



*We aspire to be beacons of God's love and truth ...*

December 18, 2020

Dear Members and Friends of FPC Moorestown,

Planning for Christmas Eve in the middle of a pandemic, like nearly everything else we've faced this year, isn't easy. Consider that Christmas Eve is the night when everyone goes to church. Not this year. Most churches are planning for pre-recorded or live stream services with no in-person participants.

But at FPC Moorestown, after planning and adjusting, we are able to offer both in-person and live stream Christmas celebrations. NOTE: There is a possibility our services will move to Wednesday, December 23 due to predicted weather. Watch for updates from Facebook, eblasts and our website.

### **Outdoor Christmas Eve Worship at 3:00 pm and 7:00 pm**

I'm delighted that we have a way to gather safely on this holy and beautiful night by offering two unique outdoor services on Christmas Eve! We're preparing the courtyard next to the sanctuary with luminarias, fire pits, and other decorations. Everyone who joins us receives a battery-operated candle. These brief services feature a lot of carol singing, Scripture, prayer and I will deliver a Christmas message.

If you attend, please wear your mask from the time you leave your car until the time you return to your car following worship. Practice physical distancing with our members and friends. Rejoice, for we get to join the shepherds who were outside at night when they heard the announcement of Jesus' birth. We'll be in the right place at the right time on Christmas Eve!

### **Live Stream Lessons and Carols at 4:00 pm (no in-person attendance)**

We'll live stream one indoor Christmas Eve service, with Communion and an abbreviated order of Lessons and Carols. Some of our choirs sing that evening. I'll preach and celebrate the Lord's Supper with the virtual congregation. If you join us online for this service, have a communion serving and a candle ready at the start of worship. After we gather around the Lord's Table, Kelly LePenske will invite you to light your candle at home as we sing "Silent Night, Holy Night." Someone asked me if the singers will lift their candles with every stanza and they will. We're planning to offer special pre-recorded Christmas music from our choirs before the start of this service. Check our website and watch for an e-blast on Christmas Eve day for the start time for this musical offering.

### **Celebrating Christmas**

Remember that Christmas is a season and should be celebrated longer than a day. On Christmas Eve, after the conclusion of our 4:00 pm service, videos from some of our Christmas Eve services from 2019 will be posted on our website for your viewing. On Sunday, December 27th, we gather for in-person

worship as we have since the start of November. Worship remains at 9:30 am and I look forward to preaching a sermon called, “The Mouse, the Sink, and the Bowl.”

Finally, I want to thank you for your incredible financial support of our ministry and mission. Thank you for all the ways you’ve supported our staff too. Our faithful God is seeing us through this difficult year. So, good Christian friends rejoice, with heart and soul and voice!

Yours in Christ,

Stuart Spencer, Pastor