

*News & Views of Activities & Happenings at The Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow*

# The Bell Ringer

## Of the Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow

**A Friendly Church; So When You Come — Bring a Friend**

**OCTOBER 2017**

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**Pastoral Column:**

Pastor Meg Flannagan

**Reformation (Part II)**

This month is the 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Luther’s protest. We will celebrate our ongoing reformation through worship and Christian Education opportunities. Beginning Sunday, October 8, we will use orders of worship from our congregation’s history and significant Protestant reformers. Old pictures and records will be available for viewing during coffee hour. Special guests may join us each week. Reformation Sunday (October 29) will conclude our celebration. Please join us for these time-travelling services of praise and prayer, word and song.

What’s it all about?

The early Reformers sought to purge the church of its fluff and flaws, and restore the church to the essentials: God, scripture, faith, and grace. In their questions and dogged pursuit of God’s presence in the world, they changed the course of both sacred and secular, familial and political communities. From Martin Luther (Wittenberg, Germany) to John Calvin (Geneva, Switzerland) to John Knox (Edinburgh, Scotland) to William Leverich (at Old First Presbyterian Church, Huntington), they looked for the ways God was re-forming the church, and realigning its mission. Their footsteps lead from the 16<sup>th</sup> century through the founding of Old First Presbyterian (1658) to Sweet Hollow’s establishment (1829) and into our congregation today. Our reformation continues as we consider who God is *here* and *now*, and who we have become through God’s recreation of our community.

We see our reformation when babies are born and new church officers are installed. We see our reformation when a new program is begun and a tired one is discontinued. Thus, our reformation is not yet complete. We continue to examine ourselves, asking what God is doing *now*. We continue to wonder what God would have us do *now*. And, like the early reformers, we continue to wonder what fluff and flaws distract us from the essentials. What stands in the way of loving God with our whole heart and mind and soul – whether it is dogma, practice, institutions, social pressures, or other diversions?

(continued on page 2)

### **Pastoral Column—(Continued from page 1)**

The Presbytery of Long Island is our partner in our ongoing reformation. Over the past two years, they guided Sweet Hollow as we examined and evaluated our history and present identity, as well as the places God calls us next. Our Visioning Task Force did this work and gave us a better understanding of our identity and immediate challenges. Now we move to the next steps.

At the direction of the Presbytery, this fall our congregational Nominating Committee will prepare a list of candidates to serve as church officers and members of our next Pastoral Nominating Committee (to be presented at our annual meeting in January). The Pastoral Nominating Committee (PNC) will prepare a “resumé” for Sweet Hollow, then search for pastoral candidates to fit our current needs and lead us to the place God calls us. This process will take at least a year. Let us pray for those who will form the PNC, and the work that they will do.

My position as Designated Pastor is a temporary call to Sweet Hollow. Presbytery allows the call to be renewed once (which happened in May 2017). It is my job to minister to and with you until a permanent pastoral relationship is formed. There are many questions about what will happen in the coming months. Please contact me or a Session member if you would like to be involved, or have any concerns about the process. Updates will be shared through monthly newsletters and bulletin announcements. Though the church, the world, and we ourselves change, we trust in God’s unchanging and abiding presence.

### **Women 4 Women**

by Sukey Walter

Women 4 Women will start off its Fall meetings with a potluck supper on Monday, October 2 at 7 pm in the Fellowship Hall. W4W is open to all women over the age of 18. Join us as we plan our upcoming activities. Bring a dish to share as we enjoy catching up with old friends and new. Contact Sukey Walter at Sukey1@me.com for more information.

### **Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow**

Rev. Mary Margaret Flannagan, Pastor

Rachel Fogel, Choir Director

Barbara Zimmerman, Secretary

Tracy Dein, Treasurer

#### Other Groups & Activities:

#### Elders:

Melissa Beyer  
Barbara Blanthorn  
Lynn Burke  
Charlotte DeSanti  
Tim Mason  
Maureen Sansone  
Brian Schiffmacher  
Jim Sommermeyer  
Emily Wagner

#### Deacons:

Jim Beyer  
Jean Cavanaugh  
Bill Chamberlain  
Laura Fallon  
Daniel Layer  
Susan Manning  
Barbara Martin  
Frank Sansone  
Dan Schiffmacher  
Jason Wagner  
Marc Young

Book Discussion  
Christian Education  
Church Brunch  
Fellowship & Outreach  
House & Property  
Mission  
Personnel  
Prayer Circle  
Prayer Shawl Ministry  
Stewardship  
Women For Women  
Worship  
Youth Group  
Bell Ringer Editor

Sukey Walter  
Lynn Burke  
Bill Walter  
Maureen Sansone  
Brian Schiffmacher  
Charlotte DeSanti  
Charlotte DeSanti  
Carol Keil  
Sukey Walter  
Jim Sommermeyer  
Maureen Sansone  
Melissa Beyer  
Pastor Meg Flannagan  
Bill Chamberlain

## Prayer Corner

by Carol Keil

“Grant that I may not pray alone with the mouth; help me that I may pray from the depths of my heart.”—Martin Luther

“To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing.” —Martin Luther

Please join us in prayer for the Schiffmacher family on the passing of Nicole’s mother, Noelle Skidmore.

We lift up prayers of joy for Emily and Jason Wagner who are expecting their first baby in February.

We pray for our church officers and Nominating Committee members.

We offer prayers of thanksgiving for the volunteers planning the Square Dance and manning the Pumpkin Patch.

## Distinguished Guest

Rev. Jan Edmiston, Co-Moderator of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), will preach at the Presbytery Meeting on Saturday, October 28. All are welcome to attend the meeting at Glenwood Life Center (formerly the Glenwood Landing Presbyterian Church). Hosting the Moderator is a rare and honorable occasion. Please join us in welcoming her to Long Island.

## Officer Nomination Process

The congregational Nominating Committee will begin its work this month. We are seeking individuals with the time and talent to serve as church officers, on our next Pastoral Nominating Committee, or on next year’s congregational Nominating Committee. Please contact Pastor Meg or Lynn Burke (Clerk of Session) at [lynburke@optonline.net](mailto:lynburke@optonline.net) if you would like to nominate yourself or another church member.

## Dinner and Discussion at Sweet Hollow Diner

Dinner and Discussion takes place all four Wednesdays in October at the Sweet Hollow Diner in Melville. Join us on October 4, 11, 18 and 25 at 6:30 pm. This is a time to ask questions and consider what we (and you!) really believe.

No experience necessary!

## Prayer Shawl Ministry

by Sukey Walter

Prayer Shawl will meet October 19 in the parlor at 1:00 pm. If you knit or crochet or would like help in learning how to do so, please join us as we knit shawls for comfort or celebration

If you would like a shawl, please contact either Sukey at [<sukey1@me.com>](mailto:sukey1@me.com) or Pastor Meg.

## **Christian Education News**

by Lynn Burke

We have started an At-Home Sunday School series for preschool and elementary age children. There will be short lessons posted on our church website for the families to do each week. A lesson will be taught on the third Sunday of each month at church when the children will leave worship for their Sunday School class. Please visit [www.sweethollowpresby.org](http://www.sweethollowpresby.org) and click "Education & Fellowship" to access the lesson each week. The lessons for October will be on the Life of Moses up to the crossing of the Red Sea. The Sunday School lesson during worship will take place on October 15. We look forward to seeing parents and children in worship. As a reminder, we have set up the small room at the back of the sanctuary as a child-friendly space stocked with simple crafts and activities.

The Nursery will be open every week; Sukey Walter has graciously volunteered to care for our youngest members.

Dinner and discussion will be every Wednesday in October at 6:30 pm.

As always, we are still in need of volunteers to teach Sunday School, and room shepherd in the Nursery and Sunday School. Look for the sign-up sheets in the back of the sanctuary.

## **Youth Group**

The youth group will meet immediately after worship on Sunday, October 8. We will have a short lesson then decorate for the square dance.

## **Stewardship – Budget News**

by Jim Sommermeyer

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!

Thank you! We asked and you responded! Our positive momentum is growing stronger! Amazing things are happening at Sweet Hollow! Our Roof Repair Fund Raising campaign has reached \$26,049, more than two-thirds of the way to our target of \$35,000.

There is a chill in the air and that can only mean one thing. It is Stewardship Season! This is the time of year when we renew our commitment to God and his church. We are one in the spirit; let us journey together! We can change the world – it's dying to get better! We will celebrate Stewardship Dedication Sunday on October 29, which is also Reformation Sunday. Keep an eye on your mailbox the second week of October for your pledge packet, engage in thoughtful prayer, and return your pledges as soon as humanly possible. Your Stewardship Committee is hard at work developing a schedule and theme for this season.

Much thanks to Jean Cavanagh for gracing us with her deeply moving Faith Testimony on Sunday, September 10! If you feel so moved, please sign up to do the same. We wouldn't be the "Little Church with the Big Heart" without you and your time, talents, and treasures supporting all the good work we do.

Much thanks also to Melissa D'Angelo for recommending our newest friends, Pro Soccer Kids, to us! They are practicing on our Great Lawn on Saturday mornings. If you want to see something really special, come down and take a look and hear a joyful noise, the children are as young as 2 years old!

Do you have your own business? If you are interested in listing it in a Sweet Hollow friends and family directory, please send me your information. There will be more information to come on this initiative.

Joyful things are happening at Sweet Hollow! In September we celebrated our Welcome Home BBQ/Picnic with over 65 people attending. We were blessed with many new friends and it was great to have friends return after many years! Coming up on October 14 we have our Harvest Square Dance!

We have much to do and I know we can do it together if we trust in our faith and pray to God to show us the way.

## Mission Team

by Charlotte DeSanti

The recent hurricanes that hit Texas and Florida have been devastating and as I write this, there is another category 4/5 hurricane bearing down on Puerto Rico. Communities will be rebuilding for months, and in many cases years, before all is back to normal. How can we help? As Pastor Meg stated in church, "It is our prayers and monetary donations that are most needed at this time."

The Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) is our greatest resource. They are one of the first groups in after a hurricane. They are an emergency refugee program of the Presbyterian Church, USA. They focus on the long term recovery of disaster impacted communities. They provide training and disaster preparedness for Presbyteries and Synods. You can view their Statement Values and their Code of Conduct and Professional Standards at [pda.pcusa.org](http://pda.pcusa.org). Some of their funding comes through One Great Hour of Sharing. If you would like to give, please make a donation to Sweet Hollow (write PDA in the memo) and we will forward it to the PDA. You may also donate directly to them at [pda.pcusa.org](http://pda.pcusa.org). The Session has also voted to give our half of the 50/50 Raffle at the October Square Dance to PDA as suggested by Mickey Rogers and Marc Young. If you are unable to give at this time or have given elsewhere, your prayers for rebuilding are very much needed.

Thank you, everyone, for your generous donations of healthy snacks and school supplies for the children at Tri CYA. My small Jetta was totally packed. Tri CYA was very appreciative. Thank you also for the continuous donations to the food pantry basket in the breezeway. This time of year, cereals, peanut butter, jelly, snacks for school, soups, coffee, tea, baby products and health and beauty aids are some suggestions for the basket.



Looking ahead to November, we will be collecting clothing, shoes, linens and blankets for our veterans. Thank you and Happy Fall!

## Pumpkin Patch

by Frank Sansone



Thank you to all who helped unload the pumpkins on Saturday, September 30. The Patch will be open each day until Tuesday, October 31. The Pumpkin Patch is our opportunity to raise funds for our church. It continues because of our congregation's history of supporting the Patch by unloading, manning a day shift in the Patch and donating baked items. We need even more support this year to make this successful. Please give your time to the Patch. Sign-up sheets are out in the CEB hall during Fellowship Time.

The **weekday** times for the Patch are: 12 – 3 pm and 3 – 5:45 pm.

Weekends are: **Saturdays:** 10 am – 1 pm, 1 – 3:30 pm, and 3:30 – 6 pm;

**Sundays:** 11 am – 2 pm, 2 – 4 pm, and 4 – 6 pm.

Weekly updates for staffing needs will be sent out by PCSH/Secretary emails. Help support the Patch by publicizing us on your Facebook page, by posting and asking your FB friends to Like and Share; also ask your friends, family and neighbors to purchase their pumpkins from us.

Michelle Von Brook has volunteered to Co-Coordinate the Patch with Frank Sansone. The email contacts are [michellevb@gmail.com](mailto:michellevb@gmail.com) and [sansfra87@gmail.com](mailto:sansfra87@gmail.com).

## Notes from Session

by Lynn Burke

There was a joint meeting of the Elders and Deacons on Monday, September 18. There was much discussion on where we are as a congregation. It was decided to downsize the number of church officers. The Session voted to ask this year's Nominating Committee to nominate one Elder and no deacons, which will bring us to a total of seven elders and eight deacons. This decision will come before the congregation at our Annual Meeting in January.

Over the summer, a large sink hole opened in the yard at the Manse. It was discovered that this was an old cesspool that was no longer being used. A company was hired to fill in the hole. The bay window in the kitchen at the manse has been leaking for quite some time, we are currently obtaining quotes to have this window replaced and to repair any damage to the wall around it.

The Worship Committee recommended and Session approved that Communion be served by intinction for the months of October, November and December.

## Welcome Home BBQ/Picnic

by Maureen Sansone

As it is always a great opportunity to reconnect after we've enjoyed our adventures of Summer, this year's Welcome Home BBQ/Picnic was held on Sunday, September 10.



Following a vibrant worship service, fun and fellowship abounded as everyone enjoyed burgers and hot dogs prepared by our "Grillmeisters," as well as delicious salads, side dishes and desserts brought by those attending.

We would like to thank all those who assisted with the setup, BBQ duties and cleanup.



## Reformation Trivia

Which King took advantage of the Reformation by declaring allegiance to it and marrying his choice wife?

- A: Henry II (French)
- B: Henry VIII (English)
- C: Ferdinand I (Holy Roman Emperor)

How many theses (complaints) were on the document Luther nailed to the door of the Wittenberg church in 1517?

- A: 95
- B: 12
- C: 3

Who is the father of Reformed Theology (eventually leading to the Presbyterian Church)?

- A: Ulrich Zwingli
- B: Martin Luther
- C: John Calvin

## Fall Church Brunch Program Begins Tuesday, October 10

by Bill Walter

Church Brunches this fall will start on the second Tuesday of each month at 10:00 am — October 10, November 14 and December 12. Mark these dates on your calendars now.

We will begin our 16th Brunch Season with a program which takes a look at the Sayings of Jesus from the *Gospel of Thomas*. We are not familiar with the *Gospel of Thomas* because in 367 AD it wasn't chosen to be included as one of the 27 works to form the New Testament. The *Gospel of Thomas* is one of many early Christian writings now known as the apocrypha, a word taken from a Greek word meaning "hidden" or "secret." We will be listening on a DVD to David Brakke, Chairman of History of Christianity and a professor of History at Ohio State University. During the first two or three hundred years following the death and resurrection of Jesus, there were many different Christian writings used at the many Christian churches around the Mediterranean before an agreement was forged to have an official canon of 27 works forming the New Testament. The *Gospel of Thomas* is the most famous of the apocryphal gospels and was thought to have been lost until a copy was found in Egypt in 1945. Come join us as we listen to a very interesting story.

The second Tuesday, October 10, will be the kickoff Church Brunch for the Fall 2017 - Spring 2018 season. We'll have freshly-brewed decaf coffee to accompany some delicious goodies. Join us at 10:00 am or whenever your schedule permits. We'll be in the church parlor until 12:30 pm.

## Book Discussion

by Sukey Walter

We will meet on Thursday, October 26 in the parlor at 1:30 pm. Our book selection is *The End of White Christian America* by Robert P. Jones.

The End  
of  
White  
Christian  
America

Robert P. Jones  
CEO, Public Religion Research Institute

## White Christians Have Become a Minority Group in America

by Bill Walter

The Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI) has just released the results of its 2016 survey of interviews with 101,000 individuals in the 50 states on their attitudes to religion. The national results show continuing declines in church membership during the past 10 years, white Catholics from 16 percent to 11 percent, white mainline Protestants from 18 to 13 percent and surprisingly white evangelicals from 23 to 17 percent.

Nationally, white Christians now account for only 43 percent of Americans and only 30 percent are white and Protestant. New York is the most diverse state, having the largest number of different religious groups. The largest religious group in New York state is Catholic with 31 percent. The second largest is unaffiliated with any religious group - 25 percent, and the third largest in New York state is black Protestant with 9 percent. Of the national unaffiliated group, 16 percent identify themselves as religious persons.

Sweet Hollow has always been a welcoming church. "You'll Know We Are Christians By Our Love" is a hymn we've recently sung which sums up Sweet Hollow. Robert P. Jones has written a book, *The End of White Christian America*, which will be our selection for the October Book Discussion. The discussion might assist in moving forward on the selection of our next pastor.



## Gift Baskets Needed For Harvest Square Dance and Fall Harvest Dinner

by Maureen Sansone

The Harvest Square Dance and Fellowship and Outreach Committees are seeking donations of items for gift baskets, or donations of themed gift baskets, which will be auctioned off at the Harvest Square Dance to be held on Saturday, October 14, and at the Fall Harvest Dinner, to be held on Sunday, November 12.

The Harvest Square Dance gift basket proceeds will benefit the roof repair project; the Fall Harvest Dinner gift basket proceeds will benefit a charitable cause yet to be determined.

Do you have a favorite hobby, activity, store or restaurant? We welcome any and all donations as we look forward to offering a beautiful array of gift baskets at each of these events, which we've been so blessed to do in the past.

Anyone who would like to avail themselves of these gift basket offerings before the events will have an opportunity to purchase raffle tickets during coffee hours on Sunday, October 8 for the Harvest Square Dance, and on Sunday, November 12 for the Fall Harvest Dinner.

Please contact Maureen Sansone at [msansone@optonline.net](mailto:msansone@optonline.net) or 631-385-1855 if you're interested in donating, or if you'd like to assist in the collection and assembly of the gift baskets. Thank you in advance.

### Welcome One, Welcome All

To Sweet Hollow Presbyterian Church's

## Harvest Square Dance!

Grab your boots, "grab yer pardner" and come on out for a fun night of dancing, food and fellowship!

No square dancing experience necessary. All types of music will be played.

When: Saturday, October 14, 7:00 pm to 9:30 pm

Where: The Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow

95 Old Country Road

Melville, NY 11747

[www.sweethollowpresby.org](http://www.sweethollowpresby.org) 631-367-9249

Tickets will be sold in advance and at the door:

\$10/adult; children under age 10 are free

\$25 per family of 3; \$35 per family of 4



Snacks, beverages, 50/50 Raffle and Gift Basket Raffle Tickets will be sold at the event!

Raffle Tickets will also be sold in advance during Coffee Hours.

Childcare available for babies and toddlers

Square Dance Caller: Mickey Rogers



# October 2017

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>1</b> 10:00 Worship 11-6 Pumpkin Patch Alexandra D' Angelo's Birthday	<b>2</b> 12-6 Pumpkin Patch 7:00 Women4Women	<b>3</b> 12-6 Pumpkin Patch	<b>4</b> 10:00 Prayer Circle 12-6 Pumpkin Patch 6:30 Dinner & Discussion Kristen Sommerweyer's Birthday	<b>5</b> 12-6 Pumpkin Patch	<b>6</b> 12-6 Pumpkin Patch	<b>7</b> 10-6 Pumpkin Patch Diana Fogel's Birthday
<b>8</b> 10:00 Worship 11-6 Pumpkin Patch 11:15 Youth Group	<b>9</b> 12-6 Pumpkin Patch Niaja & Leroy Mowat's Anniversary	<b>10</b> 10:00 Church Brunch 12-6 Pumpkin Patch Carol & Otto Keil's Anniversary Hillary & Justin Zucker's Anniversary Sukey Walter's Birthday	<b>11</b> 10:00 Prayer Circle 12-6 Pumpkin Patch 6:30 Dinner & Discussion	<b>12</b> 12-6 Pumpkin Patch	<b>13</b> 12-6 Pumpkin Patch	<b>14</b> 10-6 Pumpkin Patch 7:00-9:30 Square Dance
<b>15</b> 10:00 Worship 11-6 Pumpkin Patch Nick Pereira's Birthday	<b>16</b> 12-6 Pumpkin Patch 7:30 Session Zariah Howard's Birthday	<b>17</b> 12-6 Pumpkin Patch	<b>18</b> 10:00 Prayer Circle 12-6 Pumpkin Patch 6:30 Dinner & Discussion Michelle & Bill Von Brook's Anniversary	<b>19</b> 12-6 Pumpkin Patch 1:00 Prayer Shawl Ministry	<b>20</b> 12-6 Pumpkin Patch Melissa D' Angelo's Birthday	<b>21</b> 10-6 Pumpkin Patch
<b>22</b> 10:00 Worship 11-6 Pumpkin Patch 11:15 Church Committees	<b>23</b> 12-6 Pumpkin Patch	<b>24</b> 12-6 Pumpkin Patch Brittney Morder's Birthday	<b>25</b> 10:00 Prayer Circle 12-6 Pumpkin Patch 6:30 Dinner & Discussion Daniel Layer's Birthday	<b>26</b> 12-6 Pumpkin Patch 1:30 Book Discussion	<b>27</b> 12-6 Pumpkin Patch	<b>28</b> 9:00 Presbytery Meeting at Glenwood Landing 10-6 Pumpkin Patch Matilda Bauser's Birthday
<b>29</b> 10:00 Worship 11-6 Pumpkin Patch	<b>30</b> 12-6 Pumpkin Patch	<b>31</b> 12-6 Pumpkin Patch				

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
OF SWEET HOLLOW**

*95 Old Country Road  
Melville, NY 11747*

**Phone: 631-367-9249**



*We're on the Web!*

*www.sweethollowpresby.org*

**BELL RINGER DEADLINE  
For November Issue  
October 21, 2017**

## **Moving Forward**

Now that the Visioning Task Force has written its report, our congregation is moving forward. Sweet Hollow's future is dependent on our membership – who we are, the gifts we bring, and how we work together. Come and share your ideas and experience on Sunday, October 22 (immediately after worship). Pastor Meg will moderate the discussion.

## **Save the Date for the Fall Harvest Dinner**

by Maureen Sansone

Join us for a fun-filled evening of fellowship, food, games and raffle baskets at The Annual Fall Harvest Dinner, which takes place on Sunday, November 12 at 5:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall.

Please bring your favorite "Potluck" main dish, side dish, veggies, desserts, etc. to share. Attendees are also asked to bring non-perishable food items for the Huntington Food Pantry.

There will be a wonderful selection of gift baskets which will be raffled off, the proceeds from which will be donated to a charitable cause. Anyone who would like to donate items or baskets, please contact Maureen Sansone at 631-385-1855 or [msansone@optonline.net](mailto:msansone@optonline.net).

Assistance will be needed with setting up, cleaning up, etc. Please contact Maureen Sansone if you are able to lend a much-needed hand in that regard.

Looking forward to seeing you all there!