



Christ Presbyterian Church in The Hill

Chip M. Anderson, Pastor (203) 450-2299

158 Davenport Avenue, New Haven, CT 06519 – Worship and office address
135 Whitney Avenue, New Haven, CT 06510 – Mailing address



Gandalf: "You will have a tale or two to tell of your own when you come back."

Bilbo Baggins: "Can you promise I will come back?"

Gandalf: "No. And if you do, you will not be the same." ~The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey

"We need to 'smudge' ourselves with 'the hard complexities of the world'" ~Dietrich Bonhoeffer

September 5, 2023

Dear Partners and Co-workers in God's field,

In my Senior Year of Bible College, I was an intern at my home church. I had confessed to one of the pastors that it had been a very hard week. I will never forget what he said: *"If church work was easy, everyone would do it."*

As a pastor in the Hill, not one week goes by without some form of earthly or spiritual skirmish. (*"We do not wrestle against blood and flesh,"* Ephesians 6:12). My call as a pastor in the Hill is to be in the midst of their battles, messiness, and struggles—every day. On call at all times. Present among them in their own neighborhoods, on the streets and sidewalks, at their kitchen tables. *This is what you enable in your kind financial partnership—a pastor and wife living among those often forgotten by the world, and sadly, often by the church.* I have mentioned this before: most pastors in communities like the Hill do not live in the community. *Your support makes it possible for us to live in their midst, as neighbors—a present pastor and wife.* Trust me—they notice.

I used to work in the social action world, basically 9 to 5 and off on the weekends . . . I got to go home . . . here, I live . . . I am here 24/7 because it's my home. *Thank you for making this possible.*

This season of ministry has been both exhilarating and exhausting. (Most of you all know by now, I did the last five months of this FY recovering from open heart surgery.) Yet still, it has been an incredible journey that God has Lisa and me on—a *journey that you enable with your prayers and kind support.* Amidst the rapid pace, the almost daily crisis, and constant messiness, there are wonderful moments—unexpected moments—that remind me that God is working and using us. Quick story . . . and one of the reasons I am so blessed to be a pastor here in the Hill.

I had just got back to our apartment around 6:00pm. It was dark out. I went to check mail at our front door. Barely had stepped out to check the box and I hear from across the street: *"Hey, Pastor Chip!"* Two young men were walking by across the street. *"Good evening!"* Then one of the young men asked: *"Pastor can you pray for me? Pray for the whole 127 Carlisle Street."* I did. Right then. Loudly! For this young man and his household. And after I had finished the words *"In Jesus' name, Amen!"* you could hear others, maybe 5 or 6, who were walking by or sitting on their stoops nearby, plus the two young men, shout, *"Amen!"*

Humbled and blessed to be called "Pastor" and to have been asked for prayer right there in the street. *God, do something in this neighborhood. For those young men. Bring salvation, light, and blessing right here on this street.*

In order to continue living and ministering here in the Hill, I must continue to raise support. While the congregation is doing much better in its Sunday offerings, this alone will never be enough to sustain our ministry here. Last year (FY23), the graciousness of our financial partners enabled us to meet our responsibility for the ministry budget: \$50,000. We are so appreciative of your generosity! This year (FY24), we need to increase our annual goal by \$8,000 in order to maintain our FY24 budget (and no we didn't increase our ministry budget, we actually had to decrease it). We are tasked to raise \$58,000 this year (9/1-8/31). We can only do this with your help and support.

Fundraising is difficult. It's been hard since 2017. But many of you have been so gracious to share of your own resources that enable us to live here in the Hill and pastor and grow CPC in The Hill—and pastor many who'd not have a present pastor to talk to or to pray with. If you haven't partnered financially with us or have in the past—and appreciate our ministry here—please consider assisting us to meet this year's goal. *(The ways to contribute are on the bottom of the next page—one-time gifts and/or monthly support. Note even e-checks need to indicate CA/Hill.)*

Most of our ministries are outside, seeking to reach and minister to those who typically are not (or never) associated with church. We need to reach those who struggle with every aspect of life, don't wander far from their neighborhoods, often are overlooked in their potential for church life and usually don't have a pastor.

Sidewalk Thanksgiving—Our 5th annual Sidewalk Thanksgiving will serve 30 or more a full Thanksgiving meal. More than half will be homeless and the rest will be neighborhood families who cannot afford a thanksgiving dinner. I'll read some scripture and pray, and the people are served.

Kids Christmas Eve—This started out small 3 years ago with 10 kids. Last year we had over 30 kids show up, all receiving a small box of toys and games (thankfully from a supporter who made gift boxes for the kids). This event starts weeks earlier with Maxine leading the Read Out Loud kids in making Christmas ornaments that they will use to decorate a live outdoor tree with lights. We will also provide a community meal for all to enjoy. This event not only provides for the kids, but also helps us to interact as a church with the parents.

Saturday Sidewalk Breakfast & Church Service—It's incredible to find 40+ people showing up in front of the pastor's home every week. Each week we serve (Lisa makes!) oatmeal, French Toast Casserole, and turkey sausage, along with oranges, bananas, apples, breakfast bars, yogurt, coffee (which Lisa grounds) and OJ. We are also a drop off for a food rescue that offers our neighbors and the homeless a few items each week. We do this consistently each week in all sorts of weather. We also, each week, have a church service on the sidewalk.

Easter Sunrise Service—For the last four Easter mornings CPC in the Hill ladies gather all who are willing to get up early to see the Sunrise on Easter morning at the nearby Veterans Park, which sits on the waterfront in New Haven's harbor. The ladies put together a short Sunrise Service to celebrate and remember the morning that Jesus was raised from the dead.

"In His Midst" Summer Park BBQ—We just finished our 10th annual Park BBQ where we served (for 8 Wednesday evenings) an average of 90 kids, teenagers, and adults a meal. Two of the evenings we had 120 join us for the meal. After I've called out "*Dinner is ready; come and join us,*" 40 to 50 people will gather to listen to me preach an evangelistic message. Then, I pray and the folks line up for their meal. People would continue to come for about 45 minutes. On the last evening we also gave out 80 backpacks (donated by the Beacon Bikers, a local Christian Motorcycle Association chapter), along with some school supplies.

Kids Read Out Loud—Each Saturday Maxine gathers kids from the neighborhood for 3 hours to sit outside, reading a portion of a chapter book. The kids will be asked age-appropriate reading comprehension questions. Afterwards, the kids will all share prayer requests and be led in prayer. Kids can all go home with books to read. This activity is done all year, no matter the weather. The kids even show up when it snows!

Kids IMPACT Read Out Loud—For the first 5 Saturdays of the Summer an extra hour is added to the Read Out Loud to include a Bible Story, a snack time, and a craft activity. Each of our Christ Presbyterian Church plants and our CPC anchor church provides one of the craft times and the snack. There are typically 12 to 18 kids who gather for these special IMPACT Read Out Louds.

Outdoor Movie Nights—Friday nights from the end of June to the end of October, Maxine hosts a free movie (sometimes 2) for the kids. There is popcorn and a concession stand with hot dogs. At the last Friday evening we have a Harvest Party with pumpkins to decorate and host a community meal for all (including the parents).

Coffee & Conversations—I am creating a space where the pastor (me) can be available for a conversation. Mostly it's for the folks who come out on Saturdays to the Sidewalk Church, but others drop by. A kind of pastoral counseling time; a discipleship time; or simply a time to pray. I put out some good coffee and pastries. A little coffee bistro! Don't know what God is creating here, but I am trying to listen and see what happens.

Thanks for praying, my warriors. God is working and I still can't believe I get to be a part in it. *You all make this possible. Again, thank you for your financial partnership with us.*

Your co-workers in God's field,

Pastor Chip, & Lisa Anderson

Ways to donate—monthly payments or as one annual sum

- **E-Check or check** to "CPC New Haven"; memo "Hill/CA"; CPC New Haven, 135 Whitney Ave, New Haven, CT 06510
- **Online** at CPCintheHill.org > Donate > Donation Applied > "**Hill Church Planter—Rev. Chip Anderson**"



The ladies meet weekly from Fall to mid-June under Maxine's leadership. The ladies wanted one of their last gatherings to be fun and an outreach at the same time—so they did a *Paint & Sip* (and eat)—and still had their study.



Our Sunday service has been a blessing and an encouragement to us as a congregation. Jerry (the man to my left, who is an elder in training) helps me each Sunday with the Lord's Table.



Our 4th annual Sidewalk Thanksgiving served 30+ a home-cooked Thanksgiving meal, turkey with the trimmings, apple and pumpkin pies for dessert.



From the end of June through the last Friday in October, Maxine offers free Movies for neighborhood kids. These also help us connect to parents. There is a concession stand with (free) popcorn, drinks, hot dogs, candy, and chips. We end with a Harvest Party and a Community Meal for the kids and all who want to join us.



We hosted our 11th annual Hill Christmas Store, a partnership between our anchor church and ourselves, providing low-cost kids items for local families.



We host a Kids Christmas Eve, with presents, crafts, and a community meal for the kids and their parents—and anyone walking by! A few weeks earlier, the kids make ornaments for an outdoor Christmas tree they decorate. This is hosted late afternoon on Christmas Eve. We had 30 kids (and many parents) this past year.



Started a coffee time—*Coffee & Conversations*—to create a space for street folks and neighbors to talk to the pastor (me!). While we have both women and men stop by, most of my conversations are with the men.



Kids IMPACT Read Out Loud 2023



Hill young people at the Park BBQ



40 to 50 folks would often gather to hear my Park preaching before I pray for the meal.



The line at the Park BBQ



Our Anchor Church teens make and offer a nice bag lunch to our neighbors in Trowbridge Square Park; where we will soon serve a Wednesday evening meal (at our Park BBQ)



The Saturday Sidewalk Breakfast & Church Service. As you can see, meeting even in the rain. On the right, a good picture of much of our regular team and that day's volunteers. Below is a great picture of the kids that show up at the breakfast & church. And, there is a weekly food rescue dropped off.



We are so grateful for everyone who partners with us to make these ministries happen each week. Continue to pray that God uses us to minister to our Hill neighbors so that they would be drawn to follow Jesus. Thank-you.