In Our Prayers

Deborah Masella (new cancer diagnosis)**Family and friends of Claire Fowler** Tina Caldwell**Paul and Melissa Masi and friends mourning the loss of Hayden Steinhilper**Kim Baldwin (Lori Folk-Barron's friend)**Those recovering from natural disasters**Diane Geiss** Shirley Breedlove (Tina Caldwell's mom)** Sharon Geil**Sally Coleman** Amanda Otfinoski, victim of a hit and run** Megan Perkowski **Alexander Karacsonyi **Cousin Jean Farrell and Aunt Joyce Gorsky (the McKenna Family) **A Friend Diagnosed with Pancreatic Cancer** Mark and Lynn Bailey (friends of John and Sherry Perkowski)** Tim Keogh** Charmaine Craggs** Ashley Sibley (Bernie and Tony's great-niece)**Tom Jastermsky** Connie Ferrara (Sue Keogh's mom)** Gabe and Jude Heidenis (Bernie and Tony's grandsons)**Jack Grotti (friend of Sally Coleman)** Wendy Riddle, sister of Sandy Weekes ** Cathy Kovi** Holly Arce (Daughter-in-law of Manuael Arce and Deborah Sinon)** Kyle Denson (friend of Kristen Hinckley)** Sandy McCume** Betsy-Sue Eisenman** Hazel Rickes (Kristen Hinckley's grandmother) **Anne Stevens (Ken's mother)** Judy and Eric Rickes (Kristen Hinckley's parents)**Janice Frey**David Lick** Beverly Lastig** Those around the world who live in areas of conflict.



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@firstchurchwlfd.org (office) pastormeredith@firstchurchwlfd.org (pastor) gross7jeanette1@gmail.com (Minister of Music) Website: www.firstchurchwallingford.org



To make a gift to First Church



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 up lift 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.

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First Congregational Church Wallingford, CT



Prophecy By Hannah Garrrity

Second Sunday of Advent
December 10, 2023
How does a weary world rejoice?

Seeking peace!

THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 10, 2023 ORDER OF WORSHIP

+ Please rise in body or in spirit

PRELUDE Pietro Yon Gesu Bambino

arr. Karen Smith

and David Snyder

Erin Vivero, flute and Jeanette Gross, piano

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Long ago, a voice cried out in the wilderness

P: Prepare the way for the Lord; make straight the pathways.

L: Something new was about to happen.

P: God would visit God's people in a new way!

L: Lord, open our hearts to receive this good news!

P: Prepare us to be people of great faith and compassion as

we look forward to this wondrous event you have reclaimed to us. AMEN.

+HYMN

Now Bless the God of Israel

NCH

#110

TIME WITH THE CHILDREN - Candle Candle Burning Bright

LIGHTING OF THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE - PEACE Dr. Delbert (Doc) Smith and Virginia Smith

- L: How does a weary world practice peace?
- P: By listening before we speak and saying sorry when we need to.
- L: By advocating for justice and caring for our neighbor. By practicing Sabbath and forgiving seventy times seven.
- P: By choosing grace over hate and opening the door for each other.
- L: There are a million ways to practice peace. So today we light the candle of peace as a reminder and a charge.
- P: With God's help, may we bring peace

into a weary world. Amen.

HYMN When God is a Child (insert) (vs.1, 2) CHL #132

CALL TO REFLECTION

PRAYER OF REFLECTION

God of laughter, God of open front doors and family reunions, we confess that we often doubt good news. We move through this world waiting for the other shoe to drop, waiting for life to fall apart, waiting for our humanity to get the best of us. Instead of leaning into joy, we lean into scarcity. We lean into fear. We lean into isolation. Forgive us for forgetting that joy is amplified when shared. Heal the wounds we have from past hurts, and teach us how to throw open the doors of our hearts with abandon. Show us how to find joy in connection. Amen.

MOMENT OF QUIET PRAYER

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S LOVE

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

READING FROM THE HEBREW SCRIPTURE Isaiah 40:1-11 (Pew Bible OT p. 682)

THE CHORAL SERMON - I Hear the Prophet Callin'
Words and Music by Pepper Choplin
The Chancel Choir

HYMN Isaiah the Prophet Has Written of Old NCH# 108 PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts,
as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever.

Amen.

INVITATION TO GIVE

OFFERTORY No Wind at the Window

COLUMCILLE Setting

Brenda Portman

+DOXOLOGY (melody: In the Bleak Midwinter)

Praise the one creator, praise the living Christ.
Praise the Holy Spirit, praise both day and night.
Praise when you are weary, praise and times of joy.
Praise my soul, with all your strength and your heart and voice.

+PRAYER OF DEDICATION

+HYMN Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates

NCH

#117

COMMISSION AND BENEDICTION

RESPONSE Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord

CHL # 121

POSTLUDE In dulci jubilo, BWV 729

J.S. Bach

Announcements

Welcome to the First Congregational Church of Wallingford! If you are visiting with us this morning, we extend a special welcome and greeting to you. First Church is a part of the United Church of Christ. No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!

The flowers on the altar are given in honor of my son Steven's birthday by Marilyn Colandrea.

Serving the church today: Russ Hinkley, Liturgist; Bob Blakeslee, Bob Westervelt, Bill Zemina, Ushers; Bernie Annunziata, Chimes.

Blue Christmas Service, Thursday, December 14, at 7 PM. It is not uncommon to experience loneliness, sadness, and loss during the holiday season. Know that you are not alone. Please join us for a simple worship service of song, readings, and reflections of God's hope for us and presence with us as we

allow ourselves to feel whatever we are feeling this holiday season. All are welcome.

Let us wrap your Christmas gifts! Wrapping Event December 16 and 17. See the flyer for more information.

Greet our Ashlar friends at a **Service of Lessons and Carols, Thursday, December 21 at Ashlar Village.** Sign up to be greeter today! Contact Pastor Meredith for more information. (914) 255-1690.

Join us for our **Hot Chocolate Bar and Cookies**, Sunday December 24 following the **Pageant**. Celebrate the holiday with your church family!