

The Olive Branch



A Monthly Newsletter

JANUARY 2012

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The Presbyterian Church of Pleasantville

Congregational Meeting Notice

January 15, 2012

The Session of the Presbyterian Church of Pleasantville at its November 29, 2011 meeting called a meeting of the congregation for January 15, 2012 following worship for the purpose of approving the call of a new pastor.

The Presbyterian Church of Pleasantville

Congregational Meeting Notice

January 22, 2012

The Session of the Presbyterian Church of Pleasantville has approved the calling of a meeting of the congregation for January 22, 2012 following worship for the purpose of approving the purchase of 2116 Ocean Heights Avenue in Egg Harbor Twp. NJ, and a loan from the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program.

Encouragement from Alice

Journeys of Biblical Proportions

There are many Bible stories about journeys. Abraham, when he was “past age” (to use the Bible’s phrase) was called by God to go to a place that would become his inheritance. He didn’t know where he was going, but he trusted God and went. He then became a father. Another amazing journey for an old man.

Noah, and Moses, and others in the Old Testament also heard God’s call and, in spite of their fear and trepidation, went. As we know, Noah’s journey included him building a large boat in his yard. What must his neighbors have said about that. Moses led his people out of slavery and they journeyed for 40 years. But Moses himself never made it to the promised land.

There are also familiar journeys in the New Testament. Mary and Joseph bravely traveled to Bethlehem, in spite of her almost full-term pregnancy. And Joseph was on a personal journey of discovery because of Mary’s pregnancy. Three “wise men” made a long journey following a star. They left their families and friends, their homes and their work, but had no idea what they would find, or if they would even survive their trip to an unknown place. Jesus spent at least three years of his life on an incredible journey as a homeless, itinerant preacher.

Years later, the man who would become known as the Apostle Paul, was on a journey to persecute Christians when he met the resurrected Jesus. It changed Paul’s life forever.

All of these travelers were told, in one way or another, to be unafraid. To trust God. To have faith. Those are all easy things to say – but not always easy things to do.

We are also on a journey. Since our Transformation Report was presented three years ago, our session has devoted significant time and energy to discerning what our congregational future would look like, and it seems that God may be calling us to step out into the wilderness. Our wilderness journey, if we choose to take it, will probably not be as taxing as these biblical journeys, but I know that it will create many of the same feelings of excitement, anger, anticipation, fear, and frustration that the biblical travelers surely felt.

Can I say that everything will be fine? No, although I certainly hope that will be the case. Can I say that everyone will be happy? I already know the answer to that is “no.”

But what I have faith in is this congregation. I believe that we can, and will, find ways to care for each other, and what we hold dear, while listening for, and acting on, God’s call.

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. - Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV)

Peace,
Alice



PNC Report

The PNC proudly presents the Reverend William Blake Spencer to be our next pastor. Blake is a native Texan who has 23 years experience in pastoral ministry in churches in Texas, Arkansas, and Tennessee. He is currently the interim pastor at Second Presbyterian Church in Nashville.

Blake came to the committee's attention in July 2011, and it didn't take us long to realize that he was a pastor of interest to us. He visited with us in November and it was then that the committee was unanimous in its decision to call Blake to be our pastor.

You will have the opportunity to meet Blake at an Open House on Saturday, January 14th. He will preach his candidacy sermon at the **January 15th** worship service. Immediately following worship there will be a congregational meeting. At that meeting, members will vote on whether to offer the call to Rev. Spencer.

Details about these events and more information about Blake will be coming in a special mailing.

We hope you will be joining us on this weekend.



Session Notes

- ◆ Session meetings were held on November 29th and December 11th.
- ◆ Session approved the pastor compensation package recommended by the PNC and presented by PNC chair Charlotte Jensen. This will include the pastor's moving expenses.
- ◆ Dick Williams and Betsy Phillips discussed their meeting with attorneys Safe Fecadu and Arthur Brown. Dick Williams also provided updates at each meeting on the status of negotiations for the purchase of the Painters Union Hall.
- ◆ Session agreed to submit a loan application to the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program to cover the purchase of the Egg Harbor Twp. property.
- ◆ Session agreed to list the Pleasantville property for sale. Les Schumacher will be consulted for this matter.
- ◆ A request was received from Islamic Outreach to use our facility on Fridays from 12:30 to 3:00 p.m. The facilities committee will review the request.
- ◆ Session approved a request from Rocket Learning Partners to rent Cotter Hall for the purpose of tutoring local school children from 12/6/11 to 2/15/12 for 2-3 days a week at \$600 a month.
- ◆ Stewardship chair Laurann Cacioppo reported that she has received 41 pledges totaling \$109,044.
- ◆ The 2012 mission pledge was approved for \$5,000.
- ◆ A special congregational meeting will be scheduled for January 15th.
- ◆ New officers will be examined and installed on January 22nd.

Betsy Phillips, Clerk of Session

Prayers of the People

- ◆ For the PNC
- ◆ For Gus Steele, home from the hospital
- ◆ For everyone in Iraq & Afghanistan
- ◆ For Kendall Annalise Foster born 5½ weeks early to Brian & Tricia
- ◆ For Les Schumacher having surgery on December 7
- ◆ For our homebound members
- ◆ For Jonathan, being treated for multiple myeloma, and for his family
- ◆ For Ann Seel flying to Denver
- ◆ For Mr. & Mrs. George Carnavasi, Palestinian Christians in Bethlehem, both dealing with serious health problems
- ◆ Kendall Foster, daughter of Brian & Tricia, came home at her birth weight of 5 lbs 6 oz
- ◆ For friends newly diagnosed with cancer
- ◆ Congratulations to Beth Hurley, daughter of Ernie & Joanne Phillips, on her graduation from Stockton College
- ◆ Thanks to God for Rob Seel who passed his state test and is now an official Colorado State Park Ranger
- ◆ For John Ford fighting cancer
- ◆ For the Neal family on the death of their son Nick
- ◆ Joy for the end of Americans fighting in Iraq
- ◆ Travel mercies for friends & families
- ◆ For Capt. Eric Snyder stationed for two months in Afghanistan



THE PRAYER
OF THE
RIGHTEOUS
IS POWERFUL
AND
EFFECTIVE.

JAMES 5:16

\$9.00

This congregation does include "feeding the hungry" among its many mission efforts. We make hundreds of PBJs every month to help sustain the hungry and homeless who eat at Sister Jean's Kitchen during the week but have little nutrition during the week-end when the kitchen is closed. We make hundreds of sandwich lunches each month for the working poor in Pleasantville who can barely or rarely feed their families at the end of the month. We send \$9.00 to Lukaya, Uganda so that one of the students at Mustard Seed Academy can have food for a week while school is out or, better yet, that student's family can eat well for several days.

When nine U.S. dollars reach Uganda they multiply as did the loaves and fishes in the feeding of the five thousand. Despite crippling inflation in Uganda, \$9 can purchase enough beef, rice, beans, chicken, bread, butter, oil and soap to provide for a child for a week. If the family is fortunate to have more than one student in Mustard Seed Academy, the family will eat for a week. Despite extreme deprivation, sharing is a cultural trait among the Ugandan children that is like a behavioral reflex. That sharing is "The Gift of More" (title of a sermon) that stretches the \$9 even further.

The 2011 donations to the Gift of Food program from this congregation totaled \$1,337. The Mustard Seed Academy students, families and staff experience this sharing and caring as us loving them. Thank you from the recipients. God bless you all.

Diane Falk and Lee Whitton

A Message from Malachi

Hello to My Presbyterian Friends,

My family and I are thrilled that we were able to be with you through all the events to celebrate Christmas. From our secret hiding places we saw many dedicated helpers working behind the scenes to make all the festivities special. And when people came to hang the greens, and then to decorate with poinsettias, we were very excited. More places for us to hide!

We saw new charities at the Alternative Gift Fair and found the gathering to be full of good cheer and generosity by the folks who attended. I have always encouraged my children to give from their heart and experience the joy of helping others. I noticed the tables of Fair Trade products and handcrafted gifts were busy too. Your purchases will give crafters and farmers monetary assistance to support their families. Thank you **Dan Campbell and Andrew Bassford** for your efforts.

And how about that **Cookie Walk**? I never saw so many cookies, ever! We can report that **Laurann Cacioppo and Kristen Williams** took good care of your rodent friends. They baked on Saturday morning in the kitchen of Cotter Hall, and I know that they are not usually clumsy. However, we had our tummies full by the end of the baking. Joyfully, we scurried around the kitchen and sampled all the rejects and mistakes which landed on the floor. What a happy day indeed.

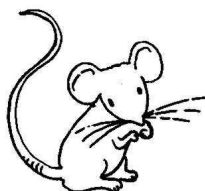
Speaking of food, the Christmas dinner was delicious as usual because of the careful planning of **Joanne Phillips and Betsy Phillips**. I could tell that everyone enjoyed the food as much as we did (at clean up time.) We also enjoyed the extensive musical repertoire of the **Four Belles Appealing**. It was a fun family night.

The sanctuary looks especially beautiful at this time of the year, and the poinsettias truly enhance the front of the church. It was a most festive look for the services of music and fellowship honoring the birth of our savior Jesus Christ.

We are greatly anticipating the opportunity to meet your new pastor. We want to make sure that he or she doesn't own a cat. That could really be a problem. We see that the PNC committee members are all smiles and expressing a feeling of accomplishment so I have no doubt that you will be blessed with a dynamic leader. It looks like a lot of things will be happening for your congregation in 2012. As you know, we're always sneaking around, so we can say with confidence that your session members and all your church leaders are thoughtfully and prayerfully considering what the future holds for your wonderful congregation.

My family wishes all of you a joyous New Year.

Your friend,
Malachi





The first service of the new year was led by Gus Feather and we were so pleased to have him and Nancy with us. **Communion** this month is on **January 8** and Graeme Veitch will be leading worship.

January 15 is an exciting day for our congregation! Rev. Blake Spencer, candidate for pastor of this church, will be preaching and leading worship. Look for other information in related articles regarding an opportunity to meet the candidate and about this important Sunday service.



CHILI COOK- OFF

The Friday Club dinner group will be having a chili cook-off on Friday, January 27, 2012. The rules are: **NO RULES**. You can make it as hot as you want or with whatever secret chili ingredient. Those in attendance for the event will be judging the entries. In addition to chili, we will be serving bread, salad, and dessert. The cook-off results will be announced after dessert. Space is limited for the number of entries, so please notify Sharon Cresse or Mary Ellen Foster if you would like to participate.



January

The Presbyterian Church Of Pleasantville January 2012

SUNDAY	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 10:00 am Worship with <i>Rev. Gus Feather</i> 11:00 am Coffee Hour 2:00 pm Atlantic Korean P.C.	2  Church Office Closed	3 3:00 pm Rocket Learning Lounge & Cotter Hall	4 3:00 pm Rocket Learning Lounge & Cotter Hall 7:00 pm Living Word Church Cotter Hall 7:45 pm Atlantic Korean P.C./ Choir Room	5 6:00 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:15 pm Choir Rehearsal	6	7
8  10:00 am Worship / Comm. with <i>Rev. Graeme Veitch</i> 11:00 am Coffee Hour 2:00 pm Atlantic Korean P.C.	9 3:00 pm Rocket Learning Lounge & Cotter Hall Church Office Closed	10 3:00 pm Rocket Learning Lounge & Cotter Hall 7:00 pm A.T.O.W. Circle @ Tanna Williams'	11 3:00 pm Rocket Learning Lounge & Cotter Hall 7:00 pm Living Word Church Cotter Hall 7:45 pm Atlantic Korean P.C./ Choir Room	12  2:00 pm PB&J Sandwiches 6:00 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:15 pm Choir Rehearsal	13 Articles due for the February issue of <i>The Olive Branch</i> 	14 Open House 3 - 6 pm 
15 10:00 am Worship with <i>Rev. Blake Spencer</i> 11:00 am Congregational Meeting 11:30 am Coffee Hour 2:00 pm Atlantic Korean P.C.	16  Church Office Closed	17 1:00 pm AtlantiCare Family Workers Meeting / Lounge 3:00 pm Rocket Learning Lounge & Cotter Hall	18 3:00 pm Rocket Learning Lounge & Cotter Hall 7:00 pm Living Word Church Cotter Hall 7:45 pm Atlantic Korean P.C./ Choir Room	19 11:00 am Sarah Lydia Circle Lounge 6:00 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:15 pm Choir Rehearsal	20	21
22 10:00 am Worship Service w/ <i>Rev. Graeme Veitch</i> 11:00 am Congregational Meeting 11:30 am Coffee Hour 2:00 pm Atlantic Korean P.C.	23	24 3:00 pm Rocket Learning Lounge & Cotter Hall 7:00 pm Session Meeting	25 3:00 pm Rocket Learning Lounge & Cotter Hall 7:00 pm Living Word Church Cotter Hall 7:45 pm Atlantic Korean P.C./ Choir Room	26 6:00 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:15 pm Choir Rehearsal	27 Friday Club Dinner 	28 
29  9:00 am Lunch Assembly 10:00 am Worship Servicew/ <i>Rev. Graeme Veitch</i> 11:00 am Coffee Hour 2:00 pm Atlantic Korean P.C.	30	31 3:00 pm Rocket Learning Lounge & Cotter Hall	February 1	February 2	February 3	February 4



January Birthdays

- | | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 3 rd | Tyler Stangle | 13 th | Rosalind Kelsey |
| 3 rd | Gus Steele | 13 th | Leni Savell |
| 5 th | Kathy Doerr | 14 th | Vicky Helsabeck |
| 11 th | Kristen Williams | 15 th | Charlotte Jensen |
| 13 th | Chelsea Fortunato | 24 th | Greg Blake |
| 13 th | Betsy Griffiths | 28 th | Phil Willows |

Birthdays

The Presbyterian Church of Pleasantville

The Presbyterian Church of Pleasantville
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- Ministers - The entire congregation
- Church Administrator - Alice Groome
- Office Coordinator - Wendy Cacioppo
- Director of Music - Robert Helsabeck
- Organist - Heera Ghorashi
- Organist Emeritus - Elton Corson
- Clerk of Session - Betsy Phillips
- President of Corporation - Gary Cresse

Proud member congregation of the
Presbyterian Church (USA)

