

# 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/)

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Members and Friends,

These last five+ months have certainly seen a dramatic change in all of our daily lives. How we have operated as a church required us to adapt to many changes, including new avenues of Worship and relationships with one another. This has not been an easy time for anyone, but I am encouraged by how you have responded to the challenges our world has presented to us.

I am indebted to the work of our "Get-Back-Together" committee and hope you will also express your gratitude to them for all they have done.

While the doors to our church are not ready to open yet, we are close to getting there (tentative date - Sunday November 1). When the Committee and the Session believe that we can return to in-person worship in a reasonably safe manner as led by science, our denominational leadership and our own consciences, the following guidelines will be in place.

1. Please consider your own risk factors and personal comfort when returning to our sanctuary. Health guidelines recommend if you have high-risk health issues or are over 65 that you continue worshipping from home through our live portals on Zoom and social media sites.
2. Please do not come to church if you are feeling ill or have a temperature over 100F.
3. Please wash your hands prior to arrival.
4. You are expected to wear\_a mask for the duration of the service and use hand sanitizer. In the narthex there will be a hand sanitizing station and extra masks will be available for those who arrive without one. Additional sanitizer will be available in the sanctuary.
5. Upon arrival, you will be expected to observe social distancing rules by maintaining at least six feet between yourself and others. Please enter the pews from the center aisle, take a seat quickly and express your greetings to others from a distance.
6. There will be changes in the sanctuary to ensure social distancing. Every other pew will be taped off; the rocking chairs will remain in pairs at the back wall. Family members may sit together; individuals must maintain at least six feet from others in all directions.
7. Paper bulletins will not be available. The order of service, announcements, etc. will be visible on a large projection screen. Please submit any announcements you wish to make to Pastor Denise prior to the service. The hand-held microphone will not be used.
8. Hymnals and pew bibles will not be available. You may bring your own bible if you wish. We will not be singing hymns in our traditional way; Valerie will provide musical alternatives for us to still enjoy our rich history of song.

9. Collection plates will not be passed during the service. One will be in the back of the sanctuary for you to leave your offering. Since we won't be passing the jars for Pennies from Heaven either, please consider a monthly donation to Habitat for Humanity with your offering.
10. For the safety of all, we will not pass the peace, shake hands or come in contact with others.
11. Free standing fans have been removed and the overhead fan will not be used. Windows and doors will be opened as weather permits.
12. On Communion Sundays, for those who wish to participate, a packaged set of communion elements will be available as you enter the sanctuary.
13. If you need to use a restroom, you are asked to enter the area through the Church Street or kitchen doors rather than passing through the sanctuary. NOTE: The bathrooms are now limited to one occupant at a time. You must wash your hands and disinfect any surface you touch. Appropriate signage and supplies will be in place.
14. After the benediction, as dismissed by the ushers, please leave the church one pew at a time, starting from the back. As you are able, please exit via the outside aisles, and remember to maintain social distancing. There will be no coffee hour until further notice.

These are not hard requests, but they are different, and will make our worship time together feel different. I hope you will follow these requests as we continue to strive to love and care for one another.

Blessings,

Pastor Denise

Dear Church Family,

It has been almost 6 months now since we last met in person. Over these several months Denise and I have learned about Zoom meetings, live streaming, iPhone recordings and various other technologies – more things than we ever imagined needing to know simply to be able to provide a worshipful environment each week. I'm certain many of you have learned more than you ever wanted to know about online meetings too. During this period, we have been incredibly blessed by this congregation. Both Denise and I have received so many positive comments and encouraging words. Many of you have thanked us for all we have done but I assure you that it only comes together because of the love and generous spirit we receive from the congregation. We thank you for all of your prayers, your encouraging words, your simply "being there" for us through each week.

I know that you each are struggling to define new feelings and to meet our individual needs. While we feel God brought us here to offer comfort and care to this congregation, we have received so much more than we have provided. Thank you all for your care, concern and love for us, for each other.

While we continue to live through this extraordinary time, may God bless each of you in extraordinary ways.

**With Thanksgiving and Joy,**

**Valerie**

# 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. **(NOTE: on Tuesday, September 1, we will meet at 11:00 A.M.)**

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

9:30 a.m. –September 6 ----- 10:30 a.m. – September 13 and until our sanctuary re-opens 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 morning each week.**

Denise's Email is [pastordenisestone@gmail.com](mailto:pastordenisestone@gmail.com) **(NOTE: THIS IS A NEW EMAIL ADDRESS)**

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



## JOYS AND CONCERNS

We are physically separated from each other, but we are connected by the faith and love which overcome all barriers and voids. Thank you to all who have kept us together as a vibrant community of faith!

# *Circle of Love*

- **Pastor Denise and Valerie** have made our Sunday Zoom services and our Tuesday/Thursday midday devotions so very special and meaningful.
- **Julie Spangenberg-Jolley** and her Food Pantry team continue to serve those in need
- Our Church Session, our Worship Committee, our Property Committee and our Financial Team work behind the scenes to enable our church to function.
- Our “Get Back Together” committee has worked to plan for the safe resumption of services in our sanctuary and to establish guidelines and cleaning protocols that will keep us safe in the future. Our tentative re-opening date is **Sunday, November 1**.

To all those involved we give our heartfelt thanks!!

The sympathy of our church is extended to **Pastor Beth Frigard** and her family on the passing, in early July, of Pastor Beth's mother, **Sybil Ewald Edson**, at age one hundred four. Among our concerns this month, we ask for prayers for: **Betty Apicello, Dorothy Hoos, Neal Gummo, Alissa Jolley, Cathy (Neally) Hubbard, Marilyn Jenkins, Mary Ellen & Nick Rudnick, 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.*

## CAR PARADE – SEPTEMBER 9

On Wednesday evening, September 9, we will be meeting at our church parking lot at 6:00 PM. We are going to travel in a “Car Parade” to visit members of our faith community who are shut in or whom we have not seen during our ZOOM services. We will parade by their homes, honk our horns and wave, and share our love with these special folks. We will be staying in our cars throughout this event, so all should feel safe in participating. Please join our parade on Wednesday, September 9, at 6:00.

QUESTIONS?? – Contact Pastor Denise (562-8048) or Ann Slowik (207-7862)

**JOIN US AS WE BEGIN OUR 193<sup>RD</sup> YEAR AS A COMMUNITY OF FAITH**

**JOIN US ON TUESDAY EVENINGS STARTING IN SEPTEMBER FOR A STUDY ON  
EARLY CHRISTIANITY: CHALLENGES THAT SHAPED THE CHURCH**

Starting September 8<sup>th</sup>, we will meet on Tuesday Evenings via Zoom at 6:30 p.m. for a brief study on **Early Christianity**.

**Please email Pastor Denise [pastordenisestone@gmail.com](mailto:pastordenisestone@gmail.com) if you are interested in attending this study.**

**PROPERTY COMMITTEE UPDATE**

Our Property Committee has worked throughout the summer to continue to keep our building and grounds in tip-top shape! Projects during the summer of 2020 include:

Weekly mowing and weeding

Trimming and debris removal around shrubs and trees

Servicing our pressure washer and power washing of church exterior

Regular inspections and maintenance of our roof, basement, sump pumps, dehumidifier, and exterior lighting

Replacement of a defective panel in our electronic sign

Installation/monitoring of security camera near St. Pauley used clothing shed

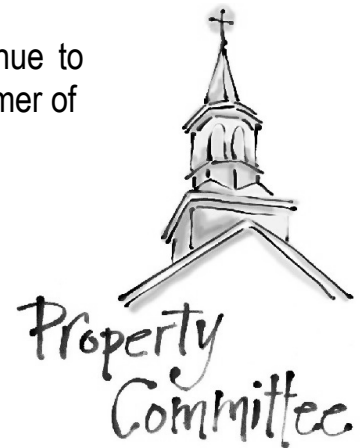
Installation of anti-skid strips on outside ramp

Continued monitoring of utility usage and insurance costs

Preliminary assessment of condition of church steeple and exploration of repair financing options

Coordinating with "Get Back Together" re-opening committee

Working with Town Board to secure recognition as a historical site



We would like to thank all our hard-working volunteers and supporters!

**CHURCH RECEIVES HISTORICAL BUILDING DESIGNATION**

Our church, founded in 1827, is beginning its 193<sup>rd</sup> year. We serve our community of faith with the motto "**Pride In Our Past – Faith In Our Future.**" The Town of Big Flats has officially recognized this heritage of faith and service. On August 26, the Town Board passed a resolution which:

**"Recognizes The First Presbyterian Church of Big Flats as the oldest continually used Church in Chemung County and Grants this to be a Historical Building"**

A ceremony to present an official recognition document will be scheduled in the near future. Special thanks to **Jenny Dean and Mary Churchill** for working to secure this honor for our church!