

FLEMINGTON BAPTIST CHURCH MESSENGER – JANUARY, 2013



REED'S RENDERINGS...

Scandalous Love

Last Sunday in the Adult Class, we were focusing in our study book, Christmas Is Not Your Birthday on Chapter Three entitled, "Scandalous Love." The author, Mike Slaughter, encouraged us to consider the word "scandalous" in a couple of different ways. First he spoke of the "scandals" in the Bible and asked us to reflect on how God uses us for the good despite our failures and faults—Cain's killing of his brother, Abel; King David committing adultery with Bathsheeba and then killing her husband, the rape of Tamar, etc. These scandals remind us that humanity has a brutal and broken past, yet God continues to love the creation.

Then the author defined "scandalous" for us as going beyond the bounds of normal human conduct, participating in risky acts of kindness, choosing to do the unexpected, incautious in our exuberance. And in that way, God's love for us takes on a different tone. God's love as we know it in the "Incarnation", becoming flesh among us, is a "scandalous love affair." God has a passion for us which exceeds understanding. We human beings continuously chase after other gods, continuously turn our backs on our Creator, continuously forget the One who cherishes us. Yet, God continuously takes us back and works for our deliverance, health and peace. Scandalous love!

And it is that kind of love which we are inspired to show to others. Love that exceeds the normal wink and a nod. Love that goes the extra mile, love that embraces the scoundrel, love that even costs us something.

David Instone-Brewer is Senior Research Fellow in Rabbinics and the New Testament at Tyndale House wrote: "Jesus was accused of being a bastard, blaspheming, abusing alcohol, partying with prostitutes and working for Satan – in other words, scandal followed him." When we excel in being God's children, filled with grace and truth, and when we choose to be God's people, loving as God loved, with passion and abandon, I suppose that we too could be considered to live outside the lines of decency. We, too, could become those who hang out with the wrong people, go against the grain, and baffle those who follow convention's wisdom. But what a way to go—alongside Jesus!

As we move into this new year I want to invite others to join me in "loving scandalously" in Jesus' name. I want to encourage all of us to look around us and see people or situations that are worth your investment of time, energy, creativity and yes, even money. I want us to "go overboard" in showing forgiveness, acting in a generosity of spirit, encouraging like crazy, and modeling God's abundant grace. I want us to live boldly, speak truthfully, and serve humbly.

IN THE CHURCH FAMILY...

Russ Stier spent several weeks at St. Lawrence Rehab and is doing very well. He was discharged from the Rehab on 12/22 and will be staying with his son, Peter, and family for a while.

John Anaya was having some trouble getting around but is doing better. He hopes to be able to come back to church after the first of the year when he returns from VT.

Jan Martin's father had a biopsy on December 18.

Jason Kuster's uncle in Florida passed away.

Judy Brown's friend's daughter (Jen) had a double mastectomy.

Jim Brown continues to have intestinal issues and is seeing a surgeon in Philly as they decide what to do next. Because of this health concerns, Judy will no longer be able to watch their 2 adorable grandsons. They are looking for someone who might be able to babysit them a couple days a week. Please contact her if you know of a good, responsible person.

Norma Modzeleski, former member who now lives on Cape Cod, lost her husband of 4 years, Rob, who died on November 15 of cancer. Her address is: 10 Donahue Rd., Brewster, MA 02631-1770.

Ernest Reid had surgery on his arm; they drained fluid, he also may have gout. He is in the process of getting a prosthetic leg made. Ernest & Jeanine's new address is: 258 Brunswick Avenue, Apt. 436, Lambertville, NJ 08530.

Pastor Pam's daughter-in-law, Terrill, is healing from the incisions in her abdomen in preparation for beginning dialysis. Her parents stayed with the family to help care for Calvin while Terrill recouped.

Lee O'Connor had same day surgery and is doing well with her recovery.

Mary Fedorko is back at Acorn Glen with Nick and feeling much better following a short stay in the hospital.

Joan Douglas in Sea Girt is slowly healing from her heart surgery a couple months ago.

Bianca Ramos had successful same day surgery.

Doug Kerr fell again recently sustaining several bruises along with a fractured bone in his wrist.

Sandy Poole's (former member) mom passed away.

Continue to pray for: Dave Aro; Gus Roth; Margaret Kania; Ruth Compton's mom; Christina Bowden and her family as she begins hospice care at home; Larry Brydia; Rwigasore family.

Chantal Rugagaza, who used to live in the parsonage, was here visiting for a few days. She is now working and going to school in Lexington, KY.

Bianca Ramos is applying to do PhD work at Rutgers.

Lois Stewart and Verna Stothoff have donated two maple trees on the corner of Broad and Church in memory of the Andersons (Lois's aunt and uncle) and Sam Stothoff (Verna's husband).

Cheri Roth's dad and niece did well with their doctor appointments this month. Additionally, Cheri has a new great niece named Hannah Marie!

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Anniversary Date</u> | <u>Years</u> |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| Jackson & Agnes Alleger | January 24, 1953 | 60 |

CHURCH NEWS...



As the New Year begins, so too does a new study in our adult Sunday School class! To start the New Year off right we will be sitting down with a book by Warren Wiersbe to listen to and discuss his 50+ years of experience and insight into being A Servant Of God. Wiersbe has pastored three churches, taught practical theology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, and was the Distinguished Professor of Preaching at Grand Rapids Theological Seminary. Dr. Wiersbe has had the privilege of counseling and working alongside countless servants of God from all over the world, and through his book *On Being a Servant of God* we have the opportunity to learn from his invaluable experience. Each week, starting January 6th and continuing at least until the Lenten Season we will learn from the lessons that God has taught Dr. Wiersbe through his many years of ministry.

WHAT'S HAPPENING...

GAME NIGHT - JANUARY 4

New Year - "New" Game Night! Bring your favorite New Game and start off 2013 by learning something new and fun! All Sr. Highers and adults are invited to join us on Friday, January 4 at 7 PM in the parlor. Please RSVP to ddubs15@gmail.com or (908) 399-1982 for a head count. Bring your friends!

PRAYER BREAKFAST - JANUARY 12

Join us for Prayer Breakfast on Saturday, January 12 from 8 - 9:30 AM. We'll meet at Perkins Restaurant.

SENIOR LUNCH - JANUARY 19

All seniors are invited to join us for lunch at FBC on Saturday, January 19 from 12 - 2 PM. This will be a covered dish event so please bring a dish to share. Come and invite your senior neighbors or friends to join us for this time of fellowship!

HAPPY ENDINGS & ANNUAL MEETING - JANUARY 27

Please plan to attend our Annual Congregational Meeting when we adopt the 2013 budget and approve our Nominating Committee report. We'll meet following our Happy Endings Luncheon, hosted by the Youth, immediately following worship in the dining room.