

CLINTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

News & Events....



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From the Pastor's Pen

Dear Friends,

Welcome to October! It's taken our family more than a minute to try and find a rhythm this fall. The transition from the holidays to the school year was not met with enthusiasm at the manse and the work of transition to new classrooms, new teachers, homework and more is always, well...work.

No doubt each of you has also had to adapt over the last few weeks, whether it is to a work schedule that picked up pace, a family calendar that is hard to wrap your arms around, or a new season in parenting, marriage, retirement or so much more.

Here at church, we've also been managing some transitions, thanking Diane for her work here and blessing her as she moved into retirement and welcoming new faces to the CPC staff team. Then of course, we said a sad farewell to the Carol and Dennis Kotopoulos at the end of September as they moved. Some deacons and elders have completed their terms of service (thank you!) and others are just beginning in new leadership roles, and all the while renovations around the building are keeping us on our toes!

With so much movement and change on all sides, Julia and Ted's offering on September 24 was a real balm to my soul. Hearing these words centered me again, in the midst of changing seasons, I remember,

***This is my anthem, this is my song
The theme of the stories I've heard for so long
God has been faithful, He will be again
His loving compassion, it knows no end
All I have need of, His hand will provide
He's always been faithful, He's always been faithful
He's always been faithful to me.***

(If you need a few minutes of calm as this new month unfolds, you can find the recording [here](#). The song begins at the 7 min 34 sec mark)

Morning by morning, season by season, we cling fast to God's steady faithfulness. May it be so from this place.

See you in church,
Tracey



Worship

Although fall temperatures have set in, it would be remiss of us not to pause and give thanks to all those who made our outdoor services possible this summer. It's no small feat get everything set up outside, (including livestreaming equipment) to rehearse and refine music and then to take it all down again a short time later. Thanks to the many volunteers and musicians who made it all happen seamlessly this summer. It was great to worship in the beauty of God's creation and we can all agree that we our Rock Service was one we will long remember!

"God has not called me to be successful. He called me to be faithful."
— Mother Teresa



The first Sunday of the new year was full of happy reunions, full pews and great music. Then to top it off, a breakfast feast - provided by YOU! Thank you to all who made this wonderful morning possible.



CPC Elders

- Amey Barnes
- Deirdre Blas
- Larry Boyd
- Colleen Duerr
- Dave Kelly
- Tina Little
- Gwili Marsh
- Paul Morrissette
- Linda Schipmann-Pustai
- Caleb Schlegel
- Judi Sifuentes

CPC Deacons

- Julie Baldassare
- Tracey Bardecker
- Robin Carver
- Abby Dougherty
- Dick Farrell
- Spencer Holmsborg
- Lee Longell
- Robin Meyh
- Wendy Morrissette
- Barbara Pearson
- Ellen Piccolo
- Jim Pustai

Worship

Exodus and Us

Since early September we've been drawing on the story of Moses, leading the Israelites out of Egypt, overcoming the obstacles of logistics, the Red Sea, a new land and more. Their story has been a wise guide for us, urging us to remember God's faithfulness in the past, knowing that God has our back, and trusting that God will provide for our needs (though not always our greeds). We'll conclude this series in early October.



On October 8, we will welcome Dan Sadlier from City Relief to lead us in worship. As you are aware, City Relief is currently reviewing existing programming and discerning how best to move forward in serving those who are unhoused. We are looking forward to hearing how we can best partner with them as we seek to share God's love

Serving the People

with Energy, Intelligence, Imagination and Love

A highlight of the year is coming together as a congregation to ordain and install the new officers in our church family. Spencer Holmsborg, Lee Longell, Ellen Piccolo and Wendy Morrissette will begin a term of service as Deacons while Amey Barnes, Larry Boyd and Paul Morrissette will serve as Elders. We are grateful for the work of the Nominating Team and grateful for the faithful "Yes!" of each one of these friends as they commit to being spiritual leaders in and from this place.



Worship

Upcoming Events

October 15th

Congregational Meeting

Session has called for a Congregational Meeting on Sunday, October 15, following the worship service. The purpose of this meeting is to receive the 2024 Budget and to vote on Rev. Henry's Terms of Call for 2024. All members should plan to attend. There will be no adult education class this morning.

October 22nd

Youth Sunday

This year, CPC members, friends, and visitors are invited to attend Youth Sunday on October 22! CPC middle and high school students will be leading the entire service, including crafting the liturgy and sharing a message! Don't miss it.

November 5th

All Saint's Day

It has been our custom in the last few years to pause on the first Sunday in November to remember with gratitude those who have passed away in the last year. If you would like to have your loved one remembered on this date, please email the church office and share their name. office4cpc@gmail.com

Message from the Director of Music Ministry, Mr. Ted Brancato

After a busy summer that included a "Folk/Old time Hymns" outdoor service in July and an outdoor "Rock Music" service in August, September got even busier! Chancel Choir started regular rehearsals, and the Bell Choir started rehearsing as well. We are fortunate to have a bell expert in our midst - Jared Miner. Jared recently graduated from Bucknell where he played in a bell choir all four years he was there. Jared gladly agreed to lead the bell choir this go-around, and from the sound of it, Jared is an effective leader! The bell choir will unveil the piece they are working on, "Festival Fanfare", during the October 15th service.

To bring in the new church season, we had a jazz music service on September 10th featuring some of my favorite musicians. It was a spirited way to kick off a Fall season of exciting new music. So many have graced us with their talent these past few months. Tom Fuller and Julie Baldassare provided lead vocals for our entire "Rock" service in August. Julie Baldassare and Zan Struebing sang a stunning, unaccompanied duet for the Sept. 17th service, "Down By The River", and Julia Morrisette sang an achingly beautiful version of the Sara Groves song, "He's Always Been Faithful" to open the Sept. 24th service.

The Praise Team, and the church as a whole, was sorry to see Carol Kotopoulis say goodbye on Sept. 24th. Carol sang in the Chancel Choir, played in the Bell Choir, and provided the harmony on Praise Team songs. She will be dearly missed! Carol was always ready and willing to sing a solo or two, and graced us with one last beautiful song, "Oh My Soul", for the September 10th service.

Chancel Choir will be singing for the congregation on a more regular basis in the months to come. Our prayers were answered when we asked the congregation for singers to join the choir. Among the newer members are Larry & Janet Boyd, Pete & Marg Peterson, Laurel Kelly, Tom Fuller, Mary Morgan, Julia Morrisette, & Dorothy Battaglia. The addition of these voices to our choir has provided a much needed bolstering of our overall sound. I'm proud and happy to say that, though many churches have dwindling numbers of singers in their choirs, ours has grown this past year!

Tracey and I continue to meet weekly to plan out the music for the coming months. We try to find music that compliments Tracey's sermons and amplifies her message of the day. We hope that the music we choose speaks to you and nurtures your spirit.

Children & Youth



Blessing of the Backpacks

Before the school year started we paused to pray for our kids, their teachers and school staff, praying that they might know God's presence with them each and every day as they figure out new schedules, make new friends and grow and learn together. Each adult also selected a name of one of our students from the baptismal font, promising to hold them in prayer throughout the year as way of continuing to live out our baptismal promises. You've got this CPC kids - and God's got you!



Sunday School

The Kids are back in town and we are so glad to see them! We didn't let the ongoing renovations stand in our way of getting the Sunday year off to a great start - in fact our 4th and 5th graders even enjoyed class "Al Fresco!" Lots of smiles from kids and teachers just made our day. Thank you to all of our Sunday School teachers for showing up from week to week - we couldn't do this without you.

As you know, Clinton Presbyterian Church has been selected by GenOn Ministries to participate in their new pilot program called the Christian Parenting Project. Our church will get to try out proposed resources that support parents, grandparents, caregivers, kids, and the connection between homes and churches. Four of our families with elementary aged kids and younger are currently trialing materials which have been provided - we'll keep you updated as we go.



Children & Youth



Is your child registered for Sunday School? It's not too late!
To sign up, [click here](#)

What time is Sunday School? - 10:45 - 11:30 a.m.

Where do I drop off my child? - Teachers will meet the children in Fellowship Hall at 10:45 and escort them to the classrooms.

Where do I pick up my child?

Preschool 3s/4s: Downstairs, Nursery Jill & Rich Prakopcyk

Kinder./1st Grade: Upstairs, Room 7 Carolyn Donchevich, Abby Dougherty, Leigh Perry

2nd - 3rd Grade: Upstairs, Room 6 Dorothy Battaglia, Adrienne Hodulik, Megan Verderamo

4th - 5th Grade: Upstairs, Room 5 Kim Darcy, Cathy Edelsberg, Judi Sifuentes

6th - 7th Grade: Downstairs, Room 4 Jim Dornbusch & Ben Dougherty

NOTE: Sunday School will meet in the above classrooms once room renovations are complete. Refer to the worship bulletin each week for temporary locations.

Sunday Funday

We might call it Sunday Funday, but our 4th and 5th graders were hard at work on Sunday helping to prep some special pumpkins for our Blessing of the Animals service! These pumpkins will be serving double duty - vote for them to win the group award at the town wide Pumpkinfest on October 20th. Our next meeting is November 5 @ 11:30am - mark your calendar now!



Children & Youth

Announcing CHAOS Jr High

Here we go!!! Middle School Youth Group at CPC is officially back! After we learned that Camp Johnsonburg was no longer able to run Ultimate Youth Night we made a quick pivot to provide a once a month program for our Middle Schoolers - they deserve it and they are a ton of fun! Our First meeting was around the firepit at the manse when we learned that it is possible to eat your weight in S'mores and Pizza! Next Gathering - **November 2 @ 5:30pm**



Chaos: High School Edition

After a far too long summer it was good to be back together again, especially since it involved food and a few competitive games. The award for the most charred S'more of the night goes to Marissa Anese. We're meeting twice a month this year, on the first and third Sundays and all 9th-12th graders are invited. **Oct 15, Nov 5 & 19, Dec 3 @ 7pm**



Adults

Weekday Evening Women's Study

We enjoyed Lynn Japinga's book on women of the Old Testament so much last year that we working though her New Testament book, From Daughters to Disciples, this year. Our first study was about Mary, Eliazbeth and Anna and next up is stories of women who were healed by Jesus. We're meeting on the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month at 7pm in Room 4 and we always love to see new faces.



"Jesus encouraged and supported women. When they were shamed or limited or restricted, he affirmed them and expanded their sphere of action."
—FROM THE INTRODUCTION



Sunday Morning Bible Study



The Gospel of John is 21 chapters long and this group is almost halfway through! Starting with chapter 13 this fall, we're working our way slowly and steadily through the lessons in the pages of this Gospel and learning more about Jesus as we go. This group is open to all. Meet in Room 8 (upstairs) on Sundays at 10:45am. (No morning bible study on October 13th and November 12th)

**So you want
to start a
small group?**

All throughout the month of September we have been gathering the names of those who are interested in forming new small groups at Clinton Presbyterian, groups to grow and learn together. Before we start to form groups, here's one last call to express your interest. You can either email Tracey (tracey4cpc@gmail.com) or sign up [here](#). Groups can meet weekly, bi-weekly, monthly or on another schedule that works for the group members. Meet in homes, on zoom or at the church. IF you have already signed up online or on a clipboard, no need to register again!

Community

Blessing of the Animals

Our first ever Blessing of the Animals Service was such a hit that we believe we'll make it a yearly tradition! Scheduled to fall on the Sunday closest to the Feast Day of St. Francis of Assisi, who was devoted to the care of animals and God's good creation, this was a wonderful opportunity to invite our animal-loving neighbors to CPC. Each animal was given a special certificate to mark the occasion and we had a lot of fun with the photo booth! Check out our Facebook page for some photos of all the fun!



Carol and Dennis Kotopoulos

September 24 was the Kotopoulos' last day with us in worship, as they leave to begin a new chapter in South Carolina. We were grateful to be able to bless them and thank them for all the ways they have been involved in our life together, singing, serving and always being witness to a faith which endures. They have promised to visit when they are back in the area and we intend to hold them to this promise. Blessings to you, dear friends!

**Kotopoulos' New Address:
214 Old Grove Ave
Moncks Corner, SC 29461**

Community

Joy Scouts

Since beginning in February, our Joy Scouts have had 13 outings with a diverse group of organizations in Hunterdon, Morris, and Somerset counties. From assisting homeless shelters, senior centers, therapy animal certifications, environmental organizations and everything in between, our children are actively serving the community face-to-face.

On Sunday, October 1st the Joy Scouts volunteered at the Somerset County Sourland Mountain Preserve to help with trail maintenance and removal of invasive species. What a beautiful day it was and what a wonderful way to give!

On Sunday October 22nd we will be having Halloween fun at the Hunterdon Care Center. Join us at 2:30 (in costume!) for games and festivities with our senior friends. All ages are welcome!

Join our facebook group (Joy Scouts-CPC Kids) for the latest details or email adougherty160@gmail.com



When: Tuesday, October 31st 5:00-7:00pm

Where: CPC Parking Lot

Ways to get involved:

1.) Decorate a trunk - contact Jes or Jill to sign up to decorate your trunk.

jessicaqbruno@gmail.com or soldbyjillpeaol.com

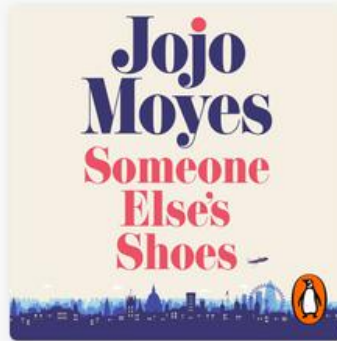
2.) Donate candy - we get HUNDREDS of kids in our parking lot and the candy donations we received last year were wonderful to help us get through the evening! Please drop off all candy donations in the church kitchen, labeled "Trunk or Treat" by Sunday, October 29th.



Community

Book Club

The CPC Book Club met on Thursday, September 21st. We had a great turnout and enjoyed great fellowship. Ten readers gathered and discussed the novel, *Someone Else's Shoes* by Jojo Moyes. Our next gathering is Thursday, October 26th at 7pm at Karen Kursar's home. The genre is, autobiography, biography, or memoir of someone who has made a positive contribution. It's up to you what you would like to read and share. Come join us! Contact Adrienne Hodulik, hodulik@comcast.net with any questions.

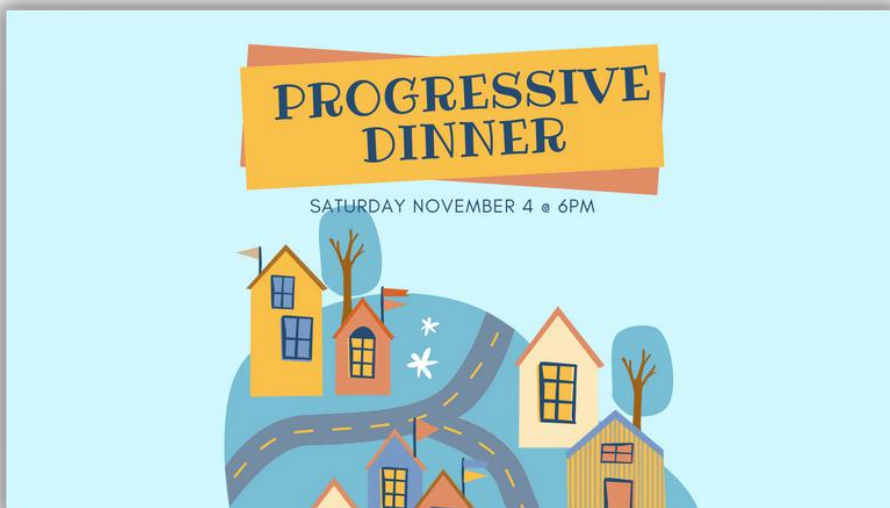


October Birthdays

5 Eric Crespo, Adrienne Hodulik,
Cami Plaxe
9 Robin Meyh
10 Kimberly Westlin
12 Tracey Bardecker, Kevin Treese
15 Kristen Polaski, Cole Salemo
17 Marybeth Ahmed, Chenge
Pusztai
19 Cassidy Treese
21 Kimberly Bieksha, Brielle
Hansen
23 Liz Scannell
24 Andres Madriz, Judy Moller,
Griffin Westlin
26 Mary Ellen Anthony, Griffin
Honthy, Grady Pearson
27 William Lalor
28 Nathan Henry, Dave Kelly,
Dorene Longell
30 Sandie Lundeen

October Anniversaries

1 Jeff and Lynn Hazelette
3 Michael and Kim Darcy
6 Louis Judice and Lauren Farese
7 Michael and Angela Penyak
10 Michael and Courtney Fernandes
13 Roy and Cindy Christopher
14 Matthew and Candice Pozarycki
Justin and Kara Wehrenberg
15 Dennis and Carol Kotopoulos
17 Clifford and Cathie Sayre
22 Kevin and Jennifer Thompson
25 Jim Dornbusch and Zan Struebing



Spend the evening with friends enjoying delicious food and delightful conversation! We'll meet in one home for appetizers, travel to various homes for dinner then come back together again for dessert. Save the date now and look out for sign up information coming soon!.
(Childcare available upon request.)

Preschool

A Successful September Start at CP Preschool

We opened the 2023-2024 school year with 28 families registered in our preschool program. We opened a second classroom as our 4s enrollment grew to eighteen. Each classroom has nine enrolled with still two seats open in each class. Ms Amanda, Ms Sarah and Ms Powick provide many learning opportunities and fun activities on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays for our "big kids" while Ms Cathy and Ms Powick's ten "littles" are exploring, learning and having fun on Tuesdays and Thursdays. We are very excited to be able to use the entire playground this year! The squeals of joy and laughter can be heard every morning from the children enjoying this wonderful space.



New Faces in Preschool

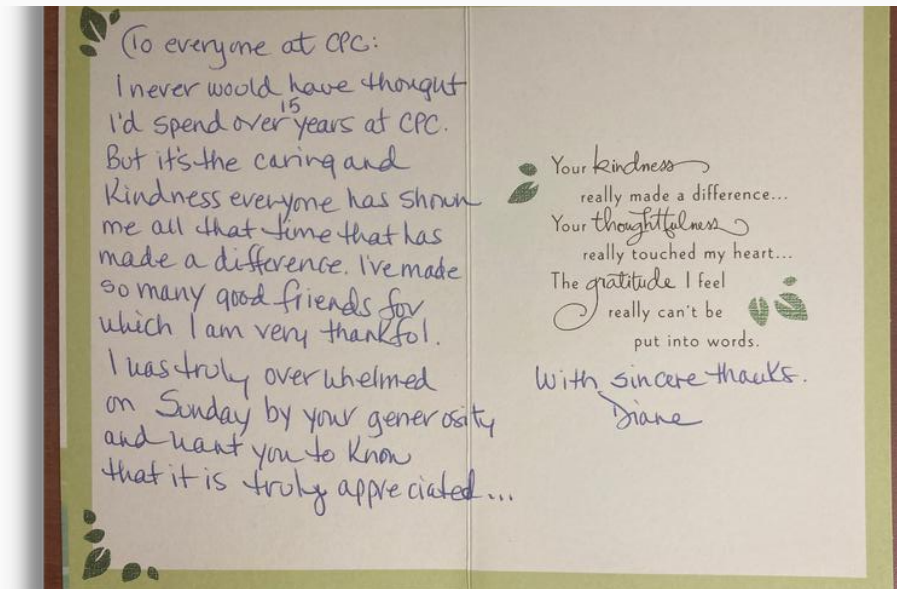
We've had a few changes among the CPC staff recently. Congratulations to Sarah Kyte, who has been promoted from Group Teacher to Head Teacher at CPC Preschool. We're also pleased to open our doors to Amanda Caruso, who is joining our preschool as the new Group Teacher.



Amanda

Sarah

Staff Updates



Thank you Diane!

Diane O'Connor retired from CPC in September after serving our congregation for over 15 years. We will miss her dedication, attention to detail, and her dependable attention to the many administrative details associated with our busy church.

Office & Communications Manager

Ali Miller joined our team in September as Office and Communications Manager, and brings substantial experience in education, not-for-profit administration, and technology expertise to our church.



Performance Reviews

Thank you to everyone who submitted feedback on our staff and Rev. Henry for the recent performance review process. We are blessed to have an amazing team dedicated to our spiritual needs, and they all truly appreciate hearing your thoughts. Your sentiments help with the professional development of our staff and pastor, while also playing a role in budgetary decisions made by Session for the 2024 financial planning process. If you have questions about the staff performance review process, please contact Paul Morrissette.

Congratulations to Sarah and a warm welcome to Amanda and Ali.

Far and away the best prize that life offers is the chance to work hard at work worth doing."
—THEODORE ROOSEVELT

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Accountant
Mike Kirsch

Cleaning Services
Gabriella Pusztai

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Mission

"The mark of a great church is not its seating capacity, but its sending capacity." – Mike Stachura



Volunteer Opportunity: Anderson House Craft Night

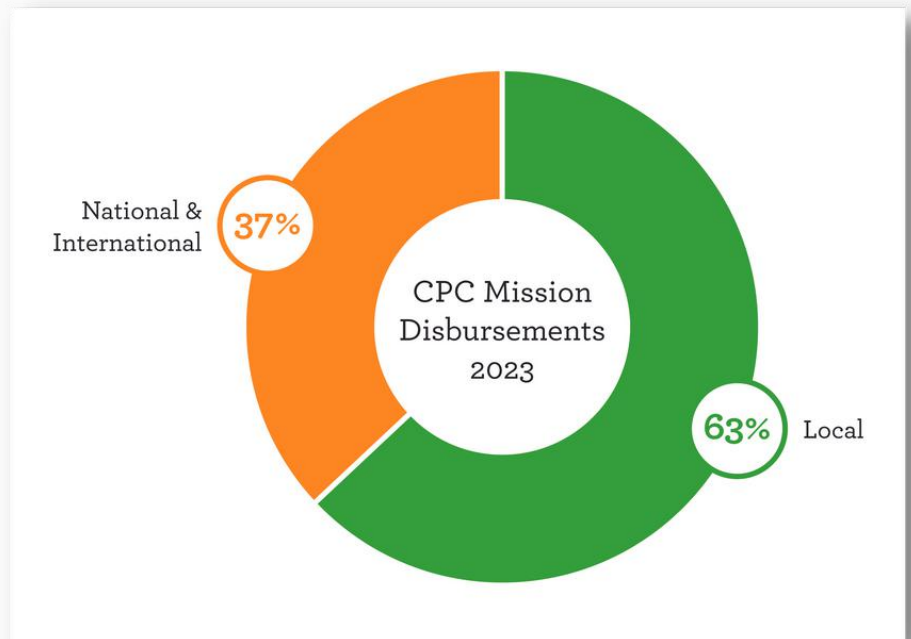
We're looking for women to help with a craft night at Anderson House (located in Whitehouse Station). This craft night provides social time and time to decompress for the women that are currently in the program. Typically, it is the third Monday of each month from 7:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. to provide supplies and assist with a simple craft to be completed within that timeframe. No crafting experience is needed.

If interested in helping monthly or even just one time or you want more information, please reach out to Christina Schlegel (cecmschlegel@gmail.com).

OUR COMMUNITY IMPACT

Mission Disbursements 2023

During our September meeting, the Mission team went through their disbursements for the year, with an increase of funds (compared to last year) serving national /international organizations. The mission team discussed how there are more national and international disasters happening and wanted to support the organizations who are serving those areas (i.e. Maui). Of all the disbursements distributed, 63% went towards local organizations (Anderson House, Bible Club Ministries - Philly, Camp Johnsonborg, CASA, City Relief, Clinton Fire Department, Clinton Rescue Squad, Family Promise, Flemington Food Pantry, Friendship Center for New Beginnings, Good News Home for Women, Grow-A-Row, Market Street Mission, Meals on Wheels, Open Cupboard Food Pantry, and Safein Hunterdon) and 37% went towards national / international organizations (All Hands, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, Red Cross, Salvation Army, and Samaritan'sPurse).





Items We Are Collecting

- Can of Coffee
- Box of Tea Bags
 - Ketchup
 - Peanut Butter
 - Jam / Jelly
 - Crackers
- Box of Mac 'n' Cheese
- Box of Dry Pasta
 - Pasta Sauce
 - Canned Soup
 - Box of Cereal
- Instant Jell-o / Pudding
- Vegetable Oil / Olive Oil (small bottles)
 - Jar of Applesauce (no unsweetened)
 - All Purpose Flour / Granulated White Sugar
 - Monetary Donations

Note: Ham and / or Turkey donations are welcomed as well.



Thanksgiving Baskets

We will be collecting and delivering food to local families in need. We are hoping to help families with more of their everyday lives, not just their Thanksgiving meal.

The collection will be from 10/22 - 11/12. The boxes will be delivered on Saturday, 11/18.

Please return all items and place them either in the designated areas in the sanctuary or fellowship hall or in the big container on the side porch.

If you are interested in delivering boxes, please keep a look out for sign-ups or reach

out to any team member below.

Questions?

Contact Christina Schlegel (cecmschlegel@gmail.com) or Colleen Duerr (cpduerr@mac.com).

Grow A Row

Have you ever harvested corn with friends? If not, we 100% recommend it - it was hot, humid and a whole bunch of fun! Working together with other volunteers, we harvested hundreds of pounds of corn, all to be shared with those who face hunger and food insecurity. Grow a Row is a fabulous organization and it could not be easier to volunteer with them. Check out their website to see how you might help:

<https://www.americagrowarow.org/>



Building Updates



What a transformation! As soon as Vacation Bible school drew to a close, the work of interior renovations kicked into high gear. In no time at all, a dumpster was filled to the brim with old bathroom fixtures and other materials removed from classroom spaces and a steady parade of contractors have been our constant companions at the office. At the time of going to press, the work on all three bathrooms has been completed and what a transformation! The spaces are bright, clean and welcoming. You may have noticed that the bathroom on the middle level has also increased in size and is now fully ADA compliant, as we continue to strive to make sure that people of all abilities feel at home here.

The classroom spaces are almost complete and in a week or so we expect them to be filled not only on Sunday mornings, but also throughout the week as ministry teams, study groups and community events are convened in these spaces. Storage has been added throughout the upper level, every room has been freshly painted and new carpeting is on the way.

This has been a colossal undertaking and Property Chair Gwili Marsh must be thanked for her leadership, negotiating skills and tremendous investment of time. Thank you , Gwili! And to each of you who have invested in our Capital Campaign efforts, deepest of gratitude - without you this work would not be possible!

The work continues! As classrooms are completed, we are turning our attention to signage and roof repairs. Keep your eyes peeled for more updates to follow.



AFTER!

