

A Joy-Filled Advent Season!

Wednesday Advent Communion Services — Dec. 1, 8, 15 and 22 — 6:30 to 7:10 PM

Christmas Silver Tea — Wednesday, Dec. 8 — 12:30 PM

Christmas Concert — Sunday, Dec. 12 — 4:00 PM

Family Christmas Experience — Sunday, Dec. 19 — 3:00 to 5:00 PM

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services — Friday, Dec. 24 — 6:30, 8:00, 9:30 and 11:00 PM

“Happy Birthday, Jesus!” Party (age 5 thru grade 3) — Friday, Dec. 24 — 6:30 to 7:30 PM



FROM THE SENIOR MINISTER

LET THE COUNT-DOWN begin! The tree is up. The ornaments and the lights are on. Let the presents come out! Bring them out, Mom and Dad. Let’s see them! It’s

almost time for Christmas!

Don’t you just love that joy, that longing, that excitement? It’s infectious, isn’t it?

The emotions of a child waiting and longing for Christmas are the emotions and desires that we are to have in the season of Advent. In Advent, we are not waiting for the toys under the tree—we are looking forward to our Savior!

It’s no wonder that Zephaniah said these words to Israel in 3:14: ***Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion; shout O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem!*** I hear these words and I want to sing, “How great our joy! Great our joy! Joy, joy, joy!”

Joy coupled with longing is a theme of Advent. During this great season we wait and long with the prophets of old as they awaited the great promise of the Messiah. We also eagerly await the promise of Jesus’ return.

Children eagerly await the gifts under the tree. Usually, the bigger the gift, the better. In Zephaniah there are also gifts

that we can look forward to. These gifts are better than expected; they are wilder than our wildest imagination. They are gifts from our loving, glorious Savior that He gives us in small part now and fully in the future.

I have already mentioned the gift of joy from Zephaniah 3:14. Joy. Infectious joy. I can’t wait. There are other gifts as well. There is the gift of **forgiveness** in 3:15 and the gift of **life change** in 3:19. There is also the gift of **treasure** in 3:20: ***“At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes,” says the LORD.***

Treasure! The gift of treasure! This treasure will not be of silver and gold—it will be better. It will be the treasure of God Himself. Zephaniah tells us in 3:17 that this Mighty Warrior will fight for us and love us. God will be for us and no one will be able to stand against us. And He will love us, really love us, as He sings to us. What a fabulous gift!

During this Advent, I hope you get excited as you read with us the **Scripture readings** found on **page 4** of this issue. As disciples, let’s cherish Christ together. Let’s prepare for the journey. Let’s renew our joy in Jesus.

—Pastor Deryk

SERMON SERIES • ALL SERVICES

Sunday Worship

Traditional Services
in the Meetinghouse:
8:00, 9:15 and 11:00 a.m.

Wind Contemporary Service
in Keith Jones Hall: 11:00 a.m.

DNA & Discipleship

SERMONS BY DERYK RICHENBURG

Nov. 28 — First Sunday in Advent
The Disciple’s Worship
Romans 12:1-2

Dec. 5 — Second Sunday in Advent
With Holy Communion
The Disciple’s Community
Acts 2:42-47

Dec. 12 — Third Sunday in Advent
The Disciple’s Mission
Luke 10:1-12

Journeys

SERMONS BY DERYK RICHENBURG

Dec. 19 — Fourth Sunday in Advent
Family Sunday
The Journey Before the Manger
Isaiah 61:1-3

Friday, Dec. 24 — Christmas Eve
6:30, 8:00, 9:30 and 11:00 PM
The Journey To the Manger
Matthew 2:1-12

Dec. 26 — First Sunday of Christmas
The Journey From the Manger
Isaiah 61:10-62:5



DNA & discipleship

YOUTH FOCUS

What they need is a community of adults who can model for them the way of Jesus—with humility, authenticity, and passion.

While walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. And He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." Immediately they left their nets and followed Him. And go-

ing on from there He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and He called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed Him.
—Matthew 4:18-22 (ESV)

Awareness

DID YOU KNOW THAT there are two words for time in the New Testament? The first is the word **chronos**. *Chronos* conveys a familiar understanding of the word "time." Our days are lived out as *chronos* moves forward through the stuff that makes up our everyday existence. The other word for time is **kairos**. *Kairos* is often translated "appointed time."

Pastor Jay once reminded me that **there are distinct moments when *chronos* and *kairos* intersect**. The birth of Jesus was one of those moments, as was His Resurrection.

God's *kairos* invaded my *chronos* one night 15 years ago as I sat outdoors in a rocking chair and chose to follow Jesus. Along the way there have been many other *kairos* moments in my life.

I remember the day Rex called me. It was nearly ten years ago. I didn't know him very well at the time, but now I consider him a close friend. My only memories of him had been the few times he had dropped in to observe an inner-city ministry I volunteered with as a high school student. Another such program began during my first few years in college. Rex invited me to lunch. As we sat down over a sandwich at a local café, I was invited into a journey that would have a lasting impact on my walk with Jesus. This was a *kairos* moment—as God worked through my friend Rex to set a new course for my life.

Jesus was aware of the fact that *chronos* and *kairos* collide. There were many *kairos* moments during His three years of ministry. The day along the shores of Galilee when He called a handful of young men to follow Him was one such moment. Their lives would never be the same. In fact, the world would never be the same.

Jesus always seemed to be aware of what was happening around Him. He noticed Peter, Andrew, James, and John. He



saw Zacchaeus hanging out in a tree. He was aware of the woman who reached out to Him in the crowd so that she could be healed. **Jesus is aware.**

This is an area in which I desire to grow as a follower of Jesus. I want to become more aware of the lives of those around me. I want to be in sync with the Holy Spirit so that I can hear God's voice as He sends me to participate in His *kairos* moments.

As a church, we are moving toward living out our identity as *a community of Jesus followers who love God, love one another, and make disciples*. **Awareness is a key element for living this way of life.**

I need to become more aware of God's Presence. As I press in to that relationship by choosing to meet regularly with Him, my capacity to hear His voice will increase. And as a direct result, my ability to be aware of and to love others will grow.

A huge component of making disciples is learning how to **partner with God in initiating His *kairos* moments in the lives**

of others. Our temptation is to try to force ministry to happen. Maybe this is connected to our desire for control. A wise teacher once told me, "**All ministry is God's ministry.**" My role is to love Him, to serve Him, and to be obedient to the unique and specific actions He is calling me to carry out, just as Rex was obedient to God when he asked me to join him in ministry.

I share these thoughts because **I long for us to grow as a congregation in our ability to love, serve, and disciple the children, teenagers, and college students in our midst.** What they need more than programs is a community of adults who are genuinely walking with Jesus. What they need more than a youth pastor is a

community of adults who are willing to listen to their lives. What they need is a community of adults who can model for them the way of Jesus—with humility, authenticity, and passion—and who can partner with God in bringing His *kairos* moments into existence.

What would happen if we spent less time worrying about the "stuff" of church and more time meeting with Jesus? What would happen if we spent less time concerned about getting the things we want and more time listening to the lives of others? My friend Luke gives a great response to these questions. He says we will become a community that **"praises God, experiences favor with all the people, and to which God Himself will add daily those who are being saved."**

We're on the verge of a huge *kairos* moment for our church. I sincerely believe that. Let's listen to God together as He leads us closer to our destiny!

—Pastor Todd

Midweek Advent Services

A special feature of the Advent season at First Church is our midweek service of prayer and Communion, offered in the Meetinghouse **Wednesday evenings from 6:30 to 7:10.**

This is a time for prayer, for singing Advent and Christmas carols, and for the celebration of the Lord's Supper. A different member of our family of faith speaks briefly at each service—**Heart-to-Heart.** Pastor Mike invites you to commit to joining us for all four of these special services, which can be a spiritual oasis, keeping us “grounded” in the true meaning of the Nativity.



Nancy Snyder

On **December 1**, we will hear **Nancy Snyder's** testimony. Nancy is the mother of three grown sons, two of whom are active in the military. She also enjoys being a grandmother of five. She currently serves as one of our Stephen Ministry leaders and is involved with our Chapel Prayer Team and Pastoral Care Team.

Our second speaker, on **December 8**, will be **Terry Shook**, a member of the Outreach Committee who also assists with the Alpha Course. God has called Terry into mission work, resulting in multiple missions to the Dominican Republic and Haiti, including serving in Haiti just after the earthquake. He is the supervisor for interventional cardiology at St. Francis Hospital and Medical Center and volunteers as a paramedic in Ellington.



Terry Shook

On **December 15**, our Heart-to-Heart speaker will be **John Hickey**, who lives in Wethersfield with his wife, Lori Ann, and their children—Jacob, Jordan and Madison. At First Church,



John Hickey

John serves as a Stephen Minister and on the Men's Advance Committee.

Lastly, on **December 22**, **Justine Grandpré** will share from her heart. When single, Justine was active in PF, Rainbows for All God's Children, and our Singles and Growth Group ministries. Now, she and her husband, Jim, are involved with our Couples Ministry, a local Growth Group for couples, and several Bible studies. Justine has worked in the pharmaceutical industry for 17 years and has also been a commercial interior designer.



Justine Grandpré

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

6:30, 8:00, 9:30, 11:00 PM

CHRISTMAS EVE at First Church is an unforgettable experience.

We light our chandeliers, and the Meetinghouse is full of the joy Christ's Birth brings! **Pastor Deryk** will

give us an uplifting message—**The Journey To the Manger**—and the music will be truly glorious!

Plan to be with us for this holy moment of celebration, and invite family, friends, and guests to be with you in God's House that evening—at **6:30, 8:00, 9:30 or 11:00.**

*Childcare is provided during the 6:30 and 8:00 p.m. services for ages 5 and under, and our 13th annual **Happy Birthday, Jesus! Children's Party** will be held separately during the 6:30 service (see below).*



Happy Birthday, Jesus! Party

During the 6:30 service, children from kindergarten through grade 3 are invited to the Fireside Room for a celebration of the Birthday of our King—with games, crafts, Christmas carols and birthday cake! (Those in grade 4 and up are encouraged to attend church with their families.)

NOTE: Anyone who can attend one of the later services and help with the party during the 6:30 hour should call **Vicki Huffman** at 860-529-1575, ext. 206.

Help is also needed for childcare for preschool and younger during the 6:30 and 8:00 services, for whom age-appropriate activities are planned. Won't you lend a hand on this special evening when so many visitors come to our church?

Caroling on the Broad Street Green

Also, don't miss the ever-popular **caroling on the Broad Street Green**, a community-wide event led by First Church Pilgrim Fellowship, with brass accompaniment and a brief message by **Todd Willard**. There will be candles and song books for everyone! It is a joyous gathering at **5:00** on Christmas Eve!

Family Christmas Experience

This year, in order to celebrate Christ's birth as families together, the Christmas Pageant will be replaced by a **Family Christmas Experience** held right here at First Church of Christ.

Join us on **Sunday, December 19**, from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.—beginning in Keith Jones Hall and ending in the Meetinghouse—as we experience and celebrate together the birth of Christ. The event is designed especially for families, with children of all ages (no separate childcare will be offered).

We will sing carols, hear readings from the Christmas story, watch the manger scene be created by a “living tableau,” enjoy cookies and hot chocolate—and get creative with craft-making for all ages. We ask that each attendee bring a gently used coat of any size, to give as a gift to someone in need, celebrating God's Gift to us—His Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ!

Please sign up on the Wells Area poster, beginning Sunday November 28, so we can have enough supplies for all!



D.R. Mission News

Mission Trip Date Change

The 2011 Dominican Republic Mission Trip will take place from July 8 through July 16. Please note that this is a change from the previously noted dates. The first team meeting will be on Sunday, January 9, at 12:30 p.m. in the Fireside Room. Trip space is limited and filling up fast! A deposit of \$100 reserves your spot. For more information, please contact Dana Crompton at 860-635-1530 or dcrompton@sbcglobal.net.

Knitters & Crocheters

Do you knit or crochet? The 2011 Dominican Republic Mission Team needs hundreds of dolls to distribute to children on the sugar cane fields. The pattern is simple and the rewards great. If you can help by making one or more dolls, please contact Joyce McNamara at 860-436-2923 or jedanfor@juno.com.



FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST Advent Readings

Advent Prayer

Almighty and Gracious God, give us eyes to see what those who longed for the Messiah desired to see. Give us hearts, like Mary's, that are open to Your work in our lives. Strengthen us with Your Holy Spirit, that we might walk with Jesus and glorify His Name. Amen.

Week of November 28

Sunday..... Psalm 130
Monday..... Philippians 4:4-7
Tuesday..... Mark 13:32-36
Wednesday..... Luke 1:5-25
Thursday..... Matthew 9:14-17
Friday..... Micah 5:2-5
Saturday..... Isaiah 64:1-9

Week of December 5

Sunday..... Isaiah 40:1-11
Monday..... 1 Peter 1:3-5
Tuesday..... Isaiah 35:1-10
Wednesday..... Luke 1:26-38
Thursday..... John 16:12-16
Friday..... Zechariah 14:4-9
Saturday..... Luke 1:39-45

Week of December 12

Sunday..... Zephaniah 3:14-17
Monday..... Luke 1:46-56
Tuesday..... Isaiah 61
Wednesday..... Luke 1:57-66
Thursday..... Isaiah 62
Friday..... Isaiah 65:17-25
Saturday..... Luke 1:67-80

Week of December 19

Sunday..... John 1:1-18
Monday..... Isaiah 7:10-17
Tuesday..... Isaiah 9:2-7
Wednesday..... Matthew 1:18-25
Thursday..... Psalm 96
Friday..... Psalm 97
Christmas..... Luke 2:1-20



Christmas Joy!

Our Church is filled with poinsettias during the week of Christmas, due to the generosity of the congregation. You may add to the joy by making a memorial contribution to the floral decorations or to the Memorial Fund. Suggested donation is \$25.

This completed form and your check (payable to "First Church of Christ") should reach the church's Finance Office by Thursday, December 9. Either mail them to the church or place them in the drop box located just outside the Finance Office.

Please check one: Flowers Fund

This information will appear in the Bulletin:

In loving memory of: _____

Given by: _____

Your phone number: _____

Start the New Year with the Power of Hope!

Are you hoping for a new year of balanced health—physically, spiritually, emotionally, and mentally?

Then join our First Place 4 Health Bible study—*The Power of HOPE*—on Wednesday nights, from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m., from January 12 through March 30. Led by Greg and Bonnie Ryan, Cindy McDowell, and Suzanne Edgardo, this study offers support and great teaching on healthy living and growing closer to God. For registration information, go to www.firstchurch.org or pick up a HOPE brochure in the Wells Area. Registration closes on January 3. Please contact Arlene at 860-529-1575, ext. 211.

Middle School Snow Jam Weekend Nears!

January 14 to 16, all in grades 5 through 8 may join us for an awesome weekend at Singing Hills in Plainfield, New Hampshire! There will be snow sports, skating, wild games—and time to discover what it means to be a follower of Jesus! Call Todd Willard at 860-529-1575, ext. 205

Christmas Shopping at the Outreach Gift Shop

Do your Christmas shopping at this delightful shop and support worthwhile causes at the same time!

Open after each service on Sundays, and also on Wednesday nights during Advent from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m., the shop offers a beautiful assortment of unique gifts from many countries. Stop by and visit—the store is located in the Marsh Building, the first door on the left as you walk from the Meetinghouse.

Christmas Silver Tea

Our annual **Christmas Silver Tea** will be held on **Wednesday, December 8**. The Women's Fellowship extends a warm invitation to women of all ages to share in this lovely tradition at First Church.

The delightful Silver Tea will be held in the Worship and Fireside Rooms, beginning at 12:30 p.m., with a time of worship, followed by **Christmas carols with the children of the First Church Nursery School**.

Following the program, tea, punch and delicious cookies will be served. Please feel free to bring a friend to share in this most enjoyable and heartwarming experience! If you plan to attend, please call **Judy Tatters** at 860-529-5362 by December 7. (If you forget to call, walk-ins will still be welcome.)

And homemade cookies will be most appreciated!

MEN'S MORNING BIBLE STUDY — Start-
ing **Tuesday, November 30**, or **Thursday, December 2**, the men will begin a 24-week study of the **Book of Matthew** using the **John MacArthur** study series. The **Tuesday** group meets in the Fireside Room and the **Thursday** group meets in Conference Room 1; both groups meet 6:45 to 8:00 a.m. Join either gathering for an inspirational time of study, discussion and fellowship! Cost of the workbook is \$7. For more information, please call 860-529-1575, ext. 211.

WOULD YOU DELIVER PLANTS? Christmas "Angels" are needed to deliver the lovely memorial plants from the Meetinghouse to our home-bound members and friends after Christmas. Please sign "Angel" after your name in the Friendship Register or call **Sybil Lyon** at 860-633-2840, and come to the church on **Monday, December 27**, between 9:00 a.m. and noon, to pick up your assignment. (Call the church office if you have signed up but find you are unable to help that day.)

DISABILITIES SHOPPING PARTY — The Disabilities Team will hold a Christmas shopping party with light lunch on **Saturday, December 4**, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the Wells Area. Please RSVP—or let us know you can help—by calling **Joan Haines** at 860-529-2281 or by contacting **Eileen** at 860-529-1575, ext. 210, or care@firstchurch.org.

ANGEL TREE CHRISTMAS — Will you help make Christmas more meaningful to a child of a prisoner? Our **Angel Tree Christmas Party** for over 200 children will be held in Keith Jones Hall on **Saturday, December 4**, noon to 3:00 p.m. We would love volunteers to help set up from 10:00 a.m. to noon, help at the party, and help to clean up until about 5:00 p.m., and volunteers to deliver gifts to children who couldn't attend the party. For details, or to donate toward

the purchase of food, supplies and gifts, contact **Wendy Parker** at 860-371-0367 or wendysparker@gmail.com, or visit www.firstchurch.org/angeltree.

BROWN BAGGERS BOOK CLUB will meet **Monday, December 6**, in the Worship Room, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Brown-bag your dinner and join this group for a lively discussion of *Pearl in the Sand* by **Tessa Afshar**; Tessa will be present. The reading for **Monday, January 3**, is **R. C. Sproul's** *The Truth of the Cross*. Questions? Call **Linda Papertian** at 860-257-7566.

OUR STEPHEN MINISTRY LEADERS want to welcome you to a 15-minute introduction to becoming a Stephen Minister, following either the 9:15 or 11:00 Sunday service, in the Caring Concerns Room (the room behind Reception)—on **December 5 or 12**, or on **January 2**. Questions? Call **Wayne Luman** at 860-529-1575, ext. 203.

STORM CLOSINGS — Under conditions severe enough for us to cancel services or close the church, we publicize churchwide closings on Channel 3 (WFSB), Channel 30 (WVIT), and radio station WTIC (1080 AM and 96.5 FM). You may also check online at firstchurch.org, wfsb.com, nbcconnecticut.com, or wtic1080.com. Occasionally, individual ministries may cancel activities when the church remains open as a whole, or they may proceed when others do not; when in doubt, please be sure to contact your ministry leaders.

Blessed by Someone's Stewardship

Historically, stewardship testimonies are given by those who have been generous with their time, talent, or money. They talk about how blessed they've been by giving or sharing something with someone else.

I'm not going to do that this time. Not because it isn't true—it is. Giving transforms us and delights our soul. Even God says so:

...He Himself said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

—Acts 20:35b (ESV)

This time I want to discuss the other half of the story—the importance of receiving. I think that story is equally, if not more, important.

We all bring something to the table. We all have some ability, some talent, or some resource that we can share with our brothers and sisters in the Body of Christ—and beyond. Everyone can do something.

But we all need something, too. None of us is perfect. We all come to the table once in a while, needing something. We should be thankful that someone put it there for us!

Someone puts something on the table, and someone else takes and uses it. Together, all our lives improve. It is God's design for how it all should work, and why Scripture constantly encourages us to share and give and help—and receive. No one can go it alone. Even the Lone Ranger had Tonto.

But many just don't come to the table to take anything. They don't want to admit they need help, or they worry about what others will think. Even when they do accept help, they hide it.

This is wrong. Not only are they making their life needlessly harder, they are denying someone the blessing of sharing their God-given talents and resources.

I've come to the table often. There are godly men and women in our church that come alongside me and help me with their gifts, such as wisdom and guidance. Here are some of their statements that have really helped me:

Christian doesn't mean doormat. Learn to defend your faith appropriately.

Your future relationship with God is in your daily habits. Spiritual disciplines matter.

The Truth isn't a club to be used to force others to our way of thinking.

God cares more about the direction we are heading than where we are now.

I am Christ's ambassador and represent Jesus to the world. My words and actions may be the only gospel someone ever knows.

These men and women are a gift beyond price. They have helped me, more than I can say, to keep on the narrow road that leads from being a man who first professed faith in the triune God to becoming a man of God with the childlike faith that our Lord is looking for:

And Jesus said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the Kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the Kingdom of heaven."

—Matthew 18:3-4

Come to the table. Right now, in our First Church family, there are needs of all descriptions. What is yours?

God has compelled someone to put something special there just for you. It's waiting for you. All you have to do is take it. And, of course, be thankful!

—**Anton Hertle**

BOOK OF LIFE

ENTERED ETERNAL LIFE

Richard W. Ellis, November 3, 2010
Paul D. Anderson, November 4, 2010
Robbins W. Barstow Jr., November 7, 2010
Our Church unites in an expression of heartfelt sympathy to their families.

BORN

Jaclyn Morgan Coffey, daughter of Roderick N. and Sara Coffey,
October 24, 2010

BAPTIZED

Sawyer Kelan Durkee, son of Daniel and Rebecca (Leghorn) Durkee,
November 14, 2010

UNITED IN MARRIAGE

Christopher Henderson and Ashleigh Spicer,
November 12, 2010

First Church

FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST IN WETHERSFIELD

CONGREGATIONAL

860-529-1575 • Fax: 860-721-7861
250 Main Street, Wethersfield, CT 06109
Website: www.firstchurch.org
Email: fcw@firstchurch.org

Sunday Worship

Traditional Services in the Meetinghouse:
8:00, 9:15 and 11:00 a.m.
Wind Contemporary Service
in Keith Jones Hall: 11:00 a.m.

First Church on Facebook

www.facebook.com/FirstChurchPage
www.facebook.com/WindService

Dial-A-Message: 860-529-1785

Messages of Uplift
by Minister Emeritus Donald Morgan

What will you leave behind?

Please remember First Church in your will.

e-GIVING reduces paperwork and helps keep track of your yearly pledge. For info about contributing electronically via a monthly automatic withdrawal from your bank account, call the Finance Office, 860-529-1575, ext. 218.

Atessa M. Afshar Associate Minister
Vicki A. Huffman Director of Children's & Family Ministries
Linda T. Jackson Church Administrator
Wayne E. Luman Director of Caring Ministries
T. Michael McDowell Associate Minister
Donald W. Morgan Minister Emeritus
Deryk P. Richenburg Senior Minister
David C. Spicer Minister of Music & the Arts
Todd E. Willard Associate Minister

OUR MISSION

We are a community of Jesus followers who love God, love one another, and make disciples.

SPIRE DEADLINE

Material for the January issue of *The Spire*, which will be mailed December 29, must be submitted to Dave Gilbert by noon on Thursday, December 16, at daveg@firstchurch.org or 860-529-1575, ext. 225.

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Christmas Concert

Sunday, December 12 • 4:00 PM

COME CELEBRATE the Christmas season on **Sunday, December 12**, by attending our annual

Christmas Concert in the beautifully decorated Meetinghouse. The choirs of First Church, soloists, and the Festival Orchestra, under the direction of **David Spicer**, will present George Frideric Handel's *Messiah* (Part 1, plus the *Hallelujah* chorus) and *Fantasia on Christmas Carols* by Ralph Vaughan Williams. There will also be carols for all to sing, arranged by David Willcocks!

Part 1 of Handel's much-loved *Messiah* consists primarily of the Advent and Christmas stories and is often performed during this season. The quiet joy of the popular *Fantasia on Christmas Carols* by Vaughan Williams complements Handel wonderfully.

Sir David Willcocks, a contemporary British composer, is widely known for his beautiful choral arrangements of Christmas carols.

Our soloists are **Nancy Andersen, Stewart Battle, Christopher Dukes, Anne Graczyk-Druce, Linda Henderson, and Charity Lowell-Clark**. Doors will open at 3:15 p.m. for this popular concert. Pre-concert music will be provided by the Wethersfield High School Choralaires, starting at 3:20 p.m., directed by **Scott Rioux**. Following the concert, please stay for a festive reception in the Wells Fellowship Area!

This event is open to the public and tickets are not required. A free-will offering will be received. Childcare is available for those age 8 or under. For more details, contact the Ministry of Music and the Arts at 860-529-1575, ext. 209, or music@firstchurch.org.



Our wonderful new members, who joined First Church on Sunday, November 14, are (standing, from left) Jean Koenig, Susan McDonald, Kathy Hallett, Janice Kelly, Peter May, (seated) Timothy Monsonis, Nicole Albert, Teresa Ciarcia, and Rebecca May.

When you see them, please warmly welcome them into our First Church family of faith!