

# THE MESSENGER

*The Newsletter of*

## MEYERSVILLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

*223 Hickory Tavern Road at the Circle in Meyersville*

*Gillette, NJ 07933-1038*

The Rev. Barbara F. Aspinall, Pastor



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### MARCH 2017

#### *Four Church Lenten Soup and Study*

Plans are made for our annual Lenten Soup and Study and this year we will be joined by new friends at the Watchung Avenue Presbyterian Church in North Plainfield. Each of the four churches will host a supper and the three pastors will take turns leading the studies.



The people of our nation continue to struggle with how our faith and our politics relate to each other. Our Four Church Lenten Soup and Study series this year will seek to address this question. We will begin with a two part study written by church historian, Martin Marty, that addresses what Abraham Lincoln in 1858 said in his classic "House Divided" speech, "If we could first know where we are and whither we are tending, we could then better judge what to do and how to do it." Participants will get a review of some of the major events of U.S. history to date and how various religious groups and peoples have been represented or not in this history.

Our study will continue with *The Declaration of Independence: A Christian Document?* We will examine the Declaration of Independence in an effort to discern its context and clarify its original intent. We'll consider its references and appeals to a higher power and what those references mean to us as people of faith.

Our final week will address two important principles in the foundation of our nation: the free exercise of religion and separation of church and state. While these two principles have served the nation well,

they are not easy to put together logically, and they give rise to issues in practice that often require thoughtful and, frequently, legal judgment. Many Americans believe that the free exercise of religion involves the right and duty to apply their religious commitments to public as well as private affairs and therefore think in terms of America as a Christian nation. Others believe that the separation of church and state means that all political life should be secular in orientation. We will consider this history and ask how Christians can best act while respecting a separation of religion and government.

Each of the four churches will host a soup and study evening. The schedule of location, leader and topic is below. Each event will start at 5:00 pm and end at 7:00 pm.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Host Church</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Session Topic</b>
March 5	First Presbyterian Church 158 Central Avenue Stirling, NJ	Barbara Aspinall	History of Religion & Politics in America (Part 1)
March 19	Trinity United Church 118 King George Road Warren, NJ	Tom Peters	History of Religion & Politics in America (Part 2)
March 26	Watchung Avenue Presbyterian Church 170 Watchung Avenue N. Plainfield	Barbara Aspinall & Tom Peters	The Declaration of Independence
April 2	Meyersville Presbyterian Church 223 Hickory Tavern Road Gillette, NJ	Joel Biggers	Separation of Church and State

***Begin Your Season of Lent with Ash Wednesday Worship,  
March 1st, 7:30 pm at First Presbyterian, Stirling***

We will be beginning the season of Lent with an Ash Wednesday service at First Presbyterian Church in Stirling.

Ash Wednesday is an opportunity to pause to remember and assess our relationship to God and one another. Ash Wednesday is a chance to acknowledge the opportunities we missed for being and doing good and to remember that God is always with us and forgiveness is always available.



email: [baspinall223@aol.com](mailto:baspinall223@aol.com)  
March, 2017



Dear Church Family,

*My sister just got the results of one of those DNA ancestry tests. As far as we knew, our family (from both sides) had all come from Great Britain with maybe a smidgeon of Ireland and perhaps Germany thrown in. Interpreting the information is a little difficult, but my sister's DNA test results reflect a somewhat more diverse family heritage. It is still all European, but there are, in addition to some British DNA, bits from all over western Europe including Scandinavia. Who knew? It doesn't really make a whole lot of difference but it got me thinking about identity and where we believe our identity comes from.*

*I think we usually think of our identity - who we are to both ourselves and the world, as something we forge on our own, make up ourselves. It is influenced by our family heritage, but our day to day lives, who we are in the world, is created by our own selves.*

*However, research argues that actually our family of origin and the community we belong to has a lot more say in our identity than we realize. An article I was reading about this gave this example: "No one wakes up one day and says: 'You know who I'm going to be? I'm going to be one of those crazy people who paints my face, wears a costume, and goes wild at football games rooting for my team.' Instead, you hang out with friends, watch lots of football, decide to go to a game, discover someone has brought body paint, and then all of a sudden realize you are one of those persons! You could say the same about just about any of the other groups we associate with and from which we derive a lot of our identity.*

*By virtue of our baptism, we people of the Christian faith, are adopted into a family of faith and, even more, told that we are God's beloved child and therefore have infinite worth, and that can be, and should be, a powerful identity-giver. We are Christians partly because that's who we associate with. Depending on the way your week is going though, it can be hard to believe by Sunday that we are God's children, that God is with us, that God values and loves us and promises to use us. It can be already hard to believe by noon on Monday, but that is what our Sunday mornings are about – reminding us of our identity, of ourselves as God's beloved, valued, worthy people who are called to be thankful and to be at work in the world sharing that message.*

*Yours in Christ,*

*Barbara*



## *Almost Spring Rummage and Pancake Breakfast Buffet March 18, 9am-5pm*

Coming soon is our Almost Spring Rummage Sale and Pancake Buffet. You may bring items to Fellowship Hall at the church starting now! Clothing, household items, books are welcome, but please do not bring upholstered furniture or large sports equipment or computer printers. The last day to bring your treasures is Tuesday, March 13. Please let your neighbors and friends know that we have begun collecting. You might even offer to pick their stuff up to bring to the church!

### *Weber Grill Raffle Returns!*

As part of our Almost Spring Rummage Sale, (and after) we will be selling raffle tickets for a beautiful new Weber grill, the Weber Genesis S-310, that has a retail value of \$849.00. The grill winner will have the options of propane or natural gas. The drawing will be on Father's Day, Sunday June 18<sup>th</sup>. The raffle tickets will be \$20 each and \$100 for 6 tickets. There will be a limited number of tickets sold. They will be available from the church office. Tell your friends! Sell some tickets!



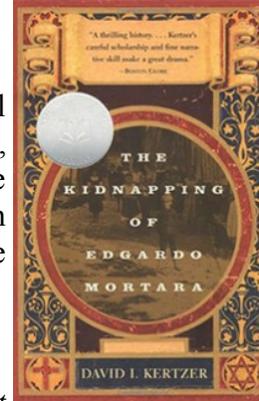
The "specs:"

front mounted control panel	38,000 BTU per hour input
3 stainless-steel burners,	stainless steel flavorizer bars
individual electronic ignition	porcelain-enameled heat deflectors
507-square-inch primary	six tool hooks
cooking area	stainless steel cooking grates
130-square-inch warming rack	enclosed cart, painted steel doors
2 heavy-duty front locking casters	stainless-steel handles
2 heavy-duty back swivel casters	stainless steel shroud

## Meyersville Church Book Club

Tuesday, April 4 at 7:30 p.m.

The Meyersville Church Book Club will be reading *The Kidnapping of Edgardo Mortara*, a non-fiction account by David L. Kertzer for the next discussion on Tuesday, April 4th. Church members and community friends are all welcome to participate!



From Kirkus Reviews, April 1st, 1997:

*A dramatic and heart-wrenching tale that reveals a great deal about the battle between conservative and progressive forces in mid-19th-century Europe. In 1858, authorities of the Papal States in Bologna abducted the Jewish child Edgardo Mortara from his family. Reports had reached the Inquisition in Rome that when Edgardo was an infant he had been secretly baptized by the Mortaras' Catholic servant girl. The law of the Papal States was very clear: A Christian child was forbidden to be brought up in a Jewish household. Liberal circles in Europe were outraged and mobilized.*

*Kertzer skillfully weaves the larger historical, social, religious, and cultural forces at work into the story, without allowing these elements to overwhelm his protagonists. Although cases of children being abducted by the Church and forced to convert were not unusual, the timing of the Mortara case could not have been worse for the pope. Pius IX was—upon his election to the Chair of St. Peter—considered a liberal who might lend his temporal and spiritual power to the movement for Italian national unification. He was soon caught between the implacable forces of modernism and the Church's obstinate refusal to enter the modern world.*

*Kertzer's challenging thesis is that the Mortara case became the catalyst for the end of papal power in Italy. Anticlerics in Italy, Protestants and Jews in Britain and America, even Napoleon III (staunch defender of papal power) joined in criticizing the abduction. Arrayed against these groups was the dark power of the Inquisition and the pope's obsessive desire to maintain his temporal power at the expense of a united Italy. A moving, dramatic study of the clash between the sacred and the secular.*

## Thanks to Outgoing Church Officers

Our deepest thanks and appreciation go to our church officers who have completed three or six year terms of office on the Session or the Board of Deacons. These folks have been dedicated to the ministry of Christ in Meyersville, using God's gifts of intelligence, imagination and love. Their energy and devotion have enabled and served the worship and work and fellowship life of our congregation.

Many thanks!

From the Session: Doris Mertz and Sandra Seymour

From the Board of Deacons: Karen Leski and Peg Arnold

## Worship at First Presbyterian, Stirling, MARCH 12

Barbara and Doug will be away visiting their son, Colin, in Colorado so our congregation will worship with our friends at First Presbyterian on Sunday, March 12th, at 10 am. 158 Central Ave, Stirling.

	<p><b>Start of Daylight Savings... SPRING FORWARD!</b></p>	<p><b>SPRING AHEAD</b> Sunday, <b>March 12</b>, is the beginning of <b>daylight savings time</b> so <b>DON'T FORGET</b> to turn your clocks <b>AHEAD!</b> And head over to FPC, Stirling for worship!</p>
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## Second Sunday Concert at First Presbyterian, Stirling Sunday, March 12, 2:00 pm

Rev. Kelvin C. Quince and the Reconciliation Band will bring their special brand of jazz and gospel music in order to preach the gospel to the children of God and all humanity. Their music is original but discernable are influences from John Coltrane to Stevie Wonder. The concert is free and donations are accepted.





## Village 2 Village College Scholarship

Our church has been involved with the **Village2Village Project** in Serere, Uganda for some years now and our Session decided to commit us to the provision of a college scholarship for a Village 2 Village child. This is a financial commitment of \$4,000. In an exciting development for our church is that two very generous church members have already pledged a 100% match and a 50% match. This means that for every \$10 that another church member gives, it will have a dollar value of \$25. Every \$50 contribution will mean \$125 for the scholarship.

The Village 2 Village Project has grown to provide clothing, medical care, money for schooling and support for care-givers for over 110 children and 30 HIV+ parents in a comprehensive community based program. The children have lost one or both parents to AIDS. The children were left without secure places to live, without food, without medical care and therefore without schooling since they had to spend their days scavenging for food.

Now, in 2016, while the care continues for new children entering the program, those first children have grown up with the love and support they needed. They have done well through primary and secondary school and are ready for college or vocational school. And that schooling costs more money. Our Session has decided to help with this life-changing, community changing, even nation changing component of the Village 2 Village ministry by gathering the funds for a college scholarship. As it turns out, two young women are partially funded but need our help to complete their college educations so we will be helping to fund two students.

Esther Inebe is a freshman at Uganda Christian University. She hopes to contribute to the future of her community by studying rural development. Jesca Achola is a first year accounting and finance student at Uganda Christian University. She hopes to become a CPA. Laurie Kroll has known her since she was 7 years old.

Check out our fund raising progress on the bulletin board!

### Still Collecting Canned Fruit for Local Food Bank



Help us keep our commitment! Next time you are at the grocery, pick up a couple of cans of mixed fruit in juice. Deliver your cans to the box in Fellowship Hall.

## *We Keep in Our Prayers:*

**George Barker**, Marion Barker's brother  
**Marilyn Barker**, Marion Barker's sister-in-law  
**Edith Belansky**, friend of Steve Boyle  
**Clark Carson**, husband of Claudia  
**Lynne Combs**, community friend  
**Ellen Dreyer**, sister-in-law of Barbara Grillo  
**Ellen Eastty**, community friend  
**Bill Hart**, uncle of James Thorn  
**Yme and Heike Eelkema**, Loura Zijdel's parents  
**Maggie Givens**, friend of Doris Mertz  
**Diane Goberis**, Carol Skidmore's sister  
**Sean and Carrie Gould**, daughter and son-in-law of Joanne Smith  
**Eleanor Gormley**, relative of Barbara Grillo  
**Luke Grecco**, son of friend of Barbara Grillo  
**Paul Hilf**, father-in-law of Lynne Hilf  
**Jinouos Kalbousa**, sister-in law of Matt Minaian  
**McGuire family**, Michele Urbanski  
**Mustafa Minaian**, Matt Minaian's father  
**Quaid Mobus**, friend of Roberta Keller  
**Suzanne Moran**, Sandy Seymour's sister  
**Pelan/Hahn families**, Sue Hahn's family  
**Lou Pizzigoni**, friend of Sue Hahn  
**Reinhardt Family**, Lynne Hilf's friend  
**Riser Family**, Lynne Hilf's sister's family  
**Schmitt Family**, at the loss of Deborah's mother, Adrienne Schmitt  
**Garland Smith**, Joanne Smith's brother  
**Mary Stapperfenne**, Jean's daughter-in-law  
**LaVonne Lundell**, Barbara Peter's mother  
**Robert Wenz**, Jean Stapperfenne's brother-in-law  
**Charlene Wilverding**, friend of Kelly Roshto



### *MISSION for March*

Village 2 Village College Scholarship

## Lectionary Readings



### **March 5 - 1st Sunday in Lent**

Gen., 2:15-17; 3:1-7; Ps. 32; Rom 5:12-19; Matt. 4:1-11

### **March 12 - 2nd Sunday in Lent**

Gen. 12:1-4a; Ps. 121; Rom 4:1-5, 13-17; John 3:1-17

### **March 19 - 3rd Sunday in Lent**

Ex. 17:1-7; Ps. 95; Rom 5:1-11; John 4:5-42

### **March 26- 3rd Sunday in Lent**

1 Sam. 16:1-13; Ps. 23; Eph. 5:8-14; John 9:1-41

## NEWS FROM OUR CONGREGATION

### Happy Birthday

- March 6 Ann Sarsten, Loura Zijdel
- March 12 Peggy Cappeto
- March 14 Craig Skidmore
- March 16 Andrew Smith
- March 18 Stephanie Opdyke (Grillo)
- March 29 Robert Kielblock
- March 30 Colin Smith, Mariella Zijdel



### Happy Anniversary

- March 18 Barbara & Angelo Grillo

## COMMUNION

**March 5, 2015**

**Preparing Elements:** Jaci Crisall and  
Gail Duffe

**Elders Serving Communion:**

Class of 2019: Doug Smith and Loura Zijdel



### Call to Worship:

- March 5 Art England
- March 12 (at Stirling)
- March 19 Barbara Grillo
- March 26 Loura Zijdel

## EASTER FLOWERS

Easter is on April 16th this year. If you would like to purchase Easter flowers to be placed in our sanctuary for the worship service on Easter Sunday in memory of or in honor of someone you love, there will be forms to fill out on bulletin board at church, or call the church with your order.

This year, the flower options are lilies, hyacinths, tulips or daffodils. Lilies are each \$11; hyacinths, tulips and daffodils are \$8 each. Please submit your order **by April 9**. Checks should be made out to the church with a note on the memo line ("Easter flowers") and placed in the offering plate or mailed to the church.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

		how many	cost
<i>Daffodils</i>	\$ 8	_____	_____
<i>Hyacinths</i>	\$ 8	_____	_____
<i>Lilies</i>	\$11	_____	_____
<i>Tulips</i>	\$ 8	_____	_____

**TOTAL**

Given to the glory of God in honor or memory of:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

