

**THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF VERNON, UCC**

First Sunday of Advent

November 29, 2015

**WELCOME!**

*If you have thirst our love will quench it.*

*If you are lonely our hope will be your company.*

*If you are hungry God's peace and joy will fill and feed you.*

(A Crib Room is available upstairs near the balcony for parents with infants where the worship service can be heard via intercom. A staffed Toddler Room, located downstairs in the Kellogg wing is open for children 12 months to 3 years old.)

**PRELUDE** "Sinfonia from Christmas Oratorio" Bach  
"2 Chorale Preludes on 'Keep Awake, Be Always Ready'"  
Bach/Reger

**WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS**

***Hanging of the Greens Ta-Da!***

**WELCOMING the LIGHT of CHRIST**

**\*CALL to WORSHIP** Peg Leary

Leader: In Advent we watch and wait, and prepare to welcome the Christ Child into the world.

**People: Come, Lord Jesus, come!**

Leader: In Advent we prepare for a life of discipleship, and watch faithfully for signs of God's light breaking into the world.

**People: Come, Lord Jesus, come!**

Leader: As we wait, dear One, we watch for signs of your action in the world, actions of compassion and grace breaking in.

**All: Come, Lord Jesus, come! Be born anew in our world and in our lives.**

**\*OPENING HYMN #138 "Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn"**

**ADVENT WREATH**

**The Candle of HOPE** Dave and Barbara Grigg

Reader 1: For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples' but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. *(from Isaiah 60:2)*

Reader 2: We light this candle to proclaim the coming of the light of God into the world. With the coming of this light there is *hope*. Because of Christ we not only have hope, but we believe

that good is stronger than evil. God wants us to work for good in this world.

***Lighting the Candle of Hope (in silence)***

**Prayer (unison)**

**O God, we thank you that Jesus brought hope into our world. By the good news of the Bible you are still bringing hope to people. Help us to be ready to welcome Christ so that we may think good thoughts and do good deeds, that we may be a people of hope in our world in need. Amen.**

**Hymn Response #467 "Fill the World with Love" (vs. 1)**

*With the vision in our minds of how the world could be, and the fullness of our hearts from the suffering we see; when we make all that we are and have part of God's destiny, we can fill the world with love, when God fills the world with love.*

**TIME with the YOUTH**

**The LORD'S PRAYER (unison)**

***Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.***

**\*GLORIA PATRI**

***Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.***

**ANTHEM** "We Gather Together/Count Your Blessings" arr. B. Adams  
*Althea Madigan, oboe*

**SCRIPTURE** The Gospel of Matthew 24:36-44

**SERMON** "Are You Awake?!" Rev. Suzanne Personette

**\*HYMN** "Keep Awake, Be Always Ready" *(insert)*  
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**SHARING of JOYS and CONCERNS**

**MORNING PRAYER**

**PRAYER RESPONSE**

**CALL to OFFERING**

**OFFERTORY** "Put Peace into Each Other's Hands" Kaan/Schwoebel

**\*DOXOLOGY**

***Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below; praise him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.***

**\*PRAYER of DEDICATION** (*unison*)

**All: God of hopeful waiting, we give thanks for all of the ways in which you reveal yourself to us. Help us to clear away the many distractions of this season and offer our whole lives as gifts to you. May these offerings nurture all of the ways in which your promise is breaking into the world in acts of compassion and justice. May these gifts nurture your rule of peace. Amen.**

**\*CLOSING HYMN** #142 "People, Look East"

**\*BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE** "French Carol 'Joseph est bien marié'" arr. Guilmant

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon us, because he has anointed us to bring good news to the poor. He has sent us to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. ~ based on Luke 4:18-19*

**\*All who are able are invited to stand.**

**Join us for coffee and conversation after the service in Fellowship Hall.**

**In Our Ongoing Prayers . . .**

**The Barney/Oliphant** family on the loss of Millie's cousin Debbie Barney; **Bob Bradford**, Karen Langone Bradford's father; Pete Wivagg, Debi Hockenberry's father; Bertha Sullivan; Terri Carr; Paris, France; Cottage Meetings; Dave LaPlante; Jake and Deb Garrow; David Hollister; Daniel Burnett-Pollock; Emmalee Watkins; Bess Howe; Debbie Barney; Dave Toolan; Lillian Morse; Debbie Chase; Dick Myer, Margaret Klukas; Candy, Lynette Melanson's sister; Dave Boucher; Greg Moffatt; Joyce Smith; Gilmay Markunas and family; Pat Lazeren; Bobby Dwire; Warren Little; Tom Fitzgerald; Melinda Singh; Paul Westerberg; people struggling with mental illness; Ed Rockland; the people of Syria, including the family of Tarek Eid; Heidi Howie; Steve Bright; Wendy Parker; Rachel Andrews; Carol Shea; Bobby Kelley; Nancy Bailey; Will Fisher and Jessica Surratt; Mason Bower; Debbie Marshall; Michael Turner; Richard Brooke; Ray Turner; Martha Fowler; Michael Bebrin; Thelma Gifford; Cooper Doyle; Horst Pohlmann; John Kaminski

*New additions in bold print*

**Greeters and Coffee Hour:** Stewardship and Evangelism Committee

**TODAY DURING COFFEE HOUR downstairs in Fellowship Hall**

**Orders** for **Poinsettias** which are displayed in the Sanctuary during Christmas will be taken **today** during Coffee Hour.

The **Memory Tree** will be lit again this Christmas season in the Memorial Garden. If you would like to honor loved ones, see a member of the Memorial Garden Committee during Coffee Hour **today**. The Memory Tree Honor Roll will be published in the January 2016 Carillon. The names of your loved ones being remembered will be included in this listing if your donation is received by December 7.

Please stop by our **Congregational Prayer and Gratitude Board**. Take a star and marker from the basket and write your prayer on it. Then remove the clear tab on the back of the star and place it on the board. Everyone is welcome to participate.

**TODAY'S ACTIVITIES**

**Junior Choir Rehearsal:** 11:30 a.m., PF Room

**Potluck Lunch** today following the Worship Service. Bring your favorite dish to share.

**Christmas Giving Tree** sponsored by the Board of Missions. We are collecting toys for the Vernon Social Services "Toy Workshop" where a family in need can choose the toys that best fit their children's wants and needs for Christmas. Please note that *shopwithscrip.com* gift cards are a great option for older kids and teenagers. Please choose an ornament tag from the Christmas Giving Tree set up in the back of the Sanctuary until December 6. Each tag bears the age and gender of a child in need. Please place your new, unwrapped gift (or gift card) under the tree by Sunday, December 13. Any questions, please contact Sue Moreau at 860-268-8801 or [susan.j.moreau@gmail.com](mailto:susan.j.moreau@gmail.com). **Note:** If inclement weather cancels the church service on December 13, gifts will be collected in the Breezeway between 8-10 AM on Monday, December 14.

**THIS WEEK'S ACTIVITIES**

**Bible Study:** Monday, November 30, 11 a.m., Library

**Men's Breakfast Group:** Tuesday, December 1, 6:30 a.m., Vernon Diner

**Council:** Wednesday, December 2, 7 p.m., Fellowship Hall

**Basket Group:** Thursday, December 3, 10 a.m., Fellowship Hall

**Choir Rehearsal:** Thursday, December 3, 7:30 p.m., Fellowship Hall

**Support Group:** Friday, December 4, 10:30 a.m., Library

**Christmas Tea/Luncheon:** Saturday, December 5, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m., sponsored by Women's Fellowship. Scones, sweets and savory sandwiches will be served. Listen to some carols or shop at the bake sale. Storytelling of Christmas classics will be available for the young at heart. \$10/adult, \$5/children under 12. **Space is limited so please sign up on the Women's Fellowship bulletin board.**

**Family Night Out:** Saturday, December 5, 5-9 p.m. here at the church. Kids hang with kids and are kept safe by the J\*Walkrz and several adults, giving parents a few hours to themselves. Cost? Name your price, but remember this is a fundraiser for the J\*Walkrz! Please sign up on the J\*Walkrz bulletin board.

**Pairs and Spares:** Saturday, December 5 (**note change of date**) 10 a.m. at church to carpool to the Festival of Trees at Wadsworth Athenaeum. Cost - \$13. Members of the Wadsworth - \$3. Please contact Kate Fowler (Kfowler64@yahoo.com or 860-614-9747) if you plan on attending, so we don't leave anyone behind.

**Evening Circle:** Monday, December 7, 7 p.m. at Millie Oliphant's for our Christmas Party.

**Junior Choir** for children in grades K-5, rehearses each Sunday after the worship service and a quick snack at 11:30 a.m. for 20 -30 minutes in the PF Room (Kellogg Hall). New members are welcome. Questions or suggestions? Contact Althea Madigan at 860-870-5185 (leave a message) or childssings@gmail.com.

**Scrip-Your-All Update:** To date we have earned \$4230 towards our \$5,000 goal for 2015! If you are planning on participating in the "Giving Tree" for Christmas, think about buying a gift card for an older child or purchasing a gift card to use to buy your gift. New cards are available at the Scrip-Your-All table. We now have cards to KMart, Toys R Us, LL Bean, in addition to Walmart, TJ Maxx, Macy's, Amazon, iTunes, Target, and Rave Theater to name a few. Gift cards will be ordered throughout December but **December 13** will be the last date to order to receive gift cards in time for Christmas. For complete information, check out our FCCV website (firstchurchofvernon.org/scrip-your-all) or stop by the Scrip-Your-All table during Coffee Hour.

**Pay It Forward:** Last Sunday, Doe Simmonds "Paid it Forward" to the Vernon family that recently lost their home in a fire. One of the children is a classmate of someone in our church family. If interested in helping this family consider donating a gift card. We will see that all donations get to the family. Also, if you are interested in donating to PIF, a PIF box is located near the stairway down to Fellowship Hall or you may place a check of any amount in the offering basket with "PIF" in the memo line. If you would like to participate in the drawing for a PIF moment, write your name on an index card and place it inside the box. We now have a PIF bulletin board in Fellowship Hall with information on the last 4-5 PIF moments. Check it out for all the great places the PIF donations are going!

The **Care Network** is offered by the Deacons as a helping hand during difficult times. If you are in need of a ride to church, the doctor, hospital, grocery store, etc., in need of meals or a visit, contact Jan Muro at jmoze@hotmail.com or 872-1757 or Sue Pilkons at 860-875-4122.

**Please Note:** To request a visit with one of the pastors, please contact the Church Office at 860-875-7580.

## ADVENT CALENDAR

### Advent Bible Study

*led by Barbara Hesse*

Friday, December 4, 7 p.m. in the Library

### Christmas Tea/Luncheon

Saturday, December 5, 11:30 a.m. in Fellowship Hall

### J\*Walkrz, Chili Caroling

Sunday, December 6, 3:30-5 p.m.

### Advent Bible Study

*led by Barbara Hesse*

Friday, December 11, 7 p.m. in the Library

### Christmas Cantata

Sunday, December 13 during the Worship Service

### Advent Bible Study

*led by Barbara Hesse*

Friday, December 18, 7 p.m. in the Library

### Christmas Eve Children's Pageant

Thursday, December 24, 5:30 p.m.

### Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Thursday, December 24, 11 p.m.

### Lessons and Carols

Sunday, December 27 during the Worship Service

