



The Blawenburg Beacon

December, 2014

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

December 1, 2014

Dear Friends,

As we prepare ourselves to encounter the light of Christ's hope this Advent season, where is that hope most needed? Where is it needed in yourself, our community, our world? This is the question we explored in a new small group I am hosting Sunday evenings in Advent at the church called *The Uncluttered Heart: Making Room for God this Advent and Christmas*. As you can imagine, there were as many responses to this question as there were participants in the group. From the personal to the political, we are all aware of many places where hope seems in short supply. Yet, one of the greatest gifts the church offers this time of year is the proclamation that hope is born. It was born once and for all in the birth of the Christ-child and is born anew in every human heart that prepares him room. How will you prepare this year for the arrival of Christ's hope in your heart, your home, our church and surrounding community? It can be as simple as making an Advent goal of spending 15 minutes a day with a devotional reading, befriending someone you know is lonely or grieving and inviting them to coffee or lunch, or trying a creative gift-giving approach that emphasizes enjoying relationships with loved ones instead of getting caught up in all the hectic consumerism. Whatever your goal, I pray it blesses your Advent spiritual journey with the light of God's love.

Peace,

Travis



Advent has begun---the waiting period. The candle of Hope has been lit. Come, members and friends, wait and worship together as we light the candles of Peace, Joy, Love and finally the candle of the Christ Child.

The Blawenburg Reformed Church is a family 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

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

CHRISTMAS EVE: FAMILY CANDLELIGHT SERVICE - 5 PM (with Prelude beginning at 4:50)



December 28 at 9:45 AM
Christmas Carol / Hymn Sing



Hospitality

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

The Family Life Team will be hosting a covered dish luncheon on January 11th. Please mark your calendar and come over to Cook Hall after worship to have lunch and fellowship with our church family. Bring along a friend, if you would like.

We ask everyone to bring a dish to share. Ovens will be on low, if you wish to use them during the Church service. Beverages and dessert will be provided.

Hope to see you on January 11th. Lunch will be served at around 11:45. See me if you have any questions.

Evelyn Cochran, Chairperson
Family Life Team

*The Reverend Classis of Delaware-Raritan
Of the Reformed Church in America
Cordially invites you
To celebrate the installation
Of the Reverend Travis Winckler
As pastor of the
Blawenburg Reformed Church
424 Route 518
Blawenburg, New Jersey
On Sunday, December 14, 2014
At 4:00 P.M.*

*A reception in Cook Hall will follow the service.
Please RSVP Reception Only by December 7
At 609-466-3108 or BRC1832@verizon.net*

Life-Long Learning Team

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

Nursery – 9:45—11:30 – Noah's Ark Room – Cook Hall, upper level, east end

Our own Emma Murphy, a Junior at Montgomery High School will be our regular caregiver in the Nursery. Emma is Red Cross Babysitting certified as well as certified in Red Cross First Aid, CPR and AED. She worked at GSHNJ resident camp, Camp Lou Henry Hoover, as a summer camp counselor as well as an off-season supervisor. Emma will be there every Sunday from 9:45 AM until 11:30 AM. On rare Sundays when needed, our own Morgan Van Liew, certified as a lifeguard, will sub for Emma. They look forward to playing with and caring for your children on Sunday mornings! Feel free to contact Emma about any special nursery needs or questions you may have. Call or email the church office for her contact information.

Advent Discussion / Discovery Group will meet on Sunday evenings December 7th and 21st, during Advent at 7:00 PM in Cook Hall. It's meant to be a time to slow down and connect with the meaning of the Advent season before the holiday frenzy sets in. Come with the idea of discovering ways to unclutter your heart to make room for God during Advent and Christmas. There will be dessert, coffee, and tea on hand. Hope you can join!

The Tuesday Morning Study Group will reconvene in January.

The Mary and Martha Prayer/Study Group will not meet in December. Everyone will be busy at Sinterklaas and with Christmas. Mark your calendars for January 19, 2015, at 5:45 p.m., at the home of Bernice Van Nostrand. They will continue their conversation on *Waiting for Our Souls to Catch Up* by Sister Carol Perry from Marble Collegiate Church. The book is available through Amazon.com.



Blawenburg Village School

P.O. Box 153, Blawenburg, NJ 08504

609-466-6600

blawenburgvillageschool@yahoo.com

Karen Hill, Director

During the month of November many BVS families participated in Operation Christmas Child and as a group we donated 23 completed shoe boxes.

A Scholastic Book Fair will be held in Cook Hall on December 4th, 5th, and 6th. Stop by and do some Christmas Shopping!

All classes will learn the Advent Story in Children and Worship and will continue preparing for our Christmas Concert. The concert will be held in the church on Saturday, December 6th at 3:30. Please feel free to join us as we journey to Bethlehem. Following the concert, Santa will be visiting, and the Book Fair will also be open.

Our Mom's Morning Out program is available Monday - Friday (9:00-12:00) for a cost of \$30.00/morning. This program is open to all children ages 2 - 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.

Our students will also be busy making Christmas cards this month. If you know of anyone who would enjoy a card please email us (info@blawenburgvillageschool.com) their name and address and we will be happy to send one.

Save the Date: January 24, 2015- BVS Open House (10:00-12:00)

Missions

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

HEIFER INTERNATIONAL will be our mission focus for Advent and Christmas. We will try once again to raise the \$5,000 for a Gift Ark [see below]. Heifer alleviates hunger, poverty and environmental degradation through gifts of livestock and training. These animals provide food, draft power, and income for families. Since 1944, Heifer has helped more than 4.5 million families in 125 countries (including the U.S.) become self-reliant. Each family “passes on the gift” by giving one or more of its animal’s offspring to another family in need, and they also, and so on. It is the ‘gift that keeps on giving’!

In Cook Hall, you will see options for purchasing a gift of different animals: cows, camels, sheep, llamas, water buffalo, goats, pigs, ducks, geese, chickens, rabbits, and honeybees. If you would like to do this in honor or memory of someone, there will be handsome gift cards for you to take and use for this purpose. It is the perfect gift! (If you can’t get to Cook Hall, you may leave a check in the basket on the back table of the sanctuary starting December 7th where there is a price list for the different animals. Please make checks payable to BRC, noting “Heifer” (and the animal) on the ‘memo’ line, and we will get the handsome honor/gift card to you to give to a loved one.

Whether we give enough for an ‘Ark’, changing the world two by two, or not, we can be assured that these are truly Christmas (or Birthday, etc.) **gifts that will “keep on giving”!** To learn more about Heifer, visit <http://www.heifer.org> or see *Sonya Hunt* or *Barbara Pavlicek*.



Gift Ark: Changing the World Two By Two

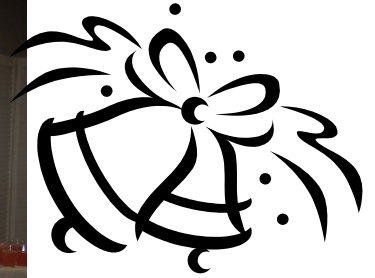
The Heifer Gift Ark offers hope worldwide to families who are poor and hungry. You'll help families start on a journey to fulfill a seemingly impossible dream - to secure food and a source of dependable income. Each family who receives livestock will pass on one or more of the animal's offspring to other families who are in need in their community. Every gift will multiply for years to come. Imagine how your gift could change the world. Two cows bring milk and income to a Russian village. Two sheep help families in Arizona produce wool. Two camels help families in Tanzania earn income by transporting agricultural and industrial materials. Two oxen pull plows and carts in Uganda. Two water buffalo help Cambodian families increase rice production through animal draft power. And that's just the first five sets of animals ... your ark provides 15 pairs of animals to change lives. **What a wonderful way to bring joy to the world!**

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD SHOEBOXES



Our final count was 20 shoe boxes that were delivered to the drop off point at Montgomery Evangelical Free Church. Thank you to everyone who prepared shoe boxes and offered prayers for the children who will receive your gifts. With special mailing labels, we will be able to “follow” our boxes around the world, so stay tuned to the Mission page in future months.

Thank you from the Mission Team



Our Classis Supervisor and neighboring pastor, Dave Kahler, was married to his high school sweetheart, Christy, on Saturday, November 29th. Congratulations!

Community Food Bank Deliveries for Crawford House



“Some kids have to use their imagination for dinner.” The saying on the side of the truck speaks volumes about the plight of many families in NJ.

Thousands of families in New Jersey rely on the Community Food Bank in Hillside for their food. This consortium gathers food from donors, businesses, and other sources to be distributed through churches and community organizations. Crawford House is among those that benefit from this low-cost food supplier.

Our church assists Crawford House by picking up food and delivering it to them. We usually have a “food run” every six to eight weeks. We drive a 15-passenger Crawford House van to Hillside and fill it with food, usually staple products. In November, we picked up 2500 pounds of food, which was mostly canned goods.

A variety of people from the community have helped us with this project and it is greatly appreciated by Crawford House. If you would like to participate in a future food run, please contact Dave Cochran, davidc99@aol.com.



Isn't this our mission, too?

Proclaiming

We commit our gifts to ... proclaiming the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ.

SINTERKLAAS IS HERE! Saturday, December 6 from 9-2

The frosts, changing leaves, and now snow on the ground make us think of celebrating winter holidays, of gift-giving, and **SINTERKLAAS DAY** [actually December 6th]. Plan to join us to celebrate this day and think about how you can help make this event a day of fun and fellowship for our church and our community. We will once again be giving a significant percentage of our profits to missions.



Are you a crafter? Donations for the **SEWING/CRAFT TABLE** will be greatly appreciated by Bernice Van Nostrand, Chair. She and her quilting friends have found time to keep up their quilting and sewing this year. Bibs, potholders, knitted dish cloths, baby hats and sweaters, scarves, crazy socks..... what can you think of to make? Hand-made cards, tags and Christmas ornaments and decor? Please put a suggested sale price on your item. Some new offerings this year are lap quilts, purses, key fobs, ornaments, and other fun items. There are many gift ideas here. Since our workers have made major purchases for the last two years, they should plan a break in their work time to look at these new offerings.

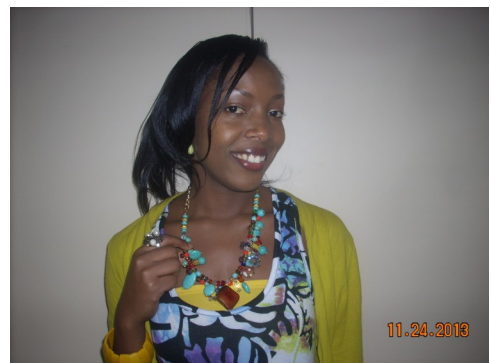
Do you like to cook and bake? Evelyn Cochran and Jean Beachell at the **BAKE TABLE** are looking for all kinds of baked goods. Bread and cookies sell very well. If you bag the cookies, please put six to a bag. People are also looking for cakes, pies, brownies, jellies and jams, sticky buns----or whatever you enjoy making. Please label your products and include if they have **nuts**. Please be sure to label everything with all ingredients and your initials. Deliver all items by Friday afternoon, December 5, at 4:00 p.m. to the Bake Table downstairs in Cook Hall. We do accept items on the morning of December 6, but please deliver early so we can get your item priced and out on the table.

The Bake Table and Soup Table can use the recycled, plastic, shopping bags from your favorite store. Just drop them off at the Bake Table and we will share.

David Cochran, Chair of our popular **FROZEN SOUP TABLE**, thanks everyone who has already made soups for Sinterklaas. We would like to have all the soups by Thursday, December 4, so we can check and organize them for sale on Saturday. Be sure to label your soup on the LID with its name, ingredients, and your initials, and register them in the blue soup log folder near the freezers.

Have a treasure to pass on? Peggy Querec is looking for treasures for the **WHITE ELEPHANT TABLE**. Holiday décor, ornaments and china are appreciated, as well as collectibles and new or gently used items appropriate for gift giving.

This will be the spot for any toys this year. Because of our limited space, this is the time and place for your 'treasures', not rummage. Items may be left as soon as possible at the west end of Cook Hall. Peggy can use help with sorting and pricing this week. If you know the original price or current value of an item, please note it.



SELECT FURNITURE items from Scott and Sue Weingart will be available in the White Elephant area.

HEIFER: And don't forget to count on our mission table for Heifer Int'l. for your gift-giving needs again this year. If you happen upon small stuffed animals or inexpensive books about the animals we buy for the Ark, Sonya Hunt would love to have them to sell along with the donation for the animal.

It makes a nice gift package for young children learning about the mission of Heifer. [Cows, sheep, camels, oxen, water buffalo, pigs, honeybees, goats, donkeys, ducks, rabbits, guinea pigs, geese, chicks, and llamas.]

Suzanne Hunt will have her beautiful **water colors** available for sale and Charlotte Corro will again grace us with her popular **jewelry** and items from Charlotte's Posh Accessories (www.poshmark.com/closet/chiqtita)- a huge hit last year! The Boy Scouts will have their **wreaths** for sale for anyone who didn't yet buy one from Cal Urbanski! BVS will be starting their Scholastic **book sale** as a fundraiser for the holidays. They will be set up in the center room upstairs in Cook Hall and will be open for Sinterklaas.

Lisa White will be chairing **LUNCH** with the help of Barb Reid. We will not be doing morning coffee & muffins, but rather encouraging people to buy those and desserts at the Bake Table. We will have our 'Hospitality' hot cider again. Lunch will be assorted sandwiches, salad, and apples from 11 AM-2 PM. Prepping will be Friday a.m. And help with cleanup after 2 on Saturday will be appreciated. Let Gracie Johnson know or sign up on the staff board.

We can also use help with parking on Saturday and signage, publicity this week. Posters and yard signs are available in Cook Hall. Can you put one up? Any suggestions about other things we could do or offer?? Let us know. Please sign up in Cook Hall for staffing or call/email Gracie Johnson [609-466-1862, gtuckerbj@gmail.com].

Think about making a day of it with us: work, shop and invite friends to join us for Sinterklaas; help us break down after 2 p.m.; stick around or return for the pre-school holiday concert at 3:30 PM!

Thank you in advance for your generosity and all of your contributions, donations, and help in general. You will soon be able to relax knowing that you've helped the church raise money for missions and God's work in our church. You are the best!



Finance Team

By now, you have received a letter from Consistory regarding the budget and pledging. Please note that there is a box for helping to pay the RCA Assessment and an opportunity to let Consistory know that you wish to use your talents by serving on a particular Team.



The Eagle Scout Project is now complete with the plaques memorializing Len and Fran.



Enjoy Jean's flower talents at the sanctuary doors.



Properties Team

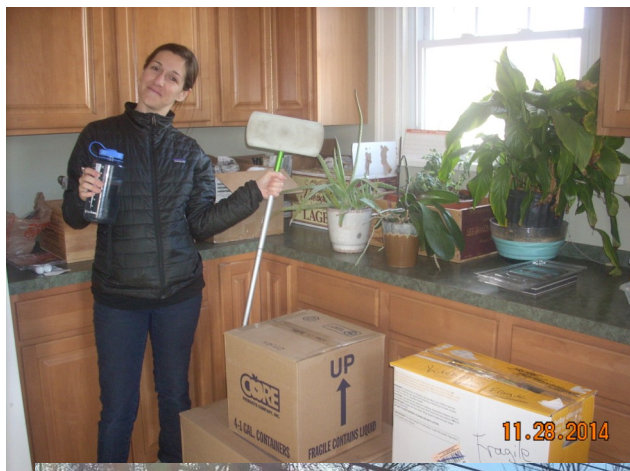
Moving Day!

Travis and Emily are in the house!

Thank you to all the busy people who made the parsonage ready for our new Pastor and his family.

And Emily, between placement of all her plants in her new sunroom, says thank you to everyone!

Gabe and grandma Karen, visiting from Colorado, enjoyed the nursery.



Finally, an exhausted Pastor Travis regains strength with a slice of pizza!

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



2 Barbara Antoniewicz	12 Sarah Johnson	25 Ruth Patterson
8 Mait Van Nostrand	Susan Weingart	28 Morgan Van Liew
11 Art Brown	23 T.J. Van Liew	29 Emma Murphy
	24 George Gurzo	31 Barbara Pavlicek

Summary of Dates

(Please see complete information in body of newsletter.)

* * * * *

Dec. 4-5-6		BVS Scholastic Book Fair (Cook Hall)
Dec. 6	9 to 2	Sinterklaas (Cook Hall)
	3:30 PM	BVS Christmas Concert (Sanctuary)
Dec. 7	10 AM	Second Sunday of Advent—Worship with Communion
	7 PM	Advent Discussion / Discovery Group (See page 3.)
Dec. 10	3:30	Princeton Theological Seminary Carols of Many Nations Miller Chapel
	6:30	
	8:30	
Dec. 14	10 AM	Third Sunday of Advent—Worship
	4 PM	Travis's Installation (See page 3.)
	7 PM	NO Advent Discussion / Discovery Group (See page 3.)
Dec. 15	7:30 PM	Consistory
Dec. 21	10 AM	Fourth Sunday of Advent—Worship
	7 PM	Advent Discussion / Discovery Group (See page 3.)
Dec. 22		Beacon Deadline for January Beacon articles and information
Dec. 24	5 PM	Christmas Eve—Prelude at 4:50 (See page 2.)
Dec. 28	9:45 AM	Christmas Carol / Hymn Sing
	10 AM	First Sunday of Christmas -Worship

Plan Ahead

January 11—Pot Luck Luncheon (See page 2.)
January 19—Mary's and Martha's (See page 3.)
January 24—BVS Open House—10 to Noon (See page 4.)

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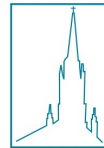
P.O. Box 266

Blawenburg NJ 08504

Dated Material



BLAWENBURG
REFORMED CHURCH



MARBLE
COLLEGIATE
CHURCH

Partners in Ministry

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424 Route 518; P.O. Box 266

Blawenburg, NJ 08504

e-mail address: BRC1832@verizon.net

Pastor: Travis Winckler

Editor: Barbara Pavlicek

Publisher: Nancy Curtis

Website: www.BlawenburgChurch.org

Phone: (609) 466-3108

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