

Main Street Musing

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF SOUTH WINDSOR



March 2026

Lent is in the Wilderness

Matthew 4:1-11

Lent is a season of inner reflection and silence. It is a quiet call to review our life, consider our commitments, and embrace our failings and the need for forgiveness. As Christ entered into his passions and struggles, he began by going into the wilderness alone, where God shapes character and builds maturity of spirit.

As we begin our journey, let us recognize that silence is not bad, but a way of following God's voice to reach us through the noise of the world. God's voice in our silence offers guidance when we feel lost, offers support when our faith waivers, and offers joy when we feel alone or abandoned. Let silence have its say! May we join Jesus in the wilderness and let him be our companion in this journey of silence and reflection! Silence grows your spirit to be strong, not because you are being abandoned, but because, like Jesus, you are being prepared for the work ahead.

Lenten Blessings to You!

Pastor Dean

Lenten Supper #1, February 25th at 6:30 PM

Speaker: Minister Josh Pawelek of Unitarian Universalist Society East
Pastor Dean will prepare his famous Hungarian Goulash and Salad.

Lenten Supper #2, Wednesday, March 11th 6:30PM

Speaker: Donnamarie Brown, Hospice Chaplain
Potato & Leek Soup and Salad by Bob and Julie Reynolds.

Lenten Supper #3, Wednesday, March 25th 6:30PM

Speaker: Cantor Talya Smilowitz, of Temple Beth Hillel
Lenten Soup & Salad by Marc and Betty Couture.

All are welcome. There are also sign-up sheets on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall.

*****Save the Date:** Our next *Vision Forward Meeting* will be **Sunday, April 19th**, after worship, featuring the work of the diaconate of FCCSW.

Save the Date!



Sunday, March 22, 2026, *Take Note!* will present a fundraising concert here at First Church, at 3:00 pm. *Take Note!* is an a cappella group from the Mansfield area. The concert will raise funds for the floor project in Fellowship Hall. Their services are at no cost to us. A donation toward the project will be requested of attendees. Please spread the word! See Jean Jackson with questions about this event.

Parish Nurse

Melody Treadwell



Our Parish Nurse, Melody Treadwell, invites you to visit her in the chapel on Thursdays from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Whether you need a blood pressure or blood sugar screening, or simply wish to discuss a health concern, she is here to support you. We recommend that you please confirm her availability with the Church Office before arriving, as she occasionally joins the Pastor on off-site visits.

Church Committee

Jean Jackson, Clerk

Clerk's highlights from the Church Committee meeting held February 10, 2026 -

- Treasurer's report - Sue Larsen joined us via Zoom. January's expenses were \$30,061.26. Income was 34,411.52. Surplus for January is \$4,350.26. Sue highlighted some extra income in January as monies were received from the Church School to help with Wolcott Bldg. expenses, as well as Trust income. Sue brought attention to unusual expenses, a bill for the pod needed for the floor project, and a distribution to the Cemetery Association.
- Investments - no report was available for the meeting. Jean Trotman expects to have one for the March meeting.
- The next meeting will be held March 10, 2026, at 6:30 pm in the Metzger Chapel and on Zoom. All are welcome to attend whether or not you serve on a committee.



Trustees News

Jean Trotman



Two trustees, Carroll Stearns and Jean Trotman, met with Dean Spada of Kingston Wealth Management Group to continue developing a financial policy that would govern how we work together to manage our trust funds.

Sue Larson is working on getting us a new credit card to replace the old one, since it was in Lee Anderson's name.

Between various requests to use our space for non-church functions and experience with renters, we realized we need to update our rental agreement and rates. Linda Dalpe is currently working on this project. If you have any comments, please contact her directly.

We had two occasions with no heat in the Wolcott building. After the second incident, Homestead was asked to investigate. They made some repairs to the furnace. We had no problems when the extremely cold weather arrived.

The Trustees are looking for some volunteers who could help us with some basic maintenance work in our buildings on an as-needed basis. You would not be expected to join the committee unless you want to. Please contact me if you are interested. A sample of our needs are as follows:

- replace curtain rods
- hang bulletin boards
- replace batteries in clocks, etc.
- replace light bulbs or fluorescent lights
- hang banners
- install and remove window air conditioners

Financial Audit

Excluding the main Church account managed by Don Brooks Agency, the books of those committees that manage funds need to be audited. It has been a couple of years since we have had someone audit these books, and it should be done again. This can be a one-time task or yearly. If you are comfortable doing this audit by yourself or would like to share the work with someone else, please let me know.

c: 860-690-9071

email: jtrotman3@cox.net

Church Historian

Mary Crittenden

Celebrating Lent

Where does the word 'Lent' come from? What is the meaning of Lent? It comes from the Old English/Germanic word *Lenten*, which means "spring," linking the season to the renewal associated with Easter. The 40 days from Ash Wednesday to Easter (excluding Sundays) are a reminder of the 40 days of Jesus' temptation. Lent is considered a time of preparation for Easter.

Fat Tuesday comes from the idea that Christians (especially Roman Catholics) should fast or at least give up something for Lent. There were some food restrictions, like not eating meat on Fridays. Fat Tuesday was the last day before Lent. It was considered the time to eat things that were in the house that were not to be eaten during Lent.

When I joined First Church in 1994, while the Rev. Arthur Dunham was our minister, it was the custom to celebrate the start of Lent with a modified Passover Dinner with Lamb.

The Rev. David Snyder introduced a new celebration called "Soup, Bread and Salad Suppers," which has been continued by several ministers. These successfully combined a light meal followed by a program. Cooks signed up to make soup and other members brought bread and desserts (I don't know where the salads went). Over the years that followed, we have learned many things, had interesting speakers, and learned about local service opportunities. When The Rev. Sarah Emerson was with us, we dramatically met Biblical people who were part of the Easter story. Ask Judy Borre who she portrayed.

Last year, we had three soup bread suppers rather than the weekly ones. Pastor Dean spoke about the week of the crucifixion of Jesus. We learned about the Jewish calendar that year. I had wondered how Christ could be crucified on a Friday and rise on Sunday morning, while in Matthew 12:40 we learn of Jesus's prophecy of being "three days and three nights in the heart of the earth". What is usually overlooked is that there were two Passovers that week. A special annual one occurred earlier in the week. It would have been this

earlier one was the Passover that we call the Last Supper and would have preceded the arrest, trial, and crucifixion.

Pastor Dean's sermon on January 4 reminded me of one supper several years ago that involved our minister emeritus, the Rev. Art Durham. That year, no one signed up for the soup at all except for one evening. The minister asked me what she should do. My suggestion was to have Stone Soup. That is what we did. She introduced the idea a couple of weeks before that supper and let me tell the story of Stone Soup during Children's Time. We asked the people to bring one soup ingredient on the Sunday before the supper. LeAnne Morgan and I made the soup. We looked at our supplies and went to the grocery store for seasonings and broth. We had a tasty soup.

I ladled up the soup, and LeAnne delivered it until she got to the table where Art sat. She laughed about his bowl of soup, but would not serve it. I went to the table with a tray with bowls of soup and quietly placed them in front of our diners. Art was busy talking to the person next to him. His wife Lee gently spoke to him that his soup was there. When he finally looked at it, he roared with laughter. He definitely had stone soup! In his bowl of broth was one stone with a carrot slice perched on top.

Music Committee

Jean Jackson and Lisa Horsfield



The organ has experienced some whistling stops on the Swell/upper manual due to the cold, dry temperatures. After talking with Chris Walton, it was decided to wait a week or so for the coming warmer temps to see if the stops settle down on their own. If there is no improvement, he will make a service visit. The Great/lower manual is fine and is being used.

Caleb Nierenberg will join us again this Easter on trumpet.

Church Fair News!

Fair crafting workshops will take place on Fridays and Sundays from 1-4 PM at Linda Dalpe's warehouse, 1090 Main St. Come craft with us! Let Linda know if you can make it so she can have something ready for you: 860/528-1936 or lindald001@aol.com

UCW Fair Debriefing and Planning Meeting



UCW held an afternoon fair debriefing and planning meeting in Fellowship Hall on Feb. 1st. It was a productive work session full of great ideas and fun snacks!



Missions Committee

Nancy Stearns



Please join us after church on March 15th to make fleece blankets for the South Windsor Police Department. These blankets will be given to help comfort children being removed from their homes. Everyone can help with this easy project and no sewing is required. See Judy Borre with any questions.

Although we designated the 2nd Sunday of each month for collecting non-food items for the South Windsor Food Bank, we will leave the grocery cart in the narthex so donations can be made at any time. We are collecting laundry detergent, dishwashing detergent, soap & body wash, and paper goods such as toilet paper and paper towels.

We are collecting egg cartons (not plastic) and unused toiletries for MACC. Please place these items in the box located in the narthex.

Snowman Soup Packets

Sunday, February 15th, the Missions Committee of First Church put together packages of snowman soup to go to Hands-On Hartford's Nutritional Backpack Program. These backpacks are provided to children who receive free breakfast and lunch in school, but are at risk of going hungry on weekends. Hot cocoa packets, mini marshmallows and peppermint sticks were packaged as a special treat. Thank you all for helping support our mission! *We choose love!*



Edwards Center Committee

Ingrid Fraize

We met in February, after a short sabbatical during the holidays. We had the pleasure of meeting with and learning from Beth Burgess, Collections Curator at the Connecticut State Library.

Beth spoke to us about conserving items for our collection and the process of exhibiting them. She also spoke about preservation of paper items, special window treatments, places to look for information, fire safety, insurance, etc. Beth provided us with handouts as well.

We are looking forward to visiting the Connecticut State Library in the future.

Anyone interested in visiting our committee meetings is welcome. Donations are also welcome so we can purchase archival materials and other needed materials. For further information, please contact Ingrid Fraize, committee secretary, at 860/528-8366.

Memorial Bulletin Project

Carrie Morse



Admin's Corner

When we lose someone dear to us, the smallest details of planning can often feel the most daunting for the family. In an effort to make that time a little easier, I'm starting a project to help us pre-plan the personal touches of our memorial service bulletin.

Whether it's a favorite scripture, a poem that speaks to you, a quote, a specific hymn, or even a cherished photo, having these preferences on file can be a wonderful gift to your loved ones. After a very positive response from a few folks I have asked, I've created a simple form you can fill out to be kept in a secure folder here at the church. I also have sample bulletins available if you'd like to see some examples for ideas and inspiration.

My hours are normally Tuesday through Friday from 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM if you would like to stop by to look at some samples and pick up a form. Let me know when you might stop in so that I can have things ready for you.

****Members:** Updated Church Directories (blue) are here! Please grab one on Sunday, or please contact me if you need a copy sent to you.

You Are Loved Ice Cream Social

Carrie Morse

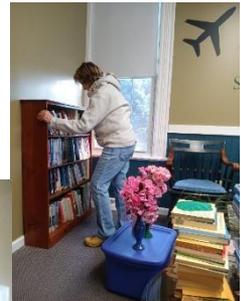
Pastor Dean and I want to thank everyone who came out in the cold to our 2nd *You Are Loved* Ice Cream Social on Feb. 11th. We had a nice turnout and a great time making our own sundaes and laughing together. Remember just how loved you are!



Living Faith and I'd Rather Have an Iguana *How are These Books Related?*

Mary Crittenden

Jimmy Carter's Book: Living Faith, and a small book: I'd Rather Have an Iguana by Heidi Stetson Mario probably have little in common. However, here they were stacked on top of one another in our library. The library has been neglected for too long. When Betty Couture met with me in the Wolcott Memorial Chapel, she wanted to tackle the dust and disorganization. Shelves have been emptied, cleaned, and are ready for the books to be reshelved in some semblance of organization. Betty has started shelving books. This will take time. Some books will not be kept. An example is the many issues of *Ideals* from the 1980's and 90's. *Ideals* has been in continuous publication since 1944. They now publish only two issues a year, Easter and Christmas. We cannot justify shelf space for them, so they will go elsewhere or to the church tag sale. Each is published full of poems,



stories, and photos based upon a theme. These were published four or five times each year with different themes.

We have a collection of different translations of the Bible. Collected by the Rev. Art Dunham, his children donated them along with other materials. The Bibles have been shelved in the built-in bookcase. Look here for future information about our books, which range from 0 to 100+ years old.



*First Congregational Church of
South Windsor
Lent and Easter Programs and Worship
2026*

Ash Wednesday, February 18th-The church chapel will be open from 9:00 AM to Noon for anyone wishing to receive ashes.



*More
Than
Soup...*

First Church
Lenten
Suppers
& Chats

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*All are welcome to our Lenten meals & discussion series. Please register with the church office for food planning purposes. firstchurchsw@gmail.com or (860)528-7992 –

There are also sign-up sheets on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall. Thanks!

Palm Sunday Service, Sunday, March 29th, 10:00 AM *Pancake Breakfast to follow!*

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

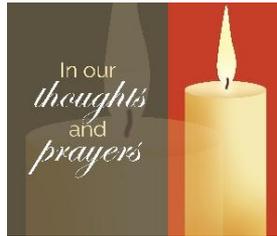
Maundy Thursday Service, Thursday, April 2nd, 7:00 PM Service of Shadows and Communion, in person or on Zoom.

Good Friday, Friday, April 3rd, 10:30 AM-12:30 PM- Church will be open for quiet prayer and reflection.

Easter Sunday Service, Sunday, April 5th, 10:00 AM in person or on Zoom.

Church Family News

3/03 Jean Jackson	3/17 Geoff Gossett
3/03 Mary Anne Novak	3/17 Patrick Woble
3/07 Donna Fletcher	3/18 Liz Smith
3/07 Liam Senatro	3/18 Kaye Woolam
3/08 Lisa Horsfield	3/24 Ingrid Fraize
3/08 Holly Burnham	3/24 JT Samsel
3/10 Stephanie Clarke	3/25 Bei Tong
3/12 Caitlin Cote	3/26 Joyce Coon
3/14 Dashiel Cote	3/31 Karen Smith
3/16 Scott Burnham	



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

Iva Burnham
 Bob Woodward
 The McIntosh Family
 The Anderson Family
 The Sharp Family
 The Senger Family

Church Office Hours

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

Newsletter Deadline

The next newsletter issue will be published in **April 2026**. Please send your submissions **and photos** to the church office by **March 13th** for inclusion:

firstchurchsw@gmail.com ~ Thank you!



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United Church of Christ

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TO: