

INTRODUCING THE CPC STAFF

Since we've been through a lot of transitions lately, do you know who attends staff meeting? Allow me to make a few introductions.

Rev. Preston Graham is the church planter and senior pastor of CPC. He is our primary preacher, counselor, the head of staff, the moderator of the session, and the visionary that keeps us moving forward. He has been married to Lisa for 25 years and they have three children, Stephen, 21, Nathan, 18, and Anna, 16.

Rev. Tolivar Wills has been an assistant pastor at CPC for the past 3 years. He has been directing the graduate student and professionals ministry, community groups, and men's ministry, assisting with preaching and counseling, and overseeing Athletes in Action at Yale. He has recently begun turning his attention to church planting in the Hill community. He is married to Samantha and they have three children, Hailey, 13, Riley, 11, and Anthony, 4.

Kevin Nelson is the newest addition to the CPC staff starting just last week! He is serving as the Pastor of University Ministries and as such will direct the graduate student and professional ministry, the college fellowship, and RUF at Yale. He is married to Christie and they have one child, Kyra, 11 months.

Rebekah Caldwell has been with CPC for the past 2 years. She serves as the Community Life Coordinator overseeing the church publishing, coffeehouse, bookstore, women's ministry, community groups, and generally assisting in most pastoral and lay ministries.

Julia McLaughlin has been CPC's administrator for the past 7 months. Hers is the friendly voice that answers your phone calls. She also fields emails and prints the bulletin. She is married to Kelly and they have two daughters, Katie, 9, and Aerin, 5.

Joe Shields is a classical guitarist and has been our worship director for the past 3 years. He has also organized many special events like Live at 135, the April concert series, and the Artstravanga. He is married to Nancy and they are in the process of adopting.

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If you would prefer to receive future copies of *theWindow* via email, please write me at thewindoweditor@gmail.com.



theWindow

CHRIST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR: REBEKAH CALDWELL

Who are we really, Christ Presbyterian Church? We are the people, the ideas, the acts of service, the worship, the mediated presence of Christ in New Haven, Connecticut. Our people are more than the 200 or so that worship at 135 Whitney Avenue on Sunday morning, they are the people who have worshipped with us over the life of this congregation. So we want to reconnect with you. For some of you, the Window will be a new thing and for others a familiar face. It is you whom we want to connect and this is your window into the life of CPC.

WELCOME BACK! BY REV. GRAHAM

It has been way too long since the last time we were able to peer through *The Window* into one another's lives, especially since CPC increasingly spans the globe through our alumni. By re-issuing *The Window*, it is our great ambition to reconnect with one another, both in terms of our various personal lives and the unique bond we share together relative to a common history, experience and even "brand" of spirituality that is CPC.

It's true, over and over again I hear back from those of you who have left New Haven about how the CPC years were special and formative, a result of the CPC brand of Christianity being in many ways unique. It is a kind of Christian spirituality that is always working the tension of being both high gospel (gospel-centered and missional) and high church (confessional, sacramental, and communal), even daring to believe that the two are mutually served by the other.

As we have been theologizing about this more and more of late while engaging the spiritual landscape of our local "post-Christian" context, it is being affirmed more than ever that our journey these years together at CPC is increasingly the context of western culture.

What this context means is that Christianity-as-usual – with its typically false polarities between either high gospel or high church, confessional or missional, fundamentalist or liberal, red or blue – is all becoming obsolete in a age that wants to

talk about being a "Christian-Buddhist!"

Church theologians are re-thinking the conception that the church is *merely* a credentialing and sending agency or *source* of mission *to* the "un-Christian" world. Rather, the missional church within a context that is no longer even culturally Christian affirms *the church as the locus of mission in the world*. The church – her sacraments, her preaching and teaching, and her "one-anothering" in community formation – is "the good news" and the very real, albeit mediated, presence of Christ unto salvation in the world and for the world! Our method of evangelism in New Haven is to be a good church in a way that expects the whole city of New Haven to be present; that is, a "high-gospel, high church" kind of Christianity! It sounds like Acts 2, doesn't it, where people came into the church and then became Christians; where the church was the evangelist as opposed the church sending little "evangelist-sorties" into the world!!

Drat! There I go again, doing theology when I am supposed to be writing a welcome column. Anyway, as all of this is being played out in New Haven, you will want to read on to get a few more snapshots of the things that are happening. We want to invite you to email us your stories (a brief paragraph or so) as well so that we can publish them in future issues of *The Window*.



Very briefly then:

- Be sure to notice the introduction to the CPC staff—most of whom you will probably not know if you left over 2 years ago.
- We are working on publishing some training and small group oriented studies that focus on the dynamics of a healthy spirituality. These dynamics are based on a "high gospel-high church" kind of Christianity that is contextualized into what has been described as a post-Christian context. Rebekah Caldwell will tell you more about this in her article.
- Notice the piece on our ministry in the Hill community. What's beneath the surface is a recent decision to pursue a "mono-congregational, multi-site church model" in New Haven.
- You will want to notice the upcoming CPC 15 year anniversary weekend that is scheduled for Oct. 9-12. We are really hoping for this to be a reunion for many of you who are CPC alumni!!
- Related to our 15 year anniversary celebration, check out the piece on a publishing project entitled *Where He May Be Found* which will be authored by YOU!

I hope to see you in October!!

AN EYE ON NEW HAVEN

Caseus
93 Whitney Avenue
New Haven
203-624-3373
www.caseusnewhaven.com

Bistro Hours:

Lunch: Mon – Sat: 11:30am-4pm
Dinner: Wed – Thur: 5:30-9:30pm
Fri – Sat: 5:30-10pm

One of the best parts of living in or around the Elm City is its collection of restaurants, with many new places popping up on different corners. New Haven's most recent addition sits at the corner of Whitney and Trumbull: Caseus.

Owner Jason Sobocinski had initially planned to open up a cheese shop, but decided to venture into the restaurant business as well. Patrons can

dine at the wood-paneled bar or choose a cozy basement area with a view of the "cheese haven" that houses a broad range of local and imported cheeses and other specialty items such as olives and olive oils, honey, fresh artisan sausages and European chocolates.

French chef Fabrice Renaudin offers up traditional bistro fare with such standards as cheese and charcuterie boards, Salade Niçoise, and French onion soup topped with comté, raclette and gouda, which adds a nice texture to the flavor. Try a flaky tart *du jour* or poutine, a French-Canadian mélange



Sobocinski at the bar inside Caseus

of cheese curds, French fries and gravy. There are cheeseburgers, grilled cheese sandwiches, and even a creamy white-sauced macaroni and cheese. For those who love fine cheese and fine wine, this would be the perfect stop to shop and dine while out on the town.

fashioned fellowship meal. (Remember all those wonderful dishes that other people make? Alumni, if you have special requests in this department, let us know and we'll see if we can get your favorite CPC foods on the table.)

We hope that many of you will make the effort to join us for this fantastic weekend. The church's alumni now far outnumber current members, and, as such, are a huge part of CPC's church history and family. Therefore, we look forward to this wonderful reunion that will, in a small way, mirror the grand reunion we will celebrate someday in heaven. Please don't underestimate how much it will mean to have YOU there. Mark your calendar and we'll see you in October!

try plan and priorities. There will be morning seminars ranging from Christian Faith and Practice (involving many of our alumni) to Missional Ecclesiology (in celebration of our launching a multi-site church in New Haven) to Theological Aesthetics (in celebration of CPC's worship and arts project). In the evening, we will head to Anthony's Ocean View near Lighthouse Point for a grand vision banquet, where we'll toast the end of our capital campaign, hear from an alumni speaker, and celebrate the many, many ways God has been good to our church in its fifteen years of existence. On Sunday morning, we will gather for covenant worship followed by a good old-



ALUMNI REUNION

BY KATIE LEVESQUE

Save the Date!

CPC is proud to announce its first ever alumni reunion weekend, scheduled for October 10-12, 2008. We hope that many former members and attendees of CPC will return to New Haven for this event, which will be full of opportunities to reconnect with other alumni and with those who are still a part of CPC.

On Thursday, before the weekend gets started, we will unveil a recently commissioned original work of art by Mako Fujimora that will become part of our holistic worship experience when hung in the chancel area of our sanctuary.

We will kick off the weekend with a coffeehouse event on Friday night. Hot Off the Press coffeehouse is one of the newest ministries of the church. On Saturday, the pastoral staff will offer alumni an update on the church's current minis-

SPIRITUAL DYNAMICS CURRICULUM
BY REBEKAH CALDWELL & REV. GRAHAM

On page 1, Preston referred to the brand of CPC as that which is high gospel and high church. We are working on a couple of publications trying to explain what that means and what it looks like. One of these is curriculum we can use in a small group or Sunday school setting. To give you an idea of what I am talking about, let me share with you an annotated look at the table of contents.

1) Gospel-centered: I Peter 4:11 teaches, *God is glorified in all things through Jesus Christ*. This means that the focus of everything we say and do is *not* on what we must do in order to glorify God in order to gain God's favor, but on what Christ has done on our behalf and we have received by faith in order to gain God's favor. It sets us free from the fear of God's condemnation and rejection and makes it safe to be morally flawed and spiritually broken. More than a mes-

sage, the gospel is the life transforming power of God! It is, quite simply, an amazing grace that changes everything!

2) Sacramental: Our identity as a church is constituted in our assembly together with the church in every age and place in the sacramental presence of God. At the heart of worship is a faithful human response to God's revelation and presence. The sacramental-centered church will live, serve and worship as the liturgical "amen" to the life of Christ on our behalf. We are assured therefore not only of our ultimate salvation, but of God's favor now – our works are being completed by Christ's work now in his ascended state in sacramental union with us.

3) Confessional: A confessional ministry is characterized by a church whose identity is most essentially what it believes and whose beliefs drives what it does. It is decreasingly susceptible to being *tossed to and fro*

and blown about by every wind of doctrine. (Eph. 4:14)

4) Communal: In Christ's final prayer for the church He prayed, that *they may be one as we are one*. (John 17:11) Notice that this unity is theologically grounded in the reality of the mystical union enjoyed within the Trinity now being extended to include the members of the church. We are communal so that the world might know Jesus Christ in the flesh even as He is being mediated through "one-anothering."

5) Missional: The missional church is the church *in the world, not of the world and for the world*. It is particularly interested in the missional nature of God acting in, with and through the local church. It regards the Trinitarian conception of God that is referenced by Christ when he once said, *as the Father sends me, so I send you* (John 20:21). The church is not merely the source of witness, it is the locus of witness in the world.

Where He May Be Found is a little book we as CPCers are putting together about the ways Christ has been seen in our church. The title comes from the idea that His presence is mediated to us in a special way through the Church and it is these stories of His presence that I wish to publish. So ask yourself, where have you seen Jesus at CPC? Was it at the table? in a community group? in confession? in reaching out to a neighbor? in sharing a meal? in having a joint birthday party? The list goes on and on of the people and places through which Christ has revealed himself in His Church. Allow yourself to reflect on this and I think you will be blessed to see with renewed vision Christ at work. I will be collecting these stories until the beginning of September. Please prayerfully consider being a part of this project by sending your stories to me at rebekahcaldwell@mac.com. They don't need to be long, extraordinary, or sound professionally written, they just need to be *your* stories of seeing Christ at work at CPC. I look forward to hearing from you!

WHAT'S IN PETER MCHENRY'S
CD PLAYER?

I've been listening to Bela Fleck recently. Currently in my CD player is the first album I purchased from Mr. Fleck and his Flecktones band: *Three Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. This album sounds best in a 1985 GMC Jimmy driving down Lebanon Road in Nashville, TN. But the cool virtuosity of this collection of three mega-talented musicians is great anywhere. Bela Fleck is probably the best banjo player in the world, and he plays a modern electric version of the bluegrass instrument. Other members of the band are Victor Wooten, one of the best bass guitar players in the world, and his brother Roy Wooten, whose grooves on the synth-axe drumitar are inventive and always in the pocket. My favorite tune is *At Last We Meet Again*, which has a peaceful feel that evokes for me all the good parts of high school. *Bumbershoot* is the closest thing to bluegrass-fusion-bebop I can imagine. *The Message* is a very positive rap that grooves so much I can't keep my head from moving.

My musical preferences tend toward approachable virtuosity, funky percussion, and improvisation. I love jazz and bluegrass. Bela Fleck and the Flecktones meld these elements as well as anyone.

