



New Covenant Connection

New Covenant Presbyterian Church

The Pressured Christian Life



2026

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Dear friends,

I remember several years ago, when I still had children living at home, that a friend recommended reading the book *Raising Cain: Protecting the Emotional Life of Boys*. The author, Dr. Michael Thompson, also wrote *Best Friends, Worst Enemies* which is a book about powerful childhood issues such as popularity and social cruelty. As I got into this subject and came to appreciate this author, I also learned about another book, *The Pressured Child: Helping Your Child Find Success in School and Life*.

In this last book, Thompson told the story of a 9th grade boy whose parents thought he was unorganized, and so they sought Thompson’s help. He asked the dad if he himself was “organized.” And he replied, “Yes, I am.” Next Thompson asked him when he got organized and his response was when he was a junior in college.



Thompson acknowledged that some anxiety can be helpful in the learning process, but constant pressure is **NOT** helpful. Moreover, the pressure that parents place on children is now equaled by the pressure parents exert on teachers to ensure that they are providing the education the parents want and need their child to have. To know how true this is, just talk to any teacher and you will hear all kinds of stories.

In fact, Thompson says, children are looking for experiences that make them feel that they’re achieving developmentally, and that they’re as competent as they can be. In short, they’re looking for - **CONNECTION, RECOGNITION AND A SENSE OF MASTERY**. Generally, these feelings do NOT come from report cards. Kids have a sense that the report card is not who they are.

And I don’t think this feeling of pressure, which can lead to anxiety and even more serious problems, only applies to teenagers. Have you ever considered that the Christian faith can seem like it’s all about report cards, and that generally speaking, the “report cards” that we would imagine

~continued~



A Note From Our Pastor (Cont'd)

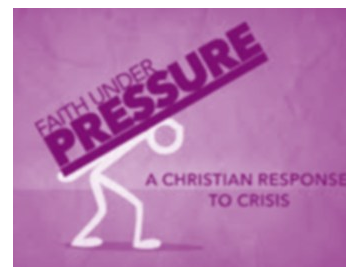
Receiving which would probably have more D's and F's than the eye chart at the optometrist's office? It might look something like the chart below.

No wonder pastors are dealing with "pressured Christians." Fortunately though, Lent comes along once a year, giving us an opportunity to "try harder." But, this of course, only puts more pressure on us. If we can't be model Christians during Lent, then what hope do we have for the rest of the year?

I suspect that Christians, like our young people, are looking for - **CONNECTION, RECOGNITION AND A SENSE OF MASTERY**. That is, Christians need **connection** and **community** to thrive and grow spiritually and emotionally toward a wholeness that enables them to deflect pressure, or channel it wisely.

We also need **recognition**; that is, our particular skill set must be affirmed and authenticated by the Body of Christ in order for us to function and serve effectively. And when we are affirmed in what we're doing, handling pressure is a piece of cherry pie. And finally, we need a sense of **mastery**.

Name: <u>(Fill in your name)</u>	CHRISTIAN LIFE REPORT CARD	Evaluator: Almighty God
SUBJECT	GRADE	COMMENTS
Social Development		Needs a lot of improvement in all areas;
Love	D	shows potential
Sharing	F	occasionally
Gets along with others	F	
Cognitive Skills		
Biblical Literacy	F	Can't find Haggai without consulting table of contents
Memorization	F	Consistently trips over Lord's Prayer in worship
Prayer	F	Abysmal effort
Theology	D	Very confused
Eschatology	F	Still can't figure out when Jesus is coming
Stewardship	F	Tight
Faith Development		
Hope	F	Hope-less
Trust	F	Cocky
Peace	D	A worrier
Joy	F	Comes and goes
Purpose	F	Does many things on purpose



Christians can handle the pressures of life when they have gained control of themselves. This is the right kind of control, the kind of self-discipline about which the Apostle Paul often spoke. We're not talking about control over others, but the ability to discipline one's self. When a Christian is able to exercise restraint, discipline and self-control, then that Christian may find not only that pressure is easier to handle, but that some stressors don't even show up for work. Self-discipline and mastery can do that.


So, as we come to the end of the Lenten season, ready to enter the Easter season, let us consider what our report cards look like. Chances are that we didn't work on everything that needed attention during the Lenten season, so there is plenty more to spend time on during the Easter season. At least consider what the most difficult subjects are for you and give them some attention.

And when you're done with your time of self-reflection, you could let everyone in on a little secret. You know, God doesn't really issue report cards anymore, at least not to me or you. I used to try peeking and copying my answers by looking over Jesus' shoulder. And then I asked Jesus if he'd turn in his work for me, on my behalf. It wasn't considered cheating; it

was sacrificial instead. I told him right upfront that I was a total doofus in some areas, so he did as I asked. And wonder of all wonders, God accepted making the supreme sacrifice as a gift for you and for me.

Your partner in ministry, 2 *Carol*

APRIL 2026

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	HOLY		WEEK	1	2	3
				Maundy Thursday Service @ 7	Good Friday; Our Daily Bread	4
5	Easter Breakfast @ 8:30; Worship @ 10	6 Deacon's Mtg @10	7	8	9	10
11						
12	Trustee mtg @ 11:30 am	13	14	15	16	17
18						
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
			Session Mtg. 10 am			
26	27	28	29	30		

EVERY SUNDAY—CHRISTIAN EDUCATION @ 8:30 AM; WORSHIP AT 10 AM FOLLOWED BY FELLOWSHIP;
 EVERY TUESDAY – CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN-PERSON AND ON ZOOM @ 10:30 AM
 BELL CHOIR—CHECK WITH JENNY FOR DATES/TIMES

- | | | | |
|------|--|------|--------------------------------------|
| 4/2 | Maundy Thursday Worship @ 7 pm | 4/19 | 2nd Sunday after Easter |
| 4/3 | First Friday @ Our Daily Bread | 4/20 | Jane Adams' Birthday |
| 4/5 | EASTER SUNDAY; Breakfast @ 8:30; Worship @ 10 with Communion; ODB Special Offering | 4/21 | Ruth Keiderling's Birthday |
| 4/6 | Deacons' Meeting @ 10 am | 4/22 | Session Meeting at 1 pm |
| 4/7 | Win Bookhart's Birthday | 4/26 | 3rd Sunday after Easter |
| 4/8 | Pat Wright's Birthday | 4/28 | Barbara & Win Bookhart's Anniversary |
| 4/12 | 1st Sunday after Easter | | |
| | Trustees' Meeting @ 11:30 am | | |
| 4/14 | Pam Leeson's Birthday | | |





Clerk's Report

The Session met on March 18, 2026. Next Session meeting will be April 22, 2026

The following items were approved: 1) Minutes of the February 18th meeting; 2) The Annual Statistical Report for 2025; 3) Sabbatical Leave for Carol Fisher (at least 4 weeks) for 2026(as recommended by the presbytery).

New Castle Presbytery Meetings

May 16 th (Sat) Hybrid Mtg	Barbara Montazella & Carol
Sep 10 th (Sat) Hybrid Mtg	Barbara Bookhart & Carol
Dec 1 st (Tues) Zoom only	Jane Adams & Carol



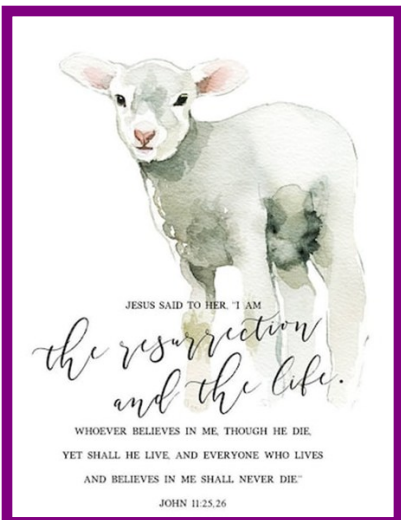
Mar 18th (Zoom) Special Called meeting to approve 2 new Associate Presbyters. Casey Carbone (from Hudson River Presbytery in NY) as Assoc. Presbyter for Congregational Ministries and Sarah Craven (from So. New Jersey Presbytery) as Associate Presbyter for Missional Ministries. Both were approved along with their Terms of Call. (Pat and Carol attended this meeting)

Financial Statements:

At the end of February, our YTD Income/Revenue = \$12,407.00
Our YTD Expenses = \$7,032.02. So as of the end of February we are in the black by \$5,374.98. As the year progresses this may change as some submit their entire annual pledge at the beginning of the year.

Membership 42

Email Addresses: Clerk: clerk.ncpc24@gmail.com
 Office: newcov.office2@gmail.com
 Treasurer: treasurernewcov@gmail.com
 Pastor: pastornewcov@gmail.com



*Yours in Christ,
Pat Wright, Clerk*



Worship



Holy Week



Palm Sunday

March 29th

Procession of Palms



Maundy Thursday

April 2nd
7 pm

Communion/Reflection
on Christ's Sacrifice



Good Friday

April 3rd

Time to Pray/Reflect and
Give Thanks

Easter Sunday

April 5th

Easter Breakfast (8:30) and
Resurrection Worship

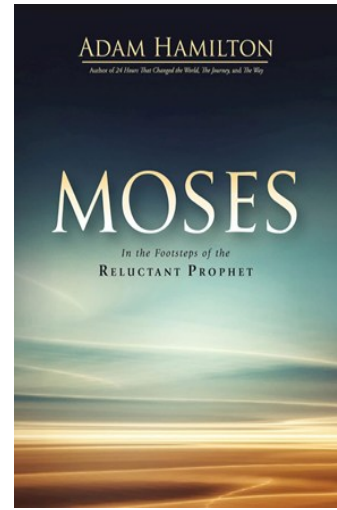
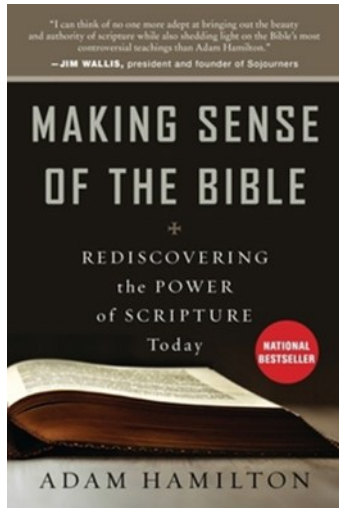


Barbara Montazella
Worship Elder

Christian Education Report

Weekly Christian Education Classes

Adult Christian Education continues on Sunday mornings at 8:30 in the Pastor's study and on Tuesday mornings at 10:30 there as well (with a zoom attendance option). We have almost completed our study of Adam Hamilton's book *Making Sense of the Bible* and we will be starting on another of his books on *Moses - In the Footsteps of a Reluctant Prophet*, after Easter.



WITH APOLOGIES TO MATTHEW 25: 31-46

***I was hungry,
and you formed a humanities group to discuss my hunger;
I was imprisoned,
and you crept off quietly to your chapel to pray for my release.
I was naked,
and, in your mind, you debated the morality of my appearance.
I was sick,
and you knelt and thanked God for your health.
I was homeless,
and you preached to me of the spiritual shelter of the love of God.
I was lonely,
and you wrote to assure me of God's abiding presence.
You seem so holy, so close to God,
but I am still very hungry - and lonely - and cold.***

**Jane Adams,
Christian Education Elder**

Mission Report

Our Daily Bread: : We served 172 meals and put an additional 20 meals into the Community Refrigerator on First Friday in March. If anyone is interested and able, ODB has a Saturday Sandwich program which has groups and/or individuals who have an hour or so on a Saturday morning to come to the dining room in Middletown to prepare sandwiches to place in the community refrigerator for the weekend. This can help ensure that there are easy meals available in the refrigerator even when ODB is closed for the weekend. If you are interested, contact Pat Wright at church or contact ODB directly at our-dailybread.2016@gmail.com



Neighborhood House: We continue to collect non-perishable food items for Neighborhood House. There is a constant need for spaghetti/pasta sauce and jelly but any non-perishable food item is welcomed with open arms. The suspension of the federal “Emergency Food and Shelter” program may impact Neighborhood House’s programs.

The One Great Hour of Sharing special offering: : The current special offering is the One Great Hour of Sharing which will continue during March (Lent) and conclude on Easter Sunday (April 5th). This collection has its beginning in 1949 when several denominations came together to support a collection for relief and reconstruction in areas devastated by WWII. From the beginning the offering has been an ecumenical effort. While each denomination allocates its gifts differently, all use their funds for ministries of disaster relief, refugee assistance, and development aid. Today, projects supported by One Great Hour of Sharing are under way in more than one hundred countries including the United States and Canada. This offering supports: Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, Presbyterian Hunger Program, and the Presbyterian Committee on Self Development of People.



Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes

Look for future announcements for a “Christmas In July” campaign again this year. You can start doing your shopping now to be able to “stuff” the boxes with lots of goodies this summer.

Shopping list:

School supplies	Soft plush animal
Comb/hairbrush	Tshirts
Toothbrush	Socks
Small toys	No soap, liquids, food or war toys

Pat Wright, Mission Elder

Trustee & Outreach Reports

TRUSTEE REPORT:

The Trustee Meetings are open to all and they are normally scheduled each month on the 2nd Sunday after worship service. Our next Trustee Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, 12 Apr 2026.

We are still looking at what we may want to do to increase the security around our property with all the construction going on around us.



Still need some landscaping in the main electrical connection in the middle of the grass area around the church. The pavers have been installed and all is good as far as it goes, but we need some flowers, or something in the middle. This is scheduled for Spring of 2026.

Had a meeting with Blenheim Builders as to where our sign(s) will be placed to let people know how to get in to our Church. There are a couple of issues with New Castle County that are being worked on, THANKS to Blenheim Builders.



We now have the "Tramonto Woodfired Pizza" business in our Parking Lot. The times are being determined but he is aiming for afternoon/dinner time. Check with Al for exact times. Days to be established when they find out what are the best days for business. If there are any questions or comments you would like to make, please let us know. You can use my e-

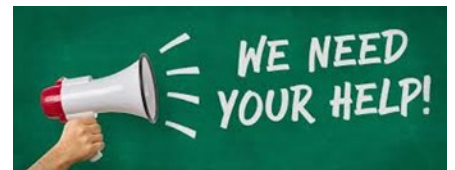
mail address: al.grimminger@icloud.com.

**Your Friendly Trustees,
Al Grimminger, Bill Shields, and Bob Magonigal**

OUTREACH REPORT:

We have 1 less elder and 1 less deacon on these boards this year. That means that our Outreach efforts are few and far between, so we NEED YOUR HELP!

Our first effort this year is that volunteers were recruited to distribute Easter flyers proclaiming the Good News and inviting people to come to our Holy



Week activities. If you feel called to help with any form of OUTREACH, please let me know because this is truly important for our church and for the

benefit of the spiritual health of our neighbors. COME ONE AND ALL - WE NEED YOU!



bors. COME ONE

Deacon Ministry & Fellowship

The deacons strive to care for our congregation through our Shepherding Ministry. Every person in the congregation is cared for by an elder and deacon who partner to be their shepherds. The shepherds assist the pastor in ensuring that all know they are loved.

The other thing deacons do at NCPC is organize and hold Fellowship Events. Here are some of our highlights this spring:

IN MARCH: We enjoyed DELICIOUS food and each other's company at our **St. Paddy's Dinner**. Be sure and come next year if you missed it!



♦ **IN APRIL:**

On Sunday, 4/6 - Continental **Easter Breakfast**

at 8:30 am. Come and bring a dish to share!

Then, on 4/16-19 @ 7:30, Cheryl Shields is directing *Radium Girls* which is a true story about the U.S. Radium Corp. and the young ladies who worked there painting watch dials that would glow in the dark. After a disease started to change their lives, young Grace Fryer took the company to court. Limited seating, tickets are available at the Everett.

Then **on 4/23-24**, *The Somewhat True Tale of Robin Hood* by the Towle Institute. This is a rich comedy that will have you rolling in the aisles laughing about Robin Hood who stole from the rich and gave to the poor. Only 2 shows, limited seating. See Cheryl (the director) for tickets.



IN MAY:

Friday, 5/15, **Dinner at Pat's + Jesus Christ Superstar** at the Everett. We hope that you all can participate.

**Skip Leeson and Cheryl Shields,
Your deacon leaders**

STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE

-Taken from *Parish Publishing*



During the Lenten season, our thoughts turn once again to the true meaning of giving, as exemplified by Christ on the cross. God's gift was great. God's only Son died to save us.

How can we give back even a fraction of what God has given to us? All of our efforts, all of our gifts, seem like nothing in the face of what God has done for us. Are we to feel helpless? Hopeless?

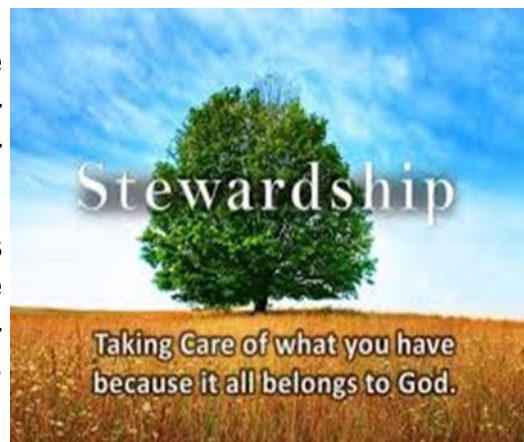
Of course not. God does not expect us to match the generosity or sacrifice of his gift. That would be impossible. But God does want us to learn about the true nature of giving, and we can do that by examining his gift to us.

God gave us his only Son whom God loved greatly. True giving involves sacrifice. We all know that it is easy to give when that which we give has no importance or value to us. God knows the real value of our gift because God knows the amount of sacrifice that is behind each gift.

The rich person may give a large sum of money, but the gift represents no sacrifice to that person. God may better cherish the meager gift of a poor man or woman. True giving must be unselfish.

Christ died to redeem all people. He gave his life for us. Our motivation – why we give – must be Christian and unselfish. We do not give to enhance our self-image or to appear “holy” like the Pharisees.

Finally, true giving is ongoing. God's gifts to us are unending, continuous. We should strive to become more Godlike in our giving. During Lent, let us remember true giving involves sacrifice, it is unselfish and it is ongoing.



Barbara Bookhart

Finance & Stewardship Elder

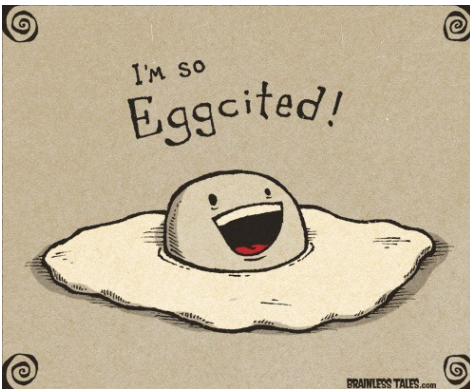
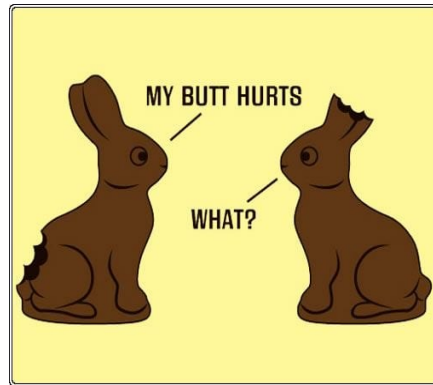
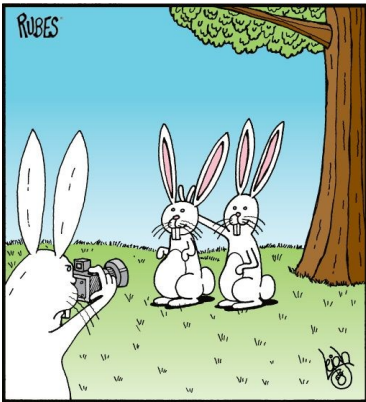
Frog Corner

F.R.O.G. CORNER: *Forever Rely on God*

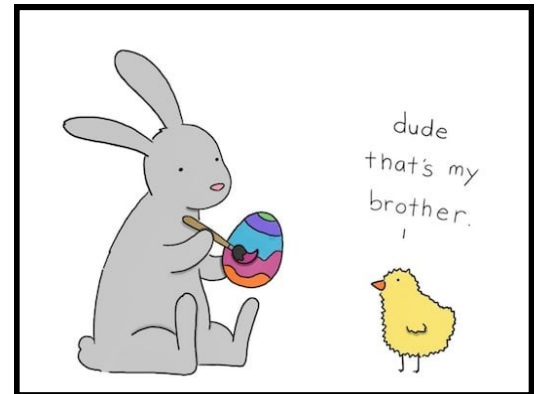
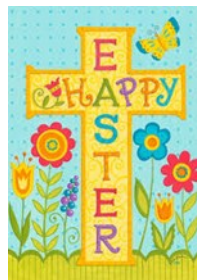
Don't forget the meaning behind the acronym **RIBBIT** :
Revere, **I**nvoke, **B**less, **I**nspire, and **T**rust in the Lord.



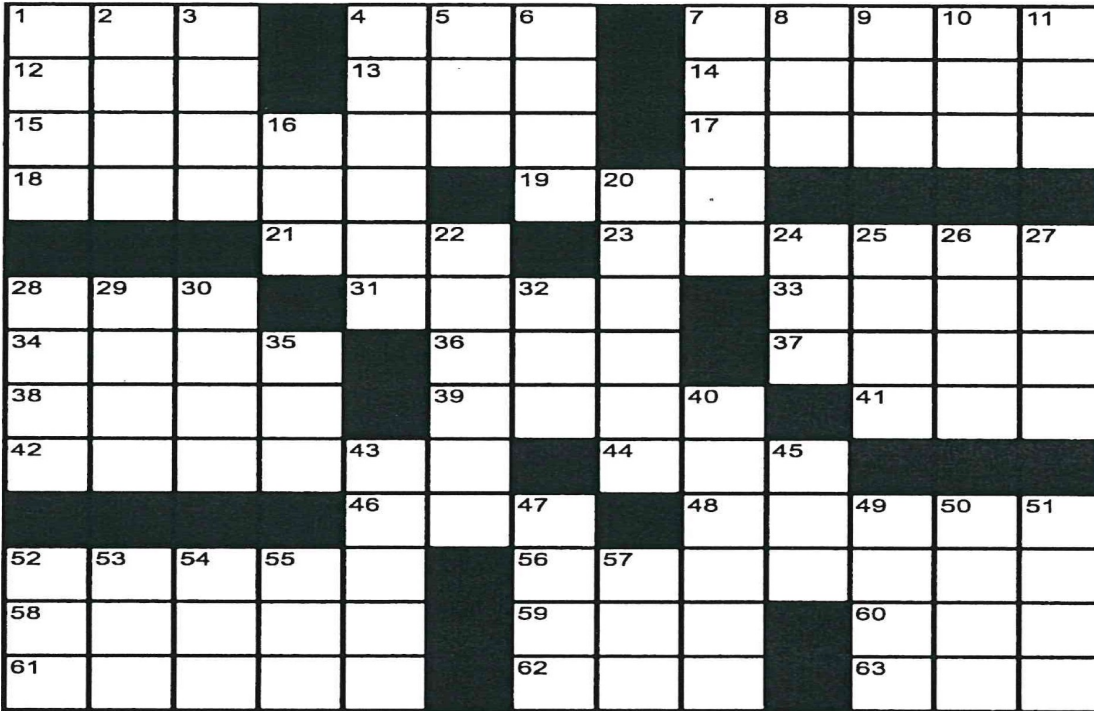
I thought we all needed a few smiles and laughs, so enjoy these cartoons -



MAY YOU HAVE A HAPPY,
BLESSED EASTER!



CROSSWORD PUZZLE FOR YOUR ENJOYMENT



Across

- 1 A College Cheer
- 4 Sneaky
- 7 Sign of spring
- 12 A bar drink
- 14 _____ Dunne (actress)
- 15 Keeps out the sun
- 17 Not too smart
- 18 Live coal
- 19 Choke
- 21 Recent
- 23 Insist
- 28 Luau food
- 31 Fatal ending
- 33 Lake
- 34 Rational
- 36 Ball park figure
- 37 What you inherit
- 38 Cease
- 39 Soil
- 41 Gloomy
- 42 Fit for a King
- 44 Before
- 46 Eddie Cantor's wife
- 48 To follow in order
- 52 Great fear
- 56 In the process
- 58 _____ in Wonderland
- 59 Aged
- 60 Great festival place
- 61 One who melds in
- 62 Belittle

Down

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 Run quickly | 47 Like 2 peas in a _____ |
| 2 A chemical compound | 49 Highly respected people |
| 3 A plant used for flavor | 50 A single |
| 4 Looked intently | 51 Favorite subject of Freud |
| 5 Flower in Hawaii | 52 Cooking spray |
| 6 Opposite of ying | 53 Top boxer |
| 7 A chain of hills | 54 Veto |
| 8 What miners seek | 55 Cools drinks |
| 9 Famous clock name | 57 Maker of a cotton gin |
| 10 Insurance-(abbr) | |
| 11 Society word | |
| 16 No. of commandments | |
| 20 Find pleasing | |
| 22 Spoken | |
| 24 One of Little Women | |
| 25 A Greek god of war | |
| 26 Christopher's ship | |
| 27 Legal contract | |
| 28 To catch attention | |
| 29 Vow | |
| 30 Are you going _ _out?-2 words | |
| 32 Japanese apparel | |
| 35 A Health Insurance | |
| 40 Fads | |
| 43 Pleasanter | |
| 45 Final | |

Save your completed puzzles.
Answers will be in next month's
newsletter.



HAVE FUN!