



The Steeple Chimes

The E-Newsletter of The First Presbyterian Church of Greenlawn
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Rev. Dr. Ann M. Van Cleef, Pastor

January, 2025

Pastor's Message

My Beloved Church Family,

I had a very interesting Christmas this past year.

On Christmas Eve morning, I walked into my garage to find water cascading from ceiling to floor. I called my plumber, left a message on the answering machine, and prayed that he would call back.

He did call back within ten minutes and instructed me to turn off the water to the house. Then he gave me the bad news. He was recovering from surgery and would not be able to help me. But he gave me the name of a colleague who, unfortunately, never returned my call.

What to do? It was Christmas Eve. I had a 4:00 Candlelight Service scheduled and had planned to leave the house by noon. I still had presents to wrap, guests coming to the house for Christmas, and had not yet found time to put up my Christmas tree.

“Help me, Lord Jesus.” “Come, Holy Spirit, Come.” “Guide me, O Thou Great Jehovah!”

Knowing that I would not be able to get a plumber until after Christmas, I called the Marriott Residence Inn in Riverhead. Fortunately, there was room at the inn! I threw some clothing into a suitcase, grabbed the unwrapped presents (along with wrapping paper and Scotch tape), emptied the refrigerator into two picnic hampers, and took off for Greenlawn. And eventually, Riverhead.

It ended up being a pretty good Christmas after all. I didn't have to decorate (I had grabbed an 18-inch Christmas tree that I had on my desk as I ran out the door), and I didn't have to clean. My guests didn't have to travel to Greenport; Riverhead was 40 minutes closer for them. And no one had any expectations about having a great Christmas dinner; we enjoyed chicken pot pies that had been in my freezer. I ended up spending six nights at the hotel and treated it like a mini-vacation.

As I sat with my feet up one of those nights, sipping a glass of wine, a line from Don Miguel de Cervantes' *Don Quixote* came to mind. “There's a remedy for everything except death.” Then I remembered – there IS a remedy for death, in Jesus Christ, who came to Earth, God in human form, to save humankind from death. He opened the gates of Heaven so that we might enjoy Eternal Life.



All my prayers were answered. The burst pipe got fixed, we had a good Christmas, and I had a relaxing six nights away from the chores of home. I have a friend who keeps telling me, "We have a God of surprises." God is indeed good.

Maybe I'll book a room at the inn again next year. Minus the burst pipe, of course!

With love and blessings,

Pastor Ann

Zoom Worship

We will continue to "simulcast" our Sunday worship on Zoom for those who cannot be in the Sanctuary. You may log on as early as 10:00 a.m. for our 10:30 Celebration of Worship.

The easiest way to do Zoom is to download the Zoom App from the App Store. Zoom will work on a computer, a laptop, an I-Pad, or a Smartphone. Or, you can just click the link that is sent out every week.

What is the Meeting ID?

From now through June 29, 2025: **Meeting ID: 813 0261 1379 Passcode: 039859**

If you are on the church e-mail list, you will get a weekly e-mail with the Zoom link.

I don't have a computer or a Smartphone. What can I do?

You may telephone the following number: **1-646-558-8656**.

You will be asked for a Meeting ID and a passcode. (Please see above.)

You won't be able to see us, but you can still hear what's going on.



Birthday Blessings

January 2 – Rosalie Wilson
January 23 – Betty Chatfield
January 25 – Linda Rexon
January 26 – Stephanie Horne

February 8 – Caroline Prentiss
February 9 – Janice Hago
February 13 – Kathy Fitzgerald
February 14 – Bill Chatfield
February 23 – Bill Becker





Prayer Corner

Submitted by Betty Chatfield

A PRAYER on New Year's Day

~Roxie Lusk Smith

A new beginning on this day
that starts another year.
The future holds a mystery
of equal faith and fear.

My heart requires a steady grace
to match my every need.
My mind and spirit search, O Lord,
for You to intercede.

May healing mercies, by Thy love
exhort the ailing state.
Let all my troubled thoughts respond
as trusting would relate.

Be with me as I meet each day
whatever life may hold:
“My times are in Thy Hands,: O God,
Let greater self unfold.

I would not ask for strength beyond
the good of soul and nerve.
Whatever length of hours bring –
Lord, bless me as I serve.

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity, ...And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Col 3:12-14, 17

Do not go where the path may lead, go instead
where there is no path and leave a trail.

~Ralph Waldo Emerson

LIFE'S MIRROR

~Madeline Bridges

There are loyal hearts, there are spirits brave,
There are souls that are pure and true;
Then give to the world the best you have,
And the best will come back to you.

Give love, and love to your life will flow,
A strength in your utmost need;
Have faith, and a score of hearts will show
Their faith in your word and deed.

Give truth, and your gift will be paid in kind,
And honor will honor meet;
And a smile that is sweet will surely find
A smile that is just as sweet.

Give sorrow and pity to those who mourn
You will gather in flowers again
The scattered seeds of your thought outborne,
Though the sowing seemed but vain.

For life is the mirror of king and slave—
‘Tis just what we are and do;
Then give to the world the best you have,
And the best will come back to you.

INFLUENCE

~Joseph Norris

Drop a pebble in the water,
and its ripples reach out far;
And the sunbeams dancing on them
may reflect them to a star.

Give a smile to someone passing,
thereby making his morning glad;
It may greet you in the evening
when your own heart may be sad.

Do a deed of simple kindness;
though its end you may not see,
It may reach, like widening ripples,
down a long eternity.

One of the most valuable things we can do to heal
one another is listen to each other's stories.

~ Rebecca Falls

THE GIFT

*You created my inmost being; You knit me together
in my mother's womb. I praise You because I am
fearfully and wonderfully made; Your works are
wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not
hidden from You when I was made in the secret
place. When I was woven together in the depths of
the earth, Your eyes saw my unformed body. All the
days ordained for me were written in Your book
before on of them came to be.*

~Psalm 139:13-16

HELP

~T. Hanks

Help publicly.
Help privately.
Help in your actions by recycling and conserving
and protecting, but help also in your attitude.
Help make sense where sense has gone missing.
Help bring reason and respect to discourse and
debate.
Help science to solve and faith to soothe.
Help law bring justice, until justice in
commonplace.
Help and you will abolish apathy- the void that is
so quickly filled by ignorance and evil.

WHAT DO I WANT?

~Edgar A. Guest

What do I want for Christmas Day?
A few glad hearts about me,
Some smiles to light me on my way
As proof that you don't doubt me.
And then, if you choose,
 you may climb my knee
And smother my cheek with kisses,
And I am sure that the heart of me
Won't ache for a thing it misses.
Just tiptoe to where I sit and doze,
And give me your fond embraces,
And all of my different cares and woes
Will vanish to other places.
Just give me your love in the old-time way,
Bestow on me your caresses,
And my battered old heart on Christmas Day
Will forget all the past distresses.

ALL I NEED

~Lowell Patton

All I need, my God has offered, all my heart needs, He
can give. Strength and courage, when I've suffered, He
has shown me how to live.

Light He gives me for my darkness, greatly smooths
Life's rugged weary. All the clouds, He lines with
silver, and He keeps me through the day.

All my hungry soul is needing, is the manna which He
gives. If sometimes I'm sorely tempted, God is love,
and He forgives.

Oft His voice comes through the stillness, when He
speaks, I understand. And I wait there in the silence, for
the touch of His dear hand.

All I need is Christ my Savior, all I need is His great
Love. I am leaning on His promise, of a home in heav'n
above.

Trusting, hoping, praying, striving to be worthy of God's
Son, all I want is just to see Him, just to hear Him say
"Well done!"

THE DAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

~Peter Marshall

O Lord Jesus, we thank Thee for the joys of this season,
for the divine love that was shed abroad among men
when Thou didst first come as a little child.

But may we not think of Thy coming as a distant event
that took place once and has never been repeated. May
we know that Thou art still here walking among us, by
our sides, whispering over our shoulders, tugging at our
sleeves, smiling upon us when we need encouragement
and help.

We thank Thee for Thy spirit that moves at this season
the hearts of men: to be kindly and thoughtful—where
before they were careless and indifferent; to be
generous—where before they lived in selfishness; to be
gentle—where before they had been rough and
unmindful of the weak; to express their love—where
before it had been taken for granted and assumed.

We are learning—O Lord, so slowly—life's true values.
Surely Christmas would teach us the unforgettable
lesson of the things that matter most—
the ties that bind the structure of the family upon which
our country and

all the world rests; the love that we have for one another
which binds Thy whole creation to Thy footstool, Thy
throne. We are learning slowly, but,

O God, we thank Thee that we are learning.

So may Christmas linger with us,
even as Thou art beside us the whole year through.

Amen



Helen Koslowski

(October 30, 1928 – November 30, 2024)

In 2020, Helen made a request of our former Pastor, Rev. Fred Woodward – to please write her memorial homily. He wrote this “Living Memorial” for her on the occasion of her 92nd birthday in 2020. It was read at her Funeral Service on December 5, 2024, which was conducted by Rev. Matthew Means. It reads as follows:

The child of parents married in the Russian Orthodox faith, immigrants who came to this country through Ellis Island in 1913, Helen Keda (Kozlowski) was born in Greenlawn at her ancestral home on Furman Avenue, now known as 56 Cuba Hill Road, Greenlawn, NY on October 30, 1928. If at her life’s beginning she was a “two dollar baby” (the amount the doctor charged Helen’s parents for her home delivery), her value today as she turns 92 lies beyond all human calculation, held only in the heart and mind of God.

Helen’s mother bore eight children, four boys and four girls, though Helen would learn later of another child born prematurely who did not survive. Two of her siblings, Mike and Marie were born in Greenlawn, but five of her older siblings were ten or more years older than she and lived and worked in NYC until her entire her family moved to Greenlawn. As her mother and youngest siblings worked their two-acre plot of land, her father and the older ones commuted on the Long Island railroad into the city. Helen’s father was a tailor, and made men’s suits for a New Lots firm in Brooklyn.

There was much for her mother and her younger children to do at the Greenlawn house and farm. The family tended animals, among them cows, pigs, rabbits, ducks, chickens and pigeons, along with

cats and dogs. The family also gardened, which meant that pretty much every inch of their two-acre property had to be plowed and tended. Back in those days, there was no government assistance and few stores or services, so families traded with one another what they raised or grew, canned or preserved. Life by contemporary standards was austere. The children slept four to a bed on the first floor of a home with no running water or indoor plumbing. But there was no want of fun, whether playing dress-up in the attic with her younger sister Marie with whom Helen was particularly close, or playing all manner of games outside. When bored, they counted the cars that drove by their house at the rate of one per hour. But there was also the radio which Helen particularly loved.

On June 16, 1951, Helen married Antonio. She was 21 and he 25. Raised in a different era than our own with its casual claims of love and easy expressions of affection, neither Helen nor Antonio expressed their love to each other formally with the words, “I love you.” But the feeling was there and indeed the love, and they did everything together through their 67 years of marriage until Antonio’s death in on Christmas Eve 2018.

In his last years, Antonio struggled with dementia, so Helen became his caretaker as she had her younger sister Marie until her own death in 2010. Even when Antonio didn’t recognize her, even after she had become a stranger to him, he was not a stranger to Helen who remained ever faithful to him. As Antonio’s condition worsened, Helen soldiered bravely on with a courage of which few of us are capable or can even imagine. He was not only her husband but also a friend, and is now an angel beside her whose voice she continues to hear.

Helen grew up strong-willed and sturdy, definite in mind and spirit, bound by duty to do good and carry on with a dogged determination. Indomitable at 92, she remains all of those things. If frugal with herself as a child born on the cusp of the Great Depression, she has always drawn from a deep well of gratitude from which she generously serves others. Not cynical but clear-eyed, Helen is a quick estimator of character. Hers is a no-nonsense faith, the kind that has a backbone. She does not slip easily into sentimentality. Faith for Helen is rooted in usable wisdom, that which has the power to sustain us when the going gets tough. Candid about matters some may not dare to talk about, Helen is a

reliable witness: she simply tells it how it is. Helen accepts herself fully and is immensely comfortable being who she is. She knows her own seasons, and is deeply attuned to how long it takes for a wound to heal, how long it takes to sustain a grievous loss.

A lover of yard work and gardening, Helen is as much in her element outside as she is inside clipping coupons, busying herself with her paperwork, or working at her stove. Devoted to her church which she generously supports, she arrives early and departs late. A visible presence at church fairs, Helen barter with the best of them.

Helen is an extravagant gift of a woman, so very much loved and so very much made for love, now and forever precious in the sight of God. As a daughter, wife, aunt, great aunt and friend, Helen is an agent of God's blessing in this world.

God is not finished with God's world, but keeps on raising it and us from death unto life through people like Helen who do their part, who give and receive love, withholding nothing.

And so on her birthday, in this living memorial, we celebrate her life, and declare that God has acted and is acting even now in the life of Helen Kozlowski. Well done, sister and servant. You are a gift to us all.

Ann Beck

(October 7, 1931 – September 8, 2024)

Ann was born Oct 7, 1931 in Middle Village NY to Martha and Carl Mangold. She attended Grover Clemens HS and graduated in 1949. On February 25 1954, she married Peter Beck, and the young couple moved to Greenlawn to start their married life. They had three children: Philip, Laura, and Todd.

Ann was a member of the First Presbyterian Church of Greenlawn, having joined in the late 1950s, when the old white church still stood. She was a homemaker and a good mother. She made sure her children went to church every week; Laura added "whether we wanted to or not," and she made sure we they attended Sunday School and made their Confirmation.

She loved traveling. She went to Germany for a month to visit her father's side of the family. And, with a group from Greenlawn Presbyterian Church, she and Peter went to The Holy Land. This was by far her favorite trip. In addition, she traveled to Mexico.

Ann loved attending theatrical performances, both in New York City and at local playhouses on Long Island. She was also part of a closely-knit group of ladies who went out to dinner every week.

In 2015, Ann went into assisted living, as she was dealing with issues relating to dementia.

Ann will be missed by her children, Philip, Laura, and Todd, their spouses: Lola Beck and Kyle Dutter, their grandchildren: Phil Beck, John Condon and Susie Condon-Leslie, and great-grandchildren: William Condon, and Azelea Condon. She will also be missed by her beloved nieces, Nancy Lascala and Barbara Kapps, who went above and beyond the call of duty in taking good care of their Aunt Ann during her final illness.

Ann's Funeral Service took place on September 13, 2024 at Bruggemann's Funeral Home, with Rev. Ann Van Cleef officiating.





Services of Worship:

- December 1: Advent I. The sermon was titled, “Advent – a Season of Waiting.” The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper was celebrated.
- December 8: Advent II. The sermon was called, “Juggling Too Much at One Time.”
- December 15: Advent III. The sermon was titled, “A Light in the Darkness.”
- December 22: Advent IV. A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols.
- December 24: Christmas Eve Service, 4:00 p.m. The Christmas Reflection was called, “Why the Shepherds?”
- December 29: Carols and More Carols. Most parts of the Service were sung. The sermon was about the story behind the song “Let There Be Peace on Earth.”
- January 5: A Celebration of Epiphany. The sermon was titled, “What You May Not Have Known about the Wise Men.” The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper was celebrated. John Van Dyke was received as a new member.
- January 12: The sermon was called “The Baptism of Jesus”

Upcoming Services:

- January 19: The Wedding at Cana
- January 26: The Rev. Mark Applewhite, Chaplain at Huntington Hospital, will be our guest preacher.
- February 2: First Century people learn of Jesus’ identity in a sermon called “I Am Who I Am.” The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper will be celebrated.
- February 9: Our God does unexpected things. We will explore that in “The Call of Simon.”
- February 16: We look at a harsh side of Jesus in “Sometimes Jesus Surprises Us.”

Brahms German Requiem Concert a Huge Success

Our second fund-raising concert for the purchase of a new organ took place on Sunday, October 27; a performance of *A German Requiem* by Johannes Brahms. Conducted by Frances C. Roberts, it featured Pamela E. Jones, Soprano, Stan Lacy, Baritone, and pianists Stephanie Watt and AeRee Kim.

The 40-voice choir consisted mainly of people who had sung under the direction of Ms. Roberts in The Long Island Philharmonic Chorus, The Long Island Masterworks Chorus, and The Long Island Choral Festival and Institute.

A German Requiem was composed between 1865 and 1868. With seven movements, this is Brahms’ longest composition and largest ensemble work. *A German Requiem* is sacred, but non-liturgical. Unlike a long tradition of the Latin Requiem, *A German Requiem*, as its title states, is a Requiem in the German language.

The audience was thrilled with the choir, the beautiful voices of the soloists, the professional accompanists, and the sensitive musical direction of Fran Roberts.



The Requiem Choir in rehearsal

Melissa Maravell “Wows” Audience

Our third and final fundraising concert for our new organ took place on Sunday, November 17, and featured Melissa Maravell in a one-woman show.

Melissa spent much of her career with the New York City Opera chorus and has sung leading roles with regional opera companies around the country. In addition, she taught in the theatre department at Suffolk Community College for fifteen years.

Her rich, contralto voice lends itself not just to classical music, but to folk, pop, and Broadway as well. The concert was in cabaret-style, with the audience seated around tables, enjoying refreshments. The audience loved the performance, and would not leave until Melissa gave them an encore.



Update on Our New Organ

The organ has been purchased, and we are looking forward to having it installed in our Sanctuary.

We are in the process of contacting some organ makers in the greater Metropolitan area to see if they would like to have our old organ. The cabinet is like new, and the keyboards and knobs might be able to be re-used.

When the new organ is delivered, we will use the speakers that are inside the organ until we can have the proper speakers installed in the church. We are certain that we will be able to use the organ by Easter Sunday.

The Organ Committee, Marian Adams, Fran Roberts, and Ann Van Cleef, have been working for a year on this project, and are pleased to see it come to completion.

A New Tradition at Our Church

We have a new tradition at our church! During coffee hour on the last Sunday of the month, we honor all of the people who celebrated birthdays during that month. We sing *Happy Birthday* and enjoy a delicious ice cream cake.



October birthday honorees



November birthday honorees

Wedding Bells Ring for Stephanie and John

Stephanie Horne and John Van Dyke were married on Sunday, December 15, immediately following our Service of Worship. Afterwards, the congregation hosted a wedding reception for them in CE Hall. Stephanie and John had been high school sweethearts. They ran into each other at their 60th high school reunion, and the rest, as they say, is history.



**Two Beloved Church Members
Celebrate Important Birthdays**

This past fall, our congregation shared in the joy of two important birthdays. Meg Lawrence celebrated 90 years in September, and Nancy MacIntyre turned 97 in October. We were delighted to celebrate with these beautiful ladies and their families.



Meg Lawrence and her family

We Celebrate the New Year

We rang in the New Year a bit early during Coffee Hour on December 29 with sparkling cider and our annual Christmas Sweater contest. Many thanks to our Fellowship Director, Debbie Eitel, who organizes this event for us every year.



Debbie leads the New Year Toast



Nancy MacIntyre and her family



*Winners of the Christmas Sweater Contest:
Linda – Judge's Choice
Betty – Most Beautiful Sweater
David – Ugliest Sweater*

“Follow the Star”

A Devotional by Linda Dickman

Don't leave Jesus in the manger; don't remember Him only at Christmas, Instead, learn to walk with Him every day as you pray and read His Word and ask Him to help you. ~Billy Graham

Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 1:13)

I know a minister who gave me two nuggets to carry with me: 1. "Be kind to yourself at least once a day." 2. Follow the star."

The first was a part of his benediction when he substituted for our minister, the second was a part of an Advent sermon. The Reverend gave each of us a foam star and instructed us to put it somewhere that we would see it every day. He then told us to follow the star. After some deliberation, I put it on the inside of our home, on the inside of the front door. Just under the sign that says "Peace to all who enter here." I got the idea to put the "peace" sign on the inside because we have a peaceful home and when people come to visit, they often remark about how comfortable they feel. A friend of mine shared that he posted his "peace" sign over the door going out and I loved it and employed his idea.



Sometimes, it is so dark. Following the star involves risk. But - there is nowhere that the star will lead you that Jesus has not been. And, as the light from neighborhoods and towns and cities fade, the sky becomes a blanket for the stars. The stars under which Jesus was born, and lived and moved and leads us.

As we follow His star through a New Year, let us not be afraid, but let us carry His peace into the world.

Do not be afraid.

Because of Him,
Linda

Welcome New Member: John Van Dyke

John Van Dyke has been attending Services both on Zoom and in person. He felt it was important to join our church so that he and his wife, Stephanie, could worship together.

As John and Stephanie will be living in Maine for most of the year, he is our first new member who joined with the understanding that he would be would worship with us primarily on Zoom.

Welcome to First Presbyterian, John!



Plastic Bag Recycling Program

We have learned that the local Girl Scouts are collecting plastic bags, which will eventually be turned into earth-friendly park benches. We have set up a box to accept these bags. A volunteer will take the bags to the Elwood Library, which is serving as a collection point.

Please feel free to deposit the following bags:

- Produce bags, store bags
- Ice bags, cereal box liners
- Ziploc and other re-closable bags
- Bread bags, newspaper sleeves
- Dry cleaning bags, bubble wrap





From the Pastor's Kitchen

Vidalia Onion Dip

You know me well enough to realize two things about me. (1) I enjoy cooking for company, but this 365-dinners-a-year stuff is for the birds. (2) I love recipes with four ingredients or less. So, I was very excited when my North Fork friend Peggy shared this recipe for Vidalia Onion Dip with me.

“It’s very easy to make,” she said, “and my guests just love it.”

- 1 Cup of Chopped Vidalia onion (must be a sweet onion)
- 1 Cup Shredded Parmesan Cheese
- 1 Cup Mayonnaise

Preheat oven to 350 degrees

Stir together the three ingredients. Place in a baking dish. Bake for 30 minutes. Serve with crackers.



Managing your weight around the holidays just requires a little planning. For example, I took the batteries out of my scale on Monday.

Me as a kid: (Falls 10 feet from the monkey bars) I’m OK.

Me now: I tried to scoop ice cream that was just a little too frozen and I dislocated my shoulder.

I wanna be 14 again and ruin my life differently. I have new ideas.

Kids nowadays do whatever they want. Growing up, I couldn’t even open two different kinds of cereals at once.

I think we have all had a near death experience at some point in our life. Talking back to our mother, for instance.

I finally know why they call me a grown up. I groan every time I get up!

Boss hangs a poster in office. “I AM THE BOSS, DO NOT FORGET.” He returns from lunch to find a note on his desk. “Your wife called. She wants her poster back.”

I thought the dryer was making our clothes shrink. Turns out it’s the fridge ...

“If you hear me yelling, just know that I said it nicely 26 times.” – The Mom

When I was a kid, bedtime was 9 p.m. I couldn’t wait to be a grownup so I could go to bed any time I wanted. Turns out that is 9 p.m.

The more you weigh, the harder you are to kidnap. Stay safe. Eat cake.

You know when you buy a bag of salad and it gets all brown and soggy? Cookies don’t do that.

The Session

Susan Perrotta, Recording Clerk

Class of 2024

Debbie Eitel
Larry Foray
Susan Perrotta

Class of 2025

Marian Adams
Bill Becker
Gary Prentiss

Class of 2026

Arlissa Dean
Kathleen Gerlach