

# The Bell Ringer

## Of the Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow

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

**MAY 2019**



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### Pastoral Column

by Pastor Meg Flannagan

The disciples shouted earnest Hosannas on Palm Sunday, but they quickly abandoned Jesus in the following days. We, too, waved palms, shouted “Hosanna!” and celebrated Christ’s rising on Easter Sunday. But what shall we do now?

As warmer weather and summer activities tempt folks away from church, plan ways to nurture your faith throughout the coming weeks. Spend time in prayer when early sunlight wakes you. Talk to a friend about a faith question or prayer while you are riding in the car together. Help a neighbor with outdoor chores. Add a spiritual book to your reading list. Revisit old favorites by C.S. Lewis, Kathleen Norris, and Henri Nouwen, or, try a contemporary classic. I highly recommend these titles (available in our Public Library) or other books by these authors:

Barbara Brown Taylor – Learning to Walk in the Dark. God is as present in the dark as in the light. This is an exploration of spirituality when (or because) life is not always bright and sunny.

Gregory Boyle – Tattoos on the Heart: The power of Boundless Compassion. Father Boyle’s collection of true and profound stories about his ministry to inner-city L.A. gangs. Each chapter is brief, easy to read, and resounds with simple truths.

Tod Bolsinger – Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory. About today’s changing church demographics, this book is on every pastor’s and Presbytery COM’s list.

Robin DiAngelo – White Fragility: Why It’s So Hard for White People to Talk about Racism. Although not explicitly spiritual, this is a must-have reflection and conversation for Christians. It is on every pastor’s book list.

Richard Rohr – Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life. This is a beautiful and thought-provoking book for everyone as we age.

Stay connected to Jesus wherever life takes you. Walk with Jesus beyond the Easter glory. Then tell us how Christ’s new resurrected life is made manifest in your own life.

See you in church!

## Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow

(631) 367 - 9249

www.sweethollowpresby.org

Rev. Mary Margaret Flannagan, Pastor

Rachel Fogel, Choir Director

Barbara Zimmerman, 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

Sukey Walter

Christian Education

Carol Keil

Fellowship & Outreach & Mission

Laura Fallon & Maureen Sansone

House & Property

Bill Von Brook

Personnel

Frank Sansone

Prayer Circle

Carol Keil

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Sukey Walter

Budget & Stewardship

Jim Sommermeyer

Women For Women

Maureen Sansone & Sukey Walter

Worship

Joan Sommermeyer

Youth Group

Pastor Meg Flannagan

Church Historian

Bill Walter

Bell Ringer Editor

Bill Chamberlain

## Prayer Corner

by Carol Keil

“Love one another, just as I have loved you,” John 13:34, is the theme for The National Day of Prayer 2019 celebrated this year on Thursday May 2.

We lift up:

- Prayers of healing and support for the Schiffmacher family as Carol undergoes diagnostic testing and evaluation for the treatment of uterine cancer.
- Healing prayers for Otto Keil as he undergoes TAVR valve replacement on May 2.
- Healing prayers for Bill Chamberlain as he undergoes therapy to improve his mobility issues.
- Prayers of gratitude for all who gathered to participate in Outdoor Cleanup Day on Saturday, April 6.
- Prayers for our members who are homebound and unable to join in worship at Sweet Hollow each week.
- Prayers of congratulations and hopes for their future endeavors to all graduating this month from colleges and universities.
- Prayers of thanksgiving for the “Children’s Choir” directed by Pastor Meg who so enriched our Easter Worship Service.

## WANTED: New Clerk of Session

Our current clerk, Lynn Burke, will complete her service this year. Another volunteer is needed to train and transition now so that they can confidently begin work next February. A Clerk of Session must be an Elder (currently serving or past) available to attend all Session and congregational meetings. A great Clerk is organized and competent in basic computer programming: word processing, email, etc. According to the *Book of Order* (the Presbyterian constitution) the Clerk is the secretary for both the Session and congregation; the Clerk records transactions, maintains attendance and the rolls, preserves the records, and serves as the official contact for other councils of the church (Presbytery, other congregations’ committees, etc.).

Prayerfully consider if God is calling you to serve in this capacity. If you have any questions, please contact me or our current Clerk of Session, Lynn Burke.

## **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**

When we honor the Lord with all that we have, we have faith that he will provide all that we truly need. The total of our campaign is 41 pledges for a total of \$89,665. Praise the Lord! The end of the first quarter of the year is a good time to assess our finances. This year our overall donations are \$23,058.60. Some of our members are behind in their donations. If you have not yet done so, please bring your pledged donations up to date as soon as possible.

### **Estate / Legacy Planning**

A key to creating a sustainable church is to consider Sweet Hollow in your estate / legacy planning. Rich Burke has graciously offered his assistance with planning. We are extremely grateful for those who have done so already! We received a substantial gift recently and our committee is discerning the appropriate use for this gift to sustain Sweet Hollow.

### **Current Financial Status - End of March**

We have income of \$45,891.83 and expenses of \$51,651.53 for a YTD total of (negative) \$5,759.70. Our largest expenses are quarterly and we had to make a withdrawal of \$5,000 from savings. We have received \$1,371.82 towards our *Per Capita* responsibility. Our affiliation with the Presbytery helped us recently when the Session decided not to renew our contract with the Board of Elections. The amount they were willing to pay for the use of our facilities was insufficient for the amount of wear and tear incurred by the events. They threatened to force us to hold elections and we referred the matter to the Presbytery. They intervened on our behalf, without cost.

### **Facility Improvements**

Session has decided to move forward with replacing heating and A/C in the Little House (Parlor, Office, Nursery, Youth Group Room). This will eliminate the risk of our over 50-year-old boiler system failing us next winter. We will also be expanding our WiFi connectivity to the CEB and installing a video doorbell system to increase security for our Daycare friends.

### **Facility news**

Our Gathering of Light friends will now be staying with us through May. Please keep in mind when planning your family events that one of the benefits of membership is the ability to utilize PCSH space at a deep discount.

### **Discipleship/Membership**

We are grateful to our new members and their families as they commit to joining with us on their Faith Journey! We delighted in welcoming new visitors, dear friends and many children on Palm Sunday; it was a moment of pure joy! 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)

# Palm Sunday



## Christian Education

by Carol Keil

The Sunday school classes for the month of May will focus on stories related to the days following Jesus' resurrection as Jesus made himself known to those who thought him to be dead. We begin with *On the Road to Emmaus* from Luke 24:13-35.

We welcome Kristen Conroy as she serves in our nursery beginning May 12. Kristen, daughter of Jill and Ed Conroy, is an education major at SUNY Oneonta. She'll be entering her Junior year this Fall.

## Easter Egg Hunt



# Plant Sale Fundraiser & Fellowship

**Sunday, May 19**

**Noon — 4pm**

Otto Keil Florist

30 E Gate Dr, Huntington

Benefitting the Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow

**Come one, come all! Not just for gardeners!**

Planter Raffle, Free snacks, Fun!

**Explore greenhouses and aisles of plants from the usual to the exotic.**



**2019 Sunday School Plant Sale Takes on a New Look!**  
**It is a Plant Sale Social....fellowship, fun, food and more.**  
**Sunday, May 19 from noon to 4:00 pm**

Wander through isles of plants and meander through the greenhouses of Otto Keil Florist while sipping on sangria or soda and munching on snacks; fellowship with Sweet Hollow family and friends; shop for your upcoming spring planting – it is the newly “renovated” Sunday School Plant Sale.

For over two decades, Otto Keil Florist opened its greenhouses to Sweet Hollow family and friends for a one-day shopping event for the spring planting season. This year, the Sweet Hollow Fundraising Team, in collaboration with the Keil family, expanded the traditional Sunday School plant sale into a fellowship/social experience. Attendees will still have the ability to explore the vast variety of hanging baskets, exotic tropical plants, vegetable and garden plants from the typical to the unusual, cacti, succulents, and much, much more. Along with your Sweet Hollow friends and family, enjoy snacks, beverages and have some fun scavenger hunting for biblical plants while you shop for your spring gardening needs. We encourage you to invite friends, neighbors and family to the 2019 Sunday School Plant Sale and Soirée... food, fellowship, fun, and a lot more, including raffles! We hope to see you there! All proceeds of sales on that day go directly to support the mission and work of the Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow.

Do not miss out on the fun and spring plant shopping! No gardening experience necessary; there is something for everyone. Join your Sweet Hollow family and friends at Otto Keil Florist, 30 E. Gate Drive, Huntington, on Sunday, May 19, from noon to 4:00 pm for our biggest and best Sunday School Plant Sale ever. It's going to be a grand event! If you have a question or need additional information, please contact Joan Sommermeyer at 516-857-0556.

**From the *Christian Century*:**

The largest 10% of American congregations contain half of all those who attend worship; that is, half of worshippers go to the top 10% of churches (by attendance). The other half of worshippers attend the remaining 90% of churches.

The average American congregation has 70 regular participants (adults and children) with an average budget of \$85,000. (Note that Sweet Hollow has maintained a budget of approximately \$200,000 for many years.) – “Century Marks” in March 27, 2019 *Christian Century*.

## Mission Team News

By Maureen Sansone

*“Do your little bit of good where you are; it’s those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world.”- Desmond Tutu*

These are the ways in which Sweet Hollow has shared or will share our gifts with others, transforming the lives of those in need:

**Donations Needed For Displaced Melville Avalon Fire Families**-Approximately 40 residents lost their homes in the Avalon Court Melville fire on Saturday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>. The American Red Cross has been assisting these families by providing food, comfort and aid. If you’d like to donate, go to [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org); call them at 1-800-HELP NOW (1-800-435-7669) to make a credit card payment; or mail your check, payable to American Red Cross, to our local chapter at 195 Willis Avenue, Mineola, NY 11501. Please put in the memo section “Melville Avalon Fire.” Thank you for helping those in your community.

**PB & J Sandwiches For Family Service League**-On Sunday, May 12, our Sunday School continues with this vibrant mission activity, held on the second Sunday of each month. Donations for supplies are welcomed. One additional parent volunteer is needed to supervise and assist.

**Spring Clothing Drive**-We’re collecting new and clean, gently used clothing and linens through Sunday, May 26, at which time the donations will be blessed before giving the them to the United Veterans Beacon House right after Memorial Day. Please do a spring cleaning of your closets and help others at the same time.

**“Box of Giving”** -Please continue 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 generous donations to the Huntington Community Food Council on a regular basis and for her unwavering dedication to this mission.

**Thank you all for your generosity of spirit!**

## California Pizza Kitchen FUNdraiser

by Maureen Sansone and Mickey Rogers

Sweet Hollow’s FUNdraiser at California Pizza Kitchen — “Pizza with A Purpose” — was held all day on Sunday, March 31.

Much gratitude to all our church members and their friends and families who participated. A total of \$142.92 was raised.

We’d like to thank California Pizza Kitchen for donating 20% of each customer’s check to our church.

We look forward to partnering with this restaurant again in the future.

## Women for Women (W4W)

By Maureen Sansone and Sukey Walter

Women for Women (W4W), which is open to all women over the age of 18 at Sweet Hollow, provides an opportunity to gather together in fun, meaningful Christian fellowship. Events are held primarily on the first Monday of each month, from October through June.

On Monday, April 1, W4W held its **Scavenger Hunt** at Walt Whitman Mall. An awesome time was had by all, as we made our way through the clues, with the evening culminating in a delicious dinner.

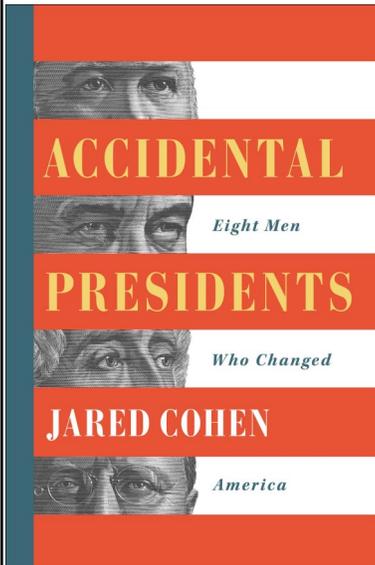
Our last event of our season will be held on **Monday, June 3-The Ladies High Tea**, hosted by Marcy Gordon at her home. If you're interested in attending, please let Maureen Sansone, Sukey Walter or Marcy Gordon know.

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!

## Book Discussion

by Sukey Walter



We have decided to have our next meeting on September 19.

The book to read over the summer is [The Accidental Presidents: Eight Men Who Changed America](#) by Jared Cohen.

Following is an excerpt from "About the Book" on the Simon & Schuster (the publisher's) website:

"The strength and prestige of the American presidency has waxed and waned since George Washington. *Accidental Presidents* looks at eight men who came to the office without being elected to it. It demonstrates how the character of the man in that powerful seat affects the nation and world.

Eight men have succeeded to the presidency when the incumbent died in office. In one way or another they vastly changed our history. Only Theodore Roosevelt would have been elected in his own right. Only TR, Truman, Coolidge, and LBJ were re-elected."

# May

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
<p><b>5</b> 10 am Worship with Abington PC Youth Choir</p>	<p><b>6</b> Thora Engel's Birthday</p>	<p><b>7</b> 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal Jimmy Reiser's Birthday</p>	<p><b>8</b> 10 am Prayer Circle</p>	<p><b>9</b> Elliott Laver's Birthday</p>	<p><b>10</b> Rev. Meg Flannagan &amp; Rev. Adam Fischer's Anniversary</p>	<p><b>11</b> 7:30 pm Abington PC Youth Choir Concert at Old First Presbyterian Melissa &amp; Anthony D'Angelo's Anniversary</p>
<p><b>12</b> 10 am Worship</p>	<p><b>13</b></p>	<p><b>14</b> 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p><b>15</b> 10 am Prayer Circle Nate Miller's Birthday</p>	<p><b>16</b> Barbara &amp; Ross Martin's Anniversary</p>	<p><b>17</b></p>	<p><b>18</b></p>
<p><b>19</b> 10 am Worship 12-4 pm Sunday School Plant Sale at Otto Keil Florist's Maureen &amp; Frank Sansone's Anniversary</p>	<p><b>20</b> 7:30 pm Church Officers' Meeting Ambryel Moder's Birthday</p>	<p><b>21</b> 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p><b>22</b> 10 am Prayer Circle</p>	<p><b>23</b></p>	<p><b>24</b></p>	<p><b>25</b> Leroy Mowat's Birthday</p>
<p><b>26</b> 10 am Worship</p>	<p><b>27</b> Memorial Day – Office Closed</p>	<p><b>28</b> 12 pm Project Regeneration 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p><b>29</b> 10 am Prayer Circle Ellie Schiffmacher's Birthday</p>	<p><b>30</b> Carol Keil's and Kevin Manning's Birthdays</p>	<p><b>31</b></p>	

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
OF SWEET HOLLOW**

*95 Old Country Road  
Melville, NY 11747*

**Phone: 631-367-9249**



*We're on the Web!*

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

**BELL RINGER DEADLINE  
for June Issue  
May 27**

**Abington Presbyterian Church Youth Choirs to Visit May 3-5**

Sweet Hollow is delighted to host the Abington Presbyterian Church (metro Philly) youth choirs over the weekend of May 3-5. They will stay two overnights in our church.

Old First Presbyterian Church will co-host a Saturday evening, May 4, concert at 7:30 pm. Please mark your calendars for this FREE evening concert.

Their Chapel Choir and Festive Ringers will also sing in Sweet Hollow's worship service on Sunday, May 5.

**Volunteer Help Needed**

Volunteers are needed to welcome the Abington Presbyterian Church Youth Choirs, do pre-arrival grocery shopping (reimbursed by their congregation), and help with a brunch coffee hour on Sunday morning.

Please let Pastor Meg know if you can help.

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