

This week's news...



March 25, 2021

GO FIND ANOTHER CHURCH

Dear Friend,

In my former congregations, I often told my members around this time of year to **“go find another church.”**

Now that would seem contradictory to building membership and growing a church — and that would be true — if I didn't add the caveat, “and then come back and tell us about it!”



First Presbyterian of Haddonfield is not unique in the sense that many (most?) members never see the inside of another church unless attending a wedding or a funeral. Very few members actually experience another worshiping community as a visitor, and that puts us at a disadvantage.

Nikki, Travis, and I visited the Lutheran Church of Our Savior in Haddonfield this week and were provided an in-depth tour by the pastor, Wayne Zschech. In the course of our time together, Wayne said two things about the building:

1. “How can people trust us to care for their souls if we don't take care of the building?”
2. “The purpose of a church is to provide a safe and welcoming place to encounter Christ.”

Like other churches in the area, they've partially re-opened on Sunday mornings and are reconfiguring much of their typical seating and liturgy to accommodate the restrictions of the pandemic. As you know, FPCH is in the midst of those deliberations as well.

Here's where you can help!

Go find another church...and then come back and tell us about it!

In particular think about:

1. Ease of parking and finding your way in.
2. Ease of navigating the building (sanctuary, restroom, COVID awareness, etc.)
3. Greeting — did anyone talk to you? Nametags?
4. Facilities — was worship space comfortable? could you hear and see?
5. Service — were you able to follow the liturgy? did the bulletin explain things? was the sermon meaningful?
6. Fellowship time — where was it held? was it “visitor friendly” or was it a time for members to catch up with each other?
7. Building — what's your overall impression of cleanliness, upkeep, appearance, functionality?

You know what it's like to stop by a few "Open Houses" when folks are selling a home — and then you go back to your home and see it, perhaps, with fresh eyes? Often you'll think, (cont.)

"I love my home!" and maybe you'll come home and think, "Hmmm...we could do a few things to spruce it up!"

My guess is that you'll have similar reactions to another church — just be sure to come back!

Be well, stay safe, and God bless!



PALM SUNDAY AND HOLY WEEK



The 10 a.m. live-streamed worship service on 3/28 will be extra lively, with music by our children's choirs. After the service, drive through the parking lot for a palm. (The Easter Egg Hunt has been postponed. See announcement below.)

During the week, please take advantage of the many opportunities for prayer and worship. during

Monday, March 29: Holy Week Zoom **Prayer Service** — 6:30-6:45 p.m.

Tuesday, March 30: – Holy Week Zoom **Prayer Service** — 6:30-6:45 p.m.

Wednesday, March 31: – Holy Week Zoom **Prayer Service** — 6:30-6:45 p.m.

Thursday, April 1: **Maundy Thursday Service** streamed at 4:00 p.m.

Communion served in parking lot — 5:00-6:00 p.m.

Friday, April 2: **Good Friday** Zoom Service at 12:00 p.m.

Sunday, April 4: **Easter Service** streamed live at 10:00 a.m.

DATE CHANGE: FPCH's First Easter Egg Hunt

Due to the rainy weather predicted for this Sunday, we are moving our Easter Egg Hunt to Saturday 4/3/21 at 11 a.m. We will be dividing up the playground and church grounds by age for kids 10 and under to be able to have some fun and hunt for eggs. Our Easter Egg Hunt will be BYOB(asket) and BYOM(ask). Hope to see you there!



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING:

Restoring Hope, Feeding the Hungry, Empowering the Oppressed

Collected today and next week, each gift to One Great Hour of Sharing supports efforts to relieve hunger through the Presbyterian Hunger Program, promote development through the Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People, and assist in areas of disaster through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. For specific information about OGHS and an interactive map of projects your gifts support, [click here](#). *Your OGHS offering can be made online or with a check. (Please label accordingly.)*

Our Appreciation for Mark Cole

Mark Cole will be leaving First Presbyterian Church and his last day will be on Easter Morning (April 4th). He has served as organist for FPC for 3 ½ years and he will be greatly missed. Despite no in-person worship this past year, we have been blessed to receive his gifts of music in online worship.

Before he goes, we want to wish him well. If you would like to express your appreciation to Mark, we will be collecting cards and/or donations to his purse at the drive-through on Sunday mornings, now through Easter. Please make check payable to First Presbyterian Church and put Mark's name in the memo or donate online in Realm if you prefer. You may also drop off cards/donations directly to Cheryl Tarditi. Please contact her directly to schedule arrangements: cheryltarditi@gmail.com or (919) 784-9450.

CONVERSATIONS ON RACE

Sunday morning discussions continue from 9-9:45 a.m. on Zoom at [this link](#). This Sunday, we will be discussing the current challenges to voting rights affecting minority communities with a focus on current issues facing New Jersey voters. We will be hearing from representatives from the non-partisan League of Women Voters-New Jersey about two initiatives that the League is working on to expand access to voting for all citizens. Here are two articles to read as general background to ground our discussion: [Targeting State Restrictions](#) (NYTimes) and [In Georgia, Republicans Take Aim at Role of Black Churches in Elections](#) (NYTimes). Each week's resources are linked in the weekly email newsletter and on the [Adult Ed](#) page of the website. Questions? Email Becky Bryan, rebeccabryan@me.com.

BLOOD DRIVE right here at First Presbyterian

Tuesday, April 13, 2-7 p.m. Sign up on the American Red Cross [website](#).



MUSICAL MEDITATION FROM MARK

Beneath the Cross of Jesus, arr. Victor Labenske



[Listen Here](#)

*Beneath the cross of Jesus I fain would take my stand,
The shadow of a mighty rock within a weary land;
A home within the wilderness, a rest upon the way,
From the burning of the noontide heat,
and the burden of the day.*

An enormous thank-you to Mark for nine months' worth of these weekly gems. Thank you for providing a moment of calm and beauty each week – a true gift.

A CAROL CHOIR CELEBRATION OF PALM SUNDAY

Mackenzie and James sing, "Hosanna to the King of Kings!"



Click on image

YOUTH GROUP NEWS!

We took an unexpected break this week for Youth Group, but will be back this week! Please join us on Sunday, March 28th from 5pm-6pm. If it's nice outside we'll do Capture the Flag. If it's raining, we'll head into Fellowship Hall for dodgeball. Masks required and temps will be taken. Hope to see you there! Contact [Gab Heimerling](#) to receive Youth Group emails.



SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

**FOR I KNOW THE PLANS
I HAVE FOR YOU,
DECLARES
The Lord,
"PLANS TO PROSPER YOU
AND NOT TO HARM YOU,
PLANS TO GIVE YOU
Hope And A Future.**
JEREMIAH 29:11

This week our lesson teaches us about a prophet named Jeremiah. Jeremiah was a teenager when he was first called by God to be a prophet, and he didn't think he would be able to rise to God's challenge. God didn't give him an easy path - often it was lonely and sad. - "weeping prophet" came from somewhere. Jeremiah had some hard truths to tell and his messages were not well received. But he persevered, strengthened by his faith in God. And in the end there are some words of hope (this is one of my favorite verses).

This Week for Lent: Did you know that the pretzel is a traditional food for lent? In fact, the pretzel was actually invented in order to be a simple Lenten snack! Pretzels for Lent date back to the early Church, perhaps

sometime in the 4th century. During that time it was common for Christians to fast during the season, abstaining from meat, dairy, fats, and sweets. These quick breads are made with only a tiny bit of sugar (or honey, if you prefer) to activate the yeast and no fat – they are entirely flour, water and yeast! Pretzels can remind us of prayer, too. This soft dough is formed into a loop with ends crossed, meant to symbolize arms crossed in prayer. The word “pretzel” comes from the German translation of the Latin word for little arms, “bracellae.” Another story places the origin of the word in “preiola” which means little reward, so pretzels might have been given as an award to a child who had learned her prayers! Here is a [pretzel recipe](#) for you to try.



PINWHEELS FOR PREVENTION



Once again Presbyterian Women is creating a pinwheel garden in April for the observance of National Child Abuse Prevention month. It is a program of *Prevent Child Abuse-New Jersey (PCA-NJ)* which promotes great childhoods, positive parenting and healthy child development. Founded in 1979, all their efforts throughout the state

are dedicated to preventing child abuse and neglect in all forms for all New Jersey children. April is the national observation of Child Abuse Prevention Month. During this time, PCA-NJ implements its “Pinwheels for Prevention” campaign. The pinwheel is in their logo and was chosen as a national symbol of prevention because it is whimsical and evokes childlike notions – so it is a good emblem of the “Great Childhoods” that is desired for all children.



ONGOING...

Old Testament Bible Study: Meets Mondays at 11:30 a.m. on [Zoom](#). Contact Doug [here](#) for info.

Doug's Bible Study: Tuesdays at 8:00 a.m. on Zoom, Doug hosts an informal conversation about the scripture that will be the text for the following Sunday's sermon. The text for **Tuesday, March 30** is John 20:1-18. [Zoom link](#)

PASTOR NIKKI'S BIBLE STUDY AND STIL CLASS will both take a break for Holy Week. Please join us for worship and prayers during the week.

IHOC ADOPT-A-BOX COLLECTION



It's time to collect hygiene products – toothbrush and paste, shampoo, baby shampoo, hand sanitizer, deodorant, underwear, socks, comb, shaving supplies, soap, washcloth, etc. (travel sizes are fine) – and put them in a shoebox to be distributed to neighbors in need. Close each box with a rubber band, label it “Man,” “Woman,” “Boy,” “Girl,” or “Baby,” and drop it off at the Sunday drive-through.

ST. WILFRID'S OPEN DOOR CLINIC

The Report of the Open Door Clinic March 22nd:

Saturday, the Open Door Clinic celebrated the one year anniversary of our weekly feeding outreach at St Wilfrid's. We celebrated with cake: cake for everyone. It takes a lot of work, time and effort to prepare and distribute the food and goods that we distribute. BUT there are humble, loving people that no one sees, and are never recognized doing more than we do, with less. They are at it all the time. They are heroes to our little effort to touch the lives we touch in Camden.

This week marks the 53rd straight week that the Open Door Clinic at St Wilfrid's has distributed food during the pandemic; 106 bags, 4,910 total. Over 122,750 pounds of food and dry goods!

Foodbank Helpers needed!!!! The group usually meets Friday mornings at 8am at the Foodbank, and unload cars at St Wilfrid's at 8:40am. It's amazing talking with people picking up food at the Food Bank! So many people caring – in so many ways. Please contact Rose at intrepidrose@hotmail.com to see if you want to join the fun.

NEEDS are syrup, canned peas and carrots, Mac n cheese, pasta, diapers – sizes 5 & 6, wipes and more wipes! We also need plastic grocery bags from Shoprite and Wegman's, paper grocery bags to line the plastic bags with, and plastic newspaper bags to hold hygiene products. **AND** Paul Urian is giving **books** to the kids who show up with their parents for bags on Saturdays – if you have any kids' books that are in good condition that need a new home – the smiles on the kids' faces are overwhelming. Many have never had a book they could keep! **Donations** may be dropped off during the week in the bin behind Grace Episcopal Church or on Sundays during the drive-through after church from 11-12.

If you think you might like to volunteer during the week to help fill all those bags that are given out or would like to know more about volunteer opportunities, please call Jill Mascena at 856-428-7342 and Check the website opendoorcliniccamden.org



WEEKLY CALENDAR

Mar. 25 – 6:30 p.m. Nikki's Bible Study
Mar. 28 – 9 a.m. Conversation on Race
Mar. 28 – 10 a.m. Palm Sunday Worship
Mar. 28 – 11 a.m. Palm distribution in the drive-through
Easter Egg Hunt moved to Apr. 3
Mar. 28 – 5 p.m. Youth Group – IN PERSON
Mar. 29 – 11:30 a.m. OT Bible Study
Mar. 29 – 6:30 p.m. Holy Week Prayer on Zoom

Mar. 30 – 8 a.m. Doug's Bible Study
Mar. 30 – 6:30 p.m. Holy Week Prayer on Zoom
Mar. 31 – 6:30 p.m. Holy Week Prayer on Zoom
Apr. 1 – 4 p.m. Maundy Thursday Service Online
Apr. 1 – 5-6 p.m. Communion in parking lot
Apr. 2 – 12 p.m. Good Friday Prayer on Zoom
Apr. 3 – 11 a.m. Easter Egg Hunt
Apr. 4 – 10 a.m. EASTER Worship online