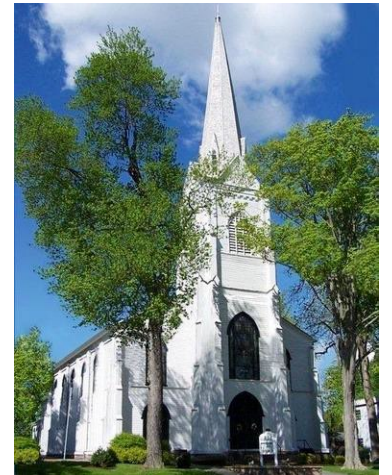


**First Presbyterian Church
298 Main Street
Hackettstown, NJ 07840**

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
298 MAIN STREET
HACKETTSTOWN, NJ 07840
REV. ERIN HAYES-COOK
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Church website,
<http://www.fpchackettstown.org>
Editor: MaryAnn Simmons
maryann.simmons3@verizon.net**

*Light
from the*



**JULY/AUGUST
2023**



Steeple

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
HACKETTSTOWN, NJ
CHURCH OFFICE: (908) 852-4011**

Pastor: Rev. Erin Hayes-Cook
Choir Director/Organist: Lorinda Ravo
Treasurer: Al Ravo
Financial Secretary: Deborah Gulick-Shepherd
Head Usher: Kim Newton
Church Secretary: Pattie Huff

2023 SESSION

Class of 2023	Class of 2024	Class of 2025
Geof Gohlich	Bruce Bergman	Donna Erickson
Sharon Heil	Michele Cameron	Diane Hull
Dottie Kappers	MaryAnn Simmons	Ray Sookhoo

Clerk of Session: Donna Erickson

2023 BOARD OF DEACONS

Class of 2023	Class of 2024	Class of 2025
Gilles Djongang	Pat Gohlich	Ellen Bergman
Jackie Hammel	Janette Hendershot	Patricia Butts
Lorinda Ravo	Justin Simmons	Carol Miller

Moderator: Ellen Bergman

2023 HEAVEN SENT NURSERY SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES

OFFICE: 852-2006

Director: Jen Bujno

Ved Fernandez - 2023	Pam Venturini - 2025
Kaitlyn Elliot - HS Parent	Heather Pittman - HS Parent
Sharon Heil - Session Rep	
Rev. Erin Hayes-Cook - Ex-Officio	

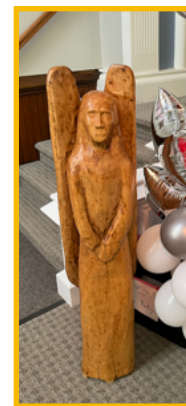
**ANGEL CARVED
OUT OF LOVE**

**ANONYMOUS DONOR CREATES
ANGEL FROM 100 YEAR OLD
DOWNED MAPLE TREE
BY: DIANE HULL and LORINDA
RAVO**

The beautiful angel that you see here was carved from the wood that was "rescued" from the huge maple tree by the steps to the Manse. The tree had to be taken down due to disease which made the tree unstable, and someone who prefers to remain anonymous took a piece of the downed tree to Steve Barnes of Schooley's Mountain.

Our donor and his wife came up with the idea of having an angel carved out of the tree for us so that we could always have a piece of that beautiful tree with us. We are so grateful for this generous donation of time and talent and in the near future will be finding a permanent location for the angel.

FPCH thanks you for your beautiful donation!



PRAYER LIST

**Please keep the following
in your prayers:**

The Archer Family
Gwenn and Louis
Bartku
Joan Beddow
The Brodo Family
Eris Bunnel
Les Carpenter
Churches through
-out the U.S.
Barbara Courtright
FPCH
Friends of FPCH
Dan Gardner
Roger George (father
of Gwen Bartku)
Terry Gretchen
Joan Grover
The Lee Family
Maikuu congregation,
Kibwezi Kenya
Members of the Armed Forces
Edna Ort
Barbara Pace, niece of the
Prestopines
Shirley Pennington
Carol Spitzer
Those in California affected by
natural catastrophes
Those who are food insecure
Those who are homeless
Those struggling with
addictions
Those recovering from COVID
Those recovering from surgery
Those traveling long distances



DATES TO REMEMBER-JULY/AUG 2023

JULY:

- 02: Worship and communion - 10 AM; livestream through Facebook; Suggested Pantry Donations - Bring on Breakfast
- 04: Happy Independence Day!
- 05: Yarn Girls - 1 PM - Conference Room
- 08: Community Dinner - 5-7 PM, at the Chapel
- 09: Worship -10 AM, livestream through Facebook; Pantry Donations due - Packing the Shelves with Protein
- 09: Second Sunday - 11:30 AM-1:30 PM, at the Chapel
- 15: Ladies breakfast - 9 AM at the River Star Diner, Hackettstown
- 16: Worship - 10 AM; livestream through Facebook; Suggested Pantry Donations - "Let's Do Lunch"
- 23: Worship - 10 AM; livestream through Facebook; Suggested Pantry Donations - Lotsa Pasta; start of school supplies collection for Backpack Program
- 24: Morning Bible Study - 10-11 AM in the Conference Room
- 26: Evening Bible Study - 6:30-8 PM in the Conference Room
- 30: Worship - 10 AM; livestream through Facebook; Suggested Pantry Donations - Very Veggie Week
- 31: Blood Drive - 2:30-8:30 PM at the chapel
- 31: Morning Bible Study - 10-11 AM in the Conference Room



AUGUST

- 02: Yarn Girls - 1 PM - Conference Room
- 02: Evening Bible Study - 6:30-8 PM in the Conference Room
- 06: Worship and communion - 10 AM; livestream through Facebook; Suggested Pantry Donations - "It's Personal": Personal Hygiene and cleaning supplies
- 06: National Sister's Day; Hiroshima Day
- 07: Morning Bible Study - 10-11 AM in the Conference Room
- 08: Deacon's Meeting - 6:30 PM in the Conference Room
- 09: Evening Bible Study - 6:30-8 PM in the Conference Room
- 12: Community Dinner - 5-7 PM, at the Chapel
- 13: Worship - 10 AM; livestream through Facebook; backpack donations end today; Second Sunday - 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM
- 13: "Youth in the Church and the World" Sunday
- 14: Morning Bible Study - 10-11 AM in the Conference Room
- 16: Evening Bible Study - 6:30-8 PM in the Conference Room
- 15: Session Meeting - 6:30 PM in the Conference Room
- 20: Worship - 10 AM; livestream through Facebook; Public Education Sunday
- 21: Morning Bible Study - 10-11 AM in the Conference Room
- 23: Evening Bible Study - 6:30-8 PM in the Conference Room
- 27: Worship - 10 AM; livestream through Facebook
- 27: Youth Ministry Leadership Workshop - 2PM-6:30 PM at Camp Johnsonburg
- 28: Morning Bible Study - 10-11 AM in the Conference Room
- 30: Evening Bible Study - 6:30-8 PM in the Conference Room

A NOTE FROM OUR PASTOR

Dear Brothers and sisters in Christ.

I recently had a conversation with one of our members about life. She mentioned that she doesn't know how I balance being a wife, mother, and pastor. Now honestly, it isn't easy but it is a joy in life. I told her that when it gets hard, I try to remember that life has different rhythms and cycles. Each phase won't look like the other and it's ok to let go of certain expectations for each. Summer is that time to find a different rhythm and give space for life and the spirit within you. Don't forget to discover your spiritual life along with those lazy summer afternoons. I invite you to try something new and see how the Spirit moves you. I'd love to hear more about it.

Summer spiritual practices to consider:

- Go for a prayer walk. Read a Psalm before you go and use it as a way to pray throughout your walk. Choose someone to pray for as you walk.
- Reach out to someone you haven't spoken to in a long time.
- Find a quiet space in the day to enjoy the sunrise or sunset.
- Write down a prayer for the summer that you will carry with you every day.
- While grocery shopping pick up 2-3 items for our food pantry.
- Discover joy as a spiritual practice and test out different activities over the summer that might bring you joy.
- Read Isaiah 52:1-12. Pick a recent news story and pray for that situation using the scripture.
- Read a story about someone who is very different than you.
- Find one way to be kind to a stranger without expecting anything in return.

Enjoy your summer and remember that I look forward to hearing about your summer spiritual journey.

Pastor Erin

MAY 2023 FINANCIAL \$NAPSHOT

BY: AL RAVO

The Expenses Paid and Income amounts below do not include the funds transferred from the Endowment to meet the church operating expenses.

	MAY	Year to Date
Income	\$13,970.15	\$ 96,542.21
Expenses Paid	\$16,310.84	\$113,009.62
Net Operating Income / Deficit	(\$2,340.69)	(\$16,467.41)
Amount Needed from Endowment	(\$2,000.00)	(\$ 2,000.00)

Financial Comments / Observations:

1. The five largest operating expenses in May were:

- *1.) \$7,508.66 – Pastoral expenses (payroll, Board of Pensions, etc.).
- *2.) \$4,223.21 – Staff payroll & payroll processing expenses.
- *3.) \$1,422.15 – Computer and Software.
- *4.) \$390.98 – Electric expenses (3 buildings).
- *5.) \$389.04 – Water and sewer quarterly expenses (3 buildings).

2. The May and Year To Date operating net income / (deficit) are **(\$2,340.69)** and **(\$16,467.41)** respectively.

*The actual May operating expenses were \$2,522 below the average monthly budgeted expenses.

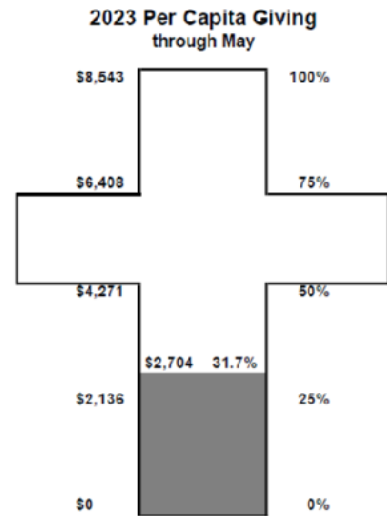
*The actual May operating income was \$2,405 below the average monthly budgeted income.

- Both the Year-To-Date operating incomes and expenses are above the budgeted amounts.

3. In May, the value of the Mass Mutual Investments **decreased \$3,152.12** to \$317,235.62.

4. The total endowment fund on May 31, 2023, was \$320,531.64. The total endowment fund was **down \$3,203.11** since May 1, 2023, and up \$11,756.88 since January 1, 2023.

CONTINUED - SEE MAY 2023 FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT



MAY 2023 FINANCIAL \$NAPSHOT

CONTINUED

The 2023 Per Capita amount is \$42.50 for each member of our congregation.

The 2023 Per Capita is \$42.50 for each of the 201 members of our Church. (The number is the membership of FPCH on December 31, 2021.) The total amount due in 2023 is \$8,542.50 or \$711.88 monthly. In May, \$42.50 was received for the Per Capita bringing the total received in 2023 to \$2,704.00 or 31.7%. This amount was then sent to the Presbytery bringing the total to \$2,704.00 or 31.7%.

BUILDING ON GENEROSITY (BOG) CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

- Donations received during May, \$600.00.
- Total donations received from church members, non-members and anonymous from September 2019 (BOG Kickoff dinner) through May 31, 2023, \$635,700.64.
- Total expenses used from BOG for Chapel entrances flooring (\$5,050.00) and partial pavement of parking lot (\$12,600.00) in May, \$17,650.00
- Funds available for the next BOG project, \$5,829.63.
- Donations breakdown by source:
 - 5.0% - \$31,893.38 from nonmembers
 - 86.2% - \$548,058.05 from members
 - 8.8% - \$55,749.21 from anonymous & dinners
 - 100.0% - \$635,700.64 Total

Please contact Al Ravo if you have any questions or would like to discuss the Church's operational finances, the Endowment Funds, Per Capita or the Building On Generosity Capital Campaign.

BIBLE STUDY SESSIONS TO COMMENCE IN JULY

BY: PASTOR ERIN HAYES-COOK

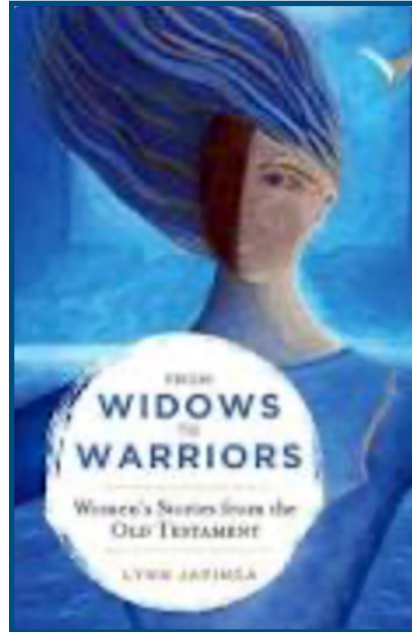
During the months of July and August, we will begin a new Bible study which focuses on the women of the Old Testament. This session's study will be centered on *From Widows to Warriors: Women's Stories from the Old Testament* by Rev. Dr. Lynn Japinga.

Morning sessions for this study will take place each Monday from 10 to 11 AM in the Conference Room of the Church. Evening sessions will occur each Wednesday, from 6:30 to 8:00 PM, also in the Conference Room. Monday dates are: 7/24, 7/31, 8/7, 8/14, 8/21, and 8/28. Wednesday dates are: 7/26, 8/2, 8/9, 8/16, 8/23, and 8/30.

From Widows to Warriors is divided into six chapters, each focusing on a different woman from the Bible. Readers will encounter flawed heroes like Ruth and Rahab, fierce fighters like Deborah and Joel, and tragic characters like Jephthah's daughter and the unnamed concubine in the book of Judges.

Conversation will focus on the faith of these women and their messy, yet redeemable humanity. These women are depicted as multidimensional individuals whose lives are inspiring, funny, and tragic. We will explore what each individual's story means today for each of us.

Won't you consider joining one of these groups so that you can witness the beautiful lives of the women of the Old Testament? To reserve a spot or if you have any questions, see me before or after worship or email me at revehayes@gmail.com



WHAT ARE THE DEACONS DOING?

BY: JUSTIN SIMMONS

The Deacon Board met on June 13 and discussed many of its mission projects that have taken place over the past month and made plans for the month of July.

The Board is pleased to announce that it has spent 40 years working together with Kenya, hosting the water project. This partnership will continue.

During its semi-annual clothing drive on May 20, 2023, the congregation donated 3,568 pounds of clothing to the A&E Clothing Corporation. The church received \$713.60 payment - \$.15/pound for clothing and \$.17/pound for shoes. We also received \$4.00/per bike. We are requesting that the next drive take place on October 21, 2023, with an alternate date of October 28.

As you may recall, we have put in a request for town approval for a book drop to be placed in our parking lot. We are still waiting for that approval.

During the Maifest fundraising activity, we collected \$255.00 profit at the tent sale and \$46.00 from goodies which were sold at the church, making our total earnings \$301.00.

This summer, we are announcing our Summer Stewardship Project associated with the Little Pantry. We need more food and personal care items. Please see the article associated with this project on the previous pages. In addition, we are looking forward to the completion of the eagle scout cabinet project.

This past month we purchased table carts for use at the Chapel. The cost covered by the Deacons was \$277.20.

As you may recall, each year we work together with the local schools in the district to purchase items needed for students. However, there are changes in school administration and no needs have been reported at this time.

During the church grounds cleanup in May, the Prayer Garden was given a face lift. We are now looking at purchasing a Pergola with shrubs for privacy.

Finally, we have received donations in memory of Charles Lee. They will be used at the discretion of the Deacon Board members.

If anyone has any questions, please feel free to seek out one of your Deacons who can discuss with you your concerns or ideas for ways to reach out to our community. Thank you.

THANK YOU FROM BARBARA COURTRIGHT

I would like to thank everyone who came to celebrate my birthday! I feel blessed for being 100 years old! Having a celebration in the Chapel with all my family and extended church family was a wonderful blessing for me. I love and cherish you all and feel blessed knowing all of you.

Love,
Barbara Courtright

NEW MEMBERS WELCOMED AND MADDOXX FUCETOLA BAPTIZED

BY: MARYANN SIMMONS

June has been quite an eventful month, one filled with many joys for FPCH. On June 25, we welcomed 6 new members to the church via reaffirmation of faith and one new baptism.

We are blessed to welcome into our church community **Karen Cramer, Dennis and Pattie Huff, Jose and Della Irby, and Jean Zetterburg.**

On this day we also witnessed a baptism of **Maddox Fucetola**, Jean's son, who we asked to share with us Christ's ministry, for we are all one in Christ.

Afterwards, all enjoyed cake and refreshments in the Narthex of the church to celebrate these two momentous occasions. Please join me in welcoming our new members and congratulating Maddox.



Sharing God's Bounty Faithful in All Things

Jesus said, *"Whoever can be trusted with very little can be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much"* (Luke 16:10). Jesus is saying that a faithful person will handle God's gifts faithfully regardless of whether they have few or many gifts entrusted to them. What we do with what we have shows our faithfulness.

A faithful person will do the small things well. One day a young man went to a bank to apply for a job. After his interview, he was leaving the bank and happened to notice some small trash on the floor. He picked it up and put it in the waste paper basket. Seconds later, he helped an elderly lady with the door. Unknown to the young man, the man who had interviewed him for the job was observing him. The young man was promptly summoned back and given the job. The employer's comment: "Anyone who pays attention to the small things as you just did needs to work here."

Unfortunately, we Christians may incorrectly think that small things aren't important to God. We may have the attitude that God won't be concerned with the small amount of money or other gifts that we have been given. In the Bible, God spoke mightily through the little that people had. God used the widow and her two mites to teach us a lesson about sacrificial giving. He used the small amount of flour and oil that the Widow of Zarephath had to demonstrate obedience. Jesus used the loaves and fish of a young boy to reveal how God can magnify a small gift. God commended their faith with small things, and he didn't overlook what faithful people did with small things.

Through God's Word, we understand that small things do count. Because we understand our need to be faithful with all things, we should ask ourselves how we are handling the seemingly small things in our lives. Are we handling small things well in our homes, jobs, and churches? Can non-Christians see a difference in us? With God's help, we can be faithful with **ALL** that we've been given. Through our faithfulness, God will be glorified.