

December 2009

Save the Date and Join Us For Our  
**WPC Christmas Celebration!**  
**Sunday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2009**  
**4:30pm ~ 7:00pm**



**4:30-6:00pm**

**Crafts and Cookie Decorating for all ages**  
**Adults are invited to mingle and enjoy some appetizers and**  
**“Spirits” in the church gathering space**

**6:00-7:00pm**

**Caroling and Dinner**

**Suggested Donation: \$10 Per Family (or bring a dessert)**  
**Please RSVP (yes or no) to your Deacon**

**Sponsored by The Church Life Committee**

Please contact Loralyn Cropper (210-5673) or Lelei Coyle (762-5626) if you're interested in helping out.

In their respective ‘Saving Jesus’ Bible studies this fall, men and women WPC members and friends have been diligently applying their minds to the Christmas story of Jesus’ birth. If we are what we think (as in Descartes’ “I think, therefore I am.”), then the Christmas story is fraught with puzzlements—and mistakes. For example, the virgin birth has prompted thoughtful responses from the likes of Thomas Jefferson: “The day will come when the mystical generation of Jesus by the Supreme being, in the womb of a virgin, will be classed with the fable of the generation of Minerva in the brain of Jupiter” (1823) and Bill Nelson (2006): “The virgin birth was an honest mistake... (Early) Greek translators converted the Hebrew word for ‘young woman’ Isaiah 7.14 into our English word ‘virgin’. And that’s just one application of the mind to the Christmas story. What about the wise men? Whoever said there were three, let alone their names: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar? And the star in the heavens? Over a part of the world, yes, but over a particular house?! And the angels singing in the heavens? Come on, think! Reason! Like good Calvinists, use your mind! In fact, the more you think about it, the more difficult it is to take the Christmas story literally!

But to question and unravel the literal truth of the Christmas story is not to deny the spiritual truth of the Christmas story. Both Matthew and Luke are not appealing so much to our minds but to our hearts. They write the stories they write because they know we are not just what we think. We are whom we love: “I love, therefore I am.” They want to convey to us not facts, but faith. And they want to share their faith that this man Jesus who died on the cross for the love of God for this world was, not just at the end of his life but at the beginning of his life, an extraordinary man of God and God made man. And that’s not a mind thing. It’s a heart thing. If Christmas is only in our heads, we miss at least half the truth of the story—and the better half of the story that’s alive in our hearts.

Which is why, at Christmastime, year after year after year, we return to the Christmas story. It’s why we love to sing Christmas carols. And to decorate our houses. And join in Christmas merriment and Christmas families. For the comfort and joy at Jesus Christ’s heart-felt meaning and purpose for our lives and for this whole world’s life. Jesus Christ—born of God, died to God, and still lives in God. As he was loved into being by God, so we have been loved into life by God. A spirit-filled life with both meaning and purpose, just like Jesus’. In flesh and blood, in soul and in spirit, in mind and in heart, just like Jesus’.

Merry Christmas,

David Graybill  
Your Pastor

### **PASTOR DROP-INS**

**Mondays**

**December 7, 14 and 21**

**5:00 – 7:00 PM**

Once again this Advent, the Pastor is hosting Pastor Drop-Ins in his office at church. People wishing to come by to visit informally, to share an experience, to tell a story, to make a suggestion, to ask a question, whatever - either in person or by phone - are invited any time between these hours. No appointments. Just come as you have time and inclination.

### **THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM**

This sacrament will be administered on upcoming Sundays, December 13, 2009 and January 24, April 11, May 16, and June 20, 2010. Parents wishing to present their child(ren) for this sacrament are urged to contact the church office as far in advance as possible. Ordinarily, only two baptisms are scheduled at a single service.

## WORSHIP AT WILTON

**Sunday, December 6, 2009**

**Advent 2 Peace**

**The Service for the Lord's Day**

Lighting of the Second Advent Candle

The Sacrament of The Lord's Supper

David Graybill, preaching

Call/Worship: Lisa Hofrichter, Florence Johnson, Margot Steele  
Reader: Margot Steele  
Scripture: Malachi 3.1-7; Luke 3.1-6  
Ushers: Adele & Mac MacGregor, Irla Landry, Sally Post  
Hymns: 9 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel  
10 On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry  
13 Prepare the Way  
Anthem: Come, O Come, Lord Jesus

**Sunday, December 13, 2009**

**Advent 3 Joy**

**The Service for the Lord's Day**

Lighting of the Third Advent Candle

The Sacrament of Baptism

David Graybill, preaching

Call/Worship: Sam & Claudia Halsey  
Reader: Jennifer Gabrielson  
Scripture: Isaiah 12.2-6; Philippians 4.4-7  
Ushers: Elaine Shields, Patty & Steve Connor, Julia Foster  
Hymns: 12 People Look East  
8 Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates  
28 Good Christian Friends, Rejoice  
Anthem: Thou Shalt Know Him

## CHRISTMAS FLOWER AND MUSIC CONTRIBUTIONS

Contributions are being accepted in memory/honor of loved ones for both the Music Fund and the Flower Fund. Their names will be listed in the bulletins at the 4 PM and 9 PM services on Christmas Eve. Please have your contributions (of any amount) to the church office no later than Wednesday, December 16. Remember to include your name as well as the names of those people you wish remembered. Be sure to stipulate either the Flower and/or Music Fund and in memory or honor of.

## GIFTS OF CHRISTMAS 2009

It is that time of year again where we receive numerous catalogs in the mail, but the most important catalog in your mailbox this year is the Gifts of Christmas!! Please take the time to notice that we have **31 organizations** and **219 items** to choose from that will bring much happiness and meaning to many deserving people throughout our community. It is very important to note this year that you have **only 3 Sundays** to buy your amazing angels: **December 6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>**. **A table will be set up in the Gathering Space and you may buy your angels either before or after worship. Please help to remember the true meaning of Christmas this holiday season!!**

**Sunday, December 20, 2009**

**10:00 AM**

**Advent 4 Love**

Lighting of the Fourth Advent Candle

Family Service

Choral Advent Worship

Offered by the Sanctuary and Youth Choirs

Al Galletly, director

Call/Worship: Susan Boardman  
Reader: Adele MacGregor  
Scripture: Luke 1.46-56  
Ushers: Margaret Carkner, Jane & Frank Melani, Doon Foster  
Hymns: 1 Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus  
44 O Little Town of Bethlehem  
23 Angels, We Have Heard On High  
Anthems: Processional Alleluia  
Christmas Comes in the Morning  
A Mother's Carol  
Two Kings  
Fantasia on Christmas Carols  
Away in a Manger  
Pretty Baby Born in Bethlehem  
Night of Silence

**Thursday, December 24, 2008**

**Christmas Eve**

4:00 PM

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Family and Children's Service:

A Nativity Tableau

The Sharing of Light

Reader: Molly Hoch  
Scripture: Luke 2.1-20; Matthew 2.1-12  
Ushers: Cindy, Hank, Ken, Charlie & John Watkins  
Carols: Familiar carols ending with Silent Night

8:30 PM

Prelude Music with Choir and Organ

Anthems: All Is Well  
To You Is Born A Child  
Good King Wenceslas  
Carol of Remembrance  
That Holy Night So Long Ago  
Night of Silence

9:00 PM  
Lighting of the Christ Candle  
Service of Candlelight and Communion  
The Sacrament of The Lord's Supper  
David Graybill, preaching  
Sharing of Light

Reader: Chase McReynolds  
Scripture: Luke 2.1-20  
Ushers: John, Sherry, Chase, Parker & Mac McReynolds  
Carols: Familiar carols ending with Silent Night  
Anthems: Lo, How a Rose  
On That Hallulujah Night

**Sunday, December 27, 2009**  
**Christmas 1**  
**Service of Lessons and Carols**

10:00 AM  
Joint Service with St. Matthew's Episcopal Church  
in the WPC Sanctuary  
Presbyterian Liturgy

Carols: 22 Angels From the Realms of Glory  
19 To a Maid Engaged to Joseph  
27 Gentle Mary Laid Her Child  
59 While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks  
43 O Little Town of Bethlehem  
53 What Child Is This?  
23 Angels We Have Heard on High  
31 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

**The Greening of the Sanctuary**  
**Friday, December 4**  
**4 – 6 PM**

Come join in the greening of the Sanctuary for Advent and Christmas. Everyone is welcome to help decorate our worship space for these festive seasons. Led by Nancy Gorkin and Irla Landry. A happy hour immediately follows.

**ADVENT QUIET DAY**  
**Tuesday, December 15**  
**9:30 Am – 1:30 PM**

During this most hectic of seasons, here's an opportunity for adults to breathe, relax, enjoy some personal silent reflection and small group sharing on Advent themes. Led by David Graybill and Jane Field.

**MORNING PRAYER**  
Every Thursday  
7:15 AM  
the Sanctuary

## NOTES FROM THE CHOIR ROOM

### Merry Christmas, everyone!!

If there is ever a time in the year that brings out the musical best in everyone, it's this wonderful holiday season.

Last month I issued a call for all of you bathtub choristers to come forth and join in with our annual Big Music Sunday (December 20<sup>th</sup>).

This month, I'm issuing that same call for a group of young choristers. I've selected several Christmas anthems, and I need a group of happy young singers – grades two through eight. We'll need to take a bit of time for three back-to-back Thursday afternoon rehearsals (12/3, 12/10 and 12/17), plus an hour-long rehearsal on Saturday morning (December 19<sup>th</sup>) – all in preparation for our December 20<sup>th</sup> music service noted above. Some of the music will be familiar. Some not so. But it's all wonderful music. It will be fun to learn and even more fun to sing. ALL the anthems will be sung with the Sanctuary Choir backing you up. But you will have a major role in each of the numbers; and some will involve you in the LEADING role. **This is Christmastime. I need your voices. And your smiling faces.** So please let me know if you can and will be able to join in, OK? Simply email me at [agalletly@optonline.net](mailto:agalletly@optonline.net) or respond to the EVITE you received from Jane Field.

I'm hoping for a great turnout ... and looking forward to a wonderful Christmas music event on the morning of Sunday, December 20<sup>th</sup>.

Hallelujah!!

Al

## TWO SPECIAL ADVENT ACTIVITIES FOR WPC'S CHILDREN

**#1: Advent Youth Choir** – (See Al's article)

**#2: Christmas Eve Pageant** – Children in Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade are invited to participate in the Family Christmas Eve Service by playing a role in a Nativity tableau. This "low-maintenance" pageant will be narrated by Pastor David Graybill. As excerpts from scripture are read, children will come forward to take their place around the manger. Children will not be singing, dancing, or reading lines, so stress will be kept to a minimum! The only preparation required is a costume fitting on December 10 at 5pm, and a quick run-through on December 23 at 2pm. Registration forms were mailed to every family with elementary school-aged children (extra forms can be downloaded from the church website, and are also available on the church office bulletin board). Registration deadline is December 1. For more information, contact Jane Field at 762-5514 or [jane@wpc.net](mailto:jane@wpc.net).

## STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Our "**Experience the Joy of Giving**" 2010 Stewardship Campaign needs your attention. We have had nearly one-third of the congregation respond and our pledge total (to date) of \$158,532 is roughly one-third of the 2010 budget of \$459,000. Many thanks to those who have sent back their pledge cards. If you are in the silent majority who have yet to respond, the time to be heard and submit your stewardship pledge is upon us - *all gifts are greatly appreciated and truly helpful, in whatever amount you can pledge.* Stewardship of our church depends upon the participation of our congregation, so please submit your completed pledge card to the church via the mail or by dropping it in the collection plate this Sunday.

## 2009 ANNUAL REPORTS

The 2009 committee annual reports are due to the church office no later than Friday, January 8, 2010. Please email them as an attachment to [wpchurch@snet.net](mailto:wpchurch@snet.net). Be sure to include the members of your committee. Thanks very much, Susie Gross.

## NOTES ON PEOPLE

Madeleine Ball, Alex Bendix, Jane Field, Elliot Gorkin, Molly Hoch, Sonny Kern, David Lourd, Adele MacGregor, and Sophie Paddon participated in the "Rake & Roll" event on Tuesday, November 3rd, an annual mission project for the middle and high school youth of Wilton Presbyterian, Wilton Congregational, Our Lady of Fatima, St. Matthew's, and Zion's Hill United Methodist Churches to rake leaves for some of Wilton's elderly and disabled residents.

We hold close in prayer Gladys Bendix, who is mending at Sunrise Assisted Living from a recent hospitalization.

We hold close in prayer Lisa Bettke, who has been confined to her home these past several weeks battling pneumonia.

A memorial service for Howard Estes, son of Jane Estes who died in California earlier this year, was held in The Sanctuary on Friday, November 27.

We hold close in prayer Jim and Joan Kline, father and mother of Nancy Gorkin, in Dearborn Heights, Michigan. Jim, managing Parkinson's disease, has been diagnosed with esophageal cancer and is evaluating options moving forward.

Our prayers are with Amy Gross Kehoe, niece of Susie Gross, who underwent surgery for a brain tumor in October. Following chemotherapy and radiation treatments, the doctors are expecting a full recovery. Amy is a fighter!

We extend our Christian sympathy to WPC former member Michelle Quincy at the death of her mother, Eleanor Fetchick, of Lou Gehrig's disease Sunday, November 1. Those who wish who wish may contact Michelle at 54 Emily Road, Marlborough, CT 06447 or [mquincyx2@yahoo.com](mailto:mquincyx2@yahoo.com).

We hold close in prayer Richard Rastettler, father of Chris Sherwood, and his wife, Margaret. Dick has been admitted to the Health Center at Essex Meadows, Essex, CT with Alzheimer's disease.

We hold close in prayer Navy Lt. Sarah Sherwood, daughter of David and Chris Sherwood. Sarah is in Naval Intelligence posted in Kabul, Afghanistan on a tour due to conclude in March, 2010, at which time she'll return to Naval Intelligence School in Virginia.

We extend our Christian sympathy to WPC former member Nancy Wells at the death of her son, Tony in New Jersey on Friday, October 30. A memorial service was held by Tony's friends in Georgetown, CT. Those who wish may contact Nancy at East Hill Woods #13, Southbury, CT 06488 (203-264-1276).

Thank you to all those who prepared and present on Sunday, November 22, Thanksgiving baskets for Wilton Social Services' people in need and Covenant to Care's foster-children.

Thank you to all who participated in the November 21 WEPCO Work Day, cleaning up both the buildings and grounds.

## OUR NEWEST MEMBER

At its November 22 Called Meeting Session will receive **Tim Cummins** by Reaffirmation of Faith. Tim and his wife, Tara, live at 143 Old Boston Road, Wilton with their two children, Maggie (6/15/00) and Patrick (6/27/02). Jennifer Reese is his (and Tara's) Deacon.

The Session has called  
**A MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION**  
Sunday, December 6, 2009  
Immediately following morning worship  
in The Sanctuary

1. To hear the report of The 2009 Nominating Committee of the Congregation regarding nominees to the offices of Ruling Elder and Deacon;
2. If the way be clear, to proceed to elect persons so fill these offices;
3. To conduct any other business growing directly out of the above.

### SMALL GROUP MEETINGS IN DECEMBER

WPC's new Small Group Ministries program is in its second month, and members continue to enjoy a wide variety of activities as they get to know one another in fun and meaningful ways. The **"Two By Two"** dinner group was such a success that it has multiplied (like loaves and fishes!) into two monthly groups—a Wednesday group for socializing and community building, and a Thursday group for community building through faith sharing on a deeper level. Both have decided to forego dinner meetings during the busy month of December, and will meet again in January. Other small group plans include:

- The **"Good Book"** group, who read Mitch Albom's book Have A Little Faith last month, is now reading The Year of Living Biblically and will meet to discuss that book on December 2 at 7:30pm in the Lounge.
- The **"Third Thursdays Movie Group"** (formerly known as "Popcorn & Presbys") met last month to discuss the film, "The Invention of Lying." In December, they have agreed to see "Precious" and will meet to discuss it on December 17 at 7:30pm in the Library.
- The largest small group at WPC, **"Back 2 Nature"** had a great hike at Devil's Den in October, and will be hiking in the Wilton Town Forest on December 6 right after church.
- "One-Shot Wonders" are small groups that form for just one or two meetings around a focused topic. In October, our pastor, David Graybill, led a two-part workshop entitled "This I Believe." Members learned how to write about what they believe, and then shared their own personal statements aloud. On December 15, from 9:30am to 1:30pm, WPC will offer an **"Advent Quiet Day,"** a mini-retreat designed to help us slow down, quiet our hearts and minds, and find a peaceful center during the sacred season of Advent. See David Graybill's article in this newsletter for more info about this opportunity for spiritual growth.
- **"Get Real,"** a Christian ethics lecture series, meets the first Tuesday of every month at 7:30am in the Lounge. Each month, a featured guest speaker helps frame a contemporary issue for people of faith—last month, WPC's own Kit Smith gave an overview of global energy use and resource allocation; on December 1, the Reverend Peter Powell, Executive Director of Interfaith Housing in Westport, will discuss effective responses to the issue of homelessness. All are welcome.
- **"The Times on Sundays"** group meets every Sunday morning at 9am in the Meditation Room in the WPC Sanctuary's Gathering Space to consider current events in the light of our faith. This self-directed group uses "The Wired Word" resource as a discussion guide, and so far this year, they have covered these news stories: the arrest of Roman Polanski, President Obama's Nobel Peace Prize, medical and bio-engineering, the distracted Northwest airline pilots who overshot the Minneapolis airport, the anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the Fort Hood shootings. All are welcome to drop in on this discussion group before worship—help yourself to a cup of tea or coffee and join in the wide-ranging conversation!

## SESSION ACTIONS

At its November 17 Stated Meeting Session

- Elected Nancy Gorkin 2010 Clerk of Session and Max Gabrielson 2010 Recording Clerk of Session
- Continued its review of the church rolls;
- Referred draft of committee guidelines to the 2010 Personnel Committee for review;
- Authorized purchase of officer computer back-up system;
- Heard update from Buck Burnaman concerning the 2009 Stewardship Campaign for 2010;
- Heard report of Presbytery Commissioner Mac MacGregor.

### JOINT OFFICERS' CONFERENCE

Saturday, January 9, 2010  
9:00 AM – 3:00 PM  
At First Presbyterian Church  
178 Oenoke Ridge Road, New Canaan

## WOMEN'S MINISTRIES NEWS

For the fourth month in a row, the women of WPC have gathered together in someone's home to spend time getting to know one another, sharing our selves and our faith, laughing, praying, and of course, eating great food! In November, WPC's wonderful women put their extraordinary creativity and generosity to work in service of female soldiers currently serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. For several weeks, we collected donations of items wished for by four different soldiers whose wish lists appeared on the website anysoldier.com. And on Friday, November 6, we gathered in Linda Rost's home, which had been converted to our own version of a Walmart—the kitchen and dining room tables were piled high with shampoo, candy, DVDs, socks, paperback books, lotion, sheets, towels and blankets, games, chapstick, foot powder, and holiday decorations! So much had been donated that things spilled off onto the surrounding floor and chairs and we could hardly move through the room as we filled shipping boxes to create care packages. As a finishing touch, each box was topped off with a handwritten note from a WPC woman, sending love and care from our church family. At the end of a hard night's work, we sat down, sipped hot cider, and told stories from our own lives of times when we had been far from home, when we had learned how to survive as a woman in a man's world, when we had been courageous or scared (or both!). We prayed for the soldiers who would be receiving all of the boxes we had packed, and for each other. Two days later, when every box had been taped up, carefully labeled, and had a completed customs form taped to the top, Linda and Jane stepped back and counted... **TWENTY-NINE** boxes sat in Linda's foyer, ready to be loaded into our two vehicles and taken to our new best friend, "Lou," at the Wilton P.O., who, with the patience of a saint, took each box and made sure it was entered in the computer and sent on its way overseas to Dawnisha, Jessica, Lindsay and Jessica...and to several other female soldiers we chose to receive some of the abundant gifts donated by WPC's amazing women!

In December, we're doing something a little different! Instead of gathering in someone's home, we're going to gather in a woman-owned business—"Earth Garden," the flower and gift shop owned by Elder Nancy Gorkin. On December 10, with carols playing in the background, goodies to nibble spread on the countertops, and Christmas lights twinkling around the greenhouse, we will enjoy each other's company and shop for one-of-a-kind treasures to give to loved ones, to stuff in the toe of a stocking hung by the fire with care, or to help decorate our home for the holidays. Don't miss this light-hearted evening of Christmas joy!

### **THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10**

**WPC Women's Gathering At Earth Garden**

**(At their new location: The corner of Danbury and Sharp Hill Roads)**

**DROP BY ANY TIME BETWEEN 6:00 to 8:00 PM**

***A portion of the evening's proceeds will be donated to WPC's Special Music Fund in honor of Nancy's father***

## YOUTH EVENTS IN DECEMBER

### Wednesday, December 2

7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Youth Group, 6-7:30pm

### Sunday, December 6

High School Youth Group Christmas Party, 4:30-6:00pm

“Yankee Auction” Gift Swap

Bring the weirdest xmas gift you’ve ever received, wrapped and ready to “re-gift” in this swap!

### Tuesday, December 8

Sixers 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Youth Group, 5:30-7:00pm

### Sunday, December 13 (Tentative)

High School DC Mission Trip Orientation #2, 11:30am-1:00pm

**(Mandatory)** for all team members—any absence must be excused in advance.)

WPC is a partner in the Joint Youth Ministries Program, a cooperative venture with Zion’s Hill United Methodist and St. Matthew’s Episcopal Churches. Unless otherwise noted, youth groups meet at the WEPCO complex, 48 New Canaan Road. Please contact Director of Spiritual Formation, Jane Field, [jane@wpcnet.net](mailto:jane@wpcnet.net) or 762-5514 if you have any questions or concerns. If your family includes a 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grader and you have not been receiving our regular email reminders or “snail-mail” postcards, please let Jane know and we’ll add you to the list right away!