



RESPONSE

The Presbyterian Church of White Plains **Newsletter**

39 North Broadway, White Plains, NY 10601

(914) 761-8585 Website: wppresby.org E-mail: wppresby.church@optonline.net

APRIL 2012

Congregational Life

Nancy Re, Chair

Outreach for Palm Sunday and Easter

Did you know that 80% of those who visit church come because they were personally invited? Our congregation has a mission to be a beacon in our community to draw people into relationship and service with Jesus Christ. Consider inviting a friend or neighbor, in person, by phone, by email, or through *facebook*, to join us. When you see a visitor, offer a smile, say hello and share the peace of Christ, offer directions, and make them feel welcome.

Do you live in an apartment building or condo-association? We have invitational door hangers with a message for Easter. If you would be willing to put a few door hangers up in your building or neighborhood between now and Easter, please let someone know, or stop by the office and pick some up.

Last month a group of adults, youth and children hosted a Valentine celebration that served approximately 40 residents of Kingsley House. We provided dinner, dessert, and led a sing-along. The children supplied homemade Valentines and gave the participants chocolate hearts. Be sure to read the lovely thank you note from the tenants posted on the church bulletin board. Thank you to the members and friends who generously provided the celebration.

On the Sunday before Ash Wednesday we held a very successful Mardi Gras brunch. POTLUCK it was and it worked! We had some wonderful homemade hot dishes, breads and LOTS of delicious desserts. While we had reservations for 48, close to 100 actually attended ~ but the hot dishes went further than expected, loaves were multiplied, and everyone was served. In the coming year we will be sponsoring more potlucks. We love the participation and the variety of dishes.

Music

Tyrell Lundman, Music Director

I hope you enjoyed our exploration of female composers in the month of March. The choir and I both had fun with the pieces, some of which may have been the most meaningful for us as a group this year. Look for some of these again, as their seasons emerge, or other pieces by the same composers.

For every hymn we sing from the Presbyterian Hymnal, both the author of the text and the composer or source of the music are listed at the top of the page (the author is on the left). I hope that after these two months of featuring sources and composers your interest will be sparked to examine more closely the hymns we sing every week, whether they are old favorites or totally new.

Now looking ahead. This month we welcome back the New York Chamber Brass for our Easter services. We are fortunate to have these top-level musicians in our own community. We have concerts in the works for these and other students groups later this year, and I hope many of you will attend. Look for postings as we decide on the dates. These activities are the result of a new collaboration with Purchase College that should serve both sides well for some time.

Looking beyond Easter, I assure you we have some inventive things planned. Please look up the word "ackee," and where you might take one.

And don't forget to plant a tree.

Blessings,
Ty

Session/Council Snippets

Deirdre Lewin, Clerk of Session

The Session met on February 28th. Agnes Scheu and Nicole Freeman were welcomed as new session/council members and David Greffenius was thanked for all his dedicated work as chair of the Music and Worship Commission as he moves off the session/council.

We approved a very comprehensive Child Protection Policy with the understanding that it would be reviewed by an attorney. The Nursery School will be following suit with the help of Jeff Geary.

Congregational Life led the discussion about planning for the Presbytery meeting that will be held at our church on March 27th. At that time Sarah Henkel will be ordained – CONGRATULATIONS Sarah!

Sarah was at the session meeting to tell us about how the Presbytery is seeking our support in sending an overture to the Presbyterian Church USA's General Assembly (GA). They meet once a year with representatives from all over the country attending. The aim of this overture is to encourage the GA to adopt this country wide. Our church is supporting this initiative that requests that the GA. *“call Presbyteries and local congregations to a time of being at church together with immigrant brothers and sisters. This call urges presbyteries and local congregations to begin active (more than setting up a committee!) exploration in their home communities, seeking to answer how they can be at church together with immigrant communities through...”* and then it lists a variety of ways this can be accomplished. The session voted to endorse this overture.

Housekeeping items included reviewing the need for new carpeting in the sanctuary, use of kitchens and closets, the pastor's housing and getting our 46 Rockledge property ready to be rented out by May 1st.

Peace and blessings to all!

Deirdre Lewin

visit us online!

at our website wppresby.org

E-mail: wppresby.church@optonline.net



Rev. Jeffery A. Geary, Pastor

Tyrell Lundman, Director of Music

Lynn Dunn, Director of Christian Education

Stella M. Aviles, Executive Assistant.

Vicente Velasco, Sexton

Doug Astarita, Night Custodian

Gina Cerillo, Nursery School Director

Noel Warner, Business Mgr.

Elizabeth Peene, Church Treasurer

Olga Daniels, Asst. Treasurer

Wanda Van Woert, President of Trustees

John Timmons, Financial Secretary

Worship Time: Sunday, 10:00 a.m.

Office Hours: 9:00-a.m.-5:00 p.m. Monday-Friday

Website: wppresby.org

Telephone: (914) 761-8585

E-mail: wppresby.church@optonline.net,

View the up-to-date calendar on website



facebook.com



twitter.com

Pastor Jeffrey Geary, Editor-in-Chief

Agnes Scheu, Editor, Layout Designer

Articles for coming months must be submitted as e-mails sent to pastorgeary@optonline.net by the

12th of the month. The articles should be no longer than approximately **200** words.

We enter April together with shouts of *hosanna!* which must reckon with the cries of *crucify!* before we can share the acclamation of *Alleluia!* This is our Christian way – we pass through death on the way to life. Unless a seed fall to the ground and die, it will not bring forth new life.

The early church knew true life because they knew death, and regularly lived under the threat of death. But because they also knew the resurrection of Jesus, they lived without fear.

“The terror of death,” Martin Luther once wrote, “is death itself.” It is death’s power over us. Jesus was raised from death to life to declare an end to the power of death – both death dealing powers of this world and our mortal death. God’s raising of Jesus as the first fruits of a new creation did not declare that we would never die, just that death would not carry among us the power that it used to. Death (with a little ‘d’) may separate us from one another, at least for a time. But nothing in life or death can separate us from God.

When I was in seminary I owned a powerful book of poems and prayers which I have subsequently lost. It was by Julia Esquivel, a poet and a lay preacher who was exiled from Guatemala in the 1980s. The title poem was called “Threatened with Resurrection.”

Esquivel crafted that phrase for many reasons, but the primary reason was to describe her Christian hope. For decades, along with thousands of her countrymen and women she endured the massacres, the repression, of those in power in her country. Her response to that suffering was to cultivate, somehow, even more faith in the God of life and love. She confronted the daily threats she received with the power of her faith in the resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. The threats were designed to silence her, to intimidate her, to inject fear into an entire people. She sustained hope by believing the powers of the world face a greater threat than they could ever wield. The powers are “threatened with resurrection.”

This is just what the early church did. They dangerously dared to declare that Jesus is alive.

To tell the story of the empty tomb was to say even the greatest earthly power, the Roman Empire, shall not prevail. It meant an end to the legitimization of oppression in the name of God. To proclaim the resurrection is to celebrate the defeat of everything that denies life and everyone who deals death in this world.

Esquivel says resurrection is “something that doesn't let us sleep, that doesn't let us rest, that won't stop pounding deep inside ... it is the earthquake soon to come that will shake the world and put everything into place.” And she invites us to join in “this great vigil and ... know what it is to dream! Then you will know how marvelous it is to be threatened with resurrection.”

We have marvelous celebrations of God’s life among us planned in April. On Palm Sunday we will wave sustainably harvested palms from Guatemala in order to mark Christ’s entry into Jerusalem. Our worship will be modeled on the early church’s paschal vigil, telling the story of God’s great acts in history so that we can dream the next chapters. That same day we will welcome new members into fellowship, and gather together at the table. During Holy Week we will meet on Maundy Thursday to recall the narrative of Jesus’ passion in a deeply moving service of *Tenebrae*. And then finally on Easter morning we will greet the sunrise at 6:00 a.m. to break bread with our risen savior. We will gather again at 10:00 a.m. for a festival celebration of music and praise as we hear again the good news of our God’s goodness.

In the following weeks we will welcome the leadership of our children on Emmaus Sunday, and on Earth Day we will continue the work of Nobel Peace Laureate Wangari Maathai. At the end of the month we will even have the opportunity to hear Norma Smikle preach! God’s life is truly working new and marvelous things among us.

Folks, we are *all* threatened with resurrection. Come join the celebration.

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia. Amen.



Mission Commission

Elder Mike Doehring, Chair

EASTER – It’s here! Holy Week – Maundy Thursday - Good Friday - Easter Day

What a gift! How do we respond? By participating in our Mission programs that are just one way that we recognize the incredible gifts of our faith.

One Great Hour of Sharing – A reminder that part of the offering goes to the PC(USA) Self Development of People program. This important mission program transforms lives by providing self-development grants to non-majority community groups who are organizing to change things in their community or in their lives that hold them back from enjoying the fullness of life that God intends. It isn’t just buying food or giving needed disaster assistance. If you know of a group that might qualify, check the PC(USA) website for grant applications, or ask Pastor Jeff or me for more info.

Easter Offering – A special Easter Offering will be received on Sundays, March 25, April 1 (Palm Sunday) and April 8 (Easter). Envelopes will be available in the pews. This year our special Easter Offering will be distributed three ways:

The Emergency Ecumenical Food Pantry of White Plains

The Stony Point Conference Center (the building of a new Arts Center)

The Prison Ministry of Presbytery of Hudson River

Information about these important ministries, and how they are changing lives, will be shared during worship on each of the Sundays mentioned above.

Summer Mission Trip: The Mission Commission, in coordination with Christian Education, is planning an intergenerational mission trip for the end of June. We will participate in building a new Arts Center on the campus of Stony Point Conference Center, just across the river. The youngest participant for this trip must be age 14, and all other ages are encouraged to participate. The trip is scheduled for Monday, June 25 through Friday, June 29. Stay tuned for more information, or speak with Mike Doehring or Lynn Dunn to sign up.

Wangari Maathai/Earth Day Celebration is Sunday, April 22. We will have a special shortened worship service and then proceed to the front lawn for the celebration and tree planting.

Remember ; **Mission is Possible!**

Prayer Ministry

How Do We Pray?

How do we pray? The most common answer to that question is we pray in church with the pastor speaking or we pray by ourselves speaking to the Lord.

Often we pray when something special happens – like when a crisis occurs and we ask for God’s assistance. Or maybe we thank him when a car has cut us off and miraculously we are able to stop before having an accident. Those are the times people often to think of when asked about praying.

There are many other ways we can pray. Let’s consider some of them.

Spiritual reading
Praying the scriptures

Listening (sometimes that can be the hardest)
Contemplation
Praying to music
Dance, prayer movement
Prayer walk in nature
Journaling
Daily gratitude journal
Drawing, painting
Meditation
Watching the sunrise or sunset

There are many more ways as well as adaptations of those mentioned. This month why don’t you try a different way of communing with God.

Christian Education

Lynn Dunn, Director of Christian Education

Lenten worship and education programs in March provided many opportunities for learning and creative participation. Now we look forward to Palm Sunday and Easter and beyond with joy and excitement. On Palm Sunday, we will have our traditional palm processional, but this year we will be using Eco-Palms, procured through the PC(USA). These palms have been harvested in ways that allow the plants to remain living and growing, and the money earned from them directly benefits the communities where the palms are harvested. This money helps the children and families living in these communities in meaningful ways, adding even more joy to our processional.

April 1 is Palm Sunday, and following our palm processional, older children and youth will carry in a set of Easter banners that they helped create during this year's Lenten Arts program. These banners tell the story of salvation history, from Creation through Revelation, through the trees of the Bible. Easter Vigil readings accompanying each banner as it is carried in, are reflected in the symbolism of the banner. A lengthier description will appear in the Palm Sunday bulletin. Telling the Easter story through this unique viewpoint of the trees of the Bible was planned in recognition of our church's connection to the late Dr. Wangari Maathai, whom we will acknowledge with a special community service on April 22.

Following worship on Palm Sunday the annual Dan Sabia Memorial Easter Egg Hunt will take place. We will assemble in the Church House for a remembrance of Dan Sabia, after which the



children may go to the front lawn to search for Easter eggs. The Easter Bunny has promised to make his annual appearance, too!

The Emmaus luncheon on April 15 provides 3rd grade students the opportunity to receive and help serve communion at a luncheon meal with the congregation following worship. If your child is in 3rd grade or above and has not participated in a class on the meaning of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, please contact me or Pastor Jeff to be included.

Earth Day, April 22, our 10:00 a.m. worship service will be short, followed by an outdoor service at 11:00 a.m. celebrating and remembering the late Dr. Wangari Maathai, Nobel Peace Laureate, and founder of the Green Belt Movement. Due to the shortened service, there will be no Church School that day.

April Christian Education Dates:

- April 1 - Palm Sunday - palm and banner processional, children 5th grade and older remain in worship. Dan Sabia Memorial Easter Egg Hunt following worship, on front lawn, weather permitting.
- April 8 - Easter Sunday - No Church School classes, children remain in worship.
- April 15 - Emmaus Luncheon following worship - Children in 3rd grade and older receive and serve communion.
- April 22 - Earth Day. No Church School: shorter 10:00 a.m. worship, followed by 11:00 a.m. Wangari Maathai Community Service of Remembrance and Celebration outdoors.

Did You Know?

from The Stewardship Team

May 6 is Wills Emphasis Sunday

Did you know 70% of Presbyterians create a will by age 65?

Did you know it is important to create a will?

Did you know that you can include the church in your will?

What's coming up at Church

Add the events to your calendar and join us

**Maunday Thursday, April 5
Service 8:00 p.m.**

**Good Friday Ecumenical Worship Service:
St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church
12:00 - 3:00 p.m.**

**Dan Sabia Memorial Easter Egg Hunt on
Palm Sunday, April 1**

**Welcoming New Members
Sunday, April 1**

**Easter Sunrise Service, 6:00 a.m.
April 8**

**Easter Sunday Service, 10:00 a.m.
April 8**

**Sunday, April 15
Emmaus Sunday**

**Sunday, April 22 Earth Day
Tree Planting**

**We welcome all to God's house
Help us Share the Holy Days with others in
our community
Help others find God and share the invitation
to join us**

Childcare is available every Sunday morning, including Easter.

Who's Having A Birthday?

APRIL

- 1 Victor Hatcher
- 3 Estelle MacDonald
- 3 Pamela Moyer
- 4 Tuvana Rua
- 4 Lois Winterrose
- 5 Pat Farrell
- 5 Elizabeth Wagner
- 6 Melita Chiappolini
- 6 Janice Mone
- 11 Pamella Nyambi
- 12 Julene Goode
- 17 Nancy Caprari
- 20 Errol Brown
- 22 Robert Horan
- 23 Madeline Schroeder
- 25 Tristan Leclere
- 27 Lenton Gray
- 28 Joseph Re

*Best Wishes from your church
family*



Emmaus Communion & Luncheon

Join Us April 15

Emmaus Luncheon & Communion

Share Communion with the church family at lunch
just like Jesus did with the Disciples
Celebrate the Young members of our congregation
as they share the communion



Book Club

The WPPC Book Group meets each month to discuss contemporary books (fiction and non-fiction) through which we engage with the issues, struggles and joys of life and faith. Each selection is announced six weeks in advance so that participants have an opportunity to acquire and read the book. Meetings are open to all and guests are always welcome.

In April we will explore Anne Patchett's *State of Wonder*.

The book Club normally meets in the Conference Room at 10:00 a.m. on the fourth Tuesday each month.



Congregational Life

Tag Sale

Milme Hoag, Edna Shaw, Carmen Gray,
Barbara Barnes, Beryl Dilworth

**The date for the Spring Tag Sale
has changed to May 19 - please
mark your calendar**

It is that time again to start spring cleaning and purging your closets. What you can't use, someone else might be able to. So bring your items in good condition to the church and our fabulous Nifty Thrifty ladies will sort it and price it for the sale. Donations will not be received after April 7.

How you can help...

- The sorting room functions year round on Monday and Friday mornings. All hands are welcome. Come when you have a moment or join the team on an ongoing basis.
- We need volunteer to put flyers up in buildings, at work, and at local stores. We need help the week of the sale to set up, to work the sale, and to clean up afterwards. Even an hour of your time helps.

So mark your calendar, come help, come shop, spread the word.

If you have a question, please see Milme Hoag, Edna Shaw, Carmen Gray, Barbara Barnes or Beryl Dillworth or leave a message for them in the office.





The Presbyterian Church
39 North Broadway, White Plains, NY 10601

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
Paid
White Plains, New York
Permit No. 269

“Maundy Thursday”

services will be held on
**April 5, 2012 at
8:00 p.m.**

What's Coming Up at White Plains Presbyterian Church

PALM Sunday

Dan Sabia Easter Egg Hunt

Easter Bunny will arrive to deliver Easter eggs to all the young children on Palm Sunday, April 1. The hunt will begin after services.



A Sunrise service will be held on Easter morning at 6:00 a.m.

Easter Sunday service will be held at 10:00 a.m.

God's Gathering*

A small group of young adults and parents with young children have begun to hang out in the youth room on the first Saturday of each month. We meet from 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. for unstructured time together, good conversation and play. The kids enjoy being together in the church, and the adults grow closer. All are welcome. For more information, call the church office at 914-761-8585.

*God's Gathering was named by August Xavier.