



Hope Presbyterian Church
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Message from the Pastor

Presbyterian Genius

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

As we move forward into a new epoch in the journey of those who follow Jesus Christ, it is important to identify what we want to take with us, and what we may consider leaving behind. One of the most important things we Presbyterians bring to this conversation is the way we govern ourselves: our polity. I'm serious.

Christian churches govern themselves according to systems that fall somewhere on a continuum. On one end of this scale we find Episcopal polity, which is rule by monarchical or semi-monarchical bishops. Examples of this are the Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, and Lutheran churches. On the other end we find Congregational polity, which is a more-or-less pure democracy of the church's membership, examples being Congregationalist, Baptist, and Pentecostal churches.

Presbyterian polity falls somewhere in the middle; the church is governed by elders (*presbyteroi*, in Greek) chosen by the members. While it might look like Presbyterianism is a "hybrid" or "compromise" between the two extremes, this is not the case. During the Reformation the leaders in places like Switzerland, France, Holland, Hungary, and Scotland, looked into the Bible to ascertain how the people of God governed themselves in response to God's Word. What they discovered is that, at least from the book of Exodus, God's community was governed by elders selected from the people. This pattern extended into the New Testament as well. It appears clear that when Paul established new churches, he also had them governed by elders. In other words, they were not pure democracies in which decisions were made by the whole membership. Neither were they monarchical systems ruled by a single bishop. In the New Testaments a bishop (the Greek term is *episcopos*, "overseer") is simply one of the elders who moderates or convenes the gathering of elders.

Thus Presbyterianism is an attempt to recreate the biblical model for church government.

It also works. The liabilities of both Congregational and

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Episcopal polities are well known. Congregations tend to be easily swayed by fads, emotion, charismatic leaders, and can make rash, uninformed decisions. Bishops can abuse their power in arbitrary, coercive, and insensitive decisions. Presbyterian polity is not perfect and flawless, but it does avoid these extremes, attempting to place decision-making power in a smaller, representative group dedicated to listening and responding to God's Word.

This philosophy is embodied in our *Book of Order*, especially in chapter F-3. There we find some very valuable basic principles outlining how the church should be governed. It is the Presbyterian Way, that if the principles and process are good, the resulting decisions are likely to be good as well. That's why we are known, and even caricatured, for our devotion to procedure and our taking seriously Paul's advice that "everything be done decently and in order." (Of course, this means that sometimes we take procedure and process overly seriously, and we forget the actual substance of an issue. We are prone in fact to use procedure to *avoid* real issues. This is our unique problem.)

To go through some of these principles quickly, we see that the rights of individuals as well as the whole body are protected. Groups determine their own membership and leadership; no outsider ever (except in extremely dysfunctional circumstances) appoints elders or a Pastor for a Presbyterian congregation. We do have officers (some denominations don't). We understand the dangers when a church is allowed to use the powers of the State, and we categorically state that we don't want this. The people elect their officers by majority vote. (This is a modern American idea; in the Bible other methods

were used for selecting church leaders.) Members are to exercise mutual forbearance with each other, realizing that none of us possesses all truth. And every local council (session) is part of larger councils (presbytery, synod, and General Assembly) that have oversight over their work, with the larger governing the smaller.

The local session is made up of ruling elders ("ruling" not in the sense of directing but measuring the faith and practice of the congregation according to God's Word) and moderated – not directed, bossed, or dictated to – by a teaching elder, or Pastor. I like the recovery of ruling elder/teaching elder language because it reaffirms the placement of all the elders on a level, and clearly indicates the vocation of the Pastor as primarily a teacher of the Word. Our system militates against leader-centered models in which there is one "executive" or "head of staff," or any of the other corruptions we allow to creep in from secular life. Chapter F-1 of the Book of Order clearly and unequivocally states that there is only one Head of the church and that is Jesus Christ. Period. The rest of us, even those who have been called to serve as elders, are all *disciples* of him.

No one is more aware of the problems in our denomination than I. And I hope to hold lightly the institutional pieces of denominationalism, which is a doomed and obsolete model for the church anyway. At the same time I do think our polity is inspired and the best way for churches to govern themselves under the Holy Spirit. Things go better when we use it; things tend to get messed up when we ignore it. Whatever is the shape of emerging Christianity, I hope the wisdom and insight of our polity is a part of it.

--Paul+

If you are interested in more information on Presbyterian polity, **Cntl+Click** to follow this link. Copies of the Book of Order and Book of Confessions are available online and for download in English, Español, Korean, and Portuguese.
<http://oga.pcusa.org/Book of Order and Book of Confessions>

A LETTER FROM THE SESSION

Members of Hope Church,

The session would like to take this opportunity to present you with a list of items we are currently looking into. We would like to stress that no action is being taken at this time we are only investigating these ideas. We are providing this list as a conversation starter and would like your feedback about these items. If you have expertise in any of these areas, or would like to investigate any of them further, please see one of the Elders. We covet your prayers, and welcome your feedback and help as we look into these possibilities. Please pray with us as we seek to discern God's will for Hope Church at this time. Please contact an elder if you would like to make a comment. **We are scheduling a "meeting of the whole" for May 26th following service.** This follows the session retreat on May 24th and 25th when we will be discussing this list, how each item could be accomplished, what would be the results and all comments we have received.

Shape of Pastoral Ministry

A sharing arrangement with a larger church.

A yoked congregation.

A commissioned ruling elder.

Elders and members of the congregation speak each week.

Cell church / home meeting groups. (No church building)

Shape of Buildings & its use Ministry

Actively seek groups to use building when not in use by the Koreans or us.

Find another congregation in need of space.

Rent the manse.

Sell the manse.

Increase offering to support the financial burden of the building.

Shape of Our Finances

Refinance our current debt at a lower rate.

Make difficult decisions about budget items we want but cannot afford.

100% of members participate in the weekly or regular offering.

Increased stewardship of time, talent and treasure to maintain the buildings and property.

Other Items to Consider

Some of these changes may cause some current members to leave Hope. This may cause increase financial burden in the short term, but with continued work we can be a stronger more loving church. This can attract new members looking for something new and different. (Not mainstream)

We all need to be disciples and start inviting friends, neighbors and coworkers into the church. Part of our problem is a diminishing membership and we as members are not doing anything about it. We became too lax in this area under David Cotton because he would bring in many people just from name recognition. That is no longer the case and has not been for over six years. It is every member's responsibility.

With no change we could easily close our doors in the not too distant future.



HOPE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PRESENTS ANNUAL SPRING CONCERT:

"CHRISTIAN COMPOSERS OF THE JERSEY SHORE"

Sunday, May 19, 2013 7:00 P.M.

Featuring The Singers of Hope and The Ringers of Hope

With Special Guest Band "Waiting for the Flood"

Free and Open to the Public

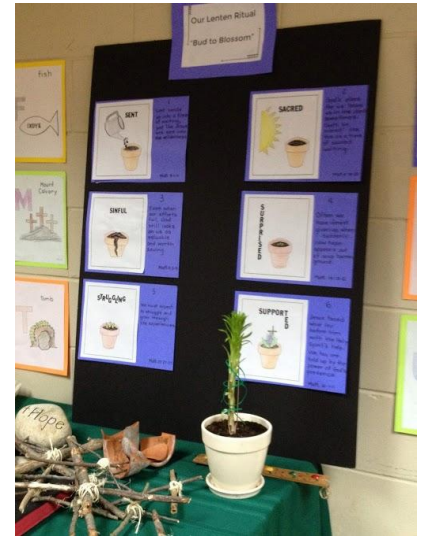
The Music Department of Hope Presbyterian Church presents its Annual Concert featuring music of local Shore Area Christian composers. The idea to celebrate and highlight local Christian music was conceived of well before last year's storms. Hope Church has a vibrant musical outreach, and the musicians of Hope Church recognized that many talented Christian composers lived in the local area, representing a body of work worthy of concert recognition. Hope's Bell Choir Director, Ensemble Leader, and composer-in-residence, Carl Fritsche, together with Hope's Choral and Praise Music Director, Tess Nielsen, designed an evening to highlight Christian Music of the Jersey Shore. The concert features music by such noted local composers as Tim Broege (Bradley Beach, NJ), Nancy Scharff (Middletown, NJ), Charlie Clarke (Long Branch, NJ) and Brian Elias (Shore Area), among others. The concert will feature music of various genres, including contemporary Praise Music from the bands "The Singers of Hope" and "Waiting for the Flood" as well as the Chancel Choir, Mens' Quartet, featured vocal and instrumental solos and duets, the Ringers of Hope Bell Choir, and combined ensembles. Audience members will also learn about the local composers and will be invited to sing along on some of the songs.

One of the main features of the concert is that audience-goers need not look any further than their own community to find great spiritual music. Hope Church has a strong musical mission, and the audience members will certainly experience a concert that reflects local Christian values. The concert is scheduled for Sunday May 19 at 7:00 P.M. The evening is appropriate for families, and young people are encouraged to attend. Casual attire is requested and the musicians will host a reception afterwards. The concert is free and open to the public. A free will offering will be taken to support the continuing Hope Church music ministry.



Sunday School Stewards of Our Prayer Garden

Again this spring, Sunday School students are tending our prayer garden. All of the Easter flower bulbs from last year (lilies, daffodils, and hyacinths) are coming up on schedule, enhanced by the addition of this year's Easter lilies. Sticks found in the garden were lashed into crosses by the students, then placed throughout the garden for the Saturday night Easter Vigil and the baptism of two of our students Dean and Avery Morgan. Last week, the lily that we nurtured during Lent as part of our "Bulb to Blossom" ritual was planted in front of the cross. Before Sunday School ends on June 2, the classes will be making stepping stones for the garden. Please take a few minutes to see how we have been tending this little corner of God's world.



Photography by Bill Heller



Baptism

Music Department Springs into Summer

We look forward to a glorious concert on **May 19 at 7:00 P.M.**, featuring music of local Jersey Shore composers, and welcoming Brian Elias and his guest band, "Waiting for the Flood."

Later in May, the music program will wind down its Spring activities, moving to summer schedule. After Sunday June 9 service, the Choir Program goes on summer break, and Praise team moves to Summer Schedule. The final spring season Handbell Choir presentation is Sunday June 16. Vocal rehearsals continue on Thursdays 7:30 throughout the summer for soloists, small ensembles, and praise team members who want to keep up their practice.

Summertime is a great time to "try out" the Praise Team. Just come a little early on a Sunday morning for the "pick-up" rehearsal if you want to sing with us. If it looks and sounds like we are having fun singing on Sunday morning, it's TRUE! Also, if you play an instrument, have a talent you would like to share, or would like to work on special musical presentation, summer services offer a great opportunity.

MUSICAL SAVE THE DATE:

June 30: Special Outdoor Music for the Service in Wolcott Park

July /August TBA: Concert at Ocean Grove Pavilion

Oct. 22, 7:00 P.M. Friends Helping Friends Concert at Boscov's, Eatontown



Adopt A Highway is getting ready to kick off another clean-up. Let's all gather up and make our part of the highway shine.

We meet **May 19, 2013 at 1:00** in the church parking lot. As always you will get a fashionable orange vest, a neat pick, some very durable work gloves, and a heavy duty bag for the task. This is your chance to do something for your community and partake in an effort to maintain what God has so generously and freely given to us all. Sign up is on the counter in the Narthex. Any questions please see Fred Bauch 732-542-3733.

BENEFIT CONCERT FOR ANDREW McGEADY

Andrew is an usher in the Great Auditorium of Ocean Grove and a friend of Steven and Jean Buckley. He uses a motorized wheelchair due to severe cerebral palsy, and desperately needs a new lift-equipped vehicle in order to work, attend college and for medical visits. The world famous Dr. Gordon Turk will perform a concert to benefit Andrew. At St. Paul's UMC, 80 Embury Ave., Ocean Grove. **Sunday May 5 @ 4 p.m.** Free will offering! For more information, contact Steven or Jean, 732-542-1131.



ZUMBAthon®

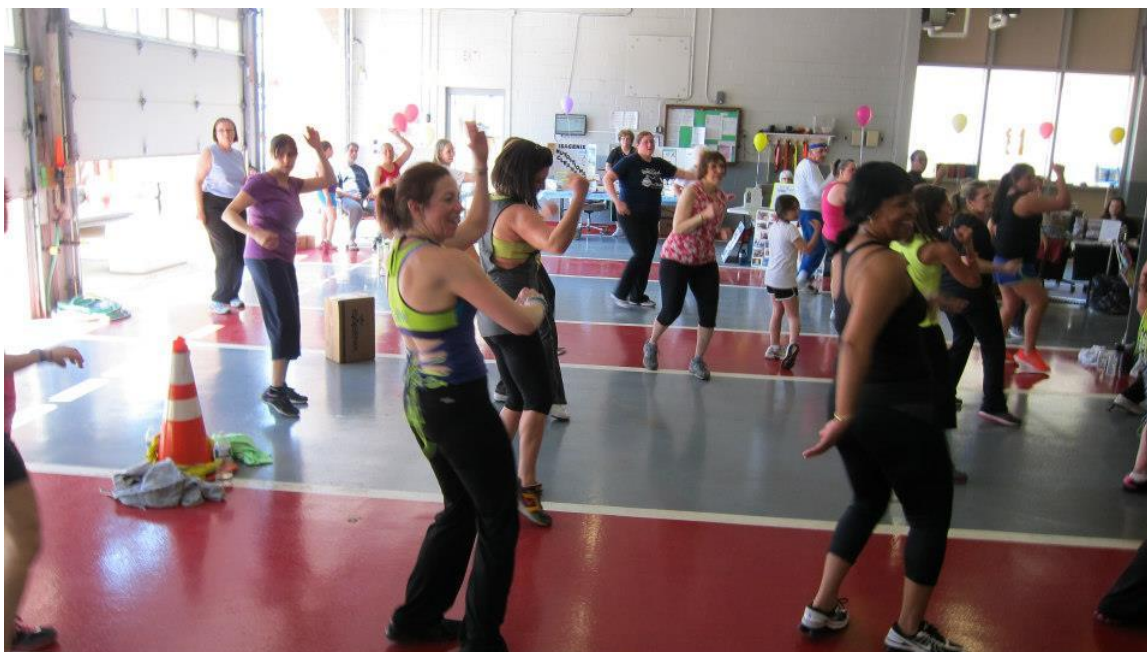


Photo by Paul Lampa



Tammy Weiss and other church members and friends enjoying the Zumbathon on April 27.

The Zumbathon raised \$565.00!

The Zumbathon featured instructors Paul Lampa, Michelle Smith, Joanna Shrearer, Nancy Eccles, and Deeanna D'Alterio and DJ Negro Luis.



"Flower Power"

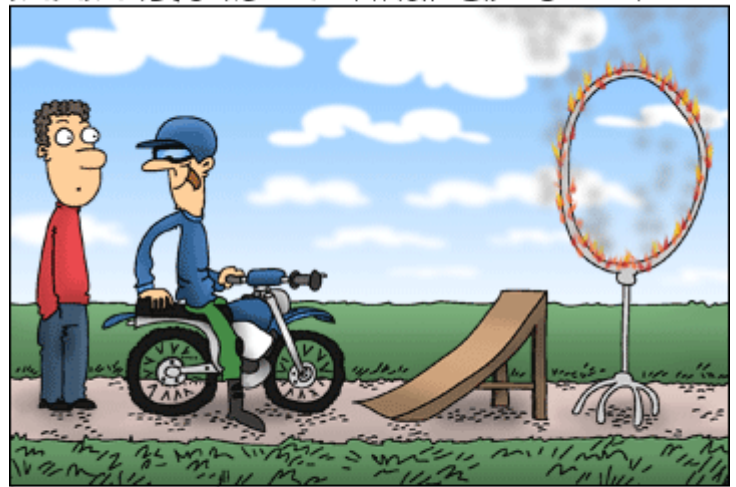
Thank you to everyone that ordered flowers from *Flower Power*. The church raised **\$794.00!** Email pictures of the beautiful flowers that you grow from the bulbs you purchased to harrismw@comcast.net. Later in the year we'll have a photo flower show in the newsletter!

Upcoming Events

- **May 4, 8:00AM** The first Saturday of each month is the Men's Breakfast in the John Calvin Room.
- **May 5, 4:00PM** Benefit concert for Andrew McGeady
- **May 7, 7:30PM** Prayer Service
- **May 8, Spring Ladies Day** at Keswick
- **May 19, 1:00PM** Road clean-up
- **May 19, 7:00PM** Spring Music Concert
- **May 26** Congregation Meeting
- **June 1, 8:00AM** Men's Breakfast
- **June 4, 7:30PM** Prayer Service
- **June 30** Outdoor Service in Wolcott Park
- **July 30, 7:00PM** Healing Service
- **July/August TBA** Ocean Grove Concert
- **October 22, 7:00PM** Friends Helping Friends Concert
- **November 2**, Beauty and the Beach Race

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(See Matthew 7:13-14)

04-22-2013

THERE'S NO REASON THE STRAIGHT AND NARROW CAN'T BE AWESOME!

Save the Date Sat. Nov. 2, 2013

The Beauty and the Beach Race/ Walk will be back **Sat. Nov. 2, 2013**. It is a great day for women of all ages. It is also a rewarding day for **Aslan Youth Ministries**. Located along the ocean in Long Branch the Race in Nov. 2012 was stormed out by Sandy. Our entrance fee goes to Aslan where lives are changed through the message of the Gospel in youth ministry, a family outreach for over 35 years in the immediate shore area. **Women, there is a great t-shirt, a necklace and chocolates at the end of the race. Ask Kelly Colao or Jean Buckley for more info.**

	May
1	Linda Morgan
4	Kathy Heller
7	Emma Rivera
9	Mary Harris
11	Conor Mullan
13	Virginia Lippincott
13	Tyler Shephard
13	Fred Bauch
16	Joyce Waldron
19	Willie Brown
28	Mary Tursi
29	Tess Nielsen
30	George Jones
30	Jason Evans

happy,
happy
birthday
to you!

	June
1	Charles Massa
1	Gwynne Mahns
2	Jean Buckley
5	Riley Mullan
7	Betty Janin
9	Bob Shaw
10	Heather Baffige
14	Altug Gurur
15	Matt Scheidt
18	Dean Morgan
23	Aisha Torralba
24	LeeAnn Tursi
25	Dorothy Van Pelt
	Donna Anderson
26	Sweeney