

- OPEN HEARTS
- OPEN MINDS
- OPEN DOORS

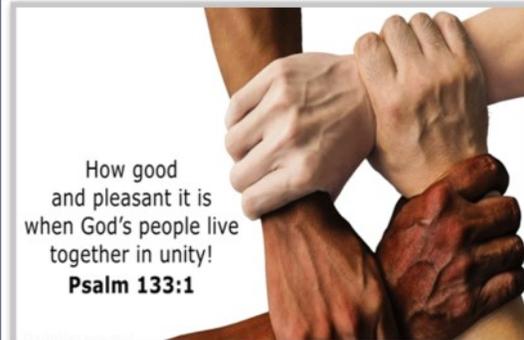
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the HIGHLANDER

Volume 12 Issue 3

May/June 2021



Dear Bergen Highlands Families, Spring is here!

Flowers bloom and the grass turns greener each day. Although we are still living in the midst of a pandemic, I am so grateful for each of you who stands strong in Christ. Each Sunday, more families are coming back to in-person worship and we are so happy to see you.

For those of you who worship online, we always thank you for being the church in your place. We pray for a hopeful future when we can all get together to praise the Lord and share the love of God with one another soon.

May and June always reminds us of how important it is to have a family, as we will celebrate Mother's day and also Father's day. I am sure many of you celebrate these days with your family but we also want to remember those who do not have a family near them. No matter how big or small a family we have, I want all of you to remember, we are a family in Christ. God called us a family through the love of Jesus Christ and called us to live together in unity.

Just like Psalm 133:1 says, "How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!" In this season of family gatherings and celebrations, I hope you remember we are here for you and we care for you. I am so grateful to have a family like you here at Bergen Highlands United Methodist Church.

As a family, we not only take care of one another but we can bring God's love to many people in the world. With many people's support, we were able to serve the Spring Valley Homeless Mission last month and we hope to continue to serve people in need. Be ready to join us, in any way you can, to do God's mission together and never stop worshipping God wherever you are.

We will resume our strawberry festival and best stuff sale this year. If possible, please come and give your hands for our missions. If you cannot participate in them physically, please pray for our events and help us with donations and spreading the word! We hope our missions continue and stand stronger each day to shine God's light in every corner of our community.

If you need a visitation and/or a prayer request, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for being a family and I love you so much!

In Christ,

Rev. Miso Park



When one's enemy becomes one's neighbor

Commentary by the Rev. Constance Hastings

April 5, 2021 | JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (UM News)



*The Rev. Constance Hastings
Photo courtesy of
the Rev. Constance Hastings.*

In the 1960s, my parents owned a motel in Wildwood, N.J. When I was only 7 years old, a friend and I decided one day we knew how to swim and went to the beach on our own. Not that we told anyone; it was the day and age when you sent your kids out the door and they came home when it got dark.

On Wildwood beaches, you walk a long way to get to the water and then a long way to get past the waves to swim. Going out beyond the breakers, we got caught in the undertow. I remember paddling hard and looking toward the lifeguard on the beach, but we were too little and too far away to be seen. We were in literal deep trouble.

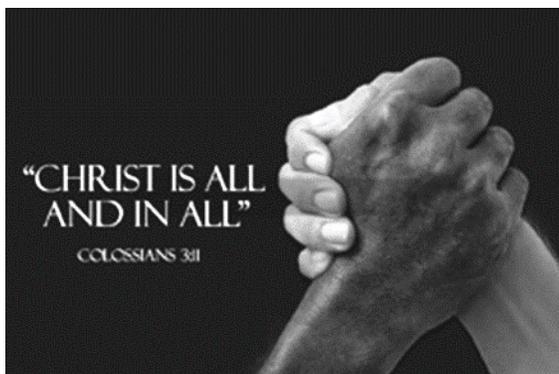
And then I felt a hand grab my skinny little arm, lifting my body up and over the waves and placing me on solid ground. A deep voice ordered, “Get back on the beach.”

This person saved my life. But you also must understand this became a traumatic memory that I repressed for decades. Psychologists will tell you children have the ability to protect their frail psyches by repressing trauma. Yet those memories will return and as adults, persons need to examine and wrestle with the experience.

Realizing how my life nearly ended wasn’t the source of my trauma. My trauma was that I was absolutely mortified that the man who saved my life was Black.

Growing up, I don’t remember being told that Black people were bad; it happened in a more subtle way. My parents’ business practice was clear: We did not rent our rooms to Black people. When they came to the motel office, I learned to say with a straight face that we had no vacancies or the room rental price would be ridiculously high.

But conflicting my mind also was that my father ran two bars in Wilmington, Delaware, on the poorer east side. His only patrons were Black, and I remember him telling whites they could not be served there. Two businesses and two policies based on color. That’s how I was raised, being taught that Black persons were not the same as those with a skin color like mine. Where they were not welcome in one place, they put food on my table from another.



By saving my life, this man reached across a boundary that intuitively I knew was not allowed. However, the racism I’d learned left me mortified rather than grateful.

It was around 40 years later that this repressed memory returned. When it did, I discovered how fraudulent my feelings were.

I carried within me the ability to be prejudiced in the worst way, to build my esteem in paternalistic and self-serving ways on those who lacked the opportunities I take for granted due to white privilege. God took me on a path of sorting out what I should understand of this memory and how I needed to live out the grace that was afforded me in not only saving my life, but in saving my life for a purpose that eventually

“When One’s Enemy...” Continued from pg 2

was ordained of God as a United Methodist deacon called to Word, Service, Compassion and Justice.

When I tell this story to persons who are white, I usually get all kinds of excuses for my shameful reaction. It was in the middle of the civil rights conflict, I was too young to understand and separate his actions from what I was taught, and I was taught well.

But from persons of color, I do not get any excuses. I know anger and realize, for this, I deserve a good measure of hate. Eventually, someone helped me understand that for whites I am seen as an individual in conflict, but for Blacks I am a product of racism to the fullest degree and how it twists persons. Likely both are right in their own way, but regardless, in God’s eyes, what I felt was not acceptable.

The parable of the Good Samaritan has been a restorative source for me. I learned to understand what it means to see one’s enemy as neighbor and to love as God would have us love. Some have told me this man — my Samaritan, my enemy and my neighbor — was an angel. Sending an angel to not only save my life but save me for a sacred journey is certainly within the realm of God.

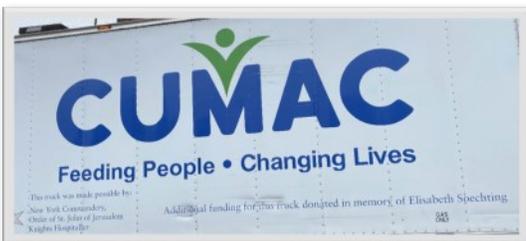
Honestly, I prefer to believe he really was just a man whose arm extended and reached beyond his heritage of slavery and oppression, who put aside those who would keep Blacks from sleeping in the same motel rooms as whites, whose life daily had to bear unfair burdens and whose faith mirrored the teaching of Jesus.

Instead, he became my neighbor and reached his arm into a margin of grace, such that a child like me could know a love of Jesus that changes the world with a love in which one’s enemy becomes one’s neighbor.

Hastings is a retired United Methodist deacon, a blogger and author of the upcoming book [“The Trouble With Jesus.”](#)

BHUMC Helping Feed the Homeless

In March BHUMC delivered 217 lbs. of food to the CUMAC food pantry in Paterson.



Last month Bergen Highlands served 80 meals to the homeless in Spring Valley on April 15th at the Spring Valley UMC.

Dinner was Chicken Pot Pie, Biscuits, Fruit, and 160 cookies.

Strawberry Festival

Saturday – June 12

12 noon—5pm Rain or Shine



Handpicked New Jersey Strawberries

Eat In or Take Out Strawberry Shortcake Only

A few vendors have been invited!



Masks Are Mandatory.

Although this will be a smaller Strawberry Festival than we normally have (no grilling hamburgers or hot dogs) there is still a need for as many helpers as possible.



- NEEDED:**
- | | |
|------------|----------------------|
| Pickers | Slicers |
| Decorators | Bakers (pound cakes) |
| Servers | Cleaners |

This year's **Silent Auction** will be a collection of new items that have been donated to the Best Stuff sale. If you would like to donate something you have or will purchase from your favorite local retailer (we're trying to support our community), please, let Matt Mitovich know or call the church and leave a message.

We are in the process of planning the best way to keep everyone safe and socially distant.

For more information call: 201-327-3960

Surprise!!! We're Also Having the BEST STUFF SALE!!!

Saturday 10 am ~ 2pm
June 26



Since we share our space with another congregation, we can not begin to accept donations of items for the sale until June 13. **This is VERY important!**

We have tried to plan a safe and yet fun Best Stuff Sale. There will be new rules:

- ⇒ Masks are mandatory! Temps taken.
- ⇒ Limited number of people in the building.
- ⇒ Movement is in a one way direction, the cashier will be at the back door.
- ⇒ The back meeting room will be utilized to spread out the people

Great things to donate:

- Clean, useable kitchenware
- Crystal, collectables, etc.
- Small furniture that will fit into a car (we can't deliver if sold)
- Electronics that work
- Children's toys (must have all their parts)
- Jewelry
- Clothing accessories (belts, scarves, gently used shoes)
- Clean Linen
- Gardening tools, equipment
- Workshop tools
- Sports equipment
- Any new or gently used items
- A used car that runs wouldn't be bad, either!

As we do every year, we will need helpers for every part of this event even if all you do is sit and watch over things to make sure it runs smoothly. First of all we will need pricers and sorters. Then on the day of the event; watchers, helpers and cashiers. We will supply you with gloves for any job you volunteer to do.

If you have any suggestions or questions, please call the church at 201.327.3960 or speak to Pastor Miso or Pat Hiler. Thank you, anything you can help with is appreciated!

Harmony at Home by Lourie Modrzejewski

Families can do amazing things when they work together! To Solve this problem, use the color clues to write the letters in order in each blank. You will discover the words of Philippians 2:2—a great reminder of how we can cooperate in Christ.

This article was taken from the May 2019 edition of *Pockets for kids who love God* The Upper Room Magazine

Make my joy complete: be of the

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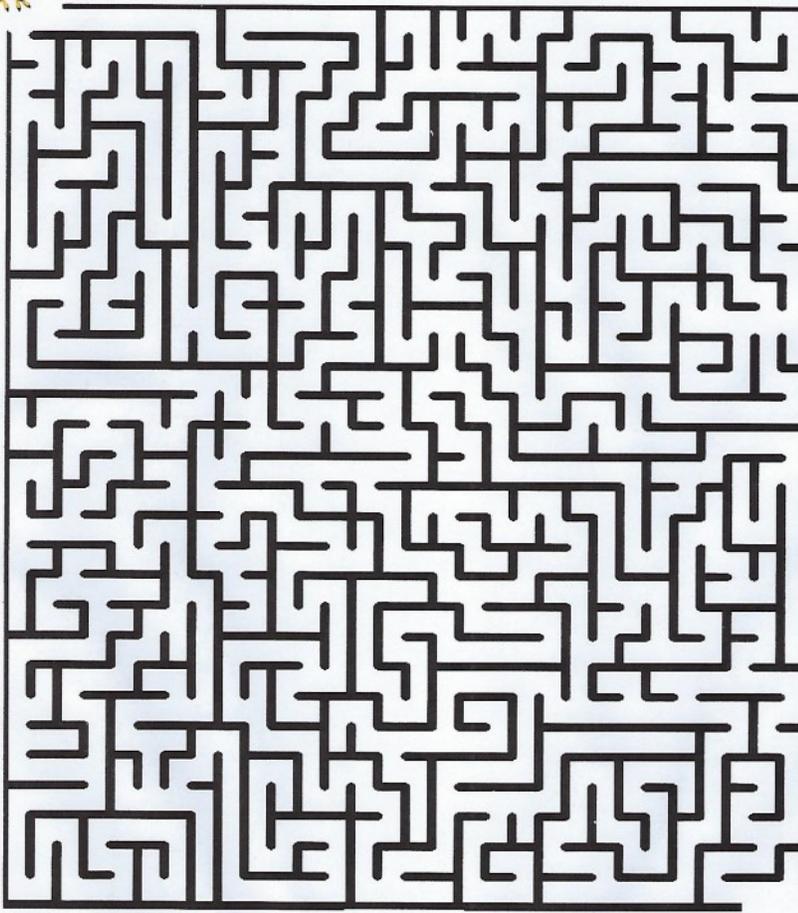
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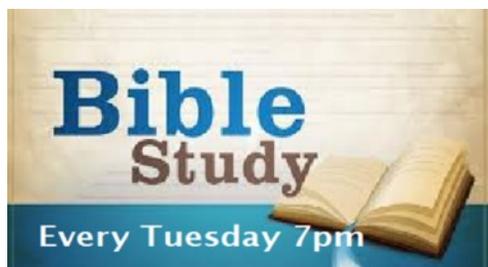
Help these kids get down to...



You Are A-Maze-ing!

...their parents and find their way home.



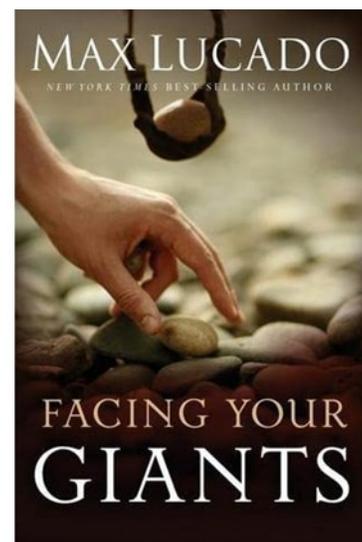


2021 Bible Study

Tuesdays 7pm

All are invited to attend.

May 4	Chapters 1-3. Facing Your Giant
May 11	Chapters 4-6. Dry Seasons
May 18	Chapters 7-9. Slump Guns
May 25	Chapters 10-12. Strongholds
June 1	Chapters 13-16. Tough Promises
June 8	Chapters 17-19. Take Goliath Down!



Important Dates to Remember

May 9—Mother's Day.

May 15—Church Cleanup Day

May 23—Pentecost

May 24-25—Annual Church Conference on line

May 31—Memorial Day.

June 11—Strawberry Picking; meet at the church at 8:30am.

June 12—**63 Annual Strawberry Festival: 12 noon—5pm. Eat In or Take Out**

June 26—Best Stuff Sale; 10am—2pm.

July 4—Beginning of Summer Worship Hour; 9:15am.

Due to COVID we have decided to postpone VBS till the summer of 2022. It is difficult for our children to stay safely separated during our program and we don't want anyone to possibly become ill. Hopefully, we'll see you in 2022 when we become...

Knights of North Castle!

In the mean time, stay safe and stay healthy.



New Happenings Around BHUMC



A new garage door for the Parsonage was badly needed. Finally, after many weeks of waiting, the parts and supplies that were ordered came in and were installed.



Upgrading the lighting in the church has become essential not only for looks but also for safety. Everything is so much brighter. Phase 2 is almost finished and the Narthex completed. Next will be the lighting in Fellowship Hall. Thanks to Matt Mitovich for his tireless work with the lighting crew, working out all the problems and keeping the job moving ahead.



There are many large and small projects that are needed to be done around the church; cleaning, gardening, small repairs, etc. If you are interested in helping out your church and volunteering just ask Pastor Miso or Ken Gabbert for suggestions.

Church Clean-Up

May 15th 9:30am~

Please come and lend a hand. Bring your gardening tools or cleaning supplies. The church needs a little sprucing up. We're expecting company on June 12th for the **Strawberry Festival** and we want to look our best!

Come when you can, stay as long as you can. We appreciate your help.

Annual Church Conference



22nd Annual Conference Session | May 24-25, 2021

The Annual Church Conference is a yearly session for clergy and lay members to worship, learn about programs and conduct the business of the United Methodists of Greater New Jersey. You are welcome to participate in this live event as a non-voting member through streaming from your home on YouTube. Links will be coming soon. If you are interested in watching, please contact the church via email.



"Even though the last meeting was an eternity, Sam, we'll continue to call this report the minutes."

Young People Moving On!

Nate Rothenberg will be moving on from Cherry Lane Elementary School this June to Suffern Middle School in the fall.

Emily Kim will be moving up from Cavallini Middle School and will be attending Northern Highlands HS in the fall.

Richard Dressel will begin attending Pascack Hills HS this fall after moving up from Fieldstone Middle School.



David Rothenberg is graduating from Suffern HS this year and will attend NYU in the fall to study at the Steinhardt School of Music.

Eitan Rothenberg is graduating from Suffern HS this year and will begin his studies in the sciences at NYU.

Julia Broadbent has successfully finished her studies at the University of New Hampshire and will be graduating this spring.

Eva Rothenberg is graduating from Emory University in Atlanta and is currently working for CNN.



'Get Them Talking' From Ask UMC.org



The Bible tells us to build each other up. (Thessalonians 5:11) We thank God for the people in our lives, both nearby and at a distance, who encourage us.

Photo from Casa Linda United Methodist Church, Dallas, Texas, USA, 2018, courtesy of United Methodist Communications with Canva design.

Get Them Talking is a series of resources to help families start conversations about issues of faith.

Scripture

"So continue encouraging each other and building each other up, just like you are doing already." *1 Thessalonians 5:11, CEB*

Reflection

All of our devices—tablets, phones, gaming systems, computers—need good connections to work best. Sometimes those connections are wired, and we can see the connection. Other times the connections are invisible—WiFi, Bluetooth and more. When the connections fail, the device simply doesn't function well.

The Bible tells us it is best when people have good connections too. We all need people in our lives who encourage us and build us up. Some of those connections are obvious and visible, like our family members. Others may be a bit harder to see, like our connections to those who live far away, but they are just as important.

As we have benefited from the encouragement of others, we should be people who build others up.

Get them talking

- What's the worst part of losing electricity during a storm or other outage?
- One of your connections may be a best friend. Why is that person your best friend, your closest connection?
- Is there someone who you don't see often (maybe they live far away) who you feel connected to?
- The Bible tells us to encourage each other and build each other up. Who does that for you?

Who can you encourage and build up?

Prayer

Dear God, thank you for connecting me to people who build me up. Amen.

Activity

Do a family encouragement circle. Have each person take a turn being quiet while the others each say one thing they appreciate about her/him.

Have an idea for a Get Them Talking topic? Let us know. This devotional was first posted on April 2021.

Isaiah 41:10

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

(NIV)

THE
POWER
OF PRAYER

Prayers for Our People...**A Prayer for those in pain today**

Lord God, whose Son, Jesus Christ, understood people's fear and pain before they spoke of them, we pray for those in hospital; surround the frightened with your tenderness;

give strength to those in pain; hold the weak in your arms of love, and give hope and patience to those who are recovering; we ask this through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen

Christine McMullen, Mother's Union



Oh, praise the Lord, for he has listened to my pleadings! He is my strength, my shield from every danger. I trusted in him and he helped me. Joy rises in my heart until I burst out in songs of praise to him.

Psalms 28:6-7

Important BHUMC Dates for 2021

**Bergen Highlands
United Methodist Church**

318 West Saddle River Road
Upper Saddle River, NJ 07458

Church: 201-327-3960
Parsonage: 201-934-1618
bergenhighlands@optonline.net

www.bergenhighlandsumc.org

Join Us!



Jan. 6 – Epiphany

Feb. 7-Valentine Packages -for college students home or away

Feb. 16 - Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper at your own home

Feb. 17 – Ash Wednesday Service; 7:30pm; BHUMC

March 28 -Palm Sunday Service

April 1 -Holy Thursday Service; 7:30pm

April 4 - Easter Sunday Service; 10:15am

May 9 - Mother's Day

May 15 – Church Clean Up

May – BHUMC in the USR Memorial Day Parade TBA

June – Confirmation

June 11 – Strawberry Picking, 8:30am.

June 12 – Strawberry Festival, Rain or Shine

June 20 – Father's Day

June 26 – Best Stuff Sal3; 10am-2pm

July 4 – Summer Worship begins- New service hours 9:15am

Aug. – VBS postponed till next summer

Sept. 5 – Back to Fall Service Hour; 10:15am

Oct. TBA – Kids in the Kitchen; 6:30pm

Oct. 3 – World Communion Sunday Luncheon

Nov – Hanging of the Greens TBA

Nov. – Begin drop off for Toy Sale TBA

Dec. – End of Toy Sale drop off Tba

Dec. 24- Christmas Eve Service

Dec. 25- Christmas Day

- **Adult Bible Study**-Tuesdays at 7:00; call for more info 201-327-3960
- **Adult Choir**-TBA
- **Children's and Youth Choirs**-TBA
- **BHUMC Youth Group**- TBA
- **Executive Leadership Team** –as needed after church, Contact person-Pat Hiler or Pastor Miso Park 201-327-3960



Put these dates on YOUR calendar!

Dates and times can occasionally change, for more info call 201-327-3960, thanks.