

# Oak Leaves

The Presbyterian Church of  
Basking Ridge  
Newsletter



March 2012

[www.brpc.org](http://www.brpc.org)

Keeping the Faith...Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

## *The Season of Lent*

In the Christian year, Lent is the 40-day period of repentance and reflection, preparing us to renew our lives and freshly rejoice in the victory of Easter. Join us here at BRPC for a variety of special events throughout the Lenten season, culminating with Easter Sunday, the celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

## *Lenten Music and Meditation 2012*

These short services of music, readings and prayer at 12 noon in the Sanctuary on each Wednesday of Lent offer a quiet time out of our busy schedules.

- February 29 Merynda Adams, Harpist and Mary Lou Stevens, Organist  
March 7 Volanti Flutes  
March 14 Soloists from our Choirs  
March 21 Joe Arndt, Organist  
March 28 Madison String Quartet



Lunch will follow in Westminster Hall (\$7). No reservation needed.



### *Spring Oratorio*



ROBERT RAY'S "GOSPEL MASS"  
AND OTHER GOSPEL SONGS AND SPIRITUALS

*Sunday, March 25, 4:00 p.m.*

See pg. 4 for all the details.

### *The Labyrinth*



"The Labyrinth", an ancient spiritual tool often used in Christian communities for prayer and meditation, will take place on Sunday, March 4, 3:00 - 7:00 p.m., in Westminster Hall and the Chapel.

### *Lenten Devotional Books*

In accordance with our Lenten theme of Sabbath Keeping and our small group focus (see pg. 8 for details), individual devotional books are available in the Church House and the Narthex. These daily devotions will guide us through this season and allow us to explore further the idea of Sabbath Keeping and how we can practice this spiritual discipline in our fast-paced world. If you would like a copy of this book mailed to you, please contact the Church Office.

### *Lenten Offering*

#### **Elizabethport Presbyterian Center (E'port)**

Founded in 1965 by the Presbytery of Elizabeth, E'port provides a caring, loving witness to Jesus Christ for disadvantaged Elizabeth residents. Services include: daycare, after-school programs, summer camp, tutoring, scholarships, social services, vacation bible school, job readiness, senior citizens outreach and family strengthening classes. A special offering for E'port will be collected on Sundays during the Lenten season.



## PASTOR'S LETTER



**Rev. Dennis Jones**  
[djones@brpc.org](mailto:djones@brpc.org)  
766.1616, x15

Dear Friends,

In her latest book, *An Altar in the World: A Geography of Faith*, a book I highly recommend, here's what Barbara Brown Taylor has to say about Sabbath Keeping:

"At least one day in every seven, pull off the road and park the car in the garage. Close the door to the tool shed and turn off the computer. Stay home not because you are sick, but because you are well. Talk someone you love into being well with you. Take a nap, a walk, an hour for lunch. Test the premise that you are worth more than what you can produce – that even if you spent one whole day being good for nothing, you would still be precious in God's sight . . ."

The sacred season of Lent is upon us. Our Lenten theme for this year is, "Be Still and Know That I Am God: Keeping the Sabbath in a Culture of Busyness."

Sabbath Keeping is the regular, ancient practice of honoring God's command to slow down, cease work, and be spiritually renewed. It is something that many of us are in desperate need of in our hectic, rushed, and over-scheduled world. I pray that as you learn about and begin this essential spiritual practice, your life and your relationship with God will be profoundly blessed. To that end, in the month ahead, I lovingly urge you to:

**Renew your commitment to being in worship each Sunday.** It is the heart of our life together as a community of faith, and the single most important thing you can do to grow in your relationship with God. It is what defines and orients us for all else that follows. Sermons and other elements of our worship will center upon our theme.

**Sign up for a Lenten Small Group.** Special, short-term small groups will be offered for a rich opportunity to deepen friendships and encourage one another toward a more balanced life.

**Pray each day.** A take-home devotional will be provided to give some structure and focus to your prayer life, and to help you grow as a disciple of Christ.

**Slow down and cease work.** Though it might sound counterintuitive to cancel meetings during one of the busiest times in the church year, during "Mondays in March", all church committees and boards will take a break, a Sabbath, and not meet. In what ways might *you* claim a healthier and more balanced rhythm in your life? Is there some load you are carrying that God is calling you to put down or set aside? Remember, your value is immeasurably greater than the sum total of the work you produce. You are cherished and loved by God not because of what you *do*, but because of who you *are*.

See you on the journey,

Dennis W. Jones  
Pastor

### ***2017 Vision Retreat on April 21, 2012***

The Planning Council has been hard at work drafting an exciting vision of BRPC in 2017, the 300th anniversary of our church. The theme of the vision is "Growing and Serving as Disciples of Christ." On Saturday, April 21, the Planning Council will host an off-site retreat for members of Session, all ordained elders in our congregation, and program staff to provide an opportunity to explore this vision in more detail. Additional information regarding the meeting will be coming out shortly.

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## SESSION

### *Highlights from the February Session Meeting:*

The Session examined the newly elected church officers, and enthusiastically and unanimously approved them for ordination and installation on Sunday, February 12, 2012.

Elder Chuck Miller, Chairman of the Mission Council, presented a motion from the council to move the Per Capita Assessment expense from the General Mission Budget to a separate category in the operating budget starting in 2013. This will more accurately reflect our unified mission giving, since Per Capita funds are not used by the Presbytery for mission purposes.

Outgoing Session members were thanked for their service as church leaders and presented with a Bible or Hymnal, signed by the elders with whom they served, to commemorate their term of service.

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## DEACONS MINISTRY

While there are some differences, being a Presbyterian Deacon is similar to being a College Resident Assistant (RA). When I was in college, I was fortunate to be selected to be a RA and then later the Head RA. I dealt with my fair share of "sudden illnesses", taught the freshmen how to make a good solid meal out of the tragic offerings in the dining hall, helped to mend the broken hearts of lost first loves after a bad break-up, and gave hugs to the homesick.

Now, as a Presbyterian Deacon, I am given the challenge to care and pray for those who are sick or injured, or bring hot meals to a family who just had a baby or who are struggling with difficulties in their lives. I have comforted a widow whose husband of 30 years passed away and helped mend the heart of someone who lost the love of her lifetime. I have welcomed families who have just joined the Church, inviting them to lunch or showing them the best place to shop for groceries. Of course, now, instead of stopping the parties, I am expected to attend the parties--All Cluster Brunch, 'Appy Christmas, Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, etc!

As a college RA, there was one thing that was never written in my contract, nor mentioned at training or even raised at a staff meeting...PRAYER. As a Presbyterian Deacon, I pray for people. The word is not hidden, it is spoken. In fact, it is shouted from the rooftops! The most important thing I can do as a Deacon is to pray for those who need it. I can pray for those in celebration, thanks and praise, and for those in need of help. As a Deacon I can, and I will, pray.

So, if you are ever feeling a little homesick, under the weather, overwhelmed, or have a broken heart, please don't hesitate to call on your Deacons. Like an RA, we are there for you. Oh, and don't forget to call if you are having a party, too! *(Submitted by Amanda Hughes)*

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## TRUSTEES

### *Highlights from the February Trustees Meeting:*

The new class of Trustees--Rudy Hyzer, Henry Kane and Koert VanderVoort--were welcomed to the meeting. The Trustee officers for the upcoming year will be President, Dick Bedner; Vice-president, Jeff Schaub; Secretary, Kathy Graback; Treasurer, Janet Bentley; and Assistant Treasurer, Lisa Ann Smith.

Financial reports through January 31 were reviewed. There was discussion regarding refurbishment and repainting of the front of the church sanctuary and the soon-to-be-introduced planned giving program.

Outgoing Trustee President Jacob Mathew was presented with a certificate and Bible to thank him for his service. Diana Boquist and Doug Dunn were also recognized for their service to Trustees in their absence.

**ROBERT RAY'S  
"GOSPEL MASS"**

AND OTHER GOSPEL SONGS AND SPIRITUALS

**Sunday, March 25, 2012  
at 4 p.m.**

**Presented By:**

Oratorio Choir, Soloists, Knox Bell Choir and Instrumentalists

Mary Lou Stevens, Director

Linda Langstaff, Handbell Director



**Soloists for the Gospel Mass:**

Nancy Nelson DiSisto

LaFrederick Coaxner

**Other Soloists:**

Butch Cooper

Beth Donley

Jeanne Poehner

Melinda Porter

All are welcome.

No ticket needed. A free-will offering will be received.

Childcare available for children age 5 and under.

A reception will follow the service.

**The Presbyterian Church of Basking Ridge**

One East Oak Street Basking Ridge, NJ 07920 908-766-1616 [www.brpc.org](http://www.brpc.org)

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## CHILDREN AND FAMILY MINISTRIES

### *Spring Fling: A Don't-Miss Community Event for Children*



**What:** An afternoon of games, crafts, snacks and fun! Bring your decorated Easter basket for a parade with prizes!

**When:** Saturday, March 24, 2012, 3:00 - 5:00 p.m.

**Where:** Westminster Hall

**Cost:** Free! Fun and fellowship for all!

To volunteer for this event or for more information, please contact Jacqueline Obregon at 908-766-1616, x14 or [jobregon@brpc.org](mailto:jobregon@brpc.org).

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## ADULT EDUCATION FORUMS

Adult Education is offering a variety of Sunday Morning Forums and Small Group Studies this quarter, as well as a Women's Retreat being planned for April. To find out more about these Forums, speakers or other activities, please see the Adult Education Brochure in the Narthex or Church House.

### **Upcoming Sunday Morning Forums (11:30 a.m., Church House Parlor)**

*March 11: "The Bible in English: Tyndale and His Followers and Imitators"*

*Led by Rev. Iain Torrance, Princeton Seminary President and Professor of Patristics*

The focus of this program will be the history and background of the King James Bible. Begun in 1604 and published in 1611, the KJV became England's Authorized Version of the Bible. Since then, millions of Christians have lived out their faith through its words. This address focuses on the context and history of the translation of the Bible into English and helps you to understand the challenges and achievement of the Authorized Version.

*March 18: "Family Ministry Today"*

*Led by Jacqueline Obregon, Director of Ministries to Children and Their Families*

Share your vision and ideas for children and family programs in this forum on family ministry. Hear about hot trends happening in family ministry today, and learn how working together, we can continue to make a lasting impact on our children and church as well as the community! Care and nurture of volunteers will be discussed: Volunteers should be refreshed and inspired! How can the Church help? Other topics addressed in the program will include Sunday School, Fellowship Opportunities, Parent Groups, Bible Studies, and Child Protection. *The Vacation Bible School 2012 theme will be revealed!*

### **SAVE THE DATE: WOMEN'S RETREAT**

*Saturday, April 28: "Caregiving: Can you be Mary and Martha?" Led by Rev. Janice Smith Ammon*

How do we live a Mary/Martha life? It can be a challenge to balance our lives between these two back-to-back instructions. We support and care for others, but we are also supposed to take time for rest and restoration for ourselves. How do we balance the demands of work and family with finding time to care for ourselves? How do we balance caring for children and perhaps aging parents? We will explore these questions in our women's retreat this year.



*Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. ~ Matthew 11:28-30*

## MISSION

### *A Souper Sunday Thank You!*



The 2012 Souper Sunday, held February 5, was fun and clearly successful! Westminster Hall was filled with families enjoying hot chili, hearty soup and homemade desserts. There was a continuous showing of the 2011 Maine Workcamp slideshow on the stage. Our Senior High students served the food, and did the set-up and clean-up as well. The Youth and Young Adult Committee wishes to thank the 40+ generous parents who cooked the delicious food. We are also very grateful to the many people who donated and attended. A grand total of \$1,282 was raised and the proceeds will go toward defraying the cost of going to Workcamp 2012.

### *God's Co-op Pantry*



The Food Pantry is not quite a year old, but is already making a great impact on our local community. We are proud to now have around 75 individuals or families receiving food each month. Our services have now expanded to include eight individuals from Ridge Oak as well as a few young mothers from our area who were identified by social agencies as needing assistance. This is in addition to the main clientele of members of the Hispanic congregation at the First Presbyterian Church in Bernardsville. We are grateful for all the contributions of food that we receive each month from members of the congregation. You can continue to support the Food Pantry through your financial contributions, your prayers and your food donations. If you would like to be involved personally with this ministry, please contact Janet Bentley in the Church Office at 908-766-1616, x18, or [jbentley@brpc.org](mailto:jbentley@brpc.org).

The God's Co-op Pantry "Food of the Month" for March is: **24-oz. plastic container of vegetable oil**

### *March 11 ~ Mission Visit from Doug Baker*

We will be joining with Liberty Corner Presbyterian Church in welcoming Doug Baker, one of our PCUSA sponsored missionaries, to our area on March 11 at 5:00 p.m. Liberty Corner will be hosting us at a St. Patrick's Day celebration of music, dancing and food, with Doug as the featured speaker. For many years, Doug has been working in Northern Ireland to help to bring peace and reconciliation. He will update us on the work that is being done in the name of Christ and with our support through their mission efforts. Please plan to join the Mission Council at this event in Liberty Corner Presbyterian Church. Call the Church Office by March 8 to register, and indicate if you would like a ride to LCPC so we can arrange that for you.

### *Oak Tree Quilters ~ Sew-In! Sew What?*



On Saturday, March 10, 9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., the Oak Tree Quilters are having a Sew-In to make simple dresses for girls in Malawi and Haiti. We are looking for sewers, cutters, ironers and donations of colorful, cotton print fabrics. The smallest dress takes about 1/2 yard and the largest takes 1 1/3 yards. Each dress also needs double-wide, double-fold bias tape and 1/4-inch elastic. Donations may be left at the Church House Reception Desk or in the box in the Narthex. Come for an hour or for the day. You may want to bring your own machine, scissors, and colored thread. Bring a bag lunch. Hot water will be available for tea and coffee. For additional information, call Sue Watt (732-412-7378) or Mary Browning (908-580-9709).

***Deaths***

**Patricia McKelvey**

Mother of Sarah Sell, 1/27

**Gerald Creedon**

Father of Marc Creedon, 1/29

**John Barrett**

Father of Cara Burchett, 1/30

**Eleanor Davis Miller, 1/30**

**Dr. Robert W. Smith, 2/9**

**Hank Stoddard**, brother of Fox Stoddard, 2/11

**Ernesto Cottely**, Uncle of Alex Ryder

**Theresa Dicolo**, Aunt of Jason Pinto

***Births***

**Alexia Gonzalez Galaragga**,

Granddaughter of Tex & Kendel Culton, 1/26

**Sophia Marie Vi Truong**

Great-granddaughter of Jessie Bledsoe, 2/2

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If you would like to sign up for email notifications of losses in our church family, please contact Cara Burchett at 908-766-1616, x19 or [cburchett@brpc.org](mailto:cburchett@brpc.org).

***Communications***

***Office Hours***

The office hours of BRPC Communications Coordinator Andrea Mastrobattista, are Tuesdays, 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. and Wednesdays, 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Also, please feel free to leave an off-hours message at 908-766-1616, x13, or email [amastrobattista@brpc.org](mailto:amastrobattista@brpc.org).

***Welcome Our New Members***

The I&M council is pleased to have six new members join our congregation on January 22, 2012. Please offer them a warm welcome to our BRPC family.



*Martine White*



*Lauren McArthur*



*Annette & Simon Hu*



*Camilla & Michael Li*

***Men's Luncheon for March***

We are privileged to have Dr. Ali Chaudry as our guest at the Men's Luncheon at 12 noon on Thursday, March 15, in the Church Parlor. Dr. Chaudry teaches at Rutgers University and is a former mayor of Bernards Township. He is a very active participant in interfaith dialogues, and we have asked him to speak about his Muslim faith and the meaning it gives to his life. This is a great opportunity to learn more about Islam from a layperson's point of view.

Our chef, Gary Ingram, promises another delicious meal. We will do our best to end promptly at 1:30 p.m. You can call Church House Reception Desk (908-766-1616) to make a reservation. Why not invite a friend or neighbor to join us?

***Information Please***

As we continue our work to prepare the Church Photo Directory, we want to be sure that we have the most accurate contact information possible for each member of our church family. If you have not submitted, or have a change to, your telephone, cell phone, e-mail or home address, please contact Pam Smith as soon as possible, either by phone at 908-766-1616, x 12 or email at [pamsmith@brpc.org](mailto:pamsmith@brpc.org). Thank you!

## Oak Leaves

is published monthly  
by and for members and friends of  
The Presbyterian Church  
1 East Oak Street  
Basking Ridge, New Jersey 07920  
908-766-1616 [brpc.org](http://brpc.org)

We welcome news about your  
family, friends, and church activities.  
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materials to the editor, Andrea  
Mastrobattista, 1 East Oak St., Basking  
Ridge, NJ 07920, fax: (908)766-4450,  
e-mail: [amastrobattista@brpc.org](mailto:amastrobattista@brpc.org).

**The deadline for the  
April 2012 issue  
is Sunday, March 4.**

*This newsletter is  
lovingly prepared for distribution  
by faithful BRPC volunteers.*

### Ministers

All the People

### Pastor & Head of Staff

Rev. Dennis W. Jones – x15

### Associate Pastor

Dr. Maureen Paterson – x11

### Parish Associates

Rev. Bob Beringer

Rev. William “Tex” Culton

### Pastors Emeriti

Dr. J. Calvin K. Jackson

Dr. James Morris

### Director of Ministries to Children and Their Families

Jacqueline Obregon – x14

### Minister of Music

Mary Lou Stevens – 908-953-9809

### Director of Children’s Music

Beth Donley – 908-500-1798

### Handbell Director

Linda Langstaff – 908-347-9664

### Church Administrator & Treasurer

Janet Bentley – x18

### Assistant Treasurer

Lisa-Ann Smith – x21

### Pastoral Administrative Assistant

Cara Burchett – x19

### Church Administrative Assistant

Pam Smith - x12

### Editor/Communications Coordinator

Andrea Mastrobattista – x13

### Sexton Staff

Peter O’Connor – x16

David Brownlee



## Small Group Lenten Focus



We will be offering three Monday evening groups in March focusing on the Lenten Theme of Sabbath Keeping in conjunction with the preaching series for the season. Please contact Maureen Paterson at 908-766-1616, x11 or [mpaterson@brpc.org](mailto:mpaterson@brpc.org) if you wish to sign up for one of these groups or would like more information.

***Mondays in March – Sabbath Keeping – Church House, 7:30 p.m.***

Led by Ken and Sally Warman – meets in the Church House Library (or their home depending on participants wishes)

Led by Katja Gruening – meets in the Youth Center (lower level, Church House)

Led by Charles King – meets in the Church House Parlor

***Turning Points Led by Rev. Bob Beringer***

Tuesdays – Fellowship Village at 1:30 p.m.

Using his own book, which focuses on different journeys recorded in the New Testament and how those lives were transformed by an encounter with the living God. Non-Fellowship Village residents are welcome. Contact Bob for more information and the location of the class.

***Sabbath Keeping Led by Rev. Tex Culton (starting on February 29)***

Wednesdays, Church House Library at 1:30 p.m. (following the Music and Meditation Service and Lenten Lunch)

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