

# THE RED DOOR

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BIG FLATS, NY – MAY 2017

Founded 1827 ----- “Pride In Our Past – Faith In Our Future”

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



Friends,

On Friday mornings I attend a study group at Mt. Saviour Monastery. Usually we pour over Holy Scripture, but the last few weeks we have been reading the most recent book by Rabbi Harold S. Kushner. You may remember him as the author of the best seller, “When Bad Things Happen to Good People.” This new release is titled “Nine Essential Things I’ve Learned About Life.”

One chapter I found particularly compelling and I want to share a bit of it with you. As we know, church attendance throughout the world has been declining and Christianity is not the only religion affected by this phenomenon. And how many times have we heard people say that they are not religious in the conventional sense, but that they are spiritual. Perhaps we have even said it ourselves. Well, Rabbi Kushner admits to having been at a loss regarding how to respond to these individuals. That was until a colleague, Rabbi David Wolpe, of Los Angeles, shared with him his response, which is, “No, spirituality is what you feel, theology is what you believe, religion is what you do.” Rabbi Kushner goes on to say, “the most sublime religious faith becomes real only when it is translated into behavior, into doing things you might not otherwise do as an enactment of your religious faith.” He then quotes the famed theologian Martin Buber who, when asked, “Where can I find God?” replied, “God is not found in churches or synagogues. God is not found in holy books. God is not found in the heart of the most fervent believer. God is found between people.” Rabbi Kushner then adds, “when you act toward someone as your religion tells you to, God comes and bridges the gap between you. You are joined for those moments by bonds of holiness.” He continues by quoting Rev. Lillian Daniel, a UCC minister who in her book, “When ‘Spiritual, but Not Religious’ Is Not Enough” writes, “people who invoke simplistic reasons for rejecting traditional religion, but find God in spring flowers and changing leaves will have no problem as long as it’s sunny out, but they have no framework for making sense of a hurricane, or a business reversal or a diagnosis of serious illness. At times like that, you need a tradition to turn to that has seen it all and has no illusions about the world. You need a community, people who have learned to find God in the shadows as readily as in the sunshine, to find Him in the courage of afflicted people and the helpfulness of their neighbors. And you need people whose faith compels them not to pity you or to question God on your behalf, but to hold you and dry your tears.”



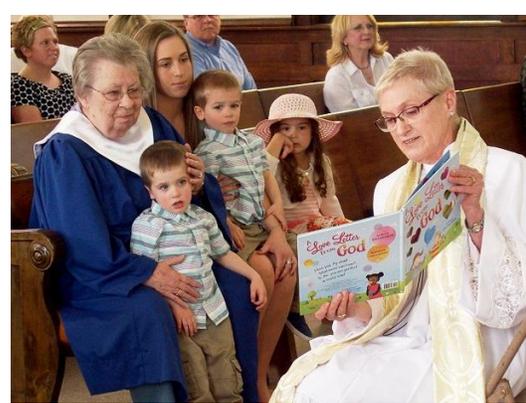
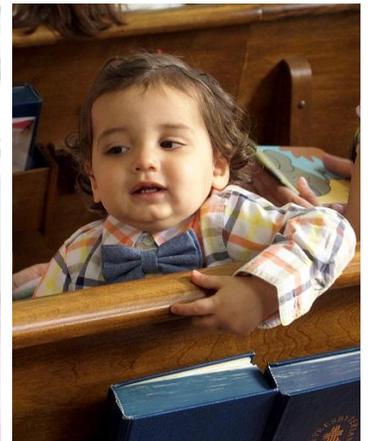
I do hope that this sampling of Rabbi Kushner’s book will spark both reflection and conversation. I would love to hear your thoughts. This may be a book you will find worthy of a discussion group.

In the meantime, I encourage you to spend time out of doors enjoying the warmth of the sunshine, the greening grass, flowering trees, and the gardens ready to burst forth with colorful and fragrant blooms, and then come to church where your friends are waiting for you.

Blessings,  
Pastor Beth

Kushner, Harold A. “Religion Is What You Do, Not What You Believe.” *Nine Essential Things I’ve Learned About Life*. New York: Anchor, 2015. 103-117. Print

# PHOTO GALLERY





## 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 2 (Tues.)	Scout Troop #87 will set up tables for Rummage Sale – our help needed – time TBA
May 3 (Wed.)	Set up / Organize / Price items for Rummage Sale: 9:00 AM - ?
May 4 (Thurs.)	<i>(If necessary)</i> Price items for Rummage Sale: 9:00 AM - ?
May 6 (Sat.)	Rummage Sale: 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM
May 7	Holy Communion
May 14	Mother's Day – Bill Powell will lead our worship service
May 28	Sunday of Memorial Day weekend
May 28	Information due for the June <b><u>RED DOOR</u></b>
May 28	"Pennies from Heaven" collection during morning worship

## COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Worship Committee	Meets following church service on May 21
Property Committee	Wednesday, May 17 – 6:00 PM
Session	Wednesday, May 17 – 7:00 PM

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## RUMMAGE SALE MAY 6



Our Spring Rummage Sale has been scheduled for **Saturday, May 6, from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM**, with lunch served and a bake sale.

We are going to need volunteers for setting up, working at the sale, taking down, and a variety of other jobs. We will be setting up tables on **Wednesday, May 3, 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 4, 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, May 6, 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.