



A Message from Pastor Becca

On March 8, it will be one year since we have worshiped together in the sanctuary of the church building. **On March 14**, my Sunday morning routine will transform once again as I welcome those who are ready back into the sanctuary for the first time in a year. Coming back in is going to look a whole lot different from when we last departed worship, yet it is a step toward what will become our new normal. *The first thing you need to know is that if you are not ready to return to worship, worship will be available online every week.*

If you plan to come to worship, there will be precautions in place. Your session and particularly your reopening team have worked diligently to get the best reopening plan in place for our context. I want to take a moment to thank them for their leadership through these difficult times, their commitment and courage to lead has been a gift to each of us! Throughout this newsletter you will get all the technical information you need in order to fully participate in the in-person part of our hybrid worship. Worship will look different, you will need to wear your mask with your nose and mouth covered the entire service, we will not be singing together, we will not have robust call and response liturgy, we will not be greeting one another, and our seating arrangements will look different. I will be wearing a mask except when I am speaking, and we will have space between myself and the congregation to ensure the safest experience possible. Thanks to a clergy vaccination program, I have had both doses of the COVID 19 vaccine. Despite all the will not, cannot, and changes ***we will be together*** to worship God.

I want to use this space to talk about our relational commitment to one another as we reenter the building. We are committed to being a church community together, to serving one another in the name of Jesus, and caring deeply for one another. Returning to church amplifies this commitment to care for one another. We often do not know the whole story about a person's life, medical risks, and so forth. Each of us looks at the risks of this pandemic through very personal lenses. We each decide what the risks are worth it for us. When we reenter the building, we do so with a variety of experiences and varying levels of risk taking. Therefore, I remind you that in care for one another, it is of utmost importance that we are absolutely honest and committed to caring for one another. If you have been feeling ill, you need to stay home; if you have been exposed to COVID 19, you need to stay home. This is not because you are not welcome in worship but because of your commitment to loving and caring for your fellow worshipers. You may disagree with some of the precautions, yet they still must be followed, even as some of us are fully vaccinated. This is not a matter of politics, media coverage, or differing opinions, ***it is a matter of living our faith.***

I am looking forward to March 14 when I can see your faces (or eyes) again as I lead worship. Please join me in committing to our new way of worship as a means of living our faith and caring for one another. Together we are making strides toward a future that is still unfolding.

Gratefully,
Pastor Becca



February Session Summary

During the February meeting, Session members discussed the responses of the church survey about reopening the church for worship. Based upon the online and oral responses, most members responded that they would favor reopening the church for worship. Enough responders indicated that they would be willing to volunteer as greeters and tech people. Therefore, based upon these responses, **Session approved opening the church for worship.**

The next item that Session discussed was when this should occur. Several dates were brought up, but the date that Session approved was **March 14**. This date allowed for the information to be put in the March newsletter so that members could be notified and reminded of the COVID protocol that must be followed to enter the church. Both of these major decisions allow for Faith Church to worship Easter Sunday inside the church.

Another point of importance was a recent WJ Presbytery Called Meeting. Both Pastor Becca and Ginny Magnus attended this virtual meeting. The Called Meeting was to approve the recommended items that the Transition Team proposed for the reformation of our presbytery. The new name for our presbytery will now be The Presbytery For Southern New Jersey. It will include some additional churches in Burlington County and Monmouth County.

Virginia Magnus, Ed.D.
Clerk of Session



Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. (1 Peter 5:6)



Celebrating Reopening on Sunday March 14

Praise the Lord! After a full year of being closed to in-person worship due to the pandemic, we are now ready to reopen for in-person services. All 3 online worshipping formats will continue for those not quite ready to return. We have developed safety guidelines as required by the West Jersey Presbytery & will highlight them here.

- All entry and exit to the church will be via the side door at the parking lot & entry into the sanctuary will be from the middle side door only. Masks must be worn from the time we leave our cars until we return after the service.
- Pews have been marked off with social distancing in mind & have orange tape where people may sit. Some pews are blocked off completely. Thank you, Joyce S. for our unique sleep mat strips being used for that purpose. A Greeter will be available to help you with the new layout.
- Pews have been emptied of all multi use items such as bibles, hymnals, cards etc. You are welcome to bring your own bible and scriptures will also be on the screens.
- There will be no singing or verbal responses during worship at this time. Offering will be by drop in basket or you can continue with online giving. Fellowship time will not be safely possible at this time.
- The sanctuary will be sanitized before & after each service.
- There will be no Christian Education at this time.
- Communion will be offered using self-contained & individual juice with wafer. These will be picked up as you enter the church. Masks can be dropped briefly to partake of the elements depending on your comfort level.



It has been a very long & difficult year for many of us. We look forward to the time when we can burst out in song, hug each other again & linger over a coffee & goodies in the Fellowship area after church. We are most grateful to Pastor Becca for holding the church together during extraordinarily challenging times. In many ways, God continues to bless us all & we ask His guidance as we enter a new phase here at Faith Church. Hope to see you on Sunday March 14th.

The reopening team: Pastor Becca, Linda Hamilton, John Heald, Lorraine Kunkle



One Great Hour of Sharing

Around the world, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity. The three programs supported by One Great Hour of Sharing: 1) Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, 2) the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and 3) Self Development of People, all work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need. From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance, and hope.

Received during the season of Lent, each gift to OGHS helps to improve the lives of people in these challenging situations and gives us a way to share God's love with our neighbors.

Again this year, there will be a special mailing to the congregation with more information and an offering envelope that can be mailed back to the church with your donation or placed in the offering basket at church. Please do so by Easter Sunday, **April 4**.

Thank you for your generous support to One Great Hour of Sharing for a world in great need.

Mission Elder, Lorraine Kunkle



For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. (Jeremiah 29:11)



EASTER FLOWERS It's Time to Order!

It is Lent! That means it is time to think about the flowers that will decorate our sanctuary as many members gather there on Easter.



If you want to donate for the purchasing of flowers, please make out a check to Faith Church with "Easter Flowers" written in the Memo.

Donations are needed by **March 21st**.

If you donate, you are welcome to flowers anytime following the Easter Service. The remaining flowers will be planted around the church.

For questions, **please contact Sondra C.** at 856-797-8620 or sondraRDH@gmail.com.

Include the following, with your check:

Name:

Donation:

Dedication:



*Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;
in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. (Proverbs 3:5-6)*



SLEEP MAT UPDATE!

Though we have not yet met in person, several Sleep Mat volunteers have been busy cutting, looping and crocheting - and in new and creative ways, too. (See the cross design that Joyce created!) Joyce is on her third mat and several more have been completed and others are in progress. We are grateful to those working at home to keep this ministry going.

We have decided to postpone meetings in March, but are hoping that *maybe* we can meet in April. Meanwhile, **please contact Bonnie** if you need supplies. There are five large garbage bags filled with bags in the deacon closet which need to be flattened and cut.



HOPE GARDEN – A Few Plots Available!

Season 11 is about to begin as we look forward to another productive year of growing and giving!

There are several individual garden plots available right now. If you are interested in tending your own garden space, along with Helping Other People Eat, **please contact Mary C.** It's a great community fellowship experience. Beginner gardeners are welcome!



Volunteers to help with the main community garden are always needed. Help with planting, watering, weeding and harvesting throughout the season is greatly appreciated!

'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' (Matthew 22:37-39)



SMALL WORLD NEWS

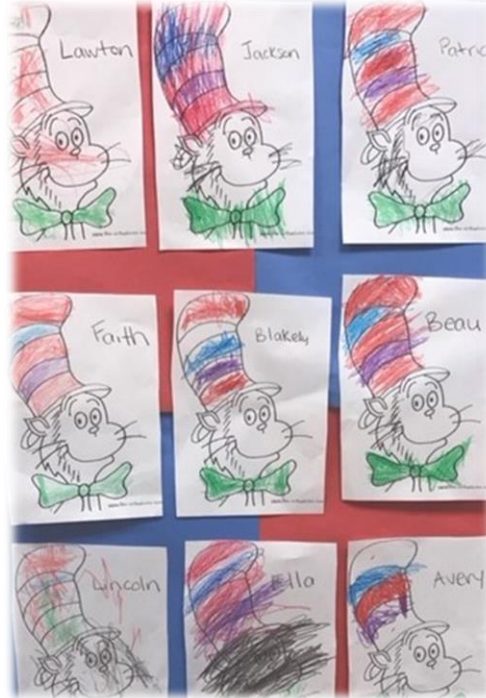
Small World is hoping March is all about the lambs and less about the lions! We really want to get back out on our playground.

This month it is all about the color green, Dr. Seuss and Easter preparation.

Our TK and Pre-K students will do a virtual Read Across America with the students at Shawnee HS.

At the end of the month, Pastor Becca will come into the classes and read the story 'Twas the Morning of Easter!'

We are so glad to hear that our FPC friends will be back in the building this month.



Newsletter Editors Needed!



Do you enjoy reading the Info@Faith newsletter? Are you looking for a way to participate in our church life while staying safely at home? Then maybe helping with the newsletter is for you! We currently use Microsoft Word, but any software that can create a few pages is fine. Contact Bonnie or Sandy G. if you have questions or are interested in participating.



Did You Know?

Faith Church has added an **ON-LINE GIVING** option through the Presbyterian Foundation. This option is available on our website using the GIVE NOW button and on our Facebook page using the link to on-line giving (right above DONATION).

While this is a great option to give for on-line visitors to Faith Church, members of Faith Church should be aware that 2% of all donations through this service go to administrative fees and only 98% goes to the church. A better option for members, who give on a regular basis, is to use Bill Pay through the member's bank. Bill Pay, which is free and easy to set up, assures that 100% of the donation goes to Faith Church.