



We aspire to be beacons of God's love and truth ...

June 25, 2021

Dear Members and Friends of FPC Moorestown:

Right at this point in June, in the longest days of the year and summer nearly arrived; I fondly remember playing outside as a child with the kids of my neighborhood. My favorite game was Kick the Can, the reverse of Hide and Go Seek. One kid guarded an old tin coffee can while the rest of us hid by the houses, trees and shrubs of our neighborhood. The goal was to kick the can -- though if the guard tagged you, you had to sit in jail until someone successfully booted the can. If the game went too long or the hour was too late, the person guarding the can shouted: Ollie! Ollie in come free! According to Wikipedia, the phrase my friends and I yelled is a variant of "Olly olly oxen free." The term is a truce term used in children's games such as hide and seek, capture the flag, and kick the can. Hearing it indicates that players who are hiding can come out into the open without losing the game; or, that the game is entirely over.

I'm calling: Ollie, Ollie in come free today. Though the COVID pandemic isn't completely over, we see the right signs moving in both directions. Infection rates in Burlington County are dropping while the vaccine rates are rising. At FPC Moorestown, this means that we're loosening more of our restrictions and easing into a number of changes. I invite, welcome and encourage you to join us Sunday for worship at 8:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary and 11:00 a.m. in Miller Commons. The coast is clear. Come on in!

At its stated meeting Tuesday, June 22, Session approved the following guidelines for our worship services and meeting ([see our event page for details](#)).

- Effective Sunday, June 27, masks will be optional. Some people may decide to wear a mask for a number of reasons. As disciples, we honor and love one another without judgment. NOTE: These mask guidelines will *not* apply to participants of our Vacation Bible School. Children will need to mask next week because of mandates for day camps in the State of New Jersey.
- Starting Sunday, July 4th, our Independence Day, congregational singing will be permitted at both services. We'll start slowly, meaning that the congregation will sing a couple of times in each worship service. Beginning this Sunday, singers at both services won't have to wear masks as they offer their praise to God.
- The collection practice continues with emphasis on electronic giving and mailing checks to church. The offering box will be available at both services.
- All entry remains through the Commons Lobby.
 - Check-ins will be for attendance purposes only and will shift to **self-check only (no QR code)**. We won't be asking people to complete release forms, health forms or have temperatures taken, effective immediately.

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- Please continue to check in on the [Church Center app](#) on your smart phone when arriving *or* when viewing the live stream from home.
- Handicapped entry remains through the narthex
- Restrictions on seating capacity are fully lifted.
- We'll continue using individual communion serving units when we celebrate the Lord's Supper.
- If you're not feeling well or have any COVID symptoms, please stay at home.
- These same protocols are in effect for all FPC Moorestown groups, though groups won't have to check in before meeting. Please consult the Church Office when planning an event or a meeting.
- For the present, no food will be served inside our facilities. We won't offer a Sunday Coffee Hour for the time being, though we hope to in the coming months.
- Both Sunday morning services will be available by live stream.

I have more pleasant news to share with you. At Tuesday's Session meeting, our elders approved the recommendation of our Personnel Team to hire Steve Margerum as our new Property Supervisor and Steve Purdy as a full-time member of our Property Team. Identifying the members of our Property Team is now simple but confusing. Just call Steve!

I like to conclude all of our Congregational Updates with a request for your prayers. Please hold Holly Ascitutto and her staff in prayer in the final days before Vacation Bible School and each morning next week. Remember regularly our search committees for an Associate Pastor and Youth Director.

Please continue to support the mission and work of our church financially. Our staff and lay leaders are eager to serve our community and congregation as the pandemic recedes.

Ollie! Ollie in come free! See you in worship!

Fondly yours in Christ,

Stuart Spencer
Pastor