

# Community Press

A PUBLICATION OF COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
ROCHESTER, MN



**Lent** this year offers stories of Jesus encountering people who are seeking something they don't understand: Nicodemus by night, a woman at a well, a man born without sight. Each person is seeking a new beginning, a different life, a deeper faith. Jesus comes seeking them, as well. Questions follow. Often, an unveiling occurs—assumptions are disrupted, new perspectives are revealed, mystery grows.



Like the biblical characters, we at CPC also come in search of many things: clarity, connection, wonder, justice, balance. We are seeking our calling, our life in God, and how to live as disciples. We seek new leadership in a changed post-COVID world. Jesus comes seeking us as well, welcoming our doubts and hesitations. Ultimately, we pray, our questions, too, will lead to a new beginning, a restoration, a wider grace.

**seeking:**  
honest questions  
for deeper faith

Plan to show up this Lent. Take time to gather with others in uncertainty, wonder, and hope for the future we seek.

## Upcoming worship services

**February 5** -- Global volunteers: Last summer, Ivy Pillers and Ronda Marshall spent a week teaching at a camp in Poland. They'd signed up for 2020 but were plans were disrupted by covid. Last August, they were able to complete their commitment. In addition to the Polish children, they also met Ukrainian refugees and were able, thanks to CPC's generosity, to provide a few of them with tablets to help them in their studies. Come and hear the full story! Pastor Tim Gerarden will preside at the monthly communion service.

**February 12** -- Reverend Carla (Atkinson) Nelson, daughter of Vera and sister of Karen, will lead worship on this day. During her years as a teacher, Carla also attended United Theological Seminary in St. Paul and was ordained in the Disciples of Christ. She has served congregations in Iowa and Owatonna, and is currently living in Rochester. We welcome her to CPC in Pastor Jan's absence!

## Ash Wednesday

Lent opens with a traditional Ash Wednesday Service, February 22 at 7 pm.

Seeking: *Is this the fast that I choose?*

What are you seeking? What is your body, or your mind, or your soul seeking? Where does your seeking overlap with God's seeking? What areas of your life are discordant with what God seeks? God's words to the prophet in Isaiah 58:2 could also be translated as, "Day by day they are inquiring knowledge of me and delighting in my ways." What would it look like for this to be your Lenten quest?

*Why not show up for this thoughtful service, gateway to a season of seeking?*

FEBRUARY 2023

# COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LEADERSHIP

## Session

The Session is the governing board of the church. It consists of six ruling elders, elected for three years. Much of the business of the church is conducted through committees. Each ruling elder chairs one of the committees. The Pastor, who is a teaching elder and moderator of Session, is an ex-officio member of every committee.

<u>Class of 2023</u>	Ivy Pillers Kim Nickander Lyal Powell	Worship and Music Finance and Stewardship Building and Grounds
<u>Class of 2024</u>	Amanda Ross Sherrie Wilson	Personnel and Nominating Mission
<u>Class of 2025</u>	Sue Chipman	Christian Education
<u>Officers:</u>	Mary Meyer Mark Pillers Joanne Powell	Clerk (Non-voting) Financial Secretary Treasurer

## 2023 Nominating Committee

Mark Neville, Bruce Felger, Dave Copeland, and Mary Alice Richardson,  
Margie Petersen (Deacons)

Membership (a sub committee of Christian Education) Chairperson: Amanda Ross

## Deacons

The Board of Deacons is responsible for ministering to all those who are in need, to the sick, to the friendless, and to all those who may be in distress. Deacons provide meals and transportation, among other requested needs. They maintain the Prayer Chain. Deacons are elected in classes of two and serve a three year term.

<u>Class of 2023</u>	<u>Class of 2024</u>	<u>Class of 2025</u>
Margie Petersen	Dave Copeland	Ron Murray
Peggy McCarty	Aaron Simms	Louis Bouchard

## Staff

Pastor/ Head of Staff  
Choir Director  
Pianist  
Bell Choir Director  
Custodian  
Office Manager

Rev. Jan Wiersma  
Meg Cain  
Glenna Muir  
Judy Kereakos  
Nancy Sanford  
Stephanie Pasch

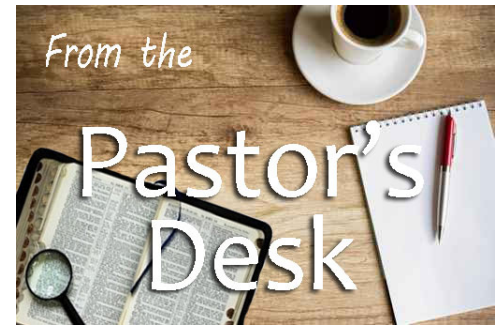
**Ministers to the world**

**Congregation Members**

## A WORD FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

### What are you seeking? Whom do you seek?

Could we have invented a more appropriate theme for Lent this year? Once again, this congregation—*your* congregation—stands on the cusp of change. As I prepare to retire (for the fourth and, I hope, final time), you are preparing to seek, find, and welcome a new pastor. Does it seem that as soon as you get one of us nicely trained we take our leave and move on to other fields?



But I am still with you for four action-packed months. And I think you have taught me by now *how* we can act together. I urge you to show up for this adventure of seeking God's will and way in Rochester through CPC's next phase of life. I invite you to participate fully in this search, by praying every day and activating every network you're part of. It will be fun. It will be surprising. Like gardening, the task will require some work, but it will yield more joy.

As I have repeated throughout Epiphany, life has taught me that wherever I go, God has gone ahead to meet me when I finally show up. Not only that, but God has already seeded the soil with whatever it is I will need; God knows better than I do what that is. I don't need to search on ebay, or seek answers through Amazon; what I need is here, hidden but alive and alert.

When I think of how God prepares the ground for us, I picture God hiding out in a pumpkin or a bean seed, gleefully anticipating our arrival. As our sweat and tears wet the soil, God springs out from the seed to surprise us. "Look! Here I am! We'll root and grow, blossom and bear fruit together!" And in the way of good fruit, in partnership with God, we produce seed to scatter in the soil for those who come to till it next.

William Arthur Ward wrote, "Judge each day not by the harvest you reap but by the seeds you sow." When I think of Margaret Nelson, as I so often do, I remember her as someone who planted seeds: in books, libraries, ideas, with her knack for connecting people to one another. She lived a wise and careful life and we are her beneficiaries in more ways than one. We have certainly reaped the harvest of her and Hank's sound financial management.

But shall we simply treat her gifts as the harvest we now sit back and enjoy? Or do we treat them as seed corn? This is the question currently being asked by the Investment and Use Committee. What remained of Margaret physically is planted in York, Nebraska, in accordance with her own wishes. What she leaves behind spiritually is ours to use, nurture, and replant.

People of God, what we need is here. Thanks be to God.



## A WORD FROM THE PASTOR, CONTINUED

A poem from our Lenten theme, by Sarah Are Speed, says it another way:

### **how do we begin again?**

Do we slide into something new?  
Do we make a formal announcement? *Dearest reader,*  
*I have decided to begin again.* Do we turn gradually, a gentle yield  
in a new direction; or like a wave,  
do we crash onto the shore of a new day?  
Do we grieve the change? Are there breadcrumbs on the path?  
Will Nicodemus be there?  
Will it ever be easy?  
I'm not sure exactly how we begin again,  
but I know that moths wrap themselves in silk,  
and after quite some time,  
after many long nights,  
after days spent alone,  
they break out of their shell.  
They pull themselves out under open sky,  
and they spend the rest of their days chasing the light.  
Maybe it's always that way with beginnings.  
Maybe it feels like the protective layer falling away.  
Maybe we have to go it alone at first.  
Maybe it feels like pulling and dragging yourself into something new.  
Maybe there's always open sky at the other end.

## AROUND CPC

A colorful, 3D-style graphic of the words "HAPPY BIRTHDAY". Each letter is a different color and has a slight shadow, giving it a festive, celebratory appearance.A purple, elegant graphic of the words "HAPPY ANNIVERSARY". The letters are in a serif font, and the word "ANNIVERSARY" is larger and more prominent. A decorative swirl or flourish extends from the end of the word.

*Birthdays and anniversaries can  
be found in the print edition of the  
newsletter. Pick one up at church!*



## Gage East Library Project

When the 3M committee invited proposals for projects that Margaret Nelson would approve, our ministry partners at Gage East Apartments mentioned the loss of their onsite library and the desire to replace it. Although the majority of Margaret's tithe went to the Women's Shelter, the idea of rebuilding the GE library captured the imaginations of CPC's avid readers.

A special year-end donation from the Mission Committee led to the planned construction of hand-crafted shelves by volunteer Melvin Tyree, with the help of Mark Neville and his tools. In the meantime, dozens of books were donated, and several hundred dollars for the purchase of additional culturally appropriate new and used books, mostly for children and young adults. As of this printing, more than 340 books are cataloged and ready to go on the shelves as soon as they are completed.

The project is just getting started. If you'd like to show up and get on board with it, speak to Pastor Jan.



## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



## BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP



### Book Discussion Group, Sunday, February 26 after worship

The group will read and discuss *First They Killed My Father: A daughter of Cambodia remembers*, by Loung Ung. "From a childhood survivor of Cambodia's brutal Pol Pot regime comes an unforgettable narrative of war crimes and desperate actions, the unnerving strength of a small girl and her family, and their triumph of spirit."

Books will be available at church on January 29, or from Carol Jones, through the Rochester Public Library "Book Group in a Bag."

## FROM OUR MISSION PARTNERS - EXCERPTS FROM LETTERS

### The Village Agricultural Cooperative

Helping Communities Grow Together

RochVillage.org

2022 was an amazing year of growth. We are so grateful for our community members, like you, that have chosen to acknowledge the importance of our mission with your financial support.

Thank you for your donation. Our partnered efforts in health equity work make a significant impact in our community. By working together, we make a difference to BIPOC and recent immigrant communities seeking land access to lower their grocery bills, integrate into community, improve their physical and mental health, and preserve their indigenous cultures, among other benefits.

Thank you for investing in the health and future of your community.



Thank you for supporting Channel One - your donation is making an impact right now!

Channel One has seen a 33% increase in Food Shelf visits compared to this time last year. As everyone tries to adapt to these challenging economic times, it is harder for some of our neighbors to put dinner on the table, especially over the holiday season. Your caring partnership and compassion means they won't go without the food they need. It is estimated that over 52,000 people in our region are food insecure, and your generosity helps us to ensure these individuals have dignified access to fresh and healthy food. Your investment in Channel One will be put back into the community through the distribution of over 9 million pounds of food a year across 14 counties, the Channel One Food Shelf which supports approximately 5000 household visits a month, 1200 prepared meals going into the community each week and Mobile Pantries that deliver food to areas where food programming is scarce. Thank you.

You envision a world where every child learns to read; then, you donated to The Reading Center to help us make that happen. Your donation is an investment in the future of the hundreds of children The Reading Center serves every year who struggle due to dyslexia.



**The Reading Center**

DYSLEXIA INSTITUTE OF MN

2022 marks The Reading Center's 71st year serving the needs of the dyslexic community. Your donation will help us reach our goal of providing over \$100,000 in scholarships by the end of this year. Additionally, it will help us train more Orton-Gillingham tutors and provide barrier-free tutoring for the lowest income students through our partnerships.

Thank you for supporting the mission of The Reading Center. You give children the opportunity to achieve success in school and in life. Together we are building confidence, inspiring hope, and enhancing success.

# Community Presbyterian's Calendar

## February 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>29</b> Pastor Jan Vacation <b>9:30am Online and Onsite Worship</b> <b>10:45am Book Discussion Group</b> 2:30pm Building Use: Labranza de Dios	<b>30</b> Pastor Jan Vacation	<b>31</b> Pastor Jan Vacation 12:00pm Online Conference Call 12:00pm Bulletin info due 7:00pm Building Use: Mission Aid Network	<b>1</b> Pastor Jan Vacation 6:30am Prayer Group at Church of Christ 7:00pm CPC Choir Rehearsal	<b>2</b> Pastor Jan Vacation 5:30pm Building Use: Labranza de Dios	<b>3</b> Pastor Jan Vacation	<b>4</b> Pastor Jan Vacation
<b>5</b> Pastor Jan Vacation <b>9:30am Online and Onsite Worship with Communion</b> 2:30pm Building Use: Labranza de Dios	<b>6</b> Pastor Jan Vacation 6:00pm Med-City Tai Chi	<b>7</b> Pastor Jan Vacation 12:00pm Online Conference Call 12:00pm Bulletin info due 6:30pm Christian Education Committee meeting 7:00pm Building Use: Mission Aid Network	<b>8</b> Pastor Jan Vacation 6:30am Prayer Group at Church of Christ 7:00pm CPC Choir Rehearsal	<b>9</b> Pastor Jan Vacation 5:30pm Building Use: Labranza de Dios	<b>10</b> Pastor Jan Vacation	<b>11</b> Pastor Jan Vacation
<b>12</b> Pastor Jan Vacation <b>9:30am Online and Onsite Worship</b> 2:30pm Building Use: Labranza de Dios	<b>13</b> Pastor Jan Vacation 6:00pm Med-City Tai Chi	<b>14</b> Pastor Jan Vacation 12:00pm Online Conference Call 12:00pm Bulletin info due 6:30pm Building and Grounds Meeting 7:00pm Building Use: Mission Aid Network	<b>15</b> Pastor Jan Vacation 6:30am Prayer Group at Church of Christ 7:00pm CPC Choir Rehearsal	<b>16</b> 5:30pm Building Use: Labranza de Dios	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b> <b>Installation of Elders, Deacons, and Officers</b> <b>9:30am Online and Onsite Worship</b> 2:30pm Building Use: Labranza de Dios	<b>20</b> President's Day 12:00pm Newsletter articles due 6:00pm Med-City Tai Chi	<b>21</b> 12:00pm Online Conference Call 12:00pm Presby Pastor's Gathering 12:00pm Bulletin info due 7:00pm Building Use: Mission Aid Network	<b>22</b> 6:30am Prayer Group at Church of Christ <b>7:00pm Ash Wednesday Worship</b>	<b>23</b> 5:30pm Building Use: Labranza de Dios	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b> <b>9:30am Online and Onsite Worship</b> <b>10:45am Book Discussion Group</b> 2:30pm Building Use: Labranza de Dios	<b>27</b> 6:00pm Med-City Tai Chi	<b>28</b> <b>10:00am PW Bible Study</b> 12:00pm Online Conference Call 12:00pm Bulletin info due 6:30pm Session Meeting (v) 7:00pm Building Use: Mission Aid Network	<b>1</b> 6:30am Prayer Group at Church of Christ 7:00pm CPC Choir Rehearsal	<b>2</b> 5:30pm Building Use: Labranza de Dios	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>

*Community* Presbyterian Church  
3705 Fairway Place NW  
Rochester, MN 55901

**CPC worships at 9:30 each Sunday  
Both onsite and online!**

**Online Worship, Sundays 9:30 am  
<https://meet.google.com/vao-wjef-cbe>  
+1 575-305-4527 PIN: 652 821 468 #**

**Bulletins for worship can be found  
on the homepage of our website.  
[www.cpcrochester.org](http://www.cpcrochester.org)**

**Tuesday's Conference Call - 12:00 noon  
<https://meet.google.com/kee-rcys-sdh>  
+1 413-889-2244 PIN: 433 818 991#**

**Contact CPC: 507-280-9291  
Church office: [office@cpcrochester.org](mailto:office@cpcrochester.org)**