



Stirling Stuff

Volume 66, No. 1

January 2022

Dear Church Family,

In this Epiphany season of Magi and camels, I have a favorite camel story: Once there was a Bedouin man who died and, in his will, instructed that his most valuable property, his seventeen camels, should be divided among his three sons. The eldest son was to receive one half of the camels, the second son was to get a third of his father's camels, and the youngest was to receive one ninth. Now you can't divide seventeen camels in half, thirds, or ninths without shedding a considerable amount of camel blood and, of course, these camels had value only if they were alive. The three sons argued loud and long about what to do.

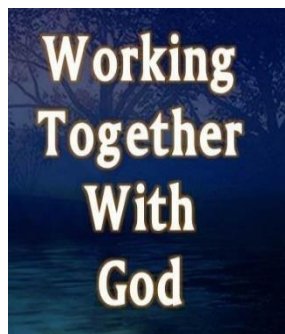


Then a wise, elderly woman who lived in a tent nearby and who could hear all the goings on, went to where her one camel was tied up. She untied her camel and added it to the father's herd of seventeen camels. Then she gave half of the now eighteen camels – that would be nine – to the eldest son. She gave six camels, or one third, to the second son. And she gave two, or one ninth, to the youngest. Then she untied the one remaining camel, her own, and took it back home.

Now I don't expect you have seen or heard a lot of camels in the past year, and I would even venture to guess you won't see a lot in the coming year. But, as you think about your own life, were there times or places when you managed to untie a knotty problem by contributing something of yours to the situation? Or did you maybe see someone else do this in a gracious, giving manner? Did you, or someone you know, find a way forward by giving, sharing, and not standing on rights? If you saw this happen, I suspect that what you saw was the power of God acting in the world.

When we can think a little differently, contribute something to a situation like an idea or a compromise or a thing that smooths the way forward, I believe that God is working through us in the world. May we all be more conscious of these moments in the coming year. May we seize these opportunities to be part of the work of God in the world.

Yours in Christ,
Barbara



The First Presbyterian Church of Stirling
Feeding Those Who Hunger

Return to On-line Worship**- Rev. Aspinall**

In response to the surge in Covid cases in our area and concern for the health of our church family, the Session has decided to cancel the in-person worship services on January 2nd and January 9th. They will talk again about the following Sundays in January.

The Cardinali family agreed that postponing the memorial service for B.J. Cardinali (scheduled for Jan. 2nd) would be helpful as several of their family members would not be able to attend due to Covid concerns. We will plan for a future date, and the handbell choir will again be scheduled to play at the service.

Our online services will continue, and I will send the link to you, as usual, on Saturdays.

I am disappointed, as I am sure you are, that we cannot gather for worship on Sunday mornings. I am hoping that we will be able to resume services as soon as this holiday surge is over.



Thank You

Dear FPC Congregation,

Many thanks to all of you for your generous Christmas gift. I am grateful for your kind and thoughtful (and surprise!) present. At the moment, I am not sure what I will spend it on, but it will probably somehow be horse related – perhaps a pair of toasty warm winter riding boots! Again, thank you for your gift.

Sincerely yours,
Barbara



January Lectionary Readings**January 2 - Epiphany Sunday**

Jeremiah 31:7-14; Psalms 147:12-20; Ephesians 1:3-14; John 1(1-9), 10-18

January 9 - Baptism of the Lord

Isaiah 43:1-7; Psalms 29; Acts 8:14-17; Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

January 16 - Second Sunday After Epiphany

Isaiah 62:1; Psalms 36:5-10; 1 Corinthians 12:1-11; John 2:1-11

January 23 - Third Sunday After Epiphany

Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10; Psalms 19; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a; Luke 4:14-21

January 30 - Fourth Sunday After Epiphany

Jeremiah 1:4-10; Psalms 71:1-6; 1 Corinthians 13:1-13; Luke 4:21-30



Annual Congregational Meeting – January 30th**- Rev. Aspinall**

In accordance with the bylaws of the First Presbyterian Church of Stirling, the Session has called a meeting of the congregation following morning worship on **Sunday, January 30th**, in Pollard Hall. The purposes of this meeting are:

1. to receive the 2021 reports of Pastor, Committees, and Church groups
2. to elect the 2022 financial secretary
3. to elect the 2022 nominating committee
4. to review and receive the 2022 budget
5. to elect Elders and Deacons



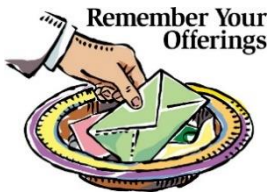
Please plan to attend this important event in the life of our Church as we look back over 2021 and ahead to 2022.

Annual Reports – Due January 14th

Reminder: Annual reports for all church committees/groups are due to the church office by no later than January 14th so they can be assembled and distributed in time for the Annual Congregational Meeting scheduled for January 30th. If you need a copy of the 2020 report, please contact Paulette in the church office (908-647-1033).

Stewardship**Offering Envelopes**

The **2022 offering envelopes** can be picked up at the church. Call ahead to be sure someone is in the office; please look for your name on the envelope box.

**Weekly Contributions**

When we are not worshipping in our sanctuary, financial commitments still need to be met. Expenses for maintaining the buildings and grounds, paying our staff, or keeping up with our mission support, are ongoing. Whether we worship in person or on-line, please try to keep your pledges current. Please send your weekly offering/pledge (in your offering envelope) to the church office or directly to Elsie Turgman. Thank you.

Per-Capita Apportionment

For 2022, our per-capita apportionment to the Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly is **\$40 per active member**. This money is used to help fund the different levels of the denomination. Please pay your full apportionment for each person in your family who is a member. The Per Capita envelope can be found in the front of your offering envelopes box.



Deacons' Corner**- Janet Parziale****Mission of the Month - January - Bridges Outreach Lunch Program**

During the month of January, we will be collecting donations for our Bridges Outreach Lunch Program. Currently, Toni Hopcraft and Janet Parziale prepare 40 bag lunches each month, containing a sandwich, fruit cup or applesauce, drink, snack, mustard, spoon, and napkin. The lunches are delivered to the Bridges Outreach office in Summit to be distributed to many grateful members of the homeless community in Summit, Newark, Irvington, and even New York City.

We need your help to continue our participation in this program. We have committed to providing lunches monthly in 2022. Last year we did not miss a single month, providing a total of 480 lunches at a cost of approximately \$80 per month. All donations from the January Mission of the Month offering will be used towards the purchase of the items that go into the lunch bags.

To help support our Bridges effort, please send your donation to the church office (158 Central Ave, Stirling, NJ 07980) or to Elsie Turqman. Remember to mark it as "January 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.

**A Look Ahead: February Mission of the Month**

During the month of February, we will be collecting donations for the **Super Bowl of Caring** program. Last year we collected a record \$390 for this worthy program. In recent years, the donations were split between Family Promise of Morris County and the Market Street Mission (Morristown). Be sure to check out the February Stirling Stuff issue for more information on how you can support this much-needed program.

**Christmas Cheer Appreciated!**

This year the Deacons brought back their special Christmas Card writing event. Fifteen church ladies enjoyed writing Christmas card greetings to several of our congregation members to let them know we are thinking of them still and that they are not alone. During the past year, several individuals met weekly for a few months via Zoom in virtual coffee hours to catch up with friends. But for others this has been a very isolating time. We began outdoor services and, finally, in November we returned to indoor services, alternating months at the Stirling or Meyersville churches. It is good to see some folks coming back to church. However, due to current Covid concerns, not everyone has been able to get back to regularly attending church, and we miss seeing our friends each week.



The Christmas cards were collected and placed in beautifully hand-decorated bags (made by Toni Hopcraft's friend, Ellen Bardolf) and accompanied with a plate of Christmas cookies and chocolates provided by several church members. Then, Janet and Tom Parziale delivered them, along with a poinsettia, making that much-needed personal connection. The Deacons thank everyone involved in writing the cards and providing the goodies. Everyone greatly appreciated our

efforts and the kind words in the cards through words of grateful verbal and written thanks! Following are pictures of Tom Parziale sharing the Christmas Cheer with Marie Darby, Lynn Rosol, and Jean Hoffman:



A Big Thank You and Help Needed!

A special thank you to everyone who helped the Deacons decorate the church for this wonderful Christmas season. Deacons Carolyn Malfatone, Sue Gerecht, Elsie Turqman, and Janet Parziale were expertly assisted by Tom Parziale and Rev. Aspinall. We all had a fun time setting up and trimming the tree, hanging the wreaths, decorating the pews and windowsills, and preparing the luminaries for Christmas Eve.

We will be meeting at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, January 8th, to take down the Christmas Tree and put away the ornaments, lights, and the pew decorations. If you are available, the Deacons would appreciate any help you can provide. Thank you!



Another Note of Thanks



The Deacons thank everyone who ordered the beautiful poinsettias that decorated our sanctuary this Christmas season. Also, thanks to Carolyn Malfatone and Elsie Turqman for picking them up from the *Great Swamp Greenhouses* and setting them up in the sanctuary for all to enjoy. They were really beautiful this year! See page 7 for a picture of our sanctuary on Christmas Eve.

A Wish from the Board of Deacons

Over this holiday season, some of us traveled, some stayed home, and some visited with family and friends. The Deacons wish everyone a healthy and happy New Year in 2022!



ShopRite Gift Cards



Do you shop at ShopRite? Well, then, you cannot afford to pass up this deal to help support the church in another small way. For the past several years, the church has been selling ShopRite gift cards (known as our *Voucher Program*). For every \$100 sold, the church earns \$5; that is, we get 5% of all sales. Over the course of a year, at times that has translated to more than a \$1,000 earned.

The gift cards come in \$20, \$50, and \$100 denominations. They never expire; you can continue to use them until the balance is used up. To purchase these gift cards for yourself or as a gift, please contact Yvonne Fletcher. She will be more than happy to help you out with your purchase. Thank you in advance for helping in this special way.

Know Someone Who Needs a Card?

We know what the power of prayer can do in helping give strength to all those involved. If you know of someone who is in need of our 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.



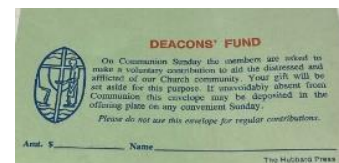
Deacons Fundraiser: First Presbyterian Church Notecards



The Deacons are selling packets of **ten cards and envelopes for \$5.00**. The note cards have a pencil sketch of our church on the front; they are blank inside, thus making them useful for any type of communication. If you are interested, please let any Deacon know or leave a message at the church office, and we will get a pack or two to you. Proceeds will go into the Deacons' Fund. Thank you for your support of this project.

Deacons' Fund

The Deacons' Fund helps the Deacons do their Mission work and is funded by donations given so generously by the congregation. You may send your donation to the church or directly to Elsie Turqman. Please note "Deacons' Fund" in the memo section of your check and include your envelope number. Thank you very much!



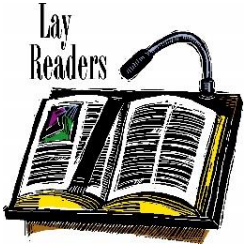
Worship Committee

- Janet Parziale

Return to On-Line Services

Due to increasing Covid concerns, we will have **only on-line services for January 2nd and 9th**. They will be accessible through a link delivered by email and on the church website, www.fpcstirling.org. The services will also be available on a DVD; please contact the church office and one will be delivered to you. We will notify everyone of plans for later in January.

Liturgists Needed For Worship Services



We need Liturgists each week to do readings for the worship services. For the month of January, recordings will be done in Meyersville, typically on Thursday afternoons (other arrangements can be made if necessary).

To sign up, please contact Jan Somers. If Jan contacts you about reading, please **let her know as soon as possible if/when you will be available**. Rev. Aspinall will send you a copy of your readings and confirm the location and time for the on-line recording. Thank you.

Worship Service on December 19th



On Sunday, December 19th, our worship service was held in Meyersville. Jan Somers' granddaughter, Paige, played a violin solo, "The First Noel." The handbell choir, comprised of members from both congregations, played "Away In A Manger."



Christmas Eve Worship Service



Our Christmas Eve service in Stirling began with luminaries lighting the way to the sanctuary and included lots of poinsettias and candlelight. Jan Somers' granddaughters, Kylin and Paige, participated in the service. Paige played a violin solo, "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing," and then she did the Christmas Eve readings and Kylin lit the Advent candles. Elizabeth and Margaret Turqman, daughters of Elsie Turqman, read the Christmas story from scripture. The service concluded with the congregation holding candles and singing "Silent Night! Holy Night!"





Mission Programs

Community Food Bank of NJ

- Kai Ihringer

After a two-year absence, we returned to the Community Food Bank in Hillside on Saturday, December 4th, with a group of volunteers. Our task was to fill "Take-Home Family Food Boxes." We set up a line starting with assembling the boxes. Then food items were added as the boxes moved along the line. It was enjoyable and satisfying for everyone to be there again helping with this wonderful program.



Our group included members and friends from both the Stirling and Meyersville congregations:

Left to Right: Nicole Honneger, Daria Jankura, Kai Ihringer, Lynn Blakeslee, Katherine Ihringer, Stephanie Smith, Tom Jones, and Doug Smith.

Family Promise of Morris County**- Jan Somers**

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the recent **Mission of the Month** collection for **Family Promise of Morris County**. Our church "hosted" on December 17th by donating \$225 to help guests purchase food and other necessities while being housed in motels.

Due to ongoing Covid concerns, in 2022 Family Promise will continue housing guests in hotels and requesting financial donations from support congregations like ours. Thank you for your continued support of this mission program.

Bridges Outreach Lunch Program**- Janet Parziale**

Bringing the housed and homeless
together in community

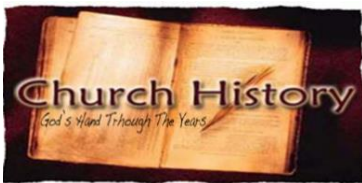
The Bridges Outreach organization is in need of as many lunches as we can provide. Currently, one person is making sandwiches and one person is filling the brown bags. The children from the Montessori School often decorate the bags and write messages to the recipients. The sandwiches, drinks, and non-perishable goodies are delivered to Summit monthly.

We are always in need of small bottles of water or cartons of juice; snacks of cookies, nuts, Goldfish, pretzels; and small fruit cups, applesauce, pudding, etc. Cash donations are also appreciated to help with the purchase of bread and lunch meat. You can drop items off in Pollard Hall (call the office to confirm that someone is there) or send cash donations to Elsie Turqman.

Please see the related article on page 4 of this newsletter.

**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.

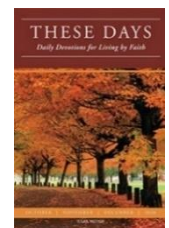
Church Archives**- Jan Somers**

Please continue to save 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 save them until you are in the 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 Christian life."

Copies of this devotional booklet are available at the church. If you would like a copy, contact the church office and one can be mailed to you.

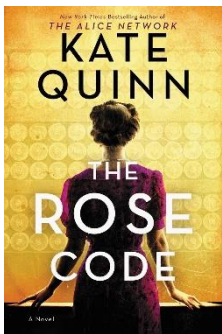


Pop-Top Can Tabs**- Jan Somers**

Please continue to save pop-top can tabs, any size. **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, you can give them to me any Sunday morning, or I can pick them up from you. Thank you for your continued support of this program.

Meyersville Book Club**- Jan Somers**

The Book Club's current selection is, "*The Rose Code*," a novel by Kate Quinn, based on the top-secret work done by codebreakers at England's Bletchley's Park during World War II. The group will be meeting via Zoom on Monday, January 31st, 7:30 p.m. to discuss the book. Everyone is welcome to join the group; please contact Rev. Aspinall so she can send you the Zoom link. The book is available at local libraries in several different formats.



The Rose Code centers on three women (Osla, Mab, and Beth) who were once closer than sisters but have been ripped apart by betrayal and misunderstanding. The women work on various aspects of codebreaking in Bletchley's Park (BP) during WWII, where the best minds in Britain train to break German military codes. The women's' friendship splinters due to Beth not warning the others (because they take an oath of secrecy) about a raid that kills Mab's husband and child. Then, Beth learns there is a traitor at BP, but she gets hauled off to an asylum so that she can't report it.

Years later, Beth calls upon the other women to help get her out before she's scheduled for a lobotomy. Together, and by calling in a bunch of former BP cryptographers as reinforcements, they get Beth out and decode the messages (the titular "Rose Code") needed to identify and arrest the traitor.

By illuminating the top-secret work done by codebreakers, Kate Quinn has created a fresh take on World War II and created three unforgettable heroines who use their intelligence, grit, and tenacity to help save the world from Nazis. It is for lovers of historical fiction and lovers of simply good books in general.

In Remembrance . . .

Rev. Dr. Murray Blackadar, who was our Pastor in Stirling from 1978 to 1989, passed away on December 5th. There will be a Memorial Service on Saturday, January 8th, at 1:00 p.m. at the Providence Presbyterian Church, in Providence, Rhode Island. Following is a Zoom link from the church for the service. Everyone is welcome to use it:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82406366587>

Please keep Murray's wife, Judy; their children, Andy, Lisa, and Jay; and other family, friends, and congregation members in your thoughts and prayers at this difficult time.

In Remembrance . . .

Freeman Clarke, former long-time member for our congregation passed away on December 14th. Freeman served as an Elder and was very involved with the Buildings and Grounds committee for many years. There will be a Memorial Service in Lake Forest, California, on Sunday, January 9th, for both Freeman and his wife, Charlotte, who passed away in September. Please keep their sons, Eric and Jim, in your thoughts and prayers as they grieve the loss of both their parents within such a short time.



Ongoing Mission Programs:

Family Promise of Morris County
Bridges Outreach Lunch Program
Local Food Pantry

Please e-mail submissions for the
February 2022 issue of Stirling Stuff to:
jsomers17@hotmail.com
by January 20th. 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

Stirling Stuff is the newsletter of

The First Presbyterian Church of Stirling
158 Central Avenue
Stirling, NJ 07980

Editor: Jan Somers

Rev. Barbara Aspinall, Interim Pastor
baspinall223@aol.com
Paulette Irlander, Office Manager
Secretary@fpcstirling.org
Church Office: 908-647-1033
Website: www.fpcstirling.org

Why not invite a friend to 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.

