



April 2026

The Presbyterian

Church Office
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The View from the Pew



Easter is here, with all its light and joy! But imagine that first Easter morning from Jesus' perspective.

What was his experience that first Easter morning? We turn the lights up bright, play the organ triumphantly, and sing at the top of our lungs, but that first Easter morning must have been much more subdued. Here is Ralph W. Seager's take on how that first hour on the first Easter Day must have gone:

No Manger for Easter

*He stirs – He moves – in the lifting gloom
He wakes, and searching through the tomb
Finds no one waiting at night's end;
Only Himself – no other friend.*

*Where are the heralding angels now?
Where the donkey and the cow
That warmed Him when the night was deep?
Where are the shepherds, the kindly sheep?
Where the star of Christmas skies?
Where the kingly and the wise?
Where are the righteous, those in sin?
And where is the keeper of the inn?*

*He folds the linen cloths away,
Then facing the sunrise side of day,
Steps into Easter, a lonely stranger
Longing for old friends round His manger.*

I really like that description, because it gives me an insight I've never considered before. What a dark place to come back to life in – a cold cave with a stone blocking the entrance. No one around, no bright stars to illumine such a momentous event. What a relief when the stone has been rolled away and the sunlight shines into a former place of death! Soon, women coming down the path with disciples soon after, and then all of them back in that upper room to rekindle

their relationships and to contemplate the implications of life conquering death.

The disciples had a hard time relating to Jesus after he was resurrected. At different points they didn't believe he was really back, whether to hug him or not, whether he was just a ghost or a real live person, or whether the wound in his side was still there. Eventually they caught on and were back on the side of believing he was truly alive again amongst them, but for a while, none of them believed he could overcome death.

We may also come and meet with him at Easter – and deepen our relationships with him as we contemplate his victory over death on our behalves as well. Easter was the day God, who had been killed in the most excruciating way known at the time, smiled at death's worst and turned away from the dark tomb toward light and life. He turned toward those he loved, hoping they would come and greet him, and hug him, and clap him on the back in amazement and wonder, and pledge to live with him in their lives despite their previous unbelief. I believe he looks for us to do the same – so let's proclaim with our mouths, but also with our lives that, "He is risen! He is risen indeed!"

Pastor Jeff Hatch



Calendar Notes



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		



The Annual Spring Clean-Up will be held Saturday, April 18th from 9:00 AM to Noon (rain date is the following Saturday, April 25th). We appreciate any time that you can give us,

even if it's only for 30 minutes. The more people we have, the faster the work will get done. Please bring your gardening tools, rakes, wheelbarrows and whatever else you think may be helpful. Thank you from all of us on the Property Commission. We look forward to seeing you there!



**Sunday, April 5th
Easter**

Christ is Risen! Join us at 10:00 AM for worship!

We'll also be collecting non-perishable food items for Casa Freehold. Bring what you can for our neighbors in need. If we all do a little, it adds up to a lot! Thank you for your continued generosity and support.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30



The church office will be closed for Easter Monday on April 6th.



Please join us for Coffee Hour on Sunday, April 12th, following worship in the auditorium. Coffee Hour is a wonderful opportunity to

catch up with your church family, to spend time with old friends, and get to know some new ones. Coffee Hour is monthly on the second Sunday following worship. We look forward to seeing you there!



The Monmouth Civic Chorus will be performing *We Hold These Truths* here at FPC on Friday, May 1, 2026 at 7:00 PM in the sanctuary. For more information

regarding this event, including ticket information, please visit the MCC website:

[We Hold These Truths - Monmouth Civic Chorus](https://www.monmouthcivicchorus.com/)

National Scrapbook Day Event

Hosted by Alice Wendel Funk
Saturday, May 2, 2026 at 9:00 AM

For more information regarding this event, please contact Alice Funk:

📞 732.599.1057

✉ alicewfunk@gmail.com

www.creativememories.com/user/alicefunk



**Freehold Borough-Wide
Yard Sale
Saturday, May 9th
9:00 AM – 2:00 PM**

SPRING HAS SPRUNG - so let's dust off! On Saturday, May 9th, we will participate in the Freehold Borough town-wide yard sale. We did this last year and it was lots of fun!

And just like last year, we need volunteers! We need your talents, your time, and your treasures!

We need your time to help set up and work the sales tables and the concession stand. We also need your talents as cooks, bakers, and sales people to help ensure that all of our guests find the treasures they're searching for, and enjoy refreshments while they shop.

Finally, we need your treasures--the stuff that you used to treasure a lot, that now we hope someone else will treasure. Tables are provided. Come between 7:00 and 9:00 AM on May 9th to set your table up.

Let us know how you can share of your talents, time, and treasures. Please contact Sam Daesener or Barbara Lloyd to let them know how you can be a part of the festivities on Saturday, May 9th. You can also email bigbrownstonechurch@gmail.com.

Presbyterian Women will be hosting the concession stand. If you would like to assist with refreshments, please speak with Marie Schlechtweg.

(Kindly note that any unsold items will need to be removed at the conclusion of the yard sale. You may either take them home or they can be disposed of. If it rains, FPC will not be participating in the yard sale.)

Freehold Twp High School Spring Concert
Wednesday, May 13, 2026
7:00 PM in the sanctuary
More to come regarding this concert.

Orchestra of St. Peter by the Sea
Presented By: The Freehold Memorial Day Parade Committee

Saturday, May 16, 2026
7:00 PM in the sanctuary
For more information regarding this event, including ticket information, please visit the Freehold Memorial Day Parade Committee website:

<http://www.freeholdmemorialdayparade.com>

In celebration of the
250th Anniversary of the
Declaration of Independence

MEMORIAL DAY PARADE
Since 1874
FREEHOLD, NJ

Join Us!
for an evening of music featuring
**The Orchestra of
St. Peter by the Sea**
Conducted by **Fr. Alphonse Stevenson**

DATE Saturday, May 16, 2026

TIME 7:00pm • Doors open at 6:30pm

LOCATION First Presbyterian Church of Freehold

TICKETS \$45 per ticket (fee applies for credit card purchases)

Pastoral Search Steering Committee



The temporary Pastoral Search Steering Committee continues to meet weekly to support our congregation's pulpit and pastoral needs. In addition, Pastor Karen Brostrom has been assigned as our liaison to the Committee on Ministry and will help guide us as we search for an Interim Pastor. Pastor Karen is a retired pastor who currently lives in Keyport and is a parish associate at the Matawan Presbyterian Church.

Once an Interim Pastor is in place, a formal search committee will be formed, and the congregation will begin a self-study and discernment process for our next settled pastor. If you have questions, please feel free to speak with any member of the Steering Committee:

- Berwin Guttormsen
- Sandra Whitehill
- Sue Stoia
- Sue Craig
- Julie Heinsohn
- Tammy Ciok

Welcoming Guest Ministers with Open Hearts

In the coming weeks, while we search for an Interim Minister, we are blessed to welcome a number of guest ministers to share God's Word with our congregation. Each brings a unique voice, perspective, and life experience, offering us the opportunity to hear Scripture in fresh and meaningful ways.

We encourage everyone to approach these services with patience, openness, and a spirit of hospitality. While each minister may differ in style, we trust that God can speak through a variety of voices.

Sometimes the message that challenges us most is the one we most need to hear.

Please know that these visits are thoughtfully planned by our Pastoral Search Committee. We advertise guest preaching through respected platforms such as Princeton Seminary and the New Brunswick Theological Seminary Center, allowing us to connect with ministers and elders. Weeks before each service, we speak with our guest ministers, getting to know them and ensuring they understand the heart and rhythm of our congregation.

We also walk them through the flow and order of our worship service so they feel comfortable and prepared, and so their message can be shared in a way that aligns with our congregation. Our goal is always to create a meaningful, cohesive worship experience for everyone present.

Welcoming guest ministers is not only a practical need—it is a spiritual opportunity. It invites us to listen more deeply, to grow in grace, and to extend the same warmth and encouragement that we would hope to receive ourselves. We invite any feedback and questions you may have during this unique time for our church.

Thank you for your continued faithfulness, flexibility, and kindness as we journey together in worship.

With gratitude,

Pastoral Search Steering Committee
(Transition Team)



Session

The Session continues to meet monthly during our Interim Pastor search. The next session meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 21st. We are grateful to Reverend Robin Palmer-Burton, pastor at Old Tennent Presbyterian Church, for serving as our temporary moderator for our meetings. If you have any questions, please see an elder. You can also reach out to the church office for assistance.

Prayer Requests



Your prayer requests are important. Please call or email the church office during the week to let us know of any requests for prayer you have. If you have a prayer request on Sunday morning, please use the Prayer Cards in the narthex to write out your requests. A greeter or usher can assist you with any questions you may have. Thank you for helping us stay on top of your prayer requests.

Per Capita

Every Presbyterian Church is asked to make an annual contribution to its local presbytery, based on the number of members in the congregation. This donation is called a per capita offering. The current amount is \$40 per FPC member. To our members who have already made an extra contribution to cover their per capita for our current budget year (July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026), thank you! If you haven't yet made a contribution to cover your per capita, we urge you to consider doing so.

Per capita contributions may be made during the offering at Sunday worship, mailed to the church office, or online through the FPC website. Please indicate that your contribution is for per capita.

One Great Hour of Sharing



**ONE GREAT
HOUR OF SHARING**

On Palm Sunday, we collected the *One Great Hour of Sharing* offering. You gave an astounding \$3,276.65 for this special offering, which goes to help people in need around the globe. Needs such as:

- Food;
- Restoration of damaged homes after floods, earthquakes or fires;
- Building and staffing of clinics and schools;
- Construction of wells and toilets in parts of the world, including the USA, where clean water is not readily available for everyone.

You – the good folks of this church – gave out of your compassion for others, and the generosity of your hearts, just as Jesus told us to.

Thank you to all for your generosity and support! We all gave what we could and it did add up to a LOT!



Beloved, let us love one another,
because love is from God; everyone who
loves is born of God and knows God.

1 John 4:7

Gifts of Women Sunday

On March 8th we celebrated the gifts of women as they led worship for us. We have gifted women in our midst, using their creativity and talents, to bring the word of God to us in different ways in all humility.



To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

1 Corinthians 12:7



Happy Birthday to Ed Chan

Happy 101st birthday to Ed Chan!



Ed recently celebrated his 101st birthday with some of his friends from FPC. A good time was had by all! Thank you to Marie Schlechtweg for sharing this photo.

Birthday Blessings

Join Us For Sunday School!

**Ages 3 through High School
Class is held in Rooms A/B and the nursery.**

Children are invited to the Sunday worship service in the sanctuary at 10:00 AM and then they can go to Sunday School after the Time for Children message.



Sunday School – March 29, 2026



Please let Vera Musser (732-685-3125) or Samantha Daesener (732-547-2551) know when your children will be in Sunday School.

Blessings,

Christian Education Commission



Growing in Faith Together

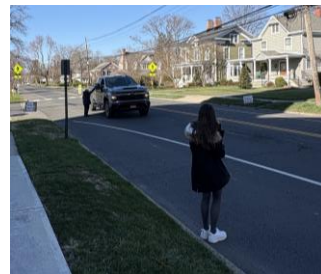
Palm Sunday

On March 29th, we welcomed back Rev. Nancy Conklin to our pulpit. Rev. Conklin served as our Interim Pastor from 2014-2017, and is looking forward to again leading this year's FPC's women's retreat in May.



Barbara and Sue with Rev. Nancy Conklin
March 29, 2026

We also handed out free palms curbside before the worship service. A big thank you to *Especially for You Florist* in Freehold for once again graciously donating 200 palms for Palm Sunday to FPC.



Music Ministry at FPC

Many Voices. Many Gifts. One Shared Song.

As our church continues through this season, music remains one of the steady threads that binds us together. Week after week, voices rise, bells ring, and instruments sound—not only to support worship, but to strengthen community.

This is not a ministry standing still. It is growing, creating, and reaching beyond the sanctuary in meaningful new ways.

Ongoing Ministry Teams

Music ministry at FPC is sustained each week through dedicated teams who lead and support worship in many ways.

Chancel Choir

Rehearsals: Thursdays at 7:00 PM

(Upstairs Rehearsal Room)

Worship: Sundays at 10:00 AM

The Chancel Choir leads congregational songs and offers anthems throughout the year. This continues to be a wonderful time to join.

Kirk Ringers (Handbells)

Rehearsals: Mondays at 1:00 PM

A welcoming group offering meaningful and collaborative music-making each week.

Youth Bells & Youth Ensemble

Rehearsals: Sundays after worship

(Upstairs rehearsal room)

Our young musicians continue to grow in confidence and skill—we are grateful for their energy and commitment.

Sound & Broadcast Ministry

This team supports worship both in-person and online, extending the reach of our services beyond the sanctuary.

Training is provided, and new team members are always welcome.

Current Projects

Lenten Recording Project **Now Available**

Our Chancel Choir's Lenten recording project has now been completed and is available to watch and share.

This presentation reflects many hours of preparation and collaboration, featuring both our choir and guest soloists. It stands as a meaningful expression of the season.

 Watch the full presentation:

<https://youtu.be/7GBOiJfAvxo?si=rf34nN3W85nQR -F>

Weekly Devotional Recordings **Growing Each Week**

Our year-long devotional series continues to take shape, with **sixteen recordings already completed and scheduled for release.**

Each brief reflection pairs scripture with music, offering a quiet moment of encouragement during the week.

We've also created a dedicated page where you can easily access each published devotion:

 <https://scriptureandsong.com/freehold-presbyterian-church>

There are 52 readings in total, and we continue to welcome new participants.

- The next recording session will be Sunday, May 3rd, immediately after the worship service
- All materials are provided
- No prior experience is needed
- Guidance is offered throughout

This is a simple yet meaningful way to share your voice and be part of something lasting. Please see Sandra Whitehill or me to sign up for a reading.

🎵 Host a Hymn Sing
A Different Kind of Gathering

We're still looking for our first hosts—and perhaps it just needs a slightly different picture.

Instead of thinking of this as an “event,” think of it as a **relaxed evening with friends, centered around music.**

Imagine:

- A small gathering in your home
- A few familiar hymns (with simple guidance)
- Light refreshments and conversation
- No pressure, no performance—just shared experience

We bring everything needed, including instruments if necessary.

If you enjoy hospitality but aren't sure what to plan, this may be the easiest and most meaningful gathering you host all year.

If you're even *curious*, let's talk—no commitment needed.

An Invitation

There are many ways to take part in music ministry at FPC—whether through singing,

ringing, reading, hosting, or supporting behind the scenes.

Each role contributes to something larger: a shared offering of music, reflection, and community.

If something here speaks to you, I would be glad to help you find the right place to begin.

John Cavicchio
 Director of Music
 Telephone: 732-558-7525
 Email: cavicchiojohn@gmail.com



Follow Us On Facebook!

**📌 Stay Connected with
 First Presbyterian Church of Freehold!**

Want to stay up to date with the life of our church? “Liking” our Facebook page is a simple way to stay informed, inspired, and connected all week long!

When you follow us on Facebook, you'll enjoy:

- ✓ **Photos** from recent church events and activities
- ✓ **Reminders** about upcoming services and special programs
- ✓ **Clips** from worship services and sermons
- ✓ **Music highlights** from our talented musicians
- ✓ A chance to **connect** with your church family throughout the week

**Let's grow our online community
 and share the love and life of our church
 with each other!**

The Pastor Study

Thank you to everyone who helped with getting the Pastor Study ready for our next Interim Pastor.



Scott and Berwin – March 5, 2026



March 20, 2026



Unity Club

Unity Club meets the third Thursday of each month, September through June, for lunch and refreshments. It's a great time to meet other members for fellowship, friendship and good conversation.

Thank you to Berwin Guttormsen for sharing this photo from their March get-together.



March 19, 2026

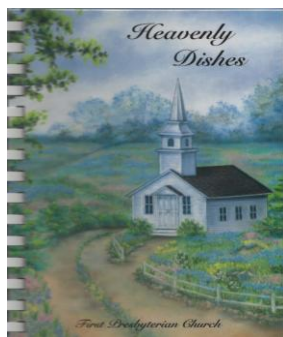
If you are interested in joining the Unity Club, please contact Marie Schlechtweg or the church office. All are welcome!



Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.
1 Thessalonians 5:11



Recipe Corner



In 2011, Presbyterian Women published **Heavenly Dishes**, a cookbook dedicated to all FPC members past and present who so generously supported PW over the years.

Here, we'll look to share a recipe or two from that cookbook. This month we shine the recipe spotlight on **Mint Squares**. Enjoy!

MINT SQUARES

1 c. sugar
1 c. flour
4 eggs
1 c. + 6 T. butter, divided
½ tsp. salt

1 tsp. vanilla
1 (16 oz.) can chocolate syrup
2 c. confectioner's sugar, sifted
3 - 4 tsp. Creme de Menthe
6 oz. chocolate chips

Cream sugar and ½ cup butter. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well. Add vanilla, salt, and chocolate syrup. Add flour and beat until well blended. Grease and flour 9 x 13-inch pan. Pour batter into pan and bake in 350° oven for 30 minutes. Cool completely. Cream ½ cup butter and add confectioner's sugar gradually. Add Creme de Menthe and beat until fluffy. Spread on cold cake layer. Refrigerate until this layer is set and hard. Melt together chocolate chips and 6 tablespoons butter. Spread over mint layer. Chill until cloudy and cut into squares.

Susan Beaton



March 2026 – Word Search Puzzle Solution

T	O	G	O	D	U	U	L	P	S	A	C
H	B	U	J	C	N	N	L	T	I	N	H
A	Q	A	A	G	W	D	S	E	N	X	R
N	I	R	L	O	H	E	T	T	O	I	I
K	M	D	N	I	U	R	D	E	I	O	S
S	X	K	D	Q	E	S	M	R	T	U	T
G	E	D	E	K	A	T	H	C	A	S	J
I	P	R	M	P	E	A	C	E	C	A	E
V	R	Y	A	N	T	N	G	A	I	D	S
I	H	E	E	Q	R	D	M	P	L	G	U
N	W	V	Y	T	S	I	N	A	P	J	S
G	L	N	I	A	A	N	I	L	P	M	B
A	O	R	R	V	R	G	D	D	U	P	E
Z	S	E	S	S	A	P	R	U	S	S	N

Word Search Puzzle



Welcome to our word search puzzle! Take a moment to read and reflect on the passage and then find the words on the list below the puzzle. The solution will be in the next newsletter. Enjoy!

Proverbs 3:5-6

- 5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart,
and do not rely on your own insight.
- 6 In all your ways acknowledge him,
and he will make straight your paths.

Z	A	I	N	S	I	G	H	T	Y	B	X
C	W	M	D	V	E	U	F	T	G	S	H
J	N	A	N	H	I	M	Y	F	I	F	X
E	A	K	A	K	P	U	N	W	E	D	B
G	H	E	A	R	T	O	B	E	L	O	T
D	O	S	I	D	R	X	C	O	W	N	A
E	P	T	N	U	U	R	N	T	L	O	G
L	E	R	P	A	S	T	A	A	M	T	E
W	M	A	S	Y	T	H	E	L	O	R	D
O	U	I	Q	U	A	S	T	O	R	E	S
N	S	G	L	Q	N	M	P	R	E	L	T
K	I	H	S	Y	A	W	R	U	O	Y	T
C	W	T	Y	O	U	R	P	A	T	H	S
A	L	L	V	Y	R	A	Y	S	U	N	F

- trust
- all
- do not rely
- insight
- acknowledge
- make straight
- the Lord
- heart
- own
- your ways
- him
- your paths



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF FREEHOLD

SESSION

Bill Canning

Finance Commission

Tammy Ciok

Worship Commission

Berwin Gutformsen

Clerk of Session

Julie Heinsohn

Personnel Commission

Vera Musser

Christian Education

Susan Pascullo

Worship Commission

Chris Pilla

Property Commission

Chuck Stapp

Mission/Outreach Commission

Nominating Commission

Sandra Whitehill

Mission/Outreach Commission



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