

Good Tidings

The Newsletter of Brick Presbyterian Church

December 2015

“In the Darkness and Dread, A Holy Presence Comes” by Pastor Doug

Winter advent skies are dark and gray with short days and bone chilling nights
Reflective of a world where nations rage in wars that make refugees take flight

Innocent lives in Beirut, Bagdad, and Paris lie tormented, killed and maimed
ISIS spreads hated filled deeds in the name of a god they’ve wrongly claimed

Our area’s home foreclosures and number of working poor are at an all-time high
As Super Storm Sandy survivors give up struggling in red tape, let out a great sigh

Stressed out people race about with over-booked calendars ever so crammed
while multi-tasking and waiting in gridlocked traffic ever so jammed

Politicians and would be leaders argue and debate
and voters tire of hearing all the negative voices that berate

Hurting lives are filled with pain caused by relationships filled with unresolved issues
Run and hide in alcohol and heroin and so cause their loved ones tears and a need for tissues

“Where is God?” “Show me that God really cares,” cry those in the darkness of the night.
They say, “I long for something to believe in – something or someone that offers me light”

How easily we forget the One who saves, and was born in a stable in the dead of night
how quickly we forget the One who was born for us did not enter this world with military might

To all who wander in the darkness of the night and feel ever so forlorn
to you with longing hearts in Bethlehem’s manger a Child has been born

To those who like shepherds of old are watching as they work the late night shift
Comes One of whom the prophets spoke – whose words can bridge the greatest rift

Where many have forgotten how to listen for the sound of hope or how to joyously sing
There comes a living hope born in the Christ of whom angelic choirs in adoration ring

The One who has been born
comes to all who feel forlorn

The Savior comes quietly with radiant light
to be with you in the darkness of your night.



CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICES



Christmas Eve
SERVICES

We invite you to celebrate Christ's birth with us on December 24th at Brick Presbyterian Church. The services will be held at 5:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. Our Christmas Eve Services are a wonderful way to worship the One born King of Kings. So come and bring family and friends for a special time of worship.

The **5:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service** is a more family-orientated service with the children's music ministry taking an active part in the service.

The **8:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service** will feature more traditional-style music with our choir and soloist.

Both services will feature the lighting of candles at the end of the service.

There will be only one worship service on **Sunday, December 27, 2015**. Please bring the children and enjoy a service "Praising Our Lord" and thanking Him for the gift of His Son.

CHRISTMAS FLOWER DONATIONS

The envelopes for the flower donations can be found in the pews starting on **November 22, 2015** and remaining until **December 13, 2015**. If you would like to donate a Poinsettia for Christmas, please do so during this time frame to ensure inclusion in the Christmas Eve bulletin. We request that you print clearly on the envelope. Thank You for your cooperation.



CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL

The Christmas Festival will be held on Saturday, **December 5, 2015**, beginning at **4:00 pm**. This is an extremely enjoyable family event which includes the Christmas play, dinner, desserts, crafts and a visit from Santa. Join us for a wonderful way to kick off the Advent Season!



Keeping the promise of the Advent season

During this Advent season, we reflect on the influence a promise can have on our lives. God promised each of us salvation, and kept that promise with the birth of Jesus. That promise sustains and uplifts us, during good times and challenging ones.

When we understand this deeper meaning of a promise, we also understand each of us has a special responsibility to make and keep faithful promises of our own. The Christmas Joy Offering is one way to do that. Each gift received equally supports two vital promises for our faith.

Through the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions, the Christmas Joy Offering assists church workers and their families during times of need, giving back to those who have spent their lives in the service of the church. The program provides grants for housing supplements, income assistance, and pastoral vocational leadership needs. In 2013, income supplements from the Board of Pensions helped nearly 300 households and housing supplements from the Board of Pensions helped more than 200 households. \$1.6 million of 2014 gifts are being used to provide financial support and grants for current and retired Presbyterian church workers in their time of need.

The Christmas Joy Offering also supports the education and development of our future leaders at Presbyterian-related racial ethnic schools and colleges. These schools are dedicated to nurturing opportunity and creating environments where diverse students can succeed from a foundation of Christian values. The Offering benefits Menaul School and Presbyterian Pan American School, two secondary schools that ready students for a path of higher learning, as well as Stillman College, where graduates are prepared for lives of leadership and service. Many of the students attending Presbyterian-related racial ethnic colleges are the first in their families to enroll in higher education. \$1.4 million of 2014 gifts are being used to provide education, enabling students to attend Presbyterian-related racial ethnic schools and colleges to develop leadership skills.

When you give to the Christmas Joy Offering, you help sustain these promises and uplift our brothers and sisters in Christ by reducing their burdens and opening new paths of opportunity. **On December 20th, our Christmas Joy Offering will be taken.** Special offering envelopes will be available in the pews on December 13th and in your bulletin on December 20th. *Please give generously.*

If you would like to learn more about the promises of the Christmas Joy Offering, please visit:

- Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions: www.pensions.org, click on Plans & Programs
- Presbyterian-related racial ethnic schools and colleges: www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/resc/

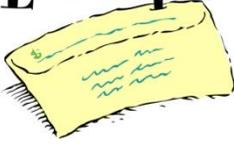
From this page, you can also link to the institutions supported.

Stewardship and Mission Committee

Information taken from presbyterianmission.org/christmasjoy

OFFERING ENVELOPES

Offering Envelopes



The 2016 Offering Envelope Boxes with your name on them will be in the Narthex starting Mid-December for you to pick up. If you are unable to pick up your box and wish to receive it, let me know. Also, if you do not find a box with your name on it and would like one, let me know. Please be sure to submit all your 2015 donations by 12/27/15 (the last Sunday in December), as I will be printing the 2015 statements after that date. Anything received after January 1st will be posted to your 2016 statement. If you have a change of address, be sure to contact me or the church office with your information. Thank you. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Karen Ellis financialsecretary@brickpresby.com or at home at 732-920-3724.

PRAYER GROUP MINISTRY

The next meeting of the Prayer Group Ministry will be December 14th at 7:00 PM in the Family Life Center.

For anyone who is not familiar with this new group, we are holding in prayer all persons listed on our weekly prayer list; including members, as well as relatives & friends. Members may be contacted by a member of our team to find out how the member, relative, or friend is doing. We respect your privacy so you may give us as much or as little information as you are comfortable with. You may, of course, request any help we can provide including asking our pastor to contact you. We are here for all.



YOUTH GROUP



The Youth Groups would like to thank everyone who participated or contributed to our Paint Party Fundraiser. We were able to raise \$758.00 for the Children's Christmas gifts. Everyone who came out had a good time and was able to bring home their very own masterpiece.

We will be handing out Christmas Ornaments on December 6th with every donation in our last effort to raise money for the Children's Christmas gifts.

The Shop and Lock In will be on December 11th. We will meet in the Family Life Center at 6:00 pm. Come well rested; we will have a long night ahead of us!

There will be a "Bring a Friend to Youth Group Movie Night" on December 20th at 5:30 pm in the FLC.

He must become greater; I must become less." John 3:30

FUNDRAISING

A huge thank you to everyone who supported our November fundraisers - the Delicious Orchards pie sale and the Vendor/Craft Show. We were able to raise a substantial donation for the Deacons' Fund.

Christmas Shopping/Restaurants Coupon and Flyer Packet



The Fundraising Committee has put together a packet of coupons and flyers which we hope you will enjoy in December.

Pick up your packet on the table outside the Family Life Center or go to our website. The packet includes:

- **Modell's Sporting Goods** - Use a 15% off coupon for purchases made at any of their locations from Thanksgiving night (11/26) thru Christmas Eve (12/26). We will receive 5% of the total sales.
- **A.C. Moore** - We will receive 10% of total dollars spent 9:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. on Friday, December 4th at the Brick location.
- **Five Below** - Shop at either the Brick or Toms River location from Sunday, December 13th thru Saturday, December 19th during their regular store hours and they will donate 10% of the dollars spent back to us.
- **Tommy's Coal Fired Pizza and Bar** - Tommy's Brick location will be hosting a fundraiser for us on the first three Wednesdays in December (12/2, 12/9 and 12/16) from 12:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. and will donate 10% of the sales back to us.
- **Applebee's** - Dine at the Applebee's Brick location on Monday, December 7th between 11:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. and 10% of your bill will be donated to Brick Presbyterian Church.
- **Chick-Fil-A** - On Thursday, December 17th, between 5:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. 15% of your purchase at Chick-fil-A's Brick location will be donated directly back to BPC.

Gift-wrapping



The Fundraising Committee will be gift-wrapping at Boscov's Department Store at Ocean County Mall on various dates during the coming weeks. We will receive donations from people using us to gift-wrap their purchases. Boscov's will supply everything - we just need to supply people to gift-wrap. We are looking for volunteers to help us so please let us know if you are interested. For times and dates, please see one of the Committee members.

Stream Energy

Stream Energy continues to make monthly donations to Brick Presbyterian Church if you sign up with them for savings on your gas and/or electric bills. See Patrice to find out how you can save money this winter!



THE BAKING CONTEST

We would like to extend a thank you to all who participated in our recent baking contest. The contest and coffee hour were a great success. The contest raised \$190 in donations for our church's Unified Mission. Grateful thank yous go out to all our baking enthusiasts: Terry Idarola, Lori Evans, Debbie Johnson, Evelyn Carlson, Nancy Olsen, Carol Farley, Sally Schoeneick, Phyllis Baker, Linda Kathenes, Susan Gargano, Lynn Christen, Kathe Jones, Rosemary Prange, Kindra Slater, Penny Chandler, Paulette Auriemma and Jean Reilly. Your baking was greatly appreciated and enjoyed by our congregation during the October 18th coffee hour. Thank you also to our panel of five dedicated taste-testing judges: Brian Aldrich, Lee Wagner, Nancy Olsen, Frank Miterotonda and Tom Fortier. Congratulations to the contest winners – 1st Linda Kathenes, 2nd Lynn Christen, 3rd Phyllis Baker and Best Presentation Susan Gargano. Finally, thank you to Carol Boucher, Ruth Cook and Barbara Tutzauer for their helping hands.



for your gifts totaling \$823 to the Peace and Global Witness Special Offering. In giving to the Peace & Global Witness Offering, the true gift is the peace of Christ, for all of God's children. With each gift, we begin to create a world of peace—together.

DEACONS

Once again, our amazing congregation contributed so generously to our food pantry that the Board of Deacons were able to provide almost 50 food baskets to the people of our community for the Thanksgiving holiday. We are so blessed to have such a giving and caring congregation, and want to let everyone know how much it is appreciated.

With Christmas now quickly approaching we will need to replenish the food pantry, so please continue to donate so we will be able to help additional families for the Christmas holiday.

Donations are still being accepted for our military and will be sent to the troops prior to the holiday.

OUR VISIT WITH MISSIONARY, MARK HARE

On October 25 Missionary, Mark Hare, was our guest at both of the worship services and the coffee hour. He visited our area to share the mission of co-workers Jenny Bent and himself. Their ministry transcends international borders into Haiti and the Dominican Republic. His personal testimony told of the positive difference that their work has made in people's lives. Missionary, Mark Hare's, visit was a wonderful, personal connection with a life changing ministry.

“The word of God is living and active” Hebrews 4:12

For more information please check our church's website.

Mark and Jenny appreciate your prayers and support.

Donations can be made through our church by designating your gifts to

“Mission Co-workers Mark Hare & Jenny Bent.”

KNITTERS AND CROCHETERS



Premie
Hats

A big thank you! We are receiving a lot of preemie hats for the little babies in Africa. This is so wonderful for all of you to take time in making these hats. These babies are 3 ½ lbs. The mothers are not getting enough nutrition for these babies to have their weight increased. Thanks for making these hats. Hopefully we can continue making them.

*Presbyterian Women of the Synod of the Northeast
and Church World Services.*