

First Press Newsletter 2023



We are a welcoming community formed in Christ, committed to sharing his love with others – with feet that carry us out into the world, with hands that serve, and with hearts in fellowship and faith.

Dear Friends,

On Sunday, October 1, here at First Presbyterian Church of Ridgewood NJ, we will celebrate World Communion Sunday.

World Communion Sunday (originally called World Wide Communion Sunday) is a gift of the Presbyterian Church to the larger ecumenical church. The first celebration occurred in 1933 at Shadyside Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh, PA, where Dr. Hugh Thompson Kerr served as pastor. According to Dr. Kerr's son, Rev. Dr. Donald Craig Kerr, World Communion Sunday grew out of the Division of Stewardship at Shadyside. It was their attempt to bring churches together in a service of Christian unity ó in which everyone might receive both inspiration and information, and above all, to know how important the Church of Jesus Christ is, and how each congregation is interconnected one with another.

Celebration of World Wide Communion Sunday was adopted as a denominational practice in the Presbyterian Church (US) in 1936. Churches in other denominations were invited to celebrate with us from the beginning, but it wasn't until 1940 when the Department of Evangelism of the Federal Council of Churches (a predecessor body of the National Council of Churches) promoted extending the celebration to a number of churches around the globe that the practice became widespread. World Communion Sunday is currently celebrated by congregations all over the world.

World Communion Sunday is a time for remembering that around the globe ó in different languages, with different traditions and customs, and in various forms of liturgy ó the Lord's Supper is celebrated throughout Christendom.

Our guest preacher on World Communion Sunday will be Rev. Dr. Mark Mueller, a Presbyterian Pastor who currently serves as the Executive Director of The Outreach Foundation (TOF). The mission of TOF is *engaging followers of Christ for his work in the world*. And a stated priority of the foundation is *building the capacity of the global church, especially where the church is vulnerable or growing rapidly, as together we*

- *Cultivate deep, long-term relationships.*
- *Support the work of global workers.*
- *Help each other equip leaders, plant and build churches, and strengthen ministries of compassion.*

It is therefore extremely fitting that Mark will join us for worship and deliver the morning message on World Communion Sunday. During two trips to the Middle East, I have traveled with Mark, have gotten to know him well, and count him as a friend. He is a person of deep faith, who has a passion for the Gospel and a love for the global church and its people.

I encourage you to join us for worship online or in the sanctuary on Sunday, October 1!

Grace and peace,

Bruce

ENDOWMENT CORNER

Trick or Treat?



As little ones knock on our doors on Halloween shouting 'Trick or Treat', we know they are not expecting a trick. They expectantly wait for us to drop a treat into their little bags.

We on the Endowment Committee might wish we could go door to door and have people drop an Endowment 'treat' into our little bags....but we know that is not likely a wish that will come true... so we rely on the old fashioned way, we ask, we pray, we graciously say, "won't you please give to Endowment today?"

Tree of Life, Leaves Stones and Doves
Green Umbrella Note Cards
Outright Cash Gifts

As Coffee Hour begins again look for an Endowment table for the many ways you can give to Endowment.

Checks can be made out to First Presbyterian Church with a memo to Endowment.

All things future begin today!!!

Mission

200 CANS FOR OUR 200 YEARS!



Throughout the month of October, the Mission, Peace and Social Righteousness Team is sponsoring a canned food drive to benefit the Center for Food Action.

Donations may be placed in the bin in the cloister hallway!

PLEASE HELP US REACH OUR GOAL~THANK YOU!



On Sunday, September 3, the McDevitts delivered food made by First Pres volunteers for dinner for the men at St. Paul's homeless shelter in Paterson.

The meal consisted of Garlic Parmesan Chicken made by Janis Ax, Meatballs made by Marcia Unger, Garlic Parmesan Pasta made by Joel Torielli, a green salad made by Marjorie Vanacore, and Italian bread and clementines provided by Laura Magrath.

Many thanks to these faithful volunteers for providing this delicious meal!

If you are interested in helping out with the St. Paul's mission, or are still considering and have some questions, please contact Suzy McDevitt by text at 201-315-2063, or by email at suzyjmc2@yahoo.com. We still have a few spots that need to be filled for the October and December meals (always the first Sunday of the month).



The Summer Produce Mission is still going! To volunteer meet at the Ridgewood train station at 1:45 PM on Sundays to pack up produce and transport back to the church.

Walk & Talk @ the Ridgewood Duck Pond: Thursdays October 5, 12, 19 & 26



Are you looking for a way to get more exercise and enjoy the beautiful fall weather? Would you like to connect with friends from church during the week? Then Walk & Talk is for you! On the following dates, be sure to join Pastor Bruce and your First Pres friends at 6:00 p.m. for an hour of exercise and lively conversation as we walk the path around the Duck Pond on East Ridgewood Avenue: Thursdays October 5, 12, 19 & 26. Put on your walking shoes and meet us at the flag pole (on the west side of the Duck Pond) between 5:45 and 6:00. And one more thing: bring a friend! See you at the Duck Pond!



Join us at Hammering 4 Habitat 2023 as we come together to thank our incredible volunteers and build walls for future Habitat homes. Volunteers are vital in our mission of building homes, communities, and hope in Passaic County. And because of that, we want to show our gratitude during our most exciting event of the year.

Friday
October 20, 2023
4pm to 7pm
First Presbyterian Church
722 E Ridgewood Ave., Ridgewood



What you can expect at H4H:

- **Build a wall**
Build framed walls for the construction of future Passaic County Habitat homes.
- **Sign and decorate studs**
Write special messages to future homeowner families, draw a picture, or simply sign your name. The positive and inspiring messages and decorations you share will be read by the homeowners and forever be part of their homes.
- **Fun for all ages**
As a thank you to our dedicated volunteers for sharing their time and talents with us, we will have family-friendly activities, a food truck, games, a bouncy house, giveaways, and crafts. All included with your FREE admission.

Sunday School Notes

Lessons covered Sept/Oct- Matthew 16:15-16 Creation/The Beginning/Stories of Moses: The Burning Bush, Moses leads the people out of Egypt, The plagues, Parting of the Red Sea, God provides manna from heaven, The 10 Commandments, and The Golden Rule.



Sunday, September 10th was Genesis Sunday and the Blessing of the Backpacks.

We had a lesson on creation and students enjoyed ice cream, cookies and chips during class! Church school classes began on September 24th. Students in grade school meet in Room 1 in the Nursery school annex and grades 5 thru Middle School meet in the McClure room and "on occasion" in the auditorium for class. Parents will receive a weekly email with updates. We will have music after the children's message each Sunday in the auditorium with Mrs. Schmeidecke before going to class and on Communion Sundays we will have music in Room 1!



Sunday, October 15th: Bible Presentations will be held during worship. Second grade students will receive Bibles! If your child is in 3rd grade or older and did not receive a Bible please contact MaryEllen Castaldo and we will include them! Email marecmt@aol.com.

Church School Habitat Project: Church school students of all grades will be decorating 2 x 4 studs for Habitat for Humanity. All grades are invited to participate on Sunday, October 8th and Sunday, October 15th after worship in the auditorium.

SUNDAY INFANT NURSERY IS AVAILABLE TO PARENTS! Nursery care is available for newborns through 3-year-olds during Sunday school time and during the 10:00 a.m. Sunday worship service. Our Nursery attendants are Sarah Eliya and Katie Paveo! We have adopted guidelines and policies to provide a safe environment for all children. There will be a child sign-in sheet in the nursery. Parents are required to sign the attendance form when dropping off and picking up their children.

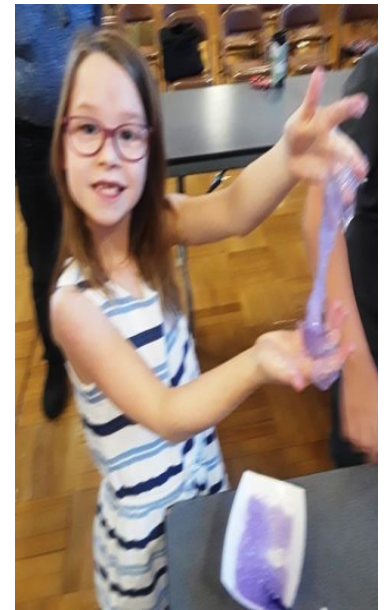


On Sunday Sept. 17th our church school Kickoff was held with High Touch High Tech! Tom or as he is referred to as “Tommy Tsunami” was our wonderful host and program director! Hands on

SCIENCE



science projects of all types were introduced, from making cold snow, to space mud, sparkly slime and they did a little ice fishing. Not to mention the volcano experiment that unexpectedly shot high up in the air! Now that was a sight to see! It was great fun for the children!



IN THE BEGINNING GOD CREATED THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH. GENESIS 1:1



Consecration Sunday is Coming!

Fall is our stewardship season. Our most anticipated event, *Consecration Sunday*, will be held on **Sunday, November, 19th** followed by our catered *Celebration Luncheon* directly after Service.

This year, as First Pres celebrates our bicentennial, we are laying the foundation for the future. Fittingly, our theme is “*Joyful Giving as we enter our Third Century*”.

Congregations that approach financial stewardship from a joyful perspective do not view the money Christians give to their church merely as a way to pay its bills. Rather, such congregations see financial contributions as a way to help people grow spiritually in their relationship with God by supporting their church’s mission and ministry.

During *Consecration Sunday*, our congregation will gather together during worship to make our financial commitments for the coming year to support our church’s mission, benevolent and educational ministries in this community and around the world. We share our blessings so that we may be a blessing to others. The enthusiastic practice of joyful giving over the past 200 years has enabled First Pres to continue to be a spiritual home, faithful to the teachings of Jesus Christ who encourages us all to give unselfishly as an act of discipleship.

Please add this important date to your calendar. Let’s all support First Pres’ mission and ministry results for 2024 as we continue to do God’s good work with “*feet that carry us out into the world, hands that serve, and with hearts in fellowship and faith*”.

First Wednesdays ~



What instrument would you be?

Thank you to Dawn Murdock for an inspirational talk and to Donna Flagg for hosting First Wednesdays in September.

Email Donna flaggbda@gmail.com to attend in October!





It's great to be back in the swing of things at the Weekday Nursery School! This year marks the 55th year of First Pres. Nursery School! In September, we had a well-attended Back to School Night. Many of our FPNS parents attended our Nursery School when they were preschoolers themselves! It is very exciting to have first and second generation of First Pres Nursery School families.

We are very busy enjoying getting to know one another and making new friends! With smiles on their faces and laughter amongst friends, the children have filled our school with joy! Lunch/Play and afternoon Enrichment classes are underway. As we work back into our regular routine, Weekly Gym, Music, and Spanish classes have begun as well.

We have a few fun events happening in October. We are looking forward to a visit from the Ridgewood Fire Dept. to acknowledge Fire Safety Month.

In preparation for Halloween, our students are rehearsing for the annual Halloween Parade on Friday, October 27th @ 9:15 am in the Auditorium.

Should you have any questions about our nursery school, please contact Julia Bolt, Director, @ 445-2552.





Holy Baptism

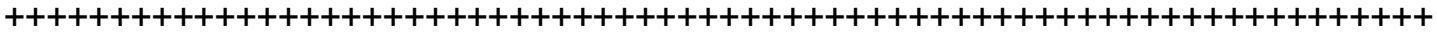


Chris and Sara Wilson presented their daughter~

Avery Rose Wilson

To receive the sacrament of baptism on 9/10/2023!

Welcome Avery, may God bless you always!



In 200 Seconds

What First Pres means to ~

Dave Shaw

Suzy McDevitt

Britt Tunick

Rev. Elmarie Parker, PC(USA) Regional liaison to Iraq, Syria & Lebanon was our guest preacher on 9/17/2023. Following worship she gave a presentation and answered questions. Members of the Mission, Peace, and Social Righteousness Team invited her out to dinner to thank her for her service!



THE DEACONS' RECEPTION ON 9/24/2023 WAS TO THANK ALL ELDERS AND DEACONS COMPLETING OR STARTING THEIR TERMS OF SERVICE.



Thank you for your service!

Elders: Robin Byrne, Andy Castaldi, Jill Critchley, Rick Friedl, Sandy Santangelo

Deacons: Jan Ax, Jan Cross, Greta Croucher, Lynn Malysy, Linda Strickland, Rodger Yaden





Susan Castaldi Peter Castaldo John Dickinson

Steven Eliya Joe Unger

Joel Torielli Luca Torielli Nicole Torielli

If you are not on our church birthday list, please send an email to joandavies916@gmail.com

Church Staff-

Pastor	Rev. Bruce Ballantine
Director of Children & Families	MaryEllen Castaldo
Director of Music	Dr. Ed Schmiedecke
Organist	Linda Sweetman Waters
Director Cherub Choir and Bells	Carol Schmiedecke
Administrative Manager	Dana Feeny
Tom Carozza	Sexton
Custodian	George Wood
Director Nursery School	Julia Bolt
Newsletter Editor	Joan Davies (Volunteer)

Church Phone (201) 652-2504

Pastor Bruce: (215) 337-5623 please contact him directly for Pastoral Care
www.firstpresridgewood.org

God 
makes everything
beautiful
in its time. -Ecclesiastes 3:11
Happy Fall!
hotglitterarts