



January 2026

The Presbyterian

Church Office
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My Peace I Leave With You

This is my last official goodbye. I know that some of you couldn't be with us in worship on December 28th, which is too bad. It was a great service and you all gave me a wonderful send off! As I write this brief message—it's Tuesday afternoon, December 30th—my heart is still overflowing with love and gratitude for everything that you've given me over these last seven-and-a-half years. I am touched!

I am going to miss you more than you know! I don't know if any of you noticed this, but I would often select the hymn "God Be with You Till We Meet Again," as the last hymn on a Sunday before I took a week of vacation or study leave. I didn't do it every time, but I wanted to leave that thought with you before I went away.

I thought about using that hymn on December 28th, though who knows when we'll meet again. I also thought about using "It Is Well with My Soul," but it felt a little bit like a funeral, so I didn't want to go there.

I still want to leave you with a song—a new song! It's called "May the Peace of the Lord Christ Go With You" and it comes from morning prayer service in the Northumbria Community. That's a religious community that's near the border between England and Scotland. If you want to hear the song, go to YouTube and search the song title. If you see the words "Northumbria Community" or "morning prayer" in parentheses after the song title, then you've found it. Here are the lyrics:

May the peace of the Lord, Christ go with you,
Wherever He may send you.
May He guide you through the wilderness,
Protect you through the storm.
May He bring you home, rejoicing
At the wonders He has shown you.
May He bring you home, rejoicing,
Once again into our doors.

Thank you for all the gifts and blessings you've given me over the years. Though I am being sent somewhere new, I will always carry a piece of you!

Grace & Peace,



Pastor Alan



Calendar Notes



Please join us on **Sunday, January 11th**, following worship for our next Coffee Hour.

The church office will be closed Monday, January 19th, for Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

The 2025 Giving Statements will be mailed out before January 31st.

For those of you who donate using the online service, you can obtain your 2025 contribution statement by logging into your account on the Vanco website at: www.vancopayments.com.

Inclement Weather Announcements



During the winter months, when there is a threat of inclement weather, the Session and the Property Commission will determine whether or not it is safe to hold worship services or other activities at the church.

When the weather is threatening, please check for emails from FPC. We will also post notifications of closures on Facebook, but email should be the first thing you check.

First Presbyterian Church of Freehold 2026 Holiday Schedule

Thursday, January 1st

New Year's Day

Monday, January 19th

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Monday, February 16th

Presidents' Day

Monday, April 6th

Easter Monday

Monday, May 25th

Memorial Day

Friday, July 3rd (observed)

Independence Day

Monday, September 7th

Labor Day

Wednesday, November 11th

Veterans Day

Thursday, November 26th

Thanksgiving Day

Friday, November 27th

Day after Thanksgiving

Friday, December 25th

Christmas Day

The church office will be closed on the aforementioned holiday dates.

Church staff will be working remotely December 28th through December 31st.

Pastoral Search Steering Committee

Our temporary Pastoral Search Steering Committee meets weekly and is diligently working to ensure that our congregation's weekly pulpit and pastoral needs are met.

We are grateful for the guest ministers who are blessing us with their leadership during this time of transition.

As we search for an Interim Pastor, please know that once an Interim is in place, a formal search committee will be established. At that time, the congregation will engage in a self-study and discernment process to help guide the search for our next settled pastor.

If you have questions about this process, please feel free to speak with any member of the Steering Committee:

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

Session

The Session will continue to meet during our pastor search. The next session meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 27th.

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



Prayer Requests

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.

I ask your prayers for:

Name (If desired) _____ Date: _____

For this service – hand to an usher *before* worship.

For next week's service – put in the offering plate.

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF FREEHOLD, NJ

Your prayer requests are important. Thank you for helping us stay on top of your requests.

Deacons Ministry

As part of their ministry, the Deacons share fellowship with homebound members and the church community. Sometimes it's conversation, other times it's just listening or reading the Bible together and praying. In this way, the Deacons share God's love and grace and reconnect homebound members with their church family.

If you would like to schedule a visit, please contact the Deacons. You can also reach out to the church office for assistance.



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

How to Like Our Page:

1. **Open Facebook** on your phone or computer
2. **Search for:** First Presbyterian Church of Freehold
3. **Click on our church's name** in the search results
4. Click the "**Like**" button (thumbs up icon) near the top of the page
5. Click "**Follow**" to see our updates in your News Feed

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

Join Us For Sunday School!

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

Children are invited to begin the Sunday worship service in the sanctuary at 10 AM, and then they will be dismissed to Sunday School after the Time for Children message.



FPC Sunday School Team

Samantha Daesener (732-547-2551)
Vera Musser (732-685-3125)
Carol Matino
Bob Musser

Nursery Attendant

Hanah Koch

Please let Vera Musser or Samantha Daesener know when your children will be in Sunday School. We look forward to seeing you in the New Year!

Come Be Part of the Music This Season

A new year is a wonderful time to step into music—whether for the first time, or by returning to something you once loved. At **FPC**, our music ministries are growing, welcoming, and preparing for meaningful moments in the months ahead.

Chancel Choir – Come Sing With Us! **Rehearsals: Sundays at 8:45 AM**

Our Chancel Choir truly needs new voices. A healthy choir depends on many singers supporting one another, and your voice can make a real difference. If you've ever sung in a choir—or even wished you had—this is your invitation.

Rehearsals are welcoming, supportive, and focused on making beautiful music together for worship, especially as we prepare for Lent and Easter.

Looking ahead:

- **Sunday, February 22** – Choral recording sessions for Lenten music
- **Easter Sunday** – Special music as we celebrate the Resurrection

If you've ever thought, "Maybe I could sing again," this is a perfect moment to start.

Youth Bells

A Great Beginning for Young Musicians **Rehearsals: Sundays at 11:15 AM**

Our young ringers are growing every week, and new members are always welcome. Youth Bells is a wonderful entry point for children who enjoy rhythm, movement, and teamwork. No prior experience is needed—just curiosity and enthusiasm!



Kirk Ringers – Adults & Seniors **Rehearsals: Mondays at 1:00 PM**

This weekday handbell choir is a warm, joyful group that welcomes anyone eager to learn—or return to—ringing. No experience necessary; we'll guide you every step of the way.

This is an especially good time to join as we begin preparing special music for Easter.

Youth Ensemble – All Instruments Welcome

The Youth Ensemble plays **once a month** during worship and is open to students of *all instruments*. It's a great way for young musicians to share their gifts, grow in confidence, and be part of the worship life of the church.

Host a Hymn Sing — A Simple Way to Connect

We've welcomed many new families to our church, and you may have already thought, "I'd love to invite someone over... but what would we talk about?"

Here's a simple and joyful solution: **host a hymn sing**.

A hymn sing isn't a concert or a program—it's relaxed, friendly, and surprisingly fun. Singing a few familiar hymns together breaks the ice naturally, gives everyone something to share, and often leads to great conversation and laughter. You don't need musical experience, and there's no pressure to "perform."

We'll take care of the music, the flow, and even help with invitations if you'd like.

All you need to do is be willing to host **6-10 people** in your home and offer a bit of hospitality.

Many people are surprised how quickly a hymn sing turns strangers into friends—and sometimes into really wonderful, long-term connections.

If this sounds like something you'd enjoy, **see John to schedule your event.**



In closing, our Music Ministry grows one conversation at a time.

If any of these opportunities sound interesting—or if you're simply curious—come find me after worship or contact me this week. I'd love to talk, answer questions, and help you find the right fit.

Sometimes the best things begin with a simple hello.

Blessings,

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



**Make a joyful noise to the Lord,
all the earth.
Worship the Lord with gladness;
come into his presence with singing.**

Psalm 100:1-2

January 4th Worship Service

On January 4th, we welcomed the Rev. Dr. Jefferson Hatch into the pulpit. Pastor Jeff was joined by liturgist Berwin Guttormsen as we celebrated the first worship service of the new year.



Berwin and Pastor Jeff Hatch
January 4, 2026

As Pastor Alan shared last month in the December issue of our newsletter, Pastor Jeff has graciously agreed to fill the pulpit on the first Sunday of every month until we find an interim. Thank you, Pastor Jeff.



December Snapshots

Westminster Handbell Choir Concert **December 6, 2025**



Session Meeting - December 16, 2025



December 21, 2025
Sunday Worship Service
PW Cookie Sale





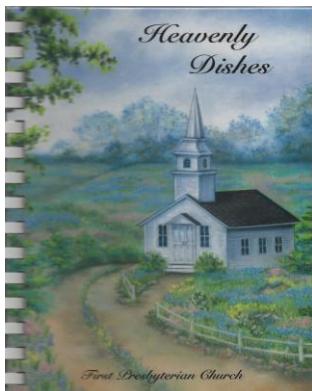
Christmas Eve - December 24, 2025





Coffee Hour - December 28, 2025



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 *Brandied Shrimp with Garlic, Tomato & Basil* and *Ranch Ham Roll-Ups*. Enjoy!

BRANDIED SHRIMP WITH GARLIC, TOMATO, AND BASIL

1 lb. lg. shrimp, peeled	2 lg. tomatoes, cubed
6 shallots, chopped	1 tsp. salt
4 cloves garlic, pressed	1 tsp. black pepper
¼ c. olive oil	½ c. chopped basil
¼ c. brandy	½ c. butter, cut into pieces
½ c. dry white wine	1 c. parmesan cheese

Heat oil till smoking. Sear shrimp for 3 minutes tossing constantly. Add shallots and garlic, stirring another minute on HIGH. Add brandy and ignite. Add tomatoes and cook for 2 minutes. Add wine, salt, pepper, basil, and butter, and cook for 3 minutes. Stir in ½ cup of parmesan cheese and serve over cappellini pasta or with French bread. Pass around remaining parmesan cheese.

Dorothy Munnery



RANCH HAM ROLL-UPS

2 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese, softened	3 green onions, chopped
1 env. ranch salad dressing mix	11 (8-in.) flour tortillas

In a small bowl, beat cream cheese and salad dressing mix until smooth. Stir in onions. Spread about 3 tablespoons over each tortilla; top with 2 ham slices. Roll up tightly and wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate until firm. Unwrap and cut into ¾-inch slices.

Dona D'Auria

WORD SEARCH PUZZLE



Welcome to our word search puzzle! We are taking a new year break this month and will return in February.

DECEMBER 2025 WORD SEARCH PUZZLE SOLUTION														
A	E	B	U	F	C	H	O	S	D	I	D			
N	G	D	A	V	I	D	J	A	M	T	R			
G	Z	I	Y	Y	A	L	E	V	T	H	O			
E	N	A	T	M	F	J	O	I	R	E	L			
L	P	R	S	E	B	P	E	O	P	L	E			
O	L	F	D	S	E	B	I	R	M	O	H			
F	T	A	A	S	C	H	E	A	L	R	Y			
T	I	E	B	I	W	R	T	H	O	D	F			
H	N	B	K	A	M	E	A	S	C	E	O			
E	X	T	A	H	C	I	N	L	E	P	Y			
L	B	O	R	N	A	S	O	D	T	X	R			
O	Q	N	M	S	E	L	V	D	O	R	O			
R	E	O	U	S	E	E	L	I	W	O	L			
D	A	D	R	Y	O	J	T	A	E	R	G			

So if anyone is in Christ,

there is a new creation:

**everything old has passed away;
see, everything has become new!**

2 Corinthians 5:17



FPC branded t-shirts and sweatshirts are available for sale to the congregation. This is not a fundraiser, but an opportunity to purchase clothing (at cost) with the First Presbyterian Church of Freehold logo. If you have any questions about purchasing FPC Spirit Wear, please speak with Marie Schlechtweg or Tammy Ciok.

FPC Spirit Wear Order Form

Item	Item Description	Size	Quantity	Price	Total
	Black T-Shirt with FPC emblem on left side of chest 60% kingpin cotton & 40% polyester Runs large	S M L XL XXL 3XL		\$25.00	
	White T-Shirt with FPC emblem on left side of chest 60% kingpin cotton & 40% polyester Runs large	S M L XL XXL 3XL		\$25.00	
	Black zip-up hoodie with FPC emblem on left side of chest 60% kingpin cotton & 40% polyester Runs true to size	S M L XL XXL 3XL		\$55.00	
	White zip-up hoodie with FPC emblem on left side of chest 60% kingpin cotton & 40% polyester Runs true to size	S M L XL XXL 3XL		\$55.00	
Total Due →					

Name: _____

Address: _____

Town: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Please make all checks payable to: "K. Schlechtweg"

**Please return order form and payment to:
Marie Schlechtweg or Tammy Ciok**

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF FREEHOLD

SESSION

Bill Canning

Finance Commission

Tammy Ciok

Worship Commission

Berwin Guttormsen

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

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