

GraceNotes

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A publication of the Otisville-Mt. Hope Presbyterian Church

Sharing God and giving thanks around the table

Food, Friends and Fellowship (FFF)

Our new group has started off with two fun gatherings with more to come.

Our gathering in **January** was at Tony Boffa's on Railroad Ave. We had 26 friends join us for some good food and conversation. Then in **February** we all gathered at Cosimos on Route 211 with a total of 18 friends. We had some very delicious food with large portions and an awesome *tiramisu* for dessert. This is a fun way to get to know your fellow church members and try some different restaurants. Anyone can come in any given month. So if you haven't joined us yet, try to join us next month. We go out the last Friday of each month and usually have a predetermined price which includes your entire dinner plus tax and gratuities. If you sign up and can't make it please contact Allison Wilbur or the church office as soon as possible because some places charge for the number of people we reserve for. Thank You.

March: For March we will be going to the Mountain View in Bloomingburg. This will be March 28 at 7:00pm. We normally meet at 6:30pm but they asked us to make it 7:00pm due to their smaller dining room. We will have a back room but they can only accommodate 18. And they will issue separate checks for each party so that we can order off the entire menu. So this gathering the time is different and there is not a specific price. If you are interested in joining us, please add your name to the sign up sheet in the back of the sanctuary.

April: For April we will be going to Bottom's Up in Slate Hill. This restaurant is a bit more expensive. At Bottoms Up your dinner will include: salad, pasta appetizer, choice of a steak entree, a fish entree or a chicken entree, unlimited soda, coffee and tea and dessert. The total cost including taxes and gratuities is \$51.00 per person. There will be a sign up sheet after April 1st at the back of the church. This will be a nice way to celebrate Easter.

May: We are hoping to have a catered dinner in our church Fellowship Hall. More info in the May newsletter.

April Events

A Conversation About the Ultra Orthodox (Hasidic) Faith

The Session has invited Rabbi Joel Schwab from Temple Sinai in Middletown, to help us understand Hasidism, and its unique take on Jewish life. With all the news related to Kyras Joel, as well as housing developments in Bloomingburg and our nearby Otisville School building, there is a growing sense that we need to understand our religious neighbors. The gathering will be on **Wednesday, April 2 at 7:00pm.**

Easter Pageant

“Lambs R Us” is the Easter Pageant for Sunday School. It is Sunday, **April 6th at 9:30am** in the fellowship hall. Please have your children there 10 minutes earlier so we can prepare and start on time. There will be a small reception after. Contact Wendy Fisher if you would like to donate cookies, snacks or drinks for the reception.

Church Scholarships

Each year church scholarships are awarded to graduating High School seniors who are members of the church and who have applied for the scholarships. The scholarship recipients are decided by the Session and awarded at the church's Baccalaureate service in June. Scholarship applications will be **available starting on Easter Sunday, April 20** in the church office, and they will be due back to the church office by Sunday, May 18. The scholarships do require an essay, so be sure to get them early so the application and essay are ready by the due date.

Confirmation Classes

Confirmation Classes will be available for students who are at least 12 years old and in sixth grade or above as of the start of classes, and who have the approval of their parents. The classes will be on four Sunday afternoons at 4:00pm after Easter, on April 27, May 4 & 18, and on June 1. The group will join the church on Sunday, June 8 at the 11:00am service. The classes will be one and one half hours long, and there will be homework for every class including the **first class on April 27th**, so be sure to sign up and get the calendar and curriculum from Jeff as soon as possible.



Holy Week is the last week of Lent.

Its purpose is to re-enact, re-live, and participate in the events leading to the Passion of Christ, and to help us observe a Holy Lent. Observances of Holy Week began in Jerusalem in the earliest days of the Church. The first service of Holy Week is Palm Sunday (or Passion Sunday), when we remember the entrance of Jesus into the

city of Jerusalem. He was triumphantly hailed as he rode a donkey across palm fronds into the city – to shouts of “Hosanna in the Highest.”

4/13 – Palm Sunday

Join us as we once again celebrate Jesus arrival at the gates of the city of Jerusalem! With song, Palm branches and pageantry we remember the joy and possibilities that day meant to the folks who saw it; a descendent of King David come to claim his kingdom.

4/17 – Maundy Thursday

The Thursday of Holy Week is called Maundy Thursday, because it is the day Jesus gave his disciples the command (“madatum” in Latin, from where we get the word “mandatory”) to “love one another”. This year we will be participating in a service of readings and growing darkness. Readers are needed. See Jeff.

4/18 – Good Friday

Our Holy Friday worship will again find the upstairs worship area (the sanctuary) open for prayer and meditation from 12:00noon until 3:00pm. Come to the foot of the cross and lay your burdens down, and go home knowing that through Christ you are forgiven and blessed.

4/20 – Easter Sunrise Service

Join us as we greet the Lord risen from the dead early on Easter morning at our usual spot on Guymard Extension. We will gather at 6:00am and get started immediately so we can see the sun rise over the horizon as we sing our words of praise!

4/20 – Easter Sunrise Breakfast

If all the pieces come together, we will be having our traditional Easter Sunrise Breakfast at 6:45am back at the church’s Fellowship Hall.

4/20 – Easter Services

We will continue celebrating the resurrection at our two Easter services, our 9:30am Contemporary Easter Service and our 11:00am Traditional Easter service. We look forward to wonderful music and great fellowship that day!

Alleluia, Christ is Risen!

Ugly sweater Contest

Thanks to all who entered our Ugly Sweater contest. We had a lot of doozies! What a fun show and a great lunch. Many thanks to Subway on Dolson Ave. and John and Linda Gugliuzzi who so generously donated the meatballs and sauce for our Meatball Parmesan heroes. Because to their generous donation and our hungry audience we were able to raise \$300 for our Junior High Youth Group lead by Edgar Hayes. Our first prize winner was Maureen Dineen with the ugliest and oldest sweater. She was the winner of a \$50 gift card to Macy's so she can replace

that sweater with something nicer (which will not be hard to do). We had three runners up: Marilyn Komstedt with a Christmas sweater filled with way too much Christmas Joy and our own Pastor and wife; Jeff and Sue Farley. he runners up won movie certificates because with those sweaters they need to stay in the dark! All I can say is poor Brian and Katie! A fun time was had by all and a nice amount of money was raised for our young, helpful, energetic youth group!

Baked Potato Luncheon

Thanks to all who attended and bought orders to go! We made \$1326.00. This money will go to HEART (Haitian Education and Resource Team). We are so blessed due to so many donations we have a large profit! Thank you to Joan Addy and family they donate all those delicious potatoes year after year! And that great Chili made by Sheila and Barry Moore, every year we need to add more, this year there was 20 pounds of meat in that awesome chili! We also had 10lbs of onions just for that French Onion soup. We also have very energetic and helpful volunteers in the kitchen and in the hall serving up our lunches! We are

always blessed to serve the Miedema Family and had a special guest Carina Blon who has lived in Haiti for the last 3 years. She was amazed at the crowd. Mike and I would like to thank you all for your continued support in this mission project that is so close to our hearts! I also want to thank you for all your prayers for my healing. After my return from Haiti I had an awful stomach virus and had to reschedule and we were still so blessed with help and also customers. We also took 49 pre ordered lunches to the Otisville School, they are a very supportive staff. Thank you all from the bottom of our hearts!

April Celebrations

Anniversaries

Frank & Karen Ketcham
Mike & Tootie Canonico
John & Renee Thibodeau
Stephen & Wendy Michalek
Wesley & Bettsye Hunter
Jennifer & William Lynch

Birthdays

Thomas Dolson
Morgan Weissinger
Emiley Hughes
Neil Lisberg
Scott Card
Mitchell Saler
Cooper Michelitch
Madison Jennings
Rachel Pierson
David Thousand
Jordan Metellus
Molly Yourman
Jacob Eisentraut
Juliana Goldsmith
Kenneth Halstead
Jan Hums
Jennifer Robinholt
Lyla Ten Eyck
Jahsair McCline
Arianna Pagan
Hayden Shay
Skyler Gove
Jennifer Weekley
Jeffrey Dolson
Derrick Cash
John Dullaghan



disturb the queen's rest. Joins us to find out how the story unfolds. For more information, contact Marilyn Komstedt.

A Comedy Mystery

Friday, May 16 & Saturday, May 17
7:00 PM in Fellowship Hall

Preview: When Professor Artie Facts' expedition unseals the burial chamber of Queen Tootsiwootsi, they get a taste of the curses threatened in ancient scrolls to any who dare

Stephen Ministry Minute

When We Need God's Love Most

When do we need God's love most? Of course we need that love every second of our lives. But at times, God's love is especially precious to us, times when:

- we lose a loved one;
- life becomes so confusing that we do not know where to turn; or
- life just becomes meaningless and depressions sets in.

At times like these, it is very important to have someone who cares. Our congregation has trained lay people, Stephen Ministers, who offer a ministry of Christian caring.

To find out more about Stephen Ministry or to receive a Stephen Minister's care, speak with Pastor Jeff Farley or Deanna Prisco.



May Events

1st Friday—Scrap Booking

May 4—Communion Sunday

May 4—Nursing Home Worship
@ Park Manor

May 8—Board of Deacons

May 9—ZUMBA

May 11—Mother's Day

May 16-17—Drama & Dinner
Theater

May 18-Sunday School Closing
Program & Picnic

May 24—Yarn Works

May 26—Memorial Day

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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Annual Ham Dinner

The Women's Auxiliary will hold the Annual Ham Dinner on **May 3rd at 5:30PM**. Tickets for adults will be \$10.00 and children under 12, \$5.00. The menu includes Pineapple Juice, Ham, Raisin Sauce, Scalloped Potatoes, Peas & Carrots, Homemade Applesauce, Cole Slaw, Rolls and for Dessert – Assorted Cakes. For tickets or to help at the dinner, please see auxiliary members or call Candy at 343-5675.



Love Bouquet

On **May 11th**, we will again have vases available at the front of the church for anyone who would like to place a flower in remembrance or honor of their mother. Any flower is

acceptable. We always have such a gorgeous assortment of flowers. Some flowers are purchased and some are from our gardens. The bouquets frequently include tulips, geraniums, roses, lilies, carnations, lilacs of various colors, bleeding hearts, mums and the occasional dandelion. Most importantly, they are always filled with love. The flowers will later be divided into smaller arrangements and given to some of those who have not been able to attend church. If you know of someone who might appreciate receiving one please let Candy Burnett know.

Loving Father,

**May I lay hold upon
the highest standards
of friendship and so be
qualified to be a friend.**

**May those who call
and lean on me feel se-
cure in my support.**

**May none ever be
ashamed to call me
friend. Grant that
those whom I love may
keep faith with me.**

Amen.

Inactive Member List

A couple of years back the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. eliminated the Inactive Member Roll from one of the membership categories of church membership. What that meant was that we could either have people as Active Members or we had to remove people to non-membership, with no steps in between. It was an uncomfortable, and from the session's point of view, unwarranted, change in normal church practice.

After much discussion it has become clear to us that while the national church may not think we need an inactive members roll, we do, and so at the January meeting of Session we have re-established an inactive mem-

bers list. What that means is that people we love and miss will not simply be dropped from our church's ministry of compassion and care when they become inactive, but rather will be placed on the "inactive list" until it becomes clear that their inactiveness has become permanent, that they have become active again, or that they have decided to join another church fellowship somewhere closer to them.

This policy is more consistent with our church's practice of love and acceptance of all kinds of folks in all kinds of situations in their lives than does the national policy. While there is some fine tuning we will need to

do (to keep our records consistent with the national church's membership accounting practices) let us be clear: if you have ever been part of our church's membership you will always be considered a member until you decide otherwise. We may over-time recognize that you are inactive, but you will still be dear to us no matter what your circumstances.

If you have questions about any of this, you can talk to Jeff or to Clerk of Session Candy Burnett. The love of God will never leave you nor forsake you, and to the best of our ability, neither will we.

JUNE Preview

June 7—Take-out Only

**June 7—Spring Cleaning
(Women's Auxiliary Indoor
Yard Sale)**

June 21—Coffee House

**June 22 or 29—Baccalaureate
Sunday**

Mark your calendars—details in next month's newsletter.



Recreation

In the past years we have had lots of recreation activities during the spring months: volleyball, badminton, softball, cycling, even some hiking events. Now is the time to look toward good weather and think about meeting at the Town or Village parks on a Tuesday at 6:00pm to do 45 minutes of pathway walking, or having a bike hike to a picnic, gathering on a Sunday afternoon for volleyball, or running in the Second Annual Deacons 5K. Let's get outside together and have some fun!

Volleyball

Several years ago we gathered to play volleyball on a regular basis, for a while at Middletown Psychiatric Center's gym, then later at the Town of Mount Hope's volleyball court. Families with kids, teenagers, young and older adults all just gathered to play for fun. It seems like that would be a good idea again so we are looking to find someone interested in organizing some late spring and early summer volleyball games. See Jeff if interested.

Going Natural

Lots of folks here at church are trying to go more natural in their eating and their choices about food. Maybe there are ways we can support each other in that. Let's be creative and share our gardening tips, extra produce, and even healthier recipes. Dream big! What can we do together that we can't do alone? Maybe we need a Director of Healthy Living, to encourage us along the way!

Communion for the Homebound

Communion is always available to any homebound persons. Simply contact the church office or call Candy Burnett to arrange a time. We have several trained Elders who can preside at communion and bring communion to you, including, Candy, Gerda, Chuck, Elizabeth, Edgar, Bob, and Deanna.



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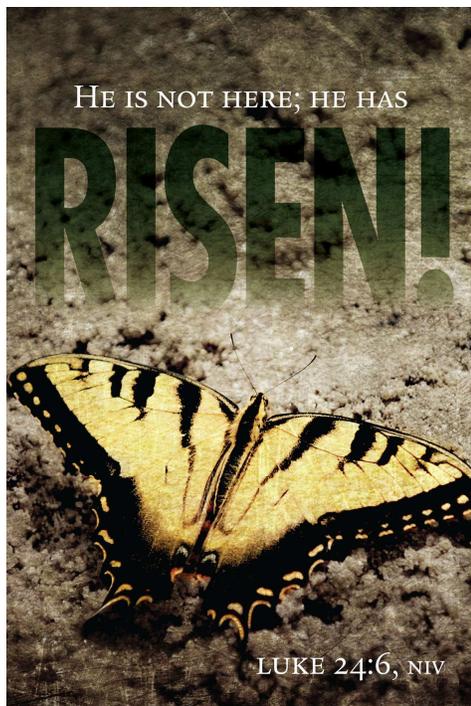
Address Service Requested



Worship Schedule: 8:30 | 9:30 | 11:00 AM, Sunday School—9:30 AM

GraceNotes

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Prayer

Prayer is the simplest form of spiritual exercise a believer in Jesus can do. Take a moment every time you think of your joys or your needs to toss up a prayer of thanks or a prayer of request. God is delighted to hear your voice and know that you are thinking of the grace God has given you. Think of each prayer as a warm, caring Valentine card sent with you as the one signing your name at the bottom!

“Always be joyful and never stop praying. Whatever happens, keep thanking God because of Jesus Christ. This is what God wants you to do.”

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Address Changes

If you are in the process of changing your mailing address, phone number or email address be sure to send along the changes to us. Since our mail to you is sent as bulk mail, it is not returned if it is undeliverable at your old address. It is just junked by the USPS. Send us a note however, and we will gladly make sure you are still getting Newsletters on time! Better yet, sign up for an emailed version of the Newsletter in Color, and save us the postage entirely!