



# CHURCH KEY NEWSLETTER



First Presbyterian Church  
of Branchville, New Jersey

Volume 20, No. 6

JUNE 2020



## AT A GLANCE:

14th Youth Sunday



21st Happy Father's Day



21st Summer Begins



Every Sunday —10am Live Streaming Worship on Facebook and  
then available on YouTube for later viewing



### Our Mission Statement:

Our mission is to gather as a church family for worship and spiritual fellowship, to nurture and educate, and to proclaim the gospel to the world.

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# CHURCH KEY NEWSLETTER



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
**P.O. BOX 1**  
**5 WANTAGE AVE.**  
**BRANCHVILLE, NJ 07826**



**VOLUME 20 NO. 6**

**JUNE 2020**

## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

## When Can We Re-Open?



That's a good question, but the answers are tough to get. I've heard from some that they are tired of this pandemic and tired of the social distancing. How does the state or anyone have the power to limit our rights to assemble or gather as a church? When can we re-open?

I met online with our Presbytery Leader and a group of about 25 pastors last Wednesday to talk about re-entry, and then with a team from our Session last Thursday, and in both meetings we talked about the above questions and more. It turns out that there are very few *new* answers at this point. There are answers, but they've been in effect for weeks now and what we really want is more up-to-the-minute information. Some of that should be coming out soon (within the next week or 2).

One important question is: who is our authority in making our decisions? There are actually four of them at the moment: the CDC, the State of NJ, Newton Presbytery, and our insurance carrier. The CDC has given general guidelines about doing everything possible to protect those who are at higher risk (those with underlying conditions and those 60+ in age), but their guidelines defer to the states. New Jersey allows groups of up to 10 to gather indoors, and up to 25 outdoors, as long as masks are worn and social distancing occurs. Newton Presbytery has a Re-entry Team looking into all of this and is working on a report to send out to the churches of our region within the next week or so.

But one of the most important considerations for us is from our insurance company. They require that we follow state regulations, because if we don't that is considered *negligence*, and if someone gets sick from attending a worship service or other church gathering then they won't cover us.

It's been described to us that when churches do begin to re-open, it will happen in three stages (the 4th stage will be that we are fully open and can gather as we used to). We are currently in Stage 1, where only 10 may gather indoors, and churches may have Car Gatherings (meeting in a parking lot inside your car). Stage 2 is the next stage where up to 25 may gather indoors, but when that happens, members will need to wear a mask, choirs may not gather to sing, singing in general won't happen, no greeting that includes touching, no passing the plates, no Bibles or Hymnals may be used, they discourage use of printed bulletins, and no Coffee Hour afterward(!). When you think about it, being able to worship online with all parts of our liturgy intact is more inviting than a limit of 25 with no hymns, wearing masks, and no touching. Stage 3 will allow more interaction, but "Presently Stage three guidelines are not specific." We hope to know more soon.

Perhaps instead of focusing so much on what we *can't* do, we should look at what we *are* doing to adapt to the situation. We've figured out how to do our Session, Deacon, and committee meetings online. Our worship service is going out to hundreds more than we were worshipping with on pre-virus Sunday mornings—this past Sunday's service (5/31) has 345 views so far, and many of those locations were for multiple people. Add in a few more Youtube views and we could easily have had over 500 people worshipping with us!

Using Zoom to meet online is not ideal, but through it we have had Youth Group meetings (with games and discussion included), Bible study, board meetings, and even a Presbytery meeting that no one had to drive an hour to attend. Our ministries continue with our Sunday School kids getting a lesson delivered to each of their houses, an at-home VBS is in the works, and we're considering a virtual Coffee Hour after worship. Youth Sunday will honor our graduating senior highs, and we'll most likely still offer a "cooler" service (in temperature, that is) during August from our Fellowship Hall.

So despite the uncertainty of when we can re-open the sanctuary, this body of Christ we call the First Presbyterian Church of Branchville is still ministering, worshipping, enjoying fellowship and prayer. We do *really* miss Coffee Hour, though, and being together in person, but every day is a day closer to that happening again. I'll see you in online church. Your pastor,

*Jefferson L. Hatch*



Please offer prayers for these concerns that have been brought to our attention. They are collected each Sunday morning during the past month from the prayer concerns list used in worship.

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aaron</li> <li>• Abigail</li> <li>• Walter Ackerly</li> <li>• All those fighting anxiety and depression</li> <li>• All first responders and essential employees</li> <li>• All those fighting cancer</li> <li>• Anthony &amp; Samantha</li> <li>• Ann</li> <li>• Anne</li> <li>• John Arnedt</li> <li>• Audrey</li> <li>• Joyce B.</li> <li>• Barbara</li> <li>• Corine Barton—undergoing chemo</li> <li>• Beth</li> <li>• Beth &amp; Ken</li> <li>• Tim Berg</li> <li>• Brodhecker Family on the loss of Tom</li> <li>• Buddy</li> <li>• The Caldwell Family</li> <li>• Muriel Card</li> <li>• Carl</li> <li>• Carole's granddaughter</li> <li>• Peg Carlson</li> <li>• Family of Alice Casey</li> <li>• Kathleen Castonguay</li> <li>• Chrisbacher Family and their Uncle Ernie</li> <li>• Chuck</li> <li>• Leanne Clausen</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Coss Family</li> <li>• Dan</li> <li>• Hazel Doty's family on her passing</li> <li>• Carole Edwards</li> <li>• Ethan</li> <li>• Esther—suffering with shingles</li> <li>• Lorraine Feaser</li> <li>• George</li> <li>• Greg</li> <li>• Hannah</li> <li>• William Helms</li> <li>• Ann Hersey on loss of her son, David</li> <li>• High School Seniors</li> <li>• Phyllis &amp; Lauren Hoke</li> <li>• Margie Hult on a ventilator</li> <li>• Rich Innes</li> <li>• Irene</li> <li>• Jack</li> <li>• Jeanne</li> <li>• Jess</li> <li>• Jim</li> <li>• Joe &amp; Robin</li> <li>• John</li> <li>• Jolene &amp; John</li> <li>• Justin</li> <li>• Karen</li> <li>• Kate &amp; Mike</li> <li>• Kayla</li> <li>• Ken</li> <li>• Lillian Kinney</li> <li>• Jay Krug</li> <li>• Amy, Dave &amp; Josh Langley</li> <li>• Sharon Lee</li> <li>• Linda</li> <li>• Lewis Lippe</li> <li>• Lisa &amp; Rob</li> <li>• Lorraine</li> <li>• Mary Beth</li> <li>• Mary Ellen</li> <li>• Michael</li> <li>• Michele</li> <li>• Mikey &amp; Riley</li> <li>• Sherry Moon</li> <li>• Morgan</li> <li>• Ruth Morrow</li> <li>• Gail M.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Oldock Family</li> <li>• Joyce O.</li> <li>• Joyce P.</li> <li>• Pat &amp; Dave</li> <li>• Peg &amp; Mary</li> <li>• John &amp; Karen Pawelczyk</li> <li>• Deb Porter</li> <li>• Arthur Powers, Sr.</li> <li>• Rachel</li> <li>• Carolyn Rauscher</li> <li>• Rich</li> <li>• Rita</li> <li>• Robin</li> <li>• Grandma Ro</li> <li>• Ruby</li> <li>• Sarah</li> <li>• Sharon</li> <li>• Sherry</li> <li>• Sean —recovering from surgery</li> <li>• Stephanie</li> <li>• Sue</li> <li>• Suzanne &amp; Jerry</li> <li>• Those at higher risk for COVID-19</li> <li>• Those suffering from allergies</li> <li>• Those in nursing homes and long term care facilities</li> <li>• Virginia</li> <li>• Warren—fighting cancer</li> <li>• Gail Zubl</li> </ul> |
|--|---|---|



- Birth of Jean Ransom's great granddaughter, Abigail Claire



**PLEASE GIVE** – Our church is not closed but is continuing to make a difference in the world. Folks from all over the states and even internationally are tuning in to our streaming worship. We appreciate both the giving of those who aren't regular members of our church as well as the generosity of our members. Please help us continue to be a presence online, through our food pantry, and in the missions we support around the world - for the need is greater than ever!



In addition to the options of mailing in a check, using Bill Pay at your bank, or using our e-Giving service, we are now able to offer you the option of giving through texting on your phone. Just text the word GIVE to 973-874-1277 and follow the link that will be texted back to you. You can donate using your credit card, debit card, checking or savings account.

**NEW OFFICE HOURS** – Secretary Laura is now in the office: Monday—Friday, 7:30-11am, and may be reached at 973-948-3495 or [presbsec@ptd.net](mailto:presbsec@ptd.net).

**JUNE MISSION NEWS** – Our focus for June continues to be **Communities Little Helpers**. This group of local children ages 0 to 12 years old, led by our own Kristen Reinertsen, gathers to perform acts of community service and kindness. They visit with, make crafts for, shop for and donate to those in need. Your contributions allow them to purchase items that are necessary for their program activities while they learn the value of helping others. You can donate to this quarterly mission by sending a check with the memo marked "CLH." This is the last month to put some monetary resources in their hands so they can continue to teach young children how meaningful it is to perform community service.

### Our Worship Continues Online



Our worship schedule is every Sunday morning at 10am streaming live on Facebook Live. "Friend" [pastorjh@ptd.net](mailto:pastorjh@ptd.net) and watch for the announcement that we've gone live. Afterward the video will be posted to YouTube—search for "First Presbyterian Church of Branchville."

**The Road Back—June 2020****Guidelines from New Jersey Government with Guidelines from Newton Presbytery****NJ GUIDELINES THAT PERTAIN TO CHURCHES**

- Work that can be done from home should continue to be done from home.
- Clinically high-risk individuals who can stay at home should continue to do so.
- All residents and businesses should follow state and federal safeguarding guidelines:
- Wash hands
- Wear masks in public
- Respect social distancing
- Disinfect workplace and businesses
- Minimize gatherings
- No mass gatherings

Precautions that Apply Across the Stages

**NEWTON PRESBYTERY GUIDELINES**

- Churches continue to offer virtual worship services.
- Consideration be given at every stage as to how those who are choosing to shelter-at-home for their own health and safety—may participate in church worship and activities.
- High-risk individuals, including staff, should continue to shelter-in-place and/or work from home.
- Sessions provide accessible updates on status of their particular congregation steps for the Road Back

**STAGE ONE****NJ Guidelines that Pertain to Churches**

- Car Gatherings Permitted
- Attendees must Remain in their same car throughout the gathering unless 1) occupant needs to get out of vehicle for health or safety or 2) occupant needs to use the restroom.
- The vehicle must remain closed at all times unless 1) there is six feet distance between other vehicles or individuals or 2) an officer, public official or guard requires the vehicle to open.
- Individuals organizing the gathering who are not in vehicles must follow social distancing and wear cloth face coverings
- For pre-payment or donations of any kind, contactless options for pre-payment or donation must be offered where feasible.

**Newton Presbytery Guidelines**

- See “Recommendations that Apply Across the Stages.”
- Churches who choose to have drive-in worship shall consider how people who continue to shelter-in-place may participate. Also the insurance company shall be
- If participants do not abide by the guidelines as outlined by the state, drive-in worship experiences should be discontinued immediately.

Please Note” Government Guidelines for Stages Two and Three are not specific at this time. Details will be provided when the NJ Government declares that we are in next stages. It is anticipated that outdoor gatherings will be permitted in the coming weeks.

### **NJ GUIDELINES THAT PERTAIN TO CHURCHES**

- More work activities are allowed at physical locations only if they adhere to safeguarding and modification guidelines...*all with significantly reduced capacity.*
- All workers who can work from home continue to work from home.

### **STAGE TWO**

#### **NEWTON PRESBYTERY GUIDELINES**

- See “Recommendations that Apply Across the Stages.”
- Note: Stage Three specifies “in-person meetings are allowed at physical locations...” It is unclear what size gatherings will be permitted at this stage, Stage Two.
- For any church activities:
- Require social distancing and face masks for all participants.
- Building usage (by church and outside groups) will need to be determined along with sanitary procedures to ensure the safety of all who use the building.
- If worship/gathering is permitted—at “significantly reduced capacity”: see instructions below.

### **STAGE THREE**

#### **NJ Guidelines that Pertain to Churches**

- More work activities, *including in-person meetings*, are allowed at physical locations only if they can adhere to safeguarding guidelines and modifications.
- All workers who can work from home continue to work from home.

#### **Newton Presbytery Guidelines**

- See “Recommendations that Apply Across the Stages.”
- See Recommendations for Stage Two
- Presently Stage three guidelines are not specific. We will update our Stage 3 guide-lines as we received guidance from the Governor’s office and NJ Health Dept.

Until there is a breakthrough regarding a vaccine, we strongly recommend churches continue to model safe and healthy behaviors using the guidelines provided for all church gatherings including worship.



## **NEWTON PRESBYTERY GUIDELINES FOR ALL CHURCH "FACE TO FACE" GATHERINGS IN THE TIME OF COVID-19**

- **Face Masks:** Returning to worship will require the wearing of masks. Request that members supply their own masks and have masks available for your community to help members who do not have access to a mask comply with regulations.
- **Hand Sanitizer:** Access to soap and hand sanitizer will be crucial to prevent viral spread. Purchase or collect hand sanitizer for your community and strategize about location, accessibility, and administration of your hand-sanitizing stations.
- **Setting Up Your Space:**
  - Have a plan for maintaining 6 feet of physical distancing for entry, worship, and exiting with instructional signage.
  - Remove Bibles, hymnals, offering envelopes, etc...
  - Consider adding a screen or TV monitor into your worship space. Do not use paper bulletins.
  - Open all doors to eliminate transmission via doorknobs.
  - Have a strategy in place for sanitizing before and after worship (i.e. pews, railings, door-knobs, microphones, etc...)
- **Attendance, Reporting and Contact Tracing:**
  - Create a process for reporting to your local health department and for notifying worship participants in case a member of your faith community contracts COVID-19. Consider using a phone number so participants can text you as a way to log attendance or have an allocated person collecting names as people arrive.
- **Manage Member Expectations:**
  - In the weeks leading up to returning to your building, be sure to contact your members with specific guidelines of what to expect:
  - Everyone, including pastors and worship leaders, will be wearing masks.
  - Congregational song will not be a part of the in-person service.
  - The offering plate will not be passed: consider other alternatives for giving.
  - There will be no fellowship hour before or after worship.
  - Consider how you will welcome and communicate with visitors.
- **When Gathered:**
  - Use no-touch alternatives for passing the peace, collecting and counting offering, etc...
  - Create a healthy hospitality strategy for ensuring compliance and preparing for sanitation.
  - Remove congregational and choral singing from the service because of increased risk of transmission.
  - Give serious consideration to options for communion and other parts of the service in order to minimize or eliminate contact. (This may mean postponing in-person communion.)
  - Track attendance and create a plan of action in case one of your worshippers becomes infected with COVID-19 after gathering.
  - Childcare, nursery, and children's church or Sunday School will not be offered.
- **INSURANCE:** Most insurance companies are requiring that you follow all state regulations during this pandemic. Before moving forward with any gatherings make sure you check in with your insurance company.
- *Additional or more details will be added as more information is available from the State of New Jersey*

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY JUNE

Bryce Becker	6/3	Betty Willis	6/16
Dillon Dean	6/4	Deanna Nussberger	6/17
Cassandra Hardy	6/5	Brad Swistack	6/21
Bob Price	6/6	Cindy Clark	6/24
Gary Snyder	6/7	Linda Buehrer	6/24
Emery Castimore	6/10	Steve Leenheer	6/26
John McCurdy	6/13	Clare Willis	6/29
Stephen Nucci	6/13		

## RECIPE OF THE MONTH

### GRILLED CLAMS WITH LEMON-SHALLOT BUTTER

#### INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup unsalted butter (1 stick), room temperature
- ½ small shallot, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh chives
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh parsley
- 2 teaspoons finely grated lemon zest
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 4 pounds clams (such as littleneck or mahogany)
- Fresh Basil and flat leaf parsley leaves (for serving)

#### RECIPE PREPARATION

- Mix butter, shallot, chives, and parsley in a small bowl. Add lemon zest and mix until well combined; season with salt and pepper.
- Clean the clams—Fill the first bowl with cold water - Add enough salt to make the water mimic ocean salinity, then put the bowl back in the fridge and let the clams soak for 20 minutes.
- Set up a second bowl full of cold, salted water. Lift the clams out of the first bowl and place them into the second soaking vessel. You don't want to dump them from one bowl into another, even if you use a strainer, because you'll just be pouring the gritty water back over the clams, negating step #1.
- Let them soak in the second bowl of clean, cold, salty water in the fridge for another 20 minutes.
- When the second soak is done, set up a third bowl full of cold, salted water, and again, lift the clams from their current bowl and transfer them to the new one. Soak them in the fridge for a final 20 minutes. That third time should be the charm. However, if you still see a lot of sand in the bottom of the bowl, you may want to repeat the process, once or even twice.
- Finally, scrub each clam with a stiff-bristle brush to remove any grit or debris on the shells. Then they're ready to go.
- Prepare grill for medium-high heat, Place clams directly on grill grate. Grill (no need to turn or rotate) until they pop open, 3-5 minutes. Transfer clams to large bowl, discarding any that are not open.
- Add butter mixture to bowl with Grilled Clams and toss to coat. Transfer to a serving platter and top with basil and parsley.
- **Do Ahead:** Butter can be made 4 days ahead; bring to room temperature before serving.





**NOTES:**

Thank you for your kindness and care while my dad was hospitalized and during this time of bereavement for his loss, I'm not sure how I would have managed everything with his illness, passing and readying the house for sale without all of you. Your generosity of spirit, hospitality, and love made it all possible. Both Mom & Dad loved you all very much. You were their friends and became extended family. I am forever grateful for all of you,

Love,

Kathy Caldwell (daughter of Duncan and Bonnie)

Hi First Presbyterian,

This is for your food pantry collected as donations from face masks. Ken & I live on Culver Lake and we have a stand with free masks at the end of our driveway. We have a box for donations. People are generous! Seriously generous, and so we are able to send money around our area. I also sent to the food pantry at the U. Methodist Church of equal amounts as well as Blue Ridge Rescue, Frankford Fire Co. Station 1 and NJPRF-New Jersey Pandemic Relief. We learned of your need at the food pantry from Linda Larsen at Blue Ridge. Now we can pass on more help. I said Ken and I are doing face masks, he has taken over cooking and I have made 700 plus masks. It's a joy to be able to help others and each mask has had a prayer over it. God is good.

Ginny Kopperl

Stop by! Lots more waiting for a home! 73 Walnut Ave., Branchville

Dear First Presbyterian,

Thank you for streaming Sunday services. I especial enjoyed Music Sunday!

-Deb Irmiter

Dear First Presbyterian,

We have been watching and enjoying your services online for the last three weeks and wanted to send this to support your church. Sincerely, Jim & Susan Leighty

**View our website at:**

**<http://www.fpcbranchville.org>**

**and Facebook at:**

**<http://www.facebook.com>**

**(ask to be friends with  
"pastorjh@ptd.net")**

**You may e-mail**

**the secretary at [presbsec@ptd.net](mailto:presbsec@ptd.net)  
or the pastor at [pastorjh@ptd.net](mailto:pastorjh@ptd.net)**

**View a daily devotion at:**

**<http://www.d365.org>**

**First Presbyterian Church of Branchville**

**PO Box 1**

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Branchville, NJ 07826**

**Phone 973-948-3495**

**Fax 973-948-3495**



# JUNE 2020



## First Presbyterian Church of Branchville



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																											
	<b>1</b> 10:00 AM -12:30 PM Food Pantry open  3:00 PM Music & Worship Meeting	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> 10:00 AM -12:30 PM Food Pantry open	<b>4</b> 10:00 AM -12:30 PM Food Pantry open	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>																																																																																											
<b>7</b> 10:00 AM Livestream Worship/Communion Sunday  	<b>8</b> 10:00 AM -12:30 PM Food Pantry open  7:00 PM Session Meeting	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> 10:00 AM -12:30 PM Food Pantry open	<b>11</b> 10:00 AM -12:30 PM Food Pantry open	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>																																																																																											
<b>14</b> 10:00 AM Livestream Worship/Youth Sunday  1:00 PM Youth Group  	<b>15</b> 10:00 AM -12:30 PM Food Pantry open  1:00 PM Presbytery Transitional Team Meeting (pastor only)	<b>16</b> 7:00 PM Deacons' Meeting	<b>17</b> 10:00 AM -12:30 PM Food Pantry open	<b>18</b> 10:00 AM -12:30 PM Food Pantry open	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>																																																																																											
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