

December 2011



THE SPIRE

The Presbyterian Church in Westfield, NJ
140 Mountain Avenue Westfield, NJ 07090
(908) 233-0301
www.westfieldpc.org



Invite...
Grow...
Serve...

THIS MONTH:

- PW Dinner, December 2
- Soup & Bread Lunches, December 4, 11 & 18
- Live Nativity, December 4
- Homeless, December 4-10
- Evening Prayer Services, December 6 & 13
- PW Tea, December 15
- Lessons & Carols, December 18, at 10am
- Christmas Eve Services, December 24, at 5pm, 8pm & 11pm
- Christmas Day Worship, December 25, 10am

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'Tis the Season

The Christmas season, filled with gifts and presents, reminds us of God's ultimate present to the world in his son Jesus Christ. To celebrate that love, we invite all, including friends, family and neighbors to enjoy the Christmas season with us through various events and services.

The church's season of joy begins with 7 p.m. Tuesday Evening Advent Prayer Services, held on November 29, December 6 and 13.

Another holiday tradition, Advent Lessons and Carols, is scheduled for Sunday, December 18, during the 10:00 a.m. service. Short readings will be interspersed with instrumental presentations, vocal solos, congregational singing, the children's choirs and the Chancel Choir, which leads the regular Sunday Worship services.

A popular event for the entire family is set for Sunday, December 4, from 3:30 to 5 p.m. with a Live Nativity and community Christmas Carol singing on the Great Lawn of the church. Enjoy a cup of steaming hot chocolate while getting up close to the petting zoo and the members of the church who play the roles of the main characters in the Nativity tableau.

On Saturday, December 24, three Christmas

Eve services will be presented. The Family Worship Service at 5 p.m. showcases the music of the Cherub and Joyful Sound Choirs and costumed children will recreate the scene in Bethlehem. Cherubs will be expected to attend a 4 p.m. rehearsal. They will sit as a group in front pews on the lectern side until after they have sung, at which point they will disperse to sit with their families throughout the church. Joyful Sound will be needed for 3:45 p.m. rehearsal and will sit as a choir throughout the service in front pews on the pulpit side. Both groups will get costumed/robed at 4:15 p.m.

The 8 and 11 p.m. Candlelight Services, led by Senior Pastor Rev. Dr. Ray Roberts, will feature the Chancel Choir under the direction of Kathleen Connolly, Interim Director of Music and Organist. A musical prelude for each of the later services will begin one half hour before the candlelight programs.

An informal 10 a.m. Christmas day service will be held in the Chapel of the Presbyterian Church and will highlight the joy of the day with congregational singing of timeless Christmas Carols.

Advent Prayer Requests

Let us Pray for One Another as Partners in Mission! During this advent season, the Zambia Team is asking the congregation to exchange prayer requests with our sister congregation in Livingstone. Prayer requests will be in your bulletin on Sunday, December 4. Please complete a prayer slip, and sign it or leave anonymous. The prayer slips will be collected after services. The Livingstone congregation will be collecting

prayer requests from their congregants as well.

After we exchange with Livingstone we will make their prayer requests available to our church members. After you receive a prayer request from Livingstone, we ask you to set aside some time each day during advent to pray for the needs of our fellow Christians, as they will be praying for us.

Mission Commission Zambia Pie Sale Results

Great news! We sold 164 pies and cakes during our Thanksgiving fundraiser and raised approximately \$773.81! Mission Commission has approved rounding this amount up to \$1000! This money will be used by our brothers and sisters in Livingstone to help build their church,

which they shared with us on their recent visit, is their number one priority! What a nice Christmas gift we will send to them. We look forward to hearing about the progress they are making. Thank you for supporting this mission project.

The Spire

Stewardship Moment



My life has always included God. Church services, Sunday school, and mission work have always been a normal routine throughout my life. I particularly like The Presbyterian Church in Westfield because of the deep roots I have here. I have been attending this church since I was born. I was baptized here. There are many people here who have guided me in the right directions. I look up to these people and welcome their thoughts, ideas, and concerns. The Youth program at this church is very strong and has impacted me in so many positive ways. Over the years, many friendships have grown and developed that are very dear to me. Church is an escape from the rest of the world. It is a place where I feel comfortable and accepted.

It wasn't always my first choice to go to Fellowship on Sunday nights or to leave for a whole week for a mission trip. The funny thing was, I came home every time thankful that I had gone. Not only did I learn more about my Presbyterian religion, but there were bonds that began to grow between the other kids in Youth as well. Exploring God with friends in this particular church has made my journey more exciting, more memorable, and more productive.

Mission trips have changed the way I live my life. I never knew I could learn so much about myself,

other people, and most importantly, God, in just one week. This past summer in Louisiana, it amazed me how happy I could make a single family by building a roof over their back porch. The construction was not always easy, but with God's help, our work made a world of difference in these peoples' lives. At times, my friends and I didn't even realize we were making a difference. By bringing happiness to other people, I was bringing happiness to myself. These trips brought me closer to God and forced me to think deeper about the way I was living my life.

The Presbyterian Church here in Westfield has given me the opportunity to do God's work in my own community. Agape is a wonderful thing that this church does. Only someone who sees the look of gratitude or even relief on a guest's face when they receive a hot meal understands this church's impact on the Elizabeth community.

Stewardship is giving our time, our talents and our treasures. There are many ways to respond to God's goodness. As Christ's disciples, we should be doing everything we can to help our neighbors. We should all be eager to share with the world.

—Kelly Lapham, 11th grade

News From Zambia



Justina husband Ginny

Last month, the Zambia Team brought you news of our Zambian visitors Rev. Nehemia Mkwai and Robert Nkunika, as well as some stories of Home Based Care clients who are being served by our sister church, the Livingstone congregation. This month, we'd like to share news of our other two visitors, Justina Yvonne Mwanza and Jane Ngala (pictured at left). These updates come to you courtesy of Barbara McLaughlan, who recently visited Africa and spent several days in fellowship with our brothers and sisters of the Livingstone congregation.

Justina Yvonne Mwanza was at the airport to greet Barbara when she arrived in Zambia, along with Sandra, Jane's daughter, Rev. Nehemia, Davidson Agwila, and Chamunga Kasalu. Justina took a circuitous route from the airport to her home to show Barbara around Livingstone. Upon arriving at her home for dinner, Barbara met Justina's husband, Ginny, daughters, Benele, Bulanda, Suzzio, Jafika, grandson, Kasabo, niece, Rabbacca, and her future son-in-law from Namibia. Ginny recently suffered a stroke which affected his speech and his left side, and Justina had to make the difficult de-

cision to temporarily let a few of her employees go in order to spend more time at home meeting Ginny's needs. Recent communications indicate that Ginny is improving quite well. Please keep them in your prayers.

Later in the week Barbara met up with Justina at her shops in the "Zimbabwe Market" where she met some of her employees and her friends in other shops. Justina's excitement could not be contained as they toured the different stalls in the market. She introduced Barbara to her nephew, who she taught to sew and who now has his own successful shop. Jane Ngala and her daughter, Sandra, attended Sunday services at the main church, Dambwa North, during Barbara's visit. Normally, they attend the Linda Prayer House which is much closer to their home, but they made the longer trip to spend time with Barbara. Jane also spent a day visiting Home Based Care clients alongside Barbara, and later they attended the Bible Study at Dambwa North. Bible Study usually meets on Tuesday afternoons in three locations; Dambwa North,

—Continued on page 8—



Jane, her son Isaiah, her husband Joseph, and her daughter Susie

Waiting

Christmas is preceded by Advent. Advent is a period of waiting. We can all relate to the experience of waiting. We wait in long lines at the supermarket and wonder why there are only two of ten checkout lanes open. We wait in line at Starbucks, hoping to get a blast of tasty caffeine in our system in order to fuel up at the beginning of our day, or again for a mid-afternoon kick. We wait to hear from the doctor about the latest test results, our lives hanging in the balance. We wait to hear about the next round of layoffs at work. We wait to get home from work and see those bright, shiny faces greet us after a long day at the office. We all wait.

Advent is a season of waiting. The church offers us an opportunity to present our longings, our hopes, our fears, our frustrations, our joys and sorrows to God during Advent. As we do, we bring these things into God's story, in which all of these things are pointed to the manger as the beginning of God's answer to them and gift to us. To be sure, it is an unexpected answer, and is likely not be the one we were looking for: a small, helpless human being.

Nevertheless, that is the gift we are given. The gift is that God has entered into our experience of waiting and waits *with* us. The experience of waiting, for us, is a helpless place. We are hoping for something, but it is presently outside of our grasp. Did you know that the number one

reason people cite for joining a church is that they "felt like something was missing" in their lives?

This speaks to the universal experience of waiting and to the way that God draws people to the manger to find what it is they are hoping for. To that end, through a project called *Unbinding the Gospel*, PCW is currently working hard to provide opportunities for small groups of people to get together and bring before each other and God our hopes and fears as we "wait" together. Unbinding the Gospel small groups provide each of us an opportunity to connect meaningfully. Please let me know if you'd like to be a part of this.

As we wait for what it is we are hoping for, we can be assured that God waits *with* us. The reason we can be assured of this is that God comes to us in our waiting in the form of the people who cross our paths. "See, I am standing at the door, knocking" (Rev. 3:20); "whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me" (Matthew 25:40). As we wait *together*, "through all the Advents of our life that we celebrate runs the longing for the last Advent, when the word will be: 'See, I am making all things new' (Rev. 21:5)."

— Rev. Mike Samson

Martha Grace Reese, *Unbinding the Gospel: Real Life Evangelism*, (Danvers: Chalice Press, 2008), p. 78. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *God is in the Manger*, (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010), p. 2.



Sixth Annual Men's Retreat — January 20-22, 2012

This year's retreat leader is The Rev. Robert Johnson, pastor of Forest Hill Presbyterian Church in Richmond, VA, the Executive Director of Friends of Forman Christian College, the organization set up in the U.S. in support of Forman Christian College in Lahore, Pakistan.

Rev. Johnson previously lived at Forman with his wife Marianne and two sons, Nathan and Peter, from 2005-2008 where he was Dean of the Chapel and Associate Professor of Religious Studies. He also taught Historical Theology at Gujranwala Seminary during his time in Pakistan.

During his tenure as Dean, Johnson instituted a large Christian life program for Christian students, who are a small minority in Pakistan. The program included a well-attended chapel as well

as weekly Bible Studies, prayer groups and leadership committees.

Don't miss this spiritually-enriching and fun-filled weekend in a unique seaside setting on Long Beach Island! The cost is only \$250.00 (which covers food, lodging and retreat speaker). Full payment must accompany registration form. The deadline to register is Sunday, December 25, 2011.




For more information or to register, please contact Dawn Adam, 233-0301 ext. 24, or George Himmel, 654-7540. Carpooling will be arranged closer to the date.

Register NOW before limited spaces are filled! Forms are available in the church office and on the church's website.

**6th Annual
Men's Retreat
Harvey Cedars
Conference Center
Long Beach Island
January 20-22, 2012
Contact Dawn Adam
to register!**

The Spire

DECEMBER 2011

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
Homeless Week December 4 – 10 Lower Westminster Hall 				1 7am Breakfast Club 9:30 PW Board Mtg 7:30 Chancel Choir	2 9:30 Bible Study 6:30 PW Christmas Dinner	3 7:30 Men's Group
4 2nd Sunday Advent 8 & 10am Worship 9am Youth & Adult Education Hour 10am Sunday School 11am Joy & Advent Soup Lunch 3:30 Live Nativity 5pm Middle School Fellowship 6:30 Youth Worship 7pm High School Fellowship	5 7:30 Theology Discussion	6 9am Craftsmen 9am Search 4 Work 5:30 Confirmation Advisors 6pm Confirmation 7pm Evening Prayer 7pm Outreach & Welcome 7:30 Communication Youth, Worship Stewardship Commissions 8pm Mission	7 7am Dawn Patrol 10am Program Staff 1pm Agape Prep 3:15 Agape 5:30 Advent Adventure	8 PW CIRCLES 7am Breakfast Club 7:30 Chancel Choir	9 9:30 Bible Study	10
11 3rd Sunday Advent PW Advent Bake Sale 8 & 10am Worship 9am Youth & Adult Education Hour 10am Sunday School 11am Advent Soup Lunch 5pm Middle School Fellowship 6:30 Youth Worship 7pm High School Fellowship	12 1:30 Parkinsons' 7:30 Stephen Ministers	13 9am Craftsmen 9am Search 4 Work 1:30 Program Staff 6pm Confirmation 7pm Evening Prayer 7:30 Session	14 7am Dawn Patrol 1pm Agape Prep 3:15 Agape 5pm C.O.W.	15 7am Breakfast Club 9:30 PW Christmas Tea 5:30 Zambia Team 7:30 Chancel Choir	16 9:30 Bible Study	17 7:30 Men's Group
18 4th Sunday Advent 8 & 10am Worship 9am Youth & Adult Education Hour 10am Sunday School 10am Lessons/Carols 11am Congregational Mtg 11am Advent Soup Lunch 5pm Middle School Fellowship 6:30 Youth Worship 7pm High School Fellowship	19 7:30 Theology Discussion	20 9am Craftsmen 9am Search 4 Work 1:30 Program Staff	21 7am Dawn Patrol 1pm Agape Prep 3:15 Agape	22	23	24 Christmas Eve 5pm Family Worship Service 8pm Worship 11pm Worship 
25 Christmas! Day 10am Worship Service 	26 Church Office Closed	27 9am Search 4 Work	28 1pm Agape Prep 3:15 Agape	29	30	31 New Year's Eve

The Spire

Christian Education

Sunday School Happenings! In our December "Kids Discovering Worship" classes (age 3-1st grade) the prophets, Mary and Joseph, the shepherds and the Magi are showing the children the way to Bethlehem as they discover the mystery of Christmas. Children in our December "Workshop Rotation" classes (2nd through 5th grades) are learning about the angel Gabriel's message to Mary (Luke 1:26) and the angel of the Lord's message to Joseph (Matthew 1:20) before the birth of Jesus. They are exploring this topic through art, audiovisual, drama/storytelling and game workshops.

"Night of Light" Advent Adventure is Wednesday, December 7th from 5:30 -7:00 p.m.: Be sure to mark your calendars for this year's Advent Adventure. The theme is "Night of Light." We will explore the meaning of "light" in the Christmas story. The evening includes a delicious dinner, a craft activity, games, and storytelling. Registration forms were mailed out to families last week. The cost is \$4.00 per person or \$15.00 family maximum. All children must be accompanied by a parent or other responsible adult. Families that attend COW (Church on Wednesday) still need to register if they are staying for dinner or the after-dinner activities. If you haven't yet signed up your K-5th grader, registrations will be taken through Friday, December 2nd. Here's are several ways to register: 1) Bring or mail your form and check to the church office c/o Betty Born by Friday, December 2nd. 2) Bring it to COW (on November 30th. 3) Bring it Sunday, Dec 4th and turn it in at the "Sunday School Information Station" on the Nursery School level of the Education building.

Room for All at the Family Christmas Eve Service: Families gather at 4:30 p.m. The service begins at 5:00 p.m. All families will be e-mailed information early in December about the Christ-

mas Eve Family Service. Parents sign up their children by responding to the e-mail. Children may be one of the following nativity characters: stars, angels or shepherds. (We do not have animal costumes available, but children are welcome to wear their own animal costume if they have one.) The children try on a costume after Sunday School on December 4, 11, or 18 in Room 201. On Christmas Eve at 4:30 p.m. families arrive to get their children's costume in Assembly Hall and then head to the sanctuary where the service will begin at 5:00 p.m. Children sit with their families and when it is their turn, they are called forward by character and join the nativity scene being formed up front in the chancel area. If your child would like to participate, please respond to the e-mail notice NO LATER than December 16th.

LIFE LONG LEARNING

Questers is held every Sunday in the George Plenty Room at 9:00 a.m. They are currently using The Present Word curriculum. Questers welcomes everyone. Email Nancy Smith at alan.nancy.smith@gmail for more information. **Triangle** class is also held every Sunday at 9:00 a.m. in the Christian Lounge. It is led by The Rev. Hibbert Moss. Participants read, review and discuss the scriptural passage being used for each week's sermon. Whether you like to have an active part in the discussion or just listen to others, please feel free to come and join in. No preparation is required.

THE LIFE LONG LEARNING COMMISSION recently purchased 12 DVDs about Jesus' ministry and the life of the early church. The DVDs are located at the library circulation desk (Upper Level Parish House) and may be checked out for 30 days. All DVDs were produced by the History Channel and the Arts & Entertainment Channel.

—Mary Bielen

Please note that the families with children in the Cherub or Joyful Sound Choir should check with the Choir Directors for special Christmas Eve instructions.

Yes, Soup for You!

Advent Soup and bread lunches began November 27. There will be three more Soup/Bread lunches: December: 4th, 11th and 18th.

The JOY Lunch is December 4, and the menu will include Chicken Caesar Salad, plus three soups, rolls, and ginger bread for dessert! We will be singing Christmas Carols as a group with everyone who attends. Please join us!



Time Out For Parents

Time Out for Parents (T.O.P.S.) will have openings in January 2012 for children ages six months to 22 months. Classes meet Monday through Wednesday in room 104, from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Pick up a brochure and application card in the church office, and start the new year off with one morning free for yourself!



The Spire

Youth

Youth!



Middle School Tubing
February 4, 2012



High School Ski Trip
January 20-22, 2012

SUNDAY SCHOOL: In the month of December you will have classes on 12/4, 12/11 & 12/18. There will not be Sunday school classes on December 25th! Please join us each Sunday at 9:00 a.m. to start your day off with breakfast and then head off to see your friends, have great discussions and learn about God! Grades 6-9 meet in the Jim Cole Room. Grades 10-12 meet in Lower Westminster Hall.

MIDDLE SCHOOL BREAKFAST CLUB: If you are in grades 6 - 8, you are more than welcome at Breakfast Club!! Come join us and get a great start to your day by having breakfast with new and old friends. Meet in the Jim Cole Room on Thursday mornings at 7:00 a.m. for food, laughter and fun!! We play *Capture the Flag* and eat donuts and bagels. We even give you a ride to school! Bring \$3 for breakfast. Hope to see you there!! **PLEASE TAKE NOTE:** there will be NO Breakfast Club on December 22 & 29.

FELLOWSHIP: Join in the fun of Middle School and High School Fellowship! In the month of December there will be fellowship on December 4th and 11th! Middle School starts at 5:00 p.m. in the Jim Cole Room and includes dinner for \$5.00. All YOUTH worship is at 6:30 p.m. High School starts at 7:00 p.m. in the Jim Cole Room and dessert is included.

CONFIRMATION: Confirmation class of 2012, please remember that there be NO class on Tuesday, December 20th and 27th. We will see you back in class on Tuesday, January 3rd.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING: This year come sing carols to our friends on December 18, 4:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. All youth in grades 6-12 are invited. Pizza will be provided. Please wear your warmest winter clothes and meet in the Jim Cole Room at 4:00 p.m.

SAVE THE DATES

MIDDLE SCHOOL SNOW TUBING 2012: If you are in grades 6-8 and would like to participate in the middle school snow tubing trip, then **SAVE THE DATE** of February 4th on your calendar for a **SNOW TUBING EXTRAVAGANZA!** Exact times and cost are to be determined.

HIGH SCHOOL SKI TRIP 2012: Youth in grades 9-12, it's that time of year again! Get your skis and snowboards ready! **SAVE THE WEEK-END** of January 20-22 on your calendar! Exact times and cost are to be determined.

Please keep an eye out on your email and the church website for updates!

— Linnette Mercado, Youth Assistant

Women's Retreat

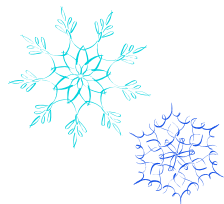
The annual Women's Retreat will be held on the weekend of February 24-26, 2012. We are very excited to introduce you to our leader, Ruth Workman. Ruth is a Certified Spiritual Director, Retreat Leader, and Certified Supervisor of Spiritual Directors. She earned a Master of Education at Rutgers University and a Master of Arts in Holistic Spirituality and Spiritual Direction from Chestnut Hill College. She has been offering Spiritual Direction since 1995. In addition to her ministry of individual spiritual direction, she offers contemplative retreats at The Sanctuary, at her home, and facilitates spiritual direction groups at Princeton Theological Seminary. Ruth retired from the Langhorne Presbyterian Church in 2009 after 20 years of service as Pastoral Care Associate. She is ordained as an elder in the Presbyterian Church USA.

Ruth comes to us highly recommended by

Nancy Schongalla-Bowman, our 2011 retreat leader, and the Rev. Ted and Sue Wright. Ted was pastor at the Langhorne Presbyterian Church for many years before serving with Sue as PC(USA) regional liaisons in Africa.

The theme for the 2012 retreat will be *Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God: A Look at Your Priorities*. Ruth will guide us as we examine our priorities in our busy lives, discern how God invites us to include Him, and learn how we can keep ourselves available to God. You won't want to miss this opportunity to retreat from the stresses of our busy lives, relax, share fellowship and have fun with old and new friends, renew our spirits and contemplate our priorities. Keep watching for more details.

—Your 2012 Women's Retreat Planners
Debbie Himmel and Barbara Ringk



Women's Retreat
February 24-26, 2012

The Spire

Celebrate the Holidays with The Westfield Symphony!

From traditional to pops, choral favorites to musical theater classics, this season of WSO concerts will fill the whole family with holiday cheer.

On December 3rd at 7:00 p.m. join Maestro David Wroe and WSO musicians at our Presbyterian Church in Westfield for *Home for the Holidays*, a family festival of traditional and contemporary songs and music, sing-a-longs and more guaranteed to make the season merry.

This seasonal stroll of timeless classics and sentimental holiday favorites is sure to bring joy, smiles, and holiday memories to share with the whole family. Tickets prices range from \$25 to \$75 for adults and there is a special discount price of only \$12 for students K-12 making this event a perfect start to the holiday season for the whole family.

On Saturday, December 31st, at 7:00 p.m., the fully professional Westfield Symphony Orchestra again presents one of New Jersey 's most popular New Year's Eve musical celebrations.

This year's performance, *That's Entertainment!*, promises a superb revue of American musical theater classics presented in glorious symphonic splendor.

The cabaret style New Year's Eve celebration has become a musical event eagerly anticipated by much of central New Jersey. This year's line up reads like a Who's Who of the best of American musical theater composers and again features renowned guest vocalists direct from the Broadway stage.

The NYE concert will take place in the newly refurbished Westfield High School auditorium, 550 Dorian Road in Westfield, and will finish at approximately 9:00 p.m. Tickets in advance are \$40 for general admission and \$70 for preferred seating (\$45 and \$75 at the door, if available.)

Looking forward to seeing you at the concerts!

Tickets for both concerts are now available on line at

www.wesfieldsymphony.org

Tickets may also be purchased by calling (908) 232-9400 or visiting the office at 224 E. Broad Street, Westfield. Patrons are advised to purchase tickets on line – it's simple, secure, you can choose your own seats, print your tickets, and avoid the additional \$6 office handling fee.

Homefirst: 25 Years of Helping the Homeless of Union County

Over 25 years ago the seed of the Homefirst community was planted by providing shelter to families in need. Soon after Homefirst began its work, the organization realized that families needed more than that: they needed a home. So Homefirst started purchasing and renovating homes for families to live safely and affordably. Today, the agency owns and operates 49 housing units in Westfield, Scotch Plains, Summit and Plainfield.

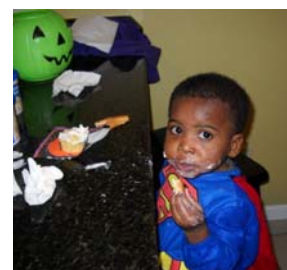
What good would a safe and affordable house be, if the family itself was so stressed they couldn't function? Social services have always been an important part of Homefirst's work with families. Homefirst strives for preservation of the family, but in the midst of a crumbling sense of community, people often feel isolated and alone. The need for community building for safe and stable neighborhoods is ever increasing. *Donors and volunteers are an important part of community building* and have been key to the establishment of the Family Success Center. The FSC is the realization of Homefirst's vision for a gathering place where individuals come together to build a community for a brighter future.

The Annual Children's Halloween party was held at the Family Success Center at 905 Watchung Avenue, and Circle #1 collected craft items and had Williams Nursery donate pumpkins for the kids to decorate. Teenagers from the Confirmation Class at Temple Sholom in Fanwood helped with the festivities. (Pictured at right)

Homefirst continues to reach out to its partnerships within the faith community and once again this year, PW Circle #1 has responded! This women's Circle has chosen to focus its mission study efforts on homelessness and is working with Homefirst on various projects and events. There will be multiple opportunities for others within the PCW Congregation to be involved so **stay tuned!**

To learn more about Homefirst and how you can get involved, please check out their website at www.homefirstinc.org or visit them on Facebook to see the Homefirst Community Garden. You may also call (908) 753-4002 ext. 26 for more information.

—Marybeth Lapham



The Spire

Presbyterian Women

NEW MEMBERS: If you, or someone you know may be interested in PW, please contact Carolyn Fleder (crlfelder@gmail.com). Carolyn would be happy to explain PW and to get you started in a Circle. It's a wonderful way to get involved and to meet other women of the church.

ADVENT BAKE SALE, December 11: Don't miss your opportunity to buy some delicious baked goods lovingly prepared by Presbyterian Women. Cakes, pies, cookies, muffins...all available for purchase in Assembly Hall. Additionally, our very talented Sewing Circle has been busy making some wonderful pieces that will be available for sale. All proceeds support local and international mission.

PW CHRISTMAS TEA, December 15, 1:00 p.m.: Join The Rev. Emily Wilmarth and interim music director, Katie Connelly, as Presbyterian Women host their annual Christmas Tea. Always a wonderful opportunity to get into the Christmas spirit!

SHOPPING SPREE: Please consider volunteering to help at the Shopping Spree at Norwood Terrace in Plainfield, on Wednesday, December 7. Volunteers will set up the "shop" at 9:00 a.m. with gifts donated by members of our church, will then assist the residents to "purchase" no more than three gifts, and then wrap the present. Volunteers should be done by noon. Helping the residents, who may otherwise not be able to shop for loved ones, will warm your heart and get you into the holiday spirit.

The "store" cannot happen without your donations. Please check out your closets, basement, or garage for "newish" items that perhaps were not quite to your liking and bring them to your

Circle Meeting or the Thank Offering Luncheon. Anything not used for the Shopping Spree will be donated to Elizabeth Port for a similar program. Anyone interested in assisting with the shopping spree in pre-sorting or setting up shop and assisting shoppers may contact Ann Fontana: afontana@comcast.net or by calling 232-7825.

PLEDGE TIME: Please do not forget about your PW Pledge. Although we will be having fewer gatherings this year, the majority of our budget goes toward our annual dues for Presbyterian Women at the national, synod, and presbytery level. These dues, as well as other expenses, must still be paid. Checks may be given to your Circle leader, left in the PW mailbox, or mailed to Jane Collins, 520 Kimball Turn, Westfield, NJ.

CAMPBELL SOUP LABELS: Thanks to the coupon-clipping-box-top-saving members who stuffed the large Campbell's soup can over the summer, we were able to send nearly 1,000 "Labels for Education" to The Menaul School in Albuquerque this month! That translates into \$100.00 worth of educational aids for the school. So, keep those labels coming. Labels may be deposited in the large Campbell Soup can in the mailroom. To see all the qualifying products that the Menaul School accepts, please take a look at the poster hanging in the Parish House.

News From Zambia

Continued from page 2.

Linda Prayer House and Libuyu Prayer House. Maureen, Rev. Nehemiah's wife, led the bible study that day and some attendees tried to speak English for Barbara's benefit, but many others do not know the language. The bible study continued in their native tongue, and Jane translated for Barbara. The following day Barbara visited Jane and her family at their home. She saw her beautiful garden, saw her shoe and handbag store and sampled the fritas she sells, which were delicious. Barbara also got to see the many refrigerators that her husband, Joseph, had waiting for him to repair. Jane's family is building a new home, and Barbara had the chance to see the progress so far.

Now we'd like to introduce another member of the Livingstone congregation, Davidson Agwila (pictured left). His wife Monica is also a member of the congregation. Davidson spent time with Barbara daily during her trip, always with a big smile on his face. He is retired and now works as

a fish broker to supplement his retirement income. Barbara dined with David and Monica after visiting Home Based Care clients. Davidson is an HBC caregiver and Barbara had the opportunity to meet two of his clients. One client is Situmbeko Muyaukwa, an elderly woman who lives with her grandniece and her son. The other is Victor, a teenager who has lost both of his parents. Victor's father was once a client of Davidson's as well, and CCAP has kept Victor, who is slightly mentally challenged, as a client, paying for his school fees and encouraging him. They will continue working with him until he is finished with his schooling and able to support himself. He wants to be a pilot when he grows up!

We've enjoyed bringing you the latest news from our Livingstone friends. We hope to bring you more updates and introduce you to other members of the congregation in the future. Thank you for your support of this PCW mission!

-Kristin Pirich, Barbara Ringk



Davidson Agwila
and his wife Monica

If you have any questions or concerns, or would like to learn more about this partnership, please contact Kristin Pirich at mission@westfieldpc.org.

The Spire

Unbinding the Gospel: Attention Takes Time

Spiritual Styles

Our congregation is taking part in the second phase of a Lily Foundation study called, *Unbinding the Gospel*, that is investigating how mainline congregations can develop the contagious faith that characterizes growing mainline churches. In the first phase of this study, they discovered that growing mainline churches congregations do not fit a single theological profile. They are both conservative and liberal. Interestingly, they discovered that growing congregations very often were not the ones that talked most about evangelism. What growing congregations had in common was a vivid spiritual life, a comfort in talking about the difference God made in their lives, and an outward focus on God's world. As we think about how we can intentionally develop these characteristics in our congregation and in our lives, here are a couple of thoughts.

Diverse Spiritual Styles

People have different spiritual styles. Some Christians gravitate to the Psalm that says, "Be still and know that I am God." They are most deeply fed when they are still: that is, alone, quiet, free from distractions so they can be present to God.

But other Christians gravitate to Jesus' promise that "wherever two or three are gathered in my name, there I am with you." These Christians are more deeply fed by a group, where ideas are ricocheting and they are stimulated to go deeper.

Some are fed by intellectual insight. Yet others are fed by connecting with God on an emotional level. Some need to talk about their faith with others before they know what they believe. Others need to carefully process their thoughts

before they know what they have to share.

Throughout history the church has supported a diversity of spiritual styles. Mystics have developed forms of spirituality that push beyond the limitations of human language. Activist Christians have found spiritual purpose for their lives in helping the poor, working for justice, and engaging God's world in other ways. Scholarly Christians have felt most in touch with God when engaging their minds in study of the Bible, theology, science, philosophy, economics, sociology, and ethics. Other Christians find they are drawn closest to God in worship, when they are "lost in wonder, love and praise."

Our efforts to renew the spiritual life of our church will fail, if we fall into a cookie-cutter, one size fits all, overly formulaic approach to the spiritual life. As we encourage each other to more intentional prayer, we need to celebrate and make room for the different spiritual styles each person is drawn to.

One of the strengths of the Unbinding the Gospel program is that it encourages experimentation with a number of different spiritual practices, from bible study to prayer during exercise. Another strength is that by encouraging us to talk about the spiritual exercises, I have learned that the same spiritual exercise I found challenging really worked for someone else. Hearing this finding opened up something new for me.

As long as we remember that the point of all spiritual exercises is to grow in our relationship with God and fall deeper in love with God and neighbor, we can celebrate the rich treasury of spiritual practices in the church.

—Ray Roberts, Senior Pastor

A Special Opportunity!

Are you 70 1/2 or older? Do you own an IRA? If the answer is "yes," Then you have a special opportunity this year. You can make a gift to The Presbyterian Church in Westfield directly from your IRA, often without increasing your taxable income or withholding requirements. Please consult your Financial Advisor to find out how this opportunity can benefit you and the Church!



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PLEASE ADD OUR AGAPE GUESTS TO YOUR CHRISTMAS SHOPPING LIST!

Each Sunday in Advent, you will have an opportunity to take a tagged ornament from the basket in the narthex to hang on your Christmas tree. The tags list small items that are badly needed by our Agape friends. If you choose to take an ornament, please purchase the item on the tag (men's T-shirts, boxer shorts, gloves, toiletries, etc). Then place your unwrapped gift in the large holiday gift bags located in the Narthex and the parking lot entrance. Thank you.



The Spire

Financial Report



If you have not made a pledge to the PCW 2012 pledge campaign, please prayerfully consider doing so. Pledge cards are available in the church office. You may also email your pledge amount to Tina Barulli, Comptroller at tbarulli@westfieldpc.org.

Participation in the life of our church and its wide-ranging ministries and missions only partially achieves the ways we are called to put our faith into action. In response to God's love and generosity to each of us, we are also called to provide the financial resources needed to continue sharing Christ's message and to care for others in our community and worldwide. As support for our church grows, so does our ability to serve. If you have already made a commitment to the church's 2012 Annual Pledge Campaign, you can be sure that it will be used for missions and ministries that have the ability to transform people's lives. If you have not yet committed to the church for 2012, please consider doing so. Pledges may be sent or emailed confidentially to Tina Barulli, Church Comptroller, at tbarulli@westfieldpc.org in the church office.

	ACTUAL for	ACTUAL for	ACTUAL for
ANNUAL OPERATING FUND Results	10 mos 2011	10 mos 2010	10 mos 2009
Total Annual Operating Fund Receipts	\$1,016,449	\$952,524	\$980,224
Total Annual Operating Fund Expenses	\$1,144,072	\$1,142,143	\$1,154,001
YTD NET for the Ann Oper Fund	\$(127,623)	\$(189,619)	\$(173,777)
	Projected	Actual	Actual
Budgeted Full Year results	\$(137,310)	\$(169,794)	\$(88,684)

Receipts in 2012 include \$59,000 in investment income from the Unrestricted Endowment, and this income was not included in prior year figures. Adjusting for this, receipts this year are just about equivalent to what they were last year through the 10-month period.

Session is in the process of putting together the budget for the 2012 Annual Operating Fund. The Annual Operating Fund is the account where the majority of church financial activity is recorded. All pledges received, plate collections and all fees from space rentals make up the Annual Operating Fund revenues. Costs for many of the church ministries and programs, plus all costs to operate and maintain church facilities are recorded in the Annual Operating Fund. (There are currently more than 70 active fund accounts tracked based on specific donor designations.)

OCTOBER 2011 FINANCIAL RESULTS ACROSS ALL FUNDS			
	10 mos 2011	10 mos 2010	10 mos 2009
Total Cash Receipts	\$1,163,312	\$1,817,240	\$1,749,552
Total Cash Expenditures	\$1,617,439	\$1,945,870	\$1,474,509
Total \$\$ spent on Mission	\$233,827	\$234,499	\$272,701
<i>as a percentage of total \$ received YTD</i>	20.1%	12.9%	15.6%

Total cash received in 2011 includes just over \$55,000 from bequests vs the nearly \$400,000 received in 2010. Of the 2010 amount, \$330,000 was designated as to use. There were no bequests received in 2009. All the remaining difference in receipts between 2012 and 2011 can be attributed to the fact that the church had unrealized losses of \$50,000 in its investment portfolio as of 10/2011 vs unrealized market gains of nearly \$150,000 as of 10/2010.

Total cash expenditures in 2010 were higher than those in 2009 by the amount spent through October to purchase and renovate the church manse. During the first 10 months of 2011, there have major capital expenses for the cemetery and for the Christian Education roof. Additionally, the Carrie Holmes Memorial fund (via its strictly defined designations) has purchased the new Youth van and assisted the renovation of the Agape kitchen in Elizabeth.

Do you still have some questions or comments about our church finances? They are always welcomed as transparency and clarity are my goals! Please email me with your thoughts and/or inquiries at mblapham2001@aol.com.

—Marybeth Lapham, Church Treasurer

The Spire

Happy Birthday

December 1
Nemec, Joel
Stroeever, Johanna
Woods, Michael

December 2
Wright, Deborah
Pierce, Michelle
Priesing, John

December 3
Ainslie, Marilyn
Dembiec, Walter
Husch, Katherine

December 4
Duncan, Linda
Colao, Lisa
Cox, Matthew
Gelfand, Christine
Wright, Christopher
Raimi, Alexander
Mulzoff, Joy

December 5
Bonnetti, Nancy
Vierschilling, Barbara
Purachev, Gregory
Cunningham, Barry
Cordeiro, Carolyn
Timko, Barbara
Shepard, Lauren
McCann, Andrew
Crenshaw, William
Nugent, Robert

December 6
Graf, Jo
Gruman, Kristin
McArdle, Carolyn
Ingrassia, Benjamin

December 7
Fredericks, Carol
Testa, Tom
Kennedy, Diane
Hoffman, Christian

Johnstone, Kaitlin
Bergo, Adam
Grom, Alexander
Dickey, Jacob

December 8
Miller, Douglas
Sorge, Amy
Hoelt, Chad
Bracco, Danny
Sandstedt, Jack
Arndt, Grace

December 9
Jackson, Robert
Testa, Nancy
Monzella, David
Walpole, Denyse
Stockwell, Andrew
DeCristofaro, Brian

December 10
Danskin, Mary Kay
Taylor, Susan
Tafur, John
Sommese, Stephanie
Sexton, Kyle

December 11
Baly, Holly
Woods, John
Adams, Howard
Borton, Bonnie
Pinkin, Jeffrey
Keller, Christopher
Kline, Katie
Thode, Elizabeth

December 12
Factor, Carl
Bristow-Fitzhenry, Carol
Iasello, Alena
Kieczkowski, Emily

December 13
McMahon, Joshua
Werder, Kelly
Doyle, Jessica

December 14
Melloan, Joan
Bryden, Ellen
McClelland, Susan
Herdman, Beth
Boff, Travis
Hawkins, Alexandra
Kubicz, Tyler

December 15
DuBois, Eleanor
Vierschilling, James
Seigle, Margaret

December 16
Brookman, Alice
Finter, Lucille
Frawley, Patricia
Dickey, Michael
Keenan, Donald
Mantone, Shea

December 17
Rusch, Valerie
Schultz, Nancy

December 18
Bentley, Carole
Hewit, Carol
Fritz, Cherie
Gearhart Parsons, Elissa
Becker, Helen
Firenzuoli, Rocco
Sellers, Colleen
Siwulec, Anne
Morgan, Griffin
Valentine, Scott

December 19
Wooster, Timothy
Schwarz, Bradford
Hawkins, Elizabeth
Himmel, Anneliese
Wright, Brennan
Brown, Daley

December 20
Trott, John
Speir, Gregory
Wetlesen, Matthew

December 21
Kole, Marilyn
Iglesias, Gail
Johnstone, Irvine
Bungerz, Deborah
Dackow, Susan
Fahrenthold, Carol
Gray-Gilford, Lauren
Aliche, Carol
Lau, Michael

December 22
Maggio, Linda
Bischoff, Leslie
Cook, Carole
Palma, Charles
Peterson, Stacey
Schwartz, Charlotte

December 23
Brown, Carl
Yates, Jane
Murtishaw, Thomas
Chapman, Brian

December 24
Heinbokel, Robert
Becker, Sean

December 25
Woodfield, Wendy

December 26
Mill, Robert
MacPherson, Margaret
Fraits, Roberta
Barker, Carol

Priesing, Erin
Goodwin, Christopher
Grow, Geoffrey
Powell, Ethan

December 27
Klimas, Valerie
Miller, Catharine
Henry, Michael
Henry, Milone

December 28
Lott, Jeremiah
Alexander, Laura
Jacobsen, Erik
Meierdierck, Jeffrey
Peterson, Keith

December 29
Jacobsen, Leslie
Pote, Heidi

December 30
DePaul, Barbara
Sinclair, Joan
Powell, Maria

December 31
Miner, Mary
Goodwin, Pamela
Ehrhardt, Caroline

CHRISTMAS MEMORIAL FLOWERS

Our Chapel and Sanctuary are beautifully decorated each Christmas by our church members. If you would like to contribute monies to this effort and give them in memory of, or to honor a loved one, please complete the form at right and place it with your check in the offering plate on Sunday, or return it to the church office.

The deadline for giving


Christmas Memorial Flowers is

Monday, December 19.


The suggested donation is \$30.

Checks should be made payable to: **The Presbyterian Church**. Please indicate on the memo section, "**Christmas Flower Fund**." Your donation honors your loved ones and beautifies our church during this joyous season.





I wish to give Christmas Memorial Flowers



In loving memory of:

From: _____

In honor of:

From: _____

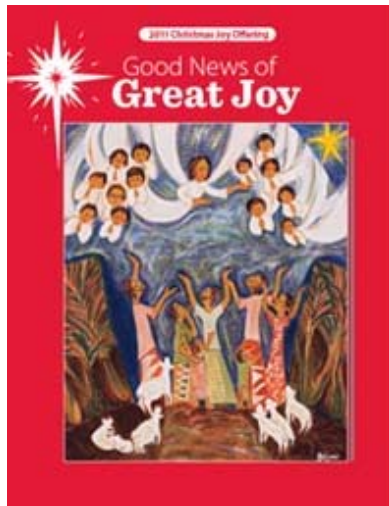
Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

The Presbyterian Church in Westfield, NJ
140 Mountain Avenue Westfield, NJ 07090
(908) 233-0301
Fax: (908) 317-9218
Visit us on the web: www.westfieldpc.org

Rev. Dr. Ray Roberts, Senior Pastor	45
E-mail rroberts@westfieldpc.org	
Rev. Mike Samson, Associate Pastor	37
E-mail msamson@westfieldpc.org	
Rev. Emily L. Wilmarth, Associate Pastor	46
E-mail ewilmarth@westfieldpc.org	
Mary Bielen, Director of Christian Education	38
E-mail mbielen@westfieldpc.org	
Kathleen Connolly, Interim Director of Music	39
E-mail kconnolly@westfieldpc.org	
Tina Barulli, Comptroller	23
E-mail tbarulli@westfieldpc.org	
Lou Ann Kaplonski, Church Administrator	26
E-mail lkaplonski@westfieldpc.org	
Betty Born, Church Secretary	24
E-mail bborn@westfieldpc.org	
Dawn Adam, Executive Secretary	47
E-mail dadam@westfieldpc.org	
Linnette Mercado, Youth Secretary	22
E-mail lmercado@westfieldpc.org	
Jim Kajosevic, Maintenance Supervisor	34
E-mail jkajosevic@westfieldpc.org	
Kristin Pirich, Mission Coordinator	973-601-3371
E-mail kpirich@westfieldpc.org	
T.O.P.S	908-654-5157
Nursery School	908-233-0766
Furniture Assist	
E-mail furnitureassist@westfieldpc.org	



To view the 2011 Christmas Joy Offering Video
please visit our website: www.westfieldpc.org
Christmas Joy Offering envelopes are available in the pew racks.

SUNDAY MORNINGS AT

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN WESTFIELD

- Worship Service in the Chapel at 8:00 a.m.
- Christian Education for Youth (grades 6-12) & Adults at 9:00 a.m.
- Worship Service in the Sanctuary at 10:00 a.m.
- 10:00 a.m. Sunday School (2yrs-5th grade)

Child care for infants thru 3yr olds is available in our cribbery located on the lower level of the Christian Ed. Building, 8:00 a.m. -11:15 a.m.