



The Friendly News

The First Presbyterian Church of Woodbury Heights February 2018



Dear Friends,

In the year 221 BC, Qin Shihuang became the first emperor of a united China by unifying the various Chinese states that had been at war for more than two centuries.

Once in power, he did two things: He established a widespread and organized administration through which to govern, and he began to build a huge underground mausoleum.

You see, Emperor Qin believed that in the afterlife he would still be an emperor, and he needed people to serve and support him in the next world.

So he had laborers create a huge army of terra-cotta figures – officers, infantrymen, archers, horses with saddles, government officials -- even musicians and other entertainers – to provide for him in the afterlife.

He even had weapons, musical instruments and chariots in this tomb. When he died in 206 BC, he was ready. Or so he thought!

It wasn't until 1974 that some Chinese farmers, plowing a field, discovered pieces of pottery. Thus began one of the most important archaeological digs in history.

Samples of the artifacts that were unearthed are on display at the Franklin Institute. Dottie and I saw this exhibit right after Christmas.

As incredible as this underground tomb

was, it did get me to thinking about the afterlife.

We don't need soldiers and archers and chariots and the like. We don't need a vast underground tomb. We don't need all sorts of artifacts.

Oh, and, emperor or not, we won't rule in the afterlife – that's God's job. We just get to enjoy it and all the glories He offers us.

And while Emperor Qin made many preparations, the only preparations we need to make are the spiritual ones, which is what Lent, which begins on Feb. 14, is all about.

Lent is about getting our souls in shape, restoring our relationships with God, seeking His direction and guidance in all things, and discovering just how He intends to use us in this life before we meet up with Him in the next one.

The worship we will bring to Him, the time we take to study His word, the prayers we lift up to Him, and anything else we do during these holy weeks to get closer to God will be all the preparation we need for the afterlife.

As we approach Lent, ask yourselves these questions:

How much do I trust Jesus? Do I show it? Have I opened my soul to Him completely?

Do I confess my sins to Him regularly and not just when I think about it?

Do I treat other people the way He would want me to?

What am I doing to express in my life the sacrificial love of Jesus Christ to others?

Am I relying on His grace and His grace alone?

Yes, that is a challenge. But it's a lot more effective than creating an army of terra-cotta warriors!

In Christ, John

February birthdays

3 -- Ryan Eachus
 3 -- Nancy Zane
 6 -- Ammie Davis
 7 -- Noah Elliott
 7 -- Ginny Naylor
 7 -- Rachel Geserick
 8 -- Benjamin Taylor
 9 -- Audra Bonfiglio
 10 -- Bette Murphy
 11 -- John Pedicone
 11 -- Nancy Butler
 12 -- Maggie Woodrow
 12 -- Walter Pierson
 12 -- Judy Grantham
 14 -- Paul Belcher
 14 -- Michelle Bogert
 14 -- Zachary Bogert
 14 -- Ollie Lambert
 14 -- Peg Schoen
 16 -- Mike Camilli
 18 -- Helen Boyce
 18 -- Madelyn Elliott
 18 -- Amy Reynolds
 21 -- Kristen Lynch
 22 -- Robert Chute
 23 -- Daniel Geserick
 25 -- Norman Bramble
 25 -- Chuck Elliott
 28 -- Ed Harley
 28 -- Geri Sincavage

**February anniversaries**

17 -- Craig and Jeanne Mangano

Are we honoring commitment?

In an email received from the Family Promise coordinator of Pitman Presbyterian Church, she asked, "Is your church able to help out with Family Promise when we host them the week of Feb. 11 to 17?"

Sadly, we have not been helping them as we should. Our church made a commitment to host for two days out of seven, and we have not been doing so. If you would like to help with this worthwhile outreach, please email roqueknitter@hotmail.com ASAP.

News and notes from our pastor

Since the last newsletter, three of our members have entered God's Kingdom: **Lois Gebeline**, on Dec. 4 (our sympathy to her daughter, **Janet Sims**, and her family); **Bob Peterson**, on Jan. 1 (our sympathy to his daughter **Amy** and her family); and **Jeanette Palmer** on Jan. 21 (our sympathy to her granddaughter **Jessie Pizarro** and her family).

Sympathy and prayers also for **Sara and Gary Keedy** and their family on the passing of her mother, **Joanne Westermaier**, and to **Connie Harley, Audra Bonfiglio**, and their family on the passing of Connie's father, **Bill Abraham**.

Get well wishes are sent to **Gary Keedy**, who had a stroke several weeks ago; to **Dick Shaw, Carol Martino** and **Pat Wilkins**, who all had bad falls recently; and continued healing prayers for **Jim Golding** and **Fran Lambert**, as well as all the others on our weekly prayer list!

Winnie Higgins thanks church family

To all my friends and members of our wonderful church: Thank you so much for your thoughts, prayers, cards and calls after the tragic accident that took my daughter-in-law's life and seriously injured my son Glenn.

Glenn is recovering slowly and will be doing that for months to come, but he is making progress. The outpouring of prayers not only sustained our whole family but made a significant role in our faith in God.

Rev. Shedwick and Dottie faithfully checked in and offered their prayers. I cannot thank you all enough for your truly Christian caring,

-- Winnie Higgins

Family Promise fundraiser March 3

Family Promise, which we support in conjunction with the Pitman Presbyterian Church, plans a Comedy Night fundraiser at 7 p.m. Saturday, March 3, at the Church of Incarnation in Mantua.

Tickets cost \$40 per person, and the event includes food, soft drinks and a basket auction. For tickets see <http://www.familypromisegc.org/events/>

Perkins family thanks us for helping

Robert and Phyma Perkins thank our congregation for our prayers and gifts after their home near Detroit blew up. They moved into their new home on Jan. 25 and appreciate our help.



FEBRUARY 2018

“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God.”

-- 1 John 4:7

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Quilters meet, 10 am Bell choir practice, 6:45 pm Sanctuary choir, 7:45 pm	2	3
4 Sunday School, 9:30 am Worship, 11 am Souper Bowl collection	5	6 Esther Circle, Woodrow home, 7 pm	7	8 Quilt group, 10 am Bell choir practice, 6:45 pm Sanctuary choir, 7:45 pm	9	10 Men's group, Piston Diner, 8:30 am
11 Sunday School, 9:30 am Worship, 11 am Annual church meeting and lunch, 12:15 pm	12 PrimeTimers' lunch at Filomena's in Deptford, noon	13	14 ASH WEDNESDAY Meager meal, 6:30 pm and Taize service, 7:15 pm	15 Quilt group, 10 am Bell choir practice, 6:45 pm Sanctuary choir, 7:45 pm	16	17
18 Sunday School, 9:30 am Worship and communion, 11 am Youth Group, breakfast 12:15 pm	19	20	21 Mission meets, 6:30 pm Session meets, 7:30 pm	22 Quilt group, 10 am Bell choir practice, 6:45 pm	23	24 Deacons' Lenten day of service, 10 am, Fellowship Hall
25 Sunday School, 9:30 am Sanctuary choir, 9:30 am Worship, 11 am	26	27 Deacons meet, annex, 7 pm	28			



MARCH 2018

“For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory.

-- 2 Corinthians 1:20

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Quilt group, 10 am Bell choir practice, 6:45 pm Sanctuary choir, 7:45 pm	2 Newsletter deadline, 5 pm	3
4 Sunday School, 9:30 am Worship, 11 am	5	6 Esther Circle, annex, 7 pm	7	8 Quilt group, 10 am Bell choir practice, 6:45 pm Sanctuary choir, 7:45 pm	9	10 Men's group, Piston Diner, 8:30 am
11 Sunday School, 9:30 am Worship, 11 am	12 PrimeTimers, church lounge, noon	13	14	15 Quilt group, 10 am Bell choir practice, 6:45 pm Sanctuary choir, 7:45 pm	16	17
18 Sunday School, 9:30 am Worship, 11 am	19	20	21 Mission meets, 6:30 pm Session meets, 7:30 pm	22 Quilt group meets, 10 am Bell choir practice, 6:45 pm	23	24 Victorian Tea and Treasures, noon and 2:30 pm
25 Sunday School, 9:30 a.m. Choir practice, 9:30 am Worship, 11 am	26	27 Deacons meet, 7 pm	28	29 HOLY THURSDAY communion, 7:30 pm	30 GOOD FRIDAY worship, noon, Mantua Methodist Church Prayer vigil starts, 9 pm	31

Updated church directories will be available Feb. 4 at the congregational meeting.



DEACONS CORNER: Next meeting 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 27, 2018, annex

HAPPY NEW YEAR! Thank you to all who helped in gift-giving for seven families at Christmastime. Also, thanks to all who chipped in to undecorate the church Jan. 14!!

DEACONS' REORGANIZATION

Moderator: Liz Billings-Santora; **Vice-moderator:** Sue Reim; **Secretary:** Kayleigh Reim;
Treasurer: Carol Martino; **Nominating committee representative:** Joan Mullin; **Youth deacon:** Madison Kratzer; **Chancel:** Sue Reim; **Correspondence:** Ada White; **Literature:** Liz Billings-Santora; **Visitation:** Peg Schoen; **Special projects:** Andrew Reynolds.

NEWS:

Next Communion: Feb. 18, Elders serve

Food collection for December: 145 items collected; **For the year:** 916. Thank you!!

Food collection for January: 76 items were collected.

Suggested food items for February: hot chocolate, canned and bottled juices; all nonperishables are welcomed.

Visitations: The deacons made 72 during December and January.

Greeting cards: Thirty-seven were sent in December, and 50 were mailed in January

Flower Fund: The deacons and flower chairperson Erin Zorio are requesting the congregation's help in purchasing/dedicating altar arrangements for each week in 2018. These arrangements are given to shut-ins and others the deacons visit. Please look for order forms in the Narthex.

Welcome to new deacons: Kristine Brenner and Nancy Butler

Farewell and thanks to: Deacons Cassandra DiFinizio, Steve Elliott and Joyce Woodrow

Also thanks to: Debbie Becker, for making the communion bread for the last 15 years.

Please continue your donations in the green offering envelopes! And most importantly:

Please tell Rev. Shedwick of anyone in need of help, a visit or a prayer

God Bless - In Christ's service, your Board of Deacons:

Steve Antosky, Nolan Becker, Kris Brenner, Nancy Butler, Madison Kratzer, Kayleigh Reim, Nancy MacDermott, Carol Martino, Joan Mullin, Sue Reim, Andrew Reynolds, Peg Schoen, Dottie Shedwick, Ada White, Liz Billings-Santora, moderator

This winter's Narthex display features Sunday School, choir

The Winter 2018 memorial cabinet displays honor our Sunday School and choir. Both predate the formal establishment of our church!

The center section is a reminder of the devotion to attending Sunday School as evidenced by the picture of Gladys Albert, Carol Martino and Barbara Daugherty. Gladys taught Sunday School, directed Bible School and was also a dedicated Girl Scout leader. Before pins were awarded for perfect attendance, Victorian trading cards were given to the children.

The choir display illustrates the development of church choirs, our choir history and many candid photos. There is an image of The Genevan Psalter created by John Calvin, which influenced our Colonial church music.

Psalmody relied on the oral tradition of learning tunes by rote. The psalms/music were so sacred that choirs rehearsed with different words as they learned the tunes. The technique employed to teach the congregation a new tune was called "lining out," or "Deaconing."

The Deacon or any member who could sing would sing each line of the psalm followed by the congregation in a call and response manner. This would be repeated each week until the parishioners could sing the psalm in its entirety without assistance.

Highlights from the January meeting of Session

Your Session met on Wednesday, Jan. 17. After devotions were presented by Rev. Shedwick, the minutes of the previous Session meeting were approved.

Pastor's report: Rev. Shedwick drove 479 miles on church business in December, which included 11 home visits, 3 hospital visits, 3 counseling sessions, 3 funerals and 5 in-home communion offerings. The ushers for February are: Mike Camilli (Feb. 4), Dave Geserick (Feb. 11), Brad Gilmore (Feb. 18) and Connie Harley (Feb. 25).

Session reorganization: This year's committees are: **Building and Property:** Brad Gilmore (chair) Jake Mangano, Dave Geserick; **Christian Education:** Jeanne Mangano (chair), Bonnie Dawson, Arin Sheehan; **Communication and Outreach:** Barrie Dawson, chair and sole member; **Membership and Fellowship:** Barbara Daugherty, chair and sole member; **Stewardship and Finance:** Mike Camilli (chair), Jesse Butler, Nick Zorio; **Worship and Program:** John Pitchford (chair), Connie Harley, Lori Taylor; **Clerk of Session:** Denise Pitchford, **alternate:** Barbara Daugherty; **Board of Trustees president:** Brad Gilmore; **Nominating committee elders:** Barbara Daugherty (chair), Connie Harley, Barrie Dawson. The Session also approved the list of treasurers for our groups. See Rev. Shedwick or an elder if you have questions.

Mission: On Sunday, Jan. 21, Rev. Shedwick told the congregation of the \$5,000 our church received from the West Jersey Presbytery as seed money for a new mission project. The plan is to solicit ideas from the congregation during the Feb. 11 congregational meeting that will be presented to the Mission Committee. That group will then present final project plans to the Session.

Building and Property: The cold weather and an inordinate number of service calls to our provider have delayed the installation of the new church air conditioning/heating units that were to have been in place by mid-January. We have no firm installation date at this time. ... A donation has been made to cover replacement costs for the windows on the Fourth Street side of Fellowship Hall.

Christian Education: The envelopes given out to our Sunday School children have resulted in more donations. ... Our Sunday School teachers will do individual Lenten celebrations with their classes.

Stewardship and Finance: Liz Billings requested that the deacons be represented on the Visitation Report Committee, and her request was approved. She will be the deacon representative. ... The Lois Cooper bequest money is in the process of being turned over to Merrill Lynch for investment. Some paperwork still stands in the way. ... There are no new developments with the Electronic Fund Transfer donation plan to be run in conjunction with the Presbyterian Foundation.

Worship and Program: Elders will help serve communion during the Feb. 18 worship service. ... The Youth Group's annual pancake breakfast will begin after church that day. ... The annual meager meal will be served on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 14, and elders were asked to sign up and assist. ... Elder Jake Mangano will provide the sermon on March 4, when Rev. Shedwick is on vacation.

Communication and Outreach: Bids from four companies were shared with Session members for a two-sided sidewalk-type sign with changeable letters to promote church activities. Money for the sign will come from the Memorial Fund. ... The elders preferred a rectangular sign that is 60 inches wide, 48 inches tall and 30 inches deep that comes with letters that are 5 inches tall. It was suggested that we try to find a similar sign with some sort of covering to prevent vandalism and the theft of letters. ... Our payment for the church website comes due Jan. 19, and we will remain with the same provider for another year.

Membership and fellowship: A sign-up sheet will be posted for sandwich and dessert contributions for our annual congregational meeting and luncheon on Feb. 11 in Fellowship Hall.

New business: Annual reports from our 2017 committee chairmen are due Jan. 28. ... It was suggested that the church create formal job descriptions for all paid employees and that they all be evaluated annually. The Session is to discuss that at its February meeting.



SPRINGTIME TEA & TREASURES WISH LIST



Save the Date: Saturday, March 24, 2018

Two Seatings: Noon & 2:30 p.m. (Limited, No walk-ins)

Tickets: Adults \$10 and Children \$5 (Ages 6 & younger)

(Includes Springtime Tea & Admission to Treasure Shoppe)

***Tickets available in the Narthex each Sunday after church STARTING Sunday, January 7th. You may also call Anne Camilli @ (856) 366-4129 or acamilli@yahoo.com.**

Our Treasure Shoppe is looking for **NEW** or **LIKE NEW** items please. **REMEMBER...This is not a Yard Sale, it is a Treasure Shoppe!** (A large container will be available in the Narthex for collection in **JANUARY**)

- Unwanted treasures you received for Christmas
- Tea cups & saucers, tea spoons, tablecloths, napkins
- Candles, bath & body items, spa items, collectibles, trinkets
- Ladies' gift items, costume jewelry, scarves, purses, etc.
- Children's items
- Art work, home decorating items
- Gift cards

Committee: Heather Antosky, Anne Camilli, Nickie Kuehnappel, Nancy Zane

PrimeTimers begin 2018 with lunch at Milios' home

A dozen Presbyterians dined deliciously on Monday, Jan. 8, at the Rev. Paul and Judy Milios' home in Sewell. The temperature had climbed from the frigid single digits to a balmy 34 degrees, and the sun was shining as the Prime Timers met for their January meeting.

The menu included a specially spiced "Milio Chili-o," "Judy's Famous Chicken Salad Sandwiches," cheese and crackers, and assorted beverages. Many members contributed cookies to round out the dessert fare of cake, cupcakes, and ice cream.

You may well ask, "Why no pie?" The answer is because this group resolved to cut back on their consumption of sugar in 2018, and as we all know, there is no sugar in cookies, cake, cupcakes and ice cream!

Cards were signed for Esther Korn, Carolyn Ronketty and Esther Culbert.

The group will travel to Filomena's Lakeview Inn in Deptford for their next meeting, which is at noon Monday, Feb. 12. In March, all will enjoy a pizza party in the church lounge and plan future group events.

Talent show tops PrimeTimers' best Christmas luncheon ever

On Monday, Dec. 11, 14 PrimeTimers celebrated **Christ**-mas at Terra Nova Restaurant in Sewell. Our president, the Rev. Paul Milio, offered a prayer before the food-laden platters arrived. The private room allowed the group to quietly converse with each other as the luncheon continued through the dessert course -- Bananas Foster. Next came a marvelous display of senior-citizen talent.

Esther Culbert narrated the Pennsylvania Dutch version of "The Night Before Christmas" in the voice of Belsnickel, the crotchety Christmas gift-bringer who rides through the town on a plow.

"Climb up on that roof now, and you make it schnappy -- you don't want to make me no more unhappy. And then Belsnickel yelled, brushing snow off his head, "Merry Christmas zu all, now chust go back to bed!"

While her audience clapped, Cindy Lou, the Grinch and an announcer took the stage for The Great Church Robbery! Narrator Nancy Butler expressively recounted the details surrounding Grinch-y Dick Daugherty's theft of all in the church near his home.

Any retiree who wishes to join this talented group of fun-loving Christians is invited to join us. Tryouts for the next production will be announced at a later date.

Notes from the Organ Bench by Quint Lerch

Ash Wednesday and the mystical worship of Taize

For the last several years, we have begun our season of Lent on Ash Wednesday with a meager meal in Fellowship Hall. It is one of my favorite evenings of the church year. But once dinner is over, Fellowship Hall is transformed into a mystical place with the lights turned off and a single solitary candle lit in front of each participant.

We sit in silence. It is a safe and welcoming environment for everyone. We meditate and pray and listen to scripture. We sing short songs over and over so that the words and music wash over us like waves at the seashore. They cleanse us from the noise of the outside world. They bring us closer together and help us center our hearts and minds on God's presence among us.

Taize worship was begun more than 75 years ago by Brother Roger at a monastic community in Taize, France. His mission was to bring reconciliation to divided peoples and Christians -- particularly Catholics and Protestants. His goal was to emphasize service and ecumenicalism. Surprisingly, Taize also attracted young people in their 20s and 30s; those who often are turned off by anything that resembles organized religion. The key to this desire to be part of a worshipping community is thought to be in its simplicity -- so opposite society's desire to chase after things or excess. That nonstop chase does not allow us to just be together with other people in a setting that is open, welcoming and affirming.

A key component to this worship style is silence. We are bombarded by noise and the constant attention to personal devices. So, on a practical level, setting aside the noise and the demands on our attention allows the spiritual side of our personal lives to be awakened and transported to the mystical and spiritual side of our being that we so often ignore. Pope John II said, "One passes through Taize as one passes close to a spring of water." He went on to say that at Taize, "The traveler stops, quenches their thirst, and continues on their way." The monastic brothers who live at Taize want you to visit but not stay. What they want is "for you to, in prayer and silence, drink the living water promised by Christ, to know His joy, to discern His presence, to respond to His call, then to set out again to witness to His love and to serve your brothers and sisters in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Well said, and I hope that you can join us Feb. 14 and share in that amazing experience.

Spaghetti dinner thanks

For all those who attended our annual spaghetti dinner in November, please accept our sincere thanks for your support. We raised about \$1,000 to fund the Music Department for the coming season. Thanks, too, go to all the Sanctuary and Bell Choir members, and our youth for their organization, set-up, dessert-baking help and for being servers and helping in the kitchen. But our biggest thanks go to our chef, Brad Gilmore, and his wife, Kim. Without them, our dinner would not be possible. We owe them a huge debt of gratitude.

Esther Circle meets, sets date for annual chicken barbecue

Esther Circle held the first meeting of the New Year at the home of Ada White.

With freezing temperatures outside, we all felt warm and cozy in Ada's family room.

The group of 10 women enjoyed delicious homemade cookies and other treats as we got caught up on the latest news and events in our lives.

The moderator called the meeting to order and important business was settled.

The first order of business was setting the date for the annual church barbecue, which will be Saturday, April 21.

We also voted to donate four large laundry baskets to Family Promise.

The baskets will be filled with household items given by various churches and presented to the families graduating from the program and setting up new homes. Special thanks go to Connie Harley for buying the baskets.

Ada led us in our Bible Study on the "I Am" sayings of Jesus, highlighting "I am the Good Shepherd."

A thoughtful and insightful conversation ensued as we all shared what that means in our Christian faith.

Our next meeting will be on Feb. 6 at the home of Joyce Woodrow. All women of the church are invited to join us.

Cathedral Kitchen dates

We are scheduled to help serve at Cathedral Kitchen on Feb. 7. Call Mary Kay Reynolds at (856) 803-4068 if you can help that day.