PeacePress

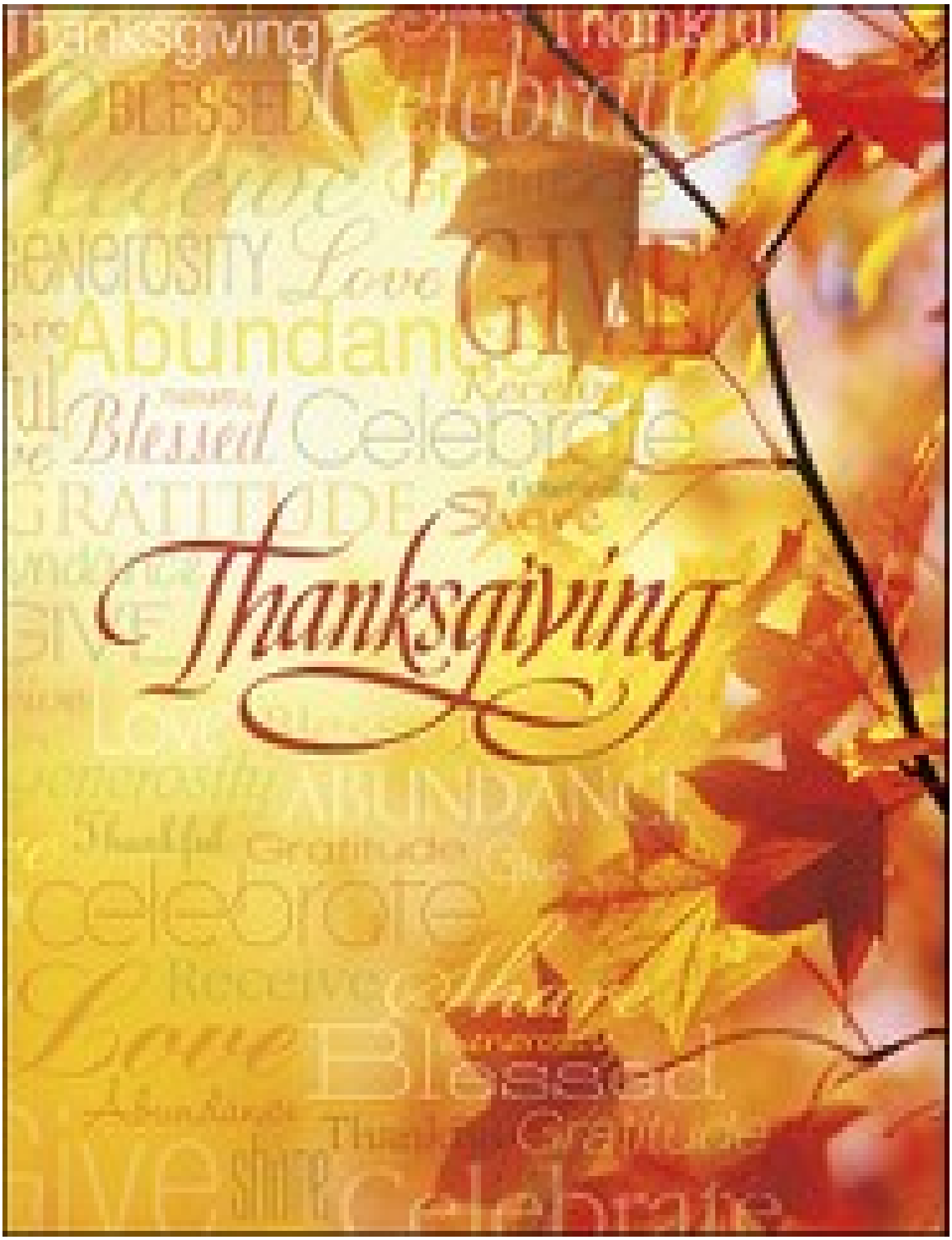
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST www.peaceucc.com

Volume 33, Issue 11 *A Global Mission Church* November, 2020

Inside this Issue:

Pastor's Perspective	2
Educational Opportunities/Discussions	2
Music Director	3
Other News & Notes	3
2020 GUM Holiday Honor Card	4
Reverse Advent Calendar Food Drive	5
Stewardship	6
Missions Update	6
Cuba Update	7
Hands-On	7
PeaceCare	8
Peace Church Recipe Corner	8
Birthdays, Prayer List	9
Family Shelter Meals	10

The mission of Peace United Church of Christ is to reach our community for Christ, develop disciples, and empower all people for ministry.



Peace United Church of Christ
2714 W. Market St.
Greensboro, NC 27403
Phone 336-299-8663
Fax 336-299-9730
www.peaceucc.com

Church Email:
peaceucc2714@gmail.com

STAFF

Rev. Tom Warren
Pastor
Direct Line 336-553-9730
Email:
reverendtom65@gmail.com

Ms. Elisabeth Penry
Music Director
and Organist

Mrs. Sherri Vestal
Office Manager

Mr. Ted Wilkinson
Youth Director

Ms. Rachel Johnson
Nursery Attendant

Ms. Ava Chambers
Consistory President

Pastor's Perspective

As we enter into November we do so with continued chaos in our nation and in the world. It is easy to get discouraged. Yet, we are people of faith and we believe that God is still with us and guiding all of creation even at this most difficult time. How we understand this truth is deeply tied to how we understand the biblical God. Here is a place to start:

Psalm 82

God has taken his place in the divine council;
in the midst of the gods he holds judgment:
"How long will you judge unjustly
and show partiality to the wicked? *Selah*
Give justice to the weak and the orphan;
maintain the right of the lowly and the destitute.
Rescue the weak and the needy;
deliver them from the hand of the wicked."
They have neither knowledge nor understanding,
they walk around in darkness;
all the foundations of the earth are shaken.
I say, "You are gods,
children of the Most High, all of you;
nevertheless, you shall die like mortals,
and fall like any prince."
Rise up, O God, judge the earth;
for all the nations belong to you!

So, the psalmist and the totality of the biblical narrative affirm that God - the great 'I Am' - is the God of the nations whose primary concern is for the weak, needy, lowly, and destitute. God reigns among the false "gods" (idols) and works through history to bring justice to the land; what we call the Kingdom of God where all have what they need and there is human solidarity among all people.

Let us not despair at this moment. In 1958, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King wrote that "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice." This quote, used by many great preachers throughout American history, is a foundational statement affirming that God is, despite evidence to the contrary, still at work bringing peace, justice, and well-being to the peoples of the world.

"Rise up, O God, judge the earth..."

Perhaps that's exactly what's happening. These words, if our heart is centered on the biblical God of justice, are divine comfort for us all.

Blessings,

Pastor Tom

UPCOMING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES & DISCUSSIONS

On ***Sunday, November 8th, 15th, and 22nd,*** Pastor Tom will present a three-part program called ***Sabbatical Insights: Exile Then & Now***. This program will explore the theological concept of exile, what it meant to the Israelites, and what it means for the mainline Protestant church in 2020. This program will be held in the church Sanctuary beginning at 9:45am. Social distancing and masks will be required. Sanitizer will also be available. Please bring your Bible (NRSV version if possible.)

On Thursday, November 19th at 7:00pm a three-episode documentary called ***"The War on Cuba"*** will be presented in the Sanctuary. Each episode is 12 minutes long and documents the dire situation of Cubans at this time due to the severe, 60-year economic blockade suffered by the Cuban people and the COVID-19 pandemic which put a halt to tourism back in March. This documentary series is hosted by Cuban journalist Liz Olivia Fernandez and was produced by Danny Glover and Oliver Stone. A discussion will follow. Social distancing and masks will be required. Sanitizer will also be available.

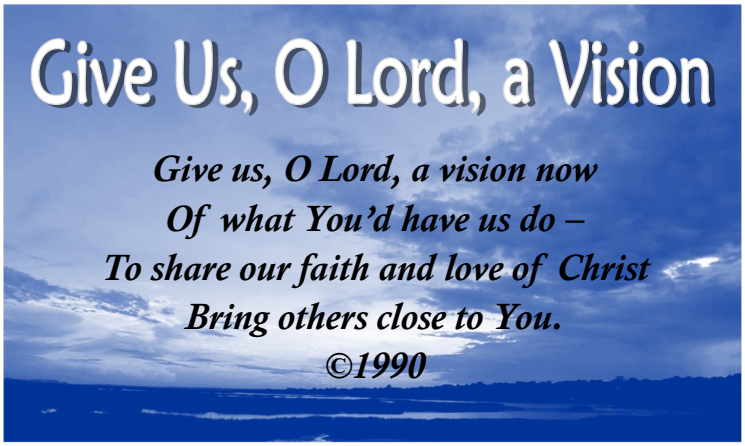
Looking Ahead to January...Dr. Karl Kuhn, a fellow student of Pastor Tom's at Eden Theological Seminary, has published a new book titled ***Reading the Bible Badly: How American Christians Misunderstand and Misuse their Scriptures.*** Karl is the Professor of Religion and Grace at Lakeland University in Plymouth, Wisconsin. In a time when Christianty has come to mean anything at all, Dr. Kuhn's book helps its readers to reflect upon their own understandings of faith and move toward a more authentic understanding of the Christian faith and its biblical groundings. This discussion group will begin on **Sunday, January 10th at 9:45am** in the Sanctuary. The book can be most easily ordered through Amazon.com or you can support your local independent bookseller at Scuppernong Books (304 South Elm Street) in Greensboro. Social distancing and masks will be required. Sanitizer will also be available. More details to come as well as Advent opportunities!

A Note from Elisabeth

One thing that I have definitely experienced during 2020 is that things change! This article is very different from the one I had first written which was to be my last *Peace Press* note.

I am writing this one on Sunday, October 25th, and at this time we certainly all want to offer our prayers for Tom for his complete healing and protection for his family. I was speaking with Ava yesterday and agreed to put my resignation on hold until further conversations can be held. We'll see where God leads!

I offer the following which is just the first stanza (there are actually five stanzas) of a hymn I wrote when I was working in another denomination and helping lead music for some gatherings. It fits with lots of different hymn tunes and is a prayer for God to give us vision of His direction. I thought of it and that it might be appropriate now as we seek for ways to minister in these challenging days and months:



Let's all pray for Christ's vision and leading in how to honor Him and support one another and also serve others beyond our church family.

~ Elisabeth Penry

Women's Fellowship

Because November 3 is Election Day, the Women's Fellowship will meet on **Tuesday, November 10 at 10:00am** in the Fellowship Hall so we can have space for social distancing. All women are invited to join us.

Ramona Griffin, pictured here with Ben & Christy Pope and baby Caroline, is excited to share the news that she will be returning to North Carolina in late December or January. Ben, the husband of "grand-niece", Christy, has been reassigned to Camp Lejeune in Jacksonville. Ramona is really enjoying her great-grand-niece, Caroline, and some of you may have kept up with the family on Facebook. We miss Ramona and look forward to seeing her again.

A Piece of Peace

An important "Piece of Peace" will leave our church office on November 13th after 18 years of dedicated service. Although Sherri Vestal is not a member of our congregation, she is very much a member of our church family. Over the past 18 years, we have watched Sherri and Mark raise two boys that have become fine young men with families of their own, all while loving our families. Mark has been by Sherri's side contributing his time and effort making repairs, delivering and picking up whatever needed and giving up vacation time… while on vacation. Yes, Sherri has always continued to work during vacation time so the bulletins and newsletters come to you without interruption. She has supported grieving families as well as those in need and welcomed visitors to our building with love and professionalism. A true woman of God, her love and support will be sorely missed at Peace, and we know she can never be replaced. Please join me in giving back to Sherri a "Piece Of Peace" as she continues to serve our Lord in her future endeavors. We love you, Sherri!

~ Una Lee Myers and Jean Scott

GREENSBORO URBAN MINISTRY

The Honor Card

And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them. (Isaiah 42:16)

"You're Gonna Be OK"

Each year, Artist William "Bill" Mangum designs and paints a wintry scene that becomes the image of the Honor Card for that year. His paintings have an underlying message of hope and support. This year's theme is "You're Gonna Be OK". Donors underwrite the cost of the card, so all proceeds go directly to Greensboro Urban Ministry's programs that provide emergency shelter, food, utility and rent assistance, transitional housing and case management.

Here is the inspiration for this year's card (https://www.thehonorcard.com/creation-inspiration)…

No one could have ever imagined the impact of what the coronavirus has done to our lives and the world around us. The quarantines and self isolation only gives a glimpse of what aloneness feels like. But every setback is also an opportunity to recover and a chance to become stronger. We have learned to cope and deal with difficult and unexpected developments and it has lead us to use skills that we didn't know we possessed and has given us a passion to move forward despite the darkness the viral epidemic has caused.

This hinderance in our lifestyle hopefully has moved on and we have realigned ourselves back to our routines that bring us comfort. Yet many have been forced to step back and rebuild themselves. Many have lost jobs and unemployment figures have reached unprecedented highs. Many businesses with storied histories, no longer exist, creating a new search for life and meaning.

It may be the closest to homelessness and insecurity that we have ever sensed before. Insecurities, if even for a short while, lead us to reevaluate once again truly what is priority in our life and what we can and can't live without.

It's a plight the needy struggle with every day. The path forward is never perfectly straight and unhindered. You've encountered doubts, fears and challenges before and successfully worked your way through them. But there are times when a helping hand, an encouraging word reminds us how we can effectively cope with the difficulties that hinder us at this moment.

The Honor Card is a marvelous way to recognize a friend or family member and at the same time, give a meaningful gift to someone in need. With a donation of $5 or more, you receive an Honor Card that you inscribe to that individual. Recognizing them and contributing to their honor. Since its inception, more than 1,000,000 Honor Cards have been sent to special friends and family members.

Stand with us this holiday season to help our neighbors that are struggling, those who have faced hardships and are experiencing homelessness. The Honor Card is a great way to support the work of Greensboro Urban Ministry and share the message of need by honoring a friend or family member by purchasing a card.

Honor Cards will be available on Sundays in the Narthex for $5.00 each or to have cards delivered to you, please call **Cindy Spillers at 336-852-0478.**

Please make checks payable to Greensboro Urban Ministry when purchasing Honor Cards.

REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR

Add food item to your box each day in December until December 20th

November 29	Peanut Butter
November 30	Stuffing Mix
December 1	Boxed Potatoes
December 2	Macaroni and Cheese
December 3	Canned Fruit
December 4	Canned Tomatoes
December 5	Canned Tuna
December 6	Dessert Mix
December 7	Applesauce
December 8	Canned Sweet Potatoes
December 9	Canned Beans
December 10	Box of Crackers
December 11	Package of Rice
December 12	Box of Oatmeal
December 13	Package Pasta
December 14	Spaghetti Sauce
December 15	Chicken Noodle Soup
December 16	Tomato Soup
December 17	Canned Corn
December 18	Canned Mixed Vegetables
December 19	Canned Carrots
December 20	Canned Green Beans

Advent Calendars are often used to count the days as we prepare for the coming of the Christ Child. Themes of *Hope, Peace, Love and Joy* dominate the season. Advent is a time to reach out to our neighbors. This year we will prepare gift boxes of food using a ***Reverse Advent Calendar.*** Greensboro Urban Ministry will present the filled boxes to families in need for Christmas. On the **First Sunday of Advent, November 29,** decorated boxes with a list of items will be distributed to Peace Church members to take home and fill with a food item each day of the Advent season. Inclusion of a Greensboro Urban Ministry Holiday Honor Card is encouraged, also. We will return the filled boxes to church on **Sunday, December 20th** so that Greensboro Urban Ministry can distribute the food to families in need by Christmas Eve.

Stewardship... Did you know?

As we move toward Stewardship Sunday (November 8th), we want people to know what our financial pledges support at Peace Church over and above staff and building maintenance. In a word...***Blessing!!***

The United Church of Christ as a denomination, and Peace UCC in particular, has a long history of reaching out to our local community with love, assistance, a witness for justice, and a commitment to an inclusive community. Peace Church has been a strong supporter of Greensboro Urban Ministry. We have reached out with hurricane relief supplies. We have supported international mission children and the Lavastida Christian Center in Santiago de Cuba. This is just to name a few of our mission efforts grounded in being a ***Blessing*** to the world.

On Sunday, October 25th, we placed a ***"Be a Blessing"*** banner on display in our Sanctuary and also have the banner posted on our Facebook page. We hope this will encourage all Peace Church members and friends to live out their faith as a ***Blessing*** for the world and to reflect on how financial support for the mission of Peace Church is part of our witness of ***Blessing***.

A letter with the pledge card was mailed to all members explaining more on our program. Our theme this year is Beloved, LOVE, which covers The Love of creation, children, and our neighbors.

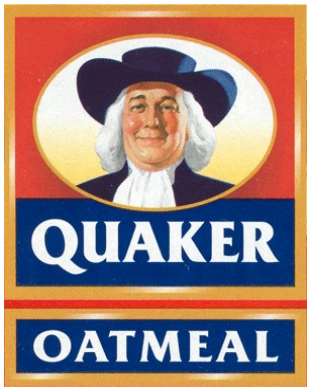
This is a very important time of the year for our church, as we will create a budget for 2021.

A Mission Look Ahead...

Greensboro Urban Ministry Holiday Honor Cards will be available through November and possibly into early December. Contact **Cindy Spillers** to purchase cards.

Our December mission is our annual Heifer Living Gift Market (depending upon our meeting status) benefitting ***Heifer International***. Also in December, we will receive the special ***Christmas Fund offering*** on Sunday, December 20th, benefitting retired UCC pastors and widows of UCC pastors. The ***Reverse Advent Calendar*** will extend from the end of November through December 20 as well. (See page 5 for Reverse Advent Calendar details.) A busy month for missions!

January is the month we collect financial gifts for the **Lavastida Christian Center** in Cuba. The Center, and Cuba as a whole, has been hit hard by the pandemic, a strengthening of the economic embargo, and the shutting down of the tourism sector. Please consider giving generously to the Lavastida Center in this most difficult year. More information can be found on page 7 of this newsletter about the Cuban situation.



Peace Church has an ongoing commitment to supply oatmeal to the Greensboro Urban Ministry Food Pantry on a monthly basis. The first Sunday of each month is designated Oatmeal Sunday when everyone is encouraged to bring a one pound box of oatmeal or to donate $1.00 to purchase oatmeal. Donations are welcome at any time and can be placed in the basket under the bulletin board in the Narthex. There is an oatmeal box for monetary donations in the same location or your weekly offering envelopes can be used.

THE COVID-EMBARGO 1-2 PUNCH: UPDATE ON LAVASTIDA CHRISTIAN CENTER

The UCC Cuba Study Seminar 2020 trip arrived home from Cuba on February 9th. Less than a month later COVID-19 arrived on the island, tourists were all sent home, and a lockdown ensued. To date, Cuba has been quite effective in its response to the virus: 5,978 COVID-19 cases with only 123 deaths. With the exception of Havana, most of Cuba is now free of the virus and the tourism sector is slowly reopening.

Cuba's economy is largely dependent on tourism, and when the tourists were all sent home it had a tremendous impact on businesses in both the public and private sector (hotels, restaurants). Added to the COVID chaos has been an intense strengthening of the U.S. economic blockade against Cuba, a blockade in place for 60 years. Today, Cuba's public transportation system is shut down for lack of fuel, imported food supplies have dried up, and basic medicines (aspirin, antibiotics, blood pressure medicines) can no longer be found in local pharmacies or hospitals.

During this time the work of the Lavastida Christian Center has, in scaled back form, continued. Their staff and outreach workers are experiencing this dire economic moment (worst since the Soviet Union pulled out of Cuba in 1989) first hand, helping local Santiago churches and residents find, grow, and distribute food and other supplies to its most vulnerable citizens. Revs. Elmer and Gisela Lavastida not only work on the front lines of this crisis moment through their Center, but also experience this crisis in their personal, day-to-day lives. They need our help more than ever.

During the month of January we typically take up an offering for the Lavastida Christian Center. This timing is intentional so that Kim and I can deliver those funds as part of the *UCC Cuba Study Seminar* annual trip. In 2021, that trip is in doubt due to continued COVID-19 concerns and also because commercial flights to Cuba have been cancelled as part of the strengthened U.S. blockade. Any funds we raise will instead be delivered to the Lavastida Center through a Baptist organization based in Montreal, the international outreach arm of the Lavastida Center.

Due to the pandemic and economic blockade, our Christian brothers and sisters in Cuba are suffering greatly. To help ease this suffering, please donate to the Lavastida Christian Center. Checks can be made out to Peace Church. Our gifts may indeed be critical at this most difficult time.

In Christ's name,

Pastor Tom

HANDS-ON OCTOBER DISTRIBUTION

Hands-On has been hard at work these last few months even through this time of the pandemic. Here is what we distributed in October:

Cone Palliative Care	21
Cone Pediatrics	27
Wesley Long	32
Total	80

Great job, Hands-On! Keep up the good work.

Visit www.peaceucc.com to contribute online through VANCO.

PEACE CARE

CONNECTING, COMMUNICATING, CARING . . .

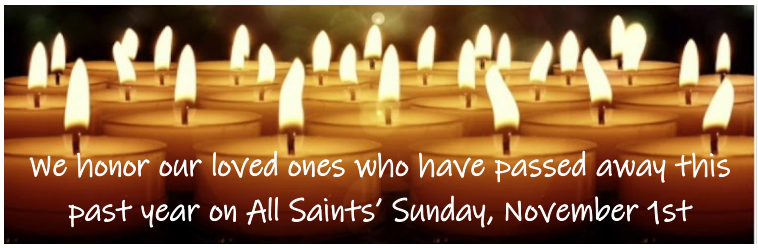
Thanks to the PeaceCare Leaders who responded to the recent request for updates on contacts during COVID 19. I appreciate your reaching out to group members, and many of you reached out to other church members as well. Some leaders have made over 25 contacts during this time. Your dedication to this ministry has been nothing short of extraordinary.

We all need to feel that someone cares during his difficult time. We are blessed to have a ministry and people like you who provide a testimony to "We are all in this together." While a lot of people use this phrase, you bring true meaning to the words.

The PeaceCare rosters are being revised due to the changes which have occurred this year. Generally, member assignments will remain unless the Leader has to change. The revisions should be made by mid-November, and the new booklets distributed shortly thereafter. (We had hoped to distribute them during a live Sunday service, but that may be on hold for a while longer.) They will also be available for pickup in the Narthex or a copy can be mailed.

In His Service,

Theo Scott
PeaceCare Chair



- ✞ *Gertrude Radford, died 11-9-19*
- ✞ *Iris Haislip, died 12-6-19*
- ✞ *Lucille Waynick, died 2-24-20*
- ✞ *Tony Clare (husband of Theo Scott's cousin), died 4-1-20*
- ✞ *Betty Shoffner, died 4-18-20*
- ✞ *Nathan Vanden Heuvel, died 7-17-20*
- ✞ *Jack Neal, died 7-22-20*
- ✞ *Wilhelmina Jones (friend of Theo Scott), died 8-2-20*
- ✞ *Stephen A. Virgilio (father of Chris Virgilio), died 8-6-20*
- ✞ *Rhodee Jones (friend of Theo Scott, daughter of Wilhelmina Jones), died 8-22-20*

Peace Church Recipe Corner

PUMPKIN CRUNCH CAKE

2 cups pumpkin puree
1 (12 oz.) can evaporated milk
4 eggs
1-1/2 cups white sugar
2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
1 teaspoon salt
1 (18.25 oz.) pkg. yellow cake mix
1 cup chopped pecans
1 cup butter, melted
1 (8 oz.) container whipped topping

Preheat oven to 350˚. Lightly grease one 9x13 inch baking pan.

Combine the pumpkin, evaporated milk, eggs, sugar, pumpkin pie spice and salt. Mix well and spread into the prepared pan.

Sprinkle the yellow cake mix over the top of the pumpkin mixture and pat down. Sprinkle the chopped pecans over the top of the cake mix then drizzle the melted margarine all over the top.

Bake at 350˚ for about 1 hour but no longer than 1 hour and 20 minutes. Top cooled cake with whipped topping when ready to serve.

(This is a popular Thanksgiving desserts, and one of my favorites! ~skv)

Thanks from Deb Shiner: *Thank you all so much for all the cards, calls and food, while I was recuperating from my back surgery. I really appreciate all your good wishes and can't wait till I can see you all again.*

Please keep these members of our church family in your thoughts and prayers:

Lois Bell; Dot Benshoff; Bertie Bowman; Karen Brittain; Nan Buchanan; David Fesperman; Lucille Hege; Glen Hutchinson; Buddy Lippard; Sylvia Lippard; Carol MacDonald; Sally McGrogan; Sharon Mitchell; Jean Morgan; Marcy Neal; Jimmy Norred; Jim Spillers; Dale Starr; Don Wheeling; Doris Yeattes.

Remember these wider church family and friends:

Chris Barnes (nephew of Harold Poffenbaugh)**; Katie Bowen** (daughter-in-law of Cynthia Bowen)**; Eric Chapman** (nephew of Jane Ford)**; Rob Fountain** (son-in-law of Jimmy & Nora Norred)**; Ron Hindson** (father-in-law of Amanda Hindson)**; David Kaynor** (nephew of Debbie Kaynor)**; Kerry & Irene King** (parents of Sherri Vestal)**; Betty Larimer** (aunt of Trish Larimer)**; Ronald Long, Sr.; Michael Pauli** (son of Dorothy Pauli)**; Lisa Pemberton** (niece of Abbie Wheeling)**; Beatrice Rosenthal** (mother of David Dole)**; Annette Sarty** (sister of Yvonne Poffenbaugh)**; Amy Wells** (niece of David & Linda Fesperman)**.**

PEACE CHURCH FINANCIAL REPORT SUMMARY

(Through September 30, 2020)

	Current Month	Year to Date	YTD Budget	Amount Over (Under) Budget
Contributions from Members & Friends (including rental receipts)	NO FINANCIAL INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE FOR THIS MONTH.			
Disbursed in Support of Ministries, Programs & Facilities				
Other Receipts (Special Funds, Missions/Designated Gifts, Memorials)				

November Birthdays

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5* Mick McGrogan	*6*	*7* Trish Larimer
8	*9*	*10*	*11*	*12*	*13* Dan Smith	*14*
15	*16*	*17*	*18* Linda Forotan	*19*	*20* Kentoya Savage	*21* Abigail Miller-Warren Eddie Small
22	*23*	*24*	*25* Barbara Small	*26*	*27*	*28*
29	*30* David Fesperman					

Peace United Church of Christ
2714 W. Market St.
Greensboro, NC 27403

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Feeding the Hungry

Over the years, the Hands-On sponsored Family Shelter program has served a large variety of food to the residents. None of our meals was ever catered. We virtually spend the day of the dinner preparing the food for delivery around 6:00 p.m.

We thought you might like to see some of our menus. We hope they provide a "mouth-watering" experience

September 2016

Meat Loaf
Mashed Potatoes
Mixed Vegetables (10)
Corn Muffins
Cake

May 2019

Marinara Subs
Slaw
Potato Salad
Marinated Cucumbers
Chocolate cake
Pudding, Cool Whip

July 2017

BBQ chicken/Buns
Mashed Potatoes
Coleslaw
Cookies
Watermelon

January 2020

Smoked sausage on buns
Shell mac and cheese
Baked apples
Entennman mini-muffins

November 2017

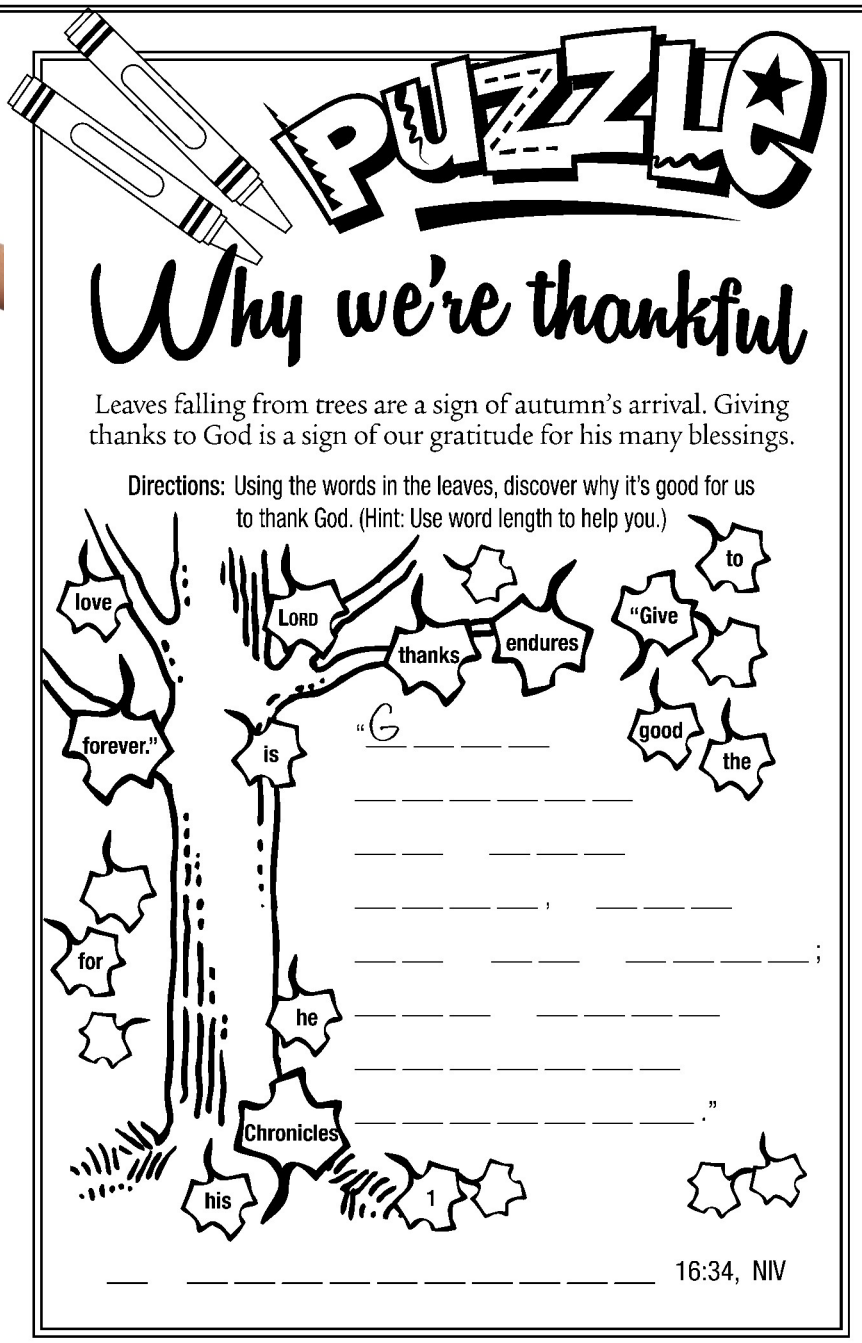
Hot dogs/chili sauce
Mac & cheese
Carrots
Salad
Pound cake
Fruit

July 2020

Pasta Alfredo
Glazed Carrots
Salad
Rolls
Mini Pastries

March 2018

Beef Stew
Potato Soup
Hot turkey sandwiches
Cookies



Answers: "Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever." 1 Chronicles 16:34, NIV