

FRENCHTOWN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CROSSTALK



FRENCHTOWN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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STEPHEN'S SEASONINGS March, 2017

Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer everyone. (Colossians 4:6)

The season of Lent begins on Wednesday, March 1. We call that day Ash Wednesday (see page 2 for evening service details) because there is a long tradition of Christians marking their foreheads with ashes to begin a time, personally and as a community, to turn toward God's tenaciously faithful love. Then in the light of God's grace and mercy we can find the courage to look honestly at who we are and open ourselves to God's healing. I hope that sounds a lot different to you than "giving up things" for Lent in order to be a good Christian. The original point of "giving up" was to clear our lives of the clutter that keeps us from listening and responding to God. If forgoing chocolate or meat helps you do that, then by all means go ahead. I know in my own life that I need to clear away some of my busyness and my distractions in order to be still and listen, listen, listen for what God is saying.

One of the spiritual growth opportunities comes each week—reading the Bible. This can be as simple as a few minutes of reading followed by a few minutes of silent reflection. The Scripture texts from your worship bulletin are a good place to begin. You are invited to revisit the readings after Sunday--at home or during lunch at your desk. And you can join us each Wednesday morning (March 1 through April 12) in the sanctuary at 7 am for a service of morning prayer and communion. We will have you on your way by 7:40 so that you can get to other responsibilities. We also have an ongoing Bible group those same Wednesdays at 9 am.

Lent lasts for 40 days and the six Sundays between Ash Wednesday and Easter don't count toward the 40. Even in a time when we remember how Jesus set his face toward Jerusalem to die, the Sundays are always a celebration of resurrection day.

There are books I love to read again and family stories I hear and tell over and over. The story of Jesus' last days is like that. We tell it to our children and hear anew for ourselves—how much God loves us in Jesus Christ. We listen to our Lord's teachings and his invitation to live another way, knowing that he gave his life for our sake. It's worth the time to explore this story as a church and to choose some time for ourselves in March and April to reflect on its meaning for each of us. Lent is a journey of faith—let's walk together.

Grace and peace are yours in Christ Jesus.

Stephen C. Kolderup, Interim Pastor



2017



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WAYS TO GROW DURING LENT

LENT BEGINS ON ASH WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1

This year we are gathering at 7:00 p.m. for an **evening service**. We begin this meaningful Christian season with a time of confession and receiving ashes on the forehead. "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return," come the words from Genesis 3:19. As we begin this season of prayer we not only acknowledge our mortality but also embrace our humanity that is made whole again in Jesus Christ. The words and the ashes are not a resignation of life but an acceptance that in life and in death we belong to God. We are hosting this service at our church and will be joined by pastors and members and choirs from two Milford churches.

WEDNESDAY MORNINGS IN LENT (March 1 through April 12)

Join us each Wednesday morning in Lent in the sanctuary at 7am for a service of morning prayer and communion. We will have you on your way by 7:40am so that you can get to other responsibilities. We also have an ongoing Bible group those same Wednesdays at 9 am.



FASTING AND FEASTING IN LENT

Lord, help us to...

Fast from judging others...feast on Christ dwelling in them.

Fast from emphasis on differences...feast on the unity of life.

Fast from apparent darkness...feast on the reality of light.

Fast from thoughts of illness...feast on God's healing power.

Fast from words that pollute...feast on phrases that purify.

Fast from discontent...feast on gratitude.

Fast from anger...feast on patience.

Fast from pessimism...feast on optimism.

Fast from worry...feast on divine order.

Fast from complaining...feast on appreciation.

Fast from negatives...feast on affirmatives.

Fast from unrelenting pressures...feast on unceasing prayer.

Fast from hostility...feast on nonresistance.

Fast from bitterness...fest on forgiveness.

Fast from self-concern...feast on compassion for others.

Fast from personal anxiety...feast on eternal truth.

Fast from discouragement...feast on hope.

Fast from facts that depress...feast on truths that up lift.

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(continued from page 2)

Fast from lethargy...feast on enthusiasm.
Fast from suspicion...feast on truth.

Fast from thoughts that weaken...feast on promises that inspire.
Fast from shadows of sorrow...feast on sunlight of serenity.
Fast from idle gossip...feast on purposeful silence.

(adapted from William Arthur Ward, American author, teacher and pastor, 1921-1994)

SESSION NEWS

It is hard to believe we are heading into Lent and spring! Soon the Nominating Committee will convene to gather names of members to serve as Elders and Deacons. I want to thank all our officers for their dedication and hard work. Also, if you believe you may want to serve your church as an Elder or Deacon....please let me know and I can let the nominating committee know. I am happy to answer any questions as well. Enjoy each new day!

Kathy Skerbetz , Clerk of Session



MUSIC

Greetings from the Music Department!

Winter has finally settled in, but spring keeps knockin' at the door, Praise Band and the Chancel Choir are preparing for the upcoming Easter season. We are hoping to bring a brass ensemble to our 11:00 a.m. Easter Sunday service.

Josh and I would like to feature the musicians, both vocal and instrumental, at a regular church service. Young and old, we need you! There is so much talent in this congregation! Please consider being part of Sunday worship.

Praise Band will be bringing their musical praise to the Feb. 26th, at the 11 a.m. service. Come and join us as we praise the Lord with song!

Also, Praise Band is in DIRE need of a drummer. If you know of anyone within the congregation or community who might be interested; please have them contact Kathy or Josh.

Preparation for community concerts at FPC continue and we hope to be able to bring you a piano recital from Josh Wilson, the MCCC Jazz Band, and more this spring and summer.

Sing praises to His name!

Kathy Hartman



STEWARDSHIP



This month, we are concentrating on Principle #9 of the "10 Financial Principles that are Biblical. Principle # 9 talks about working hard. Everything that we have and do is a gift from God and that includes our work. Whatever it is that we do, in order to make a living, we have to do our best. Our work is a gift from God and we must glorify God.

There is a difference between working hard and being a "workaholic" and Principle #9 touches upon that. We must remember for whom we work and in doing so, we are reminded of that balance between work and everything else that we do.

10 Financial Principles that are Biblical

Who's My Real Boss?

The Scripture spells it out: *"Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all of your might."*

Ecclesiastes 9:10. The Lord expects us to do the best we possibly can. There is value in work.

Principle #9 Work Hard

Our real boss is the Lord, and He is pleased with hard work in pursuit of excellence. Our work should never be at a level that people equate with mediocrity. Our work is a reflection of our spiritual relationship with our Lord.

This does not mean that we have to be perfect and never make mistakes in our work. The Lord expects us to do the best we can using the gifts, skills and abilities He has uniquely given us.

Our work is a gift. It is designed to develop character. A job is not just a means to earn money, it is also intended to produce godly character in the life of the worker... whether we are doctors, homemakers, secretaries, salespeople, managers or blue-collar workers.

Yet, as important as working hard and diligently at what we do is, there also needs to be balance. Some people work so much that they neglect the other aspects of their lives. If our jobs demand so much of our time and energy that we neglect our relationship with Christ and/or our family, then we are working too hard. We are forgetting the importance of balance in our lives.

"Workaholics" must take precautions to guard against sacrificing what's really important. The gift of work is just one of many gifts which God has given us!

The most important question we need to ask everyday as we begin our work is: For whom do I work? The answer is: I work for Christ.

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MISSION POSSIBLE

Save the Date! The Summer Mission trip will be **July 9-16th** to Black Mountain Children's Home in Asheville North Carolina. This trip is open to all ages. If you are interested in going or have any questions please contact Paul Pfisterer at 610-294-9412.



COMMUNITY LIFE COMMISSION

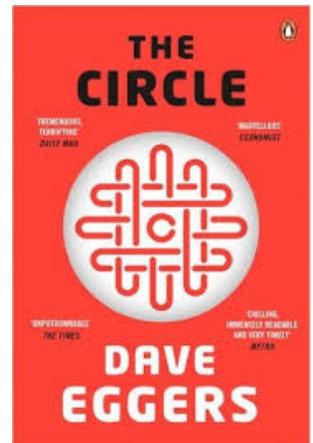
BOOK CLUB

Come join us at the next Book Club: Tuesday, March 14th, 7-9pm, downstairs. Light refreshments provided.

The Circle

By: Dave Eggers

"When Mae Holland is hired to work for the Circle, the world's most powerful internet company, she feels she's been given the opportunity of a lifetime. The Circle, run out of a sprawling California campus, links users' personal emails, social media, banking, and purchasing with their universal operating system, resulting in one online identity and a new age of civility and transparency. As Mae tours the open-plan office spaces, the towering glass dining facilities, the cozy dorms for those who spend nights at work, she is thrilled with the company's modernity and activity. There are parties that last through the night, there are famous musicians playing on the lawn, there are athletic activities and clubs and brunches, and even an aquarium of rare fish retrieved from the Marianas Trench by the CEO. Mae can't believe her luck, her great fortune to work for the most influential company in the world—even as life beyond the campus grows distant, even as a strange encounter with a colleague leaves her shaken, even as her role at the Circle becomes increasingly public. What begins as the captivating story of one woman's ambition and idealism soon becomes a heart-racing novel of suspense, raising questions about memory, history, privacy, democracy, and the limits of human knowledge."



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The Christian Education Commission would like to thank everyone for their donations to the Blessing Bags for Broad Street Ministry. Without the help of this wonderful and giving congregation this mission project would not have been possible!

And a big thank you to all those who helped set-up, assemble bags and deliver bags! In addition to the 100 pre-made bags, we also delivered all the extra items and were able to make a small monetary donation to Broad Street Ministry with leftover funds received.

Broad Street Ministry was very grateful for our donations and our simple act will help impact the lives of over a hundred individuals.

We are truly blessed here at FPC!!!

MISSION AND OUTREACH

Free Tax Prep Services

FPC is hosting United Way free tax preparation. Dates scheduled are February 28th, March 14 & 28th and April 11th. Appointments are needed.

Please dial 2-1-1 ext 27 to schedule an appointment. Hosted by Frenchtown Community Services and Outreach Group.

LIVE UNITED



United Way of
Hunterdon County

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

"If the Church were your home"

It has been said that the more we put into our home - of work, effort, and money, the more those homes mean to us.

The same is true of our churches, both the inner life and the visible activity. There are some people who come Sunday after Sunday, who worship sincerely, whose love for God is genuine and warm, but they have not yet found "a place to serve" in the church. Sometimes, a temporary situation keeps them from becoming involved, but often, it is their hesitancy to know or understand how many ways there are to serve God through a church and thereby to enrich their lives.

What are some of these areas?

Teaching: from toddlers to college

Calling: on sick at home or hospital; on visitors, finding out their needs, or what they hope to find in church.

Shuttle service: for those without transportation Sundays and weekdays.

Pianists: song leaders

Deputations: to local areas of need.

Youth Participants: for chaperones, driving, food prep, etc.

Ushering

Office assistance.

Think what would happen if every member gave just three hours a week - consistently in some way. How much we all would profit, how effective would our ministry be!

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FRENCHTOWN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Regular Worship Schedule

8:00 a.m. with Communion

10:00 a.m. with Kids Communities

7:00 p.m. Ash Wednesday Service-March 1st