

THE TOWER TIE

The Newsletter of the
First Presbyterian Church of Goshen

33 Park Place; Goshen, NY 10924
The Reverend David Calvin Kingsley, Pastor
Robert J. Clooney, Director of the Ministry of Music
Patricia Schwetje, Church Secretary

Telephone: (845) 294-7991; fax: (845) 615-1239
email: fpgoshen@frontiernet.net
Web Page: www.fpgoshen.org

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Well, once again, time has come around its circle, and the end of the year begins its settling in. Autumn is full upon us, the leaves of the trees have finished their work and have ended their lives in a burst of color and a windblown fall to the ground. The air is cool all day now, and the fields are ready for harvesting, thanks to a lush and fruitful summer. The insects have already ended their nightly songs, except for a lone one or two who continue their trills to the very end. The gardens are done, the mowers are put away, we've reluctantly found our winter coats, and we know, deep in our bones, that now is the settling-in time.

Though we are a busy congregation, busier perhaps than any other generation that has worshiped and worked within these church walls, we are also the generation that is most disconnected from our natural world. And the reason is that, other than keeping an eye on the weather to know how it will affect our plans or our commute or our children's school schedule, we rarely pay attention to our world. Not being farmers or those who must cleave our daily meals from the earth by our own hands, we have become disconnected from this sacred presence and gift. It's quite easy to do. And yet, deep within each of us, connected somewhere in the ancient rhythms of our blood, that ocean of life that flows through our veins from the beginning of time, we know and can feel the change of the seasons within us. Given time and space, we slow down and know that now is the time to gather in, to allow our energies to come home from the many far-flung paths on which they have been all summer.

Like the earth, we reflect the sacred connection to God that was given to us as soon as that holy breath filled our lungs. As God breathes in us, so we breathe. And that life breath has a rhythm that connects us with all that is deep and strong and life sustaining. The change of seasons is one of those long moments when we can see it, feel it, and, if we are able, let it guide us. For the breath of God is wisdom for all of us. Even if we cannot live a life fully connected to our created world, we can let God's wisdom fill us by allowing ourselves to receive the gift of this changing time. We can know it, engage in it, and make room for it in our lives. We can let it teach us, season by season, about the rhythm of life, of being and doing, resting and gathering in.

Augustine once wrote that nature is God's Big Book of Scripture, the wisdom of God writ large, while the Bible is God's small book. Let's take time to read, ponder, and gather in so that, come spring, our roots are deeply fed and watered, ready for new leaves that will grace the trees that now stand bare. Autumn is not an ending; rather, it is a fulfilling of the promise. It is a time to savor, taste, and breathe deeply.

In Christ's love,
Pastor Kingsley

There will be no Wednesday at the Well Service on December 23 or 30.

Please join us for our traditional Christmas Eve Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols at 7:00 p.m. on December 24.

ADVENT—A TIME OF EXPECTATION AND MYSTERY

We began the church year anew on November 29 with the familiar refrain, "Come Thou Long Expected Jesus." It is a time of looking forward to and longing for the birth of our Savior, Christ the Lord. As daylight grows shorter, darkness is upon us, and, in our hearts, we long for the light of Christ. The pine swags are up, the sanctuary takes on an air of beauty and mystery, and we can feel the season quickly approaching. We carry expectancy in our hearts as we await the celebration of his birth on Christmas Eve.

OUR ADVENT MUSIC SEASON

November 29	Advent Peace Canon
December 6	Advent Prayer
December 13	Youth Christmas Presentation
December 20	<i>God's Son is Born</i> (a cantata by Peggy Hoffman)
December 24	7:00 p.m. Service of Lessons and Carols



Please come and join with us in song, word, and sacrament as we experience this wonderful time of year. The choir is strong and preparing for a blessed Advent and Christmas season of 2009.



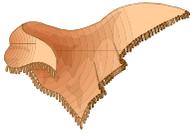
P E A C E



YUMMY, HOMEMADE COOKIES NEEDED

Cookies are needed for the Christmas baskets that the Presbyterian Women's Association distributes each holiday season. Please call Carol Gabella at 342-4367 (evenings), or e-mail her at calgabel@hotmail.com, if you can bake two dozen (or more) cookies during the week of December 7. If you can help arrange the baskets and/or help with their delivery, please tell Carol or Pat (the church secretary).

PLEASE PAY YOUR PER CAPITA ASSESSMENT FOR 2009 IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY DONE SO. Every year, the Presbytery of the Hudson River charges every member church an assessment according to the current active membership. Our recorded active membership is currently 377 and *our assessment per member (not per family) for 2009 is \$26.42*, which is a total of *\$9,960.34* to be taken from our operating budget. Please assist with this expense and write a check for your family assessment and either mail it to the church or place it in the Sunday offering plate. **Thanks for doing your share.**



HUG HAPPENINGS

News of the Prayer Shawl Ministry (PSM)

We start this month's news by welcoming Elfriede Johnson to our group. We can always use extra hands to make the shawls, as we have become very popular in many communities. We are sure Elfriede will be turning out shawls like the rest of us.

We recently donated five lap robes to The Valley View Center for Nursing Care and Rehabilitation in Goshen for their wheelchair patients. Also, we will soon be taking more shawls to the maternity unit of Orange Regional Medical Center in Middletown. They give them to new mothers that have seriously ill newborns or stillborn births. We took some about a year ago, and, sadly, they are in need of more. Apparently, hugs from shawls during these sad times seem to let them know that someone cares.

Our first thank-you book is filled to capacity, and we are going to have to start a second binder. The letters and cards are very moving, and the gifts are so very appreciated by the receivers. Remember, if you know someone in need of a hug, stop by the church office, and our wonderful secretary, Pat, will guide you to the supply of shawls and lap robes. You can pick a folder and choose a prayer or two to give with the gift. We have several new prayers in our box now, so pick and choose what you feel is appropriate for the receiver.

We are again in need of gift bags, so if you have some gently-used ones at home that you can part with, we would welcome them. We have a supply of tissue paper, but we will always accept more to wrap the shawls inside the gift bags.

Our members have also made scarves, mittens, and other things needed for the Christmas Giving Tree. This is a fine way to use up the small quantities of leftover yarns. We don't want to see any of our yarn go to waste. Remember, too, that if you want to help this ministry continue, we are more than grateful for gift cards for stores that sell yarn. We thank you in advance for this.

Our group has decided to meet after service on the first Sunday and third Sunday of each month. Please watch the bulletin for any changes in this. Also, we would love our group to continue to grow with new members. Come and join us, and we will start you on a new hobby.

Until next month, consider yourselves hugged.

Wendy Paffenroth
Journal Keeper, PSM

FUNDRAISER UPDATES

Although the selling time was limited, the Yankee Candle Fundraiser raised \$203 for the Window Restoration Fund.

The fall Rummage Sale brought in \$3,000. This money will go towards our General Budget.

Thank you to everyone who supported these fundraisers.

PRAYER CORNER

The following members or friends are going through a time in which they have asked for prayer by The church. Please keep the following people in your prayers:



Vince Ahrens
Janice Broderick
Cheryl Campbell and Family
Susan Caslick
Dan Conley
Bruce and Jean Crandall
Mary DeFreece
Joshua DePew
Pat Farley
Steve Fischbein
Fran Genovese
Mary Gray Griffith
The Family of Brian Kilpatrick Kim
Lyndsay Krutki
The Family of Anita McCarthy
Lisa and Bob Montalbano
Richard Nash
Nina and Jason
Ann Ott
The Family of Marina Petersen
Trudi Roach
Kevin Ross
Kevin Schuler
Marguerite Shaw
The Smith Family
Braiden Thew
Donna Totton
Kim Valentini and Family
Jean Wade
Paul and Phyla Wright

Jefferson Billings
Haley Buckley
Mary Carr
Nancy Chase
Grace Cook
Phyllis Cummings
Bob Dennis
Joe Destefano
Kevin Fenner
Ben Fisher
The George Family
Barbara and George Hankins
Carol Kingsley
Margaretta Macica
Evelyn Mercado
Richard Mudrick and Family
Toni Neidel's mother
Amy (Thompson) Nguyen
Amy Pemberton
The Family of Madeline Pillmeier
Robyn
Robert Ruckdeschel
Fred Schwarz
Walter and Louise Spencer
Bill and Jean Strong
Judy Thompson
Brenda Travers
Kenya VanZandt
Molly Wanat
Judy and Wayne Yendall

Karen and Paige Brooks
Sarah Burrows
Barbara Caruso
Jessica Chasen
Ethan Cox
Sylvester Damiani
Amy DePew
Everyone serving in the Military
Judy Hankins Feragola
Gabby
Ann Graham
Kevin and Sara Hankins
Evelyn Kingsley
The Family of Melissa Martucci
Jeff Monroe
Eileen Myslinski
Steven Neil
Janet Oberg
Peter
Jack Richner
Dorothy Rose
Ted Sandstrom
Barbara Scott and Family
Peggy Srirach
Shawn Thatcher
George Tietz
Lori Turner
Wendy Bynum-Wade and Family
Orra and Dale Wood
Cheryl and Rebecca Zis

(If you or someone you know would like to be on this list or if you would like to take a name off the list, please call the church office and the name(s) will be included/omitted next month.)



THIS BASKET IS EMPTY... Please help fill it with goodies for our shut-in friends and neighbors of our church. Contributions of dried fruit, yummy canned soups, jellies, Christmas candy, toiletries, hand lotion, etc., would be most appreciated. Baskets will be distributed during the Christmas holiday. Please call Dorothy Sevcik at 294-7783 if you know of anyone who would like a Presby basket. Contributions may be dropped off in the church office or in the narthex beginning in November.

Maney-Hawkins Meditation Garden

DECEMBER UPDATE

“Stewards of the Garden”

For our eight stewards, the schedule for December and January is below. If anyone is interested in joining the group, please call Wayne George.

During your “volunteer period,” simply pull any weeds, remove any debris from the beds, lightly rake the mulch, and perform a general “tidy-up” of the area. *But don't hurt yourselves!* It's not necessary to complete the work in the garden on any particular day, only when you deem it's needed during your scheduled time.

SCHEDULE

Loretta and Jack Richner	December 1–December 15
Barbara and George Hankins	December 16–December 31
Diane and Wayne George	January 1–January 15
Beryl Yungman and Sue Varden	January 16–January 31

The schedule will also be posted outside the church office.

Sixteen niches are available for sale in the columbarium wall. Each niche is 11¼ inches cubed, allowing for double or single interment.

Four purchase options remain available to help make owning a niche more affordable:

Payment in Full = \$2,500
12-Month Payment Option = \$255/month for 12 months
24-Month Payment Option = \$125/month for 24 months
36-Month Payment Option = \$90/month for 36 months

Fifteen NEW memorial pavers have been installed in the garden to honor and remember loved ones. Pavers are only \$100 each. At the end of February, we will be ordering the next round, which will be installed in the spring. Please see Pat in the church office to order your pavers.

Please call the church office (845-294-7991), Pastor Kingsley, or Wayne George (914-213-4093) for any additional information you may need about the garden.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION (PW)
NEWS NOTES

PW will have their Christmas dinner on Sunday, December 13 at 1:00 p.m. at the Orange County Park ski lodge. All women of the church are invited to attend. This year, we are honoring Dorothy Gott and Jean Stukey. The cost of the dinner is \$25. You may make reservations at coffee hour through Elfriede Johnson or Barbara vonPentz.

We will be collecting gifts for the Christmas boxes at the dinner. The suggested gifts are playing cards, travel-size soaps and lotions, or fancy teas. The date for assembling and distribution of Christmas boxes will be announced at a later date. Please check the bulletin for more information.

We will be having a community dinner on March 13 at the church, and the theme will be "St. Patrick's Day." More information will be available as the date gets closer.

We will be taking a break during the bad weather, but we'll resume again in March with enthusiasm and plans for an exciting spring.

Meeting Dates for 2010

March 1

April 5

May 3

June 7

THE GIVING TREE

The Giving Tree is back in the narthex. Last year, thanks to the generosity of the congregation, we donated over fifty presents to the Salvation Army. We hope to match that number again this year.

Once again, our Sunday school students have decorated bright and cheery tags. Please consider taking a tag (or two—or more!), buying a gift (\$12 suggested price minimum), and making Christmas a little brighter for a child in need. All presents need to be beneath the tree by 12:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 9.

If you have any questions, please call Beth Laskoski (651-3294). Thank you in advance for supporting this worthy cause.

HABITAT CHILI CHALLENGE: The Mission Committee has decided to have a chili contest as a fundraiser for Habitat for Humanity. First, we'll have a trial run in January within the church. Cooks will enter their best chili efforts, and the congregants get to vote on which is the best. Then, in a future month, we'll open our "spicy" contest to the outside—all churches in the area and the fire departments.

So begin thinking about making your family's favorite chili (that they all claim is the best), or look for a fantastic new recipe. The Chili Challenge will be a lot of fun! Lori Turner is the chair of this "tantalizing" contest. The date will be announced soon.

CONFIRMATION CLASS

If you have a thirteen- or fourteen-year-old who is interested in participating in our next confirmation group and joining the church, please fill out the form below and either drop it in the offering plate or drop it off at the church office before Christmas so we can order the textbooks. We're looking forward to a great group this year. Of course, they'll learn about the Christian faith and Presbyterian beliefs, but they'll also learn what we have in common with other faiths. As usually happens, we're looking forward to this group developing into a close fellowship as previous years' groups have.

Please understand that, while we have a lot of fun going through the confirmation training, we also consider what's being taught to be important to the spiritual development of your child. We will meet on Sunday after church for one-and-a-half to two hours. The course will last from mid-January through Pentecost (May 23, 2010), with Easter Sunday and Mothers' Day off. Class attendance is important. We know that there are a lot of extracurricular demands on your student's time. Make-up sessions can be arranged for Saturday mornings, but there are only two non-made-up class absences allowed.

Parents, you will be asked to participate in (and help organize) at least one of our trips. You're all welcome to come on these excursions! Please indicate your preferences below. I'm looking forward to hearing from you!

Thanks!
Anne Wood

Student Name: _____ Age: _____

Parent Name: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

PARENT: I am willing to help coordinate the group's trip to:

___ Florida Synagogue

___ Middletown Mosque

___ Middletown Hindu Temple

___ Carmel Buddhist Temple

___ Midnight Run (February)

___ Cornwall Quaker Meeting

___ Philadelphia Presbyterian Historic Society (March/April)

___ The Bellvale Community (near Sugar Loaf)

TIDBITS FROM THE TOWER

HAPPY DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS TO:

4	<i>Greg Sitler</i>	19	<i>John Snook</i>
5	<i>Erica Gati</i>		<i>Joe Pietropaolo</i>
6	<i>Lisa Montalbano</i>	20	<i>Nancy Leech</i>
9	<i>Beryl Yungman</i>	22	<i>Gabby Vanderhoof</i>
12	<i>Daphne Castellano</i>	23	<i>Carol Simpson</i>
	<i>Bruce Crandall</i>	25	<i>Jennifer Serkes</i>
14	<i>Rob Dickover</i>		<i>Wesley Sproul</i>
	<i>Elise Frederick</i>	27	<i>Kayla Farley</i>
	<i>Jeanette McDowell</i>		<i>Paul Gruber</i>
	<i>Ken Skyer</i>		<i>Barbara Heiser</i>
16	<i>Linda Boardman</i>	29	<i>Geri Corey</i>
17	<i>Sergio Maturana</i>		<i>Ethan Cox</i>
18	<i>Barbara Skyer</i>		

HAPPY DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES TO:

14	<i>Dave and Michelle Castellano</i>
17	<i>Robert and Rebecca Boardman</i>
18	<i>Bruce and Jean Crandall</i>
23	<i>Bill and Gina Gruber</i>
28	<i>Jon and Deb Hourahan</i>
29	<i>Tom and Jeanette McDowell</i>
	<i>Greg and Deb Spencer</i>



If you are also celebrating a special day, we wish you much happiness. If you would like your birthday and/or anniversary included, please give your dates to Pat in the church office.

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

- *Team Brazil which included Jack Calzaretta, Derek Holt, Kate Laskoski, Darcy McDowell, and Coach Glen Holt on winning the championship for their division in soccer.*
- *Michelle Koury on completing her fourth marathon on November 1 when she ran the New York City Marathon.*
- *Jessica Spencer who will play the violin in both All-County and Area All-State Orchestras.*

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
CHRISTMAS CARDS

With Christmas coming, it's a perfect time to purchase The First Presbyterian Church Christmas cards. For our newer members who may never have seen them, you can purchase 25 cards and envelopes that include beautiful pictures within our church. Each package is \$3.00. They are available for purchase in the church office.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

In honor of the birth of our Savior and in celebration of this glorious season, please consider helping us to decorate our Sanctuary with beautiful red, white, pink, and mixed poinsettias. They will be placed in the church for Christmas Eve, December 24 and may be taken following the 7:00 p.m. Candlelight Service. Kindly consider ordering a plant in honor of or in memory of a special person(s) or loved ones, or simply to the Glory of God and in celebration of Christ's birth. The deadline for ordering is Sunday, December 13. Please complete the form below and submit with your payment of \$12.99 per plant made payable to the First Presbyterian Church (put PW in the memo) or call the church office (294-7991), Barbara Hankins (294-8410) or Carol Coon (294-7145).

Thank you for helping us honor Christmas with festive flowers!

Yes, I would like to order Christmas poinsettias for the Sanctuary as follows:

<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Color</u>
_____	Red
_____	White
_____	Pink
_____	Mixed
	Total @ \$12.99 each = \$ _____ due

Please make checks payable to the First Presbyterian Church (put PW in the memo) and place in the offering plate or give to Carol or Barbara.

Given by: _____
(Kindly PRINT as you would like it to appear in the bulletin.)

To the Glory of God and:
In memory of: _____
In honor of: _____
In celebration of: _____
To honor the birth of Jesus Christ: _____

NAME: _____ **PHONE:** _____

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Confessing Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, guided and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we shall seek to use our gifts through worship, ministry, and mission, to gather the Church in from the world, to continue to nurture one another, to serve a world still broken, and to exemplify through common values and purposes Christian discipleship to the greater glory of God.

ELDERS

Class of 2010

Loretta Richner
Scott Roper
Barbara Skyer
Doug Wade
Rob Warner
Orra Wood

Class of 2011

John Bruno
Linda Clark
Geri Corey
Dominick Fontana
Bill Hodges
Kathy Stringer

Class of 2012

Craig Calzaretta
Tyler Cox
Bill Keller
Tom McDowell
Sue Varden

Clerk of Session: Sue Varden

BOARD OF DEACONS

Class of 2010

Diana Bowe
Andrea Branson- Snook
Deb Hourahan
Jon Hourahan
Lori Turner
Cheryl Zis

Class of 2011

David Castellano
Jean Crandall
Patrick Farley
Barbara Lippert
Ken Skyer
Grover vonPentz

Class of 2012

Linda Boardman
Jessica Bowe
Glynnis Jorgensen
Carolyn Keller
Marni Lewis
Rebecca Zis

Moderator of Deacons:

Lori Turner

Presbyterian Women:

Barbara von Pentz, President

STAFF

Robert J. Clooney, Director of the Ministry of Music
Pat Schwetje, Church Secretary
Kim Hoernig, Church Treasurer
Nancy Smith, Financial Secretary