

An impressionistic painting of a church interior. The scene is filled with vibrant, textured brushstrokes in shades of yellow, green, pink, and blue. In the foreground, several figures are visible, including a person in a red and white robe standing on the left, and others seated or standing in the background. The overall atmosphere is bright and dynamic, with a focus on light and color rather than fine detail.

TOWER TIDINGS

LENT 2023

Building Community

CELEBRATING LENT

SUNDAY WORSHIP

Sundays at 10:00 am

FEB 22

ASH WEDNESDAY

Wednesday, February 22

Drive through Ashes | 12:00 - 1:00 pm | Church on the Green

Worship | 7:30 pm | Sanctuary

Children's Service | 4:15 - 6:00 pm | Parish House

LENTEN BIBLE STUDY GROUPS

Wednesdays, 6:30 - 7:30 pm

Thursdays, 11:15 am - 12:15 pm

HOLY WEEK

APR 2

PALM SUNDAY

Palm Sunday Parade, followed by Worship

Sunday, April 2 at 10:00 am

All children welcome! Please meet at the Chapel at 9:30 am

APR 6

MAUNDY THURSDAY

Worship and Communion

Thursday, April 6 at 7:30 pm

APR 7

GOOD FRIDAY

Reflection and Prayer

Friday, April 7 | Drop in anytime 12:00 - 3:00 pm

APR 9

EASTER SUNDAY

Worship

Sunday, April 9 at 10:00 am

A NOTE FROM DANIEL

DEAR PCM FAMILY,

Hanging on the wall in my office is a large newsprint post-it with observations from a recent Session retreat. We asked our elders to name things they're noticing here at The Presbyterian Church in Morristown. Some of the things on the list include: energy in staff; excitement about the possibilities; more acceptance and inclusion; the Spirit is moving...

Of course, not all of the things we're noticing are positive. One elder recognized the need for more younger people in leadership. Another pointed out that many of our pews are still empty on Sunday mornings.

All of those things are true - we have both empty pews *and* lots of excitement about the possibilities. We need more young people in leadership *and* the Spirit is moving. If I could add a few more truths, I'd say that PCM has been through a lot over the past few years *and* that God is working among us to do great things in and through our church.

God has blessed PCM to be a place where people find hope, joy, and love in their walk with Jesus. This good news we have deserves to be shared! We want everyone to experience the grace-filled presence of God in their lives. That's why we're devoting this issue of Tower Tidings to **Building Community**.

People are at the heart of everything we do - from leading worshippers deeper in devotion, to serving our neighbors through our outreach ministries. Everywhere I look around at PCM there are wonderful groups of members and friends sharing in fellowship, study, and service. *And*, there is room for more. We are called not only to build community among those already inside our doors, but to fling our doors open wide to invite others to join us.

As you flip through the pages of this issue and find upcoming events happening at our church, will you think about the people you know who might welcome an invitation to attend? And then... invite them! From worship to service to movie nights and everything in between, we want to build a hopeful, joyful, loving community where people become followers of Jesus. I can't think of a more perfect time for that than the season of Lent.

Indeed, there's room for more... *and* the possibilities are endless!

Yours, in Christ,
Daniel



THE LENTEN SEASON: ALL THINGS NEW

DEAR FRIENDS,

This Lent, we share stories about making **all things new** through a Lenten Devotional written by the members of our community. It is our hope that these Scripture passages and personal reflections will be a guide as we journey together as a church through this season. Within the pages of the devotional, you will find many connections made with stories about God bringing something new into our lives.

I am so grateful to all of our writers who put so much thought and effort into their meditations, the Adult Education Committee for all of their input, Amanda Tufts for her design work, and for the many hands who made this devotional possible. We hope you will pick up a devotional at the church or follow along online as we journey through Lent together. You can read the first three meditations [here](#).

Blessings to you during this season of Lent,
Audrey

FEBRUARY 22

REVELATION 21:1-7 | REV. DANIEL VIGILANTE

I have always loved the season of Lent - I think because it has a beginning (Ash Wednesday) and an ending (Easter Sunday) and a promise that in-between the two we will somehow emerge from the season as better, more faithful, people.

That said, I've struggled at times with how to make Lent a season for true spiritual growth. Somehow, giving up French Fries or chocolate hasn't brought me closer to God, but it has made me frustrated when I've wanted a brownie or something delicious to accompany a cheeseburger. The one time when I gave up something and felt like it had real meaning was the year I gave up my bed for Lent. Every night as I got into my sleeping bag on the floor next to my bed, I remembered how fortunate I was to have a warm, dry, safe place to sleep. I did feel like I emerged from that season as a better, more faithful person...

Revelation tells us that God is Alpha and Omega, beginning and end. And God promises to make all things new. During Lent, this season between Ash Wednesday and Easter, we also have the opportunity to be made new. In the fullness of time, our struggles to be better, more faithful people will be redeemed by the God who makes all things, even us, new.

FEBRUARY 23

ISAIAH 43:1-21 | MIKEY KNOTTS

The footnote in my Bible (NRSV) says this verse refers to the new exodus from Babylon, when God will lead Israel home to Palestine. Clearly, things were going to change for Israel.

My divorce became final when my son was 15 and my daughter was 13. Clearly, things changed for us, and sometimes it was hard not to remember and miss “the former things.” While the kids got through high school and made decisions about college and careers, I was in law school and then building my own career, but our love and our connections remained strong – all the more precious because we realized we couldn’t take each other for granted.

Sometimes over the past 33 (yikes!) years, I’ve tried to figure out what I did wrong initially, and what I could have done differently to prevent that change in our lives. Then I remember it doesn’t matter. My children and their families constitute that wonderful “new thing” that is God’s gift, and I am part of it. May I never forget to “perceive it,” cherish it, and rejoice in it.

Thanks be to God!

FEBRUARY 24

2 CORINTHIANS 5:11-21 | PAM WOOD

In this passage, Paul writes about the ministry of reconciliation. Simply put, God blesses and forgives us if we accept the teachings of the gospels, act as peacemakers, and ask for forgiveness. At first glance, it’s easy. Then, “love thy neighbor as thyself” (Matthew 22:39) comes to mind. That can be difficult!

In *Secrets in the Dark*, Frederick Buechner writes about Noah. He states, “the ark is wherever human beings meet in such a way that differences between them stop being barriers - the way people meet at a wedding of someone they both love.” In that setting, we are able to put aside our differences and accept each other, warts and all.

We probably all have a person in our extended families who generates a collective eye roll when it’s announced that they’re joining the family for dinner. For me, it was Uncle Paul. His holiday rants were epic! However, his audience agreed to be attentive and polite. At times, we did need to be excused for a bit (to check the baby, start the coffee, warm the pie, or take a deep breath). We loved him, accepted him, and did our part for our “ark” moment.

How do we reconcile with the Uncle Pauls next door? Perhaps Lent is a good time to return to basics to find the “ark” with our neighbors. Time to renew efforts to open our hearts to be attentive, kind, respectful, and caring. If we need to take a deep breath or tend to the baby, so be it. Community reconciliation, in its infancy, may only happen with our own first baby steps.

WHAT STEPHEN MINISTRY MEANS TO ME

MEET OUR NEWLY-COMMISSIONED STEPHEN MINISTERS



MICHELE YAMPOLSKY

As a long-time member of PCM, my family and I have been blessed by many moments of grace, prayer, and support in times of difficulty and in joy. It is my hope that becoming a Stephen Minister will provide the opportunity for me to give back to our faith community. The training with our group was a prayerful and powerful journey in reflection and spiritual growth rooted in trust and compassion for each other. I am humbled by this opportunity to serve with my fellow "faith keepers."



RICHARD SCHWARTZ

Over the nearly four months of training, I came to understand that being a Stephen Minister at our church is a gift and a sacred responsibility, for it commits me to being a Christian presence for a person facing a challenging situation. I thank my trainers and my fellow ministers-in-training for a powerful experience, and I ask God's blessing on all involved in this ministry.



LINDA FAIRCHILD

Stephen Ministry uniquely enables me to walk alongside someone in need during a life crisis by listening, empathizing, and validating their experience to the point of closure.

WHAT STEPHEN MINISTRY MEANS TO ME

MEET OUR NEWLY-COMMISSIONED STEPHEN MINISTERS



AMIE LEE

My first experience with Stephen Ministry followed the death of a family member. I was sent a set of books that really helped with my grief. The materials made such a difference to me that I passed them along to a grieving friend. I didn't know that eventually, I would be given an opportunity to be part of this amazing ministry. I am thankful for my training and look forward to using it to provide a listening ear to someone who needs it.



EMILY CAMPBELL

My view of Stephen Ministry is best captured by a prayer attributed to St. Teresa of Avila (with a couple of additions from me):

Christ has no body now but yours.
No hands, no feet on earth but yours.
Yours are the eyes [and ears] through which he looks
[and listens] compassionately on this world.
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good.
Yours are the hands with which he blesses all the world.

Yours are the hands.
Yours are the feet.
Yours are the eyes.
You are his body.

Christ has no body now on earth but yours.



SPRINGTIME FOR FAMILIES

Alexandra Mead, Director, Christian Education and Children's Ministry

For more event details, please visit pcmorrystown.org!

LENT SERVICES

- **Family Lenten Craft during Sunday School**
March 12 | Parish House
- **Ash Wednesday Children's Services**
February 22 from 4:15 - 6:00 pm at Parish House during Midweek. All children are welcome to attend!
- **Palm Sunday Parade**
April 2 before Worship. All children are welcome to attend! Please meet at the Chapel at 9:30 am.



CINCO DE MAYO COCKTAIL PARTY

- All parents of children and students invited!
- Friday, **May 5**
- **6:00 - 7:30 pm**
- Parish House

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Everest Expedition: June 26 - 30
Conquering Challenges With God's Mighty Power

- Vacation Bible School Registration opens **April 1**
- **\$50** per child
- Ages **3-11**
- Visit pcmorrystown.org to register



THE BEGINNING OF A JOURNEY

Jeanne Mueller, Director, Presbyterian Church Nursery School

One of the most important parts of being human is feeling part of a community. At the Presbyterian Church Nursery School (PCNS), we believe that we are the beginning of a child's journey to find a sense of self as well as a sense of belonging to a community. Families often send us their first child to attend our school with lots of trepidation. The staff here at PCNS realizes that they are trusting relative strangers with their precious little children.

We run our orientations with big smiles and try to explain how our little school community becomes a family and the children will gain self-confidence and pride as they come to school and find success inside themselves and make new friends. Parents and caregivers quietly nod at us but don't look at all convinced that this will work out. Several weeks into each school year, after the young ones (or their parents) conquer separation anxiety and the tears stop, the children are thrilled with their new school community and the parents have built trust with us. That is where the journey and the sense of community begins for our PCNS children. Our school, and often this church, becomes like a family for them.

When our PCNS students leave us, they often continue to be part of our community. Many become members of the Presbyterian Church in Morristown, they come to the annual Vacation Bible school and end up as volunteers when they are too old to be campers! Church family events like Movie Nights and the Chili Cookoff are welcoming to our PCNS families. Recently, we had several PCNS "alumni" perform in an after school MPAC show. Some of the PCNS staff went to support the students and the families of the students expressed their appreciation for the support. "It meant so much to ... our family that you continue to support our kids. PCNS is such a special place, we are grateful for the introduction to other families and the lifelong bond our kids have formed. ...We are forever grateful for PCNS!"

Once a part of PCNS, you are part of our community forever. We are a great place to start, but we never forget our students and families. In today's world, children need a safe place to grow and feel part of a community. We are proud to be at the beginning of that process and we continue to nurture our children and families as they grow.

The Presbyterian Church Nursery School and staff wish the PCM family a wonderful and joyous Easter.

-Jeanne Mueller and Staff



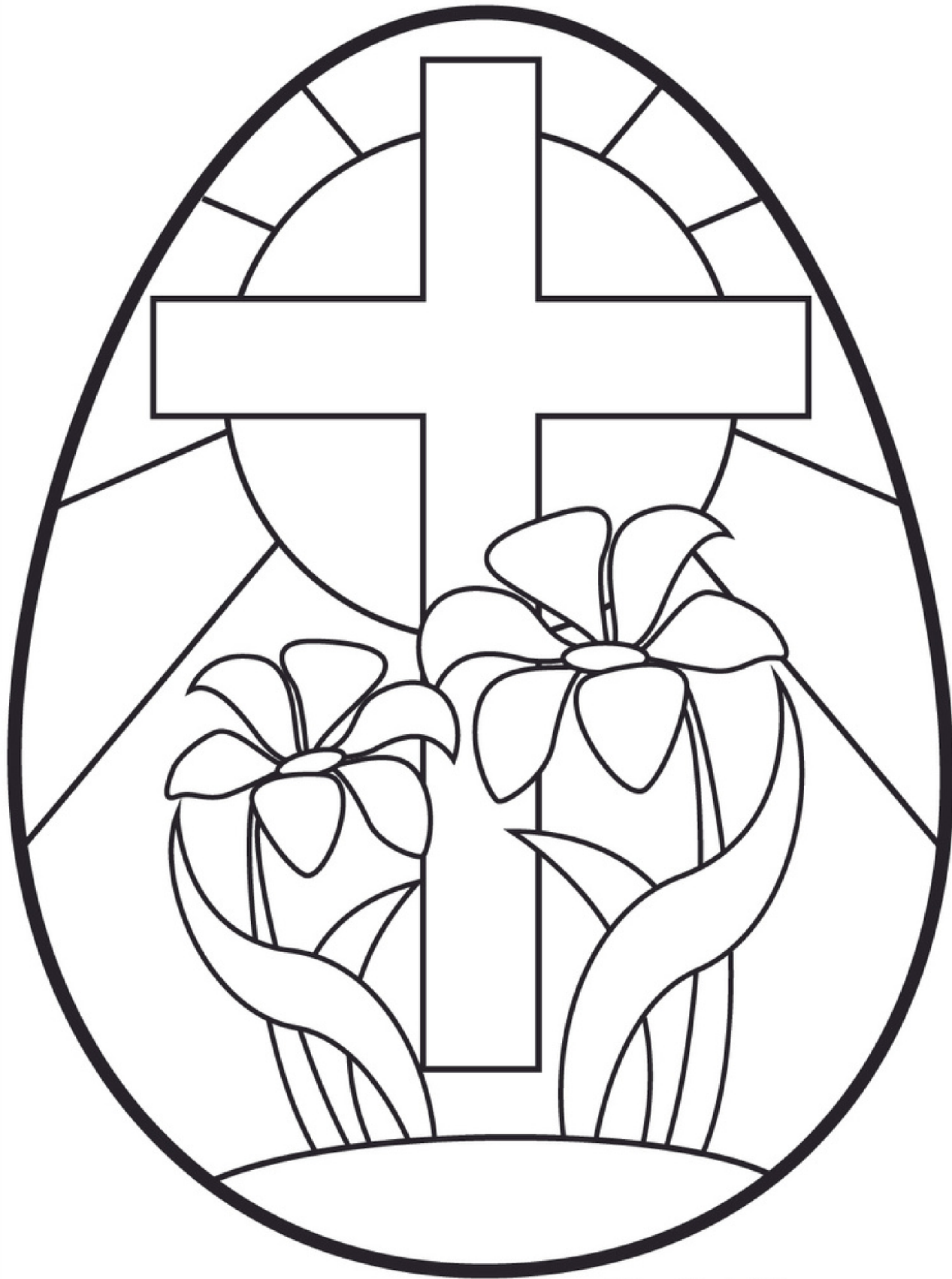
LOOK OUT SUMMER, HERE WE COME!

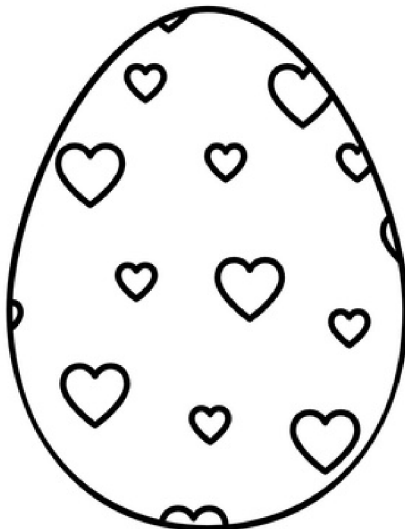
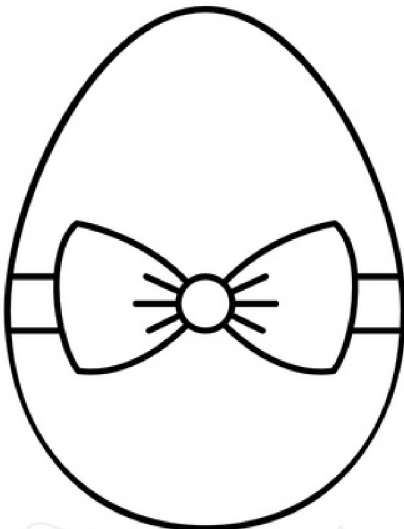
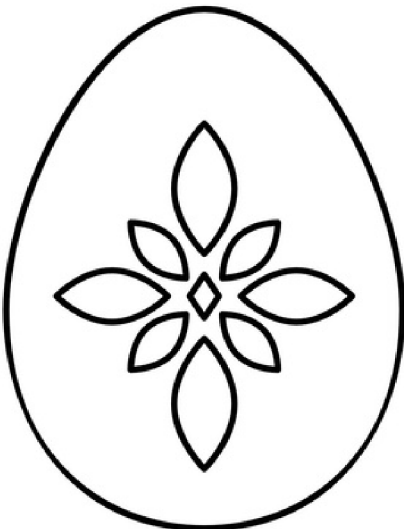
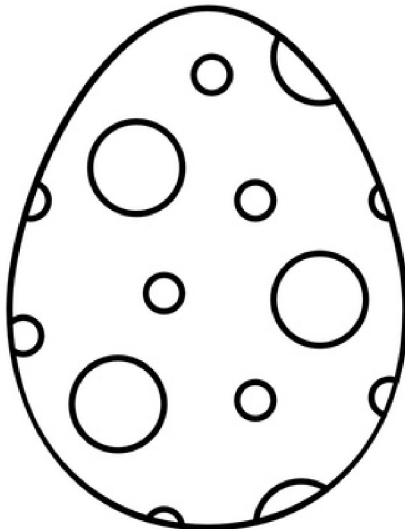
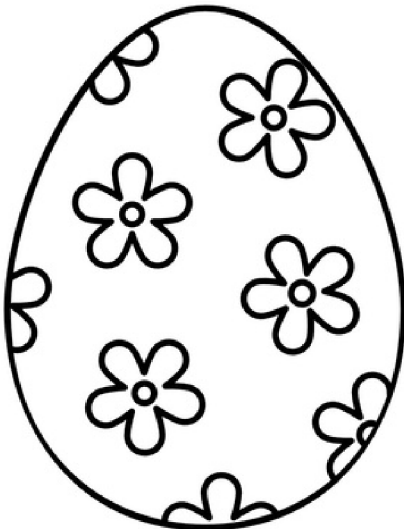
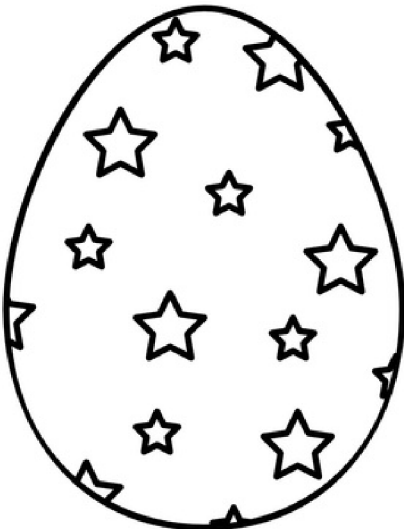
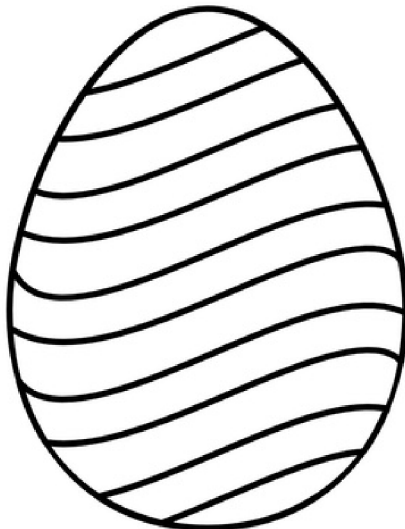
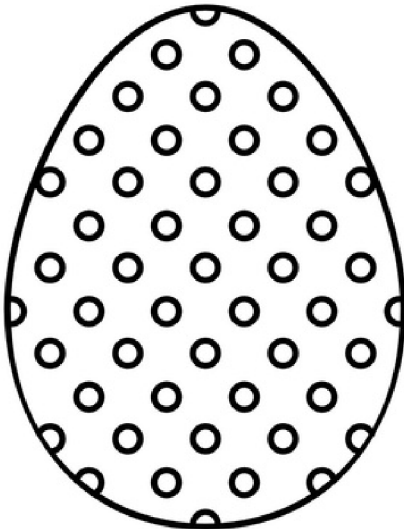
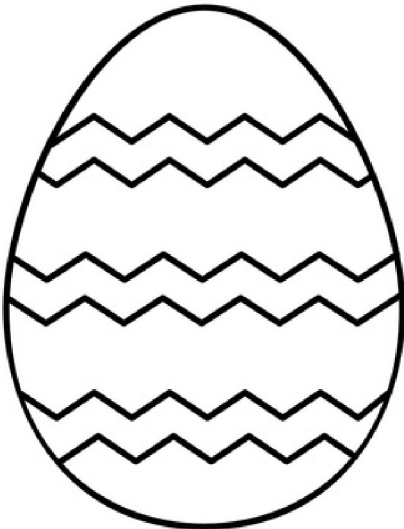
Announcing our first summer camp program for ages 3 - 5!



Contact Jeanne Mueller:
 JM Mueller@pcmorristoryn.org or
 visit pcnsmorristoryn.org.







OUR STUDENT COMMUNITY

Patrick Allred, Director, Youth and Young Adults



CONFIRMATION

Our confirmands have been hard at work this year learning the ins and outs of what it means to be a Presbyterian, the narrative themes in the Old and New Testaments, and attending a number of classes covering various theological topics. You've also seen them serving as acolytes, running the sound booth, and helping out with Sunday School. I'm also thankful for our amazing mentors: Wendy Doidge, Bruce Frazier, Ken Hashagen, Wayne Rush, and Rich Schwartz. Be sure to attend worship on **May 7** to celebrate our confirmands, and welcome them as new members of our congregation.



CHILI COOK-OFF

Our Youth and Young Adult Committee is so excited to host our **Annual Chili Cook-off Fundraiser on Friday, March 3** starting at 6:00 pm. Please plan on attending and sample a ton of amazing chilis (or hot dogs for the kiddos!) and consider bidding on some great baskets in the silent auction.

Do you have a chili recipe that you think is a cut above the rest? Please consider donating it to the cook-off! All attendees will vote on their favorite chilis during the cook-off. Your chili may walk away with one of the awards! The Youth and Young Adult Committee is also looking for gift basket donations for our silent auction. All of the proceeds from our fundraiser go towards the Youth Ministry Mission Trip to R.I.S.E. where our students help repair homes to be warmer, safer, and dryer for individuals with low income in New York state. Please reach out to **Patrick Allred** or visit our website if you'd like to donate a chili or you would like more information about gift baskets.



SENIOR SUNDAY

Be sure to attend worship on **June 11** to celebrate our **2023 seniors**:

Avery Craig
Michael Hoppes
Zachary Hoover
Kezia Volinsky

RINGERS ON THE GREEN TO TOUR THE UK!

Matthew Webb, Director of Music

The Ringers on the Green will be joining forces with the Walsh Memorial Handbell Choir for a tour to the UK - Oxford, Stratford-Upon-Avon, and London. It is an ambitious and exciting undertaking and we need your support!

Over the next few months, leading up to our trip, from **June 24 - July 3**, we will be providing ways for you to offer your support and for us to provide you with services such as a Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner, a chocolate candy/cookie sale, multiple Parents' Night Out events, and an opportunity for you to sponsor a ringer.

Thank you for your continued support! Since January we have gained three new ringers and will also have some alumni ringers joining us for the tour. If you're interested in tagging along, we have space available at a very reasonable price for a nearly-all-inclusive trip!

If interested, reach out to Matt Webb (mwebb@pcmorristown.org).

May the season of Lent be a time of removing those things that stand in our way of personal growth and a time of adding things of great value to our lives!

Peace,
Matt



HOMELESS SOLUTIONS HONORS PCM

SAVE THE DATE – MARCH 31

This May marks the 40th year since the inception of Homeless Solutions (HSI), when it began as the Morris Shelter, Inc. - a private, non-profit community organization - founded by religious and business leaders who saw a critical need for a homeless shelter in Morristown.

The shelter, which opened in November 1983, comprised 14 beds in the Howard House, the former manse of the Presbyterian Church on the Morristown Green. It provided a warm place to stay and meals for up to 10 days per guest. PCM members worked hard to convince the town of the necessity and safety of such a facility, and to make caring for their homeless neighbors viable.

Finding that expansion for permanent emergency housing was necessary, Morris County Freeholders approved a site at a vacant county building on West Hanover Avenue to be the new shelter. In March of 1987, the doors opened to what we still know today as our Main Shelter.

Because of the long connection between PCM and HSI, The Presbyterian Church in Morristown will be the 2023 honoree at the annual "Dream Builder's Bash" to be held Friday, March 31, at the Westin Governor Morris Hotel. Announcements about purchasing tickets to attend this wonderful event will be coming soon, so circle the date and plan to attend with a group of friends.

If you have any interesting stories, anecdotes and/or photos from years past, HSI would love for you to share them! Please contact amyrozgony@hsinj.org and also let Janet Foster (janet.w.foster@gmail.com) in our congregation, so she can prepare more HSI history updates for us!



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

"YOU SHALL BE CALLED REPAIRERS OF THE BREACH" ISAIAH 58

PROVIDING RELIEF FROM NATURAL DISASTERS, FOOD FOR THE HUNGRY, AND SUPPORT FOR THE POOR AND OPPRESSED.

Around the world, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity. The three programs supported by One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) – Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA), the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People – all work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need. From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance, and hope.

Received during the season of Lent (**February 22 – April 9**), each gift to OGHS helps to improve the lives of people in these challenging situations. The Offering provides us a way to share God’s love with our neighbors in need. In fact, OGHS is the single, largest way that Presbyterians come together every year to work for a better world. OGHS is YOUR reach into the world: working in partnership with people we never meet, yet to whom we are connected. Your contributions are transforming lives for generations to come. We can make a difference. **We do make a difference.** Your generosity makes all the difference in the world.

WAYS TO DONATE

- Make a check out to the Presbyterian Church in Morristown (memo: OGHS) and mail to the Parish House (65 South Street, Morristown, NJ 07960)
- Text OGHS to 91999
- Pay by credit card: select the BREEZE drop-down menu for “One Great Hour of Sharing” for this mission



PCM IS NOW PARTNERING WITH RAMP TO HELP A REFUGEE FAMILY

“Do not mistreat foreigners who are living in your land. Treat them as you would an Israelite and love them as you love yourselves. Remember that you were once foreigners in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.” Leviticus 19:33-34

A group of PCM members met on Monday, January 16 with Paul Pazniokas, the Family Coordinator from Refugee Assistance Morris Partners (RAMP), to share how we can help an Afghan family, new to our area, adapt to life in New Jersey. After a harrowing year in refugee settlement areas in both Dubai and Elizabeth, NJ, the family has moved to an apartment in Boonton, and now the real work of their integration into American life begins.

Our volunteer team is already working to drive the family to the grocery store, offer transportation and assistance with medical appointments, and to do other errands with them. There are long-term needs, like helping them learn English. Volunteers will pair up and visit the mom and dad to help with English in an informal and relaxed setting. There are also short one-off assignments like helping the family navigate sign-ups for cell phone plans or get up to speed on local recycling rules.

If you're interested in learning more about the family and our volunteer team, please reach out to Outreach member Tom Tignor (ttignor@gmail.com), who has stepped forward to serve as our Family Team Liaison with RAMP.



WELCOME TO OUR NEIGHBORHOOD!



Historically, the Presbyterian Church in Morristown has been instrumental and supportive of nearly every organization to support and improve the lives of Morristown residents. We now welcome and embrace Cohome at 44 Miller Road – only a few blocks away from our Parish House!

Today this home is shared by eight neurodiverse housemates. In addition, it is used to host community events like holiday parties and workshops. As their website states: "Living in a neurodiverse home develops relationships. That means empathy, compromise, collaboration, joy, and navigating conflict. We wouldn't have it any other way." Instead of being isolated in an institution, Cohome's residents live within Morristown where they can have jobs, shop, mingle with the community, and give back in various ways. They do all of their own meal preparation and eat together along with staff and volunteers.

Hannah and Jack, two of the residents at Cohome, participated in a holiday party for the Children on the Green, another organization PCM supports. It was wonderful to see the Cohome residents relating to and interacting with the children. In February, the Cohome crew made Valentines for all the Children on the Green plus its staff members, and the children reciprocated with Valentines for the Cohome family. The love flows both ways!

As Mr. Rogers said: "All of us, at some time or other, need help. Whether we're giving or receiving help, each one of us has something valuable to bring to this world. That's one of the things that connects us as neighbors—in our own way, each one of us is a giver and a receiver."

A few months ago, the Outreach Committee offered financial support to Cohome. We are in the beginning stages of forming relationships with Cohome and its residents and invite any who are interested to **contact Marnie Kaller**.



WE'RE BETTER TOGETHER



MOTHER'S DAY BLANKET SUNDAY IS BACK!

For decades Presbyterian Women has sponsored Mother's Day Blanket Sunday, as a way to honor our mothers and at the same time give a kind, loving, and tangible response to someone facing a difficult time, reminding them that they are not alone. In 2022 41,845 blankets were distributed around the globe by Church World Service. These blankets serve as a source of warmth and comfort to people who are homeless or displaced, reminding them that they are part of our community and are loved.

Envelopes and cards will be available in the pews and in the Narthex on **Mother's Day (May 14)** so that you can be part of this extraordinary way to honor mothers everywhere. For just \$10 you can provide a family, not only with a blanket, but also with hope.



TIME TO GET OUT YOUR HIKING GEAR!

Our community is very blessed to be surrounded by incredible natural beauty. Our county, state, and national parks are wonderful places to hike, to be close to God and to one another. God's love for us is evident in the beauty that He has given us to enjoy...so strap on your hiking boots and come join us for the first hike of the spring – on **Saturday, April 22 at 9:00 am**. We will meet at the Jockey Hollow National Park parking lot that is located at the end of Western Avenue (not the main entrance to the park), where we will hike the Blue Loop on the New York Brigade trail. The loop takes about an hour to complete and is rated as an easy trail. All ages are invited to participate in this event, be rejuvenated by the spring air, and enjoy God's creation. See you there! For more information, please contact Sherry Guthrie (cell: 973-714-7687).

"DID YOU NOTICE? THE FLOWERS IN THE SANCTUARY ARE ESPECIALLY BEAUTIFUL TODAY!"

We're hearing this more and more lately, thanks to the talents of our new vendor, and thanks AS ALWAYS to those of you who donate towards the purchase of a weekly arrangement. We are so grateful!

Here's something to consider, though, when you plan your next donation: Our cost for each arrangement has risen from **\$100 to \$150**. If you can raise your donation accordingly, that would be great! If not, we totally understand — stick with \$100, or raise your gift to something in between.

To donate flowers, please contact Lynne Harmen at lynne@madisonphoto.com. Thank you so much for helping to make our sanctuary beautiful!



Cover Art: *Spring in the Park*, oil on panel, 2022, by Woodie Webber

LET'S STAY CONNECTED

VISIT

We worship weekly in-person at 10:00 am in our Sanctuary
Our weekly service is live streamed and is available at: pcmorristoryn.org

The **Parish House** is located at 65 South Street | The **Sanctuary & Chapel** are located at 57 E Park Place

Please feel free to contact our offices at the Parish House at **973-538-1776**

CONTACT

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Sigris Lorena Girón Sorto | *Weeknight Custodian* - **Cory Villeneuve** | *Weekend Custodian*

Jeanne Mueller | *Director of Presbyterian Church Nursery School* | jmueller@pcmorristoryn.org

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