



First Presbyterian Church of Sussex  
**PRESBYTERIAN**  
**PRESS**

21 Unionville Avenue, Sussex, NJ 07461

December 2021-January 2022

## From the Pastor's Desk...

Happy Advent! Merry Christmas! Happy New Year!

It's the most wonderful time of the year! At least it truly is for me. (And I really hope you sang—out loud or in your head—the first sentence of the pastor's note. If you didn't, go ahead and take another stab at it now!) I love Advent and Christmas.

I love the feeling in the air as houses, storefronts, and town squares get all dolled up in their winter finery! People are generally jolly, and kids are excited beyond all comprehension. There's just something in the air around this time of year. I'm guessing you understand the feeling I'm talking about.

And yet, this time of holidays and special celebration can also be a very hard time for people—people going through grief, no matter how long ago the death was. People who aren't near their families, so the celebrations seem less exciting. People who don't have a stable income and either make great sacrifices or get into a lot of debt to bring joy to their children come Christmas morning. People who just go without.

There are plenty of reasons for people to not be thrilled and overjoyed around Christmas time. And, when we look around and see the state of things here on earth, I think we can all understand that things aren't ideal. We proclaim the waiting for Christ's birth and then we rejoice at His coming to us in the form of a tiny baby.

And then we wait—we wait for Jesus to return, for a complete restoration and transformation of this world. The thing is, as we wait—we don't sit idly by. God calls us to serve others and to give back from what we do have.

And friends, we sure have a lot. Just being citizens of this country, we have so much. If you're looking for an easy and meaningful way to give back during this Advent, Christmas, and New Year time, I suggest looking into participating in a reverse Advent Calendar.

A reverse Advent Calendar gives you day by day instructions on things to collect to donate to those in need. This is a way to easily participate in giving back and building our generosity muscles. It shows us how doing a little something every day does make a huge impact for those with less. I've included an example of one in this newsletter.

1 Timothy 6:18-19 is a good reminder for us as we get wrapped up in this gift-giving season—“They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share, thus storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life that really is life.” The money spent on gifts is not nearly as important as the heart behind the giving.

Our culture loves to equate expensive gifts with higher importance, but I promise you that's not the case. Instead, it's the heart of WHY we give. The WHY of showing God's love to the world: to those we know and those we don't.



Friends, remember the true meaning of Christmas—that Christ is born into the world to save the world, redeem the world, and restore the world. May we live into this change and be agents of this change in our communities today.

Happy Advent, Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year!

In Christ,

Pastor Katherine

(973) 771-4721 (cell)



## Reverse Advent Calendar

Taken from “Christmas Gals’ blog (online) – October 2019

**Collect these items each day and then donate to a local food pantry on December 24<sup>th</sup>. *“It is more blessed to give than to receive.” - Acts 20:35***

- December 1<sup>st</sup> – cooking beans
- December 2<sup>nd</sup> – cooking oil
- December 3<sup>rd</sup> – boxed cereal
- December 4<sup>th</sup> – jar of spices
- December 5<sup>th</sup> – canned tomatoes
- December 6<sup>th</sup> – rolled oats
- December 7<sup>th</sup> – baby food
- December 8<sup>th</sup> – peanut butter
- December 9<sup>th</sup> – canned peaches
- December 10<sup>th</sup> – cake mix
- December 11<sup>th</sup> – tomato soup
- December 12<sup>th</sup> – ketchup
- December 13<sup>th</sup> – applesauce
- December 14<sup>th</sup> – crackers
- December 15<sup>th</sup> – pudding mix
- December 16<sup>th</sup> – rice
- December 17<sup>th</sup> – pasta
- December 18<sup>th</sup> – pasta sauce
- December 19<sup>th</sup> – chicken noodle soup
- December 20<sup>th</sup> – can of corn
- December 21<sup>st</sup> – can of green beans
- December 22<sup>nd</sup> – macaroni and cheese
- December 23<sup>rd</sup> – bottle of juice
- December 24<sup>th</sup> – muffin mix



## Session Highlights

Session met on November 16<sup>th</sup>. The following items were discussed:



- The students who will be confirmed will receive Bibles as their gift.
- Pastor Katherine will be on vacation from **December 25<sup>th</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>**. Ruling Elder Jason Touw will preach on **December 26<sup>th</sup>**.
- The Per Capita amount due per member will remain at \$40.00 for 2022.
- Ruling Elder Richard L. Hayzler is interested in filling slots for Deacons and Elders. If you have an interest, please see him.
- The Cookie & Bread Walk is scheduled for **Saturday, December 18, 2021**. All cookies and breads will be individually wrapped. See information elsewhere in the newsletter.
- Painting and other upgrades have occurred to our physical plants. Please be generous.
- An Advent Wreath workshop will take place on Sunday, November 28<sup>th</sup>.
- The 2022 Budget continues to need tweaks. We are close to presenting the Budget to our congregation.
- Let us not forget the one person who makes this church operate so well. Sharon Bove will be honored on November 21<sup>st</sup> for her 30 years of devoted service.
- Stewardship is never over. We need your financial support.
- The High Point Regional High School Chamber Singers will be with us on **December 15<sup>th</sup>** at 7:00 p.m.
- Our Christmas Eve Service will be held on **December 24<sup>th</sup>**, at 7:00 p.m., in person and on ZOOM.
- The membership rolls will be evaluated before the end of the year.
- The next regular Session meeting will be held on **Tuesday, December 21, 2021**, at 6:30 p.m., on the ZOOM platform.

Respectfully submitted,  
Charles Bates, Clerk to Session

## Can You Help?



Our parking lots need work (repaving, striping). We would appreciate it if you would consider donating to the church for this purpose. No donation is too small! Please make your check payable to *First Presbyterian Church of Sussex*, and mark *Parking Lots* on the memo line. Donations may be placed in the offering plate on Sundays, or you can mail it to our Depositing Treasurer, Janet Hayzler, at 96 Holland Road, Wantage, NJ 07461. Thank you in advance for your help in this matter.

## Mark Your Calendars

The Deacons' met on Tuesday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, on ZOOM; the next regular Session meeting will be held on **Tuesday, December 21<sup>st</sup>**, 6:30 p.m., on ZOOM.



## Presbyterian Women's Group

The Presbyterian Women's Group of the First Presbyterian Church of Sussex is planning to hold its annual Cookie & Bread Sale again this year. We are asking anyone who wants to bake cookies and/or breads to contribute. Cookies are to be packaged in a sandwich-size baggie (4 cookies to a bag). Breads are to be packaged separately. The sale will take place on **Saturday, December 18<sup>th</sup>**, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. There will be no pre-ordering this year. For any questions, please contact Joanne Cosh (973-903-3152) or Penny Bates (201-452-5082). All moneys raised will go into the Presbyterian Women's Group's account.



## Worshiping In Person Update



The church leadership voted that masks will be optional for those vaccinated; for those not vaccinated, it is strongly recommended that masks continue to be worn. Child care in the nursery has resumed.

## Sunday School News

Sunday school runs from 9:30 – 10:15 a.m., for Pre-K through Adult, September through June. Please see Ashley Ziccardi if you have any questions.



## Christmas Pageant

Please join us on **Sunday, December 19<sup>th</sup>**, when the children will present their Christmas Pageant "Just a Little Christmas" during our worship service. Please plan to attend this special presentation!

## Caroling in the Square

Please join the Deacons in celebrating the Christmas Season by caroling after church on **Sunday, December 19<sup>th</sup>**. We'll be singing in the town square of Sussex Borough. We hope to see you there!



## Advent Program

Give yourself a gift this Advent and come to the church on **Wednesday, December 15<sup>th</sup>**, at 7:00 p.m., to hear the High Point Regional High School Chamber Singers. You will be glad you did...and bring a friend! ZOOM participation will also be available.



# Christmas Joy Offering

“A gift opens doors.” – Proverbs 18:16. During this Advent Season, we celebrate leadership: past, present and future, through support of the Christmas Joy Offering. Please give generously to this offering, which will be collected **Sunday, December 19<sup>th</sup>**. Special envelopes will be in our Sunday bulletins on **December 12<sup>th</sup> and December 19<sup>th</sup>**. If you won't be worshipping in person, you can mail your offering in to our Depositing Treasurer, Janet Hayzler, 96 Holland Road, Wantage, NJ 07461. Please make your check payable to “First Presbyterian Church of Sussex” and mark “Christmas Joy” on the memo line.



## Christmas Eve Service

Join us on **Friday, December 24<sup>th</sup>**, as we celebrate the birth of Christ at our service starting at 7:00 p.m., in person and on ZOOM.

## How Are We Doing???

### For the Month of November

(Computers Connected During ZOOM + People Attending In-Person Worship)

Average Weekly Attendance:            39  
Monthly Offering:                            \$ 7,214.00



## From the Finance Committee



Even though we re-opened the church, not everyone is ready for in-person worship. Our bills still need to be paid. For those of you who are not returning to in-person worship, please remember to keep up with your weekly contribution. If you pay your bills using online banking, consider scheduling your weekly or monthly giving like other regular payments. This will greatly assist with our cash flow. Thank you!

**We have online giving!** There is a 'donate here' link on our website, [www.sussexpresbyterian.org](http://www.sussexpresbyterian.org) or you can download the GivePlus Mobile App (Vanco) to your smart phone. Our online giving program is provided by the Presbyterian Foundation in partnership with Vanco Services, LLC. Both the Presbyterian Foundation and Vanco Services have very good reputations, and this online giving program came highly recommended by other churches.

## Pastoral Care

Pastor Katherine aims to be in the office on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays. She is available at her cell phone number (973-771-4721) the rest of the days and for longer conversations in the evenings. She sets aside Friday evening through Saturday evening as her Sabbath (around 5:00 – 5:00 p.m.) most weeks. If you have a pastoral emergency during this time, please still reach out.



## Donate to Your Church by Shopping at Smile.Amazon



You can increase donations for First Presbyterian Church of Sussex by shopping at <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/22-2422961>. You shop as you normally would on the site, at no extra cost to you, and you don't need to make a separate account. AmazonSmile is a program that donates 0.5% of your eligible purchases on Amazon to a charity of your choice. **IT IS EASY.** Your selection of items will not be limited by using smile.amazon when you shop. Though 0.5% is not a large donation, and it isn't intended to replace your regular charitable activities, AmazonSmile is still a great way to take advantage of a service you're using anyway. Thank you for considering this simple way to help our church. Every little bit helps.

## Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation and Corporation will be held on **Sunday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>**, at 11:30 a.m., in the church sanctuary and on ZOOM (snow date: **January 30<sup>th</sup>**). Please mark your calendars, and plan to attend this important meeting.



## Annual Report

The end of the year is drawing near, so it's time to put together your reports for the 2021 Annual Report, which should be ready for the congregation on **Sunday, January 16<sup>th</sup>**. Please have your report in to Sharon Bove by **Tuesday, January 4<sup>th</sup>**, so that she will have plenty of time to put the report together (in case we have bad weather to work around). **Thank you!**



## 2022 Church Envelopes

The 2022 church offering envelopes will be available by **December 19<sup>th</sup>**. Please take yours home with you when you come to church. Also, if you see a neighbor's envelopes, please take them and drop them off.



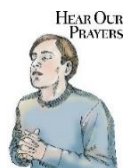
## 2022 Calendars

Pinkel Funeral Home has generously donated scenic calendars with our church's information on it. Please feel free to take home as many as you'd like. They are located in the narthex.



## Prayers of the People E-mail

Pastor Katherine sends out a weekly email with the prayer requests lifted up in worship. If you would like to receive this e-mail, please contact the church office.





## In Our Thoughts & Prayers



Please pray for **Frank Del Sardo Jr., Bob & Donna Gibson, Rev. Bruce Gillette & his family, Evelyn Haggard, Rev. Charles Holm, Betty Martin, Ralph Miller, Jeff Thomas, and Paulette Touw, and the Kovach Family.** Please let the Deacons or the office know who to add and who to remove. **Thank you!**

*Update From Rev. Bruce Gillette: "December 3<sup>rd</sup> Carolyn and I went to see my oncologist at the University of Rochester Medical Center-Strong Memorial Hospital. My doctor has decided to take me off the chemo! It has been two years of nasty side effects from this drug, but I am alive and my leukemia is in full remission. I will still be taking plenty of meds but a great burden feels lifted. I was tired over the weekend from the five vaccines on Friday, but they will not stifle my joy. Carolyn has been my comforting companion 24/7, wonderful caregiver, and always my amazing love through it all. She managed to juggle caring for a sick husband, lots of pastoral work, loving our extended family and writing hymns (some were done at my hospital bedside). Thank you and your church for all of your prayers and support on this journey. Praise God from whom all blessings flow!"*

## Prayer Shawl Ministry

Our Prayer Shawl Ministry has been sending prayers and love in the form of beautiful knitted, crocheted, or quilted shawls to people in need of physical, emotional, or spiritual comfort. The shawl maker begins with prayers and blessings for the recipient, and keeps these thoughts in mind throughout the creative process. Our shawls are delivered with a message expressing the feelings of love and comfort with which they were made. If you know anyone who could benefit from a prayer shawl, please call Janet (973-875-9252) or see her after worship. If you would like to create these beautiful shawls, a 20 x 60-inch rectangular shawl requires five skeins of yarn. If you don't knit, crochet, or sew, or don't have the time, you can purchase yarn or donate funds for materials.



Prayer Shawl Ministry

## Deacons' Fund Offering



A part of the Deacons' ministry is our monthly Deacons' Fund Offering, which assists charitable, nonprofit organizations. The Board of Deacons would like to thank all those who donated to Skylands Outreach Depot, our Deacons' Fund recipient for November.

Our Deacons' Fund for December is Father John's Animal House in Lafayette. Father John's is a nonprofit 501c(3) organization which is supported entirely by donations, grants and fundraising events. This special place provides love, companionship, shelter, food, socialization and medical care for many homeless animals waiting for a permanent loving home. It is a no-kill center, ensuring that the animals housed there will continue to receive the best of care for as long as it is needed.

For January, it will go to the Church of the Good Shepherd Episcopal Church's Food Bank. Please give generously!

*Note: The Deacons' Fund recipients for December and January are subject to change. Updates will follow.*



## Deacon of the Month

When Pastor Katherine is not available or needs assistance, the following Deacons will be on call for the month of December – Phil Hardin; for January – Frank Del Sardo.



## Care Package Ministry



Thanks to all who contributed to the College Care Packages. There were plenty of goodies and some essentials in them! They were sent out the beginning of November, with this note included:

*“Just a short note from your church family. You certainly must have a lot going on! College coursework, finals, and the added stress of the COVID-19 pandemic is quite a challenge.*

*You’ll see that this package is filled with selected items that we hope will be meaningful, helpful, useful, and some edible stuff too!*

*Enjoy them knowing that we are thinking of you and wish you God’s peace and love and a whole lot of success in all your endeavors.*

*Sincerely,*

*The First Presbyterian Church of Sussex Congregation*

*P.S. If you have the time, send us a note about how you are doing!”*

We know the students will enjoy them!! The 2021 recipients were: Natalie Alheidt – St. John’s University, Alex Edwards – Penn Technology (a division of Penn State University), Emma Klein – Centenary College, Kevin Scymanski – Sussex County Community College, Ryan Scymanski – Kutztown University, Jacob Sives – West Chester University, Will Smisko – Graduate School in the near future, Sam Touw – University at Buffalo, Jacob Vanderwiele – Sussex County Community College, and Kate Vanderwiele – Ramapo College.



*Dear 1<sup>st</sup> Presbyterian Church of Sussex,*

*Thank you for the goodie box, and the well wishes. Hope the church is doing well! Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas to everyone!*

*Regards, Alex Edwards*

*Dear Church Family,*

*Thanks so much for the awesome care packages! Your thoughtfulness is greatly appreciated. Really loved all the great treats and warm blankets. Looking forward to finishing out the semester and having a nice break.*

*Merry Christmas, Ryan & Kevin Scymanski*





Dear Pastor Katherine, Session, and Friends of the FPC of Sussex,

Thank you so much for the special celebration you gave me on November 21<sup>st</sup> for my 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary here at the First Presbyterian Church of Sussex. The framed certificate, cards, beautiful flowers, balloons, cake, and generous gift cards were very much appreciated! Also, the church sign was a nice surprise! Several of you gave me beautiful words of appreciation for my work here, which I will treasure.

Over the years I have met such wonderful people here at FPC of Sussex. Sadly, some have passed on; but I have such nice memories of them. This church is made up of wonderful, caring people, who make coming to work an enjoyable experience!

Again, thank you for your kindness and appreciation of the work I do. I am honored to work here!

Fondly,  
Sharon Bove



# Just Plain Change Ministry



*I give you a new commandment: Love one another; as I have loved you, so you are to love one another. If there is love among you, then all will know that you are my disciples. - John 13:34-35*

Please remember to empty your pockets/ purses to help our neighbors in need. Listen to your neighbor, your co-workers, your friends, cashiers at the places where you eat or shop and/or the waitresses where you eat. If you find a need to cheer or support, write down your suggestion on a slip of paper. Put it in the jar in the back of the sanctuary or contact any Deacon. **You can also mail in your donation to Janet Hayzler.**

Yes, your quarters, dimes, and pennies do make a difference in the lives of those around us!

## Small Change Suggestion (The suggested amount limit is \$50.)

Recipient/situation: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact information (name, address, phone #): \_\_\_\_\_

Your name (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

How do you want to have the "gift" delivered? (By yourself or by a member of the committee? Or other suggestion?): \_\_\_\_\_

Please continue to listen to your neighbor, classmate, and community members, as each has a story to tell. If we at the First Presbyterian Church of Sussex can help, let someone on the Board of Deacons or Sharon Bove or Pastor Katherine know. There are also papers on the back table in the sanctuary that can be filled out and placed in the glass jar. **Do you know of someone who needs a little boost?**

## Liturgists Needed

Mike Kosco, chair of the Worship & Sacrament Committee, is looking for people to serve as liturgists. You can be liturgist in church or at home on the ZOOM platform. If you have done it before, or even if you haven't (Mike will train newbies!), please contact him at 973-600-2386, or see him after worship on Sundays. A schedule (*through January*) of liturgists is listed below. **If you cannot volunteer on your scheduled date, please "swap" a date with someone else and notify Sharon Bove at 875-4760. Thank you!**



## Schedule of Liturgists



December 19 <sup>th</sup>	Sheryl Dekmar
December 24 <sup>th</sup>	Richard L. Hayzler
December 26 <sup>th</sup>	Mike Kosco
January 2 <sup>nd</sup>	_____
January 9 <sup>th</sup>	Betsy Sives
January 16 <sup>th</sup>	Charles Bates
January 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Richard L. Hayzler
January 30 <sup>th</sup>	Mike Kosco

## December Birthdays

- (1) Brandon Dwornikoski
- (5) Victoria Johnson
- (8) Karen Hardin
- (13) Christine Sarno
- (20) Sarah Fairweather
- (21) Carol Tomasula
- (23) Janet Eagles
- (24) Amy Mills
- (25) Jesus Christ
- Elizabeth Davis
- Pastor Katherine Scott-Kirschner



## January Birthdays

- (1) Alicia Bilney
- Ryan Hayzler
- Betsy Sives
- (5) Reyes Madera
- (10) Betty Martin
- (11) Barbara Madsen
- (16) Kristen Hayzler
- (18) Owen Demeter
- (22) Melanie LiTrenta
- Lois Wright
- (24) Dawn Klein
- (25) Justin Smisko
- (28) Krista Kotowicz



## **Refreshments After Worship**

Refreshments are served in the fellowship room. We've purchased an air purifier to help keep us all safe during our time together. Please plan to stay after worship and visit with your friends!



**When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.**

**- Matthew 2:10-11**

# Lectionary for the Lord's Day

## December 2021

- 19 **4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent**  
Psalm 80:1-7; Luke 1:39-45 (46-55)
- 24 **Christmas Eve**  
Psalm 96; Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)
- 26 **1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Christmas**  
Psalm 148; Luke 2:41-52



## January 2022

- 2 **2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Christmas**  
Psalm 147:12-20; John 1:(1-9) 10-18
- 9 **Baptism of the Lord**  
Psalm 29; Luke 3:15-17, 21-22
- 16 **2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany**  
Psalm 36:5-10; John 2:1-11
- 23 **3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany**  
Psalm 19; Luke 4:14-21
- 30 **4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany**  
Psalm 71:1-6; Luke 4:21-30



## Local Food Pantry News

The Sussex Help Center is open from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon on Wednesdays, and from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. on Mondays/Fridays. They appreciate all donations, and they especially need canned tuna. Please let Walter Houck know if there is a family in need.

## Sussex Elks

**Veterans:** The Sussex Elks are still collecting needed items for our Veterans, as well as DASI. The Veterans need: body wash, shampoo/conditioner, and toothpaste/toothbrushes. DASI needs: toilet paper, paper towels, tissues, napkins, laundry detergent, Dreft (baby detergent), cleaning products, dish soap, female hygiene products, deodorant, soap, hair-care products, shampoo and conditioner (full size), cereal, canned tuna/chicken, individual snacks, juice boxes, mac & cheese, and soup. Also, small and medium dog/cat food bags, and gift cards for Walmart, Shoprite, and gas in \$10 increments. The following new items are also needed: pillows, twin-size bed sheets, hand towels, larger size women's pajamas, children's pajamas (boys and girls), sweatshirts and sweatpants (XXL), socks, and slippers. Drop-off location: Sussex Elks Lodge #2288. Please leave by the door.



Contact the Sussex Elks Lodge 2288 at [SussexElks2288@gmail.com](mailto:SussexElks2288@gmail.com) or they can be found on the Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/SussexLodge2288](http://www.facebook.com/SussexLodge2288)).

Peace Love JOY Peace Love JOY



# Family Promise of Sussex County

Dear First Presbyterian Church of Sussex,

On behalf of Family Promise of Sussex County, I would like to thank you for your donation of toiletries, food, and cleaning supplies valued at \$200.00 on November 3, 2021.

Your commitment to helping homeless families in our community is incredibly kind and sincerely appreciated. We are on the verge of a historic housing crisis once the moratorium on evictions is lifted. In a recent report on the potential impacts of COVID-19 related evictions, it was determined that 40% of NJ renter households would be unable to pay their rent. It is estimated that the eviction rate, once the moratorium is lifted, will be 600% higher than prior to the pandemic. This means that upwards of 419,000 NJ households will be at risk. With unemployment hovering above 7.5% in New Jersey, many of those facing eviction will have few options beyond a friend's couch or on the streets. It is because of the generosity of donors like you that we can continue to provide assistance to at-risk and homeless families and individuals during this time.

Each year Family Promise continues to advance its mission of working with families to overcome barriers to self-sufficiency and advocating for local affordable housing solutions. Through our Emergency Shelter, Supported Housing, Rapid Rehousing, and Men's Day Programs, we have seen many lives changed for the better.

The goal of Family Promise is to continue to make a difference in the lives of homeless families. With the help of donations from supporters such as you we will continue to see improvements in eliminating homelessness.

Thank you again for your generous donation that helps support our efforts to assist homeless families in our community. Please retain this information for your tax records.

Best Wishes,

Nicole Reed

Social Media & Event Coordinator

nreed@familypromisesussex.org

973-579-1180 ext 1010

## Father John's Animal House



Father John's Animal House has a small inventory of pet toys and supplies for sale that you can gift to your pets this holiday season. We have toys, collars, leashes, bowls, blankets, and more! We also have handmade (by one of our volunteers) animal charms and jewelry available for the animal lover in your life. Help support us this holiday season, and do your shopping with a little more meaning. We are open from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. **Tuesday** through **Sunday**. Limited items are priced. Donation of your choice for all other items!





# Our Church Sign

(Thank You Phil Hardin)

