



# Stirling Stuff

Volume 66, No. 5

May 2022

Dear Church Family,

JOURNEY  
OF  
*Faith*

I am usually a fiction reader, but one of my favorite non-fiction books is *Undaunted Courage* by Stephen Ambrose, published in 1996. It is the story of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark's Corps of Discovery expedition to cross the newly acquired western portion of the U.S. after the Louisiana Purchase. The expedition was commissioned by President Thomas Jefferson, and the goal was to find a path across the United States that could be navigated by boat. For a few hundred years, the Spanish, British, French, and American settlers had all been searching for a shipping route that could be navigated by boat to transport goods from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean. It would mean economic and political domination for whatever country discovered it.

The Lewis and Clark expedition traveled for months along the Missouri River. Heading upstream meant they were often carrying their supplies and canoes on their backs. They endured a cold, hard winter and a hot, mosquito-filled summer with the unwelcome company of grizzly bears and other predators.

Then one day, 15 months after leaving St. Louis, and climbing steadily uphill for days with their canoes in tow, the expedition finally arrived at the start of the Missouri in what is now Montana. Lewis wrote in his journal that as he rested there to drink from the spring that flowed into the Missouri, he felt a tremendous sense of accomplishment. He had discovered new species of plants and animals and had carefully collected specimens; despite great dangers, he had kept all but one of his crew of explorers alive; he had met and written about both friendly and hostile Native Americans; and most importantly, he believed he was within hours of meeting President Jefferson's goal. He believed that after all their hard work over more than a year, they had finally discovered the long-sought Northwest Passage. They had found the source of the Missouri River and expected that after hitting the crest of the hill just ahead of them, they would get into their canoes and paddle gently downstream and arrive at the Pacific Ocean in half a day.

In Montana, of course, this was not what they found on the other side of the hill. They, along with every other explorer for the last 300 years, found the Rocky Mountains.

At that moment, everything that Meriwether Lewis assumed about his journey changed. The plan was river travel. The plan was to have the hardest part behind them. But everything they had accomplished – which was certainly significant – was only a prelude to what was in front of them.

In some ways, both the Christian church in the U.S. and our church in particular are in the same canoe with Meriwether Lewis. The world around us is not the same, not what we expected. The road ahead looks nothing like the road behind us. Many of our assumptions about the church and its interaction with the world no longer apply. We have many past accomplishments to celebrate in the history of the church, and what we learned, what we assumed, what we expected will be of use as we move into the future, but those expectations and assumptions can no longer be our only guide.

The path ahead is uncertain; there are significant challenges, and we will continue to mourn the loss of Tom. As we move forward, we, like Lewis and Clark, will have to leave some expectations behind. But, and this is an important “but,” our core identity as the people of God, the body of Christ in Stirling and Long Hill Township, will remain.

The “Discernment Team” of Lynn Blakeslee, Shaylyn Gallagan, Ed Gerech, Kai Ihringer, Joyce Koenig, Sandy Mackay, and Kim Ridgway has begun its work with Presbytery’s Church Development Team’s representative, the Rev. Scott Foster. This group will be reviewing the work done by the FLHiP group and will then forge ahead in discerning a path forward for the church. As Lewis and Clark looked ahead to the enormous stone wall that was the Rocky Mountains, I expect it looked like an impossible situation. It was also, however, a great opportunity as they continued to explore and map and catalog what they discovered.

God has been with the First Presbyterian Church of Stirling from its beginning 200 years ago and will continue to journey with the congregation into the future. God will provide opportunities for ministry that have occurred to none of us yet. They may look like impossible situations at first, but my hope is that this congregation will have the vision and the courage and the trust in God’s presence to seize those opportunities to be the voice and the hands and the feet of Christ in the community.



Yours in Christ,  
Barbara

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

### **Shared Indoor Services**

**- Rev. Aspinall**

The Meyersville Presbyterian Church and the First Presbyterian Church of Stirling will continue joint indoor worship services. We will wear face masks, social distance, and sign-in for purposes of contact tracing, if needed. **In May, the services will be held in Stirling.**

If you need a ride to either church, please feel free to call upon a Deacon or fellow church member; we are happy to help. Reminder-- at Meyersville, there is an elevator that can be used instead of walking up the front steps to the sanctuary. Please plan to join us at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings.



Our online services will also continue each week and are accessible through a link delivered by email and on the church website, [www.fpcstirling.org](http://www.fpcstirling.org). The service can be viewed at any time. DVDs of the service are also available and may be requested through Janet Parziale.

**Easter Ham Donations**

**- Tom Parziale**



I am very happy to report that the team of First Presbyterian Church and Meyersville Presbyterian Church, two relatively small congregations, **donated 10 hams**. I delivered nine to the Market Street Mission in Morristown and one to a local family. We should all be very proud. This was an all-time high for us!

**Stewardship**

**Weekly Contributions**



Whether you worship in person or on-line, please try to keep your pledges current. Financial commitments still need to be met. Expenses for maintaining the buildings and grounds, paying our staff, or keeping up with our mission support are ongoing. You can send your weekly offering/pledge (in your offering envelope) to the church office or directly to Elsie Turqman. Thank you.

**Deacons' Corner**

**- Janet Parziale**

**Mission of the Month - May - Family Promise of Morris County**



The Mission of the Month for May is Family Promise of Morris County. Our church **will be hosting the guests during the week of May 8<sup>th</sup>**. Due to Covid, the families continue to be housed in motels, and support churches are asked to provide gift cards for food, gas, and other necessities. Families are always very appreciative of whatever we provide.

Feel free to use the special envelopes available in the church pews or send your gift directly to the church or Elsie Turqman. Please note "Mission of the Month," and remember to include your name and/or your envelope number if you would like your donation to be recorded.

***Thank you for being a part of our mission to end family homelessness!***

**Share Your Plants to Beautify Our Sanctuary in May**

Spring is here! Flowers and flowering plants are beginning to bloom! Wouldn't it be wonderful to have a bit of spring beautify our sanctuary and your garden this season? If you are thinking of adding some flowering plants like tulips, daffodils, azaleas, hydrangeas, or other flowering bushes or potted plants to your garden, **consider bringing them to the church to be used during the in-person services in May.**



You can bring them in on Saturday or Sunday morning when you come for worship and then take them home following the service (or leave them for another week). If you are interested in sharing your plants, please call the office so Paulette can get the information (your name and who you are sharing the flowers in honor or memory of) for the weekly bulletin. We'll be sure to water them while they are at the church. Thank you very much in advance for helping beautify our sanctuary with wonders of spring!

## ShopRite Gift Cards

For the past several years, the church has been selling ShopRite gift cards (known as our *Voucher Program*). For every \$100 sold, the church earns \$5; that is, we get 5% of all sales. Over the course of a year, at times that has translated to more than a \$1,000 earned.



The gift cards come in \$20, \$50, and \$100 denominations. They never expire; you can continue to use them until the balance is used up. To purchase these gift cards for yourself or as a gift, **please contact Yvonne Fletcher. She will be more than happy to help you out with your purchase.** Thank you in advance for helping in this special way.

## Know Someone Who Needs a Card?

We know what the power of prayer can do in helping give strength to all those involved. If you know of someone who is in need of our prayers, please let Janet Parziale know so that a card can be sent. Janet can be reached at [janetparziale@comcast.net](mailto:janetparziale@comcast.net) or 908-647-2212.



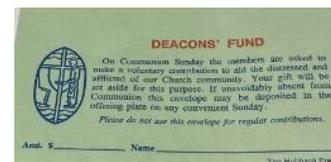
## Deacons Fundraiser: First Presbyterian Church Notecards



The Deacons are selling packets of **ten cards and envelopes for \$5.00**. The note cards have a pencil sketch of our church on the front; they are blank inside, thus making them useful for any type of communication. If you are interested, please let any Deacon know or leave a message at the church office, and we will get a pack or two to you. Proceeds will go into the Deacons' Fund. Thank you for your support of this project.

## Deacons' Fund

The Deacons' Fund is supported by the contributions and offerings so generously given by you in the **little green envelopes found in the church pews**. In recent years, this fund has been used to purchase the name plaques on the memoriam boards in Pollard Hall, candles and oil for the sanctuary, stamps for cards sent to the congregation, provisions for the Bridges Lunch program, special items like the cable for the remote TV used in Pollard Hall, and support for some of the mission projects of the Deacons. Every dollar is greatly appreciated and put to good use.



You may send your donation directly to Elsie Turqman or use the little green envelopes in your pew on Sunday morning. Please note "Deacons' Fund" in the memo section of your check. Thank you very much!

## Worship Committee

**- Janet Parziale**

### Sacrament of Holy Communion and Non-Perishable Food Collection, May 1<sup>st</sup>

We will celebrate the Lord's Super in **Stirling on May 1<sup>st</sup>**. Please remember **to bring a non-perishable food item or monetary donation for the "Twelve Baskets Food Pantry,"** housed at All Saints' Episcopal Church in Millington. Our church has been working along with Meyersville and All Saints' churches to make this program available to those local residents who need assistance. For more information, please speak with Lynn Blakeslee or Rev. Aspinall.



If you or someone you know is in need of food, please call the food bank office at 908-647-0067 (Ext. 4) and leave a confidential message.



Food items: baby food, applesauce, shelf-stable milk, cold cereal, crackers, chips, coffee, dried herbs and spices, canola oil, olive oil  
Non-food items: toiletries, diapers, baby wipes, paper towels, toilet paper, household cleaners

# Twelve Baskets Food Pantry

**Goal/Mission:** Food support for neighbors when times are tough

**About the Pantry:** Opened for walk-in service January 22nd

- The food pantry is free and confidential
- The food pantry provides supplemental food for Long Hill & surrounding area individuals, families, children, seniors, and Veterans
- The Pantry offers produce, non-perishable foods, and at times, toilet paper, paper towels, and cleaning supplies

**Details to note:**

- Twelve Baskets Food Pantry is a cooperative project of:
  - All Saints’ Episcopal Church,
  - First Presbyterian Church of Stirling, &
  - Meyersville Presbyterian Church
  - LHT CERT
- Located at All Saints’ Church Parish House
- Open the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month from 10am to 12Noon
- A valid driver’s license or state ID card showing current address is the only documentation needed



**1Qtr Success by the Numbers:**

- **Eleven** Distribution Offerings to date: 5 Saturdays at Parish House, 1 Senior Center, 5 VA
- **Five** pick-ups of perishable and shelf stable food from the Hillside Food Distribution Center
- Total of **~5,612 lbs.** of food distributed
- **~35** Volunteers and over 200 hours from:
  - Sponsored Church’s
  - Long Hill Public School
  - Long Hill CERT Team
  - Local Area Boy & Girl Scouts
  - Community volunteers

Average per distribution week:

- **15** Families
- **10** Seniors
- **20** Adults
- **16** Children
- **60** Vets

31-Mar-2022



### Rededication of the Memorial Garden

Also on **Sunday, May 1<sup>st</sup>**, we will be **rededicating our Memorial Garden**. This rededication has been postponed twice due to Covid. At the end of the worship service, we will gather outside around the Memorial Garden (weather permitting) for a prayer, a hymn, and the benediction. Please plan to join us for this special occasion as we celebrate our beautiful, peaceful Memorial Garden and remember congregation members and friends we have lost through the years.

### “Blessing of the Animals” Worship Service

On **Sunday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>**, we will have a **Blessing of the Animals** worship service. The service will be held outside on the lawn (bring a chair—we will have a few available). Invite your family and friends to attend with their pets. In case of inclement weather, the service will be rescheduled.



### May Lectionary Readings

#### May 1 - 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Easter

Acts 9:1-6 (7-20); Psalm 30; Isaiah 61:1-3; Psalm 90:13-17; Revelation 5-11-14; John 21:1-19

#### May 8 - 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter

Acts 9:36-43; Psalm 23; Isaiah 53:1-6; Psalm 114; Revelation 7:9-17; John 10:22-30

#### May 15 - 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter

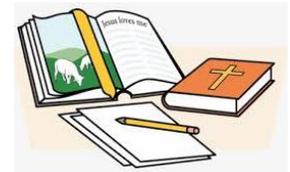
Acts 11:1-18; Psalm 148; Leviticus 19:9-18; Psalm 24:1-6; Revelation 21:1-6; John 13:31-35

#### May 22 - 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter

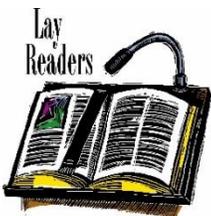
Acts 16:9-15; Psalm 67; Deuteronomy 34:1-12; Psalm 109:21-31; Revelation 21:10, 22-22:5; John 14:23-29; John 5:1-9

#### May 29 - 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter

Acts 16:16-36-34; Psalm 97; Kings 2:1-15; Psalm 2; Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20-21; John 17:20-26



### Liturgists Needed for Worship Services



We need Liturgists each week to do readings for both the in-person and on-line worship services. **For the month of May, we will be worshipping in Stirling; recordings will be done in Meyersville,** typically on Thursday early evenings (other arrangements can be made if needed).

To sign up, please contact Jan Somers. If Jan contacts you about reading, 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 on-line recording. Thank you.

Holy Week

Some images from Holy Week in Stirling and Meyersville:



**Buildings and Grounds Committee****- Tom Parziale**

The Buildings and Grounds Committee is happy to share that the **new church boiler system and integrated hot water heater have been installed** as scheduled. We also had a new sump pump system (Zoeller 3/4 hp) with battery backup implemented in the boiler room with new PVC discharge piping. After many years of nursing along a fractious boiler and a prolonged search for a company that could obtain and install a much-needed new boiler, all our work has come to fruition. Pictured below are the new boiler system and hot water heater:

**Mission Programs****Bridges Outreach Lunch Program****- Janet Parziale**

The Bridges Outreach organization is in need of as many lunches as we can provide. Currently, one person is making sandwiches and one person is filling the brown bags. The children from the Montessori School often decorate the bags and write messages to the recipients. The sandwiches, drinks, and non-perishable goodies are delivered to Summit monthly.



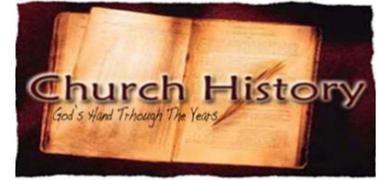
We are always in need of small bottles of water or cartons of juice; snacks of cookies, nuts, Goldfish, pretzels; and small fruit cups, applesauce, pudding, etc. Cash donations are also appreciated to help with the purchase of bread and lunch meat. You can drop items off in Pollard Hall (call the office to confirm that someone is there) or send monetary 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](http://www.fpcstirling.org), and Facebook page, [https://www.facebook.com/fpcStirling/?ref=aymt\\_homepage\\_panel](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 save 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 and put them in the "Archives" mailbox outside the church offices. Thank you.

**Pop-Top Can Tabs****- Jan Somers**

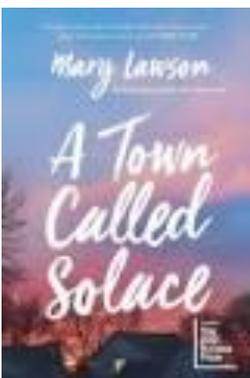
Please continue to save pop-top can tabs, any size. **The can tabs are sold by weight to recycling centers, and the proceeds are donated to Ronald McDonald House Charities**—a nonprofit family and children's charity dedicated to supporting families with sick children in their time of need. You can put them in the collection canister in the church office, give them to me any Sunday morning, or I can pick them up from you. Thank you for your continued support of this program.

**Upcoming Graduations****- Jan Somers**

Please send me the names and specifics regarding graduates in your families so they can be recognized for their achievements in the June newsletter. Thank you.

**Meyersville Book Club****- Jan Somers**

The Book Club's current selection is, "***A Town Called Solace***," a novel by Mary Lawson. The group will be meeting via Zoom on Wednesday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 p.m. to discuss the book. Everyone is welcome to join the group; please contact Rev. Aspinall so she can send you the Zoom link. The book is available at local libraries.



*This brilliant and emotionally radiant novel opens on a family in crisis. Sixteen-year-old Rose is missing. Angry and rebellious, she had a row with her mother, stormed out of the house, and simply disappeared. Left behind is seven-year-old Clara, Rose's adoring little sister. Isolated by her parents' efforts to protect her from the truth, Clara is bewildered and distraught. Her sole comfort is Moses, the cat next door, whom she is looking after for his elderly owner, Elizabeth Orchard, who went into hospital weeks ago and still has not returned. Enter Liam Kane, mid-thirties, newly divorced, newly unemployed, newly arrived in this small northern town. He moves into Mrs. Orchard's house—where, in Clara's view, he emphatically does not belong. Within a matter of hours, he gets a visit from the police. It seems he is suspected of a crime.*

*At the end of her life, Elizabeth Orchard is also thinking about a crime, one committed thirty years previously that had tragic consequences for two families and, in particular, for one small child. She desperately wants to make amends before she dies.*

*Told through three distinct, compelling points of view, the novel cuts back and forth among these unforgettable characters to uncover the layers of grief, remorse, and love that connect them. A Town Called Solace is a masterful, suspenseful, darkly funny, and deeply humane novel by one of our great storytellers.*

## **Oscar Movie Nights**

Although the Oscars were already presented, we will continue to view movies on Friday nights.

### **May 13: CODA**

As a CODA (Child of Deaf Adults), Ruby is the only hearing person in her deaf family. When the family's fishing business is threatened, Ruby finds herself torn between pursuing her love of music by wanting to go to Berklee College of Music and her fear of abandoning her parents. Rated PG-13. Won Oscars for Best Picture, Best Supporting Actor, and Best Adapted Screenplay. See trailers at: [https://www.imdb.com/title/tt10366460/?ref=fn\\_al\\_tt\\_1](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt10366460/?ref=fn_al_tt_1)

### **May 20: KING RICHARD**

A look at how tennis superstars Venus and Serena Williams became who they are after the coaching from their father, Richard Williams. Armed with a clear vision and a brazen, 78-page plan, Richard is determined to write his daughters into history. Training on tennis courts in Compton, California, he shapes the girls' unyielding commitment and keen intuition. Rated PG-13. Won Oscar for Best Actor in a Leading Role.

Our movies will be shown on Friday nights at the Millington Firehouse at 7:30 pm. Many thanks to Ruud Zijdel and Ed Gerecht for providing the movies and the place!



### **National Nurses Day**

**- Jan Somers**

**May 6<sup>th</sup> is National Nurses Day.** Please remember all the nurses around the world who continue to work tirelessly to help others during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. Say an extra prayer and a thank you for all of them!

## **RUMMAGE SALE**

<b>May 6 &amp; 7</b>	<b>May 8</b>
9:30am - 3:30pm	12:30 - 3:30pm
<b>Far Hills Fairgrounds</b>	

### **Atlantic Visiting Nurse Rummage Sale** **(formerly VNA of Somerset Hills)**

The biannual rummage sale in Far Hills is their major fundraiser. The funds they receive help provide home health and hospice care for uninsured and underinsured patients.

**Ongoing Mission Programs:**

Bridges Outreach Lunch Program  
 Family Promise of Morris County  
 Twelve Baskets Food Pantry

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Please e-mail submissions for the  
 June 2022 issue of Stirling Stuff to:  
[jsomers17@hotmail.com](mailto:jsomers17@hotmail.com)  
 by May 19<sup>th</sup>. 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

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

**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.