

Fourth Notes

December 2009

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

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ADVENT 2009 - *Stand Up and Raise Your Heads*



Advent begins Sunday, November 29, 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 Gospel reading for the First Sunday, Luke 21: "Stand up and raise your heads..."

Luke 21 speaks of Christ's return and the dramatic signs that announce that coming. The "standing up" verse is telling us to look for those signals. "Your redemption is drawing near."

We invite you to stand up and look for signs of God's coming. Speaking more broadly, we invite you to *stand up* this Advent as part of receiving the Christ. Stand up as part of re-orienting yourself in the right direction. Stand up to stand with others. Stand up because you are

worthy of a visit from God. Stand up so you can welcome and receive God-with-us, Emmanuel.

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

There is our Sunday morning class, "Raise Up," where we'll reflect on ways we raise our heads, spirits, voices and stories. There is time for Soup and a Service of Taize Sung Prayer on Wednesday evenings, there is a chance to pray and have communion on Thursdays (7pm), and there are choir rehearsals on Thursday (7:30). 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 standing.

Look especially for the artwork that will be presented in the new hall.

We know it is a busy time for all, but we invite you to set some bit of time each week to yearn, hope, & raise your heads to see and behold.

Sundays: Raise Up

Lauren Gallant and Kristin Raley lead a new Sunday morning class starting November 29, 9:30am. Like the well-received November Sunday School class, "Raise Up" will include chances to create art as we do our theological reflections. We'll also explore prayer practices for Advent. We raise our voice, our hearts, our hands, our stories. All are welcome, including those who are brand new to the idea of advent.

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 6:00pm 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.

Communion thursdays

Pray with sung chants on Wednesday nights. Pray around the communion table on Thursday nights, 7pm-7:30. December 3 and 10.

caroling party- dec 17

The Stanfields host the annual Christmas caroling party on THURSDAY, December 17, 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, 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:

Solomon Chum, who escaped from political threats in Cameroon for asylum in the US.

Sarah Manoucheheri, a student at Harvard Divinity School who does remarkable work with our youth and worked with Mazemakers in 09

Amanda Lee, a Southie resident who teaches in Weymouth and sings in our choir.

Justin Wood, Amanda's fiancé who has won big accolades for his professional speed and skill in painting our Sunday school room.

Micah Chu & Foy White-Chu, who have been affiliate members with us for a while. They are staying longer (rah!) and now have a new boy- Stewart.

church birthday – moved to jan 31

The official anniversary of Fourth Presbyterian Church is December 12, so we've typically picked a Sunday near then to celebrate our birthday—replete with cake, presents, the works.

Session is mindful that these anniversaries come right in the middle of Advent and Music/Art performances, so they want to try something a little different this time around.

We'll be sure to sing Happy Birthday on December 13, but we are going to move our celebration to January 31 (which is also the day to ordain and install new elders and deacons).

The hope is that we can keep our focus on Advent during Advent... and then more fully LET LOOSE with a party in January.

Maybe we get that great band to come and play for the party in January??

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 20, 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 \$75,000 in pledges toward 2010. Our goal is \$125,000. Please turn in a pledge by mail, by phone, or by email. Session meets December 8

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, but she will be recuperating from a medical procedure. So we put out a special pitch for helpers to work with Tim! It takes place Saturday morning, December 19. Children and adults will have a chance to build gingerbread houses. Adult helpers are much appreciated!! See Tim to volunteer.

children's party on Sunday the 20th

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 11 and 12 -- Two nights – of “The Music Man” at 7pm and “Into the Woods” at approx. 7:40.

SUNDAY, Dec 13 - music recitals at 4:30 and 5:45, with a short hip hop dance presentation in between.

Annual meeting- jan 24

The congregation has its annual meeting on January 24. We will receive the ANNUAL REPORT and budget for 2010. We'll also elect new officers and vote on the revised terms of call for Pastor Stanfield for 2010.

prayers...

Prayers for Peter Brook, Dave McKenzie and Darla Danilowicz, who have all been very ill.

Remember Margaret Brennan in Marian Manor.

Micah and Foy are adjusting to parenthood with the beautiful Stewart!

Great leadership by the confirmation class for the Hanging of the Greens: Marguerite, Grace, Genna, Nick, Billy, Patrick.

Ernesto De Vera had to back to the Phillipines to tend to some business. He will be gone for a few months. Remember him and the family here: Paz, Patrick, Eileen.

Devina Patel returns from India in February.

Thanks to the food pantry crew for a major distribution right before Thanksgiving.

Shorty and Pam Henry are grateful for the help in moving to their first floor apt. Thanks, Erik, Burns, Ryan, Nathan.

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