



THE RED DOOR

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BIG FLATS, NY

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

[/www.bigflatsfirstpres.org/](http://www.bigflatsfirstpres.org/)

Dear Friends,

Summer is upon us. Things have settled down after the somber yet busy Lenten season and the joyful celebration of Easter. We have just celebrated Pentecost, known as the birthday of the Church. The season of Pentecost invites members of a congregation to take a look at their church and to rededicate themselves to fulfilling its role which is to meet the spiritual needs of its people. This is true for us, but with an even greater sense of urgency and responsibility for we are now in the search process for a new settled Pastor.

These past months I have been learning a great deal about this church and about you, its members and friends. I know that you love this church and want it not just to survive, but to thrive. But you are also busy, and at times stressed, pulled in different directions. Some are dealing with health issues, their own or a loved one's. Some are dealing with the demands of caring for small children, others are involved with their school age children's activities. And then, of course, there may be stressful work outside of the home or financial worries, or concerns regarding the state of our nation and the world. It seems that the church just has to take a backseat. As for finding a new Pastor; some of you may feel it is just too much work or perhaps you are just uncomfortable living in limbo, in the "not yet" phase, and just want it to be over. But the reality is we need you, all of you, not just to complete the process, but to complete the process successfully, to ensure that the church will truly be a place of spiritual respite, comfort and support.



This is not a task to be undertaken by a few. We need all of you. This is an extremely important time in the life of this church and your presence, your wisdom and your help are needed. The old adage, "many hands make light work," rings true here. If you would like to lend a hand let me or a member of Session know. And please know that

just by showing up at Worship can be extremely helpful. This summer during Meditation we will be discussing such topics as what we expect the role of a pastor to be, what is the role of a congregation, and what are this church's strengths, passions and resources, and how do we envision the church in 5 years' time?

This is all information that can be used in our Mission Study, a study required by the Presbyterian Church (USA) before a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) can be elected and commissioned. This Study will give the committee an up to date and comprehensive picture of the church, and will include the history of the church, an analysis of its membership and its financial resources, the demographics of the area, and a review of the church's goals and objectives for the next 5 -10 years. It will be a useful tool for the PNC to use in the search process and will also give a potential new Pastor a glimpse into the church's strength, enthusiasm, and vision. It is good to keep in mind that not only do you select a Pastor, a Pastor selects you.

Questionnaires will soon be distributed to help us to better understand what is important to you. We are in the process of preparing a spreadsheet of statistical data for the past 10 years and soon we will begin a timeline of the church. There is still work to be done, but I am hopeful that with your help that by the end of September the Pastor Nominating Committee can begin its task. Please let us know if you would like to be part of the Mission Study Team.

While exploring the church's long history with its successes and struggles, its conflicts and reconciliations, its courage and persistence, I found that even in difficult times the members did not give up hope. You have a very long legacy of strength, and of determination as people stepped up to help one another, to care for the community, and do what was needed to ensure that the church would be here for generations to come. That legacy is your legacy.

I pray that this will be an inspiring, exciting and hope-filled time for the church. Let us all work together that it may be so.

Grace and blessings on your path,

Pastor Beth

FROM THE EDITOR: This issue of THE RED DOOR covers the months of July and August. Our next newsletter will be the September, 2017 issue. Have a great summer! Thank you for your support and continuing interest in our publication.

Circle of Love

JOYS AND CONCERNS

The last month has been very special in the life of our little church. It is truly amazing to think of all that goes on in our community of faith! June was a hot month, but it cooled in comparison with the warmth of our spirit!

- On Saturday, June 2, we hosted a discussion on racism. This lively and informative conversation was sponsored by the Geneva Presbytery and utilized a book by Debby Irving, *“Waking Up White, and Finding Myself in the Story of Race.”*
- On Sunday afternoon, June 3, we were entertained by **Samara Gromer**, her sons **Ty and Luke**, some of her students, and members of the Corning Brass Works. In addition to being a wonderful afternoon of terrific music, the concert raised funds for our music ministry. Thank you, Samara, and all who made this happen!
- **Pastor Beth** has been leading a Bible study group on recent Monday mornings. They have been exploring some of the parables in the New Testament. For information about this and future studies, see **Pastor Beth**.
- Our music ministry makes our spirits soar! Our choir members are resting their voices until the fall, and we eagerly await their return. We thank **Nancy Compton, Mary Ellen Rudnick**, and each choir member for all you do to make each Sunday special!
- On Wednesday evening, June 14, we had a pot luck dinner and special program. Over twenty-five members of our congregation and guests gathered to enjoy a delicious meal and a program of wonder and amazement! Using photos and insights gained from a lifetime of study, **Rocky Peters**, a retired aerospace engineer and accomplished amateur astronomer, led us on a journey to the stars and beyond. It was a terrific program and a wonderful evening of fellowship!
- On Father's Day, June 18, we met to worship, eat, and socialize at our annual church picnic, held at the Big Flats American Legion. Our worship message focused on the “Power of a Picnic.” Following our service, we enjoyed a wonderful array of delicious picnic fare. Master of the grill, **Rocky Peters**, kept the burgers and hot dogs coming, and the legendary **“Big Flats Bakers”** provided an amazing variety of delicious side dishes and desserts. Thanks go to all our volunteers for making this such a special day!
- Special thanks to **Tom Seem**, who led our worship service on June 25.
- Congratulations to **Dave and Meg (Howells) Aiosa** on the June 13 arrival of daughter **Harper Grey Aiosa**!



Among our concerns this month, we ask for prayers for: **Phil Hubbard, Brandon Davis (nephew of Sheila French and Lisa McGill), Wendy Fought (niece of Sheila French and Lisa McGill), Denise Wiskowski (sister of Debbie French), Alan Giglio (Pat Fitzgerald's nephew), Heinz Weissenbuehler, Reva Soutar, Nick Rudnick, Emma Gardner, Irene Hooley, Ginnie Schweizer, Dudley & Marie Shea**, 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.

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.

RALLY DAY SUNDAY – SEPTEMBER 10

We are planning a special Sunday morning for **September 10**. We will be welcoming old friends and new back from a restful summer, and we hope to get everyone excited about what lies ahead for our community of faith. In addition to a wonderful worship service, we will have an opportunity to be updated on the progress of our pastoral search and will be informed about the important work to be done in the months ahead. A special fellowship also luncheon is being planned.

Our church was organized in September, 1827, (**one hundred ninety years ago!!**), and it has been a strong and vital part of our community. We are eager to face whatever challenges and opportunities our future may bring. We encourage everyone to join us on this journey. Mark your calendar for **September 10**, and watch for more information later this summer.

CLOTHING SHED UPDATE

Since 2009, our church has hosted a used clothing shed. Located on our Welles Land property (along Church Street), the shed is part of a network of similar structures sponsored by St. Pauly Textile, an organization which focuses on diverting clothing items and textiles away from landfills and sending them to people who can use them around the United States and around the world.

In 2016 roughly **38,696 garments** were donated to our shed. This was enough to clothe an estimated 4,691 people in one or more of forty-four different nations (including the US). In addition to the mission served by the shed, the project is also a source of funds for our church. In 2016 our participation in the project raised **\$1,761** to help our budget.

We rely on volunteers to help with this project. The work involves checking the shed every few days to make sure that donated items are properly bagged and arranging the bags to make for easier collection by the St. Pauly truck. It is also necessary, at times, to remove items from the shed and place them in our church trash cans, as such things as household goods, electronic items, toys, etc. are not part of this project. We strongly discourage folks from leaving these non-clothing items, as it makes extra work for our volunteers!

Members of our congregation sign up to work in the shed throughout the year. It is also helpful when others help out during the month. If you are driving by the shed, just take a minute to stop, check out the shed, and take care of anything that needs attention. If the shed is locked (side door), there is a key hanging on the rear outside wall.

The St. Pauly shed is an important part of our church's mission. Please help us to continue this tradition. See **Pat Fitzgerald**, our Property Committee chairman, if you have any questions about this project.



First Presbyterian Church of Big Flats, NY

JULY – AUGUST 2017



WEEKLY EVENTS

SUNDAY	9:30 – 10:30 AM	Morning Worship
TUESDAY	12:00 – 2:00 PM	Food Pantry is open

SPECIAL EVENTS

July 2	Holy Communion
July 23	Pastor Beth will be away – worship leader to be announced
July 30	Pennies from Heaven”
August 6	Holy Communion
August 20	Pastor Beth will be away – worship leader to be announced
August 27	Pennies from Heaven”
August 27	Information due for the September RED DOOR
September 3	Morning Worship at 9:30 AM
September 10	Morning Worship at 10:30 AM

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Worship Committee	Meets following church service on August 13
Property Committee	July 19 and August 16 – 6:00 PM (Wednesday)
Church Session	July 19 and August 16 – 7:00 PM (Wednesday)

PARKING LOT REPAIR FUND DRIVE CONTINUES

Our church parking lot will need to be repaved in 2018, at a cost of more than \$11,000. Property chair **Pat Fitzgerald** has announced the establishment of a “**Parking Lot Repair Fund**” 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, in advance, for your generous support.