



GOOD NEWS FROM YOUR CHURCH

The Newsletter of The Presbyterian Church at Woodbury

January 6, 2021
Volume 58, Issue 1

SUNDAY January 10, 2021

9:30 A.M.
WORSHIP SERVICE
In-Person and
Virtual Worship Service

SUNDAY January 17, 2021

9:30 A.M.
WORSHIP SERVICE
In-Person and
Virtual Worship Service

FROM THE PASTOR....

The season after Christmas and before Lent can often seem like a “down” time in the church year—as if we’re simply marking time while waiting for another grand celebration. Whether it is because we are suffering from holiday fatigue or influenced by gloomy winter weather, the season of Epiphany can go by unnoticed and unheralded. As we enter our Tricentennial celebration, I would like everyone to have a “star gift.” A star gift is simply a star-shaped piece of brightly colored paper with a word printed on it. Every person who comes to church on Epiphany Sunday receives a star gift and is asked to reflect on that word for the coming year. You are invited to ponder what significance this word might have in your live, and how God might be speaking to you through this simple message.

The star gifts will also be sent to every church family. In this moment, you are receiving a gift. It reminds us that this is always the order of things in God’s realm—God always gives first, and then we are invited to respond with our gifts and ourselves.



Receiving Gifts

The wise men who traveled great distances to offer their gifts to the newborn Christ-child were responding to the gift first given to them. They received God’s gift, then offered their gifts to God. As we commemorate the arrival of the wise men and remember their offerings, we delight in the “star gift” reminder that symbolizes God’s generosity in our lives.



“Ponder These Words in Your Hearts”

Everyone who receives a star gift is encouraged to hang it up where they are sure to see it every day. It may be on their bathroom mirror, or next to their computer screen.

My prayer is that you allow these words to speak to you. You could start by looking the word up in the dictionary so that you are clear on its meaning; we hear the word *grace* all the time, but what exactly does it mean? A word that seemed unclear at the beginning of the year may gain new meaning as the year goes on.

Often the words seem very timely, as if they were indeed designated for the recipient. It is this sense of providence and wondering how God might be working through this simple process that reminds us of God’s presence throughout the year.



Out of Receiving Comes Sharing

We are invited to reflect on our relationship with God who continually encourages and strengthens God’s people. Perhaps that is the delight of “star gifts”—they truly are a gift that keeps on giving, even long after the Epiphany season is over.

Like any other gift, “star gifts” can either be received with joy or discarded and forgotten. I hope that you will be intentional about your response to the “star gift.” Will the paper stars be stuffed into a pocket or jammed into the bottom of a purse, never to be considered again? Or will that word be considered an opportunity—a chance to reflect on how God speaks to you in your current situation? What might you learn from one word? What new ideas might evolve; what treasured wisdom might resurface?

Epiphany is the celebration of God’s presence breaking through to shine as a light in the darkness. As we enter into a celebration of 300 years of ministry may we also rejoice in the reminder of our generous, giving God—one “star gift” at a time. (Based upon an article by Susan Foster for “Reformed Worship”)

**THE ANNUAL
CONGREGATIONAL/
CORPORATION MEETING**
of the Presbyterian Church at
Woodbury will be held on
Sunday, January 31, 2021
at 10:30 am

The purpose of the Meeting is to receive the 2020 Annual Reports and approve the Terms of Call for the Pastor. All members are reminded to be present (in person or via zoom) for this important meeting of the church.

THANK YOU! The Deacons will be gathering at the church on Saturday January 9th at 9AM to take down the decorations .We would like to thank the Deacons for making the sanctuary look so beautiful this Christmas season and also, Janet Edick for keeping the Poinsettias so fresh each week.

In Christ,
Rev. Dr. Philip W. Oehler, Sr

ADULT SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY:

How would you like to have a practical way to keep your New Year's Resolutions? Join us the first Sunday in January for our new series "Developing Christian Character" a 12-week study featuring teaching by Dr. RC Sproul and discussion led by David Platt. Topics covered will include: the struggle for Christian growth, righteousness, the practice of love, joy, peace, long suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, meekness, and self-control. If you would like to grow in these areas in 2021 please join us on Sundays at 10:30 in the sanctuary.

2020 ANNUAL REPORTS: If you were given a memo about submitting a report, we need it **NO LATER** than January 8. You can forward a Word document to church.office@pwoodbury.com.

2021 OFFERING ENVELOPES are available in the Chapel. If you would like yours, please pick up your box before or after worship on Sunday or call the church office to make arrangements.

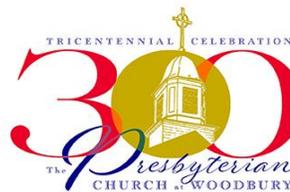
APPORTIONMENT: The first offering envelope in the box is for the Per Capita offering. This offering of \$37.00 per person (\$74.00 per couple) helps offset the Per Capita Apportionment. If each member donates their share, over \$9,500 would be freed up for church programs and Mission use.

FOOD BANK DONATIONS: A reminder that there is always a mad rush to donate food items and clothing for Christmas; but the need doesn't stop on December



Feeding the Community

25th. There is still a pandemic, it is still winter and the need will probably continue to grow. Let us all resolve in 2021 to step up our mission and outreach to this vital ministry.



2021

300th Anniversary Speakers

February 7

Rev. Dr. Martha Moore-Keish
J.B. Green Professor of Theology
Columbia Theological Seminary

March 7

Rev. Dr. Mouris A. Yousef
Blackwood Presbyterian Church
Blackwood, NJ

April 4 Music/Art EASTER

Rev. Dr. Deborah Brincivalli
West Jersey Presbytery

You Can't Have Too Many Prayers:

One of the ministries we have been blessed with over the years is our prayer chain. Each week they receive the prayers of the people from the list on Sunday, and they pray for those folks throughout the week. Currently we have seven faithful servants in this role who do such a wonderful job fulfilling this vital mission. We would like to expand this list, and to offer others to participate as well. There seems to be an unstated consensus that only women or only those of us old enough to remember Neil Armstrong's big step are qualified to pray for those in need. This assumption is wrong and so we are reaching out to all, the young, those who may have just joined the church, men, and those who may feel they are not sure how to pray but are willing to learn. Since I announced this on January 3rd, we have had our first new volunteer, and we hope others of you will think about it, and Pray about it as well. We live in difficult times and we see anxiety, distress, and suffering all around; and many of us do not quite know what we can do. Well, we can start with prayer for others, and in doing so I fully believe we will help ease many of our own burdens, for in Christ, all things are possible. If interested give me a call 423 5692, drop me an email miltrose@comcast.net or call the church office.

Thanks be to God. Milt Fredericks Lay Pastor of Congregational Care

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS: Larry Diehlman, Chuck Dahmer, Wendy Kunz, Al Edwards, Geri Petri, Meg Orem, Charlotte Nelson, Janet Muhm, Judy Fetty, Emma Mustard, Alex Jenei, and Marie Batten. A reminder to keep our military personnel in your prayers, including Jonathan Gabler, Nathan Wadding, Cameron Wadding, Jarrod Fetty, and Wesley Tatham.

