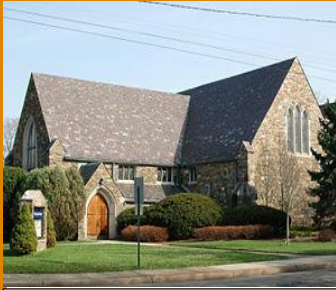


First Press Newsletter



We are a welcoming community formed in Christ, committed to sharing his love with others – with feet that carry us out into the world, with hands that serve, and with hearts in fellowship and faith.

Dear Friends,

I believe worshipping God is the most important thing we do as Christians. It is in worship that we center our lives before God, offer praise and thanksgiving, listen as God's Word is read and proclaimed, offer our prayers and our gifts to support God's work through the church. It is in worship that God sustains and strengthens us, continues the good work of shaping and reshaping us into the people God would have us be, and enables us to live as God would have us live between Sundays.

The opening paragraph of the Presbyterian Church (USA) Directory for Worship has this to say: "Christian worship gives all glory and honor, praise and thanksgiving to the holy, triune God. We are gathered in worship to glorify the God who is present and active among us - particularly through the gifts of Word and Sacrament. We are sent out in service to glorify the same God who is present and active in the world." [W-1.0101]

Unfortunately, since mid-March, we have been prevented from fully experiencing the "We are gathered in" part of that statement. Due to the coronavirus pandemic and the need to avoid large gatherings of people, worship moved out of the sanctuary and online on March 15. For two Sundays, we live-streamed the service. Then we moved to pre-recorded services for 17 weeks, before returning to a combination of in-person and live-stream worship on Sunday, July 26.

Through all these transitions, I believe God's Spirit has not only led us, but held us together - even when we haven't been able to fully gather in person. For that, I am extremely grateful!

I am also grateful to music staff members Ed Schmiedecke, Carol Schmiedecke and Linda Sweetman Waters; to Emma Schmiedecke (cello), to Christopher Vehmas (piano); and to section leaders Mike Schuil and Vera Coleman for their creativity and versatility in providing music for the pre-recorded, live-stream and in-person services. Just as I am grateful to Jessica Strader for her initiative, technical skill and creativity in helping us to move online and develop a greater online presence; to Sami Eliya for his tireless work to implement and improve our live-stream capability; and to Dave Ciccolella for producing the Sunday morning video broadcasts over YouTube. Grateful also to MaryEllen Castaldo for her Facebook Sunday School videos and to Dana Feeney for keeping us connected through communications from the office.

And while I am expressing gratitude, I must also say a big "thank you" to members of the Re-Entry Task Force, who developed and implemented Weekday Prayers during the summer and who worked to develop our protocol for a safe return to the sanctuary: Joan Davies, Carola Di Iorio, Donna Flagg, Anita Hutton and Sandy Santangelo.

A number of you have said how happy you are to be able to return to the sanctuary for worship. And a number of you have indicated that you're not ready to return, but have expressed your appreciation for the live-stream option. We are very pleased to be able to offer both! And we hope whichever option makes sense for you that you will continue to join us each Sunday as we worship God together!

Finally, I am pleased to announce that we will offer an outdoor worship service at 5:00 p.m. Saturday, October 17. Music by Brian Princing. Watch your email for additional details! Forward in faith, Bruce

Endowment Corner

Endowment Corner October 2020



(Saving for a Rainy Day and Beyond)

We have been endowed by our Creator to do good things; to choose kind words over ridicule, to share rather than to hoard, to build up rather than to tear down, to help rather than to hinder, to encourage rather than to criticize, to make peace rather than go to war, to love rather than to hate. We are endowed! and we are free to choose. It is a blessing and a burden.

You, our members, continue to endow our church with gifts that help sustain us through difficult times. We appreciate your efforts to grow our Endowment Fund for present use and into the future. We will overcome many hardships with your continued support. You are a blessing for choosing to support God's church in the world.

In these times when we cannot meet and greet in the old fashioned way, we especially appreciate your gifts to Endowment. Checks can be made to First Presbyterian Church with a memo to "Endowment"

Blessings from Your Endowment Committee.
Richard Davies, Don Dexter, Al Schagen, Laura Magrath,
David Shaw, Joanne Bonwick



dreamstime.com

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We remember Phyllis Crocco who passed away on September 15, 2020



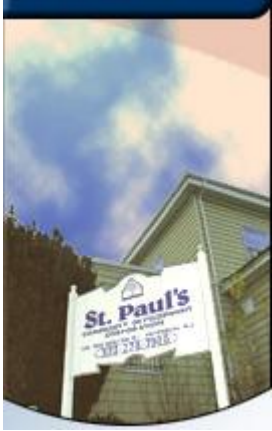
Phyllis was a longtime volunteer and active member of First Presbyterian Church. Her warm smile and graceful presence lit up any room she entered. Her kind spirit and generous heart will truly be missed. She was married to Bruce Crocco (who passed away in June) for 65 years.

A memorial service to celebrate the lives of both Bruce and Phyllis will be held at a future date.

CONDOLENCES MAY BE SENT TO:
SCOTT CROCCO
152 CORTLAND DRIVE
SADDLE RIVER, NJ 07458

Feeding God's People

St. Paul's Food Ministry -



On September 6th, the McDevitt family delivered dinner for the men at St. Paul's Homeless Shelter.

A big thank you to all the volunteers who provided such wonderful food for the men. Dana Feeney made her delicious fried chicken, Suzy McDevitt made a Mexican casserole, Laura Magrath made ham and brought fruit and bread, and MaryEllen Castaldo made a lovely salad.

The men are always appreciative of the delicious homemade food that each volunteer brings.

Our church's next meal delivery will be on Sunday, October 4th. Please contact Sam McDevitt at sammcdev99@gmail.com or (201)-820-8056 for details, or if you have any questions. Thank you!

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THANKS TO ALL THE RECENT PRODUCE MISSION VOLUNTEERS AND TO ALL WHO PARTICIPATE!
Pictured from left to right: Joe Suplicki, Maddy Santangelo, Samantha Santangelo, Glen Santangelo, Linda Strickland, Sandy Santangelo, Karen Dexter, Kristina Rae and William Rae.

You too can help~ just show up at the Ridgewood train station on Sundays at 2:30 to pack up and deliver the harvest to the church.

God of grace, nourish your people with this food, fill our hearts with fellowship and our souls with your love, for Christ's sake. Amen

Ministry in Word and Deed!



MUMS the word!

Thank you to Jessica Strader for organizing this wonderful ministry and to all who participated and purchased plants.

\$500.00 was raised for the Deacon's emergency fund!

HEY THERE! WHAT'S WITH ALL THE FACEBOOK STUFF?

I'm so glad you asked! We recently made some changes to all of our Facebook areas and I wanted to make sure it was easy to understand.

WHY DO WE HAVE A FACEBOOK GROUP, PAGE AND A PERSONAL ACCOUNT CALLED BRUCE FIRSTPRES?

Great Question! The Facebook Group – now called Ridgewood First Presbyterian Church Members and Friends, is an area where people can come together and chat, post, share things, and more! Think of it as that special time of the passing of the peace where you get to spend some time seeing and chatting with members and visitors.

The Facebook Page – a fairly new item called First Presbyterian Church of Ridgewood, NJ, is the official business page of the church. While we are not a business, according to Facebook we are a Religious/Spiritual Organization which is classified as a Facebook business. The amazing thing about having a business page is that we get to promote it! This means we can pay a small fee and Facebook will advertise our [business] page. We cannot do that in a Group, so this is a fantastic new feature.

Bruce FirstPres – a “personal” account, was created by the church staff to have an owner and admin of the Facebook Page and Group. The great thing about setting this up with a church email is that when we have a new pastor, we can change the person's name and photo and keep the Facebook account associated with the church. This is NOT Pastor Bruce's personal Facebook account – “Pops” is probably too cool for Facebook. ☐

CAN I REACH OUT TO PASTOR BRUCE ON FACEBOOK (I.E. BRUCE FIRSTPRES)?

You can, but please know that several staff and volunteers (like me) have access to his account to post relevant announcements and documents. The best way to reach Pastor Bruce is still via phone (215-337-5623) or email (pastorbruce@firstpresridgewood.org).

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN MOVING FORWARD?

Moving forward, we will be posting church information on the Facebook PAGE. You should like our page by going to <https://www.facebook.com/firstpresridgewood> and clicking the thumbs up icon.

You should continue to post in the Facebook GROUP. I personally love it when members share feedback on the worship service/pre-service or when Carol posts inspirational music videos.

HELP, I STILL DON'T GET IT!

Don't worry, I'm here for you! Call me (551-404-7345) or email me (jessicatrader@gmail.com).

With love,

Jess

Jess Strader



Pizza and Pop Tailgate

October 11 (Oct. 18 rain date)

11:00-1:00

Church parking lot on Van Dien Ave.

Come and enjoy a slice of pizza and some “pop” music with the congregation.

We will be parking every other spot and wearing masks when not in your “spot” and social distancing when catching up with friends.

MaryEllen will have games and prizes for the youth (& any adult interested😊)

We will have folding chairs for you to use or bring your own. Pizza, popcorn and drinks will be provided by the Growth Committee.

Hope to see you all there!



Session notes

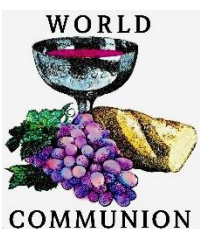
Welcome back to members recently reinstated by session~ Andrew and Lisa Freda!

Session approved a social media policy.

Session approved facilities use for a poinsettia sale for Ridgewood High marching band.

Session is exploring ways to be in partnership with United Paterson Church.

Session agreed to allow Ridgewood High School project graduation to auction off church parking lot spots for 2021 RHS graduation ceremony.



Join us online or in church, as we celebrate World Communion Sunday on October 4th!

Church Staff~

Pastor	Rev. Bruce Ballantine
Director of Children & Families	MaryEllen Castaldo
Director of Music	Dr. Edward Schmiedecke
Organist	Linda Sweetman Waters
Director of Youth Music and Handbells	Carol Schmiedecke
Administrative Manager	Dana Feeney
Youth Leader	Jessica Strader
Tom Carozza	Sexton
Custodian	George Wood
Director Nursery School	Julia Bolt
Newsletter Editor	Joan Davies (Volunteer)

Church Phone (201) 652-2504

Pastor Bruce: (215) 337-5623 **please contact him directly for Pastoral Care**

www.firstpresridgewood.org

