

HOPE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
TINTON FALLS, NEW JERSEY



NOTES OF HOPE

A monthly publication to keep us informed.

May 2009

Edited by
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Published by
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Our Mission Statement

We believe that God has gathered this congregation and staff at this time and place in order to:

Introduce people to the enduring love of Jesus found in the Gospel of Jesus Christ

Invite them to become part of the family of God

Instruct them in the scriptures, God's word to us

Involve them in the ministry of the church, according to their gifts

Inspire them to go into the world, making disciples of others

Biblical Stewardship: The Truth About Money

Biblical stewardship requires that a Christian view money differently from the way the secular world views it. The secular world equates affluence with success and happiness. Therefore, society constantly struggles to acquire as much wealth as possible. The Bible, however, exposes the worthlessness of such a struggle by revealing the truth about money. The Psalms proclaim, "But man, despite his riches, does not endure; he is like the beasts that perish" (Psalm 49:12). No matter how much one struggles for wealth, death still awaits because money cannot add anything to one's life.

One could argue that, although money does not keep death away, it is still worth pursuing because it brings happiness and satisfaction in life. Solomon, a wise and rich man, argues, "Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless. As goods increase, so do those who consume them. And what benefit are they to the owner except to feast his eyes on them...the abundance of a rich man permits him no sleep" (Ecclesiastes 5:10-12). Money is meaningless. It can never satisfy those who love it and, instead, offers frivolous goods and anxiety. The struggle for wealth brings with it dissatisfaction, not a better life.

Biblical stewardship does not require that a Christian despise money or to discontinue earning it. Money is a necessity for basic living. The Bible does warn, however, that the love of money creates evil (1 Timothy 6:10). It is important not to allow money to become the center of one's life. When money is not the object of one's love and devotion, one is free to focus on higher things.

Good stewardship encourages a Christian to find true value in life. If money does not offer much to life, what does? The Bible states, "Whoever trusts in his riches will fall, but the righteous will thrive like a green leaf" (Proverbs 11:28). The righteous, not the rich, thrive. But how do the righteous thrive without riches? They thrive because they understand and possess what holds a higher value.

The righteous have character. Proverbs 22:1 states, "A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold." A pure reputation should be one's goal in life rather than the accumulation of wealth. Character lasts. Money cannot.

Believing in God offers the righteous a lifetime of wealth (Romans 11:33). Knowing God and understanding his love are the true eternal riches. The author of Hebrews writes, "Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you' (Hebrews 13:5). Money does not love and it does not linger. It is God who stands by and blesses his children in immeasurable amounts-this promise, not money, truly satisfies. Taken from <http://www.allaboutgod.com/Biblical-Stewardship.htm>

How's our Giving?

Giving for March..

| | Actual | Needed | Difference |
|--------------------|---------|-----------|------------|
| Operational Giving | \$6,795 | \$ 10,000 | - \$3,205 |
| Building Fund | \$1,250 | \$ 2,075 | - \$825 |

SIGN UP FOR E-GIVING! It's a sure way of remembering your offering each week.

Dear Members & Friends of Hope Pres. Church

Recently we received a phone message on the church answering machine from Ellen Morris. Ellen lives at 77 Reynolds Drive Eatontown. This house was formally the house that Isabelle & Elliott Willitts lived in who were dear Methodist friends of our congregations for many decades and a very active family in and around Eatontown. They were also very active during the years we share the facilities of the United Methodist Church of Eatontown on Wyckoff road in what was called the "Eatontown Cooperative Ministry". She said that since many of the Methodist members left that congregation to be part of our congregations when the Cooperative Ministry broke up in 1985 that we all might like to know that the Willitt's son Gordon died recently in South Carolina. I have included a copy of the Obit from the Asbury Park Press

GORDON LESLIE WILLITTS

AGE: 67 FORMERLY OF EATONTOWN AND POINT PLEASANT

Gordon Leslie Willitts, 67, of Little River, S.C., died Thursday, April 9, 2009. He was a graduate of Long Branch High School and attended Monmouth and Rutgers Universities. He was a business owner and operator, and outdoors man. He was a longtime resident of Eatontown and Point Pleasant.

He is survived by a son, John Willitts; and his life partner, Jean Schooley.

Steven Buckley

Reflections on Walking With the Lord

When I wrote **Swan on a Lake**, it was in response to a request for inclusion in the Advent booklet. There were not enough pieces sent to be included to make a booklet, so the project had to be cancelled. My contribution was not shared and, I confess, my feelings were hurt a bit. After all, I had spent considerable time writing the piece and I was quite disappointed that it was not going to be shared with the congregation.

When my friend, Robyn heard of my feelings, she responded with care and wisdom. She made a suggestion, which seemed a perfect solution, that I could perhaps include my writing as a reflection that could be shared in the newsletter. The Lord spoke to me through Robyn, illustrating that my time frame is not necessarily in sync with His plans. This was a tremendous reminder to me to trust in the Lord and not impose my desires or demands.

Now I would like to continue my walk with the Lord with you and share my story about my dear sister-in-law Diane, who passed away three days after Easter last year, my dear friend Chad, and the Lord.

Nancy Massa

Swan on a Lake

The summer had left us and we had just started the first week of fall when I decided to vary my walking route around the neighborhood and try a different route. I selected Franklin Lake in West Long Branch, just a few minutes from home with a nice mile trail around the lake. There were a few leaves starting to turn color. This was going to be a potentially good walk.

I had shied from this spot for a while because it reminded me of my sister-in-law, Diane's and my visit the summer before, while she was in her battle with cancer, and it saddened me to think of her death. She and I made our way to the gazebo that day with small steps and heavy breathing because Diane had to struggle with walking. I knew how much Di loved God's creations and I had told her of all of the beautiful birds there, including this magnificent swan. We chatted and watched and enjoyed all of the birds and the scenery and each other's company, but the swan never appeared and she was so disappointed. I reassured her and promised that for real there was a swan, I saw it myself many times, but on that particular day the two of us could not find it. I told her we would come another day and find it. We never had the opportunity after that to return to the lake together and find the swan.

Diane was on my mind as I walked past Shore Regional and the thick growth of lakeside greenery, which blocked my view of the lake in that area. As I left Shore Regional property and was again in the residential area, the overgrowth thinned and I had a perfect view of the lake, the gazebo on the opposite shore, and the magnificent swan, floating on the lake not 50 feet from me!!! This sighting of the swan was breathtaking and very emotional for me. I stopped in my tracks, eyes frozen on this beautiful creation, and, with tears streaming down my face I thought, "Here he is Di. I told you he was here." The bird stretched its neck upward, pointed its beak to the sky, fluffed its huge wings for a moment and then returned to its statuesque beauty, floating on the lake. I felt the Lord's presence that day, like a jolt of electricity. What was the message he was sending me?

The next day, I was fortunate to spend the afternoon with my young friend, Chad, who is recovering from two bouts with brain cancer. This is a beautiful spirited young man who, when he sneezes and you say, "God bless you", he says, "Thank you and God bless you too." We attended a QiGong class at the Wellness Community and took a walk at 80 Acres. While resting at my home, Chad sat at my piano and started to play a simple, beautiful song. He had played a few measures on previous visits, but he had never done more than that, due to possibly not remembering it, losing interest in it, or losing the energy to do it. On this day, Chad played the whole song for me from memory. I was so impressed I asked him if he had been practicing and he said, yes, a little. I asked him to show me how to play it and he started at the beginning and showed me the fingering. We hummed the melody together; it was beautiful. I congratulated him and pointed out that this was a milestone. He was progressing because he had not been able to do that previously. With his usual kindness, he thanked me. I asked him the name of the song and he said, "Swan on a Lake."

Thank you, heavenly Father, for showing your love for us in so many different ways. We pray that we can keep our hearts open so we can hear you. Help us to know you are always there.

Ruth 2:12 "May you be richly rewarded by the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge."

Nancy Massa

For the Church School of Hope

This month the church school classes will be interpreting the *Pentecost Offering* in their classes. Each child will receive a church shaped bank for the families for this offering. The Pentecost Offering is traditionally received on the day of Pentecost (May 31, 2009). It provides a direct way to meet the needs of children at risk, youth, and young adults. Congregations are encouraged to keep 40 percent of the Offering to support ministry with children at risk in their communities. The General Assembly's portion (60 percent) provides leadership development opportunities for Presbyterian youth and young adults and supports children-at-risk programs at the national level. Since 1998, Presbyterians of all ages have raised over \$7 million for these ministries that benefit younger members of God's family. In the past some of you may recall that Andrew, Daniel, Elisabeth and Jean Buckley attended the Presbyterian Youth Triennium at Purdue U. This is an example of leadership development opportunities for youth. We hope to have some of our present youth at Hope consider attending the next Triennium in 2010 at Purdue. We are thankful for the dedicated church school teaching staff at Hope. We are never surprised at the creativity that use to bring the message of Jesus Christ to our children and youth. We are following a great tradition of church school leadership who have served faithfully over the years!

Parents' Night Out has returned to Hope Church. The first night will be on Friday, May 8, 2009 from 6:30 - 9:00 pm. We will gather in the John Calvin Room for a night filled with stories, activities, crafts, and games. This program is for toddlers to pre-teens. All you need to do is call the church by May 6th to let us know that you will be dropping off your child. You do not need to be a member and members you should tell your friends. This program is open to all. We will continue to meet the second Friday of each month so mark your calendars and plan your dates! Please see or call Michelle Mullan (732) 222-9182 if you have any questions or would be interested in helping out with this program.

Christian Education

Beginning on Sunday May 10th we will be having a study based on Philip Yancey's book "The Jesus I Never Knew". It will be a 6 week study (Skipping Memorial Day Weekend Sunday). The study will be hosted at a different house each week and we are looking for six volunteers to host one week of the study. There will be a segment of the study on DVD so we will need access to a TV and DVD player. If you would like to host one of the studies, please contact Carl Fritsche at 732 216-6519 or email me at cfritsche@hotmail.com.

Deacon News

Thank you for making many families **Easter Dinner** tables full and **BLESSED**. We truly appreciate your help in this mission outreach. We take for granted what we need sometimes and we thank you for sharing in your resources and gifts.

CAR Dirty???????????????

Mark your calendars MAY 30th 10-1 to come help support the DEACONS and get your car SQUEKY CLEAN! Please see Fred, John or Jonathan to help on this day.

PLAY BALL!!!!

Our annual BlueClaw outing will be July 20th at the Lakewood First Energy Field. Please contact Tammy Weiss to purchase tickets. It is a great nite out for the whole family.

Prices are \$6.00 for 5-12 or over 60 and \$8.50 for in between. Free under 5.

ALSO KIDS EAT FREE

SPRING FUNDRAISING EVENT



Date: SATURDAY May 16, 2009

Where: Hope Presbyterian Church

Time: 9 AM to 2 PM-refreshments will be served –
Bagels and Coffee \$1.00—Hot Dog \$1.00—Soda/
water \$1.00

There will also be a bake sale--all baked goods can
be dropped off on Friday or Saturday

**We need volunteers for Friday 3-7PM and Sat
7AM - 3PM-**

We will be doing 2 hour shifts and the signup sheet will be
in the Narthex--Please sign up to help-

May Birthdays

- 1 Linda Morgan
- 4 Kathy Heller
- 7 Emma Rivera
- 9 Mary Harris
- 10 Robyn Tibert
- 11 Conor Mullan
- 13 Virginia Lippincott
- 14 Ingrid Boker
- 15 Susan Ellsworth
- 16 Joyce Waldron
- 16 Melba Van Pelt
- 18 David Cotton
- 19 Willie Brown (father)
- 28 Mary Tursi
- 30 George Jones
- 30 Jason Evans