

# THE SPIRE

AUGUST 2020

The Presbyterian Church in Westfield, NJ 140 Mountain Avenue // Westfield, NJ 07090

## Looking Forward

*PCW on the Lawn* is finally here!

After much care and deliberate planning, I'm excited to announce a worship experience designed to accommodate the health crisis. We will wear masks. We will social distance. We will worship in new ways (more on this in a moment). We will do all the things necessary in this time of pandemic.

We will also enjoy being together on our spacious front lawn while weather permits. We will be able to change the pace of life a bit by closing out the day in the middle of the hectic work week. We will hear God speaking to us, speak to each other, and speak back to God by taking a pause with others we care about in prayer and joyful reflection.

Join us, starting **Wednesday, August 5th at 7pm** for *PCW on the Lawn*. Now, if you're wondering, "why Wednesday," well, we considered Sundays at all kinds of different times and several other times throughout the week, and we kept coming back to wanting to say that this service is special; this service is unique. It's not the inside service moved outside.

We are not getting back into the sanctuary, chapel, and Westminster Hall yet. We are not having fellowship time after, or singing in worship. We don't even get to sit where ever we want! We also see that many of us need a way to break up the week a little and what better way than taking time on Wednesday evenings while it is still nice to step away from it all and catch our breaths together.

**You can register on our website or by calling the office at (908) 233-0301.**

Here is a little background on how we got here:

In June I reached out to you with the exciting news that the Session was exploring safe ways for us to regather for a time. Even in the midst of great uncertainty nationwide concerning the impact of the pandemic, we continue to see at this time that New Jersey's efforts to contain the virus have been successful. From the beginning, our elders and staff have tried to balance the spiritual need of maintaining community with the very real health concerns present.

For more than two months church leaders have diligently studied the best thinking around containment – even as new information

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has come and old views have been dispelled by the scientific process. Time and again leaders have commented on how complex this situation is, and how difficult it is to provide a safe environment for our members to regather for worship, learning, connecting, and service.

In June the Session created a task force (see the July Spire) to devise guidelines for determining how and under what conditions we may regather in-person, and how our campus may be used as an arm of our important outreach ministry to and for the local community.

The top priority was to explore whether there was a safe way to conduct worship in-person. PCW on the LAWN is the result. I can't wait to be with you all again on Wednesday - on our front lawn.



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## What You Need to Know About PCW on the LAWN

**Do I need to sign-up for the service?** No. You don't need to register in advance. But if you plan to attend, we would love it if you let us know in advance by calling the church office. The safety of those joining us for worship and the community is our highest priority. When you sign in, we will also ask you a few simple health questions.

**What do I need to bring to worship?** Please wear a mask, bring hand sanitizer, and your own chair. If you are unable to bring a chair, let us know and we will have one for you. Of course, if you also want to bring your Bible by all means do.

**Where do I enter the worship service?** The sign-in tables will be placed on the patio outside the church's front doors. Please walk to the tables from Mountain Avenue. Chalk markings on the ground will indicate appropriate six-foot spacing for those waiting to sign in.

**What should I expect when I get to the service?** Please plan to get to church 10 to 15 minutes before the service to allow enough time to get through the check-in process. Someone will help you sign in, take your temperature and direct you to your space. If you need a chair, a disinfected chair will be available for you.

**What will the service include?** The service is not meant to replace Sunday worship. The service will be simple, flexible and meaningful....and probably around 30 -45 minutes. It will include a scripture reflection by Jeremy, time for prayer and some music.

**Will there be singing?** There will be music at the service but we are asking attendees not to sing to limit the risks to those around us. Congregational singing has been shown to contribute to the spread of Covid 19.

**Will there be handouts for the service?** To minimize risks to all attendees, no Bibles, hymnals or bulletins with the order of worship will be handed out. But you certainly can bring your own Bible.

**Will there be fellowship after the gathering?** Not in the traditional sense, but you are welcome to stay on the lawn, appropriately distanced, and with masks on, after the service to connect with others.

**Can I bring my children?** Yes! Everyone is welcome to join us in community and worship. To observe social distancing, children must stay with their parents.

**Will this be handicap accessible?** Yes, this gathering will be handicap accessible. Please let us know in advance if you will need assistance.

**Will restrooms be available?** While we would like to limit their use, bathrooms will be available for emergency use. Please reach out to one of the team leading the service for assistance if needed. The restrooms will be sanitized after each use and that may cause a delay in availability.

**It's already August, how many weeks do you expect to have outside gatherings?** We anticipate being able to have services on the lawn through at least the end of September.

**What are the current safety protocols?** The safety of those joining us for worship and the community is our highest priority. The seating on the lawn will be socially distanced; hand sanitizer will be provided for those who don't bring their own; all attendees will be required to wear a mask; all will have their temperature taken. Additionally, if you or anyone in your household has a fever above 100 degrees, is waiting for COVID-19 test results or, has come in contact with someone who has tested positive or is presumptive positive within the last 14 days you will be unable to join the service.

**How were the safety protocols determined?** Our protocols are based on the most recent guidelines from government and health authorities, including the Centers for Disease Control, the World Health Organization, the New Jersey Department of Health, and the Elizabeth Presbytery. We also reviewed the best practices employed by other houses of worship.

**What if there is a positive test result from someone who attended the service?** We will have a list and contact information for all attending worship. It will be collected at the sign in. If we learn that someone has tested positive or presumptive positive, we will notify attendees and the congregation.

**What if it rains?** In the event of bad weather, we will cancel the service. The information will be sent out on email and posted on Facebook.

**What if I sign-up to attend and my schedule changes?** That's ok. Just let us know that you can't be there.

**Can non-church members attend?** Yes! Everyone is welcome to join us in community and worship.

**When will we be able to be inside for worship?** As of now, that is uncertain. Some churches are waiting until the fall, at the earliest, and others don't expect to be back with inside worship until next year. The Presbytery is encouraging a go-slow approach. The Session will be monitoring the status of the pandemic and we will periodically share updates.

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## Associate Pastor Nominating Committee Update

Summer is in full swing, but the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee is not vacationing!

We are hard at work discerning God's call for both our new Associate Pastor for Children, Youth and Families and our new Associate Pastor for Congregational Life.

We have reviewed numerous Pastor Information Forms (PIFs), have listened to countless sermons and done online research, have checked in with references, and are in discussion with a number of promising candidates, which gives us great hope.

We thank you for your patience and ask that you continue to pray for us as we seek the pastors that God is calling to the Presbyterian Church in Westfield.

Yours in Christ,

The PCW APNC: *Emily Parkinson, Courtney Nemec, Shannon Crooks, Gregg Gorman, Cotter Spurlock, Maggie McCauley, Ella Johnson, Susan Murtishaw, Jane Collins, Robin Hoy, Paul Stierhoff, Tom Walker*



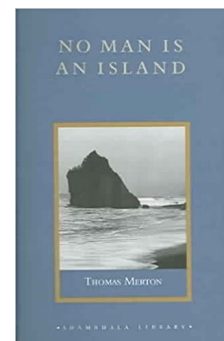
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## Theology Discussion Group

We invite you to join us for our next discussion on Monday, September 21, 2020, 7:30-9pm. as we read and reflect on Thomas Merton's *No Man Is an Island*. Then beginning in October, we will meet on the first and third Monday evenings, reflecting on 2 chapters during each meeting.

All discussions will be held via ZOOM until further notice. Look for announcements of dates and times in the Friday e-blasts. All are welcome. Please contact Alan Smith

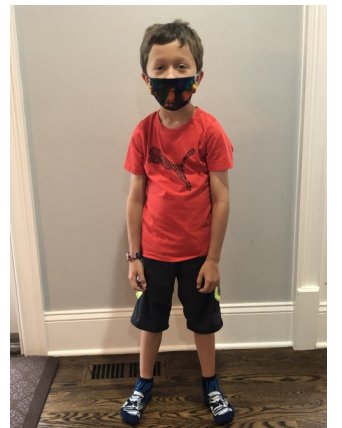
([alandsmith518@gmail.com](mailto:alandsmith518@gmail.com)) for more information.







# Virtual VBC 2020



# Faith Formation

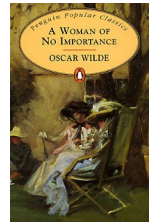
**Summer Sunday School** for children and adults continues. There are two Adult Education classes - Questers, led by Nancy Smith, [nancyreidsmith@gmail.com](mailto:nancyreidsmith@gmail.com), meets via telephone conference call each Sunday at 9:00 a.m. and Serendipity, led by Robin Hoy, [rhoy@puroclean.com](mailto:rhoy@puroclean.com), meets via Zoom each Sunday at 11:15 a.m. Both are open and welcome all! Children's Sunday school is posted on the church website and links are included in the weekly email blasts with information for worship. We are grateful to all of the volunteers who prepare videos and written materials for children and families to review each week.

**Virtual Vacation Bible Camp 2020 "Emmanuel - God With Us" - VVBC 2020** was a unique and wonderful program in July and we thank all of our adult volunteers who made it such a great experience for the children. We had about 40 children participate, including many children new to our church. The video Bible stories, craft projects, and nightly Zoom meetings that included singing and activities made us all feel a little less socially distanced. All of the Bible story and craft videos are on the church website ([westfieldpc.org](http://westfieldpc.org)) if you want to go back and watch them again or share the link with people who were not able to participate. Thank you volunteers and families for participating!

Virtual VBC  
pictures  
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**Summer Zoom Book Group -Faith Formation** will sponsor a book discussion in mid-August on the book, "So you want to Talk about Race?" by Ijeoma Oluo. Everyone is encouraged to participate. Books are available through Amazon, but can also be ordered through the Town Book Store. We will schedule a Zoom meeting in August to discuss. Any questions or if you would like to participate in the discussion, please contact Lisa Black, [lmb.blacklaw@gmail.com](mailto:lmb.blacklaw@gmail.com).

**Lunch and a Book** -The summer book is, "A Woman of No Importance" by Sonia Purnell. It is the true story of a Baltimore socialite who joined a spy organization during World War II. We will discuss this book in September (hopefully). It is available online and can also be ordered through the Town Bookstore.



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## Time Out For Parents (TOPS)

Enrollment is still available for children, younger than 2.5 years, in Time Out for Parents (TOPS) at The Presbyterian Church this Fall.



The cost is \$40 per morning and you may sign up for Monday and Wednesday OR Tuesday and Thursday. Information and registration material is available by contacting [MKDanskin@comcast.net](mailto:MKDanskin@comcast.net) or visiting the Church office.

This non-profit program originated as a mission of the PCW and currently serves as a licensed preschool to introduce young children to socialization and the experience of learning through play in a loving, developmentally appropriate environment.

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## Congratulations to PNS&K!

Presbyterian Nursery School & Kindergarten is celebrating 72 years of enabling ALL children from Westfield and surrounding communities to learn through PLAY.

PNS&K has been working with the NJ State regulations and coordinating with area pre-school directors and the Board of Education to plan for a safe reopening for our students and staff during COVID. Guidelines and safety precautions are being developed in consultation with currently open Westfield programs to enhance our planning.

Providing a safe environment for our students to learn and develop their social, emotional and cognitive skills is paramount. We look forward to more input and guidance as we approach the new school year. Please feel free to reach out to Jennifer Collum, Director, 908-233-0766 for further information.



Presbyterian  
Nursery School  
& Kindergarten



# Groundbreaking News...From 1964!

The Presbyterian Church in Westfield was established when settlers living in the West Fields of Elizabethtown (later to become known as "Westfield") wished to split off from First Presbyterian Church in Elizabeth and build their own house of worship. Prior to this time, the men, women, and children living here travelled to Elizabeth by foot, on horseback, or in wagons every week for Sunday Services. At the time, this was an all-day event!!

This church was incorporated in 1728. Well before The American Revolution, before the Boston Tea Party, and even before Georgia was founded as one of the original 13 Colonies. As the country grew and changed, PCW's history was growing and changing as well with many beloved ministers standing in its pulpits. It is interesting to note there have been different buildings that housed the congregation over these years with the first being a simple log house. Several church structures later, a version of the present church was dedicated on March 25, 1862, during the early part of the Civil War. At the time, the congregation numbered fewer than 250, but the building could seat 800 – something that would prove to be inadequate 100 years later.

The church was renovated in 1951, but by the early 1960's, the church roles were growing by leaps and bounds. Three Worship Services were offered on Sundays, and all were "Standing Room Only." Something had to be done!! In May of 1964, the church's history book added on yet another significant chapter when the ministers and congregation acted on plans for a major expansion of the Sanctuary and the construction of the Christian Education Building. The groundbreaking ceremony on the front lawn was attended by over 1,000 church members and community residents. The Rev. Dr. Fred Christian, Pastor at the time, assisted by The Rev. Richard L. Smith, The Rev. M. Bolin Durway, The Rev. Ace L. Tubbs, and The Rev. James D. Cole were part of the festivities.

The plan was to add 27 feet to the Sanctuary by "cutting" the building in half, putting the front half on jacks, pulling that half of the building toward Broad Street, and filling in the open space with exterior walls, a floor, a roof, and pews that would increase the seating capacity significantly. Inside, windows and trim would be added to match that which already existed, and the new section would look as if it had always been there. In addition to the "stretching" of the church, the project would build a space for Christian Education to take place, and provide some renovations to the Parish House. All this for \$975,000!!

The pictures of this monumental project were provided through the kindness of Patti Klein, whose father, Lawrence J. Klein (1919 – 2006), worked on the expansion. Patti remembers her father's stories about the work, and that even the workers were in awe of the scope of the project. We thank Patti and her family for sharing their treasured photographs with us!













# **PCW**

## **Elders**

*Class of 2021, 2022, 2023*

*Howard Adams*

*Lisa Black-Polak*

*Ethan Harris*

*Martha Kieczkowski*

*Virginia Leiz*

*Gerard Lorenzetti*

*Barbara McLaughlan*

*Joshua McMahon III*

*Courtney Nemec*

*Michael Quinlan*

*Pamela Shaw*

*Nancy Smith*

*Amy Cummings*

*Liz Miller*

## **Board of Deacons**

*Class of 2021, 2022, 2023*

|                          |                           |                           |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| <i>Preston Andrews</i>   | <i>Yelena Grow</i>        | <i>Norma Nemec</i>        |
| <i>Anna Lee Bachtell</i> | <i>Anastasia Harrison</i> | <i>Susan Pink</i>         |
| <i>Sue Case</i>          | <i>Carey Heintz</i>       | <i>Sue Priscoe</i>        |
| <i>Patricia Chen</i>     | <i>Jim Hewitt</i>         | <i>Joan Quinlan</i>       |
| <i>Abigail Colao</i>     | <i>George Himmel</i>      | <i>Fay Sobala</i>         |
| <i>Celine Crenshaw</i>   | <i>Chris Hoy</i>          | <i>Val Stierhoff</i>      |
| <i>Addie Cummings</i>    | <i>Ella Johnson</i>       | <i>Chris Svoboda</i>      |
| <i>Joe Diacheysn</i>     | <i>Larry Kinsella</i>     | <i>Dan Swartz</i>         |
| <i>Dave DuBois</i>       | <i>David Leiz</i>         | <i>Kristen Vanderwolk</i> |
| <i>Ryan Finley</i>       | <i>Debbie Lorenzetti</i>  | <i>Lynn Vinegra</i>       |
| <i>Carey Golden</i>      | <i>Maggie McCauley</i>    | <i>Bobbi Wager</i>        |
|                          | <i>Anita McNamara</i>     |                           |
|                          | <i>Will Murtishaw</i>     |                           |

# Updates from Zambian Mission Team

In early June we sent our quarterly donation for Home Based Care and the preschool to our CCAP partner church in Zambia. In view of the Covid-19 virus we told them they could spend the donations as they determined was best for each of their missions. Here are two communications we have received.

Jane Nagala, on behalf of the Central Church of Africa Presbyterian, Livingstone Congregation writes. "I wish to thank you so much for your emails. I am also glad to learn that you attained your independence way back in 1776. I did not know about this neither did I learn of it at school. Our independence was attained in 1964. You can imagine the difference. Up to now our school is not yet open, we only hope that we may open in the month of September as we start our third and last term. Meanwhile we are busy preparing. We have downloaded most of the devotions particularly those that will help us as we begin our school. It has been wonderful. I have also learnt a lot. As regards to HBC, our clients are okay and enjoying their food. We bought food items because of the situation we are in, during this Covid-19 period, businesses have collapsed hence very difficult to find money to buy food. We may buy other items in the next allocation if the situation allows. Otherwise I still wish to thank you so much on behalf of our clients for the services you are rendering."

Rev. Sevatt Kabaghe, General Secretary of the CCAP Synod in Lusacka, Zambia, writes:

"Greetings from Lusaka in the blessed name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Hope you are doing fine despite the impact of Covid-19 in our lives. The situation has not been easy globally and many people have lost their faith in the Living God.

I would like to thank you for your messages of encouragement to our congregation and the support you have continued rendering to them. I was so glad to hear of the help even to the vulnerable that they can even pay for their school fees. You have done great work to help the congregation reach to the needy. May I also thank you for the HBC program that you have always put at your heart. This is evangelism on its own. May the good Lord bless everyone who contributes to the work of the Livingstone congregation.

The devotions and the word you always share is very encouraging. Covid-19 has brought a lot of uncertainties but your word of encouragement is hope to many. I pray that this continues and will help a lot of souls to continue in the faith."

The cases and deaths here in Zambia keep on increasing and this is very dangerous. We need just God in such a situation and that people adhere to health guidelines as well as follow what is needed to avoid the spread of the Virus. Above all the word of God is important for the nourishment of the faith and strength as we pass through such difficult times.

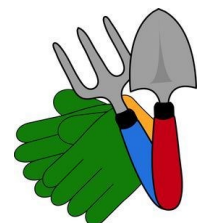
We also pray for you and your country as we know that you are also in the same situation. Continue to remember your congregation here in Zambia in your prayers as you always do. We are so grateful for your continued support in this very difficult time."



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## Weedy Workers

Weeds never go away, but thanks to our dedicated group of Weedy Workers, we are keeping the campus looking lovely. Please join us on Saturday mornings from 9:30 - 11:00 in the church parking lot. Please bring gloves and whatever gardening tools you might want to use. All are welcome.







# Happy Birthday!

There are no recorded birthdays on August 9 and August 16.  
If you don't see your birthday listed, please contact the church office.  
We will be happy to add your name to the monthly birthday list!

## August 1

Doyle, Katherine  
Dembiec, Olivia

## August 2

Johnson, Gustav  
Williams, Jennie  
Crowe, Leslie

## August 3

Roff, Nancy  
McLaughlan, Barbara  
Esposito, Jessica  
Panton, Allyson

## August 4

Fontana, Ann  
Pink, Joseph  
Giles, Scott  
Heesters, Mackenna

## August 5

McCurdy, Jeanne  
Chapman, Jacob

## August 6

Jacobs, Jonathan  
Harrison, Ava

## August 7

Murphy, Debra  
Parker, Catherine  
Schmeling, Amanda

Howland, Dylan  
Kohler, Daniel  
Gibbs, Shannon  
Dailey, Grace

## August 8

Shpunder, John  
Sinclair, Scott  
Cerra, Jakob

Crossland, Emma  
Koch, Nicholas  
Fico, Mark  
Kim, Phillip

## August 10

Vinegra, Lynn  
Vazquez, Brandon

## August 11

Kudron, Cynthia  
Santagata, Jennifer  
Shepard, Benjamin  
Andrews, Cooper

## August 12

Thompson, Mary  
Sturr, Michael  
Heintz, Casey  
Tilyou, Alexander  
Tilyou, Paul

## August 13

Rellosa, Frank

## August 14

Straight, Ronald  
Aliche, Irondi  
Sugrue, Emma

## August 15

Yamano, Diane  
Shields, Olivia  
York, Henry

## August 17

Wildi, Ernst  
Kender, Gail  
Kole, Jeffrey  
Weldon, Isabelle

## August 18

Johnson, Mary  
Stravach, Lauren  
Thomas, Charles  
Dackow, Christopher

## August 19

Sawicki, Daniel  
Ince, Emily

## August 20

Braun, Ralph  
Jacobs, Nicole  
McCauley, John  
O'Connor, Madeline

## August 21

Smith, Holly  
Leone, Evan

## August 22

Tsai, Jane  
Eck, Dominique  
Heber, Noelle  
Thompson, Meagan  
Festa, Christian

## August 23

Armstrong, Vanine  
Bartok, Kristen  
Cummings, Amy  
Harris, Zachary

## August 24

Comstock, Frances  
Aliche, Sylvia  
Dickson, Daniel

## August 25

Robbins, Joan  
Walker, Lisa  
Venturino, Paige

## August 26

Schoenemann, Wendy  
Ramos-Wilkin, Yomayra  
Cummings, Addelaide

## August 27

Monzella, Charles  
Fritz, James  
Fritz, Jessica  
Fritz, Samantha

## August 28

Rich, Judith  
McCauley, Paula  
Grom, Harrison

## August 29

Gordon, William  
DuVernois, Vincent

## August 30

August, Kenneth  
Beauchamp, Susan  
Finley, Ryan  
Palia, Alyson  
Paden, Matthew

## August 31

Masterson, Donna  
Santoro, Joseph