

The Inkling

The News of First Presbyterian Church

January 2016

learnmovebelievestretchwelcomerestoredreamcommunicatecelebratepreparetrustenduranceplanninginheritexpandjusticewalkjoylighcreatorstoreself-control

completebuildsmilecaredspeakeachingwonderharmonyexaminationbravecontentmentexplorationpatience

playfulcouragestronglovingquietgrowthdevotionconnectionwomensfriendadventurenurturepeacebeauty

Word for the New Year

Another new year is upon us. Resolutions and parties, fireworks and kisses are all traditional ways to mark the New Year in this country. Another tradition that I have found a bit more valuable has been to prayerfully choose a word for the year.

One year the word I picked was “playful.” I know how to work, but I am not all that good at playing – unless that means lying in a hammock reading a good book! It is still a challenge for me to find my playful side – it tends to come out only when I can stop worrying about what I should be doing!

To choose a word is a challenge to grow. Write down words that seem appropriate for you and then meditate on them, think them through, write about them, pray about them, share them with a friend. Then choose one that will be a focus for you in the coming year.

So often we remain content with what is already in our lives. But God is always calling us deeper into the knowledge of divinity, and into the knowledge of ourselves. Take some time as the years change to ponder what word might be the right one to challenge you or to cause you to grow.

When you have the word you feel speaks to you, write it on something – and put it somewhere where you will see it with some regularity. Keep it in your wallet or put it on the mirror so you will see it in the morning. Keep it with your Bible. Ask God to help you to grow into the word – whatever it may be.

I’m considering possibilities, playful (again), devotion, connection. What are your words? Which one will rise to the top to accompany you through the year 2016?

-Pastor Susan

explorationpatiencereleaseassurancefervorventuretruthencouragementguidancediscipleshiphealthpreparationdepthjourneyvisionzealgraciousnessprayerfamily

Scripture Readings for Sundays in January

January 3: Matthew 2:1-12, Psalm 72, and Isaiah 60:1-6

January 10: TBD

January 17: Psalm 36:5-10, 1 Corinthians 12:1-11, John 2:1-11

January 24: Nehemiah 8:1-10, Psalm 19, 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a, Luke 4:14-21

January 31: Jeremiah 1:4-10, Psalm 71:1-6, 1 Corinthians 13:1-13, Luke 4:21-30



Stewardship 2016 - Update and Thanks

For those who offered your pledge for the financial support of the life, mission and ministry of First Presbyterian Church for 2016, you deserve your own “commemorative Stewardship trading card” ...



But in place of that, please accept our congregation’s heartfelt “*thank you.*”

The Session’s 2016 budget reflects continued support of our Interim Pastor Susan, our commitment to extend our work for justice and peace through an increase of discretionary funds for Mission of over 50% in the past two years, continued exterior maintenance on the Manse and property landscaping and funds a Pastor Nominating Committee’s search expenses. The resulting Stewardship Pledge Goal is \$302,000 for 2016.

Over the past month and a half, our congregation has responded faithfully pledging a total of nearly \$253,500. This is 84% of our goal. Of the 75 individuals or households who pledged, five are new pledges. (Note: figures are as of the date this article was submitted December 21.)

Pledges toward 2016 are still being received. If you have not yet had the opportunity to pledge, we encourage you to do so now. You can simply email a note in confidence to firstpreschurchstewardship@gmail.com. Pledge cards are also available on the welcome table and can be placed in the offering plate.

The opportunity to be part of this active and engaged worshiping community is truly a blessing. Thank you for your continued and renewed support.

David B. Miller
Elder, Chair of Stewardship

Report from the December Meeting of Session

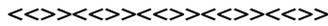
Each meeting of Session opens with a devotion and prayer by one of the elders. This month Betty Whitney spoke movingly and meaningfully of the responsibilities of Christian hospitality and of the presence of God she has felt in her work with IRIS.

Christian responsibility was also a theme of a special presentation to Session by Ralph Jones on a proposed overture to Presbytery about Fossil Fuel divestment by the PCUSA. Session first considered the overture, which came from the mission committee, in November and asked the committee for more information. After the presentation and further discussion, Session voted to forward the overture to Presbytery for consideration and vote.

In other news: the Mission Study Committee is taking shape and will likely meet for the first time in early January; the 2014 financial accounts have been audited (with Session's thanks to auditors Bonnie Sherman and Teddy Hogle); the problem skylights in the Gathering Hall are being tackled; the mission committee is looking at how the new long-term version of Abraham's Tent can be supported financially.

And finally, the December meeting was the last regular Session meeting for outgoing ruling elders Jim Duncan (finance), Scott Funston (CLOC), Elizabeth Gill (Christian Education), and David Miller (stewardship). Pastor Susan thanked them all for their service, an expression of gratitude reinforced by the remaining members of Session.

Rona Johnston Gordon
Clerk of Session



New Elders and Nominating Committee Members for 2016

At the December 6, 2015 Congregational Meeting, new elders and Nominating Committee members at-large were elected.

They are:

Session-Class of 2018:

Philip Phiri
John Dinkler
Gary Cline
Robert Williams

Nominating Committee Members at-Large:

Tim McCloskey
Mike Tenney
Betsy Mussman
Elizabeth Gill

FPCNH Music News



Many thanks to the members of our choir, and to our soloists Christy Purnell, Beth Aura Miller, and Ken Balakrishnan, for their inspiring singing in the Christmas program on Sunday, December 13, and on Christmas Eve. Thanks also to violinist Sophie Latham and to Ellie Latham for their music in the Children's and Youth Service on December 20. We all appreciate all of these musicians for the sharing of their musical gifts.

As the choir looks forward to January and February, we see that Lent and Easter come very early this year: Ash Wednesday is February 10, Palm Sunday is March 20, and Easter March 27. We welcome anyone who would like to sing with us in the next few weeks of Epiphany and beyond, and then in the Lenten and Easter seasons that follow.

-Patrick McCreless

Abraham's Tent 2016

The seventh year of Abraham's Tent is now under way. For the next 12 weeks Congregations in the greater New Haven area will be hosting 12 homeless men for a week.

Save the week of Monday, February 22nd to Monday, February 29th. This is the week that that First Presbyterian will be co-hosting with First and Summerfield Methodist Church in New Haven. Sign-up sheets will be up Sunday, January 17th, followed by an information meeting during Friendship Hour. We will need meal preparers, hosts, overnight volunteers, as well as others who want to be involved .

See Brian Gray or email him at brian_gry@yahoo.com for more information. Watch the Bulletin each week for further updates and announcements.

Refugees in New Haven

On November 29, Ashley Makar, Community Liaison of IRIS (Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services) spoke to a large FPCNH group right after coffee hour. There is clearly a great deal of interest in the current refugee crisis, much need, and much to be done. While Syrians are the most in the news, many are fleeing other intolerable situations. Among the needs:

- Letters to our elected representatives in support of increasing the number of refugees the U.S. government will admit to this country.
- Volunteers to help at IRIS.
- Donations – both financial and of materials to help set up apartments.
- Cultural Companions, who help refugees adapt to life in America, learn English, navigate public transportation, explore New Haven, and make friends.

The Mission Committee is continuing to explore ways we can be helpful.

Fossil Free PC USA Overture



Back in the summer, the Rev. Rob Mark contacted several people in this presbytery about supporting a measure asking the upcoming General Assembly to divest from fossil fuel companies. After due consideration, the Mission Committee voted to forward the measure (technically called an “overture”) to Session for approval. In December, Session voted to forward the overture to Presbytery for its February meeting.

The overture begins by expressing:

... profound concern about the destructive effects of climate change on all God’s creation, including a disproportionate impact on those living in poverty and in the least developed countries; the elderly and children; and those least responsible for the emissions of greenhouse gases. The 222nd General Assembly (2016) thus recognizes the moral mandate for humanity to shift to a sustainable energy regime in a way that is both just and compassionate. This mandate compels us to action as a denomination to divest from the fossil fuel industry even as we reduce our use of fossil fuels and shrink our carbon footprint.” It specifically asks that we stop any new investments in fossil fuel companies, work to divest from those companies where we presently are invested, work out alternative investments, and do all this while mindful of fiduciary responsibility.

You can read the full overture and supporting documents at <http://www.fossilfreepcusa.org/>

Here are a few of Rob Mark's words about the urgency of this effort:

Thank you for your interest in the work of Fossil Free PCUSA and its call to address climate change. We are continuing our work to bring the attention of PCUSA leadership to the damage to creation caused by fossil fuels. For this reason, we are calling for divestment from fossil fuels. As people of faith, we cannot profit from the destruction of creation.

I have been working with Fossil Free PCUSA since General Assembly last year in Detroit. At that time our overture on divestment from fossil fuel companies was referred to MRTI (Mission Responsibility Through Investment) for study. We have prepared an overture for ... 2016 which, once again, calls for divestment from fossil fuels. We have listened carefully to people’s concerns and have modified the recommendations accordingly. We believe this is a strong “ask” to divest from fossil fuels but includes provisions which will make it more acceptable to many in the church. We are excited about the possibility of PCUSA making a prophetic witness on behalf of creation by divesting from fossil fuels.

In his encyclical “on care for our common home,” the Pope made clear to people all over the world that climate change is placing a disproportionate burden on poor people. Taking care of the earth and social justice go hand in hand. The Pope’s powerful message reminds us of why we do this work.

Upcoming Youth & Children's Activities

Sunday 1/10: During the church potluck after worship, we will have **dancing and games for children and youth** in the rooms adjacent to the Gathering Hall. We'll have Apples to Apples, Sushi Go, Uno, We Didn't Playtest This At All, and more. Bring your favorites, too!

Sunday 1/17: After worship from about 12 noon to 2 p.m., we will **make fleece blankets to donate to New Haven's IRIS, Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services**. Last year we made four blankets for new families in our community. How many will we make this time? Our crafty Candice will lead this mission project, open to all interested youth ages 11-18. A light lunch will be provided. Let us know of any allergies or dietary restrictions.

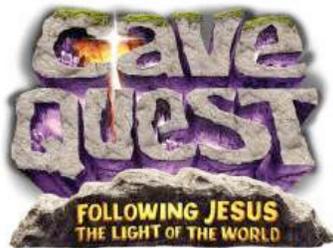


Winter Youth Event, date TBD: **Sledding or snow-tubing, anyone?** Weather permitting, we will plan a day outdoors in the snow sometime in January or February. Make sure to email firstpresbyterianchurch@gmail.com to join our Youth Group mailing list if you'd like to hear about this and future events. If you have activities or locations to suggest, don't hesitate to send them our way!

Last Chance to Vote for New Library Resources: January 10



Our vote for new books for children, youth, and adults of all ages will come to an end on Sunday, January 10. Before you head off to the potluck, see the book descriptions on the bulletin board by the welcome table in the Copeland Room and cast a vote in the ballot box! Our youth and children's Library Team will tally the votes the following week. Special thanks go to our youth Demolition and Design Consultants Alanna and Kelly Fay for designing our rainbow progress-meter and Sam Purnell for creating our shiny gold ballot box.



Vacation Bible School 2016

Interested in Vacation Bible School this summer? We'll have our first meeting to determine dates and participant ages and narrow down the options for the theme on Tuesday, January 5. Meet at 6:30 p.m. in the Owens Community Building. We'll finish by 7:30. If you can't make it to the meeting but would be willing to help in some way, please email Kimberley at firstpresbyterianchurch@gmail.com. It's imperative that we know how much involvement we will have as we go forward in planning.

Save the Date!

What: Curling, Cocktails & Chilli.

When: Saturday, Jan 23, 2016 from 6-10 p.m.

Where: Nutmeg Curling Club, 123 Glenwood Ave, Bridgeport, CT

Cost: \$10 per person



Ever watched curling during the Olympics and thought you would like to give it a try? Here is your chance. The evening will include on-ice instruction from experienced curlers, time to play a short game and will end with a shared meal in the clubs Warm Room. Just want to watch? No problem, as the Warm Room has comfy chairs and large windows looking onto the ice. There is room for 24 curlers (age 15 & up), so get your deposit in soon. Contact Scott Funston (sfunston66@gmail.com) with questions or to sign up.

Memorial Cairn – Monday, January 4th

Reclaiming the Prophetic Voice will once again mark the number of deaths of civilian and military personnel from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Join friends at the monument on the corners of Broadway and Elm Streets in New Haven at 6 p.m. for a 15 minute prayer service. All are welcome.

Connecticut Folk Concert—Friday, January 8th

Connecticut Folk will host its Folk Fridays concert at First Presbyterian on Friday, January 8th. This month features, *Good Night, Blue Moon*, a New Haven band spanning folk, jazz, and classical. Doors open at 7 p.m. and the show begins at 7:30. First Presbyterian receives ten complimentary tickets; call or e-mail the church to reserve yours!



Winter Potluck-Sunday, January 10th

Prepare a winter dish to share, and join friends for a delightful meal to warm both the body and the spirit.

Book donations –Sunday, January 10th

Our FPCNH Family will be celebrating our “new family members” at our potluck on January 10th. We will be collecting children’s books to include in the “book bags” we will be presenting. If you have new or tenderly used children’s books you would like to add to our bags, please place them in the “Book Box” by the Welcome table.



FPCNH Communication Card Coordinator



Caring Ministry is pleased to share that Betsy Mussmann will be coordinating all of the cards we send out from FPCNH. These cards send our love and best wishes around the world! If you know of anyone you would like FPCNH to share love and support through a card, please let Betsy Mussman (bmussmann@snet.net), Beth Aura Miller (dbmiller@optonline.net), or the church office (firstpresbyterianchurch@gmail.com) know.

The cards will be found on the Welcome Table and available for all to sign.

In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. (Philippians 4:6)

When you pray, offer prayers for ...

Church members and friends who seek God's healing grace, including Ken Haynam, and Eugene Smith recovering at home.

Jeff Miller, brother of David Miller, who recently had surgery.

Allyson McKinney, who needs prayers for health and healing.

Peter Bollier, son of Trudy Bollier, who is undergoing chemotherapy.

Shaleen Camery-Hoggatt, Michal Beth Dinkler's mother, who is undergoing chemotherapy.

The people of Kenya, Turkey, Syria, South Sudan, Egypt, Israel and Palestine, Iraq, and for those all around the world experiencing unrest, violence, and discord.

Isaac Newton Kinity, who is traveling in Kenya.

David Meeske, serving with the Peace Corps in Mongolia.

Andrew McCloskey, serving with the Peace Corps in Mozambique.

Christopher Woodington, serving with the Grinnell Corps in Namibia.

James Smit and Patrick Copeland, who are serving in the armed forces.

Those who are unable to worship with us on a regular basis.

Prayers for other people and situations in need of our supplications

January 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 New Year's Day	2 9:00am Yoga 9:30am Women's AA 5:30 pm Columbus House Dinner
3 10:45 am Worship & Communion 12:00 p.m. Friendship Hour	4 6:00 p.m. Memorial Cairn	5 6:30 pm Vacation Bible School Mtg 7:30pmCLOC Committee	6 11:30 am Staff Meeting 1:00 pm Bible Study	7 9:00am Yoga 6:30 pm NH Comm Chorus	8 7:30 p.m. CT Folk	9 9:00 am Yoga 9:30 am Women's AA
10 9:30 a.m. Sunday School 10:45am Worship 12:00 p.m. Potluck Lunch	11 4:00pm Musical Folk	12 9:30am & 10:30pm Musical Folk	13 11:30 am Staff Mtg 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Musical Folk 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	14 9:00am Yoga 6:30 pm NH Comm Chorus	15 9:30 am Musical Folk	16 9:00 am Session 9:30 am Women's AA
17 9:30 a.m. Sunday School 10:45am Worship 12:00 p.m. Friendship Hour 12:00pm Youth Blanket Making	18 4:00pm Musical Folk	19 9:00 am Presbytery Comm Meeting 9:30am & 10:30pm Musical Folk	20 11:30 am Staff Mtg 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Musical Folk 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	21 9:00am Yoga 6:30 pm NH Comm Chorus	22 9:30 am Musical Folk	23 9:00 am Yoga 9:30 am Women's AA 11:00 am Painting class 6:00 pm Curling in Bridgeport
24 9:30 a.m. Sunday School 10:45am Worship 12:00 p.m. Friendship Hour	25 4:00pm Musical Folk	26 9:30am & 10:30pm Musical Folk 4:00 pm Columbus House Homeless Count	27 11:30 am Staff Mtg 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Musical Folk 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	28 9:00am Yoga 6:30 pm NH Comm Chorus	29 9:30 am Musical Folk	30 9:00 am Yoga 9:30 am Women's AA
31 9:30 a.m. Sunday School 10:45am Worship 12:00 p.m. Friendship Hour						

February 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 4:00pm Musical Folk 6:00 p.m. Memorial Cairn	2 9:30am & 10:30pm Musical Folk 7:15pm Mission Committee 7:30pm CLOC Committee	3 11:30 am Staff Mtg 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Musical Folk 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	4 9:00am Yoga 6:30 pm NH Comm Chorus	5 9:30 am Musical Folk 7:30 p.m. CT Folk	6 9:00 am Yoga 9:30 am Women's AA 5:30 pm Columbus House Dinner
7 9:30 a.m. Sunday School 10:45am Worship 12:00 p.m. Annual Congregational Meeting	8 4:00pm Musical Folk	9 9:30am & 10:30pm Musical Folk 5:00 pm Shrove Tuesday Pancakes	10 11:30 am Staff Mtg 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Musical Folk 7:00 pm Ash Wed Service	11 9:00am Yoga 6:30 pm NH Comm Chorus	12 9:30 am Musical Folk	13 9:00 am Yoga 9:30 am Women's AA
14 9:30 a.m. Sunday School 10:45am Worship 12:00 p.m. Friendship Hour	15 4:00pm Musical Folk	16 9:30am & 10:30pm Musical Folk 7:15 pm Session	17 11:30 am Staff Mtg 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Musical Folk 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	18 9:00am Yoga 6:30 pm NH Comm Chorus	19 9:30 am Musical Folk	20 9:00 am Yoga 9:30 am Women's AA
21 9:30 a.m. Sunday School 10:45am Worship 12:00 p.m. Friendship Hour	22 4:00pm Musical Folk	23 9:30am & 10:30pm Musical Folk	24 11:30 am Staff Mtg 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Musical Folk 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	25 9:00am Yoga 6:30 pm NH Comm Chorus	26 9:30 am Musical Folk	27 9:00 am Yoga 9:30 am Women's AA
28 9:30 a.m. Sunday School 10:45am Worship 12:00 p.m. Friendship Hour 2:00 pm Presby Promise Mtg	29 4:00pm Musical Folk					

INTERIM PASTOR: SUSAN DEE REISINGER

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC: PATRICK McCRELESS

CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR: MARTHA SMITH

DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOR
CHILDREN AND YOUTH: KIMBERLEY FAIS

CAMPUS CHAPLAIN AT YALE: JACKIE SPYCHER

NURSERY CARE PROVIDER: NAOMI BRINTON

First Presbyterian Church
704 Whitney Avenue
New Haven, Connecticut 06511
Phone: (203) 562-5664
Fax: (203) 562-1202
Email: firstpresbyterianchurch@gmail.com
Web site: www.fpcnh.org

Christian Education for all ages
9:30 a.m.

Worship
10:45 a.m.

First Presbyterian Church
704 Whitney Avenue
New Haven, Connecticut
06511

Please find your e-copy on the church website at fpcnh.org!