

Good Tidings

The Newsletter of Brick Presbyterian Church

April 2012

“It’s More than A Game – Rethinking Life in the Light of Christ” Pastor Doug Reflects on the Holy Week Story



Some people believe faith and religion are about making one successful in the “game of life.” That’s appealing to those who want religion to help them one-up others, and who value winning, power and worldly success over all else. Many people today believe that if they play by “rules” they will be rewarded. Do the right things and you will be rewarded with love, power and success. But that is not always the case.

Playing by the “rules” does not always mean we win or get what we want. There are forces at play we can’t control. Life can change in a moment, as a doctor announces a dreaded diagnosis to us. An auto accident may end a life in its prime. An E-4 tornado can level an entire community in an instant. These things are harsh reminders that our lives are more than a game in which one wins or loses. Life is about being faithful to a God who loves us and is with us in both the good, bad and ugly of life. Yes, terrible things happen to good people. Jesus once said the sun rises on the evil and the good, and rain falls upon the righteous and the unrighteous in Matthew 5:34.

Jesus said to those who aspire to be great – to be winners – to those who want to be first in the kingdom of God, that they must “first be willing to be the servant of all.” The way to the Kingdom of God is also the way of the cross. There is no Easter Resurrection apart from the pain and suffering of Good Friday.

When we think in these terms, life is not about winning or success. It is about being faithful, and caring for the sake of caring. It is about identifying with and taking on the real pain and suffering of the world. And that can be tough and costly.

To any who think faith and religion are about making one successful in the eyes of the world, I would point to Jesus. I see in Jesus one who was the fulfillment of human perfection. He loved and cared for others, regardless of whom they were. Yet, even those closest to him betrayed him. The crowds that praised him on Palm Sunday turned on him when he didn’t fulfill their expectations for worldly victory.

In the Holy Week events God shows us what our real humanity and life are about in the life of Jesus. The world saw Jesus as a loser when his love and grace were met by hatred and anger. Some saw him a loser as they taunted him hanging on a cross. Others thought him a fool praying from that cross, “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.” Many thought the story ended at Jesus’ tomb. But the truth of the matter is that with Jesus’ resurrection, we see that life is more than a game. Life is about being faithful to God and embodying the love and grace of Christ no matter what in life. Life is about a love that overcomes the hatred and resentments we too often nurse; about a forgiveness that heals the guilt of a wrong doer and liberates the forgiver from embitterment; and about a commitment to care enough to change things where apathy has failed. Life is more than a game. It’s about being what we were and are intended to be.

HOLY WEEK SERVICES



Palm Sunday, April 1st - 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM
Maundy Thursday, April 5th - 7:00 PM
Good Friday, April 6th - 7:00 PM
Easter Sunday, April 8th - 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM

Please mark your calendars accordingly

House of Hope Cafe' *"Feeding Body Soul & Spirit"*

Just when you thought it couldn't get any better, the House of Hope Cafe' is open in April!

As all of you know, we had an awesome event in March with the Grand Opening of our new Cafe', House of Hope. The Michael J Maione Band kicked us off with some great music and even better fellowship.

Well it gets better because on **April 21st at 7:00pm** the House of Hope welcomes Abundant Grace Music to the Cafe'. AGM is a small group of some of the finest musicians you will ever hear perform contemporary praise and worship music. Their musical style of worship is only seconded to their absolute love and praise for our Lord.

You won't want to miss this event! Come out, fellowship and enjoy as together we raise our voices in Praise to the Glory of our Living Lord, Jesus!



Palm Sunday, April 1st between services
The Sunday School will have a
presentation in observance of Holy Week
Followed by refreshments



The Fellowship Committee
will be having a Pancake Breakfast
between services on May 6.

The Stewardship & Mission Committee
Will host a "Thank You" Coffee Hour
Between services on April 22nd



Coffee Hour

March Fundraising News

The Fundraising Committee is pleased to announce three new events.

Ruby Tuesday



First, on **Wednesday, April 25th** and **Thursday, April 26th**, we will be holding a restaurant fundraiser at **Ruby Tuesday** on Rt. 70 in Lakewood. Just pick up the flyer in the Narthex or download one off our website and bring it to Ruby Tuesday and they will donate 20% of your check to our Building Expansion Fund.

Bon Ton's

Our second fundraiser is at **Bon Ton Department Store**. We will be selling coupon books for \$5.00 each. They are usable on **Saturday, April 28th** and **Sunday, April 29th** and contain over \$225.00 worth of coupons. Come see us at our table in the Narthex for more information.



Blue Claws



Our third fundraiser will be a spring **Blue Claws** game on **Sunday, May 13**. This is a **1:00** game and tickets are \$10 each. They can be exchanged for other games if you can't attend this one. We have 250 tickets to sell and the Blue Claws will donate \$3.50 per ticket toward our Building Expansion Fund. **Remember you can use these tickets for any game if you can't go on May 13th.** So stop by our table in the Narthex for more info and prizes for early buying. Get your tickets early... this one will sell out quickly!



We will be celebrating Pentecost Sunday on **May 27th**. We are asking everyone to wear red which signifies the "fiery tongue" referred to in Acts 2:3. Please mark your calendars and wear red on **May 27th**.

Brick Presbyterian Church Continuing Education Awards



Applications are now available in the Christian Education office or by contacting Donna Schlatter at christianeducation@brickpresby.com. All students graduating High School this June and planning to pursue further education this Fall are encouraged to apply. Deadline for applications is April 30, 2011. Recipients will be notified by mail shortly thereafter. Scholarship awards will be presented on Sunday, June 17, 2012.

Camp Johnsonburg 4th and 5th Grade Retreat

This retreat is scheduled for Friday June, 1- Saturday, June 2, 2012. We will be leaving the church at approximately 5:00 on Friday and should be returning around 5:00 on Saturday. Chaperones are welcome and needed. Please contact Donna Schlatter for more information at christianeducation@brickpresby.com.



Senior High Youth Group

We are very happy to announce that Susan Gargano and Roberta Kleban have officially taken the lead of the Senior High Youth Group. They are excited to be working with the youth and have some fun things planned, as well as some service projects. If you would like to be added to the email list so that you may be notified of planned meetings and such, please email Susan at srhi@brickpresby.com.

Dates to remember for Jr Hi's

April 1st 12:45 - meet in church parking lot to deliver palm crosses to Shorrock Gardens Nursing Center in Brick

April 8th Easter Sunday - Bake Sale (jump start on raising money for Christmas gifts)

April 29th 2:00pm - Laser Tag -meet in church parking lot (please download waiver form from website and fill out) \$15.00 per person, 2 or more children per family \$25.00 total.

Things to Celebrate at Brick Presbyterian Church



- Did you know: The Brick Clergy Association interfaith “Stop Hunger Now” event that was held in our Family Life Center on March 11th had nearly 170 people show up in this collaborative effort? The group prepared enough food packets to feed 10,584 children. How good it is when people work together in harmony!
- Did you know: The House of Hope Café drew nearly 120 people for its first event with the Michael J. Maione band on its “This Little Light Tour.”
- Did you know that worship attendance last Sun., March 18th, exceeded the number of bulletins that were printed? What a nice problem to have!

NEWS BRIEF FROM PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN OF BRICK



Want to know what we're up to in between quarterly gatherings? On Saturday, March 10, the quilters and guests met to cut, assemble, and sew "Little Dresses for Africa." Would you believe almost 40 so far, and such a good time was had some of the group met again the following Saturday to continue finishing and even start more! Impressive output for this wonderful mission project.

The March 21 gathering was held in the Family Life Center for fellowship, brown bag lunch, and to celebrate the "Gifts of Women" as well as to receive the annual Birthday offering for national and international mission. A good reason to get together and make the long month of March seem shorter.

By now, all women of the church should have received copies of the surveys that Brick PW is asking to be responded to and returned on or before April 15. The sincere hope is that the needs in the area of women's participation in group fellowship and mission may be helped by the results of this survey.

Presbyterian Women of Monmouth are holding their Spring Gathering on **Saturday, April 21** at the Pt. Pleasant Beach Church. Registration begins at 9 A.M. The program, which will include lunch (\$5 to cover costs due at time of registration), will run approximately 9:30 A.M. to 2 P.M. Please let Lori Evans know if you're planning on being there by April 16.

And don't forget to mark your calendars for the June 20 meeting of PW in the Family Life Center which is always our end-of-the-year "picnic."

DEACONS

While the Deacons of the Brick Presbyterian Church have a responsibility to assist Pastor Doug with his ministry and to those in need, we could not do what we do without the assistance of the members of this church. During this very busy Easter season, we, the Deacons, have a number of ways that you, the congregation can help provide assistance as well! From a very simple request for coffee cans, to a more rewarding opportunity to provide transportation, there is something that everyone in the congregation can do to support the church and its members.

If you're looking for a chance to help out and receive some instant gratification... anyone who has **metal coffee cans** that they can donate is being asked to do so. These cans are used by the Deacons to deliver flowers for nursing home visits. Small, metal cans work best for this purpose, please refrain from donating cardboard or plastic containers, as we will have to recycle them because they do not meet our needs at this time. What an easy and immediate way to help the church and those in need!



For members looking to challenge themselves a bit more, the upcoming Easter season brings with it the opportunity to provide **food donations for those in need**. The Deacons prepare a large number of food boxes that are distributed to people in the community during holidays, and Easter is no exception. The food collection room is always open if any church members are interested in seeing what items are needed. There is also a shopping list available for anyone who is willing to donate. In addition to the "everyday" items that are accepted, we are asking that anyone who receives and does not use their free turkey or ham from ShopRite think about donating that item to the church. This ham or turkey can now be stored in the church freezer, so it's easier than ever to support those in need! Please find any of the Deacons if you have any questions or are interested in making this contribution.

Still looking for a bigger challenge? ... Then we ask that you consider scheduling an appointment to donate blood on Wednesday, May 16, 2012. Our **2012 Blood Drive** will be taking place from 4:00 – 8:00 that evening, and we are hoping for our most successful drive ever. In the very near future, you will begin noticing flyers advertising this event, and a registration table will be set up to schedule your appointments. This experience is a very gratifying opportunity to help in a very meaningful way, and we hope that every member will thoughtfully consider making this a successful event.



And finally, for those members who are looking for a truly rewarding challenge... What could be more gratifying than giving someone the opportunity to attend a worship service? There are currently members of this church who are unable to drive to our place of worship, and would love the chance to be a part of our wonderful Sunday morning experience. Please contact a Deacon if you are able to **provide transportation to a member in need**, even if you can only offer a ride on a limited basis.

Again, although the Deacons assume a great responsibility on assisting those who need, it is the members of the church who make what we do possible. By taking an active role in the church, everybody can feel good about their contribution in helping both the church and the community.

TENT CITY RELIEF COMMITTEE NEWS



As you may know, we continue to support our brothers and sisters living at Tent City with our donations of eggs and water. Also, the Committee wishes to thank the members of our congregation for their clothing donations to date. Please remember that all clothing donated to them should be in usable condition and useful for the current season. The people of Tent City can also use the following items: tarpaulins, sleeping bags, paper goods, baby wipes (used for simple clean up in the absence of running water), feminine hygiene products, LED lanterns (style where battery clips to bottom to minimize danger of fire), flashlights, batteries and, bicycles. Home Depot gift cards are welcomed by Minister Steve to be used for projects that benefit the entire community. Special thanks also to our Youth Groups and their leadership team for all of their support.

In March, members of our Committee hosted a visit to Tent City and met with Minister Steve who gave us a tour and once again helped each of us understand our the people of Tent City have adapted and grown to be a place where God dwells among them. Our Committee will also be hosting a special coffee hour between services on **Sunday, April 15th** at which our congregation will have a chance to meet Minister Steve and better understand the needs of Tent City and what we, as God's people, can best do to support them. One frequently asked question: *What can I do for the people of Tent City?* One important thing each of us can do is to lift the people of Tent City and all those who support them up in prayer in the Savior's name. We are all members of God's family and the Savior walks with each of us daily.

In the meantime, if you wish to learn more about what you can do for the Tent City people or, if you would like to join our Committee, please contact Committee Chair Jean Reilly at tentcity@brickpresby.com.

As the Savior reminds us, whatever we do for the least of our brothers, that we do for HIM. May each of you share in the Savior's abundant love!

ATTENTION PARENTS



Did you know we have a room dedicated to young children? Did you know it is staffed by experienced adults? Did you know there are many toys and games there? If the answer is "NO" to any of these questions, we invite you to find out. We have child care available while Sunday School is in session on Sunday mornings. If you want to enjoy the church service without having to entertain your child, we encourage you to let your children play happily with the adults and other children in the Child Care room.



Ten Tips to a Better Night's Sleep

Quality sleep is vital for the mind and body. The less you sleep, the more tempting it is to eat the comfort foods that poorly help you compensate for that lack of rest and necessary energy. How much sleep do you need? Experts agree that too little or too much sleep is too much on your body. Less than 6 hours is not enough. More than 9 may be too much. It has even been found that lack of sleep contributes to the rise in type 2 diabetes.

1. **Relax your mind.** Don't worry. Be rested. Pick up a good book. Try meditation. Maybe do a puzzle – if you aren't the sort who can't rest until the puzzle is done, that is. Any quiet activity that won't over stimulate your mind should help do the trick.
2. **Relax your body.** Try yoga or a warm bath. According the National Foundation for Sleep, your body temperature drops after a hot bath in a way that mimics, in part, what happens as you fall asleep.
3. **Don't exercise.** At least nothing that will get your heart rate up and not within 2 to 3 hours of going to bed. Exercise, no matter how physically tired you feel immediately afterward, tends to wake you up and give you energy. So don't make it a part of your nighttime routine if it's close to bedtime when you are done.
4. **Quit smoking.** Besides all the usual benefits of quitting smoking, nicotine is a stimulant and it can take hours for the effects of a stimulant to wear off.
5. **Skip the nap.** If you have a traditional schedule that allows you to sleep at night, then don't take a nap after 3 pm as it may be harder to go to sleep later that night.
6. **Watch what you consume before bed.** Don't drink/eat too much or too little before bed, caffeinated drinks and drugs/medicines can keep your brain awake. And alcohol before bed may only serve to put you in the lightest of sleep instead of the preferred REM state. If you must try something, try a healthy protein snack- like peanut butter & celery.
7. **Make your bedroom your oasis.** Your bedroom should be a sleep-friendly environment (Clean; Dark as possible; Comfortable mattress& pillows; No technical distractions, if possible).
8. **Set your thermostat.** Once you are asleep, it is difficult for your body to regulate its own temperature, so make sure you are comfortable beforehand.
9. **Set a schedule.** Going to bed & waking up about the same time each and every day – including weekends – can help the body establish a healthy cycle.
10. **Don't be a clock watcher.** If you need an alarm, then set it and forget it. Clock and cell phones emit light that seems to be brightest in the darkness of the bedroom. They also can be a consistent reminder of just how little sleep you are actually getting. Turn the clock around, turn the cell phone over or cover it if you can't control the light it emits.

Sleep plays a critical role in immune function, metabolism, memory/attention span, learning and other important mind and body functions. It also impacts a person's weight, lowers incidents of depression, and it is one easy way to get stress relief. Source: www.dlife.com

DID YOU KNOW ???

...that we will join with millions of Christians on April 8, not only to celebrate Easter Sunday but also to share resources that will change lives through One Great Hour of sharing?

For over sixty years, Presbyterians have supported OGHS. More than 100 countries receive support from this cause and we Presbyterians give about \$10,000,000 annually! This offering is divided three ways:

**One
great hour
of sharing**

1. Presbyterian Hunger Program
2. Presbyterian Disaster Program, and
3. Self-Development of People

The impact of OGHS was felt by the country of Haiti when they received 150 tons of vegetable seeds; through this effort Haitians can now feed Haitians and learn to be self-sufficient.

OGHS was also felt in the United States during the flooding in the upper Midwest. The southern Plains received assistance during the wild fires, drought and heat wave. After the Massachusetts tornado, OGHS was there to give assistance.

During 2011, you, the members and friends of Brick Presbyterian Church, contributed \$1,179 to this cause. We, the members of the Mission Committee, ask you to pray and be as generous as you are able. This offering will be received on April 8, Easter Sunday. Sharing brings joy to others, to God, and to us.

*Excerpted from Presbyterian Mission Yearbook
for Prayer and Study*

FYI

Interfaith Hospitality Network of Ocean County is a non-profit interfaith ministry that mobilizes resources for homeless families in our community. For today's growing population of homeless families, IHN offers trained volunteers and host churches and synagogues that provide shelter, meals, help and hope. In addition to shelter, IHN provides guest families with case management, education and training in life skills, parenting, financial management, counseling and other services.

