

MAY/JUNE 2018



# THE RED DOOR

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BIG FLATS, NY**

Founded 1827 ----- "Pride In Our Past – Faith In Our Future"

(607) 562-8048 ----- /www.bigflatsfirstpres.org/

Dear Friends,

For the past two years you have been living in a state of transition, not an easy place to be. Rick had been your pastor for over twenty-four years, and imagining the church without him was both unsettling and sad. It is not uncommon for people to leave their church at such times, and that indeed happened here. But still you held firm and embraced the challenge, as step-by-step you met the tasks laid out by the Presbytery and began to envision your new future.

One bold and courageous step was your decision to seek to hire a half-time pastor, which I believe to have been a wise and prudent decision. Now, I too have decided to change my Interim position to half-time. It is the right decision for a number of reasons. The obvious, of course, is that it will save the church money, but it also gives you the opportunity to see how having a part-time pastor works and to give you a chance to make adjustments. I do want to assure you that though I will have reduced office hours, I can still be easily reached and available for pastoral concerns, and, of course, I will still be here on Sundays.

Another important point I want to make is that having a half-time pastor does not denote a diminishment or failure. It just means a shift and an adjustment, but I am certain that First Presbyterian Church is up to the task. From her beginning in 1827, she has periodically gone through challenging times, sometimes even extended periods without a pastor, but she kept going. Men and women stepped up and did what needed to be done. There was a "We Can" attitude chugging through the church's long history. I encourage you to embrace this optimism and let go of doubt and defeatism, remembering that old adage about catching more flies with honey than with vinegar. People will not be drawn toward a church which exhibits no energy or passion. And let's not forget that as Christians we are called to be the harbinger of the Good News.



Yes, there will be changes, but with change can come opportunity. I am hopeful that a sense of shared ministry will grow, resulting in a fifty-fifty partnership between pastor and congregation and that in that relationship will arise a sense of empowerment that will lead to a broad and vibrant ministry. The future is yours, and I am hopeful that your ministry will go far beyond these four walls.

The times they are a-changing, a fact there is no escaping. I love the image of the beautiful butterfly emerging from pupa stage and taking to flight. Change can be not only good, it can indeed be a blessing,

Following is a prayer from **When I Talk to You: A Cartoonist Talks to God**, by Michael Leunig:

God help us to change. To change ourselves and to change the world. To know the need for it. To deal with the pain of it. To feel the joy of it. To undertake the journey without understanding the destination. The art of gentle revolution.

Amen

May it be so.

Blessings,  
Pastor Beth

## HEINZ WEISSENBUEHLER (1934 - 2018)

Heinz Weissenbuehler passed away on March 22, 2018, at the age of eighty-three (born December 24, 1934, in Schwaebisch-Hall, Germany). Educated as a tool and die maker, Heinz came to this country in 1955, became a US citizen, and served in the United States Air Force. His greatest loves were his wife Elsbeth and his wonderful family. Next came his love of flying, especially soaring. He began soaring as a boy in Germany and continued flying gliders and towplanes throughout his life. He was also an avid gardener. Heinz was a good, decent family man, and a friend to all who knew him. He will be missed.

## JOYS AND CONCERNS

**We serve a risen Savior!** Easter is always a special time for our congregation, and this year was no exception. Our Lenten season was marked with very uplifting worship services and beautiful music. Our Holy Week featured a festive Palm Sunday service, a very spiritual Maundy Thursday experience, a joyous Easter Sunrise Ecumenical Service and breakfast, and a wonderful Easter Sunday time of worship and praise. Soul-lifting music, inspiring messages, a beautifully decorated sanctuary, the joyful sounds of our children as they hunted for Easter eggs, and a wonderful coffee hour combined to make Easter Sunday a day to remember! Special thanks to **Pastor Beth, Nancy Compton** and the choir, **Ann Slowik and Donna Stevens** and kitchen helpers (wow -- what fabulous Easter buffets, first following our Sunrise Service and then during our morning coffee hour!), **Joyce Dean** for the beautiful flowers, and all who worked to make this such a meaningful time.



Some of our recent highlights included:

- Saturday, April 21, was the date of our final fundraising breakfast for the 2017-2018 season. What a terrific project this has been. Thanks to **Sarah Cory**, the Breakfast Committee, and all our wonderful volunteers (and patrons, too) for making these morning meals so successful! Be sure to watch for news of our return next fall!
- We celebrated a special birthday with a card shower during April. Congratulations and best wishes to **Dorothy Bartlett**, who marked her **105th** birthday on April 16.
- Our Property Committee has planned a very ambitious program of spring and summer projects. See Chairman **Pat Fitzgerald** or any committee member to find out how you can become involved.
- A new mission program, **Shared Blessings!**, has been announced. See page four for details.
- Finally, as spring arrives, our Sunday soup sales end. We truly appreciate the efforts of our talented soup makers. Thank you to all who provided this wonderful home-made goodness and thanks also to those who bought soup and helped support this special project.

The sympathy of our church is extended to the **Elsbeth Weissenbuehler** and her family on the passing of husband **Heinz** and to **Sam and Joyce Dean** and their family on the passing of Sam's brother Jerry. Among our concerns this month, we ask for prayers for: **Cindy & Ed Leisenring, Brandon Davis (nephew of Sheila French and Lisa McGill), Denise Wiskowski (sister of Debbie French), Alan Giglio (Pat Fitzgerald's nephew), Reva Soutar, Nick Rudnick, Emma Gardner, Ginnie Schweizer, Dudley & Marie Shea, Dorothy Bartlett**, and others who are dealing with ill health, surgery, loss, or life changes. Please remember our shut-ins, and please continue to pray for our servicemen and women and their families and for peace in our troubled world. Please remember our shut-ins, and please continue to pray for our servicemen and women and their families and for peace in our troubled world.

***Do you have a special joy or concern that you would like to share with our faith community? See Pastor Beth or Bill Howells, and we will include your news in our Joys/Concerns column.***

## PNC UPDATE

The Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) has the ultimate responsibility for nominating a minister to the congregation for election as our next pastor. The work of the PNC involves many different tasks and responsibilities as we work our way through the call process.

Early in the month of April, after many hours of meeting together, our PNC completed what we hope is our final version of the Minister Information Form (MIF). Approval by both our Session and then our Presbytery must next take place.

A special Session meeting was called for Wednesday, April 11th for the purpose of presenting our (MIF) for the Session's approval. After some discussion and the answering of questions, a vote was held, and I am happy to announce the MIF was unanimously approved! Afterwards, as required, our Clerk of Session, Joyce Dean, and I, as Chairperson of the PNC, signed and dated the MIF.

The next step in the call process involves presenting our MIF to the Presbytery of Geneva's Committee on Ministry (COM). This is scheduled to take place on Tuesday, May 1<sup>st</sup> in Penn Yan. **Pat Fitzgerald, Sheila French** and I will make the trip together.

We strongly encourage all members of the congregation to look at the enlarged flow chart for the call process which is posted on our church house bulletin board. This chart will help you to better understand how the call process works. It is a lengthy process.

As we proceed through the various required tasks on the chart, we will mark a large X through each box once that task has been completed. This will allow all of you to see what the PNC has already accomplished while at the same time allowing you to see what we still have ahead of us to complete.

Please pray for the PNC, and also remember that it is "God's own choice" who will be our next pastor.

With faith and hope,

**Pat Seem**

PNC Chairperson

PNC Committee Members: **Jenny Dean, Pat Fitzgerald, Sheila French, Ann Hayes, Rocky Peters, Mark Slowik**

COM Liaison: **Rehana Stanley**



**PASTOR  
NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

**PENTECOST SUNDAY -- MAY 20**  
**CATCH OUR SPIRIT -- WEAR SOMETHING RED!!**

## **SHARED BLESSINGS!**

### **A COMMUNITY BASED GIVING AND SHARING PROGRAM**

#### **SPONSORED BY THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BIG FLATS, NY**

Our church is once again expanding its local mission. *Shared Blessings!* is a multi-faceted outreach program that will involve our entire congregation in helping others.

Our goal is to start a *low cost-no cost 'store'* which will be open by appointment-only for people in need of clothing, health and beauty aids, small appliances, and other non-perishable items. We are taking gently used or new donations at any time. Just drop donations off at the church and mark them *Shared Blessings!*

As a second part of the *Shared Blessings!* program, we would like to inspire the church and community to be a part of a monthly mission project.

- **May's Mission** inspired by Mother's Day – To fill a Baby Crib with all types of baby donations. A crib is set up at the back of the church just waiting to be filled. We are in the process of matching our crib collection with appropriate agencies/individuals. Details will be announced
- **June's Mission** – Goodie bags for the Horseheads Bus Garage and for Teachers at the Big Flats Elementary School – we will be filling small bags with homemade cookies. We are asking anyone who is interested in baking to bring goodies to church on Sunday, June 3rd. We will put bags together right after church and deliver them on Monday, June 4th.

Our church has a one hundred ninety-one year tradition of sharing the love of Christ through community outreach and involvement. Thank you, in advance, for helping to keep our mission alive and growing!

Questions? Talk to **Ann Slowik or Pastor Beth**

### **RUMMAGE SALE JUNE 2**



Our Spring Rummage Sale has been scheduled for **Saturday, June 2, from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM**, with lunch served and a bake sale.

We are going to need rummage donations, baked goods, and volunteers for setting up, working at the sale, taking down, and a variety of other jobs. We will be setting up tables on **Tuesday evening, May 29 (time TBA)** and **Wednesday, May 30, starting at 9:00 AM**, and we will then continue working to organize and price items for the sale. If needed, this work will continue on **Thursday, May 31, also at 9:00 AM**. We may also be working on Wednesday and Thursday evenings. We will be cleaning up after the sale on **Saturday, June 2, at 2:00 PM**. Extra workers are needed for setup on **Wednesday morning** and for cleanup on **Saturday**.

Our sale is truly a win – win – win event – a chance to recycle your un-needed items; a chance to help raise funds for our church; a chance for everyone in our community to buy quality items at bargain prices! Please consider spending a few hours of your week to make this sale successful.

**Linda Lincoln and Donna Stevens** are coordinating our sale and will be happy to answer your questions. Call Linda at **562-7601** if you need access to the church to bring in your sale items.

### **PARKING LOT REPAIR FUND DRIVE CONTINUES**

Our church parking lot is scheduled to be repaved this spring, at a cost of more than \$11,000. A "**Parking Lot Repair Fund**" has been established to raise the money needed for this critical project. Donations can be sent directly to the church or can be placed in the offertory plates each week. Donations should be marked "**Parking Lot Fund**" and directed to the attention of **Barb Horn**, our church Financial Secretary. Thank you for your generous support.

# PHOTO GALLERY



# MAY / JUNE

## WEEKLY EVENTS

SUNDAY	9:30 AM	Choir Rehearsal
	10:30 AM	Morning Worship
TUESDAY	12:00 – 2:00	Food Pantry is open
	6:30	Boy Scout Troop #87

## SPECIAL EVENTS

May 6	Holy Communion
May 13	Mother's Day – <b>David Knuppenburg</b> , Executive Director of the Golden Key Prison Ministry for Chemung County, will lead our worship service
May 20	<b>Pentecost Sunday</b>
May 27	Sunday of Memorial Day weekend
May 27	"Pennies from Heaven" collection during morning worship
May 29 (Tues.)	Scout Troop #87 will set up tables for Rummage Sale – our help needed – time TBA
May 30 (Wed.)	Set up / Organize / Price items for Rummage Sale: 9:00 AM - ?
May 31 (Thurs.)	(If necessary) Price items for Rummage Sale: 9:00 AM - ?
June 2 (Sat.)	Rummage Sale: 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM
June 3	Holy Communion
June 17	Father's Day & Church Picnic
June 24	"Pennies from Heaven" collection during morning worship
June 24	Information due for the July/August <b>RED DOOR</b>

## COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Worship Committee	Meets following church service on May 13 & June 17 (tentative dates)
Property Committee	Wednesdays, May 16 & June 20 – 6:00 PM
Session	Wednesdays, May 16 & June 20 – 7:00 PM

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## NEW LOCATION    CHURCH PICNIC    NEW LOCATION



This year the church picnic will be at **10:00 on Sunday, June 17**. The picnic will be at a new location, the **Liz Farr Pavilion** in the new section of **Big Flats Community Park**. Enter the park from Winters Road by the walking track near route 352. Go to the end of the drive, and you are there.

As usual, please bring a dish to pass and your place settings. Hamburgers, hotdogs, buns and condiments will be provided. See you there.

**The Worship Committee**