

The HOPE Diamond

In our national museum in Washington, The Smithsonian, the number one item people want to see is the “Hope Diamond.” At 44 carats it isn’t the largest diamond in the world but it may be the most beautiful. It was mailed to the museum in the late 1950’s through the US Mail in an ordinary brown cardboard box. Since no one would think to send such a treasure through the mail, it was considered the safest way to transport it. *Extraordinary things can come wrapped in very ordinary packages.*

Another year may seem ordinary to you, especially if you’ve lived for a while. But inside this ordinary package of January 1st is a gift from God that exceeds the value of the Hope Diamond. This is a priceless gift of time. This is a fresh start, a new chance. It’s not a time to be all frowny and pensive! A new year isn’t a problem to be solved but a blessing to be experienced. So let’s thank God for it and seek his wisdom for how to use it.

God speaks to us primarily through his Son and his Word (Hebrews 1:1-3, Psalm 119:105). But he also speaks to us through circumstances and experiences *if* we have the wisdom to listen. We listen best when we pray. Please! Get off of your digital devices, and get on your knees. In the quiet, listen to God.

2016 was filled with unpredictable events. We cannot see the future, but God does. Planning is fine, but the first step in wise planning is to “inquire of the Lord.” Unlike us, he can see over the horizon of the future. Ask him to show you the way. Pray first; plan second. **“Many are the plans in a man’s heart, but it is the LORD’s purpose that prevails”** (Proverbs 19:21). If God’s way is going to carry the day, then how pointless it is to leave God out!

So... congratulations! You have already started off on the right foot! On this first day of 2017, you are beginning your new year with worship. That’s fantastic! And as a church we are beginning the year with a *“Month of Prayer & Fasting.”* This is our hope.

The mail doesn’t come on Sunday, but this time it has. Today God has sent you an ordinary brown box holding a Hope Diamond. It is the year of our Lord, 2017. Open it with prayer.

Mark

PRAISE GOD! Tim Davis was Baptized into Christ on Christmas Day!

God answered our prayers as we watched as one more precious soul was added to his fold! **Tim and his wife Carmen live at** 114 Second Avenue, Mount Ephraim, NJ 08059, 609-605-3592, 609-932-7552, timdavis@yahoo.com, cvelazquez240@yahoo.com (Kids: Carna 5, Tim Jr.). Welcome!

Happy New Year! What better time to turn to Jesus and have your sins washed away? The water and changing room are ready. Why put off being baptized? Talk to us. We want to help.

January/February, Ladies Classes & Men’s Classes Will Meet! The Men and teen boys will meet in the new basement downstairs. The Ladies and teen girls will meet in the Auditorium.

The NEW Ladies Room is now OPEN: Thank you to Howard Mansdoerfer, Adrian Gonzalez, and Thanh for the work they have done.

Thank You, Sandra Mendez and all those who helped with the Gingerbread Houses.

Haircuts for Missions is Jan. 14th

Sr. Youth Group will meet this Friday, January 6th at the Schoener’s home from 7-9pm.

Our January “Prayer & Fasting” Calendar is up! Sign up with an anonymous check-mark on the day you will pray and fast. This is the BEST way to start the new year. God is just waiting to bless us! (*read this week’s article on the left*).

Today's Worship Leaders

Worship Leader: Gerry Hogan

Welcome & Scripture: Scott Schoener (Psalm 25:1-10)

Opening Prayer: Bret Goen

Lord's Supper: Chet, Larry D., Henry Duncan, Thanh Ly

Scripture Before Message: Jon Jon Cook (Psalm 20:1-8)

Greeters: Jack Swinehart, Tim Jones, April Jones, Elaine Firman

Nursery Debbie & Jaela Next Week: Norma & Layla

Green Cleaning Team Jan. 4-7 **Hardee** Coordinates

OUTREACH/MINISTRY

Mark Finn – Preacher

Church Office- (856) 854-0197

ELDERS:

Rick Boyle (856) 986-4876

Tony Ceraso, Jr. (856) 278-6276

Bret Goen (856) 996-5267

Chet Churchill (609) 560-7179

Howard Mansdoerfer (609) 790-9969

Worship Total 130

Wed. PM 32

Contribution \$1,812

Budget Goal \$4,260

15-Minutes Daily with GOD: 28



Tim Davis
Baptized!



Collingswood Church of Christ

Church Website: www.ccc123.org

300 White Horse Pike

Collingswood, NJ 08107

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“Now faith is being **sure** of what we hope for and **certain** of what we do not see.” (Hebrews 11:1)

Is a New Year a NEW PROBLEM?



...no, it's a NEW BLESSING!