



FISHERMEN'S NEWS

The Greenwood Community Church, Presbyterian
805 Main Avenue; Warwick, Rhode Island
www.gccp.org

DECEMBER 2009 / JANUARY 2010

Dear Members and Friends,

Thanksgiving is just a few days ahead, now; with the commercial press for Christmas starting earlier and earlier each year (*two radio stations I know of started playing Christmas ... er, holiday music 24/7 a week ago!*) it seems Thanksgiving is almost lost and forgotten! Not here, however ... at the time of this writing, the Member Care Committee is busy cleaning up downstairs after the enjoyable potluck meal and Advent wreath-making activity which followed the well-rehearsed and worshipful **Celebration of Thanksgiving** put on by our chancel choir, Joyful Song youth choir and bell choir. Thank you to all who took part in this enjoyable and worthwhile experience, and especially to music director Kathy Hart for her fine direction, thorough planning and characteristic excellence in performance. Thank you, too, to all who joined us in conscientious and worshipful thanksgiving to God in the sanctuary today.



And now that the first Sunday in Advent is just days away, we are gearing up for the celebration of Christmas. I hope to see many of you at any (or all!) of the numerous events and services in the weeks ahead (e.g., the Hanging of the Greens, the Presbyterian Women dinner and mini-bazaar, the choir cantata, the Living Nativity, the Angel Tree program, the Christmas Eve services), as this is always a wonderfully active, worshipful and enjoyable time in the Greenwood Church community.

Both Thanksgiving and Christmas have, at their core, the remembrance of "gifts;" both the gifts received from God and others, as well as the gifts we plan to give in gratitude for the gifts given to us. In fact, at the core of both holidays, really, is our gratitude to God for His supreme Gift, wrapped in flesh and blood, and placed in a manger. It is by this Gift we enjoy every spiritual and physical blessing we enjoy, for "... through Him all things were made, without Him nothing was made that has been made (John 1:3)." Both holidays are celebratory occasions of thanks giving ... for that matter, every day is a celebratory occasion of thanks giving, but that's another sermon.

Some of you may remember the following story I told in a sermon exactly twelve years ago tomorrow, November 23, 1997 (*in a between-services decision made this morning, I also decided to include it in the sermon for the 10:30 service today!*). This memorable story of a well-known hymn never fails to inspire an attitude of gratitude in me.

The year was 1617. For the next thirty years, wars would rage throughout the German cities and countryside. Germany was the battleground of the Thirty Years War, this decades-long conflict between warring Catholic and Protestant forces; Germany was devastated as a result. Over the next three decades, the population of the country would dwindle from sixteen million to six million. Also in that year of 1617, the son of a poor coppersmith from the town of Eilenburg was ordained as a minister in the German Lutheran Church. Martin Rinkart had worked his way through the University of Leipzig as a chorister (a singer and composer) in the St. Thomas Church of Leipzig.

Upon his ordination to ministry, Martin Rinkart was assigned as a pastor in his hometown of Eilenburg. A walled city, Eilenburg was looked upon as a place of refuge and safety for those thousands of refugees fleeing the attacks of the warring armies during the Thirty Years War. Overcrowded and undersupplied with food, sanitary facilities, and medical care, the walled city became, instead of a city of refuge, a city of death. Plagues raged throughout the crowded streets and homes, eventually claiming thousands of victims.

Martin Rinkart faithfully served his home town parish throughout these three decades of devastation. In the midst of the constant human suffering around him, this former chorister composed over sixty hymns of faith and hope. A terrible plague hit the city of Eilenburg in 1636 (20 years after he arrived); during this time all other ministers in the walled town either died or fled. Martin Rinkart alone remained, and he conducted up to forty-five funerals **every day** during this sad and distressing time of pestilence. He buried nearly 4,500 men, women and children during this plague; he also buried his beloved and devoted wife. It was also in this year 1636 that Martin Rinkart penned his most well-known composition, a familiar hymn we sing every Thanksgiving: "Now Thank We All Our God." It was in the midst of this terrible time of plague, the year he lost his beloved wife, that Rev. Rinkart penned the words:

Now thank we all our God with heart and hand and voices,
Who wondrous things have done, in whom His world rejoices;
Who, from our mother's arms, hath blest us on our way
with countless gifts of love, and still is ours today.

Something lost in the translation and tune is that the original German, "Nun danket alle Gott", is a *command*. The opening line might be better translated/paraphrased: "Now ... in the midst of whatever may befall ... we will thank our God!"

May the attitude of gratitude that so pervades the Thanksgiving season carry through with all of you in the joyous season of Advent expectation, the celebration of Christmas and in whatever our gracious God may have in store for you in the new year 2010.

Blessings to you and yours for a healthy, happy and celebratory holiday season!

Stephen L. Clark, Pastor

NEWS FROM THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School continues to run smoothly. Starting November 29th Sunday School will begin in Fellowship Hall with seasonal songs as we journey through the Advent season. All are welcome to join us. Grades 1 and 2 will be collecting mittens for their mission project. On Sunday, December 27, there will be one service of worship at 9:30 and there will be **no** Sunday School.



WHATS GOING ON IN ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

Pastor Clark and "Travelin" Dave Williams will be sharing duties throughout the year. We've started this year off with the topic of Communion and followed with a class on the distinctives of Presbyterianism: What do Presbyterians believe and how do we differ from other traditions? We're also looking to have some guest teachers throughout the year. Do you have an idea for a future topic? Please share it with us. We also encourage you to bring a friend. What a great way to demonstrate and share your faith in Jesus Christ.

PYF NEWS

PYF is off to a great start this year. The group meets from 6-8 pm on Sunday nights. If you're in the 7th thru 12th grades, join us for fun and fellowship.



3- 3
4 5:30



For the second year in a row, Greenwood Church will host a living nativity in our own front yard! Volunteers to help make this event a success are needed. Please see the sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall. If you cannot

volunteer, please be sure to visit that night and bring your friends and neighbors as well. The bells in the bell tower will be chiming, the carolers singing, the sheep baaing and the donkey braying. Hot cocoa and cookies will be waiting for all who visit! See you there!



THE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN FUND

The repairs to the steeple have been completed. While the appearance of the steeple is essentially unchanged from when it was brand new, it is now made of materials that are "maintenance free" and constructed in a way to prevent the water leaks we have experienced over the last several years.

The Building and Grounds Committee is now focused on the sanctuary roof replacement.

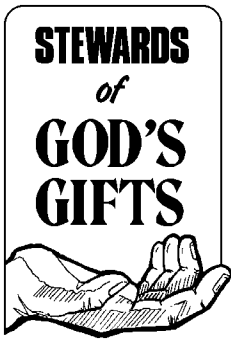
The projected capital costs over the next three years (including the steeple and the sanctuary roof) are approximately \$160,000. In order to complete these projects as necessary, we are using gifts received to date, income from the Memorial and Endowment Fund as available and a line of credit loan with the Memorial and Endowment Fund as collateral to make timely payments. As of November 15, the Capital Campaign has received \$12,553.

Enclosed in this issue of the Fishermen's News is a pledge card providing you the opportunity to make a commitment to maintain God's house here in Greenwood. The card allows several options for completing your gift. These range from a one time gift to a weekly gift over the next three years. Make your gift as God is calling you and modify the card if necessary to define your commitment. We would appreciate as much giving as possible in the early part of this campaign to minimize the interest expense from the use of the line of credit loan.

Barry Baxter
Stewardship Committee Chair



THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE



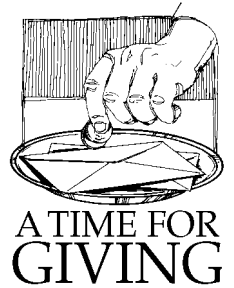
This is the third year that we have addressed Christian stewardship from the perspective of each of us asking ourselves, what is God calling me to do with the time and talents and gifts he has given me. Again this year the call for careful personal reflection finds us in a challenging and dynamic economic environment.

We have received 101 pledge cards for 2010 as of Sunday November 15th. Based on the number of pledges for 2009, we are expecting another 50 to 55 pledge cards for 2010 by the end of the year. A review of the pledges received shows: 42 new and increased pledges, 49 pledges remaining the same and 10 decreased pledges. The pledge total from these commitments is \$181,500 which is an increase of \$6,800 (3.9%) from this year. The potential commitment from pledges not yet received is about \$73,000.

If we do not receive your pledge card by the first of December, we will assume that you want someone to visit you to provide a fuller understanding of our programs for next year.

The Stewardship committee is working with the other committees of the Session to be faithful stewards of the funds the church receives from you and our other sources of new money. We are doing this to try and fund our church budget without needing to use income from our investments. We ask for your help in this endeavor by your fulfilling of your pledges and planned giving for 2009 and 2010.

"Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a fraction of a penny. Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, 'I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything--all she had to live on.'" (Mark 12:41-44)



Barry Baxter
Stewardship Committee Chair

Member Care Committee



We're glad so many people were able to join us at the surprise celebration of the 25th anniversary of Pastor Clark's ordination on Sunday, October 25th. He has spent more than half of that time here at Greenwood. In commemoration of this occasion, we are putting together a "memory" book for him. It would be great to get contributions from a broad cross-section of our church family. Do you have a photo showing Pastor Clark at some church event like the May Breakfast, a PYF event, or Vacation Bible School that you would be willing to loan us to be scanned? Could you write a brief reminiscence of an incident involving Pastor Clark? It could be humorous or something that was especially meaningful to you. Maybe you would like to write your contribution in the form of a thank you note, noting some of the small or big ways in which he has helped your family to celebrate happy times or cope in times of difficulty or loss. You can place your contribution in the Member Care box in the church office, or give it to any member of the committee. Like so much we do here at Greenwood, bits and pieces from lots of different people will add up to generate the final product. Thank you in advance for your contributions.

Also, we are continuing to tally the results of the interviews conducted last summer. While not everyone chose to respond to the questions about possible church activities, the results we received are quite interesting, and we have already begun to implement some of these suggestions. Thanks to Nancy Dickerman for tallying these results. Remember that they generally represent households, which suggests that the total number of people who would participate in something like a pot luck dinner or PawSox excursion is even greater. Would you have guessed that the two most popular choices would be pot luck suppers and a yard sale to benefit the church (each with 32 "votes")? Next comes a dinner club with 27 votes. You can see that food is a significant element of our community! A hymn sing was highly rated, too; and we hope to see lots of folks at the Worship Committee's musical program and sandwich pot luck (with crafts besides) on November 22. It is also clear that sports are popular, with 23 votes for a trip to a PawSox game, 16 for the P-Bruins, 16 for a bike path excursion, 13 for family bowling, and 9 for family square dancing. A church movie night (16) or family bingo night (13) rounded out the list. Be on the lookout for some of these events in the coming year!



Member Care Committee: Elaine Magyar, Peter McKnight, Joan-Sandra McKnight, David Dickerman, Melinda DelCioppio, Cheryl Bullock, Lynn Kramer, Lois-Belle Crankshaw, and Nancy Dickerman.

MISSION COMMITTEE



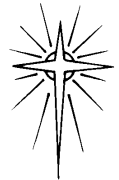
Prison Fellowship's "Angel Tree" program is already in motion as you read this newsletter. We welcome and applaud the generosity and enthusiasm of our members each December. Pray that our efforts cheer the children and help in healing the hearts of divided families.

The following is an excerpt from a letter from The Rev. Dr. and Mrs. Peter Pedro, who currently work with World Impact, Newark. World impact is a national church-planting movement among America's urban poor:

"My wife and I want to thank the congregation of Greenwood Community Church for the gift toward our support with World Impact--New Jersey. We are once again working to reach the *lost* in urban cities. Newark needs the saving work of Jesus Christ through the Gospel. Thank you for investing in our work and ministry."

Myrle L. Dean, Mission Committee Chair

Hart Beat



'Tis the season for music! Did you enjoy the Thanksgiving Celebration on November 22 with all our music groups? We hope you're looking forward to the Chancel Choir's cantata, "Morning Star", on Sunday morning, December 13. These celebrations require a lot of preparation, and we appreciate your feedback for future planning. If you enjoy the choir music and would like to help us make a joyful noise, the new year is a wonderful time to join in this ministry which is vital to the spiritual life of our church family!



39-ERS December Gathering

Wednesday, December 16
11:30 A.M.

Top of the Bay in Oakland Beach
Cost is \$12.00

Menu

Choice of Turkey or Baked Scrod with Soup, Coffee or Tea, and Dessert

Program in Fellowship Hall at 2:00 p.m.
We will hold our Yankee Swap with the help of Santa.

If you need a ride or a reservation, please call Linda Gungle

DEADLINE for February 2010 FISHERMEN'S NEWS is January 10, 2010.

Please leave articles in the church office or e-mail to: FishNews@gccp.org (please include Fishermen's News in the Subject line.)

To all: Please help the editor and office staff get our newsletter prepared by making an extra effort to abide by the deadline. Thank you for your consideration!

NEWS FROM PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN



Thank you to everyone who helped our Presbyterian Women to handle the “coffee and” and luncheon for the Presbytery of Southern New England on November 14. The delicious luncheon that was prepared by Stu, Betty, and their kitchen crew was enjoyed by all. Thank you to the women who baked for the “coffee and” and helped to set up and serve. Also, thanks to the PYF and their leaders who helped to serve and clean up.

Our next big event will be the Christmas Gathering on December 8. This will be a wonderful time to bring a guest. Check with Evelyn Rae or Sue Desmond to see if tickets are still available. At 5:30 you'll be able to shop at the Mini Bazaar, then, at 6:30, enjoy a delicious and relaxing dinner of Yankee pot roast or baked stuffed chicken breast prepared by Stu and his kitchen crew and served by the men of the church. After dinner we will go to the sanctuary for a Christmas program, “Searching in Bethlehem,” a series of carols, readings, and a tableau, all directed by our own Angie D'Albora. At this celebration we will collect non-perishable food items and paper goods for local shelters as well as unwrapped gifts for children (infants to teenagers) that will be taken to the South Providence Neighborhood Ministries for distribution.



Our Circles will be having their own Christmas parties. Several of the Circles adopt families at Christmas and provide Christmas gifts for them. Some Circles also have special giving projects for local needy people.

Looking Ahead: The Presbyterian Women of Southern New England Winter Retreat will be held on January 29-30, at the Immaculate Conception Convent and Retreat Center in Putnam, CT. Please call me by January 14 at 789-1002 if you plan to attend.

I hope to see you all at the Christmas Gathering for a wonderful evening! “Come as a guest; leave as a friend.”

I wish you all the Blessings of Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year!

Betty Mason for Presbyterian Women

‘ROUND IN CIRCLES FOR DECEMBER/JANUARY

Circle I will NOT meet in December, but will resume their study of Joshua at 1 p.m. on Tuesday, January 26 in the church parlor.

Circle III will meet on Tuesday, December 15, at 6 p.m. at the home of Joan-Sandra McKnight for their Christmas potluck supper. Their January 12 meeting will be at 7 p.m. in the PYF Room (1st floor, west wing).

Circle IV will have a Christmas luncheon at the home of Evelyn Rae on December 12, at 1 p.m. On January 12 they will meet in the church parlor at 7 p.m.

Circle V will meet on Monday, December 21, at noon at the home of Angie D'Albora for lunch and a Yankee Swap. They will NOT meet in January.

Circle VII will meet at various times the week of November 30 to December 4 to make fresh wreaths and table decorations for the mini bazaar. On January 12 they will go out to dinner at Chelo's at 6:30 p.m.

If you have any questions about Circles, please call me at 737-0717 or e-mail me at bettystacey@cox.net. Copies of the current month's Circle Notes are available on the table in the Narthex.

Betty Stacey, Circle Coordinator

PW WORLD SERVICE

The World Service Committee of Presbyterian Women would like to thank this church family for their support of Blanket Sunday. We sent over \$1,000 to Church World Service.



In January we will begin collecting for the School and Health Kits which you supported so generously last year. Please watch the church bulletin insert for details after Christmas.

Angie D'Albora and Martha Beard, World Service Committee Chairs

CAUGHT IN THE NET

Hospitalized since the last issue:

- Gladys Bracker
- Lexie Budlong-Springer
- Jonathan Farnsworth

Wedding Wishes to:

- Julie Howard & Patrick Boutwell who were married at Greenwood on November 7.

Sympathy is extended to:

- May Degnan on the loss of her husband, Jim, on November 2.
- Glenn Fairbairn who lost his stepfather on November 5 in Ohio.
- Ann Marie Bataitis and Al Williams on the loss of their mother on November 17.

NOTES RECEIVED

Dear Members,

My sincere thanks to Peggy Phillips for her Halloween treat bag and visit. Unfortunately, I was not in my room when she came, but it was a real treat to find the bag at my door when I returned. My sincere thanks for all the get well wishes that I still continue to receive. Also, thank you to Peggy for again bringing me the chancel flowers and to the many members of Greenwood for their help during my illnesses. It is comforting to be a member of such a fine caring church.

In Christian Love, Gladys Bracker

Thank you all for your many cards and telephone calls. Special thanks to Joann Rudolph - I really enjoyed her visit and the chancel flowers (which matched the sweater I was wearing!). Hope to see you all soon.

Mabel Fuller

(ed. Note: The following note is included for all at Greenwood who have contributed to the Picasso Quilt project.)

Dear Sandra & Quilt Ladies,

An overdue note to say thank you for entrusting your Picasso Quilts to me—they are wonderful!

On Saturday, October 17th, they were delivered to Father Brice, ofm, who is the Administrator of the Bread & Blessings Program at St. Francis Chapel. Some were given out on that Sunday, the 18th, and the rest will be given out as needed.

It's nice to have them on hand when the need arises. Thank you again.

Yours in Christ, Jim

Minister, St. Francis & Clare Fraternity

Worship Schedule

Christmas Eve
Two Services of Worship
6:00 & 10:00 PM

Sunday, December 27
One Service of Worship
9:30 AM

No Sunday School