

Cross Ways

The Newsletter of
The Congregational Church of Brookfield
160 Whisconier Road,
Brookfield, CT 06804
(203) 775-1259

December 2014



Candlelight Christmas Eve Wednesday, December 24, 2014

- 5:00pm** Join us for Family Christmas Eve worship in the Meetinghouse, with special music from the Cherub and Alleluia Choirs, a story for children from Rev. Jennifer Whipple, and our traditional Christmas Eve carols and candle-lighting. *(Nursery is open at this service only, but children of all ages are always welcome in worship.)*
- 8:30pm** All are welcome to this candlelight Christmas Eve communion service in the Meetinghouse, with special music from the Still River Ramblers, in the bluegrass tradition. Rev. Bryn Smallwood-Garcia preaches on the Good News of the birth of Jesus .
- 11:00pm** Sing carols and enjoy special music from our Adult Choir. Rev. Bryn Smallwood-Garcia preaches on the Good News of the birth of Jesus. Communion is served by candlelight, as we depart into the magical darkness of Christmas midnight .

Church Council Meeting November 11, 2014

To keep you better informed, this is a brief summary of our monthly Church Council Meeting,

As promised last month, the Planning Task Force delivered Listening Session feedback relevant to each committee rep on Council (except Stewardship). Committee reps will bring discussion of the material to their next committee meeting. Designated PTF reps will also attend to assist in those discussions.

Moderator: Nancy brought a proposal from Deacons to send Bryn to Stephen Ministry Leadership Training Course in January 2015, using continuing education funds. Council approved by consensus.

Nancy advised Council that the 2015 CT Conference Annual Meeting will be the 2nd-to-last Saturday (4th Saturday) in October, not the 3rd weekend as she was led to believe. In light of the new information, Council voted to return the date of the Yankee Fair to the originally scheduled date, October 17, 2015.

Vice Moderator: Dave encouraged everyone to attend the CT Conference annual meeting next year. Our proposed CCB budget for fiscal year 2015-16 will be discussed at the next Council meeting. Council approved a call to a Congregational Meeting on January 11, 2015 to vote on that preliminary budget.

Treasurer: Income is about \$21,000 behind budget, which is 92% of year-to-date, compared to 97% at the end of October in 2013 and 2012. Stewardship will send a letter of concern targeted to givers who have fallen more than 50% behind, with pastoral help to discern those who might have special needs.

Investment Treasurer: Market value of endowment funds was down at the end of the third quarter.

Welcome: The committee is expanding their advertising beyond newspapers to smaller media like the Brookfield Playhouse playbill and the Association of Religious Communities fundraiser program. Congregation members are invited to make suggestions of other such venues to help get our message out.

Worship: 4 usher training sessions are set for December & January. Pew cushion cleaning is Nov. 15.

Church House: Facilities Use Committee voted a small increase in user fees and is making sure all users have their own liability insurance. The Solar contract is OK, and construction is to begin soon.

Fellowship: Pasta and Pumpkins night was a big success. Thank you to Larry Ruschmeyer for donating and installing the granite handicapped parking marker at Memorial Garden. The Brookfield HS Special Chorus will perform Dec. 8 at 7 pm at CCB and Tuesday the 9th at Serendippers.

Church in Society: The first event in CIS's mental health education series will be hosted by CIS and Stephen Ministers on Nov. 16 at 5:00 pm. There will be a pizza dinner and age-appropriate programs for all: "It's Kind of a Funny Story," a PG-13 Movie for 8th graders and older, and a K – 7th grade programs and nursery care. Giving Tree goes up Nov. 22, with additional giving opportunities to follow.

Stewardship, Nominating, & Deacons: no report

Pastor Jennifer: Youth programs benefited a great deal from Empower ziplining, and they are grateful for CG&E funds that made the trip possible. Jen and Church School Coordinator Barbara Crandell are writing a curriculum for Advent. Barbara has pulled together an excellent children's program, teaching them about mental health at their level, during the CIS/Stephen Ministry adult education movie night.

Pastor Bryn: Five new members joined Nov. 9, all of whom have been regular attendees for some time: Daryle Brown, Stewart Bussell, Jane Prisco, Joe Rocky, and Steve Waschak, who will also be joining the Worship Committee.

Church Council Meetings are open to all and are scheduled for the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00pm in Brooks Hall. If you would like to have something put on the agenda for a Church Council meeting please contact Nancy Vodra, Moderator or Dave Goral, Vice Moderator.



**Brookfield High School Special Chorus Concert –
Monday, Dec. 8^h at 7:00pm – CCB Meetinghouse**

Our annual visit from the Brookfield High School Special Chorus, led by Mr. John LaMendola, is always a wonderful way to start the Holiday season. All are welcome to attend. The Fellowship Committee is looking for bakers willing to help provide cookies for a reception in Brooks Hall after the concert. If you can help, please drop your cookies off in the upstairs kitchen on **Sunday morning, December 7th**.
Thank you.



Join Us for our Annual “Instant” Christmas Pageant

Our Instant Christmas Pageant will be held this year on
December 14^h during the 10:30am service.

All children are welcome to participate and we ask that they **arrive between at 10:15am** for wardrobe selection.

After the pageant please join us down in Fellowship Hall for a special coffee hour with bagels, fruit and Christmas cookies sponsored by the Fellowship and Christian Education committees.



The early service on December 14th will be in our usual 8:30am format, with a traditional sermon from the Rev. Jennifer Whipple and communion worship.

Share the Warmth of the Season



The Salvation Army kettle is coming on **December 14th**. Please share your donation on your way out of Brooks Hall, after worship. All proceeds from the Salvation Army Kettle stay in our local area – recipients include Brookfield Social Services Emergency Fuel Fund and the Salvation Army Emergency Fund. Your giving may make the difference, providing food, clothing or warmth to a family in need this winter. Please give generously.

On November 9, 2014, we were pleased to welcome these 5 new members. Please introduce yourself and get to know these latest additions to our church family.

Daryle Brown: Daryle was born in Pennsylvania and moved to Ohio when she was 6 years old. She completed her undergraduate degree (a BS in nursing) at Kent State University and her graduate degrees (M.A., M.Ed., Ed.D.) at Teachers College Columbia University in New York City. Daryle has taught nursing for more than 35 years and is currently teaching at Western Connecticut University in Danbury where she lives. Daryle was “born” into the Church of the Brethren (PA) but baptized Methodist (OH). Since moving to Danbury in 1978 she attended the First Congregational Church in Danbury, where both of her children, Alison and Kimberly, were baptized and confirmed. She first began attending CCB a number of years ago at the urging of one of her daughters and once she attended she was enthralled by this church. She always feels welcomed and at peace each time she enters the doors. Daryle feels both Pastors Bryn and Jennifer are wonderful ministers, and the congregation...well, what can she say? She continues to attend CCB for the very same reasons she first attended. Daryle says she has 3 hobbies...Alexa, Stephanie and Jordan, her grandchildren who also attend CCB when they are not on a soccer or baseball field or cheering for the Brookfield Bobcats! She loves to read and honestly does not go far without a book nearby. Daryle is both excited and honored to become a member of CCB.

Stuart Bussell: Stuart and his wife Arlen, and two children, Eric and Juliette, have been regular visitors at CCB for years. Stuart is a local physician, a specialist in colon and rectal surgery at Danbury Hospital. Eric sings in the Youth Choir, after years of singing in the Alleluia Choir

Jane Prisco: Jane lives in Candlewood Shores in Brookfield with her husband John and their 3 sons Andrew, Joseph, and Dominic. She works as a paraprofessional at Center School. Jane was raised and confirmed in the Episcopal Church. She loves spending time with her family and working with children and enjoys reading. When she and John first moved to Brookfield with their family Jane had heard from several people that CCB was a friendly and welcoming church with good Sunday School and youth programs. She has stayed because she felt at home here from her first visit and her children love it here.

Joseph Rocky: Joe lives in Brookfield with his wife Tina. He was raised Roman Catholic, and attended Catholic school for 12 years. Joe works for Coldwell Banker in Danbury. In his spare time Joe enjoys bridge, baseball, scrabble and spending time with his family. Joe started attending CCB because his family attended because of the children’s programs. He stays because he enjoys men’s fellowship.

Steve Waschak: Steve lives in Brookfield with his wife Sue and commutes to Waterbury for work. He grew up Catholic and earned a B.S. from the University of Connecticut. Steve loves gardening and being outdoors, volunteer work and rebuilding together. He first started attending CCB when he was first married Sue because she was a member here. Steve continued to attend because he finds CCB to be the warmest and most comfortable church in this area.



Advent Wreath Workshop—Sunday, November 30th!
After both the 8:30am and the 10:30am services
in Fellowship Hall

Come one, come all to this intergenerational opportunity **Sunday, November 30th**, after both services. A \$5 Donation is appreciated for wreaths. (If you still have decorations from last year, please bring them with you to swap or reuse.)

WOMEN'S MISSION TRIP!!

Calling all women who can give 2 days of their busy lives to help someone less fortunate (and enjoy the company of other wonderful women).



We will travel to Providence, Rhode Island to volunteer at the Providence Rescue Mission on Saturday and then volunteer at Irons Homestead, the Rhode Island UCC camp, on Sunday. Volunteer opportunities are available for everyone.

- Friday, January 16th evening departure, Sunday evening return (MLK weekend)
- Stay at Irons Homestead with real beds, bathrooms, heat, etc.
- Dietary issues easily accommodated
- Cost anticipated to be about \$30, with scholarships available
- One fundraiser—making pies before Thanksgiving

Please contact Marianne Gaffey or Pastor Jen with any questions or to let us know that you would like to attend.

A NEW Support Group is coming to Brookfield!

For those Caregivers, Family Members and Friends who know someone who is affected by Alzheimer's Disease or Dementia. This ongoing support group, led by an Alzheimer's Association Group Facilitator, will meet in a safe and caring environment, the second Wednesday of every month from December 2014 – December 2015. You are welcome to join discussions Wednesday evenings from 6:30 to 8:00pm, at the Brookfield Senior Center, 100 Pocono Road. For exact meeting dates and more information please contact Darlene Lobraico.

Celebrating Christmas with Church in Society (CIS)

As with any request made at the Congregational Church of Brookfield, we hope you prayerfully consider which, if any, contribution you can make at this very busy time of the year!



We are continuing this year with our **Giving Tree**. How does this work? We receive gift requests from both Brookfield Social Services (approx. 3 families) and Interfaith AIDS (approx. 3 families). Adults are allowed one gift, children two gifts; gift costs are not to exceed \$30. CIS writes these requests on special shaped tags (each shape is for each family) and places these gift tags on the large Christmas tree in Brooks Hall by November 23rd – just in time to do your shopping on Black Friday! You and/or your family can choose a tag off the tree, purchase that gift and return it to Brooks Hall by Sunday, **December 14th** – in time for CIS to deliver the presents to these social agencies.

Also on the Giving Tree will be tags for a ministry we joined last season, **Baby Bundles**. This ministry was started many years ago to help new moms with items such as diapers and diaper wipes; items that cannot be purchased with food stamps. We also include requests for gift cards for gas/groceries/Target, etc, which are used at the discretion of the Pastors for those in need.

Another wonderful moment is when Margitta Savo shares her blanket story for the **Church World Service Blanket Fund**. If you would like to made a donation to this worthy cause, we invite you to write a Christmas card to all your CCB friends, mail the card and donation to the church office or place it in the collection plate, and your Christmas card will be placed on the Card Tree in Brooks Hall.



We are also looking forward to the annual return of the **Salvation Army Kettle** on **December 14th**. All monies collected will be distributed in our area.

Lastly, please look for **the Alternative Gifts Fair on December 6th and 7th**. This opportunity to purchase items, or make donations to many worthy causes, will be run by our very own Confirmands, Loren Wurst and Amanda Bray.

CIS would like to wish you and yours a wonderful holiday season, and thank you for your outpouring of generosity to those less fortunate.



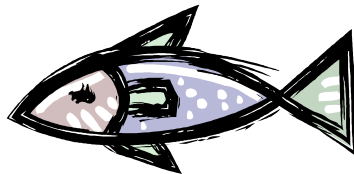
**Christmas Serendippers Gathering
Tuesday, December 9th at 11:45am**

Please join us for a special holiday concert as we welcome
the Brookfield High School Special Chorus - Small Group,
led by Mr. John LaMendola

Our menu:

Egg Nog
Ham with Pineapple
Dutchess Potatoes
Squash Casserole
Rolls
Cookies

Please contact Eleanor Loesch or additional information
OR you can contact the Church Office 203-775-1259
Hope to see you all there!



LOOKING TO VOLUNTEER IN BROOKFIELD?

“Neighbors helping neighbors” best describes those who drive for Brookfield FISH (Friends in Service Here). Ambulatory disabled and/or senior residents who need rides to medically related appointments, Monday-Friday from 9AM-2PM, are matched with volunteers willing to drive. Volunteer as little or as much as you can.

We accommodate your schedule.

Get involved and make a difference!

For additional information contact Carol Howe.

Christmas Flowers

Help us beautify the Meetinghouse with poinsettias & greens as we celebrate the Glory of Christ's birth. Just complete this form and return it with your donation in the offering plate, or mail it to the church office by **December 14th**. Please write on your check that it's for **Christmas Flowers**. *Checks can be made payable to CCB.*



If you have any questions, please call either Barb Sikorski (203-775-8885) or Nancy Smith (203-775-3900). *Note: Any donations that exceed our cost for Christmas decorations will remain in the designated flower fund until needed.*

- Please use my donation to provide a poinsettia to a shut-in.
- I would like to take a poinsettia home after the **December 24th** service.

Your Name _____

Amount of Donation _____

Given in Memory or Honor of _____
(circle one)



Angels for Anthems

One of the highlights of the Christmas season is the wonderful Christmas music. The Music Committee is giving you the opportunity to be an "Angel for Anthems" by making a donation to help support the cost of purchasing extra music for the holiday.

To make a contribution in memory, or in honor of someone special, especially someone who really loved or loves holiday music, complete this form and place it in the collection plate, or mail it to the church office along with your check on or before **December 14th**. Please write on your check that it's for **Angels For Anthems**. *Note: Any donations that exceed our cost for Christmas music will remain in the designated music fund until needed. Checks can be made payable to CCB.*

Your Name _____

Amount of Donation _____

Given in Memory **OR** Honor of _____
(circle one)

Alternative Gifts Fair

Congregational Church of Brookfield is hosting its 4th Annual Fair

*Saturday, December 6th from 10:00am - 1:00pm
and Sunday, December 7th from 9:00am-12:30pm.*

This fair presents a great opportunity to give a meaningful gift to "someone who has everything." You can donate money to local, national, and international organizations in someone else's name (or do it for yourself!), then present that person with a card stating your donation on their behalf. Last year happy shoppers bought over \$2,000 of "alternative" gifts that benefited organizations that included the ***Handy Dandy Handy Man, IRIS, SERRV, Heifer Project, Simply Smiles*** and others. These alternative donations are thoughtful ways to bring cheer to others this holiday season!

This year the fair will be organized by Loren and Amanda for their confirmation project. There will also be baked goods you can purchase at the fair.

Proceeds will be distributed to all of the organizations represented.



See you at the Fair!

Calling All Ushers!! (*and those who would like to help out and be an usher...*)

Please mark these Sunday dates on your calendars... **December 14 & 21** and **January 18 & 25**. On these dates, for a short time during "coffee hour" after the 10:30 service, we will meet in the Creation Station room near Fellowship Hall to talk about the strategy of ushering and learn "several things you never knew" about this important function of our church services. I guarantee that if you attend one or all of these sessions, you will make a better usher and be more comfortable with "herding the flock", so to speak. So... please join us!

Thank you

Bob Brown and Patty Moran

For the Usher Team





Update Solar System

By the time you read this in December the solar system on the Sunday school building should be either under test or in full operation. The system was installed the week of November 17th. Writing in advance to get into CrossWays I expect things to go smoothly but you can never tell. I am sure I will have a final report by January's CrossWays.

Ken Arifian
Church House Chair

Church House Work Order

Church House is responding to inquiries as to the procedure to report or request any sort of facility issue or need. Two plastic file holders that contain "Work Order" request forms have been installed for anyone to report an issue or ask for some facility modification or repair. One file holder is located to the right of the office door and the other is in Fellowship Hall to the left of the kitchen pass through. Completed forms should be given to Jeannine in the office or deposited in the office mail slot. Passing everything through the Church office will insure to request gets route to the appropriate party. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.



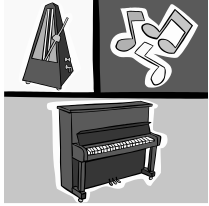
Ken Arifian
Church House Chair



When The Joy Of The Season Is Missing...

**Healing Prayer Service
Sunday December 28th ~ 8:30am**

For some, the holidays can be a tough time. But Christ need not be lost in pain, sorrow or suffering. Join us for a service designed to acknowledge and comfort those who struggle during this time of year.



Notes from the Choir Room

Psalm 71:23 My lips will shout for joy, when I sing praises to you; my soul also, which you have redeemed.

As we head toward Christmas, songs begin to fill the air and our hearts. Singing is such a powerful way for us to connect with the meaning of the Christmas story. Songs bring back memories of Christmas' past and give us hope for the future. They are a source of light shining into the darkness.

Light has been our theme this fall and it continues into the Christmas season. On December 7th, the entire community of Brookfield comes together to bask in the warmth of Christmas songs sung by the combined choirs of all the churches in town. Then on December 14th, we have our instant Christmas pageant. That day, the Cherub and Alleluia Choirs will be singing about lighting the Advent candles in preparation for the child of hope, of peace, of love, and of joy. On December 21st the Adult Choir, in combination with two of our children's choirs, will present the Christmas Cantata "*By Heaven's Light*" written by Tom Long and Allen Pote. And of course we end Advent Season on Christmas Eve with the beautiful light of candles filling up the meeting house as we sing "Silent Night."

Music for Advent

November 30 – Adult Choir sings "Lost in the Night" by Haugen

December 7 – Adult and Youth Choirs sing the rousing gospel song, "Jesus, What a Wonderful Child" at 10:30.

2:00pm - Brookfield Ecumenical Christmas Concert - St. Joseph Church

December 14 – Music by the Joy Ringers (our new intergenerational beginner choir) Cherub and Alleluia Choirs sing "Prepare the Way of the Lord"

December 21 – Christmas Cantata "*By Heaven's Light*" by Long and Pote

Christmas Eve

December 24 – 5:00pm -The Cherub and Alleluia Choirs sing the German Carol, "Kling, Glöcken"

8:30pm – Music in the Bluegrass style by the Still River Ramblers

11:00pm – Music by the Adult Choir

Fellowship Of Concern



CONTINUING CONCERNS:

Judith Fisher
Evelyn Gerowe
Anne Hardin
Ruthie Maxim
Joe Rocky
Carlo Santi
Shirley Stoppel

IN MEMORIAM: Our sympathy is extended to:

- The family and friends of Jeanette Sivo, who passed away on November 8th.

CrossWays Deadline

The deadline for the January 2015 issue of CrossWays is **December 15th**. You can e-mail articles to Jeannine McCullough at office@uccb.org or leave them in the CrossWays mailbox outside of the church office. Please e-mail or call Jeannine McCullough, Office Manager at 203-775-1259 if you have any questions.

Note: Because of the short holiday week the presses will run on this CrossWays very soon after Dec. 15th, so be sure to submit your article(s) by the deadline.



Church School in December:

Our church school program has been in full swing, and our children and parents have been getting to know Mrs. Crandell, our new Church School Coordinator. We have been studying some of the important figures in the Old Testament (and Jesus' lineage) this fall, and this Advent Season we will join with our church family in waiting for the light and figuring out ways that we can let our light shine into the world. We have some FUN service projects and events coming up this Advent Season, and we hope all of our children will join us in our Advent journey with Mary & Joseph as we await the birth of Jesus. See our schedule of events below.

Sunday, November 30th – One Room Schoolhouse at both services to create Advent/Christmas cards for our homebound church members. After a busy holiday weekend this is a great way for our children to reach out and spread some seasonal cheer to those we don't get to see regularly in church.

Sunday, December 7th – Door Decorating Time!

After we hear a bit more about the Advent Season and story each class will have an opportunity to decorate their classroom doors based on our theme, "How do we shine our light to the world?" Get ready to see our church school wing transform for the Advent and Christmas season!

Sunday, December 14th – Instant Christmas Pageant

Children are invited to join the CE Committee in the youth room after 10:15am to grab a costume and get ready for our Instant Christmas Pageant at our 10:30 service. We will have an Advent lesson for our 8:30 children.

Sunday, December 21st – Christmas Cantata & Advent Lesson

Our 8:30 children and children in grades pre-k thru 2 at our 10:30 service will have a chance to prepare a bit more for the arrival of the baby Jesus with an Advent lesson. Our 3rd-8th graders are invited to remain in church during the 10:30 service to enjoy our special worship service that day and to cheer on their classmates who sing in the choirs.

Sunday, December 28th – Special Christmas Season Worship

Healing Prayer Service at 8:30 (Nursery Care only)

"There's A Baby in My Breakfast!" at 10:30 All children are invited to remain in 10:30 worship this Sunday to enjoy (or participate in!) a special Christmas puppet show with Pastor Bryn.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please be in touch with our Church School Coordinator, Barbara Crandell, at Barbara@uccb.org.

Youth Fellowship in December

It has been a good fall with our youth fellowship groups. We have had fun getting to know one another better using music and playdough. We have had a chance to zip through trees and build up our community. We have had a chance to serve the community and our college students with some great projects and care packages.

Now we look toward the winter and opportunities to work together, to serve others, and to have a LOT of fun. We invite any youth in grades 6-8 to join us for Junior Youth Fellowship (JYF), and youth in grades 9-12 to join us for Senior Youth Fellowship (SYF). Our upcoming December calendar will be posted on our website and by the youth room. We will also email reminders. Please be sure that Pastor Jen has an email address that is best used to contact you and your parents.

We look forward to spending time with you this winter and beyond!

JYF Advisors: Miss Jen Wurst, Miss Laurie Matson, and Pastor Jen

SYF Advisors: Dan McKee, Robin Murphy, and Pastor Jen



Confirmation Class in December:

Confirmands will meet on **Sunday, December 14th** from 12-2pm in the Parsonage to learn about the Bible. Get ready to learn and play some Bible Jeopardy. Who will win?

SAVE THE DATE: Sunday, December 14th

Join us in the early evening for an All-Church **Christmas Scavenger Hunt** and **Caroling** opportunity (followed by food of course!). This event will be sponsored by our Senior Youth Fellowship Group, and ALL ages are invited and encouraged to join us. More details about timing, things to bring, and more will be in Sunday bulletins and posted to our website at www.uccb.org.

We hope you will join us for this evening of FUN and a chance to spread some holiday cheer to some of our church family members!

*"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined."* (Isaiah 9:2)

Waiting for the Light...

As all the bright Christmas lights go up in our neighborhoods and garish displays adorn malls and shopping centers everywhere we go, our ***"Waiting for the Light..."*** worship theme for Advent 2014 may seem more like an ironic joke than reality to you. In December, I expect most people are more troubled by too much glaring brightness than too much darkness, too much noise and not too much silence.

And yet, it is in the "bleak midwinter" that our national suicide rates rise markedly, that people who have experienced loss or who are suffering from depression may feel the most alone. In spite of, or perhaps because of, the incessant spirit of celebration around them, they may feel lost in their own darkness and out of step with the hectic pace of our national "holiday season." What, you may wonder, can we church folk do to make a difference in their lives?

Your church staff began planning in August for Advent 2014, and chose this ***"Waiting for the Light..."*** theme as an intentional way to help us as a church extend God's "extravagant welcome" to those people in our community whose emotional fragility may leave them the most in need of hope and healing during December this year. With your help, as you look around in your own circles and invite others to Advent worship with us, we believe the praying, sharing, and welcoming we do here, in the spirit of Jesus, may bring real healing to their lives.

Did you know surveys show that 48% of people who do NOT attend church regularly are more open at Christmas to saying "yes" to an invitation to a church service or event suggested by a family member, neighbor, or friend? That compares to 38% who say they were more open to seeking out the kind of faith resources a church might offer after 9/11 or other disaster, and 28% who say they were more open to attending church after the birth of a child.

I believe it was a "God-incidence" of great serendipity that our Church-in-Society Committee and Stephen Ministry Team began similar planning for a year-long focus on mental health education and development of resources in this same area. We had nearly 100 men, women, youths, and children here on November 16 for our mental health movie and pizza night.

Adults and teens saw *"It's Kind of a Funny Story,"* the 2010 film adaptation of Ned Vizzini's award-winning story of his own struggles as a depressed teenager. His mother Emma (an old friend of Cindy Radtke, who attended their Lutheran church in Brooklyn) graciously drove up from the city to attend and to share her own message of both hope and sorrow, as her son lost his battle with depression in a suicide death just before Christmas on December 19, 2013.

For those of us whose lives are pretty happy — who are blessed to be able to "walk in the light" most of the time, without clouds of depression, anger, loneliness, anxiety or family members caught up in mental illness, violence, or addiction — we may have a hard time understanding our familiar Christmas stories at all. For who needs a Savior when we are happy, healthy, prosperous, and strong? But for "those who walk in darkness," as Jesus and Isaiah's people did, and as many people today still do, the Advent lights of Christ's hope, peace, joy and love which we celebrate each December may be more important than we can imagine.

Board of Deacons

Your Deacon Branch provides a way for you to have a specific member of the Board with whom to relate. If you have requests or concerns that you'd like to share with a lay person, your Deacon is available. Naturally, if you're more comfortable calling one of the other deacons, or one of your pastors, please feel free to do so. Such requests or concerns might include:

- a need for prayer
- a request for help (transport to a doctor's appointment, church function, etc.)
- a sorrow (illness, accident, death)
- a joy (a birth, graduation, upcoming wedding, etc.)
- something that particularly pleases you, or would better meet your needs in the worship service

Remember, if you don't know your Deacon, ask someone to introduce you. He or she will look forward to meeting you – in church or out!

Deacon Branches 2014-2015

A-BRI	Leslie Sands (Stephen Ministry)
BRO-C	Barbara Anderson
D-EA	Jan Labas
EC-F	Sherrie Ruschmeyer
G-H	Carol Howe
I-LE	Mark Lyon
LI-MA	Robin Murphy
Mc-MU	Mike Anastas (council rep)
N-RI	Margitta Savo (memorial garden rep)
RO-SC	Marie Immohr
SH-T	Dan McKee
U-Z	Gordon Markiewicz

Youth Deacons:

Jillian DeLucia
Shannon Downey
Zach Mangold

Committee Chairmen and Church Council Reps

Please call these elected representatives with any questions or comments regarding any matter of interest or concern to you:

Moderator: Nancy Vodra
Vice Moderator: Dave Goral
Clerk: Kathy Wandelmaier
Treasurer: Sung Goral
Investment Treasurer: Greg Labas



Committee Chairs

Christian Ed Melanie Shapiro
Church House Ken Arifian
Church-In-Society Sue Slater
Deacons Sherrie Ruschmeyer
Fellowship Eleanor Loesch
Nominating Kim Downey
Personnel Nancy Vodra
Stewardship Sally Markiewicz
Welcome Carol Eagan
Worship Patty Moran

Church Council Representatives

Christian Ed Dave Honeyford
Church House Larry Ruschmeyer
Church In Society Jeanine Hanewicz
Deacons Mike Anastas
Fellowship Sara Cline
Nominating Kim Downey
Stewardship Desere Edwards
Welcome Jean Dorrell
Worship Bob Brown
Historian Gordon Markiewicz

Pastoral Relations Committee

Robin Murphy (chair), Leslie Sands, Bob Lambert, Larry Ruschmeyer

Personnel Committee

Nancy Vodra (chair), Dave Goral, Rev. Bryn Smallwood-Garcia, Barbara Anderson, Michael Matson, Olivia Quinsland, Karen Underhill

Senior Pastor	Rev. Bryn Smallwood-Garcia	bryn@uccb.org
Associate Pastor	Rev. Jennifer Whipple	jennifer@uccb.org
Organist/Choir	Toni Sullivan	sullivantt@hotmail.com
Membership Care	Sue Ronan	sue@uccb.org
Church School	Barbara Crandell	barbara@uccb.org
Church Office	Jeannine McCullough	203-775-1259 office@uccb.org



With Gratitude from Your Stewardship Committee

Genesis 1:4: And God saw that the light was good.

And God separated the light from the darkness.

As we move from a season of thankful giving to one of joyous celebration, we are reminded of the many blessings that emanate from this very special place and the people who worship here. At times like these, we hope you will all pause and recognize that your annual pledge provides a warm and welcoming space where God's work is done with passion, generosity and joy. In a world with much darkness, we may all be proud to let our collective light shine so brightly!

PS: If you have fallen behind in your pledged giving and expect to be unable to catch up by March 2015, please let the church office know so that our committees can reduce their spending accordingly. Remember, your pastors (and The Pastor's Fund) are also available if you have financial distress or special needs. We care about YOU much more than your MONEY!

Stewardship Committee: Sally Markiewicz (chair), Alan Peck, Tom Grogan, Pete Lane, Tom Brown, Desere Edwards, Dan Smolnik, Rich Nyers, and Sissy McKee

A New Opportunity!

Chancel Healing Prayers

Sunday December 21st

**during 8:30 worship &
immediately after 10:30 worship**



While our worship services always include a time to offer up names for prayer, sometimes the need is a bit more urgent, complicated and/or personal. **Chancel Healing Prayers** will provide the opportunity to join a more intimate prayer circle to lift up your deepest concerns and receive the comfort and support of your church community in more specific healing prayer.

This new opportunity is entirely optional and it won't take long... After 10:30 worship there will still be plenty of time to join Coffee Hour in the Fellowship Hall. Please join us for just 15 minutes at 11:30 am, or as soon as the Chancel space is clear.



**Annual Community Carol Sing & Christmas Concert
Sunday, December 7th – 2:00pm
at St. Joseph Church**

The choirs of Brookfield will combine forces for several anthems, and everyone joins in on our favorite Christmas Carols. There will be a special Christmas message and some numbers from the CCB bell choirs. Arrive early to find a seat. Free-will offering will benefit the Emergency Fuel Fund of Brookfield Social Services. Please give as you are able, in the spirit of the season.

CrossWays – the newsletter of

The Congregational Church of Brookfield
160 Whisconier Road, Brookfield, CT 06804
(203)-775-1259 Fax (203)-775-3466
Email: office@uccb.org



Sunday Worship at 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

The Rev. Bryn Smallwood-Garcia, Senior Pastor
The Rev. Jennifer Whipple, Associate Pastor
The Rev. M. S. Desmond, Pastor Emeritus