



Stirling Stuff

Volume 62, No. 1

January 2018

Pastor's Letter



Recently, I came across the following:

If you are ever on Facebook (and many are), you know what it's like at year's end to be bombarded by countless friends' "Year In Review" photo montages. It's all part of Facebook's endless crusade to keep their users actively engaged in the site.

The problem for many, however, is that Facebook automatically generates these montages without a user's consent. Admittedly, they do not post them publicly without consent (a user must select the option to "post" the review), but that doesn't stop FB from creating them and then inserting them into your news feed, repeatedly, in the hopes that you'll eventually opt to post the review. This keeps your page active, generates lots of "likes" and "comments" from your friends, and, overall, boosts Facebook's exposure and vitality.

While many are all too happy to look back at the past year and smile at the images from the past twelve months, for others it's a painful intrusion into a chapter of their lives they'd just as well leave locked in the vaults of yesterday.

When it comes to a new year, most of the time it is easy to look back with grateful hearts for what has been; but, it is also a time to turn the page on what may have been a difficult year and look forward to a year that's filled with hope and promise. Looking back is essential so that we don't make the same mistakes again. But, looking forward enables us to find a new way. We have the opportunity to change and try something different. We have the possibility to forgive and renew relationships.

We also understand that the God who helped us get through the past year, with whatever trials it contained, will go with us into the coming year and help us face whatever may come our way. That is the promise of God as we look at 2018 and beyond.



Happy New Year!

Tom

The First Presbyterian Church of Stirling
Feeding Those Who Hunger

Worship Services and Scripture Passages for January

January 7, 2018

- *Epiphany Sunday* **At Meyersville Presby. Church**
- *Sacrament of Holy Communion*
- *Non-Perishable Food Collection – Fruit Cocktail*
Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:1-14;
Ephesians 3:1-12; Matthew 2:1-12
Rev. Aspinall preaching

January 14, 2018

- *Second Sunday After Epiphany*
1 Samuel 3:1-20; Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18;
1 Corinthians 6:12-20; John 1:43-51
Can You Ignore It?

*Child Care is provided in the Nursery.
Children join their families in church and then leave for
Christian Education classes after the Children's Talk.*

*Worship begins at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings,
followed by Fellowship Hour in Pollard Hall.*



January 21, 2018

- *Third Sunday After Epiphany*
Jonah 3:1-5, 10; Psalm 62:5-12;
1 Corinthians 7:29-31; Mark 1:14-20
How Much Time Do We Have?

January 28, 2018

- *Fourth Sunday After Epiphany*
Deuteronomy 18:15-20; Psalm 111;
1 Corinthians 8:1-13; Mark 1:21-28
*What Prophet Has God Called Up
In Our Midst?*

**Scriptures that are listed after the first Gospel
reading are non-lectionary passages
that will be used in the sermon.
All the scriptures are provided here for
any weekly Bible reading you may do.**

Rev. Peters' sermons and the scripture readings
are posted on the church website.

Visit: www.fpcstirling.org, click on:
"Sermon Archive," then select the sermon
and/or scripture reading date you would like.



Pastor's Coffee Klatch

The monthly Coffee Klatch will be on **Sat., January 6th, 9:00 a.m.**, at the Stirling House Diner.
We talk about whatever is on your mind. Come join the fellowship and conversation.



2018 Church Offering Envelopes

The 2018 Church Offering Envelopes are available to be picked up in Pollard Hall or the Church office.



Per Capita Apportionment



The 2018 Per Capita amount we are being assessed **per member is \$35**. This money enables the Presbyterian Church (USA) and its Councils (Presbytery and Synod) to do their work. Please help out by paying the \$35 for everyone in your family who is a member of the church. The Per Capita envelope can be found in the front of your offering envelopes box. Thank you.

Family Promise of Morris County

- Jan Somers

This is our 29th year of participation in this program that helps families through difficult times in their lives. **Our first 2018 date is Thurs., January 11th, when we will be hosting the guests at Trinity House in Stirling for dinner through 7 a.m.** Please look at the sign-up sheet in Pollard Hall, and help out in any way you can. If you have questions, please speak to Rev. Peters.



More information about [Family Promise](#) can be found on page 6 of this newsletter.

Annual Congregational Meeting – January 28th

Session has called for the Annual Meeting of the Congregation and Corporation of the First Presbyterian Church of Stirling to be held in Pollard Hall on **Sunday, Jan. 28th**, following morning worship. The purposes of this meeting are: to hear and receive the annual reports of the committees of the congregation and of groups sponsored by the church; to elect a financial secretary for a term of one year; to elect members of the 2018 Nominating Committee; and, to affirm the 2018 church budget. Please plan to attend this important event in the life of our Church as we look back over the past year and ahead to 2018.

Annual Reports

Reminder: Please submit annual reports for your committee/group to the church office by Friday, January 12th so they can be assembled and distributed in time for the meeting on January 28th. Thank you.

**The Concert Series in Stirling – January 21st**

Our January Music Series concert will be held on the **third Sunday of January, the 21st, at 2:00 p.m.** The performer for that concert is still to be determined. Please invite your family and friends to this concert and join us for beautiful music played in our sanctuary.

The concerts are free; a free-will offering is accepted. A short reception follows the concert, during which guests may meet the performer. Refreshments will be served.

Christian Education Committee

- Lore Pateman

**Adult Bible Study**

- Rev. Peters

Our **Bible Study of the Gospel of Luke** continues on **Thursday mornings from 10:30 a.m. – noon.** We invite you to join us in our study of Rev. Dr. Fred Craddock's book, **Luke**.

Brunch and Learn Presentation, February 4th

Following morning worship on **Sunday, Feb. 4th**, the Christian Education Committee will host another ***Brunch and Learn***. **Judy Carbone will give a presentation about alcoholism and the opioid epidemic**. America's addiction epidemic is being confronted at the local, state, and federal level. Judy has been active with the Watchung Hills Regional Municipal Alliance, both in support activities and presentations. She has made presentations at our town's schools and Watchung Hills Regional High School. Kudos to America for recognizing the epidemic and to Judy for helping to educate. Consider attending the *Brunch and Learn*. Knowledge is a key in confronting the epidemic.

Fourth Sunday Focus, January 28th**- Tom Parziale**

Fourth Sundays give us an opportunity to connect with other members of our church family in a relaxed atmosphere: a pot of tea, a Box o' Joe, Munchkins . . . and conversation. Our next "Fourth Sunday Focus" gathering will be on **Jan. 28th** in the meeting room. We start around **8:45 a.m.** and end by about 9:45 a.m., but join us whenever you can.



If you have a topic you'd like to discuss, contact Tom Parziale.

Worship Committee**- Janet Parziale**

Liturgists for January:

Jan. 7	Meyersville	Jan. 21	Tom Parziale
Jan. 14	Janet Parziale	Jan. 28	Ed Gerech



If you would like to serve as Liturgist during worship, please sign up on the sheet in Pollard Hall or speak to Jan Somers.

Epiphany Sunday - at Meyersville

On **Sunday, January 7th**, we will celebrate **Epiphany Sunday**, also known as Three Kings Day. Please plan to join us for this service, which will be held at Meyersville Presbyterian Church that morning.

The congregation at Meyersville Presbyterian Church has pledged to donate canned mixed fruit, sometimes labeled "fruit cocktail," to the township food pantry. Since we will be worshipping at Meyersville on Jan. 7th, please consider bringing this item (preferably the kind in juice, not syrup) to donate when we are there.

**Deacons Corner****- Katherine Ihringer**

Happy New Year! I hope that everyone had a wonderful Christmas and is ready to start 2018. I want to thank everyone who came out to the Carol Sing. I also want to thank those who donated cookies and purchased poinsettias. It was a lot of fun and the cookies were delicious and the poinsettias were beautiful.

Mission of the Month

Our ***Mission of the Month*** for January is the **Bridges Outreach Lunch Program**. The donations will be used to help our church provide 40 lunches per month for the homeless in Newark and New York City. There are envelopes in the pew racks for this purpose; just note: Mission of the Month" on your check. Please give generously to this collection and the food it will provide. Thank you.



Fellowship Hour

Please remember to sign up in Pollard Hall to host Fellowship Hour some Sunday after worship. If you have questions or would like help hosting, please speak to Carolyn or any Deacon. If you would prefer to sponsor a Fellowship Hour and have someone else host it, please sign up for that option. Thank you.

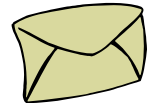
Church Flowers

Please sign up on the Flower Chart in Pollard Hall if you would like to place flowers on the chancel for Sunday morning worship in honor or memory of someone. Allow enough lead time to have them ordered for the date you would like. The cost is \$30, and cash or checks (made payable to: Flowers on the Ridge) should be given to Israel Sierra. When you sign up on the flower chart, please be specific, i.e. *in memory/honor, given by*, and print clearly.



Deacons' Fund

Please use the green Deacons' Fund envelopes for donations to help the Deacons with their Mission work. They are available in the pew racks or in the church office and may be placed in the offering plate. **Remember to put your name on the envelope so you can receive credit for your donation.** Thank you!



Mission Programs

Bridges Outreach Lunch Program

- Jean Hoffman



Due to the possibility of bad weather and the resulting travel difficulties for our volunteers, we will not be preparing lunches for January-March. Our next commitment date for preparing 40 lunches is: Friday, April 4th, 9:30 a.m., in Pollard Hall. We are always in need of small bottles of water and cartons of juice; snacks of cookies, nuts, Goldfish, pretzels, etc.; and plastic spoons. Cash donations are also appreciated to help with the purchase of bread and lunch meat. You can drop items off in Pollard Hall on Sunday mornings, or give cash donations to Madeline or Jean. If you'd like to help with this program, please speak to Jean or Madeline.

Upcoming dates: May 4, June 8, July 13, Aug. 3, Sept. 7, Oct. 5, Nov. 2, and Dec. 7

Family Promise & Our Promise Programs of Morris County**- Tom Parziale**

Many of us are familiar with the Family Promise Program of Morris County. Local churches, including ours, are part of the network that provides temporary housing and meals to those in the program as they try to get back on their feet. In the past year, we helped provide 4,880 nights of shelter. The program was at 95% capacity, which allowed more people than ever to be sheltered.

Are you aware of the ***Our Promise*** program? Family Promise of Morris County has expanded! Building on the agency's long history of serving homeless clients, they have partnered with the First Baptist Church of Morristown to start a new program serving the local homeless population in Morristown. Officially named *Our Promise*, the program is based out of the church basement, staffed by professionals, and provides the following services: phone and computer access, mailing address, restrooms, warming/cooling center, information and referrals, linkage to medical and dental services, case management, systems advocacy, and more.

Volunteers are needed for *Our Promise*. Hours would be during the day (Mon-Fri, 1pm-5pm range) and include filing, administrative work, organizing mail, cleaning, serving, and stocking food/beverages. *Our Promise* can be reached by phone at 973-644-0100 or email at ourpromise@familypromisemorris.org.

A Holiday Message from a Friend...

A former guest took the opportunity to thank volunteers, staff, donors, and the supportive community members involved with Family Promise of Morris County. We share this message with you as a token of gratitude for your commitment to ending the homelessness crisis in Morris County.

"The holidays are usually portrayed as happy and cheerful. Now, this is what we have come to expect, and have accepted as the norm. In the midst of all the hustle and bustle, there are those that are so lonely during these times. Please excuse those of us that may have quietly expressed our thanks to all of you.

Speaking for myself, and unbeknownst to me, there are others. The lonely "us". Those that don't trust others or just don't have other folks in our life, or a circle of loved ones that remember us. Those of us that wouldn't have a gift, a place to celebrate, a smile, let alone a family, if not for Family Promise.

Our gratitude should rain from the heavens, and it does. We should shout it out, but we don't. We should wave a flag of gratitude, and we do. In our most humble selves, we echo gratitude from the bottom of our hearts, and we hope that your ears hear. We hope that you all can feel our love, and overlook the fact that we are just shy, but know that our gratitude is never ending. Our gratitude extends from the earth to the heavens for all the love that Family Promise has given us."

Buildings and Grounds**- Tom Parziale**

The Narthex Project at the church, which is being funded by the Deacon's Memorial Fund, is underway. Dale Monetti is overseeing the project. Two new entrance doors for the sanctuary were installed recently. The center column at the entrance way has been removed. There is still some follow-up work with the panic bars, and the painting of the doors is dependent on the weather being favorable in early 2018. The second phase of

the project, which includes work on the floor and installation of a new rug in the Narthex, will begin in early 2018.

"All Are Welcome" Sign**- Rev. Peters**

I want to thank those who made our "All Are Welcome" rainbow sign a reality (Lynn Blakeslee, Sandy and Rob Mackay, and Bill Hopcraft). We need to let people know that we do welcome all people, and the sign will certainly help; but, it is best if we, the members of the church, let people know as well in our conversations.

A Note of Thanks**WE JUST WANT TO SAY...
THANK YOU!**

We want to thank the Pioneers of AT&T for their recent gift of 3 computers to our church.

We also want to thank Jean Hoffman, who is retiring from the group, and Steve

Palaszewski, who rebuilt the computers for the Pioneers and donated them to us. The

Pioneers is a group of retired AT&T Bell Labs people who have been involved in various projects that help non-profits and other groups with donations, such as computers and other equipment. For many years, Chuck Phelan worked with the group in repairing Braille machines.

Church Directory Update

Our new church directory will be finalized in January. If you have changes/additions to be made to the directory, please contact Paulette in the church office asap.



If you do not have a current directory, there is one available in the church office for you to look over.

Church Archives

Please remember to forward news clippings, bulletins, programs, pictures, or other memorabilia regarding any member of our church family to the church office so our archives can be kept up-to-date. There is a **Church Archives** mailbox outside the church offices for this purpose. There are a lot of items to put in the 2017 Archives binder before we start collecting items for 2018. If you are interested in helping to keep the archives current, please speak to Rev. Peters or Jan Somers.

Church Website

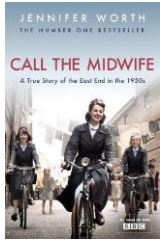
Our Church website, www.fpcstirling.org, is a good source for church news, the Church calendar, Stirling Stuff, upcoming events/programs, Pastor's sermons, Scripture readings, Church history, and more. Please make it a point to log on regularly and keep up-to-date with what's happening.

These Days

"To nurture the daily practice of prayer and the reading of Scripture, there is solid help in the pages of These Days. The devotions wrestle faithfully with the doubts, joys, and challenges of the Christian life."

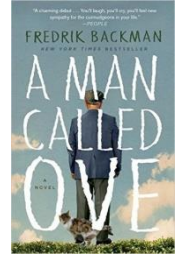


Our Church has a subscription for multiple copies of this devotional booklet; they are available on the table in the Church narthex.

Meyersville Presbyterian Church Book Club**- Jan Somers**

The Book Club is currently reading, “Call the Midwife: A Memoir of Birth, Joy, and Hard Times,” by Jennifer Worth. The group will meet in the parlor at Meyersville on Tuesday, January 9th, 7:30 p.m. to discuss the book. Everyone is welcome to join the group.

The group’s next selection is, “A Man Called Ove,” a novel by Fredrik Backman: *Meet Ove. He’s a curmudgeon—the kind of man who points at people he dislikes as if they were burglars caught outside his bedroom window. He has staunch principles, strict routines, and a short fuse. People call him “the bitter neighbor from hell.” But must Ove be bitter just because he doesn’t walk around with a smile plastered to his face all the time? Behind the cranky exterior there is a story and a sadness.*



Please contact Rev. Aspinall or Jan Somers for a copy of the book and the date the group will be meeting to discuss it.

Free Gentle Yoga Class – Meyersville Presbyterian Church

Roseann McGraw, a certified yoga teacher, offers free yoga classes in the parlor at Meyersville Presbyterian Church on Tuesdays, from 9:00 – 10:00 a.m. The classes are on-going, so you can join at any time.



You will not be sitting or lying on the floor, so just bring yourself in comfortable clothes, and invite friends along. The classes are appropriate for all, the flexible as well as the tight. Injuries will be accommodated. Yoga is relaxing, as well as good for general health; so, come give it a try. Call or email Roseanne with questions or concerns: 908-508-1435, rosanne.mcgraw@gmail.com.

Labels/Box Tops for Education; Pop-Top Can Tabs**- Jan Somers**

Please continue to save Labels for Education, Box Tops for Education, and pop-top can tabs. The labels are used by parent organizations in schools to earn educational and recreational items for students.



The can tabs are sold by weight to recycling centers, and the proceeds are donated to assist people on dialysis. There is a collection canister in the church office. Thank you.



Ongoing Mission Programs

Road to Bridges

Change (and more) is collected during Fellowship Hour and supports the Road to Bridges program, providing 40 lunches per month to NJ/NY homeless.

Township Food Pantry

Non-perishable items can be left in baskets labeled "Food Pantry Donations" in the Church narthex and outside Pollard Hall.

Items collected for various causes; may be placed on the pew in Pollard Hall:

- ✓ Full-sized and "courtesy"-sized bars of soap, shampoo, conditioner, shower caps
- ✓ Cell phones, eyeglasses, sunglasses
- ✓ Fabric: about ½ yard minimum, to make small bears for children, totes for wheelchair patients, etc.
Yarn: to make lap robes for wounded veterans, afghans for battered women, and hats for newborns in hospitals

Ongoing Fundraisers

ShopRite Gift Cards

- ✓ No additional cost to you to use
- ✓ Purchase cards at face value
- ✓ Church earns 5%
- ✓ Denominations available are:
\$20, \$50, \$100

Gift Cards are available each week during Fellowship Hour or by contacting Madeline Hahl.

iGive

- ✓ No cost to you
- ✓ Log on / sign up / find out more at:
<http://www.igive.com/FirstPresbyterianChurch-StirlingNJ>
- ✓ E-mail this information to your friends

Please e-mail submissions for the February issue of Stirling Stuff to:
jsomers17@hotmail.com
by January 18th. Thank you!

Stirling Stuff is the newsletter of

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Our Mission

Jesus said, "Feed My Sheep." This welcoming and caring family, empowered by the love of Christ, shares the grace and peace of God's blessings by serving those who are hungry in body or spirit.

Why not invite a friend to church?

