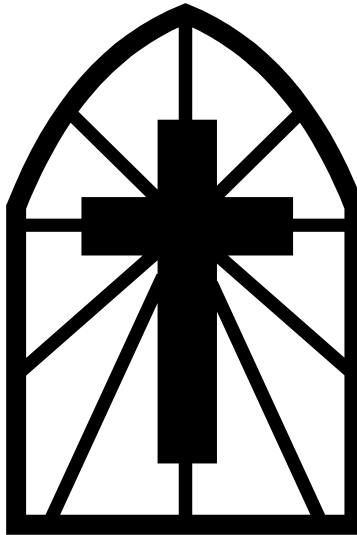


Announcements December 2018

Elmhurst Presbyterian Church

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“We are a church called by Jesus Christ to Proclaim, Teach & Serve.”

In Our Prayers Meg March and Kathy Thompson.

There is a list on the bulletin board in the Nelson-White Room on the “news” bulletin board. It shows the latest parishioners who are in a health center or are hospitalized. If you would like your name added to the board or put on the prayer list, please contact the church office.

Traci Smith, Pastor
Emily Culella, Director of Children & Youth Ministry
Susan Smentek, Director of Music
Karen Bircher, Office Administrator
Jesus Garcia — Custodian
Liz Johnson, Clerk of Session
Cheryl Turek Technology Assistant Sunday morning's
Frank Dattillo & Rick Rodriguez —Sound Techs,
Sunday morning's
<http://www.elmhurstchurch.org>
Find EPC on Facebook: Elmhurst Presbyterian Church &
Find on Facebook: Elmhurst Presbyterian Church & Youth Ministries
Follow us on Twitter @EPC_tweets

God 
Answers
Prayers

Pastor's Corner - Rev. Traci Smith

This morning I came across a helpful reminder: *When everything is important, nothing is*. As I told the session at our last meeting, I'm the type of person who can get excited about a lot of different things. "If a train is going by," a friend once told me "you want to get on it." It's true. I love trying new things and having new experiences. If I'm not careful, I find myself hopping on every train that rolls by. Living that way can be fun, but it can also be unfocused and unbalanced.

This tendency to join every party or hop on every train isn't something unique to me: it's emblematic of a major struggle in our culture as well. Every day we're bombarded by messages in the media about what we ought to pay attention to, buy, subscribe to, or follow. How do we decide what's really important? How do we focus?

This advent I feel a strong sense of calling to a very specific focus: mission and ministry to others. The season of advent is a season of waiting for Christ to be born in our hearts and into the world. We can spend it focused on ourselves and our own needs, or we can look outside of ourselves, toward the needs of others.

When I talk to folks about mission, one of the most common concerns I hear expressed is the concern that the problems of the world are so overwhelming, it's hard to know where to start. Sometimes the suffering in the world seems too great for one person, or even one church to impact. I feel that way sometimes, too. When I do, I remember this helpful saying from the Talmud: "Do not be daunted by the enormity of the world's grief. Do justly now, love mercy now, walk humbly now. You are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to abandon it."

We are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are we free to abandon it. This advent we're "filling the stable." As we think of Mary and Joseph on their journey to Bethlehem, we think of others in our community who have very real needs: for warm socks and hands and heads, for basic necessities like toilet paper and toothpaste, for diapers. We might wonder what these humble offerings can do in the face of so much grief and suffering in the world, but we should take heart. We might not be able to follow all of the tubes of toothpaste we give to their final destination. We will not wash the feet that wear the warm socks. We will not hold the babies who wear the diapers. We will, however, be a part of building a better world for those around us.

When everything is important, nothing is. This advent I'm prioritizing giving to others.

Will you join me?

Take a look at our "Fill the Stable" campaign and participate however God leads you.

With gratitude,

Pastor Traci

MISSION PAGE

CONTINUED

EPC Hosts PADS December 29th and 30th.

EPC provides dinner, breakfast and overnight monitoring on the 5th weekends of the month. Our first weekend for the season will be December 29th and 30th. We realize that this is during the holidays and we will be short staffed with many of us out of town – so if you are in town, your help is much needed.

There are many ways to participate. For more information please call Diana Riekse at 630-220-2269. Sign-up sheets are in the Nelson White Room. Thank you.

MISSION PAGE

ERIE HOUSE GIFTS PLEASE BRING TO THE CHURCH BY DECEMBER 2ND. THANK YOU.

Ah, Christmas time. That time of the year where it feels like it is all about the presents. But what do you buy Aunt Betty when she has everything! Does Uncle Joe really need another tie? The EPC Mission Team has created a gift giving catalog. Buy gifts that are meaningful and truly make a difference. Choose items from the catalog and we will give you a card to give your loved which one explains the donation. Catalogs and order forms can be found in the Nelson-White room.

Join us in Calvin Hall after the service on **December 16th for Mission Sunday**. We will have many different mission organizations providing you with information on what they do and why we support them. Refreshments will be served!

Recently DuPage PADS arranged for 13 new apartments to help the homeless get from a pad on the floor to a key in the door. In the spirit of "Filling the Stable," this year's local Christmas offering will be given to DuPage PADS for items needed for these apartments.

December Book Study — Join us for a 3 Week Study of Joseph December 5, 12, and 19.

From his beginnings as a humble carpenter to his all-important role as the earthly father of Jesus Christ, Joseph's place in the nativity story is sometimes overlooked but contains valuable lessons for all of us. Join Adam Hamilton as he examines Christmas through the eyes of Joseph. Absent from much of the biblical narrative, Joseph never spoke a word, but his courageous actions were crucial to the birth of Christ and God's salvation plan for humanity.

As you read this book, you will understand how Joseph's story is much like our own. In life, we encounter circumstances that we would never have chosen for ourselves. At times it can be tempting just to walk away. Joseph provides us a great example of humbly obeying God even when we don't understand and faithfully moving forward in the strength that God provides. Exchange your doubt for courage this Advent and Christmas season. The story of Joseph provide us a great example of humbly obeying God even when we don't understand and faithfully moving forward in the strength that God provides.

GRACE CAFÉ

Grace Café was held in Calvin Hall on Monday, November 5th. We served 82 people chicken on rice, roasted green beans, raspberry Jell-O, and apple or pumpkin pie.

Thank you to the 29 volunteers who cooked, served, and cleaned up. Also, thank you to the 12 people who donated food items and to Dawn Fleming who shared her musical talents (playing the piano) with all of us.

“It is not joy that gives us gratitude, It is gratitude that makes us joyful.”

Mary Ellen Hayes, Chair of EPC Deacons

News from The Prayer Shawl Ministry

We have a good supply of comfort shawls and lab robes. With the Holidays coming up we are looking for places to donate the extra items. Please call me or the church office if you know of a senior center, nursing home or individuals that would benefit from the shawls or lap robes.

If you knit or crochet or want to learn to knit or crochet, please join us on the 1st. Wed. of the month from 1-2:30. in the Nelson White Room. The next meeting will be on December 5th.

Any questions, please call Mary Mueller (708) 547-8793



CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE will be held at 5:00 P.M.
Come as we celebrate the birth of the baby Jesus with song, candles, and a special interactive moment for all ages.

ADULT STUDIES at 9:30 A.M. in Calvin Hall each Sunday. Pastor Traci will lead on the text for that day.

WOMEN’S SPIRITUALITY GROUP meets from 1-2:30 p.m. every Monday.
Questions please contact Muriel Gifford at 630-510-2680.

MOVIE GROUP The group will meet on Saturday, December 1st. Contact Susan Leslie at kcleslie206@sbcglobal.net to be added to the member list. Normally the Movie Group meets the first Saturday of the month.

R.O.M.E.O. Group (Retired Old Men Eating Out)
Will meet on Wednesday, December 19th at Hi-View Restaurant in Villa Park.
Time: 1:00 P.M.
Contact: Doug Hall at (630) 279-8739.

POINSETTIAS It has been the tradition to decorate the sanctuary during Christmas with Poinsettia plants ordered by members and friends of EPC. Ask an usher for an envelope, the first 3 Sundays in December (2, 9,16). The deadline for ordering will be December 16th. Questions? Contact Meg March 312-699-9763 or Paula Reckley at 630-212-5842.

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING to elect officers on Sunday, December 23rd, directly after church.

Change of address: EPC member Jane Ann Prest 1834 Highbury Lane, Aurora, IL 60502.

EPC Member Ginny Harmon has a new unit # at Beacon Hill. Number 406.

Former EPC Pastor Jeannette Sutfin’s husband recently passed away. Her new address is 5555 Arapaho Rd., #430, Dallas, TX 75248. She has Alzheimer's and the family mentioned on the card to please not mention her home in Wheaton or her move to Dallas.

SESSION NOTES 11/20/18

Lots is going on at Elmhurst Presbyterian Church!

Session has been updating the membership rolls and straightening records and converting the rolls to a computer database. As a result, you may be asked to complete an updated membership form.

We will have our Annual Congregational Meeting to elect church officers on Sunday, December 23rd, directly after church.

Pledge cards are coming in! Trustees have begun the intensive job of putting together a budget. Please keep them in prayer as they face this exciting and challenging time of planning.

Emily Culella, CYE Director, will be attending the APCE Conference in Galveston, Texas this February. We look forward to all the great ideas she will bring back with her.

Mission will be hosting Mission Sunday on December 16, after church, in Calvin Hall. Representatives from the various missions we support will be there! Please come and see what impact you and EPC is having in our community. Refreshments will be served. Pam Fuesz has also arranged for PADS clients to receive free haircuts on November 24. PADS recently set up 13 apartments to transition clients from homelessness. Mission is exploring options in which the Christmas Offering can help these individuals set up their new homes so please give generously!

Don't know what to give that hard to please relative for Christmas? Don't want to ship packages across the country? Then check out Mission's new Gift Catalog! It's a great way to honor someone at Christmas or birthday while carrying out God's work.

Deacons served a delicious dinner to 82 community residents on November 5. Thank you to the 42 people who volunteered and donated food items! This wonderful event could not have been done without many hands helping.

Please take a moment to look at our wonderful new Welcome Center, created by Karen Miller and the Communications Team. This is our first impression of EPC and to let visitors know who we are. If you feel called to greet visitors/staff the Welcome Center, please speak to Karen Miller.

Liz Johnson
Clerk of the Session

Children and Youth Ministries (CYM)

TO THE WOMEN OF EPC

Once upon a time, an EPC women's group called **HUGS** (Hearts "uf" Grace) met about once a month at a restaurant for the primary purpose of fellowship and fun. We aspired to be a group of women who listened, laughed, and cared about each other without judgment or agenda.

Starting the new year, with a new pastor is a good time for women to brainstorm around two questions: 1) Do we want to create such a women's group now? And 2) How would we like to organize ourselves?

If you would like to join Pastor Traci for a meal and some brainstorming, please mark Monday, **JANUARY 28, 2019**. We'll gather at **6:00ish** at Cheryl Kopecky's, 718 S. Killarney Court, Elmhurst. A variety of beverages and dinner will be provided – just bring your ideas.

PLEASE RSVP to Cheryl by Wednesday **January 23**, 2019 so that adequate seating and food can be planned. Your RSVP will be appreciated very much.
(ckopecky2@me.com)

TO THE MEN OF EPC

Would you like to brainstorm a fellowship time open to all of the men of the church? If so, contact the office or Pastor Traci at smith.traci@gmail.com.

CHILDREN/YOUTH STUDIES

For the coming weeks of Advent, both Adult Sunday School, Children's Sunday School and Youth will be held in the Nelson-White Room from 9:30-10:15. This season, we will work on inter-generational crafts, spiritual practices, and fun ways to welcome the season

December 9th, at 3:00 pm, we'll meet in the Nelson-White Room to sing Christmas Carols around the piano and enjoy hot cocoa and cookies! Bring your favorite instrument to play along! We'll be handing out easy tabs in the weeks before so you can practice if you want! Contact is Emily Culella (eculella@gmail.com).



Come one, Come All! This year, we'll be performing the Christmas Pageant together! Be sure to practice your baa-ing, your moo-ing, and your shepherd skills! We'll see you on the 23rd during the church service!