



Christ Child Society Of Pittsburgh

MISSION STATEMENT

The Christ Child Society of Pittsburgh is a non-profit Catholic association of lay volunteers embracing members of all denominations, expressing its members' love of the Christ Child through service to God's children regardless of race, color or creed.

January, 2024

RED WAGON LUNCHEON

Red Wagon planning has officially begun! CAROLYN GREEN and JANET MASCARO will co-chair the event. **The date set is April 27, 2024, at the Pittsburgh Field Club.**

The following members have volunteered to chair a committee:

Printing/Mailing-

Ellen O'Brien (will need a co-chair)

Door Prizes-

Gerrie Orr and Suzette Venturini

Basket Auction-

Theresa Magnotta and Judy Kern

Surprise Wine Raffle-

Molly Kelley

Money Raffles –

Diane Donovan and Charlotte Collins

Reservations & Registration-

Chris McCarthy and Jean Lombardi

Centerpieces-

Maria Kitay

Silent Auction-

Stacy Doepken and Lisa Gaydos

Purse Raffle-

Pam Diulus and Mary Ann Gonot



Since Red Wagon is around the corner, we would like to start planning for our raffles. If you are able to donate, *please* let us know by March 1st. Following is a list of what we need and who to contact if you can donate:

Purses- designer brands with a retail value of \$100.00 (can be bought on sale for much less of course!). Contact Pam Diulus or Mary Ann Gonot.

Auction baskets- Must be worth \$100.00. The most popular baskets contain gift cards, lottery tickets, or money. More than one person can go together to make a basket. Contact Theresa Magnotta.

Bottles of **WINE** only. This year we are trying a "Surprise Wine" raffle so we are asking for better quality wines (\$16.00 and up retail). Contact Molly Kelley.

Door prizes- Value of \$15-\$20. Contact Gerri Orr or Suzette Venturini.

Gift cards- These will be used in purses or in baskets. \$25.00 and up. Contact Theresa Magnotta.

For our Silent Auction this year, we will be soliciting vendors. However, if you have friends or relatives with a business who may be able to donate, please ask them! We will provide you with the appropriate form they will need for tax purposes.

Thank you all! With your help we know we will once again have a very successful event!

SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR

REVEREND JEREMY MOHLER

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PAM DIULUS

Vice-President

Treasurer
MARLENE MacDONALD

Recording Secretary
SUZETTE VENTURINI

Corresponding Secretary
MARY ANN GONOT

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CHARLOTTE COLLINS
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MOLLY KELLEY
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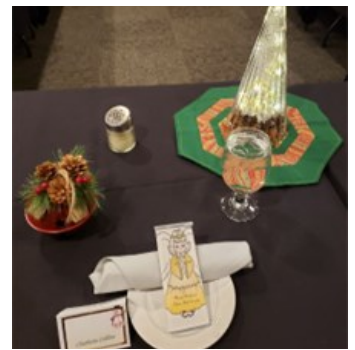
PATTI SMITH
GERRIE ORR

NEWSLETTER

JUDY KERN

CHRISTMAS PARTY 2023

Our annual Christ Child Christmas Party was held on Tuesday, December 5 at Scoglio's Restaurant in Greentree. Eighteen CC members and 6 guests attended. The afternoon included a brief general meeting, a delicious meal along with door prizes and a Christmas raffle. Also attending was a guest speaker, **Frank Bursic**, a Deacon from the Diocese of Pittsburgh who spoke to us about our possible involvement with the *Walking with Moms* program that is designed to support pregnant and parenting mothers in need. It was a lovely afternoon and our special thanks goes to PAM DIULUS, MARY ANN GONOT and THERESA MAGNOTTA for planning the event and putting all who were present in the Christmas spirit!



Christmas Stockings



CCS "adopted" a third grade class of 23 students by providing them gifts for the holidays. Each student was graciously provided with a large bag containing a stocking filled with items brought and donated by CCS members at the holiday luncheon and wrapped toys, they wished for, shopped and wrapped by CCS members. Thank you *Theresa Magnotta* for sorting the items and making up the packed full stockings. The joy that radiated on their faces was priceless. Holidays as everyday are for giving.

In regards to Conrad School and their Angel tree: We had 7 little angels to buy gifts for —two boys and 5 girls. Their gifts were received with great enthusiasm. The teacher and school cannot thank us enough for the joy this brings to their students. Many different people and small organizations participate in this yearly event. God Bless all those Angels in that special needs school.

Happy Birthday

January:

Mary McCormick

Paula Casasent

Theresa Magnotta

February:

Phyllis Palombo

March:

Dolores Butch

April:

—

Batch A Toys Wrapping Party

The Charlie Batch Foundation, founded in 1999 by quarterback Charlie Batch provides year-round educational programming to more than 3,800 children ranging in ages from 4 to 18, across 22 school districts in eight western Pennsylvania counties. Throughout the month of December groups and organizations are invited to meet at the foundation's headquarters in Homestead to wrap gifts for underprivileged children in the Pittsburgh area. On December 13 ten Christ Child members along with a Christ Child friend, Denise



Chizmar, took part in this Christmas gift wrap. The well organized event was a fun and rewarding experience that we all enjoyed! We are hoping to participate again in 2024!



ANGELS' CLOSET

... *From Molly Kelley*

I am happy to report we have distributed over 250 coats this past coat season. Thank you to Knights of Columbus St. Sebastian Council who donated 140 coats to our inventory. On January 9th, 2024 we delivered 80 plus coats to St. James Ministries Wilksburg for their coat distribution January 20th. Also a big thank you to the students and faculty of Ingomar Elementary School In North Allegheny School District who collected and donated over 100 beautiful high quality hats, gloves, scarves and slippers (all sizes) from their giving tree to CCS..!!!! We shared some with St. James Ministries and will continue to use the items for our next distribution in the fall. Its been a great year for ANGELS' CLOSET!!! PS. A big thanks to all the committee members for your help.



Twins and big sister model new coats from our Angels' Closet!

DIAPER PROGRAM

... *From Carolyn Green*

The diaper program is beginning in January. I have had an anonymous donor give us 5 large packages of diapers. These will be distributed in January to St. James in Wilksburg along with diapers the Christ Child has purchased for this program. I am waiting for two other organizations to make plans for them to say when they would like diapers to be dropped off at their location. We will see how this new adventure goes and then evaluate for future distribution.

LAYETTES

... *From Charlotte Collins*

The Layette committee distributed a total of 110 Layettes in 2023.

In October 2023, Molly Kelley delivered a Layette to St. James Church. Stacy Doepken delivered 20 Layettes to Magee Hospital in November of 2023 and Ellen O'Brien delivered 14 Layette bags to Genesis of Pittsburgh in January of 2024.

I will schedule another packing in February or early March. I will e-mail the Layette committee on a specific date once I have received all ordered merchandise.

If anyone would be willing to crochet baby blankets please contact me (412-398-5211) for details.

MEMBERSHIP

... *From Patti Smith*

Since September of 2023, our Christ Child organization has sadly lost three of our long time members, Mary Jane Diamantopulos, Marian Flowers and Mary Ellen Ploeger. Our current membership now stands at **35**, with 24 active members and 11 sustaining. As we continue to pray for all deceased members, may we also be vigilant in seeking new members to join us in our mission of helping children in need. If you know of anyone who may want information or could be interested in our CCS, please contact Patti Smith.

BACKPACK FOR HUNGER

... *From Gerri Orr*

News and updates from the Backpack for Hunger Program were discussed at the January 15th General Christ Child Meeting. These updates will be included with the publication of the minutes for this meeting, as well as in our next newsletter.

NEWS FROM NATIONALS

Please continue to check the National Christ Child website (www.nationalchristchild.org) for all national Christ Child news and events.

MEMBERS WHO HAVE RECENTLY PASSED AWAY ...

Our local Chapter of the Christ Child Society has lost three long time members in recent months. They represent a commitment to service, particularly serving children in need and were very actively involved with the Mission of Christ Child as Mary Virginia Merrick, foundress, often said "Find a need and fill it". We mourn their passing along with their families and friends.

Mary Jane Diamantopulos had been an active member of Christ Child since its early beginning days in 1992. Always upbeat, she eagerly searched and obtained the support of merchants for our Red Wagon. She passed away in October 2023, at the age of 89 leaving siblings and dozens of nieces and nephew.

Marian Flowers became a member more than 20 years ago and immediately took an active role in supporting our ministries. She even became interim President when that office had an unexpected opening. She along with Mary Ann Gonot supported the Red Wagon by receiving reservations and assigning tables to our supporters. Marian passed away in November 2023 at the age of 86 and left two daughters and five grandchildren.

Mary Ellen Ploeger was a member from our earliest days also. She served as President and in 1994 attended the National Christ Child Society's Biennial Convention in Detroit. She received our Charter bringing us into the national fold of Christ Child. She supported every ministry but was especially drawn to the Angel's Closet and eagerly shopped for coats for our clients. Often she would come into a meeting carrying large bags of coats she found at bargain prices. Mary Ellen was 90 at her passing in January 2024, and left her three children, twelve grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Mary Jane, Marian, and Mary Ellen thank you for your service to the Christ Child, may you Rest in Peace, and may *The Perpetual Light* shine upon you.

DONATIONS TO THE CHRIST CHILD SOCIETY OF PITTSBURGH

FROM: Cheryl George (Christmas stockings for children)
Corp. ACH - United Way of Columbus, Ohio.

In Memory of **Marian Flowers**

FROM: Helen Capone Amy Fajt (Greg) Nancy Geist Carole Gilardi Mary Ann and Carmen Gonot Bob Hillard Celeste and Bob Janosko Bob and Molly Kelly and Family Mary Jo Kelly Judy Kern Marlene MacDonald	Kathleen Mates Theresa Magnotta Mary McCormick Annette Pasqual Jeannine T. Schoenecker John & Ellie Simmons Charlotte Smith Janet Smith Phyllis Trail Suzette Venturini (Angels' Closet) Patricia Wilson
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In Memory of **Mary Jane Diamontopulos**

FROM: Mary Jo Kelly
 Marlene MacDonald
 Mary McCormick

CHRIST CHILD SOCIETY OF PITTSBURGH

DONATIONS, TRIBUTES AND MEMORIALS FORM

This form is also available on our website: www.christchildsofittsburgh.org

IN HONOR OF *
 IN MEMORY OF *
 IN THANKSGIVING FOR *

OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____

* **NAME** _____

Address _____

Donation of: \$50.00 _____ \$25.00 _____ \$10.00 _____ Other \$ _____

DONATION FROM: *Name* _____

Please send an acknowledgement of my gift to:

Name _____

Address _____

**Please enclose this form and
 your check payable to
 "Christ Child Society of Pittsburgh"
 and mail to:
 Marlene MacDonald
 642 Pennridge Road
 Pittsburgh, PA 15211**

Christ Child Society of Pittsburgh is
 a 501(c)3 (non-profit) organiza-
 tion. Your donation qualifies as
 a charitable deduction.

Christ Child Society of Pittsburgh

P.O. Box 11324
Pittsburgh, PA 15238-1324
www.christchildsocietyofpittsburgh.org

FIRST CLASS MAIL



Dates to Remember

CHRIST CHILD SOCIETY OF PITTSBURGH

2024	February 22	11:00 at All Saints <u>Meeting for all RED WAGON CHAIRS</u>
	April 27	Red Wagon Luncheon, Pittsburgh Field Club

Committees and Board of Directors will meet on an as needed basis.

NOTEWORTHY:

- *Please remember . . . our new phone number (412-719-1066)*
. . . check our website www.christchildsocietyofpittsburgh.org for news and updates,
including General Meeting minutes and newsletters
. . . follow us on Facebook
- Please note that in addition to our regular newsletter, we are including information from the Diocese of Pittsburgh that outlines the necessary requirements for working with children. Please keep this document for any future reference you may need.
- Please **MARK YOUR CALENDAR** and submit all information for our next newsletter to Judy Kern by **March 18**.

Requirements for Parish Volunteers: Clearances

Please note that you should **contact your parish's safe environment coordinator** to guide you.

Go to the Diocese of Pittsburgh website, diopitt.org. Click on "Clearances" across the top and then scroll down and click on "Parish Volunteer." You will see the following steps which can be completed online.

According to the website, all parish volunteers must complete the following steps.

1. **Virtus[®] Online Safe Environment database:** (Unsure whether you have an existing account? Call the Office for Compliance at 412-456-3093. If your record exists, they will provide you with login information). Or go to www.virtusonline.org, and log in. Putting yourself in this database will let the parish coordinator track your progress and notify you if renewals are needed.

2. Child Abuse History Clearance

a. [Complete the online Application](http://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home) at www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home **OR**

b. Complete the paper application.

To download the application, go to [https://files.ecatholic.com/16469/documents/2018/9/Child abuse history new form-3.pdf?t=1536868434000](https://files.ecatholic.com/16469/documents/2018/9/Child%20abuse%20history%20new%20form-3.pdf?t=1536868434000).

Paper submissions of the Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Certification application will still be accepted for anyone who may not have access to the internet, or who may be unable to access the self-service portal due to their attempting to access the system from outside the United States. Please note, results will be received more quickly if applied for electronically. Submit paper applications to:

ChildLine and Abuse Registry

Pennsylvania Department of Human Services

PO Box 8170

Harrisburg, PA 17105-8170

The instructions for how to complete the Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Certification application are now included on the last page of the application and can be printed for easy reference when completing the application. Failure to comply with the instructions that are attached to the application will cause considerable delay in processing the results.

3. FBI Clearance or Waiver

If you have lived in PA for 10+ years, complete the waiver form found at: [https://files.ecatholic.com/16469/documents/2017/8/disclosure statement application for volunteers.pdf?t=1504206600000](https://files.ecatholic.com/16469/documents/2017/8/disclosure%20statement%20application%20for%20volunteers.pdf?t=1504206600000). You can also easily find the form on the diopitt.org website when you click on clearances. It is called the "FBI Disclosure Statement for Volunteers."

4. Protecting God's Children On-line Class, Live Class or **Trauma Sensitive Alternative.*** **Go to the diopitt.org website, click on clearances-parish volunteer; then look at Step 4 and click on Live class. It will list any classes available in person in the diocese. As of October 27, there were no live classes scheduled.**

5. Mandated Reporter Training

You are not required to complete this step unless you volunteer in particular settings which are defined on the website such as a school setting, catechesis, daycare etc. However, many parishes require this step for all volunteers. Please check with your safe environment coordinator.

6. The Diocese of Pittsburgh does not seem to require a **PA Criminal History Clearance** but some parishes may require it. Again, check with your safe environment coordinator.

The Pennsylvania State Police have established a web-based computer application called "[Pennsylvania Access To Criminal History \(PATCH\)](#)". Results are often received immediately when applied for online. If results are not immediately received, please note the following:

If you provide your e-mail address in the application, PATCH will send messages stating that the clearance request was received, and when your clearance results are completed and ready to be reviewed and printed.

If you do not provide an e-mail address, then please document the control number so that you may log back into the PATCH system to obtain the clearance results when they are completed.

Paper Request

If you need a paper version of the application, please complete the following steps:

Go to "[Pennsylvania Access to Criminal History \(PATCH\)](#)"

1. Go to the "Help" option on the top of the page.
2. When you hover over the "Help" option a drop-down menu will appear
Scroll down and click on the form that you want to review and print

FAQ

Who Needs clearances?

Adults applying for or holding an unpaid position as a volunteer with a child care service, school, program, activity, or service responsible for a child's welfare or having direct volunteer contact with children will need clearances (From PA Department of Human Services).

How is direct volunteer contact with children defined?

It is defined as the care, supervision, guidance, or control and routine interaction with children. Routine interaction is defined as regular and repeated contact that is integral to a person's employment or volunteer responsibilities.

We are an adult volunteer agency who sometimes has children attend or the children ask to participate in the organization's activities. What are the clearance requirements?

Allowing children to join an adult volunteer organization requires members to obtain clearances if those members would have direct contact with children.

Can my clearances be transferred? Yes, any person who obtained their clearances within the previous 60 months may serve in a volunteer capacity for any program, activity, or service. Clearances obtained for volunteer purposes may not be used for employment.

What is the renewal requirement for clearances?

All volunteers will be required to obtain clearances every 60 months. Time frames for renewed clearances are based upon the date of each individual clearance. If an individual or agency elected to renew all clearances at the same time, the date of the oldest clearance rather than the most recent would be used.

What does it cost to obtain my clearances? For volunteers, clearances are free.