

TOWER TIDINGS

ADVENT 2023

the weary world rejoices



CELEBRATING ADVENT

DEC 9

A CONCERT OF READINGS AND CAROLS

7:00 pm | The Sanctuary

Kickoff the holiday season as the PCM Chancel Choir joins Music in Somerset Hills Choir for a night of joy!
Tickets available at pcmorrystown.org/carols

DEC 17

CAROLS AND COCOA: OUTDOOR COMMUNITY SINGALONG

4:00 pm | Parish House

Get ready to ring in the holiday season at our annual "Carols and Cocoa" outdoor singalong.

DEC 21

LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE

7:00 pm | The Chapel

A contemplative and reflective gathering that takes place on the winter solstice, designed to provide solace and support for those who find this a difficult time of the year.

DEC 24

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE | 10:00 AM

10:00 am | The Sanctuary

Join us Sunday morning at 10:00 am for a special Christmas Eve worship service.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE | 4:00 PM

4:00 pm | The Sanctuary

Family-friendly service featuring our annual Christmas Pageant, children's choirs, and Ringers on the Green. All children are welcome to participate in the pageant!

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE | 8:00 PM

8:00 pm | The Sanctuary

A beautiful candlelight service featuring the Chancel Choir and Chancel Ringers!

THE WEARY WORLD REJOICES

Reverend Daniel Vigilante, Senior Pastor

DEAR PCM FAMILY,

As the season of Advent begins, Christians turn toward the celebration of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem. This year, our Advent theme is **The Weary World Rejoices**. It comes from a line in the beloved song O Holy Night. For a weary world weighed down by fear and anxiety and violence and sin, Christ's birth signaled a time for rejoicing.

But what does that mean for the weary world, now?

For biblical scholars, it means the finale of an ancient prophetic expectation of a Messiah. For theologians, it means the Incarnation of God – the very Creator of all that is, taking human form. For mystics, it means the Word becoming flesh and dwelling among us. For people living in places of oppression, it means daring to strive for peace. For children, this season means sensing the wonder of a time when dark nights are lit, songs are sung, and joy is in the air.

For Starbucks, it means pouring their coffee into holiday-themed cups. For retailers, it means seasonal workers and a crush of shoppers. For our town, it means hauling out the annual decorations and fixing them to the trees and light poles around the Green.

For PCM, it means Christmas Eve worship (10:00 am, 4:00 pm, and 8:00 pm) and the rehearsals of handbells and choirs to prepare for it. It means readying the Church on the Green to welcome guests to our services and community events, including this year's Concert of Readings and Carols on December 9. It means Carols and Cocoa on the lawn of the Parish House on December 17 and our Longest Night Service in the Chapel on December 21. It means Operation Love and the Gift Bag Program for inmates at the Morris County Correctional Facility.

But what does it mean, to you, that the weary world rejoices?

That's a question I've been asking myself as we prepare for this Advent season. I think the answer lies in the words just before and after... about the thrill of hope heralded by Christ's arrival... for yonder breaks a new and glorious morn. No matter our perspective on this time of year, for "people walking in darkness," our hope for the coming Christ child carries us forward. We move into the night, trusting the dawn will come, and with it, a new day. There is no better time than Advent and Christmas to remember that in the midst of the weariness of the world, **there is always cause to rejoice**.

See you in church – and invite someone to join you!

In Christ's love,
Daniel

THE LONGEST NIGHT

Reverend Audrey Webber, Associate Pastor

FRIENDS,

During this season of Advent, in every aspect of our worship and programming, we are contemplating this concept of “The Weary World Rejoices.” There is undoubtedly much to rejoice about: we are gifted with wonderful family and friends, we have fun and joyful programs we can participate in, and most of us are blessed with homes and delicious food to eat. Other times, each of us has moments where we are feeling more weary than joyful. We are called to name these feelings, especially when we are going through a difficult season of life, perhaps due to the loss of a loved one or job, lack of direction, difficult family relationships, mental illness, or finding yourself at a loss about what to do to help a hurting world.

That is what our Longest Night service is all about.

On December 21 at 7:00 pm, we will have our Longest Night service in the Chapel. The Longest Night service is a contemplative and reflective gathering that takes place on the winter solstice - quite literally the longest night of the year. It is designed to provide solace and support for those who find this a difficult time of the year.

While the holidays are often associated with joy, celebration, and togetherness, many of us experience a sense of loss, grief, or loneliness during this time. The Longest Night service honors these feelings, creating a space to acknowledge this season in our lives. During the service, everyone will be invited to engage in reflection and prayer as we sit together with our weariness. As we name and validate those emotions for ourselves, we invite you to find community with like-minded people.

The Longest Night service is inclusive and open to everyone. It serves as a reminder that, even in the midst of holiday festivities, there is a space for acknowledging and honoring the diversity of our feelings this season.

If you or someone you know may benefit from this service, please consider attending or inviting others to our Longest Night service. All are welcome as we navigate this season together.

Wishing you peace and comfort during this season of Advent.

Blessings,
Audrey

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Bob Spurr | Isaiah 64:1-9

THE WEARY WORLD REJOICES

As we lean into our theme “The Weary World Rejoices” this Advent season, we hope you will include our Advent Devotional as an Advent spiritual practice. This year, we asked a few of our Elders who are rolling off the Session to reflect on our Advent theme. There is one devotional for each week, which includes a meditation, prayer, and activity. Choose one day each week to read the meditation and prayer and do the activity. We hope this devotional will be a blessing to you this season.

- Reverend Audrey

MEDITATION:

The season of giving is upon us, there is conflict in the world, and the needs in our communities near and far are significant. What has been our effort in loving all, and how have we used our gifts to serve the Lord? Consider each day what enriches you spiritually and draws you closer to experiences demonstrating our love and caring for each other. Within our homes and for all those we engage daily, give thanks for the journey is joyful, challenging, and often consumed with periods of loneliness and sadness.

Supporting each other is not something seasonal but a way of life. Share your gifts generously, as it is part of our Christian duty. Our PCM faith community is built on a foundation of serving all. Bring your gifts to share as the needs are plenty, and our community is strong with us all banding together for ALL!

PRAYER:

God of us all, we are so grateful that you call us to be a community. As we enter this season of Advent, may the light of hope guide our hearts, the warmth of love embrace our souls, and the promise of your coming fill us with anticipation and joy as we share our gifts with gratitude for your glory.

Amen.

ACTIVITY:

As we care for each other, create a different kind of advent calendar this year. Instead of the chocolate ones you find at the store, write down on small pieces of paper tasks you could do throughout the Advent season and place them in a jar. Do it with a friend or family member, and take turns picking a task for the day. Name things such as: Compliment someone, make a handmade card for a friend, help with a household chore, leave a positive note for a colleague, smile and say hello to a stranger, bake cookies for a neighbor.

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Robin Ballard | Mark 1:1-8

MEDITATION:

The sacrament of baptism is how we are marked as God's own. John the Baptist acted in fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah by baptizing individuals after they confessed their sins, all while understanding that Jesus was going to be the one to baptize with the Holy Spirit.

As Christians, we all have been baptized and claimed as God's children. We are united with brothers and sisters all over the world who share our beliefs. We have been given the gift of knowing that in our baptisms, we were cleansed of our sins, and there is no sin so great that our Heavenly Father would not forgive us. Let us rejoice in knowing we are saved through the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

PRAYER:

God, thank you for marking us as your children. Help us to be worthy of your grace and to remember the sacrifices made for our salvation.

Amen.

ACTIVITY:

Gather some symbols of your baptism. Light a candle, grab a bowl of water, and find an object which represents when you were baptized. Sit with these objects as you repeat the prayer to yourself. Dip your hand in the water and feel its coolness as you remember that you are marked as God's own this season of Advent.

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Bill SanFilippo | Isaiah 61:1-4

MEDITATION:

Ever since my first job, I always feared making a mistake. I feared getting written up, spoken to, or even fired from the job. When you find yourself a job that matches your passion for helping others and giving back, you tend to give it your all.

One of my first experiences with this was not necessarily a direct impact on me but on those who I led and who trusted me to carry out our community work. During Covid, we were forced to let go of some of our best staff; the staff that used their time, talent, and treasures to carry out the much-needed work in our local communities. They were angry and upset, and they asked God, "Why me?"

Recently, I was reminded again of why we look to Jesus for all these things in our lives, as mentioned in Isaiah's scripture. One of our best employees, who worked 10-14 hour days, missed her kids' sporting events, family time, and time with God, made a mistake, and was let go within hours. Needless to say, she was devastated and hurt.

We learn that God's anointed is sent to the oppressed, to the ones whose hearts are crushed, to the captives, the imprisoned, and to all who mourn. Though unstated, in order to reach those persons, God's anointed must, of necessity, confront the perpetrators and sources of oppression, marginalization, hopelessness, and despair.

In this time of hurt, pain, and reflection, we think of how we are here to help all of God's people. Many of us wrapped our arms around her to make her feel comfort and love. It helped her heal and move on. Through prayer and hard work, she has landed a new job, just weeks later, which allows her to spend more time with family and work fewer hours for the same salary. Good news was delivered to those mourning and seeking hope.

This reminds us that no matter what happens, God has a plan for you and all. In this weary world, there is always hope and things to bring us joy when we trust God.

PRAYER:

Loving God over all creation, many of Your people are mourning today because of abuse and affliction, disease and death, unjust punishments, and evil persecutions. Comfort all who mourn and make us instruments of Your peace. Lord Jesus, come again quickly and make all things right in Your sight.

Amen.

ACTIVITY:

Be a good steward of God this week! Identify someone you know who is struggling, hurting from a mistake they made, or mourning for whatever reason. Reach out to them via call, text, zoom, and letter, and let them know they are part of God's plan and you are here to pray and support them.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS EVE

Elizabeth Annis | Luke 2:1-14

MEDITATION:

I was born in the New York Presbyterian Hospital and raised on the banks of the Hudson River just west of the city in a New Jersey town aptly named West New York. Throughout my life, I lived in the ever-present shadow of New York City. After college, I pursued my dream of attending art school and enrolled at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn. My first job after grad school led me to a small film distributor in the West Village. For the next 13 years, New York City became the epicenter of my world, encompassing my work, leisure, culture, entertainment, friendships, and romances. So, when, after only a year of marriage and just a few months after purchasing a home in Morristown, the devastating events of 9/11 unfolded, I was very affected. It was deeply personal. Everything had changed suddenly and drastically.

In the following weeks, months, and years, I witnessed the incredible power of God to heal all forms of suffering and renew the human spirit. Downtown New York was rebuilt and offered hope and promise. The stories, the memorials, new construction, the sheer wonder of it all—these were testaments to the power of the human spirit. To me, this is the essence of the story of the birth of Jesus Christ.

"Today in the town of David, a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.' Suddenly, a great company of heavenly beings appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.'" Luke 2:11-14

Out of the darkness and despair of those days, a new life began in Morristown. A year later, I became a mother. As New York City rebuilt and regenerated, welcoming new life, our family found its roots in Morristown, and our faith in God continued to grow.

PRAYER:

Dear Heavenly God,

Give me the strength and wisdom to provide a warm, loving and stable home for me today and every day, and the ability to adequately serve with your eyes, ears and voice to continually provide hope, joy, laughter and love for a weary world that needs to be reminded that your presence is a constant source of comfort and guidance, even in the darkest of moments. I pray in Jesus' name, trusting in your unwavering love and grace.

Amen.

ACTIVITY:

Find one person this week to pray for who needs God's peace. Surprise an old friend you haven't spoken to in over ten years with a phone call.

CHRISTMAS DAY

Craig Barth | John 1:1-14

MEDITATION:

Wait a minute! This is a Christmas Day story? Where's "O little town of Bethlehem?" The narrative attributed to John is not a story of where and how but more of why and how come. Each narrative is equally meaningful. I live with these different narratives, not an "either-or/right-wrong" contrast but a "yes-and."

How we are so trained to see the world in "either-or" contrasts! When I was a rambunctious boy, I remember that the words go out and play often meant cowboys and Indians with cap guns! How repugnant that now feels. Though sadly, it continues to this day. All one needs to do is turn on the T.V. or your laptop, and you know in an instant who are spun to be the "good" guys and who spun to be the "bad" guys. Our view of the hurting world is filled with such dichotomies. It is simpler to picture, though not always compassionate.

Our God is a God full of "yes-and." Even in this John narrative, the writer says, "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it." It does not say that the light overtook or obliterated the darkness either. It is not a static picture but a dynamic process. The One True Light shines in the midst of the darkness. Kathleen Thomerson's Hymn "I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light" describes this dynamic tension in the line "The day and the night are both alike." Another example of "yes-and."

Our God narrative is not only replete with yes-and but with surprises as well. Think of the entire Christ birth story: a common, everyday couple placed in a refugee situation, giving birth in a faraway land for them, then having to flee shortly after he was born. Full of surprises!

The Rabbi was not trained in ecclesiastical ways of the established religion but in the trade of carpentry. Full of surprises!

PRAYER:

Gracious loving God, may we not view this world with either/or eyes but with yes/and hearts. As we consume ourselves with Advent and Christmas season, may we be aware of all the little surprises in our comings and goings. May we always remember that you are the Big Surprise for our hurting hearts and a weary world.

Amen.

ACTIVITY:

Surprise someone with an act of kindness and thoughtfulness. If you know someone who likes apple pie, make or get a pie, ring their doorbell and run! Make your surprise a family affair by cutting out a snowflake, glittering it, and mailing it to somebody (return address optional).

JOIN PCM'S CHANCEL CHOIR ON DEC 9

Dr. Matt Webb, Director of Music

WHAT IS THE READINGS & CAROLS CONCERT?

Immerse yourself in the Holiday spirit through the power of words and music! The Somerset Hills Chorus, along with the Chancel Choir of the Presbyterian Church in Morristown, will perform an epic evening concert of Readings & Carols with brass, organ, and percussion. With a special spotlight on Ralph Vaughan Williams' ethereal Fantasia on Christmas Carols, this event will herald in the start of the holiday season with an array of joyous music and heartwarming poetry!

WHY SHOULD I COME TO READINGS & CAROLS?

Whether you're seeking a moment of quiet reflection or boisterous celebration, this enchanting December evening promises to deliver an unforgettable experience. Our carefully curated program will feature captivating readings by renowned authors, poets, and storytellers, all accompanied by beautiful carols and anthems. Don't miss this opportunity to sing loudly along to timeless favorites and be blown away by the sound of our combined choirs!

WHO IS READINGS & CAROLS FOR?

People of all ages will love the Readings & Carols concert. Parents and children will love kicking off the holiday season with a one-hour concert where they can experience musical instruments up close and sing Christmas carols (plus the concert is free for all students!). Youth and adults will enjoy hearing a diverse collection of poetry and literature from the Bible and from authors such as Maya Angelou, Langston Hughes, and Christina Rossetti. Everyone will love hearing familiar Christmas carols and learning new Christmas music that will warm their hearts and feed their souls. The best thing of all is that will be doing this together as a community!

I hope that you will join us on **Saturday, December 9 at 7:00 pm** and that you will invite your family and friends. I promise you that you will leave inspired!

Blessings,
Matt



A Concert of Readings & Carols

December 9, 2023 | 7:00 PM

The Presbyterian Church in Morristown: 57 E. Park Place, Morristown



Tickets On Sale Now:
pcmorrictown.org/carols



CHRISTMAS IS COMING, REJOICE!

Alexandra Mead, Director, Christian Education

Preparing for the upcoming holidays can be an arduous task when the kids still have to get their homework done, get to sporting events, ballet lessons and karate. You are shopping and wrapping, baking and decorating. It is easy to become weary and forget what this holiday is really all about: **That cold winter's night, beneath the star's light; a little One came for the world.**



CHILDREN'S ADVENT PROGRAMS | SUNDAYS AND WEDNESDAYS

Our Sunday school and Midweek children are learning the stories of Jesus' birth: the journey to Bethlehem, the angel's visits, the shining star, the baby! Now is the perfect time to register and have your child be part of the beautiful story of baby Jesus.

Sunday School | Sun | 8:45 - 9:45 am | Howard House

Midweek | Wed | 4:15 - 6:00 pm | Parish House

Register: pcmorrystown.org/children



FAMILY CHRISTMAS CRAFT AND DINNER | DEC 6 | 6:00 PM

Join us Wednesday, December 6 at 6:00 pm for our December All Church Dinner at the Parish House and enjoy a fun angel craft for the children while the PCM family spends time together before the holidays. We hope you can be a part of this very special evening!

Register: pcmorrystown.org/dinner



CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE | DEC 24 | 4:00 PM

We invite all children, grandchildren, cousins, friends, and neighbors to join in the celebration on Christmas Eve at 4:00 pm! Arrive by 3:45 pm to put on a costume and be part of our nativity scene. We have wise men, shepherds, sheep, donkeys, angels, cows, and of course Mary and Joseph. We have costumes for all ages and sizes - the more the merrier! No rehearsal necessary - just the joy of celebrating Jesus!

FOCUSING ON FAITH AND FAMILY

Jeanne Mueller, Director, Presbyterian Church Nursery School

Our Weary World Rejoices!

How true that statement is this year – with the current distressing state of affairs in the world, it might seem hard to imagine rejoicing about anything right now. Yet, we continue on and keep up the traditions of Advent and Christmas for our little ones and keep a focus on faith and family. Bringing peace through our Advent preparation and Christmas celebration can help us rejoice that the hope for peace is something to pray for and believe in.

Our youngest ones can help bring us all the feeling of rejoicing during this season: their little faces when they see a glowing tree, beautiful church services with the sounds of carols and hymns full of faith, following family traditions and activities. These are all reasons to celebrate and rejoice together this season. Young children thankfully don't understand the world struggles we are living through – and I'm sure you would agree that sometimes we can't either. Despite this, we strive to move forward, stay strong, and hope for peace.

Family strength is what will carry weary parents through this season of love and sharing. Your little one's world is really just what is right around them – their family and their community. This Advent, rejoice in your children's innocence and notice their pure delight in all the festive fun and joy of the season. It will surely help the weary adults around these children to rejoice as well in this wonderful season of love and light during a dark time for many.

The Presbyterian Church Nursery School and staff wishes the school and church families a joyous and peaceful Christmas holiday.

Jeanne Mueller and PCNS Staff



OPERATION LOVE: BRING CHRISTMAS CHEER TO NEIGHBORS IN NEED!

Karen Griffith, PCM Outreach Committee Chair

For 39 years, the Presbyterian Church in Morristown and the Church of God in Christ in Morristown have partnered in this Christmas-time effort to bring “comfort and joy” to those in our community who need both.

Please join in the wonderful, fulfilling outreach effort, Operation Love, to help Morris County families and senior citizens celebrate Christmas with food and gifts. To make sure recipients get exactly what they need, we will be giving ShopRite, Walmart, and Five Below gift cards. We need donations of gift cards, and volunteers to pack and deliver the cards in gift bags.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN OPERATION LOVE:



Donate:

- **Now through Sunday, December 10**, purchase \$10, \$15, or \$25 ShopRite, Walmart and/or Five Below gift cards and drop them at the Parish House office Monday – Friday, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm or at Sunday service.
- Give online through Breeze and select “Operation Love” or mail a check to Presbyterian Church in Morristown, 65 South Street, Morristown, NJ 07960 and note “Operation Love” on the memo line.

Wrap Gift Boxes:

- Join other volunteers at the Church of God in Christ to wrap gift boxes Thursday, December 14 and Friday, December 15 from 6:00 – 8:00 pm.

Deliver Gift Bags:

- Help deliver gift bags on Saturday, December 16th, from 8:45 am -12 pm. Meet at the Church of God in Christ.
- Church of God in Christ is located at 3 Rev. G.A. Rogers Way (formerly 3 Rowe St.), Morristown, NJ.

Please let us know if you can pack or deliver gift bags by signing up online by December 3 or by contacting Karen Griffith at kgriffith32@aol.com.

CHAPLAINCY CHRISTMAS GIFT BAG PROGRAM: MORRIS COUNTY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

Julie Hess, PCM Outreach Committee

Want to bring tidings of comfort and joy to a group that is often forgotten? Join PCM in caring for individuals in the Morris County Correctional Facility through the Chaplaincy Program. By purchasing items from the following list, you can provide warmth, support, comfort, and most importantly, an understanding that we are all children of God. **No one is forgotten.**

The Chaplaincy Program of the Morris County Correctional Facility is a nonprofit organization that PCM has sponsored for many years. They supply a Christmas Gift Bag for each inmate that includes basic necessities such as underwear and toiletries. The gift bags are deeply appreciated by the inmates. For many, it is their only contact with the outside world during the holiday season.

We invite you to offer comfort to those in prison this holiday season by purchasing and donating the following items for Christmas Gift Bags for each of the inmates. Please donate **ONLY** these specific items which have been approved by jail security:

- Men's white crew neck t-shirts (large, XL, 2X, 3X)
(NO pockets or V-neck style)
- Men's white briefs (medium, large, 2X, 3X)
- Men's all white crew socks (all sizes, NO stripes)
- Women's white briefs (all sizes)
- Women's white sports bras (all sizes)
- Women's all white crew socks (all sizes, NO stripes)
- Toothpaste
- Conditioner (neutral scents, no pumps)
- Lotion (neutral scents, no pumps)
- Deodorant (unscented or neutral scents)
- Bars of Soap (neutral scents, individually wrapped)



NO gift wrap – just plain, all-white clothing items in original packages!

We encourage you to take a moment to pray before dropping off your donations. Pray for the inmates, their families, the Chaplain, and the Correction Officers, that they might all feel God's peace and love this holiday season.

The donation drive runs now through December 10.

Items can be dropped off in marked bins at the Parish House Monday - Friday, 9:00 am – 3:00 pm, or at Sunday service.

Would you like to help assemble Christmas Gift Bags?

Gift Bag assembly will take place on Monday, December 11, at the Calvary Baptist Church, 10 Martin Luther King Ave., Morristown. To sign up, email Dick Kaller at rwkaller@verizon.net

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

From the PCM Outreach Committee



THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING OUR WINTER COAT DRIVE

From all of us on the Outreach Committee, please accept our heartfelt thank you for the tremendous support to ensure this year's Winter Coat Drive for Table of Hope was a great success! The outpouring of generosity from our congregation, with more than 100 coats donated, enables TOH to outfit both children and adults, many who rely on TOH for their nightly meals and/or food from their food pantry, to have a coat to keep them warm. An outreach program such as this can only happen because of YOU. Thank you for helping to make a difference in the community we serve!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS TO THE FALL FOOD DRIVE

Your generous donations made a difference in the lives of Morris County residents struggling to feed their families and helped them celebrate Thanksgiving with a meal. Through your donations our church community, including the nursery school and children's groups, gave 1,100 pounds of food and over \$3,000 to the Interfaith Food Pantry during our Fall Food Drive. **That is a record amount for the Fall Food Drive** – thanks to you – and the spirit of outreach and giving in our church community.



OUTREACH



REACH OUT!

STEPHEN MINISTERS: MAKING A DIFFERENCE DURING A DIFFICULT TIME

Mikey Knotts, PCM Member & Stephen Minister

You see us in the Narthex every Sunday, each with a small blue name tag that proclaims us to be a **Stephen Minister** or **Stephen Leader**. But what does that mean, and what is our purpose?

It means we are part of our church's **Stephen Ministry**, a team of congregation members trained to provide high-quality, one-on-one, Christ-centered care to people in the congregation and the community who are experiencing life difficulties. All of us have been trained by our Stephen Leaders, Stephen Ministers from our church who have been equipped for this key role through a special training course offered by Stephen Ministries St. Louis.

A Stephen Minister typically has one **Care Receiver** at a time, and meets with that person once a week for about an hour. The caring relationship lasts as long as the need persists.

Stephen Ministers are drawn to this ministry by their desire to make a difference during a time of great need in someone's life. Many of us have been surprised and gratified by the personal and spiritual growth we ourselves have experienced while working with our Care Receiver.

The Stephen Minister/Care Receiver relationship is characterized by complete confidentiality; even other Stephen Ministers do not know the identity of our Care Receiver. And what, exactly, do Stephen Ministers do for Care Receivers? First and foremost, **we listen**, and go from there. If you don't think that sounds like much, think again. I think it's safe to say everyone has been in situations when, however hard we tried, we felt we just weren't being heard. We all know how frustrating that is. Stephen Ministers are trained to be active, involved, and patient listeners.

Mission-focused actions that are central to Stephen Ministry include equipping people to use their gifts in ministry; helping people grow in their faith; providing care and support for hurting people; building up our congregation as a caring community; and reaching out with the love of Jesus Christ.

If you have ideas as to how our Stephen Ministry could reach out to our community, or if you or someone you know may be a potential Care Receiver, please reach out to the Rev. Audrey Webber or a Stephen Leader.

Mikey Knotts

WISHING YOU PEACE AND COMFORT DURING THIS SEASON OF ADVENT

Reverend Audrey Webber, Associate Pastor

We recognize that grief doesn't follow a calendar, and the holidays may intensify the ache of missing a loved one. Our aim is to provide a haven for shared experiences, gentle guidance, and resources that offer comfort and encouragement.

You're not alone in your journey through grief this holiday season. Let this space be a source of comfort, understanding, and resilience as you navigate the bittersweet emotions that may arise. Join us in embracing the possibility of healing, even amidst the holiday lights.



GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP | DECEMBER 7 | 3:00 PM | ONLINE

This is a guided discussion for those grieving the loss of a loved one. If you have been thinking about joining our Grief Group now would be a good time as we engage in topics relating to different parts of our grief journey. This safe space allows for participants to engage as much or as little as they would like. By leaning on our faith and one another, we can learn so much about ourselves through the journey of grief.

Register: pcmorrystown.org/grief



LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE | DEC 21 | 7:00 PM | THE CHAPEL

While the holidays are often associated with joy, celebration, and togetherness, many of us experience a sense of loss, grief, or loneliness during this time. The Longest Night service honors these feelings, creating a space to acknowledge this season in our lives. During the service, everyone will be invited to engage in reflection and prayer as we sit together with our weariness. As we name and validate those emotions for ourselves, we invite you to find community with like-minded people.



SEMINAR: THE GOOD FUNERAL | REPLAY NOW AVAILABLE

Good and funeral may not sound like they go together, but in this seminar (hosted by our Deacons) on funeral planning they most certainly do! No matter what age you are, join us for this seminar on the meaning of funerals and what a funeral plan could look like.

Watch the seminar: pcmorrystown.org/good-funeral

CELEBRATING TOGETHER



ALL-CHURCH DINNER | DECEMBER 6 | 6:00 PM

Let's celebrate the joy of the season together. Join us for our final All Church Dinner of the year - a special holiday meal together with cookie decorating and an angel craft for the kids! Register at pcmorrystown.org/dinner if you plan on coming - all are welcome and we can't wait to see you!

HOLIDAY FELLOWSHIP LUNCHEON | DECEMBER 8 | 12:00 PM

All are welcome to our monthly fellowship luncheons. Stop by the Parish House on December 8 for our Holiday Fellowship Luncheon to meet some new friends and eat some great food. We hope to see you there as we kick off the Advent season!



CAROLS AND COCOA: OUTDOOR COMMUNITY SINGALONG DECEMBER 17 | 4:00 PM

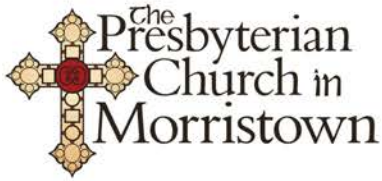
Get ready to ring in the holiday season at our annual "Carols and Cocoa" singalong. It's the most wonderful time of the year, and we're bringing the joy of the holidays right to South Street! Gather 'round the bonfire and sing your heart out to your favorite Christmas carols and holiday tunes. Whether you're a professional singer or just love to hum along, our sing-along is open to everyone!



STARWORDS IS COMING! | JANUARY 7 | 10:00 AM

On Epiphany Sunday, everyone will be invited to take a star during worship. On each of the stars is a word that will lead you through 2024. You are then invited to carry that word with you and take notice when it comes up in conversation, in your reading, and in all that you do throughout the year. Keep your star nearby – put it on your desk, your wallet, or your refrigerator so you can be reminded to have it be your guide as you trust God to hold you this coming year.





65 South Street
Morristown, NJ 07960

Please contact the office to update your contact information.

LET'S STAY CONNECTED

We worship weekly in-person at 8:00 am (Chapel) or 10:00 am (Sanctuary)

Our weekly 10:00 am service is livestreamed and available at: pcmorristoryn.org

The **Parish House** is located at 65 South Street

The **Sanctuary, Chapel, and Howard House** are located at 57 E. Park Place

Please feel free to contact our offices at the Parish House at **973-538-1776**

FIND US ONLINE @PCMORRISTOWN



THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN MORRISTOWN