



The Messenger

February 2008

Deacons: Laurel Ennis, Louise Manning, Linda Mayerik, Keith Strege,
Cliff Wilkinson, Chair Fred Yarnell

The Mission of North Branch Reformed Church
*is to invite all people into a personal relationship
with Jesus Christ that results in a continuing worship
of God and daily service in the Holy Spirit's presence.*

CORE VALUES

*THE MISSION OF NBRC...
results in a continuing worship of God...*

#1 - SPIRITUALITY in life by increasing our awareness of God's presence through an emphasis upon prayer, contemplation, music, and inspiring worship.

*THE MISSION OF NBRC...
is to invite all people into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ...*

#2 - SUPPORT for the journey by offering Christ's healing for all individuals, families, and our church family through an emphasis upon classes, group activities, and community in committees.

*THE MISSION OF NBRC...
results in...daily service in the Holy Spirit's presence.*

#3 - SERVICE to the world by empowering the church to realize our gifts, given to us by the Holy Spirit, to reach out to the world through increased mission giving and mission living in the Preschool, Kirkside, Sunrise House, and wherever the Holy Spirit leads us.

CONSISTORY

Officers: President Pastor Todd Buurstra, Pastor Mark E. Swart, Clerk Doris Munzenmaier, Treasurer Alice Swan

Elders: Vice President Steve Biuso, Libby Butler, Tim Chamberlin, Janet Kolb, Carlos Lugo, Carmen Lugo, Bonnie McCay Merritt, David Mojica, Ylva Mojica, Hugh Talada

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Inserts

- February Messenger Calendar (center page)
- February Messenger Junior

March 2008 Messenger Deadline:

February 19th

Bulletin Deadline:

Each week by Thursday Noon

Committee	Chair Person(s)
Adult Education	Sue McGeown
Audio Visual (sub. of Worship)	Bruce Taggart
Building & Grounds	Dennis McGale, Keith Strege
Cemetery	Jim Houston
Christian Action	Lynn Cargill
Christian Care	Louise Manning, Nancy Vollers
Christian Education	Donna Taggart
Church Planting	Mary Beth Iodice
Ecumenical Relations	Bruce McConnell
Fellowship	Nancy Fiedler
Finance	Wendy Kroon
Kirkside	Kathy Rue
Memorial Gifts	Margaret Zeugner
Men's Ministry	Wes Frueh
Music	Jennifer Landrieu
Pastor Staff Relations	Paul Soskey
Preschool Board	Dennis McGale
Women's Ministry	Laurel Ennis
Worship	Doug Bateman



Message from

Pastor Todd



immensely. Why?

As I write this I am preparing to go away for four days to San Antonio, Texas for a denominational conference. While many Reformed Church (RCA) groups will be gathered at this *One Thing* conference I will be there with the RCA Parenting Church Network. Taking part in the “middle management” of this part of the conference I will be busy, but I anticipate enjoying it

Just because it will be good to get away? Yes, though I will miss you and my family, absence usually does make the heart grow fonder. But that is not the main reason.

The main reason is that I am excited about North Branch’s participation in what God is doing in the wider church. You know by now that my role in our area Classis churches is to oversee the multiplication of new churches. Through our help the Reading, PA Hispanic church, which Carlos and Carmen pastor, has grown to 60 people on Sundays. They have started their own daughter church in Lebanon, PA, which is now worshipping 30 and anticipates renting a new building soon (cf. picture). Bob and Heidi’s plant in Oxford Valley is now worshipping 60 and is preparing for a grand launch. And then, my personal favorite, our own daughter church, *Ignite*, is preparing to launch her second cell group. Within each of these new groups there are a high percentage of people who are experiencing Jesus Christ for the first time! I am so blessed to be able to witness a powerful work of the Holy Spirit in these plants!



So to San Antonio I am bringing four other pastors from our Classis to explore giving birth like we have. If even one or two become partners with us in this venture we will no longer be alone! We are in the middle of God’s greatest work to bring new people to Christ through new churches that our Classis has seen in over 100 years!

And this is just our Classis. Throughout the other 45 Classes of the RCA in North America over 100 churches have been born since we launched our

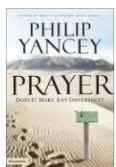
ten-year goal to plant 400. For the first time in a half a century God has blessed the old RCA with growth!

So I ask you to pray that God might inspire and challenge our denomination, the oldest in America, to help bring our nation to a deeper commitment to Christ.

Peace and joy,



Adult Education

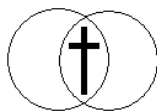


PHILIP YANCEY: PRAYER – DOES IT MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE? January and February's focus will be on this excellent book that will be discussed in numerous venues throughout the church included Sunday morning worship and adult class.

LOOKING FOR A BIBLE STUDY? Sue McGeown will be conducting an in home Bible study on women of the Bible in the near future. Meeting dates and times will be decided based on the consensus of the group. Contact Sue by phone (908-722-1873) or email (mcgplace@email.com - THIS IS NEW!!) to learn more. Hope you can make it!!

MONTHLY NOON BIBLE STUDY: Meets on the second Tuesday of each month. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, **February 12th**.

SMALL GROUPS: Interested in being part of a circle of care with Christ in the center? Join a small group. Most of our groups meet monthly and function as either a Bible Study, task group, or support group. For more information contact Pastor Todd in the church office.



Building & Grounds

The Buildings and Grounds Committee hopes to help all of us become more aware of taking care of God's earth by providing ecology tips each month in the NBRC Messenger. The following applies to us at home as well as at church.

THIS TIP MAY SEEM A LITTLE AFTER THE FACT, BEING THAT CHRISTMAS IS A MEMORY, BUT STILL WORTH YOUR EFFORT.

Looking for an easy way to put a stop to those unwanted catalogs that fill up your mailbox? Catalog Choice is a free service that allows you to opt-out

of catalogs easily. Via the web site, you can select the catalogs you no longer wish to receive (there are hundreds of common catalogs listed). They also allow you to type in catalog names not on their list. You will find them at catalogchoice.org

Christian Action

MISSION OFFERING: We collect a mission offering on the first Sunday of each month. Mission Offering envelopes are at the beginning of each month in the offering envelope packages. Additional envelopes will be placed in the pew racks.

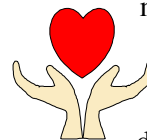


FROZEN FOOD TRAYS: Christian Action reminds everyone to use the frozen food trays found in fellowship hall for leftovers. These meals are distributed to those in need in the area. The trays are easy to use and you can leave them in the freezers in the kitchen at your convenience. Please help with this valuable mission of the church.

Christian Care

JANUS BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP: The purpose of this group is to offer education and support in an attempt to build friendship and understanding among people suffering from loss and aid them in coping with their losses. This group meets the second Tuesday of each month at 7:30 PM at The Centre at Raritan, 1124 Highway 202S-A2, Raritan, NJ 08869. The next meeting will be Tuesday, **February 12th**. For more information, please contact Barbara Ronca, M.S.W., L.C.S.W., Counseling and Therapy Services at 908-218-9062.

CHRISTIAN CARE SERVICES: Blood Pressure Check: 2nd Sunday of every month in Fellowship Hall at 10:00 AM. **Medical Equipment:** Judy Wilkinson, 908-218-1575. **Prayer Concerns:** Kathy Herrman, 908-231-1917. **Small Chore Services for the Elderly:** Louise Manning, 908-722-3834 or call any of the deacons listed in the bulletin. **Transportation Needs:** Alice Swan, 908-722-5308. **DVDs and Audio Cassettes of worship services for shut-ins:** Fred Swan, 908-722-5308. For further information regarding Christian Care and its services, please call Louise Manning 908-722-3834 or Nancy Vollers 908-725-7656.



PLEASE NOTIFY us when you or a member of your family is admitted to a hospital. This knowledge will be useful for visitation and prayers. You may contact the church office, 908-725-2313, Pastor Todd, 908-725-2313, or Louise Manning, 908-722-3834.

Church Plant

CHURCH PLANT PROSPECTS: Do you know a young adult or family who would benefit or be interested in our new ministry. If you do, please call the David Mojica at 908-393-6405 or the church office at 908-725-2313.

Congregational Meeting

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING will take place on Sunday, **February 10th** beginning with a brunch immediately following the 10:15 AM worship service. The purpose of the meeting is to approve the 2008 budget and the Elder and Deacon nominees. The Elder nominees are Sue Betz and Tim Sanford, and the Deacon nominees are Violet Coy and Larry Fox. All are welcome to the brunch. No need to sign up. Childcare will be available during the meeting.



Deaths

OUR SYMPATHY to **Janice and Ron Davenhall** and family on the passing of Janice's mother on **January 19th** in Florida.

On **January 21st** longtime NBRC member and a much-loved friend, **Mary Florence Cadden** passed away. Mary Florence served NBRC as Elder and Vice President of Consistory, RCWM President and Chairperson of the Chancel Committee. A Memorial Service celebrating her life will be held on Friday, **February 8th**, at 11:30 AM. The Chancel Committee will be providing the floral arrangements. If you would like to contribute, donations can be made to the Women's Ministries Chancel Committee.

Fellowship

FELLOWSHIP HOUR HOSTS are needed. Please signup in Fellowship Hall.



Interfaith Hospitality Network



HAVE A HEART RAFFLE: It is time again for Interfaith Hospitality Network of Somerset County's annual "Have a Heart for Homeless Families" 50/50 raffle. The winning ticket will be drawn on Thursday, **February 14th**. The cost of a ticket is \$100, and 50% of the proceeds will support IHN/SC's mission to empower homeless families to attain independence. The other 50% of the proceeds will go to the lucky winner. Last year's raffle raised \$26,000! Please remember that this is the season of giving. Why not purchase a raffle ticket as a gift for a loved one? Your gift will not only give a loved one the chance to win a little extra cash, but will help IHN/SC with their community response to homelessness. If you are interested in purchasing a raffle ticket, please contact Michele at 908-704-1920.

Kirkside

SAVE THE DATE: Saturday, **June 7th**, 7 AM – 2 PM, Kirkside's semi-annual Garage Sale. It's never too early to mark your calendar. We especially need your help in setting up first thing in the morning, and then for the clean up at 2 p.m. anything in between is greatly appreciated too.



Men's Ministries



The next **MEN'S BREAKFAST** is Saturday, **February 16th**, from 8:00 AM to 9:30 AM in the Fellowship Hall. All men are invited for good food, good friends, and a better faith.

Music

WILL YOU BE A "KEY PLAYER" IN THE ORGAN FUND? Are you a Key Player, yet? Help us reach our goal to purchase the new organ for our sanctuary by purchasing a key, pedal or stop in the amounts of \$50, 100, \$150, \$200 and \$250. For each donation made, a certificate will be issued. For more information, contact Helene Cantilina, Music Director, at 908-908-725-2313 or Jennifer Landrieu, Music Chairperson, at 908-575-0330.



Prayer Needs

REMEMBER IN PRAYER: Bob Karnell, Henry Larsen, Jim McKelvey, Cathy Pfauth, Harold Polhemus, Ben Van Doren.

PRAYERS FOR OUR SERVICEMEN: Tom Cantilina, Craig Casucci, Martin Christensen (3rd Infantry Division in Iraq, Cathy & Tim Sandford's nephew), Jim Crosley (husband of Jennifer (Munzenmaier) Crosley), Nichole Haas (in Iraq, niece of Ron & Lori Taylor), Matthew Hicks (nephew of Janet Kolb), Rob McCracken (in Iraq, husband of Meg (Yarnell) McCracken), Michael and Kevin Oatley (in Baghdad, nephews of Darlene (Goceljak) Purcell), Colin O'Rourke (in Iraq).

Women's Ministry

2008 PRAYER CHAIN: We would love to have you join our existing email prayer chain group of 80 people! Our goal is 100 people! The power of prayer is amazing and a comfort to us. All you have to do is receive the prayer requests by email and pray for all God's people in need. If you do not have email, no problem--we have a phone chain too! You would receive the prayer requests by phone and then pass it on to another person. Please consider joining us in prayer. Regarding Prayer Pals, we will not be continuing for 2008. If you have a Prayer Pal, please reveal yourself on February 14th. To sign-up, contact Kathy Herrman by email at kvherrman@patmedia.net or telephone at 908-231-1917.



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LENTEN SOUP & WORSHIP: Women's Ministries would like to invite you to our first of many Lenten meals together. Beginning on the **13th of February** through the **12th of March**, every Wednesday, we will be having a Lenten meal of delicious soup and Italian bread. Along with the meal at 6:30, Pastor Mark Swart will be leading us in worship at 7:00. Please join us for a time of fellowship and prayer. *Everyone is welcome!*



WOMEN'S MINISTRIES MONTHLY MEETING: The next Women's Ministries Monthly Meeting will be held on Tuesday, **February 12th** at 7:30 PM at the home of Laurel Ennis. We warmly welcome all women of the church interested in sharing their ideas to help with our mission.

JOURNEY WITH JESUS: Read almost 100 personal stories of faith from North Branch Church members. The book is only \$12.00. North Branch Women's Ministries will donate all proceeds from the sale of "Journeys with Jesus" to local missions. To obtain a copy, contact Pam Frueh at 908-526-1829.

CHANCEL FLOWERS: If you would like to provide the Sunday flower arrangement in memory of someone or just would like to provide an arrangement, there is a sign-up sheet for this purpose in Fellowship Hall. See Fred Yarnell, 908-722-4759, for details.

Worship

ASH WEDNESDAY: A brief prayer service with ashes will be held on Wednesday, February 6th, at 7:00 PM in the NBRC Sanctuary



SUNDAY MORNING PRAYER GROUP meets in the Upper Room on Sunday mornings at 8:30 AM before the worship services to pray for the ongoing ministry of NBRC. Anyone wishing to join is welcome!!!

Youth

SHOPPING FOR SENIORS: As a service project, our Senior High Youth Group would like to do your grocery shopping for you on the evening of February 10th. If you are a Senior Citizen or could just use assistance and would like to stay home and keep warm and take advantage of this convenient service, please send your grocery list, phone number and address to the church to the attention of Pastor Mark. You may pay your grocery bill when the youth member delivers your groceries that evening. Any questions, call Cathy Callahan at 908-963-8205.



Staff Contact Information and Office Hours

Telephone: 908-725-2313

Fax: 908-725-5682

Email: Office@NBRC.com

Web Page: www.NBRC.com

Pastor Todd Buurstra

Pastor of Worship and Witness

E-mail: buurstra@NBRC.com

8:30 AM to 5:00 PM - Monday thru Thursday

Evening hours & meetings by appointment

Helene Cantilina

Director of Music

E-mail: Music@NBRC.com

Beth D'Elia

Interim Contemporary Music Assistant

E-mail: beth_delia@msn.com

David Mojica

Church Planter

E-mail: davidmojica@optonline.net

Doris Munzenmaier

Office Administrator

E-mail: Office@NBRC.com

8:30 AM to 5:00 PM - Monday thru Friday

Office periodically closed at lunchtime.

Barbara O'Rourke

Kirkside Administrator

E-mail: Kirkside@NBRC.com

Kate Sarles

Preschool Director - 908-725-2326

E-mail: Preschool@NBRC.com

Pastor Mark E. Swart

Pastor of Discipleship

E-mail: Swart@NBRC.com

8:30 AM to 5:00 PM - Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday

Evening hours & meetings by appointment

WORSHIP SERVICES FOR FEBRUARY

EVERY SUNDAY

9:00 AM - Worship Service

10:00 AM - Fellowship Time

10:15 AM - Worship Service

10:15 AM - Adult Education

10:30 AM - Church School

SUNDAY, February 3, 2008

(Communion)

Transfiguration Sunday

Pastor Todd Buurstra will preach.

Prayer Dilemmas

WEDNESDAY, February 6, 2008

Ash Wednesday Service

7:00 PM

SUNDAY, February 10, 2008

First Sunday in Lent

Pastor Todd Buurstra will preach

The Practice of Prayer

Drama: Church School Skit

SUNDAY, February 17, 2008

Second Sunday in Lent

Pastor Todd Buurstra will preach.

John 3:1-17

SUNDAY, February 24, 2008

Third Sunday in Lent

Pastor Mark Swart will preach.

John 4:5-42