



HOPE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
TINTON FALLS, NEW JERSERY



NOTES OF HOPE

A monthly publication to keep us informed.

Feburay 2004

Edited & Published
by The Buckley
Family

Our Mission Statement

We believe that God
has gathered this
congregation and
staff at this time and
place in order to:

Introduce people
to the enduring love
of Jesus

Invite them to
become part of his
family

Instruct them in
the Scriptures

Include them in the
celebration of
worship, and

Inspire them to
serve God according
to their gifts



PASTOR'S JANUARY 2004 REPORT TO SESSION

My hands get very dry in winter, so I ran into the local drugstore to grab some hand cream. How long could that possibly take - no time at all, right? Wrong! There were fifteen or twenty different choices for just that one item.

Choices. It's what people want, in hand lotion, in everything. So that's what businesses do when they want to reach as many different people as possible. They offer choices to get them in the door and to develop loyalty and keep them coming back.

We at Hope Church are united in our desire to fulfill the Great Commission to reach out with the love of Christ to all the churched and the unchurched, the saved and the unsaved. We don't have all the answers regarding the best way to do that, but perhaps what works in other areas of life will work for us too.

Choices. Since we want to reach everyone, I propose we offer more than one choice of worship experience but with the same sermon and the same scripture readings and the same emphasis on salvation and growth in Christ starting February 1st.

Let's offer a traditional 9:30 worship service that reaches out to those who experience Jesus in the hymns they grew up with and the flow and structure and familiarity that bring peace and comfort. This service will use Hymns from the Presbyterian hymnal, accompanied by organ and piano, with musical selections by the choir and bell choir and special music from time to time. Church school will be held during this service, and fellowship time will take place between services.

And let's offer a contemporary 10:45 worship service that reaches out to those who didn't grow up with our tradition, to those who are drawn to experience Jesus in praise and worship music that touches *their* hearts as the hymns touch ours. This service will use Praise and worship music,

emphasizing congregational participation, accompanied by a variety of instruments. Nursery will be available during this service.

What will be different? The media delivery for the message will be different. The music and the style, or “feel” of the two services will be different.

What will be the same? The message itself. In each of the two services the same scriptures will be read and the same truth proclaimed in the sermon that Jesus Christ is the **way**, the **truth**, and the **life** the rock of our salvation.

Whether you choose traditional or contemporary or both, let’s all come to Hope Presbyterian, “sing joyfully to the Lord,” and invite others to do the same!

We’ll be one family with two styles of worship but One Lord, one faith, one commitment, and one church home. I believe Hope Presbyterian is big enough in both volume and in values to embrace and offer two worship services that are different in many ways but the same in what really counts.

Choices. Jesus met people right where they were, reached out in a unique way that ministered to their needs, and invited them to new life in the Spirit. Let’s do the same.

Grace and peace, Rev. David Cotton, Pastor

WORSHIP COORDINATORS JANUARY 2004 REPORT TO SESSION

The ball has started rolling in many areas. The equipment that was approved for purchase was bought and I have been working on installing it since it came in. There have not been any major problems; all of the equipment is working.

I have received a lot of interest from various people about joining the Praise Team. Our training for the Praise team was going to be on Sunday evening the 25th of January but due to weather conditions it will be moved to a new date. If any of you are interested in being on the Praise team please talk to Gwynne (Mom) or me.

Whenever change is announced and introduced there are always those that accept it with open arms, and those that question the necessity since they were happy with the way it was. I am convinced that those who were happy the way it was will never be satisfied with the new unless they make a conscious choice to allow themselves to change as well. I fully support the Pastor’s proposal to go to 2 worship services, one being contemporary and one being traditional. We will never reach both groups with one style. And we will not draw people to Hope Church unless we embrace the style that attracts them. Being contemporary has less to do with what we think attracts and more to do with what is the target group saying that attracts them.

The Gospel message never changes, but the way we deliver it must change. What worked 10 years ago still works for those that it reached back then to a certain degree, but in our fast paced stressed out society the needs of the individual have changed dramatically.

Why should we expect someone, that doesn't already come to Church, to get up on their only day off, drag their whole family to something that isn't relevant to them, is slow and boring and doesn't offer them anything other than "I went to church today" in their eyes?

As Christians we are missionaries. You don't have a choice as to whether you want to be a missionary or not, you don't have to wait for a calling, you are already called. Jesus commanded, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (*Matthew 28: 19-20*)

Three points I would like to cull out of this message are:

First "Go"! Is anyone going? Do we have an outreach planned? Are we going to let people know that God is here, wanting to meet with them?

The *second* thing is "Make" It is going to involve you doing something; it will take work, and time, and effort. Are you willing to put it in?

The *third* thing is "All Nations" Do you plan on reaching a people that only speaks French, by witnessing to them in English? What I mean by that is will you use the methods that speak to them, or will you refuse because "we've always done it this way!"? There is no culture that is stagnant; therefore the church must change as well.

The Apostle Paul said, "To the weak I became weak to win the weak, I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the Gospel that I might share in its blessings". (1. *Cor. 9:22-23*)

The next phase has begun - *The training phase*. I am working on training the Praise Team, training individuals to use the equipment, teaching the congregation about worship (Feb 8th 5:00pm).

Thank you for the privilege of working with you in the Great Commission! Blessings,

Yours in Christ, Stephen Bounds Worship Coordinator

PARISH ASSISTANTS JANUARY 2004 REPORT TO SESSION

I'm pleased to say that I have already received five devotions for the Lenten Booklet. Please get your submissions to me soon. The absolute deadline is February 15, but that only gives me one week to get the manuscript completed, copied, collated etc., in time to hand out the Sunday before Ash Wednesday. So it would be very helpful to have your stories etc. as soon as possible. I would like to do what we did in years past, i.e. take copies of this booklet to each of the homes in the development bordering our property and use this as an outreach tool to the neighborhood. I would also like to suggest that we send it to the PNO parents, as we did with the Advent booklet.

Unfortunately, I have had to give up facilitating the Adult Sunday School Class as of the this

how they want to continue from this point on. I just do not have enough hours in the week to spend studying and researching for the weekly lesson. Plus, particularly in this transitional period, I feel the need to spend time listening to those of our older members who go downstairs for refreshments and can't do that if I have to rush over to the manse to get ready for the class.

Since two of the ladies that come to our Tuesday morning study have been in hospital and Ginny is still in Health South, we've not met for the last couple of weeks. We're committed to completing this study and will meet again when the weather is better and we can all get to the class.

I've received several phone calls, emails and had personal conversations with members of the congregation who have questions or comments about the new style of worship. Some have been very positive; others are more hesitant to accept change. But I'm thankful that people are coming with their comments. To me that is healthy.

Gwynne Mahns

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION JANUARY REPORT TO SESSION

Nursery

Last spring we tried to accommodate parents by having the narthex available as a parent child area to encourage its use for restless children during the worship service. As we were without regularly attending babies and toddlers, this narthex service became less formal and nursery aides tended to sit with the congregation and sometimes couldn't be easily found when needed.

It came to our attention in December that modern parents, especially visitors, do not want to leave their young children in such a distant venue as the back of the John Calvin room with caretakers that they do not know. The current format was suggested by Rev. Cotton to meet an immediate need. Of course we realize the drawbacks, and we are working to address them, however, for every complaint we've had enthusiastic comments from parents (5 children were cared for on 1/18) and other congregation members and visitors who enjoyed seeing the children. I think we all know the applicable Bible verses that fit here!

Please be assured we are trying to keep the children as quiet and happy as possible. More helping hands are needed and would assist in this endeavor. For the short term, it is recommended that you sit closer if the rear pews are too noisy from the narthex nursery. We would appreciate your patience and support. We need these new, young families.

Church School

Taking advantage of Juli Bound's expertise and enthusiasm, Jean Buckley and I have met twice with her to develop ideas to invigorate church school and attract more children. During the month of February we will pilot "G - Force" from Life Ways, a multimedia approach to youth Christian Education. Juli has materials available for us to use during

February, and we have begun to promote the program with invitations for church school and PNO children, and a video presentation for parents and congregation members. We requested authorization from session to change the configuration of the John Calvin Room with the dividers spread across the back third of the room. We also wanted to paint a large rectangular areas (6ft x 3 ft?) in the back left corner of the room to set off the stage area. Please support this program through prayer, elbow grease, and program participation for the success of "G - Force"

Souper Bowl

The Church School will once again sponsor the Souper Bowl of caring collection on Sunday February 1st, 2004 The offering collected will be donated to a hunger program the Monmouth & Ocean County Food Bank.

Pancake Breakfast:

On Fat Sunday February 22 the Sunday School will once again be sponsoring a pancake breakfast to celebrate the start of Lent. I have it on good authority that Rev. Cotton will be asked to be the head chief again. Be ready for a great time of fellowship and good food to eat. It was great last year.

Kathy Heller

BOARD OF DEACONS JANUARY REPORT TO SESSION

OUTREACH:

The Hope Helping Families program was a great success for the Christmas holiday. Deacons delivered many gifts to 5 needy families in the extended community. WE want to give a big thanks to the congregation for their generous contributions. Carol, Linda, Mike, Margot, and Bill reported on the families that they contacted and delivered gifts to, with all of us receiving warm welcomes and appreciation from the family members. We are planning on a continuation of support for these families at Easter.

As a follow up to our Hope Helping Families program, Bill described a meeting he had with Claudia from Love Inc where she presented information on the Love Inc mentoring program. This is an in-depth one-year program in which a church family mentors and supports a local family in need to help them become self-sufficient. No decision was made, but we will consider this opportunity for the future.

FELLOWSHIP:

The postponed Pot Luck dinner will be held on Sunday, February 8 at 5:00, and will precede a workshop on Tabernacle Worship by Stephen Bounds. Bill will provide a sign-up list for the congregation.

Carol Fenwick

ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE JANUARY REPORT TO SESSION

I don't even know where to begin. This past month has certainly not been a boring, uneventful time in the life of Hope Church! Our Session and Deacons made a decision at our meeting at Grove Hall, Ocean Grove, to begin some radical changes in the way we "do worship". The premise was that traditional worship could be found at Tower Hill Red Bank and Church on the Hill in Ocean and at Hope Church. The feeling was if we were going to change the direction of Hope Church, then we had to have the courage to offer something that could not be found elsewhere.

Rev. Cotton did not make this proposal hastily. It was the result of much thought and earnest prayer. And I believe he has followed the leading of the Spirit. And courage is what it takes to step out in faith and take big risks. But isn't that what we are called to do as followers of Jesus?

This new direction we have chosen has meant a lot of extra work for our staff. And each one of them has been giving us 110%. I am extremely happy with the way things are going, and have heard many positive comments. We have met very briefly, and will meet again at the beginning of February, to discuss job descriptions, and what tasks perhaps could be delegated to others, or how we could do things a bit differently, in order to relieve some of the work load our staff carries. I am concerned that we respect their need for rest and refreshment, and that we not overload them.

A few months ago, David and I were charged with reviewing the membership rolls and proposing names of possible persons to contact about being transferred to the inactive list. I have given this list to Gwynne and Marilyn Gifford to review.

In closing, I would ask each of you to keep our staff in your daily prayers. We must uphold them (and each other) in prayer as we walk through this time of change. Let us continually seek the leading of the Holy Spirit to guide us, and let us always say to Him, "Yes, Lord, I will follow where you lead" 1.

PARENTS NIGHT OUT (PNO)

February 20th from 6:30 pm till 9:00 pm. This is an evening of free childcare in a safe, fun environment, so parents can do some shopping, or go to the movies, or just take a break from the hectic week. The kids will be making valentines this month.

NEWSLETTER:

We want to better inform our members and friends of the activities of the various organizations of the church. Committee Chairs of the church please let us hear from you because much of the success of this undertaking depends upon you. So write an article, or just give us the facts and we will write it for you! The March 2004 "Notes of Hope" deadline for articles is Sunday February 22nd hand written or via email to both esbuckley@monmouth.com and sbuckley@monmouth.com.