

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As the new year is under way, we are grateful that 2020 is behind us. As we have learned this past year, the world around us continues to change. Preparing for the new year, we noted that the number of offering envelope boxes continue to decrease. A main reason for this is a changing shift for many who have direct payment sent to the church. Additionally, we began offering online giving as another option that keeps us changing with the times. However, these changes revealed that we rarely get the initial offering anymore because it was an additional envelope in the boxes that prompted and challenged those giving to give an additional amount beyond their pledge.

What was also discovered is that most people didn't know that this initial offering was used to pay the per capita for that member. Additionally, it revealed that most congregants are unaware of per capita. Our current stated clerk of the PC (USA) put it simply "Per Capita is crucial to the overall health of the PC (USA), because it binds presbyteries, synods and congregations together in one church." -J. Herbert Nelson. This church has been faithful in paying per capita apportionment for each of our members, whether or not it was received, because the leadership recognizes the importance of doing ministry together with the wider church. I believe that this congregation will follow suit in recognizing this importance too and commit to paying their own per capita. This year's per capita rate is \$39.13 per member. I would encourage each of us, if able, to pay our own per capita. Some, who feel called to do so, can support another member by paying their per capita because they don't have the means to do so.

Let us also support one another in worshipping this communion Sunday as we celebrate the beginning of the Epiphany season. We continue with the hybrid in-person worship. For those at home it means preparing your worship space. For those in person, it means wearing masks, keeping safe distances and waiting to be dismissed by an usher. This Sunday, as mentioned, will include a celebration of the Lord's Supper, which means I would invite you to bring your communion elements along with you to your worship space, wherever that might be. Let us support one another in many ways not only financially, but also by loving each other through sharing Christ's peace, hope and joy in new ways.

In His peace,

Pastor Nicki

YouTube live and video recordings <https://www.espresbyterian.com/worship/> or <https://www.youtube.com/user/ESPresbyterian>

click on the link below near the time the service begins at 10:00am to watch the live stream <https://www.facebook.com/espresbyterian/>

Additionally, bulletins and an online hymnal have been put on the website and can be found at <https://www.espresbyterian.com/worship/sunday-bulletin/>

Ways to give- mail or drop of check/cash through no contact mail slot in office window. Drop off envelope in offering plates before or after worship services. Donate on our website by going to the home page at <https://www.espresbyterian.com/> and clicking on the Donate button in the upper right corner.