

Profile of the First Presbyterian Church of Philipstown

November 2023

The First Presbyterian Church of Philipstown (FPCP) is also known as the “Church of the Open Door.” Our inclusivity statement, adopted in 1990 and printed in the bulletin every Sunday states:

“Knowing that all community is a gift of God, we affirm there can be no exclusiveness about the body of Christ. We welcome into our community and membership all people of God regardless of ethnic heritage, national origin, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation or socioeconomic standing; and we encourage the full participation of all in the life of our congregation”.

We are a group of Christians striving to discern God’s will for our ministry in the Hudson Valley and beyond. We are a close-knit congregation of about 100 active members, diverse in age, background and interests. Most members live in the community.

FPCP currently has an interim in place but can be characterized by active lay person involvement and leadership, a passion for outreach, and a love of music in worship. Our interim pastor acts as our worship leader, but the congregation participates as readers, ushers, youth sermon presenters, Sunday School teachers, group leaders and occasional preachers. The church hosts the area food pantry, organizes Habitat for Humanity work crews, prepares meals for the Midnight Run and the Peekskill Area Pastor’s Association soup kitchen. It also houses and supports the Community Nursery School which offers scholarships to children in the area. Music in worship includes traditional hymns as well as jazz, popular songs, classical music, and improvisations. Our music director recruits collaborators from our congregation as well as professional players and has organized jazz vespers services in addition to Sunday and holiday worship.

Our in-house worship is celebrated every Sunday, an on-line Zoom invitation to those not able to attend in-person. Sunday School is held each week with alternating teachers providing a wide range of lessons and experiences for our young students. An adult study is held at 9am Sunday on Zoom. Those attending

come from many faith and non-faith backgrounds and participate in a discussion of a wide variety of spiritual writers and practices.

We have recently updated our Community Nursery School website and in the process of doing the same with the church web page. A newsletter is published weekly, and church activities are posted on Facebook.

<https://conta.cc/3QBByp> First Presbyterian Church of Philipstown: The Church of the Open Door

Another statement in our church bulletin each Sunday states that:

“The Church of the Open Door is where we seek to live out the truth of God’s love; worship is inclusive and inventive: joy is found in nurturing one another; and we seek to bring comfort to all people.”

We strive to make it so.