



The First Presbyterian Church of Mt. Holly, NJ

Gray Matters

By Rev. Barry Gray

April 2020

I'm really happy to announce that our Pastor Nominating Team (PNT) has been chosen and commissioned and will have met for the first time by the time you read this article. The team consists of all the current session members: Christie Grover, Luinie Taylor, Debbie Burke, Scott Buchannan, Joe Amisson, Bill McFarland, and me; plus two members from the congregation at large: Haley Bunting and Rob Craig. Our first duty is to prepare our church information form (CIF) and then get it out so perspective candidate know what kind of candidate we are looking for.

Because I know some wonderful pastors who are looking and knew that this time was coming soon, we already have 4 people who want to be considered for the position. As soon as we complete our CIF, we will send a copy to those four pastors and ask them to send us their resumes. Then the team will decide who has the best qualifications and who they feel led by the Holy Spirit to interview. We will also list our CIF on the ECO website and see who else may apply for an interview.

I am convinced that the Lord Jesus has just the right person in mind to lead you on the next leg of this exciting journey that God has called us to. I have been asked to stay on for up to 3 months once the new pastor arrives to make sure they are fully embracing the vision that God has given to this congregation so all the work of the past year will not be lost but will be the foundation upon which the new pastor will build.

At this point in time it seems like all our plans for the Easter season is up for grabs. We had planned to have several opportunities to gather for worship that we will not be able to fulfill in order to keep everyone safe and not be a way for the Corona virus to spread. We are working to establish a greater online presence on Facebook and through our website in which I will at least bring a sermon to you each Sunday morning. As we work out the details we will get them to you.

The session will be meeting regularly during this time to assess the congregational needs and respond to them in a timely manner. We will have to close our church building to the public to stay in compliance with the state mandates to curb the spread of the virus, but we also feel a great need to keep making provisions for the needy among us. Please be in prayer that we will receive the wisdom from God on how to do this.

While the threat of the Corona virus is dire, we do not despair for we know that we serve a sovereign God who will lead us through the difficulties to a place of victory in Jesus. Keep on praying and trusting God to get us all through this with a greater vision for how we can be more effective for the kingdom of God as we reach out to our friends and neighbors to see how we may serve them in Jesus' name and share the love of Christ with them by being there when they need us.

April Birthdays

01	Collin Stewart	14	Malcolm Craig
04	Mackensie Tansey	15	Miriam Mengel
05	Ron Traver	17	David Correa
07	Brian Beck	19	Cullen Grover
08	Susan McLaughlin	19	Margaret Vytowich
08	Nancy Jones	19	Nancy Rivera
09	Jacqueline Bozarth	19	Curtis Van Walsen
10	Eric Delgado	20	Ashley Eckart
10	Noah Grover	21	Dana Carter
10	Diane Miller	23	Todd Bunting
10	Ric Traver	27	Derek Scattergood
12	Paula McFarland	28	Nora Kennedy
13	Aaron Jones		

April Anniversaries

04	Michel and Nancy Rivera
19	Gary and Kathy Kibler
20	Brian and Melody Beck
22	Robert and Dana Carter
26	Walter and Karen Heide

Servants of the Lord: The Congregation



Servants of the Servants: Barry Gray

Pastor

Rick Hamilton

Assistant Minister

Haley Bunting

Director of Next Generation Ministries

Jackie Bozarth

Organist and Director of Choirs

Brian Taylor

Praise Band and Worship Leader

Harry Cunningham

Building Supervisor & Sexton

Jan Delgado

Director of Community Lunch

Barbara Biedenbach

Administrative Assistant

Gretchen Bisbort

Financial Secretary

First Presbyterian Church

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609-267-0330



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Church Website:

www.firstpresmtholly.org

FROM THE EDITOR

Articles should be **submitted by the 15th of the preceding month** to the church office so that staff can review and get the material included in the following month's edition. I can be reached at:

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The Vision of First Presbyterian Church is: A Heart for the Rancocas Valley.

Mission: First Presbyterian Church exists to honor God by making more disciples.

Next Generation Ministries

This past summer the Vacation Bible School theme was “When Life is Wild; God is good!”, we also learned that “When life is Scary; God is good!”. I think that life is sure wild and pretty scary right now for all of us, but it is important for us to remember that through all of this God is good, and God is faithful. God has not abandoned us or forgotten about us. We need to continue to turn to God and continue to remember his goodness.

With that being said, we are taking precautions to ensure the safety of our children and youth. With great sadness we are deciding to cancel Easter Jam this year; we will give it another try next year! Thank you to all who jumped on board and committed to help and donate!

Each week I will be sending out resources to all of the parents with the lesson videos, activities for them to complete at home, and a short lesson guide. I hope that every family will encourage their children with a short worship or devotional time each week at home! This month’s theme is DIY Forgiveness and families are being challenged to build a fort together and to send it to me for a prize!

The youth and I will be engaging in conversations via the internet; meeting on web camera and having Bible Study, messaging, and having competitions via social media. We are even doing an ABC photo challenge, and when completed the youth will be rewarded with ice cream at a later date!

I am continuing to look into other ways to get connected with our children and youth during this time! It’s important that we stay connected and encourage one another as a church family. Be in prayer for our children and youth as they are continuing with their online schooling and being at home.

American Red Cross Blood Drive

Where: First Presbyterian Church

When: Saturday, April 18, 2020

Time: 8 am - 1 pm

Appointments are preferred.

For an appointment please contact: Mary Craig at **609.267.8621**

Please note this blood drive may be cancelled depending on the virus current status.

GIVE BLOOD



SAVE LIFE

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

STATED SESSION MEETING

February 10, 2020

125 Garden Street, Mount Holly, NJ

Moderator: Rev. B. Gray
 Clerk of Session K. Badgley
 Elders Present: J. Amisson, S. Buchanan, D. Burke, C. Grover, W. McFarland, Luinie Taylor
 Elders Excused: None
 Elders Absent: None
 Staff Present: B. Gray
 Staff Excused: None

The meeting opened at 7:26 PM with devotions based on Genesis 16:1-3 and prayer.

TRAINING: Pastor Gray has selected Effectiveness by the Numbers by William R. Hoyt for Session’s next focus. Session was asked to read the introduction and chapter 1 for the March meeting. Pastor Gray and Elder McFarland shared their experiences at the ECO National Gathering, February 4-6.

At 7:50 PM Steve Burke, team leader for the Stewardship and Finance Team, and Gretchen Bisbort, Financial Secretary, were welcomed to the meeting. They presented the final report for 2019, updated budget for 2020 and team meeting report of February 3, and answered questions from the elders. The presentation ended at 8:15 PM, and they were thanked for their work.

APPROVED: Docket as sent by email.

RECEIVED and APPROVED as part of the Consent Docket:

Minutes of the Stated Session Meeting of January 13, 2020 and called meeting of January 25, 2020
Report of the Clerk. No action items.

Report of the Financial Secretary:

Balance as of December 31, 2019	\$28,131.41
Total Income	43,785.33
Total Expenses	<u>(39,046.42)</u>
Balance as of January 31, 2020	<u>\$32,870.32</u>

STATISTICS: January 2020

Lord’s Supper: The congregation celebrated the Lord’s Supper on January 5, 2020. In-home communion was served to 13 covenant partners and their families.

Baptisms: 0

Weddings: 0

Funerals: 0

RECEIVED outside the Consent Docket: Verbal report of the Pastor. No action items.

OLD BUSINESS:

APPROVED: Revised contract for Richard Hamilton, commissioned lay pastor: salary of \$76,043.76 and benefits of \$8,890.87, for a total of \$84,934.63.

APPROVED: Budget for 2020, as presented by S. Burke and G. Bisbort.

APPROVED: Five-year faith goals, as a part of the recommendations adopted during the transformation weekend in March 2019:

Objective – *Our vision statement is “A Heart for the Rancocas Valley.” We are adopting two five-year faith goals to achieve this vision: a faith goal related to conversions and a faith goal related to showing God’s love to people.*

Conversion – By 2025, FPC will have cumulatively led 250 people to Christian commitment. A commitment will be defined as one or more of the following: adult baptism, non-regular church attenders who become either Covenant Partners or join another church, and new professions of faith. We will measure this in terms of either local or global conversions.

We aim to reach this goal at an increasing pace similar to this:

2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
10	25	45	70	100
	(35 cumulative)	(80 cumulative)	(150 cumulative)	(250 cumulative)

Showing God’s love – By 2025, FPC will demonstrate God’s love to 2,000 Rancocas Valley residents per year beyond the attendance of our Community Lunch. (The Community Lunch guests represent approximately 2,000 per year. Our goal is to reach an additional 2,000 per year by 2025.) We will measure this goal only in terms of residents of the Rancocas Valley.

We aim to reach this goal at an increasing pace similar to this:

2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
100/yr.	320/yr.	680/yr.	1,220/yr.	2,000/yr.

Action – Pastor and Team Leaders will develop a plan for Session approval by May 2020 that articulates the Who, What, When, Where, and How the 2020 goals will be achieved. (It is assumed that ongoing prescription actions are already in motion, but it’s not clear if those are sufficient to achieve the 2020 goal.) Additionally, the Pastor and Team Leaders will develop a plan for Session approval each November until 2024.

UPDATE: Session was informed that Robert Craig and Haley Bunting have accepted invitations to serve on the Pastor Nominating Team. The first meeting will be scheduled when information from Rev. Nate Dreesman of ECO has been received.

TABLED ITEM from January 13: Session declined to approve a special offering from the congregation to support Presbyterian-Reformed Ministries International as they raise funds to furnish their building that was damaged by fire in 2018. Instead it will be suggested that the Mission Team inform the congregation through an article in the Weekly News of the need and ways that individuals may support this ministry.

NEW BUSINESS:

APPROVED: Session voted to release \$10,000 that had been pledged to Max and Deby Perez in December 2018 to secure a special visa to return to South Asia.

The meeting adjourned with prayer at 8:49 PM.

Attest:

Kathryn M. Badgley, Clerk of Session

April 2020

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

Note: All events listed are subject to cancellation due to the Coronavirus outbreak.

1 9:30 FPC Play Group
6:30 Children's Choir
7:00 Band Rehearsal
7:30 Adult Choir

2

3 12:00 Community Lunch-
eon
10:00 Stiche'd Together
10:30 AA
10:30 Alanon

5 *Palm Sunday*
8:30 Prayer for church
9:30 Worship Service
10:30 Fellowship Time
11:00 Growth/Life Grps
6:00 Youth Groups

6 12:00 Community Lunch-
eon
7:00 Team Leader Meeting

7 10:30 Bible Study
7:00 Boy Scouts

8 6:30 Children's Choir
7:00 Band Rehearsal
7:30 Adult Choir

9 7:00 Maundy Thursday
Service

10 12:00 Community Lunch-
eon
7:00 Good Friday Service

11 10:30 AA
10:30 Alanon

12 *Easter*
8:30 Prayer for church
9:30 Worship Service
10:30 Fellowship Time

13 12:00 Community Lunch-
eon
7:15 Session Meeting

14 10:30 Bible Study
7:00 Boy Scouts

15 9:30 FPC Play Group
6:30 Children's Choir
7:00 Band Rehearsal
7:30 Adult Choir

16

17 12:00 Community Lunch-
eon
8:00 Red Cross Blood
Drive
10:30 AA
10:30 Alanon

19 8:30 Prayer for church
9:30 Worship Service
10:30 Fellowship Time
6:00 Youth Groups

20 12:00 Community Lunch-
eon
7:00 Deacons Meeting

21 10:30 Bible Study
7:00 Boy Scouts

22 6:30 Children's Choir
7:00 Band Rehearsal
7:30 Adult Choir

23

24 12:00 Community Lunch-
eon
10:30 AA
10:30 Alanon

25

26 8:30 Prayer for church
9:30 Worship Service
10:30 Fellowship Time
2:30 Women's Ministry
Tea
6:00 Youth Groups

27 12:00 Community Lunch-
eon

28 10:30 Bible Study
7:00 Boy Scouts

29 6:30 Children's Choir
7:00 Band Rehearsal
7:30 Adult Choir

30