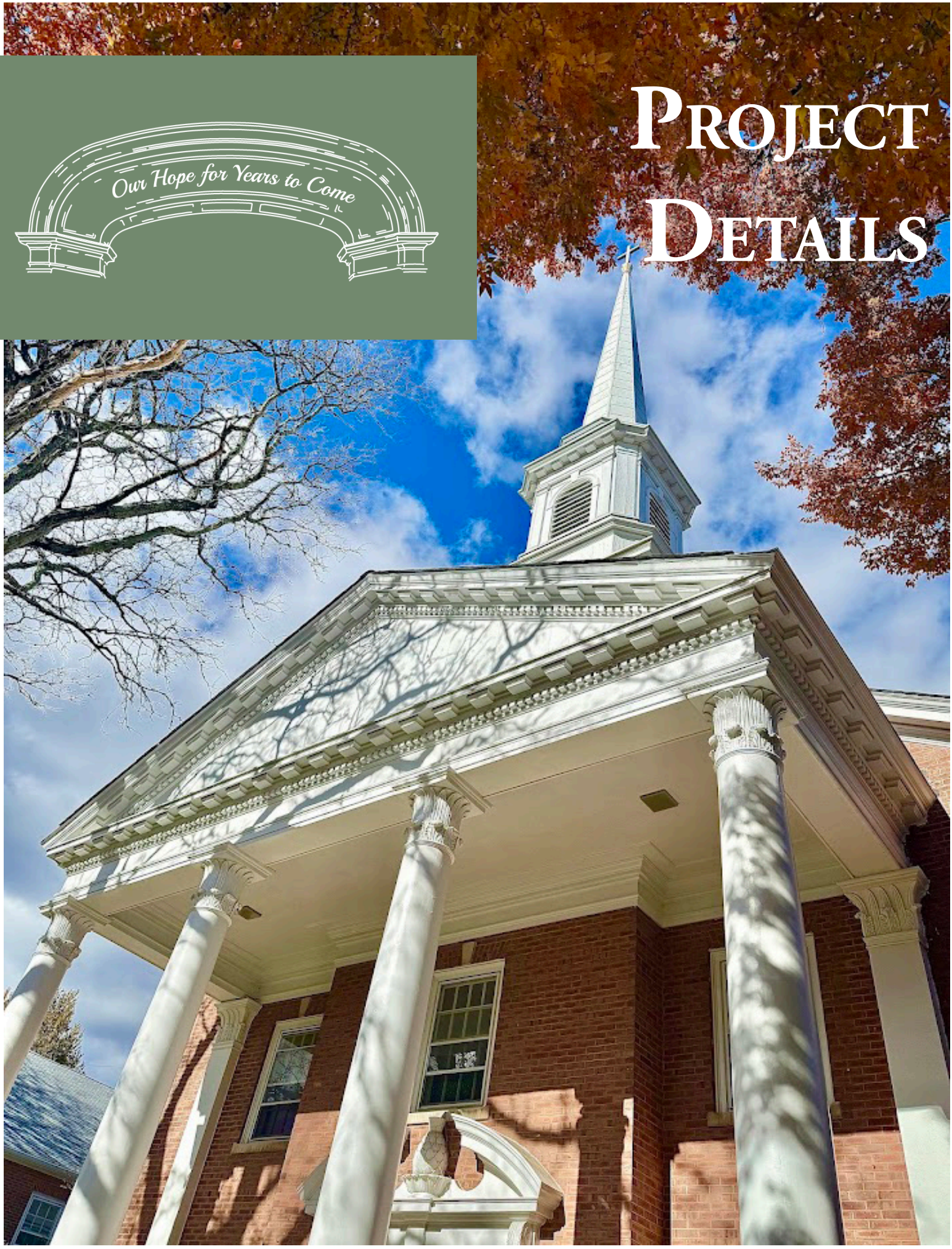


Project Details





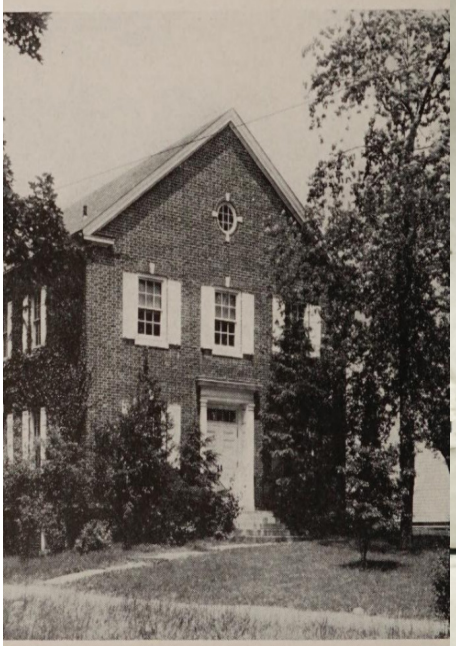
AFTER ERECTION OF THE SPIRE IN 1863





First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen





THE EDUCATIONAL BUILDING, ERECTED IN 1931





Dear Members and Friends,

As Chairs of the "Our Hope for Years to Come" capital campaign, we are excited to embark with you, our church family, on this journey of faith for First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen. For over 300 years, FPC has been a place where people have gathered, celebrated, worshipped, learned, and grown together. And for over 300 years, this has been a place where members of our congregation have had special moments—both large and small.

We now have an opportunity to create the next chapter in the life of FPC: a sanctuary that is accessible, liturgically flexible, and beautiful—with room for all!

- **Accessible**—Our sanctuary will reflect our core value of inclusiveness. The revised chancel design will allow safe access by everyone. The updated bathrooms will conform to the ADA as will the LULA (Limited Use, Limited Access elevator). We are making room for all!
- **Liturgically Flexible**—Our reconfigured worship space will allow the pulpit and organ console to be moved when needed, further opening up the chancel for our choirs as they sing during worship, for children's pageants, special presentations, and concerts. Most importantly, it will eliminate the steep steps leading from the pulpit to the choir loft and from the loft to the floor, replacing them with just a few stairs in front and a ramp at the rear. Our chancel will have room for all!
- **Beautiful**—The visionaries who came before us created a beautiful space for worship. The redesign will enhance that beauty with repaired and restored flooring and refurbished pews.

Each of these projects, while necessary and practical, carries a deep spiritual purpose: To allow the good news of Jesus Christ to be shared for generations to come. The gifts we give now are not just for a console, floors, and pews. They are for people. They are for the children who will grow within this space and the worshippers who will be comforted and inspired.

The visionaries who came before us prayed, planned, and undertook what they believed would carry their congregation into the future. It did! FPC is alive and thriving! Now is our opportunity to move forward with a step of faith. Let us begin to pray, plan, and undertake what will move our congregation forward for generations to come. How will God call on us to participate? What will be our legacy?

With Gratitude and Hope,

Maggy Cook Brenda Day Margo Gunsser

Maggy Cook, Brenda Day, and Margo Gunsser
Campaign Chairs





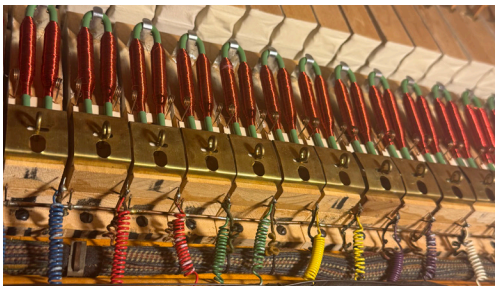


The Projects

The Organ

Keeping the voice of our worship strong for the next generation
Since 1955, our Austin pipe organ, with its over 2,000 pipes, has led our singing at weddings, funerals, and on Sunday mornings. After 71 years, it needs significant renovation to keep going.

Wiring. The organ still has its original cotton-covered wiring. It was standard in 1955, but it is a fire risk today and doesn't meet the current National Electrical Code. The organ is permitted to stay as it is, but we can't renovate the chancel without bringing the wiring up to code.
Pipes. Several ranks were made from an inferior metal alloy, and those pipes are slowly collapsing under their own weight.
Mechanical parts. The rubber, leather, and wood parts that make the organ work are wearing out. Our organists have run into significant problems in recent years, and without repair the organ could become unplayable.
Control system. The computer that coordinates the organ was installed in the 1980s and is failing.
Console. The original console can't be restored without custom-fabricating interior parts. We will build a new one that matches the beauty of our sanctuary and uses modern technology.



"Our organ is so important to us. If it catches on fire, we could lose our 200 year-old sanctuary." -Susan Hammer

The renovation will include:

- Re-wiring, re-leathering, and re-rubbering the instrument
- Removing, cleaning, repairing, and restoring all pipes
- Protecting the organ chamber during construction
- Relocating the blower to fit the new chancel design
- Replacing the computer control system
- Building a new facade that reflects the historic character of our church
- Building a new console

"The Organ. It fills my heart with joy at times, with solemnity and reflection at others. It nourishes my soul. Through both our Director of Music Ministries, Jordan Klotz, and our Minister of Music Emeritus, Brenda Day, it is God's Grace brought forth through music."
-Paul Gunsser



A Look Back...

1717: Our roots. Neighbors in Metuchen build a meetinghouse and begin gathering for worship, as a branch of the Presbyterian church in Woodbridge. For over 300 years, this community has gathered here.

1700

1783: The Revolution ends. Thirty-six members of our small congregation served in Washington's army.

1793: Our congregation breaks with the church in Woodbridge, being called Second Presbyterian Church of Woodbridge.

The Chancel

A chancel that welcomes everyone
This project began with one goal: everyone should be able to take part in worship. A new ramp will give people of all abilities access to the chancel. The platform will be two steps above the floor, with handrails to guide access.

The new design returns to an earlier arrangement of our sanctuary, from before the mid-century renovations, with the pulpit placed in front of the choir. All furniture will be movable, so the space can change easily between worship, concerts, Christmas pageants, and community events.

This phase also includes structural work to reinforce our aging foundation and creaky floor.

"What excites me about this renovation initiative is the fact that we will be modernizing our church, while maintaining the original architectural feel of the church building. Increasing the accessibility of the chancel will make the church more inclusive and relevant to the current and future generations."
- Lori Kellner

Sanctuary Flooring, Painting, and Finishes

A cohesive, lasting space
Our sanctuary floor has no subfloor, and new hardwood for the chancel won't match the existing hardwood in the rest of the room. We will install new hardwood throughout the nave, chancel, and chapel so the space looks and feels unified. When construction is done, we will repaint the walls and trim.



1835: The present church is constructed. In 1834, members begin planning a new church. New railroad tracks were about to disrupt the area where worshippers tied their horses. The land cost $30 an acre, and the building cost $3,500. It was dedicated on January 30, 1836, and it is the building we still worship in today.

1800

1871: The congregation buys a pipe organ from the Institute for the Blind in New York and installs it. Music has been central to worship here for centuries.

Pew Refurbishment

Restoring pews that have served FPC since 1835
Our pews date to the original 1835 building, with backs made of solid single-slab pine. At some point in the 20th century, their mahogany trim was painted over in dark brown. Because the pews must be removed and stored during construction, now is the right time to restore them:

- New cushions
- Sanding and repainting of seats and backs
- Stripping and staining of the mahogany trim
- Stripping and staining of hymnal and pencil racks

Limited Use/Limited Application (LULA) Lift

Keeping every voice in the choir
Every week, dozens of adults, children, and families come to the choir room for rehearsals and Sunday mornings. Over the years, choir members who struggle with stairs have stopped singing. Others, with temporary injuries, have had to take time away until they healed. This has impacted more than just the Senior Choir; the Music Ministry has at one time or another excluded singers of every age group from participation due to the inaccessibility of the choir room. Because we work so hard to include musicians of all abilities into our program, we must rectify this.

The lift will give everyone access to our music space. It will also let worshippers who can manage one step but not a flight and a half reach the balcony.

"Romans 15:7 tells us, 'Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.' To be an unconditionally welcoming congregation, it is our responsibility to ensure safe and hospitable access to all of our rehearsal and worship spaces."
-Helen Burr-Cackowski

Bathroom Renovations

Accessible, comfortable restrooms
All three narthex bathrooms will be updated and brought into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, so every visitor and member can use them comfortable.

"Updating our bathrooms is not simply a cosmetic improvement. It is an investment in the health, safety, comfort, and dignity of our congregation, including our seniors, children, families, and visitors with mobility challenges."
- Susan Harmon

Window Replacement

Efficient windows for the next 100 years
Our 71-year-old windows are inefficient, and most of them no longer open. We will replace all 23 windows in the sanctuary, narthex, bathrooms, and choir room with custom wood windows and metal hardware. They will make the building more comfortable and lower our energy costs.

"In my professional experience as a real estate agent, I've found that installing new windows is one of the best improvements a homeowner can make. Beyond enhancing the appearance and letting in natural light, new windows improve functionality and offer significant energy savings." -Niall Corbalis

Chairs for Choir, Clergy, and Sanctuary

Seating that fits the space and supports those who use it
The choir currently sits on metal folding chairs. With the new chancel layout, the choir will be much more visible during worship, and the new wooden chairs will look the part. A selection with arms will make it easier for people with mobility challenges to stand and sit.

1875

1877: Rev. James G. Mason arrives and serves nearly 50 years. He drives a buggy the children call the "Gospel Car," teaches stewardship as a spiritual practice, helps found the town library, and befriends Thomas Edison. One of the earliest public demonstrations of the phonograph is held in our church.

1888: The congregation sells a strip of land to the Pennsylvania Railroad for a new station and uses the money to install stained glass windows. It is not the first time the railroad has shaped our building.

1899: A kerosene chandelier falls and starts a fire in the sanctuary. The Session approves electric lighting. Our predecessors acted on fire safety in their own time, and we are doing the same.

The Costs

We have received input from our architectural firm, John Miller Architects, Inc., to forecast a resonable project budget. As the specifics of the design proposals are received and decisions are finalized, the scope of work and preliminary budget will inevitably adjust. Our current budget, including preliminary costruction costs, reflects a healthy amount of contingencies to cover unanticipated costs.

The Organ:	**$625,000**
The Chancel:	**$610,000-787,000**
Sanctuary Flooring, Painting, and Finishes:	**$264,000-343,000**
Bathroom Renovations:	**$101,000-146,000**
Pew Refurbishment:	**$119,000**
Limited Use/Limited Application (LULA) Lift:	**$168,000-201,000**
Window Replacement:	**$186,000-215,000**
Chairs for Choir and Clergy:	**$18,000**
Total Estimated Project Cost:	**$2,091,000-2,454,000**

How do we get there?

Capital Campaign. Our goal for the Our Hope for Years to Come campaign is $1.3 million.

A generous bequest. Longtime member Lorraine Bachmann left FPC a generous bequest, $238,000 of which has been directed to this project.

Preservation Fund. The remainder of the Bachmann bequest substantially increased the Preservation Fund, which provides money for capital improvement and maintenance projects. Additional funding may be drawn from this portion of the endowment at the direction of Session.

Financing. FPC has secured a $1.5 million loan to bridge the gap between when the expenses arrive and when the campaign's gifts are fulfilled. Greater success in our campaign directly decreases our dependence on loans.

1908: A new organ is installed for $2,500, including $1,000 from Andrew Carnegie, and the congregation funds the rest.

1900

1912: A floor paid for by the whole community. The congregation raises $1,200 for new hardwood floors and carpeting through food sales, musicals, recitals, benefit suppers, and a "thimble bee."

The Timeline

A Project Overview

Our Construction Team has established a general timeline based upon all factors including design time, material aquisition lead times, permitting and other factors.

2026

OCT

Capital Campaign to secure commitments of financial and prayerful suport.

Oct 25: Kickoff Sunday

NOV

Design Development to finalize project details.

DEC

Announcement Sunday

Nov 22: Commitment Sunday

2027

JAN

Project Bidding & Contractor Selection

MAR

Construction Permitting

March 28: Easter Sunday Worship

APR

Construction Begins

Where will we worship?

During construction, our congregation will gather for worship in the Social Center. While our sanctuary is being renovated, we will continue to worship, pray, and grow together in this welcoming space. Though our surroundings may change, our faith and community remain at the heart of FPC Metuchen as we prepare for the next chapter of our ministry.

1930

1932: Serving through the Depression. Rev. George Humphries serves for several years without pay as Metuchen's first Director of Public Welfare, helping about 900 residents receive coal, food, and supplies.

1949: The Social Center opens. A space for fellowship and community life, completed after years of planning.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why now?
Inspection of our 1955 pipe organ revealed cotton-covered wiring that poses a fire hazard and no longer meets electrical code. Because the renovation will already open up the chancel and disturb the floor to address it, this is also the moment to address the chancel's inaccessible, stair-heavy design and shore up the foundation beneath it. Our campus has seen impressive growth over the past 15 years, while each project builds toward one goal: spaces where we can live our mission while being welcoming, safe, and accessible. This sanctuary project is the piece that completes that vision. Now we have an opportunity to come full circle and complete the work by creating a sacred space for the next 100 years.

Why can't we use that to restore the organ and keep everything else as it is now?
The current chancel design with multiple steep stair segments creates significant risk for anyone of any age to access the chancel area. Renovating the chancel and floors at a later time will pose a threat to the newly refurbished organ from possible construction damage and debris. Because the pews need to be removed to shore up the floor and foundation, this is the most cost-effective time for pew refurbishment.

How will this impact our community?
Healthy facilities support healthy ministry. Our sanctuary is a beautiful place, and this campaign will allow its beauty to be matched in safety and accessibility. Our sacred space, our organ, and the most critical elements of our worship life, at the heart of our church, will be set on a path of success for decades to come. In the meantime, flexibility of use of our Social Center will allow regular Sunday worship to continue and limit the impacts on FPC's programming.

How much should I give?
Each household is invited to pray and consider, "*God, what do You want to do through me?*" Every commitment is an act of faith and shared vision. There is no equal gift, only equal sacrifice.

Should this affect my annual giving?
Our annual giving is the lifeblood of our ministry and should always be our first priority. "Our Hope for Years to Come" asks us to prayerfully consider what we can give over and above our regular giving.

How does the broader congregation feel about the project? as excited as the pastors, staff, and volunteer team?
The comments received from the congregation are overwhelmingly filled with excitement and optimism for the "Our Hope for Years to Come" campaign and our effort to build for now and the future of FPC.

How will we be kept informed of the building plans and progress?
The team will keep our church family informed throughout each phase of the project through pictures and information on our website, social media feeds, newsletters, in-person reports during Sunday worship, and emails/letters sent to members. Please feel free to reach out to our leadership team with questions as we make all efforts to be completely transparent and keep everyone informed.

A more detailed FAQ Sheet is available on the campaign webpage.

1955: The Austin organ. After raising $55,000, the congregation installs and dedicates a three-manual Austin organ on October 30. This is the organ we are renovating today.

1950

1958: The last sanctuary building project. The congregation raises $250,000 to enclose the building in brick, expand the education building, and connect it with a new chapel. The history records that "the energies of the entire congregation were mobilized" and that members gave sacrificially. Worship was held at the Forum Theater during construction.

Annual Stewardship

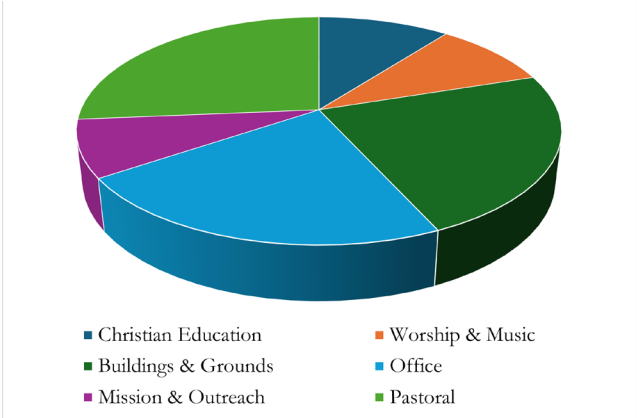
Our church has been a source of stability, comfort, and joy for generations as we seek and serve Christ together here at FPC Metuchen. We all benefit from the legacy of those who have gone before us, and we share in all that this community offers us today. Our Hope for Years to Come campaign is truly a significant way for us to demonstrate our commitment to improving the sacred space we all enjoy.

While planning and preparing for the future is very important, we cannot neglect the essential annual pledge campaign. Your generous annual pledge sustains the ministries and daily work of our church and serves as a clear indication of your faithful gratitude for all that God has done in your life.

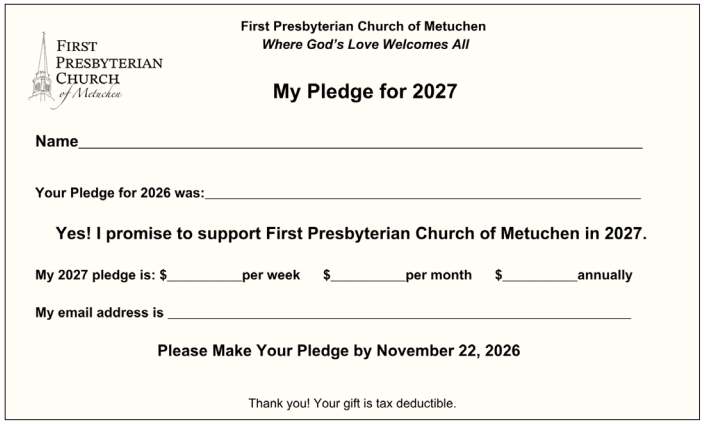
On November 22, 2026, everyone will have the opportunity to offer two different commitments supporting FPC Metuchen in ministry with the Our Hope for Years to Come campaign and the 2027 Annual Stewardship Pledge. Our Hope for Years to Come commitment will soley go to the Capital Campaign. The money you pledge will be over and above your annual commitment. The amount pledged to the campaign will be given over the next three years beginning November 2026.



2026 Budget	
Christian Education	108,990
Worship & Music	98,900
Buildings & Grounds	242,250
Office	232,850
Mission & Outreach	84,543
Pastoral	274,562
Total	1,042,095



What to look for.
Pictured above is the Our Hope for Years to Come Campaign commitment card. Pictured below is the 2027 Annual Stewardship Pledge Card.


First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen
Where God's Love Welcomes All

First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen

My Pledge for 2027

Name_____

Your Pledge for 2026 was:_____

Yes! I promise to support First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen in 2027.

My 2027 pledge is: $_____**per week $**_____**per month $**_____**annually**

My email address is _____

Please Make Your Pledge by November 22, 2026

Thank you! Your gift is tax deductible.

2012–2025: A campus growing in mission. The Social Center is expanded twice (2012 and 2015), and the Food Pantry grows in 2025. Each project makes our campus more welcoming and more useful to our neighbors.

2010

2027: The next chapter. Groundbreaking is planned for April 2027 on "Our Hope for Years to Come," to make the sanctuary safe, accessible, and sound for generations to come.

3-year Giving Guide

Weekly	$10	$25	$30	$40	$50	$60
Monthly	$45	$108	$130	$173	$217	$260
Total	$1,560	$3,900	$4,680	$6,240	$7,800	$9,360
Weekly	$75	$80	$90	$100	$110	$115
Monthly	$325	$347	$390	$433	$477	$498
Total	$11,700	$12,480	$14,040	$15,600	$17,160	$17,940
Weekly	$130	$150	$175	$180	$190	$200
Monthly	$563	$650	$758	$780	$823	$867
Total	$20,280	$23,400	$27,300	$28,080	$29,640	$31,200
Weekly	$225	$250	$275	$300	$325	$350
Monthly	$975	$1,083	$1,192	$1,300	$1,408	$1,517
Total	$35,100	$39,000	$42,900	$46,800	$50,700	$54,600

How to give

There are several ways to support our capital campaign, Our Hope for Years to Come, and help ensure that First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen remains a welcoming, accessible, and vibrant place of worship and community for generations to come.

Complete a Commitment Card: Fill out a campaign commitment card to indicate your pledge and how you plan to fulfill it. You can give a one time gift or fulfill your pledge over three years.
Give Online: Use our online giving option to make a one-time gift or contribute toward your campaign commitment and set up recurring giving.
Send a Check: Mail or deliver a check payable to First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen, noting Capital Campaign in the memo line. Sending a check is a preferred method of payment to avoid credit card processing fees.

Every gift, regardless of size, makes a difference. Thank you for your generosity, prayers, and commitment to Our Hope for Years to Come as we invest in the future of our church and the community we serve. For more information contact Kevin Trolaro, 732-491-2303, ktrolaro@fpcweb.org

Campaign Resources

All capital campaign resources are available on our dedicated webpage, making it easy to stay informed and connected. The page will be updated regularly with campaign communications, important announcements, and new resources as we move forward together with Our Hope for Years to Come.

Visitors can access campaign brochures and informational materials, find links to make their pledges and give online, and watch our Making Room video series to hear stories and explore the vision behind our campaign.

Scan the QR code to visit our campaign website and learn more about **Our Hope for Years to Come!**

Scan the QR code to watch our Making Room video series on YouTube and hear the stories and vision behind **Our Hope for Years to Come!**







First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen





Our Hope for Years to Come





