

# Community Press

A PUBLICATION OF COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
ROCHESTER, MN



## seeking: honest questions for deeper faith

### *Open Hearted - Open Minded*

*Open hearted - open minded is the title that we bear.  
What should we be doing, then, to prove we really care?  
Is it just a group of words upon a printed page?  
A farce that's only make-believe, played out upon Life's stage?*

*NO! We believe the words we speak: Our actions make them real!  
Open hearted, open minded is the purpose that we feel!  
The daily witness that we bear; examples of our creed  
Must show our whole community the way this church can lead!*

*Some of us march to different drums; the cadence that we hear  
Is just as valid as the rest: We follow without fear.  
We dare proclaim our differences, yet still our faith embrace;  
Within these walls God's love shines forth, on each and every face!*

*-MariLynn Johnson*

MARCH 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

**Seeking: what Christians are all about.** Well, and finding, too. “Seek and you will find,” Jesus counsels. Sometimes what we seek appears quickly and clearly; more often we have to live the questions to live into the answers, as the poet Rilke put it. “Be patient toward all that is unresolved in your heart.”

Seeking is our theme in Lent, but also our task for the next few months. We seek ways to invest and use Margaret’s marvelous gift to us. We seek people to fill the staff positions that will be vacant in June, not just the pastor’s role but the irreplaceable Meg, our music director for the last nine years. We seek help from the Presbytery in defining who we are right now, and in locating good candidates who will fit the CPC style and goals. We seek ways to continue to be active and resourceful in engaging the needs of the Rochester community and beyond.

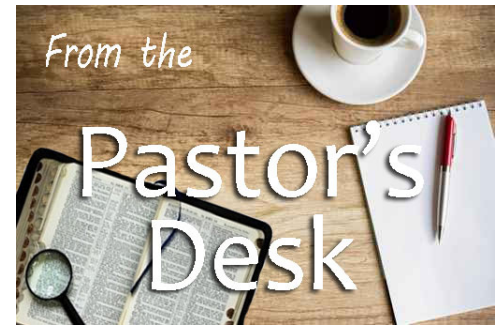
Bob and I returned this week from a three-week vacation to the Southwest with other family members. We went seeking warmth, sunshine, and time with family. We found all three, and more. Like many of you, we had curtailed travel plans through most of COVID. Stretching our muscles outside the usual safe haunts feels like a miracle. Gathering indoors with people we love feels doubly precious. Walking casually into a restaurant, ordering and being served by unmasked women and men presents pure luxury on a platter.

Our last in-person-only worship took place three years ago on March 15, 2020, as the pandemic loomed. Clueless as we were then, we thought we might suspend meeting at church for a couple of weeks, a month or two at most. Scientists and health care professionals feverishly sought knowledge, effective vaccines, or any solid evidence to keep people safer. Meanwhile, panicked people went in search of toilet paper and hand sanitizer, which had vanished from every retail shelf. Which was worse, the anticipation of the lockdown, or the reality?

What we don’t know is always scary in the veiled future, but less so in hindsight. One of the Psalms’ recurring messages tells us: Do you worry about what’s to come? Then look to the past. When have you felt abandoned, or cast down? How were you nourished and held, even through the most trying times? Did you sometimes turn from God in frustration? One answer is simply to live in the present, in the Presence of God’s love.

Part of our Sunday worship through Lent will be sharing our honest questions as we reach for deeper faith. Let your family of faith in on the secret of what you are searching for. You will be invited to share your doubts and concerns, your queries and your quests with others. We will knock together on the door of the future.

God’s answer to you when you just don’t know is to love you more. Only to love you more. Let that always be the answer you seek. May that always be the assurance you find.



# A GLIMPSE OF THE ANNUAL MEETING AND SESSION

## Highlights of the annual meeting

On Sunday, January 22, a sizable group of members gathered onsite and online to review the achievements of the year past and look ahead to new developments.

A budget of \$154,766.42 was passed, reflecting the slightly smaller pledged giving base this year.

Our membership was recorded as seventy-four. The decrease reflects the Clerk of Session and Session's good work in contacting members who have moved or are no longer active and removing them from the official rolls.

Bylaws were amended to provide for shorter terms for leaders. Elders and deacons will serve two-year terms, with a maximum of three consecutive terms, or six years of service. They will be elected at a specially called meeting in November, so they are ready to take up their roles without pause each January.

Another amendment reduced the number of annual Session meetings from ten to six, with the option for more as needed. Committees, too, will be able to meet only as needed and instead focus energies on accomplishing tasks.

The meeting concluded in just one hour. Thanks to all for participating and expediting the work!



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***On Sunday, February 19th, the Elders, Deacons and other Lay Leaders were installed into office. Lyal Powell was ordained as a Ruling Elder. Blessings on all of the CPC Leadership Team!***





## The Gage East library grows from the ground up

As the 3M committee (Margaret's Mission Money) gathered funding proposals for a tithe, or 10%, of Margaret's bequest, one project we regretted not being able to support was the rebuilding of the library at Gage East Apartments. A fire in the room above had ruined the books and shelves with water, soot, and smoke.



You rose to the challenge anyway, donating \$500 as individuals and through the Mission Committee for the purchase of appropriate books. A further \$620 was allocated from year-end Mission Giving for shelves to fit the designated space.

The library is growing! Almost five hundred new and used books and child-friendly DVDs have been purchased. Most of the books are for preschool to young adult readers, with a few for adult readers, also. Some still await cataloging on Pastor Jan's dining room table. About eight boxes of materials have already been recorded.

Meanwhile, a local craftsperson, Melvin Tyree, was engaged to design and build the shelves according to Gage East's specifications. With the support (and some borrowed tools) of woodworker Mark Neville, Mel undertook the project in Jan and Bob's garage.

With Gage East, we look forward to a grand opening for the library sometime later this spring. Once the library is up and running, Melissa Stortz, family support coordinator, will be seeking volunteers to tutor children a couple of hours one or two days a week, probably Tuesdays and Thursdays after school.

Stay alert for other volunteer opportunities as well, possibly including an Easter egg hunt, an Earth Day clean-up contest, or a Planting Party. And, of course, the Summer Party with the usual outdoor festivities (date TBD).



## IN MEMORY OF MARILYNN

From the Spotlight that Margaret Nelson wrote about MariLynn in June, 2016:

“A founding member of Community Presbyterian Church, MariLynn has been an active member since the beginning. She has served two terms as Deacon, Chaired the Membership Committee in the early days, and has been a member of the choir until recently.” MariLynn also blessed CPC by sharing her poetry over the years (Open Hearted, Open Minded is on the cover of this newsletter).

Her last years were spent as part of the Samaritan Bethany Community here in Rochester.

### In Memory of...

#### **MariLynn Lois (Tolzman) Johnson**

Published February 17, 2023 08:53 AM, Post Bulletin

Marilyn Lois (Tolzman) Johnson, aged 87, of Rochester, MN, passed away Wednesday February 15, 2023, at Samaritan Bethany in Rochester, MN. Marilyn was born January 29, 1936, to Louis and Lydia Tolzman in Albert Lea, MN. Marilyn graduated from Albert Lea High School, she later married Robert L. Johnson on October 7, 1956. Robert and Marilyn moved to Rochester in 1969.



Marilyn worked at various jobs throughout her lifetime. Upon graduating from nursing school in 1978 she worked for Woodside Convalescent Center and Bear Creek services until she retired. In 1982 Marilyn also became a member of the Rochester Police Reserves. In the early years of Rochester Paws and Claws existence Marilyn worked with the cats at the cat shelter. She enjoyed sewing, reading and writing poetry among many other things, she was a “construction” minded person, building many things from just a vision. She designed and built a few homes for her and her family.

Marilyn is survived by her three children, Kathy (Mike) Maloney of Yellville, Arkansas, Kris (Craig) Hall of Rochester, MN and her son David (Mary) Johnson in addition to 6 Grandchildren and 4 Great-Grandchildren and 2 Great-Great-Grandchildren with another on the way. She was preceded in death her by her parents and her husband.

Always wanting to teach those around her Marilyn has chosen to donate her body to medical science.

No memorial service will be held at this time.

The family thanks the devoted and caring caretakers at Samaritan Bethany and Season's Hospice for all of their help and hard work during this time of their loss.

Memorials may be given to a local animal shelter in her memory.



# BIRTHDAY WISHES

# HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

*Birthdays and anniversaries are in our print edition of the newsletter. You can pick one up at church next time you are here!*



**The Reading Center, a favorite of Margaret Nelson, received a year-end monetary gift from the Mission Committee to support their work. Margaret's generous bequest to us reminded us of the joy of sharing what we have received!**

*To the members of Community Presbyterian,  
Thank you so much for the generous donation at the end of the year! It will make a real difference to a child with dyslexia, with a sense of confidence when they realize they can learn to read.*

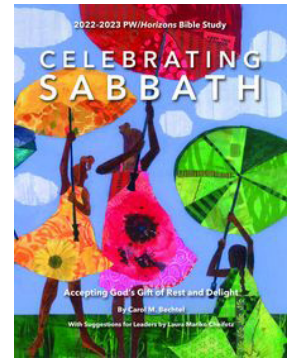
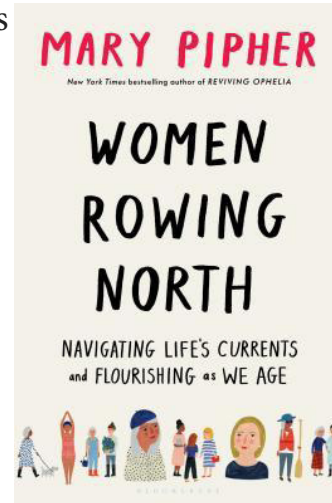
*Blessings,  
Cindy Russell  
Exec. Director*

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The **Book Discussion Group** will read and discuss *Women Rowing North: Navigating Life's Currents and Flourishing as We Age*, by Mary Pipher this month. The *New York Times* bestseller from the author of *Reviving Ophelia* is a guide to wisdom, authenticity, and bliss for women as they age.

“Women growing older contend with ageism, misogyny, and loss. Yet as Mary Pipher shows, most older women are deeply happy and filled with gratitude for the gifts of life. Their struggles help them grow into the authentic, empathetic, and wise people they have always wanted to be.” (<https://www.goodreads.com/en/book/show/38884171>).

**Join in on this interesting discussion on Sunday, March 26, following worship!**



The PW Bible Study resumed on Tuesday, February 28, 10 am, and continues on alternate Tuesdays. We look forward to seeing you at church or online!

## LENTEN DEVOTIONS

During Lent, daily devotions are available “to expand and deepen your spiritual walk through Lent.” It is not too late to pick up a devotional! The same devotional is available online, <https://online.flippingbook.com/view/928029194/>. Another option is to receive daily messages via text.. Please see the information below about signing up for texts/notifications. There will also be different daily messages on Facebook. Check it out!

Pick a way to receive messages for Daily Texts:

A) If you have a smartphone, get push notifications. On your iPhone or Android phone, open your web browser and go to the following link: [rmd.at/ga2hfb](https://rmd.at/ga2hfb) Follow the instructions to sign up for Remind. You'll be prompted to download the mobile app.

B) If you don't have a smartphone, get text notifications. Text the message @ga2hfb to the number 81010. If you're having trouble with 81010, try texting @ga2hfb to (608) 467-4108. Note: you'll be asked if you are a student (s) or a parent (p). Choose either one. The application was designed for schools, but will work for our purposes.

If you received daily texts last year, you're likely still on the list and you should be receiving the texts.

\* Standard text message rates apply.



**seeking:**  
honest questions  
for deeper faith



## • *Working for Justice and Peace* •

### PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN J&P CALENDAR



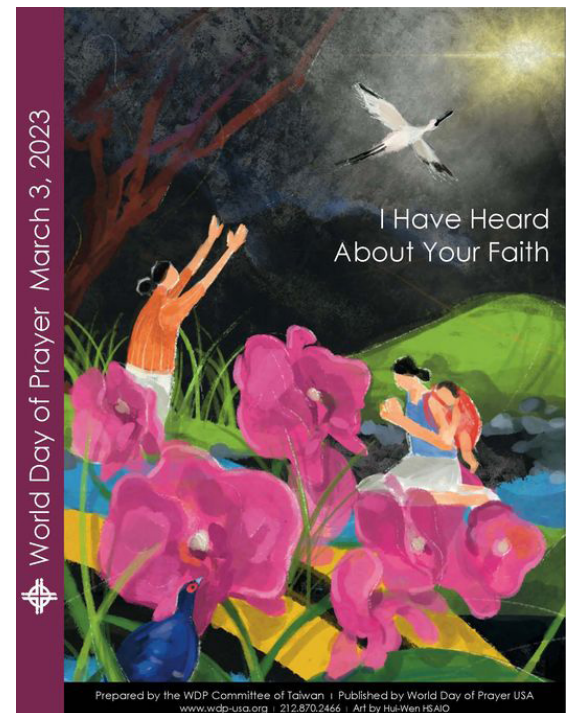
#### MARCH

- Women's History Month, [womenshistorymonth.gov](http://womenshistorymonth.gov)
- 3 World Day of Prayer, [wdp-usa.org](http://wdp-usa.org) or [worlddayofprayer.net](http://worlddayofprayer.net)
- 5 Celebrate the Gifts of Women Sunday, [pcusa.org/women](http://pcusa.org/women)
- 5–11 PW Together in Action for Women's Empowerment, [presbyterianwomen.org/justice](http://presbyterianwomen.org/justice)
- 6–17 UN Commission on the Status of Women, [unwomen.org/en/csw/csw67-2023](http://unwomen.org/en/csw/csw67-2023)
- 8 International Women's Day, [internationalwomensday.com](http://internationalwomensday.com) or [un.org/en/observances/womens-day](http://un.org/en/observances/womens-day)
- 12 Self-Development of People Sunday, [presbyterianmission.org/sdop-sunday](http://presbyterianmission.org/sdop-sunday)
- 13 J&P Book Discussion Group online, 6:30–8:30 PM (Eastern) Climate Justice: Hope, Resilience and the Fight for a Sustainable Future by Mary Robinson (New York: Bloomsbury, 2018). Register at [presbyterianwomen.org/justice](http://presbyterianwomen.org/justice)
- 20 Mr. Rogers Day, [presbyterianmission.org/ministries/theology-formation-and-evangelism/office-of-christian-formation/mr-rogers-day-resources](http://presbyterianmission.org/ministries/theology-formation-and-evangelism/office-of-christian-formation/mr-rogers-day-resources)
- 20 International Day of Happiness; [daysoftheyear.com/days/international-day-of-happiness](http://daysoftheyear.com/days/international-day-of-happiness)
- 22 World Water Day, [worldwaterday.org](http://worldwaterday.org)
- 25–31 National Farmworker Awareness Week, [saf-unite.org/national-farmworker-awareness-week](http://saf-unite.org/national-farmworker-awareness-week)
- 31 National Farm Workers Day, [nationaltoday.com/national-farm-workers-day](http://nationaltoday.com/national-farm-workers-day)

#### Worldwide Movement of Christian Women

World Day of Prayer is a worldwide, ecumenical movement of Christian women of many traditions who come together to observe a common day of prayer each year, and who, in many countries, have a continuing relationship in prayer and service.

- It is initiated and carried out by women in more than 170 countries and regions.
- It is symbolized by an annual day of celebration observed on the first Friday in March to which all people are welcome.
- It brings women of different races, cultures and traditions together in fellowship, understanding and action throughout the year.
- Through World Day of Prayer, women affirm that prayer and action are inseparable and have immeasurable influence in the world.
- The motto of World Day of Prayer is *"Informed Prayer and Prayerful Action."*



# IN THE MAILBOX



Women's Shelter  
AND SUPPORT CENTER

January 12, 2023

Community Presbyterian Church  
3705 Fairway Place NW  
Rochester, MN 55901

Dear Pastor Jan and friends at Community Presbyterian Church,

You are incredible! With your generous gift of funding for a new or gently used van, you are keeping families safe! Transportation services are a critical part of direct service provision at the Women's Shelter, as this is often a difficult barrier for many survivors. Thank you giving victims a bridge to safety.

Because of you, victims of domestic violence will have access to transportation for critical safety needs, medical and legal appointments, school, work, and other resources, as well as field trips for our youth! Geographically, this van will benefit thousands of victims and their children throughout southeastern Minnesota.

Safety is our number #1 priority at the Women's Shelter and Support Center. The new van will allow us to continue our efforts to make our community a safer place.

Thank YOU for supporting the work of the shelter and for keeping victims safe.

We are grateful for your kind and generous donation:

Date	Amount
12/28/2022	\$40,000.00

You mean the world to us and the families we serve. Thank you for changing futures for victims of domestic violence.

With gratitude,

  
Artyce Thomas  
Executive Director  
ArtyceT@womens-shelter.org

*Thank you from the  
bottom of our hearts!  
your gift has impacted the  
entire community! We are forever  
grateful.*

Please consider this letter official receipt of your tax-deductible contribution. No goods or services were provided to you in consideration of this gift. Our federal tax identification number is 41-1316614. This organization is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization, IRS Section 170(b)(2)(iii) for both federal and state tax purposes.

Dodge County  
507.634.6070

P.O. Box 457  
Rochester, MN 55903  
www.womens-shelter.org  
507.285.1010  
800.438.6439

Fillmore County  
507.765.2550

# Community Presbyterian's Calendar

March 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<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>
<b>5</b> <b>9:30am Online and Onsite Worship with Communion</b> 2:30pm Building Use: Labranza de Dios	<b>6</b> 10:00am Mission Prayer Group 6:00pm Med-City Tai Chi	<b>7</b> 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> 6:30am Prayer Group at Church of Christ 6:00pm Confirmation 6:45pm Jubellation Handbell Rehearsal 7:30pm CPC Choir Rehearsal	<b>9</b> 5:30pm Building Use: Labranza de Dios	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>12</b> <b>9:30am Online and Onsite Worship</b> 2:30pm Building Use: Labranza de Dios	<b>13</b> 6:00pm Med-City Tai Chi	<b>14</b> <b>10:00am PW Bible Study</b> 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> 6:30am Prayer Group at Church of Christ 6:00pm Confirmation 6:45pm Jubellation Handbell Rehearsal 7:30pm CPC Choir Rehearsal	<b>16</b> 5:30pm Building Use: Labranza de Dios	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b> <b>9:30am Online and Onsite Worship</b> 2:30pm Building Use: Labranza de Dios	<b>20</b> 10:00am Mission Prayer Group 12:00pm Newsletter articles due 6:00pm Med-City Tai Chi	<b>21</b> 12:00pm Online Conference Call 12:00pm Bulletin info due 5:30pm Finance & Stewardship Meeting 7:00pm Building Use: Mission Aid Network	<b>22</b> 6:30am Prayer Group at Church of Christ 6:00pm Confirmation 6:45pm Jubellation Handbell Rehearsal 7:30pm CPC Choir Rehearsal	<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>29</b> 6:30am Prayer Group at CPC 6:00pm Confirmation 7:00pm CPC Choir Rehearsal	<b>30</b> 5:30pm Building Use: Labranza de Dios	<b>31</b>	<b>1</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)**