

Oak Leaves

Vol. LXV, Number 7

March 2023



Dear Congregation...

by Rev. Dr. Paul J. Kirbas

My wife Jennifer will tell you, she is a bit afraid of something that might seem rather harmless to you. It is a Kite. She doesn't like to see something so high in the air, frailly connected to a thin line. I guess she imagines herself as the kite, and if so, that can certainly be a scary position!

Yes, kites could disappear into the air if they weren't connected to a string, which is connected to someone on the ground. No matter how high the kite rises, the string connection to the ground is what keeps it safe and controlled.

I think that churches are that way as well. Some churches today are floating into the high skies of contemporary ministry, and have cut the strings to the ground of their history and legacy. They may be floating high, but with no string attached, they are actually adrift. When a church wishes to sail into the unknown skies, we need to make sure the string to the ground from which it started is strongly intact.

Here at Rumson Presbyterian Church, change is upon us. We are floating into the high skies of transition, that will lead us to an unknown future. Before we release this kite into the sky, it is important for us to make sure the string to the ground is strong and intact. Before we start moving into the future, we have to acknowledge the past.



In March, we are moving from phase one of the interim transition period to stage two. Stage one was a listening and relationship-building stage. It was a time for me to hear your stories and your feelings about this church. And it was a time for you to get familiar with my pastoral leadership. Now we enter phase two, which is to claim our history and our legacy. This phase will include several

Continued on next page...

...Continued from previous page

events, including small group conversations, community interviews, and a congregational dinner event scheduled for Friday, April 21. But to start it all off, we are inviting you to participate in the historical timeline project.

The historical timeline project will be a large timeline spread across the western window wall of Wilson Hall. This timeline will be divided into decades. In each decade section, we will place pictures, articles, bulletins, and historical notes that come from that decade. We invite all of you to do the same. Perhaps you have a picture of your grown child, who was in the children's choir back in the decade of the 90's. Perhaps you have a picture of a baptism or a wedding. We will have safe ways for you to attach these items to the timeline, so you can retrieve them in safe condition when we are finished with the timeline.

The timeline will be in place and ready on Sunday, March 12. From that time on until our dinner event of April 21, you are invited and encouraged to view the timeline and to add to it. Together, let's build a visible string to the foundational times of our church, so that the transition kite will fly strongly controlled and safely guided into the unknown future ahead!

In God's Love,
Paul J Kirbas
Interim Pastor

Worship



Worship News

March is upon us, and with it, the season of Lent. Lent is a five week journey that brings us from the ashes of Ash Wednesday to the Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. Here at the Rumson Presbyterian Church, Pastor Paul Kirbas is devoting the season of Lent to a sermon series on the famous words of Jesus, collected into what we often call, "The Beatitudes".

The Beatitudes are some of the better-known words of the Bible, but are often not fully understood. Sometimes the problem is the language translations. And sometimes the problem is that we hear these words as 21 century Americans, rather than the people of Jesus day. In

Continued on next page...

...Continued from previous page

this worship series, we will seek to uncover the raw experience of the original hearers and learn, from their language and from their historical and geographical location. This is what Biblical researchers call a "Sitz im Leben" approach, which is a German phrase that literally means "place in life". When we hear these words from their "place in life", it will help us realize a new meaning that can open these words to new understanding in our own place in life.

Join us in worship this season of Lent as we dive deep into the Beatitudes. Living the Blessed Life is what Jesus wanted his followers to learn, both in his day, and in ours. Sunday, Febru-

Worshipping Together in March

Second Sunday of Lent, March 5th, 2023 @ 9:45 AM (Communion)

Series: "**Living the Blessed Life: A Walk Through the Beatitudes**"

Sermon: "**Turn, Turn, Turn**" by Rev. Dr. Paul J. Kirbas

Scripture: **Ecclesiastes 3:1-8; Matthew 5:1-2, 4**

As we continue our series on the Beatitudes, we come to the theme of mourning. Yes, we are blessed to be sad, but it all depends on what we are sad about.

Third Sunday of Lent, March 12th, 2023 @ 9:45 AM

Series: "**Living the Blessed Life: A Walk Through the Beatitudes**"

Sermon: "**Taming the Shrew**" by Rev. Dr. Paul J. Kirbas

Scripture: **Acts 9:1-9; Matthew 5:1-2, 5**

As we continue our series on the Beatitudes, we hear that it is blessed to be meek. But to be meek in Jesus's culture means something very different than in our own.

Fourth Sunday of Lent, March 19th, 2023 @ 9:45 AM

Series: "**Living the Blessed Life: A Walk Through the Beatitudes**"

Sermon: "**The Bread that Satisfies**" by Rev. Dr. Paul J. Kirbas

Scripture: **Exodus 16:1-6, 31-32; Matthew 5:1-2, 6**

As we continue our series on the Beatitudes, we learn to be hungry and thirsty, but for something very different than food and water.

Fifth Sunday of Lent, March 26th, 2023 @ 9:45 AM

Series: "**Living the Blessed Life: A Walk Through the Beatitudes**"

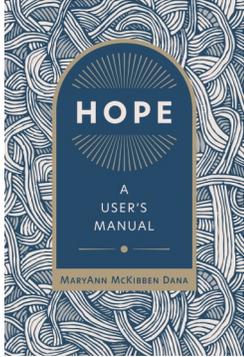
Sermon: "**The Wideness of God's Mercy**" by Rev. Dr. Paul J. Kirbas

Scripture: **Micah 7:14-20; Matthew 5:1-2, 7**

As we conclude part 1 of our series on the Beatitudes, we discover the real meaning of Mercy, and see how it is more than just saying "that's ok, forget about it."

For updates & more services, visit rumsonpresbyterian.org/upcoming-services

Adult Nurture



Join us throughout the season of Lent as we discuss the book *Hope: A User's Manual* by MaryAnn McKibben Dana. What IS hope? How do we experience it? What difference does it make in how we live our lives? We meet Wednesday evenings in the library, 7:30-8:30. If you'd like to join the conversation, just show up! We'll meet every Wednesday until April 5.

Music Program



Happy March, everyone.

As always, we welcome new members to our choir. It's a joyful experience with minimal time commitment where we create music together in community. If you're interested in joining, please reach out!

A few dates to keep in mind as we enter into spring:

- Maundy Thursday, April 6th
- Good Friday, April 7th
- Easter Sunday, April 9th

Youth: For those interested, we can meet for a rehearsal after Sunday worship in the choir room. Please reach out if you are interested.

Warm regards,
Andreea Fegan, Music Director

Mission News



The Mission Commission is expanding our community support by assisting two dedicated, hard-working groups that help those in need. We are conducting a drive for The Furniture Bank, and raising awareness for help needed by the Blessings Bag Brigade. Donation bins for each organization have been placed in the narthex.

The Furniture Bank

A hard-working shoestring operation based in Holy Trinity Lutheran Church of Manasquan, the Furniture Bank (FB) finds people with good quality used furniture and matches it with people who need it. The donations are picked up from the donor and delivered to the client. Agencies from all over Monmouth and Ocean County refer clients to the FB, particularly those folks with Section 8 housing who now have an apartment but can't afford to put anything in it.

Rumson Presbyterian Church is conducting a drive to help the FB collect the items they need. Smaller items, like linens and kitchen stuff, can be brought to the church and put into the collection bin in the lobby. For larger items, please call the church office at (732) 842-0429. We can store some large items in the church until pick-up time.

Only essential basic items should be donated, as most clients have very small apartments. The two FB general "rules of thumb" are that:

- the bigger it is, the less they want it; and
- while items don't have to be in perfect condition, please don't donate something you would be embarrassed to give a friend.

Here are a few items that we DO NOT take:

Big armoires, buffets, china cabinets or hutches, entertainment units, TVs that aren't flat screen, king size beds or linens, wooden bed frames or platforms, headboards, sofa beds, double reclining sofas or love seats, big dressers, pictures and other decorative items, and medical items such as hospital beds, walkers, and wheel chairs.

We DO take the following items:

Smaller-sized sofas and love seats, chairs, end tables, coffee tables, lamps, beds (if mattress is stained, FB can still use the box spring), dressers or chests, night stands, kitchen tables and

Continued on next page...

...Continued from previous page

chairs (favorites are small drop leaf tables with 2 chairs), dining room tables (not too big - best are 60" or less and <40" wide without the leaves; with 4-8 chairs), small appliances like coffee pots, toasters, toaster ovens, countertop microwaves, pots & pans, kitchen gadgets like spatulas and cooking spoons, dishes (only if they're sets, but can be missing few pieces, favorite is Corelle), flatware, queen/double/single bed linens, and bathroom towels.

While FB volunteers will pick up our donations from Rumson, they have limited resources and are happy if you would like to bring your donations directly to the FB. Items can be stored in the shed behind the Methodist church in Manasquan at 23 Church Street (it will be open). Please call FB Manager Cynthia Mussinan at 732-259-7652 or email her at cynthia.mussinan@yahoo.com before you drop off your donations to ensure there's available storage room.

Blessing Bag Brigade

The Blessing Bag Brigade (BBB) is a wonderful non-profit organization dedicated to showing compassion and helping the homeless. The mission is to help them find comfort by providing snacks, toiletries, and socks to people experiencing homelessness, especially veterans. BBB also works with local soup kitchens, food pantries, and churches to provide meals, weekend lunches for schoolkids, and supplies to the needy. This is a shoestring operation begun by Kevin Garrison, a former homeless veteran, and they never turn anyone away.

BBB is holding a fundraising gala on Friday, March 10 at 7:00 pm at Jacques Reception Hall in Middletown. Tickets are \$100 pp and include a buffet dinner, wine/beer/soda. They have asked not only for attendees, but also for help with this fundraiser. Contact Bonnie Wenzel for gala questions at bonniebbbnj@gmail.com, and questions about BBB can be emailed to founder Kevin Garrison at blessingbagbrigadenj@gmail.com.

Here are the ways to help:

1. **Help with basket wrapping for the gift auction** beginning after February 17 (specific dates to be announced in February). Volunteers can help for just an hour or all 4 hours. The baskets will be all done and ready to wrap during wrapping days at the Kindness Center located at 55 South Avenue, Atlantic Highlands.
2. **Donate new items for the gift auction.** These can be small items like candles, kitchen items, costume jewelry, gloves/hats/scarves, games, knickknacks, gift cards, etc. - perhaps a gift given to you that you wouldn't use, but want to go to a good home. Larger new items are also happily accepted, such as sports/workout equipment, restaurant or hotel gift certificates, luggage, household items, etc. These can all be dropped off at the BBB Kindness Center located at 55 South Avenue, Atlantic Highlands; items can be deposited in the boxes out front of the school after hours.
3. **Solicit for gift auction donations from local businesses and/or family & friends** for both

Continued on next page...

...Continued from previous page

donations and for sponsorships. BBB has a letter to use for solicitations, and volunteers need to contact BBB so they can provide you with a specific list of businesses to avoid duplicate solicitations.

4. **Attend the gala on March 10th.** Tickets can be purchased through Venmo at @Blessingbag-brigade, or by mailing a check made payable to Blessing Bag Brigade to 410 Main Street Middletown, Attn: Bonnie Wenzel.
5. For gala attendees, BBB could use folks to **volunteer one hour of time to during the event** to assist with the gala itself.

BBB is always looking for donations of bottled water, individually packaged snacks like granola bars, socks, deodorant, disposable razors, toothbrushes, and travel-size toiletries like toothpaste, soap/body wash, lotion, shampoo, and other personal hygiene items. These can be brought to the Kindness Center located at 55 South Avenue, Atlantic Highlands.

Other Church News



Giving

GIVEPLUS⁺

YOUR CHURCH GIVING APP

Rumson Presbyterian Church is excited to partner with the Presbyterian Foundation and Vanco Payment Solutions to bring you our GivePlus Online Giving page (<https://rumsonpresbyterian.org/giving/>).

We are also listed in the GivePlus Mobile App, which can be downloaded to your smartphone, making Online Giving even easier. This YouTube video explains how to get and use the App. In addition, here are links to two more documents about the service and the App: “Vanco GivePlus Church FAQs for Donors” and “Vanco GivePlus Church How it Works”.

Note: 2% of your GivePlus donation will be retained as an administrative fee by the Presbyterian Foundation.

Per Capita Update



The Per Capita envelope in your Stewardship booklet (February 6th) is used in a special way. Each year every member of the Presbyterian Church (USA) is assessed a certain amount that is paid by the local congregation to the National Church. In turn, that money is divided among the General Assembly, the Synod of the Northeast and our local Presbytery of the Coastlands according to a set formula. Per Capita money is used by those governing bodies to pay for administrative costs such as salaries of staff persons, office expenses, program materials, etc. In 2023, the Per Capita amount for the Rumson Presbyterian Church remains \$40.00 per person. By using this special envelope and including an amount equal to three and a half weeks of your regular pledge, we can avoid using scarce operating dollars. We thank you in advance for your support.

Easter Lilies



Below is a form for those who wish to provide Easter Lilies as part of our Easter Sunday celebration. Please fill out the form and return it to the Church Office. Also, please send a check payable to the "Rumson Presbyterian Church". Those wishing to have a plant placed in our worship services and then to have it shared with someone who is homebound or hospitalized, should place a check in the appropriate box.

EASTER LILY ORDER FORM

Please order the following Easter Lily plant(s) to be used as part of the decorations for the Easter Sunday service:

_____ Plant(s) (@ \$12.00 each) \$ _____

Donor(s): _____ Phone: _____

Presented in memory of _____

Please share my plant with someone homebound or hospitalized.

Presbyterian Church News



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

SPECIAL OFFERINGS

HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT

March 2 - April 17, 2022

For over 70 years, One Great Hour of Sharing has provided Presbyterians a way to share God's love with our neighbors in need around the world.

In a world of disaster, hunger, and oppression, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity.

The three programs supported by our church - One Great Hour of Sharing, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People - all work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need. From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance, and hope.

To learn more, pick up a brochure from the literature shelf in the narthex (just outside the sanctuary) or visit <https://specialofferings.pcusa.org/offering/oghs/give>

To give, there is an envelope in your Stewardship booklet (March 13th), you can pick up an envelope from the literature shelf in the narthex, or you can visit <https://specialofferings.pcusa.org/make-a-gift/gift-info/oghs/>

Caring for God's Earth



Lenten Devotional

You're invited to journey through the '7 Marks' for seven weeks

by Beth Waltemath | Presbyterian News Service

DECATUR, Georgia — The tenor of Lent is one of “complicated joy,” according to the Rev. Carlton Johnson, Associate Director for Theology, Formation & Evangelism for the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

Continued on next page...

...Continued from previous page



“That is the way many of us approach Ash Wednesday, and the Easter Season in general,” writes Johnson for a new resource from the Office of Vital Congregations, which Johnson serves as coordinator. “While we know that the season ends with hope, we begin with the recollection of despair that is both present and historical, both individual and collective.”

The “Vital Congregation Initiative Lent 2023 Devotion” offers weekly reflections by pastors and presbytery staff participating in the Vital Congregations Initiative, which is currently in its 5th wave. The Rev. Dr. Gary Neal Hansen, the Rev. Katie Day, the Rev. Dr. Flo Barbee-Watkins and the Rev. Mario A. Bolivar are just some of the contributing writers who contribute a scripture reflection. The Rev. Tony Oltmann, associate for the Vital Congregations Initiative, pairs each reflection with a favorite soup recipe. Lenten soup suppers are a cherished practice among many churches that Oltmann has frequented. “I was surprised by the way soup made me feel closer to God,” says Oltmann. In his introduction, Oltmann holds up the way soup suppers bring fellowship during Lent’s “unique discipleship journey.”

The resource is organized according to the 7 Marks of Congregational Vitality: Lifelong Discipleship Formation, Intentional Authentic Evangelism, Outward Incarnational Focus, Empowering Servant Leadership, Spirit-Inspired Worship, Caring Relationships, and Ecclesial Health.

“There is plenty we can give up for Lent,” writes the Rev. Dr. Tracy Keenan, Missional Presbyter for New Castle Presbytery, as she connects Lenten practices to the process of getting “real” that comes with Ecclesial Health. “It’s more important than ever that we know who we are and what our priorities are,” Keenan writes before encouraging leaders to know their values and make decisions in alignment with them and to be accountable to one another.

The “Vital Congregation Initiative Lent 2023 Devotion” is available as a downloadable pdf (<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/resource/vci-2023-lent-devotional/>) and is designed to aid your devotional journey beginning on Ash Wednesday, February 22.

Community News



Early Risers



If you want to stop drinking call: 1-908-687-8566
or (toll free from NJ area codes): 1-800-245-1377
24 hours a day / 7 days a week.

For a list of other local A.A. meetings, visit www.nnjaa.org/#
For information about A.A. visit www.nnjaa.org

Meetings: Fri. from 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM at Rumson Presbyterian Church

Waterspirit Event Calendar for March



Meditation for Earth Every Tues. from 12:15 PM - 12:45 PM

Please join Waterspirit for a "Meditation for Earth." We read a short blessing, followed by an excerpt from Hal Borland's '12 moons of the Year'. Then we lead a simple meditation followed with silence, for a flourishing Earth. The meditation and silence is approximately 30 minutes. There are two ways to meditate with us: (1) In-person in the Sanctuary at Rumson Presbyterian Church (2) Online on our YouTube channel. No matter where you are in the world, you can join us as we meditate for our Earth!

Climate Pastoral Care Course Drop-In Session Fri., Mar. 10 from 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM (Virtual)
Students who are enrolled in the Climate Pastoral Care Course are invited to join us for an informal drop-in session to meet other students and ask questions about the course material.

Continued on next page...

...Continued from previous page

Beach Clean-up Sat., Mar. 11 from 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Waterspirit will be joining forces with our friends from Save Coastal Wildlife to protect our precious water by doing some beach clean-ups. Our next scheduled beach clean-up is happening at Monmouth Beach on 3/11/23 from 10 am - noon. Please join us. Together we can make a difference.

Spring Equinox Celebration Mon., Mar. 20 from 7:00 AM - 8:00 PM

Daylight is lengthening, temperatures are warming, trees are blooming and we are celebrating. Join Waterspirit and musical guest Anreea Fegan as we celebrate the arrival of Spring. The Spring Equinox is a time to reflect on the freshness and excitement of the rebirth of nature. We look forward to the April showers which will water our gardens and bring forth new life.

Garden State Film Festival 2023 Thu., Mar. 23, 3:00 PM thru Sun., Mar. 26, 4:00 PM

We've done it again! Waterspirit has entered a video to the 2023 Garden State Film Festival and we have been accepted! Our video, Waterspirit's Mindfulness Moment, will be screened at the festival on Saturday, Mar. 25 2023, 2:45 pm in the BERKELEY CONTINENTAL BALLROOM.

Rain Barrel Workshop with Waterspirit Wed., Mar. 29 from 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

Families and friends will gather for this special workshop to learn how to make and use a rain barrel of your own. Will you make it for your own home? Is this rain barrel an Earth Day gift for your friend? That's entirely up to you. But we at Waterspirit know the value of water. Water Is Life.

All are welcome. Please visit their website (waterspirit.org)
for more information about these events.



First Presbyterian Church of Rumson NJ
P.O. Box 399
East River Road at Park Avenue
Rumson, NJ 07760

Nonprofit Organization

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

DATED MATERIAL ENCLOSED

~Please check our website at www.rumsonpresbyterian.org for calendar updates~

MARCH 2023

Mar 1	Wed	Adult Nurture Book Group	7:30PM
Mar 3	Fri	World Day of Prayer	
Mar 7	Tue	Meditation for Earth*	12:15PM
Mar 8	Wed	Adult Nurture Book Group	7:30PM
Mar 12	Sun	Daylight Saving Time begins	
Mar 13	Mon	Rumson Seniors	11:00AM
Mar 14	Tue	Meditation for Earth*	12:15PM
Mar 15	Wed	Adult Nurture Book Group	7:30PM
Mar 17	Fri	St. Patrick's Day	
Mar 20	Mon	First Day of Spring	
Mar 20	Mon	Spring Equinox Celebration*	7:00PM
Mar 21	Tue	Meditation for Earth*	12:15PM
Mar 21	Tue	Session	7:00pm
Mar 22	Wed	Adult Nurture Book Group	7:30PM
Mar 27	Mon	Rumson Seniors	11:00AM
Mar 27	Mon	Mission Commission	7:30PM
Mar 28	Tue	Meditation for Earth*	12:15PM
Mar 29	Wed	Adult Nurture Book Group	7:30PM

APRIL 2023

Apr 2	Sun	Palm Sunday	9:45 AM
Apr 4	Tue	Meditation for Earth*	12:15 PM
Apr 5	Wed	Adult Nurture Book Group	7:30 PM
Apr 6	Sun	Maundy Thursday	7:30 PM
Apr 7	Sun	Good Friday	12:00 PM
Apr 9	Sun	Easter Sunday	9:45 AM
Apr 10	Mon	Rumson Seniors	11:00AM
Apr 11	Tue	Meditation for Earth*	12:15PM
Apr 18	Tue	Meditation for Earth*	12:15 PM
Apr 18	Tue	Session	7:00 PM
Apr 22	Sat	Earth Day	
Apr 24	Mon	Rumson Seniors	11:00AM
Apr 24	Mon	Mission Commission	7:30 PM
Apr 25	Tue	Meditation for Earth*	12:15 PM

**Waterspirit sponsored event. All are welcome.
Please visit the Waterspirit website (waterspirit.org) for more in-*



www.rumsonprebyterian.org