

# THE RED DOOR



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BIG FLATS, NY – APRIL 2017

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

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

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Friends,

Populations of the captivating orange and black monarch butterfly have plummeted in recent years. To help with conservation efforts, scientists have calculated the extinction risks for the eastern migratory population of monarchs, which overwinter in Mexico and migrate up through North America during warm spring and summer months. Their new data suggest that these butterflies have an 11–57% chance of going quasi-extinct if new efforts are not taken to protect them.

Eastern monarch populations have declined by about 80% over the last decade, primarily because of the destruction of important breeding sites inhabited by milkweed in the United States. Monarchs lay their eggs on milkweed, and newly hatched caterpillars feed exclusively on these plants.

The milkweed plant used to be abundant in our fields and along our roadsides. Now those plants are being eradicated as a result of development and by wide spread use of chemical weed killer. At the same time the summer habitat of the Monarch has grown smaller. Illegal logging is claiming more and more of the butterfly’s winter habitat in Mexico.

Climate change further complicates the challenge facing Monarchs. Temperatures above 95 degrees can be lethal for larvae and eggs dry out in hot, arid conditions causing a drastic decrease in hatch rates.

I invite you in this Lenten season, when one of the symbols of the great mystery of resurrection is the butterfly, to pray for this most delicate and lovely gift from our Creator and to raise your voices, that our concerns may be addressed and policies altered.

There is hope. In 1962 Rachel Carson’s book, *Silent Spring*, led to the banning of DDT and to the saving the of the Bald Eagle, which too was on the road to extinction.

Following is the Environmental Policy of the Presbyterian Church (USA):

“... God’s work in creation is too wonderful, too ancient, too beautiful, too good to be desecrated...Restoring creation is God’s own work in our time, in which God comes both to judge and to restore...”

I leave you with this cautionary note by the poet Mary Oliver titled *Watching a Documentary about Polar Bears Trying to Survive on Melting Ice Floe*

That God had a plan, I do not doubt.  
But what if His plan was, that we would do better?

With God’s help we will do better.

Blessings,  
Pastor Beth



# Circle of Love

## JOYS AND CONCERNS

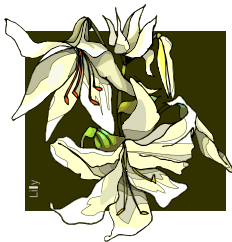
Winter is finally behind us (we hope!), and our little church is blossoming with faith and warm fellowship. Fasten your seatbelts, because it's going to be a busy spring! Some of our March highlights included:

- On Ash Wednesday, March 1, we started our Lenten journey together at a potluck supper and informal service. Those who wished were able to receive ashes from Pastor Beth as a reminder of our mortality. It was a very special evening.
- On Wednesday, March 8, 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. Special thanks to **Pat Seem** for the beautiful centerpieces on each table!
- Our fundraising pancake breakfasts continue to be a hit. The season's last breakfast will be held on **Saturday, April 15**. Thanks to all who work so hard to ensure our success!
- Our **Lectio Divina Bible Study** group meetings have been rewarding times of spiritual growth and fellowship. The group will continue meeting each Thursday morning during Lent (see calendar page). All are welcome!
- Finally, as spring arrives, our Sunday soup sales end. We truly appreciate the efforts of our talented soup makers. Thank you to all who provided this wonderful home-made goodness and thanks also to those who bought soup and helped support this special project.



Many in our faith community need our help and support. The sympathy of our congregation goes to **Dorothy Hoos**, on the passing of her sister Roberta. Among other concerns this month, we ask for prayers for: **Rev. Rick Price, Jean Uszenski (Joe Pangia's mother), Phil Hubbard, Brandon Davis (nephew of Sheila French and Lisa McGill), Wendy Fought (niece of Sheila French and Lisa McGill), Denise Wiskowski (sister of Debbie French), Peter Middaugh, Alan Giglio (Pat Fitzgerald's nephew), Heinz Weissenbuehler, Reva Soutar, Nick Rudnick, Emma Gardner, Irene Hoey, Ginnie Schweizer, Dudley & Marie Shea, Marge Larocque (Gigi Price's mother)**, and others who are dealing with ill health, surgery, loss, or life changes. Please remember our shut-ins, and 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 faith community? See Pastor Beth or Bill Howells, and we will include your news in our Joys/Concerns column.***



**EASTER PLANTS:** Those who wish to place Easter plants (lilies or tulips) in our church "in memory of" or "in celebration of" should contact **Dean's** at **562-8120**. The cost per plant is \$15.00.

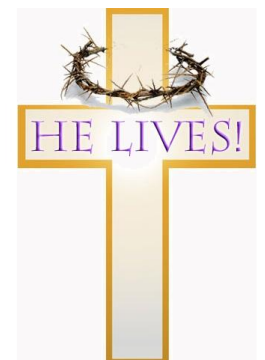
## HOLY WEEK SERVICES

**Thursday, April 13 (7:00 PM)** – in our Sanctuary – Maundy Thursday Service

**Friday, April 14 (12:00 Noon)** – Good Friday ecumenical service at Hillview United Methodist Church

**Sunday, April 16 (7:00 AM)** – Sunrise Service at Hillview United Methodist Church – breakfast to follow

**Sunday, April 16 (10:30 AM)** – in our Sanctuary – Easter Service with Holy Communion



## EGG HUNT TO FOLLOW EASTER SERVICE

Our annual Easter Egg Hunt will be held after Church on **Easter Sunday, April 16**. Event coordinator **Ann Slowik** has asked for donations of wrapped candy and non-food items to fill the eggs. Donated items should be left in the church kitchen by **Palm Sunday, April 9**. This is always a fun event for our children. Please do what you can to help make this annual tradition such a success. Also, please plan to join us for all the fun following morning worship on Easter Sunday!

don't miss the  
**big egg hunt**

## SPRING RUMMAGE SALE COMING MAY 6 (MAYBE!!!!)



Our Spring Rummage Sale has been (tentatively) scheduled for **Saturday, May 6, from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM**, with lunch served and a bake sale.

The schedule is tentative because our sales rely completely on volunteers to be successful. The size of our volunteer crew has been diminishing in recent sales, with fewer people pitching in. Sign-up sheets will be circulated during morning worship in coming weeks. If we get enough folks to volunteer, the sale will go forward – if not . . . ???

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 **Wednesday, May 3, starting at 9:00 AM**, and we will then continue working to organize and price items for the sale. If needed, this work will continue on **Thursday, May 4, also at 9:00 AM**. We may also be working on Wednesday and Thursday evenings. We will be cleaning up after the sale on **Saturday, May 6, at 2:00 PM**. Extra workers are needed for setup on **Wednesday morning** and for cleanup on **Saturday**.

Our sale is truly a win – win – win event – a chance to recycle your un-needed items; a chance to help raise funds for our church; a chance for everyone in our community to buy quality items at bargain prices! Please consider spending a few hours of your week to make this sale successful.

**Linda Lincoln, Nancy Pangia, and Donna Stevens** are coordinating our sale and will be happy to answer your questions.

## FINAL 2016/17 PANCAKE BREAKFAST SLATED FOR APRIL 15

Our Pancake Breakfasts continue to be the premier gourmet experience of the greater Big Flats area. Discriminating breakfast buffs know that our combination of wonderful food, friendly service, and great prices just can't be beat. Thanks to all who have helped make these events so successful. Our last breakfast for this season will take place **Saturday, April 15, 8:00 - 10:00 AM**. The cost for each meal is \$5.00 for adults. There is no charge for those under six years old.

This series of meals is an ambitious project for our little church, and it takes a lot of help to ensure success. Please do your part by pitching in to help and also with your patronage.

Questions?? Talk to **Sarah Cory**.

## NOTES FROM THE CHOIR LOFT

Things are beginning to get a little dicey in the choir. When one person is out of town or ill, we can usually deal with it, but when we only have eight to begin with, two folks missing can be a disaster. We hold our breath every week until we see the whites of the eyes of our faithful members on **Sunday morning at 9:30 AM**. We have a lot of fun and we believe that what we do serves as inspiration to the congregation. Think, for just a moment, what the service would be like without music. **PLEASE**, consider joining us. Just come **one** time. We guarantee that the blessings that you receive if you join us will far outweigh any effort that you have to make.



## APRIL 23 – HOLY HUMOR / LAUGHTER SUNDAY

Our church will observe Holy Humor / Laughter Sunday on April 23. The idea of setting aside one Sunday each year to celebrate God's gift of laughter and joy has a long and rich history in many congregations around the world.

Churches in 15<sup>th</sup> century Bavaria used to celebrate the Sunday after Easter as **Risus Paschalis** ('God's Joke,' or 'the Easter laugh'). In the Orthodox tradition, people would gather on Easter Monday to tell jokes and funny stories, and to dance and eat together.

In 1988, the Fellowship of Merry Christians began encouraging churches to resurrect some of these Christian traditions—to celebrate the grace and mercy of God through the gift of laughter and joy.

G.K. Chesterton once wrote:

*"Angels can fly because they take themselves lightly.  
Never forget that the devil fell by force of gravity.  
He who has the faith has the fun."*

So come to church on Sunday April 23 with a joke and/or your sense of humor as we continue the joyful celebration of the Resurrection.



## FOOD PANTRY TO CONDUCT SPRING DRIVE

A special food drive to benefit the Big Flats Community Food Pantry will be held during April. Our congregation's efforts will be part of a local campaign involving area businesses, churches, and civic groups. Can you help? Contributions of money or food items will be gratefully accepted. Further details will be announced during morning worship.



Questions? - Julie Spangenberg-Jolley (524-6143).

## CHURCH PICNIC SET FOR JUNE 18

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 18**. Sharpen your taste buds and watch for more details in months to come.



# WE ARE A COMMUNITY OF FAITH!



### WEEKLY EVENTS

SUNDAY	9:30 AM	Choir Rehearsal
	10:30 AM	Morning Worship
TUESDAY	12:00 – 2:00	Food Pantry is open
	6:30	Boy Scout Troop #87

### SPECIAL EVENTS

April 2	Holy Communion
April 5 (Wed.)	Lenten Ecumenical dinner First Presbyterian (HHDS) – 6:00 PM
April 6 (Thurs)	Lectio Divina group to meet – 11:00 AM
April 9	Palm Sunday
April 13 (Thurs)	Lectio Divina group to meet – 11:00 AM
April 13 (Thurs.)	Maundy Thursday service – 7:00 PM
April 14 (Fri.)	Good Friday service at Hillview Methodist – Noon - ?
April 15 (Sat.)	Pancake Breakfast – 8:00 – 10:00 AM
April 16	Sunrise service & Breakfast at Hillview Methodist – 7:00 AM
April 16	Easter service with Holy Communion
April 23	“Holy Humor Sunday”
April 30	Pennies from Heaven collection
April 30	Deadline for articles for May <b><u>RED DOOR</u></b>

### COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Worship Committee	Meets following church service on April 9
Property Committee	Wednesday, April 19 – 6:00 PM
Session	Wednesday, April 19 – 7:00 PM

### TO CONTACT OUR CHURCH:

**TO WORSHIP WITH US: Sundays at 10:30 AM – 95 Main Street, Big Flats, NY**

**TO CALL US: (607)562-8048**

**TO MAIL US: First Presbyterian Church of Big Flats, P.O. Box 454, Big Flats, NY 14814**

**TO VISIT US ONLINE: /www.bigflatsfirstpres.org/**