

Main Street Musing

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF SOUTH WINDSOR

May 2026

Now that the holidays are over, we move forward. The coming days will bring more warmth and with that, changes in our schedules. Come May, I will take a few days off for R&R, in June a vacation and again R&R. July will also see some time for rest. Our summer worship will be less formal and shorter, considering the heat, etc., and although things may slow down a bit, we are still moving here at First Church. It is important to attend summer worship, to involve yourselves in programs and stay alert to our church activities. (So check your calendars!)

After Memorial Day, my office hours will move from 7-12:30 PM to 7-11:30 AM. I welcome your visits at these times and am always open to setting up appointments, given the heads up. Vision Forward will take a break throughout the summer months and will resume in the fall (late September).

Big thank yous to:

Those who supported the Lenten soup suppers with your presence and those who provided soup (Julie & Bob Reynolds, Betty and Marc Couture, and me!) Well done! Thank you!

Thank you to those who attended the Vision Forward Meetings! Your support is noted. Also to the Missions Committee for a great presentation and the Deacons' Committee for an insightful look at what Deacons do.

And as always, your presence on Sunday mornings! Big time important! This is key to building a secure future at FCCSW. Have a great rest of spring and see you in summer.

Pastor Dean

**Pastor Dean's Hours & Office
Schedule:**
Tuesday - Friday 7:00 am - 11:30 am;
Monday: Off

Church Committee

Jean Jackson, Clerk

Clerk's highlights from the Church Committee meeting held April 14, 2026 -

- Treasurer's report - Expenses for March were \$19,867.20. Income was \$16,359. Deficit for March was \$3,508.20. Deficit year-to-date is \$1,516.50.
- Investments - the account decreased \$113,927.91 in March, which includes the withdrawal of \$10,000 to cover expenses. The amount of \$15,000 will be requested for April, as the Cemetery Association's quarterly distribution will be due. Balance at the end of March was \$2,190,657.31.
- The next meeting will be held on May 12, 2026, at 6:30 pm in Fellowship Hall or the Metzger Chapel and on Zoom. All are welcome to attend, whether or not you serve on a committee.



Trustees News

Jean Trotman

We had two heat outages in the Wolcott Building this past winter. Both were caught before we sustained any plumbing damage. To prevent the possibility of frozen pipes in the future, the Trustees voted to have Unitech add a temperature alert for the building.



We have had several unexpected burglar alarm incidents in the last month or so. It is very important for everyone exiting the building to double-check to make sure the door latches behind them. Our doors are finicky and just letting them swing shut doesn't mean they latch which means they aren't locked. Also, anyone with a fob needs to know their password, should they need to speak with the call center. If you don't remember yours, contact Carrie or me.

The gray water sewer line has been fixed, and beadboard installed in the narthex stairway to Fellowship Hall to replace peeling wallpaper. Various external areas have been painted, including the columns, front doors for both buildings, and the Wolcott ramp.

Take Note! Benefit Concert



March 22, 2026



A giant **THANK YOU** to Jean Jackson for organizing this amazing fundraiser for our church's capital fund, and to Take Note! for sharing their outstanding talent with us!





Come Join Us
for a
SPRING TEA PARTY



at
First Congregational Church of
South Windsor
Saturday, May 9, 2026

Bigelow Tea will be here at
First Church to give a tea presentation
during our tea party!



11:00 AM-1:30 PM
in Fellowship Hall



Tickets are \$15

Tickets are available in the church office. Please call (860) 528-7992

Ticket proceeds will benefit the Bigelow Tea Charities and First Church SW Capital Fund Lift Project.

First Congregational Church
993 Main Street
South Windsor, CT 06074

Linda Dalpe
Lindald001@aol.com
(860) 528-1936

Tea and Refreshments
will be served.

Carrie Morse
Firstchurchsw@gmail.com
(860) 528-7992



www.firstchurchsw.org



Church Historian

Mary Crittenden

The members of First Congregational Church of South Windsor have weathered much over the years. In this column, I will talk about the changes in our climate here on the East Side of the Great River.

A group of 60 Dorchester people trekked from the Massachusetts Bay Colony through the woodland, following the Indian Trails that led to the Connecticut River and to where other Indian Trails converged. The Indian Trail led to the only place for miles where the Great River was fordable.

They expected to settle on the east side. However, finding that the east riverbank was a flood plain and the summer camp of the Podunks, they revised their plan.

It was the end of October. There was no time to build proper shelters, so they dug into the bluff bank. These shelters had three dirt walls. In front, the colonists set poles and roofed the shelter with thatch.

They had shipped their supplies; however, the ship was not able to sail up the river as far as Windsor due to the river being frozen. Some of the adventurers returned to Dorchester.

Some of the settlers were left behind to look after the cattle and to hold the land. They survived on acorns, malt, grain, and food given to them by the Natives and the few earlier settlers. But most of the cattle they had so laboriously driven there from the coast died of starvation. Strangely, though, those cattle that had arrived late and were left to fend for themselves on the east side of the river survived the winter very well (The Gunn Family Genealogy).

Do you personally know of the Connecticut River below Windsor freezing? New England and western Europe were in the middle of an ice age. This Little Ice Age lasted roughly from 1300 to 1850. Before the Industrial Age, people did not have much effect on the weather and climate change. So, what are the natural reasons for change?

- 1) Changes in the Earth's orbit. The shape of the Earth's orbit around the sun naturally changes over time, and so does the way the Earth tilts toward the sun. These changes affect how much of the sun's energy the Earth absorbs, which in turn affects the Earth's temperature.
- 2) Changes in the Sun's energy. The sun goes through changes that affect how much energy (heat) it gives off.
- 3) Volcanic eruptions not only spew out hot molten lava, but also add carbon dioxide (CO₂), dust, ash, and other particles to the

atmosphere. The additional CO₂ would cause warming; however, the particles in the air have a cooling effect. When they are sent high enough, they block sunlight from reaching us and can lead to slightly cooler temperatures around the world for a few years. On May 18, 1980, the Mount St. Helens eruption had a cooling effect.

No matter what caused the Little Ice Age, the colonists knew nothing else. Winters were cold. Summers were a time for growing food and fiber (both linen and wool) that was spun and woven for clothing and household goods. The settlers east of the river were finally permitted to hire a minister in 1694. A few years later, they had an unusual summer – the time was summer, but the weather was not summerlike. Next month, we will examine the "Year Without a Summer" and how people of our church community experienced it.

Music Committee

Jean Jackson and Lisa Horsfield

The choir was scheduled to take part in the service on April 26, but due to several members being away, Kamilla played a piano piece. The choir will sing on May 12 and then be off for the summer.

The Trustees were asked to let Jean Jackson know when the sanctuary has transitioned to summer A/C so all instruments can be tuned.

To recap the Take Note! concert in March, 60 people attended; \$820 was donated to the Capital Fund. Take Note! provided the concert with no cost to us, including fliers, postcards, and a media packet to use in advertising the event, plus, to our surprise, sent a check for \$250 to add to the Capital Fund. Thanks to all who had a part in making this event a success.



Save the Date!

Sunday, May 17, 2026 - South United Methodist Church on Main Street in Manchester will present its spring concert event at 4:30 pm. You will be treated to music from the Chancel Concert Choir, Wildfire Praise Band, and other performers.

Spring Clean Up Day: Help Needed!

Spring Cleanup Day is scheduled for Saturday, May 16th, from 9 AM-2 PM. We will be washing windows, installing window ACs and cleaning the entrances for the south door and the lift, as well as some other tasks. Bring your own lunch. Many hands make light work. We want our church home to be clean and welcoming for all who visit.



Below: Our Missions Committee coordinated a Palm Sunday snack drive to benefit Hands On Hartford's Homeless Outreach. Portable, high-protein snacks were collected to help the Hands On Hartford volunteers offer a bridge to services and a reminder to these folks that they are not forgotten. Thank you to everyone for their very generous donations for this special mission!



Missions Committee

Nancy Stearns

The Missions Committee thanks all who participated in our *Days for Girls* session to create drawstring bags that hold reusable personal hygiene items for girls in Guyana who would not be able to attend school on a regular basis without these kits. Special thanks to Donna Fletcher, who organized the project and provided a wonderful lunch for the attendees!



This year, we have (1) stuffed backpacks for homeless individuals, (2) made hot cocoa kits for children at risk of going hungry on the weekends, (3) created fleece blankets for SW police to carry in their cruisers to give to children and (4) made *Days for Girls* drawstring bags as part of reusable personal hygiene kits for girls in Guyana. The Missions Committee thanks all who participated in these projects, and we want your feedback to determine if the congregation enjoyed participating in our missions' projects. Do you want to see more of these projects? What other activities would you like us to work on? Would you rather not be part of these projects but feel obligated to attend? Please share your thoughts with a member of the Missions Committee so we can consider them in our decisions going forward.

We are again participating in the Church World Service Blankets of Hope and Tools of Hope programs.

A donation of \$10 will purchase a blanket dedicated to a mother or mother figure. The dedications are due to the church office by May 5th in order to be included in the Mother's Day bulletin. The Tools of Hope program provides families with seeds, tools, and even chickens to help them grow their own food and build a sustainable future. Each tool, at a cost of \$10, can be dedicated to a father or father figure. The Tools of Hope dedication form is included in this newsletter and must be received by the church office by June 18th to be included in the Father's Day bulletin.



Below: On Palm Sunday, we laid our palms at the foot of the cross.



Below: A beautiful display of Easter flowers adorned the sanctuary on Easter Sunday. Thank you to the church deacons for your hard work!



Palm Sunday



Maundy Thursday

Maundy Thursday Service of Darkness

Tenebrae (the Latin word for "shadows" or "darkness") is a unique and ancient service of reflection. Holy readings are shared, describing the time between the Last Supper and the Passion of Christ, as the sanctuary candles are gradually extinguished. This final light represents our steady hope and the promise of the coming of Easter morning. Holy Communion was served as we remembered the Last Supper. At First Congregational Church of South Windsor, we practice an open table and all are welcome.



Easter Sunday Worship Celebration

On Easter Sunday, we celebrated the resurrection of Christ and the promise of new beginnings! We were delighted to welcome the return of acclaimed jazz musician Caleb Nierenberg on the trumpet. His soulful music helped us mark this celebratory day with beauty and energy. There's nothing quite like a trumpet to announce a celebration! It was wonderful to gather to reflect on the power of hope and the joy of a new morning.



BLANKETS OF HOPE



We will once again be participating in the Church World Service (CWS) Blankets of Hope program. When difficult times happen, a kind and loving response can make all the difference. That's why the CWS Blankets program was created—to give a kind, loving and tangible response to someone facing a difficult time, reminding them that they are not alone.

Through the generosity of CWS partner organizations, congregations and individual supporters, our most vulnerable neighbors around the world can feel safe and keep warm with fresh linens and clean sleeping quarters.

A donation of \$10.00 will purchase a blanket, and we will continue our tradition of dedicating them on Mother's Day in honor of, or in memory of, mothers or mother figures in our lives. You will also find additional order forms in the Narthex and in Fellowship Hall.



I would like to purchase blanket/blankets at \$10.00 each in honor of or in memory of a mother for Church World Service to send to people in need of shelter and warmth. **Orders must be received by the church office by Tuesday, May 5th.** Make your check payable to First Congregational Church with **Blankets of Hope** in the memo portion.

Number of blankets: _____

In Honor of: _____

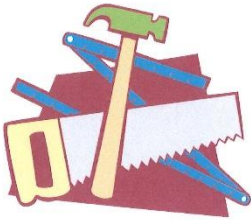
In Memory of: _____

Given By: _____

Total Donation: _____

TOOLS OF HOPE 2026

We are participating in the Church World Service Tools of Hope program. A donation of \$10.00 will purchase a tool and we will dedicate them on Father's Day on June 21st in honor of or in memory of fathers or father figures. An order form will be included in the June newsletter and will also be included in a few Sunday bulletins. Additional order forms can be found in the narthex and in Fellowship Hall. Please make checks out to First Congregational Church with Tools of Hope in the memo. This program provides tools to people around the globe and teaches skills necessary for people to sustain themselves.



TOOLS OF HOPE



I/We would like to purchase tools at \$10.00 each in honor of or in memory of a father or father figures for Church World Service to send to people in need of skills training and implements. Orders must be received by the church office by Thursday, June 18th. Make your check payable to First Congregational Church with Tools of Hope in the memo portion. Place this order form along with your payment in the offering plate or mail to First Congregational Church, PO Box 165, South Windsor, CT 06074.

Number of tools: _____

In Honor of: _____

In Memory of: _____

Given By: _____

Total Donation: _____

Church Family News



LeAnne Morgan 05/04
 Scott Larsen 05/12
 Mary Greco 05/15

Jeff Virr 05/25
 Kate Larsen 05/29

Bob & Julie Reynolds 05/01
 John & Shiela McIntosh 05/19
 Eric & Jan Soares 05/25
 John & Sue Larsen 05/26
 Greg & Jean Jackson 05/29

The Addington Family
 The Belknap Family
 Doris Burgdorf
 Iva Burnham
 Joyce Coon
 The Charette Family
 Della Mitchell



Bob Woodward
 The McIntosh Family
 The Anderson Family
 The Sharp Family
 The Senger Family
 The Starr Family

Our thoughts and prayers are with Lauren and Anthony Litwin and family on the passing of Anthony's father, Ronald Litwin, on April 15.

Church Office Hours

Hours are normally Tuesday – Friday, 9 am – 2 pm.

Newsletter Deadline

The next newsletter issue will be published in **June 2026**. Please send your submissions **and photos** to the church office by **May 15th** for inclusion: firstchurchsw@gmail.com ~



Thank you!

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF SOUTH WINDSOR

United Church of Christ

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TO: