Alternative Christmas Shop

Swarthmore Presbyterian Church

2025













GIVING HOPE AROUND THE WORLD



CELEBRATE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON WITH GIFTS OF HOPE.

Lives changed. Futures brightened.

The Alternative Christmas Shop (ACS) of Swarthmore Presbyterian Church gives hope around the world by showcasing often lesser-known charities as "alternative" holiday gift opportunities. Your gifts are contributions to charitable causes made in honor of family members, friends, colleagues, and others for whom you are thankful in your life.

ACS expands SPC's outreach efforts globally, encompassing local, regional, national, and international charitable programs within five general categories which the ACS Committee considers important: Children and Education, Animals and the Environment, Empowerment and Social Justice, Health and Welfare, and the U.S. Military (active duty and veterans).

Since it was established in 2006, ACS has raised over $527,000 for more than 340 causes around the world.

SWARTHMORE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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SWARTHMOREPRES.ORG • 610.543.4712

Alternative Christmas Shop

SWARTHMORE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF PEOPLE, ANIMALS, AND THE PLANET.

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CHILDREN & EDUCATION

ABC Strath Haven, Wallingford-Swarthmore, PA

Opening Doors to Academic Success

Places talented disadvantaged young people into the nation's leadership pipeline.

Gift: **SCHOOL SUPPLIES FOR ONE STUDENT** ***Price:*** **$45**

Since 1963, A Better Chance has placed talented young people who live in poorer and underperforming school districts into the nation's leadership pipeline through increased access to academically rigorous independent and public schools. ABC's 13,000 alumni have become innovators and leaders in the fields of business, government, media, and medicine, with nearly 75% attributing their success to educational opportunities provided through ABC. ABC Strath Haven is a longtime partner of SPC. Students attend Strath Haven High School and have abundant learning opportunities throughout the academic year, supported by staff, volunteer tutors and mentors, and host families. A recently constituted board of alumni seeks to strengthen the financial foundation of the chapter as a catalyst for academic advancement and civic leadership.

More information: abcstrathhaven.org

CHILDREN & EDUCATION

Build Congo Schools, Democratic Republic of Congo

Build Up Schools and Students

Constructs and equips primary and secondary schools in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Gift: **TRAINING TO EMPOWER ONE LOCAL TEACHER** ***Price:*** **$75**

Most schools in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are poorly constructed and in dire condition because of extreme poverty, internal conflicts and a lack of government funding for education, despite the country's mineral wealth. In 2019, the government mandated free education for primary school children, and student enrollment has exploded, with some classrooms having over 100 students. Even though these schools are public, the government provides only minimal funding for teacher salaries and school maintenance. Build Congo Schools constructs and equips primary and secondary schools to transform children's futures, reduce poverty and strengthen communities, through new buildings, teacher training, books, scholarships for girls and orphans, and motorcycles for supervisors. Since 2013, Build Congo Schools has built 10 schools, supporting over 6,000 students.

More information: buildcongoschools.org











CHILDREN & EDUCATION

Chester Charter Scholars Academy, Chester, PA

Empower Students in Chester

Gives students the necessary tools to successfully transition from school to contributing members of their communities.

Gift: **SCHOOL SUPPLIES FOR ONE STUDENT** ***Price:*** **$50**

Chester Charter Scholars Academy (CCSA) is an arts-integrated K–12 public charter school in Chester PA. CCSA serves students in the Chester Upland School District and surrounding areas by delivering a high-quality arts-integrated curriculum, empowering students to realize their best selves and to employ their intellectual and creative power to succeed personally and to enrich their community. CCSA's vision is that 100% of its students will graduate prepared for college, conservatory, technical school, the military or gainful employment, demonstrating four essential qualities: Scholarship, Strong Character, Craftsmanship and Purpose.

More information: ccsascholars.org

CHILDREN & EDUCATION

Chester ExChange, Chester, PA

Lift Chester Students Academically

Provides an academic boost to children and youth in Chester outside of school hours.

Gift: **ONE LITERACY KIT** ***Price:*** **$60**

As an all-volunteer, grassroots organization, Chester ExChange brings child advocates together to work collaboratively in helping children and youth in Chester succeed in school, at work, and in life by providing learning and enrichment opportunities outside of school hours. Literacy program educators focus on phonics instruction so that early learners become proficient readers by grade 4. The tutoring program offers students in grades K–12 the opportunity to work one-on-one with a volunteer to catch up, strengthen their reading and math skills, or even move ahead academically. Chester Exchange's newest initiative coordinates with students' families more fully through check-ins, suggestion guides, workshops, and family events designed to support their children's learning at home.

More information: chesterexchange.org

CHILDREN & EDUCATION

Girls First - Artsee© Program, Philadelphia, PA

Art for Girls (and Boys!)

Empowers underserved youth through creative learning.

Gift: **ONE MONTH OF ART SUPPLIES FOR ONE STUDENT** ***Price:*** **$25**

The mission of Girls First is to build character, instill a positive sense of self, and provide tangible life skills through a four-year Artsee© curriculum of art exploration, academic reinforcement, and emotional learning for grades 1–4. From its roots in Norristown PA, Girls First has grown to establish co-ed programs at Chester Eastside and the Chester Charter Scholars Academy in 2024-2025. Girls First provides a safe, stable environment where students practice respect for themselves and others, exercise appropriate interactions with peers and adults, discover new skills and talents, and develop tools that will allow them to achieve greater success in school and beyond.

More information: girlsfirst.org

CHILDREN & EDUCATION

PaGaSa Program, The Philippines

Build Community Through Theater Arts

Provides a safe space for children and youth to build community through creative expression.

Gift: **THEATER SUPPLIES FOR 10 WEEKS** ***Price:*** **$60**

SPC mission partners Cobbie and Dessa Palm provide pagasa ("hope") in many ways through their ministry in the Philippines. PaGaSa is an acronym for words in Philippine languages meaning faith, viewpoint, conviction; skills, action; and self, community. Over the last five years, Dessa has worked with Youth Advocates Through Theater Arts, Inc., collaborating with parents in neighboring communities to bring social development and the joy of creating theater to 50 children in each six-session workshop, grounding their experience in the values of care and community. For children ages 9 – 18, these workshops focus on developing positive self-image and a safe space in which to develop social connections guided by the ethos of love, kindness, and respect.

More information: yattadumaguete.wixsite.com/yatta

ANIMALS & THE ENVIRONMENT

New Leash on Life USA, Philadelphia, PA

Build New Lives Together

Facilitates fresh starts for incarcerated individuals and at-risk dogs in the greater Philadelphia area.

Gift: **CANINE BODY-LANGUAGE TRAINING TEXTBOOK** ***Price:*** **$25**

New Leash on Life USA is an innovative reentry and diversion organization in the greater Philadelphia area that facilitates fresh starts for incarcerated individuals working with at-risk dogs. New Leash on Life engages adults in a 24-week program beginning with 12 weeks of in-facility workshops focused on dog training, life skills, career readiness, and trauma-informed care. The second 12 weeks of the program focuses on individualized reentry services and paid internships, supporting participants as they transition into their communities. Graduates achieve long-term success through minimal recidivism, permanent employment, and reintegration into their community, and the rescued dogs become loving and valued members of their newly adopted families.

More information: newleashonlife.org







ANIMALS & THE ENVIRONMENT

Providence Animal Center, Delaware County, PA

Forever (Pet) Homes

Provides affordable and reliable adoption for healthy and loving animals.

Gift: **ONE WEEK OF CARE FOR A DOG OR CAT** ***Price:*** **$25**

Providence Animal Center (PAC) cares for and manages adoption for pets rescued from overcrowded shelters, pets who are relinquished by their owners, and pets who have suffered cruelty and neglect. PAC offers high-quality, affordable, and life-affirming rescue, adoption, medical care, and training of companion animals. In 2024, PAC placed 876 dogs and 1,870 cats in forever homes. The Center serves as a community resource that inspires others to embrace the human-animal bond. PAC offers low-cost vaccine and microchip clinics (no vet fee is required), and has joined with Francisvale Home for Smaller Animals to save the lives of more animals and provide new and expanded services to the people who care for them.

More information: providenceac.org

EMPOWERMENT & SOCIAL JUSTICE

Community Action Agency of Delaware County

Support Economic Self-Sufficiency

Provides housing assistance and social services to empower families toward self-sufficiency.

Gift: **ONE HOUR OF HOUSING ASSISTANCE** ***Price:*** **$75**

Community Action Agency of Delaware County (CAADC) assists residents to move toward economic self-sufficiency and to strengthen the community through innovative approaches to programs including housing, workforce development, energy conservation, social services and community and economic development. CAADC's housing services help families transition out of temporary shelter, to avoid homelessness, to stabilize their situations, and to make their homes healthier. CAADC's social services include child development, economic support, and linking families to vital programs in their community.

More information: caadc.org

EMPOWERMENT & SOCIAL JUSTICE

HIAS Pennsylvania, Philadelphia & Surrounding Counties

Stand Strong for Immigrants

Provides legal assistance to recently arrived immigrants and refugees navigating the US immigration system.

Gift: **ONE HOUR OF LEGAL CONSULTATION** ***Price:*** **$35**

HIAS Pennsylvania partnered with First Place Swarthmore to place recently arrived immigrants in our community. Although First Place Swarthmore is on hiatus due to changes in federal immigration policy, HIAS Pennsylvania continues to help low-income immigrants and refugees in our region navigate the US immigration system and courts through the services of attorneys, Board of Immigration Appeals accredited representatives, law clerks, legal representatives, and paralegals. HIAS Pennsylvania also provides technical assistance to service providers and non-attorneys to the community at large to help our community continue to support those seeking safety, security, and peace in the region.

More information: hiaspa.org

EMPOWERMENT & SOCIAL JUSTICE

Media Fellowship House, Media & Delaware County, PA

Support Home Ownership Success

Provides counseling services for first-time homebuyers and those struggling to avoid foreclosure.

Gift: **ONE HOUR OF COUNSELING FOR HOME OWNERSHIP** ***Price:*** **$35**

Media Fellowship House was founded over 80 years ago by two local women who envisioned a space where people of all races, backgrounds, and beliefs could gather in unity. Media Fellowship House believes in building strong communities through fair housing, economic empowerment, and youth and education programs. Their First-Time Homebuyer Counseling Program creates pathways to homeownership for low-income homebuyers by providing the tools needed to develop the knowledge and confidence to manage their finances and prepare for the responsibilities of homeownership. Working with HUD-certified counselors, they build individualized action plans to achieve home buying success. They also offer a Foreclosure Prevention Counseling Program that helps homeowners strengthen financial skills, resolve financial challenges, and connect to additional programs to prevent loss of housing.

More information: mediafellowshiphouse.org

EMPOWERMENT & SOCIAL JUSTICE

New Avenue Foundation, Delaware County, PA

Community Cup Coffeehouse

Improves the lives of adults with disabilities by providing social events and job training programs.

Gift: **ART SUPPLIES FOR ONE ADULT** ***Price:*** **$15**

New Avenue Foundation was formed by two fathers to create more innovative options for socializing and employment for their adult daughters with autism. For ten years, New Avenue Foundation has been hosting the Community Cup Coffeehouse on Friday nights in Springfield as a space for adults with disabilities to enjoy music, snacks, crafts, and other activities. Originally a safe social space for people with disabilities, the coffeehouse now welcomes all who wish to share a musically inspired night. The foundation also offers weekday enrichment programs for all ages and abilities and partners with Media Bean Café to train and employ individuals with disabilities.

More information: newfdn.org







EMPOWERMENT & SOCIAL JUSTICE

The Common Place-Bunny's Garden, Philadelphia, PA

Make a Garden Grow

Supports food justice, environmental sustainability, and community empowerment.

Gift: **SEED PACKETS FOR VEGETABLE GARDENS** ***Price:*** **$15**

The Common Place (TCP) provides support to children and their families in southwest Philadelphia through educational programs, food sovereignty, community collaboration, and welcome. Located at the corner of 58th Street and Chester Avenue, TCP shares a space where various organizations come together to meet educational and social support needs for the community. TCP's Bunny's Garden supports food justice, sustainability, and community empowerment. Gardens at Chester Avenue and Cecil Street and Southwest Presbyterian Church provide fresh, healthy produce to families and educate youth about nutrition and agriculture. All produce is donated to the neighborhood through weekly food distribution. Over 1,300 pounds of produce has been distributed since 2019, impacting over a hundred families and thousands of meals.

More information: thecommonplacephilly.org

HEALTH & WELFARE

American Near East Refugee Aid, International

Emergency Aid for the West Bank and Gaza

Mobilizes resources for emergency and long-term relief of Palestinians and other communities in the Middle East.

Gift: **ONE FOOD PARCEL** ***Price:*** **$35**

American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA) works to address the development and humanitarian needs of Palestinians and other communities in the Middle East. Since 1968, ANERA has helped refugees and others affected by conflicts in the Middle East live with dignity and purpose. ANERA, which has no political or religious affiliation, works on the ground with partners in Palestine (West Bank and Gaza), Lebanon, and Jordan. It mobilizes resources for immediate emergency relief and for sustainable, long-term health, education, and economic development. ANERA's organizational values are reflected in its collective work, which prioritizes dignity, impartiality, and service to communities in need. As a humanitarian and non-sectarian organization, ANERA condemns antisemitism and all other forms of hatred and bigotry.

More information: anera.org

HEALTH & WELFARE

Comfort Cases, USA, Puerto Rico, United Kingdom

Support Foster Children and Youth

Works to instill a sense of dignity and hope for those entering foster care.

Gift: **ONE BACKPACK OR DUFFEL BAG** ***Price:*** **$25**

Children and young adults removed from their homes and placed in foster care are typically given a trash bag to pack whatever personal belongings they take with them. Comfort Cases, located in Gaithersburg MD, is working to eliminate this practice. Countering the sense of worthlessness associated with neglect or abuse, Comfort Cases provides those entering the system with backpacks or duffel bags filled with new comfort and personal care items, lending dignity and hope to the removal process. Comfort Cases works in partnership with welfare agencies across the US to distribute backpacks and duffel bags filled with gender and age-appropriate toiletries and dental supplies, blankets, stuffed animals, coloring books, and journals to reinforce self-care and self-worth and help calm distressed feelings.

More information: comfortcases.org

HEALTH & WELFARE

Domestic Abuse Project of Delaware County, PA

Empower Survivors of Domestic Abuse

Provides services to support survivors and works to reduce domestic violence.

Gift: **ONE HOUR OF COUNSELING** ***Price:*** **$50**

The Domestic Abuse Project of Delaware County (DAP) was created in 1976 as part of a movement to provide safety, advocacy, and supportive services to victims of domestic abuse not otherwise available in Delaware County. Empowering victims of abuse and domestic violence prevention are at the core of DAP's mission. Each year, thousands of victims of abuse and their children are supported through DAP's strengths-based confidential counseling services for survivors of domestic violence. Services include a 24/7 hotline, emergency safe shelter, counseling, and legal advocacy.

More information: dapdc.org

HEALTH & WELFARE

Hope for Hallie, Wallingford-Swarthmore & Ridley, PA

Help A Struggling Teen

Raises mental health awareness and connects teens and their families with support services.

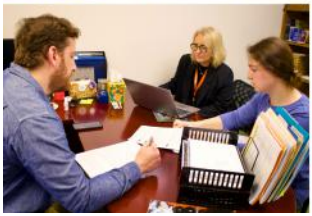
Gift: **ONE HOUR OF COUNSELING** ***Price:*** **$50**

Founded in Swarthmore in 2020, Hope for Hallie is dedicated to changing the narrative around mental health and instilling hope for young people. Hope for Hallie raises mental health awareness through both formal and informal education, taking an active role in teaching the community how to identify teens who may be struggling with mental health, and by connecting teens and families with specialized therapeutic guidance focused on holistic mental health and well-being, sport psychology, and counseling. Hope for Hallie provides mental health and suicide prevention support to adolescents, schools, families, community members, and mental health professionals, and has sponsored events at Strath Haven and Ridley high schools to reduce the stigma around mental health and educate students about resources available in the community.

More information: hopeforhallie.org





HEALTH & WELFARE

Murphy's Giving Market, Upper Darby, PA

Fill A Basket

Provides free shopping for needy families in Upper Darby and surrounding communities.

Gift: **ONE WEEK OF GROCERIES** ***Price:*** **$45**

Murphy's Giving Market is a volunteer organization founded in 2021 to serve Upper Darby and the surrounding areas, which have a large African American and immigrant population. The Market provides fresh and healthy food, clothing, and hygiene products to approximately 300 families each week and facilitates access to a wide network of resources, including co-located services for immigrants, mental health, and holistic health. Murphy's Giving Market empowers clients to create long-lasting positive changes in their lives and their communities.

More information: murphysgivingmarket.org

GAIT - Veterans with Horses Program, (PA, NJ, DE)

Hoofprint of Healing

Provides equine activities and equine facilitated counseling for veterans and their families

Gift: **EQUINE FEE FOR A VETERAN'S WEEKLY SESSION** ***Price:*** **$25**

GAIT Equine Assisted Services works to improve the quality of life of children and adults with developmental, physical, and mental/ emotional challenges. Equine activities and therapies support independent living and mental health. The Veterans with Horses program provides veterans, active-duty personnel, first responders, law enforcement, and their families with specially designed equine-assisted activities and therapies to address the effects of PTSD, stress, anxiety, depression, and burnout. Riding and working with horses allows participants a temporary respite from stress and has been proven to be effective for physical and emotional rehabilitation. The program focuses on establishing a partnership between the horse and individual to build trust, improve personal decision making, and increase confidence as they learn to work together.

More information: gaittrc.org/veterans-2/

Operation Second Chance, USA

Heal Our Veterans

Serves wounded and ill military veterans by supporting their immediate and long-term needs.

Gift: **ONE WEEK OF GROCERIES** ***Price:*** **$45**

Operation Second Chance (OSC) is committed to serving wounded, injured, and ill military veterans. Those returning home from a "normal" tour in a combat zone may find that reentering everyday life is difficult due to wounds that may be visible or invisible. This process can be traumatic for family members who are struggling to understand the changes that have occurred and continue to occur in their loved ones after a combat deployment. OSC supports veterans and their families by building relationships, identifying interests, and supporting immediate needs. OSC provides emergency assistance such as rental and mortgage assistance, utility and food aid, hospital visits, emotional support, retreats, internships, scholarships, and a healing arts program especially for women veterans.

More information: operationsecondchance.org

Alternative Christmas Shop

Shop in person in Fellowship Hall, Sunday mornings, December 7, 14 and 21. *Shop closes on December 21.*

For more information, please scan the QR code below, or visit **swarthmorepres.org/alternative-christmas-shop-2025**.

2025 ACS Committee

Betty Ann Flynn (Co-Chair), Jan Semler (Co-Chair), Barbara Addison, Peg Cunningham, Barbara Nagel, Abbie Rowley, Susanne Smith, Mandy Weiss

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PROVIDENCE ANIMAL CENTER

COMFORT CASES

OPERATION SECOND CHANCE Helping Heroes Move On

DAP

New Avenue Foundation

MURPHY'S Grand MARKET

THE COMMON PLACE Reviving the Spirit of Hope

New Leash On Life USA

HIAS PENNSYLVANIA

CHESTER EXCHANGE Connect. Collaborate. Champion Children!

HOPE FOR RALLIE

Youth Advocates Through Theater Arts

A BETTER CHANCE

BUILD CONGO SCHOOLS

CAADC Community Action Agency of Delaware County, Inc. Helping People. Changing Lives.

girlsfirst

MEDIA FELLOWSHIP HOUSE

anera WHERE HOPE FINDS A WAY

Veteran Fellowship GAIT Equine Assisted Services

CHESTER CHARTER SCHOLARS ACADEMY