



The Blawenburg Beacon

Newsletter for the members and friends of the Blawenburg Reformed Church

Early Spring 2019

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Giving Thanks for Teachers

March 4, 2019

Before our February consistory meeting, (the consistory is our church leadership board) I was responsible for devotions. For my devotions I shared about a person who was important in my faith development.

I grew up in a very Bible-heavy environment. Between worship (morning and evening services on Sundays), Sunday school, family devotions, Christian school classes on religion, and my weekly Christian boy scout program, I heard a lot of scripture passages, lessons, sermons, and prayers. I knew the basics of Christianity inside and out, but when I went to college, God used one of my professors to lead me into a deeper understanding of my faith.

I went to Calvin College, which is a Dutch Reformed liberal arts college in Grand Rapids, Michigan. In my first year of studies at Calvin, I took the 101 Theology course with Professor Tom Thompson. His class thrilled me. Professor Thompson's lectures revealed the stories that lay behind the traditional Christian beliefs that I had grown up hearing about over and over again. It is one thing to be told that God is a Trinity of three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It is a whole other experience to hear about the history that led to the doctrine. In Professor Thompson's classes he revealed the history, the context, the arguments, and the battles that were fought to bring about our orthodox Christian beliefs.

Professor Thompson showed me how dynamic and alive theology is and was and could be. He showed me how theology is not just about ideas that were decided upon in the distant past, but that theology is something that we all are doing all the time. We are always growing in our understandings of God and God's calling. We are always responding to new questions. We are always in the middle of wrestling with our beliefs, our doctrines, our questions, and our doubts.

Through Professor Thompson, God lit a fire in my heart. God made me passionate and curious to know more, to study more, to wrestle with my beliefs more, and to understand more and more how scripture plays a role in my life. Eventually this passion and curiosity was transformed from a personal desire into a passion and a desire to help others to grow in their beliefs and their faith-lives as well. Eventually, I found myself feeling called to congregational ministry.

I am thankful for the people whom God has put in my life, who helped me become the person that I am today. I would encourage you to spend some time thinking about your own faith journey. Who are the important people who helped you into your faith or taught you valuable lessons? Remember those people and give thanks for them today.

Pastor Jeff

ADMINISTRATION



For Your Planning Convenience

Beacon material is due to the office (office@blawenburgchurch.org) and Barb P. (bjpmay1998@aol.com) by the date of the deadline. Also, if anyone would like to contribute photos for future Beacons, we welcome them.

Deadline
April 2

Rummage Sale - New Leadership Needed!

Our church has had a tradition of hosting a spring rummage sale. This year we are prayerfully wondering if God is preparing or has prepared anyone to take over the work of organizing the sale. If no one comes forward, the sale will not occur this year, but perhaps a new leader or team of leaders could spend this spring making plans for a fresh new take on the rummage sale for next year. The funds raised from the rummage sales are typically divided between charitable organizations and restoration projects on the historic church campus. If you have any interest in learning more about the possibility of taking on this leadership role, perhaps with a friend or team of friends, please contact the church office or speak to pastor Jeff.



New Church Email Address

Please be aware, the new church email address is office@blawenburgchurch.org. Emails sent to the former address will continue to forward to the church office's inbox.

*We commit our gifts to **WORSHIP** gathering as a community to celebrate God's presence among us!*



A joyful noise from the Celebration Singers.

THE LENTEN SEASON

Ash Wednesday at the United Reformed Church - March 6, 6pm

For Ash Wednesday this year we are invited to worship with our brothers and sisters at the United Reformed Church in Somerville. Their service begins with a potluck supper at 6pm followed by a worship experience starting around 7pm. The worship service will include communion and the imposition of ashes. All are invited and a carpool can be organized for those who would like to find a ride.

Maundy Thursday at the Griggstown Reformed Church – April 18, 7pm

This year we will have a combined Maundy Thursday service at the Griggstown Reformed Church. We will join them in their traditional Tenebrae-style service. The service will include the celebration of the Lord's Supper and will end with the congregation leaving the darkened sanctuary in silence to prepare for the sorrow of Good Friday and the joy of Easter.

Good Friday – Personal Prayer at Blawenburg and a Service at The Hillsborough Reformed Church, 7:30pm

There will be two ways to observe this solemn day. The sanctuary at Blawenburg will be open for a time of personal prayer between 12:00pm and 3:00pm. Pastor Jeff also invites you to attend the Good Friday service at the Hillsborough Reformed Church in Millstone at 7:30pm - please reach out to pastor Jeff if you are interested in carpooling.

Worship Guide

- Mar 10 First Sunday of Lent – Luke 4:1-13 – Jesus Tempted in the Wilderness
- Mar 17 Second Sunday of Lent – Luke 13:31-35 – Jesus Laments over Jerusalem
- Mar 24 Third Sunday of Lent – Luke 13:1-9pr – A Call to Repentance
- Mar 31 Fourth Sunday of Lent – Luke 15:1-3, 11-32 – The Parable of the Prodigal Son
- Apr 7 Fifth Sunday of Lent – John 12:1-8 – Jesus is Anointed
- Apr 14 Sixth Sunday of Lent, Palm Sunday– Luke 19:28-40 – The Triumphal Entry
- Apr 18 Maundy Thursday – at GRC 7pm - John 13:1-7, 12-17, 34-35 – A New Commandment
- Apr 21 Easter – John 20:1-18
- Apr 28 Chaplain Nancy Curtis preaching

WORSHIP—Continued

Scout Sunday, February 17 - The boys participated in the worship service. They . . .



rang the bell,



greeted,



led the Scout Law Litany,



read the scripture,



shared scout activities,



received thanks and appreciation from the church,



and collected offering.



And . . . (see next page)

*We commit our gifts to **HOSPITALITY** caring for those in our congregation*

...in addition to being worship leaders, the scouts enjoyed a time of fellowship with the congregation and a special cake.



If you should have a long-term health challenge, you just might get a Sunshine Basket to help you thru a difficult time. Two of our friends have already received cheery baskets with fun gifts.

HOSPITALITY—Continued

Potluck brunches on cold winter days. Creative dishes were enjoyed by all.



Kids always know how to entertain themselves after the meal—playing musical chairs.

*We commit our gifts to **LIFE-LONG LEARNING** providing spiritual growth opportunities for all.*

Sunday School



PARTY TIME!

Two and three year olds made party hats to celebrate the return of the lost son.

Mary and Martha Book Group

A sample of the group, the appetizers, and the dessert with hearty soups and lively discussion in between made for an interesting evening. On April 24, the discussion will continue with Chapters 6--8 of The Ragamuffin Gospel by Brennan Manning. Do chapters with titles of "Grazie, Signore", "Paste Jewelry and Sawdust Hot Dogs", and "Freedom from Fear", intrigue you enough to come to the group? You would be more than welcome to join us at Bernice's home at 6:15 for discussion and then dinner.



Tuesday Morning Bible Study meets at 10am in the church library. Come join us as we read and discuss scripture for the upcoming Sunday message and take time to pray with one another. Coffee and an occasional treat will be provided.

Bible and Cell Phone

A new symbol for 21st century Bible study. When in doubt, Google!





Blawenburg Village School

PO Box 153, Blawenburg, NJ 08504 | 609-466-6600
info@blawenburgvillageschool.com | Angela Wright, Director

February may be our shortest month; however, it is also a very busy month. We started off the month talking about Groundhog's Day. Will we have six more weeks of winter? Or is spring just around the corner? Our students loved seeing their own shadows and trying to predict what the groundhog was going to decide.

We had wonderful Valentine's Parties here at BVS. Each child was given a hat to decorate, and bring back to school for our Mad Hatter Party. We had such special treats to eat and we absolutely loved showing off our very unique hats.

A special visitor also spent some time with us. Miss Lisa, our friendly neighborhood Dental Hygienist, talked to us about having healthy teeth and how eating healthy foods helps to make our teeth happy.

BVS has started the enrollment process for the 2019-2020 school year. If you are interested in checking out our Hidden Gem, please call or email the school for additional information or to schedule a tour.

Angela Wright



We commit our gifts to **MISSIONS** serving those in need both locally and around the world.

Scout Mission Project

Jai Narula of Troop 46, spearheaded a scout project to help mothers and children (especially teens who suffer from domestic violence relationships). Jai thanks everyone in our congregation who helped to fill the tub below with health and bath items for both boys and girls.



Hurricane Florence Recovery

BRC received a letter of thanks for our response to the need for school and health kits. Because of the response of many churches, Church World Service was able to get nearly 50,000 kits to victims of Hurricane Florence impacted in North Carolina last year. Now that their supply is critically low and hurricane season is coming up, the Missions Team has committed to helping to restock their shelves with 20 school and 20 health kits. We will collect for these kits in August and early September. For our repeated efforts, our church will be known to CWS as a Kit Ambassador.



Thanks from Heifer International



*We commit our gifts to **PROCLAMATION** spreading the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ.*

Montgomery Mosaic Intercultural Community Celebration was held on January 28. Pastor Jeff is sharing the Sinterklaas tradition of putting an orange in a wooden shoe.



A sampling of treats from all cultures represented.

Montgomery Mosaic Presents “A Proud Heritage: The African American History of the Sourlands” Tuesday, March 5 7:00pm Montgomery Municipal Building – One way to “love our neighbor as ourselves” is to hear their stories and understand their heritage. We have an opportunity to learn more about our African American neighbors on March 5. Montgomery Mosaic is honored to host a special presentation by Elaine Buck and Beverly Mills. They will share about the African American presence in our region dating back to colonial times that has been left out of many of our local histories. Copies of their book, *If These Stones Could Talk*, will be available for purchase. This event is sponsored in coordination with the Van Harlingen Historical Society.



One outcome of our Sinterklaas endeavors - A happy young married couple enjoy their time at an NJ Devils’ hockey game. Tickets were a gift to them purchased at the Silent Auction. (The happy couple are the Zimmermans. Chris is Barb Reid’s nephew, and Cara is Sue Perkins’ daughter.)

Run With Rotary!

For the third year in a row, we will be suspending our normal Sunday morning worship service to participate in a fantastic community event, which is hosted in nearby Skillman Park. This year, we will welcome our friends from the Griggstown Reformed Church on a joint team for the race! We will then have a joint worship service at Blawenburg Church at 5pm that evening. May 5 will be a wonderful day of mission support, community connections, and inspiring worship. Registration can be found online at <https://runsignup.com/race/nj/skillman/runwithrotarynj> or by googling “run with rotary 2019”. There is a one mile ramble (which Pastor Jeff will be doing) and the main event, which is a 5k. The ramble fee is \$15 and the 5k is \$27. One hundred percent of your fee will go towards charities and causes, many of which we already support as a church.

PROPERTIES

PROPERTIES UPDATE

The weather stripping on the church front doors was just installed. Now they are not only beautiful, but insulating as well! The once-wide air gaps are gone! Insurance payment has been received for repair of those front shingles from the November car accident, so that repair will be next along with repainting the gray steps in warmer weather.

Bids are being sought for removal of 'bats in the belfry' and repair and painting of the steeple as well as fireproofing the attic storage space in the Village Schoolhouse.

Does anyone out there have grant writing experience? Our Properties Team could use your help in the coming months.

Cleaning Days: Thursday, March 21, 7-9pm and Saturday, March 23, 9am-1pm. We will be cleaning the church in advance of an Eagle Scout Court of Honor and the Easter season. Your help is always welcomed!

New Recycling Containers & Rules: There are directions for recycling on the bulletin board in the kitchen in Cook Hall.

Beautifully Insulated Refurbished Doors!



SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

CROSSROADS XXXIV
&
Reformed Church Women
in the Regional Synod of the Mid-Atlantics present

Broken Hearts/Thriving Hearts: Our Life's Journey



Women Pilgrims Journeying Together With Christ

"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. And the life that I now live in my body, I live by faith, indeed, by the faithfulness of God's Son, who loved me and gave himself for me. [Galatians 2:20, Common English Bible (CEB)]"

FEATURING:
A Pilgrim's Psalm
A Contemporary Oratorio For Lent
By ***doorjam***

March 29-30, 2019
Harvey Cedars Conference Center, Long Beach Island, NJ
Friday 7:30 PM - Saturday 5:30 PM Supper
Check in Friday 4:00 - 7:00 PM

For more information, see church office bulletin board.

**THE CENTRAL NEW JERSEY AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS
PRESENTS THE ANNUAL MEMBERS' RECITAL
Sunday, March 24 @ 2:30PM
Princeton University Chapel**



Recital Program

TIM BROWN—SUITE GOTHIQUE (COMPLETE) by LEON BOELLMANN
KATHLEEN CONNOLLY—KOMM, HEILIGER GEIST & PRAELUDIUM IN F by D. BUXTEHUDE
SUE KIM—CHORALE NO. 1 IN E MAJOR by CESAR FRANCK
MICHAEL RYAN—DANCING PIPES by JONATHAN DOVE
CECILE WANG—TU ES PETRA by HENRI MULET
NOEL WERNER—LA NATIVITE & HYMNE D' ACTIONS DE GRACES: TE DEUM by JEAN LANGLAIS

OFFICE HOURS

Mon, Wed, Thurs.

8:00am -1:00pm

Fri—11:00am—12:30pm

*The Blawenburg Beacon
is a publication of*

**Blawenburg
Reformed
Church**

424 Route 518
PO Box 266
Blawenburg, NJ 08504

609.466.1832

office@blawenburgchurch.org

Pastor
Rev. Jeff Knol

VP of Consistory
Bernice Van Nostrand

**Church Administrator
& Beacon Publisher**
Barb Reid

Beacon Editor
Barb Pavlicek

**Summary of Dates
(See articles for more information.)**

Plan Ahead:

March

- 4 Cemetery Team, 11:00am, CW Center
- Properties Team, 12:00pm, CW Center
- 6 Men’s Breakfast, 7:30am, Fellowship Hall
- Ash Wednesday Service, 6:00pm, United Reformed Church, Somerville
- 7 Missions Team, 10:15am, Library
- Communications Team, 11:00am, Library
- Worship Team, 2:30pm, Library
- 14 BSV Board, 9:30am, Library
- 19 Consistory, 7:30pm, CW Center
- 22 BVS Art Show, Fellowship Hall
- 28 Mary & Martha, 6:15pm, Bernice’s Home
- 30 Scout Ceremony, 10:30am, Sanctuary/
Fellowship Hall

April

- 1 Properties Team, 12:30pm, CW Center
- 2 **Beacon Materials Due**
- 3 Men’s Breakfast, 7:30am, Fellowship Hall
- 4 Missions Team, 10:15am, Library
- Communications Team, 11:00am, Library
- 11 BVS Board, 9:30am, Library
- Worship Team, 2:30pm, Library
- 13 Homeward Bound Dance, Fellowship Hall
- 18 Maundy Thursday Service, 7:00pm, GRC
- 23 Consistory, 7:30pm, CW Center
- 24 Mary & Martha, 6:15pm, Bernice’s Home
- 25 Blue Pomegranate, 7:00pm, Fellowship Hall
- 30 SHIP Lunch, 11:00am, Parking Lot

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

If you don’t see your name listed and it should be, please let Barb know so we can celebrate with you!

March

- 8 Katie Connolly
- 9 Ken Bradsell
- 12 Colby White
- 14 Ava Kugler
- 16 Sharilyn Tel
- 18 Byron Gurzo
- 19 Joe Pavlicek
- 20 Allison Clancy
- 24 Cheryl Soos
- 26 Ray Liao
- 29 Dot Dorey
Pam Wanner

April

- 1 LaFerne Keller
Pasquale Malpeso
- 2 Doug Hill
Katie Mueller
- 25 Jacque Parmele
- 26 Sarah Tel
- 27 Lori Bradsell

If anyone would like to contribute photos for future Beacons, we welcome them. Please send photos via email to Barb Pavlicek and Barb Reid by the date of the deadline. (See p. 2)

Weekly Events

Tuesday
Bible Study 10:00am

Saturday
AA 8:00pm

Sunday
Worship 9am
Sunday School 10am

BRC Mission Statement

The Blawenburg Reformed Church is a covenant community of God’s people united in Christ through the Holy Spirit.

We commit our gifts to worship, hospitality, life-long learning, serving those in need, and proclaiming the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ.



Like us on facebook to view more news and events!

We have a tradition of filling our sanctuary with an assortment and abundance of potted flowers on Easter Sunday – daffodils, lilies, hydrangeas, hyacinths, tulips, etc. If you would like to purchase plants, which you may take home with you after the service, please fill in the form below. You may mail it to or leave it in the church office or on the table at the entrance to the sanctuary through April 14. As with Christmas, we will have a page dedicating the flowers however you wish.



Easter Flower Order Form

Name _____

Phone _____

Number of Flowers _____ x \$15 = _____

Check Enclosed \$ _____ Cash \$ _____
(payable to Jean Beachell)

Dedication – From: _____

In honor or memory of: _____
(circle one)
