

## **FROM PASTOR CHAD**

### *The Work of the People*



A while back I did a fair bit of reading about the Church in North America and the particular challenges we face in this present age. There is little dispute that we live in a radically consumer oriented culture. We need not go further than our cell phones to find ads tailored specifically to our particular interests, age range, desires, perceived needs, and previous browsing habits. We are drowning in false advertising.

I along with many pastors, professors, and students of church feel that for too long our churches have not stood over and against this *consumer culture*, but have unwittingly become part of it and even embraced it. We practice the same schemes for marketing our congregations that Madison Avenue advertisers use for their clients. We sell the church based on the programs we have to offer you, your children, and your neighbor. We talk about what we have to offer as if we're competing in a marketplace. We talk as if our purpose is to entertain, disseminate helpful information, and deliver individual satisfaction to consumers.

For seven years the session of LVPC and I have attempted to steer our congregation away from a consumer approach to church and toward a more authentic community. To this end we've emphasized: the spiritual formation of children, youth, and adults, intergenerational activities, growing deep community with one another, discerning God's voice, and being a blessing to our local community and the world.

I've also insisted, on more than one occasion, that our worship is not just one more event to attend on a packed calendar. Worship is not something simply to be consumed for our entertainment, or a program for us to evaluate. At its best worship is transformational. When we come to worship open to God's Spirit we leave, still with busy lives, worries, and burdens to carry, but we leave changed.

*It is not the person who presides who gives the baptism or the meal its authority. The authority is inherent in the ritual's witness to the gospel.*

— Rick Barger

What we do in worship is best described by the word *liturgy*.

We often think of *liturgy* as the ordering of, or the different parts of the service; some people might think of a liturgical church as a more formal style of worship. However, *liturgy* literally means "the work of the people." It is the work we do when we gather together on Sunday morning: we pray, sing praise, lament, love, listen for God, share the sacraments, and create community through the hope of the Gospel.

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To understand worship this way is to assume that we all have a role to play and that when we do not participate the community is somehow incomplete. Worship is something so much more than what we can consume to meet a need. A crucial element of my 2016 sabbatical is considering what it means to rely less on the pastor in our worship and claim the work we do together.

Rick Barger writes, "To insist that only the ordained can do certain things, no matter what the circumstances are is [a consumer culture approach]. It is not the person who presides who gives the baptism or the meal its authority. The authority is inherent in the ritual's witness to the gospel."\* Our work in worship, at its core, is to "witness to the gospel." This witness happens in our prayers, our song, our art, and our proclamation of the Word. It is my hope that we can all find our role in the *liturgy*, and thus our worship will become a deeper and even more authentic witness to God's Good News.

To this end I would like to encourage everyone to consider what their role in our worship is. What is it that you bring? How can you share in our worship together? On Pentecost Sunday, for example, our fourth and fifth graders will be leading worship, but they will be

inviting the congregation to be more than spectators. I look forward to how we will be growing in our understanding of our work as we continue to be witnesses to the resurrection together.

\* Rick Barger, *A New and Right Spirit: Creating an Authentic Church in a Consumer Culture*, (page 123).



### **G.i.F.T. (FORMERLY VBS)**

Don't forget to keep your eye on July 12-16. We are excited to announce that the adult study time during GiFT will be led by special guest Rev. Stephanie Muntzel. Stephanie is a member of Newton Presbytery, serves as Pastor to Musconetcong Valley Presbyterian Church in Hampton and is the Presbytery's Resource Center Media Coordinator.

### **EASTER SERVICE DVD**

A video of the Easter Service with exceptional handbell, brass and organ music, as well as our "Congregational Choir" and Chad's always excellent sermon, is available. See or call David Knight 537-4347 to reserve your copy.

### **ASP PRAYER CARDS**

This year we will once again offer "Prayer Postcards" featuring each of the ASP volunteers. The postcards will have a photo of each member of the LVPC team and prayer requests. The postcards can be yours for a \$10 donation each, fully tax deductible.

During May and June, our ASP volunteers will have the postcards available and can talk with you during Coffee and Conversation after worship.

Our volunteers are:

*Laura Hostler, Isabel Roppolo, Carol, Anthony and Julia Casale, Annalee and Lora Harris, Chad and Annalise Rodgers, Katherine Rupprecht, Colleen and Morgan McCord, Terry Hoffman, Sara and Allison Varga, Melissa and Jake Ollerenshaw, Sarah Tymes and Jeff Dahl.*

Collect the postcards over the coming weeks and keep them handy to remind you to pray for each person before and during the trip. By backing the trip financially and with your prayers, you can be an important part of this mission opportunity. We are very grateful for all of our generous congregational support!

**EVENING CIRCLE**

Women's Evening Circle will be meeting Wednesday May 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. in the Getz Library. We will be continuing our Bible Study "Journeys Through Revelation, Apocalyptic Hope for Today" from the Horizon's Bible Study 2010-2011. There are extra Bible Studies in the Getz Library for anyone who wants to join us. If you have any questions please feel free to contact Nancy Knight 537-4347 or Joni Nodes 391-6263.

**SAVE THE DATE!**

Our annual Worship in the Park and Picnic will be on June 7 at Califon Park. This year we are calling this our "New Members Luncheon/Picnic". It's a great way for us all to get to know each other a little better. Everyone is to bring a salad or dessert to share with all. Any questions? Please call Lisa Coffaro at 973-713-4870 or email her at [coffaro423@comcast.net](mailto:coffaro423@comcast.net).

**BUILDING AND GROUNDS SPRING CLEAN UP**

On **Sunday, May 10<sup>th</sup>** following coffee and conversation, we'll be raking, trimming bushes, spreading mulch, sweeping walkways, and cleaning windows. Please bring your favorite garden tools, rakes, shovels and a little elbow grease! Rain date is May 17<sup>th</sup>. Contact Warren Newman with questions.

**PRAYER CHAIN**

The Prayer Chain is an email distribution group of people from our LVPC family. Prayer requests are forwarded to Wendy Garcia and then Wendy forwards the prayer to the entire group. If you would like your email address added to the Prayer Chain, please send Wendy an email at [kwgarcia@msn.com](mailto:kwgarcia@msn.com).

**COMMUNITY GARDEN**

**We still have 2 garden beds available in our Community Garden for this growing season.** If you are interested, please call Claudia **as soon as possible**. Beds are available on a first come/first served. There is a \$25 fee per bed. Registration form and covenant agreement (required with payment) can be found on the website.

**CHILDREN'S MINISTRY**

Sunday School will continue through the month of May. The church picnic will be June 7, in the Califon Park. All are welcome for a Family Worship Service followed by a picnic lunch and games. As we are winding down this Sunday School year, please consider a teaching position for the fall. If you are interested contact someone on the Spiritual Formation Team: Kim Rodgers, Susan Huntington, Christina Wilson, Natalie Gast, Linda Stetler. The team hosted a brunch on April 25, to review the year and to thank this year's teachers for their dedication. Dr. Maureen Paterson was the inspiring guest speaker.

As summer approaches the children will have Family worship at the art tables each week during morning worship. If you would like to sign up to man the art table during the summer, please contact Linda Stetler.

The GiFT summer program will be held July 12 - 16. It is for everyone! If you have not already signed up, please contact Kim Rodgers. It is never too late. For more information, speak with anyone on the Spiritual Formation Team.

**MISSION TEAM  
"RE-START"**

The Mission Team had a meeting at the end of April. The purpose was to introduce new members as well as get the team re-started and rejuvenated. The team will now be meeting monthly, **every 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday at 7 p.m.**, and anyone is welcome to join.

There was an exciting discussion about our plans for the future as well as what we have been doing as a church community in the past. As you may or may not know, the team has been responsible for three major projects. These

include the **Community Garden**, the **Appalachia Service Project** and the **Alternative Gift Fair**. Lively discussion was around doing more hands-on projects, more frequently and locally.

Another activity that we do as a community is sponsor a child named Juliet through Compassion International. We have sponsored Juliet since 2011. Below is a copy of her latest letter.

Stay tuned for more information about upcoming events and how you can help the Mission Team and our church. We look forward to including more members of

the congregation in these various activities.

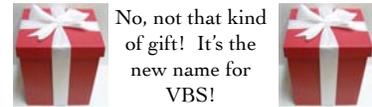


Mpendwa Lower Valley Presbyterian  
 Salamu nyingi zikufikia huko uli  
 pu nadumaini wewe ni mama wa  
 a afya njema. Nimefurahi kwa  
 zawadi ya barua nzuri pamoja  
 na picha. Namshukuru Mungu  
 wa kutupa usima. tumeona koi  
 smas na Mwaka mpya. Pia hu  
 duma ya mfoto ya inaende  
 ea vizuri. habari za shule  
 ni nzuri. tuna mshukuru mu  
 ngu kwa kutupa mvua na  
 hali ya hewa ni nzuri na  
 Inavutia. Naendelea kuku  
 ku omba kwa Mungu ili  
 akusaidie katika kazi ya  
 mliko. Ninaamstanwa  
 biblia nao unasema kafi  
 Lipi 4:13 Wayawezwa nam  
 bi yote kabika yeye ali q  
 nitiaye nguvu. Mungu  
 aliku baniki, aliku pe bee  
 ma ni mimi Juliet.aku

**Translation**  
 Dear Lower Valley Presbyterian  
 Many greetings reach  
 you these days.  
 I hope you are fine and  
 you have a good health  
 I'm happy for good  
 gift and good letter  
 and photo.  
 I thank God for  
 making alive. We have  
 seen X-mass and New  
 Year!  
 The child ministry is  
 proceeding well.  
 The school information  
 is good we thank God for  
 giving us rain and a good  
 weather which is attracting  
 Am proceeding praying  
 for you to God so that he  
 can help you at your  
 hard work.  
 I have the bible verse  
 from the book of phil 4:13  
 God bless you who  
 loves you Juliet!



# G.i.F.T.



No, not that kind of gift! It's the new name for VBS!

## GROWING IN FAITH TOGETHER



Grow Spiritually

Growing In Faith Together



JULY 12-16, 5:30 -8:30PM



Lower Valley Presbyterian Church  
 2015 Summer program  
 445 County Rd. 513  
 Califon, NJ 07830  
 908-832-2933  
 www.lowervalley.org

Do you know how to fish? Well, it's not necessary for this community adventure. (Maybe next time!) But for now, come by yourself or with your family, to explore what Jesus meant by saying, "Follow me & I will make you fish for people" and might look like to us today.



### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- All ages are encouraged to attend!
- We will start each night with dinner together.
- There will be activities for kids, adults & everyone in between.
- Child care will be available.
- We need adults to lead activities for the younger kids. If everyone volunteers 1 night, then everyone will have the chance to participate in the guest led adult section of G.I.F.T. Chad will lead the middle school ages & teenagers instead of the adults this year. (New!)
- \$25 donation per family. Single adults attending are asked to bring some food to share as their donation. After signing up, Linda Stetler will contact you to coordinate the nightly meals/desserts.
- Any questions, contact Kim Rodgers at [chadandkimrodgers@gmail.com](mailto:chadandkimrodgers@gmail.com) or 908-892-0141.



Does the same thing Jesus said so long ago, affect us the same way today? How can we drop everything to follow him? Is that really what he wants? There are so many questions & apprehensions that can surround this. Let's discuss & explore it together!



**Sign up now!** You know you're thinking about summer already, so pencil GiFT in as well!

Family Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Names & ages of children attending: \_\_\_\_\_

Names of adults attending: \_\_\_\_\_

Names & ages of children needing nursery care: \_\_\_\_\_

Where can you help? (please circle)

Art Games Practicing Our Faith  
 (if more than 1 adult is available to help, please indicate which area each would like.)

What is the best way to get in touch with you? \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this section to the church office or in the offertory plate.

**Pastor Chad's Contact info:**

Cell phone: 892.0044

E-mail: [revchadrodgers@gmail.com](mailto:revchadrodgers@gmail.com)

**Church Info:**

Claudia Gilbert: Church Administrator

Phone: 908-832-2933

E-mail: [lowervalleypc@embarqmail.com](mailto:lowervalleypc@embarqmail.com)

Website: [www.lowervalley.org](http://www.lowervalley.org)

Office hours: W-F, 8:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.

**Session Members**

Lisa Coffaro: 832-0409/[coffaro423@comcast.net](mailto:coffaro423@comcast.net)

Stephanie Donlon: 537-2604/[stephaniedonlon@yahoo.com](mailto:stephaniedonlon@yahoo.com)

Abby Ernst: 439-3549/[abigailernst@gmail.com](mailto:abigailernst@gmail.com)

Wendy Garcia: 867-7186/[kwgarcia@msn.com](mailto:kwgarcia@msn.com)

Terry Hoffman: 689-7646/[tbeehoffman@aol.com](mailto:tbeehoffman@aol.com)

John Leddie: 537-9622/[dovendog@comcast.net](mailto:dovendog@comcast.net)

Warren Newman: 638-4332/[newmanwj@cdmsmith.com](mailto:newmanwj@cdmsmith.com)

Kim Rodgers: 892-0141/[chadandkimrodgers@gmail.com](mailto:chadandkimrodgers@gmail.com)

Hunter Wilson: (703) 304-1445/[hunter22wilson@gmail.com](mailto:hunter22wilson@gmail.com)

Karen Newman (clerk): 638-4332/[karennewman@embarqmail.com](mailto:karennewman@embarqmail.com)

## Upcoming Servers

Date	Liturgist	Ushers	Communion Servers
May 3	Stephanie Donlon	Lisa Coffaro and Isabel Roppolo	Stephanie Donlon Lisa Coffaro Lisamarie Boehm Renee Ollerenshaw
May 10	<b>OPEN</b>	Nancy and David Knight	
May 17	Christina Wilson	Terry Hoffman Lisamarie Boehm	
May 24 (family)	4th & 5th Graders	4th & 5th Graders	
May 31	Dick Fincher	Judie and Adam Ambielli	
June 7 (Worship in the Park)	Warren Newman	Janet and Gary Kipp	Stephanie Donlon Warren Newman Kim Rodgers Lisamarie Boehm
June 14	Dick Kline	The El-Zahr Family	
June 21	Nancy Knight	Carol and Anthony Casale	
June 28	May Saxton	Terry Hoffman Kirk Petrik	

Art Table Schedule	Children's Message Schedule
May 24: Isabel Roppolo	May 17: May Saxton
	May 24: 4th and 5th graders

**If you are able to serve in an OPEN spot please contact the church office. If you are unable to serve in an assigned spot please try your best to find a substitute and let the office know of any changes. Thanks so much!**

Lower Valley Presbyterian Church  
445 County Road 513  
Califon, NJ 07830  
May 2015

## **The Vision of our Church**

Lower Valley Presbyterian Church is a community of believers who worship God in word and deed, nurture each other through prayer, friendship, and education, and seek to serve others in the Spirit of Jesus Christ. Our four areas of ministry are faith development, caring for each other, outreach ministry and supporting ministry.