



THE RED DOOR

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BIG FLATS, NY

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

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"Rabbi Levi Yitzhak of Berdichev in the Ukraine used to say that he had discovered the meaning of love from a drunken peasant. The rabbi was visiting the owner in the Polish countryside. As he walked in he saw two peasants at a table. Both were gloriously in their cups. Arms around each other, they were protesting how much each loved the other. Suddenly Ivan said to Peter, "Peter, tell me, what hurts me?" Bleary-eyed, Peter looked at Ivan, "How do I know what hurts you?" Ivan's answer was swift, "If you don't know what hurts me, how can you say you love me?"

" Everything that can be counted does not necessarily count; everything that counts cannot necessarily be counted." Albert Einstein

As a faith community we have experienced great loss and hurt this past year. Whether it was less children showing up for worship or the deaths of faithful worshippers the fabric of our community has worn thinner. Yet, we must be careful not to evaluate the strength of our community on these things. No church that I have attended has grown or loved more without hurt and loss. And as such as a faith community we have also experienced great love and hope this past year. Bob Dylan once said, "Strange how people who suffer together have stronger connection than those who are most content." We have had to form closer community because of the loss and hurt we have experienced. In many ways I have seen this church change for the better in my last 22 years in your fold. We have achieved making our church more appealing on the outside AND inside, in our hearts. There are new creative missions and more to come. I feel that we have a new day coming and I believe Jesus Christ is in our midst. Big Flats First Presbyterian is a wonderful community of people from all walks of life and the richness of diversity of spirituality. I hope and pray that Jesus Christ continues to bless us spiritually and financially as we struggle on this journey together.



Blessed be the tie that binds – Love and Peace,

JOYS AND CONCERNS

Many people worked very hard to make Advent and Christmas a truly joyous time for our community of faith. We are very thankful to have such dedicated and caring friends in our congregation. Highlights of the last two months include:

Circle of Love

- Thanks go to **Ann Slowik and Gigi Price** for a successful Silent Auction on December 8.
- Thanks to the **Prices and Deans**, who braved the cold to harvest our Christmas tree and to all who helped decorate. The "Photo Ornaments" made by our Sunday School children made this year's tree very special!
- On December 15, we had a wonderful Christmas pageant! Children, youth, and adult members of our congregation joined together in an intergenerational telling of the Christmas story. Thanks to **Stacie Belosky** and our Christian Ed. Committee for helping put it all together.
- On Christmas Eve, **Pat Silvernail** and her many volunteers manned the kettle and rang the bell at Miniers to raise funds for the Community Food Pantry. Pat also organized our church's donation of fruit for the Food Pantry. Thank you to all who donated fruit, money, and, especially, time to help others.
- Special thanks to **Joyce Dean** for the stunning display of poinsettias!
- And thank you to **Rev. Rick, Nancy Compton, Mary Ellen Rudnick**, our two choirs, and all those who made the Christmas Eve Service so joyous and so meaningful.
- Our choir members looked especially spiffy in their new robes on Christmas Eve! We will dedicate these new robes during morning worship on **Sunday, February 9**.
- Our "**Shower for Mary**" and "**Gifts for Joseph**" drives were held again during Advent -- both drives were very successful. Thanks to all who participated.
- Our Pancake Breakfast series continues to be a success, thanks to **Jenny Dean**, and many volunteers!
- We installed our new Session elders on January 12. Congratulations to: **Pat Fitzgerald, Tom Halm, Kathy Johnston, Linda Lincoln, Ann Slowik, and Tyler Stevens**. Thank you for being willing to serve our church in this way. A special thank you to those elders who are leaving Session: **Jenny Dean, Ben Farr, Barb Gilbert, Sherry Page, Tom Rhodes, and Kim Wilsoncroft**. We appreciate your gifts of time and talent.
- Thanks to the efforts of **Scott French** and the "Sunday Shovelling Society," our walkways have been kept clear and safe this winter. The Property Committee recently acquired a new snow blower to aid in this work.
- It is with great joy that we celebrate the birth, on December 12, of twin sons **Antonio and Vincent to Melissa Thomas and Dylan Caporiccio**. The boys are both doing well, much to the delight of grandmother, **Sarah Cory**, and great-grandparents **Jack and Barb Horn**. Congratulations to all!!!

Many in our church family need our prayers. The sympathy of our congregation is extended to **Jerry Lagonegro** and his family on the passing of Jerry's father and to **Robin and Pat Fitzgerald** and family on the loss of Robin's brother-in-law. In our concerns this month, we ask for prayers for: **Greg Page's father, Ann Slowik's brother (Rob Vanderbrand), Hank Schurr, Nick Rudnick, Emma Gardner, Flora Berke, Art Devenport, Glen Bates, Irene Hooey, Art Jenkins, Hank Fitzsimmons, Lydia Middaugh, Jackie McMann, Ginnie Schweizer, Dudley & Marie Shea, Dick & Peg Shockner, Ruth Price (Rev. Rick's mother), Marge Larocque (Gigi's mother)**, and others who are dealing with ill health, surgery, loss, or life changes. Please continue to pray for our servicemen and women and for peace in our troubled world.





Dear Church Family,
We would like to thank you for your very generous 'Love Gift' at Christmas time. We are blessed to be a part of this family. We wish you all peace and love and joy in the New Year.
God Bless – Rev. Rick.

IT'S PER CAPITA TIME!



Each year the church must pay a fee to our Presbytery for each member. This year that individual member fee is **\$44.00**. Our total per capita amount for 2014 is **\$5,596**. These monies are used to fund outreach programs, disaster relief, the resource center for the churches, and Camp Whitman programs. In your offering envelopes box, you will find a "Per Capita" envelope. It would be great if we could all pay our individual per capita assessment and, if possible, a little more. Just ten cents a day would really help to meet our budgeted goal. If anyone would like to start a "matching" drive/challenge, please let the Finance Committee or Session know of your willingness. Thanks for your help in balancing our budget. By the way, contributions (money, stock, etc.) can be made directly to our church's Reserve Fund. If we can "grow" this fund it can generate enough interest each year to make a major impact on our budget. See **Mark Slowik** for more information.

PANCAKE BREAKFASTS CONTINUE -- NEXT SLATED FOR FEBRUARY 8

Well into our third season, our fund-raising Pancake Breakfasts have proven to be a big hit! Enthusiastic patrons have flocked to our Church House for gourmet breakfasts of pancakes, eggs, sausage, fruit cup, and beverages. We thank all who have helped to make these meals so successful.

On December 14, we hosted a free-of-charge breakfast as a thank you for the support of our local community – nearly one hundred folks were served. Our fund-raising breakfasts resumed on January 11, and will continue to be held on throughout the winter and early spring. Our next breakfast is slated for **Saturday, February 8, from 8:00 - 10:00 AM**. Subsequent breakfast dates are **March 8, and April 12**. The cost for each meal has been set at \$6.00 for adults and \$3.00 for children. There is no charge for those under five years old.

This series of meals is an ambitious project for our little church, and it takes a lot of help to ensure success. Sign-up sheets will be posted for each meal. Please do your part by pitching in to help and also with your patronage.

Questions?? Talk to **Jenny Dean**.



MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE UNTO THE LORD

There's still room in the choir for more singers and we even have an extra robe for you. Lent, Palm Sunday and Easter are coming - a time for some beautiful pensive anthems, waving palm branches and the singing of joyful "Alleluias." Join us. We'll save you a seat.





FELLOWSHIP LUNCHEON – FEBRUARY 9

A “Bring a Dish to Pass” fellowship luncheon has been scheduled to take place following morning worship on **Sunday, February 9**. All are invited to join us for fine food, fellowship, and fun.

Decide to come at the last moment???? Don't have time to fix anything???? Don't worry!! There is always plenty to go around.

ALL ARE WELCOME!!!

ADVENT MISSION DRIVES VERY SUCCESSFUL

Once again this year, our congregation responded with great generosity to our Advent mission drives. Our **"Shower for Mary"** is an important effort which helps victims of domestic abuse at the **Elmira Salvation Army's Safehouse**, and our **"Gifts for Joseph"** program helps men served by the **Catholic Charities Samaritan Center**. Both of these drives were extremely successful, overflowing a station wagon with donated items on delivery day!

Thank you to all who participated in this vital outreach. **Special thanks to our Mission Committee for a generous cash donation to both these programs.**



PRAYER CHAIN SEEKING MORE LINKS



We are blessed to be part of a caring, supportive faith community. One of the means by which we strive to show that care and support comes through our Prayer Chain. Through the Prayer Chain, concerns, sorrows, and other needs are shared and lifted up for prayer. A call to one of the links in the chain leads to all members of the chain lending their prayers of support. We are in the process of updating our Prayer Chain and are looking for new links. Contact **Nancy Compton (562-3903)** if you would like to join in this important ministry or if you would like more information.

PRESBYTERIAN ARTISANS GROUP FORMED

Our Presbyterian Artisans meet on **Friday mornings, from 9:00 – 12:00** in large room of our Church House. If you would like to spend some quality time working on your project(s) or would like to start a new one, join us. There is no cost. If you have a skill you would be willing to share with others, let us know. We'll try to hook you up. At this time we have quilters, a watercolor painter, a scrap booker, and a knitter.

We have tea available, and someone usually brings a snack. This is a good opportunity for fellowship. We would love for all of our “creative” people to join us. We'll save a seat for you!

Questions – call **Cathy Neally at 562-8001**.

ONLINE GIVING OPTION TO BE OFFERED

Supporters of our church will soon be given the option of making donations directly through their computers. The system will be similar to the online process currently used by many in our congregation to make automatic payments to various accounts. Donors will be able to use their computers to make regular, recurring donations and also to make one-time gifts. Participation in this program will, of course, be at the option of each individual. Our Finance Committee is in the process of finalizing this system and will be providing more details in upcoming months.

PHOTO GALLERY



ANNUAL REPORT: Our “*Annual Report for 2013*” was distributed during the Congregational Meeting on January 26. This booklet gives an overview of the past year at our church, including reports from committees, a financial report, a copy of our budget for 2014, and a listing of members and friends of our congregation. Additional copies are available on the tables in the back of our sanctuary. Our ushers will be happy to assist you.

FEBRUARY



WEEKLY EVENTS

SUNDAY	9:30 AM	Choir Rehearsal
	10:30 AM	Morning Worship with Sunday School and Nursery Care
TUESDAY	12:00 – 2:00	Food Pantry is open
	6:30	Boy Scout Troop #87
THURSDAY	6:30 – 7:15	<i>Praising Voices</i> Rehearsal
FRIDAY	9:00 -- noon	Presbyterian Crafters meet

SPECIAL EVENTS

February 2	Holy Communion
February 2	“Souper Bowl” Sunday
February 8 (Sat.)	Pancake Breakfast – 8:00 - 10:00 AM
February 9	Dedication of new choir robes during morning worship
February 9	Fellowship Luncheon following morning worship
February 16	Blanket Sunday – collection to help disaster victims
February 23	“Pennies from Heaven” collection during morning worship
February 23	Information due for the March RED DOOR

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Worship Committee	Meets following church service on February 16
Property Committee	Wednesday, February 19 – 6:00 PM
Session	Wednesday, February 19– 7:00 PM

“SOUPER” BOWL SUNDAY – FEBRUARY 3



Go Broncos! Go Seahawks! It doesn't matter which team you are supporting. Here's a way that everyone can be a champion! Each year our church participates in “Souper” Bowl Sunday. Wear your favorite team apparel and bring cans of soup (other canned goods and cash are also gratefully accepted) for the benefit of those who are served by our Food Pantry. We will be passing around the soup kettle on **Sunday, February 2**, and we hope that you will join us in helping those in need.

BLANKET SUNDAY SET FOR FEBRUARY 16

For some fifty years, the Church World Service Blanket Program has helped in making life more bearable for those who have been affected by a disaster, such as flooding or fire. We will be taking a special collection on **Sunday, February 16**. Every \$5.00 that we give can provide a good wool or cotton blend blanket (quantity purchase keeps cost down). Please support our church's participation by donating to this very worthy cause during morning worship on February 16.

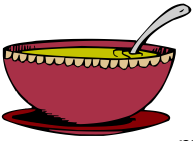


CAUTION URGED!

Winter weather often leads to conditions which require extra caution inside our church. Snow that is tracked in melts and can lead to slippery spots on our kitchen and Church House floors. Please be sure to thoroughly wipe your feet when coming inside during inclement weather, and please watch your step on the linoleum floors in our kitchen and Church House areas. **PLEASE BE CAREFUL!**

**FELLOWSHIP LUNCHEON
FEBRUARY 9
ALL ARE WELCOME
BRING A DISH TO PASS**

SOUP HELPS BEAT THE COLD!



Mm-Mm-Good! Delicious and nutritious homemade soup will be available after church each Sunday, through the end of March. A donation of just **\$4.00** will bring a quart of our world-famous Big Flats goodness right to your table. Find out what good is – you won't be sorry! Sign-up sheets for those willing to serve as "Soup Chefs" are posted on the Church House bulletin board. Volunteers would be most appreciated. . Questions? See **Barb Horn**