



March/April 2023

The Messenger

WORDS FROM THE PASTOR

Pastor LaThelma Yenn-Batah

I did not grow up in a church culture that followed the liturgical calendar. I was introduced to Lenten practices during my studies at Princeton Theological Seminary. Knowing that across the world, Christians of every denomination are walking closely with God for the next 40 days is just what my soul needs. The unexpected loss of my dear friend, the Rev. David Van Brakle has left me with hard questions. I need to know now more than ever that I am not alone. This year's Ash Wednesday hit differently than in years past. Pastor Rich Villodas captured the feeling with words on an Instagram post, "Ash Wednesday is a day to recognize our brokenness, humanity, and trust in God's love. It's a day to freely come before God and declare, 'I am human, I am dust, and you still love me.'" Formal and consistent recognition of Ash Wednesday is relatively new to our church community. I encourage you to read this [article](#) which underscores the importance of it for our maturation in Christ.

Our churchwide Lenten theme of Seeking: Honest questions for a deeper faith will allow us to question and explore all that is within our hearts. Throughout this season, we hope you will continually ask yourself: what am I seeking? What is God seeking? We pray that these questions will create a safe space to explore—to be drawn more deeply into the fullness of life, into the heart of God. Let's go deeper.

Love,
PLT



seeking:
honest questions
for deeper faith

LENTEN SCHEDULE

Devotional books are available in the church office.

Thursday Night Bible Study at 7:30 PM (virtual only)

Dates: Thursday, March 2nd-Thursday, March 30th

Ash Wednesday Service – February 22nd (On-Demand Service. We invite everyone to watch at their convenience.)

Palm Sunday Reenactment & Service - April 2nd at 10:30am

Our Sunday School students will join together to reenact Jesus' entrance to Jerusalem.

Please join us at 10:30 on the front lawn to participate in this celebration.

"Hosanna it is he who comes in the name of the Lord."

Maundy Thursday Service – April 6th at 7:00pm(In-Person)

Good Friday: Seven Last Words of Jesus - April 7th (On-Demand Service. We invite everyone to watch at their convenience)

Easter Sunday – April 9th

Sunrise Service at Prospect Hill Cemetery

Pot luck Breakfast & Easter Egg Hunt 9:30am in the dining room

Worship at FBC 11:00am



CABINET CORNER

- A special Cabinet meeting was held on 1/13/23 to review the revised proposed 2023 FBC budget to be presented to the congregation at the end of January.
- A congregational meeting was held on Sunday, 1/29/23 to present the 2023 budget. The congregation moved to approve the proposed budget.
- The journey toward stewardship for 2024 will begin earlier in 2023 and will include advance training for leaders to improve direction and clarity around planning.
- A new slate of FBC leaders was approved for both the cabinet and commissions, including Tammy Kendig coming onto Cabinet as an at-large member.
- Coffee fellowship volunteers can now sign up online using the Sign Up Genius form as well as the paper sign up sheet outside fellowship hall.
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040F4DA5AD2CA4FE3-coffee>
- 2 new commercial ovens have been installed in the FBC kitchen. Special thanks to the Trustees for coordinating getting them installed.
- The Dream Team continues to work in conjunction with Cabinet to develop draft goals coming out of the small group and Day of Historical Reflection meetings.
- The next congregational meeting is scheduled for Sunday, 3/26/23 after worship. The agenda will include the dissemination of the 2022 Annual Report and updates from the Commissions. Full agenda to be shared separately at a later date.

UPCOMING NEEDED MAINTENANCE PROJECT

The windows of the church annex are in need of repainting to avoid deterioration of the wood. Quotes for the work are currently being sought. It is estimated that the total expenditure for the project will be between \$12,000 and \$15,000. It is hoped the work can be done this summer. This expense is not covered by the 2023 annual budget recently approved by the congregation. A capital fund raising project will be announced upon receipt of a specific amount needed to be raised. Members and friends of FBC will be asked to "adopt" a window or two so this needed project can be accomplished in a timely manner. Further information will be forth coming.

DREAM TEAM UPDATE

On Sunday, February 12th FBC held a Day of Historical Reflection. The goal was to discover meaningful statements about FBC from generation to generation. Approximately 30 congregants gathered in the dining room to look back over 250+ years of FBC history. Starting at the present and looking back through each pastor's term of service we examined the events and people who made FBC. After reflecting on the history, we broke into small groups to develop "meaning statements" based on what we had learned. The meaning statements were shared and compiled then voted on to determine the top 3 priorities which will be used by the Dream Team to enhance or create additional draft goals.

These are the 9 meaning statements that were developed (in rank order);

1. A strong Youth Fellowship program has been foundational for FBC and brings life and energy to the church
2. Change Management/Leadership is something we've struggled with in the past causing anxiety, poor communication, and a lack of follow-through
3. The relationship of the pastor and the congregation and the accessibility of the pastor is very important to FBC
4. FBC has a history of being inclusive and welcoming
5. Music and traditions and rituals are passionate topics
6. A vibrant music program is an important part of our church life
7. The Adult and Children's Sunday School program is thriving
8. It is important to encourage each person to contribute their talents in service to the church
9. Food is important. How else can we feed the community?

The Dream Team thanks all who gave their time and energy to participate in this event. We will continue to gather input from the congregation to form FBC's strategic plan and mission statement. Our next activity will be examining our Church's norms so stay tuned for ways to participate.

YOUTH SPRING MISSION PROJECT

In keeping with the FBC commitment to our community, our Youth Sunday School will be "giving back" to our local first responders, which includes the Flemington Fire Company, Police Department and the Flemington Raritan Rescue Squad.

We will be kicking off the project in February and concluding in March.

Our youth, and with the support of the congregation, will be holding a collection of snack foods to assemble and fill baskets to be delivered to the first responders.

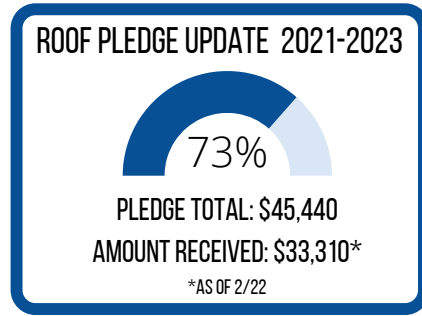
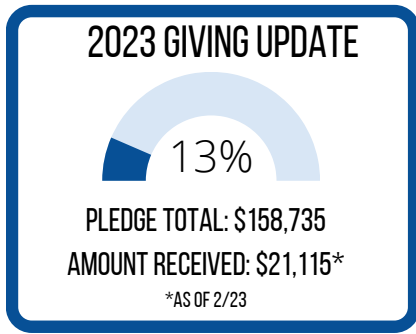
Students will have the opportunity to visit the rescue squad building upon the delivery.

Suggested snacks foods: Chips, granola bars, candy bars, nuts, dried fruit, beef jerky, and small packages of cookies. Cash/check donations, as an option, may be collected to purchase gift cards for coffee/drinks at local businesses.

Please identify cash/check donations as Youth Spring Mission Project and deliver to the church office or place in the offering plate. We will have a designated box by the Fellowship Hall entrance to collect the "goodies."

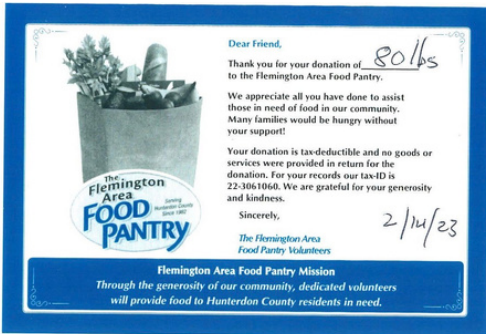
Thank you, as always, for supporting our youth missions.

Pledge Information



FOOD PANTRY DONATION

Thanks to your donations, we donated 80 pounds of food to the Flemington Food Pantry!



CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

A congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, March 26th following worship to review the 2022 annual report.

SENIOR LUNCHEON

Get your "Irish Jig" on and come enjoy some Cornbeef, Cabbage, and Potatoes. Join us as a guest and bring a friend.

Please RSVP to either the church office or Colleen 908-295-3667

Birthdays



MARCH

- 4 Joshua Woznicki
- 9 Kellen Healy
- 11 Abigail Trafford
- 23 Boyden Stretch
- 29 Dorothy McQuilken
- 31 Donna Slovak



APRIL

- 1 Nora Krukovsky
- 2 Tanner White
- 3 Chris Hoffman
- 5 Ruth Mangual
- 8 Kristie Axt
- 9 Audrey Braun, Doris Stretch
- 11 Don Harper
- 12 Marie Day
- 13 Barbara Herder, Christine McQuilken
- 17 Nichole Brimmer
- 22 Doris Case Harrison Cody
- 30 Katherine Sikorsky



Please Keep in prayer

Chris and Marie Day-prayers for overall well-being. Megan Ross, Byron, Beverly (Chris B's mom), Erica (Renee's aunt), Bob, and Barbara Herder, Butch Sorge (Kristie's brother-in-law), Joanne Hamilton's daughter, Julie Moore (Kristie's friend's daughter who was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer), Julie (Birdyshaw's niece), Otis (cousin of Joshua) who is battling addiction, Motas and Clay's mother for mental health recovery and fortitude for Misa, Clay's brother. Sarah Williamson's grandson who is expecting a little boy in July - the little boy is in distress, Jan Cody - lymphoma is back in her throat, prayers for her treatments and that her voice fully recovers.

*Our prayer list has been updated. If anyone is missing, please contact the church office.

MAR2023

SUN MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT

			01	02	03	04
				7:30pm Lent Bible Study		
05	06	07	08	09	10	11
9:30am Sunday School 11am Worship				6:30pm Trustees Meeting 7:30pm Lent Bible Study		12pm Senior Luncheon
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
9:30am Sunday School 11am Worship				7:30pm Lent Bible Study		
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
9:30am Sunday School 11am Worship				7:30pm Lent Bible Study		
26	27	28	29	30	31	
9:30am Sunday School 11am Worship 12pm Congregational Meeting		7pm Cabinet Meeting		7:30pm Lent Bible Study		

APR 2023

SUN

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

SAT

						01
						3pm Sight & Sound Trip
02 PALM SUNDAY	03	04	05	06	07	08
9:30am Sunday School 10:30 Palm Sunday Processional 11am Worship				7pm Maundy Thursday Service	Good Friday – Church Office Closed	
09 EASTER	10	11	12	13	14	15
Sunrise Service 9:30am Potluck Breakfast 10:30am Easter Egg Hunt 11am Easter Worship				6:30pm Trustees Meeting		
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
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30						
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