



Stirling Stuff

Volume 64, No. 10

November 2020

Pastor's Letter

November is a month of thanksgiving. It begins with All Saints' Day, when we remember and give thanks for those who have been important parts of our earthly journey. It ends with the celebration of the Thanksgiving holiday, when we gather with friends and family to enjoy our family ties and celebrate all that we have to be thankful for. However, 2020 is a year people wish would be over. It doesn't feel like there is much to be thankful for. Obviously, the pandemic tops the list of reasons to forget 2020. There is also the anger and hatred among people that led to the killings of black lives, the protest movement, and the very divisive presidential election. Many cannot wait to put 2020 in the rearview mirror!



I want to suggest to you, though, that there is much to be thankful for in 2020 and to not put it in the past too quickly. For those with eyes to see and ears to hear, 2020 can be/was a year that reset our thoughts as to who is important/essential to a decent way of life. It has not been the moneyed class or the CEOs, but it was the grocery store stock people and clerks; the front-line workers in the health industry; and the patient care techs, nurses, doctors, and first aid squad people. It was those who don't often get the highest wages yet provide the indispensable services!

In a time when it seems computers and the internet are nothing but trouble and headaches, we saw the silver lining of what they can provide. They enabled families to be together and see each other on Facetime, or Google Hangout, or Zoom. Many employees were able to work from home and be safe and still get a paycheck. Groceries could be ordered and delivered through the computer. Household necessities could be ordered and delivered by going online. For many of us, the computer took on a very important job by keeping us connected to the world. For many families, computers were a lifeline between family in the hospital and outside the hospital and, in some cases, the only way to say a final goodbye.

One other thing to be thankful for was that we recognized that we could be a faith community and continue to worship even if we could not be together in person. We could worship on line, and we could attend virtual coffee hours and Bible Study. God's Spirit continued to be manifested to us through the phone calls, on-line presence, and prayers of church family members. 2020 was not a year without the presence of God, but a year when we found the presence of God in new ways and places. That is certainly something to be thankful for. So, this Thanksgiving, even though we may not be together in ways that we are used to, let us be thankful for the God who reaches out to us in new ways. May we all give thanks for the fact that, in a year like 2020, God is still with us. Thanks be to God!

Tom

The First Presbyterian Church of Stirling
Feeding Those Who Hunger

Worship Services and Scripture Passages for November

November 1, 2020

- *All Saint's Day*
- *Pentecost 22A*
- *Sacrament of Communion*
Revelation 7:9-17; Psalm 34:1-10, 22;
I John 3:1-3; Matthew 5:1-12

November 8, 2020

- *Pentecost 23A*
Joshua 24:1-3a; Psalm 78:1-7;
I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Matthew 25:1-13

November 15, 2020

- *Pentecost 24A*
Judges 4:1-7; Psalm 123;
I Thessalonians 5:1-11; Matthew 25:14-30

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.

November 22, 2020

- *Reign of Christ Sunday*
Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24; Psalm 100;
Ephesians 1:14-23; Matthew 25:31-46

November 29, 2020

- *First Sunday of Advent*
- *Heritage Sunday*
Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80:17-19;
I Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37

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.



Message from Rev. Peters

As many of you know, I have been experiencing health issues since June. I have been diagnosed with Myelodysplastic Syndrome (MDS), a disease of the bone marrow. In October, I found out that I have several blood clots in my legs, which makes the treatment of the MDS a little more difficult. Most likely, I will begin receiving either outpatient or in-patient chemo treatments, depending on the results of a few more tests. This means that I will be dealing with this for the next several months. I will not be able to do in-person worship services every Sunday, and services will only be on line or I will have someone cover. I have talked to Rev. Aspinall at Meyersville, and people are invited to in-person worship services at Meyersville; at this time, they are still outside on the opposite side of the church from Gillette Road. I will try to keep you informed about my health, and I hope that you will keep me in your prayers during this time.



Need Food or Help with Errands?

Although many of us are now able to get out to shop and take care of other errands, we have people in the church who will help if needed. Also, if you know of anyone who is in need of food or something else, please contact Rev. Peters.



Thank you to the Deacons who continue contacting people just to see how they're doing. People have told me how much they appreciate it. It is vitally important for us to remain connected during this time of isolation.

Stewardship**- Rev. Peters**

If you are able, we hope you will continue to send in your pledge. You can use the **Online Giving** link, which is on the home page of our church's website, using your credit card or a PayPal account. Or, mail your check to the church or directly to Elsie Turqman, our Financial Secretary. Her address is in the church directory.

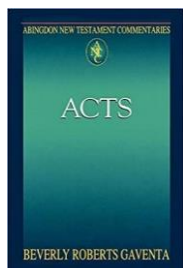
How to View Our Online Worship Service**- Janet Parziale**

The church website, <http://www.fpcstirling.org>, has links on the home page that will take you to the recorded worship services. On the home page, you can click the "Recorded Services" link at the top of the page or the "Online Services/Bulletin" link on the left-hand side. Both of these links will take you to the page for our recorded services. The links to all online services, listed by date, have the video recording and also offer you a link to the weekly bulletin you can use to follow the service. The videos will be available for you to view once they are uploaded, usually sometime on the Saturday before each Sunday Service. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Janet Parziale at janetparziale@comcast.net or call 908-647-2212, and she will do her best to help you.

**Join the Online Zoom Coffee Hour****- Janet Parziale**

Many folks have been enjoying our online Zoom coffee hours. It has brought together friends and families of the church here in Long Hill Township and surrounding towns and from as far away as Washington State, Colorado, Iowa, and New York City. For many, these visits online with one another have been fun, therapeutic, and a great way to catch up with one another.

If you have not attended, please try it during an upcoming Sunday morning. You do not need any special software to join in the fun; just click the link on the email provided by Rev. Peters to participate. You can join with video or just with audio. You can do this using your phone, kindle, tablet, or computer. If you need the link resent, please feel free to contact Janet Parziale (at janetparziale@comcast.net or 908-647-2212) or Rev. Peters. They will be happy to forward you the email with the link. We hope to see you there this coming Sunday!

Christian Education Committee**- Rev. Peters****Adult Bible Study**

The Thursday morning Bible Study continues to meet on Zoom from 10:30 am – Noon. We are continuing our look at the Book of Acts, using Beverly Gaventa's book, *Acts*. It's never too late to join us; just let Rev. Peters know so he can send you the Zoom Link.

You may access the Bible Study through the following: paste the address for "Join Zoom Meeting" into your web browser, and then paste the Password if or when asked. Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://zoom.us/j/955212010?pwd=czB0UUpBaWFWuSmdJSnVCYlZqQXBzUT09>

Meeting ID: 955 212 010

Password: 202121

Deacons' Corner**- Janet Parziale****Mission of the Month - November**

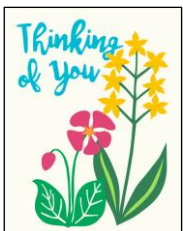
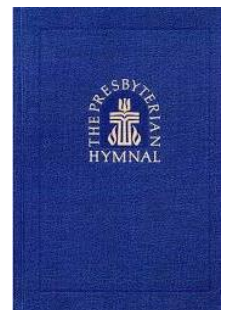
Throughout the month of November, our **Mission of the Month will be focused on the Market Street Mission in Morristown**. Each Thanksgiving for many years, our congregation has stepped up and donated their free turkeys to the Market Street Mission to help with their efforts to provide a delicious Thanksgiving dinner to many homeless individuals. During the Covid-19 Pandemic, they are still providing 200 meals each day to those in immediate need. Besides providing much needed meals, this organization also provides recovery programs and vocational training to those rebuilding their lives, community counseling services, and "regularly scheduled meetings and services that give people a solid foundation for stable lives." This year we are going to support the Mission in two ways. We have confirmed that the Mission has begun accepting food, so we will collect turkeys on the Saturday morning before Thanksgiving. If you are able to help with a monetary gift, you will help the Mission care for an individual's immediate needs as well as their long-term needs for a stable and independent tomorrow.



Tom Parziale will be at the church from 10-11 a.m. on Sat., November 21st to collect the turkeys. He will then deliver them to Morristown. The special monetary gift will be collected throughout November during indoor services. **If you are not able to come to church, feel free to send your donation to the church office (158 Central Ave, Stirling, NJ 07980) or to Elsie Turqman.** Remember to mark it as "November Mission of the Month," and include your name and/or envelope number if you would like your donation to be recorded. Thank you very much in advance for supporting this special mission program.

Sign-Out a Blue Church Hymnal

Prior to the sanctuary reopening, all books were removed from the pews. The Deacons are offering an option for our church members to sign-out a blue hymnal for use at home or to bring back and forth for your own use during worship services each Sunday. The hymnals are numbered, and the member's name and date borrowed will be recorded by a Deacon. Once the pandemic is over, the Deacons will ask those who signed out a hymnal to return it, and the date of return will also be recorded. During the month of November, there will be an opportunity at the end of each service to sign out a book. If you want to sign out a hymnal but will not be attending worship in person, please contact Janet Parziale, and she will arrange to get one to you.

**Need Help? Want to Chat?**

During this time of Covid-19, it is easy to miss that human connection. If you are in need of help getting groceries or just want to talk to someone, please feel free to call a Deacon or Rev. Peters. We are ready to help in any way we can. If you know of someone who needs assistance, please reach out to one of us, even if it is just for an ear to listen.

Know Someone Who Needs a Card?



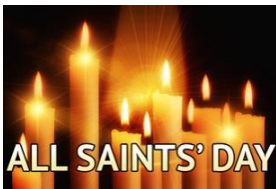
Each week during the Prayers of the People, Rev. Peters lifts up names of members, friends, and family who need our prayers for joys and concerns. Many have attested to the power of prayer in helping to give strength to all those involved. A Deacon sends cards to let them know they are being thought of and they are in the prayers of the congregation to get well, share joyful wishes, or express sympathy.

If you know of someone who is in need of our thoughts or prayers, please let Janet Parziale know so that a card can be sent. Janet can be reached at janetparziale@comcast.net or 908-647-2212.

Worship Committee

- Janet Parziale

All Saints' Sunday, November 1st



On Sunday, November 1st, we will be observing **All Saints' Sunday**, a day when Christians give thanks for all the good people God has placed in their lives. During this service, we will take time to remember those special people we have lost during the past year, and a candle will be lit as each name is read. The last hymn was especially made to remember many of our own saints at FPC. Be sure to check it out. Plan to join us online for this meaningful service.

First Sunday of Advent

November 29th is the first Sunday of Advent, and we will begin a special program that will continue for the four Sundays in the season of Advent. Each week, members of the congregation will be asked to read and light the Advent candles. The committee is working out how to do this in a way that will keep everyone safe.



Heritage Sunday

November 29th is also Heritage Sunday. Although we cannot have our usual service featuring our bagpiper, Dave, and all the traditional Scottish goodies, we are planning to spotlight our banners and other Scottish items during worship.



Please plan to join us in person or on-line for these special services in the life of our church.



Mission Programs

Family Promise of Morris County - Update

- Jan Somers



Due to Covid-19, there are currently no families being housed in the Family Promise program. Coordinators are looking into several options for 2021, depending on the status of the pandemic at that time. I will keep you updated as more information becomes available.

Bridges Outreach Lunch Program**- Janet Parziale**

The Bridges organization is still in need of as many lunches as we can provide, but we all want to ensure that they are prepared and delivered in a safe manner. They are asking that we bring them any day (Mon-Thurs) convenient to us. Only one person is handling the preparations during this time. We select a day when the sandwiches will be made and the brown bags prepared with non-perishable goodies, and one person takes them to Summit.

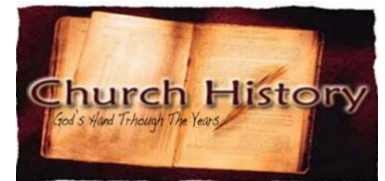
We are always in need of small bottles of water and cartons of juice; snacks of cookies, nuts, Goldfish, pretzels; and small fruit cups, Jello, pudding, etc. Cash donations are also appreciated to help with the purchase of bread and lunch meat. You can drop items off in the church narthex on Sunday mornings, or give cash donations to Janet Parziale.

Church Website & Facebook Page

To keep up-to-date with what's happening at our Church, make it a point to check in regularly on the Church website, www.fpcstirling.org, and Facebook page, https://www.facebook.com/fpcStirling/?ref=aymt_homepage_panel. They are good sources for church news, Stirling Stuff, Pastor's sermons, Scripture readings, Church history, and more.

Church Archives**- Jan Somers**

Please continue to forward news clippings, bulletins, programs, pictures, or other memorabilia regarding any member of our church family so our archives can be kept up to date. **Please be sure items are dated and, if possible, the names of church members and/or families are highlighted.** Items can be mailed to the Church (labeled "Archives"), or you can hold onto them until you are in building. Thank you.

**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 copies of this devotional booklet. If you would like a copy, please contact the church office and it can be mailed to you.

Helping Out**- Jan Somers**

It looks like we'll be wearing masks for some time. So, Elsie Turqman and Jan Somers are still available to sew fabric face masks in different sizes. If you or someone you know needs one, please contact Elsie or Jan.

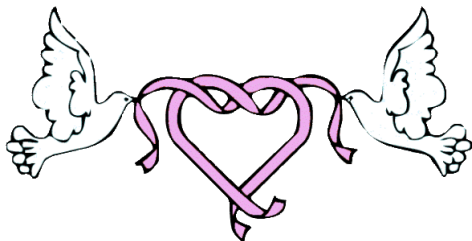
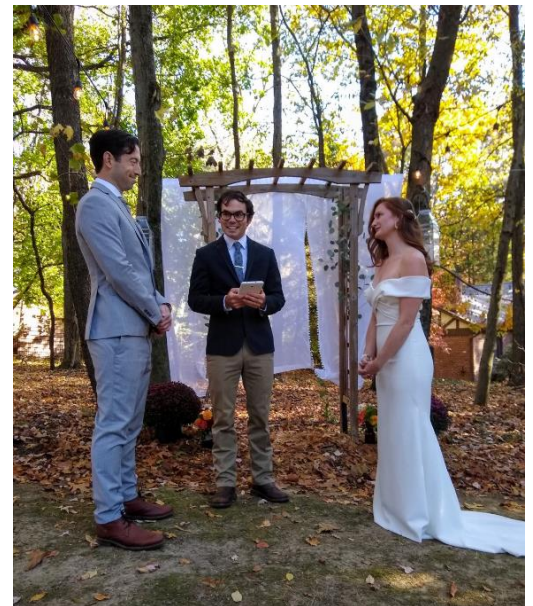
Member-abilia**Welcome Owen Charles**

Rev. Peters recently shared the wonderful news of the birth of Owen Charles Alongi on October 18th, measuring 21 inches and weighing 7lbs. 12 oz. Owen is the son of Tony and Sharon Hopcraft Alongi, the brother of three-year old Ethan, and the grandson of Bill and Toni Hopcraft. Big brother Ethan loves him and is very helpful. Rev. Peters noted, "We celebrate with all of them and pray that God will bless little Owen as he journeys through life." Our best wishes to the entire family!



Wedding Congratulations

Congratulations to Ross Griswold (son of Barbara and Larry Griswold) and Mallory Scott who were married on Saturday, October 17th. Ross, now 35 (wow – time flies!), and Mallory were married at her home in Pittsburgh with a beautiful wooded landscape in the background. Barbara writes "Mallory is a wonderful young woman we adore." She also writes, "There were just 6 family guests, plus the bride, groom, and celebrant. But they made a lovely occasion of it and we are all delighted!" The newlyweds just moved to Rochester, NY, where, Ross will be a mental health counselor in the regional hospital system. "Joy all around!" Best wishes to the happy couple as they begin their married life together.



Ongoing Mission Programs:**Items collected for various causes:**

- ✓ Full-sized and "courtesy"-sized bars of soap, shampoo, conditioner, shower caps
- ✓ 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

Please e-mail submissions for the December issue of Stirling Stuff to:
jsomers17@hotmail.com
 by **November 19th**. Thank you!

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 from Yvonne Fletcher.

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

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Why not invite a friend to online church?

**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.

