

PVEC Happenings



Panther Valley Ecumenical Church Official Newsletter

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August 2009

Welcome Pastor David Wright



On August 16th, we welcomed our new Pastor David Wright to PVEC. His first official day as our pastor was

very well received by our congregation and we look forward to the exciting new ideas he will bring to our church.

If you haven't had the chance to meet David, here is a little bit about our new leader:

David was born in Schaghticoke, NY but grew up in Langhorne, PA where his father served for 23 years as the pastor of the Langhorne Presbyterian Church. Suspending her career as a therapist, his mother joined his father as mission partners through

the Presbyterian Church (USA) to be regional liaisons to Southeastern Africa. They have lived in Lusaka, Zambia since 2005 and their ministry includes service with mission partners in Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, and Mozambique. David has one sister, Bethany Ides, who is 30, married to Joseph Bradshaw, and who teaches performance art at Pacific Northwest University of the Arts in Portland, OR.

David is a 2000 graduate of George School, a 2004 graduate of Amherst College with a B. A. in Classics and Religious Studies, and a 2009 M. Div. Graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary.

His career background is in Christian camping and social services, particularly working with adolescents with behavioral health needs.

He enjoys playing softball, cheering on the Philadelphia

Phillies, running, spending time with kids of all ages, and popular music. His favorite recording artists are Bruce Springsteen, Neil Young, U2, Pearl Jam, and Bob Dylan. His favorite places to visit include the ballpark, New Hampshire, the Jersey Shore, and Kirkwood, the Presbyterian summer camp where he still volunteers.

David's favorite Christian author is Anne Lamott. Other favorite authors include James Joyce and Richard Brautigan.

His has a passion for youth ministry, preaching, hospital and elder home visitation, and accessibility to persons with disabilities.

David is looking forward to personally meeting many members of the congregation one-on-one in the coming months, and welcomes them to come by his office, invite him to their home, or arrange a time to meet and share stories together.

A Big Thank You from Maxine

My many friends at Panther Valley Ecumenical Church have made me feel very special during my present illness. Your cards, letters and phone calls have gone a long way to help-

ing the healing of my pelvis pass. I'm hoping it won't be too long before I can be back with you to join in welcoming our new minister.

-Maxine Romig Volger



GETTING SETTLED

It has been a very unsettling couple of years here at Panther Valley Ecumenical Church. You all are the survivors. You've weathered out the storms of having many different faces in the pulpit, the arduous search process for your new pastor, and have had to shoulder most of the responsibility of caring for the church in a pastor's absence.

I could feel the tension in the room as you all considered me for the role of your next pastor. The stakes were high. You all want this church to succeed for the sake of yourselves and your community. You wanted to make the right choice.

You had a fantastic leader in Chip Sanders as your interim pastor. Chip graciously prepared the way for calling a new pastor, identifying his role to the congregation with John the Baptist – the one who prepares the way for the next leader who is to come. Chip was especially gracious and supportive to me in the transition with my coming on to fill his role—not an easy task, but one he embraced out of his love for all of you.

In contrast to Chip, as your new

called pastor it is *exactly* my job now to get settled here at the church and in our community. My immediate priority is to get to know all of you, to hear your stories, and to understand better what PVEC means to you. It's also important to my job that I take root in our community, which is why I made it a priority to relocate and live nearer to the church. Additionally, I have been working on establishing relationships with the other churches and local businesses in our area.

There is twisted irony in all of this though. You're all so used to having to do it yourselves that there may be some growing pains in making space for me as your new pastor in the church. So far I have received nothing but the warmest of welcomes from all of you. Every day I am here is an occasion for joy to thank God for bringing me to you. But I also know there is a great amount of letting go involved in letting me do my job since you all have been so intentional in being stewards to the church's future.

The greatest way you can support me, as your new pastor, is simply to share yourselves with me. I promise I

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-Pastor David Wright

have no agenda to change those things you love about our church. Come by my office whenever you'd like, and make yourself comfortable! The door is always open and I am never too busy to talk. Let me know when you would like me come to your home or go out together so that we can talk about what's on your mind and where you would like to see the church go. Listening more than doing is more the task at hand of this first season in our life together, so may I be a creature of good ears to all of you. My email is david@pvem.net and my phone number is 215-307-6661.

And together may we always be open to listening to where Holy Spirit is calling us next.

- David Wright, Pastor

~Quote Of The Month~

"If God is your co-pilot, swap seats!"

PVEC Blood Drive Donors Needed!

As part of our service to the community, PVEC will host a Blood Drive on Sept. 24th from 4-7:30pm. This is an effort to help refill a diminishing blood supply for our local area. **In order for this event to proceed, we**

must have at least 20 donor volunteers. We currently have 17 people signed up and are hoping to fill the remainder of appointment times by the first week in September. If you are willing to contribute, please sign up on the sheet located in Fellowship Hall, or call Erika in the office as soon as possible. If you are not sure if

you are eligible to donate blood, please call Millers at 1-800-223-6667 to find out.

Millers-Keystone Blood Center is the sole provider of blood for Hackettstown Hospital as well as a number of other local hospitals. You can feel good that your donation goes directly back to your local community.

CHURCH COUNCIL NEWS

Christian Outreach

By Kathy Zinckgraf

We are having another busy month giving food out from the Lord's Pantry. Please continue to support this important mission by donating food and/or ShopRite gift certificates (for sale during Coffee Hour). We could use donations of the following items:

- tuna fish
- peanut butter/jelly
- pancake mix/syrup
- soup
- tea/coffee

Thank you for all of your help!

Church School News

By Betty Schultheis

Rally Day will be Sunday, September 13th. We will begin the Church School year with our customary "pancake brunch" follow-

ing the church service on that day. The entire congregation is invited to participate in this annual event.

We are pleased to announce that the Nursery will once again be available during Sunday morning services. Beginning Sunday, September 6, Miss Christina Medina a student at Sussex Community College will be available to care for the younger set, age's infant to two years. The three year olds and older may participate in Church School.

This is going to be an exciting year. We will be including a wide variety of activities in our Church School learning. In addition to our usual Bible story and a Bible craft activity the children will be acting out some of the stories utilizing costumes and sometimes making a food treat that was en-

joyed in Bible times.

We are always looking for interested adults or teens to assist with Church School activities. If you are interested in assisting, please call me at 908-850-0179 or see me during coffee hour.

Support Services Commission

By Ron Reece

The building and grounds committee has been conferring almost weekly to check on conditions of the property. We have found a few things that need to be addressed and will report on the progress in next months' Happenings. Meanwhile, Regional Oil will be in to replace our furnace on August 31 and possibly finishing on September 1.

Playground Time!

If you've looked in our backyard throughout the summer, you may have noticed that little, by little, our playground has been looking better and better. First, was the daunting task of removing the jungle of weeds that had collected, and then 2 separate batches of mulch were ordered and spread. The damaged tarp has been removed and we are looking for an affordable way to replace it in the near future.

Help Support Claudia's Fund

Claudia Smith is a brave 6-year old neighbor who was diagnosed with a brain tumor.

Her family is in great financial need with medical bill piling up and lengthy treatments which prohibit them from working on a regular basis.

On September 19th, there will be a giant community yard sale fundraiser held at PVEC. The \$30 to purchase a table to sell your unwanted items goes directly to Claudia's family. You keep whatever you make.

For more info. or to purchase a table, please call Elizabeth Payne at 852-0060

Mark Your Calendars!

PVEC Fall Rummage & Bake Sale will be October 16 and 17

PVEC 40th Anniversary Celebration- Sun. Nov. 22

Happenings Deadline

Please submit all articles by the 15th of the month for timely publication. All articles received after that date will be published in the newsletter for the following month.

Submit articles to Erika in the church office or to office@pvem.net Thank you!

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*“In our diversity we find common ground
in Christ”*

*Visit us on the
web at pvem.net*



Sliding to Slidell:

By Ron Reece

Bob and Kathy Zinckgraf joined 53 fellow mission team members from two churches in Pennsylvania for a week long trip to Slidell, LA to help in the ongoing Katrina reconstruction. It was a wonderful week of hard work and spiritual growth. They stayed at Aldersgate United Methodist Church where the Northshore Disaster Recovery Center is headquartered.

Each morning they rose at 6:00AM to have breakfast, pack their lunches and have devotions. They then went to worksites and

worked until 4-5PM. Bob was co-leader of a group that replaced a damaged roof with a new one. Kathy worked on a sheet-rocking job and a roof job. Other crews worked on sheet-rocking and insulation jobs.

The families were very grateful for the help they received and repaid the workers with delicious southern cooking! Midweek they took the afternoon off and toured New Orleans. It was unbelievable to see the devastation that still exists there. The rebuilding is a very slow process and is expected to take up to 11 years to complete. Most of the work is being done by volun-

teer groups like the one in which Bob and Kathy participated.



Bob Installing new roof with fellow crew members



The Ninth Ward of New Orleans