

# The Inkling

The News of First Presbyterian Church

December 2011

## Advent Hope and Christmas Joy



The season of Advent is upon us offering us a time for reflection as we make ready for the coming of Christ. The sanctuary is decorated for the holiday season. The children of the Church School are lighting the Advent candles this year and each Sunday morning the congregation will gather to sing Advent hymns and offer prayers for God's people close by and far away.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion will be celebrated each week for those who wish to experience this celebration as part of their Advent meditations. On December 4<sup>th</sup> the Sacrament will be included in the morning's worship. On the mornings of December 11 and December 18, there will be a brief communion service following the worship service.

The First Presbyterian Church Choir will offer music of the season during worship on December 11. Under the direction of Patrick McCreless, the choir will sing carols and spirituals and songs celebrating the Advent and Christmas season. Following worship that morning, the church will sit down for the Annual Christmas Dinner. The menu will include home cooked turkeys and hams, and all the fixin's for a holiday meal. Sign up to bring a side dish, salad, or dessert.

On Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup>, the Children and Youth Choirs will sing as we draw near to the birth of Christ. Co-Pastor Maria LaSala will preach and preside at the Table at the Communion service following worship.

### Christmas Eve Worship

Welcome the Christ Child into your hearts and into your lives. Three Christmas Eve services will be offered on Christmas Eve, Saturday, December 24<sup>th</sup>.

At 4:00 p.m. join the children and youth of the congregation as they tell the Christmas story in word and song. This is a service that brings delight to all as candles are lit, the good news of our Savior's birth is proclaimed, and the children lead us into God's hope for a new day.

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.

The final service of the evening will take place at 11:00 p.m. This service of Lessons and Carols will also include the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

May God's blessings be given to you and yours during this joyous season. O Come, O Come, Emmanuel!

## Christmas Morning Worship

This year Christmas falls on a Sunday, and we will gather for lessons and carols as we welcome Christmas morning. The service will also include the reading of *A Christmas Parable* by Barbara Brown Taylor. This day offers another opportunity to be together to proclaim that good news of Christ's birth and to share prayers of peace and good will for all. There will be no Christian Education. Plan to arrive in time for worship at 10:45 a.m. Children of all ages are welcome to come in their pajamas with their favorite new Christmas gift.

## New Year's Worship – Join us for an Agape Feast

Welcome the New Year, with all its hope and promises, on Sunday, January 1. We will gather at 10:45 a.m. for an Agape Feast and the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Join friends in offering your prayers for a new year. Plan to bring breakfast treats to share ... the Table will be full to overflowing with good things. Coffee, tea, and hot chocolate will be provided. Again, no Christian Education classes will be held on New Year's Day.

## Choir to perform Christmas Music

In our worship service on Sunday, December 11, the choir will "sing" the sermon. As has become our tradition, the sermon time on this Third Sunday of Advent will be given over to the choir's presentation of a selection of Advent and Christmas carols and anthems. The music will range from simple carols to joyous Christmas choruses of Bach and Handel: from the old German carol "Maria Walks Amid the Thorn" to Bach's "Christians, Mark This Special Day" and Handel's "His Yoke Is Easy," from the Messiah; from quiet meditation on the Advent and Christmas story to exuberant celebration. Join us for a musical and meaningful service, and then enjoy our annual Christmas dinner afterwards in the Owens Community Building.



## Advent Play and Potluck Program – December 4th

"O What a Night!" written by CE Director Bryce Wiebe, and directed by Sue Balakrishnan, Bryce Wiebe, and Elizabeth Gill, will be performed by the Children in Worship players on Sunday evening, December 4<sup>th</sup>. The evening begins with a pot luck dinner at 5 p.m. in the Miller Gathering Hall. After dinner, we'll move into the sanctuary for the singing of carols, and the Advent play. Following the program, all are welcome to return to the Miller Hall to make some Christmas ornaments. This event is for young and old alike.



## Christmas Joy Offering

This year's Christmas Joy offering will be received during the worship service on Christmas Eve. This special offering supports the Presbyterian Church USA's Racial/Ethnic Colleges and offers assistance to retired clergy across the country. Envelopes for this special offering will be found in the pews beginning in December. You are encouraged to make a gift at any point during this holiday season.

## Youth Group Christmas Party and Caroling!

The Youth Group will gather on Sunday, December 4 at 2 p.m. for a Christmas Party and Caroling at Mary Wade Home. Any questions, please see Anthony Damelio or Sharon Anderson.

## Christmas Caroling at Whitney Center – December 18

Join First Presbyterian Church Choir members for caroling at Whitney Center in Hamden, beginning at 7 p.m. Bruce Peabody will once again serve as MC for this fun event. Please bring a tray of cookies to share with the residents. Hot cider will be provided by Whitney Center.



## Join us for Bible Study!

The Lectionary Bible Study meets on Thursday Mornings at 11:30 a.m. in the Miller Gathering Hall. Each week we read and reflect on the texts for the upcoming Sunday. Co-Pastor Maria LaSala leads the study.

*Please note there will be no Bible Study on Thursday December 22 and December 29. Bible Study will resume on January 12.*

### The texts for December are:

**December 4:** Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13; 2 Peter 3:8-15a; Mark 1:1-8

**December 11:** Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Psalm 126:1-6 or Luke 1:47-55; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24; John 1:6-8, 19-28

**December 18:** 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16; Luke 1:47-55 or Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26; Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38

**December 25:** Isaiah 52:7-10; Psalm 98:1-9; Hebrews 1:1-4 (5-12); John 1:1-14

## Women at the Well

Women of the congregation are invited to come together for a supper of soups and breads, as we reflect during this Advent season on Mary, the mother of Jesus. Dinner begins at 5:30 p.m. followed by a time for prayer and conversation. If you would like to prepare a pot of soup, or bring a loaf of bread or dessert, please indicate that on the sign up sheet on the Welcome Table.

## Goody Bag Sunday!

Every student needs some encouragement and goodies to make it through finals. On December 11th our congregation we will be assembling Goody Bags for the college and university students who worship with us each week. Please bring homemade or store bought goodies to fill 25 bags. If you have any questions, please contact Beth Aura Miller at [dbmiller@optonline.net](mailto:dbmiller@optonline.net).



## Holiday Giving from the Alternative Gift Market

"Go Green and Help your Neighbor Worldwide" – Come browse and/or take a catalog to see the various projects that you can support which offer aid to our neighbors near and far. You CAN make a difference in our neighbor's lives and build a better world. For more information or to help staff the table, please see Pat Wales or Ken Haynam. Thank you!

## Congregational Meeting to Elect Officers!

Plan to stay for a brief meeting of the congregation on Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup>, to hear the report of the Nominating Committee. Paul Turner, chair of the committee, will present the slate of new Elders and the new Nominating Committee. Grab a cup of coffee and a snack following worship and return to the sanctuary.

## Chuck Forman turns 95 in December!

Chuck Forman will turn 95 on December 2<sup>nd</sup>! Help him celebrate this momentous birthday by staying for a special Friendship Hour in his honor, following worship on Sunday, December 4<sup>th</sup>.

## Iraq/Afghanistan Memorial Stone – Monday, December 5

Reclaiming the Prophetic Voice will again be marking the cost of the continuing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan by placing the November stone on the Memorial Cairn at the intersection of Broadway, Elm and Park streets in New Haven on Monday evening, 6 p.m., December 5. This stone will be inscribed with the November death total of US military personnel and the approximate documented numbers of Iraqi and Afghani civilians killed during that same period of time. This gathering will mark the fourth anniversary of the establishment of the memorial.

November

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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27	28	29	30			

January

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

# December 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
November 27 9:30 AM Choir & CE 10:45 AM Worship 12 PM Friendship Hour 5 PM Confirmation Class	28 3:30 PM Musical Folk 6 PM Tai Chi 8 PM Yale Repertory Theater	29	30 9:30 AM Musical Folk 10:30 AM Staff Meeting 7 PM Choir Rehearsal	December 1 9 AM Yoga 11:30 AM Bible Study	2	3 Columbus House 9 AM Kundalini Yoga 9:30 AM Women's AA
4 9:30 AM Choir & CE 10:45 AM Worship 12 PM Friendship Hour 2 PM Youth Group Christmas Party & ... 5 PM Children's Advent Play and Potluck	5 3:30 PM Musical Folk 6 PM Iraq/Afghanistan Memorial 6 PM Tai Chi 7 PM CE Committee	6 7:30 PM Mission Committee 7:30 PM CLDC Meeting	7 9:30 AM Musical Folk 10:30 AM Staff Meeting 5:30 PM Women at the Well 7 PM Choir Rehearsal	8 9 AM Yoga 11:30 AM Bible Study	9	10 9 AM Kundalini Yoga 9:30 AM Women's AA
11 9:30 AM Choir & CE 10:45 AM Worship - Christmas Music 12 PM Advent Communion 12 PM Christmas Dinner	12 3:30 PM Musical Folk 6 PM Tai Chi	13	14 9:30 AM Staff Meeting 9:30 AM Musical Folk	15 9 AM Yoga 11:30 AM Bible Study	16	17 9 AM Kundalini Yoga 9:30 AM Women's AA
18 9:30 AM Choir & CE 10:45 AM Worship 12 PM Advent Com... 12 PM Friendship Hour 12:15 PM Congregational Meeting 7 PM Caroling at Whitney Center	19 3:30 PM Musical Folk 6 PM Tai Chi	20 7:15 PM Session	21 9:30 AM Musical Folk	22 9 AM Yoga	23	24 Christmas Eve 4 PM Children's Service 7:30 PM Lessons and Carols 11 PM Communion
25 Christmas 10:45 AM Worship - Lessons and Carols 12 PM Friendship Hour	26 3:30 PM Musical Folk 6 PM Tai Chi	27	28 9:30 AM Musical Folk	29 9 AM Yoga	30	31 9 AM Kundalini Yoga 9:30 AM Women's AA

December

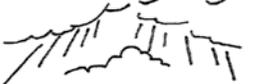
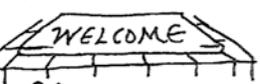
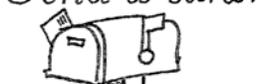
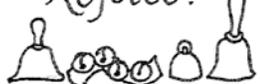
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February

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19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29			

# January 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>January 1</b> New Year's Day 10:45 AM Worship - Agape Feast	<b>2</b> 3:30 PM Musical Folk 6 PM Tai Chi 7 PM CE Committee	<b>3</b> 7:30 PM Mission Committee 7:30 PM CLDC Meeting	<b>4</b> 9:30 AM Musical Folk 10:30 AM Staff Meeting 7 PM Choir Rehearsal	<b>5</b> 9 AM Yoga	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> Columbus House 9 AM Kundalini Yoga 9:30 AM Women's AA
<b>8</b> 9:30 AM Choir & CE 10:45 AM Worship 12 PM Friendship Hour	<b>9</b> 3:30 PM Musical Folk 6 PM Worship Committee 6 PM Tai Chi	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> 9:30 AM Musical Folk 10:30 AM Staff Meeting 7 PM Choir Rehearsal	<b>12</b> 9 AM Yoga 11:30 AM Bible Study	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> 9 AM Kundalini Yoga 9:30 AM Women's AA
<b>15</b> 9:30 AM Choir & CE 10:45 AM Worship 12 PM Friendship Hour	<b>16</b> Abraham's Tent 3:30 PM Musical Folk 6 PM Tai Chi	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> 9:30 AM Musical Folk 10:30 AM Staff Meeting 7 PM Choir Rehearsal	<b>19</b> 9 AM Yoga 11:30 AM Bible Study	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> 9 AM Kundalini Yoga 9:30 AM Women's AA
<b>22</b> Abraham's Tent 9:30 AM Choir & CE 10:45 AM Worship 12 PM Friendship Hour	<b>23</b> 3:30 PM Musical Folk 6 PM Tai Chi	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> 9:30 AM Musical Folk 10:30 AM Staff Meeting 7 PM Choir Rehearsal	<b>26</b> 9 AM Yoga 11:30 AM Bible Study	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> 9 AM Kundalini Yoga 9:30 AM Women's AA 5 PM Bingo and Movie Night
<b>29</b> 9:30 AM Choir & CE 10:45 AM Worship 12 PM Friendship Hour	<b>30</b> 3:30 PM Musical Folk 6 PM Tai Chi 6:30 PM Eve's Daughters	<b>31</b>	<b>February 1</b> 9:30 AM Musical Folk 10:30 AM Staff Meeting 7 PM Choir Rehearsal	<b>2</b> 9 AM Yoga 11:30 AM Bible Study	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> Columbus House 9 AM Kundalini Yoga 9:30 AM Women's AA

1st Sunday	2nd Sunday	3rd Sunday	4th Sunday
Mk. 13:32-37 	Mk. 1:1-8 	Jn. 1:19-23 	Lk. 1:46-55 
Make welcome.  Rom 12:9-13	Dream.  Ps. 16:5-8	See the glory.  Isa. 40:3-5	Say "yes."  Lk. 1:26-38
Rise early.  Lam. 3:22,23	Give a gift.  Mt. 1:11	Pick fruit.  Gal. 5:22,23	Find room.  Lk. 2:7
Send a card.  1 Cor. 1:3-9	Rejoice!  1 Thess. 5:16	Be still.  Ps. 46	Make peace.  Mic. 4:1-4
Be well.  Ps. 103:1-5	See what's new.  Isa. 43:18,19	Show love.  1 Cor. 13:4-7	See the sun set.  Gen. 1:14-18
Share yourself. <a href="http://churchworldservice.org">churchworldservice.org</a> 1 Thess. 2:8	Remember them.  Heb. 12:1	Hear a child.  Isa. 11:6	Glory  2 Cor. 4:6
Shine light.  Isa. 9:2	See moonlight.  Ps. 8	Sing carols.  Ps. 100	 Jn. 1:14

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SAT

*a · d · v · e · n · t · 2 · 0 · 1 · 1*

We know to keep the door ajar for strangers trav'ling from afar.  
 We know to make a manger bed where ox and sheep are nightly fed.  
 But you whose birth we'll welcome there, will turn our gaze to love & care  
 For ev'ry child at ev'ry birth, in whom we'll see your sacred worth.

DEVOTIONS: THE REV. MERRY WATTERS © 2011 POEM AND DESIGN: THE REV. THOMAS MOUSIN

## Looking Ahead to the New Year:

**Eve's Daughters** returns on Monday, January 30<sup>th</sup>. Women from First Presbyterian Church and Congregation Mishkan Israel in Hamden will gather for a light supper and a conversation on Monday, January 30<sup>th</sup>. Dinner begins at 6:30 p.m. The program will take place at First Presbyterian Church. We'll start the new year discussing the qualities of a valiant woman! Join us. Sign up at the Welcome Table.

**Abraham's Tent Returns!** First Presbyterian Church will once again participate in Abraham's Tent, a sheltering program for ten homeless men living on the streets of New Haven. The Owens Community Building's doors will be open beginning on Monday, January 16<sup>th</sup> for dinner and hospitality and a warm place to sleep. Volunteers will be needed for each of the seven nights helping to prepare and serve meals, set up the space, provide a warm and welcoming community of friends, and spending the night at the church. Sign up sheets will be available and a planning meeting will be held sometime this month. If you have questions, please contact Micah Luce or Brian Gray at firstpresbyterianchurch@gmail.com.

## Special Offerings: Year End Summary of Our Giving

Our denomination, the Presbyterian Church USA, has four official special offerings each year: One Great Hour of Sharing Offering, Pentecost Offering, Peacemaking Offering, and Christmas Joy Offering. In addition, in 2011 our New Haven congregation also collected monies for PCUSA Disaster Relief following the tsunami in Japan in March and for Thanksgiving in November. Here is a breakdown of monies received:

Christmas Joy Offering (December 2010)	\$1,327.00
One Great Hour of Sharing (April 2011)	\$3,601.00
Pentecost Offering (June 2011)	\$ 935.00
Peacemaking Offering (October 2011)	\$1,963.00
PCUSA Disaster Relief (March 2011)	\$2,115.00
Thanksgiving Offering (November 2011)	figures not yet available

Thank you to everyone who has contributed!

## Prayers for Our Community

**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 ...

Joanna Ali and Derek Daigle who welcome their newborn daughter, Zelaya.

Blanca Thiebaut and her colleague Montserrat Serra, who were abducted in Kenya. Blanca works for the Spanish division of Doctors Without Borders and is a friend of George and Nancy Rupp.

Dick Hasbany, whose healing continues.

Christian Gagnon, Isabella Quagliato's boyfriend.

Christy Purnell's sister Joey Shoemaker, and Joey's son Todd.

Mary, mother of Fiona Scott Morton, as she struggles with the late stages of ALS.

Jordan Matos, who is stationed in Vilsek, Germany with the U.S. Army.

Those who are unable to worship with us on a regular basis, including Jim Tenney & Ken Jetter.

Prayers for other people and situations in need of our supplications.

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## 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 today. 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 \_\_\_\_\_



CO-PASTORS: BILL GOETTLER & MARIA LASALA

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC: PATRICK McCRELESS

CHRISTIAN EDUCATOR: BRYCE WIEBE

CAMPUS CHAPLAIN TO YALE: JENNIFER DAVIS

PARISH ASSOCIATE: SUE ASHER

CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR: HANNAH ROH

First Presbyterian Church

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Web site: [www.fpcnh.org](http://www.fpcnh.org)

**Christian Education for all ages**

9:30 a.m.

**Worship**

10:45 a.m.

Office Hours

Tuesday - Thursday

8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

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**First Presbyterian Church**  
**704 Whitney Avenue**  
**New Haven, Connecticut**  
**06511**

*Please find your e-copy on the church website at [fpcnh.org](http://fpcnh.org)! We hope to stop printing most copies of the Inkling, moving to an entirely digital format. So take a moment today to check out the newsletter online.*