

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Clerk's Corner	2
Stewardship	2
From Rev. Garry: Part 1	2
From Rev. Garry: Part 2	3
Pastor's Peace Continuation	3
Music Ministry	4
From Church Clergy and Staff	5
Missing our Families	5
Updating FPC Photo Directory	5
Children and Youth Programs	6
Youth Group	7
Adult Enrichment Programs	8
Presbyterian Women	9
Mother's Together	9
Prayer Shawl Ministry	10
February Blood Drive	10
Jersey Cares Coat Drive	10
Church Snow Day Policy	11
Church Clergy and Staff	11
Indonesian Fellowship	11

PASTOR'S PEACE by Rev. Justin Karmann

It was not what I was anticipating from a recent discussion. Per our Racial Justice Committee's efforts to promote the ethos of antiracism for us as a congregation, we began a book study on Ibram X. Kendi's *How to be An Anti-racist* back in December. Don't worry, there are four more virtual meetings being offered between now and April that you can and should join us in. This all leads up to Kendi speaking at a Racial Justice event hosted by our congregation as well as other surrounding houses of worship and Princeton Theological Seminary. More information on that to come.

Back to my surprise...

What I anticipated from the book discussion was a conversation around how to be an anti-racist. I assumed the discussion participants would offer their experiences, insight, and wisdom regarding perceptions and expectations of race. We would all grow together as we learn together. And yes, all that happened. But what also happened was a twenty-minute conversation on Jesus and the Gospel. This conversation was started and maintained by 14-year-old and 16-year old female youths who are on our committee.

Yes, you read that correctly. Our Youth wanted to devote parts of our discussion of anti-racism towards the Gospel and intentions of Jesus Christ. This I did not anticipate.

What started this surprise comes from Kendi's own understanding of the Gospel. Traditionally, American Christianity has interpreted the Gospel to mean God becoming human to save the world from our individual sins. And although there are aspects to this that are true, our faith and understanding of the Gospel is so much more communal oriented. In light of this, Kendi emphasizes the Gospel as liberation. Liberation not only from our mistakes and sins, but liberation from systemic inequality and pervasive communal injustices. The Kingdom of God is a liberation from the brokenness of our entire world towards the redemption and restoration of all things. As one British theologian likes to put it: the Gospel is the story of the world being put back to rights. As such, Kendi declares that "if the Gospel does not speak to the issue of enslavement—if the Gospel does not want to go where people are hungry and poverty-stricken and set them free in the name of Jesus Christ—it is not the Gospel." Jesus Christ is the liberator setting the captives free and preaching sight to the blind. Therefore, concludes Kendi, "A Christian is one who is striving for liberation."

These lines of Liberation Theology captured the imagination of our young people and the rest of the book discussion participants. One of our Youth commented, "if this is what Jesus is about, then I am in." It was a proud moment in ministry for me since although Jesus as liberator has become a recent conversation, theologically it has always been the case. Liberation is the Gospel.

As such, we find throughout the great black spirituals of the Antebellum era the theme of liberation. *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot* is a plea for God to take us to the heaven God is building. *Wade in the Water* reminds us of the "trouble" God is up to and the promise to come. *Balm of Gilead* is hope for a healed world. These are the anthems of a people longing for Jesus Christ—the liberator. They certainly are not the first or the last who view liberation as the primary tenant of the Christian faith.

Continuation in page 3





AN UPDATE FROM STEWARDSHIP COMMISSION

Our Pledge thermometer just went up!! But we're not quite there yet.

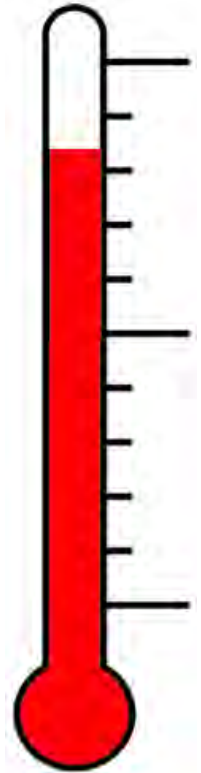
We are now at 83% of our goal.

We are grateful to many of you who have responded in time to make this happen. We are very close. Please don't delay your pledges and together let's work to make this happen.

Your pledge will help us reach our goal.

Please make your 2021 pledge TODAY.

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING OUR CHURCH FAMILY!



Session unanimously approved a motion to use the State of NJ Department of Health COVID-19 Activity Level Index (CALI) weekly reports for the Central East region in determining when to:

- 1) Suspend in-person Worship services and Youth Group. (Immediately when the Index score is "Red.")
- 2) Resume in-person Worship services and Youth Group (After two consecutive weekly "Orange" scores following a "Red" score.)
- 3) Require Session meet on both the second and forth Tuesday of the month. (Whenever the score is "Orange.")

Session listened to a FPC-M Food Panty Vision report addressing the need to develop a strategic plan identifying both the funding for and a larger Food Pantry facility. The report anticipates a post COVID-19 Pandemic environment of growing food insecurity throughout the community served by the Food Pantry.



On December 3rd the session had a special meeting to discuss the rise in COVID cases. Specifically, how and when we should return to virtual programming only, and how would we know when to resume our limited and socially distant programming?

This is a very tough question. The challenge here is to find a reasonable place to measure our decisions. It is one path to say, "I am staying in" or "I am fine going out with my mask and healthy habits." It is quite another to make this decision for more than 600 members, staff, and volunteers. The challenge is compounded by being Presbyterian. For us there is no priest or bishop who decides for all. We have a session composed of elders who decide everything from the mundane to the sublime.

After much thought, reflection, conversation, and discussion, the session decided to follow the COVID-19 Activity Level Index Score (CALI Score, for short) for New Jersey. You can find this scale at: <https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/statistics/covid/>

Each week the health department issues a score of low, moderate, high, or very high (green, yellow, orange, and red). For the last five weeks, area of New Jersey where Metuchen is scored (Central East) has been at high (orange). A way of viewing this would be to consider:

if the CALI Score is "very high" (red), then the schools go completely remote.

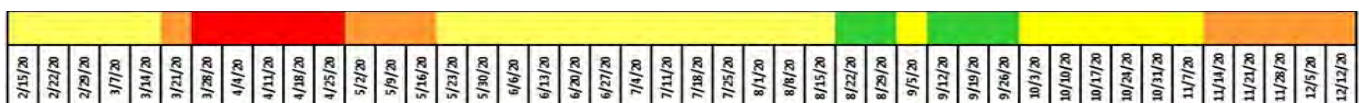
The session voted to follow a similar path. If the CALI Score is "red" we go completely remote in terms of worship and youth programming. They also decided that after two consecutive weeks when the score was lowered to "orange" we could return to our limited and socially distant programming. This was the best way we could determine a guide.

Another challenge of this decision is that churches have a unique freedom. The state, in essence, allows churches to follow their conscience. We have very broad guidelines from the state that we have never exceeded, but it is our responsibility to form our own plan.

Although the CALI Score is orange and continues to rise each week, we are not yet at red. In the event this happens a clear plan is in place to suspend in-person by reservation worship as well as shift all of our programming to virtual. This is what we did last March.

One area of the church's life and mission that didn't go virtual the last time the CALI Score was very high was our Food Pantry. This vital mission has persisted through all the scores and has proved a moment of strength and hope for the community.

As we wait for the vaccine to drive these numbers down, we pray for the safety of all and we pray that we would find the strength to persist in this challenging pandemic.





I have never been a fan of the New Year celebration. If I go to the parties, it is always my hope to make an appearance and then slip out. I want to make it back in time to watch “When Harry Met Sally” and let the next year begin with a quiet yawn. I cast no stone at the reveler or fireworks lighter or the Time Square *thronger*, but I am more inclined to watch such from a distance, or better still, the warmth of a living room.

Although Time Square is definitely out, I must admit no “New Year” has ever occupied my thoughts and hopes as much as 2021. For the most part I usually see the New Year in terms of academics; September is the start of the new year. At least it has until now. January 1, 2021 is probably the first date I have ever prayed for let alone yearned to see. But I am ready, more than ready, truly, to turn the page on this calendar year.

In a darker moment this week I listed out my “losses” and moments of unfortunate circumstances. Pandemic aside, it was a tough year. And I am convinced, this gloom is not just me. I am not an Eeyore with a personal rain cloud. But the pandemic made every loss more painful, every set back more frustrating, every change more a hurdle. I am ready for 2021, aren’t you?

A few years ago I read *Silver Linings Playbook*. The main character in the story is a man suffering from the ruin of a psychotic break and lost marriage. He wants to get his life

back and leave behind the disaster. His plan to find redemption is to read all the works of literature his ex-wife provides as curriculum to her high school English class. He wants to find the moment where the characters overcome challenge, where tragedy gives way to hope; he is looking for the silver lining in each story. This way, perhaps, they could find a path to be together again.

My favorite moment is when he finishes *A Farewell to Arms*. When I saw the title as his next search for a silver lining, I said out loud, “Oh no, this will go poorly.” Sure enough, reaching the last page he hurls the book through a window shouting, “worst ending ever.” And it is. It is a horrible, sad, depressing moment of complete heartbreak. In the gloom I found myself smiling with the thought: well, at least I am not a character in a Hemmingway story. In truth, 2020 has had moments of true mercy and grace and splendor. No year with the birth of a first granddaughter can ever be deemed as terrible. And there were many other moments where life persisted and even became better. There was plenty of “good news of a great joy.” As the dust starts to settle on 2020, I will not lament its passing, but I will also be especially thankful for the mercy and the love which made a way in the midst of the pandemic. There was much more than a “lining” of silver. Fare thee well, 2020; you will not be soon forgotten.



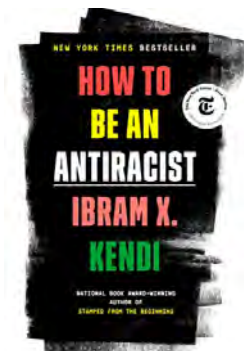
Pastor's Peace Continuation

On Sunday, January 17th, we will be providing a dialogue sermon led by our congregants. Similar to Lessons in Carols, our congregants will preach vignettes of black spirituals while others are sung. It is a moment for us to listen and learn as well as understand what liberation is all about. If the Gospel is liberation, it is liberation for all God’s people: you and me included.

The Racial Justice Committee would love for you to consider joining us at 11 am on January 17, 2021 for our continued book study of Ibram X. Kendi’s *How To Be An Anti-Racist*. We will be discussing chapters 3 to 7. Even if you haven’t read it all by then, please join us.

Admittedly, there’s discomfort when discussions about racism arise. For some, this new awareness may find it intimidating. And there are those who feel that it’s a discussion that’s long overdue. Wherever you find yourself in this spectrum, please know that this is a completely safe and judgement-free space. Together we are all learning at the same time so please don’t let any fear or concerns keep you from participating.

Racial Justice Book Study



Sunday, January 17th

11:00 a.m.

Virtual Study on Zoom

See page 8 for details of the Racial Book Study. If you have any questions about this, please don’t hesitate to reach out to Reynolds Shaw, Mike Draper, Nancy Leardi, or Rev. Karmann.

During this strange Christmas season of no congregational singing, it has still been comforting to hear the soloists sing our carols each Sunday of Advent and on Christmas Eve. Many are so familiar that we rarely take time to really LISTEN to the words. Here are two new carols - unfamiliar tunes as well as words. But please read the poetry - it's beautiful.

'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime

This hymn is the earliest known Canadian hymn, originally written in the Huron language by a missionary in 1641. It speaks of the birth of Christ as someone from an Indian tribe might experience it. Instead of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, the chiefs knelt before him with fox and beaver pelt.

'Twas in the moon of wintertime, when all the birds had fled,
Great Spirit, Lord of all the earth sent angel choirs instead.
Before their light the stars grew dim and wandering hunters
heard the hymn.

Refrain: Jesus, your king, is born;

Jesus is born, In excelsis gloria.

Within a lodge of broken bark the tender babe was found.
A ragged robe of rabbit skin enwrapped his beauty round.
But as the hunters brave drew night the angel song rang
loud and high. *Refrain.*

The earliest moon of wintertime is not so round and fair
As was the ring of glory on the helpless infant there.

The chiefs from far before him knelt with gifts of fox and
beaver pelt. *Refrain.*

O children of the forest free, the angel song is true:

The holy child of earth and heaven is born today for you.

Come kneel before the radiant boy who brings you beauty,
peace, and joy. *Refrain.*



A favorite service for so many of our congregation is the annual Lessons and Carols Service. While this year's service looked very different, we

included some traditions that were a comfort in this difficult time - the beautiful music of the harp, the singing of *Once in Royal David's City* at the beginning of the service,

GOD'S SURPRISE

Written in 1987 by John L. Bell

I. Who would think that what was needed to transform
and save the earth

Might not be a plan or army, proud in purpose, proved
in worth?

Who would think, despite derision, that a child should
lead the way?

God surprises earth with heaven, coming here on
Christmas Day.

II. Shepherds watch and wise men wonder; monarchs
scorn and angels sing;

Such a place as none would reckon hosts a holy helpless
thing.

Stable beasts and by-passed strangers watch a baby
laid in hay;

God surprises earth with heaven, coming here on
Christmas Day.

III. Centuries of skill and science span the past from
which we move,

Yet experience questions whether, with such progress,
we improve.

While the human lot we ponder, lest our hopes and
humor fray,

God surprises earth with heaven, coming here on
Christmas Day.

the reading of the Nine Lessons re-telling the story once again, and the singing of duets and age-old carols. The Covenant Bell Choir encircled the sanctuary in the balcony, casting a spell with their music. We look forward to a full choir loft next year with people packing our sanctuary and singing the carols we have all come to love.





We are always here for you! Behind those masks are warm and caring hearts. As we greet another year, may God be with you and fill you with comfort, love, hope and good cheer. Know that your Pastors and Church Staff (Elaine Hansen not in photo) are just a phone call or an email away. Let's all stay well until we can safely gather again.



Mrs. Leardi and Mrs. Day and the entire staff and congregation are truly missing seeing all our families in person at worship.

We would like to see your Christmas photos so we can make a collage of FPC families in the February Parish News. Share with us your holiday photos - send in your family, child or grandchild's photo if you would like to share their smiling faces with our church family.

Please note:

- * We will accept only ONE photo per family
- * All photos are to be emailed to: vlacson@fpcweb.org
- * Deadline to email is January 10th (No exceptions)

We look forward to seeing those happy faces once again!



As we start another new year, we invite YOU to help us put together an updated photo directory. There will be no appointments needed - just a simple selfie of you and your loved ones— as simple as that!

This invitation is for everyone, near and far! If you are reading the Parish News, we want you! We need just one picture per family, ideally showing your beautiful faces. If you need help with the picture, let us know and we will figure out something.

Email your photos to:

Sue Harmon at sharmon@fpcweb.org or
Vicky Lacson at vlacson@fpcweb.org

Please send them by January 21, 2021. We can't wait to see our complete family album with your photos!



Above are photos shared by Gail and Howard Stein next to their Christmas tree and a carved Nativity set from Jerome, Arizona.



We are God's children, fearfully and wonderfully made. (Psalm 139:14)

TUESDAY SONGS & GAMES (Age 4 years thru 2nd Grade)

January 12

Tuesdays at 4:00-4:30 pm

Songs and Games will be Zooming this month!

Now that we are in winter, we cannot meet outside as we have done so in the past. But we will continue to play some games and have a chance to connect with each other over zoom.

Please stay tuned for the Zoom link, which will be sent through eblasts and posted on FB.

JUNIOR CLUB (For 3rd to 6th Grade)

Thursday, January 14

5:00 - 5:30 pm Fun and Games

JUNIOR CLUB IS ZOOMING!

Sadly our group cannot meet outside in this cold winter. We invite you to meet up over Zoom for some fun games and conversation!



Join the Zoom meeting with the link below as hosted by Mrs. Leardi.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83736594506?pwd=eE45VTB6MmJYz1ZwdnZuM2hNa2ZWQT09>

Meeting ID: 837 3659 4506

Passcode: 595784

VIRTUAL SUNDAY SCHOOL



The Faith Kits for children joining the virtual Sunday School are packed and ready to go. The Kit has lessons for each week and packed with fun activities and treats! Stop by the foyer of the Church Office to pick up your child's Faith Kit.

Our virtual class is only for 20 minutes. Zoom links will be posted on the FPC Facebook Sunday School Group page. We welcome new students; there's always room in our classes.

Join by signing up on the Facebook group :

FPC Metuchen Sunday School OR

register your children today at fpcweb.org/forms.

Find your class by entering the meeting ID to join:

Preschool Zoom - 2 to 4 Year Old

Teacher: Kat Davis, Holly Distefano & Angie Brown

Meeting ID: 893 4778 3182

Kindergarten & First Grade Sunday School Zoom

Teacher: Fred Blake, Emily Almeida & Veronica Lijeron

Meeting ID: 886 0815 1258

Second, Third & Fourth Grades Sunday School

Teacher: Marni Yannaccone, Bridget Sanger & Kelsee Young

Meeting ID: 898 6038 8579

Fifth & Sixth Grades Sunday School

Teacher: Nancy Kipnis & Charles Hedrick

Meeting ID: 822 6624 7240



A NEW YEAR means summer will be here very soon. Lets gear up and **SAVE THE DATE** for VBS 2021.



VBS 2021
June 28 - July 2

Would you like to be on the planning team for VBS 2021? We need you! Please contact Nancy Leardi.

For questions about any of our Children and Young Adult Programs, contact our Christian Education Director, Nancy Leardi: (732) 491-2264 or nleardi@fpcweb.org



WEDNESDAY YOUTH GROUP

5:00 pm-6:00 pm	Jr. High
6:00 pm-6:30 pm	Jr. High Dinner
6:30 pm-7:00 pm	Sr. High Dinner
7:00 pm-8:15 pm	Sr. High

Perhaps this is the moment to exhale. We are through 2020! It is incredible the resilience of our Youth and their families throughout one of the most difficult years in recent memory. That said, although the end is in sight, this pandemic is not over. We are constantly working to provide Youth Group and a community for our Youth amidst this crisis and our goal is to begin again in-person on January 6th starting with our postponed White Elephant Gift Exchange.

If we are unable to meet in person due to the NJ Covid Activity Level Indicator (CALI) placing us in RED or having just come out of red, we will offer a virtual Youth Group and hope to have the White Elephant a week or so later.

As always, the safety of our Youth, their families, and our Youth Leaders is most important while still maintaining the community we have. We are excited for what 2021 will bring and we look forward to normal once again.

YOUTH GROUP WHITE ELEPHANT GIFT EXCHANGE

January 6th (CALI score-permitting)

Jr. High 5 - 6 pm

Jr. High Dinner at 6 pm

Sr. High Dinner at 6:30 pm

Sr. High 7- 8:15 pm

Gifts should range between \$10 to \$15. The more ridiculous, the better!

NO GIFT CARDS! (They are not fun!)

Additional gifts will be provided if new Youth are present so that there are enough gifts for everyone. Please bring a dessert to share.



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 selling chocolate **from January 13th through February 24th** with all proceeds going towards the 2021 Youth Mission Trip. Please contact Rev. Karmann at jkarmann@fpcweb.org for more info.

SKI TRIP

We are still optimistic that a ski trip to Gore Mountain is possible. Group rates are being determined and registration forms are available.



THE 2021 FAMINE

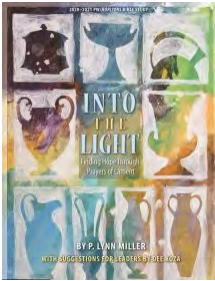
THE 2021 FAMINE

In so many ways, this year's Famine is the same as every other year, but also very different. We will be hosting our Famine on **Saturday,**

February 27th, ONLY! Certain activities will not take place out of an abundance of caution.

This year's all-too relevant theme is food insecurity in regard to the Covid-19 pandemic. Our goal is to package 20,000 meals and raise money for our ongoing Food Pantry efforts and expansion. Please consider donating financially as we combat food insecurity in our area.

ADULT ENRICHMENT PROGRAM



INTO THE LIGHT

Finding Hope Through
Prayers of Lament

**Lesson Four: January 4
6:00 pm (Eat and learn!)
By Zoom**

We will start the New Year with...Lamenting Death. Well, just remember that the Horizons Bible Study is called INTO THE LIGHT: FINDING HOPE THROUGH PRAYERS OF LAMENT. So, while Lesson Four sounds grim, Jesus reminds us in the Beatitudes "Blessed are those who mourn...for we will be comforted."

Please join us as we learn how to comfort those mourning the loss of loved ones -- and find comfort ourselves.

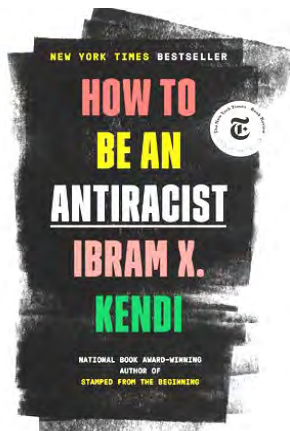
Primary Scripture: John 11:28-37

Join Zoom Meeting Hosted by Deb Teall and PW:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86590898594?pwd=VFdOMjk4U2laOEhjcXJvZWsySUXtQT09>

Call, text or email Deb for a Study Guide: (908) 917-3990 or debteall@optonline.net OR jump on the Zoom even without a Study Guide!

Racial Justice Book Study



Sunday, January 17th at 11a.m.

Join us this Sunday for another meeting of a virtual book study of Ibram X. Kendi's "How To Be An AntiRacist". This continuing study on racial justice will cover Chapters 3 through 7. Members of the Racial Justice Committee will lead discussions in smaller group settings to allow for a richer exchange and conversation. This ZOOM link will be used for all scheduled book studies:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6094807259>

Meeting ID: 609 480 7259

The Pastor's Study on Zoom

With Rev. Garry

Wednesday, Jan. 27 at 7:00 pm

This month we will examine the Book of Acts as "Apostolic Parables." This is a unique way of looking at the story of Peter and Paul. We will focus our attention on Peter as a parabolic teaching about power, the power of the Church. You don't need to read any material to participate, but you will have a greater grasp of the topic if you read the first 14 chapters of Acts.

See the zoom link below:

Join Zoom Meeting <https://zoom.us/j/92645246194>

Meeting ID: 926 4524 6194

Flawed But Faithful

A Study with Rev. Bob Beringer

Sundays at 10:30 am by Zoom

January 17 / January 24 / January 31

If you ask the question, "What Bible character do you most identify with," the likely answer would be Simon Peter. In the Gospels Peter is mentioned by name more than any of the other disciples. But what draws us to him is the fact that he is nearly always portrayed as a flawed disciple—one who seeks to follow Jesus, but yet one who is often confused, afraid, and faltering. But as the story continues, it is Peter's courage, his determination and his leadership that the world remembers. In this study we will look at this undeniably flawed and yet wonderfully faithful human being.

Scriptures for each session are:

Jan. 17	The Call of the Fisherman	Luke 5 and John 1
	Walking with Jesus in the Storm	Matthew 14
Jan. 24	Bedrock or Stumbling Block	Matthew 16:13-23
	"I Will Never Deny You"	Matthew 26
Jan. 31	From Cowardice to Courage	John 21:12, 15-17
	The Rest of the Story	Acts 2, 3, 10 & 15

Jane Meyer will be hosting the first study on Zoom with the Zoom link as follows:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83823035163?pwd=WitJVjNRYjhRQitzbzdOWjhCejh2QT09>

If you have the Zoom app, you can join using the following:

Meeting ID: 838 2303 5163 Passcode: 290085



2021 PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Happy New Year to all Presbyterian Women!

Yes, every woman congregant is a Presbyterian Woman and we do offer a special invitation to the Presbyterian Men who have over the years graced us with their talents and treasures. We are grateful for Lois and Nancy, Co-Moderators and Dee, PW Treasurer and the PW committee members listed below.

2020 has been a challenge for all of us in our church family. We would like to rewind a bit when the PW Finance Committee members were preparing our budget for the 2020 year. We met in December 2019 to prepare our 2020 budget to enrich the community with our strong mission statement to serve others. While reviewing our forthcoming budget, we reflected on the gratitude of those that have supported our April and September Rummage Sales (2019) and the 2019 Holly Fair and Dinner. We were overwhelmed that we were able to achieve our mission to support our community. Dee Bonner has assured our committee that all 2020 budgeted missions have been fulfilled to our communities. What a blessing this has been to help those in need.

2020 COVID FACTS:

We have had two *Rummage Sales* that did not materialize

in 2020. Yes, it's the blood in our veins to hold these sales. As we all know, social distancing with 6 feet away from one another would not have been possible at these incredible sales!

Not to mention that we have also missed our *Rummage Sale drop-offs* and the fellowship when welcoming everyone's treasures. Also, the Friday night dinner and our Saturday hot dogs and sauerkraut.

The *Holly Fair* dinner and *Holiday Bazaar* were such a highlight for all of us and, WOW the jewelry we offered. Our treasures lie in storage till we can once again have the mission events we cherish.

GOOD-BYE, 2020.

We thank you for our church family and all that goes with every Sunday Live Streaming and "Good Morning" texts while the sermon is being delivered. We praise the church staff that has endured and brought us all together.

We have high hopes to have the *April Rummage Sale*.

We are not sure what that will look like, but we are ready to make it a possibility, if possible.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN BUDGET 2021 WILL BE A LEAP OF FAITH.

We count on all the women of the church to support the mission work the PW provides. . The January brunch for the women of the church will also be postponed due to being held so early in 2021. Please send your PW Annual pledge/donation to the church office marked PW in the memo or make check payable to Presbyterian Women. Help us support our mission outreach through these challenging times.

Always thankful!

Co-Moderators	Lois Crespy Nancy Blomn-Kipnis
Treasurer	Dee Bonner
Secretary	Susan Short
Corresponding Secretary/ Sewing Bees Circle	June Young
Fundraising Coordinator	Cindy O'Neill
Horizon Bible Study Circle / Program Planning Coordinator	Deb Teall
MOM's Study Group	Nancy Blomn-Kipnis
Craft Circle	Doris Gulotta
Member-at-Large	Lori Kellner
Indonesian Liaison	Norma Tambingon

MOTHERS TOGETHER

January 25 @ 8:00 pm

Are you a mom of a little one that would appreciate some adult conversation?

Mothers Together will be meeting once a month for a brief devotion, monthly topic and upbeat conversation.

Join us on Zoom !

Meeting ID #: 82311528459

Questions?

Contact Nancy at (732) 491-2264



Nurture Faith



Support Mission



Work For Justice and Peace



Build Community



Develop Leaders

The Prayer Shawl Ministry in FPC Metuchen had its beginnings in 2008 involving some of the ladies in Presbyterian Women. Thanks to former member Betty Seidner, she coordinated this ministry where the women would meet once a month at someone's home to knit/crochet prayer shawls. In 2010, when Betty moved to North Carolina, Merry Matlock agreed to coordinate and continue this ministry.

Since then, we have given out a total of 423 prayer shawls.

2008-2012: 76	2015: 56	2018: 31
2013: 38	2016: 55	2019: 29
2014: 55	2017: 38	2020: 45 as of Dec. 18, 2020



Members (past & present) of the Prayer Shawl Ministry

Diane Beck (Merry's neighbor), Brenda Day, Doris Gulotta, Grace Hammesfahr, Marie Hoffsommer, Muriel Johnson (Merry's mother), Merry Matlock, Anna Rice, Karen Rubarski, Betty Seidner and Jennifer Thompson

For more information, contact Merry Matlock at mmatlock@fpcweb.org

Thank you to those who have supported this ministry monetarily; and especially to those who have devoted their time and talents knitting or crocheting. It is an extremely well-received and gratifying outreach ministry! In fact, here is just one of the many "thank you" notes received from a recipient that says it all!

Thank you for the wonderful gift of a prayer shawl. It was an unexpected but thoroughly enjoyable surprise. It is really soft, and the skill it takes to make one is obvious in how beautiful it looks. But for me, the real comfort of the shawl is in understanding the well-wishes and prayers that surround this ministry. That is the healing power of the shawl. What a wonderful ministry. Thank you all. Receiving the shawl makes one reflect on their blessings and God's grace.



Blood Drive

First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen

FPC Social Center Dining Room

Sunday, February 21, 2021

10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Schedule your appointment today!

Call 1-800-RED-CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or download the Blood Donor App or go to www.redcrossblood.org

Enter when prompted the sponsor code: **FPCM**



The Mission Commission
partners with
Jersey Cares

COAT DRIVE

Ongoing until

2021 Jan. 13



DROP OFF:
Social Center Lobby
HOURS: Mon. to Fri.
8:00 am– 4:30 pm

There is ample time for you to provide warmth with your gently used or new coats. Please drop off in the Social Center much needed coats for men, women, children and infants.

Another way to help: On January 18, 11 am to 3 pm in the Social Center auditorium, coats will be sorted and volunteers are needed. If you have an hour or more to help, email: breyanie@jerseycares.org

First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen

CHURCH CLERGY AND STAFF**CLERGY****Rev. Dr. Fred Garry**732-491-2330*Senior Pastor/Head of Staff* fgary@fpcweb.org**Rev. Justin Karmann**732-491-2260*Associate Pastor* jkarmann@fpcweb.org**Rev. Robert A. Beringer, Pastor Emeritus****CHRISTIAN EDUCATION****Nancy Leardi**732-491-2264*Director Christian Ed.* nleardi@fpcweb.org**Kat Davis***Christian Education Production Leader***MUSIC MINISTRY****Brenda Day**732-491-2266*Minister of Music* brendaday@fpcweb.org**Elaine Hansen** ehansen@fpcweb.org*Assistant Bell Director and Accompanist***SUPPORT STAFF****Sue Harmon**732-491-2302*Director of Operations/Treasurer* sharmon@fpcweb.org**Jonathan Hollenbeck**732-491-2270*Facilities Manager* jhollenbeck@fpcweb.org**Bob O'Connell** 732-491-2270*Facilities Assistant* boconnell@fpcweb.org**Vicky Lacson** 732-491-2303*Office Assistant* vlacson@fpcweb.org**Nick Spadavecchia** 732-491-2305*Communications Consultant*

..... nspadavecchia@fpcweb.org

Nate Brown 732-347-9951*Technician and Sound Design Consultant*

..... nbrown@fpcweb.org

Merry Matlock 732-491-2301*Administrative Asst.* mmatlock@fpcweb.org**Sarah Teti**732-491-2325*Food Pantry Coordinator* foodpantry@fpcweb.org**COMMUNITY NURSERY SCHOOL****Fran Brennan** 732-491-2242*Director/Treasurer* fbrennan@fpcweb.org**Colleen Smith** 732-491-2242*Head Teacher* csmith@fpcweb.org

Community Nursery School will be registering for the 2021/2022 school year beginning Monday, January 18th. FPC families will receive a 5% discount on tuition for the year. If you're interested in taking a tour of CNS, please call the office at 732-491-2240 to schedule an appointment after school hours or during the day on Monday, January 18th (Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday) or Saturday, January 23rd. CNS will be offering half day classes for our Young Learners (2.5 years old) and Pre-K3, and half day or full day options for Pre-K4s. Half day K-Wrap will also be offered to compliment the half day kindergarten programs in Edison and Metuchen. For additional information on the Community Nursery School program, please visit our website: www.communitynursery.org.



In case of a snow storm and the roads are not safe to travel, our church office will post all weather-related closings on our church website (www.fpcweb.org), Facebook (FPC Metuchen) and phone answering system (732)491-2300. Our priority is to ensure the safety of our congregation, staff, and others who are part of our ministry.

In the event of a serious weather condition falling on a Sunday, we encourage you to exercise your judgment but always check for details of a possible cancellation or modification of our Sunday morning service and programs.

FRIENDLY REMINDERS FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE:

- Please pick up your 2021 Offering Envelopes any-time from the Church Office Lobby.
- Office will be closed on January 18th in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

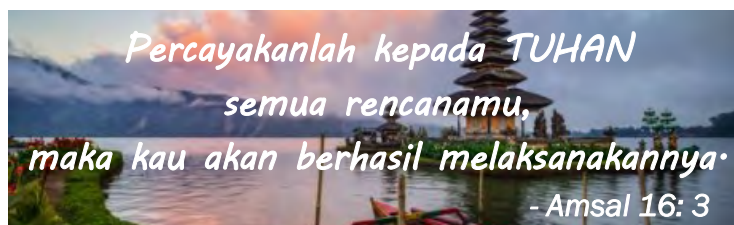
INDONESIAN FELLOWSHIP JANUARY PULPIT SUPPLY

January 10 Rev. Mariska Lauterboom

January 17 Rev. Ferdinanda Pattipeilohy

January 24 Rev. Henderika Wattimena

All Indonesian Worship Services will continue to meet virtually through Facebook Live.



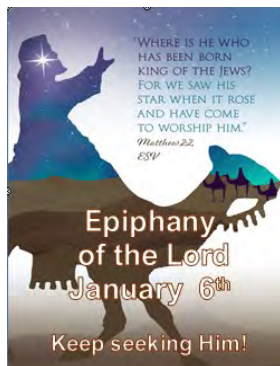
JANUARY 2021 PARISH NEWS

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

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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 vlacon@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
Hours: Monday – Friday 8:00 am to 4:30pm
Telephone: (732) 491-2300 Email: fpc@fpcweb.org

Sunday Worship Service

(By Reservation only) 9:30 am

Online Sunday Morning Worship : 9:30 am

Livestreamed on FPC Metuchen Facebook