

# 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.

**SEP 2025**



### In This Issue:

Pastor's Nook	1 & 16
Building Relationship	2-4
Faith Formation	5-7
Worship Notes	8-9
Stewardship/Giving	10
Mission & More	11-12
Prayer Corner	13-14
Special Days	15
Website/Social Media	16

### From the Pastor's Nook:

#### Casting a Vision Together

*"Where there is no vision, the people perish." – Proverbs 29:18 (KJV)*

In every season of the church's life, God calls us to look both backward with gratitude and forward with hope. Our Presbyterian tradition holds that the church is *Reformed and always reforming, guided by the Holy Spirit into new ways of faithfulness. That is why we are beginning a process of visioning together as a congregation.*

So what is "visioning," and why do we need it?

At its core, visioning is about discerning God's call for our community at this time and in this place. Just as the early church gathered in Acts 15 to prayerfully decide how to live out the Gospel among diverse peoples, so we gather to ask: *What does God want to do through us in the years ahead?*

Visioning is not simply strategic planning, though it may borrow some of its tools. In the business world, small companies often take time to clarify their "mission" and "values" so that their decisions align with their core identity. A vision statement helps them navigate challenges and stay focused on their purpose. For the church, our mission is already rooted in Christ: to proclaim the Gospel, love our neighbors, and embody God's kingdom here and now. Visioning helps us ask how we uniquely live that mission in this community, in this generation.

Scripture reminds us again and again of God's call to renew and reimagine. Isaiah 43:19 proclaims, *"See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?"* Paul encouraged the Philippians to *"press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus"* (Philippians 3:14). Visioning invites us to seek out that *"new thing,"* to press on faithfully, and to listen for the Spirit's leading.

Continued on page 15

# **BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS**

## **A Practical Guide to Our Church Visioning Process**

*“Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established.” – Proverbs 16:3*

Over the coming months, our congregation will be engaging in a visioning process. This is an intentional season of prayer, listening, and planning designed to help us discern where God is calling us next. Visioning is not about imposing a new identity, but about clarifying the gifts God has already given us and aligning our ministry with the Spirit’s leading.

Here are the steps we will be following together:

### **1. Prayer and Grounding in Scripture**

We begin by remembering that this is God’s church, not ours. We will gather in worship and prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to guide our conversations. Key passages such as Proverbs 29:18 (*“Where there is no vision, the people perish”*) and Acts 2:42–47 (*the life of the early church*) will frame our work.

### **2. Looking Back with Gratitude**

Before we look forward, we pause to reflect on where we have been. Like the psalmist who remembers God’s faithfulness (Psalm 77), we will name the milestones, traditions, and ministries that have shaped our identity.

### **3. Listening to the Congregation**

Visioning is a communal task. Through surveys, small groups, and listening sessions, every member will have a chance to share their hopes, dreams, and concerns. This helps us discover our shared values and passions.

### **4. Listening to the Community**

Just as Paul became “all things to all people” (1 Corinthians 9:22), we are called to pay attention to our neighbors. We will gather input from community leaders, local organizations, and those outside our walls to learn where our gifts might meet real needs.

### **5. Clarifying Our Mission and Values**

Many small businesses thrive by identifying their core mission and values; the same is true for the church. Together, we will articulate what is most important to us as followers of Christ in this community. These values will become the foundation for future ministry.

### **6. Imagining the Future**

This is where we dream! With the Holy Spirit’s leading, we will consider what God may be calling us to in the next three to five years. What new ministries might we try? What partnerships might we build? How can our worship, service, and fellowship deepen?

### **7. Drafting a Vision Statement**

From our conversations, we will craft a simple, memorable statement that expresses who we are and who we hope to become. This statement will be more than words on paper—it will be a guidepost for decision-making, helping us stay focused on God’s call.

Continued on next page...

## **BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS**

Continued from previous page.

### **8. Planning Next Steps**

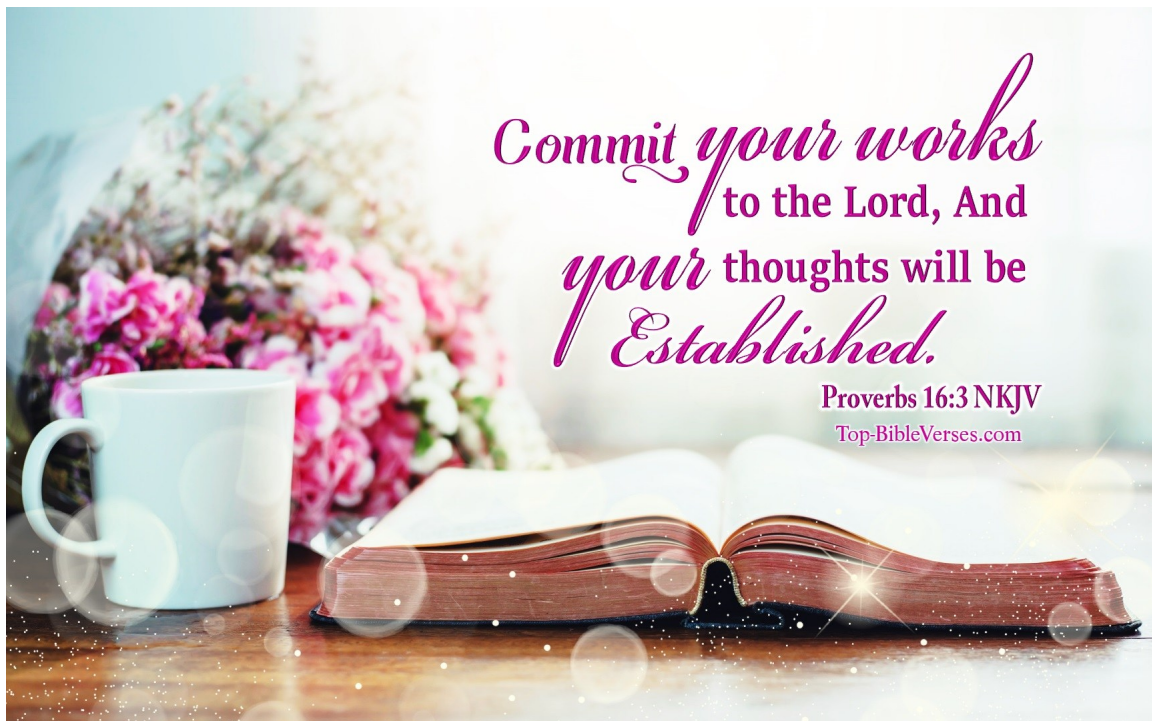
Finally, we will identify practical goals and steps. Just as Nehemiah rallied the people to rebuild the wall (Nehemiah 2:17–18), we will work together on achievable actions that align with our vision.

### **9. Living the Vision**

Visioning is never a one-time project. It is an ongoing practice of prayer, evaluation, and faithfulness. As our context changes, we will keep listening for the Spirit's voice and adjusting as needed.

---

This visioning process is not about creating something from scratch, but about listening deeply—to God, to one another, and to our neighbors—and then aligning our life together with what we hear. With God's help, we will discover a renewed sense of purpose and energy for ministry



## BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

### New Members Inquirer's Class at the Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow



We are excited to invite you—and those you love—to be part of an upcoming **New Members Inquirer's Class** at the Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow on September 28th! This is a wonderful opportunity for friends, family, and neighbors who may be seeking a church home to learn more about who we are and what it means to walk together in faith.

Becoming a member of the church is not about checking off a list of requirements or proving that you have all the “right” answers. Instead, membership is about beginning—or renewing—a **life-changing relationship with God** and joining a community where faith is nurtured, questions are welcomed, and love is shared.

In this class, participants will have the chance to:

Learn about the history and values of our congregation.

Explore what it means to live out faith as Presbyterians.

Connect with others who are on the journey of discipleship.

We encourage our current members to **invite friends and family** who may be searching for a place to belong. Your personal invitation could be the nudge someone needs to take the next step toward a deeper life of faith.

Come and see how God is moving among us—and consider who in your life might be ready to take this journey too. Together, we continue to grow as Christ's church, rooted in grace and reaching out in love.

# FAITH FORMATION



By Pastor Wade Pond

## **Digging Deeper: *The Bible in Depth* with the Kerygma Program**

*"The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever." – Isaiah 40:8*

This fall, our congregation is embarking on a new adventure in learning and faith formation: **The Bible in Depth**, a Kerygma Program designed for those who want to take a deeper dive into God's Word.

### **What is *The Bible in Depth*?**

Unlike a quick overview or topical study, this course takes us **through a thematic exploration** of starting with God saving the people and finishing with God's people having hope. Together, we will examine the sweep of Scripture—from creation to covenant, prophets to psalms, Gospels to letters. The goal is not simply to *read the Bible*, but to **understand its history, context, and meaning** and to *discover how these sacred texts continue to speak into our lives today*.

Continued on next page...



# FAITH FORMATION

Continued from previous page.

The Kerygma approach is interactive and community-centered. Sessions combine careful scholarship with engaging conversation. Each week we will wrestle with questions, share insights, and learn from one another as the Spirit guides us.

## Why This Study?

In the Reformed tradition, we affirm that Scripture is “the unique and authoritative witness to Jesus Christ” (Book of Confessions, 9.27). A study like *The Bible in Depth* helps us move beyond surface readings into a **richer, fuller understanding** of God’s story and our place within it.

The apostle Paul reminds us: “All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness” (2 Timothy 3:16). This course is one way we answer that call to be trained and shaped by the living Word.

## What You Can Expect

- A **two-year journey** through the entire Bible (with flexible pacing).
- Study guides that provide **historical background, theological themes, and discussion questions**.
- A group setting where all questions are welcome—no prior Bible study experience required.
- Opportunities to connect ancient texts with today’s challenges and joys.

## Who Should Join?

Anyone who hungers for a **deeper knowledge of Scripture** and a **closer walk with God**. Whether you’ve been reading the Bible for decades or are just beginning, you will find this study accessible, challenging, and enriching.

## Getting Started

Our *Bible in Depth* study will begin in October and meet **every other Sunday following worship**. The resource guide for the study is \$50.

Come ready to explore, question, and grow. Together we will discover how the grand story of the Bible continues to proclaim good news for us and for the world.

~PW

## FAITH FORMATION



What does Star Wars have to do with Faith In Film? Believe it or not, it offers a window into the deep questions of life, purpose, and faith.

This summer, we've launched a new class called Faith & Film—a relaxed, discussion-based gathering where we 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 have 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!!!!

Film: Star Wars: A New Hope

Where: PCSH CEB Hall

When: October 4th, 6:00 PM

Who: Everyone is welcome!

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



# WORSHIP NOTES

## **Behind the Scenes: How a Worship Service Comes Together**

When we gather for worship each Sunday, we experience prayers, hymns, scripture, and a message woven together in a way that helps us encounter God's presence. But have you ever wondered how a worship service is created? Worship may look seamless when we gather, but behind the scenes there is prayerful planning, creativity, and collaboration.

The process often begins with **scripture**. Many churches follow the *Revised Common Lectionary*, which provides a cycle of readings across the seasons of the church year. These readings guide the preacher in preparing the sermon and set the spiritual tone for the day. At times, services may also be shaped around themes—such as justice, healing, or thanksgiving—that speak to our community's current needs.

Once the guiding scripture or theme is chosen, the **flow of worship** begins to take shape. We consider:

- What prayers and confessions help us open our hearts to God?
- What hymns or songs best carry the theme forward?
- How can liturgy (spoken responses, creeds, or affirmations) help us voice our faith together?
- What visuals or symbolic actions (candles, banners, communion, baptisms) deepen the meaning of the moment?

Creating worship is both **art and prayer**. It blends the traditions of the church with the unique spirit of the congregation. Sometimes worship is deeply liturgical and follows familiar patterns; other times it is creative, involving drama, storytelling, or new music. Each choice invites us to experience God's Word in a fresh way.

Finally, every service is bathed in **prayer**. We pray that God's Spirit will work through the words spoken, the music sung, and the silence shared. Worship is not a performance to be watched but a sacred space we enter together—bringing our hopes, questions, and gratitude before God.

As we continue to gather week by week, remember that each service is carefully and prayerfully crafted with one purpose: to help us draw closer to God and to one another. Worship is not just something the pastor or musicians "do"—it is something we *all create together as the body of Christ*.

**Liturgist Schedule - many thanks to those that serve and if you are interested, reach out to Pastor Wade if you are willing to help lead.**

September 7th - Niaja

September 14th - Lynn

September 21st - Niaja

September 28th - Sheri

(Smorgasbord)



# WORSHIP NOTES



## Poinsettia Sponsorship Order Form



This Christmas season, you are invited to sponsor a poinsettia to help decorate our sanctuary in celebration of Christ's birth. Sponsoring a poinsettia is a meaningful way to honor or remember a loved one.

After the Christmas services, you may take your poinsettia home or allow it to be delivered to someone in need of encouragement.



### Sponsorship Details

- Cost per poinsettia: \$25 each large (4 red and 2 white available)
- \$15 each small (18 available - red only)



### Order Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of large poinsettias: \_\_\_\_\_ × \$\_\_\_\_\_ = \$\_\_\_\_\_

Number of small poinsettias: \_\_\_\_\_ × \$\_\_\_\_\_ = \$\_\_\_\_\_

In Honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

(Please print names clearly as they will appear in the Christmas bulletin.)



### Payment Options

Cash

Check (made payable to: PCSH)

Online giving (please note "Poinsettia" in memo line)



Return form & payment by:



Lori – [pcshsecretary@hotmail.com](mailto:pcshsecretary@hotmail.com) – 631-367-9249



Thank you for helping to beautify our worship space and



## **STEWARDSHIP AND GIVING**

***Have you ordered your Bricks yet?***

***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 are available as well as electronic ordering. Frank Sansone is 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

### SCHOOL SUPPLY MISSION COMPLETE!



Once again, our church membership rose to the occasion of gathering supplies to give kids a boost for a smooth-running transition back to school. All supplies will make an impact. Those 19 backpacks were stuffed with an assortment of supplies ready for delivery to local kids. Excellent effort showing our church community is aware of ways to help the needy. The bags around the sanctuary were helpful in figuring out what kids may need and creative members had other treats for kids—they went beyond the bag lists and notices. Local sales made it easier on the wallet to get backpacks and composition notebooks as requested by Tri-CYA. Since the children need extra supplies during the year, you can continue to bring in supplies and our team will make sure they head down to the local kids. Keep supplies coming.

THANK YOU once again for all your efforts...

Your Mission Team



## MISSION & MORE

### MISSION & MINISTRY-LOOKING AHEAD TO SEPTEMBER THROUGH DECEMBER

As the days of summer wane, the kids return to school and Fall begins to display its beautiful colors, the Mission Team looks ahead to our upcoming Mission and Ministry initiatives:



**September-Food Drive**-For this ongoing initiative, we're requesting donations of pasta, rice, sauce, hot cereal, cold cereal, canned tuna, and peanut butter to benefit the **Huntington Community Food Council**.

**October-"Fill a Box, Feed a Family" Food Drive** to benefit **Helping Hand Rescue Mission**. In order to have ample time stuffing mix, cranberry sauce, to amass supplies to fill another five boxes, items will be collected October 1<sup>st</sup> through November 16<sup>th</sup>. Last year's overwhelming response to this ministry was all thanks to your generosity. Clearly, the need is greater this year.



#### **Food Needed For Boxes**

Stuffing mix, cranberry sauce, small canned yams, rice, cake mix, tortillas, canned corn & green beans or peas, macaroni & cheese, turkey gravy, instant mashed potatoes, brownie/quick bread mix, icing, canned fruit, tea or coffee, hot chocolate packets, pancake mix & syrup, snacks, family size juice, candy and holiday/seasonal decorations.



**November**-Collection of food items for **"Fill a Box, Feed a Family" Food Drive** to benefit **Helping Hand Rescue Mission** continues until November 16<sup>th</sup>. In early November, we'll also begin to collect toys for **Toys For Joy**, to benefit the children of **Tri-CYA**. Last year, we were blessed to deliver a mountain of toys, for which **Tri-CYA** was so grateful. We strive to collect even more this year.

**December**-We'll continue accepting toys for **Toys For Joy** to benefit the children of **Tri-CYA**, which will be delivered the second week of December.

The Mission Team thanks you all in advance, for your compassion towards those in need.

## *Prayer Corner*



### **Prayer Points for Current Global Concerns**

#### **1. Peace Amid Escalating Conflicts**

- **Ukraine & Israel–Gaza:** Ongoing violence and displacement continue to pain God’s heart. Humanitarian conditions in Gaza are worsening, with limited access for relief workers.
- **Eastern DR Congo:** Renewed rebel attacks in North Kivu claim dozens of lives.
- **Sudan (Darfur):** Health services are retreating under attack—cholera aid is being hampered.

**Prayer:** Lord, bring lasting peace and protection to those in conflict zones. Comfort the suffering and guide peacemakers toward reconciliation and justice.

#### **2. Humanitarian Crisis**

- **Gaza City:** The destruction of homes and essential services continues, with limited aid access.

**Prayer:** God of mercy, spark transformation in systems that harm children. Empower communities to embrace gentleness, restoration, and protection for the youngest among us.

#### **3. Blockages to Justice & Accountability**

- **ICC Sanctions:** The International Criminal Court faces new sanctions from the U.S.—framing concerns about judicial independence. [Global Issues](#)

**Prayer:** Righteous Judge, sustain the ICC and other justice systems committed to accountability and rule of law. We stand with victims needing fair and courageous advocacy.

Continued on next page



## *Prayer Corner*

Continued from previous page.

### **A Hopeful Outlook in God's Promises**

In a world shaken by conflict and crisis, let us anchor our hope in these truths:

- **God transforms despair into hope.** Even small sparks—like tendrils of peace or scientific breakthroughs—point toward God working in secret for good.
- **Prayer truly moves mountains.** Responding collectively unites us in spiritual solidarity for real change.
- **Advances are signs of God's creativity.** From environmental solutions to cosmic discoveries, science invites worship, wonder, and stewardship.
- **Love compels action.** Our prayers aren't passive. They fuel acts of justice, mercy, and compassionate advocacy in a broken world.

### **Closing Prayer**

**Creator God**, we lean on You amid turmoil and uncertainty. Bring Your peace to war-torn lands. Strengthen broken-hearted communities and bring healing to the wounded. Guide leaders toward just decisions. Bless scientists, aid workers, and all who labor for good. As we unite in prayer, may they ring out as gospel proclamations of hope and healing. Use Your church as a beacon of love—reflecting Your glory and grace to a hurting world. In Jesus's name, Amen.

Thank you for sharing this moment of reflection and intercession. May our church be a channel of hope and healing—as we prayerfully engage with the world entrusted to us

~PW





## SEP 2025

5... Jill Conroy  
 5... Carol Mason  
 9... Sue Manning  
 12... Peter Kevelos  
 12... Stavros Kevelos  
 21... Barbara Moder  
 30... Sharon Krams



1... National Pastor's Spouses Day  
 1... Labor Day  
 5... National Food Bank Day  
 7... National Grandparents Day  
 11... Patriot Day  
 11... National Day of Service and Remembrance  
 14... National Parents Day Off  
 16... National Mayflower Day  
 19... National Talk Like A Pirate Day  
 21... National New York Day  
 21... National Wife Appreciation Day  
 22... National Family Day  
 22... National Girls Night  
 25... National Daughter's Day  
 26... National Johnny Appleseed Day  
 28... National Good Neighbor Day  
 30... National Love People Day



## SEP 2025

24... Nick & Beth Pereira



SEP 26... Anniversary  
 of the Installation of  
 Rev. Wade Pond

## 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

## **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 SEP 15. Any member of the church is welcome to attend.



*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>

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

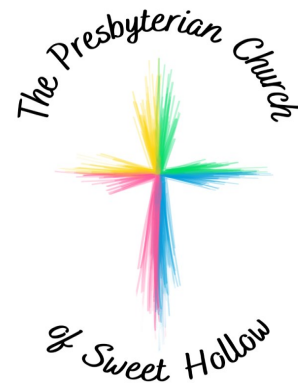
Continued from page 1...

As a small church, our strength lies in our close relationships and our flexibility. While larger organizations can become weighed down by bureaucracy, small communities can adapt quickly and respond creatively. Many small businesses thrive because they know their customers personally and are able to serve them with care and authenticity. In the same way, we as a congregation are called to listen to our neighbors, to understand their needs, and to discern how God wants us to serve.

Over the next months, we will be gathering stories, listening deeply, and prayerfully considering what God has in store for us. Visioning is not just about writing a statement for the website—it is about shaping our future ministry together. It is about asking: *Who are we? Who is God calling us to be? And what difference can we make in the lives of those around us?*

May we enter this season with open hearts, ready to be surprised by the Spirit, and trusting that the God who has sustained us in the past will guide us into the future.

~PW



**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.

**SEPT Bell Ringer Submissions: Due by SEP 25**

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