

# Crescent Connections

Crescent Avenue Presbyterian Church

DECEMBER 2015 NEWSLETTER



716 Watchung Ave  
Plainfield NJ 07060  
908-756-2468

[www.crescentonline.org](http://www.crescentonline.org)

Pastor: Rev Lynn Santulli

This is a newsletter for December, highlighting a few important projects! Included is the calendar for Advent, notes from Christian Ed and our Kindness project, which is a tree in the church house library. Please visit the tree anytime and take a tag or hang a tag.

On a personal note, below is a picture of the tree that celebrates the life of Sal Badalamenti at his community in SC. The Cliffs, where he lived, was able to run power to the tree where Sal and his family had attempted to put lights on back in 2013. The Cliffs employees used a bucket truck and ladders to hang all the lights as well as provide us with a giant bonfire that night. This past month, on November 28<sup>th</sup>, the community held a Sal-a-bra-tion and Jean pushed the button which turned on the 3700 lights. Jean, Catherine, Sal's sister Maria and I were there with 66 other Cliffs Communities friends. It was a perfect tribute to a great guy we all miss so much.

Julie



**We Get It--Do You Still Want to Get It?**

The holidays are busy times and you cannot always get to church as much as you would like. How can you still keep God in your life even in the midst of hectic schedules? Here are a couple of ways we are working to help:

**Oasis Advent Devotional** - have a daily devotion sent to your email (or smartphone). It takes just a few minutes each day for a short reading, brief reflection and short prayer. Read it on the train into work, on the checkout line, when you find yourself with a few minutes on your hands. Signing up is easy. Simply send an email to [pastor@crescentonline.org](mailto:pastor@crescentonline.org) with the subject line, 'sign me up for Oasis' and you will be added the next day! Paper copies are available as well in the church hallway, or contact the church office at 908.756.2468 to have a copy mailed to you.

**Weekly Sermons** - Did you know that the sermons are recorded each Sunday? There are already a number of people who receive the sermons online, how about you? Perhaps you would like to hear the message again, missed something that was said and wanted to know what it was, or were away that Sunday yet still wanted to hear the sermon. How? You can either call the church office at 908.756.2468 and leave a message for Pastor Lynn or send an email to her and ask to be included on the distribution list. Also, if you hear a message that you think others might like, send it on. It may be just the message they need to hear to lift their spirits as well.

### **Session Highlights**

- Plans for renovation of the church's kitchen continue. Although we are taking a break for the holidays, work will resume in January, stay tuned to hear more.
- Forty Five (45) shoeboxes were filled and distributed by our Mission team (and you!) for Operation Shoebox. Thank you to everyone who participated. Your gift will truly be a gift to a child in need.

The 2016 budget was discussed, reviewed and approved. It will be presented to the congregation at our upcoming congregational meeting on December 6.

Advent 2015

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ

Happy New Year! As we launch into our Christian year (at least from the perspective of our church calendar), we might feel all of the excitement of preparations for our celebration of Christmas. We find ourselves in the midst of the Christmas story once again. Perhaps we will resonate with the wise men, seeking after truth and following God's Light to discover a new understanding and wonder at God's love. Perhaps we will be rejoicing with the angels and find our hearts swelling with joy as we celebrate all that God is and the power and wonder of His glory. Perhaps we will feel more like a lowly shepherd, coming to the humble manger a bit raggedy and worn from life, but feel the welcome and warmth of God's love. Or perhaps we will find ourselves somewhere else in the story. Wherever we find ourselves this year we know that we will only come together when we come to Christ. Here every knee bows and tongue confesses that Christ is King in our lives and that all the worldly trappings are but rags that encumber us.

You are invited on this journey. Please join us for this season of worship, for concerts that are offered that decorate the season with their own special beauty. Join us for daily refreshment found in the Advent Oasis or through serving the hungry and needy in our midst. Come home for Christmas this season and be touched by God's love in a place in your heart that the world can never fill.

May your season be bright with Christ's love, surrounded by God's grace, and filled with the peace that only Christ can bestow.

In Christ's love,  
Pastor Lynn



## **THE KINDNESS PROJECT**

**Beginning on December 6<sup>th</sup>, you may notice a small tree in the library of the church house. It's the Kindness Tree Project!**

**Throughout the month, we encourage you to hang a kindness on the tree. A tag that notes your willingness to help with....well, just about anything. It's exclusive to our membership and we're hoping it promotes fellowship and friendship, so we can get to know each other better outside of the walls of church.**

**We ask that you note the kindness offered on one side of the tag and your contact information on the reverse. Please remember that some of our members may not have access to a computer, so a phone number would be helpful as well as an email address.**

**Here are some ideas:**

**Walking your dog**

**Taking you out to breakfast or lunch**

**Taking your car to be washed**

**Explaining how to text, email, etc.**

**Going for a walk with you**

**Taking you grocery shopping**

**A ride to and from a Dr appt**

**Changing curtains with you**

**Bake cookies with you**

**TAGS WILL BE PROVIDED; PLEASE HELP FILL THE TREE!**

**Starting on December 28<sup>th</sup>, members will be able to pull the tags and contact the kindness giver to arrange a mutual date. There's no time constraint on the kindness; it can be done any month! We're just hoping it's a springboard for fellowship. If it's a success, maybe an Easter tree will follow. 😊**

## **Christian Education and Nurture Backward Glance...Forward Stride**

As the hot days of July gave way to even hotter days the beginning of August, members of the CEN department took some time on Saturday the 15th to cool off under a large shade tree in scenic Colonial Park in Franklin Township. Our off-site Leadership Retreat provided the perfect opportunity to delve into a full agenda that included a Getting to Know You Icebreaker Exercise, the Importance of Spiritual Leadership, highlights from CAPC's Child Protection Program, excerpts from Jim Collins' book *Good to Great*, and the final item Backward Glance...Forward Stride, where we recounted many of our 2014-2015 accomplishments and cited some of the things we'd like to do moving forward during the 2015-2016 program year. We were privileged to have Pastor Lynn join us to present some of the information about spiritual leadership that the Elders covered during their retreat in July at Ocean Grove.

It's one thing to plan and organize a retreat and quite another thing to see how things fit together. Nevertheless, it was quite evident that the power of the Holy Spirit moved among us as we touched on agenda item after agenda item, at one point rearranging the order for better flow, and then believe it or not, giving up our free time to expand the duration of our conversation. Oh, the things we found out about each other from the most interesting fact segment of the icebreaker. Would you believe there is a beauty queen, state roller skating champion, and target shooter among our Sunday School teachers? Who knew? Of course Pastor's Lynn's component contained many spiritual nuggets; but to sum it up, spiritual leaders must be spiritually mature, and the way to maturity is through prayer, study, reflection, solitude, and service. I am sure we can all say, if we're honest with ourselves, we have some growing to do in any one or all the aforementioned areas.

Yes, it is important to pause and reflect, and the Backward Glance...Forward Stride component allowed us to appreciate God's grace and enabling presence in our midst as we looked back at our visit to the Woodlands nursing home, the Christmas Eve Family Worship Service, the culmination of almost a year's work to produce a child protection manual and accompanying training and background check system, and among other things, a major curriculum change which resulted in all Sunday School classes studying the same topic each week. Even though the Camp Johnsonburg on the Road Vacation Bible School project did not result in an on-site one week experience for campers as we'd hoped, we were still overjoyed that as a result of the efforts of our committee and the generosity of George Germinder, two children from CAPC, McRae and Wendy Nkellefack, had a chance to spend a week at Camp Johnsonburg. So with momentum from last year's successes on our side, but also realizing there's probably more we can do to meet the needs of a greater number of families, we're currently preparing a survey to glean additional ideas. Our goal is reach out to virtually everyone currently listed in the church directory. Who knows where the next great idea dwells? It could be in the mind of someone whose children were part of the Sunday School department 20 years ago, or even in the thoughts of a person who has no children, but encountered a great suggestion in her or his travels. You get the drift, God is

no respecter of persons when it comes to distributing creativity and grand ideas among His people.

We're really curious about what people at CAPC are thinking regarding Christian education and we hope when you receive your survey you'll take a few minutes to fill it out. If you don't get one in the mail, extra surveys will be available on the table under the hallway bulletin board. A backward glance and forward stride has CEN all revved up for 2015-2016. In the words of Walt Disney, "We keep moving forward, opening new doors, and doing new things, because we're curious and curiosity keeps leading us down new paths."





<b>Valarie Fisher</b>	<b>11/04</b>	<b>Jean Badalamenti</b>	<b>11/12</b>
<b>Leslie Fagan</b>	<b>11/05</b>	<b>Jonathan Buck</b>	<b>11/13</b>
<b>Deidra McIntyre</b>	<b>11/05</b>	<b>Janice Haer</b>	<b>11/13</b>
<b>Bob Fahrenholz</b>	<b>11/06</b>	<b>Herbert Coyler</b>	<b>11/16</b>
<b>Liz McNish</b>	<b>11/08</b>	<b>Brandon Baker</b>	<b>11/27</b>
<b>Ella Sawyer</b>	<b>12/05</b>	<b>Mark Badalamenti</b>	<b>12/24</b>
<b>Paul Mikalonis</b>	<b>12/07</b>	<b>Jessica Williams</b>	<b>12/28</b>
<b>Keith Mann</b>	<b>12/19</b>	<b>Chloris Archer</b>	<b>12/29</b>
<b>Susan Webster</b>	<b>12/19</b>	<b>Laura Mann</b>	<b>12/29</b>
<b>June Higgs</b>	<b>12/20</b>	<b>Alyssa Webster</b>	<b>12/30</b>
		<b>Michael Ngwa</b>	<b>12/31</b>



**Busy Bees were at work in the church on cleanup day! Many thanks to all who came to sweep, mop, dust, rake and haul.**

**We do this 2 Saturdays a year. If you can devote just 4 hours, two times a year, we would SO appreciate it!! Hopefully you've noticed that the grounds and the Sanctuary are better for it!**

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2015**

09:00 AM - 10:00 AM  
 09:30 AM - 10:15 AM  
 10:15 AM - 11:30 AM  
 05:00 PM - 07:00 PM

**THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

Sunday School (Adult)  
 Sunday School (Children)  
 CAPC - Worship Service  
 Crescent Concerts

Conf Room 101  
 2<sup>nd</sup> floor classrooms  
 Sanctuary  
 Sanctuary

*Yuletide by Candlelight***MONDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2015**

07:30 PM - 09:00 PM  
 07:30 PM - 09:30 PM

Christian Edu & Nurture  
 Finance Committee

Conference Call

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2015**

09:30 AM - 10:30 AM  
 12:00 PM - 02:00 PM

YOGA  
 Soup Kitchen

Guild Room  
 Assembly Room

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2015**

06:00 PM - 09:30 PM

Session Meeting

Off Location

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2015**

08:00 AM - 10:00 AM  
 09:00 AM - 10:30 AM  
 09:00 AM - 10:00 AM  
 09:15 AM - 10:00 AM  
 09:30 AM - 10:15 AM  
 10:15 AM - 11:30 AM

**FORTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

FOP Worship  
 St. Stephens Worship  
 Sunday School (Adult)  
 Chancel Choir  
 Sunday School (Children)  
 CAPC - Worship Service

Lower Chapel  
 Chapel  
 Conf Room 101  
 Sanctuary  
 2<sup>nd</sup> floor classrooms  
 Sanctuary

*A Service of Lessons & Carols*

11:30 AM - 01:30 PM

Christmas Luncheon

Assembly Room

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2015**

09:30 AM - 10:30 AM  
 12:00 PM - 02:00 PM

YOGA  
 Soup Kitchen

Guild Room  
 Assembly Room

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2015**

10:00 PM - 11:00 PM

Christmas Eve Candlelight

Sanctuary

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2015**

12:00 AM - 12:00 AM

CHRISTMAS - Office Closed

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 26, 2015 THRU SATURDAY, JANUARY 2, 2015**

Pastor

Rev. Lynn Santulli

Vacation