



# The Presbyterian Church at Lakehurst, NJ

*Rooted in God's Love  
Growing as Christ's Caregivers  
Nourished by God's Spirit*

## December 2015

The Presbyterian  
Beacon



A Presbyterian minister who now is a full-time author, recently wrote that she misses serving a church during Advent. And I can understand her lament. It is a privilege to lead worship and preach on hope, peace, joy and love; to proclaim the good news of great joy for all people that Christ, our Savior, is born anew in our hearts and in the world.



It is inspiring to tell the old, old story in new ways and to new generations. I love to serve with faithful people who come up with fresh ideas to reach God's children of all ages who may not know Christ.

But it is also difficult to change. This year, instead of working through an Advent study together, we thought we might do a 21st century discipline of reflecting on an Advent theme each day, shooting a photo that captures that theme, and then posting it via some social media. (See page 3 for the daily words.) In that way, we would share our faith with one another and with the world.

For those who do not use Facebook, on Nov. 29, I posted for **#Hope** a photo of plants pushing through a concrete sidewalk. But I couldn't post just the photo. I felt the need to add: "with God all things are possible." Then on Nov. 30, I posted for **#Prepare** a photo of soil that my neighbor has been preparing for a new lawn. But, again, I felt the need to add a second photo of a lush green lawn.



Are you having similar difficulty trying something new? I think I will combine the new [photo] with the old [words] right up to Christmas Day. Even so, I trust that God is at work, giving birth to new life in the church and hope to the world.

Merry Christmas!  
*Pastor Christina*

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### PLEASE NOTE:

- 12/6 **Brunch after Worship with Santa**
- 12/10 Nursing Home Worship
- 12/13 **Cantata at 2 pm**
- 12/15 UMW & PW Luncheon
- 12/18 **Children's Christmas Pageant Practice at 5:30 & Christmas Party at 6 pm—Fun, Fun**
- 12/20 **Cantata—Take 2**
- 12/14 **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service of Lessons & Carols at 7 pm**
- 12/25 Christmas Day!
- 12/30 Food Pantry
- 12/31 New Year's Eve



## Stewardship Update

Thank you to everyone who pledged their time and talent and financial resources for the church’s ministry in 2016. To the Session, your action is worth much more than dollars and cents – it inspires and energizes us to continue to give of ourselves as your leaders and servants of Jesus Christ. Thank you.



As of Nov. 29, we received 38 pledges totaling \$59,814. Of the 38 received to date, 16 were able to continue giving at the 2015 level. 5 were new pledges and 6 increased their pledge from last year. 5 decreased from last year, and 6 apparently intended to continue the amount you gave in 2015, but because we asked for a ‘monthly’ amount instead of a ‘weekly’ amount, the total for the year decreased. If you intend to give at 2015 level, please let Laure Childers, the treasurer, know by calling the church office. Thank you—everyone!

We recognize that many people have fixed incomes, or young children, or children in college, and a multitude of expenses. We trust that everyone considered what they could pledge in prayer with God. And we are grateful. We must, however, let you know that the estimated income falls far short of our estimated expenses. And Session will need to continue to discern what Christ is calling us to do with what we have.

Part of the shortfall is due to the fact that 2 members died and 4 contributors moved away. This loss totals \$8,100. But 8 members pledged a total of \$7,760 last year and they have not yet pledged for 2016. Their pledges, if they continued, would cover some of the shortfall. We are providing this information to be transparent, and to ask for your continued prayer. You could also invite a friend to worship with us!

The Presbyterian Church in Lakehurst is a “small” church and many people are surprised by the genuine care of the members for everyone who comes through the door, and by the amount of ministry that we are able to do here and abroad. We respond by saying that it is because God’s Spirit guides us, equips us, and surprises us with all of the resources we need in order to do what God is calling us to do. We thank you for your continued prayers, presence and support.

## Church Officer Nominating Committee

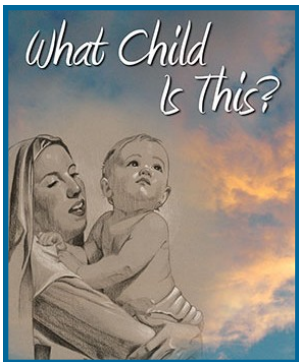
The Church Officer Nominating Committee has put together a wonderful slate of elders and deacons for the class of 2019. Thanks to everyone who prayerfully considered Christ’s call to serve the church at this time.





## Worship Team

- Dec. 6: Worship at 10 & Brunch with Santa!
- Dec. 13: Worship at 10 & Cantata at the Presbyterian Church at 2 pm
- Dec. 20: Elder Carole Sloan is preaching Children's Christmas Pageant during worship at 10 Cantata at the Methodist Church at 2 pm
- Dec. 24: Candlelight Service of Lessons & Carols at 7 pm Children—**Bring a Bell to Ring whenever you hear "Christ is Born!"**
- Dec. 27: Elder Glenn Milana is preaching, and Carole Sloan and her grandson Kyle Bogert will offer "Little Drummer Boy."



### Cantata: What Child is This?

Sunday, December 13, at 2:00 pm  
at The Presbyterian Church

and

Sunday, December 20, at 2:00 pm  
at Lakehurst United Methodist Church

The Choirs of **The Presbyterian Church** and **The Lakehurst United Methodist Church** are combining to offer a Christmas Cantata, under the direction of Diana Smerillo. A reception will follow each Cantata. A free-will offering will be accepted. Come and welcome the community! And bring your neighbors and friends.

**Christian Worship & Communion Service** for Jim Murray and senior residents at the Hampton Ridge Healthcare & Rehab., 94 Stevens Road, Toms River, at **10:30 on the 2nd Thursday of each month**. Let's bring the church to the people.

**Advent Devotion** – An Advent Calendar of daily acts of kindness is available at both entrances to the sanctuary. And we are encouraging everyone to try something new this year! **Open your eyes and your heart to God with your camera (or phone) in hand**, take a photo that captures the Advent word for the day, and post your photo on the Presbyterian Church at Lakehurst Facebook page. This Advent season, let's draw closer to God, even as we share our faith with one another and with people who desperately long to see the Light of Christ.

### Advent photo-a-day (Nov. 29 - Dec. 25)

29 Hope	6 Peace	13 Joy	20 Love
30 Prepare	7 Listen	14 Ponder	21 Wonder
1 Wait	8 Free	15 Sign	22 Community
2 Journey	9 Justice	16 Praise	23 Gift
3 Open	10 Awake	17 Release	24 Birth
4 Comfort	11 Mystery	18 Promise	25 Light
5 Wisdom	12 Grace	19 Faith	



## Deacons

The **Deacons' Brunch** will be on **Sunday, Dec. 6** after worship – when we will have a special visitor again (Ho Ho Ho!). The menu includes: Waffles with your choice of strawberries, blueberries, whipped cream, chocolate chips, peanut butter, and for the traditionalists: butter and syrup, as well as delicious homemade breads. For the carb conscious, we'll also have cheese and crackers and a veggie tray.



**Please come and enjoy the Deacons' Christmas Fellowship!**



The Deacons also ask that you keep the members and friends of this faith community in your prayers. The holidays can be a difficult time for many of us.

## Evangelism & Fellowship Team

**Fellowship Hour:** Every Sunday, join us after worship for fellowship and refreshments. Please also consider hosting fellowship hour one Sunday with a friend. We supply the coffee, tea, plates and utensils. We ask the hosts to bring a snack, a quart of milk, and some juice.

**Country Wonder** – Carole Sloan sings lovely ballads with a country flair at **5 pm on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sundays**. Please bring a table-ready dish to share and join us for a pot luck supper. It is a delightful evening of good music, good food and good fellowship. We will not meet in December. But Carole will resume at **5 pm on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month, in January**.

**Membership**—What is the difference between a *member* of this faith community and someone who *visits* regularly – even for years? Not much, from all appearances. We have many long-time visitors who actively participate in the life and ministry of this church, and we are very grateful.



But something life-giving and life-changing happens *internally* when you declare that “Jesus is your Lord and Savior” and you respond to God’s grace by promising to be a faithful member of a faith community. It could be likened to living together and then getting married, or being a foster parent and then adopting a child, but the difference is between you and God.

Interested? The Session **receives new members before (or after) worship on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month**. Talk with the pastor or any member of the church. And know that you are welcome here any time as a member, a friend, or a Christmas-Easter worshipper.



## Christian Education Team

**Sunday School:** The children are “*Growing in Grace & Gratitude.*” Children begin in the sanctuary at 10 am and move after the Children’s Message to their classrooms: Preschool-Kindergarten; Grades 1 to 3, and Grades 4 to 6.

**GRACE SIGHTINGS:** Every week, the children bring home a handout designed to help them and their families see God’s grace in their life all week long. Parents, have you found this helpful?

**Adult Education:** Using Marcus J. Borg’s *The Gospel of Mark, Conversations with Scriptures*, we are studying the Gospel on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays at 11:30 or 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays at 7:00 pm. Everyone is welcome any time.



**Don’t miss it !**

**The Children’s Christmas Pageant  
is Sunday, December 20, 2015, at 10 am**

**Costuming and Practice at 9:30 am**

## Children’s Christmas Party !!!

The Christian Education Team is hosting a Christmas Party for all of our Sunday School Children on Friday, December 18.

At 5:30, the children will practice for the Dec. 20 Christmas Pageant.



Then at 6:00, the fun begins—making Gingerbread Houses, watching a Christmas Movie, eating popcorn, and more. The fun should wind down around 10 pm (or earlier for the youngest ones).



## Mission Team

**Christmas Gifts:** Thank you for taking a **Gift Tag** for a **Child at Lakehurst Elementary School**. We ask that your wrapped gift be returned with the Gift Tag on or before **Sunday, December 13**. Thank you for making a child's Christmas brighter.



**Prescription Pill Containers:** We are collecting containers for the **Malawi Project** which gives them to pharmacies and hospitals in developing countries that dispense medicine in a piece of paper which is not a safe way to transport medicine. Instead of letting our bottles go to landfills, please consider donating them. Remove the labels, and bring us your cleaned, capped bottle to the church. Thank you.

**Food Pantry:** is open from **10 to 11 am on the last Wednesday** of each month. Thank you for all of your contributions, especially of pasta and sauce, peanut butter and jelly, canned fish and meat, soup and vegetables, breakfast cereal and toiletries. If you would like to join the Pantry Crew, please tell Kim Milana or Ruth Bell.

Other mission programs: **Cub Scouts**, Pack 10, meet at 6 pm on Fridays, and **Boy Scouts**, Troop 10, meet at 7 pm on Sundays. **Al-Anon Family Meeting** at 1 pm on Fridays is open to the family and friends of people who have addictions, and **N.A.** meets on Wednesdays at 6:30 pm; **Seniors Deaf Club** on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday at 9 am, and the **Ocean County Deaf Club** on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays at 5 pm.

## Property Team

Thank you to everyone who came out on November 28 to get the church ready for the holidays. The leaves are raked up, the pews are polished, the tables, chairs and woodwork in Fellowship Hall sparkle; the children's toys are disinfected, the kitchen's organized, and the sanctuary is dressed for Christmas. And now we wait for Christ!

And now we wait for Christ!

Many more people helped than are in this photo. But we **THANK YOU** one and all.

And thank you to everyone who purchased a Poinsettia plant!





# DECEMBER 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 6 CE Meeting	2 10 Mission Team 11 Session Mtg 1 Choir Practice 3 Bell Choir 6:30 N.A.	3	4 1 Al-Anon Mtg 6 Cub Scouts	5
6 10 Worship 11 Brunch 11:30 Bible study 7 Boy Scouts	7	8 10 E&F Team 1 Deacons 7 Bible study	9 1 Choir Practice 3 Bell Choir 6:30 N.A.	10 9 Seniors Deaf Club 10:30 Hampton-Ridge Worship	11 1 Al-Anon Mtg. 6 Cub Scouts	12
13 10 Worship 11 Fellowship 11:30 Property 2 Cantata 7 Boy Scouts	14 PW are celebrating Christmas with UMW on Dec. 15.	15 12 UMW & PW Luncheon 6 Session	16 12 Worship Tm 1 Choir Practice 3 Bell Choir 6:30 N.A.	17 7:30 Cub Scouts at Lakehurst Community Ctr.	18 1 Al-Anon Mtg. 5:30 <b>Pageant Practice</b> 6 <b>Children's Christmas Party</b>	19 5 Ocean County Deaf Club
20 9:30 pageant preparation 10 Worship 11 Fellowship 11:30 Bible study <i>No Boy Scouts</i>	21	22 7 Bible study	23 1 Choir Practice 3 Bell Choir 6:30 N.A.	24 7 pm Candlelight Service of Lessons & Carols	25 1 Al-Anon	26
27 10 Worship 11 Fellowship <i>No Boy Scouts</i>	28	29	30 10 Food Pantry <i>no choir practice</i> 6:30 N.A.	31 		



**Presbyterian Women** decorated two trees in the sanctuary with their hand-made Christ-mons. We are not meeting on the 2nd Monday this month. Instead, we are joining the United Methodist Women for a Christmas luncheon at **12 noon on Tuesday, December 15.**



**The Presbyterian Church  
at Lakehurst, NJ**



101 Orchard Street, Lakehurst NJ 08733  
Phone (732) 657-5211

E-mail: lakehurstpreschurch@verizon.net

Facebook: Presbyterian Church at Lakehurst  
www.LakehurstChurch.org

Sunday School & Worship: 10 am

Rev. Christina Hindley, Pastor

Elder Dawn Heaney, Clerk of Session



**Christmas Cantata  
in Lakehurst**

**2 pm December 13  
at Presbyterian Church**

**2 pm December 20  
at Methodist Church**

**A time for refreshments and fellowship will follow both presentations of the Cantata by the combined choirs of The Presbyterian Church and The Lakehurst United Methodist Church. A free-will offering will be accepted.**

WORSHIP  WITH US!

<b>Dec. 6 2nd Sunday of Advent &amp; Christmas Brunch w/ Santa</b>	Luke 1:5-25, 57-66	<i>“Surprised Speechless”</i>
<b>Dec. 13 3rd Sunday of Advent &amp; Cantata at 2 pm</b>	Luke 1:26-56	<i>“Say ‘Yes’ to God”</i>
<b>Dec. 20 4th Sunday of Advent &amp; Children’s Christmas Pageant</b>	Luke 1:26-56	<b>Carole Sloan preaching</b> <i>“Simple Trust”</i>
<b>Dec. 24 Christmas Eve 7:00 pm</b>	Matthew & Luke	<i>Candlelight Service of Lessons &amp; Carols</i>
<b>Dec. 27 1st Sunday after Christmas</b>	Luke 2:8-20	<b>Glenn Milana preaching</b> <i>“Rejoice &amp; Ponder”</i>