

Glad Tidings

hearts open to christ - doors open to his world

First Presbyterian Church of Haddonfield . Summer 2022

Pastor's Notes

Only one thing left to say...and that's "Thank you!"

For two years you've welcomed me into your church and your lives. We labored through some very difficult times and made lots of first-time decisions that we weren't prepared for nor did we have any experience.

As with any large system, not everyone loved every decision, yet I remain convinced that the direction forged by the leadership of the church was the best and safest.

Regardless, we're emerging and many of the traditional offerings are returning and folks are finding new routines.

For that I'm very grateful. So many of you have "stuck with it" and remain engaged and connected to the church. My hope is that more and more will do the same as the future is bright for this congregation.



Your PNC is working hard and will surely find the best person for the next Senior Pastor. In the meantime (and beyond!), you're in excellent hands with Nikki and the rest of the staff. In short, the future is bright!

And so, my friends in Haddonfield, I bid you goodbye and Godspeed — I know wonderful things await you — and my many fond memories of you are the indelible capstone to my ministry.

Thank you and God bless,

Doug



Rev. Dr. Douglas Gerdtz
Transitional Senior Pastor

Celebrating 150 Years : Hearts Open to Christ, Doors Open to His World



WORSHIP

In Person
Fellowship Hall
10 AM Sundays

Live Streaming
Go to website and
click on Watch Live

1st Presbyterian Church
20 Kings Highway East
Haddonfield, NJ 08033

www.haddonfieldpres.org
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Summer Highlights

June 19
Commissioning of Mission Trip
Participants

Year End Celebration
and Rev. Gerdts Appreciation
following Worship until 2 pm—Manse

June 20
Session Meeting 7 PM

June 22
Steven Ministry Interest Meeting

June 25-July 2
Youth Mission Trip

July 9-10
Annual Craft Fair
Sanctuary Open

July 17
Mission Trip Members Lead Worship

July 18
Session Meeting 7PM

July 25-29
Vacation Bible School
“Discovery on Adventure Island”
9am - Noon

July 31
Siomara Wedderburn,
Director of Wellness at Urban Promise
60 minute workshop following Worship

August 15
Session Meeting 7PM

Glad Tidings

Betsy Westermaier,
Editor
beewulf@mac.com

— **Church Staff** —

Rev. Dr. Douglas Gerdts
Transitional Senior Pastor

Rev. Nikki Perrine Passante
Associate Pastor

Peter Leibensperger
Music Director

Nancy Ruth Wainwright
Children’s Choirs

Lucas Brown
Principal Organist

Gabrielle Heimerling
Director of Youth and Family
Ministries

Marisa McGovern
Preschool Director

Anne Vial
Office Administrator

Kris Bean
Financial Secretary

Ed Hess
Community Caseworker

Rebecca Mannion
Receptionist

Travis Bogetti
Building Manager

Mark Hall
Security

Parish Register

Baptized

Milo Thomas Mills
2/27/22

Tristan Thomas Probst
child of Brian and Emme Probst
3/6/22

Abigail Gaynor Friday
and
Brandon George Friday, Jr.
children of Brandon Friday and Christine McDevitt
3/27/22

Chance Grabowski Kelm
child of Carly and Roland Kelm
4/17/22

Laine Catherine Cortese
child of Rebecca and Patrick Cortese
and
Colin Patrick Koch
child of Sarah Smedley and Paul Koch
5/15/22

Joined the Church Triumphant

Jay Brennan-Martin
11/16/21

Alberta Kramer
12/17/21

Robert St. Marie
12/21/21

Pat McGrody
1/29/22

Dan Colombi
5/21/22

Summer Study Opportunities

Porch Bible Study, met on Wednesday, June 15 @ 7 p.m. on Zoom to finish James 4 and start James Chapter 5. We plan a July meeting to finish James and then start a new study in September. For more information about the Porch Bible Study, email Deb Nussbaum at debranussbaum1987@gmail.com. The study is guided by Deb and Jill and Tony Mascena.

Wednesday Night Book Discussion

Beginning on July 6 at 6:30 on Zoom, join a discussion of *Friedman's Fables*, by Edwin H. Friedman. These tales "offer fresh perspectives on familiar human foibles and reflect the author's humor, pathos, and understanding." These Wednesday night discussions will be led by Pastor Nikki and Rachel Davis. Zoom link is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6467052376>. To join by phone: 646-558-8656, meeting ID 6467052376.

JAC Conversations on Race, The Justice and Advocacy Committee is reading Heather McGhee's *The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together*, which explores how racism and zero-sum attitudes are used in discussions about the common good. You are invited to join JAC's upcoming book discussion on July 10, immediately following worship in the choir room.

VBS 2022: DISCOVERY ON ADVENTURE ISLAND

Registration is ongoing. Camp dates are July 25-July 29 from 9 a.m.-12 p.m. Using map coordinates from the Reference Book (the Bible), children discover clues to finding Infinity Lanterns while learning how God's light shines in the lives of familiar biblical characters in Old and New Testament stories. VBS is open to kids 4 (fully potty trained) - 5th grade. Cost is \$35

Associate Pastors Play Many Important Roles

When Betsy put together the Senior Pastor article last season for Glad Tidings, I asked one question: 'and what about the Associates?' It's been my experience that Associate Pastors carry the day-to-day details of church operations, and in a large sense function as the backbone of the church- freeing up the Senior Pastor for visioning, strategizing, and outreach. Because of this, Associates are often just as busy – if not more so- than their Senior counterparts. Most recently a colleague in the presbytery asked me to preach for him during an upcoming Sunday, to which I laughed loudly and heartily, responding that 'my Senior Pastor is retiring.' To which the question was asked again, "So can you preach that Sunday or not?"

The role of Associate Pastor is one that has been long misunderstood, largely from its evolution from the Assistant Pastor position, a role that was phased out several decades ago. In the PC(USA) pastors are ordained for **function**, not for power. **Every** pastor in every PC(USA) church has gone through (at least) 3 years of seminary, Hebrew and Greek language school, one or more internships, a 3-year term of guidance and grilling under the Commission on Ministry in the particular presbytery of care, and 5 ordination exams. Whether one becomes a Senior Pastor, a Solo Pastor, a Co-Pastor, or an Associate Pastor, is as much a matter of personal choice as it is qualification.

Some congregations are used to Associates coming directly from seminary and then entering into a mentoring relationship with the Senior Pastor. Other congregations have an Associate position installed strictly for children and youth ministry. Still other congregations have Executive Associates who manage all the affairs of the church leaving the Sr. Pastor totally

available for a preaching ministry. My ministry as an Associate has been different altogether in that I have served as a 'Generalist' Associate (Generalist meaning involved in all matters of the church), in periods of transition after the departure of long-term Senior Pastors. Out of these contexts developed one of my proven and unique gifts: to undergird congregations while preparing them for the advent of a new pastor. I liken it to functioning as John the Baptist – helping the church to 'Prepare the Way' for new Senior Leadership.



Nikki Perrine Passante
Associate Pastor

My colleagues have often referred to me as a 'Professional Associate.' I'm not sure what that means, other than it being an attempt to try to place ministry in a category. My hardest-won experience has proven that the Holy Spirit doesn't work through categories, but through folks willing to be led and willing to be obedient to the Call, wherever it goes. FPCH has a rich history of Associates who have answered that Call; each undoubtedly bringing a rich and unique set of gifts. As you read through these biographies, thoughts, and updates, let us all give thanks for the communion of pastoral saints at FPCH. Whether Senior or Associate, let us give thanks for those that have gone, those that are here, and those that are yet to come. May we continue to be so richly blessed.

In Christ's service,
Nikki

Assistant and Associate Pastors

John K. Mills 1953-1958

Fred L. Rhody 1958-1981

David B. McDowell 1964-1969

Kenneth H. Young 1969-1977

Graeme Veitch

Jeremy Sanderson

Rachel Achtemeier Rhodes

Laura Colee

Nikki Perrine Passante

Rev. Fred Rhody, our beloved and longest serving Associate, led the 8:30 Chapel Worship Service that was most often filled to over-flowing. David McDowell offered many new ideas, including producing T. S. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral* in our Sanctuary. Ken Young revived the Youth Program—involving young people and their parents more closely in the life of the church. Graeme Veitch brought maturity, wisdom, meditative Taize worship and a belief that Sunday worship was a sacred time, not a lodge meeting. He guided us through the transition from Dr. Levering to Pastor Bill. And then came the young Princeton Seminary grads Nikki alluded to in her article. They brought renewed life to the youth programs and "rejuvenated" the congregation.



Rachel Rhodes



Laura Colee

The first of the new generation was Jeremy Sanderson, a seminary grad eager to serve under the mentorship of Pastor Bill. The Youth Movement began. When Jeremy left to go to a church in the Northwest, our first young woman joined the pastoral staff. Rachel Achtemeier is the third generation in her family to be a Presbyterian pastor. She was immediately comfortable in the pulpit and with the junior and senior high members of the congregation. Mission trips, talent shows, Youth Sundays, faith challenges, and "God Sightings" were all part of the program. During her time with us Rachel married, became Rachel Rhodes, and started her family. When we needed a new Christian Education Director, Rachel suggested her friend from seminary Laura Colee. And the fun and inspiration continued. When Rachel left, we called Laura to be our Provisional Associate. When Laura left to pursue her interest in inner city mission at the Broad Street Mission in Philadelphia, we began a long search for a new Associate, a search made especially urgent when Pastor Bill announced he would be retiring in June of 2020. The Lord has always sent us an associate pastor with the skills we need. And so the Lord sent us Nikki with her special skills to see us through another transition and bring us new visions for the future of our church.



Nikki's installation was delayed by Covid, but her good work began the day she arrived.



Rachel with Pastor Bill and her father, Rev. Dr. Mark Achtemeier, a Presbyterian pastor and theologian.

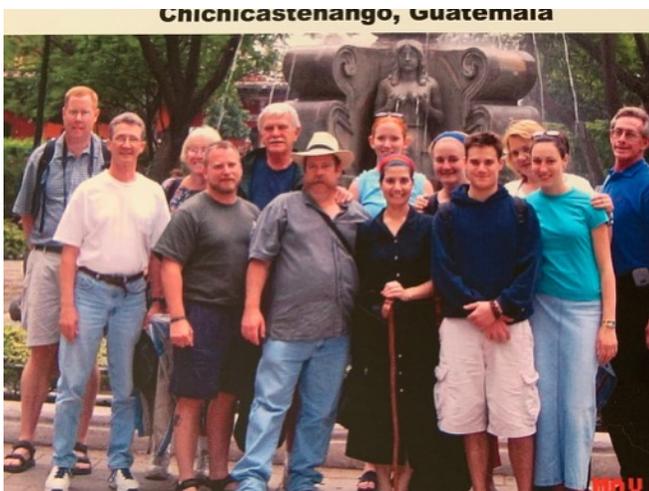


Rachel's family.



Laura was/is also a gifted preacher.

Guatemalan Ministry



In April, 1997 - one of the nurses in our church family went on a non-denominational medical mission trip to Guatemala City. A year later, John and Sharon Harvey (the missionaries who led the trip to Guatemala City) took the group to Chichicastenango and began a ministry in the highlands.

Since that time, several in our congregation went down to help them build The Leadership Institute for Lay Pastors as well as a permanent clinic space. ASELSI became the Name of the ministry).

The Leadership Institute teaches reading skills (average schooling is 3rd grade), Bible, and pastoring skills ASELSI CLINIC provides health care for all ages MILK PROGRAM (FPC has donated money for years) which provides milk, vitamins, health teaching, and medical care for infants to 5 years of age who otherwise would have died of malnutrition.

PHYSICAL THERAPY program for children with birth defects, and a MOBILE VAN which takes medical care to the Mayans in areas surrounding Chichicastenango Those who chose to share God's love directly to this ministry are listed below and LOVE to talk about it! Unlisted are the many who collected supplies and helped sort them and pack them....and prayed our families and us through these experiences....as well as financially supporting the work

Jennifer Brown (children's ministry), Doug Chase (construction), Lisa Davis (physical therapy), Steve Ercolani (children's ministry and translating for medical team), Esther Gauntt (pharmacy tech), Liz Getman (children's ministry and translating), Andy Levering (construction), Jill Mascena (RN), Steve Pazan (construction and translating), Kyra Pazan (children's ministry), Ken Rodgers's (physical therapy), Rob Smith (MD), Robbie Smith (RN), Claire Smith (children's ministry), Lauren Smith (children's ministry and pharmacy tech), Joyce Stout (RN), and Dan Tonden (construction).

Mission Then and Now

Presbyterian missions over the years have supported projects in education and medicine. Many hospitals and colleges have provided witness to our faith and our concern for the world beyond our sanctuary walls. In recent years we at FPCH have supported Crop Walk. Feed My Staving Children, St. Wilfrid's Clinic and Food Pantry, and Interfaith Caregivers.



In the early 70's Pastor Fred Rhody's wife, Mary established Camden County Jail Visitors—the "Good Ladies" to visit the women's prison in Camden. Founding members of the group were honored during services in 1981. Seen above, they are Bonnie Bell, Tanya Mackenzie, Bunny Hurd, Barbara Solly, Joan McCullough, Tish Schalk, and Mary Rhody.

Becky Bryan, seen below with students from the Camden Forward School, joined the faculty of Urban Promise to facilitate wellness and counseling. Nadia Vanderkoop, International Director for Urban Promise introduced us to visitors from Malawi and other African programs. Her husband Jeff helped lead our youth program.





Celebrating Pastor Bill.

For more than fifteen years he reminded us of God's abiding love by loving us, and we loved him back.

He told us stories, made us laugh, sang us songs, gave lots of hugs, and stood with us in the Jordan.



Periodical

First Presbyterian Church of Haddonfield *Hearts Open to Christ; Doors Open to His World* Here we are! Come join us.

Supporting missions at home and abroad hands on/face to face.



Generations of service and leadership.



Ordaining Elders and Deacons.
Celebrating together.



Singing and ringing.
Remembering who we are and
whose we are.