



May 2025

# The Presbyterian

Church Office  
Telephone: 732-462-0234  
Email: [fpcsecretary2@gmail.com](mailto:fpcsecretary2@gmail.com)

## STEWARDSHIP SEASON AND THE RESURRECTION

Life in the church is structured around the various seasons we observe on the liturgical calendar. We have observed some of these seasons, such as Advent and Lent, for nearly as long as the church has existed. We also recognize Easter and Epiphany as seasons, too. These seasons align with the scripture readings we hear in worship and they help all of us to be attentive to the movement of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Stewardship season isn't tied to the liturgical calendar. A number of years ago, this congregation chose to structure its financial and programming decisions around a fiscal year that runs from July 1 through June 30. While that's a little out of the ordinary—most of the congregations that I've observed have operated on a standard calendar year, January 1 through December 31—the Book of Order doesn't specify how congregations structure their business operations. What I find very interesting about our situation is that stewardship season often overlaps with the Easter season, which is the season between Easter Sunday and Pentecost.

During the Easter Season, the options for scripture readings include stories of the resurrected interacting with the disciples, as well as stories from the Books of Acts and Revelation. The readings from Acts show the disciples, who are then called apostles, spreading the Word of Jesus and also performing the healings and even resurrections, just as Christ did! These readings show the power and reach of the new church!

During this Easter season, my sermons have focused on real life resurrection stories, things in our world that we can see and appreciate. Beloved, I think that FPC Freehold is also a resurrection story!

When I came here seven years ago, this congregation was riddled with anxiety. The church had a mortgage balance in excess of half a million dollars and the we had been losing members for many years. At the end of my first year, we had a budget deficit of a little over \$13,000—and everybody marveled at how well we were doing! It was the smallest deficit we'd posted in years, or so I was told.

The numbers weren't good, but people kept telling me, "You can't talk about money, you mustn't say anything about the budget." Money was dirty and pastors shouldn't talk about it, they would have me believe. (To be fair, I've heard that at other churches, too.) A couple people even told me that if we ever had good news about our finances, I wasn't supposed to share that, either! "Pastor, if people think we're not in a crisis, they'll stop giving altogether!"

Seriously! I heard that from a couple people.

It was a sign of the deep anxiety you all felt.

That's no way to run the finances of a church! We have to do better and we ARE doing better!

Last year our budget deficit was about \$4,600. Four thousand. Six hundred. I bragged about that to all my clergy friends. Everyone was amazed.

This year, we're on track to have a balanced budget. Maybe even a small surplus.

Beloved, that's a resurrection story! We're a resurrection story!

We have come back from the brink of a catastrophe and that's remarkable! Our membership is stable and our finances are solid. And I can tell you that I don't feel the kind of existential anxiety that I used to feel from you folks. Things are good and we can build on what we've done over the last seven years.

First, we can do better with our annual stewardship campaign. We need to change our culture. Typically, about one in four members of the congregation fills out a pledge card. A pledge card lets us know what you think you can give in the next year. A lot of people, even longtime members, are reluctant to do this. I've heard people say, "I don't want to promise something I can't give. What if I have an emergency? I don't want to let God down!"

Beloved, if that's you, I hear you. I also feel the anxiety in what you're saying, but anxiety rarely leads us to making good and healthy decisions. God knows what's going on in our lives and God understands if something happens and we can't maintain certain commitments.

When you put an annual pledge on paper (or in an email) it lets us know what we can expect; it helps the Session to make informed decisions about annual budgets. Believe me, the Session also understands that sometimes our lives go sideways. Sometimes unforeseen events occur.

Sometimes we can't honor every commitment we make, and that's okay. But if you make a pledge, then the Session is better able to make informed decisions about the money it spends. And we're more likely to honor our commitments when we put them in writing. A pledge isn't a promissory note or a loan guarantee, but it helps the church and it helps the person who makes the pledge.

There's a second way that we can improve stewardship in this congregation and it's also a resurrection story. It's called legacy giving. If you can leave a gift to First Presbyterian Church in your estate, that can go a long way toward preserving the viability of this congregation. It doesn't have to be a huge donation. If ten or twenty people pledged gifts of five-, ten-, or twenty-thousand dollars, that money could be put in endowments to maintain this church for generations to come.

Please consider pledging to the annual stewardship campaign. If you already pledge, please consider raising your pledge. And if you can make a legacy gift, please prayerfully consider it and communicate it to the church. If you have any questions, I would welcome the conversation.

Grace & Peace,



Pastor Alan

MAY 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	31



**Freehold Borough-Wide  
Yard Sale**

**Saturday, May 17<sup>th</sup>  
9:00 AM – 3:00 PM**

On Saturday, May 17<sup>th</sup>, we will participate in a community-wide yard sale. We did this last year and it was a blast! It was almost as much fun as the church picnic!

We need volunteers! We need your talents, your time, and your treasures!

We need your time, as you work the sales tables and the concession stand. We also need your talents as cooks, bakers, and sales people to ensure that all of our guests find the treasures they're searching for, and wonderful baked goods and other food and drink 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, and at a very affordable price! You may drop your treasures off at FPC on May 17<sup>th</sup> between 7:30 and 9:00 AM. Tables are available if you want to be here for the sale.

Let us know how you can share of your talents, time, and treasures. Please contact Sam Daesener or Barbara Lloyd and let them know how you can be a part of the festivities on Saturday, May 17<sup>th</sup>. You can also email [bigbrownstonechurch@gmail.com](mailto:bigbrownstonechurch@gmail.com).

*(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.)*

**Sunday School Calendar:** There will be no Sunday School classes held on May 25<sup>th</sup>.



**Calling All Men!  
Sing for Mother's Day!**

We're inviting you to join a Men's Choir for a special musical tribute during the **worship service on Mother's Day, May 11<sup>th</sup>**. No experience is necessary—just come with a willing heart and a strong voice! There will be a brief rehearsal at 9AM, just before the worship service. Let's come together to honor the mothers of our church with a joyful gift of song. Please see John Cavicchio to be part of this meaningful tradition!

*(Please note, there will be no coffee hour on Mother's Day, May 11<sup>th</sup>.)*

**Sunday School Calendar:** There will be no Sunday School classes held on May 11<sup>th</sup>.



**The Monmouth Civic Chorus** will be performing *Earthsongs* here at FPC on Friday, May 16<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM in the sanctuary. For more information regarding this event, including ticket information, please visit the MCC website:

[monmouthcivicchorus.org/earthsongs-2025/](http://monmouthcivicchorus.org/earthsongs-2025/)



On **Sunday, May 25<sup>th</sup>**, we will hold our **Annual Congregational Meeting** in the sanctuary following worship. At that meeting, we will elect new officers,

receive the annual budget, and review Pastor Alan's terms of call.

**Church Office:** The church office will be closed Monday, May 26<sup>th</sup> for Memorial Day.

**Worship Calendar:** Pastor Alan will be away May 27<sup>th</sup> through June 2<sup>nd</sup>. The pulpit will be filled by the Rev. Dr. Jefferson Hatch on Sunday, June 1<sup>st</sup>. If you have a pastoral emergency while Pastor Alan is away, please contact the church office.

### HISTORIC RECORDS COMMITTEE

Check out the latest historical records display coming out in May; featuring pastors, Memorial Day and some surprises.

If you have any questions regarding the display case in the sanctuary or are interested in joining the Historic Records committee, please speak with Susan Croft or Barbara Lloyd.

### 75 AND OVER LUNCHEON



On **Sunday, June 8<sup>th</sup>**, the Deacons will be hosting a luncheon for our members who are 75 years and older.

The luncheon will be held in the auditorium following worship. If you turned 75 years old in the past year, please contact the church office so we can send you an invitation.

### MISSION MATTERS...



Thank you for the generous \$2,559 that you donated to **One Great Hour of Sharing!**

We gave more this year than last year to help ease *hunger*, for those recovering from *disasters*, and for those trying to create essential services for their *communities*. In a hurting world, you are repairing the breach!

**'LOVE ONE ANOTHER'**



### **C & C Sundays**



It is not 'Cookies & Cake', nor Cook & Clean'. It's **Communion & Casa**, the first Sunday of each month when we celebrate

Communion and we bring non-perishable food items for our neighbors in need at Casa Freehold.

If you miss a C & C Sunday, you can always leave your donations in the food collection box in the sanctuary or the cart in the hall near Room A/B any other day.

Thank you for your generosity and support. If we all give what we can, it really does add up to a lot!

### **Mission/Outreach Commission**

Mission/Outreach meets monthly on the third Sunday following worship in the nursery.

If you feel you might be called to serve with the Mission/Outreach Commission, please join us. We'd love to put your enthusiasm to work for the Lord and our church!

### WOMEN'S RETREAT



A group of our women members and friends were away the first weekend in May for their annual spiritual retreat in the Poconos. The creative leader for the retreat is Rev. Nancy Conklin and the organizer of the retreat is Sue Craig. This is a special time for busy women to relax, pray, find themselves and engage with others in deeper conversations guided by Jesus. Fun is also part of the mix!



May 2025 Women's Retreat

If you are interested in learning more about this annual event, please speak with Sue Craig about retreat plans for Spring 2026.

Sue has run this special retreat for many years and always welcomes new souls to this amazing event.

### SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

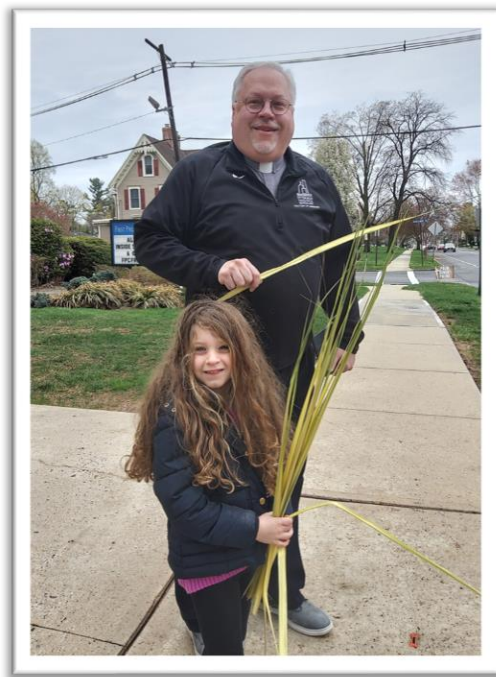
#### **Kindergarten through 12th Grade**

**Classes are held in Rooms A/B and the nursery from 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM. Come join us on Sunday mornings!**



Growing in Faith Together

On Palm Sunday, palms were handed out in front of the church before worship.



And there was an Easter Egg Hunt after worship during the coffee hour!



**Calendar Notes**

**May 11<sup>th</sup> - Mother's Day  
No Sunday School**

**May 25<sup>th</sup> - Memorial Day Weekend  
No Sunday School**

**June 8<sup>th</sup> - Pentecost  
Sunday School Party**

Please let us know if your children will be in Sunday School each week so we can plan the lesson.

**Vera Musser: 732-685-3125**

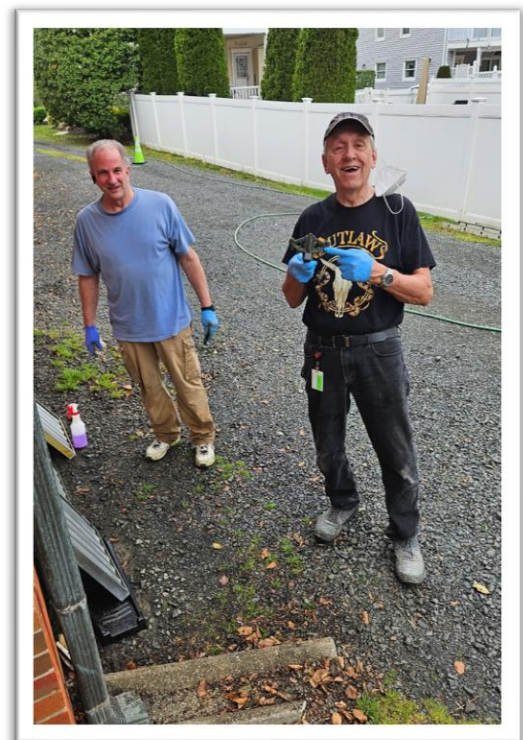
**Samantha Daesener: 732-547-2551**

**SPRING CLEAN-UP**



A big **THANK YOU** to all who helped out with the annual Spring clean-up on April 26<sup>th</sup>! Quite a bit was accomplished that day!

And thank you to Jeff Hatch for sharing some pictures!



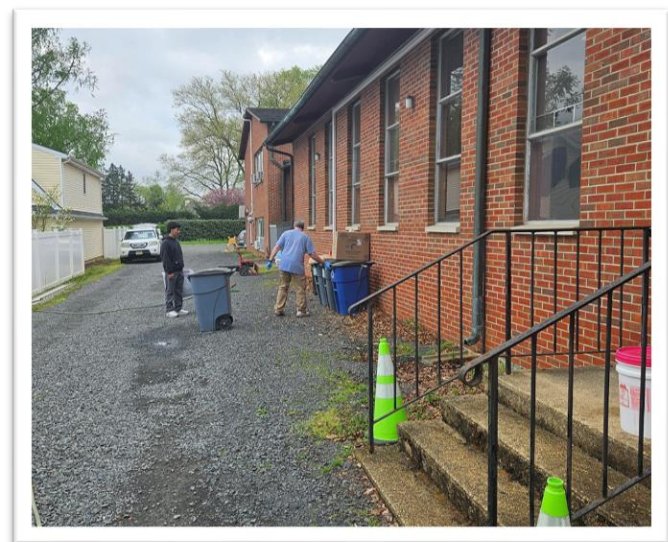
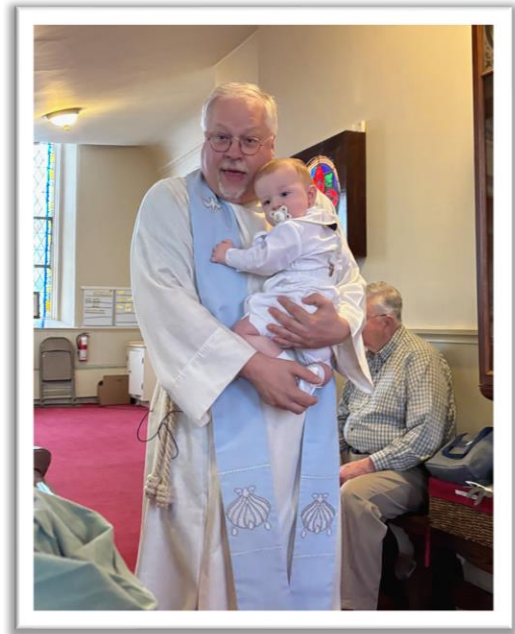


**CELEBRATING  
THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM**

Such a joyful day!

During the April 27<sup>th</sup> worship service, we celebrated the Sacrament of Baptism for

***Austin Pipher, child of  
Nick Pipher & Krystin Ryfkogel***





**MUSIC MINISTRY**

On April 27<sup>th</sup> our choir presented **Mendelssohn's *Hear My Prayer*** during the morning worship service. Special guest musicians included Celia Castro, a dramatic soprano, and Beth Chen, pianist.



Rehearsal – April 26, 2025



April 27, 2025

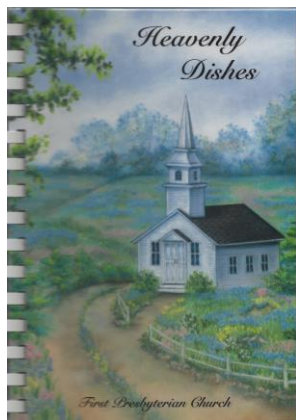
**Calendar Notes**  
**Monday, June 16<sup>th</sup>**  
**Summer Choir Season begins**



Beth Chen, John Cavicchio and Celia Castro  
April 27, 2025

**Upcoming Event**  
**Thursday, May 8<sup>th</sup>**  
**Eddie Zheng, Organ Recital**  
**Juilliard Artist Diploma Program**  
**Eglise St. Jean Baptiste Catholic Church**  
**184 E 76th St, New York, NY**  
  
Don't miss this exciting recital by Juilliard organist Eddie Zheng. Admission is free; a \$10 donation is suggested. No tickets or reservations required.

**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 **Italian Broccoli Salad**. Enjoy!

**ITALIAN BROCCOLI SALAD**

*Salad*

1½ lb. fresh broccoli or 2 (10 oz.) pkg. frozen broccoli      1 c. cherry tomatoes

Cut broccoli into smaller bite-size pieces. Heat salted water to boiling. Add broccoli and cover. Simmer until crisp and tender, about 10 minutes and then drain. Cut tomatoes in half and add to broccoli.

*Dressing*

½ c. olive oil      ¼ tsp. pepper  
 ¼ c. lemon juice      2 cloves garlic, finely chopped  
 ¾ tsp. salt      1 T. snipped parsley

Combine all dressing ingredients. Add to broccoli and tomatoes when ready to serve. Salad may be served either warm or cold.

*Donna D'Auria*



**April 2025 Word Search Puzzle Solution**

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

**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!

**Isaiah 61:11**

11 For as the earth brings forth its shoots and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

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

- EARTH
- BRINGS FORTH
- GARDEN
- SOWN
- SPRING UP
- LORD GOD
- RIGHTEOUSNESS
- PRAISE
- ALL
- NATIONS



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF FREEHOLD

SESSION

**Bill Canning**

*Finance Commission*

**Berwin Guttormsen**

*Clerk of Session*

**Julie Heinsohn**

*Personnel Commission*

**Carol Matino**

*Worship Commission*

**Larry Moran**

*Property Commission*

**Vera Musser**

*Christian Education*

**Susan Pascullo**

*Worship Commission*

**Chuck Stapp**

*Mission/Outreach Commission*

**Sandra Whitehill**

*Mission/Outreach Commission*

*Nominating Commission*



BOARD OF DEACONS

**Judi Cavicchio**

**Lenora Chu**

**Robin Fox**

**Peggy Guttormsen**

**Barbara Jean Keune**

**Jean Pennett**

**Marie Schlechtweg**

**Michele Williams**