



claremont presbyterian church COMMUNICATOR

January 2024



In This Issue...

Upcoming Worship	2
Guest Preacher	2
Village Dinner Church	2
Annual Meeting	2
Adult Ed.....	3
Children’s Spiritual Formation.....	3
Alternative Christmas Market	3
Transitional Leadership Team	3
Stewardship Update	3
Farewell Pastor Brian	4
Deacon News	4
Poinsettia Thanks	4
Winterfest.....	5
Waffle Church	5
Worship Flowers	6
Financials.....	6
Prayers	7

From Pastor Brian

“The world needs a sense of worth, and it will achieve it only by its people feeling that they are worthwhile.” - Fred (Mister) Rogers

I knew of Mr. Rogers’ Neighborhood as a child, but I only started paying attention as an adult and when I learned he was an ordained Presbyterian Minister, well that was icing on the cake. As I transition out of the role of Associate Pastor for Outreach at Claremont Presbyterian Church and move into the role of Pastor and Head of Staff at All Peoples Presbyterian Church, I have found Mr. Rogers’ words to be a sort of balm for my soul, “The world needs a sense of worth, and it will achieve it only by its people feeling that they are worthwhile.”

My ministry began with believing that meeting people where they are in life, exactly as who they are, and finding value and worth in them was what the Gospel calls us to do. I brought that with me to Claremont Presbyterian Church, and shared it with everyone I met - to the many community organizations, faith groups, commissions, families, schools, and others to whom I was honored to have become a friend and pastor. And now, even more than just the lesson from the Gospels, CPC has shown me that you are truly worthwhile. I hope I played a small part in sharing this message with you all.

At All Peoples PC I will be working with the folks in the congregation to help them build a ministry outward; not unlike what we did at CPC. I have been invited to walk with them around the neighborhood and engage the neighbors in building relationships and friendships, and hopefully some new partnerships. It is their desire and prayer to hear the Spirit whisper in their ears God’s revealing word as to what is next for them in Cathedral City. I

Upcoming Worship

Sunday worship services are in-person and accessible through Facebook Live (facebook.com/claremontpres) or Youtube (search Claremont Presbyterian Church).

Sunday, January 7, 10:00 AM

Communion Sunday

Baptism of the Lord

Mark 1:4-11

The Rev. Wendy Tajima preaching

—

Sunday, January 14, 10:00 AM

John 1:43-51

Pastor Karen Sapio preaching

—

Wednesday, January 17, 5:30 PM

The Village Dinner Church

—

Sunday, January 21, 10:00 AM

Waffle Church and Farewell Reception

for Pastor Brian Gaeta-Symonds

Mark 1:14-20

Pastor Karen Sapio preaching

—

Sunday, January 27, 10:00 AM

Mark 1:21-28

Pastor Karen Sapio preaching

covet your prayers and your blessings as you send me off as I continue to faithfully follow God's call on my life. You are sending me off knowing that you and I are worthwhile, and continuing to spread the message to others in this world that they too are loved, valued, and worthy.

Guest Preacher

The Rev. Wendy Tajima to preach on January 7

As CPC heads into a time of transition in 2024, our San Gabriel Presbytery Executive, The Rev. Wendy Tajima, will be our guest preacher in worship on Sunday, January 7.

Rev. Wendy S. Tajima is a native of Pasadena, and was raised in San Gabriel Presbytery. Her grandfather was an immigrant Japanese pastor. Wendy has always believed that growing up in Pasadena's strong and diverse community has been a great blessing in her life. After graduating from Stanford University, Wendy worked in a social service agency working with battered women and their children. She earned an MBA from UCLA (Anderson) Graduate School of Management, and worked for Apple Computer in multiple management positions for 8 years.

She started seminary, first at Fuller Seminary's Bay Area extension campus, then San Francisco Theological Seminary (SFTS). She was ordained in 1997 and served ecumenically in Hawai'i for 10 years. She came back to California and served as Associate Dean of Enrollment at SFTS, then as Stated Clerk and Associate General Presbyter for Presbytery of the Pacific. She has been Executive Presbyter for San Gabriel Presbytery since April 2014, offering support to 39 Presbyterian churches from Eagle Rock to Claremont and Pomona.

January Village Dinner Church

On Wednesday, January 17, at 5:30 PM, The Village Dinner Church welcomes Whitney from Grafted Cellars in Claremont. Whitney began her wine career in the Finger Lakes region in upstate New York. A beautiful AVA with hundreds of wineries, the Finger Lakes is known for their delicious white wines such as Rieslings and Gewürztraminers. This is where Whitney learned the ins and outs to running a winery in the front end and the back end and is excited to bring that expertise to Grafted Cellars.

Join us in the Fellowship Hall for this unique worship experience.

Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of Claremont Presbyterian Church will take place immediately following worship on Sunday, February 4 in Fellowship Hall. The congregation will receive the 2024 Budget approved by Session, approve Karen Sapio's terms of call for 2024, and hear an update from our Transitional Leadership Discernment Team. If you are submitting an annual report, please have it in to Lisa Strom by January 15.

Adult Education

This January and February, the Adult Ed Planning Team is inviting you to join them for two important and maybe difficult conversations about Aging. Come listen and engage around the topics of hospice care and Alzheimer's. Two moments that enter into our lives either invited or not, but more importantly how do we prepare, what is there to know and expect, and how do we care for our loved ones experiencing either of these moments? The schedule:

Sunday, January 28, 8:45 AM in Room 1 – Hospice Care

Sunday, February 25, 8:45 AM in Room 1 – Alzheimer's and What to Expect

What to look forward to in 2024: in March, Rev. Dr. Duane Bidwell will share from and about his newest book, *After the Worst Day Ever: What Sick Kids Know about Sustaining Hope in Chronic Illness*. Also, look out for additional Sunday morning classes from Adult Ed.

Children's Spiritual Formation Continues in 2024

After some time this last Fall preparing for the annual Christmas Pageant, which was fabulous, our teachers and children will return to fun and engaging learning opportunities beginning Sunday, January 14.

At 9:30 AM, Infant/Toddler - In-person child-care is provided every Sunday in the Children's Center building and playground during the worship service.

At 10:15 we dismiss the following age groups from church for their educational experiences:

Early Elementary (4 yr-old – 2nd Grade) - In-person in the Chapel during the worship service.

Tweens (3rd – 5th Grades) – In-person in Classroom 1 during the worship service. Could become hybrid to accommodate remote visitors.

Jr. Highers (6th – 8th Grades) – Inquire with Heather Chapman and Amanda Colclough regarding the schedule for Jr. High Initiatives on Sunday mornings as they do not gather every Sunday.

Save the Date:

Our annual Interfaith Exchange with Temple Beth Israel will take place on Friday, February 9 (TBI at 7:30 PM) and Sunday, February 11 (CPC 10 AM). Please stay tuned for more information in the bulletin, The Latest, and the February *Communicator*.



Alternative Christmas Market

Wow! What a generous congregation we have at Claremont Presbyterian Church. As of the time of this writing, over \$14,000 has been received for the 2023 Alternative Christmas Market. Our 20 worthy mission partners thank you sincerely. Bless you CPC!

Session Appoints Transitional Leadership Discernment Team

At a special meeting on December 10, Session appointed a Transitional Leadership Discernment Team: Sam Atwood, Jenna Brooks, Tracy Doebler, Barb MacKenzie, Ginni Rassieur, and Rev. Karen Sapio, ex officio. This group will work together to:

- Prioritize leadership needs in the areas of ministry for which Pastor Brian has been responsible
- Compose Job Description for interim leadership staff
- Work with Presbytery to identify potential candidates
- Interview and propose candidate to Session

The team will give periodic updates to the congregation on their progress. We hope to have interim staff in place sometime in the first quarter of 2024.

Stewardship Update

Thanks to your generosity, as of December 21, we have 99 pledges for a total of \$421,425. This is 85.1% of our goal of \$495,000 for 2024. Let us open our whole hearts this year and continue to share God's love with others and with one another. If you have not yet made your pledge to support the ministries of Claremont Presbyterian Church in 2024, please do so as soon as possible. You may do so online at claremontpres.org/annual-pledge or contact Neila Carey in the church office.

Farewell and Thank You to Pastor Brian on January 21

Following worship on January 21, there will be a reception in Fellowship Hall to celebrate Pastor Brian's five and a half years as our Associate Pastor and thank him for his ministry with us. The Waffle Church gang will welcome us to join them for waffles, coffee, and other refreshments. Plan to come and send Pastor Brian off to his new call with our love and our blessings.

News from the Deacons

The Deacons would like to thank you for all your support during the 2023 year.

- This year we sponsored 4 Red Wheelbarrow drives and delivered the donations to the Beta Center. The next Red Wheelbarrow drive will be February 11. Remember donations can be added to the Red Wheelbarrow anytime. They appreciate donations of reusable bags, especially cloth bags as well as food and toiletries.
- We held a successful Adopt-a-School drive in August, donating school supplies and gift cards to the teachers and classrooms at Mt. View Elementary.
- Everyone enjoyed Parish Sunday with another crossword puzzle from Nora Quinn.
- We thank you for your generosity in supporting the seven families we "adopted" this Christmas. What a wonderful group of people you are! Along with some very generous families from the

Children's Center we were able to give each family member a \$50 gift card plus a \$100 food card. What a beautiful way to support the families in our community during this very special time of year. The Deacons so appreciate your kindness and generosity.

- We were able to make monthly monetary donations to IVHP and Uncommon Good.
- The Deacons organized and helped with memorial receptions held at the church.
- Along with Worship and Music and the Elders we began preparing and serving communion in the congregation and by intinction.

Thank you so much for enabling us to accomplish so much through your donations!

Christmas Poinsettia Thank You!

The Deacons would like to extend a great big, huge thank you for your generosity in funding 128 poinsettias with precious dedications made in memory or in celebrations of loved ones!

These poinsettias were blessed in worship and then distributed by Deacons, volunteers, and your Congregational Care Coordinator on your behalf to those who are homebound, ill, recovering, grieving, or who could use a bit of holiday cheer. Poinsettias are also given as an expression of thanks to all staff and the pastors serving CPC and Emmanuel Presbyterian Church.

So thank you so very much for your generosity!

CPC Session

Bill Brinegar	Worship and Music Commission Chair	Patricia Maine	CPCC Commission
Heather Chapman	CPCC Commission Chair	Madelynn Miller	Evangelism & Nurture Commission
Karry Denton	Evangelism & Nurture Commission Chair	Scott Randles	Mission Commission Chair
Tracy Doebler	Personnel Committee Chair	Virginia Rassieur	The Haven Task Force
Stuart Lillich	Property & Finance Commission Chair	Janet Siedschlag	Treasurer
John Lin	Education & Leadership Commission	Theodora Warner	Clerk of Session

Winterfest 2024

January 31 to February 3

Weeknight Zoom Sessions - 7:00 to 9:00 PM
Saturday Plenary Session - 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM
(lunch to follow)

Schedule:

Wednesday, January 31, 7:00 - 9:00 PM on Zoom
New Voices Panel: pastors for the next generation

Thursday, February 1, 7:00 - 9:00 PM on Zoom (Choose 1)
We Are Here: Listening to the First Peoples of this Land
Nuts and Bolts Training for Church Leaders

Friday, February 2, 7:00 - 9:00 PM on Zoom
Panel on Responding to Our Unhoused Neighbors
Nuts and Bolts Training for Church Leaders (Choose 1)

Saturday, February 3, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Northminster Presbyterian Church, Diamond Bar
Growing as the Beloved Community with Dr. Tracey Shenell, Church Change Consultant

Watch for more registration information to come, or speak to one of the pastors.



Waffle Church

In 2024 the Education & Leadership Commission is planning on bringing back Waffle Church. On the last Sunday of the month our children are invited to come together for Waffle Church in Fellowship Hall. Watch for emails from the Children, Youth and Family Ministries Coordinators for more information throughout the year.

First Tuesday Coffee and Conversation

At **9:30 AM on January 2**, grab a cup of coffee to go from your favorite Claremont Village coffee shop and join friends in Laemmle Square for a time of conversation and building friendships. This is a great chance to get better acquainted with members of our community. Questions? Call the church office at 909-624-9693.

Stay Up to Date!

Subscribe to *the Latest* by going to claremontpres.org and scrolling to the bottom of the page. Here you can enter your e-mail and begin receiving our weekly email with all the most recent events and information.



The Communicator is published monthly by Claremont Presbyterian Church. Submissions are subject to editing for content and length. To submit an article please e-mail Lisa Strom (lisa@claremontpres.org) by the 15th of the month.

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Worship Flowers

We wish to express our gratitude and appreciation to the below individuals for generously donating worship flowers that enhance our worship space and experience. What a wonderful way to get to know one another as we celebrate, grieve, or remember special dates together with our friends!

December 3: given by Pastor Brian in loving memory of his father, Dennis Ladd Symonds. Singer, family man, and provider.

December 10: chancel flowers given by the congregation in thanks to "Pastor Brian for his inspiration and guidance, and to wish him well in his new adventure."

Flowers by the organ were given by Herb and Carlynn Christian, in memory of Marcus Forcenelli and in honor of his friend, Geri DeMasi, who wrote *Epic Fantasia* for Marcus. This will be the 44th year that Geri has played this original composition as part of our worship on the Sunday closest to Marcus' birthday.

December 17: chancel flowers were given lovingly by Jean Perry in honor of her son, Richard's birthday, which is on December 17.

The flowers in the narthex were in celebration of "Lisa and David Frazier's love of each other and our 41st Wedding Anniversary to be celebrated on December 18."

December 24: given by Delight Slotemaker de Bruine in celebration of Christmas and in honor of and in loving memory of her mother, Caroline Bristol Slotemaker de Bruine, on her birthday, December 23.

December 31: "In loving remembrance of Lisa and David Frazier's son, Sean David Frazier's third Angel Anniversary of his passing on January 1, 2021."

If you would like to make a worship flower donation on any given Sunday, please contact delight@claremontpres.org

CLAREMONT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH AS OF 11/30/2023	ACTUAL	BUDGET
Pledges	\$422,079.82	\$444,587.00
Other Income	\$148,111.24	\$159,373.00
Expenses	-\$654,355.85	-\$658,243.57
Variance	-\$84,164.79	-\$54,283.57
CHILDREN'S CENTER AS OF 11/30/2023	ACTUAL	BUDGET
Revenue	\$1,084,850.82	\$1,026,555.00
Expenses	-\$1,074,321.64	-\$1,024,211.25
Variance	\$10,529.18	\$2,343.75

Please Lift Up Your Prayers

In contemplation: May we continue to be in prayer and thoughtful consideration as we seek to discern how we might be called to follow and serve Christ in this new year with our whole hearts. How might we continue to allow ourselves to be amazed, find hope, and sing songs of joy as we move through Epiphany.

For those who have died, may God wrap each one left grieving in love and peace: Claire McDonald; Wendy, Marcia Reich's niece; Ted Marchant, Wilma's husband; Dennis Symonds, Pastor Brian's father.

For healing: Scott Blair, Tina Blair's brother; Nancy Crawford, Delight Slotemaker de Bruine's cousin; Suzanne, Sally Lopez's sister.

For those for whom we wish the gentle soothing grace, wisdom, and comfort of the Holy Spirit as they navigate life at this time: the Symonds family; Pam and Roger House; Herb & Carlynn Christian; Phoebe Deville; the Perry family; the Hughes family; Catherine Lin and her mother, Patricia; Lisa Blix, Joyce Alexander's niece.

For living transitions: Joyce Alexander.

For those living homebound or in retirement facilities and for all of those who may experience loneliness during the holidays: We lift up our prayers of love and support for all of our friends and members in these living communities, and in this situation.

We also lift up all of those who remain unnamed here, but whose names and spirits are held deeply within our hearts.

Please be assured that your CPC staff, along with your Congregational Care Coordinator and Deacons are praying and caring for each one of you.

Please contact Delight for any prayer requests. Details will be shared only as you give permission. Otherwise, the CPC Staff and Deacons will lift up your confidential prayer requests.

See All That's Happening...

For the most up-to-date calendar of events, go to www.claremontpres.org/calendar.



Ways to Give

- Place offerings in offering box in narthex after worship.
- **Check:** We can receive contributions by checks mailed or dropped off at our church office.
- **Online:** You can make an online contribution to Claremont Presbyterian Church by navigating to our website at claremontpres.org/giving-2. or by scanning the QR code.
- **Autopay from your checking account:** Your bank should be able to help you set up an electronic payment directly to CPC.
- **Transfer money through your bank or the Zelle app:** Send your money to: giving@claremontpres.org.





COMMUNICATOR

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Deadline for February *Communicator* - January 15

Weekly Online Events

Monday - Friday

9:00 AM - Daily Prayer (Facebook)

Sunday

10:00 AM - Worship (Facebook & Youtube)

Wednesday

4:00 PM - Bible Study (Zoom)

Friday

8:00 AM - Morning Meditation (Online Meditation Chapel)



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