

FIRST PRESS NEWSLETTER



February

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,

Three years ago during Lent, we created a midweek worship service combined with a simple meal. During those three years, the Lenten Supper Series met a need by providing food for body and soul. While we're unable to gather in-person to share a meal this year due to restrictions caused by the pandemic, we can still gather online to experience a brief worship service and listen as members and friends share a portion of their faith journey. All are encouraged to make this series a part of your Lenten practice!

Grace and peace,

Bruce



2021 Lenten Suppers Minus the Calories Series Journeys of Faith

Join us at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesdays on Zoom as First Pres members and friends share a portion of their faith journey. Zoom will open at 6:45 for those who would like to sign on early and visit with friends. The evening will conclude at 7:30. A Zoom link will be emailed each week on Monday.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
2/24	Elise Bates Russell, Executive Director Johnsonburg Camp and Retreat Center
3/03	Joan Davies, First Pres Clerk of Session
3/10	Steven Dear, First Pres Session Member
3/17	Robin Brickman VP of Consistory, Wyckoff Reformed Church
3/24	Dawn Murdock, First Pres CE Co-Chair

Come and receive food for your soul. And one more thing: Invite a friend to join us!



Christian Ed and Growth committees are sponsoring this soup fundraiser!

How it works:

- A Sign up Genius link will be emailed to our church members on Sat. January 23
- If you are not able to access Sign up Genius call or text MaryEllen at 862-686-8956
- An array of soups and chili's and stew have been listed for you to purchase
- Sign up and place your order
- **Soups are \$10.00 a quart, Chili and Stew are \$12.00 a quart**
- We are providing a curbside "drive thru pick up" at church on Sat. Feb. 6th 1pm to 2pm
- You can also pick up your soup or chili on Sunday, February 7th immediately after worship service.

****The amounts of stew, soup and chili are limited and offered until sold out! ****

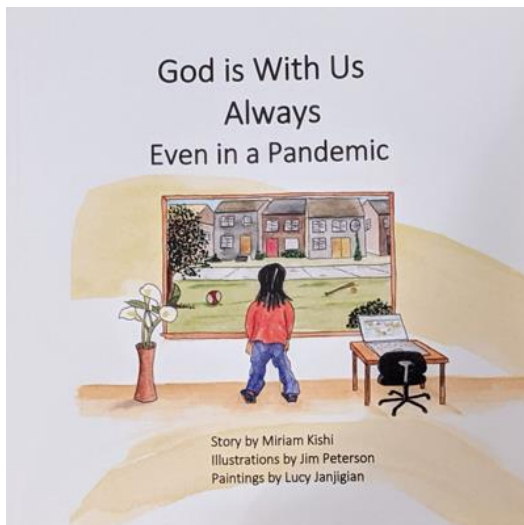
Lenten Devotional booklets will be available along with youth Lenten calendars!



**If you do not wish to place an order for soup
You can still get into the game by making a donation!**

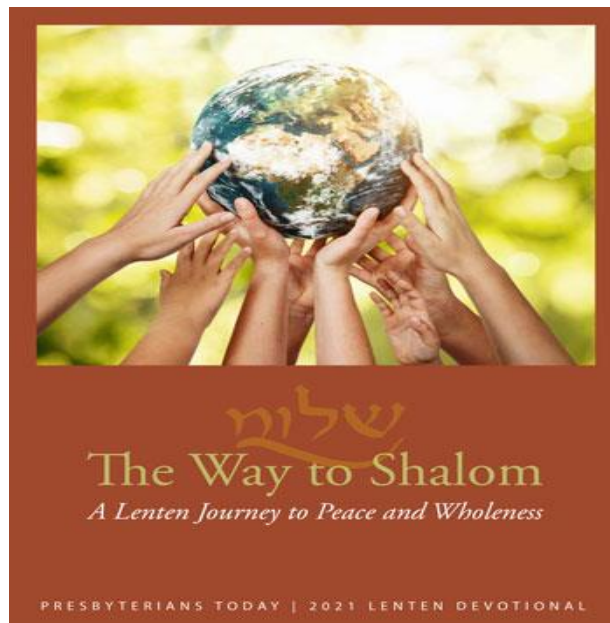


All proceeds will support Eva's Village in Paterson, NJ



God created our beautiful world. People fill their days, keeping very busy. But at times the life they've known is shattered by something unexpected, such as a pandemic. God's amazing gift is God's presence with us in the midst of all of life. In the good times and in the unexpected hard times, we are never alone. God is with us--always!

Written by members of a Presbyterian Church in Sunnyvale, CA, this book is available on Amazon for \$15.00.



The Way to Shalom A Lenten Journey to Peace and Wholeness

Lent is all about spiritual renewal. It is a sacred time of preparation for Easter and a time to reflect on what God has done to redeem us and how we can live a whole and full life as a child of God.

Many of us see Lent as a season of penitence, fasting, service and contemplation - but at the top of our list should be a prayer for the acquisition of peace. In our devotional this year, we invite you to reflect upon the gift of shalom, the Hebrew word with a host of meanings: peace, security, well-being, health, completeness. Our spiritual goal: *exploring how can we receive this gift of shalom and, in turn, bestow it upon the world.*

Now, more than ever, we deeply crave shalom. Our world is in desperate need of peace. The United States has just come out of a contentious election, a struggle with a global pandemic, and painful racial violence. Poverty, misery and despair fill many corners of the world. Yes, we desire peace. We need peace.

The Way to Shalom is online and free for download or printing. You're invited to use it, share it, excerpt from it and make it your spiritual companion this Lent. Copy and paste link in your browser.

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/today/lent2021>



The Ash Wednesday service will take place in the sanctuary at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 17th. As a precaution against the spread of COVID-19, there will be no imposition of ashes. Members can come and worship in-person or join via livestream.

The link will be provided as the date draws near.

Paterson Habitat Volunteers Needed: Construction & ReStore

Volunteers are needed on our construction sites and at our ReStore!

Construction Sites:

Volunteers are needed on select Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. You can find available dates and registration information [here](#). *Please only register if you are able to attend.* *All volunteers must be 16 or older, and minors must be accompanied by an adult.* *All volunteers must wear masks while on the work sites, and temperatures will be taken upon arrival.*

For questions or to schedule a group of 3 people or larger please email ashley@patersonhabitat.org.

ReStore:

The ReStore in Wayne is in need of volunteers who are able to operate a computerized point of sale system (you will be trained!). A minimum of one 4 hour shift per week is requested (10am to 2pm, or 2pm to 6pm). Volunteers must be 18 years old or older. PPE will be provided and there is minimal customer interaction. If interested please email Manager@patersonrestore.org.



One Great Hour of Sharing is the single, largest way that Presbyterians come together every year to work for a better world. Each gift to One Great Hour of Sharing helps improve the lives of the suffering and the vulnerable.



Our church's OGHS campaign will start during Lent, so stay tuned!

Endowment Corner

The Heart of the Matter...



Valentine's Day conjures up images of romantic love and gifts of candy and flowers. Webster's Dictionary defines love as, 'a quality or feeling of strong or constant affection for and dedication to another'.

But love in its larger context begs a deeper definition. For that we turn to our Judeo Christian 'Manual' for life, the Bible.



There are hundreds of references about love in the 'manual' and one of those is stated in I Corinthians 13: 4-8 – ***“Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away”***

And in 1 Corinthians 13:13, ***“So now faith, hope and love abide these three; but the greatest of these is love.”***

As members of the Endowment Committee we work to build a sound financial foundation for the present and future of the church and through love and concern for others to provide rescue to those in greatest need.



You can begin at home to show love and concern for fellow members by supporting our **Green Umbrella** project. Check out our variety of cards on the table in the hallway and surprise someone with a loving message.

They'll be glad you did.

Instructions are in the packet.

For more information email Joanne Bonwick at – joannedbonwick@gmail.com



WE KNOW GOD
E THAT causes
everything
work together
FOR THE
GOOD to those
we love GOD &
ARE CALLED
according to HIS Purpose FOR THEM





If you need help pre-registering for the vaccine, please let the church office know.

[COVID-19 Vaccine \(nj.gov\)](https://www.nj.gov/health/covid-19/vaccine/)

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 and Handbells	Carol Schmiedecke
Administrative Manager	Dana Feeney
Youth Leader	Jessica Strader
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


Lenten Prayer

GOD OF GOODNESS AND MERCY,

**HEAR MY PRAYER AS I BEGIN THIS LENTEN JOURNEY WITH YOU.
LET ME BE HONEST WITH MYSELF AS I LOOK INTO MY HEART AND SOUL,
NOTICING THE TIMES I TURN AWAY FROM YOU. GUIDE ME AS I HUMBLY SEEK
TO REPENT AND RETURN TO YOUR LOVE.**

**MAY HUMILITY GUIDE MY EFFORTS TO BE RECONCILED WITH YOU AND LIVE FOREVER
IN YOUR ABUNDANT GRACE.**

**TRANSFORM ME THIS LENT, HEAVENLY FATHER. GIVE ME THE STRENGTH TO
COMMIT MYSELF TO GROW CLOSER TO YOU EACH DAY.**

AMEN.

