

First Presbyterian Church of New Canaan

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The Rev. Paul E. Gilmore, Pastor

The Rev. Kathryn Kibbie Laird, Associate Pastor for Children, Youth and Families

Victoria Shields, Director of Music

Michelle Olsen, Church Administrator

August 31, 2016

Dear Parents,

As we approach the new church program year, I wanted to update all of you on some exciting changes we are making this year with regard to our Wednesday night Choir School program!

Choir School begins on Wednesday, September 7, with snacks, games and fellowship, beginning at 4:30, with Carol Choir (grades 3 and up) meeting from 5:00-6:30. Our rehearsals will incorporate singing, playing chimes and handbells (yes, the real ones!), as well as xylophones and other percussion instruments. The goal is to give our kids the opportunity to make music in many different ways so learning is fun and varied, as well as geared toward bringing out their individual strengths.

The Cherub Choir (pre-K through grade 2), under the direction of Sherry Tate, will meet from 5:00-5:45 in the Cherub Choir Room. Sherry will be teaching songs about our faith and helping our young singers learn to match pitch, become familiar with different rhythm patterns, and have fun with bells, rhythm sticks, and other percussion instruments.

Highlights for the Choir School this year include the Christmas Pageant, Christmas Concert, Easter Sunday and the Spring Musical.

This year, Carol Choir has been expanded to include all children in grades 3 and up. Rehearsals will be geared according to age levels and ability. This will give us the opportunity to prepare more challenging music and is a way for our older singers to take on a leadership role and be mentors for our younger singers. We will also continue to sing music in combination with our adult choir as we did this past spring. This choir model is centuries old and is a great way to mold young singers. The choir will help lead worship approximately once per month in the upcoming 2016-2017 program year. Singing hymns, anthems and spiritual songs, our children will serve a vital role in our worship service.

Questions about Confirmation Class? Those in Confirmation this year will be able to participate in choir as well! Confirmation Class will be meeting every other week this year. In weeks that confirmation does not meet, they will be able to attend choir. If you have any questions, please see Kibbie or me.

I hope you all have heard about our new "First Wednesdays@First Pres" program, beginning on the same day as our first rehearsal, Wednesday, September 7! The staff and I are excited about this program, which brings our congregation together for a delicious meal and storytelling. The program begins at 5:45, at which time we will gather in the Common Room. Please note that reservations are required for the "First Wednesdays" dinner. This event is designed to bring our Wednesday night participants together, and is considered part of our weekly choir commitment. Therefore it is highly encouraged that all choir members participate in this program.

Please see our Facebook page or our website for more details about "First Wednesdays@FirstPres."

Incorporating the children in worship is important for their own Christian formation as well as their development in ministry. I hope you and your children will consider a musical role in the ministry at First Presbyterian Church!

Soli Deo Gloria,
(Glory to God alone)

Victoria Shields