**The Federated Church of Charlton**

**January 2025 *On the Green* Pastor’s Message**

Shortly after sitting down to write my January message Sunday afternoon, I learned that President Jimmy Carter had died. At 100 years~ he shared a birthdate with my father-in-law ~ former President Carter lived well and fully. He most certainly lived three decades beyond the three-score-and-ten, “perhaps eighty, if we are strong” that Psalm 90 declares are the days of our life. We can all declare that the words of Matthew 25:21 apply for the peanut farmer from Plains, Georgia. “‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things; I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ ” The world may not be so joy-filled at his departure from this life, but surely the heavens are alight with his arrival.

None of us is perfect – not you or me, or Mr. Carter. His presidency ~ a difficult job in the best of circumstances ~ was tougher than many for harsh reasons and circumstances in the world and here at home in the late 1970’s. But his life’s mission and legacy were not built at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. They were lived out with God’s people in God’s world.

Oh, what if each of us approached the gift of every morning with President Carter’s clear-eyed and laser-focused faith in God and in God’s son, Jesus? The decades of service he offered the world are a marvel to ponder. I feel blessed to have lived at a time when his example of faith-filled Christianity offered ballast to a dangerous shift in our society’s perception of what is good. He took his cues from Jesus, his playbook from the Gospel.

These game metaphors reveal my own struggles with living in the world but not being of it. Who of us doesn’t dream of fame, even a small bit of it? Story after story detail Carter’s exemplary work for God’s beloved around the globe after his short tenure in the White House. The world has rewarded him medals and honors, the Nobel Peace Prize only one of many accolades. Reports about him from so many places reveal a man whose daily living changed lives. I’m persuaded that his ability to do so much is nestled in the words Jesus spoke most often and most ardently at his life’s end.

“I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” [John 13:34-35.]

May this new year bring each of you more love, more joy, and more of God’s light, “Light that shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.” [John 1:5 NIV]

With God’s love and mine ~ Pastor Shannan

Thank you to everyone who decorated the Meetinghouse so beautifully

for Advent and Christmas, and especially the teams responsible for the manger scene.

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Dear Ecumenical Friends,

The Winter Coat Closet was open for 8 weeks and had a very busy season! Through your congregation's support and our community's generosity, we helped 178 people who came in seeking coats for themselves and their families. This totaled 362 warm winter coats given out, as well as countless hats, scarves and gloves.

How much joy we get when we see the smiles on the faces, especially the children. It is such a simple mission but so important with the high costs of food, clothing and other essentials. A special thank you to Holy Trinity Church for the use of their building. On behalf of our terrific volunteers, thank you all so very much. Please share this with your congregations as you see fit.

Have a blessed Christmas and wonderful New Year,

Chris McTigue, Coordinator

The Winter Coat Closet

*An Ecumenical Project in its 17th Year*

Thank you to Joseph J. Szela & Associates, P.C., Certified Public Accountants, for donating the beautiful 2024 inspirational calendars to the Church. They are so appreciated by the congregation.

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*Prayer List*

As we enter the New Year and observe the season of Epiphany, let us seek to make Jesus known through our lives and lift our prayers to God:

* for the family of Pam Ekman and the death of her mother, Claire Huckins, and her sister-in-law, Diane Ciesluk
* for the victims of the New Year’s Eve violence in New Orleans
* for peace in our world
* for the more than 16,576 who died from gun fire in the US in 2024
* for Marge Jalbert
* for our families and friends who are dear to us
* for joy in the New Year

## **Deacons of the Month for January are:**

Mark Duhamel - 508- 248-6352 Elizabeth Moran – 508-248-4694

**Flower Person for January is :** Nancy Murphy – 508-248-3155

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All Annual Reports are due in the Church Office by Tuesday, January 7th for the Annual Meetings.

Please email to: secretary@charltonfedchurch.org

The Annual Meetings of the UCC and the UUA will take place on Sunday, January 19, 2025.

The Annual Meeting of the Federated Church will take

place on January 26, 2025.

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***Faith in Film***

Movie Nights now have a new name, they are called the *Faith in Film* series! It will continue on the third Friday of each month. The movies explore religion and theology broadly and may include films that explore various denominations and faiths. The films also explore Christianity, and the ethics and morals found in the teachings of Jesus Christ. While some films may showcase historical and Biblical characters and events, others may take a more abstract approach to faith and how people respond to and interact with God and the teachings of Christ.

Whenever possible we showcase a variety of genres, tones and periods. Thus, we explore silent films, foreign cinema, classic films, well-known and obscure works all with the aim to entertain, enjoy and enlighten. A handout with pertinent and interesting information, key concepts and discussion questions about each film is prepared and distributed at each movie night.

For the first half of 2025, we will show films that explore the theme of character. Our first film on January 17 will be *The Producers* (1967). In this, one of the great comedies of all time, Zero Mostel’s character, Max Bialystock, is a despicable person who along with Gene Wilder as Leopold "Leo" Bloom do despicable things to hilarious results.

Come join us for some great viewing and a fascinating discussion afterwards!

**Sunday School News**

The Sunday School children worked hard and put on a lovely pageant to celebrate the story of Christmas. We are all so proud of them! The Giving Tree was a great success, thanks to our generous congregation. We hope everyone enjoyed the pageant!

Molly Carlson,

R.E Director

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Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

In recognition of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, January 18-25, 2025, three churches here in Charlton will swap pulpits on the morning of January 19th. Fr. Bob Grattaroti, pastor of St. Joseph’s Catholic Church, will preach here at the Federated Church. The Rev. John H.D. Lucy, pastor at Charlton City United Methodist Church, will preach at St. Joseph’s Church. Pastor Shannan will preach at The United Methodist Church. Ecumenism is alive and well in this community and reminds us that God’s abiding love is ours to enjoy and to share. (Pastor Shannan will be at church for the denominational meetings following worship.)

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Reminder: Christmas Tree pickup by Club pack 165 will take place on Sunday afternoon, January 5 for those who signed up!

### **January 2025**

#  CHILDREN

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Nicole BalcunasBraydon WallDana OlsonSamatha NorbergShane Dubois | 88101213 |  |

####  Ethan Wall 25

####  ADULTS

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Jean CurtisMelissa MorinMark DuhamelJeff CrockettSusan LetourVictoria Fournier Andy Porter | 13612142020 |  | Anna BoisseBob ThorpDiane HequembourgStephanie HeflinPam ChathamErik EkmanEric WebbJulie Norberg | 2222232529292929 |

Anniversaries

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Jeff & Janice VickersSherry & Kevin ChuteAllan & Gerri Babineau | 81830 |