



A Message from Pastor Becca

Lent. The season of fasting, repentance, and wilderness. This sounds like a miserable season in the church year but if I am honest, it is one of my favorites. I enjoy the time of quiet reflection on my own. I appreciate the somber tone of worship for several weeks. It all prepares my heart for Holy Week and then Easter.

For this moment I want to talk about being in the wilderness. Our traditional timing doesn't always line up with what life brings but we will assume each of us will experience some wilderness this Lent. The wilderness is a funny thing, many of us think simply of the outdoors, some think of scorching deserts. God's creation is beautiful and worthy of exploring. This creation is also worthy of our respect; if one becomes disoriented or caught off guard the beauty of creation can quickly overwhelm us. Beautiful trees can become an insurmountable maze. Refreshing water can become terrifying waves. A beautiful bear can become a threat to our very lives.

When I was a young adult I had gone camping approximately five times when I decided to take four of my "nieces" (we don't all share DNA but we are family) who were 12-13 years old camping. The campground sat upon the shores of the Delaware River. The highlight of the trip was to be tubing down the river. I had tubed a local creek and expected the same sort of experience. Much to my surprise when we met up with the bus that would drop us off upstream, we were handed tubes made of thin vinyl not the truck tire inner tubes I was expecting. Still we donned our life vests that came complete with other people's body odor. We rode along as the guide gave us pointers and then he said, "Oh yes that is the power plant, steer clear of those rapids as you could get sucked into the turbines." Some of the girls burst into tears. Our trip got off to a rocky start, the smallest girl's tube wouldn't move, we hit rapids, and then the turbines. Then when we made it past all that, one of the tubes straight up popped on a rock. No worries we worked it out tranquil water was much easier to navigate. We passed under a bridge to find more rapids. We all managed to get to a little rock island, and I made a solid plan to get us all on tubes and over the rapids. Then another tube sprung a leak. As I improvised a repair and got the girls all situated, the river swelled, and all four girls got pulled away from me with the tubes. I watched them go down river getting stuck in the current. I am screaming and gesturing for them to swim to shore, eventually one of them understood, they made it to shore. Then I prayed, "Please God, just don't let them see me die." I had to ride the rapids to them on my own. I took a deep breath and waded into the water, it took two seconds before the water took me down and I was heading headfirst down the river. I remembered my mother's voice from 20 years earlier when she was teaching me to swim, "if you get in trouble you have to relax to float". That inner voice helped me protect my head from rocks and bruised I made it to my kiddos. We climbed a hill to a yard where Lydia a gracious saint told me all about how the campground hadn't give us all the proper equipment. She deflated our tubes, squeezed all of us into her car and drove us over the bridge and back to the camp. Then we limped back to camp missing shoes, articles of clothing, and a bit of pride. Grateful we were all ok.

This event always reminds of the complexities of the wilderness. The trip started out tranquilly appreciating creation. The water became rough, we lost some of the tools we needed, all seemed lost, I was scared and angry, and I was never alone. From my prayer, to my mother's voice, to a woman I would never see again. This is what it is like if we enter into the wilderness and bare our souls before God and we are honest about our lives, our shortcomings, our shame, our sin. It can get rocky, lonely, disorienting. Yet, while we enter into this wilderness without the answers we seek, we do so clinging to the promise of Easter with gratitude for the entire breath of human experience.

I pray this Lent you willingly enter into the wilderness and allow God to work in you, so you return renewed and ready to live more fully into your call as a follower of Jesus.



Together in Faith



Only one month of Saturdays left for
Sleep Mat Workshops!

We already have five completed mats and many more in progress. We've made new friends from Medford Methodist and have several new crocheters this year, which really helps. We have LOTS of bags and need assistance in getting them flattened so please join us from 10 to noon each Saturday in March.



*Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm.
Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the
work of the Lord, because you know that your labor
in the Lord is not in vain.
~ Corinthians 15:58*





Great Food, Fun and Fellowship at the Deacon's Soup and Sock Brunch!



Super Sock Success!

We had a total of 173 pairs of socks donated for the homeless during the month of February. Half of the socks were distributed during the free lunch program at the First Presbyterian Church of Mt Holly & the other half went to the Christian Caring Center in Pemberton. **Thank you for your generosity!**

- Mission Committee

*For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ to do good works, which God prepared us in advance to do.
~ Ephesians 2:10*



One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS)



Around the world, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education & opportunity. The three programs supported by the One Great Hour of Sharing- Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and the Self Development of People- all work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need. From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance, and hope.

OGHS is the single, largest way that Presbyterians come together every year to work for a better world. Received during the season of Lent, each gift to One Great Hour of Sharing helps to improve the lives of people all over the world. Please prayerfully consider your donation this year.

- Lorraine Kunkle, Mission Elder

Looking Forward...

Our Lenten Journey

April 5, 2020 Palm Sunday Worship 9:30 am
April 9, 2020 7:00 pm The Service of the Three Days
April 10, 2020 Noon Good Friday
Ecumenical Worship at
Faith Presbyterian Church

April 12, 2020 Easter
6:30 am Sunrise Worship - To be confirmed
9:30 am Traditional Worship

Our Lenten Journey

Through out the season of Lent prayer stations will be available in the front entry of the church. They are open anytime the church is open. Come encounter God! They will change on Sunday of each week.

Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. ~ 1 Peter 5:6



Faith Bible Study Groups

OGs Men's Bible Study continues the series, The Truth Project from Focus on the Family. There is open discussion following the video, then brunch at the Medport Diner. The group meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month at 9:30am at the church.

Morning Glories Women's Bible Study is reading a new book "Bad Girls of the Bible" by Barbara J. Essex. The book explores the traditionally misunderstood women of the Bible and reveals what their stories have to tell us today. The group meets the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month at 9:15am at the church.

Please Join Us!



Upcoming Schedule

- 3/8 Sleep Mat Sunday – Mission Workshop
- 3/15 Lesson: Jesus Washes Feet
- 3/22 Lesson: Jesus Celebrates Passover
- 3/29 5th Sunday, Kids Stay in Church*
- 4/5 Palm Sunday Parade!
Lesson: Jesus Enters Jerusalem
- 4/12 Easter Sunday! Lesson: Jesus Lives

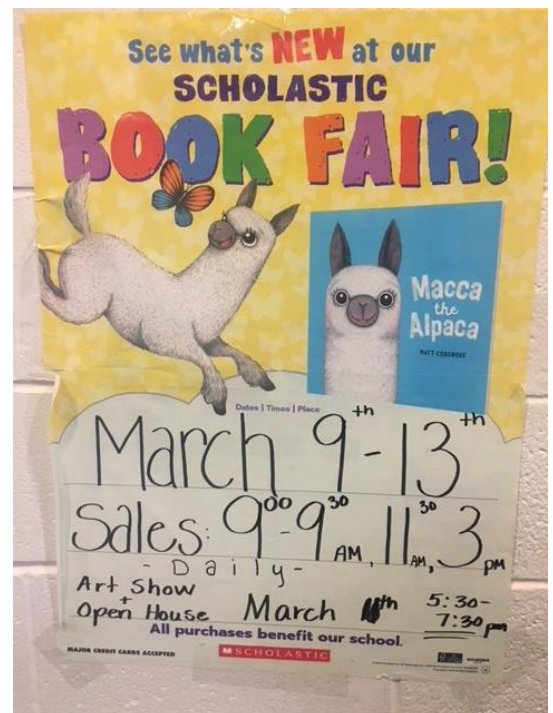
Practicing for our Palm Sunday Parade!

Hosanna, loud hosanna
the little children sang;
through pillared court and temple
the lovely anthem rang.

To Jesus, who had blessed them,
close folded to his breast,
the children sang their praises,
the simplest and the best.



Small World Book Fair!



**New 5th Sunday Service: Whenever there is a 5th Sunday in a month, the Sunday School children will stay in church. Pastor Becca is planning a kid-friendly, inter-generational service that day.*



Prayer Shawl Ministry!

We need **Pocket Prayer Squares**! The Prayer Shawl Ministry is looking for additional home knitters to help make pocket prayer squares. These small 3x3 squares, knitted with a cross design in the center, fit easily in a pocket and are given out frequently at church, with each sleep mat we send to the Christian Caring Center, and to patients at Mt. Holly hospital.



We need lots more squares! Please contact Janet Sharpe for the pattern and more information.
Stay tuned for our next PSM meeting date.



Fellowship Collection

Did you know that your continuing “dollar here & dollar there,” put in the collection cans during the fellowship time, has been keeping pace with the cost of coffee, tea, lemonade, iced tea & cups for the past year?

Thank you from your fellowship supply team!

There is a new way to connect with
Pastor Becca on social media.
You can follow her here:

<https://www.facebook.com/writerevwrite>

Did You Know?

If you bank online, you can set up an automatic payment for your contribution to Faith Church. You'll never have to worry about forgetting your envelope!

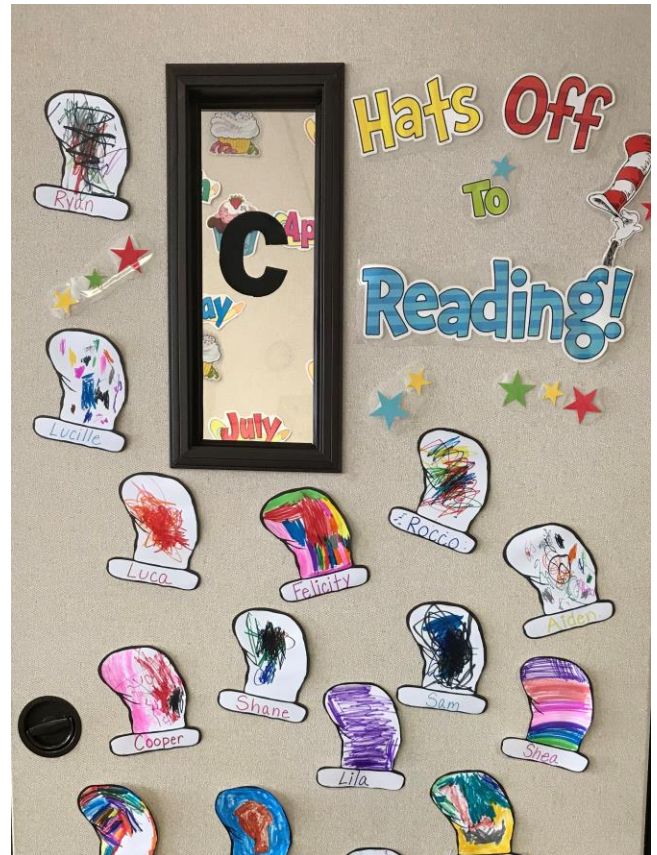


Small World News

Transitional Kindergarten just finished reaching for the stars with a fun Space week! We are busy this month reading and rhyming with Dr. Seuss, painting rainbows, kites and wind socks. We are looking forward to the Small World Book Fair, Art Show and Spring of course!

While February was an exciting month filled with Community Helpers, the month of March will bring celebration and change in the **Pre-Kindergarten** classes. We will begin the month celebrating Dr. Seuss's birthday and the joy of reading. The students will get to show off their creative sides in our Annual Art Show. We will then explore the changes that occur during the seasons focusing on wind and weather. We plan to talk about rainbows~how they are made and the promises that they symbolize. Pre-K can't wait to leap into spring!

The 3's will be reading Dr. Seuss books to kick off the first week of March. Then comes our fabulous book fair week and Art Show. We will be using our rainbow crayons and painting with peppers for St. Patrick's Day. We will celebrate all the colors of the rainbow by making a class Rainbow Fruit Salad! Hopefully Spring does come early and we can start planting some seeds.



This month, **the 2s** will have fun learning about and celebrating Dr. Seuss, St. Patrick's Day, baby animals, and spring. Our color is yellow and the shape is rectangles. We will do lots of crafts and activities that will help our children have fun while learning about these topics. We also look forward to taking the children to the "big room" to play with all different types of blocks on Block Day! It's always a lot of fun for the students!

Registration for the year 2020-2021 is underway and spots are filling up quickly!

Please let family, friends and neighbors with pre-school age children to come in and register. ☺

Please feel free to come in and stroll down our hallways and browse the Book Fair the week of March 9th through 13th for our Annual Open House Art Show/Book Fair!!

Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it. Proverbs 22:6



February 2020 Session Report

Holy Week Services and Easter — The Maundy Thursday evening service “Service of Three Days” with communion will be held at 7 pm. This year, Faith Church will be hosting the Good Friday Ecumenical Service at Noon. Pending approval by the camp, Faith Church will be holding the Easter Sunrise service again at 6:30 am at the YMCA Camp of the Pines with a breakfast to follow. Be sure to check the weekly bulletin for any changes.

Pastoral Call Process - Session invited members of the WJ Commission on Ministry (COM) to attend the February 24, 2020 Session meeting. Rev. Dr. Deborah G. Brincivalli and Rev. Ellie Cowherd came to inform the Session about how a church’s pastoral call could be changed. The process for such a change would involve seeing the church’s finances and the theological reason for such a change. The COM would need to see the church finances, the change in the position description, the change in the mission study when the pastor was first called, and any change in the role of the leadership. The onus for such a change is on the Session to initiate the process. The process requires COM approval as well as congregational approval. For the meantime, the COM representatives made some suggestions that included holding a townhall meeting every two months to update the congregation about the finances and any steps that may have been taken to change the pastoral call. A suggestion for finances was to provide electronic offerings so that those people who can’t attend will still be able to give to the church.

- Ginny Magnus, Clerk of Session