



The Church Bell

The Federated Church of Christ, Brooklyn, CT



United Church of Christ and American Baptist Churches U.S.A.



Sunday Worship & Sunday School
10:00am

Church Office Hours:
Tuesday – Thursday
9:00am – 1:00pm

Pastor:
Rev. Mary L. Apicella

Worship Accompanist:
David Gonzalez

Christian Education Director:
Therese Carpentier

Secretary:
Linda Huber

Newsletter for January 2015

Notes from Pastor Mary

*When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:*

*To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among brothers,
To make music in the heart. ~ Dr. Howard Thurman*

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This Christmas meditation, entitled "The Work of Christmas," provides an answer to the question that many people often feel but don't voice aloud: "Jesus is born...now what?"

Once the sun sets on the 25th box on the calendar, for many families it is be time to "put Christmas away." The multicolored and clear lights are taken down and decorations go back into their boxes; ornaments are carefully removed from the live Christmas tree, which is now shedding its green and brown needles as it is dragged (rather unceremoniously, compared to the care taken when bringing the evergreen into the house), to the curb. Living rooms can seem suddenly very large and cool without the lights and smells and sounds of the holiday, and a sense of nostalgia may creep around the edges of our spirits as we wonder how Christmas came and went by so quickly.

Yet Thurman gives us something to hold on to – a memory and a mission that we can claim from our time of awe and wonder by the manger. *“To find the lost, to heal the broken, to feed the hungry, to release the prisoner, to rebuild the nations, to bring peace among our brothers and sisters, neighbors and friends, to make music in the heart.”*

And what better way to be about the work of Christmas than with others who are also working alongside you? At the Federated Church this year, we continue to do the work of Christmas – keeping the Christ light burning bright in our hearts and in our worship together.

Thank you for all the ways you bear the light of Christ, and I am grateful to begin this year of continuing the work of Christmas with you.

~ In Peace, Pastor Mary



Dr. Howard Thurman was an influential author, philosopher, theologian, educator and civil rights leader. He was Dean of Theology and the chapels at Howard University and Boston University for more than two decades, wrote 20 books, and in 1944 helped found the first racially integrated, multicultural church in the United States, The Fellowship Church for All Peoples, in San Francisco, CA.

Christian Education Notes

I want to thank you all for thinking of me this Christmas, it is a pleasure to work with such wonderful people. Also I would like to thank Ann Lambert for her generous donation from Kohl's to help raise money at the Sugar Plum Fair for our adopted families. A special thanks to Katherine Stellitano and Cindy Rollins for their generous donations of recipes in a jar gift to also sell at the fair to generate money for our adopted families. We raised a total of \$190.00 towards gifts and gift cards for the two families we had. I hope everyone enjoyed their Christmas season and is able to reflect on the true meaning of the season.

Upcoming events for the Sunday School include a Children's Coffee hour set for January 18th after the service. We will begin our rehearsing a song in our Sunday School classes for our Palm Sunday service. Hope your children can attend to start getting ready for our next big season in our church.

God bless you all!

Therese H. Carpentier

Women's Group

Many thanks to everyone who helped to make the 2014 such a resounding success. Despite a cold rainy day, there was a steady stream of customers for the hot donuts, pulla, cookies, knives, old jewelry, wreaths and handmade items. The Women's Group is very thankful for all of the donations we received from everyone. (Don't forget this is the perfect time to start a box with those Christmas decorations that just aren't fun anymore for Hannah's Attic Treasures)

The WCGCS is starting to replace some of the wobbly coffee hour card tables. We have also finished the paperwork and paid the \$100 fee for a food permit from NEDDH. This enables us to use the church kitchen to serve food throughout the year without reapplying for a food permit each time.

The WCGCS does not meet in January or February (but we will be starting projects the next bazaar). Our next meeting will be Monday, March 9th at 1 PM in the Chapel meeting room. We will be finalizing plans for the spring Lasagna Supper on March 28th.

Deacons

The Deacons would like to wish each and every one a very Happy New Year

January Birthdays & Anniversaries

1/5/2015 John Wilcox



News from the Thrift Shoppe

The Thrift Shoppe will be closing for the year on
Dec. 21st 2014 and re-open on Feb. 13th 2015.

Thank You to all who have volunteered, donated,
And supported this ministry!

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE:

Loving God, hear our prayers...

- We pray for those who are grieving the loss of loved ones, especially for David Kettelle on the death of his partner, Tony; and for the Alters family upon the death of their father, Harry.
- We pray for Doris H., who is recuperating after a fall a few weeks ago.
- We pray for all who experience depression, and for their families and loved ones.
- We pray for Jesse and Danielle, who are dealing with fertility issues.
- We pray for those who are struggling with illness; for Larry, Betsy B's brother, undergoing treatment for pancreatic cancer; for Evelyn C.; for Hillar, who has been diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumor, and for his family as they make decisions about treatment; **for Diane S.'s daughter who will have surgery in the fall**, and for her brother-in-law's mother; for Enddie and Leah as they go through treatment for cancer.
- We continue to offer special prayers for Billy, son of Josh and Aleah D., and great nephew of Jean B., whose prognosis is better, but still has a long way to go in recovering from seizures.
- We pray for those who are facing surgeries, are in pain, and for relief and freedom from all that makes life a struggle.
- We pray for peace in our world, particularly in Ferguson, Missouri, between Gaza and Israel, Ukraine and Russia, in Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Iran; we pray for all those impacted by the flooding in the Southwest; we pray continually for the girls who have been kidnapped in Nigeria, for their families and their communities and swift action for international efforts to bring the girls back home safely.

Gracious God, we give you thanks...

- for a loving and supportive church family.
- for the people in our lives who remind us of God's love and presence, even in the midst of struggle.
- for teachers and all those who care for and instruct our children in the ways of knowledge, respect for others, and compassion for the world.



The Federated Church of Christ, Brooklyn, CT

15 Hartford Road
PO Box 204
Brooklyn, CT 06234

Moderator: Mark Rollins 860-779-1784
moderator@federatedchurchbrooklynct.org

Worship Committee: Sandy Motasky
860-974-1202

Clerk: Kathryn Stellitano 860-
flowers@federatedchurchbrooklynct.org

Church Bell: Linda Huber
860-774-9817

Deacon Contact:

@federatedchurchbrooklynct.org

churchbell@federatedchurchbrooklynct.org

Trustee: Russ Parker
@federatedchurchbrooklynct.org

**United Church of Christ Interim
Eastern Regional Minister:**

er: Lori Bailey 860-774-4418
lori@federatedchurchbrooklynct.org

Rev. Tom Clough 860-928-0765
toms@ctucc.org <mailto:tome@ctucc.org>

Parish Relations: Cindy Rollins
-1784

**American Baptist Churches of
Connecticut Executive Minister:**

an Education Director:
Carpentier 860-230-2284
ned@federatedchurchbrooklynct.org

Rev. Judy Allbee 888-236-5421
jallbee@abconn.org

's Group (WCGCS):
n Stellitano

OFFICE PHONE:
(860) 774-9817

PASTOR'S PHONE:
(860) 774-3761

CHURCH OFFICE E-MAIL:
federated.church@snet.net

PASTOR'S EMAIL:
minister@federatedchurchbrooklynct.org

WEBSITE:
<http://www.federatedchurchbrooklynct.org>

FIND US ON FACEBOOK:
[www.facebook.com/
federatedchurchbrooklynct](http://www.facebook.com/federatedchurchbrooklynct)

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Moderator: Mark Rollins 860-779-1784
moderator@federatedchurchbrooklynct.org

Clerk: Kathryn Stellitano 860-774-9210
flowers@federatedchurchbrooklynct.org

Deacon Contact:
deacons@federatedchurchbrooklynct.org

Head Trustee: Russ Parker
trustees@federatedchurchbrooklynct.org

Treasurer: Lori Bailey 860-774-4418
treasurer@federatedchurchbrooklynct.org

Pastor/Parish Relations: Cindy Rollins
860-779-1784

Christian Education Director:
Therese Carpentier 860-230-2284
christianed@federatedchurchbrooklynct.org

Woman's Group (WGCs): Kathryn
