



# THE CARILLON

Monthly Newsletter  
December 2018

First Presbyterian Church  
Rev. Dudley Elvery, Transitional Pastor  
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Web Site: [www.fpchw.org](http://www.fpchw.org)

P. O. Box 1519  
Homewood, Illinois  
708-798-0490  
E-mail: [fpchw@sbcglobal.net](mailto:fpchw@sbcglobal.net)



## ADVENT – KNOWING THE ENDING

**FROM THE PASTOR:** I love to read and watch mysteries. I think part of the fun and intrigue is trying to figure out the end, the “who done it,” before the author gets there. I read the conclusion of a book first only if the book or article is non-fiction that tries to build a case. Haven’t Advent and Christmas become much like a mystery that we know the ending before we begin?

As a child, I would sometimes, and not entirely accidentally, stumble on my parent’s cache of Christmas gifts for my sister and me. Sometimes I knew the end before it started. The surprise and mystery of the gifts were destroyed. I had to act surprised on Christmas Day even though I knew what the package held. Isn’t that what happens to us at Advent and Christmas?

How do we find the mystery and the surprise in Christmas? How do we let the season have something new in the midst of the welcome, comfortable rituals and trimmings? Part of the way the season becomes authentically new comes through our looking for new and deeper understanding of the miracle of Emanuel, God-with-us. Another part may be looking for those subtle and less obvious ways we see God in the human form of a friend or fellow human who shows thoughtfulness and kindness for no apparent reason. Another way, yet, may

be letting the spirit of God-with-us move through us as we find new and familiar ways to reach out and touch some people just because they need some hope and light in their life and just because we have the opportunity to be that channel of God’s love and hope.

Each of us will decide daily during Advent whether we will settle for the tried and true and act as if we are surprised by God’s gift this Christmas or if we will open ourselves and actively seek the newness God gives.

*Dudley Elvery*

## COMMUNION SCHEDULE

December 2	10:30 a.m.	Advent
December 17	6:30 p.m.	Still Night
December 24	7:00 p.m.	Christmas Eve
January 6	10:30 a.m.	Epiphany



## SESSION REPORT

### Regular Session Meeting, November 13, 2018

After meeting with the Chicago Heights Session, our meeting was called to order at 8:12 p.m. New member Joyce Anders visited to offer hospitality suggestions as she felt alone and overlooked on her first visit. We assume that we are a welcoming church, but we must be on the look-out for any new face and welcome that new

face with a smile and a handshake. This discussion will continue in December.

Session has been reading a book titled *Changing the Conversation*, which discusses the changes in American society and in mainline (Presbyterian, Methodist, Lutheran, etc.) denominations over the past 50-60 years. The point is that the book is about us. Church participation has changed and is changing so that we need to change the way we think about church ministry and structure as we move into the future. Because we encourage all members to read and discuss this book, we will be providing copies to the congregation. You can expect us to be talking about it as we make decisions about our future as a church.

One of the steps for moving forward is to send a description of our congregation to the national Presbyterian headquarters. One of those descriptors is the size and participation level of the congregation. Session is in the process of editing our Official Active Membership Roll so that we will have a Membership Roll that is an accurate picture of our congregation. It will end up including people who are active in the life, worship, and/or activities of the church within the past two years.

Our Church Directory, on the other hand, will NOT be a list of our official Active members. It will be a way for us to keep in touch with those people who are in our Church Family, which means those people who attend worship and activities of the church (whether official members or not), as well as non-participating confirmed children of Active Members. The Directory will continue to include contact information of all those in our Church Family.

From the **Clerk's Report**: Our weekly worship attendance is holding steady right around 50 each week, which has been true since last winter. We are wrestling with the issue of photographing at church our youngest members, our children. It is our concern to keep them safe in this age of social media and internet accessibility. We'll let you know what policy we settle on, but please be careful not to take and post pictures of children's faces on the internet—including Facebook.

#### Ministry Team Highlights:

From the **Congregational Life Ministry**, there will be a Soup Lunch during Heavenly Perks and Caroling by Phone on Sunday, December 16.

From the **Faith Formation Ministry**, Young Children's Sunday School classes number two, with our 4-yr-olds using the printed curriculum and our 2-yr-olds using the

material written by Karen Maurer for this age group. The Adult Sunday School video series is continuing to draw people to this class so if you are interested in how our Bible came to be our Bible, join us for this series in the Parlor at 9:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings.

From the **Monday Night Dinner Ministry**, the dinner was held at the Chicago Heights church on October 22, but we have no future plans to have another dinner at that site. Attendance is expected to increase with the colder weather, and we are looking into ways to continue to provide a Food Sharing Table for our guests.

From the **Nominating Committee**, a slate of church officers for the Class of 2021 is filled. **We will hear their report and vote on the nominees at a Congregational Meeting after worship on December 2.**

From the **Personnel & Administration Ministry**, we are still looking for volunteers to serve on a Task Force to create a policy dealing with visitor/potential members with sexual-assault histories. If you are willing to serve on this Task Force, please speak with Kathleen O'Hanlon.

Thanks for continuing to hold Session in prayer as we work through this time of transition for our congregation. The process is moving forward, but it is a many faceted job. God is leading us, and we are seeking to follow!

Respectfully submitted,  
Laurie Ulrich, Clerk of Session



#### FLOWERS FOR THE SANCTUARY

The Worship Ministry Team invites you to participate in one of our traditions. It began as a simple gesture by individuals placing poinsettias in the sanctuary for the beauty of the Advent season. Over the past 57 years, members of our congregation have given poinsettias to commemorate or honor relatives, friends, or events. This year the tradition continues.

In preparation for the celebration of Christ's birth and as a way to share the joy of Jesus, the Worship Ministry Team is offering three options.

Choose poinsettias (\$9), mumsettias (\$19), or donation to Respond Now (\$10). The Christmas Eve bulletin will acknowledge these gifts. **Order forms will be available**



in the Sunday bulletins and maybe on a full page at the end of this Carillon. Please make checks payable to First Presbyterian Church of Homewood and write poinsettia or Respond Now on the memo line and use a **separate check from your weekly offering**. Turn order forms with the check in to the church office or mail to P.O. Box 1519, Homewood, IL, 60430. **The deadline for orders and checks is Tuesday, December 4, 2018.** Flowers may be picked up after Christmas Eve service and through January 2.

## SPECIAL ADVENT SERVICES



**Still Night Service:** This service has become a tradition of First Presbyterian Church. The holidays can be a difficult time for people, particularly if they have lost a loved one, suffered a serious illness, or are going through a major life transition. This quiet prayer service of candlelight and Communion and, for those who so choose, anointing and individual prayer by the Pastor is designed to offer time for reflection, comfort, and healing as we lift our hearts to the One who brings us Light when it seems it is *still night*. **This year, the service is on a Monday evening so as to welcome our Community Dinner guests. There will be an extended prelude at 6:30 p.m. as a way for those who stay to transition from dinner to worship.** This might be the year for you to reach out to a neighbor or co-worker who is going through a particularly tough time and invite someone to worship with you on Monday, December 17, at 6:30 p.m.



Likewise, **Christmas Eve (December 24) is also a Monday.** After the 5:30 p.m. Community Soup Dinner, our regular Christmas Eve Candlelight and Communion service will be held at 7 p.m. in the sanctuary, probably with an extended prelude at 6:30 p.m. for dinner guests to transition from dinner to worship. We hope you will join us for one or both of these services.

## MUSIC MINISTRY

There is a third special Advent service! On Sunday, December 16, during worship, the Chancel Choir will present a Christmas Cantata entitled **Sing Joy to All the World!** by Lloyd Larson. *“The message of Christmas is one of deep and abiding joy! It is a message filled with the assurance that no matter how difficult the journey may seem; no matter how hopeless the situation may feel; no matter how long and dark the*

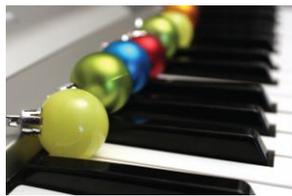


*night may be, joy will eventually come. That is the promise of God: weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes with the morning. (Psalm 30:5b) ... Jesus came to provide us with a deep and lasting joy, a joy that could truly fill the void in our lives, a void that we often attempt to satisfy with temporal things. ... We who have been recipients of this great news have the privilege and responsibility to share it. To celebrate it. To sing it. That is the reason for this Christmas musical. It is conceived as a vehicle to help us share, celebrate, and sing the joyous Christmas message!* Lloyd Larson

There is narration throughout this cantata of new and old familiar tunes: “Tidings of Comfort and Joy,” “A Light Shall Shine,” “Prepare the Way,” “David’s Royal City,” “Glory in the Highest,” “Joy of Every Longing Heart,” “Worship Christ, the Newborn King,” and “Sing Joy to All the World.” Please come to worship on December 16 to be a part of the joy!

## SOUP AND CAROLS

Also on Sunday, December 16, members, family, and friends are invited to a delicious homemade **Soup Lunch after worship and then to Christmas Caroling from the church by PHONE!** Rebecca Circle will



provide dessert choices, plus there will be a cake from the Women’s Association for the church’s 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary that falls on December 19. Do you know of someone in need of Christmas cheer? We are developing a list for our Christmas caroling venture by phone. Please send in names and phone numbers and your connection to the person (friend, family member, etc.) to the church office at 798-0490 or [fpchw@sbcglobal.net](mailto:fpchw@sbcglobal.net). USA calls only, please. Don’t worry if they aren’t home—We can leave a singing voicemail! Following lunch, interested singers will gather around a speaker phone at the piano (Thank you, Tim) and sing to folks near and far. What a joyous way to connect with others during this Advent season. Paul Gerrish is available for additional information.

Jan Bunker

## WOMEN’S ASSOCIATION

The Women’s Association will not meet for a luncheon in December. See you all in January. However, the Association Board will meet on Thursday, December 6, in the Parlor at 9:30 a.m. for a Brunch and planning meeting for the reorganization of the Women’s Association. Check out the invitation to join Chicago Heights women on the next page.

Charlene Hansen

## CIRCLE MEETINGS

LYDIA – Thurs., December 13, **noon**, at the home of Charlene Hansen, 810 St. Andrew Dr., Crete.

REBECCA – Wed., December 12, **6:30 p.m.**, at the home of Joyce Anders, 3616 Breakers Drive, Olympia Fields (Brookdale). Bring an appetizer and cans of food for the needy. (No lesson)

**Circle Chairs, please send your 2019 meeting places.**

## WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION CHICAGO HTS.

The Women's Association of Chicago Heights Presby Church has invited the women of our church to their meeting on Tuesday, December 4, at noon. Lunch will be catered meal for \$10, payable at the door. Eleanor and Char plan to attend. Contact Charlene Hansen at 672-7986 if interested in attending, and she will make the reservations. Charlene Hansen



## MEN'S FELLOWSHIP CHICAGO HEIGHTS

First Presbyterian Homewood men are invited to join the Chicago Heights Men's Fellowship Lunch on Friday, December 14, at 12:30 p.m. at Paulie's Pub, 2736 Chicago Rd., South Chicago Heights. Share a devotion, a few pops, and Christian fellowship. Hope to see you there.

## TRUSTEE REPORT

(Not Available)

## STEWARDSHIP/FINANCE MINISTRY TEAM

The 2019 Per Capita Apportionment is increasing by only **\$0.61** from 2018, all of which goes to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). There is **no increase** for the Synod of Lincoln Trails nor for the Presbytery of Chicago components. The new 2019 amount is **\$34.22** per communicant member of the church. The 2019 Church Budget continues in development for presentation to Session in January.

The 2019 Church Budget will still require pledge support from all our members. It is our task as a Ministry Team to ask for your prayerful and generous support through your pledges and Per Capita contributions. You will receive a letter and pledge envelope early in 2019, and we know you all understand the need to do this at this time of year. We will ask for a response from every member, and we thank you in advance for keeping the church high in priority in your life. S&F Ministry Team

### ***Last Reminder!***

**There is a Sunday, December 30, 2018, deadline for each of the following categories for 2018 charitable giving to the church to be included in your 2018 federal and state tax returns:**

- 1. If you are an annual pledge member and have not yet paid your 2018 pledge.**
- 2. If you are behind and are completing your 2018 pledge.**
- 3. If you have a Required Minimum Distribution from an IRA that you must take for 2018 and can donate it tax-free to the church.**
- 4. If you wish to make a donation to the Memorial Fund in memory of someone in 2018.**
- 5. If you wish to remember the church with an extra donation above your pledge to help with our shortfall.**
- 6. If you have not made a pledge in 2018 and wish to contribute to the church from your income in 2018.**
- 7. If you wish to make a donation to the Mission and Ministry Endowment Fund in 2018.**

**All charitable contributions to the church are tax deductible to the extent provided by law.**

Your identified giving statements through November 2018, will be distributed in church early in December 2018. These statements will inform you about the record of your contributions toward your 2018 pledge and provide the opportunity to catch up, if necessary, before the end of December. The boxes of 2019 offering envelopes will be available no later than Sunday, December 16, 2018, on a table in the Cloister.

***Christmas Joy Offering*** is one of four PC(USA) denomination-wide offerings in which we participate, this one in Advent. Bulletin inserts and posters will help explain that this offering goes to the Board of Pensions, to racial ethnic schools and colleges, and to support racial-ethnic leadership for our denomination. ***Christmas Joy*** asks that we think beyond our congregation, as we do not retain any of this money. Think younger (schools and colleges), think older (pensions), and think bias-free (leadership). Think about **JOY**. [There is also a Christmas Offering. Please do not confuse the two.]



The summary of receipts and disbursements for the First Presbyterian Church of Homewood for the month ending October 31, 2018, is in the following chart:

	<u>Through Octoberber</u>	<u>2018 Budget</u>
<b>General Fund Income</b>		
Identified Giving	\$115,505	\$130,000
Loose Offering	1,877	1,500
Initial Offering	595	500
Required Min. Dist./Stock Sale	0	5,000
Community Dinners Donations	2,803	4,000
Other Income	5,716	8,000
Dividends & Capital Gains	10,306	10,000
Sale of Investment Shares	0	34,000
Endowment Fund Distributions	0	8,000
Transfer from Designated Fund	1,320	0
<b>Total General Fund Income</b>	<b>138,122</b>	<b>201,000</b>
<b>General Fund Expenses</b>		
Missional Ventures	\$3,429	\$6,500
Faith Formation	812	1,800
Facilities	35,515	52,800
Staff	68,875	89,500
Transition	34,160	43,000
Administrative Support	4,603	7,400
Purchase of Investment Shares	0	0
Transfer to Designated Fund	0	0
<b>Total General Fund Expenses</b>	<b>147,394</b>	<b>201,000</b>
Designated Fund Income	\$33,640	
Designated Fund Expenses	66,795	
<b>Total Active Members—October 30, 2018</b> 122		
<b>Average Sunday Attendance—July 2018</b> 46		
<b>Average Sunday Attendance—August 2018</b> 50		
<b>Average Sunday Attendance—September 2018</b> 49		
<b>Average Sunday Attendance—October 2018</b> 50		
<b>Summary through October 2018 (10/12 of Budget):</b>		
Income Over/(Under) 2018 Budget		\$(29,378)
Expenses Over/(Under) 2018 Budget		(20,106)
2018 Total Net Income (Loss) to Date		(9,272)

We need an average income of **\$4,000** each week to fund our mission and operate our church. This is inclusive of pledges and identified giving as well as other income sources. So, how are we doing?

- Weekly average for January (4) \$5,841
- Weekly average for February (4) \$4,554
- Weekly average for March (4) \$2,790
- Weekly average for April (5) \$3,247
- Weekly average for May (4) \$2,446
- Weekly average for June (4) \$2,437
- Weekly average for July (5) \$2,018
- Weekly average for August (4) \$2,301
- Weekly average for September (5) \$3,261
- Weekly average for October (4) \$3,382
- **Weekly average for 2018 (43) \$3,181**

## MISSION/OUTREACH MINISTRY

**Monday Night Community Dinners:** Looking ahead at the calendar, we find Monday Night Dinners scheduled for December 24 (Christmas Eve) and December 31 (New Year's Eve). Hunger knows no season, and we are committed to serving dinner every Monday night. Many of our regular volunteers are understandably not available those evenings to serve, so we need help. Volunteers need to arrive about 4 p.m. We serve at 5:30 p.m. and clean up is usually completed by 7 p.m. Christmas Eve is planned as a 5:30 soup supper; we need pots of soup donated (labeled and brought to church Sunday or Monday) and servers. This supper will be followed by our usual Christmas Eve Candlelight and Communion Service in the sanctuary at 7 p.m. Dinner guests are invited to stay for the service. The menu for New Year's Eve is not planned yet, but we need helpers. IF YOU ARE ABLE TO HELP WITH ONE OR BOTH EVES in any way, please contact Jay Webster, Shirley Armistead, or Charlene Hansen. Charlene Hansen



## ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

The Bible's story includes the history of its reading and interpretation within the diverse religious traditions that accord a special authority. Jews and Christians not only read different Bibles, but they interpret their sacred texts from distinct perspectives and premises. Biblical interpretation lies at the heart of Jewish and Christian identity, and the story of the Bible is inextricable from the history of these religious traditions.



Interpretation takes place throughout the deliberate work of sages and theologians, to be sure, as a book that generates countless other books. Interpretation of the Bible also occurs through communal practices of worship and through the prayer, poetry, works of art, & musical compositions of individuals inspired by biblical imagination.

For 17 more weeks, we will study **The Story of the Bible**. Following the 30-minute video lecture, which begins at 9:30 a.m. in the Parlor, we will then have 20 minutes for discussion before adjourning to the worship service in the sanctuary. Everyone is welcome to attend as your weekly schedule permits. Join us to learn about this topic **you** have requested.

The lessons for December include:  
 Dec. 2 **Old Latin and the Vulgate**  
 Dec 9 **Other Ancient Versions**  
 Dec. 16 **Monasteries and Manuscripts**

Dec. 23 **Interpretation within Judaism**  
Dec. 30 **Interpretation in Medieval Christianity**

### PRAYER CARDS

The following members and staff of First Presbyterian Church will receive a card telling them that the church is praying for them. Please pray for those listed each week.

Donna Moore

#### **Week of December 2**

Tim Van Nasdale  
Debbie & Scott Way  
Nolan Way  
Jay Webstser & Nick  
Leighton Whitaker

#### **Week of December 9**

Carolyn Wiley  
Susan Zorns  
Judith Blakesley  
Chris & Rev. Nancy Dederer  
Debbie Dennis

#### **Week of December 16**

Rev Dudley & Glenna Elvery  
Dottie Guenter  
Dan & Rev Laurel Hamilton  
Marilyn Jerner  
Norrine Pulec

#### **Week of December 23**

Karen Allison  
Joan Alvers  
Joyce Anders  
Donna Anderson  
Earl Anker & Jan Bunker

#### **Week of December 30**

Dave & Shirley Armistead  
Marilyn Austin  
Ray & RoseMary Baird  
Karen Barge Fillippo  
Nancy Beaudoin



### HOSPITALIZED

In the hospital during the past month was Debra Ruklic.

### NURSING HOMES

Mae Evert, Lemont Center Rehab; Donna Dekker, Manor Care East Palos; Betty Bednarcik, Prairie Manor; Pat Steiner, Plymouth Place LaGrange Park.

### SYMPATHY

Church sympathy is extended to the family of Kathleen O'Hanlon on the death of her father.



*I am the Resurrection and the Life saith the Lord: he that believeth in me though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.*

### JANUARY CARILLON

The deadline for articles placed in the January *Carillon* is **SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15<sup>TH</sup>**. The January newsletter is the most difficult to produce because every

one is too busy to write, and there are so few days for production around the holiday closings. Please turn in all materials in writing to the church office for *The Carillon* mailbox or e-mail the Editor at [ewahl@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ewahl@sbcglobal.net). The Editor thanks all of the December reporters for their assistance.

J C=W=

### *Birthday greetings to our church family:*



#### **December**

- 1 Shirley Smiddy
- 2 Jeremy Aguilera
- 6 Nicholas Hamilton
- 19 First Presbyterian Church

#### **December**

- 21 Jay Ruklic
- 22 Pat Steiner
- 24 Lee Hilario
- 27 Jean Bonthron Conover
- 30 Janice Rolls

**May God grant birthday blessings on you all this coming year.**



*Merry be your Christmas,*

*Peaceful be your home,*

*Joyful be your family,*

*Blessed be each one!*



***Merry Christmas!***

*First Presbyterian Church of Homewood Staff:  
Rev. Dudley Elvery, Debra Campbell, Linda Daanen,  
Tim Van Nasdale, Johnnie Dorsey*



## DECEMBER 2018

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>2</b> 9:30 Adult Sunday School 10:30 Worship/Kids Sun Sc <b>Advent Communion</b> <b>Congregational Meeting</b> Heavenly Perks	<b>3</b> 5:30 Community Dinner	<b>4</b> 10:30 Tuesday Bible Study Panera Bread 12:00 Chicago Heights Women's Gathering <b>Poinsettia Deadline</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> 9:30 Women's Board Brunch 6:30 Handbell Choir 7:40 Chancel Choir	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> 
<b>9</b> 9:30 Adult Sunday School 10:30 Worship/Kids Sun Sc Heavenly Perks	<b>10</b> 5:30 Community Dinner 7:00 Stewardship Team	<b>11</b> 10:30 Tuesday Bible Study Panera Bread 7:00 Trustees	<b>12</b> 6:30 Rebecca Circle <b>Christmas Party</b>	<b>13</b> 12:00 Lydia Circle <b>Christmas Party</b> 6:30 Handbell Choir 7:40 Chancel Choir	<b>14</b> 12:30 Chicago Heights Men's Fellowship	<b>15</b> <b>CARILLON DEADLINE</b>
<b>16</b> 9:30 Adult Sunday School 10:30 Worship/Kids Sun Sc <b>Christmas Cantata</b> 12:00 <b>Soup and Caroling</b> at Heavenly Perks	<b>17</b> 5:30 Community Dinner 6:30 <b>Still Night Service</b> <b>Communion</b> 7:30 Session	<b>18</b> 10:30 Tuesday Bible Study Panera Bread	<b>19</b> <b>CHURCH'S 160<sup>TH</sup></b> <b>BIRTHDAY</b>	<b>20</b> 6:30 Handbell Choir 7:40 Chancel Choir	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>23</b> 9:30 Adult Sunday School 10:30 Worship/Kids Sun Sc Heavenly Perks	<b>24</b> 5:30 Community Dinner (Bring Soup) 7:00 <b>Christmas Eve Serv</b> <b>Communion</b>	<b>25</b> <b>CHRISTMAS DAY</b>	<b>26</b> 	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>30</b> 9:30 Adult Sunday School 10:30 Worship/Kids Sun Sc Heavenly Perks	<b>31</b> 5:30 Community Dinner <b>NEW YEAR'S EVE</b>					