

*December 2016*

# *Good News*

**Verse of the Month:** *“Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: the virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel” Isaiah 7:14*



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## From the Interim Pastor's Study Window

Dear Friends,

By the time you read this newsletter, the congregation will already have elected new officers for the coming year and you will have elected a Pastor Nominating committee, (PNC). These seven people along with the presbytery's Committee On Ministry will be working on your behalf to find a person who will be called to be your next pastor.

This is a very big step. Your last pastor served this congregation for thirty-four years, almost an entire career of service. Hopefully, before too long, you will be starting a new ministry with a new shepherd. I look forward to meeting him or her and welcoming that person to the Presbytery of West Jersey as a brother or sister in Christ.

In the meantime, you and I will probably have one more Advent and Christmas together. Is Advent a season that you enjoy? Or, is it merely a period of time leading up to the main event, Christmas? Advent can be a time for spiritual preparation and not only a time for Christmas shopping. Each day, we can perform one or more spiritual exercises, which can contribute to our equilibrium, which is often lost at this time of the year.

Some people make an extra effort to maintain regular noon prayers at this penitential season. Others decide to read from authors such as Chesterton and Lewis or adapt readings from Oswald Chambers to their own situation. *The Upper Room*, or *Forward Day By Day*, or any of the regular devotional booklets that are published by religious presses provide regular daily readings for prayer and meditation. But, whatever you choose to do, do it systematically so you get in the habit of being in contact with the Holy Spirit as well as your own inner nature.

Meditation can also help us center ourselves and find peace in the midst of turbulence. Find a quiet place and breathe deeply and regularly and open yourself to the leading of the Holy Spirit. Don't overthink this and you may find a calmness in the midst of turmoil. Stay in prayer, for in prayer there is true peace and true power. It is in prayer that we find our deepest selves in relation to our Creator. In good works, we find ourselves in relation to our Redeemer and in openness do we find ourselves in relation to the Holy Spirit. And, in relationship to God, we find ourselves connected with each other as well.

So, certainly we can get excited about Christmas. After all, it is the second highest Holy Day in the Christian calendar. But, first, take a breath and find yourself immersed in Advent, the season of penitence and peace. And,

I'll see you in church.

Grace and peace,  
Tom Purchase, Interim Pastor





## Sunday School and Related News for December

Our Trunk or Treat was a huge success! Forty plus people came out and had a great time! We had 11 cars and 35 trick or treaters, the imagination in the car decorations was amazing. Our game night also was a success with approximately 24 people coming out for a pot luck dinner and good old fashioned board games. Everyone had enjoyed themselves with faith, fellowship and fun. Thank you to all those who participated and made these events successes.

We welcome everyone to come out and enjoy what we hope will be the future of our church. As we enter the season of giving, please remember how blessed we are and be sure to help someone less fortunate this season. Remind your family and friends how much they mean to you. It's easy to get caught up when things are busy but there is always time for gratitude and remembering the true reason for the Season. Our Lord Jesus Christ's birth who gave the greatest gift of all.

### **Highlights and Up Coming Events**

- ◆ Our **Christmas presentation** and the Birthday party for Jesus will be held on **December 11, 2016**. Bob Gillis and Priscilla Schultheis are bringing their talents together to bring us an amazing presentation, while we have a fun birthday party celebrating the birth of our Lord. It will be a pot luck luncheon so bring your favorite dish, chicken nuggets and fries will be served for the kids. There will be games, crafts and goodies. Also, we will be accepting gifts of warm hats and gloves for all ages that will be donated to Sister Jean's kitchen.
- ◆ Our first Fellowship Sunday will be on **December 18th**, this is an opportunity for all the children to come together for some creativity, praising and fun. Grades Pre K-6 will be reporting to Madden Hall once dismissed from service. This first lesson will be on gifts, the children will be creating things to share with those less fortunate. We will be caroling at the Absecon Manor at 2pm so we will be flip flopping our day so our schedule will be as follows:

10:00 am – 11:00 am Service  
 11:15 am – 12:00 am Sunday school  
 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm Lunch  
 1:00 pm – 1:30 pm Practice  
 1:45 pm – 2:45 pm Caroling

Just a reminder for parents that there will be no Sunday School on Christmas Sunday or New Year's Sunday. The new rotation will begin on January 8, 2017. The Christian Education Committee would like to wish everyone a Merry and Blessed Christmas. 2017 will the best yet!!!! God Bless!

In His Service, Tina

### Women's Circles

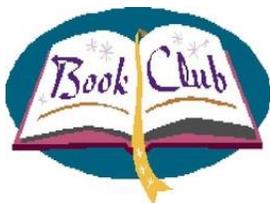


In January we began this year's study with the chaotic waters of creation in Genesis. Now as we end this study we come to the Waters of Life in John's vision of the New Jerusalem in the Book of Revelation. At the beginning of the Bible there is a garden, a

river and a tree and at the end there is a city, a river and a tree. In between the garden and the city, we see all the mess humanity makes from turning away from God. The good news is that just as God was among and with the people in the beginning, so God will be among and with us when everything is new again.

The **Ruth Circle** will meet at 1:00 p.m. Friday, December 2nd at the home of Betsy Cunius. The **Martha Circle** will meet at the home of Carol Thomas at 10:00 a.m. Thursday, December 8th. Don't forget to bring your hats, gloves, scarves and socks. We will deliver them the week before Christmas to the Charles L. Spragg School in Egg Harbor City. All women of the church are encouraged to join us at the time and place that is best for you. We will be happy to see you and will welcome you warmly.

### Christian Readers Book Club



We will be reading the book *The Mistletoe Promise* by Richard Paul Evans. It's a very easy read for over the Christmas holidays. We will meet on January 18 to discuss the book. Come out and join us for the discussion and to choose new books for the coming year.



### Worship Committee Report

The Music Director Search Committee will interview two candidates for the Director of Music Ministry by the end of November.

The Fall Congregational Survey seeking input on the current Sunday Service schedule was mailed to all congregants the week of Nov. 14.

December Sunday Service music will be provided by Mr. Harold Hawkes (Dec 4, 24), Mr. Rick DeKarski (Dec 11, 18, 25) and Ms. Anna Mae Werner (1/1/17).

There will be no Communion Service on Sunday, Dec 4. The next Communion Service will be 1/8/17.

Respectfully submitted,  
David Burgess MD,  
Worship Committee Chair.



### Mission/Evangelism for December

**The Bakely House:** We recently fixed a leak under the sink as well as the dryer that needed repair. The storm door was tweaked to close better, and Bob Hudak

will address the weather stripping below the door in hopes that the door will close even better. We approved an extension for our current family to stay through August. We are working diligently with the family to help them prepare for the future. We are also aware that the kitchen is due for an update. The counter top looks a bit sway backed around the sink area. More details in the near future.

**Christmas Eve Offering:** We designated our Christmas Eve offering to Family Promise to give it a financial boost at this critical start up time.

**Family Promise:** We will be hosts for our first round of guests during the week of January 8-15, 2017. We will be making all the final preparations and will likely be asking for volunteers to assist with meal preparation and other activities with our families.

Thank you so much for all your support to date. We will now be able to get homeless families with children off the street or out of their car. We'll be able to help them get the help they need to find work and housing. Please pray for our part in this mission.

**God Care People Ministry:** The committee approved a \$500 donation to assist the Pakistani Christians with food to be given immediately. We also approved the motion to send \$250 quarterly to establish more sustainable support.

**Away Mission Trip:** If anyone is interested in volunteer mission work, Presbyterian Disaster Relief is looking for you. There are opportunities for volunteers in W Virginia, Louisiana, and N Carolina. See Carol Kleiner for more information.

**Family Retreat at Keswick:** A year ago the committee decided to schedule a retreat after our new pastor is installed. This retreat will enable families and our pastor to enjoy a bonding experience. Stay tuned for details in the near future.

**Evangelism:** Please invite your friends and neighbors to church. Everyone will be blessed, and that's how we grow.

**Budget:** We established our budget for the 2017 fiscal calendar back in November. We reduced our budget by \$1,500 since Karen Moritz no longer needed support as a missionary. This does allow us some flexibility to offer financial assistance where we can. Your weekly benevolence contribution makes it possible to reach out to those in need.

Our **next meeting** will take place when your new chairperson and committee are established in the New Year. I thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Mission/Evangelism Chairperson for the past two years. I hope to remain on the committee to assist those in need and to reach out into the community in faith that we will grow as a church with our new pastor.

In His Service, Priscilla Schultheis



### **Salvation Army Christmas Angel Tree**

Our Christmas Angel Tree is up waiting for you to take a tag and give a child a blessed Christmas.

The tag has the size of clothing the parent has chosen and the child has chosen a toy they wish for. The gifts are to be UNWRAPPED. Please make sure the tag is securely attached to the gift to make sure the correct gift goes to each child.

If you purchase more than one gift for the child make sure they are together in a bag or tied with string or ribbon. Please attach the tag securely.

Gifts must be back to the church on December 12.



Over the beautiful autumn months, the Deacons were busy making Fall bags which contained sweets and goodies which were distributed to members of our church. We also compiled a list of members or family members who served our country in the military and honored them on Sunday, November 13th. Thanks go out to Elaine Risley and Donna Hughes who made the patriotic pins and to Gay Channell who compiled the names and printed them in the bulletin. Also many thanks to Jack and Dee Heil who wrote the beautiful patriotic poem which they read during the service. The Deacons are truly appreciative!!

Also we are so thankful to our church members who have donated 1,422 pounds of food to the Community Food Bank so far this year!! This is very impressive and really appreciated by the Food Bank. Remember as the Christmas holiday approaches to save the front of your holiday cards (no Hallmark, American Greeting or Disney) so they can be sent to St Jude's Ranch for Children for their projects.

Thank you to all the members of the Board of Deacons for all they do for our church and its members. It has been a pleasure and an honor to work with you!!

Yours In Christ,  
Kris Jenoriki, Moderator  
Anita Brown, Vice-Moderator

### **Taking Time to Listen**

by Lisa Whitaker

“He who has ears to hear . . .” - this is a common phrase used in the Bible. Have you ever wondered why - it seems a bit ridiculous . . . if you have ears, you can listen right? Well, not necessarily. There are many people who have ears, have 100% hearing capability, but who fail to listen. There are many times, I hate to admit, when someone says something to me and I hear the sound of their voice, but I don't really listen.

In October, I was in Switzerland staffing a two week intensive for the University of the Nations Master's program (the same program I completed in 2015). The 2 week intensive class was on the topic of Human Development and part of the teaching was centered around personal story - our personal stories impact our development. We were divided into small groups and were asked to share a story from our life. The others in the group were only allowed to listen and observe how the person told the story - we were not allowed to give our commentary or try to “fix” anything. We simply had to listen. As we sat together, shared and truly listened, my heart exploded with love, compassion and amazement towards my friends. Some of what was shared had never been shared before. As we listened to people's stories, I thought

“wow, I had no idea this person had walked through \_\_\_\_ in life.” So many stories of tragedy and redemption, of heart ache and victory. We often have no idea what people working beside us or living beside us have experienced in life.

It made me wonder about the innkeeper, the shepherds, the wise men. Did they really know who they were visiting? Did they have any idea that the baby in the manger had left the heavenlies as the Son of God, Creator? Did any of them take time to listen to Mary and Joseph tell their story?

This holiday season, I encourage you to take time to listen to one another. This season is one of busyness and preparation. Consider giving the unique gift of time and an attentive ear - listen to what your family and friends are sharing. THAT may possibly be the best Christmas gift you can give - and it doesn't cost a dime - just your time AND attention.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year - thank you for all you do to encourage, pray and support me as I share the Good News around the world !

Love,  
Lisa

International Small Group from  
Brazil, England, Jamaica and USA



### Nominating Committee

First, I would like to thank my Nominating Committee. We have met several times over the last couple months and I appreciate your hard work and dedication. There were many names that came across as being considered for the different leadership roles of the church and that makes it hard to sometimes narrow down the list. We, as a committee, came up with the nominations that we felt were very competent to do the job of the roles that they were nominated for. Therefore, we hope that there are no hard feelings as we are all concerned about the future of our church. That being said, let's all support those that have been not only nominated but were elected at our meeting on Nov 20th. The list of all the nominations were as follows:

- Robert Hudak III (Bobby) who was nominated, elected and has already been installed to fill an unexpired two year term of Elder.

- Don Wong, Priscilla Schultheis, and Donna Hughes nominated and elected to a three year term of Elder.
- Karen Muldoon, Alice Smith, and Naida Burgess nominated and elected to a three year term of Deacon.
- Don Wong and Cindy Greenlee nominated and elected to a three year term of Trustee.

(The date of the ordinations and installations on the above names is to be determined)

Bud Burgess, Tina Harvey, Karen Little, Betty Lloyd, Loretta Metz, Scott Sabo, and Priscilla Schultheis have all been nominated and elected to serve on our Pastor Nominating Committee.

Thank you to all for accepting the nominations and congratulations on being elected!

In His Service,  
Dawn Duran, chairperson



### **New Treasurer Hired**

After 16 years, Marge Chapman has retired from her position as our Treasurer effective October 31, 2016. We sincerely thank her for a great job that has grown tremendously over the years. She has been a steadfast professional in keeping our books and has navigated through many changes since she initially took the position. Marge has graciously agreed to stay on to help with the transition until the year-end reports have been filed.

After setting up interviews with our select committee we have chosen Karen Sheeran of Absecon as Marge's replacement. Karen has been a lifelong resident of Absecon. She and her husband Patrick, owner of Pitney Painting, have raised their two boys in Absecon and have been very involved in many community activities. She has a Bachelor of Science degree from Richard Stockton College majoring in Accounting. We are very pleased and happy to have her aboard. If you have any questions for the new Treasurer, Karen can be reached at 703-4696 and her email address is [Sheeran.karen@gmail.com](mailto:Sheeran.karen@gmail.com). All other procedures remain the same.

Respectfully,  
Nancy Conover, Finance Chairman

### **Property Committee Report**

Notice of install and a few projects completed around the church this past year.

- The carillon dedication plaque has been installed in the back of the church. Pete Hamer cut, stained and mounted the plaque to the wood. It looks very nice.
- The vestibule entrance carpet has a new section of carpet, along with the narthex. This carpet was installed to keep the dirt from making past those points.
- New window blinds were installed for the chapel and Pastors office recently. Much easier to operate now.

- If you have not noticed or heard, the different church committees split the expense of purchasing new refrigerator and freezer. If anyone knows of a use for the old freezer please let me know.
- New pull down attic stairs were recently installed in the garage. Now they are safe, compared to the old ones.

Thanks to everyone who helps with handling all of the small quick repair jobs around the church. All those little things add up and without your help our church would not look and run as good as it does, Thank you so much!

God Bless  
 Dan Hughes  
 Property committee chair

**Notice from the Treasurer:**

All requests for payment for 2016 must be submitted by Tuesday, December 27.



**2017 Planning Calendar**

Our 2017 planning calendar is now hanging in the church office. All chairmen and group leaders are encouraged to update this when scheduling meetings and/or events. (Please use the water-soluble marker provided.)

And remember, our online calendar linked to our website is updated regularly and available 24/7. This is a great planning tool when groups and committees are scheduling in advance!



**Fellowship Committee**

Our next event is the Congregational Concert on Friday Dec 9th at 7PM. John Taylor will be sharing his musical talent with us. Please contact Joanie Hoenes for tickets, they are going fast. Also, if you have reserved a seat already, but have not yet paid, please do so prior to that night. Please see the attached flyer for details! We are also still in need of desserts for the dessert reception that follows the concert, please sign up in the vestibule if you are able to donate a dessert, thank you!

On Dec 11th breakfast will be a continental breakfast due to the Birthday Party for Jesus that will be following the church service that day. There will be a covered dish luncheon for the birthday party for Jesus so please remember to bring a dish to share.

Christmas and New Year's Day both fall on a Sunday this year and although we still hope that you can attend church, we will NOT be having breakfast on those two Sundays. Please enjoy this extra time with your families instead.

We will be having another soup sale Sunday, January 15th. There will be a sign-up sheet in the vestibule to donate homemade soups. Thank you in advance for your donations and please have the soups at church by 9AM on Jan 15th.

The next Fellowship meeting will take place on Monday, Dec 12<sup>th</sup>, at 7PM. This will be my last meeting as your chairperson, please make an effort to attend. I will be writing one more Good News article next month.

I wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

In Christian Love and Fellowship,  
Dawn Duran



### Evergreens Christmas Luncheon

Our Christmas Luncheon is at Smithville Inn at noon on Wednesday, December 21, 2016. Lisa Whittaker is our guest speaker. Cost is \$23 or \$24, cash only, payable to Fran Weir or Anita Brown by December 11th. The van will leave at 11:30 for anyone who needs a ride.

**Lunch Bunch** will not be meeting this month as we will be joining with the Evergreens Christmas Luncheon.

All are welcomed to join us.

### Memorial Tree

We will be doing a Memorial Tree for Christmas in the hallway outside the sanctuary.

Pictures of your loved ones will be placed on an ornament to be hung on the tree. Pictures should be 3"x4" or 4"x5" – no larger. Please contact Dee and Jack Heil at 264-1179.



### Re-Introducing – John Taylor - -

Taylor is truly a dedicated servant of the Lord. He has an unflinching faith, not bowing to winds of compromise. His purpose, to present the gospel of Jesus Christ through Christian music. "I want to be the Christian music version of Billy Graham."

“I want to present to my Lord, barrels of crowns to lay at his feet when I stand before him on that glorious day”.

His vocal range is indeed profound and dramatic. He sings from the depths of his spirit. “The music I sing has to minister to me first. It must glorify Jesus Christ and magnify his love, grace, compassion and forgiveness.”

“My relationship with Jesus had come in my early years. I was a prayer warrior. I could pray and now I could sing.”

John sang his way through high school. During those years he won competitions for Male Popular Vocalist of New Jersey and the following year Male Classical Vocalist of New Jersey. The same person in two separate categories had never been done before. He also performed in Cole Porter and George Gershwin revues as well as tenor and baritone soloist in The Messiah, works from John Michael Talbott and Vivaldi’s Requiem with the New Jersey Symphony. John states, “I sang for three different services and churches traveling between them on Sundays. I sang in Catholic and Protestant churches with diverse congregations and developed a love for different styles of music from the more reverent traditional hymns to fast paces African American gospel songs.”

Over the years John has sung for Presidents Ford, Reagan and Bush as well as Bob Hope, General and Mrs. Westmorland, Dick Clark, Ed McMahon and many Governors, Senators and Statesmen. Taylor, now a recording artist, has offered his musical talent at Fort Dix for many years. He has performed with the Gaithers Christmas Concert in Philadelphia, bringing 35,000 people to their feet, and has been a “sought-after” soloist at the Ocean City Tabernacle for many years.

Indeed, we are blessed to call him a “long-time friend” of our church. Do plan to be blessed by his concert in our Sanctuary this Dec. 9 (Fri.) at 7pm, and enjoy meeting him at the lovely dessert reception following.

Planned by your Fellowship Committee,  
Dawn Duran, Chair.



Ferd & JoAnn Morgan wish to thank the Prayer Shawl ministry for their gift, the deacons for the wonderful fruit, and everyone for their kindness expressed by prayers, cards and visits during Ferd’s recent illness.

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To our Church Family & Deacons,

Thank you for the holiday goodies. It was greatly appreciated.

God Bless You, Olga Davies

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Many thanks for the prayer shawl and fruit basket as well as for the many cards & prayers following the passing of my father.

Sincerely,  
Greg Hamaty



Evergreens 2016 Christmas Luncheon  
Wednesday, December 21<sup>st</sup>, 12 Noon  
Smithville Inn, Smithville, NJ

Menu Choices -- Choose one (includes Mixed Green Salad & Lemon Raspberry Cake)

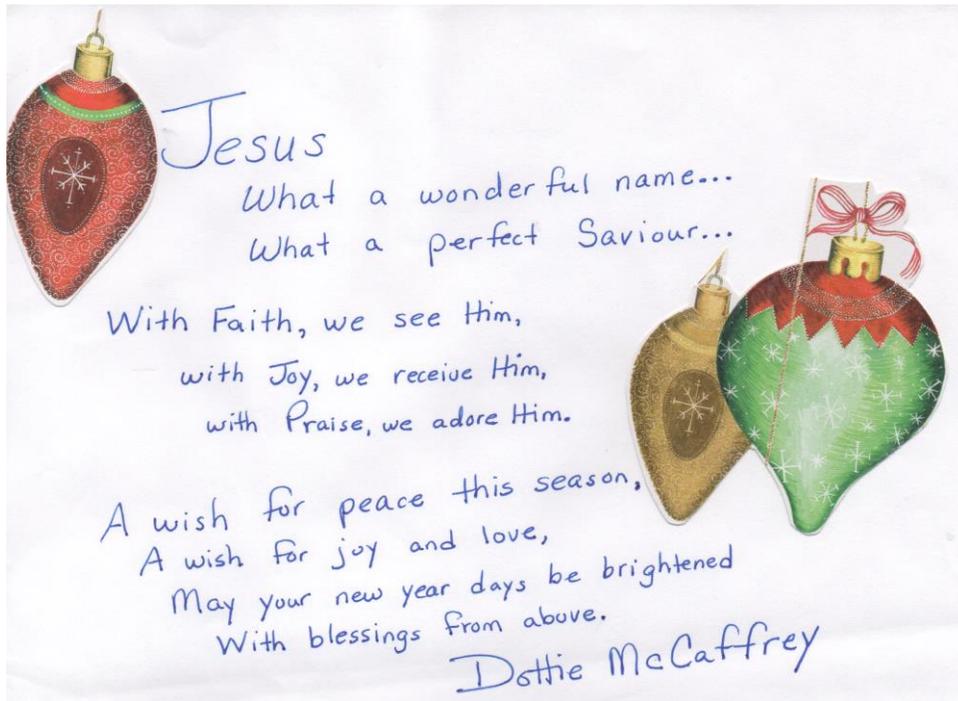
Smithville Chicken	\$23.00
Pan Seared Salmon	\$23.00
Maryland Crab Cake	\$24.00

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Menu Choice: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of People: \_\_\_\_\_ Paid: \_\_\_\_\_

Give **Cash Only** to Anita Brown or Fran Weir no later than December 11<sup>th</sup>.



★  
For  
unto  
you is  
born this  
day in the  
city of David  
a saviour, which  
is Christ the Lord.  
Luke  
2:11

May your hearts be filled with peace and faith in God.  
May your days of doubt be replaced with days of hope and cheer.  
May you and your family get nurtured with lots of love!  
Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you and to your loved ones!

Gay & John Channell



Plan ahead <sup>now</sup> for our CHRISTMAS  
CONGREGATIONAL EVENT:

JOHN TAYLOR ---  
in concert!!!



FRI-DEC. 9<sup>th</sup>



AT 7:00pm

(A lovely Dessert Reception  
to follow...)

Tickets IN ADVANCE **ONLY**  
starting on SUN. - NOV. 13<sup>th</sup> ---  
(\$10 - Adults \$3 - 18+ Under & All students)

See Joanie ASAP - 641-1839 - Sorry, no refunds

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ALL SEATS ARE RESERVED: HANDICAPPED always given  
preference --- (BUT) you are WELCOME + ENCOURAGED to  
request your "favorite" spots well in advance - thus making  
it easier for Joan. cash preferred - Help us to avoid requests  
to pay AT THE CONCERT - An eve of BLESSINGS awaits us all!!!

## Serving in December

### Lay Assistants

04 David Burgess  
11 David Burgess  
18 Linda Gillis  
24 David Burgess  
25 Priscilla Schultheis

### Head Ushers

04 Vic & Rita Abelson  
11 Elaine Risley, Carol Thomas  
18 Mary Bew, Betty Lloyd  
24 Naida Burgess, Bud Burgess  
25 Jack & Dee Heil

### Offering

04 Joan Nale, Franklin Nale  
11 Jack & Dee Heil  
18 Tina Brown, Greg Hamaty  
24 Jack & Dee Heil  
25

### Acolyte

04 Franklin Nale  
11 Jacob Sabo  
18 Kassie Little  
24 Bud Burgess  
25

### Nursery

04 Jennifer Platt  
11 Gloria Achamizo  
18 Jennifer Platt  
25 Gloria Achamizo

### Deacon of the Month

Bob Hudak

### Van Drivers

04 Tina Brown  
11 Barbara Hughes  
18 Tina Brown  
25 Vic Abelson

### Refreshment Hosts

04 Joan Nale, Patti & Dennis Scardilli  
11 Mary Bew, Betty Lloyd  
18  
25

### Breakfast Club Kitchen Crew

04 Set-up –  
Cook – Melvin Washington  
Clean-up – Ginny Davenport  
11 Continental Breakfast  
18 Set-up – Donna Hughes  
Cook – Bill Hoesten  
Clean-up – Dirk Williamson  
25 No Breakfast

### Counter Schedule

04 Jerry Hoenes, Betsy Torjussen  
11 Lee Wolff, Kirk Conover  
18 Barbara & Bob Hudak  
25 Debbie & Don Wong

