

The Bell Ringer

Of the Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow

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

JANUARY 2020



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Pastoral Column

by Pastor Meg Flannagan

Christmas finds newborn Jesus laying in the manger. So we sing, “Gloria!” for twelve days. We bring gifts with the wise men on Epiphany, then celebrate Christ’s baptism the following week. When John the Baptist stood with Jesus in the Jordan river, God’s voice proclaimed that “This is my Son, the Beloved. I am well pleased with him.” Praise after praise after praise! Stars and gifts and signs! Love and joy and hope! Our own hearts are likely full with love for God in these days. Rooted in all these acts and all these days, though, is God’s great love for us. He (Jesus) came down not for himself, but that we might have love. He came down that we might have joy. He came down that we might have hope.

The poet R.S. Thomas used modern imagery to describe why Jesus came down. “The Coming” was quoted in a December sermon, prompting reflection and conversation with several church members. It is reprinted here for your consideration:

And God held in his hand
a small globe. Look, he said.
The son looked. Far off,
As through the water, he saw
A scorched land of fierce
Colour. The light burned
There; crusted buildings
Cast their shadows: a bright
Serpent, A river
Uncoiled itself, radiant
With slime.

On a bare
Hill a bare tree saddened
The sky. Many people
Held out their thin arms
To it, as though waiting
For a vanished April
To return to its crossed
Boughs. The son watched
Them. Let me go there, he said.

See you in church!

Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow

(631) 367 - 9249

www.sweethollowpresby.org

Rev. Mary Margaret Flannagan, Pastor

Rachel Fogel, Choir Director

Secretary

Tracy Dein, Treasurer

Elders:

Lynn Burke

Ed Conroy

Tim Mason

Jim Sommermeyer

Bill Von Brook

Deacons:

Jean Cavanaugh

Barbara Martin

Niaja Mowatt

Maureen Sansone

Dan Schiffmacher

Jason Wagner

Marc Young

Other Groups & Activities:

Book Discussion

Christian Education

Fellowship & Outreach & Mission

House & Property

Personnel

Prayer Circle

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Budget & Stewardship

Women For Women

Sukey Walter

Carol Keil

Maureen Sansone

Bill Von Brook

Frank Sansone

Carol Keil

Sukey Walter

Jim Sommermeyer

Maureen Sansone & Sukey Walter

Worship

Youth Group

Church Historian

Bell Ringer Editor

Joan Sommermeyer

Pastor Meg Flannagan

Bill Walter

Bill Chamberlain

Prayer Corner

By Carol Keil

Immanuel: God with us! As we begin this New Year 2020, we pray we may feel God's presence with us each day. God, shine your light in us, through us and over us that we may make a difference in this world. Help us to reflect your peace and hope to a world that so desperately needs your healing presence.

We continue to raise up healing prayers for Tracy Dein.

We lift prayers of thanksgiving for the continued strengthening of William Walter and pray for energy and peace of mind for Sukey and the Walter family.

We pray for the Wallace family as they celebrate the life and mourn the death of Judy's brother Thomas A. Magill.

We pray healing prayers for Pastor Emeritus John Wallace, hospitalized for pneumonia.

We lift prayers of joyful welcome for new members Sandra Mouloudj and Monica Van Houten.

We lift prayers of thanksgiving as Lori Kevelos begins to serve as church administrator this month.

We lift prayers of gratitude for Maureen Sansone who so ably served as our church secretary these past months.

We raise prayers of hope and thanksgiving for the work of the church nominating committee as they prepared the slate of officers to be presented for election at the Annual Meeting.

Holy Spirit,

Guide us each day to do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with you at our side. Amen



Introducing Our Two New Church Members

Pastor Meg with our new members,

Monica Van Houten and

Sandra Mouloudj.

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

Stewardship - Budget

By Jim Sommermeyer

To all that have pledged and donated this year, thank you for your continued generosity! We wouldn't be the "Little Church with the Big Heart" without you and your time, talents and treasures supporting all the good work that we do!

Stewardship - our path to sustainability

Thus far we have received 28 pledges for a total of \$74,225.00. Thank you all for responding so quickly. To reach full participation of our membership we need another 25 pledges. We are well on our way to exceeding our 2019 pledge total. On another positive note, five families were able to increase their pledges this year! I continue to believe that an increase of 10% in active members, building use and donations are all that we need to turn the tide and have momentum in our favor.

Estate / Legacy Planning

Have you named the Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow as a beneficiary in your will? A properly executed will enables you to sustain your support of Sweet Hollow. Your bequest may be a specific amount, a percentage of your estate or a residual amount (after expenses and other bequests have been fulfilled). If you need assistance, Rich Burke has graciously offered his help with planning. We are extremely grateful for those who have done so already!

Current Financial Status - End of November

We have income of \$210,218.71 and expenses of \$199,108.86 for a YTD total of \$ 10,109.85 Please keep in mind that this includes a legacy gift of \$50,000.00. Thank you for your continued generosity! Our donations are up from last year, while our Building Use is down \$20,000.00 and our Fundraising is down \$2,000.00.

Per Capita

We have received \$1,485.97 towards our 2019 responsibility of \$4527.95. Per Capita continues to be an area of that creates a large shortfall for Sweet Hollow on a yearly basis, even though it is approved as a budget expense.

Project Regeneration

We are continuing to work with consultants from the Presbyterian Foundation to help us discern a path forward for Sweet Hollow. Currently we are not on a path towards long term sustainability. We may have to make a difficult decision in the near future. The Presbytery of Long Island is also committed to provide support to us as we go forward together.

Discipleship/Membership

We are grateful to all the new members that have joined us this year as they make a commitment to supporting Sweet Hollow and joining us in the unity of our church family. We are called to discipleship, to be bold and spread the good news about Jesus; engage your family and friends in discussion about the joy of membership at Sweet Hollow!

For the Stewardship – Budget Committee
Jim Sommermeyer (Chair)

Session Notes

By Lynn Burke

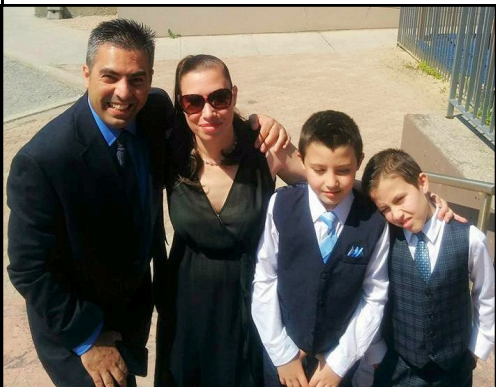
The Personnel Committee reported Barbara Zimmerman's resignation in July and Tracy Dein's resignation effective January 1, 2020. These two open positions presented an opportunity to change our staff structure as has been repeatedly suggested in congregational forums. The Session thus approved the following changes to our church secretary position:

- * The former Treasurer and Secretary positions will be combined into a joint secretary/bookkeeper position at 25 hours/week beginning January 1, 2020.
- * Payroll will be outsourced to an outside company. This is a minimal expense and recommended by Presbytery.
- * A Treasurer will be elected from within the congregation.

The above changes will give us more office hours, as well as increased expenses. Reductions must thus be made elsewhere in the 2020 budget, or congregational giving and property rentals must be increased. Having assessed our resources and discussed the state of our church for several years (through congregational forums, the Visioning Task Force, and other intentional conversations) discerning where God is leading us, the Session recommends reducing our pastoral position to part-time beginning June 1, 2020. This will bring significant cost savings which will easily cover the slight cost increase for the secretary/bookkeeper position.

The proposed pastoral position changes require our Pastoral Nominating Committee to resume their work. (Remember that they intentionally paused work in August 2018 in order to participate in the Project Regeneration and other discernment about what we could afford.) There will be opportunities for feedback and sharing at future congregational forums. Please join us in these conversations as we together practice faithful stewardship of God's gifts to Sweet Hollow.

Introducing Our New Church Administrator



Our new church administrator, Lori Kevelos, along with her family.

The Personnel Committee was delighted to hire Lori Kevelos as our new church administrator. She will be working everyday from 9am-2pm doing a combination of basic secretarial tasks (finishing weekly bulletins, answering phones, etc.), financial administration (receiving income, paying bills, negotiating contracts), and property management. She begins work on January 2, 2020.

Call or stop by the office to welcome her!

Mission Team

By Maureen Sansone

Project HOPE-Storm Supply Box For HiHi (Huntington Interfaith Hunger Initiative)

Thank you to all those who donated items for the HiHi Storm Supply Box. All items were brought to St. Hugh of Lincoln Church in Huntington Station, where they'll be sorted and distributed to the men whom they provide services to during the cold winter months.

Sunday School is making Peanut Butter and Jelly Sandwiches for Family Service

League on *Sunday, January 12* with sandwiches, bottled water, fruit, and a salty snack. This will be the 14th time we are participating in this vital ministry. Since November 2018, we've been so blessed to have the opportunity to provide approximately 400 of these hearty lunches to the residents of Family Service League in Huntington. Thank you to all the children and adults who have assisted in this ministry, and to all those who have generously donated cash to offset the cost.

Donations of the following are needed on a regular basis: Arnold Brick Oven White Bread, bottled water, snack packs, crackers, and apples, oranges, and bananas. Monetary donations are also welcomed and appreciated. Please consider dedicating a portion of your plate money to this mission. Please see Frank Sansone if you're able to assist or donate.

"Box of Giving"-Please continue to consider donating items for our "Box of Giving" located in the breezeway. All non-perishable items are appreciated, as well as diapers, baby formula and hygiene products. Special thanks to Jane Beller, for bringing these donations to the Huntington Community Food Council on a regular basis.

Thank you

Thanks to the generosity of our congregation, Sukey Walter delivered a dozen gift bags to Madonna Heights on Tuesday December 17th. In addition to making 12 children happy, we also delivered a large Supply of baby wipes making the moms happy as well.

Our **Chili Cook-Off and Line Dancing Party** was a Success because of your generosity, love and support!

Thank you again for all of your unique contributions and for all you do to promote and sustain Sweet Hollow's Mission!

Have a Happy and Safe Holiday Season!

Love,
Mickey Rogers

First Sunday in Advent

Lighting the first Advent candle.



Children's Choir



Santa Claus Visits

The Melville Fire Dept. brought Santa Claus and his helpers for a visit on Saturday December 15.



Christian Education

By Carol Keil

Happy New Year greetings to all!

This winter our Sunday School lessons will be based on Jesus' Lost and Found parables as told in Luke 13:1-8; Luke 15:8-16 and Luke 15:11-32. Please see the signup board located at the back of the Sanctuary each Sunday for opportunities share your time and talents with the children of our congregation. If you have never served as a lesson Leader or Room Shepherd and want to learn more about our Sunday School program you may contact Carol Keil by email at c1keil@aol.com or by phone at 631-219-4558.

Coming up:

On the 2nd Sunday of each month Frank Sansone will continue to lead the children in sandwich making to bag along with water, a fruit snack and chips for Family Service League distribution to the homeless.



Fourth Sunday in Advent



Women For Women

by Maureen Sansone & Sukey Walter

Women for Women (W4W) meets on the first Monday of various months from October through June (subject to change), and is open to all women at Sweet Hollow.

W4W historically has found that attendance is very light during the months of January and February, so we won't meet during those months.

Here are upcoming W4W events:

Monday, March 2 - *Movie Night/Dinner Night*

Monday, April 6 - *Scavenger Hunt*

Monday, May 4 - *Ladies Tea*

All planned activities are subject to cancellation/rescheduling due to inclement weather or other unforeseen circumstances, etc.

We look forward to seeing you at one, a few or all of our events!

Blender Quiche Recipe

By popular request, here's Carol Keil's recipe for the quiche she served at coffee hour on October 27.

Basic recipe fills a 10" pie plate or baking pan of equivalent volume

Preheat oven to 400 degrees

Place the following ingredients in the blender bowl:

4 eggs

2 cups milk

1/2 cup Bisquik baking mix

2 medium onions

1/2 pound cheese (a great way to use up a variety of cheeses, if we have leftover cheese after a party I store it in a zip lock bag in the freezer till I need it for this recipe.)

1/4 tsp nutmeg

pinch of pepper

Blend on high until smooth then pour into the pie plate or baking dish. Add "extras" of your choice: sautéed mushrooms, sautéed zucchini, diced ham, crumbled cooked sausage, diced tomato, etc. I usually place the pie plate on a pizza pan prior to filling it if I am adding ingredients that might cause the pie plate to fill to the rim.

Bake approx. 30 minutes. Let rest 10-15 minutes before serving.

Enjoy!

January 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 10 am Prayer Circle	2 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	3 Rachel Fogel's Birthday	4
5 10:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Worship	6	7	8 10 am Prayer Circle Bill VonBrook's Birthday	9 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	10 Jennifer Engel's Birthday	11
12 10:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Worship	13	14	15 10 am Prayer Circle	16 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal Kivrin Engel's Birthday	17 Timothy Schiffmacher's Birthday	18
19 10:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Worship	20	21	22 10 am Prayer Circle	23 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal Wyatt Wagner's Birthday	24	25
26 10:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Worship	27 7:30 pm Session Meeting	28	29 10 am Prayer Circle	30 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	31 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 2020 Issue
Tuesday, January 21, 2020**

Annual Congregational Meeting will be on Sunday, February 2 (snow date February 9). This later date is to allow more time for the 2019 financial books to be settled. The annual report will be emailed to the congregation before the end of January. Please read it and come to our February meeting to celebrate the past year's work.

Coming up:

On the 2nd Sunday of each month Frank Sansone will continue to lead the children in sandwich making to bag along with water, a fruit snack and chips for Family Service League distribution to the homeless.

Souper Bowl of Caring Food Drive: The month of February

Soles for Souls Shoe Drive: The month of March

Pancake Breakfast: Sunday March 1, 2020

Nursery Help Is Needed

The nursery needs an additional volunteer each week to assist Nursery Supervisor Francine James in caring for our youngest members. We have young children every Sunday, ranging from infants to toddlers.

Please contact the Church Office or Lynn Burke at 516-458-1320 or at lynburke@optonline.net to sign up.