

*FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF MANASQUAN'S*

# MONTHLY BLESSINGS

A TESTIMONIAL OF CHRIST'S WORK IN OUR COMMUNITY

## The Gift of Music

Have you ever just closed your eyes during Sunday service and gotten lost in the inspirational sounds of the Chancel Choir? Have you ever looked on in amazement as each member of the Bell Choir plays his or her individual part in perfect unity with the rest of the Choir, creating the soothing and beautiful sounds that they do?



We are truly blessed in this church to bear witness to one of the most beautiful gifts that God has given us. The gift of music. Led by Marcello Velame, Cathy Gaestel, Andrew Tufts, Janice Blanton, Stu Hooten, and many other talented individuals whose names are too many to mention, the Music Ministry of our church, made possible by the generous giving of Time, Talents, and Treasures of our congregation, is a vital part of our churches mission to spread God's word.



Each member of our Music Ministry, no matter how small of a part they play, has been blessed by God with a special gift. As good stewards of that gift, they have made a commitment to use their talents for God's glory. We here at FPCOM are truly the beneficiaries of that commitment, and should be grateful for their participation.

One of the newest members of our church family, who uses his musical talents to praise God, is Tony Gonzalez. If you have been to the 11:00 AM service, you have seen Tony playing the conga drum and singing in the Praise Band. Tony, along with his wife Lisbeth, and daughter, Hannah Grace, have been New Jersey residents since 2009. The Gonzalez family did not have an easy road to get here. They lived in Simpsonville, SC, Charleston, SC, and Augusta, GA before making their way to the Jersey shore. Tony is a jewelry designer and getting work was tough in a not so good economy. He was working on his own when he received a call from an old friend, who offered him a job here in NJ, working for the Bagheri family at Bentley Diamond, and Tony graciously accepted.



Although they have been here a little over 4 years, Tony and his family did not start coming to church here at FPCOM until July, 2013. However, Tony did volunteer here for Sandy relief. Shelly McHugh, who is a coworker of his, and Christie Morford, who tutored Hannah Grace, reached out to Tony when the relief efforts began, and he was more than happy to help. I asked him what impressed him the most about this church and he told me that he "loved the way the people of this congregation opened their hearts to the community. This church is the real body of Christ."

Tony and Lisbeth took a while to decide to come to church after Sandy relief, but when they finally came, they felt at home. Being disconnected from their own family, the Gonzalez' were impressed with how warmly they were welcomed. They attend the parenting class together, and Hannah really loves Sunday School. Tony says, "To see Hannah growing in her Christian faith is a blessing. This church brings hope to my family. It gives us a purpose. There is a reason why God has led us here."



Tony was also very impressed by the music, and quickly decided to offer his talents to the church. For Tony, music comes naturally. His father was a professional singer in Puerto Rico, singing in night clubs, and then he gave his heart to Jesus and started singing in church. This had a huge impact on Tony's life and he began to follow in his father's footsteps. Music is Tony's calling. He told me that when he sings for God, he "feels alive, like in 'Chariots of Fire' and he feels God's spirit inside him."

Tony, and all of the talented musicians, who are part of our Music Ministry, have one thing in common. They have the gift of music inside of them. Stewardship would like to thank the entire Music Ministry for blessing us by sharing that gift, which was entrusted to them by our great and generous God.



Blessings,  
The Stewardship Commission

*Stewardship would like to thank Cindy Tufts and Joann Cotton for their photos.*

<p><b>THE STEWARDSHIP COMMISSION</b>                  Cherie Matthews                  Dick Stern                  Susan Tritsch                  Elder Bob Cardin                  Elder Rob Petillo</p>	<p>Anyone interested in sharing a testimonial about how FPCOM has helped bring Christ's love into your life please contact Rob Petillo at (347) 432-7550 or <a href="#">email</a>.</p>
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First Presbyterian Church of Manasquan  
16 Virginia Avenue, Manasquan, NJ 08736  
(732) 223-4627 + [admin@fpcom.org](mailto:admin@fpcom.org)



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