

Welcome to
First Presbyterian Church of Bordentown
An Introduction for Pastor Applicants



Our mission as a congregation is to proclaim the good news in word and deed. God's love in Jesus Christ brought light and healing to this world 2000 years ago and still does today. We want to be a community of believers that makes God's love known and tangible and is faithful beyond traditional boundaries.

HISTORY AND IDENTITY



We are a small but active congregation that is passionate about the love of God, our community, social and environmental justice, children, and music!

Our church family currently consists of 100 active members, with an average of 40 attendees at Sunday services. Our membership includes 10-15 families with children under 18 living at home.

Our church was founded in 1848, and our present church building was dedicated in 1869. The fellowship hall, underneath the sanctuary, was constructed in the 1950s (dug out manually by members of the church!).

Our beautiful manse, less than a block away from the sanctuary building, has belonged to the church since 1893. The manse is the left half of a large brick building, and the other half is the “Julian House”. Julian House has belonged to the church since 1953 and includes our main office, main meeting room, the pastor’s study, the youth group room, and a few other rooms used by various employees and church groups.



Our church is rich in history, and we continue to update the church properties while looking back with admiration and gratitude to those who formed this congregation and have maintained it with faith and prayer.

For more information on our church’s history and identity, please visit <http://www.bordentownpresbyterian.org/history.html>.

STAFF



Caryl Tipton (Interim Director of Music Ministry)

A Westminster Choir College graduate, Caryl has worked in church music since high school as a choir director or section leader for many denominations! She sang professionally and was a voice instructor in NY and the metropolitan area for many years. She served as a soprano in the professional choir of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in NYC. Simultaneously, Caryl developed a career in orchestra management with the NY Philharmonic, Music Sacra (NY), Congress of Strings and the Voice Institute at UC Santa Barbara. She moved back to the Princeton area to marry her college sweetheart, Robert Joe Lee. Robert Joe and their daughter, Hannah, have been involved at First Presbyterian Church of Bordentown for many years. She has recently retired after serving as Director, Music Ministry at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Washington Crossing for 30 years.

Caryl is the Concert Manager with the Princeton University Summer Chamber Concerts. She also followed a call as a grief counselor for hospice and suicide prevention and was recently recertified as an Advanced Grief Recovery Specialist, offering individual and group support.

As an Interim, Caryl hopes to help the music program become a healthy, thriving ministry. In this way, the program will be ready for the called Minister to hire a permanent Director of Music Ministry in the future. It's been said that music is the universal language. It is only fitting then, that First Presbyterian Church of Bordentown encourages musicians to express themselves musically using many different resources — through different styles, modes, and instruments — encouraging people to express the inexpressible.

Dr. Bob Lowden (Accompanist) — Bob has been the accompanist at our church since 2015. He studied at the Settlement Music School in Philadelphia, the New England Conservatory in Boston, the Philadelphia Musical Academy, and Trenton State College. He has taught music at every level and has served as a conductor, artistic director, chorus director, and more. In addition to teaching, Bob spends much of his time presenting piano concerts/recitals for churches, nursing homes, schools, civic organizations, and business/corporate functions.



Sheri Devlin (Office Manager) — Sheri came to our church in February 2018 with 15 years of experience working in a Presbyterian Church office and an additional 10 years of secretarial experience. She has been a member of the First Presbyterian Church of Hightstown since 2001 and is currently spending 25 hours of her work week in their office. At FPC Hightstown, she volunteers as the Kids Club Coordinator and has been teaching Sunday School for about 18 years. Sheri was previously employed by Princeton University at Firestone Library for 10 years before taking time off to care for her family. Sheri has been married to her high school sweetheart Mark for 28 years at their home in Hightstown where together they raised 5 beautiful children.



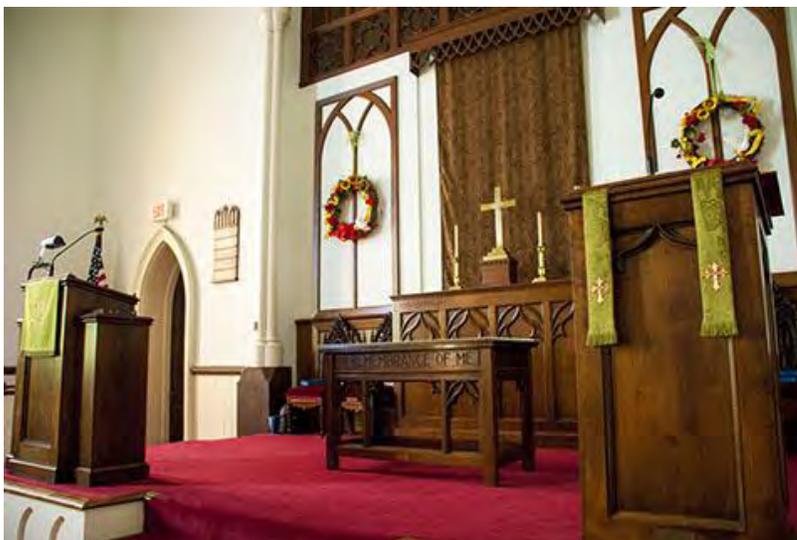
Dana Maiuro (Director of Christian Education/Youth Group Director) — Dana grew up in the church, attending Sunday School, singing in children's choir, and participating as an active and enthusiastic member of Youth Group. Dana also served as a Youth Member of Session. She worked with the Youth Group for the past 9 years, first as a helper and then as Youth Group Leader. In 2012 she assumed the role of Director of Christian Education, with both Christian education and Youth Group placed under her leadership. Dana attended Rider University, majoring in Elementary Ed and Music. She has a gift for helping Sunday School kids and Youth Groupers find their place both inside and outside of the church.

Don Ryba (Treasurer) — Don and his wife Dana joined our church in 1998. He became actively involved in 2003 as a member of the Board of Trustees, which later became the Buildings & Grounds Team. Don was ordained as an Elder in 2006 and eventually served for 5 years as chair-person of Buildings & Grounds. Don is currently a member of Session and helps to oversee the financial affairs of the church. He took on the role of Custodian in 2013. Don was born and raised in the city of Trenton as part of a large Roman Catholic parish where his family was very active. He attended parochial schools in Trenton and earned a Bachelor's degree in Accounting from Rider University.



WORSHIP

In many ways, our Sunday worship is traditional: In general, we follow the suggested order of worship as outlined in the Book of Order, we typically use two readings from the Revised Common Lectionary, we often base our liturgical readings on Feasting on the Word's resources, and we honor the seasons in Christianity's liturgical calendar.



That said, our services are also marked by flexibility and creativity: Liturgical readings that differ from what Feasting provides are common, and sermon series that are not based on lectionary readings are welcome.



We are constantly striving to make worship a meaningful experience for young and old. Music and singing play an important role. Our children are invited forward for a children's message after the second reading. We celebrate communion on the first Sunday of each month.

Since the start of the COVID-pandemic, we have been streaming our Sunday services on Facebook. To get a better idea of what worship looks like at our church, we invite you to review some of the bulletins published on our website (under the News/Publications tab). To view our worship services, please visit <http://www.bordentownpresbyterian.org/worship.html>.



MUSIC

Music is a centerpiece of worship at our church. We used to have an adult choir, a hand bell choir, a youth percussion ensemble, and a children's chimers group. The COVID-pandemic and some demographic fluctuation in our congregation brought these activities to a halt. Our small but dedicated adult choir resumed rehearsals in the fall of 2022. Many of our hymns and anthems are played on our organ; most are played on our piano. Most of our hymns are from the PC(USA)'s 1990 blue hymnal, but the congregation has become familiar with a dozen or so newer hymns from the 2013 Glory to God hymnal as well. Our anthems and solos cover a variety of musical styles: classical, folk, spiritual, and more.



CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

In addition to the fellowship hour that follows worship each week, our church has an annual summer picnic, a monthly men's breakfast, a 55+ social group ("The Wanderers"), and other events. Additionally, the process of planning and running our church's outreach events (see "Community Involvement" below) provides meaningful opportunities for our congregants to experience fellowship and have fun together.

Please check <http://www.bordentownpresbyterian.org/newsletters.html> for recent congregational newsletters.



MISSION

Most of our church's mission work focuses on addressing local hunger. On the last Sunday of each month, we prepare hot meals and deliver them to low-income individuals and families living in area motels. On the first Tuesday of each month, a small group of congregants delivers hot meals that have been prepared by the Methodist church to the residents at these motels. Throughout each month, we are collecting various items for St. Mary's Food Pantry, as well as collecting microwaveable meals that get pooled with donations from other churches and then distributed via the Baptist church. Additionally, we are a four-for-four congregation that supports each of the PC(USA)'s special offerings. Ecumenically, we partner with other local churches in supporting the Good Neighbor Guild, which gives emergency grocery and motel vouchers to people in need. We are charter members of Interfaith Community Builders, a group that emerged after the murder of George Floyd that seeks to improve intergroup relations in the Greater Bordentown area. We are now certified as an Earth Care Congregation and hope to become a More Light congregation.



In 2022, we used funds from our endowment to support the following organizations: El Centro (supporting families in need of help with rent and/or utilities), HomeFront (helping families break the cycle of homelessness and poverty), Society of St. Vincent de Paul, St. Mary Church (supporting families in need of help with rent and/or utilities), Trenton Area Soup Kitchen, PCUSA--Mission Personnel Support (Supporting PCUSA mission personnel working in about 50 countries), Friends of Burlington County Animal Shelter, Grace AME Church (Restoration Projects), PCUSA--Ministry to Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children, Congo (in honor of the Boyd-family), PCUSA—PDA (disaster relief), Triad House (a program of LifeTies in Ewing helping youth ages 16-21 with emotional or behavioral challenges, the first LGBTQ+ friendly group home in New Jersey), Trinity UMC (Roof fund), World Central Kitchen (serve chef-prepared meals to communities impacted by natural disasters and during prolonged humanitarian crises).

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



Our church has a Sunday School class (Pre-K through 5th grade), which currently has about ten students. Sunday School meets on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month after the children's message. Our Youth Group (6th grade through 12th grade) currently has about six to seven students. Each winter, the two groups come together for a Christmas pageant, and each spring, they end their Sunday School/ Youth Group year by leading a Sunday worship service together. Youth group activities include a mission trip each summer, retreats, service projects, and fundraisers.



Adult education includes a Women's Bible Study group that meets twice a month. Adult Sunday School classes and other small groups are only occasional, due to lack of leadership.



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Our church reaches out to and serves the local community through a variety of events — annual, weekly, and one-time. Our Art Show in the spring and our Strawberry Festival in early summer are beloved traditions in the community.



On a weekly basis, we host two AA groups, and music/theater lessons and productions. Additionally, Play and Learn Preschool has been operating in our building (in the main room behind our sanctuary) for over 30 years.

Ecumenically, our church participates in a Good Friday service with area churches. Over the years, we have partnered in various ways with the local Methodist church, Baptist church, Episcopal church, Catholic church, Unitarian Universalist Community, and more. Most recently, our congregation organized the local coordination, collection, and staging of donations for refugees from Afghanistan that stayed at a nearby military base - we were overwhelmed by the generosity of our community!



In the last couple of years, we hosted concerts as well as a variety of kid-friendly events such as a nerf-battle in our yard or a cookies & crafts afternoon in fellowship hall. These events were open to the community.



LOCATION

Bordentown is situated between Philadelphia and New York City, with rivers and highways defining the one square mile city limits. The Greater Bordentown area (Bordentown City, Bordentown Township, and Fieldsboro) has a population of approximately 16,000 residents and consists of residential development and rural farmland (much of which has been preserved). The NJ Turnpike, Route 295, Rt. 130 and Rt. 206, the Riverline (light rail service from Trenton to Camden) and the New Jersey Transit bus line make access to Bordentown City extremely simple. Bordentown is approximately one hour from the NJ shore and about two hours from the Pocono Mountains in Pennsylvania.



The area around Bordentown includes many farms yielding fresh fruits and vegetables as well as trails for hiking and biking and waterways for kayaking and fishing. Bordentown is bordered on the west by the historic Delaware River and on the north by the remarkable Abbot Marshlands whose 3,000 acres are filled with an incredible array of animal and plant species. Only thirty minutes away are the campuses of Princeton Theological Seminary, where there is an abundance of post-M.Div. academic opportunities as well as continuing education offerings, and Princeton University.

LOCAL HISTORY

Bordentown City is over 300 years old. It was first settled in 1682, when Thomas Farnsworth, an English Quaker, moved from Burlington to a wind-swept bluff overlooking a bend in the Delaware River, which he called Farnsworth Landing. In 1717, Joseph Borden arrived, and the town soon became known as Bordentown. By 1740, Borden had a line of stage coaches and boats traveling between New York and Philadelphia, carrying both passengers and cargo. In the mid 1830's, Bordentown had much economic success from the Camden and Amboy Railroad. Famous historical figures who resided in Bordentown include Thomas Paine (American revolutionary and author of *Common Sense*), Joseph Bonaparte (King of Spain and brother of Napoleon), and Clara Barton (founder of the American Red Cross and NJ's first free public school).

BORDENTOWN TODAY

Bordentown City is approximately one square mile in size and has roughly 4,000 residents. We love that our town is economically and racially diverse, and we take pride in our identity and close-knit community. Residents and visitors enjoy Bordentown’s walkability, its historic homes, tree-lined streets, and small-town charm.



Within a half-mile radius of the church, you can find many restaurants, a coffee shop, a brewery, a Dunkin Donuts, an Aldi supermarket, a post office, two pharmacies, a bank, a fantastic library (part of the Burlington County Library System), a second-hand bookstore, a pottery and art studio, art galleries, hair salons and barbershops, gift and antique shops, two marinas, medical offices, several playgrounds, light rail and bus stops, and eleven places of worship. Extending the radius to two miles includes car dealerships, motels, additional banks, restaurants, supermarkets, a WaWa, and easy access to interstate highways.

Bordentown has a community garden and hosts a weekly farmer’s market in summer and early fall. Three times per year, Bordentown hosts a street fair on its main street, Farnsworth Avenue, which draws thousands of attendees. Other popular events include the historical society’s peach social, the porch fest, the antique car show, Halloween trick or treating and the Halloween parade, the annual Christmas tree lighting ceremony in the center of town, or Santa Claus visiting town on a fire truck.



Regarding education, Bordentown Regional School District is a K–12 school district with 5 school buildings and a regional board of education. In 2020/2021, the BRSD had 2,373 students with 194 teachers representing a 12:1 student/teacher ratio. The five schools are Clara Barton Elementary, Peter Muschal Elementary, MacFarland Intermediate School, Bordentown Regional Middle School, and the Bordentown Regional High School. For more information visit <https://www.bordentown.k12.nj.us/>.

For more information on our community, visit www.cityofbordentown.com and www.downtownbordentown.com.

OUR MANSE

Our manse is a historic building on Farnsworth Ave. just a block away from the church. It has a large, fenced-in backyard with a shed and a driveway for off-street parking.

The first floor includes a large living room, dining room and kitchen with refrigerator, dishwasher, microwave, oven/stove. The pastor's office on the first floor is equipped with a desk, lighting, built-in book shelves, and chairs. The rest of the manse is un-furnished.

The second floor has three bedrooms and one full bath. There are two more bedrooms and a full bath on the third floor.

The basement has a washer, dryer, pass-through water heater, and a large storage area.

The building is equipped with passive hot water heating, window units for air-conditioning, and Wifi.





The pastor's study has a separate entrance from Union Street and can also be accessed from the manse and the church offices.



View of the manse (left) and Julian House (right) from Farnsworth Ave.

The driveway on the left can accommodate two vehicles.



The side entrance to the manse is accessible from the driveway.



The manse has a large fenced in yard (view from Union Street).