



# SOUNDINGS

January/February 2023

**Wednesday, January 25**

Mission Team meeting 11:30am

**Sunday, January 29**

Worship Team meeting after service

**Sunday, February 5**

Pasta Sunday

Communion in worship

**Annual Meeting after service**

**Sunday, February 12**

Simple Church

“Soup”er Bowl Sunday event, 12pm

**Tuesday, February 14**

Property Team meeting, 7pm

**Sunday, February 19**

Deacons meeting after service

**Monday, February 20**

Presidents’ Day; office closed

**Tuesday, February 21**

Session, 7pm

**Sunday, February 26**

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Lent

## ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the congregation and corporation of the First Presbyterian Church of Easton will be held on February 5, 2023, following worship, at approx. 11:45am. The meeting is currently planned to be an in-person event. The purpose of the annual meeting is to review the 2022 Annual Report and receive the 2023 budget. All members are strongly encouraged to attend this congregational meeting. Session will be reporting on the realities of a 2022 budget deficit and asking the congregation’s input as we face an even larger deficit in 2023.

The Annual Report will be sent out via email the week of January 22. If you would like a hard copy, please contact the church office.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF EASTON

333 Spring Garden St.

Easton, PA 18042

610-253-3579

[www.eastonfpc.org](http://www.eastonfpc.org)

## **A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR**

Winter is a strange season. The cold and dark makes the green growing things sleep. I certainly feel like many days I could just stay curled up in bed. For even with, or maybe because, of the wild fluctuations in weather, this January feels more sluggish and duller than other years. It is therefore perhaps best to embrace the slowdown. Rest is essential to life. Even God modeled rest and asks us to keep Sabbath. In a season like this, there an invitation to turn inward, reflect and listen what God might be saying to us.

Our congregation is in a unique season. There is no frenzied crisis: no looming lock-down, no conflict, no hurtful discovery, no pesky infestation, no surprising loss. But we see our congregational numbers are down. We know our finances have dwindled. After our joy during Christmas, now our energies may feel low. It's a quiet time in the life of the church. Perhaps the perfect scripture for the season is: Be still and know I am God.

In the spirit of winter reflection, this month I invite you to consider what you love about this congregation. I ask you to ponder what this church's mission and ministry has meant to your life and the lives of your loved ones. I ask you to consider what your place is in the future of this small, resilient and faithful community. Even as we sit in the season of short days, we know the season will shift. Spring will come. Our personal lives will demand more - projects to get done, travel plans to follow, people to see. Then what? What will your energy be for the faith journey you are on and how will this church community be a part of your journey?

On February 5th, we celebrate communion in worship and then hold our congregational meeting. You are invited to come together. Together we will reflect honestly about where have been and where we are. One could say the outlook is gloomy. You will be given facts and figures about our income and expenses. Then we will ask: What now? What season of ministry are we in and where is God calling this community of faith to next? We will reflect with quiet but certain trust that God is good and gracious.

I hope you are finding some quiet and restful time this January. You are a precious creation of God, and you deserve to rest and be restored.

I look forward to seeing everyone on February 5th after worship.  
Pastor Stefanie

### **LEHR FUND**

The Barbara and John Lehr Fund is a designated fund is only distributed to members. Are you a member going through a financial crisis? Please speak with our pastor Stefanie Muntzel or contact her at [revstefaniefpce@gmail.com](mailto:revstefaniefpce@gmail.com) to see if the Lehr Fund could be a support to you.

## WORSHIP AND MUSIC

### CHOIR REHEARSALS

**Chancel Choir** rehearses on Wednesdays, 5:30-6:30pm.

The **Handbell Choir** rehearses on Wednesdays, 6:30-7:15pm.

### ONLINE WORSHIP CONTINUES

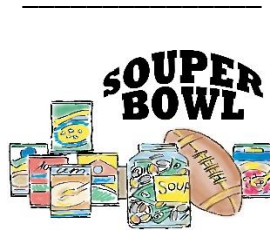
Our services are streamed live on our Facebook page - [EastonFPC](#) - at 10:30am Sunday. The recording of the live worship is posted each Sunday by 12:30pm- on our website: <https://eastonfpc.org/online-worship> and YouTube channel is [Easton First Presbyterian Church](#).

## MISSION

### PASTA FOR PROJECT

**Sunday, February 5 is Pasta Sunday!**

On the first Sunday of each month, we collect pasta for ProJeCt of Easton's food pantry, and we welcome your donations of boxed, canned and microwaveable pasta. Peanut butter is also greatly appreciated. If you cannot make it to church on Sunday, you may drop off your donations at our church up until noon on Tuesday, February 7. "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat." (Matt 25:35).



### SAVE THE DATE!

"Souper" Bowl of Sharing Luncheon on Sunday, February 12 at noon. More details to come! Watch the weekly emails!

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### THANK YOU!

We received thank you letters from Holiday Hope Chest for our contribution to their annual gift drive for children, and from ProJeCt for our December donation of \$215.00. Also, this thank you from Support the Troops, Inc.:

*Support the Troops, Inc would like to thank the good people of First Presbyterian Church as well as the Mission team for your recent donation of \$100. One hundred percent of your donation will be used for postage to ship our free care packages to a military person serving. We know they appreciate these packages because they're from strangers who thank them for their service and it gives them the little bit of morale that they need to continue doing their job. We thank you for making our mission easier by your donation. Please don't forget if you know anybody serving, even if they are stateside, we will ship them a surprise package. Just supply their name and address to us. Thank you very much.*



JOIN HANDS TO  
**SUPPORT CHILDREN**  
2022-23 FPCE MISSION FOCUS

**A.M.E.N. UPDATE ACTION – MEDITATION – EDUCATION – NEW HABITS**  
**MISSION 22-23, JOINING HANDS TO SUPPORT CHILDREN**

AMEN: Who counts? Think of your homeless neighbors on the night of January 25th.

**Education**

Every winter human service agencies and volunteers throughout the nation conduct a census of the homeless in their communities. The Point-in-Time (PIT) count is a count of sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness on a single night in January.

The 2023 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count of individuals experiencing homelessness will occur on Wednesday, January 25. The count will include all people residing in a homeless assistance program, and unsheltered persons, on Wednesday night (January 25th) through Thursday morning (January 26th). All emergency shelters, domestic violence shelters, agencies that provide hotel/motel vouchers, transitional housing, rapid re-housing, permanent supportive housing, and other permanent housing programs are required to submit information for the PIT Count. The count does not include anyone who may be couch-surfing or doubling up with family or friends.

**ACTION:** Join our knitters to add hats, socks, mittens and scarves to our Blessing Box.

**MEDITATION:** Read in Psalm 139: “Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.” God cares about people - all people. We are never forgotten by God. It is important that we take account of the number of people who are living without permanent homes (including children) in the USA. We cannot help if we do not know the scope of a problem. It is also spiritually important that we “see” our neighbors who are homeless - to be of help to them and to honor them as children of God. On the night of January 25th, lift in prayer all those who are homeless being counted, all those who work to serve our homeless neighbors and pray for those who remain unreported.

**NEW HABITS:** Don’t look away. It is easy to not make eye contact with someone who “looks” homeless. But if you feel like you are safe, don’t look away. Don’t avert your eyes, close your ears, wall off your heart, and keep on walking by. Homeless people need to be seen and treated with dignity. They are beloved children of God.

## CALLING ALL CROCHETERS AND KNITTERS!

We are up and running once again! Although we will not be meeting formally, we will continue to create items for those in need at our own convenience and disperse via the church. We hope to have enough children's items and adult hats and scarves for the cold weather. Needles, patterns and yarn are available at church, contact Lois Shoemaker (loisshoe@gmail.com) or Nancy Udut (naomiudut@yahoo.com) for pickup or any questions. Get those needles and hooks clicking!



*Pictures of some items bagged and being dropped off at Easton Area Neighborhood center. Scarves are also being put in Blessing Box.*



## FAITH FORMATION AND FELLOWSHIP

### BRUNCH BUNCH

Please note that Brunch Bunch will not meet in February. All are invited to come to the next Brunch Bunch on **Sunday, March 12** after worship!

### MEETINGS

The **Worship Team** will meet on **Sunday, January 29** after worship.

The **Property Team** will meet on **Tuesday, February 14** at 7pm.

The **Deacons** will meet on **Sunday, February 19** after worship.

**Session** will meet at the church on **Tuesday, February 21** at 7:00pm.

If you are unable to attend a meeting, please contact the church office to let us know. Thank you!

### **2023 Per Capita**

*The Per Capita assessment for 2023 is **\$48.00** per confirmed member. Per Capita dollars make possible the ministry of Presbytery Staff as well as the work of committees that support churches and nurture those who are called to pastoral leadership; enable the connectional church to maintain records and compliance with financial and governance issues; and fund various publications, website and social media, and education and inspiration for congregations.*

*Please note "Per Capita" in the memo line of your check. Thank you!*

## ***JANUARY AND FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS***

- 1 Peyton Barrow
- 5 Barry Fugere
- 12 Candy Gulotta
- 13 Parker Barrow
- 14 Bernadette Fennimore
- 19 Jacob Van Norman  
Jessica Van Norman
- 24 Michelle Muthoka
- 25 Deborah DiCanto
- 27 Swain Fennimore

### **February**

- 1 Lawrence Opthof
- 11 Anthony Moki
- 12 Mary Gyamenah
- 23 Solomon Akpor-Mensah
- 25 Stefanie Muntzel
- 26 Anne D'Alberto



### ***Update from Lehigh Presbytery, 2023***

Like the Church of Jesus Christ around the world, Lehigh Presbytery is in a time of transition. At its November 2018 stated meeting, the Presbytery approved a statement of direction called "expecting Hope": For such a time as this, the congregations and leadership of Lehigh Presbytery will partner to challenge and resource each other, so that we may boldly risk our comfort for the sake of the Gospel of Christ.

Based on this statement, we agreed to engage in a season of experimentation and to live into the two-tier structure. We created a Vision Board to work with the Transitional Leader: to dream, create, challenge, strategize, and explore possibilities. We also created an Administrative Board to focus on the "operations" of the Presbytery and support the work of the Vision Board. Rev. JC Austin is chair of the Vision Board. Our former moderator chairs the Admin. Board.

Of course, we had no idea of the change coming in March 2020 with the arrival of a coronavirus pandemic. Yet, as people of faith, we are still expecting hope; because we continue to believe that though it seems like everything in the world has changed, God has not changed.

In July 2022, Lehigh Presbytery and Lackawanna Presbytery, our neighbors to the north, entered into an experimental partnership of collaboration by sharing several staff members. Our longtime Administrative Assistant, Robin Matthias retired. Unfortunately she also experienced some health issues, but is thankfully on the mend. The Presbytery office is now "virtual" - all our staff works from their homes. Because of this, this month (January) we are able to share a Transitional Presbytery Leader, Administrator, and Treasurer with Lackawanna Presbytery.



We're quickly learning that collaboration generates energy and teamwork builds community. We're learning that pooling our efforts has a positive impact on supporting all of our congregations.

Lehigh Presbytery is still expecting hope. We believe that God IS doing a new thing. And we want to be part of it!

Lehigh Presbytery Address Update:  
P.O. Box 12734  
Philadelphia, PA 19134-9998

## **PRAYERS**

We pray for...

All who grieve for the loss of loved ones, including Jay Koch and family at the passing of Cindy on Monday; the family and friends of Rev. Charles Holm, who passed away last week; and for the mother, brother, and newlywed wife of Vernon Kineard, cousin of Darcel Hayes-Bridges, who passed away suddenly this week.

Students returning to college and schooling after a winter break.

Peace and goodwill for all God's children, especially in places of war and conflict.

Members addressing ongoing medical concerns, including Fran Dean.

All those who live with dementia and their care givers.

For neighbors near and far recovering from natural disasters and extreme weather.

Victims of gun violence and acts of hate.

Those who suffer from mental illness.

For injustice in our nation and world, that people of goodwill might work together for the greater good.

Prayers can be sent to [office@eastonfpc.org](mailto:office@eastonfpc.org), please include "prayer list" in the subject line.



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