



Tidings



VOLUME 11, ISSUE 4

SPRING 2016

*Faith
in the
saving
work
of
Jesus
Christ:
the
ultimate
in
Long-
Range
Planning!*



*Pastor Spencer's Call to Action: p. 3
Long-Range Planning Initiatives: pp. 4-7*

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“Rejoice
greatly,
Daughter
Zion!
Shout,
Daughter
Jerusalem!
See, your King
comes to you,
righteous and
victorious,
lowly and
riding on a
donkey . . .”
(Zechariah 9:9)

Timeless

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As soon as they could walk, my sons Miles and Sam became movable grabbers. Stumbling forward on pudgy legs, stretching out pudgy hands, anything from the height of three feet and below was theirs for the grabbing.

Their mother lovingly called them both “grabby grabbers.” We did like most parents do. We raised

“Grabby Grabbers!”

everything we didn’t want grabbed by our sons’ grabbers way up high in the house, out of their grabby reach.

Our sons are no dummies. Whatever they wanted to grab that they couldn’t reach—a cookie, a cup, or a book—they would find something to push over to get them high enough to be in their grabbing zone. They were relentless grabbers, only stopping their pursuit when they fell asleep, exhausted by a day’s grabbing.



Thompson Church: I want to task you with something important. For the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ, please start grabbing. Within this issue of the *Tidings*, you can read the details of our Initiatives from our Strategic Plan. Last year your Session approved both our five Core Values and these Strategic Plan Initiatives.

“Have you ever really considered that you are Jesus Christ to the people you know?

You and I are His instruments, standing in the place of the Lord Jesus Christ, beseeching others to be reconciled to God. To me that is a grabber.

As you and I go to work, walk down the street, talk to our roommates, visit over the back fence, we are face to face in conversation with people for whom Christ died.

We may even be the last link in the chain that stretches out to them from the throne of God, the chain that God forged to bring them to faith [or to bless them with hope].

There may be no one else they know who can tell them God’s message of reconciliation.

And that carries with it a solemn responsibility.”

—Paul Little, How to Give Away Your Faith

Now, it’s time to start grabbing people for Jesus.

As you study these Initiatives you will see plenty of grabbing for everyone. I am hoping and praying (and preaching!) that *every* member of the Thompson Church family signs on to *do one thing* to help these Initiatives become realized.

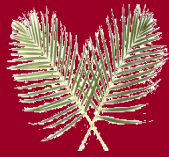
If we all start grabbing, a lot of good will be accomplished for the Kingdom of God. In this way our church will grow stronger *as we grab*.

There is grabbing to be done inside the church as we seek to better care for each other. And there is grabbing to be done outside the church as we grab those who are

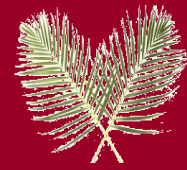
heading towards the cliff of drug or alcohol addiction. This kind of grabbing has been the chief activity of Jesus’ followers from Day One.

Are you ready to get your grabby grabbers grabbing? Good! Me, too! Grab away, then.

—Stuart Spencer, Pastor



Living into the Call: Strategic Plan Initiatives 1-6



In Matthew 28, in a passage often referred to as “the great commission,” Jesus gives the ultimate call, not only to the eleven disciples in Galilee (who form His immediate audience), but as we understand the timeless movement of the Spirit through Scripture, to His disciples today as well: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations . . . Teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19a, 20a).

In November of 2014, the Session commissioned the Long-Range Planning Committee to enable this movement forward. Through various committees, private interviews, and focus sessions, over 150 people provided input into this process, assuring that the ultimate plan would represent the aspirations of a majority of church families. In the Spring 2015 *Tidings*, Pastor Spencer posed the following questions as springboards for the Strategic Plan process: “Where are we going? Why are we going there? How do we get there? How do we know when we’re there?” The Long-Range Planning Committee is confident that these questions have been answered, as manifested in the following 12 Initiatives that Sue Wert and Rick Foltz unveiled to the congregation on January 31, 2016.

Initiative 1:	Encourage Sermon Reflection & Worship Music Participation
Core Value	Bible-Based Preaching/Teaching
Purpose	To engage the congregation & others throughout the community in the Sermon & worship music
Scripture	“You shall put these words of mine in your heart and soul...talking about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise” (Deuteronomy 11:18, 19). “It is good to praise the LORD and make music to your name” (Psalm 92:1).
Session	Jo Ann Lieber
Staff	Bailey Pruner
Team Leader	Bailey Pruner

Initiative 2:	Expand the Prayer Team
Core Value	Bible-Based Preaching/Teaching & Caring for Each Another
Purpose	To actively encourage and promote prayer within the life of the church
Scripture	“Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.” (James 5:16)
Session	Steve Sailer
Staff	Stuart Spencer
Team Leader	Stuart Spencer



Initiative 3: Increase Participation in Small Groups
Core Value Bible-Based Preaching/Teaching & Fellowship/Church Life
Purpose To create more intimate connections with others in basic Christian community to enable spiritual maturity
Scripture “And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds” (Hebrews 10:24).
Session Sue Wert
Staff Bailey Pruner
Team Leader Bailey Pruner

Initiative 4: Expand the Use of Property and Events
Core Value Biblical Hospitality: Welcome All/Warm Fellowship & Fellowship/Church Life
Purpose To open our building and our hearts to the community by hosting enriching events
Scripture “Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it” (Hebrews 13.2).
Session Mark Delehey
Staff George Salt and Cynthia Tuleja
Team Leader Mark Delehey



Initiative 5: Develop Family Music Interaction Opportunities
Core Value Fellowship/Church Life
Purpose To have an inclusive program where all can participate with voice or instrument
Scripture “...speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord” (Ephesians 5:19).
Session Michelle Summerson
Staff Patty Gatto
Team Leader Liz Jordan

Initiative 6: Create a Welcoming Environment
Core Value Fellowship/Church Life
Purpose To share together a common life with other believers through relationship with God
Scripture “We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ” (1 John 1:3).
Session Jo Ann Alberts
Staff Stuart Spencer
Team Leader Amy Brewer





Initiatives 7-12



Initiative 7: Provide Managed Caring
Core Value Caring for Each Other
Purpose To assure that no member in need is forgotten
Scripture “And the King will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me’ ” (Matthew 25:40).
Session Rick Foltz
Staff Stuart Spencer
Team Leader Brad Michael

Initiative 8: Understand Addiction
Core Value Support Local Missions & Caring for Each Other
Purpose To provide a safe environment for families and individuals to learn about addiction
Scripture “Bear one another’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2).
Session Chris Bromberg
Staff Stuart Spencer
Team Leader Stuart Spencer

Initiative 9: Increase Fellowship Opportunities and Collaboration with Other Churches
Core Value Fellowship/Church Life & Support Local Missions
Purpose To work with fellow churches to better serve our communities
Scripture “We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28).
Session Nancy Kopp
Staff Bailey Pruner
Team Leader Kirsten Fleisher



Initiative 10: Host Musical Performances at TMPC
Core Value Bible-Based Preaching/Teaching
Purpose To provide the opportunity for others to spread the joy of music to TMPC and the community
Scripture “My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast. I will sing and make music” (Psalm 57:7).
Session David Oxley
Staff Grant Farmer and Colton Martin
Team Leader To Be Determined



Initiative 11: Provide Musical Performances Outside of TMPC
Core Value Bible-Based Preaching/Teaching
Purpose To spread the Word to the community through music
Scripture “Sing to Him, sing praises to Him; tell of all His wonderful acts” (Psalm 105:2).
Session John Davis
Staff Tricia Murphy
Team Leader Tricia Murphy

Initiative 12: Establish a “Sister” Church in Trenton
Core Value Support Local Missions
Purpose To carry out God’s plan in the world by establishing a new church to bring new believers to Christ
Scripture “Let each of you look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others” (Philippians 2:4).
Session Rick Schaub
Staff Stuart Spencer
Team Leader Stuart Spencer



Free clip art: <http://cliparts.co/cartoon>

The Manifold Blessings of *Living into God's Gifts*

“I think there is no greater joy than to be able to recognize your God-given talents, and then to be able to develop them: to find something you love that also does good.”

—Filmmaker and TMPC member, Frederic Haubrich

A United Effort

In 2001, at a time when America suddenly found itself reeling from the tragic loss of innocent lives, our redemptive God was already at work moving to save lives *worldwide*, stirring in French-born Christian Frederic Haubrich the courage to risk devoting himself full time to what had previously been a hobby: researching, directing, and producing documentaries – ultimately leading him very recently (February 4, 2016: World Cancer Day) to a showing of his cervical-cancer-awareness film, *Lady Ganga*, at the United Nations in New York.



A Destiny Found

The United Nations event follows a previous invitation (in October of 2015), extended to Mr. Haubrich by the Cancer Action Coalition, to travel to London for a screening of *Lady Ganga*, which was shot in large measure in India and later shown in the Himalayas, where it inspired large numbers of cancer screenings that saved countless lives. “A few years ago I never thought I’d be an advocate of cervical-cancer

awareness, and now I’m taking the film around the world. Sometimes you don’t really find your destiny; your destiny finds you” – a comfort that we gratefully embrace as believers whose faith is in the One who promises to “guide you continually” (Isaiah 58:11).



Photos (this page, from top): Frederic Haubrich (film name *Lumiere*) at the United Nations screening of *Lady Ganga* on Feb. 4, 2016; to his right is Audrey Baldwin, narrator of *Lady Ganga* and the daughter of Michele Baldwin (*Lady Ganga* herself); [view the event](#).

Michele and Audrey Baldwin, as Michele lies dying

A Laudable Goal

Mr. Haubrich's high-reaching goal for *Lady Ganga*, which he created for a worldwide audience with the intent to translate it into 50 languages, is "to eliminate cervical cancer around the world" – with good reason, as the statistics are staggering: 500,000 women worldwide contract cervical cancer annually and half of those women die. (View the 15-minute film at www.ladyganga.org.)

Paddling for a Purpose

Lady Ganga traces the final phase of life for an American woman, Michele Baldwin, who suffers from cervical cancer but decides to harness her remaining energy to travel to India and perform a record-breaking standing paddle of 1,000 kilometers down the Ganga River as a way of



raising awareness of the need for cervical-cancer screening and human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination, a final act of courage that has proved to be extraordinarily effective, prompting at one point in the Himalayas alone 1,700 screenings and 102 surgeries in four days.

Themes Resonating of the Divine

Mr. Haubrich's many other projects include military films (e.g., *WWII in HD*, *D-Day Sacrifice*, *The Wereth Eleven*), among which one of the themes that resonates, as he notes, is: "Some will sacrifice all for the good of humankind" – a theme that we recognize, particularly as we enter the Easter season, as modeled with ultimate perfection by our Savior, the Giver of all gifts and of the life that enables us to express them. In Mr. Haubrich's case, "My faith has helped me to choose my projects more wisely. I feel very fortunate to be able to provide for my family doing something I love while also making a difference."



God's Arm: Not Too Short!

Impacting the whole world for good?

Actually, a very reachable goal – to those who steward the Lord's gifts with faith, knowing that all achievements of value are an act of divine grace. "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13).

This article is based on a conversation between Frederic Haubrich and Cynthia Tuleja that took place on January 26, 2016.

Photos (this page, from top): Michele Baldwin paddling down the Ganga River in India; Frederic Haubrich filming 2,000 kids at Lamdon School (featured in Lady Ganga) in Ladakh, India.

Lenten Reflection and Spiritual Preparation through the Gift of Music

Lent is here: The time of preparation for the coming of our Lord on Easter Sunday morning has begun. In the liturgical year, both Advent and Lent offer us time to reflect and to prepare for the coming of a joyful season: Christmas and Easter, respectively. Though these seasons may share some similarities (reflection, preparation, stillness), they are quite different — and our prayers as individuals and as a community should reflect this.

During these seasons in order to prepare ourselves in the light of the Gospels, we should look to two primary examples: 1) those nearest Christ in His time on this earth, and 2) Jesus Himself.

In Advent, the preparation that befits the season and best prepares our souls for the coming of a Child is the anticipation and longing of a mother. Both Mary and Joseph prepared themselves for the birth of their Son physically and mentally, but especially spiritually. The mother of our Lord spent some of the most intimate moments of her life carrying the Christ-child in her very womb. Full of wonder and reverence, she patiently awaited the day she knew would come when her Lord would be born. And Jesus prepared for His first coming as He silently grew, preparing for the vulnerability of His birth under the star on Christmas. In this season, there is a silent reflectiveness, there is time to ponder these things in your heart — much like a gardener quietly awaiting the first blossoms of spring.

There is waiting and preparation in the season of Lent as well, but it is quite different. It is the desert of existence, filled with temptation, drought, hunger, and no clear indication of an approaching end. Whereas with Mary's pregnancy there is a celebration of fertility and blessing, in Lent we now face dryness and uncertainty. Along with John the Baptist, we prepare the way in our hearts for the coming not of a Child, but of the God-man as Savior. Having already witnessed His coming in the vulnerability and [apparent] weakness of the flesh, we now walk with Jesus as He prepares to live out His ministry, be crucified, and come again in the glory of His resurrection. Christ's days in the desert were necessary to prepare Him for the mission of sanctification. We find company with Christ and His disciples as we walk through our own deserts, as we face periods of temptation and drought and hunger.



The liturgy offers us guidance to help prepare our hearts for this holy season of Lent. Not only will there be a shifting focus in the Scripture readings and sermons as we near the events of Christ's Passion, but there will also be musical changes that serve to draw our attention and prayer to the "dryness" of this season.

You may notice that there will be no organ postludes played during Lent. This not only highlights the simplicity of our preparation, but also makes the return of more elaborate music with the Easter season more remarkable. We prepare for Jesus as we hear the voice of one crying in the desert, and it is not until that holiest of mornings that we rejoice with all the hosts and choirs of angels with trumpet blast and jubilant exultation.

Further, you will notice that each week there will be, as a *prélude*, an improvisation upon a different Gregorian-chant theme. A single melodic line, in its simplicity and instability, images for us the path of the soul wandering in the desert, searching for shade and drink. These chant melodies are selected from chants whose texts are common to this season and are thus suited to portraying the anticipation of Lent (e.g., *De Profundis*, *Ecce Lignum Crucis*, *Ubi Caritas*, *Stabat Mater*). In each week's bulletin, the English translation to the opening words of these chants will be printed along with the *prélude* selection to offer the chant text for reflection and prayer. Not only does this offer the chance for us to listen to music that has been sung by Christians for hundreds and hundreds of years, it will also give us the chance to hear some of the more subtle qualities and colors of the beautiful organ in our Sanctuary. If you listen closely, you will hear that each week a different "voice" is used to "sing" the chant — these registrations will be carefully chosen based on the text and mood of the chant. See if you can hear why specific sounds were chosen!

As we enter this time of waiting and preparation, I pray that your Lent may be dolorous and dry, and that the innumerable blessings of the Easter season will all the more abound in your hearts and within your families! Amen.

Colton Martin
Principal Organist and Accompanist



Learning to Sing Lament through the Gift of Music

If we are to be honest when we pray and sing to God, then we have to bring the whole of our experience into that prayer and make it part of that song. We need to bring every situation before God—and that includes moments that call for lament.

This is hard for us because we lament about things that seem insoluble. Sometimes it even seems as if God cannot take away the pain that causes us to lament. Lament comes from the core of our being, where our deepest feelings are born. It is not the primal wail or scream that comes when a person's or a people's world falls apart, when even articulate language fails. Rather, lament comes in a return from the edge of chaos, when we find ways to make the unspeakable spoken, when we find some measure of faith that someone will hear our cry and respond. Lament is truth-telling that captures the heart and mind; it is a complaint against continuing evil.



Lament really is an act of hope. St. Augustine said that the two beautiful daughters of hope are anger and courage. Our anger arises when we recognize that something is terribly wrong and therefore has to change. Such anger can propel us to courageous action to make that change. Lament, then, is the opposite of what the Bible calls “hardness of heart.”

Our faith tells us that even lament has become part of the redeeming act of God in Jesus Christ. There is a saying among theologians: Anything human that was not taken up by Christ was not redeemed. But since Christ was fully human as well as fully divine, everything that is human is part of the redemption—including lament. And when we “put on Christ” in baptism, we become joined to all the suffering in the Body of Christ that leads to lament, anger, and a commitment to change things for the better.

How do we bring this lament to prayer? The psalms offer repeated examples. They call on us, as a community, to bring our complaint to God (and even to complain about God). They teach us that a final resolution to human tragedy will only come about with God's help or through God's intervention, and they bring us, finally, to place our trust in God's Word and God's presence among us.



Our liturgy offers a further library of prayers, postures, gestures, and environmental and musical resources to express our lament to God. They sum up the horrors that bring us to lament as death and sin, but they also promise salvation from death and redemption from sin. Baptism and our need to confess sin offer occasions for lament, and the season of Lent is filled with a sense of anticipation and longing - the lament of a people walking in darkness.

Our songs, too, call us to voice our lament, for any church that goes around singing “happy songs” all the time, in the face of raw reality, is doing something very different from what the Bible and our liturgy call us to do. We need songs of lament, lest we unintentionally give the message that all is well with the world, that suffering doesn’t touch us, or that there is no need for Christians to be concerned about what is going on around us. We need to face and name the hard realities of human experience. Without prayers and songs of lament, we may fail to stir up compassion in our churches and so fail to move toward the deeds of mercy to which Jesus’ Gospel calls us.

For lament, like the liturgy, calls us to action. The Gospel tells us that there is a way things ought to be and that disorder needs to be corrected. We require that things be other than the horrors that human beings seem to manage on a regular basis because we have a dream and a promise of a different way of being human. We not only look forward to a future that we call *the reign of God*, we believe that this future is here among us now and that we are caught up in it and are called to do what we can to make it real. Because of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and because we are incorporated into Christ through the grace of encounters with Him, we have a sense of what God’s future is like and a call to help others experience what the reign of God is like now.



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Spotlight on...



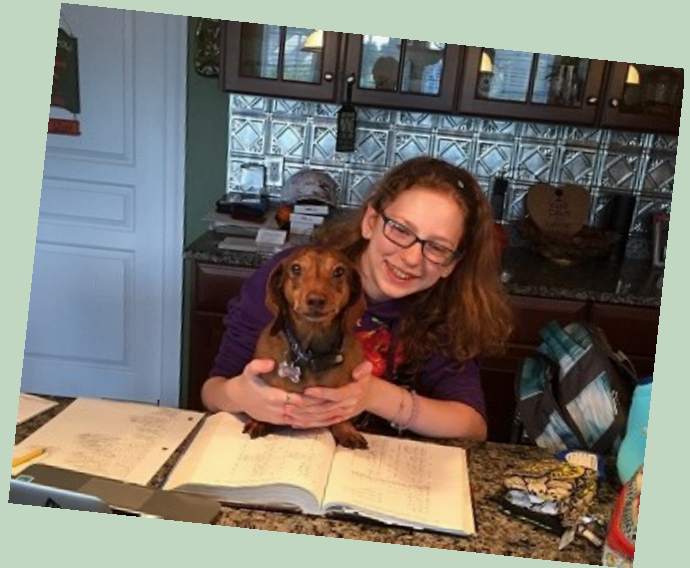
God is truly at work in the young lives in our family of faith! Not only are they active in the life of our church family, but they glorify God by living into the gifts that He gives in abundance!

Emma Repasy

Emma Repasy is a seventh grader at New Hope-Solebury Middle School. Emma enjoys dancing (ballet, pointe, and jazz), playing tennis, doing drama at church, and playing viola in the Middle School orchestra. She loves drawing, reading, and all things Disney!

Emma's dachshund, Luna, loves to be with her no matter what she's doing (including homework).

Lest we forget . . . Emma provided the original drawing of the manger and crown of thorns on the Advent/Christmas-services page of the Winter 2015 issue of the *Tidings*!



Kevin Brewer

Kevin Brewer is an 18-year-old senior at Council Rock High School North, where he plays the viola in the orchestra. Kevin has two siblings: a brother, Justin, and a sister, Heather, who are both in college. Kevin says, "I'm looking into going to Penn State University after high school and getting a degree in engineering. I like engineering a lot because I like the problem-solving aspect that goes along with engineering."

Kevin is also a volunteer firefighter at the Upper Makefield Fire Company and plans to get his certification in Fire I to become an active firefighter. Kevin likes to go paint-balling and fishing. He also enjoys playing video games, and last summer he and his brother even built their own gaming computer!



Quotables . . .

“ ”

Even as we move into the Lenten season, some of us still have our Christmas trees up (yes, really!) and actually enjoyed the thrill of our first major snow storm this winter.

Alive in the minds of some of our children and youth are the memories of Christmas, and the following are their expressions of their favorite ways to celebrate it at Thompson Church.

“I liked being an angel, lighting the candles, and singing Silent Night.” (Madison Ritter and Lily Rampe – 2nd grade)

“I liked when we colored the magnets for the Jesse Tree Calendar.” (Charlotte Haubrich – 2nd grade)

“Being with my family – church, immediate, and extended.” (Sabrina Green – 10th grade)

“The thing I love the most is the lighting of the candles. Just the sight of it all is enough to light up a pitch-black room. That is my very favorite way to celebrate Christ at Thompson Church.” (Julia Lyons – 3rd grade)

“Going to the midnight service.” (Mikey Summerson – 11th grade)

“I like holding the candles on Christmas Eve and singing Silent Night.” (Ryan Wanat – 5th grade)

“My favorite way to celebrate Christmas at Thompson is being in the Christmas Pageant and when the candles are lit.” (Kaitlyn Marth – 4th grade)

“I like the Christmas Eve Children’s Service. I was a sheep. I also liked the birthday cake for Jesus and a movie.” (Dylan Ritter and Emma Rampe – Pre-K)

“Going to the Christmas service and celebrating Christmas with my friends.” (Will Rampe – 8th grade)

“I like the decorations at church.” (Jake Martino – 6th grade)

“I liked the Youth Group Party.” (Matthew Lieber – 8th grade)

“I like to be with my family and go to the family service.” (Ella Berry – 7th grade)

“Ring in Christmas!” (Connor Chinoy – 12th grade)

“Playing bells for the church to hear, singing Silent Night, holding lit candles, being in the Christmas Pageant, and singing in my choir.” (Jane Haubrich – 4th grade)

“Going to the Christmas Eve services.” (Aidan McGinley – 7th grade)

“Hanging out with friends.” (Evan Clark – 6th grade)

“Coming to church.” (Sam Spencer – 11th grade)

“To go to the 10:30 service.” (Miles Spencer – 6 grade)

“My favorite way to celebrate Christmas at Thompson Church is singing Christmas songs.” (Julia Martino and Matthew Rampe - 5th grade)

“Going to every service and singing with the kids.” (Emily Clark – 10th grade)



“My favorite way to celebrate Christmas at Thompson is being in the Christmas Pageant and when the candles are lit.” (Kaitlyn Marth – 4th grade)

“I like the Christmas Eve Children’s Service. I was a sheep. I also liked the birthday cake for Jesus and a movie.” (Dylan Ritter and Emma Rampe – Pre-K)

“Going to the Christmas service and celebrating Christmas with my friends.” (Will Rampe – 8th grade)

“I like the decorations at church.” (Jake Martino – 6th grade)

“I liked the Youth Group Party.” (Matthew Lieber – 8th grade)

“I like to be with my family and go to the family service.” (Ella Berry – 7th grade)



“Ring in Christmas!” (Connor Chinoy – 12th grade)

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Christian Education for Children and Youth: Celebrating God's Gifts in Our Lives . . . and the Life of His Son!

Kids' Club: Learning about God's Gifts



The children at Kids' Club have been learning about the gifts that God has provided to different people in the congregation. We have been delighted to hear from Tracey Jefferson, Allan Salt, Jennifer and Frederic Haubrich, Barb Markey, Doug Greene, and even Oliver, Barb and Doug's puppy, who used his gift of barking when a fire threatened their home! Hearing how our friends recognize God's blessings allows our children to recognize gifts that they, too, have been given. We are all blessed with special gifts from God and with each day we can say, "Thank you!"

Easter Program: Celebrating the Gift of God's Son

Mark your calendars for a special Sunday School Easter Program on March 27 at 9:45 a.m. in the Sanctuary. We will celebrate the resurrection of Jesus with a game, a skit by the Drama Team, an Easter video, and, of course, the annual Easter Egg Hunt! This is truly a day of celebration and thanksgiving, so don't miss the festivities! All are welcome!

Marcia's Music and Arts Camp

The holidays are over and it's time to start thinking about summer plans! We hope Marcia's Music and Arts Camp (July 11-15) is at the top of your camp list! This year we will be celebrating our eleventh year with the theme "Celebrate!" Look for camp information on The Table of Well Wishing. Register early to be sure you are able to get your selected electives. Take an extra trifold brochure (or two!), and give one to a friend or neighbor who might want to come to camp with you!

Youth Group Calendar: Winter 2016

FEBRUARY 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27

MARCH 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28	29	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Youth Sunday: May 29

Last Blast: June 5

Sr. High Mission Trip: July 9-16 (details at right)

Jr. High Mission Trip: July 24-30

For more details contact Bailey Pruner:

215-862-2440; bpruner@tmpc.org

Visit the Youth Group pages: tmpc.org/middle-school and tmpc.org/high-school

REGULAR YOUTH GROUP

ROCK (JR. HIGH) 6:00-7:30 P.M.

ROOTED (SR. HIGH) 7:30-9:00 P.M.

CHILI COOK-OFF

6:30 P.M. IN FELLOWSHIP HALL

SUPER BOWL SUNDAY

NO REGULAR YOUTH GROUP

ASH WEDNESDAY

SERVICE AT ANCHOR PRES. AT 7:00 P.M.

30-HOUR FAMINE

NO REGULAR YOUTH GROUP

MAUNDY THURSDAY

WORSHIP AT 6:00 P.M.

GOOD FRIDAY

WORSHIP AT 7:00 P.M. IN SANCTUARY

HAPPY EASTER!

NO REGULAR YOUTH GROUP

Our High School Mission Team will be heading to Crownpoint, New Mexico to serve the residents of the Navajo Nation Reservation, July 9-16. The trip to New Mexico will cost \$4.00 per mile, and any donation will help us along our way! You can give on our website at tmpc.org/mission-trips or fill out an envelope from our bulletin board.

Worship Services: Lent through Easter

ASH WEDNESDAY

Wednesday, February 10

7:00 - We will meet at the Anchor Presbyterian Church in Newtown to join in their worship service.

WEDNESDAY EVENING PRAYER SERVICES

Wednesday Evenings

from February 17 through March 16

6:00 - Soup-and-Bread Supper in Fellowship Hall

7:00 - Evening Prayer Service in the Sanctuary: We will hear testimonies from members and friends of TMPC who will share how they have encountered God in their lives.

PALM SUNDAY

Sunday, March 20

8:30 - Worship Service in the Sanctuary: Our children and youth will open this service with a musical called *The Singing Bishop*.

11:00 - Worship Service in Fellowship Hall

At both services we wave palm branches in celebration of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem!

MAUNDY THURSDAY

Thursday, March 24

6:00 - Dinner in Fellowship Hall

7:00 - Worship Service in Fellowship Hall: Musical selections will be provided by the With One Voice Choir.

GOOD FRIDAY

Friday, March 25

7:00 - Worship Service in the Sanctuary: We will follow a Tenebrae Service or "Service of Shadows" with musical selections by the With One Voice Choir and special musicians.

EASTER SUNDAY

Sunday, March 27

6:30 - Sunrise Service: Weather permitting, gather in the courtyard; Choir Room otherwise.

8:30 - Family Service in Fellowship Hall: Our children and youth will sing and ring praises to our risen Lord!

9:45 - Sunday School Program in the Sanctuary:
The egg hunt will follow!

11:00 - Celebration Service in Fellowship Hall:
We are joined by our adult bell and vocal choirs.

After each service in the Choir Room enjoy breakfast items and an assortment of goodies!



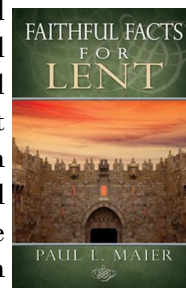
Opportunities for Prayer and Study

THURSDAY MORNING LENTEN PRAYER GROUP

Pastor Spencer will lead a morning prayer group (8:15-9:00 a.m.) in the chapel on Thursdays during Lent, beginning on **February 11**. There will be an introduction to different types of prayer (Centering Prayer, Lectio Divina, Breath Prayer), followed by a time of praying together. Start your day in the presence of the Lord and with God's people! (The last session will be **March 24**.)

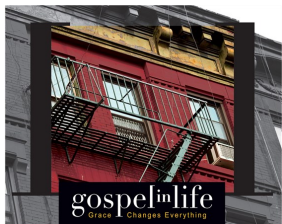
LENTEN DAILY DEVOTIONAL

The season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday on February 10. We hope and pray that this season is a time of reflection and preparation for Holy Week and Easter Sunday. On The Table of Well Wishing you can find a daily devotional entitled *Faithful Facts for Lent*. Dr. Paul Maier, who is the professor of Ancient History at Western Michigan University, explores the personalities of the Passion in these daily devotions for the season of Lent. Drawing upon archeological findings, empirical data, and writings of the ancient world, Dr. Maier makes the events of Christ's Passion more real for us today. Pick up a copy for your Lenten devotions and feel free to take one for a friend.



CHURCH-WIDE LENTEN STUDY

The season of Lent allows us the time and space to reflect on our relationship with Christ and to take stock of those things that need to change in our lives. This year many of our small groups are participating in our current church-wide Lenten Study on Timothy Keller's book *Gospel in Life*. Timothy Keller explores how the Gospel is something that should seep into every aspect of our lives and should change how we interact with our communities, our cities, and the world. Living in Bucks County gives us an interesting predictive on cities. While many of us do not live in the city, we all have major cities, such as New York, Philadelphia, Trenton, and Camden, as our neighbors. In this study Timothy Keller invites us to take a closer look at how we as Christians are called to live out the Gospel in the places we find ourselves. By doing so, we allow the Gospel to change our hearts, our communities, and the world.



SPRING PRAYER RETREAT

Stuart Spencer will lead a retreat, May 31-June 3, for those who want to learn how to pray or to go to deeper places in their prayer lives. As guests of the monastery, we are welcome to sit in on the five short offices of prayer throughout the day. The retreat is an opportunity to find spiritual renewal, to enjoy rich fellowship with others, and to soak in the beauty of Holy Cross Monastery. You can find brochures on The Table of Well Wishing; you can also register online at tmpc.org/retreats. Feel free to contact Stuart Spencer (sspencer@tmpc.org) with any questions. Guests and friends are always welcome!



The Ultimate Spiritual Gift: Relationship with the Holy Spirit through the “God-breathed” Word

Join us this year as we experience the sanctifying work of the Word (John 17:17a) as we read through the entire New Testament together! If you would like to read ahead, contact Cynthia Tuleja (ctuleja@tmpe.org) for the upcoming questions.

You can start anytime, but *do* try to keep going once you jump in! A concentrated reading of the New Testament will help you to *live into* a daily relationship with the Holy Spirit as He reveals God’s purposes through the life of His Son and those who follow Him. Join us on this communal journey of faith!

Weeks 1-4

Week 1 reading: Matthew, chapters 1-7

Scripture question: From where, specifically, is Jesus quoting when He uses the Word to stand fast against the temptation of Satan?

Question for personal reflection: With Christ as your model, are you regularly memorizing key verses from the Word of God as your strong defense against the enemy?

Week 2 reading: Matthew, chapters 8-12

Scripture question: In Matthew 9:27-31, two blind men approach Jesus and He heals them in accordance with their (?).

Question for personal reflection: Are you trusting in the Healer for all of *your* needs, ordinary or dramatic?

Answer to last week’s Scripture question: Jesus rebuked the enemy by quoting from the following: Deut. 3:3; Deut. 6:16; Deut. 6:13.

Week 3 reading: Matthew, chapters 13-17

Scripture question: In Matthew 16:24-25, Jesus tells us that there is a cost involved in following Him. What does He tell us we must “take up” to follow after Him? Since we cannot do this literally, what does He mean by this image?

Question for personal reflection: What specific “cost” is the Lord requiring in *your* life of faith today, and will you willingly incur it as a disciple of the One who gave His own life for you?

Answer to last week’s Scripture question: Jesus heals the blind men in accordance with their...*faith!*

Week 4 reading: Matthew, chapters 18-22

Scripture question: In Matthew 19:26, Jesus tells His disciples that “for God all things are possible.” He does this in response to what question from the disciples?

Question for personal reflection: Are you viewing the “impossibles” in your life today through *the lens of faith?*

Answer to last week’s Scripture question: In Matthew 16:24-25 Jesus tells us we must take up our *cross* and follow Him. The cross is an instrument of crucifixion, so one way we may understand these verses is that *taking up our cross is symbolic of dying to Self* so we can more fully follow Christ.

“All Scripture
is
God-breathed
and is
useful for
teaching,
rebuking,
correction and
training in
righteousness.”
(2 Timothy
3:16)

Weeks 5-8

Week 5 reading: Matthew, chapters 23-28

Scripture question: When Jesus is arrested and taken to Caiaphas (the high priest), Peter follows at a distance and finally sits in the courtyard of the high priest to await the outcome. While Peter is there, he denies Jesus three times. The first two times it is in response to whom (Matthew 26:69-72 NRSV)?

Question for personal reflection: One might assume from Peter's occupation (he fished for a living before meeting Jesus) that he was strong and rugged (the fishing nets could be very heavy), yet it seems to take so little to intimidate him. Are you putting on the "full armor of God" (Ephesians 6:13-18) to protect yourself from people or circumstances that threaten to cause your faith to waver?

Answer to last week's Scripture question: Jesus tells His disciples that "for God all things are possible" (Matthew 19:26) in answer to the disciples' question in the previous verse, which is: "Then who can be saved?" Jesus' response reminds us that salvation is an act of God's grace, which is echoed elsewhere in Scripture (e.g., Ephesians 2:8-9).

Week 6 reading: Mark, chapters 1-5

Scripture question: What do you think Jesus meant when He said, "The sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the sabbath" (Mark 2:27)?

Question for personal reflection: Which prevails in your own life of faith, the letter of the law or the "law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2 NIV)?

Answer to last week's Scripture question: In Matthew 26:69 Peter is confronted by a servant girl.

Week 7 reading: Mark, chapters 6-9

Scripture question: Why does Jesus rebuke his disciples in Mark 8:17-21?

Question for personal reflection: Are there times when you are tempted to forget the "loaves and fishes" in your own life that God has blessed miraculously?

Answer to last week's Scripture question: Jesus says in Mark 2:28 that "the Son of man is lord even of the sabbath," proclaiming His position, as the One in whom all the commandments are fulfilled, as the supreme rule in our lives.

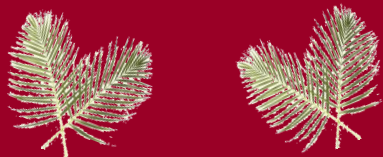
Week 8 reading: Mark, chapters 10-13

Scripture question: In what way does Jesus consider the widow's two copper coins (Mark 12:41-44), which equal only one penny, an *abundance*?

Question for personal reflection: If we think of *time* as the issue instead of money, are you willing to follow the widow's model and put the Lord *first*, making time with Him a *priority* in your acts of service, in your prayer life, and in your study of His Word?

Answer to last week's Scripture question: Having already witnessed the miracle of the loaves and fishes (twice!), the disciples are nevertheless focused on their lack of bread instead of the spiritual lesson that Jesus has put before them.

"When
the Spirit
of truth
comes,
He will
guide
you into
all the
truth..."
(John
16:13a)



Weeks 9-12

“Thy Word
is a lamp
unto my
feet
and a
light
unto my
path.”

(Psalm 119:105)

Week 9 reading: Mark, chapters 14-16

Scripture question: When Jesus prays, “yet, not what I want, but what you want” (Mark 14:36c), to what is He referring?

Question for personal reflection: Following Jesus’ model, are you willing to do the Father’s will at all costs?

Answer to last week’s Scripture question: Those who gave large sums to the temple treasury were giving out of the abundance of their riches; the widow in her poverty gave everything she had.

Week 10 reading: Luke, chapters 1-3

Scripture question: What does John the Baptist mean when he says, “Bear fruits worthy of repentance” (Luke 3:8a)?

Question for personal reflection: What are the “fruits of repentance” that God is calling you to bear in your own life of faith?

Answer to last week’s Scripture question: Jesus prayed, “yet not what I will, but what thou wilt” (Mark 14:36c) when his soul was “very sorrowful, even to death” (Mark 14:34a) as He faced the prospect of the cross, modeling for us true sacrificial submission to the Father.

Week 11 reading: Luke, chapters 4-7

Scripture question: Why do the crowds cry out, “God has visited his people!” (Luke 7:16b)?

Question for personal reflection: Do you trust the Giver of Life to revive the “dead” areas of your own life?

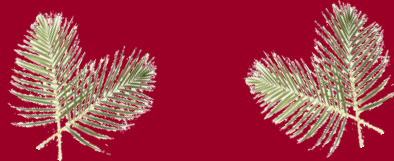
Answer to last week’s Scripture question: After telling the crowds to “Bear fruits worthy of repentance” (Luke 3:8a), John the Baptist instructs them to share their clothing and their food (vs. 11) and to turn away from dishonest and abusive practices (vs. 13-14).

Week 12 reading: Luke, chapters 8-10

Scripture question: Even though Jesus is in their midst, why do the disciples conclude that they are “perishing” (Luke 8:24a)?

Question for personal reflection: Will you trust the sovereign God of Creation to carry you safely through all the “storms” of your life?

Answer to last week’s Scripture question: The crowds cry, “God has visited his people!” (Luke 7:16b) when Jesus raises a widow’s only son from the dead.



Weeks 13-16

Week 13 reading: Luke, chapters 11-14

Scripture question: What does Jesus mean when He says, “Your eye is the lamp of your body” (Luke 11:34a)?

Question for personal reflection: One of the ways to keep our spiritual “eyes” clear is to be immersed in the Word and in prayer. Are you committing yourself to improving the health of your “eyes”?

Answer to last week’s Scripture question: In Luke 8:22-25 the disciples are on a lake with Jesus during a wind storm that is causing water to fill their boat, prompting them to believe they are perishing. Jesus rebukes not only the wind and the raging waves, but the disciples as well for their lack of faith.

Week 14 reading: Luke, chapters 15-19

Scripture question: In Luke 18:1-8, why do you think Jesus uses an unjust judge to make the point of not losing heart?

Verses for personal reflection: This week reflect upon the following verses and commit them to memory to encourage you in times of waiting: Psalm 27:13, 14.

Answer to last week’s Scripture question: One interpretation of Luke 11:34a is that the eye is a symbol of spiritual understanding; when the darkness of unbelief and doubt is removed, we are able to “see” our circumstances through the light of Christ as He illuminates His will for us.

Week 15 reading: Luke, chapters 20-22

Scripture question: In Luke 22:52, how do the chief priests and captains of the temple demonstrate their misunderstanding of Jesus’ identity?

Question for personal reflection: To protect his own safety, Peter follows Jesus “at a distance” (Luke 22:54c). Are there areas in your own life of faith where you are keeping Jesus at a “safe” distance?

Answer to last week’s Scripture question: In Luke 18:1-8, if even an unjust judge eventually vindicates a persistent petitioner, how much more should we persevere in prayer without losing heart when we entrust ourselves to “the One who judges justly” (1 Peter 2:23c).

Week 16 reading: Luke, chapter 23 through John, chapter 1

Scripture prompt: Describe the circumstances surrounding this verse: “But their eyes were kept from recognizing him” (Luke 24:16).

Question for personal reflection: Is there any area of your life of faith where your eyes are kept from recognizing Jesus?

Answer to last week’s Scripture question: In Luke 22:52, the chief priests and captains of the temple come out against Jesus with swords and clubs, mistakenly thinking that human force can overwhelm the Son of God. When Jesus subdues Peter’s violent resistance and goes willingly, He is yielding to God’s will, not human coercion.



“You shall
put these
words of
mine in
your heart
and soul . . .
talking about
them when
you are
at home and
when you are
away, when you
lie down and
when you rise .”
(Deuteronomy
10:18, 19)

Weeks 17-20

“...Thy
Word
is truth.”
(John 17:17b).



Week 17 reading: John, chapters 2-6

Scripture question: In John 5:6 why does Jesus ask a seemingly obvious question (i.e., “Do you want to be healed?”)?

Question for personal reflection: Are there areas in your own life of faith where Jesus may be waiting on *your* response? (Do you want Him to intervene?)

Answer to last week’s Scripture question: Luke 24:16 (“But their eyes were kept from recognizing him”) refers to two of Jesus’ followers who met Him on the road to Emmaus after He had risen from the dead.

Week 18 reading: John, chapters 7-11

Scripture question: Some commentators suggest that in Jesus’ day, at a time when medical science lacked today’s technical precision, the fourth day after someone’s passing was considered the day beyond all hope, making Lazarus’s resurrection (on the fourth day of his entombing) all the more significant to the audience of that time. What reason does Jesus give for waiting until Lazarus’s passing before responding to the call for help (John 11:14-15)?

Question for personal reflection: Are there any “fourth day” areas in your own life, areas that seem to be beyond hope, where Jesus may be saying, “...if you would believe, you would see the glory of God” (John 11:40b)?

Answer to last week’s Scripture question: Naturally we cannot know for certain why Jesus would ask a sick man (in John 5:6) if he wanted to be healed when it seems the answer would be obvious, but we can look to a similar dynamic in our own lives: Jesus requires a response of faith (Romans 10:9) before we can receive the benefit of His offer of forgiveness and eternal life.

Week 19 reading: John, chapters 12-16

Scripture question: Whom does Jesus say to the disciples that the Father will send to “teach you all things” (John 14:26)?

Question for personal reflection: Are you nurturing an ongoing and increasing sensitivity, through study of the Word and through prayer, to the work of the Holy Spirit in *your* life of faith?

Answer to last week’s Scripture question: In John 11:14b-15a Jesus tells the disciples, “Lazarus is dead; and for your sake I am glad that I was not there, *so that you may believe*” (italics added).

Week 20 reading: John, chapters 17-21

Scripture question: When Simon Peter, at Jesus’ prompting, insists again and again that he loves Jesus, Jesus’ final response to Peter at the conclusion of this dialogue is to call him to do what? (See John 21:19b.)

Question for personal reflection: Is the proof of your own love of the Lord manifested in your daily willingness to follow Him wherever He leads?

Answer to last week’s Scripture question: In John 14:26 Jesus tells the disciples that “the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things...”

Weeks 21-24

Week 21 reading: Acts, chapters 1-5

Scripture question: What issue does Peter raise with Ananias and Sapphira? (See Acts 5:1-11.)

Question for personal reflection: Is there anything in your own life that you are holding back from the Lord? Are there areas in your life of faith where your response to God is less than completely forthright?

Answer to last week's Scripture question: At the conclusion of the dialogue recorded in John 21:15-19, Jesus' final response is to call Peter to "Follow me" (John 21:19b).

Week 22 reading: Acts, chapters 6-10

Scripture question: When Stephen addresses the high priest and the council in Acts 7:51, of what does he accuse them?

Question for personal reflection: Are there any areas in your own life where you may be opposing the Holy Spirit?

Answer to last week's Scripture question: In Acts 5:1-11 Peter confronts Ananias and Sapphira with lying to the Holy Spirit.

Week 23 reading: Acts, chapters 11-15

Scripture question: In Acts 15:37-40, what is the source of contention?

Question for personal reflection: How do *you* resolve the tension between fair expectations and grace in your relationship with brothers and sisters in Christ?

Answer to last week's Scripture question: When Stephen addresses the high priest and the council in Acts 7:51, he accuses them of always resisting the Holy Spirit.

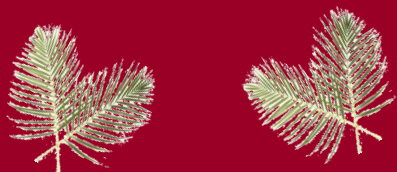
Week 24 reading: Acts, chapter 16-20

Scripture question: In Acts 18:24-26, what form of help do Priscilla and Aquila provide?

Question for personal reflection: In your own life of faith, is your fervency of spirit matched by a fervency for Biblical accuracy, understanding that "The sum of your word is truth" (Psalm 119:160a)?

Answer to last week's Scripture question: When Paul wanted Barnabas to go with him to every city where they had spread the gospel message, Barnabas wanted to bring along John (called Mark). Paul disagreed because Mark had withdrawn from them in Pamphylia. (It's not evident why.) As a result of this conflict, Paul and Barnabas parted ways; Paul traveled with Silas, and Barnabas traveled with Mark. (See Acts 15:36-40.)

"The
sum of
your
Word
is truth . . ."
(Psalm
119:160a)



Letters to the Congregation

This page: letters in response to The Church Has Left the Building

Dear Thompson Memorial,

Thank you so much for the box of books and for your support of Operation Paperback. It means a lot to know folks back home [Hatboro, PA] are thinking of us.

Doreen Debenedictis
Shafafiyat
HQ RS
APO AE 09356

Dear Operation Paperback,

Thank you very much for *all* the wonderful books you sent us. They will all get read!

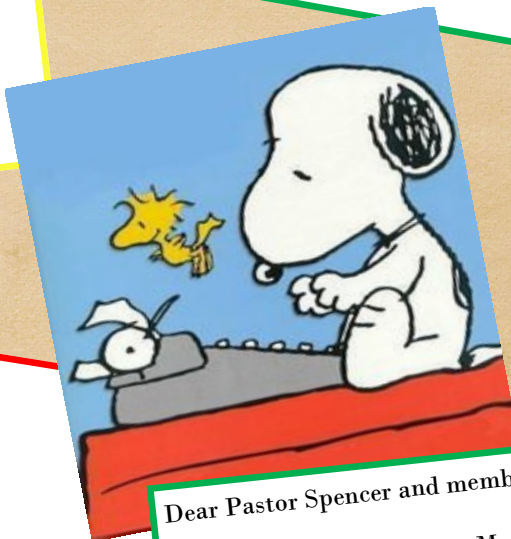
Thank you for your kind words, thoughts, and prayers.

—The Moedes

To "Ladies of the Lunch,"

What a wonderful treat and blessing to be so cared about.
What a labor of love!

Love,
Carole Harris
New Hope Manor



Dear TMPC:

Thank you for donating to the Houston VA Medical Center. Your thoughtfulness in remembering our veterans is appreciated.

Michael E. DeBakey
Department of Veterans' Affairs
VA Medical Center
Houston, TX

Dear Pastor Spencer and members of TMPC:

The residents of New Hope Manor thank you for thinking of us and coming to fellowship with us on Sunday, Nov. 1. It was a delightful afternoon as we all enjoyed the fellowship while having the delicious lunch you provided. This was a gesture of love, reflecting the love of Christ.

God bless you all,
Kamale (on behalf of all the residents)

Letters (continued)

Dear Thompson Church family,

In the midst of Roy's passing and the aftermath of it all, I have truly experienced God's many blessings, one of which was knowing that your church family was lifting our family in prayer. I truly believe that when we lift our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ in prayer, they receive and are strengthened with the power of His Spirit and the love of our Almighty God. I try to keep close to my heart always: "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).

I cannot imagine how awesome the Lord's glory is or how we'll all respond when we are in His presence, but we (the family) rejoice, knowing that we will one day be with Roy, singing His praises.

As members of God's family, we thank you for your prayers for our family.

In Christ,
Lynn
Chris and Whitney
Cherie and Ty
DeVeaux
Knisley
Gruber

A big THANK YOU to everyone who contributed to the Alternative Christmas Market on Sunday, December 6, benefitting UrbanPromise Trenton, Fisherman's Mark, and Life Abundant. Over \$5,000 was raised to support these worthy and grateful organizations, helping those in need in our greater community. Here's an excerpt from a very nice note we received from Linda Meacham, Executive Director of Fisherman's Mark, at the end of last year:

"Thank you for your tremendous support throughout the entire year, with Food Drives benefiting the food pantry, various pop-up fundraisers, as well as the campus cleanups—which provided a beautiful setting for both employees and clients. Frankly, we could not have achieved all we did without Thompson Memorial Presbyterian Church. Thank you for believing in Fisherman's Mark and for being there to help. We look forward to an awesome 2016."

—Rick Schaub

Thank you to everyone who has already given to Miles for Mission! So far we have raised \$1100 of the \$7500 we need to purchase our flight. We want to thank you for your continued generosity and prayers!

—Bailey Pruner and the Youth Mission Team

[For more details on this mission trip, see p. 17.]





Thompson Memorial Presbyterian Church
1680 Aquetong Road
New Hope, PA 18938
Office: 215-862-2440 Fax: 215-862-9046

Our Mission:
We are a joyful family called by God
through Jesus Christ and
empowered by the Holy Spirit to:
welcome all, share our faith, love
each other, serve the world, and
glorify God.

Visit us at tmpe.org



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Teaching Elder/Associate Pastor (<i>Sabbath: Friday</i>)	Bailey Pruner	bpruner@tmpe.org
Director of Christian Education for Children and Youth	Patty Gatto	pgatto@tmpe.org
Communications and Administration	Cynthia Tuleja	ctuleja@tmpe.org
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Organist/Accompanist	Colton Martin	cmartin@tmpe.org
Choir Director	Patricia Murphy	pmurphy@tmpe.org
Contemporary Worship Music Leader	Grant Farmer	gfarmer@tmpe.org
Seminary Interns	Kevin Vollrath and Joel Wood	
Sexton	George Salt	
Business Administrator (Volunteer)	Sue Schaub	sschaub@tmpe.org