

THE TIDINGS

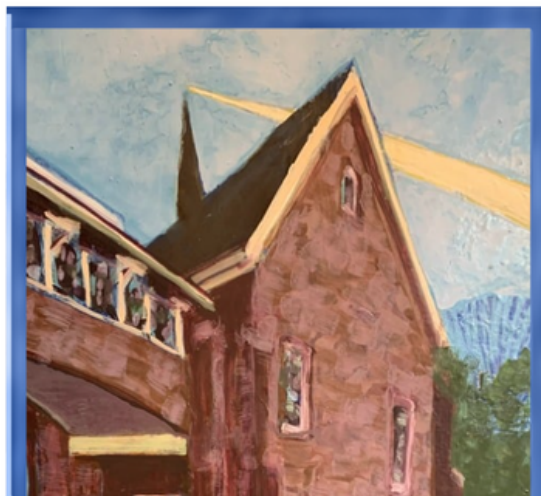
Doylestown Presbyterian Church's Digital Newsletter

December 2025

Advent 2025

Be Beacon Bearers!

Our theme this Advent is *Be Beacon Bearers*. It ties to the beacon on top of our church building and a charge Rev. Ruth Faith Santana-Grace (Presbytery of Philadelphia Executive Presbyterian) gave to the congregation in late June. She said we are called to “bear” Christ’s light into the world and that, “Christ’s light will always break through the darkness.” Advent is a time of anticipation and expectation of the emerging light of Christ.



The lectionary passages we will focus on in worship speak to the coming light of the Triune God. Our Advent devotion will speak to DPC’s musicians experience of light through song. New members will light the Advent Wreath candles each week in worship. Each week at 8:30 am, Advent worship we will offer communion by intinction. Music takes more of a central role during Advent and provides hope to rise above our weariness. The theme is also represented in a wonderful piece of original artwork that you’ll see in several different places by local artist David Ohlerking.

Rev. Santana-Grace quoted German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer in her charge to us. He said, “In **me** there is darkness, in **we** there is light.” One of the points of this quote is we need each other to find the light and hope of Christ.

Welcome to Advent,

For a complete overview of
this Advent Season at DPC,
see page 2



Advent Devotional for 2025. For this year's devotional booklet, Pastor Mac asked musicians at DPC: “How has music brought Christ’s light into your life?” The question ties into this year’s theme of *Be Beacon Bearers*.

To view a digital version of the devotional, [CLICK HERE](#). Printed copies are available at the entrances of the Sanctuary throughout the season.

Advent 2025 at DPC *Be Beacon Bearers!*



First Sunday of Advent November 30

Services at 8:30* and 10:30 am

Sermon: "Be Beacon Bearers: Walk in the Light"

by Rev. Dr. Mac Schafer

Text: Isaiah 2:1-5

Second Sunday of Advent December 7

Services at 8:30* and 10:30 am

Sermon: "Be Beacon Bearers: While the Sun Endures" by Rev. Becca Bateman

Text: Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19

Third Sunday of Advent December 14

Worship service at 8:30* and 10:30 am*

Sermon: "Be Beacon Bearers: My Soul Magnifies"

by Rev. Dr. Mac Schafer

Text: Matthew 11:2-22; Luke 1:46-55

Fourth Sunday of Advent December 21

Worship service at 8:30* and 10:30 am

Sermon: "Be Beacon Bearers: Let Your Face Shine"

by Rev. Dr. Mac Schafer

Text: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

The Festival of Lessons and Carols

1:30 pm - Our music ensembles shine the light of Christ in this beloved annual tradition.



Mission Market

Open between worship services on Sundays from November 30 through December 14 in the Celtic Cross Room. This is an opportunity to purchase gifts from organizations who give back to the community.

Advent All Together!

On November 30 enjoy lunch, grow friendships, and create keepsakes at this all-church event beginning at 11:30 am in Fellowship Hall.

Caroling

All are invited to sing Christmas songs on December 7 following 10:30 worship. After a light lunch, a group of carolers of all ages will depart from church to visit the homes of DPC members who could use some Christmas joy. Festive dress encouraged! Click here or visit bit.ly/DPC-CAROLING to sign up!

Drive-Thru Nativity

On December 19, travel down Mechanics Street between 5:30 and 6:30 pm to be transported to Bethlehem from the comfort of your own car! Experience the sights, sounds, and animals along the way!



Doylestown
Presbyterian Church

Christmas Eve Services

3:00 pm - Nativity & Candlelight Service

Meditation: "Shine, Jesus, Shine" by Rev. Becca Bateman
Special Christmas music by the Sunshine Singers and Celebration Singers

5:00 pm - Candlelight Service

Sermon: "Be Beacon Bearers: Glory of the Lord Shone"
by Rev. Dr. Mac Schafer
Special Christmas music by the Youth Choir
(Childcare available)

8:00 pm - Candlelight Communion Service

Sermon: "Be Beacon Bearers: Glory of the Lord Shone"
by Rev. Dr. Mac Schafer
Special Christmas music by the Chancel Choir
(Livestream available)

BE KNIT
TOGETHER



Be Knit Together Generosity Campaign Update

We're so grateful to the many members and friends who have pledged. Thanks be to God!

These commitments help the leadership know how to financially plan for ministry. Your pledge makes worship, pastoral care, fellowship, education, and mission/outreach of the church possible.

Did you notice this year that we asked you to pledge time, abilities and financial resources, not just money? Of course, we'd love for you to pledge all three categories, but we also know that's not always possible based on life circumstances. If you can only pledge time and abilities, do that! If you can pledge funds but don't have as much time presently, do that! People are committed to Christ's church in a variety of ways through seasons of their life.

Our approximate goal is **\$1.4 million** pledged and over **263** pledging households out of **567** households.

If you haven't made your commitment yet, you can still turn in your 2026 pledge on DPC's website, through the QR code below, drop a pledge brochure by the church office or in the offering plate, or send it by mail.

The Book of Order says we are to regularly review and evaluate, "the integrity of one's membership, and consider ways in which one's participation in the worship and service of the church may be increased and made more meaningful."

Thank you for your prayerful discernment and commitment to Christ through DPC.



The Generosity Subcommittee

Giving at a Glance

2026 pledge results (as of 11/19)

220 pledges for \$1,240,247.

Of these pledges:

134 increased from their last pledge or was a new pledge (no 24/25 pledge)

52 stayed the same

29 decreased

5 pledged their time and talents

As you prayerfully consider making your 2026 pledge to DPC, think about proportional giving (10%, 5%, 2.5%, etc.). This allows you to gift a percentage of God's resources, and if led to, faithfully increase your giving.

Annual Income	2.5%	5%	10%
\$35,000	\$875	\$1,750	\$3,500
\$50,000	\$1,250	\$2,500	\$5,000
\$75,000	\$1,875	\$3,750	\$7,500
\$90,000	\$2,250	\$4,500	\$9,000
\$115,000	\$2,875	\$5,750	\$11,500

November Session Update



The Session met on Monday, November 24th for their stated meeting

- Elder Charlie B. led the Elders in a wonderful devotion reframing our thoughts on giving thanks at Thanksgiving.
- Elder presbytery commissioners reported on their experience at the 11.18.25 stated meeting of Presbytery of Philadelphia
- Session discussed:
 - Details of the Nominating Committee process
 - A new Friendship Pad design from Membership Subcommittee
 - Staffing plans and priorities
 - Discernment on annual pledging follow-up
- The meeting was closed with small groups sharing of personal prayer requests.

-- Linda Cacossa (Clerk of Session) & Mac Schafer (Pastor & Moderator of Session)

Weddings November 2025



Meghan Dacey
& John Heisey
November 21

Financial Corner



As we come to the end of the calendar year, we thank you in advance for fulfilling your pledge and prayerfully considering any end of year gifts that will help DPC live into its mission in the community. If you are unsure where you stand with your pledge, you can contact Linay Richards in the office. She can let you know the balance remaining for the current pledge campaign that ends December 31, 2025.

Deadlines for end of year gifts. Gifts must be received in the office by 3 pm on Wednesday, **December 31** or be postmarked in the year 2025. You can also make online gifts through our website. Due to processing times, this needs to be done by Friday, **December 26**, to be counted as a contribution in 2025.

Our income (pledges, non-pledge and other income) as of October 31 is slightly under budget (\$7,206) with our planned budget. Our expenses are under budget by \$114,227 below our planned expense budget.

As a reminder, we had a net income of almost \$265,000 at the end of 2024, to carry us through 2025.

If you would have any questions or want to see the full financial report, please contact Linay Richards, Director of Finances and Operations at linayr@dtownnpc.org or by calling the office (215-348-3531).

As of October 31	Actual YTD	Budgeted YTD
Income	\$1,184,384.23	\$1,191,590.38
Expenses	\$1,298,994.58	\$1,413,261.10
Net	(\$114,610.35)	(\$221,670.72)

Setting the Scene for Youth Ministry an update from Pastor Becca

I've witnessed quite a few Sunday evenings, our CCR alive (and rowdy) with the sound of chatting while eating dinner, and the hum of some great Christian music. It sounds like a group that feels like family. Around fifteen youth and leaders gather regularly Sunday nights for games and prayer. Even more boosted when we have confirmation class- a class of twelve. All these youth often respond with a resounding YES when asked to lead in various parts of the church, whether it be worship from the front or with the audio-visual crew or teaching a children's class. These simple offers sum up what's been happening across our youth ministry this fall: *young people are stepping forward, taking ownership, and finding their voice in faith.*



On any given Sunday we might see 25 youth participating in some way. Some come and sit with their families in worship. Two to eight middle schoolers are in Sunday School regularly, two to four youth regularly help with children's programs or in the nursery, modeling servant leadership for the next generation. In the evening add on eight youth are lifting their voices in choir. Four are serving faithfully on Session and Deacon boards. All this momentum follows a summer when three high schoolers and eighteen middle schoolers each gave a week of their lives to mission work. Not to mention fourteen youth and five adults who spent a weekend at Johnsonburg for the fall retreat. The Spirit is moving among our youth, they're not just attending; they're leading, growing, and discovering that faith is something you build together.

This season brings exciting growth within DPC's youth ministry, and as we grow, some shifts naturally follow. We want to share a clear picture of what's happening and where we are headed.

First, we give deep thanks for the faithful leadership and energy our seminarian, Jamie Neal, has brought to our youth. Her presence with the youth has been a gift. As Jamie continues her seminary studies and other ministry commitments, she is not able to offer the expanded hours that our growing youth ministry requires. We are grateful for all she has poured into DPC and will continue to cheer her on as she leans into her call. She has become family to us and we to her, you will still see her on some Sunday mornings. However; now when you spot her, don't limit your questions to youth updates. Ask her how seminary is going, or how much sleep she's getting, or whether she's learned any new fancy theological words this week!

Youth Update continues
on next page...

From Jamie...

"My time at DPC has been one of joy, love, and quiet transformation. My heart is full from the warmth I've received from colleagues, youth, choir members, and the wider congregation—this church has been a place where God's grace has met me again and again. As many of you know, I'm maintaining a full schedule as a seminarian working toward two master's degrees while serving as a hospital chaplain intern and fulfilling ongoing responsibilities as a Chaplain Candidate Program Officer in the Navy. After much prayer and reflection, I've realized that in this season, it is both wise and necessary to make space for rest and soul-tending.

As the Psalmist writes, "He restores my soul"—and I am learning to trust that invitation. With a heavy but grateful heart, I will be stepping out of my leadership role at DPC. I remain deeply thankful for this community, and I look forward to continuing to worship with you as I am able. You have been a blessing in my journey, and I welcome your prayers as I continue following God's leading. This is not *goodbye*, but *see you around!*"



Setting the Scene for Youth Ministry an update from Pastor Becca

Because the needs of the ministry have outgrown the limited hours this role previously held, DPC will make three key shifts:

- **We will conclude our position of seminarian for youth ministry**, moving beyond the few weekly hours previously allotted.
- **We will begin the search for a full-time permanent Youth Director**, someone able to serve our teens and families with dedicated, consistent leadership.
- **We will welcome a part-time Interim Youth Director** to serve alongside our Youth Leadership Teams during the search process, ensuring strong, steady support for our students.



Welcome Katy Schafer as our new Interim Youth Director!

From Katy...

"I am so grateful to be able to join with the congregation in this particular way in caring for the teens of this church. I feel confident that my gifts for ministry and my instincts to engage with middle and high school students, along with their families, will be a good fit. During this interim period, I will thoroughly enjoy the opportunity to participate and care for students, some of whom I have already spent time with at DPC Summer Camp, Middle School Mission Week, and the Youth Retreat to Johnsonburg."

From Becca...

"When considering what would be next, we thought about what resources we had in our midst. We have a qualified member with several years of experience in youth ministry, and we feel this would be a perfect fit to bridge this gap. Please join me and the other youth leaders in welcoming Katy to the team. During this transition we are thankful for the youth committee, the youth leaders, and confirmation mentors as they continue to love and build relationships with the youth of DPC. We always are welcoming more to be part of youth ministry. Talk with Katy or myself to learn more about how!"

Reminders!

Christmas Decorations



If you would like to make a donation in honor or in memory of someone to make DPC's Advent decorations possible, please [CLICK HERE](#) or find the form in the Sunday bulletins. Memorials will be listed in the **December 21** and **Christmas Eve bulletins**. All names must be submitted to the church office by **December 15**.

A graphic with a blue silhouette of a church with a steeple on the left. To the right, the text reads: SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28, SINGLE WORSHIP SERVICE AT 9:30. There are small yellow star icons on the right side.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28
SINGLE WORSHIP
SERVICE AT 9:30

WHAT'S happening AT

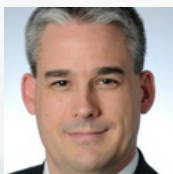


The Peace & Justice Subcommittee **Exploration of Pathways to Immigration Justice**

As noted [in last month's Tidings](#), the DPC Peace & Justice Subcommittee will be hosting a series of 4 educational talks by outside speakers on immigration issues in January. We are firming up details, but the first three talks will take place in the **Celtic Cross Room during the education hour** from **9:30-10:15**. The final talk will take place in the afternoon as noted below. These talks will cover four different aspects of the immigration issue, as follows:



January 4: Juan Navia from Immigrant Rights Action / The Welcome Project PA will discuss their work on local legal support, advocacy, and accompaniment for immigrants.



January 11: William Stock, Esq. from Klasko Immigration Law Partners will review the history of U.S. immigration law and talk about the current legal environment.



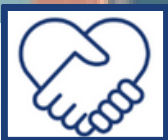
January 18: Rev. Dr. Samuel Arroyo from Princeton Theological Seminary will discuss the biblical, theological, and moral considerations around immigrants and refugees.



January 25: Professor Zeke Hernandez from the Wharton School / University of Pennsylvania will focus on the economic impact of immigrants on the U.S.
This talk will be offered at 4 pm.



Please plan on attending one or all of these discussions which we hope will enable DPC and community members to develop a more accurate and better understanding of the immigration issue which is currently very much in our daily news.



DPC's **Home Help Corps** volunteers continue to be busy, providing transportation and help with small home tasks year round! If you are in need of help around the house (small repairs, seasonal tasks, yardwork) or need transportation to an appointment, just give the church office a call with your request. We are happy to lend a hand!

DPC's Sunday morning adult classes are always welcoming new faces:

- **The Word Among Us:** 9:15 am, AH-213, where participants study and appreciate the beauty of Scripture and how we can use it in our own devotional times with God. Led by Dick Cornelius and Margaret Thoresen.
- **Good News and Other News:** 9:30 am, DPC Library, where current events are discussed while reflecting upon the story from the perspective of faith. Led by Christo Claassens, Jenny Danzis, Ken Johnson, and Jay Stough



WHAT'S happening AT



Doylestown Places of Worship: A Historic Tour

Saturday, December 13 1:00 - 4:00 PM

DPC will be participating in a Local Historical Church Tour on Saturday, **December 13 from 1-4 pm**. This exciting tour organized by the Doylestown Historical Society will feature four of the borough's oldest churches – Doylestown Presbyterian, Salem United Church of Christ, St. Paul's Episcopal, and Doylestown Friends Meeting – and will explore the history and architecture of each place of worship.

DPC's own Holly Mullin will share information about our church's incredibly interesting founding as well as some of the history about the graveyard – a place we walk through weekly but whose stories go unknown.

Presentations at each site will begin on the hour and half hour from 1 pm until 3:30 pm, with refreshments available at all sites. You may explore the four locations at your leisure and in any order of your choosing. Tickets are available through Eventbrite and proceeds will benefit The Coalition to Shelter and Support the Homeless (Code Blue).

DPC's portion of the tour is sponsored and organized by the Connections and Outreach Subcommittee. If you are interested in volunteering at the event, please reach out to the church office.

To purchase tickets **[CLICK HERE](#)** or visit www.dtownnpc.org/dpc-tour



NEW CHURCH DATABASE AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU!

REALM is DPC's new church database. On Nov. 13, all DPC adult members received an email invitation to create an account in Realm. One of the new function of the new system, is an online directory, which will replace Church Life App.

When you create an account, we ask you to manage your personal privacy information by allowing who can see your contact information. If you do not want to be in the online database, please contact the church office.

Step by step Instructions can be found at www.dtownnpc.org/realm. To keep this database secure, you can only create an account with an invitation. If you need an invitation sent again, please email dpc@dtownnpc.org.



Celebrate the Arts continues this season with the ongoing visual art display "Joy" in the Celtic Cross Room, and the beloved tradition of the **Festival of Lessons & Carols** at 1:30 pm on **December 21**. No tickets required!

DPC MISSION



The Coalition to Shelter and Support the Homeless needs 15 volunteers each night that our **Code Blue shelter** is open (28° or colder with the wind chill), December through March, to provide shelter and food for our homeless neighbors. In December the shelter is housed at Neshaminy Warwick Presbyterian Church. The shelter will be at DPC from **January 30** through **February 27**.

In-person volunteer training is still available, on Wednesday, **December 3** at 7 pm in Multipurpose Room A of the new Doylestown Twp. Parks and Recreation Center, 425 Wells Road. The session lasts approximately 1½ hours. If you have an interest in being a driver or van attendant, in-person training will be offered immediately afterward.

Alternatively, to receive training on your own schedule, visit the CSSH website www.co2ssh.org/new-volunteer-training for the online version.

Special Offerings

Christmas Joy Offering

Each year during the Advent and Christmas season, we open doors for healing and for opportunity for our leaders--past, present, and future--of the Presbyterian church. This PC(USA) Special Offering provides support for our retired and active church workers and their families through the Board of Pensions (50%) and leadership development and education for communities of color at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges (50%). Designated envelopes are available in the pew racks or in your offering envelope box.

Christmas Eve Offering

Doylestown FISH, a nonprofit that often serves as the front line in Bucks County for individuals who are in crisis, assisting clients with finding emergency shelter, making utility payments, and finding food, is the local mission supported by this year's Christmas Eve Offering. In October, FISH tapped their endowment funds to fund grocery store gift cards for those facing suspension of SNAP benefits. It took less than a week for the Bucks County Hub to distribute all the funding! Please give generously to help our neighbors in need. Envelopes for this offering can be found in the pew racks or in your offering envelope box.

DPC MISSION



Thanks to your generous spirit, a whopping **560 winter coats** (which is believed to be a record amount since DPC began participating in this drive) made their way to Bethel Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia to help those in need during these frigid months! The Arnold family (along with some special helpers) sorted, packed, and loaded the truck in memory of DPC member Maureen Arnold, who championed this important cause.

WINTER
Coat Drive

DPC's **Giving Tree** can still be found on the Bridge **November 30, December 7 and 14!** Celebrate the holiday season by selecting tags from the Tree to donate to Code Blue and Hunting Park Christian Academy. These gifts are due back in the church office by **December 21**.

The **Advent Mission Market** will run for three Sundays starting on **November 30**. Come shop for stocking stuffers and fun treats that help support great causes! Philly Fairtrade Coffee and hot chocolate is back along with brownies from Greyson's Bakery and Stroopies stroop waffles. Prosperity Candles, which were very popular last year, are back again. Buy a children's book or purchase notecards to benefit ANA. Come shop the Advent Mission Market and go home with gifts you can feel good about! You can also purchase a lithograph of Garber's **Green Pastures** with proceeds going toward purchasing native plants for DPC through the Earth Care Team. Visit www.dtownnpc.org/mmgf to learn more about all the products.



Community Meal. If you'd like to get involved in this month's Meal, which happens at 12 noon on **December 21**, just click bit.ly/DPC-CM to sign up to volunteer—or just plan to stop by for lunch!

Monthly Food Drive. In October we delivered **666 pounds** of food and care items to the Doylestown Pantry. Thank you for helping our neighbors—the next collection occurs Sunday, **December 21**.

Caring For Friends Meal Packing will take place on Tuesday, **December 23** at 9:30 am in the Andrews Hall kitchen. Keep watch for the sign up link!

CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

Looking Back

WEDNESDAY CLUB, CWT+ & THIER FAMILIES AT THE COMMUNITY MEAL!



SUNSHINE SINGERS SANG IN WORSHIP NOVEMBER 16.



FRIENDSGIVING FAMILY FELLOWSHIP NOVEMBER 19.

FIRST READING OF THE CHRISTMAS PAGEANT SCRIPT.



What's coming up

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL, CWT & CWT+ WILL ALL BE FOCUSING ON ADVENT THROUGHOUT DECEMBER.



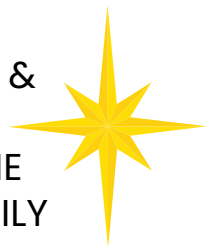
WEDNESDAY CLUB CHRISTMAS PARTY WITH WHITE ELEPHANT GIFT EXCHANGE DECEMBER 3.



CAROLING TO HOMEBOUND MEMBERS DECEMBER 7.



SUNSHINE SINGERS, CELEBRATION CHOIR & WEDNESDAY CLUB PARTICIPATING IN THE CHRISTMAS EVE FAMILY SERVICE & PAGEANT.



YOUTH MINISTRIES



What We've Been Up To

Youth Choir amazed everyone in November 16 worship with their ringing & singing.



Confirmation budgeted a week's worth of meals & enjoyed a field trip to the grocery store.

Five adults & 14 youth bonded & strengthened their faith on the fall retreat to Camp Johnsonburg.



What's Coming Up

Caroling to homebound residents after worship on December 7 wearing their Christmas best!



December 14 is the Youth Choir & Element Youth Group...

Christmas
PARTY

Register TODAY!



Ministry in Motion!

During November's Community Meal, Pastor Mac led a service of remembrance in recognition of lives lost and Hunger & Homelessness Awareness Week.



The Matthew 25 Subcommittee sponsored a bus trip with our friends from Second Baptist Church of Doylestown to visit Mother Bethel AME Church, mother church of the nation's first black denomination, and the African American Museum in Philadelphia.



Illustrator Lee Harper gave kids and adults a wonderful presentation about his life and career and led an interactive turkey drawing activity as a perfect way to get excited for Thanksgiving! His visit was sponsored by the Library Subcommittee.



Be a bridge for Christ and a beacon of His love

