

The Congregator

First Congregational Church of River Edge, New Jersey

a congregation of the United Church of Christ

February 2021

Volume 72, Issue 2

MEMBERSHIP



The Leadership Council has called the Annual Meeting of the Congregation and Corporation of First Congregational Church of River Edge for Sunday, February 21, 2021 immediately following the morning worship service. The business will include the presentation of annual reports of church teams and organizations, the financial report of the church, and election of officers. Please submit your reports to the church office no later than February 5. The Annual Report booklets will be available upon request prior to the meeting. Please contact the church office.

CAN YOU HELP?

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

CHURCH OFFICE INFORMATION

109 Continental Avenue, River Edge, NJ 07661 / (201) 261-1712 / office@fccriveredge.org
Website – www.fccriveredge.org

CHURCH STAFF

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

FIRST THINGS

Who Is Our Neighbor?

“Who *is* my neighbor?” That question, asked of Jesus by a lawyer in the crowd (Luke 10), is where the story of the Good Samaritan begins. And with a simple story, Jesus turns the question on a dime; the real issue that we, as followers of Jesus, need to be worrying our little heads about is whether we are acting like neighbors. The neighbor is “*the one who showed him mercy.*”

One of my favorite loves of the First Congregational Church of River Edge is how often we demonstrate that we (you!) are asking and answering the right question. Call it mission...call it outreach...call it service...the disciples of Jesus here are continually trying to find ways to show mercy to the needs that cry out in our “neighborhood.” I see it incessantly as you touch one another’s lives within the congregation, but the even bigger amazement is our ever-evolving outreach. The most visible “showings of mercy” have been for homeless families through Family Promise, for housing stability with Habitat for Humanity, in food assistance through St. Peter’s pantry and CFA and more, in community service through Pumpkin Patch...and especially and enduringly for the disabilities community through Second Sunday.

Then came pandemic. Seemingly thwarting our mercy-showing reflexes. Nowhere has it quashed our neighborliness more than with Second Sunday. From the first week that I joined FCC in ministry, I have marveled at your Second Sunday community—true neighbors interacting...until suddenly last March the adult group homes around us went

into lockdown. It is a reality that will continue indefinitely. And, until the world fully reopens, we will miss and long for these true friends.

Still, around food issues and needs, we are learning to be flexible neighbors. No longer able to staff Family Promise shelters, we are now twice providing full (take-out) dinners to over 150 folks. The next meal through which you can be neighbors is February 26.

Bigger still, through a new grant, we are about to discover a whole new neighborliness. We have just received confirmation from the Central Atlantic Conference of the UCC that we have received a three-year Trinity Trust Grant for our proposed Soup Supper and Loaves of Love ministry. Our Mission Team still has much to discover about how to carry out this creative showing of mercy. But, in my understanding, in the coming months we should begin a weekly (during pandemic a take-out) soup supper for the food scarce in our community, as well as bread-baking classes for our congregation and community which will provide “loaves of love” for the soup suppers...also available to members and possibly for fund raisers.

I am sure that I have misrepresented more than a few details of this unfolding new ministry. But I know that we’ve got the purpose down pat—we *are* neighbors, determined to show mercy to whatever need that presents itself around us!

Godspeed,
Pastor Dennis

First Life in Lent

Last year most of our Lent plans were upended as we entered pandemic. This year, as we enter Lent, put these adaptive opportunities for prayer, worship, study, and fellowship on your calendar:

ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP, February 17:

A pre-recorded service will be available at fccriveredge.org all day, to aid you in walking into a holy and helpful Lent. Individual packets of ashes (from previous years' palms) will be available in the entryway in the days prior to Ash Wednesday.

Tuesdays (six weeks, beginning 2/23), 4:00 –

5:00 pm: BIBLE STUDY - From Widows to Warriors. We will take a deeper and broader look at forty women of the Old Testament. Guided by Lynn Japinga's book, we will encounter a wealth of foremothers in the faith in all their messy, yet redeemable, humanity. *A sign-up sheet and books will be available in the Commons, or by calling the church office. At this time the class will be by Zoom only.*

Tuesdays (2/23-3/30), 6:00-6:20 pm:

VESPERS PRAYER & COMMUNION -- A simple and quiet **Zoom** service of scripture, Lord's Supper and guided prayer. Join in; make space for God!

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

Adria B. Brown

*Ruth and Hugo Tschudin
William and Christine Hamilton
Donald Huggett*

BUILDING RENOVATION FUND

In Memory of

Adria B. Brown

*William and Cynthia Fordham
Hilma Albrecht*

In Memory of

June Morris

Robert Owens

WORSHIP TEAM



COMMUNION

We celebrate Communion during the 10:00am service on the first Sunday of each month – this month is February 7.

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.



Lent is a period of reflection and a chance to set aside time to focus on Christ's life, ministry and resurrection. This year Lent begins Wednesday, February 17 with Ash Wednesday and continues for 40 days (plus 6 Sundays). We will celebrate the glory of Easter on Sunday, April 4th at 10:00am.

Please remember to register to attend church services. Our website is www.fccriveredge.org or by phone 201-261-1712. We worship each Sunday morning. Arrive by 9:55 to hear the organ welcome all.

Janet Arena
Worship Team – Leader

MINISTER OF MUSIC

We are so grateful to the musicians who share their talents with us every week.

Though it is a challenge, we manage to find ways to include meaningful music in all our services of worship. While the choir is temporarily suspending rehearsals, their pre-recorded anthems will continue to enhance our worship; and soloists will also provide hymns and responses.



*Alleluia! Laud and blessing to our God,
whose Word is sure;*

*by whose grace we find redemption, in
whose love we live secure.*

*Righteousness and rich compassion shall
attend us all our days;*

*may God's promise to be faithful echo
through our songs of praise!*

paraphrase of Psalms 111 and 112 by Michael Morgan



Join in the Fun,
Fellowship and a little
Fundraising on **February
11 and 25** as we host

more Virtual Bingo nights. Get your family and friends to sign up. We promise you will have fun and you can win some Amazon gift cards.

Register for virtual Bingo similar or exactly as you donate to the church by **noon on game day**. Go to 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**
- 4 cards - \$20**

Three games per 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.

FOOD PANTRY SUNDAY

The first Sunday of each month is Food Pantry Sunday. We receive monetary donations to support the community food pantry through the Center for Food Action. Donation envelopes will be in the Narthex and pews each first Sunday of the month. Donations may also be made on our website under the "Giving" tab.

THANK YOU

FCC Friends,

The beautiful altar flowers brightened my spirits and week. They were shared with my son, Alec, who is battling pancreatic cancer. And, thanks to Joan, who was so kind to deliver them.

I am so happy to be sharing in the love of FCC.

In gratitude,
Carol Cameron

THANK YOU

Dear Rev. Dennis TeBeest, Members and Friends of the First Congregational Church,

The love and support shown by everyone regarding the passing of my beloved wife, Nancy, have been overwhelming! My family and I would like to thank you all so much for the condolences, prayers and wonderful remembrances of such a special, kind and beautiful person.

*In Loving Memory of
Nancy E. Chiang
August 9, 1953 - Sept 15, 2020*



**Do not stand at my grave and weep,
I am not there, I do not sleep.
I am in a thousand winds that blow,
I am the softly falling snow.
I am the gentle showers of rain,
I am the fields of ripening grain,
I am in the morning hush,
I am in the graceful rush
Of beautiful birds in circling flight,
I am the starshine of the night.
I am in the flowers that bloom,
I am in a quiet room.
I am in the birds that sing,
I am in each lovely thing...**

*With love,
Wai Chiang and Family*

SHAWL MINISTRY

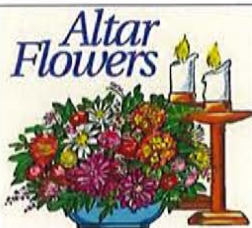


The next regular meetings of the Shawl Ministry will take place on:

Tuesday, February 9, at 7:30 pm
Thursday, February 11, 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 201-694-9055. 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.

Offering Envelopes



In order to assure that your Sunday donation is credited to your church account, please use your offering envelopes. If you haven't picked up your envelopes, they may be found in the Commons.

Don Huggett,
Counting Team

CELEBRATIONS



- 4 Taylor Buono
Alexander Joseph Myers
- 5 Cheryl Chormanski
- 6 Nell Lent
- 8 Carin Karyshyn
Max Froonjian
- 9 Talli Sutherland
- 13 John Rushforth
- 15 Suzanne Hamilton
Rylie Logan Kearns
- 20 Leigh Ann (Keehn) Bertuzzi
- 22 Sara McIlroy
- 25 Efren Frani
- 26 Raegan Kobbe
- 27 Declan Asplint



- 2 Laura & Patrick Hogan
- 28 Lynn & Edward Lanni

COVID VACCINE REGISTRATION

If any River Edge resident has not yet registered and needs help to register for the Covid Vaccine, assistance to register is available. Please contact me at 201-261-1795 or the River Edge Library at 201-261-1663.

Thank you,
Russell Van Wetering

CONGREGATOR DEADLINE

The deadline for the **March** 2021 issue of the Congregator is Friday, February 19.

EDUCATION



To continue our tradition of "Tackling Hunger," a soup collection box will be available in the Entryway beginning Jan. 10th through Super Bowl Sunday on Feb. 7th. Unfortunately, we will not be collecting coins this year, but you may make a monetary donation to the local CFA campaign at <https://cfanj.salsalabs.org/souperbowl/index.html>. Please specify First Congregational Church as your group. 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 begun 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!



The Confirmation Retreat began on January 9 with dinner in Pilgrim Hall and a group outing to Amazing Escape Rooms in Bloomfield. All attended worship on January 10 then continued on with the retreat in The Commons. We talked about the history of both the FCC and the UCC that included a power point presentation, a video and a scavenger hunt. The mentors shared their faith journeys and the Confirmands shared their Statements of Faith. We finished the day with a catered lunch and creating a spiritual terrarium together. All mentors and Confirmands participated in this blessed experience with hopes for a perfect Confirmation Sunday on Feb. 7. There will be no Confirmation breakfast, but the Education Team will be planning an outdoor luncheon to celebrate our Confirmands in May.

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

?? ? Bible Quiz ? ? ?

The precise number varies depending on the Bible version, but roughly how many times does the word "love" occur in the Old and New Testaments combined?

A. 200-300
 B. 400-500
 C. 600-700
 D. 800-900

Answer: C

Homeless Dinner, February 26th

On Friday, February 26th, we will provide dinner for 150+ homeless/distressed individuals through the Family Promise feeding program (called the "Walk-in Dinner" or WiD in pre-pandemic times)

Can you help...

Purchase & DONATE food items below?

Food items need to be brought to the church by Wednesday, Feb. 24th

If you can help by donating a food item,

please contact Helen Koons first to coordinate and avoid duplication.

helenknkk@aol.com or Home: 201-261-4824 or Cell 201-961-2350

Salad Greens	Large bags with about 25 servings (about 6 donors)
Grape Tomatoes	Medium container (6 donors)
Dinner Rolls	Two dozen (6 donors)
Cases of Water	(Standard 16.9 oz. bottles, 24 per case (3 donors)
Apples or halos	160 eating apples, any kind OR similar number of clementine/halos

Can you help with FOOD REPARATION?

(We need about 15 people!!!)

Prepare and cook in your home oven, three loaf-size pans of meatloaf (about 2 pounds each) and bring these to church (hot) around noon on Feb. 26th?


We will provide the ground meat, the disposable aluminum pans, and a standard recipe. We will reimburse you for other recipe items.

OR Help in our church kitchen or driving the food to Hackensack on Feb. 26th,
Please let us know.

*Our neighbors are counting on us. On February 26th **we** are responsible for providing their evening meal. For many, this will be their only meal of the day.*

Let's feed them abundantly.

February 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 4:00 Worship Team 7:00 Education Team	2	3	4	5 Annual Reports Due	6 8:30 KWIS 7:00 AA
7 SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY CONFIRMATION SUNDAY 10:00 Worship Service/Communion The Rev. Dennis TeBeest Church School	8 CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED 12:00 Al-Anon 7:30 Step by Step	9 3:00 Funds Advisory 7:30 Shawl Ministry	10	11 1:00 Shawl Ministry 7:00 Virtual Bingo 7:30 Pilgrim Ringers	12	13 8:30 KWIS 7:00 AA
14 VALENTINE'S DAY 10:00 Worship Service/ The Rev. Dennis TeBeest Church School	15 CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED Presidents' Day 12:00 Al-Anon 7:30 Step by Step	16 7:00 Leadership	17 ASH WEDNESDAY	18	19 March Congregator Deadline	20 8:30 KWIS 7:00 AA
21 10:00 Worship Service/ The Rev. Dennis TeBeest Church School 11:00 Annual Meeting	22 CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED 12:00 Al-Anon 7:30 Step by Step	23 4:00 Bible Study 6:00 Vespers Prayer & Communion 7:00 Mission Team	24	25 7:00 Virtual Bingo 7:30 Pilgrim Ringers	26	27 8:30 KWIS 7:00 AA
28 10:00 Worship Service/ The Rev. Dennis TeBeest Church School						

FEBRUARY 2021 COMMITMENT REMINDERS

Sunday, February 7, 2021

COMMUNION TEAM/USHERS - Wayne Placek, Jane Silane, Alice Rushforth,
COUNTERS – Don Huggett, Jane Silane, Jeff Bernard
GREETER – Russell Van Wetering
LAY READER – Anabelle Babington
ALTAR GUILD – Noreen and Chayse Van Wetering

Sunday, February 14, 2021

USHERS - ☒ Janet Arena, Marvin Orendain, Janet Masiello
COUNTERS – Don Huggett, Jane Silane, Jeff Bernard
GREETERS – Russell Van Wetering
LAY READER – Joan Hammerle
ALTAR GUILD – Noreen and Chayse Van Wetering

Ash Wednesday, February 17, 2021

LAY READER – Joy Jacobs

Sunday, February 21, 2021

USHERS - ☒ Wayne Placek, Tom Rushforth, Jeff Keehn
COUNTERS – Don Huggett, Jane Silane, Jeff Bernard
GREETERS – Volunteer needed
LAY READER – Bert Schmitt
ALTAR GUILD – Noreen and Chayse Van Wetering

Sunday, February 28, 2021

USHERS – ☒ Betty Hogan, Frank Meeks, Inge Reist
COUNTERS – Don Huggett, Jane Silane, Jeff Bernard
GREETERS – Volunteer needed
LAY READER – Janice Hildreth
ALTAR GUILD – Noreen and Chayse Van Wetering

☒ **Team Leader**

RIVER EDGE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Homebound Delivery Service



For River Edge Residents Only

a volunteer-run delivery service for those unable to visit the
Library due to limited mobility, illness or disability

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Julia Lee at julia.lee@riveredge.bccls.org

201-261-1663x4

www.riveredgepubliclibrary.org