

St. Peter's Press

March 2023

St. Peter's Presbyterian Church - Spencertown, NY

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St. Peter's Values as Described on the Church Website

In his message delivered at our February 19 service, Jeff Kiplinger asked if anyone had looked at the St. Peter's website lately. A couple of people said yes. Then Jeff said the site describes us as a "progressive" church. Below are some excerpts from the section of the website called *Values*. To read all of it, go to <https://saintpeterspc.org/our-values/>.

A Spiritual Home in the World: We are not a church with its head in the clouds. We take seriously the demands, joys, struggles, and hopes of human life. We feel called by God to participate in Christ's ministry of repairing a world that is broken and building up the kingdom of heaven here on earth.

A Progressive Voice: We are committed to interfaith collaboration, economic and racial justice, LGBTQ rights, and peace at home and abroad.

A Thinking Church: We embrace science and acknowledge the validity of conflicting perspectives. We believe that wrestling with questions and facing doubt are integral parts of faith.

An Outstretched Hand: Church just isn't church unless we "practice what we preach." We enact, as best we can, the love of Jesus for the poor, the hungry, the sick, the lost, the friendless, etc. We gather here, not to retreat from the world, but to live more fully in it.

A Place of Refuge: St. Peter's Church is open 24/7. You are always welcome here. Our serene worship space provides a wonderful place to sit and think (or pray or cry or yell or rest) at any time of day or night. Whatever your needs, this space is open to you.

A Heritage of Inclusivity: St. Peter's has a long-held tradition of inclusivity. We welcomed our first African American member, Lilla Van Buren, in 1826. That tradition is still being lived out. We consider our diversity one of our greatest gifts.

A Gathering Place: St. Peter's has long been a place for people to gather and connect with others — in times of joy and in times of sorrow, for spiritual sustenance and communal fun.

A Community Laboratory: This is a safe place to experiment and try out new ideas. The big experiment that occupies most room in our hearts is the one that Jesus himself began, building on the foundation of his Jewish faith. How do we thrive together? How do we stay connected and real? How do we trust and forgive, confront and comfort, nurture and empower? It is here, in this diverse and sometimes conflicted community, more than anywhere else, that we experience the presence and providence of God.

A Still-Striving People: We are proud of our church community, but we know that there is always room for improvement, more to learn, and more work to be done. We have worked hard and found great joy in following God this far, but our journey continues.

Rev. Donna Elia will be at St. Peter's in March on the 15th and the 29th from 3 to 5 PM. Feel free to come chat with her in person while she is here. You can also call her on her cell phone (518-495-6795) or on the church phone (518-392-3386).

Visiting with Marian Kern

By Sharon Wing

What a delight it is to visit Marian Kern. We sit out on her front porch, even in winter, as it is shielded with plastic through which the sun warms us. We watch all of the birds that come to her feeders. The neighbor's dog, a beautiful



golden retriever, visits daily. Her name is Friday, and she always greets me at my car door when I arrive. Keely, Marian's friend and helper, brings out Marian's speaker and playlist and Marian's knees start bouncing the rhythm. We are dancing in our seats as Marian sings along to *Hey Good Lookin'*. Next comes, *Papa Loves Mambo* — Marian loves Perry Como (so do I). Several times during my visit, Marian whispered, "Papa loves Mambo."

Marian has been a part of St. Peter's for a very long time. When Ian and I first came to St. Peter's, Woody would drop his mother off at the front steps, and Marian would come in and sit in the pew opposite us on "our side" of the church. Marian would be towards the back with Betty Dallas and Marion Goodrich.

During our visits, Marian has asked me if the church had any sewing for her to do. She would say, "Give me a job. I could dust Bibles." When Sandy Fischer wrote a feature in the newsletter about the Banners at St. Peter's, Marian said, "I helped with those. I was a member of the Women's Guild." Marian loves the church newsletter and looks forward to receiving it each month.

I learned Marian was born on April 14, 1929, in Breakabeen, NY (Schoharie County). Marian said she misses her hometown and would like to visit it again. From there she moved first to Schenectady (because of gas rationing) and then to this area. She loved to Polka and Square Dance and said there used to be Barn Dances at the Tassinaris' barn. Marian and her husband Willard would attend square dances at the Grange in Spencertown, where their children would sit on benches and watch.

The Kerns' place had apple trees, and their big vegetable garden is still there. Helping with "Summertime in Spencertown" one year — when Frances Culley drew rhubarb for our flyer — I was asked to go to Marian's and ask if we might have some rhubarb again. When I went to her door, she came out and pointed to where the rhubarb was. "Take a lot," she shouted from the door.

Marian is no longer able to come to church, but she cares so much about us. I wanted you all to come along with me in this article to also visit Marian.

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Food Donations for Kids

For the month of March, the Deacons are asking for food donations for Sandy's Food Pantry (that is our Sandy Fischer who keeps snacks on hand, which she purchases, for her students) and the *free* Morris Memorial Afterschool Program snack supply. This would involve healthy snacks for kids, e.g., granola bars, fruit cups, juice drinks, fruit leather, protein bars, trail mix, applesauce cups, and the like. Many children in our community need a little help getting the food they need to thrive. We can be part of that help!



food4kids

OUR NEW COMMUNION DISHES!



*Thank You, Mary Anne Davis, for making this exquisite Communion Set for St. Peter's!
We Are Truly Blessed!*

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***Clara Gott Fund***

The Clara Gott Fund is a grant-giving agency of St. Peter's Church, established in 1976 from a gift left to the church by Clara Gott. Grants are awarded to:

- Individuals in need of help, and
- Organizations and projects intending to help others.

The members of the Clara Gott Committee for 2023 are Kurt Barenfeld, Sandy Fischer, Kathy Geddie, Shirley Newsome, Ellen Schoonover, Jennifer Thompson, Marion Ulmer, and Jere Wrightsman.

The next **deadline for submitting applications** to the Clara Gott Fund is **March 15**. You may obtain applications both on the St. Peter's website at <https://saintpeterspc.org/?s=Clara+Gott+Fund&x=0&y=0> (near the bottom of the page) and in an envelope on the bulletin board above the mail slots in the narthex.

***Update on New Well at the Manse***

*By Wendy Diskin, Co-Treasurer*

***Good news!***

As you may know, Council voted to have a new well drilled for the manse after learning that there was not enough water pressure to allow it to be used for any income purpose. We got an estimate of \$21,000 which was not included in our 2023 budget. We felt confident, however, that we could find a way to pay for it.

*Fast forward ...* The well was drilled; water was found and connected to the manse thanks to Goold Wells and Pumps. A well fund drive was set up and congregants raised \$4300, which helped pay for the down payment. In addition, Donna Elia, with Council input, submitted a grant request to the Trustees of Albany Presbytery. We're grateful to learn we were granted \$12,500 toward the project, which does not have to be repaid. Also, Goold Wells gave us a 10% discount as a donation to St. Peter's for a final cost of \$19,736.97. We are still short close to \$3,000 dollars for the cost but have used general budget funds to pay the bill in a timely manner. We will continue to accept donations for the well.

**Special thanks** to Barbara Conkling, who facilitated the project; Donna Elia, who wrote the grant; Council for their thoughtful discussions; and congregants who donated money and items for a thank-you bucket for the workers who drilled the well in January. We are truly blessed.

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Coming Soon: The St. Peter's Soul Café

Thanks to a grant from the Clara Gott fund, the deacons are planning the Soul Café, a pay-as-you-can or pay-nothing dinner for the whole community.

It is scheduled to occur Tuesday, April 18; *mark your calendars!* On the menu are lasagna (meat and vegetarian), salad, garlic bread, and dessert. Patrons can eat in or take out. More information to come.



**JOIN US AT
Wednesday Lenten
Dinner and Worship Services from
March 1 through March 29!**

At each service, A supper of soup and sandwiches will be served at 6 PM, followed by the 7 PM worship service.

When and Where:

Wednesday, March 1
at St. James Catholic Church
Rt. 203 & Rt. 66, Chatham
with Rev. Gloria Jimpson

Wednesday, March 8
at Chatham United Methodist Church
3 Kinderhook St, Chatham
with Fr. Steve Matthews

Wednesday, March 15
at St. James Catholic Church
(Payne AME, Host)
Rt. 203 & Rt. 66, Chatham
with Rev. Donna Elia

Wednesday, March 22
Ghent Reformed Church
1039 County Rt. 22, Ghent
with Rev. Karin Squires

Wednesday, March 29
at St. Peter's Presbyterian Church
5219 County Route 7, Spencertown
with Elder Bonnie Pflgel

Revs. Donna Elia and Bill Levering will share in leading Lenten Bible Study sessions for the St. Peter's, Valatie, and Hudson Presbyterian Churches each Monday beginning February 20 and concluding on April 3. Each session is from 7 to 8 PM. The Zoom link is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81615859760?pwd=SHAzL1kwTmcyYm1PdkdzNVNlNUZ6dz09>.



St. Peter's men enjoyed fellowship and camaraderie at their February 26 meeting. Randy Ezinga noted that the group's purpose goes beyond the social aspects. "The Men's Group gathers with the intention of coming up with projects and causes that benefit St. Peter's as a whole, or members who can use their help," Randy said.

True to this stated mission, at their February meeting, the group started planning an Easter morning breakfast, to be held from 8:30 to 9:45 on April 9. It will be a Pay-What-You-Will event.

Look in the Church Bulletin for meeting announcements. The next meeting will be Sunday, March 26, at noon at the Chatham Grill. Contact Randy Ezinga (518-755-1510) or Paul Greene (518-758-2048) with questions or input. All St. Peter's Men are welcome. Hope to see you there!

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Women Unabridged Book Club



For March, WU is reading the classic work *Mythology: Timeless Tales of Gods and Heroes* by Edith Hamilton, which was first published in 1942.

This, "like no other book, brings to life the ... Greek, Roman and Norse myths that are the keystone of Western culture — the stories of gods and heroes that have inspired human creativity from antiquity to the present" (description from Amazon.com). While touring the Clark Museum in January, members of WU realized that they had forgotten the mythology learned so long ago. Many works of art viewed had mythological roots, which piqued their curiosity on the subject. The next meeting is Thursday, March 23.

The book club always welcomes new participants. For questions, contact Denise Davis, 518-392-9690, or Teresa Barenfeld, 518-755-3273.



From Friday, April 28, through noonish on Sunday, April 30, Rev. Donna Elia will lead a retreat for members and friends of the St. Peter's, Valatie, and Hudson Presbyterian Churches. Kirkridge Retreat Center (Kirkridge.org) is in the Kittatinny Mountain Range, overlapping with the Appalachian Trail. The property is stunning, has many places to take in nature and quiet reflection, and also has an outdoor labyrinth.

It is next to Columcille, a property with megalith stones placed in a way reminiscent of Stonehenge.

Rev. Donna Elia served on the Kirkridge Board for 6 years and has a 30-year history of going on retreats there.

Although there will be some programming, there will also be free time for walking, reading, and writing. The cost includes meals and lodging and will be about \$350 per person, with limited scholarship assistance available. Please talk with Donna if you are interested.



The memorial service for Rev. Bob Kaiser is Saturday, March 11 at 2 PM at Batavia First Presbyterian Church, 300 East Main Street, Batavia NY. It will be live streamed at

<https://www.facebook.com/fpcbatavia/videos/>. If you would like to share a memory, story, or photo that might be displayed at the memorial please send it to lkaiser106@gmail.com or Loreen Kaiser, 157 Maple Ave, Troy, NY 12180.

March Worship Sundays at 10 AM

(In-person and via Zoom)



5th: Nina Nichols, MDiv
Communion

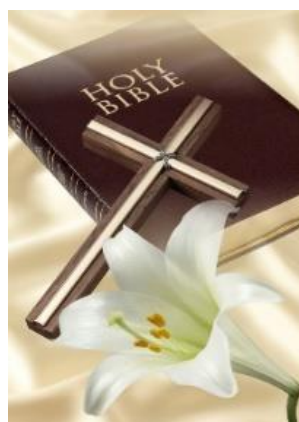
12th: Rev. Donna Elia

19th: TBD

26th: Rev. Donna Elia

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## March Lectionary Readings



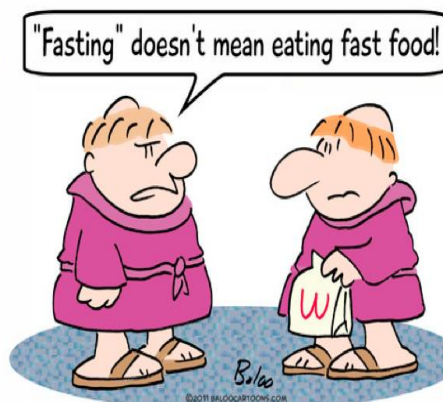
**5th:** Genesis 2:5-17 and 3:1-7, Psalm 32, John 3, 1-17, Matthew 4:1-11

**12th:** Exodus 17:1-7, Psalm 95, John 4:5-42

**19th:** 1 Samuel 16:10-14, Psalm 45, Luke 1:26-38

**26th:** Ezekiel 37:1-14, Psalm 130, John 11:1-45

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Time

Author Unknown

Note: This is another of Mary Wambach’s contributions for the newsletter. Thank you, Mary; you are with us.

Take time for worship.
It is the highway of reverence.

Take time to work.
It is the price of success.

Take time to think.
It is the source of power.

Take time to read.
It is the fountain of knowledge.

Take time to dream.
It is hitching your soul to the stars.

Take time to play.
It is the secret of perpetual youth.

Take time to be friendly.
It is the road to happiness.

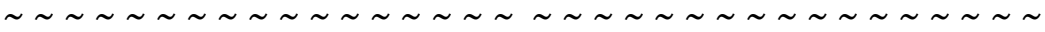
Take time to help and enjoy friends.
It is the source of happiness.

Take time to love and be loved.
It is the sacrament of life.

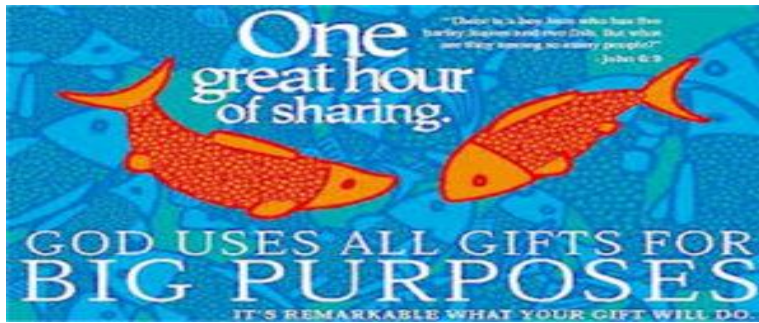
Take time to laugh.
It is the music of the soul.

Take time for beauty.
It is everywhere in nature.

Take time for health.
It is the true treasure of life.



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING
Campaign: February 22 - April 9



Offering for:

- **Hunger Relief**
- **Disaster Assistance**
- **Self-Development of People**

Every year during Lent, St. Peter’s collects donations for the Presbyterian Church USA’s One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) campaign. Each gift to OGHS helps to improve the lives of people in challenging situations. The offering provides us a way to share God’s love with our global and local neighbors in need. In fact, OGHS is the single, largest way that Presbyterians come together every year to work for a better world. You are invited to participate in this special offering throughout the Lenten season. Special offering envelopes are available in the pews; you can also send a donation to St. Peter’s Presbyterian Church, PO Box 14, Spencertown, NY 12165. If writing a check, enter “One Great Hour of Sharing” on the check.

***You shall be called repairers
of the breach.***
~ Part of Isaiah 58:12 ~



♪ Happy Birthday to: ♪



Paul Greene	3/2	Dylan Davey	3/16
Meredith Hansen	3/2	Jennifer Thompson	3/16
Ermengarde Culley	3/3	Paul Pitman	3/17
Grace Ann Silvernale	3/3	Connelly Cashen	3/20
Stephen Brown	3/7	George Wenk	3/26
Joel Dyslin	3/9	Carol Taylor	3/27
Wendy Diskin	3/11	David Bolluyt	3/29
Luke Olivieri	3/12	Jean Brower	3/29
Jere Wrightsman	3/16		

*Did we forget your birthday?
If you would like to be added to our birthday list, please contact one of our Deacons.*



Happy Birthday to Neal Warshaw who turned 70 on February 26! Neal and his wife, Patricia McKeon, celebrated with a wonderful dinner at Feast and Florets in Hudson. Neal is very busy playing his flute with fellow Irish music musicians and creating fine art photographs, which have been displayed in various galleries in the area. He loves spending time with his four ganddaughters in New Jersey.

If you have milestones in your family (births, weddings, milestone birthdays and anniversaries, etc.) please send an email to saintpeters.spencertown@gmail.com so we can share the good news with others in our community.

Photo Album



On February 5, new officers were installed for 2023; we thank them so much for their service to the St. Peter's community! Pictured from left are Rev. Donna Elia, Jere Wrightsman (representative from Council), Wendy Diskin (installed as elder), David Pearce (installed as elder), Marion Ulmer (installed as elder), Randy Ezinga (installed as deacon), Marcy Coalter (installed and ordained as deacon), and Sandy Fischer (current elder standing with her sister, Marcy).



*These are photos taken at the Goid Well and Pump Company office when Barbara Conkling delivered the gift "bucket" containing donations from St. Peter's congregants to show appreciation for their quick and successful digging of the new well at the manse, as well as their 10% discount. Thank you Barbara for the difficult work of making the well project happen and for collecting and so beautifully arranging the gifts. **Left photo:** Walter Goid, Tom Shaw, and our own Barbara Conkling. **Right photo:** Ricky Goid and Walter Goid.*

MARCH

Sunday (Service at 10 AM)	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>March is Women's History Month; the theme this year is "Celebrating Women Who Tell Our Stories."</p>			<p>1 Ecumenical Lenten Service at St. James in Chatham, supper at 6; service at 7</p>	<p>2 Council Meeting 7 PM via Zoom</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>5 Elder Nina Nichols Communion</p>	<p>6 Lenten Bible Study 7 PM via Zoom</p>	<p>7 Choir Practice 7 PM</p> 	<p>8 Ecumenical Lenten Service at Chatham UMC, supper at 6; service at 7 International Women's Day</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11 Rev. Bob Kaiser's memorial service, 2 PM at Batavia First Presbyterian Church, Batavia, NY</p>
<p>12 Rev. Donna Elia <i>Welcome to New Members Scott and Vicky Jensen!</i></p> 	<p>13 Lenten Bible Study 7 PM via Zoom</p>	<p>14 Choir Practice 7 PM</p>	<p>15 Ecumenical Lenten Service at St. James, sermon by Rev. Elia, supper at 6; service at 7 Clara Gott applications due</p>	<p>16 Deacon's Meeting 7 PM via Zoom</p>	<p>17</p> 	<p>18</p>
<p>19 TBD</p>	<p>20 Lenten Bible Study 7 PM via Zoom First day of Spring</p> 	<p>21 Choir Practice 7 PM</p>	<p>22 Ecumenical Lenten Service at Ghent Reformed, supper at 6; service at 7</p>	<p>23 Women Unabridged Meeting 7 PM via Zoom</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>
<p>26 Rev. Donna Elia Men's Group lunch at Chatham Grill, 12 noon</p>	<p>27 Lenten Bible Study 7 PM via Zoom</p>	<p>28 Choir Practice 7 PM</p>	<p>29 Ecumenical Lenten Service at St. Peter's, supper at 6; service at 7</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p>	