



**The First Presbyterian Church
of Washingtonville**
The Good News-Letter

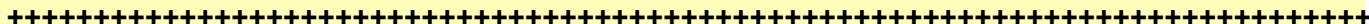


February 2018



Ash Wednesday
February 14
7:30 PM

Soup & Bread Supper
6:15 PM



Saturday, February 24
5:00 - 7:00 PM

First Presbyterian Church
Washingtonville

See Karen Lipton for details.
\$10.00 adults,
\$8.00 seniors/children
Supply donation is posted.
Come join us!

**First Presbyterian Church
of Washingtonville**

Session Moderator
Rev. Martha Carlson

Clerk of Session
Deborah Chedister

The Session
Nancy Bruscano 2018*
Nancy Popoloski 2019*
Bill Cooke 2019

Board of Deacons
Mark Chedister 2018
Debbie Woodmansee 2018*
Sue Roosje 2019
Karen Lipton 2020*
Beth Cooke 2020

*indicates second term

Pastor
Rev. Martha Carlson

Organist
Bill Hooper

Office Manager
Cynthia Carey

30 Goshen Avenue
Washingtonville NY
845-496-3814
firstpres@frontiernet.net

Office Hours are:
Tuesday - Thursday
3:30 PM - 6:30 PM

Rev. Martha Carlson
revmpc86@yahoo.com

First Presbyterian Church
www.fpcw.makeswebsites.com

Presbytery of Hudson River
www.hudrivpres.org

From The Pastor

Dear Friends,

In the midst of the freezing and thawing of January's weather, I've been thinking about resolutions. I'm still enough of an optimist to make some at the beginning of the year, and some of them don't get started until after the last Christmas cookie is eaten, and most of them freeze and thaw and start and restart like the weather. A few of the more farfetched ones are ancient history by the beginning of February (one year I was going to donate a bag of books to the library every week of the year.) However, this is a great time for resolutions. The Season of Lent which starts this month is a time for thawing any resolutions we've made about trying to reach a new level in our relationship with God.

The church is full of opportunities to get closer to God. In worship, the Lenten Scriptures explore various ways God has a covenant with us, from the rainbow in the cloud in Genesis to the way Holy Week is a fulfillment of prophecy. Special events like the Ash Wednesday service call to mind how very important it is that God offers us a fresh start. And in church we can explore and try out new spiritual practices.

What is a spiritual practice? I turned to the unusual spiritual authority, Wikipedia, for a definition. "A spiritual practice or spiritual discipline (often including spiritual exercises) is the regular or full-time performance of actions and activities undertaken for the purpose of inducing spiritual experiences and cultivating spiritual development." Let's break that down, though. A practice is anything we do in the hope of getting better at it, like the practice involved with playing a sport or a musical instrument, or something we do with our special training, experience and gifts, like the practice of law or medicine. So a spiritual practice is something we do regularly to improve spiritually or to get experience and training with our spiritual gifts.

So, are we capable of a spiritual practice? Isn't everything good we do or experience a product of God's grace? We can't get into heaven by pulling ourselves up by our own bootstraps, so we're not really helping by doing more of things that can be measured or observed, like more minutes spent in prayer or more verses of the Bible memorized. In fact, when we start counting our own good deeds, it's human nature to count our neighbor's good deeds too and judge whose good deeds are better, and that's not only not helping, it's harming. And when we do religious things so that they can be measured or observed by people, we're not really doing them for God in the first place. These arguments have held generations of Presbyterians in a state of wariness about spiritual practices.

But what about the idea that we're somehow specially gifted to please God? We do have gifts of the Spirit and we believe that God likes it when we use those gifts. God has given us the Bible for our instruction and we believe God likes it when we follow the instructions. God has given us neighbors whom God loves, and we believe God likes it when we love them too. Even if we end up doing some measurable things, what matters is our motivation to please God.

During this season of Lent, as we contemplate trying some new spiritual practices, let's remember that we're not trying to get better THAN others. We're trying to get better WITH others, and thereby open a space for God to create in us a clean heart and put a new and right spirit within us. (Psalm 51.)

Grace and peace to you,
Martha



Worship Ministry

The Lord's Supper will be celebrated on February 4. Pastor Martha will be away on vacation February 5 through 13. Enjoy your vacation Martha and Edd! We pray for your safe travels.

CRE Lynn Costa will be our guest pastor on Scout Sunday, February 11. Join us in recognizing the Boy and Girl Scouts as we welcome back a very good friend to our pulpit!

As we enter into the season of Lent, please join us and the Bethlehem PC family for the Ash Wednesday service on February 14th at 7:30 PM. A soup and bread supper begins at 6:15 in Hazekamp Hall. Please sign up to bring soup or bread and to let us know you will attend on the bulletin board in the hallway.

New officers will be installed during the worship service on February 18. First Presbyterian Church of Hamptonburgh will hold its annual Black History program at 3:00 PM on Sunday, February 25. The FPC Chancel Choir will sing. All are invited to attend.

Blessings, The Worship Ministry

Scout Sunday



Many churches will celebrate Scout Sunday this February. It's appropriate that many scout troops meet in a church. Boy and Girl Scouts are taught to develop themselves mentally, physically, spiritually and morally - all Christian virtues. They also learn to serve others.

Join us and our scouts as we celebrate Scout Sunday on February 11.

Where's the Pastor?

Martha ordinarily has office hours at Bethlehem 9-12:30 Monday and Tuesday, and at First Washingtonville Tuesday and Thursday 1:30-5. Anyone is welcome to call or stop in at office hours of either church. Calls made on those phones during office hours will reach Martha; messages left on those answering machines will reach Eileen at Bethlehem or Cynthia at First. Her home phone number is 845-614-0048; her cell number (which might be changed within a few weeks because its reception is poor in the manse) is currently 717-953-2257. Messages left on either of these numbers will reach Martha. You can also speak to her before worship at First, after worship at Bethlehem, before or after choir practice or scheduled board meetings at either church (check the church bulletin for dates), before or after Bible study on Wednesday mornings at First, arrange to have dinner with her on a Thursday in Washingtonville, or make an appointment. Other things to know about Martha's regular weekly schedule is that her Sabbath is ordinarily on Friday, unless there is a scheduled church event on Friday and then her Sabbath will be announced in church publications, and that she spends as much time as possible on Saturdays somewhere out of the way preparing for worship.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
					4:00 PM Girl Scout Troop #493	10:00 AM Girl Scout Troop 592
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9:30 AM Worship, Lord's Supper 8:00 PM A.A.	Pastor Martha Vacation	Pastor Martha Vacation 7:00 PM Troop 416	Pastor Martha Vacation 9:30 AM Bible Study 6:00 PM Choir rehearsal 8:00 PM A.A.	Pastor Martha Vacation 7:00 PM N.A.	Pastor Martha Vacation	Pastor Martha Vacation
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
9:30 AM Worship, Elder Lynn Costa Scout Sunday 8:00 PM A.A.	Pastor Martha Vacation	7:00 PM Troop 416	9:30 AM Bible Study 6:15 PM Soup & Bread Supper 7:30 PM Ash Wednesday Service 8:00 PM A.A.	4:00 PM Girl Scout Troop 503 7:00 PM N.A.	4:00 PM Girl Scout Troop #493	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
9:30 AM Worship Office Installation 8:00 PM A.A.		7:00 PM Troop 416	9:30 AM Bible Study 7:00 PM Joint Session Meeting at Bethlehem PC 8:00 PM A.A.	6:00 PM Choir rehearsal 7:00 PM N.A.		10:00 AM Girl Scout Troop 592 5:00 - 7:00 PM Spaghetti Dinner
25	26	27	28			
8:30 AM Breakfast with Pastor Martha 9:30 AM Worship 3:00 PM Hamptonburgh PC 8:00 PM A.A.		7:00 PM Troop 416	9:30 AM Bible Study 6:00 PM Choir rehearsal 8:00 PM A.A.			

Sundays - 9:30 AM Worship Service
10:30 AM Coffee Hour

Church Office Hours are:
Tuesday - Thursday, 3:30 - 6:30 PM



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO

- 11 Mary Kate Paulus
- 12 Beth Cooke
- 14 Richard Baroni
- 16 Helen Robinson
- 24 Bobbie Trager
- 27 Ray Fuentes

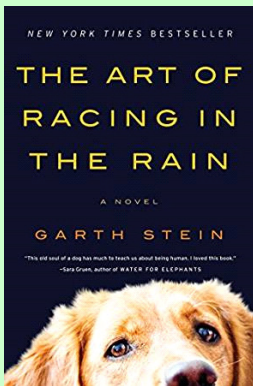
Prayer for February from Pastor Martha

Amazing God, when we realize that Ash Wednesday and Valentines' Day are the same day, help us to think a new thought about the depth and faithfulness of Your love. While we were still sinners You gave Your Son, and He willingly gave Himself, for us. Give us grace to respond to this great gift of love by offering our love, our gratitude and ourselves. Amen.

Habitat for Humanity of Greater Newburgh

From Meme Hanley Borin, Director of Fund Development - "I would like to personally thank you for the support of Habitat for Humanity's mission of building houses and building hope in partnership with hardworking families in need of decent and affordable housing. Construction is in full swing on PresbyBuild's eight house located on Ann Street in the City of Newburgh. Together we have dedicated 89 houses and served over 450 children and adults through our homeownership program. Thank you for making a difference in the lives of these well-deserving local families. We could not do it without you!

The Art of Racing in the Rain by Garth Stein



The New York Times best-selling novel from Garth Stein—a heart-wrenching but deeply funny and ultimately uplifting story of a dog's efforts to hold together his family in the face of a divisive custody battle.

Enzo knows he is different from other dogs: a philosopher with a nearly human soul (and an obsession with opposable thumbs), he has educated himself by watching television extensively, and by listening very closely to the words of his master, Denny Swift, an up-and-coming race car driver.

Through Denny, Enzo has gained tremendous insight into the human condition, and he sees that life, like racing, isn't simply about going fast. Using the techniques needed on the race track, one can successfully navigate all of life's ordeals.

On the eve of his death, Enzo takes stock of his life, recalling all that he and his family have been through: the sacrifices Denny has made to succeed professionally; the unexpected loss of Eve, Denny's wife; the three-year battle over their daughter, Zoë, whose maternal grandparents pulled every string to gain custody. In the end, despite what he sees as his own limitations, Enzo comes through heroically to preserve the Swift family, holding in his heart the dream that Denny will become a racing champion with Zoë at his side. Having learned what it takes to be a compassionate and successful person, the wise canine can barely wait until his next lifetime, when he is sure he will return as a man.

New Year's Eve

On December 31st after service and in spite of the freezing temperature the congregation gathered for a New Year's Eve celebration. Over Champagne (sparkling cider) and appetizers enjoying the food and company we looked at all our activities of 2017. The congregation presented Sue Hegmann and Hanora Sullivan with a plant and a thank you for their services as the Congregational Life team.



Snow Cancellation

Our church cancellation policy during the winter months is to evaluate weather conditions on a case by case basis to determine if church closure is advisable for the safety of our congregation. The church's answering machine will have a message about closure. Our website will have a special notice on the front page. A group email will be sent and phone calls will be made to members of our congregation who do not have computers or do email.



Thank You

- to Ernie Hegmann Sr., John L. Sullivan, Hanora Sullivan and Peggy Wright as they continued to work on the Overfield Room. Great work!

- from Pastor Martha - Thank you to everyone who participated in the generous gift cards you gave me for my birthday and Christmas. What I liked most about them was the fact that I know my ministry here is surrounded by your love, support and prayers. God bless you all.

Mark your calendars - **Food for Kids** will be holding its second annual fundraiser at the Newburgh Brewing Company on March 11th, 1:00 - 4:00 PM.

There will be a 50/50 raffle and special baskets and gift certificates to be raffled off. Good food, good drinks and live music will make it a fun afternoon for a wonderful cause.

Board of Deacons

Food Pantry The food pantry welcomes all donations. Needed for February is: macaroni and cheese, canned or bags of beans, canned fruit, pudding or Jell-O. Please add at least one of these items to your shopping list. Donations can be placed in the wicker basket outside Hazekamp Hall.

Angels on Call - We are creating a new list of volunteers who would like to do God's work by bringing meals to members that are in need (post surgery, trauma, emergency, etc). or drive a member who need a ride to the doctor. You can contact any of the deacons and/or sign up on the volunteer list which is posted.

Coffee Hour Needs: Currently coffee hour needs are styrofoam cups along with cookies - baked or store bought. Thank you all for helping the Deacons keep the kitchen stocked!

Prayer Shawl The Deacons are so happy to have this special ministry to help with their shepherding.

E Prayer Circle Please contact Lois Dunikowski at lbd9999@hvc.rr.com if you have any prayer requests.

Emergency Use of the Church Building

If any person in our church family is without power, water, or heat, and needs to use the church as a safe haven, please contact your deacon shepherd so he or she can direct your need to the appropriate ministry elder(s).

The Deacons are very happy to serve the members of this congregation. Please let your deacon shepherd know if he or she can help you in any way. (There is a list posted on the bulletin board in the Denniston Room if you are not sure who your deacon shepherd is.)

Celebration!

Sunday, December 17th, was Peggy Wright's birthday. Her special day was recognized during worship as she had the honor of lighting the candles on the Advent wreath assisted by her family. The celebration continued with her special birthday cake for fellowship time following worship. What a joyous occasion for Peggy to have her multigenerational family and her faith family surrounding her with love!



A Matter Of Love

Read: Mark 12:28-34

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
with all your soul, and with all your strength.”

- *Deuteronomy 6:5*

“Where intellect and emotion clash, the heart often has the greater wisdom” wrote the authors of *A General Theory of Love*. In the past, they say, people believed that the mind should rule the heart, but science has now discovered the opposite to be true. “Who we are and who we become depends, in part, on whom we love.”

Those familiar with Scripture recognize this as an ancient truth, not a new discovery. The most important commandment God gave to His people gives the heart the prominent place. “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength” (Deut. 6:5). Not until the gospels of Mark and Luke do we learn that Jesus added the word *mind* (Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27). So, what scientists are just now discovering, the Bible taught all along.

Those of us who follow Christ also know the importance of whom we love. When we obey the greatest commandment and make God the object of our love, we can be assured of having a purpose that transcends anything we could imagine or our strength could achieve. When our desire for God dominates our hearts, our minds will stay focused on ways to serve Him, and our actions will further His kingdom on earth and in heaven.

Lord, we long to make You the supreme desire of our heart.

As You taught Your disciples to pray, so too we ask You to teach us how to love.

Guide us today.

Count as lost each day you have not used in loving God. - Brother Lawrence

INSIGHT: According to rabbinic tradition, there are 613 commandments in the Torah (the Pentateuch) which every pious Jew must keep. When asked which of these commandments is the most important, Jesus (quoting Deuteronomy 6:4-5 and Leviticus 19:18) said to “love the Lord your God” and “love your neighbor” (Mark 12:30-31). All the commandments are summarized in the duty of love (Matthew 22:40). This priority of love is echoed by John, the apostle of love, in 1 John 4:7-21.

--Our Daily Bread

With blessings of love from the Nurture Ministry



**Calendar of Prayer for our
Congregations and Leadership**

The endorsed calendar of prayer is a way for us to be united. It's an awesome responsibility and gift to pray for one another. To make our offering on behalf of one another. Each member congregation, staff member, elected servant leader, ministry team, and mission commitment of our Presbytery is represented:

Calvary PC Newburgh, Holmes Presbyterian Camp & Conference Center, Carmel PC Gilead, Rev. Noell Damico-Director of Communications at the Presbytery, Amenia PC Smtihfield, Freedom Plains PC United, Cornwall-on-Hudson PC, and Emily Monk-Finance Manager at the Presbytery.



VISION STATEMENT

*Together, we worship God through our
Study, Stewardship, Service, and Song.*

Call Cynthia at 496-3814 or send an e-mail to firstpres@frontiernet.net
to share your news with our church family!



***First Presbyterian Church
30 Goshen Avenue
Washingtonville NY 10992***

Address Correction Requested

