



TIDINGS

WESTHAMPTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
JANUARY 2021

A Word from your Pastor

As soon as Christmas is over and the New Year has arrived, we figure that the story of Jesus Christ's birth will be shelved for another year. However, this isn't completely true. The feast of Epiphany is actually what completes the season of Christmas. It centers around the magi or wise kings who anticipated, recognized, and welcomed the infant into the world. Like the Magi, we are also invited to discern the identity of the Christ child.

Would you like to extend your Christmas celebration a bit more this year? Perhaps you could celebrate Epiphany with one of its traditions.

First, you could bake a Kings' cake. Just like the wise men searched for Jesus, we also seek and search for him in unlikely places. One fun way to do this is to have a symbolic search and gather to eat a cake or pastry with a small hidden baby inside. The person who finds the baby Jesus in his or her piece of cake is awarded the honor of providing the cake next year. Whether or not that is something you would want to do is up to you. Kings' cakes come in many shapes and sizes. Sometimes they're made in the shape of a wreath to symbolize the circuitous route that the Magi took to get to Bethlehem. Kings' cakes are also often served at Mardi Gras celebrations which celebrates a time of indulgence right before Lent.

Another Epiphany activity you could do is to bless the home where you are celebrating by reciting a blessing and chalking the door frame with a series of marks that look something like this: 20 † C † M † B † 21. The numbers correspond to the calendar year (2021), the crosses stand for Christ and the C, M, and B stand for the traditional names of the Magi (Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar.) It's also an abbreviation of a Latin blessing: *Christus mansionem benedicat* which means "May Christ bless this house." Maybe this sounds a little foreign to you, but the symbolism is fascinating. The Magi journeyed a great distance to recognize the birth of a child who was to be a ruler, and not of their country, but a foreigner. Their acceptance of his reign shows they believed in the peace he would bring. So when we reenact the blessing, we are acknowledging that Christ's entrance into the world makes our homes places of peace and hospitality.

A final tradition is probably one we have already practiced—lighting candles. Lighting candles can help us create a space for prayer and focus. It can also remind us that Christ has arrived into the world and brings with him—light. Not only does the sun shine for a couple more minutes each day, but God's love and care for us also shines in our world. Some people incorporate a candle from their advent wreath to remind us of the past season of Christmas and the coming of Christ.

Maybe you find all of this to be just some interesting trivia behind an often forgotten liturgical season, but I encourage you to find some way to honor this season. Think about what it means that these wise men from far away came to see a child with parents they'd never met. Think about what it means that they gave him precious gifts, unusual to give a baby. Think about what faith it must have taken to follow a star and trust they would arrive safely.

May your season of Epiphany be blessed,

Rev. Vanessa



***Prayer Concerns**

Recent: Seth Stevens; Kathleen Rogers (Kimberly Rogers Murawski's mother); Maureen Nelsen; Bob Wetter (Nancy & Wes Winters brother-in-law), pancreatic cancer; Robyn DeLorenzo, Ruth Duvall's granddaughter; Brendan Clavin, Nancy Hamma's son; Patrick J Knight, PLI Treasurer; John Lowe & Roberta Williams, friends of Vern Hackworth; Susan Sullivan, friend of Mary & John Hull; Kimberly Rogers Murawski; Dana Barrett, friend of Nancy Miller; Jay Sears

Long Term: Chelsey Carter Collins, Southampton Care Center; Russell Deihl; Brad Carbone; Gene Hubbard; John Comba; Dorothy Evans; Paul & Ellen Pfaff; Rev. John Kloepfer, home

We Are Live!

Visit the church website to view Sunday worship services streaming live every Sunday.

www.westhamptonpresbyterian.org

Click on "Live Church WebCam" in the right hand corner of the homepage.

Per Capita 2021

The 2021 Per Capita is \$43.08 per church *member* which includes the \$5 Presbytery Salary Supplement.

Fundraising: Scrap Metal

We have collected \$6,043 just in scrap metal donations throughout the year! Thank you to all who have donated in 2020! Happy New Year!

Annual Reports are due

Please remember to **email** your Annual Reports by January 8th to admin@westhamptonpresbyterian.org.

*PDF files are preferred. After you have made your reports please save and send as a PDF file. Thank you.

Church Family News**Christian Sympathy**

We give our deepest Christian sympathy to Kathy and Bob Turecki and their entire extended family on the passing of her beloved father, George Payne.

We give our deepest Christian sympathy to Rev. Jeanne Baum and her entire extended family on the passing of her beloved husband, dear member and friend Robert Baum on December 6, 2020.

We give our deepest Christian sympathy to Frank & Amee Mazurkiewicz and their entire extended family on the passing of Frank's father on December 11, 2020.

"Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that."

-Martin Luther King Jr.
A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings and Speeches



*Remember to submit your Tidings articles on the 15th each month so that it can be displayed in the next newsletter. Lets stay connected!

Youth Group & Christian Ed

As I sit and write this, my heart is full of hope! I just returned from going to see the “Christmas Star”. I was in awe as I looked into the sky to see the planets shining and said a prayer for a better 2021. I know we will be gathering together in the coming months and rekindle the spark inside Westhampton Presbyterian Church!

I’m full of hope to bring new ideas and programs to the Sunday School and Youth Group. Excited to work face to face with the youth of our church. With 10 new confirmands that joined the church in October I’m excited to hear what they want to do in our ministry.

A BIG shout out to those of you that supported the Youth Groups mission projects Heifer and The Presbyterian Giving Catalog. I know it was a little different this year, but I did hear from some of you that you gave the gift that keeps on giving! Thank you! And don’t forget about the local food pantry’s as we won’t be able to host our annual soup sale for “Souper Bowl of Caring” which normally happens at the end of January, first Sunday in February. I challenge you to fill a bag this month to donate to the food pantry. Every Sunday an item or two by month’s end the bag should be filled!

Hope...it’s looking forward to the New Year with blank pages waiting to be written. It’s our chance to write a memorable one.

Let’s make the most of 2021!

Happy New Year!

Kathy

Peter Seidler and Ginger at the 5pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Drive-In Service



5pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Drive-In Service



Christmas Wreath Sale 2020

When life sends you lemons, make lemonade is the famous expression. The Presbyterian Women were unable to have all of their fundraising activities because of the restrictions from Covid 19. Each year, many of us start our Christmas season with our beloved Christmas Bazaar and Tea but alas we could not do that either but that never stopped us from contemplating our options. After a modified version of the bazaar was voted down, Donna Williams and Gini Wagner came up with an outdoor wreath sale. Donna wrote a proposal for the sale which was approved. We decided to step out in faith and order 48 wreaths to be decorated instead of our usual 36. Donna, Gini and I sorted through the various items which could be used to decorate the wreaths and put them in bags. Donna picked up the wreaths from the distributor on the day after Thanksgiving. Donn Larson came through with many beautiful greens and Donna again made bows. The Saturday before the scheduled sale, many talented members of our church picked up a blank wreath, a bag of decorations, greens, picks and bows and took them home to decorate.

It was a beautiful day that day so I am sure that many were inspired to use their creativity on the wreaths that day. They were all returned to the church unless the wreaths were prepaid for by the decorator on the following Thursday. Janet Hann cleverly erected a fence to put peg boards, which she had painted white, to display the wreaths. Publicity had been put out. Then Mother Nature again stepped in to thwart our mission with a Nor'easter on our designated Sale date of Saturday December 5th. Fortunately, a rain date was figured in on Sunday December 6th. Before church, Cheryl Van Tuyle helped Janet secure the pegboards and after church some members of the church helped bring up the wreaths to be displayed. The spirit of helping in our church is wonderful! Many of the wreaths were preordered and they were quickly picked up and then other church attendees bought wreaths. The sale was supposed to run from 12 until 3 but we were all sold out by 12:30!

Meanwhile Gini and her talented daughter Taylor have been making beautiful masks for a few weeks for church members to have. They then turned their focus on festive Christmas décor for the fabric and gave away the masks after church and at the sale. Donations were welcome. Again, people came through and the donations were generous. When all is said and done a little more \$2000 was made for the Presbyterian Women to put towards their mission.

A fresh green wreath can really bring the spirit of Christmas into our lives. Thank you to all who participated in this event.

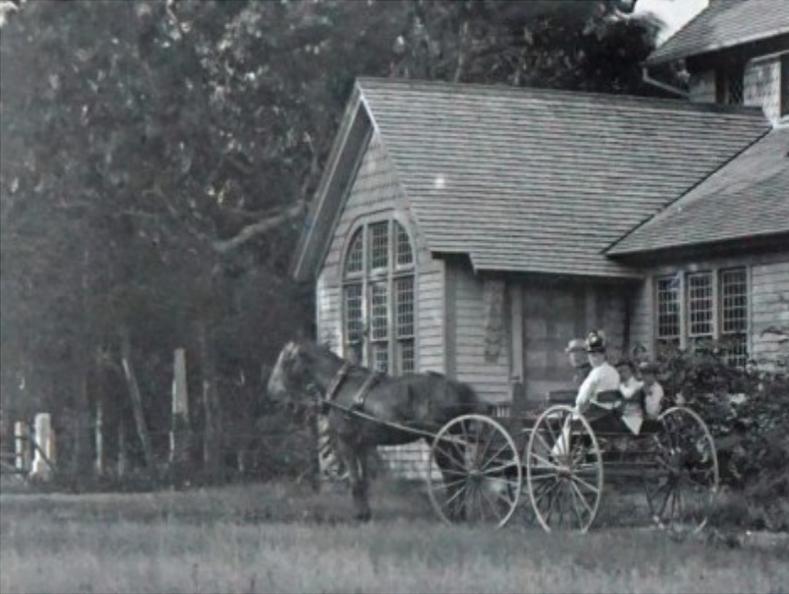
The Wreath Committee: Christine Haddad, Donna Williams, Gini Wagner, Eloise Carter and Janet Hann



Deacons Corner

We are fortunate to live in a fairly affluent area here in Westhampton Beach. Many of us are comfortable in our houses looking at the long lines on the television for food distributions. However, there are many people right here in our neighborhood who are struggling to pay bills and are finding themselves relying on local food pantries. Covid 19 has cost many people their jobs so formally food secure people are no longer. Please when you go to the store remember these people who are in need. Nonperishable food items can be taken right to the Immaculate Conception Church building to the south of the church proper where there is a porch to drop off food items. Other necessities like soap, shampoo, toilet paper etc are welcomed too. We are a generous church having supplied twelve overflowing Thanksgiving baskets and buying gifts for all the potential adopting a family people. Let us thank God for all our blessings and continue to remember those less fortunate.

A little piece of History - continued



In the December Tidings, Erika Lukert included two photographs that were sent to her by the Rev. Daniel Long of Rye, NY. While the duck farm was a familiar enough scene, I was particularly interested in the c1900 photo of our church. I have seen similar views of the church from that time period when the doors, windows, and trim were painted in shades of grey and black. I have even seen that fence post with the bulbous top. It is actually on the manse property; there was a fence along the south side of the road with those posts. But there were two things different. This is the first photograph that I have ever seen, prior to the 1950s, which includes people. I will always wonder who these four are. Is it a fam-

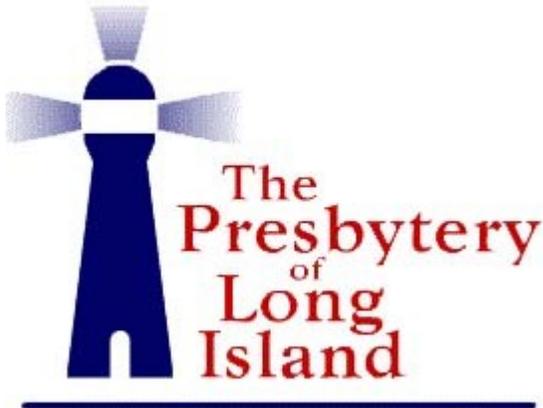
ily? It appears to be a possible mother and two children seated on the bench seat. Presumably the father is on a front seat, although he may possibly be standing alongside the wagon. (Or is it a carriage? I know very little about the various types of horse-driven transportation.)

It also makes me wonder where the horse stalls are. Also, where is an outhouse? Are these perhaps on the east side of the sanctuary? I always assumed they would be on the west, since there is so little land to the east.

Prior to the construction of the fellowship hall, which gave us a minister's study, the large room (used for coffee hours), a kitchen, and restrooms, there was no water available. This addition also gave us the stage and a small room on either side used by the nursery and kindergarten. There were no classrooms prior to that date. Sunday School classes met in the sanctuary. Part of the time, at least, the Senior High class met in the study in the manse across the street. It is possible that they also held a class in the ell (behind the wagon), which I call the minister's robing room. From the 1950s until the 1970s, this was the choir room. Then it became the church office; now it is an anteroom to the sanctuary.

The second difference about this photo is that it reveals the community cemetery. Just to the left of the building one can see a few tombstones. The obelisk is easily identified. It is for John Schellinger Jessup (1798-1878) and his family. Completely hidden from the street today, this historic cemetery is not forgotten. It has been inventoried by the Town of Southampton and is of great interest to genealogists and a few local families.

Diane F. Perry
Church Historian



2020 Worship via Presbytery of LI

One of the unique things about Presbyterian denominations is that the ministers are members of the presbytery. As such, the presbytery accepts the role of caring for these servants of God. While taking part in a search for an Interim Executive Presbyter back in 2006, the search committee members were reminded that the Executive was the Pastor to the Pastors. They were encouraged to look for an Elder or a Minister of Word and Sacrament with the gifts that could support and, if needed, counsel them. However, the presbytery's Committee on Ministry (COM) is also where this task lies.

During this year of the pandemic, one way that our COM tried to care for our pastors was by urging churches to give them a few extra days off. To make this possible, the committee took on the responsibility of preparing recorded worship services for our churches to use.

We at WPC were specifically made known of this a couple of weeks ago, when the Session decided to urge us to follow the provided link to the presbytery's worship service for December 27. They hope that you took this opportunity and enjoyed it.

The Session was aware of this effort of the COM on our behalf earlier in the year, for these extra days off were also recommended for Memorial Day and Labor Day weekends. On those days when Vanessa took her respite, Elder Rich Schneider volunteered to fill the pulpit.

These worship services are still available. They are wonderful services, filled with music, glorious scenes, and meaningful liturgy. On the presbytery's home page of their website (presbyteryofli.com) there is a lavender box labeled Worship Services. Clicking on that box will take you to the page where you will find five links to recordings on YouTube or on Zoom.us. The three above are dated May 24, Sept. 6, and Dec. 27.

The June 30th worship service is the worship that took place throughout the stated meeting of the presbytery on that date. This was a special service, lamenting and seeking understanding and healing. The message that day was 8:46. It is well worth a return visit for worship and meditation.

The fifth link on that page is not specifically a worship service of itself. It is a recording of the full Presbytery Day event on October 24 which, naturally enough, took place via Zoom and was then posted to YouTube. It is entitled Co-Conspirators in the Cause of the Gospel. The presenters were the Rev. Ray G. Jones, III, Director Theology, Formation, and Evangelism; and the Rev. Carlton David Johnson, Associate for Vital Congregations. These pastors returned to us to lead the worship on December 27.

Why not explore these links, and get to know a few more members of our Long Island churches. Just as World Communion Sunday is a special day, when we recognize, visualize, and actualize the Church as one, when all are worshipping the Lord's Day and the Lord's Supper all over the world on this day; so too, worshipping through these www links, link us together in one island-wide worship experience. And, after all, one can never have too much worship.

A Letter from our dear friend Sarajane Giere

Dear Westhampton Presbyterian Family,

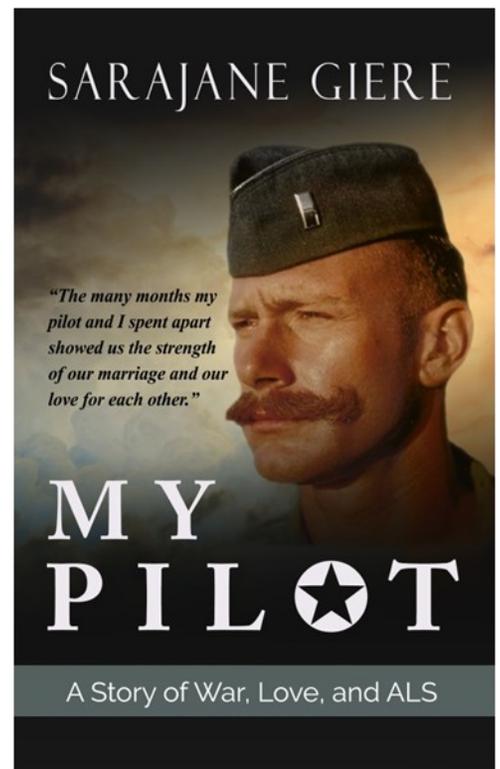
It's been 6 years since I've left your church community, but I haven't forgotten you. I can still recall the first women's luncheon I attended and how happy I was to be accepted into the fold. Bernie and I joined the church in 1973, and Westhampton Presbyterian Church became our second home for the next 40 years. Our faith was nurtured and grew to manifest itself in our service on your various boards, and of course, through Sunday School. It was a rewarding life of service. Even though I now feel at home in my NJ church, I still miss the camaraderie we enjoyed at 90 Meeting House Road.

I'm writing to let you know about my memoir about Bernie, which made its debut on Nov. 13, 2020. Many of you knew Bernard by serving on the Trustees or Session with him. I began writing about my pilot two years before he died on July 3, 2013. My plan was to pass down a legacy to my grandkids to let them know what their grandpa was like as a young man and what we went through as a married couple during those tumultuous years of the 60's and beyond. As I delved into Bernie's letters from Okinawa and Vietnam, I realized what unpredictable adventures we'd lived through during our 52-year marriage. Before I knew it, along with the support of my writing group and my wonderful editor, my Bernie story became *our* story, and it's entitled, *My Pilot: A Story of War, Love and ALS*.

Thank you all for being such a blessing in my life, and giving me a voice in your newsletter so I could tell you about my book. Most proceeds will go to ALS Ride for Life.

Until we meet again, and with love and gratitude,
I'll say so long for now,

Sarajane Giere
West Caldwell, NJ
sarajanegiere.com
sjgiere@yahoo.com
631-728-3183





Happy Birthday & Happy Anniversary

1	Scott Campbell	15	Claire Berry
2	Paul Pfaff	15	SuZanne Jessup
2	Oliver Bradley	18	Steve Ravenhall
2	Crawford Jackson IV	20	Christian Carter
3	Mia Victoria Tortorella	23	Brian Mosher
5	Lilly Wagner	23	Tabitha Heath
5	Marjorie Ridgway	23	Jenn Greiner
6	Diane F. Perry	24	Benjamin Otis Miller
7	Jared Jessup	25	Cathy Holliday
7	Mary Hull	26	Eric Wootten
9	Mason Gragg	26	Kearney Staniford
11	Ralph Hubbard	28	Chic Hedberg
11	George Burns	29	Lynda Confessore
12	Jesse Deihl	30	Maik Jornitz
13	Karen Neubauer	30	David Rowe
14	Seamus Naughton	31	Ralph Downs
15	Bob Busking	31	Sophie Rouhandeh
15	Derik Herzing	31	Josephine Levitt

January 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						2
3 <i>2nd Sunday after Christmas</i>	4	5 <i>7pm Deacons</i>	6 <i>9:15am Mission 10:30am Staff "Zoom"</i>	7	8	9 <i>9:30am Budget Meeting</i>
10 <i>Baptism of the Lord</i>	11	12 <i>5:15pm M&W 6pm Session</i>	13	14	15 <i>9:30am Audit meeting</i>	16
17 <i>2nd Sunday after Epiphany</i>	18 <i>Martin Luther King Jr. Day Office Closed</i>	19 <i>7pm Trustees</i>	20	21	22	23
24 <i>3rd Sunday after Epiphany</i>	25	26	27	28	29	30
31 <i>4th Sunday after Epiphany</i> <i>11am Annual Congregational meeting-Annual Report reviewed</i>						

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Your issue of the January Tidings
