

The Inkling

The News of First Presbyterian Church

December 2016

SILENCE

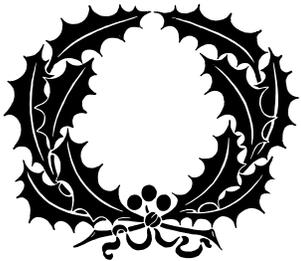
On November 27th we spent a few moments in silence during our prayer time. This is a practice we are keeping for the season of Advent. It seems fitting to allow some silence into our lives. The election season has encompassed many words – too few of them helpful, too few of them uplifting. It is too easy for us to listen to these earthly words – and too hard for us to listen to the voice of God. That voice of God can often feel hidden, or even absent.

Time and time again the elders of our faith have talked about meeting God in the stillness and quiet. From Elijah's still small voice (sometimes translated: the sound of sheer silence) to the Psalmist's injunction to be still and know God. The written and oral testimony is that we can find at least some inkling of God in the silence of our own hearts or the kind of silence we find in nature.

This season of Advent calls for some time of quiet, some time of listening to God's voice of love, God's words of comfort and God's challenge to live in love. Find some time for silence – find some time for God.

--Pastor Susan

ADVENT and CHRISTMAS WORSHIP



Sunday, December 4th

On the Second Advent Sunday, Pastor Susan will preach and we'll celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

Sunday, December 11th is the Third Sunday of Advent.

We'll enjoy a service filled with readings and choral music sung by the choir. Afterwards, stay for our annual Christmas Potluck dinner to share food and fellowship together.

Sunday, December 18th

The children and youth will lead us in worship on the Fourth Sunday of Advent with a short play and scripture readings.

CHRISTMAS EVE SCHEDULE

7:30 p.m. – A Service of Lessons and Carols, with a short meditation. Some of the choir will be singing, and we will lift joyful voices of thanksgiving for God's love made known in human form.

11:00 p.m. A Christmas Eve Communion Service along with a traditional Service of Lessons and Carols.

CHRISTMAS DAY

10 :45 a.m. Come join together to celebrate our Savior's birth!

MANY THANKS

Our Advent worship is being enriched this year by the writings of Sarah Wallman and Miranda Hall. Sarah has written the liturgy for each worship service. Miranda has written the Advent wreath lighting services. The liturgies reflect scriptural themes and the movement between fear and faith.

- 1st Sunday of Advent: Fears/Welcome
- 2nd Sunday of Advent: Godlessness/Invocation
- 3rd Sunday of Advent: Anxiety/Expectancy
- 4th Sunday of Advent: Hopelessness/Hope

We are grateful for their talents – and for their willingness to share those talents!

SCRIPTURES FOR DECEMBER



DECEMBER 4th - Matthew 3:1-12, Psalm 72, Isaiah 11:1-10

DECEMBER 11th is the choir service. You will be hearing lessons from Isaiah 35: 1-10 and Luke 1:46b-55.

DECEMBER 18th is children's Sunday - Isaiah 7:10-16, Matthew 1:18-25

DECEMBER 25th - Hebrews 1:1-4, John 1:1-5, 14

Advent Communion

The Sacrament of Holy Communion will be offered each Sunday during the season of Advent. ON December 4th, the Sacrament will be celebrated during the worship service. On Sunday, December 11th and 18th, all who wish to receive the sacrament are invited to come to the front of the sanctuary to stand around the table following the Postlude. There, prayers will be offered, the bread and cup shared and another benediction given.

Congregational Meeting on December 4th

The Session has called a congregational meeting for Sunday, December 4th, following worship. The purpose of the meeting is to elect elders. Not other business may be conducted.

December 4th is Goody Bag Sunday!



You are invited to bring 42 home-baked or store-bought treats for the students who worship with us and students from our congregation who are away at school. Herbal tea, mints, gum, hard candies, popcorn, energy bars and home baked treats are all good options to consider. It's like a Friendship Hour in a bag!

Memorial Cairn Prayer Service on Monday December 5th

Reclaiming the Prophetic Voice will mark the cost of the continuing violence in Iraq and Afghanistan and elsewhere in the Mid-East with a 15 minute prayer service at the intersection of Broadway, Elm and Park streets in New Haven on Monday evening, December 5th, at 6 p.m.

CT FOLK Concert on December 2nd

CT Folk's First Friday Concert, will be held this Friday, December 2nd at 7:30 p.m. in First Presbyterian Church's Miller Hall. This month's concert will feature the contemporary folk duo, The Levins, who offer harmony-driven acoustic music that is warm and uplifting without skating over the complexities of life. Guitar and piano, along with tightly blended unison vocals, reflect the couple's own compatible musical and personal relationship.



The church receives ten complimentary tickets. E-mail or call the church office to reserve yours.

Pastor Nominating Committee News

The PNC is moving forward. We (Dick Hasbany, Bonnie Sherman, Jenn Ballew, Sarah Wollman, Bruce Peabody, Scott Funston, Jane Hindenlang, Brian Gray, and Beth Aura Miller) are meeting weekly and beginning the process of the Ministry Information Form. We have organized our committee by establishing Beth Aura as our Chair, Bruce as our Vice Chair and Scott as our secretary. We ask for your continued prayers and support as we do the work you have entrusted to us and what God has called us to do.

November Session Meeting Notes

The November 15th Session meeting was called to order by Rev. Susan Reisinger at 7:15 p.m. During the pastor's report, the plans for Advent and Christmas worship were presented. After deliberations, the Session agreed to make the Manse part of the package in advertising the pastor's position at First Presbyterian Church New Haven (FPCNH), noting that it can be revisited in the future.

The Christian Education Committee announced the beginning of rehearsals for the children's Christmas play to be performed on December 18 while the CLOC announced the date of Christmas lunch as December 11.

The Mission Committee reported that fifteen duffle bags for women that are released from prison will be funded via Guilford First Congregational Church, a program being supported by FPCNH for the second year. The Nominating Committee reported that a slate for Session is now in place: Candice Grey (class of 2017); Lucy Ambach, Rona Johnston Gordon, Fiona Scott Morton, and Mary Porterfield (class of 2019). The committee will meet again to establish a slate for the congregational nominating committee for 2017. The Property Committee reported that heating problems in the Sanctuary has been resolved and attention is now towards external lighting. The Stewardship Committee reported that the stewardship campaign came to an end on November 13 however, pledges are still coming in. The Worship Committee reported that preparations for Advent – liturgy, bulletin covers, and choir music for example – are in place and the committee's next meeting will consider the practical and logistical aspects of Communion.

Rev. Reisinger closed the meeting with Prayer.

--Phillip Phiri

Winter Parking Update

The Red Cross building across Whitney Avenue has been sold. They will, most likely, not be plowing this winter. Parking is available at the Hooker School across Whitney Avenue.

STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN UPDATE

As you know, our Stewardship Campaign seeking financial pledges for 2017 culminated in our Stewardship Lunch on Sunday, November 13th, with about 100 of our members in attendance that day. As is usual for our church, financial pledges continue to be collected and arrive for a month or so after the Luncheon; as of November 22nd, we had received 68 pledges totaling about \$221,000 as of November 22st. Last year's complete total was \$279,000 from 89 pledges and, based upon past giving patterns, we anticipate that the total for this year should be about the same or a little higher. If you have already pledged, we thank you for your support for 2017--and if you have not pledged and are still intending to do so, please return your pledge cards to the Church as soon as you can, so that the Session can work on our 2017 budget at the Session Meeting on December 20th. You can mail a pledge card to the church office, bring it to church and place it in the offering plate, or reply confidentially to the Stewardship email address of "firstpreschurchstewardship@gmail.com". We have been richly blessed and pledging to the church lets the Session plan how best to share those gifts from God with others.

--Bruce R. Peabody, Stewardship Chair.

Christmas Choral Music Coming on December 11th!!

Our annual Advent/Christmas musical service will take place, as always, on the Third Sunday of Advent, which this year is December 11. The music will be more spread out through the service than it has been in the past few years.

We will begin with Eugene Smith reading the creation story in the words of James Weldon Johnson's *God's Trombones*, followed by a haunting musical realization of the text "Spirit Moving Over Chaos." The choral music will still center on the sermon time, though, in which we will alternate scriptural readings—readings that tell the Advent and Christmas story from Old Testament prophecy to the birth of Jesus--with musical commentary in choruses and carols. The music will range from settings of traditional carols (including an African-American spiritual and a Spanish children's song) to contemporary anthems for the season, and one chorus each from Handel's *Messiah* and Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*.

Come and celebrate the season with us: be moved by the readings and music of the service, and then enjoy our annual Christmas Dinner with friends in the Miller Gathering Hall.

The Christmas Dinner is Sunday, December 11th

Plan to stay following the Christmas music program as we will gather together as the First Presbyterian Church community for our annual Christmas Feast! We will need food of every kind on the table: turkey, ham and vegetarian main dishes, and potatoes and green beans and salad too! Sides of cranberry relish, of course. And lots of dessert! We'll sing carols and delight in one another's company. **Please sign up by December 4th if you haven't already**, to tell us what you will bring! Sign up sheets are on the Welcome Table.



ABRAHAM'S TENT 2017

The 8th winter of Abraham's Tent kicks off this month. It will extend from December 19th through April 9th, with over 20 congregations in the Greater New Haven area participating. **Save the date; of Monday January 16-Monday January 23, 2017** when First Presbyterian will be hosting Abraham's Tent in our Owens Community Building. 12 area homeless men and women will be our guests each night. We will provide a warm evening meal, a comfortable bed overnight and a nutritious breakfast in the morning. First and Summerfield Methodist Church in New Haven will be hosting with us a couple of the nights. Signup sheets will go up Sunday December 11th. As in the past, we will need dinner preparers, hosts, overnight volunteers and breakfast preparers. Serving on the Abraham's Tent organizing committee this year are Mary Webber, Pat Wales, Paula Burkhard and Brian Gray. If you have any questions you can contact anyone on the committee. A Minute for Mission is planned for December 11th to provide further information.

Presbyterian Giving Catalog: Nontraditional Christmas Gifts



During Advent, the Presbyterian Giving Catalog will be on the Welcome Table, inviting you to give a different kind of gift. By contributing to the purchase and distribution of animals, the building of wells to provide life-giving clean water to entire communities, and the support for ministries to youth and young adults, to name a few, you can fill a need, make an impact, and provide the light of hope here in the United States and around the globe. Such gifts are signs of our gratitude for all that we have received: feeding the hungry, comforting the broken-hearted, and sharing our faith with young and old. By joining our gifts together, however large or small, we expand out witness to God's gracious and abundant work in the world.

To give at church, talk to Pat Wales. You can also give securely online at the [Presbyterian Online Giving Catalog](#).

FPCNH, Music Together, and IRIS Team Up

A small group from our church (Betty Whitney, Mary Webber, Dick Hasbany and Rev. Susan Reisinger) has been working with Music Together, which meets at the church several times during the week, to offer scholarships to two refugee families. The scholarships will provide not only the fees for the Music Together program, but also personal support and transportation to and from classes. Our hope is to enrich the lives of the refugee children and their parents, particularly the mothers, who will have increased opportunities to interact with English speakers, other mothers, and children.

Reentry Duffel Bags

For the second year, the Mission Committee is supporting the prison and reentry ministries of First Congregational Church, Guilford, by contributing 15 duffel bags, as opposed to last year's ten, to help women newly released from prison in their first couple of weeks of reentry. These women have nothing when they are released. The bags include towels, an umbrella, a winter hat, gloves, socks, writing paper, a tablet, pens, and personal hygiene items. The women also receive a bus pass for transportation needs. Our indefatigable knitter, Lynn Autry, contributes a warm winter scarf to every bag for a more personal touch.





December Play and Pray on December 17th

The next Play and Pray, a fellowship group for kids 5 and under and their parents, will take place on Saturday, December 17 from 10-1 at the home of Robert and Elizabeth Williams (90 Ardmore Street in Hamden). This month the kids will be assembling Welcome Kit items for Columbus House. If you're interested in participating in Play and Pray or would like to contribute something towards the Welcome Kit, please contact Elizabeth Williams at eliz.j.williams@gmail.com or [865.310.0499](tel:865.310.0499).

Christian Education for Children and Youth - Dec-January Plans

A Note from Kimberley to Parents, Guardians, and Teachers

To all those at FPCNH who teach or care for children, youth, and young adults:

Christian Education encompasses the information we feed our minds, the spiritual practices we inhabit in our souls and bodies, communal discernment to guide us, and the mentorship and nurture of those who teach and provide care in our community of faith.

I will be available to meet with you throughout much of December and January, ready to hear your concerns and hopes without condemnation and willing to accompany you as you discern what current events occurring anywhere in the world might mean for your family, your faith, or your teaching. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me at firstpresbyterianchurch@gmail.com or in person. We can meet at the church or another mutually comfortable, convenient space nearby.

Teacher Training Session for Adults

Sunday school teachers and all others who are interested are invited to a training session after church on January 15th. (Note: This is the weekend of MLK Jr. Day; training may be rescheduled if overall attendance is an issue.) Meet Kimberley in the Community Building from 12 noon to 1 p.m. The topic of this session will be a "Letter Writing Workshop." Learn to write stronger letters to your students to show them that they are known and appreciated, to challenge them in faith, and to help them further connect with the church. Letter-writing is a spiritual practice with a deep biblical history in our faith, as well as a meaningful memento to offer students mid-year or at the end of the year.

Seconds: Youth Group for Ages 10-18

Our next two meals for Seconds both fall on all-church potluck dates. The Youth Group will share a table in the Gathering Hall on December 11th and January 8th from about 12 noon to 1 p.m. Come enjoy some good food and conversation. Optionally, bring cards or board games to play in one of the meeting rooms nearby after lunch. Guests and friends are welcome, too!

Sunday School for Ages 3-18

We are still on our first hiatus for formal classes. Those children and youth who are leading the Advent service on December 18th will continue to meet during the 9:30 hour to prepare and rehearse. Be in touch with Kimberley Fais at firstpresbyterianchurch@gmail.com with any questions about the schedule.

Block 2 (of 3 total) of the Sunday school year will run from January 15th to February 26th. To aid teachers in their lesson plans, please let us know of any Sundays you expect to be absent. The full calendar for the 2016-2017 year is available on the church website at: fpcnh.org/community/children-youth

Children in Worship for Ages 5-10+

Paula Burkhard will join us on Sunday, December 4th for a lesson in meditation and yoga, in addition to our usual time of music and prayer. Come and enjoy some breathing space in the midst of this busy season.

On December 18th, there will be no Children in Worship program... because children and youth will lead the full worship service! Find us all in the sanctuary.

There will also not be any CIW gatherings on December 25th, January 1st, or January 8th. We will resume on January 15th, same as Sunday school. Children in attendance who do not wish to visit the nursery are encouraged to stay in the sanctuary and follow along, color, or try the puzzles in the children's bulletins available at the doorways near the ushers.

Intro to Worship Music

Our Intro to Worship Music class is open to all ages from infant to adult. Join us to learn some of the basics of congregational singing or simply enjoy an additional opportunity for song. The group meets in the Choir Room from 10:30 to 10:45 a.m. on most Sundays, under the leadership of John Dinkler. All are welcome!

Intro to Ukulele for Ages 10-Adult

Adults and youth ages 10+ are welcome to a free introductory lesson after church on January 22nd. Meet Kimberley in the Choir Room from about 12:15 to 1 p.m. Bring a ukulele if you have one, but an instrument and prior knowledge are not required. Novices and intermediate players are welcome according to interest.



A Message from Margaret Fox

Dear Friends at First Presbyterian Church of New Haven,

I'm writing to let you know that I am about to begin work as pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Perrysburg, Ohio--a small town just across the Maumee River from Toledo.

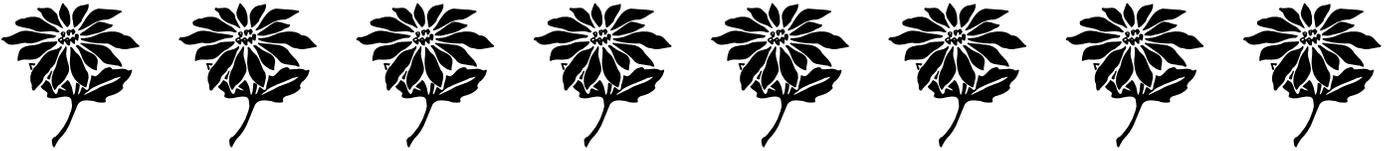
This has been a bit of a whirlwind--I was examined for ordination at the Maumee Valley Presbytery meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 15th, and begin work immediately in time for the first Sunday of Advent. But I'm feeling excited and hopeful about this call. I haven't set a date for ordination yet, but I am hoping for January or February.

During the examination on the floor of Presbytery, the first question I was asked was about how I became a Presbyterian. Most of my answer, it turned out, was about First Presbyterian Church of New Haven--about finding my way to the congregation, being welcomed there and then baptized there, hearing the Gospel preached there, witnessing a congregation working for peace and justice in its city and in the world. So I wanted to say thank you for your care and support--during the ordination process, but also in forming my Christian identity and faith. I really appreciate all that you have done to support me.

I miss you and have been thinking of you, during this election season, during the pastor search process, and as Advent nears. You are in my thoughts and prayers.

Grace and peace,

Margaret



Christmas Poinsettias

If you wish to give flowers for the Christmas display of poinsettias and greens for the sanctuary, clip this order form and return it to the church with your check by this Tuesday, December 6th. The cost is \$12.

Number of Poinsettias _____

In Memory of _____

or

In Thanksgiving for _____

Given by
(as you would like printed in the bulletin) _____

Check here if you would like to take a plant home on December 24th _____



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 ...

Our country and its leaders.

Church members and friends who seek God's healing grace, including Ken Haynam, at Benchmark Senior Living in Hamden.

Anita Shaffer, who is recovering from hip replacement surgery.

Jeanette Murphy, for healing and strength.

Joan Wells, who is undergoing chemotherapy.

Bob Frew, who will have heart surgery next week.

Prayers for those whose lives have been shattered by natural disaster, war or famine.

Prayers for those who have had to flee their homes, that they may be safe.

Andrew McCloskey, serving with the Peace Corps in Mozambique.

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.



December 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 8:30 a.m. Staff Meeting 9:00am Yoga 1:00 pm Bible Study 7:00 p.m. GNHCC rehearsal	2 9:30 a.m. Musical Folk 7:30 p.m. Folk Concert	3 9:00 am Yoga 9:30 am Women's AA 5:30 pm Columbus House Dinner
4 9:30 a.m. Sunday School for all ages 10:45 a.m. Worship & Communion. 11:45 am Cong Meeting 12:00 p.m. Friendship Hour	5 6:00 p.m. Memorial Cairn	6 6:30 p.m. CE Committee 7:00 p.m. CLOC Committee meeting	7 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal	8 8:30 a.m. Staff Meeting 9:00am Yoga 1:00 pm Bible Study 7:00 p.m. GNHCC rehearsal	9	10 9:00 am Yoga 9:30 am Women's AA 10:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal
11 9:30 a.m. Sunday School for all ages 10:45 a.m. Worship 12:00 p.m. Christmas Potluck	12 6:00 p.m. Worship Committee	13 7:15 p.m. Mission Committee meeting	14 5:00 p.m. Property Committee	15 8:30 a.m. Staff Meeting 9:00am Yoga 1:00 pm Bible Study 7:00 pm GNHCC	16	17 9:00 am Yoga 9:30 am Women's AA 10:00 am Play & Pray in Hamden
18 9:30 a.m. Sunday School for adults 10:45 a.m. Worship 11:45 a.m. Friendship Hour	19	20 7:15 p.m. Session	21 7:00 p.m. Survivors of Homicide	22 8:30 a.m. Staff Meeting 9:00am Yoga 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:00 p.m. Hollingsworth Memorial Service	23	24 9:30 am Women's AA 7:30 pm Service of Lessons and Carols 11:00 pm Communion Service
25 CHRISTMAS 10:45 a.m. Worship 11:45 a.m. Friendship Hour	26	27	28	29 9:00am Yoga	30	31 9:00 am Yoga 9:30 am Women's AA

January 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 NEW YEAR'S DAY 9:30 a.m. No Sunday School 10:45 a.m. Worship & Communion 11:45 a.m. Friendship Hour	2 6:00 p.m. Memorial Cairn	3 7:00 p.m. CLOC Committee meeting	4	5 8:30 a.m. Staff Meeting 9:00am Yoga 1:00 pm Bible Study 7:00 p.m. GNHCC rehearsal	6 7:30 p.m. Folk Concert	7 9:00 am Yoga 9:30 am Women's AA 5:30 pm Columbus House Dinner
8 9:30 a.m. Sunday School for adults 10:45 a.m. Worship & Communion. 12:00 p.m. Potluck Lunch	9 4:15 pm Musical Folk 6:00 p.m. Worship Committee	10 9:30 a.m Musical Folk 4:30 p.m Musical Folk 7:15 p.m. Mission Committee meeting	11 10 am PSNE Creative Space 5:30 p.m Musical Folk 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal	12 8:30 a.m. Staff Meeting 9:00am Yoga 1:00 pm Bible Study 7:00 p.m. GNHCC rehearsal	13 9:30 a.m Musical Folk	14 9:00 am Yoga 9:30 am Women's AA
15 9:30 a.m. Sunday School for all ages 10:45 a.m. Worship 12:00 p.m. Friendship Hour	16 4:15 pm Musical Folk 5 p.m. Abraham's Tent	17 9:30 a.m Musical Folk 4:30 p.m Musical Folk 5 p.m. Abraham's Tent 7:15 p.m. Session	18 5:30 p.m Musical Folk 5 p.m. Abraham's Tent 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal	19 8:30 a.m. Staff Meeting 9:00am Yoga 1:00 pm Bible Study 5 p.m. Abraham's Tent	20 9:30 a.m Musical Folk 5 p.m. Abraham's Tent	21 9:00 am Yoga 9:30 am Women's AA 5 p.m. Abraham's Tent
22 9:30 a.m. Sunday School for all ages 10:45 a.m. Worship 11:45 a.m. Friendship Hour 12:15 pm Ukelele 5 p.m. Abraham's Tent	23 4:15 pm Musical Folk	24 9:30 a.m Musical Folk 4:30 p.m Musical Folk 5 p.m. Homeless Count	25 5:30 p.m Musical Folk 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal	26 8:30 a.m. Staff Meeting 9:00am Yoga 1:00 pm Bible Study	27 9:30 a.m Musical Folk	28 9:00 am Yoga 9:30 am Women's AA
29 9:30 a.m. Sunday School for all ages 10:45 a.m. Worship 11:45 a.m. Friendship Hour	30	31 9:30 a.m Musical Folk 4:30 p.m 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: EMILY THEUS

NURSERY CARE PROVIDER: NAOMI BRINTON

First Presbyterian Church

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New Haven, Connecticut 06511

Phone: (203) 562-5664

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!