

THE RED DOOR

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BIG FLATS, NY – MAY 2014

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

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



Deep silence leads us to realize that prayer is, above all, acceptance. When we pray we are standing with our hands open to the world. We know that God will become known to us in nature around us, in people we meet, in situations we run into. We trust that the world holds God's secret within it, and we expect that secret to be shown to us. Prayer creates that openness in which God is given to us. Indeed, God wants to be admitted into the human heart, received with open hands, and loved with the same love in which we



Grandma's hands clapped in church on Sunday morning. Grandma's hands played a tambourine so well. Grandma's hands used to issue out a warning. She'd say, "Billy don't you run so fast. Might fall on a piece of glass. Might be snakes there in that grass." Grandma's hands.

Grandma's hands soothed a local unwed mother. Grandma's hands used to ache sometimes and swell. Grandma's hands used to lift her face and tell her. She'd say, "Baby, Grandma understands that you really love that man. Put yourself in Jesus hands." Grandma's hands.

Grandma's hands used to hand me piece of candy. Grandma's hands picked me up each time I fell. Boy, they really came in handy. She'd say, "Matty don' you whip that boy. What you want to spank him for? He didn't drop no apple core." But I don't have Grandma anymore. If I get to Heaven I'll look for Grandma's hands.

Lyrics and Music by **Bill Withers**

Dear Friends,

At a Lenten Dinner I spoke of the story of the "widow's mite", one of the Bible stories leading up to the Passion of Christ. Immediately my mind was taken to **hands** and their posturing. My thought was that this was a woman of poverty, stark means, alone in the loss of her husband, a person who knew what it meant to be a second-class citizen in that cultural society. Yet, her posture was one of **open hands**. The song "Grandma's Hands" by Bill Withers played in my head.

Our **hands** tell a story of what we have done, where we have been in the etching of scars, lines, missing fingers, callouses. Sometimes our **hands** are clenched in anger, sometimes holding on to animosity, hatred, sometimes unwilling to **let go**. Sometimes, like the widow with **open hands**, are we willing to be open and generous in spirit? Sometimes are we willing to receive the grace and love that God freely gifts each and every one of us with **open hands**? May the posture of **open hands** encourage us to God's will, to the presence of others, and openness

Finally, from the cross, with openness Jesus cried out loudly, "Father, I place my life in your **hands**!" [Luke 23:46] Then he breathed his last.

In Christ,

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 meaningful 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

Circle of Love

children as they hunted for Easter eggs, and a wonderful coffee hour combined to make Easter Sunday a day to remember! Special thanks to **Barb Horn** and the Worship committee, **Nancy Compton** and the choir, **Stacie Belosky** and Christian Education, **Ann and Mark Slowik** 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, of course, **Reverend Rick** for making it all so meaningful.



Some of last month's highlights include:

- On Wednesday, April 2, our church hosted one of the area Lenten Ecumenical Dinners. What a success! We served a large, enthusiastic crowd, and they raved about the dinner! Thanks go to **Chef Ann Slowik** and the kitchen crew for a terrific meal, and to the legendary "Big Flats Bakers" of our church who provided the desserts.
- Thank you to all who participated in the **Feinstein collection** for the Food Pantry on Easter Sunday. This year's campaign raised over **\$500** in cash and food donations to help those served by our local pantry.
- Saturday, April 12, was the date of our seventh and final fundraising breakfast for the 2013-2014 season. What a terrific project this has been. Thanks to **Jenny Dean**, the Membership Committee, and to 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 two special birthdays in our congregation during April. Congratulations and best wishes to **Dorothy Bartlett**, who marked her **101st** birthday on April 16, and to **George (Hank) Fitzsimmons**, who turned **100** on April 26!
- There are many big hearts in our little church. In April, members of our congregation supported the Food Pantry, Habitat for Humanity, Meals on Wheels, Little League Baseball, the Girl Scout Cookie Drive, and research to fight Multiple Sclerosis and Juvenile Diabetes. Thanks to all those who walked, cycled, collected, and donated!

In our concerns this month, we ask for prayers for: **Greg Page's father, Ann Slowik's brother (Rob Vanderbrand), Nick Rudnick, Emma Gardner, Flora Berke, Art Devenport, Glen Bates, Irene Hooley, 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 think of our shut-ins and those who are in nursing homes or assisted care facilities, and please continue to pray for our servicemen and women and their families and for wisdom for the leaders of our world.

Do you have a special joy or concern that you would like to share with our Big Flats Presbyterian Church community? See Rev. Rick or Bill Howells, and we will include your news in our Joys/Concerns column.

PICTURES WANTED!!

We are seeking pictures, preferably digital photos, of children/families/friends in our church that can be scanned for a Power Point presentation on June 8, during **Children/Youth Sunday**. It will really make the planning process much more efficient if pictures are submitted as soon as possible. Pictures can be given to **Gigi Price** on a disc or may be e-mailed to her at gprice@stny.rr.com. Thanks, in advance, for your help.



SPRING RUMMAGE SALE COMING MAY 24

Our Spring Rummage Sale will be held on **Saturday, May 24, from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM**, with lunch served and a bake sale. Our reduced-price **Bag Sale** will take place at **2:00 PM**.

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 **Tuesday afternoon, May 20, at 3:00 PM**. Organizing and pricing items for the sale will take place on **Wednesday, May 21, starting at 9:00 AM** and, if needed, on **Thursday, May 22, also at 9:00 AM**. We will be cleaning up after the sale on **Saturday, May 24, at 3:00 PM**. Extra workers are requested to come for setup on **Tuesday** and for cleanup on **Saturday**, both at **3:00 PM**. Many hands make light work!

Linda Lincoln, Nancy Pangia, and Donna Stevens are coordinating our sale and will be happy to answer your questions. We need things to sell – rummage items may be brought to the church starting on **Sunday, May 18**.



BUTTON CLUB NEWS



There is no meeting this month at the church. Most of the club members are going to the **New York State Button Show** at the Treadway Inn in Owego, **May 2-4**. The show is open to the public and there is no admission fee. There will be dealers selling buttons, competitions, a Friday night auction and a Saturday night program. The theme this year is "County Fair" so it should be lots of fun! For more information contact **Pat Silvernail**.

QUILT PROJECT CONTINUES

The **Presbyterian Artisans Quilters**, who meet on Friday mornings, have recently completed the 144 necessary squares which will make up the center of our quilt. We "played" with different patterns and made a decision as to which to use. The pieces were then numbered and placed in proper sequence for piecing together.

This quilt will be on display as soon as it is completed and you will soon be able to attempt to win it. The drawing will be in the late fall. It is going to be just gorgeous, with each square having a pink center and green shades on one side and light beige and white on the other.

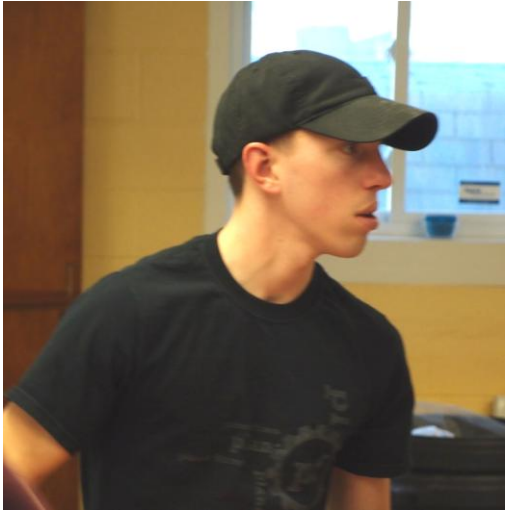
PROPERTY COMMITTEE UPDATE

Our church grounds are looking very spiffy, thanks to the efforts of many dedicated volunteers. Thanks to all who work to keep our church looking so nice!

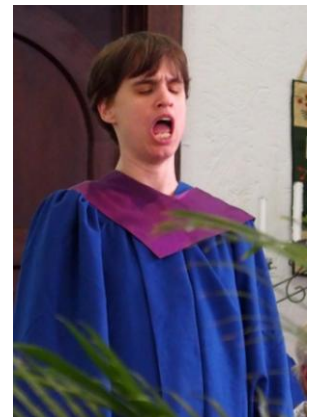
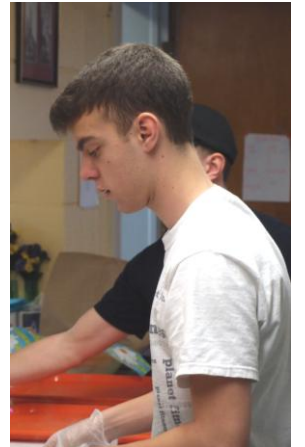
- On Good Friday, April 18, **Scott and Sheila French, along with granddaughters Alissa and Ashley French and Alexis and Alison Keach**, cleaned leaves and debris from all the flower and shrubbery beds surrounding our church building.
- On Saturday, April 26, **Brian Dean, Chris Dean, Jenny Dean, Pat Fitzgerald, Scott French, Sheila French, Tom Halm, Bill Howells, Kathy Johnston, and Linda Lincoln** spent the morning cleaning up the area along the northern edge of our church's Welles Land property – the group took down a number of trees, removed stumps, and cleared dead wood and debris from the tree line border.



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WEEKLY EVENTS

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



SPECIAL EVENTS

May 4	Holy Communion
May 11	Mother's Day -- Bill Howells will lead worship service
May 20 (Tues.)	Set up for Rummage Sale – 3:00 PM
May 21 (Wed.)	Organize / price items for Rummage Sale – 9:00 AM - ?
May 22 (Thurs.)	<i>(If necessary)</i> Price items for Rummage Sale – 9:00 AM - ?
May 4 (Sat.)	Rummage Sale – 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM
May 25	Sunday of Memorial Day weekend -- Memorial Day observed Monday, May 28
May 25	"Pennies from Heaven" collection during morning worship
May 25	Information due for the June <u>RED DOOR</u>

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Worship Committee	Meets following church service on May 18
Property Committee	Wednesday, May 21 – 6:00 PM
Session	Wednesday, May 21 – 7:00 PM



CHURCH PICNIC SET FOR JUNE 15

Mark your calendar for a culinary adventure and a time of worship, fellowship, fine food, and fun! Plan to join us at the Big Flats American Legion picnic pavilion for our annual church picnic. The date is **Sunday, June 15**. Sharpen your taste buds and watch for more details next month.