

Good Tidings

The Newsletter of Brick Presbyterian Church

April 2014

Watching Robins – Amid a Relentless Winter – A Lenten /Easter Pondering
“...weeping may remain for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning.” Ps. 30:5

Winter snow storms one day and a few days later warm weather, back and forth it goes, making this a very long and dreary winter for all of us. Peering out the window recently, I saw some robins looking like they were sorry they had migrated back. Their black and orange feathers all fluffed up in an effort to protect their bodies from the cold and snow as they hopped about in search of food. It was as if they had come offering me the hope of springtime, sunshine, green lawns and warmer weather. Yet, there they were, looking so cold vulnerable and sad as the cold air blew about. The sign those robin had come to bring was so overshadowed by the wind, snow and gray skies. Surely, they must have felt their efforts in announcing the good news of spring's approach was unappreciated by the harsh weather they now endured after their long migration flight.

I sometimes wonder as Jesus went about his ministry, healing the sick, casting out demons, forgiving sins, welcoming strangers, eating with sinners, raising the dead, feeding the hungry, what he felt and thought. I wonder what Jesus thought and felt when tensions arose among his disciples as to who was the greatest. I wondered what he thought and felt as dedicated religious leaders were troubled by what he did and how he went about his God given ministry. Could Jesus have wondered if the one who sent him to us had played some cruel trick on him, like the return of snow and wintery winds fell upon the robins in my back yard?

Then, I thought of Jesus' disciples. There was Martha who tried so hard to be the perfect hostess when Jesus was at her home. She tried so hard that she lost sight of what the day was all about as she lost her temper with her sister Mary. There was Peter who said he would never ever deny Jesus. Yet in one night alone the one who was called the “Rock” fell apart in denial like a sandcastle. And I wondered what each of them thought and felt when they were later able to let down their guard about that which meant well but somehow didn't play out as intended? Surely, those men and women must have felt like the robins in searching for warmth and food amid the snow in my backyard.

Paul spoke of finding himself wanting to do good things, but the good he intended didn't play out as he intended, and the things he sought to avoid doing, he found himself having unwittingly done. I find this true in my life far more often than I care to think. And I suspect it happens to us all in various ways, more often than we want to confess. It happens in our personal lives, and in our collective lives as families and as a community of faith in so many ways.

But, Thank God for Jesus, who loved those disciples anyway and who loves us anyway. Thank God that he can and does still forgive us. Thank God, the cross he bore for us is not the last word – that our failings and shortcoming – our blown opportunities – sorrows aren't the last word! Christ Jesus is Risen! Alleluia! Love and Forgiveness Rule Victorious! There is Hope.

I recall how Jesus scattered and imperfect disciples came back together after that. As I looked outside the other day I saw robins again. They were feeding on the lawn as the Sun-shine warmed the air. They looked grateful that the spirit of the weather had shifted, and they had come through the storms they encountered knowing the cold snow and gray skies were not the last word. As I look out my window this morning I see hope for you and me and all of us as the Sun-rise drives the cold chill from the air.



HOLY WEEK SERVICES

PALM SUNDAY, April 13, 2014 - 9 A.M. and 11 A.M.
Palms or Palm Crosses will be distributed after both services.

MAUNDY THURSDAY, April 17, 2014 - 7 P.M.
Holy Communion will be served.

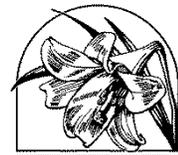
GOOD FRIDAY, April 18, 2014 - 7 P.M.

EASTER SUNDAY, April 20 - 9 A.M. and 11 A.M.
Come to church to celebrate the Risen Christ!

There will be NO Sunday School on Easter Sunday so families can attend church together.

EASTER FLOWERS

The donation envelopes for the Easter flowers will be placed in the pews through April 6, 2014. This will give us time to type up the names for inclusion in the bulletins.



Scholarship Applications Available

Florence M. Mallinson Memorial Scholarship Fund



Applications to apply for our church's continuing education awards are available in the Christian Education office. Any senior graduating from high school in June 2014 with plans to attend college, trade school, or any other type of continuing education are welcome and encouraged to apply. Deadline for applications will be April 30, 2014. If you have any questions or would like an application mailed to you please call 732-785-0665 or email me at Donnaschlatter@comcast.net



Blessing of the Pets

*All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful,
The Lord God made them all.*

Yes, our God made these precious animals great and small and we would like to invite all who have pets to the Blessing of the Animals on Saturday, April 5, 2014 at 10:00 am in the Memorial Garden. Please make sure that your dog is on a leash and your cat in a carrier. Turtles, rabbits and gold fish are also welcome! We will have special treats for our little friends.

We are also asking donations for the Jersey Shore Animal Shelter. The items they currently need the most are:

Purina dry cat chow – BLUE BAG
Friskies non-fish ground cat food
Feline pine or non-clumping clay kitty litter
Blankets, towels, sheets
Bleach
Paper towels
Large rawhide chews (8")
Shoe boxes
Tall Kitchen garbage bags
Gallon zip lock bags

Donations can be brought to the collection area at the Family Life Center through
Sunday, April 6th

Youth Group



April is a busy, busy month for the Youth Groups, mark your calendars with the following events:

- April 6th - 6:00pm meeting in family life center to make palm crosses.
- April 11th - Acquire the Fire event at the Izod Center
- April 13th - 1:00pm Shorrock Nursing Home visit to teach their residents how to make palm crosses and deliver premade crosses
- April 20th - Easter Sunday Bake Sale
- April 27th - Laser Tag from 3:00 -5:00pm, we will meet at church at 1:30pm

Thank you all for your continued support with the Youth in our church. Have a blessed Easter.

Fundraising News

Thank you to everyone who bought coupon books for our Bon Tons fundraiser February 28th to March 1st. Your contributions to this effort will help our Deacons continue the great work they're doing in our community. Please watch the bulletin as well as the website for upcoming restaurant fundraisers as well as other fundraising events for our church.



PENCIL IN THE DATE!

Saturday May 31st Brick Presbyterian Church first ever Vendor and Craft Show

On Saturday May 31st we will host over 50 vendors in our Family Life Center. Admission is free so please plan on coming out to this event. Please watch for more info as we get closer to the date. Or follow the link below.

<http://njvendors.com/events/counties-m-w/ocean/brick-nj-may-champ-network-craft-and-vendor-fair/>

Stream Energy Isn't Just For Summer



Thank you to everyone who has already signed up for our Stream Energy fundraiser! The good news is if you haven't already switched your electric provider, **it's not too late**. Also, we are excited to announce the addition of the natural gas opportunity. Now, whether you have already taken advantage of the savings with the electric, or you are new to the opportunity entirely, you can switch your natural gas and help the church! The summer months are well behind us but we still use electric and natural gas all year long. Regardless of your consumption Stream Energy will continue to donate **\$4.00 per month** for each **electric** customer and now and additional **\$1.50 per month** for each **natural gas** customer to our building expansion fund. Just bring us your current electric and/or gas bills and we'll do the rest, or you can log on to our account @ **brickpresbyterian.streampowerup.biz**. Look for our table at the church, contact us through the church's website, or contact either Jeff Law (732-779-4499 or Lawjeffrey1@gmail.com) or Patrice Law (732-779-7242) for more information. Come join the growing list of people who are helping the church while saving money every month with Stream and **Please** don't switch your energy provider until you talk to us!



To the Congregation of Brick Presbyterian Church:

We wish to express our deep appreciation for all the prayers, cards and support received at the passing of Debra's father. Your kindness and love have meant much to us during this very difficult time.

Most Appreciatively,
Debra, Glenn & Lauren

An Update on New Eyes for the Needy

The Stewardship and Mission Committee has been collecting reusable old plastic or metal framed eyeglasses, nonprescription sunglasses, hearing aids, costume jewelry and old watches (even broken!) to help support New Eyes For The Needy, Inc. First organized in 1932, New Eyes for the Needy is a New Jersey based nonprofit volunteer organization that recycles the above items and uses them to provide the gift of sight to the poor all over the United States and throughout the world.

Thank you for supporting this worthy effort! We will continue to collect these items in 2014. Please drop them off in the collection box located in the Narthex. For more information, contact Patrice Law at 732-840-8412 or via e-mail at patricealaw@gmail.com.

Did You Know????

One great hour of sharing

.....that we will join millions of Christians on April 13th to celebrate Palm Sunday and One Great Hour of Sharing. This year's scripture theme is found in Romans 5:5: "Hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts".

Your gift to One Great Hour of Sharing is a gift of hope to many. Through your gifts, the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Program helps communities around the world, and right here at home, rebuild after natural and man-made disasters. Your generosity helps the Presbyterian Hunger Program alleviate hunger and teaches communities how to eliminate the causes in this country and worldwide. Your gifts also make it possible for the Self-Development of People to assist and help the economically poor, oppressed and disadvantaged.

Since 1949, Presbyterians like you have given generously to One Great Hour of Sharing helping to carry the message of love and hope to people here at home and around the world. As we share together this year, we, the Stewardship and Mission Committee, thank you for your continued investment in the Church's effort to meet the needs of the members of God's family. We challenge you to pray and give abundantly!

*"Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have" Hebrews 13:16
Excerpted from information received from the General Assembly
by your Stewardship and Mission Committee*

For Your Information

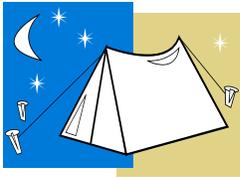


On December 22nd, 2013 our congregation participated in the Christmas Joy offering. This offering provides financial assistance to current and former church workers and helps deserving students of all racial and ethnic backgrounds follow their dreams through Presbyterian related education.

This past December you, the members and friends of this Church donated \$1162 to the Christmas Joy offering. Remember it was YOU who made this possible with your generosity!

The Stewardship and Mission committee thank you for your commitment to our Mission giving.

What's Happening at Tent City?



As of this month, it is three years since our church first approved an outreach and connection with Tent City. In these years and thanks to the generosity of our congregants, donated funds and grants, we have helped to sustain those living at the encampment. In addition to our assistance to Tent City, we have partnered with Angelo Villanueva, a former Tent City resident who has transitioned from tent living to apartment living. We are delighted to report that Angelo has secured employment in the masonry field and he is deeply grateful for the support and encouragement from our congregation.

Sadly, another loss of life of a 45 year old man occurred on March 15th resulting from a fire that began with a wood burning stove. As of the writing of this article, approximately fifty people remain at Tent City awaiting relocation assistance from the Township of Lakewood. As the months unfold, we are maintaining our commitment to provide donations of eggs and water and to deliver items provided by our church family. For a list of donated items welcomed by Tent City, you may refer to http://www.brickpresby.com/files/Tent_City_Donation_List_-_3.9.14.pdf. Donations may be placed in the bin located in the narthex.

The relocation of the homeless from Tent City in Lakewood will not eliminate the issue of homelessness in our area. Your prayers and your generosity have been a true demonstration of faith in action to our brothers and sisters in need. Please pray for the direction of this ministry as we investigate ways in which we can continue to address this problem.



Organ Donations Save Lives

Organ donation begins with a person who recognizes an opportunity to help others, enrolls in a state donor registry, and shares the decision to be a donor with family members and friends. The culmination of the process occurs when the person donates—and saves or enhances the lives of as many as eight people who need an organ transplant.

Why Donate?

Because you may save up to 8 lives through organ donation and enhance many others through tissue donation.

Last year alone, organ donors made more than 28,000 transplants possible. Another one million people received cornea and other tissue transplants that helped them recover from trauma, bone damage, spinal injuries, burns, hearing impairment and vision loss.

Unfortunately, thousands die every year waiting for a donor organ that never comes. You have the power to change that!

LEARN THE FACTS

These facts may help you better understand organ, eye, and tissue donation:

FACT: Anyone, regardless of age or medical history, can sign up to be a donor.

FACT: Most major religions in the United States support organ donation and consider donation as the final act of love and generosity toward others.

FACT: There is no cost to donors or their families for organ or tissue donation.

How You Can Help

REGISTER: Make the commitment; Decide to be an organ and tissue donor; Sign up on your state's donor registry; Your decision to be a donor may help to save or enhance over 50 lives.

SIGN UP TO BE A DONOR

INFORM OTHERS ; Don't keep your decision a secret; *Share the news -*

Tell your family and friends about your decision. *Share information* with them when they have questions. *Speak up -* Talk about donation at every opportunity.

Learn more about this at www.organdonor.gov & info@njsharingnetwork.org