

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.

April 2025



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From the Pastor's Nook:

The Transformative Power of Easter

As spring breathes new life into the world around us, we find ourselves once again at the threshold of Easter—a time of resurrection, renewal, and boundless grace. At our church, where faith and justice walk hand in hand, Easter is more than just a celebration of Christ's victory over death. It is a profound reminder of hope, love, and transformation—both for ourselves and for the world we seek to heal.

The Easter story speaks to the heart of our faith. Jesus' resurrection is not merely an event to be remembered but a call to action. It reminds us that love is stronger than fear, justice outlasts oppression, and new beginnings are always possible. In a world that so often feels weighed down by division, inequality, and suffering, Easter invites us to be co-creators of a more just and compassionate future.

Resurrection is not just about what happened in a tomb two thousand years ago—it is about what happens in our hearts and communities today. It is about the courage to stand for what is right, the faith to believe that change is possible, and the commitment to live out God's love in tangible ways.

As we gather to celebrate Easter, let us do so with open hearts, ready to be transformed and to bring transformation to others. Let us embody Christ's message of radical love, welcoming all, and working together to build a world that reflects the Kin-dom of God—one where peace, justice, and grace abound.

This Easter, may we find resurrection not just in an ancient story but in our own lives, our church, and the world around us. Christ is risen—let us rise, too, in love and purpose!

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Join Our Welcoming Ministry:

Be the Smile That Makes a Difference at Sweet Hollow!



Are you looking for a way to make a meaningful impact in our church family? Our new Welcoming Ministry is calling on warm hearts and friendly faces to help us create a space where everyone feels at home. Whether it's offering a kind smile, guiding a newcomer, or simply being a source of encouragement, you can play a vital role in spreading God's love.

No special skills are needed—just a love for connecting with others and a spirit of hospitality. Together, we can make every person who walks through our doors feel like family. Ready to make a difference? Reach out to Pastor Wade to learn how you can get involved!

Let's make our church a beacon of warmth and acceptance, one greeting at a time.



FAITH FORMATION

By Pastor Wade Pond

Faith Formation

During this Lenten season, the church provided two different Lenten opportunities to connect closer to God. There are daily devotions provided through The Presbyterian Outlook entitled “Grieving Change and Loss.” It is a thoughtful reflection on the different stages of grief that happen in the lives of the various writers and may connect with our own experiences. It is a great exercise in connecting our minds and our hearts to God.

A second resource that was provided is entitled “A Gentle Lent” by Reverend Ann Russ. This resource is different in that it provides some unique actions that we can take upon ourselves during the Lenten season. A summary of those items include:

1. Say only Kind Things to You
2. Treat Yourself as you treat Others
3. Stop Comparing
4. Laugh at Yourself
5. Take a Compliment
6. Say No
7. Don't Start Your Day With Your Phone
8. Turn Off Notifications
9. Cook Up Tasty Memories
10. Do Something That Renews You
11. Reverse To-Do List (a list of what you DID get done)
12. Take Care of Your Physical Body
13. Connect with God
14. Gentle on Social



Which of these items would be a gift to you for the remaining weeks of Lent and leading into Easter? Which can bear fruit for you? As Reverend Russ, states, “Take what you need. Leave what you don't and arrive at Easter better equipped to walk with the Risen Christ.”

If you wish to have the complete article of either resource sent to you, be sure to reach out to Pastor Wade!

WORSHIP NOTES

April marks the end of the Lenten season. In worship, it is a time of contemplation as we connect the mortality of Jesus to our own mortality. The color for the season of Lent is purple. As part of this holy season, we will have some distinct worship opportunities:

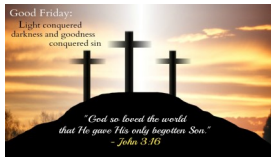


Sunday April 13th—Palm Sunday - We will be waving the palms at the beginning of worship as we look to connect with Christ's memorable and triumphant entrance to Jerusalem.

Thursday April 17th, 7 PM—Maundy Thursday – On Maundy Thursday, we sit and remember the last time that Jesus sat and shared a meal with his friends. The meal was accompanied by a time of Jesus washing the feet of the disciples as the ultimate expression of servant leadership. Plan to attend this small and intimate service as we break bread together and wash each other's hands in connecting ourselves to Jesus and one another.



Following Maundy Thursday is Good Friday, the day that we identify with the crucifixion of Christ. On this day, Christ dies. The church will not have a worship service this day but a reminder will be sent as a way to recall and commune with God during this tragic day.



All of the season of Lent then leads us into the biggest day of the church year: Easter Sunday. It is on this day we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus with choruses of Hallelujah!

Sunday April 20th—Easter Sunday worship with communion at 10 AM. This service is one that should not be missed as glorious music and inspiring worship happens! Drop-In choir will be held that morning at 9 AM as an opportunity to add your voice to the heavenly chorus!

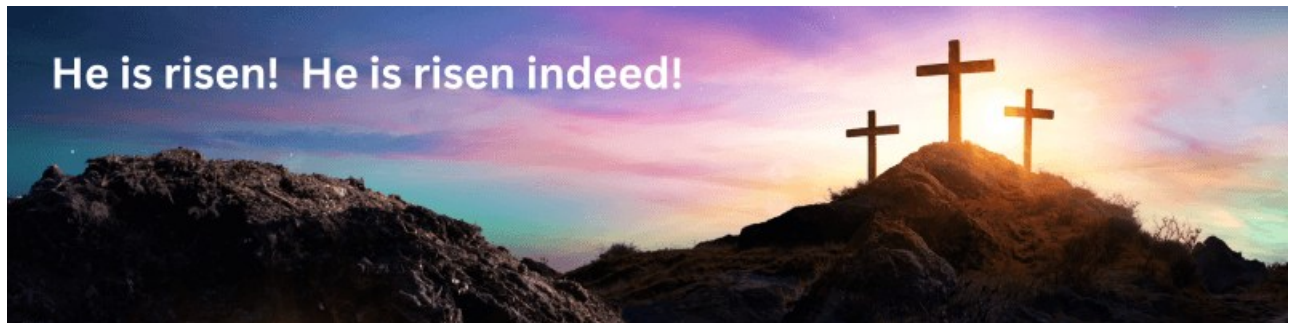
What is **DROP-IN CHOIR**????



Drop-In Choir happens on select worship opportunities to learn a simple but beautiful piece of music before worship starts. If you have ever participated, or wanted to participate, in choir, a musical election is chosen that can quickly and easily be learned in about 30 minutes. With that piece of music swirling through your head, we then offer this piece of music for worship that very same day!!!! It has become a tradition at Sweet Hollow to have Drop-In Choir for Easter Sunday and Christmas Eve and it is a gift to the worshipping congregation to share in this worship opportunity!

WORSHIP NOTES

For Easter Sunday, the Drop-In Choir will be singing a beautiful piece that connects the Hallelujah Chorus with the Ode to Joy. We give great thanks to God for our music director, Jason Black, for the gifts of music that he brings as he leads us in this opportunity!



The first Sunday worship of the month we offer communion at the Lord's Table. Anyone is welcome to receive communion at the Lord's table even if you are not a member. And if you do not wish to receive communion, you are welcome to come and receive a blessing from Pastor Wade.

LITURGIST SCHEDULE

We give thanks for all of those individuals who help to lead worship on any given Sunday. It is a gift to the congregation and to Pastor Wade to see the willingness of others to serve God's people.

April 6th ~ Frank Sansone

April 13th ~ Sheri Myers (Palm Sunday)

April 20th ~ Niaja Mowatt (Easter Sunday)

April 27th ~ Joan Sommermyer (Smorgasbord/Pastor on Vacation)

Serving as a liturgist is a gift to the church. You don't have to be a bible expert, a linguist, or have a seminary degree to serve as a liturgist. A liturgist has a heart to help and lead others. Remember that Moses was called to lead and speak in front of people despite his difficulties speaking: "How then should Pharaoh heed me—who gets tongue-tied!" ([Exod. 6:12](#)). Moses has already pointed this issue out a few chapters earlier, protesting that he has "never been a man of words" and is "slow of speech and slow of tongue." Scholars believe that Moses was afflicted with the challenge of stuttering. Look how he turned out with God's help!

If you have questions about serving as liturgist, talk to Pastor Wade. It is a joy to those explore the calling to serve.

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



MISSION & MORE



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING **SPECIAL OFFERINGS** --- **HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT**

As we join with Presbyterians worldwide in sharing God's love with our neighbors-in-need around the world, our "One Great Hour of Sharing" special offering continues up through 4/20/25, Easter Sunday.

Each gift to "One Great Hour of Sharing" supports efforts to relieve hunger through the Presbyterian Hunger Program, promote development through the Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People, and assist in areas of disaster through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. All three programs work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need; their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance, and hope.

-36% of each donation supports the Presbyterian Hunger Program, which is committed to ending hunger globally.

-32% of each donation supports Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, which is committed to helping others repair from disaster during and beyond the initial aftermath globally.

-32% of each donation supports Self-Development of People, which is committed to helping communities around the world gain the skills they need to improve their communities.

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

Special Offering envelopes for "One Great Hour of Sharing" can be found in the pews, and on the table at the back of the sanctuary during this Lenten season-March 5th through April 20th.

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

MISSION & MORE



"FEED THE NEED"



Our local food pantries are being drained of their food resources due to overwhelming demand caused by food insecurity. The Mission Team sincerely thanks everyone who so generously donated food items in March.

During the month of April, the Mission Team will continue to collect donations of the most requested non-perishable items: canned soup, rice, canned vegetables, pasta, cereal and pasta sauce.

Your donations will truly make a difference in the lives of the 300 clients the Huntington Community Food Council serves twice a week.

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 change lives for the better!



Prayer Corner

Prayer Corner

I attended seminary in Dubuque, Iowa from 2008-2012. While there, I had the pleasure of meeting one of the seminary's most distinguished theologians and professors, Donald Bloesch. One item that has stuck with me since that meeting, and having had to study some of his written work, was this story that he shared about Martin Luther and the boldness of prayer. (My apologies for the thees and thous).

"Fredrick Myconius wrote his friend, Martin Luther, in 1540 to tell him that he was deathly ill and would soon die. The following is Luther's response:

'I command thee in the name of God to live because I still have need of thee in the work of reforming the church... The Lord will never let me hear that thou art dead, but will permit thee to survive me. For this I am praying, this is my will, and may my will be done, because I seek only to glorify the name of God.'

By the time Myconius got the letter, he was already too weak to speak. Yet within a short time he recovered and lived two months longer than Luther. To pray is to look the Creator in the eye and say, 'You know I'm not praying for my own personal advantage, but only that your most holy name be glorified.' Such praying lends great boldness to our ability to intercede for others and for the work of the kingdom." ~Donald G. Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer* (1980).

Let our boldness in prayer be carried out for these names spoken to us through worship and prayer circle:

Dan	Sue	Cindy	Nicole	Claudia	Ray
Otto	Miriam	Rhea	Clea	Ralph	Brad & Kelley
Robbie	Brian	Marcie	Ross	Bill	Matt

And if you find the words of prayer difficult, try using this one:

Holy God, we come before you seeking restoration and healing. Heal _____'s brokenness, mend their wounds, and make them whole again. May Your love and grace fill the shattered pieces of life, bringing inner peace and restoration. It is in the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.



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: Ed Conroy

Melissa D'Angelo

Niaja Mowatt

Frank Sansone

Bea Reiser



April 2025

- 3... April Fallon
- 3... Nate Pereira
- 5... Mary Reiser
- 8... Courtney Schmitt
- 17... Douglas Moder
- 20... Kaleb Pond
- 21... Thallia Pond



April 2025

- 28... Joe & Barbara Moder

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 March 17th. Any member of the church is welcome to attend.

Find our website and social media links!

www.sweethollowpresby.org

Facebook/YouTube/Instagram

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

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

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

National Days In April

- 1... April Fool's Day
- 5... National Play Outside Day
- 7... National No Housework Day
- 10... National Siblings Day
- 13... National Scrabble Day
- 17... National High Five Day
- 20... EASTER ~ The Lord is Risen
HE IS RISEN INDEED!!!
- 22... National Earth Day
- 25... National Arbor Day
- 30... National Bugs Bunny Day

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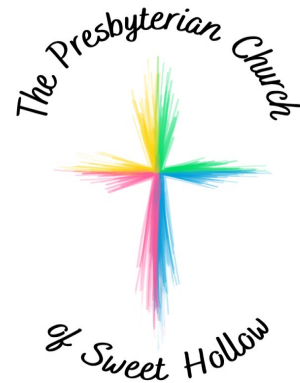
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<https://youtube.com/>

@presbyterianchurchofsweeth1401

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April is.....



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> or Pastor Wade.

Apr. Bell Ringer Submissions: Due by Apr. 25

Email to Jessica Pond: 8kidscallmemom@gmail.com