

First Things

A Newsletter of the First Baptist Church of Trenton

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A word from Pastor Liz

Happy Mother's Day

When my children were young I wanted to give them what God wanted for his children, a life which included both milk and honey. God blessed Abraham and gave him and his descendents a land of milk and honey. That is what I want for my children. To me it is symbolic of the necessities of life and the sweetness, the joy of life.

Milk; those crucial things we need:

- To know we are loved; to be able to love others.
- To know we belong.
- To know God, for God is love, repentance, forgiveness.
- To know how to forgive.
- To know how to be kind.
- To have faith, to believe.
- To know that life is all about relationships: relationships with God, with ourselves and with others.
- To know we are GOOD. God said so. God created us and then looked at what was created and said, "it is very good."
- To know we have a purpose in life, and to learn what that purpose is.

Honey; the delight, the joy.

- To be able to laugh, to enjoy.
- To know joy in our work, our vocation and avocation.
- To know meaning in life; to live lives of significance even more than simply being successful.

Oh, that my children could have both the milk and the honey of life! And I am still learning I am learning a great deal from the mothers in the Bible. Mothers love us, and give us both the milk and honey for life. I know that I would die for my children, I love them so. Oh the pain when they are disappointed, scorned, hurt, lonely or lost. The unconditional love of mothers (and fathers) is closest to Jesus' love. It is closest to the love Jesus has for us. In loving mothers we see a glimpse of God's love for us. God will not ask if we baked the best cookies, kept the best house, earned the most money. God will ask.....do you love me? Do you love your children? Do your children call YOU blessed?

From the Search Committee

For the last two months members of the Search Committee have been meeting every Sunday Evening to have either telephone or personal interviews with twelve persons who have expressed an interest in ministering to this congregation. Each and everyone one of them would bring interesting gifts of ministry to this congregation. The hard part for our search committee is finding the person who we believe will work best in this congregation.

Our next step will be to select a smaller group of persons from the twelve that we would like to get to know better. As one person on the committee said, we are ready to date, but we are not ready to get married yet. So in the next month or two we will be inviting these persons to come to Trenton and meet with us personally. We will show them around the city, walk them through our church building, and try to get better acquainted with their ministry gifts and interests. And we will try to hear each of them preach in a nearby church.

We ask for your continued prayers for the work of the committee. We know the work seems slow, but we promise we are doing our best to keep the ball rolling. And in the meantime we are blessed with a wonderful interim pastor who has been there in everyway for us.

May Sermons

Sunday, May 2	Isaiah 43:15-19	“A New Thing”
Sunday, May 9	Exodus 1:13 – 2:10	“Brave Women”
Sunday, May 16	Acts 4:32-35	“Life Together”
Sunday May 23	Acts 2:1-4	“Pentecost: Bridge not Tower”
Sunday, May 30	II Corinthians 13:13	“The Trinity”

Breakfast on Sunday Mornings

You may have noticed cereal or cereal bars out and available for hungry children on Sunday mornings. If you could help, please bring cereal boxes or cereal bars. Our children do appreciate it.

Camp Scholarships

A limited number of scholarships are available for children and youth to attend the Baptist Camp in Lebanon, NJ. Brochures with all the details and the applications are available. Please submit a completed application to the Christian Education Board by May 23rd with a \$25.00 deposit for each child wishing to attend and be considered for a scholarship. Scholarships will be distributed on a first come, first served basis.

Help Available for Energy Bills

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and NJ SHARES programs can help with your energy bill. To find out which of these programs will best meet your needs, call 1-800-510-3102, Monday thru Saturday, or visit www.pseg.com/help to learn more and where to apply.

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The Board of Christian Education welcomed Jeanne Johnson as a new member and Ijezie Nwokomah as the Sunday School Superintendent. Robyn Kay was elected the new chairperson and will take over the duties this month.

Plans for a summer Vacation Bible School Camp are underway. Rev. Mia Chang from the Next Gen church in Princeton visited us and talked about the activities for the week and began registration. We hope to hold the camp from August 16–20 from 10 am till 3 pm. We still need helpers for the week. Please see Pastor Liz.

Applications for Camp Lebanon are in the office. A \$25.00 fee is needed when you register. Our limited resources and yet a desire to see as many children have the ‘Lebanon Experience’ as possible has placed the Board in a position of financial need this year. Any children wishing to attend camp will need to be sure applications are in very early so that the Board may determine appropriate distribution of its limited funds in the way of scholarships for camp. We regret that the simple paying for camp expenses out of hand can no longer be the way funds are expended.

We will have a breakfast at 9:45 on May 9th, to celebrate Mother’s Day. Everyone is invited and asked to bring a special breakfast treat to share with everyone.

Remember Sunday School starts at 9:45 and classes begin at 10:00.

REVIVE 2010

Save the dates. **REVIVE 2010** will take place June 11-13, 2010 at the Trinity Cathedral in Trenton, NJ. **REVIVE 2010** will bring together 1,000 Christians across denominational, theological, class, and racial/ethnic divides to renew a faith in Christ that inspires and equips us to proclaim his justice. **REVIVE 2010** will be a weekend of Christian proclamation that brings together nationally known speakers, inspiring preachers, and useful workshops to equip participants in the work of evangelism and justice. The speakers for June 11-13 include Cornel West, Bart Campolo, Shane Claiborne and Brenda Salter McNeil. Please let Pastor Liz know if you are interested in attending.

ESL Teachers Needed

Let Pastor Liz know if you **MIGHT** be interested in becoming a trained ESL (English as a second language) teacher. We are considering applying for funding to support such a ministry.

Riverview Estates is planning a Community Service Project. “Flower Planting Day” will be Saturday, May 22, 2010 from 10 am until 12 Noon. Volunteer Teams will be needed for this event. We are hoping for many teams to plant the 100 flats of flowers we will have. It would be a wonderful service project for student or church groups. A box lunch will be provided. Call and register your group at 1-856-829-2274 (ext 150) or email to opal@riverviewestates.org.

One Great Hour of Sharing

In his final moments with his disciples, Jesus asks Peter, "Do you love me?" "Yes," Peter replies. Then, "Feed my lambs," the Good Shepherd tells him. "Tend my sheep," Three times, Jesus passionately repeats his instructions, pressing his followers: If you love me, take care of the people I love. Live your love for me by actively tending these for whom I have sacrificed everything. (John 21:15-19)

Soon, you'll have an opportunity to offer your gift to One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS), empowering our American Baptist ministries of disaster relief and refugee aid, meeting basic needs in Christ's name throughout the world, and sharing resources that allow people to improve their own lives and communities. Soon, each of us will decide how to respond to Jesus' question "Do you love me?"

The members of the family of God – from those we know to distant sisters and brothers in parts of the world we may never visit –are God's flock, the sheep of God's pasture (Ezekiel 34:31). Yet, God's flock is often forcefully scattered as people are chased from their homes and livelihoods by brutal expressions of war, as communities and futures are shattered by natural disasters, as societies and countries are ground down by unrelenting hunger, disease, and poverty.

Jesus calls us to tend his sheep caught in these situations of evil and nature run amok. And with love and energy, the Church responds! Through One Great Hour of Sharing,

- Disaster victims quickly receive shelter, food, water, and medical supplies
- Local communities develop secure sources of food and clean water
- Minds and bodies grow stronger with new schools and medical clinics
- Refugees receive housing and long-term help to construct new lives.

In these challenging times, we often wonder how much we can afford to sacrifice to help feed Jesus' beloved sheep, when our needs remain pressing. Perhaps only our prayerful conscience can answer that. But remember the feeding of the 5,000: when Jesus asked the disciples to feed the crowd, the disciples despaired (Mark 6:34-44). The five loaves and two fish seemed insignificant compared to the massive need. Yet when each gave sacrificially from what they had, through God's blessing, their gifts turned into a miracle of compassion for all.

Heed Jesus' call to feed his sheep with a generous, even sacrificial, gift to One Great Hour of Sharing. Sharing your resources will change lives – including your own.

Used TV's and VCR's are needed. Let Pastor Liz know if you are able to donate either.

Serving This Month

Deacons:

**Abigail Amutah
Bella Nwokoma**

Trustee:

Bella Nwokoma

Help Available for Those on Medicare

Medicare recipients on limited income and resources may be eligible for extra help to pay monthly premiums, annual deductibles, and prescription co-payments. The extra help is worth an average of \$3,900 per year. To qualify you must have income limited to \$16,245 for an individual or \$21,855 for a married couple living together. Even if your annual income is higher you may be able to get some help. Further information and applications are available on www.socialsecurity.gov/prescriptionhelp To apply by phone or have an application mailed, call Social Security at 1-800-772-1213 and ask for the *Application for Help with Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Costs* (SSA-1020). Or go to the nearest Social Security office. If you would like to learn more about the Medicare prescription drug plans and special enrollment periods, visit www.medicare.gov or call 1-800 MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227).

MILESTONES

From Mildred Caparella

Spring has sprung. All of the Easter flowers have popped up. The trees are flowering with their white buds. Cherrie blossoms are showing off. What a glorious sight to see. As I step out of my front door I have a circle of different colored pansies looking up at me with their smiling little faces. They are telling me God has made all this happen and that puts a smile on my face.

Easter Sunday was a beautiful day, inside and out of the church. Richard Petro was out in the back yard hiding Bunny Eggs for the children. The secret was he hid some for himself. The breakfast was delicious as they always are with plenty of “eatin” “good meetin” at the tables.

The flowers on the altar were beautiful and colorful. We all had our pictures taken. And the password is “Cheese and Crackers” which makes a lovely picture. On April , the 6th , Florence, Charlie and I went to see Miriam Dean at the Estates. She was in a bad way. Her hands were shaking and she cried. We felt so sorry for her. We all said a prayer for her. She said she couldn’t swallow her food properly. While we were there I held her hands so they wouldn’t shake. Florence gave her a lovely hug for a while and she quieted down. We stayed a while with her in her room until she decided to take a nap. We left after that. It was a very hot day. Miriam needs prayer. Think of “we” before “me.”

“Of all the troubles, great and small, are those that never happened at all.”

The choir was beautiful sounding. Every seat was taken in the choir. Johnson family, you made me proud. Why don’t you make me proud every Sunday. Mommy Jeanne, those keys really talk to you. Erik Johnson and family – what a great ;looking family. Miss you all so much, along with our fellow members.

Happy Mother’s Day, May 9th. Take Mommy out of the kitchen into a restaurant of her choice.

May 6th is National Day of Prayer.

Rev. Liz Congdon, what can I say about your Easter Sunday sermon. All of your sermons are the buzz of the congregation. Behind that smile of yours (which you always share) is another sermon for the following Sunday. I like the way you preach. You put a lot of drama in it, even with the children’s message. Amen to that. Glad to see my Barbara and Tom sitting in front of me. Praise the Lord for the beautiful Easter Sunday He gave us.

Drive with care. Watch for the crazies

Have a blessed day!