

DEACON PROGRAMS AT WORK INSIDE AND OUTSIDE OF THE CHURCH

CLOTHING DRIVE - Even though we no longer have a clothing drop bin in our parking lot, you can still donate used clothing, shoes, belts, handbags, stuffed animals, and linens by bagging them in trash bags and leaving them in the church garage. If you have questions, check with a member of the Board of Deacons.

SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM - Because of the generosity of our congregation, we were able to provide school lunches for children in need in Willow Grove School and Hatchery Hill School, but we were also able to reach out to Hackettstown Middle School and assist children there as well. Thank you!

CHRISTMAS TO OUR SENIORS - During December, our Board of Deacons made lovely fruit baskets to deliver to our friends who are no longer able to regularly attend worship.

SOUPER BOWL OF CARING - Did your team make the play-offs? Are you pulling for an NFC or an AFC team? On February 1, we don't know which team will win the Super Bowl, but we do know of one group who will be a winner: our Board of Deacons, who will be recipients of the Souper Bowl of Caring offering that day. Our Sunday School students will again be waiting with soup pots and the hope that all attending worship that day will donate at least \$1 to help alleviate hunger right in our own community.

ADOPT-A-FAMILY MINISTRY - The Deacons implemented the "Adopt-a-Family" program allows us to help local families three times a year: in November, February/March, and May. With the assistance of the school nurse at Hatchery Hill School, we are given the names, ages, and needs of children in the school who face economic hardships. Our congregation shows their generosity by purchasing clothing, shoes, and toys for the children. We received a note from a little girl last spring that thanked us for her new clothes. As we read the line "I wore my new dress for my Spring Concert", we all looked at each other with tears in our eyes and knew that we were so lucky to have God working through our congregation to help others!

SECRET DEACONS / COLLEGE AGE STUDENT MINISTRY - The Board of Deacons has a ministry to reach out to our college age and boarding students. We let the kids know that their church cares about them and that we'll continue to be part of their support system. If you have a college age student, either away at college, or commuting to a local school, and you think they'd like to get a "little bit of home", please contact a Deacon with your student's address!

"THINKING OF YOU" CARD MINISTRY - Each Sunday in the Sanctuary are cards to sign. Take a moment to sign them for our members and friends who can't easily get to Sunday worship. Responses from recipients have let us know that this ministry is a resounding success! Please be sure to take time to let congregation members know that they're being thought of. And if you know anyone whose name should be added to the list, please contact a Deacon.

FREE MARKET - The Deacons every few years, hold a "Free Market/Free Meal". Through the generosity of members and friends of FPCH, we were able to provide much needed items to those in our community who were in need of clothing, kitchen items, linens, toys, books, and more. As the donations came in, our Chapel is turned into a "store" and displayed all of the items offered. When the doors opened, people who were waiting patiently outside and were welcomed to come in a take whatever they needed - without any need to pay for what they took. What a blessing for all of us to be able to do God's work in our community. Pictures of the Free Market are available on the church's Facebook page!

OTHER ACTIVITIES - Our church's Board of Deacons are a hard working and very busy group of dedicated servants of God! Throughout the summer, they host refreshments after the VBS Closing Program, they prepare Communion for our morning worship, they assist people in need in our community with grocery and gas gift cards, and provide funding for the Domestic Abuse center and the Summer Food Backpack Program, co-sponsored by the North Jersey United Way and St. James Church. The Board of Deacons purchased the beautiful new earthenware chalice and plate now gracing our Communion table. The pieces were purchased with Memorial Funds and are gratefully dedicated to the memory of those friends and congregation members who have joined the church triumphant.

Throughout the year, the deacons provide financial assistance to various community agencies:

- Presbyterian Disaster Assistance
- DARRC - Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault Crisis Center
- Family Promise of Warren County
- United Way of Northern NJ