

Gates Presbyterian Church

January 2023

Harbinger

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From Rev. Laura Bachmann

*Arise, shine, for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. Isaiah 60:1*

As we begin the new year, I have found myself thinking about Epiphany – wondering what it means in this moment that God reveals God’s self to us in the brokenness and chaos of the world; what it means that even people from far away recognize this revelation of the divine presence in our midst; what it means that God invites us to bring our best gifts to these places where God’s light shines forth into the darkness; what it means that we, ourselves, are invited to participate in this revealing of God’s presence.

The invitation of Epiphany is to seek God in unexpected places; to bring our best selves into this divine presence; to share the news of God-with-us in our communities and our world; to welcome ways we, too, can embody the light God shines into the darkness of our broken places. What does this mean for us in the GPC family as we begin a new year? I believe God is inviting us to lift our heads from the places we have been focused – yes, from the challenging things like our grief over the pandemic and our sadness at the passing of people and traditions who meant a great deal to us; and also from the joyful moments like our personal successes and the meaning we find in our lives, as well as from our certainties about life and our deep commitments to secular things. God has arrived, God is here, God will continue to be revealed, in all the corners of our community where need and suffering, oppression and hopelessness, discouragement and grief have taken hold.

Our task, I believe, is to listen for the Spirit’s guiding; to seek out the light of God’s presence; to be open to new pathways and unexpected practices that allow us to interact with our neighbors in ways that further the creation of God’s kin-dom where all people flourish. In our own community, I believe we are following the light when we create the bags of weekend food for our children who would otherwise face hunger at home. We are following the light when we show up for our children as teachers and music makers, youth leaders and mission teams. We are following the light when we take the risk of joining the session or the deacons, of serving as a trustee or team leader, all working together to listen for God’s unique call to us today.

And there are always new ways that we can follow this light into the world, by actively working for justice and peace – supporting those working to change systems that target the poor or the mentally ill, the stranger or the addicted, Black and brown neighbors or the queer community. We witness God’s light moving through the world when love and justice follow its passing. As members of Christ’s body, we, too are called to be this light, to make our presence felt in the community by calling for love to be the standard by which we measure the structures and laws that govern the way we live together.

As a Matthew 25 community, we remain committed to increasing our congregational vitality, eradicating poverty and dismantling structural racism – all of which flow out of the light of God’s presence revealing itself to the world. As the new year begins, let us ask ourselves, how do we, each of us, want to become part of God’s light shining into the world to actively work at transforming the world, loving act by loving act, into the kin-dom Jesus came to show us?

Peace,

Laura

From the Office ...

- February Harbinger articles are due Wednesday, January 18

2022 Year-End Tax Letters



If you received a giving statement for 2021, **you will automatically receive one for 2022, you do not need to contact the office.** If you did not receive one last year, but would like one for your 2022 donations, please email the office at office@gatespres.org. All letters will be emailed as a PDF unless a hard copy is requested. Letters will start to go out after February 1st.

Directory of Church Boards – 2023

- ❖ The Session's Ruling Elders who will serve us in ministry and governance are:
Betty Blystone, Christine Cook, Paul Gluchowski, Lauren Henderberg, Sheri MacFarlane, MaryBeth MacKenzie, Kris Ohman, and Katie Steinmiller.
- ❖ The Deacons who will serve us in ministry and care are:
Jan Brewer, Dan Charcholla, Simon Njumbwa, Fran Paro, Sue Poole, Bill Shirtz, Linda Sidore, Barb Snaith, Paula Sousa, Anne Tonery-DeMars and Irene Ward.
- ❖ The Trustees who will serve us in ministry and management are:
Roger Best, Jan Beutner-Shirtz, Ed Coons, Bill Dassero, Gary Dykes, Jason Taylor, Chris Thornton, Tom Ward and Dennis White.

Ordination & Installation will be on January 15, 2023

Thank you to our Elders, Trustees & Deacons who are rotating off their respective boards. We appreciate your service to GPC!

Elders: Jan Beutner-Shirtz, Carrie Dykes, Cam Mossgraber, Linda Sidore, Barb Snaith, Larry Wakeman

Deacons: Sally Christensen, Cathy Goodykoontz, Kay Harder, Keith Morgan

Trustees: Vicki Gutheil, Marty Ohman

THANK YOU!
thank you!

PER CAPITA

Per Capita is a set amount of money (apportionment) per member that our congregation pays to the larger Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as a religious and moral commitment. It establishes a minimum level of financial participation in the vital work of our church. With this year's commitment of **\$36.45** per member, we work together with other Presbyterian Churches in our presbytery and across the country to further the mission of Jesus Christ around the world. We benefit from the gifts, skills, vision and ministry of each other when we come together. Your Per Capita pays for the programs, training and resources that help us work together to benefit all.

If you haven't yet contributed **\$36.45** per member, please consider doing so. You can put your check in a plain envelope marked Per Capita and place in the offering basket or mail it to the church office. Labeled envelopes are available at the church.

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| Want to make your Per Capita contribution online? You can do so by clicking here and choosing 'Give to Per Capita' from the dropdown. | Haven't yet submitted your 2023 giving intentions card? You can now do this online via the link below: 2023 GPC Giving Intentions Card | For those that prefer to print the giving intention card and drop it at the office, you can access a printable PDF here |
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There will also be a limited quantity of each available on the literature rack just outside the sanctuary.

Bible Study

Whether you are new to Bible study or consider yourself well versed, we welcome you to our small group for a time of wondering about the word and sharing our wisdom and our lives together. Tuesdays at 4:00 p.m. in room 1.

| Date | Scripture | |
|------------|--|---|
| January 3 | Isaiah 42:1-9 Psalm 29 | Acts 10:34-43 Matthew 3:13-17 |
| January 10 | Isaiah 49:1-7 Psalm 40:1-11 | 1 Corinthians 1:1-9 John 1:29-42 |
| January 17 | Isaiah 9:1-4 Psalm 27:1,4-9 | 1 Corinthians 1:10-18 Matthew 4:12-23 |
| January 24 | Micah 6:1-8 Psalm 15 | 1 Corinthians 1:18-31 Matthew 5:1-12 |
| January 31 | Isaiah 58:1-9a (9b-12) Psalm 112:1-9 (10) | 1 Corinthians 2:1-12 (13-16) Matthew 5:13-20 |



Worship Services Schedule for January

| Date | Liturgist | Elder Greeter | Usher Team |
|------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------|
| January 1 | Tom Ward | Lauren Henderberg | 3 |
| January 8 | Janice Bilohlavek | Jan Beutner-Shirtz | 4 |
| January 15 | Barb Snaith | Christine Cook | 5 |
| January 22 | Sally Christensen | Carrie Dykes | 6 |
| January 29 | Katie Steinmiller | | 1 |

Trustee Lock-Up: Bill Dassero

Please make sure you have made notes of when your scheduled dates are. Reminders for upcoming weeks are in the weekly bulletins as well as the weekly email blasts. If you cannot serve on a scheduled day, you are responsible for finding someone to switch with and for notifying the office of the change.

New position available at GPC – Assistant Child Care Provider

This is a one-year contract position.

Responsibilities include:

The Assistant Child Care Provider will work together with the Child Care Provider and/or volunteers to create a loving and welcoming environment in the nursery and toddler rooms during church events, allowing parents to feel secure in leaving their children. The specific responsibilities of the Assistant Child Care Provider include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Develop a positive relationship with the children and parents.
- Provide supervision to all children in the Nursery and Toddler rooms
- Provide supervision to all volunteers in the Nursery and Toddler rooms
- Maintain open communication with Head of Staff and Young Children's Committee
- Contact Head of Staff and Young Children's Committee if there is a concern or problem
- Notify Child Care Provider in advance of any absences
- Work cooperatively with other volunteers to provide childcare in case of the Child Care Provider's absence

You can read the full job description, qualifications, hours and compensation [here](#).



From the Deacons

Please keep in thought & prayer ...

- Bob Kaiser now residing at The Landing in Brighton.
- Laura Nolan at home after hospital stay with severe heart issue.
- Paula Sousa's brother and sister-in-law, Chuck and Maureen Munroe recovering from illness.
- Jan Beutner-Shirtz cousin, Brian, suffering with several health issues.
- Doris Barney at Unity Assisted Living not doing well.
- Andrea Unson's mom in Unity with breathing issues; Andrea's dad home from Strong with heart issues; Andrea's brother recovering from an illness.
- Tracy Vander's sister-in-law, Eileen Vander in the ICU after suffering a heart attack.
- Tom Ward's mom, Pat Tripoli, in rehab.
- Gary Dykes' Uncle Gary recovering from a stroke.



Our sincere sympathy to Debbie and Dennis White, Scott and Chris Davis, Bill Davis, Kelly and Matt Cox, Jennifer and Ben Olsen, Andrew and Maggie White and all their families on the recent passing of mother and grandmother, Sonia Davis on December 11th ... Janice Bilohlavek, Tess McKeel & Alex McKeel on the passing of Janice's sister, Gloria, on December 14th.

Continued prayers for ... Buz Bauman, John Belt, Debbie Schnabel, Hannah Walker, Angelika Alvarez's brother, E.J., Janice Bilohlavek's niece, Tyanna, Peter & Irene Derry, Fran and Bob Paro's sister-in-law, Patricia Withrow, Whit Beckett's brother, Bob, Eric Paquin, Art Brooks, Julie Seide, and Miss Carol Brown.

Prayer Shawls

Anyone who needs a prayer shawl for themselves or for a friend or family member, can contact Dorothy Mundt at 247-3782 or email quilter2@twc.com. Delivery can be made in church or in the church parking lot, whatever your preference is.

Happy New Year from the Public Worship Team!

Many thanks to everyone who helped decorate the sanctuary for Advent and Christmas. Your enthusiasm and energy are much appreciated.

Please plan to join us as we un-decorate the sanctuary following worship on Sunday, January 8th. With lots of help we will be done well before the Bills welcome the Patriots (game time is currently TBD).



The Hospitality Ministry team has invited our neighbors of the White Oaks West apartments on Silver Birch Drive to our worship service, childcare and coffee hour at any time. Please welcome them and help them find their way.

MISSION NEWS

The job description of the GPC Mission Team includes, among other things, advocating and supporting peacemaking efforts in families and addressing hunger issues. During the Season of Advent, our church community certainly rose to those challenges. Thanks to your generosity, a family with 5 children from Cameron Community Ministries (Aloha, Alphonso, Aliany, Samora, and Samajelyn) had several gifts to open on Christmas morning. You helped stock the shelves at Cameron's Children's Shop, where the children select gifts for the adults in their lives. Roughly 55 meals were delivered to SWEM, and many of our members helped distribute them over a very busy weekend. The boxes in the foyer are overflowing with coats, mittens, and scarves to be delivered to the YWCA, Cameron Ministries, and St. Joseph's.



While all of that was happening, you continued to prepare lunches for St. Joseph's (including an additional Saturday lunch) and send weekend lunches to the children at Neil Armstrong School. You supported the annual Christmas Joy Offering, which supports the past, present, and future leaders of the Presbyterian Church USA.

Looking ahead –

- ❖ The next Mission team meeting will be on Monday January 2 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom.
- ❖ The January collection of non-perishable food items, toiletries, and underwear for men/women/children will be on Saturday January 28th. According to SWEM, there is a great need for certain items at this time – Cereal and low-salt soup (not chicken noodle or tomato). You can bring items at any time and leave them in the marked bins – one outside the main door, one in the foyer under the coat rack, several in Room 28.
- ❖ The collection of food items for the weekend lunch program is ongoing as well. There is a marked bin in the foyer.
- ❖ The Lenten Wall of Food will return in February! (We thought you would like to know early about that exciting news!)
- ❖ Coats, mittens, and scarves will be delivered.

Expenses approved at the December meeting went to the People's Pantry to help them refurbish a large shed as a "tiny house" in Peace Village; St. Joseph's; Trinity Emmanuel Church's Saturday breakfast program; Keeping Our Promise: the YWCA; India Gospel League; and Genesee Presbytery Mission

Share Your Story - Members of our congregation are making a difference through their volunteer work. Please contact Sally Christensen (703-6238 or sjmcc02300@gmail.com) to share your story.

From Paul Gluchowski

Saint Joseph's House of Hospitality

Reflections:

Saint Joseph's House of Hospitality located on South Avenue is a ministry established in the 1920's by Dorothy Day and operated today by Catholic Workers and those who share the vision of serving those in need within our community. It is housed in several buildings on South Avenue with the main building providing food and essential support to the surrounding neighborhoods. Currently operating with COVID restrictions, the hope is to be fully open in the coming months with a staff of Catholic Workers living in the upper floors of the building and the ground floor providing daily hot meals, a place for people to gather, to socialize and share their burdens with each other and the staff. Currently a team of Gates church members gather on Monday mornings to make 70 bag lunches which I have the privilege of giving to those showing up at the door of Saint Joe's every Tuesday. Other churches and organizations provide lunches for other days of the week and recently Gates Presbyterian has been providing on site hot meals at lunch time one Sunday a month.

My participation with this ministry has in many ways restored my hope and vision in what Christian service and church membership can be. This vision is really Christ's vision of ultimate peace among all people with human relationships centered on unconditional love. As someone who has been given this opportunity to be a part of lives so materially different than mine, I often experience love freely given to me by those at the door. We often laugh together, share stories and talk about our common state of brokenness. In the telling of our life stories I find the essential things of life; a kind word, an expression of thankfulness, prayers for each other, someone who listens as we wrestle with the unfairness and injustice of life, someone who visits when a participant is in the hospital. Sometimes these things are as important as the lunches, drinks, clothes, groceries, hot showers and guidance in applying for available public benefits and services are.

If you share in my struggle in seeing the relevance of your faith in this chaotic and often energy sapping world, taking part in some way to restore Christ's vision of a world filled with peace among all people and love shared in unconditional ways could be restorative for you too. Your part to play likely will be different than mine but just as important. Thanks be to God that we can experience this peace in giving.



RocUbuntu Update

GPC continues to participate in the ecumenical group ROC Ubuntu. This group of representatives from five churches in Greece formed in the spring and summer of 2020 in response to the racial upheavals of that time. ("Ubuntu" is a Zulu word meaning "humanity toward others," or "I am because we are.") The group's mission statement is "To promote racial and social justice in our communities". One of the ways we have committed to support each other is by sharing a monthly article in common across all our newsletters. This article is the most recent piece.

RocUbuntu members have been working with United Christian Leadership Ministries (UCLM) in two areas: Police department data management, and bail reform.

First, we are urging the Rochester City Council to purchase Benchmark Analytics' *First Sign* software, designed to help law enforcement agencies identify officers at risk of unlawful use of force. The software offers a greater ability to manage RPD officers and better management in general. This results in a safer community, improved & targeted training (RPD does not have an automated way to track training), officer wellness, and tracking of suspect demographics to identify patterns of where force is used.

Currently, 150 communities in the U.S. use this software and they are experiencing positive results. RocUbuntu members joined UCLM at a press conference on Tuesday, December 19, and also contacted members of Rochester City Council by email and phone to urge them to support the acquisition of this software.

Second, we are educating ourselves about the pros and cons of bail reform. On Tuesday, December 13, RocUbuntu's Rev. Joyce Newton helped to facilitate a community forum on bail reform to try to answer the questions: What's right, what's wrong and what's next? The panel ranged from law enforcement to city council, all in agreement that there's too much gun violence in our community and all are looking for the next step.

You can listen to a recording of the Bail Reform conversation at <https://www.facebook.com/UCLMrochesterny/videos/2951521721809861>.

January

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| Sunday, January 1 | 9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m. 11:00 a.m. | Choir Rehearsal (1) Worship Public Worship (1) |
| Monday, January 2 | 7:00 p.m. | Mission (Zoom) |
| Tuesday, January 3 | 1:00 p.m. 4:00 p.m. | Prayer Shawl Group (16) Bible Study (1) |
| Sunday, January 8 | 9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m. 11:00 a.m. | Choir Rehearsal (1) Worship, <i>Communion</i> Jr. Choir Rehearsal (2,3) |
| Monday, January 9 | 1:00 p.m. 6:00 p.m. | Library Ministry Trustees (Zoom) |
| Tuesday, January 10 | 4:00 p.m. 6:30 p.m. | Bible Study (1) Deacons (Zoom) |
| Thursday, January 12 | 7:00 p.m. | Generosity Team (Zoom) |
| Sunday, January 15 | 9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m. 11:00 a.m. | Choir Rehearsal (1) Worship, <i>Ordination & Installation</i> Jr. Choir Rehearsal (2,3) Hospitality (library) |
| Tuesday, January 17 | 4:00 p.m. | Bible Study (1) |
| Wednesday, January 18 | 10:00 a.m. | Rebecca Circle (16) |
| Sunday, January 22 | 9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m. 11:00 a.m. | Choir Rehearsal (1) Worship Jr. Choir Rehearsal (2,3) |
| Monday, January 23 | 1:00 p.m. | Library Ministry Team |
| Tuesday, January 24 | 4:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m. | Bible Study (1) Personnel (Zoom) |
| Saturday, January 28 | 11:00 a.m. | Mission Collection |
| Sunday, January 29 | 9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m. 11:00 a.m. | Choir Rehearsal (1) Worship Jr. Choir Rehearsal (2,3) |
| Tuesday, January 31 | 4:00 p.m. | Bible Study (1) |

