

HILLTOPICS

WILSON MEMORIAL UNION CHURCH • WATCHUNG NJ 07069 • 908-755-5020
WWW.WILSONMEMORIALCHURCH.ORG



A MESSAGE FROM INTERIM PASTOR

Pastor Ryan Irmer

Greetings Wilson Church family! As I reflect on this past summer, I am struck by how much life and ministry unfolded in just a few short months. It has truly been a season of fresh energy and joyful connection.

One of the highlights was our Fruitful Living sermon series. Together, we explored how we can incorporate the different Fruits of the Spirit into our everyday lives. The conversations, reflections, and prayers that grew out of that series were a true gift, reminding us that God continues to nourish us for faithful living in a variety of ways. Our ability to live out qualities like joy, peace, patience, and kindness can make a positive impact on the world around us.

We also shared many meaningful moments as a church family—Confirmation, welcoming eight new members, celebrating Youth Sunday, joining in service with Urban Promise-Camden, hosting a community flea market, celebrating Pride Sunday, and attending the ICCF Conference in Illinois. These occasions reminded us of the many ways God's Spirit is at work among us.

Now, as we turn toward Fall, there is much to look forward to: returning to the sanctuary, resuming our Children's and Youth Ministry programs on September 7, and creating new opportunities for our young people to learn and grow in their faith. We will continue strengthening our outreach efforts, seeking new ways to connect with neighbors and invite them into the life we share here. In worship, we will follow the lectionary through the Gospel of Luke, grounding ourselves in God's Word for the season ahead.

This Fall will also bring moments for us to gather in fellowship, to serve our community, and to dream together about what God has in store for Wilson Memorial. My hope is that each of us will make space for these opportunities to deepen our faith and relationships.

We enter this Fall with hope, gratitude, and excitement for all that God continues to do in and through this vibrant and faithful congregation.

With joy and gratitude, Pastor Ryan

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 4

WoW Meeting 11:30am

SEPTEMBER 7

Children's Church Begins

SEPTEMBER 11

Memorial at the Village Green

SEPTEMBER 20

Eileen Higgins Celebration of Life 11am

SEPTEMBER 21

Kindess Trail Event 12:30

SEPTEMBER 24

"The Gathering"
Jr/Sr High Program

SEPTEMBER 28

Blessing of Animals

OCTOBER 4

Annual Fall Gala (Tickets on Sale Now)

OCTOBER 5

Brunch during Coffee Hour

OCTOBER 18

Watchung Harvest Festival in Town

OCTOBER 25

Enchanted Forest

OCTOBER 26

Blood Drive

NOVEMBER 2

Remembrance Sunday

NOVEMBER 16

Stewardship Sunday

NOVEMBER 23

Pancake Breakfast

NOVEMBER 29/30

Decorating for the Season

DECEMBER 6

Advent Supper and Tree Lighting



Registration for Children's and Youth Programming is now open through the link on Wilson's website.

PASTOR SEARCH
Judy Herlich and Deidre Seidel



Hello Wilson Family!

The Pastor Search Committee received 41 cover letters and resumes from interested candidates. Those that did not meet the minimum requirement of ordination did not move further in the process. The materials received by the 14 candidates that were ordained were reviewed by the committee. The Committee used review criteria that aligned with the Pastoral job responsibilities. Following our collective discernment, the Committee narrowed the ordained candidates down to 3. Two candidates whom we did not know were invited to a 15 minute zoom phone screen. The phone screen eliminated one of the 3 candidates.

The Pastor Search Committee will conduct virtual interviews the week of September 8th. The Committee will provide an update to the congregation within two weeks after the interviews.

Due to the ongoing and comprehensive Pastoral Search process and to ensure Sunday Worship consistency for Wilson's staff and congregation, the Committee recommended to the Executive Board extending the Interim Pastor contract with Rev. Ryan Irmer until December 31, 2025. Wilson's contract with Rev. Ryan Irmer was set to expire October 31st and required Wilson to communicate a 60-day extension before August 31st. Rev. Ryan Irmer was contacted by the Board and has agreed to the December 31, 2025, extension.

Over the next few weeks, we invite you to pray with us a prayer that speaks to the collective efforts of our Pastoral Search process. Together we are cultivating our ability to identify Pastoral leadership that will nourish our community to continue our mission to aspire to be a light on the hill reflecting God's love and sharing the message of Christ.

Peace and Blessings,

The Pastor Search Committee

Co chairs: Judy Herlich & Deidre Seidel

Committee members: Russ Harding, Michelle Marigliano, Sarah Miller, Bruce Ryno and Judy Wall

FINANCIAL FACTS

Pam Davis

Our financial status at the end of July is very typical of the summer months. At times we are boosted by a few annual donations, other times we receive only our weekly offerings. In *Project Runway* terms "One month you're Up, the next month you're Down."

As we enter the Fall, Wilson is buzzing with activity, but that doesn't mean we have been on vacation all summer.

Much time and effort has been spent refurbishing the manse to prepare for a new pastor or an alternative use.

We've dealt with several drainage events from the summer storms.

The Christmas in July event was an outreach project, supported by our church with the purchase of supplies.

Speaking of Outreach, to date we disbursed our annual Outreach checks to the following organizations:

- Star Fish: \$4,500
- ICCC: \$5,500
- Haiti Partners: \$500
- Neighborhood House: \$1,000
- Good News Home for Women: \$1,000
- SHIP: \$500
- Community Care Hospice Somerville: \$750
- Urban Promise: \$500
- Covenant House: \$500
- Contact Caring: \$1,000

Our Outreach budget guideline is 10% of our Congregational Giving Receipts, this is OUR giving.

Our offerings, in any form, support these important Outreach Efforts, and the life of our church.

With gratitude, Pam

BOARD PRESIDENT

Bruce Heyman

I hope everyone had a great summer. It was a joy to watch services in Fisher Hall. It is nice to see everyone have a chance to interact with others at their table. At the time of this printing, we should be returning to our beautiful sanctuary. This is a very busy time for the church staff and volunteers. Registration is ongoing for Children's Church. Please tell your friends and neighbors.

Our biggest fundraising event of the year is the fall Gala. This year the theme is Broadway. We have so many talented singers and musicians here at Wilson that this is guaranteed to be an amazing night.

You can participate in many ways. Buying a ticket of course or buy a whole table and fill it with friends and family. You don't need to own a business to buy an ad in our program – you can simply send a message with your ad. Sponsorships are also available. Please spread the word. Fundraising is an important part of any non-profit organization and churches are no exception.

The big night is October 4th. I hope to see you there. I am praying with you.

VENMO

A new way to Give



Wilson Memorial Church
@wilson_memorial_church



venmo

END JULY FINANCIAL STATUS

YEARLY SUMMARY

	YTD-2025	YTD-2024
Receipts	232,468.37	204,222.98
Expenses	232,963.49	198,871.95
Balance	-495.12	5,351.03

KINDNESS TRAIL

Emily Hauck

The Kindness Trail is an outdoor space in the upper parking lot of Wilson Church that has given solace to those who need a quiet space to think and hosted special events over the years, including the Enchanted Forest. Like any natural area, it needs regular care; clearing debris, weeding, and freshening up with mulch.

Wilson members, Emily Hauck, Shirley Kreis and Kendal MacTaggart, have been fundraising for these projects.

After two successful movie nights, we're excited to invite everyone to join us for the official **Cleanup Day on September 21.**

Your support makes all the difference, and we hope you'll come lend a hand as we care for this special place together. Thank you for your continued generosity and encouragement!



CHILDREN AND YOUTH FALL PROGRAM

Nancy Scott

As the school year begins and families gear up for band, soccer, and other activities, we invite you to also make space for your children's spiritual growth. **Registration for Children's and Youth Programming** is now open through the link on Wilson's website.

This fall, we are excited to launch new **Children's Church** opportunities for children in kindergarten through fifth grade, beginning Sunday, **September 7th**. A special word of thanks goes to Michelle (Bella) Desiano, who will be coordinating this important ministry for our youngest disciples. We are also working on how we can support parents with children preschool ages and below. Stay posted for what we will have available.

At Wilson, we believe faith formation is a lifelong journey, and we are delighted to relaunch our **Youth Program for tweens and teens (7th-12th grade)**. Growing up can be challenging, and this program will provide a safe and supportive space for fellowship, fun, and faith. Under the leadership of Tyler Lostan and Shirley Kreis, our Youth Coordinators, students will have opportunities to build friendships, engage in service, and grow in their relationship with God.

One of the highlights this year will be **THE GATHERINGS**, a monthly youth group gathering for junior and senior high students. Our first gathering will take place on the evening of **Wednesday, September 24th**. The main focus is to provide a space for fun, good food, and a time of fellowship. Please remember to register using the link above so we can plan accordingly.

In gratitude, Nancy Scott

Vice President of Wilson's Executive Board and Children's Church Volunteer

FACILITIES

Angela Della Ventura

- Carpets have been thoroughly cleaned throughout the building.
- The church experienced two floods in the last two months due to heavy rains. After being initially sopped up by hard-working church members, each has been or is in the process of being remediated professionally.
- Nardi Heating and Air Conditioning completed the installation of mini split heat/air units in the five rooms in the office wing.
- Pete Della Ventura completed minor repairs inside the manse and the entire interior has received a fresh coat of paint by John's Painting Company. The second floor bathroom floor will be replaced next week. Next stop...exterior painting. Estimates are being sought.
- Rich Tree Service removed limbs from a tree overhanging the manse porch as well as two dead trees in a jumble of vines near the road in front of the manse. Also removed was a semi-fallen dead tree in the Kindness Trail.
- Estimates are currently being sought for the addition of wings onto the Memorial Garden wall to increase the space for commemoratives.

EVENTS

Nancy Scott



Sitting on the beach while sipping cool drinks and gazing at the sunset. Cruising to Alaska, the Caribbean or the Mediterranean on a luxury “home away from home” where you don’t have to cook or clean. Hiking in the mountains, playing sports, or filling your day with music at a camp dedicated to the things you love.

It’s hard for a church to compete with all of the other summer activities and adventures which fill our lives. Wilson Memorial Church does not want to compete with all of the activities and obligations in your life; rather, we’d like to fill that empty space in your heart with something meaningful. And I think we’ve managed to do just that with our successful “Christmas in July” card and craft outreach project; along with our summer movie series.

This fall is shaping up to be just as busy.

We will start with our Kindness for the **Kindness Trail Clean-up afternoon on September 21st** where we will prepare the trail for upcoming events by spreading wood chips, planting flowers, and cleaning up our trail for the upcoming Enchanted Forest in October.

If your non-human loved one has been giving you trouble lately, you should come to the **Blessing of the Animals of September 28th**. Wilson will be collecting pet food, blankets and other products for the Hope4Paws Humane Society in Plainfield.

For those of you who missed our previous **Gala Events** due to college reunions or homecomings, we have changed the date to **October 4** with **brunch on October 5** in hopes that you might attend this year. Join us for dinner, an evening of Broadway Showtunes, a bit of Schtick, baskets to bid on, and wonderful fellowship. If you can’t make it to the dinner on Saturday, please come for our Homecoming Brunch which will be held immediately after worship service. Join us for some fantastic food and fellowship!

We are still looking for volunteers to help create baskets, donate an item for a themed basket, or distribute baskets to the lucky winners. Please contact Linda B. or Nancy if you would like to help make our fundraiser a success.

The Watchung Harvest Festival is on October 18th and Wilson is planning to have a craft booth- what a perfect way to promote our **Enchanted Forest Halloween Event the following Saturday, October 25th** (rain or shine). We are honored to once again be working on this event with the Watchung Library. This year’s theme will be Grimm’s Fairy Tales. So, start thinking of your favorite childhood character- sign-up sheets will be available in September.

We at Wilson will be looking for ways to give thanks and give back; starting with the Covenant Committee Blood Drive, the continuation of our Christmas in July outreach project; and culminating in our Pancake Breakfast.

I’ve only touched on some of the upcoming events. There are many others in various planning stages.

In closing I’d like to add my thanks to all of you who make Wilson the special place it is. I’d like to ask for your continued help, not only with volunteering, but by giving me your feedback on how we are doing and what we can do better. What types of things are you interested in? More events? More day of service opportunities? Faith discussions? More off-site pop-up experiences?

Let’s keep Wilson’s beacon shining bright.

Please keep watching your newsletters for the latest Wilson information. If you do not use email, please call Tina at the church office to have the latest information mailed to you.

In gratitude, Nancy

THE FRIPPERY THRIFT SHOP

Lisa Renaud

(The pale yellow building in the TOP parking lot)

Serving the community since 1971.

Even though the Frippery was closed for cleaning and restocking this summer, we never let "The grass grow under our feet"

During those horrific storms in July, we donated \$1,000 to The Plainfield Animal Shelter (Now Hope 4 Paws) that was flooded during the storms.

Volunteers have been at The Frippery weekly to set up for our "55th year" **OPENING Thursday September 18th** at 9:30 am!

We are FILLED to the brim to give you top quality items at affordable prices and in turn donate our proceeds to many local and national charities besides Wilson Memorial Church.

We also collect \$1 from customers who would like to take advantage of our "SALE OF THE DAY" and buy diapers for underprivileged families for Wilson's YELLOW BIN FAMILIES and The Pregnancy Aid Center in Raritan.

The Frippery will be open Tuesdays, Thursdays and the FIRST Saturday of each month starting October 4th, 9:30 am -12:30 pm. When we have additional help we try to open extra Saturdays during the year.

We accept CASH, VENMO or CHECKS from church members (we do NOT accept credit cards).

Consider adding us to your calendar frequently, our items are ONE OF A KIND and disappear quickly.

We love your clean donations but do ask for a 2 box or bag limit on days we are OPEN.

PLEASE do not leave items at our back door. They get wet or stolen.

Looking forward to seeing ALL your smiling faces each week,

ALL The Frippery Volunteers



BLOOD DRIVE

Judy Wall

Save the date for our Fall Drive:

Sunday, October 26th,

8 AM to 2 PM

at Watchung Exempt Hall, hosted by Wilson Memorial Church and St. Mary's Covenant Committee. We hope to see you there!

OUTREACH

Cota Possien-Kania

Wilson Memorial experienced a return to "normal" with the mission trip to URBAN PROMISE in Camden, NJ on Saturday, June 21st! Special thanks to Shirley Kreis for spearheading our trip! Pastor Ryan and Amelia Irmer, Pam Davis, Yvette and Stuart Whitley, Sarah Miller, Mike Harris, Tyler Lostan, Emily Hauck, Cota Possien Kania and Dubem Onyuke rounded out the work committee.

Wilson was able to turn around a complete 3 bedroom, two story house with fresh interior paint, cleaned kitchen, plumbed bathroom, organized laundry space, washed curtains and throw rugs, and emptied of leftover possessions from the previous family that lived there.

We were very gratified to be able to contribute "person power" to assist Urban Promise in readying their campus to welcome new interns to help run their summer programs for the youth of Camden.

The Outreach Committee sent out \$14,500 in allocated funds to ten agencies/programs that we support as voted on by the congregation.

We are looking forward to more informative presentations from some of our other sister organizations in the near future.

If you have a program or agency you believe could use our assistance either financially or with person power, contact Cota Possien Kania at cotapkania@gmail.com, or the church office.



IN MEMORIAM

Eileen Higgins
David Jones

MUSIC

Timothy Walton

Do I spot a pumpkin—or was that a gnome?
Fall is right around the corner, which means
the official close of summer.

This fall, the Wilson Collective will meet for
work sessions on Tuesdays at 6:30pm. If you
have a heart for worship, God will take care of
the rest. Every time you step into ministry, you
help strengthen our community.

And yes—Advent will be here before we know
it! But before that, a day of giving thanks awaits
us. So, Wilson Family, I'm listening: what
Thanksgiving hymns are on your heart? What
does Thanksgiving mean to you? Have you
found a song that tells your story? If so, I'd love
for you to share it with me.

You may have noticed that our summer
communion songs aren't in the hymnal. That's
intentional—if all of God's people are welcome
at the table, then why not sing a song that we
all know? Let's carry that spirit into World
Communion Sunday on October 5th. Imagine,
what will the world be singing that day?

One more thought to leave with you: What
does Worship Arts look like to you? Maybe it's
photography, maybe it's spoken word. Russ has
his own brilliant expression of worship art—
you'll see at the Gala just how much he brings
to the table (and perhaps what he can't do!).

Beautiful people, I'll meet you in the sanctuary.
Let's give God the very highest praise we have.
Hallelujah! And the church said—AMEN!

**DID YOU KNOW...Rev. Irmer's sermons
are available for online listening?**



www.wilsonmemorialchurch.org/weeklyword

STAR FISH

Bruce and Ruth Ryno

This summer has been particularly busy for us
at the Starfish Food Pantry. We've expanded
our reach to the new distribution location at
504 Madison Avenue, Plainfield. Thanks to your
generosity, we've been able to distribute over
200 bags of food each month at this location
alone. Additionally, we are proud to serve
families from the Plainfield Action Services
(PAS), providing them not only with bags of
essential groceries, but also fresh vegetables
from Wagner's Farm, as well as eggs and
chicken.

We are fortunate to have volunteers who
return from college to assist with all operations
of the food pantry, and we could not function
without the dedication of all our volunteers.
Their hard work ensures that we can meet the
growing demand for food and assistance in our
community.

We are deeply thankful for the ongoing
donations from Wilson and our other
supporters. Your generosity enables us to
continue providing vital services to families in
need, and we look forward to your continued
partnership in the months ahead.

Bruce and Ruth Ryno

WOW

Cota Possien-Kania

WoW hopes your summer break was relaxing
and revitalizing because we have much work to
do! What with the major fundraising Gala on
Saturday October 4th, and the approaching
historical 250th birthday of our nation in 2026,
as well as Watchung's own incorporation
anniversary on April 20, 1926, the Women of
Wilson will be busy!

The first monthly meeting will take place on
Thursday, September 4th at 11:30. Join us for
dessert and coffee- bring your own lunch.

If you have any questions please email Cota at
cotapkanis@gmail.com.

Check us out on social media



WILSONCHURCH



MYWILSONCHURCH

HOW TO SUPPORT THE WORK OF WILSON MEMORIAL CHURCH

In Service: You are invited to place your offerings in the plate at the back of the Sanctuary.

Venmo: Scan the Venmo QR Code to access the Wilson Memorial Church Venmo account.

Text-to-Give: Text WILSONCHURCH to (908) 460-8818 and follow the setup prompts for your first time. Once set up, you can simply text the gift amount to the above number.

By Mail: Gifts can be sent to the office at:
7 Valley Road
Watchung, NJ 07069

Online: Use our secure giving portal by clicking the "Giving" link on our website:
www.wilsonmemorialchurch.org/GIVE



ANNUAL FALL GALA

Our fundraising campaign is in full force with our annual gala, basket auction, and Broadway themed entertainment on **Saturday, October 4th at 5:00 PM** in our own Fisher Hall.

We humbly ask for your support in making this a successful campaign.

Funds will go towards community outreach so that we may continue to offer free events.

There are several ways you can help.

- Join us at the Gala on October 4th (\$60 per person)
- Make a donation
- Donate a themed basket for our basket auction
- Buy an ad in the program (see attached sheet)
- Sponsorship opportunities are also available

Donors will be recognized in our event program.

Information must be received by 9/14 for printing.

Tax receipt available. Join us and experience the light at Wilson Memorial Church.

WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Sunday Mornings at 10:00am

In Person Worship or Online Worship

Live Stream also available on our website

www.wilsonmemorialchurch.org

*If you would prefer to receive communications via email,
please contact Tina in the office:
admin@wilsonmemorialchurch.org*

OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Starting the 1st week in September

Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Email: admin@wilsonmemorialchurch.org



WILSON
MEMORIAL CHURCH

CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS

Bruce Heyman, President

Nancy Scott, Vice President

Pam Davis, Treasurer

Laurie Conley

Russ Harding

Judy Herlich

Kendal MacTaggart

Issac Onuorah

Cota Possien-Kania

Deidre Seidel

Judy Wall

Yvette Nora Whitley, Clerk