



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.

March 2026



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From the Pastor's Nook:

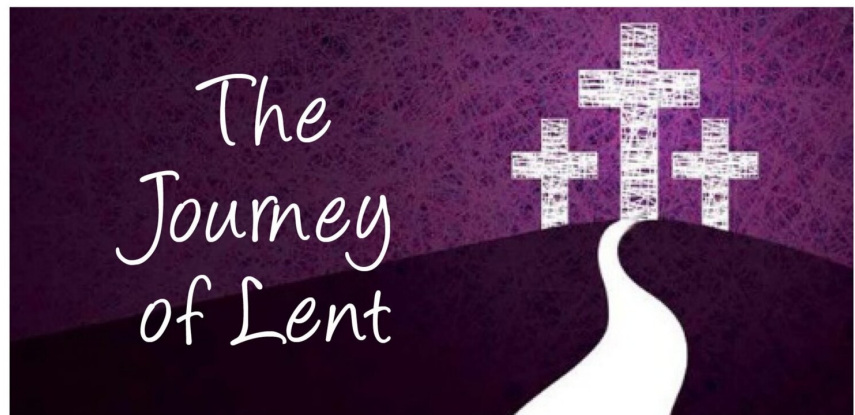
Lent and the Life Cycle of a Church

Lent is a season for telling the truth.

We tell the truth about our mortality: "Remember that you are dust." We tell the truth about repentance, change, and the ways we fall short. And we tell the truth because we believe in resurrection.

One truth facing the Church in the 21st century is this: congregations have life cycles. Across our country, churches are closing. Faithful communities that once flourished are discerning that their season has come to an end. This is not a failure of God. It is the reality that institutions, like people, live within seasons.

We would be naïve to think we are immune to those patterns. Not long ago, we found ourselves asking hard questions about our own sustainability and future. We stood closer to the edge than many realized. Those conversations were not easy—but they were holy. Naming reality is an act of faith.



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From the Pastor's Nook: continued...

Something shifted when we moved from anxiety to discernment. Instead of asking only, "How do we survive?" we began asking, "How is God calling us to grow?"

Lent teaches us that before resurrection comes surrender. Before Easter morning comes Good Friday. Jesus does not avoid the cross; he walks through it. In the same way, churches sometimes pass through seasons where old assumptions must die so that deeper faith can emerge.

Growth in our time may not look like it did decades ago. It may not mean larger crowds or busier calendars. Growth may look like deeper spiritual formation, stronger relationships, clearer mission, and more courageous outreach. It may mean focusing less on preserving the past and more on embodying Christ in this moment.

Hope is not denial. It does not ignore statistics or challenges. Hope trusts that the Spirit of God is still at work.

Lent invites us to reflect as a community: What must we release? What is God nurturing among us? Where do we see signs of life?

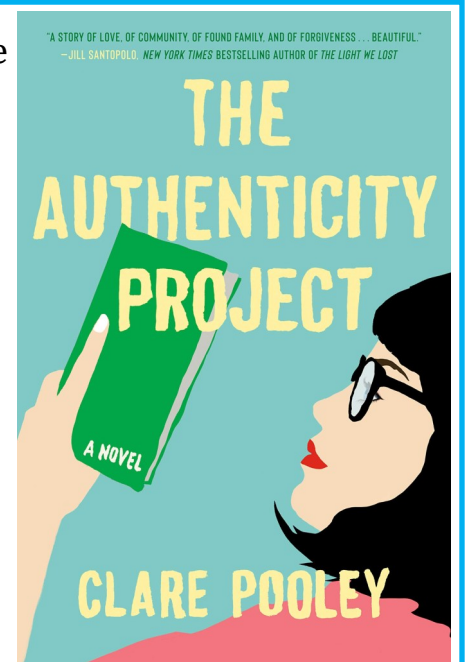
The cross is not the end of the story. It is the doorway to new life.

We are not defined by how close we once came to decline. We are defined by the One who brings life out of tombs. And as we walk through this Lenten season together, we do so with humility, courage, and confidence that resurrection is always possible.



Building Relationships

Book Club: The Authenticity Project written by Clare Pooley takes place in modern day England. The main character is an eccentric artist who purposely leaves his journal on a table in a cafe with the hope that a stranger will pick it up and include an entry of his or her own, then pass it on all with anonymity. The lives of these secret journalists become intertwined. Meaningful friendships are forged forming an unexpected social connection. Interested? I will again try to have a few hard copies on hand after this coming church service, March 1st and will provide a reading schedule to follow during the month. Please send me an email or text if you will be participating. I look forward to hearing from you!
 Laura Fallon 631-838-8490 or llfallon12@gmail.com



Let's Eat Out!

Sharing a Meal, Sharing Fellowship

One of the simplest and most meaningful ways we can grow in community is by gathering around a table. In the Gospels, so many of Jesus' conversations, teachings, and moments of welcome happened during shared meals. There is something sacred about breaking bread together—listening, laughing, and catching up on one another's lives beyond the pews on Sunday morning.

We would like to begin planning occasional informal outings where parishioners can meet at a local restaurant for good food and even better fellowship. These gatherings will be relaxed, come-as-you-are opportunities to deepen relationships, welcome new friends, and enjoy time together as the body of Christ in a different setting. No agenda, no program—just conversation, connection, and community.

To make this truly a shared effort, we would love your input! Do you have a favorite local restaurant that is reasonably priced, accessible, and conducive to conversation? Please share your suggestions with Laura Fallon at 631-838-8490 (call/text) or by email llfallon12@gmail.com. We hope these meals will reflect the warmth and hospitality of our congregation as we continue to nurture friendships and strengthen our life together in faith.

FAITH FORMATION

RESCHEDULED

DON'T MISS FAITH & FILM NIGHT.



WHAT DOES THE MOVIE **STRANGER THAN FICTION** HAVE TO DO WITH FAITH IN FILM? COME AND SEE HOW GOD CAN SPEAK, EVEN THROUGH HOLLYWOOD. FUN MOVIE; YUMMY SNACKS; GOOD CONVERSATION.

FILM: **STRANGER THAN FICTION**

WHERE: **PCSH CEB HALL**

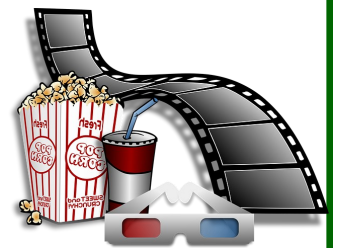
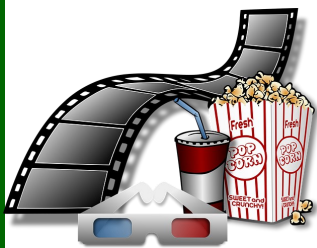
WHEN: **MARCH 7TH**

6:00 PM

WHO: **COME ONE, COME ALL!**

*****BE ADVISED THIS MOVIE IS RATED PG-13.*****

*****CONSIDER THIS IF BRINGING CHILDREN.*****



WORSHIP NOTES

Maundy Thursday in the Parlor

April 2nd is Maundy Thursday. On that day, we will gather at 7 PM for worship in the parlor of the church for a quieter, more intimate time together. This sacred evening invites us to step away from the busyness of Holy Week and enter the tender moments Jesus shared with his closest friends on the night before his arrest, trial, and crucifixion.

Seated close together, we will share in light refreshments as a reminder of the final meal Jesus ate with his disciples. Around the table, we will celebrate the Sacrament of Communion, remembering his words: “Do this in remembrance of me.” In that simple and profound act, we are drawn once again into the mystery of Christ’s love poured out for the world.

As part of our worship, we will also experience the washing of hands. This act recalls Jesus kneeling to wash the disciples’ feet—an enduring sign of humility, service, and self-giving love. In receiving and offering this gesture, we are reminded that we are called not only to remember Christ’s love, but to embody it.

Maundy Thursday is a deeply meaningful service—quiet, reflective, and rich with symbolism. We hope you will join us in the parlor as we gather at the table, serve one another in love, and prepare our hearts for the solemn and hope-filled days to come.



WORSHIP NOTES

Easter Worship

10:00 AM

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

We invite you, your family, your neighbors, and your friends to join us for Easter worship this year at **10:00 AM** as we gather to celebrate the joy and hope of the resurrection.



Easter is the heart of our faith—the day we proclaim that love is stronger than death, light shines in the darkness, and God is always making all things new. In a world that can feel uncertain and weary, Easter reminds us that hope is not wishful thinking; it is the living promise of the risen Christ.

Our worship will include the celebration of **Communion for all people**. At this table, there are no strangers. Whether you are a longtime member, a first-time visitor, or someone who has been away from church for a while, you are welcome. This is Christ's table, and all are invited to receive the bread of life and the cup of grace.

We are also excited to offer a special **"Drop-In Choir"** for Easter morning. If you enjoy singing—even if you haven't sung in a choir for years—you are invited to come a little early and learn a beautiful piece of music together that morning. No long-term commitment, no auditions—just a joyful opportunity to lift your voice in celebration. Music has a way of carrying the good news straight to the heart, and Easter is the perfect day to sing boldly.

Easter is more than a date on the calendar. It is an invitation—to renewal, to community, to faith, to joy. It is a chance to gather in worship and remember who we are and whose we are.

Mark your calendar for **10:00 AM** and come ready to celebrate. Bring someone with you. Come hungry for hope. Come ready to sing. Come ready to hear again the good news that changes everything:

Christ is risen indeed!

WORSHIP NOTES

LITURGY

Liturgist on Sunday...Think about it.

Joan Sommermeyer, Worship Chairperson

Serving as a liturgist at Sunday worship is more than reading words from a page — it is a meaningful act of leadership, hospitality, and spiritual service. It is connected to the Presbyterian Church (USA) as worship is rooted in shared participation. The liturgist plays a vital role in making that participation come alive.

1. You Help Lead Worship — Not Just Attend It

Presbyterian worship is grounded in the belief that all believers are called to ministry. While pastors preach and administer the sacraments, liturgists help guide the congregation through Scripture readings, prayers, and responsive liturgy. When you serve as a liturgist, you are not performing — you are leading our church family in encountering God's Word together.

Your voice may be the one that proclaims the Old or New Testament lesson. You may lead the Call to Worship or guide the congregation in prayer. That leadership is powerful. It invites others into reverence, reflection, and response.

2. You Deepen Your Own Faith

Preparing to serve as a liturgist encourages you to spend time with Scripture in a focused and prayerful way. Reading the text aloud requires understanding its meaning, tone, and context. For me, serving as a liturgist allows me to explore Scripture in a deeper way in preparation to proclaim it.

When you speak sacred words aloud, they shape you. You grow more comfortable praying publicly. You gain confidence in expressing your faith. You may find that the Scripture resonates deeply finding profound and personal meaning in its message.

3. You Model Shared Ministry

Presbyterian churches value shared leadership. Serving as a liturgist demonstrates that worship is not the work of one person at the pulpit, but of the whole body of Christ. When members see fellow congregants — people like them — helping to lead worship, it reinforces the belief that everyone has gifts to offer. This shared ministry strengthens community. It shows children, youth, and newcomers that they too are welcome and can participate. It reflects the Presbyterian conviction that God calls ordinary people to extraordinary service.

Continued on next page...

WORSHIP NOTES



4. You Build Confidence and Communication Skills

Public reading builds clarity, poise, and presence. Serving as a liturgist helps you grow comfortable speaking in front of others in a supportive and encouraging environment. These skills extend beyond Sunday morning — into workplaces, volunteer roles, and everyday conversations. And you are never alone. When needed, Pastor Wade can provide guidance and encouragement, especially with those pesky Greek names! YouTube is another resource on the pronunciation of those difficult Bible names.

5. You Strengthen the Worship Experience for Everyone

The liturgist is a gift to the entire church. Each voice brings something unique — warmth, gravity, joy, tenderness. That diversity of voices reflects the richness of the body of Christ.

6. It’s a Simple but Powerful Way to Serve

Not everyone can commit to weekly committees or long-term leadership roles. Serving as a liturgist is periodic and flexible. Scheduling is in advance and typically covering several months. Fellow liturgists will cover a Sunday if you are unable to make your assigned date.

You do not need theological training, You simply need willingness.

In the Presbyterian church, worship belongs to the people. When you agree to be a liturgist, you step into a tradition that values Scripture, shared leadership, and faithful participation. You say, “Here I am. Use my voice.” In doing so, you help our congregation hear God’s Word in a fresh and living way. If you want to give it a try, its as easy as letting Pastor wade know of your willingness to serve.



March

- 1 - Sheri
- 8 - Laura
- 15 - Laura
- 22 - Sisi
- 29 - Niaja



- 22 - Smorgasbord
- 29 - Palm Sunday



March

- 1 - Jessica
- 8 - Jean
- 15 - Laura
- 22 - Sisi
- 29 - Jessica

Stewardship & Giving

Stewardship in Every Season:

As we move through the year together, I want to take a moment to speak about something both practical and deeply spiritual: stewardship.

In the church, stewardship is about far more than dollars and cents. It is about trust.

It is about gratitude. It is about recognizing that all we have comes from God—and choosing to return a portion in love to support Christ's work through this congregation.

At the same time, stewardship is also very real and very concrete.

Our church depends on your consistent giving. The lights must stay on. The heat must run—especially during Long Island winters. Insurance premiums, staff salaries, mission commitments, utilities, building maintenance, and denominational support do not pause when attendance dips or when weather keeps us home. The bills continue to arrive with dependable regularity.

This winter, as we have navigated snow, ice, and storm warnings, we have felt the financial impact of weather-related cancellations and lower in-person attendance. When worship is disrupted, so too is the offering plate. And yet our expenses remain steady—and in many cases, rising. Energy costs have increased. Insurance has increased. Routine maintenance costs more than it did just a year ago.

As you are aware, the reserves of the church are depleted and until the land sale is completed, the church is completely dependent on your giving to maintain normal operations.

In other words, the church runs on faithfulness. It runs on the steady, prayerful generosity of its members and friends. It runs on people who understand that giving is not just about showing up on Sunday—it is about sustaining ministry in every season.

Your giving supports:

- ◆ Worship that nourishes faith
- ◆ Pastoral care in times of crisis
- ◆ Seniors and 12 step groups that gather in our building
- ◆ Outreach and mission beyond our walls
- ◆ The maintenance of a sacred space where our community gathers

When you give regularly—whether weekly, monthly, or through electronic giving—you provide stability. You allow the Session and leadership to plan responsibly. You help ensure that even when storms come (literal or figurative), the church remains strong.

Continued on the next page...



Stewardship & Giving

If you have fallen behind on a pledge, we invite you to prayerfully consider catching up as you are able. If you have not yet made a commitment this year, it is never too late. If you are able to increase your giving in light of rising costs, that generosity makes a real difference.

Stewardship is not about pressure. It is about participation.

It is about saying: This place matters. This ministry matters. What God is doing here matters.

Thank you for your faithfulness. Thank you for your generosity. And thank you for sustaining Christ's ministry through this congregation—not just when the weather is clear and the sanctuary is full, but in every season of the year.

With gratitude,
Pastor Wade

Why pay the Per Capita early in 2026?

Sweet Hollow is required to pay the **\$42.51** for **every member** on our rolls. Please consider paying your family's Per Capita dues. 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.



Thank you for helping us meet OUR church's obligation!

Please remember each member should pay a Per Capita Apportionment of \$42.51 this year. Therefore, 3 family members would pay \$127.53.

What is Per Capita?



Per capita in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (PCUSA) is the annual amount of money each congregation is asked to contribute per member to support the shared work of the wider church (presbytery, synod, and General Assembly).

It helps fund things like governance, training, mission coordination, and resources that serve all congregations. Per capita is based on membership numbers, so larger congregations pay more in total, but the amount is the same "per person" across the denomination.

www.sweethollowpresby.org

Venmo: @PCSHsecretary95

Check/cash to PCSH at

95 Old Country Road, Melville, NY 11747

****Type/Write "per capita" on the memo/description line**

**Pay your
Per Capita
Here**

Stewardship & Giving

Property Sale



- ⇒ **We know it has been a while since we have provided a written update. We are in the very last stages of this long process. We have received and signed Suffolk County's contract for the purchase of the designated property.**
- ⇒ **The next step in the process is that this transaction must be approved by the state supreme court. This is required by state law when selling any church property. Once completed we will be able to schedule a closing date.**
- ⇒ **Our hope is that this will be completed by Easter!**

Thank you all for your continued support, generosity and care.

MISSION and MORE

One Great Hour of Sharing

Around the world, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity. A meaningful, impactful way to share God's love with our neighbors in need is by donating to "One Great Hour of Sharing" (OGHS). Typically received during the season of Lent (February 18, 2026 through April 5, 2026), each gift to "One Great Hour of Sharing" (OGHS) supports efforts to relieve hunger and poverty, to promote development, and to assist in areas of disaster, all which help to improve the lives of individuals and communities in these challenging situations. Through your generosity, you'll be providing our sisters & brothers in need with safety, sustenance, hope and dignity.

Special Offering envelopes for "One Great Hour of Sharing" (OGHS) will be made available in the pews and on the back sanctuary table during this Lenten season-February 18th through April 5th.

Thanks to the heartfelt gifts given by so many, "One Great Hour of Sharing" (OGHS) currently supports projects in over 100 countries.

If We All Do A Little, It Adds Up To A Lot!



Our community is living through a time of unprecedented food insecurity, and the needs of our neighbors continue to grow. Local families are facing rising grocery costs, reduced work hours, and difficult choices between paying for housing, utilities, and food. As a congregation committed to loving our neighbors in practical ways, we have an opportunity to respond with compassion and generosity.

The Huntington Food Pantry has shared a specific and urgent request: diapers and diaper wipes. These essential items are not covered by most assistance programs, yet they are vital for the health, dignity, and well-being of infants and toddlers. When families cannot afford diapers, they often stretch supplies dangerously or divert limited funds away from food.

We invite you to prayerfully consider donating packages of diapers (all sizes are helpful) and diaper wipes, in addition to food, in the coming weeks. Your gifts will directly support local parents and caregivers who are striving to provide for their children during challenging times.

Together, through faithful giving and loving action, we can help ensure that no family in our community feels forgotten or alone.

Prayer Corner

Walking the Lenten Path



As we journey through Lent, the lectionary guides us step by step into deeper trust, repentance, illumination, and hope. Each week's Scriptures invite us to slow down, listen, and allow God to shape our hearts for the mystery of Holy Week and the promise of resurrection.

Second Sunday in Lent

In Genesis we hear God's call to Abram: "Go from your country...to the land that I will show you." Lent begins with a call to leave what is familiar and walk by faith. The psalmist reminds us that our help comes from the Lord, while Paul in Romans speaks of faith credited as righteousness. In the Gospel of John (or Matthew), Nicodemus comes to Jesus in the night, learning that new birth comes from above. We begin Lent acknowledging that faith is a journey into the unknown, sustained by God's promise.

Third Sunday in Lent

The people in Exodus thirst in the wilderness and question God's presence. How often do we do the same? Yet God provides water from the rock. Paul again writes of hope that does not disappoint, and the Samaritan woman encounters living water that quenches every thirst. Lent asks us to bring our doubts honestly before God and trust that Christ meets us at the well.

Fourth Sunday in Lent

In First Samuel, God chooses David not by outward appearance but by the heart. The letter to the Ephesians calls us to live as children of light, and the man born blind in John chapter nine receives both sight and faith. This week reminds us that God sees beyond what the world sees, illuminating our lives with grace.

Prayer Corner

Fifth Sunday in Lent

Through the prophet Ezekiel, God breathes life into dry bones—a powerful image of resurrection hope. Paul contrasts life in the flesh with life in the Spirit, and Jesus raises Lazarus, declaring himself the resurrection and the life. Even in seasons that feel barren, God’s Spirit is at work, bringing renewal where we see only endings.

Palm Sunday

As the beginning of Holy Week, Palm Sunday invites us to move from shouts of “Hosanna!” to the humility of Christ’s suffering. The Servant Song in Isaiah and the hymn in Philipians call us to the mind of Christ—self-giving love poured out for the world.

Holy Week

The readings from Hebrews and 1 Corinthians reflect on Christ as our true high priest and the cross as the wisdom and power of God. Holy Week invites us into stillness, reverence, and awe at the mystery of redemption unfolding.

Throughout Lent, we are pilgrims—called, tested, enlightened, and ultimately led to the cross and empty tomb. May these Scriptures draw us closer to Christ, deepen our trust, and renew our hope as we await the joy of Easter morning.



Closing Prayer

Gracious God,

You call us to walk by faith, to drink deeply of living water, and to see by the light of Christ. In this Lenten season, breathe new life into our dry places, strengthen us in times of doubt, and shape us into servants who reflect your love. As we follow Jesus from the mountaintop to the cross, keep our eyes fixed on your promise of resurrection. Renew our hearts, guide our steps, and prepare us to rejoice in the victory of Easter.

Through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Special Days



March 2026

- 4... Emily Moder
- 4... Joan Sommermeyer
- 4... Hillary Zucker
- 4... Jessica Pond
- 5... Allison Paalz
- 8... Frank Sansone
- 8... Monica Van Houten
- 19... Carol Kirchoff
- 22... Denise Moder



- 1... Peanut Butter Lover's Day
- 2... Old Stuff Day
- 3... I want you to be happy day
- 4... Pancake/Paczki/Fastnacht/Fat Tuesday
- 5... Cheese Doodle Day
- 6... Hospitalist Day
- 7... Employee Appreciation Day
- 8... Proofreading Day
- 9... Daylight Savings Day
- 10... Napping Day
- 11... Johnny Appleseed Day
- 12... Working Moms Day
- 13... Good Samaritan Day
- 14... PI Day
- 15... Quilting Day
- 16... Panda Day
- 17... St. Patrick's Day
- 18... Awkward Moments Day
- 19... Let's Laugh Day
- 20... Proposal Day
- 21... Single Parent Day
- 22... Goof Off Day
- 23... Puppy Day
- 24... Cheesesteak Day
- 25... Tolkien Reading Day
- 26... Spinach Day
- 27... Scribble Day
- 28... Something On A Stick Day
- 29... Vietnam War Veterans Day
- 30... Take A Walk In The Park Day
- 31... Prom Day



Website/Social Media



Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow

(631)367-9249

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: Melissa D'Angelo

Niaja Mowatt

Maureen Sansone

Joan Sommermyer

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 virtual Mar 16.

Any member of the church is welcome to attend.

Ask Pastor Wade for details.

Find our website and social media links!

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: Would you like a paper copy of the Bell Ringer not digital?

please call the office at (631)367-9249 or

e-mail the office: pcshsecretary@hotmail.com or

e-mail Pastor Wade: revwadepond@outlook.com.

APR Bell Ringer Submissions: Due by MAR 25

Email to Jessica Pond: 8kidscallmemom@gmail.com