PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF CHATHAM TOWNSHIP

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER PROGRAMS 2026



The Presbyterian Church of Chatham Township
240 Southern Blvd., Chatham, NJ 07928



The four pillars of our common life unite us to one another and empower us to live out our mission and vision.

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PASTOR TOM

Dear Friends,

Have you thought about what you want from the holiday season this year? It's a question worth pondering before we get too deep into the flurry of planning, purchasing, and scheduling that is likely to crowd the coming weeks. One way to find the answer might be to imagine ourselves looking back, after all the decorations have been put away and the thank-you notes are in the mail, and asking: What will we most appreciate about how we've spent our time and energy?

There's a natural tendency to approach this time of year with grand ambitions about all we'll accomplish, the gifts we'll give, and the gatherings we'll host for family and friends. These are wonderful aims to the extent that they help us experience the season's joy, but they can also lead us to place outsized expectations on ourselves, on others in our holiday orbit, and on the family traditions we feel bound to uphold. The danger, of course, is that when we try to do too much – to create the holiday magic through our own efforts – the season meant to fill us up can leave us running on empty.

The good news is that there is another way, one that is simpler and focused on the things that matter most. The gratitude, peace, and wonder we long for are freely offered gifts, and our part is simply to make room to receive them. That is the invitation of Advent: to prepare not by doing more, but by clearing space for God to arrive.

That's the kind of holiday season we're planning at PCCT this year, one that goes deeper rather than bigger and is intentional about drawing close and celebrating the connections we share. There's still plenty going on, with lots of ways to take part in the season together: bringing our gifts forward on Harvest Sunday, watching our children retell the Christmas story at the family service, and lifting candles as we sing "Silent Night" on Christmas Eve.

This guide is meant to help you find your way to these moments and choose the ones that best fit your schedule, your interests, and what you'll hold dear long after the candles are blown out and the creche is stored away. Come as you are, as often as you can, and let this be a season that gives back more than it asks of you.

I look forward to seeing you in the coming weeks.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Tom



November is filled with special Sundays, beginning with All Saints' Day and a remembrance of members who died this year, which are followed by *Pastor in the Pews* and our annual Stewardship/Harvest Sunday.
Advent begins the Sunday of Thanksgiving weekend.

PASTOR IN THE PEWS

Gratitude
Sunday, November 15

Join us for a special service of worship planned and led by members of the congregation who will be reflecting on the theme of Gratitude and how it reorients us away from worries over scarcity and not having enough to a greater sense of appreciation and abundance.
If you would be interested in being part of the design team, leading a portion of this service, or sharing a story of your own, please contact **Pastor Tom.**

SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE

Tuesday, November 17, 7:00 pm in Halldorson Hall

Led by the Deacons, Pastor Tom, and organist Steve Zimmerman, this contemplative service of candlelight and music provides an opportunity to honor and give thanks for our departed friends and loved ones. During the service, we will take time to remember by name those who have recently passed and those long-missed during the holiday season. All are welcome to join us as we acknowledge our grief and claim the hope we share in God's eternal love.

COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING SERVICE

Tuesday, November 24, 7:30 pm
Saint Patrick Church, 85 Washington Ave, Chatham

Join with Chatham friends and neighbors across all faiths and traditions in a joyous celebration of the many blessings we share. The service is sponsored by the Interfaith Council of the Chathams and Green Village. Offerings of non-perishable food items will be received for Chatham United Methodist Food Pantry; monetary donations will go to the Chatham Emergency Squad.

GRATITUDE

DINNER CHURCH

Wednesday, November 11
6:00 – 7:15 pm, Mulford Hall

Join us as the PCCT community gathers for an informal, interactive, and inter-generational worship service centered around a shared meal. Seasonally themed prayers, music, and a brief message will invite those who attend into the sustaining presence of God as a source of hope and strength. There is nothing you need to bring. Expect to be fed in body, mind, and spirit and to be on your way home no later than 7:15 pm. Dinner Church dates for 2027 are: Jan 13, Feb 10 (Ash Wed), and May 5. RSVP **HERE!**

"FRIENDSGIVING" FELLOWSHIP EVENT

Saturday, November 14, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

All are invited to a special "Friendsgiving" at the home of Dave and Ann Whitman. Hosted by the Fellowship Committee, please bring a beverage of your choice and an appetizer to share.

HARVEST FESTIVAL

Sunday, November 22, 10:00 am

Join us in celebrating Thanksgiving by bringing non-perishables to worship on November 22, for donation to the Interfaith Food Pantry in Morris Plains. Following worship, please join us in Mulford Hall to help sort food. Many hands make light work for this wonderful cause! This is a Faith Forward opportunity. If possible, please bring your donations in reusable bags which will also be donated.

This is also Stewardship Sunday! Please bring your Pledge cards for our Stewardship 2027 campaign. Giving Trees will be up too! Grab a tag or two!

GIVING TREES

Sunday, November 22

Our Annual Giving Trees will be in the Upper Lobby. Help brighten someone's Christmas by choosing a tag or two. Additional online giving options are also available.

ADVENT

This Advent, we take our cue from the prophet Isaiah: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord." Instead of adding more to an already full season, our worship will invite us to slow down and make room for waiting, for wonder, and for the grace that has appeared in Jesus Christ.



Week by week, familiar scriptures and beloved carols will carry us from the longing of Advent to the joy of Christmas Eve.

November 29 – Soon but Not Yet
Isaiah 64:1-9; Mark 13:24-37

December 6 – Prepare the Way
Isaiah 40:1-11; Mark 1:1-8

December 13 – Lessons & Carols

December 20 – Greetings, Favored One
Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26; Luke 1:26-38

Christmas Eve – Grace Has Appeared
Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-20

I hope you'll make time to worship with us, in person or online, as we prepare our hearts once again to receive the gift of Christ's coming.

CHRISTMAS EVE



CHRISTMAS EVE

Thursday, December 24

Children and Youth Christmas Service, 3 pm (see page 8)
Led by Director of Youth and Family Ministries, Elizabeth Monkemeier
Director of Music, Caitlyn Huetz and Church Organist, Steve Zimmerman
Children & Youth Music Groups

Candlelight Service, 5 pm
The Rev. Thomas A Brown
The Rev. Dr. Edwin D. Aponte
Music led by Director of Music, Caitlyn Huetz and Church Organist, Steve Zimmerman

Candlelight Service, 11 pm
The Rev. Thomas A Brown
Music led by Director of Music, Caitlyn Huetz and Church Organist, Steve Zimmerman

YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRIES

Children and Youth Christmas Service



Thursday, December 24th at 3:00 PM

All Children and Youth from Pre-K to 12th grade are invited to participate in our 3PM Service.

Ways to Be Involved

Choir
Handbells
Pageant Role (PreK-5)
Worship Speaker (MS+HS)
Planning Team (MS+HS)
HS Volunteer

Mandatory Rehearsals

Sunday, December 6th
4:00–7:00 PM
Sunday, December 20th
4:00–7:00 PM
Thursday, December 24th
2 PM call, 3 PM service

Please indicate your interest by filling out this form!

REGISTER HERE >

Winter Programming

Chat and Chew

Join us almost EVERY Wednesday this Winter for our weekly children's fellowship!
From 5:30 to 7:00pm, we make dinner, play games, and enjoy music time with Ms. Caitlyn!
All are welcome - please bring friends!
Register here!

Please note date for **Dinner Church.** We would love to have families attend together as we expand our worship opportunities!

2026 Dates:
November 4
November 11 - **FAMILY CHAT + CHEW at Dinner Church**
November 18
December 2
December 9
December 16

MS Youth Fellowship

Grades 5 to 8 are welcome at our Middle School Youth Fellowship Events! On Sundays from 5:00-7:00 pm, we will share dinner, play games, and other themed activities.
All are welcome - please bring friends!
Register here!

Sunday, November 1st
Manhunt, Movie, and More

Sunday, November 22nd
Capture the Flag/Game Night

Sunday, December 13th
Christmas Party

Parents Night Out

Parents Night Out, Kids Night In!
Mark your calendars for our 2026 PNO Dates!
From 5:00 to 8:00 pm, we have dinner, play games, and enjoy a movie! Ms. Emma, Ms. Elizabeth, and volunteers will lead this program for young children through grade 8!

2026 Date:
November 20th
NEW! Saturday, December 12th Elf's Day Out

Register here!

Senior High Fellowship

Grades 9 to 12 are welcome at our Senior High Fellowship Events! On Sundays from 5:00-7:00 pm, we will gather for service and fellowship opportunities. Ideas welcome!
All are welcome - please bring friends!
Register here!

Sunday, November 15th
Friendsgiving

Sunday, December 6th
Cookie Baking Fellowship

Church School

Church School is for all children in grades K to 8 and begins in worship. Children leave Worship together at 10:15 am with Ms. Elizabeth. Children in grades K - 4 gather in A-5, while grades 5 - 8 gather in the Youth Suite.

In order to have two separate Church School Classes, we need your help! This is a limited time commitment, and lesson plans will be provided.

Please use this form to register for teaching.

Please use this link to sign up for a Sunday!

THOUGHTS, QUESTIONS, IDEAS? EMAIL ELIZABETH AT: EMONKEMEIER@PCCT-NJ.ORG

Winter and Advent

Music Ministries

Fall Music so far, and what's to come!

So far this Fall, we've had such a wonderful time in rehearsals preparing music for each Sunday. Thank you to those who spent time with us in October at the Bell Open House and the Choir Coffeehouse.

As we aproach Advent, we will be preparing special musical offerings for the holidays, including the Lessons and Carols service on December 13th, and Christmas Eve services on Dec 24th. This is a bustling time for the music program at PCCT, a time where all our ensembles and musicians come together to celebrate in song. We hope to see you this Advent and winter, whether that is at rehearsal on Thursdays or in the Sanctuary on Sundays!







Adult Music



PCCT Adult Ensembles in Advent

Advent is just around the corner, which means we will be gearing up for special music for the holidays!

Sanctuary Ringers: Thursdays, 6:45 pm - 7:45 pm
Chancel Choir: Thursdays, 7:45 pm - 9pm

(Highschool aged musicians are highly encouraged to join!)

Do you play an instrument and are interested in playing during a service this year? Email Caitlyn Huetz for more information.

Sign up to get emails from me!

2026-27 PCCT Choral Scholars

Have you heard the Choral Scholars this year? The Scholars are an integral part of our program made up of young professional choristers who serve as section leaders in the Chancel Choir. Hear them sing every Sunday with the choir, and during special musical performances.

From left to right: Abdon, Kira, Sarah and Cam

Join us for Advent

The Advent season is a wonderful time to get involved with music @ PCCT!

if you are someone who wants to join the Chancel Choir or Sanctuary Ringers and can't full time, consider joining us for the holiday season!

Advent Season Rehearsals start November 17th and go through December leading up to Christmas Eve.

Advent Sundays:
Nov 29th
Dec 6th
Dec 13th (L+C)
Dec 20th
Dec 24th (5pm, 11pm)

Children's Music



PCCT Children's Ensembles

Join us this winter and Advent season! There are numerous ways to get involved with children's music, singing and playing for special services, and the Children's Christmas Eve Service! All are welcome to join in.

PCCT Children's Choir (Kindergarten+)

Youth Ringers (grades 5+)

PCCT Youth Chamber Musicians (4th+)

Children and Youth Christmas Service + Holiday Choir

Calling all Intrumentalists!

Does your child play an instrument in school? Are they interested in sharing their music with the congregation? Join Chamber Musicians!

Email Director Caitlyn Huetz for details on how to participate!

Performance Opportunities

Wednesday November 11th: Dinner Church! 6 pm

Sunday November 22nd: Harvest Sunday, 10 am (Youth Ringers)

Sunday December 13th: Lessons & Carols, 10 am (Children's Choir)

Look out for an email from Director Caitlyn Huetz for rehearsals and practices for this winters performances!



Lessons and Carols
Sunday, December 13, 10:00 am

Join us for this special worship service blending music performed by PCCT music groups, along with youth and adult leaders sharing Scripture and featuring festive music and many "sing-a-longs." Don't miss this family friendly celebration of Advent and Christmas.

A Festive Faith Forward! Carols and Coffee
Sunday, December 20, 11:00 am

Join us for a fun and festive holiday songfest with PCCT's own Sandy Batten! Stop in to sing a few of your favorite Christmas carols and enjoy seasonal refreshments after worship in Mulford Hall. All ages and voices are welcome as we sing well-known and much loved tunes.





TREASURED TRADITIONS







Cookie Walk and Soup to Soothe Souls
Saturday, December 12, 9:30 - 11:00 am



Your help is needed to make this ever-popular event a success! This is Women's Ministries biggest fundraiser of the year. To bake, make soup and/or volunteer to help Sign-up **HERE**

Cookie Walk: When you are baking your Christmas cookies, please add an extra batch of 2-4 dozen for this event.

Soup to Soothe Souls: Would you be willing to fill 4 one-quart containers with your favorite soup for our sale? This is a great family event and cannot happen without your support. Soup containers and labels can be picked up in the church office or from the table in the Lounge. Please sign up to help **HERE** or through our weekly eblasts.



Cookies and soup can be dropped off at the church any time before Friday December 11 between 8:30 am and 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday.

Cookies and soup sell out quickly.





WOMEN'S GROUPS

A New Day
First Tuesday of the month
November 3 (Halldorson Hall), December 1(Offsite Holiday Luncheon)
11:30 am - 1:30 pm

Our enthusiastic group of senior women meet on the first Tuesday of the month from 11:30 -1:30. Bring a sandwich and beverage, delicious desserts are provided. Enjoy devotions, new friendships and camaraderie while having lunch followed by varied programs and activities. Please join us - all senior women are welcome. Transportation can be provided, if needed.
Coordinator: **Linda Patten**

The Next Act
November 9, 23: 9:30 am - 11:00 am, New Parlor
December 7: 9:00 am (cookie baking in the church kitchen)

This group meets twice monthly to navigate the next phase of our lives through prayer, fellowship, discussion, and healthy doses of laughter. Any woman is welcome to join us!
Coordinators: Lisa Boles and Deb Ahsler **pcctoffice@pcct-nj.org**

Prayer Shawl Ministry
November 16, No meeting in December (the third Monday of every month)
7 pm, Griswold Parlor

Calling all knitters and crocheters - beginners, experts, and anyone in between are welcome! The prayer shawl ministry meets on the third Monday of each month during the program year. Refreshments will be provided, so we can sip, stitch, chat, and learn to knit. Yarn and needles will be provided if you're a beginner or don't have a project in the works.
Coordinators: Anne Fields and Patti Montefusco.



WOMEN'S GROUPS

Milestones

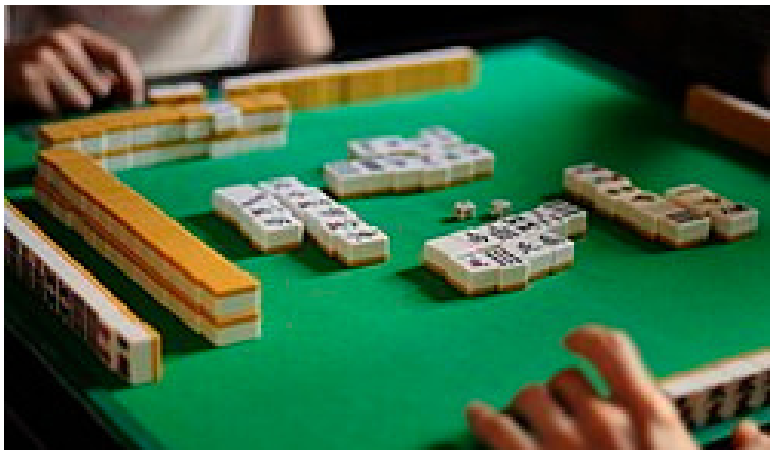
"Milestones, embracing grace in the middle place."
Future monthly dates to be announced in eblasts and bulletins. This group of PCCT midlife moms meet monthly for an evening of fellowship and topic discussion.
Please contact Stacy McCann for more information.

OUTSIDE SUPPORT GROUPS

Compassionate Friends
Third Sundays (Second Sundays in June and December), 7:00 p.m. in Halldorson Hall
Compassionate Friends provides comfort, hope and support to families experiencing the death of a child and helps others better assist the grieving family.
Website: **www.compassionatefriends.org**

Alcoholics Anonymous, Tuesdays, 7:00 p.m. Theos Room
Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of people who come together to solve their drinking problem. It doesn't cost anything to attend A.A. meetings. Membership is open to anyone who wants to do something about their drinking problem. A.A.'s primary purpose is to help alcoholics to achieve sobriety.





MEN'S GROUP

Men's Group Monthly Gatherings
First Saturdays, November 7, December 5, 7:30 am, New Parlor
All men of the church are invited to join us for coffee and a light breakfast. Casual conversation will be followed by a more focused topical discussion on matters of faith and life. Monthly meetings will be supplemented by occasional social and fellowship events during the evening and/or on weekends.

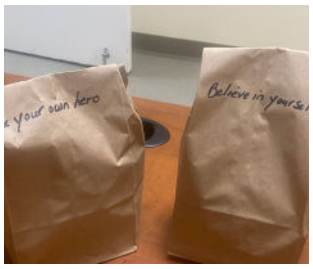
NEW GROUP! MAH JONGG

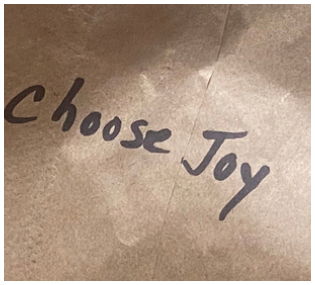
Every other Thursday, Halldorson Hall
November 5, 19
December 3, 17
2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

We will be playing every other Thursday afternoon from 2-4 pm at the church and will start with three - four tables. Please bring your National Mah Jongg League, Inc. 2026 card. It would also be helpful to have additional sets of Mah Jongg tiles. We can accommodate players with at least some knowledge of Mahjong as we are not a teaching group. For those who are just learning and need extra help playing, we hope to be able to find someone to teach in the spring. (In the mean time, consider taking lessons at the Adult School of the Chathams, Madison and Florham Park!) Please contact Deb Ahsler, Pat Frank or Patti Montefusco with questions and to be added to our email distribution. Sign-up to play HERE.









MISSION AND OUTREACH

Community FoodBank of New Jersey, Hillside
Saturday, November 21
9:00 am - 11:00 am

Volunteers ages 12 and up are invited to join us at the Community Food Bank, located in Hillside. Depending on the day, we may end up assembling food boxes, sorting donated items, or repackaging bulk food for distribution to local warehouses. We never really know what's in store until we arrive! Participants must sign up in advance by contacting Joslin Ruffle. Carpooling can be arranged for those who need it.

nourish.NJ
Monthly Breakfast Bags
Collection of bags before the 4th Thursday of Every Month. Leave in Church Office

Sign-up **HERE** (It's helpful to know how many bags to expect.)

As these bags are moved several times before they even arrive at nourish.NJ, it really helps to have no more than 12 taped closed breakfast bags in a box/large bag. Fresh Direct bags are very helpful and easier to use than cardboard boxes. Please keep an eye out for friends or neighbors who might use Fresh Direct as we always need more bags.
Shopping List: small box of cereal; box of shelf stable milk like Parmalat; 100% fruit juice box or small water bottle; granola bar; fruit cup; plastic spoon; napkin; brown lunch bag; tape.
Assembly Instructions: Please wash hands and wear surgical gloves when assembling **Breakfast Bags:** put one of each item in a brown bag and tape the bag shut; drop off any day during the scheduled weeks between the hours of 8:30 am and 4:00 pm Mon. – Thurs., by 2:00 pm on Fridays during the summer.
Coordinator: **Story Savage**

Faith Forward

FALL CALENDAR

We gather as a community following Sunday worship to strengthen our bonds with one another and engage the world through service and education.

FELLOWSHIP TIME ADULT EDUCATION HANDS-ON-MISSION SPECIAL EVENTS

Date	Event
November 1	New Member Reception
November 15	Addressing Food Insecurity: Action, Faith, and Community Impact Guest speaker Terry Connolly, Chief Executive Officer of Nourish.nj See page 18 to learn more about the Breakfast Bags we provide monthly. We welcome more people to get involved with this crucial ministry.
November 22	Harvest Festival/Food Sorting
December 6	Advent Around the World
December 20	Carols and Coffee



Breakfast Bags



Sorting Food





FAITH FORWARD:

ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS ON SUNDAYS AFTER WORSHIP

Food Insecurity in Morris County and How to Help
Sunday, November 15
11:15 am, Halldorson Hall

nourish.NJ (formerly the Community Soup Kitchen) has been fortunate to partner with PCCT for decades to help our neighbors experiencing food insecurity,homelessness and poverty. At nourish.NJ, we know that hunger is never just about food. It's about being unseen,unheard, and unsure of what tomorrow holds. That's why we do more than serve healthy meals—we show up, in person, everyday, building trust and connection through nourishment and dignity. From that trust, everything else becomes possible. We walk with our neighbors through crisis, helping them access and navigate housing, financial assistance, and other critical services to help them move toward a stable future. As Morris County's most comprehensive response to hunger and its root causes, we believe no one should face life's hardest moments alone. Because when food opens the door, we stay and help carry the weight.

Join Terry Connolly, CEO of nourish.NJ for an update on the state of food insecurity in the county, learn about nourish.NJ's programs and participate in a discussion of ways to get involved and make a difference.

ADVENT AROUND THE WORLD
Sunday, December 6
11:15 am, Halldorson Hall
Join Pastor Ed Aponte for a multi-sensory exploration of how Christian communities across the globe celebrate the season of Advent. Through a rich tapestry of sights and sounds, this guided tour highlights the vibrant traditions, sacred music, visual arts, and distinctive cultural customs that reflect our shared Christian faith around the world. Come deepen your connection to the global Church and experience the universal spirit of the season. All are welcome!

THE BIBLE STUDY CREW!

All are welcome to join this lively group.



PASTOR'S BIBLE STUDY: THE BOOK OF RUTH

Wednesday Mornings at 9:30 am, Theos Room

Members and friends are invited to join us for an informal, conversation-based study of the book of Ruth. This short, beautifully crafted book tells the story of two women - Ruth and her mother-in-law Naomi. After both are widowed, Ruth chooses to cast her lot with Naomi and follow Naomi's God, a decision that reshapes both their lives and, ultimately, threads its way into the lineage of King David. Along the way the study will explore themes of loyalty, belonging, and how God's providence moves through ordinary acts of faithfulness and generosity. All are invited to join us as we explore this beloved four-chapter book together.



STEWARDSHIP 2027

We are excited to announce the launch of our 2027 Stewardship Campaign, **Footprints of Faithfulness: Our shared journey continues**

Our theme reminds us that every act of generosity leaves an imprint. Through the gifts of time, talent, and financial support, we help shape the path that others will one day follow. We walk in the footsteps of those whose faithfulness built the church we cherish today, and through our own faithful giving, we prepare the way for future generations.

Our stewardship goal is **$730,000**.

You should have already received your pledge card for our **Footprints of Faithfulness: Our shared journey continues** campaign.

Stewardship Sunday will once again coincide with **Harvest Sunday on November 22**, a day of celebration, giving, and support. Let's continue the journey together and leave our footprints. Thank you in advance for your generous support.

STAFF

The Rev. Thomas A. Brown, Pastor, tbrown@pcct-nj.org
The Rev. Dr. Edwin D. Aponte, Parish Associate, eaponte@pcct-nj.org
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