

**First United Methodist Church of Freehold
Bulletin**

**Sunday, February 18, 2024
1st Sunday in Lent**

Announcements: Linda Gatti

Prelude: "Coming In These Doors"
(v. 1, 2) Mitch Samu

Welcome: Linda Gatti

*Call to Worship: Linda Gatti

Leader: Together, we worship, celebrating the hope we have in Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

People: We pray that peace will grow within our hearts, our nation, and our world.

Leader: In a world of division, of violence, and yes, even of evil,

People: We long for understanding, justice, and peace and love.

Leader: Blessed be God who calls us to a life of nonviolence.

People: Blessed be Christ who shows us the way.

Leader: Praise be to God's Spirit who lives in our lives.

People: Praise be to God who invites us to worship.

*Opening Prayer: (In Unison)

Ever faithful God, strengthen us, guard us from evil. As we worship, may we stand firm and hold to your truths. Teach us your perfect will and guide us in the paths of righteousness. Speak peace to our restless minds. Empower us to bravely seek justice for all ... for all, everywhere. We pray that your ways may become our ways in all situations life finds us. Amen.

*Opening Hymn: "God of Mercy, You Have Shown Us" Carolyn Winfrey Gillette
(Tune of 'Beach Spring' #581)

*Praise Song: "Peace Prayer" John B. Foley

Introduction to Prayer: Rev. Yoseb Jeon
[For those joining us online, please submit your prayer requests in the comments on the virtual attendance sheet, or email the church office. Your prayer requests will be lifted up in next Sunday's service.]

Prayer Song: "I Know That I Know" Mitch Samu

Pastoral Prayer: Rev. Christina Zito

The Lord's Prayer: UMH #895

Scripture Readings: Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5 (selected verses) Bob Sterling

Friendship Moment and Passing of the Peace

*[For those joining us online, please take a moment to sign the online attendance form:
www.freeholdmethodist.org]*

Message: "The Gospel of Guns vs The Gospel of Jesus" Rev. Christina Zito

Blessing of the Scarves: Rev. Yoseb Jeon

Offering Time: **Giving Page:** www.freeholdmethodist.org/give

Offertory: "Throw All Your Colors Down" Mitch & Kristen Samu
FUMC Choir

*Doxology: "Thank You God" Mitch Samu

*Offering Prayer: (In Unison)

Awesome God, let your love flow through these tangible gifts. As your children, strengthened by your Spirit, we also offer our love and our lives. Let our love be instruments of peace, an expression of hope, a sign of your presence in your hurting world. Use our gifts, use our lives, O God, to bring your Kingdom on earth. Amen.

*Closing Song: "If We Just Talk of Thoughts and Prayers" Carolyn Winfrey Gillette
(Tune of 'Gift of Love' #643)

*Benediction: Rev. Christina Zito

*Postlude: "Going Out Our Doors" Mitch Samu
(v. 3, 4)

Isaiah 2:4

God will judge between the nations, and settle disputes of mighty nations. They will beat their swords into iron plows and their spears into pruning tools. Nation will not take up sword against nation; they will no longer learn how to make war.

Matthew 5 (selected verses)

⁹ "Happy are people who make peace, because they will be called God's children."

¹¹ "Happy are you when people insult you and harass you and speak all kinds of bad and false things about you, all because of me. ¹² Be full of joy and be glad, because you have a great reward in heaven. In the same way, people harassed the prophets who came before you."

²¹ "You have heard that it was said to those who lived long ago, *Don't commit murder*, and all who commit murder will be in danger of judgement. ²² But I say to you that everyone who is angry with their brother or sister will be in danger of judgement."

³⁸ "You have heard that it was said, *An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth*. ³⁹ But I say to you that you must not oppose those who want to hurt you. If people slap you on your right cheek, you must turn the left cheek to them as well."

⁴³ You have heard that it was said, *You must love your neighbor and hate your enemy*. But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who harass you ⁴⁵ so that you will be acting as children of your Father who is in heaven. He makes the sun rise on both the evil and the good and sends rain on both the righteous and the unrighteous. ⁴⁶ If you love only those who love you, what reward do you have? Don't even the tax collectors do the same? ⁴⁷ And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you doing? Don't even the Gentiles do the same? ⁴⁸ Therefore, just as your heavenly Father is complete in showing love to everyone, so also you must be complete."

The Word of God for the people of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

Introit:
“Coming In These Doors” (v. 1, 2)
Mitch Samu

(Verse 1)

Coming In These Doors
I will leave my stress outside.
Coming In These Doors
I will find some peace and calm.
I will greet my brother. I will greet my sister.
I will greet the stranger too,
Coming In These Doors.

(Verse 2)

Coming In These Doors
I will seek for ways to serve.
Coming In These Doors
I will hear the word of God.
My heart will be open, I will lift my cares in prayer.
I will look to share my love
Coming In These Doors.

Opening Hymn:
“God of Mercy, You Have Shown Us”
(Tune of Beach Spring #581)
Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

God of mercy, you have shown us
Ways of living that are good:
Work for justice, treasure kindness,
Humbly journey with the Lord.
Yet your people here are grieving,
Hurt by weapons that destroy.
Help us turn to you, believing
In your way that brings us joy.

On a street where neighbors gather,
Shots are heard; a young girl dies.
On a campus, students scatter
As the violence claims more lives.
In a family filled with anger,
Tempers flare and shots resound.
God of love, we weep and wonder
At the violence all around.

(Continued...)

God, we pray for those who suffer
When this world seems so unfair;
May your church be quick to offer
Loving comfort, gentle care.
And we pray: Amid the violence,
May we speak your truth, O Lord!
Give us strength to break the silence,
Saying, "This can be no more!"

Praise Song:
“Peace Prayer”
John B. Foley

Lord, make me a means of your peace.
Where there is hatred grown,
Let me sow your love.
Where there's injury, Lord,
Let forgiveness be my sword.
Lord, make me a means of your peace.

Lord, make me a means of your peace.
When there's sadness here,
Let me sow your joy.
When the darkness nears,
May your light dispel our fears.
Lord, make me a means of your peace.

Lord, grant me to seek and to share:
To forgive in Thee
You've forgiven me;
For to die in Thee
Is eternal life to me.
Lord, make me a means of your peace.

Prayer Song:
"I Know That I Know"
Mitch Samu

I know that I know, that I know,
That my God loves me.
I know that I know, that I know,
God is my friend.
I know that I know, that I know,
God's always with me.
And I know that I know, that I know,
That God cares.

I know that I know, that I know,
That Jesus loves me.
I know that I know, that I know,
He is my friend.
I know that I know, that I know,
He's always with me.
And I know that I know, that I know,
Jesus cares.

I know that I know, that I know,
You are my brother.
I know that I know, that I know,
You are my friend.
I know that I know, that I know,
You are my sister.
And I know that I know, that I know,
That you care.

Offertory:
"Throw All Your Colors Down"
Mitch & Kristen Samu

Can you, will you come to the table?
Can you, will you lower the walls?
Can you, will you just take the first move?
Come to the altar and throw all your colors down.

Black and white man, empty your guns.
Hebrew, Gentile, worship as one.
Men and women, can't we be equals?
Come to the altar and throw all your colors down.

(Continued...)

I'll give you my hand, please give me yours.
The children need us to unlock doors.
They deserve to breathe air free of violence,
Air free of hatred, air free of war.

Power Mongers, you've got the weapons,
You may think you're gonna win.
I've got God standing on my side.
God won't be mocked,
Can't you see that you've already lost.
God won't be mocked,
Can't you see that you've already lost.

I'll give you my hand, please give me yours.
The children need us to unlock doors.
They deserve to breathe air free of violence,
Air free of hatred, air free of war.

Can you, will you come to the table?
Can you, will you lower the walls?
Can you, will you just take the first move?
Come to the al-tar and throw all your colors ...
Come to the al-tar and throw all your colors ...
Come to the al-tar and throw all your colors down.

Doxology:
"Thank You God"
Mitch Samu

Thank you God,
Thank you God,
Thank you God,
For giving me this life I get to live.

Thank you God,
Love you God,
Praise you God,
Forever I will give all I can give.

Amen!

Closing Hymn:
“If We Just Talk of Thoughts and Prayers”
(Tune of Gift of Love #643)
Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

If we just talk of thoughts and prayers
And don't live out a faith that dares,
And don't take on the ways of death,
Our thoughts and prayers are fleeing breath.

If we just dream of what could be
And do not build community,
And do not seek to change our ways,
Our dreams of change are false displays.

If we just sing of doing good
And don't walk through our neighborhood
To learn its hope, to ease its pain,
Our talk of good is simply vain.

God, may our prayers and dreams and songs
Lead to a faith that takes on wrongs —
and That works for peace and justice, too.
Then will our prayers bring joy to you.

Going Forth:
“Going Out Our Doors” (v. 3,4)
Mitch Samu

(Verse 3)

Going Out Our Doors
I will be the face of Christ.
Going Out Our Doors
I will be His hands and heart.
I will ask myself, "What would Jesus do today?
Would He turn and walk away?"
Going Out Our Doors.

(Verse 4)

Going Out Our Doors
Let me be refreshed, renewed.
Going Out Our Doors
Let me be the heart of God.
Let me give my Love. Let me show my faith today.
Let me show the Face of God
Going Out Our Doors.

Announcements
February 18, 2024

Welcome to worship at the First United Methodist Church of Freehold. We are glad you are with us.

Altar Flowers donated by Ben & Laurie Sciortino.

The first **Lenten Prayer Service** will be held on Wednesday, February 21st at the Co-Cathedral of St. Robert Bellarmine. Lunch will begin at 12 noon, prayer service at 12:30 p.m. and lunch will resume at 1:00 pm.

This Week at a Glance (February 19 – 25):

Monday: *** - **President's Day – Church Office CLOSED**
7:00 p.m. – United Theatre Rehearsal (Stage)

Tuesday: 8:30 a.m. – Walking Group (ZOOM)
4:30 p.m. – FUMC Serving Meals at St. Peter's Church

Wednesday: **10:00 a.m. – Bible Study (Coffee Room)**
12:00 p.m. – Lenten Prayer Service (St. Robert Bellarmine)
7:30 p.m. – Seventh Day Adventist Church (Lounge)

Thursday: 8:30 a.m. – Walking Group (ZOOM)
2:00 p.m. – Stitcher's Circle (Coffee Room)
7:00 p.m. - Social Justice Committee Meeting (ZOOM)

Friday: ***

Saturday: 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Seventh Day Adventist
Church (Sanctuary & Wesley Hall)

Sunday: **8:30 a.m. – Seekers Class**
8:45 a.m. - Children Sunday School (Classrooms)
9:00 a.m. – Joyful Noise Rehearsal (Sanctuary)
9:30 a.m. – Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary)
10:00 a.m. – Worship (Sanctuary)
(Nursery care for our youngest members is available during worship service.)
11:15 a.m. – Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary)

***No Meetings Scheduled

Community News

Hear the Princeton University Chapel Choir at the Reformed Church of Freehold (67 W. Main St.) at 4:30 p.m. today. The Princeton University Chapel Choir is a 50-voice ensemble that draws its members from the entire Princeton community: students, alumni, faculty, staff, and residents. With director Nicole Aldrich and University Organist Eric Plutz, the Chapel Choir explores a varied and rich repertoire of sacred music. The suggested donation is \$20, and all proceeds will benefit the arts education programs of the Community Arts Center of Freehold. For more information: <https://www.communityartsfreehold.com/>

**Greater Freehold Clergy Association
Lenten Prayer Service Schedule**

Lunch at 12 P.M., Prayer at 12:30 P.M., Lunch at 1 P.M.

February 21 st	Co-Cathedral of St. Robert 61 Georgia Road	Rev. Matthew Jones First Assembly of God
February 28 th	First United Methodist Church 91 W. Main Street	Rev. Dirk Reinken St. Peter's Episcopal
March 6 th	First Assembly of God 272 Jackson Mills Road	Rev. Alan Olson First Presbyterian
March 13 th	T.B.D. Lunch will be provided	Bishop Fred Rubin Community Refuge Church of Christ
March 20 th	Reformed Church of Freehold 67 W. Main Street	Msgr. Sam Sirianni Co-Cathedral of St. Robert
Good Friday March 29 th	Service at 12:00 P.M. First Baptist Church 81 W. Main Street Lunch will not be provided	Rev. Ruth Scott Foundational Truth Bible Study Ministries

February Birthdays

(2) Dan Tagatac	(12) Kristine Darby
(3) Lynne Beach	(12) Don Johnson
(4) Ashley Darby	(18) Tanika Peart
(5) Betsy Healton	(18) Nancy Mongano
(5) Lucero Velazquez-Alvarez	(22) Pamela Wentworth
(6) Lori Beauregard	(23) Becky Gorman
(11) Bobbie Budalich	(28) Colin Budka