

December 2015

Dear members and friends of Christ the King Presbyterian Church,

What is the church? A seemingly simple question, yet how one answers it is so important. The church is a number of things: a place we *gather* to worship; a place we come to fellowship; a place to learn; a place to witness the gospel; a place to serve one another, our community, and the wider world. But if we think about it, all of these things—worship, fellowship, learning, witness, and serving— happen outside "church" as well.

So why is the church special? Notice the word above—*gather*. In the Old Testament, the people of God were gathered in the nation of Israel and in the Temple where the Lord dwelt and met with his people. In the New Testament, the gathered believers *are* the temple and the place God uniquely meets with his people. The church is different from every other organization or group. We don't gather together based on a common nationality, race, gender, interest or political persuasion. We gather, rather are gathered by the Lord, as a family, a covenant family who have been given new hearts and adopted into a new family.

What's special about the church? It's the special place where God meets with his people in a special way. When we gather together, the Lord meets with us in a way he does nowhere else. This Advent season is about the Father sending his Son to redeem and perfect his gathered family.

Search

As we enter this Advent season, your Session and Search Committee know and share the longing to see God bring a shepherd to this family. But, as we wait, let us share an encouraging story. We were meeting recently with a possible candidate and his wife. He asked us what have been some of the challenges we've faced during this transition. One of the women on the committee answered his question in a different and revealing way. She said the Lord has made us a stronger church during this transition. Several people began to nod and offer examples, and we realized how the Lord has used this time for us to grow stronger as a body and to love and serve one another in new and fresh ways. While we rejoice in this growth, continue to pray for the Search Committee as we pursue particular persons and seek to discern the Lord's will.

Financial

As we approach year end, though we are under budget in giving, we are exceeding our expenses and thus slowly building back a reserve in anticipation of bringing on a new pastor. As you consider your year-end giving, one area in which we desire to continue progress is debt reduction. Our second note with Marine Bank is just under \$14,000. It would be wonderful to retire this debt sooner. Any gifts so designated will be applied to the debt. If we receive gifts in excess of that amount, we will apply those to our first mortgage debt. The Lord has been good to us, and the officers appreciate your continued faithfulness and support.

We pray in this Advent season that you might know real joy and the love of your Father who delights to do good for his children.

In His service and yours,

The Session