

The Inkling

The News of First Presbyterian Church

December 2012

Advent: A Season of Waiting and Wonder



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 will bring us to our knees as we 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.

Are such promises impossible? Has our world turned its back on believing this good news? The faithful who gather week after week at First Presbyterian Church of New Haven will affirm that with God all things are possible!

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.

Christmas Eve Worship

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

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 Maria LaSala 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!

Advent Communion

The Sacrament of Holy Communion will be offered on all four of the Advent Sundays. On December 2, the First Sunday of Advent, The Sacrament of Holy Communion will be celebrated during the worship service. On Sundays December 9, 16, and 23, 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.

A Special Service of Shadows and Light

Advent is an important time for people who know that this Christmas will be a hard one, either because they have had a death in the family, a loss or broken relationship or because of painful memories of Christmases past. This service, which will be held on Sunday, December 23rd at 3 p.m., acknowledges the pain and sadness many people experience as the holidays approach but also encourages people to move toward hope. We'll move the mood from solemn to hopeful over the course of the service by choosing music and Scriptures that give full expression to both sorrow and the longing for hope. The good news of Christmas Joy is for everyone, and most especially for those who are in deep darkness. On them the light has shined, too!

Choir to perform Christmas Music

On the Third Sunday of Advent, December 16, the choir will present its annual Christmas program during the sermon time of the morning worship service. This has become the traditional time for our music Sunday in the Advent/Christmas season. In the past the choir has sometimes done large works (Benjamin Britten's Ceremony of Carols, and the Magnificats of Vivaldi and Francesco Durante), and sometimes offered a selection of carols, anthems, and choruses for the season. This year we will follow the latter practice, as we did last year, with carols from England and Poland, a Native American Christmas poem set to the melody of a 17th-century French carol, celebratory choruses of Bach and Sweelinck, and more. Join us for a musical and meaningful service, and then enjoy our annual Christmas dinner afterwards in the Owens Community Building.



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.

Advent Dinner Theater – December 9th

Join us for a night of fun and laughter with Bryce Wiebe and the children! Dinner will be provided at this Advent dinner theatre in the Miller Gathering Hall starting at 5:30 p.m. on Sunday, December 9. Please talk to Bryce or sign up at the Welcome Table to let him know you are coming. All are welcome!

Agape Feast and Abraham's Tent Setup December 30

Anticipate the New Year, with all its hope and promises, on Sunday, December 30. We will gather at 10:45 a.m. for an Agape Feast. 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. And then plan to stay after the service to help set up for Abraham's Tent, making the Miller Hall and classrooms ready for our winter guests.



Join us for Bible Study!

The Lectionary Bible Study meets on Thursday Mornings at 11:00 a.m. in the Miller Gathering Hall. Each week we read and reflect on the texts for the upcoming Sunday. Bryce Wiebe leads the study.

Please note there will be no Bible Study on Thursday December 20 or 27. Bible Study will resume on January 10.

The texts for December are:

December 2: Jeremiah 33:14-16; Psalm 25:1-10; 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13; Luke 21:25-36

December 9: Malachi 3:1-4; Luke 1:68-79; Philippians 1:3-11; Luke 3:1-6

December 16: Zephaniah 3:14-20; Isaiah 12:2-6; Philippians 4:4-7; Luke 3:7-18

December 23: Micah 5:2-5a; Luke 1:46b-55; Psalm 80:1-7; Hebrews 10:5-10; Luke 1:39-45

December 30: 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26; Psalm 148; Colossians 3:12-17; Luke 2:41-52

Goody Bag Sunday!

Every student needs some encouragement and goodies to make it through finals. On Sunday, December 2nd 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 20 bags.



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!

Adult Education Class on The Messiah ...

Not Handel's oratorio *Messiah*, but the Messiah as told to us in Scripture. On Sunday, December 2, Rabbi Herbert Brockman, of Congregation Mishkan Israel will be our guest speaker. Rabbi Brockman will be joined by members of his beginning Judaism class, to talk with us about the meaning of the Messiah in Jewish tradition. Bringing together scripture and story, come and hear our good friend and everybody's rabbi, share with us his understanding of the Messiah. Spoiler alert: Rabbi Brockman does not believe Jesus to be the Messiah! On Sunday, December 9th, Co-Pastors Bill Goettler and Maria LaSala will share story and scripture which point to the revelation of Jesus as the Messiah. This two part series is sure to be lively and engaging. Join us on Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m. Coffee and tea will be available. Please note there will be no Adult Education hour on Sundays December 16th, 23rd, and 30th. The Adult Education class will resume on January 13th.

Special Meeting of the Congregation – December 9

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 2015 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!

A Rabbi and A Minister walk into a Bar ...






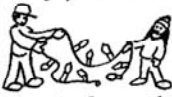

















Did you think this was a joke? Co-Pastors Bill Goettler and Maria LaSala will join Rabbi Herbert Brockman from Congregation Mishkan Israel for a night of conversation about things theological and biblical, and things political and personal. This evening of fun and friendship will take place at Mickey's Restaurant on the corner of Dixwell and Whitney Avenue on Thursday, December 20 at 7 p.m. Come join us!

December 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 9:00am Yoga 9:30am Women's AA
2 9:30am Choir, Church School 10:45am Worship 12:00pm Friendship Hour 4pm Adele Crawford Installation	3 6:00pm Memorial Cairn	4 9:30am Musical Folk 4:00pm Musical Folk 7:30pm CLOC and Missions Committee	5 9:30am Musical Folk 4:30pm Staff Meeting 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	6 9:00am Yoga 11:00am Bible Study 4:00pm Musical Folk	7 10:00am Musical Folk 7:00pm CT Folk	8 9:00am Yoga 9:30am Women's AA
9 9:30am Choir, Church School 10:45am Worship 12pm Communion, Congregational Meeting 12:30pm Friendship Hour, Abe's Tent Mtg 5:30pm Dinner Theater Program	10	11 9:30am Musical Folk 4:00pm Musical Folk	12 9:30am Musical Folk 4:30pm Staff Meeting 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	13 9:00am Yoga 11:00am Bible Study 12:00pm DDS Self Advocate Holiday Lunch 4:00pm Musical Folk	14 10:00am Musical Folk	15 9:00am Yoga 9:30am Women's AA 9:30am Choir Rehearsal
16 9:30am Choir, Church School 10:45am Worship 12:00pm Communion, Christmas Dinner	17 6pm Eve's Daughters Interfaith Holiday Celebration	18 9:30am Musical Folk 4:00pm Musical Folk 7:15pm Session	19 9:30am Musical Folk 4:30pm Staff Meeting	20 9:00am Yoga 4:00pm Musical Folk 7pm A Rabbi and a Minister Walk Into a Bar	21 10:00am Musical Folk	22 9:00am Yoga 9:30am Women's AA
23 9:30am Choir, Church School 10:45am Worship 12:00pm Communion, Open House at Manse 3pm Service of Shadows and Light	24 Christmas Eve 4pm Family Service 7:30pm Service of Lessons and Carols 11pm Communion Service	25 Christmas Day	26 9:30am Musical Folk 4:30pm Staff Meeting	27 9:00am Yoga 11:00am Bible Study 4:00pm Musical Folk	28 10:00am Musical Folk	29
30 9:30am Choir, Church School 10:45am Agape Feast 12:00pm Abe's Tent Setup	31 4:00pm Abraham's Tent					

January 2013

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		1 4:00pm Abraham's Tent	2 4:00pm Abraham's Tent	3 4:00pm Abraham's Tent	4 4:00pm Abraham's Tent 7:00pm CT Folk	5 9:00am Yoga 9:30am Women's AA 4:00pm Abe's Tent
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◦ SUN ◦	◦ MON ◦	◦ TUE ◦	◦ WED ◦	◦ THU ◦	◦ FRI ◦	◦ SAT ◦
2 LIGHT ONE CANDLE.  1 THESS. 3:9,10	3 BLESS THE HOUSE.  2 SAM. 7:25-29	4 FULFILL A PROMISE.  JER. 33:14-16	5 MAKE PEACE.  ISA. 2:2-4	6 SURPRISE A CHILD.  ISA. 7:14-15	7 SEE LIGHTS.  ISA. 9:2-7	8 GO WALKING.  ISA. 35:1-10
9 LIGHT TWO CANDLES.  MT. 5:14-16	10 JUST LISTEN.  HAB. 2:1-5	11 PREPARE.  MAL. 3:1,2	12 TASTE HONEY.  MT. 3:1-12	13 RECHARGE (A BATTERY).  MT. 25:1-13	14 KEEP WATCH.  MK. 13:32-37	15 SHINE LIGHT.  1 THESS. 5:1-6
16 LIGHT THREE CANDLES.  PHIL. 4:4	17 TAKE COURAGE.  PS. 27:13,14	18 GIVE LIGHT.  LK. 1:76-79	19 HUG A CHILD.  LK. 2:25-32	20 ASSIST SOMEONE.  MT. 11:2-6	21 SHARE.  LK. 3:10,11	22 WELCOME THEM.  MT. 25:34-36
23 LIGHT FOUR CANDLES.  ISA. 43:19	24  JN. 1:14	WAKEN AGAIN TO THE WONDER, THAT ADVENT WILL SLOWLY REVEAL. SEARCH FOR A STAR THAT WILL GUIDE YOU, OR STAY BY YOUR SHEEP IN THE FIELDS. GO, WHEN THE ANGELS HAVE BECKONED, AND WORSHIP IN LOWLIEST STALL MAJESTY BORN IN A MANGER, THE LOVE WHO IS LORD OF US ALL.				

DEVOTIONS: MERRY WATERS * POEM AND DESIGN: THOMAS MOUSIN * ADVENT 2012 * thomasmousin.wordpress.com

Connecticut Folk First Fridays

Connecticut Folk will host its First Fridays concert at First Presbyterian on Friday, December 7. This month features a Beatles Night Song Circle with Glen Roethal and John Redgate. 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!

Former YDS Intern Installation!

Former YDS Intern Adele Crawford will be installed as Pastor of the Valley Presbyterian Church in Brookfield, Connecticut today at 4 p.m. We are invited to this worship service to celebrate with Adele and with her new congregation. Please note that the conversation with Martin Looney, originally scheduled for this same day, has been postponed. State Senator Martin Looney will join us for conversation on Sunday, January 13th at 4:30 p.m. in the Miller Gathering Hall.

A Note from Experience Corps:

You have wisdom to share. We have children who need it. If you are age 55+, you can make a real difference in children's lives by helping them improve their reading and writing skills. Become an Experience Corps tutor in New Haven elementary schools, just 15+ hours a week. Training is provided. You must have a high school diploma or equivalent and pass a background check via fingerprinting. A small stipend and funding for your child/grandchild's college tuition are provided. For more information, contact Sheila at volunteer@aoapartnerships.org, or 203-752-3059 x2900 and visit www.experiencecorps.org.

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 23rd. After the postlude has ended, make your way next door where there will be tasty treats, warm cider, and roaring fires in the fireplace. All are welcome.

Eve's Daughters Holiday Celebration

December is the month for the holiday celebrations of Hannukah and Christmas. Women of the congregation are invited to a holiday celebration on Monday, December 17th. All women are welcome ... those who have been a part of the Eve's Daughters Interfaith Bible Study and those who might want to be a part of these monthly gatherings in the new year. The celebration will begin at 6 p.m. at the church Manse. Food and drink will be provided. Please sign up at the Welcome Table, or talk with Co-Pastor Maria LaSala.

Interested in a Book Group?

Occasionally book lovers at First Presbyterian Church come together to read and reflect together on interesting books of substance and worth. It is good news that another book covenant group is forming to run from January through April or May. This is a group with a difference. Each month a passionate reader and church leader will join the group in discussion of a book that has been in some way deeply important, personally transformative, or just too much fun. Every month, then, we will look at a book that is beloved and significant to someone we especially care about in our community. You are invited to be part of the group, but time to sign up is drawing short. If you have questions or would just like to hear more about the group, see Dick Hasbany.

Afghanistan Memorial Stone – Monday, December 3

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 3.

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 ...

Nancy Woodington, recovering from knee surgery.

Jean McCloskey, during this period of rehabilitation.

Christy Purnell, whose sister Joey died last week.

Patrick Short, a friend of Bryce Wiebe, who has just started chemotherapy.

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

Joan Wells' daughter-in-law, Annabelle, struggling with illness.

Karla Koll, mission co-worker in Guatemala, who continues treatment for breast cancer.

Blanca Thiebaut and her colleague Montserrat Serra, who work for the Spanish division of Doctors Without Borders, and who have been held captive for over a year.

Bryan McCloskey, Jordan Matos, James Smit, and Dillon LaChance, who are all serving overseas 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.

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 16. 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

YDS INTERN: HANNAH DREITCER

CHRISTIAN EDUCATOR: BRYCE WIEBE

PARISH ASSOCIATE: SUE ASHER

CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR: MIRIAM SAMUELSON

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Christian Education for all ages

9:30 a.m.

Worship

10:45 a.m.

First Presbyterian Church
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06511

Please find your e-copy on the church website at 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.