



**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. - 9:30am – 1:00pm

Email: officemanager@firstchurchwlfld.org (office)

Website: www.firstchurchwallingford.org

OPEN AND AFFIRMING COVENANT

We welcome everyone regardless of age; race; culture; sexual orientation; gender identity and expression; family configuration; economic circumstance; mental, physical, developmental, and emotional ability; and religious tradition.

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.

Diversity in our world is a gift from God which we celebrate.

A horizontal row of black silhouettes of people of various ages and abilities holding hands. From left to right: a man, a woman, a young child, a man, a woman, a young child, a person in a wheelchair, a woman, a man, a woman, a man, and a young child. They are all holding hands, symbolizing unity and support.

Table of Contents

Art Show	10
Baptism	27
Bible Study	15
Book Club	15
Chili Cookoff and Square Dance	9
Christmas Card Connection	8
Christmas Fair	17
Christmas Wreath Order Form	18
Congregational Care	26
Cooke Tavern Soup Scholarship Fundraiser	14
Faith Formation News	7
Golf Tournament Thanks.....	25
Hanging of the Greens	12
Helping Hands	26
Invitation to Jeff Birch's Ordination	11
Message from the Interim Minister	4
Message from the Minister of Music	5
Message from the Moderators	6
Ministry Descriptions and Coordinators	22
Mission Funds Distribution	21
Neighbors in Need Offering	26
November Worship Preview.....	5
ONA Statement	2
Poinsettia Order Form	19
Prayer Shawl Ministry	27
Registry 350 th Anniversary Gifts	24
Rummage Sale Thanks	25
Thanksgiving Potluck	12
Thanksgiving Scavenger Hunt	13
Ushers/Greeters Info	27
Vision and Mission Statement	1
Voices of Devotion	16
Wallingford Workcamp	20
Women's Fellowship Breakfast	15

A Message From the Interim Minister



*Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you Lord for everything I can see:
Like bright colors in an autumn tree: happy birds flying free: all the happy people when they
smile at me. Thank you, thank you, my Lord!*

*Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you Lord for everything I can do:
Like jump jumping like a kangaroo; passing Math, English too; helping mother or a neighbor
just like you. Thank you, thank you, my Lord!*

*Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you Lord for everything I can be:
A true servant of humanity; loving God faithfully; for this daily faithful opportunity. Thank you,
thank you, my Lord!*

*November is my favorite month. It is a month where my focus is on Doxology. On singing
praise. While the commercial world started Halloween in July and Christmas in September, it
seems like the commercial world just skips over Thanksgiving all together. I prefer not to do
that. I prefer to sing my songs of praise loudly and with gusto, long before November, even if it
embarrasses my children.*

*The Doxology above is one of the first I ever learned. It was a simple song written by Avery and
Marsh, but as a child it helped me to understand that there are so many things to be thankful
for. Wind, bright colors, opportunities, sounds, motion. Thanksgiving is so much more than
turkey and special side dishes. Thanksgiving is a state of mind and of being.*

*What songs of praise do you sing? Praise God from whom all blessings flow? Now thank we all
our God? Give thanks? Hallelujah? God of Grace and God of Glory? What are your favorite
songs of praise?*

*Don't skip the opportunity to give thanks! Count your many blessings, name them one by one!
Live November with an attitude of gratitude and see how different your life might be. God's
love, grace, and opportunities are boundless. In response, let your heart and tongue be filled
with thanksgiving and praise! And if you need a Doxology play list, call me!*

Thanksgiving blessings to you all!

***November is still my favorite month and Thanksgiving is still my favorite holiday, so if this
message sounds familiar, you have a good memory! This is a reprint of my message from 2024.*

Message from the Minister of Music

The 350th celebration concert was a great success! On Friday night, Oct. 17th, we had multiple music groups, singers, and instrumentalists all joining together to celebrate our big anniversary. There was a wonderful reception afterwards. This was the culmination of months of planning and rehearsals by Jeanette and the music team.



Stay tuned for what we'll be doing in the Christmas season.



November Worship

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| November 2 | Communion
All Saints Sunday – Remembering Those Who Have Died in the Last Year
The Beatitudes – Blessed Are You |
| November 9 | Reception of New Members
A Recipe for Peace |
| November 16 | Dancing with God |
| November 23 | Thanksgiving Sunday
Thanksgiving Potluck |
| November 30 | First Sunday of Advent – Hope
From Generation to Generation |

A photograph of a basket filled with various pumpkins and gourds, including orange pumpkins, green gourds, and a large yellow squash, set against a light-colored wooden fence. The title "A Message from the Moderators" is superimposed in a black, italicized serif font over the top half of the image.

A Message from the Moderators

Dear Members and Friends of the First Congregational Church,

It is hard to believe that the 350th anniversary year is in its last 2 months and that the Thanksgiving season is upon us. But both circumstances remind us as moderators that we have much to be thankful for. First, we look back with gratitude on those 30 men, 31 women and 40 young children who came here from New Haven in 1670. They must have experienced hardships beyond our imagination but, within 5 years, they had started what became the foundation of the First Congregational Church in Wallingford. We are also thankful for the dedication and devotion of the succeeding generations of church members and the guidance of the 18 ministers that continued the church's spiritual journey that has brought us to the present day.

Our gratitude to the generations who have come before notwithstanding, we are most thankful for each and every person who is part of our current church family. We want to express our deep appreciation for the faithfulness, support and generosity of each of you. It is only with the contributions of your time, talents, and treasure throughout the year that we are able to bring the Vision and Mission statements of the First Congregational Church to life in the world around us. This Thanksgiving we uplift special acknowledgment and gratitude to all the members of the Settled Minister Search and Call Team who, after many months of thoughtful and dedicated work, presented us with Jeff Birch who we voted to call as our next Settled Minister. What a joy it was to watch him weave his ribbon into the congregational tapestry that we had created the previous Sunday!

Just as those early members of our church had many obstacles to overcome, we still seek inspiration every day to move forward in the world that surrounds us with God's guidance, following the lessons given to us in Christ's teaching to share the good news of the gospel. Psalm 100:5 reminds us: "God is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations." And, when Thomas said to Jesus in John: 14, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" Jesus responded, "I am the way and the truth and the life." We look forward to continuing our journey in faith with you. Let us step into the remaining months of our 350th year and beyond with gratitude, hope, and anticipation!

Yours in Christ,
Greg Whitehouse and Lori Folk- Barron
Co-Moderators



Faith Formation News

Are you interested in helping to educate our children and young people? We are looking for volunteers to be substitutes, as well as anyone interested in joining a teaching rotation. Our substitutes will remain on an “on-call” list for the entirety of the school year in the event that one of our teachers calls out or has a conflict. Our rotating teachers follow a shared teaching schedule that would allow for a smaller commitment than a consistent, weekly lead

teacher, while still giving the opportunity to work with the same students throughout the year, alongside other teachers. We are in need of help at all grade levels from Pre-K through 8th grade. We thank you in advance for your consideration! Please contact us at

fccwfaithformation@gmail.com.

For parents who wish to enroll their children use this QR code



YOUTH GROUP SCHEDULE	
FOR ALL STUDENTS IN 6TH - 12TH GRADE!	
DATE	ACTIVITY
OCTOBER 19TH 5:00 - 6:30 P.M.	KICK OFF PARTY! (DINNER IS INCLUDED)
NOVEMBER 9TH TIME TBD	POTENTIAL YOUTH GROUP WITH OTHER CHURCHES
NOVEMBER 23RD 2:00 - 5:00 P.M.	THANKSGIVING SCAVENGER HUNT
DECEMBER 14TH 5:00 - 7:00 P.M.	RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS

We are pleased to announce that Kayla Perkowski has kindly agreed to lead the Youth Group on a temporary basis until a new person is hired. However, a team of adults, both males and females, is needed to help with that group. Please consider volunteering. We are looking forward to our continued partnership with The First Baptist Church and Saint Paul’s Episcopal Church, as well as our own meetings throughout the year.

Seeking a Director of Church School and Youth Ministry

First Congregational Church in Wallingford, Connecticut is a vibrant, inclusive, and welcoming community. The candidate filling this part time role of Director of Church School and Youth Ministry will be an important part of the First Congregational Church's Faith Formation Ministry. The position is about 12 hours a week and includes programming for grades PreK-8th, and Middle & High School Youth Groups. They will be an integral part of First Congregational Church's mission to reach our community with the love of Jesus. This individual will collaborate with the other First Congregational's staff members and ministries.

Qualifications for this position include:

- Self-Motivated with ability to work independently.
- Passion for working with youth.
- Utilize creativity and fun to enhance curriculum and programs.
- High school degree required. BS degree or equivalent preferred.
- One to two years minimum experience preferred.

Interested candidates should send a cover letter, resume, and professional references to Robin Davies at robin.davies419@gmail.com

CHRISTMAS CARD CONNECTION 2025

Our 6th year!!

After 5 joyful and meaningful years, Sandy Weekes passed the pen to Denise Castellano to lead the Christmas Card Connection, a holiday ministry of sending special holiday greetings to people in our church that are Sealed with Love.



Thursdays - November 13 & 20 - 10am -11:30am in the Guild Room

Please plan on coming for this fun, chatty short time and *make a difference* by addressing and signing some cards. All cards and envelopes, return address stamp, stamps and some pens will be provided.

Questions? Call Denise Castellano 203-804-2386



Chili Cook Off and Square Dance

**Saturday • November 1
4:30 – 7:00
Congregational Hall**

Everyone gets to taste each chili entry
and vote for their favorite!



**Cooks, Tasters & Dancers wanted!
Fun for all ages – no experience needed
Come kick up your heels**

Professional square dance caller Russ Tietjen will be helping us learn to dance!

**Free Will Donation will be collected
In addition to the chili, mac n' cheese, salad and beverages will be served.**

Competitor notes: Bring a crock pot full of any kind of homemade chili to be part of a judging by everyone who attends. Arrive before 4:30, plug in and keep your chili warm. Give your chili a name. For allergy concerns, bring a printed list of ingredients.

Trophies awarded for “Adults Choice” and “Kids Choice”



Exodus 35:31-32

And he has filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, with intelligence, with knowledge, and with all craftsmanship, to devise artistic designs, to work in gold and silver and bronze.

- **This is the time to gather some wonderful artwork to display in the church art show! “Art” includes photography projects, craft projects, etc.**
- **This is a multi-generational display of our congregation’s artwork for our 350th celebration year!! Please invite your family & friends are welcome to show their artwork too!**
- ***Drop off to a designated area of Congregational Hall on Sunday, Nov. 2 and the work will be on display on***

Sunday, November 9th

- ***Pick up your art work on Monday, Nov. 10th between 3:00 – 5:30 p.m. or at coffee hour on Sunday, Nov. 16th***



I’m trying to give people time to create something or put things aside as artwork comes home with your children! Please label with family name & artist’s name.

Questions? Please email Pam Perkowski at pperkowski@myhts-wallingford.org



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

PLEASE JOIN US FOR THE ORDINATION TO
CHRISTIAN MINISTRY OF

Jeffrey Birch

ESSEX CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

6 Methodist Hill

Essex, Connecticut 06426

November 16, 2025
2:00 pm

Clergy are invited to robe. Color of the day is
RED.

Refreshments to follow.

RSVP if attending - neutron@prodigy.net

Come Ye Thankful People Come!



Sunday, November 23 11:15 am
Congregational Hall

Ham provided

***Please Bring a Generous Portion of Your
Favorite Thanksgiving Side Dish or Dessert
(Think BIG Family)***

Please sign up with Family Name, Number attending, and What You will be bringing
by Calling the Church (203) 265-1691, Emailing Pastor Meredith

pastormeredith@firstchurchwlfld.org or signing up in Congregational Hall

Sponsored by Worship Ministry



Join Us for a Hanging of the Greens Breakfast!

Saturday, November 29 9 AM

Christmas is a special time of year to celebrate family and the birth of Christ.

You are invited to join us as we prepare the sanctuary for the Advent season.

We will hang wreaths, put up the garland and decorate the Christmas tree after enjoying a fellowship breakfast in Congregational Hall starting at 9 AM. The breakfast is sponsored by the Fellowship Events Team, and a free will offering will be taken to offset the breakfast costs.

Join us for this morning of fellowship with your church family!

We look forward to seeing you!



THANKSGIVING SCAVENGER HUNT

The Youth Groups will be conducting their Annual Thanksgiving Scavenger Hunt on Sunday, November 23rd from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. Your generosity will make a difference for families in our community. Thanksgiving Baskets will be distributed through the Department of Children and Families social workers. Additional non-perishable foods and turkeys will be donated to the Thanksgiving Community Dinner, Holiday for Giving, and Master's Manna. This activity is brought to you by the Faith Formation Ministry and the Monthly Donation Drive Team.

You can help in two ways:

- 1) You can set aside items that will be picked up on November 23rd
- 2) You can participate as an adult driver!

=====

YES, I want to help with this special youth group activity!! Fill out the information below and put it in the collection plate or give it to Kayla Perkowski. There is also a basket to drop off completed forms located in the office. Thank you!!

[] I will have items that can be picked up at my home on 11/23 (2 – 5 p.m.)

[] I can help with transportation for this activity.

Name _____ Telephone # : _____

Address _____

Items to collect

Turkey	Candy	Soup
Frozen Pie	Beef Stew	Tuna Fish
Potatoes	Crackers	Macaroni & Cheese
Sweet Potatoes/Yams	Cereal (Hot & Cold)	Pudding
Canned Fruit/ Veggies	Fruit Juice	Reusable Grocery Bag
Rice/ Instant Potatoes	Stuffing Mix	Baby Food*
Gravy/ Gravy Mix	Cranberry Sauce	*No Infant Formula Please
Olives/ Pickles	Peanut Butter	
After Dinner Mints	Jelly/ Jam	

Cooke Tavern Soups

Annual Fundraiser to benefit the FCC Scholarship Fund

How can I order these great soups?

IN PERSON: We will be downstairs in
Congregational Hall after worship on
October 19 and 26 and November 9.

Cash or check

Delivery before Christmas!

Questions?
Contact Karen Blakeslee
203-589-8633
k.blakeslee@sbcglobal.net



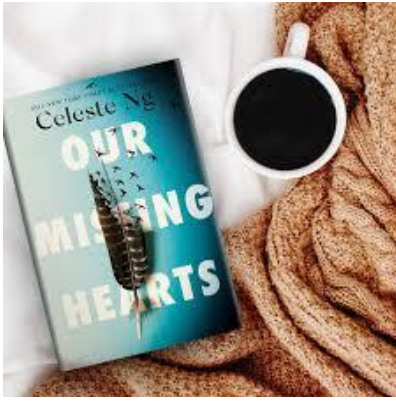
Autumn Harvest Pumpkin Lentil	🌱
Barn Raising Country Vegetable	
Blacksmith's Black Bean Chili	🌱
Candlelight Corn Chowder	🌱
Colonel Maxwell's Minestrone	
Colonial Broccoli Cheddar Chowder	
Farmer Al's Tomato Basil Bisque	🌱
Fireside Supper Bean	
Henna Marie's Potato & Cheese	🌱
Mi Madre Maria's Chicken Tortilla	🌱
Peter Piper Stuffed Pepper NEW!	🌱
Ten Shilling Sherried Mushroom	🌱
Voila French Onion	🌱
Yankee Doodle Chicken Noodle	

\$9.50 each



All are free from preservatives and artificial flavoring. Each soup mix
makes a generous 2 quarts by adding just a few fresh ingredients.

Book Club News



The November book is “Our Missing Hearts” by Celeste Ng.
“Riveting, tender, and timely.” People Magazine

Remember for November we are meeting on the
18th due to the Thanksgiving holiday.

Hope to see everyone at 6:30 in The Guild Room.

Copies of this season’s books are available in the church library.

Women’s Fellowship Breakfast

Saturday, November 22, 2025
9-11 AM

We would love to have you join us.
Please bring some breakfast food to share.
At Denise Castelleno’s Home
RSVP to Lori Folk-Barron at
lorifolkbarron@gmail.com



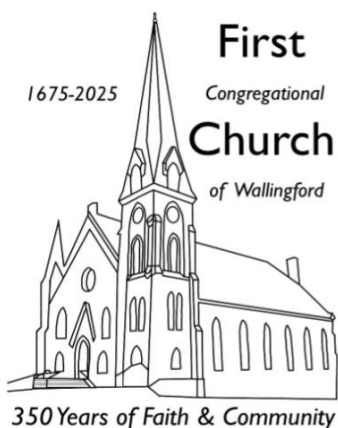
Bible Study

Join us on Tuesday evening at 5:30pm



Have you ever wondered why we sing what we do in church? Did you know there is a tie between **theology** (the study of the nature of God and religious belief) and worship, especially **hymns**? Did you know that hymn writers are some of the best theologians? Are you curious?

Information: Charlene Bruce 203-503-8379 or charlenebruce@sbcglobal.net.



We Need You for the 350th “Voices of Devotion” Project!

We are celebrating the 350th Anniversary of First Congregational Church in 2025 with the “Voices of Devotion” Project. Modeled after the Upper Room devotionals that many of us use for our daily devotional time, we are seeking devotionals written by members and friends of FCC. Since January 2025, we have been publishing submitted devotions on a weekly basis via email, and we intend to publish all of the devotions in booklet form at the end of the anniversary year. We hope you have been enjoying these weekly devotions that share the faith and God moments experienced by fellow members of our church family.

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 worshipped God at First Congregational Church. We are looking for YOU, the heart, soul, and history of FCC, to lend your voice and offer a devotion that speaks from your heart. Write about an experience, large or small, that told you God is near. Write about an event, a memory, a trial, a person, a meaningful piece of scripture - anything that brought your heart closer to God or reminded you that the Holy Spirit was and is a force in your life.

Thank you to all who have already contributed a devotional. **We are now reaching a critical point where we need anyone who has been considering writing to send their devotional. Without approximately 10 additional submissions, we will not be able to continue the weekly devotionals through 2025.** Please use the attached form to submit your devotion. The “Voices of Devotion” team members will confirm the receipt of your submission. If you have submitted your devotion and did not receive confirmation or received a “rejected email message,” please assume we have not received it, and contact us at fcc350devotionproject@googlegroups.com or at lorifolkbarron@gmail.com. You can also enter your devotional using the Google sheet at this [link](#)

We are accepting submissions on a rolling basis. Please feel free to submit more than one devotional if you have more than one story to tell!

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 or attach separate page.*

Christmas Fair

First weekend in December

Friday - December 5th

5:00 - 8:00 during the Stroll

Outside Hot Dogs, Hot Cider &
Hot Chocolate

Inside Fair Booths Open
Spaghetti Dinner



Saturday - December 6th

Booths open 9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Booths and Cookie Walk Open

Breakfast: 9:00 to 10:00 am

Lunch: 11:30 am to 1:30 pm

Crafts Workshops Times *Come and enjoy one hour of fun & fellowship!*



All are welcome to help with the project of the day!

Many hands of any/no skill are needed.

Sundays:

November 2, 16 & 30 after church

Thursday: **Nov. 6** at 10am

Monday: **Nov. 10** at 10am

Saturday: **Nov. 15** at 10am

Friday: **Nov. 28** at 10am

Crafting at Home We are delighted that many are handcrafting fair items at home!!

Donations Request slips for **crafting** items are at now Fair table. Also, there are slips for **raffle basket items** to add to baskets being assembled. Please bring donation items to the table. Soon the table will have donation slip requests for **food** for Fair meals served that will be brought to the kitchen during Fair week.

Bring Fair week

Raffle Baskets

Books:

Newish adult books

(hardcover or paperback)

Classic books

Children books

Cookies for Cookie Walk

Baked Goods:

Muffins, brownies,

Cakes or pie to sell by the slice

Pumpkin, banana or other breads

Gently used **toys** and treasures



Booths In Process

Toys

Books

Pottery

Wreaths

Handcrafts

Cookie Walk

Raffle Baskets

Jewelry Shoppe

Unique Boutique

Grandma's Kitchen

Yesterday's Treasures

Yummy Treats & Sweets

We would love for all to enjoy helping! [Click to help](#)

Contact Fair Coordinator: Lorraine Westervelt 203-257-6964 with questions, offers, ideas, thoughts!



ORDER YOUR 2025 CHRISTMAS WREATHS NOW!

As part of the ***Christmas Fair***, the Flower Team is selling Christmas wreaths to make your holiday season more festive and to raise funds for the church. The wreaths are available by preorder only.

Wreaths are **\$25**, made of balsam fir, 22" in diameter, and adorned with a homemade bow. Bows are available in a variety of patterns shown below. Wreaths will be available for pickup at the Fair on **Friday evening, December 5th during the Holiday Stroll, and on Saturday, December 6th from 9 AM – 3 PM.** If needed, special arrangements can be made for delivery; please include your address below.

To place an order, please fill out the form below and return it with payment to the church office (23 S. Main Street, Wallingford 06492) or in the offering plate.

ALL ORDERS MUST BE RECEIVED BY WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 26th.

Christmas Wreath Order Form

Name _____

Phone Number: _____

- I would like to order: _____ wreath(s) @ \$25 each = \$ _____ Total
(Checks should be made payable to First Congregational Church with "Wreath order" in the memo line.)
- Ribbon Preference:

_____ a – Red (no picture)

_____ b – Red With Glitter

_____ c - Gold

_____ d - Red/White Stripe

_____ e – Red/White Narrow Stripe

_____ f – Red/Green Plaid

_____ g – Holly & Holly Berries

_____ h – Snowflakes

_____ i – Gnomes

_____ j – Snowmen



Other ribbon styles will be available at the fair, and you will be welcome to choose another style at pick up, if desired.



2025 CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA FORM

The Flower Team is offering poinsettias for \$10 per six-inch pot. Plants may be purchased in memory or in honor of loved ones. The poinsettias will be dedicated on Sunday, December 21st. You may purchase the plants to take home with you following the Christmas Eve services or to be donated to the Christmas Community Dinner attendees.

Please complete this form and return it with payment to the church office (23 S. Main Street, Wallingford 06492) or put it in the offering plate. Orders are due by **December 9th**. Questions? Contact Lori Folk-Barron at lorifolkbarron@gmail.com or 203-314-9885.

Thank you for your continued support and generosity.

The Flower Team



Number of poinsettias ordered: _____

Amount enclosed (@ \$10 each): _____

(Please make checks payable to First Congregational Church with "Poinsettias" in the memo line.)

I will pick up my plant(s) after the Christmas Eve Services _____

Please give my plants(s) to attendees of the Community Dinner _____

The wording in the bulletin should read:

In Memory of _____

In Honor of _____

Your Name _____

Phone number _____





Wallingford Workcamp Team

Bringing A Community Together

Free Home Repair Application



Home repairs that qualify:

- Exterior Painting → Weatherizing
- Interior painting → Step repair
- Mobile home skirting
- Porch repair/construction
- Wheelchair ramp repair/construction
- Roofing (no tear-offs)

Both labor and materials are free to qualifying households. **Applicants must own their house and be present or have an adult representative present during the repairs from June 29–July 3, 2026.**

Do you own your home? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Describe the work you would like done:

Name: _____

Street: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Email: _____

Phone Number: _____

CONTACT US

Lorraine Westervelt: 203-257-6964

workcampwallingford@gmail.com

Wallingford Workcamp 2026

Wallingford Workcamp

Free Home Repair for Our Community

June 28 – July 4, 2026

Help us find homeowners

Prayers requested:

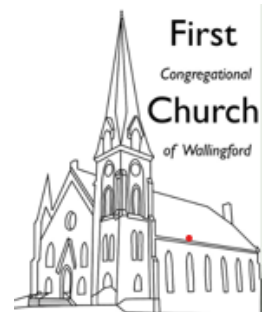
* Residents to say yes to having repairs done to their homes

* Youth and their youth groups to say yes, so they come to Wallingford 4th of July week

Volunteer Here! Donate Here!



Cosponsors for the event are
First Congregational Church
and Group Workcamps
Home Repair



MISSION MONEY AT WORK

As the scripture says: “Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it.” Hebrews 13: 1-2

Your Mission Funds Distribution Team was at work this month using your mission money to support organizations that are consistent with First Congregational’s Vision and Mission. This month we selected local, state, and national charities that focus on our youth, victims of abuse, food insecurity, various medical conditions, and uplifting the differently-abled.

Supporting our country –

The Jed Foundation, Boston, MA – A nonprofit that protects emotional health and prevents suicide for our nation’s teens and young adults. We donated \$500.

Supporting our state –

Connecticut Foodshare, Wallingford, CT – A food bank serving the people of Connecticut. We donated \$500.

Supporting our local community -

Meriden-Wallingford Chrysalis, Meriden, CT - A domestic violence service providing help for people dealing with domestic abuse. Services include emergency services, legal and financial assistance, counseling services, housing services, children’s services, and community education. We donated \$250.

Soups On - A Kinder Ground, Inc., Wallingford, CT - This is a small café where young adults who are differently-abled are developing their job, social, and educational skills in a supportive environment. We donated \$250.

Supporting those afflicted with medical conditions-

Dravet Syndrome Foundation, Inc., Cherry Hill, NJ – Supporting families, funding & accelerating research and advancing towards a cure for Dravet Syndrome, a rare and severe form of epilepsy that typically begins in the first year of life. We donated \$250.

Spondylitis Association of America, Encino, CA – Their mission is to be a leader in the quest to cure ankylosing spondylitis and related diseases, and to empower those affected to live their lives to the fullest. Their vision is a world free from the pain and disability of ankylosing spondylitis and related diseases. This donation was given in honor of our incoming settled minister, Jeff Birch. We donated \$250.

If you have suggestions for nonprofit organizations whose missions align with FCC’s Vision & Mission and who may benefit from our financial support, please feel free to contact Kathy Wallace (kathywacct@gmail.com) or Lori Folk-Barron (lorifolkbarron@gmail.com).

First Congregational Church of Wallingford Ministry and Team Organizational Structure

Arising from our Core Values and Vision statement, our Mission statement was discerned to be the following:
“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.”

The VISION BOARD empowers our work towards our church’s Vision and Mission and delegates to the following Ministries and their Teams the authority to achieve these goals. It serves as the executive body of the church between meetings of the congregation to manage our strategic issues. Vision Board officers include the Moderators, Treasurer, and Clerk.

WORSHIP MINISTRY assists the minister(s) with the Church’s regular and special services of worship and provides for the supply of the pulpit in the absence of the Ordained Minister. It determines the appropriateness of any use of the sanctuary and chapel. The Worship Ministry oversees the following Teams: Sacramental Ministry Team, Music Team, Altar Team, Flower Team, Choir, Audio Team, Greeters and Ushers Team, Bell Choir, Live Streaming Team, Bell Ringers.

FAITH FORMATION MINISTRY works with the staff to plan, coordinate, and implement spiritual and faith development programs for children, youth, and adults. Faith Formation Ministry oversees the following Teams: Adult Education Team, Church School Team, Confirmation Team, Youth Group Team, Bible Study, Youth Mission Trip, Women’s Fellowship Breakfast.

MEMBERSHIP MINISTRY designs and carries out fellowship programs and events for members and for welcoming and recruiting new members to the congregation. It develops and supports communication avenues to inspire people. It works to welcome our involvement in fundraising activities. Membership Ministry oversees the following Teams: Communications Team, Book Club, Fellowship Events Team, New Member Team, Nominating Team, Scholarship Team, Rummage Sale Team, Fundraising Team, Church Fair Team, Historian, Delegates to the Association.

CONGREGATIONAL CARE MINISTRY initiates and oversees plans and programs for the care and welfare of members. Congregational Care Ministry oversees the following Teams: Good Cheer Team, Hospitality Team, Pastoral Relations Team, Visitation Team, Prayer Shawl.

MISSION AND OUTREACH MINISTRY is responsible for the education and involvement of the congregation in the needs and social concerns of local and worldwide communities. Mission and Outreach Ministry oversees the following Teams: Community Action Team, Monthly Mission Drives Team, Mission Funds Team, Open and Affirming Team, Wellness Groups Liaison Team, Scouting, FedEx Ministry Team.

ADMINISTRATION MINISTRY holds, cares for, and conserves the physical property of the Church, and it manages the investment and dispersal of funds of the Church. It employs and oversees staff in conjunction with the Minister as specified and appropriate. It prepares a budget to submit to the Vision Board. The Administration Ministry oversees the following Teams: Investment Team, Finances Team, Personnel Team, Property Team, Stewardship Team, Counting Team, Monday Morning Crew.

First Congregational Church of Wallingford
2025-2026 Vision Board Officers and Ministry Coordinators

Position	First	Last	Yrs	Phone	email
Moderator:	Lori	Folk-Barron	2	203-314-9885	lorifolkbarron@gmail.com
Moderator:	Greg	Whitehouse	2	203-909-1027	gkwhitehouse@snet.net
Treasurer:	Leslie	Spiars	1	203-600-8043	leslie36@snet.net
Clerk:	Kathy	Filkins	1	203-641-7107	kathyfbooks@gmail.com
Worship Ministry Coordinators					
	Bob	Westervelt	2	203-218-9537	bob-lorraine@optimum.net
	Dawn	Charron	2	401-309-8763	pewabba@yahoo.com
	Debby	Voelker	1	203-710-1550	debvoelker@sbcglobal.net
	Sarah	Mather	1	203-605-7313	Sarah.mather.23@gmail.com
	Mike	May	New	203-631-0303	Tat2mike@juno.com
Faith Formation Ministry Coordinators					
	Amanda	Nesto	2	203-415-2762	amanda_nesto@yahoo.com
	Gina	Phillips	2	203-605-8008	kit31080@att.net
	Robin	Davies	2	203-379-6735	robin.davies419@gmail.com
	Ken	Minkema	New	203-507-4896	ken.minkema@yale.edu
	Lorraine	Westervelt	1	203-257-6964	lorraine.westervelt@gmail.com
Membership Ministry Coordinators					
	Russ	Hinckley	2	203-889-7789	rhinckley9@gmail.com
	Lori	Fast-Minkema	1	203-444-5724	thinkfastmink@gmail.com
	Yvonne	Ortiz	New	203-233-4121	YvonneO1210@yahoo.com
	Jolene	Pope	1	203-514-1789	Jp614u01@gmail.com
	Beth	Whitner	1	203-507-4646	imetasequoia@gmail.com
	Jackie	Wadelin	New	860-937-8783	Jwade1220@gmail.com
Congregational Care Ministry Coordinators					
	Rev. Charlene	Bruce	2	203-503-8379	charlenebruce@sbcglobal.net
	Cliff	Castellano	2	475-227-1110	cliffc45@yahoo.com
	Joan	Bushey	2	203-444-1900	joan37b@gmail.com
	Ann	Gygax	2	203-269-6493	annbobgygax@gmail.com
	Tina	Caldwell	New	860-995-5744	tina.caldwell520@gmail.com
Mission And Outreach Ministry Coordinators					
	David	Wells	1	203-599-5422	detawells@sbcglobal.net
	Erica	Haddad	2	203-494-9768	ejhaddad5@gmail.com
	Michele	Tarantino	1	203-228-7461	cheleot@yahoo.com
	Nancy	Tipping	New	203-823-6962	nancy.tipping@gmail.com
	Steve	Knight	New	203-464-6196	steveknight2248@gmail.com
Administration Ministry Coordinators					
	Kathy	Wallace	2	203-745-9842	kathywacct@gmail.com
	Matt	Bushey	2	203-433-7327	m7bushey@gmail.com
	Mike	Savenelli	2	203-996-0338	mikesavsr@gmail.com
	Steve	Perkowski	2	203-710-5785	sperkowski@snet.net
	Open position				
Delegates to the Association					
	Rev. Charlene	Bruce	2	203-503-8379	charlenebruce@sbcglobal.net
	Susan	Phipps	2	203-623-4992	snphipps@me.com

First Congregational Church 350th Anniversary Gift Registry

First Congregational Church Wallingford has been marking its 350th Anniversary with special worship, celebrations, fellowship events, weekly devotionals, and community events. We hope you have enjoyed these events honoring 350 Years of Faith & Community at First Congregational Church. The party continues! A 350th Anniversary Gift Registry has also been part of this celebration. Our Administration Ministry identified a number of physical and technological projects and desired items that help FCC upgrade and update our facilities for future worship and fellowship. THANK YOU to all who have already contributed to our registry! We are hoping that members and friends will continue to prayerfully consider making a special 350th gift (separate from pledging) toward the project registry.

Our wish list items, costs, and current funding status include:

Project	Cost	Funding Status
Chancel Carpet	\$6,700	Fully Funded! 😊
Flooring between Guild Room & Congregational. Hall	\$3,200	Fully Funded! 😊
Hearing Assist Devices (6)	\$930	Fully Funded! 😊
Kitchen Floor	\$6,650	Fully Funded! 😊
Music Room –4 Fluorescent Fixtures	\$400	Fully Funded! 😊
Office – Fluorescent Fixture	\$100	Fully Funded! 😊
Railing for Chancel Stairs	\$1,000	Fully Funded! 😊
Conference Room – Hot Water Heater	\$300	Funds Needed
Front Sign – Parade Grounds	\$6,000	Funds Needed
Hallway (Near Office) – Paint (\$65/Gal)	\$130	Funds Needed
Hot Water Heater – Ladies Restroom	\$250	Funds Needed
Library Paint (\$65/Gal)	\$130	Funds Needed
Light Fixture Near Office	\$150	Funds Needed
Office – Paint (\$65/Gal)	\$130	Funds Needed
Pew Cushions	\$35,000	Funds Needed
Sanctuary – Refinish Hardwood	\$24,000	Funds Needed
Sanctuary Insulation	\$40,000	Funds Needed
Video Screens – Sanctuary	\$75,000	Funds Needed

We are excited to share an amazing Matching Gift opportunity as you consider your gift! An Angel Donor has offered a 20% match for every gift made towards the Registry. So, a \$1,000 gift adds \$200 in Matching Funds. The Matching Funds can be applied wherever there is a need on the gift registry. The Angel Donor will offer this match up to a maximum donation on their part of \$60,000! This is an exciting opportunity to make a gift to this congregation that grows because of the Matching Funds of this Angel Donor!

Please use the form below and mail your gift payable to First Congregational Church (23 S. Main Street, Wallingford, CT 06492) Please include “350 Gift Registry” in the memo line. Gifts can also be made on-line at www.firstchurchwallingford.org or using the QR code below. Thank you for considering a registry gift!

Please specify: **Happy 350th Anniversary, First Congregational Church!**

_____ Use this gift of \$ _____ towards the following registry project(s): _____

_____ Use this gift of \$ _____ towards any project as needed.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number or Email Address: _____





RUMMAGE SALE THANK YOU TO MY CHURCH FAMILY



Once again, I wish to express my sincere thank you to so many of you who helped make our fall rummage sale another success! It goes without saying that it takes time, donated clothing along with household items, and many people to put a sale together. Your tremendous response in all these areas was

wonderful, and I am so appreciative of your willingness to provide whatever part you played in making this happen. **THANK YOU SO MUCH!**

Our total amount taken in for this year's fall sale was \$4,784.33!!!

Our sale is a welcoming event for many individuals and families who make it a point to come on a regular basis who otherwise would not be able to afford to clothe themselves or purchase household items at reasonable prices. It is a “mission project” that has helped so many, and one we can be very proud of.

Just as a reminder, the spring rummage sale will be May 7,8, and 9, 2026. Keep us in mind! Let's keep this wonderful outreach to the community going!!

In Christian love,
Bernie Annunziata

18th First Congregational Church Golf Tournament

Held October 18 at Miner Hills Family Golf

34 Golfers Participated

Raised almost \$1,000

Profits benefit Breast Cancer Research

Thank you to our 2025 Hole Sponsors

In Memory Cayllie Alicki by the Ruys Family

In Memory of Carol Pontecorvo by Charlene Bruce

In Memory of Alice Martin by Paul & Marjie Martin

In Honor of Abby Vaughn by Holly & Steve Francke

In Honor of Kate Corcoran by Holly & Steve Francke

In Memory of Jennifer Trcke by the Blakeslee Family

In Memory of Fred & JoeAnn Wallace by Kathy Wallace

In Memory of Carol Potter by David, Tracy & Gabe Wells

In Memory of Olive Whitehouse by Sharon & Greg Whitehouse

In Honor of Kim Eames-Burgett & Kimberly Baldwin by the Barron Family

In honor of all those working so hard to defeat this disease by the Keogh Family

In memory of Sally Coleman, Betty Monbleau & Carol Pontecorvo by the Westervelt Family



Neighbors in Need Offering October 5

We collected \$330

Thank you for your gifts as we work together, sharing our burdens to support our Neighbors in Need



Congregational Care

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

Helping Hands Deliver Meals

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 provide 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 Gyax), 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.



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



Baptism

On October 19, 2025, it was a joy to celebrate the Baptism of Ridley Raup, born March 4, 2025. Ridley is the daughter of Zach and Amy Raup. **Welcome to the family Ridley!**

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

*The next Spire will be published in
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deadline for the December Issue is
November 15th.*

Email the church office at:
officemanager@firstchurchwlfld.org