

THE KEY

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Previous versions of *The Key* are available online: <http://www.cranburyumc.org/thekey.html>

From the pastor's desk...

I can't believe it is already October and soon it will be Halloween. Let me just say Halloween is not one of my favorite days. The reason I'm not a fan of Halloween is because I associate it with people who take this day to the extreme. I'm not amused when people are destructive of property, dress up as pregnant nuns, or wear costumes with blood and gore. We see and hear enough violence in the world, so do we need to have a day where we glamorize it all with the goal of getting a thrill if we scare someone and to receive some candy for our efforts!

With that being said, I do enjoy the younger children coming to the door with their innocent costumes with the opportunity of bringing joy to their hearts by giving them candy. That's good, clean fun.

I also believe that the masks that people wear in everyday life are sometimes scarier than Halloween. You don't have to wear a skeleton mask to put on the face of death. We do it every time we kill an idea, stamp out a dream, or suffocate a church with our need for control.

What about those witches brewing up their concoctions of mischief? Are we any less evil when we stir up trouble with our gossip and behind-the-back criticisms of others? Do we mean any less harm when we travel through life with our brooms of gloom, sweeping away the joy of others?

Over the years, people can allow circumstances to change their facial appearances where they have forgotten how to smile and they have become creatures of the night. Halloween has its less than honorable origins, but real life can be just as scary

with the evil things we allow to happen.

We abandon God every time we think material things can substitute for happiness, offer up our children on the altar of work or other pursuits, and think God is not the source of our plenty or the best source of comfort in our pain.

Christians should resist the evil sometimes practiced on Halloween, but let's not allow our fascination with the evils of October 31st mask the just as frightening habits of our everyday living.

Hurtful attitudes and behavior, injustices of social systems and structures, and indifference to the plight of others can forge masks every bit as grotesque as those worn on Halloween.

Ezekiel prophesied that God would eventually bring life to the dry bones of God's people, but some of us are far too comfortable in our skeleton costumes to allow even God to breathe new life into us.

Through his vision of dry bones come to life, Ezekiel told the people of Israel, on behalf of God, "I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live" (Ezekiel 37:14). That prophecy came at a time when the people of Israel had every reason not to believe they'd ever see tomorrow.

This gives me reason to believe that Halloween can be redeemed if the rest of the year we allow God to breathe a little bit of life into our otherwise lifeless living. The question we have to ask ourselves this Halloween is this, "What would be more frightening, to put on a mask or to come as you are?" See you next Sunday!

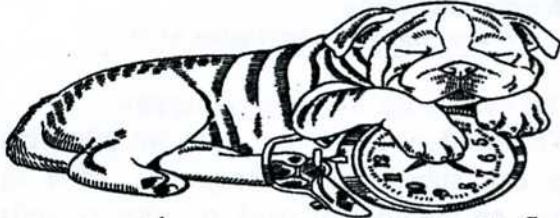
Pastor Ron

Prayer List

Please remember our members and friends in prayer.

The Red Bird Mission	Thelma Alm
Martin Collins	Peg Harris
Ruth Hemlin	Raul Martinez
Kay Milo	Eileen Mortimer
Steve Pierce	Kathy Roman
Joyce Schanck	Olga Shen
Barbara Smatusek	Chris Stahl
Bette Thielman	Marcella Woodward

To add or remove a name from our Prayer list,
please contact the church office at (609) 395-1737.



Daylight-Saving Time Ends

If you set your clocks back an hour, you'll get extra sleep so you'll be wide awake for church on Sunday, November 1!

Harvest Festival Sunday November 15

It's time to do some grocery shopping for our Harvest Festival! Remember to pick up some fruits and vegetables and/or canned goods to bring to our worship service on Sunday, November 15. The food will be placed on the altar and later sent to the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen. Dennis Micai from T.A.S.K. will visit that morning to give us an update on their work. Please join us for this special Sunday.

The "Stagecoach" is Coming to Movie Night!

The 1939 classic "Stagecoach" will be our Movie Night selection on Friday, November 20. Please join us in the Barclay Room at 7:30 PM for our ride through the wild, West!

Calendar of Events for November 2009

November 1: Sunday School, 9:00 AM
Worship Services, 9:00 & 11:00 AM
Unity Lunch following 11:00 worship
Staff-Parish Relations Committee, 6:00 PM
Church Conference, 7:00 PM

November 3: Bible Study, 7:30 PM

November 5: Chancel Choir rehearsal, 7:30 PM

November 8: Consecration Sunday
Worship Service, 10:30 AM

November 11: Administrative Council, 7:30 PM

November 12: Chancel Choir rehearsal, 7:30 PM

November 13: Deadline for November newsletter

November 15: Harvest Sunday
Sunday School, 9:00 AM
Worship Services, 9:00 & 11:00 AM

November 17: Bible Study, 7:30 PM

November 18: Women's Circle, 12:00 noon

November 19: KIDS' Club, 5:00-8:30 PM
Chancel Choir rehearsal, 7:30 PM

November 20: Movie Night featuring
"Stagecoach," 7:30 PM

November 21: Golden Age Neighbors, 11:30 AM

November 22: Sunday School, 9:00 AM
Worship Services, 9:00 & 11:00 AM
Men's Club, 10:00 AM

November 26 & 27: Church office closed

November 28: Hanging of the Greens, 10:00 AM
Sewing Group, 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

November 29: Sunday School, 9:00 AM
Worship Services, 9:00 & 11:00 AM

