

Glad Tidings

hearts open to christ - doors open to his world

First Presbyterian Church of Haddonfield • Thanksgiving/Advent 2020

News from Nikki

Speaking the Truth in Love- Coming in January!

I am writing to you early in the morning on Day #3 of the presidential election. I am NOT going to talk about anything related to the election, to the current state of affairs in our country, et al.

What I want is for us to focus on the things that we can control. And the **only** thing we can control, is how **we behave**.

Beginning Wednesday January 6th at 7:30 pm, I will begin teaching and facilitating a 14-session class via Zoom, entitled, "Speaking the Truth in Love: How to Be an Assertive Christian," based on the book by Rev. Dr. Kenneth C. Haugk, founder and Executive Director of Stephen Ministries, and Ruth Koch.

Why is this so important?

Learning how to be an assertive Christian means that:

1. You will notice a pleasant change in your friendships brought about by your enhanced self-confidence and newfound ability to express your own preferences and to honor the choices of others
2. You will reduce aggressive, dominating, and passive behaviors you might have, because you will learn how to express your own needs without giving offense, playing the victim, or having to make a show of power
3. You will learn how to allow God's power to be the most important factor in unifying your life and personality.

This course is based on three principles:

1. That individuals are response-able
2. That people continually make choices
3. That God will direct you as you learn to think and behave assertively

This will be the 6th time I have offered this class, both to the public and to churches. Without question or exception, I have watched as people have strengthened and improved their relationships with God and with others, all while developing a healthy love of self. Fourteen weeks seem like a long time, though in the context of trying to change unhealthy behaviors that we've engaged in and protected for the duration of our lifetime, this is but a primer. I've watched our lives and the lives of those around us change dramatically for the better when we learn how to take responsibility for our own behavior. Yet several things will be required.

The class will require a level of vulnerability and a willingness to self-disclose. The first session on January 6th will consist of opening comments, questions, and an 'Assertiveness Inventory,' which will help participants assess where they are in terms of interpersonal interactions: whether a majority of interactions are passive, aggressive, passive-aggressive, or assertive. This inventory is important as it will help point out personal growing edges to pay attention to during our sessions together, and also during our lifetimes. Your responses will not be shared with myself or the group. (Continued on p. 4)



Nikki Passante,
Associate Pastor



WORSHIP

Live Streaming

10 AM Sundays

Go to website and click on Watch Live

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Staff Changes

Mike Richardson, the church's long-term custodian, is leaving the church's employment due to illness. We are assisting his access to the PCUSA Board of Pension benefits that he's now eligible for and are grateful to Paul Urian and the HR Committee for their assistance and compassion. We wish Mike well and thank him for his many years of service to our congregation.

Travis Bogetti has been hired as our new Building Manager. Travis will be responsible for everything relating to the church property and buildings and will coordinate his work with the Finance and Property Committee, the membership of the church, and staff.

Thanksgiving Thanks

A huge **THANK YOU!** Words cannot express how grateful my family and I are for the generosity of our congregation in the annual turkey drive. We collected 102 birds and \$1,205 in cash. We are truly grateful for all who donated. Thank you all! Know that your donation will help make the lives of families in need a bit better. —The Dark Family and Mission

Memory Moment

Remembering the Sanctuary dressed for Candlelight and Christmas.



Glad Tidings

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Organist

Gabrielle Heimerling
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Barbara Sewall
Marisa McGovern
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Rebecca Mannion
Receptionist

Travis Bogetti
Building Manager

Mark Hall
Security



Peter Leibensperger
Music Director

Music Ministry

Covid-Style Candlelight Service

I am told that the Candlelight Service is a tradition that reaches back almost a century. People who are now in their 80s have told me that they remember participating in the Candlelight Service as a child. There was a stretch where First Presbyterian Church of Haddonfield had a live nativity scene as part of the tableau—real animals were led into the church, and gracious congregants cleaned up the inevitable byproduct of those animals. That tradition was eventually abandoned (thank goodness!). So too were some of the candles from which the occasion gets its name. Having dozens of small children holding open flames eventually seemed questionable, and so eventually electric candles were given to the children. I am told, however, that those same children then had a proclivity for sticking the electric candles up their noses (going for the Rudolph look, I suppose?), and so those were done away with as well.

This year requires another (large) adaptation to our Candlelight Service. As much as we might want to, it is dangerous to gather and to sing together in large crowds right now. Instead, we are holding a Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols that will look a bit different. During this service, Mark Cole will provide organ and piano music, with an appearance by Tanya McKenzie on flute. We will provide visual art to enjoy while Mark plays, and we will include your favorite carols for you to sing along with us at home. And of course, Betsy Westermaier will bring us the story of Christ's birth as she reads the familiar scripture passages.

Please mark December 13th on your calendars, and join us virtually for this year's Covid-style Candlelight Service at 5pm on our webcast. We know that this year is different, but holding onto our traditions as best as we can is important, and we want to make sure that you will still get to enjoy this one. See you on the 13th!



Candlelight Services in Christmas seasons past...with candles and later with shepherds, three kings, and the Holy Family.

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 (continued from page one)

Each session will provide Biblical Background and Scriptures for Meditation.

Topics include, but are not limited to:

- What is Assertiveness?
- How Jesus Lived Assertively
- Techniques of Assertiveness
- What to Say and Do when you want to be Assertive
- How to Make Requests
- Verbal & Non-Verbal Cues/Body Language
- Granting, Refusing, or Negotiating Requests
- Offering and Receiving Criticism
- Exposing, Expressing, and Receiving Anger
- Living your faith consistently and authentically

This class is highly recommended for:

- Anyone who communicates!
- Church Officers (Deacons, Elders)
- Church Staff
- Persons interested in Stephen Ministry
- Anyone interested in improving their lives with one another, and with God.

Purchasing the book isn't required, but it will be a huge boon to your development. I will be purchasing copies of the book in bulk and will have those available in the coming weeks for a nominal fee. If you would prefer to purchase the book yourself, I would ask that you purchase it directly through Stephen Ministries.

In the meantime, if you have any questions or comments, please send them to me. I'm always happy to share more about the tools available to us when we partner with God to make positive changes in our lives, to God's Glory and to the benefit of all those around us.

In Christ,
 Nikki

Run with Perseverance Stewardship 2020

Dear Family of Faith:

The year 2020 has greatly impacted all aspects of our lives including how we engage with and continue the work of the church. The resilience and perseverance we have exhibited in continuing to fulfill the church's mission has been extraordinary. For this reason, Run with Perseverance is the theme of our stewardship campaign. Thanks to all the members and staff who have provided their unique messages related to our church family during the campaign. It was great to see your faces and hear your stories and their relevance to the collective financial support of the congregation.

As we move to the pledging phase of this year's stewardship campaign, we feel it is appropriate to clearly articulate the overall goals.

The Goal: In articulating the goal, it is important for the congregation to understand what may be a little-known fact. For each year from 2015 through 2020, the number of pledging units and total dollars pledged has declined.

	Units Pledging	Amount Pledged
2015	256	\$698,844
2016	231	663,513
2017	210	606,051
2018	188	564,217
2019	165	488,058
2020 so far	28	109,070 11/25

Our goal is to build back and achieve 2015 levels of giving. While the goal may not be achieved this year, we as a congregation need to reverse the trend of decline. Below is a three-prong challenge for you to consider:

- 1. Increase your pledge to the church average of \$3,150 for the coming year;**
- 2. Increase your pledge by 1% of your gross income;**
- 3. Increase your pledge by \$500 for the year.**

We know these times are incredibly difficult and you simply may not be able to meet this challenge at any level. But if you are able, we would greatly appreciate it if you would prayerfully consider increasing your financial support, if not at the greatest level outlined above, at a level with which you have comfort.

God Bless You All,

The Stewardship Committee

Preschool Glad Tidings

Gratitude is a choice...In the year 2020 when there has been anxiety and frustration; so much to grumble about, it is more important than ever to remind ourselves and reflect on what we are thankful for. "This is the day that the Lord has made." Why not try to "rejoice and be glad in it?" Being grateful has been proven to reduce anxiety and boost immunity. Who doesn't need that right now?



At the Preschool, we are grateful for Mother Nature's

cooperation! The mild fall

weather has allowed us to open the gates to the playground each week. The children and teachers have truly embraced the outdoor classroom model.

We are especially thankful for the tiny humans who grace us at the preschool. Their smiley eyes brighten our days and provide optimism for the weeks to come.

Our preschool classes are healthy and hopeful. We have successfully provided a program that has proved to be safe and effective. We collected data and are so very grateful for all of the kind words our families expressed when surveyed about our program. We are hopeful that our community will reign in desires for social contact and embrace time at home with loved ones over the holidays so that we can move forward and open indoors on January 25th.

On this Thanksgiving, the Preschool is mostly thankful for our dedicated staff. They have gone above and beyond week after week to provide a fun and engaging unique preschool experience for our little learners!

—Marisa McGovern

The Philosophy of the First Presbyterian Church Preschool

to enrich the efforts of the home in promoting growth and happiness in children.

We believe children are individual and unique.

We strive to give each child a foundation for subsequent school learning in a Christian atmosphere of love and acceptance.

Advent Memories

Preschool Specials

2010



2005



Advent Workshops



Mission Opportunities

News From St. Wilfrid's

Open Door Clinic at St Wilfrid's November 23, 2020

On September 21, we reported about the pregnant woman waiting for food, in line at St Wilfrid's, going into labor, and rushing off to the hospital. Saturday, we met Alaya born October 28, 2020, an American citizen. She is perfectly and wonderfully made. Pray for Alaya, that she has good health, safety, and good fortune. We are truly thankful for seeing Alaya.

This week marks the 26th straight week that the Open Door Clinic at St Wilfrid's has distributed food during the pandemic; 114 bags, 3,151 total. Over 78,000 pounds of food and dry goods given out!

Needed... We are collecting CLEAN winter jackets and new socks. Diapers: sizes 2, 4, 5, 6, and wipes. Blankets And-always peanut butter, tuna, pasta, sauce, macaroni n cheese are needed

December 12th we will be distributing Christmas gifts for our clients' children. Help will be needed to translate, show parents what is available, and to go inside to get the gifts chosen. We are working from outside.

If you can help or have any questions, please call Jill Mascena -856-428-7342 and leave a message or check the website www.opendoorcliniccamden.org

Advent Giving Back

1. COLLECTING SOUP: Instead of serving soup this year we are going to be collecting soup to donate so please bring cans of soup to donate while picking up your Advent Festival Take Home kit or just because you're going through the donation drive.

2. GIFT CARD DRIVE: We will be sponsoring a gift card drive for Caring Hearts in lieu of filling their holiday stockings. Stay tuned for details!

Feed My Starving Children

It's time to start your holiday shopping. This year, why not shop from the comfort of your home and support Feed My Starving Children at the same time? Lynch Creek Farms, located in Washington State, offers organizations like Haddonfield's "It Take A Village," FMSC Mobile Pack the opportunity to earn 15% on all sales of their beautiful holiday wreaths and centerpieces. Most of their products cost approximately \$45-\$75, which includes shipping. Just make certain when ordering that you use the campaign #246058 to be certain that FMSC gets credit. Orders can be made up until Dec. 15th. Here's how it works: Online orders may be made by going to www.lynchcreekfundraising.com/c/246058. Just make your selection and provide the information required. Please note that the date you are asked to provide will be the approximate shipping date-not the arrival date of the item. You can also order by phone at (888) 426-0781 if you would prefer.

*Where there is
love there is
courage,
where there is
courage there is
peace,
where there is
peace there is
God.
And when you
have God, you
have
everything....*

—Louise Penny



An Opportunity So Unique, So Timely, So Full of Potential, We Couldn't Pass It Up

Becky Bryan and Rita Brown joined 300 Presbyterians from across the country for the four week long "Matthew 25 Dismantling Racism" course offered by PC(USA) and Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary. The biblically based, realistic, honest, hopeful, guilt-free sessions did not disappoint. We were blessed to hear from a variety of historians, biblical scholars and faith leaders.

One important takeaway from this course is the need for individuals and groups to work on identifying their own habits and practices that must change if there is to be true social justice. It cannot rest on BIPOC (black, indigenous, people of color) to tell us what to do. They have their own work to do. We can stand as partners without coopting their work and leadership. Only we know how we benefit from the current systems and what we are willing to give up to fix them. Will you march or be seen at a rally? Where do you shop and what do you buy? Do you speak up to local, state and federal law makers demanding change? Do you talk about social justice with coworkers, friends and family?

Throughout American history the mainstream Christian churches have enabled white supremacy and the socially dominant center to block justice for BIPOC people and communities. Churches and

seminaries owned slaves. In 1818 the Presbyterian GA offered a plan to pay reparations to slave owners who emancipated their slaves but nothing for the slaves themselves. To this day, white saviorism thrusts plans on communities which do not serve the needs of the people living there but try to draw blacks toward their center. In 1852, believing there were too many people who simply hated blacks, the church backed plans to evangelize blacks and send them to colonize Africa. They did not address the disease of hate that spread from generation to generation. These are only a few examples. We still have a great deal of work to do.

We examined how we need to take our bodies seriously as a medium for how God speaks and engages us. Discomfort with ideas or thoughts elicit responses such as a rise in heart rate and body temperature. For whites, discomfort is necessary for discernment of our role in ending or perpetuating white supremacy despite being "nice people". With consistent practice and stamina the Bible teaches us to see if an idea or action "looks like Jesus" or white supremacy. We also need to learn to "read" others and be aware of our reactions to others. The Justice and Advocacy Committee has provided ways to access a wide range of resources through REALM, the church's Facebook page and the Sunday morning discussion group. The PC(USA) website has more on dismantling structural racism and the role of individual Christians and churches.

—Rita Brown

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR DECEMBER 13 (and then watch for details):

- Congregational meeting (online) immediately following worship for the purpose of electing elders, deacons, and the nominating committee to serve in 2021.
- Drive-through consecration and celebration of 2021 pledges following congregational meeting
- Candlelight service @ 5 p.m. – traditional, but online

PERIODICAL

*We have come to the manger to welcome the Son—
we have heard His angels singing.
We have come to this house to bring Him gifts—
we followed His star from its rising.
We will hold His love in our opening hearts
As He holds our love in His.
May His kingdom be everlasting!*

