

On the Spiritual Side

jarthur@buckscountyherald.com

Finding a second career in an unlikely corner

Pepton Morris Petty

Three years ago, I decided to remedy a gaping hole in my education by studying religion.

I had gone to church as a child, but had done my best to learn nothing. Now, at age 55, I was curious about what I had missed.

My interest was strictly one of personal enrichment. The thought that this venture would push me into a whole new career was the furthest thing from my mind.

I was accepted into several programs but chose to attend the School of Sacred Ministries, a small part-time religious studies and interfaith divinity program in

Bucks County.

For close to three years, I had a great adventure, and one that was made all the more interesting by my fellow travelers.

The other students included a psychologist who wanted to learn more about her clients' various religious backgrounds. A molecular biologist wanted to learn how she could give back; she went on to become a hospice chaplain.

An engineer, who for decades had been informally counseling fellow AA members, wanted to take the next step, even though he wasn't sure exactly what that would be. He chose to become an ordained minister at the end of the

program.

An artist wanted to explore her own spirituality in more depth. Others knew up front that they wanted to become ordained ministers so that they could marry people, do baby blessings, and the like.

In the first part of the program, we learned from dozens of men and women about their particular faith traditions. We also were asked to attend a wide variety of religious services.

I went to services at a synagogue, a mosque, a Baptist church, a Baha'i temple and a Quaker Meeting, among others. My comfort zone was definitely challenged, and I was forced to grow in

ways I had not foreseen.

In the second part of the program, we studied numerous topics relative to helping others. A weekend retreat dedicated to hospice, bereavement and grieving led me to become a hospice respite volunteer.

While I had been in finance and marketing all of my life, and was now a business writer, I found I loved working with families and patients who were facing some of the most challenging times of their lives.

But it wasn't until last spring, when we had a lecture on Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE), that it occurred to me that I might have

found a new avocation. Months of research and soul searching later, I applied to several inner-city Philadelphia hospitals for my first 450-hour unit of CPE, and was accepted.

So here I am, almost 58, about to start the most challenging, exciting chapter of my life. I hope to write about my experiences in future issues of the Herald.

The religious studies program and interfaith divinity School of Sacred Ministries is accepting applications now for its next class, which starts in September. Visit SchoolofSacredMinistries.org for information.

Presbyterian church releases newly published history

The First Presbyterian Church of Titusville (N.J.) has released the first edition of "Shall We Gather...175 Years Along the Delaware," a narrative history of the Titusville congregation and the community that it has called home since 1838.

"Titusville Presbyterian is celebrating its 175th anniversary this year," said the Rev. Will Shurley, pastor of the church.

"We did not want to move boldly into the future without taking this opportunity to reflect deeply on where we have been and how that has shaped who we have become. 'Shall We Gather' tells our story, I think, with honesty, humor, and most of all, love for the people who have formed Titusville—the Presbyterian church and the commu-

nity—into what it is today."

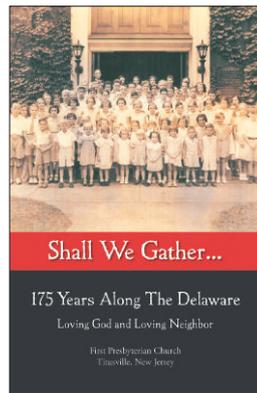
Written by church member James J. Dawson, "Shall We Gather" was produced after nearly a year-and-a-half of members and former pastoral interns transcribing and collating 175 years of primary source documents from the church's archives.

"Presbyterians have had a tendency to retain meticulous records," said Dawson. "As we delved deeper into what we came to discover was a real treasure trove of 175 years of hand-written minutes and ledgers, it became clear that our church's story was extraordinary—not because of any single major historical event, but because what happened here was and is so emblematic of churches and their home communities across America.

"The story in the history of this church and community is a microcosm of the larger story in the history of the American religious landscape, which has given so much of that which has been woven into the fabric of our nation."

The stories told in "Shall We Gather" will allow readers to hear voices such as Joseph Titus, the primary developer of the village of Titusville, N.J., as he decided to deed considerable land within his new subdivision for a new Presbyterian congregation and parochial school, which became the first educational institution in the village.

Readers will be able to see the often-times messy intersection of public morality and personal val-



ues as they converged during various periods in the life of the congregation.

Copies of the book will be available at the following events: at the church at the May 4 Annual Titusville Yard Sale; the May 11 Spirit of the Jerseys History Fair in Washington Crossing State Park; the May 18 Pennington Day celebration in Pennington; the June 1 "Titusville Heritage Day Festival"; and at the church after the July 4 Titusville Fourth of July Parade.

The church suggests a donation of \$20 per copy and \$10 for a companion, commemorative coffee mug. For information, visit titusvillechurch.org or call 609-737-1385.

The church is located at 48 River Drive, Titusville, N.J., one mile north of the Washington Crossing Bridge and six miles south of Lambertville, N.J.

Professor discusses Biblical contrasts

The DPC Forum at Doylestown Presbyterian Church offers its final program of the season at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 21 in the Celtic Cross room.

Dr. Jason Radine, assistant professor at Moravian College will speak on "Biblical Studies on the Continent: The Contrasts Between Biblical Studies in Europe and America."

He will discuss the pursuit of the historical background behind the Bible and its composition in



DR. JASON RADINE

Europe and the United States. He will explore the differences and the reasons for them, as they can be found in the intellectual and cultural traits of America in contrast with Europe,

especially Germany.

Professor Radine will take a broad view through the history of biblical scholarship in Europe and America, bringing matters up-to-date with some experiences from his recent sabbatical research in Germany.

Doylestown Presbyterian Church, located at 127 E. Court St., Doylestown, is wheelchair accessible at the Mechanics Street entrance.

For information, contact the church office at 215-348-3531 or dpc@dtownpc.org.

HAPPENINGS

Newtown church installs new pastor

Pastor Dave (The Rev. David O. Maddox, II) will be installed as the pastor of Ascension Lutheran Church, 900 Washington Crossing Road, Newtown, at 3 p.m., Sunday, May 5.

The celebrant will be Pastor Patricia Davenport from the Southeast Pennsylvania Synod (SEPA). The preacher for worship will be Pastor Gwendolyn Johnson-Bond. A reception follows the installation.

New Hope church holds two celebrations

St. Philip's Episcopal Church, 10 Chapel Road, New Hope, celebrates Rogation Sunday, or Christian Earth Day, with special Masses at 8:15 and 10:15 a.m. May 5.

There will be an introduction to the church's outdoor labyrinth after the 10:15 a.m. Mass. The labyrinth is copied from the Ravenna Basilica. It is used as a tool for prayer and reflection.

The outdoor labyrinth is open to the public everyday as a place of prayer and peace for all spiritual paths.

The church celebrates the Feast of the Ascension, 40 days after Easter, with an outdoor Mass at the church at 7 p.m. Thursday, May 9. All are welcome. For information, visit stphilipsnewhope.org.

Film shown at Bethlehem center

Spiritual Directors of Greater Lehigh Valley hosts Spirituality and InSPIral, 7 to 9 p.m., Monday, May 6, featuring the film, "Humanity Ascending, Humanity's Great Shift to the Age of Conscious Evolution," starring Barbara Marx Hubbard.

The film will be shown at St. Francis Center for Renewal, 395 Bridle Path Road, Bethlehem.

For information, visit StFrancisCenterForRenewal.Org.

Lambertville, N.J., church presents Bach Sunday

Saint Andrew's Episcopal Church, York and Main streets, Lambertville, N.J., presents an all J.S. Bach Sunday at the regularly scheduled liturgy at 9:30 a.m. Sunday, May 5.

Accompanied by organ, harpsichord and a baroque orchestra, the parish choir and soloists will sing "Christe Eleison" and "Dona Nobis Pacem" from Mass in B Minor, BWV 232, Du stellst, mein Jesu und Ach, es bleibt in meiner Liebe Lauter Unvollkommenheit! from Cantata #77, BWV 77.

At 4 p.m., all are welcome to the monthly Evensong featuring music by Charles Wood, Robert Lehman, William Byrd, Thomas Atwood Walmisley and Edgar Bainton.

For information, call 609-397-2425, or e-mail standrews@snip.net.

Doylestown Church celebrates anniversary, new book

St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 301 N. Main St., Doylestown celebrates the 50th anniversary of the nave on Sunday, May 5 during services at 8 and 9:30 a.m. There will be no additional services that day.

The church's many volunteers will be honored during those services.

Sunday will be the first opportunity to purchase a new book titled, "Creating A Vision - Building For Mission." Church archivist E. Scott Teschner wrote the book, and Curtis Cowgill provided the color photos. Copies are \$15.

For information, call 215-348-4004.

Bristol
Yardley
Solebury
Newtown
Makfield
Plumstead
Fallington
Doylestown
Buckingham
Wrightstown
Southampton
Lehigh Valley
Quakertown, NJ
Middletown (Langhorne)

**Quakerism,
Always Honoring
Human Dignity
and Respecting
Human Rights**

Contact Holly Olson
215-860-9747
hollybcq@verizon.net

Worship Directory

SALEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Sunday, May 5, 2013
The Rev. Dr. Tyson Frey, Sr., Pastor
9:30 am Worship / Communion / Sunday School
10:30 am Fellowship and Refreshments
Nursery Service Available
Faith@5 - Engaging Contemporary Worship, Saturdays at 5 pm
186 E. Court St., Doylestown • www.DoylestownSalemUCC.org
215.348.9860
GOD'S LOVE EXPERIENCED AND EXPRESSED

Christian Science
Worship & Sunday School
29 N Church St,
Doylestown 18901
csdoylestown.org
215-348-2150
Sun. Service/Sun. School - 10:30am
Wed. Testimony Meeting - 7:30pm
CHILDCARE PROVIDED

St. John the Evangelist
Anglican Church
1150 Bristol Road
Churchville, PA
(Jesus Focus Ministry)
215-396-1970
8:00 a.m. Holy Communion
9:30 a.m. Holy Communion
(With Morning Prayer 2nd & 4th Sunday)
Sunday School 10:30 a.m.
The Rev. Mark E. Rudolph, Rector
www.toknowchrist.org