

THE SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH in the CITY OF NEW YORK
Pastoral newsletter for January 2021

THE SEASON OF EPIPHANY



Let us pray that this will be a better year for all people!

Dear Friends in Christ,

At long last, 2020 is done. We just came through a very tough year. And although of course the stroke of midnight on December 31st did not bring about a magical reversal of all the past year's woes, there is hope and help ahead.

And, to perhaps help you find the light this year - Star Words are on the way!

Members and Friends can expect a letter – a real, live, actual letter – in a week or so, with a paper star with a word on it, to guide you, if you like, in your prayers and meditations this new year. (If we don't have your postal address and would like star, please let me know!)

Meanwhile, it never hurts to look back before we look ahead, so here is a preview of the letter, as I share this spiritual exercise from the good people at World in Prayer:

As another year dawns, may we take a moment
to recognize where the light appeared in our life this year (because it did);
to recognize who was the light and for you (for there was more than one person);
to acknowledge how you were the light for someone else in need (because you were)
to recognize where and how you experienced love this year (because you did);
to recognize who showed you the love (for there was more than one person);
to acknowledge how you expressed love to someone who felt unloved (because you did).

A REMINDER ABOUT THE PASTOR SEARCH

You received this letter last month, but it bears repeating, and remember: **If you are a church member and are interested in serving on the PNC or want to recommend another church member to serve on the PNC, please contact a member of the Nominating Committee before January 4.**

Dear SPC Family,

We are thankful for the good news that the Presbytery approved our Mission Statement and that we are now able to take the next step in calling a pastor to our church. The Session has asked the current Nominating Committee (Karen, Ceci, and Ed) to prepare a slate of nominees for the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC). The Session requested that the PNC have between 5 -7 members on it. It is our goal to have the slate of nominees ready by the end of January so that the congregation may vote on the slate at the Annual Meeting on January 31.

Below is a list of considerations in nominating a church member to serve on the PNC.

1. Knowledge about the church and its surrounding community
2. Knowledge about Presbyterian theology and government
3. Active in the life of the congregation
4. Spiritual leader in the church
5. Able and willing to commit time, energy, and wisdom
6. Able to honor confidentiality
7. Willing to seek spiritual discernment

A quote by The Alban Institute summarizes the call process for a pastor.

The question before us could be framed thusly: "God, whom are you selecting/calling at this time to lead in this church? Show us your choice."

It is important that the PNC consist of a variety of members who represent the congregation as a whole. The members of the PNC will also need to be willing to communicate by phone, email, and Zoom or similar platform. Access to technology will be necessary when the PNC meets virtually. The members on the PNC will be in communication with each other weekly.

Once the PNC is elected, other members of the congregation will have no role in determining who will be the next pastor until the congregation votes on the PNC's nominee. Some Session members may be on the PNC but the whole Session will not be on the PNC. The Session will determine if the PNC will seek a full time or part time pastor and will also set the high end and low end of the salary range. The Presbytery will advise and guide the PNC members as they prepare the job description, listen to sermons by prospective candidates, interview the candidates, and select the nominee to present to the congregation as pastor.

A copy of the PCUSA's resource, On Calling a Pastor, may be accessed at
<https://www.pcusa.org/resource/calling-pastor/>

To recommend yourself or another, **by January 4**, contact:

Karen Amrhein 914-263-2418 karenlynnamrhein@gmail.com

Cecilia Blewer 917-601-0867 cblewer@mac.com

Ed Carpenter 646-541-4179

Many blessings to each of you.

The 2020 Church Nominating Committee

JANUARY AT SPC

All worship and meetings continue by Zoom.

Sunday January 3: 10 AM Mini Sunday School; **10:15 AM** On this Second Sunday after Christmas we'll celebrate the Sacrament of Communion and the Feast of Epiphany. Pre[are your communion elements - and your hearts and minds – as we join in our first worship service of the new year.

Sunday January 10: 10 AM Mini Sunday School; **10:15 AM** We mark the Baptism of the Lord. How will we celebrate? Hint: Have some water handy!

Sunday January 17: 10 AM Mini Sunday School; **10:15 AM** This 2nd Sunday after Epiphany, is also the Sunday before the honoring of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., so this is a day to think about dismantling racism, and advocating for justice for all people.

Sunday January 24: 10:15 AM ON this 3rd Sunday after Epiphany, we will share a Prayer and Fellowship service, with the sermon audio posted ahead of time on the website. Because while we are trying to get back to more "normal" worship, we have all come to value our face-face time, so we'll try, once a month, to keep this new tradition going!

Wednesday January 27: 12 noon, Zoom Prayer Meeting. Contact Vivian, Karen or Lindsay for details.

Sunday, January 31 (the fifth Sunday of the month!): 10: 10 AM Mini Sunday School; **10:15 AM** Session members will join in leading worship, and right after a short break, we will hold the first ever Virtual Annual Meeting! The Session has called the Annual Meeting of the Congregation and Corporation of the Second Presbyterian Church in the City of New York to be held on Zoom following worship on January 31, 2021. Details to come.

Again, my dears, and as the beloved (and masked) New York Public Library lions Patience and Fortitude remind us, now is not the time to give up, but to persevere. For, as the Apostle Paul said, "³ And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴ and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵ and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us."

(Romans 5: 3 – 5). I don't think any of us want to boast of our sufferings, exactly – but we can hold on to hope.



God be with you, until we meet again.

love and light,
Rev. Lindsay