

News Bits



First Presbyterian Church of Blairstown, New Jersey

Pastor's Message



One of my favorite psalms, at least a favorite verse in the Psalms is Psalm 122:1. I was glad when they said, "Let us go unto the house of the Lord." In Eugene Person's 'The Message', the same verse is translated: *When they said, "Let us go to the house of the Lord, my heart leaped for joy!"* The psalmist had going to the temple in Jerusalem in mind. The Jerusalem Temple directed the psalmist's mind and heart to God. It evoked feelings of joy and shalom. Worship was an event very much enjoyed and appreciated by the psalmist. It was to worship God and good for the faith of the people of God.

I had this thought in mind back in August when Teri and I were touring with the Rick Steves Travel Group in Ireland. We flew from JFK on Friday and flew into Shannon International Airport on Saturday, arriving early Saturday morning (around 6:00 AM), and upon our arrival the weather was wet and rainy. Exhausted from the overnight flight, we managed to muster our wits together, secure a cab and ended up at the Old Ground Hotel in Ennis, where we were staying the first two nights of the

tour. We ate breakfast, wandered around a bit, and eventually checked into our room.

We also noticed across the street from the church was St. Peter and St. Paul's Roman Catholic Church, (honestly, there are almost as many Catholic Churches as there are pubs in Ireland), so we secured the time of the Mass and made plans to attend. Our hope was that we didn't come across as overly Protestant and stand out too much. We didn't want to create or cause an international incident or make a spectacle of ourselves, and to our knowledge, successful on that note, I think we were.

Honestly, sitting next to my wife in church rather than stare at her from the pulpit in the pew where she routinely sits felt good. Both of us particularly enjoyed the unifying effect of the liturgy, the homily, and observing the worshiping community stand and approach the elements during the Eucharist. Okay. I did not enjoy being excluded from the Eucharist, which is a key reason why I regularly announce before our own Holy Communion celebration *'This is the Lord's Table, not a Presbyterian Table. All are invited to celebrate the meal prepared for us by our Lord!'* I realize there is a significant theological nuance between Catholics and Protestants over the meaning of the elements, and yet Jesus prayed for the unity of his disciples and followers, and I seriously

doubt that he wants us to get too fussy over the doctrinal differences that become divisive when we celebrate the Sacrament. With Jesus as the Host, all are welcome to partake and enjoy.

Still, it felt good to be in worship. It felt good to be in church in a foreign land. It felt good to experience God in a context different than our familiar Protestant setting. It felt good to see faith being formed among the strangers surrounding us. I've heard said the European cathedrals are empty on Sunday, and that may be true, but it wasn't our experience on the Sunday we attended or at the Saturday evening Mass that I attended at St. Kevin's Roman Catholic Church in Dublin.

I share all this, because as our fall schedule resumes and we return to the Sanctuary for our own Sunday worship service, I hope God might speak to your heart and prompt you to come and be a part. The opportunity to worship our Triune God, to let God draw us together, to spiritually renew us, restore us, repair us, and to reconcile us—in effect—to celebrate and rejoice, this is what the psalmist had in mind in Psalm 122:1, *When they said, "Let us go to the house of the Lord, my heart leaped for joy!"*

Come to worship. May the glory of God shine on us.

See you in worship.

Pastor David

Bound
TOGETHER
by Faith


September
2023

Inside this issue:

Session News	2
Stewardship & Finance	2
Christian Education and Music & Worship	3
Mission Ministry	4
Membership & Fellowship	4
Deacon Ministry	5
Other Bits of Interest	6
Daily Prayer List	7
Birthdays & Anniversaries	7
Calendar of Events	8





2024 BUDGET

All committee chairs should have 2024 budgets to the church office by October 18. Please remember to plan ahead and budget for anticipated expenses and/or programs for next year. An email will be forwarded soon. Thank You!

~ Church Admin.

Session News

Session met on Thursday, August 17, 2023 and approved the following recommendations and requests:

- 1) A request from Eddy and Ashley Thorton (Eddy teaches at Blair) to have their son, Casey, baptized, date TBD.
- 2) A request from Livie Angelone to use space in the downstairs of the Outreach Center, once a week, to teach sculpting. A schedule is TBD.
- 3) A recommendation from the Christian Education Ministry to adopt the revised and updated Children and Youth Protection Policy.
- 4) A request from the Christian Education Ministry to hold a youth pizza and movie night at 6:00 PM on Saturday, Sept. 30, 2023. The movie planned is The Incredibles, rated PG.
- 5) A recommendation from the Christian Education and Music and Worship Ministry to designate the following Sundays as Family Service Sundays: Oct 15 (Anniversary Sunday), Nov 26, Dec 17 (Christmas pageant), Dec 24 and Dec 31 (New Year's Eve).
- 6) A recommendation from Christian Education to approve the following Sunday School teachers for 2023–2024: Deb Albrecht, Lisa Besser, Stephanie and Zach Burke and Joan Cameron.

7) To accept the Peace and Global Witness special offering Sunday, Sept. 3 through Sunday, Oct. 1, 2023.

8) A request from the Membership and Fellowship Ministry to hold a square dance in Fellowship Hall on Saturday, Nov. 4, 2023 from 5:00–8:00 PM.

The next Stated Meeting of Session will be on October 19, 2023 at 7:00 PM at the Outreach Center and via ZOOM.

Respectfully submitted by,

Deb Albrecht,
Clerk of Session

Stewardship & Finance Ministry

GATHER *with us*

The meaning of the word “gather” is to come together. We all find ways to gather, whether it’s going to school or work, participating in sports or joining an organization. Of course, another way is to attend church.

In Hebrews 10: 24–25 it says, “Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And now let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.”

Stewardship and Finance is encouraging all of you to actively participate in church

services. We’re always looking for ushers, greeters and worship leaders (let Bill Oliver know if you can help out). In the next few months, we’ll be organizing activities that are fun, create a sense of camaraderie, and make you feel good.

Our first event is the Annual Fish Dinner on Friday, October 6. We need bakers, food assemblers, pie cutters, runners, and ticket sales peo-

ple. See Gail Weber if you can participate. Look for our future announcements! Come and Gather with us!!

Gail Weber, Chair

Dinner Tickets available now—scan the QR code below or visit fpcb-nj.org/fish-chips

Tastefully British

FISH & CHIPS DINNER



Friday, Oct. 6

5 PM to 7 PM





Christian Education and Music & Worship

Greetings from the Christian Education and Music and Worship Committees!

I hope everyone is enjoying the last few weeks of summer break. Before too long, it will be back to school and back to business as usual. For our church community, that means the return of Sunday School, Pastor Dave's Lectionary Series, and Services in the Sanctuary. It all begins on Rally Day, being held this year on September 10. Be sure to come out and "Rally" with us as we return from a Summer hopefully filled with plenty of R&R.

A few items of note for the coming Sunday School year:

- For the first time since Covid, our Sunday School classes will be split by age again. The Children and Worship Class will serve those members of our church in Pre K thru 1st grade. Our Faith Works class will serve children from grades 2 thru 8. Both classes will meet in the church building during Sunday Service, the younger children in the small classroom, the older students in Fellowship Hall.
- With the return of the split classes, we are in need of more teachers. If you are interested, please contact me, Zach Burke, or Deb Albrecht for more info. No experience is needed. On a personal note, I can tell you that when I began teaching Sunday School about 4 years ago, I was very nervous and a little intimidated. Teaching on Sunday Mornings has since become one of the great joys in my life, and something I look forward to. So

please, if it is something you are even slightly interested in, give it a try! Sunday School teachers will be commissioned on Rally Day, September 10.

Some other items of note in our Church:

- Come Join us on Saturday September 30 at 6 PM for a youth movie night! We will be showing *The Incredibles* at 6 PM at the O.C. There will be pizza, snacks, and games! All church youth are invited to attend and bring a friend. For more info, see Stephanie Burke. See you there!
 - An effort by the Christian Education Committee, led by Deb Albrecht, has been made to update the Children and Youth Protection Policy at our church. The revised policy was presented to, and adopted by the Session this August. Most changes were minor in nature, and made in an effort to keep our policy current with the requirements of the Presbytery, as well as up to date with today's social climate. If you are interested in reviewing the policy, copies are available.
 - For the adults in our congregation, Pastor Dave will be restarting the Sunday Evening Lectionary Series Based on *The Chosen* DVD series very soon. So far it has been a wonderfully enlightening series, and very eye opening. This will be the final season of the series, and no doubt will be as good as the first three.
- Finally, here are the dates for all family services through January 1st. on Family Service Sundays, there will be

no Sunday School. Children will remain upstairs for the entire service:

- Oct. 15 (Anniversary Sunday)
- Nov. 26 (Sunday after Thanksgiving)
- Dec. 17 (Christmas Pageant)
- Dec. 24 (Christmas Eve)
- Dec. 31 (New Years Eve)

See you on Rally Day!

Submitted in stewardship,

Zach Burke



Pastor Dave indulges in one of his favorite daydreams.



PUZZLE

A PATH TO PRAYER

God's Word offers lots of insights about how to pray.

Directions: Use the code to fill in the blanks and complete a Bible passage about prayer.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
ZYXWVUTSRQPONMLKJIHGFEDCBA

R G S Z M P N B T L W

V E V I B G R N V R

I V N V N Y V I B L F

R M Z O O N B

K I Z B V I H U L I Z O O

L U B L F R Z O D Z B H

K I Z B D R G S Q L B

K S R O R K K R Z M H

1:3-4, NIV

Answer: I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, always pray with joy. Philippians 1:3-4, NIV



Godly, biblical wisdom is more valuable than gold or silver. Make this do-it-yourself toy to practice your searching skills.

What you need:

- 12 small, smooth rocks
- An empty, clean egg carton
- Paintbrush
- Acrylic paint (gold or silver)
- Black permanent marker

What you do:

1. Clean the rocks and egg carton. Place newspaper on a table to protect it from paint.
2. Paint all sides of the rocks and carton. Let dry. Add a second coat, if desired.
3. When rocks are dry, number each rock (1-12) with marker. Place rocks in the carton.
4. Play hide-and-seek with a friend. Take turns hiding the rocks in a room, sandbox or backyard. Give clues, if needed, and count the rocks as they're returned.
5. Use your imagination to incorporate a treasure hunt into study time or family devotions.



Mission Ministry

The Peace & Global Witness Offering is received during the Season of Peace, which ends on World Communion Sunday, Oct. 3.

Peace Offerings may be given electronically from the

donate/give now button on our website (fpcb-nj.org) — enter at the PC(USA) Special Offerings box, or by mailing a check made payable to 'First Presbyterian Church' — please be sure to mark

'Peace offering' in the memo. You also may give by credit card online at <http://pcusa.org/peace-global>.

You are with me.

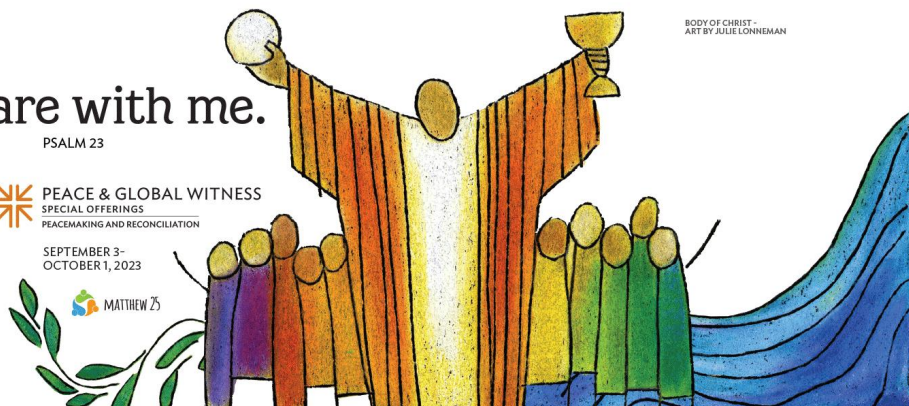
PSALM 23



PEACE & GLOBAL WITNESS
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
PEACEMAKING AND RECONCILIATION

SEPTEMBER 3–
OCTOBER 1, 2023

MATTHEW 25



BODY OF CHRIST—
ART BY JULIE LONNEMAN

Membership & Fellowship

Swing Your Partner!

It's been a fun and busy summer, starting with our booth at the Fourth of July Celebration at Footbridge Park, attending Camp Johnsonburg's Family and Friends Day, and culminating with a trip to see the Sussex County Miners play baseball. The game was followed by some spectacular fireworks.

It was also our pleasure to cohost a reception with Presbyterian Women, for Carol McLain, after church on Sunday, August 20. After many years of dedicated service to our church, Carol gets ready to move to south Jersey, where she will be closer to family. Her presence will be greatly missed, but as Pastor Dave reminded us, she will only be an hour away. Carol, we wish you every blessing as you start another new chapter in your life.

And finally, it's not too soon to mark your calendar for Membership and Fellow-

ship's, ever popular, Fall Square Dance. Ed LaPlante will be returning to FPCB to be our live caller on Saturday, November 4. We'll have a covered dish supper in Fellowship Hall from 5:00 to 6:00 PM and the square dance will run from 6:00 to 8:00 PM. It's a great evening out for all ages, and if by

chance you're not up for dancing, you'll have a guaranteed good time laughing and watching the fun.

Pete Peterson, Chair



Deacon Ministry

The Deacons are preparing for the cool weather events. The Deacons are doing the Texas Roadhouse Rib Fundraiser again on November 2 & 3. **The cut-off date for ordering is November 1.** This fundraiser will help the Church to get a new AED, which is greatly needed.

We are always looking for people to do coffee hour, so please look at the sign up sheet in the fellowship hall.

The Deacons are planning Shoe Boxes for college/military students filled with treats, so if you could please forward their address to the church office that would be wonderful.

We will need extra volunteers November 18, since the Outreach Center at 35 Main Street is serving families, and we have Thanksgiving meals distribution at 1 Main Street. We need some strong people to move the boxes from the Outreach Center to the Church on November 17. There is also a need to make fruit baskets for the shut-ins Nov. 18.

The FOOD PANTRY list is as follows: (also responsible to prepare the Communion and Coffee Hour. You don't have to do every coffee hour, but you need to ask someone to fill in that role if you're not able to.):

- ♦ Sep. 16: Robin
- ♦ Oct. 21: Derek, Emily
- ♦ Nov 18. Stephanie, Emily, Joan
- ♦ Dec. 16: Emily

The Communion list (helper to do communion):

- ♦ Sep. 3: Joan

- ♦ Oct. 1: Robin
Anniversary Sunday:
Oct. 15: Teri

- ♦ Nov. 5: Stephanie

- ♦ Dec. 3: Emily

Have a Blessed Day,
Judy Trigg,
Deacon Moderator

Deacon Ministry Meeting:

The next Deacon Ministry meeting will take place on Sunday, Sept. 24 directly following the service of worship in Fellowship Hall.

Food Pantry News

We hope everybody enjoyed the summer so far. The week before our pantry day we received a generous amount of food—Doris Sless celebrated her 80th Birthday and her family picked our pantry as the beneficiary—thank you so much to the Sless family and a Happy & Healthy year for Doris!

Last Saturday (August 19) we served 39 families. Again we looked like a mini farmer's market—blueberries, grape tomatoes and peached from Norwescap, regular tomatoes, carrots, beets, Swiss chard, new little potatoes from the Foodshed Alliance, Panera bread and bagels and lots and lots of baked goods from Acme!



We delivered to three families. Since we were very well stocked everybody left happy.

Thank you for all your donations!! Enjoy the last days of summer and a happy fall!

God's Blessing,
Betsy Gervasi &
Erika Wulster



Sun., Sept. 24
following worship



Let's Rally Together!
Help us support our friends at
First Presbyterian Church

Thursday November 2nd or Friday November 3rd
Scan the QR Code for MORE Information and to schedule your To-Go Meal pre-order pick-up today!

The \$12 RIB RALLY Meal includes:
Fall-Off-The-Bone Ribs (4 Bones),
Seasoned Steak Fries,
Fresh-Baked Bread and
Homemade Honey Cinnamon Butter!
PLUS, you receive a Peanut Bag with Free Appetizer voucher for your next visit!



First Presbyterian Church receives 30% of EVERY MEAL SOLD!

The cut-off date for ordering is Nov. 1.

*** AED Fundraiser ***





 **GIVE NOW**

Electronic Giving

Electronic Giving is available at our website at [-nj.org](http://www.nj.org).

Look for the "Give Now" button and make a one-time or reoccurring donation towards our General Account, Building Fund, Deacon Ministry, Food Pantry, Presbyterian Women, or PC(USA) Special Offerings. This electronic giving service is powered by the Presbyterian Foundation.

Fundraisers

Participate in *Loaves & Fishes* (ShopWithScrip) by purchasing ShopRite (\$25 or \$100) or Acme (\$25 or \$100) or Dunkin' (\$10) cards available at the Outreach Center.

Fish/Chicken & Chips

Plan to attend our Annual Fish Dinner on Friday, October 6. It will be take-out only!



Other Bits of Interest

In Remembrance and Gratitude for the Life of Gerald "Jerry" Walker (1941 – 2023)

Jerry entered into God's eternal kingdom on April 23, 2023. Jerry and Carol Walker joined with our church on January 25, 1981. We have been blessed with their membership for over 42 years.

Jerry was ordained as an Elder on June 28, 1992 and served three years on Session. Jerry served as the Chair of the Long Range Implantation Committee during the interim period in 1993 and 1994. Under his leadership and working with Interim Pastor, the Rev. George Vorsheim, Jerry and the Long Range Planning Committee developed a five year vision for the church, which, Pastor David said was one of the key incentives that drew him to our church in December of 1994, when he began his duties as the church's Designated Pastor.

Jerry provided extraordinary leadership for the Session and the congregation. He is sorely missed.

In addition to Jerry's service to our church, he and Carol were very active in our community. Jerry was a North Warren High School band parent, a Little League coach and a member of the Masonic Lodge. He and Carol enthusiastically attended all the school events their children, Randy and David, participated in. Carol and Jerry were instrumental in starting Project Graduation, the after-graduation celebration of activities, games and food so that graduates could safely celebrate their High School graduation. This event continued for many years. Carol and Jerry also organized the Senior Awards program at North Warren and the Senior Tea for community members.

Jerry was dedicated to the education of young people. He began his career in education as a teacher in Bridge-

water, NJ and then at Livingston High School for 34 years where he taught Advanced Placement Chemistry and later became Principal. In 1985, he was honored as a finalist for the Teacher in Space Project and in 1987 was named NJ Teacher of the Year. In 2011, Livingston High School presented Jerry with a LEAD Award for Leadership in Educational Achievement and Dedication.

Jerry exemplified the Christian life in his devotion to his family, his community and the many students he taught and guided as an educator. "And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues." (1 Corinthians 12:28) Rest in peace, good and faithful servant of Jesus Christ.

Submitted by Deb Albrecht on behalf of the Membership and Fellowship Ministry

*"Dear treasured friends,
What a lovely, delicious, and very meaningful coffee hour we spent together on Sunday (8/20). It was special, as are each of you. Our time spent together worshiping, caring for one another, and working together will always be remembered. You are all such great people. I quote something I heard the other day: "If something makes you sad when it's over, it must have been wonderful."
~ Carol McLain*

s., My pool is open until the 8th, come for a swim!

*"Dear friends,
I wanted to thank you for all the beautiful words and cards my family and I have received. We are touched and blessed by the outpouring of love and support you have shown us since the death of Les, our much loved husband and father.*

*Very gratefully,
Tina Ashburner"*

BLAIR WOMAN'S CLUB OF BLAIRSTOWN

SILENT AUCTION

THURSDAY, NOV. 9, 2023

BROOK HOLLOW WINERY
594 STATE RT. 94, COLUMBIA, NJ

DOORS OPEN 6:00 PM | BIDDING ENDS 7:15 PM

WINE TASTING AVAILABLE | ADULTS ONLY | LIMITED SEATING

For additional information or to register, scan the QR code to the right or please visit: <https://sites.google.com/view/blairwomansclubnj>



Register Now



SEPTEMBER Birthdays & Anniversaries

SEPTEMBER Birthdays

- 5 Hannah Burke
David Paulson Jr.
- 7 Brodie McLain
- 8 David Gunther
- 9 Josephine Yock

- 14 Caitlin Nicholls
Kayla Nicholls
Louise Thompson
- 17 Don Nicholls
- 18 Pat Gunther
- 21 Owen Walsh
- 23 Matthew Williard
- 25 Thomas Dugan VI
Al Gunther

- 27 Chester Topolski
- 28 Cathy Nicholls
Laura Topolski

SEPTEMBER Anniversaries

- 12 Lorelei & Kurt Oelschlager

September 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Our Daily Prayer List

The Human Family: Persons and individuals impacted by COVID-19; essential workers; the homeless; people of Afghanistan, Haiti, and the Ukraine; families impacted by gun violence; those impacted by severe weather; families and communities destroyed by the Maui fire. The pastor (Rev. Robin Curras) and people of the Montclair Presbyterian Church, whose building caught fire and burned down on Monday, 8/15.

Men & Women Serving in the Armed Forces & America's Veterans



Those in elected office: The President, the Congress, State Assembly, local community servants

Healing for Friends & Families with:

Cancer: Judy Dales, Gordon Dugan, Samantha Elwell, Ann Fleming, Olivia Hollis, Adam

Hubble, Tracy Lance, Troy Lutz, Caitlyn McMorrow and her family, Bill S., Andrew Shan, Abbi Sparkman, Robert Talmadge, Tracy Wolfe, Molly Grace Young, Alicia, Audrey, Darlene, Eva, Gail, Liza

Illness & Injuries: Robert Benz, Sue Bonkowski, Joan Caldwell, Derek Cameron, Elaine Canonico, Kyle Canonico, Lucy Cuipa, Noah Haiduc-Dale, Jan Smith, Margaret Stephens, Betty Ann Weir, Ann, Carter, Demares, Tracy



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF BLAIRSTOWN, NEW JERSEY**

Post Office Box 385, 1 Main Street
Blairstown, NJ 07825
Church Office: 35 Main Street



Phone: (908) 362-5254
Fax: (908) 362-8060
Food Pantry: (908) 362-5254
Children's Center: (908) 362-7887
fpcb@ptd.net fpcb-nj.org
facebook.com/FPCBNJ

 GIVE NOW



Bound
TOGETHER
by Faith

FPCB Calendar of Events — September 2023

(schedule is subject to change)

Sunday Worship (in person & online): 10:00 AM in the Sanctuary
(worship material available at fpcb-nj.org)

Weekly Bible Study: Tuesdays at 10:00 AM

Christian Education / Music & Worship: Thursday, Sep. 7 at 7:00 PM

Stewardship & Finance: Wednesday, Sep. 13 at 2:30 PM

Food Pantry: Saturday, Sep. 16 at 9:30 AM

Session: Thursday, Sep. 21 at 7:00 PM

Deacon Ministry: Sunday, Sep. 24 following worship in Fellowship Hall