

West Swamp News

Volume 6, Issue 3

April/May '17

Why Knot! Week goes beyond goal

Inside this issue:

From the Pastor's Desk	2
Clash of the Church Choirs	3
Haiti Hurricane Relief Update	5
Why Knot! Pictures	6
Kid's Page	7

FYI

- The PA Relief Sale is Mar. 31 & Apr. 1 at the PA Farm Show Complex in Harrisburg.
- Men-O-Lan Summerfest is May 28. Do you have something to donate to the Benefit Auction?

When the 300th Anniversary Committee came up with the idea to knot 300 comforters to celebrate our 300th year, the Tuesday morning knotters were a little skeptical. After all, the highest total for a Why! Knot Week was 211 back in 2010 and the lowest total of 166 was just last year. Was this idea just plain crazy or could we actually do it?

We did it! And more!

The 2017 total is 336 comforters. And as of this printing, almost all of them have been delivered to MCC's Ephrata Warehouse.

So how was this possible? Only by the preparation, dedication and hard work of many people.

Don Rosenberger, Carl Raub and Lynne Rush made sure it was well advertised

in newspapers, church bulletins and even the event screen at Quaker-town National Bank.

Dorothy Detweiler and Loretta Gilmore worked throughout the fall to bundle tops, backs and batting and by December 2016 had enough comforters ready for the event.

The Men's Bible Study group met in February to give some much needed maintenance to

stands, boards and chairs.

Joyce Rosenberger and the Tuesday morning knotters organized supplies.

Emily Rush convinced the Bluffton University SERVE Club to make Why Knot! Week part of their spring break service project.

For more pictures and stats of the week, go to page 6.



At 11:40 am on Saturday, the 300th comforter was finished. Showing it off are all the people who were present for this historic moment. (Picture taken by Nancy Jacobs)

Pastor's Corner: Random surprises



*If you are filled with light,
with no dark corners,
then your whole life
will be radiant,
as though a floodlight
was filling you with light.”
Luke 11: 36 (NLT)*

I was at mother's a month ago checking out her yard. It was still winter and I had on my heavy coat and gloves as I walked around the house. There were bird feeders to fill, pansies trying to stay alive in her window boxes, and daffodils in bud trying hard to miss the frost.

And then I saw it – this gorgeous little miniature daffodil in full bloom as if it was growing by some inner spring light. Not only was it in full bloom but it had pushed itself up through hard dirt next to the gravel path. I marveled how it got there, how it ever made its way up through the ground, and how it grew in such chilly air.

Life is full of wonders like that. Random surprises that suddenly appear in the middle of nowhere if we have our eyes and hearts wide open. Surprises that bring light into our dreary days, warmth and brightness into the darker troubles of life.

I'm seeing a lot of them these days. I watch the bright red cardinal sitting on the branch out-

side my window. I notice the light green of the willow trees just starting to leaf out as I drive down Interstate 81. And I smile at the feral kitty that lives in the barn next door when she sneaks onto my deck to sprawl out in the sunshine between patches of dirty snow. Or the purple crocus peeping through the snow, telling us that spring is here even though it's 25 degrees.

God tells us we are to be like that too – a bright spot in someone's day, a random surprise to those we come into contact with, a floodlight of warmth to those in need. God even calls us “children of the light” or “children of the resurrection.”

And spring is as good a time as any to notice the extra light and to become radiant ourselves. It is a good time to walk the journey to Easter that is the celebration of new life, of light over darkness, and a whole new world of random surprises as we live the Jesus Way.

~ Pastor Kathy

Worship: Holy Week services

Palm Sunday, Apr. 9: Does Jesus enter Jerusalem as the Conquering Messiah or as Humble Slave? The palm procession draws us farther along the road to the cross.

Maundy Thursday, Apr. 13: At 6:30 we will share together a simple meal and communion, then travel from Gethsemane to the death of Christ.

Community Good Friday Service, Apr. 14: Join pastors from the Quakertown Ministerium, including Pastor Kathy, as they explore the emotions of the Passion Story. The service is from noon to 1 pm at First UCC on Park Avenue and Fourth Street in Quakertown.

Easter Dawn, Apr. 16: Come at 7 am for our joint service with

Swamp to explore what happened “Early in the Morning.” Light breakfast to follow.

Easter Worship: In Matthew 28, the women leave for the tomb with grief and disillusionment and return with joy. Our 10:30 am service includes music from Chimin' In and Joyful Noise, plus the traditional “Hallelujah Chorus.”

DISCO: Youth auction on April 1—No fooling!

The Youth & Junior Youth may be small, but their church support group is not! The youth auction is always an exciting, well-attended event and you won't want to miss it.

Dinner service begins at 5:30 pm. Deb Stevenback heads up the kitchen crew and has a sign up sheet on the bulletin board for food donations to keep costs down.

The auction begins at 6:30. What will be this year's big item? Charlene's sticky buns? A Farm to Table Harvest

Meal at the Moyers? An Eli Mood original welded sculpture? A piece of history—the 300th comforter knotted at Why Knot! Week?

Other items donated so far are 2 sets of 5 reversible burp cloths/bibs (pictured right); shoo fly pie coupons; a trip for two to Philadelphia for Philly Pops Jazz concert; a baby stroller; comforters; a crocheted afghan; gift baskets; gift cards for Spors and Red Lobster.

Items we expect to have are baked

goods, more dinners and events, service coupons and a lot of miscellaneous.



10th Clash of the Church Choirs Concert

The 10th Annual Clash of the Church Choirs: Sing for LIFE event is slated for April 30th at 3:00pm at West Swamp Mennonite Church. Three local church choirs from different denominations will be singing to raise money for the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life of Quakertown.

Choirs from West Swamp Mennonite Church of Quakertown, Still Small Voice from Christ Church of the UCC of Trumbauersville, and St. John's UCC of Richlandtown will all sing in friendly competition to raise donations for the upcoming May

6th Quakertown Relay for Life. Our year-to-date amount raised is an amazing \$ 31,697.

The concert will end with a congregational hymn sing and a finale song performed by the combined choirs, directed by Lynne Rush of West Swamp.

The concert audience votes for their favorite choir with their donation to Relay for Life. The choir that raises the most funds that day will be presented with a beautiful, hand-painted silk banner to display in their home church for the year. The banner was created by West Swamp member Sue Shelly.

We will host this year's event. This will be our final concert: as West Swamp celebrates 300 years as a congregation and 10 years of Sing for LIFE concerts, we will look back with joy as we made a difference by supporting our local fight against cancer. Admission is free. Light refreshments will be served following the concert, while the donations are counted and the winner determined. Come enjoy this festive afternoon of Church Choir voices and support our local Relay for Life!

~ Barb Moyer

Community Easter Egg Hunt

Our Easter Egg Hunt for children up to age 11 is Saturday, Apr. 8 at 10 am. Join us for story time, songs, egg hunt, refreshments and fellowship. Be sure to invite your friends and neighbors

—flyers are available to pass on. As always, we count on you for donations of individually wrapped candy or money for other supplies. There is a con-

tainer in the library for candy donations; please bring your candy by Sunday, Apr. 2. If you would like to help fill eggs, contact Barb Moyer.



Mission: Progress report on our 300 Extra Hour challenge

Time flies when you are having fun. 139 extra hours of service have been recorded by West Swampers as of Sunday, Mar. 19. Over 100 hours of that were recorded during Why Knot! Week alone.

Some upcoming service opportunities:

On **Apr. 20** is a Ten Thousand Villages service trip to Browns-town. If you have never gone and always wanted to, now would be the perfect time to go.

Camp Men-O-Lan is having its spring work day on **Apr. 22**, 8:30 to 3. Lunch is provided by camp but they need to know how many to feed, so be sure to sign-up on the 300 Extra Hours bulletin board if you plan to be there for lunch. Come and go as you need, but camp is requesting that all volunteers be 12 years old and above.

The Men's Bible Study fund-



Members of the Men's Bible Study group remove thread from roller chair wheels.

raiser breakfast is **Apr. 29**. This spring they will be benefiting the summer programs of Crossroads Community Center in Philadelphia. The Bible study group does a fine job, but if you would like to help out in some way, let them know; they need a break to eat themselves sometime.

With all those opportunities and some ideas of your own, I'm thinking by the time for the next

newsletter update, we could very well be half way to our goal for the year. Be on the lookout for service opportunities coming up on the big 300th anniversary celebration weekend June 23-25. We hope to form a couple of assembly lines to put together MCC grocery bags and prison kits that Saturday. (Details to come.) Mark your calendar

now, so you won't miss out on the fun.

Be sure to check out the "300 Hours Clock" on the bulletin board. I hope to keep that up to date each week. A really big "**shout out to the youth group**" for designing and putting up the 300 Extra Hours bulletin board. Well done, good and faithful servants.

~ Rod Rush

Stewardship: Waiting for the real spring

As February was perhaps the mildest ever in this region, thoughts of spring projects began to dance in our heads— then March arrived.

In February, the Stewardship Commission began planning for those general improvement projects we put forth at the annual business meeting. The common theme however was: we need to wait until spring arrives to schedule things like the carpet deep cleaning, sanctuary stair-

well/ vestibule painting, and outside stucco work.

So far in 2017 we have taken care of a couple small electrical and basement heating issues as we keep our fingers crossed there are no big breakdowns like we experienced with the boiler last year. One big bonus from the mild February was that Mike Olimpo and his son found a nice day and got up on the roof to replace a number of slates and make repairs to the spouting on

the church and the pavilion. What a blessing to have Mike literally looking over us!

As for the land swap, Troy Shelly has taken our sketch plan to the Milford Township manager and so we are now waiting for a formal proposal from the township.

As we usher out winter and welcome in spring we look forward to moving ahead on our to do list.

~ Randy Rush

300th Anniversary Hymn Sing event

On Sunday, May 7 at 6:30 pm the Anniversary Committee and Worship Commission will host a “Celebrate in Song” music event.

Do you have a favorite song? Is it a hymn from the old blue hymn-book? A song we sing from the screen? A new song you’ve grown to love?

Help us choose songs by filling out a “Favorite God-song” form (found in the Fellowship Hall) and putting in Louise Butcher or Lynne Rush’s mailbox. We’ll use as many as we can at the event.

We’re hoping to highlight some of West Swamp’s special musical talent and our history, so there

may be some surprises in store. We’ll be tapping shoulders, but if you have an instrument you’d like to dust off and play, let the Worship Commission know.

Refreshments will be served at this “Hymn Sing Plus” celebration.

Update from Dame-Marie, Haiti

The following is excerpted from Pastor Bernard Sejour’s report of the Haitian Emergency Relief Effort coordinated by Solidarity & Harmony Church. If you would like to see the full report, contact the church secretary.

You have been such a blessing for the people of Plonquette, Dame-Marie. Many have contributed with financial support, others with counsel and emotional support.

I have had a better glance of the impact of the first trip during the recent one on Tuesday, Jan. 17. The second one was also important because the aftermath of the tragedy remains; the local government has done nothing to even assist.

The aim of the second visit was to serve the community with a second round of alimentary kits. The southwest region of Haiti used to be self-sufficient in seafood products and other crops such as coffee, cocoa, breadfruits, plantains, yams, sugar cane and mangoes, that it was the granary of the rest of the country. But now, people are so in need of food

that they travel to the nation’s capitol and beyond to buy food.

[So] before leaving for Haiti, \$1000 was sent to Miami to buy food to send to the village in order to prepare kits for distribution when I got there. Although the provisions were sent 2 months prior to the trip, the disloyalty of the person in charge of the container has caused the delivery to be delayed and delivered after I returned to the US.

Thanks be to God, the money is not lost. The food has been kept in storage for the month of March so that I can be there for the distribution to avoid any backlash among members of the village.

Another aim of the visit was to have conversation with the people who have had all their belongings destroyed in the hurricane. [On Jan. 20 I met with more than 30 people who] gathered for a meeting that lasted 3 hours.

What pleases me most is the fact that the fishermen, heads of many households, have put

themselves together to launch an association called Association of Fishermen of Kalis (in Kreyol, Asosyasyon Peche Kalis or APK).

24 fisherman are registered. They solicit help to get back to work. Together we brainstormed the need and the cost. We agreed that the needs are bamboo nets, nylon cords, two boats with motors to be able to go into deep ocean where fishing is best, and coolers to preserve the catch. The total cost for the project is \$6,485. The SCCDA account has about \$2500, so another \$4000 is still needed.

Once the heads of the households are empowered and able to work, the whole family will be able to live in dignity and hope.



Why Knot! Week by the numbers (and pictures)



6 days
 72 hours
 10 knotting frames
 336 comforters
 288 adult size
 48 baby size
 at least 150 volunteers
 14 from Bluffton
 12 volunteers were there every day
 30 churches represented



Kudos to Seth Rice & Penn State's THON

Seth, along with 15,000 Penn State Students raised the whopping sum of \$10,045,478.44 for pediatric cancer research. Fund-raising culminated at their Feb. 17-19 dance marathon, where Seth participated as one of the dancers.

Kudos to Brent Rice, who played a big part on the THON Finance Committee. Well done, brothers!





west swamp
mennonite church

2501 Allentown Road
Quakertown, PA 18951

Phone: 215-536-7468
FAX: 215-536-7709

E-mail: westswamp1@verizon.net

Reflecting God in our
living, loving and serving



Birthdays

April

- 4/4 Bev Mellan
Kimberlee Opdyke
- 4/13 Karen Butenuth
Cara Riley
- 4/14 Luke Varela-Mood
- 4/15 Carl Kiesel
Kyleigh Opdyke
Edna Rosenberger
- 4/24 Jonathan Smith
- 4/25 Emma Richards
- 4/30 Troy Shelly

May

- 5/2 Kim Oliemuller
- 5/3 Rachel Speigle
- 5/5 Griffin Bear
Gretchen Isaak
Tim Scheetz
- 5/6 Stephen Shelly
- 5/7 Tanja Prosock
- 5/11 Jane Burkett
- 5/15 Lee Hallman
- 5/16 Donna Leber

May

- 2, 6:30 pm—Junior Youth
- 2, 7 pm—Community Com.
- 3, 6 pm—Chimin' In
- 4, 1 pm—Senior Luncheon
- 7, 6:30 pm—Hymn Sing
- 9, 7 pm—Mission Com.
- 11, 7 pm—Stewardship Com.
- 16, 6 pm—Joyful Noise Final
Practice and Party
- 16, 7 pm—Ministry Team
- 17, 6 pm—Chimin' In
- 20, 8 am—Men's Bible Study
- 21, 12 pm—Brunch
- 23, 7 pm—DISCO
- 23, 7 pm—Anniversary Com.
- 27—Men-O-Lan Summerfest
- 28—Graveside Memorial Service
- 28, 12 pm—Sunday Lunch Bunch
- 29—Memorial Day, Office closed

Calendar of Events

April

- 1, 5:30 pm—Youth Auction
- 4, 6:30 pm—Junior Youth
- 4, 7 pm—Community Com.
- 6, 1 pm—Senior Luncheon
- 6, 3:30 pm—Miller Blood Drive
- 8, 10 am—Community Egg Hunt
- 11, 6:30 pm—Junior Youth
- 11, 7 pm—Mission Com.
- 11, 7 pm—Stewardship Com.
- 12, 6 pm—Chimin' In
- 13, 6:30 pm—Maundy Thursday Serv.
- 14, 12 pm—Community Good Friday
- 15, 8 am—Men's Bible Study
- 16, 7 am—Easter Dawn Service
- 18, 6:30 pm—Junior Youth
- 18, 7 pm—Ministry Team
- 19, 6 pm—Chimin' In
- 20, 7 am—TTV Service Trip
- 23, 12 pm—Sunday Lunch Bunch
- 25, 7 pm—DISCO
- 25, 7 pm—Anniversary Committee
- 29, 7:30 am—Benefit Breakfast
- 30, 12 pm—Soup & Salad Lunch
- 30, 3 pm—Clash of the Church Choirs

Regular Activities

- Tuesdays, 8 am—Quilting & Knotting
- Wednesdays, 6 pm—Joyful Noise Choir
- Wednesdays, 7 pm—Adult Choir