

*A publication of the Strengthening Our Congregations Committee of the Presbytery of Carlisle*

**Kapow!** I was in the Presbytery office waiting for a group to assemble and I happened across a copy of the September/October issue of *Presbyterians Today* with post it notes attached. Post it notes mean “look here!” so I did. One article was by our own Presbytery’s **Chaplain Emily Morgan (Wilson College)** entitled “Blessed Are the Geeks.” She wrote of a connection she made with a matriarch of her family who was in hospice care. The connection with the woman in her last days was made bowling on a *Wii gaming system*.

The digital experience is usually the domain of geeks and nerds. Will Wheaton of the *Big Bang Theory* defines geeks and nerds as “a person who loves something to its greatest extent and then looks for other people who love it the same way, so they can celebrate loving it together.” Can we see a church application here? In celebrating and loving God together, sometimes we can use a little geekiness. We can embrace and welcome this

intergenerational group (we geeks know no age limitations) and introduce the church to what Emily calls “the fusion of digital and physical worlds.” Her suggestions include a “Pokémon GO” kind of event called “Spirit-go” sharing photos of where members see God in the world. Movie nights based on comic books could provoke discussions on faith based topics with discussions flowing over into tweets, texts, and email. For the exercise-hungry without a good venue, Emily proposes in-place walking groups, with a virtual path projected on a large screen. The younger computer savvy crowd can realize an important contribution in the church, with their unique skills. Engaging the “geeks and nerds” made in God’s image is a valuable connection. Emily concludes that although Jesus didn’t say “blessed are the geeks,” geeks may be a blessing to the church while sharing with both young and old their passion and gifts.



I found a great geeky idea being used by the **Presbyterian Church of Falling Spring** (Chambersburg). They have a YouTube channel. Members can subscribe to see what is happening in the church from their home computer, but it also is being projected and used for announcements in the contemporary worship service. Members/interested parties can subscribe and keep digitally connected. I found this all out via Facebook, which is the portal to all kinds of possibilities for churches. The pastors at **Mechanicsburg Presbyterian Church** regularly use Vimeo and Facebook to give enticing previews of sermons and coming events. There is a “Video Gallery” on their website to which viewers can subscribe and receive updates. Last time I checked, there were 90 videos ready for viewing. The **Presbytery of Carlisle** has a YouTube Channel too.



Last month’s issue of *SOCC IT TO ME* featured a lot of food related articles, which is spawning others of the same ilk. On Sunday, December 4, from 12-2 and 5-7, **Market Square (Harrisburg) Presbyterian Church**’s Fellowship Hall will transform into a

festive holiday bistro, reminiscent of the stylish French restaurant setting, serving hot, hearty, homemade soups; a variety of sumptuous breads, and a wide selection of delicious desserts- all for a worthy cause, to provide emergency services for people in need in Harrisburg. The homemade soups are not

your garden variety but will include: Savory Beef Barley; Dill Pickle Soup; Turkish Red Lentil & Carrot; Buffalo Chicken Chili; and Bistro specialty: Mandoo Duk Guk, a crowd-pleasing Korean soup with dumplings and chicken broth. Free parking is available in the Market Square Garage adjacent to the church, 20 S. Second St. (at Chestnut St.), Harrisburg. Lunchtime seating (12-2) will feature lively entertainment by renowned jazz pianist, Steve Rudolph accompanied by jazz bassist, Hassan JJ Shakur of the Duke Ellington Orchestra. At the evening seating, Bob Gutheinz and Janelle Yeager will perform on hammer dulcimer and flute, respectively from

5 - 7. Tickets for the all-you-can-eat Bistro may be purchased at the door - \$15 for adults, \$7.50 for children under 12.

All of the proceeds support **HELP Ministries of Christian Churches United**, which in partnership with private and government resources, provides families in need with emergency services, including food and clothing referrals, shelter, rent and utility assistance and home heating fuel. Over the past 26 years, Market Square Bistro has raised over \$130,000.00 for CCU's Help Ministries, providing funds to assist those with emergent needs in our community.



**The bottom line** I am featuring **Central Presbyterian's** (Chambersburg) Diaper Depot again for the blessings this ministry is bringing to the its community. This is a ministry/mission many churches could undertake to provide a much needed resource to folks who face the budgetary challenges of many young families. Cloth diapers are no longer an option for most families. Apartment dwellers or those without washing facilities are not permitted to wash diapers in most commercial machines. Diaper service is not available in many areas and can

be cost prohibitive. Diapers need to be changed frequently and no one wants baby to wear a soiled diaper. Diapers are not covered under SNAP (food stamps) or other governmental programs. *Over a three year period, 9000 (15 diapers per day for the first 3 months then 8 diapers per day thereafter) disposable diapers could be used for 1 child from birth to potty training.* Assuming a family buys a 100ct box every time from a price club, that would be a total of 90 boxes. At \$40 a box, on average, you're looking at \$3,600 for disposable diapers. Last month, the Diaper Depot at Central PC served over 150 families. They also offer produce from the Gleaning Project of South Central PA and children's clothing donated by the congregation and Renee's Village in Fayetteville. One Diaper Depot partnership is with the high school students who serve as interpreters since many of our families have Spanish as a first language.

This little church is outside the front entry to **Central**. Donated books for adults/children in English/Spanish are available here for the taking.



**Greencastle PC** just celebrated **FREEDOM SUNDAY** October 30 from 9:30 a.m.—1:30 p.m. What?! Four hours of church? YES! Four quick (and FUN) hours of combining worship and mission! The mission was first-providing some TLC to their neighbor .... the Train Station! They worked with the group seeking to refurbish and restore one of the historical gems of Greencastle! They painted, pulled weeds, cleared out junk and cleaned. It was an intergenerational event. GPC showed they love Jesus in loving their neighbors. Starting at 9:30 a.m., they had Orientation to the Train Station and then worked hand in hand to

bless the community that God has put them in to serve. Homemade soups and salads were provided for lunch by the Deacons and Stewardship Committee. Finally they joined for Celebrative worship with Communion — in the Social Room. They sang and shared what God revealed to them as they stepped across the street... out of the church to be the church ... in mission.