

“Live Free or Die”

I recently ran across someone who put the official motto of the state of New Hampshire at the bottom of their e-mail or Facebook post or something like that. I honestly don't remember what I was reading, but it caught my attention in the midst of all our planning and preparations for celebrating Pentecost. “Live free or die,” actually sounds like an idea that the Apostle Paul could get behind — though I think he'd have a slightly different interpretation than John Stark (a General in the American Revolutionary War) who wrote it in a toast commemorating the Battle of Bennington.

I think sometimes Paul gets a bad wrap because his lists of things to avoid and things to do are misread and then converted into rules and regulations for the Christian life. To me this is true irony because Paul is all about Christian freedom. This is especially the case when you consider his letter to the church in Galatia. In this rather feisty letter Paul is especially focused on combatting legalism that is leading to conflict in the church.

For Paul, *the law* has condemned us to death because we never measure up. He had lived the legalism of the Pharisees and it was only after an encounter with Jesus that he was truly set free.

The freedom Paul writes about is realized by the Holy Spirit. When we live by the Spirit we live so very differently. I was so encouraged by our Pentecost reflections on how the Holy Spirit is moving in our lives as a congregation. We are not chained down to the rules and regulations of our faith, but free to be God's people.

In part this is what Paul speaks of when he speaks of “the fruit of the Spirit” in Galatians 5:22-23. “Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control” are all marks of people who live free — not free from responsibility to their neighbor (which is sometimes the thinking behind the New Hampshire motto), but truly unbounded.

This summer our Vacation Bible School theme is going to be *The Fruit of the Spirit* and we will be exploring with our children what life in the Spirit is like. Hopefully you have heard by now that *VBSplus* (that's what I'm calling it) isn't just about children, but is about gathering our whole church for a focused week of reflection and fun. Each evening there will be an adult study which everyone in our congregation is encouraged to take part in.

We'll be exploring *The Fruit of the Spirit* too, but our study will also encompass the larger context of Paul's teaching in Galatians and how it speaks to our contemporary context. One of the preeminent scholars on the works of Paul in the last century, F. F. Bruce, when asked for his thoughts on a hotly debated issue in the Church, replied, “I am for whatever brings freedom in the church. I am for whatever brings the freedom of the Spirit in the church of God.”

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Bruce's reply comes out of a deep understanding of Paul's letters and I look forward to delving deeper into the freedom in the Spirit that Paul preaches so often in his letters.

May the *fruit of the Spirit* in us lead to greater fellowship, unity, and holiness.

Clara



with those in need. The women in the two circle groups thought that it was fitting that money earned from making quilts should go toward this project. Some LVPC women are also interested in making prayer shawls. Darlene will

share knitting and crocheting directions with us, and she hopes to be the Kenya representative at our 2013 Alternative Gift Fair (AGF). Because she may be staying at the Kasasule Health Clinic for part of her time in Kenya, and because patients at the clinic may receive some of the prayer shawls and blankets, we hope to include some gifts toward her ministry on our AGF shopping list for the Clinic this year.

Calling All Young Artists!

Are you looking for a fun project to work on this summer? The Mission Committee is looking for someone to come up with a new design for the Alternative Gift Fair postcard. See Lyn Magee or Nancy Knight with questions. So, get those creative juices flowing and we can't wait to see what you come up with!!

traveling to Kenya on June 25th and staying about a month to start a prayer shawl ministry there. She began on a small scale last year, but this time she hopes to involve more churches. She writes: "It is my prayer that I may be able to meet with one or more of the yarn factories to explain our mission and try to obtain wholesale status for the Presbyterian Church in Kenya. All prayers for this endeavor will be most appreciated. We will be knitting and crocheting, both Prayer Shawls and Blankets. Adult and children sizes can be made...Our hope is that the Prayer Shawl Ministry will be able to cross Kenya as it has done in America, helping many in need of God's Love." She hopes to be able to teach the Kenyans how to make the shawls and blankets and then share them



Women's Association News

At their meeting on May 17th, the Afternoon Sewing Circle and the Evening Circle decided to donate money to the Kenya Prayer Shawl Ministry. Darlene Tapie, a member of Newton Presbytery from Blainstown, is

ASP Prayer Cards

The Appalachia Service Project work trip is coming up soon! Our 12 volunteers will be traveling to Martin County, Kentucky, on July 20th and returning on July 27th. Our volunteers have been selling Prayer Cards for four Sundays now, and the total amount raised so far is \$740. Thank you to our generous supporters!

If you have not yet started your collection of these cards, stop by the ASP table in the Parish Hall after worship on Sunday. Each card has a photo of a volunteer on the front and prayer requests on the back. You can display them on your refrigerator as a reminder to pray for each person.

Our volunteers are:
Rev. Chad Rodgers; Anthony, Carol, Ben and Julia Casale; Terry Hoffman; Laura Hostler; John Leddie, Jake and Melissa Ollerenshaw; Isabel Roppolo and Sara Varga.

By backing the trip financially and with your prayers, you can be an important part of this mission opportunity.

Penny Wars

According to Christy Young, leader of the BYG in Chester (the Big Youth Group that our ASP volunteers join each year), the Penny Wars are raising alot

of money for the ASP work trip to Kentucky. The competition between the 5 churches will continue until June 30th, so you can still bring in your pennies, which count as positive points for our church’s group. Other coins and bills go in the jars labeled for the other churches, and they count as negative points. All money that we collect in any of the jars goes toward the support of our 12 volunteers — the competition is just for fun. So far the point totals are as follows: (numbers in parentheses are negative).

Fairmount	4,306
Lower Valley	3,033
St Paul	(4,711)
Chester	(5,035)
Califon UMC	(5,124)

As you can see, Lower Valley is in 2nd place — we can beat Fairmount! Thank you to all who have been giving so generously.

Session Profiles — Part I

We thought it would be a good idea for our Session members to give you a short profile of their responsibilities. Here are 4:

May Saxton serves as clerk of the session. In this capacity, she is responsible for making sure that records are properly kept for our church. This includes minutes for session meetings and congregational meetings along with the maintenance of our

church membership records. If you are ever interested in looking at our official minutes books and/or membership rosters, including weddings, baptisms, etc., dating back to 1872, let May know! They really are very interesting!

May also serves as the current keeper of our covenant review tool. This tool lists our ministry areas as a joint covenant between our pastor and our congregation. Each year, we prioritize our ministry areas and set goals for each area. At midyear and at the end of the year, we evaluate how we feel our pastor and we, as a congregation, are doing in regards to accomplishing our goals. Your input is always very welcome!

Terry Hoffman’s mission, with the help of all of our session members, revolves around the physical condition of our buildings and grounds. Terry says, “Chad has surpassed us all by climbing to top of the steeple on an inspection tour. The first pastor ever! Well done!”

Lisa Coffaro
coffaro423@comcast.net

As the Session member heading up Parish Life, Lisa is the organizer of Lower Valley Presbyterian Church’s hospitality. She organizes Coffee & Conversation, Lemonade on the Lawn, picnics, the kitchen, ASP

soup and meals for VBS. Lisa also works with other session members in welcoming new members and gathering information on parishioners in need so we can all help. Right now she's finishing up the church directory. We are always looking for more hands to help as well as suggestions on other activities. These are just a few of the activities of Parish Life which, with a lot of assistance from others, help our church family grow and enjoy each other.

Lyn Magee heads The Mission Committee at LVPC which is dedicated to providing outreach and support to our Community in all its dimensions. We provide financial support, volunteers, food donations, back-to-school supplies and holiday gifts to the Open Cupboard Food Pantry in Clinton on an ongoing basis. We also support our local community through our Community Garden: we grow produce for the Food Pantry and provide a place for community residents to come together to garden and get to know each other. We support the ASP, a regional group dedicated to providing warm and safe housing for families in need in Appalachia. LVPC provides financial assistance and work teams that travel each summer to the area to help with home repair

and renovation. The Mission Committee hosts the Alternative Gift Fair each November; this provides an opportunity for holiday shoppers to purchase symbolic 'gifts' for friends and family through donations to local, regional, national and international charities. We have recently begun to sponsor a child through Compassion International. We serve as the LVPC liaison for our sister church in Buruburu, Kenya.

The Mission Committee would like to include more members of our congregation, including (especially!) our youth. There are many opportunities to reach out to our Community – we would love to hear your ideas!

Church Directory

Last call for the directory! If we don't have a photo of you, we'll just put in your address and email. Please e-mail or leave your pictures in the office for Claudia or contact Lisa Coffaro or Isabel at church.

Lemonade on the Lawn

On June 16th, we will be starting Lemonade on the Lawn after service. This is a simplified version of Coffee and Conversation. We'll have a tent and some chairs set up outside as well as refreshments. Please sign up to help. Thank you all in advance.

Worship in the Park and Church Picnic

Worship in the Park will be on June 9th at 10 a.m at Califon Park. The church picnic starts immediately following the service. Subs, sandwiches and wraps will be provided. Please bring your favorite salad or dessert to share. We'll have games and activities, but you're welcome to bring your own too. If you have any special needs, contact Lisa Coffaro at coffaro423@comcast.net.

Children's Ministry

As summer approaches and Sunday School is winding down, there are numerous opportunities for our children at LVPC. Use this newsletter to mark your calendars with upcoming dates to remember. Special thanks goes to all the Sunday School teachers this year: *Donna Leddie, Liz Burns, Wendy Garcia, Marilyn El Zahr, Karen Newman, Linda Stetler, Debbie Gartelmann, Lyn Magee, Ron Schildge, Tracy Heuneman, and Kim Rodgers*. Also, a big thank you to those who gave the Children's Message during the course of the year: *May Saxton, Dick Kline, Susan Huntington, Tracy and Tim McKinnon, Ron Schildge, Kyle Garcia, and Tracy Heuneman*. The children have played the bells and chimes during worship many times this past year and they are great!

Thanks to the ringers and to Sue Hostler who does a fabulous job of teaching and coordinating this effort. Also a shout out to Kim Rodgers who runs the art table on Family Worship Sundays! Our kids have produced some thoughtful work. On Pentecost Sunday, they worked together on a mural which will be in the back of the sanctuary soon. Check out their interpretation of the Holy Spirit.

The Summer Celebration Picnic will be held June 9, at the Califon Park. Service will begin at 10 a.m. with a picnic lunch to follow. Games will start after lunch, led by the high school Sunday School class. Come join the fun. Bring a salad or dessert to pass.

Family VBS will be July 7 – July 10 in the evening from 5:30 to 8:30. Everyone is invited to share a meal and fellowship, followed by art, games and practicing faith sessions for the children and a Bible study for the adults. No children, no problem,

all are encouraged to come join the fun. A flyer for sign up will be surfacing soon! Watch for it.

Opportunities abound for being involved with children's ministry. Sunday School teachers are always welcome; see Kim Rodgers if you are interested in joining this effort. Sign ups for the children's message will begin during the summer; see Linda Stetler if you are interested. A new opportunity to champion our children is now available; see the flyer on the next page to sign up for manning the art table during summer worship. The Spiritual Formation of Children Committee is always open for new membership. See Linda, Kim or Natalie Gast to find out more about the committee. Talk to our children during the greeting time in church and during lemonade on the lawn this summer. They will amaze you! We are so grateful for their part in our church family.

Children's Ministry does not stop in the summer...it just looks different!

Community Garden News

The 2013 season of the Lower Valley Community Garden is well underway! This year we added 11 new beds, bringing our total to 44. We are again dedicating 8 beds to growing produce for the Open Cupboard Food Pantry; the other 36 beds are plots rented to community residents. Our Community Garden continues to be a joint project between the borough of Califon and our church. Because much of the infrastructure was already in place – fencing, shed, water, beds – we were able to open the garden early this year; April 13th marked Opening Day for LVCG. This year we are adding electricity to the shed to power a refrigerator for the harvested produce. This way we have a common spot to park the veggies before transport to the Open Cupboard Food Pantry in

Office Summer Hours

Beginning June 18th, the office will have limited hours:

Claudia will be on summer break until August 28

Pastor Chad's summer plans are as follows:

ASP Trip: July 20-27

Vacation: August 7-16

Clinton on Tuesday mornings. Our spring greens are growing great – lettuces are ready for picking and peas won't be far behind. Onions and potatoes have been planted and other root crops will be planted over the course of the summer.

We are looking for one additional 'Harvest Master' to oversee Monday afternoon harvesting, washing and bagging of produce for the food pantry. If you are available (late afternoon is great!) and would like to volunteer to pick once a month, please contact Lyn Magee at lynmagic@gmail.com or at 908-832-2142 to be added to our

volunteer calendar. We are also looking for Tuesday morning drivers to deliver the produce to the Pantry – contact Lyn if you are able to volunteer for this as well.

A million thanks to all who continue to make the Community Garden a great place for our church and our community to come together. The help with putting together garden beds, digging trenches for electricity, providing a front loader (and manual labor!) to move soil and wood chips around, building a composter, planting, watering, weeding and harvesting – it is all much

appreciated! We couldn't do it without you!

Get Your Garden On!

Although Sunday School is not in session during the summer, we still want to get together with our students on a more informal basis. We will be meeting in the garden during and after Lemonade on the Lawn most Sundays (weather permitting) to enjoy a little 'gardening fellowship': we'll plant a few seeds, pull a few weeds, do some watering and admire the Lord's bounty. All students are welcome to wander in – adults are invited too!



Disciples Needed

Disciples needed to prepare for our children during Family Worship this summer. No experience necessary! There will be a brief training walk through of particulars FYI.

Name: _____ Contact #: _____

Circle the date or dates below that would be good for you.

- | | | |
|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| June 16 | June 23 | June 30 |
| July 7 | July 14 | July 21 |
| July 28 | August 4 | August 11 |
| August 25 | September 1 | |

Please return this form in the offering plate or to the church office. Contact Linda Stetler with questions (908-595-1882 or 908-507-4078).

Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him. Psalm 127:3

Upcoming Servers

Date	Liturgist	Ushers	Communion Servers	Fellowship Host(s)
June 2	Dick Kline	Linda Stetler Terry Hoffman	Kim Rodgers Warren Newman Judy Eckwielen Linda Stetler	
June 9	May Saxton	Lisa and Chris Coffaro		Worship at Califon Park
June 16	Nancy Knight	Marilyn and Al El-Zahr		Lemonade on Lawn
June 23	Judy Eckwielen	Cindy and Tim O'Keefe		Lemonade on Lawn
June 30	STILL NEEDED	Stephanie and Jeff Donlon		Lemonade on Lawn
July 7	Sue Huntington	Nancy and David Knight	Sue Huntington Terry Hoffman	Lemonade on Lawn
July 14	Judy Eckwielen	Dick Kline Madeleine Argue		Lemonade on Lawn
July 21	Joni Nodes	Renee and Jeff Ollerenshaw		Lemonade on Lawn
July 28	STILL NEEDED	Linda Stetler Judy Eckwielen		Lemonade on Lawn
August 4	Stephanie Donlon	STILL NEEDED	STILL NEEDED STILL NEEDED	Lemonade on Lawn
August 11	Dick Kline	Ed Getz Terry Hoffman		Lemonade on Lawn
August 18	Marilyn El-Zahr	STILL NEEDED		Lemonade on Lawn
August 25	May Saxton	Lisa and Chris Coffaro		Lemonade on Lawn

SUMMER NOTICE: If you are able to serve in one of the STILL NEEDED spots, please let Pastor Chad know. Thanks!

June 2013

Lower Valley Presbyterian Church
445 County Road 513
Califon, NJ 07830

The Vision of our Church

Lower Valley Presbyterian Church is a community of believers who worship God in word and deed, nurture each other through prayer, friendship, and education, and seek to serve others in the Spirit of Jesus Christ. Our four areas of ministry are faith development, caring for each other, outreach ministry and supporting ministry.