

# Main Street Musing

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

February 2018

Dear Winter Sojourners,

Despite the deep freeze and snow, the birds in my neck of the woods have been sounding their morning songs touched with a hint of spring, as they transition slowly towards the season of new life, preparing to find mates. The Tufted Titmouse, in particular, has begun its lilting and plaintive call which echoes throughout the woods offering hope much larger than the diminutive songster.

I keep telling myself that soon Ground Hog Day will be here, then Ash Wednesday, Lent and Easter and we will be headed towards spring. Hallelujah! Through the cold, gray days of winter we make our way, creatures and people alike, doing what we have to, going about our work, looking for hope amidst the frozen landscape; finding comfort in ‘comfort foods’ and winter pastimes; perhaps skiing, reading, napping, watching football (or both!), binge-watching old reruns of ‘Friends,’ getting away to a tropical climate or just plain sticking it out until the days begin to get longer, brighter and a tad warmer, when Old Mother West Wind settles back in her armchair for her spring vacation.

There’s a favorite children’s book called “The Tomten” by 20<sup>th</sup> c. Swedish writer Astrid Lindgren. Tomtens are a Swedish tradition; a little gnome-like creature that creeps about a farm in the arctic night, a valued caretaker and guardian, murmuring to the chickens, cows, and other animals in “tomten language, a silent little language” that only the animals can understand. Tomten reassures all: *“Winters come and winters go, Summers come and summers go. Soon you can graze in the fields.”* The Tomten shares its gentle good cheer throughout the deep nights, giving hope to all creatures that winter, too, shall pass. Life will bloom again.

It helps to hear words of hope in the dark nights when sometimes it is hard to believe spring will ever come again. The traditions and folklore of many cultures speak to this, as do the cries of humanity throughout the ages. Surely, many who are without creature comforts, freezing in woods, under bridges and in cardboard houses, are crying out for relief. Let us keep them in our prayers.

Whatever our circumstances, mercifully and blessedly, the ultimate comfort is to know that Jesus, “a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope,” (Hebrews 6:19), is ever-present, whether during those dark wintry nights or dark nights of the soul.

I pray that you hear the voice of Jesus and feel the comfort of his presence and his message of hope. I pray that you hear the lilting calls of a spring bird in your ears or your soul, proclaiming that hope. I pray for all of you, without ceasing.

Enjoy the quiet moments winter can bring us that slow us down. And rejoice with birdsong as we wait for our own folklore thing to happen, the momentous decision of Grand Creature Groundhog on Feb 2!

Faithfully,

*Nina*



## Church Committee

Jean  
Church Clerk

- Next meeting of the Church Committee is February 13, 2018. All are invited to attend, whether or not you serve on a committee or board.
- **Please note** - the Annual Meeting date is January 28, 2018 following the morning service. Pizza and salad will be provided. All are invited to attend, whether or not you serve on a committee or board.

## Special Guest

On January 28<sup>th</sup>, we will be welcoming Rabbi Jeff Glickman from Temple Beth Hillel. He will be spending time with us in the sanctuary and then with the children in their class. The Church School students will be receiving a copy of his book, *Have You Heard? A Child's Introduction to the Ten Commandments*.



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## Trustees News

Amanda has informed the Board of Trustees that due to changes in her family's schedule she no longer has the time necessary to continue in her duties as sexton at First Church past the end of January. This is a major loss. In the short time that she has held the position Amanda and her "crew" have done an excellent job and we thank them for all their efforts on our behalf. The good news is that the McNulty family remains an active part of our church family.

The Trustees have again agreed to first offer the custodian position to a qualified member of our congregation. The position is part time and is currently budgeted for up to ten hours per week. Both the days and hours to be worked are flexible. Anyone interested should contact a member of the Trustees for more information. If no one comes forward the position will be advertised to the general public. The successful candidate must be willing to submit to a background check as required by our safe church policy.

**STAFF**  
  
**CHANGES**

## WARNING

Official notice is hereby given that the 320<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, in South Windsor, Connecticut, will be held in the Lower Hall on Sunday, January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2018 after the Morning Service.

For the purpose of:

1. Accepting the Board and Committee Reports for 2017.
2. Electing church officers/board/committees and personnel for 2018.
3. Enacting any other business that may legally come before this meeting.

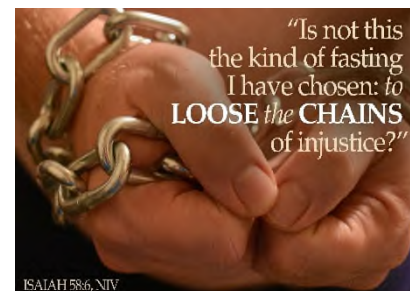
Jean Jackson, Clerk  
Jean Trotman, Moderator

A luncheon will be enjoyed after the Service

## Register Now!

### Silver Lake Conference

The calendar for conferences for Silver Lake Conference Center has been posted on the bulletin board in Lower Hall. There is an open house scheduled for **Sunday, May 20<sup>th</sup>**, 2-4pm. If anyone is interested please get in touch with the church office. Register before 1/31 and save \$50 using code EARLY18. Pastor Nina wishes to share that Silver Lake is an incredibly formative experience for young people (her son attended several years on scholarship and worked there also). She highly encourages parents to consider this camping adventure, for which there are scholarship funds available. It's a win-win! Camperships may be available to assist to help defray the cost of sending your child(ren).



## “Crossing the Road with Christ: Cultivating a Changing Worldview”

There’s a lot of change going on in our ‘worlds’ – the global community, our church community and our own personal worlds. Where do these worlds – and the people in them, meet? When they do meet, how do we ‘act’ towards each other in new or unfamiliar situations? What do we say and how do we say it in ways that are ‘ok’ (i.e., caring, honest, polite, meaningful, effective, unbiased, loving, politically correct, welcoming, respectful, compassionate, etc.)?

How do we cross the road with Christ to meet people where they are, and have them meet us where we are? How do we grow into new worldviews for the sake of cultivating our own changing worldviews and peace between peoples – starting with ourselves and understanding that which we find fearful, curious, uncomfortable, off-putting or all of the above? Many questions come up about our own and others’ thinking, behavior and beliefs.

Meeting others where they are isn’t simply a physical or geographic thing; it is a metaphor for walking in someone else’s shoes, considering ‘the other,’ learning about those things that make us uncomfortable, or that we truly want to know more about *but are afraid to ask*.

In the midst of continuing racial injustice, a communication crisis, opioid epidemic, gender and sexist crises, mental health crises, LGBTQI issues and many others, how do we communicate to each other in ways that ‘cross the road’ rather than ‘blow up the bridge?’

Christ’s command to ‘love thy neighbor as thyself’ is a five-word phrase easily read or recited, but not as

successfully practiced by humankind, as proven throughout time immemorial. Obviously, we are far from ‘crossing the road.’ We could use a little help, on all levels: personal, local and global.

Let’s start with us. This series is designed to allow us to ‘stick our toes in the waters’ of some high profile issues to learn more about the ideas and people involved; to allay fears; dissipate hate; cultivate understanding between different worldviews.

Each speaker will offer us a brief overview on a subject, five in all, presented on Wednesday evenings during Lent. **Ash Wednesday, February 14**, we will have a service at 6:30 p.m. followed by a pot-luck dinner and a brief overview of the series presented by Nina.

On Feb. 21, 28; March 7, 14, and 21, we will have guest presenters. Currently scheduled are Ms. Marissa Beaulieu of Narcotics Anonymous who will speak to us about “Addiction and Recovery.” Dr. Ron Casey, psychologist and UCC consultant will present on “How We Communicate.” Additional presenters and subjects will be announced upon confirmation.

This series is being offered based upon the popularity and success of last year’s, “Opening Doors: Exploring Our Faith Journeys,” with the hope that we might choose one of this year’s subjects to explore more deeply during the year after getting a brief introduction to it. It is also hoped you will all mark your calendars and once again come break bread, share soup and partake of possibilities as we think about how we can ‘cross the road with Christ’ to a better world. All are welcome! Bring a guest (or two)!



## 2018 Flower Chart

The 2018 Flower Chart has been posted. Individuals and families are welcome to sign up for flowers. Please note how you would like the acknowledgement to read (in memory of or in honor of). Donors are responsible for ordering and arranging for flowers to be in church on Sunday. Donors may take their arrangements home following service or deliver them to one of our homebound members and friends. Please talk with Pastor Nina for possible recipients.





## Lenten Devotionals Available

We will be offering two Lenten devotionals this year. *Lovers and Fools* is authored by the UCC writers in Stillspeaking Writers' Group. One of the writers, Vince Amlin, writes,

"I share an electronic calendar with two congregations and three staff people. When everyone's schedule is showing, it looks like I'm supposed to be in five places at once.



Lent is like that this year.

If you're beginning this devotional on Ash Wednesday, (February 14) you may have noticed how hard it was to get a dinner reservation after worship. If you look ahead to Easter, (April 1) you'll find it's also doing double duty.

As Christians, we always live between two calendars. We celebrate a new year in November. We're confused when our pastor insists on green paraments for the first week in July, not red, white, and blue. We set aside this season for solemn study and reflection, and to the rest of the world it remains six ordinary weeks between Valentine's and April Fool's Day.

How then should we observe this crowded season? What does Lent have to do with lovers and fools? Since the answer to every question in a children's sermon is either "love" or "Jesus," maybe that one's easy. But is Lent for fools?

Leave your ashes on for that romantic dinner, and you may have your answer. Or tell one of your smart Atheist friends you believe in the Resurrection.

Not convinced? Take it from Paul: "The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God...God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong..." (I Corinthians 1:18, 27)

This season and its stories, set us apart, put us on a different timeline. We spend our days worshipping a God in love with weakness; following a foolish savior, even to the cross."

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 14, and continues through Easter Sunday, April 1.

The second devotional is *Following the Way* by The Bethany Fellows; edited by Nannette E. Banks, Laura Phillips, and Lara Blackwood Pickrel

Ash Wednesday is February 14.

What does it mean to be a follower of Jesus? How do we walk with him along the way? Our annual Lenten devotional offers daily reflections and prayers to guide and deepen your journey with Jesus this Lenten season.



## Holiday Fair Workshops

Crafting meetings will begin on **Mondays 6:30 to 8:30 starting Feb. 5, 12, 19, and 26** at the 1090 Main St. workshop of Linda. Please let Linda know that you are coming as it helps to plan for work tables and materials. If you have



an idea bring it with the materials and others will help you assemble them. All are welcome at these workshops! Bring a friend! We especially are looking for ideas for children, teens, and men. If you are particularly interested in chairing a

booth or joining the fair planning committee you are very welcome. Watch for new details in each newsletter, and church bulletins.

## Reception For Concert

We will be hosting the **February 25<sup>th</sup>** Jasper Quartet Concert sponsored by the South Windsor Cultural



Jasper Quartet

Arts Commission. The concert will be at 3:00 p.m. Set up will be immediately after church. We will be supplying the food for the reception following the concert. There is a signup sheet on the bulletin board in Lower Hall. Please make note

of the food that you will be providing and if you are able to help with set up or clean up.

## Our "Fourth" Meetinghouse

The East Windsor Congregational Church was organized on June 25, 1752 as the Fourth\* Ecclesiastical Society of Windsor (or the North Society or Scantic Church). The town of East Windsor was incorporated sixteen years later. Thus the church established in 1694 was now in the town of East Windsor and as such became the First Ecclesiastical Society of East Windsor.

With the congregation dividing between the two churches, the members of First were now free to relocate their building site. The old meetinghouse was insufficient to meet the needs of the increasing population. Stiles tells us that in 1753, in consequence of some contentions (as usual) in regard to its location, the necessity of settling a new minister, and the burden of £300 paid to the Society, which had been set off in the north parish, under the Rev. Mr. Potwine, it was concluded not to build "at present."

The project was revived in 1757 when a committee was appointed to locate the new meetinghouse. The next step was to settle on the dimensions of the new edifice. (viz., length, 60 feet; width 45 feet; and height, 27 feet.) Dec. 10 1760 a building committee was formed: Erastus Wolcott, Ebenezer Grant, and Joel Loomis.

In 1761, our third meeting house was built, about a mile south of the second meetinghouse. It stood near the present building. It was sixty to sixty five feet south and fifty feet east of our current church building. It was built in the road in front of the desired

land whose owner would not sell. For this reason the road simply detoured around the church.

Zebulon Seymour, carpenter, began work on the new meetinghouse on July 6, 1761 and completed the building on November 7. It was considered a remarkably fine specimen of church architecture with a towering clock steeple.

The first Sabbath in the building was held November 22. Four children were baptized that day. The seating in this building was planned for men to sit on the south side and the women on the north. (Men sat on the south or left when looking at the picture and women on the right.)

December 1765, the first bell was purchased. It was broken and replaced in 1791.

Liberty was granted in December 1821 to "certain persons" to put up a stove or stoves at their own expense. The East Hartford Church had added heat in 1818 but Scantic did not until several years later.



In 1824, the building was moved back out of the road 45 feet. This was while the Rev. Thomas Robbins was pastor. In his diary he tells of the talk of moving the building back on the land that they had finally purchased and of his working on April 24. In the April 25 entry, he wrote "the meetinghouse stands on rollers." This move was accomplished in six days without damage to the building.

This building was used until it was razed in 1845.

\* East Windsor Congregational Church website says Fourth, Stiles says third.



### Book Group

"Readers found *Bear Town* to be extremely compelling on many levels. Backman has an uncanny imagination and knack for treating vital issues in society today as though he's lived every one of them himself. Our readers highly recommend it.



Look for the February selection and meeting date in the bulletin at church"

### UCW Meeting

There will be a UCW meeting on **Sunday, February 4<sup>th</sup>** following the service. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the distribution of fair proceeds, program planning and upcoming events.



## Church Family News



Landon MJ, born September 20, 2017 was baptized on Sunday, January 21, 2018. Godparents were Michael and Lori. His brothers are Owen and Oscar, and his parents Jan & Eric. Grandparents: John and Jill.



We extend our sympathy to the family and friends of Carol, who entered eternal life on Monday, January 9<sup>th</sup>. The service celebrating her life was held here January 13<sup>th</sup>. Please keep the family in your prayers during this time of grief and loss.



*In Our Prayers*

Thelma	Lorraine
Joyce and Wayne	Gloria
Bev	Shirley
Doris	Vibert
Cliff	Bruce
	Avis



Kristen	02/03
Nancy	02/06
Amanda	02/09
Caitlin	02/11
Samantha	02/12
Cliff	02/13
Marilyn	02/15
Beverly	02/21
Ruth	02/22
Lorraine	02/28



Wayne & Joyce 02/12



Send them a note today!

Gloria	Wayne & Joyce
Manchester Manor	Arbors at Hopbrook
385 W. Center St. Room 3013	403 W Center Street; Apt. 316
Manchester, CT 06040	Manchester, CT 06040
Lorraine	Bev
1693 John Fitch Blvd	58 Pleasant Valley Road
South Windsor, CT 06074	South Windsor, CT 06074

## Lunch Bunch



The lunch bunch meets September to June on the third Thursday of the month at 11:30 a.m. This month they will meet on **February 15<sup>th</sup>**. Founded as a gathering for retired men, it is open to anyone who wants to visit over a brown bag lunch.

## Worship Service and Event Cancellations

If the weather is bad, you can check for cancellation notices of our events including Sunday morning worship service and church school by watching WFSB TV (CBS, channel 3) or listening to WTIC (1080 AM). Notices are also posted on both the websites for WFSB news and the WTIC Storm Center. Generally, a decision to cancel worship will be made on Sunday morning around 7am. Every effort will be made to update the church answering machine, too.



## Food Ingathering

On the second Sunday of the month (**February 11<sup>th</sup>**) we collect items for a food pantry. Suggested items for February are: kid snacks, juice, canned pasta (for example: Spaghetti O's and ravioli), toiletries (antiperspirant, shampoo conditioner, shaving cream, disposable razors, toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, floss, chap stick, hand sanitizer) and paper goods (napkins, facial tissue, paper toweling, toilet tissue, sandwich/snack bags, etc.). These donations are appreciated greatly.



# February 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 6:30pm Choir Rehearsal	2	3
				Administrative Assistant Vacation		
4 Deacon's Fund 10:00am Worship & Church School 11:00am Coffee hour 11:15am UCW Meeting 2:00pm Private Party- Archambault	5 6:30pm Fair Workshop @ 1090 Main St.	6 7:00pm NA	7 10:00 am Creative Hands 2:00pm Photo Archive Team	8 6:30pm Choir Rehearsal	9	10
Administrative Assistant Vacation						
11 Food Ingathering 9:15am Choir Warmup 10:00am Worship & Church School 11:00am Coffee hour	12 6:30pm Fair Workshop @ 1090 Main St.	13 6:30pm Church Committee 7:00pm NA	14 <b>Valentine's Day Ash Wednesday Lent Begins</b> 10:00 am Creative Hands 2:00pm Photo Archive Team 6:30pm Ash Wednesday Service and Pot luck	15 11:30am Lunch Bunch 6:30pm Choir Rehearsal	16	17
18 9:15am Choir Warmup 10:00am Worship & Church School 11:00am Coffee hour 2:00pm Private Party- Archambault	19 President's Day 6:30pm Fair Workshop @ 1090 Main St.	20 7:00pm NA	21 10:00 am Creative Hands 2:00pm Photo Archive Team 6:30pm Soup Supper Series	22 6:30pm Choir Rehearsal	23	24 10am SewIn4 Servicemen
25 9:15am Choir Warmup 10:00am Worship & Church School 11:00am Coffee hour 3:00pm South Windsor Cultural Arts Commission Concert	26 6:30pm Fair Workshop @ 1090 Main St.	27 7:00pm NA 7:00pm 4-H Camp Board of Directors	28 10:00 am Creative Hands 2:00pm Photo Archive Team 6:30pm Soup Supper Series	<b>Office Hours</b> , unless otherwise noted <b>Rev. Nina Barlow Schmid</b> – Drop In Office Hours are: Wednesdays from 9:30am to 12:30 pm, other times by appointment <b>Claudia Steele, Administrative Assistant</b> – Tuesday through Thursday 9:00am to 2:00 p.m. and Friday 9:00 a.m. - Noon		



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**Staff:**

**Minister:** Rev. Nina Barlow Schmid  
**Organist:** Kamilla Mammedova  
**Administrative Assistant:** Claudia Steele  
**Sexton:** Amanda McNulty

**SAVE THE DATE**

**Annual Meeting ..... 01/28**

**Choir Rehearsals..... 02/01, 02/08, 02/15, 02/22**

**Creative Hands ..... 02/07, 02/14, 02/21, 02/28**

**Photo Archive Team.. 02/07, 02/14, 02/21, 02/28**

**Ash Wednesday Supper and Service..... 02/14**

**Lenten Soup Supper Series.....02/21, 02/28**

**Lunch Bunch ..... 02/15**

**Newsletter Article Deadline ..... 02/16**

**SewIn4Servicemen..... 02/24**

**Book Group ..... TBD**

TO:



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