



The Woodbridge Spire

First Presbyterian Church

600 Rahway Avenue Woodbridge, NJ 07095

732-634-1024 FAX: 732-634-6310

Visit our website - www.FPCWoodbridgeNJ.org

Find us on  First Presbyterian Church of Woodbridge, NJ

Serving Christ Since 1675



November 2020

Church Staff

Interim Pastor

Rev. Marie A. Bacchiocchi
1-470-351-7231
Pastor@FPCWoodbridgeNJ.org

Music Director

Mr. Karl Watson
MusicDirector@FPCWoodbridgeNJ.org

Secretary

Susan Wayman
732-634-1024
Office@FPCWoodbridgeNJ.org

Church School Superintendent

Linda Thorstenson

Church Office Hours

The Office is Closed

Leave a Message

We Are Checking Voicemail

732-634-1024

Office@FPCWoodbridgeNJ.org

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP ONLINE

Every Sunday 10:20 AM
Facebook Live on our Facebook Page

A call in number for an audio version
is also available
Check the Church phone message on Saturday
for the call in number

Sunday, November 29

First Sunday of Advent

Sunday, December 13

In-As-Much Service

Thursday, December 24

Christmas Eve Services

5:30 PM Family Service
10:00 PM Candlelight Service

Articles for the next SPIRE can be emailed to Spire@FPCWoodbridgeNJ.org

or

put in mail Box 63 at Church

A Message from Rev. Marie



Dear Friends,

We have resumed indoor, in-person worship services! Our services continue to be live streamed on Facebook Live and available for conference call.

We realize that people feel very differently about doing or not doing things during this global pandemic. Please know that the church leadership supports you in whatever choice you make for you and your family. This is a difficult time and we all will make our decisions in different ways.

We are slowly beginning to have some church events in person. Please check with the leader(s) of the activity to find out if they are meeting in person. Remember that we are able to have a virtual component to our meetings. Please let us know if you prefer to meet virtually.

Also, we are beginning to make plans for Thanksgiving, Advent, and Christmas. My goal is to continue to make lemonade out of the lemons 2020 has given to us. We are creatively reworking our holiday traditions to make them possible during this time of pandemic.

It is now November how did that happen? May we all take a moment this month to thank God for all the blessings we have. This has been quite a year. There have been so many hardships, but there have also been blessings. So, as you make scaled down plans for Thanksgiving, remember all with which God has blessed you each and every day.

Thank you for your prayers, your love and care, and your flexibility as we continue to live into this new reality. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Blessings,
Pastor Marie

Elizabeth Presbytery Update:

On Tuesday, October 14, 2020 the Elizabeth Presbytery met for its 689th Stated Meeting. At that meeting the commissioners voted to accept the proposal of the New Jersey Missional Communities Transition. This means that our presbytery has voted to accept the proposal to change the seven presbyteries of New Jersey into four. Five more presbyteries have to vote on this proposal which, if approved by all the presbyteries, will begin to go into effect in March 2021. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Marie.



Last month, in September, we enjoyed meeting as a group in person in Fellowship Hall sitting in a large circle 6 feet apart. We began our new year of PW with a lovely devotion from Julie Barany. Our new lesson book this year is "Into the Light - Finding Hope Through Prayers of Lament". Lesson 1 is The Heart of Lament, meaning a perceived absence of God is at the heart of lament. What is lament? From our lesson; "When we lament, we move from suffering to faith. In our faith there is hope. We lament in order to hope." Lament is communication with God, building a connection to our world and God, keeping us focused on the situations that encourage us to lament, lament leads us to prayer, and gives us the opportunity to confess our faith in God. I am sure we will learn a lot this year about ourselves and prayer, and our faith in God's promises.

Devotion – **Encouragement**

Encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing. — 1 Thessalonians 5:11
(Read- Scripture Reading — 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11)

Loving others includes encouraging one another. In Romans 12:7-8, Paul lists encouragement among the gifts of grace. When people accomplish a common objective together, all are encouraged. Fellow believers encourage one another to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18).

The Thessalonian Christians faced struggles and an uncertain future. Paul wrote to encourage them, reminding them of their faith and love and hope in Christ, all of which prepared them to be ready for the Lord's return. And with these assurances they could keep encouraging one another and building each other up.

The gift of encouragement is important in our lives. Encouragement is a gift in the home, the workplace, the church—wherever we find ourselves. We can come alongside others and be there for one another. We can listen, comfort, console, affirm. It's a way of living out the command to love one another.

Take time to recall the people who've been encouragers in your life. They're the ones who were there when you thought you'd never laugh again. They were the ones who listened to you; whereas others just talked. Then ask yourself, "When was the last time I encouraged someone?" It's not difficult, and the people you encourage are so blessed by it.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, help me to recognize the struggler or the lonely—anyone who needs your encouragement of love and hope today. In your name, Amen. (From Today reframemedia.com)

I would like to say thank you to all of our PW ladies, our church members, those helping at the food pantry, all our committee members, and Reverend Marie for in some

small way making this time of quarantine from this crazy pandemic a little more tolerable. Just knowing that we are doing whatever we can to stay in touch and continue the great works of our church fills me with hope and faith. Together we can work wonders and get through all of this. *1Peter 3:8 - Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind.*

Our next PW gathering is in October at Fellowship Hall. For our November meeting we will announce whether we will meet in person or virtually. If you are interested in joining PW now or in the future you can contact myself, Lyn Fales, or Marilyn Stephan. We meet once a month on the third Monday of the month. All are welcome.

For now, be grateful and have hope! We will see all of you back at church soon.

Blessings, Sharon Hanley



Notes From the Editor About This Spire

So this Spire was scheduled to go out by mid October. Unfortunately, at that point the editor was a bit under the weather and so it has been delayed until now, early November. You will see the articles are more "Octoberish".

We normally wouldn't put out a Spire in late November or December, but with the situation as fluid as it is, we are planning to put something out in the next several weeks. If nothing else, at least an update on plans for Advent and Christmas Eve.

So stay tuned and keep safe.

Cemetery and Heritage Committee

“Grounded in History; Embracing the Future”

This contribution is taken directly from the website of the Presbyterian Historical Society. We support this society. It is located at 425 Lombard Street, Philadelphia. It holds and preserves some of our oldest documents – specifically our charter- a great place to visit!

One of their current exhibits is about Reformation Sunday. Their exhibit highlights sixteenth century European reformers and their contributions to the Reformation.

The following is taken directly from that exhibit. I hope you enjoy it. Please read more at: www.history.pcuse.org/rs.

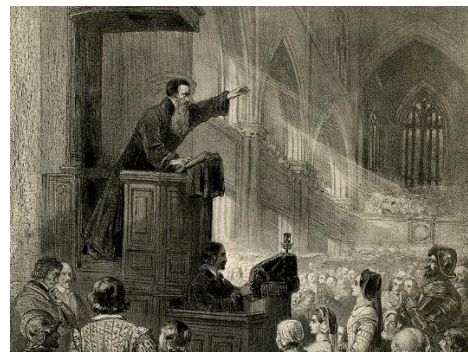
Reformation Sunday

Presbyterians celebrate the tradition that grounds their faith on Reformation Sunday. It is always the last Sunday in October, marking the occasion in 1517 when Martin Luther posted his 95 theses on the church door in Wittenberg, Germany.” This year Reformation Sunday is October 25.

History

“In Western Europe, the authority of the Catholic Church remained largely unquestioned until the Renaissance in the fifteenth century. Around 1450, the invention of the printing press in Germany made it possible for the masses to read the Bible and other religious texts, enabling the discovery of religious thinkers who had begun to challenge the Church. The term “Reformation” is used to describe the series of changes in Western Christendom between the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries. The early sixteenth century, in particular, brought divergences from Catholic doctrine caused by the perceived financial excesses of the Papacy and the Curia.

“The emerging Reformed churches are those that were influenced by the theology of reformers such as [Desiderius Erasmus](#), [Martin Luther](#), [Ulrich Zwingli](#), [Philipp Melancthon](#), [John Calvin](#), [Théodore de Bèze](#), and [John Knox](#).” All are highlighted on the society’s web site. I have chosen **John Knox** to share here.



“John Knox (ca. 1514-1572) was a leader of the Reforming party in his native Scotland. Knox studied with [John Calvin](#) in Geneva and took Calvin’s teachings back home with

him to Scotland. The Presbyterian Church traces its ancestry back primarily to Knox in Scotland and to England, and so Knox is widely regarded as the founder of Presbyterianism.”

“Educated in Glasgow and possibly at St. Andrews, Knox received minor orders, set up as a notary in Haddington, and then became a private tutor, c. 1544. Soon afterwards he embraced the principles of the Reformation. After being taken prisoner by the French during their attack on St. Andrews, he made his way from France to England, where he served briefly as chaplain to Edward VI. Shortly after Queen Mary Tudor's ascension to the throne in 1553, he fled to Geneva, where he met and was influenced by John Calvin. It was from Calvin that John Knox gained the knowledge of Reformed theology and polity that he used as the basis for founding the Presbyterian denomination.”

“Eventually returning to Scotland in 1559, after more than a decade abroad, Knox became a minister in Edinburgh and, soon after, the acknowledged leader of the Reforming party in the Kirk.

In close collaboration with his ministerial colleagues, Knox published three influential documents in the course of the next few years that were to be his principle contribution to the Reformation in Scotland—and to the religious and social history of his nation for the next century. He contributed to the writing of the *Scots Confession* (1560), a short evangelical consensus of Reformed doctrine and the principal theological standard of the Kirk until it was superseded by the *Westminster Confession* in 1647. He was the main author of the *Book of Common Order* (1556-64), based on prayer forms used by Knox in Geneva and widely used in Scottish worship until the adoption of the *Westminster Directory of Public Worship* in 1645.”

“It was said after his death that Knox was a man who neither feared nor flattered anyone alive. Scotland would have had a Reformation without him, but it was from him that it received much of its distinctive character and direction. American Presbyterians, as heirs of the church he helped to create, owe something of their character to his moral courage and social vision.”

CONNECT WITH US

The Heritage Committee is looking forward to meeting once we can gather in person. Until then, if you have ideas for the 350th anniversary (2025), please send them to me; Suzanne Moller at archivist@FPCWoodbridgeNJ.org or 732-634-1024. Also, if you have suggestions for articles for the SPIRE or if you have ephemera related to the church that you are not sure what to do with please contact me.

2020



2020

WREATHS *across* AMERICA

The **T NULTY AMERICAN LEGION POST 471** and the **VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA CHAPTER 233** are co-sponsoring **THE THIRD ANNUAL WREATHS *across* AMERICA** project at the **FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH** (“The Old White Church”) of **WOODBIDGE, NEW JERSEY**. This church, established in 1675, has been registered with the national WREATHS *across* AMERICA as Location ID: **NJFPCW**.

Sponsored wreaths will be placed on the graves of the 260 Veterans interred in this historic cemetery on 19 December 2020. **WREATH LAYING WILL BEGIN AT 9:00 AM AND THE INDOOR CEREMONY WILL BEGIN AT 12PM.**

Wreaths are \$15.00 each. This is **NOT** a fund raiser for the Church, the VVA or the American Legion. Funds will all be collected by the church and sent directly to **WREATHS *across* AMERICA** in payment for the ordered number of wreaths. Our goal is to purchase enough wreaths to make certain each Veteran’s grave is covered during the winter months.

YOU WILL HAVE THE ABILITY TO PURCHASE WREATHS FOR VETERANS INTERRED AT OTHER CEMETERIES. HOWEVER, YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO PICK UP THIS WREATH AT 9AM ON SATURDAY MORNING, 19 DECEMBER 2020, AND PLACE ON YOUR VETERAN’S GRAVE. THE COST FOR THIS WREATH WILL STILL BE \$15.

Please consider sponsoring wreaths to help honor those who proudly served our Nation in time of war and peace and join our mission to REMEMBER, HONOR and TEACH.

Name: _____
 Street: _____
 City: _____
 State: _____ Zip: _____
 Phone: _____
 Email: _____

Please make checks payable to:
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
 600 Rahway Avenue
 Woodbridge NJ 07095
 Questions? Please call: 732-261-1787

Thank you for your sponsorship and joining us in our mission to
REMEMBER, HONOR and TEACH

Do we have you permission to publicize your name as a sponson? Yes No, I wish to remain anonymous

DEADLINE FOR ORDERING WREATHS FOR THE 19 DEC 2020 PROGRAM IS SUNDAY, 01 DEC 2020.

SPONSORSHIP	QUANTITY	PRICE	TOTAL
Individual = 1 wreath		\$15.00 EACH	
Family = 4 wreaths		\$60.00	
Small Business = 10 wreaths		\$150.00	
Corporate = 100 wreaths		\$1,500.00	
TOTAL			

If you are sponsoring a wreath for a Veteran NOT interred at the First Presbyterian Church of Woodbridge, please complete the information below:

MY VETERAN’S NAME IS: _____
 MY VETERAN IS INTERRED AT: _____
 MY VETERAN SERVED IN (Name Military Branch): _____
 YEARS OF SERVICE: _____

I UNDERSTAND I MUST PICK UP MY VETERANS WREATH AT THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF WOODBRIDGE, 600 RAHWAY AVENUE, WOODBRIDGE, NJ ON SATURDAY, 19 DECEMBER 2020, AT 9AM.

Online Giving

Presbyterian Foundation - We have finally gotten online giving up and running through the Presbyterian Foundation and Vanco Payments. You can get to our donation form by clicking the link below or scanning the QR Code. You can also go to our website (www.fpcwoodbridgenj.org) and click on the GIVING section to find the link and QR code. You can set up an account or just hit continue to make a donation. You will need to fill in your name, address, email and credit card or bank information.



[Online Giving Form](#)

PayPal - We have also set up a PayPal account. You can search using our email Treasurer@FPCWoodbridgeNJ.org or this QR code will take you to our donation form. You can choose Current Expense, Benevolence or One Great Hour of Sharing if you wish.



We did look into Venmo and Zelle but our banks do not support business transactions for either of them.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
600 RAHWAY AVENUE
WOODBIDGE, N.J. 07095

Address Service Requested

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Rahway, NJ 07065
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Serving Christ Since 1675

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First Sunday of Advent

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