



Dear Friends,

What can we learn from an atheist?

A religious woman upon waking up each morning would open her front door stand on the porch and scream, “Praise the Lord!”

This infuriated her atheist neighbor who would always make sure to counter back, “there is no Lord!”

One morning the atheist neighbor overheard his neighbor praying for food. Thinking it would be funny, he went and bought her all sorts of groceries and left them on her porch.

The next morning the lady screamed, “Praise the Lord, he gave me lots of food!” The neighbor, laughing so hard could barely get the words out, screamed “it wasn’t the Lord, it was me.”

The lady without missing a beat screamed, “Praise the Lord for not only giving me food but making the atheist pay for it!”

What can we learn from atheists?

Atheism is a non-prophet organization. ☺

Is there anything funny or ironic about an atheist?

They’re always talking about God. ☺

So, what can we learn from atheists?

Penn Jillette, atheist illusionist and comedian, has said: “I don’t respect people who don’t proselytize. I don’t respect them at all. If you believe that there’s heaven and hell and people could be going to hell or not getting eternal life or whatever, and you think that it’s not worth telling them this because it would make it socially awkward. ...How much do you have to hate somebody to believe that everlasting life is possible and not tell them that?”

There is one thing that atheists do better than many of the believing Christians. It is that they truly believe that they don’t believe in God. In some ways the atheist does a better job believing that they don’t believe than we do believing that we do believe. We can learn something from the atheist. We can learn to be more passionate about our faith and what we believe. Penn Jillette got it right. “How much do you have to hate somebody to believe that everlasting life is possible and not tell them that?”

Kenda Dean, also an atheist, observed that the problem doesn’t seem to be that churches are teaching badly, but that they’re doing an exceedingly good job teaching what they really believe; namely, that Christianity is not a big deal, that God requires little, and the church is a helpful social institution filled with people focused primarily on “folks like us.”

Wow...just think...to believe with the passion and conviction of an atheist.

Just some “food for thought.”

### Mark Your Calendar

Church School/Bible Study 9:00am

Worship/Facebook Live 10:30 am/.....Feb 1

Facebook Devotions 8:30am.....Feb 3

Facebook Devotions 8:30 am.....Feb 4

Facebook Live 8:30 am.....Feb 5

Facebook Live 8:30am.....Feb 6

Needles & Pins 10:00 am.....Feb 7

Church School/Bible Study 9:00am

Worship/Facebook Live 10:30 am/Congregational Meeting.....Feb 8

Facebook Devotions 8:30am.....Feb10

Facebook Devotions 8:30am.....Feb 11

Facebook Devotions 8:30am.....Feb 12

Facebook Devotions 8:30am.....Feb 13

Church School/Bible Study 9:00am

Facebook Live 10:30am/.....Feb 15

Facebook Devotions 8:30 am.....Feb 17

Facebook Devotions 8:30 am/Ash Service 6:30pm.....Feb 18

Facebook Devotions 8;30 am.....Feb 19

Facebook Devotions 8:30 am.....Feb 20

Church School/Bible Study 9:00am

Worship/ Facebook Live 10:30 am.....Feb 22

Facebook Devotions 8:30 am.....Feb 24

Facebook Devotions 8:30 am.....Feb 25

Facebook Devotions 8:30 am.....Feb 26

Facebook Devotions 8:30 am.....Feb 27

**PER CAPITA** this year is \$44 per person (per member)

What is Per Capita? - Per capita is a set amount of money (apportionment) per member that congregations pay to the larger Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). That amount breaks down as follows:

- **\$11.26** for the General Assembly
- **\$4.25** for the Synod of the Northeast
- **\$28.49** for the Presbytery

### CONGREGATIONAL

**MEETING** The Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Washington, NJ has called a meeting of the Congregation/ Corporation for Sunday February 9, 2025 immediately following worship, for the purposes of receiving the financial reports, the 2024 annual reports, submitting the budget for comment, voting on the pastor's compensation, and any other business which may properly come before it.

### SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY

is next Sunday February 8, 2026. Since the Souper Bowl of Caring began in 1990, over hundred million has gone to help people in need. Please support the **MISSION** of our church in this effort to "love our neighbors" by dropping your dollar in the soup pot as you leave church today. All monies received will go to the Community Food Pantry of



### First Presbyterian Church

Phone 908-689-2547 Fax 908-689-7911

Web site: [www.washingtonfpc.org](http://www.washingtonfpc.org)

**Pastor**, James Scovell;

**Directors of Music**, Peter & Julie Stevenson;

**Administrative Assistants** Kerri Caldaro

**Church School Coordinator**, Jean Bowers.

**Worship: 10:30 a.m.**

The **March** issue will be published on the February 27th. The deadline is February 23rd. Please submit articles to the church office or



**Prayer:** Dear Lord, we are thankful that you are the God who communicates. The One who wrote upon tablets of stone is the same One who writes the divine word upon our hearts and minds. These words tell us that you're a God who loves, forgives, sustains, and heals. We remember this even now as we pray for our loved ones and friends.

**Those ill or recuperating at home:** Vince Smith, Stan Kubbishun, Peggy Westlake, Joan Miller, Jim Vlossak, Janet Young, Nancy Vlossak, Vicki Morgan, Eleanore Jensen, Doug Foley. Kerry & Lynn Webb, Charlene Jones, Linda Walsh, Joyce Parsons, Ronald & Joan Weber, Michael Housman, DJ Pesaniello, Tempe Schramm, Grace Murphy.

**Relatives of church members:** Linda Darwin's sister-in-law Jenny, Lee Ann Kubbishun's brother in-law Harvey Hendershot, Penny Atkinson's brother David Jayne, Pauline Albrecht's cousins Kathy & Bill, Harold Teabo, Judy Ours cousin Aurelius Newbold, Jim Morgan, Joe Kresser's brother John, Charlie Kugelmeyer, John & Elaine Boreman's daughter & son in law Jill & Ross Duncan, Joe Caldaro, Peggy Westlake's son-in-law Travis Jablonski, Barbara Miller's daughter in-law Julie, Patricia Handlos's great nephew Bear Shaw, Barbara Miller's cousin Kayla Norvis, Robert Stacie Ullrich's dad, Dorothy Thoms son Don, Bob Pesaniello, Pauline Albrecht's cousin Pete Lekousis, Laura Housman's mother Betty Machauer, Fred Kulick's brother in-law Jon, Tami Phelps cousin Jimmy, Joan Miller's sister in-law, Nancy Vlossak's niece, Vicki Tensfeldt's mother & niece; Kerri Caldaro's mom & dad Gail & Fred Mosher.

**Those in care centers:** Connie Allen, Joan Vasko, Bob Pesaniello.

**Those in mourning:** The family and friends of Linda Watters mom Peggy Hengst. The family and friends of Stacie Ullrich's mom Janet Young.

**Friends of the church:** Kerri Caldaro's friend Jason Leonard, Pat Hawkins sister Susan and her husband John, Stuart Ours friend Don Walker, Diane Van Dongen and family, Grace Sweet, Fred & Karen Graf's friend Renee Wise, Karissa Caldaro's friend Annabelle, Carol Kain's friend John Vybihal. Joe Groff friend of Doug & Jolene Foley, Melinda Velez friend of Don Johnson, Gale Soler & Ellen Gulick friends of Joan Miller, Barbara Miller's friend Patrick O'Malley, Carol Novak, and Vlossak family's friend Hallie.

**Also, pray for our servicemen and women and their families:** Albrecht's nephew Captain Kyle Mogensen, Vimp Smith's grandson Cory, Stephanie Farley's nephew John, Kathy Perry's nephew Jimmy, Linda



A festive graphic for January birthdays. It features the word "January" in a colorful, stylized font with a snowman, a bird, and a scarf integrated into the letters. Below it, "BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH" is written in a bold, black, serif font. To the left, there are three balloons (yellow, blue, pink) and a birthday card showing a cupcake with a lit candle.

# January

## BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH



Feb 1

Stuart Penman

Feb 8

Bonnie Gardner

Feb 11

Fred Kulick

Feb 15

Cynthia Lee

Feb 16

Elaine Boreman

Feb 17

Dylan Caldaro  
Dorothy Shulman

Feb 21

Liz Buwen

Feb 24

Bob Sanders  
Nick Vlossak  
Ron Weber

Feb 25

Elly Kresser



A colorful graphic with the words "Happy birthday" in a bubbly, rounded font. The letters are in various colors (blue, red, green, orange, pink, purple). The background is white with scattered stars, musical notes, and hearts.

# Happy birthday



## MUSIC NOTES

Music is a powerful medium to relay information. We remember the words of musical pieces far more readily than the spoken word. We sing hymns in our worship services to help the message of the Gospel become a part of our daily lives. You most likely have heard the term “you are preaching to the choir.” That is because the choir already knows the importance of singing! Our choir is a small but very dedicated group of people who come out to rehearse every Wednesday night (yes, even in these dark and cold months!) and sing every Sunday morning in our worship services. I hope that you appreciate the gift they continually give to the congregation each week - a sung version of the Gospel message that is preached by Pastor Jim. In selecting our choral anthems, Peter and I try to match the scriptural messages with the texts of the music.

On February first the choir will be singing three African American spirituals: *Somebody's Knockin' At Your Door*; *Go Down, Moses* and *We Shall Overcome*. *Go Down, Moses* was effectively banned by slave owners who recognized it as a coded message for escape, using the biblical story of liberation to inspire enslaved people to flee to freedom, with Harriet Tubman famously using it as a signal song on the Underground Railroad. Slaveholders outlawed its singing due to its powerful anti-slavery and freedom-promoting messages, making it a dangerous song for enslaved people to share openly. *Somebody's Knockin' At Your Door* encourages us to listen to that still small voice in our hearts and to follow the call of God.

On February eighth, the choir will be singing *Over Desert, Hill and Valley*, which is an Epiphany text. The Gospel reading for this day (Matthew 5:13-20) is about our calling to be “salt of the earth” and “letting our light shine in the world”, being disciples of Jesus and following God's commandments. Part of the text of our anthem for this day reads: “When we've seen Christ's star of promise shining through earth's night, when we've followed till we've found Him, Love's eternal Light, paths of sin no more allure us from that hallowed day; souls who once have seen their Savior, walk His holy way. We will walk His holy way.”

Our choral anthem on February fifteenth (Transfiguration Sunday) is *Your Word, Oh Lord*. Transfiguration is a hard concept to grasp. This is when God appeared as a bright light/cloud overshadowing them and **spoke** to Jesus, Peter, James and John on a mountaintop, saying “This is my Son whom I dearly love. I am very pleased with him. Listen to him!” All these centuries later, we Christians are called to “listen to him” too by reading the scriptures and following the unending wisdom of God.

The choir will be singing the American folk hymn *Lonesome Valley* on the first Sunday of Lent. This song is rooted in both African American spirituals and Appalachian folk traditions and deals with themes of personal burdens and faith. The first verse focuses on Jesus walking alone, presumably to the cross. But the next two verses are all about us. In the anthem we will be singing, Gilbert Martin's text of verse two highlights the importance of the personal journey we all must make throughout our lives:

*I must walk my lonesome valley,  
I have to walk it for myself;  
Nobody else can walk it for me.  
I have to walk it for myself.*

This is not to say that we walk alone! God is always with us guiding our journey and it is our faith and hope that keep us following the way of love and compassion. Courage is needed to accept whatever the valley holds for me while trusting my path will help me to grow and evolve.

Love and Peace, Julie Stevenson



**The Chancel Choir & Carillonaires invite you to join  
them for their Spaghetti Dinner**

**Saturday March 21, 2026**

**5:00 pm and 6:30 pm**  
**Great Food and Entertainment**

**Take Out Available**

***First Presbyterian Church***  
***40 E. Church St., Washington, NJ***

***Advanced Sales***

***Adults \$15***

***Children (5-12) \$8***

***At the Door***

***Adults \$17***

***Children (5-12) \$9***

**Snow Date March 28, 2026**

<https://spaghetti-dinner-45460.cheddarup.com>





## Needles & Pins Group

Knitters, Crocheters, Embroiderers  
All Needle Crafters

Pack up your current project or dig out that half-finished one in your closet and join us at our next monthly meeting

First Saturday of each month!

10 AM to Noon

12/6, 1/3, 2/7, 3/7, 4/4, 5/2, 6/6

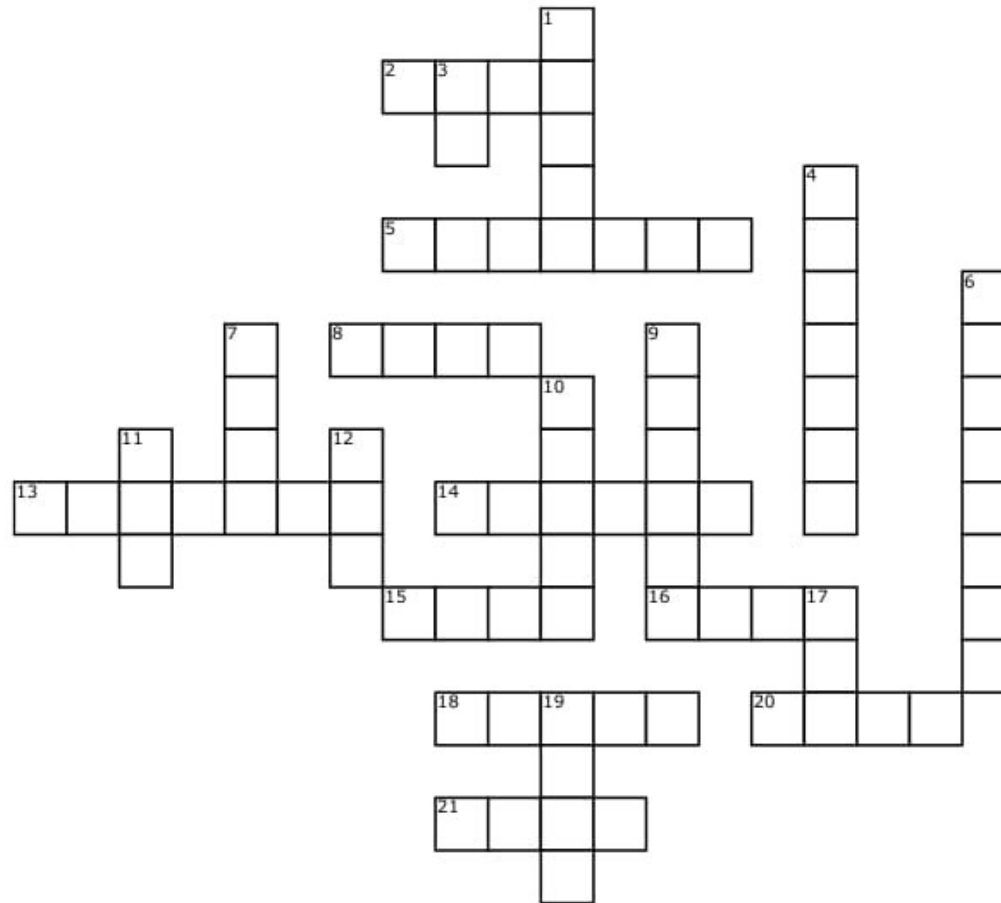
First Presbyterian Church's parlor  
40 East Church St. Washington, NJ  
908-689-2547

Through the year the group supports local charities with warm hats, blankets, prayer shawls, & soap sacks.

All skill levels welcome

We are happy to help you learn, too!

# Bible



## **Across**

**2.** It was turned into blood

**5.** 1 Chronicles 6:50 descendant of Aaron

**8.** 1 Corinthians 13:13 the greatest of these is \_\_\_\_\_

**13.** John 8:29 he did not \_\_\_\_\_ me

**14.** Genesis 14:2 one of the kings who made war with Bera king of Sodom

**15.** Genesis 5:6

**16.** Psalms 110:1

**20.** Eccl. 12:4 the true God will judge every \_\_\_\_\_

**21.** Isaiah 11:6 the wolf will reside with the \_\_\_\_\_

## **Down**

**1.** who is the Lamb of God

**3.** Daniel 2:44 \_\_\_\_\_ the days of those kings

**4.** Proverbs 3:5 Who should we put our trust in

**6.** Found in Romans 5:15-18 (4 times)

**7.** 1 Cor. 9:27 I pummel

**9.** Twelve tribes of \_\_\_\_\_

**10.** Hebrews 11:1

**11.** A rodent that may have been on the Ark

**12.** Isaiah 9:7 and to peace there will be no \_\_\_\_\_

**17.** Genesis 2:17 ...the day you eat from it you will certainly \_\_\_\_\_

**19.** Daniel 2:32 it's chest and it's \_\_\_\_\_ were made of silver



Church School/ Adult Bible Study 9:00am Worship/ Communion 10:30 am Facebook Live		Facebook Devotions 8:30 am Deacon's Meeting 7:00 pm	Facebook Devotions 8:30 am Brown Bag Devotions 11:30am Carillonaires 7:00-7:45 pm Chancel 7:45-8:45 pm	Facebook Devotions 8:30 am	Facebook Devotions 8:30 am	Needles & Pins 10:00am
8 Church School/ Adult Bible Study 9:00am Worship 10:30 am Facebook Live/ Souper Bowl of caring/ Congregational Meeting 11:30	9	10 Facebook Devotions 8:30 am	11 Facebook Devotions Brown Bag Devotions 11:30am Carillonaires 7:00-7:45 pm Chancel 7:45-8:45 pm	12 Facebook Devotions 8:30 am	13 Facebook Devotions 8:30 am	14 HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY  
15 Church School/ Adult Bible Study 9:00am Worship 10:30 am Facebook Live	16	17 Facebook Devotions 8:30 am	18 Facebook Devotions 8:30 am ASH Service 11:30 am Brown Bag lunch to follow and 6:30pm service Carillonaires 7:00-7:45 pm Chancel 7:45-8:45 pm	19 Facebook Devotions 8:30 am	20 Facebook Devotions 8:30 am	21
22 Church School/ Adult Bible Study or Confirmation Class 9:00am Worship 10:30 am Facebook Live	23	24 Facebook Devotions 8:30 am	25 Facebook Devotions 8:30 am Brown Bag Devotions 11:30am Carillonaires 7:00-7:45 pm Chancel 7:45-8:45 pm	26 Facebook Devotions 8:30 am Session 7:00 pm	27 Facebook Devotions 8:30 am	28