



Stirling Stuff

Volume 66, No. 8

September 2022

Dear Church Family,

As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, “Follow me and I will make you fish for people.” And immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went a little farther, he saw James, son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him. (Mark 1:14-20)

One of gospel writer Mark’s favorite words is “immediately.” He used it many times in his gospel, and it gives an air of urgency to the story of Jesus’ life and ministry. In the story of Jesus’ call to the disciples, Simon, Andrew, James, and John, this “immediately” also gives urgency to the disciples’ ministry. They didn’t stop to think and wonder and weigh alternatives. “Immediately they left their nets and followed him.”



This immediate response of those four fishermen is amazing, inspiring, and yet daunting because it sets the bar for discipleship so incredibly high. Leave family, job, home, security to follow an itinerant preacher into an unknown and possibly dangerous future...immediately? To be honest, I find it hard to imagine doing this. I expect most people do. I think we would all have serious and sincere reservations about doing this. So, does that make us failures as Christians? Does that mean we are less faithful than Andrew and Peter and James and John? Well, perhaps, but remember that Mark also tells us that those same disciples ended up disappointing, denying, and abandoning Jesus at various points later in the story.

So, what was Mark’s point here? By the time he was writing his gospel, it was impossible to follow the earthly Jesus the way these four did. So, what exactly was Mark seeking to inspire? What kind of example did he intend? Presumably, Mark’s message to his readers in the 1st century and to us in the 21st is more about following Jesus in a general sense than specifically leaving everything – family, job, home - to traipse along with Jesus through the Galilean countryside.

Except that following Jesus “in a general sense” doesn’t really mean anything. We live, work, choose, love, in the particular. We follow Jesus not by literally walking behind him, but in the way we live every day, the priorities we make in our lives. But, again, these priorities, this “way we live,” has to be expressed in the particular, or to use Mark’s “immediately” in a different way, in the immediate.

Merely thinking of ourselves as good people or as Christian believers is not following Jesus. Following Jesus is something that must be done immediately – in the immediate – in the way we interact with particular people, how we connect person to person, as the Deacons serve a funeral repast, as Bridges lunches are made, as we send cards or visit our homebound members.

I really think the way we let the Holy Spirit enliven us and our church is by listening to what Mark has to say about immediacy, about particularity, about personal connections. Jesus taught the crowds and fed thousands, but he called his disciples one and two at a time - as individual, particular people. And this is how ministry happens; this is how church growth happens; this is how the good news of Jesus Christ is shared – one person at a time, one personal connection, one invitation at a time. We, each one of us, has a word of good news to share. May we, each one of us, be inspired, have the courage, find the will, to speak, to invite, to share with particular, individual people... immediately.



Yours in Christ,
Barbara

The First Presbyterian Church of Stirling
Feeding Those Who Hunger

Upcoming Worship Schedule

- Rev. Aspinall

Sept 4: First Presbyterian Church 9:30 a.m.
Sept 11, 18, 25: First Presbyterian Church 10:00 a.m.

The Meyersville Presbyterian Church and the First Presbyterian Church of Stirling will continue joint indoor worship services. Wearing face masks is optional, but we will continue social distancing, and signing-in for purposes of contact tracing, if needed. 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. The service can be viewed at any time. DVDs of the service are also available and may be requested through Janet Parziale.



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 to use instead of walking up the front steps to the sanctuary.

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

Twelve Baskets Food Pantry Has Moved to Our Church!

Our local Food Pantry, Twelves Baskets, has been temporarily housed at our church since July. Jointly sponsored by our church, All Saints', Meyersville, and LHT Cert, the food pantry has been serving guests two Saturday mornings per month. Shelf stable food as well as meat, dairy products, eggs, and fresh produce are available for food insecure families in our area.



Some of the food will be stored at our church, and guests will come there on scheduled Saturday mornings. Volunteer help is needed to set up tables and put out the food in Pollard Hall. Help is also needed for picking up food from the distribution center in Hillside. There is plenty to do and the volunteer opportunities are well organized.

Please contact Lynn Blakeslee or Barbara Aspinall if you would like to contribute an hour or two of your time.

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.

Deacons' Corner

- Janet Parziale

Mission of the Month - September and October

The Deacons are once again working with the Church World Service (CWS) and their "Blanket Sunday" program for our September and October Mission of the Month. In 2021, congregational gifts provided over 183,000 CWS Blankets and Kits to families impacted by hurricanes, tornadoes, flooding, and other crises (including homelessness and poverty). They are hoping to do the same this year. You can show God's love and provide hope to your neighbors by making a donation.



The blankets, which cost \$10, have been used in many ways – to help families who have been driven from their homes due to hurricanes, tornados, or other disasters, to keep homeless persons warm, to carry personal belongings, and to cover a window broken in a storm to keep the cold air out. These woolen blankets are water-resistant and flame-retardant. They are extremely durable and warm and great for frigid temperatures or other extreme weather conditions. Each \$10 gift provides a blanket and enables someone to feel God's love in their lives.

During the months of September and October, we will be collecting \$10 per blanket. You may use the special envelopes in the pews to enclose your gift 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. We hope you will participate in this worthy endeavor.

Flowers to Beautify Our Sanctuary

Please consider sharing flowers for a Sunday morning service **in September at FPC**. The flowers can come from your garden, or you can pick from a beautiful selection at ShopRite in their flower department.

Deacon Kim Ridgway (908-458-0333) loves to make arrangements and could help you with that if you call her ahead. Kim (or another Deacon) will take care of arranging them into one or two vases. If you need greens to fill out your arrangement, there are beautiful ferns along the side of the church by the Memorial Garden walkway.



If you are interested in providing flowers for a Sunday service, please call the office (908-647-1030) and give Paulette the information (your name and who the flowers are in honor/memory of) for the bulletin. Thank you very much for helping beautify our sanctuary with wonders of nature!

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 or 908-647-2212.



Fellowship Hour

We are hosting these wonderful gatherings on the front lawn following worship services in September at FPC. If you would like to provide some goodies to share, there is always a Deacon who would be glad to help you set up the table and show you where cups, plates, and napkins are stored. We plan to keep it simple and will not be serving hot drinks.



Juice/Lemonade/Iced Tea and water are perfect for a warm summer morning. The Deacons plan to have powdered lemonade or iced tea available and can help you prepare a pitcher full.



Please consider helping with this important part of our church life by volunteering to host one yourself or with a partner or simply donating money to be used by the Deacons to provide some delicious goodies for the morning. If you wish to donate money, please give it to a Deacon or place it in the offering plate in an envelope marked "Fellowship Hour." Again, if you need help setting up, please feel free to ask any Deacon or other member of the congregation. Our Fellowship Hours are fun to do and are thoroughly appreciated by everyone.

Please sign up in Pollard Hall or call Deacon Marie Darby (908-647-0714) and let her know which Sunday you would like to host.

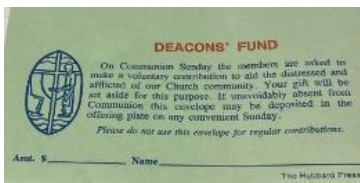
ShopRite Gift Cards

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 Lynn Blakeslee. She will be more than happy to help you out with your purchase.** Thank you in advance for helping in this special way.

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 the pew on Sunday morning. Please note "Deacons' Fund" in the memo section of your check. Thank you!

Worship Committee**- Janet Parziale****Sacrament of Holy Communion and Non-Perishable Food Collection**

We will celebrate the Lord's Supper in **Stirling on September 4th, 9:30 a.m.** Please remember **to bring a non-perishable item or monetary donation for the "Twelve Baskets Food Pantry," housed at our church through the month of September.** Our church has been working along with Meyersville and All Saints' churches and Long Hill Twp. CERT 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 or other non-grocery items, 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

There is a more complete list of needed items on the table in the narthex.

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 SEPTEMBER, we will be worshipping in Stirling; recordings will be done in Meyersville.** Recordings are typically done 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!**

September Lectionary Readings**September 4: 13th Sunday after Pentecost**

Deuteronomy 30:15-20; Psalm 1; Philemon 1:1-21; Luke 14:25-33

September 11: 14th Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 32:7-14; Psalm 51:1-10; 1 Timothy 1:12-17; Luke 15:1-10

September 18: 15th Sunday after Pentecost

Amos 8:4-7; Psalm 113; 1 Timothy 2:1-7; Luke 16:1-13

September 25: 16th Sunday after Pentecost

Amos 6:1a, 4-7; Psalm 146; 1 Timothy 6:6-19; Luke 16:19-31



Mission Programs

Bridges Outreach Lunch Program

- Janet Parziale

We continue to provide lunch bags to the Bridges Outreach organization for distribution to the homeless in Newark, Irvington, and NYC. 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.

Pop-Top Can Tabs

- Jan Somers



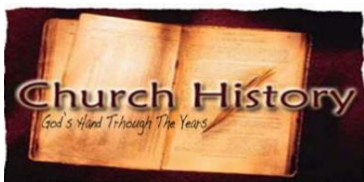
Please continue to save pop-top can tabs, any size. **The can tabs are sold by weight to recycling centers, and the proceeds are donated to Ronald McDonald House Charities**—a nonprofit family and children’s charity dedicated to supporting families with sick children in their time of need. You can give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

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

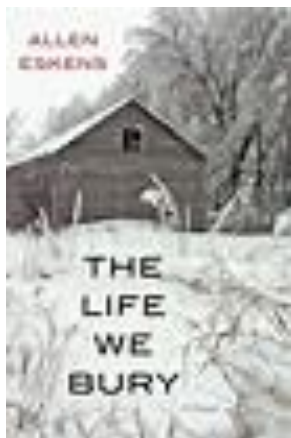
- Jan Somers



Please continue to 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.

Meyersville Presbyterian Church**Rummage Sale August 6-7**

The Meyersville Church held their Rummage Sale on August 6-7. Kelly Roshto organized and coordinated the sale, which raised approximately \$4400 for the church. Kelly would like to thank everyone from FPC for their help with setting up, donating items for sale, selling, baking, shopping, and clean up. Your support was very much needed and appreciated.

**Meyersville Book Club**

The Book Club's current selection is "*The Life We Bury*," a fiction novel written by Allen Eskens. The group will meet via Zoom on Wednesday, September 14th, 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 in different formats.

This book is told in the first-person perspective of Joe Talbert, a college student trying to get ahead in life while distancing himself from the responsibility of caring for his mentally ill mother and autistic brother. When Joe is assigned to write a biography paper for his college English class, he meets Carl Iverson, a convicted murderer. The narrative follows Joe's story as he unravels the truth of the murder case, helping to absolve an innocent man and bring the real killer to justice.

Congratulations Newlyweds

Congratulations to Lisa Monetti and Dane Ward who were married on August 6th. Lisa, who was also celebrating her 30th birthday on August 6th, is the daughter of long-time members Janice and Dale Monetti. The happy couple will be settling in Croydon, Pennsylvania. Our best wishes to Lisa and Dane as they begin their married life together.



Pictured here:
Dane and Lisa

Proud parents, Dale
and Janice with Lisa

Shrine of St. Joseph 911 Memorial Service

This year marks the **twenty-first anniversary of 9/11**. It is a time to remember those whose lives were lost, those who heroically served, and those who continue to bring peace to the world. **On Sunday, September 11th, the Shrine of St. Joseph, Long Hill Road, Stirling, will host an Ecumenical Candlelight Vigil from 7:00-8:00 p.m.**

The Shrine is home to the 35-foot **Tower of Remembrance**, which is dedicated to the memory of all those who lost their lives on 9/11.

The architecture combines steel from the North Tower of the World Trade Center and bells from the Missionary Servants of the Most Holy Trinity's Seminary in Monroe, Virginia. The name of each innocent victim who died at The World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and in the Shanksville, Pennsylvania countryside is inscribed on the memorial walls. This Tower, emerging from the rubble of violence, reminds us that in God there is hope, that as we remember, we heal.



Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey

Upcoming Events:

Fall Gathering

Saturday, October 1st; Registration: 9:30 a.m.

Stanhope Presbyterian Church, 100 Main St., Stanhope

Schedule: Speaker from "Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America"

Bible Study

Business Meeting

Resource Table

Worship

Offering during worship – 50% to PDA for Ukraine, 50% to the Thank Offering

RSVP to Jane MacDonald - jkmac3536@gmail.com

\$5.00 registration collected at the door

Fall Retreat

Saturday, November 5th, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Shrine of St Joseph, 1050 Long Hill Road, Stirling

Retreat will be led by Amy Clarkson and Lorelei Oelschlager

Coffee and lunch provided

Please RSVP to Jane MacDonald - jkmac3536@gmail.com or 973-383-4166 by November 1

Cost: \$40 – Send a (non-refundable) check – payable to: PW in the Presbytery of the Highlands

Mail to: Jane MacDonald, 35 Hillside Ave, Newton NJ 07860

Scholarships are available upon request – contact jkmac3536@gmail.com for form

Atlantic Visiting Nurse (formerly Visiting Nurse Association - VNA)



RUMMAGE SALE

October 7 & 8
9:30am - 3:30pm

October 9
12:30 - 3:30pm

Far Hills Fairgrounds

DONATIONS ACCEPTED

September 10 - 27, 2022
10:00 am - 1:00 pm
Monday through Saturday



Atlantic
Visiting Nurse



HOUBOUND HUSTLE **5K & 1 MILE WALK**

Saturday, November 5, 2022

Central Park of Morris County
1 Gov. Chris Christie Dr.,
Parsippany-Troy Hills, NJ

Walk or run to end homelessness and
increase housing stability in Morris County!

SAVE THE DATE

FAMILYPROMISEMORRIS.ORG • IMPACT@FAMILYPROMISEMORRIS.ORG

Ongoing Mission Programs:

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

Please e-mail submissions for the
October 2022 issue of Stirling Stuff to:
jsomers17@hotmail.com
by **September 22nd**. 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 Lynn Blakeslee.

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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Why not invite a friend to church!



September 11th

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.

