



claremont presbyterian church

# COMMUNICATOR

December 2022



## In this issue...

Upcoming Worship.....	2
Celebrating the Choir.....	2
Advent Bible Study.....	2
Stewardship Update.....	3
Longest Night Service.....	3
Adult Education .....	3
Christmas Breakfast .....	3
Covina Concert Band Concert .....	4
Ornament Exchange .....	4
Year End Giving.....	4
Advent Calendar of Events .....	5
Financials .....	6
Poinsettias.....	7
Worship Flowers.....	7
Prayers .....	7

## Straw for the Manger: Matthew 25 and Christmas

In 2022 Claremont Presbyterian Church joined the PCUSA's Matthew 25 initiative. This movement within the denomination urges churches to place Christ's call in Matthew 25: 31-46 to care for the hungry, thirsty, vulnerable, and imprisoned at the heart of our ministries. At his birth in Bethlehem Jesus, along with Mary and Joseph, were vulnerable in many of these ways. They were far from home, dependent upon others, and persecuted by Herod and the power of empire.

As we light our Advent candles in worship this month, we will also add straw to an empty manger, preparing to welcome this child born vulnerable and in danger in a hostile world. We will gather the straw of hope, love, peace, and joy as a sign that we are preparing to work and pray on behalf of the hungry, homeless, and persecuted in this world. We gather the straw of hope, love, peace, and joy as a sign that we seek to be a community of healing, where we can bring the hungry, thirsty, and lonely parts of ourselves and find a welcome.

For those who wish to go deeper, our Advent Devotional, *Straw for the Manger* will be available in the Narthex beginning November 27. There will also be copies available in the church office and online at [bit.ly/3tBYOad](https://bit.ly/3tBYOad).

Let every heart prepare him room...

*Karen Sapio*

## Upcoming Worship

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

**Sunday, December 4**

**10:00 AM**

*Second Sunday of Advent  
Communion Sunday  
Karen Sapio preaching*

**Sunday, December 11**

**10:00 AM**

*Third Sunday of Advent  
Christmas Pageant*

**Sunday, December 18**

**10:00 AM**

*Fourth Sunday of Advent  
Sanctuary Choir presents "Sing We  
Now of Christmas"*

**Sunday, December 18**

**7:00 PM**

*Longest Night Service (Sanctuary)*

**Wednesday, December 21**

**5:30 PM**

*The Village Dinner Church*

**Saturday, December 24**

**5:00 PM**

*Family Service*

**Saturday, December 24**

**11:00 PM**

*Lessons and Carols*

**Sunday, December 25**

**10:00 AM**

*Christmas Day  
Contemplative Christmas with  
Carols and Prayers*

## Celebrating the CPC Sanctuary Choir!

Throughout its history, one of the treasures of the Claremont Presbyterian Church has been the Church's remarkable musical heritage and the congregation's steadfast support for great music that affirms our faith. The pillar of this heritage is our glorious CPC Sanctuary Choir, which continues to inspire us in worship through song on a weekly basis.

Our choir is composed of busy, talented singers who somehow make the Church's music ministry a priority in their lives. During the two years in which the pandemic was such a trying time for all of us, the Sanctuary Choir responded by forming a "Virtual Choir" with the assistance of technical experts John Watts and Mark MacKenzie.

As the pandemic restrictions have been lifted the Sanctuary Choir is indeed singing in the sanctuary once again. After its presentation of the *Pandemic Requiem* in April, the Choir has continued to energize our worship services through skillful offerings in a variety of musical styles.

During the past three months alone, the Choir has presented Gospel-influenced selections such as "Have Mercy on Me" by Clayton White and "Total Praise" by Richard Smallwood; a South African anthem, "Ukuthula", for World Communion Sunday; a Dan Forrest arrangement of the traditional American folk melody "How Firm a Foundation"; and J.S. Bach's "Sleepers Wake!" characterized by many as "the King of Chorales."

The Choir is a caring community of individuals who have fun and support each other. They are committed to presenting the music in a way that transcends mere notes and words, to present a worship experience that reflects the conviction of their musical message.

Currently the Sanctuary Choir is preparing its presentation of *Sing We Now of Christmas* by contemporary American composer Howard Helvey. This cantata is a collection of seven familiar Christmas carols that are presented in a playful yet worshipful way through fresh harmonic interpretations of the music.

During this preparation time our Choir rehearsals are being held from 7:15 PM to 9:15 PM every Thursday in the Music Building and on Zoom, with an additional workshop scheduled from 1 to 3 PM on December 11. You are welcome to join us!

As we look to the Advent season, let us celebrate the CPC Sanctuary Choir and the incredible musical gifts that it provides throughout the year.

## Advent Bible Study

Beginning Wednesday, November 30 at 4:30 PM, go on a spiritual journey this Advent with this four-session study written by Kathleen Long Bostrom. It introduces participants to several spiritual practices that can help deepen their personal faith journeys. Each session includes Scripture for reflection, activities centered on biblical passages that tell the Advent story, and a prayer practice.

Interested? Materials are available in the church office, following worship on Sundays in November, or in electronic format by request to Pastor Karen. Zoom meeting ID 862 1883 9113.

## Stewardship Update

Thanks to your generosity, as of November 16 we currently have 72 pledges for a total of \$291,413. This is 60% of our goal of \$485,000 for 2023. If you have not yet made a pledge for 2023, we encourage you to do so as soon as possible. Let our light shine in the coming year as we continue to share God's love with others and with one another.

How to pledge:

Turn in your pledge card by mail or in person

Pledge online at [claremontpres.org/annual-pledge](http://claremontpres.org/annual-pledge)

## Longest Night Service

"The Most Wonderful Time of the Year" can be a struggle for those who are grieving. Whether that grief is related to a death, the loss of a relationship, loss of health, or some other personal challenge, it can be hard to endure weeks of relentless holiday "cheer". Our Longest Night service, held on the Sunday closest to the longest night of the year, holds space for those struggling with grief or loss during Advent/Christmas to come together for a quiet time of prayer, music, and contemplation. This year's service will be December 18 at 7:00 PM. This service is open to the whole community.

## Advent Workshop

On Sunday, November 27, following the church service, we invite you to join us in the fellowship hall for our annual Advent workshop. Your family will enjoy crafts, treats and create an Advent wreath to take home.

## Adult Education

Continuing this month, CPC's Adult Ed Planning Team invites you to continue with the 3-part series titled Indigenous Peoples & Native Realities in Southern California. It began with Susan Suntree sharing in meal and stories using the legends of Raven and Coyote. Join our next two guest presenters addressing the issue of racism as it relates to Indigenous realities. Participants will be engaged in exploring these realities by learning through storytelling, hearing about contemporary Indigenous issues as it relates to churches, and what it means to live in a place that doesn't belong to you. Parts 2 and 3 will be meeting in Room 1 or on Zoom with meeting ID 875 3830 4980.

Part 2 with Lisa Delinger is on Dec. 5 at 7:00 PM and part 3 is on Dec. 19, 7:00 PM with Anne Carter Walker.

Go to [claremontpres.org/events](http://claremontpres.org/events) for more info on each of these wonderful speakers.

## Christmas Pageant Sunday

On Sunday, December 11 during worship, our children and youth have a fantastic pageant planned. Amanda Colclough and Heather Chapman, along with many others, have spent the last couple of months planning and preparing to retell the Christmas story, but their plans may not go exactly as they hope. You'll want to be here for this - it will not disappoint. You can be part of this online through the Claremont Presbyterian Church Facebook livestream or in-person in the sanctuary.

## Annual Christmas Breakfast

Your Evangelism & Nurture Commission is so pleased to be able to once again provide the Annual Christmas Breakfast for our community on Sunday, December 18 from 8:00 -9:30 AM. This festive gathering which has always warmed our hearts... and our stomachs, is back this Advent season with a way to bring joy, friendship, and food. In an effort to add just a bit more holiday spirit we will have the musical stylings from the Claremont High School music department.

Join us in the fellowship as we come together and ring in the final days before we welcome the birth of the Christ child.

## CPC Family Outing

On Sunday, Dec. 18 from 1-4 PM we will be hiking Sycamore Canyon Trail/Johnson's Pasture, Claremont. Meet at trailhead near: 798 Via Santa Catarina, Claremont, CA 91711. It's 4.5 miles hike with a 974 ft. elevation gain, loop route. Some of us may head over to a place for snacks and drinks afterward. Let Pastor Brian or Heather know if you'd like to join this hike.

## Adopt-a-Family

The Deacons would like to take the opportunity to thank the congregation for its generosity in supporting our Adopt-a-Family program again this year. Like in past years we are working with Uncommon Good to provide gift and food cards for five needy families. This year the list includes 14 children ranging in age from 7 months to 15 years old. Our goal is to give each family \$200 in gift cards for a total of \$1,000. Your contributions makes it possible for us to reach this goal. We are listed in the Alternative Christmas Market, or checks can be made out to Claremont Presbyterian Church with a notation for "adopt-a-family." The deadline to receive this donation is December 11. Your support is deeply appreciated.

## The Village Dinner Church

This month's Village meets on Wednesday, December 21 from 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM. This will be a time for a dinner gathering with minimal liturgy and great fellowship. Then join us January 18, 2023 to hear from our next guest speaker.

Do you know of a neighbor, friend, or loved one who may be seeking a new kind of worship experience? Invite them to the CPC Village Dinner Church, or put them in contact with any of the Lead Team members: Anjlo & Lubna Ajmal, Shelley Randles, Jenna & Andrew Brooks, Tessa Klarin, and Pastor Brian

## Updating Your Estate Plan? Remember the Loaves and Fishes Society

If updating your estate plan is on your year-end "to do" list, be sure to remember CPC in your planning! The Loaves and Fishes Society, the bequest program here at CPC, provides all of us with an additional way to "give back" to our wonderful Church, in response to all that we have received.

The Society was founded in 2008, and presently there are thirty-eight members. You become a member by informing the Church that CPC is included in your estate plans.

Questions? Request a copy of our Bequest Brochure, and the Church will be happy to send one to you. You'll be glad you did – and CPC will be grateful to you.

*~The CPC Special Gifts and Endowment Committee*

## Alternative Christmas Market

The virtual Alternative Christmas Market for CPC is in full swing. You should have received a packet in the mail with descriptions of the various mission partners participating, along with a shopping list and a return envelope. Please send those in at your earliest convenience. If you prefer to shop online go to the ACM page on the church website [claremontpres.org/acm](http://claremontpres.org/acm).

What an easy way to shop for Christmas!

We would like you to complete your shopping by December 11 but will cheerfully receive donations after that date. Please give generously. Because of the lingering effects of the global pandemic these organizations are serving more clients than ever. The need is always there but this year is more severe than ever. Happy shopping and Merry Christmas!

## CPC Hosts Covina Concert Band Christmas Concert

Since 1956, when Covina Concert Band was founded by Charles King, the band has continued to provide crowd-pleasing performances year after year at no cost to our audience. In addition to our resumed summer weekly evening concerts in Covina Park, the band also attracts audiences to many performances at other venues within the local region. On many monthly occasions the band performs each first Friday in Covina's Heritage Plaza Park.

CCB will present a Christmas Concert at Claremont Pres at 5:00 PM on December 17. The concert will feature settings of traditional Christmas hymns, favorite carols, and pop Christmas music. There will be two settings of Christmas carols during which the audience will be encouraged to sing along. The band will also be performing a Dixieland setting for a tribute to Chet Jaeger.

## The Ornament Exchange is Back!

Come enjoy the fun and fellowship. Saturday, December 3, 6:00 PM at Kent and Teddie Warner's home (1585 Queens Court, Claremont). Bring a fun wrapped ornament to exchange, a beverage of your choice and EITHER a hearty hors d'oeuvre or a dessert.

## Year-End Giving

Current economic conditions have already required many of us to "go the extra mile," as we strive to fulfill our 2022 pledges and to pledge generously to CPC for 2023. If you are in this group, thank you for your support. For some, however, 2022 may have been a year of unexpected financial good news. If this is true for you, please consider making a special year-end gift to CPC.

A special gift of this type may be unrestricted or restricted. If unrestricted, the Session may choose to use your gift to close our 2022 books on a positive note. If restricted, you may designate your gift to support a particular part of our Church's program and outreach.

You might think of your special gift as a Christmas present to CPC, for all that our Church means to you and to each of us. An added bonus: if your gift is made by December 31, it may help reduce your 2022 income taxes – a win/win situation! Thank you.

# Straw for the Manger

ADVENT 2022

NOV 27 10:00 AM Worship - 1<sup>st</sup>  
Sunday of Advent

NOV 27 11:15 AM Advent  
Workshop

NOV 30 4:00 PM Advent Bible  
Study

DEC 3 6:00 PM Ornament  
Exchange

DEC 4 10:00 AM Worship - 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Sunday of Advent

DEC 7 4:00 PM Advent Bible  
Study

DEC 11 10:00 AM Worship - 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Sunday of Advent &  
Christmas Pageant

DEC 14 4:00 PM Advent Bible  
Study

DEC 17 5:00 PM Covina Concert  
Band Christmas  
Concert

DEC 18 8:00 AM Christmas  
Breakfast

DEC 18 10:00 AM Worship - 4<sup>th</sup>  
Sunday of Advent &  
Sanctuary Choir presents "Sing We  
Now of Christmas"

DEC 18 1:00 PM Family Hike

DEC 18 7:00 PM Longest Night  
Service

DEC 21 4:00 PM Advent Bible  
Study

DEC 21 5:30 PM Village Dinner  
Church

DEC 24 5:00 PM Family Service

DEC 24 11:00 PM Candlelight  
Lessons & Carols

DEC 25 10:00 AM Christmas  
Contemplative  
Worship





*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 15<sup>th</sup> of the month.

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## All Saints Day

On Sunday, October 30, during our All Saints day worship service, we remembered the following members of Claremont Presbyterian Church who were anchor points, members, and contributors to the well-being and life of our CPC community.

Please thank God for the lives of these precious individuals, and lift their families in prayer. Many of their children grew up in this church.

Ruth Auld	Elsie Harbor
Lee McDonald	Robert Kelly
Chet Jaeger	Chuck Freitas
Margie Ross	Clint Robertson
Mary Hughes	Fred Bebee (founding pastor)

The gifts that our friends have shared with you remain in your hearts, and are yours to keep. We remember their spirits and the contributions that they have made to our lives. Be good to yourselves, and be kind to your hearts. For those who may still grieve, may the Holy Spirit comfort you and give you peace.

## October Session Highlights

- Rejoiced at the vitality of our church on a recent weekend, including a vaccination clinic with taco truck, a delightful concert by John York, many children in worship before pageant practice, ice-skating with the Jr. High group, engaging adult education, and the annual Walk for Peace.
- Approved preliminary 2023 budgets for CPC and CPCC
- Voted to use Capital Maintenance funds to repair the sanctuary roof
- Heard of exciting plans for Advent worship, education, Alternative Christmas Market, music, Children's Pageant and the Christmas Breakfast.
- Were encouraged to return pledge cards early

## Ways to Give

- Place offerings in offering box in narthex after worship.
- Check: As long as the US Mail is still delivering, we can receive

CLAREMONT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH AS OF 10/31/2022	ACTUAL	BUDGET
Pledges	\$352,759.15	\$400,000.00
Other Income	\$153,245.80	\$89,866.66
Expenses	-\$551,636.29	-\$554,054.22
Variance	-\$45,631.34	-\$64,187.56
CHILDREN'S CENTER AS OF 10/31/2022	ACTUAL	BUDGET
Revenue	\$903,599.57	\$917,738.34
Expenses	-\$904,487.58	-\$900,276.22
Variance	-\$888.01	\$17,462.12

contributions by checks mailed to our church office.

- Online: You can make an online contribution to Claremont Presbyterian Church by navigating to our website at [claremontpres.org/giving-2](http://claremontpres.org/giving-2). or by scanning the QR code to the right.
- 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](mailto:giving@claremontpres.org).



## There Is Still Time to Order Christmas Poinsettias

You can still donate a Christmas poinsettia in honor of, or in memory of someone dear, or in celebration of a special event! The poinsettias will decorate our CPC sanctuary on Sunday, December 18 and will then be distributed by our CPC Deacons and volunteers to the bereaved, homebound, ill, or isolated.

Suggested donation is \$25 per poinsettia. Please submit your dedication form and donation to Neila, in the church office, or by going to [claremontpres.org/poinsettias](http://claremontpres.org/poinsettias) by Wednesday, December 7. The list of dedications and donations will be in the December 18 worship bulletin.

Thank you in advance for sharing your loving, caring generosity and for participating in this joyous annual Christmas event. If you have any questions please email Delight.

## Flowers for Worship

November 6: Chancel flowers given by Sharron Bentley in memory of her husband, Bill Bentley, on his birthday. Narthex flowers, “Judy cheer blooms,” given on stewardship Sunday celebration to share the light of Christ by Delight’s cousin and aunt, Gabrielle Lechmanik and Katie Voit and by Delight Slotemaker de Bruine, in memory of our friend, Doug Carrington.

November 13: given in honor and memory of Leanne Bauman Kerchner from her children—Paige and Charles—and husband.

November 20: given by Nancy Rice in honor of and in memory of her late sister, Rachel Murrell, who died October 18 at the age of 99.

November 27: given by regular attendees of CPC in celebration of our CPC community.

## Please Lift Up Your Prayers

*In gratitude*: our Advent Season as we contemplatively approach the celebration of the birth of Christ.

*For those who have died and their families*: Catherine Lin’s grandmother in Taiwan; Evelyn Connelly, Doug Carrington; John Clayton, Meredith Clayton’s father; Nancy Rice’s sister, Rachel Murrell.

*For those who are ill, recovering, or facing upcoming surgery*: Jean Underwood; Chris Hartmire; Brad Starr’s father, Phil Starr; Lisa Frazier; Judy Hormell; Peggy Nall; Kyungah Jung; Catherine Lin; family, friends, and neighbors who are recovering from Covid.

*For the strength, grace, and peace of the Holy Spirit*: those of us who may find ourselves in vulnerable and sensitive family situations; Greg Stout and for his sister, Margie Stout Ludwig; Herb & Carlynn Christian; Pastor Brian’s aunt; Pastor Brian’s parents, Bonnie and Dennis Symonds; Pastor Brian and family; the Agwu family; Kevin and Ken Kessler.

*For those for whom we wish continued healing grace, peace, and comfort*: Wadie and Rita Alkhouri; Mike Layne; Larry Robertson; Frank Pinkerton; Cloyce Morrow; Joyce and Ted Alexander; Ron and Trish Perry; Jean Perry; Gennie Ransom.

*For those whom we remember on an ongoing basis*: John Najarian; Roger Shervington; Sean, Matthew, and Ed Hughes; Carrie Willette, Jan Willette’s daughter; Barbara Patch; Phoebe DeVille; Doris Craig and Mae (Becky) Beck and her nieces; Suzanne and Kay Brown; Tom Bleakney; Eileen Jaeger; Carolyn Kingshill; Claire McDonald; Barbara Myers; Doris Chambers; Marianne Hillman; Sandra Deibel; Carolyn Whitham; Marion Thompson; Jean Cochran.

Please contact [delight@claremontpres.org](mailto:delight@claremontpres.org) 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.



**COMMUNICATOR**  
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**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

*Deadline for January Communicator - December 15*

## Weekly Online Events

### Monday - Thursday, Saturday

8:00 AM - Morning Prayer (Facebook)

### Sunday - Friday

5:00 PM - Evening Prayer (Facebook)

### Sunday

10:00 AM - Worship (Facebook)

### Wednesday

11:30 AM - Mid-Week Mini Concert (Facebook)

4:00 PM - Bible Study (Zoom)

### Friday

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



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[giving](#)

**See All That's Happening...** For the most up-to-date calendar of events, go to [www.claremontpres.org/calendar](http://www.claremontpres.org/calendar).