



SOUNDINGS

October 2022

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

October 2

Pasta Sunday

Bible Study @ Pilgrim Presbyterian

October 5

Brown Bag Lunch

October 8

God, Guns and Grace, Session 3

October 9

Simple Church
Brunch Bunch

October 11

Property Team meeting

October 15

Neighborhood Social

October 16

Bible Study after worship

October 18

Session

October 22

Winterreise concert at FPCE

October 23

World Music Sunday

October 30

Stewardship Sunday

Neighborhood Social

October 15, 11am – 2pm

*Consider this our annual church picnic: a
time to care and connect!*

We are hosting a “Neighborhood Social” to foster more caring here in our neighborhood. As we connect with our neighbors, we seek support for our 24/7 mini pantry, The Blessing Box. Neighbors who use the Blessing Box are welcome to the Neighborhood Social, as are neighbors and church folks who fill (or want to fill) the Blessing Box are welcome.

Live Music from Central Jersey Saxophone Quartet!

Hotdogs! Popcorn! Ice Cream!

DONATE GENTLY USED CHILDREN’S BOOKS
from Oct 1st -14th!

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF EASTON

333 Spring Garden St.
Easton, PA 18042

610-253-3579
www.eastonfpc.org

NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

Let me state a few obvious realities. Catholic and mainline protestant churches across the United States have had declining membership for decades. Americans who describe themselves as religiously unaffiliated are the largest growing “religious” segment of the US population. This is the reality every church is facing. Going against this trend was and is not easy. Then the pandemic hit. The shift in people’s habits and patterns has had a chilling effect on churches of all stripes. Even non-denominational “evangelical” congregations are seeing a decline in worship attendance (on and off-line) since the pandemic.

Our Congregation has had a rough 15+ years - a major building renovation with a large mortgage, an embezzlement, fleas, and now a pandemic. There have been conflicts, members leaving, hits to our income. Each challenge has added trauma to the faithful, resilient leaders of this congregation.

It is a marvel this church has NOT collapsed. But it and you have not.

I believe the world needs something the people of congregation have been given - hope born of faith. Every week, if not daily, I see members of this church give of themselves – to care for other members who are ill or having a hard time, and also to care for neighbors who could easily be seen as ‘just strangers’. God has given you a calling and you have said, “We are small but our YES will be mighty.”

Downtown Easton residents and surrounding communities need the gentle open hands, the calm voices, the hope-filled hearts of those who follow the Love-of-God incarnate. This is the kind of Christian community which First Presbyterian Church of Easton is. Not bombastic, not judgmental, - a people who seek to know God through worship, service and community with each other.

It is time to be forward facing and intentional in our planning for health and growth in our congregation.

We are not alone as a church facing shifts and declines. Our Presbytery is seeking to help congregations like ours be intentional as we move into 2023 and beyond. The Vision Board of the Presbytery, which I co-chair with Rev. JC Austin of First Bethlehem, is recommending leaders read *SHIFT: Three Movements in the 21st Century Church*. The Presbytery has invited the Rev. Dr. Jan Edminston, the General Presbyter of the Presbytery of Charlotte and former co-moderator of the General Assembly of the PC(USA) to speak on November 12, 2022. Her address is titled: SHIFT HAPPENS.

Consider with me the shifts in the culture around us as we make plans for how to meet the challenges of today.

-Pastor Stefanie

STEWARDSHIP AND FINANCE

Trusting in God, Growing in Faith “Faith, Hope and Love abide.” - 1 Corinthians 13:13

1 Corinthians 13:13 tells us “Faith, Hope and Love abide.” ABIDE means “to stay, remain, hold fast”. In a world with so much shifting around us, we know God is always faithful. We look to the future with hope, trusting in God’s abiding love. In response to God’s faithfulness to this church, you are asked to respond.

Please pledge your financial support for 2023.

Stewardship is the way we share our God-given-gifts to support the mission of the church. When you let the church know how much you anticipate you can give in 2023, this is your pledge. We set our annual goals and budget based on anticipated giving. Please make your pledge to the church by October 30. We will consecrate pledges in worship on this Sunday. Even small pledges help us plan for the coming year. Without robust support from you, our church cannot continue in its mission.

Maybe you’re asking yourself: “Why should I give? And what happens when I give?” The money collected in the offering plate, along with pledges and gifts, goes into our Operating Fund. This covers costs of running the church - including salaries, bills, program and mission expenses. You may pledge to the Operating Fund or the Mortgage Fund that is solely used to pay off our loan for the building. We encourage pledging to both, as you are able.

You will receive a second letter from the church in October asking for your pledge, it will include a pledge card. You may also go to our website’s Stewardship/Give page to find a pledge card.

Yours in Christ,
The Stewardship Team

STEWARDSHIP AND FINANCE TEAM NEWS

The Finance and Stewardship Team is pleased to share with you the positive outcome of our most recent review of the church’s finances for 2021. It was completed in August by accountants from Campbell, Rappold & Yurasits LLP, Certified Public Accountants. This process ensures we are adhering to best practices which guard against financial fraud. Please see an excerpt from their report below:

ACCOUNTANTS CONCLUSIONS – “Based on our reviews, we are not aware of any material modifications that should be made to the accompanying financial statements in order for them to be in accordance with the cash basis of accounting.”

The entire review is available as a hard copy or electronic file by contacting Jonathan in the church office.

CONCERT SERIES

Our sanctuary was built in 1872. Consider all the prayers, both said and sung, lifted in our sacred place of worship. To celebrate our sanctuary and our congregation's love of community and music, we are hosting a concert series. One Saturday each month this Fall, guest performers will offer their gifts of music. All concerts are free and open to the public.



Jordan Lewis and Ruth Kochera, *Winterreise*

Saturday, October 22, 7:00pm

Marquis Consort

Saturday, November 12, 7:00pm

Easton Municipal Band

Saturday, December 10, 7:00pm

SIMPLE CHURCH

Sundays this Fall - October 9, November 13

The second Sunday of each month our 10:30am service will have a familiar but simplified order. The intention is to be welcoming to all ages, a bit less formal, and more interactive. This is a perfect Sunday to bring the kids and/or friends from the neighborhood.

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, October 2 is Pasta Sunday!

On the first Sunday of each month, we collect pasta for the ProJeCt of Easton 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 up until 12 Noon on Tuesday, October 4. "For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat." (Matt. 25:35)

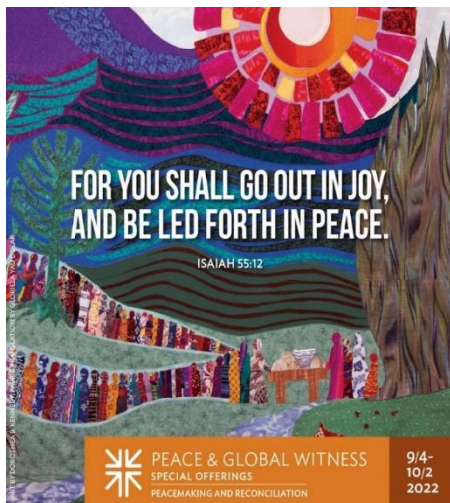
THANK YOU!

We received letter of thanks from Presbyterian Mission and Support for our gift of \$350.00 for Mission Support, and for our gift of \$548.60 for One Great Hour of Sharing; and from ProJeCt for our August gift of \$185.00.

BLESSING BOX

The Blessing Box has been overwhelmingly received by the community!

There are 2 "blessing baskets" where you can drop off food items; one in the narthex, and one by the door by the parking lot. Volunteers can sign up outside the church office to sponsor a week and fill the Box Sunday and again on Wednesday.



PEACE AND GLOBAL WITNESS OFFERING

October 2, 2022

Through the Peace and Global Witness Offering, we connect with each other to confront systems of injustice and promote reconciliation in places around the world, and right here at home.

You may support this offering by using one of the envelopes provided in the back of the sanctuary, or simply write "Peace & Global Witness" in the memo line of your check and put it in the offering box. Thank you!

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. Children's hats, mittens and scarves, men's hats and scarves, lap robes for Hospice, baby blankets for newborns, etc. We hope to have enough children's items for the holidays 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! Oh wait, I already hear them...yes once again Mission Working at First Presbyterian!

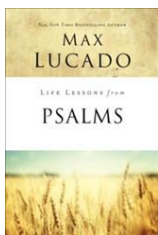
Some housekeeping...

You can find a copy of our directory and Soundings on the bulletin board by the water cooler on the first floor of the church house.

If you are the chair of a team or group, please let Jonathan, our office administrator, know when you are holding a meeting.

FAITH FORMATION AND FELLOWSHIP

ALL BIBLE STUDY



When: First and Third Sundays of October (2 and 16) and November (6 and 20) after worship (or after fellowship hour). Due to the expected congestion and use of the parking lot for Garlic Fest on October 2, we will move the location of the Bible study to Pilgrim Presbyterian Church. We will gather between 11:45PM and noon at 750 Belvidere Rd, Phillipsburg, NJ 08865. This is a 5 minute drive taking 22 East, taking Roseberry Street past St Luke's Warren, then a right onto Belvidere Road.

BROWN BAG LUNCH

Anyone and everyone from our congregation who is free during the day, is welcomed to come for some fellowship time on Wednesday, October 5. Bring your own lunch and come and chat with Pastor Stefanie and others from noon to 1:00pm.

BRUNCH BUNCH

Brunch Bunch will be going to Don Juan's Mexican Restaurant (300 North 3rd St., Easton – bottom of College Hill) after worship on October 9. There is a parking lot behind the restaurant, which does not open until noon, so please plan accordingly. We will have a private room, so contact Ruthann Arras (ruthann.arras@gmail.com) by noon on Saturday, October 8 if you would like to go. All are welcome!

FAITH IN DIALOGUE: A new partnership with College Hill PC

GOD, GUNS AND GRACE is a three-part symposium exploring gun violence. How should people of faith and good will respond to our nation’s ongoing epidemic of gun violence? Join us this Fall for a series of gracious conversations about guns and the urgent work we can do together for the sake of safety and justice. Each session is a stand-alone presentation.

Session 3: Where Do We Start? Steps to Greater Gun Safety

In this final interactive session, we will explore practical strategies for addressing and reducing the threat of gun violence in our families, homes, and houses of worship. Saturday, **October 8**, 1:00pm at FPCE.

FELLOWSHIP HOUR

Might you be willing to host fellowship hour—bring a dozen cookies and some pretzels? Or would you be willing to learn how to make coffee so you can be a fellowship hour helper? Please contact the church office or sign-up in person on the sheets by the church office.

VISITS

Would you like a visit from a Deacon or our Pastor to speak and pray with you? Please reach out to the church office via email or phone and request a visit. Pastor Stefanie will schedule a meeting at a convenient time and place. Our Deacons will be scheduling at-home communion for anyone who cannot physically come to the building.

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Sue Pappas
- 3 Rich Linnell
Gail Owens
- 4 Susan Mackay
- 5 Ginny Ogden
- 7 Gary Lehman
Carol Schroeher
- 18 Pat Stanek
- 19 Sarah Moki
- 26 Betty Minnich
- 27 John Heinsohn
Shirley Keller
- 29 BJ Evans
- 30 Dahlia Opthof-Cordaro



PARKING LOT REMINDER

A reminder that our parking lot is rented to capacity. Spaces 1-6, the 2 spaces directly in front of the rear entrance to the church, and the handicapped spaces are reserved for church business; please use those spaces when coming to the church on weekdays. Thank you!

GARLIC FEST PARKING

Once again this year, we will offer parking in our lot for visitors to Garlic Fest, Saturday and Sunday, October 1 and 2. Volunteers are needed to help monitor the lot and collect fees; if you can help out one or both days, please contact Shirley Keller.

MEETINGS

The **Property Team** will meet at the church on **Tuesday, October 11 at 7:00pm.**

Session will meet at the church and by zoom on **Tuesday, October 18 at 7:00pm.**

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

PRAYERS

We pray for...

Members addressing ongoing medical concerns: especially for Lori Young; Ella Campbell-Becker; Shirley Keller, who will be having minor surgery to remove skin cancer on her leg on Sept. 28 and will be in recovery for 10 days; Victoria Opthof-Cordaro, who is recovering from surgery for a detached retina; Peg Opthof, that her arm continues to heal; Susan Mackay, for continued healing of her shoulder.

Fran and Joel Dean, as Fran has moved to a memory care facility.

Tom Finnimore Jr., friend of Larry and Peg Opthof, who is in need of a liver transplant.

All those who live with dementia that they and their loved ones might have patience and courage.

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

Peace in our world, especially places of war and conflict.

An end to violence in all our communities, in particular we pray for an end to gun violence.

Those who suffer from mental illness, and that we might make care for those who are struggling a priority.

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

All who grieve for the loss of loved ones. Continued peace for Joan Francis and family at the passing of Linval on September 12.

Prayers can be sent to office@eastonfpc.org, please include "prayer list" in the subject line.



First Presbyterian Church of Easton
333 Spring Garden Street, Easton PA 18042
610-253-3579
www.eastonfpc.org

WON'T YOU PLEASE, WON'T YOU PLEASE, PLEASE WON'T YOU...

MEET YOUR NEIGHBORS!

'22 NEIGHBORHOOD SOCIAL

COOKING
DEMONSTRATION
"MAKE IT, TAKE IT"

HOT DOGS

POPCORN

OCTOBER 15TH
SATURDAY ~ 11^{am}-2^{pm}

NEIGHBORHOOD SPECIFIC
VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

LOCAL BUSINESSES

CHILDREN'S BOOK TABLE

FREE

ICE CREAM

MUSIC: FEATURING CENTRAL JERSEY SAXOPHONE QUARTET

First Presbyterian Church of Easton is hosting this event to foster more compassion and caring here in our neighborhood. We seek support for our 24/7 mini pantry, The Blessing Box. **Neighbors who use the Blessing Box are welcome. Neighbors who fill or want to fill the Blessing Box are welcome.**

DOWNTOWN EASTON, PA

OUTDOORS

In PARKING LOT behind
First Presbyterian Church of Easton
North Bank Str., Between 3rd & 4th Street



"All of us, at some time or other, need help. Whether we're giving or receiving help, each one of us has something valuable to bring to this world. That's one of the things that connects us as neighbors — in our own way, each one of us is a giver and a receiver." -Mr. Rogers

333 SPRING GARDEN STREET, EASTON, PA ~

610-253-3579 ~ eastonfpc.org



Saint Francis

Saint Francis of Assisi's feast day is October 4. Giovanni Francesco Bernardone was born in 1181 or 1182 and died October 3, 1226. He founded the Order of Friars Minor, commonly known as the Franciscans.

He is the patron saint of animals and the environment, and Italy. Churches often hold services with animals near to his feast day of October 4.

*Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.*

*O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
Amen.*

