

Branches

Alexandria First Presbyterian Church

“I am the vine, you are the branches.”

September 2019

141 Little York-Mount Pleasant Road

Milford, New Jersey 08848

908-996-4333

Web: www.alexpres.org

Facebook: Alexandria First Presbyterian Church of Mount Pleasant

Dear Friends,

It's hard to believe but summer is just about over. Kids and teachers are heading back to school, and before we know it the weather will get cooler and the days will get shorter. Yes, all good things must come to an end. But I hope that each of you had a terrific summer!

We certainly had a great summer here at AFPC! Each and every week we had joyful, Spirit-filled worship on Sunday mornings . . . including special Summer Sunday School class with a different adventure every week. We were blessed to call a new Director of Music Ministry, Seuli Koo—who has already begun sharing her amazing gifts with our congregation. The Sr. High mission trip had a terrific week of service in West Virginia. And we had an awesome week of Vacation Bible School at Milford Presbyterian where we went to *Mars and Beyond!*

and Beyond!

Yes, the summer was great but now it is ending . . . and we have much to look forward to this fall.

Sunday School will begin soon, the choir will start singing again, and Bible studies will start meeting.

There is lots to be excited about and a lot to do and be involved with at AFPC!

Our new church program year will get started on September 8th when we gather back together on *Rally Day* and are led in worship by our

Sr. High mission trip participants. God was indeed present with them in July . . . and I hope that each of you are as excited as I am to hear how God was at work during their trip! After worship on the 8th we will have our annual church picnic—bring a chair and a side dish to share!

God only knows what blessings await us this year. . . I hope you will join us to see where God is leading.

Peace,

Pastor Nick

A Note from Nick



Tending the Flock

Baptisms

Baptism is the visible sign of an invisible event: the reconciliation of people to God. We rejoice with those who are celebrating their baptism anniversary this month. It was in September that John Leslie McDowall, Tanner Ike McGuire, Matthew Joseph Pardonner, and Jenna Rose Schostkewitz were baptized. Congratulations and blessings upon being children of God!

Nancy Smith

Nancy Haberle Smith passed away at her home in Fairfax, Virginia on July 21, 2019. She was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1948.

Nancy was a 1970 graduate of Grove City College and in the early 1970s worked for Ocean County Board of Social Services before moving to Long Meadow, Massachusetts where she worked for Child Protective Services. She moved to Hunterdon County in 1984. While there she served as a member of the Alexandria Board of Education for many years, including a term as president. She was also president of the PTA. In later years she resumed her career working in special education at ESC in Hunterdon County. She was an active member of Alexandria Church serving on numerous committees and as a deacon and an elder.

Passionate about community development, Nancy was also involved in the Living Waters for the World through which she assisted in the installation of a water purification system in the mountains of eastern Haiti.

She moved to Fairfax in 2017 to be closer to her children and grandchildren.

A memorial service will be held at Alexandria Church on September 7 at 11:00 a.m. Contributions may be made in her name to the American Cancer Society, Living Waters for the World, or to the charity of one's choice.

Romulus Fleming

Romulus Fleming, Jr. of Hampton, NJ, passed away on Tuesday, August 20, 2019 at the Andover Subacute and Rehab Center in Andover Township, NJ. He was born September 10, 1925 in Little York and was the son of the late Romulus, Sr. and Flora (Snyder) Fleming. Rom married Virginia Parker on April 15, 1944 at Alexandria and resided in Mt. Pleasant, where they raised their family.

Rom attended Frenchtown High School and was employed at the Hampton Public School in Hampton, New Jersey as a building and maintenance engineer for over 30 years. Prior to that, he worked as a building and maintenance engineer at Delaware Valley Regional High School.

Rom was a member of the Stanton Grange, the Hampton Fire Company, the Patriotic Order Sons of America, and Alexandria Church of Mt. Pleasant. He was an exempt fireman with the NJ State Fireman's Association. He and his wife enjoyed square dancing at the Danny Tebo Square Dancing Club. Rom enjoyed woodworking, crafting, camping, and traveling.

Services were held at Johnson Walton Funeral Home on August 24. Memorial contributions may be made to the Hampton Fire Company, the Hampton Emergency Squad, or Alexandria First Presbyterian Church.

Welcome our New Music Director

We were happy to welcome Seuli Koo to Alexandria First Presbyterian Church on August 4th as our new Director of Music Ministry. Seuli was born in the United States and grew up in South Korea. From an early age, her life was filled with music, especially as a pianist. She earned a Bachelor of Music/Piano Performance from Kyung Hee University in Seoul, South Korea.

She returned to the United States several years ago, and in 2017 she received a Graduate Professional Diploma in Piano Performance from The Hartt School, University of Hartford in West Hartford, Connecticut. Her life has been filled with piano, organ concerts and recitals along with teaching piano to children. She also enjoyed mentoring and working with church youth groups.

Seuli has held positions as a church music director, first in South Korea and later in Massachusetts and Connecticut. A Presbyterian from an early age, she has loved sharing her musical talent in a church setting and stated she looks forward to being a part of our church community.

Seuli will begin a Master of Music/Sacred Music program at Westminster Choir College, Rider University under a graduate scholarship and assistantship program.

Please help us welcome Seuli Koo to the Alexandria First Presbyterian Church family.



Ordination

September 8 | 4 p.m.

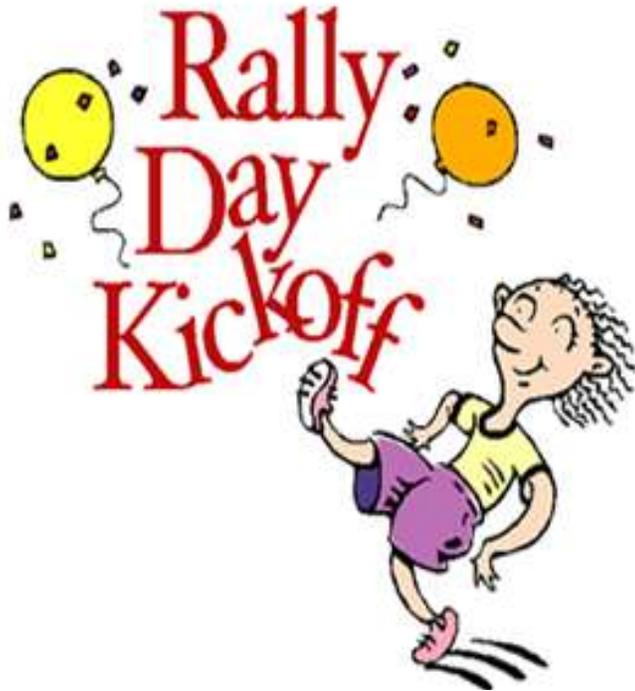
George Erlandson, a member of Alexandria Presbyterian Church, will be ordained as a Minister of Word and Sacrament on September 8 at 4 p.m. at the Community Presbyterian Church in Edison where he will be installed as their pastor.

Our congregation is warmly invited to attend George's ordination and installation and to support him as he celebrates this milestone.

September Birthdays

2 Emily Fennell	11 Arianna Scurti	23 Holland Fritsche	26 Nick Hatch
Alice Hansen	13 LuAnn Keefe	24 Kyle Hedden	Laura Strangfeld
Ed Muztafago	14 Chris Vogel	Barbara McLaren	27 Tyler Bender
3 Scott Moran	19 Roger Schneider	Chris Stagg	Deb Czerna
10 Gillian Cascio	20 Darren Kluesner	25 David Grossmueller	28 Johanna Schooff
	Meredith Oliver	Grant MacWilliam	





**SUNDAY
SEPTEMBER 8**

This Is Big

So big that you won't want to miss it!
Join us for Rally Day September 8

The youth will lead worship
and share about their mission trip

There will be a place in worship
to fill out the Gifts of Ministry forms

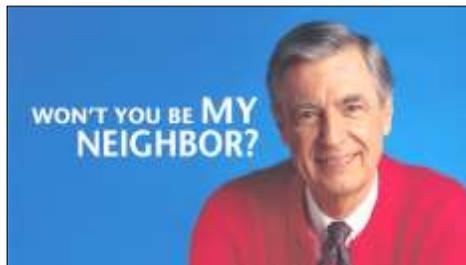
Sunday school registration will take place

During fellowship time the youth will present
a slide show of pictures from their trip

Great food and goodies
will be available

Our annual church-wide picnic begins
in the grove at 11:15 a.m.

So be sure to join us as we reconnect with
old friends and make new ones!



Love Thy Neighbor, No Exceptions

Did you see our new sign out front? Are you curious about it? Starting September 15th Pastor Nick will begin a sermon series titled "Won't You Be My Neighbor?" This series will focus on the importance of loving our neighbor . . . connecting Christ's call for love with the wisdom and theology of Mr. Rogers. Please join us in September!

Sunday School Returns

September 15, 2019 | 10:15 a.m.

Sunday school classes are available for children ages 3 through high school as an opportunity to grow in their own faith journey. Classes begin after the children's sermon at approximately 10:15 a.m. Special care has been taken to coordinate the curriculum with a scope and sequence that follows the church calendar so conversations can continue at home with children and their parents. On the first Sunday of the month, we celebrate "family worship" where children remain in the sanctuary with their parents. Nursery care is available for our youngest children through the loving care of a dedicated nursery staff; toys and books are abundant. Audio speakers in the nursery allow parents visiting their children to hear the worship service too. Volunteers for our programs are always welcome!

Gifts for Ministry & Member Info



During worship on Rally Day on September 8th you will have the chance to review a list of ministry opportunities for the coming program year. In recognition of God's love and gifts, you will be asked to check each area of ministry where you sense God has given you a gift and you may be willing to serve. We ask that every adult and every teen of each family—members and regular visitors alike—to complete their own form. We thank you in advance for your help in considering these opportunities for ministry!

If you do not feel called to ministry at the present time, we do ask that you complete the member information section of the form so that our church records can be updated accurately. This will assure that your contact information is correct when we publish our church directory this fall. Thank you.

Summer Flowers Given to the Glory of God

- July 14** in loving memory of Phylis Kinney and Dottie Erwin by LuAnn and Pat Keefe
- July 21** in celebration of Charlotte's 6th birthday by the Hatch family
- July 28** in celebration of the marriage of Emily Bondor to Timothy Bragg by Stacy Kluesner
- August 4** as a warm welcome to and with blessings for Seuli Koo our new Director of Music Ministry
- August 11** in memory of loved ones by Marion Purcell
- August 18** in celebration of Matt's 24th birthday by Cathy Torrey

Peace and Global Witness Offering

A gift to the Peace and Global Witness Offering enables the church to promote the Peace of Christ by addressing systems of injustice across the world. Alexandria Church will use 25% of this offering to connect with the global witness of Christ's peace. The remaining portion funds ministries of peace, reconciliation and enables the Presbyterian Mission Agency to advocate for justice in cultures of violence through collaborative projects of education. The Peace and Global Witness Offering will be received on World Communion Sunday, October 6. Speak with Howard Thomas if you have any questions and feel free to use the special pew envelopes for your gift.



Did You Know?

The Prayer Chain
nancy.gayle.schumann.hatch@gmail.com

Alexandria Church's prayer ministry was established 20 years ago and has been in its present email format for the past 12 years. Requests for prayer are conveyed exclusively via our gmail account. The group currently consists of 88 church members who respond in prayer when requests are made. The nature of prayer requests varies widely, including concerns for those in need of surgery, healing (physical, mental, emotional), support on the death of a loved one, etc. It is understood that these requests are confidential. So far this year, 58 requests have been processed. Our two prayer ministry coordinators are Gayle Hatch and Nancy Schumann who take turns covering our e-mail site, each serving a month at a time. Upon receipt of a request, Gayle or Nancy forward it to the 88 prayer chain participants.

New members are whole-heartedly welcomed and encouraged to join this prayer partnership. Simply email the above address with your request to be added to those who pray on behalf of those who submit needs.

Do You Speak a Different Language?



World Communion Sunday | October 6

Maybe Spanish, or French? Or maybe Mandarin or Italian? If you speak any language (other than English) and would be willing to read John 3:16 in worship as a part of our World Communion Sunday, please contact the church office or Pastor Nick and let us know what language you speak. Thanks!



Caring Hands Crafters

Next Meeting: October 20 | 11:15 a.m.

All 42 of our handmade yarn projects made it to new friends in East Bank, West Virginia! Each of the 19 members of this year's youth mission trip were able to pick two knitted or knotted gifts for the resident they helped during the week. Lots of thought went into choosing just the right crafted item for each person's resident. When our youth mission team headed for home, they left behind many memories and reminders of God's love for us all.

Thank you to all who contributed both prayers and lovely handmade gifts for the youth mission trip. For those who have never joined a Caring Hands Crafters gathering before, we are an extremely causal group that shares a dual passion for crafting and mission. We look forward to welcoming you!

Happiness

by **Mother Teresa**

May today there be peace within you.
 May you trust God that you are exactly where you are meant to be.
 May you not forget the infinite possibilities
 that are born of faith.
 May you use those gifts that you have received
 and pass on the love that has been given to you.
 May you be content knowing that you are a child of God.
 Let His presence settle into your bones,
 and allow your soul the freedom to sing, dance,
 and to bask in the sun.
 It is there for each and every one of you.



Our Facility Is at Your Disposal

Requesting the Use of the Building for Your Next Gathering?

Building-use requests for members and non-members alike are processed and approved by Session. Session meets the second Wednesday of each month except July and August. All requests will be considered by Session once a month at their regularly scheduled meeting. To request the use of the facilities, print the building-use form and policy from the church's website, fill it out, and send it to the church office. Please allow a minimum of 5 weeks for your event to be considered.

PCUSA News

Church's heart for mission helps homeless — and even pets

Calvary Presbyterian Church near Wilmington, Delaware has a long legacy of helping neighbors by partnering with Meeting Ground which is a local group that addressed homelessness, and Friendship House which offers transitional housing, a clothing bank, and "empowerment centers." But Wilmington is a big city with lots of opportunities to help others. So, Calvary Presbyterian created what is called "Second Sunday Sharing," in which the congregation helps one local nonprofit.

"It's a time where we learn a little about the organization," said the Rev. Holly Clark-Porter. "We then bring forward tangible items that will help that organization during the last hymn."

On a recent Second Sunday Sharing, the items brought forward were large bags of dog food, dog biscuits, and treats for felines. The items were to help feed animals at the Faithful Friends Animal Society, a privately funded no-kill shelter.

"Faithful Friends does so much for Wilmington and for animals. We are so heartened by their work," Clark-Porter said.

Presbyterians Today | June 14, 2019



A Calvary Church member hauls in dog food donated by the congregation during 'Second Sunday Sharing'



Smile!

In October we will be scheduling our annual photo directory update, if we have a minimum of 20 families that can participate. We hope that all new members, as well as anyone who was not able to make the photo shoot last year, will be able to come and get your portraits taken. If you would like an updated photo of your family, you are more than welcome to schedule that as well. Please talk to Lois Bondor to indicate your intention to help us keep our photo directory as complete and up to date as possible. If you need a directory from last year, we have extras.



Blessing of the Backpacks September 1, 2019 | 10 a.m.

Children & youth (of all ages) are invited to bring their backpacks to worship on September 1st! During our worship service all backpacks will be brought forward & we will together pray for our students and the upcoming new school year.

We will ask God to bless each backpack & those who wear them!

Connect with Seniors with Nutrition Services

www.mowih.org | 908-284-0735

Meals on Wheels in Hunterdon has provided comfort, sustenance, and assurance to seniors since 1973. Many homebound elderly who, through illness or disability or frailty, have no other source of meals. A hot noontime meal and a companionable visit from a volunteer driver provides food, comfort, and security they can count on.

Meals on Wheels in Hunterdon is seeking volunteers to assist the elderly in Hunterdon County. The non-profit agency depends solely on volunteers to deliver meals to clients' homes weekday between the hours of 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The volunteer commitment is flexible, generally once a month.

"Volunteers play a vital role and we are always in need of caring, compassionate volunteers to help us carry out our mission. Our success depends largely on community volunteers," said Regina Hlasney, Executive Director.

Volunteering is easy, registration forms are available online or by calling their office.



A Prayer For Our Students

Lord, thank you for the **unique gifts** of every child as they transition into a new school year. Fill each student with **fresh enthusiasm** and a heart that is excited to learn and grow. Cover them with your **enduring love**, give them **confidence and grace**, and equip them with the ability to **persevere** through trials. Bless their teachers with **wisdom, understanding, and a heart to serve**, as they embark on the journey together! **Amen!**



Mission Interpretation

It's What We Do



HARVEST APPLES WITH AGAR!

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2:00 p.m. America's Grow A Row is a local free-produce effort providing a million+ pounds of fresh fruits and veggies annually. Please join us at Riamede Orchard. All ages welcome (supervision required for those under 12). See Howard with questions.

AFPC JOINS



Amazon.Smile gives .5% of your eligible purchases to charity of your choice!

Click on <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/22-6034637>

OR:

1. In web browser address bar, type smile.amazon.com & click enter.
2. (If your Amazon account does not already have you logged in, go ahead and log into your account.)
3. Click "Supporting" under white Amazon search bar for drop down menu. Type in Alexandria First Presbyterian Church in the box, and click search.
4. Alexandria First Presbyterian Church will appear (Milford, NJ), click select . . . *start shopping!*



AGAR grocery store gleaning continues year-round and would love your help. Join the AFPC volunteers and drive Clinton Shop Rite's donated produce to the Phillipsburg Branching Out Food Pantry. Sign-ups are posted on the bulletin board, or see any Mission Team members



CARING HAND CRAFTERS (CHC)

Stop by the mission bulletin board for info, fun and inspiration!

See Pati Tiedeman or Alice Hansen to support this compassionate project!



2019 PEACE & GLOBAL WITNESS OFFERING – SUNDAY, OCTOBER 6

Presbytery USA continually strives to reach worldwide basic needs, and this offering is one way you can help. Please see the pamphlets in October 6's bulletin for additional information, and please use the pew envelopes to place your donation dollars in the Offering plates during service. More information to follow in October "Branches."

submitted by Lainey Johns

Worship Assistants

- Sept 1** John McDowall
Sept 8 Laney Johns
Sept 15 Nancy Schumann
Sept 22 Pat Keefe
Sept 29 Matt Butz

Ushers

- Sept 1** Jeanne Cole, Martha Harrison
Sept 8 Gunderman family
Sept 15 Tammy Sassaman, Carol Van Norman
Sept 22 Navarro family
Sept 29 Carroll family



Communion

- Sept 1** Brad Bondor, Doug Bondor,
Lois Bondor, Sharon Solomon

Special Dates

Also see the main calendar on page 12

- Sept 1** Communion, blessing of the backpacks
Sept 8 Rally Day, picnic
Sept 11 Session/Elder training
Sept 15 Commissioning, Sunday school resumes
Sept 17 Grow-a-Row

Coming Up

- Oct 1** World Communion
Oct 9 Session/Deacons



Our Ministry Team Officers

- Building and Property** Craig Bender (E), Jim Hansen (E)
Christian Education Mary Goldman (E), Laurie Gregory (D),
Cyndi McDowall (E)
Evangelism/Membership Lois Bondor (E), Karen Pardonner (D),
Sharon Solomon (D)
Mission Interpretation Stacy Butz (D), Steve Pardonner (E),
Howard Thomas (E)
Nominating LuAnn Keefe (E), Cyndi McDowall (E)
Personnel Joan Carroll (E), Helen Jones (D), Flora Nielsen (E)
Stewardship and Finance Pat Keefe (D), Robin Vogel (E)
Worship and Music LuAnn Keefe (E), Flora Nielsen (E),
Tammy Sassaman (D) (E: Elder, D: Deacon)



The vision of Alexandria First Presbyterian Church is to gather in God's grace and to be led by the Holy Spirit. We joyfully worship, prayerfully seek, and gratefully share as a loving family growing in Jesus Christ.

THE DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF BRANCHES IS THE 3rd THURSDAY OF THE MONTH

Branches is a publication of Alexandria First Presbyterian Church (USA), 141 Little York-Mount Pleasant Road, Milford, NJ 08848. The newsletter is published monthly—except during August—to inform members and friends of church programs, news, and events. *Branches* is online in the "News/Our Newsletter" tab at

www.alexpres.org

Editor: churchoffice@alexpres.org

Alexandria First Presbyterian Church of Mount Pleasant

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Milford, NJ 08848
Web: www.alexpres.org
Office: 908-996-4333

THE STAFF of ALEXANDRIA CHURCH
Reverend Nicholas C. Hatch
Pastor

Jerry Phelps
Director of Music Ministry

Pati Tiedeman
Administrative Assistant



How to Reach the Pastor

Rev. Nick Hatch

- Through the church office Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. 908-996-4333
- By the church's website on the "contact us" link: www.alexpres.org
- Via his email: nhatch@alexpres.org

Alexandria First Presbyterian Church September 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 10:00 Worship, communion, blessing of the backpacks 11:15 Refreshments	2 Labor Day Church offices closed	3 9:00 Bulletin deadline 7:00 Boy Scouts	4 9:00 Session materials due	5 7:00 Chancel Choir	6	7 11:00 Memorial service
8 Rally Day 10:00 Worship 11:15 Church picnic, see p. 4	9	10 9:00 Bulletin deadline 5:45 Presbytery 7:00 Boy Scouts	11 7:00 Session	12 tbd Worship and Music Team	13	14
15 10:00 Worship, commissioning, new sermon series begins, see p 5 10:15 Sunday school	16	17 9:00 Bulletin deadline 2:00 Grow-a-Row 7:00 Boy Scouts	18 9:30 Bible study resumes	19 6:00 Junior Choir 6:30 Youth Choir	20	21
22 10:00 Worship 10:15 Sunday school	23	24 9:00 Bulletin deadline 7:00 Boy Scouts 7:00 Building and Property Team	25 9:30 Bible study	26	27	28
29 10:00 Worship 10:15 Sunday school	30	Deacon of the Week Sept 1 Laurie Gregory Sept 8 Pat Keefe Sept 15 Karen Pardonner Sept 22 Tammy Sassaman Sept 29 Sharon Solomon				