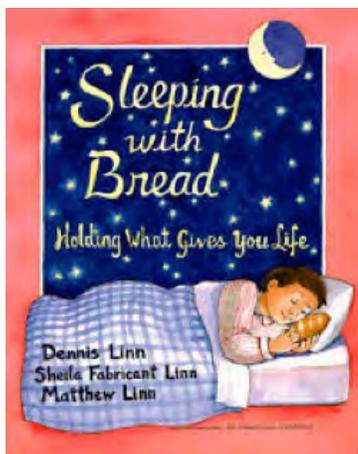


Parish Happenings

June/July 2016

FROM PASTOR STEFANIE

I followed a “non-traditional” path to become a minister. I was an experienced, non-ordained Christian educator with a seminary degree and knowledge of scripture, polity, theology, etc. when I decided God’s next plan for me was to become a pastor. The committee who was responsible to “prepare me for ministry” asked me to undergo Spiritual Direction. This is a kind of one-on-one spiritual mentoring. And, although I was a well-seasoned church professional, this particular spiritually-focused preparation brought me back to being a beginner again. It was as if this frozen-chosen Presbyterian was learning a new way to pray and relate to God. And, with the experience, my faith life became richer and deeper.



My spiritual director introduced me to a prayer practice which Catholics, specifically Jesuits, have been using for hundreds of years to guide others toward spiritual transformation and to a deeper relationship with God. And, she introduced me to this profound contemplative practice through a book with simple painted pictures. It is called [Sleeping with Bread: Holding What Gives You Life](#). In the sixteenth century, Ignatius of Loyola wrote [The Spiritual Exercises](#). The “Examen” was the most basic, most important prayer practice he introduced. It is a way to become aware of God’s presence in your life. Dennis, Sheila, and Matthew Linn’s book [Sleeping with Bread](#) offers a delightfully simple version of The Examen. The book focuses on daily prayer and reflection which centers around two questions: “For what moment today am I most grateful?” and “For what moment today am I least grateful?”

Before he began his Sabbatical, your pastor Chad and I talked about this book and how its simplicity is profound. We also talked about his interest in exploring more along the lines of this kind of daily spiritual exercise. I imagine he followed the Examen prayer practice while he was away on silent retreat in Colorado recently. And I expect that even as a seasoned, experienced, knowledgeable pastor – that working to deepen his prayer life and renew his faith made him feel a bit like a beginner again. At the very least, new patterns for praying will give him new ways to reflect on where he has been and where he is going in his journey with God.

So this month I ask you to practice a modified version of the Examen. Perhaps as you sit with some coffee or cocoa in your *new travel mug you might prayerfully ask yourself: What moments with Pastor Chad have I been most grateful for over the past few years? And what moments do I recall when Chad seemed to deflate or struggle in his ministry efforts? These are moments when God was present – calling for gratitude or discernment. Recognizing God’s presence in struggle or joy helps us to grow and deepen in our faith.

Continued from previous page

WORSHIP

Worship in the Park!

Mark your calendars for our Annual Worship in the Park which will be on June 5th at Califon Park. Everyone is asked to bring a salad or dessert to share. The church will be providing sub sandwiches. In the case of rain, worship will be at 11 a.m. in the Sanctuary with the picnic following in the Parish Hall.

MISSION NEWS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

Phillipsburg Soup Kitchen: Volunteers Needed

Our church has volunteered to work at the soup kitchen in Phillipsburg on **July 23rd from 10:45 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.** We committed to **ten volunteers** ages 11 and up. There is a sign up sheet in the **Narthex**. Hope you can join us for a great day of service!

Elijah's Promise Soup Kitchen

Our church has volunteered to work at the soup kitchen in New Brunswick on **August 6th from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.** We committed to **five volunteers** ages 17 and up. Please let Abby Ernst know if you are interested in attending.

Local Action Team Update

The Local Action Team would like to announce a new Nomination form. (*Please see the form at the end of the newsletter.*) Do you know someone that is a wonderful

neighbor and deserves assistance from the Local Action Team? Is that neighbor elderly, a single parent, disabled, injured or otherwise in need? If so, please nominate this person and/or family. If selected, they will receive aid from our team to do small chores, painting projects, clean up, yard work, grocery shopping or something else they need all at no cost to them! Please fill out the attached form and drop it in the Mission mailbox outside the library OR contact Lora Harris directly. Let's bring some joy and help our neighbors!

Giving Fair Update

Mark your calendars now. The Giving Fair will be November 12th 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

We are going to have raffle baskets again this year as another way to raise money and entice people to attend our wonderful event. Yes, it's only June, but we want to get a jump on it. We need your help with donations of **new** items to make these baskets a success! Below are *suggested* items for the baskets we are offering. Feel free to donate any other items that you think will fit into our category of baskets.

1. **"Book Lovers"**: books (adult and children's), book light, bookmarks, Amazon, Califon Book Shop gift cards, etc.

2. **"It's a Date"**: movie tickets, bowling gift card, restaurant gift certificates
3. **"Pampering"**: manicure/pedicure gift certificate, candles, robe, slippers, nail polish, hand cream, magazines, pedicure kit, etc.
4. **"Family Night"**: board games, popcorn maker, movie candy, DVD's, card games, etc.
5. **"Cooking"**: Crock pot, cookbook, pizza stone/pan, pot holders, spices, Williams Sonoma, Crate & Barrel gift card, etc.
6. **"Arts and Crafts"**: markers, play-doh, construction paper, paints/brushes, smocks, scissors, glue, colored pencils, stickers, drawing paper, Michael's gift card, etc.

Thank you in advance for your generosity!

FAMILY PROMISE OF HUNTERDON COUNTY NEEDS HELP!

Fairmount Presbyterian Church in Tewksbury is looking for volunteers from June 19th - July 3rd to sit with, make dinner for and stay over night at its Community House with families who are displaced. There are all shifts and openings available and it's a wonderful way to help those in need. If you have questions or would like to help you can speak with Lisa Coffaro for info. If you are already familiar with this

wonderful program and would like to host/help, please contact Dave Loth at 876-3656 or delmml@aol.com. To provide food, please contact Nancy Parks at 876-4669 or parks130@embarqmail.com. Any other questions, please speak with Bob Eyet at 268-5123.

NURSERY CARETAKERS NEEDED

Our church is looking for experienced, energetic, and dependable nursery workers to provide care for children ages infant - 4 years during worship services on Sunday morning, and for other occasional events. This is a great opportunity for someone to be involved in our community. It is a paid position and the employee must be willing to submit a background check. If you know someone who may be interested please contact Christina Wilson at cmwilsondvm@gmail.com or 732-616-6188.

SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Spiritual Formation of Children

We are looking for Sunday School teachers. If anyone is interested in teaching Sunday School in the fall, please contact Linda Stetler at 507-4078 or lindabs@aol.com.

Camp Johnsonburg

Calling all Camp Johnsonburg campers! Register now for summer camp and have fun swimming, running through the woods, playing games, and hanging with counselors while nourishing your faith and growing in your relationship with God in a beautiful setting. Parents, be sure to take advantage of the camperships the church offers by calling Claudia in the church office.

G.i.F.T

Mark your calendars! G.i.F.T. will be July 10-14th this year. As we have been doing, it will involve all ages. New this year, the children's portion of the program will be run by Johnsonburg! We are really looking forward to the ideas & energy they will bring to the program & hope that you can join us. More details will be available as it gets closer.

PRAYER CHAIN

The Prayer Chain is an email distribution group of people from our LVPC family. Prayer requests are forwarded to Wendy Garcia and then Wendy forwards the prayer to the entire group. If you would like your email address added to the Prayer Chain, please send Wendy an email at kwgarcia@msn.com.

ASP HAPPENINGS

ASP Prayer Cards

Once again we are offering "Prayer Postcards" featuring each of our ASP volunteers. Each postcard has a photo of a member of the LVPC team and prayer requests. The postcards can be yours for a \$10 donation each, fully tax deductible.

Our ASP volunteers will have the postcards available and can talk with you before worship at Fellowship and after worship in the narthex or outside the church.

Our volunteers are:

Sophia El-Zahr, Isabel Roppolo, Carol, Anthony and Julia Casale, Annalee, Lissy and Lora Harris, Katherine Rupprecht, Sara and Allison Varga, Melissa, Renee, Lizzy and Jake Ollerenshaw, Sarah Tyms and Stuart and Skylar Solewater.

Collect the postcards over the coming weeks and keep them handy to remind you to pray for each person before and during the trip. By backing the trip financially and with your prayers, you can be an important part of this mission opportunity. We are very grateful for all of our generous congregational support!

The Compassion Experience

Compassion International has a traveling exhibit called "The Compassion Experience". The Compassion Experience is a groundbreaking, interactive and immersive way of educating people about the plight of the 1 billion poor around the world. Created by Compassion International to bring extreme global poverty to America, the Compassion Experience invites visitors on a sensory journey through the lives of impoverished children that have completed Compassion's sponsorship program. The immersive exhibits of the Experience are based on the lives of actual former sponsor children, and as part of the exhibit, you hear them describe their lives, their Compassion projects, and what their life is now like as an adult.

Some members of our congregation were able attend the experience in Clinton at the end of April. They were able to experience the lives of two kids who were in the program and how it benefited them.





The 4/5 Grade Sunday School class did a wonderful job leading worship on May 29th



Get the newsletter via e-mail so you can enjoy the full color version and help us cut down on paper and postage costs! Call or e-mail Claudia in the office — 832-2933 or lowervalleyipc@embarqmail.com

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E-mail: steftzel@gmail.com

Church Info:

Claudia Gilbert: Church Administrator

Phone: 908-832-2933

E-mail: lowervalleyipc@embarqmail.com

Website: www.lowervalley.org

Office hours: W-F, 8:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.

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Hunter Wilson: (703) 304-1445/hunter22wilson@gmail.com

Karen Newman (clerk): 638-4332/karennewman@embarqmail.com

Upcoming Servers

Date	Liturgist	Ushers	Communion Servers
June 5 — worship in the park	Stephanie Donlon	Nancy and David Knight	Stephanie Donlon Abby Ernst Lisamarie Boehm Lisa Coffaro
June 12	Judy Eckwielen	Lisa Coffaro Isabel Roppolo	
June 19	Richard Fincher	Lisamarie Boehm OPEN	
June 26	Dick Kline	Abby and Ken Ernst	
July 3	Warren Newman	Nancy and David Knight	Lisamarie Boehm Warren Newman
July 10	Warren Newman	OPEN OPEN	
July 17	Nancy Knight	Janet and Gary Kipp	
July 24	Christina Wilson	Judy Eckwielen Rich Ehrlich	
July 31	Terry Hoffman	Lisamarie Boehm OPEN	
August 7	Stuart Solewater	Anthony Casale OPEN	Lisamarie Boehm OPEN
August 14	OPEN	Richard Fincher Madeleine Argue	
August 21	Judy Eckwielen	Marilyn and Al El-Zahr	
August 28	Rachel Gast	Lisa Coffaro Isabel Roppolo	

**If you are able to serve in an OPEN spot,
please let Claudia know. Thanks!!**

Lower Valley Presbyterian Church
445 County Road 513
Califon, NJ 07830
June/July 2016

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.