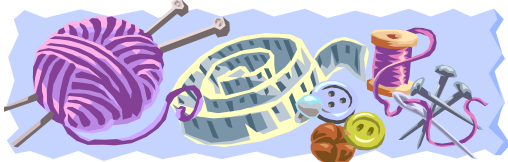




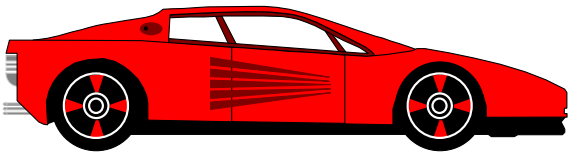
We Need Your Donation

by Betty Schultheis



A hand-knit sweater or afghan would make a fabulous donation for our PVEM Auction 2006.

Baby-sitting for a mutually agreed upon Saturday evening so parents can have a night on the town, is another wonderful donation.



Chauffeuring someone to Newark International to catch their flight on a mutually agreed-upon date is another good contribution.

Plug-in your imaginations, be creative, and come up with a unique service you can offer, or a talent or skill you can put to work producing a craft item,

Auction

Continued on pg 2 column 1

IN THIS ISSUE

- 1) We Need Your Donation; Who Are We?
- 2) continued from first page
- 3) 2005 – 2006 Church School Teaching Needs; Eighth Grade Formal
- 4) Youth Sunday Service
- 5) Supermarket gift card update; Coffee Hour Schedule; Worship Enhancing Accessories
- 6) From the Pastor
- 7) Open Forum
- 8) Public Relations Task Force

Who Are We?

Our congregation took the U.S. Congregational Survey in March of this year. Over 300,000 members of 200,000 congregations, worldwide have taken this survey since 2001.

Background

We took the survey to provide us with three types of information:

- ◆ Demographic information about our congregation
- ◆ What we like about our current mode of worship and the activities our church sponsors
- ◆ What do we as a congregation have as a "vision" for our church

Feedback

Now it's "feedback" time. The Stewardship and Communications Commission wants to **communicate** to you the results of the survey.

1. A copy has been posted in the Worship Commission section of the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall.
2. All Council members and Commission chairs have received a copy.
3. A 23-minute video regarding the survey will be playing in Fellowship Hall the next several Sundays during coffee hour.
4. We are seeking a volunteer task-force to design our path forward...in other words how do we use this information to further our collective vision for the church.

Survey

continued on page 2 column 2

article of clothing, or piece of artwork you can donate.

The Auction Planning Committee will be manning a table in Fellowship Hall during coffee hour for the next month and we expect you to drop by and fill out an "Auction Item Commitment " form.

Over 1,000 items were donated for our auction in 1988...and we're hoping to exceed that number for our 2006 auction, and to date we have two.

There will be advertisements in our auction program and you are encouraged to take a contract to sign-up your business for an ad. Congregation members may want to purchase a "Booster Ad" for \$10.

If you don't know what to donate, stop by our table and we will show you the previous Auction Program for some ideas.

The date of the Auction is Saturday, May 20, 2006. Our goal is to raise \$20-\$25,000 for projects within the church. About half of the funds will go toward establishing the Memorial Garden. Funding the benevolences and providing funds for the work of Commissions will comprise the rest.

This is a wonderful opportunity to work together, have fun and participate in making the Memorial Garden a reality instead of a dream, providing the benevolences to our founding denominations, and promoting the work of our Commissions.

See you Sunday during coffee hour, we have the forms and pens...we need your donation!

The real art of conversation is not only to say the right thing at the right time, but also to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment.

Please Honor the Happenings Deadline

Please submit all articles by the 15th of the month for timely publication. It takes time to build the newsletter; however, if for some reason you don't have the information for the article that you know you will need space for, just let us know so we can reserve the space. We realize that sometimes events create the need for a last minute addition, so we will try to be understanding. Otherwise, any late submissions will be in the following issue. Thank you

According to the U.S. Congregational Survey folks we should have a six-member task force from the congregation comprised of two persons under age 40, two persons over age 40, two persons who have joined the congregation within the past three years, and the minister.

The task force will meet for one hour only, for seven consecutive weeks, so it is a defined seven-hour job.

Volunteer

This step is extremely important and should be an exciting task force in which to participate. Those who are interested in participating in the task force should contact Rev. Howson or Betty Schultheis.

Of Interest

According to the survey:

"How long have you been going to worship services or activities at this congregation?"

- 10% less than 1 year
- 8% 1-2 years
- 19% 3-5 years
- 14% 6-10 years
- 27% 11-20 years
- 22% more than 20 years

"Before you started coming here, what type of congregation did you attend?"

- 1% Assembly of God
- 3% Baptist
- 10% Catholic
- 1% Episcopal
- 6% Lutheran
- 26% Methodist
- 1% Non-denominational
- 30% Presbyterian
- 10% U C C
- 5% Other
- 5% didn't attend before

2005-2006 Church School Teaching Needs. . .

Work in progress.

During this year, the Church School has worked hard to continue providing educational fun filled lessons for the children of this church. Some of the topics we studied were The Lord's Prayer, Abraham & Sarah, The Easter story, the baptism of Jesus, Pentecost and Psalm 23. We have continued to use many of the methods for teaching used in the past several years. We included cooking experiences, movie clips, drama experiences, crafts, stories and games in our lessons.

Many adults participated in preparing lessons, and teaching each Sunday. To all of our volunteers we say thank you, without adult volunteers it is impossible to fulfill the promises we all made at baptisms to raise our children in the ways of the Lord . . .

We are already working on plans for next year's Church School. Educating our young people is one of the biggest responsibilities that God has entrusted to our church. We have a Leadership team of 3, to prepare lessons, special programs, and attend to as many needs of the Church School as possible. If you are a former Church School superintendent you know that there is plenty of behind the scene work to share among 3 leaders.

Now is the time for the congregation to listen to their hearts and pray that we will find 9 talented people to step forward and be the teachers for next year. Why do we need 9 teacher volunteers, you may ask? Our goal is to have 3 age level classes and a 3 year old class.

The 3 team leaders will each spend 1/3 of the Sundays working in the Church school. They will take attendance and be available for any other needs that pop up unexpectedly during class time. For 15 minutes each week, the 3 year olds will have a lesson as part of the nursery care program. The leadership team will assume responsibility for this class too.

In order to provide continuity to our students we are planning a team of 3 adults to work with each of the 3 grade level classes. Each person would teach 1/3 of the year. The team of 3 would decide how they want to divide the Sundays to best fit their schedules. As we

have done for the last few months, lessons would be planned and all materials ready to go for the lesson. The teacher's responsibility would be to pick up a copy of the lesson plan one week ahead of time, read it over carefully, call Amy at church if any questions arise, and be at the church by 9:30 a.m. on Sunday morning.

It is a very invigorating experience to work with our youth and watch them grow in God's love through the year. The fulfillment of our church's baptismal promise is very important. We hope that 9 people will feel they are called to serve God as teachers.

Please call Amy at the church if you have any questions or would like to join in the rewarding job of educating our youth.

Eighth Grade Formal

This is a photo that was taken at the 8th grade formal of Green Hills School. PVEM allowed them to have the dance there because their gym was under construction.



Kids left to right...Katie Robinson, Ashley Testa, Patrick Brusci & Patrick Wilson

Katie, Ashley, Pat & Pat want to thank PVEM for hosting their 8th grade dance.

Fellowship Hall was transformed into a Mardi Gras theme. It was breathtaking. The kids were totally amazed and surprised.

Youth Sunday Services



On June 12, 2005, we had a very successful Youth Sunday Service. This was the second annual Youth Sunday here at PVEM and our youth did a wonderful job.

Pictured above left are some of the youth at the beginning of the service. Above right is a presentation by the Sunday School classes as they showed the congregation some of the things they had learned over the past year.

The photo on the bottom left is some of the teachers that were part of last year's program. Left to right they are, Betty Schultheis, Barbara Rigo, Lauren Wittig, Rick Wilson, Lynn Jurena, Dave Robinson, Diane Wilson, Lisa Blake, Nadine Robinson, Elizabeth Pflugfelder, Melissa Billington and recognizing the teachers is Ella Yager. There were of course other teachers not pictured here.

We hope that everyone is looking forward to the youth program next year. The date will be announced in the Spring.

Pictured above left to right are Rev. Dr. Mary Lou Howson, Chelsea Demark, James Blake (standing), Elizabeth Pflugfelder and Melissa Billington as they delivered the message for the day. To the left are Amy Testa, Melissa Billington, Rev. Dr. Mary Lou Howson and Lisa Zinn, as Melissa and Lisa are recognized for graduating from High School.



Supermarket Gift Card Update

Congratulations to YOU, our supermarket gift card buyers!

As you know from regular announcements, the gift card program is doing very well. For the first six-months of the year we have sold \$35,320 worth of cards, that is a 68% increase from 2004. At the current rate of purchasing we are on target to sell \$70,640 where the church will realize a profit of \$3,532. The proceeds from the supermarket program are a line item in our budget each year, so the more we sell various programs and expenditures can benefit by it. (Ex. Benevolences, Christian Outreach, missions, etc.)

Can we sell \$100,000 or more? Yes, but we need your help in doing so...SPREAD THE WORD to your friends, neighbors, relatives, co-workers, etc. It doesn't cost you any additional money for groceries and the church makes 5% for every dollar you spend. Stores participating in the program are: Shop-Rite, A&P and Weis Markets The gift cards are available, before and after worship and you can call the church office during the week to get them as well.

If you do not participate in this program, please speak to one of the committee members and tell them why? Your feedback is important to us.

Committee members:

Millard Branch, Helen & Don Guelich, Ralph Mitchell, Irene & Bob Lobell, Rick Wilson and Dennis Dawley.

Thank you for your continuing support!

Denominational Relations group mentioned in Pastor's article on page six.



Back row: Bill Saun, PCUSA; Galen Goodwin, UMC; Glenn Stevenson of PVEM
Front row: Sherry Taylor, UCC; Mary Lou Howson of PVEM; Carter Echols, EC



Coffee Hour

In case you've ever wondered how all of those wonderful cookies, brownies, bagels, etc. appear like magic on the tables in Fellowship Hall every Sunday morning after Worship Service. It's because the "Master Scheduler" (for 2005, it's Penny Newell) has contacted the various Commissions and Denominational Groups to host coffee hour and bring the goodies.

The Calendar for 2005:

- July Choir
- August Pastoral Care Comm.
- Sept. Christian Outreach
- October Presbyterian
- Nov. United Church of Christ
- Dec. Growth & Fellowship

Worship Enhancing Accessories

Do you need longer arms in order to read the church bulletin, pew Bible or Hymnal? Do you wish the announcements were louder? If the answer to any of these questions is yes, you need to utilize the items placed on the "Worship Enhancing Accessories" table on the left in the narthex.

You will find large print bulletins, pew Bibles, and Hymnals there as well as hearing aids.

Anyone needing a wheelchair during Worship Service should contact an usher as there is one available.

Our natures are a lot like oil,
mix us with anything else, and
we strive to swim on top.



FROM THE PASTOR

With the conclusion of Church School and Youth Sunday and the all-church picnic, I think that I have now participated at least once in all the highlights of church life. It has been a good year and I thank you for your warm welcome and support. As you prepare for vacations, please take with you the knowledge that life at the church continues to be vibrant and active even while you are away.

As we begin our second year together, there are many new opportunities on the horizon. The Stewardship and Communication Commission has initiated a Public Relations Taskforce to work on increasing our visibility in the community. They seek to develop effective advertising, and to design and create new brochures about the church. The process includes identifying a way to communicate clearly to the community who we are in 3 sentences or less. We are well aware of the new growth that is planned for Panther Valley and Allamuchy Township in the next few years. We want to be ready for it.

The Church Growth and Fellowship Commission has also begun a Church Growth task force headed by Jane and Bob Nichols to identify, explore, and implement more effective ways of inviting and welcoming visitors to the church.

Denominational Relations

We had a wonderful meeting with officials from our four founding denominations on June 20. Glenn Stevenson who is chair of Council and I met with Canon Carter Echols from the Episcopal Diocese of Newark, the Rev. Galen Goodwin, district superintendent of the Skylands District of the United Methodist Church, the Rev. Bill Saum, executive presbyter of the Newton Presbytery of

the Presbyterian Church, USA, and the Rev. Sherry Taylor, association minister of the New Jersey Association of the United Church of Christ. They all requested that I convey to you their desire to provide active support and resources to our congregation. We talked of many ways of nurturing these relationships. Although we agreed that our connections would have to grow and evolve, they offered us several immediate and specific opportunities.

- 1) Invitations to workshops and programs that included anyone in our congregation who wished to attend, regardless of their denominational affiliation.

- 2) Staff who will come 2 - 3 times a year to lead panel discussions on various issues and topics of our choice.

- 3) Their willingness to preach and lead worship on Sunday mornings.

- 4) On Sunday, January 15, 2006, the beginning of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity they will all join us for morning worship.. They will then stay for lunch and discussion and dialogue on topics of our choice. Then in mid to late afternoon they will participate in an area-wide worship service to celebrate the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Mark the date on your calendars now. It promises to be a day filled with rich blessings for all of us.

Church Survey

Also within the past several days the results of the church survey have been returned. You will read about these results in more detail elsewhere in Happenings. Following their guidelines, we are pulling together a task force to study the results and make recommendations for further action to the Council and the congregation. We hope to begin these meetings in August or September. It will take us 7 weeks to complete the process of interpretation, analysis, and recommendations. Thus we look forward to planning for new initiatives and growth in the fall.

Open Forum

Volunteer to help with Haven of Hope for Kids Sponsored by St. Luke's Episcopal Church Hope, NJ

This summer St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Hope will be running a ten week pilot program for families from Newark, Morris and Union Counties who have a child with a life-threatening illness, such as cancer or sickle cell anemia. The families will be staying in a newly refurbished cottage owned by the church and will spend a week enjoying life in the country. The program will run from June 25- September 1, with families arriving on a Saturday and leaving on a Thursday. Our goal is to give these children and their families a respite from the stress and anxiety they live with and the chance to relax and be together away from the usual routines. The children will be in stable medical condition, either having finished treatment or between treatments, and therefore they will not require special care or have special limitations on their activities.

Volunteers are needed to extend hospitality to these children and their families. We welcome volunteers of all ages!

Suggested activities are:

- host a welcome barbeque
- teach a child to fish or ride or raft or swim
- share an excursion
- take a family shopping

We need the help of all of you to make this program a success!

For more information please call the church office (908) 852-5444.

****We would also be grateful for contributions of children's books and games, new or used (in good condition). You can drop these off at the church office.**

2-1-1

First call for help. There are times when you might need help that doesn't come under the nature of 9-1-1 -- times when you can't cope with the problems you are faced with and there doesn't seem to be an answer. Warren County does have a help line that can help during those small emergencies.

Just pick up the phone and dial 2-1-1 and you will find help.

Warren County, along with five other counties in the state of New Jersey, has adopted the 2-1-1 information line. This number doesn't replace the 9-1-1 emergency number but, when you need information, 2-1-1 is the number to call.

Information is available for: Housing, Utility Assistance, Food Programs, Legal Assistance, Emergency Services, Volunteer Opportunities, Counseling, Education, Employment, Holiday Assistance, Child Care, And much, much more.



Letters to the Editor

Happenings is always looking for informative articles or just letters about your point of view. We would like to hear from you, often.

Wisdom From Grandma

If a man has enough horse sense to treat his wife like a thoroughbred, she will never turn into an old nag.

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Dave Robinson, Maxine Romig Volger, Betty Schultheis, Ron Reece, Glenn Stevenson and John Pfugfelder, Sr.

The Open Forum is for all members to voice their opinions and ideas.

All commissions, committees and members are invited to submit articles and photos.

2, 4, 6, 8, Everyone Participate

On July 10th the Public Relations task force will be requesting your input as we continue to define the church's mission so that we can promote church activities and events, spread church news to young and old, and attract new members.

How does this sound to you?

As faithful followers of Christ we welcome and honor all people by:

Participating in each other's religious traditions,

Valuing our God-given diverse gifts,

Embracing all who enter, and

Ministering together in our community

"that we may all be one".

If you would like to talk about the task force's work, our members would be happy to listen. We are: Dave Robinson, chair; John Jurena, Laurie Krauss, Betty Schultheis, Maxine Romig Volger.

