

# Providence Presbyterian Church Newsletter



*Providence Presbyterian Church of Bustleton*

## **OUR MISSION STATEMENT:**

***Connect our congregation with our surrounding communities using our gifts and resources and through faith, scripture, love, and fellowship as we seek to follow the example of Christ.***

**SUNDAY SERVICES 8:30 am & 11:00 am**

**PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN every 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday at 12:30 pm**

Find us online: [provpresch.org](http://provpresch.org)



[www.facebook.com/provpresch.org](https://www.facebook.com/provpresch.org)

# Pastor's Corner

“There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven.”

These familiar words from Ecclesiastes may sound somewhat simplistic, but they describe a very real truth about our world. There is a predictability to life even when it may not always seem so when we are in the midst of living day-to-day and week-to-week. That predictability reflects the nature and character of God, the creator of the universe.

We all know that we live in challenging times. In a world where we worry about our own and our children's safety, where job security is non-existent, and where the economy is up and down, it is hard to comprehend the unchanging nature of God, let alone put our trust in the Lord. Yet that is what we, as Christians, are called to do – put our trust in the God who loves us, forgives us, and is always there for us.

I know it is not easy to trust God. Trust is something we expect someone to earn; something we build slowly in a relationship. God, however, has already done more than enough to earn our trust. We just have to learn to recognize and to acknowledge all that he has done.

One way we can begin to do this is to take time to thank God for all the small blessings of life. Until we take a few moments to stop and think about the many ways God has helped us, provided for us, encouraged us, and guided us, we will find it difficult to trust in God and his constancy.

The month of November, when our thoughts naturally turn to the giving of thanks, is a natural time to focus on the blessings the Lord has brought into our lives. As you look at the world around you, interact with family and friends, buy food and clothes, attend church, and even when you pay the bills, give thanks to God for the opportunity to have such experiences, to enjoy relationships, and to have a life to live.

We can depend on the unchanging nature of God, who has provided order to the universe and a predictability to life. Let us give thanks to the Lord!



With thanksgiving,  
Pastor Diane



Operation Christmas Child collects shoeboxes filled with gifts and delivers them to children in need around the world. Every one of these shoebox gifts is an opportunity to spread the Gospel. Please join our Mission Committee in helping spread the word of Jesus to all mankind.

National collection week is the 3<sup>rd</sup> week in November (Nov. 12-18). Please drop off your filled boxes, along with a check for \$9.00 made out to Providence Pres Church (postage). Boxes may be placed in the narthex. More information on how to pack your shoebox may be found at [samaritanspurse.org/occ](http://samaritanspurse.org/occ)

Please join us on November 18<sup>th</sup> at 4pm in the CE building to put the Operation Christmas Child boxes together. Bring your goodies to pack in the boxes! A Chili Cook Off will be held after the boxes are packed. Call the office if you're interested in entering the cook off.



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*There will be no Thanksgiving Day Service this year.*

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# *Advent & Christmas 2018*

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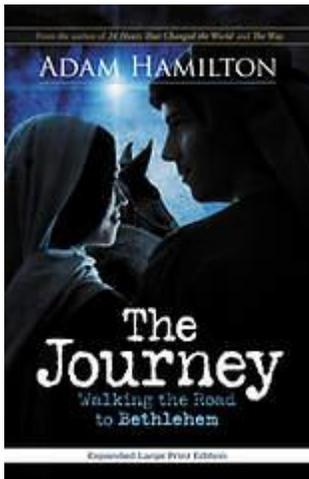
## *Advent services:*

**December 2, 9, 16, 23 at 8:30 & 11:00 am**

**Sunday School during both services**

**Help is needed for the "Hanging of the Greens"  
Friday, November 30 at 7:00pm.**

**Come for fun and fellowship as we decorate the  
Sanctuary for the Season!**



## **The Journey: Walking the Road to Bethlehem**

Advent Sunday School Class

Sundays December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>

9:40 in the Fellowship Room

*For Youth and Adults*

Pastor Diane leads this video study as we:

*Journey with Adam Hamilton as he travels from Nazareth to Bethlehem in this fascinating look at the birth of Jesus Christ. Using historical information, archaeological data, and a personal look at some of the stories surrounding the birth, the most amazing moment in history will become more real and heart-felt as you walk along this road.*

**Vesper Service Sunday December 2, 2018 at 4:00pm**

**Pot Luck dinner and crafts to follow**

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**Join us for Christmas Eve Services: 6:30 & 8:00 pm**

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### **Poinsettia Orders**



Red 8" poinsettias may be ordered for \$15.50 this year. Orders will be taken until December 16<sup>th</sup>. Forms for In Honor Of/In Memory Of information will be in the Church bulletin, or you may email Ginny Heal at [csheal@hughes.net](mailto:csheal@hughes.net).

## *Fall*

As the fall weather approaches, and we begin to enter the holiday season, I can't help but think of all the people in the world who cannot enjoy such simple things as brilliant fall foliage and the festivities of the holidays. Recently my husband and I took a trip to New Hampshire for three days, we took the scenic route going up there, along the winding roads. Once we entered Connecticut we started to see some of the leaves changing. In Vermont more of the colors on the trees came out and then once in New Hampshire they were in full, vibrant colors – red, orange, yellow, brownish yellow. We stopped at all the lookout points and viewed the brilliant fall foliage. I thought what a lovely gift from God. I so appreciated it! Then I thought of the women from Afghanistan, what would they think if they were to go out on a trip like this? Not only have these poor women been oppressed and abused, but also they have been kept in total darkness about what exists in the world. My prayers go out to these women and all other women who cannot enjoy the blessings the Lord has bestowed on this earth.

*Barbara*



# **Roast Beef Dinner 2018**



*Many thanks to all who volunteered  
to make our Roast Beef Dinner  
a success!*

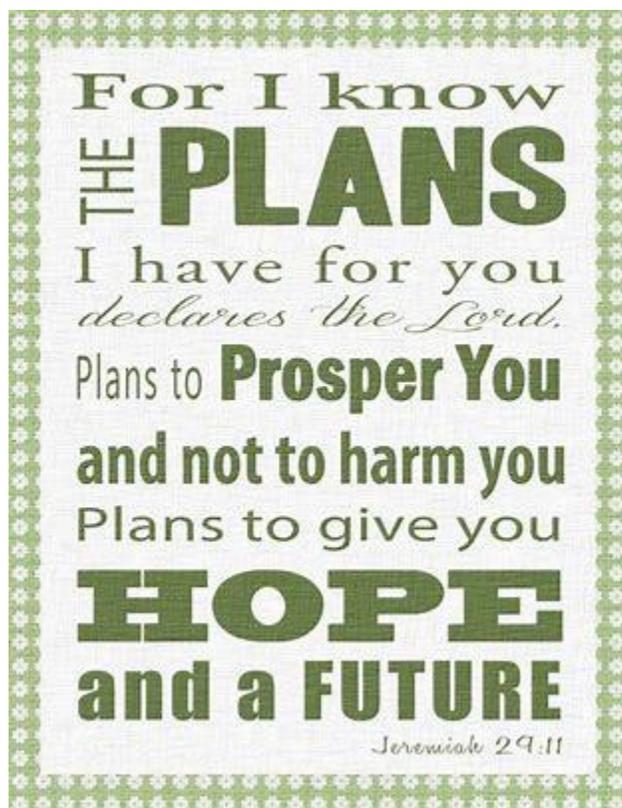
# *Pumpkin Fest 2018*



## The Mission Study Report is finished!!!

The Mission Study Team worked tirelessly to put together all the pieces needed for the report and to seek God's future for Providence Presbyterian Church. On October 14<sup>th</sup> the Session approved the report and it has been sent on to the Presbytery's Commission on Ministry for their review. Once we complete any edits and/or additions they recommend we will resubmit the report for their final approval. When we receive that approval, we will be able to elect a Pastor Nominating Committee!

The final section of the report will be our road map for the coming year. We will be working to implement the goals so that our new pastor will be able to continue to lead us into the future. That final section is printed for you below. We hope you will be as enthusiastic as we are about the plans God has laid before us and want to join in the effort to put our vision into action. If you would like a copy of the full report, contact the church office.



### Future Vision

After prayerful reflection on the congregational input, church and community demographics, our gifts and talents, and our faith history, we believe this mission statement encompasses who God is calling us to become as a church:

***Connect our congregation with our surrounding communities using our gifts and resources and through faith, scripture, love, and fellowship as we seek to follow the example of Christ.***

### Goals

Recognizing that a significant portion of our congregation is set in their ways with an expressed desire not to change, we realize that the best option to move forward into this new vision is to begin a parallel process of change. During the congregational input portion of the Mission Study, we heard from a number of people who are interested in pursuing a new direction. Believing that there is a core who want to be

involved in change, we are proposing creating another way for us to engage in ministry with our community that will develop alongside the current programs. Our hope is that, as change begins to occur, others will start to shift their perspective from a focus on what is comfortable to what is possible.

In the next year, we plan to pursue the following initiatives:

1. Create a community engagement team that will develop and oversee mission and ministry outreach within our local community as an expression of our commitment to following Christ.
  - Leadership and members of the team will initially be drawn from those who have expressed interest in more involvement in the community

- Develop a process to facilitate new ideas coming to fruition by creating a permission-giving mentality
  - Create a template for beginning new mission and ministry opportunities that covers the elements needed to allow the best chance of success (i.e. planning, organization, communication, follow-up, review, etc.)
  - Plan and carry out at least two new mission outreaches
  - When possible, provide support for current programs if members running those are interested in broadening the potential impact
2. Initiate a discussion with the Session about a 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday as a time to worship together in one service and enjoy fellowship together. The goal would be to bring the congregation together by addressing the separation that occurs as a result of having two worship services.
  3. As we look to the future of Providence Presbyterian Church with an emphasis in more local community involvement, the Mission Study Team believes that current partnerships can be enhanced while building new connections to the community.

Our hope is that, by approaching our future as we have proposed, new energy and enthusiasm for will develop throughout the congregation. Worship will be more vibrant, faith will grow, and more people will come to know Christ.

Your Mission Study Team

Jen Caron, Donna Custard, Jennifer Poole, Pam Solymosi, Randy York, and Pastor Diane



## Session Notes

*At their October meetings, the Session:*

- Approved the 2019 budget with 2.3% raises for all staff
- Canceled the Thanksgiving morning service
- Deleted, with regret, 18 inactive members from the rolls
- Accepted, with thanks, the Mission Study report
- Met with Ethan Walker, Eagle Scout candidate, and discussed possible projects for the church

## *Manse Renovations - preparing for our new Pastor!*



Contributions to the Improvement Fund cover the cost of the materials for this project. Labor is done by volunteers!

At this time each year we start to look forward to the quickly approaching holidays by planning what we and our families will be doing. Traveling, family and friend get-togethers, great meals, buying presents and how our year will end and the new one will start. It is also a time for us to reflect on how we use our gifts to live out our faith in Jesus Christ. Reflecting on (y)our time, talent, and treasures, we **all** have abilities and gifts to offer and yet, it is far easier to take a backseat and watch others serve on our behalf. In some cases we never consider or reconsider what our gift giving should be to our church.

In John Calvin's vision for the church in Geneva during the 16<sup>th</sup> century, following the charge and benediction, believers were invited to express their faithful response by dropping a coin or two in an alms box as they exited the sanctuary. This ethical and tangible act, no matter how small or large, was deeply connected to the spiritual life of the individual. At that time, serving others, supporting the poor, and loving one's neighbor were as important as taking Communion. Thus, the question **How will you serve?** connects us with Calvin's vision for the church. It asked us to consider how our lives reflect God's justice and compassion in the world. Indeed, while stewardship in the church is about tithing, budgets, and making a financial commitment, it is also about actively sharing the gifts God has so graciously given us.

What gift have you been reluctant to share? What's holding you back from offering **your** giving to **your** church?

Please remember these thoughts as we end our 2018 giving to Providence Presbyterian Church....**how will you serve?**

Jim Chambers

...and my soul shall be joyful in the Lord; It shall rejoice in His salvation

Ps 35:9

## **DIFFICULT SITUATIONS**

Everybody experiences difficult situations in life. Everybody does. Things that make us want to scream out or give up - deprivations, sacrifices, losses, and misunderstandings. But isn't there some way for the Christian to respond without getting mad at God? Otherwise, what's the good of our faith? There has to be some key to being joyful in the mindset of discouraging circumstances and crabby people. What is it?

It's taking God at his Word. It's believing He will do what he says, no matter how things look or how we feel. Trusting God with everything we have, everything we are, every problem that is ours, every loss we endure, every battle we face, every person who disappoints us – with thanksgiving – gives us the grace to come through it with flying colors!

*- Luci Swindoll*

*(From "God Made Us Just the Way We Are")*

**GOD NEVER SENDS A BURDEN TO WEIGH US DOWN  
WITHOUT OFFERING HIS ARM TO LIFT US UP.**

## **What is a Vet?**

He is a cop on the beat who spent six months in Saudi Arabia sweating two gallons a day making sure the armored personnel carriers didn't run out of fuel.

He is the bar room loudmouth, dumber than five wooden planks, whose overgrown frat-boy behavior is outweighed a hundred times in the cosmic scales by hours of exquisite bravery near the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel.

She or he is the nurse who fought against sleep, sobbing every night for two solid years in Da Nang.

He is the POW who went away one person and came back another, or didn't come back at all.

He is the Quantico drill instructor who has never seen combat, but has saved countless lives by turning slouchy, no account rednecks and gang members into Marines and teaching them to watch each other back.

He is the career quartermaster who watches the ribbons and metals pass by him.

He is the parade riding Legionnaire who pins on his ribbons and medals with a prosthetic hand.

He is the three anonymous heroes in the Tomb of the Unknowns, whose presence at the Arlington National Cemetery must forever preserve the memory of all the anonymous heroes whose valor dies unrecognized with them on the battlefield or in the ocean's sunless deeps.

He is the old guy bagging groceries at the supermarket, palsied now and aggravatingly slow, who helped to liberate a Nazi death camp, and who wishes all day long that his wife were still alive to hold him when the nightmares comes.

He is an ordinary and yet an extraordinary human being. A person who offered some of his life's most vital years in service of his country, and who sacrificed his ambitions so others would not have to sacrifice theirs.



He is a Soldier and a Savior and a Sword against the darkness, and he is nothing more than the finest, greatest testimony on behalf of the finest, greatest Nation ever known.

So remember, each time you see someone who has served our Country, just lean over and say “**Thank You.**” That’s all most people need, and in most cases it will mean more than any medals they could have been awarded or were awarded. *Two little words that mean a lot.*

## THANKSGIVING

On the Sunday before Thanksgiving, 1984, Dr. Norman Vincent Peale began his sermon with the following paragraph:

“Now it is November, the month that contains the most American of all holidays: **Thanksgiving.** We Americans invented Thanksgiving, and this is not surprising because of all the nations in the world, we have the most to be *thankful for*. We have freedom in a magnificent land that stretches from sea to shining sea. We have science, we have medicine, we have rich farmlands and soaring skyscrapers and a great cathedrals and quiet churches. If you are an American, you have every right to be proud and grateful. And there’s one thing more you should be thankful for: You should be *thankful for you.*”

***If you are precious in God’s eyes – and you most certainly are – then be grateful for the life God has given you and the constant blessings which are yours.***

## THANKSGIVING MEMORIES

Thanksgiving is for memories....

To look back on the year

In humbleness and thankfulness

For blessings we hold dear.

*For health and food and happiness,  
For joys that come our way,  
For friends who add a luster  
To the toil of every day.*

For freedoms of America  
That guard our right to be  
An individual with choice  
In the democracy.

*For churches and for homes and schools  
To guide the steps of youth,  
For those who dedicate their lives  
To aid the search for truth.*

For all these precious, precious gifts  
The year has brought our way....  
We fold our hands in heartfelt prayer  
On this Thanksgiving Day.

# *Year-End Giving*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Providence Presbyterian Church has been a faithful community of believers for over 150 years. Since the early days, when members of the Bustleton community gathered under the oak tree to worship God, our church has continued to be a family that has welcomed those who come through our doors in the name of Jesus Christ.

Today, we want to continue providing a place of warmth and welcome. Through our increased efforts in communication through social media, new programs such as the Friday Family nights, and renovations to our buildings we are stepping in to the future of our church. You make all this happen!

Now it is time for us to step out in faith, to think in different ways, to go outside the walls of our buildings to connect with our community in new ways. We want you to join in the effort – with your time, your prayers, and your financial support.

Consider giving a **year-end donation** to Providence Presbyterian Church in addition to your regular pledge. Your extra gift will help provide a solid foundation for us to begin new initiatives to connect with our community. We want to remain a strong witness to Christ in Bustleton and to become a greater presence in our surrounding neighborhoods than we already are. **Be a part of the future with your extra gift to your church!**

Faithfully in Christ,  
Pastor Diane

## *But Once a Year*

*“Christmas comes but once a year”*

*Is an old familiar phrase*

*But what do you do with Christmas*

*Through all the other days?*

*With Christmas trees and Santa Claus*

*And tinsel shining bright,*

*Many often fail to see*

*The Star that shone that night.*

*Oh, truly Christmas is a time  
For joy and much good cheer,  
And a lot that goes with Christmas  
Should come but once a year.*

*But the true meaning of Christmas  
Is the love that Christ Child brought.  
This should not just be once a year,  
But all your days be sought.*

*Please carry through the year to come  
The truths Christ came to say -  
And you will find within your heart  
It's Christmas every day!*

# Calendars



powered by [KeepShare](#)

November 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3 4:00pm Roast Beef Dinner Reservations Please call the office 609-499-2753
4 Communion Sunday 8:30am Worship 9:45am Choir Practice 11:00am Worship	5	6 12:30pm PW meets in the CE Building	7	8	9	10
11 8:30am Worship 9:45am Choir Practice 11:00am Worship 12:00pm Congregational Meeting Part 1	12	13	14 7:00pm Session Meeting	15	16	17
18 8:30am Worship 9:45am Choir Practice 11:00am Worship 4:00pm CHILI COOK OFF / Samaritan's Purse Shoeboxes together	19	20 12:30pm PW meets in the CE Building	21	22 Thanksgiving	23	24 7:00am Men's Fellowship Breakfast
25 8:30am Worship 9:45am Choir Practice 11:00am Worship	26	27	28	29	30	

December 2018

powered by [KeepShare](#)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 Communion Sunday Advent 1 Sunday 8:30am Worship 9:45am Choir Practice 11:00am Worship 4:00pm Vesper Service dinner after service	3	4 12:30pm PW meets in the CE Building	5	6	7	8
9 Advent 2 Sunday 8:30am Worship 9:45am Choir Practice 11:00am Worship	10	11	12 7:00pm Session Meeting	13	14	15
16 Advent 3 Sunday 8:30am Worship 9:45am Choir Practice 11:00am Worship	17	18 12:30pm PW meets in the CE Building	19	20	21	22
23 Advent 4 Sunday 8:30am Worship 9:45am Choir Practice 11:00am Worship	24 6:30pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 8:00pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service	25 Christmas	26	27	28	29 7:00am Men's Fellowship Breakfast
30 8:30am Worship 9:45am Choir Practice 11:00am Worship	31 New Year's Eve					

## **Church Contact Information**

### **Providence Presbyterian Church**

2087 Old York Road  
Burlington, NJ 08016  
Church Office: 609-499-2753 office  
[Ppch1@provpresch.org](mailto:Ppch1@provpresch.org)

## **Church Staff**

Interim Pastor: Rev. Diane Curtis  
[Pastordiane@provpresch.org](mailto:Pastordiane@provpresch.org)  
908-803-6395 cell

Administrative Assistant: Barbara Hammell

Sexton: Ken Poole

Choir Director: Alice Garman

Organist: Marge Hull

