

First Presbyterian Church
298 Main Street
Hackettstown, NJ 07840

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
298 MAIN STREET
HACKETTSTOWN, NJ 07840
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Church website,
<http://www.fpchackettstown.org>
Editor: MaryAnn Simmons

Light
from the



**FEBRUARY
2019**

Steeple



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
HACKETTSTOWN, NJ
CHURCH OFFICE: (908) 852-4011**

Choir Director/Organist: Lorinda Ravo
Treasurer: Al Ravo
Financial Secretary: Deborah Gulick Shepherd
Head Usher: Kim Newton
Church Secretary: Mary Lightfoot
Sexton: John Mark Wojcicki

2019 SESSION

Class of 2019	Class of 2020	Class of 2021
Carl Erickson	Jim Butts	Sandy Archer
Don Luques	Grace Clegg	Erin Roguso
Ryan Van Orden	Jim Simmons	Sandy Woolcock Patton

Clerk of Session: Sandy Archer
Presbytery Assigned Moderator: David Harvey

2019 BOARD OF DEACONS

Class of 2019	Class of 2020	Class of 2021
Marge Conroy	Patricia Butts	Jen Bramley
Barbara Cors	Gilles Djongang	Charles Nyland
Chris Roguso	Sharon Heil	Justin Simmons

2019 HEAVEN SENT NURSERY SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES

OFFICE: 852-2006

Ginny Plumbo	Pat Butts
Carl Erickson - Session Liason	Connie Quinn - HS Parent

PRAYER LIST

Please keep the following in your prayers:

Rachel Becker, Floyd Smith's granddaughter	Maikuu congregation, Kibwezi Kenya
Jeff Beddow	Jessica McDonagh and Family
Bruce Bergman	Diana Merzoian
Richard Bodycomb	Members of the Armed Forces
Mary Brodt	Martin Nyland
Eris Bunnel	Barbara Pace, niece of the Prestopines
Barbara Courtright	Sandy Patton
Pam Covert & her dad Jim	Edith Payton - mother of Sharon Heil
Alisa Dartnell's mother	Shirley Pennington
Lauren DelPlato	Elizabeth Robitsch
FPCH	Peggy Russack
Sharon Heil	Mark Tilney
Janette Hendershot	Those struggling with addictions
Friends of FPCH	Ruth Weber
Terry Gretchen	
Dorothy Knauer	
Judy Kolwicz	
Dotty Landiak	
The Lee Family	
Emily Ligarzewski	



DATES TO REMEMBER: FEBRUARY 2019



- 01: Secret Valentine begins
- 02: Decorate for Souper Bowl of Caring - 10 AM
- 03: Worship and communion - 10 AM; Sunday School; Souper Bowl of Caring collection; fellowship; Joyful Noise Bell Choir Rehearsal - 11:15 AM; Unity Chimers Rehearsal - 11:30 AM
- 06: Yarn Girls - 1 PM in the Conference Room
- 07: FPC Ringers - 6:40 PM in the Music Room
- 07: Senior Choir - 7:30 PM in the Music Room
- 09: Men's Breakfast - 8:30 am in the Chapel
- 10: Worship - 10 AM; Joyful Noise Bell Choir plays; Sunday School; fellowship; celebrate with your Secret Valentine Sunday School buddy; Joyful Noise Bell Choir Rehearsal - 11:15 AM; Unity Chimers Rehearsal - 11:30 AM
- 10: Hockey Game Outing - 2 PM, PPL Center, Allentown, PA
- 13: Bible Study - 7 PM in the Conference Room
- 14: FPC Ringers - 6:40 PM in the Music Room
- 14: Senior Choir - 7:30 PM in the Music Room
- 16: Ladies' Breakfast at the River Star Diner - 9 AM
- 17: Church worship - 10 AM; Scout Sunday; Sunday School; fellowship; Joyful Noise Bell Choir Rehearsal - 11:15 AM; Unity Chimers Rehearsal - 11:30 AM
- 19: Session Meeting - 6:30 PM in the Conference Room
- 20: RSVP for Bowling Outing due to Bruce and Ellen Bergman today; PLEFF dinner at Bea McNally's at 6 PM
- 21: FPC Ringers - 6:40 PM in the Music Room
- 21: Senior Choir - 7:30 PM in the Music Room
- 23: Family Bowling Outing - 6 PM-8:30 PM
- 24: Worship; Little Lights Choir sings; Sunday School 10 AM; fellowship; Joyful Noise Bell Choir Rehearsal - 11:15 AM; Unity Chimers Rehearsal - 11:30 AM
- 26: Deacons Meeting - 6:30 PM in the Conference Room
- 27: Ladies who Lunch - 12:30 PM at Taste of Italy, Patriot's Plaza, Hackettstown
- 28: FPC Ringers - 6:40 PM in the Music Room
- 28: Senior Choir - 7:30 PM in the Music Room

A NOTE FROM OUR MODERATOR

Dear Members and Friends of Hackettstown (First) Presbyterian Church,

Back in November, 2018, I was asked and appointed by the Committee on Ministry to serve as your session Moderator in the months following Birda Ferguson's retirement and before the arrival of your transitional pastor. I am so honored to do this, and moderated my first session meeting January 15, a positive experience. I left that night struck by Session's energy and willingness to 'pull together, to challenge one another and to get things done'. This "can do", come together spirit is refreshing, and it is important for the church's viability, especially during a transitional time; but such energy is also needed during the regular passages of a church's life. It is conceivable the transitional (interim) pastor could be hired by Easter Sunday or in May or June at the latest.

During your transitional time, Presbytery's Committee on Ministry and the Missional Ministry Team will work closely with the congregation and the transitional pastor, guiding and hopefully helping you discern the qualities and gifts that are needed for your next pastor. Sarah Cairatti, Committee on Ministry member and minister of the Whippany (First) Presbyterian Church and I (Missional Ministry Team liaison) will be working with you to discern the qualities needed in your next pastor as well as to help you discern where God is leading you in the next juncture of your faith journey.

You will be asked to participate in the '*Discerning the Pieces*' mission study. This mission study is similar but not synonymous to the New Beginnings program that you participated in a few years back. Similar questions that were raised then should emerge from the mission study to guide you in the eventual development of your Ministry Information Form - questions such as:

- 1) Who are we? (Demographics study of the congregation and community)
- 2) What is our mission within our community?
- 3) What is God leading us to do in this time and town?
- 4) How will we fulfill God's calling?

Answers to these questions take time but they are worth the time it takes. The answers will shape your (MIF) when the time comes for the pastoral nominating committee to begin their work, likely one to two years from now. Between now and then honest and authentic dialogue with one another through congregational retreats (there are four of them) will insure that the person, the skills and the gifts that you need in your next pastor, are communicated on the MIF. Admittedly, this brief summary of what to expect over the next several months is not exhaustive, only a prescriptive guideline to the process for calling your future pastor. If you have questions, please communicate them to your Clerk of Session, Sandy Archer, and we can discuss them at forthcoming session meetings.

I look forward to getting to know you better and working with the congregation and the session in the months to come.

Sincerely,

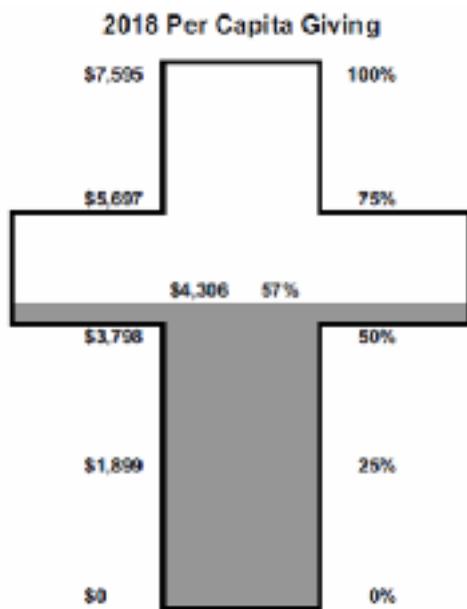
Pastor David Harvey
First Presbyterian Church
Blairstown, NJ

FEBRUARY 2019 FINANCIAL \$NAPSHOT

BY: AL RAVO

The Expenses Paid and Income amounts below do not include the funds transferred from the Endowment to meet the church operating expenses.

	DECEMBER	Year to Date
Income	\$23,442.18	\$207,129.22
Expenses Paid	\$20,451.81	\$191,122.37
Net Operating Income/Deficit	\$ 2,990.37	\$ 16,006.85
Amount Needed from Endowment	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00



This is the third year in a row (2016, 2017 and 2018) that money from the Endowment has **not** been needed to pay the operating expenses of the Church.

The 2018 Per Capita is \$35.00 for each of the 217 members of our Church. The total amount due in 2018 is \$7,595.00 or \$632.92 monthly. In December, \$293.00 was received for the Per Capita making the total received in 2018, \$4,306.00 or 57% of the annual amount due.

The 2019 Per Capita is \$37.00 for each member of the Church.

Please contact Al Ravo if you have any questions or would like to discuss the Church's operational finances, the Endowment Funds or Per Capita.

CHOIR NOTES

BY: LORINDA RAVO

February 3: We Remember Thee-Sr. Choir
The Senior Choir sings a beautiful Communion anthem this morning as we celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

February 10: God Has Spoken-Sr. Choir
Jesus Loves Me-Joyful Noise Bell Choir
How has God spoken to man? From the opening lyrical section to the triumphant climax, this song clearly presents the means that God has used to communicate - creation, scripture, and Christ.

Our Joyful Noise Bell Choir continues to grow in skill and musicianship. This week, they play their most challenging piece to date, an arrangement of the beloved hymn "Jesus Loves Me."

February 17: Were You There?- FPCH Ringers
Our FPCH Ringers play a lovely arrangement of the hymn "Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?" during this morning's worship service.

February 24: God So Loved The World - Senior Choir
Beloved, Let Us Love One Another - Little Lights Sunday School Choir
The Senior Choir sings the beautiful words from John 3:16 this morning in worship, and our precious children sing a very upbeat and enthusiastic arrangement of the scripture verses in 1 John 4: 7-8.



JOYFUL NOISE BELL CHOIR & UNITY CHIMERS

Hooray for young people learning new things and leading worship! I am so proud of our two instrumental ensembles for children here at FPCH: the Joyful Noise Ringers and the Unity Chimers. The kids are so very faithful in their attendance at and take very serious-minded love to welcome the child to the rehearsals each month to be able to ring in church! Thanks for your understanding!



CLASS OF 2021 ORDAINED AND INSTALLED

Sunday, January 6th, the Day of the Epiphany of the Lord, we ordained and installed our newest elders and serve on the Board of Deacons and men elected by congregation.

Congregational Meeting of November 18th.



Please give your prayers and support to these members of the Session Class of 2021: **Sandy Archer, Sandy Patton, and Erin Roguso**; and to these members of the Board of Deacons, Class of 2021: **Jen Bramley, Charles Nyland, and Justin Simmons**.

Congratulations to all.

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 5: Blair Gulick
- 6: Shaun O'Brien
- 9: Kyle Gulick
- 11: Andrea Sobolewski
- 13: Mary Brodt
- 14: Brenda Zellars
- 18: Dan Gardner
- 19: Joan Grover
Nicole Shoemaker
- 20: Alexis Bravakis
- 21: Jim Simmons
- 23: Christian Cochran
- 24: Floyd Smith
- 26: Lorinda Ravo
- 26: Heather Alfano-DeRosa



FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

- 17: John & Sharon Wojcicki



A GIGGLE A DAY....

We've often heard it said that laughter is the best medicine. If that's true, then you can get plenty of healing medicine by checking out the Family Friendly Humor bulletin board opposite the church's conference room on the office level of the building. That board is changed monthly, and is sure to bring a smile to your face!



GREETERS FOR FEBRUARY

03: Pete and Carol Miller

10: Al and Jen Aquino

17: Muriel Stellingwerf and Sandy Lindstedt

24: Chris and Jen Bramley

† GREETER

NOMINATING COMMITTEE NEWS

BY: MARYANN SIMMONS

Sunday, January 27th was the annual Congregational Meeting of FPCH. Before the 2019 budget for the church operations was presented and passed, Moderator Sandy Archer introduced Elder Jim Butts who introduced the nominees and elected officials for the following committees: Financial Review, Nominating, and Heaven Sent Trustee. The results are as follows:

FINANCIAL REVIEW COMMITTEE: Chris Bramley, Bill Cors, and Mark Slachetka.

CHURCH NOMINATING COMMITTEE: Present members include Jim Butts, Gilles Djongang, and Sandy Patton. Newly elected members include Bruce Bergman, Janice Courtright, Jackie Hamill, Sandy Lindstedt, Dave Ryan, and Sandy Sentner.

HEAVEN SENT BOARD: Patricia Butts.

Congratulations to all who were nominated and elected. Your service to the Lord, and more specifically to our congregation, is greatly appreciated.



The Christian Education Committee is planning their annual "Secret Valentine" event again this year. For those who are not familiar with "Secret Valentine," it is a fun February event that gives the Sunday School children and the congregation a way to connect.



Sunday School children (through Gr. 8) have been matched with willing adults or older teens from the congregation. From February 1-10, the adults will be anonymously contacting their child a couple of times a week with Valentine messages. In the past, Secret Valentines have sent their assigned child cards, crafts, colored pencils and even games and puzzles as a

surprise for the week.

After worship on Sunday, February 10, all Secret Valentines and their Sunday School children will meet up at the fellowship hour, where the pairs can mingle, chat, and share a small gift or a special card to cap off the event.

May all who partake in this event have fun!!!



2019 PRESBYTERIAN YOUTH TRIENNIUM

The 2019 Presbyterian Youth Triennium is a gathering held every three years for high school age students in the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. Youth from all churches (across the sponsoring denominations) come together for this life-changing, life-giving, faith-growing gathering!

Five days help to form a younger generation of active Presbyterians. Five days help to shape the leadership gifts and deepen the discipleship awareness for a generation who are already achieving a strong presence in this church and this world.



EVENT ESSENTIAL INFORMATION:

- DATE:** Tuesday, July 16th – Saturday, July 20th, 2019
LOCATION: Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN
AUDIENCE: Entering freshmen through graduating seniors; adult advisors must be 21 plus years
- THEME:** “Here’s My Heart”
REGISTER: Until May 2019
FEE: Youth: \$555.00; 18 years and Older: \$575
(Registration includes all programming, food & lodging. Everything but travel (check with Newton Presbytery))
- WEBSITE:** www.presbyterianyouthtriennium.org

First Presbyterian Church of Hackettstown will help any member who wants to go as a youth or an adult advisor with the finances! Check the Newton Presbytery website for more details!

SCHOOL NEWS

YOUNG PRESBYTERIAN SCHOLARSHIPS

Did you know that TWO students in our congregation can be nominated to receive an annual scholarship worth up to \$19,000 for a four year total of \$76,000? (Westminster College in PA)

Requirements for Eligibility:

- Be nominated by a member of the pastoral staff or congregation;
- Be a member of a PC (USA) congregation;
- Have a GPA of 3.5 or higher

Program Deadlines:

- February 1: Nominations Due
- February 15: Student Applications



Nominate Students online at www.westminster.edu/yps

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL “COOKING UP CITIZENSHIP IN THE VBS BAKERY!”

BY: LORINDA RAVO

Are you tired of the cold? Do you want to ponder some warm weather fun? Then join us for the initial meeting of this year’s VBS planning team. We have our theme: “Cooking Up Citizenship in the VBS Bakery”, our Scripture inspiration: “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty,” and the idea to teach our children how to help advance our church’s commitment to anti-bullying!

Now what we need are volunteers to help plan, to help teach, to help in other ways. This year’s VBS will take place from July 29-August 2.

Please keep an eye out for upcoming planning meetings and help us bring our 7th annual VBS to life!

GET READY FOR THE SOUPER BOWL!

BY: LORINDA RAVO

A simple prayer: "Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those who are without a bowl of soup to eat" inspired a youth-led movement to help hungry and hurting people around the world.

This prayer, delivered by Brad Smith, then a seminary intern serving at Spring Valley Presbyterian Church in Columbia, SC, gave birth to an idea. Why not use Super Bowl weekend, a time when people come together for football and fun, to also unify the nation for a higher good: collecting dollars and canned food for the needy? Youth could collect donations at their schools and churches in soup pots, and then send every dollar DIRECTLY to a local charity of THEIR choice.



The senior high youth of Spring Valley Presbyterian liked the idea so much they decided to invite other area churches to join the team. Twenty-two Columbia churches participated that first year, reporting their results so a total could be determined, and then sending all \$5,700 they had raised to area non-profits.

That was 1990. Since then, ordinary young people have generated an extraordinary \$75+ million for soup kitchens, food banks and other charities in communities across the country. In addition, hundreds of thousands of youth have experienced for themselves the joy and satisfaction of giving and serving, inspiring people of all ages to follow their generous example.

On February 3, we'll be participating, for our 20th year, in this nationwide event. Wear the apparel of your favorite football team, High School, College, or Pro, to church that day. And resolve to donate at least \$1 to our soup pots as you leave morning worship.

We'll be donating our proceeds to our own Board of Deacons who will use it for hunger relief right here in our own community! In these past 19 years, Souper Bowl of Caring here at FPCH has raised a total of \$5,300 to help alleviate hunger right here in our own Hackettstown area! Won't you do your part!?

A NOTE OF THANKS FROM BIRDA!

Dear Friends,

Before I "ride off into the sunset" of retirement, I wanted to say thank you—again. Thank you for nine years which stretched my faith muscles and challenged everything I had ever learned or experienced. It was glorious!

Thank you for a fun and emotional Send-off Party in the Chapel. I loved the Hamilton-rap-styled "This-is-Your-Life," complete with the giant, autographed poster of Hamilton. I look forward to laughing and crying as I read your messages in the Remembrance jar!

I'll long remember the sight of a room full of people holding signs representing the various projects, programs, or creations in which our congregation participated over the past nine years. I could not have been more proud, humbled, and grateful. Learning that you donated generously to the wonderful work of the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Program was "icing on the cake"! It was so gratifying to be part of a group which "got" what being Christ's Body meant for all people.

May you continue to seek God's will for you in this time and place.

I have many pictures and memories to take away with me, so I will leave "**Ferguson Casserole**" with you. This is the recipe I talked about in my sermon January 13th. It's simple, high in calories, fat, and salt, and it's delicious!

Ingredients: 1 box of rotini pasta; 1 jar of your favorite spaghetti sauce; 2-4 cups of Mozzarella cheese; and sliced Pepperoni (more or less to taste). **Preparation:** Mix the cooked pasta with the spaghetti sauce. Place one layer of pepperoni in an 11 X 7 casserole dish. Layer the pasta, then some cheese, add a layer of pepperoni, then more pasta. Finish with a layer of cheese, and pepperoni. Add more pepperoni or cheese as you wish. **Bake:** Glenn says, "Bake until it's hot and bubbly. And then—enjoy!"

May God's grace be with you,

Birda Buzan Ferguson



GOD'S LOVE ENDURES FOREVER

Please keep the McDonagh family in your prayers. Sharon Duris Kirschner, mother of Jessica McDonagh and grandmother of Ani and Brynn, entered the Kingdom of Heaven on January 21, 2019.

Sharon was born on May 15, 1944 in Wilkes Barre, PA and moved to Miami, FL upon remarrying after the death of her first husband. She enjoyed attending church here at First Presbyterian in Hackettstown with her daughter Jessica, son-in-law Mike, and their two daughters Ani and Brynn when she visited New Jersey.

Let us give thanks for the God of the Resurrection, whose love brings us hope!



SUNDAY SCHOOL STUDENTS CELEBRATE THE EPIPHANY



Epiphany is one of the oldest Christian feasts. It was celebrated since the end of the second century, before the Christmas holiday was established. Epiphany or Three Kings'-Day, is a Christian feast day that celebrates the revelation of God incarnate as Jesus Christ. In Western Christianity, the feast commemorates principally the visit of the Magi to the Christ Child, and thus Jesus' physical manifestation to the Gentiles. Pictured at the left are our Sunday Schoolers who dressed as the magi as they paraded through the Sanctuary on January 6th.

Let us give thanks to the children who remind us of God's love through the Christ.

Sharing God's Bounty

Disciples of the Cross

In Ephesians 2:1 and 4, the Apostle Paul writes, "*As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins . . . but because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ . . .*" Before Christ, we were dead in sin. Through no effort of our own, we have been made alive "with Christ"!

Now what? Now what, indeed! Yes, Christ has saved us for eternity, but that eternity begins at Baptism. Some of us will spend only a short portion of eternity on earth, others much longer, but all of us are called to make these days count. In the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19, Jesus calls us to "*go and make disciples of all nations.*" He asks us, empowered by Word and Sacrament, to carry on his work.

There are many facets to the work of the Church. Not all of us are preachers and teachers of the Word, but we read in 1 Peter 4:10 that each of us has a gift and each of us is to use this gift to serve others. Peter speaks of offering hospitality and serving as gifts which God has given to edify the Church. The Apostle Paul writes about spiritual gifts to the Romans, the Corinthians, and the Ephesians, each time stressing the point that we are to use what gifts we've been given for the good of the Body of Christ and according to the grace we've been given.

Jesus said:

"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it." (Matthew 16:24-25).

This is the challenge Jesus issues to each of us individually and to the Church collectively. Alive in Christ, we pick up the cross and, joyfully, just as Jesus, "*who for the joy set before him endured the cross*" (Hebrews 12:2), carry it wherever Jesus leads us. There is no life apart from Christ. As disciples of the cross who have found this to be true, let us carry this message to the world.

CHRISTMAS CARD THANK YOUs

After the publication of our January newsletter, the church was in receipt of another Christmas card from Joan Beddow and her son, Jeff. Thank you both for your card!

BOWLING OUTING SET FOR FEB 23rd

The annual First Presbyterian Church 2019 Bowling Outing is set for Saturday, Feb 23, from 6-8:30 PM. Bowling fee includes 3 games, shoes, pizza, wings, chips and salsa. Cost is 20.00/per bowler or 11.00/per non adult bowler. This fee will also include awards for special categories. We will need to firm up numbers by Feb 20.



For more information or to RSVP, contact Ellen and Bruce Bergman.

SCOUT SUNDAY IS FEBRUARY 17th

BY: MARYANN SIMMONS

Scout Sunday is traditionally held on a Sunday in February close to the birthday of the BSA. This day recognizes the contributions of young people and adults to scouting. On February 17th, we will honor the scouts from Troop #158 and the newly formed Girls Scout Troop #143 who will be an intricate part of our Sunday worship service.

Troop #158 was established in 1960 and currently includes approximately 30 boys from the Hackettstown and Great Meadows school districts.

The troop is active year round, including 12 months of camping, as well as service projects and other activities. Troop #143 was newly formed February 1st.

On Sunday, February 17, help us celebrate this endeavor by honoring our scouts from Troop #s 158, 143, and all troops from the surrounding Hackettstown area!



DID YOU KNOW?...

BY: DEB GULICK-SHEPHERD

A number of histories have been written by members of the congregation over the past 200 years. The oldest we have available to our archives are from the 1800s: one written by Elder John White (2 pages, typed) on "Presbyterian Church of Hardwick (Upper and Lower), Independence, Hackettstown, NJ and the other by Rev. John Lowery read on August 5, 1886 to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the incorporation of the church. (We have multiple copies of the latter.)

We have a portion of a history written for the Centennial of Newton Presbytery 1817-1917. In 1936 Mrs. Howard Slater compiled a history of which we have a copy of 3 ½ typed pages. We have a copy of what appeared in the History of Newton Presbytery 1949. Ruth Tickner compiled a history for the Bicentennial Anniversary in 1963. We have pages 1-28, but it ends abruptly, mid-sentence, during the section called Part II, History of the Concerns of Our Church. The following year Mildred K. Barker wrote a church history, and again we have only a portion: pages 1-8 (handwritten) and pages 15-19 (typed). Helen Montfort wrote a two-page summary of events from 1960 – 2000.

If anyone has a copy of the writings by Mrs. Tickner or Mrs. Barker, I would greatly appreciate if I could borrow them in order to copy them for our archives. Thanks!

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Members:

As we go through the process of searching for a new pastor, I ask for your patience with newsletter content. I will be working as diligently as I can to include information about our congregation, but I will need your help. If anyone knows of any news, illnesses, prayer list concerns, or deaths, please be sure to provide that information so that I can include it in our monthly publications. Please send information to maryann.simmons3@verizon.net. As always, thank you for your assistance.

God bless you.

MaryAnn Simmons