

# The Inkling

The News of First Presbyterian Church

February 2012

The days are getting longer, light stays in the sky past 5 p.m.  
The story of Jesus' earthly ministry informs our work and worship.  
It is February and we invite you to join us as we journey in faith together.

## The Season of Lent draws near!

An Ash Wednesday service will be offered on Wednesday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>. The service will begin at 6:45 p.m. with the reading of scripture and prayers. The choir will sing, a time of silence will be observed, and the service will conclude with the imposition of ashes. We hope you will make time to mark the beginning of this season of penitence as we journey closer and closer to the cross.

### Pancakes, Pancakes, and More Pancakes

Pancakes of all kinds will be on the menu at the annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper! Join us on Tuesday, February 21st from 5 until 6:30 for pancakes as we ready ourselves for the observance of Lent. Choose your favorite --- plain, banana, chocolate chip, or apple --- or have a sampling of all of them. Meat and meatless sausages will be available as well. The cost for the meal: \$4 per person; \$15 per family. Mmm good.



### The Confirmation Class continues to offer reflections on scripture

During the month of February, members of the Confirmation Class will continue to offer their reflections on the scripture texts for Sunday mornings. This month we will hear from Charlotte Gordon, Cameron Owens, Alex Rupp-Coppi, and Nathanael Matos. The Confirmation Class will also participate in the "Nightwatch Program" at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, in New York City on February 10 and 11. This program, housed in one of the great cathedrals in the country, offers young people a chance to worship and learn about our Christian tradition and our Christian witness in the world. Please continue to pray for the young people in the Confirmation Class: Anny Yun, Sophie Latham, Rowyn Davis, Jake Blackwell, Charlotte Gordon, Cameron Owens, Alex Rupp-Coppi, Nathanael Matos, Kristen Duncan, Leah Miller and Daniel McCloskey.

### YDS Intern Sungduk Yun to preach on Transfiguration Sunday

The season of Epiphany ends with the story of Jesus' Transfiguration on the Mountaintop, (Mark 9:2-9) surrounded by some of his disciples. Come and hear YDS Intern Sungduk Yun preach on this compelling text on Sunday, February 19<sup>th</sup>. Worship begins at 10:45 a.m.

## **New Members' Class – February 5<sup>th</sup>**

A light lunch will be held at the church manse, following the Friendship Hour, on Sunday, February 5<sup>th</sup> for all those interested in learning more about the mission and ministry of First Presbyterian Church of New Haven. If you have been worshipping with us for a while, and are considering membership in the congregation, please plan to attend. Questions? Talk with Co-Pastors Bill Goettler and Maria LaSala.



## **Valentine's Potluck on February 12**

A Valentine's Potluck will take place after worship on Sunday, February 12. Bring a family-sized dish you love (main dish, veggie, salad, or dessert) to share.

## **Dinner with Friends**

The next Dinner With Friends is scheduled for 6:00 Saturday, February 18. Sign up at the Welcome Table today! For more information, please see Candice Gray and Bonnie Sherman.

## **Choir Concert on Sunday, February 5<sup>th</sup>**

Many will be getting ready to watch the Super Bowl on Sunday afternoon, but we hope that you will begin your festivities by attending a Hymn Festival, sponsored by the Bethesda Music Series. This hymn festival will feature several New Haven area church choirs, including our own!, and a chamber orchestra. A freewill offering to benefit Habitat for Humanity will be received, and a reception will follow the concert. The concert will end by 5:30 p.m. with plenty of time to make it home for the kick off!

## **Eve's Daughters to meet on February 27<sup>th</sup>**

Eve's Daughters, the Interfaith Women's Bible Study, will meet again on Monday, February 27<sup>th</sup> to discuss the story of Tamar and Judah (Genesis 38). The gathering will take place at Congregation Mishkan Israel on Ridge Road in Hamden and will begin at 6:30 p.m. with supper. All women of the congregation are welcome. A sign up sheet will be on the Welcome Table. For more information about this exciting interfaith dialogue, please talk with Co-Pastor Maria LaSala.

## **Youth Group Gatherings in February**

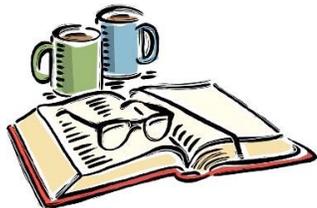
Calling all youth group members! Fun is the theme for February. On Sunday, February 5<sup>th</sup>, the youth group will go ice-skating immediately after church. And, on Sunday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, bring your favorite board games for a time of friendly competition – the fun will begin at 5 p.m. in the Miller Gathering Hall.



Thanks to the Youth Group members who came out on Sunday evening, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, to help prepare the final meal for Abraham's Tent. Hamburgers, hot dogs, macaroni and cheese and salad were on the menu ... the perfect meal for a hungry group to cheer on their favorite football teams!

## 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.



### The texts for February are:

**February 5:** Isa. 40:21–31; Ps. 147:1–11, 20c; 1 Cor. 9:16–23; Mark 1:29–39

**February 12:** 2 Kings 5:1–14; Ps. 30; 1 Cor. 9:24–27; Mark 1:40–45

**February 19:** 2 Kings 2:1–12; Ps. 50:1–6; 2 Cor. 4:3–6; Mark 9:2–9

**February 26:** Gen. 9:8–17; Ps. 25:1–10; 1 Peter 3:18–22; Mark 1:9–15

## Sunday Morning Adult Education

The month of February takes us far away from home, and brings us back to our selves. Join us at 9:30 a.m. in the Miller Gathering Hall for friendship and learning. Coffee and tea are available.

### Sunday, February 5<sup>th</sup>

The Rev. Dr. Marta Bennett will speak about her work in Kenya. Marta, who with her two children, Sarah and Justin, is living in New Haven for the year, will share stories of her work at the Nairobi International School of Theology, and the people she serves. Marta chairs the Department of Leadership Studies at the Nairobi International School of Theology/International Leadership University (NIST/ILU-Kenya). Marta trains Christian leaders for service in churches, para-church organizations, business, and government, integrating leadership with discipleship and mentoring. Students come to NIST/ILU from all over Africa to study at the certificate, diploma, undergraduate, Master's, and soon the doctoral levels. "While evangelism continues to be crucial," she says, "even more strategic is discipleship and professional skill development so that the gospel can take root, transforming lives and society as a whole." Marta will also preside at the Communion Table during worship that morning.

### Sunday, February 12<sup>th</sup>

The Rev. Gerson Annunciacao, chaplain to the Presbyterian Immigrant Ministry, a newly formed ministry of the Presbytery of Southern New England, will tell us about his work with undocumented detainees. Gerson's work takes him to Massachusetts and Connecticut, working with inmates and their families, to bring about just decisions and hope. The Mission Committee has contributed \$1,000 to this new ministry. More about Gerson's ministry can be found in this month's newsletter.

### Sunday, February 19<sup>th</sup>

The Rev. Allie Perry, teacher, chaplain, and pastor at the Shalom UCC community in New Haven, will share stories of her recent trip to Palestine and Israel, and about the struggles for justice she encountered.

### Sunday, February 26<sup>th</sup>

Kristy Powell, who has just completed her year of "The One Dress Protest," will talk with us about what it was like to wear just one dress for a year. Come and hear Kristy tell us of her journey into simplicity.

## **Iraq/Afghanistan Memorial, January Stone, Monday, February 6**

Remember that the war in Iraq is not over for the Iraqi people. Reclaiming the Prophetic Voice will again be marking the cost of the continuing violence in Iraq and Afghanistan by placing the January stone on the Memorial Cairn at the intersection of Broadway, Elm and Park streets in New Haven on Monday evening, 6 p.m., February 6. This stone will be inscribed with the January death total of US military personnel and the approximate documented numbers of Iraqi and Afghani civilians killed during that same period of time. Rev. Ian Oliver of the University Church at Yale will lead the service.

## **Ecumenical Advocacy Days**

“Is This the Fast I Seek?” will be the theme for this year’s Ecumenical Advocacy Days. In this era of economic and political urgency, as critical decisions are being made about the U.S. federal budget priorities and as national elections are fast approaching, you are invited to participate in conversations and worship which will equip you to speak boldly as people of faith on behalf of the least among us. The program will take place from March 23-26 in Washington, DC. For more information, or to sign up to attend, please talk with Mary Hunt.



## **Mission Committee Supports Nancy and Shelvis Smith-Mather’s Ministry in South Sudan**

After enduring decades of civil war with the Sudanese government, South Sudan finally declared independence and officially became the United Nations’ newest member-state in July, 2011. Yet the nightmares of violence and poverty are far from over for its people. Upon gaining independence, it also became one of the world’s poorest countries. Moreover, as of mid-January, ethnic clashes have already caused the displacement of 120,000 people. Clearly the country is in need of assistance of all sorts, more immediately humanitarian and peacekeeping operations but also economic development programs and programs that promote conflict resolution and reconciliation in the longer term.

Nancy and Shelvis Smith-Mather, both ministers from the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta, are currently in South Sudan working hard on improving the prospects of sustainable peace in the country. Nancy and Shelvis are no strangers to this part of Africa as they have worked in Kenya since 2008. In South Sudan, they are working as Peace Educators with RECONCILE International – an affiliate church organization established by the New Sudan Council of Churches (NSCC) in 2003 – in partnership with the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the Reformed Church in America. Shelvis now heads RECONCILE’s Peace Institute which trains church and community leaders from across South Sudan in community-based trauma healing, civic education and conflict transformation. Nancy provides staff training as well as monitors and evaluates RECONCILE’s community programs.

The Mission Committee has recently decided to support Nancy and Shelvis Smith-Mather’s ministry in South Sudan. In an email to us in early January, Nancy and Shelvis thanked us for our interest in and support for their ministry and invited us to share our relevant expertise and experiences with them. You are welcome to follow their work on their webpage: [nancyandshelvis.com](http://nancyandshelvis.com), include them and the people of South Sudan in your prayers, and contact the Mission Committee with your ideas on how we can best contribute to Nancy and Shelvis’s peace-building work.

## Peace and Justice Action Group

The First Presbyterian Peace and Justice Action Group was formed in April 2011 to build on the fellowship and energy developed during the 2011 Presbyterian Peace Fellowship, Convocation of Peacemakers at the Stony Point Center. The group meets regularly for fellowship, sharing interests and planning activities. First Presbyterian has an active peace and justice ministry. The mission of the Peace and Justice Group is to encourage and support these activities and also raise awareness of issues of importance to members of the group. We work as part of the Mission Committee to create education programs and provide additional opportunities for the congregation work for peace and justice locally and around the world.

We have been meeting weekly on Thursdays at 6 pm (most weeks) for a potluck dinner and discussion. We invite you to join current group members Ned and Wanda Castner, Jane Hindenlang, Teddy and Alan Hogle, Art and Mary Hunt, Ralph Jones and Bonnie Sherman.

**As a group, we collectively declare that as we believe, so we shall do.**

*We believe that First Presbyterian Church of New Haven is called to share the gospel and to apply it to all of life. Applying the gospel to social conditions calls for mission and social action, activities that support and reinforce one another. Mission involves efforts to heal the spiritual, physical, mental and emotional hurts of people. Mission is corrective; for example, feeding the hungry. Social action involves efforts to change the circumstances that cause the hurts. Social action is proactive and preventive; for example, working to eliminate the cause of the hunger.*

*We believe Christ calls us to efforts to bring about a social order characterized by love and justice. Jesus said quite clearly that we should not just say we follow Jesus, but act in the ways of his justice and mercy.*

*We believe in the broad variety of methods in applying the gospel to all of life. Some are designed to strengthen the basic institutions of the social order; such as family life, business and government. Others are designed to address wrongs in society; such as injustice, corruption, and greed. We may advocate, support and engage in boycotts and public demonstrations, lobbying government officials, and efforts to encourage voting all in an effort to deal constructively with problems that plague society and to bring about social change.*

*We believe in seeking guidance and empowerment from the Holy Spirit concerning what social problems to tackle and what methods to use.*

Please contact any member of the Peace and Justice Action Group if you would like more information. Please contact Art Hunt at [art@cheswood.com](mailto:art@cheswood.com) if you would like to be on our mailing list.

### **Recent and Upcoming Activities:**

Four in our group attended the Public Allies CT & Youth Rights Media Innovation Lab on January 28<sup>th</sup> to brainstorm ideas to reduce gun violence in New Haven.

March 23-26, 10th Annual Ecumenical Advocacy Days, March 23-26, 2012, in Washington, DC. "Is This The Fast I Seek?"

April 26- 29, 2012 Presbyterian Peace Fellowship, Convocation of Peacemakers at the Stony Point Center. "Waging Peace in the Time of Empire"

January

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# February 2012

| Sunday   | Monday  | Tuesday   | Wednesday   | Thursday  | Friday   | Saturday   |
|--|---|---|---|---|--|--|
| January 29<br>9:30 AM Choir & CE<br>10:45 AM Worship<br>12 PM Friendship Hour<br>12:15 PM Congregational Meeting<br>5 PM Confirmation Class            | 30<br>3:30 PM Musical Folk<br>6 PM Tai Chi<br>6:30 PM Eve's Daughters   | 31<br>February 1  | 1<br>9:30 AM Musical Folk<br>10:30 AM Staff Meeting<br>7 PM Choir Rehearsal                                   | 2<br>9 AM Yoga<br>11:30 AM Bible Study          | 3<br>Columbus House<br>9 AM Kundalini Yoga<br>9:30 AM Women's AA | 4  |
| 5<br>9:30 AM Choir & CE<br>10:45 AM Worship<br>12 PM Youth Group<br>12 PM Friendship Hour<br>12:30 PM New Members' Class<br>4 PM Hymn Sing at Bethesda | 6<br>3:30 PM Musical Folk<br>6 PM Iraq/Afghanistan Memorial<br>6 PM Tai Chi<br>7 PM CE Committee<br>8 PM Yale Repertory Theater | 7<br>7:30 PM Mission Committee<br>7:30 PM CLOC Meeting      | 8<br>9:30 AM Musical Folk<br>10:30 AM Staff Meeting<br>7 PM Choir Rehearsal                                   | 9<br>9 AM Yoga<br>11:30 AM Bible Study          | 10<br>Youth Group in NYC   | 11<br>9 AM Kundalini Yoga<br>9:30 AM PSNE at YDS<br>9:30 AM Women's AA |
| 12<br>9:30 AM Choir & CE<br>10:45 AM Worship<br>12 PM Valentine's Potluck<br>12:30 PM Hebrew Class   | 13<br>3:30 PM Musical Folk<br>6 PM Tai Chi  | 14<br>February 15   | 15<br>9:30 AM Musical Folk<br>10:30 AM Staff Meeting<br>7 PM Choir Rehearsal                                  | 16<br>9 AM Yoga<br>11:30 AM Bible Study         | 17<br>February 18  | 18<br>9 AM Kundalini Yoga<br>9:30 AM Women's AA                        |
| 19<br>9:30 AM Choir & CE<br>10:45 AM Worship - Sungduk Yun Proaching<br>12 PM Friendship Hour<br>12:30 PM Hebrew Class<br>5 PM Confirmation Class      | 20<br>3:30 PM Musical Folk<br>6 PM Tai Chi  | 21<br>5 PM Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper<br>7:15 PM Session | 22<br>9:30 AM Musical Folk<br>10:30 AM Staff Meeting<br>6:45 PM Ash Wednesday Service<br>7 PM Choir Rehearsal | 23<br>9 AM Yoga<br>11:30 AM Bible Study         | 24<br>February 25  | 25<br>9 AM Kundalini Yoga<br>9:30 AM Women's AA                        |
| 26<br>9:30 AM Choir & CE<br>10:45 AM Worship<br>12 PM Friendship Hour<br>12:30 PM Hebrew Class<br>5 PM Youth Group Game Night                          | 27<br>3:30 PM Musical Folk<br>6 PM Tai Chi<br>6:30 PM Eve's Daughters   | 28<br>February 29   | 29<br>9:30 AM Musical Folk<br>10:30 AM Staff Meeting<br>7 PM Choir Rehearsal                                  | 1<br>March<br>9 AM Yoga<br>11:30 AM Bible Study | 2<br>March 3   | 3<br>Columbus House<br>9 AM Kundalini Yoga<br>9:30 AM Women's AA       |

February

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April

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# March 2012

| Sunday  | Monday  | Tuesday  | Wednesday  | Thursday                                     | Friday                         | Saturday   |
|---|---|--|--|--|--------------------------------|--|
| February 26<br>9:30 AM Choir & CE<br>10:45 AM Worship<br>12 PM Friendship Hour<br>12:30 PM Hebrew Class<br>5 PM Youth Group Game Night  | 27<br>3:30 PM Musical Folk<br>6 PM Tai Chi<br>6:30 PM Eve's Daughters | 28   | 29<br>9:30 AM Musical Folk<br>10:30 AM Staff Meeting<br>7 PM Choir Rehearsal | March 1<br>9 AM Yoga<br>11:30 AM Bible Study | 2                              | 3<br>Columbus House<br>9 AM Kundalini Yoga<br>9:30 AM Women's AA     |
| 4<br>9:30 AM Choir & CE<br>10:45 AM Worship<br>12 PM Friendship Hour<br>12:30 PM Hebrew Class<br>5 PM Confirmation Class  | 5<br>3:30 PM Musical Folk<br>6 PM Tai Chi<br>7 PM CE Committee        | 6<br>7:30 PM Mission Committee<br>7:30 PM CLDC Meeting | 7<br>9:30 AM Musical Folk<br>10:30 AM Staff Meeting<br>7 PM Choir Rehearsal  | 8<br>9 AM Yoga<br>11:30 AM Bible Study       | 9                              | 10<br>9 AM Kundalini Yoga<br>9:30 AM Women's AA<br>5 PM Square Dance |
| 11<br>9:30 AM Choir & CE<br>10:45 AM Worship<br>12 PM Friendship Hour<br>12:30 PM Hebrew Class  | 12<br>3:30 PM Musical Folk<br>6 PM Tai Chi                            | 13   | 14<br>9:30 AM Musical Folk<br>10:30 AM Staff Meeting<br>7 PM Choir Rehearsal | 15<br>9 AM Yoga<br>11:30 AM Bible Study      | 16                             | 17<br>9 AM Kundalini Yoga<br>9:30 AM Women's AA                      |
| 18<br>9:30 AM Choir & CE<br>10:45 AM Worship<br>12 PM Friendship Hour<br>12:30 PM Hebrew Class<br>5 PM Confirmation Class   | 19<br>3:30 PM Musical Folk<br>6 PM Tai Chi                            | 20<br>7:15 PM Session                                  | 21<br>9:30 AM Musical Folk<br>10:30 AM Staff Meeting<br>7 PM Choir Rehearsal | 22<br>9 AM Yoga<br>11:30 AM Bible Study      | 23<br>Ecumenical Advocacy Days | 24<br>9 AM Kundalini Yoga<br>9:30 AM Women's AA                      |
| 25<br>Ecumenical Advocacy Days<br>9:30 AM Choir & CE<br>10:45 AM Worship<br>12 PM Friendship Hour<br>12:30 PM Hebrew Class<br>1 PM Church Grounds Spruce Up<br>5 PM Youth Group Lenten Preparations | 26<br>3:30 PM Musical Folk<br>6 PM Tai Chi                            | 27   | 28<br>9:30 AM Musical Folk<br>10:30 AM Staff Meeting<br>7 PM Choir Rehearsal | 29<br>9 AM Yoga<br>11:30 AM Bible Study      | 30                             | 31<br>9 AM Kundalini Yoga<br>9:30 AM Women's AA                      |

## Organ Renovation News: An Update from Music Director Pat McCreless



The renovation of our Hillebrand tracker organ has begun! You'll remember that our organ tuning and maintenance technicians recommended, about a year and a half ago, that we undertake a once-every-forty-years refurbishing of the organ. The instrument has been virtually maintenance-free since its installation in 1969, but, not surprisingly, it now has some parts that are worn, it needs a thorough cleaning, and in general it just needs a complete going-over to insure that it is as dependable in its next forty years as it has been in its first forty. The Thompson-Allen Organ Company, which has maintained the organ since it was installed, told us that they do not do major work on tracker organs like ours, and they suggested that we work with Scot Huntington, of SLH Organs in Stonington. The session approved our contracting with him for the work, and we drew up a contract with him in the fall.

The first stage has been to move, update, and bring up to code the electrical wiring for the organ.

A local electrician, working with Scot, did this work in early January. This enabled Scot to dismantle and remove the old blower motor, do some significant repair work for (an unpleasant surprise!) water damage, and install the new motor. He completed the work on January 23. We can already hear a dramatic difference: the new motor is far quieter than the old one--so quiet that a number of choir members noticed instantly that they could barely hear the organ running on the first Sunday after the installation. The next stage is the large-scale removing and cleaning of the pipes, and the inspection and repair, as necessary, of all inner parts. Scot cannot begin this work until late May or early June, at which point the organ will be unusable for a month or so.

And so, we're in good shape--on budget, with the new work already making a substantial difference in the performance of the organ. Thanks to all church members who generously donated to a fund for the renovation!

Pat McCreless  
Music Director

### Looking ahead:

**Square Dance** on Saturday, March 10<sup>th</sup>

### Save the Date: Church Grounds Spruce Up Days

The Property Committee is planning two times to spruce up the property this spring; **March 25<sup>th</sup>** (Sunday afternoon) and **May 12** (Saturday morning). Please plan on spending a couple of hours on at least one day by marking it on your calendars now.

These days will encompass work both outside (raking plant debris, spreading mulch, etc.) and inside (cleaning and repairs not included in sexton's normal schedule.) With a good volunteer turnout, we should be able to really make our Church shine!

## Presbytery of Southern New England Meets on February 11 at Yale Divinity School

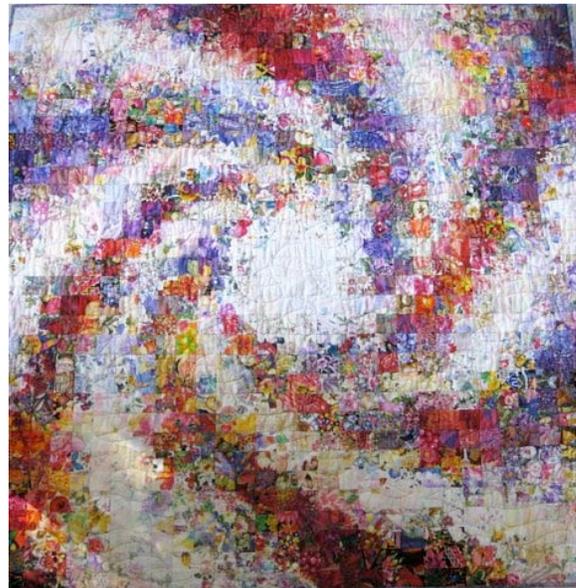


The Presbytery of Southern New England will meet on Saturday, February 11<sup>th</sup> at Yale Divinity School. Two important votes will take place during the day. The Presbytery will be asked to vote on an overture from seven congregations in the Presbytery, asking for an Authoritative Interpretation on Marriage. This overture extends permission to pastors in states where same-gender marriage is legal, to perform marriages. Currently, the Presbyterian Church's polity restricts this pastoral act. Also on the docket will be the approval of commissioners to the Presbyterian Church General Assembly in Pittsburgh this summer.

The Rev. Arthur Shippee, who worships with us on Sunday mornings, and Elder Christopher McCloskey, will both be nominated for service. Arthur is being nominated as a Clergy Commissioner; Christopher as a YAD – a Youth Advisory Delegate. We expect the vote to be unanimous.

### Presbyterian Immigrant Ministry

The Rev. Gerson Annunciacao, Chaplain to the Presbyterian Immigrant Ministry, will be our guest at the Adult Education Class on Sunday, February 12<sup>th</sup>. Gerson will also offer the Minute for Mission that Sunday. The Presbyterian Immigrant Ministry has three main foci. The first and most important is ministry through Bible study groups to incarcerated immigrants in correctional facilities. This group approach, which enables members to minister to and evangelize each other, is a distinctive feature of this ministry. The second focus is upon ministry to their families who need information and spiritual help from supportive outsiders to cope with the uncertainties surrounding incarceration. Thirdly, there is a ministry to congregations to tell the story of incarcerated immigrants so that together we may discern ways in which we can be genuinely supportive of them. To date the first focus has been our main priority.



“We are a community of the Spirit”

Presbytery banner for 2010-11  
Credit to  
Revs. Jinny Smanik and Martha Highsmith

As reported to The Presbytery in November, seventy out of the 547 incarcerated immigrants (13%) in two correctional facilities are in these Bible study groups and negotiations are well under way to begin similar groups in a third facility. Of the incarcerated immigrants currently involved twelve are from Connecticut: six from Hartford, two from New Haven, two from Danbury, and one each from Norwalk and Stamford.

## Abraham's Tent: A Reflection by Elder Micah Luce

Though First Presbyterian Church has just completed our third year of service with Columbus House's "Abraham's Tent," it wasn't until recently that I decided to recall the passage from the Old Testament from which the program's name comes. Genesis 18 presents the story: "As Abraham sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day, he looked up and saw three men standing near him...He ran from the tent entrance to meet them...and he said, 'let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves...Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves'...and he stood by them under the tree while they ate."

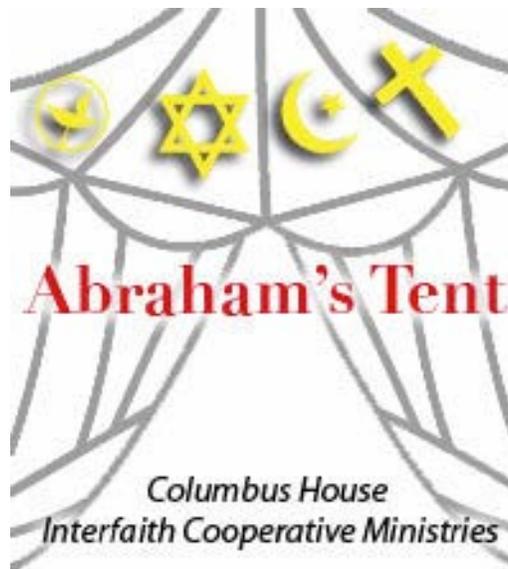
While the ideas of hospitality, service, and companionship in the ancient story were enacted by our faithful congregation again this year, there are also some obvious differences in our own hosting of the 11 homeless men who graciously brought their personalities to us from January 16-22nd.

First, the "heat of the day" was replaced with the "cold of the night." The shelter from the cold New England winter nights are surely a far cry from the heat of Middle Eastern summers. Our overnight hosts made sure the men were comfortable, cared for, and safe every night.

Second, Abraham provided his guests with "a little water" and "a little bread." There was nothing little about the food that was shared by our meal-preparers. With huge feasts of meatloaf, a Sunday-night playoff football cookout, delectable desserts, and enough food for a royal banquet each evening, our new friends surely had their fill.

Finally, Abraham "stood by them under the tree while they ate." Perhaps one of the most important aspects of Abraham's, and First Presbyterian's, hospitality was in going beyond the physical provisions of food and shelter. Abraham "stood by them." When we meet the physical needs, it is then we can move along to what the marginalized and rejected in society need more than anything else--someone to stand by them. With open minds and hearts, it was beautiful night after night to watch our hosts, meal-preparers, and overnights alike stand by the men who usually stand alone. We ate with them, played backgammon with them, served as bankers for their incessant Monopoly cravings, and even gave up our Saturday morning to keep the church open so they could remain inside during the snow. All of these moments brought laughter, conversation, and a genuine interest in simply being with the men as they ate, played, rested, and talked.

Thanks to each of you who were present with us in body or present with us in prayer. May we long remember to shelter, feed, and stand with those who are unsheltered, unfed, and alone.



## Meal-a-Month

Your generous donations go to the Christian Community Action food pantry.

- CCA's clients select the items they need and want for families ranging from one or two to seven or eight.
- A variety of sizes are appropriate.
- Use this list as a guide. Check the specials aisle for similar items on sale.
- The CT health department prohibits distribution of fresh foods.
- Census data show Connecticut had the largest percentage increase for all people and for children living in poverty in the country, despite our goal of cutting the child poverty rate in half by 2014. That's almost 315,000 Connecticut residents living under the Federal poverty level.

| <b>Meal-a-Month<br/>GROCERIES</b> |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/>          | Bags of rice                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/>          | Bags of beans (red or black)                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/>          | Pasta / pasta sauce                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/>          | Canned tuna                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>          | Canned fruits (low sugar preferred)          |
| <input type="checkbox"/>          | Canned meats                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/>          | Canned vegetables (low-sodium)               |
| <input type="checkbox"/>          | Boxes of mashed potatoes                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/>          | Pasta sauce                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>          | Peanut butter                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/>          | Low-sugar breakfast cereals (Cheerios, etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/>          | Low-sodium soups                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/>          | Dessert items – Jello, pudding mixes, etc.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>          | Canned juices: tomato, V8, grape, orange     |
| <input type="checkbox"/>          | Instant milk                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/>          | Coffee and/or tea                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/>          | Flour  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>          | Sugar  |

## 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 ...

Alan Hogle, who continues to struggle with illness.

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.

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 and Ken Jetter.

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

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

YDS INTERN: SUNGDUK YUN

CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR: HANNAH ROH

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**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.*