



The Herald

Freedom Plains United Presbyterian Church
NewsLetter

The PNC Nominates Rev. Jason Elder

During the Sunday service on January 26, 2025 the Pastor Nominating committee of Freedom Plains United Presbyterian Church announced that they are nominating Reverend Jason Elder to be the next pastor for FPUPC. Rev. Elder has been the minister of The Reformed Church of Poughkeepsie since 2016.



Rev. Elder is a native of Mississippi and from a small community of farmers and factory workers. He received a Bachelor of Biblical Studies from Blue Mountain College and he holds a Master of Divinity from Golden Gate Theological Seminary (now Gateway), in Marin County, California.

In a letter to the FPUPC congregation, he writes, “I’ve been married to Barbara, an art teacher in Newburgh, since 2001. We have three wonderful, funny, and kind children (grades 12, 7, and 3) and have lived in Dutchess since 2016. We enjoy making maple syrup from our trees, cooking together, and finding trees”.

On February 23, Rev. Elder will preach and lead the worship service. Following the service, the congregation will vote on the candidacy of Rev. Elder as our new pastor!



From the Pastor's Desk

Reflections and Transitions

Dear FPUPC Family and Friends,

It's amazing to me that I have been here among you for nearly a year~and what a year this has been!

When the Presbytery spoke with me about your role of Interim Senior Pastor, they said that, based on the results of your congregational visioning process, you needed a conductor. I took their wisdom to heart and have watched you all rise to levels of action which have been thrilling.

Some of my work among you has been behind the scenes, assisting your leadership in putting policies in place so that things can run more smoothly, and people understand how things work.

We hired Anna Strong, as Director of Children's Ministries. Elders and Deacons have volunteered to be the second adult in each classroom to comply with the new Child Protection Policy. We also hired another nursery worker, so that 2 adults are in the room to care for infants each week. Our current fabulous Church School teachers have continued to create the stability needed to grow that essential ministry.

The Rev. Heather Finck went on a sabbatical during this time, affording her much needed rest and renewal. It has been a joy and pleasure to work alongside such a trusted and gifted colleague through this time in ministry.

We also offered a retreat and more Adult Education opportunities and joined with our friends from Shir Chadash for Friendsgiving.

But watching you do ministry has been inspiring: A successful and energetic Stewardship campaign; a thorough budgeting process with participation from all committees; new offerings in mission and hospitality, such as serving hot cocoa to Arlington High School students in our parking lot, and a PRIDE celebration last June; a property committee which is unstoppable in their efforts to beautify the campus and make it more functional, complete with digital access; A committee fair which resulted in the formation of a new Worship Committee; a functioning Personnel Committee which supports our fabulous staff; and much, more~I could go on and on.

I have also worked on building community among our wonderful staff. We meet each week, and some have remarked with wonder about the laughter coming from my office during staff meetings! Yes, we have fun as well~

As you prepare to hear from your PNC's candidate, The Rev. Jason Elder, and vote on February 23, please know you will be then and will continue to be in my prayers.

Grace and Peace,

Shannon

Rev. Shannon White, Interim Senior Pastor

The Committee Page

Mission Committee:

January 14 mission committee meeting we allocated \$1000.00 to the Pacific Palisades Church. It is one of thousands of structures that burned down during the Los Angeles fires. Rev. Matt Hardin recalled being in a meeting when the preschool director interrupted him to tell him about what was happening. From the church parking lot he could see the flames just across the way, coming in his direction and the wind was also blowing in the church's direction. The church was immediately evacuated. A metal Celtic cross is all that was saved from the church. The manse next door also survived. The Presbyterian Disaster Assistance has provided grants and other support to the affected region and has been meeting regularly with local executives who are assessing needs and compiling resources to help those affected. Since the disaster, church members have started gathering at another presbyterian church eight miles away. This church is providing essential goods to the members of the Pacific Palisades Church. Rev. Hardin commented that "The prayers we're getting right now and the support and encouragement are making a very hard situation a little bit easier. It really, really helps."

Property Committee:

The property committee has been busy this year with ongoing attempts to organize and clean up neglected spaces like the old basement, storage spaces, the new attic, and closets. Along with this, the following projects have been done:

- Repair to glazing and repainting of the sanctuary windows
- Installation of AC/heat units to increase the comfort and energy efficiency of the community room and remediate the mold issue.
- Conversion of old counting room to the sexton's office
- Upgrade and maintenance in the Nursery School play yard
- Power washing of the building
- Painting and sealing 7 pillars by new entrance
- Replacement of steeple lights on the crown
- Installation of a new water softener system
- Purchase of plastic tables and a storage rack for the community room
- Installation of a new, easier to use coffee maker for the kitchen
- Waterproofing the wall in the large basement room

Since security of the building is of prime importance, a new security system with signage and video cameras has been installed. Because this is "our" church, a QR code has been made available for all to send messages directly to the property committee using the code (included) or property@fpupchurch.org. We encourage your input and would like to hear from you.

We are working on getting one-time use and monthly ongoing rental agreements up to date, as well as making sure all certificates of insurance are on file for groups using the hall.

In the near future we hope to be applying for grants to help with some expenses, so if anyone has experience in grant writing we would appreciate your guidance.



ASP 2025 is here

FPUPC has been sending a group of adults and youth on a yearly mission trip to serve with the Appalachia Service Project (ASP) for nearly 20 years.

Life-changing, eye-opening, inspiring, rejuvenating, and of course, fun, are all words that come to mind when participants describe their experience with ASP. Taking time out of our busy, normal lives to work toward the cooperative effort of making homes 'Warmer, Safer, and Drier' is an ongoing mission in the life of this church community. We'd love to have you join us this summer!

- When: July 12-19, 2025
- Where: Departing from the church around 10am on Saturday, we drive part-way to Winchester, VA, where we are hosted overnight by a local church. After exploring the historic downtown and enjoying a pizza dinner; we continue the rest of the way on Sunday to our destination...likely West Virginia, or Virginia. Our facility for the week is usually a local high school...don't forget your cot or blow-up mattress and sleeping bag!
- Who: Adults and youth (entering 9th grade in Fall 2025); No experience needed...all levels of ability are welcome. Bring a friend from outside the church--the more the merrier!
- What: Work groups of 5-7 people will be assigned basic home improvement projects and will work together over a period of 5 days to complete them, with guidance from ASP summer staff. Roofing, decks, flooring, underpinning, and siding are some of the most common projects.
- How: Email Aimée Heinly at aimeeheinly@optonline.net (<mailto:aimeeheinly@optonline.net>) to join the mailing list for upcoming meeting dates and times

Back Page Fun

THANK YOU REV. SHANNON WHITE!!!

Come One, Come All!!!! Sunday, March 2, 2025 (after church)

Join us for an opportunity to thank Rev. White for shepherding us through the transition from Rev. Paul Lent to our new senior pastor and the next steps for Freedom Plains United Presbyterian Church. It's been an exciting year of exploration and growth. Let's celebrate and thank Shannon!

Lunch will be provided, but you are invited to bring your favorite dessert to finish off the meal.

Join Us for Coffee Hour Fellowship – Volunteers Needed!

Every Sunday after service, we gather in Fellowship Hall to connect over coffee and refreshments. Hosting Coffee Hour is simple, thanks to our lightweight, user-friendly coffee makers—instructions are posted in the kitchen. We now prepare small batches of coffee, and since the congregation provides the snacks, volunteers only need to set them out. Clean-up begins around 11:30 AM.

Coffee Hour can only happen with volunteers! Here's how you can help:

- 📌 Sign up on the bulletin board across from Fellowship Hall.
- 📧 Sign up online: FPUPC Coffee Hour – This option allows you to pick a date in advance and receive an email reminder before your scheduled day. [FPUPC Coffee Hour Sign Up](#) (link to sign up)

Consider signing up with a friend—it makes the experience more enjoyable and makes setup and cleanup a breeze! Thank you for being part of our church community and helping keep this cherished tradition alive.

Great Christmas Fun at the Kellermeyers

The Merry Women's Christmas Luncheon was hosted by Annvida Kellermeyer at her home. There is a Luncheon every second Tuesday of the month. Everyone is invited to attend. Check the Sunday Bulletin for more information.



Rummage Sales Spring 2025

It's never too early for a reminder!!!! Save the Date!!!

Mark your Calendar! The Spring Rummage Sale and Flea Market is on May 17, 2025. Start gathering all your treasures!

What's better on a cold morning?



Serving hot chocolate and brownies to AHS students who park in the FPUPC parking lot for school!!!

What's New?

Grandparents Debbie and Bill Spencer welcome granddaughter Liora Charlotte Spencer, born February 6, 2025. Parents Claire Gallagher and George Spencer.

Parents Christopher Yu and Linda Lin welcome George Sawyer Yu on November 30, 2024

Mike Pike and Colleen Snavelly are proud to announce the arrival of their first grandchild, Aiden James Pike, was born Thanksgiving Day Nov 28th to Ainsley Pauley and Aaron Pike.

Stay Connected with Us!

Follow our church on Facebook and Instagram for updates, inspiration, and ways to get involved. It's a great way to stay connected with our community throughout the week!

Send Pictures or Herald ideas to: fpupcmedia@gmail.com attn: Visibility Committee

Rev. Shannon A. White, Interim Senior Pastor
Rev. Heather M. Finck, Associate Pastor
Montana Smith, Music Director
Diane Wassick, Music Accompanist
Bonnie Biskup, Parish Nurse

Anna Strong, Christian Ed Coordinator
Meredith Travepiece, Bookkeeper
Sean Date, Sexton
Susan Conrad, Clerk of Session
Gerry DeFiglio, Acting Treasurer

Freedom Plains United Presbyterian Church
1168 State Rte 55, Lagrangeville, NY 12540
www.fpupc.org
(845) 452-0684