

SPIRITUALLY
SPEAKING

SPRING 2009

Websites: www.unadillaapresbyterian.org / www.eastgullfordpc.org

Pastor's Corner

Dear Friends in Christ,

I'm sure that most of you have heard the old adage, "The more things change the more they stay the same." The Bible even says something very much like it.

"What has been is What will be,
and what has been done is what will be
done;
there is nothing new under the sun."
~ Ecclesiastes 1:9 (NRSV)

If we look over the great expanse of human history, we would undoubtedly agree. Human beings seem to be in pretty much the same place they always have been. Yet, though people have remained the same, our customs, our science, our medicine, our technology and even our methods of worship have changed over the last 2,000 years, most of it within the last 100 years. Just think of the changes to products, services, customs, and information that have occurred within our lifetimes! Airplanes can get to Europe in 3 hours and a lot of us can afford to go. Man has walked on the moon. Radio has given way to television. Black and white TV shows are only now broadcast in color and High Definition. The 24 hour drive through now appears in most fast food places, even Dunkin' Donuts. Jogging came into fashion. The Walkman became the iPod. Almost everyone has and needs a computer. Many games are played "virtually" on Xbox or Play Stations. We "text" constantly and you cannot even buy a cell phone that doesn't also double

as a camera and a video recorder. Long hospital stays are a thing of the past, as many procedures are now accomplished through outpatient surgery. Great strides have been made in the treatment of cancer and many other diseases. Chemotherapy is now delivered via permanent ports in the body. Wow! What a ride!

It's no wonder we're dizzy. And as much as technology and medicine have changed, so have social morays and access to information that was previously "taboo." Women can now work in many places that were previously "off limits". I myself have one of those jobs. Single parenthood became a badge of honor once people realized how difficult it was. Quiz shows were replaced by reality TV, and no topic is too sensitive to be discussed "on the air." Ricky and Lucy Ricardo's separate beds have been replaced by king size beds containing scantily clad people committing adultery on daytime soap operas. Real issues surrounding human sexuality and sex-related products were barely discussed by our parents. Now ads and documentaries appear on prime time television. And while wars that took place in the first half of the 20th century tended to be romanticized, with the Vietnam War, war's brutality came right into our living rooms. With all of that change going on, does anyone wonder why we cling so tenaciously to the worship rituals, music and language of early 20th century church? After all, if all this other change is beyond our control, driven by the need to make a buck and attract customers, shouldn't there be one haven of peace that is like Jesus; the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow?

Thankfully, the answer is "yes" and also, "no". What must remain the same is the message that Jesus is Lord and that His love and salvation is available to everyone! What must become more varied, are the styles of worship we use and the places and times in which we worship, not because they are better, but because they appeal to a growing American population that is more diverse than ever before.

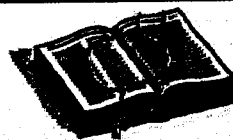
Now I'm not suggesting that we throw out all the old worship styles and replace them with something new. The music and rituals of the last century, indeed, of the last 2000 years are still good, valid and comforting. Many of us were raised on those prayers and hymns and we love them. And let's face it, we all hate change. But intermixed, I think we need to liven things up and try out some newer stuff from time to time. To date, we have tested out a new Hymn of Mutual Blessing, new words to the Doxology, and some new worship services (e.g., Ash Wednesday). A couple of those changes were met with grumbling. Yet, during Lent, as promised we returned to the music we were used to. Once again, we all hate change. But a few weeks of something new is not enough to make it our own. Actually, it's just about enough time to realize we can't come to worship and be on "auto pilot". But shouldn't we need to be attentive to what is going on? We need more time when we test things out. And we need to know that if something really doesn't fit us, there is always a way back.

The Mission Study you all did while you were seeking a new pastor said that you wanted some growth. The changes I've made in worship have been made in response to requests from the Sessions and other members when I first started here. If we choose not to try anything else new, the only "new people" we will attract are people just like us, and unfortunately, all the people who are just like us and who live in this area are already here. We want to attract people who are not like us,

while still caring for all our members. I know what you're thinking. That's a scary proposition! We might become like someone else, or lose ourselves. The good news is we might also just turn into the very thing God has called us to become. And that can never be anything but wonderful - scary - but wonderful.

So I invite you to share your ideas with me or with the members of the Sessions. And I ask you to be tolerant while we try out new things. Give the changes a chance to settle and grow, and share your feelings with me or with other church officers. We won't lose the familiar. At the very least, we will have a much wider variety of things to choose from. At the very best, when God sends us new, diverse folks, we may have something that will make them want to come back, and even stay. Giving us yet another way to enjoy God by loving and opening up to the "peoplescape" God has designed for our mutual, love, joy, and pleasure.

Shalom,
Patty



MEN'S BIBLE STUDY & BREAKFAST

Every Tuesday morning from 6:30 am to 8:00 am at the EG Church.

All EG & U Men Welcome!

PRESBYTERY OF SUSQUEHANNA VALLEY SUMMER CAMPERSHIPS 2009

Children & youth (through 12th grade) participating in the life of Presbyterian Churches within the Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley are eligible to apply for camperships. Camperships are scholarships provided to the young people of the Presbytery to facilitate a religious camping experience. Camperships are not need-based. **First consideration will be given to all who apply for camperships by May 1, 2009.** Camperships are offered on a **first-come first-serve basis, with accommodation for even distribution within the Presbytery.** The Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley only has a set amount of money set aside for this purpose. **When the money is gone, so are the camperships!** Camperships will be awarded as long as funds are available. Please be aware that camperships are based on the **cost of one week of overnight summer camp per youth.**

To qualify for a campership, your son or daughter needs to attend one of the camps listed on the sheet of approved camps accompanying this letter. We unfortunately are no longer able to award Level 3 Camperships. Each campership application form requires a pastor's (or clerk of session) signature before being sent to the Presbytery Mission Center. A local church signature will be obtained for you if you choose to apply online.

You will need to register with the camp on your own and pay the registration fee. Please do so in a timely manner. Some camps are more popular than others and fill up rather quickly. You will be notified about the outcome of your application after May 1, 2009. The Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley will send the scholarship amount directly to the camp if your application is approved. Your family will be responsible for any remaining balance.

If you have further questions about the Presbytery Camperships or Christian camps in our area, please contact Michelle Howard at 265-3774/e-mail mhoward6@stny.rr.com or e-mail Craig Kunkle at craig@craigkunkle.net

Campership info is available at <http://www.susvalpresby.org/> Click on Youth Happenings, Camperships.



Our Spirit Filled Youth



HARMONY CIRCLE NEWS

Harmony Circle met at the home of Agnes Hoffman for our March meeting. We finished the Horizon Bible study of Luke.

On Tuesday April 7th we will begin Texts of Terror with Rev Patty Wolff. Please see her if you wish to purchase the study book for \$11.

We will meet at the home of Louise Lesh at 1 pm. All women and friends of the church are invited to join us for an afternoon of fellowship..

We will continue to sponsor the Birthday Offering whose 2009 goal is \$800,000. The grants will go to La Mujer Obrera in El Paso Texas and to a children's home for Orphans in Dzerzhinsk, Ukraine.

We continue to provide the dinner for the Committee on Ministry at the Presbytery on Tuesday May 5th. If you can help or could make a donation for the meal supplies, please see Louise or Sharon.

The Presbytery sends Harmony Circle a check for this effort and we have donated the amount to the church kitchen fund.

Our regular May meeting will be on WEDNESDAY May 6th. We will miss our long time moderator and teacher, Mary Beardsley as she is now residing at the Oneonta Rehab Center. If you are in Oneonta, please drop in to visit her or send her a card.

Mary Beardsley
Room 218
Oneonta Nursing and Rehab. Center
330 Chestnut Street
Oneonta, NY 13820

EG WOMEN NEWS

The meeting of the East Gullford Women was held at Lola Palmer's home, March 5th.

Get Well Cards were signed for Hilda Verderber and Edie Phelps. Hoping they will be well and back with us soon.

The C.O.M. dinner was planned. Also the Easter Breakfast: Menu of Breakfast Casserol and Sticky Buns.

Pastor Patty led a very interesting Bible study with good fellowship and refreshments.

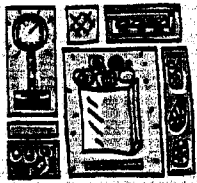
Next meeting will be April 2nd at Kathy Williams home.

YOUTH GROUP NEWS

The Youth Group held a bottle drive on Sunday, March 29th beginning at 2:00 to raise funds for the Relay for Life. If you were unable to donate to this on Sunday you can still help by bringing your bottle and cans to the Redemption Center in Sidney (just tell them that they are for Team #2 or Unadilla/EG Presbyterian Youth Group). If you are unable to bring them just call and we can pick them up.

We are also selling luminaries or taking donations so contact Kathy, Jan, Stephanie or the kids.

Also, we'd love to have anyone come and join us at the Relay either Friday night (May 8th) or Saturday morning. It's a great time to "celebrate" all that we've done to help out the American Cancer Society. This years theme is also "Celebrate".



UNADILLA FOOD PANTRY

The Unadilla Food Pantry received a large order of food on March 18th. We are grateful for the food donations from the First Presbyterian Church. Elder JoAnne Aymar has been suggesting food products in her Sunday mission moments which helps to fill our shelves.

Volunteers from Sidney and Gilbertsville and two youths have been helping to keep our doors open Monday, Friday, and Saturdays from 11 to noon.

An offering of \$78 was donated to the food pantry by participants at the Community Lenten service at the United Methodist Church of Unadilla. The Methodists are getting a room ready to have open at these same times for a local mission. They will have gently used clothing for people in need. Any donations for the clothes, will go to the food pantry. If you have any gently used clothing that you would like to donate to their local mission effort, please see Joann Rickard.

Save these Dates!!!

UNADILLA FIRE DEPARTMENT is having a ham raffle on Friday April 3rd 7pm at the fire station on Clifton Street.

UNADILLA PUBLIC LIBRARY is having their annual BBQ chicken fund raiser on Sunday April 19th. Mr Wilson will have the chicken ready by 10. Friends of the library will have sides of salads, baked beans, coldslaw, and some desserts for sale at George's service.

Please see Joann Rickard if you would like to reserve chicken etc. 369-7315 or if you would like to donate the above, please call her or the library at 369-3131.

May 9th ROAST PORK dinner at Unadilla First Presbyterian!!!

UNADILLA CHAMBER is having their annual Mother's Day Chicken BB-Q on May 10th. You may reserve you chicken by calling Linda Bickos at 369-2614.

They will be selling from 10:00 am till gone. Sides and desserts will be available also.

EASTER SEASON MUSICAL DRAMA "MICHAEL'S TREE"



Presented by St. Luke's Lutheran Church Choir
Friday April 3rd & Saturday April 4th
7:30 at St. Luke's Lutheran Church
139 W. Main Street, Sidney, NY

A Story of Resurrection

Tickets
Adults \$5.00
Children 12 & under \$3.00
Available at the door
or call: 369-2614



People News

- **Members & Friends of our Presbyterian Church Families:**

Thank You to all for your many thoughts, prayers, kind words and other acts of kindness during the illness and passing of my mother (Shirley Price). Your actions were most meaningful and helpful during difficult times like these. God Bless You All!

Roy and Sally Straka

- Don and Joann Rickard celebrated their 45th Wedding Anniversary on March 21st!!!! Their flowers, a gift from Mareta and Terri Barnhart, graced the sanctuary on Sunday, March 22nd.
- Mary Beardsley has relocated to the Oneonta Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Oneonta. She would love to hear from her church family and friends. Her address is:
Mary Beardsley
Room 218
Oneonta Nursing and Rehab. Center
330 Chestnut Street
Oneonta, NY 13820

A note from Hilda Verderber

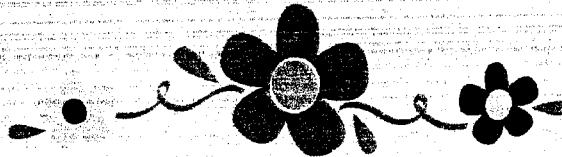
I wish to thank everyone for the cards, phone calls and prayers during my recovery from surgery.

It is so nice to know so many people think about me.

Christian Ed.

The Christian Education committee has planned some events for the spring. At the reading of this newsletter, the Easter egg may have already happened. On April 4 the youth of the church gathered together at 9 a.m. at the church to hide Easter goodies and trinkets throughout the church while the younger children worked on a few projects that they planned to share with the rest of the church membership. After the hunt the youth joined the younger children to help with the projects. Many thanks to those who donated the goodies and Easter items for the hunt.

The committee began thinking of ways to set up a parent friendly space for younger parents with their younger children (under 2nd grade age) during worship so that they would be able to care for them during worship and still possibly be aware of what is happening. The committee hopes to work with the property committee to formulate ideas for an area in the upper meeting room of the church. The church has applied for a grant and if those moneys are available, we will be able to have speakers in that room for people to hear the service as well as tend to their young ones. In the future the committees may be looking for donations of a rocking chair or some comfortable furniture for that area as well as some gently used quiet toys for the children.



Come out!
Come out! It is
finally Spring!



Jan Brett



**The First Presbyterian Church of Unadilla
P.O. Box Z
Unadilla, NY 13849**

**Non Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Unadilla, NY 13849**

Easter



**Palm Sunday - Sunday
April 5, 2009**

**East Gullford 9:00 AM
Worship With Communion
Brunch Following
The Service**

Unadilla 11:00 AM Worship

Easter Sunday - Sunday April 12

**East Gullford 9:00 AM Worship With
Communion**

**Unadilla 11:00 AM Worship With
Communion**

Spiritually Speaking

**The First Presbyterian Church of Unadilla
P.O. Box Z, Unadilla, NY 13849**

**The United Presbyterian Church of East Guilford
P.O. Box 147, Sidney, NY 13838**

**Church: (607) 369-4630 Fax: 369-4630
Office: (607) 369-4742**

**www.eastguilfordpc.org and
www.unadillapresbyterian.org**

For Pastoral Concerns call:

Roy Straka - 563-8932 / Louise Lesh - 369-9579

Newsletter

Sharon Havens - shavens002@stny.rr.com

All contributions are welcome!