



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/)

The Perfect Church (Author Unknown)

If you should find the perfect church without one fault or smear, for goodness sake, don't join that church! You'd spoil the atmosphere. * If you should find the perfect church where all anxieties cease, then pass it by, lest joining it, you'd mar the masterpiece. * If you should find the perfect church, then don't you ever dare to tread upon such holy ground, you'd be a misfit there. * But since no perfect church exists made of imperfect men, then let's cease looking for that church and love the church we're in. * Of course it's not a perfect church. That's simple to discern. But you and I and all of us could cause the tide to turn. * What fools we are to flee our post in that unfruitful search, to find at last where problems loom, God proudly builds His church. * So let's keep working in our church until the resurrection. And then we each will join that church without an imperfection.

Dear Friends,

From the time of Jesus to the present the community of faith has been defined by brokenness. There are those who would define the church as perfect - if the church would only do this or do that, we would be better, happier, more perfect. If we are not aware of the 'cracks' in our own lives then we become judgmental of the 'cracks' in others. No one is a perfect 'offering'. The cracks allow the light and spirit to enter in. The apostle Paul boasted of his weakness because it made him stronger. Our brokenness, whether in our relationships, health issues, loss of friends, family, jobs, finances, is an opportunity for God's love, our love and care of each other, to enter in. When Jesus says, "This is my body broken for you", he expresses a truth we must embrace. As we welcome the New Year as followers of Christ my prayer is that our brokenness, that defines us as a 'cracked-pot organization', enables us to be a stronger church.

God Bless,

Rev. Rick



kintsukuroi:(verb phrase) "to repair with gold"; (noun) the art of *repairing pottery with gold or silver lacquer and understanding that the piece is more beautiful for having been broken.*

GLEN EARL BATES JR. (1916 - 2014)

Glen Bates, a lifelong member of our congregation, passed away peacefully on December 25, 2014 at the age of ninety-eight (born November 25, 1916). Glen was born and lived all of his life in the town of Big Flats. He loved this area and enjoyed spending time in a number of outdoor activities. An engineer, Glen worked for American LaFrance, retiring in 1982. Glen was quite active in civic affairs in Big Flats, including such organizations as the Rotary Club (a Paul Harris Fellow), the Fire Department, the Board of Commissioners, the Planning and Zoning Board, the Rural Home Cemetery Association, the School Board, Boy Scouts, the Lions Club, and the Historical Society. He was named the Big Flats Lions Club Man of the Year Award in 1996, as well as the Town of Big Flats Citizen of the Year in 2009. Glen was an integral part of our church, serving as a deacon, trustee, and elder, as well as part of many committees. Glen was a loving husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. He was a genuinely nice man, gracious to others, and the personification of what it means to be a gentleman. Glen will be missed.



(Glen in 2012)

Circle of Love

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:

- Thanks go to **Linda Lincoln, Donna Stevens, Sheila French, Ann Slowik and Gigi Price** for a successful Silent Auction on December 7.
- On December 14, we celebrated the baptism of **Wyatt Brenning**.
- Our quilt raffle was a huge success, raising nearly \$800. The lucky winner was **Diana Daniels**, of East Corning. Thanks go to our wonderfully talented quilters and to all those who sold tickets and supported our fundraiser!
- Thanks to the **Prices and Deans**, who braved the cold to harvest our Christmas tree and to all who helped decorate.
- On Christmas Eve, many volunteers from our congregation manned the kettle and rang the bell at Miniers to raise funds for the Community Food Pantry. Thanks to all!
- **Barb Gilbert** organized our church's donation of fruit for the Food Pantry. Thank you to all who pitched in.
- And thank you to **Rev. Rick, Nancy Compton, Mary Ellen Rudnick**, our vocal and bell choirs, and all those who made the Christmas Eve Service so joyous and so meaningful. Special thanks to **Joyce Dean** for the stunning display of poinsettias!
- 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 18. Congratulations to: **Scott French, Jill Knight, Gigi Price, and Luke Gromer**. Thank you for being willing to serve our church in this way. A special thank you to those elders who are leaving Session: **Cathy Neally, Linda Lincoln, Donna Stevens, Tyler Stevens, and Kay Wolcott**. We appreciate your gifts of time and talent.



The sympathy of our congregation is extended to the family of **Glen Bates**. In our concerns this month, we ask for prayers for: **Alan Giglio (Pat Fitzgerald's nephew), Alexis Keach, Joyce Dean, Reva Soutar, Nick Rudnick, Emma Gardner, Flora Berke, Irene Hooey, 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 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 Big Flats Presbyterian Church community? See Rev. Rick or Bill Howells, and we will include your news in our Joys/Concerns column.



IT'S PER CAPITA TIME!

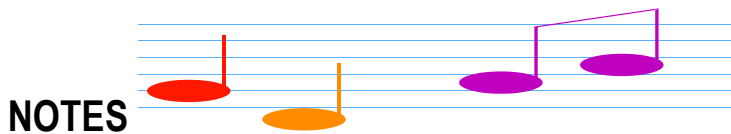
Each year the church must pay a fee to our Presbytery for each member. This year that individual member fee is **\$44.00**. Our total per capita amount for 2015 is **\$6028**. These monies are used to fund outreach programs, disaster relief, the resource center for the churches, and Camp Whitman programs. 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 14

Well into our fourth 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 15, we hosted a free-of-charge breakfast as a thank you for the support of our local community. Our fund-raising breakfasts resumed on January 10, and will continue to be held on throughout the winter and early spring. Our next breakfast is slated for **Saturday, February 14, from 8:00 - 10:00 AM. - bring your honey to have some pancakes!!** Subsequent breakfast dates are **March 14, and April 11**. The cost for each meal has been set at \$6.00. 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**.



NOTES

FROM OUR MUSIC DEPARTMENT

FROM THE CHOIR LOFT There is always room for one or two more in the choir loft. We have purchased a couple of extra robes and another pew can be added if need be. Anyone who loves to sing is invited to join us on Sunday morning at 9:30 for our rehearsal. (No traveling on dark, cold evenings to attend choir rehearsal.) We are beginning to work on music for Lent, Palm Sunday and Easter. We have some great and joyously praiseworthy music for the upcoming church season. Feel free to join us for the season or for the long haul. We have a pretty good time of fun and fellowship and will always welcome additional singers. Join us! We'll save you a seat.



FROM THE BELL CHOIR After taking a short hiatus during January for R and R, the Bell Choir will begin practice again soon for the Lent, Palm Sunday, and Easter seasons. Some new pieces will be forthcoming, and if you would enjoy "ringing" with us, please see the Director of Music.

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 and Gigi

ADVENT MISSION DRIVES VERY SUCCESSFUL

Our congregation responded with great generosity to our 2014 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! We also had a number of monetary donations.

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.**



POT LUCK DINNER TO BEGIN OUR OBSERVANCE OF LENT – FEBRUARY 18



On Ash Wednesday, **February 18, at 6:00 PM**, our church will mark the beginning of the season of Lent in a special way. We will have an informal gathering and pot luck supper. Please bring a dish to pass -- place settings will be provided. There will be time for those attending to share Bible verses which have special meaning in their lives. Following the dinner, **Rev. Rick** will distribute oil/ashes to those who wish. Don't have time to prepare a dish? Decide to come at the last minute? No problem! All are welcome!

NOTICE – PLANS FOR CHURCH HOUSE USE

Any plans for use of the church/church house should (please!) be approved/cleared with **Rev. Rick** and/or the Property Committee. Those plans should also be related to **Gigi Price** by the Chairperson of the Committee through which the request is generated so that she can record them on the Church Calendar. Thank you for your cooperation!

FOOD PANTRY BELL-RINGING CAMPAIGN A SUCCESS

Julie Spangenberg-Jolley, Director of the Big Flats Community Food Pantry, has reported on a very successful Christmas bell-ringing campaign during which a number of local churches and civic groups raised funds in the lobby of Minier's Supermarket. On December 24, volunteer ringers from our church raised over **\$1300!** The total raised by all groups was over **\$7000!** Thank you to all who donated time and money to help others.



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**

CONCERNED ABOUT THE FLU? Health officials are stressing frequent hand-washing as a major way to prevent the spread of flu infection. Our church has provided bottles of antiseptic gel for your use. They may be found on the tables in the back of our sanctuary, as well as in our kitchen.



DONATE TO OUR CHURCH ELECTRONICALLY!

Our church now has an easy and safe way to donate electronically using your smartphone. All you need is one of the many free QR (quick response) code reader Apps available for your smartphone equipped with a camera.



To donate, first print this page (works best if nothing is printed on the back side). Then, just open the camera and point it at the QR code below. The APP will read the code and take you to the First Presbyterian Church donation page on the Presbyterian Mission Exchange website. You may have to navigate through a few prompts but it's worth the effort!

Once you reach the church's page, click the **GIVE NOW** button. You'll see a dropdown menu to choose which fund you would like your donation to go to along with options for one-time or recurring gifts. You can donate using your credit card or direct transfer from your bank (you'll need your bank account number and routing number).

Use this easy way to donate when you can't make the service, forget your donation envelope or don't have cash or checks handy. Also friends and family can contribute when they visit our church.

Mark Slowik



PHOTO GALLERY



ANNUAL REPORT: Our “*Annual Report for 2014*” was distributed during the Congregational Meeting on January 25. 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 2015, 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 (<i>note: scouts meet on the first Wednesday of each month and then on subsequent Tuesdays</i>)

SPECIAL EVENTS

February 1	Holy Communion
February 1	“Souper Bowl” Sunday
February 14 (Sat.)	Pancake Breakfast – 8:00 - 10:00 AM
February 15	Blanket Sunday – collection to help disaster victims
February 18	Ash Wednesday – Potluck Dinner – 6:00 PM
February 22	“Pennies from Heaven” collection during morning worship
February 22	Information due for the March RED DOOR
February 25 (Wed.)	Lenten Ecumenical Dinner series begins – time and place to be announced

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Worship Committee	Meets following church service on February 8
Property Committee	Wednesday, February 11 – 6:00 PM
Session	Wednesday, February 11 – 7:00 PM

“SOUPER” BOWL SUNDAY – FEBRUARY 1



Go Patriots! 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 of Caring 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 1**, and we hope that you will join us in helping those in need.

BLANKET SUNDAY SET FOR FEBRUARY 15

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 15**. 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 15.

