



THE MISSION BELL

CARMICHAEL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

December 2021-January 2022

Volume LXI Number 11

Deacons Christmas Gift Ministry

by Terry Sakuda

As is our tradition, we are continuing to take part in the annual Carmichael Presbyterian Deacons' Christmas Gift Ministry. This year will be slightly different than 2020, but we continue to ensure that families in our community will have an incredibly happy Christmas. The Board of Deacons will purchase a \$60

grocery store gift card for each family so they may enjoy a

children 12 and older, sign up to purchase a \$40 gift card for clothing and/or a \$40 gift card for school supplies or other items of their choice. For children under 12, sign up to purchase clothing and a personal or toy item. Additionally, you can sign up to purchase a \$40 gift card for each adult family member.

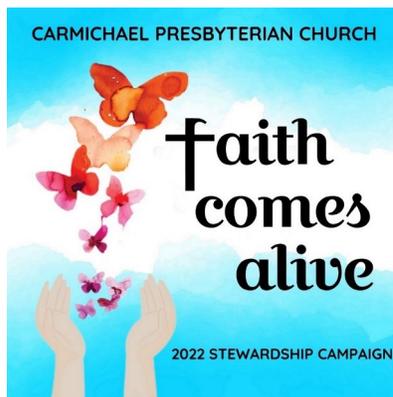
This ministry has been a longstanding
(Continued on page 5)



Christmas dinner of their choosing. For

Faith Comes Alive 2022 Stewardship Campaign

Resilience. That pretty much sums up 2021. The word resilience implies hope, faith, and possibilities. It is the ability to recover quickly from difficulties and the willingness to change or compromise. At Carmichael Presbyterian Church (CPC) we demonstrated our re-



silience in 2021. Even as the pandemic brought unprecedented-

ed challenges, our church adapted and continued to live out our mission statement. The pastors, staff, and members were resilient and thoughtful to create new, safe ways to welcome all, nurture relationships, grow in faith together and

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Pastor Keith L. DeVries Writes:

"O Lord, How Much Longer?"

"O Lord, how much longer?" The lament of the season of Advent rings strangely familiar as this worldwide pandemic extends into yet another holiday season.

As those who waited for Messiah long ago, we yearn for God to come and set the world right, to restore us and all of God's creation, to vindicate the righteous, and return us to some sense of

normalcy. *"O Lord, how much longer must we wait?"* While those cries resonate with us as we wait for the pandemic to cease and health and wholeness to return, we often find our hope fading as we hear medical experts predicting winter surges and the diminishing efficacy of the vaccine. *"O Lord, how much longer?"*

The cold, harsh reality in the daily slog of life is that we will encounter detours and

roadblocks every way we turn which often mute our hopeful expectation. We care for fragile children and aging parents, confront terminal illness, deal

than that – it not only affirms Christ's coming in the past but anticipates Jesus' return in the future. This duality of Advent permeates the season as we

declare that Christ has come, Christ is here, and Christ will come again in glory. This joyous sense of expectation fills our lives with a hope that cannot be contained – not even by a years-long pandemic. Advent is always looking forward to health and wholeness for all of God's children, the restoration of God's good creation, and justice and mercy for all.

As we enter this season of Advent – maybe with gladness, maybe with weariness, we do so with gratitude for the inbreaking of God's incarnate love

into our history, and with hope in the promised consummation of that history when God will set the world right.

I wish you a blessed Advent and very Merry Christmas with the words of my favorite poet, Ann Weems, from her book, *"Kneeling in Bethlehem."*

Blessings of hope, peace, joy and love to you all,

Pastor Keith

*The church is Advent.
The unwrapping of God's greatest gift is near,
Advent – coming.
God will take away the tinsel
and decorate our human hearts in hope
so that Christians can sit laughing in the
rain,
knowing that the Lord is going to shine in
upon their being.
For no matter how long the darkness,
God will send the Light.
In spite of cursing and violence and the
massacring of human dignity,
we will dance in the streets of Bethlehem,
for He will be born!*

~Ann Weems "Kneeling in Bethlehem"

with physical limitations, and the continuing toll of the pandemic hovers all around us.

"O Lord, how much longer?"

And yet, the season of Advent still comes. Marked by anticipation, preparation, and longing for the arrival of God's love incarnate, we spend weeks getting ready for the joyous celebration of Christ's coming into our world as a baby born in a manger. But Advent is so much more

... Faith Comes Alive ...

connect with and serve our community and the world. As the year comes to an end, we saw great progress as the church returned to many of the activities from the “before times.”

Here are a few recent examples of CPC’s ability to spring back to some familiar activities:

- In-person Sunday School, and Coffee Fellowship
- Youth Group hanging out together in their usual space upstairs at the church
- Supper on Saturday with social distancing
- Family Advent Night
- Alternative Gift Market in McMillen Hall
- Gathering for worship again in the Sanctuary with a hybrid service – and a working HVAC system!

In 2021 we were good stewards of God’s gifts at CPC. A major milestone in the 2022 Stewardship Campaign was Commitment Sunday on November 7, 2021. On that day we pledged our financial resources to support the ministry and mission activities of this congregation for the upcoming year in the Sanctuary. We did so with joy and gratitude for what God has given each of us and the congrega-

tion as a whole. And God has given this congregation so much!

If you submitted your 2022 pledge already, thank you for your faithful giving to support all the ministries of CPC. If you have not had a chance to complete your pledge, it is never too late to do so. Take a moment to complete your pledge online or fill out a pa-



In-person youth group meetings are one of the activities recently resuming at CPC.

per pledge card and mail it to the church office. Or, just give **Paul Shultz** a call at 916-486-9081, ext. 205, or e-mail him at paul@carmichaelpres.org and he will happily take your 2022 pledge. Remember that no contribution is too small – we are all faithful stewards of CPC.

Thank you to the supportive members of the 2022 Stewardship Committee. The team included **Allison Cagley**, **Lynette Ledesma**, and **Patty Peterson**. Each member provided creative ideas and gave of their time to make this year’s campaign a success. **Laura Janik** provided unwavering leadership to the team as the Committee Chair. **Avonlee Janik** contributed her excellent videography skills to

the campaign. Of course, the team was counseled and guided by **Pastor Keith** and **Paul Shultz** provided financial advice. Thanks are in order for assistance in the office from **Julie Ueltzen** and **Thelma Wever**. And, a big thank you to **Karen Gray** who makes all things possible!

2021 was indeed an unprecedented year for the world. CPC was resilient, adapting to the changing environment with creativity and grace. Many of us are glad that 2021 is just about in the rearview mirror. The pandemic forced a host of changes to how we live and work. But as the outbreak recedes in the not-too-distant future, we can expect older, more familiar ways of doing things to return. We look forward to a more ordinary year in 2022. With your stewardship support, we will focus on our mission and ministry efforts and continue to serve God and our community. Again, thank you to each one of you for your faithful and generous support of our congregation as our Faith Comes Alive.

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From Pastor Ivan N. Herman: "Peace Fractals"

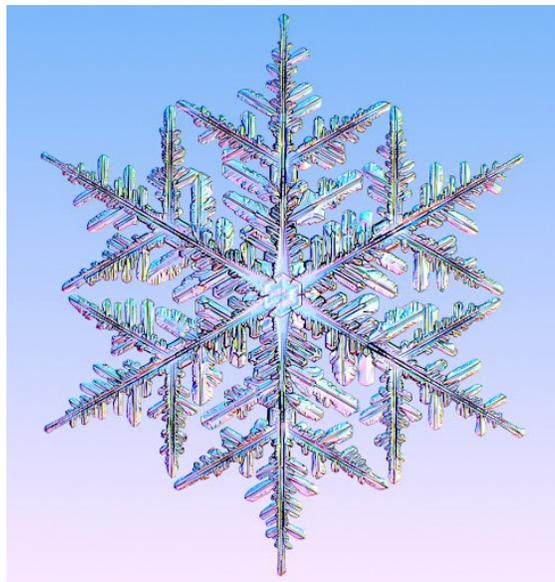
*"My power flurries through the air into the ground.
My soul is spiraling in frozen fractals all around.
And one thought crystallizes like an icy blast-
I'm never going back; the past is in the past!"*
- Elsa, Frozen

What is a fractal, you ask? Merriam Webster defines it as "any of various extremely irregular curves or shapes for which any suitably chosen part is similar in shape to a given larger or smaller part when magnified or reduced to the same size." Like a snowflake or the unfurling spiral of a fern frond, tiny bits of the fractal can look exactly the same as a whole.

The pattern isn't just a geometry principle, it also reveals the nature of our lives together. Author, abolitionist, justice-doula, adrienne maree brown writes: "Small is all. How we are at the small scale is how we are at the large scale. The patterns of the universe repeat at scale. What we practice at the small scale sets the patterns for the whole system. I am a cell-sized unit of the human organism, and I have to use my life to leverage a shift in the system by how I am, as much as with the things I do."

Contemplatives of many

traditions have explored this relationship between self, the larger systems in which we live, and our relationship with the divine mystery. Christian contemplative Thomas Merton said "our discovery of God is, in a way, God's discovery of us... We become contemplatives when God discovers himself in us."



Gandhi expressed a similar thought when he said, "We but mirror the world. All the tendencies present in the outer world are to be found in the world of our body. If we could change ourselves, the tendencies in the world would also change. As a [person] changes [their own nature, so does the attitude of the world change towards [them.] This is the divine mystery supreme. A wonderful thing it is and the source of our happiness. We need not wait to see what others do."

During the seasons of Advent and Christmas we anticipate and celebrate the coming of the Prince of Peace. The Christmas story is about the radical love of God invading our gritty, messy world. The Word becomes flesh---the very same flesh that we live in---so that peace may inhabit us and our world. The peace he brings is revealed in us and how we are peaceful in our relationships with others and peaceful with ourselves. When we are at peace within ourselves and when we are at peace with those who are closest to us, we set the pattern for the whole system. "Small is all."

Hebrews 12:14 encourages us, "Pursue the goal of peace along with everyone—and holiness as well, because no one will see the Lord without it." (CEB) The children's voices sing in Jill Jackson-Miller and Sy Miller's 1995 hymn, "Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me."

**California International
Marathon**

Sunday, December 5

will close much of

Fair Oaks Blvd

throughout the morning.

Please plan accordingly for worship!

For detailed road closure information,
go to:

<https://runsra.org/california-international-marathon/course-information/>

... Christmas Gift Ministry ...

(Continued from page 1)

tradition within CPC, and we are thankful that we can continue with this wonderful program.

How to Participate:

Sign Up. Go to our sign up website (<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080c49aba62fa2fa7-2021>) Choose a slot or two (or six! or more!) There are slots for each family member and a slot for their Christmas meal.

Send payment. Bring your donation to the church office or send it to CPC via mail to 5645 Marconi Avenue, Carmichael, CA 95608. Be sure to

note "Deacons' Christmas" on your check or envelope. You may also contribute online at <https://www.carmichaelpres.org/giving/donate/> Again, please note that your contribution is for Deacons' Gift Ministry or call Paul Shultz (916-486-9081 ext. 205) to make sure the money is allocated properly.

Purchase Gifts: If you sign up to purchase gifts or gift cards, please bring your wrapped gift to CPC on or before Sunday, December 5.

We look forward to another blessed Christmas season serving families in our area.

In Our CPC Family



Please lift up in prayer these members of our church family who have recently lost loved ones:

- † **Barbara Sebastian** and family on the loss of her husband, **Ed Sebastian**, on October 8.
- † **Bud & Karen Banker** and family on the loss of Bud's sister, **Bonnie Carpenter**, on October 12.
- † **Christine Randall-Walker** and family on the loss of her father on October 23.
- † **Bud & Karen Banker** and family on the loss of Bud's sister, **Bonnie Carpenter**, on October 12.
- † **Paul Buehler** and family on the loss of his brother, **Ron Buehler**, on November 8.
- † **Carol Dobler** and family on the loss of her husband, **Ron Dobler**, on November 12.

Alternative Gift Market Report



This year the Mission Division decided to expand the Alternative Gift Market from an in-church-only event to a community outreach event. We advertised in the *Inside Arden* newspaper and made new signage for the front of the church to encourage our neighbors to come and shop. The result was an extremely successful event that raised *more than \$19,000*. All of this money will either go directly to the agencies who participated in the event or to the individual artisans who made the fair-trade items you purchased. Thank you to each of you who came, browsed, and made purchases.

Contribution Envelopes



Beginning in 2022, we will be changing contribution envelope numbers to make more efficient use of the boxes we send out. Members with envelope numbers between 301 and 350 will receive new numbers below 300 in December. Questions? Contact Paul Shultz at 916-486-9081 or paul@carmichaelpres.org. Thank you for understanding.

Sharing God's Love

by Misty Dunn, Stephen Minister/Leader

Christmas, of course, is a time of love – God's love for us demonstrated by the birth and ministry of Jesus. When we show love for others by our loving actions, we are reflecting God's unconditional love. In 1 John 4:12, we're reminded, "No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is perfected in us."

One way that CPC shows love for others is through the Stephen Ministry program. Stephen Ministers are caring, Christian friends, ready to listen, care for and show God's love one-to-one to help others through whatever difficult time they are facing.

How do *we* as Christians show God's love for others at this time (and indeed, all year)? We show it by our presence, our willingness to be there for someone, to listen, and sometimes, to extend a helping hand to someone in need.

When you know someone is struggling during the holidays, here are some simple ways you can make a big difference:

Offer to help in specific ways. Try to anticipate needs and ways you can help. For example, you might ask, "May I

bring you dinner one night this week?" Or offer to rake the lawn, walk the dog, etc., or "Can I help put out the Christmas lights?" Remember, however, to follow the person's lead and not just impose your help.

Help people pace themselves. The holidays are busy, and those who are hurting may need help or permission to



slow down or do less than they ordinarily would. Let people know it's okay to conserve energy, take breaks, and pick which activities and traditions to take part in.

Ask people, "How are you managing?" (This question, instead of asking "How are you?" invites conversation rather than the typical answer, "Fine," which probably isn't really accurate.) During the busyness of the holidays, it can be easy to just interact with people on a surface level. Finding a good time to ask hurting people how they're *really* doing – and then listening – is a powerful way to

care.

Validate feelings. When people do open up and share, listen and then show that you believe them and accept their feelings. Letting people know it's okay to feel whatever they're feeling can provide a lot of comfort!

By relating in these ways, you can help hurting people find comfort and hope in a difficult time.

So, yes, we like to think of the holidays as being a wonderfully enjoyable time where we show others how much we love them. However, hurts, struggles, crises, and problems don't take a vacation. Many times challenging situations seem even worse during the holidays because everyone else seems to be enjoying life while you may be struggling. If you are experiencing a difficult time --emotionally, spiritually, or in a relationship--you don't have to suffer alone. Remember Stephen Ministers are available to help you through the tough times. It's free. It's confidential. And it will make a difference in your life!

If you know anyone who might benefit from a Stephen Minister, share with them about what Stephen Ministry could offer them. For information about Stephen Ministry, contact one of the Stephen

(Continued on page 7)

Opportunity Knocks

by Sharon MacLean, Engagement Coordinator

Hello CPC members and friends! We just concluded our annual stewardship campaign, and as a part of our annual pledge, we are asked not just to pledge to support our church financially, but also to give of our time and talents as we are able, to support the continuing mission and ministries at CPC. We are blessed to have so many wonderful ministries and opportunities for involvement, but they need willing people to give of their time and talents to help them run.

With the holidays upon us, there are many opportunities for you to get connected. And 2022 will bring even more. Below is a list of some of our current and upcoming opportunities. *If you're interested and want more details, please reach out to me; I will fill you in and get you connected.*

- **Deacons:** Pantry Coordinator (McMillen Kitchen) – 2-4 times per month. Check and replenish supplies as needed (church reimburses); Coffee Fellowship Servers after worship
- **Education/Youth:** Sunday School Teachers; Coordinators for Stepping Stones Program; and Playground Maintenance Crew



- **Food Closet:** AM, PM and Saturday shifts; food pick-up drivers; phone bank; holiday distribution.
- **Membership & Outreach:** Join us for Family Advent Night 12/4 5-7PM
 - **Mission:** Weekly shower ministries; weekly homeless lunches; monthly SOS meal.
 - **Building & Grounds:** Discuss and prioritize campus needs; help with campus projects and upkeep.
- **Fellowship & Nurture:** Health Ministries Committee needs medical and mental health professionals; fellowship with a Mariners group; Presbyterian Women (PW) Bible Study; Women's Bible Study small groups (day or evening); Men's prayer breakfast (Zoom); Prayer Shawl Ministries.
- **Worship:** Lay Leaders, Coffee Fellowship Servers and sharing your Faith Stories
- **Nominating Committee:** Lay people to serve on various divisions and committees.
- **HART (Homeless Assistance Resource Team):** Winter Respite for homeless neighbors – Jan. 8, 15, 22, 29 – 9:00am-1:00pm. Prepare breakfast, supervise showers, be present.
- **Things to look forward to in 2022:** upcoming Stephen Ministry training classes; choir (when it starts up again); Family Promise.

I will periodically have an "Opportunity Knocks" sign-up table after worship with current opportunities for involvement. Please stop by and say hi and see where you might fit in – for serving the church and community or to nurture your faith. Feel free to send me an email at bruce.sharonmac@gmail.com or give me a call/text. I'm happy to help you find a place to get involved and connect you with any of the leaders of specific ministries.

... Sharing God's Love ...

(Continued from page 6)

Leaders: **Kelly Holland, Mary Thomas, John Wallace, or Misty Dunn.**

And may God, in His great love and compassion, be present with you in ways that touch your heart and show His ever-present love.

Mission Matters

by Barbara Farley & Brenda Mock

WINTER RESPITE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Carmichael HART (Homeless Assistance Resource Team) will be hosting Winter Respite days for our homeless neighbors in Carmichael here at Carmichael Presbyterian Church in January and February. CPC will be hosting four of these days in January - Saturdays January 8, 15, 22, and 29. Each day will need six to eight people to help prepare a breakfast, supervise use of our showers, and just be present with our guests. The Respite will be open from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. each Saturday. It would be great if you could volunteer for the whole shift from 8:30 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.. Or you can volunteer from 8:30 to 11:00 a.m. or 11:00 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. You can sign up after worship on Sundays or call **Barbara Farley** or **Bill Dunn**.

CPC FOOD CLOSET UPDATE

The Mission Division and the Food Closet Task Force send a big "End of the Year Thank You" to all of the 130 volunteers who work each month. To the congregation and community that so generously donate groceries, egg

cartons, bags and financial assistance. To Walmart, Safeway, Grocery Outlet and Smart & Final who so generously keep our pantry shelves filled. The Food Closet is very alive and well because of all of you!



We are always busy, because there are always neighbors that are suffering from food scarcities. It makes my heart feel good

when a mom or dad drives up with two little kids in the back seat who get so excited when they see we are giving them four or five bags of groceries and there is a cart for them to choose a package of cookies or cupcakes from.

During the week before Thanksgiving, we were able to serve all 125 families that came by with a full Thanksgiving Dinner plus their regular bags.

After many meetings of the Food Closet Task Force and a survey of our guests and volunteers the committee made the decision to make some changes in how we manage the Closet. In October we held a two hour training in McMillen Hall for all volunteers. About fifty wonderful folks turned up to give their opinions on

how we could do better. In the coming months you will be hearing about new procurers as they get rolled out. Please bear with us as we work out all the details. It's not easy to change, but it must come.

The exciting information this month is that the walk in refrigerator/freezer has arrived from New Jersey and hopefully will be installed in the warehouse before the first of the year. This will allow the volunteers a quicker and better way to keep track of our food donations.

The Food Closet always needs your help!

FIRST- we need volunteers in the afternoon to help load bags of groceries into guest's cars.

SECOND-We could use a driver to help one morning a week, either at 7:30 if you are an early bird or are employed or at 10:30 to drive to Walmart.

THIRD-If you are going to the grocery store and want to buy something extra, we need cereal, pasta sauce and apple sauce or canned fruit.

May the Blessings of the Holiday be with you and your families.

Scuttlebutt

News from CPC's Mariner Ships

Clipper Ship

Skippers: Charleen Lee and Thelma Wever

lene St. Clair, and Historians Hal and Sharleen Millering. Then it was time for dessert

ship, please contact our Lookout **Sharlene St. Clair**.

Companionship

Skippers: Hal & Sharleen Millering

On November 6 the Companionship met in the Gathering Place for Soup Night: 5 delicious soups provided by **Dave Studer, Tim Farley, Bud Banker, Howard Willey, and Hal Miller-**

ing. We sampled

beef, turkey, chili, and pasta varieties, all delicious, and recipes were requested! Following dinner we discussed next year's calendar and unanimously elected our new officers for 2022: Skippers **Dave and Nancy Studer**, First Mates

Tim and Barbara Farley, Logkeeper **Chris Beeby**, Pursuer **Sally Willey**, Chaplain **Marti Wallace**, Lookout **Shar-**



Companionship enjoyed a "soup-er" dinner at their November meeting.

and more visiting!

Our next event will be Christmas caroling on December 4. If you'd like to visit our

Friendship

Skipper: Monica Dahlberg

Holy Scow

Skippers: Paul & Lynn Shultz

Lifeboat

Skipper: Anne Parker

Nautilus

Skippers: Emily Moulton, Carol Misquez, and Jane Swenson

Skipjacks

Skipper: Margo Scandella

On Friday evening, November 5, Skipper **Margo Scandella** invited Rich Desmond, District 3 Sacramento

County Supervisor to speak to the ship regarding current issues affecting the

county. County supervisors are the governing body of the

(Continued on page 10)



... More Scuttlebutt ...

(Continued from page 9)
county, which approves the county budget, appropriates funds, adopts ordi-



Skipjacks welcomed County Supervisor **Rich Desmond** to speak at their November meeting.

nances, establishes programs, such as, community planning, youth commission, adult and aging commission, and levies tax, when necessary, along with many other duties. Supervisors are non-partisan. With Sacramento County having five supervisors, Supervisor Desmond represents approximately 300,000 citizens from North Highlands to Fair Oaks, to Cordova and Carmichael, to College Glen/Campus Commons, and Arden Arcade.

Supervisor Desmond is a fifth generation Sacramentan spending most of his life in service to our state, county, and local community. By serving on various local committees over the decades, Mr. Desmond related firsthand to many issues concerning District 3, such as, the homeless



Supervisor Desmond related that providing housing for

encampments, the drug and fentanyl epidemic in our community, and potholed neighborhood roads needing attention.

the homeless is a great step forward but additional steps to treat the mental and physical needs of the homeless also need attention. Methamphetamine and drug use among the homeless are estimated at 70%. The homeless need help, and they also need accountability.

Skipjacks thoroughly enjoyed Mr. Desmond's visit and group discussion and wish him well in his governance of Sacramento County.

Thanks to **Bep Van der Mik, Carolyn Biggers, and Skipper Margo Scandella** for the cookies, cake, brownies, and coffee that followed. Our next port of call will be Jackson Catering on December 3 at 6:30 pm.

2022 MISSION BELL DEADLINES

10TH OF EACH MONTH FOR THE FOLLOWING MONTH'S ISSUE

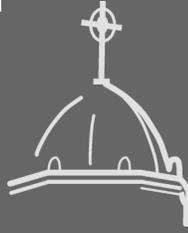


Submit articles to: Amy Lerseth, *Mission Bell* Editor at amylerseth@buzzoates.com

Our Mission

Responding to God's love through Jesus Christ, we:

- *Welcome all*
- *Nurture relationships*
- *Grow in faith together*
- *Connect with and serve our community and the world*



Contact Us



by phone:

CPC Office	916-486-9081
Office after-hours line	916-486-1406
Health Ministry	916-486-0604
Stephen Ministry	916-486-0604
Food Closet	916-483-9232
Fax	916-486-3771

To leave a voice mail message for a staff person when the office is closed, dial 916-486-9081. When the machine answers your call, dial the person's extension.

Keith DeVries	203	Paul Shultz	205
Ivan Herman	202	Karen Gray	201
Julie Ueltzen	200	Lisa Torgerson	204
Randy Benfield	208	Ron Morris	206

via e-mail:

Keith DeVries	keith@carmichaelpres.org
Ivan Herman	ivan@carmichaelpres.org
Randy Benfield	randy@carmichaelpres.org
Julie Ueltzen	carmichaelpres@gmail.com
Karen Gray	karen@carmichaelpres.org
Paul Shultz	paul@carmichaelpres.org
Ron Morris	ron@carmichaelpres.org
Lisa Torgerson	lisa@carmichaelpres.org

Or link to email through our website: www.carmichaelpres.org

Our CPC Staff

Remembering that the members of Carmichael Presbyterian Church are the ministers and missionaries of our faith community, our Pastoral Staff and Support Team provide leadership and specialized ministries.

The Rev. Keith L. DeVries

The Rev. Ivan N. Herman

Randy Benfield,
Director of Music

Trina Spivack,
Accompanist

Tammy Sigl,
Interim Bell Choir Director

Lisa Torgerson,
Children's Ministry Director

Paul & Mary Camozzi,
Childcare Providers

Karen Gray,
Pastors' Secretary

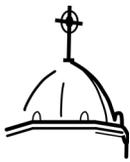
Julie Ueltzen,
Church Secretary

Paul Shultz,
Financial Administrator

Ron Morris,
Maintenance Manager

Christian Bolen,
Custodian

Lisa Levering,
Wedding Coordinator



CARMICHAEL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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TIME VALUE MAIL

Sunday Worship & More

In-Person Sunday School & Coffee Fellowship 9:00 a.m.

Children 3 years through 12th grade learn more about God's love during Sunday School. Masks are required and each family has their own set of supplies.

All others are invited to visit and enjoy a cup of coffee during coffee fellowship in McMillen Hall before and after worship services.



In-Person & Live Stream Worship 10:00 a.m.

A blend of traditional and contemporary music styles provide an opportunity to bring new life to the Word. Go to <https://www.youtube.com/c/carmichaelpres> or search for "carmichaelpres" on the YouTube app or your Smart TV. Plus, watch recordings of past worship services any time.

