

# First Presbyterian Church

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@FirstPresBath

## Tower Topics



VOLUME LViii ISSUE 5  
May 2024

### SERVING WITH YOU

Pastor

Re. John Woodring

Clerk of Session

Kathy Swan

Administrative Assistant

Valerie Brown

Treasurer

Velda Schmiegel

Organist

Katie Klawitter

Senior Choir Director

Trevor Ward

Bell Choir Director

Vacant

Custodial Staff

Sandy Robinson

Leslie Lyons

Gene Overton

Nursery Care

Alberta Nunn

Historian

Helen Brink

Newsletter Coordinator

Sandy Robinson



SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE  
10:00 a.m.

Youth Worship/Church  
During 10:00a.m.  
Service

Every year on the fortieth day the Easter season, the feast day of the Ascension of our Lord appears on the calendar. This year, that is May 9<sup>th</sup>. We Presbyterians usually don't pay too much attention to it since it always falls on a Thursday. The Companion to the Book of Common Worship describes it thus:

"Throughout the earliest centuries of the church, every Sunday celebrated the unitive festival of the paschal mystery: the passion–death–resurrection–ascension of Christ, the giving of the Spirit, and Christ's coming in glory at the end of time. Over the years, however, Christ's redeeming work was gradually separated into individual feasts on specific days. For instance, by the late fourth century, the Lord's ascension and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit were commemorated as two distinct aspects of Christ's redeeming work. Ascension Day's exaltation of Christ, however, still looks both back to Transfiguration and Easter and forward to Christ the King (or Reign of Christ).

In that John Calvin's theology placed great importance on the ascended and regnant Christ, Ascension Day is in some ways *the* Presbyterian feast day." (p.108-9, Peter C. Bower, Ed.)

I don't think I got the memo. In over thirty years of ministry, I've participated in only one Ascension Day service of worship, which means I have preached about Ascension Day only once (See Luke 24:50-53 and Acts 1:1-11; see also Mark 16:19-20). And it won't happen this year either.

Perhaps it is because the story of the ascension leaves us just as perplexed and mystified as the disciples. It seems odd, but we do have an easier time explaining and contemplating the resurrection of Jesus than we do his ascension. It is one thing to say Jesus came back from the dead, and quite another to say he disappeared into the clouds – just kind of floated off out of view.

Or it could be that we have a much easier time celebrating Jesus' triumph over death, and what it means to us, than we do proclaiming Jesus as Lord of every part of our lives. Again, as the Companion puts it: "Christ's ascension, therefore, concerns us not only with ecclesiastical matters but also with social and political ones. If Christ has ascended, then there are no other rulers — all others are merely pretenders. Christ reigns supreme." (p. 109)

## REPORT FROM THE PNC

Does Christ reign supreme in our lives? Do we really follow Christ's lead in family issues, financial matters, employment concerns, or politics? Or are there some pockets of resistance in our lives, or maybe some areas where we haven't given it too much thought because our cultural norms have blinded us to the true values of the kingdom of God. We may be ashamed to admit that Jesus really isn't Lord of our lives. It is a hard truth to swallow sometimes.

Another difficulty we may have with the ascension of Jesus is what it implies – that he is returning in power to fully inaugurate his kingdom. What would you say if someone asked you about the Left Behind series? What do you think about the last judgment, "rapture," and Jesus returning in the clouds? It is so much easier to stick with, "I believe in the resurrection of the dead," and leave it at that, than to contemplate how our lives might be judged by the Lord God Almighty. (We just might have to pay attention to the our Confession this week in worship.)

Ascension Day reminds us, if we let it, of the portion of the story of Jesus that is yet to be written, and "We, too, are destined for the glory we share now in Christ only by faith." (p. 109)

*"It does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when Christ appears we shall be like him." 1 John 3:2*

Pastor John

The PNC takes great pleasure in announcing the unanimous recommendation of Rev. John Woodring to lead our church.

We would like to share with you the search process that led to this selection.

A Ministry Information Form (MIF) was composed and posted for pastors seeking a call.

The response to the MIF was wonderful and diverse. Over one hundred applications were received and studied by the PNC members. There were two candidates being considered. Unfortunately, both were also being considered by other churches and felt more called to the other church.

During this period of time, PNC received a self-referral from our interim pastor Rev. Woodring. In the past few years, the rules have changed allowing churches to consider calling an interim pastor. After interviewing Rev. Woodring, PNC unanimously voted to submit his name to COM for approval to call Rev. Woodring as our pastor.

Rev. Woodring came to us from Ellicottville where he had served for 10 years. He was pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Cuba, NY for nine years.

Rev. Woodring has been our interim pastor since September 1, 2022.



**MAY  
Worship  
Schedule**

May 5 Mark 14:3-9  
Communion, Rev. Anne Waasdorp preaching

May 12 John 19:25b-27  
Mother's Day

May 19 Acts 2:1-4  
Pentecost; Membership Sunday

May 26 Acts 3:1-10  
Memorial Day Weekend



**MAY  
Please Bring**

**Cereal, Granola or Cereal Bars**



**MAY CONTACT PEOPLE**

**Elder  
Deacon:**

**Kathy Swan  
Sue Gay**



The Session has called a Special Meeting of the Congregation immediately following worship next week, May 5, 2024, in order to extend a call to the Rev. John Woodring as Installed Pastor and to approve the Terms of Call

## EVERYBODY HAD A HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Thank you to all who attended our annual birthday celebration coffee hour, definitely an enjoyable event!



The tables were beautifully decorated to reflect a theme from the month. A few tables are shown below.



## UPCOMING SEWING PROJECT

We are looking for volunteers on May 16th and possibly again on May 17th to help us make fidget blankets (see image) for our local hospice patients and local dementia patients. If you can cut, sew (either by hand or machine), tie, etc. then we have a job for you! We will be starting at 10:00 and we will work until ??? Our goal is to have 10 blankets done for hospice and a start on blankets for dementia patients.

If you would like to help out or have questions, please call the church office.



The fidget quilt date has been changed to May 17th. There is a church conflict on the 16th.

# UPDATE



## HISTORY



### HISTORY TIDBITS! Helen Kelly Brink –

#### The Tables

The table that sits in front of the stage in Lyon Hall was donated in 2002 by friends "In Recognition of Warren Terrill, Jim Mahnke and Don Chatfield." The two small tables that are located one on each side of the pulpit with a plaque on them that reads "In Recognition and Appreciation of Pat Shuart and Dawn Chatfield" were donated by Gary and Ruth Waldo in 2003. Jim Mahnke has made several tables/cabinets that are used throughout the church. These include the cabinet next to the cabinet holding the coffee maker in Lyon Hall, a cabinet located in one of the Sunday School rooms, and the cabinet in the conference room which was made with lumber donated by Bob Shuart. Jim's largest donation is also located in the conference room and that is the 15 foot long by 4 foot wide table! He designed and built the table with the help of his son Kevin and contractor Lynn Smith in memory of his and Sandy's son James E. Mahnke, Jr., who died in 2003 at the age of 39. Money donated by the congregation in Jim, Jr.'s memory was used for building the table which was made of layers of plywood glued together and then laminated to make it look like one long piece. It was made purposely to fill the conference room to provide a table which would accommodate the seating of large numbers of committee members, especially the session.



### A New Day- Widow Support Group

"Grief, often the most profound form of sorrow, demands the support and compassion of our fellow human beings." Our church would like to start a support group for our widows. Support groups provide an opportunity for care and support.

The mission of the A New Day support group as determined by the group coordinators, Debbie Vonderlin and Ruth Moore are the following:

Showing compassion and encouragement through fellowship and friendship by:

- "... being present to another's personal pain, not taking away the pain."
- "...honoring the spirit, ...not focusing on intellect"
- "...listening with the heart, not analyzing with the head"
- "...bearing witness to the struggles of others; without judgment"
- "...walking along side, not leading"
- "...discovering the gifts of silence; without filling up every moment with words"
- "...being still; not moving frantically forward"
- "...respecting disorder and confusion, without imposing order and logic"

Source: Wolfelt, Alan, PH.D., C.T. The Understanding your Grief Support Group Guide, Companion Press an imprint of the Center of Loss and Life Transition, Second Edition.

Inviting all Widows and widowed "...who have traveled the same road to join our group A New Day in encouraging and lifting each other( Our first weekly meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 29, 2024 at The Bath First Presbyterian Church from 6-7 PM.



## ORPHEUS CHORALE

The Orpheus Chorale will present  
Reflections: The Power of Song

May 3, 2024 7PM at the  
United Presbyterian Church in  
Hornell, NY

May 5, 2024 3 PM at the  
First Presbyterian Church  
Bath, NY



## HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY- 5/12/24

Happy Mother's Day to all the mothers and grandmothers. Make sure you call any special lady who has impacted your life.



## Liturgists Would you like to be a liturgist?

If so, please let Helen Brink know! She will soon be setting up the next 6 month schedule. You'll be given guidance and you'll find that Pastor John is very easy and fun to work with.



## CINCO DE MAYO COFFEE HOUR

The Congregational Life team invites you to our first Cinco de Mayo coffee hour celebration on May 5th. We will be having a taco bar along with other Mexican foods. Feel free to wear your sombrero!



## Would you like to be a tour guide?

If so, please let Helen Brink know! Summer sanctuary tours will once again Take place on Wednesdays during July and August from 10-1PM. We would like very much like to have at least one more guide so that no one has to serve more than two Wednesdays. A typed script is given to each new guide and plenty of personal guidance is available. It's fun and rewarding and you'll meet some interesting people.



## THANK YOU

Many thanks to my church family for making my 96<sup>th</sup> birthday special with beautiful cards. It was really appreciated.

Barb Saler



**Easter Lilies Were Lovingly Given:**

**In Memory of:**

**Helen Dildine  
Arlene Brundage  
Larry Bates  
Henry Scudder**

By: Sherman Lyke & Chad Faulkner

**Martha Brown**

By: Gary Brown

**Wes Moore**

By: The Moore Family

**Betsy Bramen**

By: A Friend

**Jean Crosby**

By: A Friend

**Tom & Harriet Griswold**

**Betsy Robinson**

**Lois & Clifford Robinson**

By: Robert & Mary Ann Robinson

**Ellie Heigel**

By: A Friend

**Sarah Johnson**

By: Swan & Johnson Families

**Our Parents**

By: Bob & Marge Mesler

**David Swan**

By: Kathy Swan & Family

**Gordon Vonderlin**

By: Debbie Vonderlin



**GIFTS WERE GIVEN TO:**

**DEACONS' FUND (bags of hope)**

**In Memory of Sara Johnson &  
Mark & Lorraine Forten**

By: Julie Swan

**DEACONS' FUND (bags of hope)**

**In Memory of Sara Johnson**

By: Caroline Cardinale

**DEACONS' FUND**

**In Memory of Barbara Beekman**

By: Phil & Lee Dickson

**RESTORATION FUND(roof)**

**In Memory of Barbara Beekman**

By: Patricia Seger

**RESTORATION FUND**

**In Memory of Barbara Beekman**

By: Helen Brink

Betsy Farley, Barry Dye &  
Mary Smith

**PASTOR'S DISCRETIONARY  
FUND**

**In Honor of Jim & Sandy  
Robinson**

By: Larry & Liz Hojnoski



Our heartfelt sympathy is extended to the family of Barbara Beekman who passed on April 21, 2024.



Sherry Parke, Lois Warren, Andi Morse,  
Megyn Melnyk, Jean Morse Diane Lathrop,  
Kathy Walker, Sharon Ward, Tom Moore,  
Andy Woodring, Connie DeLisa



### MAY BIRTHDAYS

- May 4 James Barros  
Kathleen Clark
- May 5 Deanna Lang
- May 9 William Von Hagn
- May 10 Trevor Lang
- May 12 Edwin Presley
- May 15 Robert Kittle
- May 17 James Tunison
- May 18 Kimberly Enzion  
Breanna Jones
- May 19 Diane Lathrop  
Lindsay Wolfe
- May 21 Anne Romano
- May 25 Yen Tang
- May 26 Rose Mishrell
- May 27 Matthew Robinson
- May 29 Trevor Parke
- May 30 June Brown
- May 31 Pat Binley



The office will be closed  
On May 27, 2024.



**DEADLINE FOR JUNE  
TOWER TOPIC  
ARTICLES IS MAY 20,  
2024**



# May

# 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 4:00 – Bldgs & Grounds	2 6:00 - Choir Rehearsal	3	4
5 10:00 - Communion 11:00 – Special Congregation Mtg  Cinco de Mayo Coffee Hour Feast  3:00 – Orpheus Chorale 3:00 – Sunday Supper - St. Thomas Episcopal Church	6 2:00 – Worship Team  5:00 - HR	7	8 5:30 - Finance	9 6:00 - Choir Rehearsal	10	11
12 10:00 - Worship Service  3:00 – Sunday Supper - St. Thomas Episcopal Church	13 6:00 – Session	14 4:00 - Deacons	15	16 10:30-2:00 – Rotary Luncheon – Lyon Hall  6:00 - Choir Rehearsal	17 9:30-5:00 – Sewing & Crafts	18 9:30-5:00 – Sewing & Crafts
19 10:00 - Worship Service  3:00 – Sunday Supper - St. Thomas Church	20	21 6:30 – Congregational Life	22	23 6:00 - Choir Rehearsal	24	25
26 10:00 - Worship Service  3:00 - Sunday Supper St. Thomas Church	27 MEMORIAL DAY  OFFICE CLOSED	28 5:00 - MCY	29 6:00 – “A New Day” Widows & Widowers Support Group (1 <sup>st</sup> Mtg)	30 6:00 – Choir Rehearsal	31	



## TOWER TOPICS

**May 2024**

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
6 EAST MORRIS STREET  
BATH, NY 14810

Non-Profit Org  
U.S. postage

**PAID**

Permit No. 121  
Bath, NY

*Address service requested*



## **MEMORIAL DAY – 5/27/2024**

**America is known as the land of the free and it is because of the brave. Memorial Day is celebrated to honor and remember all of the brave men and women who died fighting for our country. These men and women dedicated their lives so we can be a free nation.**