

THE FANFARE

THE MINI NEWSLETTER OF FANWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

FEB. 2016



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THE FANFARE

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For the Mar-Apr Issue

There are six issues of THE FANFARE published yearly. The deadline is the 2nd Friday every other month. Please put submissions in the FANFARE mail box or contact FANFARE Editor Chris Gray at the e-mail address listed above

Fanwood Presbyterian Church

"Growing in God's Love, Serving All God's People"
through "Rejoicing, Renewing and Reaching Out"

Lesson Three in the Session's Discernment of Same-Sex Issues and the Church

We began our study with a look at Genesis 18 and Abraham's pleading with God to save Sodom if there are 50 righteous people there. He works his petition down to 10 righteous ones, leading one elder to poignantly wonder why his petition did not reach the level of asking God to save Sodom if there is but one righteous one in it. This led us straight to my first point which was to ask, "How many righteous are in the world?" There has been but One righteous one and because of Him, God saves the world, rather than destroying it.

Next we turned to chapter 19 and Lot whose family was saved from destruction in Sodom. Unlike the rest of the crowd who wanted to violently rape the strangers who came to their town, Lot and his family showed hospitality, though they were far from holy or righteous. Lot was willing to give his daughters to the violent and lust-filled mob and after being saved, the daughters decided to sleep with their drunken father.

This chapter condemns: 1. the rejection of and, 2. violence toward God and strangers, along with 3. the chaotic and lustful thirst for power over others and especially those different from us which underlies these sins. That Lot and his daughters are saved despite both their lack of purity and Lot's resistance to the urgings of the divine messengers reflects our own lack of purity and resistance to God's messengers along with the amazing mercy and power of God that nevertheless save us through the compelling urgings of the Spirit.

Next we turned to Lev. 25 which calls same-sex relations an abomination. We noted that eating shellfish is also considered an abomination according to God's Law and then turned to the challenging matter of discerning which aspects of God's Law remain in place and which do not. *continued on page 3.....*

2016		February			2016	
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 2:00 p.m. Prayer Grp 7:30 p.m. Session 7:30 p.m. Scottish Dancing	3 9:30 a.m. - Job Networking 10:00 a.m. - Thrift Shop 4:15 p.m. - K.K. 5:15 p.m. - Joyful Noise 5:30 p.m. – Middlers 6:30 p.m. – Meal 7:00 p.m. - HS Youth 7:00 p.m. - Sanctuary Choir	4 9:30 a.m. Meditating on the Word 7:00 p.m. Small Group	5 7:00 p.m. Needle Nite	6
7 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:35 a.m. Coffee 11:15 a.m. Contemporary Service	8	9 1:00 p.m. Small Grp 2:00 p.m. Prayer Grp 7:30 p.m. Deacons 7:30 p.m. Scottish Dancing	10 Ash Wednesday 7:30 p.m. Worship	11 9:30 a.m. Meditating on the Word 7:00 p.m. Small Group	12	13
14 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:35 a.m. Coffee 11:15 a.m. Contemporary Service	15	16 1:00 p.m. Small Grp 2:00 p.m. Prayer Grp 7:30 p.m. - Committees 7:30 p.m. Scottish Dancing	17 9:30 a.m. - Job Networking 10:00 a.m. - Thrift Shop 5:15 p.m. - Joyful Noise 6:30 p.m. – Meal 7:00 p.m. – HS Youth 7:00 p.m. - SanctuaryChoir	18 9:30 a.m. Meditating on the Word 7:00 p.m. Trustees 7:00 p.m. Small Group	19	20 9:30 a.m. Food Bank
21 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:35 a.m. Coffee 11:15 a.m. Contemporary Service	22	23 1:00 p.m. Small Grp 2:00 p.m. Prayer Grp 7:30 p.m. Scottish Dancing	24 9:30 a.m. - Job Networking 10:00 a.m. - Thrift Shop 5:15 p.m. - Joyful Noise 6:30 p.m. – Meal 7:00 p.m. – HS Youth 7:00 p.m. - SanctuaryChoir	25 9:30 a.m. Meditating on the Word 7:00 p.m. Small Group	26	27
28 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:35 a.m. Coffee 11:15 a.m. Contemporary Service	29					

Pastor's message continued from page 1

Peter had a vision in Acts in which all foods were proclaimed clean but the early church remained ambivalent about this with Jerusalem church head James telling the apostles to not let their followers eat meat sacrificed to idols or food with blood left in it. [Acts 15:20]

Other aspects of the Law appear irrational and immoral to the modern mind such as putting to death any child who curses their parent— the same extreme penalty applies to sodomy and adultery-- and yet for someone who forces himself upon a female slave designated for another man, letting him off with a slap on the wrist. [While the text is not explicit about it being rape, one can hardly consider a slave woman betrothed to another man as “consenting” to her current master.]

The main point is that the church has always wrestled with moral and ethical matters related to the Law of God which: 1. Christ alone fulfilled (while at the same time mysteriously breaking some of the particulars of it!) 2. The Law has been replaced by a covenant of grace which Christians are under. 3. The Law was reinterpreted and reframed by a. Christ, b. by the early church, c. during the reformation, d. in modern times and e. throughout most of history in between! Led by the Spirit of Christ, we are once again in the middle of a period of discernment in which the living Law is being written more and more on our hearts and the active Word penetrating our hearts more deeply with love and grace.

We see this in the context and the conclusion of Peter's vision. A Roman centurion named Cornelius is told in a vision to send for Peter. And right after Peter's vision, the centurion's men go to Peter and bring him to their master. Peter immediately says to him, “You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with or visit a Gentile. But God has shown me that I should not call anyone impure or unclean.” [Acts 10:28]

This radical shift from many foods and most peoples being understood as unclean to not considering *any food or anyone* unclean reveals both how all have been cleansed by the life, death and resurrection of Christ Jesus and the absolute hospitality Christians must therefore show to all others.

Our next study will be on Feb. 2nd at 7:30 p.m. and all are, needless to say in consideration of the above, welcome! I have been so proud of Spirit of respect and peace embodied by our theologically and politically diverse board of elders throughout the studies thus far. May this continue as we commit to the graceful, humble and always loving Lordship and Mediation of Christ Jesus. Sincerely yours in Him, David

MID-DAY Fellowship

On Thursday, Feb 4, Mid-day Fellowship will meet in the dining room for our annual picnic. After lunch, there will be a presentation from the Seeing Eye of Morristown. The charge for this event is \$15.00 Members will be called. All others interested should call Shirley Pillow at 908-889-5602. The deadline is Jan 28th.

Lenten Soup and Devotions: "Risen"

Our Lenten 'Soup and Devotions' will be on Wednesdays from February 17th through March 15th starting at 6:30 p.m. with soup, salad and bread in the dining room. We will be watching the Passion and Easter components of the wonderful mini-series "Jesus of Nazareth" along with excerpts from the new movie "Risen." Small group discussions will follow and we will conclude at or before 8 p.m. You are welcome to join us on a trip to the theater to watch "Risen" on Saturday March 19th.

Ash Wednesday

Our Ash Wednesday service will be on Wednesday, February 10th in the sanctuary at 7:30 p.m. It will include a brief message, communion, beautiful choral music and the imposition of ashes. We hope you will join us for this powerful and meaningful holiday.

Calling New Committee Members

The mission of Christ Jesus begins with the flourishing of spiritual gifts in worship and extends into the life of our community through loving relationships with our neighbors. Both the receiving and the sharing of God within and beyond the church are supported by the wonderful work of church committees. I ask you to think about where your gifts and interests meet the needs of the world and the church and join the Work of God happening through one of the following committees whose chair, session liaison, or staff leader is in parentheses: 1. Mission (Jean Gray), 2. Christian Education (Christie Alston), 3. Music and Worship (Nancy Kohlenberger), 4. Fellowship (Evie Santo-Salvo), 5. Hospitality (Fiona Leahy), 6. Stewardship and Finance (Carol Thomson.)

Most committees meet once a month on the third Tuesday (with exceptions in the summer and December) for a brief devotional with Pastor David and about 45 minutes to an hour of discerning and planning. If you are not a 'meeting' person but would like to support programs run by these committees, please let the above leaders know. I want to thank everyone who has given so much time and talent to committee work over my eight years here and I hope many newcomers will get to know brothers and sisters in the church more along with learning more about the inner workings of the church. Be prepared for a phone call from a committee leader in the months ahead. God bless the flow of love and service in and through our committees. Pastor David

Missions Update, Jan. 2016

At the beginning of a new year – Missions would like to give the Congregation a few updates: Our Meal Ministry continues to flourish – In 2015, we delivered an average of 115 meals on the one Sunday of every month (January through December, thanks to the many wonderful volunteers willing to use a Sunday afternoon to “feed the hungry.”!).

We received honorable mention in the annual Cranford-Elmora Soup Kitchen newsletter: “Fanwood Presbyterian Church continues to bring bags of dried goods and other necessary items, which they distribute to our guests as they leave on the 4th Sunday of each month. They also support us and many other charities with proceeds from their lovely thrift shop... . Thank You Fanwood Presbyterian Church for your constant and heartwarming support.”

We were privileged to hear from Nadia Ayoub (the missionary we support, working with the Roma people in the Ukraine), in person in July of 2015. She is a faithful servant of Jesus Christ, and does amazing work among one group of the world’s much marginalized groups, with limited resources. In her November newsletter, she wrote: “ ...I thank God for his faithfulness through the year 2015. And I thank each one of you for continuing to be faithful partners with your prayers, encouragements, and support...”

I also went back to visit one family in Ticebokeny. They have nine children and the kids are afraid to come to the Roma Mission Center. The mother asked if we could come and work with their children at home, so we did--- and we had good time with their nine children, and three more children from the neighbors.....There are some signs of change in the people’s behavior, even little changes in a spiritual way. And this is only happening because of your partnership and support for me and God’s work among the Roma.”

Nadia is a daily testament to God’s grace in this world. The Mission Committee would like to ask everyone at FPC to hold her up in prayer this year, more than ever. Presbyterian World Mission is in some financial difficulty, and it is questionable whether or not they will be able to sustain all the missionaries in the field this year. Let us pray that Nadia will be able to continue God’s work with the Roma.

As a reminder at the start of the New Year: If anyone feels called to help in a Mission project – particularly with the delivery of bagged lunches to Elizabeth , please contact Jean Fraser at fromage7703@gmail.com or call her at 908 8891507.

In His service – The Mission Committee.

Needle Nite

Friday, February 5th at 7:30pm will be the next Needle Nite at Fanwood Presbyterian Church in Westminster Hall on Marian Ave. The pattern for the quilters is 'Half Square Triangles.' It is the project for 2016.

The knitters and those who crochet will continue on their projects for charity. All are welcome to come and see what is being done and to join the group.

If fabric, batting or yarn is needed, Needle Niters may e-mail their request to needlenite@fanwoodpc.org. The donated materials used end up in many forms usable by the charities that receive them. The Needle Nite Participants then take their newly learned skills for their use at home.

For further information about these projects or directions to Fanwood Presbyterian Church please call the office at 908-889-8891 or e-mail admin@fanwoodpc.org or check the web www.fanwoodpc.org.

The Reading Group

The Reading Group will meet on Friday, March 11th at 2pm at the home of Pat Reyes, 10 Tower Pl., Fanwood. 908-490-1901 The new book to be discussed is "The Invention of Wings" by Sue Monk Kidd. This is an historical Novel inspired by actual figures of the time. It is an extraordinary story of two women and their struggles for freedom. Each trying to find the wings that will liberate them, one from slavery the other from what society imposes on her. Their relationship spans three and a half decades. Both Fanwood and Scotch Plains Libraries have this book.

Anyone wishing to join the group and discuss the books, whether you have read them or not, please call Pat or Cena Pollitt, 908-889-2029.

Notice to all Women of the Fanwood Presbyterian Church

We will be hosting the Women of the Presbytery women for the Spring Gathering on Monday, April 25th at 6pm. PLEASE SAVE THE DATE. The speaker will be Gloria Frederick from New Brunswick Presbytery and on the UN Committee on the Status of Women. This will be a "Bring our own Dinner" event, but FPC Women, as host will provide the beverage and desserts, also will be needed for set-up and clean-up.

The Coordinating Team of the Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery will be meeting at our Church on Monday, February 29th from 5:30 to 7pm. This is an opportunity to be part of the planning for the April meeting.

Please let Judith (908-889-8891) or Cena (908-889-2029) know if you are interested in attending and are willing to help at either of these events.

January 18, 2016 MLK Day of Service Mitten Project at Fanwood Presbyterian Church.

There were two women cutting mittens from old wool sweaters and two women sewing them. 25 pair of mittens were made that day, 7 needing to be darned. Also 3 vests, 9 pair of inner soles and 2 pair of mittens with matching neckwear were made. Many cut pair were taken home to be sewn. On January 20 a donation of 24 Pair of mittens, the 3 vests, 9 pair of inner soles and 5 pair of mittens with matching neckwear were given to the Agape Meal clothes closet in Elizabeth. A 'cottage industry' of mittens will continue in several homes until all the sweaters are gone.

Family Inter-faith Board Game Night, Feb. 6th, 6:30 p.m., Westminster Hall

There has been a tremendous resurgence of interest in board games over the last 10 years thanks to many new wonderful games coming mostly out of Europe. All are invited to learn some new ones and hopefully welcome friends from other faith traditions to our church. All ages are welcome and there will be games suitable for age 8 to adults. Eat before you come, other than dessert, which will be served. Hopefully this will be the first of many game nights ahead. **Please let Pastor David know if you would like to prepare a dessert for this event.**

➤➤➤➤➤ February Birthdays ◀◀◀◀◀

Date		Date		Date		Date	
1	Maryadele O'Neil Carter Slifer Madilynne Slifer	9		17	Ashley Ulman	25	
2	Michael Howell	10	Lucas Gallo	18	Peter T. Halas Elizabeth Henderson Jillian Leahy Jennifer Lorber Milton W. Purvis Jr.	26	Brian Lorber
3		11		19	Joan Caroselli	27	Gregory Baliko
4	Theodore J. Bassman, J.H. Stephen Falloon	12		20	Brian L. Bantz	28	
5		13		21			
6	Maxamillion Kaiser	14		22	Michael Donofrio Normal Gustafson		
7	Stephanie Baliko Ryan Johnson	15	Susan Kelly	23	Kimberley Slifer Oliva Francavilla		
8		16	Luke Travis	24	Genine Schwartz		

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