



*Experience God's Grace and Hospitality*

April 1, 2009

Dear Friends in Christ,

The Friends gave me the idea. At their recent council meeting, I thanked the Friends of Massanetta for their 2009 project and gave them an update. One person said and the others echoed, "This is too exciting to keep quiet about. You need to pass this along. Send it out to the clerks, the pastors, all the churches."

This is an update on your conference center which we hope clerks will read to your Sessions, pastors will share in your church newsletters, and presbyteries will post on your websites. When we announced that Camp Massanetta, the summer camp in the woods for children and youth, was being suspended, we missed the opportunity to share that conferences and guests groups are growing year by year. New churches are coming to one of the four Middle School Conferences week by week. Openings remain for your church to come. We welcome any size group (one female adult brought her one female middle schooler and they had a fantastic time!). Over 1,100 middle schoolers and adults will gather this summer and scholarships are still available.

Our Board of Trustees and staff began to pray for a new direction for use of the sixteen camp cabins, four lodges and bathhouses, and the superb Bell Auditorium that make up Camp Massanetta. Our prayers were more than answered.

Ten weeks ago we launched Mission@Massanetta, a program in partnership with the local affiliate of Rebuilding Together. Designed for senior highs and adults, workgroups live at the camp and work on the homes of elderly and disadvantaged persons in Harrisonburg and Rockingham County. By this writing, over 200 persons have registered from Presbyterian, United Methodist, and Congregational Churches from VA, MD, VT, and KY. This is awesome!

In November 2008, contact was made with the Children's National Medical Center (CNMC) Camps, a.k.a. Brainy Camps, who offer children and teens with chronic health conditions seven days and six nights of summer fun and social connections. CNMC physicians, nurses, social workers, and parent-volunteers come together to care for campers who enjoy the typical activities one might expect at camp. This past Friday, Camp Massanetta was successful in becoming the host site for 2009 and beyond for the 255 guests who will make up the three camps in July for children and teens with Neurofibromatosis, Tourette Syndrome, Aspergers Syndrome, or Epilepsy. Praise God!

The Varsity and Junior Varsity Football Teams from Freedom High School in Woodbridge, VA will be our guests starting August 10. Sixty-five players and coaches will hold their football camp on our new athletic field and enjoy the beautiful bath house totally rebuilt by the generous gifts and labor of the Massanutten Presbyterian Church of Penn Laird, VA. This is the first of many football and marching band camps that will be hosted at Massanetta.

God has *MORE* than answered our prayers. We are so honored to share this good news with the congregations and presbyteries of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic. Please communicate this with others and join us in celebrating the ministry of camps and conference centers throughout the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

In Christ's Service,

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