



The Spire

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

Vision

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

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

Mission

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

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



The First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ

23 South Main Street, Wallingford, CT 06492

Church telephone: (203) 265-1691

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

Email: officemanager@firstchurchwlfld.org (office)

Website: www.firstchurchwallingford.org



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

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

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

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

Adopted June 9, 2024



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A Message From the Interim Minister



As I write this, it is not yet Thanksgiving, but for weeks I have been busy thinking about and planning Advent and Christmas worship. This week I made the decision to decorate my house this year, even if I only set up a few mangers and a Christmas tree; I want my house to look like Christmas. I am going to do some cooking, some old and new recipes, because I want my house to taste and smell like Christmas. And I am going to dust off my favorite Christmas CD, Handel's Young Messiah, to fill my home with music and dancing. But one thing I am not going to do is to go on a frantic search for the perfect gift for people I love. Instead, I will continue with my decade's old practice of honoring the people on my Christmas list by purchasing alternative gifts to help people around the world.

My family has been creative in their alternative gift choices. Purchasing a sewing machine to help a single mother in Mozambique start a sewing business. Making a microloan through Kiva to a man in El Salvador to buy rope to weave and sell colorful hammocks. Paying a month's tuition for a girl in Kenya to go to school. Helping a family in the Philippines to build an indoor toilet at their home. Buying warm CWS blankets for people living on the streets. Buying a sheep through Heifer Project. My heart is warmed every time I think about how my holiday gift giving helps to make the world a better place.

This year's gift giving is taking on a new meaning for me. This year, my gift giving will be focused on providing for the basic needs of the refugee family that our Meriden -Wallingford sponsor group, Starfish, expects to welcome in the next few months. The refugees will arrive with nothing other than the clothes on their back, needed documents, and maybe a keepsake or two. They will need everything from furniture to food to toiletries to clothes to cleaning supplies to cell phones to linens. There is a whole list of essential items that Welcome Corp/Iris suggests. I am using that as my shopping list this year.

The timing of this welcome project brings to mind another pair of refugees, one of whom was pregnant, who were tired and cold and hungry and scared and determined to do what was required of them, despite their poverty and despite their fear. They traveled together, until one night, it was time for the woman to deliver her baby, but there was no place for them to stay. They went through Bethlehem looking for an open door, for lodging, for a safe place to bring new life into the world. But of course, there was no room anywhere in Bethlehem because there were many travelers in the region. But as the story goes, they found a place to rest and give birth to new life. That new life came into the world, and the world has never been the same. Jesus was born a refugee. How will you honor him?

Blessings and joy as you celebrate this sacred season!
Pastor Meredith



A Message from the Moderators

As we began working on the message for the December Spire in early November, the temperature outside was the low seventies, not exactly what you would usually anticipate for this time of year. By the time this Spire is published, the tree will be up in the Sanctuary, the entire church decorated with holiday greenery, and the Christmas Advent season will be in full swing.

It has been another busy year in the life of the First Congregational Church. We both want to express our gratitude and say thanks for the support and hard work of each of the Ministry Teams and every member of our church who work tirelessly to bring our Vision and Mission statements to life all throughout the year.

As we gather together to celebrate this holy season, we are reminded of the true meaning of Christmas—the gift of God’s love, wrapped in the form of a child born in Bethlehem. Luke, Chapter 2, verses 8 thru 11 recalls that night many years ago:

“Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”

The birth of Jesus Christ is a powerful reminder that, in the midst of darkness, God’s light has come into the world. A light that brings hope, peace, joy, and love to all who receive it. This Christmas, let us remember that the true spirit of the season is not found in the gifts we give or receive, but in the love that was given to us when God’s Son was sent to be our Savior.

In a world that sometimes feels divided and weary, Christmas offers us the opportunity to renew our faith and share the message of God’s love with those around us. Just as the shepherds were the first to receive the good news and spread it to others, we too are called to carry the light of Christ in our church and in the world around us.

As we celebrate with family, friends, may our hearts be filled with gratitude for the immeasurable gift of Jesus. May we also remember those in need and extend God’s love to all, offering hope to the broken-hearted and peace to those who are troubled.

On behalf of both of your co-moderators, we wish you a blessed Christmas. May the peace and joy of Christ fill your home and heart this season and always.

Greg Whitehouse and Lori Folk-Barron, Co-Moderators



Message from the Minister of Music

Happy Holidays!

Thank you to all who attended the choral sermon on November 17. Hope you were inspired spiritually and musically. Please join the music ministry on Friday, Dec. 13th at 6:45 pm. We will present a Live Nativity in the barn at Beaumont's Farm with a lot of Christmas carols and songs as well as hot chocolate. The information for that event is below.

COME JOIN US

FOR THE

LIVE NATIVITY

AT

BEAUMONT FARM!



FRIDAY DECEMBER 13TH

COME ENJOY BILLY BEAUMONT'S ARTISTIC SEASONAL DISPLAY



THEN

JOIN US FOR OUR LIVE NATIVITY IN THE BARN!

FESTIVITIES BEGIN AT 6PM

LIVE NATIVITY STARTS AT 6:45 IN THE BARN

REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED!!!!

For Additional Information call:
First Congregational Church (203) 265-1691



December 1 – First Sunday of Advent and Communion

Join us as we begin our preparation for the birth of Jesus. We will light the first Advent Candle of **Hope** and share in Holy Communion. We will begin the new liturgical year thinking about Endings and Beginnings and learn that *You Are A Blessing*.

December 8 – Second Sunday of Advent

We will light the second Advent Candle of **Peace**. We will continue with the Endings and Beginnings theme and will be reminded *We Can't Go It Alone*.

December 15 – Third Sunday of Advent

The Third Advent Candle is the Candle of **Joy**. We will continue our theme by celebrating a new beginning for a little boy named Joseph whom we will baptize. We will be reminded to *Do the Good That is Yours to Do*.

December 22 – Fourth Sunday of Advent and Christmas Eve Sunday (10 AM)

After lighting the fourth Advent Candle of **Love**, we will reflect on why *Hope is Worth the Risk*.
HOT CHOCOLATE BAR AND COOKIES following the service!

December 22 – Lessons and Carol Service at Ashlar Village (2 PM)

Join our friends at Ashlar Village for a beautiful Service of Lessons and Carols. The service is held in the Auditorium, accessible via the Bridge House

December 24 – Christmas Eve Worship

5:00 PM – Family Christmas Eve Service

9:00 PM – Candlelight Communion

December 29 – Rev. Dr. Charlene Bruce, preacher

Don't forget there are 12 days of Christmas. Join us as the celebration continues!

CHILDREN'S Sunday School

Hello church school and youth group families, and with that, the holiday season is in full swing! I am beyond appreciative to everyone who has helped me over the last couple months in preparation for our Thanksgiving Scavenger Hunt, which was a huge success. I am honored to be a part of such an important tradition as we were able to help many families with the support of our congregation and youth group. As in years past, I believe that this event is an important aspect of the beginning of our advent season that reinforces the true meaning of the holidays.

With December beginning, we will have two more regular youth group meetings this calendar year. While I posted a schedule in the November spire, please make sure to check your emails regularly as this schedule was made before collaborating with other youth groups. As a result, December 15th may be subject to change to accommodate a youth group meeting with all three churches. However, the December 1st meeting is confirmed! In addition to our regular meetings, we will also have other opportunities for our youth to get involved in our church. If any high school student is in need of community service hours, we are looking for volunteer “elves” during our annual Christmas fair. If you want to know more about that opportunity, please contact me!

For church school, there is one date that we will not be having classes, so please keep this in mind. This date will be Sunday December 29th (between Christmas and New Year). Additionally, in anticipation of low attendance on Sunday December 1st (Thanksgiving weekend), we will just be doing a holiday party during class time with a movie and/ or activities. As with other rotational Sundays, all children will report straight to class. For this particular day, all students will go to the library instead of their individual classrooms. All other Sunday classes in December will run as normal.

If any families have not received children’s offering envelopes, they are available for pick up in the pre-k classroom (located on the right side of the library, closest to the music room). While it is not a requirement for children to bring an offering envelope to their classes each week, I believe it is an important practice for children to understand the responsibilities that adult members have within our congregation. Even if a quarter, dime, or penny is placed in a child’s envelope each week, it is far less about the monetary amount being contributed than it is about the habit of contributing to our congregation and the importance behind it. Meredith and I will be working closely to develop workshops for the spring that will familiarize our children with some of the aspects and traditions of our weekly services and collecting offering will be one of them, along with communion. I hope that by incorporating these practices into our classrooms, children can be more involved in church services when classes are not running. Similarly, I hope to grow an understanding of what goes on for parents in the weekly service while classes are running.

As always, please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions, comments or concerns. I am looking forward to diving deeper into this holiday season with you all!

Warm regards,
Madison Torre Cell: 203-815-8664
Email: fccwfaithformation@gmail.com

Open and Affirming

As expressed in our church's Open and Affirming (ONA) Covenant, "Jesus' teachings of love and compassion call us to uplift each individual and celebrate our shared humanity, both within the sanctuary of this church and throughout the community in which we live and serve."



To live into Jesus' teachings, the ONA Team is meeting to discuss ways to promote the fair and equitable treatment of all. If you'd like to join our team or have ideas you'd like to share, please speak with any ONA Team member (Kathy Filkins, Cathy Knight, Steve Knight, Sandy McKenna, Pam Walker, Erica Haddad, Jeanette Gross, Dawn Charron, Jolene Pope), or email us at ona.fccw@gmail.com.



Join Us for a Hanging of the Greens Breakfast!

Saturday, November 30, 2024 at 9 AM

Christmas is a special time of year to celebrate family and the birth of Christ. With this in mind, 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 costs of the breakfast.

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

We look forward to seeing you!

2024 Christmas Fair

First weekend in December

Friday - December 6th

5:00 - 9:00 during the Stroll

Outside Hot Dogs, Hot Cider &
Hot Chocolate

Smore's *new

Inside Fair Booths Open

Spaghetti Dinner*new

Saturday – December 7th

Booths open **9:00 am to 3:00 pm**

Booths and Cookie Walk Open
Santa Photos

Breakfast served 9:00 to 10:00 am

Lunch served 11:30 am to 1:30



Drop off by Wednesday, Dec. 4

- Raffle Basket items
- Silent Auction Items
- Gently used toys and treasures
- Crafts made at Home
- Books:
 - Newish adult books (hardcover or paperback)
 - Classic books
 - Children books

Drop off on Thursday or Friday morning Dec. 5-6

- Cookies for Cookie Walk
- Baked Goods:
 - Muffins, brownies,
 - Cakes or pie to sell by the slice
 - Pumpkin, banana or other breads
- Food for meals served (pick up slip at Fair Table)

We would love for all to enjoy helping

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



The First Congregational Church
23 S. Main Street- Wallingford

Monthly Drives Team will be sponsoring the annual Angel Tree for The
Department of Children & Families.

Thank you to all who picked up an angel from our tree, gifts
could be dropped off at church anytime. Our final collection
time will be:

Saturday, December 14 from 9-11am

Please attach the card to your unwrapped gift. If you have any questions,
Please contact Karen Janus at 203-265-5882 or kjanus01@snet.net



1675 - 2025

350th Anniversary Kick-Of Celebration

Saturday, January 18, 2025

5:00 – 8:00 PM

Calling all church members, family, and friends! Join us in Congregational Hall for a **celebration to kick-off** a year of special events marking the 350th Anniversary of the First Congregational Church of Wallingford!

The evening will feature **appetizers**, a catered buffet **dinner** (pasta, chicken, vegetables, salad, bread), **desserts**, musical **entertainment**, special **displays**, and lots of **fun** designed for all ages.

Tickets, which are on sale beginning Sunday, December 1, are \$20 for adults, and \$10 for children ages 6 – 12. Children 5 and under are free. You may purchase your tickets in person following Sunday worship services or online via the online giving page on the church website.

Note: Transportation will be provided for those who need it. Please request this service at the time of ticket purchase.

Welcome Our Newest Members!



Cheryl Norko, Carol Conrad, Brian Neves, Kristen Hollingsworth (and Troy)

Cheryl Norko started coming to the church last spring and kept coming because of the warm welcome she received from so many people. Cheryl has a degree in English and enjoys literature and writing. She loves animals and having good conversations with people. Cheryl recently started a new job as a Crisis Intervention Counselor in New Haven.

Carol Conrad has been active in churches all her life, most recently the Northford Congregational Church in Northford, CT. Carol has lived in Wallingford for more than 40 years. Carol worked as a substitute teacher and tutor in the Wallingford Schools. She has two daughters. Carol enjoys gardening and hiking. She can be found helping out at various church events such as the Church Fair and Rummage Sale.

Brian Neves and his wife, Janelle, came back to church after a Baptism Reunion in the spring of 2023. Their son, Liam, had been baptized a few years earlier. The Neves appreciate the positive environment in which to raise their son. They frequently attend worship with their extended family. Brian enjoys “helping out” where needed and especially enjoys volunteering with the youth programs.

When **Kirsten Hollingsworth** comes to church, it is often a family affair as she comes with her three children, Aliyah, Kyla, and Troy, her mother Holly Pearson and Holly’s husband Gary Campbell, and sometimes Kirsten’s husband, Justin. The family has experienced the church as being positive and upbeat and enjoy the activities, especially the youth activities, very much.



The 350th Anniversary Team is collecting photos for a slideshow to be presented at anniversary events in 2025. We need your help!

We need photos that showcase our church family and church events from throughout our 350 years. Okay, we realize we can't go all the way back to 1675, **BUT** we would love for you to share church photos from your collection that feature baptisms, weddings, confirmation classes, youth group events, work camps, musicals, plays, fellowship activities...really any church event that was special to YOU!

Digital photos can be submitted to the 350 Team using this email:

fcc350Photos@googlegroups.com

Please contact the 350 Team at this same email address if you have hard copies of photos that we can borrow, digitize, and return to you.

We are accepting photos on an ongoing basis but hope to have your photos by 12/20/24 so we can have the slideshow ready for our January 2025 kickoff event.



Join the 350th “Voices of Devotion” Project!

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

We know that some may find the idea of writing a public devotional to be intimidating, but we want to remind you that the purpose of this project is to celebrate the many voices that have and do worship God at First Congregational Church. We are looking for YOU, the heart, soul, and history of FCC, to lend your voice and offer a devotion that speaks from your heart. We are asking you to write about an experience, large or small, that told you God is near. Write about an event, a memory, a trial, a person, a particularly meaningful piece of scripture...anything that brought your heart closer to God or reminded you that the Holy Spirit was a force in your life.

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

We pray you say YES to participating in this project. Submissions are beginning to come in, and we are touched by the variety of warm and inspiring devotionals that we are receiving. 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:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfr6UXLI8h8weoxhhyoG23cKxWF0DXRDi_4z-2oGzq-b84lcQ/viewform?usp=pp_url

Our first deadline was 12/1/24 for the early bird writers, but 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 below or attach separate page.*

Prayer:

Please submit devotional by

- Email to fcc350devotionproject@googlegroups.com
- Use this Google sheet link to enter your devotion directly
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfr6UXLI8h8weoxhhyoG23cKxWF0DXRDi_4z-2oGzq-b84lcQ/viewform?usp=pp_url
- Mail to “Voices of Devotion” Project, First Congregational Church, 23 South Main Street, Wallingford, CT 06492.

Pastoral Relations Committee



Pastoral Relations Committee Members from left to right:
Rev Charlene Bruce, Bill Zemina, Heidi Bonassar, John Perkowski and Kathy Filkins

The function of the Pastoral Relations Committee (PRC) is to support a healthy relationship between the pastor and congregants with the goal of enhancing the church's ministry. We would like to remind our congregation of how the PRC can best serve you. Below are ideas on how to best communicate with both this committee and Pastor Meredith.

1. **Direct Communication is Key!** We encourage anyone who has feedback regarding 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 PRC and we would be glad to sit together to solve problems. We believe direct communication is key. If communication comes to us anonymously, we are not able to sit with you directly 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 keep issues from compounding 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? Difficult conversations should be relayed in person, as it is 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 come from a friendly collaborative space.

The PRC encourages you to reach out to us should you need help communicating any concerns you have. We understand that clear, direct and respectful communication is the cornerstone of our church. Without these principles, the climate of the church can change quickly. We ask that we all work together to provide solutions for any challenges that may arise.



ORDER YOUR 2024 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 6th during the Holiday Stroll, and on Saturday, December 7th 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 SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1st.

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.



2024 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 22nd. 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 10th**.

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 _____



Book Club News



Christmas is coming! We will celebrate with
“Jingle All The Way” by D. Macomber;
and meet in the Guild Room after church
on December 22 for Christmas treats and eggnog.



We Would Like to Be There When You Need Us!

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



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

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

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



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

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

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

A Message from the Flower Team



We are in need of altar flower sponsors for these upcoming dates in 2024. Please sign up in the Narthex or email Lori (lorifolkbarron@gmail.com).

December 1 December 15

Our Christmas Poinsettia order form is located elsewhere in this Spire. Please submit your orders as soon as you are able.

The 2025 Flower Calendar will be available for sign-ups in early December 2024.

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



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

People feel invited to serve the church through a welcoming ministry. The church usher duties can be summed up in a few words – making people feel welcome at church, assisting the Pastor with people management, assisting with seating, collecting offering and maintaining a safe environment. Currently, we have five rotating teams. Usher teams are only needed no more than once a month.

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

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

*The next Spire will be
published in February 2025.
Spire submission deadline for
the February Issue is January
15th.*

Email the church office at :
officemanager@firstchurchwlfld.org

MERRY
Christmas ★
& HAPPY
New Year ★