

The MESSENGER

APRIL 2018

OPEN TOMBS & BURNING THE MAN

Easter reminds us that all things are new. It's kind of like the celebration of a new year...

In Ecuador, the celebration of a new year has great significance. During the preceding week, people create and decorate scarecrow-like dummies. Then on the last day of the year, they take these dummies out and set them on fire. They call this unusual tradition, *Burning the Old Man*. This tradition gives people a sense of new beginnings and represents the burning away of their sins and shortcomings.

I find it very interesting that in a totally secular tradition like the Ecuadorian *Burning*, there is still a need to acknowledge a putting away of the *old self* and beginning new with a fresh, *new self*.

Long ago, the prophet Ezekiel spoke for God when he wrote,

*I will give you a NEW heart and put a NEW spirit in you;
I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.*
Ezekiel 36:26

You see, long before those fine folks in Ecuador created the *Burning* tradition to fulfill their need of new life, God offered us fulfillment, which needed no traditions to keep it alive.

All through the Scriptures, God shares with us how we can find this new fulfillment. The problem is, we are usually too busy developing traditions that we *think* will give us a new lease on life. But besides some frenzied busy-ness, our new life always seems out of reach.

I'm wondering, what traditions do you develop to fill the desire of new-ness which only God can fill? Do you make sure you have a new wardrobe every 18 months? Do you rearrange the furniture every so often so the house looks new? Do you try to make new friends as often as possible? Do you have a new interest or hobby that you pick up every so often? Those are all fine things to keep us fresh in the day to day...

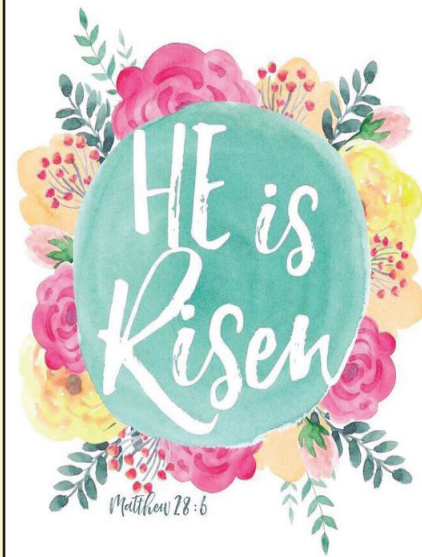
However, God says we can be eternally new, now! He says that He can take our heart (the essence of a person), which has been hardened and transform it into a heart of flesh that beats with the promise of God everyday!

In the newness of this resurrection season, would you like a beating heart to replace the stone one, which has hardened over the years by neglect, denial, or bad choices? Jesus says, all we need to do is ask....and it will be given to us. He'll let us live again. That would be a great way to celebrate the open tomb of Easter, wouldn't it?

Give me a call (or send an email) anytime about that new heart you've been hoping for. I'd love to tell you everything I about God's transplant. He is Risen, Indeed!

I love you,

Pastor Ed



Sunday Worship Services and Sunday School

9:00am
Contemporary
(Family Life Center)

10:30am
Traditional
(Sanctuary)

Sunday School
9:00am
Preschool
5th Grade & Adults

10:30am
6th-12th Grade

**Confirmation
Classes**
4:00-5:30pm

Youth Group
6:00-8:00pm
Thompson Hall

First United Methodist Church of Toms River
OUR MISSION...

BELONGING TO THE FAMILY

BELIEVING THE GOOD NEWS

BECOMING LIKE JESUS



OUTREACH REPORT

OPEN ARMS FOOD PANTRY

The Open Arms Food Pantry is located at 360 Bennett Mills Road, Jackson, New Jersey. The pantry is a ministry of the Jackson Baptist Church. The pantry's staff includes 20 volunteer members from the church congregation and one deacon/administrator who directs the daily operation and reports to an elder and the Senior Pastor. Eligible clients are screened by Ocean County Social Services and then referred to the Open Arms Food Pantry for food by Ocean County Hunger Relief.

The clients are allowed to shop for free food with supervision. Only one family is served at a time so a fellowship/snack room has been provided for clients to use that are waiting to be supervised as they shop. The staff develops relationships with their clientele which gives the volunteers the opportunity to pray with the client. The following system has been established: when the client is finished shopping, prayer is held by the entire available staff for the needs of the client.

Food is supplied by Ocean County Hunger Relief, Shop-Rite of Jackson, Wawa, Investor Savings Bank, and the First United Methodist Church of Toms River.

In 2017 56,388 pounds of food was distributed to 1790 clients. 70% of the food was donated and 30% was purchased at a cost of \$20,787. 2180 pounds of food was donated by the First United Methodist Church of Toms River. This amount was equal to 5.5% of the donated food distributed.

HOPE CENTER

January report — 45 households were served in the following ways: 1) Emergency Shelter — 58 nights — total expenditure- \$3242.50; 2) Utilities- total expenditure — \$141.54; 3) Gas Vouchers (transportation) — total expenditure — \$50.00; 4) 22 Ocean Ride Passes — total expenditure — \$49.50; 5) 112 nights (shelter) and one rental assistance — total expenditure — \$5,496 dollars; 6) Shop-Rite cards — 3 households- total expenditure- \$80.00; 7) Miscellaneous gift cards — 5 households—\$220.00.

The Hope Center's Food Pantry during the month of January disbursed 20,820 pounds of food to 947 adults and 447 children. Remember that the Hope Center provides services for all the needy people who live in Ocean County.

The Hope Center held a Gift Auction at Toms River East on Saturday, March 24th. The auction began at 12:30 P.M. and the drawings began at 2 P.M. Coffee and dessert were provided. The cost per ticket was \$15.00. The name given the Gift Auction" was the "Hope Springs Eternal" Gift Auction.

Currently, the Hope Center is contacting the Y.M.C.A. about needy people using their showers. The Hope Center would pay them for the use of the showers. They are also working with a laundromat on Route 9 that would pick up a clients dirty laundry and return it clean. They are also contacting Operation Bar-B-Que Relief to provide 1,000 meals for needy people the week before Thanksgiving. They have reached an agreement with A-1 Taxi and Ocean Ride to accept their vouchers for transportation of their clients.

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

1. The United Methodist Women held a Rummage Sale on Friday and Saturday, March 16 and 17. These sales take a lot of work when it comes to the planning and implementing of the event. Sue Malinowski and Candie Vesce are in charge of the event and a multitude of volunteers help with the setup and breakdown. Money raised by the UMW goes for their missionary work and church expenses.

2. The United Methodist Women are also providing Easter baskets for the Hope Center to distribute to needy children in Ocean County during the Easter season. Kathy Newsome and Sue Malinowski are in charge of this project and all UMW women are supplying the goods that will be put in the Easter baskets.

3. The United Methodist Men are continuing to hold their breakfasts. Profit from the March breakfast was donated to the Educational Assistance Fund and profits from the April breakfast will be given to the Youth Mission Trip.

4. The UMM is also planning a clean up of church grounds on Saturday, April 28th. The rain date would be Saturday, May 5th. Scott Bilquist and John Gatsch are in charge of this project.

5. The next collection of food and personal hygiene items will be on Sunday, April 8th. Worshipers that attend the Contemporary Service will place their donations on the table in the Family Life Center and worshipers that attend the Traditional Service will put their donations in the coatroom next to the Narthex. Personal hygiene items needed are soap, deodorant, shampoo, bath tissue, baby diapers, and baby wipes.

6. The Paula Brown Soup Kitchens are providing approximately 50 needy people with dinners during the third and fourth Tuesday of the month. This is a ministry of the church that also fights the problem of hunger in Ocean County. Betty Lou Pinto and Kris Olsen chair these special Tuesday servings. Whenever you see Judy Widener behind her table (cart), please go up to her and volunteer to bring in foodstuffs for the next Paula Brown Soup Kitchen event.

7. Make sure you listen to where your Second Quarter Mission Giving is going to be used for and please give generously.

CHESTNUT HILL NURSERY SCHOOL

Welcome to Spring!!! We are so excited to come back from our Spring Break! The children are ready to learn and have fun! March flew by at Chestnut Hill. The children had so much fun chasing the naughty leprechaun around the halls! He sure left a mess-foot prints everywhere! We never did catch him, but he left the children a nice surprise for the mess he made. A visit from Miss Vicki our Dental Hygienist from Brick Pediatric Dental was a highlight of our month. We learned just how important it is to take care of our pearly white teeth.

April finds us welcoming a visit from Cattus Island. Snakes and Turtles oh my! So much beauty right here in our back yard in Toms River. The children love learning all about the wildlife that they may run into near the Barnegat bay.

The Week of The Young child is April 16-20. This week is one of our favorite weeks of the year! Each day we will have a special theme to celebrate our little ones. Super hero day is my personal favorite! The week ends with a celebration at the Ocean County Library. The event is from 10-12 and the art work of all of our budding artists will be on display for everyone to see.

Please spread the word about our wonderful little pre-school. Registration is open! Stop by the office for information or call 732-286-9388 > Happy Spring!



CURRENT HISTORY OF THE FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF TOMS RIVER PART I

In 1972 the Women's Society of Christian Service became the United Methodist Women. In 1976 they held the first Christmas Bazaar, netting over \$5,000 which was used to furnish Fellowship Hall, provide scholarships to 44 young people who attended summer camps, and buy partitions for additional Sunday School rooms. In 1978 there were 14 circles and about 90 women met monthly.

We provided the training place and first location (the cottage) for "Contact," a 24 hour volunteer telephone counseling service, begun by the Toms River Ministerium. With many local churches we helped to collect food for needy families in Ocean County. As part of the Interfaith Hospitality Network we housed and fed homeless families for a week four or five times a year. In 1976 the Trustees turned over the maintenance of the old Methodist burying ground to Dover Township. A historical sign was placed there and the Revolutionary War soldiers' graves were marked.

In 1979 the public school stopped renting rooms from the church. In 1980 we opened Chestnut Hill Nursery School with 8 students. Today there are approximately 80 students that attend the school.

In 1984 a second parsonage was purchased on the corner of Old Freehold Road and Walchest. A full time Christian Education Director was hired in 1985. Almost immediately there was overcrowding as the Sunday School grew. Youth

activities increased with the donation of a discarded school bus that was in good condition. It was painted blue and known as the "Blue Goose." An acolyte training program was established. The choir filled both sides of the choir stalls. A children's choir and an intermediate age choir began. The memorial gift of Flemish hand bells made a bell choir possible. A Conn three manual organ was purchased with memorial gifts to the long-standing organ fund. In 1985 the Pastor Parish Relations Committee recommended Joe Iovino, who had grown up in the church, for candidacy for the ministry.

"Kids for Christ" began in 1992. Every Wednesday afternoon about 50 school age children gathered to learn about Jesus, eat dinner together, and attend the rehearsal of three children's choirs.

In 1991 the steeple was again lighted and we adopted the motto, "the church with the lighted steeple and the friendly people." In 1992 we had a celebration and burned the mortgage. 1995 saw the beginning of an informal service held every Sunday in Fellowship Hall during the Sunday School hour. At this time a full time Assistant Pastor was hired. Also in 1995 our Shantz pipe organ arrived. Collapsing pews led to a sanctuary refurbishment in 1998, For four weeks all services were held in Fellowship Hall.

TO BE CONTINUED...

20TH ANNIVERSARY OF HERITAGE SOCIETY SUNDAY, MAY 20TH AT BOTH SERVICES

IN ADDITION TO THE ADVANTAGES OF GIVING TO YOUR CHURCH'S ENDOWMENT FUND ANYTIME, GIVING NOW GETS YOU ON OUR ANNIVERSARY PLAQUE DISPLAYED AT OUR CHURCH.

TAX TIME!

With income taxes due in april, it is a good time to review a persons charitable giving. Are you taking advantage of one's charatible tax deduction? With a gift to first united methodist's endowment fund, you may have not only an income tax deduction, but avoid capital gaines taxes. Also, one may avoid paying estate taxes.

Gifts can be unique to your situation since it is not an annual gift.

There are many ways to give our endowment fund. Some are:

1. It can be cash or another asset all at once or over a period of time.
2. It can be all or a portion of a life insurance policy.
3. It can be a specific amount or percentage of your will.
4. It can be a charitable gift annuity paying a fixed amount annually to you over your lifetime. (the payout is based on your age at the time of your gift and is usually more than you could get from an investment.)
5. It can be stocks or bonds which allows you to avoid capital gains tax, and gain an income tax deduction.

PERMANENT GIFT

Your gift is used to produce income, but your gift is never spent.

For this reason, it makes a wonderful tribute to the giver.

First United Methodist Toms River Heritage Society

A miniimum gift or promise of a gift of \$5,000 makes you a member of our Heritage Society. Recognitions include your name on the plaque hung on the wall in the church lobby and a handsome individual plaque for yourself.

Questions and help available from committee members; Mary Bode. Chris Christiansen, Jim Graef, Peter Rrich, Frank Strucki, Sibyl Walczak, Robert Wahlers, and Jere Williams

BIRTHS

Parker Anne Koenigstein, 3/14/18, Granddaughter of John & Scotty Gatch

BAPTISM

Addison Claire Baier, daughter of Dalton & Tiffany, Baptized on 3/11/2018

DEATHS

GAY GERNERT joined FUMCTR 11/29/1953 and Passed 2/15/2018



APRIL

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
1	2 9am Crafters TH 11am Memorial Service CHNS CLOSED	3 11am Phoebe Circle TH CHNS CLOSED	4 5:30-7pm Covenant Bible Study RM4 CHNS CLOSED	5 CHNS CLOSED	6 CHNS CLOSED	7
8	9 7pm Ruth Circle TH 7pm UMW Executive Board Meeting RM 4	10 10am Knitters TH 12:30pm Eve Circle TH	11 3-5pm Nine Patchers TH 5:30-7pm Covenant Bible Study RM4 7pm Esther Circle TH	12 5:30pm Wedding Rehearsal	13 10am UMM Breakfast set-up FLC 4:30pm Jenna Leifert Wedding Confirmation Retreat	14 8-10am UMM Pancake Breakfast FLC
15 9am Armbruster Baptism	16 9am Crafters TH	17 3-4:30pm Soup Kitchen FLC 7-8:30pm New Members	18 5:30-7pm Covenant Bible Study RM4	19	20	21
22	23 11:30am Sarah Circle TH	24 10am Knitters TH 10-2:30pm Association, retired ministers & spouses FLC 7pm Church Council TH	25 3-5pm Nine Patchers TH 5:30-7pm Covenant Bible Study RM4	26	27	28
29 9am & 10:30am New Members Received 10:30am Fernandez Baptism	30	31				

MONDAYS

9am Crafters
6-8pm First Place for Health - FLC
7pm Boy Scouts - FLC

TUESDAYS

7:00 pm Praise Team - FLC
10:00 - Knitters - TH

WEDNESDAYS

4:30 Youth Choir (Grades 7-12) - CR
5:30 YGENESIS Choir - CR

THURSDAYS

6:30 Fellowship Bells - CR
7:30 Sanctuary Choir - CR
7-8 Acts Bible Study - MR

and by His
wounds
we are
healed

 Isaiah 53:5 

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OF TOMS RIVER**

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