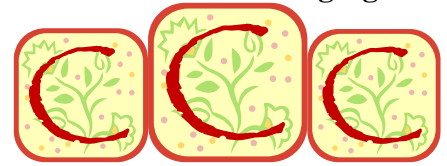


A non-denominational Christian congregation



for persons of all faiths and of uncertain faith  
meeting in historic St. Peter's Church

346 West 20<sup>th</sup> Street, New York, NY 10011

[www.chelseachurch.org](http://www.chelseachurch.org)

(212) 886-5463

# THE CHELSEA COMMUNITY CHURCH NEWSLETTER

Winter 2006

## 32<sup>nd</sup> Candlelight Carol Service, December 17<sup>th</sup>, 6 p.m.



The 32<sup>nd</sup> annual Candlelight Carol Service will be held Sunday, December 17, at 6 p.m. Our traditional service includes music by the choir, directed by John Eggleston, and carols by all to accompany readings of the Christmas story. Maura Valenti, harpist, will also accompany.

This year's reader of Clement Clark Moore's *A Visit from St. Nicholas* (aka *Twas the Night Before Christmas*) is actress and writer Susie Mee. A long-time resident of Chelsea, she has

appeared on both Broadway and Off-Broadway stages and has recently published a novel, a book of poetry and has edited a book of short stories.

There will be a reception in the rectory, featuring cider, eggnog and homemade cookies following the service.

## CCC Receives Eight New Members

*There are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit.* –Paul, to the Corinthians

We welcome the following new members, received during the November 5<sup>th</sup> service: Alana Atterbury, Paul Bodden, Gregory Gray, Merle Lister, Clare Rios, Lynne Robinson, Sam Rodriguez and Angela Romano.



*We cherish our diversity and work together in friendship and fellowship, nurturing and honoring each other and using our gifts as we grow closer to God.* -From the CCC traditional membership pledge  
(Photo, Robert Mitchell, Jr.)

## Pastoral Reflections

Greetings!

THAT season is upon us again, the one that creates so many expectations and so much stress. It is a time when we can get overwhelmed with "busyness," and also feel a certain emptiness. For me, lots of memories come up, both happy and painful, and I have some difficulty carrying all the different feelings that bubble to the surface.

St. John of the Cross, the medieval Christian mystic, compared our pre-Advent selves with green logs that have been thrown into a fire, in his work *The Living Flame of Love*. Because these logs are green and moist, they do not catch fire right away, but sizzle for a long time until they reach the burning point and join the fire around them. The journey of Advent, of waiting and preparing for God to manifest, prepares us to catch the fire of love.

I sometimes think, (especially this time of year) of our church community as a "manger," a place where God is born and manifests in human form. Each time we greet each other with love, each time we extend a kindness to someone, each time we reach out beyond our own comfort zones, and yes, each time we disagree, God is manifested and God's commonwealth is created. The challenge is holding the tension and discomfort that comes with any birth, any change, any transformation. (Remember the sizzle!)

During this season, let's let our selves "sizzle" and pop in the fire of God's love. When it's time, our flame will create enough light and warmth for the whole world.

Happy Advent.  
Rev. John

## Resignation

*November 18, 2006 (published with permission)*



*To the Board of Chelsea Community Church:*

*Please accept this as my letter of resignation as your organist/pianist/accompanist/choir director, effective January 1, 2007. This was not an easy decision to make, because I love you all so much, and you've been so good to me, especially in the last 2-1/2 years. I believe most of you realize that my "soul" seems to respond more to a liturgical worship service, and I plan on doing some "church shopping" next year. My first stop will probably be St. Peter's Lutheran up on 54th Street in the Citigroup building. I know the pastor and several of their members already and I like the way they "do church." But my search may not stop there -- I just don't know yet. And you can be sure I'll stop by and worship with you on occasion.*

*Thank you for a wonderful 16 years. You can count on my thoughts and prayers for Chelsea Church's future.*

*My best to you all, John Eggleston*

Please join us after church at the coffee hour on December 31st to thank John for his 16 years of service and to celebrate the gift he has brought to our community.

## **Annual Congregational Meeting**

We held our Annual Congregational Meeting on October 1, 2006 with 19 in attendance. The chairman of the trustees and the treasurer gave reports for 2005-2006, as did the chairpersons of the committees Worship, Music, Hospitality, Newsletter, Benevolence, Website, Publicity. Members reviewed and adopted the church budget for 2006-2007.

Under New Business, the new sound system costs and installation were reviewed; it was suggested that an appeal be made to the congregation to help cover the \$1,000 deficit between costs and donations to date.

John Magisano reported that 30 responses to the congregational survey were received and suggested that discussion meetings open to all take place throughout the year. The first was scheduled for October 15.

Robert Mitchell, Jr., Alana Atterbury, and Hilda Regier were elected to three-year terms as trustees. Kathy Reid was elected to fill 2 remaining years of Jim Mann's term. They join existing Board members Kathryn Buck, Joanne Downes, Robert Hickey, Wayne Kammerer and Lynne Robinson. Thad McGar was elected Clerk. A brief trustees' meeting followed the Congregational Meeting and the following officers were elected: Lynne Robinson, Chair; Vice-Chair, Wayne Kammerer; Treasurer, Hilda Regier, and Assistant Treasurer, Alana Atterbury.

## **Strategic Planning Process**

At the CCC Annual Meeting this year, the congregation agreed to participate in a planning process to reflect on where we are as a community, and where we would like to go in the short- and long-term. Meetings are held once a month after coffee hour at 1:30 pm, and are one hour in length. Thus far, we have had two very successful meetings during which we spent time articulating the operating principles upon which our community life rests, and we looked at what has made the church successful in the past. The overall goal is to articulate a vision that can carry the church into the future. Last month, participants were given some "homework:" to identify three wishes they have for the church. The next meeting will be held Sunday, Dec. 10<sup>th</sup>, at 1:30. Meeting dates are set from month to month. For more information, email Pastoral Counselor, John Magisano at [jmagi@aol.com](mailto:jmagi@aol.com).



## **Book Group**

The book group continues to meet Sundays at 10:30 in the rectory chapel, except on the days when the Board of Trustees meets. All are welcome, whether you have read the current book or not. For more information, email Pastoral Counselor John Magisano at [jmagi@aol.com](mailto:jmagi@aol.com).

## **Other Events and Announcements**

### **Exodus Transition Community**

For several years our church has supported the work of Exodus Transition Community, which offers assistance to ex-offenders making the transition to community living after being released from prison. Some of Exodus' staff are graduates of NY Theological Seminary's prison program and preach for us on occasion. They have begun a mentoring program for children of incarcerated parents and welcome volunteers who can donate an hour of time per week. If interested, call Mark Graham, 917-492-7167, or email him at [Mgraham@etcny.org](mailto:Mgraham@etcny.org).

**Pictorial Photographers of America**, which meets twice monthly in the rectory, has completed mounting its new exhibit there. PPA welcomes visitors and new members; please contact Kathryn Buck, Bruce Colin, Robert Mitchell, Jr., Lynn Ramsey or Kathy Reid for details. PPA will also have a month-long exhibit, "I'll Take Manhattan ..." at the Manhattan Borough President's office, 1 Centre Street, in January. The opening reception will be Thursday, January 11, from 6-8:30 p.m. A picture ID is required for entrance to the building.

## **News of Members and Friends**

**Bruce Colin**, who has given us some fine photos taken at our Blessing of the Animals service, will present in Palm Springs California in January at the Annual Wildlife Photography Conference of NANPA, the North American Nature Photography Association. The juried presentation will comprise his photos and story of a hyena at a kill in Africa.

**Karen Benedetto**, a frequent soloist at CCC, continues to accumulate honors for her songwriting. While we have been inspired in our services by her material in the Contemporary Christian style, her work not only in that area but also in the Adult Contemporary, Pop, Country, and Folk genres has garnered recognition in a variety of national and international songwriting competitions. Most recent are the Billboard, Unisong, Piano Press, and Texas Songwriters contests. Karen's work will be heard next here at CCC during the January 21st service. You can hear more of her writing on her site, [www.IntheFlowMusic.com](http://www.IntheFlowMusic.com).

**Margaret Daffin** writes: "In September I visited New York again after six years absence and stayed with Joanne and Steve on Sunday morning, many of my old friends. member of CCC - Easter Choirs as well New York in 1989 to married and moved to to be a member of CCC wonderful establishment. and just didn't want to



world - what a wonderful place it is and how I miss New York. I know it will not be another six years before my next visit." (L to R: Lisa Mitchell, Paul Bodden, Hilda Regier, Thad McGar, Margaret Daffin, Malcolm Ritter, Joanne Downes, Mary Sheeran, Jane Ritter. Photo, Robert Mitchell, Jr.)

Downes. I came to the church service September 17th and reunited with As some of you know, I was an active participating in the Christmas and as being a Board Member until I left move to Virginia. Since then, I Houston, Texas. However, I continue and enjoy receiving news of your I had a fabulous time in New York leave my favorite city in the whole

### **News of Members and Friends, cont'd.**

**Arlene Nash**, an early and enthusiastic member of Chelsea Community Church, passed away in June. Arlene and her husband, Fred, began attending services soon after the church was founded in 1975, and Arlene officially joined at our first membership service. Arlene sang in the choir and in smaller "special music" groups. She was a mainstay of the flea markets we ran in the early years as fundraisers. "Don't let the church die," she admonished Joanne Downes at the farewell party we had when the Nashes left the city.

After Fred's death in Ohio in 2003, Arlene went to live with her son, Jay, in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo, where he is a senior program officer with USAID in charge of a disaster relief program. Arlene also leaves a daughter, Liz, of Loveland, Ohio.

**Kathy Reid** was elected in September to the Board of Directors of Rising Hope, Inc., an organization that runs a Certificate in Ministry and Human Services program in seven NY State prisons, including Woodbourne Correctional Facility where Kathy teaches in the summer. Our recent preacher Mark Graham from Exodus Transitional Community is also on the Board. To learn more about Rising Hope's mission, visit [www.risinghopeinc.org](http://www.risinghopeinc.org).

**Mary Sheeran** will discuss and read from her novel "Who Have the Power: A Legend of the West" at the Muhlenberg Library, 209 West 23rd Street, on Thursday, December 21 at 6:30. Admission is free. Copies of the book will be available to purchase on site.

**Denise Soares** was ordained in November in the First Baptist Church, Fall River, Massachusetts. Her husband, the Rev. Ed Soares was a regular preacher for our church for many years. They now reside in Tiverton, RI. We extend our best wishes.



## **Chelsea Community Church Statement of Mission**

An independent, non-denominational, lay-led Christian congregation, Chelsea Community Church is a people not a building. We offer a supportive environment for people of all faiths and of uncertain faith. Our mission is:

- ❖ to enable each individual to define personal religious beliefs,
- ❖ to worship in prayer, music, reading and interpretation of Scripture with speakers from a variety of backgrounds,
- ❖ to nurture each other in spiritual growth, while respecting and accepting a diversity of beliefs,
- ❖ to share with and support each other in the daily and extraordinary events of our lives,
- ❖ to help those in need both inside and outside our congregation.

We welcome all to worship with us and become part of our extended Christian family. Services are at 11:45 a.m. each Sunday (except during August) at St. Peter's Church, 346 West 20<sup>th</sup> Street, New York, NY 10011.



Blessing of the Animals,  
October 2006 (Photo by  
Robert Mitchell, Jr.)

## **Mailing List**

SNAIL-MAIL: If you wish to continue receiving our newsletter by post, there is no need to respond.

REMOVE: If you prefer to be permanently removed from our snail-mail list, please either write (Attention: Lynne Robinson) or call the CCC phone and leave a message: 346 West 20<sup>th</sup> Street, NY, NY 10011 or (212) 886-5463.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE FUTURE MAIL BY E-MAIL, please e-mail [LYNEEROB@AOL.COM](mailto:LYNEEROB@AOL.COM) and, for security purposes, write "ADD TO E-MAIL" in the subject line. Please let us know your full name so we can remove you from the snail-mail list. Thank you.

\* \* \*

## **Newsletter**

Suggestions and information for the newsletter may be sent to Kathryn Buck at [blsspks@aol.com](mailto:blsspks@aol.com) or by calling (212) 243-0273.

\* \* \*

## **Committee Heads**

**Worship**, Hilda Regier; **Music**, Joanne Downes; **Hospitality**, Wayne Kammerer; **Benevolence**, Kathy Reid; **Newsletter**, Kathryn Buck; **Website**, Robert Hickey; **Publicity**, Alana Atterbury.

## SCHEDULE of SPEAKERS and SPECIAL MUSIC

December 17, 2006 - March 25, 2007



**December 17** **Rev. Dr. Robert J. Owens** (Disciples of Christ) is professor of Old Testament at General Theological Seminary. Previously professor of Hebrew Bible and ancient Near Eastern studies at Emmanuel School of Religion in Johnson City, TN, he was for two years a visiting scholar at Oxford University in England. He earned his Ph.D. at Johns Hopkins University.

**December 24** **Dr. Katherine Kurs** (Episcopal/Jewish) compiled and edited the award-winning book *Searching for Your Soul*. She has a private practice in spiritual counseling and direction and is an ecumenical associate minister of West Park Presbyterian Church as well as teaching at General Theological Seminary and New School University. She holds an M.Div. from Harvard and a Ph.D. from the Royal College of Art, London.

**Special Music: Andre Solomon-Glover**

December 31 **Rev. John Magisano** (Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches), Chelsea Community Church's pastoral counselor, is director of training and client services at Nonprofit Connection, a firm that provides capacity-building technical assistance to nonprofit organizations in New York City. He earned his M.Div. degree at New York Theological Seminary and has served as assistant pastor for development at the Metropolitan Community Church of Hartford.

January 7 **Kate McCormick** (Episcopal) is parish administrator and an associate in ministry at All Saints Episcopal Church in Glen Rock, NJ. She earned an M.Div. degree at Union Theological Seminary and is engaged in the process leading to ordination as a priest in her denomination. She was an editor at *Newsday* for 18 years and then served as an associate editor at the Episcopal News Service.

January 14 **Julio Medina** (United Church of Christ) is founder and executive director of the Exodus Transitional Community, an organization that works with ex-offenders. He is also associate director of New York Theological Seminary's Master of Professional Studies program at Sing Sing, of which he is an alumnus. Having earned an M.Div. at the seminary's Manhattan facility, he is now working toward an M.Div. there.

January 21 **Rev. Linda Lebel** (Interfaith) was ordained at the New Seminary in Manhattan and was on the original staff of One Spirit Learning Alliance. She is a special education teacher at P.S. 306.

**Special Music: Rev. Lebel and Karen Benedetto**

January 28 **Rev. Dr. Karen L. Ziegler** (Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches) is on the faculty at Duke University Medical School, a fellow at the Center for Integrative Medicine at Duke and an associate fellow at the University of Arizona Program in Integrative Medicine. Her work as a family nurse practitioner at Duke's Brain Tumor Center was recognized by a *New York Times* Job Market Award in 2003. She was the senior pastor of Metropolitan Community Church of New York from 1979-88 and pastoral consultant to Chelsea Community Church in 1992-93. She earned her M.Div. degree at Union Theological Seminary and her D.Min. at New York Theological Seminary. She later enrolled in the Columbia University School of Nursing and went on to earn an M.S.N.

**Special Music: Randa McNamara**

## **Schedule of Speakers and Special Music, cont'd.**

February 4     **Rev. Jerry Fargo** (United Church of Christ) is a graduate of Chicago Theological Seminary, he has worked in youth and campus ministry, with performing artists and as a journalist and art director. He was formerly Chelsea Community Church's pastoral counselor.

February 11   **Rabbi Jill Hausman** (Jewish) is the spiritual leader of Congregation Ezrath Israel, also known as the Actors Temple. Before coming to the 47<sup>th</sup> Street shul in 2006, she was with the Boro Park Progressive Synagogue in Brooklyn, first as a cantor and then as assistant rabbi. She was ordained at the Rabbinical Seminary International in Manhattan.

February 18   **Rev. James Campbell** (United Church of Christ) is pastor of Broadway United Church of Christ. He earned his M.Div. degree at Ashland Theological Seminary in Ohio and was ordained in the United Methodist Church in 1991. He served congregations in that denomination in Ohio and New Jersey for eight years before working in the private sector for several years and transferring to the United Church of Christ.

February 25   **Peterson Toscano** (Quaker) is a theatrical performance activist. He has performed at church conferences and retreats throughout North America and Europe. In 2006 he appeared at the Greenbelt Festival in England. He spent 17 years and \$30,000 attempting to become heterosexual.

March 4     **Sister Carol Perry** (Roman Catholic) is resident Biblical scholar at Marble Collegiate Church in Manhattan. A member of the Sisters of St. Ursula, she studied at Regina Mundi in Rome, where she earned the equivalent of a master's degree in theology. She also holds an M.A. in theology from St. Mary's College in Notre Dame, Ind. She has retired from the faculty of John Coleman High School in Hurley.

March 11     **Edwin McCleary/Brother Tyrrell Muhammed** (Muslim) is a consultant for the security firm, Force One International. He earned a master of professional studies degree in the New York Theological Seminary program at Sing Sing Prison. As a volunteer, he coaches a fourth grade basketball team and mentors at-risk junior high school students at Brooklyn public schools.

March 18     **Rev. Mieke Vandersall** (Presbyterian) is minister director of Presbyterian Welcome, a program reaching out to lesbians, gays and bisexuals. Also a parish associate at St. James Presbyterian Church in Harlem, she earned her M.Div. at Union Theological Seminary.

March 25     **Rev. Wilfried Wasserman** (Lutheran) is pastor of the German Evangelical Lutheran Church of St. Paul in Chelsea. Prior to coming to this pastorate in 2003, he served at two congregations in Germany for 20 years. He grew up in Beirut, Lebanon where his father was administrator of an orphanage. After majoring in biology and chemistry in college, he worked in the chemical industry in Germany for several years before studying theology at Tuebingen University and earning the equivalent of an M.Div. degree.