



# *Stirling Stuff*

**Volume 67, No. 4**

**April 2023**

## *Upcoming Worship Schedule*

Our Joint Church Worship Committee has scheduled guest worship leaders for the month of April. We will worship in Meyersville with the exception of Maundy Thursday and Easter/Resurrection Sunday.

Our **worship schedule for Holy Week** is as follows:



Palm Sunday Worship and Communion, April 2: 10:00 am - Meyersville  
Maundy Thursday Worship and Communion, April 6: 7:30 pm - Stirling  
Good Friday Vigil, April 7: 9 am - 6:00 pm - Meyersville  
Good Friday, April 7: 7:30 pm - Meyersville  
Easter, April 9, 7:00 am: Hillview Farms in Gillette  
Easter 10:00 am: Stirling

For the remaining Sundays in April, we will be worshipping in Meyersville at 10:00 a.m. Recordings for the on-line services will be done in Stirling.

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**If you need a ride to church, please call upon a Deacon or fellow church member; they are happy to help.** Our online services will also continue each week and are accessible through a link delivered by email and also on the church website, [www.fpcstirling.org](http://www.fpcstirling.org). The service can be viewed at any time. DVDs of the service are also available and may be requested through the church office or any Deacon. There is an elevator in Meyersville which will take you up to the sanctuary.

Notices of the worship location will be posted on the church doors so, if there is confusion, there will be time to dash to the other church and just be a few minutes late. Latecomers are always welcome!

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## *Holy Week: April 2 - April 9*



**Palm Sunday:** This is the day of Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem on a donkey. He was greeted by enthusiastic crowds who shouted, "Hosanna!" and laid palm branches and their cloaks on the pavement before him. This was the traditional way to welcome a royal person to the city.

**Maundy Thursday:** We remember Jesus' Last Supper with his disciples, when he washed his disciples' feet and commanded them to "Love one another as I have loved you." The word, "Maundy" comes from the Latin word for "command." Communion will be served.





**Good Friday:** The dictionary defines “vigil” as a purposeful period of wakefulness and watchfulness. As part of our Holy Week observance, we will be holding a vigil in our sanctuary. Good Friday is the day we remember Jesus’ death on the cross. We are told that he hung on the cross at Golgotha from noon to 3 and that the curtain in the temple that hid the Holy of Holies was torn from top to bottom. Even though it seems it should be called “Bad Friday” because of Jesus’ suffering and death, it was a very good day for all Christians in that it marks the day of Jesus’ death and the beginning of a new relationship with God.

**Easter Sunday/Resurrection Day:** This is the greatest day in the life of the world – the day God defeated death and Jesus rose victorious from his grave. His resurrection means that the eternal consequences of human sin are erased, and that we also, as Jesus’ brothers and sisters, are welcome to life eternal. Truly a day for celebration!

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### Liturgists Needed for Worship Services



We need Liturgists each week to do readings for both the in-person and on-line worship services. Recordings are typically done on Thursdays, late afternoon (other arrangements can be made, if needed).

To sign up, please contact Jan Somers or leave a message at the church office (908-647-1033). If Jan contacts you about reading, **please let her know as soon as possible if/when you will be available.** Your readings will be emailed to you, along with confirmation of the location and time for the on-line recording. Thank you!

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### Handbell Choir

Plan to join us for morning worship in **Stirling on Easter Sunday, April 9<sup>th</sup>**, to enjoy music by our joint-church handbell choir, under the direction of Tatiana Akhounzianova. They will be playing “Easter Fanfare,” by Sharon Elery Rogers.



## Welcome to Our New Covenant Supply Minister

The Pastoral Nominating Committee (PNC) is excited to introduce you to the Rev. Stefanie Muntzel! Our recommendation that Rev. Muntzel serve as our shared Covenant Supply pastor was approved by Presbytery and the Sessions of both First Presbyterian Church of Stirling and Meyersville Presbyterian Church. As this is not an installed position, but a contracted position with our Sessions, the congregation is not required to vote on the call.

We look forward to introducing Rev. Muntzel to you in person on **Saturday, May 6<sup>th</sup>, at the Meyersville Presbyterian Church**. Our two Sessions will have time with Pastor Stefanie and her husband Rich at 1:00 pm and the Deacons are welcome to join the Session members at 1:45 pm. **All our members are welcome to stop by between 2:00 pm and 4:00 pm for an open house celebration. Rev. Muntzel's first Sunday will be on Pentecost, May 28<sup>th</sup>, at First Presbyterian Church in Stirling.** We look forward to celebrating our new pastor with a reception after the service.

For FPC: Kai Ihringer, Joyce Koenig, Sandy MacKay, and Janet Parziale

For MPC: Sue Hahn, Doris Mertz, John Skrobacz, and Laura Zijdel

It is my pleasure to introduce myself to the congregations of First Presbyterian Church of Stirling and Meyersville Presbyterian Church. I am a lifelong Presbyterian — my mom is a retired pastor, and my dad is a retired ethics professor. I grew up in Scranton, PA. I live in High Bridge,



NJ with my husband, Rich Gelson. Rich is an incredible singer-songwriter, photographer, and Phillies fan. He is also in his 8<sup>th</sup> year as pastor at Pilgrim Presbyterian Church in Phillipsburg, NJ. We are a clergy couple who loves to talk shop with one another (not all do.) After 10 years of marriage, Rich and I became empty nesters this fall. My son, Crosby, is a first-year student at Dickinson College. My stepdaughter, Rebecca, graduates from Muhlenberg College this May. Rich's eldest daughter, Anna, works with special needs children outside of Philadelphia.



I am an avid reader, gardener, and a lover of nature, music, and stories. During COVID I began to dabble with embroidery and am a new convert to throwing pottery. I so value having dear friends with whom to laugh and grow. Above all, I consider myself a passionate witness to the Good News, as I have wondrously known the grace of God in my life.

God has called me to ministry in a variety of settings over the past 25 years. Before seminary, I worked in churches in several capacities- serving homeless in Manhattan, directing youth ministry in Queens, and as Christian Education director in New Jersey. I graduated from Union Theological Seminary in NYC in 2002. I then served on the staff of a Presbyterian church for 8 years, where my ministry focused on Christian education and community outreach. I became "Pastor Stefanie" in 2012. While serving as a solo pastor for a small congregation, I also worked as the Presbytery-wide Resourcing Coordinator for the then Newton Presbytery. My most recent call has been as a full-time pastor in Easton, PA for the past 6 years.

God's leading has felt very evident as I have gotten to know the pastoral search committee of First Stirling and Meyersville. I am excited by both your congregations' continuing openness to partner together in ministry. I am looking forward to getting to know you all and seeing where God may be leading us as I join your partnership.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Stefanie Muntzel (aka Pastor Stefanie)



## Stewardship

### Per-Capita Apportionment

Our 2023 per-capita apportionment to the Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly is **\$43.50 per active member**. This represents our share of the administrative costs of the Presbytery and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church USA. The Session is asking the congregation to consider paying the per capita for your family. In this way, you enable our church to use all pledge money for our church's operating expenses, church programs, and mission commitments. **If you are a member and do not contribute to the church financially, the *per capita* charge for you and your household comes out of our annual budget.**

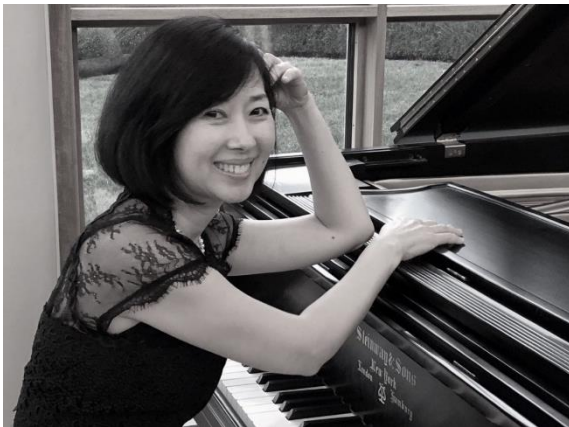


### Weekly Contributions

Whether you worship in person or on-line, please try to keep your pledges current. 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. You can send your weekly offering/pledge to the church office or directly to Elsie Turqman.



### Concert Series, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2:00 p.m.



On Sunday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, at 2:00 p.m., we will welcome pianist Ms. Yejin Han to The Rev. Dr. Thomas T. Peters Concert Series. Ms. Han is an aspiring pianist who had once lost faith in herself as a performer. She then concentrated on teaching and helping others. Having been appointed chairperson for the World Piano Competition's Regional Youth Division in 2000, Ms. Han understands what it takes to win, and her students have taken advantage of her experience by winning numerous piano competitions and performing at venues such as Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center. Having come back to the stage after a 16-year hiatus, Ms. Han shares her story to inspire others to achieve their dreams.

Ms. Han studied at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music and holds a Master of Music in piano performance from Louisiana State University. She has been featured as a soloist with several orchestras and performed as a soloist and as part of several chamber music groups.

Invite your family and friends to enjoy beautiful music in our sanctuary. As always, admission is free; a free-will offering is accepted. A short reception will follow the concert during which attendees may meet the performer.



## Deacons' Corner



### Flowers to Beautify Our Sanctuary

If you would like to provide flowers for a recorded service during the month of April, sign-up in Pollard Hall or call the church office (908-647-1033) and leave the information (your name, the date you want, and who the flowers are in honor/memory of). Flowers can be purchased at the grocery store, and Kimberly Ridgway will gladly arrange them in vases for you. Thank you very much for helping beautify our sanctuary!

### 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 Kimberly Ridgway know so that a card can be sent letting them know we are thinking about them.



## Worship Committee

- Janet Parziale

### April Lectionary Readings

#### **April 2 – Palm/Passion Sunday**

Matthew 21:1-11; Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

#### **April 6 – Maundy Thursday**

Exodus 12:1-4; 11-14; Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19; I Corinthians 11:23-26; John 13:1-17, 31b-35

#### **April 7 – Good Friday**

Isaiah 52:13-53:12; Psalm 22; Hebrews 10:16-25; John 18:1-19

#### **April 9 – Resurrection of the Lord/Easter Sunday**

Acts 10:34-43; Jeremiah 31:1-6; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24; Colossians 3:1-4; Matthew 28:1-10

#### **April 16 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Easter**

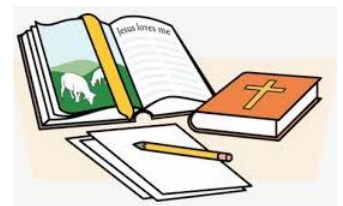
Acts 2:14a, 22-32; Psalm 16; Exodus 15:1-11; I Peter 1:3-9; John 20:19-31

#### **April 23 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Easter**

Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19; Isaiah 51:1-6; I Peter 1:17-23; Luke 24:13-35

#### **April 30 – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter**

Acts 2:42-47; Ezekiel 34:7-15; Psalm 100; I Peter 2:19-25; John 10:1-10



## Lenten Devotional

To help observe the season of Lent, our churches have been providing a daily Lenten devotional. The final issue will be sent to your email on Easter morning. We hope you have enjoyed reading them and that they have helped guide you through the season of Lent.

From the introduction to this year's devotional:

"Meditation, contemplation, centering prayer or *examen* can all feel like a waste of time — especially when our to-do lists are long, and productivity is king. But we shouldn't devalue the beneficial interior work these spiritual practices promote. Lent presents us with an opportunity to slow down and listen for the still small voice of God."

Thank you to Laura Zijdel from Meyersville for sending out these daily devotionals.



## **Mission Programs**

### **2023 Session Committee Responsibilities**

Correction to the list of 2023 Session responsibilities:

Mission Committee Chairperson is Lynn Blakeslee



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### **Joint-Church Mission Committee**

A joint-church ad-hoc Mission Committee recently met and selected Mission of the Month recipients for the year. Our two churches will work together in focusing on various causes, some local, some distant, that we feel are deserving of our support. We hope that our combined efforts will result in increased donations to these specific causes.

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### **Mission of the Month: April**

**The Mission of the Month for April for both churches is the Bridges Outreach Brown Bag Lunch Program.** Each month, a few folks meet in Pollard Hall at FPC to prepare 40 brown bag lunches 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 2023. Last year we did not miss a single month, providing a total of 480 lunches at a cost of \$80-90 per month. All donations from the April Mission of the Month offering will be used to purchase 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 "Bridges" or "April 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.

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### **Easter Ham Donations**

Once again, ShopRite is promoting free hams for the Easter holiday. As you sit down to enjoy Easter with your family, please remember those less fortunate. If you qualify for the free ham and will not be using it, please consider donating it. Tom Parziale will be in the church parking lot from 10:00-11:00 a.m. on Saturday, April 1<sup>st</sup>, the day before Palm Sunday, to collect the hams. He will deliver them to the Market Street Mission in Morristown as well as to a local family. Your support for this program is very much appreciated.



Update on January & February Mission of the Month: Souper Bowl of Caring

- Tom Parziale



Once again, thank you all for your participation in our annual Souper Bowl of Caring donation drive. We raised \$571 and donated it to the local Twelve Baskets Food Pantry. The national results are in:

2,247 groups participated and raised over \$3,463,000!

Bridges Outreach Lunch Program

- Janet Parziale

We continue to provide 40 lunch bags to the Bridges Outreach organization for distribution to the homeless in Newark, Irvington, and NYC. The sandwiches, drinks, and non-perishable goodies are delivered to Summit monthly in brown lunch bags. The children from the Long Hill Montessori School often decorate the lunch bags. Our **next commitment** date for preparing 40 lunches is: **Tuesday, April 25, at 9:30 a.m., in Pollard Hall**. Your help in making these lunches each month would be greatly appreciated. If you are available to help, please speak to Janet Parziale.



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, spoons, napkins, and mustard packets. You can drop items off in Pollard Hall on Sunday mornings or give cash donations to Elsie Turqman. **Mark your calendar** now with the April date and our upcoming May 23<sup>rd</sup> date as well. Remember, we would love to have your help!

Twelve Baskets Food Pantry

Our local Food Pantry, Twelve Baskets, is housed at All Saints' in Millington. Jointly sponsored by our church, All Saints', Meyersville, and LHT CERT, the food pantry has been serving guests on the first and third Saturday mornings of each month. Volunteer help is needed to set up tables, put the items out, and then pack it up afterwards. Help is also needed for picking up food from the distribution center in Hillside. There is plenty to do, and the volunteer opportunities are well organized. **Please contact Lynn Blakeslee if you would like to contribute an hour or two of your time.** For more information on this program, go to: <http://www.allsaintsmillington.org/outreach.html>



If you or someone you know is in need of food or other non-grocery items, please call the food bank office at 908-647-0067 (Ext. 4) and leave a confidential message.

ShopRite Gift Cards

- Lynn Blakeslee



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, that can add up to a significant addition to our church budget.

The gift cards come in \$20, \$50, and \$100 denominations. They never expire; you can continue to use them until the balance is \$0. To purchase these gift cards for yourself or as a gift, **please contact Lynn Blakeslee. She will be more than happy to help get them to you.** Thank you for helping in this special way.



## Pop-Top Can Tabs



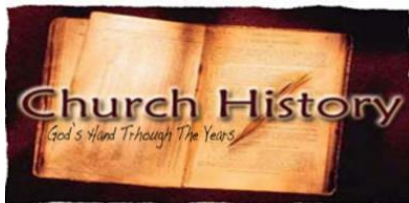
Please continue to save pop-top can tabs, any size. **The can tabs are sold by weight to recycling centers, and the proceeds are donated to Ronald McDonald House Charities**—a nonprofit family and children's charity dedicated to supporting families with sick children in their time of need. You can give them to me any Sunday morning, leave them in the church office, or I can pick them up from you. I have quite a large collection that I will be taking to the drop-off location shortly. Thank you for your ongoing support of this program!

## 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](http://www.fpcstirling.org) and Facebook page, [https://www.facebook.com/fpcStirling/?ref=aymt\\_homepage\\_panel](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



In 2023, our church will celebrate its **150<sup>th</sup>** anniversary. The Worship Committee is planning a special Archive Sunday later this year to celebrate the occasion. 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 put them in the "Archives" mailbox

outside the church offices. Thank you.

## In Remembrance

Long-time church member Virginia (Ginny) Skrobacz passed away on March 8<sup>th</sup> at the age of 91. Ginny joined the church in 1957 and served several terms on the Board of Deacons. She was remembered in a memorial service during worship on March 19<sup>th</sup>.



## Wedding Congratulations

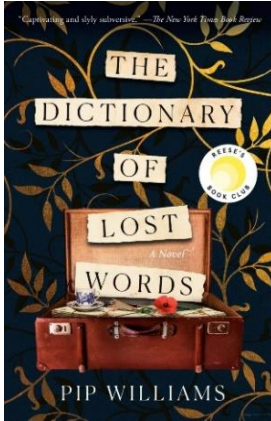
Congratulations to Fabienne (Fabi) Walch and Jacob Malfatone, who were married on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. Fabi's family is from Austria. Jacob is the son of Mark and Dorothy Malfatone and grandson of Carolyn Malfatone. Their marriage will be celebrated with a reception for family and friends on June 3<sup>rd</sup>. Our best wishes to the happy couple as they begin their new life together.

Pictured here are Jacob, proud grandmother, Carolyn, and Fabi.



## Meyersville Book Club

The April book club selection is *The Dictionary of Lost Words: A Novel* by Pip Williams. The group will be meeting on Wednesday, April 26<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m. via Zoom. Everyone is welcome to join the group; please leave a message at the Meyersville church office (908-647-0390) so you will receive the Zoom link. The book is available at local libraries.



*The Dictionary of Lost Words* tells the story of the Oxford English Dictionary's compilation through the fictional Esme, daughter of one of the men working on it, and her interactions with characters based on the real men and women behind the book.

Williams writes that her novel "began as two simple questions. Do words mean different things to men and women? And if they do, is it possible that we have lost something in the process of defining them?" From the local suffragettes Esme learns that "sisters" can mean comrades. She puzzles over the definition of "mother" and whether it excludes a woman who has a stillbirth, or who gives her daughter up for adoption, or whose son dies in the first world war.

The fictional central character, Esme Nicoll, born in 1882, lives with her father Harry, a lexicographer who works on the dictionary in a corrugated iron shed, grandly called the Scriptorium. It sits in the garden of Murray's house. Esme lost her mother at a very young age. She spends her days beneath the sorting table in the "scrippy," where the lexicographers sort and assess the potential contributions sent to Murray by volunteers following his worldwide appeal for words to be included in the new dictionary.

## Atlantic Visiting Nurse Rummage Sale (formerly VNA of Somerset Hills)

The biannual rummage sale in Far Hills is their major fundraiser. The funds they receive help provide home health and hospice care for uninsured and underinsured patients.

## RUMMAGE SALE

**May 5 & 6**

9:30am - 3:30pm

**May 7**

12:30 - 3:30pm

**Far Hills Fairgrounds**

**DONATIONS ACCEPTED**

**April 8 - 25, 2023**

10:00 am - 1:00 pm

Monday through Saturday



Atlantic  
Visiting Nurse

## **Earth Day - Saturday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>**

Each year on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, people across the globe join together to raise awareness about environmental protection. Earth Day was first celebrated in the US in 1970. Today more than 1 billion people in 193 countries take part in Earth Day and resolve to protect the environment and biodiversity.



The theme for this year's Earth Day celebration is "Invest in Our Planet." The key point here is to **act in a bold way, innovate in a broad way, and implement in an equitable manner.** Every government, every business, and every individual in this world has a voice. No one person can do it all. But, together, we can make a difference.

Smart and Innovative companies are realizing that going green will help us all. It is now vital that all business leaders become engaged in shaping the future for sustainability. It's time to take the **benefit of a green economy** by adopting it. All governments need to encourage society, institutions, and businesses to build a framework for supporting a stable future.

### **There are many ways you can help.**

Protecting or saving the earth can be an overwhelming idea, but how we take action does not need to be. You are probably already doing more than you think.

#### **Actions and tips:**

- Turn off the lights when not in use.
- Buy glass or paper products instead of plastic.
- Switch to online billing for all of your services.
- Plant some flowers.
- Try your hand at kitchen composting.
- Share your Earth Day ideas, tips, stories, and photos on social media to help others and boost awareness.

Go to [EARTHDAY.ORG](https://earthday.org) and find out how you can join over 1 billion participants around the world and take action on April 22nd.



"We must recognize that we're all part of a web of life around the world." Gaylord Nelson, Founder of Earth Day

**When it comes to the Earth, there is no time to waste.**

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**Ongoing Mission Programs:**

Bridges Outreach Lunch Program  
 Family Promise of Morris County  
 Twelve Baskets Food Pantry

Please e-mail submissions for the  
 May 2023 issue of Stirling Stuff to:  
[jsomers17@hotmail.com](mailto:jsomers17@hotmail.com)  
 by April 20<sup>th</sup>. 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 Lynn Blakeslee.

**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

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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!**

