



The Friendly News

The First Presbyterian Church of Woodbury Heights
December 2017/January 2018



From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Friends,

Black Friday has been an unofficial date on the calendar for quite some time. Cyber Monday made its appearance some years ago, but is here to stay. And Giving Tuesday (the day after Cyber Monday) showed up just recently.

Giving Tuesday is a reminder from a lot of charities that if you make a donation before Dec. 31 that you can claim a tax deduction next spring.

But here are a few thoughts about giving:

Before you give, make sure the charity you are giving to is legitimate. Some scams are out there, trying to use similar sounding names to confuse possible donors. If a charity sounds unfamiliar to you, check them out online first. Charity Navigator is among the websites that can help with that.

Before you give, even to a legitimate charity, do a little research to find out how much of your gift is going to administrative costs and NOT to help the hungry, homeless, hurting, etc.

Be an educated giver so your gift makes a difference. Just as an example, I had a phone call a few years ago seeking a donation to St. Jude's Hospital – a worthy charity.

I asked the young man who was calling if he worked for the hospital or a fund-raising company the hospital had hired. He admitted that it was the latter. When I asked him how

much of my donation would go to the hospital and how much to the company he worked for, he wouldn't tell me. There's a red flag!

That's why our per-capita donation to the Presbyterian Church is so important – it pays all the administrative costs so that every dollar we give through the church to the hungry, homeless, hurting, etc. goes to meet those very needs!

Before you give, remember that if you give one large donation to one charity, it will have a greater impact than by giving several small ones to several charities.

By now, you are waiting for me to bring up giving to the church – our church, your church.

So, here it is: Think about what your church means to you, how it impacts your life, and how your participation in it makes us better able to reflect God's light and love.

After all, the real meaning of Christmas, above and beyond the malls and Amazon and everything the world uses to define OUR holiday -- and it IS our holiday -- is the gift God gave us of His own Son.

It is Jesus' birthday, but He gave us the gift of peace on earth, good will toward all, and eternal life. What gift could be better than that?

May our giving reflect the fact that we are celebrating Christ-mas, not Mall-mas or Shopping-mas or Black-ink-at-the-end-of-the-year-mas!

In Christ, John

PS: Remember that our financial secretary, Dick Daugherty, must have your tithes/gifts *in hand* by Dec. 31 for you to claim a tax deduction in the spring.

December birthdays

1 – John David Geserick
 1 – Nicholas Long
 3 – Joseph Martino, Jr.
 3 – Rachel Outten
 3 – Shannon Woodrow
 5 – Lilliana DeFinizio
 8 – Jimmy Clyde
 11 – John Battle
 11 – Sarah Keedy
 12 – Ada White
 16 – Kayla Geserick
 23 – Jeanette Palmer
 24 – Matthew Davis
 24 – Stacey Spinosi
 24 – Winnie Higgins
 25 – CHRIST, THE SAVIOR
 26 – Michael Golding
 26 – Patrick Schoen, Jr.
 27 – Holly Golding
 29 – Philip String
 30 – Jerry Baker
 30 – Brett McMichael
 30 – Alexander Pizarro

**December anniversaries**

7 – Ken & Samantha
 Eachus
 17 – Charles & Joyce Elliott
 20 – Matthew & Melissa
 Woodrow
 21 – Patrick & Peg Schoen
 22 – Richard & Joy Love
 27 – Dave & Linda Kershaw
 29 – Quint Lerch & Judy
 Grantham

January anniversaries

29 – John & Denise
 Pitchford

January birthdays

1 – Liz (Billings) Santora
 2 – Isabella Sammacicci
 5 – Steve Antosky
 5 – Hayley Antosky
 5 – Karen Bagnell
 5 – Jean Woodrow
 6 – Carl Kuehnafel

January birthdays

7 – Eric Williamson
 9 – Luke Pheasant
 9 – Paul G. Belcher
 10 – Kim Lambert Sharp
 10 – Bonnie Lee Wilson
 11 – Laura Seidemann
 14 – Kathy Pedicone
 14 – Michael Urion
 15 – Nolan Becker
 16 – Jim Golding
 18 – David J. Belcher
 21 – Matthew Woodrow
 21 – Nicholas J. Zorio
 23 – Kay Pierson
 24 – Dave Kershaw
 25 – Amy Peterson
 26 – Linda Kershaw
 29 – Judy Milio
 29 – Robinson Guerra

**News and notes from our pastor**

Special get-well wishes and prayers go out to those in our church family who were hospitalized recently.

They are **Joy Love**, **Arnie Shannon** and **Joanne Westermaier** (Sarah Keedy's mother) – all in Inspira; and **Pete Siciliano** in Lehigh Valley Medical Center.

We also ask for get-well wishes and prayers for **Laura Holleny Czaikowski** as she receives treatments, **Fran Lambert**, **Jim Golding**, **Ginny Naylor**, **Dick Shaw**, **Glen Higgins** (Winnie's son who is recovering from injuries in an auto accident), **John McDevitt** (Elisha Elliott's brother-in-law), and **Joe McDonnell** (Pat's husband).

Thanks go out to the **Youth Group** for their 'Sundae Saturday with Santa' event; **Peg Schoen**, for organizing the reception following the RCGC community chorus concert on Dec. 2; and to our **deacons and other helpers**, who decorated the church for Advent and Christmas!

This year's Christmas Pageant onstage in Fellowship Hall at 11 a.m. Christmas Eve

Our Christmas Pageant will be a little different this year.

We will be holding it on Sunday, Dec. 24 (Christmas Eve) as part of our regular 11 a.m. worship service.

The pageant will be held in Fellowship Hall so we can take advantage of its stage.

Our Sunday School students, our Nursery Singers, our Cherub Choir and our Youth Choir will all participate – and the congregation will be active participants as well!

The pageant will give us all an opportunity to focus on the many and powerful meanings of the Christmas story.

Its title, "A Christmas Alphabet," is simple, but the story it tells of the birth of a Savior, our Savior, will remind us how much God loves us.

You won't want to miss it!

DECEMBER

2017

“And going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him.”

-- Matthew 2:11



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Newsletter deadline, 5 pm	2 Deacons' decorating brunch, 9 am Community Christmas concert, 4 pm
3 Sunday School advent event, 9:30 am Worship, communion, 11 am	4	5 Esther Circle, Oутten home, 7 pm	6	7 Quilt group, 10 am Bell choir practice, 6:45 pm Sanctuary choir, 7:45 pm	8	9 Men's group, Piston Diner, 8:30 am
10 Sunday School, 9:30 am Worship, 11 am	11 PrimeTimers' Christmas luncheon, noon	12	13	14 Quilt group, 10 am Bell choir practice, 6:45 pm Sanctuary choir, 7:45 pm	15	16 Sundae Saturday with Santa, noon, Fellowship Hall
17 Sunday School, 9:30 am Worship, 11 am	18	19	20 Mission meets, 6:30 pm Session meets, 7:30 pm	21 Quilt group, 10 am Bell choir practice, 6:45 pm Sanctuary choir, 7:45 pm	22	23
24 Christmas pageant, 11 am Christmas Eve worship, 7 pm	25 MERRY CHRISTMAS	26	27	28	29	30
31 Worship, 11 am						



JANUARY 2018

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.”

-- 2 Corinthians 5:17

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 Esther Circle, Ada White's home, 7 pm	3	4 Quilt group, 10 am Bell choir practice, 6:45 pm Sanctuary choir, 7:45 pm	5	6
7 Sunday School, 9:30 am Worship, communion, 11 am Covered dish luncheon, 12:30 pm	8 PrimeTimers meet, noon	9	10	11 Quilt group, 10 am Bell choir practice, 6:45 pm Sanctuary choir, 7:45 pm	12	13 Men's group, Piston Diner, 8:30 am
14 Sunday School, 9:30 am Worship, officer installation, 11 am	15	16	17 Mission meets, 6:30 pm Session meets, 7:30 pm	18 Quilt group, 10 am Bell choir practice, 6:45 pm Sanctuary choir, 7:45 pm	19	20
21 Sunday School, 9:30 am	22	23 Deacons meet, 7 pm	24 Mission meets, 6:30 pm Session meets, 7:30 pm	25 Quilt group meets, 10 am Bell choir practice, 6:45 pm	26 Newsletter deadline, 5 pm	27
28 Sunday School, 9:30 a.m. Choir practice, 9:30 am Worship 11 am	29	30	31			



DEACONS CORNER: Next meeting 7 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 23, 2018, annex

MERRY CHRISTMAS: As Bob Hope said, “My idea of Christmas, whether old-fashioned or modern, is very simple: loving others.” And Charles Schultz said, “Christmas is doing a little something extra for someone.”

Thank you to all who helped during our annual decorating brunch.

The Christmas Giving Tree will be ready Dec. 3: Several community families responded to allow us to help with their children’s Christmas wishes. If you wish to take gift tags off the Narthex Tree, please **sign up on the master sheet** on the bulletin board. **Please have your gifts wrapped with the tag attached by Dec. 17.** We deliver the gifts on the 17th so promptness is a necessity. Thank you in advance, because we know our congregation is so charitable!

News: The results of our Nov. 28th meeting are as follows:

Communion: Oct. 29 -- 63 people were served, including one at home

Next Communions: Dec. 3: Elders serve; Jan. 7: Deacons serve (Steve Elliott, Joyce Woodrow, Sue Reim and Carol Martino)

Food collection for November: 71 items were collected; Year to date: 771. Please continue donating. Maybe we can match or better our giving from last year, which was more than 1,000 items! Suggested food items for December and January: peanut butter and jelly – but all nonperishable foods are welcomed!

Visitations: Fifty were made by deacons during November.

College students: “Thinking of You” cards with Wawa gift cards will be given to five church members attending college.

Flower Fund: Erin Zorio reports that as of Nov. 19 the fund is stable – with 12 arrangements to be purchased/dedicated. Remember: These arrangements are given to shut-ins or others that the deacons visit. Please look for order forms in the Narthex. Also poinsettias are available to purchase and take after Christmas Eve services. See the Sunday Bulletin to order.

Farewell and thank you to deacons ending their terms: Cassandra DeFinizio, Steve Elliott and Joyce Woodrow.

Welcome to “newbies” starting their terms in January: Kristine Brenner and Nancy Butler.

Mark your calendars:

Dec. 3: Communion

Dec. 24: 11 a.m. worship in Fellowship Hall – Christmas Pageant
7 p.m. Christmas Eve service in sanctuary

Jan. 7: Communion

Jan. 14: Installation/ordination of new officers

Take down Christmas decorations after worship ... all are welcome to chip in!

Please continue to provide donations in the green offering envelopes. Thank you!

And most importantly: Please inform Rev. Shedwick of anyone in need of prayer, assistance or a visit.

God Bless - In Christ’s service, Your Board of Deacons: Steve Antosky, Nolan Becker, Liz Billings, Cassandra DeFinizio, Steve Elliott, Madison Kratzer, Kayleigh Reim, Nancy MacDermott, Carol Martino, Joan Mullin, Sue Reim, Andrew Reynolds, Peg Schoen, Dottie Shedwick, Ada White, Joyce Woodrow, moderator

Highlights from the November meeting of Session

Your Session met on Wednesday, Nov. 15. After devotions were presented by Barbara Daugherty, the minutes of the previous Session meeting were approved.

Pastor's report: Rev. Shedwick drove 328 miles on church business in October, which included 17 home visits, one hospital visit, three counseling sessions and one in-home communion offering. The ushers for December are: Connie Harley (Dec. 3), Jake Mangano (Dec. 10), Jeannie Mangano (Dec. 17), Kara Outten (11 a.m. Dec. 24), Denise Pitchford (7 p.m. Dec. 24) and John Pitchford (Dec. 31).

Building and Property: The Session voted to accept the commission's recommendation to replace three of the six air-conditioning units in our sanctuary. The new units double as heaters and should help us save on fuel costs during the winter. Money from the Cooper bequest will pay for the units. The other three sanctuary air conditioners will be replaced at a later date. ... The batteries in the sanctuary thermostats have been replaced. ... The commission told the Session of the need to replace the windows along the stairway on the 4th Street side of Fellowship Hall. ... Former West Deptford police chief Craig Mangano will talk to the commission and others about precautions and possible strategies should an active shooter invade our church.

Christian Education: Angels and shepherds were the theme of the Sunday School Advent program on Dec. 3. ... Our Sunday School children will play an active role in our annual Christmas pageant, which will be at 11 a.m. Sunday, Dec. 24, in Fellowship Hall. The pageant will be that morning's worship service. There will be a second service at 7 p.m. the same day. ... Sunday School children will donate blankets to Project Linus, for use by children in need of comfort.

Stewardship and Finance: The Session voted to invest 62.5 percent of the Cooper bequest with Merrill-Lynch in an effort to ensure the church's long-term financial future. The remaining money will help us defray the cost of our roofing/bathroom loan, cover an immediate budget shortfall and pay for the new air-conditioning units. ... A three-member committee that includes our treasurer (Steve Elliott), board of trustees president (Brad Gilmore) and a member-at-large (Matt Woodrow) will be our liaisons to Merrill-Lynch. ... The commission is sponsoring an every-member visitation, which is being conducted by elders and deacons. The objective is to take the pulse of the church. ... As suggested by the Presbyterian Foundation representative, the church hopes to employ Electronic Funds Transactions as a giving option in 2018.

Communication and Outreach: Elder Pat Diehl reported that \$365 was raised during our October yard sale. ... Another sign style was suggested to the commission as a way to promote church events, and facts and costs are being gathered.... The commission hopes to update the talent surveys early in the new year. It is hoped that members can help reduce or eliminate costs for gardening and yard work, plumbing and electrical problems, etc.

Membership and fellowship: Our sanctuary was the site of the Rowan College at Gloucester County Community Choir's Christmas concert at 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 2. Peg Schoen of our church headed up the refreshment effort. ... Five church members were shifted from the active to the inactive list.

Presbyterian Women: The Esther Circle announced how it plans to allocate proceeds from the annual church barbecue. It will pay off one month (plus) of our roofing/bathroom loan and donate \$300 to Presbyterian Women, \$500 to have some tree pruning done around the church and \$400 to the Presbyterian Disaster Relief Fund.

Mission: The church has a new missionary to sponsor. She is Cindy Corell, a Virginia native who serves PCUSA in Haiti. A former journalist, she serves as a liaison between presbyteries and churches in the U.S. and churches, grassroots groups and non-governmental organizations in Haiti through the Joining Hands organization. Its mission is to combat poverty through community education, lifestyle changes and spiritual grounding.



SPRINGTIME TEA & TREASURES WISH LIST



Save the Date: Saturday, March 24, 2018

Two Seatings: Noon & 2:30 p.m. (Limited, No walk-ins)

Tickets: Adults \$10 and Children \$5 (Ages 6 & younger)

(Includes Springtime Tea & Admission to Treasure Shoppe)

***Tickets available in the Narthex each Sunday after church STARTING Sunday, January 7th. You may also call Anne Camilli @ (856) 366-4129 or acamilli@yahoo.com.**

Our Treasure Shoppe is looking for the following donations:

NEW or LIKE NEW items please. **REMEMBER...This is not a Yard Sale, it is a Treasure Shoppe!** (A large container will be available in the Narthex for collection in **JANUARY**)

- Unwanted treasures you received for Christmas
- Tea cups & saucers, tea spoons, tablecloths, napkins
- Candles, bath & body items, spa items, collectibles, trinkets
- Ladies' gift items, costume jewelry, scarves, purses, etc.
- Children's items
- Art work, home decorating items
- Gift cards

Our committee will also be making up themed baskets, so any items that fit any theme would be appreciated (Movie Night, Tea or Coffee, Greeting Cards/Scrapbooking, Gardening, Spaghetti Dinner, Kitchen, Bath/Spa)

Also needed: Gift bags & tissue paper, wired ribbon, baskets, lace or pastel tablecloths, decorative boxes, cellophane, artificial flowers

Monetary donations are always welcome!

Committee: Heather Antosky, Anne Camilli, Nickie Kuehnappel, Nancy Zane

PrimeTimers enjoy lunch, elect officers for 2018

Fourteen members enjoyed lunch, held officer elections and conducted necessary business during the November meeting of the Prime Timers on Monday, Nov. 13.

Paul Milio gave the blessing and included prayers for several shut-ins. Thanks to the efforts of the Milio family and other early arrivals, the table was dressed with Thanksgiving decor. Candy, chips, pumpkin pie, and blueberry-peach pie rounded out our brown-bag lunches. Yum!

As for the elections, Judy and Paul Milio will continue as our moderators, Esther Culbert agreed to serve again as our secretary and Jesse Butler will be our new treasurer.

The PrimeTimers appreciate the efforts of all officers and extend a special thank you to Ginny Naylor, who has served as treasurer.

The Christmas luncheon will be at noon Monday, Dec. 11. Members must choose an entree from among the following menu options: Sonoma Skewers (\$25), Chicken Terra Nova (\$18) or Braised Short Ribs (\$24).

Concerns for members unable to attend were shared. The group also sang Happy Birthday to Dana Milio and Happy Anniversary to Paul and Judy Milio.

Church directory update

A new and updated church directory for 2018 will be published in early January. If you want to add, delete or correct any information, please contact Barbara Daugherty.

Family Promise dates

We are scheduled to help Pitman Presbyterian with Family Promise the week of Feb. 11 to 17.



Christmas Poinsettias for our Church Sanctuary 2017

The flowers that fill the chancel on Christmas Eve are gifts from our congregation. If you would like to participate please complete this form and mail it along with your payment to the church office or you may drop the form and payment in an envelope into the offering plate.

The deadline for orders is **Sunday, December 17**

\$12 for first plant; \$8 for each additional plant.

Quantity Ordered _____ Total Amount \$_____

These flowers are given to the glory of God:
In memory of

In Honor of

Given By

**Additional gifts can be listed on the back of this form.
Contact Erin Zorio with any questions (856) 889-6808.**

The value of Family Promise to a family in its time of need

Editor's note: This is an excerpt from a speech made about Family Promise.

"My family and I are very thankful that Family Promise of Gloucester County exists.

"Last year at this time, our family was sitting in Vicki's office extremely upset that we were going to be homeless. She assured us that this is just a bump in the road and that we were in good hands with Family Promise.

"While we were in the program, we experienced love, kindness, support, encouragement and respect from everyone including generous donations and amazing volunteers.

"Our family never thought we would need a "home" but Family Promise offered us a safe place to sleep, good meals -- but most importantly keeping our family together in just a time of need.

"During the holidays last year, who would have thought, my family and I would be in a shelter? Family Promise made us feel at home and we all felt as if we were in our own home.

"Our family is forever and deeply thankful for Family Promise and all the volunteers! Without Family Promise we never would have had the chance to finally have a place we can call our own."

Esther Circle meetings

The Esther Circle will meet at 7 p.m. Dec. 5 for our annual Christmas Party at the home of Sherry Outten.

Please bring a plate of goodies to share and a Pollyanna gift (not to exceed \$10.), if you wish to participate in the gift exchange.

Our next meeting will be Jan. 2 at Ada White's home. We will resume our Bible Study on the "I Am" sayings of Jesus.

All women are invited to our circle activities. Please RSVP to Barbara Daugherty and Sherry Outten for the party.



Sunday School children work on blankets for Project Linus.

Sunday School finishes Project Linus blankets

On Sunday, Nov. 12, the kindergarten through sixth grades participated in a morning of service projects during Sunday School.

They helped complete three fleece blankets to be given to Project Linus, an organization that provides blankets to comfort adults and children.

After the students completed the blankets, we discussed Thanksgiving and Veterans Day. We will all try to thank a veteran for his or her service to our country.