



# 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/)



*This letter is sent to you with a heart full of love and a flame of hope*

*(original artwork by Anna Price)*

*Five years ago I took a Sabbatical to reevaluate my ministry. I returned with vigor and vitality for the church and my position. I embraced my limitations and celebrated my gifts. Now, 5 years later, I need to embrace my limitations but in a different way. I need to move on the next leg of my journey.*

*Recently, I have sounded like the Psalmist: "How long, oh Lord?, "My eyes are weak, my faith and heart are strong.", "Is it time to leave this place I've called home for almost 25 years?". I have known my vision was getting worse but I struggled and fought for it not to impair my ministry. I began asking myself, "Can people work under these conditions?" When I look out on my church family on Sundays everything is hazy and very inconsistent. Often there is a red tint that veils an already blurry, unrecognizable face. Often I cannot make out smiles, frowns, sadness, laughter on your faces - this loss of emotional feedback is exceptionally difficult. I don't see raised hands. I may not see certain people where they sit in the pew. I have struggled to read road signs, see road workers. I was having difficulty driving to places that I used to easily access. Ultimately, anxiety and depression, lack of confidence and capabilities set in. My focus became largely on me and my worsening sight rather than the mission of this church and its community goals.*

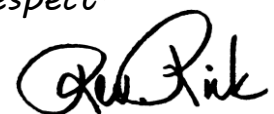
I knew I needed to go back to Johns Hopkins Hospital (JHH) in Baltimore to verify that I was not just imagining this. JHH is where I regained my vision 30 years ago after losing it to diabetic retinopathy. At JHH the Dr. showed us the picture of the retina of my left eye/good eye. The right eye has been virtually blind for years. He showed us the damage from past laser treatments in the center of the retina and said the cells were dead/atrophied/and tissue cannot be restored. Both Drs I saw in JHH suggested I should not be driving. I am no longer driving. I know many will step forward to say they'll drive. I do appreciate that and will need that between now and when I leave. But, it's more than just that. I feel a loss of dignity and confidence, and there remains a pervading fear.

I have always prided myself on two things - preaching and pastoral care. I feel they may have both been affected by my preoccupation of my loss of sight although my vision, our mission, for our church remains strong,

**"To be a family of faith that journeys together  
in nurturing love, fellowship and openness to all people;  
making known God's love through Jesus Christ in the World."**

So, you see, my loss of sight has affected me physically, spiritually, and mentally. Once, I was blind and saw... Now, I have seen and am losing my sight. It's a difficult experience and working this way is highly unsettling to me. This is not going to be easy for neither me nor our church family. I need to restore my hope. I need to find a quiet place where I can do that. I am sorry. I didn't want to leave this way but it must be done for the benefit of all. I need your support and love. I've prayed long and hard. I've always believed that no one is irreplaceable - and that applies to me, too. "I may not make it to the Promised Land but I'll be with you always." I have cherished and loved our journey together. February 7th will most likely be my last Sunday - my tentative date to seek disability. I feel this gives us time for a practical/orderly and emotional transition.

Thank you for your listening ears, love, support, and respect.



## Jacqueline (Farr) McMann (1931 – 2015)

Jackie McMann passed away on Thursday, July 23, 2015. She was eighty-three years old (born November 6, 1931). Jackie was a loving wife (husband John passed away in 1990), mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, sister, and aunt. She worked for years as a catalog designer for Paper Magic in Troy, PA, and was also a member of the Troy Bowling League and the Rebekahs. Jackie was a beloved member of our congregation, always ready to help with coffee hours, church dinners, anything involving art, and many other church functions. Jackie will be missed.

## JOYS AND CONCERNS

# Circle of Love

Summer 2015 was a time of both joy and sadness in our little church. We were blessed with inspiring worship services, uplifting music, and a lot of hard work by willing volunteers; at the same time we grieved the loss of one of our members. In the upcoming months we face the challenge of moving forward as a community of faith through a time of transition.

On Sunday, August 30, **Rev. Rick** announced his intention to retire (see *his letter, Page 1-2*), to be effective in early February. We pledge **Rick, Gigi, and their family** all our love and support, and we ask for prayers for the Price family and for our church family as we continue our journey of faith.

**Rev. Rick** made each Sunday service special this summer. His messages this summer allowed us to travel through the Gospels of Mark and John with Jesus and his disciples. **Tom Seem, Sylvie Farr, Dr. Eunice Nayo, and Dave Stafford**, led us in morning worship on those Sundays Rev. Rick was away. While our choir enjoyed a much-deserved summer respite, **Nancy Compton, Mary Ellen Rudnick**, and a variety of talented guest artists gave us music to make our spirits soar each week. Thanks to **Barb Horn, Paul Holland, Carrie Hooper, Sue Kramer**, and all those who made summer worship so meaningful!

Special thanks go to **Scott and Sheila French**, who spend many hours keeping our church lawn and our Welles property groomed to perfection! Thanks, also, to **Pat Fitzgerald** for his continuing efforts at weed and pest control.

Congratulations and best wishes to **Zachary Price and Kelby Beecher**, who were married on July 25. May happiness follow you always!

Our church quilters have been very busy – this year's "raffle quilt" is outstanding! Please pitch in to help us sell tickets. **Nancy Compton** will be happy to answer any questions about this project.

The sympathy of our faith community is extended to the family of **Jackie McMann**. Among our other concerns this month, we ask for prayers for: **Rev. Rick, Joyce & Sam Dean, Larissa & Miranda Page, Alan Giglio (Pat Fitzgerald's nephew), Reva Soutar, Nick Rudnick, Emma Gardner, Flora Berke, Irene Hooey, Lydia Middaugh, Ginnie Schweizer, Dudley & Marie Shea, 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.*



## PROVIDERS NEEDED FOR FLOWERS, BULLETINS AND COFFEE HOUR

Our new church year starts on Sunday, September 13. Worship time resumes at 10:30, our choir returns, and our Sunday School kicks off a new year! Some of the things that make for special Sundays at our church include: flowers for our sanctuary, special bulletins for our worship services, and our wonderful coffee hours. **Sign-up sheets** have been posted on the bulletin board in our Church House – please help keep Sundays special at Big Flats First Presbyterian.



## SUNDAY SCHOOL RESUMES SEPTEMBER 13

Our Christian Education Committee has announced that regular Sunday School classes will resume on Sunday, September 13. All are welcome and encouraged to join us. Classes are held during morning worship and are open to youths from pre-K through grade eight.

### STEWARDSHIP DRIVE TO START SOON

Stewardship Season will soon be here. Please keep an eye out for your pledge letter and give prayerful consideration to your response. As we approach our 188th Anniversary, let our stewardship – time, talent, and financial support, toward the church reflect our pride in our past and continued faith in our future.

### SUNSHINE CLUB NEEDS MEMBERS AND VOLUNTEERS

For a number of years, members of our "Sunshine Club" (name coined years ago by **Peg Halm**) and other willing and wonderful volunteers have provided meals and visits to members of our faith family during times of grieving, illness, recovery from surgery, and other such times of need.

**Ann Hayes** serves as coordinator of these efforts. We are called upon for help quite often, and we need reinforcements! If you are willing to be listed as a meal provider or can help in any other way, please contact Ann (**562-8523**) or put your name on the sign-up sheet on our church bulletin board. Thanks so much to those who have helped in the past. It is so appreciated when illness is overwhelming one's daily life.



### A STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

First Presbyterian is thankful for all the gifts that our church family gives to us. If you are able to pledge on a regular basis, might you be ready to take the next steps? Have you ever considered lifetime gifts? Are you willing to leave a legacy of kindness and love for your church?

Planned gifts can be made by naming the First Presbyterian Church of Big Flats as a beneficiary in wills, insurance policies, IRA's and more. If you are interested in such giving you are encouraged to talk to your estate planner or attorney. A **Presbyterian Foundation 'Ministry Relations Officer'** can help. Having an experienced gift development officer discuss with you your goals and the options available can be helpful. Your **Ministry Relations Officer** can be located by calling **800-858-6127**, option #3.

You have proven time and again that one person *can* make a difference. Please consider making a difference for years to come.

Thank you – The Stewardship Committee.

### SPAGHETTI DINNER SLATED FOR OCTOBER 8

Our church is planning a fundraising dinner for **Thursday evening, October 8**. The menu will feature spaghetti and meatballs, salad, beverage, and choice from a variety of desserts. We will charge **\$6.00** per person, with a maximum of **\$12.00** for a family of four. Take-out meals will be available. It will take help from everyone to make this a success. Details will be announced during morning worship and sign-up sheets will be posted for volunteers. **Nancy Compton** and Ann Slowik are coordinating this event.



## FALL RUMMAGE SALE PLANNED FOR LATE OCTOBER

Our Rummage Sale Committee has announced plans for this fall's sale. The sale date has been set for **Saturday, October 24**. The committee has also announced a change in our traditional schedule. In an effort to generate more "foot traffic" we will also be open on **Friday evening, October 23**. Please start collecting your rummage sale items – items can be brought to the church in October. Further details will be announced in next month's **RED DOOR**. **Linda Lincoln, Nancy Pangia, and Donna Stevens** will be happy to answer your questions.

## QUILT RAFFLE THANKS

Many, many thanks to all of the people who have helped so far with the QUILT RAFFLE. As you probably know, this project is one of the major money-making projects our church sponsors each year. This year's quilt is a Log Cabin pattern called "Beads". It consists of four color families: teal, purple, green and coral. These color "blocks" are connected by white and light beige patches. It is stunning! As a result, this year's quilt was invited to be shown at the **Quilts, Vines and Finger Lakes Wines Quilt Show** in Watkins Glen. We were also invited to sell raffle tickets at the show.

We thought that the people who have made "significant contributions" to this year's quilt project deserve special recognition. This list includes those who donated fabric, cut, sewed, ironed, helped pay for the batting and the machine quilting, applied the binding, completed the hand-sewing and sold raffle tickets at the Quilt Show on August 22 – 23: **Ann Hayes, Karen and Galer Perreault, Robin Fitzgerald, Dottie Warren, Nancy Compton, Bev Miles, Bill Howells, Dottie Hoos, and Barb Gilbert**.

Thank you to all of you! We have done our best to omit no one. If we have inadvertently done so, please let us know. We want to include EVERYONE!

Remember - We are all just one stitch in the fabric of faith. It takes many stitches to make a quilt!



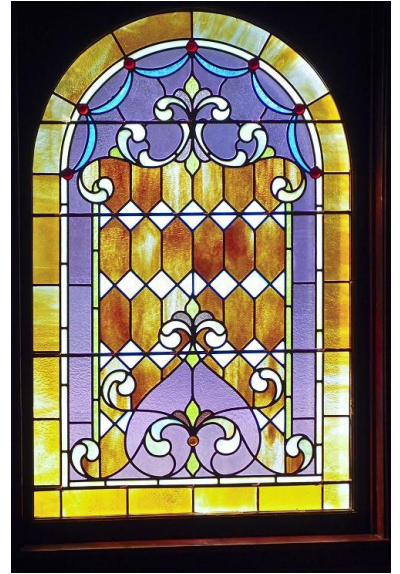
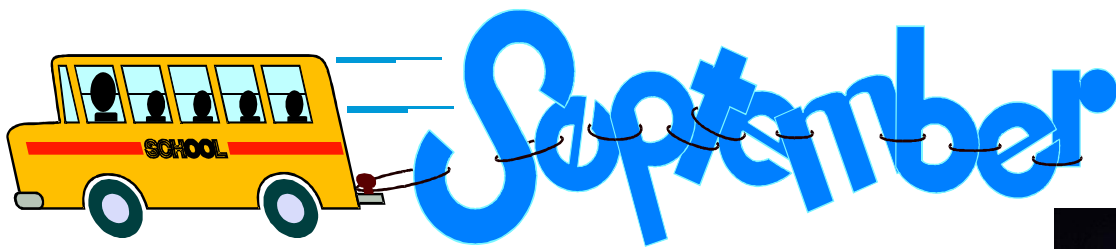
## FROM THE CHOIR LOFT

**CHOIR:** Our Choir will reconnoiter on Sunday morning, September 13th at 9:30. We WILL be singing for the 10:30 service, so please try very hard to be on time. I promise an easy anthem, but we have much work to do on anthems for the following weeks. Have you thought about Advent being just twelve short weeks away? That makes Christmas sixteen short weeks away. I know, I know! You don't want to hear it, but facts are facts and, I believe that we can all admit that during Advent and Christmas, the music that we share is especially beautiful and meaningful. Why don't you give us a try? We have a lot of fun (usually at the director's expense) and our choir loft has seating for many more!!! Please join us! We're saving one of those seats for you.

**HANDBELLS:** Our handbell choir will be starting again very soon. We rehearse one late afternoon each week. This time seems to work best for both working and retired folks. If you would like to be part of this group, please see Nancy Compton. Music reading ability is not mandatory, but is helpful. This, however, is an excellent way to hone your music reading skills. We are going to need some additional ringers (sometimes known as "ding-a-lings"). We need people who can revolve in and out when additional ringers are needed. We can ring some music that is a bit more advanced if we have a few extra ringers. Additionally, some folks insist on getting sick from time to time, and we can always use substitutes. It is a one hour rehearsal once a week. WE NEED YOU!!! Please consider this opportunity for service.

# ***SUMMER 2015***





## WEEKLY EVENTS

SUNDAY, September 6	Worship at 9:30
SUNDAY (beginning September 13)	
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 PM	Boy Scout Troop #87

## SPECIAL EVENTS

September 13	Holy Communion
September 13	Fall Kickoff Sunday – Special Coffee Hour
September 27	Information due for the October <b>RED DOOR</b>
September 27	“Pennies from Heaven”
October 8 (Thurs.)	Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser – 5:00 PM
October 23 – 24	Rummage Sale – details TBA

## COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Worship Committee	September 13 – following morning worship
Property Committee (Wed)	September 16 – 6:00 PM
Session (Wed)	September 16 – 7:00 PM

Be sure to visit us on the web: [www.bigflatsfirstpres.org](http://www.bigflatsfirstpres.org)