

# *The Bell Ringer*



## *Of the Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow*

No matter who you are or where you are on your life journey, you are welcome here.

**May 2025**



### **In This Issue:**

Pastor's Nook	1 & 12
Building Relationship	2
Faith Formation	3
Worship Notes	4
Stewardship/Giving	5-7
Mission & More	8
Prayer Corner	9
Manse Happenings	10
Special Days	11
Website/Social Media	12

### *From the Pastor's Nook:*

#### **Why the Resurrection Still Matters—Even in the Age of AI and Avocado Toast**

If someone told you they rose from the dead today, you'd probably raise an eyebrow, run a Google search, and wait for the Netflix documentary. In an age where we can 3D-print kidneys and argue with chatbots, the idea of Jesus physically rising from the dead over 2,000 years ago can seem... well, a bit retro.

So why does the resurrection still matter in the 21st century?

Let's start here: The resurrection isn't just about whether Jesus got up and walked out of a tomb (though yes, that's central to the story). It's about what that event says about the world, about love, and about how we live now.

For followers of Jesus, the resurrection is less about proving an ancient miracle and more about affirming a present hope. It's about what the resurrection represents: that death—whether literal, emotional, systemic, or spiritual—is not the final word. It's the insistence that love still rises, even in a broken world.

For example...

In 2023, after a devastating tornado flattened a small town in Mississippi, residents of every background came together to rebuild—not just homes, but community. One woman whose house was destroyed helped cook meals for her neighbors from a borrowed food truck, saying, "We've all lost something. But we're alive. So we give what we can."

That's resurrection. Not lightning bolts or choirs of angels—but everyday people showing up with casseroles, shovels, and compassion. It's a stubborn refusal to let despair win.

Continued on page 13

# **BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS**

## **Creating a Welcoming Church Family: The Welcoming Team**

At PCSH, we believe that every person who walks through our doors should feel the love of Christ—not only in the message we preach, but in the way we welcome one another.

That's why we're excited to introduce our newly formed Welcoming Team! This mission of this group is to create a warm, friendly, and inviting environment each Sunday. Whether it's a smile at the door, help finding a seat, sharing some church information, or an invitation to Smorgasbord Sunday (or other events) this team will help turn our church into a true home.

With a modest membership count, every friendly face makes a difference. The Welcoming Team isn't about perfection—it's about presence. If you have a heart for making people feel welcome, we'd love to have you join us.

An initial informational meeting will be held in June, following worship.

Let's work together to be a church where no one stands alone, and everyone feels like they belong.

Interested in joining or learning more? Reach out to Pastor Wade.



## FAITH FORMATION

By Pastor Wade Pond



Faith & Film: Finding God in Unexpected Places



What do Star Wars, The Pursuit of Happyness, and The Lion King have in common? Believe it or not, each one offers a window into the deep questions of life, purpose, and faith.

This summer, we're launching a new class called Faith & Film—a relaxed, discussion-based gathering where we'll watch a popular mainstream movie together and explore the spiritual and moral themes woven into the story. From redemption and sacrifice to justice, hope, and grace, we'll ask: What does this film reflect about the human condition—and how might it point us back to God?

Each session will include:

- A short intro to the film's background
- A full screening (with popcorn, of course!)
- A guided group discussion on the religious and ethical themes we noticed

You don't need to be a film buff or a theologian—just come with curiosity and an open mind. This is a great opportunity to engage culture thoughtfully and grow in your faith in a fresh, creative way.

Check in with Pastor Wade if you are curious about this opportunity!!!!



First Film: The Greatest Showman



Where: PCSH CEB Hall



When: TBD



Who: Everyone is welcome!

Let's discover how God can speak—even through Hollywood.



## WORSHIP NOTES



May is a season we call EASTERTIDE. Eastertide is the season in the liturgical calendar that begins on Easter Sunday and continues for 50 days until Pentecost. While Easter Day celebrates the resurrection of Jesus from the tomb, Eastertide invites us to live into the joy, mystery, and hope of the resurrection in our daily lives. It's a time to reflect not only on what Christ's rising means for our faith, but also how it transforms how we live, serve, and hope as a community.

In the Reformed and Presbyterian tradition, Eastertide reminds us that resurrection is not just an event in the past—it is a present reality. Christ is risen indeed, and because of that, we are called to be people of new life: proclaiming peace in a world that aches, offering grace where others expect judgment, and bearing witness to the quiet power of love over fear. This season, let us pay attention to signs of resurrection all around us—new beginnings, reconciled relationships, acts of courage—and be reminded that God is still in the business of making all things new!

We mark the season of Eastertide in worship by keeping our parament colors white and by talking of the scriptures where Jesus interacts with his followers after the resurrection. It is a joyful celebration where we continually celebrate Christ's victories over sin and death.



### Liturgists

#### Liturgist Schedule

May 4 – Lynn Burk

May 11<sup>th</sup> – Maureen

May 18<sup>th</sup> – Niaja

May 25<sup>th</sup> – Available

June 1<sup>st</sup> – Joan, Laura

June 8<sup>th</sup> – Lynn

June 15<sup>th</sup> – Maureen

June 22<sup>nd</sup> (Smorgasbord) – Sheri

June 29<sup>th</sup> – Laura



## **STEWARDSHIP AND GIVING**

### ANNUAL PER CAPITA DUES UPDATE

Thank you for helping us almost reach OUR church's obligation! As of this moment, 19 families have submitted their per capita—we are ***HALF way*** there.



Sweet Hollow is required to pay the **\$42.09** for ***every member*** on our rolls. Please consider paying your family's Per Capita dues this month. If members do not earmark their per capita portion, we must take money from our budget to fulfill our responsibility towards the Presbyterian Church (USA). This payment ensures that we can easily use resources, borrow from the Presbytery office, and receive advice and support from the General Assembly.

Please remember **each member** should pay **\$42.09** this year.



# **STEWARDSHIP AND GIVING**

## **PROPERTY SALE UPDATE**

*Our work is complete related to the property sale.*

### **WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CHURCH?**

*The county will then complete their process in navigating the completion of the property acquisition. We are thankful to have Jim Reiser as our attorney helping us to navigate this complex process.*

### **WHAT'S NEXT**

*At this point, most of the remaining process now is a waiting period until we receive the funds for the sale.*





## STEWARDSHIP AND GIVING

### ***Brick by Brick: Creating a Walkway of Dedication***



Build your legacy by purchasing a commemorative 4" x 8" laser engraved brick that will be permanently placed as a border on both sides of a new sidewalk in front of the church's breezeway. Bricks can honor family members, friends, pets-whatever you can imagine. We are partnering with Fundraising Brick, a not-for-profit company with an extensive portfolio of fundraising marketing support, as well as durable laser engraved brick. The proceeds from this fundraiser will be used for the cost of the replacement of the sidewalk, and the installation of the laser engraved brick.

You can have up to 3 lines of text, each line has 20 spaces for text, punctuation and blank spaces, all in CAPITAL letters, the type will be lucida sans: This article is written in that type face. You also have over 25 artwork choices approximately 1 ½" in height engraved on upper left side of text.

The costs are **1 Brick \$125.00 Each** **2 Bricks \$115.00 Each** **3 Bricks \$100.00 Each** additional clipart \$5.00 Each. Additionally, you can purchase to keep at your home or others **Electronic Doner Certificate, 7.00 Each** **4x8 Display Brick in Case \$35.00 Each** **Printed Donor Certificate \$12.00 Each.** **There is only enough space available for 150 bricks.**

Printed order flyers will be soon available as well as electronic ordering. Frank Sansone will be leading the campaign and will be able to assist you. This is a transformative opportunity to replace what is worn into a lasting Walkway of Dedication.

# **MISSION & MORE**

## **“FEED THE NEED”**



**The Huntington Community Food Council is facing a challenging new reality, as the parent organizations that supply them with the bulk of their groceries, such as Island Harvest and the NY State Food Bank, are losing funding. This is creating more uncertainty and an increase in costs. The Mission Team sincerely thanks everyone who so generously donated food items in April.**

**The Mission Team is committed to assisting in this vital ministry as we continue to collect donations of the most requested non-perishable items: canned soup, rice, canned vegetables, pasta, cereal and pasta sauce.**

**Each and every donation you make truly makes a difference in the lives of the 300 clients the Huntington Community Food Council serves twice a week-a number that's expected to keep increasing.**

**Please consider using the weekly sales at local grocery stores to generously pick up some extra supplies. Thank you in advance for your generosity of spirit.**



**TOGETHER, WE CAN TRULY MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**



## Prayer Corner



### The Heartbeat of Faith: The Power of Prayer

In the quiet moments of our lives—when words fail, when burdens feel heavy, or when joy overflows—prayer is how we connect with God. It's not just a religious habit; it's a lifeline. Prayer centers us. It reminds us we're not alone. It invites us to draw near to the One who hears, heals, and holds us.

Jesus Himself often withdrew to pray, and He taught us to pray not just with words, but with trust. Whether we pray for ourselves, for others, or simply sit in God's presence, we are participating in a holy conversation.

In this season, many in our church family are seeking comfort, strength, and direction. Let us continue to lift one another up in prayer. Here are a few simple prayers you can use or adapt:



### Prayer for Peace

Lord, in the middle of noise and worry, I ask for Your peace. Calm my anxious thoughts and fill me with the quiet assurance that You are near. Let Your peace guard my heart and mind. Amen.



### Prayer for Healing

God, You are our Great Physician. For those who are sick, hurting, or weary, I ask for Your healing touch. Restore what is broken. Bring strength to weak bodies and comfort to troubled hearts. Amen.



### Prayer for Others

Lord, I lift up my friends, family, and neighbors to You. For those who are struggling—bring hope. For those in need—provide. For those far from You—draw them near. Use me to be a light in their lives. Amen.

As we continue our journey together, may prayer be more than an occasional act—it can be our daily rhythm. A moment of stillness. A posture of trust. A breath of connection with our loving God.

Let's keep praying—for one another and for our world.

## Manse Happenings...



The front of the manse has been a wee bit barren for a few seasons. This spring we planted 9 hydrangeas and installed 8 decorative trellises. We have plans to plant climbing roses at the base of each trellis. The hydrangeas will mature to be taller than the hostas in front of them. The roses will grow taller than the hydrangeas creating a layered garden look. We also plan to place Dwarf Burning Bush Hedges under the front window. Last year's Easter lilies are starting to push up toward the sky. This year's Easter lilies have joined them around the mailbox post. They have also been joined by the hydrangeas from Easter morning to grow for years to come behind the mailbox post. We will be seeding the front lawn with clover seeds this spring. Clover has many benefits over a grass lawn.

The benefits of a clover lawn includes:

- Less water consumption. Clover is drought-tolerant and requires less water than grass.
- Natural fertilization. Clover is a legume that adds nitrogen to the soil, eliminating the need for synthetic fertilizers.
- Improved soil quality. Clover can grow in poor soil and help improve its texture and nutrient content.
- Weed control. Clover can outcompete and suppress many common lawn weeds.
- Beneficial insects. Clover attracts bees, butterflies and other pollinators that help the ecosystem.



We thank you all for allowing your house to be our home.

## Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow

(631) 367 - 9249

[www.sweethollowpresby.org](http://www.sweethollowpresby.org)

Rev. Wade Pond, Pastor

Jason Black, Director of Music Ministries

Lori Kevelos, Church Administrator

Jill Conroy, Treasurer

Beatrice Reiser, Clerk of Session

Elders: Ed Conroy

Melissa D'Angelo

Niaja Mowatt

Frank Sansone

Bea Reiser



### May 2025

15... Nate Miller

20... Ambryel Moder

24... Jordyn Pond

25... LeRoy Mowatt

29... Ellie Schiffmacher

30... Carol Keil

30... Kevin Manning



## SESSION MEETING!

The session meets monthly, typically on the third Monday of each month at 8 PM. Most meetings occur via Zoom. In person meetings occur February/May/September/November. The next meeting is May 19th. Any member of the church is welcome to attend.

### April 2025

2... Robert & Mildred Schmitt

4... Anthony & Melissa D'Angelo

8... Wade & Jessica Pond

16... Ross & Barbara Martin

19... Frank & Maureen Sansone



*Find our website and social media links!*

[www.sweethollowpresby.org](http://www.sweethollowpresby.org)

*Facebook/YouTube/Instagram*

<https://www.facebook.com/sweethollowpresby>

<https://youtube.com/>

[@presbyterianchurchofsweeth1401](https://www.instagram.com/presbysweethollow)

<https://www.instagram.com/presbysweethollow>

1... National Day of Prayer

4... National Star Wars Day

(May the 4th be with you.)

6... National Nurses Day

11... Mother's Day

14... National Dance Like a Chicken Day

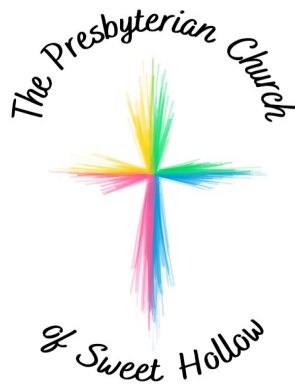
18... National Visit Your Relatives Day

23... National Road Trip Day

26... Memorial Day

31... National Smile Day





### ***From the Pastor's Nook:***

Continued from page 1...

And isn't that what Jesus embodied? A God who doesn't stay at a distance, but enters human suffering, walks through death—and comes out the other side with scars and hope in hand.

The resurrection matters today because we're still facing tombs: of loneliness, injustice, division, and fear. But the risen Christ reminds us that these graves don't get the final word. New life is possible. Not just someday—but here. Now.

So yes, we may live in a world of Teslas and Tik-Tok, but we still need resurrection. Not as a one-time event, but as a living reality. As the late Rachel Held Evans once put it, "If the resurrection is real, then nothing is impossible—and that's a hope worth clinging to."

Jesus is still rising. The question is: where will we join Him?

*Find our website and social media links!*

[www.sweethollowpresby.org](http://www.sweethollowpresby.org)

*Facebook/YouTube/Instagram*

<https://www.facebook.com/sweethollowpresby>

<https://youtube.com/>

[@presbyterianchurchofsweeth1401](https://www.youtube.com/@presbyterianchurchofsweeth1401)

<https://www.instagram.com/presbysweethollow>



**Bell Ringer Delivery:** To have your copy of the Bell Ringer delivered by paper rather than email, please call the office, e-mail <[pcshsecretary@hotmail.com](mailto:pcshsecretary@hotmail.com)> or Pastor Wade.

**Jun. Bell Ringer Submissions: Due by May 25**

Email to Jessica Pond: [8kidscallmemom@gmail.com](mailto:8kidscallmemom@gmail.com)