



First Presbyterian Church of Mahopac

Monthly Newsletter – June 2017

www.mahopacchurch.org

Special Interest This Month:

- Interim Pastor Resigns (p. 1)
- Confirmations (p. 3)
- Children's Day (p. 7)
- Choir Appreciation Day (p.4)

Search for New Pastor Begins



For the second time in two years, our church is faced with a vacant pulpit. In an email to members of the Session on May 11, Rev. Cheryl Montgomery announced her decision to resign as Interim Pastor effective June 11. She had held the position since September 2016, having acceded to the pulpit after the retirement of Rev. Ken Mast at the end of 2015.

Rev. Montgomery also announced her intention to resign at worship services on May 14. "There hasn't been any single issue or event that has led me to this decision but a compilation of many," Rev. Montgomery said. "There is work to be done in the areas of community building and conflict resolution that I don't have the skills to lead."

A special meeting of the Session was held on May 16, with Rev. Montgomery, Interim General Presbyter Rev. Gavin Meek and Rev. Luanne Panarotti of the Hudson River Presbytery's Committee on Ministry (COM) attending. After discussing numerous options, the group outlined a plan to deal with the pending absence of pastoral leadership in the church.

The plan, which complies with the Presbyterian Church USA Book of Order and bylaws of the Presbytery, involves steps for our congregation to find and install a Designated Pastor. In the meantime, an effort will be made to obtain the services of a Temporary Pulpit Supply Preacher to conduct church services and provide limited pastoral care on a regular basis. The plan was presented to the COM for approval before being implemented.

Rev. Meek will conduct worship at our church at 9:30 a.m. on June 18 and conduct an informational meeting afterward to describe the pastor search process and the involvement of the Presbytery, Session, and all members of the congregation. Everyone is urged to attend.

Pastor's Letter

Dear Friends,

In his book *The Connecting Church*, Author Randy Frazee writes, "The experience of authentic community is one of the purposes God intends to be fulfilled by the church. The writings of Scripture lead one to conclude that God intends the church, not to be one more bolt on the wheel of activity in our lives, but the very hub at the center of one's life...."

In the book of Acts we find this description of the Church immediately after Peter's Pentecost sermon:

That day about three thousand took him at his word, were baptized and were signed up. They committed themselves to the teaching of the apostles, the life together, the common meal, and the prayers.

Everyone around was in awe—all those wonders and signs done through the apostles! And all the believers lived in a wonderful harmony, holding everything in common. They sold whatever they owned and pooled their resources so that each person's need was met.

They followed a daily discipline of worship in the Temple followed by meals at home, every meal a celebration, exuberant and joyful, as they praised God. People in general liked what they saw. Every day their number grew as God added those who were saved. (Acts 2:41-47, The Message)

What this passage shows is the potential for community that can exist through the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:42-47 describes a community of faith that operates in the power of God's Spirit.

It shows a community that is deeply committed to each other. At our baptism, we are claimed by God as a child of God; that makes us family. The difference between a club and a family is that in a family, you don't get to choose who you're related to; nevertheless, you stand with and for each other, you work for the good of each other, you sacrifice your comfort in order to comfort your brother or sister. In the church, that kind of commitment only comes through a common faith, a love and mission in Jesus Christ.

It shows a community rooted in compassion. Jesus' whole ministry was one of compassion. Everything Jesus did, he did it with compassion seeking to make people whole and empowering them to live their lives for God.

My prayer is that First Presbyterian will continue to grow as a community of faith and that it will be a church family that people are drawn to by your love and unity. Even though I am moving away, I will continue to hold you in my prayers.

Yours in Christ,
Rev. Cheryl

Confirmations



During worship on May 28, five young people confirmed the Baptismal vows made for them by their parents and by us, as their church family. They are:

- **Robert Simmonds**, son of Gail and Bob Simmonds
- **Kristen Cinquina**, daughter of Kathryn and Anthony Cinquina
- **Samantha Narcissi**, daughter of Liz and Dan Narcissi
- **Zoe Hanfmann**, daughter of Chris Hanfmann
- **Breanna Fais**, daughter of Judy and Tommy Fais

The most important decision a young person can make is to commit themselves to Christ and to take up membership in Christ's Church through the confirmation of their vows.



The Confirmation Class helps our young people explore their faith journey and how to express their faith in Christ Jesus. The Confirmands meet regularly for fellowship and study. The class is designed to give students an opportunity to deepen and confirm their faith in Jesus Christ, learn the basic theology of the Christian faith, and learn what it means to identify with the Presbyterian Church family.

The Pastor teaches the Confirmation Class for all youth, grades 8 and 9 who are interested. The class explores the Bible, Reformed Theology and Presbyterian tradition and polity.

All of the Confirmands are now the newest members of the First Presbyterian Church congregation. We welcome their presence and participation in the life of the church. They will be a blessing to us all.



2017 Confirmation Class. (L to R:) Zoe Hanfmann, Breanna Fais, Samantha Narcissi, Kristen Cinquina and Robert Simmonds. *(Photo by Chris Hanfmann)*

CHOIR APPRECIATION SUNDAY

June 18 is Choir Appreciation Sunday for our church.

What does that mean? When in doubt, look on the Internet. You'll find that a choir is a musical ensemble of singers. Choral music, in turn, is the music written specifically for such an ensemble to perform. Choirs may perform music from the classical music repertoire, which spans from the medieval era to the present, and/or popular music repertoire. Usually choirs sing songs with four-part musical harmonies.

Choirs are led by conductors or, in many cases, the person playing the piano or organ. Our church choir is conducted by Peter Frost who also selects the music, makes sure everyone has copies and has learned their part of the song before it is sung in church.

Church choirs range in size from a small handful of faithful musicians to several hundreds of faithful musicians. Because rehearsals often take up time during each week, and perhaps more during the Christmas and Easter holiday seasons, you have to *really* like to sing for the Lord to be in a church choir. Like the members of our choir.

The regular members of our choir include Kevin Muller, Maryann De-santis, Heather Strickland, Johanna O'Brien and Mary Cornell. They *really* like to sing for the Lord. And they do it well.

Heather also leads the Bell Choir in playing hand bells during holiday services and special occasions.

Our church musicians add a sweetness and peaceful feeling to our worship. The music they play and sing opens pathways into our hearts and souls and lets the glory of God flow in.

Choir Appreciation Sunday is the day when we should all come to church to listen, come to sing and come to thank our church musicians for enriching our lives.

P.S. During Christmas and Easter seasons, the choir has some "pick up" singers from the congregation to swell its number. It would be great if we could keep the numbers up all year. Keep it in mind and let us know.

"Where there is devotional music, God is always at hand with His gracious presence."

Johann Sebastian Bach



The Church in June:

June 3 – This year's MAHOPAC RELAY FOR LIFE will take place from 9:00 a.m. to Midnight at the Mahopac High School Sports Field. (*Please see Heather Strickland for details.*)

June 4 – PENTACOST SUNDAY

June 11 – CHILDREN'S SUNDAY (*See Page 7*)

June 17 – FATHER'S DAY COOKIE WALK from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Shop for a variety of home-baked cookies, just in time for Father's Day and graduation celebrations. Rain or shine. (*Bakers are still needed. Look for details in the church bulletin.*)

June 17 – RENT-A-SPACE COMMUNITY TAG SALE from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Rain or shine. Refreshments will be available. Vendors are needed. Double parking space - \$25.00 in advance (by check until June 10, cash until June 15), \$30.00 Day of Sale, Cash Only. Tables are available for rent at \$10.00 each. Set up starts at 8:00 a.m. For information call the church office at 845-628-2365 or email presby411@verizon.net.

June 17 – HABITAT FOR HUMANITY – The Keystone Dinner, the premier fund-raising event of the year, will be held at the Centennial Golf Course. Contact Johanna O'Brien for details.

June 18 – FATHER'S DAY

June 18 – CHOIR APPRECIATION SUNDAY *See Page 4*

June 18 – PASTOR SEARCH INFORMATIONAL MEETING following the 10:30 a.m. worship service with guest preacher, Rev. Gavin Meek.

June 18 – WORSHIP SCHEDULE CHANGE – One service, at 9:30 a.m., through Labor Day weekend.

June 21 – FIRST DAY OF SUMMER

Good News!

Elaine & Frank Colagiovanni: Our son, David was married to Kristina Boiano on May 12th. Grandson Michael celebrated his 2nd birthday on May 9th.

Johanna O'Brien: Kat O'Brien graduated cum laude from Northeastern University on May 5, 2017; with a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Science. Her family is proud of her accomplishments!!

Maria & Jose Rivera: Grandsons Troy Garcia and AJ Taylor are both graduating pre-school in June, and will both be attending Austin Road Elementary School in the fall!

Kathy Cinquina: Kristen Cinquina is graduating from Lakeland Copper Beech Middle School. She will also be inducted into the National Junior Honor Society in June and will be attending Walter Panas High School in the fall. We are very proud of all her hard work this year.

“Therefore encourage one another and build one another up ...”

1 Thessalonians 5:11

Helping with Worship in June

Lectors: 6/4 – Ken Lott, 8:30 & Paul Novotny, 10:30
 6/11 – Children's Service
 6/18 – Heather Strickland, 9:30
 6/25 – Johanna O'Brien, 9:30

Counters: 6/4 – Phil Desanctis & Kathy Cinquina
 6/11 – Heather Strickland & Karen Trovato
 6/18 – Paul Novotny & Maryann Desanctis
 6/25 – Caren Mack & *Volunteer Needed*

Deacon for June: Maryann Desanctis

Hospitality and Fellowship

Coffee Hour Hosts: (following church services)

6/4 – *Volunteer Needed*, 8:30;
 Mary & George Cornell 10:30
 6/11 – *Volunteer Needed*, 10:30
 6/18 – *Volunteer Needed*, 9:30
 6/25 – Marion & Ken Lott, 9:30

**If you are unable to be in church when you are scheduled to help, please arrange for someone to cover for you.*

Volunteers Needed – Cooking for Jan Peek

No one can do everything, but everyone can do something. Volunteer to help.

Members of First Presbyterian Church volunteer to cook a meal for Jan Peek House in Peekskill on the third Saturday of each month. This monthly activity gives everyone in our congregation an opportunity to directly impact and help others.

Volunteers may prepare the meal alone or sign up with a friend(s) and do it as a team. The cooking can be done at the church kitchen or in your own home. From there, you drop the food off at Jan Peek House and, if you wish, you can stay to serve the shelter residents - which is a very rewarding experience.

The meal can be as easy or as elaborate as you like. On May 20, Caren Mack and Kathy Cinquina, representing the Sunday School teachers, prepared baked ziti (meatless), salad, garlic bread and cookies (store bought) for dessert.

For June, Julia Gomes and her Mom, Sathi Biswas, are volunteering to prepare the meal. Lisa & Steven Pastorino are already signed up for August- many thanks for that!

Going forward, we have available slots for July 15, September 16, October 21, November 18 and December 16.

Please prayerfully consider volunteering! You can sign up on the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the Church Library- or you can let Kathy Cinquina know what date you are interested in. Thanks and God bless you!

Deacons Meeting Notes – May, 2017

By Leslie Hoellger

We continue to pray for members in need, reviewing requests for prayers, visits, meals, transportation, even a recording of the church service. We will write cards and make phone calls to invite members back who haven't been able to attend for a while.

We are especially keeping the DeSanctis family in our prayers for their daughter Jess.

Celebration of the Confirmation Class: Carolyn will order a ¼ sheet cake from Stop n Shop. We are asking Cheryl if she is getting anything for the Confirmation Class.

The Children's Day Picnic will be on June 11. The Deacons will provide hot dogs, hamburgers, beverages, and condiments. Susan will buy the hot dogs, hamburgers, rolls, and sauerkraut. Lori will buy the condiments and 2 bags of ice. She also generously offered to buy some helium balloons to decorate the picnic tables. Carolyn will buy the watermelon. Bob Simmonds will be asked if he will be the grill master! We will ask the congregation to bring side dishes, salads, and desserts. There will be no bouncy castle this year. Caren Mack will ask her friend who is a clown to see if she can come and entertain the kids.

The Deacons will give the Sunday School teachers potted plants to show everyone's appreciation of their dedication and service to the youth of our church. Carolyn generously offered to pick them up.

The Deacons decided to give Tom Robinson and Carol Ann Nesbitt something to show our gratitude for their weekly service. Lori will get a Dunkin Donut gift card for Tom, and a Café Picolo one for Carol Ann.

Choir appreciation will be on June 18, which is also Father's Day. Thank you Carolyn for offering to buy the cake, and thanks to Susan for buying the bouquets and wine.

We still need people to host coffee hour on June 4, June 18, and June 25. Deacons are needed to set up coffee hour for July 30, August 6, August 13, and August 27.

The next meeting of the Deacons was scheduled for June 1. Deacons will not meet in July and August.

***If you know someone in need of prayer or a visit,
please speak with one of our Deacons or Elders.***

Session Meeting Notes – May, 2017

The Session met twice last month: a special meeting on May 16 to plan the search for a Designated Pastor, following Rev. Montgomery's resignation (See Page 1) and the regular monthly meeting on May 23.

The first order of business on May 23 was to receive and accept the 2017 Confirmation Class. The five confirmands – Breanna Fais, Samantha Narcissi, Kristin Cinquina, Robert Simmonds and Zoe Hanfmann – each read their Statement of Faith and answered the official questions of membership:

- *Who is your Lord and Savior?*
- *Do you trust him?*
- *Do you intend to be his disciple, to obey his Word, and to show his love?*
- *Will you be a faithful member of this congregation, giving of yourself in every way, and will you seek the fellowship of the church wherever you may be?*

(See Page 3 for full story on Confirmation)

Regular Session business on May 23 included review of correspondence, reports from various committees and financial reports.

New business included a Relay for Life meeting in the library on June 6, approval of an additional AA-Plug in a Jug beginners' meeting on Thursdays and an inquiry to the Presbytery Committee on Ministry about a moderator of session to replace Rev. Cheryl.

2016-2017 Youth Group Report

by Kathy Cinquina

This year's Youth Group consisted of Robert Simmonds, Kristen Cinquina, Samantha Narcissi, Zoe Hanfmann, and Breanna Fais. All five of the Youth Group members were confirmed this year and are now members of our congregation.

Over the course of the year, our Youth Group participated in many events- both fun and focused on charity and "giving back":

Starting last September, there was a trip to Bounce Trampoline Sports, a fun event funded by the Deacons to thank the Youth Group for their participation during the 2015-2016 calendar year. Then members of the group and their friends spent a Saturday helping at one of the training classes with Lisa Edwards' 3 Dogs Training. This had been Karen Butterfield's suggestion for a good activity for the group.

In October, several Youth Group participated as a team in "CropWalk 2016" to raise money to help provide food and resources to people in need. They walked the full course round trip and enjoyed a beautiful day in the sunshine with fellow church members.

Youth Group members helped also set up the Halloween party for the children of the Mahopac Falls Nursery School. The Youth Group ran game tables and kept the kids entertained. This is the fourth year that this has been a Youth Group project and it always turns out well! We are especially grateful for the congregation's generosity with the candy donations- which are the main treats and prizes used at the party.

The "Christmas Shoebox Project" was a December highlight. The Youth Group wrapped shoeboxes in holiday giftwrap, and filled them with toiletries and small gift ideas were donated by the congregation. At the end, we had 29 decorated boxes, which were donated to Putnam Community in Action Program for distribution to needy families who might not normally be able to afford stocking stuffers and gifts at Christmastime.

Remember "Souper Bowl Sunday?" As 2017 began, The Youth Group asked the congregation for canned soup donations for Gilead Presbyterian Church's soup kitchen. In addition, each Youth Group member personally pledged to provide 20 cans each, either by donating themselves, or by asking their families and friends for donations. The Youth group effort brought the church's total donation to 156 cans, the highest it has been in three years.

For next year, we (Erica Paris, Kim Salomon, Liz Narcissi and myself) will be working on a Youth Group calendar to incorporate the younger group of children in our church (8-10 years old) into the Youth Group activities, with the older Youth Group members both participating and helping.

Youth Group activities are always open to friends/peers as well and if anyone has ideas about opportunities or projects and/or would like to actively participate in Youth Group this year, please let us know. It is our hope to instill sense of community, friendship and "giving back" as these kids continue to grow in this sometimes crazy world. I want to say a big "Thank You" to them for always being willing to help this year.

Mahopac Falls Nursery School

by Danielle Sblano and Elizabeth Narcissi



We cannot believe that the school year is almost over!!

Our Mother's Day Tea was a smashing success. The classrooms were very lively, and everyone seemed to enjoy socializing with each other. We would definitely recommend making this an annual event.

Mrs. Sblano's class has been practicing for Graduation Day, which will be held on Friday, June 9th. Mrs. Sblano has reworked the program for that day to change it up from the previous years. Coffee, cupcakes and treats will be served.

Monday, June 12th is the last day of school. We will celebrate Field Day that day. The TumbleBus will come. This is literally a school bus outfitted as a small gym on the inside. There are things to climb, slides to slide down and mats to tumble on. Last year, this was a very successful event. The kids loved it. We will also have other activities to do, and ice cream to eat.

Unfortunately, summer camp will not be held this summer, but we look forward to taking time to regroup and revamp to do our best to help the school grow this coming year.

Thank you to everyone who has helped us. It is appreciated more than you know.

Stewardship, Finance and Fundraising

Mother's Day Plant Sale

When one thinks of Spring and planting flowers, one thinks of bright sunshine and pleasant gardens. So, of course, when our Mother's Day Plant Sale was held on May 13, it rained cats and dogs. However, many folks came to the sale and bought over \$2,000 worth of plants to put in their homes and gardens.

The plant sale is historically one of the most popular fund-raising events of the year and this year's sale was a success, despite the weather. Thanks to all who helped with the sale and to all those who bought plants. Good luck with your gardens, and better luck on the weather next year.



Quent Gardineer and others prepare for the Mother's Day Plant Sale on May 13.

Stewardship Campaign

The Finance & Stewardship Committee has begun the church's belated 2017 pledge campaign. Until now, returns have been slow in coming. All members and nonmembers are urged to complete and return an estimate of giving for the coming year.

Your pledges – estimates – are vital for developing short- and long-term plans on how the congregation can accomplish its goals as a church.

Anyone with ideas around how we can effectively and creatively gather and use our resources is encouraged to speak with any member of the Committee: Johanna O'Brien, Karen Trovato, Mary Kay Wells, Kevin Muller, and Liz Narcissi.

Rent-A-Space Community Tag Sale

June 17 – from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Rain or shine. Refreshments will be available. Vendors are needed. Double parking space - \$25.00 in advance (by check until June 10, cash until June 15), \$30.00 Day of Sale, Cash Only. Tables are available for rent at \$10.00 each. Set up starts at 8:00 a.m. For information call the church office at 845-628-2365 or email presby411@verizon.net.

Mission and Community Outreach



First Presbyterian Church of Mahopac

411 Route 6N
Mahopac, NY 10541

PHONE:
(845) 628-2365

E-MAIL:
Presby411@verizon.net

We're on the Web!
See us at:

www.mahopacchurch.com



Food Pantries –

We have an ongoing collection of groceries for local food pantries. Food can be left in the Deacons Corner of the Church Library. Thanks to all who donate!

Jan Peek Homeless Shelter –

Our church prepares and serves a meal for the Jan Peek Homeless Shelter each third Saturday from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Anyone from the congregation is welcome to come and help cook and serve.

Thanks to the Sunday School teachers who prepared the meal.

Please check the sign-up list.
Thank you all!



We are a Habitat for Humanity community. See Johanna O'Brien or Kevin Muller for more information.

The Habitat for Humanity Keystone Dinner (the premier fund-raising event of the year) will be held on Saturday evening, June 17, at Centennial Golf Course. Stay tuned for more details.



This year's Relay will be on Saturday, June 3 from 9 AM to Midnight at the Mahopac High School sports fields.

Contact Heather Strickland for more information. Please watch for future Relay events.



We donate groceries to the Gilead Church food pantry. Through our partnership with CAP, during the year we also donate: school supplies, Thanksgiving food baskets and Wish-Upon-A-Star Christmas gifts.



Samantha Narcissi Says:

"I just want to say thank you to everyone who bought Girl Scout cookies from me this year, and every year in the past!! It really helps my troop out, and I appreciate it very much!!"