

THE NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2011

FROM THE PASTOR

Five years ago a group of pastors had a vision. In the midst of holiday madness and materialism they conspired with their congregations to restore the meaning of Christmas. They vowed to spend less on themselves that Christmas, so they could spend more on others. They called it the "Advent Conspiracy," to worship fully, spend less, give more and love all. It was a huge success, and has since spread to over a thousand congregations. And in the process they have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for a ministry dedicated to providing access to clean water to people around the world. You can watch their short video at www.adventconspiracy.org.

Because of lost jobs and the recession, many people have less to spend this Christmas. But no matter how much we spend, the idea is to avoid getting

caught up in consumerism and to save some of our spending for others, not just for family and friends. Some of you have told me you are already doing this, limiting your gifts to one per person at a Christmas gathering, or only giving gifts to children in your family. The Advent Conspiracy has a website, www.rethinkingChristmas.com, where people can share ideas for meaningful gifts that don't require a lot of money. As of this writing there were 19 pages with all sorts of interesting suggestions.

There are also plenty of ideas for giving more. Our church provides you with suggestions for financial gifts through the Alternative Gift List included in this newsletter, gift requests for the Oelhaf House residents, and the Christmas Joy offering (see page 4). And if you truly don't have extra money to give, there are many ways to give of your time.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN LEONIA
181 FORT LEE ROAD, P.O. Box 448
LEONIA, NJ 07605
TEL. 201 944-1358
FAX. 201 944-6812
WEBSITE WWW.PRESBYLEONIA.ORG

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS: TUES.-FRI.
9 A.M. -12:30 P.M. & 1-2:30 P.M.

Paul wrote in his letter to the Romans (12:2) "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect." This Christmas season take the Advent Conspiracy challenge, and resist being conformed to this world. We can

Continued page 2

HEADLINERS

THANK YOU TO ALL FROM KAREN PETERS, See Page 6

COMMUNITY CAROL SING, SUNDAY DECEMBER 11, See Page 3

COME TO THE COOKIE EXCHANGE! Information on Page 5

ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS GIFT LIST ENCLOSED

From the Pastor (continued)

be transformed by renewing our minds in the spirit and giving in new ways.

Simply getting up on Sunday morning and gathering with others for worship, despite all the other demands for our time, is an act of non-conformity. And when we worship fully, entering into it with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, we are transformed. We are also transformed by taking time to read the Bible and pray at home during the week. Our church has currently provided an excellent resource for doing just that called "The Unfolding Journey." If you haven't picked up a copy yet, there are a few more left on the table in the entry room. I recommend it highly.

Christmas is about Jesus, and his message of love for all people. May we live out that message and find ways to proclaim Christ in our Christmas celebrations!

Peace and Blessings,

Rev. Debra Given

Happy Birthday

- Dec. 10 Kristen Richter
- Dec. 12 Katie Lynne Muller
Hyung Kune Shim
- Dec. 24 Pamela Lovell
Aiden Woojin Han
- Dec. 27 Debra Given
Brian Jonson
Max Voreacos
- Dec. 29 David Voreacos

COME, LET US WORSHIP GOD...

12/4 Second Sunday in Advent - 10:30 a.m.
Service for the Lord's Day.

12/11 Third Sunday in Advent - 10:30 a.m.
Service for the Lord's Day will include a celebration of the Lord's Supper and the Sacrament of Baptism

12/18 Fourth Sunday in Advent—
10:30 Service for the Lord's Day will include a Christmas Play, reception of tagged gifts for the Oelhaf House Shelter and Christmas Gift List Offerings.

12/24 8:00 p.m. Festival Service of Lessons, Carols and Candlelight. After Worship: Fellowship Hour

12/25 Christmas Day
10:30 a.m. Guitar Worship and Christmas Eucharist in the Sanctuary.

1/1 10:30 a.m. Agape Breakfast and Worship
(No Church School Classes or Choir)

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS SERVICE

REHEARSALS for the **Children's Christmas Service** will take place at **9:30 a.m.** on **Sundays December 4 and 11**, with a final run through on **Sunday December 18**. It is **IMPORTANT** that parents and children make every effort to participate.

Offering Counters

- 12/4 Hyung Kune Shim & Hiroshi Muto
- 12/11 Sarah Han & Pete Shanno
- 12/18 Olivia Taylor & Anne Stebbins
- 12/24 Maurice Lovell, Fumio Ito & Pete Shanno
- 12/25 Richard Stenken & Hyung Shim

Ushers

- 12/4 Kazuko Abe, Kristen Richter & Anne Stebbins
- 12/11 Jennifer Carriel, Joyce Hamlin & Linda McGarry
- 12/18 Jeannie Choe, Hwan Hee Kang & Roberta Toolen
- 12/24 **(Can you help as an usher tonight at the 8 p.m. service? If you can, please call the church office.)**
- 12/25 Susan Dindial, Vicky Li & Karen Peters

COMMUNITY CAROL SING

The Presbyterian Church is sponsoring a **Community Carol Sing on Sunday, December 11** at **4 p.m.** in the sanctuary. We will all join singing beloved Christmas carols and Christmas favorites concluding with a rousing finale of Handel's Hallelujah Chorus. Music scores will be provided for the carols. Please bring your own score for the Hallelujah Chorus. Refreshments will be served after the carol sing. A donation of \$5 at the door is suggested. All are warmly welcome.

ATTENTION DEACONS

Your meeting is now scheduled for December 8, 7:30 p.m. at Jane Wilson's home, 140 Ames Ave., Leonia. Please let Jane know if you are unable to make the meeting. Thank You.



THE CENTER FOR FOOD ACTION NEEDS YOUR HELP

– The Center for Food Action needs your help this year more than ever, with Christmas items as follows:

Frozen turkeys, canned white potatoes & yams, boxed mashed potatoes, cranberry sauce, pasta and pasta sauce, rice, pancake mix, syrup, 100% juice, canned fruit, cake mix and icing, coffee and tea, supermarket gift cards to purchase turkeys.

CFA always needs the following: canned meats and tuna, canned soups, canned vegetables, macaroni and cheese, peanut butter & jelly, cereal, dry milk and Parmalat, beans, rice, complete meals in a box, baby formula & diapers, ensure, and Supermarket Gift Cards, which allow them to purchase eggs, cheese and fresh products throughout the year.

The food we collect in the baskets also goes to Loaves and Fishes, a "soup kitchen" run by members of our church and other churches in our cluster. Loaves & Fishes needs canned vegetables, pasta, pasta sauce, canned potatoes, canned fruit, pasta and pasta sauce. When shopping, remember to pick up extras and bring them with you on Sunday. Thank you.



THE NEWSLETTER

THANK YOU



Our Annual Holiday Fair was again a successful event! After expenses, proceeds totaled just under \$3000. This is our main fund raiser, and would not be possible without the enormous effort put forth by so many people. It seemed to me that people came out in force this year to help out with every job necessary to make it work. To all of you who participated in any way, I'm grateful for your assistance.

Karen Peters, Chairperson
2011 Holiday Fair

(And thank-you to Karen Peters for her great organizational skills and calm presence throughout the day.)



You can help to brighten the church sanctuary for Christmas by the gift of a **poinsettia plant**. Plants cost \$12 and must be ordered no later than **Sunday, December 11th**, by calling the church office at 201-944-1358. When ordering your poinsettia, please let the church office know if you wish it to be in memory of someone or in celebration of a special event. Please make your check payable to the Presbyterian Church marked "Poinsettia" and let us know if you wish to take your plant(s) home after Christmas, or for us to give it to homebound friends.

DECORATE THE SANCTUARY

Please join us on **Sunday, December 4** immediately following worship to help decorate the sanctuary for Christmas. Each year we decorate the trees, hang the bows and wreaths and add a festive touch to our sanctuary. This year we are doing it right after church so that more people can help during this festive time. We hope you can join us.

COME TO THE COOKIE EXCHANGE!

We will be having our Annual Cookie Exchange on Friday, December 16th at 7:30 pm at the Peters residence, 142 Park Avenue. The rules are simple: bring a large batch of your favorite cookie recipe to share with others, as well as a copy of the recipe. High quality cookies may also be purchased for all of you non-bakers! Come and enjoy some delicious samples, a little wine, some good company and general Christmas cheer! This is an adults only event open to both men and women. The best part is that you'll go home with a wonderful selection of home baked (or purchased) cookies, just in time for the holidays. We hope to see you on the 16th!

WELCOME THESE NEW MEMBERS

WELCOME TO JOHN KOEPL



John Koepl has a lifelong history with our church as he was baptized and confirmed here. He grew up in Leonia and served as an Elder of the church in the 80s. And now he has rejoined in 2011.

John is a social studies teacher and is now a substitute teacher in town. Some of his interests include movies and hiking. When asked if he would like to see some new programs or other changes at the church, he replied that he was happy with its present worship, activities and programs. As John is glad to be back in his home church, so we are very lucky to have him back among us again.

WELCOME TO ALLYN JOY PONELLA

Joy Ponella was raised in the Philippines by a Catholic father and a Baptist mother. She had been living in Leonia with her husband of eleven years, Michael, but just recently moved to New City, New York. We hope that doesn't stop her from being with us during the holiday season!

Joy works for a physical medicine group in Bergen County and says that her favorite things to do are domesticate, like interior decorating and gardening. She also enjoys jazz and old songs, classic movies, and Broadway shows, along with reading romantic and mystery novels.

STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN UPDATE

The Mission and Stewardship Committee would like to thank you for your continued generosity of both pledges and spirit. Our Theme this year was: From God’s Heart Through Our Hands: and God’s Heart obviously touched all of us. A special thank you goes to our speakers who shared their testimonies about why they give: Karen Klingner, Sonia Solano, Susan Shanno and Kazuko Abe. As of November 27th we have received \$129,716 in pledges, which is amazing, the highest amount of pledges ever! If you would still like to make a pledge or a gift, please contact the church office (201-944-4603) or Susan Shanno (201-944-4603). Again, many thanks!

Mission & Stewardship Committee

SHELTER OUR SISTERS is about to embark on its annual **HOLIDAY GIFT-WRAPPING FUNDRAISER** at the Barnes and Noble, Riverside Square Mall and Route 17 South, Paramus Park Mall Rt. 17 North Paramus, Lord & Taylors, Ridgewood Ave., Garden State Plaza—Chef Central, Paramus. Can you volunteer some time? Gift wrapping shifts are for 3 hours and will begin December 1st to 24th. Shelter Our Sisters is Bergen County’s only battered women’s shelter and they are reaching out to you and local religious organizations for assistance.

If you can help please call Rhona at 201-836-1075 ext. 233 or email at Rhona@shelteroursisters.org. Sign up with a friend, it’s fun! Or if you are shopping, stop by and have a package or two wrapped.

Help End Domestic Violence

At Christmas, we celebrate a great gift to us, and one of our responses is giving gifts to others. We have three distinct opportunities for such giving through our congregation:

- ◆ The annual Alternative Christmas Gift List is enclosed on blue paper. With it, you can support one or more particular ministries.
- ◆ Gift Tags describing the gift requests for the women and children sheltered in the Oelhaf House and also friends of the church will be available at the church on Sundays December 4th and 11th. You may purchase one of the indicated gifts and offer it — wrapped for Christmas—during worship on the eighteenth.
- ◆ You may also make a money offering using the Christmas Joy Offering Envelope or the one in your box of weekly envelopes. These gifts will be divided equally between the Englewood Hospital Chaplaincy and the General Assembly Christmas offering. The General Assembly Christmas offering helps support Presbyterian minority schools and nursing home assistance for retired pastors and other workers.

As you have been blessed, share with others.