



The Friendly News

The First Presbyterian Church of Woodbury Heights

March 2017

From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Friends,

I've often wondered if the familiar story of Chicken Little is meant for children or adults.

My guess is that it is a parable for adults (a parable that I think Jesus would have liked!).

You know it well – it's the story of a chicken who likes to go walking in the woods.

While he is doing that one day, an acorn falls from a tree above him and hits him on the head. Chicken Little is convinced that a piece of the sky has fallen and runs into his town, spreading the news that: "The Sky is Falling!" And the entire town ends up in a panic.

And I wonder – well, I really don't because I have seen it far too often – how many of us have a Chicken Little mentality.

How often have we faced a situation – in a relationship, at the office, in school, in the neighborhood, or (God forbid!) in church -- and mistaken an acorn for a piece of the sky?

To be honest, I know I have on a few occasions (maybe more than a few) when the situation I was in was far less serious than my imagination believed it to be.

And how often have we been a Chicken Little, assuring those around us that the sky is falling when, in reality, there are things we can do to avoid the acorns?

And how often have we found ourselves

listening to the Chicken Littles and letting our concerns run away from us?

Well, there is a solution to the Chicken Little syndrome.

And it comes from the one who is above the sky and will not let the sky fall upon us.

Isn't that the message Jesus brought to us? The message the entire Bible brings to us?

God is greater than all the acorns that we might mistake for pieces of the sky.

God is greater than all the worries we blow out of proportion.

God is able to help us through any challenge we face –

and we do face challenges, sometimes big ones, but challenges don't mean the sky is falling.

They are just opportunities for us to rise above the Chicken Little syndrome and build a strong faith in God.

God who is above the sky will not let it fall upon us. To be honest, it takes work to believe that, to have that faith. But what is the alternative?

Oh, and by the way, there is a sequel to Chicken Little's story.

When he realized the sky wasn't falling, he went out and showed the other animals that, indeed, he could trust that the sky would stay up there, that faith overwhelmed all fears, and that, well, if they worked together, they could get rid of all of their acorns.

Or as Jesus said: With God, NOTHING is impossible!



In Christ, John

March Birthdays

1 -- John Shedwick
 4 -- Nathaniel Good
 5 -- Eva Pizarro
 6 -- Pat Diehl
 7 -- Anne Camilli
 8 -- Sandra Norcross
 10 -- Joe Williamson
 13 -- Kristine Brenner
 13 -- Sue MacWilliams
 17 -- Benjamin Good
 18 -- Christopher Reim
 19 -- Fran Lambert
 20 -- Lexi Brenner
 20 -- Eric Harley
 22 -- Grace Hill
 23 -- Josh Crampton
 24 -- Esther Korn
 24 -- Jesse Butler
 26 -- Adam Fachinger
 26 -- Jacob Urion
 27 -- Jeff Swanson
 28 -- Megan Geserick
 29 -- Joe Kershaw

**March Anniversaries**

1 -- Gary and Sarah Keedy
 12 -- Danielle and Robinson Guerra
 16 -- Nick and Erin Zorio
 23 -- Brad and Kim Gilmore
 30 -- Mike and Maureen McCabe

Lenten Bible study schedule

Our local ministerium is once again holding a Lenten Bible study. We will meet at noon on Wednesdays from March 8 through April 5 at various churches. A simple soup lunch will be served, and our Bible study will focus on Places of the Passion. The schedule is as follows:

March 8: Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Wenonah

March 15: Mount Zion Wesley United Methodist Church, Wenonah

March 22: Our church

March 29: Mantua United Methodist Church

April 5: Wenonah United Methodist Church

We will serve others March 25

We often hear about people giving up something for Lent, but it is far better to do something for someone else during Lent.

That is, after all, the meaning of Lent – service and sacrifice.

So, to focus on that idea, we are inviting everyone in the congregation to meet at 9 a.m. Saturday, March 25, in the church lounge for a few hours of service.

We will prepare cards for our military and for cancer patients. We also will make sandwiches for the Cathedral Kitchen. Please bring a loaf of bread or two as well as peanut butter and jelly.

More information to come!

News and notes from the pastor

Our sympathy is extended to **Pat Wilkins** and her family on the recent passing of **Dudley**; and to **Dave, Lori, and Ben Taylor**, and their family on the passing of Dave's mother, **Helen**.

Get well prayers go to **Bob Peterson, Lois Gebeline** and **Barbara Daugherty**, who were in the hospital recently. Also to **Dick Shaw, Carol Siciliano, Joe McDonnell** (Pat's husband), **John McDevitt** (Elisha Elliott's brother-in-law), **Rick Love** (Joy and Dick's son) and **Catherine Shannon**, all with health issues.

Congratulations to **Madison Kratzer**, our newly ordained and installed youth Deacon.

Before donating items to church, please be sure they are wanted

We've all done it. We have an item we no longer need, but we're convinced someone at church could get some use out of it. So we plop it in a box and drop it off in the narthex, or the Sunday School closet or the garage under the annex.

Despite our good intentions, the item sits ... and sits ... and sits ... until someone, who has no idea why it's there, carts it to the curb.

While the church appreciates donations, please check with someone first to be sure the church wants what you have.

General items: See Rev. Shedwick;
Sunday School items: Check with Bonnie Dawson or Jeanne Mangano; **equipment:** check with Brad Gilmore or Jake Mangano.



MARCH 2017

“In the light of a king's face there is life, and his favor is like the clouds that bring the spring rain.”

-- Proverbs 16:15

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Ash Wednesday meager meal, 6:30 p.m.; service, 7:15 p.m., Fellowship Hall	2 Bell practice, 6:45 p.m. Choir practice, 7:45 p.m.	3	4
5 Sunday School, 9:30 a.m. Worship and Communion, 11 a.m. Confirmation class, 2 p.m.	6	7 Esther Circle, 7 p.m.	8 Bible study: Holy Trinity Episcopal, Wenonah, noon	9 Bell practice, 6:45 p.m. Choir practice, 7:45 p.m.	10	11 Men's group, Piston Diner, 8:30 a.m.
12 Sunday School, 9:30 a.m. Worship, 11 a.m. Confirmation class, 2 p.m.	13 PrimeTimers meet, noon RiverWinds restaurant	14	15 Bible study, Mount Zion Wesley, Wenonah, noon Mission, 6:30, Session 7 p.m., both at annex	16 Bell practice, 6:45 p.m. Choir practice, 7:45 p.m.	17	18
19 Sunday School, 9:30 a.m. Worship, 11 a.m. Confirmation class, 2 p.m.	20	21	22 Bible study: Our church, noon	23 Bell practice, 6:45 p.m.	24	25 Day of Lenten service, 9 a.m.
26 Sunday School, choir practice, 9:30 a.m. Worship, 11 a.m. Confirmation class, 2 p.m.	27	28 Deacons meet, 7 p.m., annex	29 Bible study: Mantua United Methodist, noon	30 Bell practice, 6:45 p.m. Choir practice, 7:45 p.m.	31	



APRIL 2017

**“According to His great mercy,
He has caused us to be born
again to a living hope through
the resurrection of Jesus Christ
from the dead.”**

-- 1 Peter, 1:3

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Church cleanup 10 a.m.
2 Sunday School, 9:30 a.m. Worship 11 a.m. Confirmation class, 2 p.m.	3	4 Esther Circle, annex, 7 p.m.	5 Lent Bible study, Wenonah Methodist, noon	6 Bell practice, 6:45 p.m. Choir practice, 7:45 p.m.	7	8 Men's group, Piston Diner, 8:30 a.m. Session meets confirmands, 11 a.m.
9 Palm Sunday Sunday School, 9:30 a.m. Worship, 11 a.m. Confirmation class, 2 p.m.	10	11	12 Mission, 6:30, Session 7 p.m., both at annex	13 Holy Thursday service with communion, 7:30 p.m.	14 Good Friday Community service at Barnsboro Methodist, noon Prayer vigil, 9 p.m.	15
16 Easter Sunday Sunrise service, 7 a.m. Worship, 10 a.m.	17	18	19	20	21	22 Youth Group service day
23 Worship at Mount Zion Methodist, 9:30 a.m.	24	25 Deacons meet, 7 p.m., annex	26	27 Cathedral Kitchen help, 2:45 p.m. Bell practice, 6:45 p.m. Choir practice, 7:45 p.m.	28	29 Chicken BBQ
30 Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Worship, 11 a.m.						



Mission group plans spring schedule

Five volunteers helped out at Cathedral Kitchen on Feb. 20. The next day, a small group of church members enjoyed lunch at the Cathedral Café.

Our next visit to Cathedral Kitchen is scheduled for Thursday, April 27. If you would like to help, please call Mary Kay Reynolds at (856) 803-4068.

On Jan. 29, Jennifer Williams of Covenant House in Atlantic City, spoke to our congregation. She was very grateful for the Target gift cards we donated. They were given to Covenant House residents.

Our annual Souper Bowl collection was Feb. 5, and we thank church members for their generous gifts. The money was given to the Greater Woodbury Ministries Food Pantry.

The CROP Walk is Sunday, May 7. If you want to attend the planning meetings, please contact Sue Golding.



Sunday School program shows pupils how we can help others

This year, the Sunday School Lenten program is based on the Good Samaritan and helping our neighbors.

The children listened to a skit and explored the many ways we all can help.

They traced their hands on paper and decorated them, and the drawings were then cut out and placed on a cross to symbolize how Jesus would want us to be good Samaritans and help others as He did.

Our service project during the 40 days of Lent will be to collect everyday household items to donate to Joseph's House, a homeless shelter for men in Camden.

We have a collection box in the Sunday School area for donations.

February report from Session

After devotions by Mike Camilli, the minutes of both the January Session meeting and the February congregational meeting were approved.

The pastor requested two vacation days – March 2 and 3.

Approval was given for the March 12 baptism of Luke Francis, son of Maddie and Tim Pheasant.

The Mission Committee will hold the first CROP Walk meeting March 9.

Financial reports were reviewed and approved.

The Building & Property Commission is looking into a new chairlift for the back stairway; Work Day will be April 1. Repairs have been made to the cracks in the Fellowship Hall walls and those spots will be repainted; investigation into solar panels continues.

The Christian Education Commission reported on the Sunday School event on the first Sunday in Lent, which will focus on the Good Samaritan. Students will draw their hands and place the drawings on crosses to remind them we can all help. The crosses will be displayed in the sanctuary. Students will also collect items for Joseph's House in Camden. Mentors for the Confirmation Class were chosen.

The Stewardship and Finance Commission reported on the first meeting of Financial Situation Committee. First order of business: Review all bills to see if changes can be made.

The Worship and Program Commission asked Elders to help with the Ash Wednesday dinner and service. Elders will serve Communion on March 5. There will be another Pray for America service in September. The Rowan College at Gloucester County Community College Chorus will present its Christmas concert in our church on Dec. 2.

The Communication and Outreach Commission reported on the update of our church brochure and a new activities sign.

The Membership and Fellowship Commission is looking into holding another Strawberry Festival in June.

Youth Group: Youth Elder Arin Sheehan reported on three events – the Pancake Breakfast on Feb 19, the Presbytery-wide Famine on Feb 25; and the Dance Marathon, which has been moved to the fall.



Easter Flowers for our Church Sanctuary 2017

The flowers that fill the chancel on Easter Sunday are gifts from members of the congregation. If you would like to participate, please complete the form below and mail it, along with your payment, to the church office. You may also place the form and payment in an envelope in the offering plate.

The deadline for orders is Palm Sunday, April 9.

Mailing address: 335 Elm Ave.
Woodbury Heights, N.J., 08097

Please enter the quantity of each flower you would like to order:

Triple Hyacinth	_____	\$ 6.75
6 Bloom Tulips	_____	\$ 6.95
5-6 Bloom Daffodils	_____	\$ 6.95
5-6 Bloom Lilies	_____	\$ 9.50
Total Cost	\$ _____	

These flowers are given to the Glory of God:

In Honor of:

In Memory of:

Given by:

At church, ‘Spring Chicken’ has a whole new meaning

The Women’s Association’s annual chicken barbecue is scheduled for Saturday, April 29, at our church. Be sure to mark your calendars and tell your friends and coworkers.

Remember this is an annual fund-raising event for our church and the charities it supports.

Everyone can play a role in making the barbecue a success. There are many jobs to fill and we need help from all men, women, teens and children.

How to help:

Are you willing to be a server? See Jeanne Mangano.

Can you help sell tickets? See Denise Pitchford.

We also need: two upstairs kitchen cooks, chicken runners, lounge takeout helpers, cooks for takeout, food packers, potato-salad helpers, a chicken server, hostesses and hosts for dining-room seating, set-up and clean-up crews. We even need someone for the chicken suit.

Please call Joyce Woodrow at (856) 468-0645 and tell her how you’d like to help in this most important fund-raiser. You can also contact her via email at woody1@comcast.net.

Ticket sales:

They’ll be available starting March 19 in the church lounge or Narthex. The price is the same as last year: \$13 per meal or 2 for \$25.

Make checks payable to “First Presbyterian Church of Woodbury Heights” and write, ‘Women’s Association’ on the ‘memo’ line. We look forward to seeing you there.

ANNUAL CHICKEN BARBECUE! April 29, 2017

Where? First Presbyterian Church of Woodbury Heights, 335 Elm Ave., Woodbury Heights, N.J. 08097 (Enter at Fourth Street doors for dining in)

When? April 29, 2017

What time? 4 to 6:30 p.m.

What do you get? Half of a chicken (grilled by the Smilski family), homemade potato salad, special recipe green beans, applesauce, homemade desserts and beverages

Choice of *take-out*, or family-style *dining in* for great fellowship and once again the *drive-thru window*

will be open. (No beverage with takeout.)

Cost? \$13 per meal (2 for \$25). Make checks payable to: “*First Presbyterian Church of Woodbury Heights*” and write, ‘*Women’s Association*’ on the ‘memo’ line.

Delivery service is available to Colonial Manor, Woodbury Mews, BrightView and Lakebridge before 4:30 p.m.. Cash due on delivery.

Reservations: Call the church office at (856) 845-0139 to reserve or purchase tickets or arrange a delivery (after March 19).

Church office hours: Tues. – Fri. 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

DEACONS CORNER: Next meeting – 7 p.m., March 28, 2017, annex



**“May joy and peace surround you,
contentment latch your door,
and happiness be with you now
and bless you evermore!”**

- An Irish blessing

News:

Flower Fund update: As of Feb. 17, Erin Zorio reported that 35 arrangements needed to be fulfilled for the year. Please consider dedicating the chancel flowers this year -- \$15 per arrangement (two are needed each week) and as always, you may request to keep the arrangements. Please let the greeter know that day. The deacons deliver these flowers to shut-ins or folks in the hospital or other reasons ... so please support the Flower Fund. Forms are in the Narthex and in the bulletin every other week.

Our college students: Wawa gift cards will be sent to our college students as a “thinking of you” gesture. They are Erik and Jake Mangano, Dan Geserick, Maddie Elliott, Rachel and Leighanne Eachus and Glenn Dawson. Let us know if we forgot anyone.

Youth Deacon: Madison Kratzer was ordained as our youth deacon.

Communion: March 5

Greeting cards: Cards were sent to 52 folks in February (33 birthday, 1 anniversary, 5 special members, 3 get well, 10 Valentine’s cards to special members)

Food collection for March: 56 items; year to date: 136. Thank you!!

Food items for March: Canned or packaged soup; macaroni & cheese. As always, these are only suggestions. All nonperishable food is welcomed!

Visitations: There were 36 visitations made by deacons during February.

Mark Your Calendars!

March 5 - Communion

March 25 – Day of service; look for bulletin inserts

April 1 – Church clean-up day

April 9 – Palm Sunday

April 16 – Easter Sunday

April 29 – Chicken BBQ

May 3 – Sunshine Luncheon

May 10 - Mother/Daughter Dinner

**** Please continue your donations in the green offering envelopes!**

Thank you for all the donations in 2016!

And most importantly: **Please inform us of anyone needing assistance or a visit. **

Please notify Rev. Shedwick of any prayer requests to be announced in church or online.

Your Board of Deacons: Steve Antosky, Nolan Becker, Liz Billings, Cassandra DeFinizio, Steve Elliott, Madison Kratzer, Kayleigh Reim, Carol Martino, Nancy MacDermott, Joan Mullin, Sue Reim, Andrew Reynolds, Peg Schoen, Dottie Shedwick, Ada White and Joyce Woodrow, moderator

PrimeTimers celebrate friendship, Valentine's Day in latest meeting

Eighteen members of the PrimeTimers gathered in the church lounge on Feb. 13 to celebrate both Valentine's Day and the friendship they share.

The group welcomed Margaret Schneeman's friend, who joined them in enjoying a luncheon of pizza, a variety of sweets and beverages.

The group leader, Paul Milio, opened the meeting with prayer. Member Bob Peterson has been hospitalized recently but was just moved to a rehab facility in Cherry Hill.

There were several birthdays to be celebrated, but only two Pisces were present. Ollie Lambert and Ginny Naylor enjoyed being serenaded. Esther Culbert gave a dramatic reading of the minutes.

Ginny Naylor reported that memorial gifts had been sent for Lois Cooper and Bob Sincavage. Another gift will go to Dudley Wilkins, who passed away recently.

Upcoming activities include lunch at the RiverWinds restaurant at noon March 13 and an April trip to the Sight and Sound Theater in Lancaster, Pa., for "Jonah." The date of the trip has not yet been determined.

Those who wish to attend must sign up with Ada White. The cost for a ticket is non-refundable!

There was some confusion with the Valentine word search. Janet Koehler had enlarged the puzzle and had cut off the last column of letters. Several of the members enjoyed the extra challenge! Judy Milio led the group in a game of Musical Cups.

Please help keep supply closet neat

In January, the Women's Association closet was cleaned out by Debbie Gould, Mrs. Shannon and Barbara Daugherty.

Supplies for all dinners, coffee hours and breakfasts are in this closet and may be used by any group sponsoring a church event -- but please help us keep the closet neat and tidy.

When using the kitchen, please do not leave food in the refrigerator or on the counters. Thank you in advance.

Barbara Daugherty, Fellowship committee chair

Sermons for March:

March 12: An Answer for the Ethiopian Eunuch: Exalted by Being Appalling

March 19: An Answer for the Ethiopian Eunuch: Despicable Him

March 26: An Answer for the Ethiopian Eunuch: Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted



Narthex display shows a timeline of change

For 107 years, our small church has thrived as a strong Christian presence in the local community.

We do not exist in isolation! Our country and church remain beacons of hope through war and peace, good times and bad.

Our presidents transfer power from one to the next, but our democratic republic continues. Our pastors fulfill their calls and lead us through the changing culture.

The new display is a timeline of those changes and a few of the events within our church.

We hope it reminds us that God has always blessed our church and country and will always be our steadfast redeemer.

70 years ago: The rules of worship

Worship begins as I close the door to my house. On my way, I pray for my church, for the minister, and for those who worship far and near.

Before I enter the house of God, I pause a moment that I may cast off and leave outside all things unbecoming to a child of my Heavenly Father, hates and grudges, fretting, worldly cares and sinful thoughts.

The moment I enter the door of this sacred house, I cease all conversations. I come in stillness, for great things spring out of my quietness and minister to me and to those about me.

As soon as I am seated, I bow my head in prayer. I pray for others, as well as myself. I pray for my church and its great causes. I ask God to be near me.