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# THE LIGHT

NEWSLETTER OF UNITED REFORMED CHURCH OF CLIFTON AND PASSAIC

*A church UNITED in Faith Hope and Love!*

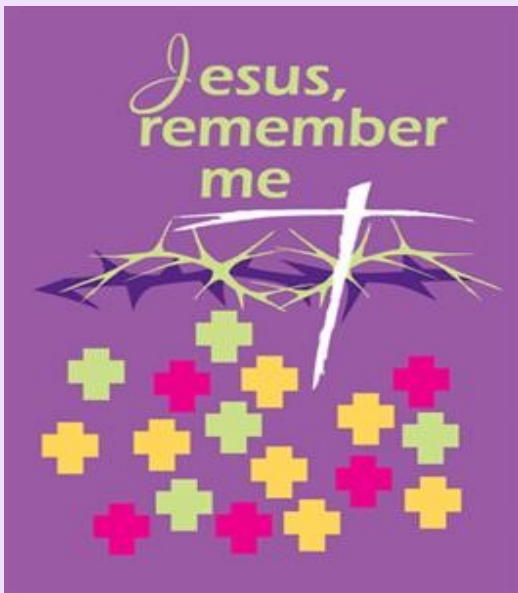
Issue No. 119

January– February, 2018

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## THE GOD WHO REMEMBERS

Once a month, I take an afternoon to write birthday and anniversary cards for members and friends of the church. I take a moment to think and remember what makes each one so special. I try to write a blessing that fits each individual and lifts them up. For me, this is part of what it means to be your pastor. This writing is a sort of prayer and spiritual discipline that expresses my pastoral care for my flock.



I also remember the birthdates and anniversaries of those who have died and are no longer with us. As I write these cards I call to mind memories of each person—a time when they poked their head into the office just to say hello, a special conversation, a sense of humor, a twinkle in the eye and scores of other things. Some of the people I have never met because they passed away before I came here. For them I remember the stories you have shared with me—memories of how you met, the joys you shared and the struggles you faced together—and I find myself thinking, “I would have loved to have known them.”

In my opinion, one of the worst things you can say to someone is “Forget you!!!” —especially if it is said by a friend or a loved one. To forget someone is to assign them to insignificance and death. And so I see part of my job as remembering, remembering those whom I love and serve

God is a God who remembers. When Noah was in the ark, God remembered him and sent a wind to dry up the flood (Genesis 8:1). When Israel were slaves in Egypt, God remembered them and sent Moses to lead them to the promised land (Exodus 2:24). When Hannah was childless, God remembered her and allowed her to conceive and give birth to Samuel (1 Samuel 1:19). When the thief on the cross prayed, “Jesus, remember me when you come into his kingdoms,” Jesus responded, “Today you will be with me in Paradise (Luke 24:32-33).”

How God remembers is different than how we remember. When we remember a thought comes to mind and with it comes strong feelings of love, joy, sadness, and longing all mixed together. Our memories nurture us but they cannot undo the loss we feel. However, when God remembers he acts on our behalf. When Jesus remembered the thief, the man joined him in paradise. When God remembers the saints who have gone before, he holds them in his hands and promises that a resurrection is coming. When God remembers us, he holds us in the same hands and promises that one day a resurrection and a day of meeting is coming. God never forgets and that is our hope.

In Christ’s love, *Pastor Mike*