



SOUNDINGS

APRIL 2023

April 6

Maundy Thursday service, 6:30pm
Session meets after service

April 9

Easter Sunday
One Great Hour of Sharing offering

April 11

Property Team meeting, 7pm

April 16

Congregational meeting after
worship

April 18

Session, 7pm

April 22

Progressive Dinner, 5:15pm

April 23

Pastor Stefanie's last Sunday

April 30

Deacons' meeting after worship

SAVE THE DATE:

Sunday, May 13

Easton Municipal Band concert

Happy Easter!



CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Session has called a congregational meeting for Sunday, April 16 after worship at 11:45am. The Session will offer an update on the plan to address the 2023 budget deficit, and recommends the congregation act to amicably dissolve the pastoral relationship with Rev. Stefanie Muntzel. All members present may vote on this action.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF EASTON

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A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

*Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice!
Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace.
And the God of love and peace will be with you.
Greet one another with a holy kiss.
All God's people here send their greetings.
May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*

II Corinthians 13:11-14

Dear Congregation,

As you receive this newsletter, Easter will be on our doorstep. So, I extend my deepest wish that you have a blessed and meaningful Holy Week and a joyous Easter.

Because my last Sunday with you will be on Sunday, April 23rd, I have been thinking about the experience of saying goodbye. I have led four funerals for long time members over the last few months. The reality of death certainly gives you perspective about what it means to say "goodbye". Even with the finality of loss because of death - even death holds less of a sting when the person who has died has lived a full and meaningful life. Both Harriet Spillman and Naomi Smith were centenarians - Harriet 102 and Naomi 107. What wonders they witnessed over their lifetime! So of course we celebrate their memory and the gift of their life, even as we grieve. I would also say that a final goodbye is easier to offer if the departed was a person of faith. If the loved one who died believed in Christ's promise of forgiveness and eternal life then our loss is not an end. So while the death of Fran, Harriet, Naomi and Betty have brought this congregation great sadness, we still stand at the grave with the words of "Alleluia" on our lips and hearts. Their story and our story continue in God's hands. This is the gift of faith.

And so as I say goodbye to this congregation, I have perspective. I celebrate that my tenure with you has been meaningful. I am grateful for the times I have sat at the bedside of members of this community, stood with you to officiate at weddings, celebrated confirmation, shared delicious meals around a table, and been a part of many Sunday worship services where we together remembered God as the center and source of our lives. We have shared many rich experiences of service and grace. And so I am thankful. I leave you with sadness but also with the confidence of faith. God is with you. God is leading you. I will pray for your discernment in the coming months and I ask that you pray for me as I transition to a new ministry setting.

I am glad to celebrate Easter with you. I look forward to raising our voices in joy for the victory of love over hate, of life over death, of goodness over evil. How excellent it is that our God turns endings into new beginnings.

Yours in Christ, Pastor Stefanie

WORSHIP AND MUSIC

Maundy Thursday, April 6 at 6:30PM

Tenebrae: Service of Shadows

The name Tenebrae is the Latin word for "darkness" or "shadows," and has for centuries been applied to the ancient monastic night and early morning services of the last three days of Holy Week. This is a typical service but centered on scripture readings and the gradual extinguishing of candles and other lights until a single candle remains. Towards the end of the service, this candle is hidden, typifying the apparent victory of the forces of evil. At the very end, a loud noise is made, symbolizing the earthquake at the time of the resurrection (Matthew 28:2), the hidden candle is restored to its place, and by its light all depart in silence.

Easter Sunday, April 9

We'll celebrate the resurrection of our Lord with joyful sounds of the trumpet and singing!

Sunday, April 23

Please join us for worship on Sunday, April 23.

We will say farewell to Pastor Stefanie as she leaves to take another pastorate.

CHOIR REHEARSALS

Chancel Choir rehearses on Wednesdays, 5:30-6:30pm.

The **Handbell Choir** rehearses on Wednesdays, 6:30-7:15pm.

ONLINE WORSHIP

Our services are streamed live on our Facebook page - [EastonFPC](#) - at 10:30am Sunday. The recording of the live worship is posted each Sunday by 12:30pm- on our website: <https://eastonfpc.org/online-worship> and YouTube channel is [Easton First Presbyterian Church](#).

MISSION

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

During Lent, we celebrate that God connects with us through Jesus' resurrection and connects us with "those who have least". The One Great Hour of Sharing offering, which will be collected April 9, provides relief from natural disasters, food for the hungry, and support for the poor and oppressed. You may make your offering with envelopes provided by the offering box, or simply write "OGHS" in the memo line of your check. Thank you!



EASTON FARMER'S MARKET

The Mission Team will have a booth at the Easton Farmer's Market on Saturday, May 20 to spread the word about First Presbyterian and the Blessing Box. If you would like to help out, contact Nancy Udut. Please stop by the booth and say hello!

CALLING ALL CROCHETERS AND KNITTERS!

Anyone wanting to make a lap blanket for our next delivery call Nancy Udut (naomiudut@yahoo.com) for yarn, needles, and instructions.

Thanks, Nancy Needles

FAITH FORMATION AND FELLOWSHIP

PROGRESSIVE DINNER!

The Board of Deacons and Mission Team invite you to a Progressive Dinner to benefit One Great Hour of Sharing on **Saturday, April 22**, beginning at 5:15pm. Enjoy appetizers, dinner, dessert, and fellowship in the homes of church members. To participate in the meal, or to host dinner in your home, sign up at church or contact Deacon Ruthann Arras (315-870-0200 or ruthann.arras@gmail.com.)



EASTON MUNICIPAL BAND CONCERT

Save the Date! The Easton Municipal Band will return to First Presbyterian on the afternoon of Sunday, May 13 for a free concert! This concert is open to the public, so please invite your family, friends, and neighbors! More details are coming – watch the weekly emails for the time and what will be performed!

MEETINGS FOR APRIL AND MAY:

The **Property Team** will meet on **Tuesday, April 11 at 7pm by Zoom.**

Session will meet at the church on **Tuesday, April 18 at 7:00pm.**

The **Deacons** will meet **after worship on Sunday, April 30.**

If you are unable to attend a meeting, please contact the church office to let us know. Thank you!

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

April 11 Sandra Banghart
April 12 Victoria Opthof-Cordaro
April 13 Nancy Udut
April 20 Shirley Heinsohn
April 22 Diana Akpor-Mensah
April 24 Ellis Finger



LEHR FUND

The Barbara and John Lehr Fund is a designated fund only distributed to members. Are you a member going through a financial crisis? Please speak with our pastor Stefanie Muntzel or contact her at revstefaniefpce@gmail.com to see if the Lehr Fund could be a support to you.

PRAYERS

We pray for...

Our church, its leaders, staff, members and friends as we navigate a significant financial crisis.

All who grieve for the loss of loved ones, including the family of Harriet Spilman; the family of Betty Minnich; Ruthann Arras and family at the passing of Naomi Smith; Joel Dean at the passing of Fran; Jay Koch and family at the passing of Cindy.

Members addressing ongoing medical concerns, including Victoria Opthof-Cordaro and Ella Campbell-Becker.

All those who live with dementia and their care givers.

For neighbors near and far recovering from natural disasters and extreme weather.

Peace and goodwill for all God's children, especially in places of war and conflict.

Victims of gun violence and acts of hate.

Those who suffer from mental illness.

For injustice in our nation and world, that people of goodwill might work together for the greater good.

Prayers can be sent to office@eastonfpc.org, please include "prayer list" in the subject line.