

# THE TOWER TIE

The Newsletter of the  
First Presbyterian Church of Goshen

33 Park Place; Goshen, NY 10924  
The Rev. Dr. Rhonda Myers, Interim Pastor

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December 2021

## “Faith Matters”

For You shaped me, inside *and out*.  
You knitted me together in my mother’s womb *long before I took my first breath*.  
I will offer You my grateful heart, for I am Your *unique* creation, filled with wonder and awe.  
(Psalm 139:13-14a *The Voice*)

My soul lifts up the Lord! My spirit celebrates God, my Liberator!  
For though I’m God’s humble servant, God has noticed me. (Luke 1:46-48 *The Voice*)

I have traveled many moonless nights, cold and weary with a babe inside.  
And I wonder what I’ve done. Holy Father, you have come and chosen me now to carry your son.  
I am waiting in silent prayer. I am frightened by the load I bear.  
In a world as cold as stone, must I walk this path alone? Be with me now.  
Breath of heaven, hold me together, be forever near me.  
Lighten my darkness, pour over me your holiness. For you are holy, Breath of heaven.  
(*Breath of Heaven*, Chris Eaton and Amy Grant, 1992)

My dear friends in Christ,

The Bible is a rich trove of songs offered up in praise of God. In Psalm 139, King David sings in awe of the marvelous gift of life he’s been given. I love the lyrics of verse 14 from *The Voice* translation, above, but the *New Revised Standard Version* speaks of David’s intimate relationship with the great Creator in words that are equally meaningful: *I praise you, for I am **fearfully and wonderfully made**.*

David’s words may seem odd to the modern ear. But when he describes himself as having been *fearfully made* by the hand of God, he’s speaking with reverence for the Holy One. He sings, in astonishment, of the gift of an intimate relationship with the One who breathed life into him and made him a *unique creation*. David welcomes God’s call to save the Hebrew people from the violent forces that threaten to darken the world. And, as one who is set apart by God to do holy work, David’s resilient voice can be heard ringing out into that darkness, singing boldly to the Lord, “*even the darkness is not dark to you.*”

As the days grow shorter and the darkness of the winter night seems an ever-encroaching presence, it’s a gift to know that God has formed us to be unique, resilient, and purposeful creations, too.

While David’s purpose is to be a king who will free his people from bondage and lead them into a wondrous and saving relationship with their God, Mary’s purpose is to grow the Holy One in her womb and give birth to a Savior. But she is a young woman—a teenager, really—from a simple family

without status or wealth. She's betrothed to an older man, but not yet married. When she replies to the angel, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word," she's committing herself to a life that is unique but not without difficulty.

In saying "Yes" to God, Mary accepts the burden of being an unwed mother, even though such a "distinction" could result in her being shunned or, worse yet, killed once her condition becomes known. So, why *would* she say "Yes" to God? Like David, she's grateful to be shown favor by God and given an opportunity to serve the Lord in a meaningful way. There's an intimacy with God that is underscored in both these Biblical characters; each understands that, while the road before them will not be an easy one, the destination is God-intended and well worth the effort.

I hear a bit of this nuanced understanding of call and purpose in the lyrics of one of my favorite Christmas songs, "Breath of Heaven" by Amy Grant. While honored to serve as mother to Jesus, Mary is young and vulnerable. In an often cold and harsh world, she chooses to honor her covenant with God nonetheless, and does so praising the Lord while also confessing her need for strength and resilience as the threat of becoming a social outcast grows greater with each passing month—and trimester.

These stories give us powerful evidence that the Creator, who knit us in our mother's wombs, too, has a purpose for our lives—that of sharing the light of Christ through word and deed, trusting that: the darkness is not dark to God, the Spirit is brilliantly at work making us resilient in the face of every challenge, and the call of Christ has been breathed into us as children of our precious Savior. And, whether we experience that call to serve as a soft whisper or a momentous shout, may we trust that, like Mary, we have "found favor" with God and are invited to say "Yes" to serving a holy purpose.

This Advent, we will look at Mary's story in a Zoom study on Monday evenings. Using the book, *Not a Silent Night* by Adam Hamilton, we will talk about this faithful woman who, like David before her, was "*fearfully and wonderfully made*." If you would like to join the group, email me at: [revrhon@aol.com](mailto:revrhon@aol.com)

Thank you, once again, for the privilege of serving as your Interim Pastor, dear Friends. And may God bless us all with an awe-inspiring and purposeful Advent as we, too, grow in intimacy with our Savior.

*Pastor Rhonda Myers*

### **Advent Book Group**

Pastor Rhonda Myers will be leading a book discussion group on Monday evenings at 7pm from November 29<sup>th</sup> to December 20<sup>th</sup>. Using Adam Hamilton's *Not a Silent Night: Mary Looks Back to Bethlehem*, we will spend the Advent season hearing Mary's story. These are the "liner notes":

*Imagine Jesus from Mary's point of view—proud of her son, in awe of his gifts and mission, guided by love for him as a person and so much more. In this book, Adam Hamilton begins at the end, with Mary at the Crucifixion and Resurrection; travels back in time as she witnesses Jesus' life and ministry; and ends at the beginning, with the Christ Child born in a stable, Mary's beautiful baby.*

If you'd like to be a part of the discussion group, email Pastor Rhonda at [revrhon@aol.com](mailto:revrhon@aol.com) and she will send you the Zoom link each week.

## Advent and Christmas Schedule

This is such a beautiful time of year, and we hope you will take every opportunity to join us for a joyous and meaningful Advent and Christmas season. Here is the current calendar of worship, song and more:

Sunday 11/28:	First Sunday in Advent, Worship 9:30am
Mondays 11/29-12/20:	Zoom Study, <i>Not a Silent Night: Mary Looks Back to Bethlehem</i> 7:00pm
Sunday 12/5:	Second Sunday in Advent, Worship with Communion 9:30am
Sunday 12/12:	Third Sunday in Advent, Worship 9:30am
Sunday 12/19:	Fourth Sunday in Advent, Christmas Pageant, Worship 9:30am Living Nativity 5:00pm Christmas Caroling by Caravan 6:30 p.m.
Friday 12/24:	Christmas Eve Carols and Music of the season 6:30pm Candlelight Worship 7:00pm
Sunday 12/26:	Pajama Christmas Worship—Come As You Are 9:30am
Sunday 1/2/2022:	Epiphany Worship with Communion 9:30am

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### Music Notes...



I want to add to the thanks already expressed to those who helped so much in making eighty-six weeks' worth of worship videos. They are George Hankins, Dominick Fontana, and John Redman, first and foremost; these were instrumental in setting up and supporting the project. Thanks are also due to the clergy who participated, including David Kingsley and Rhonda Myers, as well as many visitors. Bill Powers stepped in as worship leader over the summer, and several congregants took part as readers.

Thanks to a large, supportive community, the church did not fail to observe a single Lord's Day, in one format or another! I think that the "cloud of witnesses" who worshiped here were both amazed at our technology, and pleased with our determination. As we move into new formats, new names come to the fore for our appreciation; so far, Kevin Hankins and Sam Fontana. Of course, some old names continue—thanks to you all.

On December 19, there will be a Live Nativity in front of the church, weather permitting, from 5 to 6; this will be followed by the Dickensian Carolin' Caravan, just like last year. Let's hope for less ice on the streets! You're welcome to sing carols with the choir for either or both; Dickensian costumes are optional, and can be found cheaply online if you like. Otherwise, wear a big scarf and hat, or just come as you are.

Christmas Eve will once again feature an extended prelude of Christmas carols and music of the season. This begins at 6:30. The service proper will start at 7.

I've been reading a wonderful book by an English professor in Rhode Island named Anthony Esolen. Titled *Nostalgia*, it is a penetrating and deeply reflective study of that idea. Esolen's point is that nostalgia, for a Christian, is not for a specific place in the past, or a cherished memory. Those things are beautiful, but they are meant to point us to our true home...*where we have never yet been*. In other words, we are nostalgic for *heaven*. Neither the past nor the (imagined) future are to be condemned or idolized; both lead us to the eternal Present.

The book is beautifully written, lyrical and literary, and draws on the *Odyssey* as a metaphor for the modern search for meaning. Highly recommended.

Have a wonderful Advent! --Jonathan

## **MARK YOUR CALENDAR!**

**Pull out your hat and gloves and get in the holiday spirit!**

**We will be caroling our way through the Christmas story with period dressed carolers and audience participation.**



### **OUTDOOR LIVING NATIVITY**

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19 from 5:00 – 6:00 p.m.**

**This is a great event for the entire family!**

**Please join us in front of the First Presbyterian Church in Goshen**



**This year we have a very special Christmas Eve Service planned!**

**The evening will begin at 6:30 p.m. with caroling and music of the season, followed by a candlelight Christmas Eve worship service at 7:00 p.m.**



### **Help needed: Bakers and Soup Makers and Delivery Persons for Presbyterian Women's Holiday "Baskets"**

Christmas is right around the corner, and the Presbyterian Women are planning to deliver some baked goods, soup, and holiday cheer for some of our church members and friends. We kindly need donations of cookies, small holiday breads, and/or a jar or more of soup. We usually deliver to 12-15 individuals or families.

Contact either Carolyn Keller at 294-5508 (email: carolk11@gmail.com)  
or Carol Gabella at 342-4367 ( email:gabellacarol@gmail.com)

**Please let us know the name and address of those you wish to receive a Holiday "basket."**

**SHARE  
THE  
SPIRIT!**

Assistance appreciated to help pack and deliver goodies  
at 1 PM Wednesday, December 15th in Fellowship Hall.

## **Christian Education Upcoming Events:** **Shop Rite Cards are Back !**

The Holidays are coming, and we all must eat. Why not spend our grocery money for a cause? For every dollar spent, FPC will receive 5% back. NO extra cost to you.

This summer (July 24-27<sup>th</sup>) we are hoping to send our youth and young adults to Indianapolis, Indiana to Triennium.

Triennium, is a life-changing event for thousands of Presbyterian youth and young adults across the country.

The 2022 version of Presbyterian Youth Triennium will feature a Matthew 25 framework.

They will be asking: "Lord, When Did We See You?"

This will be the first time FPC will be participating. Help us make this happen for our youth. To purchase your Shop Rite card, see Mark Glasse.

For more information on Triennium see: <https://presbyterianyouthtriennium.org>

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### **Book Study**

Book Study, "The Sum of Us" by Heather McGhee was completed on November 22, 2021.

Thank you Mark and Paty for leading the book study. It was very informative, enlightening, with great discussion.

Books are still available in the church office until December 1<sup>st</sup>; consider picking one up.

Office: 845 294-7991

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### **Friday Night Friends**

December 10<sup>th</sup> 6 – 8pm

Theme: The Magic of the Season

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### **Sunday School**

Christmas Pageant: Sunday December 19<sup>th</sup> during church service

Name: "Twas' the Night Before..."

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### **Santa Breakfast**

#### **Reservations Required**

Date: Saturday December 4<sup>th</sup>

Open seating: 9:00- 11am

Contact Church Office for Reservations

Cost: \$8.00/person

Children under 4 years - \$5.00.

#### **Each child's ticket includes:**

Pancake breakfast (includes sausage, fruit cocktail, coffee, tea and juice) face painting and shopping for a special gift in the North Pole Gift Shoppe for that special someone.

## **TIDBITS FROM THE TOWER**



### **HAPPY DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS TO:**

2	<i>Joy Kissane</i>	18	<i>Jason Stewart</i>
3	<i>Fiona Keahon</i>	19	<i>William Person</i>
4	<i>Greg Sitler</i>	20	<i>Nancy Leech</i>
6	<i>Lisa Montalbano</i>	23	<i>Barbara Schust</i>
9	<i>Beryl Yungman</i>	25	<i>Jennifer Serkes</i>
12	<i>Bruce Crandall</i>		<i>Wesley Sproul</i>
	<i>Sadie Hankins</i>		<i>Mal Stewart</i>
14	<i>Rob Dickover</i>	27	<i>Barbara Heiser</i>
	<i>Jeanette McDowell</i>		<i>Kevan Ottochian</i>
	<i>Ken Skyer</i>		<i>Kayla Farley</i>
15	<i>Rachael Quick</i>	29	<i>Geri Corey</i>
16	<i>Linda Boardman</i>		<i>Ethan Cox</i>
	<i>Marilyn Velzey</i>	30	<i>Graham Glasse</i>

### **HAPPY DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES TO:**

12	<i>Logan and Rachael Quick</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>

*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.*

Dear Members,

I have a coin collection that belonged to my husband, Richard. It has not been appraised. I would like to give it to someone in the congregation and I'm asking those that are interested to write me a short note on why they would want this collection.

I'm thinking that it would be nice to give to a young person to either get them interested in collecting or to give it to someone who already has a collection; or the writer may want it.

Please contact me at 114 Murray Ave., Goshen, NY 10924-1106.

Cecile Ayres



## **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:**

Colin Alevras  
Janet Begnoche  
Scott Brinkley  
Jean and Bruce Crandall  
James, Max, and Liam Feragola  
Charles Fritz  
Barbara and George Hankins  
Rosemary Joy  
Jeff Kott and Natalia  
Maggie and Quinn  
The Meek Family  
Richard Montalbano  
Eileen Myslinski  
Dave and Wendy Paffenroth  
Carolyn Reynolds  
Matt Skyer  
Gary Smith  
Barbara Hankins' sister, Virginia Stubenrauch  
Lori Kilmer's mom, Learle VanEmburg  
Sam Wallis

Ron Alevras  
Ann (Strong) Blake  
Barbara Cody  
Dori Dodson  
Mary Lee Farris and her sister  
Carol Gabella's brother, Clarence  
Kevin and Sara Hankins  
Regina Kenny  
Maria Kurt  
James Magee  
Evelyn Mercado  
Kevin Murphy  
Amy (Thompson) Nguye  
Josephine Pecoraro  
Karen Saleski  
Mary Rita Schlagel  
Louise Spencer  
Jerry Westphal

Susan Ambrsino  
Richard Brahs  
Lynn Costa and Son  
Everyone serving in the Military  
Judy Fazio  
Marlene Gaynor  
Susan Johnson  
Mary Kopec's cousin, Cathy  
Patricia Lawlor  
Kelly Magee Thrush  
Dolores Mollicone  
Pastor Rhonda Myers  
Owen  
Carlos and Miarose Reyes  
Tom Sawyer  
Eva Sickler  
  
Christopher Tucker  
Kenneth Van Etten  
Orra Wood

***(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.)***

## **LAST CHANCE TO PAY YOUR PER CAPITA ASSESSMENT FOR 2021**

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 **270** and **our assessment per member** (not per family) **for 2021 is \$38.83**, which is a total of **\$10,484.10** to be taken from our operating budget. If you haven't already done so, 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.





## **Maney-Hawkins Meditation Garden**

### **DECEMBER UPDATE**

**Our garden welcomes everyone this holiday season.  
Spend a quiet moment with our God as we celebrate the gift of Jesus.**

#### **Memorial Pavers**

To order a memorial paver to honor or remember your loved ones, please see Pat in the church office. The cost of each paver is only \$100. We will place an order when we have 10 requests (as of now we have **FIVE** orders).

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#### **Only 3 Niches Remain Available for Purchase in the Memorial Columbarium**

Each niche allows for double or single interment with three purchase options:

**Payment in Full = \$2,800**

12-Month Payment Option = \$250 / month for 12 months (\$3,000)

18-Month Payment Option = \$180 / month for 18 months (\$3,240)

***We will need to consider constructing a 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> columbarium wall soon.  
The estimated cost for these two new walls is \$40,000+.***

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#### **“Stewards of Our Garden”**

*Special thanks to our dedicated Stewards for keeping the garden neat!*

##### **The DECEMBER/early JANUARY Steward's Schedule:**

Bill Eustance	December 1 – December 15
Barbara and George Hankins	December 16 – December 31
Bill Eustance	January 1 – January 15

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### **CALLING ANY & ALL VOLUNTEERS!**

***“Helping Hands” are always needed and certainly welcomed to help maintain the garden. Just reach out to Pat in the church office to sign-up and be added to our Stewards schedule.***

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Call the church office (845-294-7991) or Wayne George (914-213-4093)  
for any information you may need about The Maney-Hawkins Meditation Garden.



## **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.

### **BOARD OF ELDERS**

#### **Class of 2022**

Linda Boardman  
Geri Corey  
William Eustance  
Deb Hourahan  
Brad McLeland  
Brian Meek  
Rob Person

#### **Class of 2023**

Nancy Buckley  
Jennifer Ellis  
BA Long  
Kevan Ottochian  
Sue Varden

#### **Class of 2024**

Marlene Gaynor  
Rick Heal  
Bill Powers  
Mal Stewart  
Anne Wood

Clerk of Session: Sue Varden

### **BOARD OF DEACONS**

#### **Class of 2022**

Liese Boese  
Margaret Dickover  
Jon Hourahan  
Jody Kopec  
Logan Quick  
Felicia Van Doran  
Mitch Weintraub

#### **Class of 2023**

Diana Bowe  
Jane Geyer  
Gina Gruber  
Carolyn Keller  
Mary Kopec  
Jonathan Laskoski  
Cheryl Zis

#### **Class of 2024**

Allison Csernai  
Brendan Donohue  
Pat Ellis  
Sheila Heal  
Bill Keller  
Barbara Schust  
George Schust

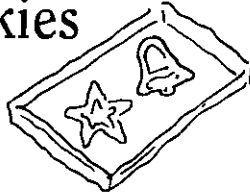
Moderator of Deacons: Carolyn Keller

### **STAFF**

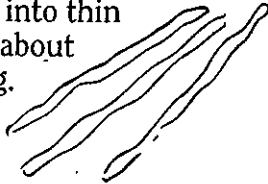
Jonathan B. Hall, Minister of Music  
Patricia Schwetje, Church Secretary  
Deborah Hourahan, Church Treasurer  
William Kozireski, Church Sexton  
Mitch Weintraub, Church Sexton

# THE KID'S PAGE

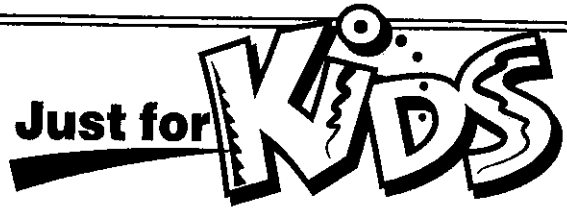
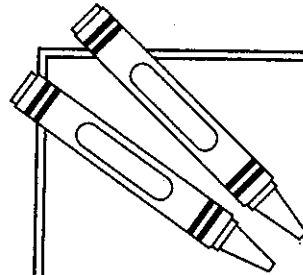
## Bake "Stained-Glass" Cookies



1. Mix your favorite cutout cookie recipe.
2. Chill overnight.
3. On waxed paper, roll dough into thin ropes, about 6" long.



4. Shape ropes into holiday symbols – stars, bells, etc.
5. Crush hard candies to make 2 cups.
6. Place shapes on well-greased cookie sheets.
7. Fill the openings with hard candies.
8. Use a toothpick to poke a hole in the top of each if you want to hang them.
9. Bake for 8 minutes, or until candy melts.
10. Cool completely before removing from cookie sheet.
11. Tie a loop of thread through hole if desired.



## The Christmas Story

Each line below contains the letters to form a word that is part of the Christmas story. But each group of letters has 1 that is extra! Unscramble the words and write the extra letter on the lines at the bottom. What did we all receive at Christmas?

- |   |            |       |       |
|---|------------|-------|-------|
| ① | TGLBEHHEME | _____ | _____ |
| ② | NEAGLO     | _____ | _____ |
| ③ | NRMEDAG    | _____ | _____ |
| ④ | ODEKSNY    | _____ | _____ |
| ⑤ | AMGYR      | _____ | _____ |
| ⑥ | OHESJIP    | _____ | _____ |
| ⑦ | EFJSUS     | _____ | _____ |
| ⑧ | ITEENMSW   | _____ | _____ |
| ⑨ | SPHHDSREEO | _____ | _____ |
| ⑩ | EMCFAL     | _____ | _____ |
| ⑪ | TLSRA      | _____ | _____ |
| ⑫ | CSSNUEO    | _____ | _____ |
| ⑬ | HEVSPE     | _____ | _____ |
| ⑭ | ENIN       | _____ | _____ |

"	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	"
	9	10	11	12	13	14			

God's gift of love

Bethlehem (G), Angel (O), Manger (D), Donkey (S), Mary (G), Joseph (I), Jesus (F), Wise men (T), Shepherds (O), Camel (F), Star (L), Census (O), Sheep (V), Inn (E)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28 9:30am - Church 9:30am - Worship	29 12:30pm - NA @ FH	30 9:30am - Food Pantry	1 Deadline for Poinsettia 4:30pm - Mission 6:30pm - NA @ B	2 6:30pm - Bell Choir 7:30pm - Choir	3 12:30pm - NA @ FH	4 9am - Santa Breakfast 1pm - Academy
5 9:30am - Church 9:30am - Worship 10:30am - Deacon's	6 12:30pm - NA @ FH 7pm - Book Study @	7 9:30am - Food Pantry 7pm - Worship/Music	8 7:30pm - Finance	9 6:30pm - Bell Choir 7:30pm - Choir	10 12:30pm - NA @ FH 6pm - Friday Night	11 9:30am - Food Pantry
12 Deadline for Giving 9:30am - Church 9:30am - Worship	13 12:30pm - NA @ FH 7pm - Book Study @	14 9:30am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Outreach	15 1pm - PW Christmas 7pm - Session	16 5:30pm - Recital @ FH 6:30pm - Bell Choir 7:30pm - Choir	17 12:30pm - NA @ FH 5:30pm - Recital @ FH	18 9am - Food Pantry @ 5:30pm - Recital @ FH
19 Tower Tie Articles Due 9:30am - Children's 9:30am - Worship 5pm - Living Nativity @ 6:30pm - Caroling	20 12:30pm - NA @ FH 7pm - Book Study @	21 9:30am - Food Pantry	22	23 6:30pm - Bell Choir 7:30pm - Choir	24 Christmas Eve Day off for Christmas 12:30pm - NA @ FH 6:30pm - Special Music 7pm - Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Day
26 9:30am - Church 9:30am - Worship	27 12:30pm - NA @ FH	28 9:30am - Food Pantry	29	30 6:30pm - Bell Choir 7:30pm - Choir	31 Day off for New Year's New Year's Eve 12:30pm - NA @ FH	1 New Year's Day