

# Absecon Presbyterian Church

## PRESBY BITS AND PIECES

*Sunday, December 17, 2023*



### LUKE 2:8-11

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord.



### THE GIFT OF THE MAGI

Each year, for those of us who do not love writing Christmas cards but want to wish our church family Christmas blessings, we have a special offering -- “The Gift of the Magi”. This year we will donate our Gifts of the Magi to the Food Bank. A list of contributors will be published so everyone will know you have them in your thoughts and wish them a very blessed Christmas season!

Our offering will be delivered to the Food Bank before the New Year. If you wish to give, please mark your envelopes or checks for “The Gift of the Magi” and/or Food Bank and leave it in one of the offering plates. Should you wish to give online, please mark the “Special Gift” box, and indicate under “Notes” it is for the Magi Fund or the Food Bank. Our Gift of the Magi will be delivered to the Food Bank before the New Year.

Thanks in advance for your Gift of the Magi and wishes to each of you for a very blessed Christmas season!

**SERVING  
THIS MORNING:**

**LAY ASSISTANT:**  
Ed Little

**USHERS:**  
Tina Brown and Ann Wallace

**ATTENDANCE**

**LAST WEEK:**  
Worship – 00

**SUNDAY WORSHIP**  
at 10:30 In Person or Online  
on APC Facebook page at  
[www.facebook.com/  
abseconpresby](http://www.facebook.com/abseconpresby)

**LISA WHITAKER**  
is with us again this Sunday  
as our Temporary  
Pulpit Supply Minister

**SERMON TITLE:**  
“Preserving the Story  
for Future Generations ”

Psalm 48:12-14  
Luke 2:8-20

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## ADULT BIBLE STUDY GROUPS

The four-week Advent Bible Study is from the book  
The Grinch and the Heart That Grew Three Times.  
Wednesday mornings at 11:00 am with Rita Abelson  
Wednesday evenings at 6:30 with Tina Harvey

\*\*\*\*\*

## CHRISTMAS CARDS

This year we will again have a box for you to drop off your Christmas cards and the Good News Express will prepare a gift bag for each of you with Christmas cards, your 2024 Offering Envelopes and little treats. Details on dates for dropping off your cards and picking up your gift bags will follow.

\*\*\*\*\*

## CHRISTMAS EVE SUNDAY SERVICE

Sunday, December 24, 2023 at 10:30

\*\*\*\*\*

## CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

Sunday, December 24, 2023 at 3:30 pm

The offering at this service will be given to Sister Jeans

\*\*\*\*\*



## THANK YOU!

Thank you to all who donated hats, gloves, scarfs and socks for the Rescue Mission.  
Your gifts will be very much appreciated by those less fortunate.

## *Prayers of the People*

Each week the people of God at APC join in prayers of thanksgiving, praise and petition to pray as one community for needs in the church. Praying for others keeps our focus outward and opens us up to know the will of God in our own lives. Consider making these prayer lists part of your daily prayer life. Doing so, may just help your feelings of isolation. Through prayer, the Holy Spirit brings others, even strangers, closer to you.

### *Please Keep These Requests In Prayer*

**The prayer book is on the table in the vestibule by the side entrance to the sanctuary.**

**Please write any requests/praise items you wish to be included in prayer during worship.**

Keep in mind that Facebook comments and requests read by the minister during worship are being recorded for broadcast and can be heard by the general public worldwide. For the privacy of those you are praying for, consider using just a first name or making your prayer requests general in nature.

- † For victims of gun violence and their families
- † Peace in Ukraine, Middle East and other countries experiencing conflicts.
- † For God's guidance as we continue the process of calling a new pastor.
- † Members of our armed services.
- † For confidence to know that in the struggle, God is with us.
- † For renewed commitment to God's purpose in us all.
- † For us to come together in the bond of self-giving love.
- † For renewed energy in finding our place in God's church,  
as people who pray, share and volunteer.
- † For wisdom and discernment when facing the unknown.
- † For God's church to embrace the poor and marginalized,  
to see God's image and be God's image in this broken world.
- † For a revival in our faith to live boldly for God's Kingdom.
- † For these individuals and families in acute need right now who are connected to your church in Absecon.
- † For those on our standing prayer list and for the needs of your church not listed here, including those intentions held in our hearts and those shared in the comments of Facebook.

**For these the individuals and families in acute need right now who are connected to your church in Absecon:**

Kathy Bordanora, Olive Brown, Maddie Caracozzo, The Carpenter Family, Chip Channell, Don Croneberger, Robin Deaver, Julie Dougherty, Jerry Falivene, Cathy Follansbee, Wendy Garwood, Christopher Green, Carol and Dave Guenther, Margareta Gustafasson, John Harvey, Jack Heil, The Hughes Family, Carol Johnson, Bob Kitchell, Walter Koteles Sr., Susan Lobrano, Carol McDowell, Jim McManus, Sam Mitchell, The Morris Family, Lisa Nagle, Betty Price, Jan Rogiers, Minerva Stadlmeir, Dave Stebbins, Judy Stebbins, Sandy Sylvester, Ann Marie Taggart, Stan Weir, The Family of Doug Winkler, Bill Young.

**Continued prayers always for:**

Rita Abelson, Kathy Boyte, Edith Budd, Emilia Carboy, Lucy Cronberger, Darryl, Khristen and Quetin, Olga Davies, Carol DeLaurentis, Jean Delesantro, Marie C. and Carmen Devece, Gail Driscoll, Kavonna and Essence, Dorie Keener, Eric Lajeuness, Aiden and Wendy Licolli, Marge Loeb, Robin McBrearty, JoAnn Morgan, Essie Newell, Rob Perry, Joyce Pfeiffer, Marilyn Rosado, Irene Smith, Georgina Umoren, Mary Umoren and Family, Ethel Washington, Frances Weir, Dirk Williamson

\*\*\*\*\*

**PRAYER SHAWL GROUP**

The Prayer Shawl Group meets the first Saturday of every month at 9:30am in Madden Hall. All are invited who enjoy knitting or crocheting or who would like to learn.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Please join us for**

***Coffee Mingle***

All are welcome to gather in Madden Hall following Sunday worship.

Brought to you by your Church Family and Fellowship Committee.

Help is needed with set up, clean up, and providing baked goods, cookies, etc.

If you are able to assist in any way please sign up on the clipboard in the vestibule.





## OUR GIFTS TO THOSE LESS FORTUNATE THAN US

Yes, it is time for me to have a quiet moment, sip a cup of tea and reflect. After Sunday, I decided I needed to get out my “Day Timer” and organize (a little late but...). So, here we go –

On December 7, the **Salvation Army** came to pick up the Angel Tree gifts. We filled twenty-five children’s wishes and the gentleman from Salvation Army was thrilled. It seems some groups were returning tags, unable to make a child smile.

On December 10, the Worship Committee instituted serving the elements (prepackaged) during the Communion portion of our service and singing the Lord’s Prayer at its conclusion. I hope everyone found it as meaningful as I did. Then in Madden Hall was our **Birthday Party for Baby Jesus**. We were asked to bring much needed socks, hats, scarves, and gloves or mittens, and these will be given to the **Rescue Mission**.

Between now and year end, if you would like to wish your church family a *Merry Christmas and Happy New Year* without writing cards, we have the **Gift to the Magi**. Please note on your check or on your envelope that your gift is for the Magi. Then on the first Sunday of January, everyone will receive a card listing all who donated. These offerings will be given to the **Food Bank**.

And at our Christmas Eve (or afternoon) service, the collection will be for **Sister Jean’s**, which is serving monthly 3,000 less fortunate people with bags of food, getting ready to serve hot lunches, and setting up a “gently used” clothing barn.

Thanks to everyone for your generous gifts for our neighbors needing our help!

Ann Wallace

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

## Deposit made on December 8, 2023 and November online giving

### General

Envelopes Undesignated (includes Loose Offerings)	\$898.71
Envelopes Designated- Initial Offering	\$410.00
Per Capita	
Energy	\$50.00
Christmas Flowers	\$35.00
Online - Undesignated	\$1,530.34
Online - Designated	\$24.55
Online - Energy	\$101.17
<b>General Total</b>	<b>\$3,049.77</b>

### Benevolence

Envelopes Undesignated (includes Loose Offerings)	\$103.30
Envelopes Designated- Mission Bouquet	\$130.00 \$5.00
Online - Undesignated	\$175.90
Online - Designated	
Wreaths Across	
<b>Benevolence Total</b>	<b>\$414.20</b>

### Capital Expenditures

Envelopes Undesignated (includes Loose Offerings)	\$30.99
Envelopes Designated	\$130.00
Online - Undesignated	\$52.77
Online - Designated	
<b>Capital Total</b>	<b>\$213.76</b>

<b>Combined Total</b>	<b>\$3,677.73</b>
-----------------------	-------------------

# Word Search Puzzle

From WhenWeWordSearch.com

Words in a straight line left to right or top to bottom

December 17, 2023

**LUKE 2:8-11**



Words in the puzzle are printed in **bold italics**

In that ***region*** there were ***shepherds living*** in the ***fields***, ***keeping watch*** over their ***flock*** by ***night***. Then an ***angel*** of the ***Lord stood before*** them, and the ***glory*** of the Lord ***shone around*** them, and they were ***terrified***. But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be ***afraid***; for see—I am ***bringing*** you ***good news*** of ***great joy*** for all the ***people***: to you is ***born*** this ***day*** in the ***city*** of ***David*** a ***Saviour***, who is the ***Messiah***, the Lord.

## THE CHRISMON TREE

Our church Christmas tree is decorated with white and gold Christian symbols called Chrismons. The word Chrismon is a combination of two words – MONograms of CHRIST. Our first Chrismon Tree was made by the Mariners group and put on display December 16, 1973.

Chrismons, as Christmas tree decorations, were originated for use in the Ascension Lutheran Church in Danville, Virginia in 1957 and since then they have been used in many countries throughout the world. In order to make the tree more meaningful and expressive to those who would see it, the decorations were made in the form of symbols which have been used by Christians since the time of the early church. These symbols were incorporated into many designs which you see on our tree.

Chrismons are made in combinations of white and gold; white symbolizing Christ's purity and perfection, gold His majesty and glory. The tiny lights remind us that Jesus is the Light of the world.

May your Christmas be blessed with a new awareness of the love Christ brings to each of us as you share in the symbolism of our Chrismon tree. And remember, Jesus is the Reason for the Season.



**Chi (X) Rho (P) with Alpha (A) and Omega (Ω)** – XP stand for the first two letters of the Greek word Christos (XPISTOS). Alpha and Omega are the beginning and the ending of the Greek alphabet.



**Latin Cross with Alpha and Omega** – The Latin Cross is the form most often used by the church to denote the cross on which Christ died. The early church often combined the A and Ω with the cross to declare the divinity of the Savior.



**Sun of Righteousness** – “But for you who fear my name the sun of righteousness shall arise, with healing in his wings.” Malachi 4:2



**Cornerstone** – “Christ Jesus Himself being the chief corner stone.” Ephesians 2:20



**Iota Chi (X)** – I, the first letter of the Greek word for Jesus. X, the first letter of the Greek word for Christ.



**Orb with Cross Triumphant** – the world united under Christ's dominion.



**Greek Cross** – A cross with arms of equal length.



**Eight pointed star** – This design refers to man's regeneration through Holy Baptism.



**Circle symbolized Eternity** – This Chrismon says by the resurrection (butterfly) of the Christ (X) from the death of the cross (+), we may look to eternal life (O) with Him who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God (Trinity) in a world without end.





**The Trinity in Eternity**



**Cross and Chi** – The Chi (X), first letter of Christ, combined with the cross (+).



**Shepherd's Crook with Alpha and Omega** – The Good Shepherd.



**Iota Eta Sigma on Greek Cross** – IHS, first three letters of Jesus in Greek IHSUS.



**Iota and Chi woven through two circles** – The outer circle refers to the infinite life, the inner one to the infinite.



**Stylized Fish and Fish in a Circle** – ICHTHUS (IXOYC) the Greek word for fish, is an acrostic on the first letters of Jesus Christ, God's Son, Savior. Christians have been using the fish to symbolize the Christ since the second century. Fish were drawn on the walls of the catacombs to direct worshippers to meeting places.



**Three Fish united to form a Circle and Triangle**—The triangle form suggests the Trinity and the circle, Eternity.



**Three Entwined Circles** – the Trinity.



**Cross in Eternity**



**Jerusalem or Crusader Cross** – This cross appeared on the shield of the Crusader Kings of Jerusalem.



**Serpent on a Tau Cross** – As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up. John 3:14



**Triangle and Trefoil** – Two symbols for the Holy Trinity.



**Epiphany Star and Rose** – The rose symbolizes the Nativity, Christ's humanity, and the star refers to His divinity.



**Celtic Cross**



**Lamb with Banner of Victory** – Isaiah was the first prophet to refer to God the Son as the sacrificial lamb. Here the lamb is depicted with the banner of victory over sin and death.



**Crown** – Symbolized the Kingship of our Lord, Jesus Christ. KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

# Absecon Presbyterian Church

## Advent and Christmas 2023



**December 3 at 10:30 AM** First Sunday of Advent  
*Lighting of the Candle of Hope*

**December 10 at 10:30 AM** Second Sunday of Advent  
*Lighting of the Candle of Peace*

**December 17 at 10:30 AM** Third Sunday of Advent  
*Lighting of the Candle of Joy*

**December 24 at 10:30 AM** Fourth Sunday of Advent  
*Lighting of the Candle of Love*

**December 24 at 3:30 PM** Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols  
*Lighting of the Candle of Light*

**December 10:** Following our morning service there will be a Potluck luncheon to celebrate "Birthday Party for Baby Jesus." Please bring a dish or dessert to share with others.



Most importantly, bring a gift of warm socks (most requested item), hats, mittens and gloves for those children and adults less fortunate than ourselves.



# *Sister Jean's Food & Clothing Pantry*

**Believe it or not, the otherwise helpful government program SNAP, does not cover these essentials!?!**

**There is a big demand for dish soap and toilet paper and other cleaning products. They need the sizes for home use, not bulk containers as these are for individuals. Even just grabbing a few items at a dollar store will help. Don't forget dish cloths and sponges... you know, the essentials.**







Please help  
replenish our  
homemade soups  
and breads for  
our shut-in  
members.

— — — — —  
| LABEL your soups and breads and |  
| please, DO NOT use nuts in your |  
| receipes as many people have an |  
| allergy to them. |  
| Please put DATE on label. |  
— — — — —



## Tips for Healthy Eating on a Budget

*Get the biggest nutrition bang for your buck*

- **Plan out a few meals** for the week and make your shopping list based on these ingredients.
- **Choose meatless meals.** Plant proteins such as beans and tofu are generally more affordable than meats and fish.
- **Don't shop on an empty stomach.** Munch on a piece of fruit or some nuts before entering the store.
- **Allow for flexibility in your shopping list** if fresh produce or poultry and fish are on sale, purchase extra quantities and freeze them for later use. Meats, fish, bananas, berries, avocados, broccoli, cauliflower, and corn freeze well.
- **Purchase nonperishable foods in bulk.** It may cost more up-front to buy "family-sized" products like whole grains, lentils, and dried beans, but the cost per unit is usually cheaper.
- **Buy store-brand items.** They're generally cheaper because less money is spent on advertising and fancy food labels.
- **Use what you have before buying more.** Take inventory of all the food in your kitchen twice a month. Bring forward the buried items and plan meals based on these ingredients.

### Low cost, nutritious foods:

#### Proteins

Beans, Peas, Lentils (dried, frozen, canned)  
Canned fish (tuna, salmon, sardines)  
Lean ground turkey, Chicken thighs (remove the skin)  
Peanut butter, Low-fat cottage cheese  
Tofu, Eggs

#### Produce

Leafy greens (kale, collards)  
Whole heads of lettuce or cabbage  
Broccoli, Radishes, Carrots  
Apples, Bananas  
Frozen unsweetened fruit  
Frozen or canned vegetables (no salt added)

#### Whole grains and pastas

Store-brand high-fiber cereals (plain shredded wheat, bran)  
Whole rolled oats  
Whole grains (brown rice, millet, barley, bulgur)  
Whole grain pasta

#### Snacks

Peanuts, Popcorn cooked in an air-popper, String cheese

It's not too late  
to get your  
Flu Shot  
Protect Yourself  
and Others

### Free Flu Vaccination

*for adults 18 years and older*

**No appointment  
needed**

Walk-In Tuesdays  
9am - 12noon  
201 S. Shore Rd, Northfield

Walk-In 3rd Tuesday  
10am - 12noon  
310 Bellevue Ave, Hammonton

**Pediatric Flu Vaccination**  
*for children 6 months – 18 years old*  
**Available by appointment.**  
Call 609-645-5933

## Beat the Winter Blues

Feeling sad when the weather and seasons change is common. To beat the winter blues, get moving. 20 minutes of activity four times a week has been shown to lift your mood. Get out in the sunlight or brightly lit spaces, especially early in the day. Set your alarm clock and stick to a sleep routine. Try to spend time with family and friends. Eat healthy foods and avoid overloading on sugar and carbohydrates like cookies and candies.

See a mental health professional if sadness doesn't go away or interferes with your daily life. For mental health resources visit [www.mhaac.info](http://www.mhaac.info). If you or someone you know is struggling or having thoughts of suicide, call or text the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline at 988 or chat at [988lifeline.org](http://988lifeline.org). In life-threatening situations, call 911.

