



CHURCH KEY NEWSLETTER

First Presbyterian Church
of Branchville, New Jersey



Volume 26, No. 1

January 2026

JANUARY AT A GLANCE:

**1st – Office Closed
Happy New Year!**

18th – Annual Congregational Meeting

**19th – Office Closed
Martin Luther King Jr. Day**



Our Mission Statement:

"We Welcome all as we celebrate God's love."

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FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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BRANCHVILLE, NJ 07826



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Happy New Year!

January can sometimes feel like a difficult month to get through. It is dark, cold, and lacks the joyful holidays that helped us get through December. I would like to encourage all of us to hold onto the joy and peace of Christmas even as shops change their decorations from Christmas to Valentine's Day and the radios all start playing their usual music rotations.

As Christians, we are called to live lives distinct from the world around us. And part of that means not hanging up Christmas so soon after it is done. We should continue to ponder the birth of Christ and use the hope he brought us to sustain ourselves through these dark months of the year.

I cannot say one way or another if 2026 will be a good year. I do not dare try and predict how God moves in our world. But I will say that I am full of hope. My faith in Christ sustains me, yes, but so does my faith in this church. What a blessing it has been to be called to serve such a caring, supportive, and faithful community for my first call!

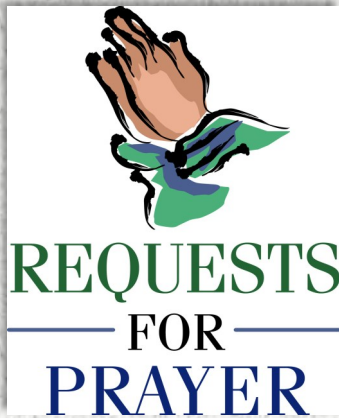
I am sustained by the excitement of entering a new season with you all. We will have a chance to celebrate the Epiphany together for the first time and then the Baptism of our Lord together for the first time. Every Sunday still feels like a chance to experience church anew.

With the changing of the months, I feel it is appropriate to let you all know that I will be taking my First study leave from January 19 – February 3. This study leave is a continuation of the Parish Pulpit Fellowship I received from Princeton Theological Seminary. I will spend two weeks in Japan, learning about the history of religion in that country and connecting with Christians living and working there. When I return, I hope to lead an adult education hour to share with the congregation what I have learned.

As the rush of the holidays dies down, I hope we can take some time and get to know each other a little better. Linger a little during coffee hour. Knock on my office door and come in for a chat. Send me pictures from your own travel experiences and share stories with me.

Whether the new year brings about feelings of nervousness, excitement, or exhaustion, I hope you know that your church family is here for you! We will walk with you through whatever God has in store for us in 2026!

Rev. Adrienne Poissant



Please offer prayers for these concerns that have been brought to our attention. They are collected each Sunday morning during the past month from the prayer concerns list used in worship.

- Aaron & Ethan
- All those dealing with cancer.
- Amy
- Angel with cancer.
- Arthur Power
- Audrey Kimble in Hospice.
- Barbara Z.
- Bobby
- Cheryl
- Christina
- Chuck Hughes
- Darlene
- Drew
- Elaine
- Elaine Hocking
- Elizabeth
- Ethyl's sisters in Hungary.
- Felicia

- Jack
- Jeanette
- Joe
- Joe with cancer.
- Joyce O.
- Joyce, Molly & Amy with cancer.
- Julie & Pat
- Karen M.
- Kellie with brain tumor.
- Kenny
- Kevin
- Laura
- Linda Wistermayer's brother recovering from back surgery.
- Marcie
- Margo
- Marsha
- Matt Vela, his wife & mother.
- Michael & Joe
- Michelle Walker's Daughter, Destiny, is missing.
- Mrs. Decker
- Patty
- Penny
- Ray in Hospice.
- Reggie Hocking
- Remembrance of Pearl Harbor
- Ron & Katie Cain
- Royce
- Ruth B.
- Sara
- Shula
- Stephanie

- The friends & family of Lisa Ahren's on her passing.
- William
- World Peace



- The birth of Mike & Linda Osbornes new Granddaughter, Rowen Willow. Parents of Tyler & Kelly Steff.
- Justin & Danielle on the birth of their Daughter.



EPIPHANY - is Sunday, January 4th and is the Day when we celebrate the arrival of the Wise Men. They were led for many days and an unknown number of miles in their search for the Christ Child. A Star was there to guide them.

RENEWAL OF BAPTISM - On Sunday, January 11th, we will be celebrating the Baptism of Jesus. In the Presbyterian tradition the Sacrament of Baptism occurs only once, but it is renewed in our hearts and minds, time and time again. We hope you will be on hand for this opportunity to renew and rededicate ourselves in discipleship and service to our servant Lord.



OUT OF OFFICE — Pastor Adriene will be away 1/19/26—2/03/26 traveling to Japan on her Fellowship, if you need anything contact the office at 973-948-3495 or presbsec@ptd.net.

ANNUAL REPORTS ARE DUE - The deadline to submit your 2025 Annual report is Friday, January 2nd. Please email it to the church office at: presbsec@ptd.net or drop it off. Thank you!



ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION/POTLUCK LUNCH - The Congregation and Corporation of the First Presbyterian Church will hold an Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 18, 2026. The purpose of the meeting is to receive the Annual Reports and to conduct such business as may be required. Please bring your favorite dish to share!

THE FOOD PANTRY is in need of mayo, coffee and tuna. Please consider donating to this continuous need in our community. The Pantry will be open every Wednesday from 10am – 12pm.



JOIN US FOR WALK N' TALK – Winter 9am-10am, Monday thru Saturday: On Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday we walk around the circle by Selective Insurance, (the old fairgrounds), or through town. We park and meet by the tennis courts. Tuesday at Frankford Park, we park and meet by the basketball court. Thursday at Woodbourne Park, we park and meet by the first parking lot. Any questions – please direct to Beverly Keur: bevkeur@gmail.com. Hope to see you there. Please invite a friend to join us.

MANNA HOUSE \$5 SPAGHETTI DINNER - Indoor dining or take-out, First Presbyterian Church, 54 High St., Newton (Church Street Entrance), January 13th 5:00 to 6:30pm. Adults \$5.00, Children 5-12 \$3.00, and under 5 Free. (Included are Spaghetti, Salad, Bread, Cookies)



1ST QUARTER MISSION



1ST QUARTER MISSION — It's a new year – with an age-old challenge: HUNGER! Our first quarterly Local Mission once again focuses on helping to feed the hungry in two local “soup kitchens”: Manna House and Harvest House. Both of these long-running programs have adapted to the changes that come with time as they continue to provide a solid meal to those in need. Your donations will ensure the food and supplies that are needed will be available in order to serve our local population in need. Please help us continue to support these well-established organizations with a check made out to FPCB with “1st Quarterly Mission” in the memo line. If you are in the sanctuary, you can use the special envelopes in the pew. Your donations really make a difference!

DECEMBER SESSION MEETING HIGHLIGHTS 12/08)

- The Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster from Troop 180 attended the meeting to thank the church for sponsoring the Troop for decades. The Troop has ceased operations and presented us with a check for \$2,7070.21, which represents the balance of the Troop's account.
- The background checks and safety training for the Session is almost complete.
- The Session discussed how best Pastor Adrienne can be available for pastoral care. She will post her hours on her office door and we're exploring whether our phone system can forward emergency calls to her cell phone after hours.
- Pastor Adrienne will be traveling for her fellowship and will be absent on January 25 and February 1. Mike Opilla will be in the pulpit both Sundays.
- To accommodate her absence, we will move the Congregational Meeting to January 18 and February communion to February 8.
- We are consolidating our Provident Bank accounts from 5 to 2 accounts, one for general funds and one for capital improvements.
- Stop the bleed kit was donated from Pastor Adrienne's father. Mr. Poissant will also do a gratis safety inspection of the property.
- The Electronic Meeting Policy was approved by the Session and will be incorporated into the Operations Manual.





CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CORNER

SUNDAY SCHOOL SCOOP

- * Thank you to Dawn, Deb A. and Karen O. for practicing our Christmas song with our little Angels and for making it so special. Also thanks to Bryan and Maddie for doing such a wonderful job with the scripture reading!
- * Teachers are needed for March and April. Weekly teacher's assistant slots are open for most Sundays through the school year, so we need you!! Please remember that by state law we must have 2 people in every class, so please consider helping us out and sign up on the sheet in FH. On behalf of our kids, thank you!
- * Our next Christian Ed Committee meeting will be Tues., 1/6 at 3:30 for the purpose of planning out the 2026 calendar.

ADULT EDUCATION

- * Please take note and mark your calendars for our Lenten Bible Study of Mark to start on Thurs. Feb 12th at 5:30. Bring your own snack.

Mark Bible Study

Feb. 19th: 1:1-3:12 Introduction to Jesus and the Gospel of Mark

Feb. 26th: 3:13-6:6 Parables

March 5th: 6:6-8:21 Disciples and Ministry

March 12th: 8:22-10:52 Miracles and Predictions of Death

March 19th: 11:1-13:37 Jesus in Jerusalem

March 26th: 14:1-15:47 The Death of Jesus

April 2nd: 16:1-20 The Resurrection

HAPPY BIRTHDAY JANUARY

Judy Casey	1/8	Cully Opilla	1/25
Debbie Gardner	1/9	Trish Cherny	1/29
Corine Barton	1/12		
Kathleen Katzenstein	1/16		
Sam Decker	1/18		

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Winter Squash Soup

INGREDIENTS

- 3 cups water
- 2 carrots (chopped)
- 7 stalks celery (chopped)
- 1 large onion (or 2 small onions)
- ½ cup butter
- ½ teaspoon dried sage
- ½ teaspoon dried thyme
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon dried ground ginger
- 4 cups pumpkin (or cooked winter squash)



PREPARATION

1. Add all ingredients except squash to a large soup pot. Simmer over medium heat until vegetables are tender.
2. Add cooked squash or pumpkin. Bring soup back to a simmer, stirring well until squash is thoroughly incorporated into the soup.
3. Remove soup from heat. Using an immersion blender, blend until soup is thoroughly pureed, and smooth.
4. If soup is thicker than desired, add extra water until the desired consistency is reached. Return soup to stove top, and reheat to a gentle simmer before serving.



JANUARY VOLUNTEERS

USHERS

4th – Linda Osborne/OPEN
 11th – Linda Osborne/OPEN
 18th – OPEN/OPEN
 25th – OPEN/OPEN

LAY READERS

4th – Debbie Anderson
 11th – Marion Alden
 18th – Judy Casey
 25th – Linda Wistermayer

First Presbyterian Church of Branchville
 PO Box 1



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 Branchville, NJ 07826
 Phone 973-948-3495



View our website at:
<http://www.fpcbranchville.org>

and Facebook at:
<http://www.facebook.com>

You may e-mail
 the secretary at presbsec@ptd.net

View a daily devotion at:
<http://www.d365.org>



JANUARY COFFEE HOUR

DEACONS

JANUARY FLOWER CHART:

If you would like to provide flowers for any of the dates, please see instructions below:

Dates:

4th –
 11th –
 18th –
 25th –

Call Lisa the week before your signup to have flowers delivered. Gail Burckes will contact you for your dedication or memorial.

Flowers By Lisa 862-268-3123



JANUARY 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																										
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<div>4</div> <div>10:00 AM Worship Ephiphany</div> 	<div>5</div> <div>4:00 PM Music & Worship Meeting</div> 	<div>6</div> <div>3:30 PM Christian ED Meeting</div> 	<div>7</div> <div>10:00 AM -12:30 PM Food Panty</div> 	<div>8</div> <div>7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Chancel Choir</div> 	<div>9</div>	<div>10</div>																																										
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