

FEBRUARY 2023 **PARISH NEWS**

PASTOR'S PEACE by Rev. Dr. Fred Garry

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Do this in memory of me.

Wherever the gospel is preached it will be done in memory of her.

They set up twelve stones so as to remember: we were slaves in Egypt.

As Protestants in the 21st century, we now enjoy a 500-year legacy. We have been protesting for half a millennia. Given such a huge amount of time, it may be hard to remember what we were so upset about in the 16th century.

As Americans near the 250th anniversary of the United States, we have nearly a quarter of millennia of history and union and a shared destiny. We have been about the process of democracy and civil rights for quite some time. Looking back we can see some successes and some failures.

It's hard to fathom time once we get beyond our lived experience. Can we really comprehend what it must have been like to leave the small towns of southeastern England in the 1640s and sail across the Atlantic in a leaky boat to start a new life in the Massachusetts Bay Colony? Can we step into the shoes of someone who was born 400 years ago?

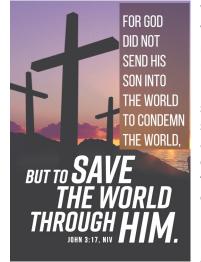
Despite the difficulties, we try. We seek to remember and we also seek to share our memories. Shared memory, collective memory, and public memory are often described as history. Yet, as we so often find when people describe their view of events in the past, our shared memories are sometimes at odds.

I have stumbled into an intriguing set of questions about memory and history. Is remembering the past an exercise in courage? We must remember the sacrifice and accomplishments of others so we too may find the strength to do the same. Is remembering the past an exercise in guilt? We must remember the mistakes and misdeeds of the past so we do not repeat them. Or is remembering the past a way of understanding how life is ever-changing but always the same?

When we try to answer these questions, we often build things. There are three intriguing ways we build places of memory. There are memorials—places where we grieve the past; there are monuments—places where we honor the past; and, there are museums—places where we interpret the past.

In the last year, I have been working on a project seeking to answer: why do we construct these? Some of my research was prompted by the debate over Confederate statues; some of the research was trying to navigate the difference between memory and understanding, and a fair amount of the research arose from trying to navigate my own genealogy. As I have done more and more research, I am beginning to see these three (memorial, monument, and museum) as reaching beyond buildings. They are not only matters of stone, but they are also matters of the heart.

During Lent this year, we will explore the memories we share. Twice each week (once in person and once on a zoom) you are invited to look at the memorials and monuments and museums we have created but also to discuss how our memories Continued in page 2



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Continuation of Pastor's Peace

are shared, how they compliment and challenge one another.

We will look at this from a "civic" perspective, but also from a "sacred" one as well.

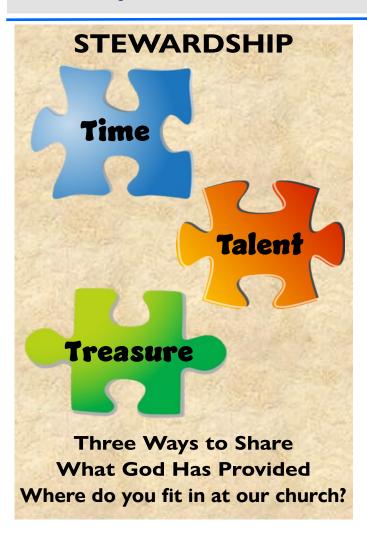
Details of times and places, zoom link and instructions are below. Consider making this your Lenten devotion. As I have explored these questions, I gained a different way of looking at our life together, our generations, and our hopes. Mostly, though, I gained a greater mastery of what it means to remember.

Memory, Memorial and Monument

In-Person, Wednesdays, 7:00 - 8:00 pm: March 1 - 29 By Zoom, Mondays, 7:00 - 8:00 pm: March 6 - April 3 The choice is yours— come in person or participate by Zoom. We want to make this as accessible as possible to many of you. Whatever your choice, come with an open mind, come to gain new perspective and come to celebrate those memories and memorials. Join Rev. Garry in these interesting discussions touching the matters of the heart. Click to join: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82607967624 Use Zoom Meeting ID: 826 0796 7624



- As a result of the Egypt trip on 14 February, the regular monthly Session meeting for February has been moved to Monday, 13 February.
- Session approved a meeting of the Congregation and Corporation on 26 February immediately after Sunday Morning Worship service. The purpose of the meeting will be to:
 - * Approve the annual Terms of Call for the Senior Pastor.
 - * Approve changes to the FPC-M By-laws.
 - * Elect Officers (due to vacancies) of the Church
 - * Receive the 2022 Financial Annual Report, the 2023 Church Operating Budget, and the Annual Narrative Reports of the Ministries, Commissions, Committees, CNS, PW, and the Board of Deacons for the program year ending 30 June 2022.
- Session approved assumption of the Unit Charter for BSA troop 74.



THIS IS YOUR YEAR!



This is YOUR year to serve our church.

Do you see yourself serving as an Elder, Deacon, Audit Committee, All Church Nominating Committee (ACNC), Community Nursery School Board, Youth Elder, Youth Deacon, or on any one of our many Commissions or Committees?

The ACNC is beginning the search to fill many positions within our church and we need your help. We need your voice, and we need your God-given gifts. How do you see YOUR year?

Contact the church office or Carol Carr (908) 930-6748 for more information or to volunteer.

Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward.

You are serving the Lord Christ.

Colossians 3:23-24, ESV

The Social Justice Committee asks...DID YOU KNOW?

"If you cannot feed a hundred people, then feed just one." — Mother Teresa

Hunger doesn't take a holiday. It doesn't stop the mail, hire a house sitter, pack a bag and head out for somewhere warm.

For that reason, the FPC Food Pantry, under the guidance of Local Mission Director Sarah Teti and with the assistance of her incredibly dedicated volunteer staff, continues to coordinate the longstanding FPC tradition of creating holiday food baskets so that clients can celebrate these special days with dignity.

"Three times a year (Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas), we pack holiday bags for our regular and/or frequently attending clients," said Sarah. "The bags include nonperishable items that are usually served at a holiday meal - canned vegetables, pasta and sauce, stuffing, cranberry sauce, gravy, cornbread mix, cake mix, soup, etc. as well as fresh produce – 5 lbs. of potatoes, 3 lbs. of carrots, 3 lbs. of apples, 3 lbs. of onions, and a few oranges to make up more of the meal. Then they are given a supermarket gift card to cover the cost of the protein they will buy for their meal."

The idea behind this has always been to encourage food pantry clients to have a holiday meal with their loved ones and give them the opportunity to make that happen. The food is distributed a few days before the holiday so they can prepare for the meal in time. In addition to the staples, extras are given as well. Candy, cookies, turkeys and hams donated by congregants and community members during the holidays are given out to them during this distribution, too.

Sarah said, "Our clients look forward to it and it's really a lot of fun and good cheer! Most of the food pantries in our area do something for the holidays, whether it's a gift card OR food, but we do both because we are RELENTLESS!"

Relentless for sure, as the FPC Food Pantry team packed and distributed 130 Thanksgiving baskets with gift cards, along with 19 Thanksgiving-specific emergency bags and turkeys. For Christmas, they distributed 123 baskets with gift cards and 14 Christmas-specific emergency bags and turkeys/hams.

So, where does all this food come from? Most of the non-perishables are donated, especially during Thanksgiving. In fact, Thanksgiving is the largest overall donation period of the year. "Which is great, because we get so much, we usually have lots left over for Christmas so we don't have to buy much," Sarah said. "The produce is purchased from Lotte Market in Tano Mall and paid for through donated funds," she continued. "Lotte Market has supplied our produce for two years now and they are EXTREMELY generous by giving us a discounted rate."

The packing of the food bags has become a much anticipated event annually. All from the congregation and community are invited to come and pack the bags for the families. "We do it in a round robin style, where the kids are given one item at a time to put in a numbered bag until all the items are packed," Sarah added. "It's so much fun (and incredibly inefficient). But we do it this way to keep the kids engaged."

Over the past two years, the Food Pantry has had more volunteers than they can handle for these packing events, highlighting a desire from the community for family volunteer opportunities. It also shows a willingness to try and help everyone enjoy the holidays with the blessings we all have.

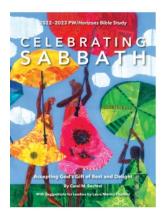
No, hunger doesn't take a holiday. Neither does the staff of the FPC Food Pantry.





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ADULT ENRICHMENT PROGRAM & OTHER EVENTS



HORIZON BIBLE STUDY IS FOR EVERYONE!

February 6 7:00 p.m. PW Lounge with Zoom option Led by Mary Kay Dangremond

Study leader Mary Kay Dangremond challenges us to explore "Sabbath and Servitude," the subject of Lesson Five in our Horizon Bible study. The key idea? "Work without Sabbath is servitude."

Primary scriptures that will help us understand the nature of work come from Genesis 2:15 and 3:17-19; Exodus 31:12 to 18, 35:1 to 29 and 36:1 to 7.

Even if you missed Lessons One through Four, don't hesitate to walk in or jump on the Zoom. Every lesson is discrete; every gathering is full of interesting ideas and good discussion.

Visit the PW page for the zoom link and study materials. https://fpcweb.org/ministries/presbyterian-women/ Use Zoom meeting ID: 813 2798 2944

If you're interested in a hard copy of the study or have any questions, contact Deb Teall debteall@optonline.net and (908) 917-3990



Memory,
Memorial
and
Monument

In-Person, Wednesdays, 7:00 - 8:00 pm: March 1 - 29 By Zoom, Mondays, 7:00 - 8:00 pm: March 6 - April 3

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THE GOSPEL STORIES

A Weekly Bible Study Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. in the PW Lounge & Zoom

Join Rev. Garry in this continuing study on the teachings of Jesus, exploring the Gospel books. Come in person or join virtually by Zoom. The lessons are available from our website, go to Resources/study-resources and look for the Gospel Stories. To join by Zoom, use: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84711673419
Use Meeting ID: 847 1167 3419

MEN'S BREAKFAST
Monday, February 13
7:30 a.m.
Dining Room

Don't miss out on the breakfast especially prepared by Rev. Garry. Best of all is the great conversation and time of fellowship that happens around the table. The meal may not be "heart" healthy but it is a time well spent.

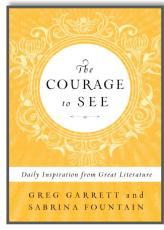


There is a group of over 20 participants joining Rev. Garry in this trip of a lifetime. Please remember them in your prayers for safe travel, a time of enlightenment, growth and wonder as they trace the footsteps of our biblical forefathers.

THE COURAGE TO SEE

As we approach Lent, consider this 365-day devotional that celebrates the beauty of literature and its ability to illuminate elements of the Divine, present all around us. There is a limited supply of this devotional for a donation of \$7.00 a copy.

Contact Nancy Leardi if you want a copy: nleardi@fpcweb.org





By Jordan Klotz, Director of Music Ministries

The thing about music is that it really is everywhere. For us, each with our busy lives—running to work, to the grocery store, to soccer practice, to choir, and back to the grocery store—this may not be entirely apparent. The hustle and bustle of daily life can make it difficult to take the time necessary to pause, to quiet ourselves for just a moment, and to listen.

Growing up, the 2007 film *August Rush* was a favorite. It's about a young, musically-prodigious orphan and his quest to find his parents, who are also musicians. Although a bit cheesy, the protagonist hears music all around him, quite literally, in all things. In the blowing of the wind, in the slapping of a basketball against the pavement, in the car horns and subway trains and constant chatter of Manhattan, a sonic creation comes alive in his mind. He stops, he listens, and the world illuminates.

Many of us think of music merely as the songs on the radio, the hymns and anthems of Sunday mornings, or the filler noise that consumes our elevator rides, but in her poem "Such Singing in the Wild Branches," Mary Oliver demonstrates the power of pausing and listening to the music of the world around us:

and I began to understand what the bird was saying,

and the sands in the glass stopped for a pure white moment

Not only do the birds make beautiful music, but as the movie *August Rush* teaches, there is music to be found in the places we least expect. We are called to love and serve God and our neighbor. Stopping, even for just a moment, to observe the beauty that lies all around us—the song of creation that goes on unceasing—helps to remind us why we love and serve. So, take time on your morning commute, as you walk to get the mail, as you sit down for dinner. Pause, listen, and say a prayer in gratitude.



Wednesdays at Noon Begins March1st

The Lenten Concert Series will again feature a variety of musicians bringing beautiful performances!

Come and listen at noon, each Wednesday during the month of March. The Lenten concerts will also be livestreamed in our website and FB page. More details to come in the SonDay paper—watch out for it and check our website for updates!



Enter the 40 days of Lent in fellowship. Together let us begin our Lenten journey with Ash Wednesday Service where we will have ashes and Communion. For those not able to join us in person, the service will be livestreamed from our website and FB page.

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FROM YOUR: **DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

1st Tuesday (4 years - 2nd Grade)

February 7th, 4:30 to 5:00 pm

Room 109 of the Education Building

Pastor Jeremy, Ruby's Dad, will share a story.

Junior Club (3rd to 6th Grade)

February 2 only from 5:30 to 6:15 pm

Room 109 or Social Center

Guest leader: Carol Carr

We will send love and joy to residents of the Parker Nursing Home with the Valentine greetings that our Junior Club members will create this month.





SENIOR HIGH Brunch with Grace

Sunday, February 12th at 10:30 am Meet in Room 109, Brunch at Cai's

We invite our 9th to 12th graders for a Valentines brunch. The group will meet in room 109 at 10:30 am to head downtown at Cai's in downtown Metuchen.

Coming soon: One Church Together

We are preparing for our next "ONE Church Together" worship service planned on April 2nd, Palm Sunday.

Would you like to read, usher or greet on this special multi-generational worship?

Contact Nancy Leardi.

Pour and Paint Craft Event with Middle School Moms

February 23rd 6:00 pm Social Center

RSVP required due to limited seating, Contact Nancy Leardi (732) 4912264





The puppeteers have been having a busy and successful year with many performances for our kids. When our children see the puppet theatre up, they immediately become excited for the show and seeing which youth are performing!

Save the date for two meetings that the puppeteers will rehearse: February 13 and March 13 at 4:00 pm in

Room 109. Hope to see you there!



Give kids the ticket to adventure where choosing Jesus gives them the ticket to the best ride of their lives. Start spreading the news! Volunteers are needed! Please give Nancy Leardi a shout out if you can help out.

Questions? Contact our Director of Christian Education Nancy Leardi: (732) 491-2264 or nleardi@fpcweb.org



YOUTH GROUP EVERY WEDNESDAY Now meeting in the Senior High Room

6:45 pm - 7:15 pm Westminster Choir (Grades 7 to 12)

7:15 pm - 7:45 pm Chapel and Good News Ringers (Grades 7 to 12)

7:45 pm - 8:45 pm Combined Junior and Senior High Youth Group

Hello friends of FPC Youth!

At the beginning of 2023 the youth set some intentions for Youth Group, including: Unity, Connection, and Acceptance. This year the youth are seeking opportunities to deepen their connections to each other and the com-

As we start this new year, here are some updates on our Youth Group and upcoming events.

- This year our youth are really connecting with each other beyond boundaries of age and school. Out of a desire to foster the growth of these connections, we have decided to have only one Youth Group that is 7-12th grade for the rest of the program year.
- Preparations are well under way for the 2023 Youth Mission Trip scheduled July 23 to 29. The Youth Mission trip committee is working hard behind the

scene to ensure another successful time of service in Roanoke, VA. Stay turned for ways you can support this annual trip.

GERTRUDE HAWK FUNDRAISER

If you or someone you know would like to purchase Gertrude Hawk candy in anticipation of the Easter holiday, our Youth are currently taking orders for Gertrude Hawk chocolate through February 27th with all proceeds going towards the 2023 Youth Mission Trip.

Go to Fundraising.GertrudeHawkChocolates.com to place an order. First Presbyterian Church is the Organization name and enter a youth name or Colleen Walker as the seller name.

For more information, please contact Colleen Walker at cwalker@fpcweb.org or (732) 491-2303.



Saturday, February 4th 9:00 am - 1:00 pm **FPC Social Center**

Attention Junior and Senior High Youth:

Come one, come all to this fun day filled with ways to give back, pay forward and learn about food insecurity. Make sure to pre-register at Youth Group so we know who is coming and we can plan. Bring your friends along!

See you there!

To pre-register, use the following link: https://forms.gle/2K5uETve8sV1cVc87

Highlights of the Youth Service Day include:

- Flash Food Drive Church and Community members are asked to flood the Social Center with food donations.
- **Restocking the Food Pantry**



Inspiring talks from Guest speakers who will share on food insecurity in our state and on running local Food Drives

hour. The winner gets a gift card from a local

business! What are you waiting for?

Start shopping!

Brainstorming Sessions to find ways to increase the food donations to our Food Pantry

Questions about any of our Youth Programs? Connect with us with the GroupMe app or email: youthgroup@fpcweb.org

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PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN: In the Church Community

All are welcome!

PW and Deacons Invite You to Brunch

Sunday, February 5 Following worship Social Center Dining Room

Special Guest Chef: Rev. Fred Garry

Special Musical Program: Under the direction of Jordan Klotz



Our Presbyterian Women and Deacons are partnering to bring to the FPC family an opportunity to once again gather after a long and difficult period of social distancing, The food, the music and the fellowship can't be missed! Please mark your calendars for a refreshing time of fellowship, and delicious food brought by our guest chef! The event is for ALL, and it's FREE! We would love to see you!

Baby, it's cold outside.....

Keeping warm indoors? Now is the perfect time to look around and see what might become an opportunity to do some uncluttering.

The Presbyterian Women have scheduled the Spring Rummage Sale date and we look forward to your donations! So, look in those closets, kids toy room, basement and attic for the treasures that you would like to pass on.

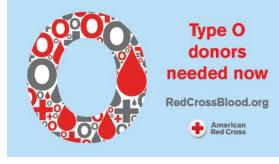
Stay warm, have a cup of coffee, tea or hot chocolate and feel inspired to Pack It Up!

Spring Rummage Sale drop off is Monday, April 17th through Thursday, April 20th and the Sale is Friday April 21st and Saturday April 22nd.



APRIL 21 and 22

Call for volunteers will be in the March/April Parish News. *Mark your calendars and as winter looms, we set our sights on Spring!*



BLOOD DRIVE

Sunday, February 19, 2023 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen

FPC Social Center Dining Room 270 Woodbridge Avenue, Metuchen, NJ 08840 Maximize your blood donations. Help more with your Power Red donation if you are an eligible type O, B- or A- donor.

Conveniently schedule your appointment using the following options:

- Call 1-800-RED-CROSS (1-800-733-2767)
- Download the Blood Donor App
- Go to www.redcrossblood.org and enter the sponsor code: FPCM. Save time by visiting the Rapid Pass also found on the website.

For the whole month of February, as a "Thank you" for donating blood, all who come to give will get a \$10 Amazon.com gift card by email, and an automatic entry to win an all-expense 3-night stay trip to Florida!

Questions? Email Jen O'Neill jenoneill06@gmail.com









Community Nursery School of Metuchen is excited to announce that Dr. Melissa Luis will join CNS as the new Director starting January 30, 2023. Dr. Luis holds a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology from Fordham University.

For the past 8 years, Dr. Luis has served as the Education Coordinator for Middlesex Community College. She brings extensive experience as a school psychologist and preschool teacher to this role.

We couldn't be more thrilled to have her lead CNS!

Registration for the 2023-2024 CNS school year is now open!

CNS offers numerous programming and enrichment options for children ages 2 1/2 to 5 years. CNS offers early drop off for all students and extended day, until 5 PM, for 4- and 5-year-olds.

A K-wrap program is available for children attending local half-day kindergarten.

Please call 732-491-2240 to schedule a tour of CNS to see our classrooms and facilities and to learn more about what makes CNS a top choice for early childhood education in the community. Church members receive a \$25/month discount on tuition.

Community Nursery School is looking for more substitute teachers. If you like working with children, please contact Heather Koball (Email: hkoball@fpcweb.org or (347) 596-2415) for more information.

For more information about our programs, please visit our website: https://www.communityns.org/



FPC Youth are gearing up for Habitat for Humanity this summer. Support them through their Spring fundraiser— for the Easter holiday or to cheer a friend. How can you say no to these scrumptious, mouth-watering goodness from Gertrude Hawk? Our Youth are taking orders until February 27th with all proceeds going towards the 2023 Youth Mission Trip. Receive your orders just in time for Easter!

Look for one of our youth or go to www.Fundraising.GertrudeHawkChocolates.com to place an order. Use First Presbyterian Church as the Organization name and enter a youth name or Colleen Walker as the seller name. You may also stop by the church office to place your orders.

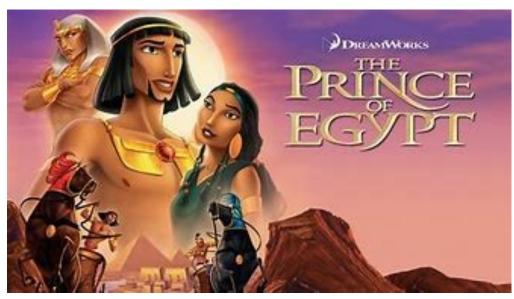
For more information, please contact Colleen Walker at cwalker@fpcweb.org or (732) 491-2303.

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1st Presbyterian Church Deacons invite ALL to join us for a

MOVIE, POPCORN AND PIZZA Sunday, February 26th 4:00 PM—6:00 PM

1st Pres. Social Center Dining Room



An epic adventure and milestone in cinematic achievement, *The Prince of Egypt*, an hour and 40 minutes film with PG rating, has captivated movie audiences the world over, becoming one of the top animated films of all time.

Two brothers—one born of royal blood, the other an orphan with a secret past—grow up as the best of friends sharing a strong bond of free-spirited youth and good-natured rivalry. The truth ultimately sets them at odd as one becomes the ruler of the most powerful empire on earth, the other the chosen leader of his people.

Their final confrontation will forever change their lives—and the world. Both spectacular entertainment and a celebration of the human spirit, *The Prince of Egypt* stands as a classic for the ages, for audiences of every generation to enjoy and cherish.



* See Nancy Leardi to borrow a copy of the Dreamworks Collectors Edition Storybook!



CHURCH STAFF

First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen (February 1, 2023)

<u>CLERGY</u>
Rev. Dr. Fred Garry 732-491-2330
Senior Pastor/Head of Staff fgarry@fpcweb.org
Rev. Ashley Bair
Interim Associate Pastor abair@fpcweb.org
Rev. Robert A. Beringer, Pastor Emeritus
Hanna Richards, Seminarian Intern
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
Nancy Leardi
Director Christian Education nleardi@fpcweb.org
Kat Davis
Christian Education Production Leader
MUSIC MINISTRY
Jordan Klotz
Director of Music Ministries jklotz@fpcweb.org
Elaine Hansen ehansen@fpcweb.org
Assistant Bell Director and Accompanist
Brenda A. Day, Minister of Music Emeritus
SUPPORT STAFF
Sue Harmon
Director of Operations/Treasurer
sharmon@fpcweb.org
Jonathan Hollenbeck
Facilities Manager jhollenbeck@fpcweb.org Bob O'Connell
Bob O'Connell
Facilities Assistant boconnell@fpcweb.org
Vicky Lacson
Administrative & Communications Coordinator
vlacson@fpcweb.org
Nate Brown
Technical & Sound Design Consultant
nbrown@fpcweb.org
Merry Matlock
Senior Services Coord. mmatlock@fpcweb.org
Colleen Walker
Office Assistant cwalker@fpcweb.org Sarah Teti
Director of Local Mission foodpantry@fpcweb.org
Heather Koball
Executive Director of Missions hkoball@fpcweb.org
COMMUNITY NURSERY SCHOOL
Melissa Luis
Director mluis@fpcweb.org
Colleen Smith
Head Teacher csmith@fpcweb.org
Josephine Czochanski
Office Manager cnsadmin@fpcweb.org

FRIENDLY REMINDERS FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE



In observance of Presidents' Day, the church office will be closed.



A reminder that the Mission Volunteer Night of the Food Pantry is held every 3rd Thursday of the month until May.

This February 16th, from 7:00-8:30 pm in the Auditorium, catch their Soup Making event.

Volunteers will bag ingredients to make a healthy soup that will be handed out to their clients. Mission Volunteer Night is a kid-friendly time of giving and serving.



INDONESIAN FELLOWSHIP

A worship service in Bahasa is held every Sunday at Noon except the first Sunday of the month when the Indonesian Fellowship joins the 9:30 am service for communion. If you have any questions, contact Norma by email at norma.tambingon@yahoo.com

Percayalah kepada TUHAN dengan segenap hatimu,
dan janganlah bersandar
kepada pengertianmu sendiri.
Akuilah Dia dalam segala lakumu,
maka Ia akan meluruskan jalanmu.

Amsal 3:5-6

FEBRUARY 2023 PARISH NEWS

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF METUCHEN 270 Woodbridge Avenue, Metuchen, NJ 08840

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Stay up to date with just one click!

We are now using Mail Chimp to bring to you the latest church happenings. Sign up to make sure we have your correct email address.

Visit the church website, send an email to fpc@fpcweb.org or use your cell phone to go directly to the link using this QR code.

We promise not to spam you!



Parish News Submission

To submit an article for the Parish News, email vlacson@fpcweb.org or see us at the church office. Deadline for submission is the 15th of the month.

Church Office

270 Woodbridge Avenue, Metuchen, NJ 08840 Office Hours: Monday– Friday 8:00 am to 4:30pm Telephone: (732) 491-2300 Email: fpc@fpcweb.org

Sunday Worship Service 9:30 am
Online Sunday Morning Worship 9:30 am
Livestream on FPC Metuchen Facebook

