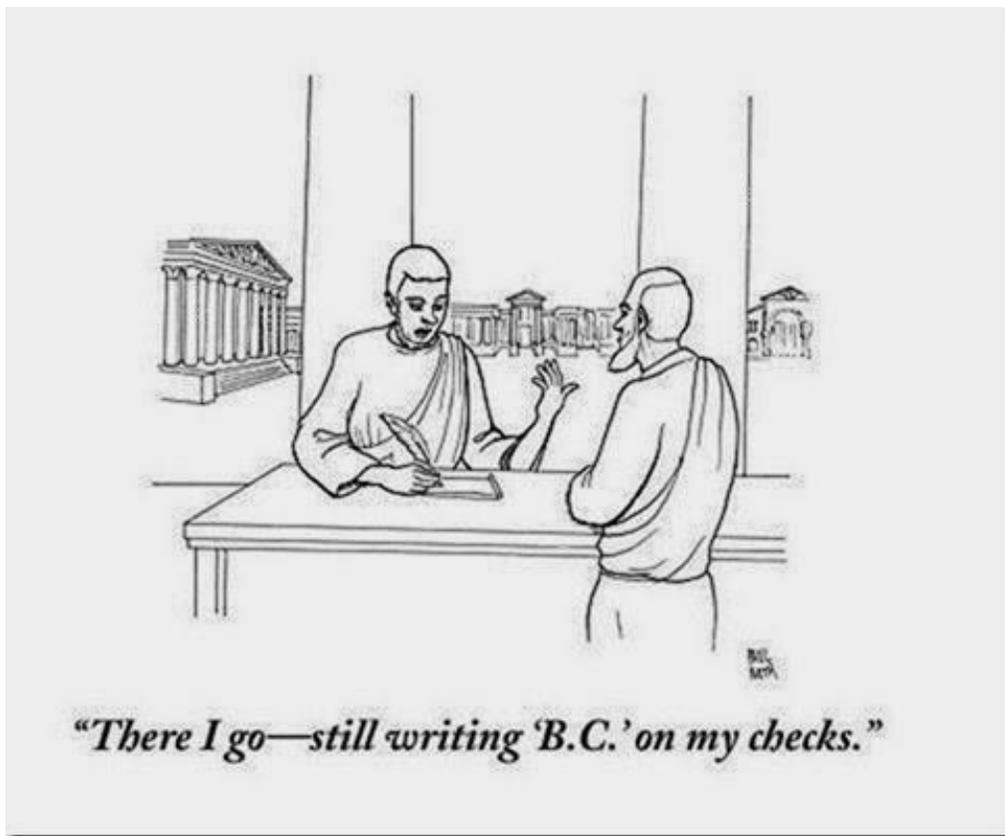


January 2016

Good News

Verse of the Month: *“Peace I leave you; my peace I give you, I do not give to you as the world give. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” ~ John 14:27*



The Presbyterian Church at Absecon

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“A Few Odd Moments”

From the Interim Pastor for the January 2016
Newsletter



From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Friends,

I am stealing a few odd moments to write to you on Christmas Eve, 2015. The rest of the staff has departed after completing the preparations for the two worship services this evening. I just returned from visiting some people and it has become eerily quiet in the church building with the exception of the children leaving the day care center that is attached to the Sunday school wing. The little children are excited for the most part as their parents pick them up. It will probably be a while before they can settle down enough to sleep.

I could not imagine writing anything about January and a New Year at the Absecon Church.

After all; it is not yet Christmas. I wandered into the atrium and turned on the two Christmas trees in the hall. Having started lighting things, I could not stop. I lit the Chrismon tree in the sanctuary and the sconces on the walls and sat down in one of the back pews, (a perspective I do not often experience).

It was almost as if Christmas had passed. I became melancholy, missing it before the season actually departed. The rush to the big day was complete. There was an anticipatory sadness as I sat there alone. Shortly, there would be lots of children and excitement as I celebrated the holy night in yet another congregation.

The New Year will bring many changes for this congregation. You will experience a refreshment and a fulfillment. Next Christmas, in all likelihood, you will be celebrating new ministry and linking your own new birth as a church with the renewal of the new birth of the Lord of heaven and earth. It will be exciting and deeply poignant. This year is a transition. Many old things are still in place. It is the lull before the great upheaval that means new life.

But, for a few minutes, I sensed a kind of sadness that vibrated from the walls of the sanctuary. All things must change. I have made few changes, but changes have been made. Soon, many changes will follow and for the good I am certain.

This is a time of sentimental thoughts and nostalgia. But, truly, the best is yet to come. There will be many Christmases before the Lord returns to take us all home, but for the in-between times, we are home in the house of the Lord.

Happy Epiphany and the season of hope anticipating Easter.

Tom Purchase





Annual Meeting to Be Held January 24

Our annual meeting of the congregation and corporation will be held Sunday, January 24, following 10:00 worship. Reports will be reviewed and accepted. A Nominating Committee (for new officers) will be elected, and there will be time for old and new business.

A free pizza luncheon will follow in Madden Hall for all those in attendance.



Winter Storm Warnings

We do not advertise on radio or TV, but you may get a message advising you of cancellations in the event of bad weather. In any case, call the office if you are uncertain. We will try to keep the church answering machine up to date.

If you feel uncertain about coming in the snow, you have our permission to stay home.

(If you have not yet signed up for auto-notifications and would like to receive messages please call the office!)



Women's Circles



As we begin a new year, the women's circles will begin a new year-long study called "Come to the Waters." There are over 800 references to water in the Scriptures and we will consider how some of these images of water played key roles in the lives of the people in the Old and New Testaments. We will begin our study with the chaotic waters of Creation in Genesis and end the year's study in the book of Revelation with a new heaven and a new earth as the river of life flows from the throne of God and of the Lamb.

The Ruth Circle will meet one week later than usual because of New Year's Day. We will meet at the home of Betsy Cunius at 1:00 p.m. Friday, January 8th. The Martha Circle will meet at 10:00 a.m. Thursday, January 14th at the home of Carol Thomas. All women of the church are invited to join us for fellowship and study at the location and time that best meets your needs. You will be warmly welcomed.

On Thursday, December 17th, Carol Thomas and Barbara Miller helped deliver warm items to the Leeds Avenue School in Pleasantville. The Circle ladies purchased the following for the children of that school: 42 pairs of socks, 27 hats, 25 pairs of gloves/mittens, 25 hat & glove sets, 5 scarves, and 1 hat, glove, and scarf set. Thank you ladies for your generous giving.

Christian Readers Book Club

Christian Readers will be meeting on January 20 at 6:30. We will be discussing the book “Christmas Treasures” by Thomas Kinkade and Katherine Spencer. We meet every other month and will start in March with our new list of books we’ve chosen to read in 2016.

If you like to read we would like to have you join us. If you would like a list of the books for 2016 contact Gerry Reedell or Carol Kleiner.



Mission

Mission/Evangelism for January

The Bakely House: All goes well with our family. We’re still working on getting that storm door installed, and we’ll need to replace a window in the enclosed porch area as well. Other than that the interior of the house is in excellent condition and the family seems happy to be in the house.

Family Promise: We have a fine letter ready to present to some local stores in the near future. We plan on approaching Boscov’s first to ask for a donation of 20 sets of twin size sheets. We haven’t gone to the store yet, but we will soon. The latest talk says that Family Promise will hopefully open in March.

Please consider becoming a member of Club 172. Payments can be made annually, semiannually, or quarterly.

You will also notice cardboard houses placed here and there throughout the church. We are grateful for any loose change.

Finally, keep those shoes coming. We have filled 2 more boxes and will make a third shipment when we fill the other two. We have raised \$52 and \$71 with our two previous shipments...so keep them coming.

Sidewalk Fellowship: We set aside four Wednesdays in the month of **December** to serve hot chocolate and java to passers-by on the sidewalk in front of the church. Two of those days got rained out, but Laurie and Jim McManus got out there twice to see who wanted some refreshments. There were some interesting reactions from the public, and we’ll discuss that at our meeting in January to see if we would like to pursue this in the spring.

Benevolence Dinner: The Mission/Evangelism Committee is teaming up with the Fellowship Committee to plan a benevolence dinner to raise money for Family Promise. The dinner will take place on February 13th. Bill Hoesten will prepare a roast beef dinner. Tickets will go on sale for \$15 per ticket for adults. It is possible we may have baskets or a silent auction to go with it. This will all be determined at the January meeting.

Camp Johnsonburg on the Road: We will continue communication with the camp and with the leaders of the area Presbyterian churches to pursue this Christian camp opportunity that comes to our door. I’ll keep you posted.

Budget: All recipients of our benevolence fund sent letters of thanks. It was moving to read those letters because everyone was so appreciative. I found it fulfilling to see our money touch the lives of so many people. I was proud to be part of this committee and a church that was delivering such hope to so many. Everyone in our congregation made financial gifts throughout the year to make this possible. The letters are posted on the bulletin board near the water fountain.

Upcoming Year: We will gather our ideas in January to chart the course for 2016. Some members will remain on the committee, some will take a break, and others will join us. Stay tuned for more information. I would like to thank all members of the Mission/Evangelism Committee 2015 for their outstanding dedication to the needs of those around them.

Our **next meeting** will take place on Saturday, January 16, 2016 at 9:30 a.m. in Cobb Lounge.

In His Service,
Priscilla Schultheis

The Prayer Shawl Committee

We continue to have a wonderful and meaningful response from those who receive your requests for the shawls and blankets that the wonderful, talented women of our church create.

To date to we have filled and delivered 58 requests. This is a truly spiritual uplifting feeling and invite any who may wish to join us on the first Saturday of the month at 9:30 am in the chapel.

In His Service,
Loretta Metz

Dear Absecon Friends,

Greetings from Prague!

I suspect life in the church is quite different these days. I hope the transition is going well. I want to thank you all for the constancy of your support for me and my ministry here in the Czech Republic. I couldn't do it without your prayers and financial support. Thank you so much!

My thoughts and prayers are with you all.

With heartfelt thanks,

Karen





Fellowship Committee

We held our Congregational Concert which featured the Mainland Choral Society on Sat Dec 12th. Thank you to Joanie Hoenes for organizing another successful Concert. They sang so beautifully, and everyone had a good time. Also thank you to the several people that donated refreshments for the evening; they were all very delicious.

As we head into the new year, we will continue with our Annual Soup Sales. The first one will be held on Sunday, Jan. 10th between services. There is a sign-up sheet for anyone that can make some of their wonderful homemade soup. Please see Dawn Duran to pick up your containers. The prices for the soup will remain the same as last year, \$5 for a quart and \$3 for a pint. The second soup sale will be held on Sunday, Feb 14th, and there will be another sign-up sheet for that one closer to that date. I thank everyone in advance for your delicious soups.

On Saturday, February 13th, the Fellowship Committee, in conjunction with the Mission/Evangelism Committee, will be having a Roast Beef Dinner to benefit Family Promise of Atlantic County. The time will from 5 to 8 PM. The cost will be \$15 for adults and \$7 for children ages 12 and under. This event will be held at our church and is open to everyone. Tickets are available for sale - please see Dawn Duran, Bill Hoesten, or Priscilla Schultheis for tickets in advance so that we have an idea of how many people to plan for.

The next committee meeting will be on Monday Jan 4th at 7PM in Cobb Lounge.

On behalf of my Fellowship Committee I wish everybody a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year!

In Christian Love and Fellowship,

Dawn Duran, Chairperson

Lunch Bunch January 13

Lunch Bunch will be heading for Ye Olde Mill Street Pub on Main Street in Mays Landing on Wednesday, Jan. 13. Meet at the church at 11:30 or at the restaurant at Noon. All are welcome!



Evergreens

Evergreens will have our first meeting of new year at noon on Wednesday, January 27th. Bring a sandwich. Dessert and coffee will be provided. A speaker is being pursued.



Directory Update

Cathy & Rich Guenther
6 Price Avenue
Egg Harbor Twp., NJ 08234
Phone: 609/277-1681

Thanks So Much!



Thank you, Carolers, for serenading me and for the delicious goodie bag (prepared by the deacons). It was kind of you to remember me and I really appreciated it. Thanks again. Thank you, Gay, for always being there in the office and your assistance when we need you. I appreciate all you do, especially for Evergreens.

Frances Weir

* * * * *

Thank you Deacons, for the bag full of goodies - yum, yum. It was a nice surprise when a group came a-caroling to my house. We had a very pleasant visit. Oliver (my Maine Coon cat) was especially happy to meet and greet everyone. Thanks for thinking of me.

Gerry Reedell

* * * * *

I would like to thank the carolers for stopping by my house and singing the Christmas songs to me. It was a very thoughtful thing to do – and I enjoyed the “goodie bag”!

Love,
Ilsa

* * * * *

Thank you to Church Carolers led by Priscilla Schultheis for the carol serenade and gift bag of goodies. It was greatly appreciated.

Olga Davies

* * * * *

Many thanks to everyone for their get-well wishes, prayers and Christmas cards. Sorry I was not able to write any cards this year. I miss not being in church, but hope to get back there as soon as I can.

Grace Gras

* * * * *

Dear Church Family and Friends,

Thank you so much for your true Christian love during my illness. Please have a good Christmas and New Year. I love you all.

Irene Hunter

* * * * *

Many thanks to the Board of Trustees, our Personnel Committee, and to all of you for the generous Christmas gift. My "Wants" list seems to grow on a daily basis, and this will indeed come in handy!

Wishing everyone a blessed New Year!
Gay Channell

* * * * *

Friends,

Thank you for the many cards and Christmas gift.
A happy and healthy New Year to each of you.

Blessings,
Marge Chapman, Treasurer



Shower of Birthday Cards

Seacrest Village
1001 Center Street
Little Egg Harbor, NJ 08087

Attn: Edna Brown
Room 320

Edna will be 99 years old on January 13! Can you help her receive 99 cards to celebrate?



Serving in January

Lay Assistants

- 03 9:30 David Burgess
11:00 Priscilla Schultheis
10 9:30 David Burgess
11:00 Lee Wolff
17 9:30 Dennis Scardilli
11:00 Linda Gillis
24 10:00 David Burgess
31 9:30 Kirk Conover
11:00 Dawn Duran

Head Ushers

- 03 9:30 Vic & Rita Abelson
11:00 Betty Lloyd, Mary Bew
10 9:30 Elaine Risley, Carol Thomas
11:00 Nancy Swank, Tina Brown
17 9:30 Bryan & Vicky Hawkes
11:00 Betty Lloyd, Mary Bew
24 10:00 Barbara Hughes, Justin Hughes
31 9:30 David & Naida Burgess
11:00 Nancy Swank, Tina Brown

Offering (9:30)

- 03 Joan Nale, Franklin Nale
10 Jack & Dee Heil
17 Bob & Barbara Hudak
24 10:00 Dan Hughes, Roy Birkbeck
31 Bud Burgess, Greg Hamaty

Acolyte (9:30)

- 03 Franklin Nale
10 Jacob Sabo
17 Jordan Hawkes
24 10:00 Kassie Little
31 Jack Little

Nursery (11:00 Sarah Gillis)

- 03 Jordan Hawkes
10 Gloria Achamizo
17 Jennifer Platt
24 10:00 Jordan Hawkes
31 Gloria Achamizo

Deacon for the Month

Mae Sterling

Van Drivers

- 03 John Channell
10 Barb Hughes
17 Tina Brown
24 Vic Abelson
27 Ed Little

Refreshment Hosts

- 03
10
17
24 Join us for lunch after annual meeting
31

Breakfast Club Kitchen Crew

- 03 Set-up – Jack Little
Cook – Ed Little
Clean-up – Ginny & Bill Davenport
10 Set-up – Kris Jenoriki
Cook – John Channell
Clean-up – Vic & Rita Abelson
17 Set-up – Donna Hughes
Cook – Bill Hoesten
Clean-up – Dirk Williamson
24 Set-up – Jordan & Christian Hawkes
Cook – Bryan Hawkes
Clean-up – Olga Davies, Jean Delesantro
31 Set-up Lynn Adkisson
Cook – Russ Adkisson
Clean-up – ?

Counter Schedule

- 03 Jerry Hoenes, Betsy Torjussen
10 Lee Wolff, Kirk Conover
17 Barbara & Bob Hudak
24 Debbie & Don Wong
31 Judy & Dave Stebbins

