



# Steeplelight

First Presbyterian Church

Steeplelight  
December 2009

## Stephen Ministry Training

"Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." Galatians 6:2

We are planning to start a new Stephen Ministry training course in the New Year. Stephen Ministers receive comprehensive training in order to provide high quality Christian care giving for people who are experiencing a life challenge. This could include grief, hospitalization, illness, unemployment or companionship. One of First Presby's own Stephen Ministers comments:



*"My regular visit to my care receiver is like an oasis for me. It is a time for me to listen, to sympathize, and to bring a little cheer. From giving, we are both rewarded but I am rewarded twofold."*

The Stephen Ministry training program is 50 hours over the course of about 20 weeks. Participants in the training often express how much the course work enhances their own lives through learning better communication and listening skills. Stephen Ministers, once commissioned, meet with their care receivers once per week for about an hour and provide the care receiver a listening ear.

Working with Pastor Duffy and the Board of Deacons, Stephen Ministry is an additional resource for those in our congregation in need. Please prayerfully consider becoming part of this valuable ministry in our church community. To learn more about Stephen Ministry and how you can be involved, please speak with

### Christmas Eve Worship Services

Thursday, December 24

6:00 p.m. Family Service

11:00 p.m. Candlelight Service

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### Special points of interest:

- Christmas Fellowship events
- Giving Opportunities
- New Officers and important dates
- Update from the Reading Room



## Christmas Decorating Fund

The Flower Committee will be in Brooks Hall every Sunday through December 13 to accept donations for the Christmas Decorating Fund. Donations will be used to purchase candles, poinsettias, wreaths, greens and other decorations that are used

throughout the church during Advent.

All flowers and decorations will remain in the Sanctuary until after the January 3 worship service.

A list of all donors will be included in the Christmas Eve, December 27 and

January 3 bulletins.

Christmas flowers are not memorials but are given to The Glory of God.

If you would like to help decorate on Dec. 11, please call Pat Piddington, 203.452.9123.

## Merry Christmas

*Join us for a*

*Christmas*

*Concert.*

*Admission is*

*free and bring*

*a friend.*

### **A Classic Christmas Concert**

Take a break from the hustle and bustle of holiday tasks and experience a night of peaceful, seasonal music on Saturday, Dec. 12 at 7:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary. "Classical

Christmas Program of Peaceful Music," presented by Nancy Weber and the Shoreline Trio with guest Soprano Beverly Blanchard. They will perform both classical and

Christmas music, designed to soothe, relax and allow you to ponder the true meaning of Christmas.

This event is free and open to the public.



## Christmas Joy Offering

"What Child Is This"? This classic Christmas hymn lies at the heart of the season. Jesus is both incarnation and invitation; a model of what God desires all humankind to aspire to – unconditional and sacrificial love for the whole family of God. At this season for more than seventy years, Presbyterians have ex-

pressed that love through the Christmas Joy Offering. Gifts to this Offering support the unmet needs of families who have responded to God's call by giving their lives to the mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Some of these needs emerge during their service, others after their retirement. Our

gifts also help students at racially ethnic schools and colleges to develop their talents and find their own calling. We will collect this offering on Sunday, December 20, 2009. Envelopes are included in the December Steeplelight and will be available in the pews during Advent.

The Angel Tree and Jennifer Mitten Tree, sponsored by the Mission Committee, are Christmas giving opportunities for you to help a child in need.

**NEW!** The Mission Committee is hosting an Alternative Giving Advent Fair for the three Sundays in December during coffee hour. Check out a different way to give a gift which will benefit local and international missions at the same time!

## Blue Christmas Service

Leave the struggles of the holiday season behind for the spiritual renewal of our annual Blue Christmas Service that lifts up hope and healing, com-

fort and blessing. The serenity will help those who find the holidays overwhelming, over-commercialized, depressing or who have suffered loss.

The service will be at 7:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary with a reception following.

*Blue Christmas  
December 16 at  
7:30 p.m.  
Reception in the  
parlor.  
Bring a friend!*

## Children's Christmas Pageant



**CALLING:** all aspiring angels, sheep, shepherds and wise men! With the approach of Advent, plans are underway for this year's **Christmas pageant**. On Sunday, December 20, the children and youth at First Presbyterian will enact the traditional Nativity story during the morning service. All children

interested in being pageant participants are encouraged to attend as many rehearsals as possible, so roles and costumes can be assigned. Pageant rehearsals will begin on December 6 during the Sunday School hour. Additional rehearsals are set for the 13th immediately after the worship service

and a dress rehearsal on Saturday morning December 19. Adults willing to assist with the pageant preparations are also invited to contact pageant coordinator Lynne Duffy (416-9122) or [lduffy180@gmail.com](mailto:lduffy180@gmail.com) Please watch the weekly church bulletins and e-mails for more details.

## Pick up some Christmas Reading

*Rev. Duffy's sermons can also be found online at [www.firstpresby.net](http://www.firstpresby.net) and click on the Worship tab.*

Please stop by The Reading Room and see our display of new Christmas Books for all ages and interests. There are delightful holiday stories for both children and adults. The Christmas message of hope and love is

illustrated in many new formats both fiction and nonfiction. We also have a variety of holiday DVDs available. Our hands-on nativity set will be out for our littlest members to enjoy. A regular feature of the Reading Room

is a collection of Dr. Duffy's sermons which may be listened to and reflected on in quiet. These CD's can also be signed out. I wish you all the blessings and joys of The Christmas Season.

*There are many Fellowship and Bible Study opportunities for women at First Presby.*

## Church Women United

Church Women United in Fairfield will meet at First Presbyterian on December 11<sup>th</sup> to celebrate the Christmas Season. We will have a Bible study at 10:00 a.m. led

by PJ Drost. This will be followed by a Christmas Auction, carol singing and a time of fun and fellowship. Brown bag lunch with dessert and

beverages provided. Call Mary Avila or Louise D'Amico for further information.

## Women's Association Update

The Women's Association held its election, and Pam Ales was elected president for 2010. Congratulations Pam!

All women of the Church are invited

to join the Women's Association. All are welcome to their Bible Studies and fellowship events. In January and February the Ruth Circle will take place in the

morning only. Please mark your calendar for January 12 and February 9. We will meet at 10:00 a.m. in the parlor.

M.O.M.s (Morning Out for Moms of Faith) Over a dozen moms enjoyed ten weeks of Bible Study and fellowship in a relaxed setting in the parlor. Childcare was provided. Thanks to the many volunteers who helped make this program a success.



## News from the Pews

*News to Share?*

*Tell us for the  
"News from the  
Pews."*

Wish there was a way to share your news with members in the church? Are you in a band and want your church family to come to your next concert? Have an upcoming art exhibit you want people to know about? The Fellowship Committee

wants to help you get the word out to the congregation. This January, we're starting **News from the Pews**, where you can easily share what you're doing with members of the church. If you have an event that you want us to put in

the Sunday bulletin, and/or Fellowship Board, send an email to Patti Law, [patti-law@sbcglobal.net](mailto:patti-law@sbcglobal.net), or drop the information in Patti's mailbox in the church office. We'll help you spread the word!

*New Address?*

*New e-mail?*

*New telephone  
number?*

*Let us know!*

## Updated Information Please

The Church office is currently updating the membership directory. If you have a new e-mail address (or e-mail preference), new home address or telephone number, please notify the office at 203-374-6176 or e-mail at [First-Presbyterian@sbcglobal.net](mailto:First-Presbyterian@sbcglobal.net). Copies will be available after the first of the year.

## Message from Stewardship & Finance

If you have not yet submitted your pledge for 2010 in support of the work of the Church, we encour-

age you to do so. The S&F committee is in the process of completing the budget for 2010 so that the programs

of the church can be finalized. Every members' pledge is needed. Thank you.

*The Annual Meeting of the Congregation is set for Sunday, January 24, 2010.*

## Congratulations to New Officers

On Sunday, November 22, the fall meeting of the Congregation was held to elect new officers for 2010.

The new elders elected for a three year term: Mike Ales, Lois James, Duke Louis, Pat Piddington, Clare Schimpf. Those elected as deacons for a three year term: Ralph Bowley, Veronica Chen-

Guerreiro, Dot Hitchcock, Chuck Snavelly, Joy Vischio and Pam Ales to fill an unexpired term of two years.

For Trustees, Mike Baisley was elected President, Vincent Caprio for Vice President and Nancy Murray as Secretary of the Corporation. Trustees elected for a three year term were Frank

DiLorenzo, Kim Donohue, David Freije, John Hoffman and Bart Surrick to fill a one year unexpired term.

Members elected to the Nursery School Board were: Amy Baisley, Jennifer Henry and Ava Hunter.

Congratulations to all and thank you for agreeing to serve our church.

## Important Dates for January

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation is scheduled for **Sunday, January 24, 2010**. All members of the Congregation are encouraged to attend to receive the annual reports of the committees and receive the budget for 2010. All new el-

ders, deacons and trustees will be ordained and installed on **Sunday, January 10, 2010** during the worship service. Officer training of all officers for the coming year will be held on **Saturday, January 23, 2010** from 9:00 a.m. to noon. All returning

and incoming elders, deacons and trustees are expected to attend. The Book of Order requires an annual training of officers. If you have any questions, please contact Clare Schimpf, Clerk of Session.



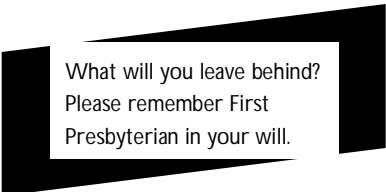
**First Presbyterian Church**

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Prayer line: 203-374-0846

Steeplelight deadline is the 13th of  
each month.

Submit articles to  
First-Presbyterian@sbcglobal.net



Non-Profit Organization  
"U.S. Postage Paid"  
Bridgeport, CT  
Permit No. 518

**DATED MATERIAL  
PLEASE DELIVER  
BY December 4th**

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

## Holiday Stress Seminar

The holidays are supposed to be about peace and love, yet we often feel inner turmoil and alone. Learn how to deal with holiday stress, and find tranquility within during this

busy time of the year. Led by Dr. Duane Kellogg, Director of Renew Counseling Center, who has helped many individuals and families learn to cope with distress.

Come on Saturday, December 5 from 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Coffee and bagels will be served starting at 8:30 a.m.