

Parish Happenings

September 2015

FROM PASTOR CHAD

Leadership

I think it is safe to say that good leadership is tricky to get your head around and good leaders are hard to find. Now I could feel this way because my cynical side rears its ugly head when the news headlines are inundated with questions about who will next lead our country.

Presidents, Governors, Congress persons and others running for political offices all claim that they have the leadership gifts necessary to do the job, but once voted into office we wonder why we believed what they claimed. From our perspective it seems like the leaders we elect intentionally claim one thing and then do another. To be sure this happens in some cases, and very possibly, more often than not in a state like New Jersey, but I (who refuse to choose cynicism as a default answer) think most folks who make claims about the changes they plan on bringing to us really believe they can make the changes. Most people genuinely believe that their policies, programs, and plans will make a big difference. Many of the men and women running for office across America mean well, but being a sound leader and enacting systemic change is very difficult.

On a small scale every year is an election year for Presbyterians and we've got the same need for good leadership required by any organization, community, or country. Each fall our nominating committee is tasked with listening for the guidance of the Holy Spirit and with a discerning spirit, nominating (for election by the congregation) Elders who will faithfully guide us well.

I believe church Elders have a very challenging task because they are called to be spiritual leaders of the church and not political or business leaders (where most people have some experience). "They are chosen by the congregation to discern and measure its fidelity to the Word of God, and to strengthen and nurture its faith and life." (*Book of Order*, G-2.0301) The role of elder in our tradition is not just keeping the place looking pretty or the budget balanced, but to "nurture faith and life." They've got to engage in the hard work of discernment in order to inspire a congregation to move with the Spirit. Discovering what God is doing is at the heart of what I think being a good Church leader is all about.

I think LVPC has had wonderful Elders over the years and I'm grateful for the strong leadership that has brought us to this point in our life together. However, we continue to need good leadership. Our Elders can serve no more than 2 consecutive 3-year terms (that's six consecutive years for the less mathematically inclined) and in the next few years some of our strong leadership will be cycling off of the Session.

... congregations should elect persons of wisdom and maturity of faith, having demonstrated skills in leadership and being compassionate in spirit. Ruling elders are so named not because they "lord it over" the congregation (Matt. 20:25), but because they are chosen by the congregation to discern and measure its fidelity to the Word of God, and to strengthen and nurture its faith and life.

Book of Order, G-2.0301

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The nominating committee will soon be asking some members to prayerfully consider whether God is calling them to leadership in our congregation. The nominating committee is not on a quest to fill quotas, but instead to approach faithful, committed, and talented members and help them discern how God is calling them to use their gifts.

As the Church, our place in the community and in the culture is always shifting and changing and our leaders are called to help us adapt and change. I pray that our congregation will continue to be lead by Elders who understand their transformational role.



EVENING CIRCLE

Women's bible study begins Wednesday, September 16th at 7:00 p.m. in the Church Library. We are continuing the 2010-2011 Horizon's Bible Study, "Journeys Through Revelation Apocalyptic Hope for Today", Lesson 5 Singing Hymns of Hope. For anyone who would like to join in there are lesson books in the Church Library. Hope to see all. any questions call Nancy Knight 537-4347 or Joni Nodes 236-7996.

GET THE NEWSLETTER VIA EMAIL

Please let the church office know if you would like to start receiving the newsletter via email. It's a great way for us to save on paper and postage, and you will enjoy full color photos!

SAVE THE DATE!

The 13th Annual Alternative Gift Fair is scheduled for Saturday, November 14 and will be here before we know it! Put it on your calendar and tell your friends about what a wonderful event this is. Please speak with Abby Ernst or any member of the Mission Team about helping out. Stay tuned for more info in the next newsletter.

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.

MISSION TEAM

We raised \$5,000 in last year's Christmas Tree Sale. \$2,500 went towards the ASP trip. The other \$2,500 is being distributed locally. The decision was made to give \$500 each to five different organizations. \$500 will be given to the Newark Christian School to sponsor a new student. \$500 will go to Family Promise. \$500 will go to the Open Cupboard. \$500 will go to Camp Johnsonburg. Lastly, \$500 will go to Donorschoose.org projects to support local teachers and their classrooms. Thank you to everyone that supported the tree sale!

If you would like to be part of the Mission Team, or have an idea for a mission project, please contact Abby Ernst.

**A MESSAGE FROM
SUE HOSTLER,
DIRECTOR OF THE LVPC AGAPE RINGERS**

Music lovers from 9 - 99 are invited to join the Agape Ringers! Experience is not necessary, and I am happy to give some training to anyone who would like to play, but feels intimidated by the bells. Our church has been blessed with a lot of very dedicated people who love making music. Please join us so we can keep the blessing going!

WHEN:

3 Sessions (You can sign up for any or all of the sessions)

**Session 1 – September through Christmas Eve
(including Christmas Concert at Immaculate Conception Church)**

Session 2 – January through Easter (March 27)

Session 3 – April 3 to June 5

My hope is that people who have been interested in playing the bells but can't commit to a whole year of bell choir will consider joining us for a session or two, as it suits your schedule.

REHEARSAL TIMES:

9:00 to 9:45 a.m. on Sundays

If you have any questions or would like to sign up, you can find me in church, email me at JSHostler@gmail.com, or call me at 908-574-5337. Thanks!

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

The lazy, hazy days of summer are coming to an end and the new Sunday School year is right around the corner. Sunday School kicks off on September 13th.

Students will start the morning in church and will be dismissed to their classes after the Children's Message. September 6 will be a Family Worship service with an art table.

The teachers are excited to begin a new year and there will be a Breakfast Retreat for them to attend on Saturday, August 29. Because the Parish Hall is in use that day, the Brunch and conversation for the teachers will be held at the Manse between 9-12. There are some new faces among the familiar ones for our students this year:

4 year olds – 1st Grade- Jeff and Nicole Dahl and Kelly Hostler

2nd and 3rd Grades – Jill Glaz **Please note we are in need of an additional teacher for this class. If you feel you could assist please contact a member of the Spiritual Formation Committee (Kim Rodgers, Christina Wilson, Natalie Gast, Linda Stetler or Sue Huntington)*

4th and 5th Grades – Linda Stetler and Ellen Haggerty

6-8th Grades – Erik Gast and Richard Fincher

9-12th Grades – Kim Rodgers and Natalie Gast

While the days may be slower in summertime, there were activities for our children to keep their spiritual growth in mind.

Many thanks to those who set and cleaned up the art tables in the front of the sanctuary each week this summer as the children listened to the sermon and worked out what they heard in their art.

G.i.F.T. (the revved up version of VBS for 2015) was held July 12-17 with wonderful food, great companionship and opportunities galore to learn and grow in faith. Two special highlights this year were the adult lessons led by Stefanie Muntzel from Musconetcong Valley Presbyterian Church and a special mission activity led by Linda Stetler, ably assisted by Chad Rodgers to have the middle school team of kids learn to sew sufficiently to produce Small Dresses for Africa. You can see their great work hanging in the sanctuary for a little longer. We are so proud of

their ability to stick to a project and see it through! The games at the end of each evening, as always, were a great hit and a terrific teaming experience.

There was a great group attending Camp Johnsonburg. Look for more on their experiences in the next newsletter!

Both our high school and middle school youth groups are getting started this week. This year we'll have a slightly different format. Everyone will meet up at LVPC from 7 - 8:30 p.m. on Wednesday nights. **First gathering is Wednesday, September 2 at 7 p.m.**

Photos from a fun week of G.i.F.T.



Pastor Chad's Contact info:

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Church Info:

Claudia Gilbert: Church Administrator

Phone: 908-832-2933

E-mail: lowervalleypc@embarqmail.com

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Session Members

Lisa Coffaro: 832-0409/coffaro423@comcast.net

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

Upcoming Servers

Date	Liturgist	Ushers	Communion Servers
September 6	Sue Huntington	Judy Eckwielen Lisamarie Boehm	Sue Huntington Lisamarie Boehm OPEN OPEN
September 13	OPEN	OPEN OPEN	
September 20	Warren Newman	Stephanie and Jeff Donlon	
September 27	Nancy Knight	Terry Hoffman Lisamarie Boehm	
October 4	Rebecca Newbold	The El-Zahr Family	Stephanie Donlon Terry Hoffman Lisamarie Boehm OPEN
October 11	Judy Eckwielen	Carol and Anthony Casale	
October 18	OPEN	Cindy and Tim O'Keefe	
October 25	Marilyn El-Zahr	Janet and Gary Kipp	

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

September 2015
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.