

First Presbyterian Church
101 Bridgeboro Road
MAIL: P. O. Box 868
Moorestown, NJ 08057
fpcmoorestown.org
856.235.1688

Rev. Stuart Spencer
Pastor/Head of Staff
sspencer@fpcmoorestown.org

Rev. Wes Allen
Associate Pastor
wallen@fpcmoorestown.org

**Worship. Connect.
Serve. Devote.**

*Worship the Lord with glad-
ness; come into his presence
with singing - Psalm 100:2*

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

10:15-11:15 am
Education Hour

Worship streams live from
each worship space. Log
on from any device to
www.fpcmoorestown.org
or [YouTube](#) or [Facebook](#).

Services are 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 announce-
ments, Connections, and
upcoming events? If not,
contact the [church office](#).**



Connections

FPC
Moorestown

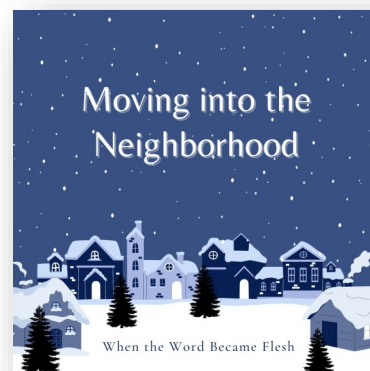
First Presbyterian Church of Moorestown

December 10-16, 2023

Way of the Week 7:
Celebrate our Unity,
Savor our Diversity
(December 10-16, 2023)

7. **CELEBRATE OUR UNITY, SAVOR OUR DIVERSITY.** Thank God that, like parts of the human body, we're not all the same. Be open to learn from others, regardless of their age, background, experience, or tenure with our church. We make better decisions and grow as people when we consider multiple perspectives. Listen with curiosity to others and consider how to use their ideas.

Ideas for Action: Seek out someone from a different background, culture or race and meet three or four times to get to know their lives and stories. Pray with them for racial and social healing.



TODAY: Manger Sunday

In one of our congregation's special traditions, members are invited to bring **unwrapped** gifts to worship on **Sunday, December 10th** for our Manger Sunday blessing. The Deacons coordinate this ministry. In both services, members will place unwrapped gifts in the manger singing carols of the season. Pastors will bless the gifts during worship. For those NOT attending services, gifts may be dropped off before or after services outside on the steps by the Sanctuary Courtyard (off the Commons Lobby, **by 12 noon**). That day, the gifts will be given to Oaks Integrated Care for their clients to use as gifts for their own families.

TONIGHT: Longest Night Service

This unique service provides peace to those dealing with grief, illness, anxiety or depression this holiday season who may not feel the joy or celebration seen in others. This event will be held on **Sunday, December 10 at 7:00 p.m.** and includes elements from a Service of Remembrance, including communion. Please share this event with anyone you know who might have experienced a loss, need a quiet place in the rush of December, or an authentic respite from busy holiday activities.

Alternative Gift Fair

Our [Alternative Gift Fair](#) is open! Alternate Gifts allow donations to worthy causes in the name of the gift recipient. Gifts begin at \$5.00 and a broad range of gifts is available to assist our ministries. Visit the tables in the narthex and Commons Lobby on **Dec. 10, Dec. 17 and Dec. 24th** to purchase your alternative gifts. Online orders, cash or checks please (checks made payable to FPC Moorestown). Or pick up your gifts at a special pickup time.

You can order in advance anytime, order before worship and we will have it waiting when you get out, or just wait and our team will fulfill it as quickly as possible. To order online please contact Linda Jagiela at call/text 267.275.7582 or misions@fpcmoorestown.org. Fulfillment volunteers are also needed to staff the Alternative Gift Fair on Sundays in December. Please contact Linda Jagiela to help.

Looking for Advent Candle Lighters

Would your family like to light one of the Advent wreaths on Christmas Eve? The Worship Committee is looking for individuals to light the Advent wreath for the five Christmas Eve services on **Sunday, December 24**. Worship is at 11:00 am, 4:00 pm, 6:00 pm, 8:30 pm and 11:00 pm. Contact Worship chair Paul Booker at pbooker31@gmail.com; (856) 816-5121.

Need a year-end update on your 2023 giving? It's available 24/7 in the Church Center app. Touch "Give" and "My Giving" for a full history



Poinsettia Pickup: If you ordered a poinsettia you may take it home after worship **Sunday, Dec. 17**

Adult Sunday Series

**10:15-11:15 am
Fellowship Hall**

Dec. 3, 10 & 17th Lissa Herman leads an Advent study ["A Clear View of the Birth of Jesus."](#) See more details and sign up on the Church Center event page or website. Meets 10:15-11:15 am in Fellowship Hall (**NOTE: Will be in Room 8 on Dec. 17**)

Year-End Giving

Thank you for remembering the church in your year-end giving. Each and every gift makes a difference. Gifts over and above one's pledge may include stocks, *Christmas Green* offering for the church, *Christmas Joy* offering for the denomination (**Dec. 10**) and General Budget Help. Online donations must be received by midnight Dec. 31, 2023 and checks postmarked by Dec. 31, 2023. Checks may be received in the offering plate up to Sunday, Dec. 31, 2023 with a date of **Dec. 31** on the check.

Christmas Worship Schedule

- ◆ **Dec. 23: Christmas Eve Eve Worship**
3:00 pm & 7:00 pm — outside, fire pits
- ◆ **Dec. 24: Christmas Eve Worship**
11:00 am Lessons & Carols (Sanctuary)
4:00 pm Family Service
6:00 pm Contemporary Service (Commons)
8:30 pm Communion Service
11:00 pm Lessons & Carols (preceded by Chapel Choir concert 10:40 pm)
- ◆ **Dec. 25: Christmas Day Worship (9:30 am)**
- ◆ **Dec. 31: Fifth Sunday Worship (9:30 am)**

No Sunday School or Adult Spiritual Formation on Dec. 24 or Dec. 31

Sunday Morning Check Ins

Please check in and register your attendance each time you attend in person and/or watch on your device. This simple check-in records important data for the staff and Membership Team. [Download the Church Center app](#) to check in. If you need help, please see the volunteer.

Please see page 3 regarding new attendance and sign-in procedures and a return to Friendship Pads in pews. *Members should still use online check-in but are encouraged to use the Friendship Pads.* Guests are invited to leave their contact information so a team member may contact them.



Holiday Offerings: **Christmas Joy Dec. 10**

December 10 will be the *Christmas Joy* offering for PCUSA to provide assistance to current and retired church workers, develop future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools, and equip communities of color. See special pew envelopes for *Christmas Joy*. Throughout December, *Christmas Green* envelopes are in the pews for your holiday offering to First Presbyterian Church. Your gifts allow our ministries to continue.



Scan me to link
to our giving page

Advent Guide

Copies of the [2023 Advent Activity Guide](#) are available at church and online on our website and Church Center event page, detailing programming information for the season's events and special dates.

Check Holiday Schedules

Check **Connections** and the church calendar for revised schedules (see website, **Calendar/Events** tab). Children's Sunday School will meet together in Fellowship Hall on Dec. 17 for a Sunday School Christmas Party. Last day for Middle School Youth Group is Dec. 20 and for High School Youth Group Dec. 17 (off-site). There will be no Adult Spiritual Formation or Children's Sunday School on Dec. 24 or Dec. 31 (5th Sunday). Classes will resume on January 7, 2024.

Poinsettia Deliverers

Can you help the deacons deliver poinsettias to some of our less mobile members? Please [sign up online](#) on the poinsettia event page or contact Jan Martin in the office at 856.235.1688, x133.

PW Winter Gathering January 16, 2024 (10 am)

Offering Radical Hospitality

In the coming weeks and months you'll begin to see changes in how we welcome people on Sunday mornings. We are reintroducing our Friendship Pads as a way to help learn the names of those sitting near you. **Please continue to check in online using the Church Center app.** We have created two "Welcome Centers" in the Narthex, at the rear of the sanctuary and at the Welcome Center in the Commons Lobby.

Moving forward we will be encouraging all guests to visit either center on Sunday mornings to learn more about us, receive a facility tour and receive a small welcome gift. Additionally, members of our new hospitality team will be strategically placed around our campus, including a parking attendant to welcome everyone and direct visitors to reserved guest parking spaces. While we have designated people and a team who will be rotating responsibilities, please keep in mind that hospitality is not merely the work of a few but the work of the entire congregation. We invite you to participate. If you feel the Spirit leading you to join our team please reach out to Wes Allen at wallen@fpcmoorestown.org and Ann McBride at amcbride323@gmail.com.

Advent Devotional

NEW: Jim Cole leads a devotion Wednesdays from 7-8 pm in Room 3-4 using this year's **Advent Devotional**. The prayer guide is available in the Narthex or Miller Commons, and can be downloaded from our [website](#) and [event page](#). Prepared by the Prayer and Discipleship Committee, this daily devotional (Dec. 1-25) was written by church members and staff. Devotions are based on the four Advent Candles we light in this season of Advent, their themes and meanings.

Christmas Eve Service Saturday, December 23 Outdoor Courtyard

Community Concert Celebrates Christmas

The West Jersey Chamber Music Society presents "Christmas Celebration: Music for Choir and Brass" **Sunday, Dec. 17** at 7:30 p.m. The holiday season comes alive with joyous selections from composers new and old, including Mark Shepperd's *A Carol Fantasy*, sung by the West Jersey Chamber Chorale and highlighted by the Timberdale Brass. Tickets \$28 at the door, \$20 seniors or students over 18). Children 18 and under are Free. Purchase tickets in advance online at <https://wjcms.org/concerts/>. INFO: contact Joann Nawrocki at (856) 291-6673 or info@wjcms.org. A free live video broadcast will be available at concert time at <https://wjcms.org/live/>.

Moravian Love Feast Concert Sunday, January 7, 2024

FAMILY MINISTRY

December 17: Sunday School Christmas Party (combined classes)

Holiday Schedule and Winter Break

Kingdom Kids (K-3rd) and Crossing Zone (grades 4-6) groups ended the year on **Wednesday, December 6** with their Christmas parties. Family Dinner ends on **December 13**. Family dinner menus are posted to Facebook weekly and the Church Center groups sign-up registration page.

Middle School Youth Group (grades 7-8) concludes **Wed. Dec. 20**, and High School Youth Group (grades 9-12) concludes **Sun. Dec. 17**. Kids, youth groups and Family Dinner will be on winter break, and will return **Wednesday, Feb. 7, 2024**. *Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!*



CHRISTMAS PARTIES

- **Kingdom Kids:** Wed. Dec. 6 (4:45-5:45 pm, FH)
- **Crossing Zone:** Wed. Dec. 6 (6:30-7:30 pm, FH)
- **Middle School:** Wed. Dec. 20 (6:30-8 pm, FH/3rd Flr.)
- **High School:** Sun. Dec. 17 (6:30-8:30 pm, off-site)

Sermon Series Memory Verse

The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood. (John 1: 14, MSG)

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 Asciutto

856-235-1688, x116 (W)

hasciutto@fpcmoorestown.org

Middle School and High School:

Dave Fauvell

609-980-7885 call/text

dfauvell52@gmail.com

Advent Experience Box

Sunday, December 3rd is the First Sunday in Advent. As we prepare ourselves for Christmas, families are encouraged to pick up the new *Advent Experience Box*. Pick a time to sit down together and follow the box's devotional guide and family activities. Everything you need is included for you to make memories and prepare your hearts for Baby Jesus.



Boxes will be

available for pick up in the Commons Lobby beginning **Wednesday, Nov. 29** (*ONE box per family please*). Try to remember the devotion throughout the week and focus on the lesson it teaches.

For questions contact [Holly Asciutto](mailto:Holly_Asciutto), [Frances Chavarria](mailto:Frances_Chavarria) or the church office at 856.235.1688.

Calling Young Artists

Once again, we would like to showcase the artistic talents of our youth at FPC Moorestown. This year, we are asking for artwork that is angel-themed. The Angels played a big part in announcing the birth of Christ. They were full of light and the Glory of the Lord. If your child would like to create a picture in this theme for our Christmas Eve bulletin covers, we would love to share it with our church family! Some basic guidelines: please have students use full coverage with color. Make the colors bold, and when pictures are colored in, please make sure no white paper is showing through. Let them be creative. We cannot wait to see what they produce! **Digital submissions are due to [Holly Asciutto](mailto:Holly_Asciutto) by December 15.**

Holiday Schedules

Please see *Connections* and the church calendar for new holiday schedules. There will be no Sunday School Dec. 24th (Christmas Eve morning) or Dec. 31st (5th Sunday). Classes return on January 7, 2024 (see page 3).