



FIRST PRESS

Sunday, May 16th, 2021

SERMON QUESTIONS FOR SUNDAY, MAY 16TH

1. What are you praying for as we move ahead into a new normal? How does this illuminate the state of your spirit?
2. In Acts 1:15-17, 21-26, the disciples chose Mathias to fill the role of apostle abandoned by Judas. What are your particular prayers for the leaders of your congregation or presbytery?
3. Jesus' prayer assumes a sharp distinction between his disciples and the world. How do you respond to these contrasts in your efforts to be faithful?
4. A wise mentor once told me that prayers needed hands and feet. How do you think that prayer is connected with faithful action by Jesus' disciples in the world today?
5. On this final Sunday of the season of Easter, how are your prayers bearing witness to the power of Christ's resurrection?



DEACONS' SPRING CLOTHING DRIVE UPDATE

The Deacons would like to thank everyone for their generous Spring Clothing Drive donations.

We received approximately 42 contractor bags of clothing and 250 disposable rain ponchos.

Our friends at St. John's are most appreciative.

WALK-IN VACCINATION APPOINTMENTS NOW AVAILABLE AT TWO ESSEX COUNTY SITES

Two Essex County Vaccination Centers, including Kmart at 235 Prospect Avenue in West Orange and Essex County College at 177 West Market Street in Newark, are now open for walk-in appointments from 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Monday through Saturday to anyone who resides, works or attends school in Essex County. [Click here for more information.](#)

VIRTUAL BLOOD DRIVE

We are all so excited about the plans to reopen the sanctuary for in-person worship! Spring is upon us with the promise of renewal, such a fitting time for reopening. It is also a time to give the gift of life by donating blood to those who desperately need it.

During the month of May, the Board of Deacons at First Pres are hosting its first-ever Virtual Blood Drive in partnership with Vitalant.

What's a Virtual Blood Drive? It provides you with the ability to make your blood donation appointment online at a time that is convenient for you. You can choose from one of four nearby locations: Parsippany, Paramus, Montvale or Lincoln Park. Then, on the appointed day, travel to the selected location and give your blood donation. Vitalant is very diligent in its adherence to all COVID-19 protocols to ensure the safety and well-being of all donors.

First Pres has a long history as a host of successful blood drives and with your participation, we can continue this success despite the challenges we face because of COVID-19. Please take a few minutes to follow the simple steps below to sign up for an appointment to donate blood during May. Thank you for making a difference in the lives of others!

[CLICK HERE FOR THE VIRTUAL BLOOD DRIVE LINK](#)

STEPS TO SIGN UP FOR VIRTUAL BLOOD DRIVE

1. After clicking on link, you will be taken to the Pledge page of the Vitalant website. Here, you are asked to state your intention to donate a life-saving blood product.
2. Click submit on lower right of page. You will now proceed to the Vitalant home page. Click 'Donate Now'.
3. Select the donor center that is convenient for you.
4. Select the type of donation: Whole blood, Double Red, Platelets, or Plasma.
5. Select your appointment date and time. Follow the instructions to schedule your appointment.

"You Asked For It" will be the theme of sermons in July and August and Pastor Bill needs your help. Between now and the end of June, please turn in topics, or scripture passages you would want explored in a sermon. Email Bill at bill@firstprescaldwell.org with your requests, or contact the church office.

THURSDAY SOUP KITCHEN

Menus are out for Thursday's Soup Kitchen. [CLICK HERE](#) to sign up for an entree or other dishes for Our Lady of the Valley Soup Kitchen. We are very grateful for all the participation and enthusiasm that has been generated by the online sign ups. Thank you all in advance for your donations.

SATURDAY SOUP KITCHEN

This month, we have two chances to serve with donations for Saturday's Soup Kitchen at Our Lady of the Valley. May 22nd will be on the ledge under the bulletin board — they are a white sheet. May 29th will be on the Christian Ed Desk and they are gold in color. Pick up your pan and help make a difference in the lives of the less fortunate. Thank you in advance for your participation in this ministry.

MEET US AT THE MOVIES!

The FPC Children & Youth Committee are excited to host a movie night at the Cinemark movie theater at Willowbrook Mall on **Wednesday, May 19th at 6:35PM**. We have rented out an entire theater for us to enjoy some time back together again while we watch the movie "Trolls!"



The theater is limited to 20 guests. Masks must be worn at all times unless eating or drinking. Kids/family groups will sit 2 seats apart. The cost of the movie has been covered by the Children & Youth Committee. Concession stand/popcorn available to children if they choose but only takes credit cards. No cash.

We will meet at the theater 15 minutes prior to showtime. You may drop off your child, or choose to stay if you'd like. Please fill out the form below to register for the movie. A form must be submitted for each child and adult who will be attending. If you have any questions, please reach out to Lauren Restaino at lauren@firstprescaldwell.org.

[**REGISTER HERE**](#)

MOVING AHEAD TOGETHER IN-PERSON WORSHIP

I want to thank those who have been cooperating and patient with our new procedures in our re-opening for worship.

I thank people who have observed wise precautions and have gotten vaccinated. You've contributed to the new case rate decline that preceded our reopening. As a church, maintaining appropriate social distancing and appropriate mask wearing are still the most effective ways to do our part in maintaining the drop in COVID 19 new case rates. As individuals, taking the same precautions elsewhere and getting vaccinated if you have not done so will help maintain the drop in new case rates.

Your leadership is trying to keep up with the changes in recommended procedures and health guidelines Your help in this has already allowed us to make procedural changes. First, consistent with CDC guidelines for gatherings, we will allow people to sit with non-household members if all are vaccinated. We will trust your self-identification as vaccinated at the time you register.

The second change is that when Illuminate is outdoors, once people are seated in a socially distanced spot, vaccinated people may remove their masks when seated. They must wear masks while going to and from their seating area. Masks are to be worn at all times by those not yet vaccinated. Again, we will trust people's self-identification as vaccinated when they register.

Related to this is that in outdoor services people will be able to sing or join in prayers, etc. while wearing masks. Mask wearing while singing/speaking applies regardless of vaccination status.

A fourth change is that our upper limit has already been raised from 30 to 50 people for indoor services as social distancing permits.

Some have raised some questions about our reasoning for some procedures. One question was why we don't seat every other row as some other churches do. The answer is that the spacing between our pews mean that we do not meet the 6 foot distance guideline with every other pew spacing. Some have asked why we ask for pre-registration. Jesus tells us to love our neighbor as ourselves. Being prepared to do contact tracing is one way we show love for our neighbors. Should, God forbid, we ever need to do contact tracing, the information we gather will greatly help that effort.

Having pre-registration also speeds up the check-in process because we only need ask information from those who didn't pre-register. We have been asked about our seating process. We ask people to cooperate with the process of being seated front to back and then leave from back to front. Our goal is to minimize people walking by each other and increasing exposure chances. We are assuming that attendees will be a mix of vaccinated and unvaccinated. Our process helps protect the more vulnerable, another sign of Christian love in action. If people prefer a seat, please let the usher know and then wait patiently in a socially distanced spot until an usher indicates it is an appropriate time.

Together we will live into the hope that our Lord presents us.

Peace,
Pastor Bill

JOIN THE A/V TEAM

Interested in PC, Stage, Film, Video Production? First Pres is in need of people like you! Learn the systems as a member of the church A/V Team. Learn about all the aspects via hands-on! Email (fpc@firstprescaldwell.org) or call the church office (973-228-0310) to learn more!

AUDIO CDS OF SUNDAY WORSHIP AVAILABLE

If you or someone you know would like an audio CD of the 9:30 am Sunday service please contact the church office during regular business hours Monday through Friday. Each week the AV group prepares audio CDs of the entire traditional Sunday service and the church office staff mails those CDs to all those on the request list. Please note the video of the Sunday service is available on livestream.com and the church Facebook page, and the audio for the Sermon is posted on the church's website each week.



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. Knowing that our income could be impacted, we invite those with extra resources to consider making a special gift.



WORDS TO PONDER FROM STEPHEN MINISTRY

"Don't let yesterday use up too much of today."

Cherokee Proverb

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*

Irma Clare, *Administrative Assistant*

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

Dr. Robert R. McGruther, *Pastor Emeritus*

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

website: www.firstprescaldwell.org

CHURCH CALENDAR FOR THE WEEK

SUNDAY, May 16th

9:30 AM Sanctuary Worship Service, Sanctuary/Livestream
10:30 AM Virtual Coffee Hour, Zoom Meeting
11:00 AM Illuminate Worship Service, Facebook Livestream, Outdoor Worship
5:00 PM Youth Handbell Choir, Sanctuary
6:15 PM Youth Choir, Church Lawn

TUESDAY, May 17th

9:30 AM Staff Meeting, Room 120
7:00 PM Session, Zoom Meeting

WEDNESDAY, May 18th

8:30 AM RRC Meeting, Zoom Meeting

THURSDAY, May 20th

6:30 PM Chancel Handbell Choir, Sanctuary
7:30 PM Chancel Choir, Zoom Meeting

SUNDAY, May 23rd

Confirmation Sunday

9:30 AM Sanctuary Worship Service, Sanctuary/Livestream
10:30 AM Virtual Coffee Hour, Zoom Meeting
11:00 AM Illuminate Worship Service, Facebook Livestream, Outdoor Worship
5:00 PM Youth Handbell Choir, Sanctuary
6:15 PM Youth Choir, Church Lawn

