



BE GENEROUS AND DO GOOD.

**WINTER 2019
VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER**

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**Episcopal
Community
Services**

SIMPLY HAVING A WONDERFUL CHRISTMAS TIME

Even in early fall,
Christmas is in the air
at ECS.

Jessica Main, director of the ECS Fund, took on the role of gift-in-kind ringleader this year. She began to get emails and calls from eager-to-help supporters about our treasured Christmas drive way back in August. You have to start early when you are curating a holiday gift drive for nearly 600 people!

We currently serve more than 500 children in our afterschool program at seven schools throughout the Philadelphia region. Each year, students share what they would like for Christmas.

Meanwhile, in West Philadelphia, staff at St. Barnabas Mission asked the 100 residents—children and their mothers—for their Christmas wishes as well. These lists are compiled and then distributed to our gift-giving partners.

Twenty-one parishes throughout the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania answered the call. Armed with wish lists, parishioners went shopping and returned gifts to their parish coordinators who facilitated deliveries by the carload.

They say it takes a village to raise a child. We'd say it also takes a village to wrap gifts for more than 600 people.

Before gifts can be delivered, they need to be wrapped. So on December 12, we held a wrapping party at our main office and invited volunteers to join in the spirit!

Marianne Maiolino, Jane Feldman, and board member Cynthia Muse came to Third Street where we sorted, wrapped, and processed the gifts.

RISE alumna Jyqueen joined in on the gift wrapping action as a volunteer and got the chance to visit staff and coaches, too. As you know, graduates of the RISE



Initiative stay connected to the ECS community well beyond program enrollment—some to be linked to alumni resources, and others to lend a helping hand.

The first floor of ECS' main office was transformed into Santa's workshop with gifts overflowing.

All of the gifts were wrapped in matching gift bags, tagged with recipient names, and then sorted into piles by program location. In an effort of logistics that would impress any UPS employee, our staff loaded and distributed gifts to the locations with awaiting recipients.

Donors and volunteers like you make this happen every year—from coordination to wish granting. We could never do this without you.

The look of joy on each child's face will make you believe in the magic of Christmas. For some participants, this gift may be the only one they receive at Christmas.

To all who lent their time and generosity to make this year's Christmas drive a smashing success, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts.



600+

**PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS
RECEIVED GIFTS THIS YEAR**

50+

**VOLUNTEERS INVOLVED (PARISH AND
DELIVERY CONTACTS, GIFT WRAPPERS)**

21

**PARISHES ACROSS THE DIOCESE
PARTICIPATED IN THE DRIVE**



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: GERRY MCKENZIE

Gerry McKenzie has been a leader and volunteer in the Carroll Park community for more than two decades.

He was one of the founders of the We Care program during the 1990s that provided a computer lab, martial arts, tutoring, life skills, outdoor activities, and support for youth in the neighborhood.

In 1994, Gerry McKenzie learned of St. Barnabas Mission through one of the friends of a We Care participant.

At the time, the emergency shelter was run out of the basement of the St. Barnabas Episcopal Church located at 6400 Haverford Avenue, down the street from where it stands today at 60th and Girard Avenue.

Mr. McKenzie was so taken aback by the work the shelter was doing that he wanted to become involved. A retired postal worker and barber, Mr. McKenzie decided he could

give back by offering free haircuts to the boys living at the shelter.

In 2000, ECS acquired the shelter and relocated it to its current location. Mr. McKenzie continues his volunteer work once a month, providing haircuts to the boys, and even some of the mothers, residing at the emergency shelter.

In addition, he sponsors at least two off-site activities for the children and moms every year. Most recently—and with the help of family and friends donating funds—he sponsored 28 participants on a trip to Get Air, a trampoline park in King of Prussia.

Mr. McKenzie also played a significant role on the planning committee for our Block Party and Free Community Health Fair back in the fall.



Back in 2011, McKenzie's home church, Calvin Presbyterian, put on a major health fair. He shared his contact list of partners and helped to recruit vendors for ours without hesitation.

He solicited donations and gifts from his church family that supplemented our budget, making our block party a big success!

Mr. McKenzie also made the connection to the West Powelton Steppers and Drum Squad, which was one of the many entertainment highlights of the event. In addition, Mr. McKenzie's church family helped to weed and tidy up the event space on Edgewood Street.

So humbled by the honor, he said "St. Barnabas has been a blessing, as it allows me to ... bless others," he said.

Mr. McKenzie's story reflects how community members and volunteers like you are partnering to help us challenge poverty in the communities we serve. He was recently honored at St. Barnabas Mission's Staff Appreciation Luncheon on December 19 for his outstanding volunteer work.



BLANKETED WITH LOVE

Carolyn Boxmeyer from St. Stephens United Church of Christ and a group of talented friends bind together layers of love in the form of quilts.

Nicknamed the St. Stephen's Quilt Project, Carolyn—and others with a knack for quilting—quilts blankets to donate. The group includes a network of quilters from various places of worship, Girl Scout troops, and individuals.

As the initiative's point person, Carolyn collects the finished products and distributes them to organizations for individuals in need. Many of the small ones go to newborns at CHOP, while many of lap and twin bed sizes are distributed to Episcopal Community Services for the senior citizens enrolled in the Dolphin Companions visiting program.

In the Dolphin program, nursing home residents are matched with volunteers who visit regularly to make life more enjoyable. Each year since Marilyn Knox, volunteer coordinator, has led the program, token gifts are given to the participants around the holidays.

"Quilts like these represent a generosity of both money and time. It is amazing to see the piled-high colorful quilts," said Knox.

EVENT RECAPS

During the Christmas season, we cooked up and strung together two events that put you in the holiday spirit.

On Monday, December 10, our Young Friends Circle hosted *The New York Times* bestselling author Anne Byrn for **Cookies and Cocktails: The History of Baking for Good**, where she dug into the history of American cookies. In Byrn's new book, *American Cookie*, she narrates the country's progress, while focusing on the American kitchen. We specifically looked at how baking has been used to fight poverty throughout our history.

Then, on Sunday, December 16, one of our favorite traditions took place: **Liebesfreud Christmastime Concert**. The renowned Philadelphia-based string quartet, returned for the 16th year to perform classical scores of Beethoven in honor of the celebrated composer's birthday.



Since 2014, quilts donated from Carolyn's group have been gifted to new Dolphin participants. However, the St. Stephen's Quilt Project's partnership with ECS began many years ago—donating quilts to the students of our afterschool programs or at St. Barnabas Mission emergency shelter.

According to Carolyn, "love can be passed between those in need and those who have time and talent to make these wonderful gifts. They're a lasting memory that people care." Indeed they are: a lasting memory, and people who care.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

BE GENEROUS AND DO GOOD

Community Cook-Off

Cook-Off volunteers gather every month to assemble 200+ dinners to be distributed to frail aging adults in the City of Philadelphia. No cooking is involved, so your time commitment is limited and easy to fit into a busy schedule.

Location: *St. Barnabas Mission*

Date & Time: *Third Sunday of every month*

Be a Companion

Our companionship programs for the elderly carefully match volunteers to an isolated aging adult either living independently in Philadelphia or in a nursing home or assisted living facility in the Philadelphia suburbs.

Location: *Matched for your convenience*

Date & Time: *Based on your schedule*

Afterschool Tutor

Assist the elementary and middle school students in our Out of School Time program with reading, writing, math, homework, and study skills.

Location: *Various*

Date & Time: *Weekdays 3:00-6:00pm*

Children's Party/Activity Host

Host a children's party at St. Barnabas Mission! Get creative with your theme and plan a party for the moms and their children. Hosts bring snacks, crafts, and/or games for a fun filled afternoon with our families!

Location: *St. Barnabas Mission*

Date & Time: *Sunday afternoons, select dates*

Speed Networking Panelist

Share your career story with the young men and women in our workforce development program, The RISE Initiative. Volunteers speak to the young adults about their occupation and the steps they took to get there.

Location: *Main Office*

Date & Time: *Various: See back page for upcoming opportunities!*

Lead a Goods Drive

Help ECS provide necessities to our participants by organizing a donation drive at your place of worship, workplace, or in your community! Some of our most needed items include: non-perishables, canned goods, condiments, baby food, books, and diapers.

Location: *Various*

Date & Time: *Based on your schedule*

Community Food Cupboard

Volunteers (individuals or groups up to three people) are needed to help organize the food pantry and assist with food distribution.

Location: *St. Barnabas Mission*

Date & Time: *Tuesday-Thursday, 9:30-11:45am*



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FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit ecsphilly.org/volunteer or email us at volunteer@ecsphilly.org with your area of interest.

UPCOMING EVENTS: SAVE THE DATES

RISE Initiative Speed Networking

Location: ECS Main Office (225 S. 3rd Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106)

Date & Time: Thursday, March 21, 2019; 11:00am-1:00pm

RISE Initiative Mock Interviews

Location: ECS Main Office (225 S. 3rd Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106)

Date & Time: Various: Thursday, March 14, 2019 and Monday, April 15 through Thursday, April 18, 2019

Cook-Off

Location: St. Barnabas Mission (6006 W. Girard Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19151)

Date & Time: Sunday, March 17, 2019; 1:00pm-2:00pm

National Volunteer Week

Location: Various (details to come!)

Date & Time: Sunday, April 7 through Saturday, April 13, 2019

“We make a living
by what we get, but
we make a life by
what we give.”

- WINSTON CHURCHILL



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