

Fourth Notes

December 2008

Fourth Presbyterian Church * 340 Dorchester Street, South Boston, MA 02127 * 617-268-1281

Pastor Burns Stanfield -- bstanfield@hds.harvard.edu Dir. Children & Youth Tim Hughes- timhughes79@gmail.com

ADVENT 2008 -

O That You Would Rend the Heavens and Come

Advent begins Sunday, November 30, and with it a brand new liturgical year. We all know that the weeks before Christmas can be festive, hectic, wonderful, overwhelming, and more. Those of us on the Worship Team invite you to let these days be holy.

This year we take our cue from the first verse of the first reading for the First Sunday, Isaiah 64: "O that You would rend the heavens and come down..."

Put another way, we begin Advent with a plea. One doesn't have to look hard to find distressing news, and we begin Advent by naming that ache that calls for God to come down and make all things right.

In the richness of our readings for Advent, however, we see that plea to God become exhortations to each other: Prepare a way! Repent! The Spirit of the Lord is upon me! Repair! Build!

It's all a part of the Advent season, and we invite to make the most of this time of yearning, waiting and preparing. Our Sunday worship will be the cornerstones of this congregational watch, but we offer other opportunities to bless this time, as well.

There is our Sunday morning class, "Deck the Hall," where we'll reflect on the season as we decorate the fellowship hall. There is time for Soup and a Service of Taize Sung Prayer on Wednesday evenings, there is a chance to sing with the choir (after Taize), there is caroling, and of course there is worship – where we will be blessed this month through weekly communion, a children's procession of Light, art and music – all pieces of our holy plea.

Look especially for the artwork that Lauren Gallant has created.

We know it is a busy time for all, but we invite you to set some bit of time each week to yearn, hope, and prepare.

Sundays: Deck the Hall

Lauren Gallant leads a new Sunday morning class starting November 30, 9:30am. Like the well-received November Sunday School class, "Deck the Hall" will include chances to create art as we do our theological reflections. This time, we reflect on Advent and we decorate the fellowship hall.

All are welcome, including those who claim to be unartistic!

Note that we meet in the hall!

wednesday prayer & soup gathering

So how do we *really* prepare for the Coming Light? With all the concerts, parties and shopping opportunities, what is the best way to prepare a way for the Divine. One suggestion – The Practice of Prayer.

Every Wednesday night of Advent, we'll gather for a light supper at 5:30pm.. Then at 6:15pm we will have our prayer time. (Children are welcome, by the way, but tutoring is also available and happening at the same time.)

The prayer service is in the style of Taize. We sing simple chants, have an extended time of silence,

and share candlelight. There is also a scripture reading.

In the darkness, with candlelight, we will pray for the Light. Come join us.

caroling party- dec 18

The Stanfields host the annual Christmas caroling party on THURSDAY, December 18, 6pm-8:30. Soup, bread and whatever-folks-feel-like-bringing will be available at 6pm. We'll go out to sing around 7pm, and then we can re-gather for desserts and such.

The Stanfield's home is at 11 Norway Road in Milton (02186). The "Capen" stop on the Ashmont-Mattapan trolley is two blocks away. For drivers, take exit 12 on 93 to Gallivan, then south on Adams, then right on Eliot. Take Eliot to Cliff, and left on to Norway.

Welcome new members!

We have a great group of newcomers in our midst, several of whom have decided to officially join Fourth Church. Welcome to:

Franco Akum, who escaped from political imprisonment in Cameroon to make it to the US.

Tim Sanchez, a physics doctoral student at Brandeis and a great musician.

Tim's wife, Michelle Chaplin Sanchez, a student at Harvard Divinity School and a musician.

Barbara Turcotte, who has come to us after the closing of her beloved St. Matt's. She's now retired and was once named "Homemaker of the Year" by her company!

Alison Slade- our voice teacher and an expectant mom.

Ben Potter, a student athlete who at UMass Boston who lives on Broadway.

Mike Motia, a student at Harvard Divinity who keeps great rhythm on his low-slung guitar.

Tyiesha Thompson, mother of Isiah and Jason, and a willing volunteer with youth group & Sunday School.

Antonia Barros, mother of Vany, who loves to cook and is our key food pantry translator: Spanish, Portugese, Cape Verdean Creole!

And two more likely members are on the way: Young Ra Rhee and Mia Kim, two young women from South Korea now studying at Harvard. Welcome!!

church birthday – dec 14and a Raise the Roof Party!!

So have you noticed? Not only did we renovate (and make accessible) two bathrooms, but we replaced a 40 year-old roof and sealed the building with new, insulated siding. It's a beautiful look, the building is sealed, and we are ready to plan a renovation of the fellowship hall for next year.

We are also ready to have a PARTY, a "Raise the Roof Party." Sunday, December 14, after church!

That is the Sunday closest to our anniversary, so we can consider it a "Raise the Roof Birthday Party" as we Thank God for 138 years of history and the good space for many years into the future.

Bring some food if you can. The Golden Group will have light refreshments and we've engaged young caterer Matt Canton to help us out.

Naturally, it's also a day for birthday cake, and a chance to give birthday presents to the church. It's fun to get in the spirit and bring simple gifts, even wrapping them!

Here's a wish list...

Colored copy paper
Dish detergent
Good Sponges (with scrunch side)
Glue sticks
Masking Tape
Garbage Bags (42 gal & kitchen size)
Other cleaning supplies
Microphone cords and Mic clips
Markers

We will have a band for the occasion, led by Thatcher's drumming. Come celebrate!

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE – 7pm

Our annual Christmas Eve Worship Service takes place at 7pm. There will be lessons, carols, this year's all-ages Christmas Pageant, and our candlelight circle. There will be a rehearsal for the pageant after the

childrens party (Sunday, December 21, after worship). But there are also many ways to participate without benefit of rehearsal!

Please check in with Tim Hughes or Burns Stanfield if you or somebody in your family is interested in participating in the pageant. Again, ALL AGES are welcome!

pledge cards out there!

As of press time, we have \$59,000 in pledges toward 2009. Our goal is \$125,000. Please turn in a pledge by mail, by phone, or by email. Session meets December 1 to start making major budget decisions on staff, mission and pastor's time. They need to know our financial commitments to the church. Pledge cards are available. Feel free also to email Burns or treasurer Susan Devine (suzzand@verizon.net)

gingerbread house party

A Saturday morning gingerbread house-making festival has become an important piece of our Advent traditions. Alice Hageman has been our leader in this endeavor, and she needs lots of good helpers. It takes place Saturday morning, December 20. Children and adults will have a chance to build gingerbread houses. Adult helpers are much appreciated!! See Alice or Tim to volunteer.

children's party on Sunday the 21st

Each year, a major outreach to community children for us is our Christmas Party the Sunday before the big day. We expect a big crowd and welcome your

help: cash donations help, as do offerings of time to : supervise, lead crafts, clean up, cook, stuff stockings, dress up as a big guy in a red suit...See Tim Hughes to help. Donations of time and/or money are needed. \$500 makes this happen!

weekend of performances

We are fast approaching that December season of frequent performances!

FRIDAY and SATURDAY, December 12 and 13 -- Two nights -- of "Lion King -- 7pm SUNDAY, Dec 14 - music recitals at 4:30 and 5:45, with refreshments in between.

prayers...

It has been great to see Phyllis Curtis again!

And great to welcome back for visits friends like Cindy Curtis Brown, Emilee Whitehurst, Georgia Frank, Jeff McArn (and kids), Tim Ellis, and the McLarens!

Prayers for Margaret Brennan, Erna Deeb, David McKenzie, the Titakum's family members in the Cameroon, Lauren Gallant (whose grandparent passed recently), David Courage's brothers.

Prayers, too, for expectant parents: Tara McKee and Trinity Ray, Alison Slade & Peter.

We celebrate with Bobby Hicks and Kimberly Hicks that their security guard union negotiated a solid new deal. Kim was on the negotiation team.

Prayers for Wayne Fuller and Erin Riddle.

Sugar Long received a BIG award from ABCD for community service !

Fourth Presbyterian Church
340 Dorchester Street
South Boston, MA 02127

Return Service Requested

Non-Profit Organization
US Postage
PAID
Boston, MA
PERMIT # 50565