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***South Branch
Reformed Church***

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TREASURER'S NOTE

The year is almost over. Where did the time go? And what a busy year it has been at SBRC.

Our 175th Anniversary is only six months away, and we have been remarkably busy preparing our church for this historic celebration. A beautiful new sign has been installed. The front of the church has been power-washed and the columns were painted. The flower beds were weeded and mulched and the shrubs pruned. With the purchase of generators, pumps and hoses, our flood defense system is now complete to face rising waters. Other projects included replacing the chapel stairs, repairing the holding tank and the pipes leading out to it, reinstalling the sidewalk by the chapel, and the repair and replacement of some parsonage windows just to name a few. Thanks to the Endowment Fund and the 175th Anniversary Fund, we were able to complete the above-mentioned projects.



However, we still had our regular monthly expenses to pay, which comes out of our current expense budget. Pledges were good this month. We experienced a very successful Chicken Cordon Bleu dinner, which made a profit of \$2,230. Our expenses were average for the month. We started October, \$11,105 in the red, and ended the month \$7,562 in the red. Keep up the excellent work and we can end 2024 in the black.

May God continue to bless SBRC and its Members.

Robyn Friedlander

JEWELRY FUNDRAISER

Join Danielle (Messineo) Dougherty on Sunday, December 8th from 11:30am to 1:30pm in the Dining Room as she hosts a "Jewelry Making Fundraiser" for SBRC! Those attending will be able to make a necklace or two bracelets (more options will be available). Cost is \$50.00 per person (\$25.00 for supplies and \$25.00 for a donation to SBRC). Items purchased that day will have 25% donated to SBRC. A sign-up sheet has been posted on the bulletin board. Come out and join in the fun!!





- 14 Mary Nunn
- 15 Judith Coates
Sherry Marlatt
- 17 Pattiann Kletz
- 26 Lindzey King
- 28 Harriet Seibert
- 31 Paige DePace



Tuesday,
December 24th

Candlelight
Service at
8:00pm

FROM THE PASTOR...

SBRC remained busy with property projects. Thanks to Dan Davenport the new staircase is completed and has passed inspection. Thank you to Jim & Hedily Wendover as they have been spending time painting areas in the Sanctuary to get us ready for the 175th Anniversary. Deepest thanks to Tom & Patti Kletz for all of the work done on the front entrance (columns, doors, and handrails all scraped and painted) and it looks absolutely beautiful!!

The tell-tale signs of the Christmas Season are all around us. For the past few weeks, the bulletin was full of reminders to submit poinsettia orders, to bring in community dinner items, to consider donating socks for the homeless, and to reserve your tickets for "Breakfast with Santa" with our Preschool. The bulletin also shared opportunities to sign-up for the Advent Study, "Christmas in the Parlor", Holiday Lights at Norz Farm, and to decorate the Sanctuary.



One of the statements I hear around this time of year (and I have said it myself) is, "Where did the time go? How can it be Christmas already?" The fact is that whether you are ready or not, Christmas is coming and it will be here soon!

While a lot has been accomplished and there will always be more to do, I have one request of each of you - slow down, watch & listen, and feel God's love. I pray that you will take some to appreciate the Seasons of Advent and Christmas. These are special times for the Church as we wait in hope to celebrate the birth of Jesus. These times when there are opportunities for us to gather in worship, praise, and fellowship as the SBRC family. These are times when our hopes are secured as we celebrate the birth of Jesus with our SBRC family.

As we gather in excitement and anticipation of that is come this Advent and Christmas Season, I look forward to seeing you all, worshipping with you all, and celebrating with all of you! It really is the most wonderful time of the year!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

In Christian Love,



2024 BENEVOLENCES

Benevolence Funds for 2024 have been designated as follows:

New Brunswick Seminary	\$250.00
Hope College	\$250.00
Central College	\$250.00
Northwestern College	\$250.00
RCA Pensions	\$250.00
Community Care Hospice	\$200.00
Habitat for Humanity	\$200.00
Visions & Pathways	\$200.00
Chaplaincy to the Elderly	\$200.00
Reformed Church Home	\$250.00
Good News Home	\$200.00
HOME of Somerset County	\$200.00
<u>Church of Grace</u>	<u>\$500.00</u>
Total Disbursed:	\$3,200.00



LECTIONARY READINGS FOR DECEMBER

December 1:

Jeremiah 33:14-16
 Psalm 25:1-10
 Thessalonians 3:9-13
 Luke 21:25-36

December 8:

Malachi 3:1-4
 Luke 1:68-79
 Philippians 1:3-11
 Luke 3:1-6

December 15:

Zephaniah 3:14-20
 Isaiah 12:2-6
 Philippians 4:4-7
 Luke 3:7-18

December 22:

Micah 5:2-5a
 Luke 1:46b-55
 Hebrews 10:5-10
 Luke 1:39-55

December 24:

Isaiah 9:2-7
 Psalm 96
 Titus 2:11-14
 Luke 2:1-20

December 25:

Isaiah 62:6-12
 Psalm 97
 Titus 3:4-7
 Luke 2:1-20

December 29:

1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26
 Psalm 148
 Colossians 3:12-17
 Luke 2:41-52

NOMINATIONS

During the Congregational Meeting on Sunday, November 19th, those nominated were:

Office of Elder: Robyn Friedlander, Joe LiBrizzi, and Tyson Stramglia

Office of Deacon: Irene Foley and Nick Speciale

Endowment Committee: Irene Foley and Patti Kletz

Remember that the next Congregational Meeting will be held on Dec. 15th following worship for elections & approving the 2025 Budget.

COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS DINNERS

SBRC came through tremendously in helping out those in our community by providing two full Thanksgiving Dinners to the Hillsborough Food Pantry! The staff was thrilled by our continued support and couldn't thank us enough for all that we do to assist local families. Kudos to all at SBRC!!



Let's keep it going as we put together two Christmas Dinners for the Hillsborough Food Pantry to help two more local families! A sign-up sheet has been posted on the bulletin board for the items that will be needed. Please bring all items to the Church Office on or before December 15th so that items can be delivered on December 16th.

SBRC continues to be a source of help and comfort to those in our community and this is just another way that we strive to be the hands and feet of Jesus.

Holly Kowalenko

2024 ADOPT A FAMILY!

There is a meme going around that depicts someone being asked “What do you want for Christmas” and the answer is “lately I’ve been into gas and groceries.” It may make you chuckle, but the truth is that it hits close to home for many families – even in our community. For most of us Christmas is a time of overindulgence – of gifts under the tree, filled stockings, and large family gatherings.

Imagine wondering how to be able to celebrate Christmas at all. Who has bath towels as the first item on their Christmas list? Simple things that we all take for granted mean the world to those struggling during this holiday season.

Here at South Branch we will once again be working with the Hillsborough Food Pantry to fulfill some holiday wishes by adopting some of the client families. Each client has submitted a “wish list” of three items each under \$35 to the food pantry. South Branch will be “adopting” 12 of these clients for a total of 36 gifts.

Ornaments with gift tags for each person will be distributed on Sunday, November 24th – grab yours on the way out of church. Place the ornament on the tree in the Sanctuary to help decorate – hang on to the tag.



BOOK CLUB

The Book Club had a wonderful year and we are looking forward to continuing to read into 2025! Our time together has been filled with great discussions, laughter, and the opportunity to challenge ourselves in different ways. There will be no meeting in December due to the holidays & family/church commitments. In 2025, we will dive into:

January - “Ordinary Grace” by William Kent Krueger

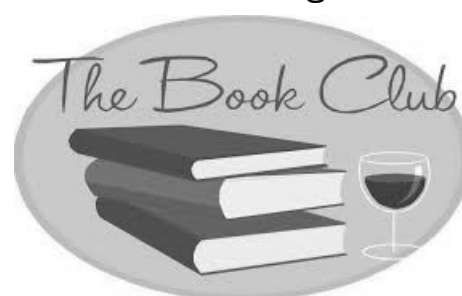
February - “The Women” by Kristen Hannah

March - “Unlocked” by Karen Kingsbury

April - “Yellowface” by R. F. Kuang

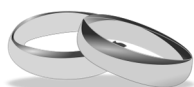
May - “A Fire Sparkling” by Julianna Maclean

June - “The Wedding People” by Alison Aspach



CONGRATULATIONS TO MR. & MRS. GILMORE!

We extend our warmest congratulations to Kristen Kletz & Christian Gilmore who were married at SBRC on Sunday, November 17th. The Sanctuary was full with family, friends, and members of SBRC as we celebrated with them the commitment they made before God. May God continue to bless you!



PRESCHOOL NEWS

Merry Christmas! Our favorite time of year has arrived at South Branch. You can feel the excitement of Christmas in the air!



We ended our Thanksgiving study celebrating with our families at our Thanksgiving Gathering. The children sang Thanksgiving songs and shared pumpkin muffins and cornbread that they made in class. Each family decorated a feather for our huge Tom Turkey listing all the wonderful things they are grateful for. Families also donated personal items for the food bank. We are certainly thankful for all our Preschool Families!

As we look forward to Christmas, we are so excited to be hosting our Breakfast with Santa on December 7th. This event is a favorite of not only our current and former students but also the staff here at South Branch. During the month of December our students will be learning all about the Road to Bethlehem and will be sharing this story with family and friends on December 17th during their Christmas Program.

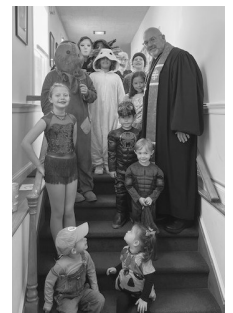
When the children return from Christmas break, we will start the year off with our Author's week. The children really enjoying reading all of types of books from one author.

Enrollment for the 2025-2026 school year will begin at the end of January. If there is anything you would like to find out more about, please feel free to call or email the Preschool, at (908) 369-7885, Preschool@SBRChurch.org. Wishing you all a blessed Christmas and happy new year.

~ Jenn Feaster

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

The Sunday School is having a wonderful year! On October 27th the children celebrated Halloween. Starting out in the Sanctuary with our annual Costume Parade for the congregation and then heading downstairs for some fun and games. Our Senior class participated in pumpkin carving in the Dining Room, we hope you were able to check out their masterpieces during Coffee Hour. Our Mini and Junior classes enjoyed some games, activities and crafts in the Fireside Room, each one taking home a pumpkin courtesy of Norz Hill Farm, thank you Norz Family! All of the children took a try at "Guess How Many" and Abby Zederbaum took the prize. Great job Abby!



We are excited to meet up with our Church family at Norz Hill Farm & Market for the Holiday Lights hayride at 5:30 PM on December 8th. Sign up during coffee hour or by calling the church office, tickets are \$12/per person. All are welcome!

Our students will spend the month of December learning God's Word and preparing for our Christmas Program, which will be presented to the Congregation on December 22nd during Worship. Practices for our Senior Class will be held after Church in the Sanctuary on December 8th and 15th. This is a school-wide production, and we may even ask for some adult volunteers! Our final dress rehearsal will be before Church on December 22nd, watch for details.

There will be no Sunday School class on December 29th. We'll be excited to welcome the students back on January 5th. All children ages 2-1/2 - 8th grade are invited to join us on Sunday mornings. The Sunday School staff is excited to continue along this journey with their students.

~ Tracy Davenport



BREAKFAST WITH SANTA

South Branch Reformed Church Preschool

870 River Road, Hillsborough, NJ 08844

Saturday, December 7th

8:00am to 10:30am

To alleviate long waits please sign up for a tentative seating time.

3 Seatings: 8:15 9:15 10:00

Admission:	\$15.00	Adults
	\$10.00	Children (ages 3 to 8)
	FREE	Children (2 and under)

Menu: Pancakes, Bacon, Sausage, Coffee, Tea, Orange & Apple Juice

PRINTED COMPLIMENTARY PICTURE

(RECEIVE A COPY VIA E-MAIL TO SHARE WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS)

Limited number of tickets available.

For ticket orders please call the Preschool office (908-369-7885),
email: Preschool@SBRChurch.org or return this order form.

Proceeds benefit the South Branch Reformed Church Preschool

December 2024



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Communion Advent Study at 7pm via Zoom	2 Advent Study at 7pm in the Parlor	3	4	5 Choir at 7:30pm in Parlor	6	7 <i>Breakfast with Santa from 8:00am to 10:30am</i>
8 Baptism Jewelry Fundraiser Holiday Lights at 5:30pm Advent Study at 7pm via Zoom	9 Advent Study at 7pm in the Parlor	10	11 Knit, Pray, Crochet 7:00pm at Stockman home	12 Choir at 7:30pm in Parlor	13	14
15 Cong. Meeting Dinner Items Due Women's Group Christmas in the Parlor at 5pm Advent Study at 7pm via Zoom	16 Newsletter Items Due! Advent Study at 7pm in the Parlor	17 <i>Preschool Christmas Programs (Daytime & Evening)</i>	18 Consistory at 7:30pm in Parlor	19 Choir at 7:30pm in Parlor	20	21
22 Sunday School Program Advent Study at 7pm via Zoom	23 <i>Preschool Closed until Jan. 2, 2025</i> Advent Study at 7pm in the Parlor	24 Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 8:00pm	25 	26	27	28
29 No Sunday School	30	31				

South Branch Reformed Church
870 South Branch Road
Hillsborough, NJ 08844



2025 CHURCH DINNERS



Live & Love Like Jesus

Rev. Stephen Eckert ~ Pastor
Mr. John Colaiacovo ~ Music Director
Mrs. Karen Abbatiello ~ Church Secretary
Mrs. Jennifer Feaster ~ Preschool Director
Mrs. Maritza Acosta ~ Sexton

January 18 - Roast Pork
March 15 - Corned Beef & Cabbage
April 26 - Roast Beef
September 13 - Ham
October 18 - Chicken Francaise
November 15 - Turkey

*We are truly grateful for your
continued support. We look forward
to seeing & serving you!*