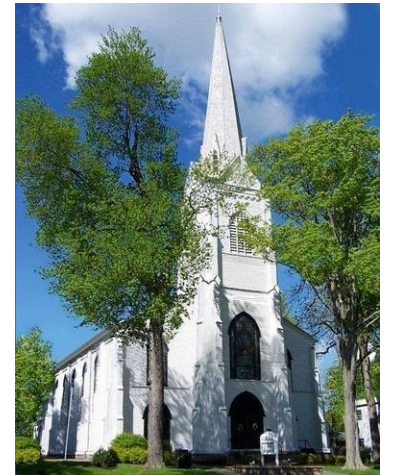


**First Presbyterian
Church
298 Main Street**

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
298 MAIN STREET
HACKETTSTOWN, NJ 07840
REV. ERIN HAYES-COOK
OFFICE: 908-852-4011
e-mail: fpchnj@gmail.com
Church website,
<http://www.fpchackettstown.org>
Editor: MaryAnn Simmons
maryann.simmons3@verizon.net**

**MARCH
2025**

*Light
from the*



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

2025 SESSION

Class of 2025	Class of 2026	Class of 2027
Donna Erickson	Bill Cors	Michele Cameron
Diane Hull	Geof Gohlich	Pete Miller
Ray Sookhoo	Sharon Heil	MaryAnn Simmons

Clerk of Session: Donna Erickson

2025 BOARD OF DEACONS

Class of 2025	Class of 2026	Class of 2027
Ellen Bergman	Jackie Hammel	Dennis Huff
Patricia Butts	Kathy Maier	Jose Irby
Carol Miller	Lorinda Ravo	Jean Zetterberg

Moderator: Ellen Bergman

2025 HEAVEN SENT NURSERY SCHOOL

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

OFFICE: 852-2006

Director: Jen Bujno

Pat Butts	- 2026	Pam Venturini	- 2027
Meghan DeCree	- HS Parent	Toni Fryer	- HS Parent
Sharon Heil - Session Rep			
Rev. Erin Hayes-Cook - Ex-Officio			

A NOTE FROM OUR EDITOR

Hello, FPCH

Welcome back to our third edition of *Light From the Steeple*. I hope you are encouraged by all of the good things that are happening at our church. As we prepare for the Lenten season, I encourage you to consider purchasing a devotional for the month of March, think about one of the books suggested in my “Books for your Reading Pleasure,” or joining the Lenten Bible study group which will begin on March 16th.

In February, we witnessed a lot of activity that is featured in our monthly highlights page. We showcased many of our choirs, ordained and installed three newly elected Deacons and one Elder, and re-elected two Elders to the session, sponsored the Souper Bowl of Caring, and a number of congregants attended the Lehigh Valley Phantoms hockey game.

Pastor Erin, in her monthly message, is encouraging us to “Meet God in the Midst of Extremes” through self-reflection about ways we can feel closer to God, our neighbors, and strangers “by letting the wind of the Spirit come in(to our lives).” Please enter the journey to rekindle your relationship with our Lord and Savior.

As always, thank you for your readership. If anyone has suggestions for future editions, please email me or chat with me after one of our Sunday services.

Until next month...

Yours in Christ,

MaryAnn Simmons

DATES TO REMEMBER - MARCH 2025

- 02: Confirmation Class - 9 - 9:50 AM in the Conference Room
- 02: Worship and communion - 10 AM; livestream through Facebook; Sunday School; Joyful Noise/Unity Chimes Rehearsal after worship
- 04: PLEFF Dinner - 6 PM at Pasta Grill by Enzo's, Rte 57, H'town
- 05: Yarn Girls - 1 PM in the Conference Room
- 05: Ash Wednesday - Worship and Communion - 7:30 PM
- 06: Music Rehearsals - FPCH Ringers at 6:30 PM and Senior Choir at 7:30 PM, both in the Music Room
- 07: World Day of Prayer
- 08: Men's Breakfast - 8:15 AM - location to be determined
- 09: Daylight Savings Time - Turn your clocks up one hour
- 09: Confirmation Class - 9 - 9:50 AM in the Conference Room
- 09: Worship - 10 AM; livestream through Facebook; Sunday School; Joyful Noise/Unity Chimes Rehearsal after worship
- 09: Second Sunday - 11:30-1:30 PM in the Church - All About Trees
- 09: Hackettstown St. Patrick's Day Parade - 3:30 PM; Church volunteers needed to serve hot chocolate and coffee to the public at the Chapel - 2:30 to 5 PM
- 11: Deacon's Meeting - 6:30 PM in the Conference Room
- 11: Stated Meeting of the Presbytery - 7-9 PM via Zoom
- 13: Music Rehearsals - FPCH Ringers at 6:30 PM and Senior Choir at 7:30 PM, both in the Music Room
- 15: Ladies' Breakfast - 9 AM - River Star Diner
- 16: Confirmation Class - 9 - 9:50 AM in the Conference Room
- 16: Worship - 10 AM; livestream through Facebook; Sunday School
- 16: Forms available to sponsor an Easter flower
- 17: Happy St. Patrick's Day
- 18: Session Meeting - 6:30 PM, in the Conference Room
- 20: First Day of Spring
- 20: Music Rehearsals - FPCH Ringers at 6:30 PM and Senior Choir at 7:30 PM, both in the Music Room
- 23: Confirmation Class - 9 - 9:50 AM in the Conference Room
- 23: Worship - 10 AM; livestream through Facebook; Sunday School; New Member Sunday; Joyful Noise/Unity Chimes Rehearsal after worship
- 25: Ladies Who Lunch: OMG Burgers and Brew 12 PM
- 27: Music Rehearsals - FPCH Ringers at 6:30 PM and Senior Choir at 7:30 PM, both in the Music Room
- 30: Confirmation Class - 9 - 9:50 AM in the Conference Room
- 30: Worship - 10 AM; livestream through Facebook; Sunday School; Joyful Noise/Unity Chimes Rehearsal after worship

A NOTE FROM OUR PASTOR



everything
[in] between

Meeting God in the midst of extremes

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Our current context in our world often feels like a tug of war between left and right, liberal and conservative, black and white. It gets tiring trying to live in between such extremes all the time and it also wears down our community. Thanks to our siblings from A Sanctified Art we will encounter familiar stories from the book of Luke like the Good Samaritan or Mary and Martha. This will give us an opportunity to find God in stranger and neighbor, intention and action, faith and works. How often do we live as if Jesus is working in the midst of these extremes? From their introduction, "And so, this season, we invite you to look beyond black and white binaries and easy answers. We encourage you to notice the dichotomies that define our lives, but also imagine where God might be meeting us beyond the categories we create."

To me that is a breath of fresh air. As this winter comes to a close, I look forward to opening the windows. I invite you to open the windows of your heart and mind. Open them and let the wind of the Spirit come in. Invite her. She will come and help us as we journey towards the cross and resurrection. Lent helps us dive into the 40 days and 40 nights before Easter. It is a reminder that Jesus stood between life and death to set us free.

I invite you over the next weeks to engage our devotional cards, devotional booklets, or join a Bible Study. There are many ways for you to discover God's invitation for us today. I look forward to journeying with you.

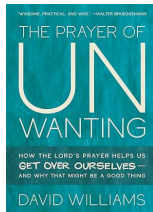
Pastor Erin

BOOKS FOR YOUR READING PLEASURE

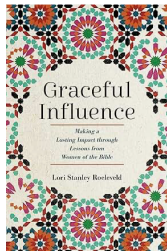
BY: MARYANN SIMMONS

In honor of the Lenten season, I am recommending a number of religious titles, which can guide us to be closer to God through our daily prayers.

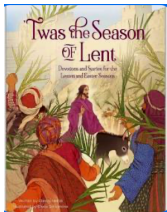
In this month's *The Presbyterian Outlook*, Rev. Dr. Sam Codrington provides a book review of *The Prayer or Unwanting: How the Lord's Prayer helps us get over ourselves and Why that Might be a Good Thing*. Author David Williams tells how he struggles with prayer and the common desire to look for magic prayers to give us what we want. He goes on to explain in his book how The Lord's Prayer is not a means to fulfill our desires, but as a prayer that "changes the heart of our wanting." Rev Codrington believes we are living in a consumer culture which causes us to desire products that we don't really need. He suggests that all people are searching for a simple return to the heart of prayer.



Graceful Influence: Making a Lasting Impact through Lessons from Women of the Bible by Lori Stanley Roeleveld: Ever wonder if you're making a difference in your world? The stories of biblical women answer, Yes, you do make a difference! Roeleveld offers the chance to realize the power of your influence by examining the lives of pairs of women from the Bible. As you read, you will discover how their contrasting choices allowed them to influence future generations. And whether their decisions were wise or unwise, God was able to use their stories to make Himself known. The relevance of their struggles will shed light on the challenges modern women face in making similar choices.



Author Glenys Nellist wrote *'Twas the Season of Lent* in poetry and prose format and Elena Selivonova illustrated this lovely 40 day devotional and storybook that explores the life, words, and works of Jesus and encourages families to draw closer to God during the Lenten Season. Nellist focuses on Jesus's mission to the least, the lost, and the lonely, with each story and accompanying prayer prompt encouraging children to try to be more like Jesus and to do what God calls them to.



THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THE SOUPER BOWL OF CARING FPCH DONATES \$311 AND 40 LBS OF FOOD

Although church was cancelled on Super Bowl Sunday due to the inclement weather, we were still able to sponsor the Souper Bowl of Caring the following week to support our local pantry with canned and boxed goods. Because the game is now over, and we know that the Philadelphia Eagles have won (Yay for Larry Cook and all you Eagles fans), we were unable to show our support for a particular team, but we truly appreciate all that you have done to make this program a huge success.



Thank you to all who provided supplies for our food insecure through this activity. All told, we collected approximately 40 pounds of food and \$311.00 that will provide sustenance to our community members who are unable to make it to the grocery store to feed their families. Your generous donations will certainly make a difference to all who depend upon this mission set forth by our FPCH Deacon Board.

Congratulations to the Eagles and to all you Eagles fans. And once again, thank you for your generous monetary and food donations. The Deacons express their sincere gratitude for your yearly support.



EASTER FLOWERS

Sunday, April 20, 2025 marks the anniversary of Jesus' Resurrection! In celebration the Deacons are asking you to help fill the sanctuary with the colors of spring by sponsoring a silk Easter flower.

Sponsorships are \$5.00 per plant and may be *In Thanksgiving* for anyone dear to you or *In Memory* of friends or family that have enriched your life.

Please make checks payable to *The Deacons* and mail to First Presbyterian Church, c/o The Deacons, 298 Main St, Hackettstown, NJ 07840 or you may drop off your forms and payment in the church mailbox.

All forms and payment must be received no later than Sunday, April 6th.

Please return the bottom portion with your payment, if you need additional space you may use the back of this form or submit on an additional piece of paper, thank you!

Sponsor:

In Memory of:

In Thanksgiving for:

Plants Sponsored:

Amount Enclosed:

Have questions? Need more Information?
Please contact: Pat Butts – 908 391-2006
or Carol Miller – 908 763-2777

NEWS FROM THE DEACONS

By Ellen Bergman

The Deacon Board met on February 11 to discuss their monthly agenda. They elected and appointed new officers for 2025.

In Little Pantry news, the Deacons will purchase one metal locking cabinet for the storage room in the Chapel once repairs are completed. We will continue to keep the pantry open 24 hours a day; however, we are establishing a schedule for restocking the shelves.

We have made a number of deliveries of winter accessories to Hatchery Hill, Willow Grove, and Great Meadows schools. We will offer one more week of collecting items the first week in March.

We are preparing for our clothing drive on May 3rd. In this newsletter you can find a list of items that are accepted and not accepted. You may drop off items at the church shed, or if you would like to drop off in person, collections will be held on April 29th from 5:30-7 PM and on May 3rd prior to the truck's arrival at 9 AM.

We are hoping to take part in this year's Town-wide Garage Sale in April. Proceeds will go to the general church fund. Since the town has not yet set a date, listen during announcements for more information.

Please note that we will once again offer an opportunity to sponsor Easter Flowers. This will take place between March 16 and April 6.

Finally, the Deacons have approved the purchase of five additional choir stoles for this growing program.

As always, thank you for your continued support of our missions. If you have any questions or suggestions, please reach out to a Deacon.

JANUARY 2025 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.

	JANUARY	Year to Date
Income	\$23,663.07	\$23,663.07
Expenses Paid	\$22,749.93	\$22,749.93
Net Operating Income / (Deficit)	\$ 913.14	\$ 913.14
Amount of Schwab/Edward Jones funds used to pay operating expenses	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Amount Needed from Endowment	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Total amount of Endowment, Schwab & Edward Jones funds used to pay Operating expenses in 2024	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00

Financial Comments / Observations:

- 2025 Per Capita Giving through January

\$8,628

100%

\$6,471

75%

\$4,314

50%

\$2,157

25%

\$0

0%

\$1,779

19.9%
- 1. The five largest operating expenses in January were:
 - 1.) \$7,617.62 – Pastoral expenses (payroll, Board of Pensions, etc.).
 - 2.) \$4,785.00 – Snow removal and salting (3 buildings).
 - 3.) \$4,329.64 – Staff payroll & payroll processing expenses.
 - 4.) \$3,332.95 – Gas (3 buildings).
 - 5.) \$871.91 – Per Capita.
 - 2. The operating net income / (deficits) were \$913.14 in January and \$913.14 Year To Date.
 - The actual January operating expenses were \$2,416.60 above the average monthly budgeted expenses.
 - The actual January operating incomes were \$6,996.40 above the average monthly budgeted incomes.
 - The Year-To-Date operating expenses were \$2,416.60 above the average YTD budgeted amounts.
 - The Year-To-Date operating incomes were \$6,996.40 above the average YTD budgeted amount.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE - JANUARY 2025 FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

JANUARY 2025 FINANCIAL \$NAPSHOT

CONTINUED FROM JANUARY 2025 FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

- 3. In January, the value of the MassMutual Investment accounts increased \$7,668.29 to \$354,100.05.
- 4. The total endowment fund at the end of January was \$369,161.83. The total endowment fund was up \$7,719.33 since the beginning of January.
- 5. The January Second Saturday Free Community Dinner was not held. The total cost to the church for all community dinners since September 2021 is \$693.02.
- 6. The Men’s breakfast was held at River Star Diner.

The 2025 Per Capita is \$43.50 for each of the 205 members of our Church. (The number is the membership of FPCH on December 31, 2023.) The total amount due in 2025 is \$8,917.50 or \$743.13 monthly. In January, \$1,778.81 was received for Per Capita bringing the total received in 2025 to \$1,778.81 or 19.9% of the amount due. A payment of \$743.13 was sent to the Presbytery of the Highlands of NJ in January bringing the total sent in 2025 to \$743.13 or 8.3% of the total amount due.

The 2025 Per Capita amount is \$43.50 for each member of the congregation.

Building On Generosity (BOG) Capital Campaign

- Donations received during January, \$155.00.
- Total donations received from church members, non-members and anonymous from September 2019 (the BOG Kickoff dinner) through the last day of January 2025, \$649,888.02.
- Expenses paid using the BOG funds in January, \$3,882.00. The payment was to everOn for the initial upgrade and inspection of the fire alarm system.
- The total available BOG funds are \$12,555.26. The breakdown is \$7,305.26 for the next BOG project with an additional \$2,500.00 designated for parking lot pavement and \$2,750.00 designated for the Chapel range hood replacement.
- Donations breakdown by source:
 - 5.3% - \$34,389.76 from nonmembers
 - 86.0% - \$559,207.05 from members
 - 8.7% - \$56,291.21 from anonymous & dinners
 - 100.0% - \$649,888.02 Total

Contact Al Ravo if you have any questions or would like to discuss the Church’s operating finances, the Endowment Funds, Per Capita or the Building On Generosity Capital Campaign.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM FEBRUARY

During February, we experienced great music during worship, ordained and installed our newest members of the Deacon Board and the Session, and took a trip to see the Lehigh Valley Phantoms. Below you can enjoy snapshots from those events.



CLOTHING DRIVE NEWS

Our next clothing drive will take place on May 3rd. We work with A&E Clothing Corp and this is the list of **items they accept** at all Clothing Collection Fundraisers:

- Clothing for men, women and children
- Shoes
- Clothing accessories: belts, hats, scarves, handbags, gloves etc
- Small toys (2 ft. or less)
- Stuffed animals, towels, sheets & pillowcases
- Bikes & Strollers

The prices are as follows:

They pay \$ 0.20 / lb. for all items accepted. PLEASE KEEP SHOES IN SEPARATE BAGS.

Bikes are \$ 4.00 / pc.

Items they don't accept:

- Quilts, comforters, pillows & blankets.
- Sport equipment (bikes are OK).
- No board games, books, puzzles, pots, CAR SEATS.
- No electrical devices or glass.
- No large toys, highchairs or baby cribs or scooters.
- VCR tapes, furniture and outdoor play sets.
- Bric and brac (picture frames, school supplies, phone cases, candles, cosmetics, greeting cards, plastic cups, food containers, baking accessories).
- Home and holiday decorations / pet accessories.

Please call or email any questions you may have:

clothingcollection@aeclothing.net

Thank you,

A&E Clothing Corp.

732-802-8100

FEBRUARY GREETERS

March 2: Jean Zetterberg and Maddox Fucetola

March 9: Kathy Maier and Bev Saunders

March 16: Pattie and Dennis Huff

March 23: The Roguso Family

March 30: Ellen and Bruce Bergman



SAVE THE DATES

April and May are just a month or two away, but we would like to provide you with some important dates for activities that will take place during those months.

Sometime in April, we will be participating in the Hackettstown Town-wide Garage Sale. Information will be provided once the town established. Listen for announcements during Sunday worship.

April 13 - One Great Hour of Sharing special collection. Please see next month's newsletter for information about this special offering.

May 3 - Our clothing drive will take place.

As always, thank you for any support of these activities. Any questions, see a Deacon or an Elder or Pastor Erin for more information.

MUSIC NOTES

Music for the month of March will be:

March 2: Wings of Faith-Senior Choir

March 5: (Ash Wednesday) Deborah Gulick-Shepherd, soloist

March 9: Come, O Almighty King-FPCH Ringers
Have Thine Own Way, Lord-Michelle Litwin,
clarinet soloist

March 16: No Rose Bloomed-Senior Choir with Karen Cramer,
flute

March 23: On Wings of Love and Prayer-Unity Chime Choir

March 30: Da n'ase-Little Lights Sunday School Choir
When I Survey the Wondrous Cross-Senior Choir



Sharing God's Bounty

What Have I Done for Him?

Lent is a season in the church year during which we particularly focus on the sacrifice Jesus made for us to pay the debt we owed for our sin. We know there is no way we can pay the debt ourselves. Only the sinless Son of God could do that. We have access to heaven only by grace through faith in Christ Jesus.

While we cannot repay Jesus for what he has done for us, his love does require a response. Paul, speaking of our ministry of reconciliation, wrote, *"For Christ's love compels us . . ."* (2 Corinthians 5:14). We remain on earth to carry out the tasks which Christ left for us to do: to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, care for the sick, and visit the prisoner, (Matthew 25:31-46). James admonished us that *" . . . faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead"* (James 2:17). We provide the funds that support our pastors, teachers, and missionaries. Again, we can quote Paul writing in 1 Corinthians 9:11-12. *"If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you? If others have this right of support from you, shouldn't we have it all the more?"* Certainly each of us is addressed by the Great Commission: *"Go and make disciples of all nations . . ."* (Matthew 28:19). The following words from Frances Ridley Havergal are a poignant reminder that Christ's love and sacrifice for us require a response:

*Thy life was given for me, Thy Blood, O Lord, was shed
That I might ransomed be, and quickened from the dead.
Thy life was given for me, What have I given for Thee?
And Thou hast brought to me Down from Thy home above
Salvation full and free, Thy pardon and Thy love.
Great gifts Thou broughtest me, What have I brought to Thee?*

We are saved by grace through faith for works. Let us pray for the desire to be good stewards of the gifts of salvation, health and wealth, and time and opportunity which God has given us that we might have a part in the furthering of God's kingdom.

We need not give up the pleasures and luxuries of this life. God does not call us to be ascetics, but he does call us to a right sense of proportion in administering our substance.

*The question is: "If I have this for myself, then what should I do for God?"
This is the question into which the whole matter of stewardship resolves itself.*

GET READY FOR LENTEN BIBLE STUDY

Lent begins on March 3rd and Ash Wednesday is on March 5th. Wednesday, March 12th marks the start of our Lenten Bible study at 6:30 PM in the Conference Room and continue through Wednesday, April 16th.

Those who join us for this Lenten study will be reading the book *The Eternal Current: How a Practice-Based Faith Can Save Us from Drowning* by Aaron Niequist. Niequist reflects upon a time when he was feeling spiritually empty and realized that God must have a wider vision for worship and community. He believes Christians do not need to enact faith in a traditional way. They can enact faith through a "practice-based faith."



According to an Amazon review, "This book is about loving one's faith tradition and, at the same time, following the call to something deeper and richer. By adopting some new spiritual practices, it is possible to learn to swim again with a renewed sense of vigor and divine purpose."

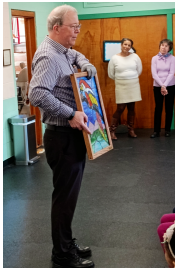
Won't you consider joining this Lenten Bible study beginning March 12th? Copies of each chapter are available in the church office. If interested, please sign up at the church or email the office for more information. Ponder learning about the spiritual faith that Niequist describes in his book and we hope you will be a part of this Lenten journey.

SECOND SUNDAY RECAP

Everyone involved enjoyed our February Second Sunday. It had to be postponed because of some poor winter weather, but that didn't dampen the fun we had later in the month. Mr. Geof Gohlich showed us all how he makes stained glass pieces of art, and then we made colorful works of our own. Thanks, Mr. Gohlich, for sharing your special talent with us!



In March, we'll be welcoming Mr. Rob Zetterberg, Jean's brother (and Maddox's uncle) of Advanced Tree Care. Mr. Zetterberg, an arborist who has been caring for trees for 25 years, will be teaching us all about the trees that surround us and how he cares for them, and if they have to be cut down, he will teach us about the tools and equipment that he uses. All participants will then be making their own art projects using "tree cookies" (not the edible kind of cookies!).



Be sure to sign up on the sheet in front of the church.



SUNDAY SCHOOL SPECIAL EVENTS

We all make sure to teach our kids about being polite and kind to those people they encounter throughout their day: at school, at a store, at a sports or music practice. However, sometimes we forget to extend that same courtesy and kindness to those in our family. This past week, we asked our Sunday School kids to think of ways that they can show kindness at home. Their charming and insightful answers are written on “Kindness Kites” on the wall by the ramp entrance. Be sure to check them out. You’d be surprised to learn what they have to say.

PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE STILL SEEKING ANOTHER MEMBER

Do you have the gift of public writing? Of public speaking? Of letting people know the news about important events and activities? If you do, then the Public Relations Committee needs your talents.

Help us to creatively reach beyond our church walls and reach out to the community around us about the great things that are happening at First Presbyterian Church of Hackettstown. For more information, please contact Michele Cameron at 908-813-0293 or by



email at ML.Cameron@comcast.net

In truth, every congregational member of FPCH is on the Public Relations team and we always appreciate when you spread the word of Sunday services and events. FPCH has a lot to offer, so don't forget to share!

TEACH YOUR CHILDREN HOW TO PRAY

The Three Pillars of Lent: Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving

Lent takes place over 40 days. This practice invites families to devote 40 complete days of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving by focusing on a different activity each day (excluding Sundays).

Designed for ages 6+.

Varied Materials.

Time Investment: 10 minutes or less per day.

HOW TO: PRAYER

1. At the beginning of Lent, make a list of 40 words that your family will use to anchor your prayer practice.
2. At the start of each day, review the day's word and think about the word throughout the day.
3. At the end of the day, gather for prayer time as a family, review the word, and discuss it in one of these ways:
 - Draw a picture that represents the word
 - Share a photo you took of something that represents the word
 - Share what the word means to you or how it affected you throughout the day
 - Share how the word might be connected to the Lenten journey.
4. Close by thanking God for the word and for looking forward to the next day's challenge.

(Note: if you miss a day, just pick up where you left off)

HOW TO: FASTING (FROM TECHNOLOGY)

1. Decide together as a family how long the screen fast will last and for how long. The "buy-in from the whole family is the most important and most challenging part of implementing this practice. Consider these questions for discussion:

Why do we want to do a technology fast as a family? How will it help us, spiritually?

- Should we try a fast for a short period of time every day or for a long time period of time once per week?
- Which activities would be excluded from the fast? (Answering phone calls in case of an emergency, for example) What will we do if someone breaks the fast? How should we gently remind each other?
- What will we do when the fast is over? How do we celebrate?

2. At the start of the technology fast, gather together and have a short conversation, reminding everyone of the mutually set parameters from step one. Start the fast with a short prayer: *God, thank you for guiding our family as we made this decision to focus on you and one another by laying our technology aside for awhile. Please help us on this journey to encourage one another and learn new things. We ask for your Spirit's help in this. Amen.*

3. End the fast with a celebration together, such as a family outing or meal.

HOW TO: ALMSGIVING:

1. Decide upon providing some food to your local Little Pantry rather than giving money. Decorate a large box and each day, beginning on Ash Wednesday, put a non-perishable item into the box. After the 40 days, deliver the box to the church so the congregation can see what you have done.

"This practice is excerpted from the book **Faithful Families: Simple Practices for Daily Family Life** by Traci Smith, published by Chalice Press, 2017, All rights Reserved. Used by Permission.

Hey, Kids.

Have some spring coloring fun



THANK YOU NOTES FROM OUR MEMBERS

A NOTE FROM THE FAMILY OF ROSE GREEN

We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to all members of the First Presbyterian Church of Hackettstown congregation. We are touched by the support and care extended by everyone during the time of our dear one's passing.

Your presence, comforting words, and acts of kindness have helped our family through this challenging time and profoundly demonstrated the spirit of communal fellowship inherent in our church.

Please accept this as our humble attempt to express our profound appreciation to each of you. We will forever cherish the love and support we have received.

Thank you once again, and may God bless you all abundantly.
Sincerely,

The Family of Rose Green

A NOTE FROM JAN AND DIANE

Diane and I want to thank all of you for your support, thoughts, and prayers for the passing of my sister, Pamela Sampson.

We truly appreciate the many expressions of love, concern and kindness from all of you.

It has been a great comfort to our family and us.
Thank you!

Jan Courtright and Diane Hull

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- 2: Myles DeCaro
- 3: Donna Erickson
- 5: Whitney Dartnell
- 6: Jason O'Brien
Peggy Russack
- 7: Maddox Fucetola
- 10: Chris Kshatri
John Trimmer
- 14: Mike McDonagh
Al Aquino
- 16: Pam Venturini
- 18: Samantha Gardner
- 19: Richard Clegg
- 20: Liz Risko
- 22: MaryAnn Simmons
- 23: Alisa Dartnell
Mark Slachetka
- 24: Sean Gilmore
- 25: Morgan Dartnell
- 27: Heather Stone
- 29: Alice Phoebus
- 31: Tom Dartnell



CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL!

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

- 9: Bob & Jackie Hammel
- 15: Chris & Sara Kshatri

PRAYER LIST

Please keep the following
in your prayers:

Eugenie Chetangie
Churches throughout
the U.S.

Jan Courtright and her
family

Displaced families due
to California wildfires
FPCH and Friends of
FPCH

Dan Gardner

Terry Gretchen

Joan Grover

Barbara Hall

Jeanette Hile

Pattie and Dennis Huff

Diane Hull

Maikuu congregation,
Kibwezi Kenya

Members of the Armed Forces

Barbara Pace, niece of the
Prestopines

Alice Phoebus

Mark and Winnie Slachetka

Carol Spitzer

Muriel Stellingwerf

The food insecure

The homeless

Those struggling with

addictions and mental health

Those recovering from surgery

Richard Westby

Barbara Yankiv

