

Parish Happenings

November 2019

FROM PASTOR CHAD

Stress

This fall on Wednesday evenings our middle school youth group has been talking about stress and pressure. You can imagine that our students feel the effects of stress and pressure all around them. Many recent articles and studies have suggested that teaching our children skills to manage anxiety and pressure, in this age of social media, is more important than ever before.

If we slow down long enough I think most of us find we could use some resources for managing stress and pressure. The first step might be to simply name the things that cause us the most stress and anxiety. In naming them we have a chance to manage the feelings and concerns that so often overwhelm us. Then the question is what do we do with all of these named stressors.

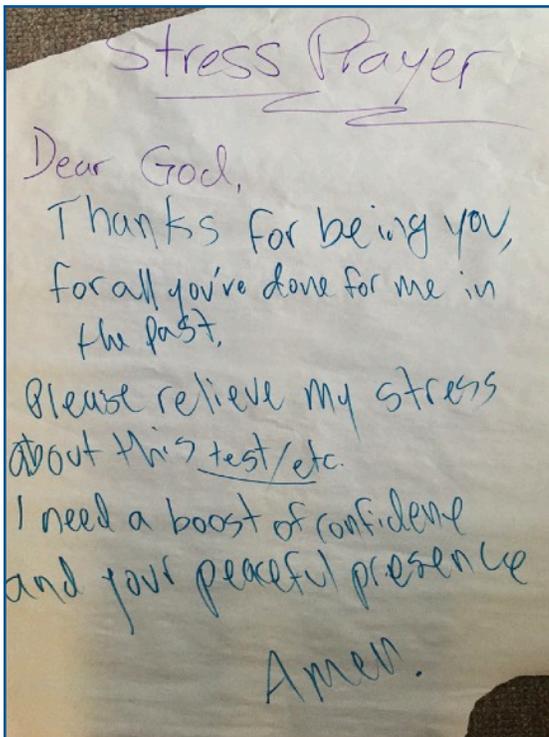
On many occasions I've rejected the notion that the bible is just another 'self-help' book or a 'user manual' for life. I don't think the bible works that way or contains black and white answers to life's challenges and dilemmas. Not to mention that no one reads user manuals. However, I do believe the bible is chock full of practical wisdom and resources for getting through the challenges, stresses, and pressures we face on a day to day basis.

The guiding verse for our discussions on Wednesday night comes from the Apostle Paul's letter to the church in Philippi. In chapter four he writes, "The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

We began by exploring Paul's reminder that God is never far from us. No matter how overwhelmed, alone we may feel. God is simply near to us in all our struggles. Following from the nearness of God is the imperative not to worry. Jesus also taught that we are not to worry. At first reading that seems a bit naive of Jesus, but I think we're to read it more as not to let worry overwhelm us. This is of course easier said than done, but we must remember what Paul led with – the nearness of God.

The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:5b-7



Then comes the invitation to turn to God in prayer. But, there is an important catch to how Paul describes this praying and I believe it holds the key to our worry and stress. We are to come to God with gratitude when we make our requests. In acknowledging all that we have to be thankful for we position ourselves to better cope with the worries that are often out of our control.

Finally, Paul finishes with the promise of peace. Notice that there is no promise we will have things work out as we want or that our prayers will receive an immediate or even affirmative answer. All kinds of prayer probably isn't gonna get you an A on that test you didn't study for. The promise of peace, however, is the assurance that we can manage stress and pressure. Peace (the Hebrew concept of Shalom) for Paul is comprehensive. It is a fullness of life as God intends for us.

Let the words from Philippians be a guide as you take on the challenges each day. If you are a parent it might be important to talk with you children about how they manage stress and pressure, but it is just as important to model your

own healthy practices. To that end I thought I'd share a short prayer our middle school students wrote together for times of particular anxiety or pressure.

May the peace of Christ which is far beyond our understanding be a deep comfort and relief in these anxious days.

Cheryl

MISSION NEWS

Giving Fair

On Saturday, December 7th we will be hosting the 17th Annual Giving Fair at Lower Valley Presbyterian Church from 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. This is a time to purchase symbolic gifts through donations to charities. We need disciples willing to donate their time and talents to make this day a success. To help with tree sales, please contact Ken Ernst. To donate gift baskets, please contact Abby Ernst. To donate soup/desserts, please contact Lisa Coffaro. To help with the Live Nativity, please contact Hope Atkinson. To help with parking, decorations, set-up, clean-up, giving cards, and purchasing, please contact Marilyn El-Zahr. Many helping hands make the day a success!

Giving Fair Gift Baskets

We are having gift baskets again this year at the Giving Fair. We need donations to make this happen. If you would like to donate new items or donate an entire basket, please contact Abby Ernst at abigailernst@gmail.com

INTERESTED IN REVIVING THE BELL CHOIR?

Do you miss the sounds of handbells in our services? Would you like to join in the effort to bring them back? If so, please contact Krista Jenkins (kjenkins1970@gmail.com). Before we launch a search for someone to lead the bell choir, the church would like to get a sense of who is interested in perhaps becoming a bell choir participant and when people are free to rehearse and perform. Ding dong!

BIBLE STUDIES AND FELLOWSHIP

Women's Bible study meets the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month, from 7:00-8:30 in the library. Please join us as we study the book of Matthew using N.T. Wright's "Matthew for Everyone." and together learn more of who Jesus was, his teachings, and what this means for our lives. Join us!

Men's Fellowship: There's plenty of bible study, but that's not all. Join us on Saturdays at 8 a.m. in the church library. We share food and life and wrestle with scripture together. At the present we're spending time in the Gospel of Matthew.

FROM THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The nominating committee is actively seeking church members who are interested in serving on Session or the nominating committee for three year terms beginning in 2020. We are seeking people who want to actively serve our congregation with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love. The Session sets the course for carrying out the vision and mission of our congregation and has some fun along the way. We hope that all members would prayerfully consider whether this is an area of church life God may be calling you to.

If you would like to serve in a leadership role at LVPC or you know of someone who you believe has particular skill or gifts for a leadership role please contact the nominating team or speak with Chad.

NEWSLETTER OPTIONS

If you would like to see the newsletter in full color, consider receiving it via email (and help save money on postage), or if you would no longer like to received the newsletter, please call or email Claudia at 832-2933 or lowervalleyipc@embarqmail.com. Thank you.

BYG ANNUAL LASAGNA FUNDRAISER!

BYG is holding its annual lasagna fundraiser. Pick-up is on Sunday, December 15 following worship (between 11 a.m. and noon). Completed order forms (below) with payment are due by December 7th. Remittance can be handed directly to Isabel Roppolo or Chad, mailed to P. O. Box 148, Chester 07930 or emailed to our PayPal account bygworkcamp@gmail.com.



Lasagna Dinner Fundraiser

Pick - up Order Form

*Please complete and hand in forms by **December 7th***

Name: _____

Contact Info: _____

Pan size	Meat	Non-Meat	Price
8.5 x 4.5 <i>(Serves 1-2)</i>			\$10 Each
9 x 9 <i>(Serves 4-6)</i>			\$15 Each
13 x 9 <i>(Serves 9)</i>			\$20 Each
Total			

~ Location for pick up ~

After church (roughly between 11 am - 12 pm)

Chester Presbyterian Church _____

Lower Valley Presbyterian Church _____

Califon United Methodist Church _____

Church Directory Information

We are in the process of updating our database and church directory and would appreciate you providing us with the following information (even if you've previously given it to us.) You can either put this in the offering plate or mail to the office. A new directory will be published in the next few months.

Family Name: _____

First Name(s): _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone number(s): Cell — _____

Home — _____

Email(s): _____

In addition please email a new "selfie" to the office at
lowervalleyipc@embarqmail.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

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

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

Krista Jenkins: 328-8967/KJenkins1970@gmail.com

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

Karen Newman (clerk): 763-9483/kjnewman115@gmail.com

Warren Newman: 763-6094/wnewman115@gmail.com

Upcoming Servers

Date	Liturgist	Ushers	Communion Servers
November 3	Warren Newman	Karen Newman and OPEN	Marilyn El-Zahr Warren Newman Karen Newman Krista Jenkins
November 10 — Family Worship	Karen Newman	OPEN and OPEN	
November 17	Al El-Zahr	Karen and Warren Newman	
November 24	OPEN	Madeleine Argue and Jennifer Hoffman	
December 1	Karen Newman	OPEN and OPEN	OPEN OPEN OPEN OPEN
December 8	Marilyn El-Zahr	Lisa Coffaro and Isabel Roppolo	
December 15	OPEN	Marilyn and Al El-Zahr	
December 22	Warren Newman	Judy Eckwielen and OPEN	
December 24 4:30 p.m.			
December 24 7:30 p.m.	OPEN	Karen and Warren Newman	
December 29 — Family Worship	Judy Eckwielen	Madeleine Argue and OPEN	

**If you are able to serve in one of the OPEN spots,
please let Claudia know. Thank you!**

Lower Valley Presbyterian Church
445 County Road 513
Califon, NJ 07830
November 2019

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.