

# The Beacon



## FAITH FORMATION CLASSES

Faith Formation class for children 3 years through grade 5 meets on Sunday mornings at 9:00 am in Room 206 on the second floor of the Sunday School building. We just completed a 6-week session called *Do Justice*. Our next 6-week session is *Love God, Neighbor, Enemy*, also from the Follow Me curriculum.

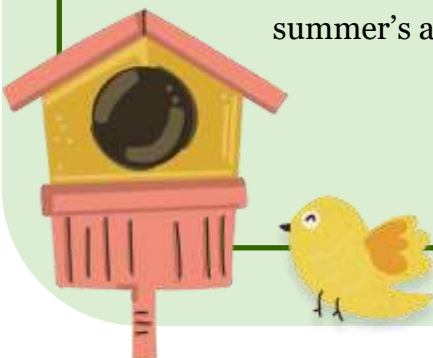
We are often told to go out into the world and share God's love with others. While this is easy in theory, sometimes it is more complex in practice. Not every person is easy to love, and sometimes offering love seems complex or even counterintuitive, such as with those we may view (and who may view us!) as enemies. Our hope is that this curriculum will provide ideas to take this practice of loving others out of the church building and into the world. Bring your children on Sunday mornings as we explore God's command to love others. Older youth are welcome to join this class too!



## Vacation Bible School Planning Team Meeting

**Tuesday, April 16<sup>th</sup>, 7:00pm.**

The 2024 Vacation Bible School Planning Team will hold their first meeting on Tuesday, April 16<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 pm in the Adult Study Room. Vacation Bible School is one of the highlights of the year for families with children. Consider joining us as we brainstorm for this summer's adventure.



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## April Reminders...

4/7 Communion

4/9 Manna House Dinner

## ***Interim Pastor Message***

I have never been one for April Fool's Day - it seemed like trickery or sometimes meanspirited. Maybe it has something to do with my grandparents choosing to get married on April 2<sup>nd</sup> long ago, "because we did not want anyone calling us April Fools" as my grandmother used to say.

But I do love April! It rains a fair amount, but even that brings new life to the ground. The flowers bud, and the trees begin to show new life. Forsythia bloom by roadways, and small crocuses are pushed aside by daffodils in a full array of yellows. Often Easter coincides with this month, but not always, as with this year. In 2024, April is the month of Eastertide... we can respond to Easter with our ways of living out new life!

Signs of New Life can come from all different places. Listening for God, and keeping our eyes open to the newness is a big part of the practice of new life. After a long day dealing with my husband's PT (*which is going well, but I had no idea what a hip replacement entailed!*) and helping his brother enter a new chapter in his life helping him learn he will need to enter assisted living due to age and illness, I wanted a poem or Easter prayer about new life. As I sought "Easter poem new life", I saw that a senior center affiliated with the Methodist Church in the Pacific Northwest had posted an *Easter poem by resident Elsie M. Brown, 1919-2013.*

***New Life*** ~by *Elsie M. Brown*

*Silently, amid the explosion  
of budding trees and countless  
evidences of new life,  
Easter comes to us.*

*Awakened plants push up  
through watery beds  
as they stretch toward  
the life-giving sun.*

*Easter...  
that glorious time of year  
when people, aroused once again  
from lethargic attitudes,  
turn to the life-giving Son.*

*Just as seemingly-dead bulbs  
burst forth triumphantly...  
just as Calvary was transformed  
into Easter morning...  
so are we given the option  
to awaken and walk  
in newness of life.*



God gives us glimpses of new life. May we have eyes to see and ears to hear this Easter season, and walk in newness of life.

*Pastor Heather*

## Transformed Bathrooms!



**New Low Flow Toilets**

The Finance and Facilities team is grateful for the volunteers and companies that helped transform the bathrooms and restore both rooms to full usage! Flooring was donated by JemCo, Tommy Battista gave a good price on the plumbing needs, and many wonderful folks of the church, including Jerry Chandler, Tom Howell, Tim Voss, Tom McNulty, Jim Hermes, and Jane McDonald, served as hard workers who took apart and put back together the stalls (finding the tools and hardware needed and solving many more problems along the way!) We are so glad to have new flooring and matching partitions as well as new environmentally friendly toilets! Some individuals donated their own funds for this to be a reality! Thank you to all who made this possible through their patience, kindness, shared labor and gifts!



**New Flooring and Partitions**

## Pentecost Prayer Initiative

On Pentecost Sunday, May 19th, our congregation will begin a 40 day period of prayer during our interim time of transition. We will use the devotional book, **Love to Pray**, authored by Alvin Vandergriend, as a guide to deepening our personal prayer lives.

We hope to discover how to become  
“devoted to prayer as a way of life rather than as a duty.”

Books will be provided. More details coming soon.



## fpcnewtonnj YouTube Channel



The link to the church's YouTube channel is:

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

Each week's worship service is available there.  
You can also view all our worship services  
since March 2020.

## CHURCH RUMMAGE SALE!

**Saturday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, from 9-3 pm.**

The youth group is holding a Church Rummage Sale on May 18<sup>th</sup> to help offset the cost of the 2024 summer mission trip to Erie, PA. You can help the mission team raise the needed funds



by gathering those items in your home that you no longer want or need and donate them for the sale. We will do all we can to help find a new home for the items. We will be accepting donations of housewares, linens, games, toys, shoes clothing, handbags, jewelry, tools, bikes, and small pieces of furniture. Please make sure the items are in good condition. Clothing should be clean and free of holes. Encourage family friends to donate items too. **Donations can be dropped off at the church beginning Sunday, May 12.** Call the church office before coming to drop off items to be sure someone is available to open the door. Please do not leave donations outside. Look for additional information in future Beacon Newsletters and the Friday Blast. Thank you for supporting the youth mission team.



## YOUTH GROUP NEWS!

Youth group at the First Presbyterian Church of Newton is open to young people in grades 6-12. We meet most Sunday's from 5 to 7 pm at the church for dinner, devotions, games, service opportunities, fellowship, and fun. Below is a list of our April gathering. All are welcome!

**Sunday, April 7<sup>th</sup>** No youth group today!

**Sunday, April 14<sup>th</sup>** Youth group gathering at the church from 5-7 pm.  
Dinner will be served.

**Sunday, April 21<sup>st</sup>** Youth group gathering at the church from 5-7 pm.  
Dinner will be served.

**Sunday, April 28<sup>th</sup>** No youth group today!

## Thank You!

Thank you for your generous and heartfelt gifts to the **One Great Hour of Sharing**, an offering that responds directly to the needs God has called us to fulfill in Isaiah 58.

This offering goes to three programs:

- Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) – receives 32% of funds
  - \* Works alongside communities as they recover and find hope after the devastation of natural or human-caused disasters, and support for refugees  
For more information, go to [pdusa.org/pda](http://pdusa.org/pda)
- Presbyterian Hunger Program (PHP) – receives 36% of funds
  - \* Takes action to alleviate hunger, care for creation, and the systemic causes of poverty so all may be fed  
For more information, go to [pcusa.org/hunger](http://pcusa.org/hunger)
- Self-Development of People (SDOP) – receives 32% of funds
  - \* Invests in communities responding to their experiences of oppression, poverty and injustice, and educates Presbyterians about the impact of these issues  
For more information, go to [pcusa.org/sdop](http://pcusa.org/sdop)



Again, thank you! Remember, if we all do a little, it adds up to a lot!

Dear Friends,

Manna House soup kitchen has been feeding the hungry in our community for the past 36 years. We serve a free meal each weekday to anyone who enters.

We employ a part-time kitchen supervisor and a part-time cleaning person. Other costs involve garbage removal, cleaning supplies and paper goods. Manna House does not receive any local, county, state, or federal funding. Manna House exists entirely on the “spontaneous” giving of local individuals, congregations, institutions and businesses. Only through these donation is our program able to function successfully in Sussex County.

We are so thankful for your very generous donation of \$900 from the Souper Bowl of Caring, this will be used to help feed our community.

With great appreciation,

The Manna House Board of Directors

Beverly Simon

Recording /Corresponding Secretary





# April



## *Manna House Spaghetti Dinner*

Dine In or Take Out

**Tuesday April 9th, 5:00-6:30 pm.**

\$5 for adults, \$3 for children 5-12,  
kids under 5 free!

Spaghetti, salad, bread and cookies!

## **Deacons’ Food of the Month:**

**Pasta & Sauce  
(Jars only)**



## **Birthdays**

- 4/1 Karter Shatrowskas
- 4/2 John Publik
- 4/3 Sutton Molitoris
- 4/7 Kate Publik
- Karen Ruitenber
- 4/8 Lucas Manzi
- 4/9 Elisabeth Crowell
- 4/11 Evelyn McKelvie
- 4/16 Jessica Smalley
- 4/17 MacKenzie Abruzzo
- Adalina Abruzzo
- 4/17 Isabelle Osborne
- Linda Zwart
- 4/20 Leighann Sherrer
- 4/21 Kaci Phlegar
- John Smalley
- 4/24 Jacob Jones
- 4/25 Caedon Jones
- 4/27 April Fisher
- 4/28 Ryan McQuillan

## **Anniversary**

- 4/26 Thomas & Bonnie Gildersleeve



# April



**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-](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCifje87megV4T0c-tJ0hSjA)

[tJ0hSjA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCifje87megV4T0c-tJ0hSjA)

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 10 am Wired Word 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH 1-3 pm Manna House Board Mtg.	2 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH	3 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH  8pm Vespers via Zoom	4 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH  7 pm Bells	5 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH 1 pm Hearts & Hands	6 10-1 BOL 12 pm Randy Pittenger service followed by luncheon
7 Communion	8 10 am Wired Word 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH	9 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH 5-6:30 pm MH Spaghetti Dinner 7 pm Deacons	10 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH  8pm Vespers via Zoom	11 10am FPCN serves @MH 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH  7 pm Bells	12 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH 1 pm Hearts & Hands	13 10-1 BOL
14 Bucket Brigade 9 am Faith Formation 9:45 am - 10:15 am Chime Choir 1-2:30 pm Girl Scouts	15 Newsletter Deadline 10 am Wired Word 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH	16 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH 7 pm VBS Planning Team	17 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH  7 pm Fin. & Fac. 8pm Vespers via Zoom	18 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH 1:30-3 pm Readers INK Book Club 7 pm Bells	19 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH 1 pm Hearts & Hands	20 10-1 BOL
21 9:45 am - 10:15 am Chime Choir	22 10 am Wired Word 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH	23 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH  7 pm Jubilee Women	24 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH  7:15 pm Session 8pm Vespers via Zoom	25 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH  7 pm Bells	26 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH 1 pm Hearts & Hands	27 10-1 BOL
28 9:45 am - 10:15 am Chime Choir 1-2:30 pm Girl Scouts	29 10 am Wired Word 11:30 - 12:30 pm MH	30				

**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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 YouTube.com - Search for: "fpcnewtonnj"



## 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			
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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](mailto:admin@fpcnewtonnj.org) by the 15th of each month for  
 the following month's publication.*