



CHURCH KEY NEWSLETTER



First Presbyterian Church
of Branchville, New Jersey

Volume 26, No. 3

March 2026

MARCH AT A GLANCE:

**11th – Daisey Roe Luncheon/Movie
12:00pm**

**13th – Chili & Cornbread Cook-off
6:00-8:00pm**

**15th – Adult Ed Discovery Group
11:30am**

17th – Happy St. Patrick's Day

**27th – Men's Night
7:00pm**

29th – Palm Sunday

CHURCH KEY NEWSLETTER



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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Friends,

A few Sundays ago, I mentioned in a sermon that Lent is my favorite time of the liturgical calendar. There's a few different reasons for that:

1. Lent is a wholly religious season. When we observe Lent, we take a step back from the hustle and bustle of the rest of the world and refocus our attention on our faith.
2. Lent encourages spiritual practices we might not otherwise consider. While the Presbyterian Church does not require anyone to participate in things like fasting or attendance at additional worship services, we are still invited to try different practices to see how they might deepen our faith. My personal favorite practices for Lent include: daily Scripture readings, keeping a prayer journal, and spending time in nature.
3. Lent is a period that encourages us to experience a range of human emotions. While I love Advent and Christmas, those seasons emphasize positive emotions of joy, hope, and peace. During Lent, we are invited to experience grief, fear, and pain alongside the hope, love, and joy that arrives on Easter Sunday.
4. Lent teaches us lessons we can carry with us after the season is over. Whether that be a new spiritual practice or the ability to find God in times of suffering, the things we do during these 40 days shape how we experience God during the rest of the year.

No matter how you choose to observe Lent, I hope this season fills you with courage. The courage to try something new, to feel strong emotions, and to worship God in every season.

Peace,
 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.

- All those dealing with cancer
- Aaron & Ethan
- Amy
- Amy, Molly & Joyce fighting cancer.
- Ann
- Anna Columbus healing from cancer.
- Betty McMickle
- Bill Smith on recovery.
- Bobby
- Brian
- Brian with cancer
- Carlos
- Carol
- Debbie healing from knee replacement.
- Diane
- Fran healing from hip replacement.

- Jeff Lewis and his wife.
- Joe Diane
- Joyce & Roger Gibbins
- Karen M.
- Kathleen K.
- Katie & Ron
- Kenny
- Kevin
- Patty
- Rita
- Rita P.
- Robin
- Robyn
- The family of Mark Wallace.
- The Gardner family on the loss of their mother.
- William



- Crystal Zubl (Gail Zubl's Daughter) welcomed a healthy baby girl on 12-18-25, Mariella Galina Ouellette.



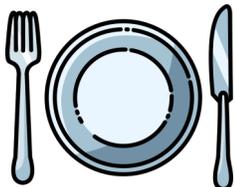
THE ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING mission began with Lent. This event lasts until Easter Sunday and the money we collect will go to help people in need around the globe as well as support the Johnsonburg Presbyterian Camp and Retreat Center. You can expect the Congregational OGHS letter to arrive in your inbox or mailbox shortly where we have shared more details regarding the donation and how to contribute. As always, giving to a good cause is good for the soul so we hope you will take the time to support this annual Presbyterian Church USA effort!

1ST QUARTER MISSION — 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!



MANNA HOUSE \$5 SPAGHETTI DINNER — Indoor dining or take-out, First Presbyterian Church, 54 High St., Newton (Church Street Entrance), March 10th 5:00 to 6:30pm. Adults \$5.00, Children 5-12 \$3.00, and under 5 Free. (Included are Spaghetti, Salad, Bread, Cookies)

LOVE IN ACTION — MEETING EVERYDAY NEEDS — During the month of March, we are collecting personal hygiene items for Jean’s Pantry. These simple necessities — soap, toothpaste, shampoo, baby wipes, lotion, mouth wash, feminine products and more — are meaningful gifts that show Christ’s love in practical ways. Thank you for helping us care for both body and spirit. Please place items in the box provided in Fellowship Hall.



DINNER FOR EIGHT — Interested in gathering with others for a night of good food and conversation? The Fellowship Committee will be planning another Dinner for Eight on Saturday, April 11th at 6:00 pm. This would entail six to eight people gathering at a host home for dinner. The host will provide the main course and guests will bring appetizers, side dishes, desert, etc. If you are interested in being a dinner host please indicate on the sign up sheet. Hosts and guests will be selected at random the week prior to the event. There will be an interest sign up in the Fellowship Hall or you may contact Sandy Carlisle at drCarlisle@gmail.com



CHILI & CORNBREAD COOK - OFF — Friday, March 13th 6-8 pm. Come to eat or compete! Signup in Fellowship Hall to bring your best Chili or Cornbread or just come to enjoy and vote for the best! Kraft Mac and Cheese will also be served for children.

MEN'S NIGHT — Friday March 27th at 7:00pm. More details will be announced in church.

THE DAISEY ROE THRIFT SHOP is planning to re-open April 11th, 9am -1pm. Until our opening Easter items will be available for purchase in the Fellowship Hall. Thank you!



DAISEY ROE LUCHEON —Our Member appreciation luncheon and movie will be March 11th at noon. Hope you will join us for pizza, salad and dessert. Please RSVP to attend!

SPRING IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER — The First Presbyterian Church of Branchville and the Daisey Roe Chain are planning their 29th Annual Spring Flea Market including the thrift shop on Saturday May 16th, 2026 from 9 am to 2 pm. Our group will be renting tables indoors/outdoors for \$20.00 each. Inclement weather - space is limited to 25 indoors - first come first served. Good weather – space is limited to 30 tables indoors and outdoors. We do the advertising and provide tables for indoor/outdoor, rain or shine. Daisey Roe keeps spaces for our church members who are interested in renting a table. Please send in your check by April 20th, 2026, to reserve your space. Co-Chairwomen: Marion Alden, Beverly Keur, Ellen Santoro. Checks payable to: Daisey Roe Chain and mail to: Marion Alden, 170 Culver View Lane, Branchville NJ 07826. Contact Marion Alden # 201-317-8210



OUR CHURCH MOUSE

Eek! Hello, my name is Milton Mouse and I've just moved into your church! It's such a quiet restful place and I love the windows. I'll try to stay out from under your feet and out of sight. I'll keep in touch and let you know how I'm doing.



Worship Notes

What is an offering and how do we respond?

Each Sunday, after the Scripture readings and the sermon, we enter a part of the service that centers responding to God's Word. Part of this response is the offering. We make offerings because God has first given us gifts: gifts of love, grace, and salvation. In response, we offer gifts of our own back to God.

The money collected at the offering goes in many different directions. It is used to help maintain and improve the facilities and grounds our church calls home. It is used to pay employees and contractors of the church so they can continue to do their jobs without financial concerns. The money also goes to missions, from ones as local as our own food pantry, to broader ones run by the PCUSA at large.

Many people think of an offering as simply a financial donation, and while money is certainly part of it, there's a lot more that we can offer God. During the worship service, lay readers, choir members, and bell choir members present their own offerings by using their gifts to read Scripture, play music, and lead us in hymns. This is what makes the music in church different from a performance at a concert: all the glory is given to God alone. We do not need to applaud a beautiful performance, because it is a gift freely given, much like the other gifts presented during the offering. (Of course, we can let the musicians in our church know their gifts are appreciated after the service by telling them ourselves).

While the offering in the service usually lasts only a few minutes, the chance to give back to God does not end there. When we are sent out from a worship service, we go with the intention of continuing to respond to the Good News for the rest of our lives. This could mean volunteering or donating to other non-profit organizations. It could also mean helping family, friends, and neighbors without expecting anything in return. It could also mean volunteering for committees or events that the church has during the week.

Next time the offering basket is passed to you, or the choir performs a beautiful anthem, remember that we all have special gifts to present to God. These gifts do not require applause and fanfare, but they are no less precious in the eyes of our Heavenly Father.

FEBRUARY SESSION MEETING HIGHLIGHTS 2/09)

- All background checks are completed for Session and those members of the congregation who work with our children.
- Mark Cummins joined the Session meeting for a discussion about the church's investments. Mark is a retired insurance and finance executive with extensive knowledge in this area. After lengthy discussions, Session approved the following:
 - Open up an "Edge" account with Merrill Lynch. An Edge account is Merri's low management fee account. Merrill Lynch currently manages part of the church's portfolio, and we will continue that relationship.
 - We will sell all of our current individual stock holdings, which are in Selective Insurance, Amazon and Thermo. The proceeds of those sales will be kept in an ESG-oriented equity fund, a Vanguard product. Those funds will be managed by ML in our managed account we currently have with them.
 - We currently have approximately \$800,000 invested with New Covenant. They charge very high management fees, so we will end our relationship with them and transfer the monies to our new Edge Account with ML.
 - The approximately \$800,000 will be divided into two different funds, both Vanguard funds, both with low management fees and both ESG-oriented. One fund is a stock fund and the other is a fixed income bond fund. We agreed to split the holdings 50-50 between the equity and bond funds, but Patrick Murphy may come back to Session and recommend a different split, which we can implement at any time.
- Everyone who was required to have a background check has completed the process. There were no problems.
- Mike Opilla is visiting with local media outlets to research how we might best get our story out there and increase attendance and membership.
- Getting a 3rd quote from a HVAC vendor for the sanctuary A/C and heating system.
- We had a pipe freeze during the deep freeze, but with no break. We had to engage a plumber to find the shut off valve.
- Hart & Iliff had to come in to replace a component on our heating system.
- We're working with the building inspector to make sure our fire system in FH is compliant.
- Session and Deacons will have a joint training session on 2/28 at the church.
- Session approved a policy governing the loan of church property.



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CORNER

SUNDAY SCHOOL SCOOP

- * Our children will sing in church on Palm Sunday, March 29th.
- * Teacher volunteers have been scheduled through May. Our need for Assistants will be evaluated on a weekly basis, depending on the number of children attending and if a parent will attend the class to help that week.
- * We will be discussing this at our upcoming CE Committee meeting on March 3rd at 3:30pm.

ADULT EDUCATION

- * Our Bible Study will continue with our study of the Gospel of Mark through April 2nd. We meet at 5:30 every Thurs. Come out to learn and share in our informative discussions. Bring your own snacks or dinner.
- * Monthly Adult Ed Discussion and Discovery Group: We are very excited to get this group together on a regular basis, which will be the 3rd Sunday of the month, after church. We will have a topic of interest, from a member's perspective or from someone outside in the community, and how our faith can benefit from such a discussion. If you are interested in presenting something to our group, we would love to hear from you! Please reach out to me, Donna H, if you have any questions.
 - On March 15th Adrienne will present on the Crucifixion of Christ.
 - On April 19th Brian Dietz will present on "Addiction, Recovery & Education, My Story".

We hope that you will come out to learn and support this new group.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY MARCH

Jennifer Knaust	3/2	Ellen Santoro	3/25
Bev Simon	3/2	Geoffrey Dean	3/26
Nancy Clink	3/8	David Langley	3/26
Jeff Willis	3/15	Geri Sutphen	3/27
Bev Keur	3/16	Karen Bath	3/28
Frank Cardinale	3/18		

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Traditional Irish Soda Bread

INGREDIENTS

- 3 ½ cups Flour
- ½ cup Sugar
- ½ teaspoon Baking Soda
- 2 teaspoons Baking Powder
- 1 teaspoon Salt
- 1-pint Sour Cream
- 2 Eggs
- 2 tablespoons
- Caraway Seeds (optional)
- ¾ cup Raisins



PREPARATION

1. Combine dry ingredients together in a large bowl.
2. In a small bowl beat eggs and stir in sour cream. Add the egg and sour cream mixture to the dry ingredients and stir with a wooden spoon.
3. Batter will be very thick. Add the raisins and caraway seeds and stir well with wooden spoon or knead in with your hands.
4. Place batter in a greased 9 inch springform pan. Dust the top with enough flour so that you can pat the batter like a bread dough evenly in the pan without it sticking to your hands.
5. With a knife make a shallow crisscross on the top.
6. Bake for 50 minutes in a preheated 350°F oven.



MARCH VOLUNTEERS

USHERS

- 1st – Debbie Anderson/Judy Casey
- 8th – Patrick Murphy/Trish Cherney
- 15th – Brian Dietz/Gay Plog
- 22nd – Gail Burkes/Debbie Anderson
- 29th – Mark & Karen Cummins

LAY READERS

- 1st – Debbie Gardner
- 8th – OPEN
- 15th – Patrick Murphy
- 22nd – OPEN
- 29th – OPEN



MARCH COFFEE HOUR

SESSION

MARCH FLOWER CHART:

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

Dates:

- 1st –
- 8th –
- 15th –
- 22nd –
- 29th –

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

Flowers By Lisa 862-268-3123

**First Presbyterian Church of Branchville
PO Box 1**

**3-5 Wantage Avenue
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>





MARCH 2026



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																										
<p><i>1</i></p> <p>10:00 AM Worship Communion</p>  <p>HOLY COMMUNION</p>	<p><i>2</i></p> <p>4:00 PM Music & Worship Meeting</p> 	<p><i>3</i></p> <p>3:00 PM Christian Ed Meeting</p> 	<p><i>4</i></p> <p>10:00 AM -12:30 PM Food Panty</p> 	<p><i>5</i></p> <p>5:30 PM Bible Study 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Chancel Choir</p> 																																																																																												
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