

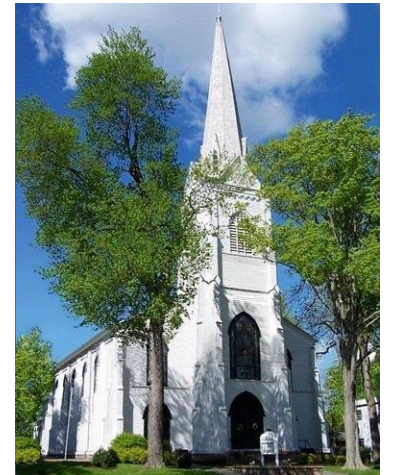
**First Presbyterian
Church
298 Main Street**

**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**

**SEPTEMBER
2024**



*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

2024 SESSION

Class of 2024	Class of 2025	Class of 2026
Bruce Bergman	Donna Erickson	Bill Cors
Michele Cameron	Diane Hull	Geof Gohlich
MaryAnn Simmons	Ray Sookhoo	Sharon Heil

Clerk of Session: Donna Erickson

2024 BOARD OF DEACONS

Class of 2024	Class of 2025	Class of 2026
Pat Gohlich	Ellen Bergman	Jackie Hammel
Janette Hendershot	Patricia Butts	Kathy Maier
Justin Simmons	Carol Miller	Lorinda Ravo

Moderator: Ellen Bergman

2024 HEAVEN SENT NURSERY SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES

OFFICE: 852-2006

Director: Jen Bujno

Pam Venturini	- 2025	Pat Butts	- 2026
Meghan DeCree	- HS Parent	Toni Fryer	- HS Parent
Sharon Heil - Session Rep			
Rev. Erin Hayes-Cook - Ex-Officio			

A NOTE FROM OUR EDITOR

Welcome to Fall, FPCH!

The summer has been busy with many activities. Our children have been engaged in their Second Sunday activities, they have been learning their ten commandments through the Children's sermon time, and they are getting ready for the start of Sunday School on September 8th. Pastor Erin went away on vacation with her family and then spent a week in Colorado at a workshop to learn new ways to engage the congregation. Our Christian Education Committee has spent numerous meetings to discuss the ever growing children's program we have witnessed over the past few years and has established a curriculum for all students in all age groups, including the Confirmation class which will return to class sessions before worship from 9-9:50 AM each Sunday. We welcome new teachers to our programs - Gwenn Bartku and Emily Tischler will work with our PreK-1st graders, John Mark Wojcicki will be teaching our students in grades 2-5, and Jan Courtright will take on the helm with our Confirmation students in grades 6-8. Please see the article which introduces our teachers, both new and returning.

Pastor Erin met with the Generosity Team who have been discussing ways to engage the congregation with opportunities to reveal their stories about the opportunities FPCH provides. More information will follow once they develop strategies for implementation of their plans.

Our Deacons and Elders took a short respite in July and returned to their meetings in August. Please see News from the Deacons to learn about their plans for the Fall season.

This month, I have included a news feature from Beverly Saunders about her work in our garden in front of the church. I have also provided an excerpt from Traci Smith's book ***Faithful Families*** which provides ideas of how to teach your children to pray.

Kids, be sure to look at the Kids' Challenge I provided for you regarding all of the special occasions that take place this month.

Finally, we sadly have lost two members of our congregation, Ivy Sookhoo and Joan Beddow. They will be sorely missed. When you see their families, please extend your condolences.

As always, thanks for your readership and continued support. Until next month...

Yours in Christ,
MaryAnn Simmons

DATES TO REMEMBER - SEPTEMBER 2024

- 01: Worship and communion - 10 AM; livestream through Facebook
- 02: Labor Day - Church office closed
- 03: Blood Drive - 2:30-8:30 PM at the Chapel
- 03: PLEFF Dinner - 6 PM at Black Stones, Rte 46, Independence, NJ
- 04: Yarn Girls - 1 PM - Conference Room
- 05: Music Rehearsals - FPCH Ringers at 6:30 PM and Senior Choir at 7:30 PM, both in the Music Room
- 08: Confirmation Class - 9 - 9:50 AM in the Conference Room
- 08: Worship - 10 AM; livestream through Facebook; Blessing of the Backpacks; Bible Distribution to students; Sunday School begins
- 08: Second Sunday - 11:30-1:30 PM at the Chapel
- 08: National Grandparents' Day
- 10: Deacon's Meeting - 6:30 PM in the Conference Room
- 10: Stated (hybrid) meeting of the Presbytery - 10 AM via Zoom and Camp Johnsonburg
- 12: Music Rehearsals - FPCH Ringers at 6:30 PM and Senior Choir at 7:30 PM, both in the Music Room
- 14: Men's Breakfast - 8 AM - at the Chapel
- 14: Community Dinner - 5:30-7 PM, at the Chapel - Kielbasa dinner
- 15: Confirmation Class - 9 - 9:50 AM in the Conference Room
- 15: Worship - 10 AM; livestream through Facebook; Sunday School; Joyful Noise/Unity Chimes Rehearsal after worship; National Back to Church Sunday
- 17: Session Meeting - 6:30 PM, in the Conference Room
- 19: Music Rehearsals - FPCH Ringers at 6:30 PM and Senior Choir at 7:30 PM, both in the Music Room
- 21: Ladies' Breakfast - 9 AM - River Star Diner
- 22: Confirmation Class - 9 - 9:50 AM in the Conference Room
- 22: Worship - 10 AM; livestream through Facebook; Sunday School; Joyful Noise/Unity Chimes Rehearsal after worship
- 24: Ladies Who Lunch - 12 PM at Taphouse Grille, Rte 57, Hackettstown
- 26: National Day of Praise and Worship
- 26: Music Rehearsals - FPCH Ringers at 6:30 PM and Senior Choir at 7:30 PM, both in the Music Room
- 29: Confirmation Class - 9 - 9:50 AM in the Conference Room
- 29: Worship - 10 AM; livestream through Facebook; Sunday School; Joyful Noise/Unity Chimes Rehearsal after worship

A NOTE FROM OUR PASTOR

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

What is God's kin-dom like?

Happy Fall season to everyone! I pray that your Summer was filled with rest and rejuvenation. Thank you to all of you who helped keep up with our ministries over the summer from music to the many projects on our building, planning our children and youth programming, Community dinners, the food pantry, administration, and more! What a joy it is to see the heart of the people who help serve!

I am excited to share that during worship we will explore the question: "What is God's kin-dom like?" Throughout the New Testament we hear Jesus talk about what it is like to see, live, and respond to God's reign on earth. This Fall we will hear stories about what it means to live as the images that Jesus shares and see that they are real and true around us. To that end, we as a congregation must ask ourselves the following questions: "Can we identify how God is at work?" "How can we share our faith with others?" and "How is God asking us to share our gifts now?"

One of the ways that we will look into this is by hearing from our newly created Generosity Team. We hope that we can help celebrate and share the amazing ministry that is happening all around us. I am excited to see what the month of September will bring!

In Christ,

Pastor Erin

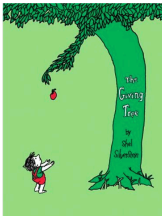


BOOKS FOR YOUR READING PLEASURE

BY: MARYANN SIMMONS

This month, I am providing you with books about life's lessons. The first two are appropriate for people of ALL AGES. The second is a book I have taught to my high school students.

"Once there was a tree...and she loved a little boy." (*The Giving Tree*)

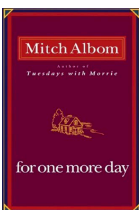
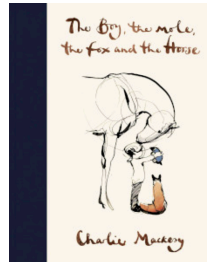


So begins a story of unforgettable perception, beautifully written and illustrated by **Shel Silverstein**.

Every day the boy would come to the tree to eat her apples, swing from her branches, or slide down her trunk...and the tree was happy. As the boy grew older he began to want more from the tree, and the tree gave and gave and gave.

Shel Silverstein has created a moving parable for readers of all ages that offers an interpretation of the gift of giving and a serene acceptance of another's capacity to love in return.

The Boy, the Mole, the Fox, and the Horse by **Charlie Mackey** is a book Rev. Jeannette Hile recommended to me a few years ago. It is a book about friendship and compassion and kindness, about self-discovery and acceptance, about resilience and hope. The four main characters travel an ever-changing landscape similar to our own and discover how to endure all types of obstacles and question what it is like to live in our world. This is truly a book of the human spirit appropriate for kids of all ages.



Published in 2006, *For One More Day* is the story of a mother and son, and a relationship that covers a lifetime and beyond. What would you do if you could spend one more day with a lost loved one? Author **Mitch Albom** explores this question in his best selling novel about Chick Benetto. I have taught this book to my high school students in the past and they come away with a true understanding of the importance of relationships within family.

Try these books. You will appreciate all that you have learned in life.

NOTE: the descriptions of each book come from Goodreads.com



FREEZER NEEDED FOR CHAPEL

As you know, each month our church community uses the Chapel to host the men's breakfast, the community dinners, and various other dinners throughout the year for fundraising opportunities.

Recently, the freezer in the Chapel broke. If anyone in the congregation has a used freezer you are willing to donate, please see the dinner committee or speak with Donna or Carl Erickson.

KIDS' CHALLENGE IN SEPTEMBER

BY: MARYANN SIMMONS

Hey, Kids. September is a month which hosts many special days of celebration and national observances. I challenge you to perform a special act of kindness on each of those days. As you do each, report back to your Sunday School teachers to inform them of your actions. You can let me know what you did as well.

9/6: National Food Bank Day - ask your parents to allow you to bring a nonperishable item or two to our little pantry to stock the shelves. Feel free to drop it off directly at the pantry in front of the Chapel on Main Street.

9/8: Grandparents' Day - make a card and spend the day with your Grandparents to make their day special.

9/11: Patriot Day/Remembrance Day - say a special prayer for someone who is in the armed forces or who you may know who passed away or was injured during the 9/11 Incident.

9/20: National Care for Kids Day - find a friend you care about and tell them how much they mean to you. Give them a smile and maybe even spend some time with them.

9/30: National Love People Day - find someone you care about - a friend, a neighbor, a teacher, a classmate, a family member - and tell them how much you love them. Give them a kind gesture and maybe even give them a card honoring them just for being who they are.

I sincerely hope you rise to the challenge and have fun with these activities. Happy September, everyone!

JULY & AUGUST HIGHLIGHTS

Here are some of the highlights of our summer worship services. Other highlights from our Second Sunday can be found in another section of the newsletter. Enjoy these memories.



NEWS FROM THE DEACONS

BY: JUSTIN SIMMONS

The Deacons continue to work diligently to maintain their missions. At their August meeting, they discussed items regarding school donations, community events, and future activities planned for the Fall.

The Deacons have received a **request from the local schools for water bottles**. Listen to the announcements before worship for more information about this ministry.

Thank you to all who donated diapers and wipes for **The Free Market** which will take place on **September 21**. Drop-off date is September 20th, noon-6 PM, for any members who wish to donate unneeded or no longer wanted items for this ministry. See the related news article about what we are accepting.

The new date for our **Clothing Drive is October 5th**. If you plan to drop off clothes on that day, please do so between 8-9 AM. An additional drop off date will be October 1st, between 6-7:30 PM.

To upgrade the kitchen in the Chapel, the Deacons have purchased and installed a **commercial-grade mixer**. Our cooks have met and experimented with operating the mixer as preparation for the next community dinner. Mama's donated \$100 toward the purchase of the mixer. We extended a warm thank you to the Schiano family for their generous gift for this utensil.

In August, the Deacons made **ornaments** with a picture of the church and the stained glass cross. A few pieces of the stained glass from the broken window will be included along with a note on the history of the window. Lorinda posted an article and a picture of the ornament on the church's website.

As requested by Carol Miller, some of the money given in memory of Edna Ort has been moved to the Yarn Girls.

Lastly, a scout has offered to **build a pergola for the prayer garden** as part of his **Eagle Scout Project**. We are working out the details. Once they are available, the scout will present his plan to the session for final approval.

Thank you for your continued support of our endeavors. If you have any questions or suggestions, be sure to reach out to a Deacon.

AUGUST 2024 FINANCIAL \$NAPSHOT

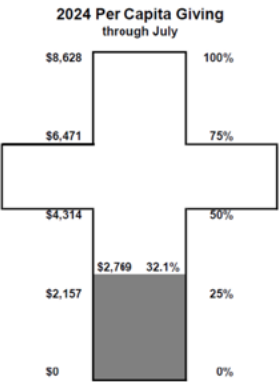
BY: AL RAVO

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

	JULY	Year to Date
Income	\$14,221.41	\$122,227.06
Expenses Paid	\$20,720.95	\$132,012.39
Net Operating Income / (Deficit)	(\$6,499.54)	(\$ 9,785.33)
Amount of Schwab/Edward Jones funds used to pay operating expenses	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Amount Needed from Endowment	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 10,000.00

Financial Comments / Observations:

1. In July, \$15,000.00 was received from the Charles Schwab Organ Fund cash account and deposited in the Fulton Designated Donations account to be used to pay operating expenses when needed.



2. The five largest operating expenses in July were:

• 1.) \$7,592.09 – Pastoral expenses (payroll, Board of Pensions, etc.).

• 2.) \$5,767.21 – Insurance, liability & umbrella.

• 3.) \$4,281.62 – Staff payroll & payroll processing expenses.

• 4.) \$845.00 – Grounds care.

• 5.) \$498.91 – Electric expenses (3 buildings).

3. The operating net income / (deficits) were (\$6,499.54) in July and (\$9,785.33) Year To Date.

• The actual July operating expenses were \$1,387.62 above the average monthly budgeted expenses.

- The actual July operating incomes were \$2,611.92 below the average monthly budgeted income.
- The Year-To-Date operating expenses were \$3,320.94 below the average YTD budgeted amounts.
- The Year-To-Date operating incomes were \$4,393.73 above the average YTD budgeted amount.

CONTINUED - SEE AUGUST 2024 FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

AUGUST 2024 FINANCIAL \$NAPSHOT

CONTINUED FROM APRIL 2024 FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

4. In July, the value of the MassMutual Investment accounts increased \$5,201.13 to \$352,913.81.

5. The total endowment fund at the end of July was \$358,053.69. The total endowment fund was up \$913.99 since the beginning of July and up \$18,388.06 since January 1, 2024.

6. The July community dinner expenses were \$0.00. The donations collected at the dinner were \$50.00. The total cost to the church for all community dinners since September 2021 is \$580.48.

7. The Men's breakfast expenses for July were \$0.00. The donations collected at the breakfast were \$0.00 because the breakfast is not held in July and August.

The 2024 Per Capita is \$42.50 for each of the 203 members of our Church. (The number is the membership of FPCH on December 31, 2022.) The total amount due in 2024 is \$8,627.50 or \$718.96 monthly. In July, \$0.00 was received for Per Capita leaving the total received in 2024 at \$2,769.28 or 32.1% of the amount due. No Per Capita payment was sent to the Presbytery of the Highlands of NJ in July leaving the total sent in 2024 at

BUILDING ON GENEROSITY (BOG) CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

- Donations received during July, \$360.00.
- Total donations received from church members, non-members and anonymous from September 2019 (the BOG Kickoff dinner) through the last day of July 2024, \$646,905.02.
- Expenses paid using the BOG funds in July, \$0.00.
- Total BOG funds are \$13,304.26. The breakdown is \$8,454.26 for the next BOG project with an additional \$2,500.00 designated for parking lot pavement and \$2,350.00 designated for the Chapel range hood replacement.
- Donations breakdown by source:
 - 5.3% - \$34,079.76 from nonmembers
 - 86.1% - \$556,942.05 from members
 - 8.6% - \$55,883.21 from anonymous & dinners
 - 100.0% - \$646,905.02 Total

Please contact Al Ravo for questions or to discuss the Church's operating finances, the Endowment Funds, Per Capita or the Building On Generosity Capital Campaign.

GOD'S LOVE ENDURES FOREVER

This month, we are saddened to report the passing of **Ivy Sookhoo** and **Joan Beddow** in July. Please express your condolences to the family members when you see them in church.

Ivy Sookhoo, age 94, died on Tuesday July 16, 2024. She was born on May 23, 1930 in Clonbrook, Guyana. She is the daughter of the late David and Hanna Samaroo. She was predeceased by her husband Cecil Sookhoo on Sept. 17, 2021 and her son Charles Sookhoo.

She is survived by her children: Norman & Nan Sookhoo, Richard & Pauline Sookhoo, Annie & Leonard Bridgmohan, Eunice & Lloyd Satnarine, Rayman & Laleeta Sookhom and daughter-in-law Leila Sookhoo. Ivy is also survived by nine grandchildren and nine great grandchildren.

The Funeral Service to celebrate her life was held 10:30 am on Saturday, July 20, 2024 at First Presbyterian Church of Hackettstown, 298 Main Street, Hackettstown, N.J. 07840. Cremation was held privately. Funeral arrangements were entrusted to Cochran Funeral Home, 905 High Street, Hackettstown NJ 07840.

Joan Beddow passed away on Tuesday July 16, 2024 in West Milford, New Jersey at the age of 86.

Joan was employed at Beneficial Management Corporation, where she began her career there as a Key punch Operator, worked diligently through the ranks and retired as an Assistant Vice President.

As a member of the FPCH, she served as a Deacon there for a time. She loved everything about that church and was proud to be associated with it.

Joan loved to entertain and was passionate about creating gourmet dishes. She enjoyed caring for orchids and was a photography enthusiast.

Joan was predeceased by her husband, Robert Joseph Beddow, and her son, Jeffrey Robert Beddow. She is survived by her loving daughter and son-in-law, Jennifer Carol LoMauro and Robert Patrick LoMauro of Sparta, New Jersey, several nieces and nephews, as well as great friends whom she considered family.

A celebration of life was held on August 6th. Funeral arrangements were entrusted to Cochran Funeral Home in Hackettstown, NJ.

We give thanks to the God of the Resurrection whose love brings us hope everyday.

OUR LITTLE PANTRY NEEDS YOUR ASSISTANCE

BY: JUSTIN SIMMONS

Our congregation has been very generous in providing food items for our pantry throughout the year, but now that the school year is about to begin, we are running low on supplies and are making a plea for items.

We are desperately in need of peanut butter and jelly and juices for kids, primarily large bottles of apple juice or Sunny D or juice boxes. In addition to juice, we can use non-refrigerated, boxed milk since many families with young children access our pantry daily. We can use various kid-friendly snacks that parents can put in their children's lunch boxes now that they are returning to school.

Proteins are also a product we can use, most specifically canned tuna, canned chicken, Chef-Boy-R-Dee products, and soups of any kind.

Finally, pasta and sauces are always welcome since they provide a good substantial meal, as are macaroni and cheese and ramen noodles.

As always, the Board of Deacons thanks you for your generosity and participation in this mission. Your giving goes a long way!

CALLING ALL COOKS: TELL US YOUR THOUGHTS

The fundraising committee is entertaining the idea of soliciting members of the congregation for their favorite recipes to compile a cookbook which we will then "sell" as a way to raise money for the different ministries that take place here at church. As a result, We are asking that you kindly send an email to Pattie Huff at the church indicating whether you would be willing to provide a recipe or two of your favorite dish - entree, side dish, appetizer, dessert - and whether you would be interested in purchasing the "COOKBOOK."

Please send your response to fpchnj@gmail.com during September so that we have time to put together the book. Thank you.

SEPTEMBER GREETERS

- SEPT 1** The Roguso Family
- SEPT 8** Ginny and Brielle Plumbo
- SEPT 15** Winnie and Mark Slachetka
- SEPT 22** The Tischler Family
- SEPT 29** Jean Zetterberg and Maddox Fucetola



BACKPACK PROGRAM OVERVIEW

BY: DONNA ERICKSON

Thank you to all who donated backpacks and school supplies for the Backpack Program. Through the generosity of our congregation members we filled forty-five backpacks which were delivered to the Warren County Office of the Department of Children and Families. This agency will distribute the backpacks to the needy children of Warren County.



Once again, thank you for your continued support of this important outreach mission.

MUSIC NOTES

In September, our music during the service will be:

- Sept. 1: Soloist
- Sept. 8: His Eye is on the Sparrow - Senior Choir
- Sept. 15: Morning Chimes - FPCH Ringers
- Sept. 22: Holy Lord - Senior Choir
- Sept. 29: Heleluyan - Little Lights Sunday School Choir

MUSIC ENSEMBLES ARE RETURNING

After the summer “break”, our music ensembles are returning to rehearsals and performances again. Our Senior Choir have begun their rehearsals on Thursday, August 29, and will sing for the first time in church on September 8.

NO auditions are required for the choir-all are welcome to be part of the group. And we completely understand busy schedules: if you can’t make a rehearsal, or even a Sunday when the choir sings in church, that’s fine. The choir will sing, on average, two Sundays a month.

We have a robe for you. We have music for you. We even have a seat for you. If you have any questions, just check with Lorinda!

Our FPCH Ringers still have a couple of spaces to fill this year. We’re happy to welcome anyone who wants to try ringing (hint: it’s lots of fun!). No experience necessary-we’re happy to teach you. So if you think you might be interested, come to the music room at 6:30 on September 5 and we’ll get you started.

Our children’s ensembles: Joyful Noise Bells and Unity Chimes will begin their rehearsals following Sunday School on September 15. Joyful Noise kids who are in kindergarten and up are welcome to join the group. Unity Chimes are for grades 3 and up. See Lorinda for more details!

Sharing God's Bounty

Seek Contentment

Many people spend years seeking contentment not realizing that contentment is a state of mind independent of external circumstances. True contentment comes from knowing that God is in control and that he will provide for you.

As a child of God, you are no doubt aware that our society is trying hard to make you discontented. Advertisements suggest you can't be content without an expensive house, a new car, an exotic vacation, big investments, and the latest in clothes. Society tries to make you believe that happiness and contentment are within your reach if you just acquire a few more things.

Contentment does not consist of the size of income or net worth. It has nothing to do with the size of your house or year of your car. Contentment can't be bought at a department store or travel agency. Real contentment is not related to circumstances or things.

For some, acquiring money can become a preoccupation and an obsession. It's possible to become a slave to wealth. Greed will not allow contentment, because it will always urge you to acquire more. No matter how you try, you cannot be satisfied by worldly things. The love of money can potentially possess a person's life like no other emotion can. Jesus spoke to the issue of greed in Matthew 16:26 when he asked, *"What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul?"* The things you possess will only contribute to fleeting happiness, not an enduring peace and contentment. *"But man, despite his riches, does not endure; he is like the beasts that perish"* (Psalm 49:12).

With money as your security, pride, self-centeredness, and self-sufficiency take over and replace your trust in God to provide. You can be like the Rich Fool, who gave himself credit for his success and desired even more. You can push God out of your life.

When God is your security, you can be content. The Apostle Paul knew both the secret of contentment and how to receive it. *"I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty"* (Philippians 4:11-12). Without Christ, you will never achieve contentment, but a relationship with Christ will redirect your focus from transient earthly pleasures to things of eternal significance. Keeping your eyes on *"the prize"* (Philippians 3:14) will bring about gratitude in your heart for what you have rather than desiring what you don't have. May the words of the psalmist be an expression of your heart: *"Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever"* (Psalm 73:25-26).

One is Nearer to God's Heart in a Garden than Anywhere Else

BY: BEVERLY SAUNDERS

Beyond the beauty and charm of the flowers in our walled garden, I want to share with you a story of human interest. While I worked in the garden on Sunday afternoons, I had a regular visitor who pulled up in a wheelchair. He was fairly young, maybe in his thirties, and had an engaging warmth about him. As we chatted, I noticed that some of his stories seemed outside the boundaries of reality, but I didn't say anything. I continued to listen.

For instance, he told me that he frequently slept in the cemetery "just down the hill" and that sometimes a few baby bears slept with him. I cautioned him, "Watch out for the Mama bear! She'll protect her babies." He then continued his story and I continued to listen, trying to be his friend. Then came the day that I saw an indentation in his forehead, about the diameter of a dime. I didn't ask any questions. Eventually, he pointed to the dent and said "Afghanistan. I was shot." I didn't want to dampen his spirits by focusing on the injury, so I said, "I'm glad you can get around and be my friend, in front

of our beautiful church, beside the comfort of a flower garden." He smiled, and that told me plenty. Then I said, "I'm so glad to have your company. You make my work at the garden seem easy."

This was God's heart - so present, so effective - in our garden. It created warmth and understanding between two people who couldn't be more different in personal identity. Then came the time when my friend stopped coming. I don't know what happened, but I'll never stop thinking about him . . . praying for him.



SECOND SUNDAY IN SUMMER

Below are highlights from our two Second Sundays held during the summer. Be sure to see the article on the next page which details the great fun the children had in July and August.



SECOND SUNDAY IN SUMMER

BY: LORINDA RAVO

We had a great time during our summer Second Sundays: in July we played Bingo and Tapple, and there was A LOT of laughter! In August we held our third annual Super Soaker Sunday, and we were indeed, soaking, but it was so much fun!

We have our Fall months planned out, so be sure to reserve the dates because you won't want to miss any of these programs!

September 8: We'll be hearing the parable of the Wise Man and the Foolish Man, and then making sand art projects and having some science fun with sand.

October 13: *Eyes of the Wild* will be coming in to do a program for us. For more than 15 years *Eyes of the Wild* has been providing the most educational and entertaining programs to audiences of all ages throughout New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New York and Connecticut. In choosing *Eyes of the Wild*, we will not only be entertained, but we will also be sponsoring their rescue efforts.

Through a combination of education and humor, their shows mesmerize everyone in the audience - from toddlers to adults.

ALL of their programs target multiple learning styles - audiences get to see, hear, touch and even move like an animal. Please note: adults and younger and older kids are WELCOME to attend this FREE program. Lunch will start at 11:30 and the program will begin in the chapel at noon.

November 10: Grown ups have "sip and paint" experiences. Well, we'll be having a "juice box and paint" experience. Mrs. Diann Carrajat, who teaches art at Willow Grove and Hatchery Hill Schools will be guiding our kiddos as they create their own painting!

As always, if you are interested in having your children attend any of these Second Sunday events, be sure to sign up on the clipboard located on the dais. We look forward to seeing you.

TEACH YOUR CHILDREN HOW TO PRAY

FOCUS ON GOD'S BEAUTIFUL CREATION (pp 208-209)

With our societal addiction to cell phones and other electronic screens, sometimes I wonder if we miss out on really absorbing the beauty of nature all around us. We're so eager to capture and share everything around us. We take pictures and videos, but do we really let beauty sink deep into our souls and leave a permanent impression there? This practice encourages deep observation of nature and creation of mental pictures of the world around us that use all five senses.

Designed for Ages 4+

Materials: None

Time Investment: 5-15 minutes

HOW TO:

1. Go outside and find something beautiful to focus on: a sunset, a flower, a beautiful sky, or anything else interesting.
2. Instruct everyone to notice all of the details they can about the beautiful thing and talk about them together. Ask questions such as: "How does it look? Are there any sounds associated with it? If you can touch it, how does it feel? Does it have a smell?" Take a good look at this object, more than you might normally, and notice details you might not have noticed before.
3. After some time of observing together, go back inside and try to recreate the memory again. Instruct everyone to close their eyes. Ask questions such as: "Can you still picture the same scene? What do you remember? What was the most beautiful part, in your mind?"

NOTES: This practice is fantastic for vacation or other special times when it is tempting to rush through the "to do" list without pausing to notice the beauty all around. Similarly, when visiting an art museum or other attraction, use this practice to help make lasting memories of the visit.

VARIATIONS: After coming inside, try to recreate the scene by drawing or painting it. Do the "three snapshots" activity: At the beginning of an important day, instruct everyone to plan to take three mental snapshots of special or beautiful moments in the day. At the end of the day, ask each person to recall his or her snapshots and share with others.

"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.

MEET OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL AND CONFIRMATION TEACHERS

BY: MARYANN SIMMONS

As you all know, Donna Annunziata has stepped down from her position of elementary Sunday School teacher as of this past school year. As a result, we have recruited two congregation members to fill in her shoes. In addition, we have revamped the program so that our second through fifth graders will be in their own section, and our confirmation class will include our students in grades 6-8.

Gwenn Bartku formerly taught Sunday School at FPCH years ago and has decided to serve again in this capacity. She has been a lifelong member of FPCH and is very artistic. As a matter of fact, she had been our resident artist when we sponsored VBS. Gwenn works in real estate as a graphic designer and is delighted to be a part of this educational team.

Emily Tischler has been attending FPCH for about 1-1/2 years and is thrilled to be a part of our church community. She and her husband James have two daughters, Audrey and Violet, who love the Christian Education program here. Emily is a fashion designer based in NYC and is passionate about dance and yoga. She is a member of our senior choir and is ready to begin teaching our youngsters.

John Mark Wojcicki has been serving as teacher of our upper elementary class - grades 2-5 - and will continue to do so this year. He is a life long member of FPCH who was baptized, confirmed, and married in our church. Previously, he was our church sexton and served on the Session and the Board of Deacons. He is excited to continue working with our youngsters in Sunday School.

Jan Courtright is a retired HS English teacher and Field Hockey coach and brings to the table over 30 years of experience from Belvedere High School. She has been a member of FPCH for 10 years and has served on the Board of Deacons and on various committees in our church. She is looking forward to working with our middle schoolers on their faith journey.

Please join me in welcoming **Gwenn, Emily, John Mark, and Jan** to our Christian Education Department. FPCH thanks you for working with our youngsters throughout the year. You are all a blessing to our congregation and our children.

SAVE THE DATE: FREE MARKET TO TAKE PLACE ON SEPT 21, 2024

BY: JUSTIN SIMMONS

The Deacons are proud to announce their bi-annual Free Market will take place on Saturday, September 21st between 10 AM and 5 PM. People in the community will be able to “shop for free” for all types of items - trinkets, jewelry, household necessities, knick-knacks, tables and chairs, luggage, kids toys, baby and kids clothing and shoes, holiday decorations, tools and books. To that end, anyone wishing to donate no longer needed or wanted items in good shape can drop them off the day before (Sept 20) between noon and 6 PM.

In addition, in an effort to provide for the less fortunate families with young children of the community, we asked the congregation to donate diapers of any size and baby wipes, which will be distributed at this event. These donations were accepted throughout the summer. As always, the Deacons thank you for your support in this endeavor.

SAVE THE DATE: CLOTHING DRIVE WILL OCCUR ON 10/5

BY: ELLEN BERGMAN

This Fall, we will once again sponsor our clothing drive which will take place on October 5 between 8-9 AM.

We are accepting all types of footwear which must be placed in separate bags from clothing items. We are also taking toys which are 2 feet tall or smaller, stuffed animals, strollers, bikes, scooters. In addition to regular clothing items like blouses, shirts, pants, shorts, we are also accepting accessories like purses, belts, hats and scarves, as well as towels, bedding, curtains, and tablecloths.

You may drop off these items any time during the day and place them in the garage located in the church parking lot, or you can drop items off on Tuesday, October 5th between 6 and 7:30 PM. As always, thank you for your support. All proceeds from this mission will go to various other missions the Deacons sponsor.

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 3: Della Irby
Shirley Roe
- 5: Katy Groover
Skylar Jones
- 7: Janette Hendershot
Ryan Chetangie
- 9: Annette Knauer
Anthony Venturini
- 10: Alexia Dughi
- 11: Violet Tischler
- 12: Ellen Bergman
- 14: Annalee Smith
- 15: Jen Aquino
- 16: Kim Ligarzewski
Anabeth Fernandez
- 18: Teresa Collina
- 23: Cassie Ravo
- 24: Paul Sobolewski
Barbara Yankiv
- 26: Lila Roguso
- 28: Torey Ravo
- 29: Daniel Wallace
Sandy Lindstedt

CONGRATULATIONS, TO ALL!!!

SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 17: John & Pam Covert
- 26: Chris & Erin Roguso

PRAYER LIST

Please keep the following
in your prayers:

- Donna Annunziata
- The Beddow Family
- The Budd Family
- Eris Bunnel
- Eugenie Chetangie
- Churches throughout
the U.S.
- FPCH and Friends of FPCH
- Dan Gardner
- Terry Gretchen
- Joan Grover
- Barbara Hall
- Maikuu congregation,
Kibwezi Kenya
- Members of the Armed Forces
- Barbara Pace, niece of the
Prestopines
- Alice Phoebus
- Pam Sampson, sister of Jan
Courtright
- The Sookhoo Family
- Carol Spitzer
- Muriel Stellingwerf
- Students & Athletes of all grade
Levels - Preschool, elementary
school, middle school, high school,
and college
- Teachers, Paraprofessionals,
Custodians, Bus Drivers, Crossing
Guards, Principals and VPs,
Guidance Counselors, Nurses,
Athletic Directors, Coaches, and
Volunteers
- Gail Thompson, cousin of Diane Hull
- The food insecure
- The homeless
- Those struggling with
addictions and mental health
- Those recovering from surgery
- Barbara Yankiv

