



# The Friendly News

The First Presbyterian Church of Woodbury Heights  
February 2016



Dear Friends:

Dr. Martin Luther King once said, "Your life will come to an end when you stop caring about things that matter."

How true. How sadly true. Once we stop caring about the things that matter – that *really* matter -- what purpose does our life have?

And how often in our society do we see people caring about things that really don't matter?

Is it really essential, as the tabloids suggest, that we follow the activities of the Kardashian family?

Unless you actually know one of the big Powerball jackpot winners, and expect them to share their winnings with you, does it really matter who won?

Was all the speculation about whom the Eagles would pick as their new head coach really worth all the air time and ink it got?

I suppose it would be depressing to hear about how many people are homeless or hungry or seeking a new way of life, but that is what Family Promise, Cathedral Kitchen and Covenant House are all about providing.

I suppose it wouldn't sell many tabloids if they featured the starving children of the world, including those in the United States.

But that's why the ways that we fight hunger (Greater Woodbury Food Pantry,

the CROP Walk, and the Presbyterian Hunger Program) make a difference.

The media won't describe the refugees and oppressed as "beautiful people" as they do the celebrities whose every move we are supposed to follow.

But so much of our mission money – locally, nationally and internationally – goes to help the oppressed.

God calls on us to care about the things that matter.

Our culture usually doesn't answer that call, so we in the church must.

Do you hear the call? Don't hang up!

In Christ, John



**Congregational meeting:** A meeting of the First Presbyterian Church of Woodbury Heights is called for Sunday, Feb. 14, following the worship service.

The purpose of the meeting is to review the Annual Report, receive the report of the Auditing Committee, elect at-large members of the Nominating Committee, elect members of the Auditing Committee and to transact any other business as may properly come before the congregation.

**Ash Wednesday** is Feb. 10. As usual, we will have our 'meager meal' of soup and bread at 6:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. Worship will follow at 7:15 p.m. You do not have to attend the dinner to come to the service!

As in past years, it will be a Taize service, quiet, meditative, and soul-searching. Come and join us!

**February Birthdays**

- 1 -- Bob Peterson
- 3 -- Ryan Eachus
- 3 -- Nancy Zane
- 6 -- Ammie Davis
- 7 -- Noah Elliott
- 7 -- Ginny Naylor
- 8 -- Benjamin Taylor
- 10 -- Bette Murphy
- 11 -- John Pedicone
- 12 -- Maggie Woodrow
- 12 -- Walter Pierson
- 12 -- Judy Grantham
- 13 -- Rachel Geserick
- 14 -- Paul Belcher
- 14 -- Michelle Bogert
- 14 -- Zachery Bogert
- 14 -- Ollie Lambert
- 14 -- Peg Schoen
- 16 -- Mike Camilli
- 18 -- Helen Boyce
- 18 -- Madelyn Elliott
- 18 -- Amy Reynolds
- 20 -- Kim Swanson
- 21 -- Kristen Lynch
- 22 -- Robert Chute
- 22 -- Karen Williamson
- 22 -- Ella Gramm
- 23 -- Daniel Geserick
- 25 -- Norman Bramble
- 25 -- Chuck Elliott
- 28 -- Ed Harley
- 28 -- Geri Sincavage



**February Anniversaries**

- 17 -- Craig and Jeanne Mangano

If we missed your big day, let us know

For most of the fall, the deacons and elders worked together to update and expand the church's birthday and anniversary lists.

We realize these lists might still be incomplete, and if they are, we apologize. If your birthday or anniversary isn't listed, please, please, please send an email with your special day to [whpresby@comcast.net](mailto:whpresby@comcast.net) so we can include you next time.

**Sunday School plans to celebrate first Sunday of Lent with activities**

The first Sunday of Lent is Valentine's Day, Feb. 14, and our Sunday School plans to celebrate the day with special activities. This year's theme is: "God's Love is for Us."

Our children will sing some songs, listen to a story and learn about love and how we share it from Rev. Shedwick.

The children will also make bookmarks with a love theme and pass them out to the congregation during worship.

**Annual pancake breakfast Feb. 20**

Our Youth Group is planning its annual pancake breakfast from 8 to 11 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 20, in Fellowship Hall.

Tickets, which cost \$5 for children and \$10 for adults, can be purchased Sundays from youth leaders Tracey Urion, Michael Golding and Megan Geserick. Tickets will also be sold at the door the morning of the breakfast.

The menu includes pancakes, eggs, sausage, fruit and coffee.

**Triennium attracts 2 of our youth**

Madison Kratzer and Anthony Urion, two members of our Youth Group, are going through the registration process to attend this year's Presbyterian Youth Triennium from July 19 to 23 at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind.

The theme for this year's Triennium is "GO into the world and make disciples."

**News, notes from Rev. Shedwick**

Get well wishes go to: Ed Elder, who has been hospitalized for several weeks; Dick Shaw, who was recently hospitalized; Debbie Becker, who had surgery last month; Kathy Pedicone, who had two optical surgeries in January; Sue MacWilliams; Arnie Shannon; and Nicholas Zorio.

Our sympathy is extended to Geri Sincavage and her family on the recent death of her husband, Bob.



## DEACONS CORNER: Next meeting – 7 p.m., February 23, annex

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**Save the date:** There will be a special Lenten event March 6. It's a pot-luck dinner at 6 p.m. featuring the music group The Spiritual Five. This is an event you don't want to miss, so tell your friends and family members. Look for more information in the Sunday bulletin at church.

### **Current News: (This was written before our January meeting).**

- **Christmas tree gift tags:** The project was a huge success once again – and we were able to put our Narthex tree up! We helped seven families have a lovely Christmas for their families. Thank you so much for purchasing gifts. Also, thank you to all who assisted in undecorating the sanctuary on Jan. 3!
- **Flower Fund:** Please dedicate altar flowers in 'honor of' or in 'memory of' loved ones throughout the year to keep our ministry active. The \$15 per arrangement is a small price to pay to help us cheer up members during weekly visitations. See Erin Zorio to order flowers, and book special dates in advance.
- **Communion:** The upcoming dates are Feb. 14 and March 24.
- **Greeting cards:** Liz Billings and Kayleigh Reim faithfully got writer's cramp sending 78 greeting cards in December and January to members for birthdays, anniversaries, sympathy, get well, etc. Please inform the deacons of your special dates to make sure you get your well-wishes!
- **Food collection:** In December, we donated 100 items to put our total over our goal of 1,000 for the year. We totaled 1,030, to be exact.
- **Food items for February:** Hot chocolate and canned or bottled juices are suggested. Of course, all non-perishable foods are welcomed. This congregation is the BEST! We're looking forward to another generous year.
- **Prayer requests:** Rev. Shedwick initiates prayer requests and instructs Joyce Woodrow to send mass e-mails and Kathy Pedicone to make phone calls to those who do not have e-mail. If you are not getting a call or an email with prayer requests, please inform the church office.

### **Upcoming Events:**

**Feb. 14:** Communion, congregational meeting and luncheon

**Mar. 6:** Pot-luck dinner with The Spiritual Five, 6 p.m.

**Mar. 20:** Palm Sunday

**Mar. 24:** Communion on Maundy Thursday

**Mar. 27:** Easter Sunday

### **Ongoing events/programs:**

- **Photo directories** are in the pew racks. Enjoy them but don't remove them.
- **Being Green:** Help recycle Sunday bulletins by placing them in the basket in the Narthex after worship.
- **Children's items:** Reusable doodle pads, toys and books for service are available in the Narthex.
- **Gift cards** for the ShopRite and Acme food markets. See Joyce Woodrow to buy them.
- **Food collection:** Thank you for helping us to continue this ministry!
- **Hospitality bags:** Donations can **stop** until further notice

**Please continue placing your donations in the green offering envelopes!  
And most importantly: Please inform us of anyone needing assistance or a visit.**

**God Bless - In Christ's service, Your Board of Deacons:**

*Liz Billings, Cassandra DeFinizio, Steve Elliott, Nancy MacDermott, Judy Milio, John Pedicone, Kayleigh Reim, Andrew Reynolds, Margaret Schneeman, Peg Schoen, Dottie Shedwick, Sydney Sheehan, Ada White, Joe Williamson and Joyce Woodrow, moderator*



# FEBRUARY 2016

“And above all these, put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.”

**Colossians 3:14**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 Esther Circle, J. Woodrow's home, 7 p.m.	3	4 Bell choir, 6:45 p.m. Choir, 7:45	5	6
7 Sunday school 9:30 a.m. Worship, 11 a.m., with SouperBowl offering	8 PrimeTimers meet, noon	9	10 <b>Ash Wednesday</b> Meager meal, 6:30 p.m. Worship, 7:15 Fellowship Hall	11 Bell choir, 6:45 p.m. Choir, 7:45	12	13 Men's group, 8:30 a.m.
14 <b>Valentine's Day</b> Sunday school, Lent program, 9:30 a.m. Worship, communion 11 a.m. Congregational meeting, 12:15	15	16	17 Mission, 6:30 p.m. Session, 7 p.m.	18 Bell choir, 6:45 p.m. Choir, 7:45	19	20 Youth Group pancake breakfast, 8 to 11 a.m. Fellowship Hall
21 Sunday school, 9:30 a.m. Worship, 11 a.m.	22	23 Deacons meet, 7 p.m.	24	25 Bell choir, 6:45 p.m.	26	27
28 Sunday school 9:30 a.m. Choir practice 9:30 a.m. Worship, 11						

# Prime Timers revel in Yule Log Festival

"What a wonderful experience!" agreed the 14 Prime Timers from our church who traveled to St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Lafayette Hill, Pa., for the Boar's Head and Yule Log Festival on Saturday, Jan. 9.

The boar was a symbol of evil, and the presentation of this beast at the altar signified the conquest of sin at the birth of Jesus Christ.

Winnie Higgins suggested last year that we take this trip, and Judy Milio organized the outing and rented a van. Dick Daugherty did the driving.

Before boarding at 10:30 a.m., the Milio family gave each person a treat bag since there would be no time to stop for lunch.

The show began promptly at 1 p.m. Everyone in the congregation was expected to participate at various points of the presentation by joining in to sing songs of praise to the Almighty King.

The room was darkened and trumpets broke the silence. A herald announced the arrival of the boar's head. First, we heard the bagpipes and watched as the beef eaters marched in. The pipers and drummers followed them.

With much pomp and fanfare, the huntsmen carried the boar, which was decked out deliciously on a huge plank.

The cooks brought plum pudding and a big mince pie, symbolizing the blessing and gifts of God. Finally the kings and noble family of the manor entered and extended hospitable smiles to us all.

As the program continued, we met the ladies in waiting as well as Good King Wenceslas, and we were greatly entertained by the raucous jesters.

Dick Daugherty received a mimed haircut from one imp. The woodsmen brought in the Yule log and the Kings processed. Then, all attention was on the manger, which was surrounded by angels and shepherds.

We were impressed by the friendly ushers, who were also in costume, and the quality of the performances.

The 47 choir members, the orchestra and the professional singers who complemented the volunteer cast celebrated the Christmas story beautifully, and they joyfully helped us welcome in the new year.



## Youth Group bracelet sale nets \$2,142 to help family

*"If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it."*

**(1 Corinthians 12:26)**

On Sunday, Jan. 3, our Youth Group revealed to the congregation how much it had earned through its "Bracelet for a Cause" campaign.

Through hard work, dedication and the support of the congregation it raised \$2,142, which it donated to the Zorio family to help with their medical bills.

Their son Nicholas spent most of the summer as a patient at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, and his outpatient treatment is ongoing.

He still makes monthly hospital visits and requires daily in-home medical treatments.

The Youth Group cannot thank our congregation enough. Without its support, donations and bracelet purchases, this fund-raiser would not have been a success.

When our Youth Group decided to help the Zorios, it had hoped to raise \$500, but within three weeks it had earned more than \$1,000.

The group is led by Tracey Urion, Megan Geserick and Michael Golding

## News and notes from the January meeting of Session

**New members:** Nicolette Barajas, who grew up in Wenonah and attended Gateway High School, was approved by the Session for membership. She has been working with children since she was 16 and is currently a teacher's aide for pre-kindergarten children in Pennsville. She and her fiancé, Carl Kuehnappel, plan to be married in our church on Oct. 14, with a reception to follow at the Camden Aquarium. Carl's request to be restored to our active roll was approved as were requests by Heather and Steven Antosky.

**Pastor's report:** Rev. Shedwick made 21 home and five hospital visits in December, and his mileage for the month was 382. He also offered seven home communions. Two requests for baptism were approved: Maximus John, the son of Joshua and Laura (Holleny) Czaikowski, will be baptized in our church on March 13. Nora Anne Geserick, the daughter of David and Megan Geserick, will be baptized March 20.

**Building and Property:** The commission's request for \$275 to purchase a new Fellowship Hall garbage disposal was approved. ... Gloucester County claims to have sent the church a letter in October stating the need to have a fire inspection be completed by Dec. 17 or be subject to a fine, but the church did not receive the letter. The inspection was satisfactorily completed in January without further mention of a fine. ... The



commission is working on a year-round maintenance schedule to remind everyone what tasks need to be done when. The thermostats are not coming on and off at the right times throughout the church, and W.B. Steward will be asked to reset them. ... A plan to remove trees and shrubs from near the church sign is under way. ... A request by the Shedwick family to use Fellowship Hall from 1 to 5 p.m. Feb. 27 to celebrate three family birthdays was approved. ... For unexplained reasons, the church has been dropped as a client by Shur-Kill exterminators.

**Christian Education:** The commission plans a meeting of Sunday School teachers on Feb. 7 to introduce the coming background checks. The church will pay for the checks. ... A Love Fest is being planned for Valentine's Day, the first Sunday in Lent. It will include songs, a story, a lesson about love from Rev. Shedwick and a craft.

**Stewardship and Finance:** The commission announced that giving for 2015 dropped off 10 percent from the same point at the end of 2014. ... The church collected about half the amount it normally receives during the Christmas season. ... With that in mind, the church is trying to cut costs in whatever way possible. One small but immediate change is that the monthly newsletter will be no more than eight pages and printed in less costly black and white. ... A bequest from former member Edith Dietz has been received and will be used to help defray church operating expenses for 2016. Office expenses/postage for 2015 were nearly \$1,000 over budget.

**Communication and Outreach:** The group completed its two-month project of updating the church's membership roll and birthday/anniversary lists and has turned the maintenance of those lists over to the church office. ... Although the budget does not allow for a website redesign, plans call for a new color scheme and a new cover photo of Rev. Shedwick. ... The commission also hopes to freshen up and redistribute the church pamphlet if funding can be found.

**Worship and Program:** With Christmas falling on a Sunday this year, a discussion was held as to how to coordinate Christmas Eve/Christmas Day services. It was decided that the Children's Service, with our young musicians, will be at 4 p.m. Christmas Eve, while the adult service, with our bell choir, will be at 7 p.m. An informal, come-as-you-are-dressed service will be held in the primary room at 10 a.m. Christmas morning. ... Church members are reminded that Ash Wednesday is Feb. 10, with the annual meager meal in Fellowship Hall at 6:30 p.m. and the service at 7:15. ... Session members are asked to bring desserts for the congregational meeting and luncheon on Feb. 14 ... Work rewriting our church bylaws is ongoing.

## **Notes from the Organ Bench**

February 2016

by

Quint Lerch



### ***Jesus' Teaching Tools – The Parables***

My church, First Presbyterian in Haddonfield, is again embarking on a Lenten project to elicit written devotions for the creation of a Lenten devotional to be used this February and March. The topic for submissions is the parables of Jesus.

My wife is already sketching out what she plans to write, but it got me to thinking about the parables and what I remember from back in my Sunday School days. How many parables are there? Where are they, exactly?

Well, the number of parables is the subject of a scholarly debate, but I'll try to stay above the fray and tell you that my research reveals as many as 46 in only three of the four gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke) with at least a couple of duplicates.

If you remember the ones from your childhood or your recent Bible studies, I urge you to take a look at them again, especially in the light of the coming of Lent. Use your computer's search engine and just pose the question: "How many parables of Jesus are there?" Then, just pick a site and start digging and rereading those that interest you or those that you seem led to read.

The Holy Spirit really will guide you if you are open to it. As I scanned my list of 46, my eyes fell on the parable of the Lost Sheep. It appears in Matthew 18:12-14 and in Luke 15:3-7. The story is simple: a shepherd leaves his flock of 99 to find the one sheep that is lost.

This parable is part of a trilogy of parables about redemption that Jesus tells after the Pharisees and other religious leaders accuse him of welcoming and eating with "sinners."

The parable shares themes of loss, searching and rejoicing that also occur in the parable of the Lost Coin. It shows Jesus as the Good Shepherd who finds the lost sheep and brings it back.

We've all had times where we feel lost and without purpose or direction. Lent is a time for us to re-establish our relationship with Jesus. For if we are lost, Jesus can find us and bring us back into his Light.

This Lent, open your Bibles and search for a parable -- or parables -- that speak to you. Study them and pray over them. Re-establish a new relationship with Jesus that helps you grow and become 'found' once again.

### ***"A Garland of Carols" Christmas Pageant***

I wish I could say, "On a cold winter's night on the 13<sup>th</sup> of December 2015, a group of dedicated Christians gathered in our sanctuary to see and listen to our newest Christmas pageant." But with 70-degree temperatures that night and the need for air conditioning in December (I never thought I would say that), it was hardly the mood I was trying to set for the evening.

Mood aside, we did enjoy a wonderful evening of Christmas music provided by the Adult and Youth choirs (all three of them) to a most appreciative audience. That performance marks the largest musical participation by our choirs since I have been here, and it was a rousing success.

There were so many people involved -- musicians, actors, narrators, support people, supportive parents, ushers, costumers, reception planners and helpers -- the list goes on and on.

I am grateful to each and every one of them -- and especially to the generous audience. Thank you one and all for a great and memorable evening, and thank you for your generous offering. We will do this again on Dec. 11 of this year. We hope to see you then.

## Mission Committee making plans to serve others in '16

Four volunteers from our church helped serve dinner Dec. 30 at Cathedral Kitchen in Camden.

Our church is scheduled to serve on Feb. 26, April 29, June 30, Aug. 30, Oct. 31 and Dec. 29 this year. We have two volunteers for the February date and need three more. Five helpers will be needed on the subsequent dates. If you can help, please contact Mary Kay Reynolds and let her know.

A few members of our church helped out with Family Promise in early January at the Pitman Presbyterian Church. The Mission Committee hopes to have the new local director, Victoria Peters, speak to our congregation about this very worthwhile mission.

We hope to arrange a field trip to the new Seeds of Hope thrift store in Brooklawn in February. We want to learn more about that ministry and how we can help. To learn more, go to its website: [seedsofhopeministries.org](http://seedsofhopeministries.org).

Finally, we are looking forward to our "SOUPER BOWL" Sunday on Feb. 7, the Sunday of the NFL's championship game. Proceeds will go to the Greater Woodbury Ministries Food Pantry.

## *A Church Mouse series ...*

### **There was a time when grease was as good as gold**

*"These are stories told and retold through all the generations of our Mouse family. We are historians!"*

So, last night Grandfather told us about some things that this church did during World War II. Those were hard times for the members, but they stayed strong for each other and worked to keep our country safe. So many of the young people left home and joined the service. Some of the wives and mothers took jobs in the Gloucester shipyard or local factories to keep the home fires burning.

The families in our church saved all the grease left over from their cooking in tin cans and brought it to our church kitchen. The Ladies Aid Society delivered it to a collection center, where it was recycled and used in the war effort. Grandpa said the tins often leaked a bit of grease on the kitchen cabinet.

"Oh, that was so tasty. I wanted more, but it would have been unpatriotic of me to go after the grease inside the cans," he said.

Another night and another story about the war: "Pastor Eckels worked late last night writing a letter to the congregation. I sat quietly and kept him company. He wants every family (there are about 50) in our church to help parts of Europe and Asia recover from the ravages of the war that has finally ended.

"This Restoration Fund will be divided. Two-thirds will go to Europe and Asia and one-third will be for work in our own land. Our church has an assigned quota of \$1,500 to be paid over a three-year period.

"Some churches are giving to the Restoration Fund as a memorial to those who gave their lives in the war. As far as we know, Woodbury Heights has no lives lost. Surely we ought to give to it as a Thanks Offering."

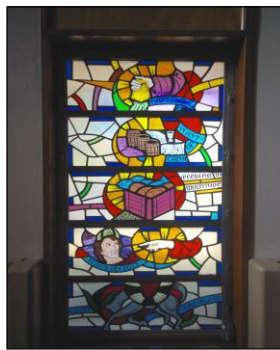
## ***Second of a series – A commentary:***

### **Side church windows tell story of Bible**

**By the Rev. John Shedwick**

When he was 30, Jesus left His home and began to teach, preach, heal and call God's people to a new understanding of His will.

He was baptized in the River Jordan by John to show His unity with us. The top frame of this side window in our church depicts baptism with the arm and hand holding a cloth over the symbol representing the river.



His first miracle took place at a wedding feast in Cana as He turned common water into uncommon wine.

The table is set with the white cloth of a wedding feast. The three barrels stand by with the water about to be transformed. The guests will drink the wine from the goblet. Taking a few small fish and two rolls, He fed 5,000 people.

The third frame shows the meager meal that soon satisfied the hunger of the multitude. But He engendered opposition, and one of His own disciples, Judas Iscariot, was tempted to turn on Him. Pictured is the disciple Judas and the finger of temptation pointing directly at him. His face is not joyful but seems to portray knowledge that what he is about to do is terrible.

The high point of His ministry came on Palm Sunday as He triumphantly entered into Jerusalem, to the cheers of the crowd (who would later call for His death).

The donkey, with his head bowed, bears the flame of the Holy Spirit.