



Parish News

PASTOR'S PEACE by Rev. Fred G. Garry

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I walked the Metropolitan Museum the other day with a new purpose. My habit is to walk through the collection of art and antiquities so to find healing. I believe beauty heals us. The three "Graces" with interlocked arms from the 2nd century carved in marble is a way to remember balance and harmony. To remember grace restores the soul.

But what if I was thirteen? Walking the Met I tried to imagine what this would look like if I were thirteen. How would I make sense of all the statues and stained glass, the Mayan sculpture and the Egyptian temple? More importantly, how would I see art as Christian?

The Metropolitan Museum has a lot of Christian art. To see it you need to remember Byzantium. The Byzantine Empire, which begins with Constantine in the 4th century, and ends with the Ottomans in the 15th century is where our faith became embellished. Christian art was born in Constantinople in the 4th century. Before Constantine there were no church buildings, no icons, no frescoes or statues depicting the life of Jesus or the acts of the apostles or the death of a martyr.

As you walk in to the ground floor of the main entrance hall, just before you venture into the larger museum, it is helpful to stop by a modest clay tablet from the 4th century with a large "Chi-Rho" carved into its surface. The "Chi-Rho" is an early Christian symbol referencing the first two Greek letters of "Cristos." Beside the "Chi-Rho" on each side are two more Greek letters: Alpha and Omega. The owner of the clay tablet is proclaiming "Jesus Christ is the beginning and the end." He was making his faith known.



4th century clay tablet with carved Chi-Rho symbol

This is a great place to start if you are thirteen and considering Christian art for the first time. It is because from this point on as you walk through halls of Virgins with babies carved by Italians and Jesus being crucified painted by people from the Netherlands, what you are seeing is the attempt to make the symbol (Chi-Rho) come to life; you are witnessing the word (alpha and omega) take flesh. People are making their faith known.



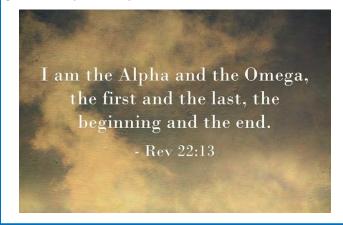
In April it is our plan to take the confirmation class to the Metropolitan for a walk. This was the reason for my attempt to see the museum with younger eyes. The plan is to have a series of pieces highlighted for them. A kind of mini-collection, ten is my hope. In these ten they will see what is Medieval and Renaissance, Baroque and Early Modern. And then, what I hope they really see is how God disappears. What was the great theme of art will shift from the divine to the mundane. The clarity of the "chi-rho" will be gone when we reach the exterior of the Cathedral of Rouen painted by Monet. The church is a gauzy purple whose medieval spires are a landscape, not a ladder to heaven.

Continued in page 2

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Continuation of Pastor's Peace from page 1

Each person needs to decide, to determine, to find their own surety so as to make his or her faith known. Yet, we need not do it alone. We can find what we believe together, and we can remember we are just one more turn of the wheel of time. I believe Jesus is our alpha and omega. What better way to remember our faith than in the beauty of art, in song, in fellowship. My hope for young people is that they never forget they live in the midst of heaven and earth with the "faithful of every generation past and present."

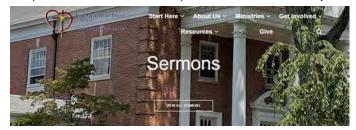




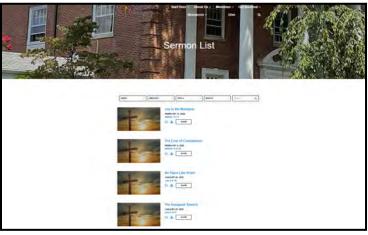
- In light of Gov. Murphy's decision to suspend the State
 of New Jersey's COVID-19 mask requirements in
 schools beginning March 7th, Session discussed
 suspending and/or amending FPC-Metuchen's current
 COVID-19 Worship Service protocols. Session will
 monitor the State of NJ weekly CALI score for the
 Central East region over the next weeks and revisit
 the matter at the regular Session meeting on 8 March.
- Session approved the 2022 Church Staff Employee Handbook and thanked the Personnel Commission for undertaking this very important project.
- Rev. Bair spoke to Session about exploring next steps in moving the Youth Ministry forward, focusing on the care and support of the youth and youth leadership.
 Rev. Bair, along with Rev. Garry are also evaluating a Seminary Intern Program consisting of two (2) Interns for the 2022-23 program year, who would intentionally engage with the voices of the Youth Group in order to evaluate the Youth Ministry program.

FPC WEBSITE TIPS AND FUN FACTS

Did you know that our website has an archive where you can access past sermons from our worship services? Available are both audio and text formats so you can listen or read as you wish. Go to www.fpcweb.org/resources/sermons



From the home page, click on the "Resources" and look for "Sermons." With a simple click the latest sermon will show and you have the option of reading and/or listening.



If it is an older sermon you are looking for, click on the "Sermon List" button at the top to view a list of available sermons. (See image on the left) There will also be an option to filter by pastor, the topic, or date of the sermon. Check it out when you get a chance.

We hope that you are learning to navigate our new website with more ease. Give us your feedback if there's any improvement you wish to see. We would be happy to make it even more user-friendly. To give us your feedback, email: fpc@fpcweb.org



A time of prayer, fasting and self-examination in preparation for the celebration of the resurrection of the Lord at Easter....in dying we live, that all who are baptized into Christ are baptized into his death.

To be raised with Christ means one must also die with Christ. In order to embrace the resurrection, we must experience the passion of Jesus.

The way of the cross, the way to Easter, is through death of the "old self." In dying, we live.

(Excerpt from The Season of Lent from the website of the Presbyterian Mission—pcusa.org)

April 6



* In-person and livestreamed

Enter the 40 days of Lent in fellowship. Together let us begin our Lenten journey with Ash Wednesday Service where we will have ashes and Communion. For those not able to join us in person, the service will be livestreamed from our website and on Facebook.

A Reoccurring Season

From Bethpage to Bethany Lenten Devotional written by Rev. Fred Garry



Rev. Garry's latest Lenten devotional will be available to those attending the Ash Wednesday Worship Service. There is a limited supply so please help yourself to a copy while we have it.

The devotional is from Matthew's Gospel, chapters 21 to 28, the last eight days of Jesus' life. There is a piece of scripture to read and a brief reflection, an invitation for the reader to seek and follow Jesus, walk with him, listen to him as he moves from Bethpage to Bethany. Lent is a season of pondering and reflection, a time to consider. May this book guide and inspire you during this season.



Refresh yourself with the music from these talented artists. Join us for some peace and calm in your day.

Brenda Day, Organ

ADMISSION IS FREE.

The Lenten Concert Series has become a highlight of the season of Lent here at our church - a chance to carve out 30 minutes out of a busy day and sit and enjoy some music that is sure to refresh your spirit.

We are excited to offer the Lenten concert in person once again. With the Covid19 situation continuing to show much improvement, we are planning to open the church sanctuary for those seeking solace each week.

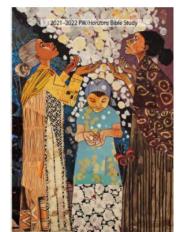
For those who cannot make it in person, we will also be streaming the 30-minute concert from our website and Facebook.

Much like our worship services, we ask those coming in person to keep their masks on throughout the concert. We invite you to check our website and our Facebook page for updates and further details. See you!

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ADULT ENRICHMENT PROGRAM

HORIZONS BIBLE STUDY



What My Grandmothers
Taught Me

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

This study helps us learn from the women in Matthew's genealogy of Jesus.

EVERYONE IS INVITED! We always have room! In this month's **Lesson Six**, we will meet **Bathsheba**, the mother of David, who appears powerless but emerges strong and wise.

Scripture:

2 Samuel 11-12; 1 Kings 1:11-31; 1 Kings 2:13-25

We have a guest in March. Joining us is Rev. Magdalena I. Garcia, pastor of Ravenswood Presbyterian Church in Chicago, and author of this year's Horizons Bible Study "Suggestions for Leaders." Rev. Garcia will join us by Zoom, and welcomes our questions!

Deb Teall leads the study.

The lessons may be accessed from our website:

https://fpcmetuchen.org/ministries/presbyterian-women

Those joining us by Zoom may use the link below:

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81327982944?pwd=bHljVXo 1bytaUnN3RGxRdTJPMXJHQT09

Use meeting ID: 813 2798 2944 Passcode: PW270

Call, text or email Deb Teall to sign up:

Cell: 908.917.3990 | Email: debteall@optonline.net



A Weekly Pastoral Bible Study On the Teachings of Jesus

Wednesdays @10:30 a.m. PW Lounge / By Zoom With Rev. Fred Garry

There is always room for anyone and everyone! The weekly lessons are available from our website. Click on http://www.fpcweb.org/resources/study-resources/ and look for the Gospel Stories Wednesday Bible Study for the latest material.

Join in person or virtually by Zoom using the link below:

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84711673419

Use Meeting ID: 847 1167 3419



Please save this date and join us!

Load up on Rev. Garry's signature breakfast and, most of all, start your day with the fellowship, great conversations and shared laughter!

Call us in the church office if you have any questions.

The Social Justice Committee asks -

DID YOU KNOW?

Our area has a rich and deep history in equality in voting.

On March 31, we commemorate the day that the first Black person in the United States cast a ballot after the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, a historic amendment which guaranteed Black American men the right to vote.

On that day in 1870, Metuchen-born Thomas Mundy Peterson voted in a Perth Amboy city charter referendum, one day after the 15th Amendment was certified into law.

The election was a vote on whether to revise the existing charter of Perth Amboy or abandon it in favor of creating a new township. Peterson voted to revise the charter, which won 230 votes to 63, according to NJ.com.

When additional minor changes were required in January 1871, Peterson was among the seven men appointed to the committee to make those changes, according to Insider NJ website.

Who was Peterson? According to historian Gordon Bond, evidence suggests that Peterson was born on October 6, 1824, on the farm of Ezra Mundy, where his father was living as an employee. Peterson's mother was a former slave. Deed records and maps show that the Mundy farm straddled the border between what was then Piscataway and Woodbridge but is now Edison and Metuchen. Peterson said he had been born in Metuchen.

Thomas Mundy Peterson

March 31st

THOMAS MUNDY PETERSON DAY

Photo credit: From the collection of the National Museum of African American History and Culture

When Peterson was a young child, he and his family moved to Perth Amboy.

Records indicate that Peterson worked several jobs throughout his lifetime, including that as a handyman and a janitor at Perth Amboy's School Number 1.

In 1989, that school was renamed the Thomas M. Peterson Elementary School in his honor.

According to InsiderNJ.com, Peterson's vote in 1870 was the start of a lifetime of civic engagement. He voted in every election he could for the rest of his life. Peterson served as a delegate at the Middlesex County Republican Convention, likely in 1880. Records show that by 1886, he had left the Republican Party to be a delegate in the New Jersey gubernatorial convention of the Prohibition Party. According to historians, Peterson felt that the Republican Party had not adequately addressed the problems of alcoholism that he saw as damaging to his race. Peterson also served as a Middlesex County juror, and evidence suggests that he ran, albeit unsuccessfully, for elected office several times.

In 1884, a bi-partisan committee confirmed that the March 31, 1870, Perth Amboy ballot was the first election held in the nation after the ratification and adoption of the 15th Amendment, making Peterson the first Black man to cast a vote in the country under the new law. Peterson was presented with a gold medal recognizing this achievement on May 30, 1884, then known as Decoration Day, but now Memorial Day, according to InsiderNJ.com.

Peterson reportedly wore his medal proudly each week to services at Perth Amboy's St. Peter's Episcopal Church. He died in Perth Amboy on February 4, 1904, at age 79.

On April 3, 1998, the New Jersey Legislature passed a resolution that March 31 be known throughout the state as Thomas Mundy Peterson Day.

In 2019, the city of Perth Amboy unveiled a plaque in honor of Peterson at St. Peter's Episcopal Church, where he is buried.

Last year, the Middlesex County Board of County Commissioners named its newest county park in honor of Peterson. Located along the waterfront in Perth Amboy, Thomas Mundy Peterson Park opened in September 2021.

Thanks to the Metuchen-Edison Historical Society and its treasurer, Tyreen Reuter, for providing us with this valuable information.

The Social Justice Committee meets every 1st Monday of the month at 7:30 pm in the Social Center Dining Room. Please join us if you can. Email Mike Draper if you are interested to attend our meetings: michaeldraper72@gmail.com

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FROM YOUR: **DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**



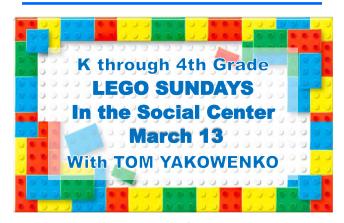
We are God's children, fearfully and wonderfully made.

1st TUESDAYS

(Age 4 years thru 2nd Grade)
March 1st / 4:30—5:00 pm
Meets in the Library at the Education Building

JUNIOR CLUB (For 3rd to 6th Grade)

5:30 - 6:15 pm, Thursday
March 3rd in the Social Center
Junior Club will play in the Gaga pit! It will be fun!
March 17th in Rooms 105/106, Education Bldg.



Our Lego Sundays continue for our Kinder through 4th Grade. It has been a fun teaching tool as the class is read a story and the students bring to life what they learn. More Lego Sundays are scheduled!

Save the dates: April 10 and May 8

For our SENIOR HIGH Monthly Coffee Chat with Grace

MARCH 13th 10:30 –11:30 am In the Social Center Kitchen

We're excited to be back and connect with one another, have meaningful conversations, or just have fun. This month the Senior High will bake Irish Soda bread in time for St. Pat's Day. Come and join!!

Questions? Contact your CE Director, Nancy Leardi: (732) 491-2264 or nleardi@fpcweb.org

MOVIE SUNDAY

For 5th - 6th - 7th Grades

March 27, 8:30-10:15 am Senior High Room (Room 201)



A simple but beautiful theme wonderfully crafted as seen through the heart and mind of a 10 year old boy. On his fifth grade year, ten-year-old Joshua Beal begins a personal search to find answers about life and death — a journey triggered by the passing of his beloved grandfather. The movie has a great cast and displays a lot of tenderness, compas-

sion and many funny scenes. Don't miss it!



We are gearing up for VBS 2022 to be in-person and using COVID-19 safety guidelines at that time. Success of our VBS rests on the many volunteers in all areas. If you are able to volunteer this week or the weeks leading to VBS to help prep, decorate or serve, please get in touch with Nancy Leardi.



WEDNESDAY YOUTH GROUP SCHEDULE

5:00-6:00 pm Junior High 6:00-6:30 pm Jr. & Sr. High Combined Dinner 6:30-7:00 pm Westminster Choir (Grades 7-12)

7:00-8:00 pm Senior High

7:00-7:30 pm Chapel Ringers (Grades 7/8)

8:00-8:30 pm Good News Ringers (Grades 9-12)



A special shout out this month to our Youth Leaders: Christine, Grace, Kaitlin, Jackson, Tom and Wally. These leaders support our youth and the youth program with incredible care. If you see them, give them a heartfelt thank you for rising up to make the youth program a fun and engaging space for our youth. If you are interested in joining this team as a Youth Leader, please reach out! If you have any questions, any ideas, want to chat, grab 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

While we wait for Session to revisit and come up with amended Covid protocols, Youth Group will continue to observe the adopted COVID –19 Guidelines for the Wednesday night combined dinners which include:

- Please make sure your youth comes to Youth Group with a mask, because if a youth is inside the Social Center for any reason (inclement weather, bathroom use, etc.) they must wear their mask.
- Youth are encouraged to self-cleanse both before and after dinner.
- Youth are encouraged to self-select their dinner group to aid in trying to maintain weekly dinner cohorts.
- Youth are encouraged to sit every other seat.
- Dinner serving lines will adhere to social distancing to the greatest extent practicable.
- Food sharing is discouraged.
- Youth may be unmasked to eat while seated.
- The expectation is to provide physical distancing to the greatest extent possible.



HOW CAN YOU SAY NO TO THESE SCRUMPTIOUS GOODNESS?

Our Youth are gearing up for Habitat this summer and we

invite you to support them through this Spring fundraiser. Perfect for the Easter holiday or to cheer a friend. Look for any of our youth to place your orders now until March 13th! The orders will be available the week of April 4 just in time for Easter.



To order online: fundraising.gertrudehawkchocolates.com Select FPC of Metuchen as the Organization and type in the name of the youth you are supporting.

Questions? Contact Colleen Walker in the church office. Email: cwalker@fpcweb.org Phone: 732-491-2303

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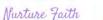
* SAVE THE DATE: PW Spring Rummage Sale on April 29 & 30

Start saving your donations...drop-off Monday-Thursday, April 25-28. We'd love it if you would help sort and price items during the week or work the sale Friday evening or Saturday -- give us an hour or two; you'll love the fun we have!

* Keep your eyes open -- PW Letter is in the mail!

Our annual PW letter is winging its way to you. You can review our boosted budget and expanded missions -- and we hope you will consider donating!







Support Mission



Work For Justice and Peace



Build Community

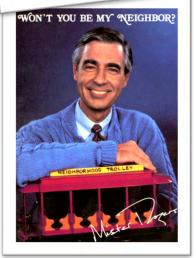


Develop Leaders

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







It's a beautiful day in the neighborhood....

Mr. Rogers' Day is March 20

Rev. Fred Rogers was an ordained minister of the Word and Sacrament for the PC(USA) and was a notable public figure whose work around peace and reconciliation are worth remembering. Mr. Rogers, as he was popularly and fondly referred to, was also a pioneer in the world of Christian education and formation of young children. March 20th is his birthday and the day that the PC(USA) has chosen to highlight all we can learn from his work.

Did you know that there is a Fred Rogers Center in Latrobe, Pennsylvania? Established in 2003 to carry forward Fred Rogers' important legacy, the Center is the official home of the Fred Rogers Archive as well as a straightforward, understanding, and compassionate voice for the healthy development of children. From their website—fredrogerscenter.org—the center works "to extend the legacy of Fred Rogers to today's generation of children and the adults who love and care for them — or, as Fred called them, "the helpers." Their Initiatives focus on helping the helpers as they care for, educate, and raise children.

The Presbyterian Church (USA) through the Presbyterian Mission has compiled in a Quick Sheet ideas and resources for faith communities to engage in this emphasis day. Visit **pcusa.org/mrogers** for a complete list of things to do, helpful PC(USA) resources, worship ideas and links to additional sites.

Just a few quotes to learn from Mr. Rogers:

"Mutually caring relationships require kindness and patience, tolerance, optimism, joy in the other's achievements, confidence in oneself, and the ability to give without undue thought of gain."

"In times of stress, the best thing we can do for each other is to listen with our ears and our hearts and to be assured that our questions are just as important as our answers."

"There are three ways to ultimate success: The first way is to be kind,
The second way is to be kind. The third way is to be kind."

Photo credits: From the Presbyterian Historical Society website https://www.history.pcusa.org/blog/remembering-mr-rogers



The Sunday Book Club is planning to meet again in-person on the 4th Sunday of each month, except when it conflicts with a major church holiday, such as Easter, or a church event.

Below are the books we will discuss. Hope you can join us on the planned meeting dates:

March 27 The Leavers by Lisa Ko

April 24 West with the Night by Beryl Markham

We will have the Book Club in the Chapel, meeting at 11:00 am. It has been guite a while and we look forward to rich and insightful discussions.

Questions?

Please contact Mary Kay Dangremond at: mk.VAtrout@gmail.com."



This Month at THE FOOD PANTRY

We were very blessed to receive many food donations from various sources this past month. In addition to so many of you who donate regularly, we also received large donations from The Metuchen-Edison Elks, Centenary Preschool, YMCA, Julian Dutemple and the Oak Avenue Food Drive, and Be The Change.

The Food Pantry is always accepting food donations. The specific needs change from week to week but the standard items are canned soup, canned meats, canned tuna, pancake mix, maple syrup, spaghetti sauce, and cereal. Currently we have an abundance of canned vegetables and beans. Food drop-offs can be made in the lobby of the Social Center during office hours from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday, or in the bin outside of the Social Center. If you have a perishable item to donate, please let the office know when you drop off to ensure that your donation is stored properly right away.





Join with Presbyterians worldwide in sharing God's love with our neighbors-in-need around the world by providing relief from natural disasters, food for the hungry, and support for the poor and oppressed. This Lenten season, please give generously to One Great Hour of Sharing.

Look for the special offering mailing coming your way soon. We will be receiving the OGHS special offerings on Palm Sunday, April 10th.

Our Sunday School children will also have a chance to participate in this special offering through the Fish Banks. Please engage your children so that they are learning to live out their faith during Lent through the One Great Hour of Sharing.

> Thanks to your heartfelt gifts, One Great Hour of Sharing currently supports projects in over 100 countries.

IF WE ALL DO A LITTLE, IT ADDS UP TO A LOT!

To learn more about how your gift to One Great Hour of Sharing makes a difference, visit pcusa.org/oghs



One Great Hour of Sharing is one of four annual special offerings. The four churchwide Special Offerings of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) play an important role in defining what it means to be a connectional church in the twenty-first century, bringing together the diversity

of the PC (USA) to focus and take faith-based action on shared concerns. The Offerings offer opportunities for partnership, learning, and witness and profoundly affect the life of the church as a collective witness to Jesus Christ's love for the whole church.

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EASTER PLANT ORDER FORM



Celebrate the glory of Easter morning this April 17th by decorating our church with a choice of Easter Plants (white lilies, yellow tulips and pink tulips) to honor your loved ones. If you would like to contribute, plants are \$8.50 each and please bring this form to Church or mail to the Church Office by Friday, April 1st.

Your Name:Phone No.:	
For Easter Bulletin Listing of Donors	
Given by:	
In Memory of:	
In Honor of :	
in Gratitude :	
Please choose your plant choice by indicating the number of plants wanted:	
White Easter Lilies Yellow Tulips Pink Tulips	
Number of plants @ \$8.50 each	
Amount of check: \$	
Make checks payable to: <i>First Presbyterian Church</i> and drop off or mail to the Church Office: P0 Box 385, Metuchen, NJ 08840 ORDER DEADLINE: Friday, April 1st	
Please select and mark [x] one of the following:	
 I will take my plant home after the 9:30 a.m. Easter service. I will leave my plant for the Deacons to deliver to someone in our Church family. 	

First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen

CHURCH CLERGY AND STAFF

CLERGY

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

MUSIC MINISTRY

SUPPORT STAFF

Director/Treasurer

Head Teacher

Dir. of Operations & Finance. sharmon@fpcweb.org Facilities Manager jhollenbeck@fpcweb.org Facilities Assistant boconnell@fpcweb.org Admin. & Comm. Coordinator . . vlacson@fpcweb.org Nick Spadavecchia . . . nspadavecchia@fpcweb.org Communications Consultant Nate Brown nbrown@fpcweb.org Technician and Sound Design Consultant Senior Services Coordinator. . . mmatlock@fpcweb.org Office Assistant cwalker@fpcweb.org foodpantry@fpcweb.org Food Pantry Coordinator COMMUNITY NURSERY SCHOOL

fbrennan@fpcweb.org

csmith@fpcweb.org



Community Nursery School is registering now for the school year 2022/2023!!
Community Nursery School offers classes for children 2 1/2

to 5 years of age in a traditional preschool setting. CNS also offers a full day kindergarten program and a K-Wrap program (Kindergarten enrichment program) for students attending morning or afternoon at a local kindergarten. Extended day until 5:00 is available for Pre-K4s, full day kindergarten and K-Wrap students. Church members receive a \$25.00 discount off monthly tuition. Call 732-491-2240 to schedule a tour to visit our school, or to get more information. Visit our website at www.communityns.org.

FRIENDLY REMINDERS FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE:

Don't forget to adjust your clocks and spring forward!



INDONESIAN PULPIT SUPPLY FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH 2022

March 13 Rev. Ferdinanda Pattipeilohy

March 20 Rev. Hennie Wattimena

March 27 TBD

The **INDONESIAN FELLOWSHIP** Worship Service will return to in-person gathering beginning March 13. If you have any questions, you may contact Norma Tambingon:

norma.tambingon@yahoo.com

"Sesungguhnya, Aku akan mendatangkan kepada mereka kesehatan dan kesembuhan, dan Aku akan menyembuhkan mereka dan akan menyingkapkan kepada mereka kesejahteraan dan keamanan yang berlimpah-limpah."

Yeremia 33:6 (TB)

MARCH 2022 PARISH NEWS

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

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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!

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 In-person and Livestreamed on www.fpcweb.org and FPC Metuchen Facebook

