

# HELPING OUR NEIGHBORS

## Special Mission Projects During Advent

Here at Burke Presbyterian Church, we have many opportunities to help our neighbors, especially during the season of Advent.

### Put together a Bethany Stocking

Bring to church on December 3

For many years at Christmastime, BPC members have made stockings filled with essentials for the women who visit the Bethany Center on N Street in downtown DC. Bethany Center helps women facing homelessness and women and children escaping domestic violence. Here's how to put together a stocking:

- Buy thick knee socks (men's socks work very well).
- Stuff the second sock into the toe of the first.
- Fill the rest of the sock with items that would be useful to a woman without a stable home, such as toothpaste, toothbrush, hat, gloves, a scarf, other small toiletries, a notebook, pens, pencils ... use your imagination to make it fun!
- Tie off the end of the stocking with a ribbon and bring it to church on December 3.



### Drop off a sweater for the men of Christ House

Bring to church on December 3

BPC has a long tradition of supplying sweaters for the men who reside at Christ House (short term) and Kairos House (long term), facilities in downtown DC for the formerly homeless, so that each man receives a sweater at the annual Christ House holiday event. If you would like to buy a sweater, please reach out to Al Bast to get colors requested and sweater sizes of the gift recipients. We will have a contact-less sweater drop off on Sunday, December 3, from 1:00 to 3:00pm in the BPC parking lot. If you'd like to drop off a sweater before then, please leave it in the Mission Center cabinet.

### Donate a toy or teen gift for ECHO's Holiday Gift Store

Bring to church by December 3

ECHO collects new toys for children ages 0 to 15 and displays them in a store-like setting, and ECHO clients visit by appointment to choose gifts for their children. You can help by donating a new toy or teen gift, such as a skate board with helmet, family board games, art supplies, remote control toys, teen wallets, teen PJ bottoms, large stuffed animals, headphones/earbuds, etc. There's a long list of ideas, as well as a link to ECHO's Amazon Wish List, at [www.echo-inc.org/holiday-programs](http://www.echo-inc.org/holiday-programs). Please bring unwrapped gifts to the Mission Center cabinet by Sunday, December 3.



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### Shop for our adopted Homestretch family

Bring to church by December 10

In 2018, BPC began a partnership with Homestretch, an organization that empowers homeless families to secure permanent housing and to attain the skills, knowledge, and hope they need to achieve self-sufficiency. Through the Homestretch Sacred Homes program, BPC is helping to support "C" and her two children. Our support includes helping to bring a wonderful Christmas to C and her family by buying items from their wish list. Scan the QR code (or use the link in church emails) to view the list via SignUpGenius. We will collect the gifts after worship services on December 10, or you may contact Nancy Morrison to arrange for another day/time. Questions? Contact Nancy Morrison.



### More about the family BPC sponsors through the Sacred Homes program

Because of the need for confidentiality, we refer to the mother, who is head of household, by "C," her first initial. She has a son in elementary school and a daughter in college. BPC receives quarterly reports about C from Homestretch, and some members of the Mission ministry team have occasional direct contact with the family. C is working hard with resources from Homestretch to gain self-sufficiency so she can "graduate" from their program. We have been so inspired as C works to earn her GED and works toward US citizenship, along with her full-time job. BPC's quarterly contribution to Homestretch helps support C's housing costs. BPC also contributes to a Thanksgiving gift card for the family.

### Make a Christmas Joy offering

December 3 - December 24

This denomination-wide offering is a way to honor God's gift of Jesus Christ by providing assistance to current and retired church workers in need and developing our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. Contribute online (scan QR code or use link in church emails) or write a check payable to BPC, noting "Christmas Joy Offering" in the memo line.



CHRISTMAS JOY  
SPECIAL OFFERINGS

LEADERSHIP: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE



### Discover an alternative gift

Throughout the season

Make a donation to a cause the church supports in honor of someone close to you and receive a certificate that can be tucked into a stocking or wrapped and put under the tree. See the "order form" on the following page for details, visit the Alternative Gift table on Sundays after worship services in December, or get in touch with Jill Moore.



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 www.BurkePresChurch.org

# 2023 Alternative Gifts Order Form

Burke Presbyterian Church has a long tradition of emphasizing the true meaning of Christmas giving - giving from the heart. The BPC Mission Ministry carries on this tradition with an annual offering of Alternative Gifts - gift certificates which benefit both local and international organizations that BPC supports throughout the year. These are thoughtful gifts which assist others in need and never create clutter! The suggested donation amounts are a guide - any amount you choose is just right. **Forms may be returned by email to Jill Moore** and certificates will be sent to you electronically. Payment can be made via the church website at [www.BurkePresChurch.org](http://www.BurkePresChurch.org) - choose the "Giving" tab, then scroll to the "Alternative Gifts" section. Alternatively, you may mail a check - *payable to BPC with "Alt Gifts" in memo section* - to the church at 5690 Oak Leather Dr., Burke, VA 22015. **Thank you for your generous support!**

Ministry Name	Program Description	Suggested Donation	Qty	\$ Total
Christ House	Provide for the purchase of needed clothing for residents at Christ House in D.C.	\$25		
Hypothermia Prevention	Help unhoused people find respite when BPC provides meals, a warm place to sleep, and other assistance in February 2024 when it hosts the Hypothermia Prevention Program.	\$30		
ECHO	Purchase grocery food cards for Burke/Springfield families in need.	\$20		
Homestretch	Support for BPC's Sacred Homes partnership which helps an individual family propel themselves out of poverty.	\$25		
Refugee Resettlement	Support for BPC's efforts to assist refugees resettling in the local area.	\$25 - \$500		
Affordable Housing	Provide rental assistance and building materials for affordable housing initiatives in the local area.	\$25 - \$500		
Church World Service	Support CWS priority programs including disaster relief, clean water, food, and hygiene.	\$15-\$150		
Malawi - School	Nursery School of the Sazu CCAP Church: \$25 provides fortified porridge for 1 month.	\$25		
Malawi - ARVT	HIV/AIDS Antiretroviral Treatment & Care Program at Embangweni Hospital.	\$25		
Kibwezi - Education	Scholarship and curriculum support for vulnerable and orphaned students enrolled in post-secondary education programs.	\$50-\$250		
Kibwezi - Nendeni Area	Support for preschools in church rural outreach villages (daily meal, clean water, teacher salaries, construction, etc.)	\$10-\$100		
Tumaini Orphan Care	General program support for 35 young people in our care (school fees, uniforms, boarding, food, medicine, etc.)	\$25-\$500		
Tumaini Orphan Care	Purchase milk goats and other farm animals for orphan families so they can help sustain themselves.	\$50		

**TOTAL DONATION:**

Purchaser's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Purchaser's E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

For AG Team Use:

Received By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Payment Method: Check # \_\_\_\_\_ Cash \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Online Engage: \_\_\_\_\_

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### Provide a Christmas meal for an ECHO family

Contact ECHO no later than Monday, December 11

Through ECHO's holiday meal program, you can deliver groceries or mail a gift card that will help a local family with a Christmas meal. Last month for Thanksgiving, ECHO received requests from 225 families, and many of you stepped forward to sponsor a family. We now have another opportunity, to help families with a festive meal for Christmas. Please see below for details. If you can participate, start by sending an email to [holidayfoodprograms@echo-inc.org](mailto:holidayfoodprograms@echo-inc.org) **no later than Monday, December 11** to express your interest.

The program works like this for donors who wish to deliver their food in person:

- **No later than December 11**, send an e-mail to [holidayfoodprograms@echo-inc.org](mailto:holidayfoodprograms@echo-inc.org) asking for a family to assist.
- Receive contact information about a family: ages of children, cultural background, etc.
- Get a list of suggested foods to include, if desired.
- Contact the family to arrange delivery date/time.
- Shop for appropriate groceries.
- Deliver the food at least one week before the holiday, before December 18.



The program works like this for donors who wish to purchase a gift card:

- **No later than December 11**, send an e-mail to [holidayfoodprograms@echo-inc.org](mailto:holidayfoodprograms@echo-inc.org) to get contact information and size of the client family.
- Find out the closest food store to the client's address (transportation is sometimes a problem for needy families).
- Purchase food store gift cards in an appropriate amount for the family size (ECHO suggests at least \$65 for a family of four plus \$10 for each additional member, not including infants)
- Mail the gift card to the family to arrive at least 10 days before the holiday (December 15, 2023), giving them time to shop and prepare the meal.
- Consider enclosing the gift card in a festive holiday card and use ECHO's return address (7205 Old Keene Mill Rd, Springfield, VA 22150).

**Thank you for your generous gifts to ECHO's food pantry!** Your faithful, weekly donations of food and hygiene items help keep the shelves stocked during this time of continuing need. Remember to add to your shopping list some of ECHO's "most needed" items, such as protein (canned chicken, Spam, sardines, chili, beef stew) and canned fruit. You can find the complete list on the home page of ECHO's website, [www.echo-inc.org](http://www.echo-inc.org).