

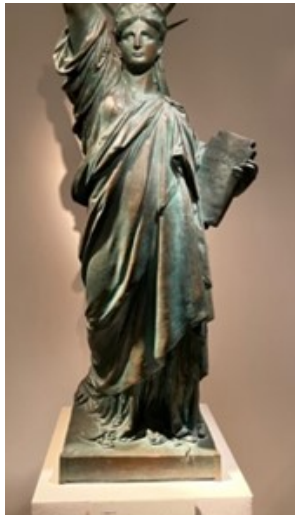


PASTOR'S PEACE by Rev. Dr. Fred G. Garry

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

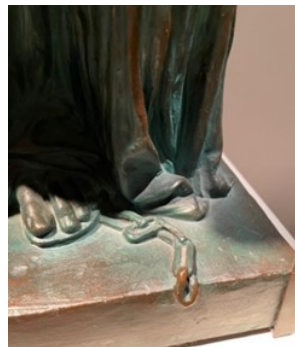
Continuation of Pastor's Peace	2
Stewardship	2
Food Pantry	3
A Retirement Celebration	3
Music Ministry	4
Camp Jburg and Campership	4
Health and Wellness Fair	5
All Church Picnic	5
Community Nursery School	5
Children's Programs	6
Youth Group	7
Adult Enrichment Program	8
Presbyterian Women	9
CWS Tools	10
Church Clergy and Staff	11
Office Reminders	11
Indonesian Fellowship	11

At the Metropolitan Museum of Art in Manhattan you can find three to-scale models of sculptures created as prototypes for large public monuments. The most well-known is the model for the Statue of Liberty. The second is the famous sculpture by Saint-Gaudens of Abraham Lincoln that was completed for the city of Chicago. The third is one that was not selected, considered but not chosen. The unchosen model was called "Freedman" by Ward.



All three statues are very distinctive. One is a complete allegory (Lady Liberty), the other is very historic (Lincoln standing by a chair), and the third is a blend of the two (a former slave who is an anonymous symbol for four million people). One is a colossus, and the other two were meant for pedestals in parks. Yet, what binds them all together is the inability to speak to or mention the emancipation of the slaves during the Civil War. It was as if it could not be spoken; certainly not cast in bronze and put in the center of a town. The Civil War was over; the union prevailed; the southern states were now free to preserve their culture. Best to leave it at that. Each of these statues struggle with this demand for silence.

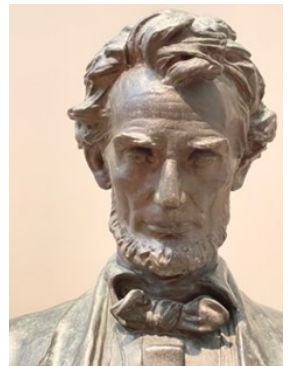
Since I learned about the shackles at the feet of Lady Liberty, I have been trying to find a moment to revisit the statue. I never knew she had broken shackles peeking from beneath her dress; I didn't know there were shackles at all. Yet, once I discovered that the early version of Liberty had a set of shackles in her hand, I wanted see this. Ultimately, the shackles were replaced by a book with the date etched upon it.



While I still plan on a return to Governor's Island, the model at the Met has sated my curiosity. The shackles are there, but not obvious; the message of liberation remains, but it is quietly spoken, as if it

is immodest to even notice, let alone mention. The shackles could not be the point of the statue. This was deemed too painful, too provocative.

Saint-Gaudens statue bares a similar modesty. Lincoln is looking forward, but down; he is standing, but he is still contemplating. Behind him is an empty chair suggesting the past, his infamous posture of repose has been left behind. Perhaps he is walking to eternity (a martyr), perhaps he is standing because the war now is over. He seems resolute and his gaze is clear, but there are no laurel wreaths, no winged victory lifting him, no symbols at all. He doesn't hold a speech or a pen; he clutches his lapel and his other hand is unseen. He is free, but still held captive by his thoughts.



Continued on page 2

IF YOU DO NOT
STAND FIRM
IN YOUR FAITH,
YOU WILL NOT
STAND AT ALL.

ISAIAH 7:9, NIV

Continuation of Pastor's Peace

This statue of Lincoln, and so many more, were called for after his assassination. Communities in the Northern states wanted to remember Lincoln, to memorialize his life and death. The statues of Lincoln were a way for us to be thankful for his sacrifice, he "preserved the union" at great cost.

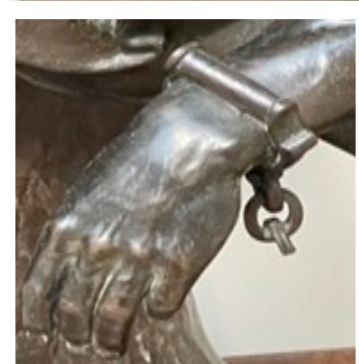
Ward's statue of "Freedman" is unique to the three in that it was never built. Ward wasn't the only sculptor who tried to convey the emancipation in stone and bronze, but his model was too early, too controversial. It would be almost fifty years later (1922) until such a monument could be constructed. Thomas Ball's "Emancipation Memorial" was dedicated in a then quiet corner of Washington D.C.

Elements of Ward's design could be seen in the statue that came to be. The former slave is crouched, but rising, clad, but not fully. His shackles are broken, but he is not alone. Standing above him is Lincoln with a hand outstretched as if to offer a blessing. Lincoln is giving the former slave his liberty. In Ward's design, there is only the former slave, no clear indication how the chains were broken, no aid in his rising. He is looking up, ahead, even if it is behind.

What I found so compelling in the three statues was the difficulty to speak of the legacy of slavery. Any attempt to bring it up was met with resistance. It was as if the "sins" Lincoln spoke of were paid for by those who died during the Civil War and now we are moving on. Slavery and emancipation were done, paid for. Leave it alone. Lady Liberty has no shackles; Lincoln is not a "liberator" he is a sacrifice; and any statue of "Freedman" should be tucked into quiet corners of a park.

As my research and study of monuments and memorials and museums progresses, I am not sure we are best served by quiet corners. Sometimes what is silenced is what is needed to be said the most.

From 1885-1925 there were more than 4000 monuments and memorials erected in public squares and parks (1,500 in the "Northern" states and 2,500 in the South) to remember the Civil War veterans. Each speaks of a great struggle, a great sacrifice to "preserve".



**“ Sometimes what is silenced
is what is needed
to be said the most. ”**

It was a war to preserve the union or preserve state sovereignty. This was not an obscure message or the opinion of a few; this is town squares, public parks. Yet with this proclaimed message came the demand for what would be unspoken; this was not about liberating 4 million people from the bondage of slavery.

I am not sure what to do with the silence. It certainly persists. We are held by a persistent shackle.

STEWARDSHIP 2023

A TIME TO PLANT

Spring brings warm, sunny days and the opportunity to get back outdoors with nature and tend to a garden. Many of us like to feel the cool, fresh dirt running through our fingertips; a way to get back to nature, to feel grounded and physically feel God's earth. We plant flower or vegetable seeds with the faith that they will grow into healthy blossoms to beautify our landscape and vegetables to nourish our bodies. This faith that a small seed will grow for our benefit is like our faith that planting our donations to First Presbyterian Church will grow the programs and mission of our church. Planting our individual seeds in the church will bring benefits for many in the community.



FOOD PANTRY Mission Volunteer Night

By Alicia Parr

At the Food Pantry's Mission Volunteer Night held on March 16th, 40 community and congregation volunteers came together to assemble 50 Happy Birthday Cake bags. The bags included cake mix, frosting, sprinkles, oil, apple sauce (as an egg substitute), candles and an aluminum pan or cupcake liners. These bags were handed out to Food Pantry clients as they came to shop at the pantry.



The next Mission Volunteer Night is scheduled for Thursday, May 11th from 7:00-8:30 pm in the Social Center Auditorium. Volunteers will be putting together spring cleaning buckets for the benefit of Food Pantry clients. This event is partially sponsored by The Coffee House in Edison. This is a wonderful opportunity for both adults and children to serve others. While we welcome children to help, those under the age of 8 must be accompanied by an adult.

Look for the signup link on the FPC Food Pantry Facebook page. We hope to see you there! If you have any questions or if you or your organization would like to sponsor a Mission Volunteer Night, please contact Sarah Teti, Director of Local Mission at (732) 491-2325 or via email at foodpantry@fpcweb.org



a Retirement Celebration, June 25th Sunday



After 30 years of dedicated service to our church, our devoted Director of Operations, **Sue Harmon**, will be retiring. Our congregation has been blessed by her many talents and selfless service managing every aspect of operations. Her ability to wear many hats and deftly juggle Operations, HR, Finance, and Communications have been instrumental in supporting the growth of our church community. Over the decades, she has continued to grow in her role and has accepted every new challenge with dedication and a willingness to learn.

We will celebrate Sue's legacy and contributions in a Retirement Reception on Sunday, June 25th after worship. We hope you will plan to come as we give Sue a retirement send off that she well deserves.

We would like to bless Sue with a monetary farewell gift to thank her for her dedication throughout these years. If you would like to be part of this, please send in your contributions to the Church to the attention of Colleen Walker with a notation on the check or envelope "Sue Harmon's Retirement." We look forward to seeing you.

"Great is the art of beginning, but greater is the art of ending."

- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

MUSIC Ministry

Calling all singers!

If you grew up singing in the Music Ministry at FPC, return on Sunday, June 4th, to help us inaugurate a new tradition. Each June, all four choirs will join together to sing an anthem, and we will invite "graduates" of the Music Ministry to return. Arrive to the choir room at 9:00 AM to learn the simple anthem! All are welcome!

Here are a few snapshots from the Music Ministry on Easter.



Questions ? Please feel free to contact Jordan Klotz, Director of Music Ministries: jklotz@fpcweb.org

Johnsonburg Camp & Retreat Center



Counted as one of New Jersey's most beloved summer camp and Christian retreat centers, the programs in Johnsonburg Camp and Retreat Center are back!

Summer Camp at Johnsonburg helps kids feel...

**Welcomed. Social.
Challenged. Adventurous.
Loved. Unplugged.
Rejuvenated. Accepted.
Empowered. Comforted.
Fulfilled. Encouraged.**

At Camp Jburg, campers will meet new friends and learn new things about themselves. They'll try out experiences that they definitely can't get at home. They'll meet camp counselors that they'll remember forever. This is a place like nowhere else - and considered as one of the best summer camps in New Jersey.

Johnsonburg Camperships

Camp & Retreat Center

Going to Camp Johnsonburg this summer?

The Presbyterian Women are once again offering their Camperships for FPC Youth (Grades 1 through 12) attending any of the weeklong camps offered by Camp Johnsonburg this summer. Visit the website of Camp Johnsonburg to get all the information you need about the 2023 Summer Schedule of Events and Activities, as well as to register: <https://www.campjburg.org/summer-camp/>

To avail of the offered camperships, individuals must fill out PW's Application for Camperships form available in the Church Office, Narthex desk, or from the FPC website. Look for the form by going to:

<https://fpcweb.org/resources/forms/>

Application forms should be submitted to the church office by the deadline: 12 Noon on Friday, June 9th.

Here's an opportunity for our FPC Food Pantry clients along with interested FPC congregants to interact with partners in physical health, mental health, financial health, self-care and assistance programs. We thank the FPC Food Pantry in partnership with the Social Justice Committee for making this event possible. Stop by – we'd love to see you!



Health **AND** WELLNESS FAIR

FPC Food Pantry
Wednesday, May 17

9:00 - 11:00 am

including:

Basic Medical Screenings

Mental Health Experts

Financial Education & Guidance

Self-Care Demonstrations

and more!

ALL ARE WELCOME!

No need for an appointment that day!
Snacks and light refreshments will be available.
Call Sarah with any questions: 732-491-2325



The Deacons of First Presbyterian Church
Invite you to join us for the

ALL CHURCH PICNIC!

Sunday, June 11th 10:45 a.m.
Behind the Social Center

Food! Fun! Games!



Don't miss this exciting time to gather again in fellowship for some food, fun and games. All are welcome!



Community Nursery School
Metuchen, NJ

2023-2024
Registration
OPEN!

OUTSTANDING
EDUCATIONAL
PROGRAM
FOR OVER
70 YEARS!

We offer quality
educational
programming
for children ages
2 1/2 to 5 yrs old

Call
732-491-2240
To register

Visit our website:
www.Communityns.org



Community Nursery School
Metuchen, NJ

MY GROWN-UP AND ME MUSIC CLASSES

12-30 MONTHS

FREE CLASSES!

THURSDAYS
9:10-10:15 AM

REGISTRATION REQUIRED
GO TO COMMUNITYNS-ORG
OR CALL 732-491-2240
270 WOODBRIDGE AVE.
METUCHEN, NJ

APRIL 20
APRIL 27
MAY 4
MAY 11

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

1st Tuesday (Kindergarten - 2nd Grade)

May 16th, 4:30 to 5:00 pm

Room 109 of the Education Building

Our 1st Tuesday falls on the 3rd Tuesday. Come and join Allison and Maggie Brennan as they read "Who is My Neighbor?"

Junior Club (3rd to 6th Grade)

May 18th, 5:30 to 6:15 pm in Room 109

Join us in the fun as we bring out the GAGA pit and enjoy a pizza party on our last meeting as we wrap up the school year.



May 28th

SUNDAY SCHOOL IN RECESS



Sunday, MAY 7th

Our confirmands have worked hard through the year learning about and growing their faith. There will be a reception right after worship in Room 109 with a cake of celebration for our Confirmation students.

Please join in the celebration!

PUPPETEERS!

The puppeteers will rehearse on May 8 at 4:00 pm in Room 109 with Mrs. Kat Davis.

REGISTER NOW!

2023 VACATION

BIBLE SCHOOL

JUNE 26 - 30

**For children
entering
Kinder to 6th
Grade**



VOLUNTEERS WE NEED YOU!

VBS happens when we can all come together and make time and space to give our kids an amazing VBS time. Please consider helping before, during or after camp. Many options to volunteer. Sign up now!

Give kids the ticket to adventure where choosing Jesus gives them the ticket to the best ride of their lives. Start spreading the news! Registration forms are available in the CE and church offices and the church website under the "Resources/forms" tab.

Please give Nancy Leardi a shout out if you can assist in the set up or the week of VBS.

Adult volunteers are needed for this year's VBS in many ways. There are many opportunities before, during and after VBS. Please let us know if you can help with decorations or simply being present the week of.

Both campers and volunteers have a form to fill out. Get one from the CE office, the church office or from FPC website: <https://fpcweb.org/resources/forms/>



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

Here are the events lined up for the month of May:

Watch out for more details through the monthly eblasts and weekly Sunday Paper.

May 10 SENIOR NIGHT/END OF YEAR BONFIRE

May 17 END OF YEAR BBQ

May 13 MOTHER'S DAY CAR WASH

May 21 YOUTH SUNDAY at 9:30 am

May 21 PLAWKING AFTER WORSHIP

Can you tell how excited our youth were as they baked their way one Wednesday evening during Youth Group? Happy to report they all had their fill of cookies!!



What is PLAWKING?

Plawking is "picking up litter while walking."

How did we learn about plawking?

Our youth mission trip participants learned about PLAWKING from our Roanoke VA community partners (check out the Roanoke Plawking facebook page). Led by many volunteers in the Roanoke community, there are weekly meet-ups for volunteer groups who walk the neighborhood and pick up litter. While the walks are intended for trash pick up, the main goal is to connect with members of the community by greeting people along the way and getting to know neighbors who volunteer with the group. The goal is to show LOVE for the community while making it a safer, cleaner, and friendlier place to live.

The FPC H4H participants have worked with the Roanoke plawking group the last few years on the trip. The team has met awesome volunteers, worked alongside community members, and even created a competitive scavenger hunt for found items along the way. The team is so excited to bring the plawking concept to Metuchen!

Join us after church on **May 21 (after Youth Sunday) at the Social Center parking lot**. We will depart on walking routes through Metuchen and work together to pick up litter. We plan to walk for approximately 30 minutes but stay for as little or as much as you can! All are welcome!



For the FPC church community

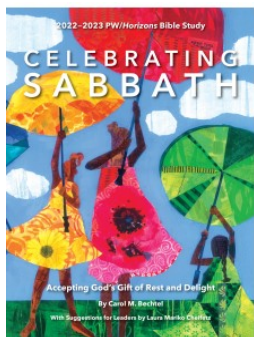
Join us Plawking!

May 21, from 10:45-11:45 am

Meet and start from the Social Center Parking Lot

Following worship on Youth Sunday we will do our share of a community clean up right here in Metuchen. If you can walk and pick up litter then you're good to go plawking!

ADULT ENRICHMENT PROGRAM & OTHER EVENTS



HORIZON BIBLE STUDY IS FOR EVERYONE!

**Monday, May 1st
7:00 p.m.
PW Lounge / Zoom
Led by Mary Kay
Dangremond**

Join us this month in the PW Lounge or by Zoom as study leader Mary Kay Dangremond leads us through Lesson 8 in our "Celebrating Sabbath" study. The key idea of this month's lesson on "Sabbath and Justice" is familiar to our congregation – "Celebrating the Sabbath means living lives of justice all week long."

Primary scripture, Isaiah 58, reminds us to reflect on the connection between Sabbath and justice, "every day in every way."

Even if you missed any of the previous lessons, don't hesitate to walk in or jump on the Zoom. Every lesson stands alone, every gathering is full of interesting ideas and good discussion.

Visit the PW page at fpcweb.org for the Zoom link and study materials. Contact Deb Teall if you have questions: Email: debteall@optonline.net Cell: (908) 917-3990

Second Hour Forum

KNOW

Your Pronouns

June 4th after Worship

In the Chapel

With Sam Fischer

and Abby Thompson



THE GOSPEL STORIES

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

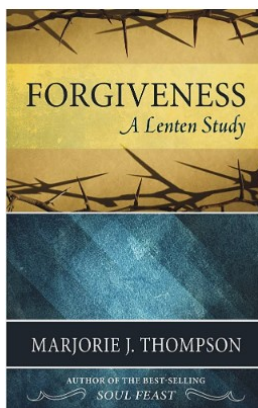
Join Rev. Garry in this continuing study on the teachings of Jesus taken from the Gospel books. Come in person or join virtually by Zoom. **Use Meeting ID: 847 1167 3419** or click on: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84711673419>



**MEN'S BREAKFAST
Wednesday, May 24
7:30 a.m.
Dining Room**

Don't miss out on the breakfast especially prepared by Rev. Garry. Join the great conversation and time of fellowship that happens around the table. The meal and the fellowship are sure to feed your body and soul.

SECOND HOUR FORUM



**A MONTHLY STUDY
May 7 After worship
In the Chapel**

**With Amy Bertelsen-Robles
and Helen Burr-Cackowski**

*Forgiving others and humbly asking
for forgiveness are central
disciplines for all Christian believers.*

Best-selling author Marjorie J. Thompson of the book ***Soul Feast***, takes a close look at our understanding of forgiveness in this encouraging study. Facilitating the study are Amy Bertelsen-Robles and Helen Burr-Cackowski. The book has six brief chapters and each meeting will cover one chapter. Launched only in April, the remaining meeting dates are:

June 11

August 6

July 9

September 10

All those interested in participating should contact Nancy Leardi for a copy of the book. With clarity, insight, and sensitivity, this book is the perfect resource for examining both our ability to forgive and our own need for forgiveness. Join our thoughtful leaders in this study.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN: In the Church Community

One more Spring Rummage Sale is in the books and we couldn't be more excited to see the support of so many - donors and volunteers all together contributing to its success. A heartfelt THANK YOU to all our seasoned and "new faces" hard-working volunteers, and all those who donated items and everyone who shopped. We are thrilled to report that the Spring Rummage Sale on April 21—22 brought in \$10,144!! **THANK YOU!!**



Clockwise from top right: The crew gathers for a meal before the doors open; the early shoppers checking out with their "treasures;" the frenzy of the Saturday \$5 bag sale and the long line of eager shoppers who lined up hours before the opening of the Social Center.

SAVE THE DATES: Here are upcoming PW events you don't want to miss. Join the fun at these events!

- **May 14, Mother's Day and PW's 126th Birthday Celebration**

Join the celebration during Coffee Hour with a birthday Cake on us!

- **June 18, July 9 and August 13**

PW Hosts Summer Coffee Hours. There will be cakes for everyone's enjoyment!

- **July 14-15 2023 Triennial Gathering of Presbyterian Women**

This year's gathering will be at Stony Point Conference Center, Stony Point, New York

- **October 20 & 21 Fall Rummage Sale**
- **December 2 Holly Fair**
-

Gather: Committees and Commissions *collaborate!*
We have more fun **TOGETHER!** Let us know if you would like PW to partner with you in planning and producing events!



Email us if you have any PW questions :

Deb Teall debteall@optonline.net
June Young june18@optonline.net



Christ's love offers strength in hard times. This Father's Day, share that love with others through CWS Tools. CWS Tools builds a stronger future for families where their safe places weather storms to come. Consider honoring your father with a gift that builds sturdy foundations and unshakeable futures. Your partnership with CWS Tools will help even more families rebuild and repair. Won't you join us by making a gift today?

Please return the completed form along with your contribution to the Church Office. Checks may be made payable to: *First Presbyterian Church*, and indicate "*Tools of Hope*" on the memo line. The Mission Commission will send an acknowledgment note to the person you are honoring and the list of donors will be posted along with our Worship Bulletin on Father's Day, June 18th.

NAME _____ PHONE NUMBER _____

AMOUNT OF CONTRIBUTION (\$5.00/ Tools) _____ PLEDGE ENVELOPE NO.: _____

INFORMATION FOR BULLETIN INSERT & ACKNOWLEDGMENT

GIVEN IN HONOR OF : _____

HONOREE'S ADDRESS: _____

GIVEN IN MEMORY OF: _____

RETURN THE FORMS NO LATER THAN: **Thursday, June 1st**



BUILDING A BRIGHTER FUTURE

That one is like a man building a house, who dug deeply and laid the foundation on rock;
when a flood arose, the river burst against that house but could not shake it,
because it had been well built.

- LUKE 6:48 NRSV

CHURCH STAFF

First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen
(as of April 20, 2023)

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Rev. Robert A. Beringer, Pastor Emeritus
Hanna Richards, Seminarian Intern

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Christian Education Production Leader

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Brenda A. Day, Minister of Music Emeritus

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Executive Director of Missions hkoball@fpcweb.org

COMMUNITY NURSERY SCHOOL

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Director mluis@fpcweb.org
Colleen Smith 732-491-2242
Head Teacher csmith@fpcweb.org



Please consider wearing red as we celebrate Pentecost Sunday.



The office will be **CLOSED** in observance of Memorial Day.
CHURCH OFFICE SUMMER HOURS BEGIN AND ENDS ON LABOR DAY.

Monday—Thursday 8:00 am—4:30 pm
Fridays: 8:00 am—Noon

INDONESIAN FELLOWSHIP

A worship service in Bahasa is held every Sunday at Noon with exception of 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

**Tetapi orang-orang yang menanti-nantikan
Tuhan mendapat kekuatan baru:
mereka seumpama rajawali yang naik terbang
dengan kekuatan sayapnya;
mereka berlari dan tidak menjadi lesu,
mereka berjalan dan tidak menjadi lelah.
- YESAYA 40:31**

MAY 2023 PARISH NEWS
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF METUCHEN
270 Woodbridge Avenue, Metuchen, NJ 08840

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION
US POSTAGE PAID
NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ
PERMIT 746

Address Service Requested

TO:



The information contained herein is for Church use only. Individuals using this information must receive permission of the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen, NJ.

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!



First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen is a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

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