

# Good Tidings

The Newsletter of Brick Presbyterian Church

September 2014

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## A Pastor's Look Into the Night



We in the Christian community have long had an aversion to the night and darkness. We have, like the characters of the Star Wars Trilogy, associated the darkness with all that is evil and against God and goodness. Much of this thinking has grown out of the dualist influences of Plato's philosophy. That, in turn, has influenced at some levels of consciousness how we read and understand scripture and even our own individual and collective journeys through life.

But I'd like to invite you to pause with me for a moment and rethink how you and I view light and darkness. I invite you to do this with me, for as I do my exercise routine on my bike in the dead of night (usually between 11:30 p.m. and 1:00 a.m.) I begin to see things I could not or did not notice in the daylight. For instance, as I pedaled my bicycle about town at night, I began noticing all kinds of wild life that was often hiding from the rat race of human day time activity. I began seeing toads and frogs – an occasional rabbit, an owl, sometimes raccoon, possums, etc.... I noticed that drivers on the road seemed more attentive to the presence of my bicycle than many day time drivers. Going by some homes I would notice TV turned up loud enough that I could hear them even though the house windows were closed as I passed. I began to notice how much noise we humans make just from the sound of our car tires that passed over the road surface, and I was amazed at how much noise my well maintained bicycle could make as its tires rolled over the pavement. At night I could see the planets of Mars and Saturn next to the moon. I was also amazed at how many kids were out on skate boards and bikes at those hours, as I wondered if their parents knew their where-a-bouts.

All of this got me remembering that it was in the darkness of night that the Angel Gabriel spoke of Christ's birth to Mary. It was in the darkness of night the angel spoke to Joseph telling him not to be afraid to take Mary as his wife. It was in the darkness of the night that Jesus was born. And it was in the darkness of night that the Magi followed a star to Christ's birth place.

Likewise, I recall that it was at night that my mother taught me to pray, "Now I lay me down to sleep...." It was after the sun went down at church camp in the summer time, I would gather with other campers to pray and listen for that still small voice of God, amid the chirping sounds of crickets in the background, and the crackling of wood burning in the campfire ring.

It was in my spiritual journey, when I was experiencing my "deep dark night of the soul," that I discovered things in my life that were both gifts to be embraced, and burdens to be released. God's redemptive Spirit has a way of working not just in the light of day, but also in life's darkest moments – teaching us things we need to know about ourselves, our world, and even about God. It is important to remember that Jesus can work in the darkness too, bringing about life's epiphanies as he once did for Nicodemus who came to Jesus by night seeking truth and understanding.

Sometimes the light of day and its glare hinders our sight to see what is before us. Sometimes, we see more clearly, and hear more nearly, in the darkness of night. Could it be that God is speaking to you in and through the darkness in your life too? It's worth considering.

## WE'RE BACK TO OUR "REGULAR" WORSHIP TIMES IN SEPTEMBER!

Starting Sunday, September 7<sup>th</sup>, we will be returning to our "regular" worship times of 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM. See you at Worship!



### Brick Handbell Choir



The first rehearsal of Brick Handbell Choir's thirteenth season will be: Monday evening, September 8, 7:00 - 8:30 PM in the sanctuary. We currently have need of two to four ringers to fill our ringing positions. The ability to read music is not a prerequisite! We lead worship one Sunday per month and rehearse weekly. Please contact Bob Mahns if interested.

### Back By Popular Demand!

House of Hope Café Presents:

A Night of Gospel  
Doo Wop Music with  
*Santos*

Saturday, September 13  
7:00pm – 9:30pm



### ACOLYTE TRAINING/PARTY EVENT



This year's annual acolyte training session will be held in the sanctuary on Thursday, September 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM. Children from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade through 6<sup>th</sup> Grade are eligible to attend this event.

The responsibility of an acolyte is to bring the Light of Jesus Christ into the sanctuary by lighting the candles on the chancel to start our 9am and 11am worship services.

Following this training session, we will have a "Make Your Own Sundae" party. Parents should come back to the church around 8:15 PM to pick up the children.

Sign-up sheets for acolyte volunteers will be distributed to each of the Sunday School classes before this event with a final roster schedule created after this date.

So, please mark your calendar if your children are interested in serving as an acolyte and are in the 3<sup>rd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grades.

For any questions, please contact Kathy Kenny at [kathy3405@verizon.net](mailto:kathy3405@verizon.net). See you there!!

Ice Cream Party



## STAY INFORMED

Does the church have your current/active e-mail address? In an effort to keep all of our members and friends up-to-date on the many church services and activities here at BPC, there are two things you can do:

If you use e-mail, send us your e-mail address so we can notify you of any changes – [brick.presbyterian@verizon.net](mailto:brick.presbyterian@verizon.net)

Or, if you have a computer, simply go to our website – [www.brickpresby.org](http://www.brickpresby.org) Major changes will be posted on the Home Page and any upcoming events will be on our "Events" tab.

We don't want you to miss a thing, so please keep in touch!

### Volunteers Desperately Needed Now!



Caregiver Volunteers of Central Jersey (CVCJ) has put out an urgent call for volunteers! Unusually high volume of homebound seniors (more than 25 requests have been received in the past week!) and the agency is experiencing an extreme shortage of volunteers to provide services. Our primary need right now is for drivers to take a senior to a medical appointment or to pick-up some groceries from the supermarket. CVCJ provides a variety of other free services to our homebound seniors. If you have a few hours or minutes a week that you can spare, please call Mary Malagiere at 732-505-2273 or email Mary at [marym@caregivervolunteers.org](mailto:marym@caregivervolunteers.org) today.

### Flower Donations – Open Dates

Would you like to remember a loved one or honor someone special in your life? Please consider sponsoring the chancel flowers for an upcoming worship service. Several dates are still available, including: October 19, November 9 & 16, and December 21, 2014. Please call the church office at 732-477-0676 if interested. Thank you.



### Junior High Youth Group

The Junior High youth group leaders are working on the upcoming calendar and will have a list of events at the September 14th annual Kick Off Pizza Party. The Pizza Party will be from 6:00 - 7:30 on September 14th and all 6th through 8th grade students are invited to come.

Youth Group plays a vital role in the growth and development of your child's relationship with Jesus and we encourage all 6th through 8th grade students to come out and see what it's all about. We have a balance of mission work, Bible study, life lessons, worship, fellowship and of course fun and games.

Your Junior High Youth Leaders are Kathy Kraynick (732-920-7949) and Tom and Debbie Fortier (848-333-2599), please feel free to contact them with any questions. You can also email them at [kmcaring@yahoo.com](mailto:kmcaring@yahoo.com)

*The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it. Psalm 24:1*

## Fundraising News

The Fundraising Committee is kicking off the Fall/Holiday season with the following scheduled events. Please pencil in the following dates and times:



1. **Fall Mums Sale:** Back by popular demand will be our **Mums Sale**. On **September 21<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>** we will have many of the huge plants just like we had last year including some extra large ones. This fundraiser was a huge success and we will probably run short again -- First come first served. Keep an eye on the bulletin for details. Any questions see Tim Towlen.
  2. **Fall Craft Show:** On November 22<sup>nd</sup> we will host our second Vendor/Craft show. Come and see our Family Life Center packed with vendors and guests as we head into the Christmas season. Keep an eye out for further details. If you are interested in being a vendor, please contact Melanie @ [ChampNet411@yahoo.com](mailto:ChampNet411@yahoo.com)
  3. **Bon Ton Community Days -- November 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>**. Just in time for the Christmas season, Bon Ton coupon books will be back. Each coupon book will be full of values available to our supporters. Look for our table outside the FLC in the upcoming months to purchase your coupon book.
  4. **Stream Energy:** As always, see Patrice outside the FLC to sign up for Stream Energy through Brick Presbyterian Church. Whether you sign up for electric or gas or both, Stream will make a generous monthly donation to our church as well as giving you additional savings on your energy bill! Just bring your energy bills to Patrice to see if we can help you help us!
  5. **Upcoming events to be announced:** "Food For Thought" cards will be back again! Keep an eye out for our greeting card fundraiser to support our Deacons Food Pantry ministry. Please consider us for the upcoming Christmas card season. As with our last card sale, we will receive a 1/3 percentage of the sales for our Deacons as well as an additional donation of \$.18 cents per card designated for our food pantry.
- Restaurant Fundraisers :** In the upcoming months please watch the website and bulletins as well as future newsletters for upcoming restaurant events.

## **Influenza & Vaccination Program**



On Sunday, October 5, 2014 the Ocean County Health Department will be providing a clinic for our congregation in our Family Life Center from 10:00 AM to 12:30 PM. This is for all, so please let your friends & neighbors know that they can get their "shots" here! Get prepared for the upcoming flu season and take advantage of this opportunity. There are no fees for individuals with non-HMO Medicare (must have part B) or Medicaid. All others are \$20.00. Please be sure to bring your Medicare or Medicaid card. Most insurances will reimburse. The Health Ministry Team looks forward to seeing you there!

## Flu Vaccination



### Why should people get vaccinated against the flu?

Influenza is a serious disease that can lead to hospitalization and sometimes even death. Every flu season is different, and influenza infection can affect people differently. Even healthy people can get very sick from the flu and spread it to others. Over a period of 31 seasons between 1976 and 2007, [estimates of flu-associated deaths](#) in the United States range from a low of about 3,000 to a high of about 49,000 people. During a regular flu season, about 90 percent of deaths occur in people 65 years and older. The “seasonal flu season” in the United States can begin as early as October and last as late as May.

During this time, flu viruses are circulating in the population. An annual seasonal flu vaccine (either the flu shot or the nasal-spray flu vaccine) is the best way to reduce the chances that you will get seasonal flu and spread it to others. When more people get vaccinated against the flu, less flu can spread through that community.

### How do flu vaccines work?

Flu vaccines cause antibodies to develop in the body about two weeks after vaccination. These antibodies provide protection against infection with the viruses that are in the vaccine.

### Who should get vaccinated this season?

Everyone who is at least 6 months of age should get a flu vaccine this season. This recommendation has been in place since [February 24, 2010 when CDC’s Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices \(ACIP\)](#) voted for “universal” flu vaccination in the United States to expand protection against the flu to more people.

While everyone should get a flu vaccine this season, it’s especially important for some people to get vaccinated. Those people include the following:

- People who are at high risk of developing serious complications (like pneumonia) if they get sick with the flu.
- People who have certain medical conditions including asthma, diabetes, and chronic lung disease.
- Pregnant women.
- People younger than 5 years (and especially those younger than 2), and people 65 years and older.
- A complete list is available at [People Who Are at High Risk of Developing Flu-Related Complications](#).
- People who live with or care for others who are at high risk of developing serious complications (see list above).
- Household contacts and caregivers of people with certain medical conditions including asthma, diabetes, and chronic lung disease.
- Household contacts and caregivers of infants less than 6 months old.
- Health care personnel.

## **VOLUNTEER VILLAGE IS A BLESSING AND ANSWERED PRAYER**



You can be proud to be a Presbyterian for many reasons. One specific reason is for our support of disaster relief. In October, it will be 2 years since many people's lives were affected by "Superstorm Sandy". Volunteer "work" groups continue to be coordinated through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. Their work assignments are allocated via the Ocean County Long-Term Recovery Group. This summer, the Volunteer Village at Brick Presbyterian Church has hosted two groups of volunteers who donated their time and talents to help with "Storm Sandy" Recovery. The first group was hosted June 22 - June 28, from Brooklyn Presbyterian Church, Brooklyn, MI; and the second group was hosted July 20, - July 25, from Montoursville Presbyterian Church, Montoursville, PA. For further information and photos visit our website at [brickpresby.com](http://brickpresby.com) "Volunteer Village".

The following are a few excerpts written in our Guest Book from volunteers we hosted:

*"Thank you so much for opening your church up to us as a 'home away from home'."*

*"You have made this mission opportunity a very comfortable and safe experience for us."*

*"Out of chaos, you brought hope; and you helped us bring hope to others."*

*"You make us proud to call ourselves Presbyterians."*

*"May your program continue to bless others who partner with you to serve others."*

### **A MESSAGE ABOUT THE BPC SUPPORTERS & THANK YOU**

We give a very special thank you all who support our "Volunteer Village"!!! From the people who spent much time and effort with paperwork and on site building preparation to meet town codes; for those who contact and handle paperwork with Presbyterian Disaster Relief, the Presbytery, and churches of the mission workers to prepare for their arrival; along with those who plan, shop, prepare, cook and serve meals to our guests: and to those who donated bottled water and various snacks for the mission workers. You have been a blessing to and have touched more lives than you will ever know.

*There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit gives them. ...  
He gives a different gift to each person.*

1 Corinthians 12 : 4,11

### **Sunday School Begins!**

Sunday School will begin on September 14 at 9:00am.  
All children should gather in the FLC and we will escort them to class from there.



## Deacons

Although it is difficult to believe that summer is over, school is now back in session. We hope everyone had time this summer to relax and recharge. We would like to remind everyone of the activities and needs the Deacons meet year round. Without the congregation's generosity and assistance, we would be unable to meet these needs, so thank you.

Our food pantry accepts donations of canned goods and food items throughout the year, but with Thanksgiving and Christmas so close together, we need to be sure it is fully stocked over the coming months.

Please continue to donate empty metal coffee cans for the Deacons to use for bringing the chancel flowers every week to congregation members who are hospitalized, homebound and grieving.

Your assistance with any of the things listed above would be greatly appreciated.

## An Update on the Homeless...



Homeless Outreach

After more than three years of commitment to our ministry at Tent City, we have seen it come to a conclusion. As of the end of June, Tent City no longer exists at its Lakewood location. Through a combination of efforts on the part of the Township to relocate those who were staying there and the personal efforts of others living there to find a new arrangement, all have now moved on to other situations and placements. During their years in Lakewood, their survival depended, to a large extent, on the generosity of others. In the final week of its existence, Minister Steven Brigham expressed his deeply felt gratitude to our congregation for our stream of support in the form of prayers, grocery items, donated clothing and household goods, bicycles, gardening supplies, buffet meals, Praise Team musical program and friendship. So many members of our congregation contributed in some fashion, whether it be through financial donations, donations in kind, labor, talent or prayer support. Please know that your generosity sustained many through some of the most difficult periods of their lives.

Sadly, the closing of Tent City and relocation of its residents does not alleviate the difficulties for many who are now living elsewhere. Some are living in locations that are far from public transportation, grocery stores, etc. Others are having a difficult time as they are now living alone and lack the social support and camaraderie found at Tent City. Please continue to hold them in your prayers as they adjust to this new chapter in their lives.

As Tent City was closing, All Saints Episcopal Church celebrated the opening of its homeless shelter on June 7th known as Samaritan House Lakewood. The shelter is housed in former classroom space on All Saints' property and has been remodeled to house nine homeless individuals at a time. Those coming to Samaritan House Lakewood are expected to be there no longer than three months. It supplies resources to work with its guests to find longer term housing solutions, job training, etc. In response to a request for assistance to provide furnishings, our Board of Deacons made a monetary gift on behalf of our congregation in the amount of \$1,000 to cover the cost for a refrigerator and microwave for the facility.

As the cost of living in New Jersey rises above the means of so many to support themselves, we expect the homeless problem to continue. The sensitivity of our congregation to this issue has been a blessing as you have generously donated to different aspects of our homeless ministry. Rest assured that we shall continue to keep our hearts and minds open to ways in which we can continue to tackle this very difficult problem in our locale.

## **PRINTER CARTRIDGE RECYCLING CONCLUDED**

Please be advised we are no longer accepting used/empty printer/ink cartridges. Thank you for your past participation and support.

### **Our Church family celebrates our staff and their employment anniversaries...**

- **Bob Mahns**, Minister of Instrumental Music, 14 years in August
- **Ed Murphy**, Minister of Choral Music, 7 years in September
- **Christy Tompkins**, Music Ministry, 14 years in September
- **Pastor Doug Chase**, 23 years in September