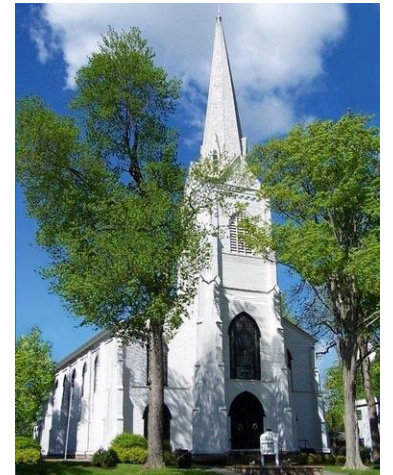


**First Presbyterian  
Church  
298 Main Street**

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

**JUNE  
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**

<b>Class of 2025</b>	<b>Class of 2026</b>	<b>Class of 2027</b>
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**

<b>Class of 2025</b>	<b>Class of 2026</b>	<b>Class of 2027</b>
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 to our sixth edition of *Light From the Steeple*. This first month of summer has our calendar full of many activities.

On June 8th we will celebrate our teachers and students in our Sunday School program. Please make every effort to attend so that you can witness the wonderful things happening with Christian education at FPCH.

Pastor Erin is planning three new members summer classes for those interested in joining our congregation. Look for this information in July's edition, but save these dates: August 3, August 17, and September 7.

Our G.R.O.W. Team has provided new facts regarding the church's finances to enhance your understanding of Al Ravo's monthly Financial Snapshot.

As you can see through the articles of this edition, you can explore many highlights that happened in May, as well as some special opportunities for the summer activities at Camp Johnsonburg, a trip to a baseball game at the end of June, and a special congratulatory article about our students who have reached a new milestone in their educational journeys.

Lastly, I have included a special article penned by Jim Simmons about the impact of governmental cuts of humanitarian aid on world hunger. He suggests visiting PCUSA's website for ways to assist in combatting this problem.

As always, thank you for your readership. If you have suggestions for stories for future editions, please email me or see me after service one Sunday.

Until next month...

Yours in Christ,

**MaryAnn Simmons**

## DATES TO REMEMBER - JUNE 2025

- 01: Confirmation Class - 9 - 9:50 AM in the Conference Room
- 01: Worship and communion - 10 AM; livestream through Facebook; Sunday School (last day)
- 03: PLEFF Dinner - 6 PM at Applebee's, Mountain Ave, Hackettstown
- 04: Yarn Girls - 1 PM in the Conference Room
- 05: World Environment Day
- 06: National Gun Violence Awareness Day
- 07: Stone Soup Symphony Concert - 3 PM in the Sanctuary
- 07: Redding up the Church - 6 PM
- 08: Mentors and Students meet 9-9:15 AM in the Conference Room
- 08: Confirmation Class - 9:15 - 9:50 AM in the Conference Room
- 08: PENTECOST SUNDAY - Remember to wear red to church
- 08: Worship - 10 AM; livestream through Facebook; celebration of our Sunday School teachers and students
- 08: Last day to purchase baseball tickets to Somerset Patriots game
- 08: Second Sunday - Fidget Day
- 08: Scout Eagle Ceremony - 2 PM in the Sanctuary; Refreshments - 3:30 PM at the Chapel
- 10: Election Day: Be sure to vote today!
- 10: Deacon's Meeting - 6:30 PM in the Conference Room
- 14: Men's Breakfast - 8:15 AM - location to be determined
- 15: Happy Father's Day
- 17: Session Meeting - 6:30 PM, in the Conference Room
- 21: Ladies' Breakfast - 9 AM - River Star Diner
- 22: Worship - 10 AM; livestream through Facebook
- 24: Ladies who Lunch - Polo's Bar and Grill - 12 PM - 140 Ledgewood Ave, Netcong, NJ 07857
- 28: Somerset Patriots game - 7:05 PM at TD Bank Park, Bridgewater
- 29: Worship - 10 AM; livestream through Facebook

## A NOTE FROM OUR PASTOR

### Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ.

How did you get here? It is a question that little ones ask us when they want to know our human origins. Often this question can be used not as a moment of curiosity but as a tool to measure whether you belong. On Saturday, May 10 we used that question as a tool to become more curious about our neighbors. Trinity United Methodist hosted an Interfaith Vigil to pray for and raise awareness about our immigrant neighbors. Several people from our Hackettstown community shared their immigrant stories about grandmothers who came from Eastern Europe, settling in the United States from Central America, and even an experience of an American living in another country in Europe. Each of the stories were heartfelt and showed our connection.

We prayed for and with our neighbors in those holy moments. It was a blessing to be connected by the scripture, "The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the Lord your God" (Leviticus 19:34). I wonder, if you could write down the origin story of you and your family, what would you learn? How has that shaped the character and values that are important to you? More importantly, how has God showed up in that story, too?

It's amazing what you might find out about yourself and each other in the process. I pray that we could find the threads of our stories woven into each other. May it be so.

**Pastor Erin**

## **GET READY FOR SOME BASEBALL**

**FPCH Will Travel to Somerset Patriots Game**

**BY: CHRIS AND GABE ROGUSO**

Everyone loves a baseball game and what better way to spend a Saturday evening than to take a trip to TD Bank Ballpark in Bridgewater, NJ to see a NY Yankees affiliate play ball?

Won't you join in the fun to see the Somerset Patriots play the Erie Seawolves on Saturday, June 28th at 7:05 PM? This evening promises to be a fun event for the entire family and you get to see fireworks immediately after the game.

Tickets are \$16.00 per person. Checks should be made out to FPCH with a note in the subject line indicating "Patriots Baseball tix." Give your payment to Al Ravo by June 8th. Let's play ball!

## **CONSIDER SUMMER FUN AT CAMP JOHNSONBURG**

Parents, grandparents, and anyone who loves kids and youth: research shows that children learn skills for living in the world during a week of summer camp, especially a faith-based summer camp like Johnsonburg Camp and Retreat Center.

Won't you consider visiting [johnsonburg.org](http://johnsonburg.org) today to register for a week of camp? Your child can make new friends, spend time away from screens, relax in God's creation, and worship during the summer at a terrific camp experience. This opportunity will make a difference in the life of your child.

Want to talk to someone? Call the Johnsonburg office at 908-852-2349 for all the answers to your questions.

## **SUNDAY SCHOOL TRAVELS AROUND THE WORLD**

**BY: LORINDA RAVO**

Since 2022, our Sunday School students, along with our congregation, have used their imaginations to "travel" to 26 different countries around the world, and have learned songs in 24 different languages. We have appreciated the assistance of congregation members and friends, including Della Irby, Torey Ravo, Gilles Djongang, Ved Fernandez, Chris and Sarah Kshatri, Al Tang, the Leguizamon family, and Pattie Huff who have helped us learn the different languages and learn about their countries.

The countries we've "visited" in these past three years include South Africa, Israel, Italy, Austria, Germany, Namibia, United States, Cameroon, Venezuela, India, Egypt, France, Argentina, Democratic Republic of Congo, Great Britain (2 times!), China, Kenya, Muscogee Creek Nation in the United States, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Paraguay, Greece, Ghana, Czech Republic, Indonesia, and New Zealand.

It is our hope that both our Sunday School students, as well as the members of our congregation, learned about our brothers and sisters in Christ around the world, and that we all worship the same God, even if our words sound different and our traditions might not be the same.

Thanks to all who supported us in this journey around the world. Next September, the kids and I (and the congregation) will be starting a different kind of adventure through music, and we're looking forward to everyone coming along and being part of the fun.



# G.R.O.W. TEAM NEWS

BY: BILL CORS

This month, we wish to highlight information regarding our need for volunteers during Sunday worship and provide you with an understanding of why it is important to give your offering each year for the Per Capita collection.

### Did You Know...?


**Volunteers for Sunday Worship Service are in high demand!**

What Types of Volunteers Are Needed?

- Camera Operators
- Communion Servers
- Greeters
- Ushers (collection)
- Worship Leaders

**Consider volunteering today!**

See a member of session or deacons for more information on how you can help.




### Did You Know...?

**PER CAPITA (currently \$43.50 per member) is a set amount of money that congregations pay to the larger Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as part of the glue that holds Presbyterians together.**

**WE ARE PART OF SOMETHING BIGGER**

- Presbytery of the Highlands (**72** Congregations in Northwest NJ)
- Synod of the Northeast (**962** Congregations in 8 states)
- General Assembly Presbyterian Church U.S.A (**9,300** Congregations)

**FUNDS FOR MISSION, EDUCATION, GOVERNANCE, AND ADMINISTRATION.**



If you have any questions or if you have any ideas, contact Bill Cors or any member of his G.R.O.W. Team Committee.

# NEWS FROM THE DEACONS

By PAT BUTTS

We would again like to thank our church family for all the help with our projects in the last few months. Our clothing drive was a huge success. We loaded 349 bags along with toys and bikes. Our total was 4,209 pounds which earned \$841.80 to be used for the Deacon's ministry.

After all the rain cancellations, we were finally able to hold our garage sale on May 17th. It was a beautiful day with lots of fun and fellowship and we raised \$392.10 for the church. Thanks to all who helped in any way.

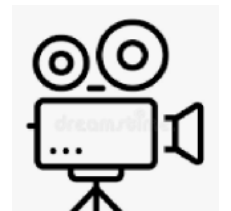
Our Little Pantry continues to help those in our community and we are grateful to Euroimmune for donating over 400 items to the pantry. We also thank the congregation for your continued support and if you have any questions about the pantry's needs, talk to Jackie Hammel or any Deacon.

# WE NEED VIDEOGRAPHERS

The worship committee would like to solicit your help on alternating Sundays as a videographer for our worship services.

If you have a talent for capturing events on video, then this is the job for you. We are currently in need of people who are willing to take on this role. We will teach you how to work the equipment. Then, give us one or two Sundays a month so our homebound members can watch our services each week.

See Geof Gohlich for details. Thank you.



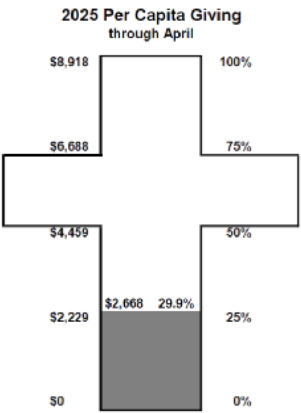
MAY 2025 FINANCIAL \$NAPSHOT

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.

	April	Year to Date
Income	\$17,972.95	\$71,396.57
Expenses Paid	\$17,899.05	\$93,363.93
Net Operating Income		
/(Deficit)	\$ 73.90	(\$21,967.36)
Amount of Schwab/Edward Jones funds used to pay operating expenses	\$ 0.00	\$ 6,000.00
Amount Needed from Endowment	\$ 0.00	\$21,000.00
Total amount of Endowment, Schwab & Edward Jones funds used to pay Operating expenses in 2024	\$ 0.00	\$27,000.00

Financial Comments / Observations:



- 1.The five largest operating expenses in April were:
  - 1.) **\$8,167.62** – Pastoral expenses (payroll, Board of Pen-sions, etc.).
  - 2.) **\$4,329.64** – Staff payroll & payroll processing expenses.
  - 3.) **\$1,786.51** – Gas (3 buildings).
  - 5.) **\$870.00** – Fire alarm monitoring (quarterly bill).
  - 4.) **\$535.47** – Electricity (3 buildings).
- 2.The operating net income / (deficits) were **\$73.90** in April and **(\$21,967.36)** Year To Date.
  - The actual April operating expenses were **\$2,434.28** below the average monthly budgeted expenses.
  - The actual April operating incomes were **\$1,306.28** above the average monthly budgeted incomes.

- The Year-To-Date operating expenses were **\$12,030.60** above the average YTD budgeted amounts.
- The Year-To-Date operating incomes were **\$4,729.90** above the average YTD budgeted amount.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE - MAY, 2025 FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

MAY 2025 FINANCIAL \$NAPSHOT

CONTINUED FROM MAY 2025 FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

- 3. In April, the value of the MassMutual Investment accounts increased **\$200.45** to **\$328,742.17**.
- 4. In April, the value of the total Endowment Fund increased **\$129.78** to **\$343,387.25**. This includes the \$3,000.00 used to pay operating expenses.
- 5. The April Second Saturday Free Community Dinner was not held. The total cost to the church of all community dinners since September 2021 remains at **\$693.02**.
- 6. The April 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 April, **\$50.50** was received for Per Capita bringing the total received in 2025 to **\$2,667.62** or **29.9%** of the amount due. A payment of **\$438.23** was sent to the Presbytery of the Highlands of NJ in April bringing the total sent in 2025 to **\$2,667.62** or **29.9%** of the total amount due.

BUILDING ON GENEROSITY (BOG) CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

- Donations received during April, **\$210.00**.
- Total donations received from church members, non-members and anonymous from September 2019 (the BOG Kickoff dinner) through the last day of April 2025, **\$650,391.02**.
- Expenses paid using the BOG funds in April, **\$460.00**. The payment was to Jensen Tree Experts for costs above estimate to remove the tree in front of the Church.
- The total available BOG funds are **\$8,164.28**. The breakdown is **\$2,914.28** 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%** - **\$34,288.76** from nonmembers
  - **86.0%** - **\$559,777.05** from members
  - **8.7%** - **\$56,325.21** from anonymous & dinners
  - **100.0%** - **\$650,391.02** Total

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

# HIGHLIGHTS FROM MAY

During May, we experienced great music at worship, were part of the town-wide garage sale, and enjoyed a sunny day at the Memorial Day parade. Below are snapshots from those events. Photos courtesy of MaryAnn Simmons.



# CONGRATULATIONS, GRADUATES OF 2025!

This month, we want to send congratulations to our students who have reached a milestone in their educational journeys. These students are graduating from the schools listed and moving onto a new endeavor. Please join me in extending a kind message to each of these students.

**Angel Anyangwe** - Mt. Olive Middle School; moving onto Mt. Olive High School where she will be a part of the choir.

**Blessing Anyangwe** - Valedictorian at Mt. Olive High School; will attend Johns Hopkins University in the Fall, majoring in chemistry and chemical and biological engineering, with a pre-med path.

**Veronica Aquino** - Mt. Olive Middle School; Veronica has been an active member of the theater productions at MOMS for the past three years and will attend Mt. Olive High School in the Fall.

**Amari Melendez** - Long Valley Middle School; Amari played softball for the LVMS team, performed ballroom dancing in the talent show all three years and has been named to the Honor Roll on many occasions. She will be attending West Morris Central High School in the Fall.

We wish you continued success in your new academic endeavors.



## **“REDDING UP” THE CHURCH TO TAKE PLACE ON JUNE 7TH AT 6 PM**

In preparation for the celebration of Pentecost, we will be “Redding up” the church at 6PM on June 7th.

Pentecost is the celebration of the descent of the Holy Spirit on the disciples of Jesus after his Ascension. It is held on the seventh Sunday after Easter. This year, we will celebrate Pentecost on June 8th.

If interested, please meet at the sanctuary to assist in decorating the church. All are welcome. The more people we have, the less time we will spend decorating.

## **FPCH BRINGS FELLOWSHIP TO HACKETTSTOWN AT MEMORIAL DAY PARADE**

The Memorial Day Parade is always a time of fun and fellowship for the citizens of Hackettstown, as well as a day of remembrance of those who sacrificed their lives for our country. This year, FPCH decided to serve breakfast sandwiches and cold drinks to the public. We earned \$320.89 through these sales and look forward to doing this again next year. Thank you to all who assisted in making this first endeavor a success. Below are a few snapshots of the day’s event.



# **MUSIC NOTES**

**BY: LORINDA RAVO**

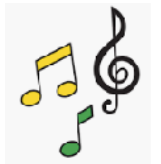
Our thanks to all of the musicians who provided music for our services from September through Pentecost. We are so grateful to all for sharing their time and talents to enhance worship, and the choirs are equally grateful for the support of the congregation for our efforts.

Soloists and guest musicians will provide our music for Sunday services in the summer as our vocal and instrumental ensembles enjoy a well-deserved break. We’re especially excited to welcome several of the kids in our congregation who will provide anthems for the summer. I often told my private music students that the very best place to begin performing is in your church, where you’ll be loved and supported, and we look forward to nurturing these talented kids.

All of our ensembles will be back in September, and anyone interested in being part of the Senior Choir or the FPCH Ringers Chime Choir are welcome to join in the fun.

Our Children’s ensembles, The Joyful Noise Bell Choir, the Unity Chime Choir and the Little Lights Sunday School, will also be taking a break for the summer, but they will begin rehearsals again in September, and we welcome both returning and new kids to be part of the groups!

See Lorinda if you’d like to volunteer to be part of our summer musicians or if you have questions about any part of our music program.



# Sharing God's Bounty

## Therefore My Brothers

Several weeks ago, the Christian Church began the season of Lent by observing Ash Wednesday. Perhaps you knelt at the altar as your forehead was marked with ashes. You heard the words, "You are dust and to dust you shall return." This rite serves to remind us of our beginning: that God created man from the dust of the earth. It also foretells our ending: that our mortal bodies will die and decay. It is a solemn moment; in truth, all of Lent is solemn. Yet, every Christian holds in his heart a secret the world needs to know: *"The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ"* (1 Corinthians 15:56-57). That is the message of Easter: through Christ we have won the victory! We wept through the night of sorrow, but morning has come and with it the joy of the morning of eternal life (Psalm 30:5b).

We remain on earth, waiting for the fullness of that joy that will be ours when we are in Heaven with the Savior. We are not idle while we wait, however. After his glorious pronouncement of this victory over death, the Apostle Paul continues, *"Therefore my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain"* (1 Corinthians 15:58). These are orders for all God's servants, the *"beloved brothers."* First, *"Be steadfast."* Day in and day out, not just on Sunday, but every day, all day, we are steadfast, putting the work of the Lord first, keeping uppermost in our minds that all we do is done in his strength and for his glory. At our work and in our homes, we remember that we *"are serving the Lord"* (Colossians 3:24).

We are *"immovable."* We don't get sidetracked. In his Gospel, Luke takes his readers along on Jesus' journey to Jerusalem. Like the Israelites traveling through the desert, Jesus' trip was not a straight line and it included many stops (although not for the same reasons), but as faithful as God was to deliver his chosen people, so *"immovable"* was Jesus on his way. We, too, have a goal: to travel to eternal life doing the Lord's work on our way. We are *"immovable"* in our desire to practice faithful stewardship on our journey, and God is faithful to go with us on that journey.

By God's grace through which he enables and equips us, we can *"always [abound] in the work of the Lord."* By God's grace, we overflow with good works. We are eager and willing to give of ourselves and our resources that his work might be done. Even when we get discouraged, we don't quit, because we know *"that in the Lord [our] labor is not in vain."*

*Because God has done this, I respond gladly and freely by doing that. Because God has given himself for me, I respond by giving myself to him in every way that I can. It is not that I owe him anything, or that he needs in a particular way anything that I have. It is simply that I, in sheer gratitude for his many gifts, want to return these gifts, in some small way, by giving of myself.*

# WORLD HUNGER IMPACTED BY FEDERAL CUTS TO HUMANI- TARIAN AID PROGRAMS

BY: JIM SIMMONS

When we witness the nearly constant stream of people taking food from our Little Pantry we see only a glimpse of the problem of hunger in our world and in our nation.

According to UNICEF, today over 300 million people in 59 countries do not have adequate food. Within the United States nearly 44 million people experience food insecurity, including 1-5 children.

In addition, cuts made earlier this year to vital US government foreign humanitarian aid programs have put even more people in jeopardy. Without United States assistance many humanitarian organizations around the world have had to cut back or even eliminate food assistance efforts.

The Presbyterian Church USA is attempting to alleviate this dire situation by launching the "2025 Hunger Action Campaign." This fund-raising undertaking will attempt to target areas with the greatest need in providing not only food but assisting with the teaching of employable life skills in an effort to break the cycle of poverty affecting nations around the world. In places like Mali, South Sudan, and Gaza the Hunger Action Campaign is a critical lifeline of survival.

More information on this vital effort and how you can help can be obtained from the PCUSA website 2025 Hunger Action Campaign.



## SUMMER SECOND SUNDAYS

Because Second Sunday in May was Mother's Day, we did not hold a session. Nonetheless, we have fun-filled summer activities for our kids.

On June 8 we'll be talking about feelings and then enjoying a fidget day as we make our own fidgets. Be sure to preregister so that we have enough supplies for everyone!

On July 13, Lorinda will be away at a family wedding, and if anyone would like to take the reins and provide some fun for our kids, we'd love to help you make that happen! Please see Lorinda or Pastor Erin for information or to volunteer.

And then.....On August 10, we will hold our FOURTH ANNUAL SUPER SOAKER SUNDAY! You won't want to miss that!

## SHARING OUR SMILES

### REVEALING THE JOY IN OUR LIVES THIS MONTH

May brought good news to FPCH. Join me in celebrating these joys in the lives of our congregation. If you have good news to share next month, send your info to MaryAnn Simmons at [maryann.simmons3@verizon.net](mailto:maryann.simmons3@verizon.net)

**Diane Hull and Jan Courtright** are welcoming a new puppy to their home on June 8th. Congratulations, and may you both enjoy a lifetime of happiness with Casey Ann.



**Lila Roguso** was inducted into the Junior National Honor Society at Great Meadows Middle School. Congratulations on this prestigious honor.

Congratulations to **Harper Schneider** and the 7th and 8th graders at HMS for winning the Warren County Battle of the Books competition this year. Way to go, Harper, and keep reading!

At Centenary University's 150th commencement on May 10th, **MaryAnn Simmons** was named Adjunct of the Year. Congratulations.

Way to go, Diane and Jan, Lila, Harper, and MaryAnn!

## PENTECOST OFFERING IS JUNE 8

This is a kind reminder that Pentecost Sunday is June 8th and FPCH will be taking part in the Pentecost offering on that day of worship. As indicated in our G.R.O.W. Team article last month, 40% of this offering remains with our church and will be designated for scholarships for our youth to attend Camp Johnsonburg.

Please find it in your heart to provide a donation toward this offering as it is a worthwhile endeavor that allows the kids of our congregation to benefit from the proceeds by defraying the cost of the camp. Envelops for this collection will be distributed at our June 1st and June 8th worship services.



Thank you for your continued support during the special collections that occur during the year at FPCH. Every dollar goes a long way to assist not only the Presbytery, but also our congregation.

## JUNE GREETERS

**JUNE 1:** Pat Butts and Bev Saunders

**JUNE 8:** Bruce and Ellen Bergman

**JUNE 15:** Geof and Pat Gohlich

**JUNE 22:** Jose and Della Irby

**JUNE 29:** Dennis and Pattie Huff



# TEACH YOUR CHILDREN HOW TO PRAY

## Pentecost: Harness the Power of the Wind

Pentecost is the day when Christians remember the Holy Spirit coming into the world. Start a tradition with your family of flying a kite on or near the day of Pentecost, which creates a memorable connection between the Spirit and wind. Imagine the effect it can have on your children if they thought of the power of the Holy Spirit each time they saw a colorful kite flying in the sky! Designed for All Ages.

Materials:

1. A red kite with string (the color is optional)
2. A windy day

Time Investment: 30 minutes to 2 hours

How to:

1. The first year, present the family with a kite on the day of Pentecost. Since red is the traditional liturgical color for Pentecost, selecting a red kite further connects the idea of liturgical colors.
2. Travel to an open space and fly the kite. As the kite flies, talk about the connection between the Spirit and the Wind. Though we cannot see the wind, we see the effect of the wind as it props the kite and helps it to fly. The same is true with the Spirit: we cannot see it, yet we see evidence of the Spirit's work and movement among us as we help others in need, as others help us, as we pray, and as we worship.
3. Take turns flying the kite and watching it fly higher and higher.

NOTES:

- If your family flies a kite often, consider using a separate Pentecost kite just for this occasion.
- While younger toddlers and babies are too little to fly the kite themselves, they can still benefit from the joy of being outside in the breeze and watching the kite fly.
- Because weather does not always cooperate, the family tradition might need to be adjusted, rather than on the actual day of Pentecost.

VARIATIONS:

- Make your own kite and draw or paint a symbol of the Holy Spirit on it.
- Maintain a similar tradition with a windsock that is hung outside each year around Pentecost time.

"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.

## GET READY FOR THE BACKPACK PROGRAM IN JULY AND AUGUST

BY: DONNA ERICKSON

Even though school is about to end, school never leaves our minds.

We will be collecting school items for our students in need from July 20th through August 10th. We need pens, pencils, erasers, crayons, colored pencils, markers, art supplies, rulers, scissors, and composition books, spiral notebooks, and binders with loose leaf paper (wide rule, please). In addition, we request toothpaste, toothbrushes, and hand sanitizer for the backpacks.

Consider picking up a few items while shopping so less fortunate children can have supplies which will make them successful during the school year. The filled backpacks will be distributed to families involved with the NJ Department of Children and Families in Warren County.

Any questions, see Donna Erickson.

## BUILDING AND GROUNDS THANKS CONGREGATION AND PUBLIC FOR DONATIONS

BY: DIANE HULL

Building and Grounds would like to extend its sincere thanks to our members who have provided some funds to cover unexpected costs that FPCH incurred during the past month.

The decaying tree in front of the church had to be removed. The cost was \$4260, but thanks to a donation of \$3800, we were able to complete the work in a timely manner. After the tree stump was removed, a donation covered the cost of fresh dirt and grass seed.

Finally, thank you to our landscaper, J&M Landscaping, who generously donated five yards of mulch which was used to beautify our church grounds on May 10th spring clean up.



# GOD’S LOVE ENDURES FOREVER

It is with a heavy heart that we acknowledge the passing of Shirley Roe on May 4, 2025. Shirley was 89 years old.

A long time member of First Presbyterian Church of Hackettstown, Shirley had been a Sunday School teacher here years ago. Her true passion, however, was nursing. She worked for many years at Heath Village Retirement Community and later in life, she served as a health care worker.



Shirley was predeceased by her former husband Robert H. Roe and her grandson Tyler Wehrenberg. She is survived by her four children: Thomas Roe, Debra Wehrenberg (Mark), Nancy Parrish (Eric), and Ellen LiPetri (Anthony); fifteen grandchildren, and many more great grandchildren.

Services were provided by Cochran Funeral Home, 905 High Street, Hackettstown, NJ.

**We give thanks to the God of the resurrection whose**

## FPCH TO CELEBRATE TEACHERS AND STUDENTS ON JUNE 8TH

On Pentecost Sunday, FPCH will honor teachers and students in recognition of Christian education.

During our worship service, we will hear some statements from our youngsters and youth about the “good news” they learned from their Sunday school teachers. Our teachers will present the kids with certificates, attendance pins, and a passport of all the places they “traveled to” from September through May.

Mrs. Simmons will then present the teachers with gifts of appreciation for their dedication to our children in helping them learn the lessons from the Bible.

Please join us for this celebration.

### JUNE BIRTHDAYS

- 3: Haley DelPlato
- 7: Leo Starks
- 8: Linda Burroughs
- 9: Jennifer Bramley  
Ryan Van Orden
- 12: Justin Simmons  
Arden Cook
- 13: Pat Gohlich
- 14: Jessica McDonagh
- 15: Suzanne Raphaels  
Malia Melendez
- 22: Jerre Budd
- 23: Dottie Kappers
- 24: Peter Miller
- 25: Samantha Newton
- 26: Daniel Carpenter
- 28: Justin Sentner  
Ginny Plumbo
- 29: Mike Plumbo  
Addison Cameron

### JUNE ANNIVERSARIES

- 6: Carl & Donna Erickson
- 8: Scott & Michele Cameron
- 11: Otto & Lori Fleischman
- 16: Geof & Pat Gohlich
- 20: Jose & Della Irby
- 23: Richard & Grace Clegg
- 25: Doug & Peg Russack
- 27: Al & Jen Aquino

### PRAYER LIST

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

- Eugenie Chetangie
- Churches throughout the U.S.
- Shirley DeLoia, sister of Phyllis Prestopine
- 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
- The Family of Shirley Roe
- Jim Simmons
- Carol Spitzer
- Students moving onto the next level of education
- The food insecure
- The homeless
- Those struggling with addictions and mental health
- Those recovering from surgery
- Those traveling
- Richard Westby

