

Spirit Soundings

July 2020

A NEWSLETTER OF OLD FIRST CHURCH
MIDDLETOWN, NEW JERSEY

STILL CAUTIOUS

We are still cautious about “reopening,” as it’s called, and for good reason. We’ve seen a spike in Covid-19 cases when people have forgotten that this virus spreads rapidly. It’s understandable that we all want to be together in a physical community, but we need to take care; we still need to be cautious.

Dr. Fauci has warned about a second wave. California, which saw a huge drop in new cases is back up in infections. In fact, it’s now been added to the list of states that our tristate region wants to have travelers from there and 15 other states to voluntarily quarantine.

Yes, the death rate out west is lower – so far. That’s possibly because more younger people have contracted the virus than older people. It’s also because it’s being diagnosed more quickly, medical treatment is improving, and older people are being more careful. Let’s hope that holds.

We still need to wear masks when we are in public. Even though on my morning walks I don’t have one on, I carry one in case I meet up with more than the neighborhood deer. I don’t like wearing one, to be sure, but I know it’s not just protection for me but a commitment to the commonweal, the community we all share.

Those free and independent states were united in their decision to throw off the yoke of the British Empire. In that document they signed, their pledge read:

We mutually pledge to each other, our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor.

Mutuality is the cornerstone of our strength as a people and a democracy. Let us remember that as we with the Founders have the same “firm reliance on Divine Providence” as did they.

Robert and I will continue our video recordings. Thanks to all of you who have given me comments on how to improve the format of the worship service.

We will get through this and emerge stronger as a community.

Rev. Joyce

Important: On Saturday, July 18, the AAUW Bookstore will have a special bag sale from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM. All customers must wear masks and practice social distancing. We hope for regular hours upon reopening in September.

Being Together as a Community

Elaine continues to improve and welcomes your phone calls. She's reading up a storm and has managed to maintain her sense of humor in spite of all that's happened.

Ruth also welcomes your phone calls and communications on Facebook. She does not want visitors at this time.

The morning meditations and prayers will continue.

The Church Directory has the email addresses of our community.

Never Cease to Pray

Everywhere, wherever you may find yourself, you can set up an altar to God in your mind by means of prayer.

St. John Chrysostom (d. 407)

Remember:

Margaret Ann & Bobby B.

Gretchen & Jim H.

Jean H.

Ruth J. & Family

Sandy K.

Elaine L.

All of us in this time of concern for the health of our community, the Nation, and the world.

Social Media

www.oldfirstchurchnj.org

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*.

facebook.com/old1stchurch

Serving the Community

Shop smile.amazon.com: Sign in to smile.amazon.com on your desktop or mobile phone browser. From your desktop, go to Your Account from the navigation at the top of any page, and then select the option to Change your Charity. Or, from your mobile browser, select Change your Charity from the options at the bottom of the page. Amazon donates a small percentage to OFC. Choose OFC as your charity.

The **Calico Cat Thrift Shop** is closed until we have overcome the Pandemic emergency

An Important Notice

Avoiding Misinformation & Online Scams: The Office of Homeland Security published a [list of rumors, scams, and misinformation campaigns](#) related to COVID-19 to keep New Jersey residents safe and aware.

Be A Peacemaker in a Turbulent World

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

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Joyce Antila Phipps • Worship 10:30am • Communion 1st Sunday • Fellowship Hour, Sundays • Riotous Readers, a monthly book club • Website: oldfirstchurchnj.org • Facebook: facebook.com/oldfirstchurchnj • E-mail office@oldfirstchurchnj.org • Voice messages: 732-671-1905