

MAY/JUNE 2020



# THE RED DOOR

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BIG FLATS, NY**

Founded 1827 ----- "Pride In Our Past – Faith In Our Future"

(607) 562-8048 ----- [www.bigflatsfirstpres.org/](http://www.bigflatsfirstpres.org/)

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## A Note From Pastor Denise

It has certainly been an interesting last couple of months. I miss seeing each of you in person. Zoom and Facebook Live allow us to continue to worship with one another, but it is not quite how we would all like it to be. I know you miss seeing each other and hugging and shaking hands.

It may still be a couple of months before churches are given the nod to gather in groups for Worship. We are in a holding pattern.

That is an interesting picture for me – a holding pattern. Often that term is used of planes waiting to land or to take off from airports – marking the ending or beginnings of journeys. Perhaps that is how we need to view this time in the life of our church, our country and our world – as a holding pattern.

We know that Journeys begin and end, but they need planning first. I encourage you to take time now to plan your journey. Think about how God can use you now and when we "open back up." Spend time reading God's Word. Spend time in Worship with us on Zoom or Facebook Live or privately on Sunday Mornings. Join us during the week for our Midday Devotions. All of these are ways we can use this time to deepen our faith and commitment to God and to our communities.

Know that you are being prayed for and thought about, by me, by the leadership of the church and by one another.

Blessings,  
Pastor Denise

## SAMUEL DEAN (1930 - 2020)

Sam Dean, beloved member of our congregation, passed away on Friday, May 1, 2020, at the age of 89 (he would have turned 90 on May 5). Sam was a wonderful husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, and he was a good friend to all who knew him. Sam had a very rich life, a life of faith, family, friends, and a love of the earth – he was a master gardener and nurseryman, always willing to share his love for making things grow. Sam was a vital part of the life of our church and the life of the Town of Big Flats. He was a wonderful Christian who was loved by all in our faith community. Sam will be sorely missed by all.

# Circle of Love

## JOYS AND CONCERNS

### We serve a risen Savior!

Even though our Holy Week and Easter Sunday services were different beyond any prior imaginings, our celebration message remains the same: **Christ Is Risen And Lives Within Each Of Us!**

We are blessed to be part of a wonderful, living community of faith and love. We worship at a distance from each other, but we are close through our shared beliefs and our love. As we live through these uncertain times let us take time to remember all those who are working to care for us, to keep us safe and to keep our world going forward. We will get through this together!

Some of our recent highlights included:

- Many thanks to **Pastor Denise and Valerie Stone** for keeping us connected and for leading us as we worship together via ZOOM, Facebook Live, and YouTube Live.
- The **Big Flats Community Food Pantry**, housed in our church, continues to serve folks in need. Thank you to all who are working to feed others!
- Our **Property Committee** continues to work to maintain our church building and grounds. Thanks to all who participate in this important work.
- Our **Worship and Property Committees** have been meeting with **Pastor Denise** to make plans for the eventual resumption of “normal” life in our church.
- Thanks to all who have supported our local mission program, **Shared Blessings!**

The sympathy of our church is extended to the family of **Sam Dean**. Among our concerns this month, we ask for prayers for: **Betty Apicello, Dorothy Hoos, Neal Gummoe, Alissa Jolley, Cathy (Neally) Hubbard, Marilyn Jenkins, Mary Ellen & Nick Rudnick, Ginnie Schweizer, Cindy Smith (sister of Pat Seem), Henry and Joyce Schurr, Martin Gromer, Cindy & Ed Leisenring, Alan Giglio (Pat Fitzgerald’s nephew), Reva Soutar, Marie Shea**, and others who are dealing with ill health, surgery, loss, or life changes. Please remember our shut-ins. 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 Denise or Bill Howells, and we will include your news in our Joys/Concerns column.***



# PLEASE WORSHIP WITH US!

## MIDDAY DEVOTIONS VIA ZOOM – TUESDAYS AND THURSDAYS AT NOON

We will gather via **Zoom** on Tuesdays and Thursdays at Noon for a brief devotion and time of prayer.

Zoom URL: <https://zoom.us/j/745507880?pwd=ZHg4THhGbXBQbFpxVTcwRHpHcG5VZz09>

If you need or want to join by phone, you can call in to one of these numbers:

**+1 646 558 8656 US**

**+1 301 715 8592 US**

**+1 253 215 8782 US**

Meeting ID: **745 507 880**

Password: **275053**

We will meet like this every Tuesday and Thursday at noon until we can meet in person again.

## SUNDAY WORSHIP

**at 10:30 a.m. via Zoom, Facebook Live and YouTube Live.**

Zoom URL: <https://zoom.us/j/705292707?pwd=SWxkR3BwSW9HaFQrK2dTZnFOQ0JMdz09>

If you need or want to join by phone, you can call in to one of these numbers:

**+1 646 558 8656 US, +1 301 715 8592 US, +1 253 215 8782 US**

Meeting ID: **705 292 707**

Password: **174036**

The Bulletin and words for the Hymns will be displayed on the Zoom page during the service.

We will also be streaming to Facebook Live and YouTube Live.

You can find the Bulletin for the Worship Service on the Notes tab of our Facebook page and the Bulletin is sent out in our weekly email notices.

***NOTE: If you have announcements you would like included in the Bulletin / on the Zoom display, please provide those to Denise and/or Valerie by Saturday mornings each week.***

**Denise's Email is [pastorbfpres@empireaccess.net](mailto:pastorbfpres@empireaccess.net)**

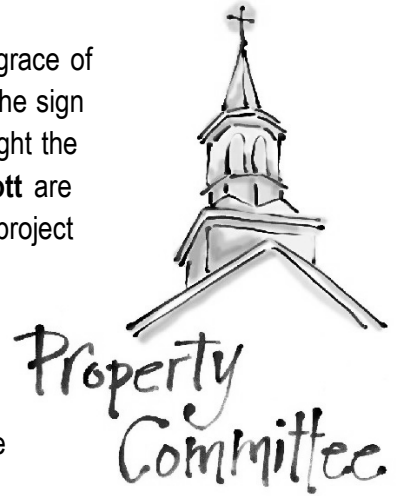
**Valerie's Email is [music2mnstry@aol.com](mailto:music2mnstry@aol.com).**



## PROPERTY COMMITTEE UPDATE

The work of our Property Committee continues during these very unusual times. Recent items of concern and progress include:

- Mother Nature toppled our sign during the high winds on April 10<sup>th</sup>. By the grace of God, the sign itself was not damaged and still works; the wooden casings for the sign broke off at the base posts. **Steve Johnston, Scott French**, and others brought the intact sign and casement into the Narthex for safe keeping. **Steve and Scott** are mulling over a sturdier base design to reinstall the sign when appropriate. This project will take priority when church activity resumes.
- Water softener: We are monitoring salt usage and coordinating our efforts with Chemung Soft Water. With monthly usage of 100 lbs. of salt, we will have to supplement bimonthly delivery with our own purchases.
- Gas usage: With cool weather persisting and no occupancy, the temperature settings in the library and sanctuary have been turned down to 58 degrees.
- Annual building inspection certificate: Receipt of the certificate is delayed as Big Flats town staff is cut back to a skeleton crew. The inspector assured us that the date of completion would reflect correctly on the certificate.
- Water department inquiry: Our Town of Big Flats Water Department asked if we were using an unusual amount of water. This does not appear to be the case as evidenced by our water bills which do not indicate higher than normal usage. No further inquiry has been made by the town water department. With no church activity, water usage should remain at the quarterly minimum.
- Annual town debris pick-up: Masked, gloved and socially distanced, a work crew gathered on April 6<sup>th</sup> to clean up the Welles property and church lawns/gardens of leaves, branches and sticks to prepare for mowing season and town pick-up. Thank you to **Jenny Dean, Kathy Johnston, Mary Churchill, Tom Seem, Bill Howells, Sheila and Scott French** for joining the fun.
- Monthly inspections: On 4/15, again masked, gloved and socially distanced, members of The Second Story Gang (**Scott, Mary, and Bill**) were pleasantly surprised to find the flat roof virtually clear of any debris. The sanctuary cellar also remains moisture and worry free. The winter coverings were removed from the foundation windows to allow for ventilation. Both sump pumps were dry. A quick walk through the facility found no apparent problems.
- On Thursday, April 30, the Property Committee met online via ZOOM to discuss plans for the eventual reopening of our church and the resumption of activities in our church building.



### RUMMAGE SALE ??????????????

We have no Rummage Sale planned for the near future, but, hopefully, we will look forward to a sale at some point. In the meantime, we ask that you save rummage items at home.

**PLEASE DO NOT BRING ANYTHING TO THE CHURCH!!**

**Linda Lincoln and Donna Stevens** are our Rummage Sale Coordinators our sale and will be happy to answer your questions. Watch for e-mail updates and please stay healthy!

## SHARED BLESSINGS NEWS

I would like to thank our wonderful church family and friends in our local community who made contributions for the young man in Elmira who just took on custody of his young children. The funds were used to purchase a Walmart card for groceries and diapers and a gas card. We also received donations towards the general account. We did use some of these donations to help the Big Flats Food Pantry. We purchased some necessities, dog and cat food, and Special treats for the participants just to lift their spirits a little during this difficult time. I think all of us who are pet owners realize how much comfort and love our animals bring us so we are going to continue to offer dog and cat food as needed each week. I want to thank **Ann Hayes** for making masks for the Food Pantry. She's a wonderful seamstress with a Big Heart.

Our mission is to give help where help is needed so if anyone knows of a local person in need please don't hesitate to call the church at 562-8048 and leave a message for shared blessings!

Our church family is small, but I am still amazed at how big their hearts are. I think we are all seeing and hearing amazing stories around the US. People are Good!

Thanks to all,  
**Ann Slowik**, Shared Blessings Coordinator

## MARCH AND APRIL FOOD PANTRY UPDATE

While the Pantry had to close for one week in March to re-tool the delivery process, we have been successful continuing to supply our neighbors with food. Horseheads Pantry unfortunately had to close. We understand their challenge of staying open; we completely changed our working staff as they were all high risk and needed to shelter in place. Now-a-days we keep all the canned food in the church house and bag everything up ahead then place the food in the trunks of people's cars as they come to our Drive-thru Pantry. The shelves up in the pantry are actually bare. We have a schedule to ensure that we never have more than 3 people in the church house from receiving food orders to closing and maintain 6 foot social distancing at all times. We ask for your help and understanding to please avoid coming into the church on Tuesdays from 9:30 to 3pm as we would like to eliminate any interaction with anyone.

We are delighted that people instinctively want to help those in need and we have received help from many of our Big Flats Community of Faith. We regularly get farm fresh eggs from **Pastor Denise and Valerie** and continue to receive anonymous donations of canned goods. We have received a large financial donation from the Methodist and from the Horseheads Lutheran churches. We were able to give out small bottles of shampoo and soap thanks to **Betsy Doan and Alissa Jolley** made masks for our working volunteers. **Ann Hayes** quickly made over 60 masks to hand out to our neighbors who had none. Shared Blessings delivered a smile by providing some comfort food (cake mix, icing, chocolate) as well as much needed tissues and cat & dog food. **Bill and Barb Powell** provided canned beef stew and Ravioli, which are always appreciated items. **Ann Slowik** made masks and provided some much needed clipboards. The Higher Hope church has reached out to us for the first time and provided cake mixes and masks.

Every week we get deliveries from Minier's and Bimbo Bread and **Ed Rhodes** brings us a Food Bank order. Currently, the Food Bank is providing a great selection of free Federal canned goods and meat, some donated food items and have also provided new food grants for Food Bank purchases (including one sponsored by Amazon). I am grateful that **Therese White, Allison Burrell and Dan Jolley** are performing the hands-on jobs of helping our neighbors, who are facing food insecurities in these uncertain times. With everyone's help in the community, we are keeping the wheels on and moving forward.

Thank you all,  
**Julie Spangenberg-Jolley**, Pantry Coordinator