

# Essex Churches Together

Volume 4 Number 2

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## ECT Operation Inasmuch- A Day of Giving in Jesus' Name

"Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and fed you, or thirsty and gave you drink, a stranger and took you home, or naked and clothed you? When did we see you ill or in prison, and come to visit you?" And the King will answer, "I tell you this, inasmuch as you did for one of my brothers here you did it for me."  
*Matthew 25:37-40*

Every month representatives from Essex churches gather to share, pray, inform, and carry messages back to their congregations about needs in the community. Every church is invited to attend. Currently there are churches represented in ECT: Antioch Baptist, Angel Visit Baptist, Beale Memorial Baptist, First Baptist, Ephesus Baptist, Grace Episcopal, Lebanon United Methodist, Rappahannock Christian, Seventh-Day Adventist, St. John's Episcopal, St. Timothy's Catholic, Tappahannock Memorial United Methodist, Tappahannock Presbyterian, Trinity United Methodist, Upper Essex Baptist, and Zion Baptist. In addition there are members-at-large representing Community Services, the Free Health Clinic, the Red Cross, the Hanger, and Social Services. There are over 50 churches in Essex County and it is the goal to have representatives from at least half of them.

## Operation Inasmuch

If Jesus appeared to us with a halo, looking like a picture in your grandmother's house- soft, brown eyes; long hair; a full beard, long tunic robe and sandals- we would serve him with gladness and humility. He does not come to us like that, however. He comes to us as the abused wife, or the lonely old man, or the pregnant teenager, or the homeless family, or the person in jail. And what did he tell his disciples when they asked how they could serve him? He gave them a list of things to do, and then he said "inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me."  
*Matthew 25:40*

*Operation Inasmuch* is based on that scripture. It is a planned, one-day event of

doing for others in many different ways. It is sometimes described as a "mission blitz" or a "day of random acts of kindness."

The Rev. David Crocker, pastor of Central Baptist Church in Fountain City, Tennessee initiated the *Operation Inasmuch* ministry almost 15 years ago when he was in Fayetteville, North Carolina. The program is happening now all over the U.S. and in England. He will present a three-hour workshop to representatives from Essex churches, and when they leave the workshop they will have the knowledge and materials needed to plan the day.

The workshop will be Monday evening, January 14, 2008, at the library building of St. Margaret's School in Tappahannock. We will gather at 5:30 PM and have supper at 6:00 PM. Rev. Crocker will begin his presentation at 6 PM. More details on page 2.

## A Few of the Projects for “Operation Inasmuch” (OIAM)

1. Backyard Bible Club for children- gathering of children from a neighborhood or trailer park for games, entertainment, and Bible stories. Excellent project for teenagers.
2. Sewing projects- blankets for homeless persons, turbans for cancer patients, prayer shawls, wheelchair bags
3. Home repairs- plumbing, electrical, roofing, painting, repair of windows, porches, steps.
4. Wheelchair ramps- construction either in partnership with local agency or as a stand-alone project.
5. Yard work for elderly or disabled
6. Firewood cutting and delivery
7. Assembly projects- packages such as hygiene kits for homeless persons, for Red Cross shelters; school supply kits; stuffed animals for abused or frightened children
8. Collection of food, clothing and household goods- then a free give-away on the event day
9. Stamp collection- special stamps are sold and money goes to support theological education in the Congo
10. Rabies clinic for pets
11. Child care to free adults to participate in the event day
12. Preparation of lunches for volunteers

Church representatives will come up with ideas at the workshop, as will Bay Aging, Social Services, Community Services, other agencies. It is the intent to start small this year and grow in numbers and projects in future years.

Working together in the name of Christ, people from different churches and denominations find these activities exciting and fulfilling. The camaraderie and infusion of the Holy Spirit are seen as the biggest benefits of “Operation Inasmuch,” with the actual projects to help people coming in second.

*Essex Churches Together* representatives have been learning about this since last summer and are excited about bringing the information back to their churches. It may be through the women’s group, or through outreach, or with a nucleus of interested member of the congregation.

Churches who have not been sending a representative to the ECT meeting are invited and urged to attend the workshop in January and sign on. The actual day of the Operation has not been set yet but it will be sometime in the spring of 2008.

Churches will be asked to send a \$75 registration fee is possible,, and as many congregation members as are interested may attend. A light supper will be served free of charge with opportunity for a free will offering. All materials will be supplied and each church will receive a book and a DVD explaining OIAM.

Church representatives are asked to please let Alice Roye (443-2021 or [alicer2@verizon.net](mailto:alicer2@verizon.net)) know by January 7 as to expected attendance so that supper and seating can be arranged.

# ECT Meets

*Essex Churches Together* (ECT) met November 27, 2007 at 7:30 p.m. at the Essex Public Library. Kathy Hughes presided over the meeting. Churches represented were Antioch Baptist (Charlie Layne), Angel Visit Baptist (Clinton and Kay Beale), Beale Memorial Baptist (Nancy Lowery), Ephesus Baptist (Hannah Healy), First Baptist (James Cary), Grace and Mercy Outreach (Minister Myrtle Johnson), Grace Episcopal (Mary Hill), Lebanon UMC (Kathy Krom), Mt. Zion Baptist (Debbie Hamilton), Rappahannock Christian (Etta Davis), St. Johns' Episcopal (Randy Brown and Martha Frank), Tappahannock Memorial UMC (Ginny Flaherty, Dawn Douglas, Dolly Loomis, and Rev. Mike Payne), Tappahannock Presbyterian (Kathy Hughes, Alice Roye, Deb Booze, Betty Dyer, and Rev. Bill Morris), Upper Essex Baptist (Mayre Frances Moore), Vauter's Episcopal (Betty Jo Butler and Betty Anne Garrett), and Zion Baptist (Stanley Clark). Members at large in attendance were Dr. and Mrs. Neils Oster, Alene Kimberlin, Mary-Lynn Krusz, Avis Miller, Sandra Batyops, and JoAnne Ruffa. Bill Kling, representative of Lancaster/Northumberland Interfaith Council was a guest.

## **Devotional**

Kathy Hughes opened the meeting with a devotional, as is the custom.

## **Salvation Army**

An announcement from the Salvation Army was shared: they will be sorting toys at Beale Memorial Baptist Church Sunday December 9 following the service. A suggested list of toys was distributed. Toys will be packed Monday, December 10 and distributed Tuesday, December 11.

## **Interfaith Council**

Bill Kling was the guest speaker. He described the work of the Lancaster Northumberland Interfaith Council which has been in existence for 20 years. The group bases their work on a scripture from John in which Jesus asks Peter to "Feed My Sheep". The group's members are lay people from the community. Among their activities are a Christmas Food Drive aided by the Bank of Lancaster; Concerned

Citizens' Committee which does home repairs and emergency food boxes with the help of FEMA; emergency financial assistance for utilities, housing and emergency medical needs; free firewood; providing school supplies; and operating a furniture warehouse. They are not involved in clothing drives as the area churches and other organizations meet this need. The group meets monthly. ECT is considering the best way to centralize resources such as the Lancaster/Northumberland Interfaith Council has done.

## **Operation Inasmuch**

Committees were established for the OIAM workshop which will be held Monday evening, December 14 at 5:30 at St. Margaret's School. Supper will be served.

*Publicity* - Hannah Healy, Debbie Hamilton, Alice Roye, and Dawn Douglas

*Supper* - Etta Davis, Randy Brown, Ginny Flaherty

Churches will be asked to contribute \$75 if they are able and as many of their congregation can come as are interested. All materials are supplied as well as a book and DVD to each church explaining OIAM.

## **Community Services**

Mrs. Tove Oster reported Community Services has been overwhelmed by the coats from the local coat drive and canned food donated for Thanksgiving meals.

## **Community Services Christmas Table**

The Community Services will be holding their Christmas Store where people in need may purchase presents for Christmas for their children for a nominal cost and children purchase for their parents. Volunteers are needed to help with this event: Thursday, December 20 from 9-2 and Friday, December 21 from 9-12.

## **Free Health Clinic**

Dr. Neils Oster reported that the Free Health Clinic has plenty of volunteers and can handle more patients. Furnishings have been supplied by several doctors who were closing their practices. The clinic is on Duke Street where Dr. Ledwith had his office. Beginning in February they will be open two days weekly with the help of more doctors from Riverside Hospital. At present they are open every Monday from 3-6 pm. Walk-ins are accepted. Phone 443-9095.

### Announcements

Special events in our community:

- The Community Choir program will be Monday, December 3 at 8 pm at Tappahannock Memorial UMC
- The *Many Moods of Christmas* will be presented at Tappahannock Memorial UMC Sunday, December 9 at 3:30 and 7 pm
- The Community Carol Sing will be Friday December 14 at 7 pm on the Courthouse Green
- Antioch Baptist will host a Christmas play Sunday, December 16 10:30 AM and 4 PM

- Combined choirs of Providence, Trinity, and Lebanon UMC will present a Christmas Cantata Sunday, December 16 at 3 PM at Trinity UMC on Route 360 in Millers Tavern
- Tappahannock Junior Academy will have a Christmas program Thursday, December 20 at 7 pm

There will be **no ECT meeting in December**.  
The next meeting will be **Tuesday, January 22, 2008**.  
Kathy Krom, Clerk



## *Essex Churches Together*

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