

Parish Happenings

May 2018

FROM PASTOR CHAD

Resurrection Every Day



It is easy to feel as if Easter has come and gone... and been gone for a while. We may have looked forward to that special Sunday or the break from the school routine that accompanies it, but even the break seems like a distant memory. If we're honest most of us have moved on from Easter: on to spring sports, the last few weeks of school, mulching the flower beds, tuning up the mower, planting spring greens, finalizing our summer vacation plans, and all the regular stuff of life.

Yet, Easter hasn't actually ended, and it is very much still a thing in the life of the Church. If nothing else the liturgical calendar reminds us that Easter is still in full swing. For the first two-thirds of May our Sundays are marked as Easter Sundays. I try to keep us focused on this small detail because it has huge theological significance.

"Christ is Risen!" is not just the call to worship on Easter Sunday, but the call on every Sunday of Easter.

I'd argue that it is even more accurate to say that "Christ is Risen!" is our call to worship each and every day when we rise in the morning hours. Christians are resurrection people. We are who we are because Jesus was crucified and raised from the dead.

The reality of Christ's resurrection permeates our lives as Christian people. Nothing is as dead as it seems and our lives are never the same after encountering the resurrected Christ. We take this truth to our places of work, to our fellowship with friends, to our family meals, to the sports field, to meal time, and even into the mundane tasks of life. We are constantly called to be a people shaped by resurrection and its promises should never be out of our view.

Eugene Peterson reminds us that the resurrected Jesus has a command for the disciples, "[Jesus'] address is a command to continue the work he has begun in and with [the disciples], accompanied by his promise to be with them as they do it:

'God authorized and commanded me to commission you: Go out and train everyone you meet, far and near, in this way of life, marking them by baptism in the threefold name: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Then instruct them in the practice of all I have commanded you. I'll be with you as you do this, day after day after day, right up to the end of the age.' (Matthew 28:18-20, MSG)

Three verbs activate their resurrection life: train, baptize, and instruct.”*

Easter Sunday wasn't a once in history event that we remember one Sunday a year or even a few Sundays a year. Easter is an everyday event. Every day we wake up as people who are commanded to train, baptize, and instruct. The stuff of life in the 21st century is shaped by resurrection. As Peterson also explains we practice the resurrection not as a skill, but a way of being. It is our work and our identity.

This new reality, this new way of living, is not simply about a final destiny after we've lived life (however good or bad) it involves us now in the very present moment. Easter Sunday is not an event or a date on the calendar that has passed for 2018. Easter Sunday is a reality as you read these words, figure out what you will eat for dinner tonight, lose patience with your child, argue with your spouse, get frustrated with your neighbor, and it will continue being reality when you rise tomorrow.

When you were buried with him in baptism, you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.

Colossians 2:12

Are you beginning to see that resurrection, while it was a moment in history nearly 2000 years ago isn't just one moment in history. All of our lives begin with resurrection: “when you were buried with him in baptism, you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.” (Colossians 2:12) We have been raised to a new life in our baptism or in the moment when we last reclaimed that baptism. We are raised to new life and invited to be part of God's Kingdom every day we have breath.

Resurrection people are not focused on some future heavenly state of being, but on the prayer we pray every week in our worship – “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.” This is the time to share the hope of resurrection in our acts of radical hospitality, care for creation, seeking justice, reaching out to the poor, love and compassion.

May the knowledge that we are an Easter people lead us to living as Easter people each and every day and in every interaction we have with others.

**Living the Resurrection: The Risen Christ in Everyday Life, Eugene H. Peterson. (p. 97)*

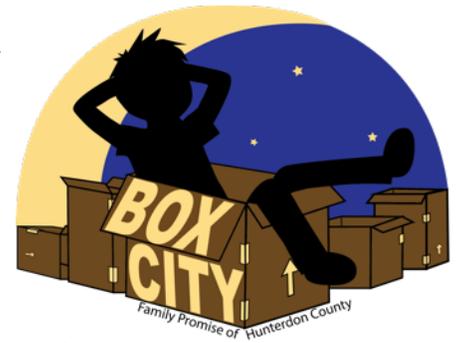


MISSION NEWS

Box City

Family Promise of Hunterdon County is hosting their Box City fundraising event again this year. It will be on **Saturday, May 19th**. Bring a box and sleep under the stars on the Hunterdon Central High School football field. There will be an outdoor movie and entertainment. Feel free to sign up and join in on the fun. (Flyers are posted on the bulletin board with more information.)

If you are unable to attend the event but would like to help, **simply donate in the pledge plate on Sunday, May 6th or Sunday, May 13th**. We will send a group pledge as a congregation. A few dollars can go a long way. Help our congregation make change in our local community.



Sunday Sundaes

Let's welcome spring (finally) with an ice cream social! Please join us after worship on **Sunday, May 20th** for ice cream, toppings and conversation out on the lawn. Yum!



Family Promise Volunteers

We are looking for volunteers to help during the weeks of **June 17th - July 1st** and **October 7th - October 21st**. Fairmount Presbyterian hosts Hunterdon homeless families these four weeks in their church. Volunteering includes making dinner or hosting. This can be a good opportunity for families, Girl Scout/Boy Scout Troops, friends, etc. Please consider volunteering for one day or evening (or more). If you are interested, please contact Lisa Coffaro. Lastly, several other members of our church have participated in the past and are more than willing to share their experiences.

APPALACHIA SERVICE PROJECT (ASP) HAPPENINGS



ASP

Prayer cards will be coming soon. Please consider buying cards to support the volunteers going to Magoffin County, Kentucky this summer to make homes warmer, safer, drier.

COFFEE AND CONVERSATION

Parish Life is looking for some more people to sign up to help with Coffee and Conversation particularly for the 1st Sunday of the month, but help on any Sunday is most appreciated. Please see Renee Ollerenshaw, Lisa Coffaro or Lisamarie Boehm or email the church office at lowervalleypc@embarqmail.com.



SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Spiritual Formation of Children

GiFT is taking on a new look this summer. The program will be on four Sunday evenings in July (July 1, 8, 22, and 29) from 5:30 to 7:30. It will begin with dinner followed by a family oriented study. There will be an art/activity table to keep younger kids busy and child care for toddlers. Watch for more information, but mark your calendars now!

Sunday School will conclude on May 20. May 27, will be family worship, and June 3, will be worship in the park with a baptism in the river, presentation of the communicants class, communion, and of course a picnic luncheon and games following the service. Please join us on these end of the year dates.

The 3/4/5 grade Sunday School class led the worship service on April 15. The children learned about the different parts of the service and each presented a part in the service. Congratulations to them on a wonderful job.

The 6/7/8 grade class continues to work on their study of John and their hands on wood working. Stop into their classroom to see what they are up too.

If anyone is interested in joining the Spiritual Formation Team, please contact Kim Rodgers or Natalie Gast. If anyone is interested in teaching Sunday School in the fall, please contact Linda Stetler.



COMMUNITY GARDEN

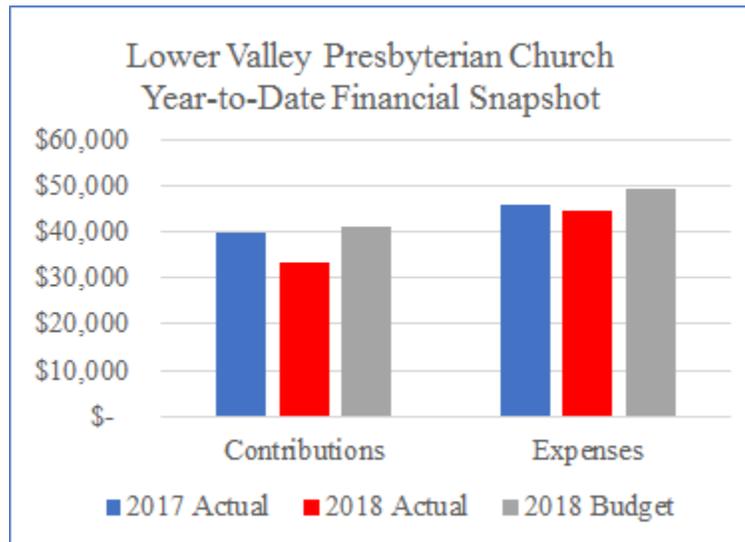
Our community garden is open for the season and we still have some beds available for rent. The garden is an important mission project as it provides the Open Cupboard Food Pantry with fresh produce throughout the summer and early fall. It also provides a place for community members to come together to garden and get to know each other. We are also looking for a few more garden managers this year and would love to have some folks from the church take on this role. The managers work together to plan different projects for the garden and take turns during the growing season tending to the food pantry beds along with other gardeners. If you are interested in renting beds, please let Claudia know. If you have any questions about the garden or are interested in serving as a manager, contact Karen Newman at 908-763-9483 or email kjnewman115@gmail.com.



IT'S TIME TO TALK CHURCH FINANCES FROM THE FINANCE CHAIR

We are in new territory with respect to the number of pledgers and total contributions in comparison to previous years.

Contributions through March 31, 2018 totaled \$33k and were \$6.8k lower than the same period last year and \$7.9k below our 2018 budget. Expenses through March 31, 2018 totaled \$45k, \$1.1k below the same period last year, and \$4.5k below our 2018 budget. Overall, we have a larger-than-budgeted loss for 2018.



	2017 Actual	2018 Actual	2018 Budget
Contributions	\$ 39,944	\$ 33,159	\$ 41,038
Expenses	45,903	44,763	49,346
Net Income (Loss)	\$ (5,959)	\$ (11,604)	\$ (8,308)

If anyone would like to participate in the finance committee at church, we have several opportunities coming up. We will need help with the annual audit (sounds exciting, right?) and we can always use help counting collections. There will be other opportunities that come throughout the year.

If you are interested in helping out, see Kyle Garcia at church or feel free to e-mail at kylesgarcia@yahoo.com.

We are looking for church members
(of any age) who would like to
contribute something to our
newsletter. Share your experiences,
your memories and your hopes for
LVPC. We want to hear from you.
E-mail Claudia at
lowervalleypc@embarqmail.com.

Pastor Chad's Contact info:

Cell phone: 908.892.0044
E-mail: revchadrodgers@gmail.com

Church Info:

Claudia Gilbert: Church Administrator
Phone: 908-832-2933
E-mail: lowervalleypc@embarqmail.com
Website: www.lowervalley.org

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

Session Members

Lisamarie Boehm: 432-3414/lisamarie_boehm@yahoo.com

Jeff Dahl: 201-574-5901/jjdahl08@gmail.com

Abby Ernst: 439-3549/abigailernst@gmail.com

Marilyn El-Zahr: 392-0934/marilyn.lastname@gmail.com

Kyle Garcia: 867-7186/ kylesgarcia@yahoo.com

Renee Ollerenshaw: 832-7250/Jems101992@gmail.com

Karen Newman (clerk): 638-4332/kjnewman115@gmail.com

Upcoming Servers

Date	Liturgist	Ushers	Communion Servers
May 6	Dick Kline	Judy Eckwielen and OPEN	Warren Newman Judy Eckwielen Karen Newman Renee Ollerenshaw
May 13	Warren Newman	The El-Zahrs	
May 20 — Pentecost	OPEN	OPEN OPEN	
May 27 — Family Worship	Rachel Gast	Lisamarie Boehm and Jennifer Kozak	
June 3 — Worship in the Park	Warren Newman	OPEN OPEN	Warren Newman OPEN OPEN OPEN
June 10	Judy Eckwielen	Lisa Coffaro and Isabel Roppolo	
June 17	OPEN	Karen and Warren Newman	
June 24	OPEN	Lisamarie Boehm and Rich Ehrlich	

Please let the office know if you are able to serve in one of the OPEN spots

Lower Valley Presbyterian Church
445 County Road 513
Califon, NJ 07830
May 2018

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.