

The Friendly News

The First Presbyterian Church of Woodbury Heights
September 2015



From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Friends,

Friends of ours recently gave me a copy of something written by Ralph Waldo Emerson. It was printed on the back of the program for the ceremony when their grandson became a Bar Mitzvah.

It is certainly appropriate for a boy becoming a man. But I also thought it was just as appropriate for all of us as we begin this new program year of opportunities, challenges, joys and possibilities.

Read what Emerson wrote. Ponder it. And ask yourself: What will I do with my today?

In Christ, John

TODAY

One of the illusions of life is that the present hour is not the critical, decisive hour. Write it on your heart that every day is the best day of the year. Today is an important day.

The problem you solve, the decision you make, the time you enjoy can shape your whole life. The way you approach today, and each day, is crucial.

Our lives are built by a series of days like today.

The following affirmations can help each of us to live each day fully.

Today, I will live through the next

twenty-four hours and try not to tackle all of life's problems at once.

Today, I will improve myself – body, mind, and spirit.

Today, I will not try to change or improve anybody but me.

Today, I will not improve what I would do if things were different. They are not different. I will do my best with what I have.

Today, I will find the grace to let go of resentment of others and forgive myself for past mistakes.

Today, I will not be afraid. I will enjoy what is beautiful, and I will believe that as I give to the world, the world will give to me.

Today, I will act toward others as if this will be my last day on Earth.

Whether these are the best of times or the worst of times, these are the only times we have.

If I live each day fully, I will look back on a life that made a difference.



Keep these people in your prayers

Prayers for healing are lifted up for Nicholas Zorio, Winnie Higgins, Edith Dietz, John Hewitt, Lois Cooper, Bob Sincavage, Bill Sharp, Kim DiNoia, John Battle, Gary Kuehnappel, and Cheryl Reifsteck, all of whom have had medical issues recently.

Our sympathy is extended to Mae Young on the death of her grandson, Gary.

September Birthdays

9/01 Connie Harley
9/04 Dorothy Simcox
9/05 Matt Geserick
9/05 Paul Milio
9/08 Gary Kuehnappel, Sr.
9/17 Helen Geserick
9/23 Brad Gilmore
9/28 Rachel Eachus



Anniversaries

9/10 Walt and Kay Pierson
9/11 Beth and Clay Cary
9/14 Gary and Diane Kuehnappel
9/19 Jim and Shirley Golding



Bread Festival coming Sept. 13

Last year, we began our new church year with a bread festival – focusing on all the ways bread is mentioned in the Bible.

This year, immediately following the 11 a.m. Sept. 13 worship service, we will again join in the breaking of bread in Fellowship Hall.

The Esther Circle will provide butter, cream cheese and other spreads as well as beverages.

We ask everyone who comes to church that day to bring a loaf of bread to be shared. It can be homemade or store-bought – just make it a specialty bread.

Special thanks to the Elliotts

The Baby Boomers would like to thank Chuck and Joyce Elliott for opening their home and swimming pool for the group's annual midsummer get-together. Thanks also to Mike and Joyce Woodrow for organizing the event.

Same-sex marriage meeting

As some of you may know, the Presbyterian Church USA, at the 2014 meeting of the General Assembly, passed an overture on marriage that has opened up the issue of same-sex marriage.

The required majority of presbyteries has approved the overture, which now goes back for final approval at the 2016 meeting of the General Assembly.

Some of our members have questions and concerns about this change. To address them, we have asked the Rev. Wendy Boer, the stated clerk of our presbytery, to meet with us and discuss the process involved, how it will affect us, and answer your questions.

The meeting will be at 1 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 20, in the church lounge. The Rev. Boer has a preaching date that day and will not be able to arrive until 1 o'clock.

Anyone who is interested in discussing this issue is invited to attend.

Rally Day set for Sept. 13

Our Sunday School year will begin Sunday, Sept. 13, with a Rally Day celebration in the sanctuary at 9:30 a.m.

After a brief time of worship, all of our students will go to the Primary Room to draw their own bodies (as our theme that morning is the Body of Christ).

Regular classes will begin the following week. Come one, come all – and bring friends. We have a great year awaiting us.

Hospitalized? Be sure to tell us

A reminder: If you go into the hospital, and you would like a visit from Rev. Shedwick or a Deacon, you must call him or the church. The hospitals do not call when one of our members is admitted.

How about a mini-golf outing?

Instead of our annual golf tournament fund-raiser this year, we are considering a miniature-golf outing this fall at Big Swing in Sewell. Please see Mike Woodrow to express whether you would be interested in playing in such an outing.

DEACONS CORNER: Next meeting – 7 p.m., September 22, annex



News from the summer:

A summer tea time, sponsored by Deacons, was successfully held BEFORE church on Aug. 9, at 9:30 a.m. The Deacons also served the goodies after church as well. Thanks to all who helped and donated treats.

Current News:

- **Tree of Life** funds were used this summer to assist folks in financial need. Thanks for helping with that project.
- **Food items for September:** We suggest donating canned juice, tea, coffee, crackers or tuna, but any nonperishables would be welcomed.

Upcoming Events:

Sept. 13: The Sunday School kicks off the year with a Rally Day celebration at 9:30 a.m. Worship services move back to 11 a.m. the same day and, after the service, the church plans to hold its second annual Bread Festival. Church members are asked to donate a fresh loaf of specialty bread – either purchased or homemade.

Oct. 13: Annual Red Cross Blood Drive, 2 to 7 p.m.

Ongoing events/programs:

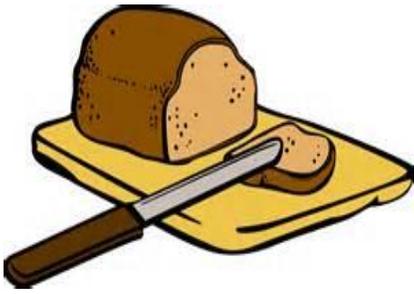
- * **New photo directories** are in the pew racks. Enjoy them but don't remove them.
- * **Hospitality bags**
- * **Being Green:** Recycling Sunday bulletins
- * **Children's items:** Reusable doodle pads, toys and books for service
- * **Gift cards** for the ShopRite and Acme Food Markets
- * **Food collection**

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, Jeff Brenner, Clay Cary, Cassandra DeFinizio, Kim DiNoia, Steve Elliott, Kayleigh Fishwick, Connie Harley, Judy Milio, John Pedicone, Andrew Reynolds, Margaret Schneeman, Dottie Shedwick, Joe Williamson, Joyce Woodrow, moderator



SEPTEMBER 2015

'Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.'

Matthew 5:16

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Esther Circle, 7 p.m., annex	2	3	4	5
6 Worship, 10 a.m.	7	8	9 Budget meeting, 7 p.m., annex	10 Bell choir, 6:45 p.m. Choir, 7:45	11	12 Men's group, 8:30 a.m., Piston Diner Woodbury Hts. Day, 9 a.m.
13 Rally Day, 9:30 a.m. Worship, 11 a.m. Bread festival, 12:15 p.m.	14 Prime Timers, noon	15	16 Mission, 6:30, annex Session, 7 p.m.,	17 Bell choir, 6:45 p.m. Choir, 7:45	18	19
20 Sunday school, 9:30 a.m. Worship, 11 a.m. Marriage petition talk, lounge, 1 p.m.	21	22 Deacons, 7 p.m., annex	23	24 Bell choir, 6:45 p.m. (No choir)	25	26
27 Sunday school, choir practice, 9:30 a.m. Worship, 11 a.m.	28	29	30			

Notes from the Organ Bench
September 2015

By Quint Lerch
Music director



Gathering together as the Body of Christ

On Sept. 13 we will again gather in the sanctuary after a long, hot summer and be God's family of faith, reunited. After time away from one another recharging our batteries, enjoying God's beauty at the shore, the mountains or in a far-away place reuniting with family members or friends not often seen, we come back together again.

We do this every year. It is our ritual. It is what we are supposed to do -- and what God commands us to do. We do it, too, because we need to be together with the people we know and love so that we truly can become the Body of Christ.

God gives each of us many talents, and we use them best when we use them together. One person doing God's work is great, but a whole church full of people doing God's work is even better.

But what we need to do as Christians is not only to work for God, but to listen first. And it can be life-changing for others and for ourselves. When we listen to God -- or the child we meet on the street, the family in need or the neighbor we rarely see -- we hopefully understand how we need to serve or what we need to do or how we need to pray. Sometimes we are powerless to do or say anything, so we can only pray.

As we come together this month, look around the church. Welcome those old friends you see, and make new friends with people you haven't met. Listen to them tell their stories and then listen to God for his leading. Look at the world around you. Find out what needs to be done and then pray about it and listen for God's leading. And if you are called, answer the call.

Do God's work so that you and all gathered here at the First Presbyterian Church of Woodbury Heights become the Body of Christ at work in the world.

New Sanctuary Choir fourth-Sunday rehearsal schedule

In an effort to reach more interested but busy people, the Sanctuary Choir will have one morning rehearsal per month -- on the fourth Sunday of each month -- from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m., beginning Sept. 27.

We hope that people who want to sing but cannot make regular Thursday evening rehearsals will come out then, and we will rehearse music for the following four Sundays. If you love to sing, but are unable to make that regular Thursday commitment, please join us at our monthly Sunday morning rehearsals. Other Sunday rehearsal dates for the remainder of the church year are Oct. 25, Nov. 22, Jan. 24, Feb. 28 and April 24.

Important upcoming Sunday dates

11 a.m. Sept. 13: Music and Teacher Dedication Sunday

9:30 a.m. Sept. 20: Youth Bell Choir rehearsals begin

11 a.m. Oct. 4: World Communion Sunday with Mount Zion United Methodist Church

11 a.m. Oct. 18: Youth Bells ring

Presbytery needs choir members for 175th anniversary celebration

Our church belongs to the Presbytery of West Jersey, a governing body of about 60 Presbyterian churches located from Burlington to Cape May.

Our presbytery is one of the oldest in the nation, and this year it is celebrating its 175th anniversary at a worship service at 3 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 18, at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Route 70, Cherry Hill.

This service will feature a combined choir with members from as many churches as possible within the presbytery district.

If you are interested, you **do not** have to be a member of our choir to participate. If you love to sing and want to be a part of this historic occasion, please contact Quint Lerch at (856) 235-8780 for more details.

There are to be two or three rehearsals at Trinity before the event, and the conductor will be Jack Hill, director of music at the Woodbury church.



Mission: Donations help others buy clothes

Jennifer Williams from Covenant House visited our Church on Aug. 2 and picked up all the gift cards our congregation purchased from Payless and Kmart stores.

The gift cards enabled young people at Covenant House to purchase shoes and clothing appropriate for interviews and job training. Thank you all for your donations.

Our other project is to collect underwear and socks for children in Camden. These items will go to Brenda and Bill Antinore, who in turn will give them to children with at least one parent who is incarcerated.

In the past, we have collected backpacks and school supplies for the children, but those in charge found they had more backpacks than necessary. So, this year, socks and underwear were requested.

Time is running out, so please bring your donations to church as soon as possible. Thanks to those who have already purchased these items.

We hope you have had a refreshing and delightful summer. In the fall we have some wonderful ideas for mission projects, which we will tell you about in the weeks ahead.

Thanks for all of your help! You are a wonderful congregation.



Church group tries out Swedesboro restaurant

On Aug. 10, several Prime Timers from our church traveled to A'Pizze Tuscan Grill on Center Square Road in Swedesboro.

An interesting detail is that Paul and Judy Milio's son-in-law made the tables in the dining area and installed the decorative wine barrels on the ceiling in the back area.

The group car-pooled with the Milios or Janet Koehler. Getting there is always part of the adventure, and this time the Koehler car led the way.

Everyone had the choice of choosing from the extensive menu or trying the buffet.

Those trying the buffet finished early, even though they filled their plates and returned for seconds. Then, they ordered desserts because they didn't want to sit idly and gawk at the menu orderers.

The Prime Timers are always considerate of others!

Paul Milio asked a blessing and then told us of a recent wedding he and Judy attended that was so sad even the cake was in tiers!

He quickly moved on to a discussion of our next meeting, and we all volunteered to make food for our September picnic in National Park.

After our delicious lunch, and general chit-chat, we gave this restaurant a big "thumbs up."

Carolyn Ronkety said the cheesesteak was the best ever, and the desserts were generous and indulgent. We will return!

"Train up a child about the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it."

-- Proverbs 22:6

3 young adults eager to direct youth program



Hello, my name is **Michael Golding**. I am a West Deptford volunteer firefighter. I am an Eagle Scout from Boy Scout Troop 9,

I have also volunteered for the Special Olympics on the state, national and world levels. I have been part of this church for as long as I can remember. I have served on the mission committee for four years and completed two years as the youth elder.

In my travels through the church, I had the awesome experience of being in the "family" of the youth group. I say "family" because that's exactly what it was. I have been through so many awesome experiences that I will never regret.

When I was first approached about being a director of the youth group, I hesitated at first because it kind of intimidated me. However, now I realize that I have been through what the youth group was and want to make it like that for the future of our church..

I, **Tracey Urion**, struggled with where to start. To say that this church is a part of me is an understatement. I grew up in this church; I was baptized and confirmed here and then was married here. I had my son baptized and my stepson confirmed here.

This church is ALL me! It has been here through every major event in my life. I was IN the youth group, and some of my fondest memories come from my times of fellowship within it.

With that being said, there are times when I have questioned my involvement with the church and how I can better serve the church that has been there for me every step of the way.

I knew serving on Session would be a great way to give back, but I still felt like I was not doing all that I could. The church deserves more from me! So when I was approached about helping with the youth group, I was excited. But just as quickly as I got excited, I became nervous and scared.

But, over the past few years, I have been trying to (by the Grace of God) face my fears head-on, or should I say that I learned to live by **Joshua 1:9** -- *"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."*

And so my acceptance of the opportunity to help lead the youth group was decided. With God as our leader, I have no doubt that Michael, Megan and myself will lead the youth group, generate excitement and grow attendance. We have so many great ideas, I hope we can fit them all in!

I am **Megan Geserick**, the third spoke in this wheel. Many of you already know me because I sing in the choir. I have a loving husband and have two beautiful daughters with another coming. As a mother, I want to see the youth thrive. I feel a strong youth program is where it all begins!

As a teen, I found myself being a part of a solid youth group, and I still have fond memories of the fellowship and faith a youth group can bring to a church.

Michael, Tracey and I have all had completely different, yet wonderfully fulfilling, youth-group experiences. From these experiences we hope to take the best and cultivate a comfortable religious environment with a focus on fellowship and church growth.

Legacy in stained glass sets our church apart

By Jim Childs

Gloucester County Times (Reprinted with permission)

Late morning sunlight streamed through a stained glass window, illuminating panes of scintillating colors, blue, red, yellows, oranges, browns and greens.

"I don't like it that way," Paul Skelly said in 1982, while surveying a stained glass window he installed in the First Presbyterian Church, of Woodbury Heights. "I don't like it when the sun bounces through the window. It expands the window. I like the muted effect," he said, pointing to a window away from direct sunlight.

Eighteen years later, Skelly returned to complete the job he started in 1964, installing seven windows with 35 panes of stained glass at the sides of the church here.

"When the church was built 30 years ago, they wanted to do the side windows, but they ran out of money," said the Rev. John Shedwick. "Over the years, we thought it would be a nice thing if we finished them. Two years ago, the church commission decided to get into it."

Shedwick said more than \$14,000 was raised within a month and the church contacted Skelly, the same artist who constructed the approximately 45-foot stained glass window that adorns the church's Elm Avenue façade.

"I was very thrilled to be asked to construct the side windows," Skelly said. "It's like a patient choosing his surgeon. When I get a new one, (commission), it's like a new adventure."

Skelly said the church decided on the designs that would tell the Salvation Story from Creation to the beginning of the church.

"I remember the stained glass windows in the church where I grew up," Shedwick said. "My dream is that kids here will remember the Bible stories from the stained glass windows."

"A lot of modern churches are not putting in stained glass windows," he added.

Stained glass art, which reached its height of popularity in the 11th century, is a dying breed," Skelly admitted.

"It's sad, really," he said. "There are no apprentices. You now have hobbyists learning 6-week programs. They can't teach stained glass in school. The best way to learn is to be apprenticed."

"Talent won't get you anywhere," he said. "You have to amplify your talent by being an apprentice to an accomplished artist. I learned my skills under hard task-masters. They were very demanding."

"The most important word is discipline," he said. "You're not an artist because you can draw pictures. You're never an artist, you're always a student of art."

"Every aspect of the window has to play a part in the overall picture. If you're disciplined, everything fits."

Skelly, who works out of a studio at his Cherry Hill home, started his own career in 1948 as an apprentice under Heinighke Sons Munich School of Painting in New York.

"For the first two years, all you do is sweep the shop and take the boss' wife shopping," he laughed.

Skelly put in his time and started his own business in 1960, constructing his first window at the Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Collingswood.

Four years and several jobs later, he erected the sizable front window here. Gazing up at the huge kaleidoscope of colors, he shakes his head in admiration of the work.

"I feel empowered," he said, shielding his eyes with his hand. "I can't believe I did it. I see things now that I don't know how I got the ideas. "I'm so happy to be in this business. It gives you a real satisfaction."

The church's large window details various events in Christ's life and is surrounded by stained glass portraits of the 12 Apostles. Interestingly, a portrait of Judas, the Betrayer, usually omitted from such works because of his infamous misdeed, is included.

"I don't usually do a Judas, but Rev. Powell (the pastor at the time) convinced me. He said there's a little bit of Judas in all of us," Skelly said with a wink.

Judas is also included in the new window and has already acquired a dubious distinction.

"A little kid came by the other day and said Judas looked like Howard Stern. He was referring to the "Temptation" pane; in which a red-cloaked hand representing the devil points to a figure with brown should-length hair in purple robes signifying Judas.

Skelly said he imports the colored glass from Europe but does all the rest of the work himself from drawing the watercolor sketch of how the window will look to cutting the glass, to fitting all the pieces together like a giant jigsaw puzzle, and securing them with soldered lead.

