

Branches

Alexandria First Presbyterian Church

“I am the vine, you are the branches.”

October 2021

141 Little York-Mount Pleasant Road - Milford, New Jersey 08848
Facebook: Alexandria First Presbyterian Church of Mount Pleasant
908-996-4333 churchoffice@alexpres.org www.alexpres.org



A Note from Nick

Dear Friends,

I want to thank everyone who has been coming to worship, who participated in Rally Day and who is continuing on this journey of “re-opening” with us. As we continue to adjust to returning to in-person worship, Sunday school, fellowship and team meetings we will undoubtedly need to have patience and be understanding. Yes, we still need to wear masks, and no, things are not completely back to normal yet. But we are getting there . . . and I know I for one am just super happy that we can be **together!**

The Pandemic took so much from us and continues to alter how we interact and live. So, trying to find moments to celebrate and be thankful are all that more important. I’m very thankful that we can celebrate communion together. For such a long time, we were each in our own homes taking communion by ourselves. And while this fit the need at the time, virtual communion was definitely a temporary solution. For the act of taking communion is inherently one that is best suited to community. We remember Christ’s death and sacrifice together when we gather like Jesus’ disciples and break bread together. Which is why I’m so thankful that we can take communion as a community of faith . . . especially on October 3rd which is World Communion Sunday.

Every communion is special, but World Communion is especially meaningful because this is the Sunday each year when Christians around the world all take communion on the same day. It is a day to remember the ways that we are connected to Christians throughout the world as we remember that Jesus died not just for a few, but for all . . . because “God so loved the world.” I hope this year on World Communion Sunday we can embrace the day and remember all that binds us together as a community of faith. In a world that continues to be filled with division and hostility, I hope that we can embrace the solidarity of World Communion Sunday and be inspired to make room at the table. Can we make room at the table for brothers and sisters who don’t look like us? Who don’t talk like us? Who don’t vote like us? Who don’t love like us? Who don’t think like us? God’s table is one that is open to all. It is a table of welcome and love.

Friends lets meet together at the communion table on October 3 and be inspired to make room at the table so that all are included. May our act of taking communion be a sign of the coming kingdom of heaven. As inspiration, please see the picture above . . . can we imagine God’s communion table like this? A table that stretches longer than we can imagine . . . one with chairs and room for all of God’s children. Let’s make real this table, not just on World Communion Sunday, but on every Sunday.

In Christ,

Nick Hatch



Tending the Flock

Join Us in Worship

Join us for worship each Sunday at 10 am in our Church. This Sunday's service, and several of the most recent are also available 24|7.

Our Ministry Teams

- Building and Property: Craig Bender (E), Larry Cascio (E)
 - Christian Education: Mary Goldman, Laurie Gregory (D), Cyndi McDowall (E)
 - Evangelism/Membership: Lois Bondor (E), Karen Pardonner (D), Howard Thomas (E), Carol Van Norman (D)
 - Mission Interpretation: Stacy Butz (D), Marie Knapp (E), Barbara Pederson (D), Larry Reinfeld (E)
 - Nominating: LuAnn Keefe (E)
 - Personnel: Joan Carroll (E), Flora Nielsen (E)
 - Stewardship and Finance: Pat Keefe (D), Steve Pardonner (E), Robin Vogel (E)
 - Worship and Music: LuAnn Keefe (E), Liz McMahan (D), Flora Nielsen (E), Tammy Sassaman (D)
- (E: Elder, D: Deacon)*

October Happenings!

October 3: Worship at 10 am in Sanctuary - World Communion Sunday

October 5: Women's Bible Study begins

October 10: Worship at 10 am in Sanctuary

October 12: Lunch Bunch, 12 p.m.

October 13: Session 7pm

October 17: Worship at 10 am in Sanctuary

October 24: Worship at 10 am in Sanctuary

October 31: Worship at 10 am in Sanctuary

October Birthdays



1	Kaylee Gunderman	12	Keith Erwin
2	Charlie Tiedeman	16	Bruce Hunt
4	Max Andreychak	18	Nora Hatch
5	Jillian Moran	23	Betty Macaulay
10	Lolita Navarro	25	Renee Navarro
10	Melinda Parsons	26	Andrew Meyer
11	Helen Jones	27	Gene Geissinge
11	Pat Keefe	31	Conor Goldman
12	Matt Butz	31	Meghan Kunich
		31	Belle Sassaman

Sunday School

October Schedule

The Sunday school children will be working on crafts and cards on 9/26 and 10/10 for college boxes for 9 college freshmen this year! As a congregation, please look for the giving cross which will be out late September and early October, so you can also contribute to the college boxes that will be mailed out in late October.



No Sunday school on 10/3 as world communion day, but there is Sunday school every other Sunday in October. Please remember masks for your kids and dress them for weather, as weather permitting, we will have Sunday school outside when possible.

No Turkey dinner this October for the youth mission trip, but please stay tuned for future fundraisers for the 2022 youth mission trip later in the year!!

Peace & Global Witness

October 3, 2021

A gift to the Peace and Global Witness Offering enables the church to promote the Peace of Christ by addressing systems of injustice across the world. Alexandria Church will use 25% of this offering to connect with the global witness of Christ's peace. The remaining portion funds ministries of peace and reconciliation and enables the Presbyterian Mission Agency to advocate for justice in cultures of violence through collaborative projects of education. The Peace and Global Witness Offering will be received this month. Donate to this special denominational offering through our secure online service through our website. Enter your gift under "general operating" AND fill in the space with "Peace Offering." You can also mail your check to the church with "Peace Offering" written in the memo section. Speak with Marie Knapp if you have any questions.

September 11 Memorial Service

20 Year Anniversary

On the 20th anniversary of September 11th Pastor Nick was asked to say an opening prayer at Holland Township's September 11th Memorial Service & Community Night. The prayer below is the prayer that he shared at this service.

Loving and gracious God, we come to you now and ask that you unite our hearts together in prayer. We pray that today, on the 20th anniversary of 9/11 that we would remember anew the tragedies of that day. That remembering and honoring all that perished we would give thanks for each who lost their lives as we lift them up to you. We remember now those that died at the World Trade Center. We remember those that perished in the fields near Shanksville, Pennsylvania. And we remember those that died at The Pentagon. We remember every father, mother, sister, brother, son and daughter who were lost on that day. We think of families that were devastated and we remember the grief and terror that struck each of us as a nation on that day. But we also remember O lord the tales of heroism and bravery. We are thankful for all of the first responders . . . firefighters, paramedics and police officers who put others first and saved lives. And we lift up gratefully those that died in the line

duty. We also pray lord that the unity we experienced as a nation after the events of 9/11 would be rekindled in our hearts. That as we remember and honor those that died on September 11 that we would also remember how we came together as a nation to be united in our solidarity and strength. We pray now that you would help us set aside the many ways that we create division. That you would remove from us the prejudice and hatred that blinds us from your calling in our lives to love our neighbors. Help us as the community of Holland Township to work and live together in harmony, help us to be inspired this day as we remember 9/11 to be better neighbors, seeking to care for each and all. Loving God, unite our nation in your grace and help us to remember this day and keep it in our hearts. We pray this in your gracious name. Amen.

-Pastor Nick Hatch (9/11/21)



World Communion Sunday

October 3, 2021

On Sunday, October 3rd congregations around the globe will celebrate World Communion Sunday. World Communion Sunday began in 1936 in the Presbyterian Church and was adopted by the Federal Council of Churches in 1940. Since then the celebration has grown into an international ecumenical celebration of Christian unity.

The key word for World Communion Sunday is communion, or unity. It is a day when we mark the almost universal Christian practice of breaking bread with one another and remembering both the night of Jesus' betrayal—when Jesus instituted what we now call the Lord's Supper as a lasting remembrance—and of Jesus' sacrifice. Accounts of the last supper feature prominently, by virtue of World Communion Sunday being a celebration of the Eucharist. There is a flavor of Pentecost as well when people from around the Mediterranean world came together in mutual understanding and inspiration by the power of the Holy Spirit. World Communion Sunday is a time for remembering that around the globe—in different languages, with different traditions and customs, and in various forms of liturgy—the Lord's Supper is celebrated throughout Christendom. World Communion Sunday serves two purposes: it is a joyous and meaningful partaking in Jesus' sacred meal with his friends, and a mind-opening exposure to different Christian traditions from around the world.

World Communion Sunday is on the Christian calendar for a reason: it can and should be a time of profound Christian unity, marked by our shared celebration of the Lord's Supper. Jesus instituted the first such meal, and World Communion Sunday is a helpful way to celebrate the liturgy "in remembrance of me."

Women's Bible/Book Study

Begins October 5, 2021

Who:

Women seeking fellowship and interested in growing their faith

When:

Tuesday mornings
10am - 11am (beginning 10.5.21)

Where: In the Gathering Room
(please remember to wear a mask)

Book Title: What's So Amazing About Grace? by Philip Yancey

Questions: please reach out or e-mail:

Gayle Hatch gaylehatch@gmail.com



Prayer Chain

Alexandria Church's prayer ministry was established 20 years ago and has been in its present email format for the past 12 years. Requests for prayer are conveyed exclusively via our gmail account. The group currently consists of 88 church members who respond in prayer when requests are made. The nature of prayer requests varies widely, including concerns for those in need of surgery, healing (physical, mental, emotional), support on the death of a loved one, etc. It is understood that these requests are confidential. So far this year, 58 requests have been processed. Our two prayer ministry coordinators are Gayle Hatch and Nancy Schumann who take turns covering our e-mail site, each serving a month at a time. Upon receipt of a request, Gayle or Nancy forward it to the 88 prayer chain participants.



New members are whole-heartedly welcomed and encouraged to join this prayer partnership. Simply email the below address with your request to be added to those who pray on behalf of those who submit needs. If you do not have access to e-mail, please contact Annie at the church office so your request can be sent.

College Freshman Care Packages

Due by: October 10, 2021

Our Christian Education / Youth Ministry Team and our Deacons will again join forces to provide care packages to our freshmen college students. We will fill each package with many goodies, crafts, cards and a few treats too! Each of you is invited to be a part of this loving ministry. Please consider adding your own personal note or adding a small treat to show our youth that we are thinking about them while they are away.



If you plan to add something to a box, please be sure it is in Fellowship Hall prior to October 10 to be included in the packages. I know how much our youth appreciate receiving mail from their church family. Please consider encouraging our youth in this simple and loving way.

There is a list of our 9 freshman college youth as well as some suggested items to provide for the packages in the Narthex as you enter the Sanctuary.

Questions – Please contact Renee Skibinski 908-246-7516.

Clothing Drive

2021 Update



The Youth already have a date and place scheduled for their mission trip Summer 2022. Thanks to your generous donations, the clothing drive has already raised \$277.30 in 2021 to support the Youth Group Mission Trips. We will continue our ongoing clothing drive as the seasons change.

We Kids and The Consignment Shop in Flemington are both open. They sell men's and women's clothing in addition to children's clothing, toys and books. Anything that is not sold at the shops will be donated to the North Hunterdon Thrift Shop and the Trenton Rescue Mission.

Items accepted are men's, women's and children's clothing, boots, shoes, sneakers, belts, purses, jewelry and outerwear. You can also donate children's toys, games, books, and sports equipment in great condition. Items can be left in the Fellowship Hall in the donation area near the kitchen. Karen Pardonner is happy to coordinate individual contactless drop-offs at church or my house, whichever is easiest for you. She can also arrange pick-ups if you'd like to leave things outside. Please reach out to Karen for details.

Mission Team

Upcoming Events

- Grow A Row weekly "gleaning" from Shoprite to Flemington Food Pantry
- Food Pantry support. Monthly delivery to Frenchtown or Milford Food Pantries Our next delivery is October 3.
- Community outreach, included our recent back to school back pack supplies for four local children. Watch for upcoming information about a Holiday collection.
- Racial Justice Work. Our recent zoom conversation with Nerva Altino on his book "More Than A Gift" can be seen at the following link. Our next reading will be announced soon.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s5RHyMcetI8>.
- Pandemic Stress Meeting. November 7th at 11:15 in Fellowship Hall. With all of the CDC protocols in place you are invited to come talk with your church family about how the Pandemic has affected you. RSVP to the churchoffice@alexpres.org.

- Afghanistan Refugee Aid. As of now the Presbyterian Church USA is only collecting monetary donations. Here are some links to The Presbyterian Church USA refugee and immigration work.

[Choosing Welcome](#)

[Welcoming Afghan Refugees](#)

[Stay Informed](#)

-Your Mission Team, Barbara Pederson, Kelsey Pardonner, Lainey Johns, Larry Reinfeld and Marie Knapp (chair).

Dedication in Quakertown – Nixon Cemetery

October 3, 2021



(QUAKERTOWN, NJ) On Saturday, October 2nd at 2 pm, Quakertown Friends Meeting will hold a dedication ceremony for an historic marker that honors the Nixon Cemetery, a burial site for non-Quakers that the Meeting offered to the community in the mid-1700s.

The sign also acknowledges the now forgotten site, across the road, of a former cemetery for enslaved Africans, also founded in the mid-1700s, but destroyed before the 1880s. The dedication ceremony will include several speakers. Talks will encompass the history of the two cemetery sites, the importance of preserving cemeteries, and remembrances of the deceased.

The Nixon Cemetery has no exact address and is located on Croton Road (Route 579), a half mile south of the village of Quakertown.

Please use 1159 or 1161 Croton Road, Pittstown NJ for GPS directions. Parking will be available. Join Quakertown Friends for refreshments afterwards a half mile away at the First Day School, next from the Meetinghouse at 290 White Bridge Rd (at the intersection of Quakertown Rd/County Route 579). The Meetinghouse will be open for tours.

Any CDC Covid restrictions in effect at the time will apply, such as wearing masks, standing a distance apart, etc. Refreshments at the First Day School may be outdoors if necessary.

ABOUT THE MEETING

The Quakertown Friends Meeting, founded in 1729, is a faith community welcoming all ages, religious backgrounds, races, education, sexual orientations, gender identities, and classes. Meeting for Worship is held every Sunday at 10:30 AM. All are welcome.

The buildings are wheelchair accessible. For GPS purposes use 290 White Bridge Rd, Pittstown, NJ 08867