



Kirk News

November - December 2020

Presbyterian Church of Easton

Incarnation

“Rediscovering the Significance of Christmas”



2020 has been a tough year for all of us. We have been locked down by a virus. We have watched our cities burn. We are still experiencing the effects of a divisive election. And in the midst of all this, our church is going through a pastoral transition. Change is all around us.

But one thing remains constant. Our Savior comes at Christmas. Who is this savior we are waiting for? Here are some of the names which he has been called: Lord, Messiah, Savior, Emmanuel, Light of the World, and Word Made Flesh. This Advent we will listen to the best-selling author, Adam Hamilton, as he examines the names of Christ and explores the historical and personal significance of Jesus' birth.

At our Wednesday Bible Study, starting December 2 at 10 am via Zoom and in Foster Hall, we will watch a video from Adam Hamilton called *Incarnation, Rediscovering the Significance of Christmas*. His teaching on the names of Christ will be followed by discussion and prayer. The book is available for just \$12 and can be ordered through Anita in the church office. Please order one today.

This Advent season, PCE will come together to remember what unites us. In the face of conflict and plague, let's reclaim the Christ child who brings us together, brings peace to our hearts, and calls light into the darkness. Let's reflect upon the significance of the Christ child for our lives and the world today!

Blessings, Pastor Jeff

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John 1:14)

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS OCTOBER 2020

The coronavirus pandemic has not stopped the work of the church! We continue to use Zoom calls to meet online in view of the coronavirus pandemic restrictions. Following are the Blessings and Business from the October 2020 Session meetings and one vote from early November.

Blessings

- PCE re-opened for in person services on October 4th following established guidelines.
- Virtual worship is also available through live streaming and taped services online. PCE is averaging 31-45 in person attendees. Thanks to the Worship Committee under chair Hubert Hoehn for making this possible.
- Potential collaboration with the Multicultural Resource Center (MRC) is an ongoing discussion with Matt Peters to provide support to students in the form of mentoring, tutoring and other identified needs with which PCE can assist. An Ignite Grant from the presbytery has been submitted for potential financial support for this endeavor. The Ignite Team has reviewed this application and has several questions which we will meet with Team members to discuss. The Revs. Grace and Jeff Howard are guiding PCE through this process with Session's approval and support.
- It has been difficult to socialize in any setting during the pandemic, but Pastor Jeff and Rev. Grace have made it a priority to meet PCE members for pastoral care and just get to know everyone with over twelve at home visits and almost as many small dinner get togethers. Just the caring that PCE needs at this time, thanks to both Jeff and Grace!

June Bittinger, Kim Cassady, Anne McNulty, Margaret Parker, Shirley Seward, Janet Shimko, Scott Worsham

Deacons

What more should the Deacons do? Since January, the Deacons have sent out over 170 cards to members of the congregation. We've also made numerous weekly phone calls and delivered flowers when they are available from Sunday service. We've also continued hand delivering copies of TidBits, sermons, and Grace & Peace to members without internet. We also share information with Pastor Jeff so he can call members in need. During the last Deacons meeting, the question was raised "What more could or should we do for the Congregation?" While we have our ideas, we'd like to hear what you have to suggest. Keep in mind that while we have in person services, there are still members that don't want to attend because of the virus. We want to keep them connected to the church and provide help if we can. So the question for the congregation is, "What more should the Deacons consider doing to care for the

congregation?” Please send your thoughts to deaconspace@gmail.com or send a note to the Deacons via the church office.

*Blessings,
Tal*

Trustee Activities

The trustees continue to be busy in October. The building has been reopened for some small church related meetings and Sunday services. Terry Mullikin replaced the gasket on our refrigerator and had it serviced. The refrigerator was not cooling properly. He also replaced some ceiling tile in the kitchen and in several of the school classroom. Terry also cleaned and turned back on the ice machine.

The cement deck behind the kitchen has been power washed as well as the walkway to the boiler room. The outside trash cans were also power washed.

Work on renovating the manse started late in October. The kitchen and the first floor bathroom have been stripped of everything down to the bare studs and the floors had been removed. At this point it was discovered the joists had been destroyed by termites and have been replaced. The galvanized plumbing is at the end of its useful life and leaks were evident in several areas where rust had gone thru and rodents have chewed thru some of the electrical wires. The HVAC ductwork in the crawl space has been replaced in some areas and the air handler had rusted thru in several places and has been replaced.

Terry Allen power washed the outside of the manse and installed leaf guards in the gutters. The bushes and weeds around the manse have been removed. Terry A. and Grace Howard will be working to replace them probably later in the spring.

Bob Bittinger

Worship Committee

Your Worship Committee has been hard at work to prepare meaningful worship experiences for our congregation during this challenging and at times frightening time. COVID-19 has made many of the things we did for Thanksgiving and Christmas much more challenging. We had to cancel the very moving Thanksgiving food bag service we all have learned to love, but we found a “work around”.

We have now planned an Advent/Christmas season we sincerely hope you will find meaningful. We are working to keep the health safety guidelines and encourage you to

attend if you feel safe in doing so. Above all we want you safe. All our services will be live streamed.

We have a new Advent Wreath and Jeff and Bob have worked hard make the advent season safe and moving for everyone. The last Sunday in Advent will be celebrated with a program of Lessons and Carols with may participants.

Communion will be celebrated the first Sunday in December and again on Christmas Eve in preparation for the coming of the Christ Child.

We have worked to make it safe for everyone so please come if you feel safe and we look forward to worshipping together.

Worship Committee: Jim Arnold (A/V team), June Bittinger (liturgists), Kim Cassady, Hubert Hoehn (chairperson), Jeff Howard (pastor), Bob Huntington (music director), Anne McNulty, Janet Shimko, Scott Worsham (Sanctuary decorations)



Advent Decorations

Following Church this Sunday, Nov. 22 and again on Wednesday the 25th at 1:00 we will be decorating the Church for Advent. Sunday we will be decorating the big tree in the Gathering Room and the two Chrismon trees in the Sanctuary. On Wednesday we will be working on the wreaths for the doors and advent wreath etc.

In keeping with Covid distancing protocols please call me so that I can arrange times and jobs so we can all stay safe. If I do not answer immediately, I may be in school on Thursday and Friday, but will get back with you after school or in the evening.

Poinsettias

We would like to decorate the Sanctuary with poinsettias for the Christmas Eve service and the service the Sunday after Christmas (12/27). Following the service on December 27 these poinsettias will be distributed as an outreach to our members that do not have computers (access to our church services). We are asking for donations to cover the cost of poinsettias. We will be buying the number of poinsettias that the donations cover. Please mail you donation to the Church by December 15 with a note in the memo section "Poinsettias donation". You can include a dedication on a sheet of paper with your check that will be listed in the Tidbits that goes out on Christmas Eve. Thank you for your help.

Scott Worsham



From the Desk of the Music Director...

A while back, Session voted for PCE to be “Matthew 25” church. That particular scripture will be the focus of the choir anthem (“For the Least”) during our November 22 nd worship service. The composer, Wayne Wold, lives in Frederick, MD and is a colleague of mine. That service will also celebrate Thanksgiving with Dale Krider returning as our guest organist.

The Music Ministry is working to include children’s participation several times during Advent, when they will lead the congregation in several familiar hymns during the “Time With Children”.

Our Taizé Ensemble will lead worship on December 6—a Communion Sunday. December 20th will be a celebration of “Lessons and Carols” with the choir, bells and congregational participation on seasonal hymns. Once again, we will be privileged to have Dale Krider as guest organist.

The 7:00pm Christmas Eve service will include the choir, the children and the Taizé Ensemble.

Habitat Happenings

Hopefully PCE Habitat volunteers have not been too disappointed by not being able to work building homes during the pandemic. Life for Habitat, like the rest of us, has been challenging.

In March, Habitat Choptank suspended all volunteer construction activities. Yet there was still a big demand for safe, decent housing with affordable mortgages so construction had to continue. The governor said construction workers were vital and allowed to go to work; hence, Habitat Choptank engaged subcontractors to build the homes for which buyers were closest to being ready to settle. This added to the cost of construction but was well worth it. So far during the shutdown, six families received the keys to their new homes and moved in. This is a great achievement during these most difficult times. Dedication ceremonies and celebrations with these buyers will occur when everything is completely opened.

In August, Habitat Choptank recalled a limited number of volunteers to return to work. Only those who had previously donated 100 hours or more of labor were invited back so that safe distancing could be practiced on the job sites. Several of those invited back

have chosen, out of an abundance of caution, not to work at this time. Hence it is still necessary to use some subcontractors.

The Habitat Choptank ReStore also closed its doors in March so no sales or donations were processed until it reopened in August. And what a beautiful reopening. During the shutdown, the store was enlarged by almost 50% and the layout upgraded to enhance the shopping experience. The store is open for business Tuesday through Saturday from noon to 5:00. To keep everyone safe and ensure proper precautions, donations must be scheduled in advance for either drop-off at the store or for pick-up by the ReStore crew at your home. Please call 410-820-6186 to schedule your donation.

Kim Cassidy



Presbyterian Preschool

At long last our amazing preschool is up and running! I am happy to report that we currently have 26 children enrolled, which is our normal capacity. Things are definitely different in the preschool hallway, however, whatever we need to do to keep children and their families safe is what we will do. The kids have adjusted extremely well to the new routines. They always seem to adapt easier than the adults. We have been blessed with amazing families who have been nothing but patient and kind while our staff gets into a routine.

For our Thanksgiving Feast this year, our preschoolers will enjoy a special snack in the classrooms and watch a children's Thanksgiving movie while they eat.

In December, we will begin our story times with Pastor Jeff and Pastor Grace. We look forward to spending this special time with them. Lifetouch will also be coming in December to take individual pictures as well as class pictures. Our Christmas program will be on December 17th and we are still in the planning process of how that will look.

While things are different this year, PPS will strive to make each child's preschool experience the best! I would like to thank the church members for the outpouring support that the preschool received during the re-opening process.

*All my best,
Missy*

