



**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



On June 9, 2024, members of the First Congregational Church of Wallingford voted to become an Open & Affirming congregation and adopted the following ONA Covenant

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.

Our work as an ONA Congregation needs to continue moving forward. In the upcoming year, the ONA committee will be providing information and planning activities that will help us learn about and embrace the diversity in our own community.

If you are interested in joining the ONA committee, please contact any committee member or Reverend Jeffers.

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A Message From the Interim Minister

*Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you Lord for everything I can see:
Like bright colors in an autumn tree: happy birds flying free: all the happy people when they
smile at me. Thank you, thank you, my Lord!*

*Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you Lord for everything I can do:
Like jump jumping like a kangaroo; passing Math, English too; helping mother or a
neighbor just like you. Thank you, thank you, my Lord!*

*Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you Lord for everything I can be:
A true servant of humanity; loving God faithfully; for this daily faithful opportunity. Thank
you, thank you, my Lord!*

November is my favorite month. It is a month where my focus is on Doxology. On singing praise. While the commercial world started Halloween in July and Christmas in September, it seems like the commercial world just skips over Thanksgiving all together. I prefer not to do that. I prefer to sing my songs of praise loudly and with gusto, long before November, even if it embarrasses my children.

The Doxology above is one of the first I ever learned. It was a simple song written by Avery and Marsh, but as a child it helped me to understand that there are so many things to be thankful for. Wind, bright colors, opportunities, sounds, motion. Thanksgiving is so much more than turkey and special side dishes. Thanksgiving is a state of mind and of being.

What songs of praise do you sing? Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow? Now Thank We All Our God? Give thanks? Hallelujah? God of Grace and God of Glory? What are your favorite songs of praise?

Don't skip the opportunity to give thanks! Count your many blessings, name them one by one! Live November with an attitude of gratitude and see how different your life might be. God's love, grace, and opportunities are boundless. In response, let your heart and tongue be filled with thanksgiving and praise! And if you need Doxology playlist, call me!

Happy Thanksgiving!

A Message from the Moderators



How is it possible that it is already time to prepare our message for the November Spire? While it may be a cliché, time does seem to be moving faster every day. Amidst the flurry of activity as the holiday season approaches once again, we find it important to press pause for a moment and express gratitude and thanksgiving for this church family.

While we are all well aware of the challenges of “doing church” in these tumultuous times, we never cease to be amazed by the Spirit at work in our faith community. In the few weeks since we sat to write the last Moderator Message, so many have done so much to walk a path of service that fulfills the tenets of our Vision & Mission and our Open and Affirming Covenant. Just in the space of September and early October, we have seen team members and volunteers from all of our six Ministries come together to:

- Catch the Spirit and launch our program year while welcoming new and familiar faces;
- Welcome the children back to the church school year with the energy of new leadership;
- Organize a rock concert fundraiser to promote fellowship;
- Collaborate with other houses of worship in our community to fight food insecurity through the Unity in Faith Food Drive;
- Offer countless hours, sorting and selling generous rummage sale donations for those in need;
- Supply and staff a free popcorn booth while offering information about our church during Celebrate Wallingford.

And, these examples only scratch the surface of the gifts of time offered by members and friends to hold these special events but also to manage the day to day and week to week needs to: prepare for worship, provide a musical ministry, offer Coffee hours, care for our buildings, manage our finances, care for and visit members of our congregation, teach our children, continue the work of the Search and Call Team, prepare for the annual Christmas fair, fundraise for our congregation, plan for fellowship events and 350th anniversary celebrations, manage administrative tasks, and generally keep the church humming along in the service of Christ. The volunteer hours are innumerable, and the devotion of members and friends awe-inspiring. The gifts of treasure from so many allow us to continue all of this work and are so appreciated. We could not be the faith community that we are and will continue to be without the gifts of time, talent, and treasure from you all. “Thank you” fails to be an adequate phrase to capture our gratitude, but thank you, nonetheless.

We close with the following scripture from Colossians 3: 15-17:

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

In the spirit of Thanksgiving, thank you and may you have a blessed November.

Lori Folk-Barron and Greg Whitehouse, Co-Moderators

Message from the Minister of Music



MUSIC EVENTS COMING UP

Sunday, November 17, 2024 - CHORAL SERMON 10:00 a.m.

OUR FATHER, A Journey through the Lord's Prayer

By Pepper Choplin

Friday, December 13, 2024 at Beaumont Farms 5-7 p.m.

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS and A LIVE NATIVITY with music & hot chocolate

Blessing of the Animals-- 5:30 p.m.

Live Nativity—6 :30 p.m.

Sunday, December 22, 2024 at Ashlar Village (Bridgehouse Auditorium)—2 p.m.

LESSONS AND CAROLS for EVERYONE

**First Congregational Church family and friends, ASHLAR VILLAGE residents
and their family and friends**

Our choirs and instrumentalists will be participating

Tuesday, December 24, 2024 **CHRISTMAS EVE FAMILY SERVICE 5 p.m.**

Participants will be our very youngest children with their parents
as well as our older youth.

Tuesday, December 24, 2024 **CHRISTMAS CANDLELIGHT COMMUNION SERVICE 9 p.m.**

MORE ABOUT THE CHORAL SERMON "OUR FATHER"

This cantata was published in 2014 making it a contemporary work, composed in our lifetime and reflecting issues that we encounter every day.

Pepper Choplin, the composer, has focused on *The Lord's Prayer* which we all say together every Sunday. Sometimes we say the prayer out of habit and don't really reflect on what the words mean. The first piece in the cantata is entitled "We Are Not Alone" which you will have heard on Sunday, October 27 during the All Saints' Service. It sets the basic message of the work. Pictures of our church people as well as nature will be projected on the screen to provide another dimension of the meaning of the words. Our choir will be joined by members of Silk 'n Sounds and other singers and instrumentalists



November Worship

- November 3** **Communion**
Reformation Sunday
- November 10** **Reception of New Members**
Congregational Meeting
- November 17** **Choral Sermon**
Our Father, A Journey Through the Lord's Prayer
by Pepper Choplin
- November 24** **Thanksgiving Sunday**
Rev. Dr. Susan Foster, preaching
Thanksgiving Potluck



Welcome Home the Rev. Dr. Susan J. Foster

Join us on Thanksgiving Sunday, November 24, as we welcome the Rev. Dr. Sue Foster to our pulpit. Sue grew up in the First Congregational Church of Wallingford and was ordained here in 1988. Sue faithfully served East Woodstock Congregational Church until her retirement in June. Pastor Sue and Pastor Meredith met the first day of seminary at Lancaster Theological Seminary in PA in 1984 and have been friends and colleagues ever since. Sue is a warm and insightful preacher. You won't want to miss this!



Dear families,

There is much to be excited about with our youth group throughout the coming two months! Entering the holiday season, we will have several opportunities for our youth to get involved in both the life of our church and the greater community on top of our regularly scheduled meetings. Similarly, we have made new connections with other youth groups in the Wallingford area, which will be a great opportunity to offer new activities and outings!

In November we will be hosting our annual Thanksgiving Scavenger Hunt. This is one of the most exciting traditions that we carry forward year to year! As always, we are in need of support from our church community with both volunteer drivers and food donations, each of which are detailed on the flier I have included within the November Spire, the church bulletin and on Mail Chimp. Additionally, for both the Thanksgiving Scavenger Hunt and all other youth group functions, friends are always welcome to join. The more the merrier! More information regarding December events will be coming soon. In the meantime, make sure to check your emails and the bulletin for additional announcements and flyers.

Please note that as we move forward with our youth group meetings for this fall and winter, one of the most important aspects is ensuring that we have enough resource adults. Without them, meetings and activities cannot be possible. With safe church policies it is necessary that all resource adults are background checked, so if you have even a slight interest in helping out at some point now or in the future, please reach out! I hope that you will consider committing to one afternoon to help our youth programs run.

For more information, please feel free to contact me, Madison Torre, at fccwfaithformation@gmail.com or 203-815-8664. I am happy to answer any questions or concerns.

Warm regards, Madison

Youth Group Fall/ Winter Calendar

- Sunday November 10th
- Sunday November 24th (Thanksgiving Scavenger Hunt)
- Sunday December 1st
- Sunday December 15th



Call to a Special Congregational Meeting

November 10, 2024

To the members of The First Congregational Church of Wallingford, Connecticut: Notice is hereby given of a Special Congregational Meeting to be held Sunday, November 10, 2024, immediately following the 10:00 AM Worship Service, both in person in the Sanctuary and via Zoom meeting, for the following purpose:

To review and act upon a proposed one-year extension of the existing Meetinghouse lease agreement between First Congregational Church and Attorney Jerry Farrell, Jr.

This is anticipated to be a very brief meeting; however, a quorum of church members is required to act on this proposal. Member attendance is critical! The brief meeting in the Sanctuary will be followed by a coffee hour reception in Congregational Hall to welcome new members.

Kathleen Filkins, Church Clerk



Greetings and Blessings from the Settled Senior Pastor Search and Call Team!

There once was an auto shop where the mechanic had hung a sign above the counter that read: We do three kinds of jobs in this shop - Good, Quick and Cheap.

You can have any two.

- *A Good, Quick job won't be Cheap*
- *A Good, Cheap job won't be Quick*
- *And a Quick, Cheap Job won't be any Good!* 🙄

We appreciate everyone's patience as we proceed methodically, thoughtfully and prayerfully with our important task of calling a new Senior Pastor to our church.

We are putting the final touches on our thorough Church Profile. It is imperative that we get this right if we are to attract quality candidates! On average it takes churches 12-18 months to find a new pastor after the profile is posted.

It is an understatement to say that our church has changed in the last 7-10 years. We are working to ensure our profile captures who we are at this moment in time, what we value most and where we see ourselves in the future. Also, we have SO much going on in the life of our church - rummage sales, fairs, children's programs, music, 350th celebrations, book clubs, concerts, fellowship breakfasts, etc - and we are trying to make sure to include as much as possible.

We are having discussions about the interview process and coming to consensus (not an easy task!) about topics such as; how we will conduct interviews, how many, how long and the types of questions we will ask. We are discussing our thoughts on the compensation package we are offering and if, when and how we will negotiate with candidates.

Most importantly, we remain confident that we will get someone really good to lead our congregation!

We appreciate the many well wishes, words of encouragement and prayers that we continue to receive.

CHRISTMAS CARD CONNECTION 2024



Hello Everyone!! Our 5th year!!

We will be meeting on the following dates to sign and address Christmas cards to people on our list of those in need of special Christmas greetings and love.

Tues., Nov 5, 10am - 11:30am

Tues., Nov 12, 10am -11:30am

Please plan on coming to Congregational Hall for this fun, chatty short time and *make a difference* by addressing and signing some cards. All cards and envelopes, return address stamp, stamps and some pens will be provided.





THANKSGIVING SCAVENGER HUNT

The Youth Groups will be conducting their Annual Thanksgiving Scavenger Hunt on Sunday, November 24th from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. Your generosity will make a difference for families in our community. Thanksgiving Baskets will be distributed through the Department of Children and Families social workers. Additional non-perishable foods and turkeys will be donated to the Thanksgiving Community Dinner, Holiday for Giving, and Master’s Manna. This activity is brought to you by the Faith Formation Ministry and the Monthly Donation Drive Team.

You can help in two ways:

- 1) You can set aside items that will be picked up on November 24th
- 2) You can participate as an adult driver!

=====

YES, I want to help with this special youth group activity!! Fill out the information below and put it in the collection plate or give it to Madison Torre. Thank you!!

[] I will have items that can be picked up at my home on 11/24 (2– 5 p.m.)

[] I can help with transportation for this activity.

Name _____ Telephone # : _____

Address _____

Items to Collect

- | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Turkey | Candy | Soup |
| Frozen Pie | Beef Stew | Tuna Fish |
| Potatoes | Crackers | Macaroni & Cheese |
| Sweet Potatoes/Yams | Cereal (hot & Cold) | Pudding |
| Canned Fruit/ Veggies | Fruit Juice | Reusable Grocery Bag |
| Rice/ Instant Potatoes | Stuffing Mix | Baby Food * |
| Gravy/ Gravy Mix | Cranberry Sauce | *No Infant Formula Please* |
| Olives/ Pickles | Peanut Butter | |
| After Dinner Mints | Jelly/Jam | |

MISSION MONEY AT WORK

As the scripture says: "Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." — Galatians 6:2

In these challenging times, our church community is called to extend a helping hand to those affected by the devastating hurricanes. Following the biblical principle in Galatians 6:2, which encourages us to "carry each other's burdens," we are reminded of our duty to support our brothers and sisters in need. Much of our mission funds was allocated to provide much-needed disaster relief, including food, shelter, medical aid, and rebuilding efforts. In addition, we choose to support mental health, homelessness, suicide prevention and food insecurity. By sharing our resources, we not only offer tangible assistance but also embody the love and compassion of Christ. Together, let's make a significant impact and bring hope to those who are suffering.

Supporting our world & church –

Community and World Service – Clean Up Buckets

Mission & Outreach is working on an internal relief activity to make buckets, we will contribute \$250 to the collection. This is intended to support hurricane relief.

Supporting our country –

Pigeon Community Multicultural Development Center located in Waynesville, NC

The mission of the Pigeon Community Multicultural Development Center (PCMDC) is to strengthen harmony among the residents of our county and its communities. To achieve this they help re-establish the long-standing tradition of the community as a family. We foster intentional inclusiveness to create a holistic quality of life. The organization is located in a hard-hit area of North Carolina. In October, we donated \$500 for disaster relief.

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

AFSP is dedicated to saving lives and bringing hope to those affected by suicide, including those who have experienced a loss. In September, we donated \$250.

Supporting our state -

Connecticut Food Bank

Often we forget that food insecurity exists year round not just during the holiday season. In September we donated \$250.

Supporting our local community -

Fellowship Place

Fellowship Place is a multi-purpose center where, in one location, adults living with a chronic mental illness may access a variety of support services to improve their quality of life and overall health. The organization does a lot of work with the homeless community and they often serve individuals from the Meriden/Wallingford area. In September, we donated \$250.

If anyone would like to participate on our Mission Distribution Team, we typically meet the first Wednesday of the month at 5:30 by Zoom. Please contact Mary Antonetti, Kathy Wallace or Lori Barron-Folk for log in information.

Our New Ministry - A Win for Everyone!

Background:

At our recent mission drive for the Animal Shelter, a FedEx employee stopped in to share that they had many loose items for pets that had spilled out of boxes. After 7-10 days of trying to locate the purchaser and store where they were purchased, they were to be thrown away. It is the policy of FedEx that their employees are not allowed to take them to donate. After our mission drive, I drove over to the FedEx facility in town and spoke with them. All they needed for us to take those items was our tax exempt information.

Our New Ministry:

This wonderful FedEx employee (her name is Hope), agreed to be our contact, and let us know when items were going to be discarded. Thus began our FedEx Ministry. Every 3 weeks or so, we have been stopping at the FedEx Facility to pick up an unbelievably wide variety of items (including food) that would otherwise end up in the landfill. As of October 8th, we have made 5 trips and transferred items to the following agencies (the value of the items in parentheses):

-Wallingford Animal Shelter (\$1,100.00)

-Master's Manna (\$316.00)

-DCF (\$275.00)

-SCOW (\$719.00)

In addition, some miscellaneous items have been used by the church, and the earth itself has benefited because of the reduction of waste. This is a very young ministry, but it has the potential to be a big win for our church! Below are pictures of our recent donations to the Wallingford Animal Shelter and to SCOW.



~ Nancy Tipping, FedEx Ministry

CELEBRATE OUR 350TH ANNIVERSARY WITH A COMMEMORATIVE TEE SHIRT!

We will be selling tee shirts with the following on the left chest and back (in white) and in the following tee shirt colors:



The cost will be \$25 per adult shirt and \$15 per youth shirt. These will be worn at the 350th celebrations and other church events. They are available in men's sizes S-4XL and youth sizes XS-XL. For questions, please contact Kathy Wallace at kathywacct@gmail.com or 203-745-9842.

ALL ORDERS MUST BE RECEIVED BY OCTOBER 13th. Pick up in mid-November.

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Qty: _____ Youth/Men: _____ Size: _____ Color _____

Qty: _____ Youth/Men: _____ Size: _____ Color _____

Qty: _____ Youth/Men: _____ Size: _____ Color _____

Qty: _____ Youth/Men: _____ Size: _____ Color _____



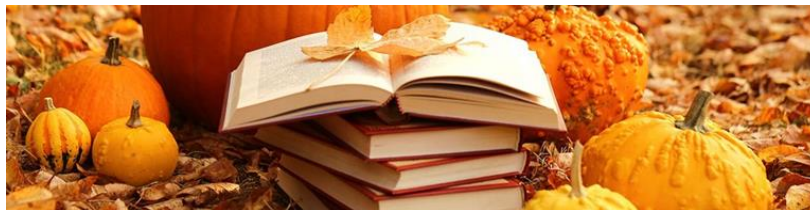
The 350th Anniversary Team is collecting photos for a slideshow to be presented at anniversary events in 2025. We need your help! We need photos that showcase our church family and church events from throughout our 350 years. Okay, we realize we can't go all the way back to 1675, BUT we would love for 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 12/15/24 so we can have the slideshow ready for our January 2025 kickoff event.

Book Club News



Something fun for November:

“How to Age Disgracefully “ by Clare Pooley *“Laugh out loud funny “*
Publishers Weekly

Please join us on Tuesday November 19 at 6:30 in the Guild Room. Please note we are meeting a week early due to the Thanksgiving holiday.



Join the 350th “Voices of Devotion” Project!

As one of the many ways we will be celebrating the 350th Anniversary of the First Congregational Church in 2025, the 350th Anniversary Team has proposed a “Voices of Devotion” Project. Modeled after the Upper Room devotionals that so 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 not looking for New York Times bestselling authors to write these pieces. We are looking for YOU, the heart and soul and history of FCC, to lend your voice and offer a devotion that speaks from your heart.

Offering some guidance from *The Upper Room* may be helpful as you consider your involvement in this project. In the July-August 2024 Upper Room (pp. 40-41), Andrew Garland Breeden offers the following advice for writing a devotional:

“If you are concerned that your story isn’t exciting, glamorous, or interesting enough, don’t worry. Write from your heart. Stories about everyday experiences make wonderful meditations. Some of my most memorable and meaningful spiritual insights have occurred on an afternoon hike, during an interaction with a stranger, or while reading scripture. Here are some questions to help you get started. Can you think of a small, ordinary experience from your life that has ultimately had a significant effect on your spiritual journey and strengthened your relationship with God? What was the experience? How and why did it affect you so profoundly? What story or passage from scripture do you connect with your experience? What did your experience teach you about yourself, and what did it teach you about God? What do you want other people to learn from it? Can you answer these questions?” If you can, YOU are the right contributor to our “Voices of Devotion” project.

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 it relates to the scripture. Describe 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. 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. We are setting an initial deadline of 12/1/2024 for submissions.

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 or mail to “Voices of Devotion” Project, First Congregational Church, 23 South Main Street, Wallingford, CT 06492.

Cooke Tavern Soups

Annual Fundraiser to benefit the FCC Scholarship Fund

How can I order these great soups?

IN PERSON: We will be downstairs in Congregational Hall after worship on October 27 and November 10.

ONLINE: Online ordering available this year!



<https://tinyurl.com/fccsoups>



Autumn Harvest Pumpkin Lentil
Barn Raising Country Vegetable
Blacksmith's Black Bean Chili
Candlelight Corn Chowder
Colonel Maxwell's Minestrone
Colonial Broccoli Cheddar Chowder
Farmer Al's Tomato Basil Bisque
Fireside Supper Bean
Henna Marie's Potato & Cheese
Mi Madre Maria's Chicken Tortilla
Peter Piper Stuffed Pepper NEW!
Ten Shilling Sherried Mushroom
Voila French Onion
Yankee Doodle Chicken Noodle

Delivery before Christmas!

Questions? Contact Karen Blakeslee
@ 203-589-8633 k.blakeslee@sbcglobal.net

\$9 each or any 3 for \$25



All are free from preservatives and artificial flavoring. Each soup mix makes a generous 2 quarts by adding just a few fresh ingredients.



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!

Come Ye Thankful People Come!

All Church Potluck



Sunday, November 24 11:15 am

Congregational Hall

Bring your favorite Thanksgiving Side or Dessert



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 WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 27th.

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 _____





The church owns a painting titled “Two Figures Dancing” by Chuck Close which is currently missing. Any information regarding the whereabouts or fate of this painting would be appreciated and can be communicated to any member of the Administration Team or Vision Team.

- Mike Savanelli
- Kathy Wallace
- Matt Bushey
- Steve Perkowski
- Millie Kabel



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

Worship MINISTRY

“Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness”
(Ps. 29:2).

Worship is one of the core activities of God’s church. The Worship Ministry supports the minister with all worship services of the church, both at First Church and at Ashlar Village. These responsibilities include preparing and assisting with the sacraments of Communion and Baptism, coordinating pulpit supply and liturgist recruitment, taking care of and changing the sanctuary paraments and other worship enhancements with each liturgical season, and procuring worship, devotional and sacramental supplies. We also coordinate activities with the Music Ministry. Ministry Teams, including Sacramental Ministers, Music, Flower, Usher, Audio, and Live-Streaming, are part of the overall effort to enhance our worship, make it accessible, and make it meaningful.

Worship Ministry coordinators include Dawn Charron, Sarah Mather, Ken Minkema, Debby Voelker, and Bob Westervelt. The Worship Ministry meets once a month along with the Pastor and the Minister of Music. If you would like to volunteer on any one of our teams, please let one of the coordinators know. You would be most welcome!



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 Gyax), Pastor Meredith or Kathy Janis for a shawl. All are created by loving hands, blessed in our group and just waiting to give to someone in need of that loving touch, that reminder that they are cared for and cared about through whatever is going on in their lives.

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

Please call or text Kathy Janis 203-376-1173 or email 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).

November 3 December 1 December 15 December 22

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





RUMMAGE SALE THANK YOU TO MY CHURCH FAMILY

Once again, I wish to express my sincere thank you to so many of you who helped to make our fall rummage sale another success! It goes without saying that it takes time, donated clothing along with household items, and many people to put a sale together. Your tremendous response in all these areas was wonderful, and I am so appreciative for your willingness to provide whatever part you played in making this happen! Thank you so much! Our total amount taken in for this year's fall sale was **\$4,359.70!!!**

Our rummage sale is a welcoming event for many individuals and families who make it a point to come on a regular basis who otherwise would not be able to afford to clothe themselves or purchase household items at reasonable prices. It is a "mission project" that has helped so many, and one we can be very proud of.

Just as a reminder, the spring rummage sale will be May 1,2, and 3, 2025. Keep us in mind! Let's keep this wonderful outreach to the community going!!

In Christian love,
Bernie Annunziata

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Email the church office at :
officemanager@firstchurchwlfld.org

