



Pennington Presbyterian



FAITH + COMMUNITY + SERVICE

PASTOR'S THOUGHTS

What an amazing experience of worship we had on Sunday! Those of you who were able to attend received a unique and powerful gift as Frank Runyeon presented "Afraid: The Gospel of Mark." His love for God and for scripture, combined with his great skill as an actor, cast new light on the story of Jesus as told in the book of Mark. I agree with Frank. This gospel is made to be heard, and not read, and is best received in whole cloth, instead of in pieces.

At the end, Frank lifted a single candle and said to us, "This is the gospel of Christ." We were encouraged to go forth to share the gospel's good news with a world that lives in fear. The first century disciples did so at the risk of their very lives. It can feel risky for us, too.

We are living in a world that is polarized. There are the "Haves" and the "Have Nots." Add to that a current category, the "Hads Who Now Have Not and Wish to Have Again." That describes many families and states as well as many nations. The 99% feel divided from the 1%. Questions arise about the nature of capitalism and the meaning of success. During this presidential election year, many citizens find themselves on opposite sides, polarized by ideology and feeling more cynical about political debate and those who seek to gain or hold onto the highest office in our land. Can the good news of the gospel build bridges instead of building walls?

This Sunday, February 5, our Science and Faith program will be launched with a series of adult education classes each Sunday at 9am and once a month special programs on Sunday afternoons. In both venues, we will explore faith and science and discover the many ways that our lives can be enriched as we hold science and faith together. Why is this such a big deal? Honestly, it is important because many people who study and love and understand science have become polarized from people who love and are committed to God and live their daily lives upheld by faith. The number of those who can live happily in the world of science and the world of faith are too few. A Gallup poll from 2009 found that 39% of Americans believe in the theory of evolution, 25% do

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Next issue: 2/15
Deadline Monday 2/13
9:00 AM

Focus is issued the first and third Wednesdays of each month, except July & August. During those two summer months, only one Focus newsletter is published per month.



not and 36% don't have an opinion either way. Gallup went on to research how many folks who believe in evolution attend church on a regular basis. Only 24% who believe in evolution reported attending church weekly. 55% said they seldom or never go to church. Can the good news of the gospel build bridges instead of building walls?

We, the bearers of the gospel not only can build bridges, we must. The Apostle Paul says that we Christians, those who have been reconciled by the grace of God, must then go forth as ambassadors, building bridges among the human family and being a visible sign of what it means to live in a vital and loving relationship with God.

Don't be afraid. We have good news to live and to share.

In Christ,
Nancy
Nancy Mikoski

CALENDAR

REGULAR WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Sunday

9:00 AM— Church School for all ages
10:15 AM – Worship Service followed by coffee hour

(Note: Cherub Choir for pre-k through grade 1 meets during part of the worship service)

7:00 PM—Jr./Sr. Highs

Wednesday

9:15 AM—Shalom Women's Bible Study

4:30 PM—Genesis Choir (grades 2-5)
5:15 PM—Gloria Deo Choir (grades 6 and up)

7:30 PM – Young Adult Bible Study

Thursday

7:00 PM—Bell Choir
8:00 PM—Adult Choir



LOOKING AHEAD...

Feb. 3 – OAM Committee
Feb. 3 – OAM Brown Bag Luncheon

Feb. 6 – Personnel Committee

Feb. 7 – Deacons

Feb. 8 – Worship & Music Committee

Feb. 12 – Youth Sunday

Feb. 15 – Stewardship Committee

Feb. 22 – ASH Wednesday
Service in our sanctuary

Feb. 25 – New Member Party

Feb. 26 – Celebration of Psalms during worship service

Feb. 26 – Science & Faith Program

March 4 – Congregational Meeting



WORSHIP SCHEDULE Sundays

■ Sunday, Feb. 5, 10:15 AM – Sermon: Rev. Dr. Gordon Mikoski

■ Sunday, Feb. 12, 10:15 AM – Youth Sunday

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Pennington, NJ 08534**

CHILDREN'S CHURCH SCHOOL Sunday 9 AM

■ J.A.M.I. ("Jesus and Me!"; k-thru-5th grade) meets in Lower Titus Hall to be shepherded to weekly hands-on workshops. Through science, drama, music, art, cooking, and more kids gain insight into recurring Bible stories and themes. ■ INFANTS THROUGH PRE-K please see page 3 for room locations.

ADULT CHURCH SCHOOL Sunday 9 AM

■ FORUM (topics include current events, community concerns, theology, the Bible and Mission) ■ MAKING FAITH REAL (group-led open discussion of faith and Spirit in our daily lives). ■ BIBLICAL LITERATURE AND FOUNDATIONS OF FAITH (two tracks – one focusing Biblical books, themes and questions and another focusing on core beliefs and practices of the Christian faith)

See website for current offerings

Sunday School's not just for kids!

KIDS, FAMILY, AND SEASONAL DOINGS

- **SR. HIGHS (9-12 GRADE) & JR. HIGHS (6-8 GRADE)**
SUNDAY, 7 – 8:30 P.M. (unless stated otherwise)
- FEB. 5** Jr. Highs will not meet – Super Bowl Sunday
 Sr. Highs will not meet – see Jr. Highs
- FEB. 12** Jr Highs will make fleece blankets for CHOP cancer patients
 Sr. Highs will meet in the “pit”

■ SUNDAY AM CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENTS:

Infants – 2yr. olds: Room 209
3 yr olds - Pre-School: Room 102
6th – 8th: Balcony classroom
Sr. Highs: The Pit
Interpreting the Bible: The Upper Room
Forum: Heritage Hall
Making Faith Real: Room 206

Rotations for K-5th grade: Start in Lower Titus Hall then rotate to different locations.

■ **PPNS REGISTRATION** Pennington Presbyterian Nursery School, which offers half-day classes for two, three and four-year-olds, has begun registration for the 2012-2013 school. If you are interested in learning more about the school, taking a tour, and receiving our new brochure and registration form, please e-mail director Hope Anderson at hopeanderson.ppns@gmail.com, call 737-6622 x12 or visit PPNS website at www.ppnschool.org. ■ **WE HAVE RECEIVED A THANK YOU...** “I would personally like to thank your entire church community for coming together and making the holidays brighter for the students at our Children’s Day School. Recognizing that there are many demands on your charitable giving, we are especially grateful that you have chosen us to put your dollars to excellent use. There were many happy smiling faces on Christmas morning because of your benevolence....thank you so much. It truly means the world to our students.” Warmest Regards, Mark Lamar, Executive Director, Family Guidance Center Corp., Family & Children’s Services of Central New Jersey

■ **DO YOU LIKE TO COOK AND/OR BAKE?** We are always looking for some help as we reach out to those in need. Whether it is to provide a meal to someone after surgery or to bake cookies for a Memorial Service luncheon, many hands make the load light. This is a great way to get involved on an “as needed” basis. If you want to be added to our list of volunteers, please contact Maude Tatar at thetatars@yahoo.com or 818-0711. ■ **SUNDAY FLOWERS** The flowers on the altar for our Sunday morning services are a wonderful way to recognize meaningful people in our lives. If you would like to request flowers for any Sunday in 2012, please sign your name on the Flower Chart, found on the wall just outside the Deacons kitchen by the sanctuary. Complete the request form, attach your check made out to *Pennington Presbyterian Church* and mark that check in the memo line for “flowers”. The minimum flower order will be \$40, but you are welcome to request a larger arrangement and the florist will be notified. Flowers will not be ordered without the required payment. ■ **COLLEGE CARE PACKAGES – DO WE HAVE YOUR COLLEGE STUDENT’S ADDRESS?** The Deacons will soon be sending out Care Packages to our college students. Please contact the church office if we don’t have a USPS address for your college student. ■ **FRANK RUNYEON “AFRAID” PERFORMANCE** Many thanks to the Worship & Music Committee and all others in our church family who pitched in and helped make last Sunday’s performance a memorable event!



PRAYER OF THE DAY

Gracious God, by water and the Spirit you claimed us as your own, cleansing us from sin, and giving us new life. You made us members of your body, the church, calling us to be your servants in the world. Renew in us the covenant you made in our baptism. Send us forth by the power of your Spirit to love and serve you with joy, and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

- taken from Book of Common Worship



OUR CHURCH FAMILY

- Please keep Kevin Swaim in your prayers.



Per Capita

Our church has been assessed for **566** members, for a total of **\$15,972.52** due during 2012. The difference between what our members pay and the amount due is made up in our operating budget. This difference amounts to about \$10,000 each year, and some years even more. We'd like to encourage each adult and confirmed member to pay their Per Capita before the year end.

Per member for 2012:
 General Assembly - \$6.63
 Synod - \$3.95
 Presbytery - \$17.64
Total: \$28.22 for each confirmed member in each household



GROUP EFFORTS



Did you know a Peace Pole was planted in our front quadrangle by our Peacemaking Committee in 2004? Look for it!

A Peace Pole is a hand-crafted monument that displays the message and prayer *May Peace Prevail on Earth* on each of its four or six sides, usually in different languages. There are more than 200,000 Peace Poles in 200 countries all over the world dedicated as monuments to peace. They serve as constant reminders for us to visualize and pray for world peace.

■ **OFFERING ENVELOPES** Per capita envelopes, pledge offering envelopes and Open Door envelopes are available. They can be picked up in the Reception Room before or after Sunday services or mailed if requested. *Note:* The envelopes are not numbered, so please make sure you put your name on the envelope when you make your contributions. ■ **HOMEFRONT MEALS PREP & DELIVERY—THUR., FEB. 16** If you can provide cookies, please call Dee Wilson at 737-7675. (Please note: The cookies can be store bought.) Have questions about HomeFront? Call Dee at the phone number listed above. ■ **PRES PLUS** Our Seniors Group is holding what they are calling an "antiques roadshow", even though there will be no professional appraiser available to evaluate your "treasure." Instead, the focus is on old items that have an interesting story that you would like to share with others. Join the group Thursday, February 16 at 10 a.m. in Upper Titus Hall. All are welcome. Bring an "antique" of your choice, tell a story about it, and be delighted with the enthusiastic responses of others. Then join the group for lunch at a local restaurant. ■ **OAM BROWN BAG LUNCH** On Feb. 3rd there will be a "Brown Bag Lunch" at 12:30 pm, sponsored by The Older Adult Committee. Jack Koeppel, a member of our church, will speak on "Glimpses of the Past – Hopewell Valley". Jack was born and raised in Hopewell Valley and as past President of the Hopewell Valley Historical Society, he has been involved in preserving local history since 1985. He owned and operated Queens-town Gallery for 25 years. All are invited to come and bring a sandwich. Beverages, fruit and cookies will be provided. ■ **HAVE YOU BEEN AN ELDER OR DEACON FOR 25 YEARS OR MORE?** If you were ordained as an elder or deacon, here or in another Presbyterian church, 25 years or more ago, please let Ernie Kimmel know at 466-6803 or ewkimmel@verizon.net. These long-serving officers of the church will be recognized at the March 4th meeting of the congregation. ■ **PPC BOOK GROUP** The group will meet on Tues, Feb. 21 (due to the Monday holiday), 7:30-9 pm at Donna Tully's house (8 Queen Lane) to discuss People of the Book by Geraldine Brooks. New-comers always welcome! Call Jane Simpson (466-4075) with any questions.

PENNINGTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

13 S. Main Street
Pennington NJ 08534

Return Service Requested



Science & Faith

February line-up!

February 5, 12, 19, and 26

9 a.m. Sunday, Heritage Hall

Evolution & Genesis

Would you like to brush up on the Genesis story or the fundamentals of biology and natural selection? This is your opportunity to come up to speed!

- Feb. 5 – **Reverend Gordon Mikoski**
Princeton Theological Seminary
- Feb. 12, 19, 26 --- **Professor Donald Lovett**, Evolutionary Biologist at The College of New Jersey and Elder, Ewing Presbyterian Church

Also on February 26!

2:00 - 4:00 p.m., Heritage Hall

Where Did Everything Come From?

Join us for a panel discussion on recent developments in evolutionary biology and Old Testament theology followed by an open discussion.

- **Professor Donald Lovett**,
Evolutionary Biologist at The College of New Jersey and Elder, Ewing Presbyterian Church and
- **Professor Dennis Olson**, *Charles T. Haley Professor of Old Testament Theology at Princeton Theological Seminary*

- *This initiative is funded through a grant of the John Templeton Foundation to "catalyze conditions for a sustained, rich, generative engagement between science and faith."*
- *PPC's Science & Faith Planning Group is led by Pastor Nancy Mikoski and Professor Leeann Thornton.*



OLDER ADULT MINISTRY COMMITTEE

Pennington Presbyterian Church

Winter Newsletter 2012

As the whole church congregation begins this year with an in depth study of prayer, it would be a good idea for the Seniors to join the ranks. Someone once wrote that Prayer is not a “spare wheel” that you pull out when in trouble, but it is a “steering wheel” that directs you through the right path in your life. When you pray for others, God listens to you and blesses them. Sometimes, when you are safe and happy, remember that someone has prayed for you. So take time to learn some new avenues of prayer. Take time to spend some quiet time to enhance your prayer life. – Barbara Rockel

BROWN BAG LUNCHES

Jan. 6 – Seniors enjoyed a wonderful afternoon with Ragtime Blues guitarist, Karl Dentino. He entertained everyone with some old favorites, some we could even join in singing like an old-fashioned sing-a-long.

Feb. 3 – Jack Koeppel will talk about the history of Hopewell Valley through a slide show.

April 6 – Rev. Richard Armstrong will share his experiences when he was in the world of Baseball. An apt topic as this writer looks forward to the opening of Baseball season.

PRES PLUS DOINGS

Jan. 19 – Ed York shared his expertise on the Delaware Valley before 1800. He recently published a book, “Opportunity Valley” about the Delaware River Basin. Different inhabitants called it different names. But it was the Quakers who really opened up this Valley. Later it became a potpourri of inhabitants.

Feb. 16 – The Seniors own version of “Antique Road Show”. No appraisals,

but a time of sharing interesting stories about some of your sentimental antiques.

March 15 – Possible tour of Sun Arena in Trenton.

OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF BABES

A Sunday School teacher decided to have her young class memorize Psalm 23. She gave the youngsters a month to complete this assignment. At the end of the month each child was to stand up in front of the congregation and recite the Psalm. Little Rick was excited. But, after much practice he could barely get through the first line. On the day the class was scheduled to recite Psalm 23 in front of everyone, Rick was nervous. When it was his turn he stepped up to the microphone and proudly said,

**“The Lord is my Shepherd,
and that’s all I need to know.”**

