



Carmel Courier

Carmel Presbyterian Church, Glenside, PA 19038 December 2020/January, 2021

 **Don't Miss Out:**

Join us for Christmas Eve worship on Thursday, December 24th. Carmel will hold two services: a 5:00 pm worship geared toward families and children, and a 8:00 pm service of Lessons and Carols. Each service will feature special music, and a message of hope in these challenging times. The Candlelight Carol service and the Christmas Day service have been cancelled.

While we remain uncertain regarding the potential for worship in our sanctuary, the staff at Carmel is dedicated to making these experiences deeply meaningful for all. **Unto us a child is born—Amen, and Amen!**

Join us for Christmas Eve Worship

THURSDAY DECEMBER 24TH

FAMILY SERVICE - 5 PM

LESSONS AND CAROLS - 8 PM

For unto us a child is born



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Save the Date!
Sunday, January 31st

The Annual Meetings of the Congregation and Corporation are scheduled to be held on Sunday, January 31, 2021 immediately following worship. Please mark your 2021 calendars and plan to participate in this important event in the life of our congregation!

The Ordination and Installation of Officers will be on Sunday, January 10, 2021.



A Note from the Transitional Pastor...

Advent: Longing/Anticipating Something New in the New Year

Dear Friends,

We are about to celebrate **Thanksgiving Day** physically with **only** those around the table who live **together** in the same household!

Who would have believed this even a year ago? Several of you have shared your deep regret about your long anticipated Thanksgiving get-togethers that are now canceled (and one family is even postponing Thanksgiving to Memorial Day weekend when it is hoped we can gather together). This is difficult for **all** of us; however, we know it is **saving lives**—perhaps our family member’s lives! And, as much as we have longed and anticipated some social relief around our Thanksgiving tables and shared turkeys, we are resolved to do what is **best** for the health of family members, strangers, and ourselves. And so, let us use the telephone, Zoom, Facebook Live, Google Groups, Snap-Chat and all forms of social media including e-mail and e-cards to shout loudly: **“Happy Thanksgiving”!**

Sunday, November 29th marks the beginning of **Advent**—a season for which it seems as if we’ve been preparing since last March, when the pandemic fiercely approached, changed our lives, disrupted our ways of meeting together and doing things. The **Season of Advent** calls us to do much of what we have become good at doing during this pandemic! **Advent is** a season of waiting, wondering, and preparing for the coming of Christ and Advent culminates with **Christmas Day**: the birth of Christ entering our hearts and lives—again—in a fresh and new way.

Advent invites us to be in silence... enjoy baking... make music... spend **“virtual”** time with friends...

ADVENT
A SEASON OF LONGING

and be **“virtually”** with extended family (and be physically at least those in our household)... Some folks manage to do that which **feeds their souls**: whether it is taking on a new spiritual discipline or affirming to attend all four Advent Sundays and Christmas Eve services—whether online or safely in-

person. Others feel sucked into the demands of December and find themselves entering the new 2021 calendar year with overdrawn bank accounts and depleted spirits.

If we long for the season to be different, then **we can choose a different path**—a distinctive path that **enables us to grow in faith**.

Choose a radical route and make a sweeping change! Maybe choose to do one thing different and see how that feels? Perhaps adding something, like lighting an Advent candle at mealtime? Or eliminating something that feels more like a burden than a joy: one less decoration, or recipe, or gift? Or why not decide to understand one new way of on-line connecting with those you love? Or prepare for Christmas by sending **monetary resources** that might have been spent on a big family fest (no-longer-possible) by designating it to the local food pantry or your favorite non-profit or to Carmel with a note that says “help those who have lost their jobs and are struggling and to the poor”.

In Advent we **begin** our new church calendar year as we journey together with Jesus and mature more deeply as his disciples so we can enter the new secular calendar year. All year worship is at the heart of what we do together. So, as we enter Advent and move into the new Christian year, **my job is to urge you to listen to what** God is telling you—really

See **PETER** page 5

Congregational Life

The Congregational Life committee would like to thank you for helping to make the Harvest Festival an event to remember. We were a little disappointed to realize we were headed for a second rain out but your willingness to show up despite the crummy weather and participate in a modified "drive-by" celebration was heart warming. It was wonderful to see so many Carmel Family faces. Thanks to all who helped pull this event together, including Janet Simon for the idea and Gary Moll for jumping in to help with anything we asked for.



Drive-By Harvest Goodies

ADVENT - a time of expectant waiting and preparation for the celebration of the birth of Jesus. We SO want to celebrate, we want to shout those glad tidings of comfort and joy from the top of the bell tower at Carmel. Come, Lord Jesus, BOY, are we ready!

As a committee, we've struggled to find a way to bring us together..... you know..... without bringing us together. We'd love to feed you (it's our favorite thing) but in this uniquely different year, a Christmas Brunch is just not going to be possible. But we ARE excited to share two different ways for you to celebrate the season with your Carmel Family this year.

A tree will be delivered to the front lawn each Advent Sunday. Come anytime throughout the week and help us to decorate each tree to represent



Hope, Love, Joy and Peace, respectively. The fourth Sunday of Advent, December 20th, will feature a drive-by event beginning at 4pm. Our tableau will be complete and we'd like you all to experience the beautiful finished product and pick up a care package as you begin the countdown to Christmas. We also will partner with the Deacons to collect canned goods that evening to donate to the Interfaith Food Cupboard.

The second Congregational Life event we'd like to invite you to join us for is a fully virtual event. Once again, we want to slow down and experience each Advent Sunday, setting an intention and focusing on **Hope, Love, Joy and Peace**. In that spirit, we ask you to join us on Zoom those Sunday evenings at 8pm. The Zoom link is the same used for Sunday worship (Zoom code 842 851 1409). Rev. Ashley will begin with a short reflection on the meaning of each focus. Our own Denise Abraham will then lead movement and meditation. What a wonderful way to spend some quiet 'end of the day and end of the week' moments of reflection together. Plan for 35-40 minutes.

We've had some help putting these events together and we'd like to thank Carmel member, David Schwanback Landscaping (the Christmas tree yard at North Penn VFW), Ed Reilly, our custodian, Mary Kate Nolen, our secretary, Antonio Young, Artist, Meals on Wheels, the Abington Police Department and the Roslyn Giant. We are grateful for their contributions.

Although it feels like we are getting there by a different path this year, we really are ready. Come, Lord Jesus!

— *Melissa Deacon*





Session Notes

Church Officers in the Class of 2023 were elected by the Congregation on November 15, 2020. In accordance with Carmel's Bylaws, our newly-elected officers will be ordained and/or installed during a morning worship service in January.

The Session expresses its heartfelt gratitude to Elders Hans Stein, Ellen Krieg and Nancy Pinkowicz as they complete their terms of service ministering so faithfully to our congregation as a ruling elder in the Class of 2020. Session welcomes newly elected Elders to the class of 2023 and all will begin active service following their installation in January.

The following items were among the reports and business conducted during the November Stated Meeting of the Session.

Congregational Life received approval to schedule a Zoom Advent series that will take place on November 29, December 6, 13, and 20 beginning at 8pm that will be focused on hope, love, joy and peace.

The Property committee has scheduled to have the flooring in the lounge replaced. It will match what is in the library hall and the kitchen and will be installed by the same contractor.

Deacons received Session's approval to collect \$25 Amazon, Target, Walmart and Giant gift cards for children & needy families to be distributed by the Village. Collection of gift cards will take place on November 29 & December 6, or can be dropped off to the Church office.

Implement three special support initiatives. (1) Provide snacks for the AA Group that meets at Carmel; (2) initiate a "Meals in a Moment"-type outreach to provide weeknight meals to Carmel families with school-aged children and; (3) start a "Pen Pal" program to reach out to Carmel Seniors to let them know we're thinking about them.

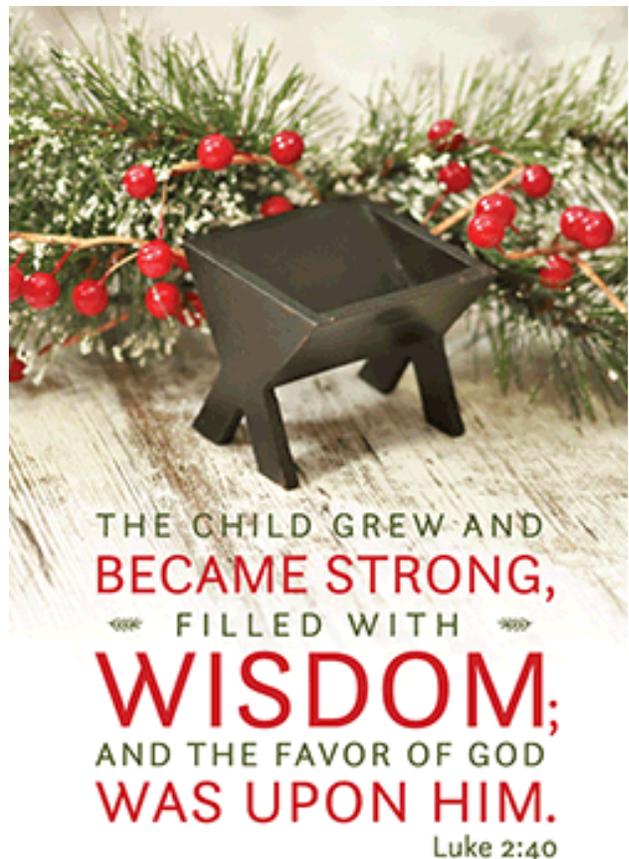
Disburse payments from the Deacons Fund through the Mission Interpretation Proposal to Bethanna, Face to Face, Dawn's Place, Caring for Friends, DePaul House, Interfaith Food Cupboard and The Village.

The Communion Schedule for 2021 was approved.

Session approved the Personnel Committee's 2021 Staff Salary recommendations which will be reviewed with the Congregation at the Annual Meeting of the Congregation and Corporation in January.

Save the date: **The Annual Meetings of the Congregation and Corporation** are scheduled to be held on Sunday, January 31, 2021. Please mark your 2021 calendars and plan to participate in this important event in the life of our congregation! More details about how the meetings will be conducted will be communicated to the congregation closer to the meetings' date.

— Nancy Pinkowicz, Clerk of Session



Rev. Rossi Elected Moderator of Presbytery

Rev. Ashley Rossi, Carmel's Associate Pastor, was elected as moderator of the Presbytery of Philadelphia for 2021 at the Presbytery's meeting on November 17. She will be installed at the January meeting of Presbytery. Pastor Ashley served as Vice Moderator of the Presbytery during 2020. She has served as Vice Moderator of the Commission on Resources and Creative Ministries and has been a member of the Presbyterian Youth Triennium leadership team.



Serving as Vice-Moderator of the Presbytery during 2021 will be Rev. Ted Mingle, who serves as Pastor/Head of Staff at the Lower Providence Presbyterian Church. Rev. Mingle also served as Commission on Ministry liaison to Carmel's Transitional Pastor Task Force earlier this year and was assigned as Carmel's COM representative to lead the exit interviews with Rev. James Thornton and with the Carmel Session upon Rev. Thornton's retirement in February, 2020.

Pastor Ashley was ordained in 2014 in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and was called as Carmel's Associate Pastor beginning in July, 2016 under the joint "full communion" agreement between Lutherans (ELCA) and Presbyterians (PC-USA) to honor each other's ordinations and communion. She "found her home" with the PC(USA) officially in 2019 after developing an appreciation for the Presbyterian form of church government and the opportunity for both ordained clergy and ruling elders to share in decision making at the Presbytery level.

Carmel previously provided a Presbytery Moderator when Rev. James Eby served in that role in 1995. Our present transitional pastor, Rev. Peter Sulyok, served as Moderator of his former presbytery, the Presbytery of Long Island.

Congratulations and best wishes to Pastor Ashley as she begins a busy year in Presbytery leadership.

— Janet Simon

PETER from Page 1

really listen—and your new and different path will become clear. Whether you'll like what you hear is a completely different conversation; however, Advent is the inkling of the birth of something new and God's Spirit makes all things new—and that includes us! It propels us in a **"Happy New Year!"**

What are you longing for this Advent and what will help you move closer to having that hope fulfilled? How can what you are anticipating for this Advent be done in a creatively new way? Listen! Really listen! God is speaking...

May the promise of **God's presence in the world give us hope and peace!** Have a blessed Advent! And live into the joy and love of the Christmas season! Happy New Year!

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Peter



October was a popular month for Carmel weddings. Congratulations and best wishes to the newlywed couples and their families.

October 10 **Miranda Hartsock and Austin Doucette.** Miranda is the daughter of Carmel member Kathleen Hartsock.

October 16 **Melissa Coulter and Dillon Jones** were married by Melissa's uncle, Rev. Skip Brecht, a ministry son of Carmel. Melissa is the daughter of Lynne Coulter and Rich Coulter, and the granddaughter of George Brecht.

October 24 **Rebecca Rose and Todd Burton.** Becky is the daughter of Ray and Nancy Rose.

Racism: Understanding and Response Adult Study Continues

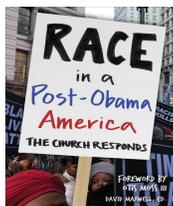
The Adult Study on “Racism: Understanding and Response” will continue on Sundays at 9:00 am and repeats Wednesdays at 8:00 pm. *Part 1: Racism Defined and Recounted* of the discussion/study followed the book: Race in a Post-Obama America: The Church Responds. The study group now continues with *Part 2: Issues of Racism Today and Our Response*.

Each week Pastor Peter and Pastor Ashley present a new topic with a brief opening presentation and wide-ranging discussions on the topic emerge. The contemporary topics selected by the groups include the following:

Part 2: Issues of Racism Today and Our Response

- 11.01/04.20 Police Brutality and “Defund the Police” Budgeting
 - 11.08/11.20 Why Segregated Churches?
 - 11.15/18.20 Racism and Healthcare
 - 11.22/25.20 White Privilege Discussion
 - 11/29/12.2.20 Racism and Financial Disparities
 - 12.06/09.20 Reparations Discussion
 - 12.13/16.20 Dismantling Systemic Racism
- [Study discussions on holiday hiatus weeks of 12.20, 12.27, and 01.03.]
- 01.10/13.20 Perspectives On Being an Anti-Racist: Pastors Ashley & Peter
 - 01.17/20.20 How My Mind & Heart Have Changed: Members Share

If you haven't participated in one of the studies, why not drop in Wednesdays or Sundays. The Zoom link remains the same each week and is available in the weekly email. Explore with your church family how issues of the day relate to racism and systemic racism.



Hello and Happy Holidays from the Board of Deacons! Though we are still meeting virtually, the Deacons have been keeping busy. The Deacons are working on the details to implement and support three new initiatives with the help of our congregation:

- Periodically provide snacks for the AA group that meets at Carmel.
- Initiate a “Meals in a Moment”-type outreach to provide weeknight meals to Carmel families with school aged children;
- Start a “pen pal” program to reach out to Carmel Seniors to let them know we’re thinking about them, to be open to Carmel Refuge/Oasis members as well as adult volunteers to participate in.

We are undertaking these initiatives as a way of further uniting and supporting our church family and community.

2 Corinthians 9:6-8

“Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”

The Deacons are proud to announce we will be organizing the annual Christmas toy drive for The Village. Because of Covid-19 restrictions, those wishing to donate are asked to purchase and donate gift cards in the amount of no more than \$25.00 for Amazon, Target, Walmart or Giant only. These will be distributed to the children and needy families by the Village. Collection of gift cards will take place to coincide with the distribution of the “Advent to Go” bags, on Sunday 11/29 & 12/6, or can be dropped off to the Church office during regular business hours.

The Deacons also made donations to the following organizations through our mission interpretation in November: Bethanna, Caring for Friends, Face to Face, DePaul House, The Village, Interfaith Food Cupboard, and Dawn’s Place. Based on our discussions and study of racism over the past few months, Joyce Kornfeld collected information about

See **DEACONS** Page 7

DEACONS from Page 6
some of the organizations we work with and their responses to this ongoing social injustice.
Inter-Faith Housing Alliance – Helping Families Overcome Homelessness

Our racism study at Carmel highlights the importance of partnering with organizations who share our concerns. Inter-Faith Housing Alliance published their Racial Equity statement June 2020...please read below.

“The past few weeks have been a time of reflection for some, awakening for others, and reckoning for many more. As we mourn for the countless unwarranted deaths of African American citizens and grieve for the American ideals that we recognize as unachieved, we also pray—and take action—for a better future for us all.

The deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery will not be in vain. Through their stories, we can recommit to learning about and more importantly to changing the systemic racism and injustice that have impacted Black communities in Montgomery County and throughout our country.

As Inter-Faith Housing Alliance works toward ending homelessness and food insecurity, we must also promote equity, inclusion, and belonging. Our board and staff recognize the importance of dismantling racism, bias, and discrimination and we are committed to doing more.

The first step in creating change is education, so that we can understand the complexities of privilege and racism, as well as what we can do to create change. Check the list below in the coming days and weeks for links to books and other resources.

The second step is dialogue. We invite you to reach out to share your ideas and concerns as you work with us to address racism within ourselves and our community. We are here for you and our entire community as we make sense of and engage in this difficult time.”

Click here to learn more about this critical community service - <https://www.i-fha.org/>

Gemma Services/The Village – where hope shines

Last year the Village became part of Gemma Services including Silver Springs’ Martin Luther School. Their values highlight the importance of diversity – one of the underlying principles in addressing racial equity. Please read below...

We value:

- Each individual and family as precious and deserving
- A safe and nurturing community that is sensitive to experiences of trauma
- Diversity, inclusion, and a community where everyone belongs
- A culture of learning
- The highest standards of excellence and data-informed practices
- Our faith-based heritage and rich tradition of service

Click here to learn more about

the critical community service - <https://gemmaservices.org/>

Joyce also brought to our attention the Amazon Smile program, which supports local charities when you make your Amazon purchases through it.

AmazonSmile – support your favorite local charity

If you’re like me, you’re using your Amazon account more than ever. Did you know that you can donate 0.5% of your purchases to charity through AmazonSmile? AmazonSmile is available at smile.amazon.com on your web browser and can be activated in the Amazon Shopping app for iOS and Android phones. You use the same account on Amazon.com and AmazonSmile. Your shopping cart, Wish List, wedding or baby registry, and other account settings are also the same. Many charities that Carmel Supports are available. Learn more at <http://smile.amazon.com>

As always, if you are in need of Deacon support or are interested in becoming a deacon, please reach out to me at jedediahsmith77@yahoo.com or Pastor Ashley at pastorash80@gmail.com.

God Bless, Merry Christmas, and a Happy, Healthy New Year.

— *Jedediah Smith*

VISIT US ONLINE
www.presbycarmel.org

Sunday Lectionary Readings

DECEMBER

December 6 2nd Sunday of Advent
Isaiah 40:1-11 Communion
Psalm 85
2 Peter 3:8-15a
Mark 1:1-8

December 13 3rd Sun. of Advent
Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
Psalm 126 or Luke 1:46b-55
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
John 1:6-8, 19-28

December 20 4th Sunday of Advent
2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16
Psalm 89 or Luke 1:46b-55
Romans 16:25-27
Luke 1:26-38

December 24 Christmas Eve
Isaiah 9:2-7 Communion
Psalm 96
Titus 2:11-14
Luke 2:1-14
(15-20)



December 25 Nativity of the Lord/
Christmas Day
Isaiah 52:7-10
Psalm 98
Hebrews 1:1-4 (5-12)
John 1:1-14

JANUARY

January 3 2nd Sunday of Christmas
Jeremiah 31:7-14 Communion
Psalm 147
Ephesians 1:3-14
John 1(1-9) 10-18



January 10 Bap-
tism of the Lord
Genesis 1:1-5
Psalm 29
Acts 19:1-7
Mark 1:4-11

January 17 2nd Sunday after Epipha-
ny
1 Samuel 3:1-10 (11-20)
Psalm 139
1 Corinthians 6:12-20
John 1:43-51

January 24 3rd Sunday after
Epiphany
Jonah 3:1-5, 10
Psalm 62
1 Corinthians 7:29-31
Mark 1:14-20

January 31 4th Sunday after
Epiphany
Deuteronomy 18:15-20, 10
Psalm 111
1 Corinthians 8:1-13
Mark 1:21-28



Happy Birthday to:

Allen Hansen, Sr.
Celebrating his 98th
birthday on
December 8th

and

George Brecht, Jr.
Celebrating his 90th
birthday on
December 15th



Happy
Anniversary!

To:

Gene & Pat Morris,
who will celebrate
their 58th on
December 1st

and

Rod & Arlene
Hackman, who will
celebrate their 60th
on January 21

From the Director of Music

It is so wonderful to be together virtually each Sunday morning during this pandemic. I am very grateful to everyone who has sung at our online worship services. Thank you so much for your gifts of music. If anyone would like to sing at our offertory or play an instrument please let me know. Music training over Zoom is available for anyone who would like to add their voice to our worship time.

God bless.

— Abby Palmisano

Organist and Director of Music



Stewardship

Thank you for your generous contributions to the Peace and Global Missions campaign. We were able to send \$225 to the Presbyterian Mission agency and \$75 to Philadelphia Organized to Witness, Empower, and Rebuild for local efforts for peace.

God saw the great needs of the world and offered a perfect gift, a gift that brought God and humanity closer together. God's perfect gift to us, Jesus Christ, offered the power of being with us. According to Matthew's Gospel, one of the names given to Jesus is Emmanuel, which means "God is with us."

Because God is with us, we see the potential of students of color who will become our leaders and we seek to come alongside them, to encourage them, to be with them. Half of your gifts make it possible for students to learn and grow in faith at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. Because God is with us, half of your gifts provide assistance for current and retired church workers and their families with critical financial needs.



The **Christmas Joy Offering** has been a cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930's. This has been a Presbyterian commitment for nearly 140 years. We will continue our

support by dedicating this special offering during the worship service on December 20.
— Anne Newman

Envelopes

Welcome 2021 with a new box of envelopes. Your Stewardship Committee has not yet figured out a way for you to receive them. When we do get them to you, please notice that there is an envelope in the front of the box that is marked *Per Capita*. This envelope asks **each member** to contribute \$32 for membership in the Presbytery, the Synod, and the General Assembly. It is a small amount for all the help these divisions provide for Carmel members throughout the year. This is the year we will be making more use of their help as we search for a new pastor.

— Anne Newman

Free Copies of the Blue Presbyterian Hymnal

Copies of our blue Presbyterian Hymnal have been donated to Carmel Church from our Presbytery Office. These are copies no longer in use by area churches. You may contact the church office to arrange for a time to pick up a free copy of the hymnal. You may keep these and use them at home for our online worship each Sunday. The hymnal will save you paper and ink so that you will no longer need to print off the hymns used for our online worship. The hymn texts are a wonderful means of meditation and prayer. Include the hymnal in your devotions. Pray on the phrases or stanzas from the hymns. Pick up your copy today!

— Abby Palmisano



Prayers for Recovery

Please continue to pray for healing for
Matthew Coulter and Joyce Young

Christmas Music Memorial

A special music memorial at Christmas time is intended to provide instrumental and vocal music to enhance our Christmas services. If you wish to contribute to this special music memorial please fill in the form below and mail it back to the office.

If you have any questions, please call Abby Palmisano at 215-887-1074, press 3. Please fill in all the information.

The deadline for these memorials is **Sunday, December 13, 2020.**



Cut here

Please fill in all the information.

*Please mail to the church at
100 Edge Hill Road, Glenside, PA 19038
Thank you*

IN LOVING MEMORY OF
or IN HONOR OF _____

FROM: NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE NUMBER _____

AMOUNT ENCLOSED _____ *ENVELOPE NUMBER* _____

Christmas Flowers

If you wish to contribute to the Christmas poinsettias which will keep with our Advent season sanctuary traditions this year, please fill in the form below and mail it with your check to the church. **A contribution of \$15.00 for up to 2 dedications** will adequately meet our needs. Dedications can be "in memory of" or "in honor of". The flowers are delivered by our Shepherds to Carmel family shut-ins, those in nursing homes, and those who have recently suffered the loss of a family member.

Thank you.

If you have any questions, please call **Deb Gates at 215-887-1852.**

The deadline for these dedications is **Sunday, December 13.**



----- Cut here -----

Please fill in all the information. \$15.00 for (2) dedications in total.
Please mail to the church at 100 Edge Hill Road, Glenside, Pa 19038.
Thank you.

IN MEMORY OF _____

IN HONOR OF _____

BY _____

PHONE NUMBER _____

AMOUNT ENCLOSED _____ *ENVELOPE NUMBER* _____

Carmel Presbyterian Church
100 Edge Hill Road
Glenside, PA 19038-3099

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
JENKINTOWN, PA 19046
Permit No. 8

Electronic Service Requested

Carmel Courier

December 2020/January 2021

Carmel Courier is a monthly newsletter of Carmel Presbyterian Church. All visitors are welcome to worship with us each Sunday.

Christian Education for adults from 9:00-9:45. Worship at 10:00 AM and fellowship time at 11:00 AM.

Nursery care available and Children's Church for those in preschool to 3rd grade during worship. Rev. Peter Sulyok is Transitional Pastor, Rev. Ashley B. Rossi is Associate Pastor and Abigail Vander Hart Palmisano is Organist and Director of Music.

Church office hours 9:00 AM-Noon and 1:00-3:00 PM on work days. Phone: 215-887-1074 Website: www.presbycarmel.org

Dated Material



Our Church
is Accessible
To **ALL**

