

The Inkling

The News of First Presbyterian Church

December 2013

O Come, O Come Emmanuel



The season of Advent begins this month and the glad tidings known in the birth of Jesus is upon us. The sanctuary greens are out, the Advent banners are hung, and the first sign of Christmas good news, the star, hangs on the Copeland Room wall. Yes, the season of Advent is upon us, the time of making ready our hearts, minds, and selves for the coming of Jesus, the baby born to Mary and Joseph, who was heralded by angels and feared by religious authorities. Four weeks of familiar scripture readings, carols of the season, prayers and Advent candle lighting, all point to a miracle of miracles—God becoming one of us.

This Advent invites us to ponder, reflect, and then act in faith to join Jesus in bringing about a new thing. Peace on earth is ever our goal. And together as a community of faith we will work toward ushering in that realm of God where the lowly are lifted up, the hungry are fed, those who mourn shall dance, and the meek inherit the earth.

Join us each week in Advent as we hear the story of miracles and wonders, of a young woman who says Yes to God, a young man who risks much to care for his family, shepherds keeping watch, and foreigners travelling to see a new born king. It's a story for each one of us and for all of us. Hope, Peace, Joy, Love ... the themes of Advent worship.

Emmanuel Comes! Worship on Christmas Eve

Welcome the Christ Child into your hearts and into your lives! Christmas Eve services will be offered on Christmas Eve, Tuesday, December 24th.

The Traditional Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols begins at 7:30 p.m. Co-Pastor Bill Goettler will be the preacher as we sing Christmas carols and hear again the words of the prophets and Gospel writers tell the wondrous story of Christ's birth.



A service of Lessons and Carols with Communion will take place at 11:00 p.m. Join us in the candlelit sanctuary to hear again good news of great joy!

May God's blessings be given to you and yours during this joyous season. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel comes, bringing hope and peace to all the world.

Christmas Dinner - Sunday, December 15

The First Presbyterian Church Christmas Dinner will be held on Sunday, December 15th following worship. This is a planned dinner ... and we need food of every kind on the table. We serve turkey and ham and vegetarian main dishes. Potatoes and corn and green beans are there too, side by side with cranberry dressing and of course, dessert. We'll sing carols and play a Christmas trivia game. It's a fun time for all! Sign up sheets are on the Welcome Table.

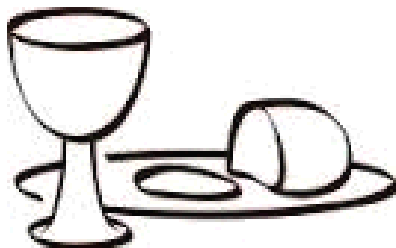
The Fourth Sunday of Advent – “The little children will lead us”

On Sunday, December 22nd, the children and youth of the congregation will lead our 10:45 a.m. worship service, proclaiming glad tidings of great joy. There will be a special children's message for the littlest ones of our congregation and older youth will take part in leading us in our worship. Martha Smalley has written a play, “Unexpected Events,” based on the Gospel according to Matthew's story of the angel who comes to Joseph while he is dreaming to assure him that all will be well, that will take the place of the Gospel lesson that morning.

Plan now to attend worship that morning and be ready to experience the joy and wonder of the Advent season anew.

Advent Communion

The Sacrament of Holy Communion will be offered on all four of the Advent Sundays. On December 1, the First Sunday of Advent, The Sacrament of Holy Communion will be celebrated during the worship service. On Sundays December 8, 15, and 22, 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 offered. This is a wonderful opportunity to extend your morning of Advent prayer and devotion.



Music During Advent

Music will again fill our sanctuary in the Advent and Christmas seasons. The choir will welcome the Advent season using the hymn "Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending" as an Introit on December 1. The anthems on the First (December 1) and Second Sundays of Advent will be Hal Hopson's "Thou Shalt Know Him When He Comes," and Benjamin Britten's "There Is No Rose of Such Virtue" from the *Ceremony of Carols*.

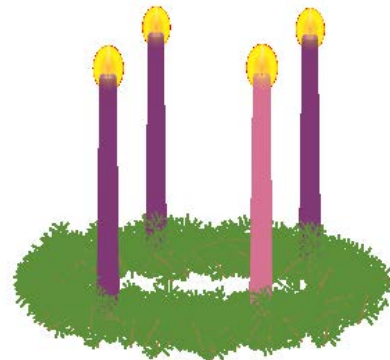


Again this year on the Third Sunday of Advent (December 15), the choir will present a selection of Advent and Christmas music during the sermon time of the morning worship service. We'll go from Handel's "O Thou That Tellest Good Tidings to Zion" from the *Messiah*, to a Renaissance Marian motet, to a setting of William Blake's "Little Lamb, Who Made Thee" (from the *Songs of Innocence and Experience*), to a jazzy "Mary, Where Is Your Baby," to a selection of English carols, and more. For hundreds of years the Advent and Christmas seasons have brought the best out of composers. Come join us and hear seasonal music, old and new, and then celebrate at the annual Christmas dinner in the Owens Community Building.

On the Fourth Sunday of Advent (December 22) the Youth Choir will sing . . . leading us to the Service of Lessons and Carols on Christmas Eve (7:30 and 11:00). Music is at the center of the Advent and Christmas seasons, and we in the music program at First Presbyterian Church hope that our voices will enrich your experience of them.

Intergenerational Advent Potluck and Program – December 8

Come feast on good food shared and on God's Word, sing carols, and enjoy the company of friends new and old at the Advent Potluck and program on December 8th. Dinner begins at 5 p.m. Bring a family sized main dish, side dish, salad or dessert to share. Young and old will hear the Advent promises and have a chance to talk together. The program will end with an opportunity to decorate the Miller Hall for the holidays and to create Christmas crafts to take home. For more information, talk with Elizabeth Gill, CE Chair, or Co-Pastor Maria LaSala. Bring friends!



November Dinner With Friends a Success

Brian and Candace Gray hosted a delightful Dinner with Friends on Saturday, November 9th with delicious food and lively conversation. Ralph Jones, Pat Wales, Caty Poole, Mike Spicer, Bonnie Sherman, Chuck Forman, Art Hunt, Mary Hunt, Nancy Woodington and John Meeske attended. Candace planned make your own grilled cheese sandwiches with a variety of wonderful chesses and terrific toppings, sides and dessert.



Photo by Art Hunt from Dinner With Friends November 9

Dinner with Friends is a casual dinner at the home of Church friends. It's a relaxing time to sit with friends new and old, share stories, and eat good food. Our next Dinner with Friends is Saturday, January 25. Look for the sign up sheet in January.

Mission Committee's Peace and Justice Group

The Mission Committee's Peace and Justice Group meets the second and fourth (except December) Mondays each month at 6 p.m. for a pot luck dinner and inspired discussion. Everyone is welcome. Come to a single meeting or become a regular attendee. If you would like to learn more about the work of this group, please contact Mary Hunt (mary@cheswood.com), Ralph Jones (rcjmhs@gmail.com), Bonnie Sherman (shermanbonnie@att.net) or Teddy Hogle (teddyjoy@comcast.net). The December meeting is Monday, December 9.

Christmas Poinsettias



If you wish to give flowers for the Christmas display of poinsettias and greens for the sanctuary, fill out this order form and return it to the church with your check by Sunday, December 15. The cost is \$15.

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 _____

Texts for the Sundays in December:

December 1: Isaiah 2:1-5; Psalm 122; Romans 13:11-14; Matthew 24:36-44

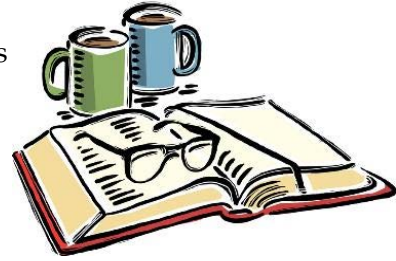
December 8: Isaiah 11:1-10; Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19; Romans 15:4-13; Matthew 3:1-12

December 15: Isaiah 35:1-10; Psalm 146:5-10 or Luke 1:46-55; James 5:7-10; Matthew 11:2-11

December 22: Isaiah 7:10-16; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-25

Christmas Eve: Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-14 [15-20]

December 29: Isaiah 63:7-9; Psalm 148; Hebrews 2:10-18; Matthew 2:13-23



Holiday Friendship Hour at the Manse

Co-Pastors Bill Goettler and Maria LaSala invite everyone to make their way to the church manse, for Friendship Hour treats on Sunday, December 22nd. After the postlude has ended, just walk next door where there will be tasty treats, warm cider, and a roaring fire in the fireplace. All are welcome.

Goody Boxes and Goody Bags

It's that time again ... when we send good wishes to the students of our congregation as they prepare for final exams and the end of another semester's work. Goody Boxes will be mailed to the students from our congregation who study away from New Haven. This year we will be mailing 12 boxes filled with many good and delicious treats as well as the prayers and good wishes of the congregation. Please bring homemade or store bought treats on Sunday, December 1st to fill the boxes.



The Goody Bags, for those students who worship with us week after week, will be distributed on Sunday, December 8th following worship. Jean McCloskey will be at the Goody Bag table, ready to fill the bags with all the good things you provide. We will fill 24 bags this year with yummy treats and our prayers.

Students near and far delight in this special ministry ... one student's thank you suggested "it was a Friendship Hour in a box."



Afghanistan Memorial Stone – Monday, December 2

Reclaiming the Prophetic Voice will again be marking the cost of the continuing war in Afghanistan by placing the stone on the Memorial Cairn at the intersection of Broadway, Elm and Park streets in New Haven on Monday evening, 6 p.m., December 2. Co-Pastor Maria LaSala will lead the service.

Abraham's Tent News!

Abraham's Tent begins on December as twelve men from the Columbus House program will make their way each week to a new home and a new family. First Presbyterian Church will host the men from Monday, January 13th through Monday, January 20th. Volunteers are still needed to cook, host, and stay overnight. Last year over 75 volunteers from First Presbyterian Church participated in this program. The week together provides many opportunities for friendship building and transformation. Strangers soon become friends, and with full bellies and warmed bodies, our guests grow stronger each week. If you'd like to participate this year by offering food or hospitality, please speak with Brian Gray or sign up in the Miller Gathering Hall.



Special Meeting of the Congregation – December 8

The Session of First Presbyterian Church has called a special meeting of the congregation to hear the report from the Nominating Committee and to elect officers for the Class of 2016 and new members of the Nominating Committee. This brief meeting will take place immediately following the Postlude. Please remain in the sanctuary. We promise the Friendship Hour treats will still be there when the meeting is done!

Men's Breakfast



We will have a men's breakfast on Saturday, December 7 at 8 a.m. at Manjares in Westville, just around the corner from Whalley Avenue on West Rock Avenue. Pancakes and eggs and waffles and sausage plus some Bible study and time for reflection are on the menu on the first Saturday of December.

Christmas Joy Offering

This year's Christmas Joy offering will be received during the worship service on Christmas Eve. The Offering supports racial ethnic education at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges, where students develop their gifts and find their calling. It also helps families of active and retired church workers meet unexpected needs through the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions. As we celebrate the good news of great joy—that a Savior has been born to us—may our gifts bear joyful witness to God's uncontainable love. Enveloped for this offering will be found in the pews. You may contribute to this offering throughout the month of December.



Alternative Gift Market – Sundays during December!

Alternative Gift Market will be back during the Advent season to entice you to consider "green" gifts for your family, loved ones and friends. Alternative Gift Market creates an opportunity for others to give gifts of food, shelter, medicine, water, education and so much more for needy people throughout our nation and the world. AGI's policy each year is to evaluate and select certain projects that are life-changing and sustainable. AND all contributions are tax-deductible! Please consider a financial contribution even if it's not for your family or friends. Every dollar makes a difference to help less fortunate people live a better life. Open for business during the Advent Friendship Hour each Sunday after the worship service.

--Pat Wales



Agape Feast December 29th

Anticipate the New Year, with all its hope and promises on Sunday, December 29th. We will gather at 10:45 a.m. for an Agape Feast as we hear again the glad tidings of Christmas Joy and the promises for peace in the New Year. Please bring breakfast treats to share ... the Table will be full to overflowing with good things. Coffee, tea, and hot chocolate will be provided. Please note there will be no Christian Education that morning and no Friendship Hour.



Congratulations to Joel Hamaguchi on his Graduation!

Joel Hamaguchi will graduate on December 9th from the Yale School of Medicine Physician Associate Program. Joel, with his wife Anna are the Youth Group Advisors for First Presbyterian Church. Joel also teaches the Middle School Sunday school class. Congratulations, Joel!

Session Approves Overtures to General Assembly Regarding Same Gender Marriage

The First Presbyterian Church Session acted unanimously at the November stated meeting to affirm two Overtures, asking the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church to offer definitive guidance and to change the Book of Order, making clear a Presbyterian policy regarding marriage equality. The overtures, which would accomplish that policy in different ways, will be considered by the Presbytery of Southern New England, at the February meeting.



Connecticut Folk First Fridays

Connecticut Folk will host its First Fridays concert at First Presbyterian on Friday, December 6. This month features Roosevelt Dime. 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!

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 ...

The people of the Philippines, mission co-workers, and all who are offering relief after the devastation of Typhon Haiyan.

Church members and friends who seek God's healing grace, including Eugene Smith, Ron and Tommie Highwart, Ken Haynam, Jim Owens, Paul Turner's mother Sylvia Turner, Fritz Gorst, friend of Beth Aura Miller, Joan Wells, and John Wood, Becky Cline's father.

Mission Co-Workers Bernie and Farsijana Adeney-Risakotta as they heal from a car accident.

The people of Syria, Egypt, and for all across the Middle East, during this time of unrest, violence, and discord.

David Meeske serving with the Peace Corps in Mongolia.

James Smit, Patrick Copeland, and Jordan Matos, 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.

ADVENT

1 Light one candle.



Mt. 24: 26

8 Light two candles.



Jn. 1: 6-9

15 Light three candles.



Mt. 11: 2-11

22 Light four candles.



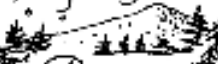
Mt. 1: 18-25

20 Show kindness.



Mt. 6: 6-8

17 See the majesty.



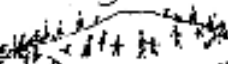
Ps. 8

19 Declare your loyalty.



Josh. 24: 14, 15

3 Walk in the light.



Isa. 2: 1-5

10 Fear not.



Ps. 46

5 Listen carefully.



Lk. 1: 5-20

13 Recognize newness.



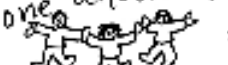
Isa. 43: 18-21

24



Jn. 1: 14

6 Rejoice with one another.



Lk. 1: 51-66

16 Encourage someone.



Isa. 35: 1-10

14 Honor a saint.



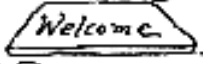
Heb. 12: 1, 2

23 Feed the hungry.



Lk. 1: 46-55

9 Prepare the way.



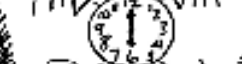
Jn. 1: 19-23

21 Let a child lead.



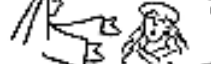
Isa. 11: 1-10

2 Get up early.



Rom. 13: 11-14

11 Listen for news.



Lk. 1: 26-35

4 Make joyful noise.



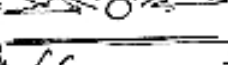
Ps. 100

12 Hear harmony.



Rom. 15: 4, 5

7 Watch for dawn.



Lk. 1: 76-80

18 Be patient.



Jas. 5: 7-10

When Mary first heard Gabriel's voice
 she trembled at his word.
 But faith prevailed, she made the choice
 and life within her stirred.
 Then Joseph, dreaming, heard his call:
 "Fear not," the angel said.
 And faith prevailed, with awe and awe,
 he made a cradle bed.

The love that Mary bears within
 and Joseph's firm embrace
 Will show a world worn weak by sin
 God's good and gracious face.
 So when, O God, you beckon us
 and fears or doubts arise
 Let faith prevail, confirm our trust,
 O Love, you will abide!

December 2013

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:30am Choir, Church School 10:45am Worship 12:00pm Friendship Hour	2 4:15pm Musical Folk 6:00pm Memorial Cairn	3 9:30am Musical Folk 6:30pm CE Committee 7:30pm CLOC and Mission Committees	4 10:00am Musical Folk 4:30pm Staff Meeting 5:30pm Musical Folk 7:00pm Choir	5 9:00am Yoga 5:30pm Musical Folk 6:30pm GNHCC	6 7:00pm CT Folk Concert	7 8:00am Men's Breakfast 9:00am Yoga 9:30am Women's AA
8 9:30am Choir, Church School 10:45am Worship 12:00pm Congregational Meeting 12:00pm Friendship Hour 5 pm Advent Program	9 4:15pm Musical Folk 6:00pm Peace and Justice Dinner Group 6:00pm Worship Committee	10 9:30am Musical Folk	11 10:00am Musical Folk 4:30pm Staff Meeting 5:30pm Musical Folk 7:00pm Choir	12 9:00am Yoga 5:30pm Musical Folk 6:30pm GNHCC	13	14 9:00am Yoga 9:30am Women's AA 10:00am Choir Rehearsal
15 9:30am Choir, Church School 10:45am Worship 12:00pm Christmas Dinner	16 4:15pm Musical Folk	17 9:30am Musical Folk 7:15pm Session	18 10:00am Musical Folk 4:30pm Staff Meeting 5:30pm Musical Folk 7:00pm Choir	19 9:00am Yoga 5:30pm Musical Folk 6:30pm GNHCC	20	21 9:00am Yoga 9:30am Women's AA
22 9:30am Choir, Church School 10:45am Worship 12:00pm Friendship Hour, Manse	23 4:15pm Musical Folk	24 Christmas Eve 7:30pm and 11pm Christmas Eve Services	25 Christmas Day	26 9:00am Yoga 5:30pm Musical Folk 6:30pm GNHCC	27	28 9:00am Yoga 9:30am Women's AA
29 9:30am Choir, Church School 10:45am Worship: Agape Feast	30 4:15pm Musical Folk	31 9:30am Musical Folk				

January 2013

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CO-PASTORS: BILL GOETTLER & MARIA LASALA

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC: PATRICK McCRELESS

PARISH ASSOCIATE: SUE ASHER

CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR: MIRIAM SAMUELSON

CAMPUS CHAPLAIN TO YALE: HANNAH DREITCER

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!