



# The First Presbyterian Church of Ridgewood

## First Press Newsletter

722 E Ridgewood Ave, Ridgewood, NJ 07450  
(201) 652-2504

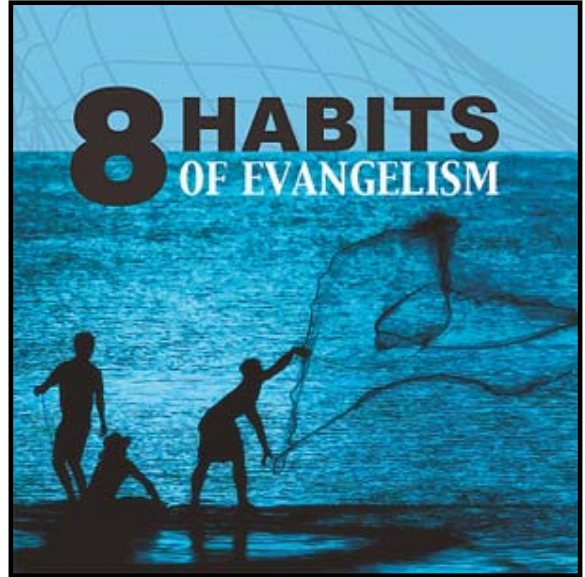
**April 2024**

*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,

When you hear the word *evangelism*, what may come to mind is a street preacher exhorting listeners to “get saved” or Christians going door to door, passing out tracts and talking to anyone who will listen. And while those approaches have their place and indeed have brought many into a relationship with Christ over the years, most of us would not be comfortable engaging in those practices.

Evangelism, simply stated, is sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with others. And the Office of Theology, Formation & Evangelism of the Presbyterian Mission Agency has developed an education series entitled *8 Habits of Evangelism*, which is designed to take a more holistic approach to sharing the good news.



The good news is about a God of love, who has a loving purpose for the world, and there are multiple ways in which a faith community can live out that good news and enable others to experience it.

During the months of April and May, on four Sundays following coffee hour, we will hold a gathering to explore four of the eight habits. Each gathering will begin with a short video focused on a particular aspect of holistic evangelism, followed by a discussion. And each gathering will take place in the Dining Room or Minnema Room.

|                         |                   |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Sunday, April 14</b> | <b>Fellowship</b> |
| <b>Sunday, May 5</b>    | <b>Worship</b>    |
| <b>Sunday, May 19</b>   | <b>Teaching</b>   |
| <b>Sunday, May 26</b>   | <b>Generosity</b> |

On these four dates, please plan to grab a cup of coffee and a bite to eat, then join us for stimulating and thoughtful conversation. Your participation will serve as one building block in our endeavor to build congregational vitality here at First Pres.

In the words of presenter Tod Bolsinger, “These exercises are meant to be done in groups of people who want others to come to the table.” I hope you will come and be part of this group!

Grace and peace,  
Bruce

## Walk & Talk



**Do you enjoy the outdoors?  
Do you enjoy walking?  
Do you enjoy stimulating conversation?**

Join Pastor Bruce and your First Pres friends for an hour of fresh air, exercise and fellowship!  
We'll walk & talk on Thursday evenings from 6:00 to 7:00 at the Duck Pond in Ridgewood!  
Thursday, April 25 - Thursday, May 30

See you at the flagpole near the front parking lot @ 6:00!

### MISSION:



On March 3rd, the Torielli family delivered dinner provided by First Pres Volunteers to the men at St Paul's shelter. On the menu was Chicken Casserole provided by Linda Cascardo, Chicken Thighs provided by Dana Feeney, Pasta Bolognese by CJ Torielli and friends, Fresh Salad by Marjorie Vanacore, and Fruit and Bread provided by Donna Flagg. Once again, the Torielli minivan smelled incredible on the way to Paterson.

Thank you so much to these volunteers for their generosity, time, and skill invested. We were allowed to bring the food into the kitchen and chat with the staff at the Shelter. The men were very thankful for everything.

We're looking for more volunteers on this outstanding mission. (We have slots to fill for April) You don't need to cook - you can provide fast food chicken or takeout.

Please contact the Torielli family by email: [Torielli@hotmail.com](mailto:Torielli@hotmail.com)  
or by text at **201-661-1452** if you are interested.



The Sunday School children learned the 10 commandments, Psalm 23, the Symbols of Lent, and a Holy Week lesson.

Thank you to all who served as liturgists during our season of Lent!

*Cole Bellorgey, Olivia Davis, David Edelbach, Maddie Eliya, Luke Eliya, Hudson Feeney, Laurie Feltmann, Chris Feltmann, Shane Strickland, CJ Torielli & Dante Torielli!*



Our **St. Patty's Bingo Event** was held on Sunday, March 17<sup>th</sup>. We had 30 Adults and children in attendance. Pizza, Popcorn Cupcakes and Cookies! It was Lots of Fun! Congratulations to all the winners!

**A special Thank you to CJ and Dante Torielli, for your leadership calling BINGO numbers! Well Done boys!**



Enjoying the Palm Sunday Animals on the Lawn





**Classes for Confirmation** begin this **Fall** in **October of 2024** for **8th** and **9th** grade **students**. If your child has not received his or her confirmation or if your child is older than 9th grade, please contact **MaryEllen Castaldo**.  
Email: [marecmt@aol.com](mailto:marecmt@aol.com) or text or call, **862-686-8956** .

### Endowment Corner April 2024



The Blessings of a Restless Heart

In medical terms the heart is a muscle, but it is the life force necessary to our continued existence as viable human beings. As such, the heart has grown to symbolize what is most valuable about our very being. To have 'heart' is to be kind, forgiving, generous and loving. A 'restless heart' is a heart seeking to reconcile the forces that pull us away from a loving God with the forces that bring us into alignment with 'the peace that surpasses all understanding.'  
Philippians 4:6,7

Matthew 25:31-46 makes clear what may quiet a 'restless heart' and adhering to the Matthew 25 scripture may be the blessing that leads us 'home'. The work of the Endowment ministry is to grow our resources and use them wisely to help feed the hungry, to give drink to the thirsty, to provide shelter for the homeless, to clothe those without clothing, to visit the sick, and to visit those in prison. Endowment also enables us to care for our own church's unbudgeted needs; for our church is where we come together to worship and give thanks for our blessings.

A gift to Endowment is a gift that keeps on giving while we are here and long after we are gone. Only the interest and income from investment is spent and the base continues to grow.

With the arrival of Spring our '**Tree of Life**' is continuing to sprout new Leaves. Stones also are accumulating at its base. If you would like to honor or memorialize someone with a Leaf or Stone, please take a brochure from the tables in the hallway or contact Laura Magrath at (201)214-3499 or Joanne Bonwick at (201) 280-6621.



# Fish & Chips 2024



\*Photography: Joanne Bonwick



The **Mission, Peace and Social Righteousness Team** would like to thank everyone who participated and/or donated to the Fish and Chips One Great Hour of Sharing Fundraiser!

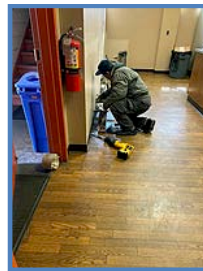
Thank you to Pastor Bruce, Donna Flagg, Marjorie Vanacore, and Laura Magrath for helping with set up and special thanks to Richard and Joan Davies, Dana Feeney, Bobbe Kutcha, Jessica Strader Paz, Steven Paz, and Joe Unger for braving the spring arctic wind and rain!

**We raised a record \$1,357.00 from this event!**

Just a reminder- One Great Hour of Sharing offerings will continue to be collected through April and the **MPSRT will match all donations** received up to \$5000.00. So if you have not done so, please consider donating to this PCUSA Special Offering and by doing so you will be "Restoring Hope, Feeding the Hungry, and Empowering the Oppressed"!

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## It's happening!



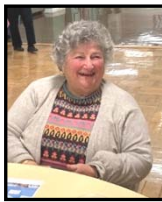
Thanks to the amazing generosity of the Massey and Magrath families and support from the Endowment Fund **a new kitchen is coming!**

HDR Construction (the same company that renovated the manse) has been hired to renovate the kitchen. Town permits have been approved and demolition to begin next month! The kitchen design team, appointed by Session, was able to sell our old appliances to add \$ to the kitchen fund!

Please refrain from entering the kitchen unless it is absolutely necessary as there are exposed and capped utility lines. The Deacons flower ministry has been moved to the sacristy.

**Stay tuned for updates!**

# Lenten Series and Suppers



\*Photography: Joanne Bonwick



Last month, the children and teachers enjoyed a school wide theme of Read Across America. Everyone enjoyed special stories, creative crafts, and wearing silly clothes.



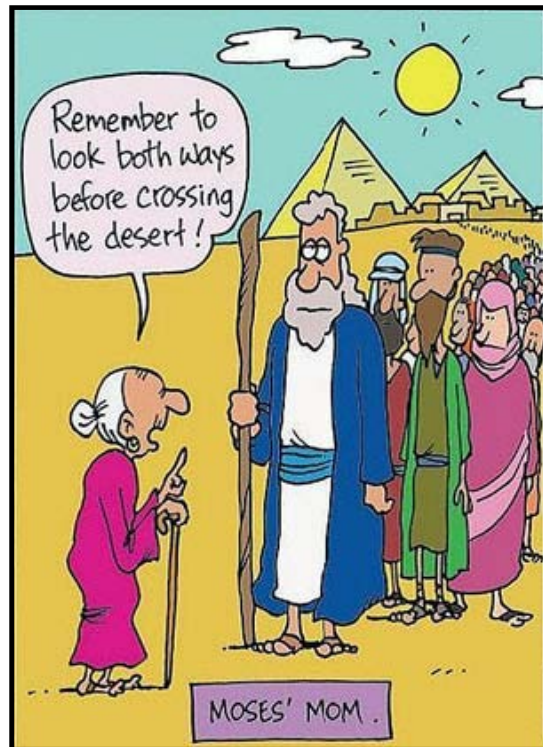
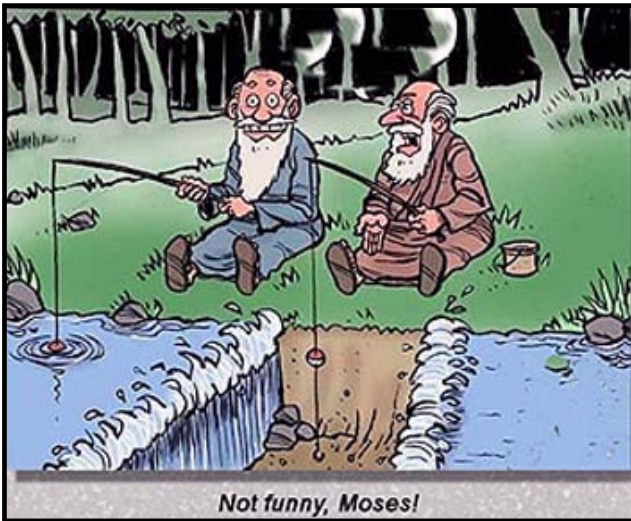
Our Threes class, were "hands-on" with their community helper unit, learning about dentists, doctors, and veterinarians. The children loved dressing up in lab coats and using play medical tools to care for baby dolls and stuffed animals. They also used real band-aids and gauze to create artwork! Other fun activities included brushing "teeth" with shaving cream, matching up band-aid letters on "boo boo bears", and reading stories about community helpers. They especially enjoyed learning more from Eliana, the dental hygienist, who visited each classroom from Pediatric Dental Associates of Ridgewood.



Registration for the 2024-2025 school year is underway! We offer programs for children 2 ½ years – 5 years, 5 days/week. Please contact **Julia Bolt, Director**, at **201-445-2552** for more information and a tour of our preschool. Church members receive a tuition discount. We offer a fun, nurturing environment, while preparing our children for kindergarten. We look forward to hearing from you!



☺ Just for laughs ☺



**Question: Why was my paycheck envelope full of Parsley ?**

**Answer: Someone garnished my wages!**

**The Church Mouse:**

**Thought for the month:**

"Go as far as you can see; when you get there, you'll be able to see further."

...Thomas Carlyle



**Church Staff**

**Pastor Rev. Bruce Ballantine**

**Director of Children & Families:** MaryEllen Castaldo

**Director of Music:** Dr. Edward Schmiedecke

**Organist:** Linda Sweetman Waters

**Director of Youth Music & Handbells:** Carol Schmiedecke

**Administrative Manager:** Dana Feeney

**Bookkeeper:** Lavonne McMillen

**Sexton:** Tom Carozza

**Custodian:** George Wood

**Director Nursery School:** Julia Bolt

**Newsletter Editor:** Carrie Werner

(Volunteer)

**Photography and Community**

**Bulletin Board:** Joanne Bonwick (Volunteer)

**Church Phone:** (201) 652-2504

**Church Web Site:** [www.firstpresridgewood.org](http://www.firstpresridgewood.org)

**Pastor Bruce:** (215) 337-5623 Please contact him directly for Pastoral Care.