

The Bell Ringer

Of the Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow

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

JANUARY 2018



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Pastoral Column

by Pastor Meg Flanagan

And off we go again! January is a time for taking stock of who we are and what we do – personally, professionally, and within the church. In the last year, our church officers and members have discussed what is working at Sweet Hollow, what needs to stop, and what needs attention. Some corresponding changes are proposed for this new year. Come to our annual meeting (Sunday, January 28) to hear more!

Thank you to the many volunteers and families who enriched our church's celebration of Advent and Christmas. It was a joyous time for our church family. The opportunity to worship with *Centro Misionero* was a particular blessing. Look for further opportunities to connect with and support our Spanish-speaking neighbors.

Annual Congregational Meeting

The annual congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, January 28, immediately after worship. The corresponding annual report will be emailed beforehand, and available in print on that day.

In addition to regular committee reports, the Nominating Committee will present a slate of officers and Pastoral Nominating Committee.

All members are encouraged to attend and vote! If a winter weather event necessitates worship being cancelled, the congregational meeting will be moved to Sunday, February 4.

Visioning Task Force

The VTF report (completing the mission study for our church) will be available at the annual meeting.

All Committees Meet!

All church members are invited to stay after worship on Sunday, January 14. Coffee hour will be a brainstorming session for committees. We will also work together on an emergency/security plan for Sweet Hollow. Please join the conversation! We need your ideas and opinions.

Prayer Corner

by Carol Keil

The great thing about walking with God in life is that there is always the opportunity to start anew. God always offers us a new day and a new dawn, no matter what has gone before. At the start of the New Year, please take a moment to **thank Him** for last year, **ask His forgiveness** for where you have failed, and dedicate this new year to Him—to serve Him and love Him afresh.

A New Year's Prayer

Lord, You make all things new
You bring hope alive in our hearts
And cause our Spirits to be born again.

Thank you for this new year
For all the potential it holds.
Come and kindle in us
A mighty flame
So that in our time, many will see the wonders of God
And live forever to praise Your glorious name.

Amen.

(with thanks to www.lords-prayer-words.com)

Church Office Hours

The church office will be closed on Monday, January 1, and Monday, January 15. Please call Pastor Meg on her cell phone (931-472-8367) if an emergency arises.

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
Church Historian

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
Bill Walter

Christian Education News

by Lynn Burke

We are continuing our At-Home Sunday School series for pre-school 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 and click "Education & Fellowship" to access the lesson each week. The lessons for January will be the Epiphany story, the visit of the Three Wise Men. 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 is open every week, with Sukey Walter caring for our youngest members. Many thanks to all our volunteers who help with Sunday School and in the Nursery.

Lighting of the Advent Candles



Mission Team

by Charlotte DeSanti

Thank you to all who contributed to our families at Madonna Heights. Your generosity fulfilled their Christmas wishes.

I want to give an extra special thank you to Sukey Walter. Sukey spear heads this entire mission, making sure she has books and stuffed animals for the children before we even get our list!! She does the shopping for items that need to be purchased and puts together the Christmas Boutique that for years has helped to fund our adopt a families along with her delicious baked cookies and goods. Also adding her delicious goodies to sell and sometimes beautiful plants as well is Carol Keil. Sweet Hollow is very blessed to have these two women.

Many thanks for the continuous food donations for The Huntington Community Food Council.



February is around the corner and The Souper Bowl of Caring will be starting. You can ask your family, friends, place of employment, schools, teams, neighbors, etc. to donate. We will be competing with other churches to see who can collect the most food for their local food bank. Information will be in the announcements soon.

Mission Team wishes you and all your loved ones A Very Happy and Healthy New Year!

Las Posadas

At the December 17 worship service, we were joined by Centro Misionero, the Spanish-speaking congregation that meets here. This was an interactive, family-friendly service with the theme of “Las Posadas,” journey to Bethlehem, which tells the story of the journey to the manger. The congregation moved slowly up the breezeway, through a number of “no vacancy” stops, finishing in the Fellowship Hall with the full manger scene. Afterwards, we celebrated with a “Birthday Party for Jesus.”



Stewardship – Budget News

by Jim Sommermeyer

Sown in Love, Growing in Faith! This is our Stewardship theme this year. Thank you to all of our members, friends and renters as we approach our annual congregational meeting on January 28. We thank God for everything good in our lives and we thank the faithful flock of Sweet Hollow for your ongoing commitment. 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.

Our Roof Repair Fundraising campaign now stands at \$27,906.50, more than two-thirds of the way to our target of \$35,000. Thank you to all that have contributed to this fund, nearly the entire congregation!

Here's the status of our Stewardship campaign: Our congregation consists of over 70 families. We have received 30 pledges of \$72,315 as compared to our total for 2017 of 33 pledges of \$75,766. We received eight pledges this year from families who did not pledge last year. We received ten pledges last year from families who have not pledged this year. We have received total donations this year of over \$85,000. There is still time to submit your pledge if you have not yet done so.

Our budget proposal will be presented to the congregation during our annual meeting. Questions are always welcome year round. Our goal is to develop a budget this year that is based on pledged funds and reinstate budgeted funds for major maintenance.

Thanks to all for your many contributions to our Church. A truly amazing turnaround has occurred these past two years financially (and spiritually)! We are no longer depleting our reserve fund at an alarming rate! This is cause for a brief celebration and a rededication to God's charge to us to live generously. Amazing things are happening at Sweet Hollow! 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.

Erie: The Canal That Made America Is Our Church Brunch Topic On Tuesday, January 9

by Bill Walter



Did you know New York was competing with Virginia to build a canal through the Appalachians into the interior of our country? Washington, Jefferson & Madison were pushing for using the Potomac River while Hamilton & Clinton favored the Mohawk River. You know who won; however, the story of digging a 4 foot deep, 40 foot long 363 mile long canal is quite a tale. What was known as "Clinton's Ditch" opened a route to the interior and the establishment of new cities — Cleveland, Chicago, etc.

Begun in 1817, the canal was a route to immense social change. Slaves fleeing the south found safe paths to freedom in Canada along the canal, and African Americans settled in canal towns. The ideas of the women's rights movement and the tenets of new and renewed religions were transported along the canal.

We will have some scrumptious goodies to go along with our usual freshly brewed coffee to provide an assortment of refreshments and fellowship. The brunch starts at 10:00 am and will run until 12:30 pm. Come join us. You'll find a most needed warm break during this cold and snowy wintry season.

Women 4 Women

by Maureen Sansone

Women For Women (W4W) will not be meeting during the month of January, since historically, inclement weather has resulted in the cancellation of that month's scheduled event.

We'll be back on Monday, February 5, for our annual Card-Making/Arts and Crafts event, wherein cards and simple crafts are made and sent to those in need, whether it be our homebound members, our members who are feeling under the weather, or soldiers in far away locations.

Looking forward to seeing all women in our congregation, ages 18 and up.

A blessed Christmas and a peace-filled New Year to everyone!

Decorating the Church for Christmas



January

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
	1 Church Office Closed	2 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal Jonathan Mandel's Birthday	3 10 am Prayer Circle Rachel Fogel's Birthday	4	5	6
7 10 am Worship	8 Bill Von Brook's Birthday	9 10 am Church Brunch 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	10 10 am Prayer Circle	11	12	13
14 11 am Committees Meeting	15 Church Office Closed	16 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	17 10 am Prayer Circle Timothy Schiffmacher's Birthday	18 1 pm Prayer Shawl Ministry	19	20
21 10 am Worship 3 pm Ecumenical Prayer Service at St. Elizabeth RC Church	22 7:30 pm Session Meeting	23 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	24 10 am Prayer Circle	25 1:30 pm Book Discussion	26	27 9 am Presbytery Meeting at Bridgehampton
28 10 am Worship 11 am Congregational Meeting	29	31 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal Bill Chamberlain's Birthday				

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF SWEET HOLLOW**

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Melville, NY 11747*

Phone: 631-367-9249



We're on the Web!

www.sweethollowpresby.org

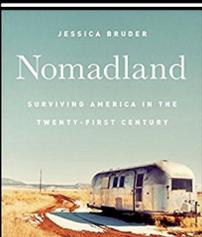
**BELL RINGER DEADLINE
for February Issue
January 21**

Presbytery Meeting

The Presbytery will meet at the Bridgehampton Presbyterian Church on Saturday, January 27, at 9 am. Contact Pastor Meg if you would like to attend.

Neighborhood Prayer Service

The congregation of St. Elizabeth's R.C. Church, with whom Sweet Hollow has long been friends, has invited us to an Ecumenical Prayer Service on Sunday, January 21, at 3 pm. Please come and share in Christian fellowship.



Book Discussion

by Sukey Walter

Our book will be *Nomadland: Surviving America in the Twenty-first Century* by Jessica Bruder We will meet next on Thursday, January 25, in the Parlor at 1:30 pm.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Prayer shawl ministry will meet from 1:00 to 2:30 pm on Thursday, January 18, in the Parlor for fellowship, conversation, knitting, and the blessing of completed shawls.

**Would you like your Bell Ringer to go in color electronically thus saving us time and postage?
Please contact the church office.**