

The Inkling

The News of First Presbyterian Church

January 2017

SIGNS OF HOPE?

I want to share with you two quotations I have come across in the last few weeks. The first is from the renowned African American preacher and writer, Howard Thurman. His writing often goes to the heart of the matter.



*I will light candles this Christmas.
Candles of joy, despite all the sadness.
Candles of hope where despair keeps watch.
Candles of courage where fear is ever present,
candles of peace for tempest-tossed days,
candles of grace to ease heavy burdens,
Candles of love to inspire all of my living,
Candles that will burn all year long.*

For me this speaks of the personal responsibility of each person – especially each Christian. Of course there are times and seasons when we know defeat and despair. However, when we continue to go back to the source of all light and hope, we can find the grace to light candles of peace, grace and love.

The second quotation is from L. R. Knost, a well known writer on parenting who also writes children's book. I don't know much about her, including her faith, but her words point me to something I too often forget.

*Do not be dismayed by the brokenness of the world.
All things break. And all things can be mended.
Not with time, as they say, but with intention.
So go. Love intentionally, extravagantly, unconditionally.
The broken world waits in darkness for the light that is you.*

Love intentionally, extravagantly, unconditionally. That is a tall order – one we can truly only work toward when we are in relationship with the God of love. The line that hit me hardest, though was the last one. Imagine, this (very) broken world waiting for your light, for my light.

Let your light shine!

--Pastor Susan



SCRIPTURES FOR JANUARY

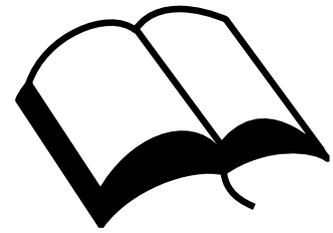
January 1 – Isaiah 63:7-9, Hebrews 2:10-18 (The Rev. Arthur Shippee is preaching.)

January 8 – Epiphany celebrated – Isaiah 60:1-3, Psalm 72:1-4, Matthew 2:1-12

January 15 – 2nd Sunday after Epiphany – Isaiah 49:1-7, Psalm 40:1-11,
I Corinthians 1:1-9

January 22 – 3rd Sunday after Epiphany – Isaiah 9:1-4, Psalm 27:1, 4-9
(preaching text), Matthew 4:12-22

January 29 – TBA (The Rev. Steve Crocco is preaching.)



Memorial Cairn Prayer Service on Monday January 2nd

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, January 2nd, at 6 p.m.

CT FOLK Concert on January 6th



CT Folk's First Friday Concert, will be held next Friday, January 6th at 7:30 p.m. in First Presbyterian Church's Miller Hall. This month's concert will feature The Wool Hats, a Connecticut based bluegrass/jamgrass band. Built upon a driving rhythm section, the trio of lead instruments weaves intricate melodic spaces while the vocal harmonies add to the warmth and richness of their sound. Their repertoire includes bluegrass classics and unique interpretations of classic rock material, as well as well-crafted originals.

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

New Elders and Nominating Committee Members for 2017

At the December 4, 2016 Congregational Meeting, new elders and Nominating Committee members at-large were elected.

They are:

Session-Class of 2019

Lucy Ambach
Rona Johnston Gordon
Fiona Scott Morton
Mary Porterfield

Session-Class of 2017

Candice Gray

Nominating Committee Members at- large:

Ken Balakrishnan
Jim Duncan
Betsy Mussmann
Mary Webber

January 8--Happy New Year Potluck!!

Please plan to stay after service on Sunday, January 8th for a "Welcome 2017" Potluck! Please bring your favorite appetizer or finger food to share as we raise a glass of "cheer" and toast one another for a happy and healthy new year.



Abraham's Tent Comes to First Presbyterian Church on January 16th

This month, the men of Abraham's Tent again will follow a star to First Presbyterian Church. The twelve men from the Columbus House Shelter program will make their way to the Owens Community Building for a week starting Monday, January 16th Sunday school classrooms will become bedrooms. The Miller Hall will be transformed into a dining hall and commons space.

A group of First Church volunteers will welcome our guests each night at 6, enjoy a home cooked meal together, play some games or just sit and talk before lights out so that all can get a good night's sleep. Morning comes early with a home cooked breakfast before the men leave for the day. Many volunteers have signed up, but more hosts, cooks and companions would be welcome. See the sheets in the Gathering Hall. If you have any questions speak to Brian Grey, Mary Webber, Paula Burkhard or Pat Wales. A final planning meeting will take place on Sunday, January 8th during the Potluck Lunch.

Join friends new and old as together we journey, following the light of Christ, spreading good news, and bringing hope to those who know hurt and despair. Perhaps this year we too will experience an epiphany and discover something new about ourselves and our community.

Stewardship Thanks

Dear Friends:

Now that our Stewardship Campaign is over for the year, I wanted to thank you for your pledge for the Church for 2017. We all pulled together and exceeded the target which I had set for this year!

Last year for 2016, we had 89 pledging households with a total pledged of \$279,041. So far this year -- there may be a stray additional pledge or two still -- we have 90 pledging households with a total pledged of \$285,074 -- \$6000 more than in 2016. I had been hoping that we would hit \$280,000 for the year and so we did better than I originally anticipated. This is most unusual for a church with an interim pastor and so is a real tribute not only to Susan's steady hand at the helm but also our congregation's strong belief in and support of our community.

For those of you who are numbers geeks, of the 90 pledges for 2017, 24 were the same as for 2016, 48 were increased, and 10 were decreased. Eight are new pledges this year, and we lost seven households who had previously pledged (some moved away). Interestingly, several of the folks who reduced their pledge sent me notes stating that (since this campaign was being run right after the election) they were reducing their church pledge because they anticipate giving more to social service charities this coming year than in the past.

I think that we have done a good job of showing, to any interested pastoral candidate, that we are a strong membership who supports the Church not only by our prayers and our talents but also our financial resources.

In closing, I want to thank everyone who helped in the this Campaign but most especially David Miller, the past Campaign chair, who continued to supply us with the spreadsheets, charts and analyses which make the bookkeeping portion of the Stewardship Campaign run smoothly.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to me (203-772-4400 x314 or bruce.peabody@winnicklaw.com). And, again, thank you for your pledges which remind us all what a wonderful and strong community of believers we are!

Bruce R. Peabody
Stewardship Chair

New Elders Ordained and Installed on Sunday, January 8th

With the New Year, we experience a little bit of the “in with the new and out with the old” on our Session.

Many, many thanks to the outgoing Session Class of 2016 elders: Andrew Forsyth, Betty Whitney and Nancy Woodington, who served First Presbyterian Church for the past three years. Candice Gray, also of this group, is staying on Session for one more year to fill a vacancy with the Class of 2017.

During the January 8th worship service, we will ordain and install our new Class of 2019 elders: Lucy Ambach, Rona Johnston Gordon, Fiona Scott Morton, and Mary Porterfield. Here’s a little bit about each of them:

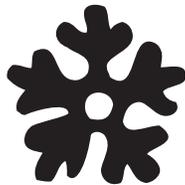
Lucy Ambach and her husband, Gordon, joined FPCNH in 2009 shortly after they moved from Vermont to be near their daughter and her family in New Haven. She sings in our choir and brings church experience from her time as a member of Presbyterian churches in Albany, New York and Washington D.C., where she served on both church’s Sessions, taught Sunday School, was Clerk of Session, sang in the choir, served on the Administration Committee, and chaired a Pastor Nominating Committee. She and her husband have three children and 10 grandchildren.

Rona Johnston Gordon and her family moved to New Haven from Scotland in 2008 and joined FPCNH in 2009, since when she has served on Session and the Worship Committee and as Clerk of Session. She works as a translator (German to English) and academic editor and is a lecturer in the English Department at Yale. Her husband, Bruce, currently organizes Adult Education at FPCNH and her eighteen-year old daughter, Charlotte, is in her first year at the University of Toronto.

Fiona Scott Morton and family (Steve Latham, Sophie (19), Ellie (16), and Rory (13)) have been members at FPCNH since 1999 when they arrived in New Haven. Steve and Fiona chaired the capital campaign and Fiona served on the building committee for the Owens building. She has sung in the choir for 13 years. Fiona is an Economics professor at the Yale School of Management where she teaches MBAs and writes about the economics of competition.

Mary Porterfield came to FPCNH about 25 years ago, attracted by the excellent choir, which she learned about from her friend Arthur Shippee. Mary quickly found a spiritual home here, but with her roots in the Episcopal church and commitment to a choir there, she didn’t officially join First Presbyterian until 2014. In the meantime, “Visits regularly” status didn’t stop her from serving FPCNH in two jobs she thoroughly enjoys: Assistant Treasurer for several years and Music Librarian for over 15 years. By the way, Mary and Arthur have remained best friends, and were married here in 2000. Outside of church, Mary has worked in the Information Technology department at AT&T for 44 years.

When you get a chance, congratulate the new elders and make sure you thank those elders completing their service.



Christian Education for Children and Youth - January Plans

Sunday School for Ages 3-18

Block 2 (of 3 total) of the Sunday school year will look a little different from Block 1. Ages 6-18 are invited to join the Adult Class in the Gathering Hall for a new inter-generational series called "Gender And..." Over the course of a few weeks, we will explore the language we use to describe humans and God and related social and ethical implications for the church. Among the several members designing and facilitating this series are the usual teachers for ages 6-10+, Lynn Autry and Sophie House, and Christian Educator Kimberley Fais.

At this time, ages 3-5 will continue to meet in their usual classroom with their teachers, Cassy Gulden and Sandra Malan-Bowles. Any older children who would prefer to follow along with the lectionary-based Seasons of the Spirit curriculum are also welcome to join this group instead of attending the "Gender And..." series.

Block 2 of Seasons of the Spirit and the "Gender And..." series will begin on Sunday, January 8th at 9:30 a.m.

To aid all teachers in their lesson plans, please let us know of any Sundays you expect to be absent.

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 January 8th and February 12th 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!

Abraham's Tent Dinner, Friday January 20th: The Youth Group will be preparing and serving dinner for our Abraham's Tent friends. Check with Tyler Wadzinski for more information.

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.

Christian Education for Children and Youth - January Plans (cont)

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 am available to meet with you, 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.



December 17 Play and Pray

A Saturday snowstorm complicated the Play and Pray gathering at the Williams' home. But four Welcome Kits were still assembled with essentials for Columbus House residents moving into their own apartments: laundry baskets with towels, shower curtains, shower rings, waste baskets, kitchen towels, kitchen sponges, and toilet bowl cleaners. Elizabeth Williams dropped them off at Columbus House before Christmas.

Youth & Children Respond: Malala Yousafzai

A report from Molly, age 10, and Riley, age 13.

Riley: Over the summer, this congregation sent us both to a speech by Malala Yousafzai in Providence, Rhode Island.

Molly: Most of you have probably heard of Malala. She was shot in the head by the Taliban when she stood up for the right for girls to go to school. She survived, and today she is an activist and public speaker on education and human rights. So it was an incredible opportunity to see her in person. Being able to be in the same room as someone that you look up to is a great experience. I had walked in excited, and I walked out amazed.



Riley: Malala talked about how important everyone is to society, regardless of gender, age, race, or religion. She delivered a powerful message to show that anyone, even a young girl in Pakistan like herself, can make a difference. What this showed me is that I can help my community, even if I thought I was too young to do that yet. Malala said that young people are not only often underestimated by adults, but also that they underestimate themselves.

Molly: After the speech came an interview with a Rhode Island television reporter. At one point, Malala told us that she had been walking around a park in Providence the previous night, and no one recognized her because they were playing Pokémon Go. Her father was with her, and he had no idea what Pokémon Go was, and she had to explain it to him. It is a perfectly normal story, and it surprised me that such a famous person could have such an ordinary story. Another part that I enjoyed was when a nine-year-old journalist came up on stage and interviewed Malala herself. That part showed that Malala wasn't the only inspirational girl there.

Riley: Thank you for sponsoring this trip. We are grateful to have had this opportunity, and we encourage all youth and children to join us for future events.

Molly: And tell us sometime - Who inspires hope and bravery in YOU? We'd love to hear from you.

Do You Want to Attend the 24th Annual True Colors Conference?

WHEN / WHERE: Friday March 17th and Saturday March 18th at UConn in Storrs, CT
MORE INFO: <http://www.ourtruecolors.org/Programs/Conference>
SEE KIMBERLEY: 1-day and 2-day registration options and some scholarships available for ages 10-Adult



The True Colors Conference is geared for a wide range of youth and adults. Some of the workshops are particularly helpful for professionals such as therapists, social workers, doctors, teachers, and clergy. Others are designed specifically for teens, college students, or family members. Many are intended for general audiences. Topical categories include the Spiritual Institute and the Activist Institute. Now in its 24th year, the True Colors Conference counterbalances the multitude of community spaces and training programs which do not yet adequately assess or address the well-being of Gender and Sexual Minorities (GSM). As a More Light congregation and a part of the global Church, we humbly recognize that we still have much work to do to resist oppressive patterns and re-frame our thinking in ways which may be life-giving for us all.

The Christian Education Committee seeks people from the congregation and/or the greater community to represent First Presbyterian Church in this educational pursuit. We wish to support LGBTQIA+ youth and adults for whom the conference will be personally nourishing, as well as allying youth and adults ready to learn more about how to support this community in personal and professional contexts. You need not explain your reasons for attending. We are happy to send anyone who asks, as scholarships allow.

We have 8 spaces for students ages 10+ and another 8 spaces for non-student adults. Please tell us whether you will attend on Friday, Saturday, or both days. You do not need to attend the full program on either day. We wish for you to participate in any way you can. Although registration opens in advance, you will design your time at the conference upon your arrival, according to your own interests and availability. You will have time to browse the schedule once it is announced online, including many choices for workshops in each and every slot. Both days also offer keynote speakers and other special events.

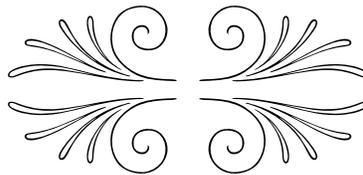
If you would appreciate a scholarship, RSVP to Kimberley at firstpresbyterianchurch@gmail.com for Early Bird registration by *Thursday, January 26th*. If you do not desire a full scholarship or wish to contribute toward sponsoring a participant, please contact us to discuss this further. Carpools may also be available upon request.

Looking for Continuing Education? CEU / CEC request forms will be available on-site at the conference registration tables. Up to 9.5 Continuing Education Credits or Units can be earned in the following professional fields: NASW, CT-AMFT, CSDE, CCB. To determine availability of other CEC/CEU's, please call 860-232-0050 x 302.

News from far away friends:

Margaret Fox will be ordained to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament by the Maumee Valley Presbytery on Sunday, January 15, 2017 at 3:00 p.m. at the First Presbyterian Church of Perrysburg, Ohio.

Teddy Hogle writes from Florida: Happy New Year dear friends. I wish you joy and health and opportunities to fulfill your ministries. May God bless us all and keep us mindful of the needs of others.



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.

Jeanette Murphy, for healing and strength.

Joan Wells, who is undergoing chemotherapy.

Bob Frew, who is recovering from surgery.

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.

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 7:30 p.m. CLOC Committee meeting | 4 5:00 p.m. Property Committee Meeting | 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 First Week of Block 2 Classes 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 12:00 p.m. CE Teacher Training | 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 | 18 5:30 p.m. Musical Folk 5 p.m. Abraham's Tent 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal 7:00 p.m. Homicide Survivors | 19 8:30 a.m. Staff Meeting 9:00 a.m. 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 Session 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 Ukulele 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 Deadline for True Colors Early Bird Registration | 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 4:15 pm Musical Folk | 31 9:30 a.m. Musical Folk 4:30 p.m. Musical Folk | | | | |

February 2017

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--|--|---|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| | | | 1 5:30 p.m. Musical Folk 5:00 p.m. Property Committee Meeting 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal | 2 8:30 a.m. Staff Meeting 9:00am Yoga 1:00 pm Bible Study 7:00 p.m. GNHCC rehearsal | 3 7:30 p.m. Folk Concert | 4 9:00 am Yoga 9:30 am Women's AA 5:30 pm Columbus House Dinner |
| 5 9:30 a.m. Sunday School 10:45 a.m. Worship & Communion. 12:00 p.m. Potluck Lunch | 6 4:15 pm Musical Folk 6:00 p.m. Memorial Cairn | 7 9:30 a.m. Musical Folk 4:30 p.m. Musical Folk 6:30 p.m. CE Committee Mtg 7:30 p.m. CLOC Committee meeting | 8 5:30 p.m. Musical Folk 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal | 9 8:30 a.m. Staff Meeting 9:00am Yoga 1:00 pm Bible Study 7:00 p.m. GNHCC rehearsal | 10 9:30 a.m. Musical Folk | 11 9:00 am Yoga 9:30 am Women's AA |
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| 19 9:30 a.m. Sunday School for all ages 10:45 a.m. Worship 11:45 a.m. Friendship Hour | 20 4:15 pm Musical Folk | 21 9:30 a.m. Musical Folk 4:30 p.m. Musical Folk 7:15 p.m. Session | 22 5:30 p.m. Musical Folk 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal | 23 8:30 a.m. Staff Meeting 9:00 a.m. Yoga 1:00 pm Bible Study 7:00 p.m. GNHCC rehearsal | 24 9:30 a.m. Musical Folk | 25 9:00 am Yoga 9:30 am Women's AA |
| 26 9:30 a.m. Sunday School for all ages Last Week of Block 2 Classes 10:45 a.m. Worship 11:45 a.m. Friendship Hour | 27 4:15 pm Musical Folk | 28 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

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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!