



**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

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[pastormeredith@firstchurchwlfld.org](mailto:pastormeredith@firstchurchwlfld.org) (pastor)

[gross7jeanette1@gmail.com](mailto:gross7jeanette1@gmail.com) (Minister of Music)

Website: [www.firstchurchwallingford.org](http://www.firstchurchwallingford.org)

## ***A Note from the Pastor's Desk***



### **Pastor's Column**

I write this column coming off the high of a joyful and energized Catch the Spirit Sunday.

I have heard about Catch the Spirit Sunday since I arrived here last December, but I had to experience it to understand the energy, hope, and community it conveys. I certainly "caught the spirit," but now I need to pause and catch my breath, for the coming year promises to be filled with all kind of activities, opportunities, challenges, conversations, worship experiences, questions, growth, celebrations, and more. Sometimes, being a pastor feels like rehearsing and conducting a classical orchestra. To me, pastoring First Church feels like trying to conduct a well rehearsed jazz band. It is fun, exhausting, predictable, unpredictable, sometimes chaotic, and often beautiful. You could get absorbed by the task of trying to conduct the unconductable, instead, I am trying to focus on things where I hope to have a positive impact. Right now those foci are creating quality, diverse, relevant, and interesting worship; strengthening the care ministry of the church, creating a functional user friendly church directory, and extending opportunities to practice generous and intentional giving to the ministries of the church. You will find stories related to these foci throughout this month's Spire.

Blessings all,

Pastor Meredith



## **October Worship Preview**

### **October 1 – World Wide Communion and Neighbors in Need Offering**

World Wide Communion Sunday an International Celebration of Our Unity in Christ as we share Communion remembering our brothers and sisters around the world who will also be sharing in the sacred meal. Neighbors in Need (NIN) is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. This offering supports a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects.

### **October 8 - Open and Affirming – What It Is, and What It Isn't**

And the journey continues....

### **October 15 – Children's Sabbath**

Children's Sabbath, a program originating from the Children's Defense Fund, is a day to focus our prayers and worship on the urgent problems facing our nation's children. We will worship together for Children's Sabbath, celebrating the children in our midst, and lifting up the needs of children around the world.

### **October 22 – Mission Team Thank You!**

It takes a village for our Mission Team to go on their Annual Mission Trip. The whole faith community sponsored the trip through fund raisers, sponsorships, and prayer. This year, 5 adults and 5 young people traveled to Hazlet, NJ to share the love of God and help people repair their homes. This is a Sunday of mutual thanksgiving - thanksgiving to the Team for their faithfulness in mission and thanksgiving to the Congregation for making it possible. Come and hear first-hand accounts of a meaningful week!

### **October 29 – All Saints Sunday**

As we gather for worship, we will give thanks For All the Saints who have touched and influenced our lives. We will read the names and ring a bell for Saints affiliated with this faith community who have gone from this life to the next. It will be a service of celebration and remembrance.



## ***A Message from the Moderators***

Dear Members and Friends,

As we write this month's message, we are still reflecting on the energy and Spirit we felt on September 10<sup>th</sup> during Catch the Spirit Sunday. It was wonderful to see friends, old and new, returning from what we hope was a restful summer, to gather together once again, and to begin our new program year. Having the children of our church school with us once again and watching them march into the sanctuary was and always is an uplifting part of the service that fills us with joy and hopefulness. Re-gathering with everyone in a celebration of the Holy Spirit and in anticipation of how it will work among us in the coming year was motivating, rejuvenating, and exciting! (We might also add that the hot dogs were grilled to perfection, and don't get us started on how delicious all of the "calorie-free" cookies were!)

The start of this program year is an especially exciting one for reasons that we have been talking about for months now...the launch of our Ministry model and our Team structure for walking God's path as we fulfill our Vision & Mission. On Catch the Spirit Sunday, we were thrilled to see the displays prepared by our new Ministries and to watch our fantastic groups of Ministry coordinators describe their work, their Teams, and the opportunities available to all for meaningful participation in the life of our church. Seeing the names of those who had signed up and were continuing to sign up to support all of the Teams of our six core Ministries filled us with optimism. We might be onto something in terms of a rejuvenated and refreshed sense of how we can all support God's work in our congregation.

If you haven't had the chance yet to sign up for a Team, activity, ministry, or mission that fuels your spirit, don't worry, there is no time limit for when you can join a Team (or Teams!) and offer your time and talent. In the coming weeks, we will be publishing an updated list of all the Teams at work in the congregation and hope you will continue to prayerfully consider where you are being called to serve. We need each and every one of you to reflect on what God is calling you to do and come forward to join with fellow members and friends to do the work of God and our congregation. Forgive all of the sports references that this Team model inspires, but please, don't sit on the sidelines. Get in the game. Be a Team player. All levels of skill and experience welcomed! If you have already signed up, thank you! Our Ministries continue to mobilize and contact all who have volunteered. If you would like to add your name to any Team, contact us, Pastor Meredith, or any of the Ministry Coordinators, and we will get you on the rosters!

This month, we would like to highlight two unique Teams that will be forming in the very near future, and we hope you will prayerfully consider your involvement in them. First, as we mentioned in our message last month, we are steadily moving toward the point of readiness to form our Search

Committee for a new settled minister. In preparation, we have invited Reverend Margret Hofmeister, our Regional Minister for Southern New England UCC, to attend the October 2<sup>nd</sup> Vision Board meeting and speak to us about the Search process and what it means to be a member of a Search Committee. The Vision Board meetings are always open to anyone who may wish to attend. However, for the October 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting, we especially invite anyone who might want to learn more about the Search process and/or who might be prayerfully considering serving as a member of the Search Committee to attend the 7 pm meeting and learn more about the process. For anyone with questions, this is an opportunity to learn more and to help you determine if God is calling you to this type of service for the future of our church. So please, join us, staff and the entire Vision Board at 7 pm on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. Rev. Hofmeister's information session will be at the beginning of the meeting, and visitors can choose to leave after she has provided her overview of the Search Process.

The second special Team that will be forming soon is our 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Team. Our church's momentous 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary is coming up in 2025, but the year of celebration will kick off in May 2024. We need to begin planning soon! The possibilities for varied and exciting celebrations throughout the 2024-2025 year are endless. We need creativity, energy, and positivity to identify the most celebratory ways to honor this momentous year. Are you a party organizer? Do you have creative ideas about how we can honor our 350 years of doing God's work? Are you good at getting people motivated, excited, and involved? Do you know how to get the community to participate in our excitement and celebration? We need you! Please contact us, Pastor Meredith, or the church office to volunteer your time and talent.

As you can see, there are innumerable ways to become involved and help First Congregational Church to continue and expand its vibrance in our community. Join in! Let Catching the Spirit become a year-round experience for all of us. Let us enjoy the fellowship, growth, love, and service that walking with the Holy Spirit and each other can offer us.

With grace and peace to all,  
Lori Folk-Barron and Greg Whitehouse  
Co-Moderators





## **A note from the Minister of Music**

### **MUSIC NOTES RESUME!!!!**

I am resuming my Music Notes for the Sunday Bulletin. My intention is to give you some information about some of the music items in the bulletin and the words to what the choir or soloist is singing. These pieces hopefully will enhance and give another dimension or interpretation of the general theme of the day. Also, I will occasionally explain some of the mysteries of the two organs we have.

### **ASHLAR VILLAGE MUSIC SERVICES**

As a pilot project this fall, the service on the fourth Sunday of each month at 1:30 p.m. at Ashlar Village in Auditorium "A" of Bridgewater Building will be primarily a music service. Everyone is welcome to come.

The dates are Sept 24, October 22 and November 26. In December, there will be a Lessons and Carols on Thursday, December 21.

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2023 AT 1:30 P.M.**

## ***AN OLD FASHION HYMN-SING***

*Come prepared to pick your favorite hymns. I will try to have them.*

## ***CHILDREN'S SABBATH***

***OCTOBER 15, 2023 10:00 A.M. WORSHIP***

The newly recreated Children's Choir will participate in this service singing "Mungo ni Mwema" (God is so Good). A group of women will sing the poignant "Prayer of the Children" by Kurt Bestor which focusses on the experiences that our **children** are going through.

Music Group Rehearsals have been launched for the most part. BUT, there is always room for more. Your participation in singing in the services is tremendously appreciated. "Making a joyful noise" is what counts whether you find the designated notes on the page or not. Hymns are chosen for their message and complement or summarize or support what the general theme of the service is. So even if you don't sing out loud, read the words of the song. Think of it as a poem which is really what it is. I am trying to print the words of the songs we sing so you can follow along when the choir sings.

## Introducing Your Vision Board and Ministry Coordinators

At the Annual Congregational Meeting on June 11, 2023, this Congregation approved a pilot implementation of a Ministry Team organizational structure at First Congregational Church. Over the next year, the organizational structure will consist of a Vision Board (in lieu of Church Council), and six Ministries that include: Worship, Faith Formation, Membership, Congregational Care, Mission and Outreach, and Administration. Each Ministry will include five elected coordinators, volunteer team leaders, and team members who will carry out the programs and ministries of the church according to our established core values, Vision and Mission. The Vision Board, which will serve to establish and clarify our Vision, Mission, and strategic issues, is comprised of the elected church officers (Co-Moderators, Treasurer and Clerk) and a coordinator from each of the six Ministries. Pastor Meredith Jeffers will serve as an ex-officio member of the Vision Board.

The following creative and dedicated Officers and Ministry Coordinators have been at work through July and August 2023 getting our new model and its functions off the ground.

- **Interim Senior Minister:** The minister will be serving as guide, worship leader, and advisor to all Ministry Teams as we implement the Vision Board, Ministry Teams, and strategic plans.

<b>Minister:</b> Rev. Dr. Meredith Jeffers	914-255-1690	pastormeredith@firstchurchwlfld.org
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- **Vision Board Officers:** These officers will be guiding the overall organization, record keeping, facilitation of Ministries, and strategic planning.

<b>Moderator:</b> Lori Folk-Barron	203-314-9885	lorifolkbarron@gmail.com
<b>Moderator:</b> Greg Whitehouse	203-909-1027	gkwhitehouse@snet.net
<b>Treasurer:</b> Brant Walker	203-641-5567	txsrngr@snet.net
<b>Clerk:</b> Kathy Filkins	203-641-7107	kathyfbooks@gmail.com

- **Worship Ministry Coordinators:** These coordinators will be guiding teams related to everything worship-related, including serving communion, assisting with baptisms, providing music, greeting/ushering, serving Ashlar, managing flowers and sanctuary decoration, and live-streaming. Dr. Jeanette Gross, as Minister of Music, will be assisting/advising this team.

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
Marji Martin	203-530-3537	marjmart1214@gmail.com
Rose Zolnik	203-915-0594	rose@rosezolnik.com

- **Faith Formation Ministry Coordinators:** These coordinators will be guiding teams related to church school, confirmation, youth group, mission trip, adult education, and Bible study. Ms. Kayla Perkowski, as church school and youth coordinator, will be assisting/advising this team.

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
Kayla Perkowski	203-710-4431	kaylaperkowski@gmail.com

- **Membership Ministry Coordinators:** These coordinators will be guiding teams related to all aspects of our membership needs including welcoming members and friends, fellowship events of all kinds – social and fundraising, book club, scholarship, communications, historian, and delegates to the UCC Association.

Lorraine Westervelt	203-257-6964	bob-lorraine@optimum.net
Ron Graziani	203-265-6035	rongraz70@yahoo.com
Russ Hinckley	203-889-7789	rhinckley9@gmail.com



- **Congregational Care Ministry Coordinators:** These coordinators will guide and oversee plans and programs for the care and welfare of members including visitation, hospitality, coffee hour, Good Cheer, prayer shawl, Stephen Ministry, and Pastoral Relations.

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:** These coordinators will guide teams related to education and involvement of the congregation in the needs and social concerns of local and worldwide communities, including Mission Funds Distribution, Community Action, Monthly Drives, Wellness Groups Liaisons, Open and Affirming, Community Garden, and Scouting Support.

Bunny Drummond	203-919-4146	bunny.drumbell@gmail.com
Erica Haddad	203-494-9768	ejhaddad5@gmail.com
Karen Janus	203-265-5882	kjanus01@snet.net
Mary Antonetti	203-887-7597	maryantonetti@gmail.com
Tina Caldwell	860-995-5744	tina.caldwell520@gmail.com

- **Administration Ministry Coordinators:** These coordinators will guide teams related to caring for and conserving the physical property, managing funds, and overseeing staff and employment issues, including Property, Finances, Personnel, Stewardship, Investments, Monday morning crew, Building Use, and Counting Team.

Kathy Wallace	203-745-9842	kathywacct@gmail.com
Leslie Spiars	203-600-8043	leslie36@snet.net
Matt Bushey	203-433-7327	m7bushey@gmail.com
Mike Savenelli	203-996-0338	mikesavs@gmail.com
Steve Perkowski	203-710-5785	sperkowski@snet.net

Please use the contact information above to direct your questions and share your ideas. Still uncertain about who to contact? Contact the co-Moderators, and they will get you connected to the right team.



## Interim Pastoral Relation Update

As a follow up on our message from earlier this year and as we get ready to move into the busy fall season, the Interim Pastoral Relations Committee (IPRC) would like to remind our congregation of how we can best serve you. We would like to share some ideas on how to best communicate with both this committee and Pastor Meredith.

1. **Direct Communication is Key!** We encourage anyone who has feedback in regards to church life to communicate directly with Pastor Meredith or church staff. If you do not feel comfortable doing so, please contact a member of the IPRC committee as we would be glad to sit down together to solve problems. We believe direct communication is key, this way we are able to meet with you to answer your questions.
2. **Communicate Often!** If you have ideas or needs that should be addressed, please try to bring them up promptly so they can be addressed in a timely manner – this will help from compounding issues over time.
3. **Be Respectful and Empathetic:** when communicating with others, please be mindful of how you are posing your ideas. If this feedback were coming to you, how would you receive it? Often difficult conversations should be relayed in person, as it is sometimes challenging to ascertain the meaning behind a text or an email.
4. **Provide Potential Solutions:** be open to helping to find a solution. You do not have to be the person executing the solution, though try to come to the table with some ideas. Often the best ideas and results come from a friendly collaborative space.

Currently, the IPRC committee consists of the following members: John Perkowski, Kathy Filkins, Heidi Bonassar, Jessie DePonte and Greg Whitehouse. We encourage you to reach out to us should you need help communicating any concerns that you have.

We understand that clear, direct and respectful communication is the cornerstone of our church. Without these principles, the climate of the church attitude can change quickly. As we move through this time of transition, we ask that we all work together to provide solutions for any challenges that may arise.



The church school kicked off on Catch the Spirit Sunday with very excited students ready to come back for another school year! We are grateful to all of our volunteer teachers!

If you are interested in teaching a class, please email Kayla at [kaylaperkowski@gmail.com](mailto:kaylaperkowski@gmail.com)

Youth Group kicked off on September 17th with our annual party! The youth group schedule can be found below. Middle school youth group is for any student grades 6 - 8 and high school youth group is for any student grades 9 - 12. Any questions, please email Kayla.

We are looking forward to a great year!

## YOUTH GROUP IS BACK!

**Upcoming Dates:**

Middle School Youth Group	High School Youth Group
September 24 <sup>th</sup> 4:00 - 5:30	September 24 <sup>th</sup> 5:30 - 7:00
October 8 <sup>th</sup> 4:00 - 5:30	October 8 <sup>th</sup> 5:30 - 7:00
October 22 <sup>nd</sup> 4:00 - 5:30	October 22 <sup>nd</sup> 5:30 - 7:00
November 5 <sup>th</sup> 4:00 - 5:30	November 5 <sup>th</sup> 5:30 - 7:00
November 19 <sup>th</sup> Thanksgiving Scavenger Hunt! 2:00 - 5:00	November 19 <sup>th</sup> Thanksgiving Scavenger Hunt! 2:00 - 5:00

# 16<sup>th</sup> First Congregational Church Golf Tournament



Saturday, September 30, 2023

Tee off at 9:00 am at Miner Hills Family Golf  
80 Miner Hills Drive, Middletown, CT

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: High and low gross team                      Closest to the Pin  
Closest to the Line                                      Longest Drive for Men and Women

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) 265-1691



Wallingford Community Dinners has been serving the community for over 40 years. They serve dinners on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter to those in need. This includes those who are financially in need as well as those who would like company for the holiday.

The dinners are dependent upon volunteers to help out both with the things that need to be done to put on the dinners as well as financially.

This year is a very special year as it is the first time since COVID that dinners will be served in house! This is exciting and a bit scary as a lot more volunteers are needed to serve in house than when dinners were all carry out and delivery.



You can help out by volunteering to help with dinner preparation, cooking, delivery (to those who cannot come to the church), serving the dinners, clearing tables, and of course clean up.

To volunteer, receive a meal delivered to you, or donate funds for the Thanksgiving dinner or if you have any questions, you can contact

Kathy Wallace at [kathywacct@gmail.com](mailto:kathywacct@gmail.com) or 203-745-9842 or by calling 203-514-8883 (the phone for the dinners).



**YES...IT'S TIME!!!**

**IT'S TIME TO OPEN UP YOUR CLOSETS  
IT'S TIME TO OPEN UP YOUR DRAWERS  
IT'S TIME TO OPEN UP YOUR HEARTS FOR OTHERS**



Our Fall Rummage Sale is back on the calendar for Thursday through Saturday, OCT 5 -7<sup>th</sup>! Hopefully you have had a chance to clean out some closets and basements. If you set things aside, now is the time to donate them for our sale. It is absolutely **CRUCIAL** that you **DO NOT START TO DROP OFF YOUR ITEMS UNTIL MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 17<sup>TH</sup>**. Storage space is extremely limited!!!

***Just a Friendly Reminder.....***

1. We accept gently used clothing, linens, shoes, coats, pocketbooks, and small household items. **PLEASE – NO FURNITURE CAN BE ACCEPTED.**
2. HOURS OF THE SALE: Thursday, October 5<sup>th</sup> and Friday, October 6<sup>th</sup> from 4:00 – 7:00 pm; Saturday, October 7<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 am to noon
3. Help is needed as follows:
  - a. Setting up tables on Sunday, October 1<sup>st</sup> in Congregational Hall at 11:30 a.m.
  - b. Sorting donated items from Monday, October 2<sup>nd</sup> through Thursday, October 5<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 am. to noon and then 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm.
  - c. Working the sale floor whenever available those 3 days and hours.
  - d. Breaking down the sale on Saturday, October 7<sup>th</sup> at noon.
  - e. **MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK** – great fellowship and camaraderie while working and helping others! Let's put a smile on all our faces!!

If interested in donating your time, please call Bernie Annunziata at either 203-265-2587 (h) or 203-415-9809 (c). **THANK YOU!!**

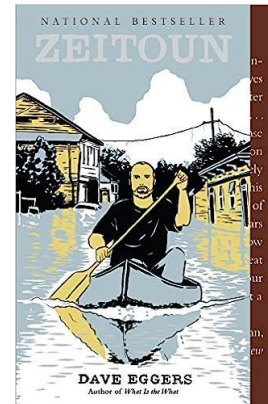
# BOOK CLUB NEWS



Our October book is “Zeitoun” by Dave Eggers.

We will meet on Tuesday, October 24 at 6:30 PM  
in the Guild Room.

There is a copy available in the church library.



## Flower Team News



### Altar Flower Sponsors Needed!

The **2023 Altar Flower** sign up calendar can be found in the Narthex.  
Sponsors are still needed for the following dates in 2023:

**October 1**

**October 8**

If you are interested in sponsoring flowers for either of these dates and cannot make it into church to sign up, please call the church office or email Lori at [lorifolkbarron@gmail.com](mailto:lorifolkbarron@gmail.com).

Direct donations to the Flower Fund are also appreciated to allow us to place flowers on the altar on those weeks when we do not have sponsors and for special occasions. Please watch for the **2024 Altar Flower** sign up calendar in mid-November. Thank you!



Please join us for a

**Ladies' Fellowship Breakfast**

Saturday, October 28, 2023

9-11 AM

At the home of Denise Castellano

Please bring a dish to share and enjoy a meal, scripture discussion,  
and fellowship.

RSVP to Lori Folk-Barron ([lorifolkbarron@gmail.com](mailto:lorifolkbarron@gmail.com) or 203-314-9885) by  
Thursday, October 26th, and let her know what breakfast item you plan to bring.  
Suggestions include juice, muffins, yogurt, fruit, banana bread, quiche, etc.

\*Special request: please refrain from perfume for those with a sensitivity. Thank you!





# HELP A HERO



## TOILETRIES DRIVE

at

**First Congregational Church  
23 South Main Street, Wallingford**

**Date: Saturday, October 21, 2023**

**Time: 9:00 am to 11:00 am**

## TO BENEFIT VETERANS AT VETERANS HOME AND HOSPITAL ROCKY HILL, CT

This will be a drive through event at the rear of the church. Enter from Center Street.  
Drive sponsored by the Monthly Drives Team of the Mission & Outreach Ministry.

**Items needed for men and women include Adult Diapers, Antiperspirant/Deodorant, Bar Soap, Body Wash, Brushes/Combs, Sanitary Napkins, Shampoo/Conditioner, Shaving Cream, Razors, Tampons, Toothbrushes, and Toothpaste.**

**Monetary Donations will also be gratefully accepted for the purchase of these items.**

As always, your donations are greatly appreciated!

Questions? Contact Tina Caldwell at [tina.caldwell520@gmail.com](mailto:tina.caldwell520@gmail.com) or 860-995-5744.





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 [kathrynjanis@gmail.com](mailto:kathrynjanis@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



## Open and Affirming

**Please join us on Sunday, November 11<sup>th</sup>** as the ONA Team welcomes our guest preacher, The Reverend Shawn Fiedler, for an enlightening sermon and a program following the service in Congregational Hall. Details to come.....

**Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Library** –Books for all ages are available to borrow each Sunday in Congregational Hall. Children’s titles are being highlighted for the month of October, so please stop by with the youngsters in your life and select a book to borrow. Below are just a few of the titles we have:

*Strictly No Elephants* – Pet Club Day policy states “*strictly no elephants*”, but they don’t understand that pets come in all shapes and sizes, just like friends. Now it is time for a boy and his tiny elephant to show them what it means to be a true friend.

*Acceptance is my Superpower* – A children’s book about diversity and equality.

*What Makes a Family* – Presents many different types of families and teaches that no matter how a family is created, what truly makes a family is choosing to love.

And there are many more titles to choose from. Please stop by, and feel free to take a puzzle, pencil and sticker too!!

*“Accept one another, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.”*

*(Romans 15:7)*



### **CHRISTMAS CARD CONNECTION**

To begin the Celebration of the Birth of Jesus in October this year, join in a short-time contribution to our church by coming together with us to sign and address cards to those who are not well, or are not able to attend church, or not able to attend church as often as they would like.

We will be meeting in *Congregational Hall* three times -  
**Tuesday October 10, Tuesday October 17 and Tuesday October 24, 2023.**  
From **10:00am to 11:30am**

When doing your planning, please keep in mind that we may not meet on the third date, so call me first or watch the Bulletin.

Just bring your favorite pen. You will be supplied with cards, envelopes and addresses around a table of convivial camaraderie.

Contact: Sandy Weekes  
203-233-7269  
This is the 4<sup>th</sup> year!!



## **DIRECTORY TIME!**

As one more way to help us get to know one another better, we will be producing a new directory. The directory will include names, addresses, phone numbers and photos. In the next few months, you will be asked to review your information and to have your directory photo taken. We hope to have the new directory available before Christmas. If you have a good clear headshot of yourself, please email it to [pastormeredith@firstchurchwlfld.org](mailto:pastormeredith@firstchurchwlfld.org) If you would prefer we take a photo of you, come with your best smile and we will take a picture for you. See Sue Phipps or Pastor Meredith on Sunday mornings at church or coffee hour, or stop by the church office by appointment Tuesday - Friday 9-2.



## *Iceland: Land of Fire and Ice*

The First Congregational Church of Wallingford is sponsoring a 10-day trip to Iceland May 15-24, 2024. This exciting Collette adventure features tours of cities, villages, farms, museums, mountains, beaches, bays, glaciers, volcanic craters, lava fields, waterfalls, fjords, thermal pools and more! You will enjoy a nature cruise, a cruise along icebergs, time in the warm mineral-rich waters of the Blue Lagoon, the local flora and fauna, and of course, the local cuisine!

This tour, "Iceland: Land of Fire and Ice," not only offers a fabulous travel opportunity, it also is a fund-raising event for our congregation. The First Congregational Church will receive a commission based on the number of travelers who participate.

There are a few seats still available for this tour.

For a complete itinerary, pricing and other information visit

<https://gateway.gocollette.com/link/1181976> or contact Debby Voelker at [debvoelker@sbcglobal.net](mailto:debvoelker@sbcglobal.net) or 203 710-1550. Brochures are available in the Church Office and in the Narthex.



***It's Time to Explore Iceland!***



## **CELEBRATE WALLINGFORD**

**Saturday, October 7, 2023 11 AM – 6 PM**

**Sunday, October 8, 2023 11 AM – 5 PM**

Celebrate Wallingford is a 2-day festival featuring the Taste of Wallingford – where one can sample the food of local restaurants. There is live entertainment, arts & crafts, shows, children’s activities and more.

During Celebrate Wallingford, First Congregational Church will be giving away popcorn, some church “swag,” and information about our Ministries under our tent at the front entrance to the church.

### **WE NEED YOUR HELP!**

Any and all church members and friends are needed to help work at the tent that day. Your presence would be greatly appreciated! Help us share the great news of our church at this wonderful community event!

**Please use this SignUpGenius link to sign up for a shift or two:**

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F084EAEA82AA1FD0-fcctent>

or

Contact Lori Folk-Barron (203-314-9885)

or

Greg Whitehouse (203-909-1027) to sign up.



## Christian Renewal Weekend

October 27-29 for Men  
November 17-19 for Women

Could you use a spiritual boost? Give yourself the gift of a well-crafted enjoyable **Renewal Weekend** from **Footsteps in the Sand**.

Footsteps Weekends are conducted by a team of 21 volunteers including two clergy. People from our church who have attended are enthusiastic about their experience and some are serving on the teams for the upcoming weekends.

If you would like to know more go to our website: [Footsteps-Sand.org](http://Footsteps-Sand.org) or contact Bob (203-218-9537) and Lorraine (203-257-6964) Westervelt

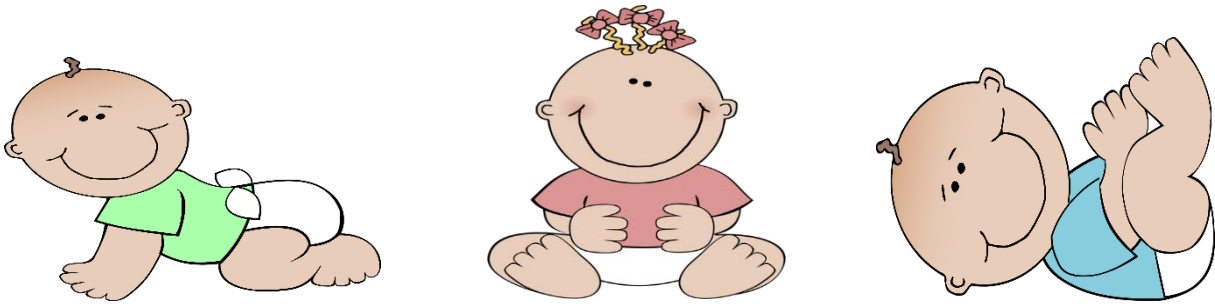


### From the Worship Ministry Team

In Isaiah 43, God declares, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise." Greetings from our church's new Worship Ministry team, which is composed of Marji Martin, Ken Minkema, Dawn Charron, Bob Westervelt, and Rose Zolnik. In this time of transitioning into our new structure, we want to reach out to every member of the congregation to let them know about opportunities to help this congregation praise God and serve each other by being greeters and by distributing communion, whether at the 8:00 and 10:00 a.m. services here at First Church, or at services we provide at Ashlar Village.

One opportunity is for anyone who has been a deacon in the past and would like to serve communion when able. We are calling this group "sacramental ministers" and we will have a recommissioning service in the future.

Please let one of us know if you are interested!



# Baby Corner Wish List

Baby wipes

Lotion

Baby wash

Diaper rash cream

Baby blankets

Grooming kit

Pajamas (sleepers) Gender neutral

Diapers All sizes

Shampoo

Pacifiers

Infant Tylenol

Boogie suckers

Baby washcloths

Blankets

Items will be collected and delivered to  
DCF Meriden/Wallingford

**Thank you for supporting the Mission & Outreach Ministry!**





**Friday, December 1<sup>st</sup> 4pm - 8pm  
Saturday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> 9am – 3pm**

**Looking forward to lots of  
fellowship and fun.**

Santa will visit for pictures on Friday night!  
Enduring favorites mixed with new ideas and great excitement.  
Help is needed creating things, baking cookies, setting up,  
decorating, working booths and food service and clean up after.

It will be wonderful to have everyone involved!  
We would love for you to enjoy helping!

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





## **We Would Like to Be There When You Need Us!**

First Congregational Church of Wallingford is a church that cares! 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... These are just some of the situations where a caring visit might be needed or welcomed. As the congregation ages, it is expected this need will grow. A recent assessment of households who might need care sometime within the next year, showed that 83 people of this community are on our “radar” as members or friends we know may need caring contact sometime in the next year. Then there are those with sudden, unexpected needs. Church care giving is always a challenge at best, because we would like to show Christ’s love and the care of the church to those who need it, but we frequently don’t know in a timely way when those needs arise. You can help us to serve you better, by calling in when you would like a supportive visit, call, or would like to be added to the prayer list. Ideally, one of our church visitors or the pastor, will be able to respond to you in a timely way. If you would like to become one of our caring callers, you are invited to join that team and share in a wonderful opportunity to care and foster new relationships. 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](mailto:charlenebruce@sbcglobal.net) or Cliff at [cliffc45@yahoo.com](mailto:cliffc45@yahoo.com)



## Baptism

**We baptize in the name of God the Father, who is our Creator; Jesus Christ, God's Son, who is our Redeemer; and the Holy Spirit, who is our Sustainer. In Baptism we are claimed as God's own and God's beloved.**

We celebrate the baptism of Anna Ruth Miconi, daughter of AJ and Ashley Miconi, born on May 3, 2023. The baptism was on September 15, 2023.



October will present two opportunities to learn more about the Bible.

Bible Study will be held at Ashlar Village Wednesday mornings beginning October 11. Join our friends at Ashlar Village for a study of the Gospel of Luke led by Bob Westervelt. This will be an opportunity to get to know our extended church family, make some new friends, and learn more about the Bible. If you would like to join this study, contact the church office at 203 265-1691 or [officemanager@firstchurchwlfld.org](mailto:officemanager@firstchurchwlfld.org) to receive the exact time and location of the Study.

A second Bible Study will be held Tuesdays October 3, 10, and 17 from 7-8:15 in the Guild Room. This study will teach a simple method for studying scripture on your own or with a group and will use favorite passages as a way to learn this simple method. The class will be taught by Pastor Meredith. Together we will explore Bible Study possibilities for the future. If you intend to attend, please contact Pastor Meredith at 914 255-1690 or [pastormeredith@firstchurchwlfld.org](mailto:pastormeredith@firstchurchwlfld.org)

First Congregational Church of  
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*The next Spire will be  
published in November 2023.  
Spire submission deadline is  
the 15<sup>th</sup> of every month for the  
following month's edition.*

*Email the church office at :*  
[officemanager@firstchurchwlfld.org](mailto:officemanager@firstchurchwlfld.org)

