



Stirling Stuff

Volume 65, No. 6

June 2021

Pastor's Message



Dear Church Family,

We have just begun the season of Pentecost – the season of the Holy Spirit, of wind, of power, and of fire. Our sanctuary and our trees outside were beautifully decorated with paper flames and red, orange, and yellow streamers for our Pentecost service. We wore red; we pinned felt flames to our shirts. We had lots of lovely representations of fire, but no real fire. We know better than to have a real fire in our sanctuary – a few candles are enough. We know better than to set a bonfire on the lawn. We know better than to pin a real flame to our shirts. We know about the devastating power of fire. Think about all those wildfires in the West last year and the likelihood of a repeat this year. You have seen the news and know how much damage fires can do to lives – human and animal – to the environment and to property.

Fire has no shape or substance. You can't touch it without being damaged. You can't weigh it or measure it except for its effects. You can never grasp it; it never stands still. Fire is a remarkably useful source of energy and heat, and there is no mistaking its extraordinary power.

So, what does all this mean when the Bible speaks of fire as somehow representing the power of God in the world? Remember that in addition to those tongues of flame at Pentecost, it was a pillar of fire that led Moses and the children of Israel through the wilderness, it was from a burning bush that God first spoke to Moses, it is a lake of fire that the book of Revelation talks about. In the Bible, fire is holiness; fire is God – uncontainable, uncontrollable, powerful. And yet, at the same time, it's a little flame dancing on the top of the heads of the disciples at Pentecost and the little fire on which Jesus cooked fish for the disciples' breakfast.



We celebrate the gift of the power of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, but I think too often we discount that power. We lose our awe of holiness, and the sacred has become, if not profane, ordinary. We forget that this power we've been given is indeed powerful and that it is available to us to serve the purposes of God. May we, in this season of Pentecost, make use of this gift to share the love of God, to empower our ministry. May we learn to trust that God is at work in and through us as we go about the work of the church and the ministry of serving Christ in the way we live our daily lives.

Yours in Christ,
Barbara

The First Presbyterian Church of Stirling
Feeding Those Who Hunger

Per-Capita Apportionment**Session**

The Per Capita amount for 2021 is **\$40.00 per active member**. This money is used to help fund the work of the different levels of the denomination.



The largest portion of our per capita contributions helps support the work of our Presbytery. In our recent past, our own church has benefited from this work. Members of the Committee on Ministry and our Presbytery Leader helped us with the process of the retirement of our pastor and the transition to an interim pastor. The Presbytery paid a stipend to Barbara Aspinall while she was helping us from November through January when Rev. Peters was ill and before he retired. In the coming months, Presbytery folks will be helping us with our discernment process and transition to a new pastor. We have benefited and will continue to benefit from the ministry of the Presbytery in our midst. Our per capita payments help support this ministry with our own church and with others in our Presbytery.

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 please note that it is for “Per Capita.” Thank you.

**Weekly Contributions**

Although we are not worshipping in our sanctuary, there are still financial commitments that need to be met. Whether it's maintaining the buildings and grounds, paying our staff, or keeping up with our mission support, our expenses are ongoing. Please send your weekly offering/pledge to the church office or directly to Elsie Turqman so that we can meet our obligations. Thank you.

Worship Committee**- Janet Parziale****Upcoming Worship Schedule**

Online services will continue to be available weekly. We will also hold services outside on Sunday mornings—weather permitting. We will continue to social distance. Feel free to bring a lawn chair. Each church will also have a few folding chairs available for those who are not able to bring one. No sign-ups are necessary to attend.



You may call the church office (908-647-1033) on Fridays to find out where the outdoor service will be held for the following Sunday morning. We look forward to seeing you there!



Following is the schedule for the **outdoor in-person services**. **Summer services will start at 9:30 a.m.**

All Sundays in June will be at Meyersville at 10 a.m.

All Sundays in July will be at Stirling at 9:30 a.m.

***Please note—there will be no outdoor service on July 4th**

All Sundays in August will be at Meyersville at 9:30 a.m.

Notices of these dates will be posted on the door of the church so if there is confusion, there will be time to dash to the other church and only be a few minutes late. Latecomers are always welcome.

Liturgists Needed

We need Liturgists each week to do readings for the online worship services. Recordings are done at the church, Stirling or Meyersville, on Thursday afternoons until 6:00 p.m. (other arrangements can be made if necessary).

To sign up, please contact Jan Somers. If Jan calls to ask you to read, please let her know as soon as possible if/when you will be available. Rev. Aspinall will send you a copy of your readings and confirm the location and time for the recording. Thank you!

Message from Rev. Aspinall

I encourage all those who have not yet gotten their **COVID 19 vaccine** to do so. It has been approved by our rigorous FDA and proven to be safe and effective. It is important for all the citizens of our nation to take seriously our responsibility to not only safeguard our own health, but also the health of our fellow citizens. As more of our congregation is vaccinated, the closer we get to being able to hold worship services in our sanctuary. For more information on the vaccines, please go to www.nj.gov/health/vaxfacts

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

The Deacons are once again working with the Church World Service (CWS) and their "Blanket Month Appeal" for our June "Mission of the Month" donations. In 2020, CWS delivered 17,000 blankets to people in need in the US and another 1,000 to folks in the Caribbean who were struck by hurricanes and flooding.

The **blankets cost \$10 each** and can be used in many ways –

including to help families who have been driven from their homes due to hurricanes, tornados, or other cold air out; a privacy divider in an overcrowded refugee facility; and, as a tent or ground covering. As people who trust in the promises of God, we reach out to comfort those who are struggling, who are in crisis, who need our prayers, our support, and our comfort. The gift of a blanket reminds those who are suffering that God loves them, and that God's people care. From the time we were babies, a warm blanket has meant comfort and love.



Please send your donation to the church office or directly to Elsie Turqman and mark the memo "CWS Blanket" or "Mission of the Month." Remember to include your name and/or your envelope number if you would like your donation to be recorded. Thank you in advance for supporting this special mission program.

Join the Online Zoom Coffee Hour



Zoom coffee hours continue every **Sunday morning at 11:00 a.m.** (unless otherwise announced) 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.

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.

Flowers for Our Sanctuary

Rev. Aspinall will continue recording at both churches. **If you would like to have flowers placed on the chancel for services that are recorded at Stirling**, please call the church office or Israel Sierra.

Services for June 6th and 20th (Father's Day) will be recorded at Stirling
July services will all be recorded at Meyersville
August services will all be recorded at Stirling



You may leave a message at the church with the specifics (your name, which Sunday service you would like them for, and who they are given in memory/honor of).

Since recordings are done on Thursdays, the flowers need to be picked up by Israel on Wednesdays. Please place your order at least one week prior to the Wednesday pick-up date to allow enough lead time to have them for the service you choose. The cost is still \$30; your check (made payable to: *Flowers on the Ridge*) can be sent to the church office. If you have any questions, please contact Janet Parziale.

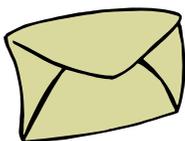
Know Someone Who Needs a Card?



Each week during worship, we remember members, friends, and family who need our prayers for joys and concerns. We know what the power of prayer can do 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.

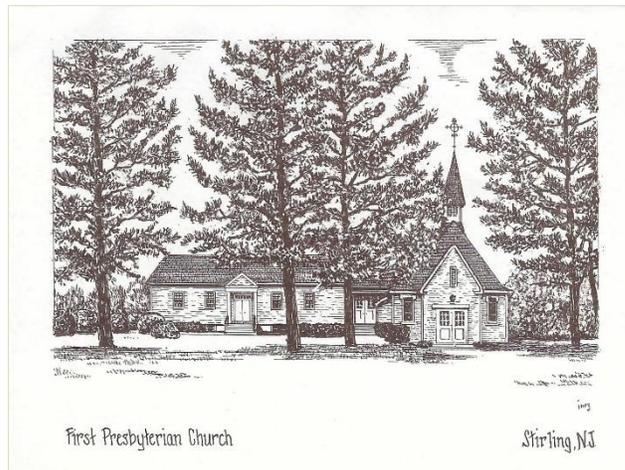
Deacons' Fund



The Deacons Fund is used to help the Deacons do their Mission work, and it is funded by donations given so generously by the congregations. You may send your donation to the church or directly to Elsie Turqman. Please note "Deacons' Fund" in the memo section of your check. Thank you very much!

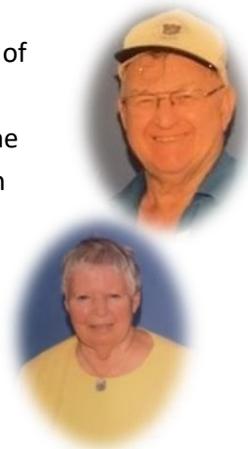
Deacon Fundraiser - First Presbyterian Church Notecards

Recently, in reorganizing the church office, Rev. Aspinall and Paulette found a box of a thousand special cards with a pencil sketch of our church on the front. The cards are blank inside, thus making them useful for any type of communication. The cards were originally made by Creeko Creations in Wisconsin. The deacons will be selling packets of ten cards and envelopes for \$5.00. If you are interested, please let any deacon know and we will get a pack or two to you. Or, leave a message on the church office phone. They will also be available for purchase following our outdoor worship services on Sunday mornings. The money collected will go into the Deacon Fund. Thank you in advance for your generous support of this project.



Deacons Need Your Help!

On June 24, 2021, at 11:00 a.m. Rev. Aspinall will be leading a funeral service for longtime friends of the church, Dottie and Thad Simms. Many of you may remember Thad as our choir director and organist more than 20 year ago before he retired from that position. The service will be held in the sanctuary. We will also have the service streaming in Pollard Hall and outside on the front lawn in order to accommodate the number of folks who may be attending while maintaining social distancing. The deacons need help in setting up chairs in Pollard Hall and outside on the front lawn. We will also need some folks to help with greeting attendees as they arrive. If you are able to help with setting up chairs (on Wednesday night – June 23rd) or greeting on June 24th, please call the church office and leave a message with our church secretary, Paulette Irlander. She will pass your name onto a deacon who will contact you with further details.



Coffee Hour for Outdoor Services

With the numbers growing for outdoor services, many folks are lingering afterwards to catch-up with one another. The deacons have decided to get back into the swing of things. They will be starting out simple, providing a refreshing cold drink for those who stay a while and chat. If you prefer, you are also welcomed to bring your own beverage. Just the chance to be together, see each other, and chat will help us to begin to feel some normalcy.



Mission Program

Bridges Outreach Lunch Program

- Janet Parziale



The Bridges organization is still in need of as many lunches as we can provide. One person is making sandwiches and one person is filling the brown bags. One day each month, the sandwiches, drinks, and non-perishable goodies are delivered to Summit.

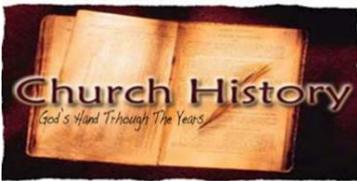
We are always in need of small bottles of water or cartons of juice; snacks of cookies, nuts, Goldfish, pretzels; and small fruit cups, applesauce, pudding, etc. Cash donations are also appreciated to help with the purchase of bread and lunch meat. You can drop items off in Pollard Hall (call the church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

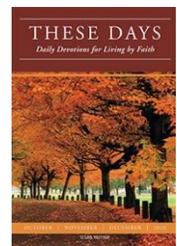


Please continue to forward news clippings, bulletins, programs, pictures, or other memorabilia regarding any member of our church family so our archives can be kept up to date. **Please be sure items are dated and, if possible, the names of church members and/or families are highlighted.** Items can 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

Although many of us have received the Covid-19 vaccine, we still need to wear a face mask in certain situations. Elsie Turqman and Jan Somers are available to sew fabric face masks in different sizes. If you or someone you know needs one, please contact Elsie or Jan.

Our 2021 Graduates

Congratulations to all our graduates and their proud families:

Cheyenne Carbone, daughter of Judy & Bill Carbone, is graduating from Central School in Stirling and will attend Watchung Hills Regional High School in the fall.

Brendan and Ryan Higgins, twin sons of Tracy & James Higgins, are graduating from Central School in Stirling and will attend Watchung Hills Regional High School in the fall.

Ian Blakeslee, son of Lynn Norcia & Jeff Blakeslee, graduated in May from Stevens Institute of Technology with a Masters in Financial Engineering. He will continue working remotely for the financial data firm, Novus, located in New York City.

You should all be proud that you persevered through on-line classes, social distancing, and forgoing many of the activities and celebrations you have earned. Best wishes as you move on in your educational, professional, and personal lives!

(Jan Somers)



Update on Newlyweds

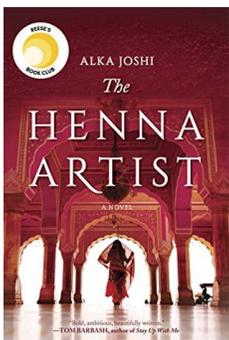
Debra Sprague and John Rubalcava, who were married on April 22nd in Seattle, Washington, want to let everyone know that they will continue to split their time on both coasts, in Washington and New Jersey. Their NJ address is in the church directory. Also, Debra will be keeping her last name.



Meyersville Book Club

- Jan Somers

The Book Club's current selection is "**The Henna Artist**," a novel by Alka Joshi. The group will meet via Zoom on Tuesday, June 15th, 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. Libraries are reopening and the book is available in different formats.



Vivid and compelling in its portrait of one woman's struggle for fulfillment in a society pivoting between the traditional and the modern, The Henna Artist opens a door into a world that is at once lush and fascinating, stark and cruel.

Escaping from an abusive marriage, seventeen-year-old Lakshmi makes her way alone to the vibrant 1950s pink city of Jaipur. There she becomes the most highly requested henna artist—and confidante—to the wealthy women of the upper class. But trusted with the secrets of the wealthy, she can never reveal her own...

Known for her original designs and sage advice, Lakshmi must tread carefully to avoid the jealous gossips who could ruin her reputation and her livelihood. As she pursues her dream of an independent life, she is startled one day when she is confronted by her husband, who has tracked her down these many years later with a high-spirited young girl in tow—a sister Lakshmi never knew she had. Suddenly the caution that she has carefully cultivated as protection is threatened. Still, she perseveres, applying her talents and lifting up those that surround her as she does.

Pentecost Sunday

On May 23rd, we celebrated Pentecost Sunday, which commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and other followers of Jesus. The sanctuary and church property were decorated in symbols of Pentecost. Members of both congregations read the story of the history of the church, from the 1st century to the 21st century. The online service is available on the Church website.

Following are pictures of the decorations being put up and the outdoor service:







Rhubarb Squares Recipe

Several people have asked Kelly Roshto from Meyersville for her Rhubarb Squares recipe. Here it is; enjoy!

Kelly's Rhubarb Squares

Ingredients:

For the crust

1 cup flour
1/3 cup powdered sugar
1/3 cup butter

For the filling

1 cup granulated sugar
1/4 cup flour
2 eggs
1 tsp vanilla
3 cups finely chopped fresh or frozen rhubarb



Crust: Combine flour and powdered sugar. Cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Press mixture into bottom of greased 11x7x2 inch baking pan. Bake at 350° for 15 minutes or until browned.

Filling: Combine granulated sugar, 1/4 cup flour, eggs slightly beaten, and vanilla. Stir in chopped rhubarb. Pour over warm crust and bake at 350° for 35-40 minutes until toothpick comes out clean. Cool on a wire rack.

For coffee hour: double the recipe and use an 18x12 cookie tray. It takes a little longer to cook.



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 Summer issue of *Stirling Stuff* to: jsomers17@hotmail.com by June 24th. 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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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?



June 14
FLAG DAY

