

THE CONNECTION

a bi-monthly publication of the
ALLENSIDE & FIRESTONE PARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES

Uncompromised Faith

Matthew 4:8-10 “Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.”



Jesus was not crucified because He was gentle or agreeable. He was crucified because He was uncompromising. Standing before Pilate, Jesus refused to bow to the power of Rome or the authority of the emperor. He would not deny who He was or reshape His message to survive. When Jesus said, “My kingdom is not from this world,” He made clear that His allegiance was not to empire, politics, or power – but to God alone. That refusal led Him to the cross.

This still matters today. We live in a world that pressures us to place our hope in leaders, systems, and policies. Subtly, we are tempted to soften our faith to fit cultural expectations or remain silent to avoid discomfort. Jesus reminds us that God’s kingdom does not rise or fall with governments. Our ultimate loyalty belongs to Christ.

Following Jesus may place us out of step with the world, but the cross reminds us that faithfulness – not power – is where God’s true work is revealed.

Faithfully,

Pastor Lisa

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING 2025

Submitted by Kim Birk, APC

Thank you for your donations to the Christmas Joy Offering.

Last year:

- Donations were used to provide critical financial support and grants for current and retired Presbyterian church workers in their time of need.
- Income supplements from the Board of Pensions helped over 300 households, assisting retired church workers and surviving spouses with the means to provide for themselves.
- Housing supplements from the BOP helped more than 250 households remain in their homes, afford assisted living, or long-term care.
- Emergency Assistance Grants from the BOP helped more than 109 households facing times of great financial need or uncertainty due to unforeseen circumstances.
- Donations were used to provide education and leadership development skills at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. Many of these students were the first in their families to enroll in higher education.

Because we all gave a little, it really added up to a lot!

MAD HATTERS 2025 RECAP

Submitted by Kim Birk, APC

In 2019 Kathy Cumpston started the group with 4 members. They made 323 hats and 36 blankets.

In 2025 they are up to 12 ladies that are hat making machines!

They made 2,124 hats! Not only did they make hats, but they also made 94 blankets and 118 bears! They also dressed 218 Barbie dolls and donated 331 Match Box cars! The items were distributed to 19 schools, non-profit organizations, a hospital and the Firestone Park Blessing Box and Day Care.

The Hatter's would like to thank the members of both Allenside and FP for the donations of yarn, fleece, felt, material, monetary donations and for the ACME cash back receipts. There are boxes in the rear of both sanctuaries to place your receipts. Receipt collection ends on February 15. Without the supplies, none of this would be possible.

The ladies are back at it again! They meet on Wednesday's from 1:00 to 3:00 PM in their craft room behind the office.

KENMORE COMMUNITY SAFETY CONVERSATION

Submitted by Pastor Lisa

There will be a Community Safety Conversation on January 21st at 6pm located at 1028 Kenmore Blvd. Dinner will be provided. The Kenmore Community Engagement Officer will be available for questions.

EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

WORSHIP SERVICE SCHEDULE

Here's the January - March Sunday worship schedule for you to clip and save:

All services are at 10:30 AM, alternating between the Allenside Presbyterian and Firestone Park Presbyterian buildings.

January 04, 2026	Allenside
January 11, 2026	Firestone Park
January 18, 2026	Allenside
January 25, 2026	Firestone Park
February 01, 2026	Allenside
February 08, 2026	Firestone Park
February 15, 2026	Allenside
February 18, 2026	Allenside
February 22, 2026	Firestone Park
March 01, 2026	Allenside
March 08, 2026	Firestone Park
March 15, 2026	Allenside
March 22, 2026	Firestone Park
March 29, 2026	Allenside

To join our services by computer/tablet/smartphone, click this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5118335841?pwd=Z3VFQktHYU1Na1RoTEhGU2p2WTErdz09>

To join via phone:

Phone number: 1-646-558-8656 (this is a New York number– note it is not toll-free)

Meeting ID: 511 833 5841 (then key "#"), No participant ID (key "#"),

Password required: 4430144314 (then key "#")

ASK THE PASTOR

Submitted by Pastor Lisa

Have you ever had a question about faith, the Bible, or something you've always wondered but didn't know where to ask? Maybe you've heard something in a sermon that sparked your curiosity, or you've faced a real-life situation and wondered how your faith speaks into it. I'm excited to introduce a new opportunity just for that – Ask the Pastor.

Ask the Pastor is a new feature to create space for honest questions, thoughtful dialogue, and spiritual growth. Whether your question is big or small, theological or practical, this is a chance to explore your faith more deeply – together.

Here's how it works – you can submit questions anonymously or with your name attached. Selected questions may be answered in our monthly newsletter, where others can learn and reflect alongside you. Some questions may even inspire future sermon topics, especially if they speak to the heart of what many in our congregation are wondering.

Nothing is off limits – ask about Scripture, traditions, Christian living, current events, or anything else you'd like to better understand from a faith perspective. Look for a submission jar located at each church or email your question directly to me:
pastorlisa.pcusa@gmail.com.

LITURGISTS NEEDED

Submitted by Megan Eretz, FPPC

Have you ever wanted to be a part of the Sunday worship? Megan and Becky are looking for liturgists. You can be the liturgist at either church. It doesn't matter the Sunday. Pastor Lisa will be having a class. If you have any questions or like to pick a Sunday. Please see either Megan or Becky.

FPPC WEATHER POLICY

Submitted by Judy Abdallah, FPPC

We have created a new policy regarding deciding whether to cancel the Sunday worship service when weather conditions are severe. Pastor Lisa, Steve Rohrs and I will make a decision by Saturday night at 6:00 PM and immediately send out an eblast. If you don't have email, feel free to call Judy at 330-730-7209.

APC WEATHER POLICY

Submitted Pastor Lisa

We have created a new policy regarding deciding whether to cancel the Sunday worship service when weather conditions are severe. Pastor Lisa, Larry Miller, and Treassa Cumpston will make a decision by Saturday night at 6:00 PM and immediately send out an eblast.

UPDATE ON PASTOR AMY STARR REDWINE

Submitted by Judy Abdallah, FPPC

From Pastor Amy - "Just a quick post to share that over the last few days my blood counts have been going in the right direction and the doctor told me today that I should be able to go home by the weekend! I'm convinced that things have gone so quickly in large part due to the prayers and support I have received from all of you, so please know you have my heartfelt gratitude — along with a request to keep the prayers coming so that I can indeed get home soon. There is still a long road of recovery ahead but I am deeply grateful things have gone so well to this point."

A NOTE FROM YOUR TREASURERS

Submitted by Sherry Priest, FPPC and Barbara Graham, APC

Our 2026 PerCapita is \$35. This money is paid to Eastminster Presbytery. It is then distributed as follows:

\$11.08 to General Assembly
\$3.40 for Synod of the Covenant
\$20.52 for Eastminster Presbytery

Please remember to pay your PerCapita along with your other Contributions. Please see either of us if you have any questions. Thank you!

JANUARY AND FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS/ANNIVERSARIES

No January Birthdays or Anniversaries

February Birthdays

11 – Michele McBride, APC

14 – Mike Wintrow, APC

23 – Kari Phillips, FPPC]

February Anniversaries

14 – Mike and Ann Wintrow, APC

We are working on creating and updating a birthday and anniversary list for Firestone Park. If you would like to share your birthdays/anniversaries, please email the church office at fppchurch@gmail.com.