



# Circuit Rider

St. Paul's United Methodist Church  
714 Herbertsville Road  
Brick, NJ 08724

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February 2012

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**“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for,  
the evidence of things not seen.” Hebrews 11:1**

We are in a study I titled *EXTREME Faith* on Sunday mornings. Our text is Hebrews 11. This is beautiful chapter about faith. There is a great list of ancient heroes who make up what has been called the **Hall of Fame of Faith**.

We are looking at this for two reasons. First, faith has been badly misunderstood. Many people think faith is believing what you know isn't true.

Or they think faith is the opposite of rational thought, as if faith is nothing more than positive thinking or wishful dreaming. Some make the mistake of confusing faith with feeling so that if they don't "feel" it, it must not be true.

The second reason we are looking at this is because, faith is better illustrated than explained. Do you remember a few years back when on Sunday morning we gave everyone who attended \$10? We asked you to do something to increase it and come back in five weeks with what you had gained and your story of how you grew. Over \$11,000 came back, but even more was the blessings that were shared by those who put their faith to the test. We all know men and women whose faith inspires us. And almost always it is those people whose faith has been made strong through adversity. We have said that *faith that is never put to the test is only theoretical*.

More than any other chapter of the Bible, Hebrews 11 shows us what faith looks like on the firing line. When we study these men and women, we are seeing faith work itself out in the lives of ordinary men and women who under enormous pressure, facing great odds, often with the whole world against them, lived by faith.

You see, faith is never meant to be a one-time experience. It is tempting to fall into that trap because we put so much emphasis on being saved by faith. We talk about accepting Christ, receiving Christ, trusting Christ, and giving your heart to Christ. We challenge people to respond in faith to the invitation.

Sometimes we leave the impression that having been saved by faith, the rest of life is up to us. Not so! The same faith that saves us is the faith that carries us from day to day as we make the journey from earth to heaven.

*The whole Christian life is a life of faith.* We are saved by faith, kept by faith, and we walk by faith, endure by faith, rejoice by faith, serve by faith, love by faith, sacrifice by faith, pray by faith, worship by faith, and we obey by faith. We get married by faith, and we have children by faith. All that we do, we do by faith.

Take some time and read through Hebrews 11. Remember the people of faith in your own life. Those who lived what they believed. May we continue to grow and be stretched. May God continue to increase our faith.

See You In Worship!

Pastor John

***Faith believes what others do not believe.  
Faith sees what others do not see.  
Faith does what others do not do.***

## Youth News

So many people have struggled to find their worth and value in how well they perform, how well they succeed, or in how well they're accepted by others. It's on the hearts of our teenagers often, and it even creeps into our adult lives as well. It's natural to think that way. In school, our performance determines success, and in the "real world" our success determines our worth. Society has no problem placing incredible amounts of value on those who are successful, and success typically brings the acceptance and approval of others.

So what's wrong with that? Well, if our worth is based upon our acceptance by others, and our acceptance is based upon our success and abilities, then what is a person worth when they can't perform any longer - when age or some disability takes away a person's capacity to succeed? Are they then worthless? And if we find *ourselves* successful, should we have the right to think of ourselves as better than others when we succeed?

We've all come face to face with this issue in some way or another in our lives. Have you ever kept yourself from trying something because you were afraid of what others thought? Have you chosen to only feel good about yourself if you succeed at certain things? Do you get down on yourself in an unhealthy way over your mistakes and failures? Have you resented instruction and criticism? Have you looked down on others for what they aren't able to succeed in? Have you compromised your values in the name of success? If you've answered yes to any of these, then you know what this issue of performance and acceptance is all about.

In a world where performance equals acceptance, Jesus comes to bring relief to this false view and the burden it creates! Ephesians 2.8-9 says, "it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast." The Bible is clear that Jesus' acceptance of us is not based on *anything* that we can perform, or anything we've earned or deserved - it is the gift of God! As far as success goes, none of us could ever be successful enough to earn His acceptance. We've all sinned and deserve to be rejected by God, but the glory of God's love for us is that Jesus chose to be rejected by God for us, so that we who trust Him will never

have to fear that kind of rejection. Jesus opened the door wide for an acceptance that isn't based on performance and gave us a worth that costs infinitely more than any other price that has ever been paid! It's an acceptance that we can never brag about, because it's all a gift from God!

This kind of acceptance changes the way we see ourselves and others! Our failures now can become opportunities to learn and grow. Other's failures can be opportunities to show people God's love for them in spite of failure. We don't have to compare ourselves to anyone anymore and we can "consider others better than ourselves" (see Philippians 2) instead of looking down on others who don't "measure up."

May the grace of God that comes through Jesus give you the assurance of your acceptance before God, and may His acceptance of you change the way you see yourself and others! - Matt Kay

## ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE



The Annual Ash Wednesday Service with The Church of Epiphany will be held on February 22nd at 7:30 PM at St. Paul's. Be sure to join us to mark the beginning of the Lenten season

## LENTEN LUNCHES



Our Lenten Lunches & Devotions will be starting on Wednesday, February 22th this year. Lunch will be from 11:30 -12:15PM followed by devotions in the sanctuary. If you can't make the lunch you are still welcome to attend the Devotions in the Sanctuary starting about 12:20PM each week. If you are interested in providing soup, dessert or crackers for one of the weekly lunches please contact Ruth or sign up in the hallway.

## 2011 Budget Shortfall

As most of our congregation is aware, we were behind on our financial commitments for 2011. The Christmas offering was designated to help offset some of that shortfall. This offering brought in over \$14,000 which was a tremendous blessing and a huge help toward meeting these commitments. Unfortunately we still were not able to meet our obligation to the United Methodist New Jersey Conference. We ended the year just over \$18,000 short which represents approximately 4 months of apportionments to the conference. The United Methodist Women gave \$1,150.46 towards the deficit and United Methodist Men of our church gave \$1,300 from the Christmas tree sales. The missions committee also gave a donation towards the deficit bringing the total down to approximately \$16,000.

We support the ministries of the *UNITED* Methodist church through our apportioned funds. This method of giving has become a strong and generous tradition.

According the NJ Conference website "Together, through our connected congregations, we accomplish what no single church, district or annual conference ever could hope to do alone. In this way, each individual, each family, each congregation gives a fair share for the church's work. We combine our prayers, presence, gifts and service to make a significant difference in the lives of God's people".

The finance committee feels an obligation to the conference to pay the amount we were supposed to pay in 2011. To that end we will have a special offering for the next 3 weeks to try to make up this shortfall and pay the amount owed. The special offering, above and beyond your regular giving, will be collected on January 22, 29 and February 5th. Please use the envelopes in the pews or you could also use your regular envelope and write "special offering" so the funds can be properly processed. We will take this offering over the next 3 weeks to make it easier on the congregation. We have approximately 250 in attendance each Sunday. This amounts to \$64 per person or \$21.33 per week per person. Obviously everyone's situation is different and we realize the economy has not been good over the last few years. Please pray about how you can help. This church has

always come through when times are tough and we pray this situation will be no different.

God Bless You!      The Finance Committee

### **Food Pantry Needs**

Many people have been coming in during the month of January as food stamps have been once again been delayed. We are **very low** on many items due to the demand for food baskets. Listed below are the items most needed but just about any non-perishable is appreciated:



***Canned Fruit, Juice, Chili, Stew, Hash, Tea,  
Coffee and Cocoa,  
Pancake mix and Syrup, Soup, Jelly***

Please leave all donations in the round tub by the mailboxes outside the Narthex. Thank you for all you do.

#### **United Methodist Women**

##### *Dates to Remember*

February 7 Executive Board 7 PM  
12 Chocolate Festival

March 6 Executive Board 7 PM  
20 Dinner & Gathering 6:00 pm

***Please note – There will be no Dinner or General Meeting in February***

### **ANGELS IN FEBRUARY (2<sup>nd</sup> graders -5<sup>th</sup> graders)**

The Angels will be having a pajama movie night on Sat. February 11 at 7:00 PM in the youth room at SPUMC. We will be watching a Veggie Tales movie. Kids are encouraged to bring a sleeping bag or blanket, and find a comfy spot to watch the flick. If you have any questions regarding the Angels youth group, please contact Ed

## Married (With Children) Part I

In one of the hand-made cards that I give my wife for our anniversary, for each year I wrote "I love you because..." or "I love you so..." and then gave a reason that was tied to that time in our relationship. Two examples:\* In the year our son was born, I wrote "I love you so our son will know how women are to be treated - always."\* In the year our daughter was born I wrote "I love you so our daughter will know what to not settle for less than."

If there are kids in your marriage, don't ever forget that you are modeling what relationships are supposed to be to those kids. Are you modeling God's design, or not? Wives, are you respecting your husbands? Husbands, are you loving your wife like Christ loved the church, giving yourself up for her? Putting her needs before your own? Parents are implored in Proverbs 22:6:

*Train up a child in the way he should go, and even when he is old he will not depart from it.*

It's a given when raising kids that your actions are infinitely more influential on them than anything you will ever say - and if they see that what you say contradicts how you act, the message is instantly discarded or lost. This is a big responsibility; God chose you to raise and teach the kids in your care. Instead of seeing this as daunting though, look at it as an opportunity. It's an chance to view your relationship objectively, and consider what message you're sending.

I read somewhere that "the best gift you can give your children is to love your spouse." Why is that? Because you and your spouse are the first couple your children see. In your home is where your children will develop their expectations, hopes and dreams for their own relationships long before they ever consciously think about it. What do you want for them when they start dating, or looking for a spouse? What kind of husband do you want for your daughter? What kind of woman do you want your son to marry? It is your responsibility as their parents to model those qualities and traits.

The Bible has plenty to say on what God wants our marriages to be. 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 lists the

characteristics of love. Paul speaks to the duties of husbands and wives in Ephesians 5:22-31. The Song of Solomon is a masterful love poem illustrating how two people build a relationship that can last as long as both shall live. Are your behavior, your actions, and the way you are handling conflict teaching your children God's design for marriage? Study God's word; learn what it is He wants for you and your spouse. Strive to build a Godly union for your own benefit, for that is how to live out His plans for you. As it says in Jeremiah 29:11 those plans:

*...are for your welfare, not evil, to give you a future and a hope.*

The bonus is that as your marriage gets better, your kids will notice. It will help shape their beliefs as to what a relationship should be. Once they notice, then talk to them. Teach them the scriptural basis that you are basing your marriage on. The lesson will mean infinitely more when they can see the results - loving parents and a happy home!

## Financial Peace University

### Learn How to Get Out of Debt

FPU is BACK!!!! Financial Peace University is a 13 week course that teaches you how to get out of debt, stay out of debt, and financially plan for your future. More than one million families have attended Financial Peace University with amazing results. On average, these families paid off \$5,300 in debt and saved \$2,700 in just the first 90days! Stop worrying about money, and start your journey to Financial Peace today. Classes will meet on Tuesdays night starting on February 7th at 7 pm. The cost is \$100 per family and includes all materials and a lifetime membership to the program. For more information please contact Stephanie. To sign up for the course fill out the form below or contact the church office.

I am interested in attending the FPU class starting February 7<sup>th</sup>.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

## **Financial Matters Ways to Help Yourself and Others**

In our December Circuit Rider, we described a way to help yourself financially (making gifts of appreciated stock and avoiding capital gains taxes), which also benefits the Church as well.

We would like to continue this month by offering additional ideas for you to contemplate. As previously mentioned, these ideas are meant to offer mechanisms by which one can achieve certain financial advantages, possible tax advantages, and help our Church at the same time.

### **Life Insurance and by naming the Church in your Will –**

Another method to fulfill a charitable intent is if one has a life insurance policy that they feel they no longer need. We do not recommend just canceling the policy, but entertain the thought of contacting the Church to see if there is a way to benefit the Church. One way is to continue making premium payments and name the Church as the beneficiary. It may be possible for the Church to take over premium payments and have itself named as the beneficiary.

**Through your Will / Estate –** One can also name the Church as a beneficiary of their Estate by asking your attorney to include such a provision in your Will. Naming the Church to receive a specific dollar amount or a specific asset is referred to as a specific bequest, while naming the Church to receive a percentage of the residue of your Estate is referred to as a residual disposition. One can either redraft their Will, or make an amendment to their existing Will. This amendment is referred to as a Codicil to your original Will. Your Estate would be entitled to a charitable deduction for such a specific bequest or residual disposition. This deduction may or may not be of benefit to your Estate, depending on the size of your Estate and to whom it is left. If you have questions, or would like to discuss this in further detail, please feel free to contact Pete, Finance Chairman, Rich, or the Church office. Rest assured that any inquiries will be treated with tact and confidentiality. As with anything of a financial nature, consult your tax advisor as well.

## **Breakfast for the Homeless**

On the third Friday of each month St. Paul's UMC provides a breakfast sandwich for approximately 60 homeless. We are running low on funds to continue this program. You can put a donation in the offering plate and write "Homeless Breakfast" on the envelope. Any donation is greatly appreciated

## ***February Dinner Night***

***When: February 18, 2012***

***Where: Norcross Hall***

***Time: 6:00 pm***

### **MENU**

***Surf and Turf***

***Vegetables, Salad, Bread and Butter***

***Dessert***

***For the kids Hot Dogs***

## ***IT'S BACK! START 2012 OFF RIGHT AND ZUMBA®!***

***Support St. Paul's Methodist Church all while having a great time!***

***15% of all proceeds go directly back to St. Paul's Methodist Church!***

***Ditch the Workout, Join the Party!***

Since its inception in 2001, the Zumba program has grown to become the world's largest – and most successful – dance-fitness program with more than 12 million people **of all shapes, sizes and ages** taking weekly Zumba classes in over 110,000 locations across more than 125 countries.

***Instructor: Joella***

***Thursdays: 5:30 – 6:30PM***

***January 26, February 2, 9, 16, 23, and March 1st***

***Cost: \$30 for a 6 week punch card OR \$8 per class.***

***Where: St. Paul's***

***Ages: 13 & up***

***For more information please contact:***

***Joella***

# Baby Bottle Boomerang



It is time for Baby Bottles again! They will be distributed to benefit The Open Door, a pregnancy and sexual health resource center. **We expect to have them available next Sunday, January 22<sup>nd</sup> for Sanctity of Human Life Sunday.**  
Thank You!

## An easy way to help The Open Door as they minister to women and babies.

Just fill the bottles with a check, cash, or coins, and return them to your church on the requested date. As you will see from the insert inside the bottle, you may list the name and address of a person you wish to honor. The Open Door will send a beautiful card to them showing that you have made a gift for life in their honor.

## Chocolate Festival

Proceeds to benefit St. Paul's Food Pantry and St. Paul's Apportionments (for 2011) - hosted by the Miriam Circle and friends.

**Saturday February 11, 2012**

**10:00am - 2:00pm**

**Norcross Hall**

There will be many home-made chocolate treats available at the Chocolate Festival! Bring your sweet tooth or your sweetheart for this Valentines Day extravaganza!

There will be peanut butter cups, cherry cordials, truffles, and clusters, just to name a few. We will also have a chocolate fountain with an assortment of items to dip.

Please join us for a day of fun and fellowship.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Oreo Truffles - 6/\$5

\_\_\_\_\_ Chocolate Hazelnut Truffles - 6/\$5  
\_\_\_\_\_ Dark \_\_\_\_\_ Milk

\_\_\_\_\_ Valentine Assortment - \$3 per box  
\_\_\_\_\_ Dark \_\_\_\_\_ Milk \_\_\_\_\_ Mixed

\_\_\_\_\_ Chocolate-covered Cherries -  
6/\$3.50  
\_\_\_\_\_ Dark \_\_\_\_\_ Milk

\_\_\_\_\_ Chocolate-covered Oreos - 3/\$1  
\_\_\_\_\_ Dark \_\_\_\_\_ Milk \_\_\_\_\_ White

\_\_\_\_\_ "Thin Mint" Cookies - 4/\$1

\_\_\_\_\_ Peanut Butter Cups - 5/\$3  
\_\_\_\_\_ Dark \_\_\_\_\_ Milk \_\_\_\_\_ White

\_\_\_\_\_ Cashew Clusters 5/\$3.50  
\_\_\_\_\_ Dark \_\_\_\_\_ Milk

\_\_\_\_\_ Chocolate-covered Coconut  
(like "Mounds") 5/\$3

\_\_\_\_\_ Chocolate-covered Coconut w/Almond  
(like "Almond Joy") 5/\$3  
\_\_\_\_\_ Dark \_\_\_\_\_ Milk

\_\_\_\_\_ Chocolate Chip Pie - \$7  
\_\_\_\_\_ Nuts \_\_\_\_\_ No

\_\_\_\_\_ SUGAR-FREE Valentine's Mix -  
\$4.50/box

\*\*\* TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_ \*\*\*

## **CONTACT of Ocean County** **Training**

**CONTACT** of Ocean County (24-hour crisis Intervention Hotline) will start the next (12-week) training class for telephone volunteers on Thursday, February 2, 2012 from 6:30-9:30pm in the Toms River area. **CONTACT**, a free and confidential service, has served the needs of individuals throughout the community since 1975, by providing a safe place for callers to talk about their problems with anonymity and confidentiality. For more information on training please call the **CONTACT** office at 732-240-6104.

## **Birthdays and Anniversaries**



Every month we put a list of birthdays and anniversaries in the Circuit Rider. If your dates are not in the Circuit Rider and you would like to have them included please call the office, write an email or drop off a note with your name(s), the date(s) and whether it is a birthday or anniversary. Also if the date we have for your birthday or anniversary is incorrect, please let us know.



# St. Paul's United Methodist Church

## February 2012



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
9:00 Sunday School rooms 2,4,5,9,10 youth 9:00 Adult Bible Study - Library 9:00 Trad. Worship Service 9:00 & 10:45 Childcare- Rm 1 10:10 Fellowship – Norcross 10:45 Contmp. Worship Service 10:45 Adult Bible Study – Youth 5:30pm Youth Group (Jr. & Sr. High) 8:00 Alcoholics Anonymous	4:00pm Girl Scout trp 1471 – Nursery+ 6:00 Cub 33 – Tigers – Rm. 10 6:00 Cub 33 – Wolves– Norcross/Rm. 7 6:30 Cub 33 – Bears – Rm. 6 6:30pm trp 1493 Girl Scouts – rm. 8+ 6:30pm Roots - Youth Disciple Group 7:00pm Monday Night Bible Study – Nursery Before/After Care 7:30-9:30am 12noon – 6:00pm Youth Room	7:00 Boy Scout Trp 33 – Norcross (except 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tues) 7:30 Safe Place – Rm. 6 Before/After Care 7:30-9:00am 12noon – 6:00pm Youth Room	6:00am Men's Breakfast 9:30 The Quilters – Youth Room 10:00 Ladies Share Grp- Penrods 1:00pm Staff Meeting 4:30pm Cherub Choir 6:00 Handbell Choir 6:00 Volleyball 7:30 Praise Team Practice (every other) Before/After Care 7:30-9:30am 12noon – 6:00pm Youth Room	6:00 Daisy trp 352 # 6:45 Men's Basketball 7:00 Carol Choir 7:00 Celebration Choir 7:00 Bible Study 8:00 Chancel Choir Before/After Care 7:30-9:30am 12noon – 6:00pm Youth Room	9:00am Bulletin Team – Lib 4:30pm Daisy Troop #102^^^ - Nursery 6:00pm Black Dragons LaCrosse - Norcross 7:00 Praise Team Practice (every other) Before/After Care 7:30-9:30am 12noon – 6:00pm Youth Room	7:00 Men's Disciple – Youth Room
			1	2 5:30PM Zumba	3	4 10AM Maturity Class
5	6 7:00 pm Council Ministries 7:00 Trustees SPCS OPEN House week	7 7:00pm UMW Exec Mtg 7:00PM FPU Class 9-3 Daily	8 7:00pm Lydia Circle SPCS OPEN HOUSE 6:30 – 8:30PM	9 12:30pm Senior Joy 5:30PM Zumba	10 3PM Chocolate Festival Setup (No LaCrosse)	11 <b>CHOCOLATE FESTIVAL</b>
12	13 7:00pm Finance	14 12noon Rebeccah Circle 7:00PM Miriam Circle 7:00PM FPU Class	15	16 5:30PM Zumba	17 6:30AM Breakfast for the Homeless Preparation	18 8:00am Men's Breakfast 6:00PM Fellowship Dinner
19	20 <b>Presidents Day</b> <b>SPCS closed</b>	21 7:00PM FPU Class	<b>22 Ash Wednesday</b> 10:00AM Ladies Share Group in Library <b>11:45 Lenten Lunch</b> <b>7:30PM</b> – Ash Wednesday Service with Epiphany RC at St Paul's UMC	23 5:30PM Zumba	24	25 8:00AM Blue & Gold Setup 4:00PM Pack 33 Blue & Gold Dinner
26	27 7:00pm SPR	28 7:00PM FPU Class	29 10:00AM Ladies Share Group in Library 11:45 Lenten Lunch			