



OVERBROOK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

News from the Crossroads

December 2018

Overbrook Church Staff

Rev. Raymond Bonwell
Bridge Pastor

Rev. David K. McMillan
Pastor Emeritus

Dr. Christopher Gage
Director of Music

Sharon Parker
Director of Christian Education

Lisa Faso
Office Manager

Carol Rozmiarek
Financial Secretary

Leonard Robbins
Church Custodian

Church Office Hours

Monday - Friday.
9:00 AM to 3:00 PM



Service of the Longest Night – Friday, December 21-7:00 PM

The excitement of the holidays can also bring challenges for each of us; the stresses and strains of preparation and celebrations can take their toll. Many people find that they have trouble feeling “in the spirit” because of the loss of a loved one, illness, an unsettling workplace environment, marital discord, or lingering sadness. Recognizing the emotional unevenness of the holidays, we will continue the practice of gathering in worship for The Service of the Longest Night. The service is so named because of its occurrence on the winter solstice...the longest night of the year. At this time of darkness, we will gather in worship, asking God’s blessing on our lives and seeking His loving guidance in our lives. May peace be a gift to all.



Christmas Eve Family Service, Dinner and Gingerbread House Decorating

Immediately after the 5:00 p.m. Family Service on Christmas Eve, we will be serving a simple supper of sandwiches, soup, veggie sticks and cookies. Gingerbread houses will be ready for decorating at 7:00 p.m. This evening’s plans are a long-time OPC tradition. Serving a simple meal (we will be collecting a free will donation) helps the cooks in your home get a much needed break from the hectic holiday schedule. A sign-up will be available online and during coffee hour for donations of cookies, soup, veggie tray, set-up and clean-up. Grown OPC “children” come back year after year for the gingerbread house decorating. Any families interested in the Gingerbread House Decorating, please email the office@overbrookpresb.org or call the church office (215-877-2744) to reserve a house. Everyone is welcome.

The Christmas Eve candlelight service will follow later in the evening at 9:00 p.m.

Give us ears to hear,

O God and eyes to watch,

that we may know your presence in our midst

during this holy season of joy

as we anticipate the coming of Jesus Christ. Amen

Advent and Christmas at Overbrook

The Messiah Sing at Overbrook: An Advent Tradition-Sunday December 2 at 3:00pm

Georg Frideric Handel’s *Messiah* has become one of the most recognizable indications that Christmas is near. This Advent season, the choir will sing no fewer than three settings of the Magnificat, also known as the Song of Mary: on December 23, a very short introit by Eleanor Daley and a slightly longer version by Ralph Vaughan Williams, and, on Christmas Eve, an expansive setting by John Stainer, whose name you might recognize from the *Crucifixion* sung this past Good Friday.

But what is the Magnificat, and why is it so important? The text comes from Luke 1:46-55 and is said to have been sung by Mary during her visit to Elizabeth, who would later give birth to John the Baptist. In this short canticle, we find many themes of Jesus’s life and teaching, including God’s holiness and mercy, the elevation of the poor and lowly, and the fulfillment of God’s promise to Abraham and his descendants; in addition, it makes several references to the Old Testament scriptures, including the Song of Hannah.

As one of the oldest Christian hymns, the Magnificat is an important part of our understanding of Jesus’s coming. It is still recited or sung daily in Vespers (the Roman Catholic and Lutheran churches) and Evensong (the Anglican church). As you hear these settings of the Magnificat, I invite you to reflect on how we can share Mary’s simultaneous joy and humility

Letter from the Pastor

Friends,

Happy New Year!

When we pray in the Lord's Prayer "on earth as it is in heaven" we recognize how a Christian may be in the world, and not of the world. Another example is the Christian calendar. The liturgical year ended on Nov. 25 (Christ the King Sunday), and the new liturgical year begins four Sundays before Christmas, on Sunday, December 2.

This "new year" is off to a very busy start at Overbrook. There are a multitude of opportunities to participate, and I hope you are able to be present. First, there are special services of worship, including:

- Longest Night, Friday Dec. 21, 7:00 p.m.
- Christmas Eve, Children and Family Service, Monday Dec. 24, 5:00 p.m.
- Christmas Eve, Lessons and Carols, Monday Dec. 24, 9:00 p.m.

There are special opportunities for fellowship:

- Messiah, Sunday Dec. 2, 3:00 p.m.
- Hanging of the Greens, Saturday Dec. 22, 10:00 a.m.
- Christmas Eve Dinner, Monday, December 24, 6:00 p.m.

There will be a called meeting of the congregation immediately after worship on Sunday, Dec. 16 to receive the report of the 2018 Nominating Committee for Elders, Deacons, and members of the 2019 Nominating Committee. For those who are not yet members of Overbrook Presbyterian Church, and wish to vote at the congregational meeting, you may participate in the Member Orientation Classes on Sunday, Dec. 2 (9:15 a.m.) and Sunday, Dec. 9 (9:15 a.m.), and appear before Session on Tuesday, Dec. 11 (7:00 p.m.). For more information, please contact pastor@overbrookpresby.org.

All are welcome at the Adult Forum, continuing Sunday mornings at 9:15 a.m. through December, with the following topics:

- Dec. 2: Presbyterian Polity (part of Member Orientation)
- Dec. 9: Presbyterian Theology (part of Member Orientation)
- Dec. 16: Why a Congregational Meeting?
- Dec. 23: What Is So Special about Christmas?
- Dec. 30: What Is So Special about a New Year?

Please note, the Member Orientation classes are intentionally not called New Member Orientation. As a member, you are welcome to join us and seek answers to what it means to be an Overbrook Presbyterian. And stay tuned for more information how the Adult Forum will support the shift in January 2019 toward a single education opportunity for all ages at 9:15 a.m. – so that all ages may stay together for worship.

Finally, the Adult Bible Study continues Wednesday mornings. This fall we have looked at an overview of the Old Testament. For December, we will focus on Jonah, which is so much more than a "whale of a tale." There are only four chapters in Jonah, and we will follow a schedule of approximately one chapter a week (Nov. 28, Dec. 5, Dec. 12, and Dec. 19). If you are interested in an evening or weekend Bible Study – if Wednesday mornings do not fit your schedule – please contact pastor@overbrookpresby.org. Please indicate which day / time works better for you.

As the church's liturgical new year begins, it starts with many opportunities to gather. Let us continue to build up each other in the faith, so we may be sent out to witness to the Good News of Jesus Christ. -

Keep the Faith,
Raymond

Congregational Life/Fellowship



Hanging of the Greens: Saturday, December 22, 10:00 AM-1:00 PM

All are welcome to participate in the annual Hanging of the Greens, at 10:00 AM on December 22. Come help decorate the Sanctuary for Christmas! We'll be making window sill decorations, pew swags, hanging festive garlands, and decorating the Sanctuary Christmas tree. All ages are welcome. There will be special craft activities for children in the Chapel, and they will be invited to decorate the tree in Wistar Morris Room. A chilly day will call for a chili lunch...and warm fellowship for all who participate. For those who would like to continue the festivities, Simpson House welcomes us to come caroling at 1:30 PM. Please sign up in the Wistar Morris Room.

Recruiting Costume Captains and Pageant Patrol Volunteers...come join us!

As we look ahead to the Christmas Eve Family Service and the annual pageant, it's time to freshen up wings and straighten halos. It's time to see if all of the cattle and sheep have ears and tails! The Pageant Patrol is recruiting a few good-humored folks to mend costumes, grab a needle (...or glue gun), and help bring the Christmas miracle to Overbrook on December 24. Please contact Sharon Parker (sparker614@gmail.com) if you would like to assist prior to Christmas preparing the costumes, or help direct participants during the 5:00 PM Christmas Eve Family Service. Once again, this year's pageant will allow members of the congregation to travel to Bethlehem and "gather" at the manger...and we want all to look their best.



Come join Peter Seidel, art teacher and Overbrook member, to consider the reason for the season! *"the Art of Advent: seven centuries of great sacred art at the Philadelphia Museum of Art"* Sunday, January 6th, 2019, 1:30- 3pm ("Pay what you wish" Sunday) Please gather on the 2nd fl. balcony of the Great Hall in the museum at 1:30 pm.

Coffee Hour for December



December 2: Host Needed
December 9: Mary Scott
December 16: Mimi Winkler and Laurie Geers
December 23: Host Needed
December 30: Host Needed

If you are interested in hosting a coffee hour instructions for this easily accomplished, highly valued ministry are available on the OPC web site and in the church kitchen (on the microwave). For more information please contact Raelyn Harman at 610-331-8972 or Artia Benjamin. Thank you.



Free Photo Directories:

Each family listed in the directory whether or not you had your photo taken is eligible to have one free copy of the directory. We don't want to unnecessarily spend money on postage to mail it to you. You can stop by the church office to pick one up during regular office hours, M-F, 9 am-3 pm. Please call me at 610-331-8972 if you have any questions or see me on Sunday to get your copy. Thank you.
Raelyn Harman

R.P.M. Cafe: Friday, December 7, 11:30-1:00 PM

Although the snowy bluster of November kept us from meeting, we're ready to thaw the soup and try again! The R.P.M. (retired person's ministry) Cafe will be open for business and our business is good-humored fellowship, shared learning, and fine food! B.Y.O. sandwich or salad...the Cafe will be offering a choice of soups (chicken corn noodle, country ham and bean) homemade desserts, and beverages. Our featured program will be "The Impact of Gratitude on Health and Well-being." The RPM cafe is a ministry of the Congregational Life committee; there is no cost to attend. Advance registrations are appreciated. Please sign-up in the Wistar Morris Room following Worship, or RSVP to Sharon Parker(sparker614@gmail.com).



Please sign up for the Precollege (11th and 12th grade) and College Students' lunch and conversation. If you are home for winter break, come and meet up with other students, some already in college, some just finishing their first semester, some preparing to make the decision to go, or not to go, and some who have recently finished college. Share your stories or just enjoy the lunch. *The date is December 30th at 12:30 pm in the Chapel.*

Check our church website <http://www.overbrookpresb.org/> for more information. Please let Artia Benjamin know if you can come, text at 215-266-8758 or email at newlife5125@gmail.com Looking forward to seeing you.

Christian Education

OPC Youth Philly Phield-trip, December 2, 9:30 AM-2:00 PM All youth, grades 6-12, are invited to participate in our Philly Phield-trip on December 2. We'll start our activity with a blessing by Pastor Raymond in the Chapel at 9:30 AM, and then take the train to Center City to attend worship at historic Arch Street Presbyterian Church. Following worship, our group will head to the Christmas Village at City Hall for lunch. There is no cost for transportation and each participant will be also given \$5.00 to help defray the cost of lunch. The remainder of the lunch expense will be the responsibility of each participant. Youth will return to the Overbrook train station at 2:00 PM. Jason Duckworth and Sharon Parker will be group leaders for this event.

Sunday School 2019: A new year, a new curriculum, a fresh start!

From August through November, OPC's Sunday School program has been the subject of study, prayerful consideration, and curriculum review. In November, changes were proposed by the Curriculum Review Committee, and approved by the Christian Education Committee and members of Session. This process resulted in a schedule that will soon allow children, youth, and teachers to participate fully in worship, and realize a 25% increase in instructional time. The adoption of the PC-USA curriculum, *Feasting on the Word* will allow children and youth the opportunity to learn and grow within the doctrinal practices of our denomination. These changes will be implemented on Sunday, January 6, 2019.

Beginning on January 6, 2019, Sunday School for children in grades Pre-K through Grade 12, will be in session each Sunday of the month, from 9:30-10:15 AM. Students will gather in Fellowship Hall for welcoming music and prayer, after which teachers will lead them to class. An adult "Greeting Team" will be in Fellowship Hall, beginning each Sunday at 9:15 AM, to welcome and supervise arriving students. Following Sunday School, students will attend worship with their families. The worship-time nursery will continue to be available for children, Pre-K through Grade 2. Following *Time With Children*, younger children may depart worship for the Nursery; students in grades 3-12 will remain in worship.

A letter further detailing these changes will be mailed to all parents of children and youth. It will also announce increasing opportunities for parent engagement during the Sunday School time period. Throughout December, members of the Christian Education team will be in contact with families regarding these revisions to our program. I personally welcome opportunity to hear your thoughts and opinions as we begin a new season of Christian Education...with a fresh start!

Blessings to all, Sharon Parker, Director of Christian Education

Stewardship

Thank you!

Stewardship season - Thank you!

For the past couple of months, you have been hearing a lot about Stewardship at Overbrook. The season kicked off with the Taste of Overbrook, our biggest annual fundraiser. Through an abundance of donations and tremendous work by volunteers, we exceeded our goal and raised more than \$7,100.

During three consecutive Sundays this fall, we heard beautiful sharing from Max Mason, Marlin Newsome and Bob Bevan about what Overbrook means to them and why they help support the church.

Pastor Raymond Bonwell's sermons and Stewardship letter spoke powerfully to the topic, and the many ways we have to offer our "first fruits:" With our hearts, by being intentionally present in this community of faith, in Sunday worship and opportunities; with our minds, by enhancing our understanding of Scripture with daily reading; with our souls, by renewing our daily prayer life with opportunities to love God, love our neighbor, love our enemies; and with our strength, by pledging financial support as an offering to God.

On Pledge Sunday, the congregation renewed its baptismal vows and showed its strength with an outpouring of pledges to help build the foundation for the coming year. And while there is no biblical link between pies and pledges, it sure did feel wonderful to celebrate our commitment in fellowship and pie sharing at Coffee Hour. To all who baked, served, cleaned and ate with us—thank you!

We know making a financial commitment is a deeply personal, prayerful decision. It is also critical in the life and planning of the church and its missions. The annual budget guides many key decisions on our ministries, our personnel, our equipment, our building, our outreach and more. In a time of transition, it is all the more important.

The Stewardship Committee offers our sincere gratitude to all who have shared their "first fruits" and those who are still prayerfully considering how to best contribute. Stewardship season truly never ends. Peace and blessings to all.

Mission and Outreach

The season of Advent is upon us! Mission & Outreach has a couple of ways for you to share the gifts God has granted upon you.

Children in foster care go from home to home on short notice and any meager belongings they may have are tossed in a trash bag for them to use as luggage. This year we are stuffing duffel bags for teens in foster care. We want them to have their own bags to carry their things in. To get them started, we want your help to fill them! We want the teens to know they are not garbage and they deserve to carry their belongings with dignity. Collect a duffel bag during coffee hour and a list of things to fill it with. *(See article below for more details)*

Thank you for all of your support for all of the projects we have supported throughout the year. Our budget comes from 10% of the pledges and plate, so thank you to all of you who pledged. It helps us to help those in need. Enjoy the anticipation of Advent and have a very merry Christmas!

Come Wield Your Power For Good at Overbrook Presbyterian Church's - Fair Trade Gift Market Saturday, December 1 - 9:00 to 3:00 Sunday, December 2 - 9:00 to 12:30

Join us for OPC's Fair Trade Gift Market where you can find holiday gifts from around the world, all made by people who receive a fair wage for their labor, ready for purchase. Save the dates and avoid the hassle of finding parking at a mall. Come cross off items from your shopping list. Hope to see you there. Below are some of the items that will be available:

- ❖ **The Women's Bean Project** - Teaches job readiness and life skills for entry-level jobs through employment in the gourmet food business – tasty gourmet food
- ❖ **Tabitha** - Silk products generate funds used to help the poorest people in Cambodia by running self-help programs focusing on personal and financial development
- ❖ **Bamboula Ltd.** - Living wages for Africa
- ❖ **Equal Exchange** - coffee, chocolate, tea, cocoa and more
- ❖ **Ten Thousand Villages** - As a Fair Trade Pioneer, we believe market-based solutions can end the cycle of poverty
- ❖ **Global Crafts** - "Our mission is simple, to improve the lives of some of the people with whom we share this planet."
- ❖ **Sophedgy** - fair trade jewelry
- ❖ **Earth & State from Media, PA**
- ❖ **Global Goods**
- ❖ **Haiti's Back Porch**



COMFORT CASES. At this season of the year, the Mission and Outreach Committee sponsors a giving project in gratitude for God's gifts to us. In the past, we have given toys to needy children and gifts to "adopted" families. This year we offer the opportunity for you to help children transitioning into or out of foster care. Each of these children could greatly benefit from having a Comfort Case containing necessary and helpful items such as toiletries, blankets, journals, stuffed animals, and gift cards, plus space for their own personal items. We have purchased large, light, attractive duffel-like bags to serve as Comfort Cases. We have some blankets for them. We need you to finish filling them. On December 9, they will be available at Coffee Hour, with more instructions provided. We are continuing this project into January, so don't panic. The Comfort Cases will go to the Village. Even though there is a need for these cases at every age level, they are most needed by teenagers. Please contact Nancy Gilhool with any questions.



NCT's run of 'Little Shop of Horrors' dropped its final curtain on Nov 17 with a successful eight show run. The attendance to this show was good and we made over seven hundred dollars for OPC's general budget. KUDOS to a wonderful team of staffers: Dick and Judy Williamson, Jane and Carol Rozmiarek, Edelen Carroll, Nancy Gilhool, Laine Blodgett, Peju Abebanjo, Sharon Parker, Alyce Marsh, Bob, Peggy and Gail Kaercher, Linda Huff-Paul, Jill VanRawley, Pat O'Gundele, Ginny Leagans, Barbara Adams Smeltz, Danielle and Aiyana Long, Kadie and Nora Whalen, Aria Fiorelli, Mary Lou Ryce, Felicia Williams, Noble Brigham, Ron Homer, and Janet Bowker. It truly takes a team to make the OPC's refreshment stand a success.

With Much Appreciation, Judy Sheau

Nominating Committee

SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Special Congregational Meeting: Immediately after worship on Sunday December 16, there will be a Special Congregational Meeting to receive the report of the Nominating Committee posting their slate of nominees for Elder, Deacon and the At-Large Members of the 2019 Nominating Committee. Since, this meeting is a Special Congregational Meeting, no other business may be conducted except the business at hand.

Will Schick, Nominating Committee Chair

Deacons

Happy December Birthdays

12/2 Allison Kothari	12/17 Eva Wilson
Caroline Kothari	12/18 Maya Mendoza
12/3 Jim Stephens	12/19 Andrew Paul
Henry Garcia	12/20 Bob Kaercher
12/6 Karen Taussig-Lux	Gary Schwinn
12/7 Tyrone Frisby	12/27 Anne Bezbatchenko
12/8 Rebecca Rottinger	12/28 Nancy Elmore
Margaret Mason	12/29 ZeeAnn Mason
12/9 Chanel Young	12/31 Max Mason
12/10 Margene Biedermann	
12/11 Alyce Marsh	
12/13 Christine Stephens	
12/16 Ameerah Skipper	



Prayer List

- ◆ Dick Williamson is undergoing medical testing.
- ◆ Luis Wong is now in the Salvation Army Rehab center in Roxborough.
- ◆ The Rev. David McMillan recovering from knee surgery.
- ◆ Terry Carter is in rehab for hip replacement.
- ◆ Wayne Gage, Chris Gage's father, is recovering from a heart procedure.
- ◆ Jessica Canning, a friend of Eileen Wiggins, is in hospice following brain surgery.
- ◆ John Nathaniel is still recovering from a recent stroke.
- ◆ Ellen Burr is experiencing ongoing medical concerns.

Please contact Mike Rottinger to add names or concerns to this list. Mike can be reached by email, mike.rottinger@comcast.net.



Luis Wong has a new address and loves to receive letters and cards!

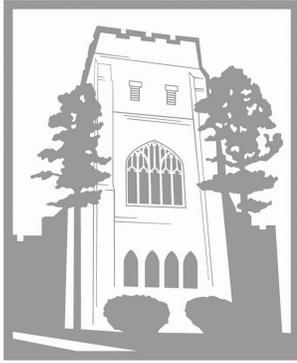
Luis Wong
The Salvation Army ARC
4555 Pechin Street
Philadelphia, PA 19128

Terry Carter is rehabbing in the Penn Presbyterian Center for Continuing Care 39th and Market streets, Philadelphia, Room 418 . Cards are appreciated.

December 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Coming up in January: ♦OPC Youth New Years Celebration- 1/5-4:00 pm ♦Service of Ordination and Installation of Elders/Deacons - 1/13 ♦RPM Cafe—1/18 at 11:30 am ♦MLK Day of Service—1/21-9 am						1 8:00 am Mens Group 9:00 am Fair Trade Market
2 9:30 am Fair Trade Market 9:15 am Adult Forum 10:30 am Worship 11:30 am Coffee Hr. 3:00 pm Messiah Sing	3 5:15 pm Junior Choir Rehearsal / Dinner 7:00 pm-Nominating Committee	4 1:00 pm Worship Committee 7:00 pm –Finance Committee	5 10:00 am Bible Study 5:00 pm Property Committee	6 6:15 pm Bell Choir Practice 7:00 pm Adult Choir Practice	7 11:30 am RPM Cafe	8
9 9:15 am Adult Forum 10:30 am Worship 11:30 am Coffee Hr. 12:00 pm Personnel Committee 12:00 pm Deacons	10 5:15 pm Junior Choir Rehearsal / Dinner	11 7:00 pm Session	12 10:00 am Bible Study	13 6:15 pm Bell Choir Practice 7:00 pm Adult Choir Practice	14	15
16 9:15 am Adult Forum 10:30 am Worship 11:30 am Congregational Meeting 11:30 am Coffee Hr. 12:00 pm-Christian Education Committee	17 5:15 pm Junior Choir Rehearsal / Dinner	18	19 10:00 am Bible Study	20 6:15 pm Bell Choir Practice 7:00 pm Adult Choir Practice	21 7:00 pm Service of the Longest Night	22 10:00 am Hanging of the Greens 1:30 Caroling at Simpson House
23- 9:15 am Adult Forum 10:30 am Worship 11:30 am Coffee Hr.	24 5:00 pm – Children's Christmas Eve Service 9:00 pm-Candlelight	25-Christmas Day 	26	27 7:00 pm Adult Choir Practice	28	29
30 12:00 pm College Luncheon	31	Community Support Group Meetings @ OPC Every Sunday beginning at 8pm—AA-Wistar Morris Room and Al-Anon in Chapel Every Monday beginning at 8pm-Overeaters Anonymous in Chapel Every Wednesday beginning at 8pm-AA in Wistar Morris Room				

News from the Crossroads



Overbrook Presbyterian Church

6376 City Avenue ♦ Philadelphia, PA 19151

215-877-2744 ♦ office@overbrookpresb.org

www.overbrookpresb.org

Upcoming Worship and Advent/Christmas Happenings:

December 2, 2018

Communion Sunday/1st Sunday of Advent

Lectionary: Luke 21:25-36

Preaching: The Rev. Raymond Bonwell

Lay Leader: Davorka Sabljak

Lighting of Advent Candle: Jason Sheau and I-Mei Huang

December 16, 2018

3rd Sunday of Advent

Lectionary: Luke 3:7-18

Preaching: The Rev. Raymond Bonwell

Lighting of the Advent Candle: Greta Ham & Mary Lou Ryce

Lay Leader: Bob Bevan

December 30, 2018

1st Sunday after Christmas Day

Lectionary: Luke 2:41-52

Preaching: The Rev. Raymond Bonwell

Lay Leader: Rachel Carnahan

December 9, 2018

2nd Sunday of Advent

Lectionary: Luke 3:1-6

Preaching: The Rev. Raymond Bonwell

Lay Leader: Bob Harden

Lighting of the Advent Candle: The Hunter Family

December 23, 2018

4th Sunday of Advent

Lectionary: Luke 1:39-45

Preaching: The Rev. Raymond Bonwell

Lighting of the Advent Candle: Aqueelah & Steven Folwell

Lay Leader: Trudy Sheau

December 24, 2018

Christmas Eve

Lectionary: Luke 2:1-14

Lighting of the Advent Candle: The Lazo Family-5pm

Sara Davis/Sharon Parker-9pm



- ❖ December 2: 3:00 PM Messiah Sing
- ❖ December 21: 7:00 PM Service of the Longest Night
- ❖ December 22: 10:00 AM Hanging of the Greens, followed by informal lunch
- ❖ December 24: 5:00 PM Family Service and Christmas Pageant
6:00 PM Christmas Eve Dinner
7:00 PM Decorating of the Gingerbread Houses
9:00 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
- ❖ December 30: Noon College Student Homecoming Luncheon
- ❖ January 6, 2019: 1:30 PM the Art of Advent Tour with Peter Seidel