

Blawenburg Beacon

Blawenburg Reformed Church

Serving God and the Community Since 1832



From Pastor Jeff

May 6, 2022

Greetings my friends in Jesus Christ,

I find myself feeling optimistic about the future of our church. I believe that our positioning this spring is characterized by faithfulness.

What does it mean to be faithful? In my use of that word, I refer to our responsibilities to God. God has put us here in this world, as individuals and as a church community, and every moment, every day, every Beacon deadline, every year, our goal is to work with God's Spirit to understand what is faithful for us to be and to do. What does God require of us? What is our calling? How can we best use our gifts and resources?

In the fall of 2021, we were asking these questions with careful intention. In leadership meetings we were recognizing with clarity and openness that we needed to spend some serious time and effort considering what was right for our church when it came to our calling before God. Some big decisions were made back in the fall and the early winter. In a sense, some seeds were planted. This spring and summer those seeds are sprouting, growing, and beginning to bear fruit.

Partnership with Griggstown:

Back in the fall we prayerfully considered the future of our partnership with the Griggstown Reformed Church. Within this "yoked" partnership, my services are shared with the Griggstown Church in exchange for their financial support. After nearly four years, our church leaders decided it was time to carefully re-evaluate our need for this partnership. In September, our Consistory asked our Finance Team to study and report on what it might mean to draw the partnership to a close in order that I could return to being solely the full-time minister here in Blawenburg. After receiving that report in October, the determination was made to move towards drawing the partnership to a close. We believed that this would be a faithful step forward for our church. During our upcoming congregational meeting on Sunday, May 15, following worship, we will share more about the future of our partnership with Griggstown.

Painting and Other Restoration Work:

This fall and winter we continued to consider the restoration projects on our historic campus. Our SOS capital campaign had raised over \$170,000. Those funds have allowed us to address the bat-related issues in the attic and cupola over the sanctuary. They also allowed us to repair and repaint the exterior of our church, which was completed in the summer of 2021. The funds also allowed us to accomplish some of the internal repairs and repainting that have taken place this winter.

Spring 2022

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From Pastor Jeff—continued

In the fall and winter, the consistory recognized that our historic campus needed more work than what the SOS funds would cover. We have this beautiful church campus, and we believe that it is faithful to make sure our spaces remain safe, welcoming, and in good care. This fall and winter, with funds gained from the 2018 sale of Memorial Hall, our leadership team decided to invest more capital in our restoration projects. Over the next three years we will invest an additional \$150,000 in restoration work. This work will include the renovation of our organ, which was installed nearly 50 years ago in 1973. Additional work could include more work inside the sanctuary; work on our parking lot; and work to repair or replace our heating and cooling units for the sanctuary. There is certainly more work that even an additional \$150,000 will cover.

We are grateful to have funds on hand for some of these restoration projects, but we continue to encourage people to consider giving to the SOS campaign. Recently, two households within the church donated \$2,500 each to allow the stairwells in the sanctuary to be repaired and repainted. Gifts of this kind will continue to further our restoration work!

Planning a Party: Blawenburg Community Festival

Finally, the seeds were sown this fall for our upcoming Blawenburg Community Festival. This fall we created a new ministry team named “Faithfully Forward.” The intention of this team was to prayerfully ask God for guidance for what we should be doing as a church to serve our community, especially considering the new reality created by the pandemic. We gathered to ask, “What would be right for us to do now that the pandemic is beginning to fade?”

The result of our prayerful consideration was the decision to host a Blawenburg Community Festival on Saturday, June 4. During the festival, the Blawenburg Band will perform, the Blawenburg Fire Company will cook and sell lunch food, the Blawenburg Village Preschool will provide activities for kids, and there will be so much more! I hope you will come out and enjoy the event and help to meet and greet our local friends and neighbors.

As a church, we will use our campus to help our community to reconnect and grow. I trust that God will bless this effort and good fruit will come from it. Already, it has allowed me and others to reconnect with friends and neighbors during the planning process.

Conclusions:

We continue to move forward faithfully. I hope you are enjoying the journey as much as I am. I continue to be grateful to serve as your minister. May God continue to bless and cultivate the seeds we’ve sown. May we always be ready to help bring in the harvest.

Pastor Jeff

Our Mission Statement

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.

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SUMMER OFFICE HOURS

Monday - 8:00am - 1:00pm
Wednesday - 8:00am - 1:00pm
Thursday - 8:00am - 2:00pm
Friday - 8:30am - 12:30pm

Worship

Worship in Our Sanctuary Before and During the Season of Lent



We welcomed Dawn Alpaugh, our Classis Minister, to the pulpit on February 13.



We honored our Scouts from Troop 46 on Sunday, February 20.



Mother and daughter team, Angie Rebert and Laura Warren sang a duet, *In the Garden*, on March 13.



Gina Williams sang *My Song is Love Unknown*, a meditation after the sermon, on March 20.



Katie Connolly and Barb Antoniewicz, offered a beautiful duet, *His Eye is on the Sparrow*, on March 27.

Worship Schedule

- Sunday, May 8 – Mother’s Day – Selections from Genesis 1.
- Sunday, May 15 – Jesus’ Farewell Address Part 1– John 13:31-35
- Sunday, May 22 – Jesus’ Farewell Address Part 2 – John 14:23-29
- Sunday, May 29 – Ascension Sunday – Acts 1:1-11
- Sunday, June 5 – Pentecost – Acts 2:1-21

Worship—continued

Holy Week in Our Sanctuary



Mark Smith in the pulpit on Palm Sunday



Despite a broken hip, Katie helped lead us in worship on Palm Sunday.



The pulpit is adorned with palms in preparation for the Holy Week service.



The choir offers the anthem, *How Beautiful*, at the Holy Week service.

Easter Morning



The choir practices before the service.



A congregation in worship



Thanks to the gifts of Jean Beachell, the sanctuary flowers are exquisite.

Worship—continued

Easter



Pastor Jeff tells the children, young and old, about the importance of the cornerstones of our faith.



Pastor Jeff is animated in his sermon.



Barb Antoniewicz sings a glorious offertory entitled *You Can Tell the World!*



The youngest members of our church family hunt for Easter eggs.

Celebrations

Celebrating the Life of Bud Lewis

April 2, 2022



Our dear friend, and former church member, Martin Tel, led us in music.



The choir sings *Be Not Afraid*, an anthem that Hilde requested.



The firefighters' Last Call ceremony.



Bud's granddaughter, Corynn, reads scripture.



Bud's son, David, remembers his father.



Military Honors
Hilde and her sons, Fred, David, and Bob, look on.



The flag is presented to Hilde.

Birthdays

May

- 6 Bob Harrison
- 7 Irene Harrison
- 16 Barb Bradsell
- 17 Sarah Liao
- 22 Ethel Terhune
- 26 Chip Parmele
Angie Rebert
- 27 Don Terhune
- 29 Angelina Han
- 31 Eric Perkins

June

- 6 Laura Warren
- 7 Alan Querec
Bernice Van Nostrand
- 10 Christopher Osander
- 13 Lee Bekir
- 14 Dave Cochran
- 18 Nancy Curtis
- 26 Melissa Blodgett
- 27 Paul Blodgett

July

- 2 Kevin Clancy
- 3 Abigail Schwartz
- 6 Chris Benbow
- 9 Melanie Schwartz
- 12 Lisa Hunt
- 16 Adelaide Blodgett
Mark Smith
- 20 Cheryl Miller
- 21 Palmer White
- 24 Buddy Cavanaugh
- 25 Preetham Prince
- 27 Nathan Han

August

- 1 Frank Tufano
- 2 Will Herbert
- 6 Anna Bekir
Sue Perkins
- 11 Nancy Meyer
- 18 Barbara Van Liew
- 19 Tom Hunt
- 21 Pam Bainbridge
- 24 Andrea Eberly
Diana Pfannebecker
- 26 Akemi Pugliese
- 31 Rick White

Fellowship

Mary and Martha

Eleven ladies met April 21 to see what we could learn from Mary Magdalene. She was the third woman in our study of women in the Bible. Esther and Ruth were the first two topics; and in May, we will look at Abigail as we read about her in I Samuel. Will she demonstrate the same characteristics as Esther and Ruth or will she demonstrate new strengths?

We enjoy having four new members take part in our discussion, prayers, and planned potluck lunch, Anne, Gina, Angie, and Laura.



Katherine and Anne help themselves.



Anne, Sonya, & Katherine



Gina, Anne, Sonya, & Laura



Angie, Diana, Hilde, & Gina



Bernice, Katherine, Angie, & Diana



Bernice, Katherine, Angie, Diana, Hilde, Barb P., Gina, Anne, & Laura

Men's Community Breakfast

I asked Lee Bekir to say a few words about the men's breakfast. Following are his heartwarming words. ~Barb R.

The BRC men's breakfast is a wonderful way for the guys to get together and share with other men in the BRC community. We normally meet once a month at 8am in Cook Hall. It's an open discussion group.

Hmmmm.....what we talk about..... it's not mandatory to talk at all but I never saw someone just sitting there. The past two meetings we went around the table and gave a brief explanation of what our passion/hobby/interest is. Some shared on a spiritual level and others shared and explained their passion of their hobby. At the end of the morning, I'm pretty sure we all leave with a little more than we came with by learning about something someone spoke of. Me personally, I talked about my latest hobby being 3D printing and explained what it is and how it works. Others shared stories about their love of painting, photography, and music. There is no real "format" to the breakfasts. But we always talk of how yummy the food is! ~Lee

Attending are Joe, Don, Dave, Lee's grandson, Reed, Lee, Keith, Jim C, Jeff, Chris O, Alan (Did we miss anyone?)



Fellowship—continued

Potluck Brunches are Back!

As Pastor Jeff said, “Yay! Potlucks!” It’s our first, post-pandemic time to eat together, socialize, and catch up a bit. We will have another brunch in January.



Our great Hospitality Team - Barb VL, Pam, Nancy, Evelyn (Dave is an honorary member.)



Grace had been offered. Time to eat!
Jeff, Jamie, Margot, Angie, & Gina



We were delighted to have the Henyon/
Vartanian family join us. Sitting with them
are Jim, Alan, Gracie, & Elaine.



Jamie and Margot, Bernice, and Sam (Is
it the food or the company that’s got you
so happy, Sam?)



Nancy, Barb VL , Sharon, Pam,
Charlotte, Margot, & Jamie



Barb P, Evelyn, & Dave

Blawenburg Village School

Spring is a busy time of year at BVS:

BVS students have enjoyed displaying their artwork in our BVS Art Expo. They were very proud of all the different masterpieces that they created. They spent their time exploring various art mediums while using their imaginations. We have quite the artists at BVS.



Our BVS students also had fun "Springing Into Music" as they performed and sang songs for our very first BVS Spring Concert. Their little voices carried like angels throughout the church. They did a beautiful job under the direction of their teachers. We were very happy that so many of our families could join us on that day.

There are so many exciting things happening at BVS! For the rest of April, we continued to celebrate the coming of Spring, 1950s style. The month of May brings with it Muffins with Mom, Butterfly Week, and Garden Week and we can't wait! Most importantly, our Blossom and Gardener Classes are beginning to practice for their big graduation ceremonies which will be taking place on June 15.

On May 14, BVS will be hosting its very first Community Yard Sale. [For more information, or to rent a table, please contact the Director, Angela Wright.](#)

BVS is currently enrolling for the 2022-2023 school year and summer camp.

For information, contact Angela Wright, 609.466.6600 or awright@blawenburgvillageschool.com. Join us on Facebook and Instagram!

~Angela Wright



Bernice and Barb R. teach Bible stories.



Bible class always includes singing and movement.



There is a new Bible story every week. Can you guess what these two stories are about?
(Hint: Jesus is the main character in each one.)



Good News Home for Women A Mission of Blawenburg Reformed Church

At the Missions Team meeting on March 31, a motion was made and seconded to provide materials needed by Angie Rebert in her calling to teach the 12 Step Program at Good News Home for Women. Specifically, she will need workbooks, spiritual journals, Bibles, devotionals, and small items to be used as gifts for the women. The Missions Team has reserved \$600.00 from the 2022 budget for Angie to use as needed for her work and teaching at GNH. In the following article, you will learn the background and work of our newly adopted local mission.

Good News Home for Women is a residential substance abuse rehab center located in Flemington, NJ. Founded as a Christian nonprofit organization in 1983, it opened its doors to residents in 1987. It is funded by donations from individuals, corporations, churches and also receives funding and supervision from the State of New Jersey. Payment assistance is available from Medicaid and state programs based on a sliding scale with income.

The Good News Home includes a four-bedroom house accommodating 12 women. An old, picturesque two-story red barn dominates the campus and offers classrooms, offices and a conference room.

The Mission

The mission of the Good News Home is to provide a comprehensive long and short-term residential substance abuse treatment program that offers a professional, faith-based, non-denominational approach. Treatment focuses on healing women using Christian 12-steps, addiction counseling, life skills and spiritual counseling to overcome chemical addiction. Integrated treatment is used for clients who have been diagnosed with co-occurring disorders.

The purpose of our program is to rehabilitate women who have life-destroying problems associated with substance abuse. The Good News Home provides support to women to help them become mentally sound, emotionally balanced, socially adjusted, physically well and spiritually alive.

The underlying philosophy: Faith in God can do for us that which we cannot do for ourselves.

Missions—continued

The Program

The program at Good News Home offers a wide range of classes providing addiction awareness and tools to achieve and maintain recovery of a balanced life. Therapy encompasses classes and activities that include: individualized therapy and classes in topics such as trauma and abuse, family dysfunction, relapse prevention and many other issues. Life Skills include a focus on nutrition, health issues, household management, menu planning, shopping, cooking, and budgeting. Other essential services are provided such as: legal assistance and court advocacy, as well as medical and dental services.

Other activities that add to the daily/weekly routine are: weekly visits to a gym for individual workouts and group classes. Frequent AA and NA meetings, Bible Study classes, and weekly trips to different churches in the area are an important part of the program.

Comments from a Volunteer

Angie Rebert, who has been a volunteer for the last 14 years teaching a Christian based 12 Step curriculum, shares her passion for the program at the Good News Home in the following account:

"I believe I was called to teach the 12 Step Program at Good News Home. It was definitely a 'God Incident!' I attended a conference entitled *The Church and Addiction*. There, I met the director of Good News Home, and I immediately made plans to volunteer there! Fourteen years later, I still feel called to teach there, even though, NOW, it requires a different mode of teaching and interacting by Zoom.

At Good News Home, the program interweaves our Christian faith into our classes, our counseling, and our daily living activities. There are morning and evening devotions, Bible Study, grace at meals, and church activities. My own teaching has evolved into opening the class with prayer, personal testimony, and a closing blessing. Sometimes we interrupt the class discussion to pray about something a class member shares. Within the framework of this program, we can teach that our lives, though often difficult, can be met with a measure of grace and peace, even joy.... when we have an ever-evolving relationship with God, as revealed by His Son Jesus."

At Good News Home, we teach:

**Even when you leave GNH and transition out,
Even if you fall into temptation and relapse,
Even when difficult life challenges arise,
You are not alone!
All you have to do is REACH OUT!
And Jesus is there, REACHING OUT for you!
With Jesus you can overcome and be victorious!**



Twelve women live in this home for the duration of their stay.



This barn provides classroom and office space.

Missions—continued

Montgomery Food Bank



On the recreation side of the Otto Kaufmann Center is the room that houses the Montgomery Food Bank. Shelves are neatly stacked and labeled with donations from churches, individuals, and civic organizations. Many trips have been made to the food bank this year with your generous donations. Thank you so much.

Habitat for Humanity



Beautiful grandparents, loving children (quite grownup and mature), and an elated mother. For Cicely Caldwell and her children, there was no happier day than February 12, 2022, when they took possession of their new Habitat for Humanity home. Several BRC people were at the Willow Road, Belle Mead, residence to celebrate with them.



Setshabelo Family & Child Services

What better way to raise a child than in a loving home? For the past five years, the Setshabelo Family and Child Services in Botshebelo, South Africa, has been working hard to fulfill their vision to have "a community where every child belongs in a loving and caring family." It is this global mission that our church has been financially supporting for several years. The Rev. Dr. Denise Kingdom Grier is our RCA Missionary Liaison. Click on the following link that will take you to the full story on our church's website of how this loving work is progressing: [RCA GLOBAL MISSION](#)



Campus Care

Our 1973 Gress-Miles Pipe Organ Gets Restored

On April 25 & 26, workers from Patrick J. Murphy, Organbuilders, disassembled and took away our organ. After almost fifty years, it was time for extensive repairs and upgrades. Many electrical components will be replaced, pipes repaired, and it will get a good cleaning. The organ will be in their Pennsylvania shop for six to eight weeks, with a tentative completion date sometime in mid-June. In the interim, our organist, Katie Connolly, will be playing the digital keyboard in the front of the sanctuary.



Even the keyboard gets restored...



...as does the pedalboard



Pipes are labeled and accounted for.



Some of the larger pipes



Out it goes



Not much left!

The Talents of Our Women on Display Here



We are blessed with many of Bernice's quilts. These tell the Easter story.



Jean's talents are ever present in the sanctuary.
Roses in February and daffodils in March



Hilde made bears for two very special people in Barb R's life.

Free Books

Our church library is filled with gems hiding on its shelves. Some of us are sorting the books and sharing them at the Blawenburg Village School Community Yard Sale. They want to be read and are being offered for FREE. Take an early look at these books for children and adults during Sunday's Fellowship Hour or another time when you are on the church campus. Or just stop by the free-book table at the west end of Cook Hall on the following date(s). The community yard sale will be held on Saturday, May 14, with a rain date of Saturday, May 21, between the hours of 7:00 AM and 12:00 PM. If you have any questions or would like to help, please call me.

Bernice Van Nostrand
908.244.1115

