

# The Congregator

First Congregational Church of River Edge, New Jersey

a congregation of the United Church of Christ

January 2021

Volume 72, Issue 1



ANNUAL  
CONGREGATIONAL  
**MEETING**

*Annual Meeting is Sunday, February 21, 2021  
Please forward your reports to the Church Office by February 5.*

**CHURCH OFFICE HOURS**

Monday, Office is closed.  
Tuesday through Friday, 9:00 – 4:00 pm.

**CHURCH OFFICE INFORMATION**

109 Continental Avenue, River Edge, NJ 07661  
Phone (201) 261-1712 Website – [www.fccriveredge.org](http://www.fccriveredge.org)  
Church Office e-mail – [office@fccriveredge.org](mailto:office@fccriveredge.org)  
Please like and follow us on the **FCC RIVER EDGE** Facebook page.

**CHURCH STAFF**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| The Rev. Dennis TeBeest<br>Pastor                | <a href="mailto:dtebeest@fccriveredge.org">dtebeest@fccriveredge.org</a><br>201-390-5548           |
| Gloria Norton, S.M.M.,<br>Minister of Music      | <a href="mailto:glorinor@aol.com">glorinor@aol.com</a>   |
| Nicole Babington<br>Minister for Faith Formation | <a href="mailto:nbabington@fccriveredge.org">nbabington@fccriveredge.org</a><br>201-956-3435       |
| Anne Cooper<br>Administrative Assistant          | <a href="mailto:office@fccriveredge.org">office@fccriveredge.org</a><br>201-261-1712               |
| Jeff Bernard<br>Financial Secretary              | <a href="mailto:financeoffice@fccriveredge.org">financeoffice@fccriveredge.org</a><br>201-538-3563 |

**INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY**

Any decision to cancel Sunday worship service and classes due to inclement weather will be posted on our website [www.fccriveredge.org](http://www.fccriveredge.org) by **8:30 am Sunday Mornings**. We will also update our church office voicemail greeting (201-261-1712 x100) with such a decision.

**LEGACY OF FAITH**

A meaningful way to remember/honor loved ones and friends is to make a contribution to the Memorial Fund, Renovation Fund, Music & Arts Fund or the General Fund of the First Congregational Church of River Edge.



**MEMORIAL FUND**

**In Memory of  
June Morris**

*William and Cynthia Fordham  
Russell and Noreen Van Wetering  
Hilma Albrecht*

**In Memory of  
Adria B. Brown**

*Russell and Noreen Van Wetering*

**BUILDING RENOVATION**

**In Memory of  
June Morris**

*Robert and Evelyn Fialko*

**In Memory of  
Adria B. Brown**

*Robert and Evelyn Fialko  
Anne and Bill Cooper  
Bob Owens*

**In Memory of  
Ruth Gill**

*Robert and Evelyn Fialko*

**MUSIC AND ARTS FUND**

**In Memory of  
June Morris**

*Gloria and Jon Norton*

**In Memory of  
Adria B. Brown**

*Gloria and Jon Norton*

**In Honor of Carol & Nowell Choir**

*Pam Weiler*

**WORSHIP TEAM**

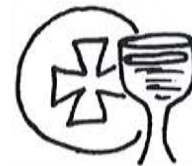
**Welcome 2021!**

Welcome to a new year for the First Congregational Church of River Edge! This was a very different and difficult year, indeed!

The strength of our staff, parishioners, friends, and all who use our church was (and is) immense and heartfelt. The Worship Team thanks you for the many ways you have helped our church continue to be there for each other. We have been able to worship in person and by Zoom. We had a tent up to allow Pumpkin Patch to reach our neighbors and a crèche to shelter the baby Jesus.

We may be keeping distant physically but our connection to God and each other is resilient!

Come and worship with us in person (reservation necessary) or by Zoom. We are there each Sunday morning. Arrive by 9:55 to hear the organ welcome all.



The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper will be celebrated on **Sunday, January 3**, during the 10:00 am. Worship Service.

**JOYS & CONCERNS LIST**

Each Sunday, on the table to the right of the double doors to the Sanctuary, there is a place for you to write any prayers requests that you might want included during the service.

Janet Arena  
Worship Team – Leader

## MISSION TEAM



**Homeless Dinner** – Nov. 18<sup>th</sup> -We provided a generous dinner of turkey breast with gravy, scalloped potatoes, peas, salad, rolls, pudding, cookies, bottled water, and apples, **feeding 157 people.**

Your monetary donations to help defray the cost of the food **totaled a wonderful \$1,260** .... and then ALL the food was provided at no cost! So, we were able to donate your \$1,260 contributions to Family Promise, to sponsor (not cook) another Homeless Dinner in early January, when there are fewer sponsors. (To sponsor a meal costs \$1,500, so we used Mission funds to cover balance)

**A warm thank you** to everyone who so generously donated food and a fantastic sum of funds and to all who helped prepare the meal. Special gold stars and heartfelt thanks to the eight people who cooked those challenging turkey breasts.

So many people expressed enthusiasm for this project that **we're going to provide another Homeless Dinner on Feb. 26<sup>th</sup>** Information to follow.

**Thank you** for your enthusiasm and support.

*Thank  
you* 

## ALL WRAPPED UP



In 2020, we **'adopted' 22 struggling families and individuals** and provided almost all the gifts on their wish/needs lists – warm clothes, sheets and blankets, pots and pan, multiple microwaves/air fryers/toaster ovens(!) as well as gifts for the children. In addition to the gifts themselves, we gave **\$1,275** in gift cards, mainly for Shop Rite and Target.

When we delivered the gifts to the agency, the caseworkers for our 'adoptees' were incredibly grateful for your gifts. This was a tough year for everyone, but for their clients, the pandemic multiplied the burdens of their already-challenging lives.

Thank you for your generous help for these hard-pressed neighbors.

## CENTER FOR FOOD ACTION

*The funds we collect on the first Sunday of each month go to our local food pantries, mainly to the Center for Food Action (CFA).*

*In 2020, we have donated \$2,900 (vs. \$3,800 in 2019).*

*Here are excerpts from their recent letter:*

*“As the pandemic settled into our community, **the need for CFA's services skyrocketed from 1,400 households a month coming for food to nearly 4,000 a month.** ...The high demand will continue into 2021. ... We continue to be grateful for (your) support (and) with your help, we will continue this critical work during the difficult days ahead....”*

## MUSIC



December was an exciting month for the music of our church. We are so very grateful for the many talented individuals who participated in our Advent and Christmas music.

Thank you to the children who sang in the choir for the Chrismon Service on December 6. They were Bridget and Cassandra Babington, Laura and John Stark, Nicholas and Eli Orendain, Brianna Struzzi, and Hailey and Vanessa Carcich, assisted by Anabelle Babington and Nadia Orendain.

Thank you to Pilgrim Ringers Alice Rushforth, Chris Braden, Cynthia Fordham, Linda Stark, and Kathleen Motoike (also a first-class chimer), who have added beauty to our services of worship.

Thank you to our choir singers who not only have recorded lovely anthems for our services; but also prepared a Cantata, complete with narration (by Michelle and Stuart Heinzinger), and projected images (thank you, Dennis!) which was presented on Sunday, December 20.

Thank you to Cantors and Soloists Anabelle and Victor Babington, Joy Jacobs, Kathleen Motoike, Nadia Orendain, and Bert Schmitt. While the rest of us miss being able to lift our voices in song, we are thankful for these singers who, for the time being, do the singing for us.

A special thank you to Pastor Dennis, for his support and guidance; to Gene Hammerle, whose expertise and diligence have been vital to our services of worship; and to Helen Koons, for faithfully maintaining our church website, and seeing that our services are available to folks everywhere.

As we enter a new year, we are hopeful that soon we will all be able to worship in person again. But, meanwhile, we continue to find creative ways to have music in worship.

Gloria Norton, Minister of Music

## MEMBERSHIP



Greeters are needed for Winter/Spring 2021. Please contact Russell Van Wetering at 201-261-1795 or at [aprilsky@optonline.net](mailto:aprilsky@optonline.net).

## SHAWL MINISTRY



The next regular meetings of the Shawl Ministry will take place on:

***Tuesday, January 12, at 7:30 pm***  
***Thursday, January 14, at 1:00 pm***

All knitters and crocheters are welcome to join us in making shawls...or bring your current yarn project and spend a relaxing afternoon in the Commons with us. Everyone is welcome. For information, please contact Alice Rushforth at 201-265-1062.



If you would like to donate altar flowers for one of our worship services, please contact our Flower Coordinator Joan Hammerle at 201-201-694-9055. The donation for flowers is \$25.00. Flowers can be taken home after the service or given to one of our shut-ins. The deadline for ordering altar flowers is the Sunday prior to their being placed on the Altar.

**JANUARY**  
Birthdays

- 2 Kenneth Mars
- 3 Louie Frani  
Lexi Noel O'Connell
- 4 William Hamilton  
Taylor Buono
- 5 Emma Rose Lenart
- 6 Donna Frani
- 7 Gregory Lubin
- 8 Maxwell Froomjian
- 10 Abigail Lynn Myers
- 12 Frank Lento
- 14 Caroline Parks  
Carter Silane
- 15 Bryce Simpson
- 20 Karen Hammerle Hernandez
- 21 Willie Jones
- 23 Matthew Jorgensen
- 24 Andrew Pohl
- 25 Janet Arena
- 26 Raegan Kobbe
- 28 Joan Sullivan
- 30 Abigail Boele
- 31 Ron Phillips

**JANUARY**  
Anniversaries

- 12 Chet & Doris Price
- 20 Anthony & Marilyn Aub

**CHURCH MAIL**

Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for the many prayers, cards, and well wishes you offered Bob and me during 2020 -- not to mention the beautiful church poinsettias we are still enjoying!

Your kindness and thoughtful gestures were very much appreciated, especially during a challenging year for all.

We are happy to say we are now both healthy and look forward to a new year ahead. We wish you all a blessed 2021!

With gratitude and fondness,

Claudia and Bob Drummond

**VIRTUAL BINGO IS BACK!**

**Thursday, January 14 at 7:00 pm!**

Join in the Fun, Fellowship and a little Fundraising, as we host another FCC Virtual Bingo night. Get your family and friends to sign up. We promise you will have fun and you can win some Amazon gift cards.



**REGISTER TO GET SET UP FOR A GREAT EVENING!!!**

You must register for virtual Bingo similar or exactly as you donate to the church by **noon on game day**. Go to [www.fccriveredge.org/activitiescalendar](http://www.fccriveredge.org/activitiescalendar) and register. When you register, please denote that it is for virtual bingo, and how many cards.

|                |
|----------------|
| 1 card - \$10  |
| 2 cards - \$15 |
| 3 cards - \$20 |

Three games each night. Winners receive an Amazon gift card. All monies collected will be distributed: 50% to the church, 50% divided among the three winners.

You must have a device to access ZOOM. You will be instructed by email how to retrieve your cards and an invite to the Zoom Virtual Bingo game.



Congratulations to Dylan Shirk and his girlfriend, Gianna on the birth of their baby boy, Dylan Michael, born on November 20, 2020.

&

Congratulations to Heather, Ricky and Olivia Nicheski on the birth of their baby and brother Luka born on December 17, 2020

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

### Chrismon Service

The Education Team would like to thank everyone who celebrated in our very different 48<sup>th</sup> Chrismon Service! Our children were excited to try something new despite the cold (and windy) outdoor alternative. Despite our limitations, the congregation's generosity shined once again. Due to the pandemic, the organizations we typically donate to have changed. We collected 6 clothing items that were donated, along with the 136 pairs of socks from the Socktober drive, to the Greater Bergen Community Alliance for their family shelters and Head Start programs. The 3 warm coats went to the Jersey Cares coat drive and 51 toys were donated to the Paramus PBA Toy drive for children spending the holidays in hospitals around NJ. We also donated a \$25 Shoprite gift card to Family Promise. An offering of \$199 was collected to support our Child Sponsorship program. Thank you!



To continue our tradition of "Tackling Hunger," a soup collection box will be available in the Entryway beginning Jan. 10<sup>th</sup> through Super Bowl Sunday on Feb. 7<sup>th</sup>. Unfortunately, we will not be collecting coins this year, but you may make a monetary donation to the national campaign at [www.tacklehunger.org](http://www.tacklehunger.org). All canned soup donations will go to the Center for Food Action in Englewood and the food pantry at St. Peter's Church in River Edge.

### Church School

Church School has officially began in-person classes! Safety guidelines are in place and our teachers are excited to finally be able to use ALL of the new curriculum with our children. Mixed ages in one classroom setting is working well with all children participating. Looking forward to 2021!

### Confirmation Class

The class has met for the last time, and our Confirmands are preparing for the big day! The group is putting the final touches on their statements of faith which they will share at the Confirmation Retreat on Jan. 10<sup>th</sup>. Confirmation Sunday will be on Sunday Feb. 7<sup>th</sup>.

### Education Team Needs New Members



Interested in getting involved with our Youth/Adult/Family Ministries? These ministries are hoping to become more active in enhancing our member's faith formation experiences. In order to do this, some committed volunteers who are open to new ideas are needed. These ministries are even more important during these unique times to allow us to engage with our community. There are Co-Op positions available, so if working with just one ministry and/or activity is your thing, the Education Team needs you! If interested, please contact team leader Beth Shuler at [bethshuler7@gmail.com](mailto:bethshuler7@gmail.com) or Nicole at [nbabington@fccriveredge.org](mailto:nbabington@fccriveredge.org).

### Childcare & Children's Message Volunteers

Currently, there will be no need for childcare or children's message volunteers. The Education team is looking forward to the time when these two priceless ministries can safely return.

~Nicole

## CONGREGATOR

The deadline for the February 2021 issue of the Congregator is Wednesday, January 20.

## January 2021

| Sunday  | Monday   | Tuesday                              | Wednesday                                     | Thursday   | Friday | Saturday                           |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|---|--|--------|------------------------------------|
|   |  |                                      |   |  | 1      | 2<br>8:30 KWIS<br>7:00 AA          |
| 3<br><br>10:00 Worship Service/Communion/<br>The Rev. Jon Norton<br>10:00 Church School<br>10:00 Pre Confirmation Class | 4<br><br>Church Office<br>Closed<br><br>7:00 Step by Step NA<br><br>4:00 Worship Team                              | 5                                    | 6   | 7<br><br>10:00 Staff<br>Meeting<br><br>7:30 Chancel<br>Choir   | 8      | 9<br><br>8:30 KWIS<br><br>7:00 AA  |
| 10<br><br>10:00 Worship Service/<br>The Rev. Nancy Hoerner<br>10:00 Church School<br>10:00 Pre Confirmation Class       | 11<br><br>Church Office<br>Closed<br><br>12:00 Noon Al-Anon<br><br>3:00 Funds Advisory<br><br>7:00 Step by Step NA | 12<br><br>7:30 Shawl<br>Ministry     | 13  | 14<br><br>10:00 Staff<br>Meeting<br><br>1:00 Shawl<br>Ministry<br><br>7:00 Virtual<br>Bingo<br><br>7:30 Pilgrim<br>Ringers | 15     | 16<br><br>8:30 KWIS<br><br>7:00 AA |
| 17<br><br>10:00 Worship Service/<br>The Rev. Dennis TeBeest<br>10:00 Church School<br>10:00 Pre Confirmation Class      | 18<br><br>Church Office<br>Closed<br><br>12:00 Noon Al-Anon<br><br>7:00 Step by Step NA                            | 19<br><br>7:00 Leadership<br>Council | 20<br><br>February<br>Congregator<br>Deadline | 21<br><br>10:00 Staff<br>Meeting<br><br>7:30 Chancel<br>Choir  | 22     | 23<br><br>8:30 KWIS<br><br>7:00 AA |
| 24<br><br>10:00 Worship Service/<br>The Rev. Dennis TeBeest<br>10:00 Church School<br>10:00 Pre Confirmation Class      | 25<br><br>Church Office<br>Closed<br><br>12:00 Noon Al-Anon<br><br>7:00 Step by Step NA                            | 26<br><br>7:00 Mission<br>Team       | 27  | 28<br><br>10:00 Staff<br>Meeting<br><br>7:30 Pilgrim<br>Ringers  | 29     | 30                                 |
| 31<br><br>10:00 Worship Service/<br>The Rev. Dennis TeBeest<br>10:00 Church School<br>10:00 Pre Confirmation Class      |  |                                      |   |  |        |                                    |

December 16, 2020

First Congregational Church River Edge  
109 Continental Avenue  
River Edge, NJ 07661

Dear First Congregational Church,

Thank you for your generous donation of \$1,500.00 dated 12/9/2020 in support of Family Promise of Bergen County's Walk in Dinner Program. We greatly appreciate your support during this challenging time.

Thanks to your generosity, Family Promise is able to empower homeless working families to become self-sufficient by providing temporary housing and personalized support, including job training, financial literacy, life skills, transportation, childcare and enrichment for children. Family Promise also addresses hunger through the nightly Walk-In Dinner, which since 1991 has served over 1.1 million meals to people in need.

Thank you supporting our vision of a community where every working family has a stable home and the means to create a better life.

With sincere gratitude,



Kate Duggan  
Executive Director

cc: Helen Koons – Mission Team

*Thank you for your  
kind support.  
Merry & Blessed  
Christmas  
to you!*

*No goods or services were provided in return for this donation.  
Federal Tax ID Number: 22-2853599*



# Pumpkin Patch 2020

Nobody knew what would happen to our Pumpkin Patch during COVID-pandemic 2020. But we took a leap of faith (Well, we are a church!) and notwithstanding challenges--much-delayed delivery, masks, pallet jacks... ***we had a successful Patch!***

Biggest, but not surprising, success was the participation of many volunteers from our church family in many ways, masked and distanced, amid of a pandemic.

THANK YOU for helping to set up and then taking down, the tent, for helping to (eventually) get the pumpkins onto the lawn, for knitting and canning and baking and making lollipops, to meet an unexpectedly large demand for our homemade goods, to volunteering to cover the Patch. Special thanks to Chuck Keehn for providing the means to get the pumpkins off the truck, and to Gene Hammerle for getting our wireless credit card reader to actually work; to Michelle and Stu for counting and reporting every night. And of course, beyond all others to Pam for all her wonderful baking, way past the end-date of the Pumpkin Patch, and to Ron for his leadership and work on managing the Patch, New York sales and delivery services.

*Please note that for the past two years, food profits have exceeded pumpkin profits!*

Another major success was the gratitude and support of the local community. Many, many people came to the Patch and said things like 'I am so glad you're doing this!' and 'I waited to buy my pumpkins until you opened.' When a new River Edge resident asked on Facebook where to buy pumpkins, multiple replies came back...us! And then there was the pumpkin carving event hosted by our Christian Ed Team which had the great participation of many non-members!

In addition to the good will generated in the local community, the Patch also raised \$14,950 for the Navajo, bringing our 12-year total paid to these hard-working but struggling American farmers to over \$193,000

|                        | <b>2018</b>   | <b>2019</b>   | <b>2020</b>   | <b>TOTAL</b> (12 year) |
|------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|------------------------|
| <i>Returned to PPF</i> | <i>18,003</i> | <i>16,738</i> | <i>14,950</i> | <i>193,061</i>         |

Although the Patch was open for a much shorter time than in prior years (we lost five days, including a weekend, to the delivery delay), it still generated a significant amount for the Building Renovation Fund.

|                           | YEAR 10 | YEAR 11 | YEAR 12       | To Date          |
|---------------------------|---------|---------|---------------|------------------|
|                           | 2018    | 2019    | <b>2020</b>   | <b>TOTAL</b>     |
| <b>Our Pumpkin Profit</b> | 12,002  | 9,013   | <b>8,050</b>  | 115,139          |
| <b>Our Food profit</b>    | 10,449  | 10,261  | <b>8,897</b>  | 85,859           |
| <b>Total profit FCCRE</b> | 22,451  | 19,274  | <b>16,947</b> | 200,997          |
| (Pumpkins + Food)         |         |         |               | to Building Fund |

Almost time to start planning and working for 2021! Let's get ready!

