

**The SPIRE**  
**Park Avenue Congregational Church**  
The United Church of Christ  
**Arlington, Massachusetts**

The Rev. Dr. William Albright, Pastor

December, 2010

*Celebrate Christmas with us*

<i>Christmas Concert and Carol Sing</i>	Sunday, December 5 3:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary
<i>Sarah's Circle</i> discusses <i>The Handmaid and the Carpenter</i>	Saturday, December 11 10:00 a.m., location TBD
<i>Christmas Pageant</i> during worship service	Sunday, December 12 10:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary
<i>Women's Guild Holiday Program</i>	Thursday, December 16 11:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Room
<i>Christmas Eve Worship</i> Family-oriented service followed by birthday cake for Jesus Candlelight service with Holy Communion	Friday, December 24 4:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m.

*more details inside*

**PLUS**

Council of Deacons election results

Update on the Capital Campaign

Holiday Fair results

## **Christian Education News**

### **Advent**

There are materials for observing Advent at home on the table in the narthex.

### **Christmas Pageant**

Our Christmas pageant will be on Sunday, December 12, during the worship service. We've been talking about the pageant in Sunday School and practicing music. If your child does not yet have a part, but would like to be in the pageant, please talk to Kate.

We'll have a rehearsal for the pageant on Saturday, December 11, from 9:30-11:30 in the sanctuary. Please make every effort to come to the rehearsal. It is our only rehearsal. It makes kids feel more comfortable when they know what to expect during the pageant and it makes Sunday morning a lot smoother when we know that everyone has a costume that fits!

### **Sunday School**

There will be no Sunday School on December 26.

### **Youth Groups**

Both youth groups will help sort gifts for City Mission Society at First Church in Winchester on Sunday, December 19. Look for details in the youth group newsletter.

### **PACC-Men will dine at Tango Restaurant**

The PACC-Men will have dinner at Tango Argentinian Restaurant, 464 Massachusetts Ave., Arlington, at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, December 7. All men are cordially invited. Gather at the church at 7:15 p.m. to car pool to Tango for 7:30 arrival or just meet us there. RSVP to Mike Rich by 3:30 on December 7 so the restaurant will have time to set up to accommodate us and we'll know whether to wait for you at church.

### **Sarah's Circle reads novel about the Nativity**

Sarah's Circle will meet Saturday, December 11, to discuss *The Handmaid and the Carpenter: A Novel* by Elizabeth Berg. This understated dramatization of the Nativity story casts Mary and Joseph as provincial teenagers who try to honor family tradition in spite of challenging circumstances. Discussion will begin at 10:00 a.m.; those who wish to meditate should come at 9:30 a.m. The group will be in the Fellowship Room or the Fireplace Room – watch for further announcements on location. If you have questions, speak with Merrith Sabo-Jones.

## **Bill Albright to present Christmas program to Guild December 16**

Christmas will be the theme when Women's Guild meets on Thursday, December 16. All women are cordially invited to come to the Fellowship Room at 11:00 a.m. for lunch followed by a program by our minister, Bill Albright. Doris Wilson and Beverly Miller will be hostesses.

## **Council of Deacons Election Results**

The Election Committee is pleased to report the results of the election of the 2011 Council of Deacons. Margaret Bell, Lauren Evans and Gary Kane were reelected to return to the Council. Norma Allen, Tim Durning, Betty Rich and Josh Young were newly elected to the Council. Both those groups have terms ending in 2012.

Returning to the Council to finish their terms that do not expire until the end of 2011 are Valerie Censabella, Don Cohn, Linda Cohn, Karen Friedman, Scott Jones, Anne Kelly Contini, Jeff Steinheider and Barbara Wagner.

Thanks to the election committee, Bill Albright, Valerie Censabella, Don Cohn, Mike Rich and Doug Record for their work, to all who voted, to our new and returning Council of Deacons members and to the Deacons who have served two terms under our new system and were not eligible for reelection this year: Hong Chin, Anita Malone Clarke, Doug Record and Mike Rich for their service.

Mike Rich, Moderator

## **Invite, Invite!**

The Christmas season is upon us and it's a great time to invite your friends and family to join you at PACC. The Christmas Concert, the children's Christmas Pageant or one of the Christmas Eve services are all opportunities to invite someone to attend with you. Christmas is a time when many people are receptive to joining the celebration, and members are more comfortable extending an invitation, so let's take advantage of that. The majority of new members are a result of an invitation from a current member of the church to participate in an event at church, so this joyous season is a chance to share the blessings we have found here and to grow our PACC family.

Doug Record and Karen Stark on behalf of the Membership Ministry

## **Capital Campaign in Action**

Thanks to the success of our Capital Campaign and the dedication and hard work of many, the transformation of the Chapel into the Fellowship Room is nearly complete. As many of you saw, the first use of our beautiful new gathering place was as the Holiday Fair “Pie Shoppe”. Many thanks to those who worked long and hard to get it ready for use. One painting party went until 1 a.m.! Those who helped with the painting were Hong Chin, Paul Domenichella, Karen Friedman, Gary Kane, Victor McNary, Eric and Christine Rochon, Jeff Steinheider, Keith Truesdale and Christie and Josh Young.

The Fellowship Room was the overwhelming choice as the new name for the space that used to be the Chapel. Of \$185 donated in the renaming contest, \$135 was for The Fellowship Room. Thank you to all who participated!

Stay tuned for the details on the dedication of the Fellowship Room.

Next up: The Capital Campaign Implementation Committee has already begun planning for the organ restoration and the installation of the handicapped access ramp and lift. The committee is working on the staging of these projects, taking into consideration the worship calendar, contractor availability, and the timing of pledge receipts.

Outreach: In June, at the end of the first year of our three-year pledge period, just over \$6000 (five percent of that first year's revenue) was set aside for the outreach component of the Capital Campaign. We will decide as a congregation what special outreach project or projects will be supported with this money and when it will be used. The Mission and Justice Ministry is creating a form for people to recommend projects and give some information about them. These forms will be available after the first of the year.

As of this quarter campaign pledges are coming in on target. If you haven't already done so, please consider mailing in your second year pledge by December 31<sup>st</sup>. Thanks to all who have invested so generously in the future of our church.

## **We have a new stove**

Thanks to Eric Rochon, who was working on a home renovation that included removal of a commercial stove, we have replaced the stove in the main kitchen with one that should work more dependably. We are grateful not only to Eric for arranging for the gift but also to him, Jeff Steinheider and Victor McNary who removed our old stove and brought in the new one.

## **THANKS, EVERYONE!**

A brief note, but a huge thank you, to all who participated in any way in this year's HOLIDAY FAIR. If you donated anything - baked, cooked, hand-crafted, purchased, wrote a check or just passed something along - thank you! If you worked in any capacity during the weeks leading up to the fair or at the fair itself - planning, publicizing, setting up, pricing, preparing or serving food, selling merchandise, cleaning up - thank you! If you purchased gifts, ornaments, meals, treats, baskets, leftovers or anything else - thank you!

The Fair is a huge undertaking and could not be accomplished without the generous outpouring of time and talents that we saw once again during this annual event. To date, we have netted over \$10,300, well above the \$9000 budgeted amount. In addition to many from our youth groups who served lasagna and pie, at least 60 people worked in some capacity to help the fair run smoothly and successfully. Thank you, everyone, for a job exceedingly well done!

### **Cookie Walk**

Thank you all so very much for all of the cookies everyone made, including those who went home on Friday night and baked some more.. Words are difficult to come by when it comes to all of that. And I was most grateful to all those who helped out by working Friday night and Saturday. I really appreciated everyone's help, and was so sorry that Judy Fox was sick and unable to help us out. She came all the way from Hawaii to enjoy the work and the people. I thank her for that. Job well done!!!!!!!!!!!!

Connie Dugan

## **Get your oranges and grapefruit**

PACC again will be ordering delicious oranges and pink grapefruit as a fund raising project in December 2010 and March 2011. The oranges come about 35-40 to a box, and in December will be seedless navels (very juicy and sweet; usually one orange will fill a 6 oz. glass). The grapefruit come about 20 to a box, and will be pink both times. They are \$28 per box, \$14 a half box ... and, yes, you may buy 1/2 box of each, or 1-1/2 boxes, or... Although the orchard went up in price, and thus we have had to also, it is still about the same price as the grocery store on a per-pound basis, and a far better price than the gift catalogs. They make good gifts for others and good healthy eating for yourselves. If you are interested, please pick up a form from the table in the narthex, fill it out and return to me (or to Kathy in the office) with a check or cash fruit by December 5 for delivery on December 11. The orchard will not ship the fruit if they are unhappy with the quality for any reason, so no checks will be cashed until the fruit arrives. Thank you.

Jill Lewis

*20 Years of Christmas*  
*Christmas Concert and Carol Sing*

**Featuring PACC's Festival and Youth Choirs**

Jeffrey Brody, Festival Choir Director

Andrea Hart, Youth Choir Director

Sunday, December 5 at 3:00 p.m. in our Sanctuary

Join us for a reception following the concert in Parish Hall.

Free will donation to benefit the PACC Music Program.



## *What's Happening at PACC*

Thu.	Dec. 2	10:00 a.m.	Coffee Group in the Fellowship Room
		7:30 p.m.	Choir rehearsal in the Nicoll Room
Sat.	Dec. 4	10:00 a.m.	Concert rehearsal in the Sanctuary
Sun.	Dec. 5	10:00 a.m.	Worship service includes Communion
		11:30 a.m.	Coffee Hour in the Parish Hall
		11:45 a.m.	Youth Choir rehearsal in the Nicoll Room
		3:00 p.m.	Christmas Concert in the Sanctuary, reception follows
Tue.	Dec. 7	7:30 p.m.	PACC-Men at Tango Restaurant, 464 Mass. Ave., Arlington
Wed.	Dec. 8	7:30 p.m.	Evening Bible Group in the Fireplace Room
Thu.	Dec. 9	7:00 p.m.	Capital Campaign Implementation Group, Fellowship Room
Sat.	Dec. 11	9:30 a.m.	Pageant rehearsal in the Sanctuary
		9:30 a.m.	Sarah's Circle, location TBD
Sun.	Dec. 12	9:20 a.m.	Pageant preparation
		10:00 a.m.	Christmas Pageant during the worship service, Sanctuary
		11:15 a.m.	Coffee Hour in the Parish Hall
Mon.	Dec. 13	7:30 p.m.	Council of Deacons in the Fellowship Room
Wed.	Dec. 15	10:30 a.m.	Staff meeting in the Fireplace Room
Thu.	Dec. 16	11:00 a.m.	Women's Guild in the Fellowship Room
		7:30 p.m.	Fellowship & Care Ministry at the Parsonage
		7:30 p.m.	Choir rehearsal in the Nicoll Room
Sun.	Dec. 19	9:20 a.m.	Youth Choir rehearsal in the Sanctuary
		10:00 a.m.	Worship service
		11:15 a.m.	Communion in the Sanctuary
		11:15 a.m.	Coffee Hour in the Parish Hall
		TBA	Youth Groups sort gifts for City Mission Society
Fri.	Dec. 24		Office closed
		4:00 p.m.	Family-oriented Christmas Eve worship in the Sanctuary
		10:00 p.m.	Candlelight Christmas Eve worship in the Sanctuary
Sun.	Dec. 26	10:00 a.m.	Worship service
		11:15 a.m.	Coffee Hour in the Parish Hall
Mon.	Dec. 27		Deadline for January <i>Spire</i>
Fri.	Dec. 31		Office closed

*coming later in the year*

Sun.	Jan. 23	12:00 non	Annual Meeting in the Parish Hall
Sat.	Mar. 5	3:00 p.m.	Trumpet and Organ Concert in the Sanctuary
Sun.	Apr. 3	3:00 p.m.	Vox Lucens Concert in the Sanctuary

## Office hours at Christmastime

The church office will be closed December 24 and 31. On the other days during the holiday weeks office hours may be reduced. Please call ahead if you need to get into the building during that time.

## End of year notices

### 2010 Contributions due December 31

Donors must *deliver* donations on or by December 31 in order to claim a charitable contribution deduction on income taxes for 2010. Checks sent in the mail with postmarks of 2010 also qualify. The date on the check does not determine deductibility. Thank you.

### Gifts of stock

The church has a brokerage account in order to accept gifts of stock. If you would like to make such a donation, contact Gary Kane or Tim Durning about the procedure.

### Have you sent in your pledge?

Thank you to all the people who responded promptly to our stewardship drive! As of November 23 we have received 68 pledge cards with financial commitments for next year; for 2010 we have 90 pledges. Have you returned your card yet? If you need one, there are some on the literature rack in the narthex, or call the office, and we will mail one to you. To help us develop a budget, please return your pledge cards by December 6.

### Offering envelopes for 2011

If you indicated on your pledge card that you would like offering envelopes, you will find a box with your name on the table in the narthex beginning December 19.

### Submit bills by December 29

In order for our 2010 financial reports to accurately reflect the year's activity, bills should be approved and submitted for payment (i.e., placed in the bright pink folder) by December 29 if possible. Deacons: Check your folder for invoices waiting for approval.

### Annual reports due January 3

Annual reports from staff, ministries and other groups are due in the office on Monday, January 3. The combined reports will be available in the narthex on January 9 and 16.

**Financial Update:** At the end of November payments on pledges are \$10,800 behind budget. There are 21 pledging individuals / households that are more than \$100 behind. Is your pledge up to date? If you have questions, call Kathy in the office.

## Advent Outreach

We are sponsoring two familiar outreach projects and one new project this Advent season – Adopt-A-Family, City Mission Society Christmas Shop, and Adopt-A-Vet.

**Adopt-A-Family** is organized by the Town of Arlington and gifts go to Arlington families. The “wish lists” have been filled!! Please bring **wrapped** gifts to church by December 5<sup>th</sup>.

**The Christmas Shop** is sponsored by the City Mission Society. Suggested gifts are listed below. Please bring a new **unwrapped** gift to church by December 12th. Gifts may be left under the Christmas tree. The PACC Youth Group will help sort gifts at First Church in Winchester on December 19th. We hope some of the PACC adults will join them. If you would like to help sort gifts, please contact Valerie Censabella, Karen Friedman or Jill Lewis.

### Christmas Shop Gift Suggestions

- Winter coats, sweaters and sweatshirts (large sizes especially)
- Hats, mittens, gloves and fleece scarves
- White socks, underwear
- Blankets and backpacks
- Toys, games, and books for all ages
- Gift cards from Target, Walgreens, CVS, Kohls or other merchants
- Basic toiletries to pack in CMS “Spread the Joy” bags to be shared with people who are homeless

***NEW* Adopt-A-Vet** is sponsored by the New England Center for Homeless Veterans. We will receive wish lists from NECHV and you may sign up in Parish Hall if you would like to provide a gift for a homeless veteran this Christmas. Additional information will follow.

### **Christmas Fund**

This year’s Christmas offering will be directed toward The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund. The Christmas Fund is one of the UCC’s Special Mission Offerings and helps provide pension and health premium supplementation to low-income retired church workers, emergency grants to clergy families in need, and Christmas “thank you” checks to retired clergy.

## **Pleasant Street Church votes to close**

In an email to Bill Albright, the Rev. Reebee Girash, pastor of Pleasant Street Congregational Church, wrote, "Oct. 31, in an all church meeting after church, PSCC voted to begin the process of closing. What the congregation wants to do now, and is able to do, is to offer thanks to God for 166 years of faithful ministry, to offer a bright legacy of financial support to some other non-profits, to take care of each other and figure out ways to stay in fellowship after the closing, and to do all of this with as much grace as possible.

"At this moment, we expect that we will have a final Sunday morning service January 30, and a party & legacy worship service the evening of February 5, 2011, to which the wider community, friends of PSCC, and 'alums' will be invited. I hope you'll plan to be there, and invite PACC members, too. The building will be sold, and eventually the proceeds distributed and the corporation closed. My own duties at PSCC will conclude at the end of February."

Our thoughts and prayers are with the members and staff of Pleasant Street Church at this bittersweet time in the life of the congregation.

### **Please don't send us a Christmas card**

Again this year, we suggest that you greet all your friends at PACC with one Christmas card by hanging a card from you or your family on the tree in the narthex. You may also mail your card to the church office. Use the money that you don't spend on extra cards and postage to support a favorite charity. The names of those who placed cards on the tree will be listed in the January *Spire*.

## *Sanctuary Christmas Flowers*

I/We wish to have poinsettias for the sanctuary given in memory of/in honor of

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# Red \_\_\_\_\_ # White \_\_\_\_\_ # Pink \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Please deliver to shut-ins \_\_\_\_\_ I will pick up

(You may take your plant after the late service on Christmas Eve.)

The cost is **\$9.00** per plant. Please enclose your payment with this order. Checks should be made payable to the Park Avenue Congregational Church with a notation for flowers. Please return order and check to the church office no later than **December 7**.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

*Merry Christmas*

*Bill Albright Kate Lindheim Sue McNary  
Jeffrey D. Brody Andrea Hart  
Kathy Richardson Victor McNary*