



HILLTOPICS –FEBRUARY 2018

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

MESSAGE FROM OUR PASTOR...

In a recent issue of Christian Century magazine, the Rev. Peter Marty, editor, shares an important truth. He states this truth by way of illustration. He writes,

A parishioner told me recently that her daughter’s family had found the perfect church in Dallas. ‘They don’t go often,’ she said, ‘because the church live streams its services. They can watch it anytime. If the kids are playing in the family room or Mom or Dad are busy pulling brunch together, they can have worship on in the background. It’s really neat. Have you ever heard of this?’

As I read his words, I realized my reaction to “worship on in the background” was pretty much the same as his. One word conveys it: *Ugh*. The conclusion he makes, that “important truth” I referred to, has to do with the very fact that physically getting to church is an inconvenient choice rather than a convenient one. You know I’m right. Let’s be honest here. When we think about what is convenient in life, we think about things like prepared foods you can pick up at the deli counter; ordering what you need online so that all you have to do is hit a key and you will have it at your door in just a few days; watching a movie in the comfort of your own home where you can make your popcorn just the way you like it and even press pause when someone you’ve been waiting to hear from texts you, conveniently, on your cell phone. Experiencing worship, connecting with others in a family of faith, feeling stirred to remember who we are in the depths of our beings, being invited to love our neighbor as ourselves and join with others in figuring out exactly how to do that...none of that is convenient stuff. It takes commitment and dedication and steady resolve and yes, even at times courage. When has any of that been convenient??? Why would we expect that those things having to do with spirituality, faith or service should fit into our personal priorities for ease, comfort and little disruption? All of this is truly food for thought, isn’t it? And, that’s my purpose for bringing it up. Maybe you are like me. I need to be reminded time and time again that a rich and abundant faith-filled life isn’t about my likes and dislikes or my convenience. It’s simply about a rich and abundant faith-filled life.

Faithfully Yours, Barbara

Communion Sunday **The Sacrament of Communion**



February 4th, 2018

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.

UPCOMING “WHAT’S BREWING?” PROGRAMS **11:20AM IN THE SANCTUARY...**

They say laughter is the best medicine but have you ever thought about why? Join us on **February 11th** after the morning service as we watch the DVD presentation **The Science of Laughter** given by Sophie Scott. She is Deputy Director of the University College London’s Institute of Cognitive Neuroscience. Learn all the fascinating reasons why laughter isn’t just important but crucial to our well-being. You will leave with a smile on your face!

On **March 11th**, join us as we learn about **Homefirst** from Karla Spivey, Director of Hillside Family Success Center. Homefirst’s mission is to deliver comprehensive solutions to end homelessness by creating a pathway out of poverty. They provide transitional, supportive and permanent affordable housing, homeless prevention assistance and family support services in the Plainfield area and beyond. We support Homefirst through our outreach budget each year.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper **February 13, 6:00 pm, Fisher Hall**

Please attend our annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday. Invite friends and family to attend! A free will donation will be welcomed. Our Confirmation Class will be hosting!



SOUP SUPPERS AND **CHAPEL SERVICES DURING LENT...**

We are carrying on our wonderful tradition of holding Soup Suppers and Chapel Services during Lent! This year’s theme will be **The Marks of Discipleship**. The suppers and services will be held on **Wednesdays, February 28, March 7, 14, 21**. We will gather at **6:30pm** in Fisher Hall for a simple, tasty meal of homemade soup, bread and dessert. Following the supper there will be a service of prayer, music and reflection in the Chapel from **7:30-8:15pm** (approximately). Of course, you are welcome to come just to the supper or service. You will be nourished by this series in which we enjoy food for the body and soul!

A MESSAGE FROM OUR YOUTH DIRECTOR...

February is one of those winter months that makes us think about summer. I know I do. It’s not only those warming thoughts of sitting on the beach that I think about, but it is the time of year where we think about our summer ministries. The two that we are working on require all of us to chip in and join the team.

Here is what is important to know to keep February warm. First we are working on our VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL! We hold VBS the last week of June and it is truly an “All Hands On Deck” experience. Our first meeting of volunteers will be Feb 25th after the morning service. If you are interested in using your gifts at VBS come here all about this summer’s program!

Second is our SUMMER MISSION TRIP. This year we are doing a multi-generational trip that is open to anyone over the age of 13. That means that whole families might have the opportunity to go as well as seniors who might want to assist with the relief efforts still proceeding from Hurricane Harvey as we travel to Port Arthur, TX Aug 5-11. On Feb 18th after the morning service we will have an informational meeting for all interested participants. You will learn where, what, when, and how much.

Finally, in the not so far off future, we want to invite all of you to participate in our Family Wednesdays during Lent. We will join the whole congregation for our Soup Suppers, followed by a family worship time that will run parallel with our Lenten Chapel Services. Keep an eye on the bulletin for more information as well as our Facebook page ([facebook.com/mywilsonchurch](https://www.facebook.com/mywilsonchurch)). This is an opportunity to help your family learn the journey of Lent in a way that speaks to all ages. Blessings, Michael

A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD PRESIDENT...

Recently I had asked for a prayer from a friend who knew I was going through a rough spot. I had simply mentioned that I needed a prayer of support. Generally, folks reply with saying, “I will mention you in my prayers”, and then that is it. Instead, my friend replied back immediately in the email with a lovely supportive prayer. I felt so blessed, I actually cried. I hadn’t realized that my need, as small as it is, was answered just as if it was a major crisis, and it made me feel grateful that both my friend and God is listening. Even when I felt I couldn’t reach out and ask for God’s strength myself, a fellow Christian helped do that for me. Wow. How awesome is that?

I am now asking for prayers for our church, worship team and church Board for His guidance and strength. We know we have many challenges and changes that we need to face this year, and knowing that we have both God’s guidance and the support of the congregation will help us as we work to strengthen and grow our church, learning always to love one another more. Our church needs you and your prayers. Lorri Monetti

“Prayer is not asking. It is a longing of the soul. It is daily admission of one’s weakness. It is better in prayer to have a heart without words than words without a heart.” — Mahatma Gandhi

BOARD BRIEFS...

1. MINISTER’S REPORT – Barbara reported on the success of the “Shop For Good” sale as well as the Advent Pasta Dinner, with the success of both due to the number of volunteers that helped. Moving the Advent workshop with the kids and their families to Sunday morning was also well received. We will be looking to expand all three events for next December. Barbara spoke of the new Confirmation Class that will begin shortly.

2. Barbara gave a “What’s Brewing?” presentation on “Let’s Talk about Grief”, her recent training, and discussed the group sessions she will be holding in the future.
3. YOUTH AND FAMILY DIRECTOR’S REPORT – Michael spoke about the progress of including the youth in our Sunday services. He thanked those that had stepped up to support him by assisting and taking on some of his responsibilities after breaking his arm. He spoke of the reception of watching the documentary of the Freedom Riders during the Second Sunday meeting, and was impressed by the comments and discussions that resulted.
4. OLD BUSINESS – In effort to create a safer environment to gather, the updated emergency lighting and exit signs have been put in place, as well as the new railing from the upper parking lot. We are looking for assistance on creating procedures for both emergency and medical evacuation. Carolyn Musacchio has offered to help coordinate.
5. The Board is finalizing a better pricing structure for any rental of spaces at the church, to assist when quotes are required, along with setting standards and policies. This should be in place by the beginning of February.
6. NEW BUSINESS - The Board approved the Deidre Seidel to the position of Financial Secretary, to assist in the recording of pledges and offerings

ANNUAL MEETING UPDATE ...

Wilson Memorial held its Annual Meeting on Sunday, Jan. 28. A quorum was present enabling us to conduct the necessary business. All reports were accepted as printed in the Annual Report. The Treasurer’s report showed a positive balance of \$4,318. The budget for 2018 was presented and approved by those present. We renewed our membership in the ICCC and our Covenant with St. Mary’s. Board President Lorri Monetti thanked retiring Board member Bruce Ryno for his six years of service. She also thanked Gwen Mayer who retired as Clerk when she moved and Hugh Woodruff who completed 31 years as Treasurer. Barbara Peters presented Hugh with a framed photo (taken by Paul Ost) of the view of the Chapel from Valley Road to remind him of his church home while he is in New Mexico. New Board members elected at the meeting were Lori Goucher and Sally Reagan and Pam Davis was elected as Treasurer. Jenn Koester volunteered at the meeting to serve as Clerk for the coming year and was enthusiastically elected as well. After the meeting the Board elected Lorri Monetti as President and Cota Possien-Kania as Vice President.

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS...

Feb. 4th We open the next Sunday School session with the story “Walking on Water”. The Sunday School children will hear the story and the teachers will have an art session about the lessons told in the story.

Feb. 11th Second Sunday: Families will gather in the Sanctuary for a “Family Friendly Service”.

Feb. 18th We continue the Bible story and lessons of “Walking on Water” and the teachers will then continue the lesson with Bible skills and games related to the story.

Feb. 25th This session will begin the story of “The Good Samaritan” and the teachers will then have an art session about the lessons told in the story.

We continue to post new pictures each week on the bulletin board outside the Fellowship Hall. They show what the kids have done that day in Sunday School. We are happy to answer any questions you may have regarding the Sunday School.

Sunday School office: (908) 755-5020 (Sunday)
Home: (908) 668-0974 (Monday – Saturday)
Love in Christ, Arlene and Roger Seidel

CHAPEL WEDNESDAYS CONTINUE...

Join Barbara on the first Wednesday of the month (with the exception of March and April) in the Chapel from 7:15-8:00pm. The evening gathering consists of music, a very brief reading or spoken reflection on the theme of the night, a guided meditation and then a period of silence which you are welcome to use for your own private prayer practice. Printed instructions are always available for the practice of Centering Prayer. The dates and themes are as follows: **February 7th**, “Emptying”; **May 2nd**, “Courage”; and **June 6th**, “Rest”.

WOMEN'S GUILD...

The Women's Guild will meet again on Thursday, March 1st at 11:30 am. Bring your own sandwich luncheon following the meeting. Dessert and beverages will be supplied. Michael Droege will present a program at 12:30 pm. All are welcome.

COVENANT COMMITTEE...

The Covenant Committee has met to work on their Annual Unity Service, which will be held, at Wilson Memorial on Sunday, March 11th at 4:00pm. The program, to be held in the Sanctuary will be presented by their talented performer Mike DeParto. Tickets for the dinner ((which will be held in Fisher Fellowship Hall) will be sold in February and March. We are also planning for our Spring Blood Drive which, we hope, will be held on Saturday April 21st. Please plan to be part of each event. Fran Ellis

MARY ANN'S MITTENS...

Our mitten tree collection ran from about December 15th through January 15th. We collected hats, scarves, gloves and mittens in memory of longtime church member Mary Ann Ingram (Lisa Renaud's mom) to distribute between Starfish (children's items) and The Somerset County Homeless Project (Adult items). In partnership with the Ingram Family and employees from Somerset Medical Center (Lisa's sister works in the blood lab there) we collected 244 items. THANK YOU to everyone who participated in this giving project (especially whoever hand knitted and crocheted items).

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. Happy Valentine's Day from all The Frippettes! Stop over to see what's new this month, on our household level we have 1000's of "new" items after our 3 day bag sale, Why pay retail??? Our clothing dept. is selling down winter items at ROCK BOTTOM PRICES and hope to have our Spring and Summer line up around the middle of the month, again,,, Why pay retail???

GRIEF RECOVERY GROUP FORMING...

When you experience loss, people say you have to let go and go on with your life, but they don't tell you how. The Grief Recovery Method Support Group experience teaches you how to recover from loss with supportive guidance every step of the way. Remember, time alone will not heal your broken heart. A Grief Recovery Group will begin in April and will meet once a week for **8 weeks**. To let Barbara know you are interested, or to find out more details, email her at stirlingpeters@verizon.net. The meeting times are as follows: **Tuesday, April 10, 17, 24 and May 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, 7:00-9:00pm.**

STARFISH AND THE FUTURE...

Wilson Memorial's tight bond with Starfish goes back many years, basically to the beginnings of the Starfish Food Pantry in 1971. Over the years we have had many champions for Starfish in our church. I have mentioned in the past, but it warrants mentioning again that we "Wilsonians" (or are we Wilsonites?) contribute over 50% of the funds Starfish receives annually through our individual donations, Outreach, and the Frippery. Also grants from the Memorial Endowment Fund provided much needed new freezers that have helped enormously at the food pantry. Starfish could not exist without Wilson Memorial. While in recent years, I have been the primary conduit between Wilson Memorial and Starfish, that conduit will remain strong even when I am not here in New Jersey. The food that you bring in weekly will get transported to Starfish by Pam and Chip Davis or Cota Possien-Kania. The checks that you donate will be hand-delivered to the new Starfish assistant treasurer by Roberta Smith since both Roberta and Michael Townley are active in the Rotary and see each other weekly. So keep the food and monetary donations coming. Starfish needs you and the needy in Plainfield need Starfish.

Thank you all, Hugh Woodruff



SYMPATHY...

We extend our sympathy to the family of Joan Decker who passed away on January 25th. Joan was a member of Wilson Memorial Church and former member of the Women's Guild. A service was held at Higgins Funeral Home on January 29th.

We also extend our sympathy to Jean Kontra and her family upon the death of her husband, Michael Kontra who passed away on January 27th. Michael was a member of Wilson Memorial Church.



PERSONAL ITEMS...

We continue to pray for those suffering with health problems: Diane Ray, DJ Hunsinger, Joan Baylis, Russ Funk, Howard Beyer, Janet Meeks, Joyce Possien, Ellie Groves, Gladys Andrews, Joy Jurgens, Eva Wehof and Alison Barr.

Check out our website: www.wilsonmemorialchurch.com
Email: wilsonchurch@verizon.net.

February 2018

Wilson Memorial Church Monthly Activities

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3 Frippery 9:30am-12:30pm
4 Worship Service 10am Communion Sunday Boy Scout Sunday Confirmation Class 11:30am-12:30pm AA 8:00pm	5 No Bells Rehearsal	6 Frippery 9:30am-12:30pm Boy Scouts Meeting-Library 7:30pm AA/SA 7:30pm	7 Boy Scouts Meeting-Library 7:30pm Chapel Wednesday 7:15 -8:00pm	8 Frippery 9:30am-12:30pm Yoga 4:30pm AA 7:30pm	9 AA 8:30pm	10
11 Worship Service 10am Family Service "What's Brewing?" 11:20am Confirmation Class 7:00-8:00pm AA 8:00pm	12 Executive Board Meeting 7:30pm Bells 7:30pm	13 Frippery 9:30am-12:30pm Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper 6:00pm Fisher Hall AA/SA 7:30pm	14 Ash Wednesday Chapel Service 7:30pm	15 Frippery 9:30am-12:30pm Yoga 4:30pm AA 7:30pm	16 Men's Breakfast Country Squire 9am AA 8:30pm	17
18 Worship Service 10am GS Meeting 1:30 – 4:pm No Confirmation Class AA 8:00pm	19 President's Day Office Closed No Bells Rehearsal	20 Frippery 9:30am-12:30pm AA/SA 7:30pm	21 Eagle Scout Dinner Fisher Hall	22 Frippery 9:30am-12:30pm Yoga 4:30pm AA 7:30pm	23 AA 8:30pm	24
25 Worship Service 10am Confirmation Class 7:00-8:00pm AA 8:00pm	26 Bells 7:30pm	27 Frippery 9:30am-12:30pm AA/SA 7:30pm	28 Soup Supper & Chapel Service 7:30-8:15pm			