

August 2018

# First Press

A publication of the First Presbyterian Church of Englewood, NJ



## From the Pastor

### Restoration

*I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live.”*  
– Ezekiel 37:5

Summer represents the start of a season of refreshment and recuperation, but it feels to me as if summer is almost gone already! So many of you are in need of relaxation. You’re tired – bone-tired. Which always reminds me of the famous passage in Ezekiel 37 where God shows the prophet Ezekiel a valley of dry bones:

*“The hand of the LORD came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. He said to me, ‘Mortal, can these bones live?’ I answered, ‘O Lord GOD, you know.’”*  
– Ezekiel 37:1-3

Could the bones live? By the power of God, of course. But Ezekiel was given an interesting instruction by God:

*“Then he said to me, ‘Prophesy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live.’”* – Ezekiel 37:4-5

Ezekiel had to prophesy to the dry bones. He was asked to express his faith by doing what might have seemed ridiculous, but only then did the bones come alive. Have faith in God’s rejuvenating power – faith enough that you will prophesy to your own “dry bones” about the life to be found in the breath of God.

When the bones were re-infused with the breath of life, it wasn’t just to be returned to the life they had before. God had something new and different in mind:

*“They shall never again defile themselves with their idols and their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions. I will save them from all the apostasies into which they have fallen, and will cleanse them. Then they shall be my people, and I will be their God.”* – Ezekiel 37:23

They weren’t just restored. They were to be improved. God has a way of doing this, of entering our lives not just to make repairs, but to make improvements.

Don’t settle for just enough rest so that you start this September where you were last September. If you’re feeling bone-tired, prophesy to your own bones that God will not only restore you to life, but to a greater life than before. Let God take you to new levels of life and living.

Peace and blessings,

*Rich*

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## FAMILY PROMISE

On July 10th through 13th our church hosted three families from Family Promise of Bergen County. Family Promise is an organization that provides working homeless families with a place to stay, as well as workshops on everything from yoga, to Internet safety, to financial advice. The families consisted of three mothers (Cruz, Jessica and Millie) and their children ages 4 months to 12 years. All of the moms have jobs and are working with Family Promise to find permanent housing. In fact, just this week Cruz found an apartment that she will move into with her two children very soon. Each night we had two volunteers that stayed overnight with the guests and one or two who provided dinner. We also had volunteers who donated breakfast food for the guest families. We owe a big thanks to these folks for donating so much time and energy to this worthy cause, as well as to Natalie Beaumont for helping to organize everything. I would also like to thank the amazing Dorothy VanderWerf for guiding us through this process.

Thank you to our overnight hosts Jeff and Nick Spady, Pastor Rich Hong, Elena Sepulveda, Ken Stevens and Jeremy Pitcock, and our food providers Natalie and Sharon Burrowes, Sheila Chen, Marcy Steele and her friend Natalie and Aile Gutierrez, and Mercedes Zuluaga. There were many great moments of socializing with the guest families and some great food.

We also owe a big thank you to the Leonia United Methodist Church and Pastor Hark for allowing us to use their space. They were gracious hosts and we even got to hear a free concert there on Friday night by an excellent choir from Korea.

The next time we host will be on December 28 and 29. I hope you will consider joining us. It is a great way to do good work and get to know people. Thanks, *Tom Christensen*

## A STATEMENT FROM THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

A few weeks ago, at the 223rd General Assembly of our denomination, the Presbyterian Church (USA), the following statement was adopted unanimously:

- We are obligated to declare our concerns about the direction towards autocracy that our country is taking.
- We say Yes to God’s power of love and justice for the neighbor as well as the self; and we say No to demonic power that urges hate of the other, scatters blame, and creates civic discord.
- We say Yes to our imperfect democracy with one person, one vote, and No to any corruption of our elections.
- We say Yes to universal health care and No to care based on the ability to pay.
- We say Yes to safe schools, houses of worship, and public gathering places; and No to civilian access to assault and/or military-style weapons.
- We say Yes to core human values and No to dividing our humanity by ideology and partisanship.
- We say Yes to bridges and preservation of families and No to walls.
- We say Yes to affirming and celebrating the full spectra of human identity and No to discrimination and bigotry.
- We say: “In life, and in death we belong to God.”



## SMALL GROUP LEADERS NEEDED

We are looking for additional small group leaders for our children's programming. Please consider sharing your time with the church school. If you have any questions, please email me at Felicia@Englewoodpres.org.

## ORANGE FOR AUGUST

### FIRST LOOK (pre-K)



Our littlest friends this month are learning God's way is perfect every single time!

### 252 (K-5)



Our elementary group is focusing on WISDOM this month. God's wisdom is worth searching for!

### XP3 (6-8 Gr)



"Uncharted" This 3 week series for our middle schoolers discusses trusting and following God's plan even when He leads us through unfamiliar territory.

## BTW...

Did you know you could go to Studio 252 to learn the K-5 lesson of the week? Find games, songs and activities to reinforce the theme of the month! Access it here: <http://www.studio252.tv/>



## THANK YOU

Thank you to all that helped bring about our Vacation Bible Camp! Our team of volunteers created a fun and exciting program. Thanks goes especially to:

- Candy Urena
- Carol Schulzrinne
- Jennifer Eloy
- Joanna O'Donovan
- Elma Van Der Eijk
- Daniel Atencio
- John Chung
- Grace Pitcock
- Emily Secor
- Cielo Camacho
- Olivia Arrigoitia
- Esther Arrigoitia



## LABYRINTH ON THE LAWN

Take time to relax and walk the "Labyrinth on the Lawn" located in the back just outside Elmore Hall. It is available for walking every day during daylight hours.



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ADDRESS CORRECTION  
REQUESTED

 **AUGUST 2018 CALENDAR**

<b>Drawing Seeing Thinking</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>2</b>	6:00 PM	<i>FPC 1st Floor Office</i>
<b>Stewardship Committee Meeting</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>7</b>	7:00 PM	<i>Meeting Room</i>
<b>Women's Connect Group</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>8</b>	7:00 PM	<i>East Room</i>
<b>Drawing Seeing Thinking</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>9</b>	6:00 PM	<i>FPC 1st Floor Office</i>

**Every Sunday**

**9:00 am**  
**Crossroads Contemporary Service & Church School**

**11:00 am**  
**Traditional Choral | Service & Church School**

**Nursery / child care available from 8:30 am-12:30 pm**

**Coffee & Conversation**  
**10:00 am and 12 noon**