



HILLTOPICS –JUNE 2017

WILSON MEMORIAL UNION CHURCH WATCHUNG, NJ 07069 (908) 755-5020

MESSAGE FROM OUR PASTOR...

A sure sign of summer when I was growing up in the Midwest was catching lightening bugs (aka fireflies). I remember the feeling of anticipation as my brother and I prepared our glass jars for our treasures. We would punch holes in the lids and fill the jars with leaves and twigs (I have know idea why we thought the lightening bugs would thrive in what we decided was a homey environment, much less survive for very long). We would then go outside to enjoy the scent of the honeysuckle, the warmth of the evening air and most of all the thrill of seeing how many of these amazing creatures we could carefully capture in our gently cupped hands. As darkness descended, it was great fun to be surprised by where the brief dots of light appeared as we ran around excitedly in our yard. We believed there was skill and technique in being quick enough to be at the right place at the right time just so one more quick-flying miracle of nature wouldn't get away. "Just a little longer," we would say as our parents attempted to drag us in for bedtime. We wanted to savor every possible moment of being outside on a glorious summer night doing what we felt we were born to do! Plus, we wanted to make sure we had enough lightening bugs in our jars to serve as perfect nightlights in our rooms as we fell asleep with our windows open listening to all the nocturnal sounds that also reminded us of many magical summer days to come. I have to admit, it was always disappointing when our special friends didn't live as long as we wanted them to in their new "digs". But, the experience of the gift of light they gave us was always such a cherished memory nonetheless.

I wonder if you know that lightening bugs emit light as their form of communication and often, but not exclusively, it's their way of attracting a mate? Also, the light they produce is the most efficient light in the world because 100% of the energy is emitted as light. None of it is heat. They are actually considered "cold lights" by scientists. And this is truly fascinating: adult lightening bugs aren't the only ones that glow. In some species, the larvae and even the eggs emit light! Thus, light isn't just one aspect of who they are, it's who they are from the very beginning of their lives.

I can't help but think about the way lightening bugs provide a wonderful way to reflect on our purpose. **We are known by the light we show forth.** Jesus said, "You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house" (Matthew 5:14-15). Isn't it true that the light which we are can best be seen when there is human darkness of some kind? Isn't it true that the light which we are is our basic form of communicating to others? Isn't it true that the light which we are is the most efficient way of expressing what God wants for all: love, peace, joy, reconciliation and hope? Isn't it also true that we can't "bottle up" this light, and save it for when we decide we may need it? Our light is always meant to be shared in the present, without reservation because the present, is what matters most.

We are called to let our light shine! By our light, others see us. As we all enjoy a slower pace this summer, wouldn't we do well to remember nature's beautiful example of the not-so-lowly lightening bug and share God's life-giving light inside us with others without any holding back whatsoever. It's simply who we are, you know. Let your light shine and shine and shine!

Have a wonderful summer and I look forward to seeing you on Sundays. **Our summer Worship Services will be in Fisher Hall beginning June 25th.**

Faithfully Yours, Barbara

Communion Sunday The Sacrament of Communion June 4th, 2017



The Sacrament of Communion will be celebrated in our Sanctuary. If you are wondering whether or not to participate, be assured that you are invited and encouraged to share in Communion as one who loves Christ and seeks to walk with Him.

Spaghetti Dinner, June 4, 2017

Won't you join us for this very important fundraiser for our summer Mission Trip to Urban Promise in Camden, July 16-21? Tickets are only \$10, with no charge for under 12. The time is 5:30pm with take-outs available. We thank you in advance for your support!

June 11, 2017 "What's Brewing?" 11:20am in the Sanctuary

You are invited to stay after our Worship Service to hear Michael speak about his work on the value of intergenerational ministry. His talk will be based on his Master of Arts in Theology thesis. Please join us!

A MESSAGE FROM OUR YOUTH DIRECTOR...

Happy June! If you know me, you know how excited I am that it is summer. Some people love the cold and the snow, and I love to wave to those people from inside the house by a fire. Summer means a celebration of the successes of the school year, taking stock of lessons learned, and the start of summer adventures. Our VBS is right around the corner! We will be hosting "Maker Fun Factory" with our students who will spend the week learning that God made them special and for a special purpose. The kids will also get to help build a well in Peru so that other kids and their families can have clean drinking water! Then we take our teens to Camden for another week at Urban Promise! I love how our students learn by doing!

I also want to extend an invitation to our entire congregation to a special "What's Brewing?" where you get to hear about the work I've been doing with Drew University on faith formation. It has been a challenging but rewarding process to take a hard look at how we pass our faith to the next generation. I think you will leave not only informed but challenged as well. "What's Brewing?" is after the service in the Sanctuary.

See you in the sun of summer!! Blessings, Michael

A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD PRESIDENT...

Spring is my favorite season. I love seeing if what I planted last year has survived the rough winter to sprout up and break out in blossom. Sometimes I forget what I planted, and am so happy to see that the irises that Gwen Mayer donated from her garden to the church pop up with a lovely blue, butter yellow or bronze; or the butterfly bush poke its head up, ready to catch the eye of some fluttering beauties; or the sage shoot out their lacy branches. Just like a garden, we tend our families with love and respect, enriching their hearts and minds with the love of God, and the result is wonderful. We love to see our children grow into individuals, strong and mindful, ready to take on the world because we have given them a good foundation.

Speaking of foundation, our church is in need of a little TLC - some spring/summer/fall sprucing. We will be putting together some work party jobs, for tasks that can be completed in an evening, or even a Saturday morning. These tasks can be anything from power-washing, cleaning and polishing, a little painting, even weeding and watering. We love our church and it is important we keep it maintained for future generations. Announcements will be made for these projects - we hope to see as many as we can help out.

The website committee is making progress! We will share the good news next month. Our website is a gateway to the congregation and to the community, and we will be selecting the company to host this shortly.

Many Blessings, Lorri Monetti

BOARD BRIEFS...

1. Minister's Report - We had a meaningful Maundy Thursday and Good Friday Worship Services. Rev. Barbara was grateful that a few people came to the Good Friday service that had never been before. She heard from several "that was the first Good Friday service I ever attended in my life". Easter Sunday was of course a highlight of our liturgical year and she wants to thank Jim, Roberta and the choir for providing such outstanding inspirational music as well as the Frippery for providing money to support extra singers for the choir and the brass musicians. The season of Easter lasts until Pentecost Sunday which is June 4th.
2. Our new book study group is going! Eleven folks attended the informational meeting about it which was held May 2nd. There is still time for **YOU** to be a part. The upcoming gatherings based on "The Road Back To You" are May 16, May 30, June 6 and June 20.

3. Rev. Barbara attended a wonderful seminar April 27 – May 1 on the spiritual dimension of the Enneagram. Don Ashmall, Executive Minister of ICCC was our guest and Brian Januzzi and Hugh helped with the service. She is so grateful to them. She would like to form a core group of folks who would be interested in assisting in the Worship Service. It will be a way to encourage more participation from the congregation.
4. May 21st was Christian Education/Youth Sunday. Some of our students received their Bibles and the service marked the official end of the Sunday School season for the school calendar year. Pizza was served during the coffee hour. At 1:30pm that day was our Blessing of the Animals gathering on the front lawn of the church.
5. Reminder - The Spaghetti Dinner scheduled for June 4th is a main fundraiser for the Mission Trip.
6. Plans for VBS June 26-29 are in high gear! The curriculum is "Maker Fun Factory" by Group Publishing. We have great volunteer help in place but if anyone would like to volunteer there is still room. The program is geared to ages 4 years-5th grade (completed).
7. Rev. Barbara offers Spiritual Direction on a one-to-one basis. Her training as a certified Spiritual Director is something that she continues to prize and it fits so well with the training in the Enneagram personality typing structure. See her if you are interested in learning more about either or both.
8. COVENANT COMMITTEE – The next blood drive will be held in August.
9. FACILITIES COMMITTEE – Anthony Cito stated that the windows need to be worked on. We need church volunteers for painting. He is obtaining (3) quotes for the electrical work, all emergency lights as well as the exit lights. He is also getting 3 quotes for the roof on the manse garage. The holes in the parking lot pavement were brought up.
10. NEW BUSINESS - A fund raising project is being explored to help pay for new windows in the Blackburn Hall wing. Randy Stefanovic will be leading a team to put together a Wilson Memorial Golf Tournament in the fall.
11. The board will be reviewing the fee structure for use of facilities. A new structure is needed to make rooms like Fisher Hall more available to more people. Cota Possien-Kania volunteered to research for original written documents regarding fee structure.

BLANKETS+ SUNDAY – A HUGE SUCCESS!!!

I'd like to extend a personal "**Thank You**" to all of you who either ordered a blanket or made a monetary contribution to this year's Mother's Day Blankets+ Fundraiser. Due to your generosity, **\$808.00** was donated toward this Outreach Project. In the 12+ years that our Church has participated in this worthwhile Outreach Project, we have now exceeded \$10,000.00 in total gifts to **Church World Service**. All of the money raised is used to fund ongoing assistance in helping individuals and communities face emergency situations around the world. Again, thank you for supporting this valuable Outreach Project. Pam Cox, Chair Person.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL...

Dear Parents: Send your kids on an imaginative, impacting adventure! Calling all Kids 4 years old through those currently in 5th grade! At ***Maker Fun Factory VBS***, kids discover not only that God made them the way they are, but for a purpose too. Maker Fun Factory is filled with incredible Bible-learning experiences kids see, hear, touch, and even taste! Maker fun, team-building games, cool Bible songs, and tasty treats are just a few of the standout activities that help faith flow into real life. Your kids will also participate in a hands-on mission project, through a program called Operation Kid-to-Kid, that will let the kids in our community show God's love to needy remote villages in Peru. So mark June 26-29th on your calendar! The fun starts each day at 8:45am and will end at NOON. Registration forms are available in the church Narthex or by calling the church office.

WOMEN'S GUILD...

The Women's Guild will hold their June Potluck Picnic on **Thursday, June 1st at noon in Fisher Hall**.

BOOK GROUP CONTINUES IN JUNE ...

The Road Back to You book group continues on Tuesday evenings: **June 6th, and June 20th at 7:00pm.** Please let Barbara know if you are interested! The gatherings will take place at the church. ***The Road Back to You*** can be purchased from any major bookseller

COVENANT COMMITTEE...

The Summer Covenant Blood Drive will be held on August 12th. This is again a Saturday so please mark your calendars. It will be in the Firemen's Exempt Hall on Mountain Blvd. from 8:00am to 2:00pm. There is a special need during the summer so we hope to see you there. Thank you!! We also encourage attendance at Vacation Bible School. This is an excellent way to encourage ecumenism. Fran Ellis

SUMMER IS COMING ...

Summer brings with it changes. We have more outdoor activities, more time away from home and therefore usually more infrequent church attendance. Yet the activities at our church do not slow down and most definitely, the expenses do not slow down.

While I cannot state with certainty as of this moment how our finances look through the end of May, we were trailing last year through April and I believe we are still behind last year's giving. I plan to send out mid-year statements to everyone in early July. Can you give something extra in June to help us catch up? And of course, even if you are away during the summer, we hope you won't forget your church and its financial needs.

Have a great summer and look forward to a mailing from me in early July!

Hugh Woodruff, Treasurer

A SUMMER OPPORTUNITY...

We love our church, don't we? We love our people, our pastors, our long, rich history and our work in our community.

This summer we have a chance to experience our connection to the larger Church. The Annual Conference of the International Council of Community will be held July 17-20, 2017 in Cherry Hill, NJ - only 1-1/2 hour drive time from us. At the Conference, other churches of our communion - from all over the US (and some from abroad) - will gather for worship, Bible study, workshops, music and fellowship. Conference youth will join with Wilson youth for the summer mission project. Bible study will be led by Dr. Tony Campolo.

Another highlight you won't want to miss is that Pastor Barbara Peters will preach at evening worship Wednesday, July 19th. Liturgist for that service will be Brian Januzzi. Come for the whole Conference or come for the day.

If you want to know more about ICCC, speak with Roberta Smith or Deidre Seidel. Brochures are in the narthex and you can get info online at www.icccnow.org.

Roberta Smith, Ecumenical Committee & Board Member, ICCC

THE FRIPPERY THRIFT SHOP...

The Frippery is the yellow house in the top parking lot and is open Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30am-12:30pm and first Saturday of the month, through June, also 9:30am-12:30pm.

Only a couple of DAYS LEFT till our summer break. Saturday, June 3rd, 9:30am to 12:30pm, \$5.00 FILLS A KINGS BAG with glasses, dishes, linens, toys, books and cds, COME AND GET UM!!! Help clean us out to the bare walls!!! AT 11:30am on Saturday, 6/3 EVERYTHING (except jewelry) will be 90% OFF!!! Stock up for college and vacation houses! Tuesday 6/6 everything left will be 90% off. Jewelry will be 1/2 price, 6/1, 6/3 and 6/6 (last day). Clothing \$3 per bagful while supplies last 5/30, 6/1 and 6/3 (last day for clothing).

As you are cleaning out linen closets over the summer, please keep those old pillowcases for The Frippery. They are perfect for us packing up breakable items when we go to estate sales to bring items back. Another request, when you go to bridal showers, baby showers and graduation parties ...please bring back the TISSUE paper for us to recycle when we SELL breakable items. Those of you that shop at grocery stores that pack in paper bags with handles..... those are also GOLD to us! Here is your list:

- 1) Old pillowcases
- 2) Tissue paper
- 3) Shopping bags with handles

Please bring these items to church and give to any of our Frippery volunteers, thank you, Questions about donations over the summer? Please call or text Lisa Renaud 908-625-5042 Enjoy your summer breaks!

STARFISH ...

The Starfish Food Pantry needs our help over the summer months while kids are home from school and not getting assistance with lunch programs. Let's help them out with cans of TUNA, PEANUT BUTTER and JELLY (plastic squeeze bottles). Look for small shopping bags on the Starfish table to put in your car to help remind you when you are out grocery shopping this summer. Thank you!



BAPTISMS...

On May 7th we shared with joy in the baptism of Samantha Rose Della Serra. Samantha was born on August 10th, 2016 to Michelle and Louis Della Serra. Her Godparents are Katherine Elizabeth Santos and Scott Santos. Her proud grandparents are Diane and Steve Kraemer and Diane and Frank Della Serra. Samantha was welcomed home by her sister, Rebecca.

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT...

On May 14th we announced the arrival of Wesley Michael Anderson. Wesley is the son of Jenny and Matt Anderson and was born on May 8th, 2017. His grandparents are Lisa Renaud, Fred Renaud and Barbara and Mick Anderson.



SYMPATHY

We extend our sympathy to the family of George Jacus who passed away on May 8th. George was the father of Jake Jacus.

We extend our sympathy to the family of Clare Gault who passed away on May 20th in Cape May. A Memorial Service will be held on June 16th in Cape May.

We also extend our sympathy to the family of Joseph Mayer who passed away on May 23rd. A Memorial Service was held at Wilson Memorial Church on May 31th.



PERSONAL ITEMS...

We continue to pray for those suffering with health problems: Russ Funk, Bill Ripley, Howard Beyer, Dorothy Ryno, Janet Meeks, Joyce Possien, Ellie Groves, Gladys Andrews, Joy Jurgens, Eva Wehof, Michael Kontra, and Alison Barr.

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Check out our website: www.wilsonmemorialchurch.com
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