

The Courier



One Spring Street, PO Box 185, Harrington Park NJ 07640

Community Church in Harrington Park

Dear Friends,

We're first! We're first! The calendar obviously flips to a new year on January 1. The Christian year begins anew about a month before that. So, last Sunday was the first Sunday in Advent, the beginning of the church year. Maybe it's time to flip the page on our lives as well.

Jesus came to do something new and different in us. He came to bring eternal life, sure, but also to change the lives we live now. God created us to "be" in a certain way: to grow closer to God, to gradually become more loving, to care for the people around the block and around the world.

For the months of October and November, we had a stewardship/discipleship campaign designed to help us grow. We called it *Super Sundays with Seuss*. The idea of the campaign was that, sometimes, the simple ideas of the Dr. Seuss books echo the changes the Gospel calls us to make in ourselves. Here are the themes we talked about:

- ◇ As a disciple of Jesus, you'll go through both peaks and valleys, but you have to keep going;
- ◇ Disciples of Jesus must be persistent in serving;
- ◇ To grow as a disciple of Jesus, we need to step outside our comfort zone, no matter how afraid we are;
- ◇ Disciples of Jesus concentrate on simply loving people;
- ◇ Part of being a disciple of Jesus is to use the gifts we've been given;
- ◇ A disciple of Jesus keeps his/her eyes open for opportunities to grow.

In Advent, we're getting ready. We're getting ready to receive Jesus into the world, as if for the first time. It's truly astounding that the very Son of God entered into the world, into Harrington Park and environs as much as Bethlehem. And receiving Jesus means opening ourselves to Him. And that requires steps – it takes change in us.

Maybe it's reading Scripture. Maybe it means offering prayers that are more than "God-I-need-this" sorts of prayers. Maybe it means serving at the Center for Food Action. Maybe it means pursuing gifts in children's ministry. Or music ministry. Maybe it means responding to some way that the Holy Spirit is tugging on your heart.

Well, it's a new year – at least it is in the church. What's new for you? What newness do you feel called to? What's your next step in the Christian life in this new year? It's a privilege to serve Him with you.

Grace and peace,



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Congregational Meeting

We have some important business to do together. On Sunday, December 11, following worship, our congregation will get together to elect elders and deacons. As happens each year, the consistory is submitting a slate of nominees. The nominees for elder this year are: Jocelyn Brueck and Chuck Dages. The nominees for deacon are: Rich Budinich and Jean Greenlaw. Of course, other nominations from the floor are welcomed. We also seek your input on next year's budget. Budgets are important documents. They are always statements of reality and priority: the priorities for ministry assigned to available funds. Perhaps you have a comment on the priorities of our church that you'd care to share at the meeting. We hope you'll plan on spending a half-hour to 45 minutes in this gathering of God's people.

Financial Update . .

Happy Holidays from your finance committee. We are here at the end of the year and what a year it's been. Lots of ups and downs. We have put together the budget for 2023 and had to make some painful cuts since giving is down. We are currently running at a \$35,000.00 deficit. We ask that you please make sure your pledge is up to date and that you consider making an additional contribution to help close this deficit. We look forward to our Congregational meeting on December 11. I will be going off Consistory at the end of this month. It has been my honor to serve The Community Church on the finance committee for the last 3 years.

The Finance Committee
Joan Hoerauf and Les Cox

River Mission Dinner

Our classis (our local group of Reformed churches) sponsors a ministry in Hackensack called the River Mission. They work with folks who are having difficulty with life. They may be homeless, formerly so, or on the edge of homelessness. They get together for worship and a meal each Sunday in the Second Reformed Church of Hackensack.

On Sunday, December 4, we're preparing that meal. We'd be glad to have a few more hands with this project. If you'd like to help, please contact Steve Sayer (570-656-1412).

From the Worship Committee:

We have begun the season of Advent - a time of preparation for the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. We look forward to the lighting of the Advent candles and worshipping together each Sunday. December 18, the fourth Sunday of Advent, is our Christmas Musicale as well as the Live Nativity at 12:00 PM. December 24, Christmas Eve, we will have candlelight worship services at 7:00 and 11:00 PM. Sunday, December 25 we will hold a Christmas Day worship service at 10:00 AM.

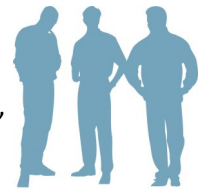
Thank you to all of the volunteers who help decorate the sanctuary, narthex and chapel for Christmas. Additionally, we need help with the luminary display on Saturday, Dec. 24. We will place them outside at 10:00 AM, light them at 6:00 PM and bring them in after the 11 PM service. Please let Sanae or Chris know if you can help at any of these times. We need three or four people for each task.

May you have a wonderful Christmas worshipping with friends and family as we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.

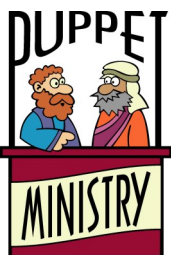
Sanae Tomita and Chris Novak

Attention Men!

The men of our church meet each month. We talk about life, what God's looking for from us, explore a little Scripture, and eat a little breakfast. These times have been very helpful and well attended. We invite you to our next gathering on Saturday, December 10 at 8:30 AM.



**MEN'S
GROUP**



The Puppets are really going strong this year. We meet for the first half of Sunday School from 10:00 to 10:30. We have been working on a program that we are excited to present in the sanctuary this Sunday, December 4 - "Being a Friend". We will also be lighting the advent wreath. Please - come watch us perform. Want to join puppets? We would love to have you - it's open to all ages. Give me a call (201) 768-0733.

Miss Joan

Outreach



Women's Ministry Breakfast

Our December Women's Ministry Breakfast will take place on Saturday, December 3rd beginning at 9:30 AM.

As you know, these breakfasts have been a source of fellowship and spiritual encouragement for all who attend! Invite your friends and neighbors, too!



Our Chancel Choir and Bell Choirs are busy preparing for the Annual Christmas Musicale, which will be held on Sunday, December 18 at 10 AM. They will be joined by our guitarist/bass player, Nate Giordano, and Barbara Ciannella on the organ and our Children's Choir.

The Chancel Choir is also preparing to sing at Allegro, the assisted living complex on Old Hook Road in Harrington Park on Thursday, December 22nd in the evening.

"A Joyful Christmas Concert" will be held on Friday, December 9 at 7 PM at Our Lady Mother of the Church, 209 Woodcliff Avenue, Woodcliff Lake, featuring Amy Duran and Barbara Ciannella on dual pianos, Chad Armstrong, baritone; Kate Hyunghee Kim, soprano; Marc Dalio, baritone/tenor; Sara Louise Petrocelli, mezzo-soprano; and Lucia Wehr, soprano. Tickets are \$10 and can be purchased by calling the parish office at 201-391-2826.

The Ramsey Wind Symphony will present, "A Very Ramsey Tuba Holiday," featuring tubist, Andrew Hitz, on December 11, at 2 PM at Tenafly High School, 19 Columbus Drive in Tenafly. Admission is free.

It is with a grateful heart that I thank Pastor Steve and my church family for all of your prayers, cards, phone calls, flowers, concern, and support throughout my recovery from knee surgery. I am most appreciative.

Nancy and I are so very blessed to serve our Lord and to be part of this loving and caring church family.

John McGlade

To my caring church family,

Chuck and I are overwhelmed with gratitude over the outpouring of love that you have shown me through my illness. Your prayers, meals, cards, phone calls, and flowers have meant so much and have definitely brightened my days. I am eternally thankful for each and every one of you. We have an amazing church family that Chuck and I are blessed and happy to be part of.

In Christian love,
Lori Anders

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

Anonymous; Lori Anders, Lynn Baker; Christian Brueck; Deanna & Roger Carman; Marilyn Clark; Harold Friedeman; Ernie Hepperle; Janet Kosack; Nancy Lanzalotto; Chris Lombardi; John McGlade, Ed Serrano; Richard Smyth; Craig Terjanian.



Continuing in Advent, Puppets and Sunday School begin their worship experience in the sanctuary on Sunday mornings at 10 AM. At approximately 10:15 they are dismissed to Founders' Hall to continue their activities.

Puppets and Sunday School will meet not meet on Sunday, December 25 and Sunday, January 1.



The Live Nativity Returns! A Family Christmas Afternoon

We are presenting the Live Nativity on Sunday, December 18 from 12:00 - 2:00 PM with a Nativity performance beginning at 12:30 PM. We are excited to reach out to the community in the name of Jesus -- giving people the opportunity to focus on their relationship with Christ.

This is a special Christmas afternoon with something for everyone. All children are invited to participate as an angel or shepherd and should arrive by 12:00 PM for costuming. Then the fun begins at the petting zoo --including a cow, sheep, goat, donkey and even a camel. There will be music, cookies and a cup of hot cocoa while sharing meaningful moments with family, friends, and neighbors.

Everyone has an important role to play in this Christmas event. Help us get out the word by telling a neighbor, inviting family, or bringing a poster to a local business. These will be available in the narthex. See you there!



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