

# GOOD TIDINGS

The Newsletter of Brick Presbyterian Church

February 2015

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## A February Devotional Reflection by Pastor Doug

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Readings: *Jeremiah 31:13 "I will turn their mourning into joy,...."*  
*2 Corinthians 5: 17 "..., if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!"*

As a child I remember watching a fire that was burning for nearly two weeks on a hill known as Mossy Bank, about a mile and a half away from my parents' house. For nearly two weeks water was air lifted and dropped by planes and helicopters on the smoky steep hill while fire fighters on the steep banks of the hill did their best to contain and extinguish the blaze. It was sad for me to watch this steep hillside of trees growing out of cliffs, and pines growing in the loose soil of that steep bank burn. That hill which over looked the Cohocton River Valley was so very special to me. I had waded across the river to it – climbed its steep banks – and with binoculars, tried to spot black bears from the cliff's caves. Never did see any bears though.

After the fire was finally extinguished, I was overwhelmed with how bare the hillside was – all charred and black with ash and burnt trees. When fall came, the radiant colors I had once attributed to "Jack Frost" and marveled at weren't there. The river at the base of the hill seemed to be muddier after rain storms as ash washed into the river for the next couple of years. For a long period of time this hill that I use to climb and gaze over the valley below was a place of sorrow and brought tears of mourning to me. I remembered how I loved to sit on a huge rock at the top of that hill and look for miles to the north and see Hammondsport and Keuka Lake.

A part of me seemed to have gone up in smoke with the scarring and ash that fire had created. But slowly, year after year, new life emerged on that seemingly dead and lost hillside. Out of the death of decade-old trees and the ashes of burnt timber and moss on that hillside, came new growth. The hillside I thought was dead was given not just new vegetation but new life.

I watched squirrels and birds return over time. I saw new creatures on that hill I had not seen before as the new growth replaced the burnt debris.

As individuals and as a church, our life can be like that. We grow fond of the familiar and the security and predictability it offers. But sometimes a fondness for the ways things have always been can become the fuel of a fire that burns and destroys. Yet, out of charred ashes, God can raise up new life. Sometimes we have to dismantle what is and has been, in order for God to bring forth something new and fresh.

Over the years in my spiritual journey I have found my greatest spiritual awakenings have come after the Holy Spirit has burned down notions that were hindering God's work in my life. Out of every devastating experience (when I have had an openness of spirit) has come new insight. I won't say this is easy or painless. It's not. Tears are often shed. But when the tears have been wiped away, gladness is restored and all things become new in Christ.

Prayer: *Lord and Giver of Life in Christ, wipe away my tears. Help me to see you making a new creation out of the ashes in my life. Take and turn my mourning into a joyous new creation, so you may be glorified in Christ Jesus. Amen.*

## ***FROM THE DEACONS BENCH***



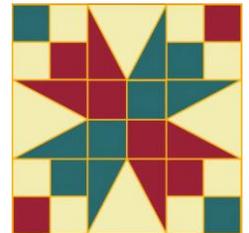
The Deacons are grateful that your donations have enabled us to send care packages to our military men and women. Please continue to support this worthwhile mission.

We would also like to thank the congregation for your continued support of our food pantry. If you check the Deacon Bulletin Board in the narthex, you will see thank you notes from extremely appreciative recipients of food baskets. However, since we gave out so many wonderful Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets, the pantry is once again in desperate need of replenishment. We ask that you help us restock, as Easter will be here before we know it.

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## ***FROM THE QUILTERS***

Although we have appreciated your donations of fabric, we have no more storage space and must ask that you not leave anything more in Room 101. We do not do crafts or knitting or complete unfinished objects. The Thrift Shop might accept some of those items. We do thank you for your past donations. You may have recognized some of your fabrics in completed quilts at our sales.



## **Fundraising Update**



Thank you to all who came out to the Windward Tavern on January 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>. We hope you all enjoyed this fundraiser, we would also like to thank our friends at the Windward Tavern for supporting our church and its work in our community.

## ***PENCIL IN THE DATE!***

### **Saturday May 30<sup>st</sup> -- Brick Presbyterian Church's Third Vendor and Craft Show**

On Saturday, May 30<sup>th</sup>, we will host over 50 vendors in our Family Life Center. This time, tables will be \$40 each and admission, as always, is free. If you have a craft to sell and wish to reserve a table, contact Melanie at [ChampNet411@yahoo.com](mailto:ChampNet411@yahoo.com). Please plan on coming out to this event, and watch for more info as we get closer to the date, or follow this link:

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

If you are a church committee or group wishing to reserve a table, please contact:  
George at [gverick@yahoo.com](mailto:gverick@yahoo.com) or call 848-333-3305.

Please continue to check the church website or bulletin for additional upcoming fundraising opportunities.  
Thank you for all your support.



On behalf of the leaders of the Youth Group, we want to extend a heartfelt thanks to all of the members of this church family who made our fellowship and service possible. We have the great opportunity to witness firsthand how your gifts supporting the Youth Group's activities are shaping their young lives. Watching as the kids take over Target to spend thousands of dollars on other kids who have so much less is an unbelievable testament to how God works through them. They learn to help others by doing, which is only possible by your generous support. Whether you bought something at a bake sale, found a Flamingo on your front lawn, or sent a check to the Deacon's fund, we appreciate it more than words can express. And thank you in advance for your continued support of the Youth at BPC.

-Kathy, Tom, Debbie, Ashia, and Vic

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## ***INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY***

In times of inclement weather, especially during this upcoming winter season, or for other adverse conditions, the congregation is reminded to tune in to the following radio stations to hear if the church is closed:

The Hawk 105.7FM  
New Jersey 101.5 FM  
WOBM 92.7 FM  
Lite Rock 96.9 FM  
The Point 94.3 FM  
SoJo 104.9 FM



For Sunday worship services, the earliest time for such closure announcements would normally be after 7:30 AM.

**You may also check the Church Website for weather related closings and cancellations by going to [www.brickpresby.com](http://www.brickpresby.com)**

## **HEALTHY HEART TIPS**

**From your Health Ministry**



### **February is American Heart Month**

During the month of February, Americans see the human heart as the symbol of love. February is American Heart Month, a time to show yourself the love.

### **Plan for Prevention**

Try out these strategies for better heart health. You'll be surprised how many of them can become lifelong habits! **Work with your health care team.** Get a checkup at least once each year, even if you feel healthy. A doctor, nurse, or other health care professional can check for conditions that put you at risk for cardiovascular disease (CVD), such as high blood pressure and diabetes—conditions that can go unnoticed for too long. **Monitor your blood pressure.** High blood pressure often has no symptoms, so be sure to have it checked on a regular basis. You can check your blood pressure at home, at a pharmacy, or at a doctor's office. **Get your cholesterol checked.** Your health care team should test your cholesterol levels at least once every 5 years. Talk with your health care professional about this simple blood test. **Eat a healthy diet.** Choosing healthful meal and snack options can help you avoid CVD and its complications. Limiting sodium in your diet can lower your blood pressure. Be sure to eat plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables—adults should have at least five servings each day. Eating foods low in saturated fat, trans fat, and cholesterol and high in fiber. **Maintain a healthy weight.** Being overweight or obese can increase your risk for CVD. To determine whether your weight is in a healthy range, health care professionals often calculate a number called body mass index (BMI). Doctors sometimes also use waist and hip measurements to measure a person's body fat. **Exercise regularly.** Physical activity can help you maintain a healthy weight and lower cholesterol and blood pressure. The Surgeon General recommends that adults should engage in moderate-intensity activity for at least 150 minutes per week. Exercising with friends and family can be a great way to stay healthy and have fun. **Don't smoke.** Cigarette smoking greatly increases your risk for CVD. If you don't smoke, don't start. If you do smoke, quit as soon as possible. Your health care team can suggest ways to help you quit. **Limit alcohol use.** Avoid drinking too much alcohol, which can increase your blood pressure. Men should stick to no more than two drinks per day, and women to no more than one. **Manage your diabetes.** If you have diabetes, monitor your blood sugar levels closely, and talk with your health care team about treatment options. **Take your medicine.** If you're taking medication to treat high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, or another condition, follow the instructions carefully. Always ask questions if you don't understand something. If you have side effects, talk with your health care team about your options.

*Together, we all can prevent and manage heart disease, one step at a time.*