

# ***THE CORNERSTONE***



*December, 2010*

## DECEMBER, 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 12:00 4th Wed. Study Grp., Rm 28 3:00 Sr. Youth Choir 4:00 Women's Praise Choir 7:00 Farmington Valley Chorus	2 6:00 Bell Choir, Room 29 6:30 Occasional Choir 6:30 Troop 76 Leadership & Committee Mtg., Parson's Study 7:30 AA - Room 28 7:30 Chancel Choir	3 9:00 First Church Friends, Honoring confidentiality, Part II, Parson's Study 9:30 Hay Stack, Room 28 2:15 JF Youth Group	4
5 8:30 Worship, Chapel 10:00 Worship, Sanctuary 10:00 Church School 10:15 Church School Christmas Service Reh., Palmer Hall 11:15 Liturgical Dancers 4:15 Confirmation Lg Grp. Mtg. for students & parents, Palmer Hall 6:00 UnCommon Worship, Sanctuary 7:00 Sr. High Youth	6 1:00 Red Cross Blood Drive 4:15 Junior Choir 7:30 Executive Council Mtg., Parson's Study	7 10:00 Card Making Grp., Rm 28	8 3:00 Senior Youth Choir 4:00 Women's Praise Choir 7:00 Farmington Valley Chorus	9 6:00 Bell Choir, Rm 29 6:30 Occasional Choir 6:30 Troop 76 Boy Scout Mtg., Palmer Hall 6:30 Troop 76 Leadership & Committee Mtg., Parson's Study 7:30 AA - Room 28 7:30 Chancel Choir	10 10:30 Farmington Valley Transition Academy 6:00 Supper Club Xmas Dinner, Palmer Hall	11 3:00 Young Families, Parent's Time Out, Palmer Hall, kitchen, Youth Room, Nursery
12 8:30 Worship/ Poinsettia Sunday, Chapel 9:00 Heifer Living Gift Auction 9:00 Gathering for Baptism Families, Parlor 10:00 Worship/ Poinsettia Sunday, - Sanctuary 10:00 Church School 10:15 Church School Christmas Service Reh., Palmer Hall 11:15 Heifer Living Gift Auction, Palmer Hall 11:15 Liturgical Dancers 11:15 Committee of Deacons Mtg., Library 1:00 South Park Inn meal Prep 7:00 Sr. High Youth	13 4:15 Junior Choir 7:15 All Boards Mtg, All Rooms	14 12:00 Retired Men's Luncheon 1:00 Cornerstone Submission Deadline for Boards, Committees & Church STAFF for January issue 4:00 Committee on Ministry, Parlor	15 3:00 Senior Youth Choir 7:00 <b>Longest Night Service</b> , Sanctuary 7:00 Farmington Valley Chorus	16 6:00 Bell Choir, Rm 29 6:30 Occasional Choir 6:30 Troop 76 Boy Scout Mtg., Palmer Hall 7:30 AA, Room 28 7:30 Chancel Choir	17 2:15 JF Youth Group	18 9:00 Church School Christmas Breakfast & Dress Rehearsal 6:00 Troop 76 Eagle Ceremony - Jonathan Saucier, Palmer Hall 6:30 Troop 76 Eagle Ceremony - Jonathan Saucier - Sanctuary
19 8:30 Worship Service 8:30, Chapel 9:00 Heifer Living Gift Auction 9:30 Church School Christmas Service, Sanctuary 10:00 Worship, Sanctuary 10:00 Youth Sunday School 11:15 Heifer Living Gift Auction, Palmer Hall 11:15 Liturgical Dancers, Sanctuary 4:15 Small Grp. Confirmation #5 at host homes	20 1:00 Red Cross Blood Drive	21 9:30 Prayer Shawl Ministry, Rm 28 6:00 Cub Scouts meeting, Palmer Hall 7:00 Evening Prayer Shawl mtg, Rm 28	22 3:00 Senior Youth Choir 7:00 Farmington Valley Chorus	23 6:00 Bell Choir, Rm 29 6:30 Occasional Choir 6:30 Troop 76 Boy Scout Mtg, Palmer Hall 7:30 AA, Room 28 7:30 Chancel Choir	24 <b>Holiday - Office Closed</b> 4:30 Puppet Pageant 6:30 Puppet Pageant 9:00 Service of Lessons & Carols 11:00 Communion Service	25 <b>CHRISTMAS</b>
26 8:30 Worship, Chapel 10:00 Christmas Service, Sanctuary 10:00 Church School 10:00 Youth Sunday School 11:15 Liturgical Dancers	27 6:00 FMHCC Board of Directors Meeting, Parson's Study	28 10:00 Card making Group, Room 28	29 7:00 Farmington Valley Chorus	30 6:00 Bell Choir, Rm 29 7:30 AA, Room 28	31 <b>Holiday - Office Closed</b>	

# *THE CORNERSTONE*

## **DECEMBER 2010 WORSHIP SCHEDULE:**

**December 5th: Second Sunday of Advent**

**8:30 a.m.:** Early Worship in the Chapel with Holy Communion

**10:00 a.m.:** Trad. Worship in the Sanctuary with Holy Communion

**6:00 p.m.:** Uncommon Worship in the Sanctuary with Holy Communion

*Rev. Alison preaching on Isaiah 11: 1-10 and Matthew 3: 1-12:*

*"A voice cries out..."*

**December 12<sup>th</sup>: Third Sunday of Advent, Poinsettia Sunday**

**8:30 a.m.:** Early Worship in the Chapel

**10:00 a.m.:** Traditional Worship in the Sanctuary (DuBois Baptism)

*Rev. Jonathan preaching on James 5:7-10: "A Matter of Patience"*

**Wed., Dec. 15<sup>th</sup>: Longest Night Worship Service**

**7:00 p.m.:** A candle-lit service for those experiencing the blues, loss or loneliness during the Christmas season (in the Sanctuary)

**December 19<sup>th</sup>: Fourth Sunday of Advent**

**8:30 a.m.:** Early Worship in the Chapel

**10:00 a.m.:** Worship and original Christmas Pageant led by the children of First Church, "Everyone Counts"

**6:00 p.m.:** Uncommon Worship in the Sanctuary with Holy Communion

*Rev. Kevin preaching at 8:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on Matthew 1:18-25: "God With us."*

*Children's Christmas Pageant will serve as the sermon at the 10:00 a.m..*

**December 24<sup>th</sup>: Christmas Eve**

**4:30 p.m.:** **Puppet Pageant** – A Christmas service for all ages

**6:30 p.m.:** **Puppet Pageant** – A Christmas service for all ages

**9:00 p.m.:** **Service of Lessons and Carols**

**11:00 p.m.:** **Service of Communion and Candlelight**

***Join us for this most Blessed of Nights!***

**December 26<sup>th</sup>: First Sunday in Christmas**

**8:30 a.m.:** Early Worship in the Chapel

**10:00 a.m.:** Traditional Worship in the Sanctuary

*Rev. Jonathan Morgan preaching: "Triumph in the Midst of Tragedy"*

## *From the Senior Minister's Desk*

*Yes... it really is about relationship!*

I write this letter to you after a pretty remarkable week and just before the most blessed seasons of Thanksgiving and Advent. During this week, I experienced again the power and joy of Spirit-led relationships and the life-changing reality of a true connection with our loving God.



As you know, we sent 30 people to Biloxi, MS the week of November 6 – 13... *what an incredible trip we had together!* It was transformative and uplifting. It was challenging and gratifying. It was the Church at it best in the midst of a troubled and still chaotic world. And it all started with the establishment of a very strong bond between us through the Grace of God's Spirit. We all knew that we were experiencing something special... *holy even...* and we did not want to let it go! Thus is the power of true relationships when they are based in the all encompassing love of our Lord.

As you also know, on November 14, our church experienced an amazing event of faith and relationship during our Consecration Sunday. To witness the gathering of our congregation sharing a delicious meal and warm fellowship after the uplifting service of worship was truly moving for me and many others. I doubt First Church has ever been blessed with such a large a gathering of faithful and committed members and friends sharing in fellowship at table together. It was a true blessing to witness the strength and vitality of our congregation as we lifted up the great Christian tradition of sharing a meal in celebration of God's love for us. *Again, special thanks to everyone who made this day possible and so wonderful!*

Yes, the Christian faith is all about relationship. That is why we worship and share a meal together. That is why we wear nametags at worship and fellowship hour. That is why we meet and work with our brothers and sisters who are have experienced great hardship and the sting of injustice... and not just send our money to do God's work. We experience the full measure of our faith when we are in right relationship with our sisters and brothers. And no wonder... for we worship a God who longs to be in relationship with us and who sent us Christ to make that relationship lasting and life enriching.

This Advent let us seek a deeper relationship with the one we call Christ. Let us marvel at the sight of God's love wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger as if it were the first time. Let us reclaim the true power of this season by taking time to consider how we might serve our Lord Jesus Christ more faithfully by following in His footsteps. Let us be open to the power and beauty of God's great love for us and desire to be in relationship with us as shown so clearly this season.

May your Advent be filled with unexpected arrivals of Grace and Love.

*Jonathan*

## *From the Associate Minister of Parish Life & Outreach. . .*

As I write this, I am still catching up after a week-long mission trip in Biloxi, MS. Sixteen members of First Church Simsbury and fourteen people from three other Farmington Valley UCC churches (Avon Congregational, First Church Granby and South Church Granby) traveled to Mississippi in November to work at Back Bay Mission – repairing homes, serving meals and providing services to homeless residents of Biloxi at Back Bay’s Micah Center.

On Monday morning, as we waited to receive our work assignments, our volunteer coordinator, Craig, reminded us about “Patience Monday.” It takes awhile to sort out sites, assignments and tools. So, we learn to wait...patiently. We would rather get right to work – we’re hard workers and we’re ready! But part of any mission trip is learning to ‘go with the flow,’ to be open to the leadings of our hosts – and to the leading of the Spirit in our midst.

By the end of the week, we will have painted, built a wrap-around balcony railing, done roofing and installed sheetrock and siding. It all happens - and there is tremendous satisfaction in being able to say, “Look what we did!” But first, we wait. And it turns out: waiting is also a gift. Taking time – to listen to someone’s story, to learn how to use a new tool, or just to see how a morning might unfold – opens us up in all kinds of ways. “I *thought* I would be hammering nails, but I ended up serving a meal to homeless neighbors.” “I wasn’t going to help install sheetrock, but then someone came along and showed me what to do.” “I was sure I knew what to expect from this trip, but I’ve been surprised, again and again!”

When we move too quickly to *doing*, there’s stuff we miss. Pausing, just hanging out, creates space for God’s Spirit to surprise us.

Now we are all back in Connecticut, and the season of Advent is upon us: Season of Waiting. It would be easy to do what we’ve always done: to jump right in, install the lights, get the gifts, plan the family gatherings. But our week in Biloxi invites me to take the season at a slower pace: call it “Patience December.” I will set down my hammer, savor the time, and wait to see what God’s Spirit has in store for us: Come, Emmanuel, come!

Alison

# Church School News

## Church School



### Attendance at church school in December is very important!

We rehearse for the Children's Christmas service during Church School

### Pancake Breakfast Saturday, Dec. 18th at 9:00, in Palmer Hall before the Children's Christmas Service Dress Rehearsal.

Please sign up with [cindy.cole@1stchurchsimsbury.org](mailto:cindy.cole@1stchurchsimsbury.org)

### **Needed:**

Mini-Powdered donuts, Fruit platters, apple juice  
The church school will provide the pancakes and bacon, and hot chocolate.

## K. I. D. S. @ First

### Kids Investigating Divine Stories at First Church

**Nursery (ages 3 & under)** The nursery (rm. 20) is available during the service for children ages 3 and under. In December the children will be learning about the Christmas story. The nursery is not open on Dec 19th or on the Christmas eve services. We encourage you to take your child to the service. The service on the 19th and puppet services on Christmas are family friendly.

**Pre-K Class (ages 3-4)** The Pre-K class (rm. 38) will be learning that "Jesus means Christmas" by doing crafts, playing games, and singing in the month of December. Students will start in church and be dismissed to their class after the children's message. At 11:00 the children attend music in room 37. Please pick them up at 11:15.

**Kindergarten Class** The Kindergarten class (rm. 37) will be learning the Christmas story through games, crafts, and activities. Students will start in church and be dismissed to the chapel after the children's message. They have music from 11:00-11:15.

Pre-K and Kindergarten students are angels in the Children's Christmas Service Dec 19th at 10:00. Angel costumes are handed out at the dress rehearsal on Sat, Dec 18th in room 28 after breakfast. This dress rehearsal is important because it will be the only time the kids practice in the Sanctuary and learn when they participate in the sequence of the service. Please provide your child with a battery operated candle to hold and help your child learn the words to the candle lighting song introduced during music. After the dress rehearsal, costumes are labeled with masking tape with your child's name and place in room 28. Arrive 15 minutes early on Sunday, Dec 19th to dress your child and escort them to the pew labeled "angels" in the Sanctuary. Your children will also be singing the opening song, "Where ever I May Wander" which they are learning in music on Sunday mornings.

### Rotation Program for Grades 1-6, Christmas:

The students will be practicing for the Children's Christmas Service. This service gives the students the opportunity to learn how a service is put together, the parts of the service, and the ability to participate in the service.

<b>Christmas</b>	Grades 1—6
<b>Wk. 1 (11/28)</b> PreK-6 Begin in Church	<b>Mission Project:</b> Tied Fleece Blanket Making & Christmas Movie, Palmer Hall, K-6th Grade
<b>Wk. 2 (12/5)</b> PreK-6 Begin in Church	Palmer Hall: Church School Christmas Service Rehearsal/ Crafts & Games
<b>Wk. 3 (12/12)</b> PreK-6 Begin in Church	Palmer Hall: Church School Christmas Service Rehearsal/ Crafts & Games
<b>Wk. 4 (12/19)</b> Arrival time: 9:30 for students involved in the service	Church School Christmas Service

### Spring Teacher/Shepherd Opportunities, Jan 9, 2011—May 15, 2011

Help the kids at First Church of Christ grow in their faith and sense of community as you grow in yours. Teaching enables you to meet the families in your children's class

**Nursery** – Ashley Cole, Cheryl Robucci; Teen aides: Stefanie Muller, Oliva Tawney

**Pre-K**—Kate Bruno, one parent volunteer to sign up each week; Teen aides: Sarah Medve, Marissa Hedman

**Kindergarten** Pattie Scanlon, Erin Naspo; Teen aides: Lydia Wartens

**Two teachers are needed for each workshop;** teachers take turns teaching the class and arrange the schedule to meet their needs, orientation/breakfast meetings are held before the start of each unit on Sunday morning

Spring units are: Daniel: Self-Control, Who is Jesus?, Pentecost

**Computer room** – Craig Patton, Ashley Schwitter, Rob Masterson

**Cooking room – 2 teachers needed**

**Art room** – Ann Marie Prabulos, Jennifer Filler

**Science room – 2 teachers needed**

**Game room** – Sarah Wolmarth Guasta, **1 teacher needed**

#### Shepherds

**1<sup>st</sup> grade shepherd** - Jackie Brooke

**2<sup>nd</sup> grade shepherd-** Janet Sienko, **co-Shepherd needed**

**3<sup>rd</sup> grade shepherd – needed**

**4<sup>th</sup> grade shepherd** – Kim Tawney

**5<sup>th</sup> grade shepherd – needed**

**6<sup>th</sup> grade shepherd** -Brian Tawney

Contact: [cindy.cole@1stchurchsimsbury.org](mailto:cindy.cole@1stchurchsimsbury.org).



### Christmas Service December 19<sup>th</sup>

The students in the church school program will be participating in the December 19, 10:00 service in the Sanctuary. This year's theme: "Everybody Counts" This year the skit takes place in Bethlehem 0 AD in the days when Caesar Augustus had issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. Everybody went to their own town to register and this is where our skit begins.

1. We will be rehearsing the service during church school in December.
  2. The junior choir is singing in the service and will rehearse at their regularly scheduled time.
  3. Participants in the liturgical dance group will rehearse in the Sanctuary at 11:15-11:45 Sunday morning.
  4. Pre-k, and Kindergarten: see information on preceding page.
  5. 1st graders are sheep.
  6. A variety of roles are available for students in grades 2-7th. If your students don't have a part yet, please contact [cindy.cole@1stchurchsimsbury.org](mailto:cindy.cole@1stchurchsimsbury.org)
1. **Dress rehearsal (and pancake breakfast) on Saturday, December 18<sup>th</sup> at 9:00a.m. in the Sanctuary is mandatory.**
  2. **All students are asked to wear black shirts and black pants for the dress rehearsal and church service. Costumes will be handed out at the dress rehearsal.**

### The Taste book fund raiser:

The church school will be selling The Taste Dining & Activity Book as a fund raiser for church school equipment and materials. This year we will try to purchase cushions for the 3rd floor hallway pews, cabinets for room 29, and die cut plates, etc. The books will be available outside the chapel for \$20 of which 50% (\$10) goes to the church school. The Taste book offers over \$1,000 in savings at the areas best retailers and attractions.

### Advent Resources for Families will be available in the kids's information center, 3rd floor.

(i.e. families Advent wreath lighting readings, coloring pages, Advent paper chains activities, etc.)

### Church School Mission Project:

Toiletry kit items: The church school is collecting toiletry kit items to be assembled by the students in the movie room. We need hotel soaps, shampoo, hand cream, small Kleenex packages, face cloths, combs, hair-brushes, body wash, etc.



## **HEIFER LIVING GIFT AUCTION**

Why buy milk when you can get the cow?

Do you know your 8 M's? Heifer International teaches that animals provide 8 M's—Meat, Milk, Muscle, Manure, Materials, Money, Motivation, and More. Animals are a blessing to resource-poor families and communities in helping them become self sustainable.

JF is hosting a Heifer International Living Gift Auction where you can purchase animals for resource-poor families and communities. You buy the animal and receive a certificate that you can keep or give as a Christmas gift and the animal will go to a resource-poor family who needs it.

### **Living Gift Auction Dates and Times...**

#### **Sunday, December 12th:**

- After the 8:30 a.m. service outside the Chapel
- After the 10:00 a.m. service in Palmer Hall (during Fellowship/Coffee Hr)

#### **Sunday, December 19th:**

- After the 8:30 a.m. service outside the Chapel
- After the 10:00 a.m. service in Palmer Hall (during Fellowship/Coffee Hr)
- After the 6:00 p.m. Uncommon Worship Service outside the Chapel

*(if these dates and times do not work for you, stop in the main church office between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday to purchase your animals.)*

## REV. KEVIN WEIKEL—YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

**PLAY, DISCUSS, WORSHIP, GROW, SERVE, LOVE...**

Go to [www.1styouthmin.org](http://www.1styouthmin.org) for more detailed information

### YOUNG ADULTS (ages 18-30ish)

January 2-8, 2011 Young Adult Mission Trip to HOMES in Whitesburg, Kentucky. See [www.1styouthmin.org](http://www.1styouthmin.org) for the brochure and more information.

### JUNIOR FELLOWSHIP (for 7th and 8th graders)

**Friday, Dec. 3rd 2:10-4:00 p.m.** Hop on the church bus in the parent pick-up loop at Henry James and we'll head back to the church for fellowship.

**Friday, Dec. 17th 2:10-4:00 p.m.** Hop on the church bus in the parent pick-up loop at Henry James and we'll head back to the church for fellowship.

**JF - Sign up to help with the JF Heifer Living Gift Auction!!!** In December, JF will be preparing to put on a Heifer Living Gift Auction. We'll be going over the details at JF but we do need JFer's to sign up now to help manage the auction at the times below. Please email Diann Bailey at [diannhbailey@comcast.net](mailto:diannhbailey@comcast.net) with the times you can help.

#### Sunday, December 12th:

After the 8:30 a.m. service outside the Chapel

After the 10:00 a.m. service in Palmer Hall (during Fellowship/Coffee Hour)

#### Sunday, December 19th:

After the 8:30 a.m. service outside the Chapel

After the 10:00 a.m. service in Palmer Hall (during Fellowship/Coffee Hour)

After the 6:00 p.m. Uncommon Worship Service outside the Chapel

### CONFIRMATION (for 8th graders)

**Sunday, Dec. 5th 4:15-7:00 p.m.** Large Group meeting (Advent and Christmas) for students and parents in Palmer Hall followed by Uncommon Worship in the Sanctuary.

**Sunday, Dec. 19th 4:15-7:00 p.m.** Small Group Meeting #5 (Holy Spirit) at host homes followed by Uncommon Worship in the Sanctuary.

**Pizza w/ the Pastor:** Dates and times being organized by Small Group leaders and communicators

### PILGRIM FELLOWSHIP YOUTH GROUP (for 9th-12th graders)

**Sunday, Dec. 5th: 6:00-9:00 p.m.** Uncommon Worship followed by fellowship in the Youth Rm

**Sunday, Dec. 12th: 7:00-9:00 p.m.** Meet in the Youth Room and then travel to McLean for a visit/discussion with 105 year young Bernice Martin.

**Sunday, Dec. 19th 6:00-9:00 p.m.** Uncommon Worship followed by Christmas Caroling!

**Sunday, Dec. 26th No PF, Christmas Week**

### YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL (for 7th-12th graders)

Youth Sunday School attends the beginning of the 10:00 a.m. worship service before heading down to the Youth Room after the Children's Time for conversation.

***The First Church PF Youth Group Fall Retreat was held at Silver Lake from November 12-14. It was a weekend filled with both fun and meaning. Below is a first hand account from former First Church Youth and current First Church Youth Advisor, Becky Butler.***  
~Rev. Kevin

After being invited to attend the PF retreat as a youth advisor by Rev. Kevin, not only was I excited but a little nervous as well. It was, after all, my first retreat since 2001, when I was a PFER myself. Experiencing the retreat from an advisor's point of view was a whole new experience and one that I would not trade for the world. I felt privileged to get to know the terrific teenagers of First Church and to get to see all that Kevin and the advisors do to make PF such a fun and spirit-filled place.

The theme for the weekend was "Relationships with Self, Others, and God." A planning team of teens was created months ahead of the retreat to plan and eventually lead the rest of PF in carrying out the theme. I was amazed to watch these teens - Ally Needham, Kelsey Olsen, Christine Mueller, Ryan Goss, Christa Fagone, Tanner Gleason, & Gabby Cusano - take the topic so seriously and do such a wonderful job leading their peers.

The first night of the retreat focused on the relationship we have with ourselves. We used individual mirrors to literally take a look at ourselves and we wrote on a puzzle piece what we believe our strengths and weaknesses to be. We then put those individual puzzle pieces together which formed the shape of a heart! This symbolized that no matter what we think our strengths and weaknesses might be, God loves us all the same. I know for myself that this exercise pushed me to really look inside myself and see who I am, not only on the outside, but on the inside as well.

There were many high points throughout the second day of the retreat. We started off on the high ropes course. Some conquered the high ropes individually; others had to depend on a partner. Throughout it all, the teens had the encouragement of their peers. This exercise led into a discussion about our relationship with others. We simulated cliques within high school and had to work together to convince the "faculty" that having school year round was a bad idea. The point was this: Even though high school students might be involved in different cliques and even though we are constantly stereotyping one another in every walk of life, we need to put those stereotypes aside as best we can and look at one another simply as human beings. At the end of the activity we discussed Proverbs 27:17 "Iron sharpens iron, and one friend sharpens another." Just as iron sharpens iron, we need everyone around us to sharpen us and make us better people.

I think the most profound discussion we had was about our relationship with God and Jesus. We were encouraged to think about how having a relationship with a friend might be similar to and different from having a relationship with God or Jesus. Although we might not be able to see God or Jesus in a physical way, we know that they are always with us and guiding us through our journeys in life. From this discussion we were asked why maintaining a relationship with God and Jesus is important. For myself I need these relationships for the fact that knowing even in the lowest points in my life that God will be there for me, comfort me, and guide me. Many of the youth echoed the same.

*(Continued on next page)*

*First Church PF Youth Group Fall Retreat (cont.)*

The dedication and enthusiasm this group put into the discussions was truly impressive. I took so much away from these discussions and was pushed to explore my own thoughts and beliefs about my relationships with myself, others, and God. I was very impressed with how passionate this group was about everything they were discussing and how they worked as a team to make this an amazing weekend.

We concluded the weekend with a moving and spiritual candlelight service that all of the teens worked together to create and present. The service was quite moving. I walked away from that service and the entire retreat feeling renewed in my religion and feeling refreshed and excited about my beliefs. As soon as I got home and talked to my friends who asked how my weekend was, I couldn't really put it into words. I felt at peace and happy with not only myself but my surroundings. The retreat was the most fulfilling experience I have had thus far in my religious journey. I have never felt closer to God and more centered within myself. Again, I want to thank the whole PF group, Rev. Kevin and the PF advisors for including me in this most inspirational weekend.

*~Becky Butler*



### ***2010 Christmas Eve Puppet Pageant***

***Wanted:*** First Church members and friends of all ages to help us bring this year's Puppet Pageant to life.

The Puppet Pageant is a re-enactment of the story of Jesus' birth, dramatized with life-sized rod-puppets!

***Choose either the 4:30 p.m. or the 6:30 p.m. service – or both (if space allows), on December 24<sup>th</sup>, Christmas Eve.***

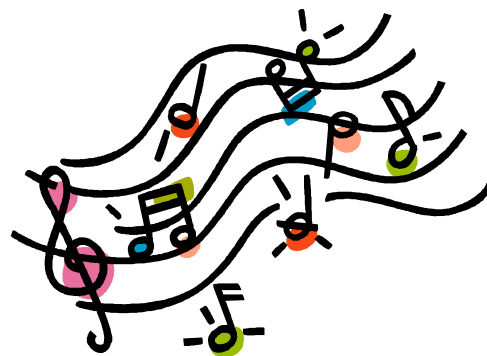
*There will be two rehearsals the week before.*

Participate yourself, or with your whole family! Bring your love of the Christmas story and your inner performer/artist/reader/back-stage hand ... no experience required; just spirit!

**Sign-up outside Palmer Hall** during the first two weeks of December *or* contact Rev. Alison Patton for details.

## *Music Notes*

The Christmas season is upon us, and what a musically rich and glorious season it is - - there is the expectancy and building anticipation of Advent, the mystery and wonder of Christmas Eve, and the Joy of Christmas Day. We have much going on, and would love for you to join us.



We are rehearsing music for the Christmas Eve service of Lessons and Carols, and we will schedule rehearsals after the 10:00 a.m. service, beginning on the Sunday after Thanksgiving, for any who would like to take part and cannot make it to a Thursday evening rehearsal. These will be in the choir room - come on down, and we'll furnish some music for you to try out. It is truly a marvelous service, and to sing at it is an experience you won't forget.

We also have Music Sunday coming up, and welcome any that would like to participate just for that event as well. We'll begin rehearsing that material at the same time as the Christmas music - after church on Sundays (as well as Thursday evenings). Music Sunday this year is January 16<sup>th</sup>, and we have plans to sing the remarkable Paul Halley "Freedom Trilogy" which would be a wonderful way to mark what is also Martin Luther King Sunday. This is a piece of music that you will remember always.

In January, we'll have another presentation by our Concert Committee - "Jazz in January" - a cabaret concert in Palmer Hall. We set up tables, light candles, furnish some heart-warming munchies to celebrate a mid-winter's night, which takes place on Friday, January 7<sup>th</sup>, at 7:30 p.m. We will have a performance by our own remarkable guitarist Doug Maher, along with expert pianist Ken Fischer, and special guests. When these two performed last year, everyone came away absolutely astounded, and raving about what a great concert this was. We really wanted to give all of you another chance to experience what will prove to be an incredible evening of music.

Any who would like to join us for these or any occasion are welcome at any time - whether you're interested in Junior Choir (Grades 2-9, Mondays at 4:15), Women's Praise Choir (high school and up, Wednesdays at 4:00, Choral Bells (Thursdays at 6:00), Occasional Choir (Thursdays at 6:30) or Chancel Choir (Thursdays at 7:30), please know that you will be warmly greeted and appreciated.

May you have the time to make your Christmas Season a meaningful and joyous one for you and yours.

Thanks

*Mark*



**Gifts of Love** has joined with Viridian Energy to form a fundraising partnership. Viridian Energy is a licensed Connecticut electricity supplier. Their energy is greener and more affordable than the competition. By switching your service today, you can save on your monthly CL&P bill, do something better for the environment and enable Gifts of Love to continue to assist people in crisis.

All at NO COST to you!

For every customer that switches to Viridian, Gifts of Love will receive a monthly payment, each and every month, per customer, from Viridian Energy.

- There is no cost for you to switch!
- There are no contracts to sign!
- Viridian will appear on your CL&P bill as your electric supplier.
- CL&P will continue to service your utility lines
- Switching takes less than three minutes

There are two easy ways to Switch:

1. Go to [www.viridian.com/GiftsofLove/](http://www.viridian.com/GiftsofLove/) and "Sign Up" under 'Make the Switch'
2. or Contact Diana Goode to request a customer form.

For More information call 860-676-2323

## **SUPPER CLUB'S CHRISTMAS DINNER**

Mark your calendars, and make reservations for Supper Club's *sumptuous*

### ***ROAST BEEF CHRISTMAS DINNER***

catered by **Bob Kane**

Christmas musical entertainment by

***Mark Mercier & The Women's Praise Choir***

**Friday, December 10<sup>th</sup>**

**6:00 PM, Palmer Hall**

**Price \$ 16 per person**

**For reservations, call Shirley Meyer @ (860) 693-1944**

## **NOVEMBER 2010 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL SUMMARY**

Following are the highlights of the November 2010 Executive Council meeting:

1. Reverend Morgan reflected on his observations of the Congregation's response to the initial announcement concerning Celebration Sunday. Some of the members are enthusiastic about trying the new approach to Stewardship while others are concerned about how the current economy will impact their decisions. Drawing on his own life experiences, Jonathan suggested we keep in mind the gifts we have been given by God.
2. Reverend Patton highlighted in her comments that she had attended the CT Conference Annual Meeting where a resolution co-sponsored by First Church was passed. The resolution authorizes a study to declare the CT Conference as a "Global Mission" Conference. Meg Gaines, chair of the Panel of Delegates, also attended the meeting.
3. It was moved; seconded; and approved that Sara Batchelder be appointed a member of the Board of Elders.
4. Reverend Morgan commented that the Biloxi group will be departing for Mississippi on November 6<sup>th</sup> with 30 participants from First Church, and three other local Churches.
5. Suzie Sabia reported on the planning underway for the November 27<sup>th</sup> Simsbury Celebrates event. There will be a myriad of activities throughout First Church. Suzie was also thanked for her catering plans for Consecration Sunday.
6. Reverend Weikel reported that the Junior Fellowship will be responsible for the Heifer Project this year.
7. Following a presentation by Manny Psarakis on the healthcare benefits for staff in 2011, it was moved; seconded; and carried that the proposed actions be approved.

Bill Ketchabaw, Clerk



giveGreater.org  
2010 Challenge

## What's Happening This Month:

[GiveGreater.org](http://GiveGreater.org), a new, online knowledge and giving resource was launched on November 1<sup>st</sup> by Covenant to Care.

A [giveGreater.org](http://giveGreater.org) 2010 Challenge has been issued to inspire charitable giving to Covenant to Care for Children. The more donors who give \$50 (or more) through [giveGreater.org](http://giveGreater.org) to Covenant to Care for Children, the greater our chances of winning grants, up to \$25,000 from The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven.

What you can do:

- Visit Covenant to Care for Children at [giveGreater.org](http://giveGreater.org) between 8:00 a.m. on November 1st and 11:59 p.m. on December 31st. The faster you give, the greater our chances of winning \$5,000 for being among the first to meet the eligibility criteria.
- Make a donation of \$50 (or more) to Covenant to Care for Children. Then tell your friends about it!

Please join our faith partner, Covenant to Care for Children, where your participation helps this organization advocate for, mentor, and provide direct critical basic need services to tens of thousands of abused, neglected and at-risk kids here in Connecticut.



## ***SUNDAY FLOWERS— IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY***

It is not too early to reserve a Sunday during our next church year to commemorate, honor or memorialize with flowers for the Communion table in the sanctuary.

If there is a Sunday that you would like to reserve, please contact *Bill Lawry* at 860-651-0281 or [wlawry@aol.com](mailto:wlawry@aol.com).

## Historically Speaking:

### *What was Life Like?*

**Using FOOD** is a good way to get familiar with everyday life in another culture or time. Dorothy Woodbridge has been mentioned already in this column and in the current historical exhibit. This article will focus on what foods were available to her and how she could have prepared them in around 1700.

Dorothy and her husband Dudley were from English backgrounds but their food preferences were modified by what was available here. Living in 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> century Simsbury, their food supplies were limited to what was grown locally and what they could afford to buy of imported goods. Locally they had grains such as oats, barley, Indian corn, rye and wheat. They also had dried or fresh legumes and root vegetables. They enjoyed dairy foods such as milk, cheese and butter, as well as eggs. They could get fresh or dried fish, domestic meats and wild game. The Indians introduced them to pumpkins and squash. For sweetening they could use maple syrup, sugar or honey. They brewed their own beer at home from barley and hops. Imported foods were expensive - things like raisins, citrus fruits, spices, sugar, molasses, coffee, tea, chocolate, rice, salt and pepper. They planted apple and fruit trees and could pick wild fruits such as cranberries, raspberries, and blueberries.

Cooking methods of the time were still primitive: frying in a skillet over the fire or in a spider on the hearth over hot coals; baking in a Dutch oven or in a brick or stone oven; boiling in an iron kettle or roasting meats on a gridiron or on a spit. The one-pot meal and the easy dessert were very popular. Stews, soups and long-baking items like baked beans were frequently served. Puddings were very popular among folks of all ages. Following is a receipt (recipe) for one that would have been served in the fall and winter. It was baked in a locally-made glazed pottery baking dish that could be placed inside a cast-iron Dutch oven.

#### **Winter Squash or Pumpkin Pudding**

- One winter squash or pumpkin, cored, boiled, skinned and mashed.
- 6 large apples, peeled, cored, and cooked tender.
- Mix these two together and add 6 or 7 spoonful (Tbsp.) of dry breadcrumbs.
- Add a half pint of milk or cream and 2 tsp. rosewater (use vanilla) and 2 tsp. of wine (optional).
- Beat 5 or 6 eggs (medium) and add salt and grated nutmeg and maple sugar to your taste.
- Add one large Tbsp. of flour and mix all together smartly.
- Pour into a cold large buttered baking dish and bake until firm.

(Note: Time and temperatures ere not given because they varied. Modern methods for this would say bake in the oven at 350 for 45-60 minutes. Check that the middle is set and the eggs are cooked.)

Donna Hopkins, Church Historian

November 2010 Happily 190+ Years After Open Hearth Cooking  
(Have You Ever Done It?)

## Our GREAT Volunteers

Many of you reading this attended our Consecration Sunday service and celebration lunch on November 14<sup>th</sup>. Let me echo Jonathan's reaction – and that of many others I talked to: It was a wonderful mixture of worship, celebration and fellowship.

I can't tell you how often I get glowing feedback regarding fellowship experiences like this or our youth programs or mission opportunities (whether the recent Biloxi trip or week-in and out ministries like Care Bags or mentoring). I've heard similar positive comments recently about our new name tags, the growing Women's ministry and our re-designed confirmation program.

Have you ever wondered how First Church manages to do all this with a very small staff? It's simple really: We are blessed with an amazing army of dedicated volunteers who live out God's call to Christian service. Hundreds of individuals take time out of their busy lives not just to participate in special events like Consecration Sunday, but to staff the Boards and Committees that permit the Church to operate day in and day out. For example, have you ever asked yourself how it is that with one Sexton, the Church building and grounds are so well maintained? The Board of Trustees works tirelessly to oversee maintenance, repairs and renovations with minimal recognition (except when something breaks). Without the Boards and other volunteers, our wonderful music ministries, church school programs, fellowship opportunities - even Sunday worship - simply could not function.

What is particularly impressive is that these dedicated volunteers never walk around patting themselves on the back or advertising their service in order to receive public recognition. They do it out of call . . . a realization that by giving, they receive even greater blessings in return (See Luke 6:38: *"Give to other people, and you will receive. You will be given much. It will be poured into your hands--more than you can hold. You will be given so much that it will spill into your lap. The way you give to other people is the way God will give to you."*)

To all these individuals and for all you do for First Church: **THANK YOU!**

If you want to join them, there are an infinite number of ways to engage. You don't have to commit to being on a Board or Committee. Volunteer opportunities exist in bite size packages that can fit your interests and schedule. Look for one of the ministers or shoot me an e-mail at [Bill@wjgoss.com](mailto:Bill@wjgoss.com). We'll find a fit for you.

I can tell you from personal experience that service – even in a small dose – can help you grow as a person and as a Christian in immeasurable ways.

Blessings:



William J. Goss

## From the Committee for Endowment Development

### Checklist of Life Seminar held October 17, 2010

This well attended seminar featured a discussion around a book entitled "In the Checklist of Life" by Lynn McPhelimy. This is a "Working Book" to help you live and leave this life. During the discussion, members John Ritson, attorney, and Len Clough, retired minister and planned giving officer, spoke about the various aspects of organizing our affairs so that we leave behind a gift rather than a burden for our successors and encouraged members to think about creating a legacy with the church in a way that will benefit ourselves and the church. If you have any questions or would like more information about making a gift to the church, please contact a committee member.

### Andrew Robe Society

"In the mid 1700s Andrew Robe made the first ever recorded gift to our Church, a parcel of land which is part of the present Church property. You can refer to page 28 of Lyman Potter's Book entitled "... TO SETTLE OURSELVES IN GOSPEL ORDER..." to learn about this gift. Several years ago the Andrew Robe Society was formed to recognize and thank individuals and families who have made a commitment to the Endowment of the Church. Currently the membership list consists of the following names:

Sara Batchelder	Margo Kilbon
Cathie Behrens	Leigh and Rita King
Paul and Judy Bryant	Burt Knust
Bill and Sue Butler	Bob and Lois Lyle
Bob and Carol Carlisle	David and Nancy Mellon
Lois Comstock	Dick and Ruth Meyer
Gordon and Nancy Crouch	Jonathan and Lisa Morgan
Jackson Eno	Tim and Lorna Patterson
Bill and Becky Goss	Bruce and Marlene Powell
Chuck Howard	Manny and Peg Psarakis
Betty Keirstead	George and Ann Richards
Carolyn Keily	Dane and Diana Woodberry
Bill and Pat Ketchabaw	Two families to remain anonymous

These members have made commitments for a deferred gift to our Church's Endowment or have made a cash contribution to it. The Church is very grateful for these commitments which help build a stronger financial foundation for us for the present and future."

Please consider our Church Endowment when completing your estate plan and beneficiary designations. Naming "FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST-SIMBURY ENDOWMENT FUND" as a percent of your primary designation is one way for you to be part of the Andrew Robe Society and supporting the ongoing mission of the Church.

***Leigh King, Bob Lyle, Tim Patterson and Bruce Powell  
Committee for Endowment Development***



*Food @ First  
is almost here!*

*300 recipes*

*\$20.00*

*Our first  
Church Cookbook  
in over 20 years!*

*Just in time for the holidays... Our new First Church Cookbooks are here! Purchase yours during Sunday morning Coffee Hour. Or call the Church Office 860 651-3593 or contact Annette Lilly at [a.lilly@snet.net](mailto:a.lilly@snet.net) Pre-purchased books can be picked up in the Church Office*

*Enjoy these time-tested recipes from some of the best chefs of our church family and our local restaurants!*



## WINTER COAT DRIVE BEGINS!

**Hands On Hartford** is now accepting donations for winter coats and other seasonal items (scarves, mittens, hats, sweaters, boots). Clothes must be new or gently used, in clean condition, and can be of any size for children, women, or men.

During Fall and Winter of last year, staff at Hands On Hartford's MANNA A&A Program gave away over 700 winter coats, all of which had been donated. Many families in Hartford cannot afford the clothing they need to stay warm during New England's chilly seasons. This year, our goal is to collect and distribute 1,000 winter coats to those who need them.

For more information about organizing a coat drive at your faith community, contact Sally Hayes at 860-728-3201 ext. 2001 or [shayes@handsonhartford.org](mailto:shayes@handsonhartford.org)

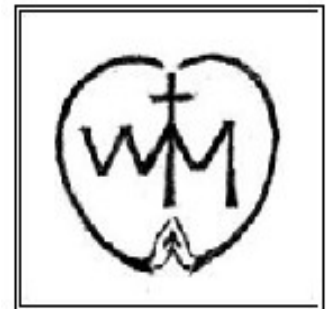
To arrange a time to drop off items, call Rosa Santiago at 860-246-6757 ext 2301.

### *Save The New Date!*

**24 Hour Women's Retreat 2011 @ Silver Lake  
Conference Center**

**4:00 p.m., Friday, March 18<sup>th</sup> to**

**4:00 p.m., Saturday, March 19<sup>th</sup>**



Est. \$85 room/board – Scholarships available (contact Pastor Alison)

Join us for rest, reflection, renewal and recreation  
in a beautiful rustic setting in northwestern Connecticut.

*All are welcome!*

**Want to help create this event?** Contact Pastor Alison by December 20<sup>th</sup> if you would like to join the planning team.

## **Board of Mission and Outreach**

### *South Park Inn*

The people of South Park Inn absolutely love it when we come work with them to help meet the many needs of the people there who are homeless and in transition. And, I must say, the blessings are always ours.

#### *WOULD YOU LIKE TO COME ALONG WITH US OR WORK "BEHIND THE SCENES" PREPARING THE DELICIOUS FOOD?*

Each of the opportunities below represents a great experience to bring a family together, to reconnect with friends, to extend your Women's Circle experience, to share with your Bible Study friends, to add a new dimension to your Men's group involvement, or to develop relationships with board members.

Look for sign ups outside Palmer Hall or EMAIL Denise Bell [sopherbell@aol.com](mailto:sopherbell@aol.com) if you would like to help with any of the following.

- Cooking and serving a meal (1:00-5:00)
- Girls (of all ages) night out to cook the desserts (date to come)
- Sharing your nursing knowledge with young mothers once a month
- Doing a Bingo Night at South Park Inn or Plimpton House
- Sharing your nutritional knowledge with folks at Plimpton House
- Helping young men in transition learn personal budgeting skills

#### *Last Meal Dates for 2010*

Sunday, 12/12/10

## **NEW YEAR'S DAY SHELTER MEAL – SOUTH CHURCH**

In coordination with Hands on Hartford, let us come together to bring some peace and nourishment to those who may be struggling this winter season.

Please join us on New Year's day, January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011 to prepare and serve a meal at South Congregational Church in Hartford. We are planning to leave the First Church parking lot at 9:00 am, and will be back in Simsbury by early afternoon. This is a family-friendly outreach, and all are welcome.

If you are interested, or have any questions, please feel free to call Roger or Billye Auclair at 860-651-8643. There will be a sign-up sheet outside Palmer Hall during the month of December.

First Church of Christ  
689 Hopmeadow St  
Simsbury CT 06070

860-651-3593  
Fax 408-9229  
Kitchen 658-9043

**STAFF**

Rev. Jonathan Morgan  
Senior Minister  
jonathan.morgan@  
1stchurchsimsbury.org

Rev. Kevin Weikel  
Associate Minister for  
Youth and Young Adults  
kevin.weikel@  
1stchurchsimsbury.org

Rev. Alison Buttrick  
Patton  
Associate Minister of  
Parish Life and Outreach  
alison.patton @  
1stchurchsimsbury.org

Mr. Mark Mercier  
Dir. of Music Ministries  
mark.mercier@  
1stchurchsimsbury.org

Ms. Cindy Cole  
Director of Christian Ed.  
cindy.cole@  
1stchurchsimsbury.org

Ms. Anne Nelson  
Church Administrator  
anne.nelson@  
1stchurchsimsbury.org

Mr. Jim Kew  
Assistant Treasurer  
jim.kew@  
1stchurchsimsbury.org

Miss Catherine Behrens  
Assistant Church Admin.  
cathie.behrens@  
1stchurchsimsbury.org

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

**4th Wednesday Study Group**—The 4th Wednesday Study Group will meet on **Wed., Dec. 1st at 12:00 Noon in Room 28**. Please come, having read Chapters 3 and 4 of “The Reason for God.” There will be no other December meeting.

**Christmas Envelopes**—As part of our ministries, special offering envelopes are included in this month's Cornerstone and will be available on Sundays as an opportunity for members of First Church to help support the numerous ministries of First Church. They may be mailed or dropped off at the church office or put in the offering plates during worship.

**Women's Ministry—January 22, 2011, 10:00-11:30 a.m.** Topic: “*Discovering the Patterns of Our Lives*”, with Guest Speaker **Sister Catherine Murtha**, Director of Spiritual Life Center in Hartford.

\* \* \* \* \*

**INCLEMENT WEATHER NOTIFICATION** - If we have to cancel or change any Sunday services and/or related Sunday church activities because of snow or ice, it will be announced as follows:

~Our website <http://www.1stchurchsimsbury.org>. A notice will be put on our home page.

~The automated message on our main phone number will be changed to reflect the notice.

~WFSB (Channel 3) will scroll an announcement on air under First Church of Christ, Simsbury. An announcement will also appear on their website - <http://www.wfsb.com>.

**FIRST CHURCH T-SHIRTS ARE HERE!**

Do you volunteer at different church events, such as Festival of the Firs or in the community with a church program like South Park, Biloxi, or at the local affordable housing project? Consider purchasing a First Church volunteer shirt so you are easily identified as a volunteer at these events and projects. Short sleeve cotton t-shirts are on sale in the church office during regular office hours for only \$8!

For more information or additional sizes, please contact  
**Kris Barnett** at [barnettfamily4@comcast.net](mailto:barnettfamily4@comcast.net) or at

860-651-8455.