



United Presbyterian Church

525 East Front Street • Plainfield, NJ 07060 • 908-756-2666 • <http://www.upcplainfield.org/>

Where God is exalted, Everyone matters, and You belong!

11:00 a.m. Worship

December 2020 - Newsletter

WISHING YOU A HAPPY AND HEALTHY AND PEACEFUL CHRISTMAS

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

~ Pastor Allegra Hoots ~

"I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all people: Today in the city of David, a Savior has been born to you. He is Christ the Lord!"

Luke 2: 10b-11

Dear Friends,

Greetings in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, our blessed Redeemer. I trust God this letter finds you with a happy heart and in good health.

I cannot think of any adjectives or phrases that have not been used by others to describe the year 2020. So, the simple term challenging seems appropriate. Political and social unrest threatened to sever a severely politically divided nation. COVID-19 adversely affected the entire world, contributing to many people losing their lives, upending daily routines, and causing folk to modify traditions. The pandemic also triggered an economic crisis. Many businesses closed or downsized, leaving thousands unemployed and countless others concerned about their future financial stability.

Despite economic and political upheaval, social unrest, and the threat posed by a global pandemic, one of the silver lining life-lessons derived from surviving 2020 is the reality that there is hope for the world. For Christians, Jesus Christ is the reason for that optimism.

Recalling Jesus' birth inspires promise for respite from suffering, hope for peace, and assurance that

God loves the world and is concerned about people. It is a reminder that God intervenes in humanity's affairs by bringing about relief.

The angels' announcement of Jesus' birth heralded in Luke 2 offers a light beam to a world shadowed in fog. The message is as powerfully uplifting today as it must have been to the shepherds all those years ago. Joy to the world, Jesus Christ – the long-awaited Messiah prophesied about by Hebrew prophets has come.

November 29 marked the beginning of Advent, a joyful occasion in the Church calendar that ends on Christmas Eve. During Advent, Christians prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ on Christmas. With anxious anticipation, they also recall and look forward to the fulfillment of Jesus' promise to return for his people, raise the dead, transform and transport the living, and reign forever.

Praise God for Jesus and for the season of Advent that focuses on Christmas's spiritual meaning – acknowledging God's greatest gift to the world by celebrating Jesus' birth.

Peace and blessings, and merry Christmas!

Pastor Hoots



195 YEARS OF SERVING OUR COMMUNITIES

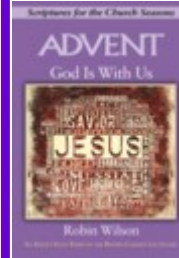
Sunday Worship
Pastor Allegra Hoots
11:00am
Livestream on YouTube*

~~~~~  
**Sunday Fellowship**  
 2:00 - 3:00pm via ZOOM  
**JOIN US**  
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Advent Study

Daily
 November 29th to December 21st
 7:00pm via ZOOM



*The book
 "Advent God is with us"
 by Robin Wilson
 will be used*

ALL EVENTS ARE VIRTUAL

NOTE: WORSHIP IN THE SANCTUARY HAS BEEN SUSPENDED

The link address to all events may be found on the church's website: <http://www.upcplainfield.org/>

BIBLE STUDY

Day	Time		Connection
Monday to Friday	12:00-1:00pm	Noon Day Prayer	ZOOM
Saturday	7:00pm	Prayer, Praise and Scripture Reading	ZOOM
Note: No studies on December 28, January 1 & 2nd.			

TO CONNECT BY COMPUTER OR TELEPHONE, GO TO THE CHURCH'S WEBSITE FOR INFORMATION:
<http://www.upcplainfield.org> **OR CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE FOR ASSISTANCE**

One of the noblest pursuits a child of God can embark upon is to get to know and understand God better. The best way we can accomplish this is to look carefully at the book He has written, the Bible, which communicates who He is and His plan for mankind.

Upcoming Events

See calendars for more activities and events

December

Date	Time	Event
1		World Aids Day—Presbyterian HIV/AIDS Awareness Giving Tuesday
10		Human Rights Day; National Gun Violence Prevention
16	7:30pm	Board of Session Meeting
24	7:00pm	Christmas Eve Service
25		Christmas Day
31	10pm	Watch Night Service

January

Date	Time	Event
1		New Year's Day
10		Baptism of the Lord
18		Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr.
18-25		Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
20	7:30pm	Board of Session Meeting

What Is Advent?



Advent is the beginning of the liturgical (church) year*. It is the period of four Sundays and weeks before Christmas.

There are three meanings of 'coming' that Christians describe in Advent. The first, and most thought of, happened about 2000 years ago when Jesus came into the world as a baby to live as a man and die for us. The second can happen now as Jesus wants to come into our lives. And the third will happen in the future when Jesus comes back to the world as King and Judge.

No one is really sure when Advent was first celebrated but it dates back to at least 567 when monks were ordered to fast during December leading up to Christmas. Some people fast (don't eat anything) during advent to help them concentrate on preparing to celebrate Jesus's coming.

To balance the two elements of remembrance and anticipation, the first two Sundays in Advent look forward to Christ's second coming, and the last two look backward to remember Christ's first coming. Over the course of the four weeks, Scripture readings move from passages about Christ's return in judgment to Old Testament passages about the expectation of the coming Messiah to New Testament passages about the announcements of Christ's arrival by John the Baptist and the Angels.

While it is difficult to keep in mind in the midst of holiday celebrations, shopping, lights and decorations, and joyful carols, Advent is intended to be a season of fasting, much like Lent, and there are a variety of ways that this time of mourning works itself out in the season. **Reflection on the violence and evil in the world causes us to cry out to God to make things right**—to put death's dark shadows to flight. Our exile in the present makes us look forward to our future Exodus. And our own sinfulness and need for grace lead us to pray for the Holy Spirit to renew his work in conforming us into the image of Christ.

The Advent wreath first appeared in Germany in 1839. A Lutheran minister working at a mission for children created a wreath out of the wheel of a cart. He placed twenty small red candles and four large white candles inside the ring. The red candles were lit on weekdays and the four white candles were lit on Sundays.

Eventually, the Advent wreath was created out of evergreens, symbolizing everlasting life in the midst of winter and death. The circle reminds us of God's unending love and the eternal life He makes possible. Advent candles are often nestled in the evergreen wreath. Additional decorations, like holly and berries, are sometimes added. Their red color points ahead to Jesus' sacrifice and death. Pinecones can symbolize the new life that Jesus brings through His resurrection. Families begin lighting a candle on the fourth Sunday before Christmas, and they light another candle each subsequent Sunday.

The most common Advent candle tradition, however, involves four candles. A new candle is lit on each of the four Sundays before Christmas. **The four candles traditionally represent hope, faith, joy, and peace. Occasionally, a fifth white candle is placed in the middle and is lit on Christmas Day to celebrate Jesus' birth.**

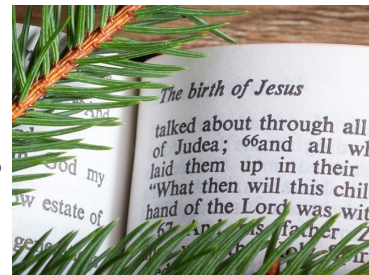


♦ Liturgical year is the annual cycle of seasons and days observed in the Christian churches in commemoration of the life, death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ and of his virtues as exhibited in the lives of the saints.

The Real Meaning Of Christmas

It's that time of year again. December has come and with it all the joys of Christmas. But what is the real meaning of Christmas? Is it the gifts under the tree, the lights in the windows, the cards in the mail, turkey dinners with family and friends, snow in the yard, stockings hanging in the living room, and shouts of "Merry Christmas" to those who pass us in the streets? Is this really Christmas?

For many people, Christmas is a time of sorrow. They don't have the extra money to buy presents for their children, family, and friends. Many are saddened at Christmastime when they think of their loved ones who will not be able to come home for various reasons. Turkey dinners may be only a wish and not a reality for some.



It is a time of God showing His great love for us. It can be a time of healing and renewed strength

Yet, Christmas can be a season of great joy. It is a time of God showing His great love for us. It can be a time of healing and renewed strength. You see, Christmas is when we celebrate the birth of the Christ child. God sent His Son, Jesus, into the world to be born. His birth brought great joy to the world. Shepherds, wise men, and angels all shared in the excitement of knowing about this great event. They knew this was no ordinary baby. The prophets had told of His coming hundreds of years before. The star stopped over Bethlehem just to mark the way for those who were looking for this special child.

Luke 2:4-19 says:

"So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ 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 the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart." (NIV)

Why did He come? Why did God send His son to this sometimes cruel and hard world? He sent Jesus to us so that one day, He would grow up to become a very important part of history. His story (history) is one of truth, love, and hope. It brought salvation to all of us. Without Jesus, we would all die in our sins.

Look at Christmas in a new way this year. This is the year to invite Jesus into your heart. You will then have a "Merry Christmas." The joy and peace you will receive will last all year as you look to God for all your needs to be met.

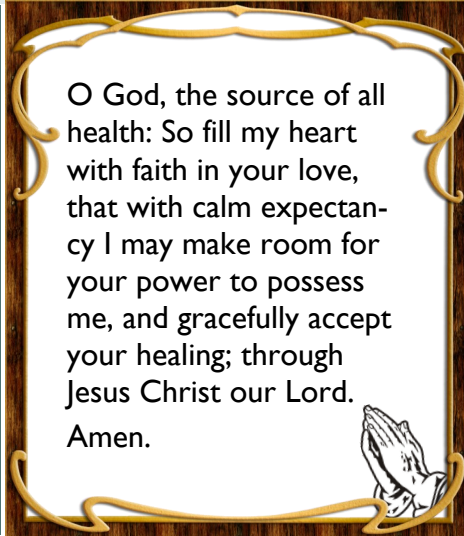
Jesus Is the Reason for the Season! Rejoice!



Prayers for Healing

Remember our sisters and brothers listed below and call them if you are able to. Let us know if there are mem-

- Emory Dawson
- Carl Foerster
- Helen Foerster
- BJ Klikus
- Frank Klikus
- Liz Mangan
- Jack Perry
- Marianna Perry
- Gail Stokes
- Izaiyah Stokes
- Jamie Sweeney



December

- 10 Macy Robinson
- 13 Javin Scott
- 16 Yetunde Falowo
- 17 Michelle Wildridge
- 18 Avril Lecky
- 22 Patricia Dawson
- 24 Pat Perry
- 26 Crystal Awobue
- 27 Gabrielle Greene
- 28 Ginni Hansen
- 29 Jennifer Youngsam

January

- 6 Bola Falowo
- 15 Izaiyah Stokes
- 17 Christopher Lecky
- 19 Jessica Dawson
- Stanley Awobue

NOTICE:

Because we are not able to meet in the Church building, donations received for flowers will be used when we are able to congregat again.

Give to the Flower Ministry

With your donation of \$25 or more to the Flower Fund, the Deacons will provide a beautiful floral arrangement for the Sanctuary on Sunday mornings. After worship, the arrangement will also brighten the day of a member or friend of UPC who is unable to join us for worship.

Flowers may be made in honor or memory of a loved one. Honoree names will be listed in the church bulletin.

You may complete the form below or add your information to the flower chart in the Narthex.

Blessings,
Zorina Bowers

Name: _____

Email: _____

Telephone: _____

Address: _____

Amount: _____

In Memory of: _____

Thank you for your generous support of
UPC's Flower Ministry

Board of Deacons



UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

195 Years

Celebrate this milestone!

1825

2020

CHILDREN'S CORNER

Parents, please read this to your younger child(ren)

Be Prepared for Christ's Coming

Theme: Being prepared for Christ's coming
Object: Images of Girl Scout and Boy Scout emblems
Scripture: "So always be ready. You don't know the day your Lord will come." Matthew 24:42 (ICB)

Who can tell me what this picture represents? (Hold the Girl Scout emblem.) That's right! It is the Girl Scout emblem. Do we have any Girl Scouts here today? Can anyone tell me the Girl Scout motto? You are right again. The Girl Scout motto is, "Be Prepared." Can anyone tell me what this picture represents? (Hold up the Boy Scout emblem.) You boys and girls are really sharp! It is the Boy Scout emblem. Now, who can tell me what the Boy Scout motto is? You are right. The Boy Scout motto is "Be Prepared."

The Girl Scout and Boy Scout motto means that a good scout must always "Be prepared." That is also the subject for our Bible lesson today.

Today is a very special day. Today is the first Sunday of Advent and we have started the countdown to Christmas. There are many things that people do to get ready for Christmas, aren't there? Let's see, what are some of the things that we do to prepare for Christmas? We have to put up our Christmas tree, lights, and decorations. We have to get our Christmas cards addressed and mailed. We have a lot of shopping to do to buy gifts for our family and friends. There is a lot of cooking that must be done -- Christmas cookies and candy and, of course, we must buy all of the food for Christmas dinner. Can you think of any things that I have forgotten? (Allow kids to answer.)

While we are getting ready for Christmas, there is something else that we must be prepared for as well. Jesus promised that he would come again and the Bible tells us that we must be watching and be prepared for his return. We all know when Christmas is coming, but when will Jesus come again? The Bible says that no one knows the hour of his return. Not even the angels who announced his birth know when he will come again.

If we don't know when he is coming, how can we be prepared? If we want to be prepared for Jesus' coming, we must always be busy doing the things that he told us to do. We must be loving God and loving one another. What are some things we can do? (Allow kids to answer.)

It is fun and exciting to prepare for Christmas, but we must also be prepared for that day when Jesus comes again.

Dear Father, we love this season of the year. We love the preparation for the celebration of the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Help us also remember that he is coming again and that you have told us to be prepared. In Jesus' name, amen.

Boy Scout Logo



Girl Scout Logo



CHILDREN'S CORNER

Parents, please read this to your younger child(ren)



Color the picture, then each day color one star beginning with number one. (You could also use star stickers instead of coloring the stars.)

2020 PER CAPITA APPORTIONMENT Never too Late!

Your annual Per Capita is \$45.00 and is shared as follows: General Assembly \$8.95, The Synod of the North-east \$4.10, The Presbytery of Elizabeth \$31.95. Per Capita is a member assessment used to fund the operating expenses of governing bodies. (Book of Order; G-9.0404 d).

Consider paying more than your share to help cover the cost of others who are unable to pay

Important:

Deadline is the 20th of each month for the Newsletter. Leave your news in the Church Office or email it to upcnews525@gmail.com

Church Office Hours: Mon-Fri 9am-3pm

Schedule of Pastor's Office Hours

Monday 12:00 – 4:00 pm
Wednesday 8: 30 – 3:30
Sunday: 10:00 am—3:00 pm

Please call the Church Office for an Appointment
or to contact the Pastor

Session Members (Elders)

Al Tate (Clerk)
Emory Dawson
Patricia Dawson
Avril Lecky
Marcia Marsh-Hinds

John 1:9

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”

CONTACT INFORMATION

Church Email: upcplainfield525@gmail.com
Newsletter: upcnews525@gmail.com
Church website: <http://upcplainfield.org>
Telephone No.: (908) 756-2666

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Director of Music: Ronn Daniels
Executive Assistant: Pat Perry
Sexton: Sue Terry

Board of Deacons

Helen Foerster - Moderator
Daniel Bofah
Thelma Fleming
Virginia Hansen
Desirae Hemans (in training)
Tania Hemans (in training)
Maggie Anglin (Volunteer)
Zorina Bowers (Volunteer)
Carl Foerster (Volunteer)

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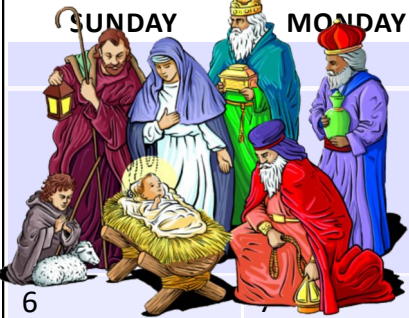
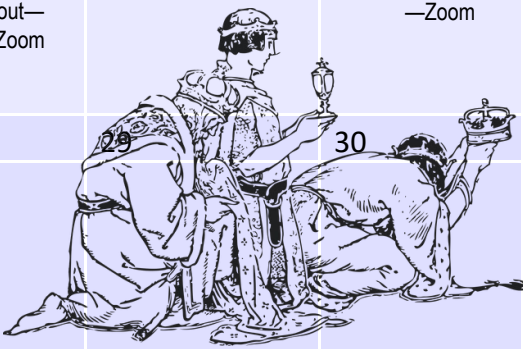


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December 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 Noon Day Prayer	2 Noon Day Prayer 7:00pm Bible Study —Zoom	3 Noon Day Prayer	4 Noon Day Prayer	5 7:00pm Prayer, Praise & Scripture Reading —Zoom
6 11am Livestream Communion Service SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT— "PEACE"	Noon Day Prayer 7:00 Boy Scout— Zoom	8 Noon Day Prayer	9 Noon Day Prayer 7:00pm Bible Study —Zoom	10 Noon Day Prayer Human Rights Day; National Gun Pre- vention	11 Noon Day Prayer	12 7:00pm Prayer, Praise & Scripture Reading —Zoom
13 11am Livestream Worship Service YOUTH SUNDAY THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT—"JOY"	Noon Day Prayer 7:00 Boy Scout— Zoom	15 Noon Day Prayer	16 Noon Day Prayer 7:30pm Session Mtg	17 Noon Day Prayer	18 Noon Day Prayer	19 7:00pm Prayer, Praise & Scripture Reading —Zoom
20 11am Livestream Worship Service THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT—"LOVE"	Noon Day Prayer 7:00 Boy Scout— Zoom	22 Noon Day Prayer	23 Noon Day Prayer 7:00pm Bible Study —Zoom	24 Noon Day Prayer 7:00pm CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE	25 Nativity of the Lord *CHRISTMAS *DAY	26 7:00pm Prayer, Praise & Scripture Reading —Zoom
27 11am Livestream Worship Service	28			30	31 10:00pm-Midnight WATCH NIGHT SERVICE	

NOTE:

CALENDAR EVENTS MAY CHANGE BASED ON THE STATES POLICY ON GROUP MEETING. CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR UPDATES.

The calendar reflects regularly occurring events and subject to change. Check with the Church Office for changes

Communion & Deacon Sunday —1st Sunday Monthly
 Youth Sunday—2nd Sunday monthly
 Dedication Sunday—4th Sunday Monthly

Committee Meetings (unless stated otherwise):

2nd Sunday following Worship: Deacons Meeting
 3rd Wednesday @ 7:30pm: Session Meeting

If you would like to be a member on any committee or help with any project, call the Church Office at 908-756-2666.

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JANUARY 2021

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
						NEW YEAR'S DAY
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
11am Livestream Worship Service Communion Service	Noon Day Prayer 7:00 Boy Scout— Zoom	Noon Day Prayer	Noon Day Prayer 7:00pm Bible Study —Zoom EPIPHANY OF THE LORD	Noon Day Prayer	Noon Day Prayer	7:00pm Prayer, Praise & Scripture Reading —Zoom
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
11am Livestream Worship Service YOUTH SUNDAY BAPTISM OF THE LORD	Noon Day Prayer 7:00 Boy Scout— Zoom	Noon Day Prayer	Noon Day Prayer	Noon Day Prayer	Noon Day Prayer	7:00pm Prayer, Praise & Scripture Reading —Zoom
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
11am Livestream Worship Service	Noon Day Prayer 7:00 Boy Scout— Zoom BIRTHDAY OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. WEEK OF PRAYER BEGINS	Noon Day Prayer	Noon Day Prayer 7:00pm Bible Study —Zoom 7:30pm Session Mtg	Noon Day Prayer	Noon Day Prayer	7:00pm Prayer, Praise & Scripture Reading —Zoom
24/31	25	26	27	28	29	30
11am Livestream Worship Service	Noon Day Prayer 7:00 Boy Scout— Zoom WEEK OF PRAYER ENDS	Noon Day Prayer	Noon Day Prayer 7:00pm Bible Study —Zoom 7:00pm Session Mtg	Noon Day Prayer	Noon Day Prayer	7:00pm Prayer, Praise & Scripture Reading —Zoom

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