

# Third Word News & Notes



JANUARY 2013

## *Pastor's Message*

### Newtown Tragedy

The State of Connecticut and the entire nation was shocked and deeply saddened by the tragedy at the Sandy Hook Elementary School where 20 first graders and six faculty members were shot to death on December 14th. We at Third Church joined with churches all across the state to ring our steeple bell once for each of the victims of the shooting one week after the tragedy. All who gathered with us shared a time of silent prayer and meditation. We continue to pray for all the families who lost precious loved ones that day. Their sadness and ours runs deep, but we have seen a groundswell of love and compassion across the state that is far greater than the anger and hatred that gave rise to this crime. With God's help, let us dedicate ourselves to love our neighbors as ourselves and to work for a just society where all can live in peace and safety.

As we watched our President and Vice President taking the oaths of office, we pray that our national and local leaders will work together to take measures that will reduce violence among us and establish tolerance and mutual respect, values we all hold dear.

*Blessings,  
Pastor Norm*

*The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.*

*Martin Luther King Jr.*

### **239th Annual Meeting**

The congregation will once again exercise their rights and voices during the annual meeting on February 3rd. Russ Hassmann will preside over the meeting as President. Brian Mendoza will take over as President for the 2013 year. We thank Russ for his two years of service to Third Church. All committees have submitted their reports and the 2013 budget will be presented. We hope for a great meeting and a year full of blessings.

## Christmas Pageant Success

The students of Sunday school presented a wonderful new pageant this year. Hark!, the Angel sang off key. Many students participated and we had great musical direction from Leslie Coutsouridis and assisted by Joan Fisher. We hope to do a musical Easter presentation as well.



## Christmas Happenings

Thanks to the Deacons for once again decorating the sanctuary. The church looks so festive during the holiday. The Student choir performed several songs this past month to the delight of the congregation. Special thanks to Leslie and Dean Coutsouridis for helping to prepare the choir and providing the great sound equipment. Four families lit the advent wreath this season. Thank you to the Kim and Emily LaValley, The Tomer family with grandchildren, the Phillips family and three generations of the Stojak family, Cookie, Cara Ehlers and Samantha Ehlers.

## Christmas Season Miracles

Third Church gave to those in need in several ways over the holiday season. Our Missions group was able to four families for New Horizons. It is a shelter for those escaping domestic abuse. The group was able to provide many items to give to a family who is starting over. A family struck by the Sandy Hurricane was also given a wonderful holiday by our Missions group. St. Vincent DePaul and the Eddy Shelter received many toiletries, warm hats and gloves and other items to give them a smile for the holiday. The Sunday school sent \$236.00 to the New Haven Diaper Bank to help keep up their supplies as well as the birthday boxes to New Horizons. Amazing Grace sent us a note that the church donated 584 pounds of food this year.



## Treasurer's Corner by Sharon Maloney

2012 has come to an end but it is not too late to make payments on your 2012 pledge.

### 2012 Summary:

We had pledges of \$109,000 and to date we received \$100,595 – a short fall of \$8,405. Fortunately, donations by members, plate collections and fundraising came in above what we had budgeted by a total of \$4,854. In total we collected \$4,370 less than what we had budgeted. Our expenses came in under budget by \$2,096 primarily due to snow removal coming in under budget by \$1,735. We ended the year with a Net Operating Loss of \$2,274. The good news is our investments gained \$5,337 in value to more than offset our shortfall. Thanks to all of you who through your pledges and plate offerings helped to make 2012 a good year for our church.

## Upcoming Events

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|------|--------------------------------------|
| 2/3  | 239th Annual Meeting                 |
| 2/13 | Ash Wednesday Service 7:30PM         |
| 2/16 | PFS Chicken Cordon Blue Dinner 5-7PM |