

# THE TOWER TIE

The Newsletter of the  
First Presbyterian Church of Goshen

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March 2025

## *From the Pastor's Desk....*

*“For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, ‘To an unknown god.’ What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you.”*

*-Paul, Acts 17:23, NRSV*

“Nobody wants to go to church anymore.” I’ve heard this often. It’s not just FPC Goshen, and not even just Presbyterian churches. Even the Southern Baptists, who seemed to be dodging the decline for a while, are losing members.

This fear isn’t new, though. As long as there has been a church, faithful Christians worried that the next generation didn’t take the faith seriously. The author of Hebrews complained that their readers were “sluggish in hearing” and not as mature in Christ as they ought to be.

In 530, St. Benedict remarked that since the holy fathers recited all 150 Psalms every single day, the monks in his order would be very lazy indeed if they failed to accomplish that feat every week.

The enlightenment threatened (but failed) to destroy the Christian faith, but in the end, modernist thought worked its way into even the most fundamentalist sects of the Christian faith. Nearly 100 years ago, Tennessee passed a law to prevent public school teachers from teaching evolution because a legislator had “read in the papers that boys and girls were coming home from school and telling their fathers and mothers that the Bible was all nonsense.”

Despite all the worry about the death of the church, I am encouraged because even as people abandon traditional Christian faith, they remain deeply interested in spirituality. I believe that people are hungry for an encounter with the Divine, with something more, but there doesn’t seem to be as much interest in Christianity in particular. People are looking for meaning and community, and the church and the Christian faith have those in abundance. I believe we can offer them to a world looking for more if we can show them a reasonable ancient faith that is willing to listen, learn, grow, and follow Jesus’ command to love God and love our neighbors, with no asterisks or caveats. Amen.

God Bless You All!  
Pastor Todd



I write this in late February, but my mind is set on Easter! This year, we celebrate the Lord's resurrection on April 20.

The greatest holiday in the Christian faith falls on different dates every year, depending on the moon. In the West, the rules followed by Catholic and Protestant churches allows for a date of Easter between March 22 and April 25. The last time we had a March 22 Easter was 1818, and none of us will be alive to see the next one in 2285. The closest we've ever come is 2008, with March 23. As to late dates, April 25 last came up in 1943 and will come again in 2038.

Be that as it may, the rhythm of Lent and Easter is a familiar one. Lent is a penitential season, a time of introspection and self-examination, often accompanied by fasting and works of charity, and the scripture readings in the lectionary guide us forward to the great acts of our redemption. People traditionally "give something up" for Lent. This imitates the forty-day fast of Christ in the desert. The music reflects this change as well; it tends away from jollity. As for Easter, it's a great outpouring of joy, intensified by the patience of what has preceded it. If you can't fast, you also can't feast.

As I've said before, church music isn't required to follow the game plan of the secular music industry—that well-coordinated marketing and social-control enterprise in which the "talent" has very little voice. The music of the Christian faith is meant to promote Christian values, not to offer pleasing distractions. Far from entertainment with a topping of God-talk, it is meant to draw a veil on the addictions and obsessions of the world, to allow us to regroup around a sacred purpose, to redirect our energies to higher things. That's a big job.

In the 1970s many in the church experimented with an anti-traditional, pop-culture-driven approach, where the sounds on everyone's AM transistor radios *had to be* the sounds of Sunday morning...no negotiation!

While that movement has been checked, it's not gone. And to be sure, the musical style of the era always has an influence on sacred music. French Classic organ music—around the time of Louis XIV—was heavily influenced by dance and opera. Even then, though, a composer would have to adapt the style to make it appropriate for worship. Luther tried to borrow tavern songs for church; but most of his efforts failed. The few that survived (like the Passion Chorale!) had to be *slowed down* and *dignified*.

The need for church music to aid us in subduing our passions and growing in virtue is never more obvious than during Lent. Even then, the music isn't gloomy, just reflective. We always look to the eternal happiness to which we're called. Enjoy the journey!

—Jonathan



Join us for the **Ash Wednesday Service** on  
**March 5 at 7:00 p.m.**

## Prayer Chain

It is vital for any congregation to be in prayer for the church and for individuals affiliated with the church who have a need for God's intervention in some way. This is why churches such as ours have prayer chains. But the prayer requests must stay current if individuals are to be asked to pray for everyone on the list. We have changed the way we update the prayer chain. Once a request has been made for a member of the church, a friend, a neighbor, a family member, etc. to be met with prayer, that name will remain on the prayer chain list for 2 months. If you want continued prayers for another 2 months, please contact the church office to make that request. Use the church email address [fpgoshen@gmail.com](mailto:fpgoshen@gmail.com) or phone the office with your request at 845-294-7991.



### PRAYER CHAIN

**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:**

*Amy Edmonson  
Zach Coffee, nephew of Bill Powers  
Denice Jones, Diana Bowe and Cheryl Zis' aunt  
Keith, Mitch Weintraub's brother  
Wendy Bynum-Wade who is recuperating at home.  
Clarice Schwartz who is recovering from knee replacement.  
Lauren Young who had hip replacement recently.  
Hong Luo  
Tom Losee, who is home recovering from a spine fracture.*

## **TIDBITS FROM THE TOWER**

### **HAPPY MARCH BIRTHDAYS TO:**

|    |                           |    |                        |
|----|---------------------------|----|------------------------|
| 5  | <i>Wendy Paffenroth</i>   | 22 | <i>Paige Gallet</i>    |
| 7  | <i>Betty Lobb</i>         | 24 | <i>Maureen Johnson</i> |
| 9  | <i>Karen Magee</i>        |    | <i>Emily Straube</i>   |
| 11 | <i>Patrick Farley</i>     | 25 | <i>Lilah Quick</i>     |
| 15 | <i>William Signorelli</i> | 26 | <i>Robin Paulus</i>    |
| 16 | <i>Bill Powers</i>        | 31 | <i>Jack Quick</i>      |



### **HAPPY MARCH ANNIVERSARIES TO:**

15 *Bill and Carolyn Keller*

*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 Congregants,

I trust this message finds you well and staying warm.

It's time for us to address significant repairs to our beloved Sanctuary, built in 1869. After consulting with a stone mason and a structural engineer to assess the ongoing water infiltration issues on the exterior gable end wall of the chancel, their expert recommendation is to move forward with necessary repairs to stabilize the structure. The mortar joints of the exterior wall are deteriorating and require maintenance, and the stone of the parapet walls on the gable end has failed, requiring immediate restoration to preserve the building's integrity.

These repairs can no longer be postponed, as the condition will only worsen over time. Both the Finance Committee and Session are aware of the situation, and we are working on a plan to raise the funds needed for this project.

The scriptures tell us in the Book of Malachi:

“Bring your whole offering into the storehouse, that My house, may be kept up. Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.”

And 2 Chronicles:

“All the officials and all the people brought their contributions gladly, dropping them into the chest until it was full. Whenever the chest was brought in by the Levites to the king's officials and they saw that there was a large amount of money, the royal secretary and the officer of the chief priest would come and empty the chest and carry it back to its place. They did this regularly and collected a great amount of money. The king and Jehoiada gave it to those who carried out the work required for the temple of the Lord. They hired masons and carpenters to restore the Lord's temple, (today that would be the church), and workers in iron and bronze to repair the temple. The men in charge of the work were diligent, and the repairs progressed under them. They rebuilt the temple of God according to its original design and reinforced it.”

God desires His house to be a place of prayer for everyone. It should not be allowed to fall into disrepair. We can all help. When we all do a little, it adds up to a lot.

I will continue to keep you all informed about the progress and status of our efforts.

Thank you for your support and prayers.

Respectfully,  
Jody

### **Mark Your Calendars!**

Pastor Todd has started a **Men's Breakfast** on the **3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of each month at 8:30 a.m.** in the Fellowship Hall. There was a terrific turn out at the February breakfast and it was enjoyed by all.

Please join us on **March 15.**

**All men are invited. Bring your friends – the more the merrier!**

**Did you know** that Session meetings are open to church members? If you are a member, you are welcome to attend regular meetings of the Session which are currently held in parlor on the **fourth Wednesday** of each month beginning at 7 p.m.

If you attend a Session meeting to express concern about a topic that is before the Session, please let the Clerk and the Moderator know of your desire to speak prior to the start of the meeting.

### **Organ Recitals**

First Presbyterian offers free noontime organ recitals on Tuesdays from 12:15-12:45. There is ample parking, air conditioned sanctuary, and handicap accessible. Come Hear Great Music in a Great Space.

### **Financial Commitments**

If you haven't made a financial commitment for 2025 but would like to support this congregation in fulfilling its work of worship, education, mission, outreach, care and fellowship, consider making a pledge using a commitment card found on the table in the Narthex or see Deb Hourahan.

### **Please Pay Your Per Capita Assessment For 2025**

**A message from the Treasurer:** Please consider paying your **per capita assessment for 2025** to offset the more than \$7,000 the church must pay out to cover expenses for the Presbytery of Hudson River, Synod of the Northeast and General Assembly of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). This year it remains at **\$40.89 per member** (not per family). 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. We ask that you pay this by February 1, 2025. Thank you for doing your share to support the expense of being a church in active ministry.

### **Electronic Giving Cards**

There are giving cards for use during the offertory for those who give electronically each week/month/year. Your gifts are meaningful and necessary, and you should be able to participate in our weekly presentation of our offerings to the Lord.

### **Livestreaming Worship**

If you are unable to join us in person for worship, watch on our YouTube channel.  
If you need help finding the Livestream, use the link on our Weekly Tower Tie.

### **Please Be Advised That We Do Live Stream Our Worship Services.**

The Live Stream camera generally captures the first 4-5 (rarely 7-8) rows of the sanctuary in its feed. Normally we only see the back of your head. If you would rather stay out of camera range, please know that we do not capture the seating under the balcony (on either side) and we don't capture the back rows at all. Regarding the Children's Message: We keep the camera zoomed out. As children leave to go to Sunday school, we will pan up to the stained glass windows so no children's faces are caught on camera.

# BREAKFAST WITH THE EASTER BUNNY

**WHEN:** Saturday, April 5, 2025

**TIME:** Pancake Breakfast will be served from 8:30 - 11:15 a.m. Activities and games are available from 8:30- 11:30 a.m.

Easter Egg Hunt will be at 10:00 a.m. & 11:30 a.m.

**WHERE:** FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN GOSHEN

**COST:** \$10.00 PER PERSON, PAID IN ADVANCE



Included in the price of each paying child's reservation will be crafts, games, activities (for children of all ages), and a ticket for 1 egg hunt time.

The Easter Bunny will be on hand to greet everyone.

**BRING YOUR CAMERA TO CATCH THAT SPECIAL MOMENT ON THE EASTER BUNNY'S LAP!**

*Reservations accepted in the church office through March 29th.*

*Walk-ins welcome for \$12.00 per person*

*Questions? Call 649-1029 or 294-7991*

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## **RESERVATION FORM for "Breakfast with the Easter Bunny"**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Egg Hunt Time \_\_\_\_\_ 10:00 **OR** \_\_\_\_\_ 11:30

Number of adults \_\_\_\_\_ Number **AND AGES** of children participating  
and older children \_\_\_\_\_ in breakfast and activities \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL NUMBER X \$10.00 COST PER PERSON = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to: First Presbyterian Church, 33 Park Place, Goshen, NY 10924.  
Forms and checks can be dropped off at the church office.

**Maney-Hawkins Meditation Garden**  
**MARCH UPDATE**



**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.

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**The Memorial Columbarium**

**PLEASE NOTE: A niche in the Memorial Columbarium has become available.** If you are interested in purchasing it, please contact Pat in the church office.

The price of the niche is \$2,800. There are two payment options:

12 month = \$250/month for 12 months (\$3,000)

18 month = \$180/month for 1 month (\$3,240)

**Once this niche is sold, the Session/Congregation will need to consider if constructing a second/third wall is desired and/or financially possible. If it is, a new estimate for the work will need to be created, considered, approved and project timeline established.**

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Call the church office (845-294-7991) for any information you need about  
The Maney-Hawkins Meditation Garden

## **OUR MISSION STATEMENT**

**We strive to be a welcoming, loving church family united by our faith and committed to service in Christ.**

### **BOARD OF ELDERS**

#### **Class of 2025**

**Diane Church  
Linda Clark  
Jody Kopec  
Felicia Van Doran**

#### **Class of 2026**

**Jennifer Ellis  
Michael Coyne  
Jon Hourahan  
Kevan Ottochian**

#### **Class of 2027**

**Linda Boardman  
Marlene Gaynor  
Bill Powers  
Mal Stewart**

**Clerk of Session: Felicia Van Doran**

### **BOARD OF DEACONS**

#### **Class of 2025**

**Cecile Ayres  
Dom Fontana  
Carol Gabella  
Jennifer Serkes**

#### **Class of 2026**

**Diana Bowe  
Carolyn Keller  
Cheryl Zis  
Sam Fontana**

#### **Class of 2027**

**Bill Keller  
Charles Quick  
Logan Quick  
Natalie Signorelli**

**Moderator of Deacons: Carolyn Keller**

### **STAFF**

**Jonathan B. Hall, Minister of Music  
Patricia Schwetje, Office Administrator  
Deborah Hourahan, Church Treasurer**





**JOIN US FOR A DELIGHTFUL  
LUNCHEON FILLED WITH LAUGHTER,  
GOOD COMPANY, AND DELICIOUS  
FOOD!**

LET'S TAKE A BREAK FROM OUR BUSY  
SCHEDULES AND ENJOY A LOVELY  
AFTERNOON TOGETHER



**SATURDAY  
MARCH 22, 2025**

# *Ladies Brunch*

**At 10AM**



**First Presbyterian Church  
33 Park Place Goshen, NY 10924  
(845)294-7991**

**Let's feast together bring a  
dish to contribute**





| Sun  | Mon  | Tue  | Wed   | Thu   | Fri   | Sat                              |
|--|--|--|---|---|---|----------------------------------|
| 23<br>9:30am - Church School<br>9:30am - Worship Service @<br>10:30am - Coffee Hour @ FH<br>10:30am - Congregational                                     | 24<br>12:30pm - NA @ B                             | 25<br>9:30am - Food Pantry<br>12:15pm - Organ Recital @ S<br>6:30pm - NA @ FH<br>7pm - Bible Study @ Zoom                      | 26<br>7pm - Session @ P   | 27<br>6pm - Food Pantry @ FH<br>7:30pm - Choir Rehearsal @          | 28<br>12:30pm - NA @ B<br>10pm - NA                                 | 1<br>4pm - NA Event @ FH         |
| 2<br>9:30am - Church School<br>9:30am - Worship Service @<br>10:30am - Coffee Hour @ FH<br>10:30am - Worship/Music                                       | 3<br>12:30pm - NA @ B                              | 4<br>9:30am - Food Pantry<br>12:15pm - Organ Recital @ S<br>6:30pm - NA @ FH<br>6:30pm - NAMI @ B<br>7pm - Bible Study @ Zoom  | 5<br>3:30pm - Mission Committee<br>6:30pm - NA @ B<br>7pm - Ash Wednesday | 6<br>6pm - NA @ FH<br>6:30pm - NA @ B<br>7:30pm - Choir Rehearsal @ | 7<br>12:30pm - NA @ B<br>10pm - NA                                  | 8<br>9am - Food Pantry @ FH      |
| 9<br><b>Daylight Saving Time starts</b><br>9:30am - Church School<br>9:30am - Worship Service @<br>10:30am - Deacon's Mtg. @ B<br>10:30am - Stone Soup   | 10<br>12:30pm - NA @ B                             | 11<br>9:30am - Food Pantry<br>12:15pm - Organ Recital @ S<br>6:30pm - NA @ FH<br>6:30pm - NAMI @ B<br>7pm - Bible Study @ Zoom | 12<br>7:30pm - Finance Committee  | 13<br>5:30pm -<br>7:30pm - Choir Rehearsal @                        | 14<br>12:30pm - NA @ B<br>6pm - Friday Night Friends @<br>10pm - NA | 15<br>8:30am - Men's Breakfast @ |
| 16<br><b>Tower Tie Articles Due</b><br>8:30am - Confirmation Class<br>9:30am - Church School<br>9:30am - Worship Service @<br>10:30am - Coffee Hour @ FH | 17<br><b>St. Patrick's Day</b><br>12:30pm - NA @ B | 18<br>9:30am - Food Pantry<br>12:15pm - Organ Recital @ S<br>6:30pm - NA @ FH<br>6:30pm - NAMI @ B<br>7pm - Bible Study @ Zoom | 19  | 20<br>6:30pm - NA @ B<br>7:30pm - Choir Rehearsal @                 | 21<br>12:30pm - NA @ B<br>10pm - NA                                 | 22<br>10am - Ladies Brunch @ FH  |
| 23<br>9:30am - Church School<br>9:30am - Worship Service @<br>10:30am - Coffee Hour @ FH   | 24<br>12:30pm - NA @ B                             | 25<br>9:30am - Food Pantry<br>12:15pm - Organ Recital @ S<br>6:30pm - NA @ FH<br>6:30pm - NAMI @ B<br>7pm - Bible Study @ Zoom | 26<br>7pm - Session @ P   | 27<br>6pm - Food Pantry @ FH<br>7:30pm - Choir Rehearsal @          | 28<br>12:30pm - NA @ B<br>2pm - Theater Group @ FH<br>10pm - NA @ B | 29<br>6pm - Theater Group @ FH   |
| 30<br>9:30am - Church School<br>9:30am - Worship Service @<br>10:30am - Coffee Hour @ FH<br>1pm - Theater Group @ FH                                     | 31<br>12:30pm - NA @ B                             | 1<br>9:30am - Food Pantry<br>12:15pm - Organ Recital @ S<br>6:30pm - NA @ FH<br>6:30pm - NAMI @ B<br>7pm - Bible Study @ Zoom  | 2<br>3:30pm - Mission Committee<br>6:30pm - NA @ B                        | 3<br>6pm - NA @ FH<br>6:30pm - NA @ B<br>7:30pm - Choir Rehearsal @ | 4<br>12:30pm - NA @ B<br>10pm - NA                                  | 5                                |