



# The PVEM Happenings



Volume 2, Issue 9

Published by the Stewardship Commission

September 2005

## Getting to Know the Commissions

### Outreach Commission Redux

**Lord's Pantry** - Many thanks to those in the congregation who have been supporting the pantry with their donations of food and supermarket gift cards. It is greatly appreciated.

**September Apple Festival** - On September 18th we will be holding our annual Apple Festival during Coffee Hour. Come down and buy some delicious homemade apple crisp with ice cream. We will also be having a preview of items being sold at the Holiday Bazaar in November and selling Fall items. All proceeds go to our Mission projects.

**Holiday Bazaar** - On November 6th we will be having our annual Holiday Bazaar, our main fundraiser for the year. Plan on coming down after

Commissions

Continued on pg 2 column 1

### IN THIS ISSUE

- 1) Getting to Know the Commissions; Adult Bible Class; New Eyes For the Needy
- 2) Christian Outreach
- 3) Still Looking for Auction Items; Task Force Progress
- 4) Rally Day; How Can We Count the Ways?
- 5) Golf Outing
- 6) From The Pastor
- 7) Coffee Hour Schedule; Worship Enhancing Accesories

## Adult Bible Class Wrestling With Angels

By Bob Nichols

Coming this Fall an intimate look at the tough questions of life and the silence of God.

**Why Me?** If I'm so good, why are things so awful?

**Prayer?** Why don't my prayers get answered?

**Doubt?** How can I question and still believe?

**Forgiving?** How do I forgive and get on with my life?

**Guidance?** How do I know what to do?

**Love?** Why is loving so hard?

This series of adult Bible classes will consist of a video presentation featuring such notables as Tony Campolo and Philip Yancy followed by group discussions led by Bob Nichols, Marion Barnes and Greg Maddock.

We would like to make this series available to all and would ask all that are interested to complete the insert in the Sunday Church Bulletin.

## New Eyes For the Needy

By Joan Gibbs

There is a basket in the Narthex where you may put your old eye glasses. A donation of an old pair of glasses could help someone see a little better and enjoy life much more.

Please place your donations in the basket and they will be sent to "New Eyes For the Needy".

Thank You  
Parish Nurse Committee

My doctor gave me six months to live but when I couldn't pay the bill, he gave me six more.

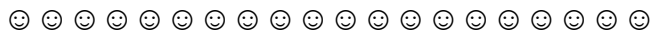
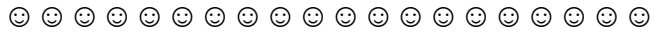
church to have lunch and do some holiday shopping!  
Any commission or group in the church who would like to have a table at the bazaar, please contact us as soon as possible.

As you can tell from the list of activities above, the Outreach Commission is very active. However, this list only covers part of their many activities.  
One that we get the privilege of sharing is, Carmen Ministries.  
During the month of July, Tony Woods, came to our church with, Carmen Hanisak (from whom the ministry gets it's name) and Tim Cole. They each shared a part of the ministries work and their own past. Tim also wrote the following poem which he shared with us.

### New Life

*From a rather troublesome, dark road  
To a road full of light.  
From letting the devil win  
To a never ending fight.  
From sinful thoughts  
To contemplating positive ways  
From death around the corner  
To longevity in my days.  
From walking in cuffs  
To walking as one with the Father.  
The old me started trouble  
The new me doesn't bother.  
I love my new life  
And I'm happy to let you know.  
That if you don't know where you come from  
Where will you go.  
I was shot in my chest and I'm sill here  
And that type of thing don't happen twice.  
So I'm not back that route  
So I'll just stick to my new life.*

When you think about what goes on in the church, take a moment to think also what the Outreach Commission is doing outside of the church that is helping in so many ways. It reminds me of the saying, "Together, we can make a difference!" Let's keep on supporting them as we have done in the past.



Things may come to those who wait, but only the things left by those who hustle.

## Please Honor the Happenings Deadline

Please submit all articles by the 15<sup>th</sup> 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

# Still Seeking Auction Items

by Betty Schultheis



A romantic gourmet dinner for two; your choice of menu, delivered to your home at a pre-determined time would make a wonderful donation.



How about a bridge party luncheon for eight served at your home? A great way to make some new friends while helping our church.

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

Among those donations to date are: a cord of firewood, a homemade pie every month for a year, a gift certificate for Charlie Brown's, an afghan, a hand quilted quilt, a photo package, a framed Ducks Unlimited print/duck stamps n/s.

John Jurena has added the auction forms to the PVEM website so you can go online to complete them.

Over 1,000 items were donated for our auction in 1988...and we're hoping to exceed that number for our 2006 auction, and we are off to a good start, go online and see pictures and/or read the descriptions

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, contact a planning committee member 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.

Planning committee members Kathy and John Pflugfelder Sr., Dave Robinson, Marilyn Schaffer, Glenn Stevenson, Ron Reece and Betty Schultheis.

## Task-force Progresses

The U.S. Congregational Survey Task- force began its work August 14. They are currently analyzing the results of the survey as presented in the categories of 10 "congregational strengths".

Following their analysis they will make prioritized recommendations to Council regarding areas requiring strengthening and ideas for implementing changes to move us toward the "congregational vision" for our church.

Members of the Task force are: Tracy Quinn, Tom Roberts, Charlie Schaffer, Lauren Wittig, Linda Yaeger, Bob Zinckgraf and Rev. Dr. Mary Lou Howson.

Anyone interested in viewing either of the 23-minute videos concerning the process, please contact Betty Schultheis.

Detailed information regarding survey results may be found on the church web-site compliments of John Jurena.



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

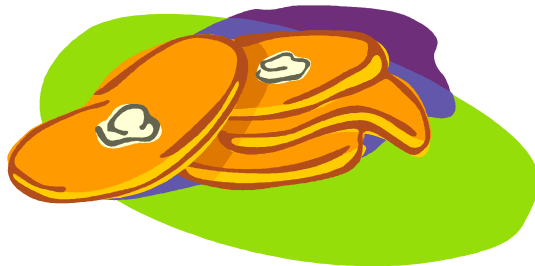
You may remember seeing the photo above in several newspapers over the past month. The story that goes with the photo is that the group met to develop new pathways of mutual ministry. As a result, the four visitors will be in the church on January 15, 2006, the day that begins prayer week.

There will be activities after the morning service and the four guests will be available for questions and other discussions.

More information will be provided as the time draws near. \*

# Rally Day

Be in church on "Rally Day" (see insert) and then join everyone in the fellowship hall for a pancake brunch.



## How can we count the ways?

We're referring to how many different ways we church members can work together to make our church a community of faith.

Think of these opportunities for service PVEM offers:

- Play in the bell choir (Call Joseph Itkor)
- Watering the outdoor plantings in summer
- Cleaning the yard to get ready for winter (Call John Pflugfelder, Jr.)
- Visiting our home-bound members
- Helping teachers in the church school (Call Doreen Schaffer)
- Reading scripture in Sunday worship services (Call Jane Nichols)
- Be a greeter at the front door on Sunday (Call Jane Nichols)
- Join the choir
- Take trash to be collected at the road
- Helping to keep bulletin boards fresh and up-to-date

Each of us, as Christians, has a job to do and each of us depends on others at PVEM.

Can you think of something else YOU CAN DO?  
 "we WHO ARE MANY ARE ONE BODY IN Christ."

P.S. You can always call the church office to give your name!

Man is harder than iron, stronger than stone  
 and more fragile than a rose.

# Golf Outing

Don't forget to mark your calendar for the golf outing on October 21<sup>st</sup> at Minebrook Golf Club. The money raised will be used to help Michael Billington in his fight with cancer.

Registration begins at 11:30 am.

Cost will be:

\$125 per person. This includes golf, golf cart and buffet dinner.

\$50 per person. Non-golfers for the buffet dinner only. Dinner begins at 6:00 pm.

\$600 for a Corporate Sponsorship. This includes 4 tee times, carts, buffet dinner, sign on tee and listing in brochure.

Registration forms will be available soon. All forms must be returned to Amy Testa no later than October 7, 2005.

If you have any questions or would like to make a donation please contact Amy Testa at 908-852-5444 or [atesta@pvem.net](mailto:atesta@pvem.net).

If you choose not to participate in the golf outing and you wish to make a donation, simply give us a check. The amount will appear on your giving statement.

Patron – Name to be listed in brochure.

Gold \$50 or more

Silver \$25 to \$49

Bronze \$5 to \$24

Advertise your business in the golf outing brochure.

\$100 – Full page ad

\$50 -- Half page ad

\$35 -- ¼ page ad

\$20 -- 1/8 page ad (business card)

Please make all checks payable to:

Michael Billington Fund c/o PVEM.

## Home Care ComForcare Senior Services

- |                      |                    |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| • Bathing            | • Alzheimer's Care |
| • Meal Preparation   | • Med. Reminders   |
| • Safety Supervision | • Homemaking       |
| • Errands            | • Transportation   |
| • Family Respite     | • Companionship    |
| • Bed/ Tub Transfers | • Rehab Assistance |

"Your care is our first concern"

Serving your  
Local Community  
24 hrs, 365 days:

[www.ComForcare.com](http://www.ComForcare.com)

## Quotable

*A foolish husband says to his wife,  
"Honey, you stick to the washin',  
ironin', cookin' and scrubbin'. No  
wife of mine is gonna work."*



# FROM THE PASTOR

## Journeying Together

By: Chuck Miller

Interim Director, Spirituality Program

It was G. K. Chesterton who wrote, “If seeds in the black earth can turn into such beautiful roses, what might the [human heart] become in its long journey toward the stars?” Such lofty words may serve to draw our gaze heavenward and remind us that we come from God, we belong to God, and we go to God. We are Homeward bound, moving toward God, the goal of our journey.

The image of a journey, therefore, is an apt metaphor for the Christian’s spiritual life. The Bible is filled with such images. In the Old Testament, for example, there is God’s call to and “uprooting” of Abram (Abraham) (Genesis 12). Another remarkable example of a spiritual journey is the story of the Exodus. Freeing the Hebrew People from slavery in Egypt, God led them to a new life in the Promised Land.

The New Testament offers a different, but related metaphor when in Acts 9:2 it refers to Christianity as “the Way.” And those who follow in Christ’s steps follow the One who refers to himself as “the way” (John 14:6).

The journey we have embarked on will take our whole life. What God will make of us, we do not exactly know (except that we are to become like Christ [see Ephesians 4 and 1 John 3:2]). Where God will take us, what surprises await us, we cannot say. What we do know, however, is that God is with us and promises to be, every moment and every step along the way.

The journey of faith is both an inward journey and

an outward one. In the language of contemplatives and mystics the journey inward is intended to lead to a discovery of one’s true self and to union with God. The journey outward, on the other hand, is the bearing of the fruit of that growing spiritual maturity and deepening relationship with God. It is the movement back from the depths where we meet God to the issues we face in everyday life. It finds expression in things like acts of justice and mercy, in compassion and love for others. With regard to both dimensions – inward and outward – it is essential that we “keep going and keep growing.”

The spiritual honesty and strong faith embodied in one of Thomas Merton’s famous prayers speaks to and for many people. Here is a portion of that prayer:

*My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end...and the fact that I think that I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe the desire to please you does in fact please you... And I know that if I do this [seek to please you] you will lead me by the right road though I may know nothing about it.*

Our spiritual journey certainly has a destination. But those who are preoccupied with the destination may miss the present moment, the magnificent vistas, the adventure and excitement along the way. They may even miss “seeing” God.

Alister McGrath writes,

*Life on the road can be hard and discouraging. Yet it is not a journey we need undertake on our own. Part of God’s gracious provision is fellow travelers along that road of faith. They are there to refresh us, to build us up, and to encourage us as we travel together to the New Jerusalem. Fellowship is not a luxury we can dispense with or should feel guilty about. It is a spiritual necessity vital to our spiritual growth. God has not created us to be*

*alone but to exist and develop in relationship with others.*

We are "companions on the journey," each of us with a unique story to tell. How rewarding it is to prayerfully listen as another person shares his or her experience of God! What a sacred privilege it is to help one another pay attention to God, "listening" for God's word, "looking" for signs of God's presence and involvement in our daily lives! How exciting it is to seek to discern God's call or will in community!

Community means providing a safe, hospitable place we can gather to share our questions, doubts, and struggles, as well as our affirmations, joys, and victories; equipping people for life and ministry in today's world; nurturing those who seek "something more" and those who have already made that discovery; helping one another deepen our commitment to God and our understanding of what God wants us to be and do.

Journeying together means following well-marked paths and charting new ones. It involves helping one another to overcome the obstacles along the path. It means seeking out an oasis here and there where we can rest and enjoy the food and water that will refresh us so we can go on.

Chesterton was right in asking, "If seeds in the black earth can turn into such beautiful roses, what might the [human heart] become in its long journey toward the stars?" For those of faith, with eyes to see, the answer is clear: We are journeying together toward God and becoming what God created us to be, all the while enjoying the journey itself and the wonders of God's love and grace.



## 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:

- 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.

Panther Valley Ecumenical Ministry  
1490 Route 517  
Hackettstown, NJ 07840

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
US POSTAGE PAID  
ALLAMUCHY, NJ  
PERMIT NO. 11  
DATED MATERIAL

Phone: 908-852-5444

Fax: 908-850-4754

Email: [info@pvem.net](mailto:info@pvem.net)

or to submit articles for the "Happenings"

[hppnings@mindspring.com](mailto:hppnings@mindspring.com)

We're on the web [www.pvem.net](http://www.pvem.net)



**Happenings** is a newsletter of the Panther Valley Ecumenical Ministry: A multi denominational Church.

**Published by:** Impressions by Ron

**Editorial Staff:** Stewardship Commission:

Dave Robinson, Maxine Romig Volger, Betty Schultheis, Ron Reece, Glenn Stevenson and John Pflugfelder, 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.**

