

# The Bell Ringer

## Of the Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow

A Friendly Church; So When You Come — Bring a Friend

January 2017



### Inside This Issue:

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Pastoral Column.....                      | 1,2 |
| Church Officers .....                     | 2   |
| Letter From Lori Galen.....               | 2   |
| Christian Education News                  | 3   |
| Stewardship News.....                     | 3   |
| Budget News.....                          | 3   |
| Mission Team .....                        | 4   |
| History: Sweet Hollow or<br>Melville..... | 5,6 |
| Women 4 Women.....                        | 6   |
| Book Discussion.....                      | 6   |
| Church Brunch.....                        | 6   |
| Prayer Shawl Ministry.....                | 6   |
| January Calendar .....                    | 7   |
| Prayer Corner.....                        | 8   |

### Pastoral Column:

by Rev. Joan Finck

Friends:

A missionary told the story of an African boy who listened carefully as his teacher explained why Christians give presents to each other on Christmas Day. "The gift is an expression of our joy over the birth of Jesus and our friendship for each other" she said.

When Christmas day came, the boy brought the teacher a sea shell of lustrous beauty. "Where did you ever find such a beautiful shell?" the teacher asked as she gently fingered the gift.

The youth told her that there was only one spot where such extraordinary shells could be found. When he named the place, a certain bay several miles away, the teacher was speechless. "Why....why it's gorgeous, wonderful, but you shouldn't have walked all that way to get a gift for me."

The youth's eyes brightened as he responded: "long walk part of gift" showing how well he understood the idea of a gift. The joy in his eyes told everyone that he had given of himself and had received joy in the process. The teacher then graciously accepted both parts of the gift and hugged the boy.

I can't help but wonder how many of the gifts we have given over the last year were presented with the same amount of sacrifice and love.

I spoke to a woman in Queens who told me that her family doesn't have time to buy and wrap gifts for Christmas, so they all just buy each other

*(Continued on page 2)*

## CALL OF CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

The Annual meeting of the Congregation of The Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow, located at 95 Old Country Road, Melville, New York 11747, will be held in the Sanctuary on Sunday, January 29, 2017, immediately following the 10:00 a.m. worship service.

By order of the Session  
Lynn Burke, Clerk

***(Continued from page 1)***

gift cards. I understand the practicality and sometimes necessity of this, but I wonder if this is really a gift giving– or family bartering.

When I was on a cruise to Alaska, a group of us attended a Lutheran Church in Sitka. During the announcements, the pastor asked those members of the church to stand up. Then he requested that those of us who were visiting from the cruise ships stand up. Members were about 60 percent and visitors about 40 percent. The pastor then invited everyone to come down to the fellowship hall after service for fellowship and food. We were treated to a lunch with salads, hot dogs, sweets, drinks, etc. This was their weekly outreach – to strangers who most likely would never return to their city. What a wonderful gift – what a wonderful witness to the gospel of Christ.

God loves each of us unconditionally without asking for payment. He loved us enough to send Jesus to show us the way and to die on a hard, wooden cross. That is the greatest gift.

**My hope and prayer for 2017 is that we will grow in our “concept of a gift” and share the gift of the gospel with all that we meet.**

**May the peace of Christ be with you in 2017.**

**Letter from Lori Galen:**

It has come time for me to move forward in my life. I have decided to leave Sweet Hollow and join the Presbyterian Church by my home here in Sullivan County, NY. For 51 years I have been a member of Sweet Hollow and will always consider it my home. I will miss all my friends who I consider to be my extended family. I love you all. To the choir, I think of you every time I sing. I will never forget all of the wonderful times I have spent in both locations of Sweet Hollow. My heart will always be with everyone. God bless and many hugs,

Lori (Nantista) Galen

**Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow**

Rev. Mary Margaret Flannagan, Pastor

Rachel Fogel, Choir Director

Barbara Zimmerman, Secretary

**Elders**

Lynn Burke, Clerk of Session

|                   |                    |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| Brian Bacchus     | Maureen Sansone    |
| Melissa Beyer     | Brian Schiffmacher |
| Charlotte DeSanti | Jim Sommermeyer    |
| Tim Mason         |                    |

**Deacons**

Niaja Mowatt, Moderator

|                   |                      |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| Jim Beyer         | Frank Sansone        |
| Barbara Blanthorn | Audra Schmitt        |
| Jean Cavanaugh    | Bill VonBrook        |
| Bill Chamberlain  |                      |
| Laura Fallon      | <u>Youth Deacons</u> |
| Daniel Layer      | (1 year term)        |
| Susan Manning     | Natasha Bacchus      |
| Barbara Martin    | Anthony D’Angelo IV  |

**Other Groups & Activities**

|                       |                      |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Book Discussion       | Sukey Walter         |
| Christian Education   | Lynn Burke           |
| Church Brunch         | Bill Walter          |
| Fellowship & Outreach | Maureen Sansone      |
| House                 | Brian Schiffmacher   |
| Mission               | Charlotte DeSanti    |
| Personnel             | Charlotte DeSanti    |
| Prayer Circle         | Carol Keil           |
| Prayer Shawl Ministry | Sukey Walter         |
| Stewardship           | Jim Sommermeyer      |
| Women For Women       | Maureen Sansone      |
| Worship               | Melissa Beyer        |
| Youth Group           | Pastor Meg Flannagan |
| Bell Ringer Editor    | Bill Chamberlain     |

## Christian Education News

by Lynn Burke

**Sunday School** resumes on January 8 when we will continue our unit on the "Visit of the Magi." Our next lesson plan will be "The Beatitudes" from Matthew 5:1-12. We look forward to seeing the children in class.

**Confirmation Class** continues on January 8 as well. There is a full schedule of activities planned.

**Volunteers are needed** for teaching and as Room Shepherds for both the Nursery and Sunday School. Please sign up on the sheet in the back of the Sanctuary.

**Dinner and Discussion** at the Sweet Hollow Diner will start again in the spring.

## Stewardship News

by Jim Sommermeyer

**With God all things are possible** is our Stewardship theme this year.

To date we have received 32 pledges for \$75,466 compared to 35 pledges for \$89,436 as reported at the Annual Congregational Meeting in January 2016. If you have already pledged for 2017, thank you for your generosity! If you have not yet pledged, please prayerfully consider pledging prior to our Annual Congregational Meeting on January 29.

We are also planning to continue faith testimonies throughout 2017, with Melissa Beyer scheduled to share her testimony in January. We wouldn't be the "Little Church with the Big Heart" without you and your time, talents, and treasures supporting all the good work we do!

## Budget News

by Jim Sommermeyer

The Budget committee has been working diligently to prepare a reasonable budget to be presented at the Annual Congregational Meeting in January. Five service providers have informed us of increases for 2017 for which we must budget.

Please keep in mind that our Roof Repair Fundraising campaign will not stop until we have reached our stated goal.

**One active member has issued a Challenge Match wherein for each \$10,000 donated to the fund, a \$1,000 match will be made, up to a total of \$3,000.** However, there is a slight catch in that it expires at the end of 2017.

Let us continue our positive momentum with this highly successful fundraising campaign and replenish our reserve fund before the end of 2017!

## Mission Team

by Charlotte DeSanti

Happy New Year Church Family! As we begin 2017 and end another year for our "Little Church with the Big Heart," The Mission Team thanks you once again for your generosity.

Everything for our Adopt-A-Family from Madonna Heights (nine mothers and their nine children) was purchased. Proceeds from the Pumpkin Patch helped to purchase the gift cards for the Moms. The shopping that you did and your monetary donations for the children completed the rest. We were also able to donate remaining funds to a dear church family.

I want to give the biggest thanks to Sukey Walter. Sukey has been doing this for years and years (26 I think!!!!). She organizes everything and completes any shopping that was not done. With all that has to be done here at church and with all that we in our own lives have to do at this time of year, I don't know how she does it — not to mention the Christmas Boutique and all the baking she does for it. And let's not forget Carol Keil who also helps with the baking and plants for the boutique and all she does with Sunday School. Sweet Hollow is truly blessed all these years for these two very wonderful women!

I also want to thank our wrapping elves; Jean Cavanagh, Reverend Joan Finck, Teddy Tanksley, and Sukey for all their help before we delivered our gifts. Madonna Heights was so very thankful.

Thank you as well for all your donations of mittens, scarfs and gloves for the children and families of TriCYO. We had two huge bags to give. I want to thank especially Carol Keil's sister-in-law, Linda Cooper who knitted the greatest portion of these scarfs and hats. They were absolutely beautiful, the colors and all the different styles. So much of Linda's time and generosity is deeply appreciated.

For the month of January we will be collecting healthy snacks for the children of TriCYO. The Sharing Bags will be in church the second week of January and run through the end of the month.

Don't forget our Souper Bowl of Caring coming up in February if you would like to get a head start. It's a contest amongst nine or so churches to see who can collect the most soups and other food items for all the local food banks within their area. Please remember each Sunday to bring a canned or boxed food item, diapers, baby formula, baby wipes or health and beauty aids for our Box of Giving in the breezeway or church foyer. After the holidays donations fall a little short and this is the hardest time of the year for families with the cold weather.

Again, we wish you ALL ahead. Thank you for all you year that keeps our Mission

### Food Drive



a Very Happy and Healthy New Year do and all you give throughout the Team going.

# SWEET HOLLOW OR MELVILLE

by William T. Walter

What is the proper name, Melville or Sweet Hollow? Sunsquams was the Indian name; however, Samuel Ketcham's Hollow appears to be the name first used for the region in which our church is located, named for one of its earliest settlers. Why the name was changed to Sweet Hollow has received much speculation. Some say it is because of the natural sweets found there, stores of wild honey found in the hollows of trees. Others say that the name came from the account of a farmer who was hauling a hog's head of molasses in his wagon when the bung accidentally came out of his barrel spreading molasses along the Sweet Hollow dirt road trail and 'sweetening the hollow'.



Early travelers by land between Huntington and settlements to the west followed the old Indian trail, now Old Country Road. The route entered West Hills along Chichester Road, turning south following the present Sweet Hollow Road between the high hills on either side and then proceeding west along Old Country Road. This was the stagecoach route before Jericho Turnpike was laid out in 1812 to avoid the steep hill at Mount Misery Road just west of the present church site. Sweet Hollow was a self-contained settlement whose early pioneers included Baylis, Carmen, Jarvis, Everett, Ketcham, Nostrand, Oakley and Smith families. Sweet Hollow became a center for the surrounding community with a store and a tavern and about 1850, a wayside blacksmith shop. Mail was delivered to Sweet Hollow as early as 1798. A post rider delivered mail weekly and by 1826, twice weekly. Formation of the Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow in 1829, at the corner of Old Country Road and Sweet

Hollow Road on land donated by Joseph Nostrand, established the Sweet Hollow church as the community center. On August 16, 1852, the first post office in Sweet Hollow opened.



In 1852 School District No. 14 listed its name as 'Sweet Hollow'; however in 1854 it was 'Melville'. The July 5, 1856 minutes and the minutes thereafter of the Session of the Presbyterian Church were headed 'Melville'. Other Town records of 1856 mention 'Sweet Hollow', while in 1857 the same region was officially called 'Melville'. Why was the name changed to Melville? No one living in this area was named Melville. Some say it was named after the noted Melville family in England, Henry Dundas and his son Robert, the first and second Viscount Melville (1724-1851); however, no direct contact between this family and the area has been found. Others point to the listing of 'mel' in the dictionary as

*Continued on next page*

## **Sweet Hollow or Melville—Continued**

honey and speculate that a few years before the Civil War a small ‘ville’ changed its name from ‘sweet’ to ‘mel’ creating Melville. The lower photo on the previous page shows the church in 1906 with the carriage sheds in the back located on the northwest corner of Sweet Hollow and Old Country Roads.

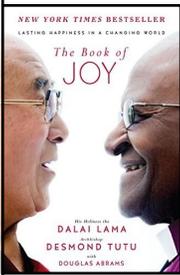
After World War II families moving to the area found an inactive church with a sign reading ‘Presbyterian Church of Melville’. When the Presbyterian Church was reorganized following an 18-year period of dormancy, the Session minutes begin, “The Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow was reorganized at a meeting held in the Church on October 3, 1948 at 3:00 p.m.” At the bottom of the first page the minutes continue, “Although the Church is located in what is now known as “Melville”, the locality when the Church was first organized was known as “Sweet Hollow.” With this fact in mind a resolution was duly made and adopted at this meeting that the Church be known as the Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow, Huntington, N.Y.”

## **Women For Women (W4W)**

On Monday, January 9 at 7:00 p.m. a game night will be hosted at the church by Charlotte DeSanti. All women age 21 and older are invited to come join in the fun.

## **Book Discussion**

by Sukey Walter



Our new book is The Book of Joy, A Discussion Between the Dalai Lama and Desmond Tutu. Our next meeting is Thursday, January 19 in the parlor at 1:30 p.m. Two spiritual giants, five days and one timeless question. How do we find joy in the face of life’s unavoidable suffering?

## **Church Brunch**

Next Church Brunch will be on Tuesday, February 14, Valentine’s Day, at 10:00 a.m.

## **Prayer Shawl**

The next Prayer Shawl meeting will be February 16 at 1:00 p.m. in the parlor.

# January 2017

| SUNDAY  | MONDAY   | TUESDAY  | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY                          | FRIDAY    | SATURDAY  |
|---|--|--|-----------|-----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| <b>1</b><br>10:00 Worship   | <b>2</b><br>Office Closed<br>Jonathan Mandel's<br>Birthday | <b>3</b><br>7:30 Choir Rehearsal<br>Rachel Fogel's<br>Birthday                                 | <b>4</b>  | <b>5</b>                          | <b>6</b>  | <b>7</b>  |
| <b>8</b><br>10:00 Worship<br>Sunday School<br>11:15 Confirmation<br>Bill Von Brook's<br>Birthday          | <b>9</b><br>7:00 Women+Women                               | <b>10</b><br>7:30 Choir Rehearsal  | <b>11</b> | <b>12</b>                         | <b>13</b> | <b>14</b> |
| <b>15</b><br>10:00 Worship<br>Sunday School<br>11:15 Confirmation   | <b>16</b>  | <b>17</b><br>7:30 Choir Rehearsal<br>Timothy<br>Schiffmacher's<br>Birthday                     | <b>18</b> | <b>19</b><br>1:30 Book Discussion | <b>20</b> | <b>21</b> |
| <b>22</b><br>10:00 Worship<br>Sunday School<br>11:15 Confirmation   | <b>23</b><br>7:30 Session                                  | <b>24</b><br>7:30 Choir Rehearsal  | <b>25</b> | <b>26</b>                         | <b>27</b> | <b>28</b> |
| <b>29</b><br>10:00 Worship<br>Sunday School<br>11:15 Confirmation<br>11:15 Annual<br>Congregation Meeting | <b>30</b>  | <b>31</b><br>7:30 Choir Rehearsal<br>Bill Chamberlain's & Cristian D'Amore-Sivo's<br>Birthdays |           |                                   |           |           |

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
OF SWEET HOLLOW**

*95 Old Country Road  
Melville, NY 11747*

**Phone: 631-367-9249**



*We're on the Web!*

*www.sweethollowpresby.org*

**BELL RINGER DEADLINE  
for February Issue  
Monday, January 30**

**Prayer Corner**

by Carol Keil

As you begin the new year, we hope you might consider joining the Sweet Hollow Prayer Circle as we meet weekly at 10:00 a.m. Wednesday mornings in the church Parlor. We typically begin with a period of *lectio divina* Bible study as we prayerfully reflect on a passage of scripture that will be read in worship the following Sunday. We then lift up prayers of concern, healing, thanks and joy as requested by our members and friends.

This month our prayers are focused on those members who are caring for aging loved ones:

For Lynn Burke and her family as they care for Lynn's mother Jessie Pleasants.

For Donna Farahat and her family as they care for Donna's mother Katherine Lacko.

For the Martin family as they care for Caroline Martin.

For Maureen Sansone and her family as they care for Maureen's mother Barbara Ravid.

We lift up prayers for the family of Kelly Furone as they mourn her death at age 39.

We lift up healing prayers for Rev. Connie Wilkerson. Connie recently underwent surgery aimed at relieving nerve damage to both arms as a result of an ATV accident last August. Connie served at Sweet Hollow as Interim Pastor from 2000-2001.

Please send requests for those you would like mentioned in the Bell Ringer Prayer Corner to Carol Keil:

[c1keil@aol.com](mailto:c1keil@aol.com)