

Good Tidings

The Newsletter of Brick Presbyterian Church

December 2011

Pastor Doug Reflects

“A Light Comes to Shine Upon Our Winter Wilderness”

Daylight fades as winter advances with its skies dark and grey
As weariness of cares weigh heavy on souls each stressful day
 Racing here and there with calendars so crammed
 As traffic is gridlock and intersections are jammed
 Souls sit in doctor's offices and in anxiety do wait
 Glancing at magazine ads, our heart's desires to bait
 While others in the stillness are in prayerful watch sitting all alone
 Longing for some reassurance and inner peace to set a new tone
As a voice cries in the wilderness where souls do moan
Calling out to spirits hiding underneath shells of stone
 Calling to souls overcome by greed, loneliness, and despair so very strong
 Calling out to a world that's had its fill of all that's gone tragically wrong
 Declaring a great Hope that pierces the dark emptiness of the night
 A Hope that descends upon us like a radiant warm beam of Light
 Entering every place that's like a humble ancient stable
 Inviting the poor in spirit to commune at a Great Table
 Where none is made to feel disgrace
 Nor ever made to feel out of place
 For that Light that descends upon us continues to shine
 In all the wilderness places one may find humankind
This light comes with an unassuming love that's gracious and mild
It comes inviting those who are as vulnerable, as Mary's holy child
 Yes, it's humble, yet strong as Joseph's Son
 It comes offering a grace to makes us all one
 It comes with a power that can overcomes all in life we dread
 With a power that breathes a life that can raise us from the dead
 It enters the places of brokenness so our wounds may heal
 Absolving sin so we may in Christ our true humanity reveal
This great Light comes to shine upon our world's dreary darkness
With love It scatters the sinful forces of apathy, hatred and harshness
 As angelic host triumphantly hail heaven's new born king
 Let us, one and all, join the angelic host to joyously sing
 That heaven's sacred light born of Mary, who had not a room at Bethlehem's inn
 May come anew finding the doors of our soul's wide open to offer room within.

FROM THE WORSHIP COMMITTEE



The flower donation envelopes will be in the pews on Nov. 27, Dec. 4, and Dec. 11, 2011. We use the donations to purchase the poinsettias used to decorate the Chancel for Christmas week. The names of donors will be in the bulletin on Christmas.

The Christmas Eve Services will be held on December 24, 2011 at 7:00 PM and 9:00 PM. Please come and enjoy a beautiful service ending in a candle lighting for the worshippers.



Christmas & New Year's Day
Worship Services

Sunday Worship Services on Christmas Day, December 25, 2011 and New Year's Day, January 1, 2012 will be held only at 10:00 AM. There will be no Sunday School classes that day so that the families can enjoy the services together

PICTORIAL DIRECTORY

If you were unable to have your picture taken for the pictorial directory, we would still like to have you participate. You may send a photo to the church office with your name, address, phone number and e-mail if you have one. We would need this photo by December 2nd so you will be included in the directory. Thank you for participating!



2011 Christmas Nursing Home Visit



"HERE WE COME A-CAROLING!"
community!

The Board of Deacons invites you to join us in the delivery of Christmas spirit to the residents of the Geraldine Thompson Care Center . The date is Saturday December 10, 2011. We will leave from the Church parking lot at 1:30PM with the program at Geraldine Thompson starting at 2:30PM sharp. For more information, please contact George through the church office. This is a wonderful way to share the joy of our Savior's birth with those in our

Look for your 2012 envelopes in the Narthex in Mid-December!

**Offering
Envelopes**



Christmas Festival



Please join us on Saturday, December 3, 2011 in the new Family Life Center for the annual Christmas Festival organized by the Christian Education and Fellowship Committees. The Sunday School Christmas Program will begin at 3pm and includes EVERY Sunday School student! At the conclusion of the program we will proceed outside (weather permitting) for the Christmas tree lighting and the arrival of a “special” visitor via firetruck. Dinner will be served. Crafts and photo opportunities (please bring your own camera) with that “special” visitor will be available. Please bring a plate of cookies or other “finger” desserts to share! Don't miss this opportunity to kick off the Holiday Season in the Spirit of Christ!

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN ANNUAL CHRISTMAS GATHERING

The Christmas covered dish luncheon will be held in the new Family Center (no stairs!) at 12 Noon on Wednesday, December 21 - and **ALL** women members and friends are invited. Please bring your favorite main dish, salad/vegetable, or pasta/potato creation to share. Dessert and beverage will be supplied by the Coordinating Team of Brick PW. After enjoying what is always a delicious meal, we'll have a short business meeting with our quarterly offering being received, this time for Harbor House. Our fund-raising activities through the year are dedicated to Presbyterian Women's national and international mission activities, but the quarterly gifts are for local needs, decided upon at the previous gathering. Most of our time, however, will be spent in fellowship and friendship with sisters in faith as this Advent season comes to a close. Please help us keep the true meaning of Christmas together - take this opportunity to invite others to be with us - neighbors, friends, relatives. Again, **ALL** are welcome!



Youth Group News



The Youth Groups bake sale for November was outstanding; they raised another \$300 towards the Christmas Gifts for needy families. They will have their last bake sale on December 4th. Thanks to all of you that donate to this awesome cause!

The youth groups also set up and served the Harvest Dinner meal and did yard cleanup for a church family member in November.

Dates to mark on your calendar for December:

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| December 4th - | Bake Sale |
| December 9th - | Lock In |
| December 10th - | Christmas Caroling at Geraldine Thompson Nursing Home |

The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him. Luke 2:40



An Update on Our Tent City Ministry

In October, a group of our youth and adults donned work clothes and headed over to Tent City on a Sunday afternoon to clear an area of brush and debris. This troop of workers went armed with gifts of beverages and platters of sandwiches made by our youth. They also delivered bags of clothing and set out to tackle an afternoon of work. While there, a family arrived with the donation of a very large tent and our Brick Presbyterian team worked side by side to help erect and secure the tent that is now being used as a community gathering spot. A final parting gift was left behind - a wheelbarrow that can be used for clearing or for transporting firewood to those living in the encampment.

Our brothers and sisters in Tent City have expressed their deep gratitude and appreciation for the commitment that this congregation has made to them. Special thanks go to: our youth group; the Presbyterian Women for the financial donation that was used to underwrite the cost of the fixings for the sandwich platters; the Faithful Remnants for the donations of knitted hats; to those who have donated clothing, blankets and food treats; and to the many who donate to the Deacon Fund which has been used, in part, to provide a regular supply of eggs and water. We also thank the Monmouth Presbytery for our Cents Ability grant award of \$400 for this ministry and our denomination for the Presbyterian Hunger Program grant award of \$1,000 that we expect to see arriving in the church's mailbox within the next couple of months.

A committee has been formed to explore ways in which our church can continue to help the residents of Tent City. If you are interested in joining our committee, please contact Jean through the church office.

MEMORIAL BRICKS

For those of you who are interested in the Memorial Bricks fundraiser here's an update. We have begun the installation process in the Memorial Garden. The Property, Building and Grounds committee has been busy laying out a traditional walkway for our bricks. Now that the walkway is planned, we have begun our second sale of bricks, order forms and instructions are on the website and in the Narthex. As with the previous sale just fill out the order for and return it to the church office with a check for the amount and we'll add it to our walkway.



DID YOU KNOW?????



...that one of the ministries that we Brick Presbyterians recognize is the Christmas Joy Offering?

At this season, for more than seventy years, Presbyterians have shared love through the Christmas Joy offering. "Scripture tells us that we as Christians are the body of Christ, individual members functioning separately but together for the well-being of the whole. We as Presbyterians call ourselves a connectional church

because we are intentional about sticking together."

What will our gifts provide? They will provide support for our racial ethnic schools and colleges that serve children around the world. They also provide support for the assistance programs of the Board of Pensions, programs that contribute much needed help to church workers and their families in times of financial distress. The funds are divided, 50% to Presbyterian related racial ethnic schools and colleges and 50% to assistance programs of the Board of Pensions.

Today, may we each know the joy of sharing love with others through this Christmas Joy offering. Every congregation's gifts to this offering are critical to the future of these programs. During 2010, you, the members and friends of Brick Presbyterian church, donated \$ 1,076 to Christmas Joy. We, the members of the Mission Committee, ask you to pray and be as generous as you can. It's remarkable what your gifts will provide. The offering will be received on December 18, 2011.

*Excerpted from "Mission Year Book for Prayer and Study"
And "Information from General Assembly"
By your Mission Committee*

Harvest Dinner

Thank you to each and every person who pitched in to make this year's Harvest Dinner a success. All donations of time, dinner items, desserts and dollars are greatly appreciated. It was wonderful to be able to use not only our new Family Life Center, but also the actual place settings and silverware instead of paper plates and plastic utensils. The food was delicious, the fellowship was superb, and the fundraising was a success. Thanks to your generosity we have over \$1,500 to add to the scholarship fund!



Health Ministry

As 2011 comes to an end, the Health Ministry Team thought it would appropriate to give the following some thought.



A Few Lessons in Life

1. Over prepare, then go with the flow.
2. Be eccentric now. Don't wait for old age to wear purple.
3. The most important sex organ is your brain.
4. No one is in charge of your happiness but you.
5. Frame every so called disaster with these words "In five years, will this matter?"
6. Always choose life
7. Forgive everyone everything
8. What other people think of you is none of your business....
9. Time heals almost everything. Give time, time.
10. However good or bad a situation is, it will change.
11. Don't take yourself so seriously. No one else does.
12. Believe in miracles
13. God loves you because of who God is, not because of anything you did or didn't do.
14. Don't audit life. Show up and make the most of it now.
15. Growing old beats the alternative – dying young.
16. Your children get only one childhood.
17. All that truly matter in the end is that you loved.
18. Get outside every day. Miracles are waiting everywhere.
19. If we all threw our problems in a pile and saw everyone else's, we'd grab our own.
20. Envy is a waste of time. You already have all you need.
21. The best is yet to come.
22. No matter how you feel, get up, dress up, and show up.
23. Yield
24. Life isn't tied with a bow, but it's still a gift.

May one and all have a very blessed Christmas !

Brickhouse Restaurant



The Fundraising Committee would like to invite all our members and friends who support our Church to our next fundraiser. The **Brickhouse Bar and Grill** at 979 Cedar Bridge Ave. in Brick will hold a fundraiser in support of our Deacons Fund. With the holidays upon us, our Deacons will be making over 40 food baskets for Thanksgiving and Christmas, as well as supporting the Deacon's Tent City Ministry. This fundraiser will also help our food pantry which runs all year long but needs added help this time of the year, providing necessities for those who need it most and might otherwise go without this holiday season. Please pick up a flyer in the Narthex or print one off our website and go to the **Brickhouse Bar and Grill on either Wednesday, December 7th or Thursday, December 8th** our Deacons fund will get 20% of your check. This fundraiser is good for Lunch, Dinner, and the bar. Please come out and join us in support of this much needed ministry.