



Welcome to the Hilltop Spire

First Presbyterian Church of Mendham, NJ

FROM THE PASTOR

I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. The wild animals will honor me, the jackals, and the ostriches; for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people, the people whom I formed for myself so that they might declare my praise.

Isaiah 43:19-21

At this time of year, as the days get a bit shorter and the evenings a bit cooler, I often think about the differences in the annual transitions of spring and autumn. Spring rightfully gets a lot of attention with new life popping up everywhere and each week a little warmer than the one before. But for me, the sense of renewal in the fall is even greater. Just the sound of kicked footballs and marching bands after months of absence might be enough to tip the balance for me. But there is so much more than that going on this time of year. The air takes on a crisp feel and, when we're lucky, we begin smelling wood burning in someone's fireplace not too far away. We start carrying a jacket just in case and, more and more often, end up wearing it by the time we get home. Having families gather again for Sunday School reminds us that all the children among us are growing up and have moved on to the next grade. And we realize suddenly that all those holidays which seem to have just past have already begun to happen again. Labor Day is already memory, as I write this it's Columbus Day, and the rest are lined up before us, ready to share and celebrate anew these next few months: Halloween, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year. As summer gives way to fall and takes its special urgencies along with it, a different kind of busyness arises in our homes and churches. With comfortable familiarity, all things old are new again; and in our families, communities, and congregations, we sense that God is about to "do a new thing."

"I am about to do a new thing," Isaiah writes, about God's promise to lead Israel out of Babylon in a new exodus, after their captivity there. It promises to be even greater than the first exodus from Egypt, when God's people wandered in the wilderness for forty years. Now, all creation will revel in the blessings of the living Lord, rivers will be formed in the desert, and the way will be made clear for a quick and welcoming return to the Promised Land. As Christians, we see a presage of Jesus Christ in God's promise to "do a new thing:" a kept promise that continues coming true each day. I think there's a connection between our return to school, church, and family life in the fall each year and God's promise to do something new through Israel's renewal and return home. We return to familiarity but not a repetition of past years – for we've lived and grown and learned another year. When we, in our turn, revel in the blessings of the living Lord, each year holds the promise of even greater things than years before.

So, as the evenings grow longer and cooler, as we prepare our palates for pumpkin-spiced lattes and watch the leaves turn orange and red, let's remember to rejoice in the grace and goodness of our Lord who, year after year, in the familiarity and comfort of autumn, does lots of "new things." Each fall, God gives us new milestones to celebrate and remember, new opportunities to forgive and connect with loved ones, new challenges to face, and new reminders to invite the Holy Spirit to walk with us throughout our lives. Let's respond as God intended, declaring our praise for the Lord!

See You on Sunday,

Pastor Scot

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DEACONS

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FROM THE
MUSIC
DIRECTOR
CHRISTIAN
EDUCATION

MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

IN NOVEMBER
Sunday,
November 20th
Christ the King

Sunday,
November 27th
First Sunday of
Advent

NEXT ISSUE:

Articles for the
November Spire
are due to the office
by **October 25th** !
The Spire is
available online
at hilltopchurch.org

**Need to contact
us at Hilltop?**

Call us at
973-543-4012 or

Fax us at
973-543-0958.

Mission Update ...

Walk for nourishNJ

nourishNJ has been a Mission project for Hilltop Church for over 30 years. Many of you have supported us in the past and we are grateful. This year's Walk for Nourish is coming up. There are two ways you can help. Join us after church October 23 for a short walk around Mendham Borough with our friends from Brookside Community Church. Another way to help is to make a donation by using the following link. Questions? Please reach out to Ginny Gilman at 973-543-6699 or gggilman@att.net. Thank you!
Link: <https://interland3.donorperfect.net/weblink/weblink.aspx?name=E357233&id=17&cfid=20>

Hands-on Mission Opportunity

Morris Habitat for Humanity invites volunteers to join them for Veterans Build Week Nov. 7-11 and help a veteran move closer to affordable homeownership. This event brings community members together to learn construction skills and help families build strength, stability, and independence through housing. No experience or skills are necessary. Habitat will be building at The Crossings at Bennett Avenue in Randolph.

Volunteers can build as an individual or with a team of friends. With a \$50 suggested donation, volunteers receive a t-shirt and a community service day they will not forget. To register as an individual, please click below.

<https://default.salsalabs.org/T4b345a7b-c4f7-4635-a858-b5ef5d5b32e0/87c100d1-5785-45a5-9586-05b70f4b04d3>

National Mission Support - PDA Hurricane and Flood Relief

Our Mission Committee strives to support local, national, and international partners, both through hands-on mission and cash contributions. The Mission Committee has sent \$500 to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) to support recovery efforts in Florida where hurricane Ian caused destruction. We also recently sent \$500 to PDA to support recovery efforts in Kentucky, Missouri, and Virginia which were impacted by severe flooding in July. PDA communicates with Presbyterian leadership in the affected presbyteries to offer resources, process grants, and deploy National Response teams. We hope our donations will help carry the hope of Christ to those affected and those offering assistance.

Mission Partner Opportunity

Ever wonder what it is like to not have a warm, cozy bed to sleep in? One of our long-time mission partners, Homeless Solutions, has a fundraising event coming up that can help you answer that question: A Night in the Cold. On Friday, December 2nd, sleep out for one night to help raise awareness and funds for our homeless neighbors in need.

It's open to all ages! You can participate as an individual or team with friends or family. Where and how you participate is up to you. You can spend the night in a car, a tent, or a sleeping bag. Last year, some of our participants chose to sleep on their kitchen or garage floors. The choice is yours. Go to <https://homelessolutions.org/anitc/> for more information.

Annual Coat Giveaway

Clean out your closets and donate your gently used coats of all sizes (except rain or windbreakers) to the Market Street Mission's Annual Coat Drive. Also collecting new hats, scarves, gloves. Plastic bin for coat collection is in Hilltop House Closet or email Cathy Malman, cimalman12@gmail.com or Wendy Whiting wawhiting27@gmail.com for collection. **Last day for donation is 10/23!** Many thanks!

More Mission News...

THANKSGIVING FOOD DRIVE

While the worst effects of COVID 19 appear to be behind us, because of cessation of various COVID-related Federal and State safety net programs coupled with rising inflation, there continues to be a significant increase in the number of families the Interfaith Food Pantry Network is currently serving. This year there have 15% more Pantry client visits and 2 additional major partner agencies added, thus it is likely the Pantry will see a significant increase in the number of turkeys and baskets – the current estimate is more than 2,000.

This year, we will, again, in partnership with the Mendham Interchurch Committee, conduct our traditional Thanksgiving Food Drive. There will be three separate collection days Sunday Nov 6, Nov 13 and Nov 20 from 12 Noon to 2 pm in the Hilltop House parking lot. Donations can be placed in marked vehicles (turkey sign) or volunteers can unload donations from your trunk.

IFPN has become the largest and most relied upon resource for emergency and supplemental food among Morris County residents, partnering with 31 agencies, houses of worship and senior housing complexes throughout the County. IFPN employs innovative approaches to hunger and food insecurity that focus on improving the health and well-being of individuals and families by providing easy access to nutritious food, nutrition education, and related community resources.

So far this year, the IFPN has distributed more than one million pounds of food.

Deacons Update...

The Deacons are pleased to invite everyone to Lunch with Friends this month. Please join us for a lovely home-cooked meal on October 12th. Doors open at 11 for coffee and snacks and lunch is served at noon.

Thanks to the efforts of Bill Maur we are excited to report that Hilltop now has it's own Book Bin behind Hilltop House. Please consider donating used books and encourage your friends and neighbors to do so as well. Proceeds from the donated books will be used by the deacons to help support local charities.

The Prayer Shawl ministry begins on Wednesday, Oct 19th at 1:30 in the parlor. Anyone who wants to knit or learn to knit is most welcome. We have plenty of supplies to share. Call Marilyn Willet at 973-543-2092 for more information.

Donuts with Deacons: The deacons would like to invite you to get to know them better after worship in the Fletcher Room on **October 30th**. We'll have donuts and apple cider on hand so please come and join us.

Upcoming Fellowship Event

Music on the Hill - October 22nd, 7:30-8:30 pm

Free admission - Donations support food security through our mission partners

Join us for "Music on the Hill," a time of fellowship and music in Hilltop House. Come for dessert and coffee and listen to local artist Megan Pepper perform her debut album "Dreamlike" You might know Megan as our own Hilltop member Megan Turner who has shared her talent with us during Sunday worship and the pageant many times! We hope to see you there.



From the Director of Music Ministries...

Musical Tricks and Treats for Halloween

1923 Silent Film "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" Starring Lon Chaney

The original film version of "The Hunchback of Notre Dame", along with other music for Halloween, will be presented by Hilltop Organist, James Wynne, on Friday, October 28, beginning at 7:00 pm.



There will be two ways to view this event. You may attend in person or, you may view the performance via live stream. Attendees are welcome to come in costume and refreshments may be available for purchase.

Tickets will go on sale shortly. The cost is: \$10 for adults/ children under 12 are Free. If you wish to view the performance via live stream, the cost is \$25, which will purchase the link to view the concert on your own device.

Our Annual Christmas Concert Returns

The Hilltop Oratorio Choir – an ensemble comprised of Sanctuary Choir members and other interested singers from around the area – has begun rehearsals for their **Annual Christmas Concert "One Small Child"**. The concert will be held on **Sunday, December 18**, in our Sanctuary. Again this year, we plan to offer two ways for you and your family to view the concert: In person and in the comfort of your home via live stream.

Ticket information is still forthcoming – but mark your calendars so you don't miss this wonderful holiday event.

Christian Education Update...

The Christian Education committee has kicked off the new year with a bang! Sunday School classes began on September 11. We have moved Sunday School to 9:00-9:50, before worship, so children can enjoy time with their friends learning Bible stories before attending service with their families. We are always looking for volunteers to teach our classes. It is a low-stress, easy, fun way to get to know the kids and have a meaningful impact on their Christian education! All lessons and materials are planned and prepared ahead of time, and no teaching experience is necessary. Please consider signing up for a morning (or 2!)

In addition to Sunday School, our youth program Hilltop Quest has begun! Hilltop Quest is a joyful group that meets on Mondays after school (3:30-5:00 pm) in Fellowship Hall. Children from Hilltop Church and the larger community who are in grades K-4 meet for friendship, fellowship and music with Jim Wynne. Britany Gladhill is leading up this program and needs assistance on Monday afternoons. Please see the Sign Up Genius below for Sunday School and Quest volunteer opportunities. High school students are welcome as Sunday School and Quest assistants!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0A49ACAC23A5FA7-sunday>

The CE Committee is looking ahead to the pageant in December! If you are interested in learning more and joining our group, please reach out to Stefanie Fox.