



*Round Hill
Community Church*

The News Letter

December 2006

PASTORAL MESSAGE

The Gift of Christmas

In one of the Christmas prayers of Ernest T. Campbell, the former Preaching Minister of the Riverside Church in New York City, he writes this:

“O God, our Father, whom we trust but do not fully understand; whom we love, but not surely with all our hearts; give us, we pray Thee, not the kind of Christmas we want, but the kind we need.

We live with a sense of crowdedness; remind us of the providence that marks a sparrow’s worth.

We live with a shrinking sense of personal worth; remind us of a love to which each soul is precious.

We live with a sense of the years going by too quickly; remind us of abiding purposes in which all that comes to pass partakes of the eternal.

We live with a sense of wrongs committed and good undone or unattempted; remind us that for such the Shepherd seeks, the Father waits.

Our souls take their rest, O God, in the joy of what Thou art. Let it be enough that Thou art for us, with us, and within us, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Give us, Thy people, so susceptible to size, so easily impressed by worldly rank and scope; give us, O God, an eye for mangers tucked away in stables, and an ear for truth whose only fanfare is the rippled intuitions of the heart.”

In this season of Advent, when we await the glorious celebration of the birth of our Lord and the coming of the One in whom the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, may we move toward that day prayerfully, being reminded of God’s providence and love, of God’s abiding purposes and the expectant Shepherd who seeks us out where we are and guides us to the place where we need to be.

May the gift you receive this Christmas be one that is accented by such gracious reminders God seeks to impress upon us, as we celebrate joyfully God’s love and peace, and as we embrace our calling to share such a gift with all the world.

Blessings upon you and all whom you hold dear!

—Bob Culp

CHRISTMAS ON ROUND HILL



**Saturday, December 2
9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Community House**

**Photos with Santa
Children’s Activities
Train Rides
Living Greens
Treasure Trove
Fabulous Food
Handcrafted Gifts and Jewelry
Gift Baskets
Christmas Puddings**



THE CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS

Children for Change and The Carver Center of Port Chester, New York

On Sunday, October 29, the Church School students assembled 125 Halloween Snack bags for the children at the Carver Center in Port Chester, New York.



The Carver Center serves our Port Chester neighbors and has a large afterschool program that assists children whose parents are at work. They have a wonderful structured program that offers students a variety of classes. It is free to the families, so Carver relies heavily on donated goods and volunteer support.

We all stuffed orange and white gift bags with healthy afterschool snacks, as well as some fun Halloween treats for them to enjoy on October 31.



Christmas Pageant



Our annual pageant will be Sunday, December 10. During Church School on Sunday, December 3, there will be rehearsal for all the children with speaking roles. The all-cast rehearsal for the pageant will be on Saturday, December 9, from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. This is a mandatory rehearsal for all children who plan to participate.





THE CENTER FOR FAITH DEVELOPMENT AT RHCC

From Anguish to Hope . . . Looking at the Promises of Advent

Many of us come running into the holidays frazzled and worn. The idea of celebrating seems like one more thing to “do” rather than something in which to participate with joy and gratitude.

Have courage! The ancient prophesies of the scriptures speak to the fresh possibilities available in this season to the individual as well as to our world plagued by war, devastating diseases, and natural disasters.

The Center for Faith Development at RHCC invites you to come refresh and renew your spirit with an hour of Bible Study and Contemplative Prayer during the season of Advent. We will be looking at the prophesies of the Hebrew Scriptures in Jeremiah, Malachi, and Zephaniah as our texts.

**Tuesday, December 5, and Tuesday, December 12
7:30 to 8:30 p.m. in the Meeting Room**
Shannon White

Coming in January from the Center Friday, January 5: Family Movie Night

Walk the Line for older youth and adults; a children’s movie will be shown in another room so the whole family can come for the fun. Pizza and popcorn provided, of course!

Sunday, January 7: Forum on “Media and Values”
E.D. Hill

Wednesday, January 10: Interfaith Visit
Our Interfaith series takes us to a “Lunch and Learn” seminar at Temple Shalom; Rabbi Mitch Hurvitz will lead us in a discussion of the Jewish interpretation of the scriptures.

**Friday and Sunday, January 26 and 28
Thorne Lecture Series**



Corporate Ethics
with Sherron Watkins,
Enron whistle-blower

Winter Solstice: Thursday, December 21

Solstice means “the sun stands still.”

On Thursday, December 21, we will once again “light up the woods” in celebration of the Winter Solstice with an evening labyrinth walk. This will be our fourth year acknowledging this ancient holiday. Each year has been a little different. One year we saw owls swooping; we’ve had a full moon and no moon, much snow and no snow. This year we will be blessed with a new moon.

Some things are constant, like the sun’s return; we will have a fire in the fire pit; the labyrinth will be lit by candlelight; it will be cold; we will have hot cocoa; and it will feel like there is Peace on Earth.

Feel free to come by between 6:30 and 9:00 p.m. behind the Community House. Dress warmly and sturdy footwear is a must! Families and friends are welcome.

January Women’s Retreat – Save the Date



On January 24 and 25, you are invited to join a small group of Round Hill Community Church women at The Mercy Center in Madison, Connecticut, for “A Women’s Retreat.” This is an opportunity to take some time for yourself to reflect, relax, and have some fun! This is our fifth Women’s Retreat at The Mercy Center and each retreat is a treat! Space is limited and the cost is to be determined. Call the Church Office to reserve your spot. For questions and more information call Beth Wright at 622-6338.



WOMEN'S GATHERING

Save the date!

On Friday evening, January 19, we are excited to have Robin Browning speak to our group. We will gather for dinner in the Church Parlor and look forward to visiting with our friends after the rush of the holidays. Future gatherings will be a breakfast on March 4, a brunch on April 15 at Jo Ann Adams's house, and a dinner on May 11 at Carrie Finlayson's house.

On another note, I am happy to report that my co-chair, Dee Lewis, is on the mend. Recently, she felt well enough to help with cooking for the Christmas Fair, so the food is guaranteed to be even more fabulous!



Until the New Year, best wishes from the Women's Gathering for healthy and happy holidays.

– Carrie Finlayson

LES BEAUX ARTS GALLERY



One of our favorite artists, Anne Strasberg of New York City, is back with a very festive and exuberant exhibition of new paintings and angels. The show will open on December 2, just in time for the Christmas Fair, and on Sunday, December 3, the artist will be present during the fellowship hour. The exhibition will run through January 7, 2007.

Every Christmas season, Strasberg adorns the walls of our gallery with fantastic scenes of beautiful villages and squares, sailboats, and happy children playing. For a moment, the viewer can lose himself in a world of serenity and beatification.

– Mirella Hajjar

PLEASE FEEL WELCOME

The Church Sanctuary is open for prayer, meditation, and reading the Bible every weekday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. We encourage those who wish to use the Sanctuary for this purpose to do so, and to be encouraged in the disciplines of prayer, meditation, and scriptural reflection.



MEMBERSHIP

On Sunday, November 19, we welcomed four families as new members.



Clare and Frank DeNicola

Clare and Frank have two children, Jack in third grade and Olivia in first grade at Glenville School. They have lived in Greenwich for ten years, moving here from Rowayton after meeting and marrying in New York City. Frank is a general contractor and Clare has a technology business. They first became interested in our church after visiting the website.



Jennifer Gerber

Jennifer Gerber, her husband Ron, and their children Alexandra (Allie), Timothy, and Annabel have lived in Greenwich for four years. The children attend Stanwich School, where Allie is in fifth grade, Timothy is in second grade, and Annabel is in Pre-K. They enjoy being together as a family, hiking, and being active. Jennifer runs a family foundation focused on minority education in New York City. She, too, first came to know RHCC through our website.



Roberto and Elizabeth Fernandez

Elizabeth (Beth Barr) was raised in Greenwich while Roberto grew up in Argentina and moved here 16 years ago to play polo. Among other things, they share a love of horses. They have a daughter Sofia (Fifi) who is two-and-a-half and was baptized at RHCC in early November. Roberto also has two children who live in Argentina. He is a landscape designer and owns a landscape company. Beth is Assistant Head of the Lower School at Greenwich Academy. They came to our church through friendship with Jody Visage and Shannon White, who married them.



Robert Harmon

Rob and his wife Sue have lived in Greenwich for six years. They have a 19-year-old daughter named Dana, who is in college, and a son, Robert, who is in eighth grade. Robert is a member of our Confirmation class this year. Rob is a bridge player and a three-season outdoorsman (not a fan of winter). He operates an internet business. Rob was introduced to our church through his parents, Lyn and Bob Harmon.



CELL FACILITY UPDATE

Since the summer there have been a number of developments related to the proposed cell facility; I thought an update would be helpful to the congregation.

At a hearing on August 31, the Connecticut Siting Council determined that Verizon’s application to build a cell phone transmission facility on church-owned land in the woods behind the Community House should be considered at the same time as and in comparison with an application by Illinois-based ClearLinx, which proposed a competing facility – a distributed antenna system (“DAS”) – consisting of a series of short-range transmission devices along the Merritt Parkway (the administrative procedures for all this included a “denial without prejudice”). In early September the State Historic Preservation Office raised serious concerns about the ClearLinx proposal (the Merritt is listed on the National Register of Historic Places). In October ClearLinx withdrew its application to build a DAS facility.

On November 9, the Siting Council met in Greenwich. At this meeting, which focused principally on technical matters, many of those who testified, including representatives of ClearLinx, stated that although the now-withdrawn ClearLinx proposal would provide cell phone coverage on the Merritt, it would

provide no additional cell coverage in the Round Hill neighborhood outside of the Merritt right of way. At the end of the meeting the Siting Council determined that Verizon’s application to build a cell phone transmission facility on our property should proceed forward to a decision, without regard to any new application by ClearLinx.

My best guess is that it will not be until early 2007 that the Siting Council will announce its decision on the facility proposed for our land.

On November 14, the *Greenwich Time* ran an editorial entitled “It is time to settle cell tower disputes.” The editorial echoed what I have been hearing from our neighbors for more than three years; public safety is by far the most important concern for those of our neighbors who support the construction of a cell phone transmission facility on our church’s land.

Should anyone have any questions or comments about Verizon’s application before the Siting Council, or about any of the assertions in a letter that many in the church received a few weeks ago from neighbors who oppose the construction of the Verizon facility, please feel free to call me at my office at (212) 935-6748, or at my home, (203) 869-5543.

– Ken Bartels

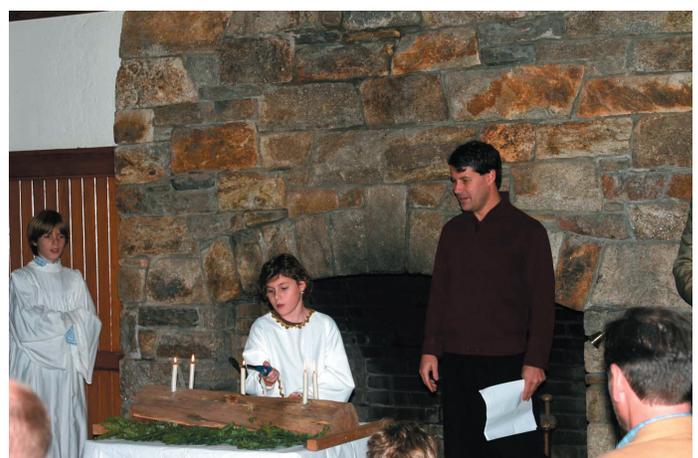
ADVENT WORKSHOP

At our annual Advent Workshop on November 26, families and friends gathered to create Advent wreaths and calendars, play “Bible Jeopardy” led by Shannon White, share a supper together, listen to stories of the season while “angels” lighted the candles of the

Yule log, sing carols, and witness the lighting of the RHCC Christmas tree. This traditional evening is one enjoyed by all who attend and is a highlight of the holiday season at RHCC.



Children and youth created Advent calendars



Angels lighted the Yule log candles



DECEMBER SERMONS AND SERVICES

- Sunday 3 Communion
Days of Promise, Shannon White
- Sunday 10 Annual Christmas Pageant
- Sunday 17 *Getting Ready for Christmas*,
Bob Culp
- Sunday 24 10:00 a.m. Service for families and
children of all ages
From a Shepherd's Viewpoint, First-
person narrative, Bob Culp
- 10:00 p.m. Traditional Candlelight
Service of Lessons and Carols
Special musical prelude at 9:30 p.m.

(Please note that there is no 4:00 p.m. service on Christmas Eve this year.)

- Sunday 31 *Growing in Wisdom and Living in
Possibility*, Ralph Ahlberg

CHAMBER PLAYERS

Holiday Special

The Chamber Players of the Greenwich Symphony return to RHCC for two concerts in the spring – March 4 and April 1, Sundays at 4:00 p.m. Between now and Christmas, the group is offering a holiday special – two tickets for \$35, which may be used at either concert.

In March, the program will include piano and wind and string instruments, performing works by Mozart, Khachaturian, and Mendelssohn. The April concert will feature the renowned harpist, Barbara Allen. A wine and cheese reception follows each concert and the musicians are present to visit with the audience and to answer questions.

For tickets or information, call Carrie Finlayson, Treasurer, at 869-4661.

The News Letter is edited by Nancy Mazzoli,
Claire McKean, Lawrence Sterne, and Lynda Treadwell

CHRISTMAS MUSIC AT RHCC

December 3 Communion Service 20th-Century Motets

Lo How a Rose, Distler
The Christ Child Lay, Joubert
What Sweeter Music, Finck
Before the Morning Star Begotten, Rorem
There Is No Rose, Joubert

December 10 Pageant Sunday

The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy, DeCormier
Noel We Sing, DeCormier

December 17 *Messiah* Excerpts, Handel

“Every Valley Shall Be Exalted”
“And the Glory of the Lord”
“For Behold Darkness Shall Cover the Earth”
“For Unto Us a Child Is Born”



December 24 10:00 a.m. Combined Youth and Adult Choirs

While by My Sheep, Jungst
Carol of the Bells, Leontovitch
Caroling, Burt

December 24 Christmas Eve Carols for Brass and Choir 9:30 p.m.

Canadian Brass Carols
Lo How a Rose
Hark the Herald
In Dulci Jubilo
Good King Wenceslas
Carol of the Bells
Gloria, Pinkham
O Magnum Mysterium, Poulenc

The News Letter

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December 2006

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December 2006 at Round Hill Community Church						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 6:00 - 9:00 p.m. Christmas on Round Hill Party Family Movie Night	2 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Christmas on Round Hill
3 First Sunday of Advent Communion	4 8:00 Trustees Mtg.	5 Bible Study and Comtemplative Prayer, 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.	6	7	8	9 Christmas Pageant rehearsal, 9-11
10 Christmas Pageant Holiday Concert; free concert in the Community House, 4:00 p.m.	11 News Letter submissions deadline	12 Bible Study and Comtemplative Prayer, 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.	13 Women's Bible Study group meeting	14	15	16
17 8:30 Men's Breakfast H.S. Discussion M.S. and H.S. Youth Group	18	19	20	21 Winter Solstice Labyrinth Walk 6:30-9:00 p.m.	22	23
24 Christmas Eve 10 a.m. Family Worship 10 p.m. Candlelight Service	25	26	27	28	29	30