

First Presbyterian Church
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Rev. Stuart Spencer
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**Worship. Connect.
Serve. Devote.**

JOIN US from the safety of your home or safely gather at church to worship on Sunday morning:

8:30 am Traditional
11:00 am Contemporary
9:30 am 5th Sunday Blended Worship

Worship streams live from each worship space.

Log on from any device to www.fpcmoorestown.org or [YouTube](#) or [Facebook](#).

The service is also posted later in the week to our website.

"Connections" is published weekly for Sunday worship and every two weeks in the summer. Please submit information by **noon Tuesdays** to:
Editor Jan Martin
jmartin@fpcmoorestown.org
856-235-1688, Ext. 133

Are you receiving our Friday e-blast with announcements, *Connections* and upcoming events? If not, contact the [church office](#).



Connections

FPC
Moorestown

First Presbyterian Church of Moorestown

December 11-17, 2022



Way of the Week #5: Assume Positive Intent

5. ASSUME POSITIVE INTENT. Decide to trust that other members are being fair, honest, and concerned for the well-being of our church. Set aside your own judgments and preconceived notions. Surrender the urge to criticize and judge – it doesn't help. Graciously give people the benefit of the doubt.

Read: [1 Peter 4:8](#); [Matthew 7:1](#); [1 Corinthians 13: 4-7](#)

Ideas for Action (try to do this by 12 noon Tuesday): Take a "criticism inventory." Just how critical are you, really? Ask someone you love and trust to tell you how you're doing in this area. Try a 24-hour fast from all forms of criticism. No complaining or criticism for an entire day.

Year End Giving



THANK YOU for remembering the church in your year-end giving. As Church leadership continues to prayerfully struggle with projected shortfalls for 2022 and 2023, your year-end gift can make a difference.

Gifts over and above your pledge may include stocks, *Christmas Green* offering, and General Budget Help. Online donations must be received by midnight December 31, 2022 and checks post-marked by December 31, 2022. Checks may be received in the offering plate up to January 1, 2023 with a date of December 31 on the check.

For important details, see our [event page](#) for 2022 opportunities, [our website](#) for giving information, or contact the church office at 856.235.1688.

[2022 Advent Guide](#)

Copies of the 2022 Advent Activity Guide are available at church and [online](#), detailing programming information for the season's events and special dates. There is something meaningful for all ages.

[Emerson Toy Drive](#) -- Steve and Mary Emerson continue the tradition started 30 years ago by Skip and Annette Emerson, of the Christmas Toy Drive for underprivileged children. Look for a box in the Commons Lobby.

[Advent & Narnia Devotionals](#) — See our event page and website for several Advent devotionals we will be using as we prepare for the coming of Christ. Contact [Wes Allen](#) for questions.

[Advent Small Groups](#) — There are two [Advent in Narnia](#) small groups meeting Sundays at 9:45 am (**Nov. 27-Dec. 18**) for adult spiritual formation led by Wes Allen, and Wednesdays at 7:00 pm (**Nov. 30-Dec. 21**) in Room 3-4, led by Jim

Cole and Gayle Payne. We are discussing the *Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe*. [Advent in Narnia](#) Devotional: \$14 (see Advent Guide or website)

Epiphany Concert January 8, 2023

Save the date for the annual Epiphany Concert featuring the Choristers (grades 5-8), Chapel Choir (grades 9-12) and Adult Choir. This year the Epiphany Concert will be held on Sunday, January 8, 2023 **during** the 8:30 am Traditional Worship Service.



**Have you noticed someone
missing from church?
Give them a call.**

[Virtual Gingerbread Challenge](#)

The gingerbread challenge ended Friday, December 2 at midnight and judging was held December 3-9. Watch the eblast and website for our 2022 winners!

[Budget Update](#)

Watch a presentation from president of the Board of Trustees Jeff Legath, during worship on November 6, 2022 with a budget update for the church. Visit www.fpcmoorestown.org/budget-shortfall/.



**Christmas Eve Eve
Friday, December 23**

[Christmas Worship Schedule](#)

- ◆ **Dec. 23:** Christmas Eve *Eve* Worship
3:00 pm & 7:00 pm — outside, fire pits
- ◆ **Dec. 24: Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship**
4:00 pm Family Service
6:00 pm Family Service
8:30 pm Communion Service
11 pm Lessons and Carols (Chapel Choir
Carol Concert 10:45 pm)
- ◆ **Dec. 25: Christmas Day Worship** (9:30 am);
No Sunday School; NEW: Christmas Brunch
- ◆ **Jan. 1: New Year's Day Worship** (9:30 am)

[Christmas Music Made in England](#)

Sunday, December 11 at 7:30 pm.

Please join us for this performance by the West Jersey Chamber Chorale featuring works by James Whitbourn plus the American premier of "Magnificat" performed by the English-born Sam Scheibe, our member and former intern.

All are invited for a post-concert reception/fundraiser with raffle baskets, silent auction and sumptuous dessert buffet.

Tickets available at the door, online at <https://wjcms.org/concerts/>, or via email to Joann Nawrocki at info@wjcms.org. The concert will also be live streamed by visiting <https://wjcms.org/live/>.

Manger Sunday Dec. 11

Church members are invited to bring **unwrapped** gifts on Sunday, December 11th for Manger Sunday. Please place the gifts in the manger where they will be blessed by the pastors during worship. Gifts will be taken to [Oaks Integrated Care](#) for their clients and families to use as gifts for their own families. Those NOT attending services may drop gifts off from 10:30-11:30 am at the Blessing Box. See our event page for a [suggested Wish List](#).

If you ordered a poinsettia you may take it home after worship Sunday, December 11

Alternative Gift

Our [Alternative Gift Market](#) will be available in person after services on **Dec. 4, 11 and 18** as well as virtually through the church's website fpcmoorestown.org.

Alternate Gifts allow donations to worthy causes in the name of the gift recipient. The Alternative Gift Market Catalog is available online and on the Church Center events page.

Holiday Hours...



The church campus will be CLOSED at 1:00 pm Friday, Dec. 23, and closed Dec. 26, 27, and 30th for the Christmas holiday. The church office will be OPEN Dec. 28, 29 and Jan. 2, 2023.

Christmas Brunch

NEW: First Presbyterian Church is hosting a brunch following our 9:30 am blended Christmas Day worship on **Sunday, Dec. 25th**. All are welcome to share in this fellowship and celebrate the miracle of Jesus' birth. Please contact Jan Martin in the church office if you can help set up, serve or clean up, or provide a breakfast casserole or baked goods.

2022 Financial Statements

If you need a copy of your 2022 giving statement to see where you are with your pledge, contact the church office at 856.235.1688. Thank you for completing 2022 pledges before **December 31**.

There will be no Session meeting for December. Happy Holidays!

Worship With Us

See our [website](#), the [Advent Guide](#) and page 2 of this issue for Christmas worship schedule of events

2023 Worship Flowers

Reservations are being taken for 2023 to provide Sunday flowers in our worship spaces. Honor special dates in your life and those you love with flowers crafted by our talented Flower Guild. Each vase is \$40, reserve one or two vases. Please contact Rumi Sinunu at rts319@gmail.com or 856.266.4047 to reserve your dates.

Preschool Open House

Step by Step Christian Preschool will be having its Open House at the preschool on **Thursday, Jan. 19, 2023** from 6:00-7:30 pm. Adults only please. Come in and see the school and sign up for fall classes.

Narnia Night

Did you get to walk through the Wardrobe on either Friday, Dec. 2 or Sunday, Dec. 4 and experience our very own Narnia? Kudos to Holly Ascitutto, Steve Margerum, Wes & Jen Allen and MANY others who helped transport visitors to the mythical land. *Photos: Patrick McIlroy*



Yes, I'm Here or Watching

THANK YOU for registering your attendance each Sunday you're here. Our simple automated check-in replaces the Friendship sign-in pads and provides accurate records for the Membership Committee, staff and member care. Download the Church Center app on your phone to easily check in. If you need help, please see the volunteer. **REMINDER:** When watching the live stream at home or attending in person, **check in** on your smart phone to note participation.



Last Sunday School: Sunday, December 18 ~ Jesus Birthday Celebration

Christmas Schedule

- ◆ **Dec. 14:** Regular meeting for Kingdom Kids, Crossing Zone; and Christmas Party for Middle School Youth Group. Last meetings of 2022.
- ◆ **Dec. 18:** Jesus Birthday Celebration during Sunday School hour (combined, Fellowship Hall), 9:45 am

Wednesday night groups conclude December 14 and will be on hiatus for our Winter Break. We will see you on Wednesday, February 1, 2023!

High School Youth Group Christmas Party

Sunday, December 18

6:30-8:30 pm

Grades 9-12

For questions reach out to John Roberts or Dave Fauvell



Sermon Series Memory Verse

“So don’t be afraid, little flock. For it gives your Father great happiness to give you the Kingdom.” (Luke 12: 32)

Kingdom Kids: Grades K-3
Wednesdays 4:45-5:45 pm
Crossing Zone: Grades 4-6
Wednesdays 6:30-7:30 pm
Middle School: Grades 7-8
Wednesdays 6:30-8:00 pm
High School: Grades 9-12
Sundays 6:30-8:30 pm

For Families and Children:

Holly Ascitutto

856-235-1688, x116

hasciutto@fpcmoorestown.org

Middle School and High School:

John Roberts interim director

724-967-1646 cell

jroberts@fpcmoorestown.org

Advent Devotional

Families: This Advent, take advantage of a four-week family Advent devotional guide (one per week), based on the Narnia Book *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*.

Family Dinner

Remaining dinner for the year will be **Wednesday, Dec. 14**, before we break for the holidays. We will return on February 1, 2023. MENU for **December 14:** Pizza



High School Winter Retreat

Our high school youth group had an amazing time on the Young Life Winter Retreat at Lake Champion (NY) Dec. 2-4, led by our interim youth director John Roberts. It was very impactful for the kids, great for the young people to process the Gospel with their leaders, and for them to experience Kingdom culture in many ways.

