

# Main Street Musing

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF SOUTH WINDSOR



March 2025

## The Gap and the aging church – a vision of hope!?

Of late, I have been giving a lot of thought to our church's future and my place in that future. The issue of a gap in age and energy has caused me to pause and consider just how far I can expect to go with First Church as an aging congregation. While I have changed some of my visions for this congregation, I have not given up pursuing some kind of vision for our future and for all of you. What that future looks like is uncertain. My goal for now is to:

1. Go one more year, with a review half way through to see how we are doing in reaching our goals through our vision forward discussions, etc.
2. Keep an eye on attendance for worship and programs to access the activity level and participation. This is crucial!!
3. Propose ideas to consider and think about as primers to our future discussions. Such are as follows:
  - a. Establish Community Vision Have we spent time talking to people in our community and asking them what kinds of things they'd be looking for in a church? Do we know who is living nearby? It is not realistic to ask people in our community to adapt to what has worked for our church in the past. We need to find out what will connect with the people who are currently seeking a spiritual home!
  - b. Invest in our children. Make room for kids in our church, in worship, in making space to gather. Young families will be attracted to a church that has room for their kids! Upgrade our facilities with up to date play and learning spaces. Invest in kids – our future depends on it!!
  - c. Accept and be open to loss. Be willing to see people leave the church when change arrives! Attracting

younger families will mean changing the way we do things (worship included!). Some will leave the church to seek a better fit; that's ok. Let them go. Its ok to be on the journey of self-transformation.

d. Embrace Diversity. Be willing to reach those who are different from us. Their difference gives new life and perspective to an aging church. Don't expect them to fit into our ways because we've always done it that way! Be open to new ways of doing things! Embrace diversity. Learn to be open to people who challenge our traditions and embrace difference rather than only those who fit in with our expectations.

e. Provide room to fail. What worked in the past may not work now. Give permission to fail as an opportunity to try new things that might connect with our community. If it does not work, learn from the experience and try something new – but don't give up!

f. Broaden worship styles. A badly done contemporary worship service will drive more people away than a typical blended or traditional service. Whatever style of worship we explore, know it well! Invest in a worship committee – offer a well-done service to attract a diversity of people and ages! Intergenerational is the goal!

g. Kill sacred cows! Ten years is a large amount of time; a gap. What we were six years ago also may not be what we are now nor becoming in the near future! Be willing to change programs and events to reach a wider population, young and old alike. Again, intergenerational is the key to the aging church.

And finally! Stop describing ourselves as 'the old people church up the road'. It's unattractive and will sabotage your growth and potential. Try describing our church as older adults, but absolutely energetic and excited for change and new opportunities.

*Pastor Dean*



**Pastor Dean's Winter Hours & Office Schedule:  
Tuesday - Friday 8:30am - 1:30pm; Monday: Off**



## *First Church Lent and Easter Schedule 2025*

**Ash Wednesday, March 5<sup>th</sup>**-The church chapel will be open from 9:00AM to Noon and 6:30PM-7:30PM for anyone wishing to receive ashes.



### Worship Schedule For Lent

**Palm Sunday Service, Sunday, April 13<sup>th</sup>**

**10:00AM Pancake Breakfast to follow!**

\*Sign up/Register for the Pancake Breakfast: Sign-up sheet will be in Fellowship Hall or contact church office at [firstchurchsw@gmail.com](mailto:firstchurchsw@gmail.com) or (860) 528-7992.

**Maundy Thursday Service, Thursday, April 17<sup>th</sup>**

**Service of Shadows and Communion, 7:00PM in person or on Zoom.**

**Good Friday, Friday, April 18<sup>th</sup> 9:00AM-Noon**

**Church will be open for quiet prayer and reflection.**

**Easter Sunday Service, Sunday, April 20<sup>th</sup> 10:00AM in person or on Zoom.**



**More  
Than  
Soup...**

**First Church  
Lenten  
Suppers  
& Chats**

**Meal schedule and discussions for Lenten season:**

Goulash meal... March 12th 6:30pm

***Discussion: What day was Jesus crucified?***

Soup & bread... March 26th 6:30pm

***Discussion: Is Sunday or Saturday the Sabbath?***

Soup & bread... April 9th 6:30pm

***Discussion: Was the last supper or communion as Passover meal?***

## *Church Committee*

Jean Jackson, Clerk

Clerk's highlights from the Church Committee meeting held February 11, 2025 -



- Treasurer's report - Income for January was \$14,883.50. Income includes \$10,000 received from the brokerage account to cover expenses. Expenses were \$24,781.66. Deficit for January was \$9,898.16.
- Investments - The brokerage account saw an increase of \$47,117.94 in January, which includes \$4,390.76 in dividends and interest. \$10,000 was withdrawn to cover expenses. The net increase for the month was \$37,117.94. The ending balance for January is \$2,209,098.07. No changes were made to the portfolio.
- The next Church Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 11, 2025 at 6:30 pm. It will be held in Fellowship Hall and on Zoom. All are welcome to attend whether or not you serve on a committee.

## *Music Committee*

Jean Jackson and Lisa Horsfield



The Choir took part in Sunday services Feb. 16 and Feb. 23, a break from their normal /usual routine of the 2nd and 4th Sundays.

## *Stewardship Committee*

Lisa Horsfield, Chairperson

The Stewardship Committee extends thanks to all who pledged their financial support during the November 2024 pledge drive. Twenty-eight pledges totaling approximately \$51,000 were dedicated during the Sunday morning service on November 24, 2024. We remind all that additional pledges and financial donations are accepted and appreciated at any time, as are gifts of your time and talent! Your continued support of the work of First Church is greatly appreciated.

### *To Cancel or Not to Cancel? - Good question!*

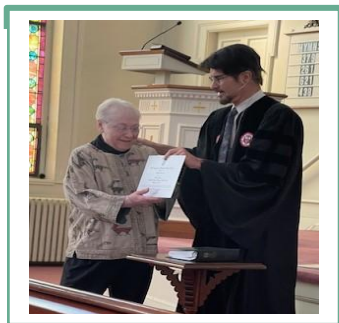
New England winter weather is here and we have weathered the storms. After canceling worship the previous week, it was decided to open for anyone wishing to attend worship following the snow/ice storm on Feb. 23<sup>rd</sup>. It was a skeleton crew worship team and only a handful made it to church, but we have heard it was a lovely, intimate and innovative service with Pastor Dean. Pastor Dean even played the piano. Thank you to everyone who ventured out to church.



### *Sharing Our Space with Our Community*

In December, First Church shared Fellowship Hall with the South Windsor Community Chorus so that they were able to keep rehearsing for their winter concert. They typically meet at the high school, but when the schools are closed, they do not have the ability to practice there. They are grateful to keep the music flowing and the rehearsals going.





First Church is excited to announce the addition of a Parish Nurse. Longtime First Church member, Melody Treadwell, has offered her nursing expertise to our church community. She was installed on February 23, 2025 during worship. She is excited for the opportunity to serve her church and church family. We offer our support and gratitude for this special health and healing ministry.

### WHAT CAN A PARISH NURSE DO?

Parish Nurses facilitate the healing mission of the Church in a confidential and professional manner through the following roles:

#### Health Educator

- Provide programs and screenings with a focus on maintaining wellness.
- Establish a resource library.

#### Health Counselor

- Provide limited, confidential health counseling.

#### Health Referral Source

- Liason to community services.

#### Integrator of Faith and Wellness

- Promote an understanding of the relationship between faith and healing.

### ARE THERE THINGS PARISH NURSES CAN'T DO?

#### Parish Nurses:

- Do not provide hands-on-nursing care.
- Do not dispense medication.
- Do not replace health care providers.

## *Trustees News*

Jean Trotman

Jim Belknap has resigned from the Investment committee. Lee Anderson, who was already involved with our investments, will take over. We have selected our contractors for the abatement and cement work on the Fellowship Hall floor and are moving on to planning for all the tasks that have to be done prior to the start of work. We don't yet have exact dates, but I am expecting work to start in June and last through August. Thanks to a very generous financial gift from NuWay Tobacco, for which we are extremely thankful, we have our financing for this project.

## *Missions*

Rachel Anderson

For many years, your faithful support of CWS (Church World Service) has provided life-changing resources to neighbors in need, often at just the right time. We recently received a thank you for our continued support. ***Thank you for your commitment and compassion***—it means the world to those we serve! Watch for details for our upcoming church food drive!



## *Historian's Column*

Mary Crittenden

As the number of families living here increased, so did the desire to have their own place of worship. In May 1680, they petitioned the assembly for permission to have their own church. This must have failed, for there is another petition in the colonial records as presented in Stiles Vol. 1 pp550-551.

To the Hon Gen Court sitting at Hartford, October 8, 1691:

The petition of the inhabitants of Windsor on the East side of the River, humbly shewet; that whereas by God's providence, who is the Supreme Orderer of bounds of all men's habitations, ours are so disposed as that we are incapacitated for attendance upon the public worship of God, in our Towne, without great Trouble, Labor, Hazard, and difficulty on the Sabbath, which by Divine appointment is a Day of Rest, and a considerable part of our inhabitants being for the most part wholly deprived of any

opportunity of enjoying God in his ordinances in public worship, and God having increased the number of our families to above 50, wherein it is reckoned there are near 300 persons capable to hear the word of God to profit, and apprehending it inconsistent with the design of our fathers who came into this wilderness that they might enjoy the ordinances of God in peace, without disturbance, and laying out our land for a settlement of so many of us their children on y<sup>e</sup> side of the River, that we should be thereby deprived of the liberty of quietly enjoying God in his ordinances on the Sabbath, & the Town together being by God's Goodness to us able to maintain 2 ministers; We humbly petition that the Hon Court would be pleased to order that the Town should mutually maintain 2 ministers, and one of the 2 to be settled on the East side of the River. We request the Hon Ct to consider that it hath pleased the Hon Gen Ct to grant an enlargement of 5 miles to our place for encouragement of the plantation, which is to us, without the enjoyment of God's ordinances there. And the extreme hazards, dangers, and difficulties to the most able, and total inability of the greater part to go to the publick meeting at the Town, and the many Sabbaths that none of us can go, forces us to make this our application to this Hon Cour Your compliance herewith will oblige us, & as in duty we are bound to pray, &c.

Signed by us in behalf of the major  
Part of the inhabitants of Windsor  
On the East side of the River

Joseph Fitch  
Nath<sup>l</sup> Bissell  
Samuel Grant S<sup>r</sup>

When the court next met May 1692: they did not render an immediate decision as they found a difficulty arising in the case. So, they appointed these men (Mr. William Pitkin, Mr. Timothy Woodbridge, and Mr. Noadiah Russell) to meet at Windsor and to try to bring the people to a comfortable agreement. While the difficulty is not given, Stiles lays out reasoning that the people on the west side of the river did not feel that they could financially maintain their minister without the funds that came from the people on the east side of the river. At this point the court recommend that the people of Windsor should settle a comfortable maintenance of their minister and then to grant that the people on the east side be able to settle a minister.

This must not have happened as we will see next month another petition from the people on the east side of the river.





# MARCH

Birthdays

## *Church Family News*

3/03 Jean Jackson  
 3/03 Mary Anne Novak  
 3/07 Lee Anderson  
 3/07 Donna Fletcher  
 3/07 Liam Senatroy  
 3/08 Lisa Horsfield  
 3/08 Holly Burnham  
 3/10 Stephanie Clarke  
 3/12 Caitlin Cote  
 3/14 Dashiell Cote  
 3/16 Scott Burnham

3/17 Geoff Gossett  
 3/17 Patrick Woble  
 3/18 Liz Smith  
 3/18 Kaye Woolam  
 3/24 Ingrid Fraize  
 3/24 JT Samsel  
 3/24 Michael McClellan  
 3/25 Bei Tong  
 3/26 Joyce Coon  
 3/31 Karen Smith



Doris Burgdorf  
 Della Mitchell  
 Cliff McClellan  
 The Cox Family  
 The Zaugg Family

Iva Burnham  
 Joyce Coon  
 Bob Woodward  
 Carol Mattera  
 The Burnham Family



It is with tremendous joy that we announce the recent engagement of Erin Jones and Benjamin Hallmark. Erin is the daughter of First Church members Patrick and Lynda Jones and beloved sister of our church Administrative Assistant, Carrie Morse. Congratulations to Erin and Ben!



## *Valentine's Evening Ice Cream Social*



On Friday evening, February 14<sup>th</sup>, we had an impromptu ice cream social here at church hosted by Pastor Dean, our Administrative Assistant, Carrie Morse and Carrie's husband, Paul. We had a great turnout and a lot of fun making our own sundaes and visiting with one another.



### *Church Office Hours*

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

### *Newsletter Deadline*

The next newsletter issue will be published in **April 2025**. Please send your submissions **and photos** to the church office by **March 14<sup>th</sup>** for inclusion:

[firstchurchsw@gmail.com](mailto:firstchurchsw@gmail.com) ~ Thanks!



Updated **Church Directories** can be found in Fellowship Hall. If you would like a copy emailed to you, please contact Carrie in the church office.





Pastor Dean shares a lesson from the Ten Commandments during the children's moment at worship in January.

*Silver Lake Summer Camp  
Registration is now open!*



*Sharing Our Space with Our Community, cont.  
Sewin4Servicemen 2025*

The very dedicated volunteers show up year after year after year to stitch patriotic lap quilts for deserving veterans throughout our community. Four Saturdays make a lifetime of difference to a veteran receiving a special lap quilt. The next sewing dates are March 22<sup>nd</sup> and April 26<sup>th</sup>. Interested in volunteering? Contact the church office to be connected with organizer, Judy Borré.



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United Church of Christ

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TO: