

We Are First Church

2011-2012



**THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
An Open and Affirming Congregation**

Address: 122 Broad Street, Guilford, CT 06437
Telephone: Church Office: 203-453-5249
 Christian Education: 203-453-3324
 Music Office: 203-458-9701
Fax: 203-453-5589
Website: www.firstchurchguilford.org
E-mail: office@firstchurchguilford.org
KendrickN@aol.com
clarerobert@earthlink.net
lisa@firstchurchguilford.org
bill@firstchurchguilford.org
 PF Director: pfdirector33@yahoo.com
treasurer@firstchurchguilford.org
 Landmark Editor: landmark.fc@gmail.com

Ministers to the World	All the Congregation
Ministers to the Congregation:	Our Staff
Kendrick L. Norris	Senior Minister
Clare Robert	Interim Associate Minister
Lisa Horst Clark	Associate Minister for Children & Families
William C. Speed	Director of Music Ministries
Penelope Rebuzzini	Office Manager
Larry Donahue	Sexton
Salisha Miller	Director, Pilgrim Fellowship
Liza Catino	Director, Junior Choir
Gail Etter	Director, Cherub Choir
Joe Catino	Chair, Church Council
Dianne Hughes	Clerk
Debbie Peluse	Treasurer
Heather Collinson	Bookkeeper
Debbie Bishop	Financial Secretary
Jeanie Cacopardo	Editor, <i>The Landmark</i>
Martin Ewing	Webmaster

Cover Art by First Church member Andrea Schmidt.

“Blessed are the peacemakers.....”

Matthew 5: 6

Dear Friends:

Here is your *We Are First Church* booklet for 2011-2012! On these pages are listed opportunities for worship, Christian growth, fellowship, and mission. Please consider this your personal invitation to join with us on our journey of faith. The New Testament notes four foundational areas of faith:

- Pistis:* believing faith - the educational and intellectual aspects
- Gnosis:* experiential faith - by which we experience God’s love through music and the arts, prayer groups, retreats and meditation
- Koinonia:* fellowship - various activities to build community
- Diaconia:* service - reaching out to help each other and our neighbors

Our theme this year is ***“Blessed are the peacemakers....”*** Peacemaking is one of the most sacred and central goals for Christians; it is also one of the most difficult to attain. In our worship, educational offerings and mission we will address the multiple facets of peacemaking in ourselves, in community, in the nations and the world. This year you are invited to stretch your spiritual wineskins: learn something new, try something different and grow your soul.

We hope you will take full advantage of the rich ministry of First Church to deepen your relationship with God, with each other and with all of God’s creation.

Kendrick and Clare

**350th YEAR ANNIVERSARY MISSION STATEMENT
1993**

Called by God
to be a family of faith,
we covenant, one with another,
to worship through word, sacrament and music and the arts
to grow in our awareness of God's grace and truth,
and to embody Christ's love for the world.

1. Caring-Support-Fellowship

Vision: We are an active, loving, caring, Christ-centered church family with no one falling through the cracks.

2. Interfaith/Community Service

Vision: We are a Christian church family that believes all people are equal in the eyes of God; therefore, we act on our commitment to break down barriers between all people and communities.

3. Christian Education

Vision: We are a Christian people who believe in an on-going coordinated educational program for all age groups, using the creative talents of every member of our church community in order to be better ministers.

4. Welcoming and Inclusion

Vision: We are a Christian people who invite all people to our fellowship; welcome, guide and love all who come to our church; encourage family/lay participation in the worship and activities of our church; and as a family church, because we are one in Christ, we celebrate diversity and support reconciliation.

VISIONS ADOPTED 2003

We are a Christian congregation seeking to discern the Spirit's leading for our life together and mission in the world. Four directions or invitations commend themselves to us, arising out of our congregational conversations in the Visioning process.

1. *Provide to church and community cross-cultural programs and opportunities to serve, by developing our refugee ministry, in order to foster mutual learning, acceptance and understanding.*
2. *Develop a deepening sense of our church as a faith community, by encouraging all church members to become involved in the life, leadership and work of the congregation, and by nourishing and nurturing one another in spiritual growth and social concern.*
3. *Reach out in innovative ways to the broader community and those in need of a deeper spirituality, inviting people to take part in the spiritual, educational and cultural resources of First Church.*
4. *Encourage the financial generosity of our members, thus increasing our annual giving and capital endowment, in order to sustain current ministries, provide more resources for under-funded programs, and expand the social mission of the church.*

WORSHIP

Worship is the central act of the Christian community. Worship includes the praising of God, the desire for reconciliation with God and our neighbor, the hearing and illumination of God's Word, the celebration of the sacraments, and our offering of self to God. We gather to worship on Sundays at the times and places listed, and in observance of other holy days.

As a United Church of Christ congregation, we recognize two sacraments, Holy Communion and Baptism. Holy Communion is celebrated on the first Sunday of each month, and on special days such as Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday. All are invited to participate in this sacrament. *Baptisms* usually occur during the worship service every six to eight weeks. Tentative baptism dates are: September 18, October 9, January 8 or 22; February 19, March 11 or 18; May 27. Please call the Church Office to schedule a baptism

Services for Prayer and Healing are held in the Sanctuary at 7:00pm on the third Wednesday of the month September through July, except for Holy Week when it is held in conjunction with the Maundy Thursday worship. It is a time of music, prayer, scripture and quiet. For those who wish, we offer the laying on of hands and anointing with oil. Services will be held Sept. 21, Oct. 19, Nov. 16, Dec. 14, Jan. 18, Feb. 15, Mar. 21, Apr. 18, May 16, June 20, and July 18.

WORSHIP AND PROGRAM CALENDAR

Sun., Sept. 4 8:30am & 10:00am Worship, *Clare preaching*

Sun., Sept. 11 *No 8:30 Worship*

10:00am Family Service "*Welcome Home Sunday*"
Nursery/Church School Kick-off
11:15am All Church Picnic - Church Lawn
4:00pm 9/11 Remembrance Service – Sanctuary
6:00pm Pilgrim Fellowship Opening Picnic - Lawn

Sun., Sept 18 *Kendrick preaching*

8:30am Worship – Chapel
9:00am Bible Study – Church School Bldg Rm 9
10:00am Worship/Nursery/Church School
11:30am Adult Forum: Kennedy Odede, Kenya – Chapel

Wed., Sept. 21 7:00pm Service of Prayer and Healing - Sanctuary

Sun., Sept. 25

Missionary Michael Joseph preaching
8:30am Worship – Chapel
9:00am Bible Study – Church School Bldg Rm 9
10:00am Worship/Nursery/Church School
11:30am Adult Forum: Michael Joseph – Chapel
11:30am "Safe Church" Training – Fellowship Hall

Sun., Oct. 2

Lisa preaching
8:30am Communion – Chapel
9:00am Bible Study – Church School Bldg Rm 9
9:00am Church Schl Potluck Breakfast – Fellowsh.Hall
10:00am Communion/Nursery/Church School
11:30am Reception for Lisa Horst Clark
1:30pm CROP Walk

Sat. or Sun., Oct. 8 or 9 – Ecumenical Blessing of Animals - Green

Sun., Oct. 9

Clare preaching
8:30am Worship– Chapel,
9:00am Bible Study – Church School Bldg Rm 9
10:00am Worship/Nursery/Children's Program
11:30am Adult Forum: Vin Woods "Palestine/Israel" Chpl

Fri., Sat. Oct. 14 & 15 – Wilcox Lecture Weekend - (*Details on page 20*)

Sun., Oct 16

Rev. Dr. Eugene Lowry preaching
8:30am Worship – Chapel
9:00am Bible Study – Church School Bldg Rm 9
10:00am Worship/Nursery/Church School
11:30am Adult Forum: Gene Lowry – Chapel

Wed., Oct. 19 7:00pm Service of Prayer and Healing - Sanctuary

Sun., Oct 23

Kendrick preaching
8:30am Worship – Chapel
9:00am Bible Study – Church School Bldg Rm 9
9:00am Ch Schl Potluck Breakfast – Fellowship Hall
10:00am Worship/Nursery/Church School
11:30am Adult Forum: Rev. Sylvia Shirk "Mennonite Tradition" - Chapel
11:30am Pony Express Trail Boss Luncheon – FH
4:00pm Church BBQ (*Parable of the Talents offering*)

Sun., Oct. 30 *Kendrick preaching*
8:30am Worship – Chapel
9:00am Bible Study – Church School Bldg Rm 9
10:00am Worship/Nursery/Church School
11:30am Adult Forum - Chapel: Chuck Ramsey
“Adult Mission Trip to Nicaragua”

Sat., Nov. 5 9:00am – 2:30pm *Harvest Fair*

Sun., Nov. 6 *All Souls Sunday, Laity Sunday, Doug Scales preaching*
8:30am Communion – Chapel
9:00am Bible Study – Church School Bldg Rm 9
10:00am Communion/Nursery/Church School
11:30am Adult Forum - Chapel: Rev. Mike Penn-Strah
“Invite a Neighbor to Church Sunday” - Chapel

Sun., Nov. 13 *Clare preaching*
8:30am Worship – Chapel
9:00am Bible Study – Church School Bldg Rm 9
10:00am Worship/Nursery/Church School
11:30am Inquirer/New Member Mtg – Minear Library
11:30am Adult Forum – Chapel: Bob Harms “Slavery &
Human Trafficking in Ancient & Medieval Worlds”

Wed., Nov. 16 7:00pm Service of Prayer and Healing - Sanctuary

Sun., Nov. 20 *Clare preaching*
8:30am Worship – Chapel
9:00am Bible Study – Church School Bldg Rm 9
10:00am Worship/ Nursery/ Church School
11:30am Adult Forum: Ex-Offenders Program - Chapel
11:30am Inquirer/New Member Mtg – Minear Library
5:00pm Interfaith Thanksgiving Service – First Church
of Christ, Scientist, Park Street.

Sun., Nov. 27 *1st Sunday in Advent , Kendrick preaching*
8:30am Worship – Chapel
9:00am Bible Study – Church School Bldg Rm 9
10:00am Worship/Nursery/Children’s Program
11:30am Adult Forum - Chapel: Elizabeth Norris
“Trafficking in Humans”

Sun., Dec. 4 *2nd Sunday in Advent, Clare preaching*
8:30am Communion – Chapel
9:00am Bible Study - Church School Bldg Rm 9
10:00am Worship/Nursery/Church School
11:15am Harvest Fair Mini-Fair
3:00-6:00pm Caroling & Advent Supper

Sun., Dec. 11 *3rd Sunday in Advent 3, Kendrick preaching*
Invite a Neighbor to Church Sunday
8:30am Worship – Chapel
9:00am Bible Study - Church School Bldg Rm 9
10:00am Worship/Nursery/Church School
11:30am Adult Forum – Chapel
5:00pm Service of Lessons and Carols
6:30pm Soup & Bread Supper by Pilgrim Fellowship

Wed., Dec. 14 7:00pm Service for Prayer and Healing - Sanctuary

Sat., Dec. 17 9:30 – 11:00am Christmas Pageant Rehearsal-Sanctuary

Sun., Dec. 18 *4th Sunday of Advent, Clare preaching*
8:30am Worship – Chapel
10:00am *Festival Service*/Nursery/Children’s Program
11:00am Pilgrim Fellowship Cookie Walk–FH

Sat., Dec. 24 *Christmas Eve:*
5:00pm **Christmas Pageant**
10:00pm **Candlelight Communion, Kendrick preaching**

Sun., Dec. 25 *Clare preaching*
10:00 am Worship, Nursery/*No Church School*

2012

Sun., Jan. 1 8:30am Communion – Chapel
10:00am Communion, Nursery care

Sun., Jan. 8 *Clergy Rotation Sunday*
8:30am Worship – Chapel,
9:00am Bible Study – Church School Bldg Rm 9
10:00am Worship/Nursery/Church School
11:30am Adult Forum – Chapel: Rev. Barbara Barlok,
Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers “Life Stories Review”

Sun., Jan. 15 *Martin Luther King, Jr. Sunday, Kendrick preaching*
8:30am Worship – Chapel
9:00am Bible Study - Church School Bldg Rm 9
10:00am Worship/Nursery/Church School
11:30am Adult Forum – Chapel

Wed., Jan. 18 7:00pm Service of Prayer and Healing - Sanctuary

Sun., Jan. 22 *Clare preaching*
8:30am Worship – Chapel
9:00am Bible Study - Church School Bldg Rm 9
10:00am Worship/Nursery/Church School
11:30am Adult Forum-Chapel: Aida Mansoor
“Women & Islam”

Sun., Jan. 29 8:30am Worship – Chapel
9:00am Bible Study - Church School Bldg Rm 9
10:00am Worship/Nursery/Children’s Program
11:30am Adult Forum - Chapel: Will Porter:
“Building a Team”

Sun., Feb. 5 *Kendrick preaching*
8:30am Worship – Chapel
9:00am Bible Study – Church School Bldg Rm 9
10:00am Communion/Nursery/Church School
11:00am **Annual Meeting**
12:00noon **Luncheon**

Sun., Feb. 12 8:30am Worship- Chapel
9:00am Bible Study - Church School Bldg Rm 9
10:00am Family Service: *Confirmands’ Worship*/Nursery
11:30am Adult Forum – Chapel

Wed., Feb. 15 7:00pm Service of Prayer and Healing - Sanctuary

Sun., Feb. 19 *Kendrick preaching*
8:30am Worship – Chapel
9:00am Bible Study - Church School Bldg Rm 9
10:00am Worship Nursery/Church School
11:30am Adult Forum – Chapel

Wed., Feb. 22 7:30pm *Ash Wednesday Worship*

Sun., Feb. 26 *First Sunday in Lent*
8:30am Worship – Chapel
9:00am Bible Study - Church School Bldg Rm 9
10:00am Worship/Nursery/Church School
11:30am Adult Forum – Chapel

Wed., Feb. 29 6:00pm Lenten Supper & Program – Fellowship Hall

Sun., Mar. 4 *Second Sunday in Lent*
8:30am Communion – Chapel
9:00am Bible Study - Church School Bldg Rm 9
10:00am Communion, *Choir Service:* Bach cantata 29
“Wir danken dir, Gott,” Bach’s Orchestral Suite in
D Major/Nursery/Church School
11:30am Adult Forum - Chapel

Wed., Mar. 7 6:00pm Lenten Supper & Program – Fellowship Hall

Sun., Mar. 11 *Third Sunday in Lent*
8:30am Worship – Chapel
9:00am Bible Study – Church School Bldg Rm 9
10:00am Worship/Nursery/Church School
11:30am Adult Forum - Chapel

Wed., Mar. 14 6:00pm Lenten Supper & Program

Sun., Mar. 18 *Fourth Sunday in Lent*
8:30am Worship – Chapel
9:00am Bible Study – Church School Bldg Rm 9
10:00am Worship/Nursery/Church School
11:30am Adult Forum- Chapel

Wed., Mar. 21 6:00 – 8:30pm Lenten Supper/Worship/Program-FH
with the Service of Prayer & Healing (7pm)

Sun., Mar 25, Fifth Sunday in Lent
8:30am Worship – Chapel
9:00am Bible Study – Green
10:00am Family Service: *Junior Choir Musical*/Nursery
11:30am Adult Forum – Chapel

Wed., Mar. 28 6:00pm Lenten Supper & Program – Fellowship Hall

Sun., Apr. 1 *Palm Sunday*

8:30am Communion – Chapel
9:45am Ecumenical Palm Blessing - Green
10:00am Communion/Nursery/Church School
11:00am Pilgrim Fellowship Cookie Walk-FH
11:30am Adult Forum- Chapel

Thurs., Apr. 5 7:30pm *Maundy Thursday Worship* - Sanctuary

Fri., Apr. 6 7:30pm *Good Friday Worship* -Sanctuary

Sun., Apr. 8 *Easter (note different worship times)***

6:00am *Sunrise Service* – Indian Cove Beach
9:00am Festival Service/Nursery care/Children’s Pgm
11:00am Festival Service/Nursery care/Children’s Pgm
Fellowship/refreshments between 9 & 11am services

Sun., Apr. 15 8:30am Worship – Chapel

9:00am Bible Study – Church School Bldg Rm 9
10:00am Worship Nursery/Church School
11:30am Adult Forum - Chapel

Wed., Apr. 18 7:00pm Service of Prayer and Healing - Sanctuary

Sun., Apr. 22 8:30am Worship – Chapel

9:00am Bible Study – Church School Bldg Rm 9
10:00am Worship Nursery/Church School
11:30am Adult Forum - Chapel

Sun., Apr. 29 8:30am Worship – Chapel

9:00am Bible Study – Church School Bldg Rm 9
10:00am Worship Nursery/Church School
11:30am Adult Forum- Chapel
11:30am Inquirer/New Member Meeting- Minear Library
11:30am Heifer Book Fair - FH

Sun., May 6 8:30am Communion – Chapel

9:00am Bible Study – Church School Bldg Rm 9
10:00am Communion/Nursery/Church School
11:30am Inquirer/New Member Mtg – Minear Library

Sun., May 13 8:30am Worship – Chapel

9:00am Bible Study – Church School Bldg Rm 9
10:00am Worship/Nursery/Church School

Wed., May 16 7:00pm Service of Prayer and Healing - Sanctuary

Sun., May 20 8:30am Worship - Chapel

9:00am Bible Study - Church School Bldg Rm 9
10:00am **Family Service:** Children’s Day/Nursery care

Sun., May 27 *Pentecost*

8:30am Worship – Chapel
9:00am Bible Study – Church School Bldg Rm 9
10:00am Worship/Nursery/*No Church School*

Sun., June 3 8:30am Communion – Chapel

10:00am Communion/Nursery/Summer Sunday School

Sun., June 10: 8:30 Worship - Chapel

10:00am **Family Service:** *Confirmation*/Nursery
5:00pm Pilgrim Fellowship Closing Picnic - Lawn

Sun., June 17 8:30am Worship – Chapel

10:00am Worship/Nursery/Summer Sunday School

Wed., June 20 7:00pm Service of Prayer and Healing - Sanctuary

Sun., June 24 8:30am Worship – Chapel

10:00am Worship/Nursery/Summer Sunday School

PARKING FOR WORSHIP

First Church is blessed with a large congregation. As a result we want to insure that the people with physical limitations who need to park the closest to the Sanctuary are able to do so. Those individuals are asked to display a **Priority Parking Card** (available from the Church Office). All able-bodied people are asked to leave the parking spaces behind the Church School Building, and in front of the church on both sides of Broad Street open for members with Priority Parking Cards. For those who use the handicapped spaces on the east side of the church, please allow space in the center for the cars behind to get around those in front. Thank you.

PASTORAL SERVICES

The Ministers care about you and hope to share in your joys and sorrows. They are available for weddings, funerals, and other life-changing transitions. If you need, or would appreciate, a visit please call the Church Office (203-453-5249). If you are homebound and would like to have a minister, Deacon or Deaconess share *Holy Communion* with you, please call the Church Office. *If you are hospitalized please alert the church office*; due to privacy issues churches can no longer request patient information.

Our ministers are available for short-term counseling. If long-term professional counseling is needed, they are able to make referrals to competent professionals. The ministers are available to meet with you by appointment. In case of emergency you may reach Dr. Norris at 203-457-9483 or Rev. Robert at 203-606-9129.

Board of Deaconesses – Deaconesses are a dozen church members who minister to the congregation behind the scenes. They make available the hearing-aid headsets for worship services, deliver worship flowers to those who need some cheer, write notes to celebrate joys and share concerns, and visit our homebound church members. If you know someone who could benefit from this ministry, please fill out a “Joys and Concerns” pew card and put it in the offering plate, or call the Church Office. We have a *Prayer Shawl Ministry*. Church members knit or crochet shawls over which the Deaconesses pray. The shawls are given to those who are ill or grieving as an expression of First Church’s love. New hands are always welcome! Co-chairs: Mary Norris, 203-457-9483 and Dianne Hughes (203-453-5429.)

Called To Care: This ministry provides support to persons and families of the congregation during times of hospitalization, bereavement, and transition. Twenty-one lay ministers have received training from clinical pastoral educators, bereavement specialists, and social workers who specialize in these areas. They also meet with the ministers for ongoing skill building and support. Our volunteers include members whose own professional training is in fields such as medicine, nursing, psychology, social work, and ministry. If you would like to request a Called to Care lay minister, please speak with Kendrick or Clare. For more information, or if you feel called to this ministry, please call Marilyn Leslie at 203-453-3295.

NEW TO FIRST CHURCH OR SEEK TO BECOME A MEMBER?

We welcome to our worship and church life all who seek the presence of God, no matter where you are on your faith journey. Each person brings his or her own gifts and faith experience which adds richness to our life as the Body of Christ - in our worship, fellowship and mission. If you are new to First Church and wish to learn more about our congregation and the United Church of Christ, of which we are a part, we offer Inquirer Meetings. These meetings are also for those who are seeking membership. All are welcome to become members as they feel led by covenanting with other members using the words of the 1629 Salem Covenant. *New members will be received on Sunday, Dec. 4, 2011 and Sunday, May 13, 2012* during the 10:00am worship service. In preparation, we will offer two sets of meetings, one in the fall, another in the spring, all meet at 11:30am in the Minear Library. *Inquirer/New Member Meetings will be offered on Sundays, Nov. 13 & 20, 2011 and April 29th & May 6, 2012.* Child care is available. The meetings are especially helpful to those coming from a different denomination or faith background. Check worship bulletins and the newsletter, *The Landmark*, for details. If you have questions, please call the Church Office or speak with a minister.

FIRST CHURCH STEWARDSHIP

In full covenantal partnership with God and each other, we seek to communicate, inspire, and encourage all members to share joyfully their time, talent and treasure, living out the gospel message of Christ.

Stewardship Mission Statement

Members of the Stewardship Committee have the charge to encourage and challenge each one of us to share joyfully of our time, talent and treasure for the mission of Christ’s Church. This includes an annual pledge campaign in the fall to support both our ongoing church operations and a vibrant community outreach program through our Community and World Concerns missions. We recognize and celebrate the myriad of ministries and missions that our thriving First Church community supports. Time and talent opportunities abound at First Church and are encouraged throughout the year. The Stewardship Committee invites us all to reflect on our many blessings and encourages us to share of our gifts with others in need. No time, talent, or treasure is too small in the eyes of God. God is still speaking to us – but are we open to receive the call? God can use us all!

FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Please wear your nametag; it is a significant way to make guests feel welcome.

Coffee Hour: Following 10:00 worship all are invited for fellowship and refreshment in Fellowship Hall. Church committees & boards take responsibility for hosting. During the summer, the Welcoming and Inclusion Committee serves lemonade, on the lawn weather permitting.

Church School Breakfasts: The Welcoming & Inclusion Committee will host two breakfasts for families of Church School children. Held in Fellowship Hall, these are potluck and offer a time of fellowship for Church School families to get to know one another. The dates are: **October 2** for families of children in Kindergarten and younger; and **October 23** – for families of children in Grades 1 – 3. Look for further details in *The Landmark* and the Sunday worship bulletin.

Alpha Club: The Alpha Club is a social and service group for women of the congregation which meets monthly September - June in Fellowship Hall unless otherwise posted. The primary goal is to develop warm friendships and support the church with dedicated service, fund-raising activities, and fellowship. All are cordially welcome. Our scheduled program dates are:

Tuesday, Sept. 27, 7:30pm- Harvest Fair Workshop

Fri. & Sat., Sept. 30 & Oct. 1 – Rummage Sale- Fellowship Hall

Tuesday, Oct. 25, 7:30pm – Clyde Work, Chair, Board of
Community & World Concerns

Tuesday, Nov. 15, 7:30pm –Fitness Program with Gert Altieri

Tuesday, Dec. 13, 7:00pm – Christmas Party – Carin Small's

Tuesday, Jan. 24, 2012, 7:30pm Surprise

Tuesday, Feb. 28, 2012, Comfort Evening

Officers for 2010 are: President: Betsy Work; Vice President: Barbara Bishop; Secretary: Kay Honsberger; Treasurer: Jane Rowen.

The Red Tent is a women's group which meets periodically during the year on a Saturday morning for spiritual reflection/renewal and fellowship. We welcome women of any age who wish to join us. For information, please call the Church Office, or check the *Landmark* or worship bulletin for details.

45th ANNUAL HARVEST FAIR!

Save the date! **Saturday, November 5th, from 9:00am to 2:30pm.** First Church has a unique event: ours is among only a handful of church fairs in Connecticut that are still member-only produced, utilizing no outside vendors or craftspeople. The proceeds are applied towards repairs and improvements to our historic Church building.

According to our By-laws, the primary objective of our fair is fellowship. The Fair offers a wonderful opportunity for fellowship by utilizing the time and talents (and treasure, of course) of the entire Congregation.

This year will feature the following shopping rooms and areas: Attic Treasures; Bakery & Candy; Dried Flowers & Plants; Handcrafts; Knitting; Jewelry; Re-Gift It! ; Tools; and Toys. Rest your feet and mingle with friends while enjoying a delicious à la carte Luncheon. The Sanctuary Exhibit will feature "Harvest Fairs from the Past"-- a display of unique items purchased by our members from previous 1st Church Harvest Fairs, including ornaments, woodwork, and crocheted or knitted goods.

We are looking for Chairs/Co-Chairs for the following Rooms/Areas. If we do not find volunteers, we may not offer some of these areas:

* Luncheon (Co-Chair to work with Lyla Johnson)

* Themed Gift Baskets (Chairperson: past Co-Chair Peggy Russell can offer guidance)

* Toys (Co-Chair to work with Virginia Friese and help move toys from storage to Toys Room during Fair set-up)

* Wooden & Metal Crafts (Co-Chair to work with Doug Eisenlohr)

If you wish to help, please contact: Nancy Patton Cell: 203-530-8481 or via e-mail: nancypatton@comcast.net

All are invited and encouraged help prepare for this event. The *Harvest Fair Handbook*, which you should receive shortly after Labor Day, contains a full description of opportunities for participation. All are welcome at any workshops to be held in the fall.

SEE YOU AT THE FAIR!

MINISTRIES WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

General Church School Information

Our church provides an educational program for children on Sunday mornings at 10:00am during regular worship services.

- ***The Crib Room and the Toddler class for “3’s and Under”*** are both available from 9:50 a.m. until the end of worship. Parents are always welcome to stay with their child until their child is comfortable with our rooms and caregivers.
- ***Pre-K through Grade 8*** will generally worship with their families for the first 15 minutes of the service and then leave the Sanctuary to attend Church School classes. Classes end at approximately 11:15am.
- ***Pick-up arrangements:*** Parents of children up through Grade 2 are requested to collect them personally from class when the bell rings. This is one of our safety measures for small children. Older children will be permitted to make their own way to meet parents in Fellowship Hall. Parents should arrange for a meeting place inside the church building.
- ***Registration for Church School and Church Nursery*** will take place in September. We ask parents to complete a new registration form for each child in the family (8th grade and below), even if the child attended Church School last year, and even if the child is a baby or toddler who is not yet attending church on a regular basis. It is a great help for us to keep track of changing contact information and up-to-date on the kids!
- In addition to the “September through May” Church School program, we usually offer some type of summer programming for children. Plans for this will be announced later in the school year.

Parents will be kept up to date with email newsletters and mailings. To be included on the mailing list, please fill out a registration form or contact the CE Director at (203) 453-3324.

Intergenerational Family Services

These are special services which occur periodically throughout the year. They take the place of regular Church School classes, and are designed to enable all ages to worship together. Extra care and attention to children’s needs and interests will help make this a special time for the whole church family to be together.

Church School Philosophy

The purpose of our Church School program is to provide an accepting, nurturing atmosphere to help children respond to God’s love and to grow in relationship with one another. We love kids and teach the stories of our faith in ways appropriate to different emotional, physical, and spiritual life stages. We strive to be a place of affirmation for all forms of family, recognizing that it is God who calls a family together. We welcome and affirm children of all abilities, and work to find ways that all children can thrive.

It is our hope that children will grow in faith, wonder, and trust in the God who loves them, that they will learn more of the stories and practices of the Christian faith, and know the church as a place where they are beloved members of community.

Middle School Youth Group Tuesdays 3:00-4:30pm MSYG is for anyone in Grades 5 – 8 interested in making new friends, getting involved with the community, having fun and making a difference in the world. We play games, take on creative projects, and reflect on our lives in a new way. The group will meet with Lisa Horst Clark and Liza Catino on Tuesdays from 3:00 – 4:30pm in Fellowship Hall beginning on September 13th. Friends and guests are welcome!

Confirmation Class

Confirmation is a program with emphasis on exploring questions of faith and learning more about the Christian tradition. Our confirmation program is open to any young person in the church in High School

Each confirmand will choose a sponsor and, with her or his assistance, will be guided through a series of hands-on learning experiences designed to increase his or her understanding of what it means to be part of the church. These experiences cover a broad range of activities – from helping at church, to participating in worship services, to assisting in a church-related outreach project. Classes will include learning about the Bible, our church’s history and missions, and exploring together some of the issues that surround our faith and beliefs.

We ask parents of 9th graders, or other young people who have an interest in the confirmation program, to attend our first meeting, on September 19 or contact the church early in September and let us know you plan to participate. Contact person: CE Director (203) 453-3324

High School Youth Group

Pilgrim Fellowship (PF) meets during the school year usually on Sunday evenings from 7:00-9:00pm in Fellowship Hall. The group alternates between serious programs, recreational and social events, and service projects for our church and the community at large. The week-long Mission Trip during spring vacation has been a highlight of the years activities. Details of PF programs are announced in *The Landmark*, worship bulletins and PF yahoo group. All high school students are welcome to participate. For information, contact the PF Committee Chair, Sandy Nicholas sandy@c3pg.com (203-453-0043).

Sunday, *Sept. 11th* 6:00pm *Opening Picnic* - Church Lawn

Sunday, *Oct. 16th* 6:00pm *PF Parent Meeting* - Sanctuary

Saturday, *Dec. 3th* 9:00–11:30am *Santa Breakfast* – Fellowship Hall

Sunday, *Dec. 11th* 6:00pm *Soup & Bread Supper* – Fellowship Hall

Sunday, *Dec. 18th* 10:00am *Cookie Walk* – Fellowship Hall

Sunday, *Jan. 1* *PF/PF Alumni Party*

Sunday, *Apr. 1st* 10:00am *Cookie Walk* - Fellowship Hall

Saturday, *Apr. 6th* – Sunday, Apr. 15th *PF Mission Trip*, TBA

Sunday, *June 10th* 4:00pm *Closing Picnic & DVD showing*

ADULT EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Annual Wilcox Lectures: “*The Gospel and All That Jazz*”

Friday, Oct. 14th – Sunday, Oct. 16th

This year we will welcome Dr. Eugene Lowry, a gifted jazz musician and celebrated preacher. Dr. Lowry will present lecture/concerts exploring Jazz and Christianity, The Theology of the Blues and The Gospel in Word and Song, interweaving narrative preaching with his own piano renditions of gospel and blues songs. He will be joined by other musicians. Dr. Lowry earned four degrees culminating in a doctorate in the Philosophy at the University of Kansas. He served as professor of preaching for over 30 years at Saint Paul School of Theology in Kansas City, MO., has written six books on the narrative preaching and produced four recordings in the blues/jazz mode. He presented the 2009 Beecher Lectures at Yale Divinity School.

The program begins Friday at 7:30pm. Dr. Lowry will also *preach at the 8:30am & 10:00am worship services on Sunday.* The fee for Saturday includes lunch; scholarships are available. *Save the dates; advance registration advised*– contact the Church Office. For further information, speak with Bob Raines, Shannon Clarkson or Bill Speed.

Sunday Morning Bible Study, 9:00 – 9:40am in Church School Building Room 9 Leadership will rotate. Check the *Landmark*, or worship bulletins for the specific focus of the study. All are welcome!

Sunday Adult Forum 11:30am in the Chapel:

We offer adult education opportunities most Sundays – there is time for a quick cup of coffee before heading to the Chapel for the program. *Child care provided.* A few special programs are:

September 18- Kennedy Odede: “Shining Hope for Communities”

Kennedy Odede, a Wesleyan student, grew up in a Nairobi, Kenya slum – with seven siblings, no running water or electricity, in a 10 by 10 foot room. Before leaving Nairobi for the US he had started the first free school for girls in Kibera, a health clinic, an Internet care, a bio-latrine center, and a community center. The slogan for his organization is “We bring hope to women because through women, we bring hope to the entire communities.” Grants he has written while at Wesleyan help him continue to support these projects. Join us and be inspired!

September 25: Michael Joseph “**Witnessing for Peace and Human Rights**” Since May 2007 Michael Joseph has served as a "critical presence" missionary to Colombia with Global Ministries of the United Church of Christ and Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) with the Commission for Restoration, Life and Peace of the Colombian Council of Protestant Churches (CEDECOL) . His focus has been the human rights documentation program which annually documents hundreds of human rights violations in Colombia and accompanies numerous victims of Colombia's civil war. Michael is also a professor of theology and ethics at the Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Bogotá, Colombia. From 1997 to 2002, he served on the International Team of Witness for Peace, a US non-governmental human rights and advocacy organization. Michael graduated from Union Theological Seminary with a Master of Arts in Theology degree and in July 2004 was ordained a Baptist minister by Metro Baptist Church, in Hell's Kitchen, NYC.

October 9 - Vin Woods: “Broken Hearts in a Promised Land: A History of the Palestinian/Israeli Conflict–Abraham to the Present”

Vin Woods is Amnesty's New England Resource for Israel, the Occupied Territories and the Palestinian Authority. His power-point presentation will trace this complicated history.

Adult Forum Details, continued

October 23 - Rev. Sylvia Shirk will speak on the “*Mennonite Tradition.*”

October 30 – Church Ramsey, church member, will speak about an *adult mission trip to Nicaragua.*

November 6 – Regional Minister, Rev. Dr. Mike Penn-Strah will encourage us and equip us to “*Invite a Neighbor to Church*” which will happen on Sunday, Dec. 11th. Mike has many years of experience of making this a positive experience for all.

November 13 - Robert Harms: *Slavery and Human Trafficking in the Ancient and Medieval Worlds.* The human trafficking in our modern world has strong roots in the ancient and medieval worlds. This illustrated talk traces the history of Old World slavery and human trafficking from the ancient Greeks and Romans to the beginnings of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade.

November 27 – Elizabeth Norris, Kendrick’s daughter, works for the U.S. Dept. of State’s Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons and will introduce us to the topic of *human trafficking in the United States and around the globe.*

January 29 – Will Porter, church member and head coach of the amazingly successful Yale Women’s Crew team, “*Building a Team.*”

Lenten Supper & Study

Lent is a season of introspection and reflection, a time to allow ourselves to go deeper spiritually. Each Lent we offer a time for fellowship and reflection/study. All are invited for the five Wednesdays in Lent: February 29 - March 28 from 6:00 – 8:30pm in Fellowship Hall for a supper, followed by the program at 7:00pm. Join us for any part, or all of the evening, as you are able, as we journey through Lent together. Look for details about the program in the February edition of *The Landmark* and in Sunday worship bulletins.

MINEAR LIBRARY

Located in the Spencer House, the Minear Library is a reference and lending library intended to advance individual and group studies pertinent to worship, faith and spirituality. For assistance please call Marjorie Colton, First Church Librarian at 203-245-3463.

CHRISTIAN MEDITATION

Introduction to Christian Meditation led by Clare Robert
Mondays, Sept. 19, 26 & Oct. 3 4 -5 pm in the Minear Library

Meditation is a simple practice of learning to live with awareness in the present moment. As Christians, we believe that all our time is given by God, and that God is present to us in our comings and goings. As the Psalmist says “O Lord...you know when I sit down, and when I rise up, you discern my thoughts from far way. You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways...” God knows *our* ways—but it can be a challenge *for us*, given our heavy responsibilities and hectic schedules, to pay attention to our own lives, and the God-given gift of Today.

What will you learn if you come to a class ? Simple things: to sit still, to observe your own mind, to taste your food, to walk slowly, to savor the moments of the day. From these simple things may rise up more space to feel God’s presence, more capacity to be with life as it is, and more gratitude for the many blessings that inhabit our lives -- and perhaps more ability to hear the “still small voice.”

Please call the Church Office to let me know if you would like to participate in this round of classes, or in the future.

Open Meditation:

Every Monday at 4pm in the Minear Library starting October 17th. For anyone who would like to spend time in silence and personal silent prayer the Minear Library will be open on Mondays at 4pm (except holidays when the Church Offices are closed.) There are no prerequisites, but since no instruction is given, it is more appropriate for those who have some experience in meditation. Please enter quietly and leave when you want. The session ends at 4:45pm. Questions ? call Clare Robert at the Church Office

MUSIC MINISTRIES

The Music Ministry continues to be one of the hallmarks of First Church. It enhances, enriches, and complements all aspects of worship through its integration in each service. Our Music Ministry is transformational, spiritually Christ-centered, dynamic and a balance of tradition and innovation. Its goal is to support congregational, choral, and instrumental music that is eclectic in style and genre, to nurture participants in discipleship and in faith, and encourage all to experience God's gift of music.

First Church, under the leadership of Bill Speed, Director of Music Ministries; Liza Catino, Junior Choir Director; Gail Etter, Cherub Choir Director, and our Music and Transformation Leadership Team of Marjorie Colton and Nancy Mann, offers quality music programs for all ages with varied opportunities for experiencing music and spirituality through vocal, instrumental and bell choirs and educational classes. Music affects who we are physically, emotionally and spiritually. Singing, listening and playing instruments help us experience the ineffable mystery that is God. We invite you to join in this rich ministry whether you sing, ring, play an instrument or attend a class.

Cherub Choir (*Kindergarten – Grade 2*) rehearses weekly on Wednesdays from 4:00 – 5:00pm in Griswold Hall, and participates in worship and special presentations throughout the program year September - May. **First rehearsal is Sept. 15th.** *The Cherubs do not meet during school vacation, on early dismissal days or snow days.* Director is Gail Etter 203-453-8818 or Gail.Etter@sbcglobal.net).

Junior Choir (*Grades 3 – 8*) rehearses weekly on Wednesdays from 4:00 – 5:00pm in Fellowship Hall, and sings in worship and special presentations from September - May. **First rehearsal is Sept. 15th.** **Note:** Junior Choir 5th-8th graders may still come to Fellowship Hall immediately after school and we'll do something while waiting for the 3rd & 4th graders to arrive. *The Junior Choir does not meet during school vacation, on early dismissal-days or snow days.* Director: Liza Catino 203-453-0494 l.catino@comcast.net).

Senior Choir (*High School- Adult*) rehearses weekly on Thursdays from 7:15 – 9:00pm in the Choir Room and at 9:00am most Sundays for 10:00am services September through June. **Begins Sept. 9th.** The Choir sings in worship as well as special services throughout the year. New members are welcome at any time. Child care is provided for rehearsals.

Attendance policy: If you want to sing with the Senior Choir and cannot make a weekly commitment, you may come on an occasional basis by attending one or two Thursday rehearsals prior to the service in which you sing. One can also sing in special services throughout the year: Lessons and Carols, Christmas Festival Services, Christmas Eve, Lent, Easter Festival Services, and Joyful Noise! Concerts.

Choir Sunday, will be March 4, 2012 when the Senior Choir will offer during worship the Bach cantata 29 “Wir danken dir, Gott.” This will be combined with Bach’s Orchestral Suite in D Major and hymns harmonized by Bach to make the entire worship enlivened by the music of this master. For more information contact Bill at Bill@firstchurchguilford.org or 203-458-9701. Rehearsals for major pieces begin about 6 to 8 weeks prior.

Bell Choirs (*All ages*) All are invited - beginners to advanced. There are opportunities to ring in worship with a short-term rehearsal schedule leading up to the Sunday. The first rehearsal for is Thursday, Sept. 15th 6:00 to 7:00pm. Rehearsals for Youth Bells (grades 5 - 12) will be announced. Look for announcements in worship bulletins and *The Landmark* or contact Bill Speed.

Instrumentalists meet for a variety of musical genres and ensembles, from Jazz and Gospel to classical, solo works to chamber orchestras. We are interested in developing a small youth ensemble to build on Guilford’s strong school music programs. Call Bill in the Music Office to discuss how you can participate in this music ministry.

Joyful Noise! Concerts

Joyful Noise! Concerts are held throughout the year. There is no admission fee; the free-will offering benefits the Myrtha Licht Fund at First Church which supports and enhances our music ministries. Concerts are usually held on Sunday afternoons at 4:00pm. The concert schedule will be announced as soon as it is finalized.

Fifth Annual Memorial Concert

This concert is offered each spring through the generosity of the Ellen and Stu Burt Family Charitable Trust. The free-will offering received benefits the Annual Memorial Concert Fund at First Church. The details of this concert will be announced when they are finalized:

Music Ministries, Senior Choir, continued

Music and Transformation Classes

Do you have a desire to experience personal inner change? You are invited to join a spiritual growth group based on Mary Morreale's **Music and Transformation** curriculum. There are two ways to participate: weekly which meets Monday mornings from 11:00am – 12:30pm in the Bride's Room, off the narthex; or monthly (the same 7-stage process in a shorter version) meets the second Saturday of the month from 9:15 – 11:30am in the Minear Library. **Classes begin Oct. 10th & 8th** respectively with a break for Advent and Christmas. New and returning students are most welcome as there is always more to discover about ourselves, one another, and our God. Groups are small to provide security and build trust. Please call Marjorie Colton at 203-245-3463.

Deepening Spiritual Connections Women's Group

Meets monthly on the first Wednesday 7:00-9:00pm in the Minear Library.. This group is an opportunity to share, in a non-judgmental, accepting environment, our longing for a deeper connection with the Divine. Using the Music & Transformation process developed by Mary Morreale as a guide, we meet monthly to explore various topics through discussion with meditation prayer practices, and discussion. Experiential aspects also can be further explored. Previous topics: spirituality, who is God to you, the female cycle of life, archetypes as an expression of the spiritual journey, and finding pleasure in the spiritual quest. During the first meeting we will discuss "*A Basket of Fresh Bread*," written by Rumi a 13th c. poet and mystic. We will also plan the future meetings. The size is limited to twelve women. To inquire about joining, please call Nancy Mann 203-245-0513, or Susan Leete at 203-453-5860.

MEMORIAL GARDEN

First Church is blessed to have a Memorial Garden which was officially dedicated on October 15, 2000. The primary purpose of the garden is for the interment of the ashes of past and present church members and their immediate families, and friends of First Congregational Church. It is also available for personal meditation, receptions, baptisms, church school classes, worship services, and other activities as approved by the Memorial Garden Committee, which has responsibility for its oversight. The burial fees and memorial gifts given are used for its maintenance and care. For more information, please call Tom Pugh 203-453-4362.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE

The Board of Community & World Concerns (CWC)

Our mission is to assess and determine the needs and opportunities for outreach in our local, national and global communities, and to communicate with church members about how we can participate in mission. Individual members of the CWC Board serve as liaisons with different funded agencies and provide leadership in various aspects of our mission program. Our mission giving includes

- 1. funds designated for mission** in our annual pledges, a portion of our loose offerings, and money given through different offerings and appeals,
- 2. material contributions** of food, clothing and other items distributed through agencies and efforts we support, and
- 3. service of time** through activities we carry out as a part of our mission.

One goal of the CWC is to contribute annually an amount of at least 10% of the church's operating expense (called "Basic Support or Our Church's Wider Ministry") for mission through the United Church of Christ, at national, and global levels. We also collect for the annual One Great Hour of Service offering..

Some of the agencies in our community that we support in various ways are: Christian Community Action, Columbus House, The Cove for Grieving Children, Covenant to Care, Fair Haven Parents' Ministry, Guilford Food Bank, Guilford Interfaith Ministries (Meal on Wheels, Charlie's Closet and Friendly Visiting,) and Guilford Welfare Oil. We are exploring the resumption of work with Habitat for Humanity. We also provide some support to two UCC seminaries, and to Church World Service through the annual CROP Walk.

In addition, we offer and encourage the **Alternate Giving Program** to facilitate contributions to agencies of the donors' choice in lieu of material gifts to friends and/or loved ones on birthdays, anniversaries, Christmas, holidays and other special occasions. For additional information contact Clyde Work, Chair, at 203-458-7708.

Service/Mission, continued

Melita Refugee Resettlement Committee

The Melita Refugee Resettlement Committee (MRRC) is dedicated to the resettlement of refugees who have been displaced from their homeland. We work closely with Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services (IRIS) in New Haven which is a part of Church World Service (CWS). CWS works on a global level, IRIS works on a regional level, and our committee works on a local level, closest with the family themselves. As a co-sponsoring church, we accept the responsibility of caring for a family for approximately one year after their entry into the U.S. We are looking for more members to assist us in welcoming a new refugee family to the area. If you are interested in learning more, or volunteering, please contact one of the committee members: Sarah Beres (203-458-2699), Lyla Johnson, Joe Sauer, or Chris Balestracci.

The Peace, Affirmation and Justice Committee

The PAJ Committee promotes peace, human rights and social justice. Since our founding, we have provided educational programs and forums that raise consciousness about current social issues and create opportunities for dialog and involvement. PAJ grew out of the Open and Affirming Committee. When that work was accomplished, PAJ was established to address a broader range of social concerns. More recently, through public gatherings and government involvement, we advocated for non-violent conflict resolution and progressive legislation on issues ranging from the war in Iraq to prison reform. Through our prison resettlement activities, we offer opportunities for individuals to become personally involved in mentoring women and young men who are incarcerated. We also offer mentoring support for the children of women who are in prison, and we provide prayer support and supplies for those who are rejoining society. We look forward to helping move our community and world forward toward greater understanding and fellowship. Contact Craig Mullett at 203-533-

CHURCH PUBLICATIONS

The Landmark, the monthly newsletter, is a great source of information about the life of our church. Articles for inclusion may be submitted by the 15th of the month to Jeanie Cacopardo, editor, for the next issue at Landmark.fc@gmail.com. To receive *The Landmark* in hard copy, please contact the Church Office. *The Landmark* can be accessed through our website.

ELECTRONIC SERVICES

The **Church's website**, www.firstchurchguilford.org, is updated frequently with news and publications. The Sunday worship bulletin is generally available on Fridays. An electronic version of the monthly newsletter *The Landmark* is available in both PDF and “blog” formats. The *Landmark* publication and link is announced on the Membership list. Audio recordings of sermons are also available on the website.

The Church uses different methods to stay in touch: A church-wide mailing list (listserv), membership@firstchurchguilford.org, is available for rapid communication with the entire church – members and friends who have given us their e-mail addresses. This list has relatively low volume and is carefully monitored. To join, send your e-mail address to the Church office office@firstchurchguilford.org. Boards & Committees may submit announcements and programs for their activities to the webmaster to ensure widest publicity. Video, social networking, blogging, tweeting, etc., can be coordinated through the website.

Martin Ewing, Webmaster webmaster@firstchurchguilford.org

GROCERY GIFT CARD PROGRAM

As a means to raise additional funds for ministry, gift cards are available for Big Y, Stop & Shop and Bishop's Orchards. For every \$100 gift card purchased, the Church receives a percentage (5% or 6% depending on which store.) Cards may be purchased after Sunday worship.

BOARD & COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS (until 2/2012)

First Church is managed by Boards, Committees, and Church Meetings. These meetings are open to all members; meeting dates are posted in *The Landmark* and Sunday bulletins. If you are interested in serving on a particular committee or board, please contact the Nominating Committee. Current chairpersons for Boards and Committees are:

Adult Education Committee	Shannon Clarkson
Alpha Club	Betsy Work
Auditors	Charles Dear
Business Committee	Ken Medvetz
Called to Care	Marilyn Leslie
Christian Education, Board of	Ann Weeden
Communion Committee	Gladys Holland
Community & World Concerns, Board of	Clyde Work
Deaconesses, Board of	Dianne Hughes, Mary Norris
Deacons, Board of	Pamela Dear, Michael Smith
Decorating Committee	Annie Merkle, Peggy Russell
Finance, Board of	Susan Leete
Flower Committee	Barbara Wells
Harvest Fair Committee	Nancy Patton
Hospitality Committee	Alison Linske
House Committee	Daphne Stitt
Human Resources Committee	Lou Federici
Memorial Committee	Catherine Gilbert
Memorial Garden Committee	Tom Pugh
Music Committee	Daniela Giordano, Krysten Guarino
Nominating Committee	Kate Ott
Offering Collection Committee	Doris Fonicello
Peace, Affirmation & Justice Committee	Virginia Corbiere
Pilgrim Fellowship Committee	Sandy Nicholas
Stewardship Committee	Doug Scales
Trustees, Board of	Tom Grant
Usher Committee	Eva Ewing
Welcoming & Inclusion Committee	Geoff Fix

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