



January 2026

Words of Gratitude

With grateful hearts, we thank everyone who gave their time, creativity, and care to decorate our church for the Advent/Christmas season. Through greenery, lights, nativities, angels, flowers and beauty our space proclaimed the joy of Christ's coming and invited all to come to into worship in a celebrative way.

We express our gratitude to the following people for giving of their time and talent to adorn our worship space to glorify our God: Kim Gavrelis, Cheryl Langston, Eileen Phelps, Rosa and Raul Recio, Jane Ricks, & Sandy Schnare.

Additionally, many thanks should be given to Emma Lassiter for helping the children make decorations for their tree in the Fellowship Hall entry room. Grateful acknowledgement of appreciation to Beth Skewis, who once again put up an imaginative and beautiful display in our library window. I also want to thank Kim Bailey, Vicki Johnson, Wanda Venable, Roxann West and Judy Kaplan for decorating the Chrismon Tree in the Sanctuary.

A special thank you to Matt, Mike and Griffen for all their help in climbing ladders, lifting heavy objects and cleaning the various messes that are invariably left behind. Their

continued support and assistance are a gift to all of us.

We are deeply grateful to our worship elders, Amanda Jacoby and Cathy Hilton, for their incredible dedication this Advent/Christmas season. From coordinating, designing and setting up the decorations, to turning on all the lights for our services, to now clean up and putting away for another year, your hard work and care have truly made our church shine.

The faithful work of all has made this season brighter for all who entered our church's doors. May God bless you for the gifts shared so generously.

Continued on the following page



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Words of Gratitude *continued*



Cathy's Decorating Skills



STAR WORDS: AN EPIPHANY TRADITION

The spiritual practice of receiving a Star Word is an Epiphany tradition that has emerged in many churches in recent years.

You are invited to use your Star Word, prayerfully, as a guiding word for the year. The word chooses the recipient, and not the other way around! The Star Word may serve as an intention word, enabling us to see God in ways that we might not have seen God before. Star Words invite us to commune with God through reflection and contemplation.

We receive Star Words as one receives a gift, with wonder and curiosity. We turn our desire to control over to God and allow God to bless us with insight.

On **Sunday, January 11th**, Epiphany “King Cake” will be served at Holy Grounds. You may receive a Star Word from Pastor Meg at that time. Star Words will also be available in Meg’s office during the weeks of Mon., January 12th and Mon., January 19th.



Nursery Corner

As it says in Luke 1:68, our verse for December, in the nursery we are learning to “Give praise to the Lord, the God of Israel! He has come to his people and purchased their freedom.” This month we are celebrating the birth of our Savior, listening to the Christmas story through books and music. We made Christmas angels who came to tell Mary about her new baby, and we played with baby dolls. Making cotton ball sheep helped us learn about the shepherds who came to worship Jesus. With our felt board figures and stickers, we made pictures of the nativity scene, and decorated star cookies. Just like the wise men brought a gift to the baby Jesus, we made cards as a gift for our families. Each week we learned a bit more about the story of Jesus’s birthday, which is what Christmas is really about.



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Children’s Church

This month in Children’s Church, we focused on the Advent season and learned about the stories of Mary, Joseph, and the Wise Men leading up to the birth of Jesus. On December 7th, we did not meet for Children’s Church due to the Christmas Cantata, where many of the kids participated in the service! They did such an amazing job singing and sharing their joy with the congregation! We are so proud of them and grateful for a wonderful Advent season. Wishing all our families a very happy holiday season filled with joy and love!



CPC Men's Bible Study – Rod Stone Gathering

The Men's Bible Study Group plus invited attendees held an appreciation event in honor of Pastor Rod's leadership, service, and God's mission at CPC. The breakfast event was held at the Pinecrest Inn and was well attended by the men of the church.

A number of men gave their personal thoughts about Rod's commitment to our Mission statement and how he affected both the church and people in a positive way.

Rod also spoke to his experience and the strong support and love he received from the members of the church.

We closed in prayer thanking God for the blessings and gifts thru Rod and his family.



Members serving in our various care ministries are warmly invited to the annual CPC congregational

Care Ministry Breakfast

Thursday, January 29th, 2026
9:00am – 10:30am
Abraham Room, Fellowship Hall

Hosted by Care Elders Patty Franklin, John Liles,
Cindy Ward, and Pastor Meg

Please **RSVP** by Monday, January 26th!

THEOLOGY ON TAP

You donated to the 2025 Sandhills Crop Walk boot fundraiser, and Theology on Tap won! This winter, cozy up with your beverage of choice and join fellow CPC members for conversations on Faith and the Christian Life. The meeting locations for each gathering will be announced closer to the dates.

ALL SESSIONS 5:30-6:45PM



WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21st

"As We Forgive Our Debtors" - Forgiveness in the Christian Life



WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11th

"I Doubt It" - Faith & Doubt in the Christian Life



WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25th

"Worthy of the Call" - Exploring Vocation in the Christian Life

**PASTOR MEG WILL FACILITATE EACH SESSION WITH
OPENING COMMENTS & FOCUSED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS.
RSVPS WILL NOT BE REQUIRED BUT WILL BE REQUESTED AS
THEY WILL BE HELPFUL FOR SAVING SEATS!**

Caregivers Group

One of the groups at Community Presbyterian Church is the Caregivers Group. It has been a functioning group for over twenty years. We meet the third Sunday of the month at 6:00 p.m. in one of the member's homes. We are mostly all currently caring for a spouse, a child, a parent or other relative, or a friend. Some of us are 'graduates', having cared for someone who has since died. They are important in the group because of their experience and knowledge of resources, etc. Everyone shares their story, their successes, their frustrations, etc. and the group listens, encourages, helps, and supports. The next part of the evening is dinner. The host provides the main course and others bring hors d'oeuvres, salad, and dessert. Most feel this night out with friends helps them to recharge, relax, and at times vent. We would welcome anyone who thinks this group might be something that would be helpful to them.

If you have any question, please call Shay Teese at (910) 295-4284.

Stewardship Campaign

As we prepare to wrap up stewardship campaign to support the 2026 Ministry and Mission budget, we want to give you an update of where we stand at the end of 2025. The good news is that the average pledge has increased from \$4358.00 for 2025 to \$5007.00 for 2026. Each year our pledging dollar has increased for which we give thanks. However, the number of pledges has decreased leaving us with an estimated pledging shortfall of \$70,000. In this month of January, the leadership of

the church will be finalizing our budget. If you have not taken the opportunity to make a pledge for 2026 there is still time. Your giving will make an impact.

You can call our financial manager Sam Crouter at (910) 295-6848, email scrouter@communitypres.com or stop by the office to fill out a pledge card. Thank you for your continued support to the ministry of this church.

Christmas in the Church



Christmas in the Church *continued*



December CALL



Lisset Cruz



CALL congratulates Lisset Cruz, a freshmen at UNC-G for her induction into Lambda Theta Alpha Latin Sorority, Inc. Lambda Theta Alpha focuses on Unity, Love, and Respect, with an emphasis on academic excellence, leadership development,

and community activism. As an academic sorority, the sorority promotes scholastic success through workshops, study groups, and campus involvement.

The sorority is deeply committed to social justice through initiatives that raise awareness about political and cultural issues impacting marginalized communities. Their national philanthropy is St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. The sorority regularly engages in fundraising and volunteer efforts to support cancer research for children. They also offer leadership training through programs, like LLEAD, which helps members build skills in cultural sensitivity, diversity, and advocacy.

Our CALL Committee is proud of Lisset for her dedication to helping others in her community while attending college. Lisset is a wonderful role model for our CALL students.

Gracias to All Who Helped with Call Gift Wrapping on December 10th

- Jane George
- Vicki Johnson
- Roxann West
- Carol Brown
- Wanda Sweeney
- Wanda Venable
- Nina Smith
- Sue Carlton
- Shay Teese
- Charlene Popson
- Cynthia Kennedy and her Granddaughter, Alex

They were our Christmas Angels and help wrap all the toys for the CALL students. Toys were given to CALL by Toys for Tots, such a wonderful mission. So, why do we wrap presents in the first place? The answer lies in the joy of surprise. Wrapping adds an element of mystery and excitement to the gift-giving experience. The element of surprise taps into our innate sense of curiosity and wonder. The act of unwrapping transforms a mundane moment into a thrilling revelation. As the paper falls away, the recipient is not just receiving an object; they are unwrapping a moment of delight, a gesture of thoughtfulness carefully concealed within layers of anticipation. They wrapped over 110 items in an hour and 15 minutes. Angel Gifts and toys were given to the families on December 16th, the last class before Christmas. CALL is so blessed to this congregation to give to this mission.

Gracias, Elizabeth Pope, director of CALL

Ushers and Greeters

For each worship service and other special events, we rely on Greeters and Ushers to welcome members and visitors as well as to help with the service.

Serving as an Usher or Greeter is a terrific way to meet members of our congregation and to help visitors experience CPC's hospitality.

We are currently looking for individuals, couples or families to join our 20 or so active Ushers and Greeters. Ushers and Greeters typically are assigned one Sunday service each month.

We all have commitments that take us away from the Sunday service now and then, so we have about 10 experienced individuals who

serve as substitutes in the event you are away or unavailable on your assigned Sunday.

To discuss this further, please contact either minister or Joe Franklin, Chair Membership Committee – (703) 244-4792, call or text; franklin.joe.t@gmail.com e-mail.

Thank you.

Tree of Gratitude for CALL to Express Thankfulness

A thankful tree, also known as a gratitude tree, tree of thanks, offers a simple activity and decoration to reflect on the things that bring joy, comfort, and meaning to our lives. The thankful tree tradition provides a fun way for kids and adults to bring gratitude and joy back to your holiday celebrations. However, a gratitude tree does not need to be limited to any particular holiday. CALL had a Gratitude Tree and all the tutors, moms, and students wrote on a card what they were grateful for. The best gifts do not have to be wrapped they are blessings to be thankful for. These interactive decorations offer a heartwarming way to promote positivity and connection, teach children about gratitude, and remind adults of the blessings in their lives. But they can bring meaning and happiness to your days any time of year!



We discovered how the thankful tree tradition can help cultivate appreciation and foster a grateful attitude with the gratitude tree. A gratitude tree can be a meaningful family activity or an interactive classroom project. It can also serve as a personal ritual, helping you slow down and reconnect with what truly matters, especially during dark or uncertain times.

Here are some of the things the members of CALL wrote they were grateful for:

- "I am thankful for my God, my family, and the children of CALL."
- "I'm thankful for my CALL friends. I love to work with them."
- "I am thankful for the tutors at CALL for their time, dedication, patience, and support. They teach us something new every day at class. May God bless them abundantly always."
- "I am thankful for the CALL program and how it's brought many opportunities for these wonderful families."

Presbyterian Women – Circle 1

Circle 1 of Presbyterian Women celebrated Christmas at Lynne Phifer's home with lunch and our Bible Study. We meet on the first Wednesday at 1pm in Fannie B. Grey Parlor. You are welcome to join us on January 7, 2026.

PW Purpose:

Forgiven and freed by God in Jesus Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

We commit ourselves:

- To nurture our faith through prayer and Bible study,
- To support the mission of the church worldwide,
- To work for justice and peace,
- And to build an inclusive caring community of women that strengthens the Presbyterian Church (USA) and witnesses to the promise of God's kingdom.

This year's study is How do we find our resilience and joy in the midst of stressful life circumstances?

By reconnecting to our spirituality, following women in the Bible, and studying Jesus' witness, we can discover a path that helps us fully embrace and celebrate who we are as Faithful Disciples.

Join Circle 1 as we rediscover our resilience, joy, and identity in Christ through this PW Bible study.



CPC Contact Information

Church Office

(910) 295-6848

Website

www.communitypres.com

Office Hours

Monday – Thursday

10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Friday

Church Office Closed

**If you need a pastor after
hours, the following can
be reached:**

Rod Stone

Pastor

(910) 585-0828

Meghan Vail

Associate Pastor

(732) 804-4907

Mailing Address

**Community Presbyterian
Church**

P.O. Box 1449

Pinehurst, NC 28370

Location

125 Everette Road

Pinehurst, NC 28374

A Special Thank You

A special thank you is extended to Pinehurst Pizza, their patrons and co-owner Lynne Beechler for supporting our angel tree giving program this year. Through their generosity, we received \$2000.00 in Food Lion gift cards as well as 20 cases each of pasta, mac and cheese, soup and pasta sauce. This will go a long way in providing food for our families in need. When you are in Pinehurst Pizza, be sure to thank them for their compassion in caring for those of need in our community.



Save the Date - February 4th



Wednesday, February 4th at 6:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall Dr. Ivan Rusyn, President and Professor of Mission at the Ukrainian Evangelical Theological Seminary will be with us to share his experiences of serving Christ in Ukraine during a time of war.

When Russia invaded Ukraine in late February of 2022, Dr. Rusyn helped rush his seminary faculty, staff and students away from the artillery and missile strikes while he and other key administrators bunkered down a mere 1,000 feet from the Russian front lines to assist those who couldn't leave.

From that first day of the war, Rusyn and his team have been actively involved in a relief ministry, providing care to those suffering from the atrocities of war because "the church cannot serve people without being among the people. We have to walk the same path."

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Matthew Best

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Evie Miller

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Terri Sinclair

Director of Music Emeritus

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Worship With Us!
10:30 a.m.



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