

## Word from the Pastor

Christmas greetings!

The latest news reports say that sales on Black Friday were down 11% from same day sales in 2013. For some, that wasn't very good news. There is concern that we might not spend as much for Christmas this year as we have in the past.

But as is always the case, one statistic never tells the whole story. Weeks before Thanksgiving there were numerous reports that this year, the largest discounts on electronics would be the week before Thanksgiving, not on Black Friday. Many stores, including my favorite (Costco) offered their Black Friday prices for an entire week. And retailers bombarded the public with emails reminding us that you could shop on-line and avoid the crowds.

And on a personal note, is it just me, or have we reached our saturation point for sale priced TVs? Years ago, people waited in line overnight to purchase one of five or ten heavily discounted large screen televisions. But after years and years of heavily discounted TVs, there are currently 2.5 TVs for every American household. Maybe sales were down 11% on Black Friday because with an average of 2.5 TVs in every house, people haven't warmed up to the idea of having a 50" TV in the bathroom, which for most is the only room without a TV. So maybe the drop in sales this year was due to the fact that Black Friday was just plain old boring this year...

While buying discounted electronics on Black Friday gets old, something that has endured for centuries is the wonder and awe that comes with preparing for the coming of the Christ child. Whether it's the placement of lights and decorations, selecting a tree, or Christmas carols, the essence of Advent and Christmas is not what we purchase for gifts to family and friends. It's the ageless reminder that even though we live in a crazy world, and while our lives may seem out of control, there is hope.

God's hope doesn't come in the expected ways. God could have selected a family of wealth and high social standing for his only Son. But instead Christ was born and raised by an everyday, common family of that time. God could have had Christ's birth witnessed by educated religious and government leaders. But instead shepherds from the fields and some people from an exotic, far away land were the first to greet our Savior.

Things created by humans, such as large screen TVs, lose our interest quickly. But God's grace, hope and love never become mundane or passé. The true meaning of Christmas becomes more important as our world becomes more chaotic and complicated. And so I hope that each of us has an opportunity take a deep breath during this busy month to ponder the real meaning of Christmas. The celebrations and gifts are nice, but what we really need is to be reminded of the hope we have through Christ.

There are so many ways that the First Church family celebrates during this special time. From the Sunday School Pageant to the lighting of luminaria on Christmas Eve, the Boar's Head Festival to the lighting of the Advent candles on Sunday morning, sharing our joy with our Christmas families to the special Christmas offering, I hope you'll be able to take part in many of those activities during this Advent season.

May the hope, joy and peace of Advent fill your hearts,

*Mike*



DECEMBER 2014

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# Church News...



## CDC News

### Melissa Lillie, Director

November flew by but we managed to accomplish so much! We learned all about owls and read some wonderful stories. We also spent a lot of time talking about Thanksgiving. The class made a wonderful "Thankful tree." It's always nice to see what each child is thankful for. Below is a picture of our annual Thanksgiving Feast!



Check us out on Facebook!

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Childrens-Discovery-Center/112035955474363>

## Christmas Offering

This year's offering will be split between:

Salvation Army Food Bank,  
McCall's Veteran's Home  
and the  
Capital Fund.



Meeting the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday each month from 10 AM until Noon. Call Barb Mazzei for info: 860-379-2900

## In Memory of Mildred Barshaw

Mildred spent every day of her 98 yrs. 9 months on this Earth being a loving, Christian woman, who was generous, caring and giving to all of her family and friends. We are thankful that she got to spend her last few days with her sister Pauline. We received word that she passed away peacefully early on the morning of November 28 2014. Mildred was a faithful member of our church family and lived life gracefully. Please keep her family, including her daughters Kathy Weaving and Judy Savoy, her son James, and her siblings, Pauline, Don and Bob, in your prayers. Rest in Peace!

A Service of Remembrance and Celebration for the Life of Mildred Barshaw will take place on Sunday, December 7, 2014 at 2:00pm in our Church Sanctuary. A reception will follow in the Gathering Room.

## Diaconate Board News...

### Christmas Eve Candle-Light Services!

Services are scheduled for 7:30 and 11:30 PM on Christmas Eve...Come share the greatest gift of all!

### Luminaries for Christmas Eve

Clean (washed) 1 Gallon Milk Jugs are still needed, the more the merrier! We use them to line the sidewalks on Christmas Eve!

### Can you help?

Please come at 5:00 PM Christmas Eve, if you would like to help to prepare milk jugs for the sidewalk luminaries. Many hands are needed. Such a great tradition!

## Christian Education News...

The Christmas Pageant will take place on Dec 14<sup>th</sup> during Worship Service.

We participated in the Bells of Hope bell ringing for the statewide children's adoption project. Next year, plans are underway to ring the bells after worship service.



Baptism of Brody Cyr Nov 9, 2014

## Church Family Thanksgiving Dinner!

Thanks to all the preparers, and set-up and clean-up crew. Youth and Middlers helped this year! Great meal... wonderful fellowship... Family style!





# Christmas Fair

Saturday, December 6th  
8 am until 3 pm

**FIRST CHURCH OF WINSTED**

95 North Main Street

★  
Vendors  
Wreathes  
Luncheon  
Poinsettias  
Rada Knives  
Christmas Trees  
Themed Basket Raffle  
Christmas Arts & Crafts  
Boar's Head Festival Tickets  
Bake Sale



The Christmas Fair at First Church of Winsted, 95 North Main Street, will be held on December 6 from 8 AM until 3 PM.

Old favorites will be available including Themed Basket Raffle, Gramma's Attic, the Jar Extravaganza, Poinsettias available, of course, Christmas TREES outside. They are \$35 his year. (Someone saw Bud and Rich setting up the stands!) Santa's Helpers Shoppe (for kids to do some shopping)!

Vendors will include: Tastefully Simple, Crystal wind chimes, Quilted, crocheted, and knitted items, Jewelry, Xmas ornaments, Burdick Farms' Hiking/walking sticks, Children's accessories (tutus headbands), Rada Knives and of course discounted Boar's Head Festival tickets

The luncheon will feature corn chowder, chili, hot dogs, & assorted desserts will be running from 11 AM until 2 PM. Best Corn Chowder around! Come on down, something for everyone!

**STILL NEEDED:** *Baked Goods including Cookies are for upstairs Cookie Walk and Cake/Pie/Brownie confections for the lunch that is available downstairs.*



# Boar's Head Festival



January 10<sup>th</sup> ~ 1:30 & 4:30 PM  
January 11<sup>th</sup> ~ 3:30 PM

Special Guest



**FIRST CHURCH OF WINSTED**  
95 NORTH MAIN STREET • WINSTED • CT  
**TICKETS: 860-379-6511**

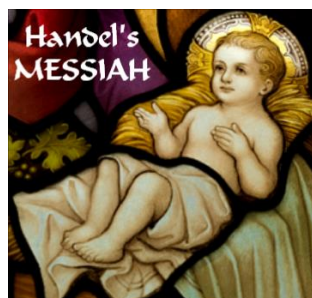
★ ADVANCE PRICES ★  
\$12 Adult ~ \$8 Senior/Student ~ \$3 Child  
In effect until Christmas Day!

★ DOOR PRICES ★  
\$15 Adult ~ \$12 Senior/Student ~ \$5 Child



Artist: Karen Delton

Boars Head Festival fittings after church 12/14, 12/21, 1/4; small choir fitting 12/18 7:15 -- 9:30; or by appointment Allison Graboski call/text 860-294-6790 or email [athall37@yahoo.com](mailto:athall37@yahoo.com)



Handel's MESSIAH  
Community Sing-a-long

December 6<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 PM

Second Congregational  
Church of Winsted

Free Admission!

Willard Minton, *Director*

Christopher King, *Accompanist*

Presented by the Music Committee of the Second  
Congregational Church of Winsted

Call 860-379-4766 for more information

*Non-perishable food items will be accepted for the local  
Salvation Army Food Bank and  
Open Door Soup Kitchen*



## Upcoming Events - Mark Your Calendars!

<i>Celebrate With Us...</i>		<i>Looking Forward</i>	
Sunday - 10 am	Worship	December 6	Christmas Fair
Sunday - 9:15 am	Rehearsal~Rock Starz 4 Jesus	December 6	Messiah Sing-a-long
Tuesday - 5:30 pm	Rehearsal~Worship Choir	December 14	Christmas Pageant
Wednesday - 7:30 pm	AA / Alanon Meetings	December 14	Birthday Party for Jesus
Thursday - 6:00 pm	Rehearsal~Laurel City Singers	December 24	Christmas Eve Service 7:30 PM
		December 25	Christmas Day
		January 4	Boar's Head Fest Rehearsal 1:30
		January 10	Boar's Head Fest 1:30 & 4:30
		January 11	Boar's Head Fest 3:30
<i>Board Meetings...</i>			
December 7	11:15 am	PM Board	
December 9	6:45 pm	Board of Christian Ed.	
December 14	11:15 am	Deacons	
December 23	7:00 pm	Cabinet Meeting	



## ★HAPPY BIRTHDAY★

### December BIRTHDAYS

01 – Nathan Blische  
 02 – Ryan Geddes  
 04 – George Sherman  
 09 – Sandy Bengé  
 09 – Leeane Marvin  
 12 – Duane Blische  
 16 – Natalie Majewski  
 18 – David Ryu  
 19 – Thomas Mazzei  
 19 – Becky Smyth  
 19 – Riley Storrs  
 22 – Makayla Dileo  
 24 – Sean Storrs  
 25 – Jesus  
 26 – Courtney Toomey  
 26 – Emma Hennig  
 31 – Noreen Marchand  
 31 – Bob Steele

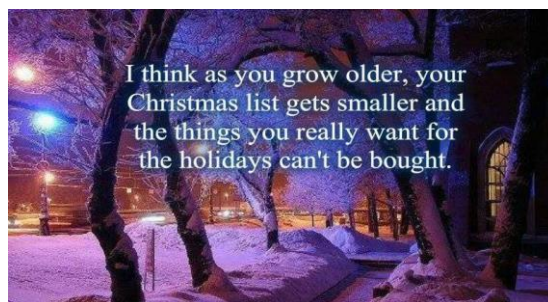
### December Anniversaries

♥ 13 - Jamie & Sabrina McAllister

*If you know of someone missing from this list, please let Debbie Storrs know, so you can be added!!*



**Christmas Eve Service at 7:30 & 11:30 PM**  
**Come and celebrate the greatest gift of all!**



## TWO-MINUTE MICROWAVE FUDGE

### Ingredients

1 lb powdered sugar  
 2/3 cup cocoa  
 1/4 teaspoon salt  
 1/4 cup milk  
 2 teaspoons vanilla  
 1/2 cup butter or 1/2 cup margarine  
 1/2 cup chopped nuts (optional)

### Directions

Sift powdered sugar, cocoa, and salt into a 1 quart microwave safe bowl.  
 Stir in milk and vanilla.  
 Mix well.  
 Place butter on top.  
 Microwave on high, 2 minutes.  
 Beat with wooden spoon until smooth.  
 Stir in nuts (OPTIONAL).  
 Spread in 8 X 8 X 2 inch baking pan.  
 Chill about 1 hour or until firm.  
 Cut into pieces.



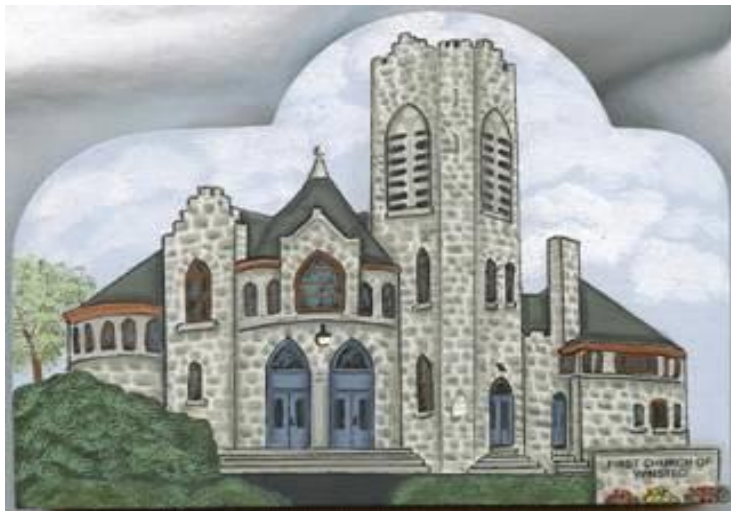
Church cleanup day...dustin' and scrubbin' and diggin' it! Too!



# December 2014



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
 Artist: Karen Delton	<b>December Birthstone: Turquoise</b> 	<b>December Flower: Narcissus</b> 	<b>Astrological Signs</b> <b>Sagittarius:</b> Nov 22 – Dec 21 <b>Capricorn:</b> Dec 22 – Jan 20	<b>"He who has not Christmas in his heart will never find it under a tree." - Roy L. Smith</b>		
Nov 30 Worship Service 10:00 am Worship Choir 9:20 Robert Adkins Ordination 4 pm <b>1st Sunday Advent</b>	<b>1</b>  Nathan Blische	<b>2</b> Worship Choir 5:30 pm Property Maintenance Board 7:00 Ryan Geddes	<b>3</b>  AA/Alanon 7:30 pm	<b>4</b> Laurel City Singers 6:00 Boar's Head Festival Rehearsal George Sherman	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> <b>Christmas Fair</b> <b>8 am – 3 pm</b>
<b>7</b> RS4J 9:15 am Worship Service 10:00 am Worship Choir 9:20 Property Maintenance 11:15 am <b>2nd Sunday Advent</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> Worship Choir 5:30 pm Chris Ed 6:45 pm  Sandy Benge Leeane Marvin	<b>10</b>  AA/Alanon 7:30 pm	<b>11</b> Laurel City Singers 6:00 Boar's Head Festival Rehearsal	<b>12</b>  Duane Blische	<b>13</b>  Jamie & Sabrina McAllister ♥
<b>14</b> RS4J 9:15 am Worship Service 10:00 am <b>Christmas Pageant</b> Deacons 11:15 am <b>3rd Sunday Advent</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> Worship Choir 5:30 pm  Natalie Majewski	<b>17</b>  AA/Alanon 7:30 pm	<b>18</b> Laurel City Singers 6:00 Boar's Head Festival Rehearsal David Ryu	<b>19</b>  Tom Mazzei Becky Smyth Riley Storrs	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> RS4J 9:15 am Worship Service 10:00 am Praise Choir 9:30 <b>4th Sunday Advent</b>	<b>22</b>  Makayla Dileo	<b>23</b> Worship Choir 5:30 pm Cabinet Meeting 7:00 pm	<b>24</b> <b>Christmas Eve Services</b> <b>7:30 &amp; 11:30 PM</b> AA/Alanon 7:30 pm Sean Storrs	<b>25</b>  <b>Merry Christmas</b>	<b>26</b> Laurel City Singers 6:00 Boar's Head Festival Rehearsal Emma Hennig Courtney Toomey	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> RS4J 9:15 am Worship Service 10:00 am Joseph's Lullaby	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> No Rehearsal Worship Choir	<b>31</b> <b>New Year's Eve</b> AA/Alanon 7:30 pm Noreen Marchand Bob Steele	<b>Jan 1</b> 	<b>Jan 2</b> Laurel City Singers 6:00 Boar's Head Festival Rehearsal	<b>Jan 3</b>



Artist: Karen Delton

### **Pastor - Rev. Michael Wu**

Moderator - Dan Jones  
 Vice-Moderator - Robert Adkins  
 Clerk - Allison Graboski  
 Board of Deacons - Co-chairs - Laura McCaw & Lisa Nanni  
 Property Maintenance - Frank Artruc  
 Treasurer - Debby Kane / Associate Treasurer - Joan Eggering  
 Financial Secretary - Tanya Mongitore  
 Christian Education Chair/Sunday School Director - Barbara Mazzei  
 Organist/Worship Choir Director - Tricia Wu  
 Youth Choir Director - Debbie Storrs  
 Webmaster - John Eggering

## **FIRST CHURCH OF WINSTED**

95 North Main Street, Winsted, CT

**ALL ARE WELCOME**

**Sunday Worship - 10:00 AM**

Communion - 1st Sunday of Every Month  
 Sunday School - Nursery Care - During Worship  
 Coffee Hour - Following Worship

**E-Mail / Office** – [info@firstchurchofwinsted.org](mailto:info@firstchurchofwinsted.org)

**Telephone** (860) 379-1778

**Church Web-Site** [www.firstchurchofwinsted.org](http://www.firstchurchofwinsted.org)

The CT Conference of the UCC  
 Telephone (866) 367-2822 Toll Free  
 Still Speaking Site [www.stillspeaking.com](http://www.stillspeaking.com)  
 UCC Web-Site [www.ucc.org](http://www.ucc.org) or [ctuucc.org](http://ctuucc.org)

American Baptist Churches of Connecticut - ABCCONN  
 Executive Minister: The Rev. Dr. Judy G. Allbee  
 Telephone (860) 521-5421  
 ABCCONN Web-Site [www.abcconn.org](http://www.abcconn.org)

First Church of Winsted  
 95 North Main Street  
 Winsted, CT 06098

# **BELLRINGER**

