

Chestnut Hill Church UCC Newsletter

Hello Winter! from Chestnut Hill Church.

The Holidays are upon us. Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's. We have several fundraisers planned for the church. Plus donations to help those less fortunate than us. Please see where you are able to help or contribute to these worthy causes. Plus the fundraisers for the church itself.

Be sure to read all about these events and mark your calendars so you don't miss them.

There are many opportunities for you to become more involved in church activities. Read on to find some that fit your talents and interests. Be sure to check the weekly bulletin and the bulletin board in the lower Narthex for updates to opportunities.

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A Letter from Pastor Linda

Dear Church Family,

Greetings Sisters and Brothers,

My husband and I recently took a few days off for some good old-fashioned rest and relaxation. No touring, no visiting, no long lines. One afternoon sitting in the yard with my feet propped up and the sun shining, I was suddenly aware of peace: peace in my heart, mind, body, and soul. Peace and quiet; the only thing I could hear was the chirping of the birds. No traffic, no neighbors, no dogs barking, no television; nothing! It is not that I can't or don't find peace in other places or at other times, but I realized in that moment how long it had been since I had taken the time to sit and be still and bask in the peace of my Creator and His creation.

The word 'peace' can be found 340 times in the Bible (NRSVUE). In the hours before Jesus was to be crucified, he said to his disciples: "The hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each one to his home, and you will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone because the Father is with me. I have said this to you so that in me you may have peace. In the world you face persecution, but take courage: I have conquered the world!" (John 16:31-33). A quick search provided me with other words for persecution, including mistreatment, provoking, and galling. Galling – now that's a word we don't use often, but what if instead we replaced that with other similar words like infuriating, exasperating, tiresome or troublesome.

Our world right now is in quite a mess and while we personally don't face persecution, if you're like me perhaps you are often infuriated, exasperated, and tired. Perhaps like me, you might even pray, "Come, Lord Jesus, come!" As we approach the season of Advent and rejoice together in the birth of our Savior, I would encourage you to seek peace and to help others do the same. In this often hectic, busy time of celebrating, I invite you to go out in peace, extend peace, hold your peace and be at peace, that it may be well with your soul!

Jesus said: **Peace** I leave with you; my **peace** I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid (John 14:27).

May God's peace fill your hearts,

Pastor Linda

Volunteer Opportunities

Finance Team

The Finance Team is looking for weekly Sunday Counters and people to join the finance team. The finance team reviews and sets the annual budget and then the budget is presented to council in November for approval. If interested, please contact Debbie Koder 610-390-9026

Communion Assistants

We are looking for volunteers to help set up, serve, and break down the monthly communion elements on the first of the month. If you are interested, please let Marj Trinkle know. A sign-up sheet is available with detailed instructions, and we have other members to assist you if needed. Thank you.

Cemetery Board

The cemetery board had their quarterly meeting on October 18th. Jeff reported that the legal documents have been signed to release the Trust Funds in the name of Charles Johnson to the Cemetery Fund, awaiting court approval. The cemetery board will have the deteriorating wall taken down next Spring. The cost of repairing is prohibitive. The landscaping that will replace it will be decided at that time. Many suggestions have been given and we appreciate your concern. Two grave plots have been sold so far this year. There were 4 burials in the third quarter and so far, two in the fourth quarter.

Betty Lou's Pantry

There is a bin in the lower Narthex for donations for Betty Lou's Pantry. We will take the donations along after service every Sunday. We need everything in the core food groups but especially: Tuna, Canned Fruit (peaches, pears, pineapples), Pasta Sauces, Tomatoes, Jelly, Canned corn. Although small, Chestnut Hill Church has the best reputation for donations to BLP. All donations are very appreciated. There has been a big increase in families that are utilizing the food pantry distribution. Thank you so much for your thoughtful donations for those less fortunate than ourselves.

Outside the Church

Women Working Wonders!

WWW has been very, very active and busy for 2023. We've held some amazing fundraisers and been able to bulk up our financial line so that we will be able to support the amazing organizations in the Lehigh Valley who help and aid those individuals/families less fortunate than ourselves.

March: we filled over 800 plastic Easter eggs with candy for the Children's Home of Easton, thanks to the generous donations from our congregation.

June: we sold WAWA hoagie coupons—made about \$450 profit. Inside Scoop (Coopersburg) ice cream fundraiser—made \$195 profit.

August: Drizzle (Alburtis) ice cream fundraiser—about \$160 profit.

September: Basket Social fundraiser—profit of almost \$6,000 total (food profits of nearly \$600) will go towards the fuel bill at CHC). Although this was our first-ever basket social, we had an amazing amount of donations (over 200 regular baskets, and many higher priced/grand prizes) from all over—many from outside the Lehigh Valley (Philly, Hershey, Poconos, Camden, Doylestown, etc.)—thanks to the work of the Slota family, who created an Internet link to advertise and allow many to link in and share. The day of the event proved to be very popular—from before the event was scheduled to begin to the drawings, there was a continuous stream of folks. Just perfect—not too crowded at any one time. The food sold out—we had 6 crockpots of soups, hot dogs, tons of baked goods, etc. We definitely plan to do this again next year—**save Saturday, October 5, 2024** (we will set up the day before at the Limeport Fire House).

October: We held our annual hoagie sale. The prices of the meat, rolls, etc., had really gone up, but we had kept our price the same—we made almost \$600 profit. Since October is such a busy time of year, we plan to hold our 2024 hoagie sale April 20th. More info will be forthcoming as we get closer to that date.

November:

WWW will be helping CHC in the collection of winter coats and apparel to support the nonprofit "Fostering Hope" event sponsored by The Children's Home of Easton on November 19.

The **winter clothing and accessories drive**, benefitting children and youth in foster care. If you'd like to support this event, please bring a new item to the church **no later than Sunday, November 19th**. Suggested items include **new** coats, snowsuits, scarves, hats, gloves. Sizes newborn to Adult XL. In addition, diapers/pullups (all sizes) and toiletries. Toiletries include: hairbrushes; tooth brushes; toothpaste; deodorant; feminine products; shampoo, conditioner and body wash (baby, child and adult). **Craig and Grace Adams will take our contributions to the Children's Home of Easton following worship on November 19th**.

Holiday Shoeboxes: We will also be wrapping Holiday Hope Chests (shoeboxes). We could use wrapping paper, scotch tape, and items to put into the shoeboxes.

We are still looking for small toys, games, socks, underwear, toiletries, etc. to fill the boxes – ages are from 2-12, boys and girls. No religious items or war-type items please. The bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall has a list of needs for the shoe boxes.

We will be filling and wrapping the boxes at the next WWW meeting, November 20th at 6 PM. Everyone is welcome to help.

The wrapped shoeboxes need to be delivered November 30th.

WWW will determine to which organizations we wish to donate at our November meeting (11/20, 6 pm). Anyone/everyone is always welcome to come join us as we move forward to support those who can use our help. [We have sent \$500 to Family Promise earlier this month to help reunite a family separated by the Ukrainian war.]

WWW meetings are held the 3rd Monday of the month, 6 pm. All are welcome.

Women Working Wonders! have been very active this past year and remains so in the upcoming season. Also, any ideas of who and how we can help those in the community is always welcomed.

Special Events

Annual Gift Card Fundraiser Program is back.

Our gift card programs makes your Christmas gift giving easier! You pay for the value of the gift card and the the % next to your card is the amount that CHC will earn. The cards are secure. You save gas, no running around to purchase the cards. Debbie has printed out about 30 copies and has put them on the back table of the Upper Narthex. **Orders are due by Sunday November 26**, with a check payable to Chestnut Hill Church. The cards will be ordered December 1 and they will be delivered to CHC on Sunday December 10. All money raised from the gift cards will go to the fuel bill, to help keep us warm this winter. If you need an order form emailed/mailed to you, or any questions, contact Debbie Koder 610-390-9026.

Decorating Church for Christmas

We will be decorating the church for Christmas on the **first Sunday in December (12/3) after church service**. We are looking for lots of volunteers to help make the job go faster and make our church ready for Christmas. Thank you in advance for your help. See Alice Debus with any questions.

Wreaths Across America

Please consider volunteering to help us place wreaths on our headstones on December 16, 2023. If you would like to volunteer, go to www.wreathscrossamerica.org and follow the prompts, or contact Karen Billger (treasurer@chcucc.org) or Jeff Bogert (610-349-4042) or in person.

Take me out to the ball park!

Friday June 7 is Faith Night at the Iron Pigs Stadium. Tickets are \$12.00 and you get a \$2.00 credit to spend on food or souvenirs. Let Debbie Koder know if you are interested in attending – 610-390-9026

Church Updates

Christmas Eve Service

Please note that this year, Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday. Council has decided to have only one service which will be at **4:00 pm, December 24th**. We look forward to seeing you on this special day as we celebrate the birth of Jesus!

Chestnut Hill Church Directories

CHC church directories are available in the upper narthex of the church. If your address or phone number is incorrect, please contact Debbie Koder to update. All information was downloaded from Breeze database, which we are no longer using, due to the high membership fee.

Chestnut Hill Grief Support Group

“BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO MOURN, FOR THEY WILL BE COMFORTED”

The Beatitudes- Mark Chapter 5:4

Chestnut Hill Grief Support Group, led by Craig Adams, meets the last Saturday of the month, 1pm, in Fellowship Hall. We have discovered that Healing and Recovery happens when stories are shared in a safe place. Our fellowship is surrounded by TOTAL anonymity. Safe place!

I encourage you to reach out to see if the Group would be a good fit for you. Please call, text or email Craig Adams 610-554-4967, dcraig.adams8@gmail.com for a confidential, private conversation.

Pastor Linda Rapp: (Pastor@chcucc.org)

Pastor Linda Rapp Phone: 610-462-7067

Secretary: Gloria Roeder (secretary@chcucc.org)

Treasurer: Karen Billger (treasurer@chcucc.org)

Sexton: Sandy Eckhart (sanddune13@yahoo.com)

Ministers: Every Member of the Congregation

Church Website: www.chestnuthillchurch.org

Church Phone Number: 610-967-1196