

# Carols

and

# Classics



John C. Black, Director

Christian J. Black, Accompanist

**Sunday, December 13, 2015, 5:00 p.m.**

**Greenwood Community Church, Presbyterian**

**805 Main Avenue, Warwick, Rhode Island**

Music  
AT  
Greenwood  
*Choral and Instrumental Concert Series*



Dear Members and Friends,

This is an expanded and updated version of what was in the worship bulletin insert **November 15**. This proposal was **approved** by the joint meeting of the Board of Deacons and the Session November 19, and emailed to our congregational e-mail list the following day. If you are seeing this for the first time, **please note the last paragraph**: There will be **ONE Service of Worship Sunday, November 29, 9:30 A.M.**, to celebrate the First Sunday of Advent with the **Hanging of the Greens!**



## Worship Schedule Update

Thank you to all who came to the **November 1 Potluck Luncheon** to both welcome our *(then potential)* new members and to engage in open and cooperative conversation and dialogue regarding the Session's **Worship Schedule Proposal**. Thank you, too, to Elaine and Jim Magyar *(who quietly served many hours in setup, preparation, service and cleanup all weekend!)*, other members of the Member Care Committee, and all who generously provided ample and varied *(and delicious!)* food contributions. In the forum that followed, many perspectives and concerns were earnestly voiced, many ideas were thoughtfully considered, and a considerable number of constructive conversations continued long after the forum officially adjourned; in fact, those conversations continued into the Planning Committee meeting four days later! I would like to *especially* commend our newest members who felt free to speak so eloquently to the issue(s) during the forum, and to all of you who obviously made them feel welcome and comfortable enough to do so!

I wrote in a congregational letter 'way back in August 1997 *(slightly edited)*:

I have long maintained that church leadership needs to strike the delicate balance of **initiative** and **consensus**. Trained in theology and experienced in the business of the church's work and mission, the pastor has the assigned duty to assert leadership, help initiate direction and impart vision. However, I have also long maintained a foundational tenet of Christian faith and practice *and* a central tenet of Presbyterian polity is that church leaders must make every effort to listen for the directive voice of Jesus Christ speaking through His collective Body, the members of the church. While realizing consensus does not always mean unanimity, I nevertheless seek as much agreement as possible on all matters facing the Session and/or congregation before proceeding, as I see no other Christ-honoring, practical way a congregation can make collective decisions.

The subsequent consensus of the Planning Committee is to recommend the original **Worship Schedule Proposal**, scheduled to commence **November 29**, be rescinded and reevaluated. We are sincerely trying to listen to all voices, including the voice of God's Spirit and how He may be leading through the collective voice of His people, and have come to something of a working resolution we think may work to address ALL expressed concerns for the immediate future.

In summary: Several expressed a desire for a single service of worship, preferring to have one worship service that is full, rather than two services that are half to two-thirds empty; i.e., a worship service *(with the entire music program accompaniment)* for all the congregation to attend; AND several also expressed a desire for a concurrent worship service and Sunday school. However, the latter cannot be done with the former; a single service of worship with concurrent Sunday School would exclude our Sunday School teachers. Some expressed a desire to keep the worship service schedule as is, so that those participating in the Sunday school programs can also attend worship.

So, a working compromise for the immediate future would be to have **one** service of worship on a more regular basis, perhaps monthly ... a full-fledged, choir(s) assisted, children's-sermon-and-maybe-communion-included, well attended grand service of worship where we pull out all the stops and worship together as one congregation and one "family" of all ages, talents, gifts and voices. Just once a month on appropriate occasions, for a certain period of time, and perhaps decide by next summer if this is to be continued, OR extended to all Sundays a month, OR cancelled and just go back to the same old schedule *(perhaps with slight time modifications, such as 10:45 worship)*, OR some other alternative. We did try having the "old old" schedule once a month on Communion Sundays for a short while, years ago, but we have NOT tried having a "family" (as in CHURCH family) single service on a more regular basis.

I would especially exhort ALL to give this a sincere try. Personally, I think this reflects the best of genuine and loving compromise on all sides as we continue to discern what is ultimately the best accommodation for all. For reasons of planning, we had to go ahead and prepare for **one Service of Worship November 29, 9:30 AM** to celebrate as one congregational family the **First Sunday of Advent** (and liturgically the first Sunday of the "church year") with the **Hanging of the Greens**. A light continental breakfast in Fellowship Hall *(food contributions welcome!)* is being planned for **9:00 a.m.** and our usual coffee hour will follow worship.

**Stephen L. Clark, Pastor**