



Stirling Stuff

Volume 65, No. 2

February 2021

Message from Rev. Aspinall

Dear First Presbyterian Friends,

As most of you know by now, your Session has asked me to be the Interim Pastor of your church starting on February 1 after Rev. Peters retires at the end of January. This new position will be half-time. I will be leading worship; meeting with the Session, Deacons, and other committees; providing pastoral care; and, helping the church to take steps forward in the process of figuring out where God is leading your congregation in the future. The Presbytery will be providing considerable help in that last task which usually takes about a year or a year and a half.



I will also continue to be the part-time pastor of Meyersville Presbyterian Church. For the moment, while COVID restricts our gathering in person and the weather is a bit cold for outdoor worship services, we will continue to share online worship services. When the weather is warmer, we may add outdoor services. Whether these outdoor services will be with the two churches together or separately at different times, remains to be decided. As it becomes possible to gather indoors for worship, we will again talk about how worship can happen in both sanctuaries.

It is important for everyone at both FPC and MPC to understand that my serving both churches is in no way meant to short-circuit the processes each church must go through in envisioning and planning for their futures. Our Future of Long Hill Presbyterians (FLHiP) discussions have been side-lined by COVID and I hope that they can resume at some point. But, they are only one part of the larger questions each church is facing. Each church must discover the ministry to which God is calling it. FPC will have the benefit of a structured interim process meant to help discern that ministry.

I feel I have gotten to know many of you over the years of shared summer worship services, educational programs, and Vacation Bible School, and I am looking forward to deepening and broadening those relationships as we work together in ministry for the next period in your church's story.

Yours in Christ,

Barbara Aspinall

*Worship
With Us*

The First Presbyterian Church of Stirling
Feeding Those Who Hunger

Interim Pastor Search Committee**- Ed Gerecht**

Your Search Committee, consisting of Edwin Gerecht, Joyce Koenig, Kai Ihringer, Evelyn Smith, and Paul Wermuth, has been working with Presbytery representatives to secure pastoral leadership after Rev. Peters retires. We conducted a Zoom meeting with the Presbytery Leader, Jeanne Radak, and our representative from the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry, Sharon Guthrie.

After we finalized the job description for Interim Minister, we anticipated beginning the search. Shortly after submitting the position description and the terms of call, Presbytery advised us that Rev. Barbara Aspinall was willing and they were agreeable to her becoming our Interim Minister. The members of the committee are grateful for Rev. Aspinall's guidance during the time of Rev. Peters' illness, her willingness to serve as our Interim Minister, and her support for all of our activities.

At the January Session meeting, Rev. Aspinall was approved as our Interim Minister. We all look forward to having her guide our Church through the coming months.

Stewardship**- Sandy Mackay****Per-Capita Apportionment**

The Per Capita amount for 2021 is **\$40.00 per active member**. This amount includes \$8.98 for the Office of General Assembly, \$4.10 for the Synod of the Northeast, and \$26.92 for Presbytery. This money is used to help fund the work of the different levels of the denomination. Please send your apportionment for each person in your family who is a member. You may send it to the church office or directly to Elsie Turqman and note that it is for "Per Capita."

Weekly Offering & 2021 Offering Envelopes

If you are able, we hope you will continue to send in your weekly offering. All local members should have received their 2021 offering envelopes at this time. You may mail your check to the church or directly to Elsie Turqman. You can also use the **Online Giving** link, which is on the home page of our church's website. It will allow you to use a credit card or PayPal account to make your offering.

Church Directory Update

Our church secretary, Paulette, will be updating the Church Directory in February. Please contact the church office (908-647-1033, Secretary@fpcstirling.org) to make any necessary changes/additions to your information as it is printed in the current directory.



Join the Online Zoom Coffee Hour**- Janet Parziale**

Our Zoom coffee hours continue every Sunday morning at 10:30 a.m. (new time) jointly with our friends from Meyersville. For many, these visits online with one another have been fun, therapeutic, and a great way to catch up with one another.



If you have not attended, please try it on an upcoming Sunday morning. You do not need any special software to join in the fun; just click the link in the email provided each week to participate. You can join with video or just with audio, and you can use your phone, kindle, tablet, or computer. If you need the link resent, please feel free to contact Janet Parziale at janetparziale@comcast.net or 908-647-2212. We hope to see you this coming Sunday!

Deacons' Corner**- Janet Parziale****Mission of the Month - February**

During the month of **February**, we will be collecting donations for the **Super Bowl of Caring** program. In the past, donations were accepted on Super Bowl Sunday as the congregation was leaving the sanctuary. Since that is not possible, we ask that your donation be sent to the church or to Elsie Turqman and note that it is for "**Super Bowl of Caring**." In recent years, the donations were split between Family Promise of Morris County and the Market Street Mission (Morristown). At the end of the month, the Deacons will select how the money will be distributed. Please support this much-needed program.

**Need Help? Want to Chat?**

As this time of staying at home continues, it is easy to miss that human connection. If you are in need of help getting groceries or just want to talk to someone, please feel free to call a Deacon. We are ready to help in any way we can. If you know of someone who needs assistance, please reach out to one of us, even if it's just for an ear to listen.

**Know Someone Who Needs a Card?**

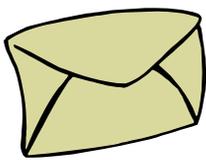
Each week during the Prayers of the People, we remember members, friends, and family who need our prayers for joys and concerns. Many have attested to the power of prayer in helping to give strength to all those involved. A Deacon sends cards to let them know they're being thought of and they're in the prayers of the congregation to get well, share joyful wishes, or express sympathy.

If you know of someone who is in need of our thoughts or prayers, please let Janet Parziale know so that a card can be sent. Janet can be reached at janetparziale@comcast.net or 908-647-2212.

Flowers for Our Sanctuary

At our recent Worship Committee and Deacons meetings, we discussed plans for worship services. Rev. Aspinall will be recording alternately at both churches. If you would like to have flowers on the chancel in honor or memory of someone for services recorded at Stirling, please call the church office. You may leave a message on the machine with the specifics (your name, when you would like to provide them, and to whom the flowers are to be given in memory/honor). Allow enough lead time to have them ordered for the date you would like. The cost is \$30. Your check (made payable to: *Flowers on the Ridge*) can be sent to the church office. The church secretary will notify Israel Sierra who will place the order.



Deacons Fund

The Deacons Fund is used to help the Deacons do their Mission work. It is funded by donations given so generously by you in the little green envelopes found in the pew racks at church. Since we are not currently meeting for indoor services, you may send your donation directly to the church or to Elsie Turqman. Please note "Deacon's Fund" in the memo section of your check. Thank you very much!

Worship Committee**- Janet Parziale****Shared Services with Meyersville Presbyterian Church**

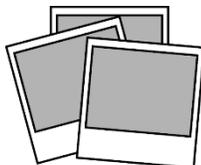
The Meyersville Presbyterian Church and the First Presbyterian Church of Stirling will continue to worship together. There will be an online service each week, accessible through a link delivered by email and also available on the church website, www.fpcstirling.org. The service can be viewed at any time. DVD's of the service are also available and may be requested through Janet Parziale.

Ash Wednesday, February 17th**Your Pictures Wanted!**

This year, Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent, will be on February 17th. The Worship Committee is preparing an online Ash Wednesday worship service to be shared that day. Because it will be online, we will not be using the Liturgy of the Ashes. The focus of traditional Ash Wednesday services is the brevity of life, that we came from dust and will soon enough return to the earth, dust once more. Considering the year we have all just been through, I think this is something we are all very well aware of. I am not sure we need too much reminding of this truth.

Another way of thinking about this is that the brevity and uncertainty of life makes this life we have even more precious, inviting us to praise, wonder, and seize the moment. This is the day and let us rejoice in it! What we love is mortal and transitory but, instead of grieving that this year, let's celebrate the things in this world, the people we love, that remind us of the presence of God and God's everlasting love for us. Like Jacob after a night of wrestling with an angel, Ash Wednesday causes us to pause, notice, wake up, and discover that "God is in this place" and now we know it!

In view of this different perspective on Ash Wednesday, one component of this year's recorded online Ash Wednesday service will be a celebration of the people, circumstances, places, and times that have reminded us that "God is in this place." To help with this celebration, all who have cameras, cell phones, pictures, are invited to share their own "God is in this place" moments by taking a picture and sending it to baspinall223@aol.com or directeur@klokhuis.com by February 11. These could be pictures of places, nature, people that remind you of God's presence and love. No explanation is necessary – just your pictures!



Mission Programs

Bridges Outreach Lunch Program

- Janet Parziale



The Bridges organization is still in need of as many lunches as we can provide. They are asking that we bring them any day (Mon-Thurs) convenient for us. One person is making sandwiches and one person is filling the brown bags at separate locations. One day each month, one person takes the sandwiches and the brown bags prepared with non-perishable goodies and delivers them to Summit.

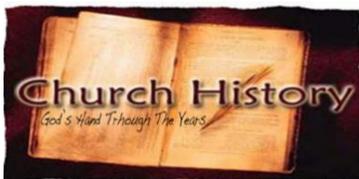
We are always in need of small bottles of water or cartons of juice; snacks of cookies, nuts, Goldfish, pretzels; and small fruit cups or applesauce, pudding, etc. Cash donations are also appreciated to help with the purchase of bread and lunch meat. You can drop items off in Pollard Hall (call the church office to confirm someone is there) or send cash donations to Elsie Turqman.

Church Website & Facebook Page

To keep up-to-date with what's happening at our Church, make it a point to check in regularly on the Church website, www.fpcstirling.org, and Facebook page, https://www.facebook.com/fpcStirling/?ref=aymt_homepage_panel. They are good sources for church news, Stirling Stuff, Pastor's sermons, Scripture readings, Church history, and more.

Church Archives

- Jan Somers

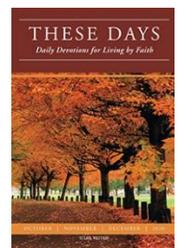


Please continue to forward news clippings, bulletins, programs, pictures, or other memorabilia regarding any member of our church family so our archives can be kept up to date. **Please be sure items are dated and, if possible, the names of church members and/or families are highlighted.** Items can be mailed to the Church (labeled "Archives"), or you can save them until you are in the building. Thank you.

These Days

"To nurture the daily practice of prayer and the reading of Scripture, there is solid help in the pages of 'These Days.' The devotions wrestle faithfully with the doubts, joys, and challenges of Christian life."

Our Church has a subscription for copies of this devotional booklet. If you would like a copy, please contact the church office, and it can be mailed to you.



Helping Out

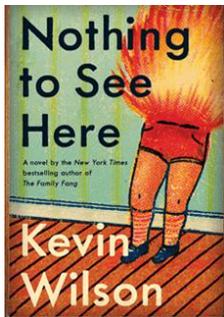
- Jan Somers

Elsie Turqman and Jan Somers are still available to sew fabric face masks in different sizes. If you or someone you know needs one, please contact Elsie or Jan.

Meyersville Book Club

- Jan Somers

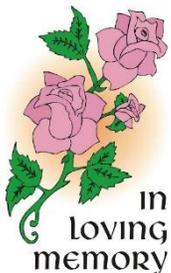
The Book Club's current selection is "**Nothing to See Here**," a novel by Kevin Wilson. The group will meet via Zoom on Tuesday, February 9th, 7:30 p.m. to discuss the book. Everyone is welcome to join the group; please contact Rev. Aspinall so she will send you the Zoom link.



Lillian and Madison were unlikely roommates and yet inseparable friends at their elite boarding school. But then Lillian had to leave the school unexpectedly in the wake of a scandal and they've barely spoken since. Until now, when Lillian gets a letter from Madison pleading for her help.

Madison's twin stepkids are moving in with her family and she wants Lillian to be their caretaker. However, there's a catch: the twins spontaneously combust when they get agitated, flames igniting from their skin in a startling but beautiful way. Lillian is convinced Madison is pulling her leg, but it's the truth.

Thinking of her dead-end life at home, the life that has consistently disappointed her, Lillian figures she has nothing to lose. Over the course of one humid, demanding summer, Lillian and the twins learn to trust each other—and stay cool—while also staying out of the way of Madison's buttoned-up politician husband. Surprised by her own ingenuity yet unused to the intense feelings of protectiveness she feels for them, Lillian ultimately begins to accept that she needs these strange children as much as they need her—urgently and fiercely. Could this be the start of the amazing life she'd always hoped for?

**In Memory**

During January we learned of the sad news of four members of our church family who passed away - Arline Most, BJ Cardinali, Bryan Hague, and Lew Addison. All four were involved in the life of our church. Although each had moved away from the area, they will still be remembered fondly. Please keep their families in your prayers as they go through this difficult time. If you would like to send a card of condolence to BJ's, Arline's, or Bryan's family, below are the addresses you may use:

For BJ Cardinali: Scott Cardinali at 1346 Mallard Drive, Martinsville, NJ 08836

For Bryan Hague: Carol Hessemeyer at 35 Princess Dr., Ponte Verde, FL 32081

For Arline Most: Zachary Most at 4801 Senora Creek Court, Austin TX 78735 and
Ryan Most at 11 Falcon Drive, Taylors SC 29687-6326

When we receive an address for a family member of Lew Addison, we will pass it on to you.

Arline Most, who had been on our prayer list for many months, passed into the Church Triumphant on January 15, 2021. Arline was the Director of the Long Hill Township Library from 1993 through 2005. She was one of the persons responsible for the library as you know it today. She was also one of our valued handbell ringers at First Presbyterian Church. Arline had moved to Greenville, South Carolina to be closer to her family during her illness.



Long-time church member and dear friend, Barbara Jean (BJ) Cardinali, passed into the Church Triumphant on January 20, 2021. Many of you may remember BJ served as our church secretary for many years and she was a long-time member of our church choir and the Travnicek Memorial Ringers, our handbell choir. Barbara gave the bells to the church in memory of her mom, June Travnicek.

Long-time church member and friend, Bryan Hague, passed into the Church Triumphant during January. He was a member of the church choir and a regular participant in the life of the congregation. Many will remember him for the gallons of delicious hot chocolate he prepared for our annual Community Christmas Carol Sing. Even after he moved away, he visited the church whenever he was back in town. Bryan's sister, Carol Hessemeyer, has requested in lieu of flowers, donations to the church are requested.



When a recent letter to Lew Addison was returned to the church, we learned he also passed into the Church Triumphant. He was 92 years old when he died on October 31, 2020. You may remember after retiring, Lew and his wife Betty moved to Tom's River. Sometime after Betty had passed away, Lew moved to Palm City in Florida. Lew and Betty were very active members of our church community. Lew served as a Deacon and was a member of our church's Men's Group.

A Zoom Celebration for Rev. Peters!

A BIG Thank You to all who participated in the wonderful Zoom celebration for Rev. Peters' retirement that was held last month. There were more than forty folks who joined in the celebration from as far away as Seattle, California, and Colorado, down to North Carolina, from upstate New York, Massachusetts, and Iowa, as well as all our local congregation members and friends. It was great to see everyone and hear all the beautiful messages and memories that were shared. A special thanks to Rev. Aspinall for setting up the Zoom celebration and to Tom Parziale for leading as our emcee. Below are a few snapshots of the Zoom screen during the celebration!





Ongoing Mission Programs:

Items collected for various causes:

- ✓ Full-sized and "courtesy"-sized bars of soap, shampoo, conditioner, shower caps
- ✓ Fabric: about ½ yard minimum, to make small bears for children, totes for wheelchair patients, etc. Yarn: to make lap robes for wounded veterans, afghans for battered women, and hats for newborns in hospitals

Please e-mail submissions for the March issue of Stirling Stuff to:
jsomers17@hotmail.com
by **February 18th**. Thank you!

Ongoing Fundraisers

ShopRite Gift Cards

- ✓ No additional cost to you to use
 - ✓ Purchase cards at face value
 - ✓ Church earns **5%**
 - ✓ Denominations available are:
\$20, \$50, \$100
- Gift Cards are available from Yvonne Fletcher.

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

Stirling Stuff is the newsletter of

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Website: www.fpcstirling.org

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 online church?

