



*Round Hill  
Community Church  
The News Letter*

*November 2004*

---

## PASTORAL MESSAGE

---

### Priorities in a Land of Plenty

In a recent issue of *The Christian Century*, which is by far one of the best religious periodicals being published today, Editor John Buchanan refers to “Rolling to Overcome Poverty,” which is an effort by the Call to Renewal Movement to persuade religious people to begin speaking about poverty in our country once again. Among its leaders traveling around the country in a big bus are James Forbes, Preaching Minister at Riverside Church in Manhattan, and Jim Wallis, Editor of *Sojourners Magazine* and Director of the Call to Renewal.

Their message is simply that while people of faith do not and will not agree on many matters, we should be able to agree that, according to the sacred texts of most faiths, God cares for the poor and expects people of faith to do the same. The movement is encouraging participants in rallies, churches, and local events to sign a “Covenant Against Poverty and for the Common Good,” which calls upon the newly-elected President to convene conferences and task forces to address the terrible blight of poverty within this wealthy and plentiful nation.

Buchanan notes that there are numerous divisive issues within religious communions today, such as abortion, stem cell research, same-sex marriage . . . which some religious leaders have termed “nonnegotiable issues.” Lamenting such rigid postures, Buchanan writes, “I look for signs of humility, the recognition that the language and attitude of absolute moral certainty have produced some less than attractive moments in our history.”

Of greater importance, though, is the need for religious people to affirm once again that poverty is a biblical priority and is a matter of utmost importance. Wallis urges us to read the Bible again and to discover that one out of sixteen verses in the Bible is about poverty, as is one out of nine verses in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Rather memorably, Forbes says that according to Matthew 25, “nobody gets to heaven without a letter of reference from the poor.”

*continued on page 8*

---

## NEIGHBOR TO NEIGHBOR

---



One out of four working families in America have trouble making ends meet. This is a statistic easy to question, but a low minimum wage and the lack of affordable housing make it true. The congregation’s ongoing commitment to the efforts of the local agency, Neighbor to Neighbor, makes a real difference to many in the greater Greenwich area. Neighbor to Neighbor provides food to more than 200 Greenwich households a week. This computes to over 14,000 meals a month. Children represent over 49% of the people served. Eligible clients have more than doubled in the past three years and it looks as if the future holds more of the same.





## RHCC YOUTH

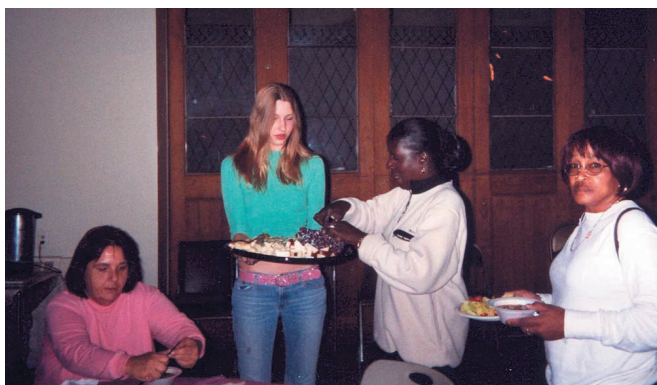
The outreach focus for the Sunday School children and youth in November will be on sending care packages to those soldiers in Afghanistan who don't receive much mail and who need cheer brought to them during the holidays! So please have your family bring the following items to the church: letters (include jokes and other humor and/or drawings), microwave popcorn, Ramen soup, chips, cookies, small boxes of cereal, hard candy, cocoa mixes, instant coffees, instant cold drink mixes, card games, DVDs, phone cards, strings of small Christmas lights, tiny Christmas trees, and decorations.

The Christian Education Committee will meet on Sunday, November 14, at 11:15 in the fourth/fifth grade classroom. All church school parents are invited to attend and hear about the additions to our curriculum and plans for this year, and to make suggestions for the Christian Education of your family.

*Annette Grueterich*

### Youth Groups

I want to thank everyone who participated on Sunday, October 15, in preparing food for the St. Luke's Life-Works shelters. We had a total of 14 people from both of the Youth Groups. The Middle Youths chopped all the food that went into making the stew the Upper Youths



made. They also made brownies and cookies. The cooks were: Elizabeth Green, Casey Minella, Matthew Minella, Jonathan Duennebier, Leah Pratt, Laura Huley, Michael Minella, Alex George, Katie Duennebier, Jamey George, Eli Running, Courtney Ziluca, Mason Ziluca, and Merritt Piro.

The following evening, Laura Huley, Max Wright, and Perry and Matthew Minella joined me and Sandy Motland at the St. Luke's Soup kitchen to serve the stew, bread, salad, and dessert. Every one was pleased to see the smiles on the faces of the approximately 30 to 40 recipients. The stew was really good. Fortunately there was a lot left over and each of us enjoyed a bowl. The entire project of cooking and serving the meal was such a success that we plan to do it again in the spring and give the shelters a BBQ.



Next month we meet on November 14, and the Middle Youths will put together boxes for our soldiers abroad while the Upper Youths will walk the labyrinth with the Youths from St. Pauls. Both groups will make a list of all the items needed to send in the soldiers' boxes and the whole congregation will be asked to participate in gathering what is needed.

*Diane Davol*

### Youth Mission Trip 2005

Preparations and plans are underway for the 2005 Youth Mission Trip. To find out more about it, all youth currently in eighth grade and above are invited to attend the informational meeting on Sunday, November 21, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. in the Community House. Hear about the past Mission Trips and learn what Mission is all about. Applications for the 2005 trip will be given out at that meeting. Our participation numbers are limited this year, so applicants will need to be present to find out how they can earn the privilege of attending this wonderful trip!



---

## STEWARDSHIP

---



With the golden leaves of fall swirling in the air and our Harvest Supper a warm and pleasant memory, we are again at the Stewardship season, the time when our Church asks each member for a pledge of financial support for the coming year.

In order for our Church to continue to flourish now and in the coming year, it needs our support in every way we can offer. Like the Pilgrim forefathers we remember in this season, we are an independent religious group, solely responsible for the continued existence, the vitality and the financial well-being of this Church. They had no ship coming from England or Holland with blankets and food for the winter months, we have no national denomination to step in and help if we fall short.

The programs of the Church, the care for our Church home and Community House, the service of our clergy and staff, and all our plans for the coming year depend on you and me. While expenses have been kept to a strict minimum, the price of heat and other items have

necessitated an increase in this year's budget of 5%, bringing our Stewardship goal to \$463,000. With a total of 150 pledges last year, we believe we have the will and the spirit in our Church community to meet this year's goal.

As we think about plans for the future year, we should also count the many blessings we share in our Church: inspiring sermons; our growing youth education program; music from great masters to jazz and spirituals; a stimulating forum series; Bible studies; fellowship groups; and, of course, "the best Christmas pageant ever." We are a lively community.

We are also a resource for our larger community; many groups all meet here because of our facilities. The congregation reaches into the community through a new website, programs with St. Luke's Lifeworks and Neighbor to Neighbor, a growing ministry of pastoral visits to meet the needs of Church members, and a benevolence program, which each year visits the 22 different organizations that we support. There are many blessings here and, at the heart of all these activities, is the connection to God's love that each of us experiences in our Church.

As you consider your pledge, all of us on the Stewardship Committee hope you will think about all the programs and works of the Church and also consider what this Church means to you personally; perhaps as a place of solace, a warm community of friends, a place to reach out to help neighbors, a path to seek God's guidance in your life . . . and that your heart will lead you toward great generosity. Thank you.

*Leslie S. Lee  
Chair, Stewardship Committee*

---

## FLOWERS

---

Fall is definitely here with all its splendor and ceremony. Flower arrangers are very much needed to grace our church and coffee hour table with their special touch. The month of November is entirely open! Talk to Heather Sandifer (661-3227) or sign up in the Parlor.

*Heather Sandifer*

---

## MEMBERSHIP

---

We will be receiving new members on November 21. Anyone interested in joining should talk to Bob Culp or Edie Wilson.

*Edie Wilson*





---

## FELLOWSHIP AND EDUCATION

---

### NEW DINNER DISCUSSION GROUPS

Many have shown interest in taking part in a discussion group led by Anita Keire that will focus on Bart D. Ehrman's *Lost Christianities*, *The Battles for Scripture and the Faiths We Never Knew*, Elaine Pagel's *Gnostic Gospels*, and dominant theological positions through the ages. The recent writings of the Jesus Seminar and Bishop John Shelby Spong will also be explored.

Because everybody's calendars are full before the holidays, this discussion group will start in January. Please plan to meet with Anita Keire on December 5 after church at 11:30 a.m. to discuss any questions you may have in addition to dates, time, and places for our gatherings. All interested members and friends are invited to attend this meeting.

Other dinner discussion groups will be formed around topics of interest. This time to gather with other members of Round Hill Community Church had rave reviews last spring! If you did not sign up to participate in one of these fun groups this fall, and are interested in participating in the next set of gatherings, let Carmel know.

### ROUND HILL FORUMS

#### "Winter Spirituality,"

#### Midweek Midwinter Women's Retreat

A retreat in the Seascapes House at the Mercy Center in Madison, CT, has been planned and there is room for you. This retreat runs from 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, January 26 to 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 27. We will focus on "Winter Spirituality" and include the writings of Medieval Mystics, chant, yoga and meditation classes, and massage, as well as wonderful fellowship, times for reflection, great food, and beautiful surroundings! The "Daughters of Sophia: the Bible and Beyond," our weekly women's Bible study group, is sponsoring this event. Spaces are limited, so let Carmel know of your interest soon.

### ADVENT WORKSHOP

Join in the fun at this year's Advent Workshop from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, November 28. Advent wreath making will begin the festivities, followed by the making of this year's Angel Tree angels by the children, and a discussion of the Advent theme with wine and hors d'oeuvres for the adults. All will gather together for story, caroling, and the Yule Log ritual that culminates with the lighting of the trees outside the Community House as we all sing "O, Christmas Tree." Once again, the youth will sponsor a baked potato supper to raise money for the 2005 Youth Mission Trip. Let the office know that you plan to attend so a potato can be baked for you!

Carmel Tinnes

---

## HARVEST SUPPER

---



On Wednesday evening, October 27, 170 people came together to celebrate the meaning of community and the endurance of a tradition. The Community House was filled with pumpkins, good food, and good friends. Then towards the end of the evening it was filled with the music of the Notetakers, a barbershop quartet. Lyn Kaufman, longtime member of the church and its choir, led the group in some wonderful singing. Eventually everyone got to sing along too. The *Greenwich Time* covered the event twice; once before it took place and then the day after. This probably reflects the feeling that many find the idea of an evening like our Harvest Supper special, a symbol of a time when life was not so rushed. It seems that even though our Harvest Supper has had to change, we have been able to hold onto its essence.

---

## WOMEN'S GATHERING

---

Emily Toohey organized a delicious, cozy brunch in the Parlor this past Sunday on Halloween. Beginning with a piece danced by her five students – Sarah Carter, Lianna Lipton, Eli Running, Hannah Smith, and Olivia Wheat – Felicity Foote shared her visions and memories. Those of us watching were spellbound by the story of a young Felicity searching for light through faith during the darkness of WWII. Felicity was struck by the remarkable performance Eli gave of the young Felicity.

Pat Kemp was approached recently by a member of the Fairfield County Community Foundation's Fund for Women and Girls who graciously acknowledged the Fund's appreciation for the generous donation made by the Women's Gathering this past year. The significance of our contribution seems particularly meaningful during this season of giving thanks.

Our next gathering of women will be on January 21, 2005, at the home of Carrie Finlayson when we will be honored by Wilma Jordan-Green who has agreed to share with us. Until then, throughout the coming joyous seasons, may we all continue to believe.

Anne Alexander and Julia Boysen



## RHCC GALLERY



Mirella Hajjar has been the curator of the gallery space in the church for a number of years. In fact, we have come to take for granted that we are able to see many interesting paintings, drawings, prints, and photographs on our walls. This photograph is of a watercolor done by the artist Hazel Jarvis, whose work was recently hung in the gallery. Mirella likes to have new work up each month and would greatly appreciate hearing from anyone with ideas for new artists. Mirella is a photographer, Professor of Art History, and Director of the gallery at Manhattanville College, and has had many years of experience to share with us.

## MUSIC NOTES

### Thanksgiving

Bob Culp and Chris Kabala are working on a special Thanksgiving service. It will be a celebration of American music and range from early to contemporary American music. The service will range from choral pieces to reflections on the text of the music. There will be a special prelude starting at 9:45 on Sunday, November 21.

### Senior Choir

December 5 is the date for our Annual Messiah Sunday. Choristers from the congregation and the community are welcome to join with the choir to sing "And the Glory of the Lord," "His Yoke Is Easy, and His Burden Is Light," and "Glory to God in the Highest." All interested should attend the Thursday night rehearsal on December 2 at 8:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. The Sunday service will start with a Prelude at 9:45 a.m. Messiah Arias will be performed.

### Youth Choir

On November 7 the Youth Choir will perform Mozart's *Dona Nobis* and join with the Senior Choir to sing *Let Me Fly*.



## Rudolph's Workshop

at

Round Hill Community House

Saturday, December 4

9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Live Reindeer  
Train Ride  
Children's Activities

Photos with Santa  
Fabulous Boutique Shopping  
Treasure Trove

Reindeer Café

Proceeds benefit  
Round Hill Community House, Child Guidance Center of Greenwich,  
Edna Adan Hospital, and Waterside School

November 2004

*The News Letter*  
Round Hill Community Church  
395 Round Hill Road  
Greenwich, Connecticut 06831

## PASTORAL MESSAGE

*continued from page 1*

Do you know that in our wonderful country there are 36 million people who are poor . . . 45 million who are without health insurance . . . 25.5 million who are hungry? That there are 7,500 homeless children in Chicago and that the average age of a homeless person in Chicago is nine? Perhaps, as religious people, we should make poverty the nonnegotiable issue for us, and make the lives of hungry, homeless children without health-care the moral issue that "outweighs every other issue."

As we embrace the high challenges of Stewardship 2005, and faithfully consider increasing our financial commitment to Round Hill Community Church for the coming year, and as we begin preparations for the Thanksgiving season and the gatherings and travels it may entail, may we do so in the keen recognition of the many blessings we have received, as well as the challenging opportunities that are ours to give generously of ourselves and thereby become God's co-workers in this time and place . . . religious people whose priorities reflect our Lord's compassion and sense of justice.

*Bob Culp*

## NOVEMBER SERVICES AND SERMONS

- Nov. 7 Peter Cobb Preaching  
*And Let Our Ordered Lives Confess  
the Beauty of Thy Peace*  
Nov. 14 *The Importance of Place*  
(Luke 19:31-44)  
Nov. 21 *The Art of Numbering Our Days*  
(Psalm 90)  
Nov. 28 O Antiphons – A Special Communion  
and Prayer Service  
Advent's First Sunday

## IMPORTANT DATES

- Nov. 4 Sophia's Daughters Bible Study  
Nov. 11 Sophia's Daughters Bible Study  
Nov. 18 Sophia's Daughters Bible Study  
Nov. 21 An American Celebration in Music  
and Word  
New Member Sunday  
Nov. 25 Thanksgiving – Office Closed  
Nov. 28 First Sunday in Advent  
Communion