



HILLTOPICS –APRIL 2017

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

MESSAGE FROM OUR PASTOR...

As we look to Easter, I want to remind you that new beginnings are God's "way of life" in us. This is what the poet John O'Donohue describes in a very personal way. I invite you to slowly read his words, and then read them again, and read them again. Savor them. Take them in as if eating a piece of tender, sweet fruit. May they remind you of a hope you may have forgotten, a longing you may have looked past, a dream you have been afraid to acknowledge. Pay attention to the seed of life germinating in you!

For A New Beginning

In out-of-the-way places of the heart,
Where your thoughts never think to wander,
This beginning has been quietly forming,
Waiting until you were ready to emerge.

For a long time it has watched your desire,
Feeling the emptiness growing inside you,
Noticing how you willed yourself on,
Still unable to leave what you had outgrown.

It watched you play with the seduction of safety
And the gray promises that sameness whispered,
Heard the waves of turmoil rise and relent,
Wondered would you always live like this.

Then the delight, when your courage kindled,
And out you stepped onto new ground,
Your eyes young again with energy and dream,
A path of plenitude opening before you.

Though your destination is not yet clear
You can trust the promise of this opening;
Unfurl yourself into the grace of beginning
That is at one with your life's desire.

Awaken your spirit to adventure;
Hold nothing back, learn to find ease in risk;
Soon you will be home in a new rhythm,
For your soul senses the world that awaits you.

-John O'Donohue

On a personal note, thank you for the outpouring of love and support I received after the loss of my mom. The depth of kindness and caring shared by my church family means more than words can say. Thank you from the bottom of my heart!
Faithfully Yours, Barbara

Communion Sunday The Sacrament of Communion Sunday, April 2, 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.

Palm Sunday Breakfast

Please plan now to attend a new fellowship event this year, our Palm Sunday Breakfast, April 9th, 8:30am-9:30am. All are welcome! Invite family and friends! We will also celebrate the service of Confirmation during our morning Worship Service

An Invitation to Our Holy Week Services

April 13th, Maundy Thursday
Communion Service 7:30 pm in the Sanctuary

April 14th, Good Friday
Worship Service 7:30 pm in the Sanctuary

April 16th, Easter Sunday Worship Service 10:00 am
Come and Celebrate This Joyful Day With Us!

A MESSAGE FROM OUR TREASURER...

Through the first three months of 2017, we are holding our own financially. As you all know, it is a struggle to end each year in positive territory and your extra donation in the enclosed Easter Offering envelope will help. Please give what you can. Thank you!

A MESSAGE FROM OUR YOUTH DIRECTOR...

As I write this, I'm sitting at Newark airport waiting for a flight to my hometown, St. Louis, Missouri. Ironically, I'm going for a church ministry conference on intergenerational ministry; how to bring your whole church together to grow together. It's interesting to consider that I am going back to my roots to deepen ours. Our family, the place where we come from, is always that place that lays our foundation in faith or life. I am looking forward to continuing to strengthen our foundation when I get back.

Some of our "root" traditions are coming up very soon. Our Vacation Bible School is planned for June 26-29. The theme is Maker Fun Factory and kids will spend the week exploring how special they are in God's, and our, eyes! We will be signing up kids, and volunteers, in the coming weeks.

Our annual teen mission trip is also planned for July 16-21st. We are heading back to Urban Promise in Camden the same week as our ICCC conference - so you can visit both! Our first parent meeting will be April 9th during our youth group (Second Sunday) at St. Mary's. We invite interested parents to join us at 6:30pm for info before picking up your student. We invite everyone to come out for our Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser on April 23rd (5PM) to kick off our mission trip season!

We are looking forward to another amazing Spring/Summer season as we continue to grow together! Blessings, Michael

A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD PRESIDENT...

Our church has so much to offer to all, and we would love to share not just the Good News but what we can offer our community. We have seminars, special speakers and music, Lenten Soup Suppers, as well as Holy Day services. We have a vibrant church school program that provides a solid Christian education weekly as well as Vacation Bible School. Our older kids have Second Sunday, Mission trip opportunities, and confirmation. Wilson has both Women's Guild and Men's Breakfast Club. We have book discussion groups and "What's Brewing?" We open our doors to non-profit groups to hold their support meetings, to the scouts, as well as neighboring schools to host their special events like kindergarten graduations. We open our church as a safe place to vote. Our Frippery has been a blessing to those in need while offering a place to donate gently used items for resale. Why wouldn't we want to share this? We are looking to bring all this to an updated website. Anyone interested in helping develop this please contact me to join the team.

Many Blessings, Lorri Monetti

BOARD BRIEFS...

1. Barbara thanked Michael and the board for holding down the fort while she was out.
2. The SCREENAGERS showing in Fisher Hall was a great success, with close to a hundred attending. Michael led the group in games prior to the showing, and there was great intergenerational discussion afterward.
3. Our Soup Suppers and Service begin this Wednesday and of course 6:30 pm is the supper and the service will begin at 7:30pm in the Chapel. Barbara hoped that the weather would be good for the first supper since we will have a big snow storm this week. The rest of the schedule is 3/22-Woman's Guild, 3/29-The Executive Board, 4/5 Barbara Diem and friends. The theme for this year is The Power of Forgiveness.
4. For the Sunday Services during Lent, Reverend Barbara will be doing a sermon series on the Stations of the Cross. Yesterday was Jesus and Pilate, Sunday 3/19 will focus on the mocking of Jesus, 3/26 will highlight Simon of Cyrene carrying Jesus' cross, and on 4/2 we will reflect on the weeping of the women of Jerusalem.
5. Doyle and his cooking crew are planning on doing a breakfast before church on Palm Sunday, April 9th. This tradition will not only mark Palm Sunday but the fact that

we will celebrate our six Confirmation students during the service.

6. Michael Droege thanked everyone for their help and support during Barbara's absence. Michael had a finished Lenten poster, which he showed us. He has asked eight families to invite other people to help them complete the posters, which will be displayed during Holy Week. They will be on the wall of the ramp leading to Fisher Hall.
7. Last week we hosted a luncheon for a group from Plainfield as part of reaching out to our communities. They have requested permission to hold the Kindergarten graduation service at our facilities. Michael is looking forward to expanding the intergenerational experiences.
8. Facilities Chairman Anthony Cito said they are working on the basement doors. Also the roofer will be here on Monday 3/20 to look at the Manse garage roof. He is looking into the railings leading to the upper parking lot as there is no way to currently get a good grip on the railings especially for our senior worshipers.
9. Lorri Monetti is looking into a way to darken Fisher Hall to enable us to have program requiring the use of the screens. As of now there is no glare prevention material in place. The use of drapes was not recommended at this time due to cost and maintenance concerns. Lorri to follow-up for next meeting.
10. Covenant Committee - Bruce Ryno reminded us of the joint service on March 26th at 4 PM. Also there will be a Blood Drive on April 1st at the Exempt Firemen's Hall.
11. Membership Committee - Keith McNally reported that ad's will be placed in the Connection and in the Echo for the Easter service.
12. President Lorri requested help with the website. The committee looking into revamping the site will meet Saturday in the library. Meeting is open to all as they are looking for new concepts to keep the site up to date. Also they are looking into being able to offer paying your pledge online and what security factors are available. We may need some professional help with this.

NEW BOOK GROUP BEGINS IN MAY ...

If you have ever wondered, "Why am I the way I am?" or "Why is my family member/friend/coworker the way they are?", this new book group is just for you! Please join us as we delve into a fascinating way of understanding our personalities and the direction we can grow personally and spiritually. We will be reading and discussing ***The Road Back to You*** by Ian Morgan Cron and Suzanne Stabile. This book is based on a contemporary understanding of a very ancient tool call the Enneagram. As the summary of the book states, "the Enneagram's uncanny accuracy in describing how human beings are wired, both positively and negatively, has spiked its popularity in recent years... ***The Road Back to You*** is rooted in this approach to formation, which Thomas Merton described as the one challenge on which all of life rests: to discover our true selves in discovering God, and to find more of God in finding our true selves." Discussing this book will be an amazing adventure in both self discovery and understanding others with compassion.

The Road Back to You book group will meet Tuesday evenings: **May 2nd, 16th, 30th, June 6th, June 20th at 7:00pm.** Please let Barbara know if you are interested! The gatherings will take place either in homes or at the church. **The Road Back to You** can be purchased from any major bookseller.

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS...

The Sunday School classes start with the weekly music sessions with Jim Musacchio. The students then hear a story told by a volunteer from the congregation. They then go to their classrooms to participate in the activity planned for that day related to the story.

April 2nd This is the 3rd session on the story and lessons of "Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday". The teachers will have a computer lab class to continue the lessons in the story.

April 9th Palm Sunday The Sunday School classes will have a story of "Palm Sunday" and the children will participate in the church service by handing out the palms during the worship service on Palm Sunday.

April 16th Easter Sunday There will be no Sunday School classes on Easter Sunday so that the entire congregation may join together in worship.

April 23rd We begin the next Sunday School session with the story "The Lord is my Shepherd". The Sunday School children will hear the story and the teachers will have a Bible skills and games session about the lesson.

April 30th We continue with the story "The Lord is my Shepherd" and the Sunday School classes will have an art lesson related to the story.

Would you like to read the story to the children in Sunday School? There are only a few more Sundays left to sign up!! Check the table outside the Fellowship Hall for the stories dates and sign up sheet! Have you looked at the pictures that are also posted each week on the bulletin board outside the Fellowship Hall? They show what the kids have done that day in Sunday School.

We encourage the children to bring the following to Sunday School each week:

1. Their Bible
2. Offering – (the Sunday School offering is used towards supplies and the Sunday School curriculum for all classes.
3. Food for Starfish! (We have a container under the hallway "payphone" to collect food each week).

We always appreciate if parents are able to offer a little additional help in the Sunday School as a team teacher, substitute or helper. We would be 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

COVENANT COMMITTEE

The Covenant Committee hopes all who attended their Annual Unity service on March 26th enjoyed the music of our Wilson Bell Choir and from Saint Mary's, the talented Roseann Sicola and Peter D'Angelo. The dinner to follow was a wonderful way to share a meal with our Covenant Church.

Saturday, April 1st our Spring Blood Drive will be held in the Watchung Firemen's Exempt Hall from 8:00am to 2:00pm. Please remember that walk-ins are always welcome and that there is an ever present need for all types of blood. In NJ only about 2% of the eligible residents donate blood. We look forward to seeing you there.

WOMEN'S GUILD

The Women's Guild will meet on Thursday, April 6th, from 11:30am-1:30pm. The meeting will be followed by bring your own sandwich luncheon. Desserts and beverage provided. The program will begin at 12:30. *Michael Droege will be sharing his thesis work and how important each and every generation is to the health and growth of a congregation.* All are welcome.

THE FRIPPERY THRIFT SHOP...

The yellow house in the top parking lot is open Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30am-12:30pm and first Saturday of the month, April 1st, also 9:30am-12:30pm.

Mark your calendars for Saturday, April 1st. The Fripp will be open for your shopping pleasure! We have a huge selection of Easter items for your home. WHY PAY RETAIL???? Our spring and summer clothing is also out, MOST items just \$4.00! So "HOP on OVER" and see what has your name on it.

Happy Easter, from all the Frippery volunteers

STARFISH...

During the next few weeks PLEASE pick up an item or two that can be added to an Easter meal for someone less fortunate. PLEASE*PLEASE*PLEASE take advantage of all the free boxes of MATZO from ShopRite and other local stores, these make great cracker additions to our weekly meals for families.

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS...

We love our pets! Mark you calendars now for this year's **Blessing of the Animals Service.** It will be on **Sunday, May 21st, at 1:30pm.** If you don't have a live pet, stuffed "pets" are welcome! Please help us get the word about to pet lovers everywhere. This is a wonderful way to celebrate all of God's creatures. Won't you join us on the front lawn of the church? In case of rain, we will hold our **Blessing of the Animals** in the church narthex.

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.iccnw.org.

Roberta Smith, Ecumenical Committee and Board Member of ICCC

NEW MEMBERS WELCOMED...

On Sunday, January 29th, a new member joined our congregation. We officially welcomed Robert Balcerski into membership.



SYMPATHY

We extend our sympathy to the family of LaVonne Lundell, Barbara Peters' mother, who passed away on March 1st. A service was held in Tennessee.

We also extend our sympathy to the family of John Andrews who passed away on March 9th. A service was held at Wilson Memorial Church on March 13th.



PERSONAL ITEMS...

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

Easter Lily Order Form



Please put your order with payment in the offering or send it to the Church Office by April 10th. They can be taken home after the Easter Service. You may choose it to be in memory of or in honor of a loved one.

A Booklet will be included in the Easter Bulletin listing all of those remembered.

Donor (s)

In Loving Memory Of:

In Honor Of:

Enclosed is \$7.00 per plant ___ Cash ___ Check ___

Please make check payable to:
Wilson Memorial Church

*Wilson Memorial Church
7 Valley Road
Watchung, New Jersey 07069*

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Check out our website: www.wilsonmemorialchurch.com

Email: wilsonchurch@verizon.net