



# THE TOWER

*First Presbyterian Church*

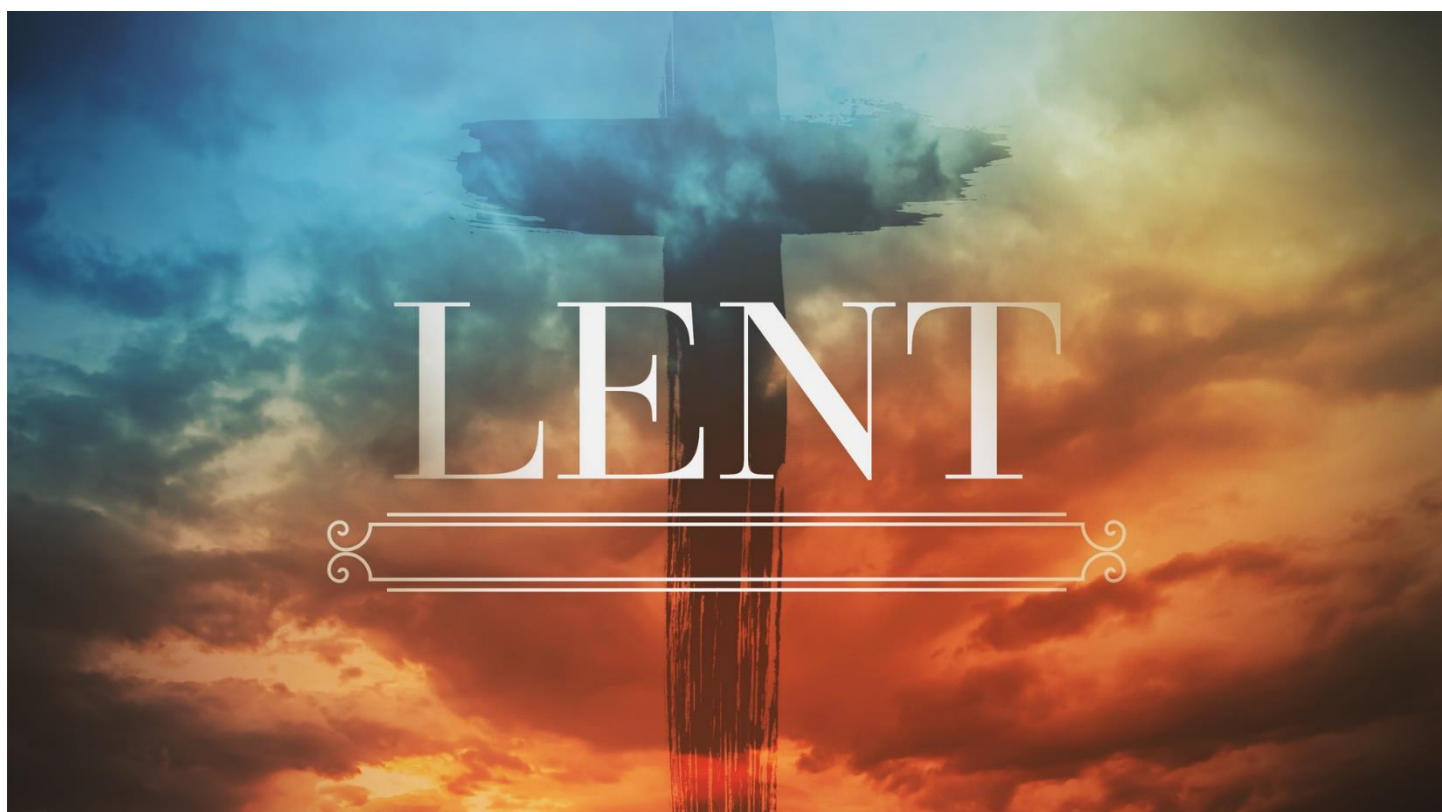
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February 2024



The Season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday (February 14<sup>th</sup> ) and continues for 40 days to Palm Sunday on March 24<sup>th</sup> . The following week is referred to as *Holy Week*, leading to the Resurrection of the Lord on Easter Sunday, March 31<sup>st</sup> . We encourage all to participate in the many opportunities offered during lent to enrich your faith.

Event details can be found throughout this newsletter.

## **MERRY CHRISTMAS/HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

Here is a photo of (most of the staff) enjoying food, fellowship and a gift exchange on Jan 14<sup>th</sup> at Hunan Spring thanks to the generosity of you, the members! A good time was had by all. (Missing are Heather: camera shy and Pastor Roberto who was out sick)



Linda J., Rev. Jen, Liliya K., Steve K., Linda A., Katie Z., Lisa G. & Chris O.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In the midst of this crazy-cold winter, it's always nice to have something to look forward to. While the thaw and warming of longer, sunny days is still a way off, there IS something we can look forward to, **Valentine's Day!** While some say that Valentine's Day is for kids or even a "made-up holiday" and an excuse for Hallmark and candy makers to increase profits, this year's Valentine's Day can take on a more special meaning for us as Christians, because it's also **Ash Wednesday**.

While at first glance, having Ash Wednesday on Valentine's Day might feel like a bit of a downer or even an oxymoron, we have planned a meaningful Ash Wednesday this year. The Outreach committee is planning a wonderful and warming Lasagna dinner and thanks to Pastor Roberto who will make the lasagnas (one meat and one veg) , we know it will be delicious!

Then we will move into the sanctuary for a meaningful Ash Wednesday service which will include the imposition of ashes. While historically Presbyterians had felt that the imposition of ashes was a penitential rite only for our Catholic sisters and brothers, it is growing in popularity in Protestant churches and can be a very meaningful experience for all involved. The dinner will be at 6:30PM. Worship is at 7:30. I hope that you may be able to attend both. If you need a ride, please let me know.

Further, since Lent begins on Valentine's Day, our Lenten theme this year will be "**Love: How to love God and others as God loves us**". While this may seem cute or even shallow on the surface, Loving God and others can be a meaningful daily discipline, especially when God feels distant and/or our loved ones stress us or make us crazy!

To help us though our Lenten journey Pastor Roberto and I will also be leading a weekly Lenten Devotional Study throughout Lent, Wednesdays at 6:30 PM, which will also include Soup/bread. This year's devotional guide is Jesus, Guide My Life by Sr. Joyce Rupp. Rupp is a prolific author, and this is a daily devotional so even if you can't make the weekly study, you can follow along with her daily devotions, each day in Lent through to Easter. If you can only make a few of the Wednesday sessions, that works too because there are 6 readings to choose from each week. Pastor Roberto and I will also be preaching though some of the texts Rupp uses each Sunday in Lent. You can order the book through Amazon in print \$14 or Kindle for 10.50. If you need us to order you one, please let me know ASAP.

I hope and pray that this gives you all an approachable and meaningful roadmap for Lent and that you will be able to enjoy the journey in the company of one another, in love.

Grace and Peace,

Rev Jen





## **SOUP & BREAD IS BACK!**

As we approach the season of Lent, we are bringing back a wonderful tradition of Wednesday Soup & Bread.

Starting on Wednesday – February 21<sup>st</sup> – we will meet every Wednesday at 6:30 for Soup & Bread, Prayers, and a reflection based on “Jesus, Guide My Life” by Sr. Joyce Rupp.

The meeting will continue every Wednesday of Lent until Holy Week.

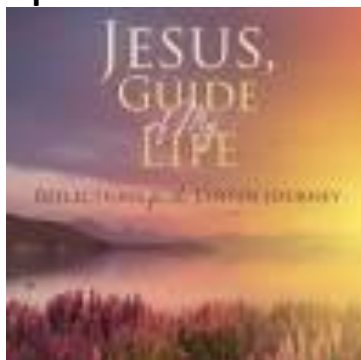
Participation is free, but we ask that you sign up to participate so we can calculate how much soup to make.

Volunteers are needed to prepare the soup (two varieties every Wednesday) and to help with the setup and cleanup.

Looking forward to sharing this time with you.

Rev. Jen and Pastor Roberto

**Sign-up in the chapel or call the office at 973-379-4320.**





Feb 1 - Lynn Doll  
Feb 2 - Clarence Davis  
Feb 3 - Linda Amiano  
Ken Guida  
Jean Sim  
Feb 5 - Eileen Clark  
Heather Hecking  
Feb 6 - Chase Werner

Feb 7 - Ryan Doremus  
Feb 14 - Donald Hartman  
Feb 16 - Alyssa Williams  
Feb 26 - Melissa Guida Bliss  
Feb 28 - Walter Peterson



*If you don't see your birthday listed,  
please provide month and date to the office.  
We are happy to celebrate with all of our members!*



## **FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SPRINGFIELD SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

Greetings and best wishes from the Scholarship Committee as 2024 begins. FPCS is fortunate to be able to support a scholarship program to help with educational expenses. Scholarships are available to eligible members of the Church or dependent of an employee, for whom the employee is/was the parent or legal guardian based on the applicant's character and academic standing. The scholarships are to support post-secondary education including training schools, online certifications, college, and graduate school endeavors. Direct inquiries to [scholarship@springfieldpresbyterian.org](mailto:scholarship@springfieldpresbyterian.org) or current committee members for any questions and application information.

Committee members: Lynn Doll, Art Biber, Heather Francis, Rev. Jennifer Van Zandt

Committee chair: Kristin Ruebling-Jass

## What Happens When We Break Bread Together

*They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. -Acts 2:42*

From the first time we came together for fellowship after our Sunday morning service, I knew that I share the same passion for food and fellowship. I dislike blanket statements, but I would venture to say that the most joyful time we can experience is to be together around a table, sharing a meal, breaking bread.

That is why we are bringing back DINNER & A MOVIE, an opportunity to come together, share in a meal, and enjoy each other's company in a friendly and light environment.

DINNER & A MOVIE is also a great opportunity to invite neighbors and friends of all traditions and backgrounds to spend time with us and discover what a good group of people we are together.

**The first DINNER & A MOVIE event will take place on Saturday, Feb 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6:00pm in the auditorium of the Parish House (37 Church Mall). We will have a catered dinner and we ask participants to bring a small dessert such as cookies or a small cake.**

Equally important to know, is that we are organizing transportation for those who prefer not to drive in the evening.

Please use the sign-up sheet in the chapel to reserve your spot and to let us know whether you need a ride or can offer a ride. If you are not able to get to the chapel, please call the office to reserve your spot.

The movie for Saturday, February 3<sup>rd</sup> is **HEAVEN IS FOR REAL**. A young boy's near-death hospital experience – and his story of visiting heaven – convince his preacher father, but cause doubt among the rest of their family and friends. The movie is based on a true story.

We sincerely hope to see you there with your friends and neighbors.

*Let us pray: "Gracious God, in the person of Jesus you showed us the value of breaking bread together. We ask for your blessings on this and other events where we imitate Jesus. Amen."*

# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SPRINGFIELD

## February 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Notes: Choir rehearses Thursday evenings at 7pm-Chapel and Sunday mornings at 9:30am in Sanctuary  Front Office Hours : M-F 9-N, 1-3pm 973-379-4320 office@springfieldpresbyterian.org Rev Jen: Pastor@springfieldpresbyterian.org Pastor Roberto: rfois@springfieldpresbyterian.org				1	2	3 Dinner and Movie 6pm- Parish House Auditorium. Sign up required.
4  Communion Worship Service 10:15am	5 Session 7pm	6	7	8 Choir rehearsal -7pm	9	10
11 Worship Service 10:15am	12	13	14 Ash Wednesday  6:30pm dinner 7:30pm service with disposition of ashes. -Church	15 Choir rehearsal -7pm	16	17
18 Contemporary Worship Service 10:15am with Band	19	20	21 Soup & Bread 6:30pm-Chapel Lenten Bible Study Week #1 of 5 7pm - Chapel	22 Choir rehearsal -7pm	23	24
25 Worship Service 10:15am	26	27	28 Soup & Bread 6:30pm-Chapel Lenten Bible Study Week #2 of 5 7pm - Chapel	29 Choir rehearsal -7pm		

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

PLACE LABEL HERE

**No matter who you are,  
or where you are in your life's journey,  
you are welcome here.**



**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>**