

Mark Your Calendars!

January

January 8—29: Gospel of Thomas study each Wednesday evening from 6:45-7:45 in the library.

January 11: High School Youth Group meeting for Parents and students in Guild Room from 12-1pm.

January 11: Middle School and High School Youth Group project at animal shelter 1-5pm

January 11: High School Youth Group overnight lock in.

January 12: Congregational Meeting immediately following worship in the Guild Room.

January 18: Men's breakfast from 8:30-10am in the Guild Room.

January 26: Sunday Sermon Series "Being

and ONA Church: It's About More than Sex!" begins.

January 26: New Member Inquiry Class series begins (continues for next 3 Sundays)

Recurring Events

Wednesday Evenings through May 28: Labyrinth Walks. 8pm in the sanctuary.

For more details check our website calendar

Find out about MMO's quality child care. Visit www.mmoprograms.org and set up a tour.



first
NEWS

40 South Fullerton Avenue
Montclair, New Jersey 07042
(973)744-4856; admin@fccmtc.com

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

www.firstcongmontclair.org

visit our website...and tell a friend

JOIN US! Sunday mornings at 10:30 for worship

first NEWS



a newsletter of First Congregational Church of Montclair, New Jersey
an Open & Affirming congregation of the
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST
"Never place a period where God
has put a comma." -Gracie Allen

January, 2014

From the Moderator

The Last Word

When I took on the job of Moderator at FCC, I wasn't entirely sure what to expect. I knew there would be meetings (many of them), and discussions, and decisions. But I really hadn't focused on the "writing" part.

First, a disclaimer....my job requires a good deal of writing. I write annual reports and committee minutes, personnel evaluations and tenure and promotion recommendations. And of course, the ever popular and thankfully rare disciplinary memo. All of these communications require that I completely avoid any personal opinions or editorial comments. Just stick to the facts....maintain that "critical distance."

So when I realized that, as moderator, I was expected to write a monthly column (which, by the way, seems to come around WAY more than once a month) I was intimidated. What was I going to say? The rest of the newsletter, not to mention the weekly announcements at the end of the service give plenty of information on what's coming up at FCC. And there are lots of wrap ups and reports on church activities....no one needs to read my version of those. And because I generally don't share a lot about myself, I considered personal musings to be out of the question.

So each month, when I got the reminder about the column being due (thank you, Rena!) I would stare at the blank screen (remember when we referred to it as the "blank page?") and wonder what on earth I would say. And then I would just start writing, much as I am doing today. And I

Inside

- Year 'round Food Drive
- Gospel of Thomas study
- New Member Inquiry Class
- Doors to Safety
- "Peace & Justice" is now "Faith in Action!"
- New Sermon Series

would think about what's happening in my life, and how the experience here at FCC has often changed the way I see it. Having a husband with a broken foot became an opportunity for the person who NEVER asks for help to reflect on just how much of it is available when we reach out for it. I thought about my concept of heaven, and how it isn't something we should wait for, or worry about missing out on if we don't have the right theology, it's something we should look for in the laughter of a friend. I thought about the insignificant moments, and how present God can be when someone asks us for help and we take time out from our wired and busy lives to answer that call. And I realized that there was more going on in my life of a spiritual nature than I ever thought.

Being moderator has taught me a great deal. But being a part of FCC, and being present to the opportunities to "go deep" has taught me even more. I see my life through different lenses now. Sunday mornings matter....this place matters. And I've learned that I have something to say....we all do.

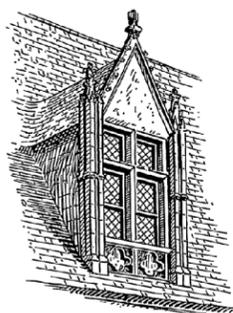
Thank you for listening.

Peace, and Happy New Year,

Elaine Wells

Congregational Meeting
Sunday January 12 after worship!

Join us in the Guild Room for our annual meeting where we approve our 2014 budget, vote on our leadership slate and share important updates in the life of First Congregational Church!



From My Study Window

Raising the Roof!

Each month for my Pastor's report at our Council meeting I do a quick assessment of our growth in worship attendance. I love sharing these statistics because they tell such a hopeful story. As a renewing church who just a few years ago was wondering if we would survive, it is so heartening to see that our numbers are steadily increasing and that our "year over year" attendance has almost tripled since we began counting in 2010. Our growth covers many demographics but the most noticeable increase has been in our children and youth population. A few years back we would be thrilled to have 10 kids in worship and now we are welcoming 35-40 regularly. Talk about a hopeful sign!

While all of this growth is exciting, it also comes with the need to do things a bit differently. In "church growth circles" there are four distinct types of churches (based on size): family size (50 or less in worship), pastoral size (50-150 in worship), program size (150-400) and corporate size (400+). Moving between sizes can be an exciting and challenging time. Currently we have been regularly hitting the 150 in worship number, which means we are moving from a "pastoral" size church to a "program" one. Experts tell us that this is the most critical transition for the life of a church.

And so, with excitement, planning and prayer, we must respond to this gift of growth with a willingness to change and embrace new ways of being church. Some of this will mean more structure around how we organize our selves, increased participation from lay leadership and the congregation, and new programs and offerings to engage the faith journeys of a diverse church family. In mid-February I and a group of church leaders will be heading to a seminar called "Raising the Roof" to address just such changes. I am looking forward to learning about all the wonderful ways we can celebrate and embrace this milestone. God has graced us with a "future with hope" to quote the prophet Jeremiah. Let us give thanks for that — and start raising the roof!

Peace,
Ann

Thank You! Thank You!

December was a busy month, filled with special projects and events. As always, it took many hands to bring it all together and so we offer thanks to...

...**Dick Thomas, Anne Garty, Liz Donald, Deb, Tim, Nick and Josh Duhamel, Karen Shinevar, Stella Wilkins, Jan Marsh, John and Sarah Ralosky, Jack Cuffari, Tracey Stephens and Tim Holly** for welcoming Advent with a wonderful Hanging of the Greens service on December 1.

...**Stephanie Sheerin, Jackie Berliner and Mark Jackson, Mike Kelley, Rachael Egan and Marie St. Victor, and many, many others** for working to offer the "It's Only Fair" holiday Fair Trade sale December 7&8.

...**Nancy & Luis Pi-Sunyer, John Ralosky, Maureen Holly, Anne Garty, Heather Cherrey, Missy Pentecost, Jan Burgess and all who brought wonderful dishes** for the congregational Open House on December 14.

...**Maureen and Tim Holly, Elaine Wells, and Stephanie Sheerin** for making Tom Walton's and Mearmon Davis' wedding truly special on December 15.

...**Julie Morgan, Dale Livingston, Joyce Mauer, Elizabeth Honer, Vivianne Potter, Mukund Marathe, Jack Cuffari and Heather Cherrrey** for bringing their gifts of music and worship leadership for the Longest Night Service on December 21.

...**Deb and Tim Duhamel, Maureen and Tim Holly, Heather Cherrey, Gregg Monsees, Elaine Wells, John Sampson and all who helped** decorate the church on Christmas Eve.

...**Elizabeth Honer** for creating and installing the magnificent Advent and Christmas banners (more to come)!

OUR FABULOUS CHOIR for their amazing gift of music throughout the Advent and Christmas season. The experience was truly amazing. Special thanks to **John Leatherman and Julie Morgan** for their creativity, dedication and talented leadership in providing this memorable season of music. And of course, many thanks to **Greg Monsees** for generously underwriting the cost of the special musicians and music. We are most grateful to all!

It can be hard to recall all the many folks who make FCC hum, so if your name was omitted, our apologies. Please know that we are deeply grateful to everyone who serves in this community.

SUPPORT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH!

Free money for FCC!



If you are doing any online shopping this holiday season (or any time during the year), please consider shopping through iGive.com. Using iGive is very simple, and the potential income

for FCC is huge. iGive members can generate donations for their "cause" of choice by shopping online at any of the 1400+ participating iGive stores and vendors. Each participating store donates a percentage of their online sales to the cause of your choice — at no cost to you. Start at the www.igive.com website, follow the simple one-time instructions to register as an iGive shopper (selecting First Congregational Church of Montclair NJ as your designated cause), select a store, and shop online as usual.

The church will receive 100% of the donation amount advertised by each participating store on the iGive website -- and it costs you nothing. If you're making an online purchase, check to see if your store participates; new stores are joining iGive all the time. Some of those participating include Kohl's, Clinique, Drugstore.com, Petco, Barnes & Noble, J.C.Penney, Macy's, Staples, Expedia, Target, Home Depot, L.L.Bean, Orbitz, Hanes, Nordstroms, Travelocity, VisionDirect, 1-800-PetMeds, and hundreds of others.

iGive sends regular emails updating you about the contributions you have earned for FCC, and you can also track the total amount of gifts made to FCC on the iGive website. Every purchase helps, and every new iGive shopper receives a \$5.00 bonus donation for their cause ... so far over \$800 has been donated to FCC through iGive! Want to know more about how it works? Ask Anne Garty (agarty14@comcast.net).

Stewardship Update!

The Stewardship Committee is grateful to all who have participated in our 2014 fund drive so far. Since our Covenant Sunday celebration on November 17 we have collected **47 pledges totaling \$101,500 — including 12 brand new pledgers!**

We are pleased to announce that we made our challenge grant, so we add an additional \$10,000 to our total, bringing us up to **\$111,500** to begin our new year! Many thanks to all for your generosity!

FOR SALE OR BEST OFFER:

In the Chancel Room (the room behind the altar) there are two pieces of furniture: a long side-piece and a hutch like piece. We are going to be getting rid of them and will be happy to give them a good home. Best offer for the next month.

Please contact Heather Cherrey @ 973-890-1691 if interested in looking or taking. I will be in church if you just want to see the pieces.

MINISTRY OF SPIRITUALITY AND WORSHIP



Ministry Update

Once again, Nancy Pi-Sunyer did a magnificent job of dressing the altar for Thanksgiving. Her offering each year has done much to make this Thanksgiving Sunday meaningful as we appreciate the bounty we are blessed to have. Tracey Stephens has volunteered for this ministry for the 2014 year.

With the help of many elves, the sanctuary was made ready for the Hanging of the Greens service. Generous volunteers were recruited to take part in the service and all went off without a hitch (well except for the missing lights and ribbons, but all still looked great). Must say a great big thank you to Maureen Holly and her crew for the awesome Pot Luck supper that followed the service. Once again I am so grateful for the many hands that come to help and offer their time and talents to make our worship experiences so very meaningful.

We are well into the season of Advent and looking forward to Christmas. Actually, when this reaches you Christmas will be behind us, but as I write this the anticipation is still there. That delicious sense of what's to come. But as the Christmas season fades, volunteers are needed for after church on January 5, to help us take down the Christmas finery and put it away for another year. Once again, many hands make this job go quickly and we'd appreciate anyone who could come and help out. Chuck Haley has volunteered to co-ordinate the HOG service preparations for the 2014 season with me, and I have a number of folks who have already said they'd help. If you are new to this congregation, this is actually a great way to meet some folks and feel a sense of "ownership" for FCC.

According to the survey we sent out, and many of you took the time to fill out, worship is very important to this congregation, and the worship experiences here are much valued and appreciated. There is a lot of "behind the scenes" effort by this ministry, and especially Rev Ann, to bring meaningful worship experiences to the FCC congregation. As my term as chair of S&W ministry comes to an end, I want to thank all who have helped me lead this ministry and for the privilege of allowing me to do so. May the new year bring good health and blessings to each of you.

Heather Cherrey,
Chair

Worship with Broadway House on Sunday, January 12th

Help spread God's love at Broadway House for Continuing Care, NJ's largest HIV/AIDS nursing home. Mark Graceffo will lead a worship service of blessing and communion with the residents there on Sunday, January 12th. We will leave FCC at 12:30 pm to drive to Broadway House in Newark. We need musicians, singers, readers, ushers and folks who just want to share their time and love with our brothers and sisters in need. Please see Mark Graceffo (mgraceffo@optonline.net) for more information.

Faith Exploration Series

"A wholly new level of Sacred Power" Exploring the Gospel of Thomas

A facilitated discussion on the dynamic and challenging sacred Christian scripture discovered in 1945 that has become a powerful influence in the lives of those following the mystic path of Christian thought.

Four consecutive Wednesdays: January 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th from 6:45 PM to 7:45 PM in the library at FCC

We will be using Stevan Davies' annotated translation, following a linked reading of seven of the sayings found in the Gospel of Thomas, proposed by noted author, teacher and sage Andrew Harvey who edited this version. NOTE: buying and reading the text is not necessary, but certainly an option for those who wish to do so. The discussions will be led by Reverend Jack Cuffari, Interspiritual minister. Questions? Contact Jack at jack@cuffari.com.

Presented by the **Montclair Center for Spiritual Practice** in conjunction with FCC.

*Attendance is free and open to the public.
Donations are welcome.*

Sermon Series Beginning January 26: "Being an Open and Affirming Church: It's Not Just About Sex!"

Part of our core identity here at FCC is as an "Open and Affirming (ONA)" congregation. Our defining statement can be found inside our bulletin and on our website, but the essence is this: we welcome an affirm ALL God's children in all their diversity. For the past 10 years we have focused on one very important component of that identity: sexual identity (aka LGBTQ). In many ways FCC has broken ground on how to be a truly inclusive church — not the least of which was our strong support in the fight for marriage equality in the State of New Jersey. We continue to lift up our faithful advocacy on this issue and the gospel values which inspired it. Yet, as important as this focus is, we also realize that there is much more to being ONA than sexual identity.

Beginning Sunday, January 26, Rev. Ann will be exploring the various components of an ONA identity in a series of sermons. We'll explore what it means to welcome and affirm folks of different races, ages, economic status, physical and mental ability and gender. And will embark on a conversation about how we can become "sacred activists" in our quest to continue living out our faith in the world.

Winter New Members' Inquiry Class begins January 26!

If you've been attending FCC and feel you may have found your spiritual home, this class is for you! We'll meet three consecutive Sundays (Jan 26, Feb 2, and Feb 9) immediately after worship for one hour. Child care is available upon request.

Come learn about who we are, how we believe, and what it means to be a member! Please RSVP to Rev. Ann (acralosky@msn.com)

Wednesday Evening Labyrinth Walks



Wednesday Evenings from 6-8pm,

Center yourself in the midst of a hectic week with a walk on the labyrinth. A labyrinth is a spiritual tool, a prayer path, that opens us up to the heart of God. The

walk is open — take as much or little time as you like. And no experience necessary. Come, take your soul out for a walk!

Please note: No labyrinth walk on New Year's Day!

New Year, New Council!

As a congregational church we provide our own leadership to conduct the business, financial and decision making process of the church. This business is conducted by our Council — a group of 12 dedicated folks who chair ministries and meet regularly to keep this place humming. **At the January 12 Congregational meeting** we will approve the new slate for 2014, a group nominated by the existing Council. They are:

- Jeanne LoCicero — Moderator**
- Lynley Jones — Vice Moderator**
- Anne Garty — Secretary**
- Dick Thomas — Treasurer**
- Liz Donald — Trustee**
- Rich Gilfert — Trustee**
- Vivianne Potter — Trustee**
- Heather Cherrey — Chair, Faith in Action**
- Tracey Winand — Chair, Congregational Life**
- Maureen Holly — Chair, Hospitality**
- Melissa Ragan & Deb Duhamel — Co-chairs, Children and Youth**
- Dick Thomas — Church Resources**

We are excited to welcome this new leadership team and look forward to joining them in the life and ministry of this church!

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY



**Welcome
Jan Burgess!**

**Our new Interim
Children's Education
Director**

We are delighted to welcome Jan Burgess as FCC's new Interim Children's Education Director, effective January 5.

Jan has been a teacher at MMO for the past 3 years. Originally from Kansas, she attended Southwestern College and graduated magna cum laude with a B.A. in elementary education. She later spent one year traveling with the international service and performing group "Up With People." Her professional experiences include working with children with autism, serving as a student support counselor for young elementary students, and serving as preschool teacher/program coordinator at The Children's Center at Goldman Sachs in Jersey City.

Jan and her husband, Rev. Peter Wilkinson, have 3 children: Madeleine, 21; Evan, 17; and Emma, 16. Six years ago, Jan's family moved from Illinois to New Jersey, where her husband is Pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Rutherford.

Although she has been an active pastor's spouse and supporter of her own church, Jan has also been a friend of FCC for several years, regularly participating in activities such as the Women's Soul Circle and attending services from time to time. She has long felt a strong affinity for FCC, and is excited to share her many gifts with our children and their families.

Jan will be working in close collaboration with our Children and Youth Ministry volunteers, as well as with our FCC Youth Director, John Rogers. She will oversee curriculum and instruction, teach Sunday School as needed, and will deliver children's sermons during Sunday worship.

Jan has agreed to fill this important role for FCC on an interim basis, through June 2014. Beginning in the spring, we will conduct a search for a new candidate to fill the position on a permanent basis.

Please join us in giving Jan a warm welcome.

YOUTH MINISTRY HAPPENINGS!



Happy New Year from the FCC Youth Groups! December was a month of Christmas card making, Caroling, and reflection for the FCC Youth Groups. Early in the month, the middle and high school kids came together to fill the library with cutout shapes, markers, and glue to create our Christmas cards. Some kids chose to send them to their family and others decided to reach out to members of the FCC community. Once again, we benefitted from the artistic expertise of our resident graphic designer, Elizabeth Honer. Move over, Hallmark.

Nothing put me in the Christmas spirit like caroling at the Broadway House. We all sang our hearts out on classics like "Frosty the Snowman," "Deck the Halls," and "Go Tell It On the Mountain." The afternoon ended in a crescendo with the FCC/Broadway House Remix of the "Twelve Days of Christmas." When it was their time, the "ten lords" were certainly leaping and the show stopped at "five golden rings." As much as I enjoyed the songs, however, the memories of Loretta Graceffo connecting to the residents and Sean Kelley encouraging the singers were my favorite take-aways from the afternoon.

On Sunday mornings, we've continued to bring our reflections and insights to our "Sacred Talk" discussions. December ended with a culminating Jeopardy competition featuring topics ranging from Advent to *Catching Fire*. It was a fierce competition that required two overtimes before a champion could emerge.

January will bring a service experience at an animal shelter and another youth lock-in. It will be wonderful to get back into the community as we continue to learn experientially. We will also be holding a meeting with the parents to plan a summer service/cultural exchange experience.

We look forward to seeing all the ways the Spirit will move with the youth program in the New Year as we continue to deepen our faith, engage in the community, and build fellowship.

MMO HAPPENINGS



This Month at MMO Programs

January is upon us. Discussions of winter, polar bears and penguins will fill the classrooms as the world outside is cold and icy. This month registration begins for the 2014-15 MMO school year.

We will hold a Program Overview on January 15th @ 7:30 p.m. for current and prospective parents. This evening will provide information on all of our programs as well as opportunities to tour the classrooms and meet our staff. For more information, please contact the office or visit our website at www.mmoprograms.org.

I'd like to thank Melissa Ragan and all of our MMO families who organized the MMO Holiday Luncheon. This beautiful event was a highlight this holiday season and the staff at MMO felt very appreciated.

Corrine Harney,
Executive Director



Quality Child-Care and Preschool Education Program

INFANT CARE
(beginning at 6 weeks old)

MY MORNING OUT
(Toddlers from 18 to 30 months)

NURSERY YEARS, PRE-K AND SUMMER DAYS
Programs for 2 through 6 years olds.

Hours:

7:30 A.M. to 6:30 P.M.
FULL AND PART-TIME OPTIONS AVAILABLE

Monday through Friday.
Calendar available upon request.

*If you would like more information and/or a tour
please call: 973-744-6521
or e-mail: info@mmoprograms.org*

www.mmoprograms.org



Your Love Needed for the FCC Childcare Room!

***After the Christmas dust has settled, please consider donating your
outgrown toys to our nursery!***

We are in need of updated toys for children ages 5 and under. We also would be able to give a very loving home to a used train table, a child-sized coat rack and a CD player.

Donations can be left in the yellow room (off the Creation room in Sunday School), or you can contact us to arrange for pickup. Also, volunteers are needed to paint the nursery walls! If you would like to lend your time and talents to this project, please let us know. Please contact Mellissa Ragan at melsau2005@yahoo.com to arrange pickup of donated items or to volunteer. ***Thank you in advance for your generosity!***

PEACE & JUSTICE

As this ministry currently has no chair person, and as I have agreed to be the chair for the coming year, I have sort of started to get my feet wet here.

At the December Council meeting I proposed changing the name of this ministry to **FAITH IN ACTION** (thanks Elaine). I think it better reflects what exactly this ministry does and embodies the concept of "Jesus has left the building and we have followed". It encompasses mission, good works, and social justice issues and actions. Faith In Action says we are not just talking about our faith, but we are following Christ and doing something about it. I hope as the year goes on, that many of you will find a project that interests you and you will allow your faith to guide you into action.

Stephanie Sheerin held the annual Fair Trade Sale the beginning of December and, although I do not have figures yet, judging by the amount of money I spent, I think it was successful. The money raised will go toward scholarships for students in South America. Here's an example of a short term mission project (not for Stephanie, but for others). a number of folks came out and helped Stephanie set up and sell.

Karen Shinevar is working with John Rogers and the Sunday School on an outreach project to care for our animal friends—more on that from John.

Coming up will be another day of covering for the interfaith Hospitality Network. All you cooks and bakers watch for more information coming along.

If you have an idea for an outreach project please talk to me (973-890-1691).

Peace,

Heather Cherrey

Not yet Chair of FIA Ministry

Collecting Food for the Hungry Year 'Round

Our national economic struggles have meant more people needing food assistance while funds for food pantries, soup kitchens and homeless shelters have been cut. Human Needs Food Pantry, the Union Baptist Food Pantry, Toni's Kitchen and the Community Foodbank of New Jersey all report record numbers of clients while they struggle to keep their shelves stocked.

To help address that need, FCC will be holding a year 'round food drive — inviting everyone to bring some food with them when they come to church. We have a tiered shelf set up in the Narthex where folks can leave their items each week. When we have gathered a generous amount we will divide it up and deliver it to various area food pantries.

Here's what's needed:

- Pastas
- Cereals
- Canned vegetables/fruits
 - Peanut butter
 - Rice
- Juice boxes
- Mac and cheese

Please make sure that foods are nutritious and not past their expiration date! If you would like to help us sort and deliver, please reach out to Heather Cherrey.



Helpful information for the Homeless

Being part of a faith community in downtown Montclair gives us many opportunities to serve our neighbors in need. Over the past few years, many of these neighbors have joined us for worship and become a part of our community. As much as we care about them personally, they often have needs that go beyond our resources as a congregation. Below is a list of resources available in our community. This same information exists in a handout available in the Narthex. If approached for help by one of our neighbors in need, please feel free to share with them the following information.

SOUP KITCHENS:

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday at Salvation Army at 12noon
Salvation Army, 13 Trinity Place, Montclair, NJ 07042
973-744-3312

Thursday, Friday, Saturday at noon and Sunday evening at 5pm
Toni's Kitchen at St. Luke's Episcopal Church
73 South Fullerton Avenue, Montclair, NJ 07042
973-932-0768 (Anne Mernin)

FOOD PANTRIES:

Human Needs Food Pantry
9 Label Street, Montclair, NJ 07042 (corner of Label and Forest Ave)
Hours: Tuesday and Thursdays from 12:30-2pm
073-746-4669

Union Baptist Church Food and Clothing Pantry
Corner of Midland and Porter Place in Montclair
Hours: 2nd and 4th Tuesdays from 6-9pm, 2nd and 4th Saturdays 9am-12pm
973-746-3270

SHELTERS:

Salvation Army
13 Trinity Place, Montclair
973-744-3312

MESH (Montclair Ecumenical Services for the Homeless)
Cold weather shelters housed in area churches
MESH Café runs Monday thru Saturday 6:30-8:30pm.

Locations vary so check in at Montclair Public Library (50 S. Fullerton Ave) for information. (over)

Overnight emergency shelters are housed area shelters when the weather drops to freezing. Information on locations is available at the MESH café locations or at the Montclair Public Library

SHOWERS:

Wednesday morning from 9:30-11am
Salvation Army
13 Trinity Place, Monclair

LAUNDRY:

Pre-paid laundry cards may be available at Salvation Army for use at Super Suds at Lackawanna Plaza.

How Can I Serve?

Do you have a special skill or talent that could be of service at FCC? Do you have a passion for hospitality, cooking, gardening, carpentry, volunteering, beautifying the church or serving our neighbors in need? There are so many ways that your gifts can help us serve God's world through this church. Below is a list of the following ministries of the church and the contact person who serves as chair. If one of these areas peaks your interest, please reach out to the chair. They'll be thrilled to meet you!

Faith in Action — Heather Cherrey
revcherrey@optonline.net

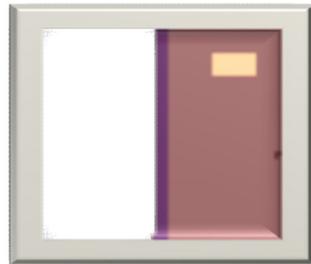
Hospitality — Maureen Holly
tandmholly@aol.com

Congregational Life — Tracey Winand
tamwindand@gmail.com

Children and Youth—Melissa Ragan
melsau2005@yahoo.com

Church Resources — Dick Thomaas
rthomas14@comcast.net

DOORS TO SAFETY: FCC RESPONSE FOR VICTIMS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE



**Look for this
symbol
around FCC!**

FCC will be beginning a small but vital way for our church to recognize

and respond to the epidemic of domestic violence. We are fortunate to be an open, lively church that welcomes members and nonmembers through our doors all week long, with the potential to reach hundreds!

What many may not realize is that for victims of domestic violence, which includes teens, persons in dating relationships, household members or roommates – is that such abuse involves not only physical violence but coercive control. It reaches across *all* socioeconomic groups, races, cultures, and sexual orientations, but not always visible due to stigma and fear – just think about how seldom this is spoken about, and you get the idea.

Did you know that:

- Statistically, one of four women may be the victim of dating or relationship violence at least once in their lifetime; an estimated one in seven men experienced the same.
- Women victims of Intimate Partner Violence more often experience *multiple types* of violence than men, who are more likely to experience physical violence. Women are victims of domestic violence homicides at a much higher rate than the reverse.
- Statistically, 50% of batterers also abuse their children, and countless children are secondary victims by exposure to an incident or aftereffects of the violence.
- Often laws are more punishing and give more jail time to animal abusers than partner abusers.
- Victims often wish to find remedies, but don't know how to safety do so.

Due to the lack of personal freedom of movement that a

victim may experience, the only exposure to information about assistance may well be their workplace, support groups, or church. This is NOT a family or private matter, no more than child abuse– it is a community, systemic problem and you can take the simplest of actions to help. If you hear something, or see something – *share something!*

Soon you will see envelope marked with the “Doors to Safety” logo in various places around the church. Take the information contents to your friend, your jobs, your haircutting salon, or for yourself. If you prefer, see a staff member whose door has the above logo displayed, for similar information or guidance through a confidential, live counselor trained specifically in these type of matters. Through this small effort, within FCC there will be “no wrong door” for hope and aid.

A huge thanks for the support many of you expressed after the service in October – about nine expressed support, and two asked how they could help. Yet another way that FCC (all of us) can minister through this outreach!

Blessings, *Joyce Mauer*

Mark Your Calendars! Interfaith Hospitality Network Week February 9-16, 2014



Once again we will be joining our sister church, Union Congregational, as we serve temporarily homeless families in our area through the IHN program. We will be serving two or three evenings during the week of February 9-16. We will provide dinner, evening activities and overnight supervision. Please stay tuned for a special sign-up email and consider sharing your time and compassion with a family in need. Questions? See Sarah Feliciano (sfeliciano1@gmail.com) or Heather Cherrey (revcherrey@optonline.net).

MINISTRY OF CONGREGATIONAL LIFE MINISTRY OF HOSPITALITY



**Call for
Volunteers:
Ministry of
Congregational
Care**

Help is needed to bring some special folks to church! Your assistance can be on a one time basis, semi-regular, or on an ongoing basis. We currently have two individuals who live in Montclair who need help getting to and from church. One person is in a wheelchair but able to get in and out of a vehicle with light assistance, the other is fully ambulatory. Both women are good company and would appreciate the help. **Please contact either Janifer- jbreezy778@gmail.com or Angela- agraceffo@afhsnj.org to find out more.**



**Men's Group –
November
Breakfast Meeting**

Saturday January 18, 8:30-10am

Men of FCC are warmly invited to attend the FCC Men's Breakfast group to be held in the Guild Room. All you need to do is bring yourself. Breakfast foods, coffee and juices will be provided.

Please email **John Ralosky** at JohnRalosky@msn.com if you plan to attend, so we can provide enough for everyone.

**Interested in being a Coffee Hour
Host, or an Usher, or both?**

Please see Maureen Holly
e-mail tandmholly@aol.com, or cell
phone 973-818-4632. Or sign up in the
Guild Room and let us know a few dates
you'd be available.



**January
birthdays!**

Dianna Munford	Jan. 1
Ishmael Pulliam	Jan.2
Jocelyn Emerson	Jan.9
Wendy McNeil	Jan.12
Michelle Rodriguez	Jan.13
Theo Sedarat	Jan.13
Loretta Graceffo	Jan.15
Amanda Gamsby	Jan.19
John Leatherman	Jan.22
Stephen Cutaia	an.25
Laura Harris	Jan.27
Jose Rivera	Jan.28
Benjamin Rose	Jan.28
Dominique Rose	Jan.28
Angelina Egan	Jan.29

Make sure to email us your birthday for
upcoming newsletters!
Email Rena at admin@fccmtc.com.