



Prospectus

From The Pastor....

Dear Friends,

During this time of the year, the days grow shorter. The nights grow longer. The darkness seems darker. We are moving toward the darkness and cold of late December. In witness to our faith, Advent proclaims the complete opposite. Each week we light more candles. Each week the joy grows. Each week the hope grows.

Advent invites us into the reality of God's counter cultural claims. While the people around us may be losing hope, we hold onto hope rooted in God's promises. While many

say this world is godforsaken, we celebrate the incorporation of God in Christ. While everyone seems to talk of divisiveness and difference, we celebrate peace on earth.



Welcome to Advent and the amazing and awesome good news of God in Christ.

Rick

Christmas Eve

If you ask people about the most meaningful and memorable church services of the year, Christmas Eve Candle Light service is likely to be named by many people. We celebrate the birth of Jesus through readings, hymns, anthems, prayers and an

impromptu nativity with the cast coming from the congregation. The service concludes with candle lighting and singing "Silent Night." Plan to be at Prospect at 7:30 pm on Christmas Eve to celebrate the birth of our savior.



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Church Retreat



The congregational retreat will be March 2-3. We are a little late in gathering the planning team, but we hope you will reserve those dates. The retreat will start with a meal on Friday evening and end with a meal on Saturday. During the retreat there will be times to deepen our faith as we gather all of the generations together.

The cost has not been set yet.

We anticipate that the cost will be approximately \$80. Children under 4 years are free. You can register for this event by sending an email to the church office, signing a yellow insert or signing up in Fellowship time after worship.

Blue Christmas Service



The holidays are a time of great joy, but they can also be a time of stress and difficulty. Some of us struggle with the blues during this season. In recognition of this fact, Prospect will hold a

Blue Christmas service on Thursday, December 21, at 7:00 pm in the sanctuary.

Epiphany Dinner and Jazz Vespers



A highlight of each year at Prospect is the annual Epiphany Dinner. This year the dinner will be on January 7 at 6:00 pm. Everyone is invited to bring food representing their cultural background. The meal is a wonderful feast of food from around the world.

Following the meal, we move into the Sanctuary for Jazz Vespers.

This service in the candlelight is a service of reading and jazz music featuring jazz musicians from Prospect and others. It is a powerful way to celebrate the light of Christ that shines into all the world. Bring a friend for this evening of food, conversation and worship.



Sensational Sundays

All ages are encouraged to join us in Fellowship Hall from 9:15-10:15 once each month for Sensational Sundays that prepare us for worship and bring us together as one church family. December's Sensational Sunday is becoming a beloved tradition, as we gather to sing Christmas carols. Please join us on December 17!

After hearing the morning's Bible lesson and singing the songs of the season, we will share our Advent joy by packing cookies for the lunches that will be distributed at Penn Station in Newark that afternoon. If you would like to donate two or more dozen cookies, please contact Rita Boyer by December 13.



Women's Bible Study

The December session of the monthly Women's Bible Study takes us on a tour of angelic messengers in the Bible and reminds us that we never know when an encounter may bring us God's messages of love and support. All women are welcome to the discussion, which is perfectly timed for the season of Advent! Come to the Burnett Room Monday, December 11 from

10:00-11:30 AM, whether or not you have attended in the past or can attend in the future. According to the stories of the Bible, who are those angelic beings that we celebrate when singing carols and decorating our homes at this time of year?



ConnectEd Schedule

ConnectEd classes WILL meet as usual on December 24 but will NOT meet December 31, in keeping with our policy to cancel class the Sunday following Christmas. Please join us for worship at 10:30 and return to ConnectEd on January 7.

As winter weather approaches, you can be alerted to ConnectEd classes being cancelled by text. To be added to that list, send your cell phone number and carrier to office@prospectchurch.org. In most cases, worship goes on as usual.





Senior High Mission Trip



Plans are now being made for an exciting Sr. High Mission Trip to Leech Lake Reservation in Minnesota! Sr. Highs and adults will be introduced to the Native American Ojibwe culture as they assist with home improvement projects and children's programs. Work projects may also be coordinated with the Bug-O-Nay-Ge-Shig School, a school that intentionally teaches the Ojibwe language and culture. In the evenings, the group will visit Norway Beach in the Chippewa National Forest, learn about Native American culture and spirituality from an Ojibwe perspective, participate in a scavenger hunt around Cass Lake, and experience a community cookout that sometimes includes drummers and dancers.

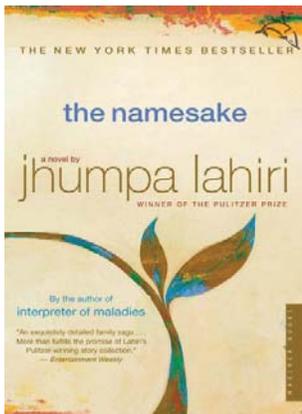
While travel plans are not final-

ized, we are projecting a three-day trip to get to Minnesota, with a stop in Chicago to provide a break from the road. Dates for the trip (including travel days) are July 13th through 21st. The cost per student is \$330. Everyone will be expected to commit to the annual soup-making fundraiser and other group-building meetings and activities.

If you would like to reserve a spot, please contact Rita Boyer immediately. A deposit of \$110 will hold by December 3rd will hold a reservation. That deposit will be returned in full if cancellation is received by December 18th. After December 18th only \$60 of the deposit will be returned.

Please contact Rita if you have any questions.

Prospect Book Club



The next book featured at the Prospect book club is *The Namesake* by Jhumpa Lahiri. This will be the last book in the selections inspired by the Prospect theme of the year, "Always Being Reformed". So, read the book now and join the book club on Sunday, January 28th at noon in the Burnett Room.

From the review on Amazon.com: "In *The Namesake*, Lahiri enriches the themes that made her

collection an international best-seller: the immigrant experience, the clash of cultures, the conflicts of assimilation, and, most poignantly, the tangled ties between generations. Here again Lahiri displays her deft touch for the perfect detail -- the fleeting moment, the turn of phrase -- that opens whole worlds of emotion."

The book for the March meeting will be *The Orphan Train* by Christina Baker Kline.

Deacons' Corner

Did you know?

The word "deacon" is derived from the Greek word *diákonos*, which is a standard ancient Greek word meaning "servant", "waiting-man", "minister", or "messenger". It is generally assumed that the office of deacon originated in the selection of seven men by the apostles to assist with the charitable work of the early church as recorded in Acts 6. One of the earliest deacons was St. Stephen who was stoned to death for teaching and preaching.

The Book of Order describes the office of deacon set forth in Scripture as "one of sympathy, witness, and service after the exam-

ple of Jesus Christ. Persons of spiritual character, honest repute, of exemplary lives, brotherly and sisterly love, warm sympathies, and sound judgment should be chosen for this office" (G-6.0401). It is a ministry of caring; a ministry of love; a ministry of compassion; and a ministry of prayer, and community service (G-6.0402).

At Prospect Presbyterian Church, there are 12 deacons who each serve a term of three years. Our mission statement is "To minister to those in need through service, witness, sympathy and celebration so that all may experience the love, joy and peace of Jesus Christ."



An Opportunity to Help

Some synagogues in Maplewood and South Orange, TSTI, Beth-El and Oheb, have joined together to help resettle refugee families.

The most recent family that has joined us, the Hussains, are still in need of rides to work, doctors appointments and school. Each

week the rides coordinators send out a note to a group of volunteers asking for help and those that are able to provide assistance either pick up or drop off one or more of the family members. Any amount of support can help!

To volunteer contact
refugee coordinator
Cheryl Barkin

cherylbarkin@gmail.com

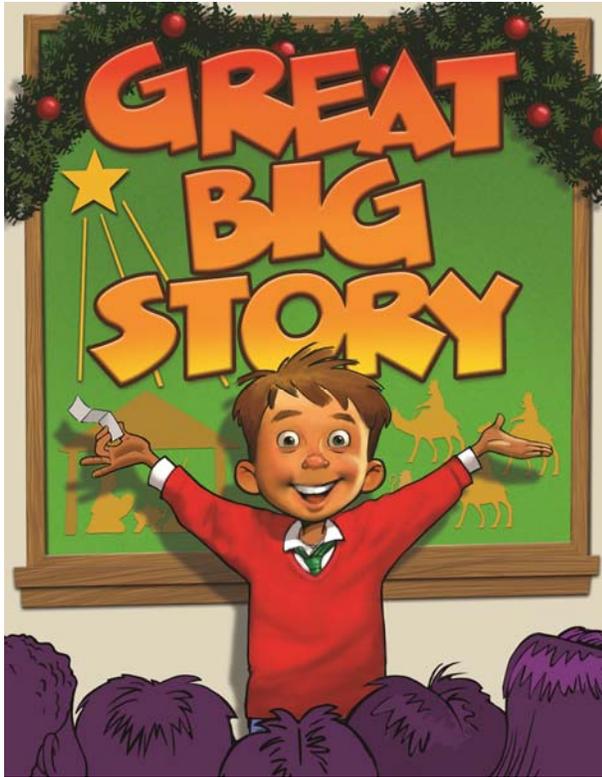
Deacons Decorating for Advent

The Deacons will be decorating the Sanctuary on Saturday, December 2nd beginning at 9:00 AM. Everyone is invited to join in this festive task. The Sanctuary as well as the outdoor crèche are set up in order that it is all ready for the beginning of Advent on December 3rd.

What goes up must come down..

Your help is also requested when the decorations come down on January 6th at 9:00 AM.





Children's Pageant

The Children's Ensemble has been working hard to present this year's Christmas Musical, "Great Big Story". by Allie Lapointe and Dave Clark.

Please bring your friends and family from near and far for this wonderful and exciting day! The presentation will be December 17th, 2017 during the 10:30 worship service.

Prospect Hunger Program

Prospect Hunger Program Ministry (PHP) works to combat food insecurity in Newark. Every 3rd Sunday of the month, members of Prospect Presbyterian Church gather after service to help to make 100 sandwiches that are later delivered to Newark Penn Station by volunteers for distribution.

Over the past month, PHP received a grant of \$3,000 from the Newark Presbytery to support churches within the Presbytery that are looking to establish and expand food security programs. The grant along with donations will enable PHP to continue its mission of ending food insecurity.

Along with combating food insecurity, our goal is to educate

those around us about what food insecurity is. It's a broader term that describes outright hunger and the coping mechanisms that households may use to avoid hunger.

PHP also participated in the Sock Giveaway through Bloomfield Human Services and collected 450 pairs of socks to be distributed in Newark for the next 4 months along with bagged lunches.

During MEND's November food drive, PHP collected and delivered over 100 bags of nonperishable food items, several frozen turkeys and bags of gently worn coats to Our Lady of Sorrows in South Orange and the Interfaith Food Pantry of the Oranges in Orange, NJ.



Interfaith Hospitality Network

Thanks to all who have signed up to be hosts or provide dinners or groceries for the current Interfaith Hospitality Network hosting week at Prospect.

Coordinator Frank Hendricks gave the inspirational message this year at IHN's annual breakfast fundraiser on October 17th. The breakfast, along with a run/walk fundraiser raised approximately \$300,000 in donations and pledges.

We thank John Pearson who offered his development expertise at a meeting with IHN Executive director Emma Justice to help the Essex County program gain additional host sites, bring in new board member and deepen ties between the IHN staff/board and the Host congregations.

Justice, in recent communications, said that IHN services about 370 people a year through their various programs. Of the 25 or 30 families who use the shelter program (like Prospect's hosting weeks) 21 families were placed in housing last year.

"The shelter families that follow the established goals and card plans with their case manager, that also take advantage of the educational, job search and interview skill building seminars we offer are generally able to increase their incomes and return to housing with the help of IHN", she said.

"We provide them with assistance in housing searches so that they

find a safe, affordable apartment," Justice said. "IHN provides families with security and first month rent with government and nonrestrictive funding for their relocation. After they move, we continue to engage them in our Home for Good program so if they have issues with housing or employment or basic needs, we are their safety net, so they maintain housing stability. IHN and the volunteers become their extended family."

A third IHN program is the After-school program which serves children from both of the other programs. Twelve children are regular attendees and another 28 children are in the summer camp program.

Prospect IHN volunteers are soliciting donations of Holiday Gift Cards which will be distributed to the families in the IHN network at their annual holiday party. We ask for cards from Target, Walmart, Stop & Shop or Shoprite in amounts of \$10 or \$25. Alternately, cash or checks made out to Prospect Church with a notation of "IHN gift cards" will be used to buy gift cards for this purpose. These donations can be placed with your offering or sent or delivered to the church office. **The deadline to contribute is December 10th.**

IHN Coordinators:
Frank Hendricks, Effie Yuen,
Allison Reid, Mary Murphy and
Nancy Shields



Emma Justice
Executive Director, IHN

The next two IHN hosting weeks at Prospect are February 25—March 4 and May 6-13.



Special Offerings

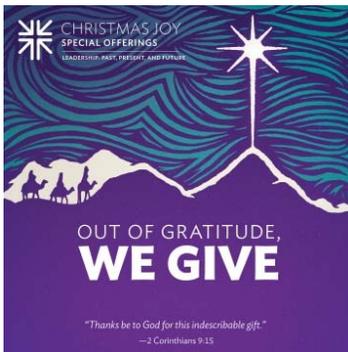
Thanksgiving Offering

This year, the Mission Funding Ministry has selected the Community Food Bank in Hillside as the beneficiary of the Thanksgiving offering. Donations will be accepted for this cause through December 3rd. (Note Thanksgiving offering on donation check or use the provided Thanksgiving offering envelope.)

Christmas Joy Offering

Advent asks us to open our hearts to God's love and grace. In response, Presbyterians have long given generously, through the Christmas Joy Offering.

This offering is equally split between a fund to help ministers, other church workers and their families in times of need, and a fund focusing on students at racial ethnic schools and colleges of the PC(USA). Prospect participates in this denomination-wide offering each year. Use the envelope provided with the announcement sheet or in your box of envelopes to contribute to this fund. Money received in these envelopes goes straight to the denomination and does not stay at Prospect.



Book Discussion About Sensible Gun Safety

Between October 1, when 58 people were killed in Las Vegas, and November 15 there have been 54 mass shootings in the United States where four or more people were injured. Are you alarmed by this number? Are you feeling overwhelmed, sad, mad, paralyzed, energized? Wondering what you can do? If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, this event is for you.

January 21, from 12:15-1:45 p.m. in the Burnett Room. We will be discussing the book *Enough: Our Fight to Keep America Safe from Gun Violence*, by Gabrielle Giffords and Mark Kelly. All are welcome. A light lunch will be provided. RSVP to Anne Love (anneglove@gmail.com). For more information contact Anne or Dave Hogenauer, Robin Morey, John Pearson, or Nancy Shields.

Prospect's emerging ministry, Sensible Gun Safety, is hosting a book discussion on Sunday,

Poinsettia Memorials

If you wish to remember/honor family and friends and would like to contribute to the lovely poinsettias that will be in the sanctuary during the Christmas season, please email Connie Cosgrove at conniecosgrove@verizon.net or phone her at 973-763-3574.

All memorials must be placed and paid in full by Sunday, December 10th.



Presbyterian Women's Secret Shoppe Returns on December 9th!

On Saturday, December 9th from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM, The Presbyterian Women will once again host a "Secret Shoppe". This day of fun shopping by kids "in secret" has become a community favorite event. Children pre-school aged through grade 5 get to shop for gifts for their family and friends. The small shoppers are assisted by teenage and adult "elves". Prices range from \$2.00 to \$8.00 and includes gift wrapping to keep the gift secret until the big day!

While the children shop, all waiting adults are invited to gather in the Burnett Room for light re-

freshments and warm fellowship.

Help is needed for this event!

The gifts have been purchased and most have been wrapped, but there is help needed to transform Fellowship Hall into this cheerful shopping location on Friday, December 8, 9:00—12:00.

Help is also needed the day of the event—Elves, gift wrappers, greeters, cashiers and more will work in two hour shifts. Visit the sign up table in Fellowship Hall after worship on Sunday to see where you could help.



It must mean something that these previous shoppers come back to help out!



Help-A-Family



Meeting Essential Needs with Dignity (MEND) is an interfaith network of donors and food pantries serving the needs of Essex County for over 37 years. Last year our network served over 109,000 children, women, and men in need of food and support services.

While we provide food and funds to MEND's 16 pantries all year long, during the holidays we sponsor a unique program called **"Help-a-Family."** This project started more than 30 years ago when we realized there would be families in our service area who would not be able to celebrate a traditional holiday without some outside support. Our Help-a-Family program is designed to respond to this need and provide our sponsors with a personal approach to holiday giving.

Each year MEND food pantry managers complete client profiles for critically in-need families they serve at their pantry. Profiles identify items needed, including sizes, colors, ages and genders of recipients. MEND then matches each family profile with an appropriate sponsor. The sponsor may be an individual, school, house of worship, community organization, or business.

The sponsor is expected to provide grocery gift cards and two or three age-appropriate gifts for each family member (approximately \$250-\$300 value

for a family of four). The sponsor is also responsible for transporting the gifts to the MEND food pantry that serves the family.

Because of the personal selection process between the donor and the family in need, gifts and other items for the family are chosen with great care. One recipient remarked, "What makes this a beautiful holiday is not just the lovely clothes and wonderful toys for my children, but knowing there are people who truly care about me—a neighbor in need. I will never forget such kindness."

For donors, participation in Help-a-Family can truly bring to life the generosity and spirit of this special time of the year. If you would like to participate in this unique program, please call MEND at 973.266.7966 or 908.497.4012, email info@mendnj.org, or simply fill out and mail the flyer found in Prospect's narthexes or posted on Prospect's [webpage](#) under "Outreach" along the top of the home page.

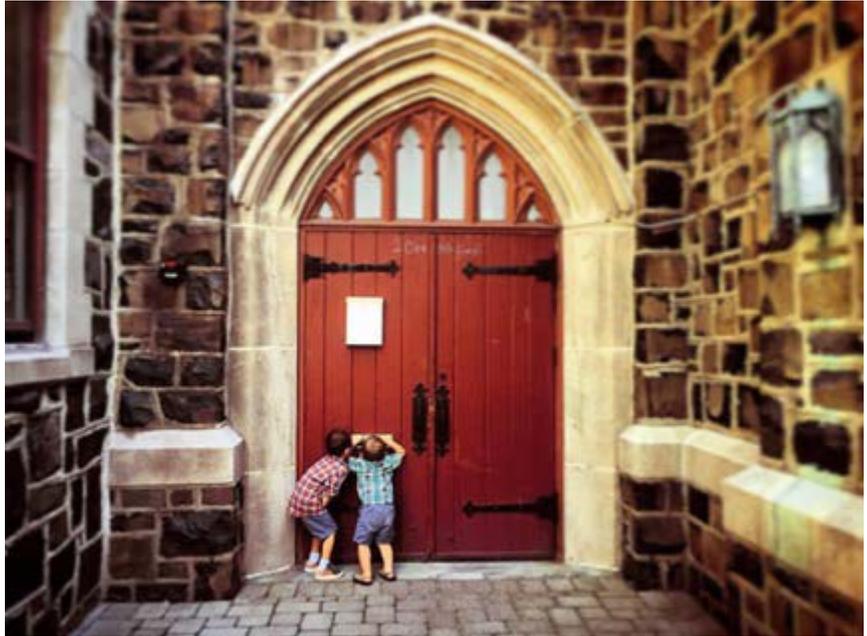
www.prospectchurch.org

"What makes this a beautiful holiday is not just the lovely clothes and wonderful toys for my children, but knowing there are people who truly care about me—a neighbor in need."



Prospect Cooperative Preschool

Prospect Cooperative Preschool registration is quickly approaching. You can register online from December 4th - December 15th at www.prospectpreschool.org. At Prospect all learning occurs naturally through play. Your child will be engaged in activities that will foster all areas of their development including their social emotional growth, sensory needs, fine and gross motor skills as well as literacy, science and math. They will be given the confidence to be life long learners. The amazing thing is that you, as a parent will be an integral part of this process through the co-op experience. Please feel free to contact the director Dana Cavanaugh at 973-763-8955 for a tour.



Camp Prospect

Camp Prospect is a play- based program that helps build friendships and a sense of community. The unique mixed-age environment and engaging themes allow children to learn and explore through arts & crafts, music, movement, water play and more. Campers bring their lunch and have time to eat with their friends. All sessions are held at Prospect Church from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m..

Sessions are available during school breaks for preschoolers and kindergarteners. The next session is February 16 & 17. The theme will be "Winter Olympics". Spring break week, April 9—13th will feature books from Laura Numeroff. (Author of *If you give a Mouse a Cookie*). Your child may attend all week or individual days. Cost is \$45 per day, \$42 per day for five or more days. For more information or to enroll go to www.campprospect.org.



This was the Opening Ceremonies from the "Summer Olympics" session In July. Look for summer camp flyers soon!

Prospect Presbyterian
Church

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E-mail: office@prospectchurch.org

Our Mission: To be a family in Christ, reaching out to all with love, prayer and service... through worship, education, mission and fellowship, we experience God's love, forgiveness, grace and call.

www.prospectchurch.org

www.facebook.com/prospectchurch

**The staff and Session of Prospect Church with you
a blessed
Christmas season.**



In addition to weekly Worship, ConnectEd classes and our Good Neighbor Coffee here are some highlights:

UPCOMING EVENTS:

12/1 Middle High Johnsonburg Retreat

12/2 Deacons Decorating the Sanctuary for Advent

12/3 Advent Begins

12/9 Secret Shoppe

12/11 Women's Bible Study

12/17 Sensational Sunday

12/17 Children's Pageant

12/17 Prospect Hunger Program Lunches Made

12/21 Blue Christmas Service

12/24 Christmas Eve Service

1/7 Epiphany Dinner and Jazz Vespers

See enclosed articles or calendar on Prospect's [webpage](#) for details and times.

Invite a Friend to Prospect!



Prospect has good news to tell and great love to share. We should share these things with our friends and neighbors. The challenge is to know when to invite someone to join us. So, we will be highlighting particular events as "invite a friend" events.

Do you have a friend or neighbor with children? Invite the families to the Secret Shoppe on December 9th. Children have a wonderful opportunity to shop for parents with the assistance of elves from Prospect Church.

Most people enjoy Christmas Concerts and Children's musicals.

Invite your friends and neighbors for the Prospect Christmas musical "*Great Big Story*" on December 17 during worship at 10:30 am.

Christmas Eve is always a good time to bring a friend to church. Since Christmas Eve falls on Sunday, there are two opportunities. Join us at the 10:30 worship service in the morning or come to the evening service at 7:30 pm. The combination of readings and carols carries the Christmas story that will take shape before our eyes when people from the congregation re-create the scene in Bethlehem.

