



## **Quakertown United Methodist Church**

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**Visit our website at [www.qumc.com](http://www.qumc.com)**

**Share Christ   Grow in Christ   Serve Christ**

**January 2012**

# **It's Easy!   It's Hard!**



It's easy to make resolutions. Many of us make them especially at the beginning of a new year. It's hard to keep resolutions: Many of us break them - sometimes as early as January 2.

It's easy to say the right things. It's hard to do the right things.

It's easy to see the faults of others. It's hard to recognize our own.

It's easy to be selfish. It's hard to put others first.

It's easy to place blame. It's hard to accept blame.

It's easy to call ourselves Christians. It's hard to live consistently as followers of Christ.

It's easy to kick ourselves and quit trying when we break our resolutions. It's hard to believe God loves us anyway.



## **Wise Words to Encourage Us:**

—From Saint Teresa of Avila: “Let nothing disturb thee; let nothing dismay thee; all things pass; God never changes. Patience attains all that it strives for. He who has God finds he lacks nothing; God alone suffices.”

—From an unknown author: “It is hard: to forget, to apologize, to save money, to be unselfish, to avoid mistakes, to keep out of a rut, to begin all over again, to make the best of all things, to keep your temper at all times, to think first and act afterwards, to maintain a high standard, to keep on keeping on, to shoulder the blame, to be charitable, to admit error, to take advice, to forgive. **BUT IT PAYS!**”



Dear Friends,

My first six months at QUMC have been terrific. I have enjoyed getting to know you and learning about the strengths and the challenges of our church. It has been particularly helpful to be part of the group that carried out the first recommendation of the Joint Conflict Resolution Team. I believe that the covenant created by the team (with so much significant input from the congregation) is a document that can become a “living model” to help us live out our discipleship in healthier and more faithful ways.

At the December Administrative Board meeting there was a spirited and very helpful discussion of how to proceed with the remaining seven recommendations. It has been decided to work on four more of the recommendations simultaneously. A group will be forming to develop a theology of worship. At the same time a second group will develop a theology of Christian Education. Check the worship folder in early January to see when these groups will start their work and prayerfully consider being part of one or both. We desperately need the support and the input of a significant portion of our congregation. Each of us is called to reflect the understandings and concerns that God is speaking to us personally.

Two additional recommendations are being referred to our Council on Ministries. First, the council is being asked to spend the entire year of 2012 working in the area of communication. The council will be looking at various means and avenues of communicating information, ministries, and important decisions. Additionally the council will be developing better and more effective channels for congregational feedback to the leadership of QUMC.

Secondly, the council will spend 2012 determining what resources and energy will be invested in healthy leadership development for the present and future of QUMC. One of the real challenges for all of our members and especially our leaders (who make up our committees, Administrative Board and Council on Ministries) will be learning to live out the wonderful covenant that we have established. Making the covenant our norm for living with and leading each other will be a challenge!

By referring two of these recommendations to our Council on Ministries we are hoping that they will become long-term areas of growth for us as a faith community. Please understand that all council meetings are open to the entire congregation. This is your personal invitation to come to our meetings to offer your ideas or express your concerns. Everyone is welcome to be part of our efforts to strengthen and grow our faith community.

I pray that we have a wonderful year of 2012 as we work together in ministry.

Grace and Peace,



## Just For Kicks !!!

“Prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on grace” (1 Peter 1:13).

I love this verse, and I’m particularly challenged by Peter’s first charge: prepare your minds for action. In the church we talk a lot about preparing our hearts, but we must also recognize that our minds are a gift from God. Like all gifts God gives, the gift of our mind is both a blessing and a responsibility. We have been blessed with the ability to think, to reason, to consider, and we have a responsibility to continually sharpen our minds as a way of being prepared to put our faith into action.

One of the primary ways to prepare our minds is by reading good, challenging, thought-provoking books. To that end, allow me to suggest some books for you to consider reading in the coming year. The following list isn’t exhaustive, but it’s a good start. I have most of these books in my office, so if you’re interested in borrowing one, just let me know!

+ **A Million Miles in a Thousand Years** by Donald Miller.

In a nutshell: *What is the meaning of life?* It’s a deep question, but Don Miller addresses it in a really accessible, really profound, and really funny way. For anyone who senses that life is passing them by, that there’s got to be more than working boring jobs, watching mindless TV, and getting the kids to another practice, this book will stir and provoke you to live a better story. (Difficulty: easy)

+ **Strength to Love** by Martin Luther King, Jr.

In a nutshell: This book is a collection of 15 of MLK’s most notable sermons, including “Love in Action,” “Loving Your Enemies,” “Our God is Able,” “Antidotes for Fear,” “The Answer to a Perplexing Question,” and “Pilgrimage to Nonviolence,” among others. After reading this book, I was blown away by King’s writing, but more importantly, I was challenged to live out my faith more authentically. (Difficulty: easy)

+ **Free of Charge** by Miroslav Volf

In a nutshell: Volf is a professor at Yale Divinity School and is one of the most celebrated theologians of our day. This book was named “Book of the Year” by the Archbishop of Canterbury. It’s about giving (God the giver, how we should give, how we can give), and forgiving (God the forgiver, how we should forgive, how we can forgive). This is a book I’d never heard of before being assigned to read it in seminary, but one that’s profoundly impacted my understanding of giving and forgiving. It’s deep, but it’s worth it. (Difficulty: moderate/academic)

+ **The Jesus Creed**, by Scot McKnight.

In a nutshell: When an expert in the law asked Jesus for the greatest commandment, Jesus said it is to love God and to love others. Sounds simple, but what does that actually look like? How can we actually love God with our entire heart, soul, mind, and strength? How can we actually love others as ourselves? McKnight’s books helps to flesh out how we can live the *Jesus Creed*. (Difficulty: moderate/academic)

+ **God is Not One**, by Stephen Prothero.

In a nutshell: This book’s subtitle is, “The Eight Rival Religions That Run the World—and Why Their Differences Matter.” We live in an increasingly pluralistic world (both at home and abroad) and it’s important for us as followers of Jesus to understand the faith of our neighbors. This book helps us understand Islam, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Yoruba, Judaism, Daoism, and Atheism. (Difficulty: moderate)



## Thank You!



Thanks to all who filled grocery bags so that needy persons of our area could have Christmas dinners.

Thanks also for the generous response to the Kensington Christmas gifts tree. The gifts are always greatly appreciated; many of the children who receive them would get no gifts otherwise.



## Great Job!

Appreciation to Dave and Cynthia Jamison and all the children who participated in the delightful and meaningful Christmas pageant on December 18. As Pastor Josh reminded us: This was a Christmas sermon and a creative act of worship, which blessed us all.

## In The Aftermath...



Now that your children have a new supply of toys that need space, you are probably looking for a good home for the ones that have been outgrown or displaced.

Bring them to church any time during the month of January. They'll again be a source of joy - this time for children served by Jerusalem House, an inner-city Allentown ministry.

Sorting through their toys to select the ones to give away will help to teach your children to share and to care about others.



## Give the Gift of Life

American Red Cross Blood Drive: Thursday, February 9, 1:30 to 7:30 p.m. This time of the year is typically a time when blood supplies run low. Please consider giving the gift of life.



## Milford Shelter Food Pantry



Items to bring in during the month of January: canned chicken, noodles, cream of chicken and/or cream of mushroom soup.



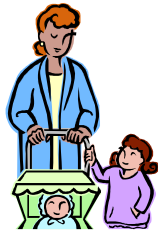
## Good Skates

Bring a bag lunch to church on Sunday, January 29. After enjoying lunch, carpool to Steel Ice for an afternoon of ice-skating. Watch for further details in the Sunday worship inserts.

## Men's Breakfast



Men of the church are invited to start the day off right with breakfast on Saturday, January 21, 8:00 a.m. at John's Plain & Fancy. This is a great opportunity for food, fun, and fellowship. See you there!



## SOS!

QUMC provides worship nursery care during the 9:00 and 11:00 services. To do this adults and youth (of at least middle school age) are needed. The more helpers in the rotation the better for all. Please contact Melissa Tomlinson at 215.529.7558 or melicca\_98@yahoo.com. Many thanks!

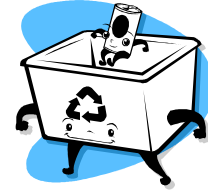
## The Welcome Center Needs You!



If you enjoy meeting people and welcoming them to QUMC, this is the opportunity for you! Welcome Center greeters are needed for all three worship services in 2012. For information, contact Adele Winkler (215.679.6402).



# Recycling Reminders



-Bring your paper (no plastic or cardboard) for recycling to QUMC. Dump them into the large receptacles at the end of the parking lot.

-Aluminum cans (no tin cans) are also recycled. Rinse them out, stomp them flat (your kids will love to do that part), put them in a plastic bag, and leave them near the charcoal pit behind the church.



## Well Done!

At December's session of the Administrative Board Don Barto was applauded and lauded for his 60 years of dedication to the church. His many roles include: treasurer, finance committee member and chair, member of a number of committees and commissions, mainstay of the chicken barbecue, co-chair of the merger process of our two predecessor churches, Sunday School teacher, and the list goes on.

Most recently, when the finance committee was unexpectedly in need of a leader, Don volunteered to fill in as chair. He is stepping down from that post, and is pleased to hand it over to John Cornelius.

Much appreciation to Don, who continues to serve his Lord and his church in his unassuming and dependable way. "Well done, good and faithful servant."

## Don't Neglect...



...to use the Initial Offering envelope in the latest mailing of church envelopes. Your gift helps to defray the costs of the envelope system.

*Heartfelt appreciation to the church family of QUMC for the cards, gifts, and expressions of kindness during the holiday season. We are grateful for your thoughtfulness and look forward to continuing to serve God and the congregation of QUMC in the coming year.*

*The QUMC Office Staff*



# Priority Registration For Faith Preschool



It's time to register three- and four-year olds for Faith Preschool's September classes. **Priority registration is Monday, January 9, at 6:00 p.m.** First come first served.

QUMC families, Faith Preschool families, and Parent's Time Out families are eligible for priority registration. Registration opens to the general public on Monday, January 16.

Classes for three-year-olds meet Tuesdays and Thursdays from either 9:15-11:30 a.m. or 12:30-2:45 p.m. with teachers Colleen O'Connor and Karen Godown. The length of this class has been increased for the 2012-13 school year. Tuition is \$98 per month.

Classes for four-year-olds meet Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 9:15-11:30 a.m. and 12:30-2:45 p.m. with teachers Beth Mininger and Lisa Gibat. Tuition is \$128 per month.

The registration form is included in this newsletter, and is available in the narthex, and on-line at [www.qumc.com/preschool](http://www.qumc.com/preschool). For additional information or to arrange a classroom tour, please call 215.536.8172.

Please tell your friends and neighbors about our affordable, high quality early education program.



## Faith Preschool on the Web and Facebook

Faith Preschool has an improved, attractive website at [www.qumc.com/preschool](http://www.qumc.com/preschool). The site now contains program content, pictures of students in their learning activities, profiles of staff members, contact information, and registration forms and procedures.

You may also "like" Faith Preschool on Facebook at Faith Preschool of Quakertown United Methodist Church.

Please help us "go viral" by spreading the word about this vital church mission.