

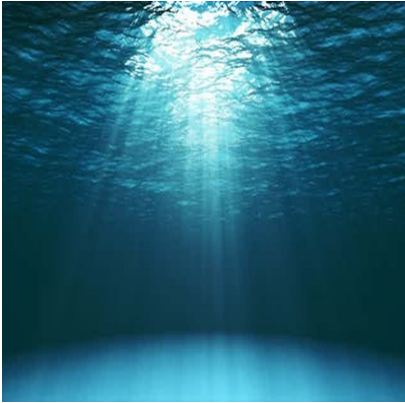
First United Methodist Church Newsletter

May 2024 Issue

Deadline for June Issue — May 21, 2024

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths."

- Proverbs 3:5-6 (ESV)



Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Picture yourself standing on the shore of a vast ocean, the salty breeze tousling your hair as you gaze out into the expanse of blue. The horizon stretches endlessly, a boundary between the known and the unknown. As you peer into the depths, a sense of awe and trepidation washes over you, for beyond that line lies a world of uncertainty, of unseen dangers and untold adventures.

In the distance, a storm brews on the horizon, dark clouds gathering ominously overhead. The waves begin to churn, their rhythm disrupted by the approaching tempest. Your heart quickens with each crash of thunder, each bolt of lightning illuminating the darkened sky. The future seems uncertain, obscured by the looming shadows of doubt and fear.

As the first drops of rain begin to fall, you find yourself aboard a small boat, adrift amidst the roiling waves. The vessel rocks violently, threatening to capsize at any moment. Fear grips your heart as you cling desperately to the railing, your eyes searching the horizon for a glimmer of hope amidst the chaos. But there is only darkness, stretching out before you like an endless abyss.

In the midst of the storm, with no land and no end to the tempest in sight, you are left to grapple with the uncertainty of your fate. Each crashing wave serves as a reminder of your vulnerability, of the fragility of human existence in the face of nature's fury. And yet, amidst the chaos and the fear, there remains a glimmer of hope—a belief that somehow, someday, you will find your way through the storm and emerge on the other side, battered but unbroken, ready to face whatever challenges lie ahead.

In the midst of life's uncertainties, it's natural to seek reassurance, to yearn for a glimpse into the future, to desire certainty in an uncertain world. Yet, as Søren Kierkegaard eloquently articulates, faith is not about grasping God objectively but rather about embracing the objective uncertainty that defines our human existence. He poignantly illustrates this concept through the metaphor of floating in 70,000 fathoms of water, a vivid image of the depths of faith and trust required to navigate life's challenges.

Kierkegaard challenges us to confront the paradox of faith: that it flourishes in the absence of absolute certainty. In recognizing our limitations, our inability to fully comprehend the divine, we are compelled to place our trust in God. It is precisely because we cannot grasp God objectively that we must believe. This is not a blind leap into the unknown, but a courageous venture into the depths of faith, where we find the assurance that God is with us, even when the waters of uncertainty threaten to overwhelm us.

In this present moment, we find ourselves navigating uncharted waters. Our community has been facing challenges—our attendance is down, our giving is down, we are going down to part-time status, and we are in the midst of a pastoral transition. The uncertainty of these times can be daunting, and it's easy to become lost in a sea of "what ifs." Yet, amidst the uncertainty, one thing remains constant: Christ stands before us, leading the way.

As we confront the uncertainties of the future, let us hold fast to our faith in Christ. Let us remember that even in the midst of storms, he is our anchor, our rock, and our refuge. Let us trust that Jesus will guide us through this season of transition, just as he has guided his people through countless trials throughout history.

Our journey of faith is not without its challenges, but it is in these moments of uncertainty that our faith is truly tested and strengthened. Let us embrace the unknown with courage and conviction, knowing that God is always faithful to His promises. As we navigate the waters ahead, may we find comfort in the words of Psalm 23:4, "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me."

Let us lean into our faith, trusting that even when we cannot see the way forward, God is already there, leading us with love and grace. May we find solace in the knowledge that we are not alone on this journey, but are held securely in the palm of God's hand.

With Love in Christ,

Pastor Todd



*Introducing our new part-time interim pastor
who will begin to serve our church July 1, 2024.*

Reverend Dr. Vicki Miller Brendler



Grace and Peace be with you in the name of our Risen Savior!

I was surprised and delighted(?) to be approached a few weeks ago by Reverend Dr. Eunice Vega-Perez, our District Superintendent, that the bishop would like me to serve in a half-time appointment.

“But, I’m retired!” I said, “ And I really don’t want to work by myself half-time—because, I know that would mean that I was really going to be working full time, and besides, that, we travel a lot in retirement and

already have some plans for the coming year that we cannot change.” I paused a moment...long enough for her to say.

“Let me at least tell you where it is.” “OK.” I assented,

“It’s Newton.” she said. I was quiet for a moment before I replied, “Oh! That’s different, then. Did you know that as a young pastor, I had always wanted to serve the church in Newton? I still can’t do half-time, but if you could you put together a team approach, I would be glad to coordinate it; that way I could still do some traveling and still help do the work at Newton.” She liked the idea too! And so, she presented that possibility to Bishop Schol and he suggested that Monica Mafarachisi, a bright third-year student at Drew Seminary who had been accepted into the annual conference’s Mosaic program for helping develop talented young pastors, would be a great one to work with me and this congregation. Additionally, as needed, our work will be supplemented by a Lay Servant or Lay Servants. We met together with the Staff-Parish Committee and we were all excited about how God might use us to help the church heal from some past hurts, do a good assessment of where we are, and do some dreaming about where God is calling us to go into the future.

So, let me take an opportunity to introduce myself as the Elder half of your new pastoral team as of July 2024. During my 40 years of active ministry, I faithfully served local churches in rural, urban, and suburban settings and was also the Raritan/Raritan Valley District Superintendent (1996-2004). The last 13 years prior to my retirement in 2018, I served Bridgewater UMC. I did my Master of Divinity at Drew Seminary and my Doctor of Ministry at Wesley Seminary (with my good friend Rev. Nancy Belsky). I also have taught UM doctrine and polity at Palmer Seminary in Philadelphia and church administration at Drew Seminary as an adjunct professor, as well as the Advanced Lay Speaker’s classes a number of times.

I am a trained Stephen Ministry Leader, have taught many levels of Disciple Bible Study (both the full length and short-term courses), and am also a trained Intentional Interim pastor, which I think will be helpful for our work together

(Reverend Dr. Vicki Miller Brendler — cont'd from page 3)

in the coming year. I love music and worship; I love to sing (both traditional and contemporary music) and ring handbells (4-in-hand in my younger years!). I love to be with people and have a passion for sharing God's love with people. I also am committed to earth care, justice ministries, and the completeness of God's love for and the church's inclusion of all people regardless of race, gender, or sexual orientation. I love children, especially babies, and take our work with children and youth and young families very seriously.

On a personal front, I have been married to Larry Brendler for almost 52 years. We have four grown daughters (Sarah, Rebecca and Rachel [who are twins], and Jessica) and 7 grandchildren. In retirement I enjoy organic gardening (and canning and freezing what we grow), traveling, reading, playing games on my iPad, cooking/being a foodie, and spending time with family and friends.

I look forward to working together with you in the coming year to help this congregation find its way into the abundant future that God is dreaming for you!



***Reverend Brendler will be joined in her ministry by
a Drew University Master of Divinity student...***

My name is Monica Kudakwashe Mafarachisi . I was born and raised in Zimbabwe. I grew up at Mutambara Mission, a United Methodist Church in Zimbabwe. I was born in a family of three kids, two boys and one girl. My father was a Reverend in the United Methodist Church before he passed away in the year 2000. My mother is a Food and Nutritionist at Mutambara hospital she has been serving at the hospital for over 20 years. I was born and raised in the United Methodist Church, Zimbabwe Episcopal area.

I did my high school at Hartzell High School and I did my Bachelor of Commerce in Accounting at Rhodes University. I have worked in the Accounting field for over 5 years. Currently I am a Master of Divinity student at Drew University in my third year. My vocation is the United Methodist Ministry.

My call to ministry started in 2020 during the pandemic. The isolation and time alone allowed me to reflect on my purpose in life. My main calling that I discovered during that time was pastoral care. I believe that isolation and disconnecting can allow us to grow closer to God.

Sunday School

This month our Sunday School year comes to a close with our last class on May 19th. It has been a joy and a blessing to meet, and learn, and pray with these eager children. Both the children and we teachers have learned more about the Bible, Jesus, and how God wants us to live, love, and move! Love you, and God bless you, Bernadette, Linda, Jenny, Gavin, James Leo, Dean, Audrey, Alma, Mario, and little Evelyn.

**Evelyn Cornwell
Sunday School Superintendent
and teacher**



Treasures of Hope

Treasures of Hope is open every Saturday from 9 a.m. to 2p.m. Come and see for yourself the beautiful items we have for sale.

Our new spring line of clothes is now out. We could always use more. If you have any apparel that you no longer wear, please donate to your church by giving it to Treasures. Thank you to all who give. We would not be able to have this wonderful outreach without you all. God bless.

Linda

Potluck Suppers

Potluck suppers are still going strong. They are every 2nd and 4th Wednesday at 6:00 p.m.

This Month's Suppers: May 8th and May 22nd

Bring a simple casserole or your favorite dish, or, if very busy, grab some dessert. Come join the fun.

Invite others also. See you there.



Manna House

Spaghetti Dinner

Tuesday

May 14th

5:00-6:30

INDOOR DINING AND TAKE OUT

**Spaghetti, Salad, Bread,
and Dessert!**

ADULTS.....	\$5.00
CHILDREN 5-12.....	\$3.00
CHILDREN UNDER 5.....	FREE

**First Presbyterian Church-54 High Street-Newton
(Church Street Entrance)**



ABC Book Club

**Thursday, May 16th, at 2:00 p.m.,
via Zoom**

The book for May is “Clark and Division”
by Naomi Hirahara.

With Zoom we are able to be connected with members in
Massachusetts, West Virginia, and New Jersey! We
would love to have you join us as well. If you need the
Zoom link, please don't hesitate to contact the church
office at 973-383-4450 between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m.,
Monday thru Friday.

Hypnosis for Health

Next Gathering, Tuesday, May 7, 2024

at 6:00 pm

join Tim Ringenberg

Board Certified Clinical Hypnotist

for

"Hypnosis for Health"

at First United Methodist Church

in Newton

Tim will lead and instruct this class on hypnotic techniques everyone can employ on their own for desired changes in their health and well-being. Enjoy a lively hour of learning and sharing while becoming a "hypno-hipster"!

Please meet in the Media Center.

Questions? Call Tim at 260.460.7783 or email tim@pshypno.com

Cleaning Day!!

**Come one, come all, to a cleaning weekend
June 1st and 2nd.**

On Saturday, June 1st from 10 to 1. Bring your favorite cleaning products and wear work clothes. Help for 1 or all 3 hours. A list will be there for you to choose where and what to do.

On Sunday, it will be after church from noon to 3 p.m. Bring a lunch and wear work clothes. After lunch, we'll check the list to finish up hopefully everything.



**In the meantime,
let me know where and
what needs cleaning
and/or painting.**

Questions?

**Call or text me,
Linda, at (973)222-0487.**

May

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
May 19-21, 2024 GNJ Annual Conference			1 8-6:30 P Training 10-3 Life V (1A/1B) 7 Transiti
5 Worship! 9 Joy Fellowship/ Sunday School 10:30 Sancuary Service/Baptism	6 10 Chair Yoga (HH) 11:30 Life with Joy (HH) 6 Bible Study	7 10-3 Life w/Joy HH 6 Hypnosis for Health (Med Ctr) 6 Cub Scouts (HH) 6-9:30 NSS (Sanct)	8 10-3 Life w 6 Potluck
12 Worship! 9 Joy Fellowship/ Sunday School 10:30 Sancuary Service	13 10 Chair Yoga (HH) 11:30 Life with Joy (HH) 6 Bible Study	14 10-3 Life w/Joy HH 5 Manna House Spaghetti Supper 6-9:30 NSS (Sanct)	15 10-3 Life w
19 Worship! 9 Joy Fellowship/ Sunday School 10:30 Sancuary Service	20 10 Chair Yoga (HH) 11:30 Life with Joy (HH)	21 10-3 Life w/Joy HH 10-1 Manna House Meal Prep/Serve 6 Cub Scouts (HH)	22 10-3 Life w 6 Potluck
26 Worship! 9 Joy Fellowship/ Sunday School 10:30 Sancuary Service	27 Memorial Day Church office closed	28 10-3 Life w/Joy HH	29 10-3 Life w

2024

Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>Pollwrkr (HH) With Joy n Team</p>	<p>2 8-6:30 Pollwrkr Training (HH) 10-3 LWJ (1A/1B) 6 Theology on Tap</p>	<p>3 8-6:30 Pollworker Training (HH)</p>	<p>4 8-6:30 Pollwrkr Training (HH) 8-12:30 SCYO (Sanctuary) 9-2 Treasures</p>
<p>w/Joy HH</p>	<p>9 10-3 Life w/Joy HH 6:30 Nominations Committee</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11 8-12:30 SCYO HH 9-2 Treasures</p>
<p>w/Joy HH</p>	<p>16 10-3 Life w/Joy HH</p>	<p>17 6-9:30 NSS (Sanct) Dress Rehearsal</p>	<p>18 8-12:30 SCYO HH 9-2 Treasures 4 NSS concert (Sanct/HH)</p>
<p>w/Joy HH</p>	<p>23 10-3 Life w/Joy HH 6:30 Leadership Tm</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25 9-2 Treasures</p>
<p>w/Joy HH</p>	<p>30 10-3 Life w/Joy HH</p>	<p>31</p>	

Appreciation Corner



I would like to thank **Scott Demeritt** and **Jay Morrison** for fixing the lights in the church sign. It has been out for about 3 years. I am so happy to see it glow. I know it was a labor of love several times. Thank you so very much.
— Linda Plimpton

I would like to thank **my church family** for the special prayers for my family. This warms my heart with all the love you give us. Thank you so very much. Blessings to you all!
— Linda Plimpton



Appreciation Corner is an ongoing space in our monthly newsletter for people to share their appreciation of the actions of others. Please contact the church office at newtonumc07860@gmail.com or by phone (973-383-4450) to make someone's day a little brighter.




NEW SUSSEX
SYMPHONY

Saturday, May 18, 2024 at 4pm
at First United Methodist Church of Newton
111 Ryerson Ave., Newton, NJ 07860



Alexandra Lang, Soloist

Join us!

WEBER Overture to Der Freischütz
R. STRAUSS Orchestral Songs from Op. 10 and Op. 27
ALEXANDRA LANG, soprano
VAUGHAN WILLIAMS Symphony No. 5 in D

www.NewSussexSymphony.org

Memorials, Special Gifts, and Bequests

The Book of Remembrance



MEMORIALS AND SPECIAL GIFTS

When special occasions arise, consider the “Perfect Gift.” Gifts to our Memorials and Special Gifts fund perpetuate our church, providing special needs beyond the operating budget and making an eternal connection through our Book of Remembrance in the narthex.

BEQUESTS

Please remember your church in your will. Consider asking your loved ones to suggest that friends make a gift in your memory to the church memorial fund in lieu of flowers. This may be included in your obituary.





5/1	Kathleen Quinn, Roger Tanis
5/3	Maria McDade
5/5	Andrew Iliff
5/6	Keith Anderson, Brittany Macko
5/8	Hannah Grace Motz
5/9	Gina Grosso, Andrew Sharick
5/11	Fred Monesmith
5/12	Alice Sharick
5/13	Elizabeth Ragsdale
5/14	Susan Wilinski
5/15	Arne Goytil, Lisa McCauley, Melissa Stewart
5/17	Linda Plimpton, Nicholas Sapio, Logan Siipola
5/18	Ashley Meisinger, Maria Patterson
5/19	Kristen Regula
5/20	Emily Burd, Leslie Hurtt, Matthew Munoz, Daniel Tietje
5/21	Benjamin Galinski, Courtney Meisinger, Lindburg Titus
5/22	Kenneth Smith
5/25	Samantha Edwards, Lisa Fischer, Heather Kilduff, James McCracken, Samantha Mitchell
5/26	Jay Gould
5/27	Vicki Lyn Galinski

Is your birth date incorrect or missing? Let us know (973)383-4450.

PULL TAB COLLECTION

Thank you to all who have been faithfully saving the pull tabs from aluminum cans and bringing the tabs to church. Tabs can be from soda cans, soup cans, pet food cans, or any other source of pull tabs.

There is a container in the Narthex in which to put the tabs. The tabs are then taken to the Shriners' Hospital for Children in Philadelphia where they are recycled. The money earned from the recycling is used to help fund the care given to children at the hospital. Please see Barbara Repp if you have questions.

Thank you for all of your support!

Support Your Church

Giving has never been easier! Did you know we offer online giving? Our church could really use your help right now. Please help us maintain our ministries.

<https://tithe.ly/give?c=1377216>

<https://paypal.me/newtonumc>





*In Need of
Prayer...*

The Albert Family
Lynn Anderson
Rebekah Beavers
Alexander, Vivienne, Max
and Sophie Beavers
Sam Bennett
Kate Bertelli-Wilinski
Lori Bischoff
Diane Bozzone
Jean Brendler
Richard Brizendine
Elsie Burdge
Jennifer Buyer+family
Bob Cambell
Nelson Ceslis
(Philippines)
Peg Coats
Family of Bill Coe
Larry Conover
Ted Cosgrove
Family of Ralph Cummins
Samantha Daniel
(Shirley's daughter)
DiGeronimo Family
The Edwards Family
Gail Ewin and family
Neil Faber
Laura Frasier
Muriel Gallo
Linda Gallo
Ron & Laurie Gallo
Rose Garten
Diane Gelone

John Giffoniello
The Halterman family
Family of Daria Hamm
Anne Handy
Jane & Peter Hartmann
Jaclyn Holmberg
The Hontz Family
Albert Huff
Family of Terry Iliff
Theresa Iliff
Jacinto family
Jackson family
Rhonda and Bob Kays
Edward Kuhn
The Lattig family
Laura Lewis
Kay Lid
Jean Maher
Peter Mahler
Family of Lois McCue
Anne McNally
Family of Al Mearns
Siblings of Kathleen
Meredith
Bruce Messina & family
Joe Miller
Bill Miller
Carole Monesmith
Morris family
Jay Morrison
Family of Joyce Post
Paul Rafalco
Henry and Barbara Repp

Willard Repp
Cindy Rich
Cousins of Cindy Rich
David Rich
Steve Rich
Family of Elizabeth Roe
Scabet Family
Scalzitti Family
Family of Claus Seebeck
Tina Simon
Mary Kate Sinclair
Spooner family
Allison Stapel
Merle Tanis
Sawyer Vaughan
Carol Wallenburg
Stephanie Walter
Jodi Wilson
John Wilson
Family of Jeannette
Zangerle

*Members and friends at
Bristol Glen*

*The members of our
military and their
families.*

***If anyone listed can
be removed, please
notify the church
office.***



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•Estate Planning

•Medicaid

•Estate Administration

•Guardianships



**Hollander, Strelzik, Pasculli, Hinkes,
Vandenberg, Hontz & Olenick, L.L.C.**

Attorneys at Law

40 Park Place, Newton, New Jersey

On the Green

P.O. Box 99, Newton, New Jersey 07860

*Mr. Hontz is a member of the
National Academy of Elder Law
Attorneys*



Smith-McCracken Funeral Home

Wood Funeral Home
Owned and Operated by Smith-McCracken

***Thank you to First UMC for all you do in our
community and around the world***

~~~~~

## **Smith-McCracken Funeral Home**

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## **Wood Funeral Home**

*16 Main Street, Branchville, NJ 07826 (973/948-3030)*

**Robert E. McCracken, Owner/Manager**

N.J. Lic. No. 3640

## **First United Methodist Church**

111 Ryerson Avenue Newton, NJ 07860

Phone: (973) 383-4450

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## **MINISTRY TEAM**

Pastor

Rev. Todd R. Lattig

Pastor Emeritus

Rev. Dr. H. Alden Welch

Lay Servants

Kathleen Meredith, Mark Hontz

Director of Music/Organist

Henry Repp

Music Coordinator-JOY Service

Christie Spriggs

Office Administrator

Kathleen Meredith

***The newsletter is produced 11 times per year.  
Deadlines are the third Tuesday of the month.  
It is available via e-mail, on the church's website,  
and in hard copy.***

**First United Methodist Church of Newton**  
111 RYERSON AVE  
NEWTON, NEW JERSEY 07860

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

PLACE STAMP  
HERE

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