

MARCH 2024

The Beacon



Milk & Honey Cooking School,

**Learning the History of God's People
Through Cooking and Eating.**

Join us at noon on **Sunday, March 17th** as we take an eating and learning adventure through the Bible. Explore Biblical dining customs, mix up Goat Cheese dip, taste Roman Bread Pudding and so much more as we explore how foods, seasonings, and preparation methods changed as the Hebrew people encountered the outside world.

This is a great event for all ages!!!

Pre-registration is requested by March 12th.

We want to be sure to have enough food and seating available.
Register by emailing Colleen at colleen.duffy@fpcnewtonnj.org,
by calling the church office at 973-383-4420
or, by signing up in the parlor on Sunday mornings!

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March Reminders...

- 3/3 Communion
Hearts and Hands Sale
- 3/11 Easter Flower Orders Due
- 3/12 Manna House Dinner
- 3/17 Milk and Honey
- 3/24 Palm Sunday
- 3/28 Maundy Thursday
- 3/29 Good Friday
- 3/31 Easter Sunday



From the Interim Pastor



March is said to come in like a lamb and go out like a lion. According to the Farmers' Almanac, the weather folklore stems from ancestral beliefs in balance, meaning if the weather at the start of March was bad (roaring, like a roaring lion), the month should end with good weather (gentle, like a lamb). One theory says this is due to astrology and the sky location of the stars of Leo and Aries in the sky.

Another theory has the saying as biblical: Jesus' first appearance was as the sacrificial lamb, but he will return as the Lion of Judah, hence those symbolic animals. Inconveniently though, the older version definitely put the lion first. Whatever the meaning of that 17th century weather saying, this year, our Lamb of God comes back to life on March 31st, as Easter – that moveable feast -- moves rather early. The symbol of the lion and lamb lying down together is used in both Christianity and Judaism to represent the Messianic Age. In Christianity, according to a sermon by Augustine, the lion stands for Christ resurrected, the lamb for Christ's sacrifice - "*He endured death as a lamb; he devoured it as a lion.*"— *Augustine, Sermon 375A.*

The Pastor Nominating Committee has begun its work! At the Annual Meeting on February 11, 2024 the congregation elected the Pastor Nominating Committee. This committee works on behalf of the church to search for the next minister. Some people know this process or think they do from past experience and others are wondering how the committee (*often referred to as the PNC*) will work. The PNC met for the first time 2/26 and were oriented to the work ahead with the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry (COM) Liaison to the First Presbyterian Church of Newton, the Rev. Robin Palmer Burton (Pastor at the Highlands Church), who will continue to meet with the PNC guiding the process and encouraging the PNC. They asked and answered questions and prayed together!

As the Pastor Nominating Committee begins meeting together regularly, they will:

- Get to know one another and bond as a group – with laughter and Christian fellowship – and prayer.
- Select officers – usually a secretary or two (possibly divvying up minutes and correspondence), and a moderator or co-moderators to call meetings and be the contact person(s) and moderate the meetings ably and to help guide the process without anxiety, trusting in the Spirit
- Pray!
- Write the Ministry Discernment Profile (MDP) → *to be approved by Session and COM*
- Remain non-anxious and trust the process!
- Ensure that the MDP gets loaded on the PCUSA leadership website which serves to encourage computer matching and personal applications by pastors who read about this church online - with help from the Clerk of Session and Presbytery staff
- Allow the Holy Spirit to work in the process throughout!

As we prepare for our Holy Week together, and recognize the many names we call Jesus and that many ways we understand Christ in our lives, please keep the PNC in your prayers as they work on behalf of the congregation, and as we move forward.

Grace and Peace, *Pastor Heather*



HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

March 24 Palm Sunday *

10:30 am Readings and Music to begin Holy Week together (sanctuary)

March 28 Maundy Thursday

7:00 pm Candlelit communion Service of Readings and Music (Sanctuary)

March 29 Good Friday

11:00 am - 3:00 pm Creative interactive stations for all ages.
Sanctuary open for this self-led family friendly experience

March 31 Easter Sunday *

10:00 am Easter Egg Hunt Outdoors

10:30 am Joyous Celebration with Music and Brass quarter (Sanctuary)

* One Service at 10:30 am and no Faith Formation Classes 3/24 & 3/31

EASTER EGG HUNT DONATIONS SOUGHT



The youth group will be hosting the Annual Easter Egg Hunt for children through grade 5 on Easter morning, March 31st, at 10:00 am. The group is looking for donations of individually wrapped candy and small trinkets to place in plastic eggs. If you can help, please drop off your donation in the church office by noon on Palm Sunday, March 24th. The youth group will stuff the eggs at their meeting that evening. Thank you for your support!

Let's Ring in Some "Times For Chimes"

Dear Families,

There will be a Chime Choir for our youth ages 7-12 that will practice on select Sunday mornings in March and April. **The Chime Choir will plan to play in church on Mother's Day for the 10:30 service.** The Chime Choir will meet from 9:45-10:15 in the room that is to the left at the top of the stairs. Sunday practices include 3/3, 3/17, 4/14, 4/21, 4/28, and 5/5. Youth members who are older and would like to come as helpers are more than welcome! Our first practice will be on March 3rd, and I look forward to seeing everyone there!

Blessings, Mindy Kline





THANK YOU to the congregation for supporting the Community Soup Lunch on Super Bowl Sunday. **The sale, hosted by the youth group, raised \$900 for the Manna House Soup Kitchen.** A big thanks to those who made pots and pots of delicious soup including Laureen Armstrong, Carol Aumick, Jerry Chandler, Doris Christians, Colleen Duffy, Shannon Duffy, Kelly Clark, Kimberly Crowell, April Fisher, Susan Hermes, Gail Hoffman, Meridith Leonard, Judy Prendergast, and Maija Volk. Thank you to the Hoffman, Ruitenberg, and Duffy families for providing the bread and to Bob Ruitenberg, Kelly Clark, and Laureen Armstrong for helping in the kitchen. Manna House has been providing 5- meals a week to any and all who walk through the door for more than 36 years.

Lenten Devotionals Available...

PSALMS – ANATOMY OF THE SOUL – Meditating on the Psalms is a fitting way to move through Lent, a season when we ponder our humanity, grieve our sinfulness, and give thanks for Christ’s gift. These devotionals that reflect on the Psalms are written by Reformed Church in America chaplains.

40-DAY “LOVE BUILDS UP” FAMILY CHALLENGE – We believe that when Easter fills the world to overflowing, we will all finally see and treat each other – and ourselves – as God sees and treats us. Meanwhile though, it’s hard down here and we could all use a little practice. So, to get spiritual muscles and emotional health good and strong, beautiful, and ready to participate in the Easter that’s already creeping through the land, we’re going to do a little training using the 40-DAY “LOVE BUILDS UP” Lenten Devotional. This is a great devotional for families with children!

Choose the devotional that works best for your family. Pick up a copy in the parlor on Sunday mornings or whenever you are at the church or, call Colleen at 973-383-4420, or by email at colleen.duffy@fpncewtonnj.org and she will email or mail you one.

CHURCH RUMMAGE SALE

Saturday, May 18th, from 9-3 pm.

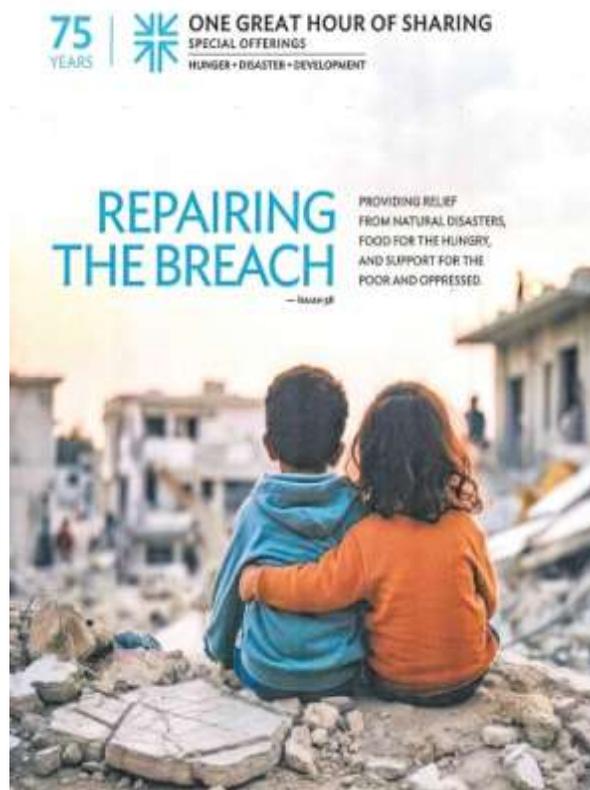


The youth group is holding a Church Rummage Sale on May 18th to help offset the cost of their 2024 summer mission trip to Erie, Pa. You can help by gathering those item that you would like to find a new home. We will be accepting linens, housewares, games, toys, shoes, clothing, handbags, bikes, jewelry, tools, and small pieces of furniture. Please make sure items are in good condition. **Items can be dropped off at the church beginning Sunday, May 12th.** Look for more information in future editions of *The Beacon* Newsletter.

One Great Hour of Sharing

Special Offering

Hunger*Disaster*Development



Around the world, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity. The three programs supported by One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) — Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, The Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People—all work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need from initial disaster response to ongoing community development. Their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance, and hope.

Received during the season of Lent (February 14-March 31), each gift to OGHS helps to improve the lives of people in these challenging situations. The Offering provides us a way to share God’s love with our neighbors in need. **In fact, OGHS is the single, largest way that Presbyterians come together every year to work for a better world.** This year is the 75th anniversary of Presbyterians coming together to support One Great Hour of Sharing!

When you consider giving, remember—
when we all do a little, it adds up to a lot.

FAITH FORMATION CLASS NEWS!

“He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” Micah 6:8



The call to do justice in Micah 6:8 is the focus of the unit the children are exploring in faith formation class. It is not simply a call to distinguish right from wrong. God’s justice is restorative, not retributive, and it emerges from a place of deep abiding love. We are learning together to use our eyes and ears to notice injustice in our schools, communities, and nation, and to explore our feelings of compassion for those experiencing injustice. We are also learning how to speak up as individuals and as community members for the voiceless. It is indeed what God requires of us. Faith Formation class takes place on Sunday mornings from 9-10 am, for children preschool through grade 5. We hope your child or children will join us!

Youth Group News!

The youth group at FPCN is open to young people in grades 6-12. We meet most Sunday evenings from 5-7 pm for dinner, devotions, games, service opportunities and fellowship. Friends are always welcome. Contact Mrs. Duffy with any questions at 973-383-4420 or by email at colleen.duffy@fpcnewtonnj.org.

Our gatherings for March include:

Sunday, March 3rd Gathering at the church from 5-7 pm. Pizza dinner will be served.

Sunday March 10th Gathering at the church from 5-7 pm. Dinner will be served.

Sunday March 17th No youth group today but all ages are welcome to join us for the Milk & Honey Cooking School in Fellowship Hall beginning at noon.

Sunday, March 24th Gathering at the church from 5-7 pm. Dinner will be served. We will be stuffing the eggs for the children's Easter Egg Hunt tonight!

Sunday, March 31st No gathering today. HAPPY EASTER!!!



Youth Mission Trip Update...this summer our youth mission team will travel to Erie, PA., July 7-13, to make home repairs for seniors and families in need in the Erie community. Keep us in your prayers as we plan and fundraise for this annual trip. Look for ways you can support the group in this and future editions of *The Beacon* newsletter.



Easter

Flowers 2024

If you wish to have Easter flowers in the sanctuary, we will be ordering them as a church. Please indicate the quantity and the total dollar amount for each flower. Thank you!

	Size	Unit Cost	Quantity	Total
Easter Lily	6" pot	\$10.75	_____	_____
Daffodils 5 bulbs	6" pot	\$7.50	_____	_____
Tulips 6 bulbs	6" pot	\$7.50	_____	_____

Total Dollar Amount: \$_____

Make checks payable to *First Presbyterian Church of Newton*. Please submit orders to the church office no later than Monday March 11th. Thank you!

Dedication should read (please print):

Name: _____

Phone # _____



Deacons'
Food of the Month:
Peanut butter and Jelly and Crackers

Manna House Spaghetti Dinner
Dine In or Take Out
Tuesday March 12th, 5:00-6:30 pm.
\$5 for adults, \$3 for children 5-12, kids under 5 free!
Spaghetti, salad, bread and cookies!

- Birthdays**
- 3/16 Ron Hoffman
 - 3/19 Allyana Drost
Sophia Drost
 - 3/22 Frank Abruzzo
Nailah Christ
 - 3/23 Larry Lenge
Dorothy Smalley
 - 3/24 Shirley Smith
 - 3/25 Steve Carson
Daniel Celentano
 - 3/26 Hunter Rutan
 - 3/27 Doris Wood

Anniversary
3/20 Mary Lou & William Holterman

HEARTS AND HANDS SALE

Join Hearts and Hands for our spring sale on **Sunday, March 3** between morning services and after the 10:30 am service.

We will have handmade items for Easter, spring and beyond, so come see what we have for sale.

There will be items to brighten your home and bring some spring into it, as well as decorations for Easter. Barbie may make an appearance, with offerings from her wardrobe.

All proceeds go to benefit our church.
Come and see, you never know what you will find!



Like us on Facebook at facebook.com/FPCNJ

March 2024



Regular Sunday Schedule
9:00 am Faith Formation
9:00 am Worship in Chapel
10:30 am Worship in Sanctuary
Recording of service available at:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCifje87megV4T0c-tJ0hSjA>

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
3 9am Faith Formation Hearts & Hands Sale 9:45 am - 10:15am Chime Choir 5-7 pm YG - Pizza!	410 am Wired Word 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH	5 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH 6:00 pm Pastor Nominating Committee	6 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH 8pm Vespers via Zoom	7 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH 7 pm Bells	8 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH 1 pm Hearts & Hands	9 10-1 BOL
10 Bucket Brigade 9 am Faith Formation 5-7 pm Youth Group	11 10 am Wired Word 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH Easter Flower Orders Due	12 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH 5-6:30 pm MH Dinner 7 pm Deacons	13 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH 8pm Vespers via Zoom	14 10 am FPCN serves at MH 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH 7 pm Bells	15 Newsletter Deadline 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH 1 pm Hearts & Hands	16 10-1 BOL
17 9am Faith Formation 9:45 am - 10:15 am Chime Choir 12 Noon Milk & Honey	18 10 am Wired Word 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH	19 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH	20 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH 8pm Vespers via Zoom	21 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH 1:30-3 pm Readers INK Book Club 7 pm Bells	22 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH 1 pm Hearts & Hands	23 10-1 BOL
24 Palm Sunday OGHS Dedication 5:00 -7:00 pm YG	25 10 am Wired Word 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH	26 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH 7 pm Jubilee Women	27 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH 7:15 pm Session 8pm Vespers via Zoom	28 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH 7 pm Candlelit Service with Communion	29 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH 11:00 am-3 pm Interac- tive Stations in Sanctuary	30 10-1 BOL
31 Easter Sunday 10 am Easter Egg Hunt 10:30 am Worship						

Abbreviations Legend:
BOL - Bread of Life

LWNJ - Literacy Volunteers of New Jersey
Fin. & Fac. - Finance and Facilities Team

MH - Manna House
YG - Youth Group

Items in *Italics* are outside organizations using the church facilities.



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 Web site — www.fpcnewtonnj.org
 YouTube.com - Search for: "fpcnewtonnj"



2024

RULING ELDERS & DEACONS OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Ruling Elders	Class 2024	Class 2025	Class 2026
	Ed Caffrey	Judy Prendergast (2)	Jennifer Smalley
	Scott Hoffman (2)	Alice Sharick (2)	Cindy Fogg (2)
	Jerry Chandler	Tim Voss	Tom McNulty
Stated Clerk: Terry VanAuken	~~~~~	~~~~~	~~~~~
Deacons	April Fisher	Susanne Gerdes	Donna Kronen (2)
		Susan Hermes (2) (Moderator)	Janice Fisher
		Jody McNulty (2) (Secretary)	Sue Hough



*Newsletter Deadline: Please submit articles to the church office via email at:
admin@fpcnewtonnj.org by the 15th of each month for
 the following month's publication.*