

Foresight

Looking to the Future

Christian Church of Villa Park
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Pastor: Rev. Laura Jennison Reed



Tuesday, January 10, 2023



Welcome to 2023! A new year, full of new possibilities.

I know many like to start the new year with resolutions to do more, do better. Often, our resolutions are aimed toward improving physical wellbeing. We plan to exercise more and eat better. We want to take better care of our bodies so we can lead richer, fuller lives.

I'm not usually one for resolutions. Not that there aren't plenty of things I should and want to improve, but I don't usually find anything particularly compelling about the new year. After all, what has really changed? January 1 looks and feels much the same as December 31.

Yet, the new year, like most things, is what we make of it. It can be the same old same old or it can be full of new possibilities, the beginning of a new journey. As a congregation, we have started the new year with a worship series full of unfamiliar and reframed images of God. A series pushing us to imagine God and faith in different ways as we focus on Mother God. What if we take this new year as an opportunity to focus on our corporate wellbeing and make resolutions for our journey together?

We could make resolutions about the physical wellbeing of the body of Christ that is our congregation, for our communal and faith wellbeing. What if we resolve to imagine new ways of being community? What if we commit to be open to new ways of understanding who we are as a community and what God is calling us into?

Changes are coming, as they do every year. Sometimes changes feel so small they pass unnoticed and sometimes they feel enormous. As much as we might wish differently, we are never truly standing still. When faced with something new, how will we respond, as individuals and community? Will we run and hide, or approach with welcome and hope?

Laura

Sunday Morning Schedule

Sunday School starts at 9:00 a.m. each Sunday, September through May.

All ages are invited to gather together to hear the Bible story before we break into groups for conversation, crafts, and games.

Worship begins at 10:30 a.m. in person and on Facebook Live

December 31, 2022 Financial Summary

	October	November	December	Year-to-date
Income for budget items:	\$10,515.62	\$4,675.10	\$5,508.78	\$85,320.05
Budgeted expenses:	\$6,548.47	\$6,541.21	\$7,118.59	\$83,484.70

Thank you for your faithful giving!

Looking Ahead....

- The Stewardship Council, Elders, and CCVP 20/20 will meet together via Zoom at 7:00pm on Wednesday, January 11 (see email from Laura to prepare for meeting).
- The Stewardship Council will meet via Zoom at 7:00pm on Monday, January 16.
- Elders will meet via Zoom at 7:00pm on Sunday, January 29.
- The Worship Committee will be via Zoom at 10:00am on Monday, January 30.
- The Pastoral Relations Committee will meet via Zoom at 7:00pm on Monday, February 6.
- Daylight Saving Time returns at 2:00am on Sunday, March 12. Set your clocks ahead one hour before going to bed on March 11 or you'll be late for everything on Sunday.

Lent 2023

Lent is only 6 weeks away! It begins with Ash Wednesday on February 22. Join us at 7:00 pm in person or on Facebook for our Ash Wednesday service. Pastor Laura will be providing ashes at the church between 9 am and noon on that day if you are unable to attend the evening service in person.

Holy Week Schedule

- 9:00am, Sunday, April 2 – Sunday school for all ages.
- 10:30am, Sunday, April 2 – Palm Sunday worship service in person and on Facebook Live.
- 7:00pm, Thursday, April 6 – Maundy Thursday worship service. The worship committee will determine if the online service is by Zoom or Facebook Live and will send out an announcement.
- 6:30am-7:30pm, Friday, April 7 – Prayer Vigil. An online sign up will be available by March 1. Contact Betty Prorak if you have any questions.
- 9:00am, Sunday, April 17 – Sunday school for all ages.
- 10:30am, Sunday, April 17 – Easter worship service in person and on Facebook Live.

Disciples Food Pantry

October Stats:
142 Households served
520 People served

November Stats:
182 Households served
689 People served

December Stats:
109 Households served
392 People served

The Pantry is open every Wednesday 9:30-11:30am.
Clients enter from Villa Avenue and receive food by the parking lot door.

Foresight News Deadline

The next quarterly issue of this newsletter will come out on April 11 with a news deadline of 11am on April 10. Send anything you would like included to Betty Prorak at BLProrak@yahoo.com or mail it to the church.

We Find Joy and Give Thanks...



- for the regional leadership that led the Regional Assemblies of Illinois/Wisconsin and Michigan on October 14 and 15. Friday evening's worship service may be watched at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SJtEO5_KMyo.
- for wonderful surprises! On November 20, 2022, Steve and Betty Prorak found out that their sons and their daughters-in-law had been plotting secretly since last spring to bring the San Diego Proraks to Chicago for the week of Thanksgiving to celebrate Steve's and Betty's 70th birthdays. When Sean and Misty made their appearance at Brent and Amanda's house throwing balloons and shouting "Surprise!", Steve and Betty were indeed surprised! (Postscript: After Christmas, all of the Proraks were especially thankful for the week together at Thanksgiving as Sean's family's flight to Chicago on December 27 was canceled.)
- with Dan Carter and his successful knee surgery in November.
- with Jane Reid who is thankful for the help she gets from her sons.
- with the Martins who spent time with extended family in Mexico at Thanksgiving.
- that Tina Amodeo has been home from rehab since December 4 and was able to join in person worship on Christmas Eve and on January 8.
- with Joan Fuller whose knee surgery went well on December 19.
- with Ruth Martin who enjoyed her time in India, though she didn't see any tigers.
- with the Disciples Food Pantry for generous donations from the Dan Gibbons Turkey Trot in Elmhurst and from G.M. Smith and Son Realtors in Villa Park.
- with Ruth and John Martin who now live in the same complex as their daughter Kim. New address: 724 12th Street, Unit 301, Wilmette, IL 60091.

Please Pray for...



- the family of Joan Kagebein. Joan passed away on Saturday, October 15, 2022.
- the family of Evelyn Zeilstra, Ed Slinkman's grandmother. Evelyn went to be with the Lord on October 21, 2022.
- Carol Robbins, who is now in long-term care at the Springs of Monarch Landing.
- John and Ruth Martin as John continues to have medical tests done, seeking answers to what is wrong.
- Dan Carter and Joan Fuller as each continues to recover from knee replacement surgery.
- the wellbeing of Tina Amodeo, Joan Fuller's sister Gloria, and Debra Studniarz.
- CCVP and our calling.

February, March, and April Celebrations

February 5	Ariana Mendoza	
6	Heidi Gomez	March 12
8	Ruth Martin	22
16	Jayne Hochstetler	Sharon Philip
March 1	Erica Schultz	22
4	Freya Verson	Minni Philip
5	Amy Slinkman	April 5
		Diana Robbins
		6
		Laura Reed
		18
		Amelia Reed
		20
		Dan Carter



April 14 Betty & Steve Prorak

April 29 Amy & Ed Slinkman

Fund-raising with Amazon, Gift Cards

Do you shop at Amazon.com? If you do, a portion of your purchase price for qualifying items can come to the Christian Church of Villa Park by choosing the church as your recipient in their AmazonSmile program. It doesn't cost you anything extra to participate; it just shares the profit with a charity of your choice. If you have any questions, ask Betty Prorak.



The next orders for Jewel gift cards will be placed for the beginning of February and April. Please let Betty Prorak know what card(s) you would like to order by January 29 for them to be delivered on February 5, and by March 26 for delivery on April 2. The church receives 5% of the cost of any cards we order as a group.

The RaiseRight (formerly ShopWithScrip) gift card order will be due on March 5. There are many different gift cards available, each giving the church a portion of your purchase price. If this will be your first order from <https://www.raiseright.com/>, please contact Betty Prorak (BLProrak@yahoo.com) for the church's enrollment code.



This past year has continued to witness the ravages of COVID-19 across the globe. War in Ukraine persists, and recovery for that nation's people will be extensive and long-lasting. Communities from Kentucky to Puerto Rico to Newfoundland are in the throes of long-term recovery from tornadoes, massive floods, and hurricanes. Wildfires continue to imperil western U.S. states and Canadian provinces, and

drought affects the world's farmers, ranchers, and tribal communities alike. Unfathomable floods in Pakistan and the Philippines have left indelible images of destruction and tragedy, while the simplest needs—nutrition, shelter, work—seem out of reach for far too many people in far too many places.

In the middle of it all, Week of Compassion calls on God's mercy and speaks boldly of the Divine goodness made new each day. When it seems that tragedy and hardship is all that rises up, the people of God trust in a holy word, and proclaim with their work, their witness, and their generous giving, that God's faithfulness will rise up anew, too.

Because God's compassion never fails, we have seen an abundance of compassion in the face of fatigue. Because God's compassion never fails, we have seen partnerships forged, communities strengthened, and opportunities blossoming—concrete and tangible ways that Week of Compassion, serving with and on behalf of the whole Disciples church, is part of what God is doing to make things new.

It is about so much more than dollars and cents. Week of Compassion is where Disciples respond to the challenges and the blessings they see and experience in the world. Week of Compassion is a full-body-of-Christ response. As our General Minister and President, Rev. Terri Hord Owens has often said, "When Week of Compassion is there, the whole church is there"—to bring immediate relief and long-term recovery after disasters; equip churches and leaders for disaster preparedness; respond to assist refugees; and support global development projects that empower communities.

As Disciples, we gather at the table of thanksgiving, where we remember Christ's very life poured out lavishly for everyone without exception. This abundance and blessing is what we receive, who we are, and who God calls us to be. In the midst of pain that seems too great and challenges that seem too many, God's great faithfulness remains, and we rise up anew, again and again, to give, serve, and live with compassionate generosity. Thank you for your ongoing support and partnership, throughout the year, throughout the world.

In gratitude,
Rev. Vy Nguyen
Executive Director, Week of Compassion

NOTE: The Easter Special offering will be received on April 2 and 9, 2023. It supports the General Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).