

March 2009

**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.

April 2009 Messenger Deadline:

March 23<sup>rd</sup>

Bulletin Deadline:

Each week by Thursday Noon



## Message from Pastor Todd



Did you know that Muslims revere Jesus as a prophet and believe in his second coming? However, they do not believe that Jesus died on the cross because it is unthinkable to them that a prophet would die.

So, as we Christians enter into Lent where we follow Jesus to the cross how do we deal with our differences with our Abrahamic cousins?

Recently I was sitting in Starbucks talking to a woman from Germany who when she found out that I was a Christian made a typical modern day comment: *I am spiritual but not religious because religion leads to wars.*

Though you and I may see it differently, much of the world sees our war in Iraq as Christians invading Muslims yet again, as in the Crusades. After all, our President said he consulted Jesus regarding the war.

What do we do about all of this? It seems to me that world peace demands that we befriend a Muslim. It seems to me that we need to rethink our faith and learn about their faith. We need to rethink our faith so that we no longer whack people over the head with it, and we need to be genuinely interested in how others see God. Then we can have humble conversations about ultimate issues.

There is still a lot of religious bigotry among us. And we who follow the Prince of Peace must take the lead in developing respectful friendships with our Muslim neighbors. Who will you befriend this Lent for peace?

Peace and joy,



## Adult Education

**DISCOVERY CLASS:** Are you interested in discovering God's call for you to participate more fully in this church and Christ's mission? Come to this class (formerly called the New Member Class) lead by Pastor Todd to discover: God's call in the Bible; God's call to the community of class participants; God's call to participate in our church's mission. The class meets after the second service on Sundays, **February 22<sup>nd</sup>** through **April 19<sup>th</sup>**, from 11:45 AM until 12:45 PM with childcare. (*No class on Easter, April 12<sup>th</sup>.*) You may explore this experience without becoming a member of our church. Please sign up in Fellowship Hall.

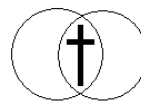
**ADULT EDUCATION:** Wendy Kroon will continue a study entitled *Be Joyful* based on Philippians from **March 1<sup>st</sup>** through **March 29<sup>th</sup>**, at 10:15 AM in the Upper Room.

**SOUP AND DEVOTIONS:** Adult Education in conjunction with the Women's Ministries will be hosting Soup and Devotions during Lent from 6:00 to 7:30 PM beginning **March 5<sup>th</sup>** to **April 9<sup>th</sup>** (see weekly bulletin for location at NBRC). Pastor Mark will be leading a discussions based on the previous Sunday's sermons. All are welcome!



**MONTHLY NOON BIBLE STUDY:** Meets on the second Tuesday of each month. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, **March 10<sup>th</sup>** and will focus on the books of Moses.

**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.

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## Births

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**CONGRATULATIONS:** To grandfather, Larry Helwig, on the birth of grandson, Cooper Reed, on **February 7<sup>th</sup>**.

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## Building & Grounds

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**GO GREEN:** 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.

### More hints from Consumer Reports October 2008 Issue.

Clean or replace furnace filters monthly during the heating season. Clogged filters force the blower to work longer, raising your electric bills.

1. Insulate and seal cracks and gaps in your ducts. That can help reduce energy costs by 30%.
2. Zone heat smartly. A portable heater in a room saves money only if you're willing to keep the rest of the house chilly. Wood-burning fireplaces can suck more heat from your home than they put back in.
3. Weather-strip old windows and doors. It's the surest way to close the gaps around openings, reducing heating and cooling costs by 15 to 30%.

**SNOW BLOWER NEEDED:** The Building and Grounds Committee would like to upgrade their current snow removal equipment so, if you have or know of someone willing to donate a snow blower to NBRC, please contact Tim Sandford (908-722-8491) Dennis McGale (908-704-8523) or Keith Strege (908-231-0764).

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## Christian Action

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**SPECIAL LENTEN MISSION PROJECT:** Christian Action Committee announces a special Lenten Mission Project to benefit the growing number of homeless and needy children in Somerset County. Please donate NEW socks and underwear (sizes 2T to 12) in the box in Fellowship Hall. These items will be delivered to Somerville Area FISH. **\*\*Deadline is April 5<sup>th</sup>\*\*** Thank you for your support!!



**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.



**FOUR SEASONS OF GIVING:** The Christian Action committee will be collecting ethnic foods, beans, canned meats and fruits during March. A box is available in Fellowship Hall for your donations.



**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.

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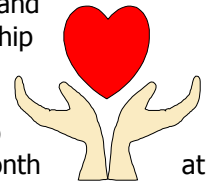
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## Christian Care

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**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, **March 10<sup>th</sup>**. 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:** 2<sup>nd</sup> 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.

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## Fellowship

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**FELLOWSHIP HOUR HOSTS** are needed for March and April. You only need to prepare beverages (coffee, tea and juice), which are supplied by the Fellowship Committee. There is no need to supply baked goods. Please sign up in Fellowship Hall.



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## Kirkside

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**VACANCY:** Do you know anyone interested in living in a shared house for seniors? There is a vacancy for one resident, male or female, age 62 or older, for a second-floor room at Kirkside. Please contact Barbara O'Rourke at 908-526-8115 for further information.



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## Men's Ministries

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The next **MEN'S BREAKFAST** is Saturday, **March 21<sup>st</sup>**, 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.



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## Music

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**WELCOMING NEW MUSIC DIRECTOR:** Please join the Music Search Committee in welcoming our new Music Director, Brian Katona and his family. Coffee and cake will be served after both services on Sunday, **March 1<sup>st</sup>**.

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## Prayer Needs

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

**PRAYERS FOR OUR SERVICEMEN:** Tom Cantilina, Craig Casucci, Jim Crosley (husband of Jennifer (Munzenmaier) Crosley), Nichole Haas (niece of Ron & Lori Taylor), Matthew Hicks (nephew of Janet Kolb), Rob McCracken (husband of Meg (Yarnell) McCracken), Colin O'Rourke.

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## Preschool

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**2009-2010 PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION:** Did you know the Preschool offers a 5% discount to church members, and we give you priority in the registration process? Registration is currently open. Check the Preschool website at [www.nbrc.com](http://www.nbrc.com) for classes and tuition rates.



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## Women's Ministry

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**CHOCOLATE FESTIVAL:** Women's Ministry will be hosting a Festival of Chocolate on **April 5<sup>th</sup>** featuring the sale of all things chocolate. We invite all "chocolatiers" to use their expertise to make and donate any chocolate goods (homemade chocolate, fudge or baked goods) to be sold to benefit local missions. REMINDER: NO NUTS PLEASE as NBRC is a nut free facility. Donations can be left in

the kitchen marked for the Festival. For more information, contact Laurel Ennis (908-722-1018).

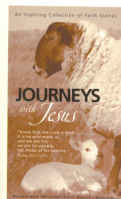
**CROSSROADS XXV: OUR CALL: Where Do I Fit In?** is the theme of Crossroads (A Retreat for Women), which will take place at Harvey Cedars Conference Center, Long Beach Island, NJ from Friday, **April 17<sup>th</sup>** to Saturday, **April 18<sup>th</sup>**. The Keynote Speaker will be Michelle Cavinder, Director of Women's Ministries, Crystal Cathedral. Registration Forms are available in the office.

**WOMEN'S MINISTRY MONTHLY MEETING** will be held on Tuesday, **March 10<sup>th</sup>** at 7:30 PM at NBRC in the Upper Lounge. We warmly welcome all women of the church interested in sharing their ideas to help with our mission.

**EASTER FLOWERS FOR THE SANCTUARY:** Flowers provide seasonal beauty to the decoration of the Sanctuary during the Easter services. If you would like to contribute to this year's decoration, *please fill out an order form, which will be available in the Sanctuary beginning March 8<sup>th</sup>, and place in the box marked "Easter Flowers" in the church office no later than April 5<sup>th</sup>*. Plants will be available for pick up after the second service on **April 12<sup>th</sup>**.



**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.



**BLOW-OUT SHIRT SALE: ALL SHIRTS \$10!!!** Pink T-Shirt, Blue Golf Shirt and Denim Shirt are available. Two logos--"Let Us Encourage One Another" and "Be Still." All proceeds go to our local missions. For further information, please call the office at 908-725-2313.

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## Worship

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**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!!!



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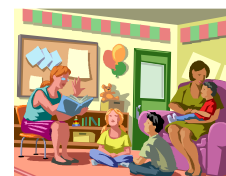
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## Youth

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**NURSERY CARE:** Childcare is available for children ages 0 to 3 years during both worship services on Sunday. Our nursery is a cheerful, warm and inviting space staffed by loving volunteers. For information or questions, please contact Natsuko Buurstra, 908-252-3727.



## 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](mailto:Buurstra@NBRC.com)

8:30 AM to 5:00 PM - Monday thru Thursday  
Evening hours & meetings by appointment

### **Brian Katona**

Music Director

E-mail: [briankatona@gmail.com](mailto:briankatona@gmail.com) or  
[Music@NBRC.com](mailto:Music@NBRC.com)

### **Doris Munzenmaier**

Office Administrator

**E-mail:** [Office@NBRC.com](mailto: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](mailto:Kirkside@NBRC.com)

### **Jennifer Landrieu**

Preschool Director - 908-725-2326

**E-mail:** [Preschool@NBRC.com](mailto:Preschool@NBRC.com)

### **Pastor Mark E. Swart**

Pastor of Discipleship

**E-mail:** [Swart@NBRC.com](mailto:Swart@NBRC.com)

8:30 AM to 5:00 PM - Mon, Tues, Thurs and Friday  
Evening hours & meetings by appointment

## CONSISTORY

**Officers:** President Pastor Todd Buurstra, Co-Vice  
President Pastor Mark E. Swart, Clerk Jane  
Yarnell, Treasurer Doris Munzenmaier

**Elders:** Sue Betz, Co-Vice President Steve Biuso, Libby  
Butler, Tim Chamberlin, Janet Kolb, Carlos  
Lugo, Carmen Lugo, David Mojica, Ylva  
Mojica, Tim Sanford

**Deacons:** Violet Coy, Larry Fox, Louise Manning, Linda  
Mayerik, Keith Strege, Chair Cliff Wilkinson

### **Committees and Chairperson(s):**

**Adult Education** - Sue McGeown

**Audio Visual** (sub of Worship) - Bruce Taggart

**Building & Grounds** - Dennis McGale, Keith Strege

**Cemetery** - Jim Housten

**Christian Action** - Lynn Ritter 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** - Janet Kolb

**Men's Ministry** - Wes Frueh

**Music** - Patti Harmer

**Music Director Search Committee** - Dona Lee Szekeres,  
Meral Pontier

**Pastor Staff Relations** - Paul Soskey

**Preschool Board** - Larry Fox

**Women's Ministry** - Laurel Ennis

**Worship** - Doug Bateman

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## WORSHIP SERVICES FOR MARCH

### 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

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### SUNDAY, March 1, 2009

(Communion)

#### **First Sunday in Lent**

Pastor Todd Buurstra will preach.

Mark 1:9-15

### SUNDAY, March 8, 2009

#### **Second Sunday in Lent**

Pastor Todd Buurstra will preach.

Mark 8:31-38

Young Pioneers Skit

### SUNDAY, March 15, 2009

#### **Third Sunday in Lent**

Pastor Mark Swart will preach.

John 2:13-22

### SUNDAY, March 22, 2009

#### **Fourth Sunday in Lent**

Pastor Todd Buurstra will preach.

John 3:14-21

### SUNDAY, March 29, 2009

#### **Fifth Sunday in Lent**

Carol Choir Musical