



# FIRST PRESS

**Sunday, January 3rd, 2020**  
**Happy New Year!**

The Adult Education Committee wants to use the sermons we hear to encourage reflection and possible discussions. As a start, questions about the sermon will be included in the bulletin and First Pres. newsletter. Further information on this plan will be forthcoming.

## **Sermon Questions 1/3/2021**

Isaiah 60 was likely written around the time of the end of the Babylonian exile and restoration of the nation of Israel. Readers at that time would hear the prophecy as applying to the nation's future after exile's end. Early Christian writers read it in relation to the visit of the wise men as recorded in Matthew. Both ways we read of gifts appropriate to honoring the kingship of Israel. Does a "double focus" in scripture, one contemporary to its writing and one a reflective look backwards, enrich or challenge your way of viewing scripture?

Gold, frankincense and myrrh are valuable gifts to honor a king ruling from a position of power and privilege. In what ways is Jesus a different kind of king?

In view of Jesus' manner of kingship, what would be appropriate gifts we could bring?

What is the gold, the things of value that you can give to Jesus?

Which ones do you actually give?

What circumstances do you wish to offer to Jesus with thanks for lessons learned and strength gained; with requests for help?

What is the "mud" that yet needs cleansing in your life? Can you honestly offer that to Jesus, trusting his grace?

## **ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

Our Annual Congregational meeting and election of officers will be January 24, between worship services. It will be a virtual meeting via Zoom. More details on how to join in by computer or by phone will be forthcoming.

## **OFFERING ENVELOPES**

The 2021 weekly offering envelopes will be mailed directly to your home on a quarterly schedule. This will replace the previous full year weekly offering envelope booklets. Any questions, please call the church office.

## **AN OPPORTUNITY FOR 2021**

Looking for a chance to brighten some lives? You're invited to join the group of caring souls who write to our homebound members. Staying in touch during the pandemic has become even more important—but one avenue not closed to us is the U.S. mail! You and a partner will be assigned a month of your choice, and we'll give you a list of about twenty names to send a "thinking of you" card that includes a personal message. Especially during 2020, our recipients have been truly appreciative, as our homebound friends are touched to be remembered by their church family. If you'd like to volunteer, or if you have questions about what you'd be signing up for, call or text Jack and Lynne Stoddard at 973-896-8216.

Thanks to the writers who reached out so thoughtfully in 2020: Laura Bogert, Gordon and Kathleen Bruchac, Deb Califf, Diane Casciano, Nancy Franks, Barbara Heil, Carol Ingersoll, Lois Jackson, Barbara Liptak, Nancy Meehan, Max and Elizabeth Oehler, Sue Olsen, Pam Ramsden, Debbie Reynolds, Lois Schnell, Sarah Solie, Mary Ann Straub, Sue Tannler, and Alison White; and our Teen Writing Team of college students August Bogert and Courtney Tannler. We extend a warm welcome to new volunteer Gail Marie Stewart, and look forward to other new writers joining the group.

**Volunteers are not paid...not because they are worthless, but because they are priceless.**

## **STEWARDSHIP UPDATE**

Thank you to those of you who have already submitted your pledge to the work of Christ through FPC for the year 2021.

As of Thursday, December 29, 2020, we have received 60 pledges totaling \$235,300 .

For the 2020 year, there were 124 pledges received, totaling \$414,057.11.

[CLICK HERE TO SUBMIT YOUR 2021 PLEDGE ONLINE](#)

*Abundant Life*



*Joyous Generosity*

## **A SWEET SURPRISE!**

The December Cookie Walk at The First Presbyterian Church of Caldwell is a beloved and anticipated tradition in the West Essex Community. It also is a vital fundraiser for a variety of ministries during the following program year. Since 2020 presents many challenges with regard to safe gathering, the Board of Deacons has prepared a collection of recipes in the form of a "Cookie Walk Book" in hopes of spreading cheer, while still providing support to FPC. Orders may be placed on the church website at [www.firstprescaldwell.org/cookie-walk-book](http://www.firstprescaldwell.org/cookie-walk-book), at a cost of \$20 per book. Currently, on the website, you will find an order form that you may print and return to First Pres, and an online ordering option. Please consider purchasing a cookbook for yourself, family members, neighbors, or friends near or far. Wishing you a sweet and blessed holiday season!

## **SOUP KITCHEN NEWS**

**HAPPY NEW YEAR AND BLESSINGS TO ALL!**

This was a very challenging year for us all but, we got through 2020. Not only did we get through, our congregation continued to support and volunteer to keep this ministry active.

Our committee is dedicated to serving no matter the challenge and we would like to give a great big thank you to Lisa Stein, Laura Schalles, Teresa Akersten, Kaitlyn Heun, Susan Dusinberre, Susy Viviano and Todd Barnes. You folks go over and beyond.

We also have some very dedicated food preparers that we always know we can count on for a pan or 2 — Mary Powers, Lenore Voorhis, Heun Family, Barnes Family, Stein Family, Dusinberre Family, Hauser Family, Mary Ann Straub, Fout Family, Califf Family and always the Board of Deacons, to just name a few. We are so very grateful for your on going support and thank you for making our job easier. It takes a village to make this happen.

For the 2021 beginning season, PANS ARE OUT, WE HAVE 2 SATURDAYS THIS MONTH, 23rd & 30th. Pick up your pan and allow us to continue this glorious mission. The pans for the 23rd will be on the shelf under the bulletin board, they are orange in color, pans for the 30th will be on the Christian Ed Desk, gold in color. Please be aware of your date and color and when to drop off.

BLESSINGS FOR A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR, peace, love, happiness and health.  
Soup Kitchen/Sandwich Night Committee

## **PRAYER MINISTRY**

The Prayer Ministry has started on its spiritual journey to offer prayers for the needs and interests of others. Please note: All are welcome to participate in this journey ... To join, please contact Barbara Heil by email: [prayerministry@firstprescaldwell.org](mailto:prayerministry@firstprescaldwell.org) or by phone: 973-227-1343. Please provide your name and email or phone number.

## WORDS TO PONDER FROM STEPHEN MINISTRY

*“Welcome January! If anyone is in Christ he is a new creation. Old things have passed away behold all things have become new.”*

2 Corinthians 5:15

To find out more about this caring, listening, confidential ministry call the confidential line at 973-228-0310 ext. 235, or speak to one of our pastors.

***My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.***



## OUR STAFF

**Rev. Bill Schram**, Interim Pastor/Head of Staff

**Rev. Barbara Jo Piercy**, Minister of Music

**Noel Piercy**, Associate Director of Music

**Kaitlyn Heun**, Interim Director Youth Ministries

**Susan Jones**, Interim Director Children's Ministry

**Scott Westenberger**, Worship Leader

**Lauren Restaino**, Youth Ministry & Communications Coordinator

**Christine Brunner**, Office Manager

**Chris White**, Building Manager/Head Sexton

**Brittany Heun**, Sunday Receptionist

**Kathleen Carlson**, Director

Weekday Nursery School - 973-226-6674

<http://www.firstpresnurseryschool.com>

**David Hicock**, Superintendent

Prospect Hill Cemetery - 973-228-4410

[prospecthillcemetery@firstprescaldwell.org](mailto:prospecthillcemetery@firstprescaldwell.org)

**Dr. Robert R. McGruther**, Pastor Emeritus

One of the implications of suspending public worship is that our regular offering isn't being collected. As it is essential to pay our staff and meet our current obligations, we ask if you are able, please mail your offering to the church or submit online at [www.firstprescaldwell.org/donate](http://www.firstprescaldwell.org/donate). Knowing that our income could be impacted, we invite those with extra resources to consider making a special gift.



## THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH AT CALDWELL

326 Bloomfield Avenue, Caldwell, NJ 07006

Office Hours: M-Th 8AM - 4PM, F 8AM - 3PM

Office Phone: 973-228-0310

e-mail address: [fpc@firstprescaldwell.org](mailto:fpc@firstprescaldwell.org)

website: [www.firstprescaldwell.org](http://www.firstprescaldwell.org)

## CHURCH CALENDAR FOR THE WEEK

### **SUNDAY, January 3rd**

9:30 AM Worship Service, Livestream

10:30 AM Virtual Coffee Hour, Zoom Meeting

11:00 AM Illuminate Service, Facebook Livestream

### **MONDAY, January 4th**

7:00 PM Women's Bible Study

### **TUESDAY, January 5th**

9:30 AM Staff Meeting, Room 120

### **WEDNESDAY, January 6th**

8:30 AM RRC Meeting, Zoom Meeting

### **SUNDAY, January 10th**

9:30 AM Worship Service, Livestream

10:30 AM Virtual Coffee Hour, Zoom Meeting

11:00 AM Illuminate Service, Facebook Livestream

6:00 PM Youth Choir Rehearsal