

# *Good News*      *January 2013*

**Verse of the Month:** “*And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.*” ~ 1 Corinthians 13:13



*The Presbyterian Church at Absecon*

*208 New Jersey Avenue  
Absecon, New Jersey 08201  
Phone: 609-641-3759 Fax: 609-641-5125*

*Office email: [absecon\\_presby@msn.com](mailto:absecon_presby@msn.com)—Website: [abseconpresby.org](http://abseconpresby.org)*



## Great Opportunities to Volunteer in 2013

As this year draws to a close we are in need of new faces to help with some very special jobs. Some require organization. Some require a little bit of technological savvy. Some just require time.

1. As our service is now projected on PowerPoint we need to schedule people to track the service on the projection screen. The same few people have been doing it, but when they are not here the pastor has to scramble to find someone to do it. Some services have not been on the screen because there is no one to run the projector. Would you agree to do it once or twice a month at 9:30 or 11:00 worship? See the pastor.
2. Kris Jenoriki has been directing the Sunday Breakfast Club for years. She needs a break. This is a job that requires some phone calls to schedule kitchen help, ordering food, turning in money, etc. We do not serve breakfast during the summer or on Brunch Sundays, so there are fewer breakfast Sundays than there used to be.
3. We need more people to usher. Call Don Mills or sign up on the poster board in the hall.
4. We need new faces to help at Sister Jean's Kitchen. The Woods have been going for over six years! We go the second and third Thursday of each month at 11:45 and are usually back by 2:15. Join us!
5. There are always special jobs to do around the church. Fill in a Talent Bank Form available in the narthex.



## Winter Weather Advisory

We do not advertise on radio or media when church activities are canceled due to ice or snow. You will need to call the office where we will leave a message on the answering machine.

Generally, activities are curtailed if there is an advisory or the police have restricted traffic. Also, if schools are closed then any youth activities are normally canceled as well.

As always, if you do not feel comfortable coming out in bad weather **do not** feel obligated to attend if worship or activities have not been canceled. We'd rather you be safe than sorry!



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize all of the leaders and volunteers who work so hard to make these programs successful, and the sponsors that support them. Without everyone's hard work and dedication, we would not have such a wonderful range of programs to offer to the young and not-so-young members of our congregation. Group leaders and Sunday School teachers give much of

themselves to prepare and present lessons each week - so much of their work is behind the scenes that we don't always realize how much they are contributing to these programs through their efforts. Thanks to all for the gifts of your time and talent!

I look forward to a great second half of the year for all of our programs!

In His Service,  
Scott Sabo  
Christian Education Chairperson

### **Sunday School and Related News for January**

This past December was amazing between The Bethlehem Project directed by Linda Gillis, Fran Tanner, and Dawn Houseworth, the Birthday Party for Jesus and luncheon, Calls to Worship by the PreK-K class and Senior Youth, and the Christmas Eve Christmas Pageant directed by Janna Beth Cobb and Dawn Lewis. Thank you, everyone, who reached out and directed, assisted, and participated in our many Christmas events. It was a spectacular way to celebrate Jesus!

### **Highlights and Up Coming Events**

- ◆ We will ring in the New Year on December 30<sup>th</sup> by wearing New Year's Eve hats and bringing bells and noise makers. Let us make a joyful noise as we sing together "New Life."
- ◆ Jr. Choir presents the Call to Worship on January 6<sup>th</sup>
- ◆ Our Senior Youth Group presents the Call to Worship on January 13<sup>th</sup>
- ◆ Senior Youth Choir performs on January 20<sup>th</sup>
- ◆ Family Worship Sunday takes place on January 27<sup>th</sup>

May you all feel peace and joy of Jesus this Christmas season.

Love, Priscilla



### **Lions & Lambs:**

Happy New Year!!! Lions and Lambs raised an additional \$79 for Sister Jean's Kitchen while joyously celebrating Jesus' Birthday. Cupcake decorating continues to be a well liked activity at this event. Thanks to all for their support, from parents who baked and decorated, to those of you who supported this lesson in feeding the hungry. Each child received a LifeSaver for their cupcake when proclaiming, "Jesus is my LifeSaver". Many changed that to "LifeSavior". Whose your LifeSavior? . . . The party ended with our first annual snowball fight! What a blast! Much thanks to the following for their kindness in joining me to make over 250 snowballs – Karen Muldoon, friends, Lisa & Rita Wochner and Fran Tanner. Please join in at any time to help make them. I believe that this event will grow into something much bigger on many other occasions - stay tuned.

Parents of Lions and Lambs will be reviewing potential events for the remainder of the school year and confirming the schedule at our first Sunday in January. Kids - don't forget to bring something for our "What I got for Christmas" Show & Share & Tell. See you then!!!

In His Service,  
JoAnn Sabo



### Senior Youth Group

We had our Christmas party and gift exchange. Too funny! We had everything from gift cards to a rubber chicken. We had a lot of fun.

The dinner schedule for the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the year was handed out. The schedule goes to April 8<sup>th</sup>. By April 8<sup>th</sup> every PERSON will have brought in 1 dinner and 1 salad. I'm not quite sure what to do with the next few weeks. But for now:

- Jan. 7<sup>th</sup> Justin Thomas...dinner/Dylan...salad
- 14<sup>th</sup> Sam.....dinner/ Gia...salad
- 21<sup>st</sup> Courtney....dinner/ Mike....salad
- 28<sup>th</sup> Nick Hughes..dinner/Angelina..salad

You may have noticed some different faces at the December brunch. A<sub>2</sub>J has agreed to help out and share the tips. The senior youth group now has 2 teens playing hockey, 2 on the wrestling team, and 4 have jobs. We truly appreciate A<sub>2</sub>J and their willingness to jump in and help us out!

We are planning a ski trip to Cobb's cabin. We are looking at the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend in January.

We hope everyone had a wonderful and Blessed Christmas!  
Karen Muldoon



### Doug Jablonski Men's Fellowship – Saturday, Jan. 5, 8:30am

The Men's Fellowship will meet for breakfast on Saturday, January 5, at 8:30am. Breakfast is \$3.00. We will finalize plans for the Valentine Dinner Show on Saturday, February 2. The band, Forever Young, will be performing. (It's been rumored that Elvis will be making an appearance.)



### Women's Circles

How are Christians to live in the world, yet live distinctly Christian lives? How do the values and norms of the culture influence how we understand our faith? What does it mean to be the family of God in our time and culture? These are some of the questions we will examine in our new Bible study about the general epistles. Come and join us as we discover what the general epistles are - who wrote them - and what issues they addressed.

**The Ruth Circle** will meet at 1:00 p.m. Friday, January 4<sup>th</sup>, at the home of Betsy Cunius. The **Sarah Circle** will meet in Cobb Lounge at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, January 9<sup>th</sup>. The **Martha Circle** will meet at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, January 10<sup>th</sup>, at the home of Carol Thomas.

Carol Kleiner and Gerry delivered the following items to the Charles L. Spragg School in Egg Harbor City on Tuesday, December 18: 78 pairs of socks, 52 pairs of gloves, 48 hats, 13 scarves, 12 hat & glove sets, 3 hat, glove & scarf sets, and 2 hat & scarf sets. Many thanks to the ladies for their generous contributions. **We especially thank Kris Jenoriki, Ethel Washington and Libby Little for their hand made scarves and hats.**

In late October the Women's Circles prepared 28 "goodie boxes" for our college students. Here are some of the thank you notes that have been received:

Ladies of the Martha, Ruth & Sarah Circles, Thank you so much for the lovely box of goodies. It is always so nice to receive one of your "snack" boxes in the mail. I really enjoyed the peanut-butter crackers, toothpaste (since I needed a new tube), and of course the hot chocolate that you pack. Receiving the box made my whole week of studying a little better. Thank you all, Erin Nassif (daughter of David & Naida Burgess)

To the Ladies of the Martha, Ruth & Sarah Circles, Thank you so much for the kind care-package you sent. The brownies were delicious! I had been having a bad day when I received your generous gift. It immediately brightened my day. I cannot begin to express how much I appreciate your kindness. Thank you and God bless! Colleen Sheahan (granddaughter of Roger & Jinny Wolcott)

Absecon Presbyterian church ladies, Thank you all for the package of "goodies"!! It was greatly appreciated! Love in Christ, Ashley Gras (granddaughter of Grace Gras)

Ladies, A few short words to help express a "thank you" for your thoughtfulness. Leah Dockery (granddaughter of Grace Gras)

Dear Women's Groups, Thank you very much for the care package. I couldn't believe all of those amazing goodies stuffed inside that little box. Thanks, Chris Jablonski (son of Terri Jablonski & grandson of George & Marge Chapman)

Dear the Lovely Ladies of the Martha, Ruth & Sarah Circles of the Absecon Presbyterian Church, Thank you so much for your thoughtful care package. All of the yummy treats and items are just perfect. It truly made me smile when I received this package. Thank you again. With lots of love. XOXO. Jenna Sterling (daughter of Keith & Brenda Sterling & granddaughter of David & Mae Sterling)

To the Ladies of the Martha, Ruth and Sarah Circles of the Absecon Presbyterian Church, Thank you so much for the package of goodies. It has been a wonderful treat for the past three years. I really appreciate all of the time and effort you put into this. I hope you all have a safe and wonderful holiday season! Thank you! Kelly McGlynn (granddaughter of Loretta Metz)

Dear Women's Circles, I would like to express my utmost thanks for the care package. At this point in the semester it is much more difficult to find the time to go shopping for groceries, and your care package came at just the right time to help with that. It never fails to bring me a little bit of home while away at college. Again, many thanks! Daniel Krchnavek (grandson of Ron & Joyce Pfeiffer) P.S. The brownies were delicious.

Ladies, I got your care package a bit late as I was home after having my tonsils out, but I want to thank you so much for everything. I appreciate the care packages so much! And always look forward to them. Love always, Page Pfeiffer (granddaughter of Ron & Joyce Pfeiffer)

Ladies, Thank you for the "goodie" box. It had a lot of great things that I can use at school. I appreciate your thankfulness. Ian Bomely (grandson of David & Judy Stebbins)

Dear Ladies, I just got the care package and honestly it could not have come at a better time with finals next week! These are great ways to show a student that we are being looked out for and I greatly appreciate it! Thank you. Patrick Maurer (grandson of Jim Maurer)

Dear Women's circles, Thank you so much for my care package of food and other items. It helped me save money and that's all a college student can ask for! I continue to seek God's will for me here at Syracuse University and try to be an example for others. Once again, thank you! God bless, Justin Lehman (grandson of Jim Maurer)



### **New Membership classes Begin January 6**

January 6 is the Feast of Epiphany which means “The Appearing”. We use it for making a discovery or the “ah-ha” moment. We say we had an epiphany.

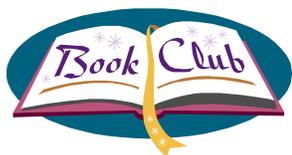
So here is a special epiphany for the new year – how about joining church? You will discover new friends and where God may be directing your life in 2013 and beyond.

Joining church is not hard. There are three classes that meet on Sunday afternoons at 3:00pm January 6, 13, and 20 in Cobb Lounge. We will talk about faith, Presbyterian history, and the programs of our church here in Absecon. The elders will receive you as a member at their meeting on February 5.

Please pray about this and plan on coming. It will open your eyes to an epiphany of God’s making.

See you there!

Pastors Cobb and Reedell



### **Christian Readers Book Club**

Please join us on Wednesday, January 16, at 6:30 p.m. This month we are reading one or both of the following books. The first one is “Christmas at Harrington's” by Melody Carlson. Christmas is approaching and Lena Markham finds herself penniless, friendless and nearly hopeless. She is trying to restart her life, but job opportunities are practically nonexistent. When a secondhand red coat unexpectedly lands her a job as Mrs. Santa at a department store, Lena finally thinks her luck is changing... But can she keep her past a secret?

The other book we are reading is called “Blame It on the Mistletoe” by Joyce Magnin. Strange happenings are afoot at the Greenbrier Nursing Home. The folks have suddenly grown younger, happier, and even a bit friskier thanks to Leon Fontaine, the newest Paradise Trailer Park resident. But Mildred Blessings is suspicious and sets out to investigate while the wedding to end all weddings is being planned. Only in Bright's Pond nothing ever really goes as planned. (There aren't any copies of the books at the library. They are available at Barnes and Noble and also Bam online.)

## **Pastors' Sunday Evening Bible Study - January 27 - 6:30 p.m.**

After a short break, Pastors Cobb and Reedell will begin a new Sunday Evening Bible Study on January 27<sup>th</sup> called "People of Faith: Christianity in America." As the first nation in the history of the world based on a concept of religious freedom, the United States became a place of unprecedented religious diversity and experimentation. This 6 week study examines the history of Christianity in America, from the first European Christian settlers to the many expressions of faith in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This series was produced with the support of a grant from the Lilly Endowment. Some of the influential Christians we will look at are: Jonathan Edwards, Harriett Beecher Stowe, Martin Luther King Jr, and Billy Graham. Come join us as we see how these Christian leaders helped shape the America we live in.

---



### **Worship Committee**

#### **Worship**

Worship Committee needs YOU. We are looking for someone to make phone calls to schedule communion servers. We are also looking for those interested in ushering. Even if you have never done either of these tasks....don't worry...we will help you. Don Mills has posted a HUGE signup sheet for ushers. It is on the bulletin board in the hall. Please check it out.

I would like to thank everyone for your hours of dedication and preparation for both the Christmas play and the Cantata. Absolutely wonderful!!!! !

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to All,  
Karen Muldoon

#### **New Procedures for Ushers**

Those interested in ushering: Sign up on the bulletin board for the Sunday in January, February, and March you wish to serve. See Don Mills in the lobby between services.

#### **Dr. Gary Young Returns on Sunday, Jan. 13, at 11:00am**

Gary will follow up on his very exciting 2011 presentation on nutrition which will be held from 11am – 12:15pm.

Following lunch, a second session will commence at 12:45. Gary will discuss avoiding depression.

---



#### **Mission/Evangelism News**

Many thanks for your generous offerings on Christmas Eve. A total of \$1,825 was received to benefit the Women's Shelter in Northfield.

The deadline for Hygiene Kits is January 13. Items to be included in the kits are:

- 1 – hand towel (approximately 16” x 28”, no fingertip or bath towels)
- 1 – washcloth
- 1 – wide-tooth comb (remove from package)
- 1 – nail clipper (no metal files or emery boards; remove from package)
- 1 – bar of soap (bath size in wrapper)
- 1 – toothbrush (in original packaging)
- 6 – Band-Aids® or other adhesive bandage strips

Please do not add toothpaste. Toothpaste with an extended expiration date will be added to Hygiene Kit shipments just prior to shipment.

Seal all items in a one-gallon plastic bag with a zipper closure. (Value: \$10)



News from the Deacons  
January 2013

The Deacons are looking forward to an amazing New Year and wish to thank everyone for continuing to make our church a welcome place for all. The Deacons also wish to thank each and every one who gave so generously during the past year. We had many needs and YOUR donations truly made a difference for many families.

The Community Food Bank was so grateful for our donation of about 500 pounds of food collected during the annual Harvest Home Collection, especially during such a difficult time for many. Thank You!

Deacons also provided 16 goodie bags that were delivered during Christmas caroling.

A special thank you to Elaine Risley and Tripicians for putting together and then donating all the items in the goodie bags!

Next Deacons Meeting will be Saturday, February 2, 10 am in Cobb Lounge. We will install our new members, Ginny Davenport and Ilsa Smith, and have our annual picture taken. We will miss and wish to thank Irene Hunter and Pat Hudak for their years of service on the board of Deacons.

Have a Happy, Healthy, and Holy New Year!

In Christian service and love,  
Naida Burgess, Moderator

### **Prayer Shawl Ministry**

The Prayer Shawl Ministry has been busy this year filling your requests for shawls and blankets. To date we have done 72 in 2012.

If you have a request and cannot find a form in the pew racks, please fill out a piece of paper with your name and phone number and the name, gender, adult or child, and reason for requests (medical, comfort, etc.), place in collection plate or drop off in office.

We invite anyone to please join the group in February 2013. We usually meet the first Saturday of the month at 9:30 AM in the chapel. We go from February to June and September to December.

I would like to thank all the members of the ministry for all their beautiful work and to those of you who have so generously supported us with your monetary donations and materials needed to continue.

Hope to see some new faces at the table in February.

In His Service,  
Loretta Metz

### **News from Lisa Whitaker – Winter Rainbows**

I was sitting on a bus from New York to Toms River. I had just opened my eyes from a wee, bus ride nap when I noticed it was raining. It was strange because when I looked to the west, there was a beautiful sunset painting the sky, yet right where we were, it was pouring rain. The thought did pass through my mind, I wonder if there is a rainbow? But I quickly dismissed it because after all, it was December. The sun was low on the horizon, and it just didn't seem like an ideal scenario for a rainbow. Then we turned the corner . . . and there it was streaking across the dark eastern sky. What? How could this be, there was hardly enough sun to create the reflection, it was late afternoon in December . . . my mind was full of reasons why this rainbow should not have been there. In that moment God reminded me that His promises are always at work . . . even when 20 children and 6 adults are ruthlessly murdered . . . even when hurricanes wash away a lifetime of memories . . . even when the world is on edge at dooms day predictions. Yes, God's promises still remain. He is a God who gently places a rainbow in the winter sky to remind us of His character. He reminds us that when the world seems like an evil disaster - He remains faithful. As you look to 2013, I hope one of your resolutions is to notice the rainbows in winter.

Once again I want to thank you for your on-going prayers and financial support. My 2013 schedule is already full as God continues to open doors of ministry both overseas and locally.

Happy New Year,  
Lisa



### **Real Partners Uganda**

The good people of Absecon Presbyterian Church contributed \$830.00 to Christmas in September this year. Because of you 83 Ugandan families will be able to enjoy a Christmas meal. Thank you.

The 2012 school year in Uganda has come to an end, and the children are now home on a break until school starts up again in February. There are many children who are in need of a sponsor so they, too, can attend school. The cost to sponsor a child is \$180.00 for an entire year. This \$180 provides education, uniforms, food and medical care. This breaks down to only \$16 monthly. I can't even buy a book or go out to dinner for \$16, yet that \$16 will mean so much for a child in Uganda.

What can you expect to receive for your \$180 a year? About twice a year you will receive a new photo of your child and either a note or pictures drawn by your child. The teacher also prepares an information sheet informing you of the child's progress in school.

I have sponsored Angella for the past 3 years, and I have seen her grow into a healthy, happy girl with a beautiful smile. She tells me that English is her favorite school subject. Her favorite color has changed over the years from red to green because she says "Uganda has a green vegetation." She always draws and colors pictures for me, and she loves music and dancing. I wish I could print as well as Angella does.

I always look forward to receiving notes and pictures from Angella. If you are interested in bringing joy to a boy or girl as well as to yourself by sponsoring a child, please contact Gerry at 404-9271 and I will see that you get the information you need to do so. Please pray about this. It means so much to a child to receive an education because someone cares for them.



---

## **Stewardship Committee Report**

*Remember: Together We Light the Way*

### **What have you done lately to bring new members to our Church?**

As of December 13, we have received 61 pledge cards totaling \$112,754. Last year at this time we had received 60 pledge cards totaling \$114,466. In all of 2012 we received 74 pledge cards totaling \$128,026. The returns so far indicate about the same level of financial support as last year. *If you have not yet returned your pledge card, please do so as soon as possible by placing it in the offering plate or mailing it to the church.*

Many of you have returned the Talent Bank Questionnaire. After the holidays the responses will be tallied and a complete list will be given to the Committee Chairmen at the February Session meeting (we do not meet in January) to be added to the Master List generated two years ago. Committee Chairs will be encouraged to contact you to serve as you indicated.

Additional pledge cards and Talent Bank Questionnaire forms are available in the Narthex.

Lastly, please remember to pick up your box of envelopes in the mailbox outside Madden Hall.

The 2013 Budget was approved by Session on December 4. A detailed copy will be in the Annual Report. You can also obtain a copy in the church office. Highlight of the 2013 budget is an overall increase from this year - \$220,771 to \$225,721. This brings the budget back to the level it was for 2009, the year the economy tanked. Highlighting the reasons for the increase are a 2% raise for our employees; insurance costs going from \$12,600 to \$14,100; and a \$500 increase for equipment and purchases.

There will be no Winter Fund Raiser in 2013 as no major project was identified at this time that needed attention.

Our challenge in 2013 will be funding the budget. Hopefully your donations to the General Fund will be the same or greater than in 2012. We had a good year with our returns from the McMullin fund and hopefully the stock market will continue doing well so our income will again be at a high level. At this time, it appears that all three rental properties are rented. This year, what rental income we received went almost entirely to paying bills to maintain the properties, with very little if anything left over to support the General Fund. If we receive rental income for the entire year, this will greatly help in funding the budget.

Pray that at this time next year we can say that we had a good year.

Statistical Report for November

Budget for 2012	\$220,771.00
Budgetary needs through November 25, 2012	\$203,788.80
Our giving through 11/25/12	\$161,305.34
Investment Income	\$ 20,617.59
Rental Income (net)	\$ 332.35
Total	\$182,255.28
Amount <u>under</u> budget	\$ 21,533.51

Average weekly giving by month

	<b>2012</b>	<b>2011</b>		<b>2012</b>	<b>2011</b>
January	\$3257.33	\$3665.34	July	\$3085.94	\$2876.39
February	\$3384.29	\$3126.90	August	\$2851.41	\$2202.63*
March	\$3326.92	\$3391.40	September	\$3384.49	\$3594.00
April	\$3527.09	\$3545.45	October	\$3507.46	\$2924.83
May	\$3271.90	\$2760.05	November	\$3872.57	\$3220.38
June	\$3403.33	\$3301.79			*closed 8/28

Gerald W. Hoenes  
Stewardship Committee Chairperson

**FUNdraising Committee**



The tentative date for our Dinner and Movie Night at the church is March 2nd. Dinner will start promptly at 6PM with a movie to start in the sanctuary at 7:30. The cost will be \$10. The movie is yet to be determined.

Also, save the date of May 19, 2013! This will be our second annual Golf Tournament, and we are hopeful that it will be even more of a success this year. Registration will begin at 1PM with a shotgun start at 2PM. This event will take place at Harbor Pines Golf Course in Egg Harbor Township, just off of Ocean Heights Ave.

Our next bus trip will be in the planning soon, so be on the lookout for more details to come.

Our next FUNdraising meeting will be held on Tuesday Jan 15<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30 in Cobb lounge.

In Christian Love and Fellowship,  
Dawn Duran, Chairperson



**Golf Tournament/Auction Fundraiser**

We have our date - May 19th @ Harbor Pines. We did so well last year, and after Sandy hit our area hard we decided to share our tournament fundraiser with 2 local charities. The

Presbyterian Church of Absecon will be hosting with proceeds going to the church, Community Food Bank, and Salvation Army. We have confirmed the Food Bank, but have not as of today confirmed the Salvation Army.

We believe this to be a win, win, win situation. We do the work, and everyone gets some much needed funding. Including these (2) charities will make our tournament more appealing to a larger number of golfers and diners.

Here is what we have so far....remember this is subject to change:

1 pm registration & 2 pm shot gun start

\$115.00/golfer incl. golf, buffet dinner and hot dog @ registration...must PRE-PAY before April 2<sup>nd</sup>. After April 2nd the price becomes \$125.00/golfer

Dinner Only \$35.00 (Italian buffet)

Dinner and Clinic \$50.00 (the clinic is 1 hour)

Our deadline is MAY 9<sup>th</sup>.

We are already receiving donations. If you would like to donate or assist with the event, please contact Karen Muldoon or anyone on the committee.

Thanks and have a Blessed Month!

Karen Muldoon



### **Thank You for December**

December was almost certainly the busiest month of the year. There were more lunches, special events, etc., than any other month. We may miss your name, and we're sorry if we do.

1. All who helped put up Christmas decorations – Ginny Davenport, Elaine Risley, Jan Jorgensen, Pastor Cobb, etc.
2. The AA guys who moved the manger box, set up tables and chairs, etc.
3. Linda Gillis, Dawn Houseworth, Fran Tanner, Roger Wolcott, Bob Gillis, and all the staff of our Christmas production, “The Bethlehem Project”.
4. Leo, Melvin and others for the great brunch on December 16, and the youth groups who worked together to get it served and cleaned up.
5. Priscilla and helpers for a great Birthday Party for Jesus on December 9.
6. Jan Jorgensen for driving up to the nursery in Hammonton to pick up the poinsettias for our Christmas worship services.
7. Karen Muldoon and youth, Jan Jorgensen, Melvin Washington, and the Conovers for working hard to prepare the Leek House for rental. It is now occupied.

8. Brian, Sarah, and baby Kayleigh for a great job as our Christmas nativity family on December 24.
9. Dawn Lewis, Janna Beth, and our Sunday School for a great job with the nativity pageant.
10. Our choir for their cantata, "Joy to the World", and our bell choir for their piece on Christmas Eve. Both really made the evening special.
11. Vic Werner, Richard Garrick, Nicole Gillis, and all who provided special Christmas music during December.
12. Gay Channell for working a lot of extra hours to get our bulletins, sign ups, poinsettia and memorial lists, additional programs and inserts, PowerPoint, etc. ready in time. Great Work!
13. Jack & Dee Heil for leading our first ever Christmas memorial candlelight service on December 16. I think we have a new tradition.
14. Joanna Howell for a great Evergreens luncheon on December 12 and two years of leadership before that. We will miss your smiling face and good attitude. And thanks go to Cathy Guenther who has agreed to lead the group beginning this month.
15. The 22 people who went Christmas Caroling with the pastor on December 23.



### **Church Rental Properties All Occupied**

The two houses and Stopfer Building are now rented.

**FINANCE  
COMMITTEE**

Sharnica Barnes signed a lease for a day care center to open soon in our Stopfer Building. This is welcome news after two years of vacancy.

The Leek House was rented to a young couple who moved in just before Christmas. They are glad to finally have a place to live following Hurricane Sandy.

The middle house, 19 School Street, has been rented to a young couple for nearly a year.

We rejoice that these properties are being utilized and will derive income for our church. Due to vacancies and repair needs our properties realized no income for us in 2012.



### **Fellowship News**

I hope everyone had a joyous Christmas. The New Year starts with our first of two soup/baked goods sales which will be held on Jan. 13. If you would like to donate your

favorite recipe for the sale a sign up sheet will be on the board across from the coat rack. Soup containers will be provided.

Also, Jan. 26 John Taylor will be entertaining the congregation. This is a concert only event, no meal will be served. More information is provided within this issue.

Sincerely,  
Tina Brown

### **Happy Friday January 11, 6:00pm**

We will start the New Year with BINGO. Small prizes will be given to the winners. We had a good time last year playing BINGO.

Please bring the dish of your choice for our covered dish supper.

See you all on Happy Friday, January 11, at 6:00pm.

Vic Vabelson



### **Lunch Bunch to the Black Cat**

Yes, we are going to a local establishment featuring a variety of libation. But we will be in the dining room, not at the bar.

Meet at the church at 11:50 or at the restaurant at noon. (It's only three blocks away.)

### **Evergreens Wednesday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 12 Noon**

I am looking forward to getting to know all of you, as we begin a new year. I thought it would be fun to think about a favorite Christmas gift that we received and talk about why it was so special to us. It could be any year we choose.

Come join us, we are looking for new friends. Bring a sandwich; desert and a beverage will be served.

Cathy Guenther

### **April Trip to Eagle Theatre**

The Doug Jablonski Men's Fellowship is sponsoring an April trip to the Eagle Theatre in Hammonton to see the acclaimed musical "Hair". Look for further information next month.

Your Fellowship Committee cordially invites everyone to share in -----

An EVENING WITH JOHN TAYLOR!  
in concert.....

SAT... JAN. 26<sup>th</sup> - 2013

at 7p

Love offering

All seats Reserved in advance

Call Joanie for tickets starting January 2<sup>nd</sup>  
641-1839 (Handicapped requests given preference when possible)

Please Read Carefully - - - -

Due to the ever-present possibility of "BAD" winter weather, we will NOT have a dinner or special refreshments - (thus relieving our faithful Fellowship Volunteers of a great concern).

Our Love Offering will support John's incredible Christian Concert Ministry - There is NO CHARGE for this INSPIRING EVE - Just ask for a TICKET with your Reserved Seat Number on it!!! John is driving from FL (where he's lived for several years) to visit family and will give several concerts in NJ while here.

(NOTE:) We may have "Surprise Guests" for John (and us) - making this truly an evening to remember. If you have never heard John Taylor in concert, do read the RE-INTRODUCING - JOHN TAYLOR article that was in our December Good News!



In the Father's House - Dave Vigue

A man we all knew and loved in the 1990's went home to be with the Lord on November 26.

Dave had served our church as music director for seven years, then a church in Florida for an additional six years, then the Orem United Methodist Church outside of Baltimore until his sudden passing from an aortic aneurism. Dave was 58.

Our prayers are with his family this Christmas. Mary Jane is a neonatal nurse in a Baltimore hospital. She had been a choir member, Sunday School superintendant, Sunday breakfast chef, deacon, and many other things when she was living here.

The Cobbs & Vignes have maintained a relationship these many years, and our pastor spoke at his memorial service on December 1.

Frankie, Gene and George all took it pretty hard. George and Frankie spoke at the service. Keep them in prayer this holiday. Dave loved Christmas. His choir had already started practicing their Christmas cantata when Dave died. The Orem church is devastated without their music director.



To all of our wonderful friends at Absecon Presbyterian Church: If you did not receive a Christmas greeting from us this year, -- not to worry, we wish you all a belated Merry Christmas and a very healthy Happy New Year with our special gift to the Board of Deacons. They do so many good things to benefit us all.

God bless you all.

Love,  
Paul and Marjorie Hamer

\* \* \* \* \*

I want to thank all my friends for my Christmas cards.

Jean Delesantro

\* \* \* \* \*

Dear Girls,

On Sunday afternoon two girls came to my door with a bag of goodies and two place mats made in the Sunday School. It was so sweet of them and I appreciate it so very much.

We used the place mats on Thanksgiving, and they looked so nice on the table.

Thanks, girls. Keep up the good work.

Essie Newell

\* \* \* \* \*

To My Sunday School Friends,

Thank you so much for my goodies. I love split pea soup, and the pumpkin cranberry bread is delicious.

Give Thanks cards I'll keep always.

Sincerely,  
Laura May St. John

\* \* \* \* \*

Dear Sunday School ~

I would like to thank all of you for thinking of me with the chicken soup and the macaroni casserole. The placemats were absolutely beautiful with the fall décor!

In Christian Love,  
Ilsa Smith

\* \* \* \* \*

Dear Children and Teachers,

Such lovely placemats and tasty foods. Thank you so much for remembering me.

In Christian Love,  
Ruth Champion

(Thanks to Karen and children for delivering.)

\* \* \* \* \*

Thank you the church officers for the generous gift card given to me on behalf of the church. It will indeed prove useful!

I wish everyone a blessed and happy 2013.  
Gay Channell

\* \* \* \* \*

.....

*There Must Be a Reason*

*There must be a reason that our children had to die  
There must be a reason but I can't find the answer why  
There must be a reason for each one of us to carry on  
But it's so very hard to find a reason when your child is gone.*

*There must be a reason why our children are taken away  
There must be a reason they are not with us today  
There must be a reason why our children cannot be here  
But we keep searching for a reason for they were all so dear.*

*There must be a reason they're gone but we loved them so much  
There must be a reason that they are not here to touch  
There must be a reason but only God seems to know  
If we could just find that reason it would keep our heart aglow.*

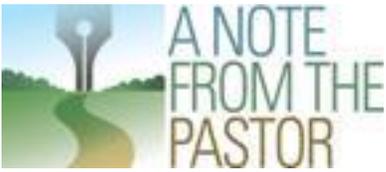
*There must be a reason for everything that happens here  
There must be a reason that we all have to shed a tear  
There must be a reason that each one of us feel so alone  
I guess only God knows the reason He takes all of our children home.*

*There must be a reason we have to suffer as we do  
There must be a reason for all of the pain that we go through  
There must be a reason so many words that are spoken  
But we keep trying to find a reason that our hearts were broken.*

*No one has an answer for us we just all keep asking why  
But we know that our children are angels up in the sky  
Some day when we see the light the answers will be all there  
For now we have to go on and find a reason to care.*

*By Jack and Dee Heil*

*Dedicated to all the parents of the children who were killed in  
Newtown, Conn. at Sandy Hook School*



## New Life in 2013

*“For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.’ So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were*

*added.” ~ Acts 2:39, 41*

On December 19 (the eleventh anniversary of my mother’s death) I got some wonderful news the likes of which I haven’t heard from any of you in years – a new baby is on the way. Laura Kay is expecting her fourth child in June. Next Christmas the child will be several months old, a much better age to play Baby Jesus if they so choose. (Baby Timothy) was only five days old when he was Baby Jesus last Christmas.) We were just rejoicing the first birthday of one new baby when news of another now fills our holiday joy. Christmas is a great time of year to welcome newness – new programs, a Christmas cantata, new lighting, etc.

But as we finish out this year our church hopes and prays that we will enjoy the pitter patter of little feet in our church nursery again. I believe 2012 is the first year in my ministry in which we baptized no children. It will also be remembered as the year we closed regular nursery service. (Just a few years ago we offered nursery at both services.) The dearth of children will be felt in our Sunday School as classes will have fewer pupils. Our youth group attendance is already inverted. In most churches the elementary group is the biggest, (remember the days when our Youth Club had over 50 kids? I do) and the numbers thin out as groups get older. But our biggest group is senior high (usually 15 kids) and groups get smaller as you work down in age.

As I write this at the end of 2012 I see the challenge we must face finding new blood. Once again this year more members died or moved away than joined. The decline in numbers makes everything more difficult. I’m not just talking about youth. With fewer members we struggle to find officers (we had to open the floor to nominations because the Nominating Committee could not find people to serve). Without younger members we can’t find people to run PowerPoint, climb ladders on work days, or lead programs for younger people. More and more the story is “I’m too old for that – find someone younger.” That only works when younger people are available!

To me 2012 will be remembered as the year of building upgrades and additions. For too long all I heard is “We can’t go along without seal coating the lots or changing windows that don’t work, or fixing the roof, etc.” Others said, “We must put in a new fire suppression system, or a sump pump, etc.” I really wonder how different the church would be if we had postponed some of those decisions. How essential were they?

One thing is sure, new members are essential.

In the Bible a church was a group of worshipping people. It was 300 years before the word was associated with a building. I just wish I heard people saying, “We must attract new families.” “We must build up our Sunday School.” “We must see baptisms return.” “We must get new members.” Whether people say it or not, we must attract new members. That is what is essential to a church’s future.

So here is the good news for 2013: The buildings are in good shape. We have lots of great programs, circles, Bible studies, worship, mission projects, dinners, etc. More than any church in town. It’s a rare night when nobody is using the buildings.

Now the not so good news for 2013: all of those programs will begin to decline and Sunday School rooms will begin to stand idle as they do in a lot of old churches if we don’t actively work on renewal and membership. Membership is not just the role of clergy or officers – all of us need to be involved. In 2013 we don’t want to hear hammers and saws. We need to hear the pitter patter of little feet. Here’s more good news: this church has

never met a challenge it couldn't meet. We are a great church. 2013 is a year of public relations. The future will be bright.

Happy New Year.

*- Dave*

**Lay Assistants**

- 6 9:30  
11:00
- 13 9:30  
11:00 Vic Abelson
- 20 9:30  
11:15 Tina Brown
- 27 10:00 Melvin Washington

**Head Ushers**

- 6 9:30 Vic & Rita Abelson  
11:00 Joan Pattky, Don Mills
- 13 9:30 Carol Thomas, Elaine Risley  
11:00 Shirley Smith, Joanna Howell
- 20 9:30  
11:15 Mary Bew, Betty Lloyd
- 27 10:00 Joan Nale, Ginny Davenport

**Collection (9:30)**

- 6 Dirk & Desiree Williamson
- 13 Ron & Joyce Pfeiffer
- 20
- 27 (10:00) Joe Marshall

**Deacons for the Month**

- 9:30 Pat Hudak
- 11:00 Mary Bew

**Acolyte (9:30)**

- 6
- 13
- 20
- 27

**Nursery (9:30)**

- 6 Alice Malfi
- 13 Fran Tanner
- 20 Jennifer Platt
- 27 Gloria Achamizo

**Van Drivers**

- 6 John Channell
- 13 Barb Hughes
- 20 Dirk Williamson
- 27 Vic Abelson

**Refreshment Hosts**

- 6
- 13
- 20 Join us for brunch!
- 27

**Breakfast Club Kitchen Crew**

- 6 Set-up – Libby Little  
Cook – Ed Little  
Clean-up – Richard & Doris Wood
- 13 Set-up – Bob Wilkenloh  
Cook – John Channell  
Clean-up – Ginny & Bill Davenport
- 20 Join us for Brunch!
- 27 Set-up – Kris Jenoriki  
Cook – Bryan Hawkes  
Clean-up – Olga Davies & Jean Delesantro

