



The Spire

**At the First Congregational Church, UCC of Wallingford, CT,
we have discerned the following vision and mission
for our faith lives together:**

Vision

Our faith – rooted in the compassion and teachings of Jesus Christ – is the foundation of our love for one another and service to the world around us.

We offer a home for those seeking deeper meaning or purpose in their lives through the exploration of Jesus Christ's teachings. The love and compassion found in those teachings commit us to uplift each individual and celebrate our shared humanity.

Mission

We will foster spiritual growth, loving communication, and mutual care, thereby empowering us to confront issues that impact our community and the world, including poverty, isolation, and exclusion.

We commit to developing a nurturing environment where all are loved, valued, and inspired to meaningful participation in the life of the church. Through our Christian faith, compassion, and service, we will dedicate ourselves to making a positive impact on the lives of people in our community and beyond.



The First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ

23 South Main Street, Wallingford, CT 06492

Church telephone: (203) 265-1691

Church Office Hours: Tues.– Fri. - 9:00am – 2:00pm

Email: officemanager@firstchurchwlfld.org (office)

Website: www.firstchurchwallingford.org

Table of Contents

350 th Anniversary Celebration Team News	10
Baptisms /Deaths / Weddings	27
Bible Study	16
Book Club Info	19
Catch the Spirit Sunday	3
Concert Info	12
Congregational Care	24
Faith Formation	8
Flower Team News	25
Golf Tournament	21
Helping Hands	24
Message from the Moderators	5
Message from the Minister of Music	6
Message from the Interim Minister.....	4
Mission Funds Distribution Team News	17
New Members Opportunity	19
ONA Message	14
Prayer Shawl Ministry	25
Rummage Sale Info	11
Search and Call Team News	9
September Monthly Mission Drive	15
September Worship Preview	7
Thank You Note	26
Trip to Italy	13
Usher/Greeter Info	26
Vision Board Officers 2024 -2025	20
Vision & Mission Statement	1
Voices of Devotion Project	22
Women's Fellowship Breakfast	16



Get Ready for

CATCH THE SPIRIT SUNDAY

Sunday, September 15th

9:15 am - Sunday School Registration on parade grounds

9:45 am - "Jonah" Mini Musical on parade grounds

10:00 am - Worship in the Sanctuary



Register Here



A Message From the Interim Minister



As many of you know, my family reunion is coming up in October. It is exciting for me to think about how my clan has grown from 9 children and 2 parents to close to 200 people since their arrival at Ellis Island 100 years ago. We celebrate our Scottish heritage with bagpipers, stories, photographs, meat pies, sausage rolls, and a service of worship that celebrates the births, deaths, marriages, and other significant life events of our clan. We love being together! But the last time we met, it became clear that while we all came from the same gene pool, we are not all alike. We like different foods, different music, and different books. Some are well traveled while others seldom venture far from home. Some have earned advanced college degrees and others have chosen vocations of service through the fire, police, or military. We are all different. I am usually accepting of differences, but I became concerned when I came to learn how different we are, especially when it comes to politics. I know my family has many political leanings and some strong beliefs. The other side of my family deals with differences by having a rule to not talk about them. My McPherson side deals with differences differently. We listen, withhold judgement, and commit to being open to another's point of view. No one is invested in changing someone else's mind, only in trying to understand a point of view different than their own.

I would like to suggest that perhaps we may want to try that at First Congregational Church of Wallingford as we enter into an already contentious political season leading up to our November election of a new president. I think of this season as an opportunity to practice important skills together and to learn from one another as we listen to other points of view. It is an opportunity to reflect on the teachings of Jesus and the values we see emerging from those teachings. We can then choose who we vote for based on our values and how we see those values reflected in each candidate's platform. You know I understand the world and our faith to be intricately connected. I can think of no one I would rather think about that with than my siblings in faith. I will never tell you who to vote for. I am curious how you connect your faith, life, and political choices. I am curious about your needs, hopes, and wants for the future. I am curious how we might have civil fruitful discourse about challenging topics that affect all our lives. After all, isn't that what church is for?

Let's think, reflect, and wrestle together. Let's place God and the teachings of Jesus in the center of our decision making. Let's open ourselves to bold, respectful, curious conversations. Any takers?

Respectfully yours,

Pastor Meredith

A Message from the Moderators



It is hard to believe that summer is nearly behind us, and we are already turning to the crispness of fall and the beginning of another program year at First Congregational Church. We hope you have had a blessed summer filled with relaxation, the making of memories with family and friends, and time to rejuvenate after a bit of a break from normal routines.

While summer is that time when we aspire to take a breather from some of our normal demands, First Congregational Church has continued to hum and buzz with much activity. The summer launched with a busy Annual Meeting where we saw collaboration and consensus around the exciting acceptance of our Open and Affirming Covenant, the difficult decisions of a challenging budget, the motivation to continue working on our Ministry Team model of structure and function, and welcoming several new Ministry coordinators on this venture. All of our staff and Ministry teams continued their amazing work to bring us inspiring (and cool!) worship in Congregational Hall, to lead summer church school and music programs for our children and youth, to conduct ongoing monthly mission drives to support our community, to maintain and improve our buildings and systems, to provide loving care for our congregation, to plan for our momentous 350th anniversary year, and to continue the work of searching for our next settled minister.

We may sound like a broken record, but it is a record of gratitude we will not stop playing. All of this Christ-centered work could not and would not happen without the dedication and generosity of all of YOU. We cannot say it enough that we appreciate your time, talent, creativity, positivity and financial support. “Doing church” in 2024 is no easy task, yet this church family comes together time and again to help First Congregational Church in its Mission to serve the Lord, our community, and one another.

And so, we are approaching one of our favorite times of the year...when we come together on September 15th to Catch the Spirit, to commit and recommit to the Mission of our church, and to keep stepping forward into the future with hope, faith, and fellowship that is guided by the Holy Spirit. We hope that you can join us to celebrate and Catch the Spirit on September 15th, and we also sincerely hope that you can help us sustain this Spirit throughout our upcoming year.

Catch and Hold the Spirit with us by:

- Walking with us as we live into our Open and Affirming Covenant.
- Offering daily prayers and uplift to our dedicated Settled Minister Search and Call Team.
- Joining in the many Ministry activities you will find described in this Spire.
- Offering your creativity and time to support our Ministries and considering yourself always invited to participate and share your ideas to make the Spirit come alive at First Congregational.
- Praying for the church staff, leadership, Vision Board, Ministry coordinators, and volunteers who are dedicating much energy to do God’s work.
- Sending grace and compassion to all involved in these many efforts to serve God.

We hope to see you at Catch the Spirit Sunday! There is much to look forward to...join us!

With the Grace and Peace of Christ,

Lori Folk-Barron & Greg Whitehouse, Co-Moderators



Message from the Minister of Music

Sept. 2024

Sept. 15 ***Catch-the-Spirit Sunday***

Before church at 9:30 am: "Jonah and the Whale " a short musical

After church, come catch your own whale (or big fish) in the music 'pond' on the green.

October 2024

Sat. Oct. 5 (after the rummage sale) at 2:00 p.m. "Blessing of the Animals" in the church parking lot. Bring your animals and critters (suitably housed) to be blessed. Our very own Praise Band will play.

November 2024

Nov. 17: 10:00 a.m. worship "Our Father: A Journey through the Lord's Prayer" by Pepper Choplin.

Most of you know this prayer well. We teach it to our children as soon as they are able to form the words. Many of us say the words in a habitual fashion.

Pepper Choplin has used the power of music to describe and explore the many facets and dimensions of this short, poignant prayer.

December 2024

Dec. 22, 2024 at Ashlar Village Auditorium A, B, and C

Sunday, 2:00 p.m. "Lessons and Carols" for the Residents of Ashlar Village, their families and friends and you, the congregation of First Church Wallingford

REHEARSALS SCHEDULED AS OF AUGUST 15, THE SPIRE DUE DATE

Chancel Choir: Wednesdays, 7:00-8:30 p.m. in progress

Handbell Choir: Thursdays, 6:30-8:00 p.m. starting August 29

Youth Choir: grades 4-8 Sundays, 11:30-a.m.-12:15 p.m. starting Sept. 22

Children's Choir: grades 1-3 Sundays, 11:15-11:45 starting Sept. 22

Cherub Choir: pre-school- kindergarten TBA

Praise Band TBA



September Worship

September 1 – Labor Day Sunday

September 8 – On Your Mark, Get Set, Get Ready

September 15 – Catch the Spirit Sunday

September 22 – Commissioning of Ministry Coordinators

September 29 – Bibles for our 2nd and 5th Graders

Worship Ministry Update.

SUNDAY SERVICE

- We will continue to hold our Sunday 10:00 a.m. Worship Service in Congregational Hall on September 1st and September 8th while our new audio system is being installed in the Sanctuary.
- If all goes as planned, we will return to the Sanctuary on Sunday, September 15th, which is **Catch the Spirit** Sunday.



Welcome Madison Torre!
Coordinator of Children and Youth Ministries



Madison is a recent graduate of the University of Connecticut, where she received her Bachelor's degree in English. She has been an active member of the FCCW community for many years, and looks forward to taking on this new role as children and youth coordinator!



Greetings and Blessings from the Settled Senior Pastor Search and Call Team!!

We have been meeting weekly throughout the summer. Each member of the team is deeply committed and invested in finding an outstanding person to lead our church.

We have been hard at work creating our Church Profile. The Profile is an official UCC document. It will be seen by prospective pastors to help them discern whether our church may be the right place for them. The profile is a snapshot of who we are as a church and who we want to become.

Creating the Church Profile is no small task!

We have been using information gathered through the Church-wide survey, casual conversations with members, as well as lively and at times difficult discussions among our team, to answer deep and challenging questions such as:

- *In a short paragraph, reflect on where your church is going and what it might look like when you get there.*
- *What do you need to get there?*
- *Who are you seeking to join you on this part of your church's faith journey?*
- *Describe how your vision of the minister you are now seeking will assist the congregation in making an impact beyond its walls.*

We have also met with Reverend Margaret Hoffmeister, from the Southern New England United Church of Christ, who is helping us to carefully craft our profile.

We are optimistic that the profile will be completed by the end of September and that it will be a beautiful lure to entice the most dazzling and amazing applicants!

Our team is keenly aware of the great gravity of our task. We sincerely appreciate the many well wishes, words of encouragement and prayers that we have received. Please keep them coming!! 😊

Celebrating 350 years of First Congregational Church!



The 350th Anniversary Team is hard at work planning events for the anniversary year which will be celebrated from January 2025 to December 2025. We have been thrilled by the interest and energy of our growing team of members and friends who have yet again offered their time, creativity, and organizational skills to celebrate all that is, has been, and will be wonderful about First Congregational Church. We can always use more helping hands to assist with planning, and we will need many hands on deck as celebratory events approach.

Here is how you can help now:

- Order a commemorative 350th Anniversary t-shirt on Catch the Spirit Sunday on 9/15/24 so you can celebrate in style and help us raise funds for our parties and events.
- Stay tuned for the 350th Anniversary Celebration “Calendar of Events” to be published soon.
- Be a participant in the 350th “Voices of Devotion” project which is described elsewhere in the Spire. Many voices and hearts are needed for this project. We hope you will participate!
- Watch for giving opportunities as the 350th Team publishes its “350th Anniversary Gift Registry” with items and initiatives that will help First Congregational move into the future.

Do you have questions, comments or ideas for the 350th Anniversary Team? Contact us at fcc350team@googlegroups.com.

Happy 350th!

Lori Folk-Barron & Greg Whitehouse, on behalf of the 350th Anniversary Team

RUMMAGE SALE

October 3rd, 4th, and 5th, 2024

Now that summer is winding down and school is back in session along with activities starting up, hopefully you have had a chance to relax, recharge, and enjoy some lazy, hazy days of summer.

Question is: **Are you ready for a REPEAT of our fabulous spring rummage sale??** Are you ready to do some serious fall cleaning of closets, cabinets, attics, and basements?? Are you ready to **love and help your neighbor** by donating some gently used clothing, linens, shoes, coats, pocketbooks, small household items, children's toys and stuffed animals?? As always, we greatly appreciate whatever you can give. **Donations will be accepted starting Sunday, September 15th. On Mondays through Fridays, they can be dropped off between the hours of 10:00 – 3:00.** Please **NO** furniture can be accepted.



Wouldn't it be terrific if we could equal or top our spring sale? Let's give it the good old college try!!

Help is needed with the following:

1. Setting up tables on Sunday, September 29th in Congregational Hall after coffee hour;
 2. Sorting donated items from Monday, September 30th through Wednesday, October 2nd from 9:00 to noon and 1:00-3:00;
 3. Working the sale floor on October 3 and 4, (hours 4:00-7:00) and 5 (hours 9:00 to noon);
 4. Breaking down the sale on Saturday, October 5th at noon.
- Please feel free to call Bernie Annunziata at 203-415-9809 if you have any questions or wish to volunteer your time. The fellowship is great!!

"Rock for a Cause"

SHELL SHOCK

Classic Rock
Concert
Fundraiser



Saturday * Sept. 21

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

23 South Main Street, Wallingford

Doors open 4:00 * Concert 5:00-8:00

Pizza, dessert & lemonade included

Ticket in advance \$15 and \$20 at the door

Family \$30 or \$40 at door * Seniors \$10 or \$15 at door

Tickets online, during coffee hour or call 203-265-1691





TAKE A FANTASTIC TRIP TO ROME AND THE AMALFI COAST

The First Congregational Church is sponsoring a 10-day trip to **Italy, April 1-10, 2025**. Highlights of this Collette adventure include Rome, Trevi Fountain, Pantheon, Piazza Navona, Colosseum, Montecassino, Amalfi Coast, Positano, Sorrento, Mozzarella-Making demonstration, Winery visit, Pompeii ruins, and more! This is a two-hotel stay: three nights in Rome and five nights in Amalfi. There are optional excursions to the Vatican, the Isle of Capri, as well as a pre-tour extension in Florence.

This tour not only offers a fabulous travel opportunity, it also is a fund-raising event. The First Congregational Church will receive a commission based on the number of travelers who participate. A limited number of seats has been reserved, and to hold our special reduced price, registrations should be made by October 1. This tour is not limited to members of our church. Invite your friends!

For full trip details and/or to register, visit
<https://gateway.gocollette.com/link/1272152>

Trip brochures are available in Congregational Hall. Stop by our display during the Catch the Spirit celebration on September 15. Questions? Contact Debby Voelker at debvoelker@sbcglobal.net





On June 9, 2024, members of the First Congregational Church of Wallingford voted to become an Open & Affirming congregation and adopted the following ONA Covenant

We, the faith community of the First Congregational Church of Wallingford, United Church of Christ, aspire to live by the wisdom of Christ’s teachings. At the heart of our vision and mission is a commitment to inclusivity and acceptance. We welcome everyone regardless of age; race; culture; sexual orientation; gender identity and expression; family configuration; economic circumstances; mental, physical, development, and emotional ability; and religious tradition.

Jesus Christ, in speaking to his disciples said this: “I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. “(John 13: 34).

As current disciples of Jesus, we commit to maintain a nurturing environment where all are loved, valued, and inspired to meaningful involvement in the life of the church. Jesus’ teachings of love and compassion call us to uplift each individual and celebrate our shared humanity, both within the sanctuary of this church and throughout the community in which we live and serve.

Diversity in our world is a gift from God which we celebrate. Guided by our Lord’s wisdom, we offer an authentic and loving welcome to all who seek a relationship with God, and we proclaim ourselves an Open and Affirming church.

Our work as an ONA Congregation needs to continue moving forward. In the upcoming year, the ONA committee will be providing information and planning activities that will help us learn about and embrace the diversity in our own community.

If you are interested in joining the ONA committee, please contact any committee member or Reverend Jeffers



FOOD DRIVE

Unity in Faith Food Drive

To benefit Master's Manna

September 28, 2024, 9 AM – 11 AM

Congregations and houses of worship across Wallingford are collaborating to hold a town wide food drive benefiting Master's Manna!

Donations of all types of non-perishable foods will be appreciated. All donations will be delivered to Master's Manna at the completion of the drive.

This will be a drive-thru, drop-off event at any of the following locations:

Church of the Resurrection, 131 Pond Hill Road

Faith Bible Church, 28 Chapel Street

First Baptist Church, 114 North Main Street

First Congregational Church, 23 South Main Street

First United Methodist Church, 941 Old Rock Hill Road

Grace & St John's Episcopal, 2927 Dixwell Ave, Hamden

Most Holy Trinity Parish, 68 North Colony Street

Our Lady of Fatima Campus, Most Holy Trinity Parish, 382 Hope Hill Road

St Paul's Episcopal Church, 65 North Main Street

Zion Lutheran Church, 235 Pond Hill Road

Special thanks to the Islamic Center of Wallingford for monetary support of the drive.

Questions? Please contact Kathy Wallace (203-745-9842) or Lori Folk-Barron (203-314-9885), Drive Coordinators, First Congregational Church.





Join Us for Fall Bible Study!

Our Fall Bible Study will begin Tuesday, October 8, in the Guild Room from 7-8 pm. Our study will be all about prayer. The Rev. Charlene Bruce leads this study. To learn more contact Charlene at charlenebruce@sbcglobal.net



Save the Date for a

Women's Fellowship Breakfast

Saturday, September 21, 2024

9-11 AM

Location and presenter TBD. Watch for more details!

MISSION MONEY AT WORK



As the scripture says: "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." Matthew 5:14-16

Your mission team was at work this spring and summer using your mission money to support organizations and spread our values. We supported a broad spectrum of organizations engaged with immigrants, disabled, LGBTQ+, homeless, food insecure, cancer patients, addiction, school bullying and international relief. We continue to *donate* internationally, nationally, locally and within our church community while keeping our mission and values in mind. In May, we participated in The Great Give held by The United Way of Greater New Haven. During this 36 hour event over \$3.8 million dollars was donated to over 549 organizations. We felt strongly about the mission of the organizations we selected and also having our church participate in the philanthropic effort. The donations made are included with other donations made below:

Supporting our world & church

BAWA – Bawa Health Initiative is established for the purpose of reducing the prevalence of endemic diseases in the village of Bawa, Cameroon and other neighboring villages. Their goals are to treat, empower, and educate through interventions, collaboration, and ongoing research. We donated \$500..

All Hands and Hearts – They are a community-inspired, volunteer powered disaster relief organization. With the dramatic weather in our country, we decided to support the cause. We donated \$250.

Supporting our country

Rachel's Challenge - This nonprofit organization addresses the root causes of school violence, bullying, prejudice, and self-harm through student wellness programs that build connection, hope and resilience.. We donated \$250.

Open & Affirming Coalition - The Open and Affirming Coalition of the United Church of Christ advocates for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community, and equips UCC congregations to become effective witnesses to Christ's extravagant welcome. This organization provided our church and other church with resources. We donated \$500

A Kinder Ground Inc. – A nonprofit organization working diligently to raise funds in order to open a small café where young adults who are differently-abled can develop their job, social and educational skills in a supportive environment. As part of The Great Give we donated \$104.92.

Havenly, Inc. – A nonprofit assisting refugee and immigrant women through job training, education and organizing. As part of The Great Give we donated \$104.92.

Tricircle Corporation – A nonprofit organization that provides resources for individuals, families, and communities affected by the disease of addiction.

Through education and community engagement, it is dedicated to providing the tools that build strong futures. As part of The Great Give we donated \$104.92 as part of The Great Give and another \$250 in August.

Supporting our local community

Wallingford Community Dinners – The Wallingford Community Dinner is now a separate 501(c)(3) organization continuing to serve holiday meals to those in need or alone in our community. As part of the Great Give we donated \$ 104.92. (Special note – board members of the organization were not involved in the decision to donate any money.)

Wallingford Public Library. – The Wallingford Racial Justice Team, in partnership with Wallingford Public Library and other community-based organizations and local venues, is hosting an initiative called The Wallingford Table in which residents of all ages, races, ethnicities, identities, abilities, and socioeconomic backgrounds are invited to have a seat at the table. Through this program series, participants will have the opportunity to share traditions, build personal connections, and experience Wallingford as a warm and welcoming community. As part of The Great Give we donated \$104.92.

Grace & Saint John’s Church – The mission of The Wallingford Table is to foster intentional dialogue between the diverse communities of the Town of Wallingford through culinary experiences. We believe that bringing people together to share a meal is fundamental to breaking down barriers, building new friendships, and celebrating the unique aspects of our many cultures. Food is part of the human experience and an essential tool for building community. By engaging each other through it, we hope to start conversations about inclusivity, equity, sustainability, and multiculturalism that will help us better understand one another and the impact we have on the land we call home. As part of The Great Give we donated \$104.92 to support their meal program.

The Sister’s Project – A local organization committed to raising funds to help cancer patients and their families. As part of The Great Give we donated \$104.92.

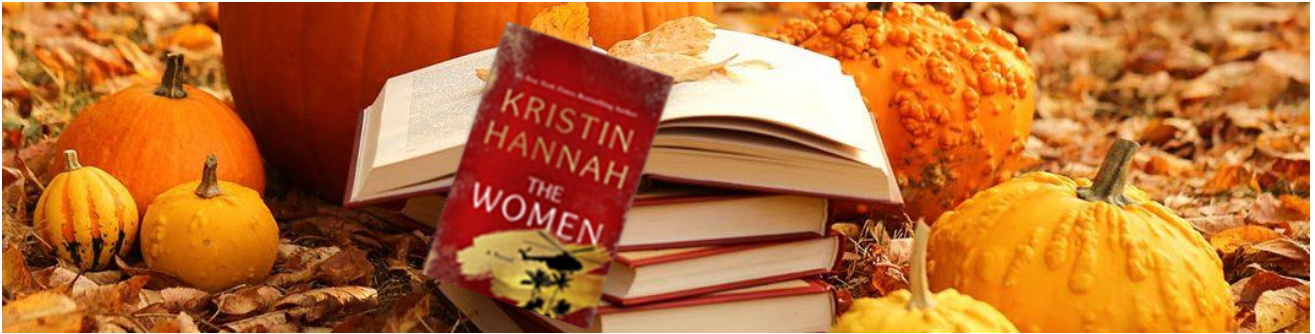
Master’s Mana – This organization is essential to meeting the needs of the homeless, near homeless, low to moderate income families and those facing food insecurity in the local Wallingford/Meriden community. While we have held many monthly drives to donate items, we felt it important to make a monetary donation of \$250.

Chrysalis Center – This organization provides supportive services to assist people in need to transform their lives. Founded in 1975 to provide critical support services to adults living in poverty who struggled with mental illness to help them live as independently as possible in the community It has expanded to help individuals living below the poverty level and struggling with food insecurity, dealing with substance abuse, HIV/AIDS, release from incarceration and homelessness through case management, community employment services, community supportive housing, recovery services and affordable housing. We donated \$400

No Kid Hungry (Share Our Strength)- No Kid Hungry is a campaign of Share Our Strength, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that believes all children and families deserve to live free from hunger and poverty. Your gift will be used to help support Share Our Strength’s comprehensive strategies and initiatives to end childhood hunger. We donated \$250.

If anyone would like to participate on our Mission Distribution Team, we typically meet the first Wednesday of the month at 5:30 by Zoom. Please contact Mary Antonetti, Kathy Wallace or Lori Folk-Barron for log in information.

Book Club News



Our new book is “The Women “ by Kristen Hannah.

We are meeting on Tuesday September 24 at 6:30 in the Guild Room. This is a big best seller to kick off our program year!

Hope to see everyone there.



A new member class is forming! New members will be received into the church Sunday, November 10 at the 10 am service. In preparation for membership two classes will be offered. The first is September 29 from 11:30-12:30 in the Guild Room. Bob Westervelt will describe the rich history of the First Congregational Church of Wallingford. Ken Minkema will offer an introduction to Congregationalism and the United Church of Christ on October 20, 11:30-12:30. Prospective members, members, and friends of FCCW are cordially invited to attend.

The First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ

23 South Main Street, Wallingford, CT 06492

Church telephone: (203) 265-1691

Church Office Hours: Tues.– Fri. - 9:00am – 2:00pm

Email: officemanager@firstchurchwlfld.org (office)

pastormeredith@firstchurchwlfld.org (pastor)

gross7jeanette1@gmail.com (Minister of Music)

Website: www.firstchurchwallingford.org

First Congregational Church of Wallingford

2024 - 2025 Vision Board Officers and Ministries Coordinators

	First	Last	Phone	email
Moderator:	Lori	Folk- Barron	203-314-9885	lorifolkbarron@gmail.com
Moderator:	Greg	Whitehouse	203-909-1027	gkwhitehouse@snet.net
Treasurer:	Leslie	Spiars	203-600-8043	leslie36@snet.net
Clerk:	Kathy	Filkins	203-641-7107	kathyfbooks@gmail.com
Worship Ministry Coordinators				
	Bob	Westervelt	203-218-9537	bob-lorraine@optimum.net
	Dawn	Charron	401-309-8763	pewabba@yahoo.com
	Ken	Minkema	203-507-4896	ken.minkema@yale.edu
	Debby	Voelker	203-710-1550	debvoelker@sbcglobal.com
	Sarah	Mather	203-605-7313	Sarah.mather.23@gmail.com
Faith Formation Ministry Coordinators				
	Amanda	Nesto	203-415-2762	amanda_nesto@yahoo.com
	Gina	Phillips	203-605-8008	kit310810@att.net
	Robin	Davies	203-379-6735	dav111@snet.net
	Lorraine	Westervelt	203-257-6964	bob-lorraine@optimum.net
Membership Ministry Coordinators				
	Russ	Hinckley	203-889-7789	rhinckley9@gmail.com
	Lori	Fast-Minkema	203-444-5724	thinkfastmink@gmail.com
	Tina	Caldwell	860-995-5744	tina.caldwell520@gmail.com
	Jolene	Pope	203-514-1789	Jp614u01@gmail.com
	Beth	Whitner	203-507-4646	imetasequoia@gmail.com
Congregational Care Ministry Coordinators				
	Rev. Charlene	Bruce	203-503-8379	charlenebruce@sbcglobal.net
	Cheryl	Naski	203-996-7467	cnaski@hotmail.com
	Cliff	Castellano	475-227-1110	cliffc45@yahoo.com
	Joan	Bushey	203-444-1900	joan37b@gmail.com
	Ann	Gygax	203-269-6493	annbobgygax@gmail.com
Mission And Outreach Ministry Coordinators				
	David	Wells	203-599-5422	detawells@sbcglobal.net
	Erica	Haddad	203-494-9768	ejhaddad5@gmail.com
	Michele	Tarantino	203-228-7461	cheleot@yahoo.com
	Mary	Antonetti	203-887-7597	maryantonetti@gmail.com
Administration Ministry Coordinators				
	Kathy	Wallace	203-745-9842	kathywacct@gmail.com
	Matt	Bushey	203-433-7327	m7bushey@gmail.com
	Mike	Savenelli	203-996-0338	mikesavsr@gmail.com
	Steve	Perkowski	203-710-5785	sperkowski@snet.net
	Millie	Kabel	203-600-9268	Kabellmillie141604@yahoo.com
Delegates to the Association				
	Rev. Charlene	Bruce	203-503-8379	charlenebruce@sbcglobal.net
	Susan	Phipps	203-623-4992	snphipp@me.com

17th First Congregational Church Golf Tournament



Picture from 2023

Saturday, October 26, 2024

Tee off at 9:00 am at Miner Hills Family Golf
80 Miner Hills Drive, Middletown, CT
Raindate: Sunday, October 27 at 1pm

9 Hole Golf Tournament Scramble Format

Lots of fun for people of all ages and abilities
Sign up as a team or join up and make new friends.

Adult \$25; Juniors \$20

Includes: Green Fees, Prizes, Picnic, fun, friends, and a great cause!

Profits to benefit the Breast Cancer Research Foundation & The Family Life Fund
Electric or pull cart rentals are available but are an extra cost to the golfer.

Prizes: Low gross Team * Closest to the Pin * Closest to the Line * Longest Drive

GOLFERS Team Member 1 Name: _____ cell # _____

Team Member 2 Name: _____ Team Member 3 Name: _____

Team Member 4 Name: _____

HOLE SPONSOR (\$30.00):

All proceeds from hole sponsorships will go to Support Breast Cancer Research

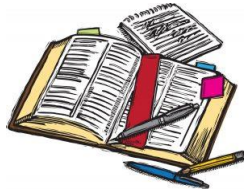
In Memory / Honor of _____ By: _____

Checks should be payable to First Congregational Church - Wallingford

Or sign up, sponsor or donate through the church website

Questions (203) 257-6964





Join the 350th “Voices of Devotion” Project!

As one of the many ways we will be celebrating the 350th Anniversary of the First Congregational Church in 2025, the 350th Anniversary Team has proposed a “Voices of Devotion” Project. Modeled after the Upper Room devotionals that so many of us know and use for our daily devotional time, we are seeking devotionals written by past, present and (hopefully) future members and friends of FCC. We have set an ambitious goal of compiling 350 devotionals, one for each year of our anniversary. To achieve this, we need your help and contribution.

We know that some may find the idea of writing a public devotional to be intimidating, but we want to remind you that the purpose of this project is to celebrate the many voices that have and do worship God at First Congregational Church. We are not looking for New York Times bestselling authors to write these pieces. We are looking for YOU, the heart and soul and history of FCC, to lend your voice and offer a devotion that speaks from your heart.

Offering some guidance from *The Upper Room* may be helpful as you consider your involvement in this project. In the July-August 2024 Upper Room (pp. 40-41), Andrew Garland Breeden offers the following advice for writing a devotional:

“If you are concerned that your story isn’t exciting, glamorous, or interesting enough, don’t worry. Write from your heart. Stories about everyday experiences make wonderful meditations. Some of my most memorable and meaningful spiritual insights have occurred on an afternoon hike, during an interaction with a stranger, or while reading scripture. Here are some questions to help you get started. Can you think of a small, ordinary experience from your life that has ultimately had a significant effect on your spiritual journey and strengthened your relationship with God? What was the experience? How and why did it affect you so profoundly? What story or passage from scripture do you connect with your experience? What did your experience teach you about yourself, and what did it teach you about God? What do you want other people to learn from it? Can you answer these questions?” If you can, YOU are the right contributor to our “Voices of Devotion” project.

To create your devotional: Choose a Bible scripture that speaks to you or connects to the story you have to tell. Describe your story and how it relates to the scripture. Describe how you apply this story and its spiritual truth to your life. How do you hope others might apply it to theirs?

We pray you say YES to participating in this project. If you do, please use the attached form to submit your devotion. The “Voices of Devotion” team members will be in touch to confirm the receipt of your submission. If you do not hear from us, please assume we have not received it, and contact us at fcc350devotionproject@googlegroups.com. We are setting an initial deadline of 12/1/2024 for submissions.

With joyful voices,

Lori Folk-Barron, Bernie Annunziata, Marsha Mather, and Bob Westervelt

“Voices of Devotion” Submission

Name: _____

(as you wish it to appear in the devotional booklet)

Email Address: _____ Phone: _____

Title: _____

Quoted Scripture: _____

Quoted Scripture Citation: (e.g., Jeremiah 29:11-14) _____

Devotional Text: (up to 500 words) *Please handwrite or type below or attach separate page.*

Prayer:

Please submit devotional by email to fcc350devotionproject@googlegroups.com or mail to “Voices of Devotion” Project, First Congregational Church, 23 South Main Street, Wallingford, CT 06492.



We Would Like to Be There When You Need Us!

We would like to be there when you need us. Sometimes, things happen in life leading to someone needing special care – the loss of a loved one, a hospitalization, a nursing home stay, a prolonged illness, an unsettling life transition, becoming homebound... If you are in need of care or would like to be added to the Prayer List, please call Pastor Meredith at 914 255-1690 or the church office at 203 265-1691. They will share your request with the Visitation Team Coordinators Charlene Bruce and Cliff Castellano. If you would like to be a visitor and join the Visitation Team, contact Charlene at charlenebruce@sbcglobal.net or Cliff at cliffc45@yahoo.com



As many of you may or may not know, we have been providing meals to some members of our church family, who through various circumstances, are receptive to having a meal delivered to them. If you know of someone in our church, who either on a short or long term basis, could benefit from a delicious dinner, please let us know. Also, if you wish to have your name added to our list of folks who have volunteered to make a meal, please let us know. We'd be happy to have you join us!

Helping Hands is just one of many "behind the scenes" groups within our congregation that provides comfort and support to our fellow brothers and sisters.

If there is a need or if you are willing to cook, please contact either Louise Zemina at 203-988-2517 or Bernie Annunziata at 203-415-9809.



Do you have a loved one, a friend, an acquaintance with health, family, personal issues? The Prayer Shawl ministry creates beautiful comforting shawls, lap robes, and blankets for you to give to your loved ones in need. There is always a selection appropriate for men, women, children, parents, caregivers. We have a variety of colors and sizes for you to give. Please ask one of the Care Team (Charlene Bruce, Cheryl Naski, Cliff Castellano, Joan Bushey and Ann Gygax), Pastor Meredith or Kathy Janis for a shawl. All are created by loving hands, blessed in our group and just waiting to give to someone in need of that loving touch, that reminder that they are cared for and cared about through whatever is going on in their lives.

We also create all the Baptismal blankets that are given to each child baptized in our church. Please consider asking for a special blanket for a child in need. Again, we have many sizes, colors and patterns for any child. Perhaps a parent who needs a Prayer Shawl and a special blanket for their child?

Please call or text Kathy Janis 203-376-1173 or email kathrynmjanis@gmail.com with any questions or requests.



A Message from the Flower Team

We are in need of altar flower sponsors for these upcoming dates. Please sign up in the Narthex or email Lori (lorifolkbarron@gmail.com).

September 8

September 22

Direct donations to the Flower Fund are always appreciated to allow us to place flowers on the altar on those weeks when we do not have sponsors, to help provide holiday flowers to our homebound members, to provide flowers to our baptismal families, and for special occasions. Thank you!



The ministry of ushering is a crucial part of worship because it is one of the most visible ministries in the church, nevertheless the usher performs a major role in ensuring that people see and experience that.

People feel invited to serve the church through a welcoming ministry. The church usher duties can be summed up in a few words – making people feel welcome at church, assisting the Pastor with people management, assisting with seating,

collecting offering, and maintaining a safe environment. Currently, we have five rotating teams. Usher teams are only needed no more than once a month.

If you are interested in joining the ushering ministry, please contact Tony Annunziata at (203) 500-9542

*Thank
You*

Dear Scholarship Committee and Church Members,

Thank you for awarding this generous scholarship. This scholarship will help me pursue my love of astronomy and theater. I am so happy to be a member of this church and honored to have such an amazing and supportive church community in my life.

Warmest Regards,
Sydney Drumheller
Lyman Hall Class of 2024

Baptisms



Caleb Jeffrey Deninger was baptized June 8, 2024. Matthew was born July 8, 2023. He is the son of Heather Velazquez and Lee Deninger. Caleb is the brother of Lucas and Abigail Deninger.

Blake Joanne Kito was baptized June 8, 2024. Blake was born December 10, 2023. She is the daughter of Tori and Ben Kito and the sister of Ben Kito.

Zahra McFadden was baptized July 14, 2024. Zarha, born September 29, 2023 is the daughter of Lida and Perry Mc Fadden, and the sister of Luna McFadden.

Welcome to the newest members of Christ's Church!



Our sympathy is extended to the family and friends of Ellen Jacke who passed away June 1, 2024. She passed at home surrounded by family. A service celebrating her life was held at Ashlar Village June 27.

Our sympathy is extended to the family and friends of Jean Haley who passed away July 20, 2024. She was a longtime resident of Ashlar Village. A service celebrating her life was held at Ashlar Village August 1.

First Congregational Church of
Wallingford
23 South Main St
Wallingford, CT 06492

*The next Spire will be
published in October 2024.
Spire submission deadline for
the October Issue is
September 15th.*

Email the church office at :
officemanager@firstchurchwfd.org

