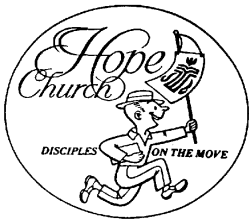


HOPE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
TINTON FALLS, NEW JERSEY



NOTES OF HOPE

A monthly publication to keep us informed.

March 2010

Edited by
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Published by
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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 found in the Gospel of Jesus Christ

Invite them to become part of the family of God

Instruct them in the scriptures, God's word to us

Involve them in the ministry of the church, according to their gifts

Inspire them to go into the world, making disciples of others

Dear Friends and Family of Hope,

I want to take a moment and reflect with you on why we gather together as a church. During a bible study recently, someone asked a simple (but profound) question. They asked me, "Andrew, when you say 'the church,' are you referring to this location and building?" It was a great question, and prompted a discussion on the nature of the church. What do we mean when we refer to 'the Church?'

If there is one thing we must say, it is that *the church is not a building, nor is it a program; it is a group of people who together make up the body of Christ wherever they are*—gathered in a building for worship or scattered into the world as God's ambassadors.

We do gather together though. And we gather for worship as well as for study and fellowship. Every Sunday we gather together, sit together and stand together as we listen, pray, sing and worship our God. We rehearse again and again, in so many ways, the story of God's redemptive love: the God who created us out of love, who pursues us in love, who redeems us in love, who adopts us in love, who restores us in love, who reconciles us in love, and also recruits us in love to be a part of his redemptive purposes in this world—God's mission to reclaim a lost world. He accomplishes all this in and for the world in Jesus the Christ. He continues all this through his body, the church, which exists in and for the world.

When I think of all that happens in our building on a Sunday morning, I must admit I glow with pride.

I have often said that Sunday is our best day of the week. I am astounded by the number of people who give themselves Sunday after Sunday in service. We have worship leaders and musicians who lead us into God's presence so that he is worshipped and we might be transformed. There are the ushers, greeters, and coffee makers who, according to their different gifts, help to make Covenant a welcoming place on Sundays. There are teachers, helpers, youth leaders, and nursery workers who reach out in love to our children and youth. There are members of the prayer team who are available to pray with us after the service. Every Sunday the Sanctuary, Narthex, halls, and John Calvin room are filled with people meeting and welcoming newcomers; engaging one another in lighthearted banter or sharing comfort in a gut-wrenching conversation; encouraging and praying for one another; beginning and deepening friendships; loving children, mentoring youth. This is a picture of the church gathered.

Every Sunday we gather to meet with Jesus Christ and each other. But it doesn't end there. Every Sunday we are sent out into the world. We don't leave the church, because we **are** the church. We are the church gathered on Sunday mornings, and we are the church sent out Monday through Saturday: in our homes and neighborhoods, our schools and places of work, in gyms and restaurants, playgrounds, sandy beaches, and hiking trails. And all kinds of things happen there too, because we are part of God's redemptive story.

When I think of what happens when Hope Presbyterian is scattered each Sunday afternoon, I think of the number of people whose lives can and will be touched by our **Church**. May God bless you as you seek to grow as Christ's disciples, build bridges into people's lives, and live as tiny outposts of the kingdom of God.

Blessings,
Pastor Andrew

REMINDER

Please take a flower from the giving tree for Easter.
Please return items to church.





Grounds for service

PC (USA)-related nursing school in Haiti provides care to homeless on its campus, damaged hospital receives funds from PDA. And you may ask what is a PDA. One part of the One Great Hour of Sharing offering is for **Presbyterian Disaster Assistance**. Money from this fund was sent to Haiti within hours of the reports of the disaster through Church World Service and other partners working in the region.

During Lent the Mission Commission and the Church School will be providing interpretation of the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering. We will start off Sunday February 21 with a short Minute For Missions and then the children will pass out Fish Banks. We have a calendar that you can use to reflect on where help is needed and how we can equal out the haves and the have nots. The calendar is only a suggestion of what you can give. You can read the thoughts and decide on a unit that you wish to contribute.

One Great Hour of Sharing Offering was first started after WW II, in response to the devastation left after the war. The offering is divided into three parts. The Presbyterian Hunger Programs, the Self-Development, and the Presbyterian **Disaster Assistance**. The offering will be dedicated on Palm Sunday. Envelopes will be in the pews and they can be used at anytime.



The Mission Commission gives a BIG THANKS to all who contributed to the Souper Bowl of Caring.

The gifts received totaled \$143.00. The Eatontown Food Pantry and the Soup Kitchen of the Methodist Church of Asbury Park will receive our gifts. We thank you for your faithfulness!

March Stewardship Prayer –

Lord Jesus,
I give you my hands to do your work.
I give you my feet to go your way.
I give you my eyes to see as you see.
I give you my tongue to speak your words.
I give you my mind to think as you think.
I give you my spirit so that you may pray in me.
I give you my self so that you may grow in me.
So that it is you, Lord Jesus,
who lives and works and prays in me.
Amen

NEW MEMBERS CLASS SUNDAY, MARCH 28th

Want to be part of our Vision and serve God as a member of Hope Church? Here is your opportunity! Sunday, March 28th from 7- 9pm in the John Calvin Room, there will be a new membership class. This is for **one night only** and it will cover a brief history of the Presbyterian Church and ways you can serve this church and community. If you have any questions you may contact Steven and Jean Buckley at 732-544-1131 or Scott and Cyndie Van Bavel at 732-493-0994.

Ministry: Shaped to serve

by Rick Warren

Your hands shaped me and made me. Job 10:8 (NIV)

God formed every creature on this planet with a special area of expertise. Some animals run, some hop, some swim, some burrow, and some fly. Each has a particular role to play based on the way they were shaped by God. The same is true with humans. Each of us was uniquely designed, or "shaped" to do certain things.

Before architects design any new building they first ask, "What will be its purpose? How will it be used?" The intended function always determines the form of the building.

Before God created you, he decided what role he wanted you to play on earth. He planned exactly how he wanted you to serve him, and then he shaped you for those tasks. You are the way you are because you were made for a specific ministry.

The Bible says, "We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works" (Ephesians 2:10, NIV). Our English word "poem" comes from this Greek word translated "workmanship." You're God's hand-crafted work of art. You're not an assembly-line product, mass-produced without thought. You're a custom designed, one-of-a kind, original masterpiece.

God deliberately shaped and formed you to serve him in a way that makes your ministry unique. He carefully mixed the DNA recipe that created you. David praised God for this incredible personal attention to detail God gave in designing each of us: "You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous" (Psalm 139:13-14, NLT).

Not only did God shape you before your birth, he planned every day of your life to support his shaping process. David continues, "Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed" (Psalm 139:16, NLT).

This means nothing that happens in your life is insignificant. God uses all of it to mold you for your ministry to others, and shape you for your service to him.

God never wastes anything. He would not give you abilities, interests, talents, gifts, personality, and life experiences unless he intended to use them for his glory. By identifying and understanding these factors you can discover God's will for your life.

The Bible says you are "wonderfully complex." You're a combination of many different factors: "*The people I have shaped for myself will broadcast my praises.*" (Isaiah 43:21, NJB)

April Birthdays

- | | | | |
|----|---|----|------------------------|
| 2 | Jolie Della Valle | 3 | Chris Scheidt |
| 3 | Barbara Patterson | 5 | Nancy Massa |
| 5 | Jim McNicholas | 7 | Luke Baker (born 2005) |
| 7 | Margaret Light | 15 | Joy Dunn |
| 15 | <i>Fred & Maryann's anniversary (5 years in '07)</i> | | |
| 17 | Natashia Brown | 26 | Melissa Emmons |
| 27 | Billy McCabe | 31 | Brian Krajcik |