

THE TIDINGS

March 2026



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From Winter to Spring: Signs of New Life

As the days slowly grow longer and the air softens, we begin to notice the quiet but unmistakable signs of spring. Snow melts, buds begin to form on branches that looked lifeless only weeks before, and the Earth seems to wake from its long winter rest. What once appeared dormant begins to stir with new life. Nature offers us this reminder every year: seasons change, and life has a remarkable way of returning.

For followers of Christ, the transition from winter to spring carries deep spiritual meaning. Throughout Scripture, renewal and new life are powerful images of God's work in the world and in our lives. What appears barren can become fruitful again. What seems dormant can awaken. What feels weighed down can be renewed. Spring reminds us that God is always at work, often in ways we cannot immediately see.

There are seasons in life that feel like winter—times of waiting, uncertainty, grief, or struggle. During those moments it can be difficult to imagine that new life will ever emerge again. Yet the rhythm of creation quietly testifies that change is always possible. Beneath the frozen ground, seeds are already preparing to grow.

The Christian story itself is a story of renewal. The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus reveal that even in the darkest moments, God is bringing forth something new. Just as spring follows winter, hope follows despair and life follows death.

As we move into this new season, perhaps we can take a moment to notice the small signs of renewal around us: the first green shoots pushing through the soil, the return of birdsong in the morning, and the warmth of sunlight after cold days. These ordinary moments can become gentle invitations to gratitude and reflection.

Spring encourages us to ask a spiritual question: Where might new life be emerging in our own hearts? Perhaps it is a renewed sense of hope, a fresh commitment to compassion, or a deeper awareness of God's presence in everyday life. Just as the earth awakens in spring, our faith can also be renewed.

May this season remind us that God is always bringing life out of what once seemed still and hope out of what once seemed quiet. And may we welcome this new season with open hearts, ready to grow in faith, love, and joy.

Faithfully,
Pastor Steve

Snow Days at the Manse



Clerk's Report by Ellen Gove

It has seemed that all the significant snow storms have occurred on Sundays this winter, and we had to cancel two of our worship services...one being on the date of our Annual Meeting! These decisions are always tough to make; however, we made the right decision both times!

At our Session Meeting in December, we held our annual Deacon/Elder Meeting and enjoyed a Potluck Dinner following the meeting. We are grateful for all that the Deacons do at S.I.P. Church. At our meeting, we discussed the Per Capita apportionment we are assigned each year. For 2026, based on our membership on our rolls of 78 members from the previous year, our portion is \$3,273.27 due to the Presbytery of Long Island. Session felt it was important to put an insert in the weekly bulletin for January explaining Per Capita and why it is necessary.

At our January Session Meeting, the Session approved the 2026 Budget that was presented at our Annual Meeting. Session also elected Ellen Gove as Clerk of Session and Peter Vielbig as Treasurer for one year. Peter shared that he is giving more and more responsibility to Eda Kaasik, our bookkeeper, and he will retire as Treasurer at the end of the year. Session welcomed Bill Clark, III into membership by Reaffirmation of Faith. Billy will be received to membership, as well as Elder on Sunday, March 12th during worship service. Bill Clark, III and Debra Speeches were approved to serve as Elders, and Marianne Baird and Lynn Thomson were approved to serve a 2nd term as Deacons. The Commission on Ministry liaison to S.I.P. Church for 2026 is Rev. James Cubie.

Since the S.I. Public Library's renovation is ongoing, we receive ongoing requests for the use of the Fellowship Hall. The *Shelter Island Reporter* has used the Fellowship Hall for their community forums, which have been well attended. The S.I. Friends of Music will be holding nine concerts this season. I highly recommend them.

We are well into the Lenten Season. Don't forget to order your flowers and attend our Maundy Service. Since Easter will be on the first Sunday of April, Holy Communion will be served.



Thank you, Billy Clark, for shoveling!

Deacons' Report by Brenda Bergman

The Deacons are preparing their Easter baskets and flowers to be delivered to the home-bound of the Island. We are sharing coffee hour responsibilities with the choir, the Session, and the congregation at large. Each group is responsible for three months, spread throughout the year. Coffee hours are an important sociability hour for church members.

Renovation Updates by Ellen Gove

The Kitchen Renovation:

The kitchen renovation is moving along—as reported at the Annual Meeting, all new electrical and plumbing installation is complete, and finished walls are up and the ceiling is set to be painted. New AVC has been installed. In a recent communication with Dan Binder, he relayed all appliances and shelving units are set to be delivered the last week of March. The Suffolk County Health Department and the Town of S.I. Building Department need to inspect and sign off on the certificate of Occupancy. We are pretty much on schedule... now it is down to the home stretch!

On March 12th, I was invited to go before the S.I. Lions Club Board to request \$20,000 to cover the unexpected extra costs of the renovation stemming from higher costs of labor and equipment, and unanticipated upgrades required by Town Code. Thankfully, the Lions Club approved donating \$20,000 for these costs.

The Fellowship Hall Closet Renovation:

Thank you to Patrick Rutledge of Rutledge Floors for installing new vinyl panel flooring. John Kerr, Billy Clark, Ken Pysher, and Oliver Shearer painted the walls and ceiling. We now have a beautiful storage closet. Thank you to all that helped empty the space and put everything back.



S.I. P.C. 2026 Budget

	A	B	C	D
1				
2	Income	2026 Budget	2025 Actual	Date Changed
3	Group Donations	\$64,000	\$64,047	
4	2026 Pledges	\$55,000	\$56,020	
5	Contributions Town/Lions etc New Kitchen	\$49,300		1/21/2026
6	Non-Pledged Revenue	\$35,000	\$30,627	
7	Endowment Interest	\$29,000	\$28,529	
8	Memorial Fund	\$3,000	\$28,410	
9	Fundraising Efforts	\$14,300	\$21,693	
10	Conlin Estate Donation	\$18,240	\$18,240	
11	Enduring Witness Grant from Presbytery	\$15,000	\$17,268	1/22/2026
12	Special Donations	\$3,000	\$7,899	
13	Services (2026 split btw/non pledge & funerals)	\$0	\$7,293	
14	Worship Life Income	\$5,500	\$5,456	
15	Holiday Offering	\$3,000	\$2,926	
16	2025 Pledges Received	\$2,500	\$2,360	
17	Baptism, Weddings, Funeral	\$3,500	\$1,800	
18	Per Member Assessment	\$1,000	\$1,162	
19	Unapplied Cash Payment Income	\$400	\$662	
20	Cooking Club	\$0	\$375	
21	Deacons	\$200	\$200	
22	Initial Envelope	\$200	\$200	
23	Uncategorized Income	\$0	\$150	
24	Miscellaneous Income	\$100	\$46	
25	Total Income	\$302,240	\$295,361	
26				
27	Expenses	2026 Budget	2025 Actual	
28	Personnel	\$190,000	\$179,266	
29	Congregational Expenses	\$50,000	\$52,646	
30	Building & Grounds	\$49,000	\$51,465	
31	Capital Improvement Expense (New Kitchen)	\$70,000	\$27,950	
32	Manse Expenses	\$12,000	\$19,068	
33	Office Expense	\$6,000	\$6,572	
34	Worship & Music	\$5,500	\$5,455	
35	Stewardship Expense	\$600	\$655	
36	Fundraising Efforts Expense	\$600	\$600	
37	Memorial Garden	\$700	\$450	
38	Uncategorized expense	\$100	\$170	
39	Other Miscellaneous Service Cost	\$0	\$25	
40	Total Expenses	\$384,500	\$344,323	
41	Net Operating Income	-\$82,260	-\$48,961	
42		2026 Budget	2025 Actual	
43	Other Income			
44	Paul Mobius Gift - Mark Mobius		\$100,000	
45	Investment Earnings Wells Fargo	\$40,000	\$70,647	
46	Investment Account Draw Down	\$51,560	\$32,000	
47	Total Other Income	\$91,560	\$202,647	
48	Net Other Income	\$91,560	\$153,686	
49	Net Income	\$9,300	\$104,725	

KIVA Team Impact Report by John Kerr

Our twenty-two member Kiva team has made fifteen loans since January. Here are four of the recent loans:



Naga, widow in Vietnam was able to purchase two cows for milking and fattening for eventual resale. Two of our members helped fund Naga.

Thoi in Vietnam received funds from one of our members to purchase new and used clothing to repair and re-sell.



Alseba in Kenya received funds that helped to buy high-quality seed, fertilizer, and farm chemicals to boost her yield and crop quality from one of our members.

The **Amatista Group** in Mexico, who sell home products such as linens and appliances received a loan from a member.



In 2024 we loaned a total of \$7,445 and in 2025 we loaned \$6,615.

So far this year we have loaned **\$1,470**. Ninety-six percent of the money we have loaned is paid back and re-loaned. **Way to go team!**

Youth Group Report by Bryan Knipfing

The Shelter Island Youth Group has been meeting monthly this winter, spending time together playing games, sharing meals, and discussing important and relevant topics to young people. In April, the group plans to visit Camp Quinipet and receive a cooking lesson from chef, Reggie Johnson. In May, the group will host an Island-wide community service event in which they will volunteer with the three churches on the Island and Camp Quinipet.

Photo Update from Imagination Island



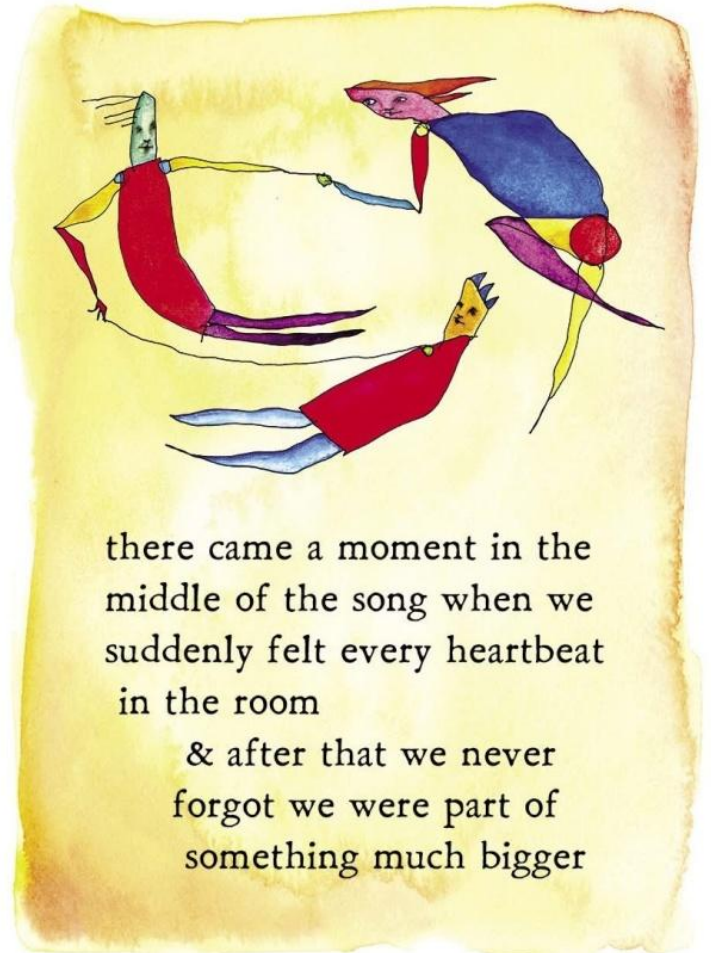
News from the Presbytery by Ellen Gove

The February 3rd meeting of the Presbytery of L.I. was through Zoom. It was a well-attended meeting. As past Moderator, my responsibility was to give a report from the Shepherding Council as I chair that committee. The Rev. Rachel Vione, Pastor of the Northport Presbyterian Church, will be serving as Moderator for 2026. Worship was led by Dr. Jerry Cannon of PC/USA. Pat Rossiter, Executive Director of Holmes Camp & Conference Center, gave an update on the camp.

Other major items:

- A report was given by the Enduring Witness Team. This is a newly established committee that invites congregations to apply for grants when there is a need. S.I.P. Church applied for a grant in October 2025 to replace an A/C unit at the Manse, and for the painting and repair of the Fellowship Hall ceiling. We received approximately \$17,500.
- The Presbytery confirmed the election of corporate officers for 2026. Pastor Steve was included as one of the corporate members as he is the Chairman of the Board of Trustees.
- The Shepherding Council asked for approval of the Revised Standing rules for the Presbytery.

At our Shepherding Council Meeting on March 9th, Rev. Kate Jones-Calone, General Presbyter & Stated Clerk, shared that the Shelter Island Presbyterian Church has four members serving at the Presbytery. In addition to Pastor Steve and myself, Heather Rylek serves on the Nominating Committee, and John Kerr serves on the Social Justice Team. Our church family continues to serve in our congregation as well as the Presbytery! **Thank you, all!**



Mission Team Report by Marilyn Pysher

The Better World Book Club is meeting Monday, March 9 at 3p.m. in Fellowship Hall to discuss our latest book: *The Coming Wave, AI, Power and our Future* by Mustafa Suleyman. The book was selected by the group from a list of highly rated non-fiction books and should result in our usual lively discussion. Our next book will be *When Breath Becomes Air* by Paul Kalanithi and will be discussed at our meeting on Monday, May 11th at 3:00p.m. We take several months between meetings as our selections are intense and require a considerable time to read and digest. Please come join us—it's really interesting—not your usual book club.

The Earth Care Team is planning an Earth Day celebration for Sunday, April 19th, the closest day to Earth Day 2026 on the 22nd. Rev. Steve will give an earth care themed sermon, the Earth Care team will do coffee hour, and Linda Bonaccorso will sing an inspiring song. There may be other activities as well, so stay tuned!

Maureen's Haven Report by Marianne Baird

Thank you all who cleaned out spaces and provided warm coats to our friends in need through Maureen's Haven, the East End homeless outreach organization. They were much appreciated along with all the warm socks and toiletries. You should see the very happy faces that greet us each time we drop off your generous donations to the Maureen's Haven house in Riverhead.

Although the spring-like weather is upon us, we will leave the big gray bin in the hallway year round. The items most needed are socks and travel-size toiletries for women and men - soap, shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrushes, first aid supplies, razors, shave cream, feminine pads and tampons, tissues & deodorant.

The lunch making season has ended so another heartfelt thank you to our committee and all those who joined us in making hearty bag lunches each month from November through March and transporting them to St. Peter's church in Greenport. It is there that the clients get to take showers, eat a hot dinner, play games together and spend the night before boarding a bus back to Riverhead with lunches in tow.

Monetary donations may be made at the Maureen's Haven website: maureenshaven.org

Worship Team Report by Rose Wissemann

It is hard to believe Lent is almost here. Our Church will be bare for this solemn time. But it is also time to think about our Easter garden for our joyous time. We will remind you for your flower donation.

Thank you in advance,
Roswitha Wissemann

A Warm Welcome



**The Ordination of
Bill Clark, III and
Debra Speeches
on March 12, 2026**

Soup-er Grateful

We are so grateful to our soup makers—Rosie Wissemann, Marianne Baird, and Sharon Morgan, and all who support this ministry every time soup is available. In case you are wondering where the “Soup money” is used—it supports our high monthly oil bills. We are all feeling the cost of increased prices of heating.

From September 2025 through March 2026, the Soup Fundraising has brought in: \$2,227.75

Thank you for the continued support!



Shelter Island Presbyterian Church

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MISSION STATEMENT

We envision the Shelter Island Presbyterian Church as a spiritual heart of our small island community—a congregation that keeps its doors open to all and offers service and support to friends, neighbors, and visitors from beyond our shores.

We will encourage the spiritual growth of our Church's people in Jesus Christ through worship, service to others, stewardship, study, and fellowship with one another. We will work to increase our spiritual engagement with youth, young families, and our growing senior population.

Inspired by God's Word, we look forward to our future with faith and confidence in God's purpose for us.

AS WE BELIEVE, SO WE DO.

Links to Sunday Services:

Please note our Sunday Services are all livestreamed and can be viewed on YouTube. The links are available on our website, or directly on our YouTube channel. Search Shelter Island Presbyterian Church on YouTube for previous services. Find upcoming services, including our weekly Sunday Services, on our channel under the "Live" heading.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

March 21st – Friends of Music Concert @ 3pm

March 29th – Palm Sunday Service @ 10am

April 2nd – Maundy Thursday Service @ 7pm

April 5th – Easter Sunday Service @ 10am

April 18th – Friends of Music Concert @ 6pm

April 20th – Session Meeting @ 5pm

May 11th – Better World Book Club discussion @ 3pm

May 18th – Session Meeting @ 5pm

May 24th – Friends of Music Concert @ 6pm