

# First Presbyterian Church

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Tower Topics email  
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[jmwoodring@verizon.net](mailto:jmwoodring@verizon.net)



@FirstPresBath



## Tower Topics

VOLUME LViii ISSUE 3  
March 2025

### SERVING WITH YOU

Pastor  
Re. John Woodring

Clerk of Session  
Kathy Swan

Administrative Assistant  
Valerie Brown

Treasurer  
Velda Schmieg

Organist  
Katie Klawitter

Senior Choir Director  
Anne Romano

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  
School During 10:00 Service

;-

**O THAT MY HEAD  
WERE A SPRING  
OF WATER,  
AND MY EYES**



JEREMIAH 9:1, NRSV

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, March 5th. Begun in the fourth century A.D., Lent marks 40 penitential days of preparation through Holy Week and ending on Holy Saturday. While different denominations and tradition observe Lent differently, generally speaking, the rituals of Lent are designed to prepare us to remember the Last Supper and Jesus' crucifixion and death. The hallmark of which usually are acts of self-denial like fasting and almsgiving and "giving things up" for the season.

The 40 days are a symbolic identification with Jesus being tempted in the wilderness at the beginning of his ministry.

"The three traditional practices to be taken up with renewed vigor during Lent are prayer (justice towards God), fasting (justice towards self), and almsgiving (justice towards neighbor). Today, some people give up a vice of theirs, add something that will bring them closer to God, and often give the time or money spent doing that to charitable purposes or organizations." (*Wikipedia: "Lent—disciplines and practices". Spirit Home.*)

We Protestants and Presbyterians have never really been good at observing Lent. Some of it comes from the Reformers' opposition to the Catholic practice of penance, but I suspect for most of us today, it is a reluctance to be penitential for a season, perhaps because we equate penitence with groveling and feeling as low as worms. We can become spiritually arrogant when we ignore a healthy practice of contrition.

Interestingly enough, the season of Lent does not wallow in self-condemnation. The six Sundays during Lent are not part of the 40 days, but rather are "mini-Easters" in which we celebrate Jesus' victory over death and sin.

From the [\*Companion to the Book of Common Worship\*](#) (Geneva Press, 2003, pp. 110-111)

"What we hear during Lent is the power and possibility of the paschal mystery, and that the way of the cross, the way to Easter, is through death. To appropriate the new life that is beyond the power of death means we must die with Christ who was raised for us. To live for Christ, we must die with him. New life requires a daily surrendering of the old life, letting go of the present order, so that we may embrace the new humanity. "I die every day!" asserts Paul (1 Corinthians 15:31).

Resurrection necessitates death as a preceding act. The church's peculiar Lenten claim is that in dying we live, that all who are baptized into Christ are baptized into his death. To be raised with Christ means one must also die with Christ. In order to embrace the resurrection, we must experience the passion of Jesus. The way of the cross, the way to Easter, is through death of the "old self." In dying, we live."

This year I invite you into the deep waters of Lent to go deeper into the spiritual oasis that this season provides.

If you haven't signed up for a Lenten Prayer Partnership, (see p. 7) there's still time to get a guide and a group of people to study and pray together.

Another alternative is to go to <https://mailchi.mp/hbehlert.com/advent-2024-landing-page> and subscribe to a daily prayer that is sent to your email. A daily reminder to pause, ponder, and pray...



**March Worship Schedule**

March 2- Luke 9:28-45  
Transfiguration-Communion

March 9- Luke 10:25-42  
A Samaritan, Martha and Mary

March 16- Luke 13:1-9, 31-35  
Jesus Preaches Repentance

March 23- Luke 15:1-32  
The Lost is Found

March 30- Luke 16:19-31  
The Rich Man and Lazarus



**MARCH CONTACT PEOPLE**

**Elder: Barb Scudder**  
**Deacon: Pat Shuart**



**MARCH**

**Please Bring**

**Cereals or  
Granola/Breakfast Bars**

## SOUPER BOWL EVENT A GREAT SUCCESS!!!

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Thanks to all who helped tackle hunger on February 9th! A free will offering of \$342.00 was collected. This money will be used to help the Deacons support the free meals served in our community called Sunday Suppers.

Three amazingly delicious soups were prepared and served during coffee hour.

- Zuppa Toscana a sausage, onion, spinach and tortellini soup, was cooked by Jim Robinson

- Butterut Squash Bisque – was cooked by Doug Schmiege. The squash were grown by Carol Sehm.

- Broccoli-Cheddar Soup – was cooked by Mike, Giovanni and Giuseppe Romano.

All the soups were extremely yummy!!! First place went to Jim Robinson with 11 votes, second place went to the Romanos with 7 votes and third place went to Doug Schmiege with 5 votes. In addition to the soups, Doug served rolls and Jackie Woodring made cheese bread!

The cookie bakeoff was super sweet!

- Brown butter chocolate chips were baked by Jackie Woodring and they came in first place with 11 votes.

- Red Velvet cookies, heart-shaped and beautifully frosted by Sue Gay came in second place with 5 votes

- Chocolate chips cookies baked by Mark Mitchell came in third place with 4 votes.

Believe it or not there were no leftovers!!!

After we all enjoyed our soup and cookies the Lyke family entertained us with Bible trivia. Not surprisingly the table where Pastor John sat won both rounds!

Unfortunately, we ran out of time to make valentines and put the kits together. These will be completed another time. Looking forward to next year's Souper Bowl event.



**Drive-thru Chicken BBQ is Back!!!!**

**Saturday, March 22  
4:00pm - until gone**

1/2 Stern's chicken, beans, coleslaw, roll and cookie  
**\$13.00** - No pre-sale tickets needed!

Spread the word to all your friends and neighbors!  
Help the youth raise funds to attend Camp Whitman!



**California Wildfire  
Disaster Assistance**

The Session has designated \$2,000 for California Wildfire relief. If you would like to add to this offering from our church, please designate your intention in the memo line of your check or envelope. You can read more about the wildfire impact on Presbyterians at <https://www.pcusa.org/news-storytelling/news/fires-rage-out-control-southern-california-affecting-churches-and-presbyteries>

You can also give by donating to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance's U.S. wildfires account, using the code DR000165.(Go to [www.pcusa.org](http://www.pcusa.org), click on How We Serve, and Disaster Response)

## SEWING AND CRAFT DAYS



The next craft/sewing days will be held on March 20th and 21st. Come enjoy our new craft room while working on those projects you need to finish. 9:30-5:00 although you can come and go as you would like.



Lois Warren, Andi Morse, June Bates,  
Tim Forester, Sandy Simonson,  
Sherry Parke, Forrest Clark, Susan Moore,  
Barbara Saler, Sharon Ward, Bob Hujar,  
Mary Jane Jones, Mary Ann Robinson,  
Debi Crossman Singer



Our heartfelt sympathy is extended to the family of Connie DeLisa who passed away on 2/12/25.



## LENTEN LUNCHES

Lenten Lunches will be served March 5<sup>th</sup> through April 9<sup>th</sup>. If you would like to help, please complete the following form or contact Kathy Partridge.

Calling all pastry chefs, we need you! If you would like to donate homemade pies or fancy desserts for our Lenten lunches, we would so appreciate it!

### Lenten Lunch Help

I would be more than happy to help with the following (check all you can help with):

- set up
- clean up
- donate a pie
- donate a soup
- prep food
- serve food
- work the ticket table
- prep the takeout orders
- manage the dessert table
- serve beverages

Lenten Lunch prices are as follows:

Sandwich	\$ 4.00
Soup	\$ 4.00
Any Two Items	\$ 7.00
Any Three Items	\$ 10.00
Desserts	\$ 3.00

Includes: coffee, tea or milk

The Lenten Lunch menu is included with this newsletter



**HISTORY**



**The of Our Church And The People Who Made It Happen**

Helen Kelly Brink  
Church Historian

Continuing our story, following is a brief biography of two of the people who played a role in the beginning of our church:

**Howell Bull** was one of the trustees of the Bath Religious Society in 1806. He and **Eunice** signed the church covenant in 1808. In 1811 Howell was one of the first elders of the Church of Christ In Bath - Presbyterian Congregation. Howell Bull was born in Litchfield, Connecticut, on 15 October 1768, the son of Caleb and Eunice Bull. He married Eunice Buell (1771-1867) on 2 March 1794 in Litchfield. In 1796 they moved from Litchfield to Painted Post in Steuben County. Years later their son Colonel William H. Bull stated that “his mother bore him in her arms while riding on horseback the long tedious journey to Painted Post.” Howell became the first postmaster in Painted Post and, for a short time, he was the owner and proprietor of a tavern there. The family lived in Painted Post until September 1804 when they moved to Bath. Howell served as Bath town supervisor in 1808 and again in 1815. In March 1810 he was appointed sheriff of Steuben County. Howell was the owner and proprietor of Bull’s Tavern and Inn located on the west side of Liberty Street. In April 1825 Howell and Eunice conveyed the title of the Methodist-Episcopal Church of Bath lot to the trustees of the First Society of the Methodist-Episcopal Church of Bath. On several occasions Howell was cited to appear before the church session because of his apparent over indulgence in alcohol. Finally, in 1820, he was excommunicated “due to alcohol abuse.” Howell and Eunice were the parents of four sons and two daughters. Howell died in 1834. Eunice was dismissed from membership in August 1844 since she had moved to Buffalo to live with her children. She died there on 20 August 1867 at the age of 96. Both Howell and Eunice are buried in Grove Cemetery.



**March Birthdays**

March 3	Sandra Simonson Patrick Zimmerman
March 4	Barbara Scudder
March 5	Sandra Sehm Mike Romano
March 8	Debbie Fisher Stanley Bhasker
March 10	Michael Conley
March 11	Chad Partridge
March 13	Lois Warren
March 14	Velda Schmieg Kathleen Johnson
March 17	Dean Chatfield Donna Montgomery Colin Gilbert
March 18	Destiny Barros Hannah Barros
March 19	Madison Shuart
March 21	Robert Thomas
March 23	Elizabeth Partridge Valerie Brown
March 24	Laura Hapeman
March 26	Joyce Wahlig
March 27	Helen Snyder Jade Andrus
March 28	Ron Delio Lisa Daley
March 29	Dallas Thomas
March 31	Matt Vonderlin



**DEADLINE FOR  
APRIL  
TOWER TOPICS  
IS  
MARCH 17, 2025**



Filled with HOPE, Packed with LOVE!

The Presbytery of Geneva  
invites you to a  
Church World Service  
Packing Party

Saturday, March 8, 2025; 10 AM to Noon

at

The First Presbyterian Church of Bath  
6 East Morris Street

Bath, NY 14810 *Refreshments Provided!*

*(sponsored by the Committee on Mission and Witness)*

## Lenten Prayer Partnerships

March 5- April 9  
6 Sessions based on our Lord's Prayer  
*(approximately 30 minutes)*

Weekly Prayer Guide provided.

Create your own partnerships or call the  
Church Office – 607-776-6464.



“The church is the only place in our culture where someone prays for your life.”  
~G. Malcolm Sinclair, *adapted*

Deepen your walk with Jesus during this Lenten season by joining a Lenten Prayer Partnership. Commit to gathering weekly with 2-4 friends for 30 minutes using a devotional guide which will guide you through the Lord's Prayer during Lent. Read and reflect on scripture, share and pray with and for your partners, pray for the church and our world.

In addition, we will also have weekly prayer in the chapel on Wednesday mornings. We will begin with a brief liturgy at 9:30 am, but you are invited to stop in and pray anytime between 9:30 and 10:00.

This is a great way to forge new friendships within our congregation or to invite a neighbor or coworker to join in prayer with you. Please sign-up by placing a bulletin insert info in the offering plate, or you can call the church office if you're looking for a prayer partner. Prayer guides will be available Thursday in the church office.

# A Sharing Calendar for Lent 2025

Each day at or after a meal time, gather around this map activity. Consider the reflection and questions, place a coin or a bill (a "gift") in your fish coin bank or a jar.

March 9-14

**Sunday:** *God, open our eyes to your face in every person. Let us see the ways we are all connected with all of Creation. May we as your Church, together, seek love, justice and peace with all. Amen.*

**Monday:** Using the online map, find a PDA partnership near where you live. Say a prayer for those recovering from natural and human-caused disasters.

**Tuesday:** In a natural disaster, people are often unable to access their normal sources of drinking water. Sharing a gift in your fish box will help water reach people who need it.

**Ash Wednesday:** Read Isaiah 58:6-8, 12. Which actions or words stand out to you? Write a prayer of intention for Lent using some of the words from Isaiah 58.

**Thursday:** Think of three people you are thankful for. Find a way to let them know you are thinking about them. Consider sharing a gift in their honor.

**Friday:** Blue T-Shirt Sunday celebrates the ministry of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA). Wear a blue shirt for worship this Sunday and learn more at [pda.pcusa.org](http://pda.pcusa.org).

March 16-21

**Sunday:** *Gather us all around your banquet table, O God, with all who hunger and thirst. May we join, together, to share the abundance you've intended for all. Amen.*

**Monday:** Using the online map, find an SDOP partnership near where you live. Read about the need being addressed and say a prayer for the people involved in that ministry.

**Tuesday:** Social barriers can be like locked doors that hold people back and keep them from thriving as Jesus intended. Make a gift to help open doors so all people can grow and learn freely.

**Wednesday:** Clean water is a necessity for every living thing. Using the online map, find three projects related to water. Give a gift for each faucet in your house.

**Thursday:** What are you thankful for in yourself? God offers gifts and talents to each of us. Make a short list of yours and make them part of a "Thank you, God" prayer.

**Friday:** Millions of Americans live in a food desert, far from a store where they can buy fresh food. Make a gift for each grocery store near your home.

March 23-28

**Sunday:** *Encourage us, Creator, when things get difficult. May we draw creativity and hope from your Spirit, and from our partners along the way. Amen.*

**Monday:** Using the online map, find a project or partnership near a location you have wanted to visit, but have never been. Say a prayer for all neighbors whom you have never met.

**Tuesday:** People who care for others also need care. Do something special for the caretakers in your life to say, "Thank you."

**Wednesday:** Wiggly worms and buzzing bees are essential to healthy soils and plants. Give a gift of thanks for all the little things that help the world grow.

**Thursday:** The right supplies make all the difference, whether you are growing crops or learning at school. Remember the last time you had the right tool for a project and make a gift as part of remembering.

**Friday:** Make up a mealtime prayer and use it during meals this weekend. Give a gift in thanks for the food you have.

March 30-April 4

**Sunday:** *God, you say, "Come to the waters" and "Buy wine without money and bread without price." Let us learn by your generosity, the gift of giving what we have to share. Amen.*

**Monday:** Using the online map, find a Presbyterian Hunger Program partnership near where you live. Say a prayer for the people involved in the ministry there.

**Tuesday:** When rain is scarce, special collection systems are built to catch the water so it can be used for growing plants. Give a gift to help bring water to people when it doesn't rain.

**Wednesday:** Electricity is usually the first utility that is lost in a storm. Can you identify a favorite Bible verse about light? Make a gift in honor of the verse.

**Thursday:** Social support and connection are important parts of being healthy. Give a gift of gratitude for one person or place that offers welcome to you.

**Friday:** Teaching healthy food choices and food safety can change the health of an entire community! Make a gift for the healthy foods you had today.

April 6-11

**Sunday:** *Loving God, help us to learn from what others have seen, so that we might grow in understanding across lines of difference. Amen.*

**Monday:** Using the online map, locate a ministry in a country far away from you. What needs are being addressed there? Say a prayer for the people involved in these ministries.

**Tuesday:** Without the right nutrition in the first two years of life, a child's physical and mental development is compromised. Make a gift to help ensure healthy food for infants.

**Wednesday:** The vulnerable are often the most impacted in emergency situations. Visit [pcusa.org/GOHkits](http://pcusa.org/GOHkits) and ask your church to assemble kits for such emergencies.

**Thursday:** Think of all the things people share with you. Write a thank you note to one of these people and give a gift of thanks for their care.

**Friday:** Learn about the Indigenous peoples who inhabited the land where you live. Learn the name they used for the land when they lived there.

April 13-18

**Passion/Palm Sunday:** *Guide us through the paths that feel lonely, assured that you are always with us. Be with us in the darkness as we walk by faith and not by sight. Amen.*

**Monday:** Immunizations give us hope for a day when certain diseases will no longer cause sickness and pain. Give a gift for each immunization you have received.

**Tuesday:** It is estimated that nearly 1 in 11 people around the world will go to bed hungry each night. Make a gift to eliminate hunger.

**Wednesday:** Education helps lift people out of poverty. OGHs helps kids world wide attend school. Make a gift and consider donating books to a local reading program.

**Thursday:** Blankets are used internationally to comfort those impacted by war and disasters. Give a gift for each blanket on your bed.

**Friday:** Communication can be incredibly difficult after a disaster, especially if the internet isn't working. Give a gift for every phone your family has.

April 20

**Sunday - Resurrection/Easter/ One Great Hour of Sharing:** Present the gifts in your coin box to your congregation. Say a prayer for all those who will receive help from your generosity.



For more locations and ministries, go to [pcusa.org/oghsmap](http://pcusa.org/oghsmap) or scan this code.



**ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING**  
SPECIAL OFFERINGS  
HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT



**First Presbyterian Church**  
**Lenten Lunches 2025**  
**Wednesday 11:30 – 1:00**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Soup</u>	<u>Sandwich</u>	<u>Dessert</u>
3/5	Tomato	Egg/Egg & Olive	Assorted
3/12	Corn Chowder	Pulled Pork Egg/Egg & Olive	Assorted
3/19	Chili	Ham Salad Egg/Egg & Olive	Assorted
3/26	Taco Soup	Meatball Sub Egg/Egg & Olive	Assorted
4/2	Broccoli Cheddar	Sloppy Joes Egg/Egg & Olive	Assorted
4/9	Tomato Tortellini	Chicken Salad Egg/Egg & Olive	Assorted

**Menu Subject To Change**



# MARCH 2025



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
ALL SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES BEGIN AT 10:00 am *SUNDAY SUPPERS @ FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH - 3:00 pm			† Ash Wednesday 3/5/25 - 7:00 pm Service @ St. Thomas Episcopal Church 			<u>1</u>
<u>2</u> Communion Transfiguration Sunday 11:30 am Coffee Hour - Lyon Hall *Sunday Supper	<u>3</u> 2:00 pm - Worship Team 5:00 pm - Handbells Sara's Closet 11:30 am-2:30 pm	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u> Ash Wednesday 9:30 am Lenten Prayer, Imposition of Ashes -Chapel 1 <sup>st</sup> Lenten Lunch, 11:30 am - Lyon Hall 4:00 pm - B & G Mtg 5:30 pm - Finance Mtg	<u>6</u> 6:00 pm - Choir	<u>7</u> 11:00 - Connie DeLisa viewing; Sanctuary 1:00 pm - Funeral - Reception to follow, Lyon Hall	<u>8</u> 10:00 am - Hosting Presbytery Event - Filling CWS Kits
<u>9</u> 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday in Lent 11:30 am Coffee Hour - Lyon Hall *Sunday Supper	<u>10</u> 6:00 pm - Session Sara's Closet 11:30 am-2:30 pm	<u>11</u> 4:00 pm - Deacons 5:00 pm - (possible) Handbells	<u>12</u> 9:30 am Lenten Prayer, Chapel 2 <sup>nd</sup> Lenten Lunch, 11:30 am - Lyon Hall	<u>13</u> 6:00 pm -Choir	<u>14</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>16</u> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Lent 11:30 am Potluck Lunch - Lyon Hall *Sunday Supper	<u>17</u> <i>St. Patrick's Day</i> Sara's Closet 11:30 am-2:30 pm	<u>18</u> 5:00 pm - (possible) Handbells	<u>19</u> 9:30 am Lenten Prayer, Chapel 3 <sup>rd</sup> Lenten Lunch, 11:30 am - Lyon Hall 6:00 pm - A New Day Mtg for Widows & Widowers	<u>20</u> <i>First Day of Spring</i> 9:30 am - Sewing & Crafts, Sewing Room (next to Nursery) 6:00 pm -Choir	<u>21</u> 9:30 am - Sewing & Crafts, Sewing Room	<u>22</u> 4:00 pm- Annual Drive-thru Chicken BBQ
<u>023</u> 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Lent 11:30 am Coffee Hour - Lyon Hall *Sunday Supper	<u>24</u> Sara's Closet 11:30 am-2:30 pm	<u>25</u> 5:00 pm - (possible) Handbells	<u>26</u> 9:30 am Lenten Prayer, Chapel 4 <sup>th</sup> Lenten Lunch, 11:30 am - Lyon Hall	<u>27</u> 5:00 pm - MCY Mtg 6:00 pm - Choir	<u>28</u>	<u>29</u>
<u>30</u> 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent 11:30 am Coffee Hour - Lyon Hall *Sunday Supper	<u>31</u> Sara's Closet 11:30 am-2:30 pm					



## TOWER TOPICS

**March 2025**

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*

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### LENTEN LUNCHESES WILL BE SERVED 3/5-4/9/25



**Lenten Lunch prices are as follows:**

<b>Sandwich</b>	<b>\$ 4.00</b>
<b>Soup</b>	<b>\$ 4.00</b>
<b>Any Two Items</b>	<b>\$ 7.00</b>
<b>Any Three Items</b>	<b>\$ 10.00</b>
<b>Desserts</b>	<b>\$ 3.00</b>

**Includes: coffee, tea or milk**

**The Lenten Lunch menu is included with this newsletter**