



CLINTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

NEW YEAR NOTES

JANUARY 2024

From the Pastor's Pen



Dear Friends,

Happy 2024! Was your Christmas all that you hoped for or did it leave you wanting? Did all go according to plan or were plans turned on their head? Were you able to “be where your feet are” or did you turn the calendar to January feeling wrung out from all the running?

The struggle to get back into a routine is real for sure, but what if this year we didn't strive for “business as usual” but rather looked for something much richer. Consider this invitation from the poet Ann Weems in her work, January's Song.

*There is a rumor on the streets that
Christmas is over.*

*Lights and ornaments are packed away,
trees dragged to the curb,
people back to business as usual.*

*We're no longer in the party mood; the
humbug is back in vogue.*

*This is January ... How can Christmas be
over?!*

*The Child is just newborn, the song of
Peace and Goodwill still rings in our
ears.*

*The shepherds and sages still kneel to this
One who is born to us ... just born
to us!*

*How can Christmas be over?? The story of
the gospel is just beginning.*

*We who saw the Star now live in its Light.
We who saw and heard
now believe.*

*Christmas is not over. We're just beginning
to follow this One who calls
us now to Live in the Light of Love.*

*Christmas is not over. It's just beginning
and this is January's song.*

May Christ be just beginning his work in
your life, in my life, in our life together.
See you in church,

Tracey

ROUND UP OF ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS

There was a whole lot and then some happening at CPC. We'll try our best to give a round of all activities and services here. If you are not already following Clinton Presbyterian on [Facebook](#) and/or [Instagram](#), hop on over there today to give us a follow and stay current in the day to day

LIVE NATIVITY

Donkeys and Sheep and Alpacas - oh my! And that was just the beginning! Our walk thru live Nativity this year also featured angels, kings, shepherds and collies - a 21st century addition to the Christmas Story! Over 300 people from the community joined us for what has become a beloved annual tradition in Clinton. They were greeted with a warm welcome and hot chocolate! Thank you to everyone who volunteered their time as an actor, stage crew or greeter. Special thanks to Matt Hodulik for providing AV support and to Doug Pearson for lighting - our sanctuary looked amazing. And of course, much credit to mother/daughter duo Jill Prakopcyk and Jes Bruno for their coordination of this event!



The rain (and there was a lot of it!) couldn't dampen our spirits! We still wanted to spread the word that "With God All Things Are Popsicle" at the Annual Clinton Christmas Parade. Our ingenious float builders even created a canopy of tents to ensure that all our kids stayed dry while jingle-belling their way through Clinton. What a night!



PAGEANT

It was the 12 Days of Christmas, but like you have never heard it before! "On the Birthday of Jesus we sing and praise his name, Jesus the Special Baby!" Four budding choir director (watch out Ted!) kept a whole cast of characters in order as we heard the story of Christmas with fresh ears! It was a tight squeeze on the chancel steps with over 35 kids in the pageant - what a blessing!



Thank you to our fearless pageant directors, Abby Dougherty and Kim Darcy, for their leadership and to the countless parents and Sunday school teachers who had a hand in turning chaos into a holy moment. We are thankful for you!



With Christmas Eve falling on a Sunday this year, we had an even fuller house than in years past. Each of our three worship services was filled with new and familiar faces, and our sanctuary resounded with the strains of "O Come All Ye Faithful" and yielded to quiet reflection as voices sang "Silent Night." What a gift!

Once again an enormous thanks must be offered to all of our musicians who carried us faithfully through Advent and on to Christmas Eve: members of our Chancel Choir and Praise Team, Soloists, Instrumentalists our Children's Chorus and more. And anchoring all of this was our talented and humble Director of Music Ministries, Ted Brancato.

In addition to our musicians, many others also gave extra effort in the month of December, from our worship team, scheduling liturgists, communion servers and more, too all our readers, ushers, acolytes, advent candle lighters and others who added such richness to our services.

Meanwhile, behind the scenes our Office and Communications Manager, Ali Miller, researched, acquired and implemented a new program, Proclaim, to enhance weekly worship services both for those in the sanctuary and even more so for our online viewers. Matt Hodulik quickly and seamlessly integrated this program during our worship services in December and was the person responsible for the wonderful AV at all three of our Christmas Eve worship services (Have we mentioned that Matt is a volunteer??!!)

How thankful we are to God who has placed such wonderful people at CPC.

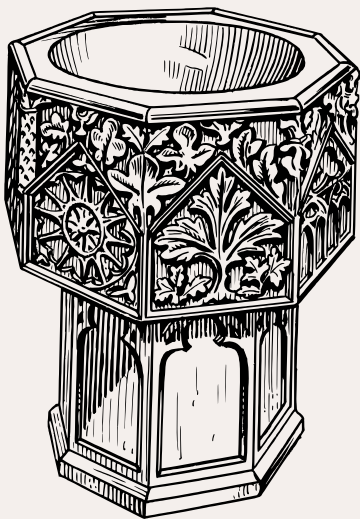


UPCOMING IN WORSHIP

CELEBRATE EPIPHANY AT CPC

On Sunday January 7, we will celebrate Epiphany (just one day late!) at CPC. Join us as we remember the journey of the Magi and mark the end of the Christmas Season. As has been our practice in the last few years, we will also receive Star Words during the worship service. (will send a photo) And to start off the new year on the very best note, we will be welcoming new members to our church family - thanks be to God!

PS: If you can lend a hand to "de-decorate" the sanctuary after worship that would be much appreciated!



REMEMBER YOUR BAPTISM

On January 21 we'll have a chance to remember the promises made at baptism as we commit ourselves afresh in this new year. Our Chancel Choir will also return to lead us in worship after a well-deserved post-Christmas Break.



UPCOMING IN WORSHIP (CONT'D)

SCOUT SUNDAY

This year we will mark Scout Sunday on January 28, welcoming members of Troop 121 and their families to share with us in worship. The Boy Scout band will also play as we consider what "Duty to God" might mean.



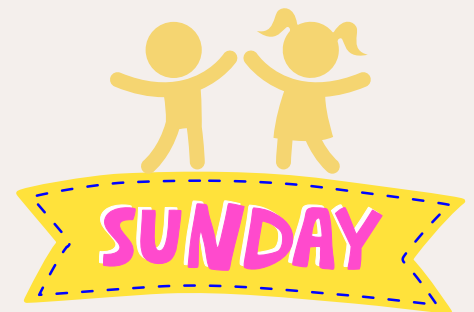
ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Congregational Meeting of Clinton Presbyterian Church will be held on Sunday January 28th, immediately following the conclusion of the worship service. Annual reports will be available prior to the meeting. Please plan to attend!



CHILDREN'S SUNDAY

Every Sunday is children's Sunday at CPC, but even more so on February 11th! On this special day, our youngest will lead us and we will participate in a service of worship designed especially with them in mind.



ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

Join us on Wednesday February 14 at 7pm for our Ash Wednesday Service as we mark the beginning of the Lenten Season together.



CHILDREN AND YOUTH AND ADULTS FAITH FORMATION

Did we mention how proud we are of our kids and the great job they did with the Pageant? CPC kids rock! In addition to serving our church community, they continue to lead the way in serving others too through our Joy Scouts program. Keep your eye on the weekly announcements for upcoming service dates

Sunday School resumes on January 7 so be sure to bring the kids to church and then let them enjoy Sunday school with their friends.

Sunday Funday will be back in the month of February! Thanks to Eric Crespo for leading our December get together. We made a craft to hang on our Christmas trees from year to year and enjoyed a competitive game of Reindeer Ring Toss!



CHAOS and Chaos Jr both rounded out the year with some Christmas Shenanigans, a few ugly sweaters and more than our fair share of sugar! We're back in action again on January 21st with a special outing to see "Something Rotten" starring our very own Julia Morrisette! To secure your ticket, please email Tracey (thenry@clintonpresbyterian.net). The cost per student is \$16.50. We will meet at Voorhees High School @ 1:45pm.

LADIES BIBLE STUDY

We took a break from our regular bible study to share in a "Very Merry Mary Gift Exchange," Since Mary was among the women we studied together in the fall, each woman brought a blue gift to share (blue is the colour often associated with Mary) and we spent the evening telling stories about women who have been influential in our lives. As we shared laughter and tears, holy space was created.

We plan to finish up our study "From Daughters to Disciples" in the first few months of 2024 and we are always more than happy to have new friends join us. Our next meeting is January 8th at 7pm - drop Tracey an email if you can make it! We meet in Room 4 downstairs



MISSION

UPDATE ON REFUGEE FAMILY RESETTLEMENT

The At Home in Hunterdon Welcome Circle, of which Clinton Presbyterian Church is a member, welcomed our assigned Ukrainian family to Hunterdon County on November 16.

Unfortunately, within a few days of their arrival, the family decided they would prefer to relocate to Jersey City to be near friends from Ukraine.

Undeterred, the At Home in Hunterdon team applied for and was accepted as a Welcome Corps

Private Sponsor Group (PSG). The Welcome Corps program is a partnership between the State Department and the Department of Health and Human Services that welcomes refugees seeking freedom and safety in the United States. Our PSG designation will allow us to participate in the program and be matched with a family seeking to begin a new life in America.

Dave and Laurel Kelly will provide further updates as the process progresses.

In the meantime, please visit <https://welcomecorps.org/> to learn more about Welcome Corps Private Sponsor Groups.

COMMUNITY

GAME NIGHT

Come join us for a family-friendly PotLuck and Game Night on Sunday, February 4th at 5pm. We are looking forward to trying each other's delicious dishes and playing some fun games.

RSVP by signing the clipboard in church or signing up to bring something [here!](#)

Questions? Contact Tina Little at 3c.lady@gmail.com

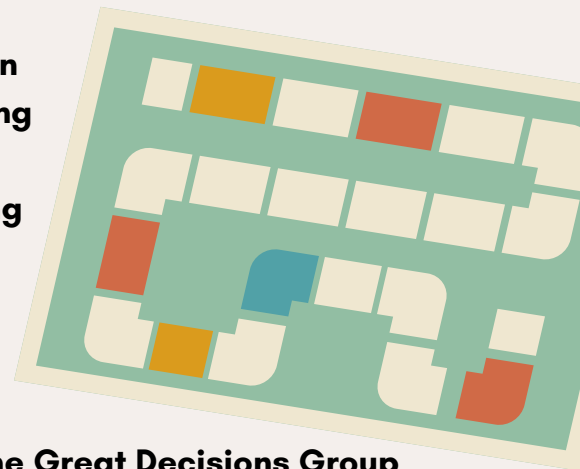
GREAT DECISIONS


Good news! We have more than enough interest to launch the Great Decisions Group this year and the workbooks are in! If you have already expressed your interest in the group, you will hear from us shortly with more details.

IF you still want to be a part of the group, there is still time. As a refresher, this is a dinner and conversation group intended to help us have real and meaningful conversations about what is going on around the world and how that impacts us in our little corner of that world. The Great Decisions Series is provided through the Foreign Policy Association and it is our hope that it will provide an opportunity for kind and thoughtful discussion.

The first gathering will be on January 28 at 630pm.

If you are interested, please fill out [this form](#) as soon as you can!



BLOOD DRIVE


Blood Drive
Clinton Presbyterian Church

Fellowship Hall
91 Center Street
Clinton, NJ 08809

Thursday, February 29, 2024
2:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Please visit RedCrossBlood.org and enter:
ClintonPres to schedule an appointment.

We are proud to be hosting an American Red Cross Blood Drive at CPC! Please try to come out and donate blood and encourage your friends and neighbors to do the same.

**STEWARDSHIP**

Because of your generous commitments we are able to begin the 2024 year confident that we have all the resources we need to do just what God has called us to. Our stewardship goal was \$303,000, a 5% increase over last year and to date \$303,866 has been promised! While we received 73 pledges last year, this year that number grew to 82. At the time of going to press we are still searching for the right candidates to fill positions for children and youth ministry and facilities support. These will be key positions to help us sustain and grow in the year ahead. We are also able to fulfil our commitment to refugee resettlement work as outlined on page 9. All this good work and more is in store in the year ahead. If you are still eager to support CPC financially but have not yet pledged, you can do so easily and swiftly [here!](#)



HAPPY JANUARY BIRTHDAY

RICH P. 3
ALYSSA RAE T. 3
JAXON C. 3
CHARLOTTE B. 4
REBECCA T. 6
BEN P. 7
MARIN D. 14
COURTNEY F. 8
SPENCER H. 8
CHRISTOPHER H. 8
RICK H. 8
KEN W. 13
CLIFFORD S. 15
BILL K. 16

CHAD L. 18
DONAVYN M. 20
CHELSEA R. 20
MARISSA A. 21
ANGELA P. 22
EMMALINE M. 23
MASON P. 25
CARLY K. 25
BRIAN B. 26
JOHN R. 27
BOB B. 29
PARKER H. 30
MEGAN T. 31



Welcome Emmeline!

On the third Sunday of Advent we had the privilege of welcoming to the family of God Emmeline June Frid! What a happy day for her family and for all of us.



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