



The newsletter of The First Congregational Church
Canton Center, Connecticut

The CHURCHMOUSE

December 2007

FROM THE PASTOR

There is a story that Gerald Horton Bath tells about a missionary who taught in Africa. Before Christmas, the missionary had been telling his native students how Christians, as an expression of their joy, gave one another presents on Christ's birthday.

On Christmas morning, one of the natives brought the missionary a seashell of lustrous beauty. When asked where he had discovered such an extraordinary shell, the native said he had walked many miles to a certain bay, the only spot where such shells could be found.

"I think it was wonderful of you to travel so far to get this lovely gift for me," the teacher exclaimed.

His eyes brightening, the native answered, "Long walk, part of the gift."

I imagine that behind many of the gifts we will be giving to our loved ones will be many miles we will walk through malls or along busy, downtown sidewalks – unless we're strictly into catalog shopping. In any event, the days are now hastening on and before we know it the great day of Christmas morning will be upon us, when once again we will celebrate God's greatest gift to all the world -- the gift of God's Son. In this gift we see the Giver and the patient waiting of an extraordinarily loving father, who as our Statement of Faith phrases it, "seeks to save all people from aimlessness and sin."



May the love of God in the gift of the Christ Child fill our hearts and inspire us to bring Christmas to others. As someone else has put it:

You are Christmas –
every time you smile and help to make
the world a brighter place.
You are Christmas –
every time you laugh and let the sound join
with all the happy music of the world.
You are Christmas –
every time you speak a word of faith to some
fearful soul along the road of life.
You are Christmas –
every time you pray a prayer for those who
need your very special blessing.
You are Christmas –
every time your loving hand goes out of the
way to touch and care and help and share.

Laurie and I wish you all a Christmas filled with joy and peace! *Larry Smith*

CALENDAR OF CHURCH EVENTS

- Dec. 2 **First Sunday of Advent**, 10:00 A.M. Worship and Church School (begin in church).
 Sunday, 11:15 A.M. **Cherub Choir**
 Sunday, 11:30 A.M. **Junior Choir**.
 Sunday, 11:15 A.M. Christmas **Instrumental Ensemble** rehearsal.
 Sunday, 11:30 A.M. **Advent Workshop** for children.
 Sunday, 11:15 A.M. Informational **Meeting on Capital Campaign** in church.
- Dec. 3 Monday, 6:40 P.M. **Music Committee**.
 Monday, 7:00 P.M. **Senior Choir**.
 Monday, 7:00 P.M. **Christian Education Committee**.
 Monday, **Honor Court** will be hosted by our church in Hartford.
- Dec. 4 Tuesday, 10:00 A.M. **Adult Study**.
 Tuesday, 7:30 P.M. **Diaconate**.
- Dec. 6 Thursday, 7:00 P.M. **Bell Choir**.
- Dec. 7-9 Friday- Sunday, **Confirmation Class**
Retreat at Silver Lake.
- Dec. 9 **Second Sunday of Advent**, 10:00 A.M.
 Worship (Music Sunday) and Church School (begin in church).
 Sunday, 11:15 A.M. **Cherub Choir**.
 Sunday, 11:30 A.M. **Junior Choir**.
 Sunday, 11:15 A.M. **Ensemble** rehearsal.
 Sunday, 1:00-5:00 P.M. **“Christmas at Silver Lake”**
- Dec. 10 Monday, 10:00 A.M. **Prayer Shawl Ministry**.
 Monday, 6:30 P.M. **Board of Trustees**.
 Monday, 7:00 P.M. **Senior Choir**.
- Dec. 11 Tuesday, 10:00 A.M. **Adult Study**.
 Tuesday, 2:00 P.M. F.V. Assoc. Committee on the Ministry.
- Dec. 13 Wednesday, 11:00 A.M. **Prime Timers’** Christmas Potluck in the Parish Hall.
 Wednesday, 7:00 P.M. **Church Council**.
 Wednesday, 7:00 P.M. **Confirmation Class** members participating in Christmas Eve services will meet.
- Dec. 13 Thursday, 7:00 P.M. **Bell Choir**.
- Dec. 16 **Third Sunday of Advent**, 10:00 A.M. Worship and Church School (begin in church)
 Sunday, 11:10 A.M. **Pageant Rehearsal with Cherub Choir, Junior Choir, and Instrumental Ensemble**.
 Sunday, 11:15 A.M. **Special Meeting of the Congregation**.
- Dec. 17 Monday, 7:00 P.M. **Senior Choir**.
- Dec. 20 Thursday, 7:00 P.M. **Bell Choir**.
- Dec. 23 **Fourth Sunday of Advent**, 10:00 A.M. Worship includes **Pageant**. Church School classes will *not* meet.
- Dec. 24 Monday, 6:00 P.M. and 7:30 P.M. **Christmas Eve Candlelight Services**.
 Christmas Fund offering received.
- Dec. 25 Tuesday, **Christmas Day**, the Church Office will be closed.
- Dec. 27 Thursday, **No** Bell Choir.
- Dec. 30 Sunday, 10:00 A.M. Worship. Church School classes will *not* meet. **Junior Choir** will *not* meet.
- Dec. 31 Monday, **Senior Choir** will *not* meet.
- Jan. 1 Tuesday, **Happy New Year!** The Church Office will be closed.

December 2007						
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