



FISHERMEN'S NEWS

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

DECEMBER 2007 / JANUARY 2008



CHRISTMAS

The word of God, Jesus Christ, on account of His great love for mankind, became what we are in order to make us what He is Himself.

Irenaeus, Adversus Haereses

God did not send Christ to us; God came to us in Christ.

Don S. Skinner, Passage Through Sacred History

Despite our efforts to keep him out, God intrudes. The life of Jesus is bracketed by two impossibilities: a virgin's womb and an empty tomb. Jesus entered our world through a door marked "No Entrance" and left through a door marked "No Exit."

Peter Larson, Prism magazine (Jan/Feb 2001)

The Reason for Jesus' Poverty

The Lord of all comes as a slave amidst poverty. The hunter has no wish to startle his prey. Choosing for his birthplace an unknown village in a remote province, he is born of a poor maiden and accepts all that poverty implies, for he hopes by stealth to ensnare and save us.

If he had been born to high rank and amidst luxury, unbelievers would have said the world had been transformed by wealth.

If he had chosen as his birthplace the great city of Rome, they would have thought the transformation had been brought about by civil power.

Suppose he had been the son of an emperor. They would have said: "How useful it is to be powerful!"

Imagine him the son of a senator. It would have been: "Look what can be accomplished by legislation!"

But in fact, what did he do?

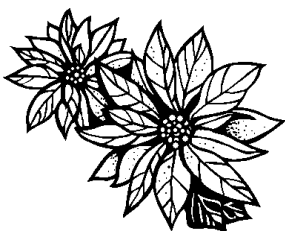
He chose surroundings that were poor and simple, so ordinary as to be almost unnoticed, so that people would know it was the Godhead alone that had changed the world.

This was his reason for choosing his mother from among the poor of a very poor country, and for becoming poor himself.

Theodotus of Ancyra, a martyred saint from the 4th century

Dear Members and Friends,

As I write, Thanksgiving is just over and we are once again gearing up for Advent and the grand celebration of Christmas. I hope to see many of you at any (or all!) of the numerous events and services in the weeks ahead, many of which you will read about in the next pages: The **Presbyterian Women's Christmas Dinner** December 4, the annual **Children's Christmas Pageant** December 9, followed by a delicious pasta supper which increases in popularity each year, the **Angel Tree** gift distribution/delivery December 15, **Christmas Caroling** December 16 (see below) and, of course, the special **Christmas Eve Services of Worship** at 6:00 PM and 10:00 PM. This is always a wonderfully active, worshipful and enjoyable time in the Greenwood Church community, and I'm sure this year will be no exception. Two new events from last year will be repeated this year; I'd like to draw special attention to these:



POINSETTIAS: We invite you to remember and/or honor a loved one with a poinsettia to help beautify our sanctuary this Christmas season. As was done last year, the Deacons will again be taking orders for plants, as well as accepting plants hand delivered by December 22. See worship bulletin insert for details.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING DECEMBER 16 (SUNDAY), 6:00 PM. About thirty people of all ages went Christmas caroling by school bus last year, and we had a wonderful time that passed all too quickly. We plan to rent the bus again, and are hoping to completely fill it! Come join us ... all ages are invited ... as we sing to some of our members and friends shut in at homes or in assisted living places in the area. We plan to return for refreshments by 8:00 PM.



Merry, Merry Christmas, and may God bless you all with a healthy and happy 2008!

Stephen L. Clark, Pastor

Christian Giving This Holiday Season

“The world asks, ‘What does a man own?’ Christ asks, ‘How does he use it?’ ”
— *Andrew Murray, South African evangelist and writer*



“I do not believe one can settle how much we ought to give. I am afraid the only safe rule is to give more than we can spare. In other words, if our expenditure on comforts, luxuries, amusements, etc., is up to the standard common among those with the same income as our own, we are probably giving away too little. If our charities do not at all pinch or hamper us, I should say they are too small. There ought to be things we should like to do and cannot do because our charitable expenditures excludes them.”

— *C.S. Lewis, English author and scholar*

In doing some research for this month's *Fishermen's News* article, I came across the above quotes and they made me think. These words are not divine; they are not from the Bible. Yet, they are the voices of two individuals who obviously knew the Bible well. As we enter into this holiday season and its pressure to give, give, give, but only if that is preceded with buy, buy, buy, I'd challenge you to ponder what Messrs. Murray and Lewis have to say to us today.

I know how easy it is to fall into the trap of thinking that this particular purchase at the mall or this on-line sale item will bring happiness and make this a joyful Christmas. Today's advertising often deceives us into thinking that more gifts under the tree equates to more love for our friends and family. I'm not suggesting that this holiday season we slight those who are nearest and dearest to us. I am suggesting however that we ponder how we use the blessings we have received to celebrate the Great Gift of this season. If we analyzed your checkbook and credit card receipts from now through December 25, what would it tell us? Have you come under the spell of today's marketing and fallen into the trap described in *I Timothy 6:9-10*? Or, has your generosity towards others and willingness to share demonstrated your gratitude towards God for His Gift to us? The choice is yours.

Blessings,
The Stewardship Committee



NEWS FROM SUNDAY SCHOOL



THANK YOU to all who donated to **WORLD RELIEF** - through donation boxes and/or through our October bake sales. Make sure to check out the Sunday School Mission Board in the classroom wing to see how much we were able to raise!! Thanks to Grades 5 and 6 for overseeing this mission!

November / December Mission is the MITTEN TREE! Grades 1 and 2 would like donations for outdoor wear including hats, gloves/mittens, scarves, coats and boots. All of the items collected will be given to the Rhode Island Family Shelter. There will be a decorated box on the stage in Fellowship Hall for all donations!



UPCOMING December Sunday School events:

During each week in **ADVENT** (starting December 2), our Sunday School will begin at 9:00 AM in Fellowship Hall for the lighting of our Advent Wreath and singing of songs! Please sit with your Sunday School class; and then after the program, you will return to your classrooms.

The Sunday School Pageant will take place on December 9 at 4:00 PM. All children through grade 6 are invited to participate in the pageant and should sign up beforehand in Fellowship Hall. Make sure to look for the sign-up sheet!! There will be two rehearsals: Sunday, November 25, and Sunday, December 2. There will be a final rehearsal just before the big show! A pasta dinner will follow - keep an eye out for more information. For more information on the pageant, please see Lisa David or Wendy.

God Bless
Wendy Petrucci

MISSION COMMITTEE



Angel Tree 2007

We want to thank the members of the congregation who adopted an Angel this year purchasing gifts for a prisoner's child. Your willingness to help ensure that a child, whose parent is incarcerated in Rhode Island, will have two gifts for Christmas. If you have not yet delivered the gifts to Fellowship Hall, please bring them in by the 10:30 Worship Service on Sunday, December 9. PYF youth will be wrapping your gifts for the Angel Tree children after the worship service that day.

Other events on the Angel Tree Calendar are:

- Saturday, December 15: Gift Distribution Event in Fellowship Hall (1:00 to 3:00 PM)
- Sunday, December 16: Delivery of remaining gifts

The Mission Committee also wishes to thank everyone who volunteered to assist in the verification phase of the program as well.

Bible Translation for the Kagayanen People of the Philippines

More than thirty years ago, Bible translation work began among the Kagayanen people of the Philippines. With thanksgiving to God, on April 19, 2008, the Kagayanen New Testament, including the book of Genesis, will be dedicated to God and made available to the Kagayanen people. Greenwood's congregation has contributed to this investment for the Kagayanen people through faithful support of Scott and Louise MacGregor and has helped to make this historic event a reality.

Representatives from Greenwood have been invited to join the celebration in the Philippines the week of April 17-22, 2008. This will be an opportunity to give thanks to God for His enabling the years of service by the MacGregors.

WISH

(West Indies Self Help) is a relief and development mission located on LaGonave Island, off the coast of Haiti (one of the poorest countries in the world). Since 1969, WISH has built a dental clinic, an ice plant, several churches, a school, an addition to the island hospital, a sewing school, several miles of roads, water lines, an airstrip, a soccer field and basketball court and a co-operative "Mall" with businesses that are now owned by villagers. The WISH Mission is to "translate the truth of Jesus Christ into deeds that alleviate the needs of the poor, giving them opportunity to break their entrapping cycle of poverty."



Emmanuel Hospital Association

(EHA) brings the healing love of Christ to the poor in northern India; approximately 600,000 people rely on the EHA team for their care every year. A staff of 1500 working within a network of 20 hospitals and 25 community health centers address critical contemporary needs like care for HIV/AIDS victims, women's reproductive health, slum renewal, community dentistry, eye care and functional literacy.

Jews for Jesus

A reminder that Jews for Jesus representative, Oded Cohen, will be with us on Sunday, January 6. The program will be a discussion of Hanukkah during the Adult Sunday School and a Minute for Mission at the Worship services that morning. Add this interesting mission program to your calendar for January 6th.

The Mission Committee

Henry Ruppenthal, Chair; Jane Geary, Vice-Chair
Myrle Dean, Debra Stacey, Carol Snyder

BLOOD DRIVE

The Rhode Island Blood Center reported that 14 people presented at our church blood drive on October 7th. Of these 14, five were deferred and nine actual donations were made (90% of the blood drive goal of 10 donations).

Each pint donated helps save three lives, so by the Blood Center's count, our blood drive helped save 27 lives in Rhode Island.

Our next blood drive is scheduled for March, 2008. Thanks for your help!
Lexie Budlong-Springer

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

On behalf of the Session, the Personnel and Worship Committees would like to express our thanks to Evon Banning and David Burge for their help during the time of transition between "Nancy and Kathy". David played the organ and Evon directed the Chancel Choir for the months of September and October. We are very grateful to you both for sharing your talent and expertise with us.

Personnel Committee Chair, Betty Stacey
 Worship Committee Chair, Don Sorgel

39-ER'S

DECEMBER:



Timmy's One Bay Avenue
 Oakland Beach
 Wednesday, **December 19** - 11:30 AM

Cost is **\$12.00.**

Menu

Turkey or Baked Scrod*, Soup
 Coffee or Tea & Dessert*

Program in Fellowship Hall

Yankee Swap

JANUARY:

Timmy's One Bay Avenue
 Wednesday, **January 16** - 11:30 AM



Menu

Yankee Pot Roast or Chicken Parmesan*, Soup
 Coffee or Tea & Dessert*

Program in Fellowship Hall

Lisa David

on her trip with her family through the National Parks.

If you need a ride or a reservation, please call Linda Gungle @828-7687.

NOTES FROM THE TREASURER

The following is a summary of member giving, as of October 31, 2007, to the General Fund and the Per Capita Assessment needs of Greenwood Church. The General Fund is the main income source that supports your church's operating budget.

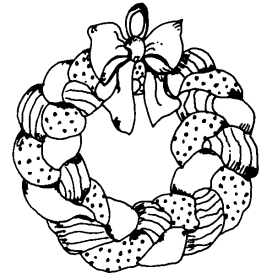
In the Presbyterian Church each church member is charged a Per Capita assessment amount which is used to support the mission and operating budgets of the General Assembly, the Synod of the North East, and the Presbytery of Southern New England. The 2007 Per Capita Assessment for each communicant member of our church is \$33.00. If you have not already done so, please consider paying the Per Capita Assessment amount for your family, in addition to your pledge or envelope support.

	GENERAL FUND	PER CAPITA ASSESSMENT
YEAR TO DATE	\$215,173.87	\$4,403.00
BUDGET	\$227,766.67	\$13,833.00
DEFECIT	-\$12,492.83	-\$9,419.00

If you are behind in your pledge or envelope giving, please remember to bring your financial support for your church up to date.

David C. Dickerman
 General Treasurer

NEWS FROM PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN



Our December 4 dinner, program and mini-bazaar -- a memorable evening. Good food, good friends; what more could we ask for! My thanks to the following:

- ☼ Stu and Betty Mason for all their hard work in planning and preparing the dinner
- ☼ The men of the church who so graciously serve us (it's a treat to sit and be waited on!)
- ☼ Peg Phillips for planning and making the table favors (with the help of Circles III & V)
- ☼ The Program Committee (particularly Evon Banning) for the lovely program
- ☼ Our hostesses, Circle IV, who really outdid themselves
- ☼ AND to all who made items for the mini-bazaar

The creativity of the items for sale never ceases to amaze me, and the generosity of everyone is just wonderful.

At our Coordinating Team meeting on November 6 we voted to send a \$500 check to the RI Family Shelter (specified for food). We will be sending more in January to several food agencies. For those of you who do not regularly attend a Circle or come to a PW gathering, please take note that proceeds from our Bazaar, Mini-Bazaar and May Breakfast make it possible for PW to help agencies such as the RI Family Shelter. We also collect non-perishable food items and paper products at each of our gatherings. Separately, what we contribute may seem small, but as a group we can really make a statement!

Many of the Circles are having Christmas parties and planning to either adopt families and/or contribute to food pantries.

The PW display board is still in Fellowship Hall. Our thanks to Sandy Olson for designing it. We had such a favorable response to it that we have decided to plan a more permanent display area that we can change and frequently update. Our thanks to Artena and Jena Fairbairn for volunteering to see that it is accomplished.

Don't forget to call me (737-0717) if you would like to attend the PWPSNE winter retreat in Putnam, CT on Feb. 1-2. Reservations must be made by January 18.

LOST AND FOUND: I still am in possession of one of the PW "Life Membership" pins (the newest version). If you have lost yours, please call me.



I would like to wish everyone a very Blessed Christmas Season and a Happy and Healthy New Year. Being Moderator of this wonderful organization is a real blessing and a joy! I receive much more than I ever could give!

From Church Signs for December 25:
***Christmas is not a day,
It is a state of mind.***

Betty Stacey
for Presbyterian Women

CIRCLE NEWS FOR DECEMBER and JANUARY

December is a busy month for Circles, with the mini-Bazaar, Christmas dinner and other activities.

CIRCLE I—the Bible Study Circle will not meet in December. They will next meet in the Parlor on Tuesday, January 22 at 1:00 PM. The lesson will be from Jonah 4 on "God's Extravagant Grace". All are welcome.

CIRCLE III—will meet in the church parlor for a potluck on Tuesday, December 11 at 6:00 PM. There will be a "silly" gift exchange. This Circle also adopted a family to help at Christmas.

CIRCLE IV—will have their annual Christmas Party at Ferns & Flowers Tea House on Saturday December 15 at 2:00 PM. After lunch there will be a Yankee Swap.

CIRCLE V—will meet on Monday, December 17 for a Christmas lunch at Angie D'Albora's.

CIRCLE VII—after making fresh greens for the mini-Bazaar this circle will not meet until January 8 when they will go out to dinner at Chelo's at 6:30 PM.

January 8: All Circles and anyone interested will meet at church either at 10:30 AM or 7:00 PM to enjoy the movie "Amahl and the Night Visitors".

Wishing you and yours a blessed Christmas Season and a Happy New Year!

Karen Baxter
Circle Coordinator

Blanket Sunday:

Thank you to all who contributed to our Blanket Fund Drive this year. We were able to purchase 155 blankets with your donations. Thank you for supporting this ministry!

Thinking Ahead to our next Outreach Project:

Details will be printed in the next issue of *Fishermen's News* regarding the collection of supplies for school and health kits.

MIKE-ee's MUSINGS:

October: If you knew it, and didn't pursue it . . .you blew it!

If you didn't get there, you missed one very tasteful event . . . the P.E.O. SOUP TASTING EXTRAVAGANZA . . . those nice ladies offered much more than just a mouthful.

November: This is when Americans close their eyes, bow their heads and give thanks for the turkeys they are about to receive . . . then they vote.

On November 11th Mike-ee accompanied Earl Pearson to the dedication of the World War II Memorial in Providence . . . a memorable event attended by thousands. Interesting chats with a few of the vets, particularly one who Earl photographed with Mike-ee. The guy was a member of the first heavy bomb group to join the 8th Air Force in England in 1942. Mike-ee's 491st Bomb Group arrived in 1944, the last to join the 8th A.F., but flew the most combat missions in the shortest period of time and held the best accuracy record overall, being labeled "The Ringmasters...The Last and the Best".

December: Mike-ee heads for Texas as usual...to play SANTA for the great-grandkids.

Santa and the Soldier

'Twas the night before Christmas, he lived all alone,
in a one bedroom house made of plaster and stone.
I had come down the chimney with presents to give,
And to see just who in this home did live.

I looked all about a strange sight I did see,
No tinsel, no presents, not even a tree.
No stocking by mantle, just boots filled with sand,
On the all hung pictures of far distant lands.

With medals and badges, awards of all kinds,
A sober thought came through my mind.
For this house was different, it was dark and dreary.
I found the home of a soldier, once I could see clearly.

The soldier lay sleeping, silent, alone,
Curled up on the floor in this one bedroom home.
The face was so gentle, the room in such disorder,
Not how I pictured a United States soldier.

Was this the hero of whom I'd just read?
Curled up on a poncho, the floor for a bed?
I realized the families that I saw this night,
Owed their lives to these soldiers who were willing to fight.

Soon round the world, the children would play,
And grownups would celebrate a bright Christmas day.
They all enjoyed freedom each month of the year,
Because of the soldiers, like the one lying here.

I couldn't help wonder how many lay alone,
On a cold Christmas Eve in a land far from home.
The very thought brought a tear to my eye,
I dropped to my knees and started to cry.

The soldier awakened and I heard a rough voice,
"Santa don't cry, this life is my choice;
I fight for freedom, I don't ask for more,
My life is my God, my Country, my Corps."

The soldier rolled over and drifted to sleep,
I couldn't control it, I continued to weep.
I kept watch for hours, so silent and still
And we both shivered from the cold night's chill.

I didn't want to leave on the cold, dark, night,
This guardian of honor so willing to fight.
Then the soldier rolled over with a voice soft and pure,
Whispered, "Carry on Santa, it's Christmas day, all is secure."

One look at my watch, and I knew he was right.
"Merry Christmas my friend, and to all a good night.

Religion: All About Pledges...An old dollar bill and an even older \$20 arrive at a Federal Reserve Bank to be retired. "I've had a pretty good life," the \$20 says. "I've been in Vegas, the finest restaurants in New York and even on a Caribbean cruise." "You did have an exciting life!" the dollar says. "Where have you been?" the \$20 asks. "Oh, I've been to the Presbyterian church, the Methodist church and the Baptist church, spent some time with the Lutherans –" "Wait!" the \$20 interrupts. "What's a church?"

PARTING SHOT: Employment Advice...Instead of calling in sick, call in well. Tell them how well you feel not having to go to work today.

Thanks for Listenin'
Mike-ee

HOSPITALIZED since the last issue:

Bill Springer

SYMPATHY is extended to:

Carolyn Caron on the passing of her brother in November.

Joanne Giroux on the passing of her dad, Arthur Steere, on November 14.

BAPTISMS:

Best wishes to Dana and Tara Weathers who presented their son, Cole Thomas, for the Sacrament of Baptism on November 25. Proud grandparents are Charles and Anita Ricker. Proud big sister is Maya.

~~~ NOTE RECEIVED ~~~

Dear Friends at Greenwood,

Just a note of thanks for all the prayers and get well cards from all my friends at Greenwood Church during my operation at Rhode Island Hospital and weeks of stay at Southern New England Rehabilitation Center after my acute stroke.

It is a blessing to belong to such a loving and caring church family. I will return home on November 14 with Joan-Sandra.

Thanks also for the beautiful flowers delivered by Timoli Richardson.

I also want to thank our many members for their thoughtfulness and kindness, especially Dr. Clark & Dr. Johnson for their visits and prayers.

Love and prayers, Peter K. McKnight

BIRTHDAYS

DECEMBER :

*Matt Algozino
Evon Banning
Chris Bataitis
Millicent Budlong-
Springer
Justin Carpenter
Joe Casinelli
Natalie Chenel
Greg Damm
Elizabeth Farnsworth
Mary Farnsworth
Ryan Fraser
Doris Hamel
Danny Hayman
Matt Huber
Benno Lebkuchner
Cathy Maguire
Marci Mahoney
Denise Mair
Marshall Martin
Sherri McNiece
Abe Monahan
Shelley Monahan
Carter Nolan
Heather Nolan
Brandon Phillips
Ken Phillips
Mildred Plouffe
Kim Price
David Riccitelli
Larry Rittmann
Joann Rudolph
Bonnie Sorgel
Peggy Swanson*

JANUARY :

*Severin Bergeron
Virginia Brodeur
Christina Casinelli
Vincent Cataloni
Jack Crankshaw
Tom D'Albora
Hunter Damm
Reilly Damm
Kim D'Antico
Cheryl Donilon
Kevin Donilon
Jena Fairbairn
Brian Flannery
Ginger Gastall
Ruth Gorton
Dave Greco
Kurt Gudmundson
Shawn Gudmundson
Cynthia Hackett
Shirley Hall
Alex Harrop
Rebecca Huber
Rebecca Hurd
Matthew Jacobsen
Paula Johnson
Tarah Krahenbill-
Pickup
Deb MacKinnon
Norma MacLeod
Phil Mahoney
Stu Mason
Tom Mays
Nancy Merritt
Norbert Morin
Ari Nazareth
John Phillips
Owen Phillips
Austin Pickup
Timoli Richardson
Anita Ricker
Alex Rudolph
Russ Rudolph
Faith Ruhren
Carol Snyder
Don Sorgel
Karen Summers
Lynn Summers
Fred Summers, Sr.
Sean Walstead*

