

Main Street Musing

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF SOUTH WINDSOR



July 2024

Reviewing & Renewing Our Vows

When you joined the church, you made vows – to God, to others, and self. One such vow was “Do you promise to participate in the life and mission of this family of God’s people? Sharing regularly in the worship of God and enlisting in the work of this local church as it serves this community and the world?” You: “I promise with the help of God.” The above promise or vow is the key to our church’s future as we discern where we are going. But to discern where we are going can only happen when individuals who become part of that story and process know where they are and where they are going in their relationship with First Church. Regular worship? Yes, if you want to inspire others to join us, you must set an example of commitment, otherwise others will see your actions as louder than your words. Actions when congruent, attract!! Enlisting in the work of the church? Yes! We need you to be active in lending a helping hand for a successful outcome of these events which make First Church visible to our larger community, such as the tag sale and other events listed below.

So, as you can see, regular worship and enlisting (given your abilities) in the work and mission of First Church are utterly essential for us to know where we are going in this discernment process! Our discernment committee is OPEN TO ALL WHO WANT TO ATTEND. At our last meeting, we discussed how our church can become more visible in the larger community and we came up with three goals to serve our world and community. They are:

1. On Saturday August 24th at 10AM we will host a blessing of the animals at church, in the First Church parking lot.

2. We plan to organize a welcome service and get literature out to the new 55+ housing facility opening soon on Main Street.

3. In the spring, a blessing of farm workers, tractors, etc. will be held at the church, in the First Church parking lot.

See you in church,

Pastor Dean



Pastor Dean's Summer Hours & Office Schedule:
Tuesday - Friday 10am - 1:00pm
Monday: Off

Pastor Dean, Judy Borré and Mary Crittenden (pictured left to right) attended the SNEUCC Annual Conference and Meeting in Massachusetts on June 22nd.



Church Committee

Jean Jackson, Clerk

Clerk's highlights from the Church Committee meeting held June 11, 2024 -

- Treasurer's report - not available for the meeting. Sue Larsen did share that \$3,700 was collected through the Sunday offering; \$10,000 came from the Trust Fund to cover expenses. Sue will be working with Brooks Agency to set up a separate reporting category for the capital fundraising monies coming in.
- Investments - The brokerage account saw an increase of \$91,144 in May. \$10,000 was withdrawn to cover expenses, resulting in a net gain of \$81,144. The ending balance for May was \$2,059,968.83.
- The next Church Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 9, 2024, at 6:30 pm. It will be held in the kitchen area of Fellowship Hall and on Zoom. All are welcome to attend whether or not you serve on a committee.



Trustees News

Jean Trotman

Electricity rates from various providers were reviewed with the result that, at least for now, we won't benefit from making a change from Eversource, our current provider.

Funding for the work on the Fellowship Hall floor continues with our quarter's jars, the August tag sale and searching for grants. It was also mentioned that we could put funds from the redemption of bottles and cans toward this purpose. Just a reminder to put all plastic bottles and soda cans in the boxes under the air conditioner in the coffee hour area as they are turned in for the deposit return money (must have CTRV on the label). If you wish to bring in the same from home to add to the pot, please do so. Every little bit helps. Also, a reminder that the church no longer pays to have non-deposit items eligible for recycling removed. Please take them home with you if you wish to have them recycled vs. just included with the trash.



Left: Rachel Anderson reads the scripture during a Sunday worship service. Above: Pastor Dean delivers his sermon to the congregation.

SUMMER
Sundays

Church Tag Sale

Jean Trotman

Tag Sale Saturday August 10th from 9am to 2 pm, rain or shine

We are again participating in the town wide tag sale day and will be coordinating with the Wood Memorial Library for advertising. We also encourage all of you to spread the word. This year this is a fundraising event to help pay for the repairs needed on the Fellowship Hall floor. It is NOT a UCW event. We will need help from **everyone** to make this a success.



We are taking more time to set up this year. The schedule is as follows:

- **Sat. 7/20** starting at 9:30, move all portable shelving from the Wolcott basement to Fellowship Hall. Assemble them and put-up tables.
- **Sunday, 7/21** starting at 1:00, move all donations from the Dalpe's barn to Fellowship Hall.
- **Tu – Fri, 9-2 starting 7/23** for the 3 weeks prior to the tag sale, sort, clean and arrange donations
- **The week of 8/4-10.** In addition to continuing to prep donations, set up a large tent outside for bulky items, set up grill area for the sale of hot dogs, bring in homemade donations for the bake sale, set up cashier stations (one outside and one inside)
- **Sat. 8/10.** From 8:00 am to? We will need many hands to help customers, pack up purchases, cashier, grill hot dogs, sell baked goods, and, at the end of the day, pack up what is left.

If you prefer to assist with preparations by staying later during the week, or if several people prefer to work different hours than specified above (later in the day or in the evening, Saturday) and don't have fobs for the security and alarm systems, contact Jean Trotman to arrange for someone to open the church and disarm/arm the alarm system.

There will be sign-up sheets to let us know who is volunteering and when:

- Sat 7/20 setup
- Sun 7/21 to move donations to the church from the barn. We will need pickup trucks or trailers and extra people to load and unload.
- Week of 8/5-9: outdoor setup and final pickup of donations.

Please let me know if you have a truck or trailer and are available on 7/21 or during the week before the sale to pick up bulkier items that we are only going to move once. The more we have, the faster we can move the donations. Also, let me know if you need help moving anything to the church.

We will take smaller furniture items but not anything that is too large/heavy as we don't have the muscle power to lift/carry it. Otherwise, any of the items you typically see at tag sales is fine, with the exception of clothing. I encourage you to bring your donations directly to the church after 7/21 but, if that isn't possible, Linda Dalpe has made storage space available in her barn. Contact her if you have questions (860-528-1936). Please do not leave things at the warehouse. Anything you leave in the barn must be in boxes with lids or wrapped to keep it protected.

We would also appreciate it if you can save your newspapers to use for packing purchases.

Jean Trotman C: 860-690-9071, H: 860-289-7637

Missions News

Rachel Anderson, Terry Belknap, Nancy Stearns, & Marilyn Senger



We received \$780.00 for the Father's Day collection for Tools of Hope. Thanks to all who donated. Fathers and father figures were honored and remembered with a list of dedications in the Sunday bulletin for Father's Day, June 16. Carrie has extra dedication copies in the church office if anyone would like one.

Sharing Our Talents

Linda Dalpe

"We all have talent...this new fundraising strategy is to showcase a talent that you never really thought about..."

- Does everyone love a certain cake you make?
- Are you a great cook?
- Would you pull weeds for two hours in someone's garden?
- What about babysitting or "grandma" sitting?
- Would you be willing to run errands, or do grocery shopping?
- What about doing computer lessons, or teach other skills that you have?
- Do you like to clean house, organize things, wash windows, iron?
- Paint outside or inside?
- Are you good at repairing things?
- Do you like to repot plants? Grow cuttings?
- Will you take all of the bottles /cans back that have been accumulating for someone?
- Do you have a large garden and are willing to sell your extra vegetables or flowers?
- Would you be willing to work for several hours to help someone on a task that they need help with?
- Are you a woodworker who loves to build birdhouses, or love to paint?
- Other talent?????

Here's how it works

You reserve a "ticket" for the item or work. Contact the person and arrange for the work/product. You decide if the product is to be picked up or delivered. Once the item is delivered/ talent received, the money earned is your donation into this project.

Here are some examples:

1) With 48 hours' notice, xxxx will make an agreed upon dinner for one/two at the cost of \$25? or \$39? (to be determined). The cook can take out the cost of the ingredients and then the remainder is deposited into the capital fund.

2) With advance notice, xxxx will come and work in your garden or ...for two (or 3) hours @ say \$16-18 an hour...or whatever fee you set.

Payment is then issued and turned over to Sue Larsen to be earmarked for the capital fundraising project.

Publicity

Ticket/Talents will be hung on the bulletin board in fellowship hall for members to access.

A “thermometer” will be created/displayed with the indicator rising as we reach each goal line.

Fill out the form on the next page, and give the information to:

Linda Dalpe

Lindald001@aol.com or

call Linda at 860-528-1936

It can also be left in the UCW mailbox.

We will make your tickets!



Indicate how many of the same tickets you want to post. Also, please let us know if this talent is ‘renewable’ after all of the tickets have been used.

Example: I am willing to do 6 cakes.

Or ... I am willing to do (4) two-hour weeding sessions.

Or ... I will do 2 dinners ...

Or whatever your talent / share is...etc.

If you have more than one idea, we will create separate tickets.

We will then print them up and hang them on the board in the lower hall...They will be green. \$\$\$

If you need someone to do something, then we can move on to “I need help with...” Post hours, when, etc., and how much you will pay for the job. These will be pink.

Finally, turn in the money to Sue Larsen.

Sharing Our Talents

Name: _____

Contact phone: _____

Email: _____

Talent: _____

Cost for my Talent: _____

Description of what it is:

Hours /days needed in advance notice:

Additional parameters...i.e. has to be on a weekend, etc.

Other Information:

Will Deliver _____ Must Pickup _____

Renewable: _____ # of times: _____



*Capital Fundraising, continued.
Cans and bottles recycling drive*



Redemption of soda cans and bottles has now increased to \$.10 each. Also, juice bottles have been added to the list. Look for the **CTRV** designation. Cans containing alcohol such as hard ciders are not accepted at the redemption center.

Glass bottles must be placed in their original container (e.g. beer) or a box. Cans and plastic must be separated. There are boxes just outside the kitchen for the soda cans and plastic bottles.

Check the roadsides, walking trails etc. for discarded bottles and cans. We can not only raise money to repair the floor in Fellowship Hall, but help the environment...

\$.10 here, \$.10 there, soon adds up to significant money.

See Judy Borré if you have any questions.

Historian's Column

Mary Crittenden

Talk talk talk talk talk Yak yak yakkety yak

“Yak to talk for a long time about unimportant matters or without achieving anything.” ¹

Our world is full of voices from TikToks, Reels, YouTube Shorts, TED Talks, TV talk shows and so on! Our ears are battered and bruised. Our minds fill with words and when reading we question when the article fades to a “read more” and we find that instead of a few more words that finish the thought, we are greeted with an endless column. “Do I really want to know or can I simply close without knowing?” Something is missing in so many lives. Where is the sense of meaning and community? Our church is a small church. Looking back there was a time that there were only 12 members in the pews on Sunday mornings. And there was a period when there was the need for two morning services. Through these times First Church was a “Family Church.” Being a small church has an advantage! Wait a minute! How can a small aging congregation be an advantage? Does being here feel comfortable and like family? If so, our feeling illustrates that we have a warm sense of community. Guests are greeted warmly and invited to coffee hour. It is a fact that it is easier to create a healthy culture and community in a small church. That is not to say that large churches can not do it. However, large churches have to work at creating a healthy culture and community.

While it can be done, it takes intent and effort.

Years ago my husband and I went to a large church a couple times after moving here. No one spoke to us other than the minister and that was just a couple of words as he shook our hands as we left. I got the impression that he didn't know if we were new or some members of the congregation that he didn't know. A few months later we went to another church of about the same size and were greeted warmly and invited to come back. I felt that that congregation had a spiritual home rather than being a random assembly of individuals who didn't know each other.



In our country, loneliness and isolation are now designated as an epidemic. The future is bright for small local churches with a heart to serve God and their communities. If we look at what is happening with younger generations, we will soon notice that they are the most sold-to and marketed-to generation in history. Well known people are featured in commercials, but do they actually use the product? Who knows, but what is important here is finding that this generation is looking for an alternative to that, not an echo of it. This fosters a desire for authenticity. Authenticity will never show up in a church budget, nor can you 'strategize' for it. It springs from character and a genuine desire to serve. As a small church, we have the opportunity to continue reaching out to new people with our hosting skills. Simply being who we are; while also reaching out to members we haven't seen recently and to people in our community. Pastors of small churches have the opportunity to preach and interact with people in a real genuine way. As Craig Groeschel often says, people would rather follow a leader who's always real than a leader who's always right. A small congregation will not have many guests, but will have a better opportunity to assimilate guests through a personal connection. The problem of many churches (large and small) is that they do not elevate the ministry of hospitality to take advantage of the opportunity. Kindness, courtesy and a genuine warm smile are the foundation for our hospitality.

1 Definition of yak from the Cambridge Academic Content Dictionary © Cambridge University Press

Music Committee

Jean Jackson and Lisa Horsfield



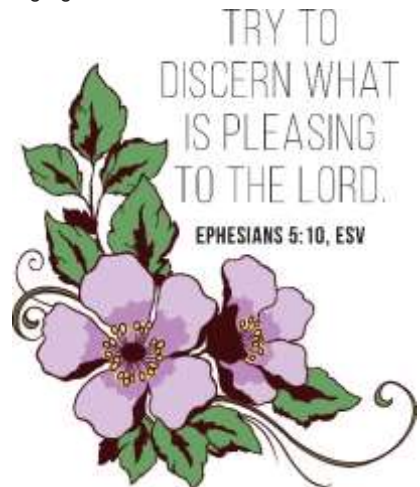
- Kamilla took a vacation day on Sunday, June 9; Jean Jackson filled in for her.
- Summer tuning of the pianos and organ are in the process of being scheduled.

Discernment Challenge

Recently, church members have been taking turns sharing thoughts during the Discernment Challenge moments during Sunday worship services. Some photos of recent discernment challenges are below and Mary Crittenden shares her discernment challenge notes for the newsletter.



Recent Discernment Challenge presenters: Scott Horsfield, Mary Crittenden, Terry Belknap and Barbara Wright share their thoughts and insights with the congregation.



Discernment Challenge

Mary Crittenden

Today I'm going to refer to my history rather than the history of our church. Over the 30 years that I have been a member, many things have spoken to me. In 1994, I lived on Ellington Road near the Police Station. As a new member, I would drive down the hill on Ellington Road to the traffic light for Sullivan Ave. By then I would be thinking of the worship service and wondering just what in the service would really speak to me. Would it be something in the sermon, a hymn, a prayer or what?

Now I'm more apt to be thinking of things I want to share with friends or bits of committee work I want to communicate to various people. It doesn't mean I value the elements of worship less. It means that I am more involved with the members and the work of the church.

These changes came slowly. Transitions slid by almost without recognition; simply gradual changes. Many of life's passages are not gradual. Right now in the life of First Church we are in a time of transition and transformation. The church has had many transitions in 330 years. The services of 1694 were quite different from today's. The changes came one at a time.

I hope you will think about what is important to you here at First Church. What do you value?

What changes add meaning? How can this church better serve you; and the community?





School's out for summer and we have had some special volunteers. Thank you to Oscar and Owen Soares and mom Jan for changing the church sign message.

Diaconate Ditties

Barbara Wright

The Deacons with the help of Jean Jackson, Clerk and Carrie Morse, Administrator have been working on updating and combining the membership lists. We will be sending out letters to inactive members inviting them to come back.

We also reviewed our procedures in case of a medical emergency occurring during a church service or activity.

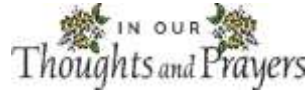
We are working on a plan for goals for the Pastor for the coming year.

There will be no scheduled Deacon's meeting for July and August unless something comes up that necessitates one.

Church Family News



Rick Whitin	07/04
Barbara Wright	07/07
Laura Klein	07/08
Alex Margiott	07/09
Rod Johnson	07/09
Ray Zaugg	07/12
Scott Horsfield	07/18
Stuart Howard	07/20
Marlena Klein	07/20
Catherine Mikkola	07/20
Sheila McIntosh	07/21
Bill Fraize	07/27
Adrienne Andrews	07/30



Doris Burgdorf
 Della Mitchell
 Cliff McClellan
 Edie & Bob Starr
 Patti & Billy Cox
 Joyce Coon
 Lisa Horsfield
 Bob Woodward
 Rod Johnson



Congratulations to Adam and Kate (Larsen) Weatherwax on the birth of their daughter Madeline Juliette on May 27, 2024. Congrats to big brother Cameron. Grandparents are Jack and Sue Larsen.

Newsletter Deadline

The next newsletter issue will be published in **August 2024**. Please send your submissions **and photos** to the church office by **July 12th** for inclusion: firstchurchsw@gmail.com Thank you.



Church Office Hours

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

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