



Stirling Stuff

Volume 60, No. 3

March 2016

Pastor's Letter



Last night at the first of our Lenten Soup and Study sessions, we began our discussion of Borg and Crossan's book, *The Last Week: A Day-by-Day Account of Jesus' Final Week in Jerusalem*. The book challenges us to see the events of Holy Week in a very different way from what we generally have thought about them. We talked about the triumphal entry we celebrate on Palm Sunday and how it was a judgement of the domination system perpetrated by Rome in collaboration with the priests of the temple. We talked about the story of Jesus chasing out the money-changers and how faith during Jesus' time was about worship and not about justice. Jesus' words and acts were a symbolic destruction of the temple, which happened in reality almost 40 years later when the Romans destroyed the temple.

I mention all of this because this kind of study takes us out of our comfort zones and causes us to reflect and perhaps rethink our understandings and actions as Christians and as the Church, which, to my mind, is what the season of Lent is all about. As I shared in my sermon yesterday, it is so easy to construct a Christianity and a Church around our specifications. We take the world we live in and mash it up with the words of scripture and see what appears. However, that is not how it is to be done. We are supposed to start with the scriptures and end with the scriptures. That is the only way we can be in the world and not of the world, as Jesus was. The writer of the Gospel of John reminds us of this in the words of Jesus' long prayer in John 17:14-16:

I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. ¹⁵I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. ¹⁶They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world.

Lent and Holy Week is our time, along with Advent, to take ourselves out of the world, to clear our eyes and reset our understanding with God. In our current election cycle, we are hearing so many different things coming out of candidates' mouths regarding what Christianity and Christ are all about. Some of it is not even Christian. We need to be clear about not only who Christ was, but also why he did and said the things he did and said. I hope you will take time to read and reflect on the scriptures during this Lent. Pick a Gospel and read a little of it each day during your Lenten journey. Attend the services of worship, especially during Holy Week, when there is a tendency to not attend Maundy Thursday or Good Friday because they are too depressing. They are important touchstones to what it means to be a follower of Christ. If you truly want to feel the joy of the Day of Resurrection, then you need to experience the whole of Holy Week.

May God bless you and all of us in our journey.

Tom

The First Presbyterian Church of Stirling
Feeding Those Who Hunger

Worship Services and Scripture Passages for March

March 6, 2016

- *Fourth Sunday in Lent*
- *Sacrament of Holy Communion*
- *Non-Perishable Food Collection*
Joshua 5:9-12; Psalm 32;
2 Corinthians 5:16-21; Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32
I Believe This Is Our Dance

March 13, 2016

- *Fifth Sunday in Lent*
Isaiah 43:16-21; Psalm 126;
Philippians 3:4b-14; John 12:1-8
What Did Mary Know?

March 20, 2016

- *Palm Sunday / Passion Sunday*
Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29;
Philippians 2:5-11; Luke 19:28-40
Travnicek Memorial Ringers will be playing
What's Subverting The Peace?

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.*

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



March 24, 2016

- *Maundy Thursday* ***at Stirling***
6:30 p.m. pot-luck supper; 7:30 p.m. service
Sacrament of Holy Communion
Exodus 12:1-14; Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19;
1 Corinthians 11:23-26; Luke 13:1-17, 31b-35
Rev. Barbara Aspinall preaching

March 25, 2016

- *Good Friday* ***7:30 p.m. at Meyersville***
Isaiah 52:13-53:12; Psalm 22;
Hebrews 10:16-25; Hebrews 4:14-16, 5:7-9
John 18:1-19:42
Rev. Tom Peters preaching
The Fear Of Separation

March 27, 2016

- *The Day of Resurrection*
- ***7 a.m. – Service at Hillview Farm, Meyersville***
10 a.m. – Service in our Sanctuary
Travnicek Memorial Ringers will be playing
Acts 10:34-43; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24;
1 Corinthians 15:19-26; John 20:1-18;
Luke 24:1-4
Whose Witness Is The Most Reliable?

**Scriptures that are listed after the first Gospel
reading are non-lectionary passages
that will be used in the sermon.
All the scriptures are provided here for
any weekly Bible reading you may do.**

Rev. Peters' sermons and the scripture readings
are posted on the church website.

Visit: 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 **Saturday, March 5th, 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.



Rev. Peters on Vacation

Rev. Peters will be on vacation the week after Easter. He and Barbara will be traveling to Cape Cod, MA. Rev. Aspinall will be on call while Tom is gone. If you need pastoral care during that time, please call Paulette at the church office or Israel Sierra (his number is in the church directory).

Service of Installation

On Sunday, February 7th, the following members of our congregation were installed:

As Elders:	Yvonne Fletcher	As Deacons:	Carolyn Malfatone
	Joyce Koenig		Rene' Phelan
	Sandy Mackay		

We congratulate and welcome each of them to their new terms of service to our church. Thank you to Susan Brodziak, Janet Parziale, and Mike and Barbara Nugent for their commitment and dedication as their terms end.

Christian Education Committee**- Lore Pateman****Souper Bowl of Caring Collection****- Tom Parziale**

Thanks to your generous support, our youth collected \$320 in their Souper Bowl of Caring Collection following worship on Super Bowl Sunday. They have chosen to split the donation between Family Promise of Morris County and the Market Street Mission in Morristown. Nationally, donations have totaled \$9,434,396. This is one more step towards fulfilling our Church's mission, **Feeding Those Who Hunger**.

**Adult Bible Study****- Rev. Peters**

We have begun our study of the **Gospel of John**, using the book *John*, by Gail O'Day and Susan Hylan, from the *Westminster Bible Companion* series. The class meets from **10:30 am to Noon every Thursday in the meeting room**. We have coffee and sometimes some delicious things to eat. **We invite you to join us** as we learn and share in fellowship, even if you have not been a part of it before or don't have the book.

Joint-Church Lenten Sunday Soup Supper and Study Series**- Debra Sprague**

This year's study is: ***The Last Week: What the Gospels Really Teach About Jesus' Final Days in Jerusalem***. We will be using a book of the same title by Marcus Borg and John Dominick Crossan, which looks at the last week in Jesus' life, using the Gospel of Mark. *(Participants do not have to purchase the book, but feel free to do so if you'd like to get into the topic in more depth.)*



We share in a soup supper at 5:00 p.m., followed by our study, and we end by 7:00 p.m. All are invited to come, and feel free to bring friends.

Our church is hosting the last two sessions on March 6th & 13th. We will need to provide soup, bread, beverage, dessert, and child care. Please sign-up in Pollard Hall so we have an idea of how many will be attending and what you will be bringing. Shaylyn Gallagan is coordinating child care for both sessions; please contact her if you'd like to help.

Fourth Sunday Focus, March 27th

- 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.



Our next “Fourth Sunday Focus” gathering will be on **March 27th** in Pollard Hall. We start around **8:45 a.m.** and end by about 9:45 a.m., but join us whenever you can. In January, our topic was Bible Ladder—you’d be surprised how many similarities there are between these two. In February, our topic was Learning; The Art of.

If you have a topic you’d like to discuss, please contact Tom Parziale.

Pictured here is our “Fourth Sunday Focus” leader, who would not let two fractured clavicles keep him from his post!

Worship Committee

- Janet Parziale

Liturgists for March:

March 6	Madeline Hahl	March 20	Sandy Mackay
March 13	Lore Pateman	March 27	Madeline Hahl

Non-Perishable Food Collection, March 6th

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.



***Following is a list of items most needed at the food pantry:**

- | | |
|---|---|
| Spaghetti Sauce (large jar) | Breakfast food: Pancake mix, jelly, coffee, tea |
| White Rice: 2 or 5 pound bags | Jello Gelatin |
| Macaroni and Cheese | Canned Beans: Cannellini, Garbanzo |
| Canned vegetables: | Dry Beans: Black, Kidney, Pinto |
| corn, carrots, beets, mixed veggies, yams | Spaghetti (long pasta only) |

Holy Week Worship Schedule

Palm Sunday, March 20th

We begin our observance of Holy Week with our Palm Sunday service at 10:00 a.m. The congregation will receive branches of eco-palms and the Travnicek Memorial Ringers will be playing as we celebrate Jesus’ triumphant procession into Jerusalem.





Maundy Thursday, March 24th, Stirling

The congregation of Meyersville Presbyterian Church will be joining us as we remember the Last Supper. The Worship Committee will host a pot-luck supper at 6:30 p.m., followed by worship and the Sacrament of Holy Communion at 7:30 p.m. in Pollard Hall. Rev. Aspinall will be preaching. Please sign up in Pollard Hall if you are planning to attend. (But, please join us for the supper, even if you have not signed up.)



Good Friday, March 25th, Meyersville

Our Holy Week observance concludes as we worship in Meyersville at 7:30 p.m. to commemorate the crucifixion of Jesus and his death at Calvary.

Resurrection Sunday, March 27th

Our Resurrection of the Lord/Easter Sunday celebration begins when we join with Meyersville Presbyterian Church for a hilltop service at Hillview Farm in Meyersville at 7:00 a.m.



We will then celebrate Christ's resurrection with a service in our sanctuary at 10:00 a.m. The Travnicek Memorial Ringers will be playing.

Please consider bringing a friend to any of the services during this significant time of year. Visitors are always welcome.

Deacons Corner

Easter Flowers/Plants

The Deacons are coordinating the ordering of flowers/plants to be placed on the chancel for Easter morning. If you would like to place an order, please complete the **form on page 9** of this newsletter. Forms will also be available in church on Sunday mornings. **The deadline to order is Monday, March 21st.**

Deacons' Fund

Please remember to use the green *Deacons' Fund* envelopes for donations to help the Deacons with their Mission work. These envelopes are available in the pew racks or in the church office and may be placed in the offering plate. Thank you!



Worship/Fellowship Hour Help

We need people to sign up to usher and host Fellowship Hour in the upcoming weeks. Remember that Fellowship Hour does not have to be fancy. All you need is coffee, tea, juice, and cookies. If you would like to donate towards it and have someone else host, speak to one of the Deacons.

Church Flowers

Please 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.

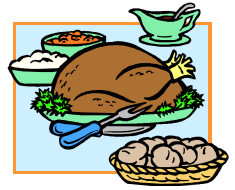


When you sign up on the flower chart, please be specific, i.e. *in memory, honor, given by*, and print clearly. Thank you.

Mission Programs

Easter Turkey/Ham Donations

The local markets are offering free turkeys/hams, etc. for Easter. If you qualify and do not intend to use your free item, please consider donating it to the needy at the Market Street Mission in Morristown. **Please bring your items to the church by Palm Sunday, March 20th.** (Keep turkeys frozen.) Thank you.



Bridges Outreach Lunch Program

- Jean Hoffman, Coordinator



Our next commitment date for preparing 40 lunches is: **Friday, March 11th, 9:30 a.m.**, in Pollard Hall. We are in need of small bottles of water and cartons of juice; snacks of cookies, nuts, Goldfish, pretzels, etc.; 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 for your continued support of this very important and much appreciated program!

Upcoming Dates: April 8, May 13, June 10

Following is a note our church recently received from *Bridges*:

"Dear Friends:

Your generosity and concern for our homeless friends help us to deliver over 65,000 meals and literally tons of clothing and seasonal necessities to homeless neighbors in New York City, Newark and Irvington each year."

Family Promise of Morris County

- Phyllis Clemson & Jan Somers

Our next responsibility to host Family Promise at Trinity House in Stirling is **Tuesday, April 5 through Wed. a.m.** We will be serving a lasagna dinner and will need salad, bread, and dessert. We will also need hosts for 5-9 p.m. and overnight from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. Please watch for the sign-up sheet in Pollard Hall later this month and see if there is any area where you can help us with this important ongoing program. Thank you!

Ending Homelessness One Family at a Time

One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS)



The three groups in the Presbyterian Church (USA) that benefit from our OGHS offering are: Presbyterian Hunger Program, Self-Development of People, and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA). We reach many people in desperate need through this offering and, unless people direct their giving specifically to them, this is the only way these three vital organizations receive funding. There are special OGHS envelopes in the church pews for this purpose; they will be collected early in April. Thank you.

Music Series

On Sunday, February 21st, 55 people from the church and community gathered to hear the Pasquale Grasso Jazz Quartet. It was an afternoon of wonderful classical jazz and very much enjoyed.

Please join us for our next concert on **Sunday, March 13th, at 2:00 pm in the sanctuary.** The concert will be classical music; arrangements are in the process of being finalized. We are also planning for a concert **on Sunday, April 10th.** Be sure to invite friends, family, and neighbors to our concerts.



Earth Hour



Earth Hour 2016 is Saturday, March 19th, from 8:30-9:30 p.m.

Earth Hour is a worldwide movement for the planet organized by the World Wide Fund for Nature. The event is held worldwide annually encouraging individuals, communities, households, and businesses to turn off their non-essential lights for one hour as a symbol of their commitment to the planet. It has grown to engage more than 7000 cities and towns worldwide. Today, Earth Hour engages a massive mainstream community on a broad range of environmental issues.

Our actions today will change our tomorrow. Please commit to joining this movement by turning off your non-essential lights on March 19th, from 8:30-9:30 p.m. Thank you!

Meyersville Presbyterian Church Free Computer Basics Classes

Meyersville Presbyterian Church is organizing free computer basics classes, to be held for 12 weeks on Saturdays from 10 a.m.-noon, from April 9 to June 25. This MS Windows 7 basics computer training is for novice windows computer users. The training is part lecture, but mainly hands-on in our state-of-the-art computer lab (see picture).



Seating is limited, so reserve your spot if you are interested. The course book is free for use in the classroom or \$10 to purchase. Following is the list of topics and dates:

<u>Session</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Session</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	Choose a Computer	April 9	7	Personal Internet	May 21
2	Explore your computer	April 16	8	Excel	May 28
3	Windows Basics	April 23	9	Music and Speech	June 4
4	Word	April 30	10	Photography	June 11
5	Communication	May 7	11	Gadgets and Gizmos	June 18
6	Surfing the Internet	May 14	12	Manage Your Computer	June 25

Whether you are interested in attending the entire 12-week course or just certain topics, please contact Rudy Zydell from the Meyersville Church at ruudz@aol.com to reserve your seat.

Free Gentle Yoga Class - Meyersville Presbyterian Church

Roseanne McGraw, a certified yoga teacher for 15 years, is teaching a free gentle yoga class in the Parlor at Meyersville Presbyterian Church on **Tuesdays from 9:00-10:00 a.m.** The class is on-going, so you can join at any time.



You will not be sitting or lying on the floor, so just bring yourself in comfortable clothes, and invite friends along. This class will be appropriate for all, the flexible as well as the tight. Injuries will be accommodated. Yoga is relaxing as well as good for general health; so, come give it a try.

Call or e-mail Rosanne with any questions or concerns: 908-508-1435, rosanne.mcgraw@gmail.com

Church Archives



Please remember to forward news clippings, bulletins, programs, pictures, or other memorabilia regarding any member of our church family to Rene' Phelan so she can keep our church archives up-to-date. There is a mailbox outside the church offices for this purpose. Thank you.

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, 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 in schools 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.



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 21st.**

	<u>What Color?</u>	<u>How many?</u>	<u>Total Price</u>
Azaleas \$16.00 ea. (Red, White, Pink)	_____	_____	_____
Daffodils \$10.50 ea. (All Yellow)	_____	_____	_____
Lilies \$11.00 ea. (All White)	_____	_____	_____
Tulips \$10.50 ea. (Yellow, Pink, or Purple)	_____	_____	_____
TOTALS		_____	_____

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 21st

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

Session and Deacon Responsibilities

Listed below are the Session and Board of Deacons responsibilities for 2016. Please note that some committees have been changed this year.

2016 Session Responsibilities

Moderator	Rev. Peters
Clerk of Session	Megan Gallagan
President of Trustees	Kai Ihringer
Christian Education	Lore Pateman
Communications	Kai Ihringer
Facilities & Property Management	Lynn Blakeslee
Fellowship/Membership	Paul Wermuth
Financial Audit	Ed Gerecht
Mission	Yvonne Fletcher
Nominating	Kai Ihringer
Personnel	Ed Gerecht
Stewardship & Finance	Sandy Mackay
Worship	Joyce Koenig

2016 Board of Deacons Responsibilities

Moderator	Carolyn Malfatone
Vice Moderator	Susan Gerecht
Coffee Supplies	Shaylyn Gallagan
Corresponding Secretary	Rene' Phelan
Deacons Corner	Katherine Ihringer
Flowers	Israel Sierra
Mission & Outreach	Rev. Tom Peters
Nominating Committee	Israel Sierra
Paraments	Shaylyn Gallagan
Reception Coordinator	Carolyn Malfatone
Recording Secretary	Susan Gerecht
Treasurer	Terry Griner

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 Gift Cards

- ✓ No additional cost to you to use
- ✓ Purchase cards at face value
- ✓ Church earns 5%
- ✓ Denominations available are:
ShopRite: \$20, \$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
by March 20th. Thank you!**

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.

Why not invite a friend to church?



*Should you be admitted to the hospital,
please have someone contact the
church office so that Rev. Peters may visit.*



Daylight Savings Time
Turn your clocks AHEAD 1 hour on Saturday night, March 12th, before going to bed.

