



# Cross Ways

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

**December 2015**



## **Candlelight Christmas Eve** **Thursday, December 24, 2015**

- 5:00pm** With a children's story 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** With the special instrumental music of flute and dulcimer, a Christmas message from Rev. Bryn Smallwood-Garcia, and our traditional carols and Communion by candlelight.
- 11:00pm** Sing carols by candlelight, share Communion, and enjoy special music from our Chancel Choir, plus a message from Rev. Bryn Smallwood-Garcia, before departing into the magical darkness of Christmas.

## **Church Council Notes: November 10, 2014**

**Refugee Resettlement:** Church Council voted to authorize RRM leader Jen Wurst to ask IRIS to invite a new refugee family to our CCB Cottage in the first quarter of 2016. Volunteers include 27 from CCB, with more expected from Valley Presbyterian and other town groups.

**Long-Range Planning Committee:** Program Board on Nov. 14 will allow LRPC to explain their decision-making process and hear various ministry and maintenance proposals.

**Moderator's Report:** The Facilities Use Committee will review and suggest revisions to our CCB Fundraising Policy, to be considered by Council at the next meeting.

**Fee Schedule Revision:** Higher fees for weddings and funerals were authorized, in a proposal that also changes price list from members/non-members to pledgers/non-pledgers. Pastors will offer reduced fees to those in financial need. The proposal passed unanimously.

**Treasurer's Report:** Total income was much improved: 98% of budget in October. Plate income budget will be adjusted downward for the next year, as many cash givers have become regular pledgers. Expenses are at 93% of budget, with large savings in heat and electricity.

**Investment Treasurer:** Endowment Funds decreased \$104,500 in the quarter ending 9/30/15. Endowment income distribution of \$1,600 was transferred to the operating budget. CTF Mission Fund income distribution of \$259 was transferred to the Mission Fund, and \$26,000 came from B&G to pay for barn repairs. A stock donation of \$10,800 went to the operating budget.

**Church House:** Heating controls in the education wing have failed & a new system will cost ~\$15,000. Manufacturer (Mitsubishi) may donate a lesser model. Upstairs Kitchen dishwasher is being replaced. Memorial Garden donated to CH as a thank-you for their garden work.

**Church in Society:** Giving Tree will provide gifts to Brookfield Social Services and Interfaith AIDS Ministry. In 5 years, Dining for Women has raised more than \$4,000. Salvation Army will collect again in Brooks Hall. Becky Bishop will offer a Happy Healthy Holidays program after the 10:30 service on Nov. 22. A collection box was set out for warm winter clothing for *La Comida* food pantry run by Danbury Association of Religious Communities (ARC).

**Deacons:** CCB's baptism brochure will be re-worded to explain use of donations to purchase children's Bibles, as well as our [no] photography policy. A new training session for Stephen Ministers starts in January. New members were to be welcomed on Nov. 15 at 8:30 & 10:30.

**Fellowship:** Serendippers offered guests a Thanksgiving dinner Nov. 10, with a program about *Homes for Heroes*. An Advent Wreath Workshop will be a dinner program held with CE and Worship on Nov. 29. Flower Committee will also decorate the church at that time.

**Worship:** Brookfield's ecumenical Christmas Caroling Concert has been cancelled. CCB children's choirs will sing during the BEC Thanksgiving Eve service at 7:30pm on Nov. 25. Children's Choir communications will offer reminders of Safe Church policy to not take photos during worship or post them on Facebook. Advent theme is "Voices in the Silence."

**Stewardship:** Council members joined the Stewardship Committee in voting to increase their pledges this year, as they are able, in a show of support for the new budget.

**Welcome:** 4 Advent ads are to go in the *Danbury News-Times*, starting Dec. 3.

**CE:** Monthly "Christian Labs" help kids learn about various CCB ministries. Adult study groups continue on Sunday Night, Monday morning and afternoon, and Thursday morning.

**Pastors:** Jennifer is taking an on-line class on youth ministry. She offered a thank-you for her 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary surprise on Nov. 8. Her next sabbatical will be July 24 to Oct. 24, 2016.

Bryn & Jen attended Fairfield East Association and CTUCC Conference meetings with Patty Buchan and Nancy Vodra, lay delegates from CCB. Jane Moran was our youth delegate.

## **Program Board Meeting Notes: November 14, 2015**

Twenty-seven people participated in the Saturday, November 14, 2015 Program Board.

### **The Role of the Long-Range Planning Committee (LRPC):**

The committee has been working since June to define their purpose and mission. LRPC understands the need to act as evaluation team to support Council in discerning priorities for both near-term and long-term projects, as well as recommending plans for their implementation and oversight. In coordinating projects, LRPC will keep the longer term vision of the congregation in mind. Where appropriate, LRPC will support Church Council with strategic thinking about how we as a congregation can live out our faith in Brookfield and the wider community.

LRPC committee members introduced themselves and described the process they have devised for objectively prioritizing proposals. They have created a detailed scoring matrix that aligns the key needs/priorities of the church in categories identified through the listening sessions hosted by the Planning Task Force in summer 2014. Each potential project or program can be scored based on its alignment with congregational vision and needs. A separate and equally challenging objective is for LRPC to identify funding sources to achieve successful implementation of approved projects. LRPC Chair Michael Matson reminded attendees that the committee will be making detailed recommendations to Church Council, but ultimately it will be up to the congregation to vote on acceptance or rejection of any recommendations.

### **The following Proposals were presented:**

#### **Barn Maintenance and Upgrades – Ken Arifian**

Phase 2 Barn upgrades include correction of drainage and grading issues. Phase 3 Barn upgrade is exterior painting. Also, the need was identified for a new outside storage shed nearer to the main church building for frequent-use items such as a ride-on mower/tractor, garden tools, traffic cones, and ladders.

#### **Information Technology Upgrades – Al Lindroth and Dave Goral**

Phase 1 includes replacing outdated and unsupported office computers, expanding internet/church network coverage to the upstairs kitchen and the Parsonage, and purchasing new printers and a large-volume color copier. Phase 2 would include additional needs, such as installing a new telephone system, improving accounting software to include a purchase order system, enabling remote teleconferencing, replacing projector & screens with flat-screen monitors, and developing live-streaming capability for worship.

#### **Fellowship Hall and Church School Wing Addition and Improvements – Laurie Matson**

This plan, which would need further development with the help of a professional architect, would include handicapped-accessible bathrooms and showers on Fellowship Hall (FH) level, a new lift from Church School wing down to FH, storage space, replacement of FH floor and ceiling tiles, fresh paint, and a new room divider. Proposed expansion would also offer storage space on the classroom level.

#### **Thrift Shoppe at the Parsonage – Joni Park**

This proposal calls for converting 3 rooms on the south side of the Parsonage first floor into a Thrift Shop that would be open for a few hours during the week and Saturdays. One upstairs bedroom would be needed for storage. Approval of a detailed plan would be needed before getting final clearance on town zoning and building code compliance, but upgrades likely would include a handicapped-accessible bathroom and entrance ramp, foundation improvements, and an upgraded fire alarm system or sprinklers.

#### **Meetinghouse Renovations – Bob Brown and John Smallwood-Garcia**

Worship Committee's plan includes estimates for replacing carpet in Meetinghouse and Brooks Hall, replacing pew cushions, replacing choir robes, installing 2 window shades to reduce glare at the rear of the Meetinghouse, replacing Brooks Hall folding chairs, and upgrading outdated audio/visual equipment.

### **Members of the LRPC**

The members of the committee are: Roman D'Alessandro, Maurice Downey, Desere Edwards, Cindy Field, Sian Hunter, Michael Matson and Larry Ruschmeyer.

**Christmas Serendippers Gathering  
Tuesday, December 8th 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 Slices  
Sweet Potato Casserole  
Peas and Onions  
Christmas Cookies

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

**Come to the Alternative Gifts Fair!**



**When: Sunday, December 6th from 9:00am - 1:00pm**

**Where: at the Congregational Church of Brookfield in Fellowship Hall**

The Alternative Gifts Fair gives you the chance to help others as you help yourself. You can get some Christmas shopping done, while at the same time donating to a local, national, or international charity.

The way it works is that you pick any of the amazing charities that are at the fair and donate money in someone's name. Then you can give this person a card showing the donation you made on his or her behalf.

There will also be beautiful gifts for sale (ones you can wrap) plus delicious home-baked goods to buy with the proceeds distributed to the organizations represented.

Organizations that have been at the fair in the past include Simply Smiles, IRIS (Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services), the Handy Dandy Handy Man, SERRV (Sales Exchange for Refugee Rehabilitation & Vocation), and Heifer Project International, which means you can help someone give someone a cow for Christmas!

This year's fair is being hosted by confirmands Sadie and Maddie .

We hope to see you there, and we wish you happy holidays!

## 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 13<sup>th</sup>**. 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 Kathy Wandelmaier or Tina Crepeau. *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 someone who is homebound or grieving.
- I would like to take a poinsettia home after the **December 24<sup>th</sup>** 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. This year, our Chancel Choir will offer their special Christmas Cantata, "Upon a Midnight Clear," on Sunday, Dec. 20. 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 season.

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 13<sup>th</sup>**. 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)



## Notes from the Choir Room

*Sing praises to the LORD, who dwells in Zion;  
Declare among the peoples His deeds. (Psalm 9:11)*

December is filled with a musical outpouring of praise, thanksgiving, reverence and joy as we celebrate the coming of love into the world in the form of a baby. I recently came across a saying I have now posted in the music room. “Words make you think a thought. Music makes you feel a feeling. A song makes you feel a thought.” We are certainly feeling the thoughts of Christmas as we are surrounded by the special music and songs of the season. As we travel through Advent, we visit the feelings of hope, love, joy, and peace. Our songs put those feelings to words as we prepare for the coming of Jesus.

### Music for Advent:

**November 29:** Chancel Choir sings *“Comfort, Comfort”*

**December 6:** Joyful Noise Choir and Cherub Choir – *“Prepare a Way for the Lord”*  
Chancel Choir – *“Let All Mortal Flesh”*

**December 13:** Joy Ringers – *“Oh, Come All Ye Faithful”*  
Alleluia Choir – *“Were You There?”*

**December 20:** Prelude Music and Offertory provided by the Jubilate Ringers  
Christmas Cantata *“Upon a Midnight Clear”*  
Complete with guest appearances by selected Biblical Characters

**December 24: 5:00pm service-**

The Joyful Noise and Cherub Choirs – *“A Child Is Born”*  
Alleluia Choir – *“Go Tell It on the Mountain”*

**8:30pm service** – Service with special instrumental music: flute and dulcimer

**11:00pm service** – Chancel Choir provides special music

Toni Sullivan, Director of Music



### Brookfield High School Special Chorus Concert – Monday, Dec. 14th 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 13<sup>th</sup>**. Thank you.

## **My Blanket Story**

By Margitta Savo

November 1950. Thanksgiving Day. My family arrived in New York City Harbor after an arduous journey across the Atlantic Ocean. We were a refugee family who had just fled Communist East Germany. My father was a wanted man for his involvement in anti-Communist propaganda. Our destination was Iowa, where a Presbyterian Church sponsored us. We knew no English. We carried only a few suitcases.



After disembarking, we boarded a train. Halfway through the journey the train encountered a blizzard. The train had to stop, and power was lost. Our family took out our blankets to wrap ourselves in some warmth. The porter walked through, checking all the passengers and stopped in front of my family. My father was taken away. Several hours passed before he returned after all of the train's blankets were accounted for. The porter thought our family had stolen the blankets from the sleeper cars, as they looked identical. But these blankets were given to us by Church World Service (CWS), from generous donors just like you!

**Note from CIS:** Your \$5 contribution to our CWS Blanket Fund, as you place a Christmas card on the Blanket Fund Tree, will allow CWS to purchase a new warm blanket for a family in need of help today. Thank you!



## **Loneliness and the Holidays – A Stephen Ministry Moment**

The holiday season is generally thought of as a time of joy and love, but for many people, it's a time of loneliness. Some people live far from family and miss seeing their loved ones this time of year; others have lost a loved one and dread going to holiday parties and New Year's Eve celebrations without their loved one and end up staying home. Others are dealing with difficulties at home or may feel distant from their faith and are feeling quite blue this season. For those who feel lonely during the holidays, this time of year can be a time of additional stress. If you're experiencing loneliness that causes you stress during the holiday season please do not hesitate to speak with a Pastor.

**Stephen Ministry is YOUR Ministry!** It is an important way we at The Congregational Church of Brookfield care for and pray for one another. There are times when every one of us experiences difficulties: loss of a loved one, spiritual crisis, cancer, hospitalization, illness, disability, divorce, rehabilitation, job loss, loneliness, and many other challenges in life. If you are going through a difficult time, consider having a Stephen Minister. If you know someone else who is facing difficulties, suggest that he or she request Stephen Ministry. God never intended for us to go through these experiences alone. That's why God has brought us together as a congregation, and why we have Stephen Ministry. Make use of it. Stephen Ministry belongs to you! For more information please contact one of our Pastors.

*May God Be With You This Holiday Season. With Love, CCB Stephen Ministers*



## Stephen Ministry Training Class – *Love One Another As I Have Loved You...*

In John 15:12 (NRSV) Jesus says, “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.” Loving and caring for one another is not just the pastor’s job – it’s something Jesus calls us to do! Stephen Ministry is a ministry in which people with special gifts for caring can put those gifts to use in an organized way, bringing Jesus’ love and care to those who most need it.

**A new 50-hour training class to become a Stephen Minister will be starting in January.** Classes will take place on Monday evenings and a few Saturday’s (half day). They will run mid-January through mid-May. If you are hearing God’s call and would like be considered for this ministry **please speak to a Pastor or one of our Stephen Leaders for further information and to receive an application.**

**Remember, we are called to love one another!** Our pastors often challenge us not to make a New Year’s resolution just to give something up, but to take something on! To grow in our faith. **Make it your New Year’s resolution to become a Stephen Minister** so that you can show your love, through this caring ministry, to those in need.

**Stephen Leaders: Bryn Smallwood-Garcia, Leslie Sands and Gordon Markiewicz**

### ***A Christmas Message From Stewardship...***

*Welcome, all Wonders in one sight!  
Eternity shut in a span.  
Summer to winter, day in night,  
Heaven in earth, and God in man.  
Great little One! Whose all-embracing birth  
Lifts earth to heaven, stoops heaven to earth.*

— Richard Crashaw (from “In The Holy Nativity of Our Lord God”)



As stewards of the Congregational Church of Brookfield we are charged with sustaining the vitality of our mission and the viability of our facilities. In the bustle of this holiday season, we thank you for remembering to give generously both to special offerings and to pledges, so that our works and ministries can continue through the joyous celebration of Advent and Christmas. Your gifts make it possible for us to celebrate the birth of Jesus and his presence among us, as we join together to “*lift earth to heaven.*”





## ***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 collecting gifts under our **Giving Tree**. How does this work? We receive gift requests from both Brookfield Social Services (approx. 5 families) and Interfaith AIDS Ministry (approx. 3 families). Under the guidelines of these agencies, adults are allowed one gift, children two gifts; gift costs are not to exceed \$30. CIS writes these requests on special shaped tags (each family is assigned a shape) and places these gift tags on the large Christmas tree in Brooks Hall. You and/or your family can choose a tag off the tree, purchase that gift and return it to Brooks Hall by Sunday, December 13th – in time for CIS to deliver the presents to these social service agencies. **Note: Please attached the original tag to each gift you place under the tree.**

Also on the Giving Tree will be tags for a ministry we joined last year, **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. There is also a box in Brooks Hall to collect warm winter clothing items for the people who use *La Comida* food pantry, a ministry we support through our mission partner, The Association of Religious Communities (ARC) in downtown Danbury.

Next, we are pleased to announce that the red **Salvation Army Kettle** will again ring in the Christmas holiday in our Brooks Hall. This mission is shared among all our Brookfield churches and has raised thousands of dollars over many years. Did you know that 90% of the proceeds stay right here in Brookfield? These funds go to the Brookfield Social Services and help pay for programs for which they don't have money in their budget. If you are able to participate, please know that we are grateful, and so are our neighbors in need.

Lastly, please look for the **Alternative Gifts Fair, on Sunday, December 6th**, organized this year by confirmands Sadie and Maddie. This is an opportunity to purchase items, or make donations to worthy causes in lieu of buying traditional Christmas gifts.

CIS would like to wish you and yours a wonderful holiday season, and thank you for your outpouring of generosity to our neighbors in need.

### **Wanted: Office Volunteers**

From time to time the need arises for office volunteers to “man the phones” when Jeannine McCullough, our CCB Office Manager, is away. If you are interested in being a part of the team of wonderful volunteers already helping out, please let Jeannine know by calling 203-775-1259 or emailing her at [office@uccb.org](mailto:office@uccb.org).

## Fellowship Of Concern



### CONTINUING CONCERNS:

Pete Cushnie  
Judith Fisher  
Evelyn Gerowe  
Anne Hardin  
Ruthie Maxim  
Pat Roehling  
Lavinia Schmaling  
Rod Schmaling  
Shirley Stoppel

### BAPTISM:

- On November 15, Lyla Grace Murphy, daughter of Daniel and Lindsay Murphy, born June 27, 2015.

### WITH THANKS:

Dear CCB family,

I would like to express my thanks to the many people who left flowers, sent notes and called to express sympathy on my father's passing. Every word and gesture continues to comfort, me and I feel blessed to have such a caring church family.

Thank you,  
Kathy Wandelmaier



### **Join Us for our Annual "Instant" Christmas Pageant**

Our Instant Christmas Pageant will be held this year on  
***December 13th during the 10:30am service.***

All children are welcome to participate, and we ask that they ***arrive between 10:15 and 10:30am*** for wardrobe selection.

*The early service on December 13th will be in our usual 8:30am format,  
with a traditional sermon from the Rev. Jennifer Whipple  
and communion worship.*



## **News From Church School**

This past month in church school, our children continued to explore becoming a person of faith and developing a closer relationship with God and the people of God within our November unit, ***Honoring The Body***.

Honoring the body means choosing a life of wholeness, holiness, and joy. Within this unit, children learned to see themselves and others as beautiful and having a body that is a gift from God — each containing many different physical, emotional, social, and spiritual treasures. We continued to honor our bodies by exploring the power and importance of touch, hygiene, and health. Church School finished the study of this faith practice with a service project for The Women's Center in Danbury and the Loaves and Fishes Food Program in New Milford. The classrooms made homemade Goat Milk Soap, Lemon Rosemary Sugar Scrub, Lavender Sea Salt Scrub, or sandwiches and bag lunches.

Our 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade church school class continued with its new curriculum, which is based on discussion and service projects. This past month contained two Bibles & Bagels Discussions entitled "***You've Got a Friend In Me***" and "***Stressed Out***," where they had an opportunity to talk about friendship and stress from a faith perspective and consider the coping tools available to them — both in scripture and in the spiritual gifts God has given them. Our 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Graders also made a special lunch, complete with CCB Apple Pies, for the people who use the Loaves & Fishes Food Program in New Milford.

As we head into the ***Advent Season*** we will look forward to exploring various symbols of the season with our pre-K through 6<sup>th</sup> graders, including a special service project. We will look at the ***Christian significance of symbols*** like snowflakes, candy canes, Christmas trees and wreaths. Our 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> graders will have a discussion about ***what Advent means and what their Advent Dreams are for the world***. We will also invite our children and youth to lead us as we bring our ***Christmas Pageant*** to life in worship on ***Sunday, December 13<sup>th</sup>***.

***Church school is always looking for teacher volunteers for all grades, Pre-K through 8. If you would feel inclined to spread your Joy for God with our Church School children, Please contact Barbara Crandell, Church School coordinator, at [barbara@uccb.org](mailto:barbara@uccb.org).***

### **CrossWays Deadline**

The deadline for the January 2016 issue of CrossWays is **December 15th**. You can e-mail articles to Jeannine McCullough at [office@uccb.org](mailto: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.

## Refugee Resettlement Ministry Underway!

<sup>35</sup>*“For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, <sup>36</sup>I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me....<sup>40</sup> Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.”* (Matthew 25:35-36, 40)

On November 10th the Church Council authorized the Congregational Church of Brookfield Refugee Resettlement Ministry to invite a new refugee family to our little red cottage in the woods. In preparation, we are recruiting volunteers, refurbishing the Cottage, and speaking with Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services (IRIS), which is the New Haven agency that works with the U.S. State Department on the 2-year process of screening, selecting and placing applicants for asylum in the United States. This will be our sixth refugee family at CCB.

Would you be able to volunteer some time in the new year to work with our new family? Whether you have one hour a week or several, this is your chance to be God’s hands in the world as we care for one another. It will be a joy to help resettle another family in need with the gifts that we have: our cottage, our time and our talents.

Please contact Jennifer Wurst if you have any questions. Complete the form below if you’d like to be part of this ministry.

### **VOLUNTEER FORM**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Work/Cell Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

## **I am interested in helping out in this/these areas:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Health** (e.g. apply for Medicaid, schedule and accompany refugees for health screening, arrange to have medical and dental needs of family met)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Housing** (e.g. locate affordable, accessible permanent housing at the end of their stay in the cottage)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Acculturation/Hospitality** (e.g. research refugees' areas of interest and help to fulfill those needs, research churches of refugee affiliation, help the refugee in becoming oriented in the community, show how to shop, use public transportation, use emergency telephone numbers, understand local customs and laws, obtain a driver's license)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Employment** (e.g. research employment opportunities prior to refugees' arrival, help refugee find a job, enroll refugee in job training programs or on-the-job training, help refugee obtain health insurance)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Education** (e.g. arrange ESL classes through adult education or church volunteers, tutor the refugee in the English language, help refugee be able to take Driver's License Test)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Transportation** (e.g. drive the refugee to doctor appointments, driving test, ESL classes, grocery shopping, clothes shopping, laundry mat, place of employment before they get their license)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Clothing/Household Furnishings** (e.g. determine refugees' sizes and clothing needs, circulate a "needs list" for clothing and household goods, arrange to "recycle" unwanted donated items, shop with refugees to purchase necessary new clothing, accompany refugees' food shopping until they are able to go on their own)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Finance** (e.g. teach refugees about budgeting - credit, banking and taxes, manage banking, encourage the refugee to repay the interest-free travel loan extended to provide transportation to this country)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Other** (e.g. collect donations of money to provide for food, clothes and utilities for first couple of months, provide emotional support if needed)



## **Youth Fellowship in December**

### **Junior Youth Fellowship (6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Graders):**

**December 6<sup>th</sup>** — Spreading Advent/Christmas Cheer - 5-6:30pm

Our youth will bring Christmas goodies and some extra holiday cheer to a family in our community. We will meet at the church at 5pm and return by about 6:30pm.

**December 13<sup>th</sup>** — Caroling Scavenger Hunt - 5-7pm

Join us for dinner, caroling to some of our homebound members, and a scavenger hunt thrown in somewhere along the way. **ALL are welcome....bring your family too!**

**December 20<sup>th</sup>** — Ugly Sweater Event - More info to follow

**December 27<sup>th</sup>** — No Meeting: Enjoy Your Christmas Break & Happy New Year!

### **Senior Youth Fellowship (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Graders):**

**December 6<sup>th</sup>** — Ugly Sweater Creation - 7-8:30pm

Who needs an ugly holiday sweater? You do! Especially because we will have an Ugly Sweater Event in a few weeks. So join us to create your own, one-of-a-kind ugly sweater masterpiece (and to prepare a few things for those we will carol to on the 13<sup>th</sup>)!

**December 13<sup>th</sup>** — Caroling Scavenger Hunt - 5-7pm

Join us for dinner, caroling to some of our homebound members, and a scavenger hunt thrown in somewhere along the way. **ALL are welcome....bring your family too!**

**December 20<sup>th</sup>** — Ugly Sweater Event - More info to follow

**December 27<sup>th</sup>** — No Meeting: Enjoy Your Christmas Break & Happy New Year!

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## **Confirmation in December**

**Sunday, December 6<sup>th</sup> — Alternative Gifts Fair – 9am-1pm**

This is a confirmation project for some of our confirmands, so we hope you will come support them as they provide opportunities for people to make special donations or buy gifts with a purpose for Christmas this year!

**Sunday, December 13<sup>th</sup> — Confirmation Class: The Bible – 12-2pm**

Meet us in the parsonage for our Bible class....we will learn together, eat together, and play Bible Jeopardy!

## **Pastor's Page**

**Rev. Jennifer Whipple**

*I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because he judged me faithful and appointed me to his service...*  
~1 Timothy 1:12

According to the dictionary, to be grateful means to be “warmly or deeply appreciative of kindness or benefits received – to be thankful.” There is so much more to be said than the dictionary can say, though, because when we are truly grateful there is a feeling that is kind of indescribable. It makes you want to laugh and cry at the same time. It makes you want to stare in awed silence and shout to the heavens. Being grateful is a powerful attitude – sometimes overwhelming but always blessed.

So we have just come through our annual Thanksgiving celebrations, perhaps talked about what it is that we are thankful for, and did our best to live on the high of the attitude of gratitude. However, I want to go back a few weeks before Thanksgiving and offer my gratitude for the amazing celebration of the ministry we have been about together for the last ten years. What a joyous occasion. I wanted to laugh and cry, to sit in awed silence and to shout to the rooftops, to dance and sing and hug everybody. Needless to say, my thankful button was pushed.

It wasn't just about the celebration, though. It was knowing that God brought us together for a reason and to take those moments to reflect on how much visioning and ministry and faith forming and life sharing and grieving and celebrating and playing and serving has been carried out in God's name together over the last 10 years that made it that much more special.

So as we head out of the Thanksgiving season (although some would say that we should live with an attitude of gratitude each and every day – wise words to be sure), and as we head into Advent – waiting with joyful anticipation for the one who comes to set the world right again, may we recognize the everyday moments of blessing in our lives and the opportunities to care and support one another, to serve others, and to be about the work of God's transformation together. May we be grateful for the ways that God has been at work, is at work, and will be at work in our lives and in the world. And may that indescribable sense of gratitude, surrounded and molded by the grace of God, be among us and remain with us in the days ahead as we listen to various voices tell the story of the coming of a baby Savior and as we consider all that means to us even today.

## *Voices in the Silence...*

### Advent Season Worship



#### **2nd Sunday of Advent: December 6 PEACE Communion at 8:30 & 10:30**

Rev. Jennifer Whipple preaches on the prophet Malachi's vision of the Messiah, and Zechariah's prophesy of the birth of Jesus, as our special guest (Elizabeth) lights the Advent Candle of PEACE.

#### **3rd Sunday of Advent: December 13 JOY Christmas Pageant at 10:30**

Rev. Jennifer Whipple preaches on the joy experienced by the shepherds in Luke's Gospel on that first Christmas morn, as our special guest (a Shepherd) lights the Advent Candle of JOY.

#### **4th Sunday of Advent: December 20 LOVE Christmas Cantata at 10:30**

Rev. Bryn Smallwood-Garcia preaches on the angel's prophetic message to Mary and her enthusiastic song of response, echoing the voice of Hannah, mother of the prophet Samuel, as our special guest (Mary) lights the Advent Candle of LOVE.

## **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 2015-2016**

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	Sue Boughton
Mc-MU	Alex DeLucia
N-RI	Mary Gallagher DeLucia
RO-SC	Marie Immohr
SH-T	Dan McKee
U-Z	Gordon Markiewicz

### **Youth Deacons:**

Jillian DeLucia  
Zach Mangold



## Committee Chairmen and Church Council Reps

**Moderator:** Dave Goral  
**Vice Moderator:** Robin Murphy  
**Clerk:** Kathy Wandelmaier  
**Treasurer:** Sung Goral  
**Assistant Treasurer:** Greg Dorrell  
**Investment Treasurer:** Audrey Himebaugh



### Committee Chairs

Christian Ed Melanie Shapiro  
Church House Ken Arifian  
Church-In-Society Marianne Gaffey  
Deacons Sherrie Ruschmeyer  
Fellowship Kelly Kelly  
Nominating Kim Downey  
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 Leslie Sands  
Fellowship Sara Cline  
Nominating Kim Downey  
Stewardship Tom Brown  
Welcome Jean Dorrell  
Worship Bob Brown  
Historian Gordon Markiewicz

### Long-Range Planning Committee

Michael Matson (chair), Roman D'Alessandro, Maurice Downey, Deseré Edwards, Cindy Field, Sian Hunter, Larry Ruschmeyer

### Pastoral Relations Committee

Robin Murphy (chair), Gordon Markiewicz, Bob Lambert, Larry Ruschmeyer, Carol Eagan

### Personnel Committee

Dave Goral (chair), Robin Murphy, Bryn Smallwood-Garcia, Michael Matson, Olivia Quinsland, Karen Underhill, Rick Hardin

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

**SAVE THE DATE: Sunday, December 13th**

Join us in the early evening for an All-Church Christmas Scavenger Hunt and Caroling opportunity (with 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](http://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!



**CrossWays – the newsletter of**

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**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