



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/)

Dear Friends,

It is hard to believe that we are already in the middle of 2018. Our long cold winter and our reluctant spring are suddenly behind us and we find ourselves in the hot hazy days of summer. Many are planning vacations, times to get away, to be refreshed, and invigorated. Some are making lists of books for leisurely summer reading. For myself I have found the best of summers combine both relaxation and opportunities to learn about something of which I had little or no previous knowledge. Difficult to do in the busier months of the year and so far this year life at First Pres has been busy.

The PNC, the Pastor Nominating Committee, has completed significant tasks, The Property Committee has been hard at work with ongoing projects. You wrapped up two successful ministries to the greater community with your Pancake Breakfasts and your Rummage Sale, and Ann Slowik is making her vision for Shared Blessings a reality (see article on page 3). You spent time at the Annual Picnic sharing your broad visions for the future. You are thinking "outside the box" as you become aware of the need in the wider community. Could we say any ideas were unrealistic, or even crazy?

In our reading of Mark a couple of weeks ago we heard the critics of Jesus say he was out of his mind as he performed miracles and healed the sick. Crazy is what they were saying. Michael Curry, the presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, believes that in this time in history we need more crazy Christians.

Christians crazy enough "to follow the radical way of the gospel. Crazy enough to believe that the love of God is greater than all the powers of evil and death. Crazy enough to believe, as Dr. Martin Luther King often said, that "the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice."

We need some Christians crazy enough to believe that children don't have to go to bed hungry; that the world doesn't have to be the way it often seems to be; that there is a way to lay down our swords and shields, and crazy enough to believe that every human being has been created in the image of God, and we are all equally children of God and meant to be treated as such. *

I challenge you to continue to be just a little crazy as you envision our church's future and what it means to be a Christian in the world today. And I recommend that you add Michael Curry's book, **Crazy Christians** *A Call to Follow Jesus*, to your summer reading list.

It could also be the topic for a summer Study group. Let me know if you are interested.

Happy Summer!
Peace and Blessings,
Pastor Beth

*From a sermon by Michael B. Curry, *We Need Some Crazy Christians*



EMMA GARDNER (1927 – 2018)

Emma Gardner passed away at the Elcor Nursing Home on June 4, 2018, at the age of ninety. She was born August 4, 1927, in Horseheads, NY. Emma leaves a large family of children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild. She also leaves many, many loving friends. Emma was retired from the Elcor Nursing Home and Rehabilitation Center. She was an active member of our church (joined in 1959) and was also very much involved in a number of civic organizations in the Big Flats area. Emma was a very special lady

JOYS AND CONCERNS

The last two months have been very special in the life of our little church. It is truly amazing to think of all that goes on in our community of faith! The weather is beginning to heat up, but it is cool in comparison with the warmth of our spirit!

- We were blessed to have **David Knuppenburg**, Executive Director of the Golden Key Prison Ministry for Chemung County, lead our worship service on Mother's Day, May 13. Special thanks to **Joyce Dean** for providing flowers for all our ladies!
- On May 20, we celebrated Pentecost Sunday with a wonderful service and by wearing **red** to show our spirit!
- **Tom Halm and Mary Churchill** served as our color guard as we honored America on Memorial Day Sunday, May 28.
- Our Spring Rummage Sale, held on June 2, raised over **\$1200**. Thank you **Linda Lincoln, Donna Stevens**, and many willing volunteers who helped set up, price, clean up, cook/bake and work at our sale!
- One of our Big Flats Presbyterian favorites, **Kessie Kieselhorst** (Robin Fitzgerald's sister), was our guest soloist on June 3 – wonderful!
- On Father's Day, June 17, we met to worship, eat, and socialize at our annual church picnic, held at the Big Flats Community Park. Following our worship service, we enjoyed a wonderful array of delicious picnic fare. Masters of the grill, **Rocky Peters and Mark Slowik**, kept the burgers and hot dogs coming, and the legendary "**Big Flats Bakers**" provided an amazing variety of delicious side dishes and desserts. Thanks go to all our volunteers for making this such a special day!
- Food Pantry Director, **Julie Spangenberg Jolley**, is pleased to announce that *"Our pantry has received a \$100 donation from the Big Flats exercise group in honor of **Lu Norris**' 90th birthday. We are lucky to have her as part of the Pantry!"*
- Our "**Shared Blessings**" program is off to a great start. See the article on page 3 to learn more about this mission effort. Thanks to all who have worked to make this outreach ministry a reality!
- Our music ministry makes our spirits soar! Our choir members are resting their voices until the fall, and we eagerly await their return. We thank **Nancy Compton, Mary Ellen Rudnick**, and each choir member for all you do to make each Sunday special!

Circle of Love



The sympathy of our church is extended to the family of **Emma Gardner**. Among our concerns this month, we ask for prayers for: **Pat Seem, Galer Perreault, Steve French, Rehana Stanley, Cindy & Ed Leisenring, Brandon Davis** (nephew of Sheila French and Lisa McGill), **Denise Wiskowski** (sister of Debbie French), **Alan Giglio** (Pat Fitzgerald's nephew), **Reva Soutar, Nick Rudnick, Ginnie Schweizer, Dudley & Marie Shea, Dorothy Bartlett**, 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. 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.

SHARED BLESSINGS!

A COMMUNITY BASED GIVING AND SHARING PROGRAM SPONSORED BY THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BIG FLATS, NY



The "Shared Blessings" program at our church is working hard to provide a store for local people who are in need of clothing, personal hygiene supplies, some home goods, and other supplies. We are trying to get the space and paper work together so we can offer this program soon at our church for our local community. We are asking the community to get involved, whether that be donations or volunteering or simply keeping your ears and eyes open for someone who is in need. We hope to work through referrals from the local community or companies. This is in the beginning stages and our hope is to have it available in the next couple months -- we will keep everyone informed. We are hoping that this becomes infectious and we will be able to get the whole community involved, not just our church members. Most of us are very fortunate, but there are plenty of people in our own community that do need help. As we continue to work this out we have also decided to tackle a community mission project each month.

WHAT WE'VE DONE!

- **May's Mission** – a Mother's Day Crib filled with donations was given to a deserving young single mother in our community.
- **June's Mission** – Goodie Bags were filled with homemade cookies and given to the Horseheads Bus Garage and the Big Flats Elementary School.



UPCOMING EVENTS:

- **July's Mission** – Thursday and Friday, **July 19th and 20th** -- our church needs volunteers to help pass out free nutritious lunches to our children. Almost 8000 children in Chemung County are enrolled in free or reduced priced meals during the school year, and many have no lunch available when school is not in session. The state provides a lunch at several different parks in Elmira, and we are set up to pass out lunch bags at Blandford Park in Elmira on these dates. Anyone interested can just show up at the park at 11:45 on either or both days.
- **July's Mission** – We are also collecting pairs of shoes during July and will be continuing to do this throughout the year if successful. This program helps other countries develop entrepreneurial experience as well as providing shoes at a low cost to their communities. The Shared Blessings program will also benefit by getting paid for the shoes. We hope this will help us to be able to buy items needed at the community store.
- **August Mission** – Friday, **August 3rd** – our church has partnered with Corning Incorporated to offer a picnic at the Bath VA Hospital for our Veterans. Corning Inc. will supply all the food, and we need volunteers to help set up, cook, serve and clean up. Times are: Set up and Cooking – 9:00 a.m. to 11:00; Serving 11:00 – 1:00; Clean Up – 1:00 – 3:00; Visiting with Veterans from 11:00 to 1:00. You can come for an hour or stay the whole day!

We welcome all people who would like to volunteer for any of these projects, as well as ideas and donations of all kinds for our future missions! If you are interested please call the church at (607) 562-8048 and leave a detailed message on the answering machine on how you can help and we will get back to you as soon as possible! With many hands we can do great work for our local community!

A REQUEST FROM OUR DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

I am wondering how much longer the choir can limp along with eight or nine members. It becomes more and more difficult to find music for so few voices. If anyone has any ideas about how to add some members, I would be happy to discuss this with you. The choir has always been such a vibrant part of our church. It is such a shame for so few to have to work so hard to make our worship service so meaningful. Suggestions **PLEASE!!!**

PNC UPDATE

The Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) has the ultimate responsibility for nominating a minister to the congregation for election as our next pastor. The work of the PNC involves many different tasks and responsibilities as we work our way through the call process.

Just to bring you all up to date, our Minister Information Form (MIF) was presented to the Presbytery of Geneva's Committee on Ministry (COM) on May 1st in Penn Yan. Pat Fitzgerald, Sheila French and I made the trip together.

After a brief discussion with the COM members, our MIF was approved. However, they asked us to make two slight changes to answers on two of the narrative questions which we have since done. This slightly revised MIF was then presented, as required, to Session at the May meeting when it was given their final approval.

After that, due to some serious health issues which came up with three of our PNC members (myself included), I had to make the decision to put the work of the PNC on a temporary hold. I notified Presbytery, and they were fully supportive of this decision.

I sent Presbytery our final approved MIF, and it was left that they would enter it on the Christian Leadership Connection (CLC) whenever I notify them that our PNC is once again able to meet on a regular basis.

Once our MIF is entered on the CLC website, I will begin receiving Personal Information Forms (PIFs) from potential candidates. Our PNC will then evaluate each and every one of these. This part of the call process may take quite some time or it may not, depending on what type of candidates we hear from and whether or not we think they might be a good fit with our congregation.

We strongly encourage all members of the congregation to look at the enlarged flow chart for the call process which is posted on our church house bulletin board. This chart will help you to better understand how the call process works. It is a lengthy process.

As we proceed through the various required tasks on the chart, we will mark a large X through each box once that task has been completed. This will allow all of you to see what the PNC has already accomplished while at the same time allowing you to see what we still have ahead of us to complete.

Please pray for the PNC, and also remember that it is "God's own choice" who will be our next pastor.

With faith and hope,

Pat Seem

PNC Chairperson

PNC Committee Members: **Jenny Dean, Pat Fitzgerald, Sheila French, Ann Hayes, Rocky Peters, Mark Slowik**

COM Liaison: **Rehana Stanley**



**PASTOR
NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

Dear Reverend Beth and friends,

I cannot thank all of you enough for the many cards, phone calls, e-mails, gifts, hugs and words of support that you have showered me with during my current "journey" with cancer. I have felt so very loved and supported (Tom too) throughout all of this, from my tearful announcement of my diagnosis through my recent surgery. I know that many of you were praying for me, and I can tell you that the power of prayers definitely works! My surgeon just told Tom and me the wonderful news that the pathology report indicates that he successfully removed all of the cancer. Again, thank you so much to all of you. This has been a humbling experience which has left me feeling so very blessed and grateful to God that I am a member of our wonderful little church.

With love,

Pat Seem



Welcome Home!!



WEEKLY EVENTS

SUNDAY	9:30 – 10:30 AM	Morning Worship
TUESDAY	12:00 – 2:00 PM	Food Pantry is open

SPECIAL EVENTS

July 1	Holy Communion
July 1	We will observe 4th of July Sunday
July 18 (Wed.)	Property Committee and Session meetings
July 19-20 (Thurs./Fri.)	Our volunteers will distribute lunches to children in Elmira parks (Feed the Children program)
July 29	“Pennies from Heaven”
August 3 (Fri.)	Our volunteers will assist at a picnic for veterans at the Bath VA
August 5	Holy Communion
August 12	Worship Committee will meet
August 15 (Wed.)	Property Committee and Session meetings
August 26	“Pennies from Heaven”
August 26	Information due for the September/October RED DOOR
September 2	Morning Worship at 9:30 AM
September 3	Labor Day
September 9	Morning Worship at 10:30 AM

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Worship Committee	Meets following church service on August 12
Property Committee	July 18 and August 15 – 6:00 PM (Wednesday)
Church Session	July 18 and August 15 – 7:00 PM (Wednesday)

NOTE – Our 2018 Summer Worship Schedule will begin on Sunday, July 1. Summer worship services will be held at 9:30 AM. We will return to our 10:30 worship time on Sunday, September 9.