



TIDINGS

WESTHAMPTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

♥ FEBRUARY 2024 ♥

A Note from your Pastor

February means Valentine's Day. For some it is a romantic holiday, while others regard it solely as a materialistic and commercial endeavor. This year it also has the distinction of being on the same day as Ash Wednesday. Isn't it connected to the church somehow? And why do we connect it with romance? In case you're curious, I did some digging to find out!

Valentine's day did start with a connection to Christianity but it is full of myths and stories which are difficult to prove (or disprove!). The Feast of Saint Valentine was established by Pope Gelasius I to honor between 1 and 3 saints named either Valentine or Valentinus. Most of us believed St. Valentine to be a single person, but there are actually three saints with those names, two from Italy and one from Africa, who all died around that time.

The most common story is that Valentine was a priest who had been put in prison for ministering to Christians and was persecuted by the Roman Empire. While imprisoned, he fell in love with a woman (sometimes described as the jailer's daughter) and sent her a farewell note before his execution that signed off: "from your Valentine". Another claims that Valentine was actually beheaded for performing secret weddings after Emperor Claudius had outlawed them for young soldiers. Yet another (and my favorite) says that Valentine was a priest who was arrested and placed under house arrest with an aristocrat named Asterius. Valentine and Asterius fought about whether Christ was truly the Messiah and Asterius claimed that if Valentine would heal his daughter, he would believe. Valentine healed her and Asterius and his daughter was baptized. When the emperor found out, he ordered Valentine to be killed.

How this day became associated with romantic love is also hotly debated. One theory posits that a poem, "Parliament of Fowles" written by Geoffrey Chaucer in 1375, connected the idea of romantic love to the beginning of mating season for birds. An excerpt from this poem reads: "For this was sent on Seynt Valentyne's day/Whan every foul cometh there to choose his mate." One source even stated that this is where the term "love birds" comes from. It also just so happened that during this time in history, courtly love became fashionable and people began expressing their love with flowers, candies, and cards.

Personally, I find digging around in the history of various topics to be fascinating and enriching so I hope you have found at least some of this information entertaining. Whatever this holiday means for you is ultimately up to you to decide. I personally feel that it is an opportunity to celebrate love, and not just the romantic kind. There are so many people in our lives whom we love—family, friends, neighbors, spouses and Jesus said that people would know we were his followers by our love. "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you are also to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." (John 13:34-35)

However you choose to observe and celebrate this Valentine's day, or to ignore it completely, I hope that you do so knowing that you are created and loved by God. We are called as God's people to share that love with all the people we encounter. Maybe this Valentine's day is a great time to do that!

Blessings,
Rev. Vanessa Winters



Prayer Concerns

Recent: Joan King, home; Family of Robert Person (Bill Brenner's brother in law); Glorya Johnson; Raphael Hidalgo, (chemo)Seth Stevens' uncle; Madeline Hackworth, Vern Hackworth's mother; Ruth Feitl, Karl Feitl's mother; Libby Hirsch, cancer, Tom Rogers' cousin; Raymond Hann; Trisha Knotoff (Hospice Care), Kathy Tureski's sister-in-law; Terry Heffernan(chemo), friend of Mimi & Stu Wood; Jane Busking; Vita Collery, cancer, Karen Derryberry's cousin; Ralph Neubauer; Helen Fitzsimons; Kevin Fitzgerald; Marjorie Ridgway, home;

Long Term: Phyllis Styrzo, Hamptons Center for Rehab; Kimberly Rogers Murawski; Ralph Downs, Florida; Dana Barrett, friend of Nancy Miller; Chelsey Carter Collins, Hamptons Center for Rehab; Ellen Pfaff; Dottie Evans

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

Please be sure to pick up your giving envelopes and include an offering of \$43.90 per church *member* for per capita contribution, this amount includes the \$5 Salary Supplement for Presbytery.

Church Family News

Deaths

January 7, 2024

Patricia Lutz

Funeral arrangements have not been scheduled.

January 29, 2024

Jean Cuthbert

Memorial Services

Anjele Kalfayan

Saturday, April 6th at 11am at the Westhampton Presbyterian Church.

A private interment will take place for family members only in the Memorial Garden after the service.



Save the Date! Line Dancing Fundraising Event!

Come join us for a fun-filled night of kickin' and stompin' with Terry Lou - Lady T, Friday, March 1 from 7-9PM in the Parish Hall. Wear comfortable clothes and shoes you can dance in. Cost is \$30 per person and refreshments will be served. Space is limited, so sign up during coffee hour.

Terry Lou - Lady T (otherwise known as Terry Barrett), has been teaching line dance instruction since 2015 at various venues all over Suffolk County as well as in her own studio in Spenk. She is a licensed member of the American Callers Association, the National Teachers Association for Country Western Dancing, and she serves as a board member of the Long Island Country Music Association.

East End Women's Choir Concert

Please join us on Sunday, February 4, 2024 at 4 PM as East End Women's Choir, under the direction of Kamilla Ozman presents our winter concert. The program centers around a theme of "belonging". East End Women's Choir is an intergenerational group made up of choir directors, music educators, church musicians and women who love to sing.

Youth Group

The New Year has kicked off and our youth have been busy. Our Heifer campaign is over the halfway mark to an Ark!!!! Thank You to everyone who keeps our project going. We added another \$110.00 this month.

The Southampton Animal Shelter in Hampton Bays were very grateful for the latest batch of pet supplies that were dropped off. The kids continue to look for projects that interest them through their involvement in school activities or outside activities.

However, our next mission project is Souper Bowl For Caring. Souper Bowl was started by a youth group at a Presbyterian church in South Carolina 34 years ago. "That was 1990. Since then, Tackle Hunger, with its signature Souper Bowl of Caring event has become a national, grass-roots, youth-inspired movement where ordinary people are doing extraordinary good. Over \$193 MILLION in dollars and food has been generated while benefiting thousands of soup kitchens, food banks, meal programs and other hunger-relief charities in local communities."

Once again, we will collect can goods and monetary donations to supply the local food pantry at Immaculate Conception and the Little Food Pantry at Mill Road. We will also be selling soup on February 11th, Super Bowl Sunday to support our mission.

Our Lenten Festival will be held on Sunday, February 11th too! It will be held in Bailey Hall. Children should proceed down to Bailey Hall at the beginning of worship, after they ring the bell! We are looking for people to bring in snacks, watch for an email reminder too.

I don't know about you but I'm satisfied with our snowfall so far, no more for me please! Let's hope the groundhog doesn't see his shadow....I'm ready for an early Spring!

Kathy

FT: Souper Bowl For Caring



Finance Committee Update

Dear friends,

We have left 2023 behind us and with that an exciting new year started.

2023 was a bit of a tougher year for everybody, with high inflation rates and economic uncertainties. Our church felt it as well as our expenses went up, in some line item considerably, for example insurances by \$10,000. The income was on a weaker side, with Donation Others, a large contribution block being much lower than the plan and pledged Givings missed the plan by \$15,000. We managed, but mainly by major contributions from the Memorial & Endowment fund, an undesirable situation.

For 2024, we hope that our income and contribution will stabilize and reach levels of previous years and encouraging pledge levels showed an optimistic outlook. We very much appreciate your support and the pledges made. Pledges though need to be followed up with the fulfillment of it. Please review your pledge for 2023 and if there is a gap between pledge and giving, there is still a chance to fulfill the pledge. The expenses we kept at a minimum and we will be disciplined and diligent to accomplish our goals.

As mentioned, we are very grateful for the pledges made and the next financial step we require to focus on is our Per Capita contribution to support our greater church and Christian community. Please support this need and indirectly our church, as we have a Per Capita obligation of \$12,116 to the Presbytery and typically we received only \$4,500 from our membership (30% of our members). The gap of \$7600 requires to be fulfilled by our operating budget. Please remember the Per Capita giving of \$43.90 per member.

Our church is blessed by your contributions, your support and all the volunteers who add to our financial stability. Hereby, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to all you !

Respectfully submitted, Your Finance Committee

Presbyterian Women: Recap on an eventful season

The Presbyterian Women held another successful Christmas Tea and Bazaar this past December. Every fall, I get out my three-and-a-half-page outline of all the things that need to be done to make sure that this event goes off without a hitch.

My first concern was in light of all the Canadian fires, we might have trouble getting our fresh green wreaths. I called our local wreath distributor in October to see how things might go and then called again in November to see if it was going to be an issue. I was reassured that it wasn't but the week before, I got a call that they couldn't fill our order the way that we requested. We decided to go back to Kurt Weiss who we used last year. The Weiss's were former members of our church. That snafu taken care of, we were trying to determine how many to order. Our number of pre orders had declined but this year we ended up with a banner number of pre orders so purchased six more. Donn Larson again provided the greens and Donna Goebel with her foot in a boot made all the decorative ribbons. Eloise Carter led the pizza party where they were all decorated. Everyone seemed to have a good time and they all looked lovely. We sold them at the end of the conference room.

People seemed to especially like the baked goods/ cookie walk and hand made items of our talented crafters. We found a new source for our cookie walk boxes and found them to be a bit larger. Our patrons didn't seem to mind paying a little more for more cookies. Eloise with Mimi Wood sold the baked goods while Lynne Jones and Pat Speed manned the cookie walk.

Jane Otis, Margretta Anderson and Hanne Manker decorated the tree and then with Meryle King supervised the lovely tea table. Nancy Vigorito and her friend Nancy hustled behind the scenes in the kitchen to provide the delicious looking platters for the tea table.

Karen Andrews, Louise Smith, Sharon Conway and Holly transformed a room full of boxes into a Christmas wonderland for Twice Nice. The Jewelry was displayed to sell.

Our crafters, Gini Wagner, Donna Goebel, Cheryl Van Tuyle and Janet Hann made magic out of raw materials for the cutest crafts. (Check Donna's Facebook page.)

Many churches have given up on having Holiday events. We have in the past have had lines out the door and people waiting to sit down to have tea. Our attendance seemed to be lower even without any pandemic restrictions or inclement weather. However our community did give us some competition with family friendly street fairs in both Westhampton and East Quogue. How do we compete with face painting, Santa Claus and fried Oreos? Things to contemplate for next year.

Thank you to all who helped make this event a success. This includes all those who helped sell jewelry, poured tea, baked, made sandwiches and brought things down from upstairs as well as those who came to help clean up. A special thanks to Eloise and Janet who would run out and buy napkins or pick up more wreaths at the last minute. My biggest regret is that I forgot to take pictures of the rest of the event. I will add that to my outline for next year.

Christine Haddad chair.



The Food Basket

Food is Love. The annual Crop Walk for Hunger in October and contributions to the Thanksgiving Baskets in November are two of the ways we as a congregation demonstrate that love. However, hunger in our world and our community is a year-round problem. The Food Basket located in the Church Vestibule addresses this need throughout the seasons. Your donations of non-perishable food items to the basket are taken over to the Food Pantry at Immaculate Conception by the Deacons on a regular basis, where they are distributed to those in need throughout the year. So please consider picking up something for the Food Basket on your weekly trips to the grocery store and dropping it off in the basket on your way into church. No food donation is too small. Let's keep that Basket overflowing with our Love!

Why I Love My Church

One of my friends says that churches are full of broken people. I beg to differ. We are not perfect and not always tuned in but most of the time we at least strive to get it right.

I was hesitant to write this, afraid someone would disagree or because some people might not have had a positive experience (and I have heard about a few), but sometimes an event occurs which inspires you to want to share.

As moderator of the deacons, I have been called upon to help out with special receptions. One of our member's dear, loved one passed away recently on a Tuesday. Because the family was here from places as far as Europe, the family requested to have the funeral on that Saturday. Reverend Vanessa called me with this decision on Wednesday afternoon. I calmly said that it will be done and internally did a panic scream. I quickly called the head of special receptions committee. An email went out to the deacons and calls were made. I asked that the choir be included as this member is also an active participant of the choir. By Saturday, many folks came forward with sandwiches, cookies etc., enough for three tables of food. A trustee and a former deacon assisted in the kitchen for absent committee members to help set up, decorate and assemble the platters of food. The funeral was a lovely event with laughter and tears. More importantly, many church members came out to the funeral to support the family, surrounding them with love and sympathy.

This is why I love our church. I love that when there is a church event, no matter what, there are always volunteers ready to give a hand from the beginning to the end. I love that when there are joys in our lives, we all come together to celebrate. I love that when there are times of sorrow, we all come together to grieve and comfort one another. I love that an important part of our worship service is sharing our prayer concerns and praying for each other. I love that we express our concern for each other by sharing experiences, hugs, flowers, food and words of encouragement. Not only do we care about each other but we care about our community and world that we live in and even our environment. Although we don't always agree about our theological ideas, we all can agree that we are better for being together.

The church is not the building. It is all of you.

Have a good season of love.

Christine Haddad



Dear Members and Friends,

We want to ensure as much communication as possible with all of our congregation near and far, because each and every one of you has a special place here.

Please contact Erika in the church office at admin@westhamptonpresbyterian.org or 631-288-2576 if you need assistance.

The Member Portal: Use the link below to update your own contact information and add a photo too! You are also able to see all of your financial contributions to the church! You will create **your own** unique password for privacy purposes.

<https://servantkeeper.com/member-portal/westhampton-presbyterian-church>

UPDATE!

You are now able to access the Online Directory through your Member Portal! Use the following Passcode when prompted: **WHPChurch90**

2024 Fundraising Committee Events

Mark your calendar for some fun fellowship events!
You won't want to miss this line up!
Questions, contact the church office or Fundraising Committee

Friday, March 1, 7-9pm: Line Dancing with Terry Lou - Lady T

Sunday, April 7, 5pm: Ham Dinner

Friday, May 10, 6-8pm: Paint Night with Ginger Baer

Sunday, May 19, 3pm: Concert #2 - Emma Ozman, Soprano

Sunday, June 9 - Annual Church Picnic

July TBD - Summer Cocktail Party

Sunday, July 28, 3pm: Concert #3 - Red Door Chamber Players, String Quartet

Friday, September 13, 7-9pm: Trivia Night with Betsy

Saturday, September 28, 9am-3pm - Scrap Metal Drive

Sunday, October 20, 3pm: Concert #4 - Woodwind Trio

Thursday, November 21, 6pm: Harvest Dinner

Sunday, November 24 - Ornament Sales begin during coffee hour

December (dates TBD) - Santa Brunch and Christmas Cocktail Party



Share!

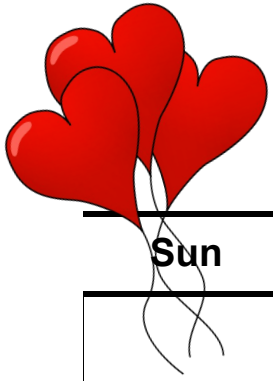
Do you know a little history about the church or our community that you would like to share? Are you on a committee or a board member? Send in your photos and articles to admin@westhamptonpresbyterian.org! All are welcome to contribute to the monthly Tidings newsletter. (please have submissions in by the 20th of each month)



1 Madeline, Michael, and Mac Gillooley
1 John Campbell
3 Deborah and Bob Busking
4 Nancy Winters
5 Zachary Downs
7 Miles Tamis
9 Donn Larson
9 Carter Cline
12 Phyllis Styrzo
14 Taylor Wagner
15 Mary Brennan
16 Matt Ravenhall
18 Louise Smith
18 Sean Doyle
21 Carol Lee Nespole
22 Casandra and Joshua Carrick

23 Sandy Surgan
24 Geoffrey Strong
25 Kimberly Rogers Murawski
27 Sally Hoge
28 Jionni Vigorito
29 Nora David
27 Marissa Schultze
28 Alison Strong
28 Patricia Kottl-Bebon
29 Warren & Brittany Frevert IV

February 2024



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 10am Men's Group	2 Groundhog Day	3
4 5th Sunday after Epiphany 10am Worship 4pm E.E. Women's Choir Concert	5	6 2-3:30pm EEH Adult Bereavement 7pm Deacons	7	8	9	10
11 Transfiguration of the Lord 10am Worship Installation/Ordination of officers Souper Bowl of Caring	12	13 6pm Session	14 Ash Wednesday 9:15am Mission 10:30am Staff 12pm PW Potluck Luncheon 3-5pm Drop in Service- Chapel	15	16	17
18 1st Sunday in Lent 10am Worship Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Blue Tshirt Sunday	19 Presidents Day Office Closed 5pm Maureen's Haven	20 7pm Trustees	21	22	23	24
	WINTER BREAK					
25 2nd Sunday in Lent 10am Worship	26	27 5-7pm E.E.H. Children's Bereavement group	28	29	<u>AA:</u> Sat. 10am –Choir Rm Sun. 12pm—Conference Rm Sun. 6:30pm– Parish Hall Wed. 6:30pm– Parish Hall Boy Scouts meet each Fri. 5pm	