

THE NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2016

What Are You Waiting For?

This year's Advent lectionary texts speak about waiting: we are waiting on the day when the wolf shall live with the lamb; we are waiting for the dry land to become glad, and for the desert to rejoice and blossom. And most of all, we are waiting on the birth of God into the body of humanity, the Messiah in the form of a weak newborn child.

To mark this waiting, we (mostly) hold back in singing Christmas carols so we can feel the contours of Advent and its night. We create Advent calendars and light the Advent wreath, marking the days and weeks until Christ's coming.

In this Advent season, what are you waiting for?

What is your hope for how the world or your life might somehow get better?

In other words, what salvation do you yearn for that Jesus might bring to you? It might be as personal as freedom from the bondage of depression, as local as the end of bullying in our communities, or as global as seeing the hungry get their fill.

As we let Advent stoke our hopes, let us dare us to imagine what God's coming could be like if we really make space for Jesus to enter our world and our lives.

Our scriptures lure us with enticing dreams. Has the time come? Have we waited long enough?

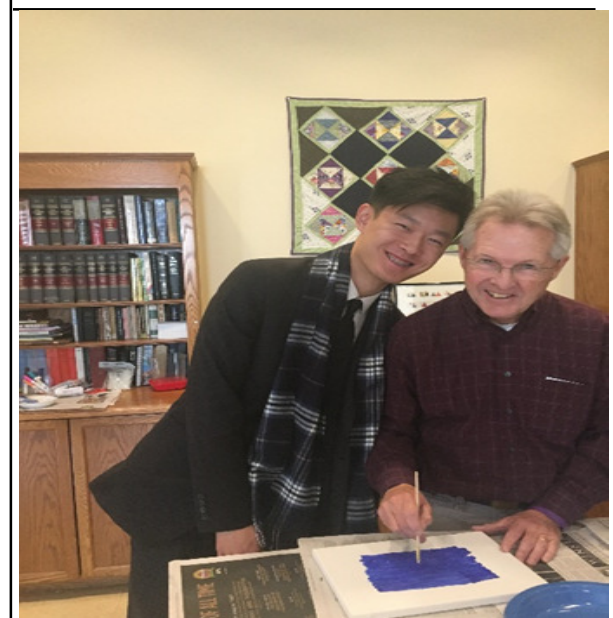
Let us consider how we might partner with each other and with God to be co-conspirators in making God's dreams a lived reality!

-Pastor Leah Fowler



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LEONIA, NJ 07605
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WEBSITE WWW.PRESBYLEONIA.ORG

OFFICE HOURS: MONDAY 8-10 A.M.
TUESDAY & THURSDAY 1-5:30 P.M.
FRIDAY 8-12 NOON



Making Advent Calendars with our friends!

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT & PRACTICE, see page 2

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NOTICE, see page 2

ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS GIFT LIST ENCLOSED

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

By Jonathan Phillips, Christian Education Co-Chair:
 We hope you enjoyed your Thanksgiving and we are excited for the upcoming Christmas holiday. December is a busy month for our Sunday School.

Every Sunday leading up to the pageant during Sunday School, our classes will be rehearsing and preparing our annual retelling of the Christmas story. In addition, there will be a special rehearsal on Saturday, December 17, 2016 from 10 a.m. to noon. Following this rehearsal, we are planning to visit Inglemoor Nursing Home and sing carols for the residents. The following day, Sunday, December 18, 2016 we will have a dress rehearsal at 9:30 a.m. followed by the service where the children will perform.

In addition, this month, we have brought back the popular "Traveling Baby Jesus." Families are invited to host the infant Jesus and create memories and share them with other families through a scrapbook. Families wishing to participate are invited to sign-up at church.

Finally, looking ahead to next year, we will once again have a Sunday School bowling day. We have it tentatively scheduled for Sunday, February 26, 2017 so please save the date.

We look forward to everyone's participation and enjoy the Christmas season.



COME, LET US WORSHIP GOD

12/4: Second Sunday in Advent -

- 10:30 a.m. Service for the Lord's Day will include a Celebration of the Lord's Supper
- 11:45 a.m. ESL Bible Study

12/11: Third Sunday in Advent -

- 10:30 a.m. Service for the Lord's Day
- 11:45 a.m. ESL Bible Study

12/18: Fourth Sunday in Advent -

- 10:30 a.m. Service for the Lord's Day will include:
 - The Christmas Pageant
 - Reception of tagged gifts for Oelhaf House Shelter
 - Christmas Gift List Offerings
 - Congregational Meeting

12/24: 8:00 pm. Christmas Eve

- Service of Lessons
- Carols and Candlelight.
- After Worship: Fellowship Hour

12/25: Christmas Day

Joyful Christmas worship with Communion

- 10:30 a.m. Service for the Lord's Day & Carol Sing
 (No Church School Classes)

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

REHEARSALS for the Children's Christmas Pageant will take place at 9:30 a.m. on Sundays, December 4, 11 and Saturday the 17 (at 10 a.m.), with a final run-through on Sunday December 18 before worship. It is **IMPORTANT** that parents and children make every effort to participate. Congregation members are invited to join the children as they go caroling at Inglemoor Nursing Home in Englewood on Saturday afternoon, December 17, after the pageant rehearsal.

Happy Birthday

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

USHERS FOR THE MONTH

December 4: Jack Peters, Karen Peters, Virginia Cora
December 11: Jeff Im, Elin Park, Kristen Richter
December 18: Lisa VanDeWeert, Roberta Toolen
Christine Banas

OFFERING COUNTERS

December 4: David Voreacos
December 11: Hyung Shim, Fumio Ito
December 18: Pete Shanno, David Voreacos

NURSERY CARE

December 4: Angie Chung
December 11: Judith Nyirongo

A Special Message from Olivia Taylor

My heartfelt thanks to all who have helped during my recovery from hip surgery.

Thanks to Virginia Cora for picking me up after my pre-op day at Hospital for Special Surgery.

Many thanks to Leah for coming with me the day of the surgery. It also gave us time together to get to know each other better.

Thanks to Maryellen Neu for visiting me in the hospital and providing me a ride home on discharge day, plus enough prepared food for several days!!

Thanks to everyone for their prayers, good wishes, visits, lunches and dinners out, and good food delivered.

My heartfelt thanks to you all!
Olivia Taylor

***MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND
HAPPY NEW YEAR***

THE CENTER FOR FOOD ACTION NEEDS YOUR HELP



The Center for Food Action needs your help this year, 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 people 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. When shopping, remember to pick up extras and bring them with you on Sunday. **Thank you.**

WE GIVE TO OTHERS

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. With it, you can support one or more particular ministries.
- ◆ Gift Tags describing the gift requests from the women and children sheltered in the Oelhaf House 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 18th.
- ◆ You may also make a money offering using 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 church workers.

As you have been blessed, share with others.

Pledge Update

Thank you to all of you who have been so generous with your pledges thus far. It has indeed been a time of fearless giving! We are especially pleased to receive new pledges, a reason to rejoice! If you have not yet sent in your pledge you may contact the church office and speak with Pat at 201-944-1358. Pledge forms are also available on-line and in the rear of the sanctuary. God has blessed our congregation with many cheerful givers!

Thank you!

FAMILY PROMISE

Once again, we are sheltering the Family Promise group at Leonia Methodist Church. We will need volunteers to cook and be overnights on December 28 and 29. We will need two cooks and two people to stay overnight. Please contact Linda McGarry (201-945-7667) with what time and talent you wish to donate. Thank you.



CHRISTMAS JOY



Each year members and friends of our church share their Christmas generosity through the "Alternative Christmas Gift List." As you consider your Christmas gifts, think also of your neighbors in need, and donate to a local charity in honor of the birth of Jesus.

Please use form on the back of this page to indicate your gifts. First, decide which ministries you would like to support and in what amounts. Then bring your list and a check made out to the Leonia Presbyterian Church, to the Christmas Gift table on **Sunday, December 11 or 18**. Or mail it to the church, P.O. Box 448, Leonia, NJ 07605.

In addition to supporting the alternatives on this list, you may wish to purchase a gift for one of the residents of the **Oelhaf House Shelter** and others we know who are in need. Gift tags with specific requests will be available at the Christmas Gift table on Sunday mornings December 4 and 11. Please bring these gifts during worship on **December 18**.

Name

2016 Christmas Gift List

AMOUNT I WOULD
LIKE TO GIVE

1. **Center for Food Action** in Englewood provides a food pantry for emergency assistance, nutrition and budget counseling for individuals and families. CFA also provides advocacy services for hunger-related issues and assists clients in providing funding for housing and utilities. \$_____

2. **Oelhaf House Shelter Fund** helps to maintain the shelter and provide for direct services to women and children, such as child care and transportation subsidies, special meals, and assistance when families leave the shelter for more permanent homes. The Oelhaf House is a church-owned structure used by Shelter Our Sisters, Inc. as a second-stage transitional housing for victims of domestic violence. \$_____

3. **Community of Friends in Action** is a group of volunteers from the community, churches and synagogues that works with immigrant day laborers in the area. Currently they run a Monday program at noon at a church in Palisades Park that provides lunch and speakers on various topics such as worker rights and community relations. They also provide evening English classes, a workers link program and assistance in collecting unpaid wages. \$_____

4. **Loaves and Fishes** is sponsored by the Englewood, Leonia and Teaneck Cluster Churches and is located at Bethany Presbyterian Church in Englewood. They serve a weekly hot meal and send clients home with a light bag meal of a sandwich, fruit and snack. \$_____

5. **Camp Johnsonburg** is the Presbyterian Camp and Conference Center located in western NJ, an hour's ride from our area. Our church has enjoyed Camp Johnsonburg for the past 30 years or more and many of our young people have been campers and/or counselors. \$_____

6. **First Friends of NJ and NY** upholds the inherent dignity and humanity of detained immigrants and asylum seekers. We provide compassion and hope through volunteer visitation, resettlement assistance and advocacy. In the current climate of suspicion and hostility around guests to this county, we have the opportunity to offer instead support and hospitality. \$_____

7. Undesignated Gift _____ \$_____

YOUR TOTAL GIFT: \$_____



FOR GLOBAL PEACE WITH JUSTICE

Make your voice heard on public policy! This high impact weekend, sponsored by the ecumenical Christian community, is grounded in biblical witness and our shared traditions of justice, peace and the integrity of creation. Our goal is to strengthen our Christian voice and mobilize for advocacy on specific U.S. domestic and international policy issues.

SAVE THE DATES!
FRIDAY, APRIL 21 – MONDAY, APRIL 24, 2017
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Cost: Conference Fee is \$200 for early registration; \$225 after March 25. Hotel Fee is \$125 per night at Doubletree per room if reserved early; rooms and costs can be shared. Conference includes 3 meals; other meals are out of pocket. Transportation can be by carpool, train or bus- we will coordinate together. Participants who are 30 and younger are eligible for denominational scholarships if they register early.

Schedule: Beginning with lively worship with music and keynote Friday evening, the conference will be full of workshops on Saturday-Sunday on themes related to peace and justice. You can choose your track or take workshops in varied areas, including Environmental Justice; Education; Immigration; Domestic Issues; Nuclear Disarmament; Gender Justice; Child Welfare; Latin American Justice; Africa; Asia; Middle East and more!

Plan to stay through 5 pm Monday because we will be scheduled to meet at our US Senators' and Representative's offices to lobby all day Monday. There will be some time to go adventuring in DC as well.

Interested? Contact Rev. Leah Fowler at pastorleonia@gmail.com and check out website www.advocacydays.org for updated info.



Presbyterian Church in Leonia Mission Trip Dates: July 9-15, 2017.

Campbell Farm is a ministry of the PC(USA). They are located in Wapato, Washington, on the Yakima Indian Reservation.

Cost: About \$700 for registration, food at Campbell Farm, housing, service projects, and ground transportation. Participants must pay for meals and extra activities outside the Farm, and pay for and arrange their own airfare (about \$400). Betsy Voreacos will suggest several flights to Seattle within a 2-hour window so that we all arrive and depart generally at the same time and can share ground transportation.

Work: The Farm can accommodate different ages, including children. We would have some choice in our work according to our abilities. There is always need for handiwork and carpentry on the farm and in the homes of surrounding neighbors. There is also use for people to participate in feeding ministry, childcare, gardening and other farm activities.

Context: Wapato has about 95% living at or below the federal poverty rate. The area includes people who are all or part Native American (Yakima) and also Spanish speaking migrants who work the orchards. The Director, Carman Pimms, does a thoughtful job of teaching the layered history that has contributed to the problems of domestic violence and child abuse, addiction, and poverty that impacts most of the participants in the Farm's programs. It is likely we would be joined by another church doing a mission week.

Housing: Workers would stay at the Campbell Farm, and sleep in a house with shared dorm-style accommodations, with several bunks per room.

Spiritual Program: The Farm offers evening reflections where people share prayer and singing as stories are told about daily encounters. The week usually ends with Communion and a traditional native Smudging ritual.

Website: www.thecampbellfarm.org



POINSETTIA PLANTS

You can help to brighten the church sanctuary for Christmas by the gift of a **poinsettia plant**. Plants cost \$13 and must be ordered no later than **Friday, December 16** by calling the church office at 201-944-1358. When ordering your poinsettia, please let us know if you would like 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.

JAZZ JAM SESSION FRIDAY DECEMBER 9 AT 8:00–10:00 P.M.

Player or audience, everyone is welcome! Bring your instruments and play with pros. Don't worry, any level of player is welcome! If you don't know Jazz, or you don't have any plans on **Friday, December 9, 8-10 p.m.**—you are welcome to play or listen. A small donation will be accepted to cover utility costs. Doors will open at 7:30 p.m.