

St Charles Presbyterian Church

Winter 2025 Quarterly Newsletter

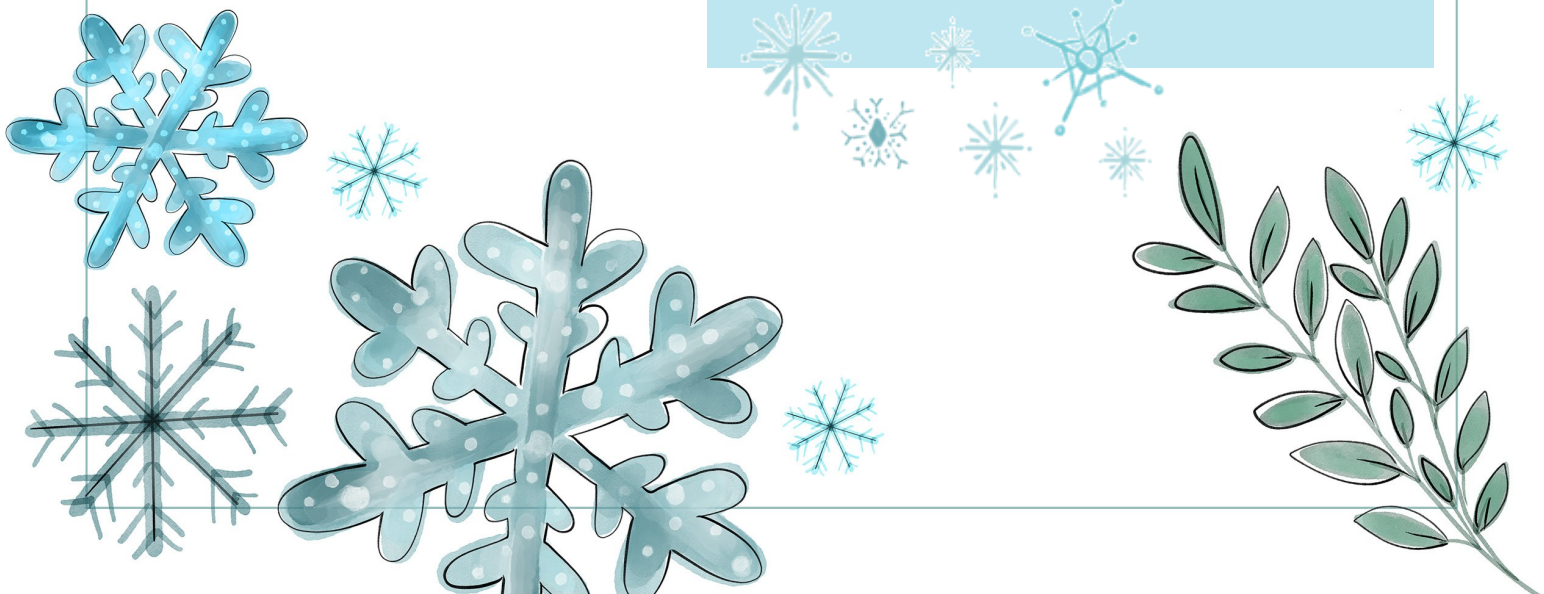


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WELCOME WINTER!

Winter CAN be welcoming, because it marks a significant season of the church-Advent & Christmas. This season SCPC will be celebrating with our Advent series, "What Child IS This?" and you can participate through worship, Spiritual Formation classes, the Dinner & Discussion Wednesday night group, and the many events happening in December. They are all listed here, along with community events, ways you can serve above and beyond our usual giving, and new events to usher in the winter season. Regardless of how you choose to celebrate the season, Emmanuel, the God-Who-Is-With-Us, is present, as we yearn to know Him more deeply, seek to follow Him more faithfully, and praise Him, as we personify the Body of Christ to the world in our words and deeds.





WINTER CALENDAR

DECEMBER

November 30 | First Sunday of Advent, no Spiritual Formation classes
December 2 | Book Club, 1:00 pm, Fratelli's Ristorante, St. Charles
December 3 | Dinner & Discussion Group, 7:00 pm, The Smiths
December 4 | Women's Fellowship Group, 7:00-8:30 pm. Java with Jesus area
December 7 | Second Sunday of Advent
December 10 | PEO, 12:30-3:30 pm, Parlor; Prime Time, 5:30-7:30 pm; Dinner & Discussion Group, 6:15 pm, at the church
December 14 | Third Sunday of Advent; VAT, following worship at Jonah Smith's house
December 17 | Dinner & Discussion Group, 7:00 pm, The Smiths
December 18 | Session, 7 pm, Aca at the church
December 21 | Fourth Sunday of Advent; Christmas Traditions Potluck following worship
December 24 | Christmas Eve, worship at 7:00 pm
December 25 | Merry Christmas! Church Office closed
December 28 | First Sunday of Christmas Lessons & Carols; No Spiritual Formation classes

JANUARY

January 1 | Church Office closed, Happy New Year!
January 4 | Epiphany Sunday; No Spiritual Formation classes
January 6 | Epiphany of the Lord; Book Club, 1 pm, Java with Jesus area
January 8 | Women's Fellowship Group, 7:00-8:30 pm, Java with Jesus area
January 11 | Presbyterianism 101 Class, following worship
January 15 | Session, 7:00 pm; Aca at the church
January 14 | PEO, 12:30-3:30 pm, Parlor; Prime Time, 5:30-7:30 pm; Dinner & Discussion Group, 6 :15, at the church
January 18 | VAT, following worship at Jonah Smith's house; Presbyterianism 101 Class, following worship
January 21 | Lunch Bunch, 11:30 am
January 25 | Annual Congregational Meeting, immediately following worship
January 28 | Dinner & Discussion Group, 6-8 pm, The Smiths

FEBRUARY

February 3 | Book Club, 1 pm, Java with Jesus
February 5 | Women's Fellowship Group, 7-8:30 pm, Java with Jesus area
February 11 | PEO, 12:30-3:30 pm; Parlor; Prime Time, 5:30-7:30 pm; Dinner & Discussion Group, 6:15 pm, at the church
February 15 | VAT, following worship at Jonah Smith's house
February 18 | Lunch Bunch, 11:30 am; Ash Wednesday service, time TBD
February 19 | Session, 7 pm, Aca at the church
February 25 | Dinner & Discussion Group, 6 -8 pm, The Smiths

Recurring Weekly & Monthly Events

Weekly:

Tuesday Tinkers-every
Tuesday at 9 am

12 Step Groups-

Tuesday at 6 pm,

Saturday at 10 am

Monthly:

Book Club-

1st Tuesday, 1 pm

PEO-

2nd Wednesday, 12:30 pm

Lunch Bunch-

3rd Wednesday, 11:30 am

(except December)

Dinner & Discussion

Group-

2nd & 4th Wednesdays,

2nd-6:15pm & 4th-7:00pm

Prime Time-

2nd Wednesday, 5:30 pm

Women's Fellowship-

1st Thursday, 7 pm (except

January, 2nd Thursday)

Session-

3rd Thursday, 7 pm

Deacons are meeting

quarterly on Sundays

following worship

MONTHLY EVENTS THIS WINTER



The Women's Fellowship group will continue to meet monthly throughout this winter. Women of all ages and stages are warmly invited! They have a wonderful time of Bible study, prayer, socializing, and snacking in their casual and welcoming group. This year, they are working through the bible study,

"Sacred Encounters: The Power and Presence of Jesus Christ in Luke and Acts."

Attendees are welcome to purchase the book from the PCUSA store for \$10 or to simply come and join in without the book, free to share as they feel led. The group meets on the first Thursday of the month (with the exception of January which will be the second Thursday) from 7-8:30pm in the Java with Jesus area.



Dinner & Discussion Small Group

The Adult Dinner & Discussion group will be observing Advent during the month of December with a weekly Wednesday evening Dessert and Devotional time. Come to the Smith's (3108 Bowman Ridge, St. Charles) on December 3 and December 17 from 7-8 pm for dessert and reading of the weekly Advent scripture. December 10 they will meet at the church for dinner with Prime Time at 6:15 pm followed by their reading and reflection time in room ACb.

The group will return to reading and discussing Christine Pohl's *Living into Community* in January and meeting on the second and fourth Wednesdays.

- * January 14 (Church, eat at 6:15 pm with Prime Time)
- * January 28 (Smiths, 6-8 pm)
- * February 11 (Church, eat at 6:15 with Prime Time)
- * February 25 (Smiths, 6-8 pm)

Questions? Need a ride? Call or text Ruth Smith at (419) 706-8506. All are welcome to join!

Lunch Bunch

This fun group meets the third Wednesday every month at 11:30 am for lunch and fellowship. During the month of December they will not be meeting, but will resume their lunches together on January 21 and February 18. Look for more details on the restaurants where they will meet in the bulletin announcements in the coming weeks.



MONTHLY EVENTS THIS WINTER

Prime Time

Prime Time continues this winter on the second Wednesday of each month from 5:30-7:30 pm, in Fellowship Hall. This program is for K-6th graders and includes recreation time, dinner, and bible study. Older youth may come to help with set-up, clean up, and/or activities. Everyone is welcome for dinner! Listed below are the dates, themes and menus.



Date	Theme/Recreation	Meal	Dress-Up/Activity
12/10/25	Christmas Celebration	Spaghetti & meatballs, garlic bread, fruit salad, cupcakes	Wear red & green
1/14/26	New Years Celebration	Pasta variety, salad, fruit salad, Rice Krispie treats	Dress up!
2/11/26	Valentine's Day	Pancakes, sausage, mixed fruit, cinnamon rolls	Wear red or pink



VAT: Video Addicted Games Group

Middle School and High School youth are invited to join **VAT (Video-Addicted Teens)** for games and fun this winter at Jonah Smith's house, 3108 Bowman Ridge, St. Charles.

Their monthly meeting dates are:

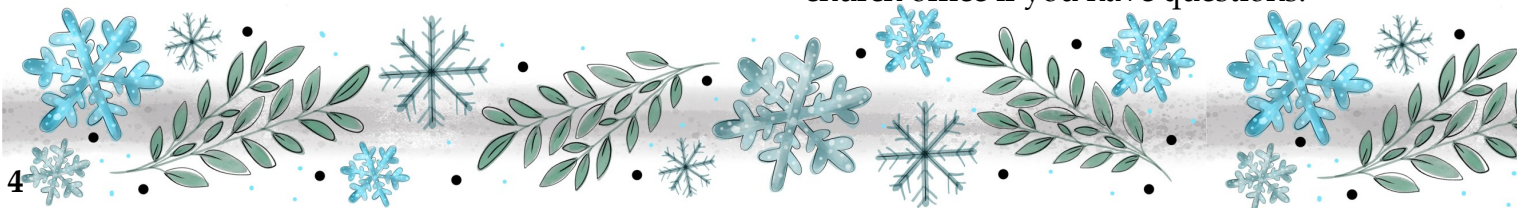
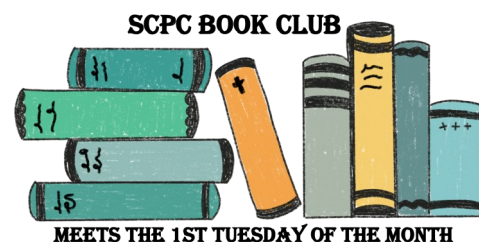
- * December 14
- * January 18
- * February 15

Come over after church for lunch and games until 4 pm. If you have questions or need a ride, call or text Ruth Smith at 419 706-8506.

Book Club

will meet Tuesday, December 2 for their annual

luncheon. This event helps them celebrate their year of reading and make decisions about their 2026 book list. It is a great time to join them to see what Book Club is like and to belong to a fun group who share the love of reading and sharing books. They will meet at Fratelli's Ristorante in the Bogey Hills Plaza at 1 pm for lunch. For their January selection, they will be reading, *The Ride of Our Lives*, by Mike Leonard. Please call the church office if you have questions.



SPECIAL EVENTS THIS WINTER



"Presbyterianism 101" Adult Class January 11 & 18

Curious to learn more about the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and St. Charles Presbyterian Church?

Pastor Marilyn will share information about Presbyterian history, beliefs, and practices following morning worship January 11 and 18 in the adult Sunday School classroom in the church office suite area.

Classes will last approximately one hour, and light refreshments will be provided.

CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS POTLUCK SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21



Christmas Traditions Potluck

Join us after worship for a Christmas Traditions potluck in the Fellowship Hall on Sunday, December 21. Everyone is invited to bring a dish that represents a family or cultural Christmas tradition. In addition to enjoying good food and fellowship, we will share these stories to get to know each other and our diverse church family in a new way!

Christiana Manyanye is planning to bring a snack called chin-chin and jollof rice. She says,

"There's no Christmas in a Cameroon household without Chin-chin. Everyone gets together for this special moment. It's usually done the eve of Christmas before going for the midnight service. It's a mixture of flour, sugar, margarine, yeast, eggs, nutmeg and orange zest. The dough is cut off in various shapes and sizes depending on every family. Then it's deep fried in vegetable oil. Delicious! Then I will also present Cameroon jollof rice. It's rice fried with tomatoes, protein and vegetables. I promise not to make it spicy the Cameroon way. It will be mild."

Ruth Smith's family has been making Grandma's Cinnamon Rolls at Christmastime for generations - large, pie-sized buns filled with cinnamon sugar. "My dad grew up eating them for Christmas breakfast as did I. My grandma made dozens for the holidays - her garage freezer was always full of them to give away to friends and church family. Now, I make them for my neighbors and always keep an extra one in the freezer to eat for my birthday breakfast in January."

We hope to see you and your Christmas traditions at the luncheon!

Winter COMMUNITY EVENTS



St. Charles Municipal Band

St. Charles Big Band

Christmas Concert

Thursday, December 11, 7:00 pm

Foundry Art Centre

520 N. Main Street

St. Charles, MO 63301

*Celebrate the holiday season
with this free event*

*For more events, please go to:

Discoverstcharles.com/events/Christmas-traditions



Los Posados -

"The Inns
or the Lodgings"

December 6,

6:30 pm

Gather at Boone's Lick & South Main streets to join in the procession with Joseph and Mary as they seek shelter in Bethlehem. You will carry candles and walk to First Capitol & Riverside Dr. There is a live nativity and Christmas caroling at the end of the journey.

Don't miss hearing **Dr. Marcus Smith**, Professor of Modern Middle East History, and SCPC member, present **After the Gaza War**, a historical analysis of the conflict in Palestine/Israel, and discuss the insights that this history provides about the possibilities moving forward. For more information, see the fliers in the Narthex

* **December 3, 2025, 2:00-3:30 pm**

* Dunseth Auditorium, Harmon Hall, Lindenwood University

Christmas Traditions

Christmas

Traditions on Main Street

Historic Main Street in St. Charles is transformed into a Dickensian winter wonderland with a unique blend of history, storytelling and fairytale whimsy. The young (and young at heart) can traverse the brick streets to experience a truly one of a kind holiday adventure where chestnuts roast on an open fire, sugarplums dance in your head, and an array of international ambassadors share their cherished holiday customs from around the world.

November 28-December 24

Opening Day: 12-8:30 pm

Wednesdays: 6-8:30 pm-



Fridays: 6-8:30 pm

Saturdays: 12-8:30 pm

Sundays: 12-5 pm



*You have shown strength
with your arm; you have
scattered the proud in
their conceit; you have
deposed the mighty from
their thrones and raised
the lowly to high places.*

Luke 1:50

(Inclusive Bible)

In 1865, William Chatterton Dix penned a poem that would become the beloved Christmas-time favorite, “What Child Is This?” During Advent, we will dive into this question that is much more complicated than the lilting lullaby tune, “Greensleeves,” conveys. We will see the story of the time leading up to the birth of Christ in its historical trauma-informed fullness. The story of humanity and its recurring themes of oppression and corruption run right through history and into our own narratives. Yet, we can rely on the assurance of the carol to confirm that God is “present with us” in powerful ways that continue to be the Word of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love even and especially in the midst of hard times. The Advent season begins Sunday, Nov. 30.



Advent 1: “King of Kings” (Hope)

Advent 2: “The Silent Word” (Peace)

Advent 3: “Son of Mary” (Joy)

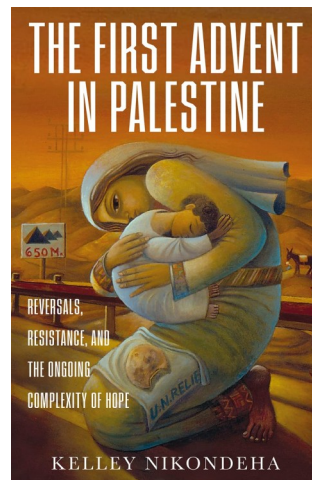
Advent 4: “Enthroned by Love” (Love)

Christmas Eve: “The Babe”

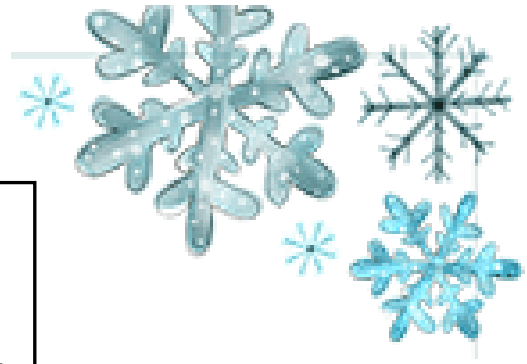
1st Sunday of Christmas: Lessons & Carols

Epiphany Sunday: “This, This...”

To deepen your Advent experience, you may join the Adult Spiritual Formation class during the weeks of Advent as they read and discuss the book, “*The First Advent in Palestine*,” by Kelley Nikondeha. You do not have to purchase the book to participate. Please feel free to come on Sunday mornings and share in the discussion as we explore together and find new discoveries of the Advent story in the gospel from its original context of resistance, abusive rulers, systems of oppression, and God coming to earth. All are welcome!



WAYS TO SERVE THIS WINTER



FISH of St. Peters- Thank you for your generosity and continued support of FISH, especially since they continue to see increased needs in our community. Your giving matters. Below is their December Wish List. Please give as you are able and look for their January and February lists in the announcements of the weekly bulletin.

DECEMBER WISH LIST

Pears	Broth/Gravy
Cranberry Sauce	Canned Chili
Canned Potatoes	Rice Side Mixes
Canned Pasta	Condiments (mayo, mustard, ketchup)
Canned Chicken	



Angel Tree

The Angel Tree is up in the Narthex with tags for 8 children from a Blackhurst Elementary family.

Please return your item(s) wrapped by December 14



Winter Welcome Team

Thank you to all who signed up to serve on the Welcome Team this fall! A new sign up for winter is located on the Church Connections counter in the Narthex. Your smiling faces and warm welcome have made a difference to new visitors and old friends.

Welcome Team is especially important during our holiday season when we anticipate having new friends and loved ones visiting. Consider signing up for one Sunday to contribute to this meaningful practice. There is no training or special skills needed. Just a warm smile and friendly greeting. With your help, we continue becoming the welcoming congregation we'd like to be. It is a wonderful way to grow our connections with each other while growing our connection with God.

WINTER WEAR



DRIVE FOR FISH

Many of you have already contributed to the Deacons annual Winter Drive for Fish, but if you haven't, you can still do it through the winter months. They are looking for new or gently used gloves, mittens, scarves, and hats. They will also take coats if you have them. Let's show our support to FISH and our community by keeping others warm this winter. Thank you!



One in four college students are facing food insecurity. This is twice the national average. Food insecurity is defined as the lack of access to nutritionally adequate food to support a healthy and active lifestyle. There are many reasons for the food insecurity on college campuses including lack of culturally appropriate food options, inadequate campus dining facility hours, high cost of food and food plans, and lack of support and preparation for navigating higher education particularly among first-generation or low-income students. Research has shown impacts of food insecurity including lower GPAs and overall academic performance; higher rates of depression, anxiety, and self-injurious behavior; and higher rates of overweight, obesity, and long-term chronic illness including diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

During the month of January, we will collect items to restock the Lindenwood campus food pantry, which is run by the campus chaplain, Rev. Dr. Nichole Torbitzky. Dr. Torbitzky will share a little more about this ministry in our Minute for Mission on Sunday, January 11. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet a local need and build connections with our community!

Most Needed Items:

Jelly
Bread (goes so quickly it never gets stale)
Cooking oil
Protein bars
Granola bars
Instant Oatmeal packets
Mac-n-cheese microwavable cups
Microwavable rice packs
Easy microwavable shelf-stable meals
Pasta/Pasta sauce

Tuna and canned chicken
NOT needed: canned vegetables

Miscellaneous Items:

Toothpaste/Toothbrushes
Shampoo/Conditioner
Soap
Deodorant
New, unused socks
New or like new coats



CHRISTMAS JOY SPECIAL OFFERINGS

LEADERSHIP: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

Think back on those people in your life who have truly developed your faith. It may be a pastor or Christian educator, a youth minister or Sunday school teacher. Devoted and caring leaders have led many of us in the way of Christ. Church workers have shaped our faith, and they have been God's gifts among us. As we celebrate Christ's coming and think of the profound impact these individuals have had on us, the Christmas Joy Offering provides a way for us to offer a gift in response, especially for those church workers who find themselves in times where they need assistance to pay bills or receive life-saving medical treatment. Our gifts through the Christmas Joy Offering support these people who give so much of themselves to Christ's church.

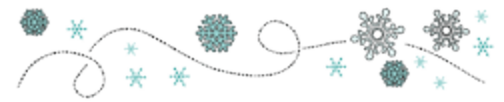
Even as we support our current and former church leaders and their families, God is calling new leaders for our Church and world, through the ministry of Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. Menaul School in Albuquerque, New Mexico; Presbyterian Pan American School in Kingsville, Texas; and Stillman College, a Historically Black College in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, are sustained through the generosity of Presbyterians, which means a brighter future and enhanced opportunities for those students to use their talents and skills to serve God, the Church and the world for years to come. When you give to the Christmas Joy Offering, you help sustain these promises and uplift our siblings in Christ by reducing their burdens and opening new paths of opportunity.

Despite the worry and consternation of this busy season, we can never match God's perfect gift in Jesus, but through the Christmas Joy Offering, we *can* testify to who we have known God to be. Our perfect gift comes from above. Our gifts reflect our generous God. Our gifts support leaders in our Church and world — past, present and future.

* For more information, please look for the bulletin inserts during Advent or visit pcusa.org/special-offerings.



CONFIRMATION CLASS



The Multi-Faceted Children of God Confirmation Group

On November 23, we welcomed as new members for mission at St. Charles Presbyterian Church, Masoma Litumbe, Ryan McMaken, Audrina Scott, and Jonah Smith. What a joy to confirm them as our newest members! They spent 10 weeks this fall studying, discussing, questioning, and growing their faith in Christ and as members of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. They completed a mission project at Missions Thrift Store in Lake St. Louis on Nov. 1 and did a beautiful job leading us in worship on Nov. 16. I hope you will have an opportunity to thank them for their dedication this fall and ask them about their experience, letting them know how proud we are not only for their work, but especially for who they are in Christ and what they mean to this community of believers.

A big thank you to their committed leaders, Pastor Marilyn and Mary Kay Lyon, and their dedicated mentors, Dave Brakeman, Ken Farrell, Janet Ferry, and Jerry Lyon. We also want to recognize and thank members of the Worship & Arts committee, Dana Luley, Angie Southard, and Dara York, for their creative work in constructing their gorgeous handprint stoles for Confirmation Sunday.



UPDATES & A BIG THANK YOU



GRATITUDE FOR OUR TUESDAY TINKERS

Every Tuesday, a dedicated group of retired men show up to work, clean, maintain, and “tinker” around our old building. Jerry Lyon, Bob Fletcher, Dennis Zeismer, David Blinne, and even Lew Tidd, when he is up to it, chip away at the long to-do list that the building has acquired. Remarkably, they do it with cheerfulness and gratitude. It is hard to understand the multitude of tasks they complete each week if you are not here to witness it, but they do a great amount of work, helping us to offset maintenance and repair costs for our church. Many weeks they are here more days than just Tuesday. Let’s show our appreciation to the Tuesday Tinkers by thanking them for their dedicated work in maintaining our building and grounds.

FORWARD IN FAITH CHURCH RELOCATING WITHIN SCPC!

Since beginning to nest at SCPC last March, the Forward in Faith Church has DOUBLED in size, completely outgrowing our Chapel. Beginning December 1, the church will instead be renting the Lower Level Youth Rooms, Conference room, and Java with Jesus area for worship, Bible studies and fellowship. SCPC is renting Java with Jesus to their church as a shared space, which means our Book Club and Women’s Fellowship Group may continue meeting there for now. Please continue to hold in prayer these siblings in Christ, celebrating with them the growth God has given this new congregation.

Are we “blessed to be a blessing?”

Recently, I had an encounter with a person in our community who is unhoused and thought of that saying after my experience with them. I am hesitant to use it as its meaning can be diminished with overuse, but it has stayed with me every time I think of this encounter.

I saw “John” sitting on the street corner while driving home one day, and remembering the blessing bag I had in my back seat, I circled back and got out to speak with him. It was a pleasant encounter. We shook hands, exchanged names, and I offered the bag to him for which he was truly grateful. He asked if I would make a phone call to a “friend” who often helps him. I obliged, but when no one answered, he didn’t want to leave a message. We talked a bit more, and I invited him to our church and then went on my way. A few minutes later my phone rang and I recognized the number as the one I had called for him. It was a woman and I introduced myself and told her of my encounter with “John.” The woman was his mother. We talked for awhile as she recounted his story to me, thanking me and our church for the kindness, dignity, and love he received from us. It was apparent that she felt blessed by the encounter I had with her son, but I was blessed by it also. The truth is, if I hadn’t remembered the blessing bag in my car, I don’t think that I would have stopped. It is easy to overlook people like “John” continuing to go about our day, forgetting that they are children of God, carrying His divine imprint, and worthy of our time. Most importantly, they are capable of blessing us. My hope is that you will have a similar encounter, knowing you are blessed to be a blessing.

Grace & Peace to you this Advent season~Kenda