



The Blawenburg Beacon

September, 2013

A newsletter for the members and friends
of The Blawenburg Reformed Church

What'r We Search'n For?

*"So...we have a Search Committee. But what are they looking for, exactly?
Don't we have a pastor?..."*

Yes...we do. And Pastor Bob is a particularly good one! But he's not, in the parlance of the church, *"called and installed"*. That's church code for *"looks like...but not quite"*. Bob is serving us well, but under a temporary contract. His principal employer is Princeton Theological Seminary.

That's not to say Bob can't get *"called and installed"*. But first, we'd have to "call him"; then he'd have to accept the "call", and then the *Delaware-Raritan Classis* would have to "install him".

In our denomination – ***the Reformed Church in America*** – there's a regular process spelled out in the bylaws for what's referred to as "calling a pastor". In order to extend a call, the church has to take a fairly detailed look at itself. It has to assess its current situation; and it has to have a conversation with its members and supporters to, in a sense, define itself and its mission in the community. And that's why our Consistory has put in place a ***Search Committee***.

"Who's on it?"

There are six church members on the committee, folks you probably know. And as an advisor, we have Rev. David Leung Kahler, currently serving the Griggstown Reformed Church.

"Why is he on there?"

Because...are you ready?...*he's our Classis-appointed called and installed guy*. David, by the way, also serves the NJ Air National Guard as a Chaplain; and come this fall, he'll be sending us some very cool photos and comments from McMurdo Station in Antarctica. Why, you may ask, is he going there? And that's a *whole-nother story*.

Gracie Johnson and Jean Beachell represent Consistory. Ginny Doremus, Joe Pavlicek, Evelyn Cochran and Bob Bradsell represent the rest of us. Bob managed to miss the first meeting, so of course he was elected as chair. Evelyn serves as secretary.

You can corner one of these folks over coffee if you have something you want to say, but you'll soon have a more structured way to do that. They have just put in the mail their first official piece of business – a ***SURVEY***.

Check your mailbox. The survey package should be there shortly. In it, you'll find a questionnaire *for each person on the address label*.

"That seems a little excessive. Wouldn't one have been enough?"

No...this group wants to hear from all of us, especially from the young folks among us. And they've made it easy...they've even sent you a return envelope and paid for the postage!

So check your mail. And please complete the questionnaire as carefully and as thoughtfully as possible. It's important. And if the committee doesn't hear back from you, they're likely to give you a call!

Efforts Underway to Revitalize our Church

We hope you've all had a great summer and are refreshed and ready to join us as we launch our fall season on Sunday, September 8th at 10 am! A team of three Consistory members and our invaluable Music Director have been hard at work over the summer developing plans and ideas with a special mission to help our congregation's families and visitors build a foundation of Christian values that will sustain us for a lifetime. We have looked at what we offer in worship, education, service, and activities that allows us to explore and develop our faith. In August, the ad hoc team's work was presented to and approved by Consistory. Here is a thumbnail sketch of what was approved. We will:

1. **Worship and Music**

make an effort to inform the congregation before Sunday of the scripture and sermon theme. This includes more explanatory information in the bulletin, Beacon, and other places to help us grow in our understanding of the Bible.

- involve more people (youth through seniors) in leading worship.
- reinstate the Minute for Kids in an effort to incorporate young children in the worship service.
- continue to have a variety of music styles in the service and also continue to incorporate the musical talent of our children, youth, and adults in the worship service.
- make a special effort to reach out to the community to invite people to worship. You will see articles we have written in the local papers in early September.

2. **Education**

begin Sunday School on September 22. Bernice Van Nostrand and others trained in Children and Worship will lead a worship service then follow it with age-appropriate activities for Pre-K to Gr. 2, and Gr. 3-5.

- have periodic Mission Sundays to involve children and youth in mission activities.
- continue existing education programs: Tuesday Bible Study, Mary and Martha group.
- offer a confirmation class to young people who have not been confirmed.
- explore reinstating the Adult Forum after worship with a variety of programs as well as sermon follow-up and related Bible study.

3. **Service**

continue our existing missions with Crawford House, TASK, and other places as needs arise.

- continue our Tuesday community luncheons and provide more information about our faith and worship activities at the luncheons.
- engage more congregants, and those who use our facilities, in church work days.

4. **Activities**

hold a Welcome Back picnic after church on September 8th. [See page 3.]
develop other activities as the year evolves.

To have all this happen, we felt that we needed to revitalize our committee structure so that the work of the church is distributed among its members. We are now calling the committees "teams". Each team will have a Consistory liaison. The Clerk of Consistory (Dave Cochran) will oversee the teams and assure that they are meeting and receiving appropriate support.

Another internal activity is the establishment of a Long Term Planning Team. This team will discuss the upcoming activities of the church at least two months in advance so appropriate plans and publicity can be undertaken. Chaired by the Clerk of Consistory, this team will consist of Team Chairs and others involved in overall planning.

(Continued from page 2)

This all seems like a lot, but there are not a lot of new or different things involved with these activities. This plan is more like a tightening of bolts rather than building a new machine. Of course, to make this all work, we need your help. We need people to serve on teams, lead worship, sing in the choir, and invite community members to worship with us. We have an important story to tell about the redeeming power of Christ. We hope that you will lend your talents to help us grow the church so that our message will be shared with the community.

We're looking optimistically toward the future of our church. We hope you are, too!



Church Picnic



Sunday, September 8th, will be our Sunday School family kick off picnic. Please mark your calendar and make every effort to join us. It is a great time to see old friends and catch up with those who have been on vacation during the summer months.

Hot dogs, hamburgers, drinks, plates and utensils will be provided. We ask that you bring a salad or dessert (6 to 8 people) to share.

A sign up sheet will be at coffee hour on September 1st.

Thanks so much and see you all on the 8th.

Evelyn Cochran



Consistory Highlights

Consistory made up for no July meeting with a full agenda on the 8th of August, 2013!

Developing Christian Values Ad-Hoc Report: We received, approved and supported the ad-hoc committee report on “Developing Christian Values” which Barb Pavlicek presented. David Cochran has shared the gist of this with you in his article, *Efforts Underway to Revitalize Our Church* (see page 2). One of the biggest helps to all of us in this, we hope, will be our commitment to long-range planning. Dr. Bob has taught us to look at the ‘why’; David Cochran will share his gifts with us in determining and following through with the ‘who, what, and where’. Our first Long-Range Planning meeting will be September 26th at 7:30.

Team Structure: If we really are committed to learning more about why Jesus makes a difference to our daily lives, and we want to share that difference with others, and we want to do that in this location and time, then we need all of us humble servants to work together as teams to accomplish that! In that light, Consistory was asked to approve the recommendations of the ad-hoc committee on team structure and to empower these teams. The first step was to ask each Consistory member to be a liaison to a Team and to report back to Consistory each month on that Team. The Liaisons are responsible for staffing their Teams and being or finding a Chair. The Liaisons were self-assigned as follows:

Worship & Music: Gracie Johnson

Lifelong Learning: Alan Taback

Missions: Barb Pavlicek

Hospitality: [needed]

In addition to the above Teams, the following have Liaisons for reporting purposes:

BVS: Peg Querec

Stewardship: Jean Beachell

Buildings & Grounds: Peg Querec

Communications: Dave Cochran

[with Catherine Murphy]

Cemetery: [needed]

Clerk of Consistory: David Cochran was named Clerk of Consistory.

History Interviews: Bob Bradsell was granted a budget of \$200 to have the interviews he did for our 175th Anniversary converted to digital form to be preserved and available to anyone.

Spanish Service: Nancy Curtis’s request to continue offering a service in Spanish on the first Sunday of each month was approved.

Supervisor: Rev. David Leung-Kahler shared details of his upcoming deployment to Antarctica. He will be gone October through December. Rev. Bill De Young of Harlingen will fill in as Classis Supervisor in his absence. Pastor David will keep in touch with the Search Committee via email.

Search Committee: Jean Beachell shared the letters and surveys which the Committee is planning to mail out to members, friends, and neighbors on September 3rd.

Please know that you may take any concerns or issues to any Consistory member, listed above under Teams. We meet on the 2nd Thursday evening of every month. You may always request an item to be put on our meeting agenda if it cannot be addressed adequately otherwise. We welcome your input!

Gracie Johnson, VP

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.

Worship Team

We gather as a community to celebrate God's presence among us!

Dear Blawenburg Family,

What an exciting autumn awaits us! We do not know the fullness of the future but we do know who leads us into the future and that our Lord will bring us into exciting and eternal ministries if we will remain watchful and faithful.

Below is a plan for preaching for the coming few months. We will take on some practical and doctrinal topics, and we will proclaim some terrific Bible passages. I look forward to worshipping with each of you.

Faithfully,
Bob Sharman

September 1 *I Believe in...the Forgiveness of Sins*

Micah 7:18-20 (14-20)

--A text with themes of shepherding, judgment; and one of the best though overlooked passages in the Bible on forgiveness.

September 8 *Stewardship Arising out of Adoration*

John 12:1-8

--The troubling story of Mary, Judas, and the bottle of costly perfume.

September 15 Guest Preacher—Rev. Ben Rivera—*A Teaching Church*

Matthew 28:18-20

Dr. Sharman will be traveling to Midland, Texas with Princeton Seminary President M. Craig Barnes.

September 22 Sermon Series

What We Are on our Knees Before God...Is

What We Are: A Brief Study of Prayer

(1) Foundations of Prayer and Worship

Genesis 4:26b; Romans 8:15-17

--These passages show the beginning of prayer in the history of God's people, and the most heartfelt honest prayer of the child of Jesus.

September 29 (2) *Groanings from the Deep*

Romans 8:22-27

--The great biblical doctrine of *adoption*, and the groanings that are too deep for words. What means grace? According to Will Campbell, grace means we're all bastards but God loves us anyway.



ALMA helped to lead worship with their music in July and will be planning to be involved with worship over the Holidays.

Blawenburg Reformed Church to Offer Hispanic Church Service

Blawenburg Reformed Church will begin holding a Hispanic Christian worship service on the first Sunday of the month, beginning on September 1st at 9 AM in Cook Hall, located at 424 Route 518 (just east of Great Road/CR 601), in Blawenburg.

The service will be informal, with music and a message delivered by local seminary students in Spanish. A children's story will be offered in English at the same time.

Blawenburg Iglesia reformada para ofrecer servicio en la Iglesia Hispana

Blawenburg Iglesia Reformada comenzará la celebración de un culto de adoración cristiana hispana en el primer domingo de cada mes, comenzando el 1 de septiembre a las 9 AM en Cook Hall, ubicado en 424 Ruta 518 (al este de la Gran Ruta / CR 601), en Blawenburg.

El servicio será informal, con música y un mensaje emitido por los seminaristas locales en español. Un cuento para niños se ofrece en Inglés, al mismo tiempo.

And Good News—the Rev. Ramon Orostizaga from Princeton Seminary has agreed to deliver the message, beginning in October.

Hospitality Team

“... care for those in our congregation and the greater church community. . .”

Lunch for Locals
September, 2013

Every Tuesday, from 11:30 to 1:00, we serve lunch buffet-style in Cook Hall and a free-will donation is accepted (\$7 is appreciated).
Lunches will always have salad, bread and beverages.

September 3
Clam chowder, grilled cheese, cookies

September 10
Tomato bisque, empanadas, flan
(we have an Argentine woman cooking with us)

September 17
Vegetable soup, pasta and meatballs, ice cream

September 24
Mushroom soup, turkey pot pie, pumpkin bars and lemon bars

Life-Long Learning Team

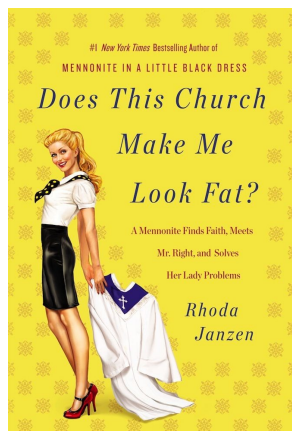
“We commit our gifts to... life-long learning...”

Nursery – Childcare for young children will be available during worship beginning **September 8th** in the schoolhouse from 9:45 a.m.

Sunday School for pre-K--5th Grade – Children, pre-K through fifth grade, are encouraged to participate in our special program called **Children and Worship**, ably taught by our beloved Bernice Van Nostrand. You may have noticed that our erstwhile lounge (west end of Cook Hall) has been transformed into the **new C & W space**. After the children’s message in church, children will leave the worship service to hear a Bible story and to engage in age-appropriate activities related to it. There will be activities for the older kids, too! This national program, promoted by the Reformed Church in America and taught by trained Children and Worship teachers, begins on **September 22nd**. Mrs. Van Nostrand can use a helper each week and would love to have observers any time. If this interests you, Bernice also teaches her C & W lesson during the week to our pre-school children. You may observe then, also. Other children’s events including mission activities, drama, and music are being planned for special occasions.

Blawenburg Village School – Don’t forget to share with your friends and neighbors that we have a special treasure in our midst: our church sponsors BVS, a week-day Christian pre-school dedicated to nurturing the social, developmental, emotional, and spiritual lives of children. And BVS sponsors Mom’s Morning Out for children ages 2 to 6. Details are on the BVS website: blawenburgvillageschool.com.

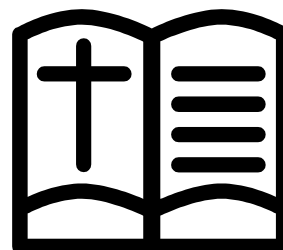
Life-Long Learning-Continued



Mary's and Martha's - The Mary and Martha prayer and book group will meet again on **September 14th** at 7:45 a.m. in Cook Hall. One area of interest (among others) that they will discuss from the book Does This Church Make Me Look Fat? is baptism. Is it a “meaningless sign” for infants to be baptized or a meaningful sign as an adult, “personal choice”? Take a second look at “Double Dip”, chapter 12.



Tuesday Adult Bible Study Group - This young-at-heart group will meet in Cook Hall lounge (across from the church office) on **September 24th** from 10 to 11:30 AM. They will begin the year by looking at the Gospels and wondering which words of Jesus have the most impact on our way of life today. If there is enough interest in maintaining a study group at this time, it will continue. If not, other choices will be made.



Sunday Morning Adult and Older Youth Group – Following fellowship time, these folks will meet in forum style to discuss a variety of suggested topics and issues as well as sermon follow-up or related Bible/Creed study. Let Pastor Bob know if you have a particular issue, book, or burning topic that you would like to explore! Older youth are welcome to join this group while other age-appropriate events are being planned. With coffee and refreshments, this group will meet at the far end of fellowship hall beginning **September 22nd**.

Sermon Feedback?

Questions?

Current Issues?



Blawenburg Village School

PO Box 153, Blawenburg, NJ 08504

609-466-6600

blawenburgvillageschool@yahoo.com

Karen Hill, Director

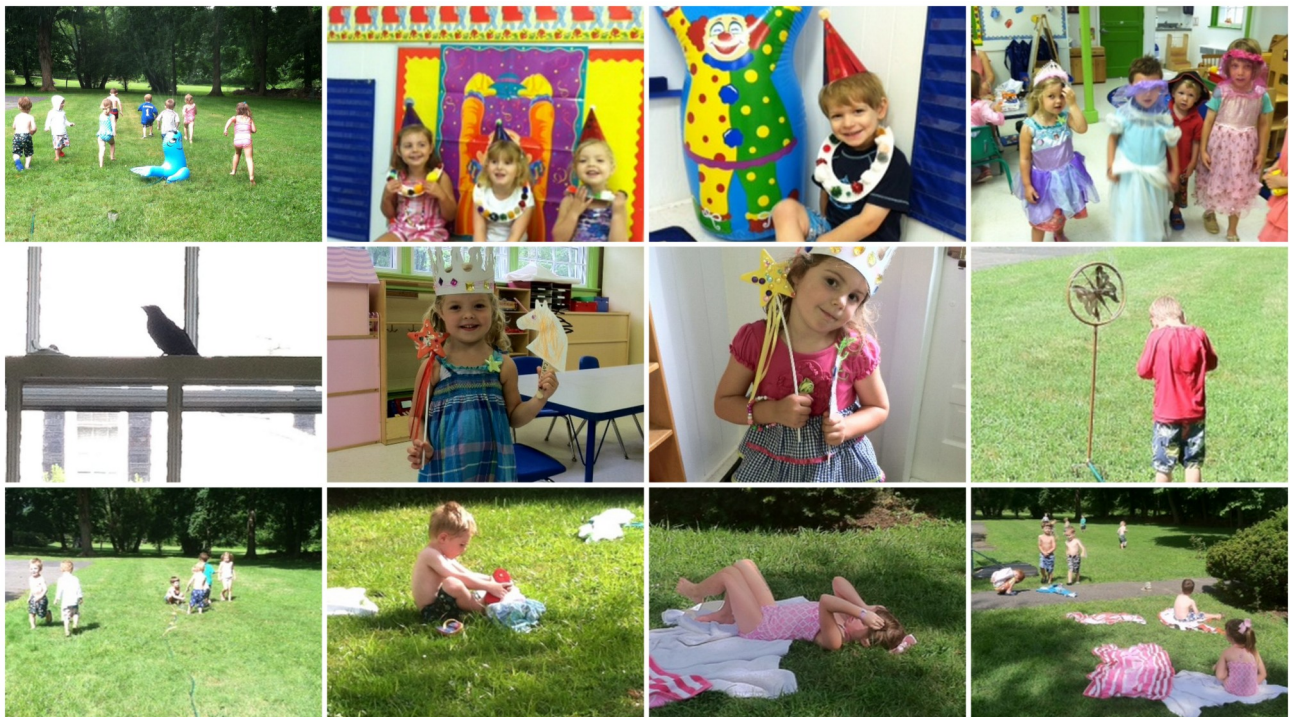
BVS summer camps were enjoyed by many children. Each week our campers participated in a variety of experiences. The first week our little school house was transformed into a circus, and our students had a great time becoming clowns! Week two found our students decked out in their chefs' aprons as they busily cooked (and ate) their way through the week. Pirates arrived at BVS for week three, and we worked hard to find their gold! Our last week of camp found us exploring the beach, and enjoying time in the sprinkler.

We have officially begun preparing for the start of the 2013-2014 school year, and eagerly await the arrival of our students on September 9th. Our teachers have begun preparing their classrooms and planning wonderful experiences to enrich the lives of our energetic preschoolers.

Our Mom's Morning Out Program will meet every Thursday starting September 19th. Children ages 2-6 are welcome to join us. They do not need to be registered students to attend. All sessions include arts and crafts, dramatics and pretend play, music, stories, snack and outdoor time. Sessions are 9:30-12:00, and the cost is \$30.00/session.

If you're interested in any programs, please call the school office at 609-466-6600 or send an email to blawenburgvillageschool.com. Limited spaces are available in some programs.

Check out the BVS page on Facebook to discover more about our daily events and see some pictures of our camp experiences!



Missions Team

We commit our gifts to. . .serving those in need.

This fall into winter, our church will combine its efforts to serve those in need with the focus in **September** on the most vulnerable—babies. In areas of extreme poverty or following a natural disaster, the **Church World Service Baby Care Kits** help young mothers care for their newborn babies. This is a wonderful family project, or you might like to partner with a friend or neighbor to assemble a kit for a baby. You may also purchase in bulk and donate the items below for the September 29th Sunday school lesson.

Please take the baby items to church by September 22nd. We will have a lesson on caring and sharing during the children's Sunday school hour on September 29th. The activity after the C & W story (See p. 7.) will be to assemble the baby care kits for delivery. (Ten baby blankets are already available thanks to Barb Reid's love of crocheting.)

To assemble a Baby Care Kit, you will need:

- Six cloth diapers
- Two T-shirts or undershirts (no onesies)
 - Two washcloths
 - Two gowns or sleepers
 - Two diaper pins
- One sweater or sweatshirt (can be hand-knitted or crocheted)
- Two receiving blankets (one can be a hand-knitted or crocheted baby blanket)

Items must be new and under 12 months in size. Wrap items inside one of the receiving blankets and secure with both diaper pins. Patterns for many of the Baby Care Kit components are available online at www.churchworldservice.org or by calling your CWS Regional Office at 888-297-2767.

Value: \$39

Processing cost: \$2 per Kit (donations always accepted)

Do not enclose processing monies with your Kits. A special offering of \$2 (or more!) for each kit will be collected to help defray the cost of processing and shipping.

* * * * *

October mission focus: **CROP Walk**

Sunday, October 20th -- Montgomery United Methodist Church

Walk With Wendy and Sadie

(Wendy Herbert and her super dog, Sadie, will lead our walkers.)

More information in October *Beacon*.

* * * * *

November mission focus: **Operation Christmas Child Shoe Boxes**

Collection Dates: November 10—17.

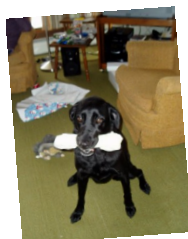
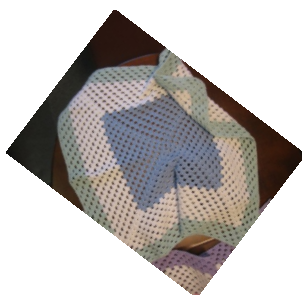
More information in October *Beacon*.

* * * * *

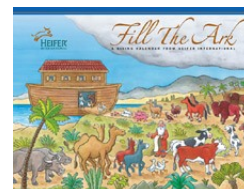
December mission focus: **Heifer International**

The gift that keeps on giving.

More information in November *Beacon*.



Sadie, with her CROP sponsor sheet



Food Pantry

Hover over the image to reveal what's in the King's Way Food Pantry!



The previous page shows our global missions, but our **local mission** needs our help too.

Our local food pantry, located at the Otto Kaufmann Center in

Skillman, is always in need of non-perishable food items, health and beauty aid items, pet food, and sundries, etc. Drop off items in the sanctuary or in Cook Hall under the mission table and we will deliver them.

Volunteer Opportunity

T.A.S.K.

By Barbara Reid

Alan Taback and I go to T.A.S.K., the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen, on Wednesday mornings to tutor people who have become our friends. We work one on one with those who are dedicated to improving their lives, despite their difficult circumstances. I know that both of us gain humility from our experience—I have been going now for about six weeks; and so far two people have been recognized for receiving their GEDs, and now have become tutors themselves. It takes not much more than a little patience, a bit of being able to adapt, and just having hope that we might have the ability to enrich the lives of those less fortunate than ourselves. We invite anyone to join us. Alan and I leave the church parking lot at 8:15 on Wednesday mornings and are both more than happy to drive. We are generally back by 11:00. Should you be interested, give either of us a call. Alan can be reached at 609-915-5420 and I am at 609-558-4471. Or simply join us at 8:15 on any given Wednesday.

In the Spring/Summer 2013 newsletter, *Crawford House, Halfway House for Women*, there was a thoughtful and thankful tribute to Bill Herbert and our congregation for the work that Bill initiated there. We thought that you would like to read it.

In Memoriam

Many people touch our lives in ways that are very special. Bill Herbert was one of those people. A member of the Blawenburg Reformed Church, Bill became passionate about the work that takes place at Crawford House and found a special connection with the women who are part of the program here. Bill's unending enthusiasm for Crawford House was evident in all the projects he undertook. Whether it was creating the two gardens, starting the tradition of teaching the residents how to prepare homemade soups or finding volunteers to manage weekly computer training, Bill never faltered in his leadership and dedication to all he undertook. Bill left behind a wonderful legacy that is being carried on by other members of the Blawenburg Reformed Church's congregation. The time that Bill spent with us was very special and will always be remembered with appreciation.

Sinterklaas...Save the date!

We will be hosting 'Sinterklaas' on Dec. 7th. This is just a reminder to put up those preserves while harvest time is here, and to think of other 'crafty' projects to tackle!



BRC Honored by Crawford House Save the Date

Each year Crawford House honors individuals and organizations that have given it significant support. At their annual Harvest Dinner on October 24, 2013, they will recognize Blawenburg Church's mission efforts.

We hope that you will be able to attend this dinner at Princeton Marriott in October. It is a fundraiser, and the price is \$125.00. It would be great if we could fill a couple of tables of eight.

Proclaiming Team

... and proclaiming the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ.



**“Flowers for Wanda”
An Exhibition by Alan Taback
Opening Reception September 20, 2013
7:00pm – 10:00pm
The Blawenburg Market // Blawenburg, NJ**



A few months ago, my friend Wanda Saums requested flowers from me. It wasn't a bouquet she wanted, and she certainly wouldn't have accepted a solitary rose. She was asking for a painting. I was hesitant; I had taken a break from painting. But Wanda was adamant, and, in her own way, motivating: "You must paint me some flowers." Looking back, starting this project for Wanda helped re-energize my artistic spirit; it gave me the drive I needed to start painting again. After a few weeks, I had worked on some paintings of tulips and other flowers, and I was looking forward to showing them to Wanda. But she passed away, and I never got the chance.

In the two weeks following Wanda's death, two more dear friends passed on: Bill Martin and Louisa McElwain.

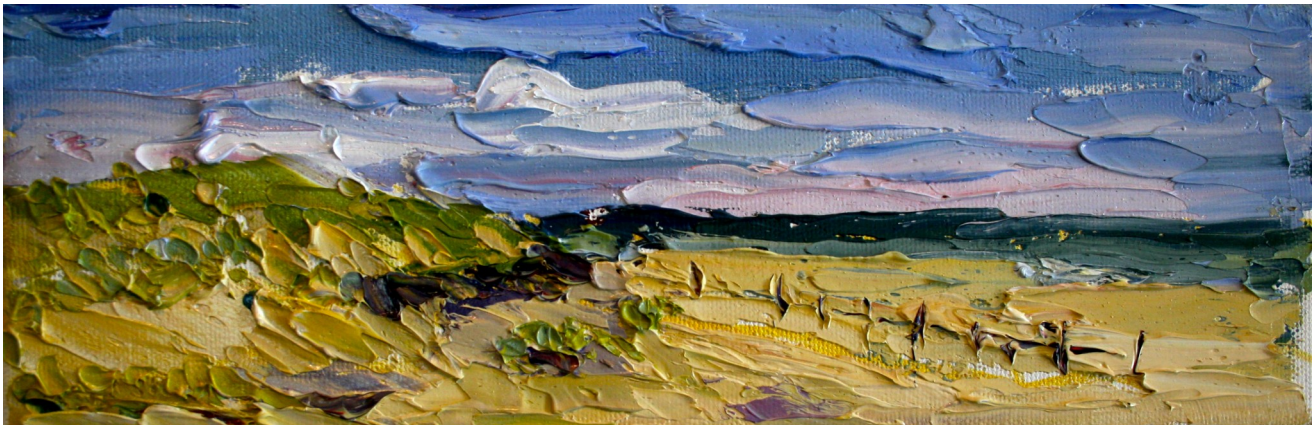
On September 20, my wife Louise and I will host an exhibition in their memory titled "Flowers for Wanda" at the Blawenburg Market from 7pm – 10pm (393 Rt. 518, Blawenburg, NJ). The show includes 25 new paintings – various representations of flowers – all painted within the last two months. I hope to at last give Wanda her flowers and to honor the spirit of these incredibly important people in my life.

The exhibition will run from September 20 – October 25.

*To God be the Glory
Our gifts are from the Lord
When I paint, the Holy Spirit;
flows through me.
All Praise be to God"*

Bio Snapshot:

Alan Taback's paintings have been exhibited in solo and group exhibitions in galleries throughout the United States and abroad, including the Toyamaya Gallery in New York City; Cine-Space in Hollywood, CA; and the Talisman Gallery in Ios, Greece. Alan received a fellowship from the Vermont Studio Center in Johnson, Vermont in 1995.



Tear out or print this page. Put it on your frig.
Make someone's day! Wish them a happy birthday/anniversary!



Anniversaries

11 Brian & Barb Van Liew
23 Doug & Pat Wengel

2 Mark Meyer	16 Calvin Urbanski	
3 Jessica Weingart	21 Cassandra De La Cruz	25 Dale Weingart
8 Peggy Querec	Daniella De La Cruz	26 Robert Bradsell
15 Jotham Johnson		28 Jean Beachell
Ginny Doremus		

Summary of Dates

September 1	9 AM	Hispanic Worship Service (Cook Hall)
	10 AM	Worship with Communion
September 6	9 to 11 AM	BVS Orientation
September 8		Church Picnic (See page 3.)
September 9		First day of Blawenburg Village School
Sept. 11 thru 18		<i>Nancy on vacation!!!</i>
September 12	7:30 PM	Consistory
September 14	7:45 AM	Mary's and Martha's (See page 8.)
September 15	10 AM	Worship with Rev. Ben Rivera
September 16		Completed surveys due to the Search Committee
September 19	9:30—12	Mom's Morning Out begins at BVS
September 22		First Day of Adult and Children's Christian Education
September 23		Beacon information deadline for October issue
September 26	7:30 AM	Men's Breakfast
	7:30 PM	Long-Range Planning Meeting

The Blawenburg Beacon

P.O. Box 266

Blawenburg NJ 08504

Dated Material

The Blawenburg Beacon is a publication of the
Blawenburg Reformed Church
424 Route 518; P.O. Box 266
Blawenburg, NJ 08504
e-mail address: BRC1832@verizon.net
Editor: Barbara Pavlicek
Publisher: Nancy Curtis

Website: www.BlawenburgChurch.org
Phone: (609) 466-3108, Emergency: (908) 304-2627
Rev. Dr. Robert Sharman, Minister

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.