



Pennington Presbyterian

FAITH + COMMUNITY + SERVICE



PASTOR'S THOUGHTS

We are right around the corner from the Christian season called Lent. It will begin on Ash Wednesday, February 22, as we worship and pray together at a service in the sanctuary beginning at 7:30 pm. We begin the season in a rather peculiar way, coming forward to receive a smudge of ash on our foreheads. Ashes or dust in the Bible symbolize several things: frailty or death (Genesis 18:27), sadness or mourning (Esther 4:3), judgment (Lamentations 3:16), and repentance or turning from sin (Jonah 3:6).

Lent quite literally begins by pondering things most of us would rather sail right by, our sin, our frailty, and our death. We've been well-trained by our culture to turn away from such thoughts and to "accentuate the positive." The trouble is, as Christians, we know a deeper truth. We don't live up to our own best goals for ourselves. We get stuck in routines that hurt us. We cycle around and around patterns that don't build up, but tear down. As hard as we may try, we don't love God with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength and we find some of our neighbors to be almost impossible to love. So what are we to do? Do we just give in and accept this mess we are in? Do we become cynical? No, instead we dare to get up from our pew and come forward to get a smudge of ash on our forehead! A smudge in the shape of a cross, that is. The truth of our sinfulness and mortality is surpassed by an even greater truth. *In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.* We don't earn this, we receive it. He did for us what we can not do for ourselves. By his grace, we find healing and wholeness. That is exactly what love does! We set aside the seven weeks before Easter as a season called Lent so that we don't lose track of this. The ashes of Ash Wednesday will be replaced by the good, good news. "Christ is Risen! He is Risen Indeed!" Lent is a time to remember all of this and to engage in Christian practices that lead to lives renewed by grace.

Here are just a few practices you might consider:

- Pick up the 2012 Year of Prayer booklet. Experiment with February's "Lectio Divina" form of prayer. Try praying March's "Daily Examen" before going to bed each night.
 - Come to church at 7:30 am on Wednesday mornings before work, school, or
- continued next page...

OF SPECIAL INTEREST IN THIS EDITION:

- *PP Nursery School Registration (pg. 3)* ■ *Sunday Flowers (pg. 3)*
- *Bowling (pg. 3)* ■ *Thank you from...(pg. 3)*
- *College Student Care Packages (pg 3)*
- *Congregational Meeting (pg. 4)* ■ *APNC (pg. 4)* ■ *TASK (pg. 4)*

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Our Church Family	3
Calendar of Events	2
Worship, Church School	2
Kids, Family, Seasonal	3
Group Efforts	4

**Next issue: 3/7
Deadline Monday 3/5
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.



other activities, for a brief devotional time followed by the Lord's Supper of freshly baked bread and sweet grape juice.

- Attend a Lenten class on Wednesday evenings at 7:30 pm taught by our seminarian Justin Pannkuk, a devoted Christian and skilled teacher.
- Instead of "giving something up" for Lent, try "picking something up", like food to bring as a gift of love for the people who depend on the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen and the Crisis Ministry for nourishment, or the phone to call someone who would be grateful for some conversation.
- Ponder the words of Henri Nouwen through a devotional booklet for Lent, "Renewed for Life." Help a child discover the meaning of Lent with a child's devotional and sticker booklet called "All around Jerusalem."

In faith,
Nancy
Nancy Mikoski

CHURCH STAFF/CONTACT

Pastor:
Nancy Mikoski

Office Administrator & FOCUS Editor: Mary Coleman

Music Director:
William Alford

Office phone: 609-737-1221
Fax: 609-730-9665
E-mail: office@pennpres.org

Web: www.pennpres.org

**13 S Main Street
Pennington, NJ 08534**

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



Ash Wednesday, February 22

LOOKING AHEAD...

- Feb. 21 – Facilities Committee
- Feb. 21 – C.E. Committee
- Feb. 22 – ASH Wednesday Service in our sanctuary
- Feb. 24 – Youth Choir rehearsal & Lock-in
- Feb. 25 – New Member Party
- Feb. 25 – Bowling
- Feb. 26 – Celebration of Psalms during worship service
- Feb. 26 – Science & Faith Program
- Feb. 27 – Session Meeting
- Feb. 28 – Personnel Committee
- Feb. 29, March 3,14,21,28 & April 4 – Morning Lenten Devotionals
- March 4 – Men's Breakfast
- March 4 – Congregational Meeting



WORSHIP SCHEDULE Sundays

- **Sunday, Feb. 19, 10:15 AM** – Sermon: Nancy Mikoski Scout Sunday
- **Sunday, Feb. 26, 10:15 AM** – Celebration of Psalms ~ A service of special music, hymn singing and readings from the Bible's Hymnbook, the Book of Psalms. Adult & children's choirs will sing.

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). Note: In order for participants to take part in the Science and Faith program, Making Faith Real is on hiatus and will resume this Fall 2012. ■ **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.

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. 19 *Jr. Highs* will not meet – Presidents' holiday weekend
Sr. Highs will meet in the "pit"
- FEB. 26 *Jr Highs* will meet in Heritage Hall. Topic: "Generosity With A Fault"
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: class will resume in fall 2012

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...** from Karen Kelly: "Thank you for all of your prayers, cards, visits and dinners. It is so reassuring to have the love and support of such a wonderful church family." ■ **AND ANOTHER THANK YOU ...**from Robin Hepburn: "Ronn, Jack and I would like to thank everyone at Pennington Presbyterian Church who made our Mother's memorial service so very special. We know a lot of effort went into setting up, making food and serving all the wonderful folks who came out. What a beautiful day to honor such a great lady! Many thanks to all."

■ **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. ■ **ABOUT COLLEGE CARE PACKAGES** A heart tree will be set up in Upper Titus Hall beginning Sunday, Feb. 19, listing items needed for the care packages. Please take a heart (or more!) and bring back the listed items along with the hearts by March 4. The Deacons will prepare the packages at their meeting on March 6. ■ **BOWLING** Sign-up during coffee hour to go bowling on Saturday, Feb. 25, 6 - 8 p.m. at the Hamilton Lanes in Hamilton, NJ. Sponsored by the Deacons, this year also includes the Sr. High group. Cost: \$12 per person, shoe rental included. All are invited to go for pizza afterward. Questions: Call Chris LaCasse at 647-4065.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Trust in the Lord with all your heart,
And do not rely on your own insight.
In all your ways acknowledge him,
And he will make straight your paths.
(Proverbs 3:5,6)

Prayer: Dear God, help us to trust you throughout our lives. May we be nourished and enriched by you, confident of your love and care, and a blessing to others. Amen.

- The Upper Room, January/February 2012



OUR CHURCH FAMILY

■ Please keep Kevin Swaim in your prayers.

■ We extend our sympathy to Karin & Jack McAnlis on the recent death of Karin's mother.

■ We extend our sympathy to Amy Pszczolkowski and family on the recent death of Amy's grandmother.

SAVE THE DATE! The Women's Retreat will be held on Saturday, April 14, from 10:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. at Nassau Presbyterian Church in Princeton. Our leader will be Reverend Kiran Young Wimberly - more information will be coming soon. We are holding the retreat close to home this year, in the hopes that many of you can attend!

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



The session of the Pennington Presbyterian Church is calling a congregational meeting for Sunday, March 4, 2012 following worship. The meeting will be held over lunch in Heritage Hall (note: contributions for lunch will be a fundraiser for the Sr. High Mission Trip this summer). The business before the congregation includes: receiving and discussion of annual reports, honoring elders and deacons who were ordained 25 or more years ago and having some fun!

■ **APNC** We continue to meet each Thursday evening, and have reviewed personal information from over 70 candidates for our Associate Pastor position. Last Thursday we reached a milestone—conducting our first phone interview. Several more are scheduled over the coming weeks, as we begin to deepen our knowledge of individuals whose written responses have shown potential. We plan to continue to receive resumes/PIFs into March. May we ask for your help in two areas? Please pray for us and for the candidates regularly, that we may all sincerely and honestly seek to discern God's call. Second is this: one of our members, Amy, often needs a babysitter on Thursday evenings, and sometimes has had to miss meetings. It would be so helpful to have a volunteer or two that she could call on. (Amy Pszczolkowski, amypiz19@yahoo.com, 609-737-6580). Thank you! Alison Young, for the APNC *Members include: Alison, Amy, Bill Guthrie, Emily Cocco, Hope Anderson, Kevin Subers, Kim Newport, Rob Thornton and Thomas Lehman-Borer.*

■ **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.

■ **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. Newcomers always welcome! Call Jane Simpson (466-4075) with any questions.

■ **ARE YOU RESPONSIBLE FOR AN ANNUAL REPORT ARTICLE?** A reminder to all who are writing a brief highlight of your group's activities during the past year (2011) – reports are due Feb. 17th

■ **TASK REMINDER** Volunteers from PPC go to the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen the first Monday of each month. There are wicker baskets in the south hallway outside the sanctuary for your contributions of canned foods, winter clothing, calendars, etc. Please call Dick Pratt (737-2767) if you have a contribution that needs to be refrigerated – such as a frozen turkey.

PENNINGTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

13 S. Main Street
Pennington NJ 08534

Return Service Requested





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*

PLEASE NOTE: All of our Science and Faith programs will be videotaped and available for viewing on our website www.pennpres.org

- *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."*