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Church in Bridgeton puts faith into action

BY TIM ZATZARINY JR. • STAFF WRITER • SEPTEMBER 21, 2009

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BRIDGETON -- Pastor Robin Weinstein thinks talk is cheap.

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During a special service Sunday morning, he implored his congregation to do more than just pay lip service to the needs of the local community.

And on Oct. 11, Bethany Presbyterian Church on Pearl Street will do just that.

The day will be the culmination of a four-week "Faith In Action" campaign focused on faith-based community service, which began Sunday.

"God has called us not to be pew warmers, but world changers," Weinstein said before the service. "Our Faith In Action campaign reminds us of God's call for us to be his ambassadors in the community. Jesus served us, and we need to serve others. We want to let the community know in a tangible way that God loves them by showing his love for them through our service."

On Sept. 27, the Sunday service at Bethany Presbyterian will feature guest speaker Quincy Lucas, founder and president of Witney's Lights, a nonprofit, domestic-violence awareness group.

The Oct. 4 service will highlight how Christians "need to have the eyes of Christ and be his hands in a world of need," Weinstein said.



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Bethany Presbyterian Church Pastor Robin Weinstein talks with congregation member Joseph Morgan, 10, of Bridgeton on Sunday. (Staff photo/Cody Glenn)

HOW TO HELP

Bethany Presbyterian Church, 31 N. Pearl St., Bridgeton, invites the public to take part in Faith In Action Sunday on Oct. 11. For more information or to volunteer, call (856) 451-4601 or visit www.bethanyinbridgeton.com.

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Finally, on Oct. 11, volunteers from the church and the community will join together for a trash pickup along Pearl Street, sell baked goods at local store to benefit area food banks, and host a "Yours For the Taking Community Giveaway." All the events run from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

The giveaway is a spin on a community yard sale, Weinstein said. In this case, everything will be given away, no questions asked, he said, adding the giveaway will include clothing, household items, furniture and other items. "Yours For the Taking" will be held at the church at 31 N. Pearl St.

The church seeks donations of baked goods, and items for the community giveaway.

After a drastic drop in attendance about four years ago, Weinstein said, the church considered closing. But now, Bethany Presbyterian has 85 to 100 active members and is thriving.

"We invite the community to join us in not just going to church, but being the church," he said.

Church elder Warren Coles, 59, a Bridgeton resident, said, "we're hoping to get out and spread the word and let the community know that we are here for them, whatever their needs may be."

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