

# CHARLTON

WINTER  
2020

# CHIMES



*Emmanuel*  
GOD WITH US

As you may or may not be aware, according to the liturgical church calendar, the first Sunday of Advent (which is November 29 this year) is the beginning of the Christian Year. So while chances are that you are reading this newsletter having just celebrated Thanksgiving, it's time to say "Happy New Year!"

As we begin the Christian Year, we also celebrate the Holy Season known as Advent. It is a time when we prepare ourselves for the coming of our Messiah. The word 'Advent', from the Latin word 'adventus', means "coming." We celebrate these days of Advent in expectation and preparation for Christ's arrival. Through the centuries, Christians have observed a time of waiting and anticipation before celebrating the birth of the Savior at Christmas. This Advent season is a time for reflection and preparation, but its mood is joyful. Advent has been enriched by Christian tradition to reflect its distinctive Christian meaning. It proclaims the revelation of God's love as expressed in Christ's birth in a humble stable, His sacrificial death on the cross, and His victorious resurrection! It points to the hope of Christ's coming again as the King of kings and Lord of lords.

The season of Advent comes to a close with the celebration of the birth of Christ ... Christmas ... a word originated from the compound of "Christ's Mass". This season, also known as Christmastide, begins on December 25th, although most scholars agree that this was not the actual date of Jesus' birth.

Christmastide is celebrated for twelve days until the celebration of Epiphany on January 6th. The word 'Epiphany' means "to manifest" or "to show" and is the observance of the "showing forth" or revelation of God in human form. This holy day commemorates the visitation of the magi when Jesus was between one and two years old. Epiphany is also the day we remember and celebrate the baptism of Jesus as he entered his earthly ministry.

As we begin to observe these holy-days, don't get caught up in the commercialization of the season. Instead, let us do our best to focus on the 'reason for the season', starting with Advent.

Advent makes innkeepers out of all of us, asking each of us to make room for the arrival of Christ the King. As the familiar carol says, "Let every heart prepare him room!"



## The Charlton Chimes

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# From the Pastor ...

The term "In-Between" is a state or position in the middle between two other things: a middle place. And it seems that we have been "In-Between" many events during this year.

During this time of the pandemic, we have lived "In-Between." And our congregation has learned to deal with it. This season has brought us changes in our behavior and doing things even in our worship services. Our jobs have been "In-Between." Some have been working from home, others splitting their day between the office and home.

Students began the academic year online. Now some of them attend in-person classes. Our nation experienced a presidential election. There are two different offices, two different styles, two different views of ruling the country. All of these events have kept us also "In-Between."

Advent is an "In-Between" time of the year. It is not just between Thanksgiving and Christmas, though that is when it occurs. Advent is a time of preparation for Christmas; a time when we celebrate the first coming of the Son of God. Advent is also the time we anticipate and wait for the second coming of Christ that will take place at the end of time. Advent is a time of joyful and spiritual hope.

Soon we will experience another "In-Between" time. The transition from one year to another. 2020, a year that many would probably like to forget, and 2021, a year that brings new expectations. Some people will make "resolutions" while others will simply pray for a better year. No matter what the new year will bring, we must remember that God is always with us.

And as soon as we begin the New Year, we will find ourselves "In-Between" once again. It will be between Epiphany and Ash Wednesday, as we prepare ourselves for the coming of Lent.

As you see, we live our lives "In-Between." And we are called to live this time with an "Advent mood", always waiting for the best to come. Let us refresh our minds, hearts, and spirits in this tiring season that we have lived, and recognize that even in this time of "In-Between", know that **God is with us** – "Emmanuel." The Son of God made flesh, who lived among us, and who brought us hope, peace, joy, and love. So, amid this season of "In-Between," we can still see God working among us. Amen.



*Pastor Miguel*

# Emmanuel

bringing hope, peace, joy, and love

There is no doubt that this Advent and Christmas will have a different taste for all of us. We have lived all these months under a new norm. Schools are transitioning between online classes to hybrid classes and from hybrid courses to in-person ones. Companies and businesses have been challenging their employees to work from home instead of being in person. Others have also used a hybrid system. Some restaurants and stores are doing curbside pickup, take out, or just limit their space to a certain number of people. Churches are not the exception. We know that Charlton Church has been blessed by having in-person Sunday worship services and streaming them for those who prefer to worship from home. New behaviors and new patterns are the reality of human beings around the world.

So, how do we prepare ourselves for Advent and Christmas this year when these two liturgical seasons seem to be so different from our previous years?

If you think that waiting for Jesus and his birth was not difficult, I think you should reread the scriptures. The advent of Jesus was in the middle of a census; his parents had to travel a long distance to participate in it. Mary was pregnant and about to give birth. The tradition says that Joseph had only one donkey to transport her. They went to Bethlehem without having a place to stay. They found nothing but a stable among animals where Mary could give birth to baby Jesus. The prophesied Messiah and King had the visit of humble shepherds and their sheep. Shortly thereafter, his parents and little Jesus had to flee as refugees to Egypt. Do you think this was a normal Advent and Christmas for Jesus and his parents?

Advent is a time of preparation and waiting. With Advent, we begin the church year and anticipate the coming of Jesus Christ at Christmas. To put it in simple words: Advent means Jesus is near. On the other hand, Christmas means Jesus is here. Advent is also the season when the church listens to Holy Scripture and hears words of hope, peace, joy, and love. These are focused on the baby born in the little town of Bethlehem – Emmanuel.

This Advent and Christmas sermon series is a refreshment to our stressed and anxious minds and souls during this season of the pandemic. A reminder that Jesus, the Child of Bethlehem, brings hope, peace, joy, and love. God is with us, Emmanuel.



**Sunday, November 29 :: First Sunday of Advent :: Emmanuel: Bringing Hope (Mark 13:24-37)**

The season of Advent is a season of anticipation and expectation. And on this first Sunday of Advent, the invitation is to have hope. But what is it that we are hoping for? What is it that we are anticipating? Many people were hopeless during this year 2020, wishing for this pandemic to end and experience a better future. In our Bible text, Jesus invites us to reflect on the shared hope for the coming of God, usually connected with the eschatological times (the study of the last things to happen on this earth in this present age.) Most of the time, we just think of Advent as we anticipate the birth of Jesus. And we prepare ourselves by decorating our homes, homes and public places. We await Emmanuel (God with us), a shared experience with the shepherds, wise men, and the people in Bethlehem. But how much of that anticipation, expectation, and waiting is with hope for the second coming of Christ? Do we hope for that? How do you expect that? Keep Awake!

**Sunday, December 6 :: Second Sunday of Advent**

**Emmanuel: Bringing Peace (Isaiah 40:1-11)**

We've always heard that "peace is the lack of war and violence." Or that "peace is what happens between wars." But is that God's peace? Amazingly, the prophet Isaiah encouraged and proclaimed hope, comfort, and peace to Babylon's exiles. The people of Israel needed peace as they were experiencing God's absence as punishment for their sins. In response, the people prepared themselves for God's coming presence. The Promised Messiah, Emmanuel (God with us), brings that peace. When we have sinned, there are burdens in our lives that keep us away from God, but when God gives us that comfort and forgiveness through Jesus Christ, we can feel God's peace in our hearts after repentance. During this second Sunday of Advent, let's prepare the way of the Lord, the way for the Prince of Peace.

**Sunday, December 13 :: Third Sunday of Advent :: Emmanuel: Bringing Joy (Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11)**

"Joy to the world, the Lord has come" is one of the hymns that we sing during this season. But how much joy that we announce with our lips is real in our hearts? The Bible text tells us that God has anointed the prophet to proclaim the good news of release, favor, and justice to those who mourn or experience captivity and oppression in Zion. After many years later, Jesus read the first two verses of this chapter from the scroll of Isaiah in the synagogue in Luke 4:16-21 and used them to announce the nature of his ministry. Emmanuel (God with us) brings joy to those suffering, to those who are experiencing injustice and burdens in their lives. We have experienced challenging moments during this year so that our moments of joy have been less than usual. May Advent be for us, as Christians, a reminder of the joy that Jesus brings to us.



**Sunday, December 20 :: Fourth Sunday of Advent :: Emmanuel: Bringing Love (Luke 1:26-38)**

Mary, a young virgin woman, received an angelic visit announcing that she would be a mother of the Son of God. How could that be possible? We can imagine her surprise and fear after this unexpected news. She was not yet married to Joseph. Therefore, she was facing disgrace and dishonor with her family and society. But she trusted the Lord and became a vessel of God's love for humanity. Mary shows love, courage, and faith in a moment of uncertainty. Emmanuel (God with us) comes to us, bringing us love. How do we manifest love during undefined times? May Advent be a season for us to meditate on the multiple expressions of love so we can give and receive from God and others.

**Thursday, December 24 :: Christmas Eve :: Emmanuel: God With Us (Luke 2:1-7)**

Today, we come to the climax of the Christmas story, when Christ the child is born. The Promised Messiah, announced in prophetic books, is now with us and among us. The One who people waited for so long. He is not fiction anymore. He is at hand: "the Word became flesh." All the familiar characters converge on this one scene to give honor to the Christ Child. The King of kings and Lord of lords is born in a humble manger, a manifestation of God's love. As the song says: "God is here today, as certain as the air I breathe, as certain as the morning sun that rises, as certain when I sing you'll hear my song."

**Sunday, December 27 :: First Sunday after Christmas Day :: Emmanuel: Bringing Salvation (Luke 2:21-40)**

Today, we get a glimpse into the life of Jesus as a child. We are in that in-between time of Christmas and New Year with a change of perspective and focus, especially after a challenging pandemic season. This has been a time in which we have learned about social distancing and wearing masks, among many other new norms. Many of us are probably waiting for a new year, new resolutions. We reflect on what has happened in the past year, try to resolve our regrets, and look forward to the coming year, with the hope of having new opportunities. Our story tells us about two elderly people, Simeon and Hannah, who were waiting to meet the Messiah, the Savior. They were old and tired, but Jesus brings them a new opportunity to be spiritually refreshed. May this Sunday, the last Sunday of the year, also be a time to remember that Christmas is not over, and that Emmanuel (God with us) is bringing salvation to all, with new opportunities, and new beginnings.



# Revealing

a faithful step for a new year

A writer begins writing a book with the expectation of a good ending. This ending is uncertain because there are many chapters to write, many words to say, and many opinions to give. However, the only way to know the final result of this writing is by writing it first. This needs to be done with confidence, sincerity, and personal truth, understanding that the readers will like or dislike our writing depending on their own expectations.

We are all called to write our own book of life. Some of us decide to live our lives close to God and be guided by God's grace in every single decision. Others believe that this is "their life," and they are the ones who make all decisions and the ones who build their destiny.

A New Year is a time of "resolutions," when many people begin writing a new chapter in their lives. We don't know what the new chapter will bring to our lives or how it will end. Most of us are finishing 2020 with a myriad of different feelings. COVID-19 is regulating our life norms, there is a newly elected president in our nation, and there are many other uncertainties for this new year. But what we do know is that God will be with us in every written word of the chapter. How are we planning to write this new chapter in our lives? Is God part of our book?

There is no better time for us to begin a new chapter in our lives more than the season of Epiphany. The term epiphany means "to show" or "to make known" or even "to reveal." In Western churches, it remembers the coming of the wise men bringing gifts to visit the Christ child, who, by so doing, "reveal" Jesus to the world as Lord and King.

"Revealing" is the main word for this season of Epiphany. During this sermon series we will reveal our intention to experience new things. We will reveal our desire to remember the past but be hopeful for a unique present and future. This means we need to be always open to new opportunities, to be aware of the presence of the Lord in everything we will do and experience. And we will keep pressing on in our faith in Christ until we are able to reveal ourselves and understand what it means to be children of God. "Why you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes." (James 4:14)



**Sunday, January 3 :: Epiphany Sunday :: Revealing Newness (Isaiah 43:14-19a, Rev. 21:5b)**

John refreshes Jesus' words in the book of Revelation when He says: "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." Beginning a new year means writing another chapter in our lives. It means that God is giving us a unique opportunity to start over because "all things are new." But it also means new things will be revealed during this new journey of faith. We will experience similar things, but it is a new year, new ideas will come with it. However, there is only one requirement in this new beginning. And this is to be guided by God from the beginning to the end. Are we willing to begin this New Year 2021 in God's Name?

**Sunday, January 10 :: Baptism of Jesus ::  
Revealing and Remembering (Ezekiel 36:24-32 / Revelation 2:5a)**

God promised to restore Israel, not physically but spiritually. To accomplish this, God would give them a new heart for following him and put his Spirit within them to transform them and empower them to do his will. A new year brings new experiences, which include decisions to make. It is always important to "remember" what we have done previously, to be sure that we are not going to commit or make the same mistakes. As we examine our lives, we may find that we, too, have lost our sensitivity to specific errors. But if we measure ourselves against God's standards of right living, we will be ashamed. To regain sensitivity, we must recognize our wrongdoing for what it is, feel sorry for displeasing God and ask his forgiveness. The Holy Spirit will guide us, making us responsive and receptive to God's truth.

**Sunday, January 17 :: Second Sunday after Epiphany ::  
Revealing Openness (Rev. 3:7-13)**

Jesus declared (John 10:9), "I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he shall be saved and shall go in and out, and find pasture." and "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me." We must preach that Jesus is the unique Son of God and Savior of the world. The message that Christ is the only way of salvation has never been popular with the world. It is even less popular today. Jesus is the only way because He is the only one who could atone for sin. After all, Jesus, the Son of God, died in our place. A new chapter in the book of our lives means "to be always open." This openness is based on recognizing Christ as our Lord and Savior. There will be moments during the year in which we will be lost, insecure, and doubtful, but it is there when we need to believe in Jesus and put our trust in Him, and, as servants of the Lord, to proclaim this message with full confidence and faith.





**Sunday, January 24 :: Third Sunday after Epiphany :: Revealing Awareness (Genesis 28:10-21)**

Jacob has a unique promise from God to bring him back home. It is a promise that speaks to Jacob's exceptional circumstances of being a man on the run. When Jacob awoke from his dream, not only the place has been changed by God's presence, but also he is a changed man. A new chapter in our lives means to be "aware." It means to be conscious that God is ever-present, no matter what. However, it also means being willing to seek him. And to be aware that even in the most challenging times of the year, when we feel hopeless or running away from God, God is present with us.

**Sunday, January 31 :: Fourth Sunday after Epiphany :: Revealing Consistency (Phil. 3:12-21)**

Paul's goal is to know Christ fully, and he will experience this only in the resurrection.

Paul also shares in his sufferings, and by doing so, he will, in some way, attain the resurrection. Not that he will earn salvation through his sufferings, but that through faith, he is united to Christ, including his crucifixion and death. As a new chapter is revealed in our lives also means to "keep pressing on." Knowing that we will be blessed during the year not because we deserve it, but because of God's grace. Our goal is to be like Christ more and more, despite our humanness.

**Sunday, February 7 :: Fifth Sunday after Epiphany :: Revealing Fearlessness (Deuteronomy 31:1-8)**

When Israel arrived at the Promised Land, they sent out twelve spies. Two of them came to give an excellent report on the land. Still, the other ten of the spies were fearful. They gave a bad report because they were dismayed at the inhabitants. Their fear was highly contagious and caused the nation to not cross over and take it. Anyone who has ever moved or made a major change in life has experienced this type of fear. The underlying principles of God's being with you, and even better, "the Lord...goes before you," should give you more peace of mind about this new chapter in life. Just think about it; He already knows the future and has "spied out" what's ahead in time.

**Sunday, February 14 :: Transfiguration Sunday :: Revealing and Being Amazed (Mark 9:2-9)**

The story of the Transfiguration is located almost exactly at the mid-point of this Gospel. Along with Peter's confession (8:29), the Transfiguration is the turning point of Jesus' ministry. Until now, Jesus has been teaching and healing. Now he will begin his journey to Jerusalem, where he will die. This is the last sermon of our sermon series, the end of the season of Epiphany. It is in the transfiguration experience that Jesus reaffirms his identity, reveals his glory, and calls the disciples to listen to him. As Christians, we are also invited to be exposed, exposed to announce to others who Christ is to us. It is not until we do this that we will be recognized for what we say we are.



# CHARLTON CHIMES

2020 Winter Update

**Following the request of our bishop and medical professionals, all indoor worship services have been cancelled thru January 3, 2021. The Administrative Council will reconvene at the beginning of the year to determine if we can return to live worship on January 10th. The health and safety of our church family is our top priority during this time. A copy of the bishop's letter is included on the next page.**



We invite you to join us online for worship each week. You can find our services on our church website ([www.charltonchurch.org](http://www.charltonchurch.org)) or by going to our church's Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/charltonchurch](http://www.facebook.com/charltonchurch)).

In addition to our Sunday morning worship service, we will also be posting a Children's Chat on Tuesday, a reflection by the pastor on Thursday, and a mini-concert from the sanctuary on Friday evenings.

Our services will be available on DVD for those who do not have internet access. If you do not have a DVD player, we can make arrangements for you to borrow one from the church. We have volunteers who are willing to help get the players hooked up.

If you would like to receive a DVD or need to borrow a DVD player, please contact the church office.



## **DRIVE-IN SERVICE - 6 pm Christmas Eve**

Join us for a service of carols and a message from the pastor. Listen to the service from the safety and warmth of your car. Please pull into the Mountain Road parking lot, and follow the direction of the ushers.

## **OUTDOOR SERVICE - 8 pm Christmas Eve**

Bundle up and join us for a short 20-minute service of carols, message, and candlelight as we stand socially-distanced in the Mountain Road parking lot. Please park in the Jonestown Road lot.

## **COMMUNION - 10 pm Christmas Eve**

Join us online for a 20 minute service of holy communion. Be sure to have your bread and juice ready.

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
HARRISBURG AREA—SUSQUEHANNA CONFERENCE



Office of the Bishop

November 30, 2020

*The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined. (Isaiah 9:2)*

Dear Sisters and Brothers of the Susquehanna Conference,

Grace to you in the name of Jesus Christ, Prince of Peace, Healer of our Brokenness, and Hope of the World!

As we experience every year, Advent is a season of waiting. When Luke tells the story of Christmas, he first reminds us of John the Baptist's birth. Zechariah has waited many years for a child. He is an old man when he learns that he will have a son, one with a special mission. Soon thereafter Mary hears that she, too, will bear a child, who will be called the Son of the Most High (Luke 1:32). And then follows more waiting.

This entire year has felt like one endless wait. For many it has been spiritually draining. Yet God's people have been here before, and each time, God has brought us to a new place of promise and hope.

We are all keenly aware that the numbers of COVID-19 cases are still increasing rapidly. Many of the hospitals throughout Pennsylvania and our country are experiencing a serious rise in admitting COVID patients. Our district superintendents are reporting that more and more of our pastors and laypeople have tested positive for COVID. As health officials strongly believe that even more people will succumb to COVID during this post-Thanksgiving season, the full Cabinet and I are deeply troubled and greatly concerned for the health and safety of our people.

**This is a very grave situation that requires a sacrificial response. For your safety and that of your friends, family, and neighbors, I, as bishop, along with the full Cabinet urge you to not conduct indoor in-person worship or gatherings for the rest of the year.**

My sisters and brothers in faith, I know this is very difficult to hear. I know that not everyone wants to pause in-person worship, especially during Advent. Calls for a temporary break from public gatherings may feel like a threat to our religious freedom. But now we must put our preferences aside and do what is best for our faith communities and the larger communities in which we live.

We must work together to stop the spread of this disease. We must do all that we can to make sure that more people do not fall victim to COVID. I firmly believe this is our calling, for such a time as this.

You have done ministry in wonderful ways during this pandemic, such as through online worship, Bible study, and ministry, as well as outdoor opportunities for worship and ministry. Please continue those excellent expressions of faithfulness while not meeting in person indoors.

The Psalmist says, "Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes in the morning" (Psalm 30:5). It feels like we are in a dark night of COVID. However, our God has not abandoned us. God is providing new and different ways to be in ministry. The joy of gathering together will come again. But for now, I implore you to suspend indoor in-person worship and gatherings.

God's light through Jesus Christ our Savior shines bright on us. May our light so shine to all people that they see that we care for them deeply; so deeply that we are willing to pause in-person gatherings as a sign of our love of God and neighbor as we keep whispering hope.

In Ministry with You, † Jeremiah J. Park

## The Sanctuary Is Open!

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Do you need some quiet time during this hectic season? During this time that we are closed for indoor worship, we will have the sanctuary open on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 10 am to 1 pm, and Tuesday evenings from 5 to 7 pm, for those who would like to spend a few moments in meditation and prayer.



## Program Updates

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We are asking for all Sunday School classes and fellowship groups to take a holiday break until the new year or meet online during this time.

Giving Grace and Helping Hands will continue to operate on a drive-thru basis.

Any other essential ministry of the church that needs to meet is asked to be diligent on wearing masks and observing social distancing.

## Sight and Sound Presentation

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Sadly, we will not be able to host the viewing of the Sight and Sound Christmas program as planned. However, you have the opportunity to watch from home! Simply go to [www.sight-sound.tv](http://www.sight-sound.tv) and sign up for the Voices of Christmas program. They request a modest \$15 donation.

## **They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love**

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One of the most difficult things to navigate over these last several months has been how groups, such as churches, make important decisions when people have varying perspectives on how to respond to a pandemic.

Keeping to our Wesleyan tradition, we begin from a place of "Do No Harm", striving to do what is best for the entirety of our church family. It is certainly not an easy decision to cancel Christmas Eve services in our sanctuary.

Our Administrative Council remains committed to following the advice of medical experts that is it important to maintain social distance of 6 feet from one another and the necessity to wear masks, especially when you cannot maintain social distancing. Together, we can get through this pandemic as a family of faith as we care for one another during difficult days.

# Advent Devotional

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2020**

*"I will greatly rejoice in the Lord,  
my soul shall be joyful in my God."*

- Isaiah 61:10



Happy New Year! Today, the first Sunday of Advent, is the first day of the new liturgical year. As we begin this time of waiting and preparation for the celebration of the birth of Christ, let us do so with joyful hearts, remembering the depth of God's love for us.

*Holy God, help me to grow closer to You during this season of waiting and preparation. Amen.*

**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2020**

*"Every good and perfect gift  
comes down from the Father."*

- James 1:17



Material gifts are plentiful at Christmas but the real ones are the ones that touch the heart — the gathering of families, the greetings of friends, the birth of Jesus, the love of God. Be sure to take the time to appreciate these wonderful gifts as we experience them this holiday season.

*Holy God, open our eyes and hearts so that we recognize the true gifts of Christmas. Amen.*

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2020**

*"Pray constantly; and for all things  
give thanks; this is the will of God  
for you in Christ Jesus."* - 1 Thessalonians 5: 17-19



This is the busiest time of the year. Why not make prayer a part of it? Whether you're buying gifts or wrapping them, making cookies or cleaning house, spend that time praying for the people the gifts are for, or for giving thanks for the many blessings we enjoy.

*Holy God, help me develop a heart of thankfulness, compassion and concern for others. Amen.*

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2020**

*Jesus said, "I am the light of the  
world. Whoever follows me will  
never walk in darkness, but will  
have the light of life."* - John 8:12



In this season of lights, let them be a constant reminder of the presence of Christ all around us. May each light bulb we see this Christmas remind us that Jesus is the light of the world.

*Holy God, may Your light shine in my life that others may come to know You more fully. Amen.*

### THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2020

*“Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit. The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him.” – Isaiah 11:1-2a*



The Old Testament prophecies remind us that God had a plan for the birth of Jesus. It’s important to remember that the Scriptures also tell us that God has a plan for our lives as well. Rest assured that God keeps his promises.

*Holy God, I give You thanks for having a plan for my life. Help me to be patient and have trust in You to see it through. Amen.*

### FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2020

*Dear children, let us not merely say that we love one another; let us show the truth in our actions. – 1 John 3:18*



Christmas is the celebration of Jesus’ birthday. What are you giving him this year? Forget the 12 days of Christmas. Why not consider giving him a gift every day this Advent season by making an effort to do an act of kindness.

*Holy God, open my eyes to see how I can bring a smile to someone’s face each day. Amen.*

### SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2020

*“To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.” – Ecclesiastes 3:1*



Advent is not only a season of preparation, it is also a season of waiting. And while it is the season that leads to Christmas, it’s important to remember that we’re not just preparing and waiting for our holiday celebrations. Advent is the time we also prepare our hearts and joyfully wait for the return of Christ in glory. Are you ready?

*Holy God, may our preparations and waiting help us draw closer to You during this Advent season. Amen.*

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2020

*“Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way.” – Matthew 1:18*



On this second Sunday of Advent, let us begin to look at the nativity story anew. Each time you see a picture, portrayal or artistic rendering of the Christmas story, prayerfully consider how you might fit into the story ... or how the story fits into your life today.

*Holy God, as the Christmas story unfolds before me, help me to see a new perspective that may change how I live my life. Amen.*

### MONDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2020

*“And the angel came to Mary and said, ‘Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.’” – Luke 1:28*



Do you see yourself in Mary? Has God seen something in you that perhaps you have not seen yourself? Has God called you to do something that goes against what you had planned for your life? Though the future may seem uncertain or even scary, remember that ‘the Lord is with you’!

*Holy God, help me to be like Mary, who trusted in You enough to follow where You led. Amen.*

### TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2020

*An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, ‘Do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.’” – Matthew 1:20*



Do you see yourself in Joseph? Has your life been turned upside down due to circumstances beyond your control? The first thing the angel said to Joseph, and to us today, is ‘do not be afraid’. Are you ready for the journey that God has planned for you?

*Holy God, help me to be like Joseph, who had the courage to journey difficult days with Your guidance. Amen.*

### WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2020

*“And the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people.’” – Luke 2:10*



Do you see yourself in the angel? Has God called you to share the good news of great joy to all people? Are you willing to be a messenger of God’s love and light wherever you are ... at home, at work or even in the mission field?

*Holy God, help me to be like the angel, who can share Your message of hope and joy with Your children everywhere. Amen.*

### THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2020

*“In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.” – Luke 2:8*



Do you see yourself in the shepherds? It is important to remember that the first people to hear about the birth of the Messiah were not what many would consider ‘successful’ people. The shepherds were everyday, common laborers, who left their livelihood in search of the infant Messiah.

*Holy God, help me to be like the shepherds, willing to give up the things most important to me, to find what is truly important. Amen.*

### FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2020

*“On entering the house, they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.” – Matthew 2:11*



Do you see yourself in the Magi? What lengths are you willing to go to worship the Lord? The Magi offered precious gifts that surely allowed the holy family to survive. Are you willing to share your treasures that others might live?

*Holy God, help me to be like the Magi, who gave of their own possessions to help others. Amen.*

### SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2020

*“Mary gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.” – Luke 2:7*



Do you see yourself in the innkeeper? Do you find yourself closing doors or finding room in your life for friends and strangers who are experiencing difficult times?

*Holy God, help me to be like the innkeeper, who went beyond what was expected to help someone in need. Amen.*

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2020

*“And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good news of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.’” – Luke 2:10-14*



*Holy God, help me to discover how these words of the angels are relevant to my life today. Amen.*

### MONDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2020

*“And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good news of great joy, which shall be to all people.” – Luke 2:10*



Just as the angel had with Joseph, the first thing the angel said to the shepherds and to Mary was “Fear not.” That same message is given to us today. Fear not! Whether your life is at peace, or whether it seems out of control, we are encouraged to stand assured that God is with us.

*Holy God, give me the courage to trust in You, that I can learn to live without fear. Amen.*

## TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2020

*“And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good news of great joy, which shall be to all people.” – Luke 2:10*



So why should we live without fear? Because we have been given good news of great joy! The Messiah didn't come as a messenger of doom and gloom; Jesus came that we may experience God's love, peace, hope, and joy more fully!

*Holy God, teach me to live with the love, peace, hope, and joy that you intend for me to have. Amen.*

## WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2020

*“And the angel said to them ... for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.”*

– Luke 2:11



The good news delivered to those shepherds is the good news of the gospel – that the Messiah had come. And just as we would spread the news to our family and friend if we had won the lottery, we should be just as excited to share the good news of the gospel during this Christmas season.

*Holy God, help me see how I can share the good news of the gospel to all I encounter. Amen.*

## THURSDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2020

*“And this shall be a sign; you shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.” – Luke 2:12*



Were the shepherds surprised that the sign they were given was a simple babe lying in a manger? God continues to give us signs ... holy nudges ... of opportunities where we can reach out and make a difference in the lives of people around us. Be ready to respond with kind words or a listening ear.

*Holy God, help me sense those times I can make a difference in the life of a friend or stranger. Amen.*

## FRIDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2020

*“And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will among all people.’” – Luke 2:14*



During these holy-days, let us keep focused on the 'reason for the season' and make worship a priority in our lives. And may our song be that of the angels, “Glory to God in the highest!”

*Holy God, may the worship and thanksgiving of my heart be never ending. Amen.*

## SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2020

*“And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will among all people.’” – Luke 2:14*



The last phrase of the angel's proclamation is directed to each of us today. Jesus came not only to give a promise of peace, he came to bring it! The peace of Christ is given to all who will claim it and make it a part of their life. Remember, 'let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me!'

*Holy God, help me to make Your peace a part of my life, and give me the wisdom to practice it daily. Amen.*

## SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2020

*“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” – Philippians 4:13*



The Christmas season is difficult for many people, and they find it hard to be “merry”. Our Scriptures remind us that, no matter what is happening in your life right now, you will survive because Christ will give you the strength. This is the HOPE that the Christ Child came to bring.

*Holy God, I give You thanks knowing that You will lead me through my life's journey. Amen.*



## MONDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2020

*“Be still, and know that I am God.”*

– Psalm 46:10



It's crunch time. Time will be a precious commodity in the coming days. But in our Advent journey this week, we must take time to pause ... to be still and feel God's presence. Remember that the Christ Child came to bring PEACE.

*Holy God, send the peace that only You can give, and help me to honor this precious gift. Amen.*

## TUESDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2020

*“Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, rejoice!”* – Philippians 4:4



They say you need to do something over and over again to make it a habit. Since Christmas is a time of joy for many people, perhaps we all should use this time to practice being of good cheer and rejoicing at all times. It doesn't matter if things are going your way or not, look around you and find a reason to rejoice. The Christ Child came to bring JOY.

*Holy God, help me to develop an attitude and discipline for rejoicing at all times. Amen.*

## WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 23, 2020

*“In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.”* –

Philippians 4:6



As we develop a discipline of rejoicing, let us also follow the Scriptural direction to lift our hearts to God with thanksgiving. Resist the temptation to focus on the negative things around us. Instead, let us focus on our many blessings and develop a spirit of thankfulness to guide our daily life. This positive attitude will help us share the LOVE that the Christ Child came to bring.

*Holy God, help me develop a spirit of thankfulness that can make me be a better follower of Your Son. Amen.*

## THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2020

*“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”* – John 1: 1,4,5



We live in difficult and dark times. Watching the daily news can be frustrating and depressing. But know this ... the darkness of this world cannot, and will not, overcome the Light of the World whose birth we celebrate this Christmas season.

*Holy God, fill me with Your light, that I may carry it with me wherever I go. Amen.*



## FRIDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2020

*“For God so loved the world that he sent his only Son, that whoever believes in him will not die, but will live forever.”* – John 3:16

As our Advent journey comes to a close, let us remember this: that God loves YOU so much that he sent his Son to be Emmanuel, which means 'God with us'. The One who was with God from the beginning came to live as one of us, to teach us, to restore us, to forgive us, to save us. O come, let us adore him!

*Holy God, thank You for giving me the greatest Christmas gift ever given. Amen.*

# JOIN THE INREACH MINISTRY

The word 'outreach' is a familiar word at Charlton Church. For over 200 years, the Charlton family has made the support of missions, both local and worldwide, a top priority. But the world 'inreach' might be new to many of you.

Many mission 'outreach' programs are born out of the commitment to the gospel mandate to "go and make disciples".

But what does it mean to "go and make disciples"? Is it simply a command to leave wherever you are at and convert people to Christianity? To travel to the ends of the earth to teach people about God? The answer to those questions may be "Yes, but ..."

The concept of an 'inreach' ministry reminds us that we still have the mandate to make disciples of the people who are already part of our church family. "Discipleship" isn't something that is attained when you join a church. It is a lifelong journey, with ups and downs.

A large part of an inreach ministry is the care and support of the church fellowship. And during times like this, when people are so isolated, it is extremely important to keep our church family connected with one another.

We are assembling a team of compassionate individuals who want to help us ensure that our church family is connected and cared for. If you'd like to learn more about our inreach effort, please contact the church office. We have some great things planned for this Christmas season, so be sure to join the inreach team!



## *Season's Greetings*

*Be sure to remember the following persons when you are sending out your Christmas cards.*

Janet Cunningham  
3525 Candy St. Apt. 105  
Harrisburg, PA 17109

Fay Dunkle  
1901 North 5th Street #112  
Harrisburg, PA 17102

Tamra Foltz  
5608 Devon Drive  
Harrisburg, PA 17112

Skip and Dennis Heimbaugh  
394 Village Blvd.  
Mifflintown, PA 17059

Catherine King  
Frey Village Rm 133W  
1020 North Union Street  
Middletown, PA 17057

Kathryn Martin  
999 W. Harrisburg Pike  
Middletown, PA 17057

Fran Kimberlin  
4700 Oakhurst Blvd. #219  
Harrisburg, PA 17110

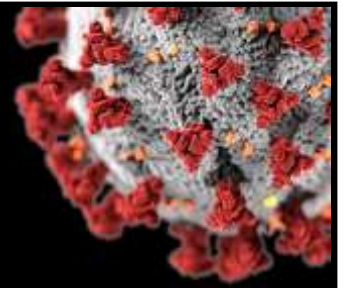
Mary Miller  
1579 English Drive  
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055

Zoe Mumford  
Crossings at West Shore  
1910 Technology Parkway  
Mechanicsburg, PA 17050

Sig Sunday  
Country Meadows  
Building 4 #225  
4905 E Trindle Road  
Mechanicsburg, PA 17050

Don and Judith Willow  
459 Sand Hill Rd. Apt. 638  
Hershey, PA 17033

# COVID-19 UPDATE



As the covid numbers continue to rise, many churches are already canceling in-person worship. It is our hope that we can continue to offer live worship services during the Advent and Christmas season, and therefore urge you to observe our “Charlton Covid Courtesies” while at church:

*Love Your Neighbor: Wear a Mask*

*Maintain Social Distance: Keep 6 feet of Love between Yourself and Others*

*Don't Gather in the Church Lobby or Hallways*

## Christmas During the Pandemic

It's not surprising that things will be different this Christmas. However, we're not going to let the pandemic cancel all of our normal activities. We will, however, make changes to those programs to ensure the safety of our church family.



### CHRISTMAS CARDS

We will not have a table available for you to share your Christmas Cards. In its place, we will print and distribute a Charlton Christmas Card. Everyone is encouraged to participate by writing up a short note to share with your church family. It might be a greeting, a line of poetry, or even an update on what you have been doing during this pandemic. You can drop off your greeting in the church office, you can place with your offering, or you can email it to [christmascard@charltonchurch.org](mailto:christmascard@charltonchurch.org). Please do so by December 6th.

### CHRISTMAS COOKIE EXCHANGE

Many of our homebound members look forward to the cookie tray they receive each year. This year, we encourage you to drop off a plate of cookies on Sunday, December 6th. A volunteer will then take these cookies and create platters that will be delivered to them.

# CHARLTON CHURCH HAS

## **GIVING GRACE and HELPING HANDS are GOING STRONG!**

While the pandemic continues, our Giving Grace and Helping Hands programs are operating as a drive-thru. The pandemic has created an even greater need for assistance in our community and Charlton Church has been there to be the heart and hands of Christ to those in need.

Pastor Miguel, Bob and Bette Baker, and Mark Holmgren would like to thank all of you for your continued support of these important ministries. They especially appreciate the willingness of our volunteers to do whatever is needed to make the programs a success.



Although we didn't fill shoeboxes this year, we collected donations that allowed for 100 Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes to be filled!

**THANK YOU** to everyone who donated yarn and completed items to God's Hands @ Work. A total of 902 hats/headwear/scarves/mittens, 79 dishcloths/hotpads, 55 baby blankets and sweaters, 17 prayer shawls, 5 full-sized afghans, and 21 lap blankets were delivered to individuals experiencing difficulties, as well as organizations including Foose Elementary, Tri County School, Lawton Elementary, PA Wounded Warriors, Neighborhood Center, Bethesda Mission, and Morning Star Pregnancy Center.

# S A FOR MISSIONS

## MONTHLY MISSIONS of CHARLTON CHURCH

DECEMBER 2020: The recipient of the December 2020 mission offering is Bethesda Mission. For over 100 years, Bethesda Mission has been making a difference in the lives of homeless men, women and children in the Harrisburg area.

JANUARY 2021: The recipient of the January 2021 mission offering is the Central PA Food Bank. It is important to note that the organization is not a food pantry, where people in need go to get food assistance. Food banks are organizations that gather and collect food that is provided to local food pantries for distribution. As a food bank, their purchase power will allow our donations to buy more food than a local organization would be able to.

FEBRUARY 2021: The recipient of the February 2021 mission offering will be our own Giving Grace program that provides basic household goods that local food pantries do not provide. Giving Grace currently serves around 75 families from our community each month.

### 2021 MONTHLY MISSION SCHEDULE

**January— Central PA Food Bank**

**February—Giving Grace**

**March—Bishop's Mission/UMCOR**

**April—Helping Hands of Charlton**

**May—World Vision**

**June—Neighborhood Center**

**July—Transport for Christ**

**August—Someone To Tell It To**

**September—Arenas Scholarship**

**October—Benevolent Fund**

**November—Christmas Blessing**

**December—Bethesda Misison**

*You may notice that Operation Christmas Child will not be a monthly mission in 2021. The Ministry Council wants to reassure you that we will be filling shoeboxes next fall; we are simply taking on some new efforts for our monthly mission offerings.*

## CHARLTON WINDOW PORTRAITS

A large framed picture of Charlton's stained glass window was given to Pastor Les upon completing his pastorate at our church. We are pleased to announce that we will be selling these pictures in a 12 inch x 12 inch frame to benefit our debt reduction. They will be \$40 each. You may order a picture by contacting the church office either by email or phone. Order now to receive your picture by Christmas.



*If you are interested in purchasing one of these pictures but are currently experiencing financial difficulties and cannot afford the \$40, please contact the church office and we can sell it to you at cost.*

***I work with a friend who is Seventh Day Adventist and is rather religious. I was surprised to hear that they do not celebrate Christmas. Why is that?***



Ask the  
**PASTOR**

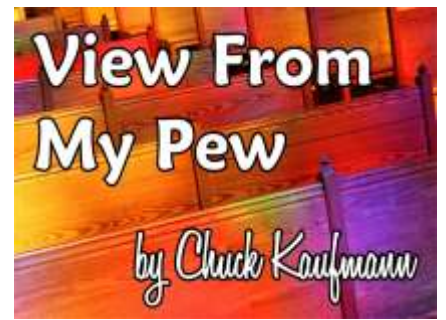
Seventh-Day Adventists do not celebrate Christmas for two main reasons: First, the date of December 25 is not biblical. That is, it does not appear in any account in the Bible. Everything would indicate that Jesus was definitely not born on December 25. It is highly unlikely that Jesus was born at the end of December. According to Luke 2:8, the shepherds were spending the night in the field, which was not done in winter. Second, they consider this holiday to be rather pagan. It is interesting to note that December 25 already existed as a birth holiday before the coming of Jesus. It corresponded in the Julian calendar to the winter solstice. Hence the Romans celebrated the day of the birth of the undefeated Sun on that day.

Consequently, Christmas is not celebrated by Seventh-Day Adventists. By the way, the "Seventh Day" means keeping SABBATH as the Lord's day, according to Jewish ordinance. In fact, the Sabbath is the only holy day that the Seventh Day Adventists will officially celebrate. Interesting, right?

***If you have a question for Pastor Miguel, please email it to [newsletter@charltonchurch.org](mailto:newsletter@charltonchurch.org) or turn it into the church office.***

How is it with your soul?

This is a very busy time of the year for many people. And while it is a time of year that many people enjoy, it surely does seem to bring out the worse in some people. This year, the stress of decorating, buying and wrapping gifts, baking and other chores is mixed with the frustration of not knowing how “to do” Christmas in the midst of a pandemic. I have been reflecting on how all of this stress has been affecting those around me.



Most drivers understand how easy it is to lose control of a car when you’re driving very fast. The faster a car goes, the greater the chance that the slightest error can be catastrophic.

Perhaps it’s the same with our own lives. We get so busy that we’re speeding through life, and it doesn’t take much for us to lose control.

Your child spills something. Your spouse forgets to do something. A co-worker says something in an email. Something doesn’t go the way we want it to. And we lose it.

Our life becomes like a pressure cooker, with all these little things in our life that just continue to build and build until we erupt. We lose our temper. We say something rude, insulting, or profane. Perhaps we even do something we will regret.

This is a perfect example of why it is so important for us to spend time with God ... and I’m not talking about going to church on Sunday. How would your spouse or child respond if you only gave them your attention for one hour each week? I don’t think that would work very well, would it?

Just as we must nurture our important relationships on a daily basis, we must also respect, honor and nurture our relationship with God each day as well. Start your day off by taking 5 or 10 minutes and just “be still” in God’s presence. Perhaps you can use that time to read and pray our Advent daily devotional that is included in this newsletter. You may also want to find another 5 or 10 minutes later in the day to reflect on your day. Where did you see God at work? What are you thankful for? What can you learn from today’s experiences that can make you a better person tomorrow?

Spending time with God on a daily basis can make all the difference in helping you keep focused on what’s important when life seems to get out of control.

**Before you buy a bunch of 'stuff' for family and friends this holiday season, try asking them what they really NEED.**

Maybe they need help with a utility bill, or a car payment, or the rent.

Maybe they need a kid-free night, and could use a free babysitter.

Maybe they could use a homemade meal.

Maybe they need help with gas for their car.

Maybe they need a cup of coffee, and someone to listen.

Maybe they need help making the holidays bright for their children.

Maybe they need help in some other way, but they don't know how to ask for help or are embarrassed to ask.

**Maybe YOU could be the one to give them what they really need this year rather than more 'stuff'.**

Charlton Kitchen is

**OPEN**

**UPDATE:** *The following Soup Sale will be held if we are back “in person” during the month of January.*

### SOUP SALE

We will have a soup sale each week during the month of January. Each week, a different soup will be available for sale on a first come, first serve basis. No pre-orders will be taken, with the only exception being any homebound members who would like to order some soup. Soup will be sold in quarts for \$8.

January 10 — Chicken Corn Soup

January 17 — Beef Vegetable

January 24 — Sausage Tortellini

January 31 — Ham’n’Bean

### EASTER EGGS

We will not make Easter Eggs at the beginning of the year. We will plan to modify our procedures to abide by pandemic guidelines, and will have a limited production of eggs that will begin in March. Many decisions about this process are still to be made, so please keep your eyes and ears open for future announcements.

**In the kitchen**



**with Elaine and Ray Hicks**

### Mexican Shepherd’s Pie

*As found in Allrecipes.com—Makes 8 servings*

- 1 ½ pounds ground beef
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- Garlic powder to taste
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 (14.5 ounce) can diced tomatoes
- 1 (1.25 ounce) package taco seasoning mix
- ¾ cup hot water
- 1 (11 ounce) can whole kernel corn, drained
- 1 (8.5 ounce) package corn muffin mix
- 1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese (Optional)
- 1 (2.25 ounce) can sliced black olives (Optional)

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Spray a 9x13 inch baking dish with cooking spray.

Place the beef and onion in a skillet over medium heat. Cook until beef is evenly brown and onion is tender. Drain grease. Season with garlic powder, salt, and pepper. Mix in the tomatoes, and cook 5 minutes. Stir in the taco seasoning and water. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to low, and continue cooking 5 minutes, until thickened. Transfer to the prepared baking dish, and top evenly with corn.

Prepare the corn muffin mix according to package directions. Spread evenly over the corn layer in the baking dish.

Bake 20 minutes in the preheated oven, or until puffed and golden. Garnish with olives and cheese.



# CHARLTON PRESCHOOL



The month of December will focus on the story of Christmas. We will also learn about different Christmas traditions. There will be reindeer, Santa Claus, gingerbread and angels. Classrooms will be recording songs and plays for their families in place of our usual Christmas Program.

Our Bible lesson in December month is Isaiah 9:6 –"For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace."

In January, we will explore the great outdoors. Some activities for the month include observing the weather, identifying the differences between the four seasons and a look into outer space. Our Bible lesson will be God Made the Heavens.

February is all about love. We will celebrate our love of family, friends and even animals. Classrooms will talk about pets and learn about farm animals, wild animals and animals in the air and sea. Our Bible story discusses how God made all animals.

Thank you to everyone who continues to support the preschool. We appreciate the support of the church and the extra measures being taken to follow our Covid-19 guidelines.



Don't forget to get your grocery gift cards at church, which benefit the preschool. They are available on Sunday mornings and also during weekday office hours. This is an easy way to support the preschool, since everyone is doing a lot of eating while stuck at home!



Need to get out of the house and do something? There are several tasks at the church which you can volunteer to do at your convenience.

With the church not being used all that much over the last several months, we have not yet found a replacement for our custodian. Sommer Garber has been doing a great job keeping our sanctuary and rest rooms clean for our continued use. But many of the other rooms can use a general cleaning. If you're interested in helping in one of these areas, please contact the church office.

## IN SYMPATHY

The sympathy of the congregation is extended to the family of Dora Hoon, who passed away on October 10th, and to the family of Bonnie Schmittel, who passed away on November 4th.

I am deeply touched by how thoughtful you are as I continue my cancer journey. My last scan was very positive and I believe all of your prayers have been truly helpful. You are amazing people!

Caroline Allen

Thank you for your condolences expressed to me in so many ways on the passing of my husband Chuck. I am so grateful for the outpouring of love and support I received from the Charlton family. Thank you for the prayers, phone calls, cards, and attendance at Chuck's visitation and service. A special thank you to Pastor Miguel, Chuck Kaufmann, and Rev. Dann Caldwell for the lovely memorial service they provided honoring Chuck. Your kind expressions of sympathy and thoughtfulness are deeply appreciated and have been a great comfort to me during this difficult time.

Love, Kay

***The staff would like to thank you for the many cards, baked goods, and gifts of appreciation.***

Thank you for all your prayers and cards during the hospitalization and passing of my brother John Kiner in August. We have peace knowing he is in heaven with his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Joan and Jack Bolton

Thank you for the projects that you have given me on Sunday. I enjoy them and they are fun.

Brooklyn Hannon

It is such a blessing to be part of the Charlton family. Thank you so much for the prayers prior to and during my surgery and for a speedy recovery. I truly felt enveloped in prayer as there were no complications and recovery went smoothly. Thank you also for ALL the cards and well wishes and many donations of food. Everything was greatly appreciated.

Marianne Eagle

Thank you for gifting us such a cute and cozy baby blanket. She is definitely a snuggler and loves being wrapped up. We look forward to meeting you all some day. I assume it will only be a few years till she's working the kitchen with the rest of the Stoners.

Ashley, Jason and Addison

Thank you for all the prayers, cards and well wishes during Jeff's recent surgery. He is doing well.

Jeff and Robin Garber

Thank you on behalf of my family, Cathy and me for the cards, donations and words of encouragement you provided during a very difficult time with the passing of my mother, Ruth Malone. We are still struggling and miss her very much. I appreciate the extra effort that was given to our family by Charlton friends and staff after the service.

My family was able to see my Mom in a different way by all of your kind words. She shared some great stories about her experiences in the kitchen at Giving Grace and we can share these in the years to come. She loved Charlton Church and would have been very pleased by all the congregation members that attended her service. She would have been happy with the special music by Nicole and the service planned by Pastor Miguel. Your outpouring of love and prayers helped very much during this very sudden and unexpected loss. Mom died surrounded by her family and knowing she was greatly loved.

Mark and Cathy Malone  
and Ruth's extended family

Thank you to everyone who helped to make pumpkin rolls and fruit cakes; Barb Goss, Joan Bolton, Cindy Killinger, Penny Arnold, Gloria Chmiola, Sherry Baker and Jan Stoner. Thank you also to all who purchased pumpkin rolls and fruit cakes. The profits will go to debt reduction.

Sandy Bovard

# Working on Your Behalf: A Charlton Committees Report

## **From the ADMINISTRATIVE and MINISTRY COUNCILS**

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Most of our work over these past several months have focused on developing and implementing guidelines in response to the pandemic, also ensuring that groups (such as Scouts) are following our procedures.

Creativity has been the buzzword as we have strived to adapt the mission and ministry of Charlton Church to our new reality in 2020.

We would like to sincerely thank each and every one of you for your cooperation and support as we have strived to find new ways of CONNECTING with God and another as we WORSHIP, GROW, FELLOWSHIP and SHARE.

## **From the PASTOR STAFF RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

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As many of you know, Chuck Kaufmann worked here at Charlton Church from 1987 to 1998 as the part-time Director of Music/Worship Arts. From 1998 to 2020, he worked as the full-time Director of Worship Arts and Christian Education at Emmanuel United Methodist Church in Enola.

In 2010, Chuck was invited to return to Charlton on a full-time basis. Though his title has been Director of Worship Arts, a large part of his duties included administrative support for our pastor and the various committees of the church. Some of those responsibilities included preparing the end of year reports for the conference, reviewing financial reports and making recommendations for the yearly budget, and caring for the technical infrastructure of the church (sound and visual equipment, computers, membership and accounting software, church website, etc.)

When Pastor Miguel joined us in July of this year, he was happy to find that Charlton had a strong team of office staff who cared for the mission and ministry of the church. After working with the staff for these last several months, he proposed that the Staff Parish Relations Committee change Chuck's title to officially recognize the work that Chuck does beyond the worship aspect of his position. The Committee concurred and have changed his title to Director of Worship Arts and Administration. This does not add any additional duties to his job description; it is simply a matter of clearly identifying the work he has been doing these past 10 years.

## **From the FINANCE COMMITTEE**

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We would like to thank each of you for your continued and faithful support of the mission and ministry of Charlton Church. Even in the midst of these uncertain times, your financial support of our church remained strong. In fact, your giving during the first five months of the pandemic were stronger than they had been for many months. We have noticed that the giving over these past two months has decreased, but we feel certain that with your continued support during December we will be able to end the year in good standing.

We are currently working on preparing a snapshot of this year's finances that will be available in the next few weeks. We are also working at creating a budget for 2021 that will support the ministry of our church while being respectful stewards of your financial offerings. A full financial report, including the 2021 budget, will be available in January.

# FINANCIAL UPDATE



## GENERAL FUND GIVING

When the pandemic hit in March of this year, church finances became the great unknown. But the Charlton family responded once again with a sign of faithfulness as they sent in their financial support. Our weekly offerings have remained constant throughout the year.

Another thing that has remained constant are our bills. The majority of our financial responsibilities were unaffected by the pandemic, such as our Shares of Ministry (formerly known as apportionments), insurance, utilities, and payroll. Some of our programming costs, such as fellowship dinners have halted completely. Other costs, such as children's activities, have decreased. And other costs, such as mailing and other office-related costs, have greatly increased as we have strived to keep our church family connected during this time.

We can report that, as of the end of November, the financial support of our congregation has covered our monthly expenses. With your continued support during the month of December, we will be able to end the year having paid all our bills, including our Shares of Ministry, in good standing without having to dip into our reserves.

## DEBT REDUCTION GIVING

Although we have not stressed the support of our debt reduction in this past year, the Charlton family has continued to chip away at this debt. As of November 30th, your financial support of our debt reduction has allowed us to pay our yearly interest and to apply \$10,000 to the mortgage principal.

## MISSION GIVING

Charlton has always been a mission-oriented church. And 2020 has been no exception. Your support of the monthly missions is in line with previous years. Thanks be to God!

*Well done, thou good and faithful servant!*

## LOOKING AHEAD

The Finance Committee would normally create a budget for the new year based upon the spending of the current year. It is important to note that a yearly budget is a framework for church finances and not a spending plan. After considering various options for a 2021 budget, the committee decided it would be in the best interest of the church to set a budget based upon the 2020 budget, with the only changes being those we have definite figures for, such as our 2021 Shares of Ministry and payroll costs. The new budget also reflects the changes needed now that we have transitioned from a pastor's housing allowance to providing a parsonage.

The Administration Council has approved the Finance Committee's proposed budget of \$383,480.00, which is a modest 1.6% increase from 2020. Once again, this budget is a framework for our finances and not a spending plan. If you have any questions about the church budget or finances in general, please call the church office and we would be glad to have a discussion with you.

## 2021 CHARLTON CHURCH LEADERSHIP

### ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

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Pastor ..... Rev. Miguel Arenas	Staff Admin ..... Charles Kaufmann
Chairperson ..... Martha Brown (2021)	Lay Leader ..... Debbie Livingston
Vice Chair ..... Tom Schreiber	Lay Delegate ..... Mark Holmgren (2021)
Secretary ..... Kathy Hoover	Lay Alternate ..... Al Goss
Ministry Council Chair ..... Scott Pribanich (2021)	Membership/Communication ..... Marianne Eagle
Finance Chair ..... Heidi Stanalonis (2023)	At Large Member ..... Bette Baker (2021)
Trustee Chair ..... <i>to be elected by trustees in 2021</i>	At Large Member ..... Kathy Hoover (2022)
Staff Parish Chair ..... Caroline Allen (2021)	At Large Member ..... Caroline Wise (2023)

### MINISTRY COUNCIL

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Chairperson ..... Scott Pribanich (2021)	Altar Guild ..... Marjorie Martin
Pastor ..... Miguel Arenas	Children's Ministry ..... TBD
Director of Worship Arts/Admin ..... Chuck Kaufmann	Youth Ministry ..... TBD
Women's Ministry ..... Debbie Livingston	Senior Ministry ..... Ailene Keath
Communications ..... Marianne Eagle	Preschool ..... Trish Wagner

Class of 2021

Leanie Hunt  
Sue Town

Class of 2022

Mark Holmgren  
Sarah Tingley

Class of 2023

Jill Romah  
Anne Shearer

### STAFF PARISH RELATIONS

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Caroline Allen (2021) – Chairperson  
Debbie Livingston – Lay Leader

Mark Holmgren (2023) – Lay Member to Annual Conference  
Pastor Miguel Arenas – Administrative Officer

Class of 2021

Caroline Allen  
Don Hacker

Class of 2022

Eric Miller  
Leslie Whitman

Class of 2023

Sherry Baker  
Ben Wagner

### TRUSTEES

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Chairperson — *elected in 2021*

Pastor Miguel Arenas – Administrative Officer

Class 2021

Marlin Kauffman  
Jay Miller  
Larry Livingston

Class of 2022

George McMillen  
Marcy Miller

Class of 2023

Denise Seiders  
Doug Whitman

### FINANCE

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Heidi Stanalonis (2022) – Chairperson  
Miguel Arenas – Administrative Officer  
Charles Kaufmann — DWA/Administration  
Marianne Eagle – Assistant Finance Secretary

Alice Enterline – Financial Secretary  
Steve Lehnert – Audit Chair  
Debbie Livingston – Lay Leader  
Trustee Representative – TBA

Class of 2021

Mike Barr  
Jim Brown

Class of 2022

Paula Judd  
Darbbie Miller

Class of 2023

Mark Malone  
Heidi Stanalonis

### LAY EMPOWERMENT

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Pastor Miguel Arenas – Chairperson

Debbie Livingston – Lay Leader

Class of 2021

Joan Bolton  
Sandy Bovard  
Nancy Wolf

Class of 2022

Amanda Eshenour  
Barb Goss  
Kay Lengle

Class of 2023

Mary Hoover  
Marjorie Martin

# CHARLTON CHURCH

A United Methodist Community

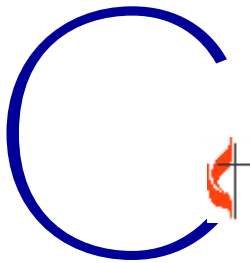
*Where Faith Meets Life*



**Making Disciples of Jesus Christ  
for the Transformation of the World**

5920 Jonestown Road  
Harrisburg, PA 17112

[www.CharltonChurch.org](http://www.CharltonChurch.org)



717.545.2000

[office@charltonchurch.org](mailto:office@charltonchurch.org)

Office Hours are 10AM to 2PM  
Monday-Thursday, Closed Fridays

**Rev. Miguel Arenas**

*Pastor*

[pastormiguel@charltonchurch.org](mailto:pastormiguel@charltonchurch.org)

Cell: 717-250-1012

**Charles J. Kaufmann**

*Director of Worship Arts/Administration*

[chuck@charltonchurch.org](mailto:chuck@charltonchurch.org)

Cell: 717-343-7975

**Marianne Eagle**

*Office Administrator*

[office@charltonchurch.org](mailto:office@charltonchurch.org)

Cell: 717-329-6300

**Trish Wagner**

*Preschool Director*

[preschool@charltonchurch.org](mailto:preschool@charltonchurch.org)

Cell: 717-406-7474

**Debra Hughes**

*Nursery Attendant*

**Wendy Criste**

*Nursery Attendant*

**Martha Brown**

*Administrative Council chairperson*

[churchcouncil@CharltonChurch.org](mailto:churchcouncil@CharltonChurch.org)

**Scott Pribanich**

*Ministry Council chairperson*

[ministrycouncil@CharltonChurch.org](mailto:ministrycouncil@CharltonChurch.org)

**Susan Veli**

*Trustee chairperson*

[trustees@CharltonChurch.org](mailto:trustees@CharltonChurch.org)

**Heidi Stanalonis**

*Finance chairperson*

[finance@CharltonChurch.org](mailto:finance@CharltonChurch.org)

**Caroline Allen**

*SPRC chairperson*

[sprc@CharltonChurch.org](mailto:sprc@CharltonChurch.org)

Want to keep up-to-date on what's happening at Charlton Church?

Be sure to 'like' our page at [www.Facebook.com/charltonchurch](http://www.Facebook.com/charltonchurch)