

Branches

Alexandria First Presbyterian Church

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

October 2020

141 Little York-Mount Pleasant Road - Milford, New Jersey 08848
Facebook: Alexandria First Presbyterian Church of Mount Pleasant
908-996-4333 churchoffice@alexpres.org www.alexpres.org

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

John 15:5

A Note from Nick

Dear Friends,

Last month we had our first outdoor worship service. Prior to the worship we were riddled with questions and worries . . . “would anyone come?” . . . “would it feel like worship?” . . . “would the weather be good?” . . . “would people have trouble wearing masks and social distancing?”



And even though the weather forecast originally called for rain, we ended up with a beautiful Sunday morning! And even though we worried that no one would come, we ended up with almost 70 people in attendance!

Being able to worship together, no matter the circumstances, turned out being just the medicine that we need during these trying times! Sure we would rather not have to wear masks, and we'd absolutely rather sing, have choir and fellowship like we normally do . . . but just the ability to be together was a huge blessing!

So we will try outdoor worship two more times in October, on the 11th and 25th. And again, bring your lawn chair and wear a mask, and let's all pray for good weather. But ultimately, as I said in my sermon, “Wherever two or three are gathered, Jesus Christ is there.” This is a reminder to us that even when we are sitting in the parking lot worshipping, or on our couch watching worship on our televisions or smart phones . . . Jesus continues to be present and the Spirit is at work!

Hope to see you on October 11th and 25th at 10:00 a.m. in the church parking lot!

In Christ,

Pastor Nick



Tending the Flock

How to Reach 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

Join Us in Worship

Join us for an online worship experience each Sunday at 10 a.m. by accessing our website or Facebook. This Sunday's service, and several of the most recent are also available 24/7.

Our Ministry Teams

- Building and Property: Craig Bender (E), Larry Cascio (E)
- Christian Education: Mary Goldman, Laurie Gregory (D), Cyndi McDowall (E)
- Evangelism/Membership: Lois Bondor (E), Karen Pardonner (D), Howard Thomas (E), Carol Van Norman (D)
- Mission Interpretation: Stacy Butz (D), Marie Knapp (E), Barbara Pederson (D), Larry Reinfeld (E)
- Nominating: LuAnn Keefe (E)
- Personnel: Joan Carroll (E), Flora Nielsen (E)
- Stewardship and Finance: Pat Keefe (D), Steve Pardonner (E), Robin Vogel (E)
- Worship and Music: LuAnn Keefe (E), Liz McMahan (D), Flora Nielsen (E), Tammy Sassaman (D)

(E: Elder, D: Deacon)

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 October that Michael Warren Folmar, Ryan Koeller, Kelsey Kunich, Tayler McGuire, and Claire Allen Parsons were baptized. Congratulations and blessings upon being a child of God!

New Officers

We extend our thanks to the new slate of church officers—the elders and deacons who help the wheels of the church spin so smoothly. Welcome to Larry Cascio, LuAnn Keefe, Marie Knapp, Flora Nielsen, Larry Reinfeld, and Robin Vogel who will be serving as elders. Several of these faithful servants have either re-upped for another term or are filling the unexpired terms of previous elders. Our new deacons are Liz McMahan and Barbara Pederson. Carol Van Norman has agreed to serve a second 3-year term.

October Happenings!

October 4: Online worship at 10 a.m., virtual communion for World Communion Sunday

October 7: Lunch Bunch, 12 p.m.

October 11: Outdoor worship, baptism, brief congregation meeting beginning at 10 a.m.

October 18: Online worship at 10 a.m., pumpkin picking at 1:30 p.m.

October 21: Lunch Bunch, 12 p.m.

October 25: Outdoor worship, ordination and installation of new officers

*In the event of inclement weather on the 11th or 25th
the outdoor worship will be cancelled
and virtual worship will be posted online instead.*

Congregational Meeting

October 11 | 10 a.m.

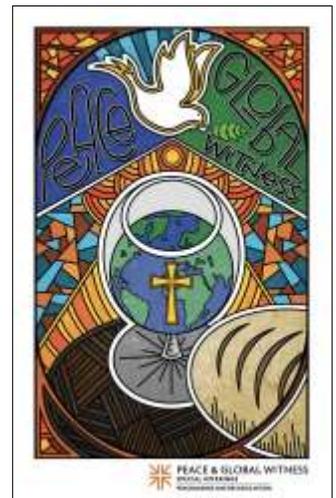
The Call of the meeting: The Session has called a brief congregational meeting to be held immediately after outdoor worship on October 11, 2020. The purpose of this meeting is to hear and act on a report of the Nominating Team.

October Birthdays

1 Kaylee Gunderman	10 Lolita Navarro	12 Keith Erwin	25 Renee Navarro
2 Steve Cameron	Melinda Parsons	15 Karen Santangelo	26 Andrew Meyer
Charlie Tiedeman	11 Helen Jones	16 Bruce Hunt	27 Gene Geissingner
4 Max Andreychak	Pat Keefe	18 Nora Hatch	31 Conor Goldman
5 Jillian Moran	12 Matt Butz	23 Betty Macaulay	Meghan Kunich
			Belle Sassaman

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 and 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 this month. Donate to this special denominational offering thru our secure online service through our website. Enter your gift under "general operating" AND fill in the space with "Peace Offering." You can also mail your check to the church with "Peace Offering" written in the memo section. Speak with Marie Knapp if you have any questions.



World Communion Sunday

October 4, 2020

On Sunday, October 4th congregations around the globe will celebrate World Communion Sunday. World Communion Sunday began in 1936 in the Presbyterian Church and was adopted by the Federal Council of Churches in 1940. Since then the celebration has grown into an international ecumenical celebration of Christian unity.

The key word for World Communion Sunday is communion, or unity. It is a day when we mark the almost universal Christian practice of breaking bread with one another and remembering both the night of Jesus' betrayal—when Jesus instituted what we now call the Lord's Supper as a lasting remembrance—and of Jesus' sacrifice. Accounts of the last supper feature prominently, by virtue of World Communion Sunday being a celebration of the Eucharist. But there is a flavor of Pentecost as well, when people from around the Mediterranean world came together in mutual understanding and inspiration by the power of the Holy Spirit. World Communion Sunday is a time for remembering that around the globe—in different languages, with different traditions and customs, and in various forms of liturgy—the Lord's Supper is celebrated throughout Christendom. World Communion Sunday serves two purposes: it is a joyous and meaningful partaking in Jesus' sacred meal with his friends, and a mind-opening exposure to different Christian traditions from around the world.

World Communion Sunday is on the Christian calendar for a reason: it can and should be a time of profound Christian unity, marked by our shared celebration of the Lord's Supper. Jesus instituted the first such meal, and World Communion Sunday is a helpful way to celebrate the liturgy "in remembrance of me."



Clothing Drive Update

Thanks to your generous donations, we raised \$252.10 for the next Youth Group Mission Trip during the first half of 2020. Yes, mission trips will resume one day, so let's help them be financially prepared for this wonderful service. We will continue our ongoing clothing drive as the seasons change.

The We Kids Consignment Shop in Flemington is open. They sell men's and women's clothing in addition to children's clothing, toys and books. Anything that is not sold at the shop will be donated to the North Hunterdon Thrift Shop and the Trenton Rescue Mission.

Items accepted are men's, women's and children's clothing, boots, shoes, sneakers, belts, purses, jewelry and outerwear. You can also donate toys and games in great condition and children's books.

Karen Pardonner is happy to coordinate individual contactless drop-offs at church or her house, whichever is easiest for you. She can also arrange pick-ups if you'd like to leave things outside. Please reach out to Karen for details.





Alexandria First Presbyterian Church

The Reverend Nicholas C. Hatch, Pastor
141 Little York-Mount Pleasant Road
Milford, New Jersey 08848
908-996-4333
www.alexpres.org

October 7, 2020

Dear Members of Alexandria First Presbyterian Church,

We are writing today to notify you that Pati Tiedeman is resigning as church administrative assistant, effective October 16, 2020. Pati is seeking other opportunities but will remain a valuable member of our church congregation. Pati has served in this capacity for 26 years and has experienced many changes as we have grown and changed. We sincerely want to thank her for the contributions made over the years and wish her many blessings and success in all future endeavors. Although we will miss her presence in the office, we are glad to know that we will continue to see Pati's smiling face amid our congregation. Please feel free to reach out individually to Pati if you'd like to convey any appreciative messages.

A message from Pati:

I would like to express my gratitude to the congregation, Pastor Nick, the Personnel Team, and all the various ministry teams for a wonderful partnership through the years. I fondly recall my early days "at the desk" when the church office was just a small cubby where the current choir robe closet now stands. My trusted companions then were an old Olympia typewriter and a ream of carbon paper. Today, I see how far we've come, growing technologically and as a solid community of faith. My tenure has brought me much joy, especially the unique experiences of working with many music directors, pastors, and interim ministers. And the members and friends. Definitely the members and friends.

To say I will not miss serving the church through the church office would be an untruth. I will cherish the memories of having worked there. Always.

Again, thank you Pati for your service and dedication to AFPC!

In Christ,

Pastor Nick and the Personnel Team



News from Presbyterian Church USA

Millions Cleared in Medical Debt

In a year like no other, five faith communities in southeastern Minnesota have worked together to clear more than \$2 million in medical debt for 1,057 households in Minnesota and Wisconsin. “Even little churches in small towns can make a big impact in their communities,” said the Rev. Rosendahl, pastor of Grace Presbyterian Church in Winona, Minnesota, one of the churches involved in the medical debt-forgiveness fundraising. This will give these families a chance to start over and build better credit, she said.

Once the funds were raised, the churches partnered with the New York-based RIP Medical Debt, a nonprofit with expertise in finding and purchasing medical debt in bulk for a fraction of its original cost. “We are so thankful for the overwhelming generosity of our churches,” said Rev. Franko of Cedar Valley Lutheran Church. “Clergy may have a lot of ideas, but it is our congregations that make them real. They gave from their abundance, knowing that they will likely never know whose life they were changing.”

RIP Medical Debt targets the portfolios for those in or near poverty level, using donors’ funds to wipe out medical debt, beginning with those who need it the most. The debt is erased millions of dollars at a time for pennies on the dollar. Then families are sent forgiveness notices to let them know the debt is gone.

“My community is made up of college students, so they have limited means,” said a spokesperson from Lutheran Campus of Winona. “By partnering with RIP Medical Debt, their small donations created a huge difference in the lives of many people.” According to the website of RIP Medical Debt, 79 million Americans choose between paying their medical bills or paying for basic needs like food and shelter.

Tammy Warren | Presbyterian News Service

Hayride & Pumpkin Pickin’
Sunday, October 18
1:30 p.m.
Trauger’s Farm Market
Kintnersville, PA
 Cider and gingersnaps provided
 Pumpkins, apples, other items available for purchase
 Be sure to look for the kettle corn stand!
 RSVP to Lois Bondor is requested.
 The cost is \$5pp.