

# Crescent Connections

A newsletter of Crescent Avenue Presbyterian Church

716 Watchung Avenue, Plainfield, New Jersey 07060

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Winter 2022

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Dear Crescentonians,

As I am writing this letter, I am sitting at my computer in my church office, warm peppermint mocha coffee at hand, looking out the window and reflecting on the season before us. I am reminded of a time not yet on our calendars (Epiphany) and the journey of the wise men in following the light in the sky, a star so bright it would be written about for thousands of years. The star shone, we are told, not only in the deep darkness of evening, but in the bright light of day as well. We journey together to and through another Advent and Christmas season and into a new year. Many of us are very aware of where we are on our journey, some of us feeling a little left in the dark and some of us enjoying the light, but wherever we are, we are on this journey together.

We prepare ourselves to receive the light of Christmas once more as we sing Advent hymns, listen to sermons proclaiming the Good News and offering prayers for joy, hope, peace, and love. We turn the pages of our lives as we turn pages in our calendars, giving thanks in all things for our stories are part of God's story and His story is marvelous. We lean not on our own understanding but live in faith that God continues to move in our world to heal, bring hope, offer peace, extend love. We journey as a people steeped in hope because of what we have already witnessed and press on to promised glory.

This issue of our newsletter captures but a tiny portion of all the good that God has done in our midst as we look with expectant and assured hope in what will yet be. CAPC remains strong, vital, a servant to Christ and His community in our midst. We have much to celebrate and we do. Christ's light shines in the darkness and the darkness shall never overcome it. What a blessing to not only know this truth but actually *live* this truth in these days. Where others are discouraged, we are encouraged. Where others may be stumbling, we have found sure footing in faith.



My prayer is that you and your loved ones will experience the joy, peace and wonder that is truly Christmas. If you have been away, we are leaving the light on for you and hope you will come home soon. If you have continued serving and being a part of this wonderful community, we give thanks.

In Christ's love

Pastor Lynn

## **Come Home to Church –it is time to worship**



**Sunday Worship - 10:20 am (prelude), 10:30 am worship begins** - what better way to journey through Advent than by making a commitment to attend worship each week during this Holy Season? Beautiful music, a breathtaking campus, timely sermons and an opportunity to grow in community and faith. Leave the chaos and frenzy behind and give yourself some time to breathe in the presence of the sacred and hear the cherished truths embraced for generations.

**Devotionals** - We have a wide selection of devotionals that are free of charge and here for your enjoyment and growth. They are perfect for bringing with you and reading while you take a sip of hot coffee (or chocolate or tea). Drink in the prayers and nourish your soul with the joy of the season. Booklets are available in the hallway at church.

**Lessons and Carols - Sunday, December 18 - 10:15 prelude** - The story told through the reading of Scripture and music, this is often cited as people's favorite service of worship of the entire year. A Christmas luncheon immediately follows worship.

**Christmas Eve Service - 10:00 pm** - with Advent behind us and Christmastide beginning, come mark this Holy Night through Communion, sermon, beautiful and moving music. The sacred fills this space with the evening darkness scattered by the lights of candles. Come home for Christmas. We've left the light on for you!

**Christmas Day Service - 10:30 am** – join us on Christmas morning for a joyous service of worship complete with a special Christmas message by Reverend Lynn Santulli and Christmas hymns that celebrate the season. Come home for Christmas. We'll leave the light on for you!

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

## Buildings & Grounds



Even from the earliest history of this church, CAPC has proven over and over again that wars, or economic downturns or other challenges never keep this church down...and now we can add pandemic to that list as well. This past year we have made major strides in the continued renovation of the church campus. Through a grant that funded the majority of the project, the First Place parking lot was remediated, repaved and relined. This represented a wonderful improvement to our campus. The work is not yet completed as we will be repairing/restoring fencing to the front and are continuing to investigate improving lighting in the back area. Donations have already been received to help begin this project.

In addition, we have installed a new walkway to the parking lot as well. This was funded largely from a grant from the Northeast Presbytery (the shortfall of \$1K to be taken from special projects). The garage roof was repaired and cleaned out and now serves as a distribution point for the clothing, housewares and other items donated to help support the community.

Other items accomplished on our to-do list included the repair and care of our Sanctuary and Chapel doors, steps renovated to the Sanctuary and Chapel and quotes to help reset the stones in our walkways leading up to the church.

The care of a campus this side is no small task. We are blessed with Elders Nicholas Stevens and Henry Ward who work tirelessly to help make all of this happen. In addition, the donations received by you are critical to helping us restore this church to its grandeur.

We will not falter in our faith, nor lag in our zeal to continue the work necessary to ensure we offer the best we have to God and His glory, and provide a building that is a testament to our desire to build up God's Kingdom and provide a sanctuary and space for people to gather, for lives to be transformed and for glory to be given to God.

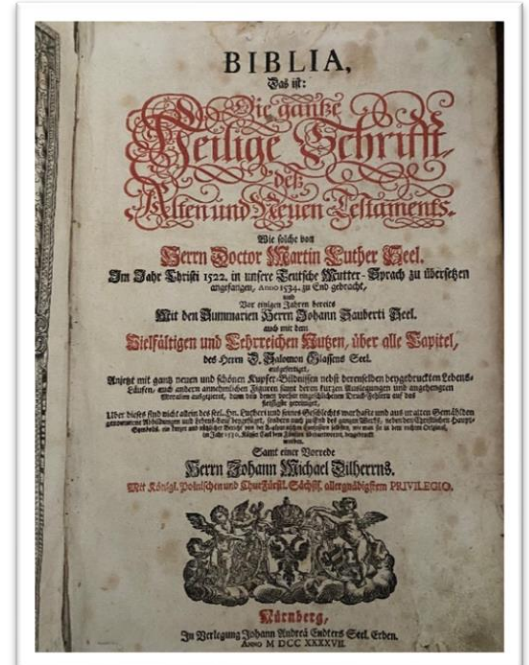




# CAPC Archive Project

by Bonnie Canevari, church archivist

The Crescent Avenue Presbyterian Church Archive Project is in full swing, and the extent of church materials is incredible. The collection includes church records, photographs, newspaper articles, architectural drawings, artwork, correspondence and more categories than you would believe. The history of this church is overwhelming, the archives are extensive and reflect a church and a history that has served a community with richness and dedication to do God's work. Over the last several weeks there has been much progress and many, many items moved from different locations within the church to their new home on the third floor. Documents are being sorted and treasures are being uncovered. The CAPC archives are busy, busy with the unique and fascinating history being uncovered from years of documents sitting and waiting to be rediscovered and transformed into a rich historical catalog which will serve as a future library within the walls of the church.



**1472 Martin Luther Bible (German)**

In October I was fortunate to attend an archiving webinar run by the Plainfield Library which provided additional information free of charge. Appropriate materials, methods and resources for archiving were outlined and support services are available where we have questions or concerns.



**1890 Winter Scene**

This is an amazing project, and I am asking those interested in assisting to reach out to me, so when I am ready for additional help I know who to contact. Hopefully there are members who may help recognize people in photographs, so if you've been a member a long time or perhaps your family has a long history here I would encourage you to come to the aid of the project.

# Valarie's Soup Kitchen (VSK)

## Things are busy at VSK!

by Elder Pat Fleming

More than lunches are served every Tuesday with the clothing and personal items tables doing a brisk walk up business before, during and after the VSK service hours. Jo-Ann Bandomer and her team work with the guests outside and distribute donated, gently used clothing and household items, as well as items purchased by the volunteers. They even fill special requests by the guests for specific items, such as large shoe/boot sizes and other needs.

Jo-Ann has posted a Facebook request for donations to this clothing mission at CAPC, either through monetary or in-kind donations. With the sudden onset of cold weather the need for winter coats/jackets, heavy socks, boots, gloves and hats has become urgent. Jo-Ann and her team also need sleeping bags for the winter as many of our guests sleep rough and this provides them some warmth and comfort.

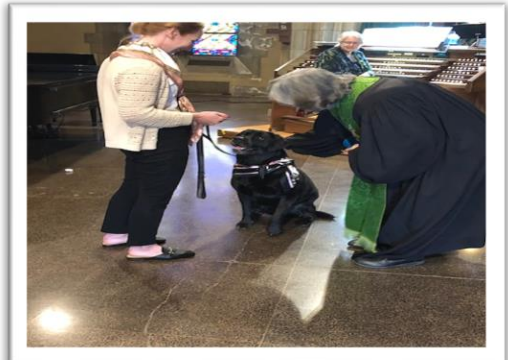
The last few weeks in VSK have found the volunteers scrambling and having to fill in for Chef Kevin who became ill. Originally, we had planned to give out “enhanced” bag lunches on November 8<sup>th</sup>, but due to the good relationship developed by Jo-Ann with Costco during her weekly pickups of the donated items, we received an assortment of food items that just needed to be warmed up, along with some sandwich and soup items. So, with the good luck of having a VSK volunteer who has catering experience, Mara Applebaum stepped up with her partner Joanne and got hot lunches or a sandwich with hot soup to over 100 guests.



The church's garage now houses the donations of clothing and other non-food items. These items are distributed on Tuesday and assist our community in powerful ways.

# Blessing of the Animals

In special recognition of the creatures God has placed in our lives, on November 13, Crescent Avenue once again held the Blessing of the Animals during Sunday worship. Furry friends in all colors and sizes received a blessing and a pet goodie bag upon entering the sanctuary. Even pet comfort stations were set up for those “special needs.” During the ceremony, Pastor Lynn lovingly blessed each animal, thanked owners for their love and care and gave out special blessing tags. Pets reciprocated with much tail wagging, a few barks and even a bit of doggy drool. Thirteen dogs, photos of kitties and two plush toy cats were counted amongst those blessed. All were remarkably well behaved during the service and even joined in with a woofed amen!







Hunger takes no holiday. As we gather and celebrate this holiday season, let us be ever mindful of those in our midst who may be hungry. Crescent will have a special food drive for Plainfield's Starfish Food Pantry now through the end of

December. Food items especially needed are peanut butter, jelly, pasta, pasta sauce, tuna, soup, boxed mac and cheese, cereal, canned fruit, canned vegetables, baked beans. ALSO, Starfish is in need of reusable grocery bags.

Donations may be placed in the Starfish bin in the church office.

## Music News

By Dr. Susan Caldwell-Nelson, Director of Music

Preparations are underway for our **December 18 Lessons and Carols** service. We are thrilled to have harpist Elaine Christy with us this year! She will be playing a prelude beginning around 10:15 and will join the choir for several carols from Benjamin Britten's Ceremony of Carols. Don't miss this beautiful service which

immerses us in the profound mystery of Christ's incarnation through hymns, anthems, and scripture readings. It will be a welcome respite from the hectic pace and commercialism of the season - bring family and invite friends.



In Advent we welcome our first Choral Scholar, Lucie Saint Denis. A Choral Scholar will, for a small stipend, augment a section in the choir by participating in our service and both the preservice and post-service rehearsals. Lucie is an alto, a senior at Westfield High School and colleague of our treasured bass, Ryan Williamson. Welcome, Lucie!

Finally, Bonnie Canevari emailed me images of a document she found while sorting through archival papers. I was excited to see that it is a Christmas carol! "To the Manger" is a musical setting of a poem by John Moment (1875-1959), dated c. 1923. As many of you know, Moment was pastor of CAPC from 1919 until his retirement and lived in Plainfield from 1920 until his death. The music is attributed to May de Forest and is dated 1923. I couldn't imagine missing the opportunity to program this in our Lessons and Carols and Christmas Eve services, so you will have TWO opportunities to hear the choir sing it before the year is over.

## Finance & Stewardship

At a time when so many churches are struggling to keep their doors open and their congregation's alive, CAPC continues to be incredibly blessed with strong finances and dedicated parishioners. This year's stewardship campaign yielded five new pledges. In addition, the average pledge increased over any previous year! That is truly something to celebrate and give thanks to God. Crescent Avenue members and friends generously pledge their time, talents and treasures to the building up of God's Kingdom here at Crescent, in our community and in the world.

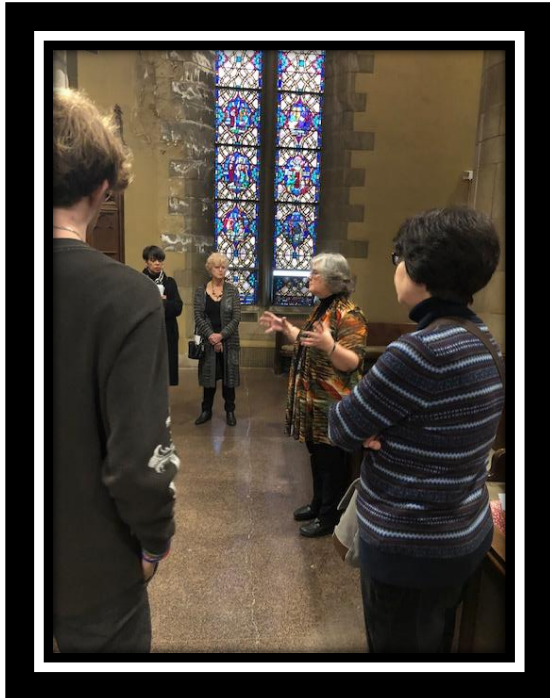
As Christians we are called upon to give generously and joyously to God. It is a mark of our faith, our dedication to Christ and our witness to the gratitude we have for all that God has done in our lives. Pledging is one way of witnessing to our faith and a powerful one, for sure. There are other ways you may show your support of Christ's church here in our midst. Special gifts are always welcomed and are used for special building projects, mission efforts and other essential projects that continue to improve our church life. Perhaps you would remember CAPC on your Christmas list and make a Christmas offering to a project or to the general fund (which supports all of our efforts). Giving yields joy and is a gift never forgotten or overlooked by our Lord. We give thanks to God for all He has done and we give thanks to you, disciples of our Lord, who make this world a better place.



Crescentonians literally step up in faith and brought their pledges forward on Stewardship Sunday.



## CAPC Tour and Brunch



Membership and Evangelism sponsored a church tour and brunch on October 23, after worship. Pastor Lynn led the attentive group through our amazing building, pointing out notable architecture, artifacts and highlights of our amazing history. All enjoyed the brunch and conversation that followed. At the end of the tour Pastor Lynn shared that of all the wonderful things and amazing campus space we are blessed with at this church, the greatest treasure is you. Being part of this incredible church, embracing the Christian life and becoming a Crescentonian is a joy, an honor and a privilege.

If you would like to see some of the church's architectural highlights from the comfort of your own home, go to [crescentonline.org](http://crescentonline.org) and click on 'Electronic Tour.'



We are updating our website and expect to launch our new site sometime in January 2023. With a fresh face and streamlined information sharing, we are excited to begin our new year with a new look. We hope you will check it out.



## **Coffee and Fellowship Returns...and we are happy!**

Coffee and Fellowship has returned and occurs in the Guild Room the fourth Sunday of each month, immediately after worship. Our goal is to 'keep it simple' as we don't want to stress anyone out nor do we want to make it

competitive, but we enjoy this time to catch up, have a nibble and go on our Sunday way.

If you would be willing to host a month, please let BJ Snyder know. She can be reached on 908.229.6808 or email her at [dillyanwen@aol.com](mailto:dillyanwen@aol.com)

Thank you to Chris Levitsky and Geraldine Harvey who have already hosted! How about you?

## **MOVIE NIGHT AT CAPC "HIDDEN FIGURES"**

Education and Discipleship at Crescent held a movie night featuring the acclaimed film "Hidden Figures", which is the story of Marion Louise Lee Johnson, a NASA space engineer who was instrumental in the success of the Apollo 11 Lunar Moon Landing Mission. The struggles she faced as a woman of color in the program in the late 1960s was discussed following the snack-filled showing.





**Congratulations to Laura Mann and William Skrabal** who are engaged to be married in 2023. Laura has served as a deacon and is now a sitting elder on the Session of CAPC. Laura has served on numerous committees, led several more, served a reader for various services and so much more. We are thrilled for the couple and wish them all the best.

**Congratulations to Dr. Darcella A. Patterson**

**Sessomes** who was promoted to Chief of the Division of Programs and Reintegration Services. Following is the announcement from her department head:

Dr. Sessomes joined the Department in 2004, as the Assistant Director for the Office of Transitional Services. She has since climbed the ranks, holding titles of Director and Assistant Commissioner in the Division of Programs, responsible for overseeing educational, transitional and religious services, residential community reintegration programs (RCRP), community engagement and reentry initiative (CERI), victim and volunteer services. She has been instrumental in spearheading the NJLEAD grants, establishing the CERI Unit and expanding the rehabilitative services available to the incarcerated population. In addition, Dr. Sessomes has launched trauma, recovery and resiliency for the women at Edna Mahan Correctional Facility and heads the critical incident stress management (CISM) team.

Dr. Sessomes received a Doctorate of Social Work from the University of Pennsylvania, School of Policy and Practice. Additionally, she received both a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and a Master of Social Work from Rutgers University. Most recently, she completed her Master of Divinity at Princeton Theology Seminary. Dr. Sessomes is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. She has served as a part-time lecturer for Rutgers University School of Social Work, the University of Pennsylvania, Montclair University and Kean University.

PRAYER  
LIST



**Health Issues:** Richard Crane, Barbara Smith, Luis Davila, Dennis Villanueva and Family, James, Craig Harvey, Glen Crane, Cena Pollitt, Roy Blair, Uzziel Arias & Family, Dudley Lumley, Rick and Lisa Lamareux, Hank Hornstein, Michael, Patrick, Maria Rita Castañeda, Andrea Wensberg, Kenneth and

Vivian Frank, Henry Ward, Jr., Lydia Rios, Jason, Carol, Stella, Emily Upton, Chris Levitsky, David Brand, those recovering from surgery.

**Homebound:** Winnie Neal, Joan Williams, Mary Jo Buck

**Bereavement:** Passing of Sally Nkellefack's father, Jonah Alasie, and cousin, Chineye

Do you have news you'd like to share? Email Pastor Lynn at [lsantulli67@gmail.com](mailto:lsantulli67@gmail.com) and we will include it in our upcoming newsletter.



# Crescent Avenue Presbyterian Church

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## 2022 LEADERSHIP

### ELDERS

#### Class of 2022

Henry Ward  
Thylene Torres  
Janice Haer  
Emily Upton  
Laura Mann

#### Class of 2023

Patricia Fleming  
Kathy Mann  
BJ Snyder  
Roz Ealum  
Nicholas Stevens

#### Class of 2024

Jacque Archer-Kennedy  
Drude Crane  
Sherrie Granger  
Joan Pivnichny  
Leslie Fagan

#### Clerk of Session:

Joan Pivnichny

#### Buildings & Grounds:

Henry Ward/  
Nick Stevens

#### Comm. Partnerships:

Roz Ealum

#### Congregational Care:

Laura Mann

#### Education &

Janice Haer

#### Discipleship:

Kathy Mann

#### Finance &

#### Stewardship:

#### Membership &

#### Evangelism:

BJ Snyder

#### Ministry Teams

Janice Haer, Jacque Archer-Kennedy, Chrystal  
McArthur, Deidra McIntyre, Pat Baker  
Gary Mann, Joan Pivnichny

Jacque Archer-Kennedy, Sherrie Granger, Noelle  
Perrine, Thylene Torres, Andre McIntyre, Deidra  
McIntyre, Bonnie Canevari, Janice Haer, Wendy  
Reid

Sherrie Granger

#### Valerie's Soup Kitchen:

Patricia  
Fleming

#### Nominating:

Laura Mann

Drude Crane, Dominique Stevens, Janice Haer,  
Noelle Perrine

#### Personnel & Admin:

Emily Upton

Janice Haer, Roz Ealum, Nick Stevens

#### Worship, Music & Arts:

Janice Haer

Drude Crane, BJ Snyder, Jacque Archer-Kennedy,  
Emily Upton, Gerry Harvey, Wendy Reid,  
Barbara Wensberg

### STAFF

Rev. Lynn Santulli  
Dr. Susan Caldwell Nelson  
Dr. Darcella Sessomes  
Tracey Robinson  
Dominique Stevens

Pastor  
Director of Music Ministries  
PTS Seminarian  
Office Administrator  
Director of Facilities

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