

January 2022

Church Staff

Pastor

Rev. Kenneth E. Kovacs, Ph.D.

Associate Pastor

Rev. Dorothy L. Boulton, M.Div.

Director of Music

Greg Knauf, D.M.A.

Organist

Christopher Keenan, D.M.A.

Communications Consultant and Messenger Editor

Lisa Roca

Membership Secretary

Peggy Carr

Bookkeeper

Virginia Daiger

Sexton

Bernard Lawson

Child Care Center Director

Michelle Hepner

Child Care Center Office Manager

Ashley Graham



At the Threshold of the Year

By Kenneth Kovacs

"Hope smiles from the threshold of the year to come, whispering, 'Will it be happier.'" I came across these words of Alfred Lord Tennyson recently and they gave me pause. I had to read the sentence several times. Something didn't make sense. Something was odd or missing. It didn't seem all that hopeful. And that's when it hit me. I read it wrong. Here's what is actually says, "Hope smiles from the threshold of the year to come, whispering, 'It will be happier.'" Ah! This word reversal is a window into how I'm really feeling as we cross the threshold from 2021 to 2022.

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At the Threshold of the Year

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These are challenging, difficult times. It's been an exhausting year. Change is all around us—in our lives, families, communities, and the church. It will feel very different come January without Shirley Winters in the church office. Just when we were settling into a new normal, the latest COVID-19 surge is upending everything. Many are bracing for what we will face in January. In Roman mythology, Janus, namesake of January, was the god of gates, the god of beginnings and transitions. Janus was depicted with two faces; one looks backward and the other forward.

Despite my trepidations, I generally like threshold places. And I love this reflection by John O' Donohue — poet, priest, gifted writer who had a beautiful soul— on the gift and promise of being in between; from his remarkable book *To Bless the Space Between Us* (2008). "At any time," he writes, "you can ask yourself: At which threshold am I now standing? At this time in my life, what am I leaving? Where am I about to enter? What is preventing me from crossing my next threshold? What gift would enable me to do it? A threshold is not a simple boundary; it is a frontier that divides two different territories, rhythms, and atmospheres. Indeed, it is a lovely testimony to the fullness and integrity of an experience or stage of life that it intensifies toward the end into a real frontier that cannot be crossed without the heart being passionately engaged and woken up. At this

threshold a great complexity of emotion comes alive: confusion, fear, excitement, sadness, hope. This is one of the reasons such vital crossings were always clothed in ritual. It is wise in your own life to be able to recognize and acknowledge the key thresholds: to take your time; to feel all the varieties of presence that accrue there; to listen inward with complete attention until you hear the inner voice calling you forward. The time has come to cross."

Perhaps this is why I'm drawn to the European tradition of chalking doorways on the Feast of Epiphany (January 6), a custom which might have originated with Christians from Alexandria in the third century. Next year, thresholds will be chalked: 20 + C + M + B + 22. The letters C, M, B have two meanings. First, they represent the traditional names of the Magi (Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar), which emerged in the sixth century. The initials "C, M, B" are also an abbreviation for the Latin words *Christus Mansionem Benedicat*, "May Christ Bless this Home." The "+" signs represent the cross, and the numbers to the left and right are the year. It's a way to celebrate the occasion of the Epiphany and to ask God's blessing on our lives, our homes, and those who visit our homes throughout the new year. The time has come to cross.

THURSDAY MORNING

Bible Study

By Kenneth Kovacs

TMBS returns on January 13 at 10:30 a.m. We won't be able to meet in person at this time, so it's back to Zoom. Join us! Instead of focusing on a particular book of the Bible, our study will explore a particular theme that runs through the New Testament: discipleship. What does it mean to be a follower of Christ? What does it mean for us today to say we are Christ's disciples or students? What exactly is the Christian life? Our text will be Rowan Williams' beautiful book *Being Disciples: Essentials of the Christian Life* (Eerdmans 2014). The cost is \$10. It's available on Kindle for \$3.99!

EDUCATION

News

In the interest of safety, we will not have any scheduled in-person children or youth activities this month. Please watch your emails for any updates. — The Christian Education Committee

WORSHIP ONLINE

for January 2022

Due to the rapid spread of the Omicron variant and the high number of covid cases in Maryland, Session has made the decision to move worship to *online only* during the month of January, 2022. While we won't be gathering in person, we will certainly trust the Spirit to unite our hearts and minds as we worship together to the glory of God.

Please watch for the newsletter which is published at the end of each week. A copy of the Order of Worship is always included, as well as information about how to access the service online. Thank you for your compassion for one another during this time. Please keep those in our congregation and community who are ill in your prayers. Take care and stay safe.

CHRISTMAS

EVE Services

Our 4 p.m. Family Christmas Eve service held outdoors under our pavilion on Friday, December 24, 2021, as well as our evening Candlelight. "All is calm, all is bright."



SESSION MEETING Highlights from December

By David Hutton

Your Session continues to meet monthly and is using Zoom to meet online in view of the coronavirus pandemic restrictions. Following are highlights from the Session meeting on December 1, 2021.

- The Session received a proposal from the Board of Trustees to dissolve the Trustees as a separate board and fold their functions into a committee of Session. Members of this “Facilities and Grounds” committee (actual name to be determined) could be unelected members of the congregation at-large and not serve fixed terms. Session will be considering this proposal going forward. To be enacted it will require a Bylaws change and a vote of the congregation.
- The Call for the Annual Meeting of the Congregation was approved by Session. The meeting will be held following worship on Sunday, January 30, 2022.
- The Finance Committee reported that a budget deficit remains, and if members will bring their pledges and contributions up to date before the end of the year a balanced budget can be expected. Committee chairs and others with charge of budget accounts are requested to submit their budget requests for 2022 to the Finance Committee as soon as possible.
- The Personnel Committee is in the process of writing the job description and advertising and interviewing candidates for the Office Administrator position, to be available after the retirement of Shirley Winters at the end of the year.
- The Mission Committee reported that the recent Catonsville food drive collected 2.37 tons of food in time for Thanksgiving. CPC also helped to support over 200 meals from Grace AME’s food pantry. Our “Christmas at Sea” appeal for the Seafarers Center has collected \$1,300 from our congregation, more than enough to fill their gift bags and leave some additional funds to donate to the Center.

Session recognizes the need to continually communicate with our membership, and we welcome your suggestions for communication exchange. Session member contact information is listed in the Church Directory, so it is easier than ever to communicate directly with your church leaders. Take a few minutes to send a message to a Session member, the pastors or the church office, and let us know what you think. We want to hear from you!

WESTSIDE MEN’S SHELTER Clothing Drive

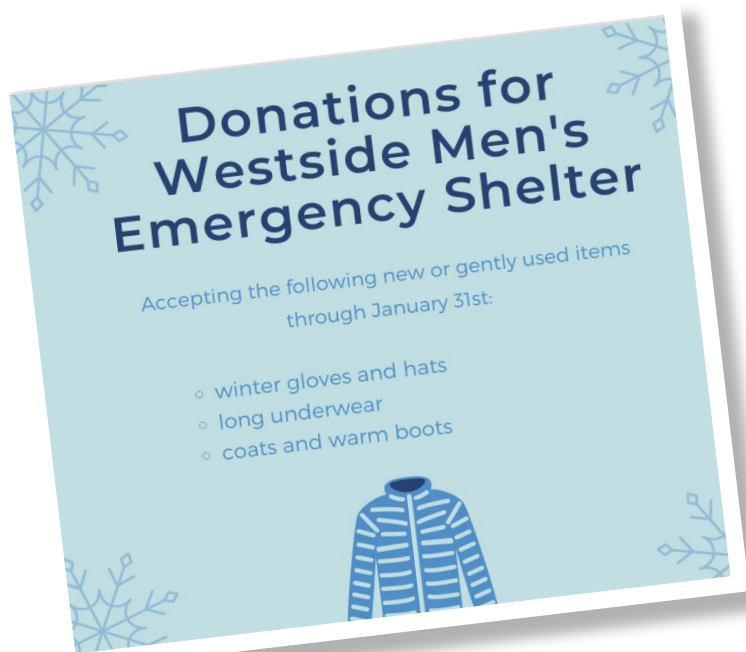
By Charre Symms

The deacons are again collecting winter clothing for the Westside Men’s Shelter. They are in need of new or gently used coats, hats, gloves, long underwear, and warm boots. Collection bins in the sanctuary and on the church house porch are available for donations through January 31, 2022. One of the deacons will deliver the donations each week to the shelter. Thank you for your support!

WAYS TO GIVE

Drop off items in the collection bins. Send a check to CPC and designate it for the Westside Men’s Shelter. Make a gift online:

<https://onrealm.org/CatonsvillePres/-/form/give/Christmas2021>



AFGHAN REFUGEES

By Susan Krehbiel

The evacuation of Afghan allies that started in August continues. About 40,000 have already arrived into communities across the U.S., including several hundred in Baltimore. This Fall the CPC Mission Committee hosted two information sessions led by Susan Krehbiel, who is working both nationally and regionally to connect PCUSA congregations to welcome and accompany these new Afghan neighbors. You can watch a recording of the first information session here:

<https://youtu.be/nJQloy1dsKA>

There are many ways for CPC members and friends to get involved, but first we need someone to coordinate and pull together a team. We invite you to fill out this simple survey that outlines that different ways for you to get involved. We have heard from 15 people so far and we would love to hear from you. [Click here for the survey.](#)

If you feel called to leading a CPC Welcome Team or have questions about what it would entail, feel free to contact Susan Krehbiel at susankr79@gmail.com. This month the Mission Committee voted to commit \$10,000 to the CPC We Choose Welcome Fund. You can contribute to this fund by check to CPC with a memo “We Choose Welcome” or on-line at:

<https://onrealm.org/CatonsvillePres/-/form/give/now>

McKIM Gifts

By Dorothy Boulton

Many thanks for your generosity in providing such an abundance of gifts for the McKim Community Center’s annual Christmas party. The staff and children extend their joyous appreciation.

Dwight Warren (left) with new McKim executive director Garfield Thompson. Dwight, who is now retiring, has served as executive director since 1975. For information on McKim’s programs—as it celebrates 200 years in East Baltimore!—please visit their website at <https://mckimcenter.org>.



... FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS?

Esther 4:14B

By Charre Symms

I became a Stephen Minister about 15 years ago in my church in California. It was one of the greatest blessings in my life to have the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of three women who were experiencing recovery from a divorce, anticipating the death of a father, and facing a fatal illness. The excellent training and continuing support from other Stephen Ministers were instrumental in helping me provide appropriate care to my care receivers. Recognizing that it wasn't my job to fix things but simply to provide care and let God provide the cure freed me from the fear of failure or doing something wrong.

As a member of CPC, I often thought we would benefit from a Stephen Ministry program, but COVID brought that need to the forefront of my mind. I've been overwhelmed by the support of our pastors, deacons, and session in this journey that started several months ago. But the journey is just beginning. It will still be several months before we have trained Stephen Ministers to provide care to those in our congregation and community who are experiencing critical life challenges.

Are you here "for such a time as this?" Do you feel called to help someone who needs you to walk beside them while they work through a difficult or challenging time? If you are considering this awesome opportunity, reach out to one of our Stephen Leaders. They can provide you with more information and an application if you decide to move forward. Applications will be accepted through the end of January, followed by interviews of each applicant before a final decision is made by the applicant and leaders that this service is right for them at this time. Training is expected to begin in March or April to have a group of trained Stephen Leaders ready to serve others by the end of June 2022. Now is the time for you to make a decision. Please keep Stephen Ministry in your prayers as we move forward. You can find additional information at the brochure rack in the back of the sanctuary, at StephenMinistries.org, or by reaching out to one of our Stephen leaders.

STEPHEN MINISTRY LEADERS

Dorothy Boulton at dboulton@catonsvillepres.org

Reid Spearman at speareid@gmail.com

Charre Symms at csymms@sbcglobal.net

COFFEE WITH A Pastor

The months can be dreary in the new year and there's great comfort to be found in a warm and caring conversation. If you'd like to contact a pastor, please feel welcome to call Dorothy or Ken at the church office (410-747-6180). We're here for you. And don't forget – we have a Deacons' prayer line; choose the option when you call the church number; a deacon will contact you to offer a prayer and share a word of kindness.

SCOUT TREE Sales 2021

Thanks to CPC members and friends in the community who supported the Troop 306 Tree Sale during the past three weeks. The sale is now finished. Thanks you for your continued support and participation in this major fundraiser for our Scout Troop.

MISSION COMMITTEE NEWS

By Glenda K. Johnson

Thanks to members and friends of our congregation for the very successful fall completed. Please know you have made an impact on the lives of so many who need our help. Your generosity, support, and help have been much appreciated by your Mission Committee and the recipients of our gifts. Thanks to Lee Van Koten and Sid Turner for delivering our kits to New Windsor and our Seafarer gifts to the Center in Baltimore.

The 202 Church World Service (CWS) Hygiene kits were delivered to the New Windsor warehouse in late October. After our bills were finalized, we are very pleased to share the news that \$404 was sent to CWS Headquarters in Elkhart, IN for the shipping and handling fees of the kits. Church World Service is so grateful for your support for making hygiene kits this year. 200 kits is amazing, and will support some of the most vulnerable people here on the US border, and in places like Haiti. I hope we can make this an annual tradition for supporting those in need. We also provided a donation of \$1735.54 to be used as part of their ongoing Hygiene Kit fund.

Our Seafarers kits were completed on December 4 by a group of CPC volunteers. We were able to provide 52 kits and a financial donation of \$1002.70 for the Center. We have received a message from Rev. Mary Davisson, Director of the Center. In her message she asks, "Please share with the members of CPC our grateful thanks for the generous gift of 52 Christmas at Sea packages. For many crews, this is their second Christmas in a row with no prospect of shore leave and no opportunity to buy special holiday items. These gifts are especially meaningful this year. We are so grateful that you have chosen to support this ministry. Thanks and Christmas Blessings."



Catonsville Presbyterian Church

Our Financial Resources

Doing God's Work

Income as of
December 27, 2021 \$ 767,459

Expense as of
December 27, 2021 \$ -756,216

Total \$ 11,243

The Messenger

Our Mission

We seek to find and share God's calling for this community of faith through worship, fellowship and service.

Catonsville Presbyterian Church

1400 Frederick Road
Catonsville, MD 21228
(P) 410-747-6180, (F) 410-747-7263
www.catonsvillepres.org
[Facebook.com/catonsvillepres](https://www.facebook.com/catonsvillepres)
[Twitter.com/catonsvillepres](https://twitter.com/catonsvillepres)
www.instagram.com/catonsvillepres
Church Office Hours:
Tuesday-Friday, 8:30 a.m.– 4:30 p.m.
office@catonsvillepres.org

Annual Congregational Meeting on Zoom

The Annual Congregational Meeting of Catonsville Presbyterian Church will take place on Zoom following worship on Sunday, January 30, 2022. The purpose of this meeting is to receive the 2022 budget, approve the pastors' Terms of Call, and any other business that the congregation would like to discuss at this time.

Adult Ed Explores Stephen Ministry

By Charre Symms

Our Stephen Leaders invite you to participate in a meeting on January 25 at 7 p.m. on Zoom to explore how Stephen Ministry will enhance CPC's ability to provide care to our congregation and community. We will discuss the history of Stephen Ministry, how it works, and provide testimonials from Stephen Ministers and Care Receivers. This will be an interactive program; we encourage you to bring your questions and comments.

