



LIGHT FROM THE TOWER

April 2012

*The mission of historic First Church is to bring diverse people of metropolitan Buffalo together to follow Jesus Christ through worshiping God, fostering spiritual growth and serving the community.*

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**AN EPISTLE FROM PHIL  
TO ALL THE SAINTS AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

The Easter Season is almost upon us and we enjoy the outburst of spring as we get ready for the observances and celebrations to come. As I write this our congregation has enjoyed some wonderful Bicentennial Celebrations and there are still more coming our way in April and May. Additionally, we are working hard on seeking God's will for our future and many people are showing renewed interest in doing the work that lies before us.

As I ponder the meaning of Christ's resurrection in my personal life and in the lives of many people and congregations I have known I want to share with you just a few things that the resurrection has meant to me.

First, as Paul writes in a letter to Corinth, "every day the inner person receives fresh strength." As Paul was writing those words he was dealing with many troubles in his life and ministry. And yet he was never discouraged. He found God's will constantly at work in his life and always sought to help his congregations as they worked through the trials of their life together.

Second, the Resurrection brings a continuing growth of new life to those who seek the risen Christ. The early church was surrounded by enemies. The Jewish leaders expelled them from the temple and synagogues. The Romans were constantly after them since the Christians wouldn't confess that the emperor was a god. Yet through all that the new faith community retained a remarkable impudence, even as some of their number died. They just couldn't be dragged down by misfortune, by the loss of people who left their number, or by anything else they faced. The Resurrection gave them a consistent sense that God's new life was operating in their midst. They felt renewed, resurrected into a whole new life.

Finally, Christ's Resurrection gave them a new way of thinking about everything in their lives. They didn't see the world around them through the same eyes as those around them. They were literally made into a new creation. As we catch the mystery and miracle of Easter, we do too.

May this Easter season bring renewal to us all,

Phil



## 2012 HOLY WEEK OBSERVANCES AND EASTER CELEBRATIONS

Our congregation will have many opportunities to share the grace of God and seek new meaning in our spiritual relationship with God during Holy Week and Easter in 2012. We had some wonderful experiences last year and this year we will once again prepare for the joy and glory of Easter with special services each day from Palm Sunday through Good Friday. Here is the schedule for this special week of witnessing to Christ's death and resurrection:

### Sunday, April 1: Palm Sunday at 11:00 AM

We shout our "Hosannas and welcome the Messiah into Jerusalem with our traditional Palm Sunday Parade and singing the songs of Christ's Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem. We'll hear the familiar story in Mark 11:1-11 and lift our prayers to God for a special experience of the Lord's presence during this Holy Week.

### Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of Holy Week 5:30-6:00 PM Prayer Services

We'll gather early in the evening before dinner for quiet services of prayer, meditation, and sharing our spiritual journey together as we prepare to witness the Passion of Christ together. Each evening we'll hear the words of comfort and strength from the Suffering Servant of the Lord songs in the book of the prophet Isaiah as we listen for what God is saying to us in this Holy Week.

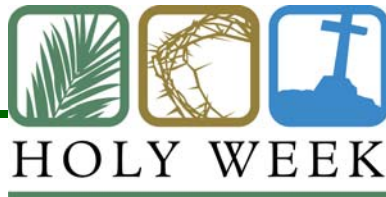
Monday:	Isaiah 42:1-9
Tuesday	Isaiah 49:1-7
Wednesday	Isaiah 50:4-9

### Maundy Thursday Communion Service at 7:00 PM

Maundy Thursday has always been special for everyone who makes the effort to take the spiritual journey to the Upper Room and experience the Last Supper with our Lord. This year we'll listen once again to the story of Christ's last evening as written in the gospel of John, remember the episode in the Garden of Gethsemane, and ponder the meaning of Christ's words at this spiritual supper.

### Good Friday Service-7:00 PM "The Cross In Our Time"

What does the Cross really mean for today's Christian? On Good Friday we'll experience ways that the cross is still evident in our own place and time, and the way it affects us all even centuries after Christ's death. Reading from the fourth Servant Song in Isaiah 52:13-53:12 we'll focus we'll ponder all that our savior has done for us. We'll have a special liturgy for the evening, some special effects to ponder and meditate upon, and lots of prayers as we answer the question, "Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?"



## THE JOYOUS FESTIVAL OF EASTER!

Mark 16:1-8 tells the early morning story of the first Easter. I Corinthians 15:1-11 gives us Paul's words on the miracle of resurrection. This year we will celebrate the wondrous glory of Easter Morning and the new life that comes with the Resurrection of the Lord. Once again we'll celebrate with two services.

### 6:30 AM — Sunrise Service

Last year we were very pleasantly surprised by the number of people who got up early and came to witness the resurrection at sunrise during our outdoor Easter Sunrise service. This year we will once again gather outside in the courtyard in front of the church. Our own Phil Sims and Theresa Quinn, the Music Director from the Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church will provide the music. We'll sing our favorite hymns, and one new one. After the service we'll have a wonderful Continental Breakfast in the Narthex. (Note: in case of inclement weather we'll gather in the chapel)

THEN...

### 9:30 AM — A VERY SPECIAL EASTER BICENTENNIAL PRESENTATION

As part of our Bicentennial Celebration we have asked our own Roger Woodard, a professor in the Classics Department at the University of Buffalo to share something with us. As many of you know Roger has been in Rome studying and researching this semester. We always miss Roger and Katherine when they are away but this year they are coming back for just a few days and we will get the benefit of Roger's well known ability as a fine teacher. Roger occupies a special chair at the University of Buffalo. The chair was endowed in the name of Rev. Dr. Andrew Raymond, a pastor at First Presbyterian Church in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Dr. Raymond was our pastor during the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our congregation and led our congregation through many changes including doing mission work in China.

Roger has agreed to tell us about Dr. Raymond and has done his usual thorough research. He will share his knowledge of Dr. Raymond and his work during the Adult Sunday School hour at 9:30 a.m. on Easter Sunday. Since Roger and his wife Katherine are only back for a few days before returning to Rome for the rest of the semester it is a double treat for us to have him share with us on Easter morning. We hope everyone will come to enjoy Rogers's unique teaching style and abundant knowledge with us.

**PLEASE MAKE TIME TO JOIN DR. ROGER WOODARD  
FOR THIS SPECIAL HOUR!**

### 11:00 AM Easter Celebration

Our Easter services here at First Presbyterian Church have always been wonderful experiences of celebration and new life. Once again we'll be joined by some wonderful musicians as we experience the glorious resurrection of the Lord together. In our prayers and our songs we'll give special thanks to God. And we'll hear again the wonderful story of that blazing glory which is Christ's resurrection; and which brings new life to us all.



# Bookkeeper's Corner

<b>FEBRUARY 2012 FINANCIAL ITEMS</b>	<b>Actual YTD Feb. 29, 2012</b>	<b>Actual YTD Feb. 28, 2011</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	\$98,765	\$140,937
<b>Total Expenses</b>	\$88,192	\$95,588
<b>Deficit support from the Endowment</b>	\$0	\$13,145

<b>HIGHLIGHTS</b>	<b>Actual YTD Feb. 29, 2012</b>	<b>Actual YTD Feb. 28, 2011</b>
<b>Pledge Income</b>	\$54,303	\$105,181
<b>Plate Income</b>	\$4,581	\$1,088
<b>Building Use Income</b>	<b>\$6,044</b>	<b>\$3,409</b>

Can you help stock our shelves for the Lyon Food Pantry with the following items?

- Cereal
- Pasta
- Pasta sauce
- Canned veggies
- Canned soup
- Canned pork and beans
- Ramen noodles
- Individually wrapped toilet paper



## PENNIES FOR HEAVEN

Don't forget about our ongoing Stewardship program, "Pennies for Heaven." First Church coin boxes are available in the Narthex.

Pennies for Heaven allows you to save your loose change and return your coin box to church anytime. This is an ongoing program, and every penny will be counted and reflected in plate income in the operating budget.

Thank you in advance for contributing!



## ***Save the Dates!*** ***Bicentennial Celebrations in May!***



**Friday, May 4:** You are invited to join our 200th anniversary Gala between 6:00 and 9:00 PM! This grand event, held at church, will feature elegant appetizers, carving and dessert stations, cash bar, live music and fellowship! Tickets will be on sale starting Sunday, April 1st, after church, at \$35.00 per ticket.

**Sunday, May 20:** All are invited to attend the Jubilee Worship and catered reception in honor of our 200th birthday! The Celebratory Service will begin at 11:00 AM and will be followed by good food and fellowship!

### **Clerk's Corner**

**The following actions were taken by Session at its meeting on March 21, 2012:**

- Received the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Congregation and the Annual Meeting of the Corporation on February 12, 2012.
- Approved with regret the request for a letter of transfer for Bill and Janet Schulz to North Presbyterian Church.
- Granted permission to Quinton Meyer to use the church parking lot and/or building for his CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) pickups on Thursdays April 21 – October 4, 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.
- Accepted the resignation of Cindy Hardin, Associate for Christian Education, effective April 15, 2012.
- Approved the request for three consecutive offerings in April, the proceeds of which will go towards the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner in May
- Approved the formation of an ad hoc committee whose purpose is to come up with a plan for staying within the building, and to bring the plan back to Session as soon as possible.
- Appointed Lauren Hill and Erica Wichtowski Session members to the Nominating Committee. Mark Armesto was chosen Trustee representative and Susan Koeppel Deacon representative.

## ASSOCIATE OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

"What would it be like if the church of Jesus Christ actually influenced the culture in a biblical way?" You will find this question in the book *Shift* written by Brian Haynes. For me it is a good question to ponder as I believe knowing the word of God draws you to the love of Jesus and in faith, Jesus is accepted as Lord and Savior of our lives. It is also a good question because we live in a world that has gone mad and the church is charged to be light and salt to the world.

In my brief time as Associate of Christian Education, I have stressed the importance of faith formation within the family structure. The vision of parents and loved ones reading, praying, and worshiping God each day in their ordinary lives leads to knowing the biblical way to influence our community, our world.

I stress the importance of faith formation in the family because my service to God with you will end on April 15th. I am engaged and will marry on May 5th. My fiancé, Ron Morse, lives in Webster, NY and I will be moving. I have known you a short time and your acceptance and love for me will always have a tender spot in my heart.

I leave you with a charge from Psalm 78: 5-7:

*He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which he commanded our forefathers to teach their children, so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children. Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands."*

Stand firm in the Lord,  
Cindy Hardin  
Associate of Christian Education

# Neighborhood Cleanup

During our March neighborhood cleanup, eight volunteers cleaned up 8 bags of litter in just 30 minutes, and canvassed houses with door flyers advertising our Holy Week services. It was a great start to our new, ongoing program to be held the fourth Sunday of each month.

Help out on April 22 at the next Neighborhood Cleanup Day. Our neighbors the Allentown Association and Kleinhans Community Association are invited to gather at church at 12:15 PM. Church will provide garbage bags and gloves, and we will walk around our Symphony Circle neighborhood and pick up litter until around 1:00 PM. All are welcome, no reservations required!

*There will be a prize for the most interesting piece of litter collected!*



# First Presbyterian Church Daily Devotions

By the Shepherding Committee

*Prayer is an exercise of faith and hope. The new Shepherding Committee at First Church has created a list of daily prayers for our church family. Please join us in incorporating these prayers into your daily routine.*

## **Sunday**

Time: Bedtime

Prayer: Give thanks for the people of First Church, past and present.  
If you attended worship, try to remember each person you saw. Ask God to bless them tonight.  
If you were not able to attend worship, think of one person at First Church who gives you joy. Thank God for that person.

## **Monday**

Time: Lunchtime

Prayer: Think of those people at First Church who are not able to come to church because they are too elderly, ill, or disabled. Ask God to make today a little easier for them. Think about what First Church might mean to them.

## **Tuesday**

Time: Breakfast

Prayer: Ask for blessings upon the children of First Church.  
If you have children, pray for First Church with them before they go to school.

## **Wednesday**

Time: Dinner time

Prayer: Pray for our Presbyterian denomination. What does being Presbyterian mean to you?

## **Thursday**

Time: Morning

Prayer: Pray for our church leadership: our Pastor, Elders, and Deacons. May they always seek God's will in this time and place. Understand that church leadership can be difficult. Pray for patience and wisdom for our leaders and for our members.

## **Friday**

Time: Lunchtime

Prayer: Think of the people who utilize our mission programs. People who stand in line for a food bags, refugees who come to church to learn to read and write English. Pray for them.

## **Saturday**

Time: Morning

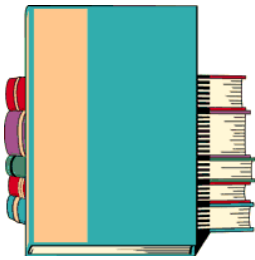
Prayer: Pray for our surrounding community, the west-side of Buffalo. Think of the impact of First Church on the neighborhood.

## Women's Book Club

The Women's Book Club will meet on  
**Thursday, Apr. 26 at 6:00 PM**  
at the home of Betty Kinnen.

Join us for an evening of good eats and  
friendship. We will discuss the book  
The Warmth of Other Suns by Isabel Wilkerson.

Potluck supper —  
please bring a dish to share.



## FIND A NEED AND FILL IT

The CMO Committee wishes to extended a special thank you and special birthday wish to Lovelace Quarshie! In March when it was her birthday, Lovelace asked all her friends and family to donate to the Geri Lyon Food Panty instead of buying her gifts! This was a wonderful selfless act!

If anyone wants to help us feed the hungry and donate to the pantry we need canned goods including tomato sauce, vegetables, soup, tuna, and pork & beans. Donations can be left in the office. Please watch those expiration dates.



## Women's Association Event

**Wednesday, April 18th**

12:00 PM in the Chapel

*Bring your own sandwich;  
salad & dessert provided.*

Virginia McIntyre, a career counselor at Everywoman Opportunity Center will be speaking on the different programs available now at the Center, such as the Displaced Homemaker Program, The Wheels to Work Program, and the Women Veterans Initiative. Specifically, Virginia will be highlighting Project Fresh Start, a new program developed by Myrna Young, Executive Director of Everywoman Opportunity Center and funded by the Verizon Foundation. This new program is designed to assure that survivors of domestic violence are provided with the tools needed to obtain economic and personal self-sufficiency. See you there!

Please make a reservation by calling the Church Office at 884-7250, ext. 10 by Friday, April 13th.



**For pastoral care concerns,  
call Quinton Meyer,  
Associate for Pastoral Visitation  
909-2259 (Cell)**

**To reach Rev. Dr. Philip S. Gittings, Interim  
Pastor,  
call 884-7250, ext. 13 (Office)  
548-0466 (Cell)**





## Remember the 4 R's: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Repair

The "green" wedding is gaining momentum across the nation. It seems obvious that weddings have both ecological and economical impact, but going green doesn't mean you have to compromise on your big day. The happy couple will be

able to create a truly personal, moving, and sustainable celebration that people will remember for years. They may even enlighten their guests in the process.

I recently read an article stating that today's average wedding costs well over \$15,000. I hope that some of the following suggestions will cut down on your costs a little.

A simpler wedding does not have to be lacking in class or style. Last summer I attended an enchanting wedding that took place in a local park. The green wedding can bring romantic memories with its beautiful outdoor setting.

There are three main goals to an ecologically friendly wedding.

1. Do no harm 2. Patronize local earth-friendly vendors, and 3. Reuse/recycle.

**Location:** Have a daytime wedding, outdoors when possible. Choosing a location that is as close to as many of your guests will reduce your wedding's impact in a big way. If you are not tied to getting married in a place of worship why not consider supporting your local community garden. Many weddings in Buffalo take place in the Delaware Park Rose Garden or the Botanical Gardens. You could also choose a local museum, art gallery, or even your own backyard.

**Guest List:** No matter what other choices you make, the biggest factor in the ecological and financial impact of your wedding will be its size.

Try to cut down on your guest list by limiting attendees to your close family and friends. Trimming your list means you're trimming everything else, from the centerpieces and appetizers you need to the programs and postage. Of course, if you've always had your heart set on a big wedding, at least choose eco-friendly vendors.

**Invitations:** The green bride and groom might choose invitations printed on beautiful recycled paper, or you can also make your invitations out of cards from institutions such as UNICEF. In most cases, you will need additional information on your invitations, such as maps or local data. One great option is having your own wedding site on the Internet where you can post all the information your guests need without wasting paper. Print your wedding site on the invitations with a message like: "Don't forget to visit our corner."

**Catering:** Choose small local businesses as your vendors. Besides saving on transportation and polluting less, you'll be contributing to the growth of local entrepreneurs. Buy from local farmers who market organic foods, breads and cheeses. Buying local can save you up to 40%.

Use recyclable plates, cups, napkins or re-useable glass and porcelain. Avoid plastic or Styrofoam products that are not biodegradable.

Wedding cake - Choose a cake designer that can make you a fabulous organic and natural wedding cake, made exclusively with Fair Trade ingredients.

Almost anything can be found locally, support your local breweries and vineyards. Why use up the earth's precious resources by trucking in a keg of your favorite organic ale from as far away as Europe or wine from California?

There is so much to mention about weddings – next month I will write 'part two' of this topic. What to wear? - Flowers - Wedding Favors - Photography - Transportation - Jewelry - Music.

Your family and friends will see that a 'green' wedding is less about buying organic and more about cutting down on the massive waste factor, thus being kinder to the planet.

Don't forget, "together we can make a difference!"

Lesley Haynes [peacesojourner@yahoo.com](mailto:peacesojourner@yahoo.com)

# News in the Family

*Dear Compassionate People,*

*This is my first time [at your food pantry]. I'm very touched by your kindness and generosity.*

*No one wants to have to come here and accept help, but you all make it nice with your warmth and kindness. You are truly angels doing wonderful things.*

*Thank you and God bless.*

*Signed,  
L. C.  
(a patron of the food pantry)*

Special thanks to Phil Sims, Theresa Quinn. & band for performing a trombone recital in March to benefit the Lyon Food Pantry Fund. \$250 was received and is helping feed people right in our neighborhood.



Save the Date! Christina Trachtenberg and Chuck Banas will be married at First Church on Saturday, September 15th at 1:00 PM, and everyone is invited! After the ceremony, there will be a two hour reception in the chapel. Your presence is requested.

*To First Presbyterian Church,*

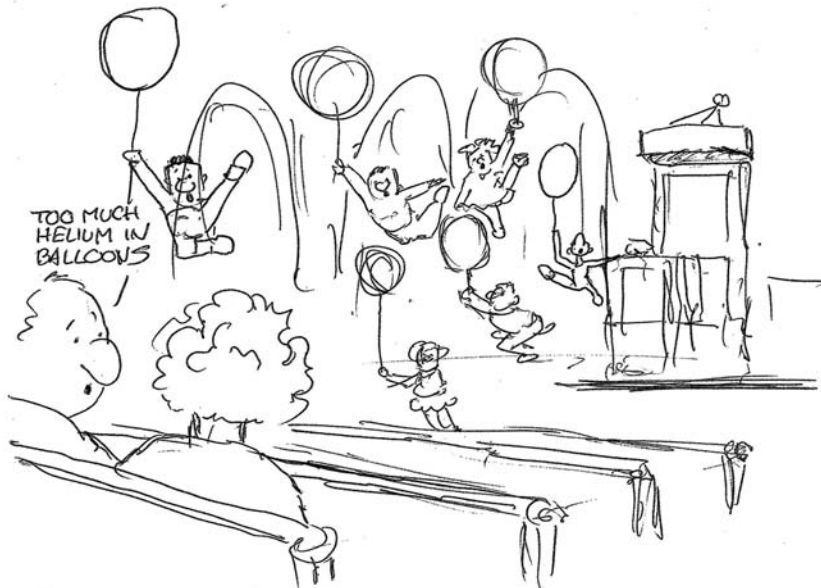
*How nice to be remembered in such a caring and meaningful way. The lovely prayer shawl and anniversary mug are very much appreciated. Thank you so much.*

*My thoughts and prayers are always with you.*

*~ Ruth Hunter*

## Sig Art

Illustrated by Sig Potembski



Paul Reger welcomes cards of prayer and positive thoughts to his home address:

3401 Stony Point Road  
Grand Island, NY 14072

# First Church Calendar

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
April 1 PALM SUNDAY 9:30 AM — Adult Christian Education 11:00 AM — Worship & Communion, Rev. Dr. Gittings 12:00 PM — Let Your Light Shine Talent Exhibit & Special Coffee Hour 6:30 PM — Kerygma Class	2 5:30 PM — Prayer Service	3 10:30 AM-12:00 PM — Staff Mtg. 4:00 PM — 501c3 Mtg 5:30 PM — Prayer Service 7:00 PM — Lands & Bldgs. Mtg.
8 EASTER 6:30 AM — Sunrise Service 9:30 AM — Special Adult Christian Education Class 11:00 AM — Worship with joyous brass music, Rev. Dr. Gittings 12:00 PM — Fellowship Time	9 BUILDING CLOSED	10 10:30 AM-12:00 PM — Staff Mtg. 5:15 PM — Membership Mtg. 6:30 PM — CE Mtg.
15 9:30 AM — Adult Christian Education 11:00 AM — Worship, Rev. Dr. Gittings 11:15 AM — Sunday School 12:00 PM — Fellowship Time 6:30 PM — Kerygma Class	16 BUILDING CLOSED	17 10:30 AM-12:00 PM — Staff Mtg.
22 9:30 AM — Adult Christian Education 11:00 AM — Worship, Rev. Dr. Gittings 11:15 AM — Sunday School 12:00 PM — Fellowship Time 12:15 PM — Neighborhood Cleanup 6:30 PM — Kerygma Class	23 BUILDING CLOSED	24 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 10:30 AM-12:00 PM — Staff Mtg. 4:30 PM — Literacy tutoring
29 9:30 AM — Adult Christian Education 11:00 AM — Worship, Rev. Dr. Gittings 11:15 AM — Sunday School 12:00 PM — Fellowship Time 6:30 PM — Kerygma Class	30 BUILDING CLOSED	May 1 10:30 AM-12:00 PM — Staff Mtg. 4:30 PM — Literacy tutoring 5:30 PM — Worship & Music Mtg. 7:00 PM — Lands & Bldgs. Mtg.

# April 2012

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
4 1:00-3:00 PM — Bible Study 3:30 PM — Church Life Mtg. 5:30 PM — Prayer Service 6:00 PM — Deacons Mtg.	5	6	7 BUILDING CLOSED
11 1:00-3:00 PM — Bible Study 5:45 PM — Trustees Mtg.	12 6:00 PM— CMO Mtg.	13 7:00 PM — Buffalo Opera Unlimited auditions	14 BUILDING CLOSED
18 12:00 PM — Women's Association Luncheon & Program 1:00-3:00 PM — Bible Study 7:00 PM — Session Mtg.	19	20	21 BUILDING CLOSED
25 1:00-3:00 PM — Bible Study 4:30 PM — Literacy tutoring 6:00 PM — P&A Mtg.	26 6:00 PM — Women's Book Club Gathering (off site)	27 12:00 PM — Elmwood Village Charter School art class in Sanctuary	28 BUILDING CLOSED
May 2 1:00-3:00 PM — Bible Study 3:30 PM — Church Life Mtg. 4:30 PM — Literacy tutoring 6:00 PM — Deacons Mtg.	May 3	May 4 6:00 PM — Bicentennial Dinner	May 5 BUILDING CLOSED

## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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(Across from Kleinhans)

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www.firstchurchbuffalo.org  
email@firstchurchbuffalo.org

Twitter: @1stChurchBflo  
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## FIRST CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Dr. Philip S. Gittings, *Interim Pastor*  
RevPhil@firstchurchbuffalo.org  
Voicemail extension: 13

The Reverend John Long, D.D.  
*Parish Associate for Community Outreach*  
JohnRLong17@verizon.net

The Reverend Jack Smiley, *Pastor Emeritus*

Dr. David Bond, *Organist/Choirmaster, Bookkeeper*  
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EKSK476@gmail.com

Tom Hollfelder, *Custodian/Security Guard*

Church Office, extension 10

## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OFFICERS

### SESSION AND TRUSTEES BY CLASS AND TERM

#### *Clerk of Session*

Janet Hill

#### *Associate Clerk of Session*

Joan Close

#### *Class of 2012*

JoAnn Doerr (2)

Jean Hess (1)

Janet Hill (1)

Don Houck (T) (1)

Quinton Meyer (1)

Roger Woodard (2)

#### *Class of 2013*

Ian Bradford (T) (1)

Norm Gibbon (T) (2)

Mike Henry (1)

Henry Porter (T) (2)

Summer Przybylak (T) (2)

#### *Class of 2014*

Mark Armesto (T) (1)

Carlton Brownell (T) (2)

John Darby (T) (2)

Lauren Hill (2)

Marv Riegle (2)

Erica Wichtowski (1)

### BOARD OF DEACONS BY CLASS AND TERM

#### *Class of 2012*

Gregg Borland (2)

Jessica Laudisio (1)

Madeline Mason (2)

Judith Paradzai (1)

Lovelace Quarshie (2)

Phil Sims (1)

Denis Wettlaufer (1)

#### *Class of 2013*

Mark Juan Armesto (1)

José Gomez (1)

Susan Koeppel (1)

Alexander Lipnicki (1)

Stephanie Lipnicki (1)

Suzanne Snyder (2)

#### *Class of 2014*

Pat Brown (1)

Russell Carlson (2)

Mary Field (2)

Karen Frieder (2)

Maria Murphy (2)

Olga Rico-Armesto (1)

Lou Ann Luther Riegle (1)

(T) indicates that the Elder has also  
been elected to serve as a Trustee.



**Queen City** Quality  
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