

# Good Tidings

The Newsletter of Brick Presbyterian Church

January 2018



## It's All About Choices – New Year's Reflection by Pastor Doug

New Year Resolutions often relate to feelings of guilt. It may be that we put on extra weight over the holidays. “Oh, I know I should change my eating habits – eat less fast foods and have more controlled portions,” we say to ourselves. So we resolve to lose weight, eat right, and perhaps exercise. For a few weeks we keep our resolution, but the results do not come quickly. Old patterns of behavior begin to weaken our resolve – a cheese burger here – a donut there – and I’ll have some large French fries. Other activities from prior routines in the past re-emerge, weakening our resolve to go to the gym. Old eating patterns take over. Prior life-style and calendar commitments pull us away from the gym and healthy exercise. We say we’d like to go, but just don’t have time to get to the gym because we’re so busy. *We call it a “reason,”* in an effort to pretend that it’s not really an “excuse” and a “choice” we’ve made. Calling it a “reason” doesn’t leave us feeling quite so guilty.

Over the passing of time we realize how often we’ve made resolutions and not really accomplished what we intended. So rather than thinking we failed, we stop making resolutions. Thus, the momentum and results of old habits continues to be our routine and our life. “Oh,” someone says to him or herself (or to a pastor encountered at a shopping center), “I must start getting back to church, worshipping the Lord with my friends of faith.” But, somehow as welcome back as one might be – as missed from the fold of God one might be - the lack of commitment sometimes impedes one’s effort.

***But there is hope!*** The Bible tells us we can change. New goals can be reached. Success is possible. It may have taken 40 years for Moses and the Hebrews to reach the Promised Land, but with determination to follow the Lord, they got there. We can learn from the man who lay crippled by the healing waters of the pool Bethztha for 38 years. Jesus asked him if he wanted to be healed. The man replied, “Yes, but I have no one to put me in the pool.” Jesus then commanded him to take up his mat and walk. And the man got up and walked (John 5:1ff).

Judy Foley, who once worked in our church office, had a very honest perspective. She said, “Life and faith is all about choices.” We always find time for the things we say are important and thus make important. As you and I enter this New Year, let us choose to strengthen our collective spiritual life together making worship service, Sunday school, church fellowship and Christian service a high priority. Let us commit to not just saying we believe in Jesus, but continuing to follow Jesus in lives of collective spiritual growth, prayer, and service. Not sure you/we can do this? St. Paul encourages us with these words: “I can do all things through him who strengthens me. (Phil 4:13-14). Let’s resolve together to make this an Awesome New Year for our Lord and church. ***You can do this.*** We can do this for God is our strength.

New Year Blessing to one & all,  
Pastor Doug

## Call for the Annual Meeting of the Congregation and Corporation



The **Annual Meeting** of the Congregation and Corporation of Brick Presbyterian Church will be held at **11:15 a.m.** on **Sunday, January 28, 2018** in the **church Family Life Center** following a 10:00 a.m. worship service. *(Please note this is a change from previous years.)* The meeting will begin with prayer and a light lunch offered by our amazing Fellowship Committee.

The business to be conducted will include the receiving of committee and organizational reports, the nomination and election of officers to serve on the Board of Deacons and the Session, review of the pastor's terms of call and a vote on the terms of call; along with a review of the church's financial reports, and audit. The meeting will also include such other old, new or miscellaneous business as the church boards, or individual active members may bring to the floor for discussion and or possible action.

Please mark your calendar now and make **Sunday, January 28, 2018** a must attend date on your busy schedules.

### “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:

WOBM, 92.7 FM (wobm.com)  
The Hawk, 105.7 FM (1057TheHawk.com)  
The Point, 94.3 AM (943ThePoint.com)  
Beach Radio WOBM 1160 & 1310 AM (mybeachradio.com)  
New Jersey 101.5 (NJ1015.com)

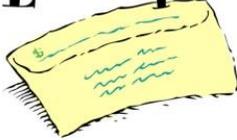


For Sunday worship services, the earliest time for such closure announcements would normally be after 7:30 AM.

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

## OFFERING ENVELOPES

### Offering Envelopes



The **2018 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 2017 donations by 12/31/17 (the last Sunday in December), as I will be printing the 2017 statements after that date. Anything received after January 1st will be posted to your 2018 statement. If you have a change of address, be sure to contact me or the church office with your information. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Karen Ellis [financialsecretary@brickpresby.com](mailto:financialsecretary@brickpresby.com) or at home at 732-920-3724. Thank you.

### PER CAPITA FOR 2018 IS \$37.00

In the box of offering envelopes for 2018, you may have noticed an envelope near the front of the box labeled “per capita”. Please note that the per capita is **\$37.00** per member.

You may make your per capita payment of \$37.00 in a single payment or you may choose to pay it in smaller installments throughout the year. If you choose to submit your per capita in installment payments, please clearly note on the envelope that your payment is for per capita.

Per capita  
is part of  
the glue  
that holds  
Presbyterians  
together

## PLEDGE UPDATE

As of December 3, 2017, **100 pledges**. Thank you to all who have submitted a pledge for 2018.

As the new year begins, we continue to welcome pledges. Each one of us has a vital role to play as we share God’s love and carry out the example set before us in the mission of Jesus Christ. If you have not already done so, please feel free to mail in your pledge card or drop it in the offering basket at a church service.

Thank you for your support of God’s work through Brick Presbyterian Church!

- *Stewardship and Mission Committee*



*Make your faith in Jesus Christ a legacy of love remembering Brick Presbyterian Church in your will.*

## ONLINE GIVING

Did you know that you can give to the church electronically? Many people today opt to pay bills online, as it seems to make life a bit easier. You can send your offering to the church using your bank's online BillPay feature. While all banks are a little different, almost all should have a way where you can set up your donation to be sent to the church as you pay your other bills. Most banks will even allow you to setup a recurring payment, so you don't forget about it!



Typically, most online billpay systems will ask you for an account number (or identifying information), and the address of the recipient. For the account number or identifying information, be sure to put your name and offering number. This will insure that the church is aware of who donated. If you have any questions relating to paying online, please reach out to Vic Erickson at (908) 839-9754 or at [gverick3@gmail.com](mailto:gverick3@gmail.com).

Even if your schedule doesn't permit you to be at church every Sunday, having the online giving option available gives us the opportunity to ensure that the important work of the Church never stops.

**CONGRATULATIONS!**

**Joe and Debbie Johnson** would like to announce the engagement for their daughter, **Jennifer Lynn Johnson**, to **Robert Vito Toranto**.

## Christmas Food Baskets



## GREETINGS FROM THE DEACONS

Brick Presbyterian Church is truly blessed to have received an abundance of donations to our Food Pantry this fall. Many expressions of gratitude are extended to our church members, as well as to several community organizations. Because of tremendous generosity, our church was able to provide 48 food baskets for the Christmas holiday to families in need.

Thank you to the **BRICK ELKS CLUB** for their generous contribution of a variety of food items, as well as gift cards to local supermarkets. Many families in our community were able to enjoy a delicious, nutritious holiday meal thanks to generous donations.

Thank you very much to **CEDARS VETERINARY HOSPITAL** of Brick for their generous cash donation, which was used to purchase Christmas presents for needy families in our community.

A special “Thank You” goes to **TOM ERICKSON** who so graciously delivers food baskets on behalf of the deacons, so that many families have the opportunity to enjoy a nutritious holiday meal.

This month, the deacons visited our members currently in nursing homes and a few homebound parishioners, presenting wrap blankets as gifts on behalf of the congregation. Blessings of joy were experienced by all.

Thank you to the congregation for remembering our service men and women who give so selflessly to ensure that our nation’s citizens are safe and secure. Your ongoing donations of personal care and food items are graciously and gratefully accepted. Please visit BPC web site for a list of suggested items for our military.

Thank you so much to our wonderful congregation members, who so lovingly and generously give to those who are needy. God bless you all.

Sincere wishes to all for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

*One gives freely, yet grows all the richer;  
another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want.*

Proverbs 11:24

## **An Opportunity to Learn about and Grow through Grief & Loss**

Bereavement and Loss touches each of our lives at one time or another. We mourn the loss of a loved one, be it a parent, child, spouse or dear friends. But sometimes our sense of loss and bereavement can also be related to the loss of a job, some aspect of our health, or some ability that is taken from us like our eye sight or the use of a limb, etc. Regardless of the loss we grieve what once was.

Brick Presbyterian Church is offering an opportunity to learn about, share experiences, and grow together through grief in a supportive and Bible based supportive community. Those wishing to attend will receive a short presentation, be given an opportunity to participate and share our experiences (as individuals are comfortable in doing) and be give time of caring discussion. All of this will be encased in prayer at the beginning and end of each meeting. These classes will be held starting on January 11<sup>th</sup> a **Thursday from 3 – 4 p.m. at the church. This opportunity will last for about 4 weeks.** For more information or to make your reservation please call the church office at [732-477-0676](tel:732-477-0676). **All religious affiliations and non-affiliated persons are welcome. Bring a friend!**

### **Attention Veterans**

It has come to the attention of the church by members of American Legion Post 348 here in Brick that you might qualify for a NJ tax benefit that was part of recent legislation that raised the taxes on gasoline in NJ. To obtain an application form for the “Veteran Exemption Submission Form” see Pastor Doug. The completed form should be submitted along with a copy of your DD-214 to the following address:

The New Jersey Division of Taxation  
Veteran Exemption  
P.O. Box 440 Trenton, NJ 0846-0440  
Or Fax with a copy of your DD-214 to 609-633-8427.



Your contributions throughout 2017 helped to give the gift of clear vision for those in need. In December, a shipment from our church containing 38 pairs of eyeglasses, 12 pairs of sunglasses, 7 watches and assorted jewelry was forwarded to this very worthy organization that purchases new prescription eyeglasses for U.S. residents in financial need and distributes used glasses to the disadvantaged in developing countries.

Thank you for your donations and please keep them coming in 2018!

## Scholarship Applications

If you are graduating high school in June 2018 with plans to further your education in the fall of 2018, you are encouraged to apply for a Florence M. Mallinson Scholarship. Applications will be available in the Sunday school office, the church office, or by emailing a request to [Donnaschlatter@comcast.net](mailto:Donnaschlatter@comcast.net) after February 1, 2018.



## A Day in Bethlehem

On Sunday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>, A Day in Bethlehem was hosted in the Family Life Center as a joint event by the Christian Education and Fellowship committees. We would like to thank everyone who stopped in to be a part of this new and exciting Advent celebration. There were tents set up representing different shops that may have been found in Bethlehem at the time of Jesus' birth, such as: pottery, carpentry, Hebrew writing, basket weaving and even samples of actual Frankincense and Myrrh. Merchants dressed the part as they shared their offerings with the townsfolk. A delicious breakfast of bagels, croissants, Danish, Muffins, and various fruits was served. Advent calendars and candy canes were shared, and each tent offered a token to take home. We truly appreciate all of the wonderful feedback we have received from those who were in attendance. We are already excited and planning to expand on this concept for next year!

## Youth Group



### Earn Your Wings

*The Youth Groups would like to thank the congregation for all their support with the "Earn Your Wings" project.* We were able to provide 30 children with a Christmas they will never forget. The Lock In was a fun night of shopping, wrapping, games and fellowship.

The Youth Groups will be hosting the January coffee hour on the 21st to show our appreciation to all of you, please come join us.

The Junior High will be meeting on January 7th from 6:00pm to 7:30pm in the Family Life Center at that time we will have a schedule of events for the New Year.

We would like to wish all of you a very Happy, Healthy and Blessed New Year.

*"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."*

*John 15:12*

## Evangelism

*Happy New Year to All!*



The Evangelism committee looks forward to continuing its efforts in reaching out to the community in an effort “to make disciples of all nations” as our Lord has instructed us to do in Matthew 28:19-20.

We have a wonderful committee consisting of Lori Evans, Nancy Olsen, Carol Boucher, Bobbie Biles, and Ed and Evelyn Carlson. And while he is not a direct member of the team, Pastor Doug is one of our very best Evangelizers as he is a respected member of the community serving on various councils that place him amid the community that is in need.

Evangelism is not the role of only Pastor Doug and members of the evangelism committee, but rather the calling of all God’s people. This year, we are looking for all members of the congregation to help us as we kick off a new campaign entitled “**I Love my Church**”. This was an idea brought to us by Frank Miterotonda last year and after ironing out a few wrinkles, we will be rolling it out at the Congregational meeting later this month.

Throughout the year we hope to keep the name of our church out in the community as often as possible reinforcing our reputation as a good neighbor who is committed to the Brick community. To that end, we are excited to begin the New Year by expanding our outreach both in print media and on the Internet.

We look forward to seeing many new faces at Worship services in 2018. Let’s start by inviting a friend or neighbor at our next Coffee Hour on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in January.

*If your heart is in Evangelism, join us on the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the Month when the committee meets. Additional hands and new ideas will never be turned down.*

## Faithful Remnants

A **BIG Thank You** to all our members and their friends who participated in crocheting or knitting Preemie red hats for the American Heart Association. Through your efforts and generosity, 85 hats were shipped out on December 20<sup>th</sup> to this worthy cause.

*If you have a free Saturday morning and would like to join the Faithful Remnants group, we meet at 10 a.m. in classroom 1. No experience necessary.*

## News from our Mission Co-workers



A recent newsletter from Mark Hare and Jenny Bent, our mission co-workers serving in the Dominican Republic and Haiti, notes that they are now both serving with the Dominican Evangelical Church. They work with marginalized communities and neighborhoods in the Barahona area helping to further the community development initiative known as Community Health Evangelism (CHE). CHE is about being present with people living in very difficult situations and challenging them to believe that God has, in fact, given them all that they need in their hearts, their minds, their souls and in their very beings, to begin **being** the good neighbor - loving God, themselves and those around them to make their lives better.

Mark and Jenny work to help community members focus on what is best about where they live and who they are, and then develop plans for making what they already have better. For example, in Casandra, community members consistently cite the pleasure they have living with the natural beauty of the area, a hillside landscape with many trees and a gorgeous view of the ocean. But, municipal trash collection is non-existent for much of the community because the steep, dirt-surfaced streets make it impossible for municipal dump trucks to come through. So, the CHE facilitators have made trash one focus of their health work.

Mark and Jenny help community movements by providing training that helps participants identify their own resources, organize their planning processes more efficiently, and then reflect on the results of each action they take. They challenge them to develop and verbalize their vision for their communities, and accompany them in the projects they choose that help move them toward that vision. As called upon, they also provide knowledge from their respective training – agriculture from Mark and health-related information from Jenny. They also help link them to others who can provide training and technical resources that Mark and Jenny lack.

From Mark, “We very much do need for you to pray for us as we strive to be faithful and, as Mom loves to say, consistent with our best. Jenny and I are also very grateful for the financial support you provide...” In recent years, our church has donated our portion of the Peace and Global Witness offering to support the work of Mark and Jenny.

To learn more about CHE, check it out online at <https://www.chenetwork.org/what.php>

You can also check out Mark and Jenny’s blogs for information about the work they are doing at:

<http://jennybent-pcusa.blogspot.com> and <http://markandjenny--pcusa.blogspot.com>.

- *from Mission Connections*