



The First United
Presbyterian Church
of Crafton Heights

The Runner

David B. Carver, Pastor
www.chup.org
November 2023

As we turn the corner into November, we recognize that the end of the year is nearly upon us. Are there things for which you'd hoped in 2023 that have yet to happen? Have you discovered new resources or strengths this year that you didn't know you had before?

In 2023, Advent is nicely contained in the month of December. Often, we sneak the First Sunday of Advent into November, and find that our season of waiting begins with the fuss and hubbub of family travel and giant meals and Black Friday and all the things we have to do to pull that off. But in 2023, the First Sunday of Advent is a full week removed from the adventure that is Thanksgiving, and I like that for all kinds of reasons.



As we move toward Advent 2023, I wonder if I could ask you to think about a time when you found yourself waiting... and I wonder if you'd be willing to share that something about that time with me. Maybe you were waiting for a baby to come, or for a loved one to die... you were searching for a job and you didn't think you'd ever find the right one. It could be something mundane – you were waiting in line at the grocery store and a child surprised you with a bit of joy or wisdom; or it may be something profound – you waited for an acceptance letter, or a marriage proposal, or the repayment of a financial obligation.

At any rate, can you think of a time when in your waiting, you found strength and hope and the ability to endure? And would you tell me about that? I'd love to fashion some worship reflections around the notion of God coming to us in the times in which we wait... and I know that many of you know a great deal about waiting for God to show up in times of pain or joy or celebration or fear.

**“The waiting of Advent teaches us to live in increments,
in small pieces rather than large chunks. Waiting also teaches us to measure
our progress slowly.”**

(Holly Whitcomb, a Spiritual Director in Wisconsin)

I look forward to sharing your stories of waiting for, deliverance from, realization of, or pointing towards some great truth (or some small joy) in your life. Please stop me at church, call me, or send me an email (dave@chup.org) to get the conversation started!

Wishing you joy and peace and gratitude this day and into this season!

I'll look for you in worship!

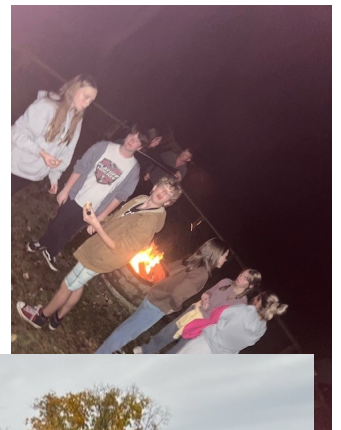
Pastor Dave

Fellowship Opportunities

Ladies Fellowship: Ladies! We are enjoying our time together, and are always looking to welcome more people. We meet in Fellowship Hall at 10:00 every Tuesday for a light snack, study, prayer and fellowship. Our first video series this fall will be Max Lucados "Anxious about Nothing". All are welcome, and bring a friend! If you have any questions, contact Dani Anderson or Barb Prevost.

Congregational Life: Our congregational life team is seeking greeters for 2024. Greeters come to church early to welcome congregants and visitors. They also collect offering during the service. You can sign up for one Sunday a month, or even sign up as a substitute. Please contact Barb Prevost at bprevost1534@comcast.net or text (412)509-6729 to continue greeting, or to be added to our current list of greeters.

Save The Date: On December 3rd, 2023, please join us after church for a soup and salad luncheon sponsored by Congregational Life. The meal will be served after worship. Come to a time of fellowship, before the busyness of the holiday season begins. We ask that, if you are able, you bring mens socks to the luncheon. These will be donated to Pleasant Valley Men's Shelter on the Northside.



Open Door

I love autumn, and we have been particularly blessed this month with near perfect weather. While I'm sure events would have been successful in the rain or snow, it's always a joy to be out in the warmth and sunshine. This was especially true for our Youth Group retreat this year. For the first time in a long time, we made our way to Promise Camp. If you were around in the early nineties, you may remember Promise Camp as the location of our "All Church Retreats," well, let me tell you that a few things have changed (along with some things that haven't). We enjoyed having multiple spaces to move between, including a huge dining hall, where some of our youth shined in the kitchen, and the activity center, where we had our lessons, and a breakout space for all sorts of games and activities. When I arrived on Sunday morning, it looked like it was going to be a cold and rainy day, but as the kids slowly woke up and made their way to breakfast, the sun popped out, the air warmed up, and we had a perfect end to the weekend. While my body might be hurting after an intense hour of volleyball, my heart is happy to see our youth thriving as a dedicated community of young believers.

While our teenagers got to have a fun weekend away, our afterschool program was hard at work in Fellowship Hall. The children met Sister Mary from The Parent Place, a family resource center across the street from The Open Door. If you have yet to meet Sister Mary and the staff at The Parent Place, then you are in for a treat! They provide a safe space for families to access the help and resources they need. In addition to the classes they lead, they also help those in need by providing utility assistance, a diaper bank, a clothing pantry, a food pantry, and a lot more. While CHUP has had a small pantry for some time, we realized that The Parent Place is more well equipped to help those facing food insecurity, which is where our after school program comes in. Sister Mary met with our after school program, and told them about all the work they do, and got us started as we brought the food from our pantry to theirs. After some vigorous sorting, we carried boxes of food down the street and added them to the Food Pantry at The Parent Place. The kids were excited to help, and we are grateful for a chance to introduce them to another group of caring adults and a new safe space for them in the community. It is always a blessing seeing kids filled with joy as they help others, and I'm looking forward to more projects with them in the future!



Preschool

This month at preschool has had its challenges as we continue to use the space behind the sanctuary, the toddler room, and parlor. The challenges include setting up our classrooms every Monday morning, moving all the tables, activities, and supplies needed for the week. Then on Wednesday, moving them out of the way for worship on Sunday. As we continue to keep preschool engaging, we are faced with the challenges of bringing down new toys and activities, replacing the previously used activities, returning them back to the 3rd floor storage rooms. This keeps preschool engaging and exciting for the children as they like new challenges each week. I want to publicly acknowledge the preschool staff, Amanda, Kristen, Zoricia, for their diligence and hard work, staying upbeat and positive, as we await the restoration process to be completed. We are looking forward to having new carpeting, shiny floors, new bookshelves and area rugs when all the restoration is finished. A huge shout out goes to my husband Glenn, who has been diligently working with the insurance company and the restoration company, to ensure that all work and claims are being completed, albeit a slower process than what we would like. We are appreciative of your continued support as we go through these difficult days . Thank you to our steady volunteers -Lynn Langford, Terri Dorman, Sonia Williams, their help in the classroom allows us to focus on learning activities with individual children.

Thank you to everyone who came out and supported us at our Mad Mex fundraiser dinner on October 3rd. This delicious meal and fun evening was appreciated by hungry diners who love preschool. Thank you to all who attended this event. A big shout out to Linda Piper and Barb Prevost for your support at this event.

Our hoagie sale has begun , if you'd like an easy dinner or lunch hoagie orders are due by November 8. They are made by Silver Star Meats and the cost is \$8.50 per hoagie, choice of Italian or Turkey. Contact Cheri if you'd like to order a few.

Pick up is Tuesday, November 14 at church between 4:45 -6pm.



WHY VOLUNTEER?



With busy lives, it can be hard to find time to volunteer. However, the benefits of volunteering can be enormous. Volunteering offers vital help to people in need, worthwhile causes, and the community, but the benefits can be even greater for you, the volunteer. The right match can help you to find friends, connect with the community, learn new skills, and even advance your career.

Read the full article here: <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/healthy-living/volunteering-and-its-surprising-benefits.htm>

So much of what we do at CHUP is done by volunteers! Sure we have the staff, Pastor Dave, Nicole, the custodians, preschool staff, open door staff and the music leader all have their jobs to do. But, Volunteers are the workhorses behind the Ministry here in Crafton Heights. Everyone on session volunteers their time, commitment and knowledge helping us follow the mission and rules of PC (USA). The deacons are the helping hands of the congregation, volunteers meeting the needs within our community. Then we have a number of committees that keep things running and organized, all are run by volunteers, such as the Christian Education committee, providing the childcare and Sunday school programming. The Stewardship team, volunteers working hard creating our budget, paying the bills and processing donations and contributions. We have the Building & Grounds team working hard to keep this old building up and running, we also have the Congregational Life committee a group charged with the fellowship and support that happens in these walls and we have our dedicated and talented worship team. They volunteer their talent each week bringing us songs and worship music Sunday mornings. It takes many, many people to fill these roles, and many people volunteering are pulling double or triple duty, we thank each and every one of them for their dedication, talent and time.



When you hear the need for volunteers, think about how you can give your time and talents to one of these ministries within our Ministry here in Crafton Heights. We have needs that can fill every age and skill level- high schoolers- need to put in volunteer hours, we could use some help pulling weeds, picking up litter or assisting with childcare Sunday morning or at Friday night Rec. Building and grounds could use a couple people willing to organize a couple work days, and help with some projects on the to-do list.

The Nominating committee will prayerfully be seeking people for Elders and Deacons. Maybe you felt God nudging you, calling you to be part of something bigger or meaningful. Pray that your eyes may be opened to the opportunities around you and how you can be a blessing to a person or committee in need of someone just like you.

The next time there is a mention from the pulpit for the need for volunteers with the afterschool program or preschool or childcare, it might be you we're looking for. If you have a lot of ideas, energy or desire to make a difference, we have a spot for you! If you are bored, feeling down, need to connect with people, we could put your time to good use.

Drop a note in the offering plate, reach out to Pastor Dave or give Nicole a call, we're waiting for you.

All the best- Cheri Mack

Restoration Update

Good news: We are making progress, and yes the pace is currently that of a tortoise needing foot surgery, but there is progress!

Bad news: We are at the scheduling mercy of an already administrative cumbersome process of insurance claims, and the subsequent control thereof.

Translated: Due to the insurance company claim process, and their need to re-view our policy to identify our coverage, coupled with the approval of claim and payments to the Disaster Recovery Co., our priority dropped with the disaster recovery team, at least until they get their first payment. Unfortunately this is the only hiccup in the process that has caused any delays, and we are working through this.

Overall: We are dry! Vent holes that were opened to dry the infrastructure have been replastered/repared, and first primer coat applied. Replacement cabinetry is in the Disaster Recovery warehouse already! We have completed our inventory of contents damaged or destroyed and this is in process of getting submitted and paid. We have had conversations with the accounting firm who will reimburse the church for lost revenue and salaries related to the preschool, and this is in process. We will select paint and carpet soon, as this will be the last portion of the recovery, and the electrician will be replacing fixtures during the same time. We will be ordering new desks, as a couple of our desks were destroyed. And we are in the process of replacing incidentals as we move through what is needing replaced.

In summary, CHUP experienced a “perfect storm” moment, if you will. And know that the B & G team is diligently working on this, and will see through to a positive completion! We are past the mopping phase, through the patching phase, entering into the painting phase, and will soon be in the completion phase!

We know that this has been trying, and will be for a few more weeks, but we know that our intentions are right, and we know that we have the congregation’s support!

Thank you for your patience and if you have any questions, please ask.
In His service and on behalf of B & G,
Glenn

Prayer Concerns

Members: Florence Hall, Marge Freeman, Eleanor Arlet, Peter Veltman, Maryanne Richardson, Barbara Wasner, Lil McConnell

Friends & Relatives: Sue Whitaker, Than and Ruthina Veltman, Pastor Michael Weller, Wayne Arlet, Jr., Lisa Myers, Teresa Stacy (niece of Mary Stacy), Helen Barto (Kitty Kistler's mother), Amy Spezialetti, Kathy Dickey, Joe Kozman (Michele Kish's brother)

November Birthdays

1st Jason Padula
 2nd Tyler Austin
 Tyler Piper
 9th Tim Salinetto
 10th Fran Andrews
 12th Beverly Steinmetz
 17th Patricia Barry
 18th Ezra Claassen
 19th Ethan Chacon
 21st Brian Mack
 23rd Lucia Carver Daniels
 24th Dietrich Zeisloft
 25th Jonah Fullwood
 26th Mimi Zickefoose
 27th Courtney Barry
 Maya Fisher
 28th Cheryl Shaw
 29th Jamie Klein

Worship Opportunities

In-Person Worship: Services are Sundays at 11:00 am, preceded by Sunday School at 9:45.

Online Worship: Each Sunday at 10:00 am, our worship service livestreams on our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/CraftonHeightsChurch/> And then later on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLU5XsLRABddh2dgu38_W9bbRu9wYaOB4

Electronic Giving

Go to <https://chup.org/giving/> to find easy options for sending your donation electronically. Feel free to contact the office chup@chup.org to find out more about how you can designate where you would like your donation to go: the Church, the Preschool, the Open Door, the Food Pantry... the list goes on! Thank you for supporting our many ministries and enabling us to spread God's love in our community and throughout the world.

CHUP Online

Did you know that you can view the Runner in full color on our website? Back issues, too! Our website is mobile friendly and easier to navigate than ever. <https://chup.org/>

Please visit www.chup.org to find online newsletters, sermons, prayer concerns, giving opportunities, announcements, online worship links, and clickable information on how you can become involved in our many ministries.

Blood Drive

Please mark your calendar for the next drive scheduled for, **Sunday, January 14th**. We look forward to seeing you all there!

Need Help?

Do you need help of one kind or another? If you are in need of food, or someone to run an errand for you, or a friendly voice with whom to speak, or prayer... please let us know!

Email dave@chup.org and we will marshal the resources to help you face the challenges of your day. You are not alone!



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