



# The Blawenburg Beacon

February, 2011

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

## "Passionate Spirituality"

As a period of transition rapidly approaches, the Church Health Team with encouragement from Consistory has elected to read and implement the recommendations of "Natural Church Development" (NCD), an enormously successful congregational "growth" program with devotees all over the globe. Created by Christian A. Schwarz, a German pastor, NCD helps churches identify those areas where they need to improve in order to serve God effectively in their communities.

NCD does not necessarily lead to numerical growth, but it does lead to a clearer focus on faith and its benefits, which ultimately makes a church more attractive to those searching in this area.

Schwarz identifies eight quality characteristics of a healthy church. Chief among these is "passionate spirituality." In short, a faithful church must be passionate about its reason for being, which is to grow in spirit and lead others to spiritual rebirth and nourishment.

What is a passion? It's that thing we can't wait to get back to, whether it's a hobby like gardening, cooking, art, exercise - or another person. Experts say having a passion is the secret to longevity. In other words, passionate people live longer. They are healthier in mind and heart and they look forward to a new day.

What is spirituality? It's that part of ourselves that is separate from the physical body or material wants and needs. In the Bible Jesus says "God is Spirit" (John 4:24). The book of Genesis says God created humanity in God's own "image" (Gen.1:26). So the spiritual life is the godly life, that place in our inner selves in which we are able to communicate with God, vent our frustrations or sorrows, offer praise and thanks, and receive instruction. The spirit is the eternal part of ourselves. It follows then that the spirit is something to which a wise person pays special attention.

Is passionate spirituality a dominant factor in our individual lives and our church? People and congregations who are passionately spiritual can't wait to join in prayer, get back to the study of Holy Scripture and worship *somewhere* on the Sabbath day. A person in this condition feels genuine loss when he or she misses a weekly church service. When passionately spiritual people gather for meetings, reading groups and breakfasts, for example, their conversation naturally turns to stories of what God has done for them and the people they know. The secular world drifts into temporary obscurity.

Some evening in February (we're shooting for Wednesday the 16<sup>th</sup>), at least thirty core members of our church will gather for a modest meal and meet with our new NCD coach Rev. Steve Sayer of the Bushkill Falls (PA) Reformed Church. Steve's congregation has successfully implemented NDC principles and continues to grow in spirit *and* in numbers. On that night he will have us take a survey in which we'll be asked to evaluate our church's health in the following areas: empowering leadership, gift-based ministry, passionate spirituality, effective structures, inspiring worship service, holistic small groups, need-oriented evangelism and loving relationships. The primary point is to identify those areas where we need improvement if we are to become a robust servant of God in our neighborhood.

What do you think? Are you passionately spiritual?

Peace,  
Pastor Rich

## **Consistory Highlights**

By Wendy Herbert, V.P. of Consistory

At the Consistory's regular meeting on Thursday, January 13:

- Pastor Rich presented and discussed with the rest of consistory his recommended strategies for the church during our upcoming pastoral transition. As a result of this discussion, consistory will be meeting separately to develop transition plans which will be presented to the congregation over the next few months.
- Coming out of the discussion of transition planning and an earlier meeting of the church elders, the elders will begin making visits to each family in the congregation.
- Consistory approved a budget for the fiscal year beginning January 1 and ending December 31, 2011, including a new line item for emergency repairs.

Consistory discussed some of the successful activities that occurred over the past several weeks, including the Christmas Eve service which was attended by 150-175 worshipers; a successful Sinterklaas event; and a worship service and potluck lunch in which we hosted the women residents of Crawford House. Thanks to all for helping out with each of these!

(There are many reasons why our Christmas Eve service was successful, not the least of which was that we were warm, because of . . . .)

### **The Oilmen Who Saved Christmas Eve**

Sometimes things happen serendipitously, and such was the case on Christmas Eve. Don Terhune just happened to be checking on the furnaces in the basement of the sanctuary. It wasn't a service call, just one of those things Don does to make sure things are working well in our church buildings. He noticed that there was a large puddle of oil forming under the recently filled tank. Upon further investigation, he discovered a hole in the tank.

The crew from Valley Oil was immediately called in. They quickly pumped out the oil, removed the tank, installed a new one, and filled it with new oil. Worshipers who attended the 5:30 PM service did so in comfort, having no idea what activity was required to keep the church warm.

As Christians, we are challenged to use our talents with humility. This is an excellent example of how one member of our community did just that. Thank you, Don, for being in the right place at the right time, as you often are, and acting quickly when you discover a problem. Thank you also to Valley Oil and its dedicated employees who generously provided the time and new tank to the church at no charge. We are grateful.

## MEET YOUR CONSISTORY

BY BOB BRADSELL

**ETHEL TERHUNE** was elected to Consistory in the spring of 2007. She's an Elder serving the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of her 2<sup>nd</sup> term, and by custom will step down from that post this June. But it's not the first time Ethel has found herself in a leadership role here at BRC. She was vice president of Consistory in the early eighties, at a time when a popular pastor was moving on, and the church faced the prospect of change.

Ethel and husband Don Terhune have been part of the church family for a long time. Don was a Blawenburg kid...lived in what is today the home of David and Evelyn Cochran. He went to school in what is now our Memorial Hall. Ethel grew up in the Bridgepoint section of town, right across from the picturesque mill. Her family, the Stotts, and the Terhunes were local area farmers going way back. Ethel attended grade school in what is today Glasiors Furniture, next door to the Harlingen Church. They both went to Princeton High School, typical in the 1950s for kids in a large part of central New Jersey. To draw a picture of the local connectedness that was rural Montgomery in those days, consider this: The parents of Bernice Crawford (remember the Crawford House women who visited our church in January) would pick up little Ethel Stott, along with her brother and sister, and take them to Sunday School at the Griggstown Church. Bernice went on to marry Mait Van Nostrand. Look around the Blawenburg Church and you'll find connections reaching back to when this nearly 200-year-old institution was young.

After high school, Ethel and Don connected while working together at Nassau Oil Company on Route 206. They married in May, 1963. It's often the case that kids make church a priority in our lives, and it was no different with Ethel and Don. Daughters Amber, then Tera, then Esther soon had them becoming more and more active at BRC. It wasn't long before the Women's Guild drafted Ethel, and she's been a prominent fixture in church leadership ever since.

These days, if it has to do with the church's properties, you'll find Ethel – and Don – plugged in and working hard. Ethel has chaired the Properties Committee for longer than she'd like to admit. Don is largely responsible for the improved care of our cemetery, on Route 601, and for our attractive signage. If you attended our Christmas Eve service this year, and didn't feel cold, thank Don and his own Valley Oil Company for replacing a leaking oil tank just in time.

Ethel and Don have been blessed with seven grandchildren...you may have seen some of them from time to time. Amber and her late husband, John, gave them Arden and Rachel; Tera and husband Tom have Garret, Blake and Morgan; and Esther and Greg have Gregory and Landen.

Say 'hi' to Ethel and Don Terhune, and thank them for their service to our church. You'll find them most Sundays in the center section, west side, in the rear-most pew.

***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, Hospitality, and Missions Teams

On January 9<sup>th</sup>, the Worship, Hospitality and Missions Teams worked together to provide a very pleasant morning of worship and fellowship between our congregation and 22 residents from Crawford House. As usual, there was plenty of food and good conversation at the potluck following the service. Many of us learned to juggle thanks to our multi-talented Jean Butcher. It was lots of fun for those who could keep the balls in the air and for those who watched!

### Worship Team

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

Liturgical Learnings – Votum: The Votum begins worship by announcing who God is and who we are: “Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth” (Psalm 124:8). Votum is a Latin word, meaning desire, which in the Middle Ages was applied to a layperson whose desire (*Votum*) was to serve Christ with an intensity equal to that of those who had entered the monastery. Later it was used of the monastic vow. Thus the use of this term, Votum, as the opening statement of reformed worship is to express the desire that our whole life, represented in this worship, is ever lived in the acknowledgement of God's help, and only his help, in heaven and on earth. The person will affirm this, their desire, with a vocal “Amen.”

### Hospitality Team

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

### Pot Luck Luncheons

February 6th

March 6th

Mark your calendars and plan to attend these fun social events that start right after church. Bring a dish to share.

## Life-Long Learning Team

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

As written in the October issue of the *Beacon*, the church-school students in grades Kindergarten through Grade 6 meet with Mrs. Van Nostrand in the Children and Worship room in Cook Hall on the first Sunday of each month. In January, the students heard the story of the arrival of the Wise Men to worship Jesus. This meant Jesus came for the whole world to worship. Students also considered the gifts of the Wise Men and made bags of potpourri. On February 6th, the students will meet in Cook Hall at 10 A.M. to consider if children can be Good Samaritans.

For two Sundays of each month (usually the second and fourth Sundays), the students meet in the upstairs room of the schoolhouse with Mrs. Perkins after the Children’s Sermon in the sanctuary. The lessons center around a Bible story from the RCA curriculum entitled “Kid Connection”. The class listens to a story and participates in games, conversations, and other activities connected to the Bible story. In January, we shared the lesson of being a good neighbor. We talked about the Good Samaritan and made a paper cutout of our neighbors and others we care about. On February 6<sup>th</sup>, Mrs. Van Nostrand and the students will consider if children can be Good Samaritans.

On the third and any fifth Sunday of a month, Mrs. Johnson or another member of the Missions Team engage the students in a Mission Project. In the fall, Mrs. Johnson taught a class around the verse “People do not live by bread alone.” For the January Mission Sunday, she and the students talked about the verse in the Lord’s Prayer “Give us this day our daily bread...” as they wrapped plastic tableware in napkins for TASK, the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen. After Sunday School, Linnéa (see attached photo), George, Byron, Barry and also Mrs. Herbert wrapped 300 more sets. TASK serves approximately 600 meals per day now, so these are really needed. Thank you to all of you who help others!



### **Marys and Marthas**

Women’s Book Study Group  
by Bernice Van Nostrand

The M and Ms will meet for breakfast February 12th at 7:30 to discuss chapter 1 of Small Wonder by Barbara Kingsolver. This author is not afraid to tackle the issues of poverty, war, big agriculture, advertising, and more. One chapter will be enough for one morning. All ladies of the church are welcome to join us.



# Blawenburg Village School

PO Box 153, Blawenburg, NJ 08504

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blawenburgvillageschool@yahoo.com

Karen Hill, Director

The students at BVS, along with their teachers will be busy during the month of February making Valentine Cards for those in local nursing homes. If you know of anyone who would enjoy receiving a card, please let us know and we will mail one to them.

We are starting our enrollment process for the 2011-2012 school year. An Open House will be held on Saturday, February 5<sup>th</sup>, 10:00am-12:00pm. If you are interested in a placement, please contact the school so we can be sure church members receive priority placement. The school will be offering classes for students 2 - 6 years old. Please help us spread the word by telling your family and friends!

Mom's Morning Out is available on Thursday mornings from 8:30-11:30am, for a cost of \$30.00/morning. This program is open to all children ages 2½ - 6, so please help us spread the word to any Mom in the community who may need a morning to herself. Students will be provided with a wide range of activities such as art exploration, science experiments, cooking projects, dramatics and pretend play, stories, music, snack, and outdoor activities. Please call or email the school to register.

## Youth Group Calendar

Sunday Night Lights: Rocky Hill Parsonage: 6pm – 8pm

February 20<sup>th</sup>

March 20<sup>th</sup>

April 17<sup>th</sup>

May 15<sup>th</sup>

June 19<sup>th</sup>

## Missions Team

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

### SOUP SALE SATURDAY RETURNS FEBRUARY 12!

9am – 1pm

Nothing conquers the cold of snow and ice in winter like hot soup! We will host our second annual mid-winter frozen soup sale on Saturday, February 12<sup>th</sup>, from 9am-1pm. Frozen soups will be available in quarts and pints at \$7 and \$3.50 in our popular recipes of Butternut Squash, Split Pea with Ham and Kielbasa, Lentil and many other favorites. You may call the church office to put in a request for your favorite or just come on the morning of the 12th. All proceeds will go toward our mission with Crawford House, a recovery facility for women. Since soup and winter go together so well, church members are also having soup-making lessons with the Crawford women, where we will enjoy the fruits of our labor together at the end!



Containers are available again downstairs in Cook Hall anytime, behind the big closet door. People enjoyed the variety. If you like to cook, you are just asked to make what you like best and how much you are comfortable making...and call or email the office with what that might be! Please include all ingredients on your labels. You may put them in the church freezer anytime, in a bag labeled with your name. Don't forget to tell your friends, neighbors and co-workers to come out for this! For suggestions or questions, call Bill Herbert or Gracie Johnson. Thanks in advance for your support.

able again downstairs in Cook the big closet door. People you like to cook, you are just you like best and how much making...and call or email the

## **Croatia Update American flag sells products here, but why?**

*By Nancy Titus*

We are all accustomed to seeing American flag motifs on all sorts of products in the United States, but it is an odd twist to see it on German- or Chinese-made products sold on another continent. Meanwhile iconic American brands, such as Colgate, Tide, or Cheerios, leave their American connections invisible to the buyer.

In U.S. stores, the flag on a package usually indicates the product's origin, letting the American consumer know it was made in the good 'ole USA. Here it apparently is a way for Europeans to indicate it is somehow like what Americans use, whether or not any of the product actually comes from the United States.

Many brands of popcorn, for example, have some kind of stars and stripes pattern on the packaging though the brand itself is European as is the corn inside.

One of first such brands I came across when we were new to Croatia was Kelly's microwave popcorn, sold in individual bags with very prominent use of the American flag as part of the labeling. I found it interesting to learn that an American, trying to teach Austrians to eat this snack, started Kelly's in Austria in 1955. At least there is an American connection behind this explicitly European business success.

Another high-profile use of the American flag is on a store-brand microwave popcorn that comes to us from Denmark. The flag wraps around three sides of the box, which clearly states it contains "American style" popcorn. I cannot see that there is any other style available, however, and there are several brands and varieties on the shelves.

Peanuts are another product often emblazoned with the American flag though some of the nuts are actually grown the United States. In this case, again, I think the packaging merely shows that Europeans associate peanuts with America. Many peanut packages have a red, white, and blue color scheme and include various forms of the Stars and Stripes, some taking up almost the entire can or plastic packaging even when the peanuts come from China.

Not all brands of popcorn or peanuts use this "American" branding of their products, but it is frequent enough that I was quite surprised recently when I found an *orange* package of pistachios in the nut aisle with a complete American flag up in the top corner. This truly was an indication of the origin of these nuts.

Perhaps the most curious flag usage is on a particular brand of peanut butter, a product almost universally known to be American. Here in Croatia, it is difficult to find. When we first arrived, one store stocked a small quantity of Skippy – in the refrigerated section! I guess the word "butter" meant to someone that it needed to be kept cold. I haven't seen a national brand here in years (then again maybe I just don't know where to look), but there is a Macedonian brand I can sometimes find. This small jar features a red, white, and blue striped label with white stars and a blue shadow of the Statue of Liberty, but the only "American" thing about it is the idea of peanut butter.

Our first Fourth of July in Croatia, after we had been here only a month, we celebrated quietly with a dinner of hamburgers cooked on the stove. Our "centerpiece" was a metal tube of something marked "barbecue," featuring an American flag. I didn't even know what it was when I bought it. It turned out to fit right in with our meal, however, as it was mustard, of German origin.

In a similar vein but on a larger scale is New Yorker, a German-based clothing company with 837 stores across Europe, including here in Osijek. Again, it is an example of Europeans choosing an American symbol as a vehicle to sell their own goods.

Seeing others use our national symbols is an interesting part of living abroad and yet another way we learn about our world.

## Proclaiming Team

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

by Chip Parmele

Once again this spring, the Proclaiming Team of our church will be hosting its second **Lecture Series**. The first one will be in April and two will be in May. **Mark your calendars now** to reserve the dates. Look for more information in the March *Beacon* and in a soon-to-be-produced flier.

**4/6-** Greg Olsen- Entrepreneur-“Voyage to the International Space Station”

**5/4-** Dr. DeForest B Soaries Jr. – Senior Pastor First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens-  
“Nationally Renowned Motivational Speaker”

**5/25-** John Patten- Senior Editor- Warren.Patch.com- “New Directions in On Line Media”

## Men’s Breakfast Group

February 3 - Cook Hall at BRC  
February 10 - Red Oak Diner, Rt. 206,  
February 17 - Cook Hall at BRC  
February 24 - Red Oak Diner, Rt. 206, Skillman



## **Outreach Lunch Menus**

February, 2010

by Nancy Curtis

Every Tuesday, from 11:30 to 1:00, we serve lunch in Cook Hall. Lunch is served buffet style and a free-will donation is accepted (anonymously). This lunch has become a great outreach to the community. We average 25 people but occasionally have 40. I can always use extra help either during the morning hours setting up the dining room or later for kitchen clean-up.

(Perk of helping—leftovers!)

Lunches will always have salad, bread and beverages

February 1

Squash & Corn Chowder, Ham w/Macaroni & Cheese

February 8.

Chicken Rice Soup, Chicken Marsala with Rice

February 15

Chicken Sausage Gumbo, Meatball Stroganoff with Egg Noodles

February 22

Broccoli Cheddar Soup, Pulled Pork, Grilled Cheese

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



- |                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| 1 Matt Nichols   | 10 Lisa White  |
| 2 Elaine Zeltner | 11 Tom Miner   |
| 6 Marc Helberg   | 12 Neil Hunt   |
| Sonya Hunt       | 25 Tom Johnson |
| 9 Barry Gurzo    | 28 Elmi Hill   |

## ANNIVERSARIES

7 Tom & Lisa Hunt

### Summary of Dates

See earlier articles for more details.

- |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| February 2  | 1 PM BVS Task Force-Cook Hall                                                                                                                                                                       |
| February 3  | 7:30 AM Men's Breakfast Club-Cook Hall                                                                                                                                                              |
| February 5  | 10 AM—Noon BVS Open House                                                                                                                                                                           |
| February 6  | 10 AM—Children & Worship—Cook Hall<br>Mini Coffee Hour / Pot Luck Luncheon                                                                                                                          |
| February 10 | 7:30 AM Men's Breakfast Club-Red Oak Diner<br>7:30 PM Consistory-Cook Hall                                                                                                                          |
| February 12 | 7:30 AM Marys and Marthas-Cook Hall<br>9 AM—1 PM Soup-r Saturday Soup Sale Fundraiser—<br>containers are available in Cook Hall<br>Please label the ingredients. All kinds of soups are encouraged. |
| February 16 | NCD Meeting-Cook Hall-Time TBD                                                                                                                                                                      |
| February 17 | 7:30 AM Men's Breakfast Club-Cook Hall                                                                                                                                                              |
| February 20 | 6-8 PM Sunday Night Lights—Rocky Hill Parsonage                                                                                                                                                     |
| February 23 | Deadline for March Beacon Articles and Information                                                                                                                                                  |
| February 24 | 7:30 AM Men's Breakfast Club-Red Oak Diner                                                                                                                                                          |
| February 27 | Girl Scout Thinking Day—Cook Hall basement                                                                                                                                                          |
| Tuesdays    | 10 AM —Bible Study—Cook Hall basement<br>11:30-1:00—Outreach Lunch—Cook Hall basement                                                                                                               |
| Sundays     | 11:30 AM in Cook Hall—Adult Sunday School                                                                                                                                                           |

# **The Blawenburg Beacon**

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Dated Material

The Blawenburg Beacon is a publication of the  
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