

The Inkling

The News of First Presbyterian Church

December 2015



ADVENT

Another Advent Season is here. There are so many opportunities for the month of December. Below are the opportunities here at the church.

SUNDAY DECEMBER 6 --The Second Sunday of Advent

Pastor Susan will be preaching and the text is Zechariah's song of joy in Luke 1:68-79

SUNDAY DECEMBER 13 --The Third Sunday of Advent

This will be a wonderful morning of music and praise. Our choir is preparing to lead us in awe-filled worship.

SUNDAY DECEMBER 20 --The Fourth Sunday of Advent

Our children will lead us in worship. Come and allow the enthusiasm and faith of our younger members inspire your hearts.

CHRISTMAS EVE SCHEDULE

7:30 P.M. – A Service of Lessons and Carols, with a short meditation. Some of the choir will be singing, and we will lift joyful voices of thanksgiving for God's love made known in human form.

11 P.M. – A Christmas Eve Communion Service, with liturgy from the Iona Community

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27 --First Sunday of Christmas

We will gather for a regular worship service in the sanctuary.

ONLINE ADVENT DEVOTIONALS

This is a busy time of year. If you would like to tap into some quiet thoughts and meditations there are many options on the internet. Here are some that I suggest.

D365

<http://d365.org/> - This devotional, with beautiful reflective music, is available all year long and is also available as a mobile app. The devotional site is made possible through three denominations, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Episcopal Church.

It is geared toward younger people, but is inspirational for all.

PITTSBURGH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

<http://www.pts.edu/devotional-> This Presbyterian Seminary publishes Advent and Lenten devotionals each year. It also has a mobile app

SAN FRANCISCO THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

<http://sfts.edu/sign-up-now-for-daily-advent-devotions/> - Another Presbyterian Seminary that has an online Advent devotional.

I am sure there are many others – if you find a good one, please let me know!

Pastor Susan

Congregational Meeting – December 6

A meeting of the congregation has been called by the Session for December 6, 2015 immediately following the worship service. The purpose of this meeting is the election of Session members and at-large members of the Congregational Nominating Committee. Please make every effort to attend this important meeting.

Interested in Church Membership? A new members class will be held Sunday, December 6, following worship and the Congregational Meeting. New and transferring members are welcome to learn more about First Presbyterian Church. Contact Pastor Susan (pastorsusan@fpcnh.org) if you have any questions.

December 6th is Goody Bag Sunday!

You are invited to bring 40 home-baked or store-bought treats for the students who worship with us and students from our congregation who are away at school. Herbal tea, mints, gum, hard candies, popcorn, energy bars and home baked treats are all good options to consider. It's like a Friendship Hour in a bag!

Memorial Cairn – December 7

Reclaiming the Prophetic Voice will once again mark the number of deaths of civilian and military personnel from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Join friends at the monument on the corners of Broadway and Elm Streets in New Haven at 6 p.m. for a 15 minute prayer service. All are welcome.

Connecticut Folk Friday Concert

Connecticut Folk will host its Folk Fridays concert at First Presbyterian on Friday, December 4. This month features *Dirt Floor Studio*, a number of different musicians from Chester, Connecticut. 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!

Advent Communion

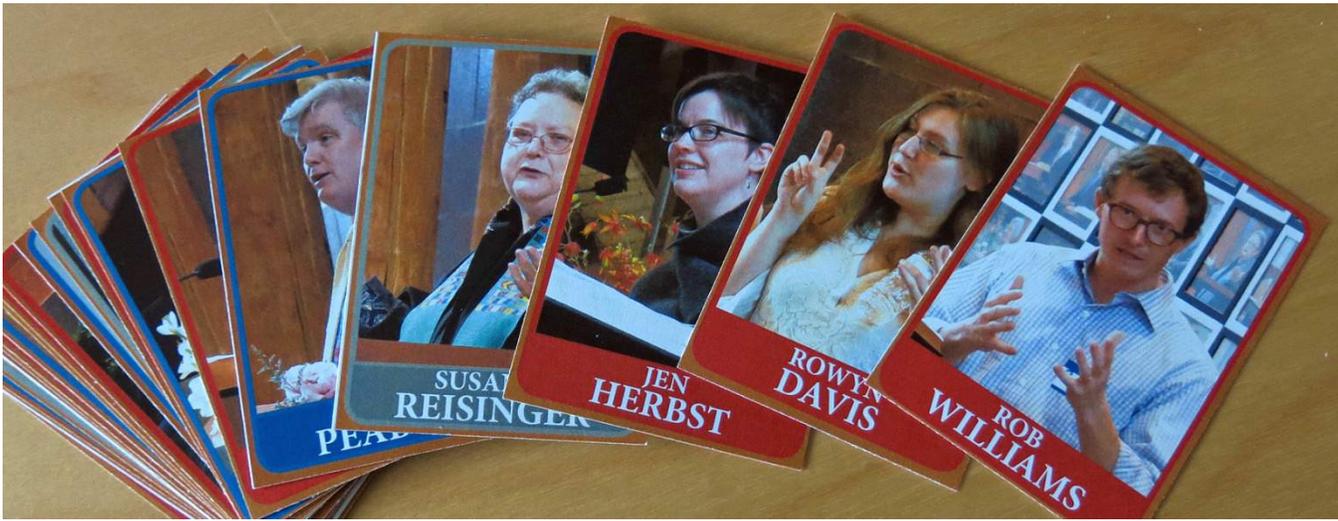
The Sacrament of Holy Communion will be offered each Sunday during the season of Advent. On December 6, the Sacrament will be celebrated during the worship service. On Sundays, December 13 and 20, all who wish to receive the sacrament are invited to come to the front of the sanctuary to stand around the Table following the Postlude. There, prayers will be offered, the bread and cup shared, and another benediction given. This is a wonderful opportunity to continue your morning of Advent prayer and reflection.



Stewardship 2016: "Sharing the Word...Thank You!"

Advent season is upon us. We can look forward to wonderful stories and lessons celebrating the birth of the Baby Jesus. Some words will be shared from our pulpit, but many will not. Our choir will share their musical talent with us at their annual Christmas program during our sermon time. Our church family will share a holiday meal and fellowship at our annual Christmas Feast. We will share "goodies" with our college students both near and far. Our children will share stories and scriptures during their traditional Advent children's play and youth-led service. And Holy Communion will be shared each Sunday throughout Advent.

As we look forward to sharing the word during this season of Advent, we give thanks for words shared during our recent season of Stewardship. On Sunday November 15th, we held our annual Stewardship Celebration Luncheon. Gathered around tables, we shared a meal, shared words of friendship, and shared both support and thanks for our active and engaged church family. We even introduced the inaugural set of collectable "pulpit" trading cards!



We especially give thanks for the folks who participated in this year's Stewardship campaign. Our "Minute for Stewardship" speakers who shared personal stories of church family – Rob Williams, Rowyn Davis and Leah Miller, and Jen Herbst. Pastor Susan for her inspirational sermons on Stewardship and generosity. And all the folks who volunteered on the spot with the luncheon with special thanks to Sue and Ken Balakrishnan, Jean and Daniel McCloskey, Beth Aura Miller, Jackie Spycher, Liz Copeland and Jim Whitney for setup and cleanup.

Our congregation is responding wonderfully to the call for Stewardship. Over the past couple of weeks, we continue to gather our pledges and are on our way to funding our hopes for our ministry, worship, Christian education, community, mission and outreach in 2016.

If you have not yet had the opportunity to pledge, we invite you to do so. Pledge cards are available on the welcome table and can be mailed to the church, placed in the offering plate or you can simply email a note in confidence to firstpreschurchstewardship@gmail.com. The opportunity to be part of this active and engaged worshipping community is truly a blessing.

Thank you,

David B. Miller, Chair of Stewardship

Adult Ed program in December

The Adult Education schedule for Sundays at 9.30 a.m., continues with Michal Beth Dinkler leading a two-part class for the Advent Season:

Dec 6: Michal Beth Dinkler: "Preparing for Christ: The Gospel of Luke in the Season of Advent"

Dec 13: Michal Beth Dinkler: "Preparing for Christ: The Gospel of Luke in the Season of Advent"

Dec 20: No Class

Dec 27: No Class

Upcoming Youth & Children's Activities

Saturday 12/5: Youth ages 11-18 are invited to help **prepare and serve a meal at Columbus House**. Please email ahead if you plan to attend: firstpresbyterianchurch@gmail.com or tyler.wadzinski@yale.edu. Youth should arrive to Columbus House (586 Ella T Grasso Blvd, New Haven, CT 06519) by 3:30 p.m. If anyone needs a ride, please let Tyler know! We'll finish up at Columbus House by 7 p.m.

Sunday 12/6: After worship and the church meeting, those in Youth Group and Children in Worship will team up to **host a Friendship Hour of refreshments and fun** for the whole congregation. Our Library Team will be on-hand to assist in the voting process for our newest library resources, and our Dance Leaders will play music in an adjacent room and supervise activities in movement and dance. We will celebrate the recent marriage of two of our youth advisors, Tyler and Erin, and enjoy inter-generational games in the Gathering Hall. Bring your favorites!

Sunday 12/6, 12/13, 12/20: Educators Sue Balakrishnan and Elizabeth Gill will lead a **3-week Christian Education series for youth ages 11-18 on the topic of Islam**. Meet in the middle classroom of the library wing (next-to-last room) from 9:30-10:30 a.m. Meanwhile, **rehearsals for children involved in the Advent play** will continue in the room behind the sanctuary, and **nursery care is provided as usual** for infants and children under 5.

Sunday 12/20: As per tradition for the Fourth Sunday of Advent, the youth and children will **lead the 10:45 a.m. worship service in its entirety**. Our own Martha Smalley is directing the children in another original play called "Companions for the Journey," which will serve as our Gospel text for the morning.

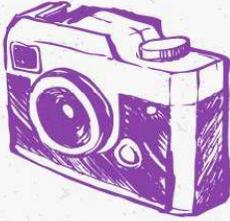
Sunday 12/27 and 1/3: As usual, we will have **no formal Christian Education on these two holiday weeks**. Classes will resume on 1/10. Rest well, stay warm, and travel safely over the break! (Come to worship if you're still in town!)

Sunday 1/10: During the church potluck after worship, we will have **games for children and youth** in the rooms adjacent to the Gathering Hall.

Sunday 1/17: After worship, we will **make fleece blankets to donate to New Haven's IRIS, Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services**. Last year we made four blankets for new families in our community. How many will we make this time? Our crafty Candice will lead this mission project, open to all interested youth ages 11-18. A light lunch will be provided. Let us know of any allergies or dietary restrictions.

Winter Youth Event, date TBD: Sledding or snow-tubing, anyone? Weather permitting, we will plan a day outdoors in the snow sometime in January or February. If you have activities or locations to suggest, don't hesitate to send them our way!

PICTURE ADVENT



How do you
#pictureAdvent?

Photo-A-Day Challenge

Nov. 29 Hope Luke 21:25-28	Dec. 13 Love Zephaniah 3:14-17
Nov. 30 Promise Jeremiah 33:14-16	Dec. 14 Sing Isaiah 12:4-6
Dec. 1 Beginning John 1:1-2	Dec. 15 Rejoice Philippians 4:4-6
Dec. 2 Guide Psalm 25:5	Dec. 16 Produce Luke 3:8-14
Dec. 3 Wonder Luke 1:26-33	Dec. 17 Remember Psalm 98:3
Dec. 4 Shout Isaiah 52:7-9	Dec. 18 Wait Titus 2:11-14
Dec. 5 Strengthen I Thessalonians 3:13	Dec. 19 Give Luke 6:38-39
Dec. 6 Peace Luke 1:77-79	Dec. 20 Joy Luke 1:39-45
Dec. 7 Refine Malachi 3:2-3	Dec. 21 Shepherd Micah 5:2-5a
Dec. 8 Prepare Luke 3:3-6	Dec. 22 Come Hebrews 10:5-10
Dec. 9 Abound Philippians 1:9-11	Dec. 23 Humble Luke 1:46-49
Dec. 10 Declare Psalm 96:1-3	Dec. 24 Child Isaiah 9:6-7
Dec. 11 Glory Hebrews 1:1-3	Dec. 25 Good News Luke 2:8-20
Dec. 12 Light John 1:4-5	



PictureAdvent.com

How do you #pictureAdvent?

Join Christians around the world as we all celebrate **Advent**, the season when we prepare our hearts, minds, and souls for the coming of Christ!

This Photo-A-Day Challenge is a little like an Advent calendar you make along the way. Each day, take a photo on the theme or prompt word listed below. Use the accompanying scriptural passage for further inspiration or a simple daily devotion.

If you would like to share your photos on your favorite social media platforms, use the hashtag #pictureAdvent. Search the tag and you'll find photos from other participants near and far!

You may also share your photos with us directly in our open Facebook group, **Educators of FPCNH**, at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/fpcnh.educators/>

Kimberley Fais manages the group as a hub for discussion and resources related to Christian education, including creative projects based on scripture and our church's teachings. Come and join the conversation!

In Session-November Meeting

Highlights from the November 17th Session meeting include the following:

1. The Session has begun putting together the Mission Study Committee. That Committee will lead conversations about the future of the Church as we prepare to find our new permanent pastor(s).
2. An information session for new members will be held after the service on December 6. All those interested in joining are encouraged to join the conversation.
3. The Stewardship Committee is still accepting pledges for 2016. If you have questions please contact Elder David Miller.
4. There will be special music at our service on December 13 and our annual Christmas dinner following that service.
5. The youth of the congregation will be leading our service on December 20. In addition, Martha Smalley is working on an advent play with the younger children which will be performed during that service.
6. There will be two Christmas Eve services.

Sincerely,
Elder Elizabeth Gill

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.

Also, the Presbyterian Giving Catalog is now being offered as an alternative. Check out the catalog if you prefer to donate directly to a PC(USA) mission project. These gifts will further the work of the Presbyterian Mission Agency and greatly increase the impact of the ministries supported by Special Offerings.

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 Friendship Hours in December. Contact Pat Wales if you have any questions.



This year we will receive the Christmas Joy Offering is during worship on Christmas Eve. Half of the offering goes to Presbyterian-related racial and ethnic schools, colleges, and universities, making quality education more affordable and accessible, a great need in these times of high tuition. The other half supports families of active and retired church workers with grants to help them through unexpected needs, such as catastrophic or chronic illness. As we celebrate the great good news of the Incarnation, may our gifts bear witness to our willingness to help these two distinct populations. Envelopes for this special offering will be found in the pews and will be received throughout the month of December.

Christmas Music Program



On December 13, the Third Sunday of Advent, the First Presbyterian Church Choir will offer its annual Christmas music program, during the time of the sermon. The choir will, as it has for the past few years, offer an eclectic selection Christmas music, old and new, lively and meditative, and from different traditions: Praetorius, "En natus est Emanuel"; Althouse, "Goin' to Bethlehem"; Holst, "Christmas Day"; the English Carol "Good People All, This Christmastide"; the Polish Carol, "Lulajze Jesuniu"; and the final chorus of Bach's *Mass in B Minor*, "Dona nobis pacem." The whole service will be full of Advent and Christmas music, and it will be followed by our annual Christmas dinner in the Owens Building. Come and celebrate the season musically with the First Presbyterian Church community!

The Christmas Dinner is Sunday, December 13

Plan to stay following the Christmas musical program as we will gather together as the First Presbyterian Church community for our annual Christmas Feast! We will need food of every kind on the table: turkey, ham, and vegetarian main dishes, and potatoes and corn and green beans, too! Sides of cranberry relish, of course. And lots of dessert! We'll sing carols and delight in one another's company. Sign up sheets are on the Welcome Table.

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 13. 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 _____

Save the Date!



What: Curling, Cocktails & Chilli.

When: Saturday, Jan 23, 2016 from 6-10 p.m.

Where: Nutmeg Curling Club, 123 Glenwood Ave, Bridgeport, CT

Cost: \$10 per person

Ever watched curling during the Olympics and thought you would like to give it a try? Here is your chance. The evening will include on-ice instruction from experienced curlers, time to play a short game and will end with a shared meal in the clubs Warm Room. Just want to watch? No problem, as the Warm Room has comfy chairs and large windows looking onto the ice. There is room for 24 curlers (age 15 & up), so get your deposit in soon. Contact Scott Funston (sfunston66@gmail.com) with questions or to sign up.

What's New With Presbyterian Promise?

In the words of Elder Ralph Jones :

“Ordination obstacles – removed.

Marriage prohibition – eliminated.

Same gender marriage – legal in all states.

What next?”

What next is a hot topic for Presbyterian Promise an educational and advocacy group, which seeks to broaden the welcome of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people in the life of the church. FPC New Haven has been a longtime supporter of Presbyterian Promise's work, along with six other congregations in the Presbytery and individual donors.

We can celebrate the changes that have taken place, but we know that there is still work to be done. Among other things this year, Presbyterian Promise:

- Partnered with the Rev. Maria LaSala and First Presbyterian Church to invite Robin McHaelan, Executive Director of True Colors, to speak to an interfaith group of ministers and rabbis on the needs, challenges and gifts of LGBTQ+ youth in CT. The dialogue continues with LGBTQ+ youth in the New Haven area.
- Provided support and partnered with others in the Presbytery in two banner making workshops led by Grace Cox-Johnson, a liturgical fiber artist and musician from Kansas City.
- Provided visible welcoming Christian outreach at Pride festivals in Fairfield County, Providence, Rhode Island, and Hartford.

SAVE THE DATES

Come share in a celebration of Christ's birth at the annual Presbyterian Promise Christmas Party – **Sunday December 13 from 3:30-7:30** at the home of Jane Hindenlang and Joel LaChance 17 Hine Place New Haven. Please bring a small treat to share and kindly RSVP: jane.hindenlang@gmail.com or 475-238-6112.

Sunday February 28 2016 - We're excited about our next annual meeting, which will be a worship service led by Reverend Mieke Vandersal, founding pastor of the worshipping community, Not So Churchy.

Abraham's Tent 2016- The seventh year of Abraham's Tent gets under way at the end this month. St. John's Church in North Haven will be the first congregation to host 12 homeless men for a week. The program will continue to the end of March. Columbus House is in the final process of choosing the men who will participate in the program.

Save the week of Monday February 22 to Monday February 28th. This is the week that that First Presbyterian will be co-hosting with First and Summerfield Methodist Church in New Haven. Sign-up sheets will be going up in January. See Brian Gray or email him at brian_gry@yahoo.com for more information.



Scripture Readings for Sundays in December

December 6: Malachi 3:1-4; Psalm 126; Luke 1:68-79

December 13: Isaiah 12:2-6; Philippians 4:4-7

December 20: Micah 5:2-5; Psalm 80:1-7; Luke 1:46-55

December 27: Colossians 3:12-21; Psalm 148; Luke 2:41-52

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 ...

Church members and friends who seek God's healing grace, including Ken Haynam, and Eugene Smith recovering at home.

Jeff Miller, brother of David Miller, who recently had surgery.

Allyson McKinney, who needs prayers for health and healing.

Libby Hollingsworth, who is recovering from surgery.

Joan Wells, who is undergoing chemotherapy.

Peter Bollier, son of Trudy Bollier, who is undergoing chemotherapy.

Shaleen Camery-Hoggatt, Michal Beth Dinkler's mother, who is undergoing chemotherapy.

The people of Kenya, Turkey, Syria, South Sudan, Egypt, Israel and Palestine, Iraq, and for those in France, Nigeria, Mali and all around the world, during this time of unrest, violence, and discord.

Isaac Newton Kinity, who is traveling in Kenya.

Gary Cline, who is sailing across the Atlantic Ocean.

David Meeske, serving with the Peace Corps in Mongolia.

Andrew McCloskey, serving with the Peace Corps in Mozambique.

Christopher Woodington, serving with the Grinnell Corps in Namibia.

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.

December 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 7:15pm Mission Committee 7:30pm CLOC Committee	2 11:30 am Staff Meeting 1:00 pm Bible Study 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	3 9:00am Yoga 6:30 pm NH Comm Chorus	4 7:30 p.m. CT Folk	5 9:00am Yoga 9:30am Women's AA 5:30 pm Columbus House Dinner
6 College Goodie Bags 9:30 am Sunday School 10:45 am Worship & Communion 12:00 Cong Meeting 12:15 p.m. Friendship Hour	7 6:00 p.m. Memorial Cairn	8 1:00pm Dancing w/Parkinson's	9 11:30 am Staff Meeting 1:00 pm Bible Study 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	10 6:30 pm NH Comm Chorus	11	12 9:00 am Yoga 9:30 am Women's AA 10:00 am Choir Rehearsal
13 9:30 a.m. Sunday School 10:45am Worship 12:00 p.m. Christmas Potluck	14	15 7:15pm Session	16 11:30 am Staff Meeting 1:00 pm Bible Study	17 9:00am Yoga 6:30 pm NH Comm Chorus	18 7:30 p.m. Sr Youth to Symphony	19 9:00 am Yoga 9:30 am Women's AA
20 9:30 a.m. Sunday School 10:45am Worship 12:00 p.m. Friendship Hour	21	22 1:00pm Dancing w/Parkinson's	23 1:00 pm Bible Study	24 7:30pm Service of Lessons and Carols 11:00pm Communion Service	25	26 9:30 am Women's AA
27 10:45am Worship 12:00 p.m. Friendship Hour	28	29	30	31		

January 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 9:00am Yoga 9:30am Women's AA 5:30 pm Columbus House Dinner
3 10:45 am Worship & Communion 12:00 p.m. Friendship Hour	4 6:00 p.m. Memorial Cairn	5 1:00pm Dancing w/ Parkinson's 7:15pm Mission Committee 7:30pm CLOC Committee	6 11:30 am Staff Meeting 1:00 pm Bible Study 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	7 6:30 pm NH Comm Chorus	8 7:30 p.m. CT Folk	9 9:00 am Yoga 9:30 am Women's AA
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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: JACKIE SPYCHER

NURSERY CARE PROVIDER: NAOMI BRINTON

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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!