



# ***THE TOWER***

*First Presbyterian Church  
37 Church Mall, Springfield, NJ 07081*

*[www.SpringfieldPresbyterian.org](http://www.SpringfieldPresbyterian.org) 973-379-4320*

VOL. 76 NO. 02

OCTOBER'S THEME:

## **MISSION AND OUTREACH**

### **A Message from World Mission**

Presbyterians do mission in partnership. We believe that doing mission in partnership broadens our awareness of how interconnectional God's mission is at the local, national and global levels. The one table around which we gather is God's table and the one mission to which we are called is God's mission.

Together with our global partners, PC(USA) mission co-workers engage in life-transforming ministries in 80 countries and help us understand issues of ministry across the world. Despair, poverty and violence are being overcome in the name of Jesus Christ. Hope is being restored and new life is springing forth. Guided by the Matthew 25 vision, World Mission is seeking new ways to come alongside our partners and nurture faith-filled relationships based in equity, mutuality and justice rooted in God's love and the Gospel of Jesus.

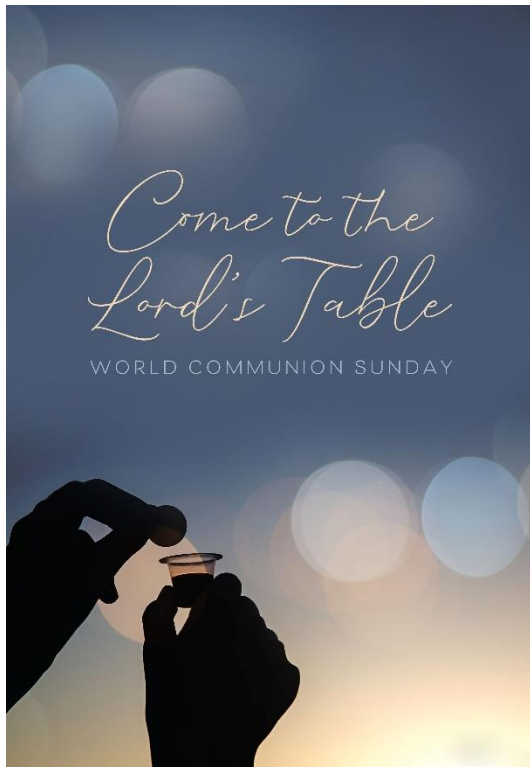
True mission partnership is about building relationships, learning from one another and walking together in faith and friendship. Together we can build the body of Christ around the world.

#### **Notice of Session Meeting in October**

Session will meet on Monday, October 2<sup>nd</sup> at  
7:00pm in-person and via zoom (Hybrid).

Elders: please contact Dawn Clarke if you are unable to attend – 848-235-1630





This year we will acknowledge World Communion Sunday with a "Parade of Breads" from cultures and countries near and far, presented by our youth and supplied by our Deacons.

The mix of breads will also be offered in the communion service in place of our usual white bread. The breads will then be carried to coffee hour as part of an **Agape Feast** which is a fellowship meal recalling the meals Jesus shared with disciples during his ministry and expressing the koinonia (Greek for community, sharing, fellowship). A variety of spreads will complement the breads along with hot and cold beverages and delicious cookies. A great celebration for all!



Oct 1<sup>st</sup> is also the culmination of **Peacemaking**. This fall we have been focusing on the PC(USA)Peace and Global Witness Special Offering. 25% of all the monies collected will remain with our local congregation to be gifted to an organization we feel is meaningful great work in Peacemaking. This year's recipient is AFSP, (Association for Suicide Prevention). Another 25% will be sent on to the Presbytery to add to the Mission initiatives of the Presbytery of the Northeast. The remaining 50% will be sent onto the PCUSA Presbyterian Mission Agency. If you have not yet made a donation, there is still time! Please feel free to use Zelle, Paypal. [Donate@springfieldpresbyterian.org](mailto:Donate@springfieldpresbyterian.org) or mail a check to the church. Once all the funds are collected we will share with you the total so you know your gifts are appreciated and being put to good use.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I don't know if you happened to see footage of King Charles and Queen Camilla on their first state visit to France since being crowned. If you didn't no big deal. It was a typical state visit with pomp and circumstance and a whole host of photo ops, outfit changes and brief visits to special spots all culminating in a 'who's-who-packed' state dinner. Yawn.

What DID catch my eye was a very out of ordinary video of Madame Macron and Queen Camilla playing...ping pong. Yup, ping pong. I was more surprised to see Madame Macron stepping out her normal French reservedness than Queen Camilla who seems to like a good laugh like the rest of us. But watching them play ping pong was indeed surprising, then hilarious, and then bordering on torturous. In fact, it was too painful to watch so I exited the video before it was over.

I thought nothing more about it until Lisa Guida, our Christian Ed director eyed a ping pong table on Facebook by someone in Springfield who was discarding it. It was free for the taking, (including the paddles!) as long as it was removed by day's end. A bunch of us who had all been meeting at the Parish house started scrambling to find someone with a truck who was willing and able to get the job done. Lisa contacted the owner and thanks to Bill Phillips w/assistance from Ken Guida, we are now proud owners of a ping pong table! It needs a little work but I'm sure we can get it back to snuff and ready for use.

Herein lies an opportunity. Well actually a few opportunities, some that I am more eager to share with you than others.

Naturally, the immediate opportunity is to involve a few members to fix/fine tune it, so it is ready for use. Next is to announce our newest acquisition to this congregation, and ALL the congregations and users of the buildings. A little further out... is to use it for a future youth group, (which is in the early planning stages) and hopefully, then for use by students who will participate in A.S.H (After School Home) when it gets launched.

Now for the hard part, for me and for some of you...

I just looked up the birthyears of Madame Macron and Queen Camilla. Yikes! They've got more than a decade on me. They're fit enough to play ping pong. I'm lucky to get 5000 steps a day and still take my recycling to the curb.

Takeaway #1. Let's keep our eyes peeled for the gifts that God is offering us for future purposes.

Takeaway # 2. Let's make sure this gift is used to bring students and adults alike together for fellowship and fun.

Takeaway #3. *"Why do [I] look at the speck of sawdust in my [neighbor's] eye and pay no attention to the plank in [my] own eye?" (Matt 7)*

Takeaway #4. This month's worship theme is **Mission and Outreach**. How is God calling ALL of us to participate in Mission and Outreach? **Hint:** it starts with outstretching our hands and our souls and perhaps even our bodies.

Lastly, deepest apologies the Madame Macron and Queen Camilla.

Grace and Peace,

Rev Jen



06-May Smith  
15- Ruth Ammerman, Jessica Hecking  
17-Donald Dauser  
19-Amirah-Grace Sarno  
22-Ifeyinwa Okobi

If you wish to be included in our birthday list and do not see your name, please contact the office to be added to the database.



Dan and Danielle pose with Seamus and Charlotte Rose on September 10<sup>th</sup>. The presentation to the Congregation was made by Elder Lisa Guida, grandmother of Charlotte. Many members of the family were present to witness Rev. Jen at the historic font baptize this child of God, then get a closer look, as Rev. Jen walked Charlotte throughout the sanctuary. What a blessing it is to have four generations of this family worship here! Welcome to the Church of Jesus Christ, Charlotte!

## A Lesson from the Mangrove

*Blessed are those who trust in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD. They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green; in the year of drought, it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit. Jeremiah 17:7-8 NRSV*

If you ever have the chance to visit the island of Puerto Rico, you might be lucky enough to experience the beauty of “manglares” (mangrove in English,) a unique ecosystem of trees that have the capacity to live in the estuaries of rivers. Puerto Rico’s native red mangrove is particularly resilient and can thrive in the mix of fresh and salt water of the delta. In some real ways, a “manglar” is a single organism where individual trees support each other, share a common root system, and give shelter and food to a great variety of birds, reptiles, amphibians, and small mammals.

What a great lesson for us. The manglar is firmly planted by (actually, **in** the) water and even when in drought conditions it continues to thrive and provide. Compare that with the Cují, a solitary, sad tree that grows in the sandy wilderness of the northwest side of Venezuela, where I lived for a while. Its only noticeable quality is its ability to bend with the wind and not break, but it bears no fruit, provide scant shelter and shade, and serves little ecological purpose, other than extracting from the sand what little water available.

Why is Jeremiah using this rather obvious metaphor? Who is he speaking to? Jeremiah is preaching to a group of Israelites who have been taken captive to Babylon. The temple in Jerusalem has been destroyed and the ruling class has been exiled. If you read a few chapters before this passage, you will hear Jeremiah’s admonitions to the people of Israel (especially those in a position of power) to change their ways. The admonition went unheard, the rulers’ “*reliance on mortals*” has led them to enslavement. The people of Israel in exile are not going home any time soon, so they must learn to live together in better ways and extend their roots.

This is where Jeremiah tells the tired, struggling people of Israel that there is hope, as long as they trust in God. This is a message that is as relevant to our tired, and struggling people of today as it was back then. Let us learn to live together in better ways and extend our roots.

**As we enter the month of October with our emphasis on Outreach and Mission**, let us be “*planted by water*.” Let’s live like the mangrove, connected with one another in community, sharing the roots of our faith, been nourished by the Word of God, nourishing those who seek shelter and food in our midst and beyond. We can’t do this by ourselves but together we can.

*Prayer: We want to trust in You, O God, but sometimes it’s easier to rely on mortals. Lead us into the living waters of Your presence so that we can extend our roots and bear fruit, giving life and shelter to all who need it. Make us one with one another, so that we can be one with you. Amen.*



## **IN GRATITUDE**

*To the Pastors and Members of FPC-*

*Thank you for the gift of food, flowers and fellowship to our family as we mourned the death of Steve's father last month. The "slow good-bye" of Alzheimer's/Dementia is difficult for the patient and perhaps more so for the family caretakers who witness the daily decline. Your acts of kindness helped us get through the initial shock and grief, and then preparation to honor a life well-lived, prior to the disease. Many thanks to all who attended the visitation and sent notes of sympathy. Your support is truly appreciated.*

*-Linda and Steve Jurczak*



## **A MOMENT FOR HISTORY**

The third full weekend of each October, Union County Cultural and Heritage Committee promotes a free weekend for visitors to tour the nearly 30 historical locations in the county. In Springfield, we have the Cannon Ball House on Morris Avenue. Prior to the pandemic, the County had asked if the First Presbyterian Church would consider opening her doors that weekend, to build momentum for America's 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2026. We said, "YES!"

When the Springfield Historical Society docents tell the story of the Battle of Springfield on June 23, 1780, the story always includes Rev. Caldwell scooping up the Isaac Watts hymnals from this church and handing them to the soldiers to use the pages for wadding in their muskets, and the familiar rally call of, "Give 'em Watts, Boys!". Unfortunately, the pandemic closed our doors, and when we re-opened, many of the members who were well-versed with the church history were no longer with us.

If you have an interest in learning the colonial history of this church and of the iconic church that was rebuilt from the ashes in 1791 so that this Congregation may worship here each week, please call Linda Jurczak in the office.

We'd love to be able to participate in the historic open houses, and welcome visitors to learn about the rich history of yesterday, and experience today's outreach to the community.

# October 2023-Mission and Outreach

## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SPRINGFIELD

Sanctuary/Chapel: 210 Morris Avenue  
 Parish House/Office: 37 Church Mall  
 Springfield, New Jersey 07081  
 Phone: 973-379-4320

Office E-mail: [Office@SpringfieldPresbyterian.org](mailto:Office@SpringfieldPresbyterian.org)  
 Rev. Jen Van Zandt: [Pastor@springfieldpresbyterian.org](mailto:Pastor@springfieldpresbyterian.org)  
 Rev. Roberto Fois: [RFois@springfieldpresbyterian.org](mailto:RFois@springfieldpresbyterian.org)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b> <i>World Communion Sunday &amp; Peace and Global Witness Offering</i>  <i>Service 10:15am</i> <i>Fellowship 11:15am</i>	<b>2</b> <i>Prayer time 8am</i>  <i>Session 7pm</i>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>  <i>Prayer time 4pm</i>	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> <i>Worship Service 10:15am</i> <i>Fellowship 11:15am</i>	<b>9</b> <i>Prayer time 8am</i>  <i>Columbus / Indigenous People Day-</i>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>  <i>Prayer time 4pm</i>	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> <i>Worship Service 10:15am</i> <i>Fellowship 11:15am</i>  <i>Springfield Street Fair 11a-4p</i>	<b>16</b> <i>Prayer time 8am</i>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>  <i>Prayer time 4pm</i>	<b>21</b>  <i>4 Centuries Weekend</i>
<b>22</b> <i>Worship Service 10:15am</i> <i>Fellowship 11:15am</i>  <i>4 Centuries Weekend</i>	<b>23</b> <i>Prayer time 8am</i>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>  <i>Prayer time 4pm</i>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> <i>Worship Service 10:15am</i> <i>Fellowship 11:15am</i>	<b>30</b> <i>Prayer time 8am</i>	<b>31</b> 	The link for the zoom prayer meeting is as follows:  <a href="https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86941297429?pwd=bkxBTzNSVk1yT09TdWZxTXFSS0dGdz09">https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86941297429?pwd=bkxBTzNSVk1yT09TdWZxTXFSS0dGdz09</a>			

THE FIRST CONGREGATION  
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH AT SPRINGFIELD  
37 CHURCH MALL  
SPRINGFIELD, NJ 07081

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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**SAVE THE DATES!**

**November Events:**

- Prayer meetings via Zoom each Monday at 8am & Friday at 4pm
- Sunday, November 5th - Daylight Savings time ends (clocks “fall” back one hour Sat. night- 11/4)
  - Special All Souls Sunday Worship Service 10:15am
- Tuesday, November 7<sup>th</sup> – Election Day
- Saturday, November 11<sup>th</sup> – Veteran’s Day
- Monday, November 20<sup>th</sup> – Community Thanksgiving Service-TBA
- Thursday, November 23<sup>rd</sup> - Thanksgiving
- **FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PRAYS** - We meet via Zoom for 20-30 min to pray for each other, the needs of the world, our country, state, county and town and for any other good reason. Meeting ID: 869 4129 7429 Passcode: 411879 One tap mobile +13092053325,,86941297429#,,,,\*411879# US Please join us via video or phone **each Monday at 8:00am and Friday at 4:00pm.**

**Prayer Works!**

The link for the meeting is as follows:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86941297429?pwd=bkxBTzNSVk1yT09TdWZxTXFSS0dGdz09>