

October 11, 2023

*Your love has given me much joy and comfort, my brother, for your kindness has often refreshed the hearts of God's people. **That is why I am boldly asking a favor of you.** I could demand it in the name of Christ because it is the right thing for you to do. But because of our love, I prefer simply to **ask** you. Consider this as a **request** from me—Paul, an old man and now also a prisoner for the sake of Christ Jesus.*

Philemon 1: 7 – 9

Dear Members and Friends of FPC Moorestown:

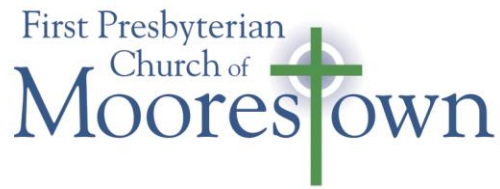
The Apostle Paul was nearing the end of his ministry when he wrote a deeply personal letter to a long-time friend of his named Philemon. This letter is the shortest of Paul's 13 letters found in the New Testament. It's a master-class in asking a lot of someone he loved. Paul hoped that his friend, Philemon, would welcome back a slave who had run away from him. It was a big ask, but Paul felt that his relationship to Philemon combined with their shared experience of God's love provided a solid foundation for this big ask.

I'm writing you this week before our Consecration Sunday to ask you to do three things. Like the old Apostle, I write to you from a place of deep affection and overwhelming gratitude for you. Whenever I pray for our congregation, I always begin with, "Lord, I thank you for the congregation of FPC Moorestown."

I've learned through the years of my ministry that people welcome a clear ask. So many of those people I've served in churches want to know when there's a need. Asking brings the blessing of giving. That's the deeper opportunity behind each ask. As you consider these three requests, I hope you'll see the joy lurking behind each one.

1. **First Ask: Please come to Consecration Sunday and stay for brunch.** We will gather this Sunday, October 15, for a single, celebratory worship service at 9:30 a.m. in our Sanctuary. At the close of worship, Pastor Allen will lead us in a time of dedicating to the Lord our Estimate of Giving cards and ourselves for 2024. Please bring your card with you. You can complete it before Sunday or bring it blank so you could complete it in the presence of your Church Family. Afterwards, we'll enjoy a delicious brunch in Fellowship Hall. We do ask you to bring an item for the meal. If God gives us a beautiful day, we'll have an all-church kickball game—Team Allen vs Team Spencer. One blessing that awaits you on Consecration Sunday is when we're giving, we're really living.

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

2. **Second Ask: Please pray with me before Consecration Sunday.** Our Prayer and Discipleship Team has organized a 12-hour prayer vigil for this Saturday, beginning at 5:00 a.m. and concluding at 5:00 p.m. If you follow the link below, you can sign up for a 30-minute slot during those hours. Our Prayer Team has a guide for you follow. I ask you to pray, not for more money, but that God's Holy Spirit would have more of our hearts, our minds and our lives. We're blessed whenever we surrender ourselves to God's Holy Spirit. Here's the link for the sign up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0B45A5AD2EA2FA7-24hour/23495663#/>

3. **Third Ask: Please plan to participate in the Church Has Left the Building.** For the sixth year, on Sunday, October 29, we're setting aside our regular Sunday morning schedule so that we can go and serve our community. On that morning, we'll offer a single, blended worship service at 9:30 a.m. in Miller Commons. Come dressed to work. Our guest preacher that day is Luke Maxted, of Urban Promise London. We have service opportunities for any age. Most activities will take place here, at church. We have Saturday opportunities too. Please review all of the ministry activities for both days. I'm certain that you'll go home tired perhaps, but glad for the chance you and your family had to think of others and serve that morning.

https://fpcmoorestown.churchcenter.com/groups/church-has-left-the-building-2023?enrollment=open_signup%2Crequest_to_join&filter=enrollment

Thank you for allowing me room to make a few requests of you. That's all I ask.

I am gratefully yours in Christ.

Stuart

Stuart Spencer
Pastor