



Stirling Stuff

Volume 67, No. 3

March 2023

Dear Church Family,

The worship service on February 26 and beautiful and delicious celebration afterwards was overwhelming. I felt such love from my church families. Your gifts – the watch and the purse and the get-away, the flowers, the luncheon, the speeches, the guest musicians, the skit, the pictures, the crowd!, the cake, the gift basket of cheese and beer for Doug, your presence on the day, those who came from a distance - made my leave-taking all the sweeter and, at the same time, all the harder. The sanctuary at Meyersville was full, Pollard Hall was full, and it truly felt like a celebration. I am grateful to all the many people who contributed their creativity and labor and money to make the day a wonderful experience. Thank you, thank you. And I wish my First Presbyterian family the very best in the future. May God be with you and your beloved church.

Yours in Christ,
Barbara



Upcoming Worship Schedule

With Barbara's retirement at the end of February, you may be wondering what happens next for our worship services. The answer is that our in-person worship services will continue each and every Sunday at 10 am. In March, we will be gathering in Stirling and in April we will be in Meyersville. A joint Stirling/Meyersville Worship Committee has been formed to organize these services. There will be guest worship leaders each Sunday so we will get to experience a variety of preaching styles proclaiming the Good News. The Holy Week services, including Easter Sunday, will happen as they always have. The April newsletter will outline the details of where and what time these services will be held.



The Pastor Search Committee has been meeting regularly. They have been keeping the Session updated in a general way and will let everyone know when there is news to share.

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. 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.

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!

The First Presbyterian Church of Stirling
Feeding Those Who Hunger

Stewardship**What is
Per
Capita?****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.** The *Per Capita* envelope can be found in the front of your offering envelopes box.

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 (in your offering envelope) to the church office or directly to Elsie Turgman.

**Piano Recital, March 12th, 2:00 pm - Meyersville Presbyterian Church**

The rescheduled recital will be held on Sunday, March 12th. Tatiana Akhounzianova will be presenting a recital of three of her piano students and herself at Meyersville. The recital will include compositions by Czerny, Bach, Greig, Schubert, Gounod, Schumann, Tchaikovsky, and others. Tatiana herself will be playing music by Liszt, Chopin, Durand, and Tchaikovsky.

All are most welcome and encouraged to come enjoy wonderful music and support Tatiana and her students.

**Concert Series, March 26th, 2:00 p.m.**

On Sunday, March 26th at 2:00 p.m., we will welcome pianist Brielle Perez to The Rev. Dr. Thomas T. Peters Concert Series. Highly regarded for her exuberant sound, her technical command, and her inherent musicality, Ms. Perez has become recognized around the globe at only twenty-one years old. She has performed as soloist, chamber musician, and with orchestra at music festivals in the US, Poland, London, Austria, Germany, Puerto Rico, Portugal, Spain, and Russia among others. She has received high awards and achievements in competitions such as the New York Piano Festival Competition, American Protégé



Piano Competition, the Chopin International Competition of Hartford, CT, the Windsor International Piano Competition of England, and many more, leading to performances at venues such as Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, Steinway Hall of NYC, Dimenna Center of NYC, the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, and the Mozarteum in Salzburg, Austria.

This past summer, Ms. Perez performed Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto No.3 with the Young Artist Concert Orchestra of Puerto Rico and won the First Absolute Prize in the Malaga International Piano Festival (FIPMA) Competition. Her upcoming engagements include an invitation to perform a solo recital at the Rachmaninov Festival of Puerto Rico in early April where she will commemorate Rachmaninov's 150th birthday celebration by performing all his Etudes-Tableaux.

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.



Prior to the concert on Sunday, February 26th, Rev. Aspinall dedicated The Rev. Dr. Thomas T. Peters Concert Series, highlighting Tom's efforts to make the concert series a reality. She introduced Rev. Barbara Peters, who spoke about Tom and his love of music. [A recording of Barbara Peters' words about Tom can be found by clicking this link and on the FPC Stirling website.](#)



The concert that afternoon featured violinist Claudia Schaer and pianist Olga Gurevich. Their program included sonatas for piano and violin by Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms as well as Dvorak's Romance in F minor. It was a wonderful performance.

Installation of Church Officers

During our worship service in Meyersville on Sunday, February 19th, our Church officers were installed in their new terms of service: Ed Gerecht, Joyce Koenig, and Sandy Mackay on Session, and Susan Gerecht on the Board of Deacons. May God guide them in their work of the ministry of First Presbyterian Church.



Deacons' Corner



Easter Flowers

The Deacons, with assistance from Carolyn Malfatone, are coordinating the ordering of Easter flowers from the Great Swamp Greenhouses to decorate the chancel for Easter morning in memory or honor of someone special in your life. Please use the **form on page 11** of this newsletter or look for the Easter Flower Order Form in the Sunday morning worship bulletin, detailing the flower options and prices. **The deadline to order is Sunday, March 19th.**



Flowers to Beautify Our Sanctuary

If you would like to provide flowers for a Sunday morning during the month of March, 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). Thank you very much for helping beautify our sanctuary!

Fellowship Hour

Fellowship Hour is a very special time following each weekly worship service. It is a wonderful chance to catch up with each other after our busy weeks. Please consider helping with this important part of our church life by signing up to host one yourself or with a partner or simply donating money to be used for someone else to host. If you wish to donate money, please give it to a Deacon or place it in the offering plate in an envelope marked "Fellowship Hour." The coffee, tea, plates, napkins, and cups are all available in the kitchen. You just need to provide milk (usually a quart), juice (or simply water), and some goodies (cookies, fruit, pretzels, popcorn, etc.). If you need help setting up the coffee and tea, please feel free to ask any Deacon or other member of the congregation. Your Fellowship Hour can be as simple or as elaborate as you want. They are fun to do and thoroughly appreciated by everyone.



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

Sacrament of Holy Communion and Non-Perishable Food Collection, March 5th

Our "FPC - Feed the Hungry" red wagon will be used during our Communion Sunday worship service on March 5th to collect donations to assist others who are less fortunate and struggle to provide for their families. All non-perishable food, household items, and monetary donations will be delivered to the "Twelve Baskets Food Pantry," housed at All Saints' Episcopal Church in Millington. Following is a list of items most needed at this time:
Cleaning supplies: surface and window cleaners, toilet cleaners, paper towels
Hygiene supplies: soap, shampoo, toothbrushes and toothpaste, deodorant, diapers, baby wipes



March Lectionary Readings

March 5 - 2nd Sunday in Lent

Genesis 12:1-4a; Psalm 121; Romans 4:1-5, 13-17; John 3:1-17

March 12 - 3rd Sunday in Lent

Exodus 17:1-7; Psalm 95; Romans 5:1-11; John 4:5-42

March 19 - 4th Sunday in Lent

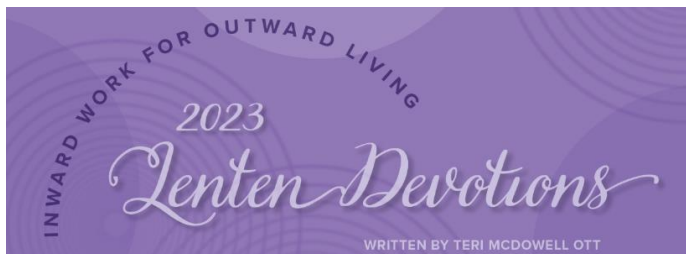
1 Samuel 16:1-13; Psalm 23; Ephesians 5:8-14; John 9:1-41

March 26—5th Sunday in Lent

Ezekiel 37:1-14; Psalm 130; Romans 8:6-11; John 11:1-45



Lenten Devotional



To help observe the season of Lent, the church is providing a Lenten devotional that will be sent to your email daily. If you are not receiving it already and would like to, please email Loura Zijdel at clerk@meyersvillechurch.com. If you would like a hard copy, please let Loura know.

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."

Liturgists Needed for Worship Services

We need Liturgists each week to do readings for both the in-person and on-line worship services. **For the month of March, we will be worshipping in STIRLING; recordings will be done in MEYERSVILLE.** Recordings are typically done on Thursdays, late afternoon (other arrangements can be made, if needed).



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.** Your readings will be emailed to you, along with confirmation of the location and time for the on-line recording. Thank you!

ASH WEDNESDAY *Worship*

Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent, was on February 22nd. If you missed the service, there is an online one available through our website. The focus of Ash Wednesday services is the brevity of life, that we came from dust and will soon enough return back to the earth, dust once more. The brevity and uncertainty of life makes this life we have even more precious, inviting us to wonder and praise. This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice in it! What we love is mortal and transitory so all the more reason to notice and celebrate the beauty in this world, the people we love, that remind us of the presence of God and God's everlasting love for us. Ash Wednesday causes us to pause, notice, wake up, and discover that "God is in this place."



Pictured here are Joyce Koenig and Carolyn Malfatone receiving ashes from Rev. Aspinall.

Mission Programs

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 1st, 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.



Mission of the Month for March: One Great Hour of Sharing

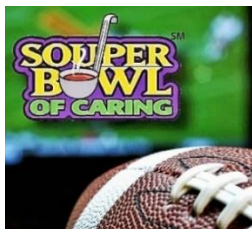
The Mission of the Month for March will be “One Great Hour of Sharing.” A gift to OGHS enables the church to share God’s love with our neighbors-in-need around the world by providing relief to those affected by natural disasters, food to the hungry, and empowerment to the poor and oppressed. Feel free to use the special envelopes available in the church pews or send your gift directly to the church or Elsie Turqman. Remember to include your name and/or envelope number if you would like your donation to be recorded.



Click this link <https://specialofferings.pcusa.org/offering/oghs/> to learn more about One Great Hour of Sharing. Thank you in advance for supporting this program.

Mission of the Month Update - January & February - Souper Bowl of Caring

- Tom Parziale



Our Souper Bowl of Caring collection during January and February raised a record amount of \$571. Our Deacons have voted to give these funds to our local Twelve Baskets Food Pantry. Thank you to everyone who supported this special project and helped make it so successful. The families assisted by Twelve Baskets will be very appreciative of our help.

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 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. Anyone wishing to help make sandwiches and fill bags, our next commitment is Tuesday, March 28th at 9:30 in the morning. Mark your calendar now – we would love to have your help!



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 monetary donations to the church office or directly to Elsie Turqman.



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

- Jan Somers



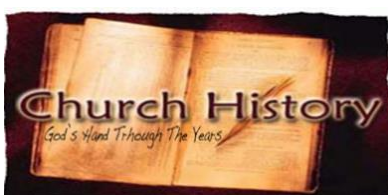
Please continue to save pop-top can tabs, any size. **The can tabs are sold by weight to recycling centers, and the proceeds are donated to Ronald McDonald House Charities**—a nonprofit family and children's charity dedicated to supporting families with sick children in their time of need. You can give them to me any Sunday morning, leave them in the church office, or I can pick them up from you. Thank you for your continued 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 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 and put them in the "Archives" mailbox outside the church offices. Thank you.



Church Directory is Being Updated

- Jan Somers

Please review your current listing and let me know asap if there are any changes to be made. If you don't have a copy of the directory, leave a message at the church office and I will send your information to you.

Oscar Movie Nights in March

Our Oscar Movie Series continues on Friday evenings in March. The movies are shown for the Meyersville and First Presbyterian members and friends at the Millington Firehouse at 7 pm. Many thanks to Ruud Zijdel and Ed Gerecht for making this event possible. The schedule below provides information about the movies including their ratings:



March 3

Triangle of Sadness – R – 2½ hrs - sexual content, language. Comedy, drama: A fashion model celebrity couple joins an eventful cruise for the super-rich. Stars: Thobias Thorwid, Harris Dickinson, Charlbi Dean

March 10 Meyersville Grange Soup Contest

Instead of a movie, head over to the Meyersville Grange to enjoy a delicious soup supper! It starts at 6:30 pm. Adult admission is \$10 and children are \$5. Bring a pot of soup for the contest and the cook gets in free!

March 17

All Quiet on the Western Front – R – 2 hrs, 20 mins War, drama. War breaks out in Germany in 1914. Paul and his classmates quickly enlist in the army to serve their fatherland. Soon their first images from the battlefield show them the reality of war.

March 24

Avatar: The Way of Water – PG-13 – 3 hrs - partial nudity, intense action, sequences of strong violence, some strong language. Sci-fi, Adventure, Action, Fantasy: Jake Sully lives with his newfound family formed on the extrasolar moon Pandora. Once a familiar threat returns to finish what was previously started, Jake must work with Neytiri and the army of the Na'vi race to protect their home. Director: James Cameron, Stars: Sam Worthington, Zoe Saldana, Stephen Lang, Sigourney Weaver

March 31

Tár – R – 2½ hrs - some language, brief nudity

Drama/musical: Set in the international world of Western classical music, the film centers on Lydia Tár, widely considered one of the greatest living composer-conductors and the very first female director of a major German orchestra. Stars: Cate Blanchett, Noémie Merlant, Nina Hoss

Pictures from the February 26th worship service and luncheon in celebration of Rev. Aspinall's retirement:



Earth Hour 2023 is Saturday, March 25th, 8:30-9:30 p.m.**- Jan Somers**

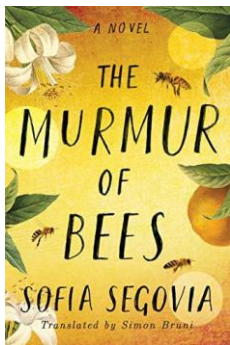
Earth Hour is a worldwide movement organized by the World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF) in 2007. It is observed annually in over 190 countries on the last Saturday in March, encouraging individuals, communities, and businesses to turn off non-essential electric lights and electronic devices for one hour, from 8:30 to 9:30 pm, to save energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The point of Earth Hour is not just to save energy for one hour; it's also a symbolic global event that shows we can all make a difference in the fight against climate change. If we all work together, even small changes can make a big difference!

The Earth Hour 2023 theme is "Take time out for nature." Whether it's 60 seconds or 60 minutes or beyond an hour, we can all take time out for nature this Earth Hour.

Meyersville Book Club

The **March** selection is *The Murmur of Bees* by Sofia Segovia. The group will be meeting on Wednesday, March 22nd 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.



From a Goodreads review:

From a beguiling voice in Mexican fiction comes an astonishing novel—her first to be translated into English—about a mysterious child with the power to change a family's history in a country on the verge of revolution.

From the day that old Nana Reja found a baby abandoned under a bridge, the life of a small Mexican town forever changed. Disfigured and covered in a blanket of bees, little Simonopio is for some locals the stuff of superstition, a child kissed by the devil. But he is welcomed by landowners Francisco and Beatriz Morales, who adopt him and care for him as if he were their own. As he grows up, Simonopio becomes a cause for wonder to the Morales family because, when the uncannily gifted child closes his eyes, he can see what no one else can—visions of all that's yet to come, both beautiful and dangerous. Followed by his protective swarm of bees and living to deliver his adoptive family from threats—both human and those of nature—Simonopio's purpose in Linares will, in time, be divined.

Set against the backdrop of the Mexican Revolution and the devastating influenza of 1918, The Murmur of Bees captures both the fate of a country in flux and the destiny of one family that has put their love, faith, and future in the unbelievable.

EASTER FLOWERS/PLANTS ORDER FORM

The Deacons are coordinating the ordering of flowers/plants to be placed on the chancel for Easter morning in memory or honor of someone special in your life. Please use the form below or the forms available in the Sunday bulletin to place your order. **The deadline to order is Sunday, March 19th.**



	What Color?	How Many?	Total Price
Azaleas \$22 ea. (Rose, White)	_____	_____	_____
Daffodils \$10 ea. (All Yellow)		_____	_____
Lilies \$15.00 ea. (All White)		_____	_____
Tulips \$10 ea. (Yellow, Pink, or Purple)	_____	_____	_____
Totals		_____	_____

Flowers are purchased in **MEMORY / HONOR** of:

Please circle one

Given By: _____
Please print clearly

To be picked up following worship on Easter morning: _____ To be planted at Church: _____

Please submit your order form and check to Carolyn Malfatone, the church office, or place it in the offering plate on Sunday morning.

*****Deadline to order: Sunday, March 19th**

Make checks payable to: FPC and note: Easter Flowers on your check. Thank you.

2023 Session and Board of Deacons Committee Responsibilities

Following are the 2023 Session and Board of Deacon responsibilities. Please keep this information to refer to in the event you need to contact someone on a specific committee during the year.

Session Members

Clerk of Session
 Treasurer
 Presbytery Commissioner
 Facilities & Property Management
 Fellowship & Membership
 Finance & Stewardship
 Mission
 Nominating
 Personnel
 Worship
 Music Series
 (Coordinate with Howard Kupferman)

Susan Brodziak
 Kai Ihringer
 Joyce Koenig
 Ed Gerecht
 Paul Wermuth
 Sandy Mackay
 Joyce Koenig
 Ed Gerecht
 Kai Ihringer
 Joyce Koenig
 Ed Gerecht



Board of Deacons

Moderators
 Treasurer
 Recording Secretary
 Corresponding Secretary
 Flowers

 Deacons' Corner (For Stirling Stuff)
 Paraments
 Communion Preparation
 Fellowship Hour/Kitchen Supplies
 Reception Coordinator

Susan Gerecht & Kimberly Ridgway
 Elsie Turqman
 Susan Gerecht
 Kimberly Ridgway
 Carolyn Malfatone
 (Former Deacon)
 Susan Gerecht
 Shared
 Shared
 Shared
 Susan Gerecht



Ongoing Mission Programs:

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

Please e-mail submissions for the
 April 2023 issue of Stirling Stuff to:
jsomers17@hotmail.com
 by March 23rd. 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

158 Central Avenue
 Stirling, NJ 07980

Editor: Jan Somers

Jan Somers, Office Manager
Secretary@fpcstirling.org
 Church Office: 908-647-1033
 Website: www.fpcstirling.org

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!



Saturday night, March 11th
Turn Clocks Ahead 1 Hour

