

PARISH NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF METUCHEN, NJ



The Habitat Youth, exploring the beauty of Virginia

THE BEAUTY OF OUR FAITH

- EXPERIENCING THE BEAUTY OF THE DIVINE THROUGH MUSIC
- THE BEAUTY OF GENEROSITY, OUR FOOD PANTRY PARTNERS
- THE BEAUTY OF FELLOWSHIP, MEET OUR DEACONS
- THE BEAUTY OF HERITAGE, LEARNING A PARENT'S LANGUAGE

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

- MEET OUR NEW ASSOCIATE PASTOR, REVEREND KHAYLA JOHNSON
- SIGN UP FOR THIS YEAR'S CHILDREN AND YOUTH PROGRAMS

COLORS AND LIGHT

Fred Garry

in 1629, at the age of 35, George Herbert left London, became a priest, and got married. He would die four years later of consumption, being of poor health for most of his short life.

He was the rector of a small, rural church in Bemerton about 75 miles southeast of London. Herbert was known as a devoted pastor, a good musician, but mostly as a man who gave up political ambition for a quiet life in the country. He was a dean at Oxford and a member of parliament when he left politics. Although not the first one to resign from power, he is perhaps the only one who then became one of England's greatest poets.

In the year of his death, 1633, he bundled a collection of poems he had written during his brief pastorate; he mailed the bundle to a friend. His direction was: if his friend found the poems could bring relief to poor souls, then publish them. If not, burn them. The poems were published with the simple title: *The Temple*. The name is drawn from the way Herbert's poetry was what he saw in the small church where he preached, his "temple" as it were. All his poems have a literal meaning drawn from the parts of the church (floors, windows, altars) and they all have a metaphysical meaning, a transcendent sense. Notice how "Church Windows" become the preacher and the sermon.

*Lord, how can man preach thy eternal word?
He is a brittle crazy glass;
Yet in thy temple thou dost him afford
This glorious and transcendent place,
To be a window, through thy grace.*

*But when thou dost anneal in glass thy story,
Making thy life to shine within
The holy preachers, then the light and glory
More reverend grows, and more doth win;
Which else shows waterish, bleak, and thin.*

*Doctrine and life, colors and light, in one
When they combine and mingle, bring
A strong regard and awe; but speech alone
Doth vanish like a flaring thing,
And in the ear, not conscience, ring.*

Herbert was a clever poet, and a devoted believer, yet the power of his words is most often to be found not in sophistry or composition, but in a simple truth found in the poem above. When we serve God, when we pray, when we love and sacrifice, when we sing we are changed. What was "waterish, bleak, and thin" becomes "light and glory." We become beautiful as we "combine and mingle."

What in us changes; how does this change occur; can we seek such change or must we wait for it to come to us? Is light and glory the substance of beauty? Although I have asked these questions in beautiful settings, in museums and works of art, in song and verse, for the most part I have sought the answer in preaching. When a story or a parable unlocks the heart because "doctrine and life, colors and light . . . combine" we can see the true "art" of preaching.

I have asked these questions now for thirty years. Last week was the 30th anniversary of my ordination. While I have preached in different churches and practiced different disciplines of sermon writing, to become a window as Herbert describes has been the constant, the binding of all the words. To become invisible so those who gather for worship can see and hear their heart. This artistic attempt with words and image, stories and confessions, perhaps it should not be confined to the pulpit, restricted to the writing of sermons.

Yesterday I listened to Scott Walters tell a story about hitting a homerun as a boy and how his father greeted him at home plate. As Scott told the story of his father's joy and delight and moment of pride, I felt engulfed in "colors and light." I keep coming back to the afterglow of his memory and each time the beauty of it reveals something more. My life for just a moment had a "strong regard and awe." Perhaps, I thought, perhaps the art of preaching is merely a way to train our "ear" to hear the truth everywhere. Perhaps the "transcendent" pulpit is a moment to survey how truth is all around, in each heart, in word and song. Perhaps. However it may be understood, one thing is sure: for just a moment I was different and life was beautiful.

FINDING BEAUTY IN THIN PLACES

Jordan Klotz

The Celtic tradition offers us the idea of “thin places,” places on earth where the boundary between here and heaven feels thinner, more permeable. These may be physical places, but are also the pauses where we feel mindful, unhurried, unencumbered, and agenda-free.

Last summer, I experienced a literal mountaintop thin place while traveling through the Highlands of Scotland. In Glen Coe, Scotland, working toward the summit of “Stob Coire nam Beith,” after hours of arduous hiking, I reached the crest of the mountain. This moment—suddenly reaching the point where I was no longer looking at the side of the mountain, but seeing over the mountain—was a feeling unlike any other. All at once, my body felt lighter, I felt more in-tune with both the ground and the sky.

For me, there is but one other way to access such euphoria, such connection to the Divine, such “thinness.” As we sing in “When In Our Music, God is Glorified:

***How often, making music, we have found
A new dimension in the world of sound,
As worship moved us to a more profound
Alleluia!***

“That thing.” When members of the Westminster Choir College community describe its members, we invariably say “that thing,” as in, “we all seem to have ‘that thing.’” Sharing the Westminster “thing” has played no small part in my beautiful friendship with Brenda Day, for which I am ever grateful. In each other, Westminster-ites find a shared knowledge and a common desire. We know that making music brings us to a thin place; experiencing this together restores us and grows us. How could we ever turn away from something so sacred?

I hope that our new Candlelight Concert Series—music by complete candlelight—will offer space for all to find a “thin place” of their own.

Candlelight Concert Series

Sunday, October 27, 6:00 PM:
Hauntings at the Organ
Brenda Day & Jordan Klotz

Sunday, December 1, 7:00 PM
Ding, Dong! Merrily on High
FPC Handbell Choirs

Sunday, February 2, 6:00 PM
Candlelight Canticles
FPC Senior Choir & La Fiocco

Sunday, April 13, 7:00 PM
Music for Christ's Passion
FPC Choral Scholars



THE BEAUTY OF FELLOWSHIP, MEET OUR DEACONS



The Deacons are a ministry of love, a ministry of compassion, and a ministry of prayer. They share the love of Jesus Christ to the church and the community. The Deacons serve FPC through their Elder Care Ministry, Community Dinners, Prayer Shawls, Soup Ministry, Flower Delivery, Cards and Caring, and Helping Hands Ministry. Jen Edge and Gilly McKie co-lead the Deacons. If you would like to receive a Deacon ministry, please contact the church office 732-491-2300.

To the left, the Deacons' retreat. Not pictured are Jen Edge, Betty Kopetz, Mary Ann Eide, Nikki Walter and Sue West



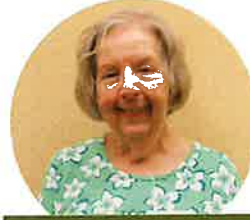
Gilly McKie



Maggy Cook



Wendy Kukowski



Karen Sorensen



Beth Russian



Reynolds Shaw



Jennifer Thompson



Eli Duhme



Sandra Laluw



Martin Brehm



Nancy Regan



Bill Volz



Betty Kopetz



Mary Ann Eide



Nikki Walter



Sue West



Jen Edge

THE BEAUTY OF GENEROSITY: FPC'S FOOD PANTRY

Alicia Parr

The First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen (FPC) Food Pantry asked some of their partnering organizations to reflect on the beauty of their experiences helping others.

"The food pantry has allowed me to impact hundreds of homeless people to give them meals and help with food insecurity. It allows me to...link them to social supports. The food pantry has been a blessing to my clients. I love the individuals who serve here, especially Sarah...the pantry assisted us with a homeless family of 8 that hadn't eaten in two days. We were able to get them emergency housing and eventually long-term affordable housing."

- Case Worker - Rutgers Health University Behavioral Health Care (UBHC)

"Visiting the food pantry as an access navigator for those facing housing insecurity is genuinely a highlight in my week. Aside from the pantry's organization and array of food options, the people who all play a role are what make it an experience to look forward to. Clients are always met with a smile and laughter, which fills the space...with respect and dignity. These subtleties go a long way in building this beautiful community that I am happy to...be a part of."

- Access Navigator - Coming Home of Middlesex County, Inc.

"...Due to my passion for public health, I am dedicated to ensuring that those in need receive nourishment and care. When I assist at the food pantry, I spend my time offering assistance with SNAP applications to help people in need. My actions provide essential resources and bring hope and dignity to those facing difficult times. My passion for working with communities [addresses] the vital need to live a healthy life mentally, spiritually, and physically...true generosity is measured by the willingness to give of oneself, creating an effect of kindness and positivity that touches countless lives."

- Outreach Team Member - Raritan Bay Area YMCA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as food stamps)

"I was helping hand out food to those who found themselves in a time of need. A young mother came in, and after I handed her a bag of food, I noticed a tear in her eye. It was a tear of joy appreciating the beauty of volunteers who were willing to collect, store, and distribute food to others who really needed it. I believe in God, and I believe that God sees what we do. Volunteering time and effort makes God smile, and you know what? It will make you smile, too."

- Togetherhood Volunteer - Metuchen YMCA

As the pantry supporters above have stated, assisting individuals in need is truly a beautiful thing!



Produce from the Food Pantry Garden that helps feed the food pantry clients

A BEAUTIFUL FPC SUMMER



*Pictures in the left column, from top to bottom:
VBS, VBS, FPC puppeteers, choir tour, Summer
2024*

*Pictures in the right column, from top to bottom:
VBS swim day, VBS Outerspace theme, FPC
puppeteers, Brenda Day on the choir tour,
Summer 2024*





Pictures in the left column, choir trip, Habitat trip, church greeters, welcome weekend for Associate Pastor Khayla Johnson, Summer 2024

Pictures in the right column, Habitat Youth, Community Garden, church picnic, Indonesian Fellowship Youth beach trip, Summer 2024



WELCOME REVEREND KHAYLA JOHNSON!



Khayla with her niece Kamiya and nephew Josiah

Tell us about yourself, where you grew up, family, hobbies, etc.

I was born and raised in Charleston, South Carolina. I inherited a large family, by large I mean my grandmother was one of fourteen. I am the oldest of three children with a younger sister and a younger brother. They both were nice enough to make me an aunt and I love every minute of it. My family means a lot to me, and they are a daily source of encouragement in my life. For as long as I can remember, my family has been a part of the Presbyterian faith tradition. At one point in my life, I was worshipping in the same church as my great grandmother. On any given Sunday you can see four generations of my relatives worshipping together. I am a sixth generation Presbyterian and grew up in Saint James Presbyterian Church USA in Charleston, South Carolina.

My hobbies and interests include photography, the arts, and sports. I enjoy spending time behind a camera, experiencing the arts and as much sports as I can possibly watch. Here are some fun facts for y'all to know. I spent my weekends during seminary coaching soccer each week with the YMCA for ages 2-6. Things I talk about way too much include soccer, basketball, Philadelphia Eagles, shoes, marine life and going on my next cruise. My friends would describe me as cheerful, open minded, fun to be around and caring. I love to tell jokes.

When and why did you decide to become a pastor? Did you consider any other career pathways?

Since I grew up in the church, I was the poster child for all the things a child could do in the church. From Christmas pageants, trunk or treat, youth group retreats and leading worship, you name it I did it. And guess what, I actually enjoyed it. I had the chance to lead in a variety of ways and it made me realize how much I loved church. While in college I had the opportunity to be a student missionary for three months and fell in love with ministry. During that time, I decided I wanted church leadership to be a priority in my life, not to become a pastor. I wanted everyone to experience the good that the church can be, to learn about the God who had done so much for me and my family. I thought about other options but went to seminary instead and here we are.

I understand you help organizations run their social media. Can you tell us more about what you do and why you like doing that?

Yes, I own a small business that is designed to help nonprofits and small businesses enhance their digital presence. I have a degree in graphic design, and I have always used my artistic gifts to help family and friends, so I turned it into a business. I love creating different things and helping others. Through my business I can help nonprofits and small businesses manage social media, build websites and tell their story to the world.

What do you like about working with youth? What are your hopes for the youth of FPC?

I love youth ministry. First, they are so much fun. Second, it's the place where faith and curiosity collide in the most amazing ways. I knew from the beginning I was called to work in youth ministry. I knew how much the relationships at that point in my life meant to me, and I knew I was wired to do that work well. I am still passionate about the need for the right person to do that work long term, especially in a time when we see a gap in the ages of those who attend church. My hope for the youth of FPC is that they would always remain curious about God, realizing that there is no such thing as a dumb question with God. My hope is that they build a community of grace, love and support on the journey. I pray that they stay open to the movement of the Spirit in their lives, so that the world will see God through them in every encounter.

WELCOME REVEREND JOHNSON! (CONT.)

I pray that they continue to cultivate an authentic relationship with Jesus Christ and want the same for the friends they share life with. My hope is that they live unashamed of the Gospel and want to live a life that glorifies God. And I hope I am here to walk with them for a long time.

What are you looking forward to in the upcoming year?

I am most looking forward to joining in the life of the community, hearing stories and sharing life

with each of you. I am looking forward to the opportunity to join you in the great work you are already doing, seeing how the Spirit moves us and how God will work through us. I think this position is poised to make a great impact in your community. I see this position as a wonderful opportunity to help you tell your story and the greatest story.

RIP AND DIP? THE CHANGE TO INTINCTION

Deb Teall and Mary Kay Dangremond

Communion by intinction. In the irreverent jargon of pastors, “rip and dip!” Tearing a piece from the loaf of bread, dunking it in the chalice of wine (or, at FPC Metuchen, grape juice).

Communion, sharing the consecrated elements. Intinction, from the Latin *intinctio* (“dip in”), dipping the symbolic body of Christ into Christ’s symbolic blood, sharing the sacred elements as one. Although Communion by Intinction has been a topic of much theological debate and discussion, it has long been a tradition in Catholic and Protestant churches. The Music & Worship Commission and its Sanctuary & Sacraments Committee (S&S) hope it will become a tradition at FPC Metuchen.

Back in the day (which now means every moment before COVID), S&S Committee members would take turns every month cutting up regular loaf bread into cubes and arranging it on silver plates with linen napkins laundered and pressed into submission by our own Linda Lee Mundy. We’d pour juice into tiny plastic cups set in silver trays, each holding 40 cups.

In the nearly three decades since I joined the Committee, we added different color loaves—white bread, rye, pumpernickel—to reflect the diversity in our congregation. We added gluten-free bread, originally baked for us by former congregant Jennifer Fong. Communion set-up was labor-intensive and time-consuming. Serving it required many hands as servers moved up and down the aisles, first passing the plates of bread, then passing the trays of juice.

But it was tradition, and a sacred process. Often smiles and soft words were exchanged between server and served. However, we have been known to diverge from that tradition. During the 10-year tenure of one pastor, for example, we traditionally switched to intinction during the light attendance of the summer months.

COVID put an end to hands-on preparation. As we emerged from the pandemic, wafers nested in reusable cups, which could still reside in the 40-cup trays. The S&S Committee members heard numerous complaints about the hard, dry wafers (which were not cheap, despite their plain aspect—and the gluten-free wafers were even more expensive).

Upon hearing the complaints, one Committee member raised an eyebrow and commented with mock incredulity, “You’re complaining about the Body of Christ?!” But the complaints inspired us to study other methods.

With encouragement from congregants, S&S began discussing a permanent move to Communion by Intinction. It would save money, it would cut back on labor and time, it would require fewer servers – and it would allow us to partake of fresh bread. Virginia Shaw, then head of Music & Worship, brought the proposal before Session. It was agreed Communion by Intinction would formally begin on the first Sunday in June.

The Communion table is still set with a white tablecloth. Juice is poured into two chalices. The minister and other servers wash their hands in

RIP AND DIP? (CONT.)

front of the congregation to demonstrate the purity of the rite, literally and symbolically. The minister “breaks” the Challah with the words Jesus spoke to his disciples.

Three months into our “new” Communion process, the S&S Committee, the Church Staff and the Elders are perfecting the setup and the serving. (Summer’s lighter attendance has been forgiving.) And yet what is truly new?

As we gather in the two traditional aisles of our historic Church, the act of Communion remains solemn. We walk together, quietly and confidently receiving the body and blood of Christ as we let meditative music lift our spirits toward God.

We still share a friendly interaction as we are given a bit of Challah with a blessing from the server. We are reassured as the chalice is tilted encouragingly to aid careful dipping, combining the elements into one. We look out for each other to ensure those who can’t easily walk are served in the pew.

While we revise our method of partaking, we recognize Communion by Intinction is not about less work or greater convenience or better-tasting bread. Rather, however it’s performed, Communion is an act of sharing the elements that represent our faith...the sacredness shown through the love of Christ.

THE BEAUTY OF FAMILY: FAMILY FAITH PRACTICES

Nancy Leardi

Encouraging simple practices for families of all ages, shapes, and sizes

This Sunday school season, classes will be discussing Christian Virtues. We plan to share puppet skits, lessons and games surrounding this teachable theme.

Virtues to Teach Your Child

The best collection of Biblical virtues is in Galatians 5:22-23, the fruits of the spirit, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.”

Consider reviewing these virtues regularly. There are many other verses that talk about Biblical virtues. Look them up as you encounter specific teaching moments in your child’s spiritual walk. As you tie lessons to God’s Word, your child’s faith will be strengthened. A few examples include strength, courage, wisdom and purity. God will empower your child to put on these virtues, and many others, with your guidance.



Martin and Maggie Brennan. Maggie often enjoys baking for her family and community.

Pray a Virtue a Day

Growth in Grace: “I pray that my children may grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” (2 Pet. 3:18)

Love: “Grant, Lord, that my children may learn to live a life of love, through the Spirit who dwells in them.” (Gal. 5:25; Eph. 5:2)

Honesty and Integrity: “May integrity and honesty be their virtue and their protection.” (Ps. 25:21)

Love for God’s Word: “May my children grow to find Your Word more precious than gold and sweeter than honey from the comb.” (Ps. 19:10)

Justice: “God, help my children to love justice and do and act justly in all they do.” (Ps. 11:7);

Respect: “Lord, grant that my children may show proper respect to everyone, as Your Word commands.” (1 Pet. 2:17)

WHAT'S NEW AT FPC?

Heather Koball

Update on the Food Pantry Expansion You might be curious about the start date for our eagerly awaited food pantry expansion. We've made great strides, yet faced some delays. Here's where we are - Jim LaPorta, the talent behind our Social Center's renovation, won the contract through a competitive bid. We've also won grants covering most of the expenses. Plus, dedicated volunteer, Charlie Day, is overseeing the project. The main holdup? Securing county approval, necessary since Woodbridge Ave is under their jurisdiction. With that hurdle cleared, we're onto securing building permits. More updates to come!

Scam Alert Be alert for a scammer impersonating Rev. Garry, targeting church members. Should you get a suspicious email or text requesting gift cards or other items for Rev Garry, ignore it and please inform the church office.

Elder Care Team The Deacons have established an Elder Care Team dedicated to ensuring that the senior members of the First Presbyterian Church stay engaged with our community. Led by Wendy Kukowski, the initiative has connected with approximately 100 senior congregants eager for visits or calls from the team. In addition to facilitating transportation to church events and medical appointments, the team aims to connect these individuals with our soup and prayer shawl ministries. The Elder Care Team is also planning to create a directory of resources for seniors and their families. Currently, the team consists of six volunteers and is looking to recruit four to six more. Volunteering is open to all, not just Deacons. Those interested in volunteering can reach out to Wendy Kukowski at 732-983-2457 or wkukowski14@gmail.com.

Grants Update The church staff have been hard at work writing proposals to support FPC's many vital missions. So far in 2024, FPC staff have secured over \$230,000 in grants to help fund our food pantry, our newly created Elder Care team, our Community Dinners, our Community Garden, and our local mission work. We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you for the generosity of our funders: the Synod of the Northeast, the Presbytery of the Coastlands, the Community Food Bank of New Jersey, Manasquan Bank, and Middlesex County.

New Childrens Ministry Space If you've noticed some dust and construction materials in the library on the first floor of the Education Building, it's because we are excited to announce the conversion of the library into a dedicated Childrens Ministry space. Our collection of library books has found new homes within the church or with new owners. Join us for the dedication of the room on September 8, right after the church service. Everyone is welcome!

Highlights from the Deacon Elder Retreat On August 24, FPC Elders and Deacons gathered at the Social Center for their annual retreat with the theme "Finding Beauty," which will guide the upcoming church program year. This theme, also featured in this Parish News, was inspired by the church's new mission statement that emphasizes art and music as pathways to spiritual growth. The retreat began with Rev. Garry's plenary, "What If Beauty Is the Goal?" followed by group discussions exploring four aspects of beauty: Interior Beauty, memory and hope; External Beauty, places and the world's beauty; Beauty of Beginnings, Christmas and Advent; and Beauty of Endings, Lent. Participants shared their thoughts on beauty and cherished memories, some of which were captured on video. FPC's ministry leaders will continue exploring these themes throughout the year with a plan to share the videos online.



Deacons and Elders Retreat, August 2024: Gary Ostermueller, Fred Blake, Gillie McKie, Tracy Regan, Beth Russian, Russ Dickow, and Izzy Garcia

CHILDREN AND YOUTH PROGRAMS, SIGN UP NOW!



**SUNDAY
SEPTEMBER 15TH**

On September 15, Rally Day, all students are invited to the Blessing of the Backpacks in worship. We will be worshipping as One Church Together, with all ages participating.

Coffee Hour will take place in the Social Center with games including the Gaga Pit.

Regular Sunday School classes will resume on Sunday September 22nd. On each 1st Sunday of the month, the children's programming will have new offerings (Puppet Skit Stories, Mindful Teachings, and Bible Baking). In addition, we will continue LEGO Sundays with Ms. Fischer. Watch your emails for more information.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH GROUPS:

First Tuesday Club (From K-2nd Grade) Starting Tuesday, October 1st from 4:30 – 5:00 PM

Junior Club (From 3rd-6th Grade) Starting Thursday, October 3rd from 5:30-6:15 PM

Wednesday Night Youth Group (7th-12th) Kick-off Barbeque on Wed. October 2nd.

The weeks following Oct. 2nd, Youth Group will continue to meet on Wednesdays at 7:30PM in the Senior High Room (Room 201) in the Education Building. Bring your friends!

CHILDREN AND YOUTH CHOIRS

Jubilee Choir (Age 4 to 2nd Grade) Starting on 9/17 Tuesdays 4:00 – 4:30 p.m.

Junior Choir (3rd to 6th Grades) Starting on 9/19 Thursdays 4:15 – 5:00 p.m.

Joy Ringers (3rd to 6th Grades) Starting on 9/19 Thursdays 5:00 – 5:30 p.m.

Westminster Choir (7th to 12th Grades) Starting on 9/18 Wednesdays 6:30 – 7:00 p.m.

Trinity Ringers (7th Grade to Adults) Starting on 9/18 Wednesdays 7:00 – 7:30 p.m.

REGISTER TODAY! We are planning for a great year ahead!

Register for Children and Youth programming online **using this QR code:**



If you prefer to print the form, download from FPC website
<https://fpcweb.org/resources/forms/> and submit to the church office.

Please complete a separate registration for EACH child.

For Christian Education questions, contact Nancy Leardi at (732) 491-2264 or nleardi@fpcweb.org

For Choir questions, contact Jordan Klotz at (732) 491-2266 or jklotz@fpcweb.org

THE BEAUTY OF HERITAGE

Caitlyn Sanger

My name is Caitlyn Sanger, I have been attending the First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen since I was born in 2005. My parents are Conny Mandagi and Roby Sanger. My sister is Bridget Sanger. My family worships at the 9:30am service and with the Indonesian fellowship on most Sundays. Many of my parents' family live in an Indonesia village called Sonder. When I was young my parents wanted us to learn their native language but as a child I didn't really want to learn.

Growing up in Metuchen, where it was not as diverse as it is now, I was shy to embrace the culture. As I got older, being in the Indonesian fellowship grew my interest in learning the language even more. When I was a child, my parents tried teaching me about Manadonese, also known as Manado Malay or Bahasa Manado. It is a Malay-based creole language spoken in Manado, Indonesia and the surrounding areas. I only knew a few words as a child. Growing up, I started to gradually understand the language because my parents would talk to me in Manado along with the Indonesian community. Being surrounded by Indonesians encourages me to embrace the culture. I wish I had learned the language when I was a child because I love trying to speak in Manado with family and friends. I try

to learn by speaking full sentences with the youth and the older generation. They continue to help me by replying back in Manado which helps me understand what they're trying to say.

I'm very eager to become fluent as I look to the day when I may travel to visit my relatives' town in Indonesia, I want to try speaking to them in their native tongue so they can be proud of me for speaking two languages. I am very grateful for my parents and the Indonesian community in helping me embrace the culture. "The beauty of the world lies in the diversity of its people."



Caitlyn Sanger

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Community Nursery

Do you have a hobby or talent that you would like to share with the children of Community Nursery School? CNS is eager for you to meet the four-year-old class and share your talents with them! You can volunteer for one afternoon or several, it is up to you! Please contact Stacy Ambriz, CNS Director, cns@fpcweb.org, or Heather Koball in the church office 732-491-2300

Children's Ministry

The children's ministry needs you! The Sunday school has opportunities for teachers and assistants this fall. Please contact Nancy Leardi for more information Email: nleardi@fpcweb.org

Pack Lunches for Elijah's Promise

This fall, local mission will sponsor an afternoon to pack lunches for Elijah's Promise, on the fourth Saturday of the month at 11AM. Elijah's Promise is a local organization that addresses the root causes of poverty. If you are interested, in volunteering please contact Sarah Teti, foodpantry@fpcweb.org.

Community Dinners

Our Community Dinners have been a great success! The Community Dinner team is always in need of volunteers and supplies. Please contact Gilly McKie (gilly@mckie.com or (908) 405-2299) if you can help out!

UPCOMING EVENTS

SEPTEMBER

6. Queer Fellowship Kick-Off Fall Meeting

PW Lounge, 7PM

Meetings are the first Friday of the month

8. Dedication of Children Ministry Space

First Floor Education Building, Following 9:30AM

Worship Service

8. Community Dinner

Social Center, 5PM

Join us for a delicious home-cooked meal. Invite a friend, all are welcome!

11. Kick-Off Men's Breakfast

Social Center, 7:30AM

Breakfasts are the second Wednesday of the month

12. First Senior Choir Fall Practice

Sanctuary, 8AM

12. First Concord and Covenant Bell Choir Fall Practice

Sanctuary, 9:30AM and 7PM

15. Rally Day and Blessing of the Backpacks

9:30AM Worship Service

Bring your school backpacks to be blessed and come to the kick-off for children and youth programming

18. Kick-Off Prayer Shawl Crochet and Knitting Circle

Session Room, 7PM, Circle is the 3rd Wed of the month

Beginners welcome! Contact Jen Thompson jenni4_thompson@yahoo.com or Gillie McKie gilly@mckie.com for more information.

19. Mission Volunteer Night

Social Center, 7PM

Help pack food for the food pantry

25: Kick-Off Deacons Lunch and Games

12-3PM, Social Center Dining Room

Lunch and Games is on the last Wed of the month. Join the Deacons for an afternoon of games. Bring your lunch, including a drink. If you are interested, please call Sue West, 732-556-7511. (If you forget to call, come anyway!) If you need a ride, please call, we have volunteers willing to drive.

28. Pack Lunches for Elijah's Promise

Social Center, 9AM

Help pack lunches for homeless and food insecure people

OCTOBER

1. Reverend Khayla Johnson's First Day

2. Youth Group Barbecue

Social Center Ballfield, TBD

6. Community Dinner

Social Center, 5PM

9. Men's Breakfast

Social Center, 7:30AM

14-17. Drop Off for Fall Rummage Sale

Social Center Mo and We 9AM - 5PM, Tu 9AM - 7PM, Th 9AM - 3PM

Got too much stuff around the house? Donate your used items to the spring rummage sale.

18-19. Presbyterian Women's Rummage Sale!

Social Center, Fr 4PM - 8PM and Sa 9AM - 3PM

There are many volunteer opportunities, with perks such as being able to shop early! Contact Cindy O'Neill, mimabook@aol.com, and Lori Kellner, lgkellner@gmail.com

24. Mission Volunteer Night

Social Center, 7PM

26. Pack Lunches for Elijah's Promise

Social Center, 9AM

27. Kirkin O' the Tartan

Sanctuary, 9:30 AM Service

Bring your family tartan to be blessed

28. The Hauntings of the Organ Sanctuary, 6PM

Listen to Jordan Klotz and Brenda Day play Halloween-inspired music in the inaugural concert of the Music Ministry's Candlelight Concert Series. More concerts to come in December, February, and April.

CHURCH STAFF

First Presbyterian Church

Metuchen (8/25/2024)

CLERGY

Rev. Dr. Fred Garry732-491-2330
Senior Pastor/Head of Staff . . fgarry@fpcweb.org

Rev. Khayla Johnson, Associate Pastor

Rev. Dr. Glory Thomas, Parish Associate

Rev. Leksmana Leonard, Intern Pastor

Rev. Robert A. Beringer, Pastor Emeritus

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Nancy Leardi732-491-2264
Director Christian Ed.nleardi@fpcweb.org

Kat Davis katdavis@gmail.com
Christian Education Production Leader

MUSIC MINISTRY

Jordan Klotz732-491-2266
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Elaine Hansen..... .hansnelaine06@gmail.com
Assistant Bell Director and Accompanist

Brenda A. Day, Minister of Music Emeritus

SUPPORT STAFF

Heather Koball 732-491-2268
Exec. Director of Mission and Operations

..... hkoball@fpcweb.org

Colleen Walker..... 732-491-2303
Treasurer cwalker@fpcweb.org

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Sarah Teti 732-491-2325
Director of Local Mission foodpantry@fpcweb.org

COMMUNITY NURSERY SCHOOL

Stacy Ambriz732-491-2242
Directorcns@fpcweb.org

Vacant732-491-2242
Assistant Director

UNICAMERAL BOARD

Unicameral Board meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m.

Moderator: Rev. Dr. Fred G. Garry

Clerk of Session: Paul D. Gunsner

President of the Board of Trustees: Lori Kellner

Vice President/Secretary of the Board of Trustees: Bob Rosko

Class 2025

Helen Burr-Cackowski
Mary Kay Dangremont
Russ Dickow
Mike Draper
Lori Kellner
Tracy Regan

Class 2026

JoAnne Bedenek
Bernard Niall Corbalis
Gary Ostermueller
Kristina Scoglio
Brian Smith
Kevin Trolaro

Class 2027

Pete Bellisano
Fred Blake
Isidoro Garcia
Arthur Jemmy
Jan Margolis
Bob Rosko

COMMISSIONS

A Commission is a body provided for by the Unicameral Board of the Church to oversee a particular part of the Church's life & ministry. Each Commission has the authority to carry out the goals established by the Unicameral Board, and regularly reports its decisions and actions to that Board.

Christian Education Commission

Chair: Fred Blake

- Sunday School and Confirmation Class, Adult Education, VBS, Puppet Ministry, Triennium, Young PW, and Library

Finance Commission

Lori Kellner — Pres. Brd. of Trustees

- Buildings & Grounds, Community Nursery School, Insurance, Investments & Endowment, and Technology.

Mission & Outreach Commission

Chair: Russ Dickow

- Food Pantry, Local Mission, Benevolent Grants, International Peace and Social Justice.

Personnel Commission

Chair: Brian Smith

- Helps to Build a Healthy Work Environment, Performance Review, and Staff Support.

Stewardship Commission

Chair: Bernard Niall Corbalis

Co-Chair: Jan Margolis

- On-going Interpretation and Development of our Stewardship Program, and Fundraising Task Force.

Worship and Music Commission

Chair: Gary Ostermueller

- Indonesian Fellowship, Sanctuary and Sacraments, and Music & Arts.

Youth Commission

Chair: Michael Draper

- Youth Fellowship, Mission Trip, Day of Service, Scouts, and Young Adults.

BOARD OF DEACONS

Board of Deacons meet the 1st Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m.

Co-Moderators: Jennifer Edge and Gillian McKie

Secretary: Nikki Walter

Treasurer: Maggy Cook

Class 2025

Eli Duhme
Jennifer Edge
Betty Kopetz
Gillian McKie
Jennifer Thompson
Bill Volz

Class 2026

Mary Ann Eide
Nancy Regan
Beth Russian
Reynolds Shaw
Nikki Walter
Sue West

Class 2027

Martin Brennan
Heather Casey
Maggy Cook
Wendy Kukowski
Sandra Luluw
Karen Sorensen

FALL 2024 PARISH NEWS

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

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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

Items for the upcoming newsletter may be emailed to
hkoball@fpcweb.org

Church Office

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

Sunday Worship Service 9:30 am

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