



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

MARCH 2013

Mission

Elder Mike Doehring, Chair

1) **A Call to Reduce Gun Violence** – An initiative from PC(USA) that we've heard about from the pulpit in the last few weeks and had an opportunity to partake by signing a petition to Congress, etc. "As members of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and people of faith and conscience, we believe that God desires health and wholeness for all of God's children – not cycles of despair, poverty, and violence." In summary, the petition focuses on an assault weapons ban, universal background checks and making gun trafficking a federal crime. See the church website and click on Pastor Jeff's blog for more info and links.

2) **Stony Point Sandy Family Partnership** - We at WPPC continue to help the Guerra family from Stony Point as they rebound from Hurricane Sandy. In January Rev. Sarah Henkel, Norma Smikle and Ruth and Mike Doehring shared a joyful meal at the Guerra's in Stony Point. They still need assistance but their hospitality and warmth of spirit are contagious. We opened our "nifty thrifties" room to Mom and Dad (Elba & Napolean) to help with their clothing needs (it's not just for tag sales). By our (WPPC) walking with this family in faith and support we are freeing up the Stony Point Conference Center to use their resources to advocate for other peoples and projects and causes.

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Session Snippets

Deirdre Lewin, Clerk

So..... "What's in a name" after all?

The NFoG (**New Form of Government**) that came into being a year or so ago in connection with variety of elements of our government in the Presbyterian Church USA brought along with it some changes in names.

One of these changes is that what we used to call the "Session" ("An assembly of people for a common purpose or because of a common interest") is now called the "Council". ("An assembly of persons called together for consultation, deliberation, or discussion: A body of people elected or appointed to serve as administrators, legislators, or advisors: An assembly of church officials and theologians convened for regulating matters of doctrine and discipline.") (www.Freedictionary.com)

So next month you won't read about the doings of the Session under "Session Snippets" anymore – you will read about it all under the heading – well therein lies the rub- what on earth to call this monthly snippet of information? Got any good ideas? I don't, so if you have an idea for a brief and catchy new name do send me an email – dklewin@optonline.net. And when someone talks about the Church Council – you will know it's just the Session with an updated name. Blessing and peace to you all and remember that spring is just around the corner!

Deirdre Lewin, Clerk of Session – oops! I mean Clerk of Council.

from the Pastor

Lucy, in one of her more philosophical moments, asks Charlie Brown the great vocational question, “Why do you think we’re put here on earth, Charlie Brown?” to which he responds, “To make others happy.”

Lucy ponders a moment, and then says “I don’t think I’m making anyone very happy.” But then after another moment she adds, “Of course, nobody’s making me very happy either. *Somebody’s not doing his job !!!*” Charlie Brown responds with his characteristic “Aaaaargh!”

Charles Shultz was a wry theologian. When I was growing up, I could count on my minister using a *Peanuts* comic strip as a sermon illustration at least once a month. Charles Shultz let his Christian faith penetrate and transformed his work in such a way that he considered drawing his comic strips to be *his* vocation. It is interesting that he didn’t consider himself a great artist. He was just a drawer of simple sketches. In fact, he’d even been turned down by Walt Disney for not being a “good enough” illustrator. And yet, his simple drawings have spoken to millions worldwide. How many of us squander or suffocate gifts that are a part of our vocation because we think they’re not “good enough.”

When we hear the word vocation in a Christian context, we typically think about ordained ministry. The Presbyterian Church believe that God calls some to special service in the church, as ministers of Word and Sacrament (like Sarah and myself), and as Elders and as Deacons (like those who you elected last month and will ordain and install this month). But the word vocation has a much larger meaning. Beyond ordained ministry, the Presbyterian Church emphasizes that through our common baptism, we are **all** called to lives of religious commitment, personal service, and social transformation. As liturgical theologian, Edward Gabrielle writes,

“We are citizens of the world with a message of hope to every age, every nation, and every person. Whether as prophetic leaders of the church, as concerned legislators whose values of goodness and compassion influence public policy, or as ordinary members of the nation’s workforce, Christians are called to make a positive difference in people’s lives. All of human life can be touched to the good by our service as disciples of Jesus.”

Lent is a good time to renew our commitment to making a difference and touching lives, for that is how we reflect the image of the Creator who put us here on earth. And there is joy in getting right with that. I am reminded of another *Peanuts* strip in which the hyper-kinetic Snoopy appears dancing with the joy of the universe and whistling a tune. Always ready to rain on a parade, Lucy shouts out “Flood, fire and famine,” but Snoopy continues dancing. “Doom, defeat and despair,” she tries, and he keeps on dancing. Finally with a sigh she says, “I guess it’s no use. Nothing seems to disturb him.”

And now I’m smiling.

visit us online!

at our website wppresby.org

E-mail: wppresby.church@optonline.net



Rev. Jeffery A. Geary, Pastor

Sarah Henkel, Parish Associate

Tyrell Lundman, Director of Music

Lynn Dunn, Director of Christian Education

Stella M. Aviles, Executive Assistant.

Vicente Velasco, Facilities Supervisor

Doug Astarita, Night Custodian

Gina Cerillo, Nursery School Director

Noel Warner, Business Mgr.

Agnes Scheu, Church Treasurer

Olga Daniels, Asst. Treasurer

Wanda Van Woert, President of Trustees

Betty Peene, Financial Secretary

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

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

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View the up-to-date calendar on website



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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

15th of the month. The articles should be no longer than approximately **200** words.

Music

Tyrell Lundman, Music Director

“Are you giving anything up for Lent?”

“For what?”

More and more I am met with a genuine perplexity over the season of Lent. Even having grown up in the most liberal branch of Lutheranism, rainbow flags and all, Lent, Lenten suppers, and Wednesday worship services were the norm during the pre-Easter season.

I don't really give anything up for Lent, other than the forced abandonment of the Choral Introits and Responses on Sunday mornings, but I like seasons. They mark out time, making it special, and provide opportunities and sometimes necessities for thinking differently about familiar things.

One familiar thing we can always think differently about is our beautiful church buildings and grounds. I teach English as a Second Language in Manhattan to many folks who live in the White Plains area. Very often they recognize the church from driving by, but have never had any reason to go inside. We, inside the church, become too comfortable with the space, the cluttered places as much as the bare walls. What could be there instead?

The Taconic Opera Company, winner of the 2012 Arts Association of the Year in Westchester County, staged its new oratorio, *Enoch*, in the sanctuary March 3rd. I hope you had the chance to support this kind of creative activity in our worship space. As our beautiful campus is meant to be shared, a vehicle for ministry in its many forms, I encourage you to keep thinking of novel ways it can be a vibrant center in this community.

Coffee Hour Host / Hostess needed

Several volunteers are wanted to host a coffee hour after Sunday services. It's easy. Just bring a treat for 75 persons and 1/2 gal of milk. Coffee and tea are provided. Set the table and fill the milk pitchers, clean up after. You can share the hosting with another person if you wish. Sign up for a specific date by speaking or emailing Nancy Re nancyre@yahoo.com or just call the office and we will be in touch with you to answer any questions you may have.

Who's Having A Birthday?

MARCH

- 1 Andrea Callender
- 3 Phillipe Nyambi
- 4 Leslie Williamson
- 4 Robert Davis
- 6 Jason Cerillo
- 6 Peter Day
- 7 Rick Ackbarali
- 8 Shirley Pearl
- 8 Krystina Pilloti
- 12 Mandi Nyambi
- 12 Sean Walsh
- 13 William Young
- 13 Dwight Degener
- 17 Erika Scott
- 19 Paul E. Rikert
- 20 Raymond Davis
- 21 Edith Liu
- 21 Virginia Day
- 22 Elorm Anyidoho
- 24 John Timmons
- 24 Bob Englert
- 25 Leslie Mardenborough
- 26 Sedinam Anyidoho
- 28 Mildred Howse
- 28 Ruth Davis
- 30 David Mills

Best Wishes from your church family



About Immigration

As White Plains Presbyterian Church continues the celebrations leading up to our 300th birthday, you will notice again and again the rich diversity of immigrant stories that form our past, present, and future. These stories come from our very own congregation and from the many immigrant fellowships that have used this church building as their home. As we celebrate our immigrant stories there is another narrative speaking loudly out in society, one that spreads fear and myths about new immigrants living in the United States. As a part of our celebrations, let's take steps to dispel these myths and move from fear to love. I would like to share with you a section of one great resource put together by Teaching Tolerance, a project of the Southern Poverty Law Center. It is a great teaching tool to use for ourselves, for our children and grandchildren, and for people we meet who



want to know the true stories of immigration.

“10 Myths About Immigration” by Teaching Tolerance

Overview: Myths about immigration and immigrants are common. Here are a few of the most frequently heard misconceptions along with information to help you and your students separate fact from fear.

1. *It's just as easy to enter the country legally today as it was when my ancestors arrived.*

Ask students when their ancestors immigrated and if they know what the entry requirements were at the time. For about the first 100 years, the United States had an “open immigration system that allowed any able-bodied immigrant in,” explains immigration historian David Reimers. The biggest obstacle would-be immigrants faced was getting here. Today there are many rules about who may enter the country and stay legally. Under current policy, many students’ immigrant ancestors who arrived between 1790 and 1924 would not be allowed in today.

2. *There's a way to enter the country legally for anyone who wants to get in line.*

Ask students if they know the rules to enter the country legally and stay here to work. The simple answer is that there is no “line” for most very poor people with few skills to stand in and gain permanent U.S. residency. Generally, gaining permission to live and work in the United States is limited to people who are (1) highly trained in a skill that is in short supply here, (2) escaping political persecution, or (3) joining close family already here.

3. *Ask students to find out how long it took for their ancestors to stop using their first language.*

“Earlier immigrant groups held onto their cultures fiercely,” notes Reimers. “When the United States entered the First World War [in 1917], there were over 700 German-language newspapers. Yet, German immigration had peaked in the 1870s.”

While today’s immigrants may speak their first language at home, two-thirds of those older than five speak English “well” or “very well” according to research by the independent, nonpartisan Migration Policy Institute. And the demand for adult ESL instruction in the United States far outstrips available classes.

(You can read the full text at <http://www.tolerance.org/print/magazine/number-39-spring-2011/feature/10-myths-about-immigration>)

Christian Education

Lynn Dunn, Director of Christian Education

There is in us an instinct for newness, for renewal, for a liberation of creative power. We seek to awaken in ourselves a force which really changes our lives from within. And yet the same instinct tells us that this change is a recovery of that which is deepest, most original, most personal in ourselves. To be born again is not to become somebody else, but to become ourselves.

-- Thomas Merton

As we journey through Lent, signs of renewal and reasons for resurrection hope are all around us.

Lenten Education: For the third year, the Lenten Arts Program for youth is part of the church's Lenten education program following worship. This year the Lenten Arts Program is also open to adults. The series began February 24 for four weeks, and continues March 3, 10 and 17. Join us, even if you missed the first session! Not primarily for artists, this program is for those who are open to fun and new means of spiritual exploration and expression. Nancy Re is also offering a concurrent Lenten program for children. Ty Lundman and Barbara Horan offer two adult Lenten education programs, beginning February 24. Please see bulletin inserts for more information.

Church School Seder: The annual Church School *Passover Seder* will be held during worship on March 17. The *Seder* is a model for inter-generational faith formation that has stood the test of time! Parents of the youngest children (pre-school through grade 2) are encouraged to attend with your children.

One Great Hour of Sharing: Children received their OGHS "fish banks" in Church School and these will be received in worship on Palm Sunday, March 24.

Youth Group: Youth Group members and leaders thank the congregation for supporting our "Souper Bowl of Caring" collection for Grace Church Soup Kitchen. You gave \$650 to this effort, and all will go directly to this very worthy local food program.

Exciting Youth Group news! Four Youth Group members from White Plains have been accepted as part of the Hudson River Presbytery's delegation to the Presbyterian Youth Triennium this July in Indiana. You will hear more about this in the coming months.

Communion Education: On April 7, we will celebrate communion at the Emmaus luncheon, following worship. Church School students who have received communion training will help serve communion. Communion training is offered to children in third grade and above. Please contact me by March 7, if you wish your child to receive communion training.

Christian Education Calendar for this Month

March 3, 10, 17 Lenten Education programs
continue for all ages
March 17 Church School Passover Seder
March 24 Passion/Palm Sunday, banner
processional,
Turn in your OGHS "Fish Banks,"
Dan Sabia Memorial Easter Egg Hunt, after
worship.
Adult education film screening, "Trigger,"
on gun violence.
March 31 Easter/Resurrection of the Lord,
worship for all ages.

Happy Easter

Prayer Ministry

Our Prayer Ministry team has been examining the impact of this ministry on our personal lives, the WPPC community and in the communities outside of our congregation. We are also exploring what other opportunities exist to deepen this impact in ourselves and others.

We know that because of this ministry personal prayer lives are stronger! We are more confident praying and reaching out to pray for others. And, we have experienced over and over that prayer works Praise the Lord!

We are encouraged that people contact us when they want or need prayer...not only members of the WPPC community...but our families, friends and acquaintances.

So we plan to continue!

- Having prayer ministers available after each Sunday service to pray with people who want to offer God thanksgiving or who need intercessory prayer.
- Circulating a list of prayer requests weekly... including those received during our worship, deposited in our Prayer Basket or Box, or received by directly by our prayer ministers on Sunday or during the week. Our prayer chain prays for these requests during the week.

We began using the Prayer Box in the narthex in 2012 especially to encourage those

who visit us between worship services to confidentially leave prayer requests.

- Giving prayer remembrances...shawls, blankets, crosses...to members of our community who are celebrating (e.g., new members, confirmands) or experiencing trials and tribulations (e.g., illness, grief)
- Supporting caregivers with prayer and [name of booklets]
- Hosting Prayer Breakfasts. Our next ***Prayer Breakfast for 2013 will be Saturday, September 21 at 9:00 a.m. Please save the date!***

We know that Prayer Works! We are especially mindful that God often works through his people to answer prayers. We encourage you to access the resources of your church community to meet specific needs, for example, social services or counseling, food, housing, or employment resources, by speaking confidentially with Rev. Geary. You may also ask your Prayer Minister to speak to Rev. Geary on your behalf.

We would love to hear feedback and suggestions from you, too. Feel free to contact Leslie Mardenborough at lamardenborough@optonline.net / 914-813-0797, Wanda Van Woert at wandamvw@aol.com/914-428-7486, or Ruth Doehring at clover7med@aol.com/ 914-761-7225.



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.

PALM Sunday

Dan Sabia Easter Egg Hunt

Easter Bunny will arrive to deliver Easter eggs to all the young children on Palm Sunday, March 24. The hunt will begin after services.



Mission

Mike Doehring, Chair

Mission

cont'd from page 1

3) **OGHS** - By now the One Great Hour of Sharing special offering of PC (USA) will have come and gone (offering received on Mar 3). Thanks for your generosity.

As you know OGHS supports three initiatives:

- Presbyterian Hunger Program
- Self-Development of People
- Presbyterian Disaster Assistance

4) **Easter** – the rebirth of the earth and our faith. The miracle is that we still believe some 2000 years later and we weren't even present at the time! How do we respond in our efforts in the world? Mission Commission has recommended that this year's Easter Offering be split three ways:

Stony Point Conference Center
Emergency Ecumenical Food Pantry of White Plains
My Sister's Place of White Plains
Unfortunately all three need continued support – Stony Point needs resources to continue and expand their programs and initiatives, White Plains continues to have families without enough food, and women are still victims of abuse. These programs help alleviate suffering.

5) **August Geary and Julian Tabb** – Thanks to August and Julian for offering to take the food we collect each month to the Food Pantry in White Plains. Twice a month the Food Pantry will get a delivery from us.

Remember – Mission is Possible!



Congregational Life

Nancy Re, Chair

Due to the anticipated severe snow storm the Mardi Gras Luncheon was postponed. The Pot Luck will replace our normal light soup and sandwich fare for the Emmaus Communion Lunch celebration on 4/7/2013.

Invite a friend or neighbor to celebrate Lent and Holy week with us
Palm Sunday 3/24 10:00 a.m. Worship followed by the Dan Sabia Memorial Egg Hunt 11:15 a.m.
Maundy Thursday 3/28 7:30 p.m. Tenebrae (Latin for 'shadows' or 'darkness') Worship, if you would like to participate in the presentation, please speak to Chris Hughes or call the office
Easter Worship 3/31 10:00 a.m.
Emmaus Communion Brunch 4/7 11:15 a.m., celebrate communion with our children who are moving forward in their faith.

Spring Tag Sale is coming up May 17 & 18 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. During your spring cleaning drop off your usable but unneeded items.

William Small Scholarship

2013

Annual application essays are being accepted now.

The scholarship will be awarded to an individual who has made major contributions to the life of the Church and who is pursuing a post-high school education.

Essays will be accepted through the end of March. The award will be based on merit and need.

Please place your essay in Doris Greenfield's folder by the office.

Easter Flowers 2013

I wish to give flowers for **EASTER SUNDAY, March 31, 2013**, in loving memory of:

Donor's Name: _____

Address: _____

Amount of Gift \$ _____

(Minimum of \$25.00 will be appreciated)

**All checks for donations must be received on or before
Sunday, March 24, 2013. Please indicate donation is for Easter Flowers.**

Please make checks payable to **The Presbyterian Church** and send to:

**Mrs. Julene Goode
Flower Committee
39 North Broadway
White Plains, NY 10601
(914) 946-1871**



Spring Activity Schedule

March 1, 10 and 17 -

Third annual Lenten Arts Program, "Art and Soul" for youth (sixth grade and up) and for adults.

Palm Sunday, March 24

Maundy Thursday, March 28, Service 8:00 p.m.

Good Friday, March 29

Easter Sunday, Sunrise Services - 6:00 a.m.

Easter Sunday, March 31 - 10:00 a.m.

Emmaus Sunday - April 7

Earth Day 2013 – Monday, April 22

Tag Sale — May 17 and 18 — 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.