



First Presbyterian Church
of Metuchen

Where God's Love Welcomes All

January 2022

Parish News

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You have been
a **REFUGE**
for the poor,
a **REFUGE**
for the needy
in their distress,
a **SHELTER**
from the storm
and a **SHADE**
from the heat.
ISAIAH 25:4

PASTOR'S PEACE by Rev. Fred G. Garry

Because God has already laid the only foundation of our fellowship, because God has bound us together as one body with other Christians in Jesus Christ, long before we entered into common life with them, we enter that common life not as demanders but as thankful recipients. We thank God.

- Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*

As we begin a new year and the third year of the pandemic, I am grateful to be Presbyterian.
I am.

If I were not Presbyterian, I would be in this on my own. Given the challenges of this time and place, I don't want to be facing the daunting questions of life alone.

This came clear the other night as the Session met to discuss the challenge of growing attendance on Sunday morning. I shared with them, "in all the years of doing this pastor gig, never did I imagine I would look at significant increases in worship attendance and be afraid. Never could I conceive of this as a problem." Yet, when I look out at the sanctuary filling up, I am not so much filled with excitement as I am concerned. I shared this concern with the Session.

I am glad I did.

Moving around the table there was a sense of "yes, there are more people, but this is the one place I feel safe." "Yes, there is an ongoing pandemic, but there is also an ongoing life. We have done the right thing; let's continue to do the right thing." Mostly, though, there was a sense of conscience. We do our best and hope others will do their best.

If I were not Presbyterian, then this wisdom would have eluded me. I would have been left to wrestle with the concerns on my own. Perhaps I would have come to similar conclusions. Perhaps. But it would have taken so much out of me, to reach this level of wisdom, and clarity would have come at a very great cost. Sitting as one voice around a table of many (and a screen with many), the cost was shared, and the demand for clarity didn't exhaust me.

I knew this before the pandemic; I was already glad to be Presbyterian. Yet, the nature of joy is that it can grow. Paul will say to the church at Philippi, "make my joy complete." In the Gospel of John, Jesus instructs his friends on the night of his arrest, that they are to seek complete joy."

Completion is often seen as an end. "This is complete" can mean "this is done." Complete, though, can also mean, "now this can work; now this can begin." When we complete a form, when we complete a task, this can be the beginning of something good. I believe that there are many tasks to complete so joy can be so as well. Being Presbyterian is to see the tasks as shared.

One of those tasks is to find the strength of a life together. To leave aside the solitude and enjoy the table set for many; to leave the solitary path and find a way with a friend; to lay aside the safety of my choices for the confluence of a common choice. What makes me so grateful as the new year begins is that the common way is what it means to be Presbyterian. Never before have I seen the need for and the value of a life in common.

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Continuation of Pastor's Peace from page 1

We are led by elders. Not one. Not the elderly. We are led to share a life of common faith by the common voice, the shared voice. It's baked in. It may be that the pandemic persists or that it fades from view. I no longer take comfort in prediction. Better to see what is at hand than what might be.

What I need not prognosticate is this: we need to regain the common life. We need to relearn the gathering. Somehow, some way, this will happen. The good news is that we are a shared life, a *Life Together*. This is what God has already made for us.

Let 2022 begin as a grateful year.



Something Brewing...

Bob Smietana posted an article on May 2021 in the Episcopal New Service (ENS) regarding the beloved church coffee hour.

Coffee hour is a staple of congregational life for many houses of worship, where members drink coffee, often brewed in commercial vats, and chitchat before or after services. But when in-person worship services paused during the pandemic, coffee hour disappeared. That time of socializing is one of the things that churchgoers have missed most about meeting in person. Now that we are worshipping together in person, the First Presbyterian Church Board of Deacons has taken the reins on **After Worship Fellowship** and they are bringing in-person gatherings back a little at a time. The renovated and redecorated Session Room and the Chapel are ideal places to gather. Thanks to our dedicated church staff, the coffee is brewing and individually wrapped snacks are handed out to those who stop by for a moment of social interaction.

We encourage you to stop by after church, if only for a moment or two to say hello. Once a month, there is also the opportunity to grab a cup of coffee and a snack in the Social Center after worship when the children gather for Lego Sunday.

We encourage you to volunteer to host one Sunday! Please contact the Deacons through the church office to sign up!

Cathy Ostermueller, Moderator, Board of Deacons



- In an environment of a statewide rising COVID-19 numbers, Session discussed the ongoing priority of responsible COVID-19 protocols during Worship Services to ensure the safety of everyone in attendance. The protocols are posted each week in the Sunday Paper as a reminder to all those who participate in-person in church events and programs.
- Session approved the 2022 Church Operating Budget as presented by the Finance Commission.



THANK YOU to all who are continuing to *Welcome Home* each other with their investment in the First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen for 2022! Thank

you to the eighteen new pledges that were received. Thank you to the sixty-four members who were able to increase their pledge from previous years. Thank you to all who have pledged!

Your pledge is an investment in our church that allows the mission and programs to thrive for our fellow members and our community. Without your help, this would not be possible. Pledges are still needed to fully fund our budget and will always be welcomed. You can complete a pledge card or go online to: www.fpcweb.org/pledge.

"Therefore, welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God."

From Stewardship Team 2022

REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. 22nd ANNUAL COMMUNITY CELEBRATION

"Good Trouble"

Led by the Metuchen-Edison Area
Interfaith Clergy Association

SUNDAY, JANUARY 16, 2022 | 3:00PM

Livestream

YouTube: New Hope Baptist Church Metuchen Media

Website: www.nhbchurch.com



Grateful and blessed to serve. As we welcome another year, may God's presence fill you with peace, hope, joy and love. Know that your Pastors and Church Staff are just a phone call or an email away.

HORIZONS BIBLE STUDY



What My Grandmothers
Taught Me

**February 7, Monday
7:00 p.m.
In the PW Lounge
and by Zoom**

Get the lesson from our website:
<https://fpcmetuchen.org/ministries/presbyterian-women/>
To join by Zoom use Meeting ID: 813 2798 2944
Passcode: PW270



**A Weekly Pastoral Bible Study
On the Teachings of Jesus
Wednesdays @10:30 a.m.
By Zoom**

With Rev. Fred Garry

To join by Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84711673419>
Use Meeting ID: 847 1167 3419



A workshop is being planned where we will explore healthy boundaries that will sustain good and healthy relationships in the church, that will also make room for spiritual growth. More details to come so please check our website and Facebook posts.





THE HISTORY OF HANDBELLS

Handbells have been part of our church music program since 1981. Bells have been found in China dating back 5,000 years. Cultures around the world have made bells in various shapes, sizes, and materials. Early man used bells made of clay to locate his animals. Itinerant priests had bells attached to their robes to call the villagers to worship.

With the rise of Christianity, bells were hung outside churches to mark the hours of worship. In England, during the 16th and 17th centuries, bell towers were erected on or next to churches. Each tower held from 6-12 bells and were rung in patterns called "changes." Bell towers were dark and cold and change ringing required a lot of practice. Small handbells were created so the ringers could practice inside around a cozy fire. Eventually they began ringing familiar tunes.

In 1926, a family from Boston, who had been living in England, returned with a set of handbells. Interest in bell ringing developed rapidly with churches, and eventually schools, purchasing their own set of bells, providing us with the bell programs we have today.

If your New Year's Resolution includes adding more music to your life, consider joining one of our choirs or bell choirs! We have something for everyone beginning at age 4. The following Choir schedule will resume as soon as the Cali Score goes back to orange and we can safely resume in person meetings.

JUBILEE CHOIR (Ages 4 – 2nd Grade)	Tuesday	4:00 – 4:30 PM
JUNIOR CHOIR (Grades 3 – 6)	Thursday	4:15 – 5:00 PM
WESTMINSTER CHOIR (Grades 7 – 12)	Wednesday	6:30 – 7:00 PM
SENIOR CHOIR	Thursday	8:00 – 9:30 PM
JOY RINGERS (Grades 3 – 6)	Thursday	5:00 – 5:30 PM
CHAPEL RINGERS (Grades 7 & 8)	Wednesday	7:00 – 7:30 PM
GOOD NEWS RINGERS (Grades 9 – 12)	Wednesday	8:00 – 8:30 PM
CONCORD RINGERS - Adults	Thursday	9:30 – 10:15 AM
COVENANT RINGERS - Adults	Thursday	7:00 – 8:00 PM



Questions about Music Ministry? Please feel free to contact Brenda Day brendaday@fpcweb.org



Where Do Your Dollars Go?

Join PW for Coffee Hour to find out!

Did you donate your work clothes when you retired? The jeans and shirts you "outgrew" in more than just fashion? Your baby's clothes, those holiday placemats, the purses your mother saved for four decades, the dish set you haven't used in four decades?

PW turned them into GOLD to fund our missions. Come see illustrated details, pat yourself on the back for your support and enjoy an **elaborate Coffee Hour after Worship**.

Because we have gone back to virtual church, PW will reschedule the promised elaborate Coffee Hour at a later date when we can enjoy fellowship in-person again!

MEET THE PW COORDINATING TEAM:

Co-Moderators	Nancy Blomn-Kipnis Deb Teall	Corresponding Secretary	June Young
Secretary	Susan Short	Fundraising Co-Chairs	Cindy O'Neill/ Lori Kellner
Treasurer	Sue Harmon	Crafts Co-Chairs	Doris Gulotta /June Young
		Indonesian Fellowship Liaison	Norma Tambingon
		Horizon Bible Study	Deb Teall

Questions about PW? Please email Deb Teall debteall@optonline.net or Nancy Kipnis njbkipnis@optonline.net

FROM YOUR: *DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION*



We are God's children, fearfully and wonderfully made.

From your Christian Education Director

We will be leading our Confirmation and Sunday School classes via Zoom until such time that it is safe to once again meet in person. Other children's programs are on pause or will resort to virtual meetings. We will keep you updated through our weekly eblasts and postings on our FPC Facebook page. Meantime, please find your class zoom links below. Please join us virtually!

8:30 am CONFIRMATION CLASS

Join Zoom Meeting with Rev. Garry
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81705374643>
 Meeting ID: 817 0537 4643

10:30 am VIRTUAL SUNDAY SCHOOL:

Preschool - Grade 1

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89347783182>
 Meeting ID: 893 4778 3182

Grades 2-3-4

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89860388579>
 Meeting ID: 898 6038 8579

Grades 5-6-7

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82266247240>
 Meeting ID: 822 6624 7240



Our puppeteers had fun presenting puppet plays for Halloween and Christmas. **New puppeteers are always welcome!** Please contact Kat Davis katddavis@gmail.com.

NEW IN 2022!

Christian Education is excited to offer theatre as a way of learning bible stories! Kat Davis, our Drama Consultant, will be working with our Sunday School classes in the coming weeks to present bible stories to the congregation during worship in the new year. This program will be fun for both our students and their supportive church family audience!



Monthly Coffee Chat with Grace for our SENIOR HIGH

will return when in- person meetings
can safely resume. Stay tuned!



Presbyterian Young Women (PYW)

BEAD and CREATE*

January 30th

5:00-7:00 pm

Dining Room

Our young women in 8th grade and older are invited to bead and create jewelry in time for Valentine's Day. Please RSVP with an email to Mrs. Leardi: nleardi@fpcweb.org

*This event is planned when the Cali score is out of Red.

Moment for Mission

Each year FPC Metuchen donates to various causes from our Mission budget. In 2021 FPC provided support to the following missions:

Camp Johnsonburg
 McFoods
 Elijah's Promise
 Elizabethport Presbyterian Center
 PCUSA Indonesian Missionary
 Life Ministries – Doug Palmetter
 Lift Up the Vulnerable
 Presbyterian Disaster Assistance – KY Tornadoes
 Restore Ministries
 The Seeing Eye
 Interfaith-RISE
 Women of Grace - Africa
 Church World Service – KY Disaster Relief

To learn more about these missions visit our website at <https://fpcweb.org/about-us/commissions>



WEDNESDAY YOUTH GROUP

5:00 pm-6:00 pm

6:00 pm-6:30 pm

7:00 pm-8:00 pm

Junior High

Junior and Senior
High Combined Dinner

Senior High

Happy 2022!

The Youth Group ended 2021 by volunteering together at the Food Pantry's Holiday Bazaar. We wrapped gifts for the Food Pantry client families. It was a fun, special night! Thank you, Food Pantry, for inviting us.

In this new year, the youth group will be embracing the season spirit by spending the month of January focusing on ways we can renew and care for ourselves. We will be creating a space for us to be our whole selves as we enter into 2022.

If you have any questions, any ideas, want to chat, grab a coffee - you can connect with me at abair@fpcweb.org and 989-859-2083.

Grateful to be in this ministry with you,

Rev. Ashley Bair



UPCOMING:

February 26

Famine 2022 will take place this Saturday. Please save the date and look for more information soon!

If interested or have questions on the Youth Program, please email youthgroup@fpcweb.org



This amazing team of Food Pantry volunteers pulled off their first Holiday Bazaar last December 16 bringing joy and holiday cheer to the Pantry clients. Almost a hundred families benefitted from the wide array of gifts and toys.

First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen

CHURCH CLERGY AND STAFF**CLERGY**

Rev. Dr. Fred Garry 732-491-2330

Senior Pastor/Head of Staff fgarry@fpcweb.org

Rev. Ashley Bair, Interim Associate Pastor

Rev. Robert A. Beringer, Pastor Emeritus

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

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Kat Davis kdavis@fpcweb.org

Christian Education Production Leader

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Minister of Music brendaday@fpcweb.org

Elaine Hansen ehansen@fpcweb.org

Assistant Bell Director and Accompanist

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Bob O'Connell 732-491-2270

Facilities Assistant boconnell@fpcweb.org

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Admin. & Comm. Coordinator vlacson@fpcweb.org

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Nate Brown nbrown@fpcweb.org

Technician and Sound Design Consultant

Merry Matlock 732-491-2262

Senior Services Coordinator. mmatlock@fpcweb.org

Colleen Walker 732-491-2303

Office Assistant cwalker@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



CNS is having information sessions for our full day Kindergarten and K-Wrap programs (Kindergarten extension program) in the evening of **Wednesday, January 19th.**

Call (732) 491-2240 to schedule a time and meet Mrs. M., our kindergarten teacher, and Mrs. Alvarez, our K-Wrap teacher. There will be two sessions, 6:30 pm and 7:00 pm. You can register for either or both program sessions.

CNS registration for the 2022/2023 school year is coming up quickly! **FPC church members and currently enrolled CNS families can begin registering** for our preschool and kindergarten programs on **Tuesday, January 25th. Registration for new families will begin on Thursday, January 27th.**

CNS serves children 2 1/2 to 6 years of age. Tours are available by appointment during school days. Registration is on a first come first served basis. For additional information, visit our website: www.communityns.org

FRIENDLY REMINDERS FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE:

- Office will be closed on January 17th in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.
- 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, 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. We encourage you to use your best judgment but always check for details of a possible cancellation or modification of our Sunday Worship Service and programs.

TREASURER'S 2 CENTS

- Church offering envelopes for 2022 are available for pick up in the Social Center foyer.
- As our internet providers try to tighten security for us, many emails that you do want to receive end up in your Spam folder instead of your Inbox. To ensure that you receive and find your Statement of Giving in your Inbox, please add any email with fpcweb.org to your list of safe senders. The email that we use to send Statements of Giving from our database is **fpc1@fpcweb.org** By saving this email, you are sure not to miss any important emails from your Treasurer, and the church office.

The **INDONESIAN FELLOWSHIP** Worship Service will be livestreamed at noon during this time until in-person meetings can safely resume. Please email Norma Tambingon if you have any questions: norma.tambingon@yahoo.com

JANUARY 2022 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
Hours: Monday – Friday 8:00 am to 4:30pm
Telephone: (732) 491-2300 Email: fpc@fpcweb.org

Sunday Worship Service

9:30 am
Livestreamed on FPC Metuchen Facebook