

From: FCCV (fccv@snet.net)
To: fccv@snet.net;
Date: Fri, December 21, 2012 12:08:04 PM
Cc:
Subject: Pastor's Weekly Email

Shoulders

A man crosses the street in rain,
 stepping gently, looking two times north and south,
 because his son is asleep on his shoulder.

No car must splash him.
 No car drive too near to his shadow.

This man carries the world's most sensitive cargo
 but he's not marked.
 Nowhere does his jacket say FRAGILE,
 HANDLE WITH CARE.

His ear fills up with breathing.
 He hears the hum of a boy's dream
 deep inside him.

We're not going to be able
 to live in this world
 if we're not willing to do what he's doing
 with one another.

The road will only be wide.
 The rain will never stop falling.
 Naomi Shihab Nye

A friend of mine posted this poem on their Facebook page last Friday night. As so many world-wide are mourning the tragic deaths of so many innocent people in the Newtown tragedy, let us all be mindful of the ways we relate and connect with one another.

Christmas is the season when we celebrate the coming of God in Jesus Christ, the bold action of Incarnate goodness in a broken and sinful world. May that act of God's love for all the world be both a comfort and a call to follow for us in the days to come.

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Last Sunday as we gathered, with such tender hearts at the tragic deaths of young children and other innocents in Newtown, our worship began with the voices of the Cherub singers, our youngest children's choir, bringing their joy and enthusiasm to our sanctuary. The sermon's focus shifted from being on the coming of John the Baptist to the promises of God that the light of God's love may be threatened by darkness at times, but will always shine triumphantly.

This coming Sunday, December 23rd, we will celebrate our annual 4th Advent Lessons and Carols service. During this, we will draw inspiration from the good news of the Scripture read aloud, complemented by the spirited songs of the season sung in carols and special music from the choir.

On Christmas Eve, December 24th, we will be having two services. The 5:30 PM Family Service will combine elements of a Christmas pageant with the songs and lessons of the season. We will celebrate our traditional Christmas Candle Lighting Service at 9:00 PM. May we be together in this special season so that we can draw inspiration from the ancient story, strength from the experience of being a worshipping community, and bear witness to the world in our confidence and hope in the wonder of God's love which comes to us in Jesus Christ.

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As I write this on Friday morning, December 21st, each of us has likely, in our own way and time, managed to find time today to honor Governor Malloy's call for a moment of silence to remember the victims in the Newtown shooting last week. Mayor George Apel, along with Governor Malloy, requested that the church bells be rung 26 times this day at 9:30 AM to remember and honor the victims killed at the Sandy Hook Elementary School . Many thanks to Al and Marilyn Newton for their help today in honoring this request. Al and Marilyn worked to be sure our church bell was tolled for the victims as had been requested.

The CT Conference webmaster reported, that as of yesterday afternoon, 124 churches had acknowledged that they would ring bells or find other ways to remember the victims. Some churches no longer have bells. One pastor planned to ring a handbell on the church steps in place of a carillon bell.