



Transforming Lives,
Communities, and
the World for
300 Years

Cold Spring Presbyterian Church
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THE BRICKETTE



A community congregation of worship and mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). A National Historic Landmark Site.



Fall Harvest Supper
Sat. • October 5 • 5 PM • Price Hall

Everyone is welcomed to our **Fall Harvest Supper** in Price Hall, Sat., Oct. 5th at 5 PM. Invite your friends for great food and conversations with a surprise or two planned for your enjoyment as we renew our connections this Fall!

Our **Fall Harvest Supper** is sponsored by the session and is provided free. It is *not* necessary to bring a dish to attend, but if you'd like, you may bring your *favorite ready-to-eat dish* to share family-style.

Whether you bring a dish or not, please RSVP to help us with our planning by contacting Lenore Bowne: 609-898-6159, lenorec2@comcast.net. Visit www.coldspringchurch.com/events to RSVP online.

See you there!

A Message from the Pastor

What Is Prayer Actually Worth To You?

Photo credit: Joshua Hanks



"The first thing I want you to do is pray. Pray every way you know how, for everyone you know. Pray especially for rulers and their governments to rule well so we can be quietly about our business of living simply, in humble contemplation. This is the way our Savior God wants us to live" (1 Timothy 2:1-3).

Hello Friend,

What is your response when someone offers to pray for you? You welcome the prayer, right? Have you ever replied, "No thanks, I don't want your prayer"? Some people may resist the suggestion of prayer for any number of reasons, but most of the time, people welcome prayer. Our congregation's active prayer list engages us and every week as we share requests and answers to prayer encourage all of us. But how much is prayer actually worth to you?

What is Prayer?: Prayer may best be described as a conversation with God. While folding our hands is frequently associated with someone praying, hand-folding is not required for God to hear us, of course! Eyes open or closed. Standing, sitting, walking, driving, or any possible activity can be a perfect context for talking to God. Remember, the apostle Paul said to pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

Since we can pray anywhere, we can also pray about anything and about the full range of life's experiences. Alone or with others. No special formula, language, or method is required, either. No practice is necessary to make a connection to God. Just direct your thoughts to God. God even offers the Holy Spirit to help us when we just don't know how to pray (Romans 8:26-27).

Our prayers may be for ourselves or others, silent or spoken aloud, expressed in words, art, music, or dance, or any other medium. Prayer can be urgently offered in crisis or during planned, peaceful, or contemplative moments. Succinct or expansive, and capturing our every possible feeling and emotion, and concerning any and every imaginable situation, prayer with God is an amazing, personalized, way to be in touch with God through Christ.

Prayer In the Bible: In God's word, people interacted with God believing that prayer was also a method of changing a situation or themselves for the better. Abraham prayed that God would not destroy the city, Jacob prayed for strength when he was going to a stressful family reunion, Moses prayed for mercy for his people, Joshua confesses his people's sins, Hannah prayed for a family, Daniel for freedom, Nehemiah for transformation, Job prayed for his friends (Job 42:10) and Solomon prayed for wisdom (1 Kings 3:1-15). The Book of the Psalms is filled with prayers from requests to expressions of anger and sorrow, including intercessions, praise, and thanksgivings. Certainly there must be value to prayer because interacting with the Creator is a real life experience. People correlate praying with results, either experienced inwardly, or externally.

Jesus practiced what he preached about prayer and made it a priority, both in private (Mark 1:15, Matthew 14:23), and in public (Luke 22:32, 41-44), and famously from the cross where he died for the sins of the world, praying, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34). Jesus taught us how to pray (Matthew 6:9-13, Luke 11:1-13), to not use prayer to get attention from others (Matthew 6:5-6), to pray before making an important decision (Luke 6:12-13), to pray boldly (Mark 11:24), and pray for the success of God's mission (Luke 10:22, Matthew 9:38). Jesus continually prays for us, too! (Romans 8:34). If prayer didn't matter, would Jesus pray?

The letters of the New Testament are similarly filled with reminders of the value of prayer. In James' letter, "...pray for each other..." because, "the prayer of a person living right with God is something powerful to be reckoned with" (James 5:17). The apostle Paul wrote, "Don't fret or worry. Instead of worrying, pray. Let petitions and praises shape your worries into prayers, letting God know your concerns. Before you know it, a sense of God's wholeness, everything coming together for good, will come and settle you down. It's wonderful what happens when Christ displaces worry at the center of your life" (Philippians 4:6-7 The Message). We are to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18), and to pray for our civic leaders and neighbors (1 Timothy 2:1-3, 1 John 5:14-15, 1 Peter 3:12, Colossians 1:9-12).

What About "Thoughts and Prayers" In our experience, prayers matter. But can we learn anything about what people in general think about prayer? Following natural

disasters, mass shootings, or catastrophes, politicians and religious leaders often offer up their “thoughts and prayers” to victims. Our nation historically values prayer. For example, both houses of Congress open each session with prayer, the government continues to provide chaplains for the armed forces (an important part of their ministry is prayer), and other civic, public, and private organizations may include prayer in their proceedings. Detractors criticize the phrase, “Our thoughts and prayers are with you,” as meaningless, asserting that prayer offers no real value. In a recent issue of the *Journal of the National Academy of Sciences*, researchers sought to quantify the value people attributed to prayer. Critics argue that the phrase is cheap, and it doesn't equate to real action. It may be offered to sound like “I really care,” but really means “I won't do anything.” Christians frequently seek other's prayers, especially during difficult or painful times.

The researchers took an economic approach to determining the value of thoughts and prayers. (For the full article, “The Value of Thoughts and Prayers,” visit <https://www.pnas.org/content/early/2019/09/10/1908268116>.)

For example, the findings showed that recipients of prayer often expect some kind of direct benefit (improved health or increased wealth), or gain feelings of hope and connection to others, or to reduce their anxiety. Participants in the study self-identified as one of three groups: Christian, atheist, or agnostic. In the experiment, they were told that a stranger would be learn about their recent hardship and in return, the participant would receive that stranger's thoughts and prayers. The experiment evaluated how much the thoughts and prayers mattered to each group. On average, Christian respondents valued the gesture, but nonreligious people negatively valued the gesture when offered by Christians, and were indifferent to receiving the thoughts and prayers from other nonreligious people. The study also suggested that while others may sincerely offer their thoughts and prayers, when no other gesture was offered, its impact was less recognized. Everyone agreed that the words alone were secondary if not also linked to other actions.

Prayer In Motion: Wait, that sounds like what we read in James' letter when he wrote about faith in action:

“Dear friends, do you think you'll get anywhere in this if you learn all the right words but never do anything? Does merely talking about faith indicate that a person really has it? For instance, you come upon an old friend dressed in rags and half-starved and say, “Good morning, friend! Be clothed in Christ! Be filled with the Holy Spirit!” and walk off without providing so much as a coat or a cup of soup—where does that get you? Isn't it obvious that God-talk without God-acts is outrageous nonsense?” (James 2:16-17).

The bottom line? Pray. But look for opportunities to do more than pray, as well. Don't stop sharing with God, listening, and learning with God's Spirit in community with others. Pray. Do. That's why Cold Spring Presbyterian Church is here; to provide spiritual resources to follow Jesus with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love! There are amazing benefits to prayer, both to the one praying and to the recipients of those prayers. But active, authentic prayer is always connected to active, authentic action.

Put your prayers into motion today. Be amazed.

Sincerely,

Pastor Kevin

Get to Know and Welcome Our Newest Members!



Lynda McCartney: Lynda is a Philadelphia native who has enjoyed Cape May for 20 years. She has three children (so far!) and enjoys fine dining, cooking, reading, swimming, walking, and film, not necessarily in that order. Lynda brings a 15 year history of teaching Sunday school as the Director of the AWANA program and a nursery and visitation worker. She is excited to join us and see how God will use her in our community.



Norris Clark: Norris is the managing partner of Princeton Strategic Communications. He has been heavily involved in the local community as a board member of the local Big Brothers Big Sisters, the MAC, the NJ Delaware Bayshore Council, Historic Cold Spring Village, the Friends of the Fishing Creek School, and TEDxCapeMay. Norris served as Deputy Mayor of Lower Township, and is a seminary graduate with a Masters in Religious Studies from the University of Pennsylvania, and he holds a BA in Philosophy from Covenant College.



Share Your Good News! To share your team, event news, or announcements and sign-up forms in our weekly Worship **Bulletin** and **Connections**, or the monthly **Brickette**, please send your information to Connor at hello@coldspringchurch.com. Publication deadlines are:

Weekly Worship Bulletin: 11AM Wednesdays

Weekly *Connections*: 11AM Thursdays

Monthly *Brickette*: 11AM, last Wednesday of the month.

Session Notes

These are the summary notes --or highlights-- of our most recent session meeting. For further details of these notes and additional session discussion matters, please refer to the next set of complete Session Minutes (upon session approval and publication).

Our Session approved the following agenda items on September 10, 2019:

1. Minutes of Stated Session Meeting of August 6, 2019;
2. "Reconnection Letters" of inquiry to be sent to select members;
3. Resignation of session member (Pam Barsby);
4. Mr. Tom Imperato nominated as President of the Corporation.

The Session also discussed the following agenda items in progress:

1. Missional Leader Training series for members of Session;
2. Calendar of team meetings and their respective planned events;
3. Schedule of programs for 2020 "Winter Concert" series;
4. Progress reports on various campus projects.

Complimentary copies of our approved Session Minutes are located on our information table in the church narthex; additional copies are available in the designated rack by the church office bulletin board in Price Hall. If you have any questions or concerns about any of the current meeting agenda items, kindly contact the pastor, a session member, or myself for clarification.

-- Rob Riehl, Clerk of Session



Food Pantry
Donations Needed

Food Cupboard News for October 2019

We hear every day about the homeless among us. The food banks are begging for supplies to fill their shelves. We have been blessed here at Cold Spring Presbyterian Church with many generous people who donate to our weekly food drive.

Last month we collected over 300 for our two food banks (St. Barnabas and the Church of the Nazarene). I pray that

we will continue to donate and increase our sharing each month. The list below is a guideline of the items the food banks need the most. In addition, almost any non-perishable food and personal items are accepted. Please check expiration dates.

*II Corinthians 9:7 NLT "For the Lord loves a person who gives cheerfully"
Acts 20:35 Remember the Words of Jesus "It is more blessed to give than to receive."*



Deacon Collection for October

October 6 Instant rice, canned soups, Ramen Noodles, crackers

October 13 Toothpaste & brushes, soap (bars), toilet paper, pasta and sauce

October 20 Peanut butter and grape jelly, fruit cups, canned vegetables

October 27 Hot and cold tea, hot & cold cereals, powdered milk, canned meat

Your donations can be dropped off at Price Hall, Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and on Sunday in the sanctuary narthex. ~ Neil Oberlin, Coordinator

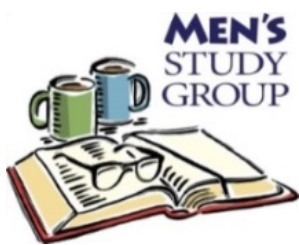


Presbyterian Women's Group:

The Annual Soup and Sandwich Luncheon, Christmas Bazaar, and Bake Sale will be held on Saturday, November 2nd from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM in Price Hall. All donations of Christmas crafts, Christmas items, and baked goods will be appreciated as well as volunteers to help on the day. In addition, "White Elephant" items will be accepted, similar to the Strawberry Festival. If anyone would

like to make soup or sandwiches, or for more information, call Roseann Paulits at (609) 886-8220. Thank you all for your help.

ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



Men's Study Group

Let the Spirit of God rest upon you! Discover how *you* can be a person who hosts the presence of God -- bringing his Spirit into *your* world.

In this eight-session dvd presentation "**Hosting the Presence**", author and pastor Bill Johnson takes us on an unforgettable and life-changing journey using Scripture to show us what it looks like to host the Spirit of God's presence in our everyday lives. Prepare to encounter God like never before and transform the world around you by hosting his presence! Gather with us for coffee and fellowship at 10:15am on the first and third Wednesdays of each month. Every man is welcome; just "*come and see*"!

Affirmation of Faith:

Our "Fifth Wednesday" program (October 30) features everyday people who have responded with courage and faithfulness in times of adversity. Exceptional talents and intelligence are no match for the ordinary person who is willing to sacrifice property and reputation for the good of others. Today, the well-being of our homes, churches, and nation depends upon these kinds of people. In his dvd presentation "**When Ordinary People Stand in the Gap**", Bryan Fischer examines the lives of common individuals who overcame fear, opposition, and overwhelming odds for the welfare of others. Learn how we can affirm our faith in biblical truth to *serve, self-sacrifice, and stand* wherever God has placed you! We will meet at 10:15am for coffee and fellowship with our program beginning at 10:30am. Everyone is welcome!

Christian Living:



What would you say if someone were to ask you, "Do you know that God loves you?" Do you *really* believe it? Are you *living* like you know and believe it? In this dvd series, "**Know and Believe The Love**", Kenneth Copeland will help you grow from mental agreement with the fact that God loves you, to *knowing* in your heart and living in the truth of His love every day. Live in *the blessing* as God always intended for you, and step into a whole new level of love for your family, your friends, and your world!

Join us for the viewing and discussion of this "love ministry"! We meet at 10:15am for coffee and fellowship on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month. Everyone is welcome!

Stephen Ministers are members of local church congregations who receive special training to provide one-on-one Christian care to people experiencing challenges in life - grief, loneliness, divorce, hospitalization, disability, job loss, and many other life difficulties. Add a "higher-calling" purpose to your life: provide confidential Christian care to someone in need of your help! To learn how to become a Stephen Minister or to receive care from one, contact Rob Riehl (609-889-3538; robriehl@verizon.net) for a confidential conversation.



Interested in performing a *hands-on* active ministry on behalf of our church within our local community? Deliver meals to home-bound persons in the North Cape May and Villas area on a weekday morning. You can set your own schedule, even if only one day a month! Volunteers for **Mobile Meals** are needed for this worthy cause. Fulfill the message of "feeding the hungry and giving drink to the thirsty"! (Matt. 25:35) Contact Rob Riehl (609-889-3538; robriehl@verizon.net) for additional information.