

SPIRIT SOUNDINGS: SEPTEMBER 2019

SUMMER MAY BE OVER BUT...



It is no time to stop thinking about the Shore. And not just the Jersey Shore where we can still see the effects of “Superstorm” Sandy: houses half reconstructed on stilts—or what look like two pairs of stilts, beach erosion from subsequent storms, and the emotional drain on our communities. But the building right in the path of future storms still goes on.

Two degrees Celsius (3.6 Fahrenheit) doesn’t sound like much of an increase but what it means is that winters are generally warmer so that pests (yes, bugs and other creepy crawly things) that are normally killed off by frost continue to live and thrive.

For us at the shore, Lake Hopatcong seems far away but its algae blooms this summer are more than a warning; they are a reality. The Navesink River in Red Bank used to be the site of ice boat races on a regular basis and although some ice boaters braved thinning ice last February, it is a tradition in danger.

NOAA (short for National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) has dire predictions for areas like our shoreline as the ice sheets in Greenland crumble. New Jersey is warming more quickly than some interior parts of the United States. The CC may stand for climate change but it can also stand for Creation Care.

Caring for the creation that God gave us means we must be not just vigilant regarding greedy builders who would devastate marshland. It also means that we must keep on top of our members of Congress including the Senate to protect the creation with which we have been entrusted.

As I come down the Parkway towards Middletown on a summer’ morning, I pass Cheesequake and look out over the marshes, I am overwhelmed by its calming beauty. (I always use the local lanes) And as I get closer to the exit, there is a body of water to my right where occasionally I will see an egret, a reminder of God’s marvel in creating such a bird.

Our national leaders do not just ignore climate change; they ignore creation care. As a people who seek to live God’s command to care for the earth, we must move past summer into a fall of calling our national—and local—leaders into account for their willful disregard of the needs of the earth.

Summer is over. It is time to face the work to be done. Fortunately, we are not alone in our concerns and can continue to engage with other churches concerned with creation care to keep these issues before our communities here in Monmouth County.

—*Rev. Joyce*

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Joyce Antila Phipps • Worship 10:30am • Communion 1st Sunday • Fellowship Hour, Sundays • Book Club, monthly
Website: oldfirstchurchnj.org • Facebook: facebook.com/oldfirstchurchnj • Twitter: twitter.com/old1stchurchnj
E-mail: ofc@oldfirstchurchnj.org • Phone: 732-671-1905

Moderator's Message for September

Thank You!

A sincere thank you to everyone in our Old First congregation who supported me during my time of need this August. Early in the month, I collapsed in my home as a result of the bites of two different kinds of nasty ticks, whose parasitic presence in my system weakened me to the point where I could not even stand up. Middletown EMS rushed me to Riverview Hospital in Red Bank. Blood work discovered that a parasitic infection had robbed my system almost completely of potassium and other elements needed for physical strength. I was in the hospital for 5 days.

Barbara Withers walked from her home to the hospital to visit me. Liz Congdon came for a welcome visit, too. Pastor Joyce came twice to check on me. Diane Fox came with magazines, reading material for my recovery. Barbara Bates came with gifts and a much-needed lift of mood. Laura Mandes and Marilyn Mandes-Zino brought me home from the hospital and even went for a shopping order of groceries. Mary Pearson did all kinds of wonderful things to help me before her flight to California. Once home, Deacon Edna Mohr brought me soups and yummy things to eat. Peter came back to Lincroft from Mass. early, so there would be someone in the house when I came home from the hospital. Numerous friends called and came to visit. My good neighbors brought in the mail, cleaned my house, fed my animals and watched my home during my absence. Trustee Don Ferrari came down from his home in Madison, NJ to mow my lawns and clear my gutters of a huge accumulation of leaves. Pastor Joyce and Barbara Withers came to visit with lovely flowers and even more food. Thank you to all who contributed to the care and feeding of your Moderator during a rough time. I won't forget your compassion and kindness. Blessings to all of you!

Windows

Trustees Dominick Green and Ron Randolph spent an hour and a half this week opening each of the windows in Fellowship Hall, the hallway, the Outer Office and Parlor to vacuum out all sorts of dead bugs and leaf debris, clean the sills and weep holes and lower the storm windows for the winter. This was a maintenance task that had not been done for a long time. Thank you, thank you!

—Moderator, Elaine S. Lent

Social Media

Website: Please check out our website: www.oldfirstchurchnj.org. Here you have links to the *prayer and thoughts for the week*, *prayers for our denominational missionaries* across the globe, *Pastor Joyce's sermons*, and the *calendar*. There is also a **DONATE button** to make your pledge or other donation with your credit card or bank transfer.

How to set up your account via the DONATE button on the website. Click on DONATE, then "sign up"; new page opens where you add your contact information; proceed to the next page to enter your credit card or bank account and routing numbers. Then enter donation amount and SELECT FUND (general fund or One Great Hour of Sharing).

Barbara Withers
Church Clerk



Calendar:

The schedule is subject to change. For the most up-to-date information please view the OFC calendar online: oldfirstchurchnj.org

For information on office hours check twitter: twitter.com/old1stchurchnj

Wednesday, Sept. 4, 7:30 PM: Shore Voices 3rd Annual Patriotic Concert. Come enjoy this all-female *a capella* singing group. The event is free, but a free-will offering will be taken.

Sunday, Sept. 8:

12:00 PM: Deacons Meeting

2:00 PM: Memorial Service for Joan Burke

Sunday, Sept. 15, 12:00 PM: Trustees meeting

Sunday, Sept. 22:

12:00 PM: Church council

2:00 PM: Riotous Readers book club meets to discuss *The Graveyard Book* by Neil Gaiman.

AAUW Bookstore Fall opening, Saturday September 7. Early admission \$5, 8am-10am, Regular hours, 10am-2pm. <http://www.aauw-nj-nmcb.org/Booksale.html>

Please remember these people in your prayers:

- ✝ Margaret Ann & Bobby B.
- ✝ Mark B. & Selina F.
- ✝ Gretchen & Jim H.
- ✝ Jean H.
- ✝ Ruth J. & Family
- ✝ Sandy K.

If you would like someone added to the Spirit Soundings prayer list, send an email to ofc@oldfirstchurchnj.org with "SEPT Prayer List 19" in the subject line.

Reminder from the Deacons: We are planning our calendar three months in advance. If there is something special you think the deacons should include, please contact Pastor Joyce or a Deacon. (Deacons are listed on the hallway bulletin board.)

AAUW Bookstore: Open Saturdays from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM September through June. Call 732-275-2237 or visit their website <http://www.aauw-nj-nmcb.org/Booksale.html> for additional information.

Shop at smile.amazon.com/ch/22-2974220 and AmazonSmile donates to Old First Church.



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*Old First Church is dually affiliated with the American Baptist Church and United Church of Christ.
We are a community of faith, open, welcoming and affirming to all.
69 Kings Highway, Middletown, NJ 07748-2001
oldfirstchurchnj.org*
