



Presbyterian
Community Church
of the Rockies

February 2021 Newsletter

Estes Park's historic mainline Protestant congregation founded in 1907.

Core Value: The Presbyterian Community Church of the Rockies is a Sacred Community formed around Jesus the Christ where we experience God's presence in our lives and service together.

Volume 9, Number 2

In-Person Worship

As you will read later in this newsletter, the Session has approved a plan which will allow in-person worship, along with on-line worship, to begin **Sunday, February 14**. The sanctuary arrangement will accommodate social distancing and it will look identical to the Christmas Eve in-person services. Members are required to wear a mask and social distance while in the church building. Each Sunday service will accommodate 80 individuals for in-person worship. At this time, reservations are not required. Fellowship Hall will also be used as an additional worship space. The service itself lasts around 35 minutes in duration. In-person congregational singing will not take place, nor will there be an in-person fellowship time after worship.

We are committed to providing a Sunday worship experience that is both safe and meaningful to PCCR in-person and on-line worshippers. You will receive another email in the days ahead with more in-person worship details and guidelines.

On behalf of Session and the church staff, we thank you for your patience as we continue to navigate the COVID church landscape, and we ask for your continued grace as we move into this new stage of our church's life together. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Chris.



PCCR Directory

Office Hours: Monday through Thursday, 9:00 am to 3:00 pm; closed Fridays

Office Phone: 970-586-4404

Church Website: pccrusa.org

Church Staff

Interim Pastor: Rev. Chris Davis, 414-690-4488, pastor@pccrusa.org

Handbell Director: Patti Dolezal, music@pccrusa.org

Choir Director/Sexton: Rich Dixon

Organist: Larry Gillum

Finance: Carolyn Hull, finance@pccrusa.org

Office Coordinator: Terry Brigham, office@pccrusa.org



Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this issue of the newsletter—whether it be your service in this church, providing a written article or photo, or helping assemble the finished product.

We appreciate your input!

The February Newsletter deadline is Tuesday, February 16. Please send your pictures and stories to Terry Brigham at: office@pccrusa.org Thanks!

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Sunday Worship Schedule



February 7 — 10:00 am, Communion, Annual Congregational Meeting

February 14, 21, 28— 10:00 am

Rev. Chris Davis, preaching

Patti Dolezal, liturgist

Virtual Worship: Services will be presented on Zoom using the following access information, which is also available at pccrusa.org.

Join Zoom online: <https://zoom.us/j/86165181814>

Meeting ID: **861 6518 1814** Password: **80517**

Or call in by telephone at any of the following numbers:

1-346-248-7799 **1-669-900-6833** **1-253-215-8782**

1-301-715-8592 **1-312-626-6799** **1-929-436-2866**

Virtual Fellowship Time immediately follows the Zoom worship service, at approximately 10:40 am. No additional log-in numbers are needed. Join in any time starting at 10:00 am using the listed Meeting ID.

Please note: Worship services are recorded and posted to the church website, allowing members of the congregation to access the service at any time through our webpage, pccrusa.org. Broadcasting and/or video recording of services will continue even after the current pandemic to allow members who are homebound to enjoy worship at PCCR.



Dear Congregation,

The Estes Park Church (Presbyterian Community Church of the Rockies) has always been a wonderful supporter of Highlands Presbyterian Camp and Retreat Center and this year you have continued to do so. Thank you!

The challenges that have faced Highlands this past year have been extremely difficult. Your continued financial support is appreciated more than you know.

Thanks again,

Bill McNeill

Development Volunteer and an
EPHS Bobcat



February 2021

Message from Pastor Chris Davis . . .

I don't know who needs to hear this but, "Ash Wednesday is February 17. It is time to take down your Christmas decorations. It's time to leave Bethlehem and journey north, to Jerusalem."

Ash Wednesday is, of course, the first day of the Lenten Season. Lent is the 40-day period, not counting Sundays, between Ash Wednesday and Holy Saturday, the day before Easter. Lent is a time of preparation, contemplation, and new beginnings. The ancient practice of placing ashes on the forehead symbolizes repentance and contrition, reminding us that we are God's sacred creation and to God we will return when life on earth is over.

*PCCR will hold an **Ash Wednesday service on February 17 at 12 noon** in the Sanctuary and on Zoom. In-person worshippers will receive the imposition of ashes during the service. However, in order to allow the entire congregation to participate, we will have "**Ashes to Go**" from **1 p.m. – 2 p.m.** in the church parking lot. It's very simple. Watch the service on Zoom in the comfort of your home, then drive over to church and I will meet you in the parking lot. Once your car has come to a complete STOP, I will give you a blessing, your ashes, and off you go. See— simple and safe. We will begin the Lenten journey together.*

Many of us will also choose to "give something up" for the 40 days of Lent. Brave souls will give up coffee, or chocolate, perhaps red wine or fast food. If this isn't your style, no worries. I suggest instead "adding something" meaningful to your daily routine. The choices are endless. Go for a walk. Spend time reading a devotional each day. Write handwritten notes to friends or family. The possibilities are endless.

This Lent I have decided to change my preaching style. I usually preach from the Revised Common Lectionary, a three-year cycle that provides daily scripture readings from both the Old and New Testament. If you read the lectionary passages every day for three years, you will have basically completed reading the Bible at the end of the third year.

During Lent I will depart from the Lectionary and instead, I will preach a sermon series on the Apostles Creed. Many Presbyterian congregations, including PCCR, say this ancient creed every Sunday. But do we know or even believe or even understand all the words we recite? I will take this opportunity to deep dive into some of the questions people have asked me over the years about the Creed. Questions like: Was Mary really a virgin? Why and what did Jesus do when he descended into Hell? And my personal favorite: If we are Presbyterian, why do we say, "I believe in the one holy catholic church?" Please join me as we explore the faith of our spiritual ancestors and discover what the Creed says about our faith today.

I leave you with a poem from one of my favorite Presbyterian authors, Ann Weems. It is entitled, "Put Away the Tinsel."

*When Lent comes,
 You have to put away the tinsel;
You have to take down your Christmas tree,
 And stand out in the open...vulnerable.
You either are or you aren't.
You either believe or you don't.
You either will or you won't.
And, O Lord, how we love the stable and the star!
When Lent comes the angels' voices
 Begin their lamenting,
And we find ourselves in a courtyard
 Where we must answer
Whether we know him or not.*

In Christ's Faithful Service,

Pastor Chris



Bright News from Malawi

In November, the oldest students at the Embangweni School for the Deaf (Class 9) took the national exams for school-leaving. They take the same exam as any other student in Malawi. Each student takes the exam in each of 6 classes, with English being required. English must be passed or the entire exam is considered failed. This exam is the “entry ticket” to secondary school in Malawi. Headteacher Jolia Mahemane reported recently that this class had a **100% Pass Rate!!** This is almost unheard of in Malawi and has only happened once before at the school for the deaf – in 2006. Nationally, the pass rate hovers around 60% in a very good year.

Keep a hand on your wallets! Years ago “Mama Kalo” (Carol Nussbaumer to you) made the rash promise that any student passing with distinction (all “A’s”) would earn a trip to the USA and if the whole class managed it, the teacher would come with them. Mr. Mahemane is determined to reach this goal and so in a year or two there may be a plea coming to help out!

Meantime, the Square Foot Gardens are doing very well with excellent rains in the region. The maize/bean field of about 4 acres is also growing very nicely. The school for deaf should be able to feed itself at least for 3 or 4 months of 2021.



Dear Members and Friends,

PCCR finished 2020 financially with a budget deficit of \$20,571 despite tight spending controls across all departments. Our Personnel and Building and Grounds expenses are relatively fixed and are responsible for 84% of our 2020 annual budget. The majority of our 2020 budget overage was due to unanticipated facility response costs related to the Covid pandemic.

The finance committee discussed the 2021 budget with session at its January 25th meeting. The 2021 operating budget is flat with the 2020 budget, but currently we need to close a \$48,641 gap between anticipated funding and budgeted expenditures. This is unusually high for this point in the budget cycle.

Stewardship pledging (the Pledge Income line in the budget) usually underwrites at least 66% of the church’s operating costs. Thus far, we have received pledges from 82 households with a total commitment of \$236,570. Last year we received pledges from 97 households for a total pledge income of \$260,930. We thus are short of our 2021 requirements, both in dollars and the number of pledges.

We sincerely thank all who have made a pledge. However, as noted above, we are woefully short of having enough pledges to support the funding needed for 2021. If you have not yet decided on your pledge, take a moment to reflect on the importance of this church to you, your family, friends, and the community. Then, if you can, please make a pledge commitment that is appropriate, affordable and meaningful to you. Everybody’s support, regardless of amount, is significant. Please call the church office to have a pledge card sent or stop by to pick one up. You can also make a pledge electronically through our website, pccrusa.org. Just click the CONTRIBUTE button in the menu line at the top of any page and follow the links for contributing to the church’s operating budget. The website also makes it easy to spread your gift out by setting up a recurring monthly credit card payment.

Thank you for your continued prayers, participation and support for the ministry of our church.

Sincerely,

Your Finance Committee

Behind the Scenes

I am always amazed when, at the end of a movie, the credits start scrolling on the screen and I see the names of hundreds of people involved in making that hour and a half piece of entertainment. I recently watched, "The Making of Frozen 2", and learned that it took nearly eight hundred people five years to make. They experienced many failures during the process, but it eventually all came together and became an award-winning movie.

At this point you are probably wondering what this has to do with anything here at PCCR. For the last five months a group of ten people have worked tirelessly to make sure that this congregation has a meaningful worship experience during this troubling time of COVID. Each Sunday you see the minister, organist, liturgist and singers, but none of it is possible without two very important people whose hard work and dedication have made it all come together—Jim Nussbaumer and Michael Moon.



These two men have spent countless hours each week since September building the technical support broadcast system. Jim and Michael took on the impossible task of making a system not designed for live worship—Zoom—work far beyond its capability. Zoom was designed strictly as a tool for virtual meetings. It is not good at handling music, and it is undependable much of the time. Couple all that with the sporadic Internet service we all experience here in Estes, and you begin to understand what they have been dealing with. By the time you read this, we should have our streaming service nearly up and running, and this will allow us to present a more professional looking service for everyone.

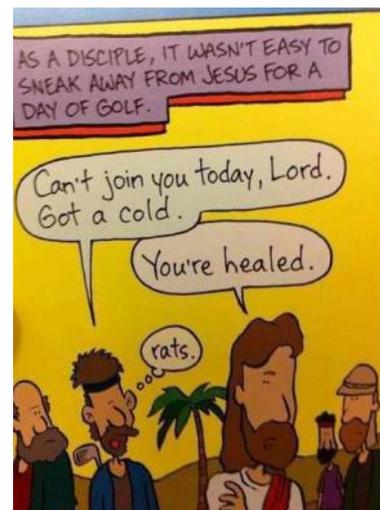
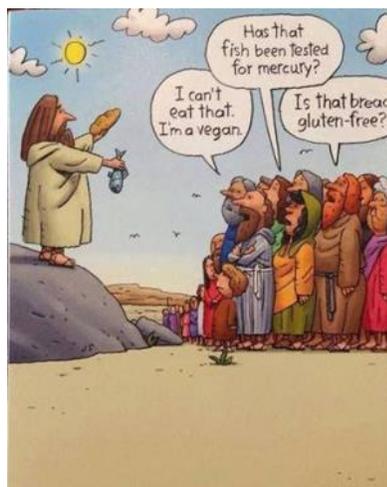
This COVID mess has had one good side to it and that is our identifying the need for a virtual service that has become an important part of this church's ministry. Shut-ins are now able to worship with us. Those who are on vacation or have moved away can now take part in worship. Our thanks to the Worship and Music Committee and the Session for recognizing and supporting this important part of this church's ministry.

~ Rich Dixon



Please pray for our mission co-worker families in Peru: Chenoa Stock, husband Jose Luis Claire, and son Leandro Aiden.

Also pray for Jeremy and Luta Garbat-Welch and their three young children, who serve in Malawi but because of Covid are still in the U.S.





June Gamet, Organist



**Rev. Bruce Brackman
delivers the Call to Worship**

**Welcome,
Rev. Chris Davis
New Interim Pastor
at PCCR**





January 10, 2021
Baptism of the Lord Sunday



**Thanking Rev. Bruce for his
service at PCCR from
September through December**



Into the Light PW Bible Study—February 15



The Presbyterian Women's Circle has been learning together how and why to lament. Laments spoken to God are prayers and help bridge the space between our faith in God and the reality of living in our imperfect world. We are called to lament the situations over which we have no control and that come out of a real need. Laments help us move from suffering to faith and through faith provide hope.

We hope you will join us for Lesson Six titled "Lament over the City." We will look back in history at the destruction of some cities, and look to the present at the care we need to give to our current cities, especially our own. Ginger Wilkinson will lead this lesson, via Zoom, on Tuesday, February 15 at 12 noon.

Please join us as we learn to lament together, providing strength and comfort to each other. The directions for joining us on Zoom are located next to this article.

PW December Circle Meeting

Monday, February 15, 2021 at 12:00 noon

Join PW Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/93520280634>

Meeting ID: 935 2028 0634 Passcode: 80517

Or Dial by telephone: (Meeting ID: 935 2028 0634)

1-346-248-7799 1-312-626-6799

1-669-900-6833 1-929-436-2866

1-253-215-8782 1-301-715-8592

PW meets on 3rd Monday monthly.

Changes Coming to Virtual Worship

As noted elsewhere in this edition of the newsletter, **we will soon cautiously reopen the church for worship services.** At the same time, look for significant improvements to the virtual service for those who are not yet ready to participate in person. The intent is to offer everyone a viable, meaningful, and safe choice in how to attend church.

When we initially closed the church last March, we used the Zoom service to keep us connected. Zoom was designed for conference calls and not the type of participation that we want for worship services. Also, the demand for Zoom calls during the pandemic has overloaded their systems. Regardless of the quality of the video and audio that we send from the sanctuary on Sundays, we cannot get high-definition picture or sound at the receiving end. All of us have experienced moments when the picture freezes or the sound drops off. We have upgraded the capability to capture and send a top-quality signal, with new cameras and associated equipment, and have installed the new Trailblazer gigabit Internet service. We now need a different way to get that signal to everybody who wishes to attend church from home.

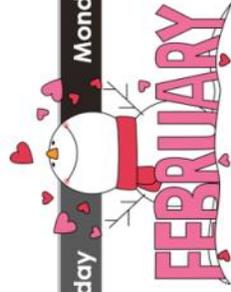
Our new virtual worship will be in high definition through Vimeo Livestream. To connect, just click on a video player that will be on the home page of our church website, **pccrusa.org**. There is no sign in or password. The service will be open to all. We will broadcast the service in real time and will then post a recorded version on the website for viewing later. As with Zoom, you can use any computer or mobile phone or tablet that has an Internet connection.

There are trade-offs. The new live stream service does not offer the interaction among participants that Zoom does, and does not provide for telephone dial-in. We are working out the details of providing a parallel Zoom connection. This will cover people who do not have Internet and instead use the telephone to connect to worship services. It will also allow for fellowship time following church. Our website will continue to show the Zoom link, which will make it easy to stop the live stream player and click on Zoom to join fellowship.

Watch for an e-mail announcement when the new live stream service is activated.



February 2021



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
7 8:30am-Journeys Class (Zoom) 10:00am-Worship Service (Zoom) 11:00am-Annual Congregational Meeting	1 11:00am-Communications (Zoom) FEBRUARY	2 4:30pm-Stephen Ministers (Zoom) 7:00pm-Deacons (Zoom) 7:00pm-Health Advisory Team (Zoom)	3 3:00 pm-Mission and Outreach (Zoom) 4:00pm-Joyful Bells (Fellowship Hall)	4 10:00am-Staff Meeting 4:00pm-Chancel Bells (Fellowship Hall)	5	6
14 8:30am-Journeys Class (Zoom) 10:00am-Worship (in-person and Zoom) <i>happy Valentine's day</i>	8 11:00am-Communications (Zoom)	9 4:30pm-Stephen Ministers (Zoom) 7:00pm-Deacons (Zoom) 7:00pm-Health Advisory Team (Zoom)	10 9:30am-Finance (Zoom) 4:00pm-Joyful Bells (Fellowship Hall)	11 10:00am-Staff Meeting 4:00pm-Chancel Bells (Fellowship Hall)	12	13
21 8:30am-Journeys Class (Zoom) 10:00am-Worship Service (in-person and Zoom)	15 Church Office Closed 12:00pm-PW Circle Meeting and Bible Study (Zoom) PRESIDENT'S DAY	16 Newsletter Deadline	17 12:00pm-Ash Wednesday Worship Service 1:00-2:00pm-"Ashes to Go" 4:00pm-Joyful Bells <i>Ash Wednesday</i>	18 9:00am-Columbarium Committee (Zoom) 10:00am-Staff Meeting 4:00pm-Chancel Bells (Fellowship Hall)	19	20
28 8:30am-Journeys Class (Zoom) 10:00am-Worship Service (in-person and Zoom)	22 8:30am-Membership and Hospitality Committee (Zoom) 6:30pm-Session (Zoom)	23 Newsletter Deadline 7:00pm-Health Advisory Team (Zoom)	24 4:00pm-Joyful Bells (Fellowship Hall)	25 10:00am-Personnel, Continuing Education Meeting 4:00pm-Chancel Bells (Fellowship Hall)	26	27



Note: Calendar events subject to change

Session Highlights ~ January 2021

- ◇ Accepted with regret Ford Nielsen's resignation from Session because of health issues.
- ◇ Noted that the new Co-Moderators of Deacons are Verlene Thorp and Judy Portman.
- ◇ Reviewed and approved the proposed budget for 2021. It will be presented to the membership on Feb. 7 at the congregational meeting.
- ◇ Scheduled the first annual in-service for staff for February 25.
- ◇ Approved having the Membership and Hospitality committee plan a welcome for Pastor Chris Davis and his family as soon as Covid restrictions will allow.
- ◇ Heard from Building and Grounds that we will soon be able to have Zoom meetings and streaming services operating parallel to each other for worship services.
- ◇ Noted that a new church directory will be coming out soon. If anyone needs to update information in the directory or have a new picture, please let Terry in the office know right away.
- ◇ Voted to return to a dual format for worship service, in-person and via Zoom, beginning February 14, and that bell ensembles be permitted to rehearse and perform.
- ◇ Approved the dates for communion services for 2021.
- ◇ Approved PCCR application for a second stimulus loan.
- ◇ Elected Randy Brigham and Sue Yowell to served as Commissioners to Presbytery for 2021.



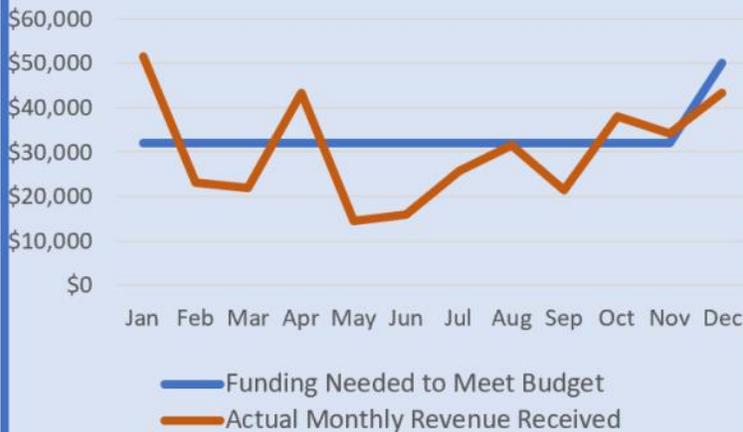
Deacon Highlights ~ January 2021

- ◇ Carolyn Kramer and Judy Schaffer, co-moderators, opened the meeting on Zoom and welcomed the new members of the Deacons.
- ◇ Judy gave a brief history of PCCR for the benefit of the new members, gave an overview of the responsibilities of the Deacons, and defined the word "deacon."
- ◇ The retiring members were thanked for their work in the past years and given a small gift of remembrance.
- ◇ Carolyn read the story, "Can Anybody See God?" as the devotion.
- ◇ Judy Portman reported on the last Session meeting giving a brief discussion of the Session committees' work. Reverend Bruce Brackman was thanked for his leadership while an interim pastor was sought.
- ◇ The 2021 budget for the Deacons was presented by Carolyn.
- ◇ Each Deacon introduced themselves to Chris Davis, who will be the interim pastor.
- ◇ The new business was to organize for the coming year:
 - Co-moderators: Verlene Thorp and Judy Portman
 - Scribe: Marilyn Irwin
 - Sunshine Committee: Katha Schweitzer, Tami Scace, Sharyn Gartner
 - Reception Committee: Carol Pearson, Carolyn Kramer, Joan Buhlmann, Sharyn Gartner
 - Communion sign-up: Carol Pearson
 - Liaison to Session: Robert Sherrod
 - Cards to members: Susie Manhoff
 - Communion for Good Samaritan: Susie Manhoff, Judy Schaffer, Verlene Thorp
- ◇ We will be ready when we can again serve the church as we again take up our responsibilities.
- ◇ In closing Carolyn read the thoughtful piece "Our Family" and Pastor Chris gave a prayer as benediction.

2020 Financial Picture – Data Through End of the Year

Revenue on a Monthly Basis

Contributions, Foundation, Building Use, Interest



Revenue and Expenses Year to Date



This is the financial summary with data through year-end. The chart on the left shows funding from all sources (principally contributions from members and visitors). The brown line reflects the usual month-to-month volatility in receipt of funding.

The chart above compares the average year to date revenue required to meet budget with actual receipts (the two bars on the left) and provides a similar comparison of anticipated average year to date expenditures with actual spending. The gap between the two brown bars, actual revenues compared to actual expenses, is a deficit of \$20,572. The majority of our 2020 budget overage was due to unanticipated facility response costs related to the Covid pandemic.

Journeys Class

During February, Journeys Class will continue to meet via Zoom. You can use the link below to join the meeting. The Zoom session opens at 8:15 am each Sunday, with the program starting promptly at 8:30. The class adjourns at 9:45.

Evolving Spirituality is the current theme of the Journeys programs. The individual topics and leaders are:

January 31 - Cynthia Johnson - *What is Conscious Ageing*

February 7 - Rosemary Lohndorf - *Life Review*

February 14 - Rosemary Lohndorf - *Facing our Mortality*

Starting February 21, the class will be discussing the History of Non-violence in America. The classes will include presentations by Paul Strom, a retired ethics professor from CU, followed by discussions.

The Zoom link is:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8457412756?pwd=UG5OWk5yV1R2b1lCVmtENnUxTCtIU09>

Meeting ID: 845 741 2756 and Passcode: 80517 (only if necessary)



Beans or Ground? That is the question...

It's possible to order your favorites: regular, decaf, and half-regular/half-decaf — either ground or beans. You choose and let Lisa Plaut know what you like. She will be ordering soon.

When you buy *Café Justo* coffee, you help families stay together in Mexico — because the coffee is grown, roasted, and packaged in Mexico — creating quality jobs for Mexican citizens.



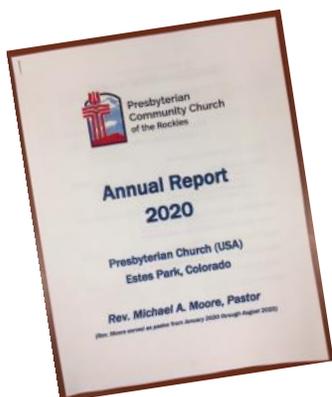
This delicious coffee sells for \$10 a pound. For delivery, please call or text Lisa Plaut at 214-766-9876 with your order. Enjoy!

Membership and Hospitality Committee News

The Membership and Hospitality Committee wants to assure our family at PCCR that things are in the works for a **formal welcome for Chris Davis and his family**; however, the committee has left the “when and where” up to Pastor Davis’s discretion. Pastor Davis has much on his plate just to learn and explore our church, not to mention a pandemic to cope with, and he would like to put a formal welcoming event on hold until COVID is less of a concern. You know this committee is always up for a good time so we will not let this opportunity go by the wayside. We promise!



PCCR and the Membership and Hospitality Committee would like to extend a **very warm welcome to Jim Jonell and his wife, Joannie**, to the world of Presbyterian Community Church of the Rockies. While they have been a staple at many of our fellowship activities over the years, it is wonderful to welcome them formally into our fold. Jim and Joannie will be welcomed into membership during worship on **Sunday, February 14**. Welcome Jim and Joannie! We look forward to sharing our faith, our church family, and our fun with you.



The **Annual Congregational Meeting** will be on **Sunday, February 7** immediately following worship. The purpose of the meeting will be to receive the 2020 annual reports of the Session committees, to receive the 2021 operating budget as approved by the Session, and to elect one elder to fill a vacancy on Session. Copies of the Annual Report will be sent electronically to the Congregation, and paper copies will be available for pick-up in the church office on February 1.