



COLLENBROOK UNITED CHURCH LINK -N-TOWER



Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
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FROM THE PASTOR

When the wise men, or the Magi, found a tiny little baby after a long and hard journey they knew they had found someone very special. They didn't know at the time exactly who Jesus was, but they knew he was someone so significant that they brought some very special gifts to present to him. They also knew they must not tell King Herod where to find this little baby because Herod was a jealous, petty man who was afraid of being replaced as king. He had been told by the Magi that a king of the Jews had been born and was looking for him. So, after visiting and worshipping the baby Jesus, the Magi quietly left the region without a word to Herod. This is the epiphany: when we celebrate the revelation of God incarnate in this little baby Jesus.

The magi did not know who they would find after their long journey. In fact, they didn't even really know why they were so compelled to take this journey bearing gifts. All they knew was that it was something they had to do...and they did it. When they arrived, they found a baby whose parents were peasants. Not wealthy in the conventional sense of the word at all. The wise men also knew that Herod would stop at nothing to find the baby Jesus and destroy him. Isn't it interesting that the Magi brought gifts that would help finance this little family to disappear from the eyes of Herod? Isn't it amazing how God works in all this? Isn't it wonderful how these men thought they would find the "king of the Jews" but found God revealed in the baby Jesus instead?

So today does God reveal to us the presence of Jesus in our lives. Every time we look in the eyes of a child, there Jesus is; every time we look into the eyes of the homeless, there Jesus is; every time we look into the eyes of the disinfranchised, there Jesus is. In fact, every time we look into the eyes of any other human being, there Jesus is. We owe much to the Magi because without their blind faith to find this little baby bearing gifts, Herod may have found Jesus....

CALENDAR

Worship Opportunities:

Sundays 10:30am

January

- 8th Council/reports Due
- 19th Game Night Pizza
- 27th Annual Reports available
MOM meets

February

- 3rd Annual Meeting
- 9th Chinese Dinner

*Handbell Choir rehearsal every
Wednesday at 7pm.*

IMPORTANT!

If you have not turned in your 2019 pledge slips to Nancy, please do so ASAP. In order to have a realistic budget, we must know what we are starting with. You can either hand Nancy the slip or call (215.429.8216) or email (nkrody@temple.edu) her as well.

**COMMUNITY DINNER January 31st
5-7 PM**

Diaper Mountain: January Mission of the Month (MOM)

Our January 2019 Mission of the Month is Diaper Mountain. We, as a congregation, are going to build a Mountain of Diapers (new, unused, in a box diapers only). Once we build it, we will move the mountain donating the diapers to Community Action Agency of Delaware County, Inc. (CAADC). We have worked with CAADC before. They oversee two transitional housing sites, the Wesley House (The shelter in Chester Pa. has 17 rooms for families or single women. It is typically at full capacity of 70 people on any given day) and Family Management Center Shelter (also in Chester Pa. contains 10 rooms for homeless families and serves an average of 45 households (100+ individuals) each year. Both centers offer supportive services such as computer training, after school programs, health assessment etc. to help family transition to permanent housing solutions.

Families means diapers. Our goal is to fill their closets with boxes of diapers which will be used throughout the year to meet an important need.

HOW MISSION OF THE MONTH (MOM) WORKS

There is a podcast series Stuff You Should Know (SYSK). It picks a topic and does a “deep-dive” into it. The listener inevitably learns something they did not know e.g. Dr Seuss had no children and did not want any. (SYSK: Dr Seuss The Good, The Bad and the Ugly, Dec 27, 2018). Now that you have learned some useless information, let’s see if we can learn some useful information.

Each month Collenbrook asks you to donate your money to a worthy cause. How do we pick the causes? Can you have any impact? Are we sure the money goes to good causes?

Let’s start with the facts. We have 12 MOM charities each year. Six are fixed denominational charities, 1 is a themed charity and 5 are chosen by the congregation. Each year the following six denominational charities are featured:

February: Church World Services: Blankets +
April: One Great Hour of Sharing
August: Chester Eastside Charities
October: Crop Walk
November: Neighbors in Need
December: Retired Clergy (UCC and PCUSA)

These charities are a mix of local, national and international in scope. Each June the Mission of the Month is selected by Collenbrook’s Open and Affirming/More Light committee. Past June charities have been SAGE (LGBTQ Senior Care) and Valley Youth Crisis and tend to be very local in focus on the LGBTQ community.

Finally, five are congregational chosen charities. Each January there is an open Congregational meeting held after church on a Sunday where any member of the congregation can come, nominate a worthy charity, present a supporting case and vote to make it one of the five congregational charities supported during the year. Some of the charities that were member nominated and supported were Philadelphia Futures (supports first in family college applicants), Justice Rescue (all-animal Rescue service Woodlyn PA) and Marine Corp League Folsom Pa. (supports Veterans needing benefits).

All MOM charities are screened through Charity Navigator. We look for 501c organizations. We avoid large charities where the leaders are compensated in excess of \$200,000. We also want a Donation to Direct Services ratio greater than 80%. We do our best for smaller charities not on Charity Navigator. We do our best to ensure your money gets to people in need.

If you want to be part of Collenbrook’s Mission of the Month in 2019 come to the Annual MOM Meeting Sunday **January 27, 2019 during Fellowship Hour.**

