

Main Street Musing

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF SOUTH WINDSOR



January 2023



Pictured at left and at right: A team of volunteers readies the church for the Advent and Christmas season. The sanctuary was just beautiful!



Pictured at left: The Soares Family lights the Advent candle for the Third Sunday of Advent. At Right: Bob and Julie Reynolds light the candle.



*Pictured at left:
Our choir joyfully sings during a Sunday in Advent. We are delighted to have everyone back together as well as some new faces too.*



“There isn't time, so brief is life, for bickerings, apologies, heartburnings, callings to account. There is only time for loving, and but an instant, so to speak, for that.” –Mark Twain

A simple interpretation of these words of the wise and esteemed Mark Twain is that basically, if we but take the time to love, all the other things – “bickerings, apologies, heartburnings and callings to account” would not be necessary. Sort of a ‘Gospel of Mark Twain,’ very much in alignment with the Gospel of Jesus Christ which exhorts, “*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.*’ *This is the greatest and first commandment. Love God above all else. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.*” It could be said that both Jesus’ and Twain’s words, though from very different contexts, remind us that with what little time we have together, there is barely enough time to love, let alone hate. Our charge and priority is to love God, ourselves and each other, taking every second to inculcate loving into our beings and act on it.

Time – both fleeting and ethereal – weighs on our minds as we approach the New Year and let the Old Year go into the nether lands. We reflect upon – if we take the time – the effects and events of the measured time of the calendar year which have affected us and how we responded. In addition, we also wonder and wish about what kind of things are to come in the measured time of the new calendar year. Time measured in quantity, is what the ancient Greeks called *chronos* time. One can see where familiar time-measuring words such as *chronology*, *chronograph* and *chronic* derived. I like to call *chronos* time “ticking time.”

The ancient Greeks also acknowledged another kind of time – *kairos* time – the moment when opportunity, energy, and events come together; when the universe calls us to greater endeavors to be discerned and acted upon; not measurable time, but significant chances that only come our way once. Time not quantified by a clock or calendar, but time presented for the taking – *carpe diem* – seize the day time, one might say.

Members and Friends of First Congregational Church of South Windsor:

We have a unique and wonderful opportunity ahead of us, not only because of the turn of the year, but as a result of so much that has happened during the pandemic, in the life of church in general in the

world, and in our own worshipping community. I believe, as your pastor, and as a member, that we are being presented with a divine *Kairos* moment in the life of this church to examine, explore, and enumerate just where we are now and where God is calling us to go and be.

Last month, I wrote about thresholds. I believe we are on a threshold of discernment; walking – or running! – into a defining *kairos* moment in our church life. It can feel daunting, exciting, uncertain, and inspiring. I say this is such a time because there are many wonderings about how to go forward as a church in these times and in our own context as a small – but mighty – congregation with a wonderfully wise population of elders, intermingled with multiple-aged new members, long-time stalwarts, kids in and out, the effects of the pandemic, our mission partners, sibling SNEUCC churches and the abundance of the gifts we have to use, and those we have not yet accessed.

This church has before it a chance to explore what it means to be a ‘threshold church’ – a wondering and wandering church on the verge of *kairos* time – opportunity – and what that may look like, supported by your church leaders. It is hoped that after some initial information-gathering, you will be hearing more about a coming together in the New Year where the congregation can embark on a discovery journey, and all that may involve going forward, perhaps as our Lenten theme and spiritual practice.

As your minister and fellow member, I invite all of you to join in. Come to church if you are able, in person or on Zoom. Bring a friend, hear the good news, see what’s going on. There’s a lot. By the time you read this, we will have had our



first pageant in three years, – with mostly “adult kids’ and three real kids! Come ‘wonder’ with us, if you’re not doing so already! We can use all the energy and enthusiasm we can get!

God bless you as we ‘chrono’ into the ‘Kairo’! May the light of the Christ child burn within you all year through! Happy New Year!

Rev. Nina

On Dec 11th, Ms. Beth Stafford, Executive Director and Ms. Shannon Baldassario, Asst. Executive Director of MACC (Manchester Area Conference of Churches) joined our worship service and talked about the good work that they do for the community during our Missions Moment.



New Members Are Joining

Left: In November, we welcomed new member, Rod Johnson to the First Church family.



Left: Bob and Edie Starr light the Candle of Unconditional Love for the 4th Sunday of Advent.
Right: Rob Donaldson treats us to his musical talents during Advent.



Music Committee

Jean Jackson

- The organ was tuned on December 4, 2022.
- The sanctuary piano will be tuned Thursday, December 15, 2022 at 9:00 am. Jean Trotman volunteered to see that the sanctuary is heated to Sunday morning's temperature. Thank you, Jean T!
- A chime choir took part in the service on December 4, and will do so again on December 18.
- The choir sang during the service on December 11, and will take part on Christmas Day, December 25.
- Deb Vinick, harpist, will join us on Christmas Eve.



Church Committee

Jean Jackson, Church Clerk

Clerk's highlights from the Church Committee meeting held December 13, 2022 -

- Treasurer's report - Expenses for November were \$14,497. Income was \$12,891. Cash on hand is \$1,438. Deficit for the month is \$1,606; deficit year-to-date is \$16,624. \$10,000.00 was withdrawn from the Trust account to cover expenses. Partial payment for the property appraisal, \$1,272, was paid. An additional \$600 is due when the appraisal report is done.
- Investments - In November, the brokerage account increased \$99,364. \$10,000 was withdrawn to cover expenses. The net increase was \$89,364. No changes were made to the portfolio. Ending balance for November is \$1,900,025.
- Thanks to Jean Trotman for serving as Facilitator for the meeting.
- The next Church Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 14, 2023 at 6:30 pm. It will be held in the Metzger Chapel and on Zoom. All are welcome to attend whether or not you serve on a committee.
- Judy Borré has volunteered to serve as Moderator. If elected to the office at the Annual Meeting, she will serve as Moderator for the meeting.



Trustees News

Jean Trotman
Acting Chairman



We have hired a Zoom technician to assist with using Zoom for church services, Church Committee meetings and other special events. Alisha Adah will be part time and start in January. She is currently a student at MCC. As a result of work Jerry Dalpe has done for the Historical Society, we have a solution for WIFI in the Wolcott Building. Gifts and Memorials has agreed to pay for the equipment needed with Trustees responsible for the annual fee of \$120. Jerry has already started to help Mary with the paperwork necessary to set it up. This solution, which is meant only for non-profits, saves us money as it accesses cell towers directly thereby by-passing carriers like Cox. It also allows WIFI access by multiple people and isn't dependent on an individual using a hot spot. We want to thank Jerry for sharing this find with us as well as assisting with the set-up.



Church school will not be held on the first Sunday of the month. Instead, the children are encouraged to remain in church for communion.



Our Candlelight Christmas Eve Service was held at 9:00PM and featured beautiful music by our own Kamilla Mammedova and guest harpist Debbie Vinnick. Scott Horsfield was the reader of the scriptures. It was a magical evening.

Magic Nativity 2022



Historian's Column

Mary Crittenden

As I write my bit of church history in the middle of December for the January newsletter, I change direction. What I was going to write can wait a month. This "Public Service Announcement" that appeared on my Facebook pages today seems too appropriate not to use.

PSA for the upcoming holiday:

Don't come at me with your little gift bag or Christmas tin and be all "it's not much, but".

Let me tell you something...if you think enough of me to build, buy, make, bake, paint, craft or grow something for ME...out of 7 billion people, this ONE thing is just for ME...

THAT is MUCH.

Let's not forget that this year when we say "it's not much, but..." because the thoughtfulness to think of someone else IS "much". ❤️ 🎄

Our church members have given much. Last month we considered the kind of items that last and are still visible today. Today I want to reminisce about the kinds of giving of self, talents and skills that so many have given.

One of the many that comes to my mind is of the director of our church school. When I became a member, Bill Stone was the director and served in that role for years. He was followed by Sheila McIntosh, then

Karen Smith, Edie Starr and Vicky Margiott. These Members have given much time and effort in assuring that our church school children had interesting and informative experiences. They gave much.

At the same time there were others who gave of their skills and talents. Our Christmas tree is adorned with Chrismons made by a volunteer committee. Our crafty members used their skills to cross stitch the designs. Jean Clark Jackson cut out the firm backing material with a saw to which I mounted the finished stitched symbols and green backing fabric.

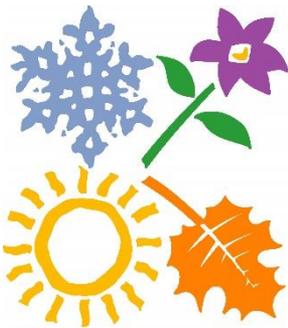
There are many others that we could highlight. One of the many that comes to mind is Louise Levack, who would make tea for the crafters working on fair items on Wednesday mornings. She insisted that the tea had to be made and served properly which meant we used the china tea cups. We could work while she did all the kitchen work. Helen Bancroft filled many positions in our church and my memory brings many to mind. The one I want to mention is that she made quilts for the fair raffle and somehow Else Woolam managed to handle the raffle tickets to the satisfaction of the Connecticut

government. That meant accounting for every ticket among other things.

There is no way I can recognize the many that have given in so many ways. However, these individuals have enhanced our religious experiences.

A big "Thank you" to our current members who continue the traditions and the giving of their time, talents and skills while also being willing to try new things and new ways of doing things.

Notice of First Congregational Church Annual Meeting



**ANNUAL
MEETING**

WARNING

Official notice is hereby given that the 325th Annual Meeting of the First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, in South Windsor, Connecticut, will be held in Fellowship Hall on Sunday, January 22nd, 2023 after the Morning Service, as well as via Zoom.

For the purpose of:

1. Accepting the Board and Committee Reports for 2022.
2. Electing church officers/board/committees and personnel for 2023.
3. Approving the Operating Budget for 2023.
4. Enacting any other business that may legally come before this meeting.

Jean Jackson, Clerk
Terry Belknap, Facilitator

*Church Family News***JANUARY**

Birthdays

Mary Pelton	1/04	Lauren Clarke	1/27
Everett Cote	1/04	Tracy McCarthy	1/27
Leilani Dinse	1/06	Stephen Johnson	1/28
Chenoa Anderson	1/07	Carolyn Stearns	1/28
Chris Kurtzman	1/11	Brad Case	1/30
Jay Samsel	1/21	Jonathan Whitin	1/30
Jared Clarke	1/25	Aimee Bombara	1/31
Ryan Zaugg	1/26	Morgan Gobin	1/31
Rebecca Zaugg	1/26		



Joyce Coon
Doris Burgdorf
Merle & Leilani Dinse
Brad Wright

Mary Crittenden
Cliff McClellan
Edie & Bob Starr

Prayer Chain

Rachel Anderson



We have an active prayer chain here at First Church. It is a confidential list of people we pray for as requested. The people on the chain remain confidential. If you have names that you would like to add, please contact Rachel Anderson via phone or

email. (860) 644-2157 or leeandrachela@gmail.com. Also, if anyone would like to join us on the chain, let me know, we would love to have you. It is not time consuming and at your convenience.

Prayer Shawls

Nancy Stearns

We are really running low on prayer shawls. If you knit or crochet and would like to help, it would be very appreciated. Homespun yarn for the shawls is in the closet next to the north hallway in Fellowship Hall. Please contact Nancy Stearns with any questions at nancycstearns@yahoo.com.





Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the First Congregational Church of South Windsor will be held on Sunday January 22, 2023. The deadline for report submission to the church office is by Friday January 6, 2023. Please send all reports to Carrie at firstchurchsw@gmail.com.



Newsletter Deadline

The next newsletter issue will be published in **February 2023**. Please send your submissions and **photos!** to the church office by **January 13th** for inclusion. Thank you.



Church Office Hours

Hours will be Tuesday – Friday 9 am – 2 pm, unless otherwise noted.

Drop-in Hours with Rev. Nina!

Wednesdays, from 10 am – noon, or by appointment



Wreaths Across America 2022

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United Church of Christ

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TO: