

First Presbyterian Church of Sussex
PRESBYTERIAN
PRESS

21 Unionville Avenue, Sussex, NJ 07461

March 2023

From the Pastor's Desk....

Hello Friends and Members,

This month is a jam-packed month for me personally and professionally, since, if all goes to plan, I will be starting my maternity leave on April 1st. As I begin my March note, I did want to share the many thanks Donald and I have for the baby shower held for us on February 26th.

Thank you for the thoughtfulness of the shower and for the gifts. We're overwhelmed by your support of us as we welcome our first child—a baby girl—into this world. So, thank you, thank you, thank you!

Now, as we journey through Lent together—which began on February 22nd – we're looking at how the natural world can inspire us in our faith and strengthen us in walks with Christ. I'm not a gardener. I'm not a plant person... let me tell you, I have the opposite of a green thumb! I have a thumb of death!

I do think I'm getting slightly better as I get older, but I often kill plants in record time. But, as an example to the fact that I'm improving with age—the planter I received on my first day, over two years ago now, still has a couple of things growing in it!

Unlike me, the author of the book that's guiding our Lenten sermon series, Rev. Kara Eidson, is an accomplished gardener and loves to be in the dirt—growing her own food and learning from the natural cycle of the growing seasons.

In a similar way, we also learn from getting down and studying scripture, spending time in prayer, and in community. We learn about God and about ourselves. We're able to learn from one another's struggles and successes. This is the life of a Christian community and one that I pray we continue to foster and grow.

Since I will be away for three months to heal and bond with the newest member of my family, it's my prayer that this community will support one another in the needs that pop up. I know the congregation is in very capable hands—with the Deacons and Elders who are the leaders of the church.

I've also secured a listing of local-ish pastors who're willing and able to be present in the case of pastoral emergency. Sharon Bove (at the church office) and Nancy Barta (the Deacon Moderator) have their contact information.

I also know the Worship Committee has a great handle on who will be leading worship while I'm off. The Holy Spirit will move and lead in my absence. And I'm already so grateful to all those people who will be leading in worship while I'm off.

The season of Lent is upon us and with that comes the first signs of spring—may you all find comfort and hope during this church season AND earth's season. In the dullness and chill of winter, in the somberness of Lent, we still have reason to hope in the greatest gift and offering ever given to us: Jesus Christ's life, ministry, death, and resurrection.

So, friends, live into that hope and share the light of Christ's love and grace with this world. For we know that come Easter morning, spring will be right around the corner, and the created world will also proclaim the lifegiving joy found in God alone.

In Christ,
Pastor Katherine Scott-Kirschner
(973) 771-4721 (cell)



Session Highlights

Session met on February 21st. The following items were discussed:



- Pastor Katherine will be on maternity leave from **April 1, 2023 until June 30, 2023**. A list of ministers and lay persons are scheduled during that time.
- Active membership is recorded at 102. Our goal is to encourage those who have not attended to be a part of our church on a continuous basis.
- Ruling Elder Penny Bates reported that the Presbyterian Women's Group made \$754 for the Soup Sale held on February 12th.
- A new protective panel for the church's front window is being prepared for installation.
- It is time for the mediation of the church's oil tank. Ruling Elder Charles Bates is working with Fredericks Fuel & Heating Service.
- A new Sunday School curriculum is being instituted.
- Ruling Elder Penny Bates continues to work on the phone/text chain.
- Our ZOOM program is being updated.
- The next regular Session meeting will be held on **Tuesday, March 21, 2023**, at 6:30 p.m., on the ZOOM platform.

Respectfully submitted,
Charles Bates, Clerk to Session

Mark Your Calendars



The next regular Deacons' meeting will be held on **Sunday, March 12th**, 11:30 a.m., after worship at the church; the next regular Session meeting will be held on **Tuesday, March 21st**, 6:30 p.m., on ZOOM.

Spring Ahead

Don't forget to set your clocks ahead one hour on **Saturday, March 11th**, before you go to bed so you won't miss Sunday school or worship. Daylight Saving Time begins **Sunday, March 12th**.



Sermon Series



On Ash Wednesday, Pastor Katherine started a new Lenten Sermon Series using the book, *A Time to Grow: Lenten Lessons from the Garden to the Table*, by Rev. Kara Eidson. Each Sunday, the worship service and sermon will look at a theme related to growing food, gardening, and enriching our faith. Lent is a time of reflection and preparation—may this sermon series assist you in your 2023 Lenten journey. The series will conclude with **Easter Sunday, April 9, 2023**.



Lent



The season of Lent began on February 22nd. The six weeks or 40 days of Lent prepare us for Holy Week and Easter by calling us to focus deeply and intentionally on our relationship with God.

Lenten Schedule

Palm Sunday Service: Sunday, April 2nd at 10:30 a.m., at our church.

Ecumenical Maundy Thursday Service: Thursday, April 6th at 7:00 p.m., at the Sussex United Methodist Church.

Good Friday Service: Friday, April 7th at 7:00 p.m., at the Beemerville Presbyterian Church.

Easter Sunrise Service: Sunday, April 9th at 6:00 a.m., at the Beemerville Cemetery.

Easter Sunday: Sunday, April 9th at 10:30 a.m., worship service at our church. There will be no Sunday school.

Easter Egg Hunt: Sunday, April 9th at 11:30 a.m., at our church.



One Great Hour of Sharing



During the season of Lent, members are asked to give generously to this special offering, which goes to support relief efforts in our country and throughout the world. A special envelope will be included in the Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday bulletins. This offering will be collected during the worship service on **Palm Sunday, April 2nd**, and on **Easter Sunday, April 2nd**. Please plan to contribute to this worthwhile cause.

Pastoral Care

Pastor Katherine will be the office/the Sussex area on **Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays**. Her Sabbath time is now **Mondays**. On days when she's not in Sussex, she's only a phone call or text away! From **April 1st through June 30th**, she will be on maternity leave. Please call the church office or Nancy Barta with any pastoral concerns.



How Are We Doing???

For the Month of February

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

Average Weekly Attendance: 39

Monthly Offering: \$ 8,783.50



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.



Easter Egg Hunt



We will be having an Easter egg hunt for the children immediately after worship on Easter **Sunday, April 9th**. Don't forget to have the children bring their Easter baskets to collect the eggs!

We are collecting candy donations for the Easter egg hunt—small, individually wrapped candies. There is a box for the candy in the narthex. Please bring candy by

April 2nd.

Why Per Capita?

Per Capita exists as a way for all Presbyterians to share costs that belong to the whole church and to give meaning to the interdependent nature of Presbyterian polity. For 2022, each member's contribution is \$42.50.

Per Capita is part of the glue that holds Presbyterians together. It exists to allow the whole church to share equitably in those things that make us Presbyterian: our theological identity, our connectedness as communities of faith, our core structures that keep us together as a church, and our call to work for full participation in decision making.



Phone/Text Chain Update



The Hospitality Committee is working on rebuilding the Phone/Text Chain before Pastor Katherine goes on maternity leave to better be able to contact our congregation. To make this work, we need at least two people (possibly three) willing to make phone calls. Please tell us which form of communication you would prefer (phone call or text), and send your name and phone/cell phone number to the church,

sussexpresbyterian@embarqmail.com, or let Penny Bates know (973-764-3781). Or you can fill out a form that is in the Sunday bulletins or will be on the table in the back of the sanctuary. Thank you!

2023 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 will be located in the narthex by Christmas Eve.



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 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.

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 sign up to bring in goodies on the sign-up sheet in the narthex. Please call Penny Bates if you have any questions.



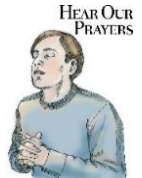
In Our Thoughts & Prayers



Please pray for **Josephine Bonanno** (Evelyn Haggard's friend), **Madelyn Coykendall**, **George Clark** (Judy's husband), **Frank Del Sardo, Jr.**, **Pam Fielding**, **Bob & Donna Gibson**, **Rev. Bruce Gillette & Family**, **Evelyn Haggard**, **Charlie & Dodi Lain**, **Betty Martin**, **Rev. Tim Marvil**, **Kenneth Van Wageninge** (Carolyn's brother), **Lois Wright**, and **Barbara Young**. Please let the Deacons or the office know who to add and who to remove. **Thank you!**

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.



Deacon of the Month



When Pastor Katherine is not available or needs assistance, the following Deacon will be on call for the month of March – Joanne Cosh.



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 the Sussex Help Center, our Deacons' Fund recipient for February.

Our Deacons' Fund recipient for March is Pass It Along. Pass It Along (PIA) works outside the realm of traditional youth development programs. Through a service-learning model, we mobilize sustainable change to the community. Most importantly, we offer youth resources to TAKE ACTION for the issues they are most passionate about. Focusing on Service in Action, Leadership, and Self-Discovery, we offer a comprehensive approach to service for all of our participants. The mission of Pass It Along is to awaken, validate, and nourish the innate desire to give back by mobilizing youth as community partners. Please give generously to our monthly Deacons' Funds!

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.



Thank You

Dear Members and Friends,

Donald and I wanted to say thank you, thank you, thank you for the showering of love and support we received at our baby shower on Sunday, February 26th. I was completely overwhelmed by gratitude for the ways we were blessed by you all. Thank you to those who planned and decorated. Thank you to those who contributed to the church gifts. Thank you to those who gave our little girl a book or two. We now have a wonderful library to begin reading to her now, before she's even born. Thank you to those who came to the shower and those who supported it in prayer. Thank you is the only phrase we have, but it doesn't feel like enough to express our gratitude to the generosity of you, my beloved congregation. The nursery isn't set up yet (we still have quite the building to do), but I'll make sure to send some photos for the April newsletter so that you all can see the important part you've all played in making our baby girl's nursery feel complete!

With love and gratitude,

Pastor Katherine & Donald

BABY
SHOWER





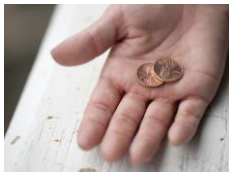


March Birthdays

- (1) Donald Kirschner
- (3) Lorraine Ricci
- (9) Ann Cosh
- (10) John Smisko
- (12) Lois Capobianco
- (16) Marion Kopec
- (19) Caroline Jacobs
- (27) Niki Lepes



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?***

Can You Help?



Mike Kosco, Chair of the Worship & Sacraments Committee, is looking for people to serve as liturgists and ushers. 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, please contact him at 973-875-7412, or see him after worship on Sundays. Communion preparers and servers are also needed. A schedule (*through April*) of liturgists, ushers, communion preparers, and communion servers 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

March 5 th	Charles Bates
March 12 th	Walter Houck
March 19 th	Betsy Sives
March 26 th	Sheryl Dekmar
April 2 nd	Richard L. Hayzler
April 9 th	Penny Bates
April 16 th	Mike Kosco
April 23 rd	Janet Hayzler
April 30 th	Charles Bates



Schedule of Ushers



March 5 th	Charles & Penny Bates
March 12 th	Kathy Carey & Janet Hayzler
March 19 th	Mary Alice Hosking & Niki Lepes
March 26 th	Paulette Touw & Ashley Ziccardi
April 2 nd	Chris & Chuck Sarno
April 9 th	Kathy Carey & Phil Hardin
April 16 th	Sheryl Dekmar & Ken Enhoffer
April 23 rd	Charles & Penny Bates
April 30 th	Janet & Richard L. Hayzler

Schedule of Communion Preparers and Servers

Preparers

March 5th – Penny Bates
April 2nd – Ashley Ziccardi

Servers

March 5th – Richard L. & Janet Hayzler
April 2nd – Charles & Penny Bates

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. Please let Walter Houck know if there is a family in need.



Lectionary for the Lord's Day

March 2023

- 5 **2nd Sunday in Lent**
Psalm 121; John 3:1-17
- 12 **3rd Sunday in Lent**
Psalm 95; John 4:5-42
- 19 **4th Sunday in Lent**
Psalm 23; John 9:1-41
- 26 **5th Sunday in Lent**
Psalm 130; John 11:1-45



April 2023

- 2 **Palm Sunday**
Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29; Matthew 21:1-11
- 9 **Resurrection of the Lord**
Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24; Matthew 28:1-10
- 16 **2nd Sunday of Easter**
Psalm 16; John 20:19-31

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.

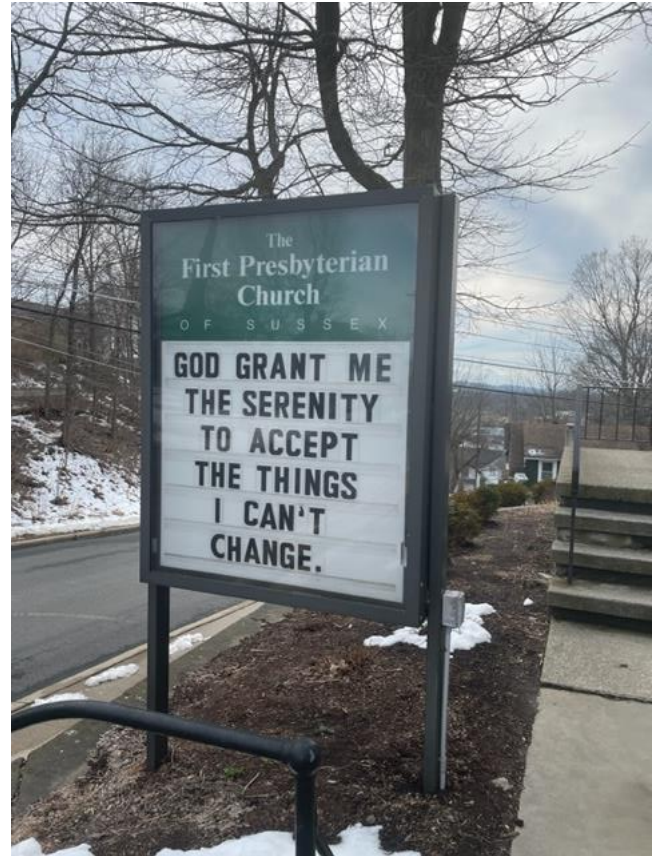
Ultimate Youth Nights

Ultimate Youth Night is a monthly offering of fun and faith put on by the Johnsonburg staff in the chapel at first Presbyterian Hackettstown Church (291 Main Street, Hackettstown) for 5th-8th graders. Every UYN, we'll play games, do fun activities like crafts, and have a devotion. The next ones scheduled are for **March 26th, April 30th, and May 21st**. This is an inclusive, affirming Christian-based program. All are welcome, especially individuals. RSVPs are appreciated, but not required, and can be found at <https://www.campjburg.org/uyn/>.



Our Church Sign

(Thank You Phil Hardin, with help from Richard L. Hayzler)



The 40 Days of Lent

Lent is the name given to the period of preparation for the chief Christian festival, Easter. The word Lent comes from the Anglo-Saxon word *Lenten*, meaning "Spring." Christians have developed various traditions within their respective denominations for the preparation of the great festival season of Easter.

Questions have been raised about the symbolism of this significant season. Why is it 40 days long? Sundays are not counted in the days between Ash Wednesday and Easter. Forty hours were first devoted to this observance in token of the time Jesus spent in the tomb. By the third century, however, this observance had been extended to a 40-day period.

The 40 days have been likened to a number of biblical parallels: Moses' fast on Mount Sinai; the number of years of wandering in the wilderness; Elijah's fast on his journey to Mount Horeb; the 40 days' grace given to Ninevah in Jonah's preaching; and Jesus' fast at the beginning of public ministry.

- Ronald E. Ingram