



**December 2015**

# The CRIER



**The Trumbull Congregational Church**  
**3115 Reservoir Avenue**  
**Trumbull, CT 06611**  
**Phone: 203.268.2433**  
**[www.TrumbullCC.org](http://www.TrumbullCC.org)**

## Notes from Pastor Tim.....

*"For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." – Isaiah 9:6*

It is mid November as I write this little article. We are moving toward our big "Consecration Sunday" pledge-giving celebration, the Thanksgiving holiday, and the seasons of Advent and Christmas. The Nominating Committee has been actively seeking leadership for our various boards and committees. And, the Deacons and I are trying to understand why attendance at worship is down by 10%. These are busy times and there is much to occupy our minds and energy.

But, mostly what is on my mind at the moment is the series of terrorist attacks in Paris. One hundred and twenty nine people were killed and over 300 more were injured in events that bring to mind the surreal horrors of September 11. As the Islamic State (ISIS) takes credit and issues additional threats, we are reminded of the radical disconnect between peoples, the seemingly incompatible perspectives that shape our lives, the violence that pervades our cultures, the underlying fragility and instability that marks reality, and the fear that now colors our sense of freedom and mobility.

Honestly, I'm confused. Jesus tells us to love our enemies, but how do we love terrorists? How do we love the people of ISIS and an Islamic state that is fundamentally opposed to respecting boundaries, diverse cultures and religions, foreign governments and modern societies, not to mention life beyond the lives of those aligned with their own ideology? What does loving your enemy look like when there is no possibility for common ground and no room for reason?

Usually, when I think about loving our enemies I think about at least being able to pray for their transformation.

I pray that I might be able to put myself in their shoes. I pray that I might see them as God sees them. This usually softens my heart and opens me to receiving a bit of the transformation that I am seeking for them. But, in the case of ISIS our enemy seems to be asking nothing of us except to live in fear and die. They offer us no perspective even to consider, no shoes to walk in. And so, I don't know how to even try to love them.

When I think about their transformation, when I think about how God might change their hearts and restore their souls, it occurs to me that perhaps the only way might be through death. Perhaps God can give them in death the grace and salvation they are blind to in life. But, honestly I'm a bit horrified by my own thoughts. I don't like thinking this way. I don't want to carry hate. It feels wrong to wish death on anyone.

Advent means "coming," and during this season we focus on the comings of Christ. It occurs to me that now more than ever we need this season. With new fears and fewer answers, with heightened emotions and growing vulnerabilities, our need for a savior to show us the way is ever greater. I don't know what to do about ISIS. I don't even know what to think. But, I know that I need Christ. I know that Christ came into a messy world, and I know that he continues to come. I know that the best thing I can do, the best thing any of us can do, is receive him again and receive him anew.

God bless you,

Pastor Tim

## Stewardship Update

By the time you receive this, our Stewardship Campaign will have ended. We hope the program provided you with a new way to think about your giving, based on the biblical and spiritual principles of generous giving vs. what bills we need to pay.

Though this is being written before the campaign has ended, we are sure it was a success. We have a wonderful community at TCC, bound in love, faith and generosity. Next year we can look forward to more spiritual growth, fellowship and giving to others.

"The generous will themselves be blessed, for they share with the poor." Proverbs 22:9

Many thanks to all who have shared in their abundance,

Stewardship Co-Chairs  
Paul Ferencz, Deb R



Happy Birthday and Happy Anniversary to all our members and friends celebrating in December!

## Many Thanks for the Thanksgiving Donations!

The Thanksgiving Drive went extremely well! We were able to fill bags of Thanksgiving dinners for 13 families including a bag for the Morales family. We even had enough food to donate 10 bags of leftovers. Thanks for your generosity and participation!



## Mark your Calendars!! DECEMBER YOUTH GROUP



### December 6<sup>th</sup> 4:00-6:00 for 8<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> Graders Appalachia Service Project Presentation

The Friends of Appalachia (FOA) will be having their kick off and presentation meeting in preparation for their 2016 summer mission trip. They will be giving an overview of what the trip entails and what youth need to do over the next several months to raise funds and prepare for the trip. Last year's trip was a huge success and a short video will be shown at the meeting. FOA requires that youth are at least freshmen to go on the trip, however the presentation will be beneficial for 8<sup>th</sup> graders that might be interested in going in the future and/or learning more about what the organization does.



### December 6<sup>th</sup> (time TBD) for 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> Graders Fun in the Round Room - More information to follow!



### December 13<sup>th</sup> (time & Location TBD) Christmas Party

Games, Gifts, Food, Fun - More information to follow!



### December 21<sup>st</sup> (time & Locations TBD) Christmas Caroling



## The Congregation is invited to join Unity Hill Church for Christmas Tea.

Thursday, December 3rd at 1:00PM.

Program: Serendipity Chorale

Devotions: Waltraud Yeager

Hospitality: Executive Board Members

For more information, please contact Eleanor Ramey at 203-449-014

## **George's Hill, A Social Engagement Group for people who have been diagnosed with an illness affecting memory and cognition and their caregivers.**

The group will meet the second Thursday of the month from 11:30 am – 1:00 pm

Next meeting Thursday, November 12, 2015 from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm

at Unity Hill United Church of Christ, 364 White Plains Road, Trumbull, CT.

A light lunch will be served from 12:00 – 12:30.

Our motto is **"You Are Not Alone"**

\*Anyone with a wheelchair, or problems with mobility, may enter through the kitchen door in back as there are no steps to negotiate.

**To register, call 203-374-8822,  
email [unityhillucc@snet.net](mailto:unityhillucc@snet.net)**

**or look for the registration form on our  
website: [www.unityhillucc.org](http://www.unityhillucc.org)**

## **LIFE DOESN'T STOP WITH A DIAGNOSIS OF EARLY STAGE DEMENTIA**

In fact, staying actively engaged in life and avoiding isolation is important to the health and emotional well-being of people living with memory loss and their caregivers. It's also important that you learn as much as you can about what to expect and plan for what lies ahead. So, we've created a special program called **'George's Hill'**, a Social engagement Group, which encourages individuals with memory loss and their care partners to seek out activities that promote healthy living and engage the mind and body through physical, social and creative activities. The social engagement group offers a fun and comfortable way for people living in the early stage of dementia to get out, get active and get connected with one another. The activities are shaped by Pastor Todd and promote social interaction and companionship. Art, music, games and exercise can enrich the lives of people with dementia because it allows for self-expression and engagement. Due to the changes an individual experiences in their behavior, cognition, daily routines and relationships, dementia can be very isolating and lonely. This opportunity will allow people to come together and continue to remain

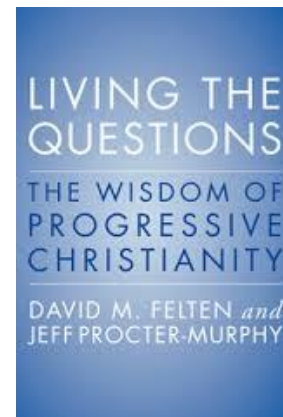
involved and active in daily life and friendships, for as long as possible.

**Unity Hill United Church of Christ  
The Rev. M. Todd Shipley, Pastor  
364 White Plains Road, Trumbull, CT 06611  
203-374-8822  
[unityhillucc@snet.net](mailto:unityhillucc@snet.net)**

## **ADVENT STUDY: "Lord, Teach Us to Pray - (a 4-part examination of The Lord's Prayer)"**

This familiar prayer consists of an address and six brief petitions, yet it has been said that "every prayer is contained in it.

Join us as part of your Advent Preparation - Sunday Mornings 9:00 in the Library - November 29, December 6, 13, 20 - facilitator: Rev. Caroly Gibson



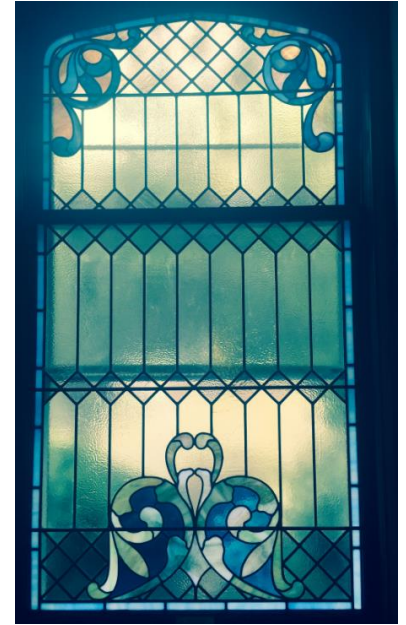
## **Study Group: Season #3**

Please join us for a time of fellowship, discussion, and prayer in the Round Room on Dec. 7 and Dec. 14 at 7pm. This is our shortest "season" of gatherings and a perfect opportunity to come out and give it a try. We'll use the "Living the Questions" series to discuss important themes of faith as presented by key Christian thinkers in brief video presentations. Possible topics include: "Restoring Relationships," "Evil, Suffering, and a God of Love," "The Myth of Redemptive Violence," and "A Kingdom without Walls." Interested? Questions? Talk to Pastor Tim.



## WINDOW RENOVATION UPDATE

The Stained Glass Group is proud to be nearing the completion of the six-year renovation of TCC's 117 year old stained glass windows. The fundraising actually was begun over twenty years ago by TCC's Women's Connection which provided the first \$20,000 toward the preservation of the glass in our historical building. We estimated this to be a \$75,000 job; however, generous donations allowed us to expand the initial work order to include the original designing and building of a long missing choir loft window, renovation of unseen stained glass in the sacristy, coat room, bathroom, up the bell tower stairs, several bell tower windows, and the stained glass in all original outside doors. We also paid to repair and paint the badly peeling sanctuary walls that framed our newly renovated windows and installed a discreet window blind on the choir loft window, to the relief of the sun-blinded choir. TCC's stained glass should now last another hundred years.



We want to thank the past and present members for their recent donations to the Congregational Window renovation, our last window (6a). We are so close to having the total funds needed – **just under \$500** -- and then WE ARE DONE. The following came in since the last CRIER.

*An anonymous gift in memory of special family members  
Cindie and Phil LaMastra in Honor of daughter Laura Ann Tappan LaMastra's confirmation  
Doc and Marcia Dougherty in memory of dear friend Karen S. Friedberg  
A gift in memory of Barbara Martin, to honor her love for her TCC family*

Think about making a tax-deductible donation in someone's memory or in honor of a baptism, confirmation, graduation, or wedding. No amount is too small. We thank you for your continued support of this project.

The Stained Glass Group  
(Herb Gratrix, Kathy Hering, Kent Lewis and LeAnn Slater)

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Your Name \_\_\_\_\_ Donation Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor of or in Memory of:

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*Make checks payable to "Trumbull Congregational Church"  
Memo: "Congregational Window"  
Enclose this form and send to TCC Office, 3115 Reservoir Avenue, Trumbull, CT 0661*

## Sunday School Holiday Planner:

December 6: Advent Workshop (Social Hall)

10:00 Carols, Craft, & Cookies...

Oh My!

December 12: Christmas Pageant Rehearsal

9:00-10:00 Costumes and Blocking

December 13: Storyteller Pajama Party

5:45 Goodies and Cocoa

6:00 Stories begin! Wear pajamas,  
bring a blanket and a treat to share!

December 19: Christmas Pageant Rehearsal

9:00-10:00 Dress Rehearsal

December 20: Christmas Pageant

10:00 Come and Celebrate the  
Birthday of Jesus!

Please remember our Mitten Tree throughout this Advent Season! Look for this special tree in the Round Room. Let's fill it with new warm woolens for those who are cold this winter. "Love Came Down at Christmas..."



# Storyteller Pajama Party

December 13<sup>th</sup> at 5:45

Round Room



Wear Cozy PJ's

Bring a Blanket and a  
Sweet Treat to Share

Cocoa Provided

Laconia (Lot) Therrio  
Professional Storyteller



*Music Ministry Notes*

Greetings!

Looking back, November was a music-filled month. Some highlights included TCC's participation in the ecumenical Thanksgiving service on November 23<sup>rd</sup>. We were also delighted to host French Horn player Brian Nichols as a special guest musician for our Consecration Sunday on November 22<sup>nd</sup>.

With Thanksgiving just around the corner, Advent is fast upon us, which means the Christmas season will soon be here, which means we are entering a season of making and listening to beautiful music! With the season of Advent comes some of my favorite music of the church year.

December is always a busy time, and attending church services during Advent can offer much needed respite. Treat yourself to some quiet, take time away from the hustle and bustle all around, and come to a Sunday morning service during Advent here at TCC. Even better, come sing with the TCC choir for Advent and Christmas! The choir will be preparing special Advent anthems for the first three Sundays of Advent, and we look forward to the TCC children's Christmas Pageant on the fourth Sunday of Advent. As St. Augustine purportedly said, "When you sing, you pray twice," so always know that you are welcome to sing with our choir, even if you can't make a year round commitment!

Christmas Eve will be an exciting time musically, as we will have special guest instrumentalists at both the 5pm and the 11pm services, with half-hour prelude music programs starting at 4:30pm and 10:30pm respectively. The choir will be singing at the 11pm service on Christmas Eve and the music ministry will also be providing special music for the 5pm service. So mark your calendars!

Here is a sneak peak at some of the particulars of our Christmas Eve plans: On Christmas Eve, for the 10:30pm prelude music program and for the 11pm service, I am so very excited to say that Brandee Younger, harpist extraordinaire, will be joining us to deepen our worship experience with her beautiful harp. To listen to some of Brandee's work, you can visit her website at:

<http://www.brandeeyounger.com/home>.

In song,

Ilana

[Ilana.ofgang@trumbullcc.org](mailto:Ilana.ofgang@trumbullcc.org)



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## **Wednesday, December 2nd**

- Council 7:15 PM Round Room

## **Sunday, December 6th**

- Advent Study 9:00 AM, Library
- Sunday Worship 10:00 AM
- Family Night 4:00 – 6:00 PM
- Friends of Appalachia 4:00 – 6:00 PM, Social Hall

## **Monday, December 7th**

- Study Group 7:00 PM, Round Room

## **Wednesday, December 9th**

- Women's Lunch 11:30AM – 1:00 PM
- Deacon's Meeting 7:15 PM

## **Thursday, December 10th**

- Men's Lunch 12:00 – 1:30 PM

## **Sunday, December 13th**

- Advent Study 9:00AM, Library
- Sunday Worship 10:00 AM
- Youth Group/Christmas Party

## **Monday, December 14th**

- Study Group 7:00 PM, Round Room

## **Wednesday, December 16th**

- Stewardship/Endowment 7:15 PM, Round Room

## **Sunday, December 20th**

- Advent Study 9:00AM, Library
- Sunday Worship/Pagent 10:00 AM
- Youth Group Caroling

## **Thursday, December 24th**

- Christmas Concert 4:30 PM
- Family Service 5:00 PM
- Musical Program with Brandee Younger, harpist 10:30 PM
- Candlelight Service 11:00 PM

## **Sunday, December 27<sup>th</sup>**

- Sunday Worship 10:00







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December 2015

*Merry*  
**Christmas**