



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

OPEN AND AFFIRMING COVENANT



Table of Contents



350 th Anniversary Celebration News	12
350 th Voices of Devotion	27
Art & Craft Show Info	24
Baptisms/Deaths	30
Bible Study	14
Book Club Info	15
Catch the Spirit Sunday	11
Christmas Fair News	25
Congregational Care	28
Faith Formation Message	8
Flower Team News	28
Golf Tournament	23
Helping Hands	29
Message from the Interim Minister.....	4
Message from the Moderators	5
Message from the Minister of Music	7
Ministry and Team Organizational Structure	18
Mission Trip News	26
ONA News	15
ONA Statement	2
Prayer Shawl Ministry	29
Rummage Sale Info	22
September Monthly Mission Drive	13
September Worship Schedule	10
Stewardship Article	16
Usher/Greeter Info	26
Vision Board Officers & Ministry Coordinators ...	19
Vision & Mission Statement	1
What to Do if ICE Comes	20
Women's Fellowship Breakfast	14



A Message From the Interim Minister



Summer used to be a magical time of year. It was a time for a different routine, new adventures, and a time to rest from the busyness of the school year. Summer would be filled with picnics, swimming, long bike rides, catching fireflies, a few weeks hosting my Fresh Air Fund sister, Vacation Bible School, our yearly trip to the Jersey shore, and a several weeks camping trip exploring the US and Canada in our Coleman tent. It was a time of making memories, establishing traditions, and celebrating life with those I loved.

But most summers, right around the middle of August, I would start to get restless and I would begin counting down to the start of school. I loved school. I was excited to see my friends, greet former teachers and meet new ones, and reestablish a routine of getting up with the sun and going to bed close to midnight. I loved trying to maximize my academic course load while cramming in as much music, theater, journalism, and art a schedule could hold. The new school year also meant the beginning of the church program year. I couldn't wait for Rally Day when everyone would return from their summer adventures to begin a new year of Sunday School, Youth Choir, Youth Group, and Worship.

First Church's program year doesn't begin with Rally Day or Welcome Home Sunday or Homecoming Sunday. It begins with Catch the Spirit Sunday, this year celebrated on September 14. I hope you are as excited about the coming program year as I am. Catch the Spirit Sunday will be an opportunity to catch up with old friends, make new friends, eat hot dogs on the Parade Grounds, and enter a Scavenger Hunt and learn more about First Church. It will begin with weaving our lives together at worship and thinking about what we would like to learn in the coming year.

The year to come is filled with promise and hope. It is an opportunity to continue to grow in faith. It is an opportunity to continue to celebrate 350 years of ministry and look toward the next 350 years. Hopefully a new settled pastor will be called to lead you into the future. It is an opportunity to consider new avenues of mission while strengthening ties to current initiatives. I have a growing sense of excitement as Catch the Spirit approaches. I hope my excitement is contagious!

With anticipation of great things to come,

Pastor Meredith



A Message from the Moderators

How can it be that Fall 2025 is already upon us? We hope that you have had the opportunity this summer to enjoy some time with family and friends for rest, relaxation and renewal. While First Church has moved at a somewhat more relaxed pace over the summer months, it has also been a time when the congregation has come together to approve several significant changes that move us into yet another era of church life.

- (1) At our Annual Meeting on June 8, 2025, the congregation approved the adoption of the Ministry Model as our ongoing organizational structure. This model has been trialed for the last two years, and it is based on a system of Ministries led by coordinators with supportive teams to fulfill our Vision & Mission. Based on discussion at Vision Board meetings and at the Annual Meeting on June 8, we clearly need ongoing focus on communication, a clear understanding of where responsibilities fall, and succession plans that allow the ministries to navigate any changes in our staff and volunteers. The six Ministries (Administrative, Congregational Care, Faith Formation, Membership, Mission & Outreach, and Worship) and their respective teams, overseen by the Vision Board, will strive to work effectively, efficiently, and meaningfully to engage the congregation as a whole in walking the path God intends for us. Please review the overview of the Ministry and Team model and the roster of Vision Board officers and Ministry Coordinators that is included elsewhere in this Spire.
- (2) Members attending the Annual Meeting also approved the adoption of new bylaws that simplify and streamline our previous bylaws in ways that allow First Congregational Church more flexibility as we move into the future. With this change, Vision Board's attention will now be shifted to the development of a Policies and Procedures manual that will provide detailed information about the actions of each team in an effort to make clear all that it takes to uphold our Vision & Mission statements, our ONA covenant, and our service to God in this place.

At a special congregational meeting on June 29, 2025, the congregation came together again to make the challenging decision to sell the Meetinghouse to Chris Regan and Regan Holdings, LLC. The sale of the Meetinghouse officially closed on August 7, 2025, and the proceeds from the sale have been set aside in a fund independent of our endowment. As per the congregation's vote on June 29th, the principal of this fund cannot be used for at least 10 years without congregational approval. The income earned from the fund will be applied to the church's operating budget. On behalf of First Congregational Church, we lift up gratitude for all who came before us to establish the Meetinghouse as a physical asset that could now be converted to a monetary asset.

- (1) Further, we express gratitude for all who came together to reach a consensus about our decision regarding the Meetinghouse after many years of problem solving how to make the best use of this gift as we move forward into the future. Last but certainly not least, we are thankful to members of the Administration Ministry who helped to ready the Meetinghouse for closure and to Attorney Lars Edeen, Jr., who served as our legal counsel during the process.
- (2) Finally, at the July 14, 2025 meeting, the Vision Board reviewed and approved a church policy for staff and volunteers regarding possible interaction with ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) in the event that ICE representatives would come on church property. This policy was based on suggestions made by the United Church of Christ, and it has been reviewed with church staff. This policy appears elsewhere in this Spire, and we encourage all to review it. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Pastor Meredith or Vision Board officers and coordinators.

As you can see, it has been far from a “quiet” summer, and many thanks go to multiple individuals who have helped to complete these significant tasks with God’s guidance. Gratitude also goes to those who assisted with the summer church school program, assisted summer worship, provided music, and organized our ongoing mission work over these summer months.

As we move into September 2025 and we once again Catch the Spirit of a new program year, we continue the celebration of our 350th Anniversary Year. We are looking forward to sharing our anniversary joy at Celebrate Wallingford, to hosting a celebratory 350th concert in October, to exhibiting a special Art show in November, and to continuing our weekly Voices of Devotion project. We will be capping off the 350th year with a Star Ball in January. We look forward to seeing you at worship and these many upcoming events. The Holy Spirit is alive and at work in First Congregational Church. Please join us to Catch the Spirit once again!

With the grace and peace of Christ,
Lori Folk-Barron and Greg Whitehouse

Message from the Minister of Music



350th concert

MUSIC & PEACE

October 17, 2025

7:00 p.m.

My intent in the planning of this concert is to showcase different styles of music we produce in our sanctuary—It Is Well with My Soul , Let There Be Peace on Earth, Edelweiss, The Greatest Showman, A Whole New World, some Praise Band favorites. They reflect our community and possibilities available to us as we live and move in this world. Music has a way of touching us, speaking to us and drawing us into an unknown realm. In this concert you will hear some representative works evoking what --you have heard in the past. Some are new. The overall message is one of welcoming, acceptance and peace.

Groups you will hear: The Chancel Choir with added voices from choirs in our town

The Praise Band, youth choir, handbell choir

Silk 'n Sound

Flute Loops

Voices from “The Sound of Music”

Some groups have already started rehearsals to give us a jump start, especially for the event listed above. BUT ANYONE IS WELCOME TO JOIN US. So far rehearsals are

Chancel Choir: Wednesdays, 7:00-8:30 p.m. starting Sept.3, 2025

For the next two weeks August 20 and 27 we are meeting from 4:30-6:00 p.m.

Adult Handbell choir meets: Thursdays, 6:30-8:00 p.m. Changes may occur

Children and Youth rehearsals will be announced soon as well as a uke group.

Sunday School, Youth Group and Confirmation Families,



We hope you all have had a wonderful summer! The Faith Formation team is looking forward to kicking off another amazing church school year. With "Catching the Spirit" quickly approaching on **Sunday September 14th**, there are a few things to keep in mind from now until then:

Please see our Catch The Spirit Sunday flyer, which details all the information you will need to know about both the first day of church school, and our annual kickoff lunch. You will also see a QR code, which can be used to register Sunday School students for our 2025-2026 church school year. This is imperative, as our teachers and administrators need this information to prepare our classrooms!

If you have students interested in joining our 2025-2026 confirmation class, please reach out to any member of the Faith Formation Team, or send an email to us at fccwfaithformation@gmail.com. Our confirmation kick-off event will be on **Sunday September 21st**, and more details about both the event as well as the class itself will come soon. This will include important dates to mark your calendars for throughout the year.

While there is currently not a kick-off youth group event scheduled at this time, please continue to check your email for a mailchimp announcement. 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!

For those who may not know, we are hosting this year's mission trip right here in Wallingford, Connecticut. With Lorraine Westervelt leading this exciting project, there is much to be done as we anticipate the arrival of students, volunteers and Group Mission Trip staff next summer! If you are interested in attending, or want to get involved, please contact Lorraine Westervelt.

Finally, we are searching for new faces to join our team of Sunday School teachers. 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 case that one of our teachers calls out or has a conflict. Our rotating teachers follow a shared teaching schedule that would allow for a lesser 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 reach out to us with any questions or comments at fccwfaithformation@gmail.com. We look forward to seeing everyone again in September!



On behalf of the Faith Formation Ministry, all of the Sunday School and Youth Group teachers, students and families, we would like to acknowledge all of the hard work and dedication that Madison Torre has shown to the First Congregational Church.

She has made such a positive impact on our volunteers and students. We'd like to recognize her exceptional co-development of the inter-faith Youth Group program that many of our teens enjoy. Her contributions to our Sunday School and Youth Group programs have made a real difference.

Madison, thank you for all that you have done! Although we are sad to see you go, we are thrilled for your new adventure in Orlando, as you begin your next chapter of your life and career. Your dedication, professionalism, and the positive attitude you brought to the Faith Formation Ministry will truly be missed.

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts!



SEPTEMBER WORSHIP SCHEDULE



September 7, 2025 – Communion. More Than a Lump of Clay

September 14, 2025 – Catch the Spirit Sunday. Come and celebrate the beginning of our church program year as we welcome the children back to Sunday School, Weave Our Lives Together in Worship, Eat Hot Dogs and Play Games!

September 21, 2025 – Commissioning of our Ministry Team Coordinators
We are told in Luke's Gospel that we cannot serve God and Wealth.
Is God for Sale?

September 28, 2025 – Bible Sunday for Our Second and Fifth Graders
God is there in times of trouble and we will be raised up On Eagle's Wings.



JOIN US FOR...

CATCH THE SPIRIT SUNDAY

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14TH

9:45 MEET YOUR TEACHERS
IN FRONT OF CHURCH

10:00 WORSHIP IN THE
SANCTUARY

LUNCH AFTER THE SERVICE

REGISTER EARLY HERE





350th Anniversary Celebration News

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!

CELEBRATE WALLINGFORD

**is Saturday, October 4 from 11 am – 6 pm
and Sunday, October 5 from 11 am – 5 pm.**

We will be setting up a booth at the church steps on both days and giving away popcorn and information about our church.

We will need your help to set up, staff the booth beginning at 11 AM on both days, and clean up.

**Can you give an hour of yur time to represent First
Congregational?**

Please sign up during Coffee Hours in September or call the church office to volunteer.



UNITY IN FAITH FOOD DRIVE

To benefit Master's Manna

September 20, 2025, 9 AM – 11 AM

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

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

Master's Manna is particularly in need of: peanut butter, canned fruit, hearty canned meals (soup, stew, chili, spaghettios, etc), pasta & sauce, rice, tuna, mac & cheese, and shelf stable milk

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

Church of the Resurrection, 131 Pond Hill Road

Faith Bible Church, 28 Chapel Street

First Baptist Church, 114 North Main Street

First Congregational Church, 23 South Main Street

First United Methodist Church, 941 Old Rock Hill Road

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

St Benedict of Nursia Parish Campuses:

- **Church of the Resurrection, 131 Pond Hill Road**
- **Most Holy Trinity Church, 68 North Colony Street**
- **Our Lady of Fatima Church, 382 Hope Hill Road**

St Paul's Episcopal Church, 65 North Main Street (9am-12pm)

Zion Lutheran Church, 235 Pond Hill Road

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

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



**Feeding the
Community**



Save the Date for a

Women's Fellowship Breakfast

Saturday, September 27, 2025

9-11 AM

Location and presenter TBD. For more details contact Lori Folk-Barron at (203)314-9885.

**Bible Study Tuesday 5:30pm
starting September 16**



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 Join us on Tuesday evenings. Information:
Charlene Bruce (203) 503-8379 or charlenebruce@sbcglobal.net



Welcome back everyone to our new program year! We have many great selections coming up. For September, our book is “Heartwood” by Amity Gaige. We will meet in the Guild Room on September 23 at 6:30 PM.

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

September ONA Team News

Hope everyone had a fun summer! We have been enjoying the beautiful rainbow ONA paraments in the sanctuary, thanks to Nancy Tipping. Our team continues to work with church committees to decide where to place prints of The ONA Covenant. Meriden Pride held their PRIDEFest on August 16th at The United Universalist Church of Meriden. On August 21st, The ONA Team met to discuss the book **A Little Less Broken: How an Autism Diagnosis Finally Made Me Whole**.

We are pondering the question: How can we provide a more **RADICAL WELCOME?**

Please come visit us at our **colorful** table at **Catch the Spirit Sunday**, on September 14th!



*What will you give back to God from the
blessings you have received?*

Stewardship

A WAY OF LIFE

Welcome to the 2025-2026 Church Program Year!

THANK YOU to all who have submitted a pledge commitment card in support of the many programs planned for 2025-2026. If you have not yet had a chance to submit yours, please use the pledge card included in this SPIRE as soon as you are able. You may send your pledge commitment card to the office or drop it in the collection plate on Sunday.

We have lost some of our very dear, long time church members and friends over the last year who were also generous, consistent pledgers so we have a budget gap we need to close. Commitments may be made as one time, quarterly, monthly, or weekly pledges.

Every renewed and new pledge will help as we dive into the church year Imagining Together all that we can do for our community. Your generosity and commitment are appreciated.

Imagine Together: Vitality

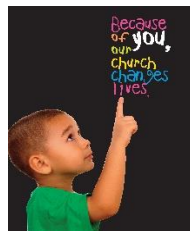
Nicodemus, initially criticized by Jesus, gradually evolves into a vibrant follower. His narrative highlights the importance of spiritual curiosity in maintaining vitality, addressing the tendency for stagnation and fear of change. How could a commitment to curiosity be transformative for us? What else might we offer our members and those in need?

If we want to not only imagine but experience vitality, we need to steward our natural God-given curiosity.

Accept invitations. Explore new places. Get to know different people. And when the spirit within us is piqued...trust that prompting is from the Lord, and get excited to not only imagine, but experience, where we will be led!"

Embracing curiosity can be the key to experiencing and maintaining vitality. How can we steward curiosity in our congregation?

Respectfully Submitted with Many Blessings by Leslie Spiars



Philippians 4: 15-16: "Generous people give when others will not"

Sample Pledge Commitments

Weekly	Monthly	Annual
\$400.00	\$1,733.33	\$20,800.00
\$300.00	\$1,300.00	\$15,600.00
\$200.00	\$866.67	\$10,400.00
\$100.00	\$433.33	\$5,200.00
\$75.00	\$325.00	\$3,900.00
\$50.00	\$216.67	\$2,600.00
\$25.00	\$108.33	\$1,300.00
\$20.00	\$86.67	\$1,040.00
\$10.00	\$43.33	\$520.00
\$5.00	\$21.67	\$260.00

Methods of Giving : Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT), Credit Card payments on the website (www.firstchurchwallingford.org or via QR code in pews), Weekly Envelopes, Bill Pay through your bank, Employee Giving through employer programs, annual gifts by check or a donation of your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) which is considered a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) and more.

Your preferred method of giving:

- ☐ EFT
☐ Credit Card Online ☐ Other _____
☐ Weekly Envelopes
☐ Bill Pay through my bank
☐ Employee Giving
☐ Annual Check
☐ Donation of RMD

First Congregational Church of Wallingford CT

Envelope # _____

Pledge Commitment Card for July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026

for office use

Name _____

Address _____ email _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

I plan to give \$ _____ ☐ Weekly ☐ Monthly ☐ One Time For an Annual Total of \$ _____

☐ Please call me about including the church in my will.

I joyfully join others in our congregation and generously commit myself to give a portion of what I have in support of the ministries of our church. Serving as Jesus taught us to live, we will indeed changes lives!

Signature _____ Date _____

I understand that this commitment can be changed at any time by giving notice to the collector.

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 Wallingford

Safe Church Policy: What to Do if ICE Comes

First Congregational Church Wallingford welcomes all people, no matter their immigration status. Recently, executive orders from the current presidential administration changed a policy that used to limit ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) from coming into places like churches. This plan describes what to do in the unlikely event that ICE tries to come into the church or asks for information about people here. It also explains the rights of all visitors, staff, and volunteers, no matter their immigration status. **Everyone who works or volunteers at the church should read and understand this plan.**

Know Your Rights: What to Do if ICE Approaches You

1. **Stay calm.** If ICE comes to you, ask them to show identification. Ask, "Am I free to go?"
 - If they say yes, walk away and don't answer any questions.
 - If they say no, you must follow their orders, but don't resist or run.
2. **Use your right to stay silent. You can say:**
 - "I want to use my right to stay silent."
 - "I want to talk to a lawyer."
 - If they search your bag or purse, say, "I don't consent to this search."
3. **You don't have to tell them anything about other people, and you don't need to share your information.** Don't help ICE figure out who people are based on their language, where they come from, or anything else. This may violate their rights.
4. People who are watching can record what happens, as long as they don't get in the way and state that they are filming.
5. **If they ask to enter or search the property, follow the guidelines below.**

If ICE Asks to Enter Church Property

1. **Ask for identification. Then contact these folks right away to review the situation:**
 - During Sunday service: Minister, Moderators
 - Any other time: Minister, Moderators
2. **Ask if they have a warrant.** ICE can be in **public areas** inside the church without a warrant, but they can't stop, search, or arrest people in those areas without a warrant.
3. **If they only show an administrative warrant, or no warrant at all, do not let them enter private areas.** You can say, "This is a private area. You can't come in without a judicial warrant."
4. **Private areas at First Congregational Church are:**
 - Minister's office
5. **If they have a warrant, check to see that it is signed by a judge.** A judicial warrant will say "U.S. District Court" or "State Court" at the top. Administrative warrants are not from a court. They say "Department of Homeland Security" and are on Forms I-200 or I-205. **ICE cannot enter private areas without a judicial warrant or consent from the Church.**

1. **Stay with ICE while they are there.** Watch them to make sure they follow the rules in their warrant. If they search places not listed in the warrant, state that you object to the search and document it in your notes. You may record the search so long as you state you are doing so (don't do this if you feel unsafe).
2. **If someone is arrested, ask where they're being taken.** This information will help the person's family and lawyer find them.
3. **Take notes or record what happens after they leave and share it with the Minister and the Vision Board.** Write down:
 - How many ICE agents were there?
 - What were they wearing? How were they armed?
 - Did they make you believe you couldn't move or leave?
 - Did they treat anyone badly? How?
4. Reach out to local community resources if necessary to connect people with additional support.

If ICE Asks for Information About People

1. **Do not ask about anyone's immigration status. Do not record information about immigration status.**
2. **Don't give ICE lists or personal information for church staff or members unless they show a judicial warrant for that information.**
3. **Keep information secure and private.**



FALL RUMMAGE SALE

October 2,3 4, 2025



It's never too late to be thinking about the Fall Rummage Sale which will be here before you know it!! During your relaxing, unwinding summer days(!), hopefully you took a little time to clean out a drawer, closet, cabinet, and/or room.

Once again, are you ready to **love and help your neighbor** by donating some gently used clothing, linens, shoes, coats pocketbooks, small household items, children's toys and stuffed animals? As always, we greatly appreciate whatever you can give. **Donations will be accepted starting Sunday, September 14th. On Mondays through Fridays, they can be dropped off between the hours of 10:00 – 3:00pm.** Please **NO** furniture can be accepted.

Let's keep our wonderful success going with this fall sale! We are becoming well known throughout the state!!

HELP is needed with the following:

1. Setting up tables on Sunday, September 28th in Congregational Hall after coffee hour;
2. Sorting donated items from Monday, September 29th through Wednesday, October 1st from 9:00 to noon and 1:00 – 3:00pm;
3. Working the sale floor on October 2 and 3 (hours 4:00-7:00pm) and October 4 (hours 9:00- to noon);
4. Breaking down the sale on Saturday, October 4th at noon.

Please feel free to call Bernie Annunziata at 203-415-9809 if you have any questions or wish to volunteer your time. The fellowship is great!!

18th First Congregational Church Golf Tournament

Profits to benefit Breast Cancer Research



Saturday, October 18, 2025

Tee off at 9:00 am at Miner Hills Family Golf

80 Miner Hills Drive, Middletown, CT

Rain date: Sunday, October 19 at 1pm

9 Hole Golf Tournament Scramble Format

Lots of fun for people of all ages and abilities

Adult \$30; Seniors & Juniors \$25

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

Profits to benefit the Breast Cancer Research Foundation & The Family Life Fund

Electric or pull cart rentals are available but are an extra cost to the golfer.

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

TEAM MEMBERS

Sign up as a foursome or come and make new friends.

↓ Indicate A for Adult; S for Senior; Y for Youth

Golfer 1 ____ Name: _____ cell # _____

Golfer 2 ____ Name: _____

Golfer 3 ____ Name: _____

Golfer 4 ____ Name: _____

HOLE SPONSOR (\$30.00):

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

In Memory / Honor of _____ By: _____

Checks should be payable to First Congregational Church - Wallingford

Or sign up, sponsor or donate through the church website

Questions 203-257-6964





November 9, 2025

In Congregational Hall

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-wallford.org



3 months to our Christmas Fair!!

Friday, December 5
Saturday, December 6

Enduring favorites mixed with new
ideas and great excitement.

Everyone invited to help with whatever you enjoy doing!



After church, grab a snack and join us for crafting
Supplies and directions provided

Your ideas are welcome. Great Fellowship!

Crafting at home also appreciated and encouraged.

Start now collecting items for our raffle!

Join in the fun of helping make the Fair happen.

It's wonderful with our whole Church involved!



Workcamp Success!



The Scranton Mission Trip was a Blessing for the town of Carbondale, PA. Forty-two homes were lovingly repaired by 63 crews of 5 youth and 1 adult. There were over 300 volunteers made a huge difference to the homes (and lives) of the elderly, disabled, low income, or veteran residents. Homes were painted, porches redecked, a huge hedge cut back, ceiling tiles replace, carpentry repairs, and more. When Sam Haddad shared his wonderful experiences at church wearing his camp shirt – Equipped to thrive. God equipped all involved to enable the workcamp. The theme verse 2 Corinthians 9:8 says: “And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good way.”



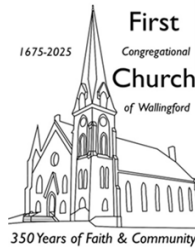
We will host Wallingford Workcamp! June 28 – July 4, 2026!



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 six 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



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 20 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:

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

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



A Message from the Flower Team

We thank our altar flower sponsors for supporting this ministry on a weekly basis. In the next few months, we are in need of sponsors for these dates:

Sept 14 Sept 28 Oct 12 Nov 2 Nov 9 Nov 30 Dec 14 Dec 28

As of 5/1/25, Wallingford Flower Shoppe increased the price of altar flower arrangements to \$50 for one large arrangement or \$50 for two smaller arrangements. If you signed up to sponsor flowers and this price increase alters your ability to do so, please contact the church office.

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, such as placing palm plants in the chancel on Palm Sunday. Thank you!



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



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.



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.

Baptisms/Deaths

On July 13, 2025, it was a joy to **Celebrate the Baptism of Callan Martha Craig**, born January 22, 2025. Callan is the daughter of Alyssa and Duncan Craig. Her Godparents are Kyle Bosucki and Megan Barracato. Welcome to the family, Callan!



For everything there is a season. We give thanks for the lives of:

Nancy Ann Williams who passed away May 27, 2025. A service celebrating her life was held June 7, 2025.

JoAn Sabatini who passed away June 11, 2025. A service celebrating her life was held July 15, 2025.

Bill Rotavera who passed away July 10, 2025. A service celebrating his life was held July 17, 2025.

Chloe Rich-Fiondella who passed away July 18, 2025. A service celebrating her life was held August 3, 2025.

Marge Erskine who passed away July 22, 2025, A service celebrating her life will be held at the convenience of the family.

Joanne Page who passed away July 26, 2025 A service celebrating her life will be held at the convenience of the family.

Sally Coleman who passed away July 31, 2025. A service celebrating her life was held August 15, 2025.

Betty Monteau who passed away August 7, 2025. A service celebrating her life was held August 14, 2025.

Carol Pontecorvo who passed away August 23, 2025. A service celebrating her life will be held Saturday, August 30, 2025.

First Congregational Church of
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September 15th.*

Email the church office at:
officemanager@firstchurchwld.org