



To Friends Who Share the Journey,

We are both horrified and saddened by the violence and the blatant challenge to our democracy that we have seen at the Capitol today, this day that Christians celebrate as Epiphany. The story of Jesus' birth and the story of Epiphany reminds us that for generations, too many to count, there have always been people who are willing to destroy in order to try and hold on to what they believe to be their birthright. We must stand for another vision. As Christians, we follow the Prince of Peace who came not with a sword but with a message of

justice and human and spiritual transformation.

Every chance Jesus had he reminded people to choose the way of God over the way of Empire. As the Spirit of the Lord was upon Jesus, let that Spirit be upon us so that we proclaim good news to the poor, recovery of sight to the blind and that we set the oppressed free. Scripture on this day of Epiphany from Matthew 2: 10-12 tells us, "When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road." Let us leave this day by another road with renewed commitment to follow the Prince of Peace and the ways he taught us to live in the world. Let us choose the road that leads to justice, peace, and obedience to God's call.

Yours in Faith,

Rev. Nancy Talbot  
Acting Synod Leader  
Synod Stated Clerk



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## Chalking the Door: An Epiphany Tradition

Have you asked for God's blessing on those who live, work or visit your home in the coming year? Check your Advent Kits to find a piece of chalk plus liturgy and prayers. How to do it:

1. **Mark your calendar:** Epiphany is on January 6<sup>th</sup>, twelve days after Christmas (or on Epiphany Sunday – the Sunday before January 6<sup>th</sup> which this year is January 3<sup>rd</sup>). In Great Britain, chalking the door takes place on Twelfth-Night, January 5<sup>th</sup>, the eve of Epiphany. Many families gather in their homes to



- celebrate with friends, food, singing, and gifts... and to chalk the door.
2. **Find some chalk:** Any color will do! White has been included.
  3. **Gather your household:** Everyone should be involved. For those who live alone, consider inviting a friend or neighbor. Or in this time of COVID remember that in Christ's Spirit we are together.
  4. **Pray:** Use the prayers and liturgy included.
  5. **Write the inscription:** Using the chalk, and taking turns, make the following inscription above the outside of your door.

**20 + C + M + B + 21**

*Make sure to change the last number to the current year.*

### **What Is Chalking the Door?**

This short liturgy is a way of marking our homes, usually at the front or main entrance, with sacred signs and symbols as we ask God's blessing upon those who live, work, or visit throughout the coming year. In Exodus, the Israelites marked their doors with blood so that the Lord would pass over their homes; but in this service, we mark our doors with chalk as a sign that we have invited God's presence and blessing into our homes

In Deuteronomy 6:9 God tells the people of Israel: "These words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house... You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates." Chalking the door is a tangible way to honor God in our lives. A way to remember God is with us in every situation and every day.

### **What Do the Numbers and Letters Mean?**

The first and last numbers simply refer to the current year. The letters C M B come from the traditional names for the three kings: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar. Some also suggest "Christus Mansionem Benedicat" which means, "May Christ bless this dwelling!"

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### **Liturgy & Prayers for Chalking the Door**

#### Opening

One: Peace be to this house, and to all who enter here.

**All: Amen.**

#### Prayer

One: Loving God, bless this household. May we be blessed with health, goodness of heart, gentleness, and abiding in your will. We ask this through Christ our Savior. Amen.

#### Chalking the Door

*As participants take turns making the inscription, the leader says:*

The three Wise Men, [C] Caspar, [M] Melchior, [B] and Balthasar followed the star to Bethlehem and the child Jesus [20] two thousand, [20] and twenty years ago. [+ +] May Christ bless our home [+ +], and remain with us throughout the new year. Amen.

#### The Lord's Prayer

**All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors, and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil for thine is the kingdom and the power and the kingdom forever. Amen.**

*May God's peace and love fill your hearts and your home.*

How about taking a picture of your door and sending it to: [office@delmarpres.org](mailto:office@delmarpres.org)

## WORSHIP

### *Worship Plans for January*

## *Season of Epiphany*

A little lectionary geekdom: The church year divides time according to the life of Christ. The church year begins with the Season of Advent - waiting for the Christ Child to be born. It is a season of preparation and joyful anticipation that lasts four weeks. The main color for this season is royal blue acknowledging the long dark winter nights and the darkness into which the Christ light comes.

The Season of Christmas is 12 days long encompassing the birth of Christ on Christmas Eve and ending with the arrival of the Magi's visit which is commonly called Epiphany. The color for Christmas is celebratory white and gold. Advent is Latin for "come" or "arrival." Epiphany is Greek for "manifestation" or "revelation." First we waited for the Christ Child to come (Advent). Then we celebrated the arrival of the Christ Child (Christmas) and during the Season of Epiphany what has come is revealed.

During the Season of Epiphany we hear and read stories from the gospels that reveal who Jesus is: at his baptism the heavens open and we hear God claim Jesus as "the beloved." Jesus calls disciples, heals, teaches and welcomes those designated as outsiders - sinners, tax collectors, women. The Season of Epiphany celebrates the ministry of Jesus as the welcoming light that shines in the darkness and as God's love made flesh walking and serving among us.

The Season of Epiphany starts with the visit of the Magi and ends with the Transfiguration of

Jesus right before the start of Lent. The length of the Season of Epiphany is irregular because it always starts on January 6<sup>th</sup>, but the end of the season is dependent on when Lent begins, which depends on the date of Easter. The Season of Epiphany can include as many as 8 Sundays.

We celebrated Epiphany on January 3<sup>rd</sup> - a Sunday.

January 10<sup>th</sup>, this coming Sunday, is the first Sunday after Epiphany, and we will remember Jesus' baptism in the Jordan River by John the Baptism.

January 17<sup>th</sup> Jesus calls disciples (we will be worshipping with New Scotland Presbyterian Church)

January 24<sup>th</sup> we will depart from the lectionary just a bit. Our worship time will center around a video worship service prepared by our denomination's Matthew 25 initiative.

January 31 Mark 1:14-20 - Jesus ministry of calling disciples continues

February 7 Mark 1:29-39 - Jesus Teaches & Heals

February 14 Mark 9:2-9 Transfiguration Sunday

Then Lent begins on Wednesday February 17<sup>th</sup> - but more on that in the next newsletter.



## CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

### *Zooming With Ladies Who Care*

*Ladies and Gents are welcome!*

Until it is safe for in-person gatherings, our programs will be on Zoom and they are scheduled for the last Wednesday of each month at 1 PM. Look for a link in your email.

Pam Taft and Judy Riopelle, Coordinators

#### **Jan 27**

The Churches of Ethiopia – Pastor Karen Pollan

Come travel to the highlands of Ethiopia to the land of fabled Abyssinia . . .



About a decade ago, I visited Ethiopia for the Mission Committee Salem First Presbyterian Church. While in Ethiopia, I visited Lalibela to see the amazing rock-hewn Churches. These structures are monolithic churches located in the Western Ethiopian Highlands near the town of Lalibela, named after the late-12th and early-13th century King Gebre Mesqel Lalibela of the Zagwe Dynasty, who commissioned the massive building project of 11 rock-hewn churches to recreate the holy city of Jerusalem in his own kingdom. The site remains in use by the Ethiopian Orthodox Christian Church to this day, and it remains an important pilgrimage designation for Ethiopian Orthodox worshippers.

## DEACONS

### JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

4	Jacob Lewis
7	Carol Scott
12	Jack Braaten
12	Nina Nichols
13	David Scott
19	Julia Cooper
19	Sherry Putney
19	Steven Zayas
31	Juliet Wilson



#### ***Christmas Flower Dedications***

**Jack and Ginny Gajewski:** in memory and in honor of our parents, our children and our grandchildren

**Tricia, Amelia and Greta Hertz:** in festive memory of Mambo Ruth Thompson, Papa Don Thomson, Nana Charlene Dybedock and Grandpa Howard Dybedock. And in happy honor of Grandpa Noel Hertz, Grammy Sharon Eiseman and Grandma Grace Reed.

**Jean Sommerville:** in memory of Kathryn Latta and Eleanor Goodnough.



Many plants were delivered by the Deacons to help bring Christmas joy to those who are quarantined due to COVID restrictions.

## EARTH CARE TASK FORCE



### New Year's Resolutions for the Planet

So, it's a new year and we often think about a fresh start and new beginnings. Self-improvement is frequently at the top of the list, so why not challenge ourselves to learn and adopt ways to improve the planet.

Consider:

1 - Challenge yourself to become educated on eco-justice issues

2 - Choose a few areas you can commit to each month to help care for God's creation. Think about small changes in your home that work towards Zero Waste, or they can be larger commitments to support local and national topics.

3 - [www.pcusa.org/ccc](http://www.pcusa.org/ccc)

Take PC(USA)'s Climate Care Challenge that concentrates on:

- personal steps to decrease the impacts of climate change
- outward steps that engage community actions.

This website will not only offer you the Challenge, but also connect to many resources PC USA offers to learn about the eco-justice challenges.

4 - On Facebook? Join "Presbyterians for Earth Care" or "Presbyterian Hunger Program"

5 - Share any resolutions or actions you take. Help others with your knowledge and ideas. Email the office or Nancy Braaten at [Braaten.jack@gmail.com](mailto:braaten.jack@gmail.com) with your actions. Let's share our ideas to show that all of our actions added together can make an impact.

If everyone chooses a few ways to improve the planet, it will be a gift to our future generations.

We are blessed to endorse this mission to preserve God's beauty.

Nancy Braaten for the Earth Care Task Force.

## SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

### Session Highlights for November 17, 2020

The Agenda was approved. The October Session meeting minutes were approved.

A proposal from the **Earth Care Task Force** was sent by Nancy Braaten to members of Session several days before this meeting. David Andersen gave a presentation to Session explaining the issues currently before the New York State Department of Conservation (DEC) regarding the determination of the discount rate for computing the cost of carbon-based greenhouse gas emissions.

Noting the environmental damages which high discount rates will impose on future generations, our DPC Earth Care Task Force has prepared a Public Petition to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation:

#### **Setting a Moral and Ethical Discount Rate for Computing the Social Cost of Carbon to Evaluate Damages from Greenhouse Gases - November 2020**

*This petition (attached to the November 17, 2020 Session meeting minutes) was unanimously approved by vote of Session. It will be submitted to the NY State DEC before the deadline for written comments, November 27, 2020.*

The intent is to send the petition document to the congregation and to other churches.

**Revisiting Church Attendance Numbers**

Due to the current uptick in COVID infection rates in NYS, DPC will maintain our limit of 10 people at worship. As there are always six or seven people conducting the livestream worship, three or four live worshipers can be accommodated each Sunday.

**Task Force on Session Restructuring**

Lynda Spielman shared a diagram of what a restructured Session might look like. A discussion followed, including the opportunity to engage more church members in events and projects.

Ed Taft presented a **request for building use from a Boy Scout troop** led by a DPC church member. The scouts would like to set up their Pine Box Derby in the fellowship hall and video it so all members of the troop could watch it remotely. This event will be scheduled for January or February 2021.

*A motion to permit the Boy Scout troop leaders to set up the ramps in the fellowship hall, race the cars, and film the event in January or February 2021 was provisionally approved by a Session vote of 7 in favor, 1 against.*

**Pastor’s Report**

Pastor Karen informed us she had ordered Advent devotional booklets, “Those Who Dream”, for DPC members and friends. Her preaching series for Advent and through Epiphany will be based on “those who dream”, taken from Psalm 126.

**Advent Offerings all on Zoom**

-Mondays at 10am, Bible study group, led by Carol Scott, will use the “Those Who Dream” Advent devotional booklet.

-Wednesdays at noon, Pastor Karen will lead a “Background to the Scripture”.

-Thursdays at 7:30 or 8pm, vespers/meditation will be led by Pastor Karen.

**Next Session Meeting:** Tuesday, December 15, 2020 at 7:00pm on Zoom

Submitted by Ravi Bolleddu, Clerk of Session

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