

**Return Service Requested:**

First Baptist Church at Pedricktown  
P.O. Box 117  
89 West Mill Street  
Pedricktown, NJ 08067

**-2019 Church Leaders-**

Moderator	John Jordan
Church Clerk	Eleanor Clemente
Treasurer	Bruce Lindle
Missionary Treasurer	Ruthann Moore
Financial Secretary	Patty Ferrell

Adult Discipleship Team (5)

Esther Jackson– chair  
Lois Jordan  
Loraine Young  
Bill Keating  
OPEN

Stewardship Team (7)

John Egan-chair  
Lisa Rudderow-Secretary  
Harry Moore  
OPEN  
Kelley Piel  
John Cobin  
Don Brickner-Vice Chair

Worship Team (5)

Dede Marsango  
Christine Cobin  
Brian Heintzelman  
Connie Clark-Chair  
OPEN

Pastoral Care Team (5)

Tina Nipe– chair  
Marion Crawford  
Melby Hite  
Patty Ferrell  
Charlotte Carty

Children & Youth Discipleship Team (5)

Jaclyn Minguez-chair  
JoAnne Taylor  
Laura Brickner  
Gary Minguez  
Chrissy Cox

Mission Team (9)

Nancy Kohler-chair	Josephine Pedrick
Eleanor Clemente	OPEN
Betty Egan	Claire Kohler
Ruthann Moore	OPEN
Warren Shiffer	

Please submit information to the office (299-2123) or email ([fbcop@comcast.net](mailto:fbcop@comcast.net)) by the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month, to be considered for publication in this newsletter.

December  
2019

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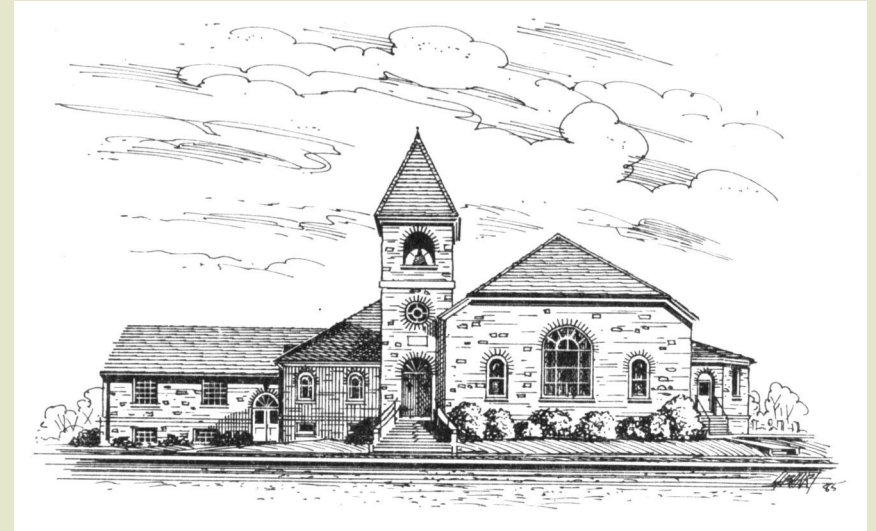


December

**INSERT:**  
Calendars

# FBC Community

The First Baptist Church at Pedricktown



P.O. Box 117  
89 West Mill Street  
Pedricktown, NJ 08067  
(856) 299-2123  
[fbcop@comcast.net](mailto:fbcop@comcast.net)  
[www.fbcpedricktown.org](http://www.fbcpedricktown.org)

**Pastor:**  
Merrit Marsango  
**Editor:**  
Michele Wallin

*Our Mission... "to birth and develop mature disciples of Jesus Christ who are characterized by faith, hope and love."*

**PASTOR'S MESSAGE**

*For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6).*

Once again it is time to celebrate and reflect on the birth of our Savior. The Advent season is always a good time for reflection on the birth and life of God's Son. But it is also a good time for reflection on our own lives and the purpose(s) for which God has

given us life. In my pastors support group we read the book "Leaders Who Last" by Margaret J. Marcuson. One of the chapters is titled, "Know Your Purpose."

It sounds like good advice—pretty important advice. But we often live life day-to-day not giving much thought to what God's purpose is for our lives. Generally, our purpose is to serve and obey God. But we all have a more specific purpose based on our spiritual gifts, life experiences and passions for service given to us by God. Most corporations and churches have a purpose statement to keep them focused and effective. Shouldn't individual Christians have one too?

Jesus was very clear about His purpose, which He stated in various ways. His overall purpose was to reconcile sinful humanity to a holy God and He paved the way for this goal by dying for our sins. Here are some of the ways Jesus stated His life's purpose. "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full" (John 10:10). "I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness" (John 12:46). "Let us go somewhere else—to the nearby villages—so I can preach there also. That is why I have come" (Mark 1:38). This last statement was to clarify that Jesus' primary purpose was to preach the good news of God's salvation—not heal everyone's illnesses, or give everyone a trouble-free life as some had hoped. That's the thing about our God-given purpose—some people will try to make your life's purpose their purpose. Jesus had to fight that tension all the time. Many people wanted Him to serve their purposes and desires instead of God's.

In my doctoral program one assignment was to write a personal purpose statement. Here is mine from nearly twenty years ago: "To focus on the development of Christian leaders who will seek personal transformation first, as well as transformation in the lives of those they serve and lead." Ten years later I think this purpose statement remains accurate for me. In retirement I will continue to dedicate myself to this God-given purpose in the church we join, confident that God will reveal opportunities for me to fulfill my purpose.

What about you? Have you ever developed a personal purpose statement? The goal of a personal purpose statement is to keep us focused on what God has called us to do with our lives. It begins with prayer, of course, because God gets to decide your life's purpose. He created you to serve Him in particular ways based on your personality, spiritual gifts and life experiences. You could also seek input from those who know you well. They may see certain talents and gifts within you that you cannot.

## CEDARS OF LEBANON



There has been \$11,630.00 pledged as of 11/17/2019

Those with pledges have given \$11,530.00

Others (no pledges) have given \$4,890.00

Total received as of 11/17/2019 is \$16,420.00

Thank you very much, you have been very generous.

Don't forget to earmark the contribution for CEDARS OF LEBANON to make sure that it is applied to the right account.

### Light Shines in the Darkness

In Nepal, where blindness is prevalent due to under-funded medical care and a lack of eye doctors, ophthalmologist Sanduk Ruit has made it his mission to treat poor people. He's performed more than 130,000 cataract surgeries to restore sight, sometimes walking for a week with surgical equipment in tow to reach patients. Dr. Ruit also found a way for replacement lenses to be made locally for less than \$3 each, rather than buying them internationally for 100 times as much. The physician brings healing to remote villages and celebrates "big eye-opening festivals" with people who "were blind yesterday, and ... are seeing today."

At Christmas we celebrate the Word of God who came to live among us as Jesus, the light of the world. In countless ways since, God has brought light to those living in literal or figurative darkness.

We celebrate people, such as Dr. Ruit and the 650 doctors he has trained, whom God uses to cause "light [to shine] in the darkness" (John 1:5).

**Gift Idea!**

Puzzled over what to purchase a family member or friend for Christmas? Consider this alternative gift idea by making a donation in honor of or in memory of a loved one to the Retired Ministers and Missionary Offering. Once you make your donation, pick up an acknowledgement certificate (either an honorarium or memorial) on the table outside Pastor Merrit’s Study. You need only to add the name of your recipient. Take the certificate and either mail or wrap it as a gift to present to your honoree.

**Youth All Night Event – December 13-14th**

Tim Joyce is working with other area churches to plan an outreach event to reach teenagers and present the gospel in a unique way for those who may not have heard it and also get youth from area churches to connect with each other. The event begins Friday at 8pm and goes until Saturday morning 8am. The night will be filled with games, activities, worship, a speaker and time at the Main Event venue in Newark Delaware. The event is open to students in 6th-12th grade and the cost is \$25 to participate. If interested please contact Jaclyn Miguez (609-202-8491).



**Men’s Fellowship Breakfast  
December 21st at 9 AM**

Talk of the Towne Restaurant

Join us, in sharing the gift of God’s Love  
in the special Holiday Season



With so many people struggling to discover the purpose of their lives we know the Lord intends to use us to build His kingdom. So, this Christmas, as we reflect on the purpose of Jesus’ birth and earthly life, why not take some time to reflect on our own?

Sincerely in Christ,  
*Pastor Merrit*

**GOD’S SERVANTS December**

**Greeters:**

- 1st John & Joy Suiters
  - 8th Harry Moore
  - 15th JoAnne Taylor
  - 22nd Betty Egan
  - 29th Nancy & Claire Kohler
- If you would like to serve as a greeter, please contact Connie Clark at (856) 678-6586.

**Nursery/Toddler Room Volunteers:**

- 1st OPEN
  - 8th Jaclyn & Gary Miguez
  - 15th Barbara Jo & Missy Perry
  - 22nd JoAnne Taylor & Nancy Kohler
  - 29th Vicki Justice & Valerie Rinnier
- Please report to the nursery/toddler rooms by 9:30 a.m. If you are unable to volunteer on your scheduled week, please arrange for a substitute and let the church office know by Thursday morning of that week.

**Scheduled Scripture Readers:**

- 1st Nancy Kohler
  - 8th Chrissy Cox
  - 15th Meghan Cox
  - 22nd Erik Biermann
  - 29th Esther Jackson
- If you wish to have your name added to our reader’s list, please contact Michele Wallin at (856) 299-2123.

**Junior Church Volunteers:**

- 1st Lisa & Joel Rudderow
  - 8th Nancy Kohler
  - 15th Jaclyn Miguez
  - 22nd Laura Brickner
  - 29th Pam Golt
- If you feel led to help with Junior Church or the nursery, please contact Jaclyn Miguez at (609) 202-8491.



**REMINDER:** Pastor Merrit and Dede have moved. Their former home phone number (856-467-1405) is no longer in service. To reach Pastor Merrit call his cell at 609-364-3690. Their new address is:

100 Lindisfarne Avenue  
Apartment 1305  
Westmont, NJ 08108

**SERMON SERIES:** During Advent Pastor Merrit will present the sermon series, “A Season of Wonder: Opening the Door to Christmas and Beyond,” developed by Mainstay Ministries.

- Dec. 1: Open Your Heart’s Door to God’s Plans
- Dec. 8: Open Your Heart’s Door to Friends and Strangers
- Dec. 15: Open Your Heart’s Door to Silence and Song
- Dec. 22: Open Your Heart’s Door to Divine Encounters
- Dec. 24: Open Your Heart’s Door to God’s Love for You

**CHRISTMAS CANTATA:** On Sunday, December 22nd our choir will present the cantata, “Invitation To A Miracle.” Following worship we will have our traditional Christmas reception in Fellowship Hall. Invite some friends to share in the joy, and sign up on the bulletin board if you plan to bring some food to share.

**Our Christmas Eve Service** begins at 7pm. This informal, one-hour service is perfect for inviting family and friends to experience the real meaning of Christmas. Be sure to include this time in your Christmas schedule!

**VACATION NOTICE:** Pastor Merrit will be on vacation from December 25th through January 1st. If you have any pastoral care needs please contact Tina Nipe at 856-299-7015.



Mark Your Calendars  
**Advent Prayer Vigil**  
**Saturday, December 7th from 6 AM to 6 PM**  
Please sign up to join in prayer with sisters and brothers of faith on this important day in our Christmas season.

**Pedricktown Industrial Complex**  
**American Red Cross Blood Drive**  
**Tuesday, December 10th -----12 PM – 5 PM**  
76 Porcupine Rd Pedricktown, NJ 08097  
Meeting Room  
Appointments are Preferred.

1-800-REDCROSS or make an appointment online: SIGN UP!  
Or visit [www.RedCrossBlood.org](http://www.RedCrossBlood.org) and enter sponsor code: Pedricktown



**Many Happy Returns**  
Somehow, not only for Christmas,  
But all the long year through,  
The joy that you give to others,  
Is the joy that comes back to you.  
And the more you spend in blessing  
To the poor and lonely and sad,  
The more of your heart’s possessing  
Returns to you glad.



—John Greenleaf Whittier