



Happenings

“EASTER PEOPLE” and “DIG INTO THE BIBLE”

Come and see our bulletin board in Fellowship Hall. The next rotation starts March 14th and obviously that will be the “Easter People.” This will tell the story about the sacrifice Jesus made for us. The children will learn about good vs. evil; suffering and joy. Their awareness will be raised on how changed the disciples were after the resurrection from fear to strength, belief, and the ability to do the work God planned for them. Reminding us on how changed we too can be. We have a new sign up sheet for the next two rotations.



Bible.” The bible is the inspired word of God. God helped the storytellers keep the stories of the bible alive for hundreds of years. God inspired people to write down their stories and teachings.

The children will learn how to find specific bible verses, learn the books of the bible and learn that the bible offers us a guide for our daily living.



Please check out the bulletin board and volunteer to teach the children. If you have any questions, please contact Colleen Newton or the Church office. Thank you!

On May 2nd the children will “Dig into the

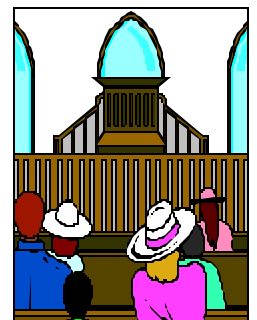
Search Committee Recommends Candidating Service!

The Search Committee is pleased to recommend a consensus Candidate for the Minister of PVEM to lead us in a service on March 21. After reviewing many, many profiles, the committee has selected the Rev. Dr. Mary Louise Howson to come and meet the congregation at a reception on the afternoon of March 20 and then to conduct a Candidating service on Sunday.

You will learn much more about Rev. Howson in a letter next week from the Council, calling for a special Congregational Meeting after the Service to vote on her acceptance for the position of Minister of PVEM.

Mary Lou has demonstrated her abilities, leadership and compassion to all members of the Search Committee and spouses who have met her. Her experience is broad in ecumenical activities, and we want to make her feel welcome by your attendance and support.

This is an important crossroad in the success of our congregation’s future, and we all want to be part of it’s continuing faith and service.



ADULT BIBLE EDUCATION

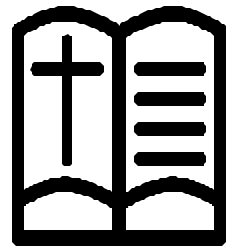
On Sunday March 14th at 9:00 AM in the Church Library, a series n “Remembering Un-named Women in Scripture” will be started. Our first lesson will be “A Daughters Compassion” followed by:

- March 21—”A Daughter Remembered”
- March 28—” A Leaders Intervention”
- April 18—”A Widow’s Might”
- April 25—”A Woman’s Healing”
- May 2—”An Outsiders Challenge’
- May 9—”A Sinners Witness

- May 16—”Our Foremother’s Legacy”
- May 23—”An Apostle’s Anonymity”

In a time when women were treated as property, come and learn of the women of courage who acted against the society of their day, using their faith, their spiritual experiences and their relation with God.

Come, have a cup of coffee, and join in the discussion led by Bob Nichols.



Lenten Bible Study with our six Cluster Groups

The Cluster of Six Presbyterian Churches are co-sponsoring a Lenten-Spring Adult Bible Study video and discussion series “Faith Lessons on the Last Week of Jesus’ Life, His Death and Resurrection” and the ‘Holy Spirit’s Visit” at Pentecost.

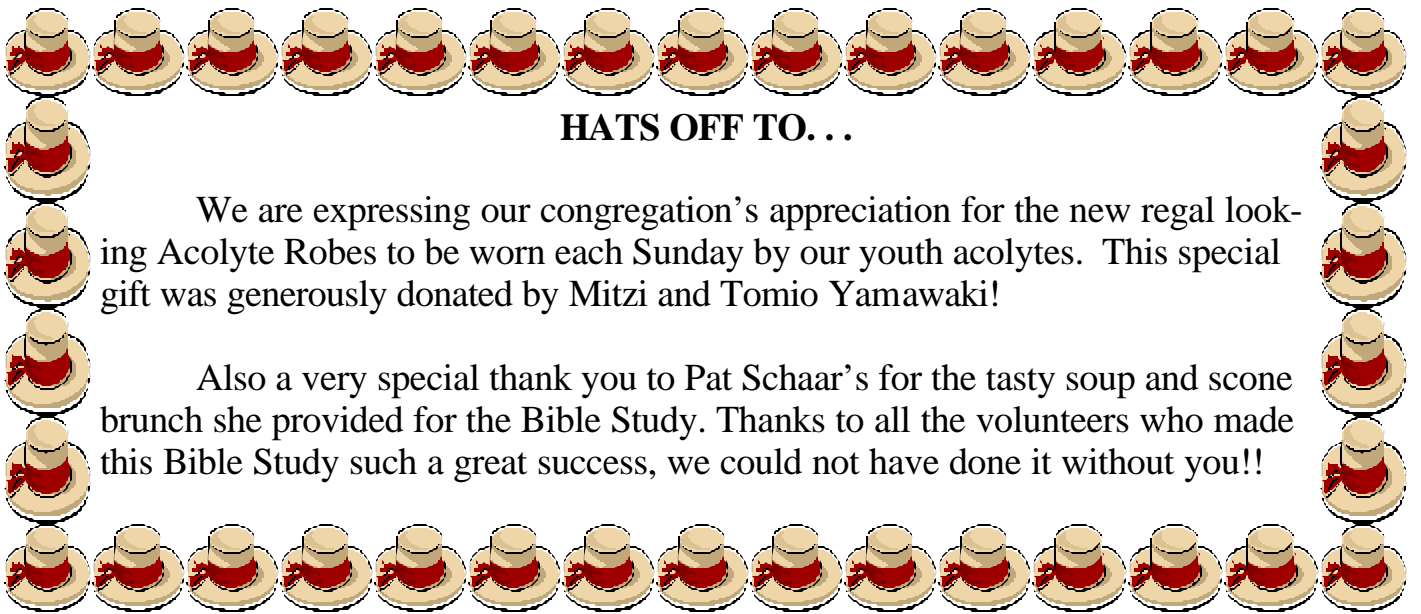
The group will meet on Wednesday evenings, March 3,10,17,24,31 and April 21 & 28 from 7:30 pm—9:00 pm. The first session (march 3) will meet at the First Presbyterian Church in Hackettstown; then we will meet on successive Wednesdays at each of the other sponsoring churches. The schedule will go as follows:

- March 3- “When Storms Come” @ 1st Presbyterian in Hackettstown.
- March 10—”Piercing the Darkness” @ Schooley’s Mountain Pres.
- March 17 -”Gates of Hell” @ Beattystown

Pres.

- March 24—”City of the Great King, I” @ Rockport Pres
- March 31—”City of the Great King, II” @ Panther Valley Ecumenical Ministry
- April 21—”The Lamb of God” @ 1st Presbyterian Church
- April 28—”The Weight of the World” @ Schooley’s Mountain Pres.

All sessions will begin at 7:30 pm. Please bring your Bible; we enjoy sharing a number of translations. Invite a friend to come with you for some great discussion and sharing of our faith during this Lenten Season.

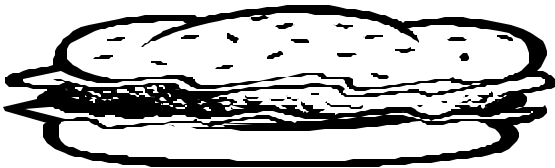


HATS OFF TO...

We are expressing our congregation's appreciation for the new regal looking Acolyte Robes to be worn each Sunday by our youth acolytes. This special gift was generously donated by Mitzi and Tomio Yamawaki!

Also a very special thank you to Pat Schaar's for the tasty soup and scone brunch she provided for the Bible Study. Thanks to all the volunteers who made this Bible Study such a great success, we could not have done it without you!!

HOAGIE SALE OF HUGE SUCCESS!!!!



The youth Group would like to take this opportunity to thank the congregation for all their support during our current Hoagie Sale. We made \$703! It looks as if our trip to New Hampshire for the work camp is really going to happen! Remember, all of the proceeds will go to the 13 of us who are going to go on this mission. We are really very excited.

"SERGE" IS COMING!!!!

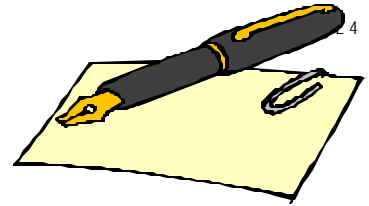
As you have seen all over the place, the "SERGE" Concert will be on March 6 at 6:00 pm. "SERGE" is a group of seven youth leaders from various churches who comprise this talented group who blend classic rock, 80's Pop, Punk and present day hits together with contemporary Christian Music to produce a positive, uplifting message for youth and adults. So come and join us and have some fun!!!

Some upcoming events that we are working on are: A Spaghetti Dinner, another Hoagie Sale except this time we are going to offer a Chef's Salad as well for those of you who

PRAYER SHAWLS

The members of the Togetherness Circle have knitted Prayer Shawls that have been blessed. Five shawls have been distributed to those in need so far. Knitters are always welcome! If you are interested in making one or if you are in need of one, please see one of the ladies from the Togetherness Circle.





Pastor's Page. . . Churches learn to "Swim Upstream"

"Swimming Upstream!" That's how most mainline churches feel as they try to be faithful. Yet a recent conference with that theme at Claremont (Calif) School of Theology celebrated and learned about progressive congregations that are vital, healthy and strong.

These congregations flourish as they maintain a witness that takes full account of critical thought and is visionary, inclusive, prophetic and morally and theologically serious. These churches realize that God is in this mix with us and Christ, as always, is here among his people.

Here are some common characteristics of churches that are enjoying the swim:

1. God, Christ, spirit unapologetically the center of these churches' reason for being. Celebrative worship and scripture are central to their life together. Christian nurture and education are for all ages, children, youth and adults, in traditional and very not traditional way.
2. A clear sense of Identity and call and shared sense of Mission and Purpose. These can be articulated in a brief statement.
3. A will to live! A recognition that without changes, churches will continue their downward spin. (The only person who really wants change is a wet baby!) With any change, some people will probably leave, but without change there will be no gains and attrition will take its course.
4. An Openness to God's Call to new ideas and new mission. We are with Christ in the engine, working for social change, rather than the caboose being dragged

into it. These churches are willing to take informed risks in programming staffing, financing, use of building, etc.

5. Flexibility. Rigid adherence to told organizational structures can be fatal in a fast moving culture. Churches need to be able to act quickly at the Spirit's call, not to wait for a subcommittee to bring it to the board next month that it can come to the council the following month. Flexibility requires trust that the best decisions will be made and recognition that not every decision will be perfect.
6. A commitment to Inclusiveness. All of the churches are intentionally as "multi" as possible—racially, culturally, generationally, economically in recognition that God loves and calls all people. All members are givers, and all are receivers from one another. The majority are "Opening and Affirming," welcoming gays, lesbians and bisexuals at all levels of membership and ministry.
7. A Commitment to "Parish-based" ministry. These churches are a blessing to the community, even those people who will never be part of its membership. Many people may show up on a regular basis but in a commitment shy age may get scared off by pressure to join

Important learning: Swimming Upstream is not something a person or a church does to quickly. It's something we do Faith-Fully! God has much more in store for us that we can imagine. God asks for our cooperation, our prayers and our faithful paddling.

Harry

(Reprint from UCC National Newsletter)

“On the Way to Wholeness Through Lent”

We will be offering a three part health focused series entitled "on the Way to Wholeness Through Lent". This series will begin on Sunday, February 29th during the worship service. The Rev. Dr. Harry Taylor in conjunction with Rev. Dr. Rebecca Radillo will lead worship by featuring scriptural wholeness references and their implications. The worship service will include celebrating the ministry's action, community oriented Parish Nurse Programs first anniversary.

On Sunday March 7th, the series will continue at 11:30 AM following worship in a class that will examine issues and suggestions that relate to “Wholeness and Depres-

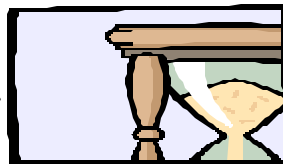
sion”. Rev. Radillo, a certified counselor, will lead the discussion and answer questions.

The third part of the series will feature The Rev. Dr. James Wyrzten, Director of the Creative Living Center on the exploration of “Men’s Issues Regarding Their Relationship and Wholeness,, on Sunday, March 21st at 11:30 am. The second and third part in this series will meet in the church’s conference Room.

This Lenten Series is offered to PVEM members and community members. For more information please contact the church office.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

Coming up this month on Sunday, March 21, PVEM will be participating in the annual One Great Hour of Sharing Campaign. OGHS is a multi-denominational campaign supported by nine Protestant denominations, Church World Service, and hundreds of Local organizations throughout the world in support of the following programs:



civil strife, war or other natural or human-caused events. On average, OGHS responds to a disaster once ever 2 1/2 days

- **Building sustainable Communities:** OGHS supports self-help programs in more that 80 nations to build sustainable communities that enable people and communities to stand against and rise above hunger, disease and illiteracy.
- **Responding to disaster.** OGHS provides emergency and long-term assistance to people in the aftermath of hurricanes, tornados, storms, floods, tidal waves, fires, explosions, technological disaster,

- **Ministering to refugees.** OGHS responds with advocacy and help, hope and hospitality for people who have been uprooted from the home of origin. More than 20 million of the world people are uprooted at any given time.

For over fifty years, One Great Hour of Sharing has supported worthy relief and developmental efforts, both in the United States and abroad. As a congregation, we should feel proud of our past efforts to assist those in need of a helping hand. Our donations have surely made a real difference in the lives of many people. Please give generously to this year's One Great Hour of Sharing Campaign.

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PVEM Youth
Group
presents

"SERGE" in
Concert

Christian
Praise
Rock Concert

Refreshments sold from 6 PM
and during intermission

Tickets \$5

For More Info: (908) 852-5444
Panther Valley Ecumenical Church



All proceeds benefit the
PVEM Youth Group trip to
summer workcamp

March 6
7 PM