



# Stirling Stuff

Volume 59, No. 3

March 2015

## **Pastor's Letter**

Dear Friends,

Last month I talked about Lent, but I have some more thoughts to share with you as some things have been shared with me that I would like to pass along.



We have begun our Lenten journey that takes us to Holy Week. We often think of Lent as a time to reflect on our sin and, in a more modern and comfortable way, we think we should mortify our bodies, or flagellate our spirits. We do this by giving up things that we like, such as chocolate, or ice cream, or dessert, or something else we like, and can easily do without. However, does this really transform us and prepare us to hear the pain and good news of Holy Week? It is obvious that I don't believe that it does. How can we observe a transforming Lent?

Recently, a pastor friend of mine posted on her Facebook page a link to a site that lists 40 things to give up for Lent, but they are not things you normally think of. The first five are: fear of failure, your comfort zone, feelings of unworthiness, impatience, and retirement. I cannot list all 40 in this space, but you can go to <http://gs4nj.org/40-things-the-give-up-for-lent-the-list/> and get the list. I will have some copies of the list available for you if you don't have a computer. You can also purchase it in a devotional book format or have a daily devotional sent to your email each day. The list was developed by Rev. Phil Ressler of the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Old Bridge, NJ.

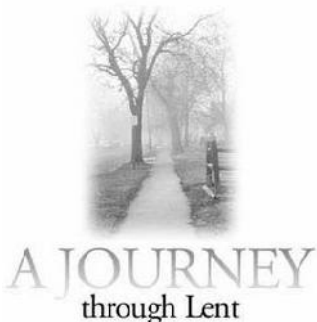
The list suggests that the church has gotten too far away from actually living the way Jesus wanted us to live. The church is more interested in appearances. The truth is that Jesus wanted us to be concerned with relationships, with how we treat our brothers and sisters in humanity. Lent is our time to recognize how we get in the way of those relationships and to repent and find new life in Christ and with each other.

As I announced last month, I will be preaching a series of sermons entitled *Walking the Via Dolorosa*. This series will focus on some of the people we encounter in the accounts of the last few days of Jesus' earthly life, and I will draw some spiritual applications from their words or actions. The sermons are listed under the worship services section of this newsletter.

I hope you will join us for this series and in our Lenten journey. Let us prepare ourselves to hear the shout of good news, "He is risen!"

See you in church!

*Tom*



The First Presbyterian Church of Stirling  
**Feeding Those Who Hunger**

## Worship Services and Scripture Passages for March

### March 1, 2015

- *Second Sunday in Lent*
- *Sacrament of Holy Communion*
- *Non-Perishable Food Collection*  
Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16; Psalm 22:22-31;  
Romans 4:13-25; Mark 8:31-38  
***Walking the Via Dolorosa***  
**2. *The Council – Rules vs. Love***  
Mark 15:1-15

### March 8, 2015

- *Third Sunday in Lent*  
Exodus 20:1-17; Psalm 19;  
1 Corinthians 1:18-25; John 2:13-22  
***Walking the Via Dolorosa***  
**3. *The Mocking Soldiers –***  
***Going with the Crowd***  
Mark 15:16-20

### March 15, 2015

- *Fourth Sunday in Lent*  
Numbers 21:4-9; Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22;  
Ephesians 2:1-10; John 3:14-21  
***Walking the Via Dolorosa***  
**4. *Simon of Cyrene – When Life is Hijacked***  
Mark 15:21

Worship begins at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings,  
followed by Fellowship Hour in Pollard Hall.

Child Care is provided in the Nursery.  
Children join their families in church and then leave for  
Christian Education classes after the Children's Talk.



### March 22, 2015

- *Fifth Sunday of Lent*  
Jeremiah 31:31-34; Psalm 51:1-12;  
Hebrews 5:5-10; John 12:20-33  
***Walking the Via Dolorosa***  
**5. *The Thieves – Opening to God's Grace***  
Luke 23:39-43

### March 29, 2015

- *Palm/Passion Sunday*
- *Procession of the Palms*  
Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29; Mark 11:1-11;  
***The Pursuit of Justice is Redemptive***  
Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 31:9-16;  
Philippians 2:5-11; Mark 14:1-15

In the Lenten series, ***Walking the Via Dolorosa***,  
the scripture after the sermon title is the one that  
will be used in the sermon. The ones before the  
sermon are the lectionary readings for that Sunday.

For Palm/Passion Sunday, the readings  
before the sermon title are the readings for  
Palm Sunday. The ones after the title are  
the readings for Passion Sunday.

Rev. Peters' sermons and the scripture readings  
are posted on the church website.  
Visit: [www.fpcstirling.org](http://www.fpcstirling.org), click on:  
"Sermon Archive," then select the sermon  
and/or scripture reading date you would like.



### Pastor's Coffee Klatch

The next Coffee Klatch will be on **Sat., March 7<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 a.m.**, at the Stirling House Diner. If you have a question, just want to talk, or have a friend you want to introduce to our church, plan to join Rev. Peters at the diner. Since he will not be doing any counseling, if you come and someone else is sitting with him, pull up a chair and join them.



Per Capita Apportionment

This year the Per Capita amount we are assessed **per member is \$33**. This money enables the Presbyterian Church (USA) and its Councils (Presbytery and Synod) to do their work. Please help out by paying the \$33 for each member of your family who is a member of the church. The Per Capita envelope can be found in the front of your offering envelopes box. Thank you.

Masterwork Chorus

- Rev. Peters

Tickets are now on sale for Masterwork Chorus's upcoming concert, "Come Away," to be held on **Saturday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, 8:00 p.m.**, at Calvary Episcopal Church in Summit. Led by guest conductor Sun Min Lee, it celebrates love and life and features works by Brahms, Elgar, Paulus, Gardiner, and Hogan.



If you like classical choral music, this is a must concert for you. You can order tickets at [www.masterwork.org](http://www.masterwork.org).

Christian Education Committee

- Lore Pateman

Souper Bowl of Caring Collection

- Tom Parziale



On behalf of the youth of our church, I am pleased to announce that we collected **\$300** in our Souper Bowl of Caring collection on Super Bowl Sunday. This is a new high amount for us. The youth voted to split the donation equally between Family Promise of Morris County and the Community Food Bank of New Jersey in Hillside. Thank you for your support of this project.

Youth Church School Class

- Tom Parziale

Building on the theme of the special Souper Bowl of Caring collection, when the class met on Sunday, February 1<sup>st</sup>, we talked about being hungry. We discussed physical and mental pain. Words to describe what it would feel like to be hungry included: aggressive, irritated, and uncomfortable.



We discussed how fortunate we are and how others are in unfortunate situations. Our key focus was to take steps to figure out how each one of us can help.

Adult Education

- Debra Sprague

Book Study Group

Our study of Barbara Brown Taylor's book, *Learning to Walk in the Dark*, will continue on **Tuesday, March 17<sup>th</sup>, at 7:30 p.m.** We will meet at the home of Ed and Jenny Chang, 44 Wolf Hill Rd., Warren to discuss Chapters 3 & 4. Upcoming meeting dates: 4/14, 5/12

Joint-Church Lenten Sunday Soup Supper and Study Series

Series continues on Sundays, March 1<sup>st</sup> to March 22<sup>nd</sup>, from 5:00–7:00 p.m.

**“Seeing Ourselves in Those Confronted by Jesus” & *Songs of the Bible***

A man ran up to Jesus, knelt before him and asked, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” This is a question that is central to the life of the Christian faith, and Jesus’ answer is both reassuring and troubling. Our five-week Three-Church Lenten Study this year will focus on some of the groups of people with whom Jesus interacted and how Jesus affirmed or challenged their understandings of what it means to be a person of faith, a follower of God. Join us as we learn about the Pharisees, Sadducees, the Essenes and Zealots, the disciples, the women who followed Jesus, and how we folks of the 21<sup>st</sup> century might also be affirmed and challenged by how Jesus responded to these groups.

Each of the three churches will have opportunities to host the Lenten Sunday Soup and Study programs, and the discussions will be led by the pastors and lay folk. The group will begin on the Sunday evenings listed below with a soup supper at 5:00 p.m., followed by the study and discussion. The evening will conclude by 7:00 p.m. Child care will be provided.

In addition, Roberta Keller, organist and choir director at Meyersville, is planning a short (½ hour) Lenten contemplative musical program based on the *Songs of the Bible* – Esther’s song, Miriam’s song, and Mary’s song. This will begin at 4:00 p.m. each Sunday, which will allow folks time to get to the Soup and Study as well.

Date	Topic	Host	Leader
March 1	<i>The Essenes</i>	TUC	Tom Peters
March 8	<i>The Zealots</i>	MPC	Tom Peters
March 15	<i>The Disciples</i>	FPC	Heather Harris-Galgoci
March 22	<i>The Women</i>	TUC	Barbara Aspinall

MPC = Meyersville Presby. Church, 223 Hickory Tavern Rd, Gillette

TUC = Trinity United Church, 118 King George Rd, Warren

FPC = First Presby. Church, 158 Central Ave, Stirling

Fourth Sunday Focus, March 22<sup>nd</sup>

- Tom Parziale

*Fourth Sundays* give us an opportunity to connect with other members of our church family in a relaxed atmosphere: a pot of tea, a Box o’ Joe, Munchkins . . . and conversation.



In February, we had two sessions and discussed, “Looking Back to Look Ahead,” and “Mountain Climbing.” Our next “Fourth Sunday Focus” gathering will be on **March 22<sup>nd</sup>**. We start around **8:45 a.m.** and end by about 9:45 a.m., but join us whenever you can. If you have a topic you’d like to discuss, please contact Tom Parziale.

Worship Committee

- Janet Parziale

Non-Perishable Food Collection, March 1<sup>st</sup>

**On the first Sunday of each month**, we collect donations of non-perishable food during the worship service. While we are receiving the Lord's Supper, we also want to provide for others. The food is donated to the township food pantry at St. Vincent Church. We continue to collect non-perishable food in the baskets located in the church entry-ways during the rest of the month.

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Dedication of the Kupferman/Giordano Piano

During worship on Sunday, **March 15<sup>th</sup>**, we will be dedicating the piano that was donated to the church in December. The piano was given in memory of the mothers of Howard Kupferman and Elaine Giordano. We hope you will join us for this special day. Also, Session has approved a five-concert series to be held in our church this year, which Howard and a friend will be orchestrating. If the series is successful, we will host more in the future. This is a way that we can feed those who hunger for music and emotional connections with others in our town. We are grateful to Howard and Elaine for this wonderful gift.

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Palm/Passion Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup>

Please join us as we continue our Lenten journey during Holy Week, beginning with Palm/Passion Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup>. Our young people will pass out branches of eco-palms to the congregation, and we will celebrate with the procession of the palms.



Looking Ahead: Holy Week continues on Maundy Thursday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> and Good Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, and concludes with the celebration of Resurrection of the Lord / Easter Sunday, on April 5<sup>th</sup>.

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Annual Fish Dinner Planning Meeting

- Lore Pateman &amp; Paul Wermuth

Sunday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, following morning worship

Time is flying by, and it's time to start planning our Annual Argyle's Fish Dinner, which will be held on **Sat., June 6<sup>th</sup>**. Anyone interested in helping, please plan to attend this meeting. We will put together a list of tasks to do over the next few months to prepare for the dinner. Hope to see you there.

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Mission Committee

- Madeline Hahl

Bridges Outreach Lunch Program

- Jean Hoffman, Coordinator



Our next commitment date for preparing 40 lunches is: **Friday, March 6<sup>th</sup>, 9:30 a.m.**, in Pollard Hall. We are in need of small cartons of juice, snacks of pudding, cookies, nuts, Goldfish, pretzels, etc., fruit cups, and plastic spoons. Cash donations are always appreciated and help with the purchase of bread and lunch meat. You can drop items off in Pollard Hall on Sunday mornings, or give cash donations to Madeline or Jean. Thank you!

Upcoming Dates: April 10, May 1, June 12

Family Promise of Morris County

- Phyllis Clemson &amp; Jan Somers

An Evening of Promise: Recognizing Volunteers & Community Service

Date: Thursday, March 26  
 Time: 6:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.  
 Place: Meadow Wood Manor, 461 Route 10 East, Randolph



Please join us for the evening as we thank our volunteers and community partners who dedicate their time, energy, and resources to help eliminate homelessness in our community. Dinner will be served, and there will be live music and our fabulous tricky tray! We are truly grateful for all you do and look forward to seeing you there!

For more information, please call 973-998-0820, or e-mail [info@familypromisemorris.org](mailto:info@familypromisemorris.org).

STOP HUNGER NOW

- Lore Pateman

Mission Opportunity – A Meal Packaging Event for the Entire Presbytery

Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>  
 Community Presbyterian Church  
 220 Main St., Chester

2 work sessions: 10:00 – Noon; 1:00 – 3:00 PM  
 Lunch will be served to both groups at noon

Pre-registration is required by April 1<sup>st</sup> (need to advise STOP HUNGER NOW group how much food to bring)  
 Cost is \$5.00 for each registrant – covers the cost of shipping the meals

Let's get a group together to attend this event. There is a sign-up sheet on the Mission bulletin board in Pollard Hall, or email Lore Pateman at [lore.pateman@adp.com](mailto:lore.pateman@adp.com).

Deacons Corner

- Katherine Ihringer

Believe it or not, Easter is right around the corner! Get ready to order some beautiful flowers that will be at the church on Easter Sunday, April 5th. Last year we had Tulips, Lillies, Daffodils, and other pretty flowers. Ordering forms will be in the bulletin. If you have any questions, contact Israel or see him after church.

I just want to remind everyone about the green envelopes in the pews. They are for the Deacons and are our source of funding. Any donations will be greatly appreciated!

Church Flowers

Don't forget to sign up on the Flower Chart in Pollard Hall if you would like to place flowers on the chancel for Sunday morning worship in honor or memory of someone. Allow enough lead time to have them ordered for the date you would like. The cost is \$30, and cash or checks (made payable to: Flowers on the Ridge) should be given to Israel Sierra.



When you sign up on the flower chart, please be specific, i.e. in memory, honor, given by, and print clearly. Thank you.

Earth Hour – Saturday, March 28<sup>th</sup>, 8:30 p.m.

It's time to switch off the lights during Earth Hour!

Millions of people around the world **switch off their lights for Earth Hour at 8:30 p.m. on the last Saturday of March** each year. Make Earth Hour an event to share with your family and friends!

Water Available During Worship

There is a pitcher of water and cups available in the Church narthex in case you need a drink during worship. Please feel free to help yourself or signal an Usher to bring it to you.

Church Website

Our Church website, [www.fpcstirling.org](http://www.fpcstirling.org), is your source for church news, the Church calendar, Stirling Stuff, upcoming events/programs, Pastor's sermons, Scripture readings, Church history, and more. Please make it a point to log on regularly and keep up-to-date with what's happening.

These Days

*"These Days has been the concrete expression of the church's witness to the love of Jesus Christ to the world for more than three decades."*

Our Church has a subscription for multiple copies of this devotional booklet; they are available in the Church narthex.

Labels/Box Tops for Education: Pop-Top Can Tabs

- Jan Somers

Please continue to save Labels for Education, Box Tops for Education, and pop-top can tabs. The labels are used by parent organizations to earn educational and recreational items for students. The can tabs are sold by weight to recycling centers, and the proceeds are donated to Ronald MacDonald House to help fund their programs for hospitalized children and their families. There is a collection canister in the church office. Thank you.



\*Please note: Prices for the Easter flowers/plants are not yet available from the florist. We will notify you as soon as we have them.

**EASTER FLOWERS/PLANTS ORDER FORM**

The Deacons are coordinating the ordering of flowers/plants to be placed on the chancel for Easter morning in memory or honor of someone special in your life. Please use the order form below or the forms available in the Sunday bulletin to place your order. The deadline to order is Monday, March 30<sup>th</sup>.

	<u>What Color?</u>	<u>How many?</u>	<u>Total Price</u>
<b>Azaleas.</b> (Red, White, Pink)	_____	_____	_____
<b>Daffodils.</b> (All Yellow)	_____	_____	_____
<b>Lilies</b> (All White)	_____	_____	_____
<b>Tulips</b> (Yellow, Pink, or Purple)	_____	_____	_____
<b>TOTALS</b>		_____	_____

Flowers are purchased in **MEMORY / HONOR** of:  
Please circle one

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Given By:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Please print clearly

To be picked up following worship on Easter morning: \_\_\_\_\_ To be planted at Church: \_\_\_\_\_

Please submit your order and check to Israel Sierra or the church office, or place it in the offering plate.

Deadline to order: Monday, March 30<sup>th</sup>

Make checks payable to: Flowers on the Ridge and note: Easter Flowers on your check. Thank you.



## Ongoing Mission Programs

### Road to Bridges

Change (and more) collected during coffee hour supports Bridges Program, providing 40 lunches per month for NJ/NY homeless.

### Township Food Pantry

Items can be left in baskets labeled "Food Pantry Donations" in the Church narthex and on the table outside of Pollard Hall.

### Toiletries

Full-sized and "courtesy" sized bars of soap, shampoo, and conditioner, and shower caps are donated to various causes. Place on the pew inside Pollard Hall.

### Sneaker Project

Place used pairs of sneakers (any size) on the pew inside Pollard Hall. They are sent to the Somerset Food Bank and other charities.

### Eyeglasses, Sunglasses, Cell Phones

Place used glasses and cell phones on the pew inside Pollard Hall.

### Yarn & Fabric

Yarn is used to make lap robes for wounded veterans, afghans for battered women, and hats for newborns in hospitals; any color is acceptable. Fabric (with the exception of wool and stretchables) of about 1/2 yard is used to make small bears for children, totes for wheelchair patients, etc. Place on pew inside Pollard Hall.

## Ongoing Fundraisers

### ShopRite & Kings Gift Cards

- ✓ No additional cost to you to use
- ✓ Purchase cards at face value
- ✓ Church earns 5%
- ✓ Denominations available are:
  - ShopRite: \$20, \$50, \$100
  - Kings: \$50, \$100
- ✓ Gift Cards are available each week during Fellowship Hour or by contacting Jean Hoffman

### iGive

- ✓ No cost to you
- ✓ Log on / sign up / find out more at: <http://www.igive.com/FirstPresbyterianChurch-StirlingNJ>
- ✓ E-mail this information to your friends

Please e-mail submissions for the  
**April** issue of Stirling Stuff to:  
[jsomers17@hotmail.com](mailto:jsomers17@hotmail.com)  
by **March 19<sup>th</sup>**. Thank you!

**Why not invite a friend to church?**



*Stirling Stuff* is the newsletter of the

## The First Presbyterian Church of Stirling

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### Our Mission

Jesus said, "Feed My Sheep." This welcoming and caring family, empowered by the love of Christ, shares the grace and peace of God's blessings by serving those who are hungry in body or spirit.