

The Bell Ringer

Of the Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow

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

JULY - AUGUST



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Pastoral Column

by Pastor Meg Flannagan

Take a look around – Sweet Hollow has received a new CEB Hall roof, a refreshed gazebo and playground, trees removed, new exterior locks, repainted downstairs bathrooms, and other minor repairs and updates in the past few months. In addition to these physical changes, three new groups joined our community of regular tenants: children's soccer on the field, a daycare in our downstairs classrooms, and a Catholic congregation meeting in our CEB Hall. Our parking lot is full every evening and weekend. We are blessed with activity on and around our property. Particular thanks go to Joe and Joey Moder, Jim Sommermeyer, Bill and Jake Von Brook, Pastor David Villatoro (*Centro Misionero*), and Artie Jacques (Gathering of Light) for all of their work!

Despite the increased rentals and property usage, our congregation continues to suffer from lower income than expected. This deficit is directly tied to members' irregular attendance, lack of involvement and financial support. Congregations of our size (less than 150 members) need everyone to show up and share the work through our time, service, finances, and more. The staff and the church officers cannot "be" Sweet Hollow without you! Please come to worship, church programs and activities. Please pray with us and for us. Please share your time and gifts whenever and however you can. When we spend time together in worship and service, we are better able to care and support one another. We are also more practiced in listening to what God is calling us to do together.

Sweet Hollow is full of loving, faithful people. A spirit of apathy has fallen over us, threatening our church family and future. In order for our congregation to survive, we must re-engage and re-energize. We must commit to a shared vision/purpose in order to survive. "Without a vision, the people will perish." (Proverbs 29:18) We must pray. We must act. We cannot wait until the fall to re-engage.

Please contact me or our church officers if you have any questions or suggestions.

See you in church!

Prayer Corner

by Carol Keil

This summer, as we enjoy the freedom to travel wherever we choose, to worship wherever and whenever we choose, to enjoy all that is encompassed in the words “Give us this day, our daily bread,” let us join with courageous Presbyterians and Christians throughout this country who have not remained silent in the face of outrageous acts against families seeking refuge in this country.

Help us remember how fortunate we are and guide us as we lift our prayers for the compassionate treatment of refugees, our prayers seeking wisdom for our government officials, and prayers for our personal courage to act when we see injustice taking place.

May these lines by Emma Lazarus echo our ears: *“Give me you tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore, send these the homeless, tempest-tossed to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door.”*

We lift prayers of joy for the Wagner and Martin families celebrating the baptism of Wyatt Ross Wagner.

We continue to lift up prayers of healing for the Wallace family: Judy, John and Jamie.

We remember those who are no longer able to be with us in worship each week with gratitude and thanksgiving for their rich legacy of faithfulness: Mattie Bauser, Jutta Christen, Caroline Martin, Maurice and Betty Perkins, Gloria Sperry, Alice Wansor, Eleanor Waters.

Happy Summer Everyone!

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Prayer Shawl Ministry will meet again in the Fall, date to be determined.

If you know of someone who needs a shawl, please contact either Sukey Walter at sukey1@me.com or Pastor Meg.

Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow

Rev. Mary Margaret Flannagan, Pastor

Rachel Fogel, Choir Director; Barbara Zimmerman, Secretary; Tracy Dein, Treasurer

Other Groups & Activities:

| | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| <p>Elders: Lynn Burke Ed Conroy Tim Mason Brian Schiffmacher Jim Sommermeyer Emily Wagner</p> <p>Youth Elder: Rebecca VanHouten</p> | <p>Deacons: Jean Cavanaugh Bill Chamberlain Barbara Martin Frank Sansone Dan Schiffmacher Jason Wagner Marc Young</p> | <p>Book Discussion Christian Education Church Brunch Fellowship & Outreach & Mission House & Property Nominating Committee Personnel Prayer Circle Prayer Shawl Ministry Stewardship Women For Women</p> <p>Worship Youth Group Church Historian Bell Ringer Editor</p> | <p>Sukey Walter Lynn Burke Bill Walter Barbara Martin & Maureen Sansone Bill Von Brook Jim Sommermeyer Frank Sansone Carol Keil Sukey Walter Jim Sommermeyer Maureen Sansone & Sukey Walter Marc Young Pastor Meg Flannagan Bill Walter Bill Chamberlain</p> |
|---|--|---|--|

Stewardship - Budget News

by Jim Sommermeyer

It's time for a mid-year reality check. God has a plan for Sweet Hollow. We believe it but we don't know what it is. We have money in the bank but we don't have a plan for it. Is the goal of keeping our doors open for the longest period of time the best use for the money? Our officers have stated that we want to re-invigorate our congregation but we don't know how to start.

Mainly because of insurance claims and repair work, our budget numbers have swung wildly this year, making it difficult to get a firm grasp on how we are doing. Looking at the underlying trends of the past ten years, the numbers indicate to me that we have major issues that must be addressed in the near future. We had an operating deficit last year of over \$8000 after looking really strong at the mid-year point. We have a deficit so far this year of over \$10,000. This might be largely explained by higher than anticipated fuel and snow plowing costs that lasted well into April. But numbers are numbers and extrapolate the numbers over the full year and a deficit approaching \$20,000 could very well happen.

Recently, The Presbytery of Long Island has transformed the Glenwood Presbyterian Church into the Glenwood Life Center, a community center with a spiritual purpose. With increasing property rentals, decreasing membership, decreasing member participation and decreasing donations over the last ten years, it may be time to ask: What will Sweet Hollow become? Will it remain a church or will it become a community center?

To remain a church will take the best efforts of every one of our members. At this time, we remain a church mainly because of the nearly superhuman efforts of a core group of dedicated members and because we have been able to increase property rentals by a substantial amount. On any given day, members utilizing our church are out-numbered by renters by at least a 5 to 1 ratio, including Sundays. While it is nice to see so many people enjoying our facilities, I don't know most of them.

Children learn a finger play called "Here's the Church" which includes the line "Open the doors and see all the people." It will be sad for me if the day comes when Sweet Hollow is no longer called a church. It has happened before and if it happens again, we know that it is God's will.

Notes From Session

by Lynn Burke

The Session decided to share some recent financial information with the Congregation. Our income is down this year. Our treasurer has had to transfer \$18,500.00 from reserves as of June. We actually held off removing any money from savings in 2017. The unfortunate consequence was that we immediately leaned on savings in 2018 to cover some debts from last year. The \$18,500 thus reflects expenses from this year and last year.

We have been increasing our rental income which is a big help but our weekly plate and pledge amounts have fallen off. We are working together with the deacons and committee members to form a plan to increase our membership and participation at church. We welcome any ideas or suggestions.

Announcement

If you or a loved one are struggling with suicidal thoughts, please reach out to someone. You are loved! Your presence makes a difference in the world. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is 1-800-273-8255. Pastor Meg is also glad to listen and pray with anyone. Please call the church office to speak with her or set up an appointment.



Strawberry Shortcake Fellowship Picnic Pictures

by Maureen Sansone



Sweet Hollow Co-Hosts Project H.O.P.E.'s Sunday Supper on Sunday, June 24

by Maureen Sansone

Sweet Hollow co-hosted St. Hugh of Lincoln's Project H.O.P.E.'s (Helping Other People Eat) Sunday Supper on Sunday, June 24, from 1:00 to 5:00 pm.

Thank you to all our Sweet Hollow volunteers who graciously assisted with all phases of this delicious dinner, whether it was assisting with set up, welcoming attendees, donating scrumptious desserts, organizing and plating the desserts, cutting the bread, making salads, serving soup, serving the salad, bread, meal and dessert, and cleaning up.

Through your kindness, compassion and willingness to help others in need, you all truly made a difference in the lives of those who attended the Sunday Supper.

Sweet Hollow is truly blessed and privileged to have an opportunity each year to participate in this wonderful ministry. We look forward to yet again co-hosting a Sunday Supper in 2019.



Women for Women (W4W)

by Maureen Sansone

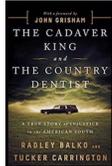
Women for Women (W4W) held its annual Clay Nation Pottery Making Event on Sunday, June 3. Participants enjoyed an afternoon of creativity, food and fellowship, as various pottery pieces were painted, including vases, decorative plates, clay wine glasses and ornamental chip and dip plates.

This concludes Women for Women’s program year. We look forward to resuming our activities in the Fall, as we start off with our Potluck Dinner and Planning event.

Have a wonderful summer, all.



Book Discussion



Book Discussion reads The Cadaver King and the Country Dentist by Radley Balko and Tucker Carrington as their summer read. We will meet on Thursday, September 20 at 1:30 pm in the parlor.

Protestors Denounce Family Separations

from www.huntingtonnow.com

On Saturday, July 30, hundreds of religious leaders and others took to all four corners of the Route 110 and Jericho Turnpike intersection to protest President Trump’s border policies and demand that the families be reunited. Included were Rev. Mary Margaret Flanagan, pastor of The Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow and her husband, Rev. Adam Fischer of the First Presbyterian Church of Baldwin. Several members of the Sweet Hollow church also took part.

“People are terrified,” Pastor Meg said of refugees and others living here without documentation. “We don’t think anyone deserves the kind of inhumane torture they’ve experienced. “The biblical message is unequivocally pro-immigrant and pro-stranger, to love not just your neighbor but the stranger.”

Pastor Adam said, “We’re here because it’s important to put feet behind faith. It is about how God cares for the world, cares for those most in need.”

The Huntington protest was one of hundreds held Saturday around the country.



July

| <i>Sun</i> | <i>Mon</i> | <i>Tue</i> | <i>Wed</i> | <i>Thu</i> | <i>Fri</i> | <i>Sat</i> |
|---|---|--|--|--|---|--|
| 1 10 am Worship 11 am Wyatt Wagner Baptism Party | 2 Anthony D'Angelo IV's Birthday | 3 | 4 Happy Fourth! Church Office Closed Fred Chacalos' Birthday | 5 Emily Wagner's Birthday | 6 Church Office Closed Andy Fogel's Birthday | 7 |
| 8 10 am Worship | 9 Rose O'Connor's Birthday | 10 | 11 10 am Prayer Circle 6:30 pm Dinner & Discussion | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 10 am Worship | 16 Lloyd Phipps' Birthday | 17 Brian Bacchus' Birthday | 18 10 am Prayer Circle 6:30 pm Dinner & Discussion Maureen Sansone's Birthday | 19 | 20 | 21 Amanda Moder's Birthday |
| 22 10 am Worship Ross Martin's Birthday | 23 | 24 Charlotte DeSanti's Birthday | 25 10 am Prayer Circle 6:30 pm Dinner & Discussion Dan Schiffnacher's Birthday | 26 | 27 Lexie Jay Zucker's Birthday | 28 Barbara Blanthorn's Birthday |
| 29 10 am Worship Silas Miller's Birthday | 30 | | | | | |

August

| <i>Sun</i> | <i>Mon</i> | <i>Tue</i> | <i>Wed</i> | <i>Thu</i> | <i>Fri</i> | <i>Sat</i> |
|--|------------|---|---|------------|------------|---|
| 5 10 am Worship | 6 | 7 Emily & Jason Wagner's Anniversary Carol Schiffnacher's Birthday | 8 10 am Prayer Circle Sharon & Donald Krans' Anniversary | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 12 10 am Worship | 13 | 14 Tim & Carol Mason's Anniversary | 15 10 am Prayer Circle Ray Moder's Birthday | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19 10 am Worship | 20 | 21 | 22 10 am Prayer Circle Tim Mason's and Mildred Schmitt's Birthdays | 23 | 24 | 25 Robbie Reiser's and Mickey Rogers' Birthdays |
| 26 10 am Worship Denise & Ray Moder's Anniversary | 27 | 28 | 29 10 am Prayer Circle | 30 | | |

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF SWEET HOLLOW**

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We're on the Web!

www.sweethollowpresby.org

**BELL RINGER DEADLINE
For September Issue
August 25**

Dinner at the Diner with Discussion

Dinner and discussion will take place at the Sweet Hollow Diner three Wednesdays in July:

July 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!

Summer Sermon Series

This summer Pastor Meg will undertake two sermon series. The first half of the summer will be spent studying the Lord's Prayer. The second half of the summer will focus on different biblical women. Come to Sweet Hollow each week to worship, learn, and fellowship. See you at church!

Save the date! Homecoming Sunday will be September 9

Would you like your Bellringer to go in color electronically thus saving us time and postage?

Please contact the church office.