



Crescent Connections

Crescent Avenue Presbyterian Church
716 Watchung Avenue,
Plainfield, New Jersey 07060

December 2016
crescentonline.org
908-756-2468

December 2016 Pastoral Letter ...



Tidings of Great Joy this Christmas Season!

As I write this letter we are already deep into Advent and I can almost hear those Christmas Day bells ringing from not too far off on our church calendar. Christmas is a wonderfully crazy time of year--we rush around in search of peace, we juggle multiple shopping lists to celebrate the one, best gift ever given, we stress over all the details of a holiday that celebrates the birth of our Savior whose salvation story is filled with 'fear not.' We do all these things because we truly want people to know that they matter to us and we want to celebrate the gift they are in our own lives. We set our tables for family and friends because we want to offer the gift of hospitality and warmth (even if we have worked ourselves up to a full-court sweat to make it happen). We yearn to create memories that will be treasured because we know that in the end that is the most lasting gift--the love we show.

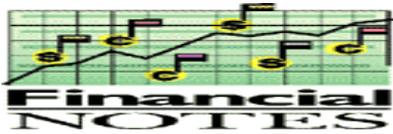
One thing we don't want to forget to do is breathe. Breathe in the wonderful smells of fir trees and Christmas cookies, of cups of hot chocolate and cinnamon candles. We want to breathe in the moments of joy that we grasp as we embrace loved ones, find ourselves laughing out loud, experiencing the moments of awe that come with worship. Perhaps that is even more important this year...to remember the precious gift that God has given us in Jesus Christ, that life and love are eternal because of His sacrifice.

This is a season of giving--but every season is one wherein the generosity of heart yields blessings of joy and goodwill. As you read through the articles in this newsletter, I hope you find ways to engage, serve, learn, worship and remember that you have an amazing church family who celebrates with you. I also hope that you feel encouraged by all the work that is being accomplished by God's grace and the many ways the gift of God's love in Christ continues to be magnified even today.

May you and your loved ones be incredibly blessed in this Christmas season and the year to come.

In Christ,

Pastor Lynn



Finance & Stewardship



A Note from Finance – A Look Ahead **Kathy Mann**

As we wrap up 2016 we can be proud that we continued to show progress from a financial point of view. We performed better than our budget and accomplished wonderful things in 2016. That spirit of generosity and comradery continued into the Stewardship campaign and budget process for 2017. Although we still are budgeting for a gap between receipts and expenses, there is a plan for creative approaches to bridge the deficit.

I am very optimistic that we can continue to make progress on our goal to narrow the budget gap and get our beautiful building to be self-supporting. The kitchen renovation project will be completed in 2017 and help with that goal. This will allow us to grow our mission and ministries. As we work together to accomplish projects, we gain more than we give. We have all come together and stepped up in 2016. We believe in what we are doing here. Let's continue with generous hearts to do God's work here at CAPC in 2017 and well into the future.



A Crescent Avenue Christmas

ome to Crescent Avenue Presbyterian Church for the Christmas celebration. Sunday October 18th is our lessons and carols service with the Christmas luncheon to follow. We'd love to celebrate the season with you. Please just let the church office know you are coming.

Our traditional candle light Christmas Eve service is at 10:00 PM (prelude beginning at 9:30 PM) on the 24th and Christmas Day worship is at the usual 10:30 AM.



Mission & Outreach

Pat Fleming - Chairperson

News from the Soup Kitchen

Approximately 15 students from Carteret High School will volunteer at the Soup Kitchen on December 13th and will bring 70 Blessing Bags with them. The students have filled these bags with appropriate items and have included an encouraging message in each. These Blessing Bags, along with the 60 filled by Valarie Fisher and those filled by others, will be distributed by the students to our guests when they are volunteering on Tuesday, December 13th.

Ryan Vincent, a student at Scotch Plains/Fanwood High School has collected coats and jackets for distribution to our Soup Kitchen guests. This is the second time Ryan has done this project and we are appreciative of his commitment and efforts. The coats he has collected will be added to those received from Jersey Cares. The Jersey Cares coats are being picked up on Saturday, December 10th and all coats will be distributed to our guests on December 13th while the High School students are there to help. Students at Wardlaw Hartridge High School prepared 50 box lunches containing sandwiches, fruit and drinks for our Soup Kitchen guests on December 6th. These were given as “take away” bags for those guests needing them.

The hat project, which began as a way to provide hats to all our soup kitchen clients on the Tuesday of their special holiday meal, has been spearheaded by Joan Pivnichny, and several elves have been knitting away for months.

A Christmas luncheon with a special menu is being planned for our Soup Kitchen guests on December 20th. The hats from Joan Van Pelt’s “Hat Knitting Project” will be distributed, along with the porcelain cups (donated by Debbie Flynn, one of our faithful volunteers) filled with candy and other goodies. The menu will include the delicious macaroni and cheese donated by Ron Pierson, owner of the 25 Burgers franchise, who has donated many servings of this favorite for our Soup Kitchen lunches. This promises to be a festive and heartwarming gathering of guests and volunteers.



Christmas Mission Project

The Box Project Holiday Family Match Program

This year the Mission Committee has elected to sponsor a family through an organization known as The Box Project, located in Hernando, Mississippi. The Box Project's mission is to encourage and enrich the lives of families and individuals living in poverty in rural America and does this by matching and fostering person to person relationships between the sponsor and the sponsored family.

All families in the program have incomes below the poverty level and live in the Mississippi Delta. The Box Project has provided us with tips and guidelines on the types of items to be sent and asks that each family member receive at least one new gift. Supplies and clothes in good condition are also appreciated and appropriate.

Crescent has been assigned a family consisting of a single mother and five (5) children, ranging in age from 3 years old to 12 years old, 3 girls and 2 boys.

Look and listen for upcoming details regarding the kinds of items we want to collect and send. We are also supposed to communicate directly with the family so the Mission Committee's hope is that the Sunday School children will write and share with the children in their age groups.

If you would like to learn more about The Box Project take a look at their website:
www.boxproject.org

oliday Box Ideas: (All gifts due by December 21st, wrapped and w/name tag for recipient!)

1. Cookware
2. Crock Pot
3. Kitchen towels
4. Child friendly snacks
5. Holiday stocking with small gifts
6. Small new gift for each family member
7. Disposable camera for holiday photos
8. Picture frames/album
9. Family Games/puzzles
10. Jump ropes
11. Music
12. Jackets (gently used OK)
13. Shoes/boots/slippers
14. Scarves/hats
15. Gloves/mittens
16. Ear muffs
17. Socks
18. Thermal underwear
19. Sweaters
20. Flannel pajamas
21. Bathrobes
22. Blankets
23. Sheets (King, Queen, crib)
24. Toothbrush/toothpaste
25. Hand sanitizer/tissues/wipes
26. Paper/pencils/pens
27. Books for each family member
28. Balls (baseball, basketball soccer)
29. Dolls and age appropriate toys
30. Stationery, envelopes, stamp

These are ideas and additional food, supplies, or clothing items in good condition are acceptable. A recipe you like, along with the ingredients to fix it would be nice.

No perishable items or candles!

Please select and enter item numbers from the above list and/or add your own and write it under the name of the family member(s) the items are for

Feleshia (Mom)	Dunlae (Male - age 12)
Ta'Mya (Female-age 9)	Ja'Nya (Female-age 6)
Seldrick (Male- age 5)	Takeish (Female-age 3)

***NOTE: SINCE WE DO NOT HAVE CURRENT SIZES FOR THE CHILDREN WE ARE RECOMMENDING CASH DONATIONS TO BE MADE INSTEAD FOR THE PURCHASE OF WALMART GIFT CARDS.**

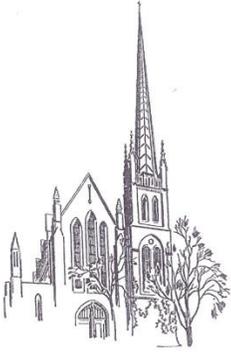


This tree, which you will be able to see when you come for services, graces the Narthex of Crescent Avenue Presbyterian Church for the season.

It was donated by the Reicken family and lovingly decorated by Crescent elves Kathy Mann, Joyce Miller, Maryellen Moffitt and Julie Downing.

Gotta say it's spectacular, as is the one in the Guild Room, decorated by those same elves!





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CRESCENT CONNECTIONS 2016



Now your whole family will be able to take their Christmas photo in our lovely Guild Room.

So, invite the whole family to worship and take your own group picture or selfie for the holidays immediately after worship!

