

Good Tidings

The Newsletter of Brick Presbyterian Church

December 2025



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Rev. Jack Cherry, Pastor

Dear Friends,

I was listening to some of our Christmas music, while writing this letter, and Elvis was wondering in song "Why can't every day be like Christmas?" And, of course, the liturgical purist in me immediately thought: "No, we have to get through Advent before we can have Christmas!"



But I wonder about that. I wonder if it might not be better to approach this season with more of a "free range" timelessness, mixing Advent preparation events with Christmas celebration events; mixing the promise of Emmanuel coming and the reality of the child sleeping in the manger together in our prayers and gatherings. And all of it happening, whenever and wherever it may occur.

Imagine the possibilities!

We can think about the shepherds on a Tuesday morning in early December, wonder about Joseph's choices on a random Friday afternoon, and spiritually join the faithful journey of the Magi on any night where a star seems to be begging to be noticed.

We can watch the parables of "It's a Wonderful Life" and "A Charlie Brown Christmas" and "Christmas with the Kranks" and "Christmas Vacation" and "The Grinch Who Stole Christmas" and recognize the characters who remind us of our families and our friends and even ourselves and the reason we are doing all of the wonderful, crazy stuff of this season!

We can see a hundred or more versions of Charles Dickens' "Christmas Carol" and measure our own Christmases - past, present and yet-to-be - and give thanks for those with whom we once celebrated, wonder about those who are still unmet in our futures and, most significantly, love those who share our joys and our lives this year.

I hope that you will blend worship into your Advent/Christmas spiritual stew this year. If worship has slipped off of your "To Do" list, as it has for many in these post-Covid years, maybe this December would be a good time to come back home, over these coming weeks, to rest your souls in the familiar songs and stories to feel the warmth that you once knew so well. And I look forward to seeing you there.

Elvis has now left my Alexa device, and I am listening to Anne Murray singing:

Christmas is coming, may joy fill your home
And the spirit be with you wherever you go . . .
Thank goodness this season will never grow old

That is my prayer for each and all of us this season.

God Bless Us, Everyone,
Jack Cherry

A/C FUND PROGRESS

UPDATE:

We are SO CLOSE!



**A/C
FUND**

**GOAL:
\$35,000**

Thank You!

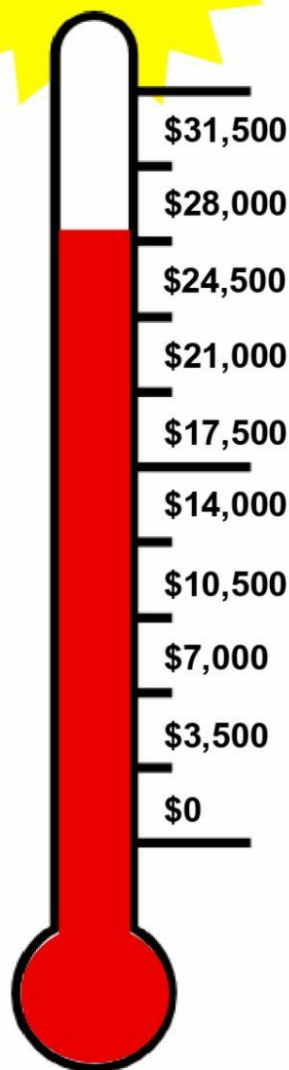
for your generous donations
to our

**SANCTUARY AIR
CONDITIONING FUND!**

*As of 11/9/25, your
donations total*

\$27,561.25

In addition to your regular offerings that are used to pay for the church's current expenses, we are prayerfully requesting that you continue to financially support with additional donations toward the purchase of this new system, which has a projected cost between \$30,000-\$35,000.



In times of inclement weather, especially during this winter season, or for other adverse conditions, the congregation is reminded to check the Church Website for closings, delays, and cancellations by going to www.brickpresby.com.

Please note that radio stations no longer announce weather-related closings, etc.

FUNDRAISING



Christmas Wreaths and Grave Blankets

Pick up will be available on December 7th before and after church.

Christmas Cookie Sale



The Christmas cookie sign-up sheet is at the fundraising table. We need as many cookies as you can bake. We ran out early last year and this is one of our biggest fundraisers. All donations will be greatly appreciated. **Cookies Sale is on December 13th.**

If you would like to donate and can't make it to sign-up or drop off, please contact Lynn Mizer at 732-966-6240.



Christmas Gift Wrapping at Boscov's

Boscov's gift wrappers are still needed.

Come and help us wrap some gifts for donations at the Boscov's in Toms River.

If you can't stay the entire time, any time is appreciated.

November 28: 10 - 6

December 4: 10 - 2

December 11: 10 - 2

December 20: 10 - 2

PLEASE REMEMBER OUR ON-GOING FUNDRAISERS

Ink Cartridges Collection



Bring them in and deposit them in the designated black trash can at the entry to the FLC. ***Proceeds help with the cost of printing for the church committees for special events.***

Hymnal Dedications and Memorial Bricks

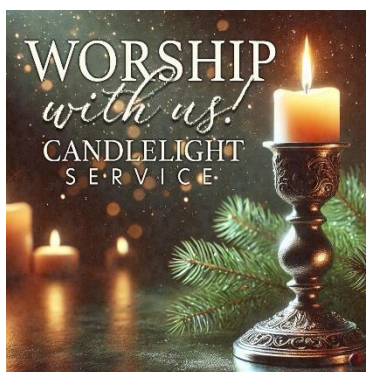


Hymnal Dedications and Memorial Bricks, both of which are available throughout the year, are two memorials that are a wonderful way to remember or honor a loved one or to commemorate a special date or event!

Order forms can be found on the BPC website, or visit the fundraising table.



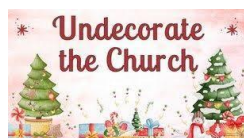
WORSHIP NEWS



CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP SERVICE

This year *Christmas Eve* is on Wednesday.
Our candlelight service will be at 7:00 p.m.

The Worship Committee is asking for your help!



We will “undecorate” the church following the service of Epiphany and the Pentecostal Service at 2:30 p.m. on **January 4th**.

God Bless you and thank you for your help!

NEW DONATION ENVELOPES



DONATION ENVELOPES

Your donation envelopes for 2026 will be put out in the Narthex as usual in mid-December.
Thank you and God Bless you all!



DEACONS CORNER



As the days grow shorter and the joyful anticipation of the Christmas season begins to fill the air, your Deacons wish every one of you a truly blessed and peaceful holiday season!

We are so grateful for this loving congregation and the profound impact we can make together in our community.

We extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who so generously contributed to our Food Pantry for Thanksgiving. Your overwhelming response made a tangible difference in the lives of many local families. Your thoughtful donations allowed us to create and deliver full, nourishing food boxes to those served by two of our vital community partners:

- Herbertsville Pre-School
- LADACIN Network

Because of your kindness, many families were able to enjoy a warm and abundant Thanksgiving meal. Thank you for embodying the true spirit of giving during this special time of year!

While we celebrate the success of the Thanksgiving drive, the need for assistance does not end with the holiday. As we approach Christmas, the number of local families relying on our Food Pantry has unfortunately increased, and the need remains great.

We prayerfully ask that you consider continuing your generosity as we prepare to provide for those in need during the Christmas season.



How You Can Help This Christmas

The Food Pantry is currently seeking donations of non-perishable items to help ensure every family can enjoy a special holiday meal. We are specifically requesting:

- Canned Vegetables (Green beans, corn, sweet potatoes)
- Pancake Mix (A welcome breakfast item for families)
- Instant Mashed Potatoes
- Non-Perishable Holiday Meal Items (e.g., canned gravy, stuffing mix, cranberry sauce, boxed desserts)

Donations can be dropped off in the collection bins located in the Narthex.

Thank you again for your selfless commitment to helping those in need. May your holidays be filled with the warmth of God's love and the joy of a giving heart.



STEWARDSHIP & BENEVOLENCE NEWS



THANK YOU for your gifts totaling \$588 to the Peace & Global Witness Offering in October!

Your support of this offering helps peacemaking efforts both in the U.S. and around the world. 25% of this Offering stays with our congregation to support peacemaking and reconciliation; 25% is retained by PC (USA) mid councils to support peacemaking efforts with neighboring congregations; and the remaining 50% is used by the Presbyterian Mission Agency to join the peacemaking efforts of church partners all over the globe.

The Peace of Christ be with us all!



“God is our refuge and strength... Therefore, we will not fear, though the waters roar and foam.” Psalm 46

As we see the catastrophic impacts Category 5 Hurricane Melissa made as it tore its path through Jamaica and across Cuba, we are praying for our siblings in the Caribbean. With maximum sustained winds of 185 miles per hour at landfall in October, authorities are calling this one of the most powerful storms ever to hit the region. Its smaller remnant continued to inflict damage among island nations in its path, and it will take years to recover.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) is providing grants to address urgent, immediate needs and will remain to address long-term recovery and unmet needs. The magnitude of this storm will require the development of long-term projects and assistance for both physical and emotional long-lasting effects.

PDA affirms our commitment to accompany those affected by this disaster. As people of God, once again we are called to bridge the “GAP” — Give, Act and Pray.

Financial support for relief efforts can be made to our church. Checks should have the notation “Hurricane Melissa” written on the memo line. Online donations should be designated for Hurricane Melissa. Donations made to our church for this cause will be forwarded to PDA.

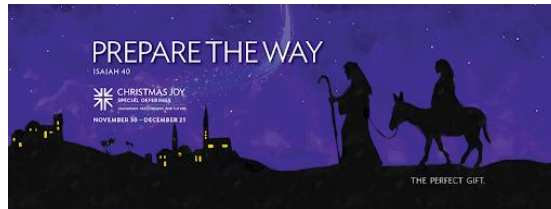
WE ARE THE MESSENGERS!

We have received an incredible message from our God – of salvation, love, and hope - and we are determined to continue to share it! ***And that is where we look to and depend on you!***



Have you returned your Planned Giving card for 2026? Thank you to those who have already done so. If not, it is not too late to mail it or drop it off at the Church. We welcome your pledges of support for the coming year.

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING



When Jesus was born among us, he came as a helpless baby destined to bring joy, peace, and salvation to his people. This child, God's Word made flesh — fully human and fully God — became one of us. One with us. One among us. In all of our vulnerabilities, struggles and triumphs, Jesus became one of us — leading us, knowing us, connecting us to himself and to each other, and offering us his gift of eternal life.

The perfect gift.

Through the Christmas Joy Offering, we reflect God's perfect gift to us, with generous support of church leaders among us — past, present, and future — who have pointed us to God. We honor and celebrate leaders like retired pastors, church workers and their families who have faithfully guided and led us but who now find themselves in critical financial need. \$1.1 million of gifts from the 2024 Offering are being used to provide critical financial support and grants for current and retired Presbyterian church workers in their times of need. Income supplements from the Board of Pensions (BOP) helped nearly 261 individual recipients, assisting retired church workers and surviving spouses with the means to provide for themselves. Housing supplements from the BOP helped more than 1,366 individual recipients remain in their homes, afford assisted living, or long-term care. Emergency Assistance Grants from the BOP helped more than 199 individual recipients facing times of great financial need or uncertainty due to unforeseen circumstances.

We also honor and celebrate emerging leaders like students in schools and colleges equipping communities of color, who develop leadership skills as they pursue their education and prepare to bring their gifts in service to the world God loves so much. More than \$800,000 of gifts from 2024 are being used to provide education and leadership development skills at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. Many of the students attending these schools and colleges are the first in their families to enroll in higher education.

Jesus' example as a child born to be among us and lead us to eternal life provides a pattern for us to follow as we celebrate those who have led us in the past and will lead us into the future. Through the Christmas Joy Offering we come together to support past, present, and future leaders, embodying God's perfect gift to us, Jesus Christ.

Please give generously to the Christmas Joy Offering which will be taken on December 14th.





HELP NEEDED

Updated for December

Are you looking for another way to share your time and talents in praise of the Glory of God? The church needs volunteers because as the Bible states, "If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it." 1 Corinthians 12:26

*This column will list the current needs of various BPC groups and committees, as submitted by the group leaders. **Here are a few of the wonderful opportunities available at BPC!***

Fundraising Committee – Seeking new members to join our fun, energetic group. Are you interested? If so, contact Linda Kathenes (848-333-5119, JLin52@comcast.net) or Lynn Mizer (732-966-6240, lmizer@comcast.net).

Worship Committee - If you are available for one hour per month to clean and restock the pews, please contact Tom Fortier at 848-333-2599 or Missy Brino at 732-691-6209. Thank you for considering this worthwhile job.

Members are welcome to join in the work of providing meaningful Worship of God at BPC. A wide variety of responsibilities dedicated to Worship are shared among all committee members. Meetings are held on the last Tuesday of the month at 5:45 p.m. Contact Missy Brino at mbrino@comcast.net or 732-691-6209.

Bell Choir - Bell ringers are needed. **All ages are welcome – We'd love to have one or more of our talented young people join us!** Practices are held weekly on **Mondays at 5:00 p.m.**, and the Bells play during Worship on the 4th Sunday of each month. If interested in joining this music ministry, see Bonnie Luton or call the church office at 732-477-0676.

Hands On Mission Group/Outreach – Volunteers are wanted to work on some easy, fun, craft and sewing projects, such as teddy bears for Baptisms. Prayer squares (crochet or knit) which will be placed in the Brick Hospital Chapel, Shorrock Nursing Home, and Weatherhead & Young Funeral Home, are always needed. All projects may be done at home. Contact Coordinator Lori Evans at lmegolfer@gmail.com.



If you are a group leader and need volunteers, simply email your info to bpcnewsletter111@gmail.com before the 15th of the month, to be included here next month.

"The generous will prosper; those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed." Proverbs 11:25

SPECIAL DAYS IN DECEMBER

Welcome
Winter

12/21

CHRISTMAS
DAY

12/25



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

- Boscov's Gift Wrapping - Sign-up sheet is available now
- Pick up Christmas wreaths and blankets - 12/7
- Christmas Cookie Sale - 12/13
- Christmas Flowers donation envelopes available until 12/14
- Christmas Joy Offering - 12/14
- Un-decorate the church - 1/4



See the [Events tab](#) on the BPC web site for further details.



RECOVERY AT BPC

AA Meetings in Fellowship Hall

Daily - 7 a.m.

Friday – 12 p.m., 8 p.m.

Saturday – 7 p.m.

NA Meeting in Fellowship Hall

Thursday - 6:30 p.m.



BPC ONLINE GIVING



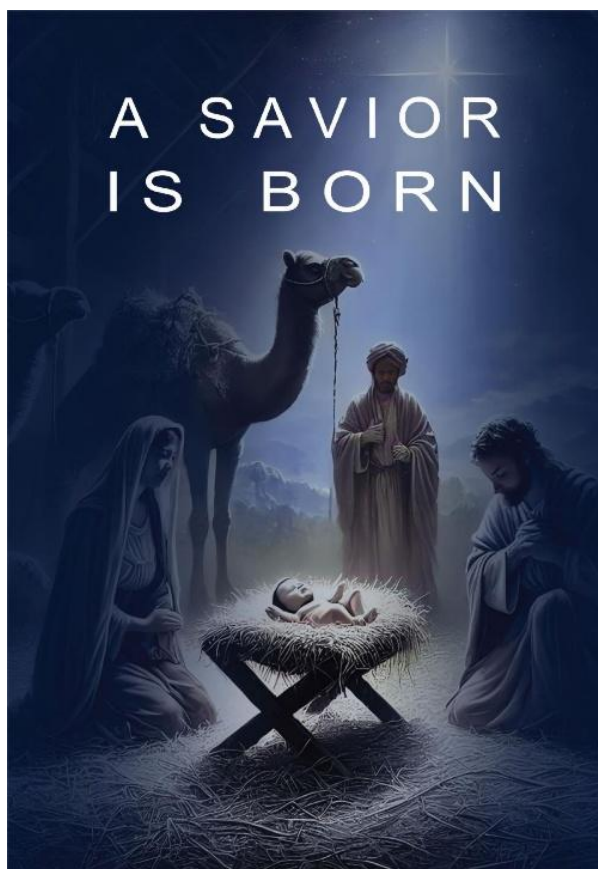
Please go to www.brickpresby.com/give-now/, and click on the "GIVE NOW" button to make an online donation to Brick Presbyterian Church.



The Good Tidings newsletter is sent monthly to the BPC family via Constant Contact email. *If you know of any members not currently receiving Constant Contact mailers, please have them notify the church office with their email address so they can receive future mailings.*

The Good Tidings is also available in condensed PDF format (with no personal info) on the church website.

We will continue with worship services online as well as live-streaming in the Sanctuary – please join us! These services are also on our website in case you miss one and would like to go back and watch.



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