



January 3, 2025

Dear Members and Friends of FPC Moorestown,

Merry Christmas and Happy 2025 to you and those you love. I greet you with love and appreciation for the gift that it is to serve as your Pastor.

I'm writing to you with some exciting information for the start of 2025.

Sunday, January 5 – Epiphany Celebration at Traditional Worship at 9:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary.

Our Christmas celebration continues this Sunday. Epiphany marks the appearance of the star that brought the Magi to Jesus. We'll celebrate the Lord's Supper together, along with many of our choirs singing special music. Our Contemporary Service that morning will also mark the joy of Epiphany.

New Sermon Series – Stop at the Stop Signs: Entering God's Gift of Rest.

I'll begin a six Sunday sermon series on practicing the Sabbath. I pray that we'll regularly find God's promised rest through the practice of the Sabbath. For most, it's a new practice. We've created resources to help families and individuals get started. <https://www.fpcmoorestown.org/worship/sermon-series/>

Centering Prayer Introduction and Refresher ~ January 8 and 15.

Since Lent last year, I've been praying on Wednesday evenings with a small group using the contemplative prayer practice called Centering Prayer. I've been praying this prayer of silence myself since May of 2023. The Spirit of God has brought profound changes to my life. The prayer is simple. We sit silently in the presence of Jesus and surrender our thoughts and feelings to Him for a set period. I will introduce the prayer on January 8 at 6:30 p.m. in my Study. On January 15, Dr. Brian Russell, a Professor of Biblical Studies at Asbury Seminary and author of the book, *Centering Prayer: Sitting Quietly in God's Presence Can Change Your Life*, joins us via Zoom to present more information on the prayer. On January 15, we'll meet in Fellowship Hall from 6:30-7:30 pm.

Offerings for the New Year.

We had wonderful Christmas Eve and Christmas Day worship services. My thanks to our staff and volunteers for providing nine incredible opportunities to worship our newborn King. While we welcomed many members and friends from our community, our offering was down significantly. If you missed the chance to give then, please consider giving now at the start of 2025.

Dr. Brian Russell wrote and shared this prayer with me today. Let us pray it with our feet now firmly in the New Year.

O Lord God, our sun and shield. You are the One who from the foundations of the world has chosen us, ransomed us and redeemed us in Christ. Now turn our mourning to joy. Transform our cries into testimonies. Empower us by your Holy Spirit to embody the faith of Mary, Joseph, Simeon, and Anna. Make us holy and blameless in love for the praise of your glory. In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

(A Collect based on Psalm 84, Jer 31:7–14, Luke 2:22–40, Eph 1:3–14 for Sunday January 5, 2025)

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Stuart Spencer
Pastor