

# Blacksburg Presbyterian Church

*Loving God with Heart, Soul, and Mind*

DECEMBER 2022 NEWSLETTER



## 2022 Advent, Christmas and Epiphany Calendar

- ♦ **Sunday, Dec. 4, 10:00 am and 11:30 am:** Second Sunday of Advent - Advent Festival, including our annual Alternative Gift Fair, service projects and crafts, hot chocolate
- ♦ **Sunday, Dec. 4, 11:30 am:** Youth group helping to pack Woodchucks baskets and making cards
- ♦ **Wednesday, Dec. 7, 5:30 pm:** Gingerbread Houses and Potluck Dinner
- ♦ **Sunday, Dec. 11, 10:30 am:** Third Sunday of Advent - Advent/Christmas music in worship, with choir and orchestra
- ♦ **Sunday, Dec. 11, 5:30 pm:** Youth Christmas Party with service project for Baby Shop
- ♦ **Tuesday, Dec. 13, 7:00 pm:** Blacksburg Master Chorale Holiday Sing-along benefit for Interfaith Food Pantry
- ♦ **Sunday, Dec. 18, 9:00 am:** Fourth Sunday of Advent - Congregational Breakfast, provided by the Men of the Church, with chimes and fellowship
- ♦ **Sunday, Dec. 18, 5:00 pm:** Chili and Cheer - chili supper followed by caroling and delivery of prayer shawls and cards for homebound and folks in need of cheer
- ♦ **Saturday, Dec. 24, 4:00 pm:** Family Christmas Eve service with participatory pageant (no childcare; children are welcome in worship)
- ♦ **Saturday, Dec. 24, 7:00 pm:** Christmas Eve candlelight service (no childcare; children are welcome in worship)
- ♦ **Sunday, Dec. 25, 10:30 am:** Christmas Day casual worship. Come in your PJs! (No childcare; children are welcome in worship.)
- ♦ **Sunday, Jan. 1, 10:30 am:** Epiphany worship, with Epiphany stars (no childcare; children are welcome in worship)



Newsletter Deadlines: We look forward to your items for the newsletter. Please have all items submitted to Rhonda by the **15th of each month** for the upcoming month's issue. Items may be submitted by email to Rhonda at the following: [rhonda@blacksburgpres.org](mailto:rhonda@blacksburgpres.org).

Don't forget our newsletter is available on our website: <https://www.blacksburgpres.org/newsletter>

## Prayer Concerns

### *Trusting in God's presence, grace, healing, and care, we pray . . .*

- for the family and friends of Lynn Lipsey, a longtime member of BPC, who died Thursday, November 24.
- for family and friends of Virginia Bethune, a longtime member of BPC, who died Wednesday, November 16. The memorial service for Virginia will be held on Sunday, December 4, at 2:00 at BPC. A reception will follow.
- for Jan McGilliard as she begins cancer treatment.
- for Bethany Brownfield, Bill and Mary Jane Henika, Stan and Janne Mathes, Nancy Alexander, Wilmoth O'Dell, Bill and Sally Foy, Rane Lahn, and for those in the military: Luke Phillips, Eden Elizabeth Lawson, and Joel Hunter.
- for the victims of the shooting in Colorado, for the families and friends of those killed and injured, and all those who identify as LGBTQ+ and struggle to have a sense of safety and acceptance.
- for the women-led movement in Iran; we feel their pain and anger, and celebrate their courage, and that of those who stand with them. Help us to show solidarity.
- for those suffering from increasingly alarming effects of climate change and for all of us feeling dread about what is to come. Give us the courage and will to labor with hope as we act on opportunities to mitigate and reverse the ongoing climate crisis.
- for those on opposing sides of so many issues. Help us to honor each other's humanity and help us to both find ways to understand and love each other, and to protect and serve those who are vulnerable.
- for the people of Ukraine who are enduring continued invasion. We pray for the global community as they continue to seek a response to Russia's aggression and an end to war. We long for truth, peace, and solidarity, in Ukraine and the whole world.
- for Afghan, Ukrainian, and other refugees, and the people in our community and in other areas who work with them.
- for our partners and friends in CEDEPCA in Guatemala, and for our co-workers, Betsey and Eric Moe and their family in Guatemala.
- for the work of our mission co-worker partners in the Philippines, Cobbie Palm and Dessa Quesada-Palm.
- for our partners and friends in Malawi, working to meet health, educational and food-producing needs.
- for our Matthew 25 Advisory Team as they continue to seek ways to keep BPC engaged as a Matthew 25 congregation. Be with us as a congregation as we try to truly understand and respond with integrity to issues of racism.
- for those suffering from COVID and with disruptions from continued infections. We pray for equitable distribution of vaccines, tests, and treatments, and for continued understanding of how to cope with the persistence of the virus.
- for all those struggling to have enough to eat, to live in safety, to feel loved, and to have hope.

You can send prayer requests for Prayers of the People in Sunday worship and/or to be added to the website prayer list to Rhonda ([rhonda@blacksburgpres.org](mailto:rhonda@blacksburgpres.org)).





## 2022 Advent Festival, December 4 10:00 - 10:30 am & 11:30 - 12:30pm Fellowship Hall



Join us to prepare for the season in several ways!  
There will be choices for all ages!

- ♦ Assemble **personal care packages** to go with the Christmas baskets which the Woodchucks will be delivering to their clients.
- ♦ Design and make **Christmas cards** with provided supplies. The cards will be delivered or sent later to homebound folks, folks at Kroontje, and BPC folks who have moved away recently.
- ♦ Participate in a **children's craft project**
- ♦ Make purchases from the **Alternative Gift Fair** sponsored by Presbyterian Women. For a brief summary of the charitable organizations included this year, please see below. Brochures with more detailed information can be found in the bulletin on Sunday and in the Gathering Space.
- ♦ Enjoy **hot chocolate!**

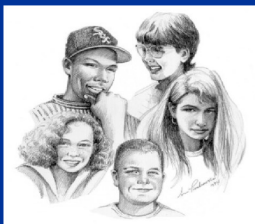
### Alternative Gift Giving Opportunity: A Summary of Charitable Organizations

**Bread for the World** is a nonpartisan non-profit Christian voice urging our nation's decision-makers to expand anti-hunger programs and increase funding for nutrition programs. Studies have shown that malnutrition can cause stunting and other problems in the bodies and brains of children. Tackling inequities within the food system is a key to ending hunger and malnutrition. Data confirms the pandemic caused additional hunger.



**CEDEPCA** (Protestant Center for Pastoral Studies in Central America) is a non-profit organization headquartered in Guatemala. Contributions will be used to support its women's ministry. CEDEPCA is committed to having an impact on women in the region, with educational experiences grounded from a feminist theology. Activities are designed to empower women to assume their rights, learn to care for themselves, take leadership in their churches and communities, understand laws that help them, continue or begin studying, and to develop more equal relationships in their everyday lives.

**Micah's Backpack** is a non-profit faith community initiative that provides direct food assistance for children in low income families. Every Friday during the school year identified students receive a backpack filled with meals and snacks for the weekend and an educational piece. On Friday mornings, volunteers deliver the bags, and the partner schools distribute them to the students. Currently, a number of children in Blacksburg schools receive healthy food during the academic year and during the summer break.



**Presbyterian Children's Home of the Highlands, Inc. (PCHH)**, Wytheville, is a residential children's home providing love, sanctuary, guidance, and support to children who have been removed from their homes and families. Many of the children are victims of various forms of abuse and neglect. If it is not possible for the children to return to their homes, they may stay at PCHH as alternative plans are developed or until their graduation.

*Continued on next page . . .*

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## Alternative Gift Giving Opportunity: A Summary of Charitable Organizations

### BLACKSBURG REFUGEE PARTNERSHIP

**Blacksburg Refugee Partnership** is an organization run entirely by community volunteers. Refugee families are provided ongoing support to help them fully integrate into American society, become self-reliant, and achieve fulfilling lives. So far, volunteers have helped 21 adults and 19 children from Syria, Afghanistan, Burundi, and Somalia settle into new apartments, learn English, enroll in school, receive medical care, etc. With no overhead, all contributions directly help refugee families thrive.

**St. Luke and Odd Fellows Hall** is a museum of African American culture and a former social gathering spot for the African American community called New Town in Blacksburg. It was the only public gathering place for African American citizens and has strong sentimental meaning to the community. Efforts to preserve and restore the Hall continue through the Blacksburg Museum and Cultural Foundation. The exhibit on display is titled "From Civil War to Civil Rights," and the museum is free and open to the public by appointment.



**UKirk Campus Ministry at Virginia Tech** (Cooper House) partners with the Presbytery of the Peaks and four area churches, one of which is Blacksburg Presbyterian Church. Students gather for dinner, fellowship, worship, discussion, and for planning participation in mission activities locally and globally. Pastoral care is offered following its mission "to nurture the faith development and discipleship of the students, respond to human needs regardless of ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation, and promote peace and justice as Christ teaches us."

**VICCC (Valley Interfaith Child Care Center, Inc.)** is a 501(c)3 organization that serves children of low-income families. With special support from New River Valley faith communities, VICCC's goal is to create high-quality, affordable, educational, and nurturing care for young children (ages 0-5) of low-income working families in the New River Valley. BPC has been supportive of this endeavor from its inception, providing board members, volunteers, funding, and much needed everyday items necessary for the care of the children.



### *Back by Popular Demand*



**Guatemalan Scarves:** Margaret Marsille, who will be returning to visit Mision San Lucas Toliman for the 19th year, will join us at the Alternative Gift Giving Opportunity to sell handwoven scarves from Guatemala. Sales are helping to expand markets for handwoven textiles for local women. Weaving allows the women to work from home and to put food on the table.







**Chili and Cheer**  
**5:00 pm Sunday, Dec. 18,**  
**beginning in Fellowship Hall**

**Enjoy food and fellowship and spread cheer  
 to our homebound friends!**

There are many BPC members and friends who are homebound or who are in need of some cheer this season. At the Advent Festival on Dec. 4, we'll be making cards to send or give to some of those folks. In addition, the Knit Wits have made prayer shawls and lap robes for us to give friends to remind them of our connections through prayer. We will be gathering on Dec. 18 to spread out in the community to distribute these cards and shawls, and/or to go to homes where we can gather on front porches to carol with them.

If you would like to spread some cheer through making deliveries or through caroling (you get to choose), join us in Fellowship Hall on Sunday Dec. 18. We will begin with warm chili which will be provided by the Fellowship Ministry while we enjoy being among each other, then we will divide up into groups, with addresses to head out to spread some Christmas love and goodwill!

**We hope you will join us!**  
**All ages are welcome! (Young children can join in  
 the groups going on shorter excursions)**

## Youth Group Calendar

### Sunday, Dec. 4:

- After worship: Pack food baskets, make cards, lunch

### Sunday, Dec. 11:

- 5:30-7:30 pm: Youth Christmas party. Bring a wrapped gift to exchange and an unwrapped gift for the Baby Shop, FH

Youth Group resumes on January 8, 2023.



**The Baby Shop Christmas tree** has returned to the Gathering Space this year from **December 4 through 18**. As in the past, the tree is decorated with ornaments representing clothing and items most needed by our less fortunate Montgomery County families. To participate please take an ornament, purchase that item, and place it (unwrapped) under the tree.

**The last day to bring your item is  
 December 18.**

BPC's generous engagement with this tradition always makes a huge impact on what the Baby Shop can offer to children in need during the coldest time of the year.

**Thank you!**

## BPC CARES Community Holiday Outreach

SEPTEMBER: MONTGOMERY COUNTY  
 CHRISTMAS STORE-FUNDS FOR FOOD

OCTOBER: BLACKSBURG  
 INTERFAITH FOOD PANTRY

NOVEMBER: WOODCHUCKS  
 CHRISTMAS BASKETS

DECEMBER: MONTGOMERY COUNTY  
 BABY SHOP



## CHRISTMAS JOY SPECIAL OFFERINGS

CHURCH LEADERS—PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Each year during the Advent and Christmas season, we turn our eyes to Bethlehem and celebrate the wondrous gift of Jesus Christ, our Savior.

God has blessed the Church with incredible leadership in every time and place, but those leaders often need to be supported by their communities as well. The Christmas Joy Offering, which we will receive on Dec. 18, addresses the support needed by some of our leaders, including supporting leadership development for communities of color, and providing support for Presbyterian church workers in their time of need.

The Christmas Joy Offering has been a cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930s. The Offering distributes gifts equally to the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and to Presbyterian-

related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. The Assistance Program provides critical financial support to church workers and their families. Presbyterian-related schools and colleges provide education and leadership development while nurturing racial and ethnic heritage.



"The money you give goes directly to students and keeps them in college. Like me, many students often feel like they are hanging by a thread. Your donation fills in the threads and makes a rope — a lifeline of financial assistance."

Kylee Thompson,  
Graduate, Stillman College,  
Tuscaloosa, AL

Student,  
University of Alabama,  
Master of Library and  
Information Science degree



"How greatly we understand the uniqueness of the Presbyterian Church in its call to help people as Christ commands. And now, having so carefully laid out the importance of giving to the Christmas Joy Offering in the rural area congregations where Ben was pastor, we are so grateful to directly benefit from such financial assistance in our great need since Ben's stroke."

Helen Whitfield, wife of Rev. Ben Franklin Whitfield,  
Honorably Retired, Rochester, IN

**Bring your offering Sunday, December 18.**

**Save the Date! January 28<sup>th</sup> - February 4<sup>th</sup>**

**TOH will take place at BPC this year!**

- \* **Volunteer opportunities include:**
  - \* making meals (dinners)
  - \* providing snacks, drinks, and breakfast items
  - \* making lunches
  - \* doing laundry
  - \* being in charge for the evening at BPC
  - \* spending the night



## Hope for Healing in Christ and Community

from Cobbie Palm and Dessa Quesada Palm,  
mission co-workers in the Philippines

Dear friends,

Every year, Church Workers of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines gather for a few days at Silliman University at the tail-end of the university's Founder Week celebration to reflect, discuss and to be in community. The Koinonia comes alive with conversations, breaking bread, singing and studying together. During this time, Dessa and Cobbie help put together a play that reflects the theme for each year. *(Photo, right: Sa Bilog ng Maylikha – In Our Creator's Circle. The final cross and affirming the Koinonia. Photo Credit: Alessandra Konahap, Silliman University Camera Club.)*



After a two-year hiatus of a face-to-face Church Workers' Convocation due to the pandemic, the university opened its door and church workers were able to gather again. In barely three weeks, students and faculty rehearsed a play inspired by stories of Divinity School students, interns, pastors and church workers. The performances were an effort to reflect on this year's Church Workers' Convocation theme, "Celebrating and Reaffirming our Hope for Healing" amidst the complexities brought about by the pandemic and other compounding social issues facing the church.



The play begins with the celebration of the Koinonia, the symbolic circle of our Christian community that is strengthened by the faithful community. This safe circle and the social fabric are suddenly shaken by the pandemic and its consequent impact on people's lives as seen through the lens of church workers. The stories of five individuals are shared, distinct but interconnected, [with stories of students and pastors who grapple with their own isolation and burdens, and who struggled to provide connection, worship and pastoral care, just as BPC did, during the height of the pandemic.] *(Photo, left: Sa Bilog ng Maylikha – In Our Creator's Circle. A church worker reminisces life before the pandemic. Photo Credit: Alessandra Konahap, Silliman University Camera Club.)*

The play ends with a reflection on Luke 5: 17-26 which tells of the story of Jesus healing the paralyzed man. The characters relate this story to the pandemic and the healing that Jesus shall continue to demonstrate in the context of an ailing world, and the role of the Koinonia, the community to rally around and together support the sick, and to declare their overwhelming faithfulness.

Indeed, we shall be healed through Jesus who works through the collective efforts of our Christian family. We continue to be deeply thankful to you all for accompanying us through your prayers and manifold support amidst all the storms and turmoil that we face as a community. May God bless us and renew us each day.

Cobbie and Dessa

(The full letter can be found [here](#).)





APRIL 17-24, 2023

WITH

*Engage*

Engage with our mission partners in CEDEPCA.  
Experience their transforming mission.

*Discover*

Meet amazing people whose lives God has  
changed through CEDEPCA.

*Learn*

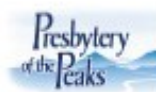
Experience the dynamic approach to mission  
and transformation in CEDEPCA's ministry.

*Renew*

Find renewal, energy, and inspiration for our  
mission here. Enjoy Guatemala's natural beauty,  
Mayan heritage, and the splendid hospitality of  
Christian siblings in Guatemala.

**COST \$2,000 (approximate)**

*Includes airfare, meals, lodging, travel within Guatemala,  
guides, and translators. Financial assistance available  
from each presbytery.*



Protestant Center for Pastoral  
Studies in Central America

**CONTACTS**

**Presbytery of the Peaks**  
Bob Fiedler  
rev.rafieler@gmail.com

**Presbytery of the James**  
Mary Jane Winter  
mjwinter@comcast.net

For more information, contact  
Sandy Schlaudecker at [cheesemaker72@gmail.com](mailto:cheesemaker72@gmail.com).



# Dates to Remember

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

2: Carter Eschenmann, Payton Kruckow  
 3: Dave Hayes, Nathan Pienkowski  
 5: Ella Lawrence, Shelly Threlkeld  
 6: Nancy Artis, Matthew Green, Marti Snyder  
 7: Judy Davis  
 8: Marilyn Hutchins, John Hunter  
 9: William Ducker, Charles Good  
 10: Tate Pospichal  
 11: Mary Harder  
 12: Nolan Stewart  
 14: Beth Mattson  
 17: Mary Frances Taylor  
 18: Carla Bundren, Laurie Good, Paul McFall  
 20: Sophia Warren  
 22: Chris Byron, Judy Pospichal  
 25: Susan Barnard  
 26: Jack Call, B'easy Thompson  
 27: Dan Bowling  
 31: Sheridan Bell



## JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

2: Sarah Windes  
 3: Skip Jubb  
 4: Sara Hunter, Evelyn Wolf  
 5: Eliza Ruth Hunter  
 8: Zoë Wiles, Isaac Wiles  
 10: Mark Hutchins  
 11: Clara Corl  
 12: Ellen Oliver  
 13: Nataleigh Pienkowski  
 14: John Perumpral  
 17: Linda Harvey  
 18: Rachel Parson  
 19: Pamela Turner  
 22: Alice Ledford, Susan Osborne  
 23: Bill Henika  
 24: Barbara McKenzie  
 25: Christopher Lawrence, Winnie Myers, Emma Rakes, Mary Ann Bowling  
 26: Judith Jones, Brandy Salmon  
 27: Joseph Childers  
 28: Heather Lawrence  
 29: Lewis Barnett  
 30: Lilia Bundren, Julie Burger



The building is now open during work hours.  
 Signing in is still required of everyone. Masks are optional.  
 Some meetings are in person and some are virtual.  
 Please hold each other in prayer and continue to look out for one another.  
 Say healthy, safe, and kind.

## BPC's Calendar

### DECEMBER 2022 — Recurring Meetings:

**Monday:** Staff meeting, 10:30 a.m., HCR  
 Deacons meeting, second Monday at 12:00 p.m., Zoom. Will meet Dec. 12.  
 Knitwits, fourth Monday at 1:00 p.m., WM  
**Tuesday:** Worship Planning Team, 10:30 a.m., HCR  
 BPC Quilters, 9:30 p.m., FH  
**Wednesday:** Helping Neighbors by phone  
**Sunday:** **No Sunday School for youth, children or adults on Dec. 18, 25, or Jan. 1.**  
 Sunday School for youth and children, 9:00. Contact Susan at [susanh@blacksburgpres.org](mailto:susanh@blacksburgpres.org).  
 Adult Ed: Contact [adulted@blacksburgpres.org](mailto:adulted@blacksburgpres.org).  
 Youth Group, 5:30-7:30 pm, FH  
**No Session meeting for December.** Session meeting, third Sunday of the month, FH

### Presbyterian Women Circles — upcoming meetings:



- Lydia Circle: 12/05, 1:30-3:00 pm, FH
- Hildegard Circle: 12/12, 6:00-7:00 pm, TBA
- Faith Circle: 01/05, 7:30-9:00 pm, TBA

Please remember to contact the church office in advance  
 to schedule room use and avoid conflicts.

Meeting Room Key: HCR—Hatcher Conference Room, FH—Fellowship Hall,  
 WM—Westminster Hall, SNC—Sanctuary, GS—Gathering Space

BLACKSBURG PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

LOVING GOD WITH HEART, SOUL, AND MIND

BLACKSBURG PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
701 CHURCH ST SE  
BLACKSBURG, VA 24060-5213

\*change service requested

**BPC offers both in-person and livestream worship services with both beginning at 10:30.** You can access the livestream via BPC's [YouTube channel](#).

Bookmark the page for easy access. The video will be available after Sunday worship if you missed the live service.

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**Subscribe to BPC emails today!**

To join the email list, click [here](#) or contact Rhonda at [rhonda@blacksburgpres.org](mailto:rhonda@blacksburgpres.org).

Check out our website, [www.blacksburgpres.org](http://www.blacksburgpres.org), for more information about BPC and church activities.

**BLACKSBURG PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

*A Vibrant Congregation of*

*Welcome, Worship, and Outreach*

**701 CHURCH ST SE, Blacksburg, VA 24060-5213**

**540-552-2504 FAX 540-961-5691**

Email: [bpc@blacksburgpres.org](mailto:bpc@blacksburgpres.org)

Website: [www.blacksburgpres.org](http://www.blacksburgpres.org)

**Rev. Sarah Wiles**, Pastor: [pastorsarah@blacksburgpres.org](mailto:pastorsarah@blacksburgpres.org)

**Dr. Larry Wyatt**, Director of Music: [larry@blacksburgpres.org](mailto:larry@blacksburgpres.org)

**Amanda Raymond**, Pianist/Organist:  
[amanda@blacksburgpres.org](mailto:amanda@blacksburgpres.org)

**Sarah Windes**, Coordinator of Church Life:  
[sarah@blacksburgpres.org](mailto:sarah@blacksburgpres.org)

**Susan Hunter**, Director of Children and Youth Ministries:  
[susanh@blacksburgpres.org](mailto:susanh@blacksburgpres.org)

**Rhonda Waller**, Office Manager: [rhonda@blacksburgpres.org](mailto:rhonda@blacksburgpres.org)

**Rev. Emily Rhodes Hunter**, Parish Associate:  
[emily@blacksburgpres.org](mailto:emily@blacksburgpres.org)

**Rev. Kathy Carpenter**, UKirk, Presbyterian Campus Ministry:  
[campusminister@pcusa-vt.org](mailto:campusminister@pcusa-vt.org)