

THE TIDINGS

December
2020

Doylestown Presbyterian Church

Be a bridge for Christ and a beacon of His love

Celebrating Suren

We thank Suren Mamedov, who retires after nearly three decades as "far more than sexton."

When Suren Mamedov was first hired as DPC's Sexton back in October of 1993, the church's longtime pastor Dr. William Barger jokingly described the job as "a piece of cake."

Of course, caring for a historic building that dates back to 1872 — not to mention Andrews Hall across the street — was anything but easy.

Add to that a significant language barrier and the stresses of making a new life for his family after arriving in the United States less than two years prior, and you can understand why the expression puzzled Suren.

"I said to my wife, 'What is a piece of cake?'" he recalled recently with a laugh.

But soon enough, Suren got the hang of the work. All the while he built relationships within DPC and soon felt part of the church family. Fast forward nearly 30 years and Suren has reached his retirement, set to step away from his career at the end of December.

Though most of his work was behind the scenes —



keeping the buildings clean, setting up for special events, and performing all sorts of handiwork — Suren also became a front-and-center-fixture, his smiling face often the first familiar sight people would see when attending worship service or stopping by the office.

Continued on Page 3...

As we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus during this Advent season, we invite you to follow the special devotional booklet you received in the mail. Inside, you'll find reflection questions and prayers that lead you along the story found within the hymn *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*. Along with the booklet are six ornaments you can decorate and color before hanging on your Christmas tree. If you did not receive a booklet, call the church office or email dpc@dtownpc.org.



Christmas Services

Christmas Eve, Thursday, December 24. This year we will be offering a **Virtual Family Pageant!** You can help create this very special prerecorded service! See Page 7 for details.

Also, we will present an online **Candlelight Communion Service**. Both services will be available to view on our website at **9:00 am**.

If circumstances allow, a brief **outdoor, in-person service** will occur on Christmas Eve as well. Keep watch for details!

Virtual Service of Lessons and Carols, Sunday, December 27. Though the format may be different, the service will still feature traditional readings and a wide variety of music from all of our ensembles! Available to view at **9:30 am**.

DPC Congregational Meeting

Sunday, December 13 at 10:30 am on Zoom
See inside for details

FROM the PASTOR

One day.

Our return to in-person worship lasted all of one Sunday. Our Re-Opening Task Force had planned exceptionally well for that morning and the volunteer teams all carried out their roles with precision and joy. It was wonderful to see the sixty or so other persons who joined us on that beautiful November day to offer our praise of God and the 300 households who participated via the livestream. It was a great occasion. Two days later, the task force and I met again to talk about what we had learned that morning and to make adjustments for the following Sunday, but then began to discuss the troubling trend in COVID cases. We met again the next day and with the latest data in hand chose to return to livestream only for the foreseeable future.

While that shift was a disappointment for all of us, that lone time of gathering in the sanctuary got me thinking about other moments in life that happen only once, but still prepare us for what is ahead. Our birth happens only once of course, but sets in motion all of the discoveries and growth in the years that follow. A baptism happens only once as well, but it marks a unique beginning by the recipient for deepening faith. Graduation happens only once from a particular educational institution, too, but it moves us ahead to further studies or a vocational life. All kinds of significant things occur one time, but set the stage for what follows.

As people of faith, we are gearing up this month for one of those events. To be sure, for anyone who can read these words, Christmas 2020 will not mark the first time they have observed that moment. Most of us have traditions that return each December which build up to and then mark the joy of the season. Given the challenges of the coronavirus, I suspect that some of those traditions will be adjusted. Yet at the heart of all the planning and shopping, caroling and wrapping that will fill these weeks, we mark again an event that happened once.

The gospel writers tell that story. "And she gave birth to her firstborn son," Luke records "and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger." "And the Word became flesh," John adds "and lived among us." One day that forever changed

all of our days.

So as we near the time of celebrating Christmas again, instead of focusing primarily on the ways that this virus has interrupted the rhythm of life, let's make it a time when we give thanks as never before for the greatest interruption of all that occurred in Bethlehem long ago. As it was that single day which continues to guide and bless us, while we are unable to worship together in person, once that joyful moment returns, and all the days in-between.

that lone time of gathering in the sanctuary got me thinking...

John

**SESSION
REPORT**

November 23

AT ITS MEETING THE SESSION:

- Endorsed Mina Choi's request to be enrolled as an Inquirer with the Presbytery of Philadelphia
- Called for a congregational meeting to take place via Zoom on December 13 at 10:30 am to elect an Associate Pastor Nominating Committee
- Learned that the Nominating Committee has completed its work with a full slate of nominees for Ruling Elders and Deacons
- Approved plans for Christmas Eve services and for the offering to support Presbyterian Disaster Assistance with COVID-19 aid
- Approved refinance terms of the mortgage with First National Bank of Newtown
- Approved a recommendation from the Property Committee that the congregation be asked to authorize (at a future meeting) the sale of the 112 Mechanics Street property
- Approved changes in the roll. Total membership as of 11/23/20 is 1478

...Continued from Page 1

It was smiling, Suren says, that helped him communicate initially. The sincere expression of warmth, he remembers, is what first struck him about those DPC members who greeted him and wife Svetlana, her mother Roza Karamyan, and his two sons Vladimir and Marat back in 1991. The family is of Armenian descent and lived in Azerbaijan before fleeing to Moscow due to escalating political conflict.

“Everybody in the church would come and smile,” Suren said. “We didn’t know people but here they are smiling. It was a different kind of life.”

DPC’s Mission Committee would later help reunite Suren with his parents, co-sponsoring their relocation to the US in 1996.

Doris Kodikian, a former Mission Committee member who also has Armenian heritage, was instrumental in arranging for the Mamedovs to move here.

“I was there at the airport when Suren and his family arrived. We’ve become family friends through the years. He calls me his sister,” Doris said recently. “Every Sunday I would arrive for worship and he’d be there to give me a cheery hello. He’s just a jovial man; warm and hospitable. It was heartwarming to see him become a fabric of this church family.”

Pastor John Willingham says Suren has been “far more than sexton” during his years at DPC.

“He has been a valued colleague in ministry, the unofficial greeter to anyone who came inside our building, and one who brought dedication and humor to all that he did,” he continued. “While I celebrate this new chapter in his life and give thanks to God for the journey together, I will miss him.”

Keep watch in your email for details of plans to honor Suren in the coming weeks!

Congregational Meeting

The Session has called for a congregational meeting to occur via Zoom on **Sunday, December 13**, beginning at **10:30 am**. The purpose of the meeting is to elect an Associate Pastor Nominating Committee.

The Session has determined we will seek an Associate Pastor who will focus on all educational and family ministries. The committee recommended for that search includes: Scott Blore, Megan Craig, Melissa Hauser, Gavin Jones, Matt Rizk (moderator), Sharon Sager, Lindsay Shull, and Margaret Thoresen. Assuming you concur in that proposal, the APNC would begin its work in January.

We encourage you to join us for that important gathering as we begin the search for the one whom God is preparing to join us.

Direct link: bit.ly/3l2CorZ

Meeting ID: 883 6020 7630 Passcode: 194974

HELLO!

From Your Board of Deacons

CAREGIVERS' CORNER



As we celebrate God’s greatest gift to us, how can we extend that spirit of love to the caregivers in our midst? In this season of giving, possibly the most precious gift is time. Can you find an hour — once or on a regular basis — to give a caregiver a break from their responsibilities?

Visit with the loved one, walk the dog, do some errands, help with yard work, read to a child? By sharing the precious commodity of time, you acknowledge and encourage the vital work of all caregivers and become a beacon of God’s love.

A Service of Light in the Midst of Darkness

Sunday, December 6. For all who face the holidays with loss, sadness or isolation, this pre-recorded service will offer scripture, music, readings and comfort. The service will be available on www.dtownpc.org at **4 pm**.



LIFE MILESTONES

Baptisms

Vincent William Dominici, son of **Beth** and **Richard Dominici**, grandson of **Lou** and **Susan Cipollo**,
November 8

Deaths

Ren Meininger, stepfather of Mark Remmey,
November 23

Norma Moyer, sister of **Nancy La Rosa**, November 24

What's Happening

ANTIRACISM DISCUSSION GROUP. Join Judy Cody, Laurie Foote, Honor Ford, and Katie Toner for informal, but much-needed discussion about race and current events on **Wednesdays at 7:30 pm, December 2 - January 20** via Zoom. The discussion will be centered around short articles and podcast episodes emailed out the Sunday before each meeting. Sign-up today by emailing dpc@dtownnpc.org.

MOMS OF YOUNG CHILDREN. These casual gatherings welcome moms of infants through elementary school aged kids together to share life, motherhood, and faith. This group meets virtually on Zoom from 8 to 9 pm on the **2nd and 4th Wednesdays** of each month. Visit dtownnpc.org/adults/fellowship-and-education/ to join in. Led by Krista Spadt and Jenny Baker.

WOMEN'S DISCUSSION GROUP. We welcome mothers with children ranging in ages from about 7th grade through college. The group meets virtually on Zoom from 7:30 to 8:30 pm on the **1st and 3rd Thursdays** of each month. New participants are always welcomed! Visit dtownnpc.org/adults/fellowship-and-education/ to join in. Led by Jenny Baker and Krista Spadt.

DPC DADS. A time of fellowship and support for fathers with newborns to college-age children. The group meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 8:00 pm on Zoom. The next one will be **December 15**. These virtual gatherings offer an opportunity to share experiences and learn from others who are at different points along the journey of fatherhood. To join, email dpc@dtownnpc.org. The Zoom link will be sent via email as the next gathering approaches. Led by John Willingham.

LIBRARY. A wonderful collection of books, DVDs, magazines, and jigsaw puzzles is available for your use in our DPC Library. Located in AH Room 118, the Library is open any time the building is open. Reminder: if you checked out books before the pandemic arrived, now would be a good time to find them and return them to the Library or the entrance to Andrews Hall.

READ AND CHAT. December 9, 1 pm on Zoom. The book we are reading this month is *Christmas Bells* by Jennifer Chiaverini. For more information, contact Joyce Baral at dpc@dtownnpc.org.

Memorials and Gifts Received

The following memorials, gifts and bequests have gratefully been received July through November 2020. These gifts have been acknowledged and designated as requested.

COMMUNITY MEAL

In honor of Rich and Joanne Arculin

GENERAL PURPOSE

In memory of Vicki Anthos

In memory of Jack Belle

In memory of Nannette N. Benson-Nicol

In memory of Ruby Feild and John Meade

In memory of Wilma Groshens

In memory of Carolyn Stewart

In honor of Barbara Buckham

In honor of Emsley Willingham's wedding
Member & Friend gifts

MISSION

In memory of Mary Valiant

WRAPPING PRESENCE

Member & Friend gifts

YOUTH MINISTRY

In memory of Carolyn Husk

In honor of Josh Gill

Have you ever considered giving a gift to the Memorials, Bequests and Gifts Fund (MBG Fund)? What is a Memorial Gift? A gift in remembrance of a deceased loved one, thereby honoring that family member or friend. What is a Bequest? Remembering DPC in your will by designating a cash donation or percent of estate. What is a Gift? It is just that, a gift designated to helping DPC to prepare for future generations to experience all that DPC has to offer. For more information, check out the giving page on the DPC website or contact Linay Richards, Director of Finances and Operations (linayr@dtownnpc.org).

YEAR-END GIVING. Contributions must be received in the church office by **3 pm on Thursday, December 31** or **postmarked with a 2020 date** in order to meet the IRS requirements for a 2020 charitable contribution. Checks that are dated, mailed, and **postmarked** in 2020 will be deductible (if eligible) in 2020, even if they are not delivered by the post office to DPC until 2021. Contributions received or postmarked after that date will be credited for 2021.

OFFERING ENVELOPES. The 2021 offering envelopes will be available for pickup on the following days: Dec. 10 from 5 pm to 8 pm, Dec. 11 from 9 am to 11 am, 1 pm to 3 pm, Dec. 14 from 9 am to 11 am, 1 pm to 3 pm. If you need to arrange a different pick-up time, please let Linay know at linayr@dtownnpc.org.



ADULT CLASSES

We invite you to visit the Adult Education page on our website at dtownpc.org/adults/sunday-morning/ to access the Zoom links and to view brief videos that describe the experience offered by each class. New participants are always welcomed so please feel free to join in on Sunday and explore which class might best fill your spiritual needs!

Bible Talk! — This class welcomes all adults to come learn from a different Christian professional or Bible scholar each week as they share a Biblical lesson and discuss how it applies to our Christian walk. We believe “BIBLETALK!” will be a class you won’t want to miss. **Sundays, 8:30 to 9:30 am** on Zoom. Coordinated by Tim Liebig.

Good News and Other News — Current events are discussed while reflecting upon the story from the perspective of faith. **Sundays, 8:30 to 9:15 am** on Zoom. Led by Christo Claassens, Jenny Danzis, Pauline Sexton, and Jay Stough.

iLIGHT — After we conclude Greg Jensen's inspiring and thoughtful journey through Science and Christian Faith, we'll close out 2020 by sharing and discussing some favorite Advent-themed podcast episodes beginning on December 6. Join us and help us plan the next stop in our journey into the new year! Let's continue to explore and Learn In God's House, Together! **Sundays, 11 am to 12 pm** on Zoom. Join us in our journey! Led by Greg Jensen and Steve Spadt.

The Word Among Us — This class will embark on a study of one of the most beloved books of the Bible. The 150 Psalms are amazing expressions of heartfelt praise, petition, and prayer offered by the Hebrews as they worshiped God. There are many types of Psalms (e.g., praise, thanksgiving, and lamentation), reflecting the joys and hardships of real life. Join us as we study and appreciate the beauty of each of the Psalms and how we can use them in our own devotional times with God. **Sundays, 10:45 to 11:30 am** on Zoom. Led by Dick Cornelius and Margaret Thoresen.

MINISTRY

in motion

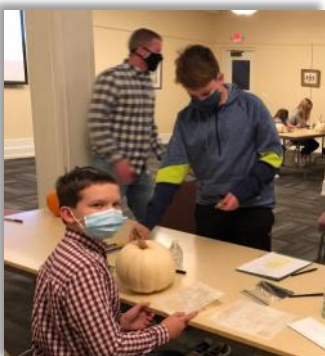


DPCers once again traveled to the Jersey Shore to help repair a house damaged by Hurricane Sandy. Visit our [DPC in Action Blog](#) to see a new video highlighting their most recent [mission trip](#).

Beautiful weather added to an informative tour of the Doylestown Historic Cemetery organized by the [Senior Adult Ministry Committee](#).



Dedicated members of the [Children's Education Committee](#) took time to assemble wonderful Advent boxes sent to DPC Seeds of Faith families.



Youth Leaders and DPC teens involved in [THRIVE](#) gathered last month for spiritual discussion and Halloween activities.



Member Peggy Moore has been selling homemade spring rolls to benefit the needy as part of DPC's [Advent Mission Market](#) for a decade! Visit our [DPC in Action Blog](#) to read about this tasty tradition.



CODE BLUE UPDATE. This year the Coalition to Shelter and Support the Homeless (CSSH) needs more volunteers than ever to provide shelter to our homeless neighbors. Though we are not physically hosting the shelter this year at DPC, we can still assist as volunteers at other locations!

Throughout the Code Blue season of December to March, they will be following the latest guidelines proposed by the CDC and the Bucks County Department of Health. All of the training is virtual and available on demand this year. For more information and other links to our online training programs, visit centralbuckscodblue.org/volunteer. Any further questions, contact Anne Bishop at dpc@dtownpc.org.

COMMUNITY MEAL. During the COVID pandemic, the regular meal has been suspended; however, meals continue to be served on the third Sunday of each month to our homeless guests. If you would like further information about helping with the meal, please inquire here: bit.ly/DPC-Meal-Info

DPC FOOD COLLECTION. The need for food assistance has risen dramatically since the start of COVID. To respond to these needs, DPC has begun a monthly food collection for the Bucks County Housing Group on the third Sunday of each month. You may drop items off in the alley behind Andrews Hall from 10:30 to 11:30 am. Our next collection will be **December 20**. You can find a list of most needed items here: <https://www.bchg.org/make-a-donation.html>



RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE - DONORS NEEDED! DPC will be hosting its annual winter blood drive on **Wednesday, December 30** from **1 pm to 6 pm** in Andrews Hall.

The blood supply is in very short supply due to COVID-19, and your help is needed now more than ever! As an added benefit to saving lives with your donation, the Red Cross is currently testing every donation for COVID-19 antibodies, and donors will be able to find out if they have antibodies shortly after their donation. To sign up, please contact Erin Rizk at erinr@dtownpc.org.

CHRISTMAS GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

DPC GIVING TREE. This year's Giving Tree is online! Thank you so much to all who have signed up thus far. All gifts are needed back by **December 7**. There are two drop off dates - Saturday, **December 5** from 9 am - 11 am, and Monday, **December 7** from 3 pm to 5 pm. If you are not able to drop off your gift during one of these time slots, please contact Erin Rizk at erinr@dtownpc.org to arrange another time. We are so grateful for your participation in this important ministry!

ADVENT MISSION MARKET. The Advent Mission Market, an opportunity for you to give a gift twice, with proceeds going to charitable causes, is also online this year!

Visit bit.ly/2Trkm7s to find your old favorites and some new items, as well as ordering and delivery information this year. Please consider this wonderful opportunity to give in a different way this Christmas!



CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING. This offering has been a cherished

Presbyterian tradition since the 1930s. The Offering distributes gifts equally to the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and to Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

The Assistance Program provides critical financial support to church workers and their families. Presbyterian-related schools and colleges provide education and leadership development while nurturing racial and ethnic heritage. This has been a Presbyterian commitment for nearly 140 years. To donate, please mail a check to the church office designated as "Christmas Joy."

CHRISTMAS EVE OFFERING. This year's Christmas Eve offering will support the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has brought hardship to people living all over the world. For more information or to make an additional donation, visit <https://pda.pcusa.org/situation/covid-19/>



DPC Youth assisted with DPC's monthly food drive in November.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

This year, our **Christmas Eve Pageant** will be a virtual celebration - and it will all be made possible by YOU!

To help us create something truly special, we are asking families to take pictures of your children (and other family members) enacting the story of Jesus' birth.

Share as many **jpg** photos, of as many scenes as you like, featuring your children from **preschool to middle school age** to the Dropbox link found within this document:

bit.ly/39deuYD

We ask that you send photos by **December 14** so we can begin to prepare the prerecorded pageant.

If your child would like a speaking part (also prerecorded), please send an email to robertak@dtownpc.org and Pastor Roberta will be in touch.



YOUTH, TWEEN, & COLLEGE-AGE MINISTRY



Parents of 4th, 5th & 6th graders, look for a festive box arriving on your doorstep within the next week. It will be

brimming with activities, some for you to keep and some to help bring joy to others at Christmas time. We celebrate together in a car parade at DPC on Sunday, **December 13** at 11 am (see details in the box).

THRIVE!

Join us virtually for an Advent series each Sunday during the season. We will light a candle for Hope, Peace, Love, and Joy and take a traditional and modern look at those words and how they play out throughout our lives. The last Sunday night, **December 20** (weather and COVID permitting), we will gather for a Fire Pit and a Sneaky Santa! Log on and Celebrate this Christmas Season with the Thrive Youth Team! The link will be emailed to you. Contact Candi at

candiy@dtownpc.org for more information.

Confirmation News

We begin in January 2021. Young people will have a chance to explore what it means to believe in Jesus with a look at his life in the gospel of Luke, through prayer walks and in conversations with mentors who share their doubts, feelings and belief in Jesus. A letter will be sent to parents by **December 15** with more details.

PEACE & JUSTICE COMMITTEE

Beginning in January, Greg Jensen will become Moderator of DPC's Peace and Justice Committee.

Greg Jensen and his wife Mary Claire have been members of DPC since 2010. They have two children, Henry and Timothy. Greg is a professor at Cairn University and his current research is in the field of Christian ethics, with an emphasis on the issue of waste.

Greg has been a member of the Peace and Justice Committee from the time he joined DPC. He believes that faith in Christ attunes believers to the gifts and needs of others and equips them to respond on behalf of others, especially "the least of these," to bring about God's justice.

"Susan Hauser has done an incredible job leading the Peace and Justice Committee; her passionate and tireless peace and justice advocacy has been a constant source of energy for the committee," Greg said recently, adding that he is excited to continue this good work and assist with the committee's ongoing

call to seek environmental justice, end hunger and poverty, prevent violence, expose injustice, and promote peace.

In addition to Greg, the members of the committee are: Diane Alexanderson, Jane Antheil, Christo Claassens, Susan Hauser, Brynne Hunter, Beverly Jewusiak, Bill Rote, Kay Rote, Mark Vandersall and Alice Vernon. Erin Rizk is the staff member on Peace and Justice.

The Esther Brigade is now an arm of the Peace and Justice Committee. The members of this group dedicated to ending racism are Judy Cody, Amy Edenson, Susan Hauser, Brynne Hunter, Beverly Jewusiak, Mary Lee Reiff, Marie Stevens Cooper, and Katie Toner.

The Peace and Justice Committee welcomes your ideas, thoughts, concerns as we continue to discern ways to work for justice for all.



Doylestown
Presbyterian Church

*Be a bridge for Christ
and a beacon of His love*

127 East Court Street
Doylestown, Pa 18901

ADDRESS SERVICE
REQUESTED

U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Non-Profit
Organization
Permit No. 208
Doylestown, PA

November 30, 2020
Time Sensitive Material
Please deliver within 5 days



SPECIAL Christmas Decorations

**are planned for
December!**

REMEMBER OR HONOR SOMEONE

We have decorated the Sanctuary and will be placing wreaths on the graves of veterans in the DPC graveyard this month. If you would like to make a donation in honor or in memory of someone to make these decorations possible, please make checks payable to DPC and specify "Christmas Decorations," mail to the office or place in the offering plate. A donation of \$15 is requested.

Memorials will be listed in the December 13 bulletin. **Due to space constraints, we can only print the names of people being remembered or honored, along with the names of the requestors.** All names for the listing **must be in the church office no later than December 4 at noon.**

I would like to make _____ donation(s) at \$15 each.

PLEASE PRINT

In memory of *(names of deceased only)*:

In Honor of *(names of honorees only)*:

Branch of service *(if honoring or remembering a veteran)*:

Requested by *(how you want your name listed)*:

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____