

23 South Main Street Wallingford, Connecticut 06492
Phone: 203-265-1691 Fax: 203-265-0693
Website: www.firstchurchwld.org

THE SPIRE

Hello from First Congregational Church

In person services are back and will continue through the summer!

Every Sunday: 10am Family Worship Service in the Sanctuary

First Sunday of each month: 8am Communion Service in the Sanctuary

(July 4, August 1, and September 5)

Ashlar Services will begin again as soon as we have permission from
Ashlar's administration.

Scholarship Awardees Announced

On Sunday, June 13, the Scholarship Committee announced the awardees for the 2021 FCC Scholarships for our youth who have recently graduated from high school and will be continuing their studies through additional higher schooling. The honorees are as follows:

Kylie Allardice - Western Connecticut
State University

Daniel Beverage - Bridgewater State
University

Mallory Crispens - Stonehill College

Simon Koepfer - Rochester Institute of
Technology

Diana Walter Memorial Scholarship
Macenzie Regan - Loyola University
Maryland

Herbie Knight Memorial Scholarship
Steven Broun - New York University



Community and World Services & The Vision and Mission Implementation Committees will be sponsoring a SUMMER SAFETY & FUN DRIVE



Saturday, July 17, 2021
9:00 - 11:00 am

We are looking for include sunscreen, flip flops, beach towels, sun hats, lip balm, t-shirts (adults & kids), and let's not forget the summer games for Meriden-Wallingford Chrysalis Inc. This is a drive through and drop off. Please enter from S. Main Street.

Meriden-Wallingford Chrysalis Inc provides crisis intervention, support services, self-sufficiency programs, safety planning, court-based and stems advocacy to victims and survivors of domestic violence and their children through community-based and housing programs. Services include a 60-day emergency SafeHouse, a 24-month transitional living program and homelessness prevention advocacy and service linkages. Chrysalis provides prevention education and tailored parent services to interrupt the cycle of violence.

For questions, please contact Kathy Wallace at kbwallace@comcast.net or 203-265-7205.

Sunday School Program

July 18, July 25

10am

Come join us to register your child for Sunday School on the Parade Ground!

Due to Covid-19, our program will look different than usual. After the children's sermon in the sanctuary, the children will meet their Sunday School teachers outside of the meeting house for socially distanced activities. Masks will be worn when social distancing cannot be maintained.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Robin Davies at 203-379-6735 or dav111@snet.net

Bouza Strong Pasta Dinner Fundraiser!

July 30

5pm-8:00pm

Join us for a pasta dinner and raffle event fundraiser for the whole family!

Dinner will be continuous so come any time for take out or dine in dinner.

Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$10 for kids, and can be purchased online at www.firstchurchwallingford.org or at the 10:00am services. All proceeds will be going to the Bouza Family.



A Message from Our Flower Committee

Please help us to provide flowers for the altar each Sunday!

Currently, there are openings for memorial/honorary altar flowers on the following Sundays: August 1, 15, 22, and 29 and September 12, 19, and 26.

If you are not interested in sponsoring flowers for a specific Sunday, but would like to help, donations can also be made to the Flower Fund which pays for altar flowers when specific sponsors are not available.

Please contact the church office or email Lori at lorifolkbarron@gmail.com with any questions or if you are interested in sponsoring flowers.

Thank you!

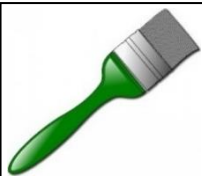


Community and World Services & The Vision and Mission Implementation Committees will be sponsoring a School Supply Drive

Saturday, August 21
9am - 11:00am.

We are looking for any type of school supplies to help families during these difficult times. Donations will be going to the Meriden/Wallingford Department of Children and Families. This will be a drive through drop off, please enter from S. Main Street.

If you have any questions or are interested in volunteering, please contact Karen Janus at 203-265-5882 or kjanus01@snet.net



Mission Trip 2022

Calling all youth in grades 8 to college Sophomore. Please let Leslie Spiars know if you'd like to attend Mission Trip 2022.

We will need adult support too!!

We will have a summer event this July or August to select our trip and talk about how to help our church elders throughout 2021-2022.

Let's make a difference and have some fun too!

Text 203-600-8043 or email leslie36@snet.net



Youth Group

Calling all church members who could use a hand!

Our mission-minded youth group would like to have some summer projects. Do you need batteries changed in smoke detectors or clocks? Maybe some raking? Does your deck need sealing?

Contact Leslie Spiars or David Wells and they will see how quickly they can pull a team together.

Hello Fellow Readers,

I hope everyone's summer is going well and everyone is out and about!

Here is the list of books for next year:

September: "The Four Winds" by Kristen Hannah

February: "Finding Dorothy" by Elizabeth Letts

October: "The Hate You Give" by Angie Thomas

March: no book. Lent

November: "Skipping Christmas" by John Grisham

April: "The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell" by Robert Digiorgi

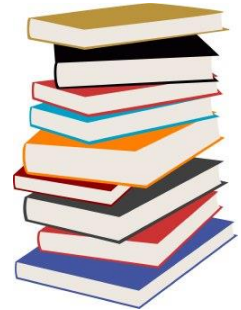
December: no book. Christmas

May: "Fearless Fourteen" by Janet Evanovich

January: "The Children's Blizzard" by Melanie Benjamin

Have a great summer and hope to see you in church.

Cathy and Bernie



Implementation Team Update

Our 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.

Our Vision and Mission Implementation Team has been actively working together to bring our Mission to life within our church and community. We are excited to share the following highlights:

Our newly formed Open and Affirming committee met and had a great discussion about starting this process! The committee is full of enthusiasm. Our first step is to increase awareness about the Open and Affirming journey by hosting fun and educational events. We are in the process of scheduling our first movie night with a plan to show a relevant film followed by a group discussion. We hope this will be a great kick-off for exciting things to come. There are many ways to be involved in helping to make our church as welcoming and inclusive as possible. Please contact Michelle Tarantino at 203-228-7461 or chelot@yahoo.com to find out more.

Other Implementation Team News:

We recently helped to coordinate the "School's out food drive" to donate to Master's Manna with the intention of helping families with children home for the summer and the upcoming "Summer Safety and Fun Drive" which will take place on July 17 and will benefit Meriden-Wallingford Chrysalis.

Have any questions? Want to be part of the Implementation Team or help with a certain project?

Contact us at fcc-wallingford-implementation-team@googlegroups.com

Prayer Shawl Ministry

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 in a variety of colors and sizes.

Please ask one of the deacons, Rev. Kathy or Kathy Janis, for a shawl. All of our prayer shawls are created by loving hands, blessed in our group, and are 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.

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



Message from the Minister of Music

As we slowly emerge out of the pandemic, I, with the help of the Music Committee, am planning some musical events for the 2021-2022 year. Some of the members of our congregation belong to musical groups outside the church. This coming year the music committee will be sponsoring concerts by several of these groups. This endeavor is in the planning stages right now. A schedule of these events will be forthcoming in the near future.

The Handbells have been sent off Malmark in Pennsylvania to be refurbished. Our original bells were purchased in 1988. Many people in the congregation purchased a bell at that time in memory of loved ones. This information is imprinted on the handle of each of the bells and will be preserved during this refurbishing process. The bell choir looks forward to having the bells back by the end of August and will be ready to play in September.

Children's Handbells: Handbells are a safe way for us to make music together. Watch for an announcement regarding the start of rehearsals.

Singing Choirs: We all are waiting to gather back together. We seem to be singing safely in church services now. It is our profound hope that choirs will be able to follow soon with the provision that we can protect everyone, especially those who cannot be vaccinated.

In the meantime, as has been our summer practice, we will have soloists singing or playing instruments and perhaps small groups, too. As always, I am open to suggestions for musical ideas anyone may have.

Jeanette

Message from the Moderators

Well, we are closing the books on fiscal year 2020-21, and, despite everything, it was clearly a successful year. This is thanks to many people, all of whom decided to meet the unprecedented challenges with spirit, determination and optimism.

Yes, there were some consequences to the pandemic that were unavoidable, the most impactful being the loss of contact with one another that has resulted in a steep drop in attendance. However, financial support continued at a very encouraging level, which has given us cautious confidence that, as the Covid-19 pandemic effects recede, attendance will rebound as well.

So now we look forward to the year ahead, a year of rebuilding. We understand that some of you are reluctant to gather back in church, and we respect that caution that you have. We want you to know that, while we are anxious to see you again, we understand that it has to be under circumstances with which you are comfortable.

And to those who have turned to other parts of your lives during the extended closure of our church, let us tell you that we enthusiastically would like to welcome you back. All of us live busy lives full of commitments and other activities that call to us, and your place of worship having been closed has allowed you to devote time to those. We certainly want you to know that you have been missed, and your return to church is sure to be met with genuine joy and friendship.

While you will find new Mission and Vision Statements that the congregation has developed, you will also find the same faith in God and commitment to living out the message of Jesus Christ. We have merely put into words the same commitments to love and care for one another and to others in our community that has always been at the foundation of the First Congregational Church of Wallingford.

There are many exciting plans in the works, as you have seen from previous issues of the Spire and many, many Constant Contact messages. May this message serve as your invitation to join back into your faith community now that the disruption to all of our lives is finally receding.

We very much hope to see you soon.

Steve and Lori

Message from the Minister

I have a question for you... Are you taking time for rest this summer? As I ask you this question, I want to clarify that I don't just mean physical rest, though this is very important. How about rest for your mind and rest for your soul? Perhaps after this very challenging year, even your spirit is exhausted.

The fourth commandment reminds us to remember the sabbath and keep it holy. How often are you able to honor this command? These days, life rolls at a level of demand that often does not allow us to simply stumble into sabbath and rest. We have to be more intentional. And for those of you who do have the benefit of idle time, how do you approach it? Do you do so with some intention or do you simply while away the hours in front of the television or some other distraction?

In his book *Sabbath: Finding Rest, Renewal, and Delight in Our Busy Lives*, Wayne Muller shares these impactful statements.

If busyness can become a kind of violence, we do not have to stretch our perception very far to see that Sabbath time—effortless, nourishing rest—can invite a healing of this violence. When we consecrate a time to listen to the still, small voice, we remember the root of inner wisdom that makes work fruitful. We remember from where we are most deeply nourished, and see more clearly the shape and texture of the people and things before us. Without rest, we respond from a survival mode, where everything we meet assumes a terrifying prominence. (p. 5)

And...

Sabbath requires surrender. If we only stop when we are finished with all our work, we will never stop—because our work is never completely done. With every accomplishment there arises a new responsibility. Every swept floor invites another sweeping, every child bathed invites another bathing. When all life moves in such cycles, what is ever finished? The sun goes round,

the moon goes round, the tides and seasons go round, people are born and die, and when are we finished? If we refuse to rest until we are finished, we will never rest until we die. Sabbath dissolves the artificial urgency of our days, because *it liberates us from the need to be finished*. (p. 82)

In this way, Sabbath is not simply a commandment and a means of survival...it is a life force amidst constant demands and a necessary diversion with intention that grants us freedom from the expectation that production and completion are life's ultimate goals. I hesitate, in all humility, to speak about what God may have intended in this regard, but it may be rather clear. God must have understood that life would include work, and throughout life, things would often be hard, but this is not the goal of life. Sabbath is like a built in release valve that grants us a means of more than just survival but actually thriving in wholistic ways, in life-affirming and life-giving ways. The totality of who we are as God's children is not defined by what we do. It is most sacred to simply and authentically BE.

Scripture tells us that God longs for us to live in joy and abundance, using the gifts God has given us to live our lives as fully and faithfully as possible. We have a part to play, and sometimes it requires hard work, and sometimes it requires faithful rest for body, mind, and spirit. Friends, may this blessing be yours during these summer months. May you find times of blessed Sabbath and fully know that God companions you and upholds you for the journey.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Kathy

First Congregational Church of
Wallingford
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Our Values, Mission, and Vision

United in Christ we:

- Uplift Individuals
- Celebrate Shared Humanity
- Cultivate and Share a Community of Faith Among All Ages
- Pledge our Mutual Love and Support
- Walk Together in Service

Our 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.

Our 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 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.