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What A Ride!!!

Christ Presbyterian Church in the Hill



Contemplating the Journey Thus Far...

Greetings in the Lord dear friends and supporters! As I sit down to write, I have found it hard to generate a mental image that paints a picture of what the Lord has been doing in the Hill. Connecticut's state of mind, including mine, has been blurred by the atrocities that happened in Newtown. Our state's, and probably our nation's, collective mindsets have been colored by the bold color of heartache. As a result, it is a struggle for me to paint a happy picture of reality. However, with the help of one of our church member's, God has reminded us of His enduring presence and work in our midst; a truth that comforts during such a dark period.



The Lord launched our Fall season with a bang. We began by taking part in several outreaches, ranging from Back-to-School, prayer & evangelism walks, to our 'Lovin' the Hill day of service. In addition, I began to personally take part in street preaching, with an emphasis on the grace and love of God the Father expressed in His Son. We were shocked by the positive response; in fact, in our neighborhood, they see this ministry as normal. As a result of our efforts, the Lord saw fit to raise up 3 new bible studies in the Hill, raising our total to 5, and seeing many of those folks begin to come to church. Four families and two singles have become semi-regular attenders and are beginning to slowly assimilate into the body of Christ.



Most importantly, the Lord is melting hearts and forming a family of believers who are learning to love and grow together under the care of the Lord Jesus! These folks have found a spiritual home; a place where our God and His people accept and love them deeply. I am continually reminded that the Church is an organism; a living entity that needs to be watered, pruned, protected, stabilized, and much, much more. Therefore, quick fixes are few in a healthy church; health takes time.

More than a Haircut...

One of the Lord's outgrowths has been a bible study in E & J's Barbershop! Yes, you read it right: A Barbershop! Every Tuesday night several men & women meet at the shop's closing time, laugh, drink coffee, & study the gospel of John. Together, we have allowed each other to re-examine the person, life, & ministry of Jesus; considering once again how it is that He is trying to engage us. The multitude and diversity of men **and women** coming through the doors has been amazing. The Lord has just begun to give them the courage to darken the door of our church. **Pray for heart change!**





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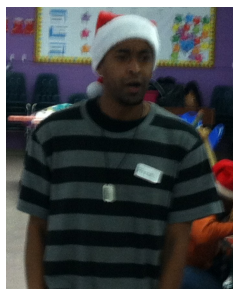
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That He Might Walk Among Us



We're on the Web:
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Assorted Highlights and Future Targets

In addition to focused outreach & small group activity, we made use of some friendly partnerships with neighboring ministries to bring the gospel in unique ways to our worship services. We invited a substance abuse ministry, Teen Challenge, and the Miracle Voices choir to minister via song and personal testimony. The men from TC were a great encouragement to many in our congregation, who have family members who wrestle with substance abuse. Hearing the damage that drugs/alcohol had on their lives and the gospel beginning to set them free was reaffirming that the Gospel does change us. Our second guest's, MVC, brought their booming and God-centered voices to lift up the hearts of our many visitors. Their ministry has inspired some in our congregation to pray for the Lord to raise up a youth choir for our church. Both of these events served as great incentive to invite neighbors and friends to church. We saw our largest attendances in the history of our church.

In the midst of our missional focus, we are also focusing and witnessing genuine life-change. We are preparing to have 4-6 folks examined for membership. As well, we had 3 new leaders examined to be teachers within the church, while 3 men will also begin the 2 year elder candidacy process after the first of the year. Without a doubt, our leadership base has grown and matured over the past 3 1/2 years.

As we prepare to enter into 2013, we look forward to sharing with you the exciting plans the Lord has given us to trust Him for and implement. In the coming days, you will be receiving a video link, a power point that maps out where we have come from and where we feel the Lord is leading us into the future, and how you can personally continue to join us on this improbable and supernatural journey. In the meantime, have a very Merry Christmas and blessed New Year in the name of our Lord Jesus!!!

Yours for the Kingdom,

Tolivar & Family