



The REMINDER

First Church of Christ, Congregational, Glastonbury, Connecticut

Member of United Church of Christ

An open, welcoming and affirming congregation

December 2019

Advent and Christmas Worship Services

Sunday, December 1 – First Sunday of Advent, 8:00 (Micah Chapel) and 10:00 a.m.

David Taylor preaching. Special music performed by Chris Stone (8:00 a.m.) and the Chancel Choir (10:00 a.m.)

Sunday, December 8 – Second Sunday of Advent, 8:00 (Micah Chapel) and 10:00 a.m.

Betsey Polglase preaching. Special music performed by Vance Harris (8:00 a.m.) and the Cherub and Chancel Choirs (10:00 a.m.)



Wednesday, December 11 – A Quiet Christmas Service in Micah Chapel, 7:00 p.m.

All are invited to this special service, during which you may find a quiet and holy oasis in the midst of the Christmas rush. It is a service especially designed for those for whom this holiday season has perhaps taken on a more poignant mood, because of a loved one's death, an illness, or some other life change. All are welcome no matter where you are on life's journey. Music will be performed by Vance Harris, bass.

Sunday, December 15 – Third Sunday of Advent, A Festival Service of Nine Lessons and Carols

One service at 10:00 a.m. Celebrate the Christmas season with this yearly tradition of music and scripture lessons of Advent and Christmas. Cantate, Cantabile, Chancel and Bell Choirs will participate in this festive service. Come worship the newborn King!

Sunday, December 22 – Fourth Sunday of Advent, 8:00 (Micah Chapel) and 10:00 a.m.

Kate VanDerzee-Glidden preaching. Special music performed by Peggy Hartman (8:00 a.m.) and the Chancel Choir and Jubilate Ringers (10:00 a.m.)



Tuesday, December 24 – Christmas Eve Services

4:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Pageant

Our youth will present the story of the birth of Jesus with music and pageantry at this service designed especially for youngsters. Children will be able to take the headdress of a shepherd, angel or king in the narthex before the service begins, and then they will process to the manger, all at one time, for our offertory. The Caroler and Cherub Choirs will provide the special music. Please see the *Giving Insert* for more information about a special offering to help babies in need in our community.

8:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service of Candlelight, Music and the Word

Invite your family and friends to celebrate the joy of the coming of Christ in this candlelight service! The Cantate, Cantabile and Mallets Choirs will perform at this service.

11:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service of Candlelight, Music and the Word

Celebrate with family and friends the coming of Christ in this beautiful, candlelight service! The Chancel Choir will provide the special music for this service with prelude music beginning at 10:40 p.m.

December 29 – First Sunday after Christmas, One Service at 10:00 a.m.

Kate VanDerzee-Glidden preaching. This informal service will include carol singing, scripture reading and storytelling. Come casually dressed and celebrate the Christmas season and the new year with your church family.

First Church of Christ, Congregational

United Church of Christ
2183 Main Street, Glastonbury, CT 06033

The Rev. Dr. Carl F. Schultz, Jr., Pastor
Emeritus (1932 - 2012)

Sunday Morning Schedule

Worship Services at 8:00 a.m. (Micah Chapel)
and 10:00 a.m. (Meetinghouse)

Church School: 10:15 a.m.

Child care is provided

Phone: 860-633-4641, Fax: 860-633-5826

Email: firstchurch@glastonburyfirst.org

Website: www.glastonburyfirst.org

Staff

- The Rev. David Taylor, *Pastor*
davidtaylor@glastonburyfirst.org, ext. 118
- The Rev. Kate VanDerzee-Glidden, *Pastor*
katev@glastonburyfirst.org, ext. 120
- The Rev. Betsey Polglase, *Minister of Visitation and Pastoral Care*
betsey@glastonburyfirst.org, ext. 114
- Dr. Angela Salcedo, *Director of Music Ministries*
angelasalcedo@glastonburyfirst.org, ext. 116
- Karin Carlino, *Church School Administrator*
ceadmin@glastonburyfirst.org, ext. 115
- Keith Conroy, *Interim Director of Junior High Fellowship*, keith@glastonburyfirst.org
- Valerie Escalera, *Program Administrator*
programadmin@glastonburyfirst.org, ext. 115
- Susan Feller, *Publications Specialist*
publications@glastonburyfirst.org, ext. 112
- Rebecca Fleahman, *Office Manager*
rebeccaflaehman@glastonburyfirst.org, ext. 122
- Cheryl Foley, *Child Care Provider*
- Jenny Giguere, *Administrative Assistant*
jenny@glastonburyfirst.org, ext. 110
- Wes Grove, *Facilities Manager*
facilities@glastonburyfirst.org, ext. 121
- Lauren Guiditta, *Interim Director of Children's Ministries*
lauren@glastonburyfirst.org, ext. 113
- Peggy Hartman, *Director of Handbell Program and Cherub Choir*
- Amy Woodruff, *Interim Director of Senior High Fellowship*, amy@glastonburyfirst.org



Steward Spotlight Lorie Martin

Home state: Born and raised in Illinois. Met husband, Dan, in the high school marching band! Earned a Bachelor's degree in Marketing at the University of Illinois. Professional life was managing large installations of telephones and voice mail systems back when voice mail was invented, in the 1980s and 90s. (Now my kids won't even leave a voice message.)

Family: Husband, Dan, and two sons: Wesley who lives in Philly, and Eric, just married to Chelsea and living in CA. Raised the family in the Boston area and in Reading, PA.

How long have you been with First Church? Eight busy years!

Church activities: I've been a member of various boards, Christian Service, Membership, Stewardship, etc. Singing in the choir and helping with choir camp is lots of fun. Pitching in where we're needed seems to be our MO. It's a great way to get to know your church family.

The Women's Theological Reflection Group has been a real blessing as we realize how much laughter and just sharing with each other is a part of God's gift to us! Dan and I most recently helped host a visit from our Korean Partner church visitors. There is always something interesting and meaningful to do around this wonderful place!

Why do you support First Church? "See above!" Our leadership is so wonderful, Kate and David have such gifts of vision, people skills, management savvy, and respect and appreciation for the congregation as a cooperative and working instrument of God's intentions. All of that, plus their sparkling sense of humor takes us a long way. But that's not all! None of this would happen without the corporate whole of all of us here. I have never met a group of people with such spirit of purpose and generosity. Together, our gifts we give – be it money, talent or passion – are somehow amplified in the hands of all of you. Simple as that. (And mysterious and beautiful as that.)

Do you like coming to church services? Besides singing in the choir – which pretty much puts me in church every Sunday, I am always struck by the fact that sitting in the pews together is one of the only places that being not perfect is totally okay. I like that holy space of being imperfect together.

What makes you laugh? My husband.

What do you do for fun? Write music, sing, and play my piano. Hike in the woods. Read. Talk on the phone with my sister, who also makes me laugh. Eat dinner with my husband. Go to the movies.

What is your typical New Year's resolution? Try to get something finished that I started!

Dream job: Archaeologist or music conductor.

A favorite movie: *Raiders of the Lost Ark* Fabulous music! Archaeology!

A favorite memory: Playing piano duets with my father.

What book are you reading? *The Hidden Life of Trees* by Peter Wohlleben – whoa! – amazing!



Communion for the Homebound



If you are homebound, and would like to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion, a member of the pastoral staff would be happy to come to your home. Please be in touch with Jenny Giguere at the church office (860-633-4641 or jenny@glastonburyus.org) and let her know of your interest.

First Church Online – Podcasts and Facebook!



Each Sunday we gather as the body of Christ to be together in community and to listen, sing, pray, share and be inspired to go out into the world in love. If you miss a Sunday, you can still listen to the sermon online. Go to <http://firstchurchglastonbury.podbean.com/>. And did you know that we have a church Facebook page where you can hear about upcoming events, see pictures from activities and stay up to date with what's going on? Find us on Facebook, and "like" us!

Growing in Generosity

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your generous pledges in support of First Church. We are grateful for the time, talent and treasure that each of you give to this beloved church community.

Faithfully,

George Norman
Chair, Stewardship Committee

Dan Martin
Church President



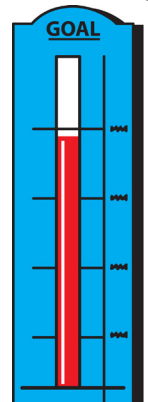
Update on 2020 Stewardship Campaign Progress



As of Friday, November 15, we have received \$722,914 towards our goal of \$850,000. We have yet to hear from 73 members who pledged for 2019, so we are hopeful we will achieve our goal. If you are interested in pledging, please contact Rebecca Fleahman, Office Manager, at rebeccafleahman@glastonburyfirst.org or 860-633-4641. Thanks for your continued support!

2019 Pledge Reminders

The end of the year is rapidly approaching. According to IRS regulations, any donations received or postmarked by December 31, 2019 will be reflected in your year-end giving statement. If they do not meet these requirements, they will be reflected in your 2020 giving statement. In addition, if you are contributing stock, please contact Rebecca in the church office so your donation can be properly identified and to receive the account and DTC number at Morgan Stanley Smith Barney. **Please note, Morgan Stanley will be moving as of December 6.** Their new address is 225 Asylum St., 14th Floor, Hartford CT 06103. **The DTC and routing number remain the same.** Pledge giving has been very strong through October and the church is counting on your continued generous contributions to close the remaining \$86,461 gap necessary to meet our 2019 operating budget. Your financial offerings enable First Church to provide youth programs, worship services, outreach programs and music programs. In addition, payment by year-end ensures your tax deductible donation for 2019. Please call Rebecca in the church office with any questions.



Steve Jackson, Treasurer

Boxed sets of 2020 offering envelopes have arrived! Please see the table in Schultz Hall. As before, they are not numbered, so you must print your first and last name so your cash contributions can be included on your giving statement. Thank you!



Korean Partnership

From October 30 through November 6, First Church and other Connecticut UCC churches hosted a delegation of five pastors from Gyeonggi Province in South Korea and members of the Kyeong-ki Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK):

- Rev. Bae Hyun Seok from Choweol Church (our partner church)
- Rev. Jung Leong from Sunyang Church
- Rev. Choi Dong Jin from Hanmook Church (partner with Colchester Federated Church)
- Rev. Ser Dong In from Incheon Sun Lin Church
- Rev. Gwak Seon Kyun from Dongbu Sun Lin Church (partner with Mystic Congregational Church)



The delegation visited the United States and Connecticut to witness and participate in the first annual convention of the new Southern New England Conference of the UCC, to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Korean Partnership between PROK and the former Connecticut Conference of the UCC, and to attend various partnership meetings.

After unescorted sightseeing in New York City, the delegation headed north for a taste of American Thanksgiving dinner hosted by First Church followed by a Partnership meeting led by CTUCC Conference Minister, Rev. Kent Siladi. For Halloween, the pastors carved jack-o-lanterns with our four Sacred Journey youth (Derek DiTomasso, Sean Donovan, Victoria Johnson and Megan Kimmel) and sampled Italian Halloween and trick-or-treating at the DiTomasso residence.



It was not all fun and games, though. The delegation stocked shelves and served lunch at MACC's food pantry and community kitchen. Pastor Bae also



led an adult Bible study class, focusing on 1 Corinthians Chapter 2, the passage that originally led him to ministry. He also was a participant in communion for hundreds of participants in the SNECUCC convention as well as at our worship on Sunday, November 3. *"Who Is The Greatest?"* was the theme of his guest sermon at worship ... Hint: It was not boxer Muhammad Ali (see Mark 9:33-37).

The week ended with a trip to Boston, accompanied by our Sacred Journey youth, to see the Freedom Trail and tour churches of Boston's early religious history, and to visit the Congregational Library & Archives. The library's archivist brought out an amazing collection of documents including early Congregational sermons, First Church records such as membership rosters and newsletters, and the original record of Benjamin Franklin's baptism.



We did our best to match the hospitality experienced when we visit South Korea. But, more importantly, despite the barriers of distance and language we simply lived together the UCC Statement of Faith: *"God calls us into the church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be servants in the service of the whole human family, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory."*



Christian Service



First Church is a place where we are constantly serving our neighbors in need. It is our call and our privilege to spread God's love in our church community, in Glastonbury, in Hartford, in other Connecticut towns and cities, throughout our nation and all around the world.

First Church Has Willing and Able “Good Samaritans!”

The First Church family of faith has many talented people, and some of these talents include “handyperson” skills and abilities. Our “Good Samaritan” group is willing to help individuals in the congregation who might be having trouble finding the right people or the adequate resources to do the job – various “odd” jobs around the house or yard. If you are interested in seeing if your household task or project is something they would be able and willing to take on, at no charge, please contact Kate VanDerzee-Glidden, Betsey Polglase or David Taylor.

Family Promise Host Weeks!



We are proud to be one of the host congregations for Family Promise of central Connecticut! Four times a year we open our church up to homeless families who are in the Family Promise program. We provide all the volunteers to make our weeks successful. Our next host week is **December 29-January 5**. What better way to celebrate Jesus’ birth than by volunteering to help families that find themselves homeless during this holiday season. We’d love to have you sign up to help with setting up and breaking down the rooms the guests stay in, bringing a meal, serving as a dinner host or staying overnight. If you have questions, be in touch with the coordinators, Tara and Amy Woodruff (tara.amy1407@gmail.com / 860-462-9548) or Kate Ersevim (ersevim@cox.net / 860-985-8075).

Mission Immersion Day Thank You!

On November 16, over forty children, youth and adults volunteered their time for our Mission Immersion Day. Our parishioners went to four different sites – assembling Christmas packages for children and families on the Cheyenne River Lakota Sioux Reservation through Hawkwing in Glastonbury, unloading and organizing food at Manchester Area Conference of Churches’ food pantry and soup kitchen, making a meal and cards and then visiting some members of our congregation, and serving a warm meal to the hungry in Middletown through St. Vincent de Paul Soup Kitchen. Thank you to our faithful volunteers for spreading God’s love!





Children's Ministries



Dear Families,

The excitement is almost palpable as we wait for the birth of Christ! Advent is a time of waiting, and while many children see waiting as a challenge, I invite you to help them see it as a peaceful and enjoyable time. The weeks leading up to Christmas can be exciting, busy, fun, festive, overwhelming and joyous. Most of us will feel many different emotions, and have a never ending list of things to do and items to buy. While the Christmas season is certainly one of joy and excitement, the Advent season leading up to that is one of peace and waiting.



The Crib and Toddler room is a busy and vibrant place every Sunday, full of joy and laughter. Stop by on **Sunday, December 8 at 11:30 a.m. for the Crib and Toddler Room Open House**, to meet with Ms. Cheryl, check out the space, grab a snack and learn more! While you're there, please sign up for our new group, **First Year at First Church**, a meet-up group for children 12 months and younger, along with their caretakers, to find fellowship while caring for our youngest members.

Our Preschool Room will complete the *Fruit of the Spirit* lessons this month and begin *Stories of Jesus*, which explore the birth, life, teachings, death and resurrection of Jesus. This class focuses on learning through play with lots of games, crafts and free play time. In the Church School Rotation Model Curriculum we will explore Unit 3: "*In the Manger*" where we learn the story of how Mary gave birth to her firstborn son and laid him in a manger. His humble birth reminds us that Jesus began life as a helpless baby, just as we do. We will learn that Jesus is called Emmanuel and the meaning of "God with us," that Jesus is the Messiah and discuss the meaning, discover the significance of Jesus being born as a baby in a humble place, how Jesus connects people of all ages, and that Jesus had a special connection with the poor. Our AGAPE students will begin a new unit called "*Do the Right Thing*," which explores how we identify as Christians and what that means for our ethics.

Your children are invited to attend the **Christmas Pageant on Tuesday, December 24 at the 4:30 p.m. service**. This is such a fun and interactive service, where they can dress up as a shepherd or an angel (head garments provided at the back of the church) to bring their gifts to the newborn King, baby Jesus! We will be collecting diapers and wipes throughout the month of December in the Cooking station, or you can bring them to my office on the first floor. The children will then present these gifts to baby Jesus during the pageant, all of which will be donated to a local social service agency in need.

We still have volunteer opportunities available to be a station leader for upcoming units. Please contact me at lauren@glastonburyfirst.org or Karin Carlino at ceadmin@glastonburyfirst.org. You can still sign your child up for the 2019-2020 Church School year. We ask that parents register every child (Crib and Toddler room – 8th Grade) so we have all necessary information on file. Please ask me, use the online form at <http://www.glastonburyfirst.org/enrollment-church-school> or see a Shepherd to get a registration form during Church School.

How blessed are we to be surrounded by a vibrant and loving community as we wait for the birth of Christ?! We have a lot of fun planned this month for all ages. Your children continue to be amazing!

With peace,

Lauren, Interim Director of Children's Ministries

Worship Bags and the Children's Corner!



Children's Corner: Feeling like you want to stay in the service with your child, but your toddler has the wiggles? Our new children's corner in the north side of the narthex is for you! This area is designed for families with young children to play together while still listening to what's going on in worship.

Worship Bags: Green canvas bags are available for children of all ages to stay busy and attentive during worship. In these Worship Bags you will find a Children's Bible, Beanie Baby, quiet fidget toy, coloring sheets and crayons, and books! We just ask that you put them back in the narthex after worship or after the children's message.



Please note that the monies collected in the envelopes with this logo are used to support the 2019-2020 Church School Mission Project, **South Park Inn**. We suggest a donation of \$1 per week.





Children's Ministries

Church School Unit 3: "In the Manger"

Bible Story Reference: Luke 2:1-20

Bible Verse: "She [Mary] gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn." (Luke 2:7)

Main Idea: Jesus was born in Bethlehem, where Mary laid him in a manger. His humble birth reminds us that the Messiah began life as a helpless baby, just as we do.



Objectives: Children will prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus as they

- Learn that Jesus is called Emmanuel and explore the meaning of "God with us;"
- Hear that Jesus is the Messiah and talk about what that means;
- Discover the significance of the Messiah's coming, not as a king or warrior, but as a baby born in a humble place;
- See how Jesus' birth connects the Messiah to all people of all ages;
- Recognize that Jesus has a special connection with the poor;
- Be able to locate the story of Jesus' birth in the Book of Luke.

	<u>Sunday 11/24</u>	<u>Sunday 12/1</u>	<u>Sunday 12/8</u>	<u>Sunday 12/15</u>	<u>Sunday 12/22</u>
<u>K & 1st grade</u>	Movie Room 102 Pamela Husband	Storytelling Room 111 Jessica Bean	Games Room 110 Judy Harding	Art Room 103 Sue VanDerzee	Cooking Room 205 Chelsea Cooper
<u>2nd grade</u>	Cooking Room 205 Chelsea Cooper	Movie Room 102 Pamela Husband	Storytelling Room 111 Jessica Bean	Games Room 110 Judy Harding	Art Room 103 Adam Garrity
<u>3rd grade</u>	Cooking Room 205 Chelsea Cooper	Movie Room 102 Pamela Husband	Storytelling Room 111 Jessica Bean	Games Room 110 Judy Harding	Art Room 103 Adam Garrity
<u>4th grade</u>	Art Room 103 Sue VanDerzee	Cooking Room 205 Chelsea Cooper	Movie Room 102 Pamela Husband	<i>Remain in the service for Lessons & Carols</i>	Games Room 110 Judy Harding
<u>5th grade</u>	Art Room 103 Sue VanDerzee	Cooking Room 205 Chelsea Cooper	Movie Room 102 Pamela Husband	<i>Remain in the service for Lessons & Carols</i>	Games Room 110 Judy Harding

Please note: The Preschool Room is in Room 105. 6th-8th graders will meet on the third floor. Some classes are combined for this Unit.

Church School runs until 11:10 a.m. each Sunday. If worship gets out earlier than that, please enjoy some time in Schultz Hall before picking up your children. Thanks for your cooperation!

Bloomfield Backpack Project




Volunteers are needed on the second Thursday of each month through May. Sign up online at: www.tinyurl.com/firstchurchbackpack or on the poster outside of the Children and Youth Ministries office. The Bloomfield Backpack Project was started in 2009 by Eunice Medwinter, who wanted to do her part to make sure the children of Bloomfield had enough to eat over the weekends. She worked with Foodshare and started the Bloomfield Backpack Project. First Church helps financially and sends teams of volunteers to pack the backpacks once a month. Grab some friends or come as a family, there are spaces for ten packers each night. **Please plan to arrive by 5:30 p.m. at First Church Bloomfield, 10 Wintonbury Avenue.** If you have questions, please call Judy Burr (860-965-6915). Teamwork makes it an easy and very rewarding experience. **Dates are: December 12, January 9, February 13, March 12 and May 14.**

Upcoming Events

Sunday, December 1

Last day for **Advent Calendar Sales** during coffee hour!
 Board of Christian Education meeting at 11:20 a.m.

Sunday, December 8

 Last chance to return gifts for the Board of Christian Education's **Giving Train!** Gifts are given to local families through Glastonbury Department of Human Services.

Tuesday, December 10

Advent Messy Church at 5:30 p.m.

Sunday, December 15

Lessons and Carols at the 10:00 a.m. service!
 Fourth graders and up are invited to stay in the service!

Sunday, December 22

Pajama Day to raise money for our Church School Mission Project – bring \$1 to benefit **South Park Inn!**



Tuesday, December 24

A Baby for the World! Gift Giving at all services!
Christmas Pageant at 4:30 p.m. Children may choose to dress as a shepherd or angel as they help us celebrate and remember the birth of Jesus!

Sunday, December 29

No Church School today. Child care available. Coloring sheets will be available for children attending this service.

Advent Messy Church on December 10

Join us for a unique and “messy” family-friendly event as we explore the meaning of Advent! We will have a pizza dinner with group prayer, celebration and fun activities for the whole family! Come to **Schultz Hall and Micah House on December 10 from 5:30-7:00 p.m.**



AGAPE Escape Room



They **ESCAPED!** Our middle school students in the AGAPE Church School class designed and created a fully functioning

escape room event with the theme of “Escaping Poverty” on November 10. The rooms had a maze, codes, locks and puzzles to solve, based on the obstacles one must overcome while homeless. Twenty five “escapees” attended and helped to raise \$200 to benefit the Church School Mission Project with South Park Inn. Thank you to all the wonderful and dedicated volunteers who made this possible, and all those who came out to support such a great cause.

Confirmation Class Schedule

Our nine-month Confirmation program is open to any interested student entering the 9th grade (or above) in the fall. Our Confirmation program aims to help young people explore and articulate their faith as they prepare to reaffirm their baptism and become full members of First Church. All we require is your willingness to jump on this journey! Together, we will be using a combination of service projects, mentoring relationships, activities, and structured class time to explore our own personal faith, the church, and the world in which we live.



Our regular class sessions are Sundays from 4:30-6:00 p.m. in the Youth Room.

Sunday, December 1: Regular class session

Sunday, December 15: Regular class session



Youth Ministry



We Need You!

We need shepherds, sheep, kings, angels, techies and more for this year's Christmas Pageant, which takes place at our **4:30 p.m. service on Christmas Eve**. We're looking for students from grades six through twelve to help portray the roles in this joyous event! Please contact Amy Woodruff at amy@glastonburyfirst.org to sign up! Below are the rehearsal dates.



Christmas PAGEANT

Wednesday, December 18: Pageant Rehearsal (6:00-8:00 p.m.)
Sunday, December 22: Pageant Rehearsal (11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.)
Tuesday, December 24: Call for Christmas Pageant 3:00 p.m. Pageant is at 4:30 p.m.

Junior High Fellowship Schedule

Junior High Fellowship is open to any young person in 6th – 8th grades. Regular fellowship sessions are the **second and fourth Monday of each month during the school year from 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. in the Youth Room.**

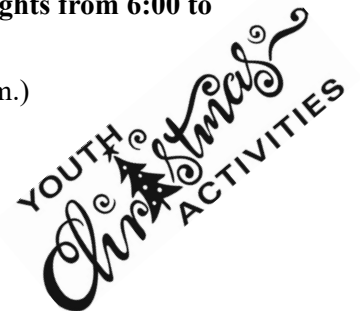
**Denotes special time or event*

Monday, December 9: Regular session
***Monday, December 16:** JHF Christmas Party!
***Wednesday, December 18:** Pageant Rehearsal (6:00-8:00 p.m.)
***Sunday, December 22:** Pageant Rehearsal (11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.)
***Monday, December 23:** No JHF
***Tuesday, December 24:** Christmas Pageant 4:30 p.m. Youth arrive at 3:00 p.m.

Senior High Fellowship Schedule

Senior High Fellowship is open to any student in 9th – 12th grade. We meet on **Sunday nights from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. in the Youth Room.** **Denotes special time or event*

***Friday, December 6 – Saturday, December 7:** SHF Advent Lock-In (7:00 p.m.-9:00 a.m.)
***Sunday, December 8:** No SHF
Sunday, December 15: SHF Christmas Party!
***Wednesday, December 18:** Pageant Rehearsal (6:00-8:00 p.m.)
***Sunday, December 22:** Pageant Rehearsal (11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.). No SHF.
***Tuesday, December 24:** Christmas Pageant 4:30 p.m. Youth arrive at 3:00 p.m.
***Sunday, December 29:** No SHF



SHF will be headed to Miami, FL from **Sunday, April 12, to Saturday, April 18, 2020** for our annual Mission Trip. **The following dates are Mandatory Mission Focused SHF Sessions – January 12, February 23, March 29 and April 5.** All students attending the Mission Trip must be present at these sessions for training, skill building, team development and pre-trip education. These are regular SHF sessions, open to all, though mandatory for Mission Trip participants, which encourage youth to think about Missions as a spiritual practice, using our Mission Trip as a case study.



Music Ministry





Music Ministry



Cookie Walk



 and Christmas Bazaar

Saturday, December 7, 2019
9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Volunteers Needed!!

- * TO BAKE DELICIOUS COOKIES
- * TO HELP AT THE EVENT

Please sign up at

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e094eacaa29a6fd0-cookie1>

or contact Ellen McNab at eesjmm2@gmail.com.

Festive Holiday Cookies and More

- * Butterbraids
- * Hand crafted wood items
- * Fresh evergreen wreaths
- * Dog bone wreaths
- * Handmade quilt, table runners and hand towels
- * First Church Choirs CD: "Praise and Thanksgiving"
- * SERRV products

Cookie Walk proceeds to benefit the First Church music programs

Children's Choirs will sing carols at 9:15 a.m.

Congratulations!

We congratulate **Noah Garrity** for receiving his Light Blue Ribbon as part of the Royal School of Church Music Program. Each ribbon color represents the various levels of musicianship achieved by the chorister according to the following graded program; Light Blue (Level 1); Dark Blue (Level II); Red (Level III); Purple (Level IV); and Black (Level V).



Music at the Meetinghouse Presents...

ANNUAL FESTIVAL SERVICE OF NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS



Sunday, December 15, 10:00 a.m.

The Choirs of First Church celebrate the Christmas Season with the yearly tradition of music and scripture lessons of Advent and Christmas, inspired by the cathedrals of England. We invite you to listen to and sing some of your favorite Christmas carols and choir anthems accompanied by the brilliant English style sounds of our fabulous Schoenstein pipe organ and The Constitution Brass Quintet.

Music at the Meetinghouse Presents...

VOICES OF CONCIANNITY



Old, New, Borrowed, and...Long Overdue

Saturday, February 8, 7:30 p.m.

A donation of \$15 per person is suggested.
\$25 family maximum.

Low Strung Concert Fundraiser

On **Saturday, January 25 at 7:00 p.m.**, First Church will host Low Strung, an amazing group of Yale University cellists as a Heads Up! Hartford fundraiser. Breaking out of the classical cello repertoire and venturing into the realm of classic rock and pop, Low Strung performs concerts that are characterized by sweeping, innovative arrangements of tunes by Led Zeppelin, Coldplay, the Beatles, the Eagles and many more. **Tickets are \$25 (Adults) and \$10 (Students/Seniors). All are asked to bring a nonperishable food item for the food bank.**



Music Ministry



Lessons and Carols Run-Through Rehearsals



Saturday, December 14

- 8:00-8:30 a.m. Jubilate Ringers**
- 8:30-9:30 a.m. Mallet Ringers**
- 9:00-11:00 a.m. Chancel, Cantate and Cantabile Choirs**

Ringling in the Holidays!

Our Jubilate Ringers participated in a Handbell Festival and concert, “Ringling in the Holidays,” at The Bushnell on November 4. They performed with elite ringers from all over New England as well as the midwest. It was an inspiring concert—the first at the Bushnell in its ninety-year history.



Adult Opportunities



Micah Moment Series: Islam – What’s The Buzz?



Our Micah Moment Series offers adult education and faith formation opportunities. **Come and learn with us at our next event after worship from 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. on Sunday, January 26 in the Micah Chapel.**

What do we really know about the teachings of Islam? More than 18 years after the terrorist attacks on the United States, voices ignorant about Islam continue to promulgate fear and hate through misinformation.

Our presenter on January 26 is Dr. Reza Mansoor, a cardiologist at Hartford Hospital, Assistant Clinical Professor of Medicine at the University of Connecticut School of Medicine, and founding President of the Muslim Coalition of Connecticut, among other roles. Dr. Mansoor is dedicated not only to educating about Islam but also advocating for the people of the United States, in all their diversity, to come together and build a stronger nation. Come and let’s learn together. If you have any questions, please contact Betsey Polglase at betsey@glastonburyfirst.org or 860-633-4641.

Join Women’s Theological Reflection Group

We invite all interested First Church women to join us on the **third Wednesday of each month** to discuss a variety of faith questions, reflect on our personal journeys and share friendship and community. We hope to see you at one of our gatherings from **8:00 to 9:00 a.m. in the Lehman Library**. We will meet again on **Wednesday, December 18**. Please contact Diana Ruddick at dianakate525@gmail.com for further information.

Gather for Prayer and Share

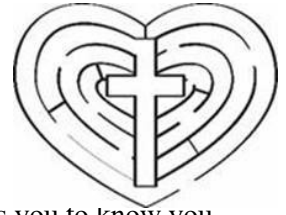
Come join us for a time of prayer, sharing, strengthening your faith and forming friendships. Being part of a small group within a large church fosters a feeling of belonging and caring. We learn and grow from our study/discussions and from each other. **All are welcome to join us in the Parlor each Tuesday morning from 9:45-11:00 a.m.** Please contact Nancy Higgins at 860-573-6092 or Donna Smith at 860-633-4428 for more information.



Adult Opportunities

Mental Health Ministry: Caring for Our Whole Selves

“Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.” ~ Isaiah 41:10



’Tis the season! The holidays are for fun, excitement, happiness and family! You should be happy, right? Not everyone enjoys the holiday season. For some it’s a reminder of lost loved ones, end of year job responsibilities, too much together time, never ending lists, financial burdens and, of course, the cold weather and darkness. At First Church, your Mental Health Ministry team wants you to know you aren’t alone and to remind us all of ways to manage our stress, depression, loneliness or sadness. Here are some tips that hopefully will help you during this season when we wait for the Christ child’s birth.

1. **Acknowledge your feelings.** You’re allowed to be sad or upset. Feel it, name it and then try to move forward.
2. **Breathe.** Try some deep breathing, prayer or meditation to ease stress and sadness. And remember that God is with you always.
3. **Learn to say “no.”** You can’t be everything to everyone all the time. Set realistic boundaries and ask others to respect them.
4. **Make a plan.** Lists upon lists that have their own lists are sure to overwhelm. However, a simple plan for shopping or menu choices can help reduce stress.
5. **Do what makes you happy.** Take a walk, bake cookies, read a book, sing, reach out to a friend! Don’t be alone, if you don’t want to. If you anticipate spending the holidays alone, try to volunteer somewhere, such as a soup kitchen, with children in group homes or the elderly at living centers. People will so appreciate you, and you may feel better about yourself. Most of all, you’ll have company.
6. **Exercise.** Moving our bodies helps our brains. It’s science! Take a walk, do the stairs, go to the gym or jump around with the kids.
7. **Ask for help.** Holidays are a time people attempt to take on too much and do too much on their own. It’s ok to ask for help, whether for decorating, shopping, cooking or just a shoulder to lean on. We all need help at various times in our lives and reminders that we are loved.
8. **Seek professional help.** Finding a trusted mental health professional is nothing to feel shame for. Mental health professionals are a wonderful way to manage your particular mental health issues and find coping strategies that work for you.

We invite you to come to our **Quiet Christmas** service here at First Church. This service is for anyone who would like to come just as they are – tired, sad, angry, melancholy or happy. This meaningful service is held at **7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 11 in our beautiful Micah Chapel.**

During this Advent and Christmas season, know that you are loved by your church community and by God.

Our Mental Health Ministry leadership team continues to meet each month planning more ways to create a welcoming environment for anyone who needs support, with the goal of engaging and educating our community about mental health and its importance. Feel free to reach out to any of the members of our Mental Health Ministry Team – Lauren Guiditta, Rick Standish, Andy Bean, Keyla Rodriguez, Lynn Baronas, Sally Riddell or our pastors – David, Kate and Betsey.

Come to our Mothers in Faith and Action Group

Raising children in this current world is a privilege and often a challenge so we are coming together to support each other and to take action on issues that affect us and the world that our children will inherit. Inspired and encouraged by our faith, we are meeting new friends, sharing ideas, taking action and providing opportunities for our children to help us create a more just and peaceful world. All are welcome!

Come join us on **Wednesday, December 18 from 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. in the Quiet Room here at church!**

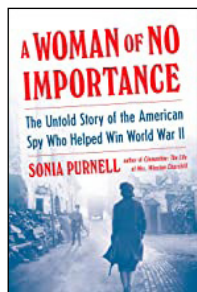
Childcare is provided. If you have questions, please contact Chelsea Cooper at 860-614-2381 or chelsnelson@yahoo.com.





Adult Opportunities

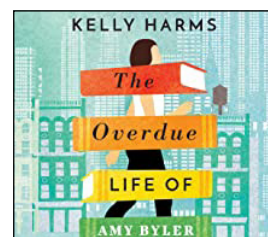
Read with Biography Book Group



The Biography Book Group meets every other month to review a book and enjoy fellowship in an informal setting. We invite you to join us for any of our upcoming selections. On **January 14** we will discuss *A Woman of No Importance: The Untold Story of the American Spy Who Helped Win World War II* by Sonia Purnell. Based on new and extensive research, Sonia Purnell has uncovered the full secret life of Virginia Hall, an astounding and inspiring story of heroism, spycraft, resistance, and personal triumph over shocking adversity. *A Woman of No Importance* is the breathtaking story of how one woman's fierce persistence helped win the war. Join our conversation about this remarkable woman. We hope you will join us for our book discussion at **4:00 p.m. in the Lehman Library**. Please contact Valerie Escalera at 860-633-4452 or miguel.escalera@sbcglobal.net with any questions.

Enjoy Talking with Thursday Morning Study Group

The Thursday Morning Study Group will begin December with an introduction to the highly regarded new (May 1, 2019) novel by Kelly Harms, *The Overdue Life of Amy Byler* on **December 5 and 12**. After that, we will look at the near classic book by Graeme Simsion, *The Rosie Project*, on **December 19 and again on January 16**, after the Christmas and New Year's break. It was a *New York Times* and *Publishers Weekly* number one bestseller for most of the 2013 and it (and the successive books published afterwards) has garnered a cult following ever since. TMSG usually meets on Thursday mornings from 9:30 until 11:00 a.m. for conversation and happy talk. For more information please email Sally Brown at saldaybrown@aol.com or call Forbes Warren at 860-633-3982. Please feel free to join us even if you have not read the material.



Calling Knitters and Crocheters



Do you knit? Crochet? Enjoy fellowship and the opportunity to help and support others? If the answer is YES to any of the above, come join us! Newcomers are always welcome. Yarn will be provided. Bring size 11 or 13 knitting needles, or a large crochet hook. Don't know how to knit or crochet? We can teach you. **The morning meetings are the first Monday of the month at 9:30 a.m.** (next morning meeting on **Monday, December 2**). **Our evening meetings are the third Monday each month, at 6:30 p.m. in the Lehman Library** (next evening meeting on **Monday, December 16**). Questions? Contact Sonmi Manto, szzmanto@gmail.com (morning meetings), or Kathy Salk, kathysalk@gmail.com (evening meetings).

Come to Potpourri Breakfast

What is Potpourri? It's breakfast and fellowship on the **first and third Tuesdays of each month at 7:30 a.m.** The church kitchen is alive with coffee, conversation and a delicious breakfast cooked up by Al Reid! Come anytime, a place is always set for you!



Green Corner

Go Hiking With First Church Outside!

Another hike is being planned for December. All are welcome to join us! To sign up or for more information, please email Rich Baber at richbabber@yahoo.com or look at the description on our website.



Sunday, December 15, 1:00 p.m. New State Road Trail, Manchester, 2.5 miles, easy. Meet at Cheney Technical School, Middle Turnpike West. This hike follows and crosses the Hockanum River through marshes, deep forests and laurel groves.

Green Corner

First Church Outside – Protecting our Earth Together!

Do you love our natural world? Have you decided that you can't sit around any longer and let our earth continue to be destroyed? Do you want to become a protector like God has called us to be? Please join us at First Church Outside and help make a difference! Meetings are the **third Tuesday of every month at 6:30 p.m.** Our next meeting will be **Tuesday, December 17 in the Lehman Library.** Together, we sponsor hikes and seasonal photo shows, and we work to protect our earth. If you have questions or want to get involved with First Church Outside, please contact Tracy Kavanaugh at lilypadprints@gmail.com or 413-250-3838.

December is First Church Environmental Action Month

Join us in steps to change our habits and be better caretakers of Earth!



What can you do?

Plastic bag exchange: Every coffee hour in December, you can bring in your old single use plastic bags and get a reusable bag for free. (If you have no bags to exchange you can purchase a bag.)

Restaurant letter writing campaign: Sign your name to a letter we plan to send out to area restaurants asking them to change leftover and take out containers to something recyclable. We are also asking them to only give out straws when requested.

First Church Outside table: Stop by the First Church Outside table every coffee hour in December to learn more about changes you can make in your everyday habits and take a pledge to give these changes a try!

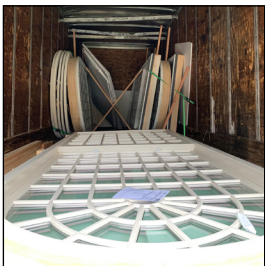
December 8: First Church Outside will be reducing waste during coffee hour by serving coffee in the church's washable coffee cups.

BE THE CHURCH

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR, CARE FOR THE CHILDREN, PROTECT GOD'S CREATION

Trustees Update

New Windows!



The Board of Trustees is excited to report that the Meetinghouse window replacement project started on November 11! The old windows date to 1938 and will be replaced by ten new historically accurate

windows. The new windows were delivered on November 7, and George Fay has been hired as the contractor to complete the window installation project which will start on the north side of the church. Weather permitting, the entire project is anticipated to take 5-8 weeks to complete.

The first part of the window installation project will remove all the siding and the contractor will inspect for water damage. All damage to the siding underlayment will be repaired. The existing sanctuary windows will then be removed and discarded and the new replacement windows installed. The final phase will involve installation of new siding and exterior trim to complete the project. Our church family continues to honor its place in Glastonbury's history through the loving care of our church property.

“No Parking” Signs

We all strive to be good neighbors, and we do the same here at First Church. There are new “No Parking” signs from in front of the Micah Chapel all the way down to Town Hall. We know this is a busy area on Sunday mornings, but this change was done in order to improve sight lines and for the safety of exiting traffic onto Main Street from our neighbors to the south. We ask you to please look out for the “No Parking” signs, and not park where it is marked. We know this might create an inconvenience for some, but we want to respect our neighbors and their safety. If you are in need of a handicapped or decreased mobility parking spot, in addition to the spaces by the Micah Chapel, and by the back lobby door, there are three additional spaces by the north side ramp door. Thanks for helping us to be good neighbors!

Fall Cleanup

Thank you to all who helped during our recent work day!





Get Involved on Sundays

Become a Greeter or Usher



Would you like to be a greeter or help usher at one of our Sunday morning worship services? We are ever so thankful for the warm welcome our Sunday morning greeters extend to everyone coming through our doors, as well as for the head ushers and ushers who help in seating and participate in the offertory. The Board of Deacons invites anyone who would love to be a greeter, head usher or usher to please make a note in the fellowship pew pad or contact Judi Barber at jjbarber0623@gmail.com.

Host Coffee Hour

The Board of Lay Life and Ministry is looking for more volunteers to host coffee hour. It's a great way to greet new members, as well as to connect with familiar faces during fellowship. Please contact Kathy Harris at kathyharris860@gmail.com to host. We would love to add your name to our list!



Provide Altar Flowers



Church members are invited to provide flower arrangements for the altar in memory of, in celebration of, or in honor of people, events or accomplishments. In the summer, some members provide flowers from their own gardens. If you are interested, please contact Susan Bonitsky at 860-633-7128 or kowsz.susan@gmail.com.



General Info Corner

Prayer Corner

Prayers of joy for:

Lynn and Mark Baronas on the birth of her grandson, Luca MacKay Loiacono on October 26. His parents are Katie (Baronas) and Jonathan (JJ) Loiacono.



Prayers of sympathy for:

Celia Gillard on the death of her Mother, Vi Gustafson, on October 30. Vi enjoyed attending worship services with Celia who has been an active member since 1995. Our prayers are with the entire Gillard family.

IN CASE OF HOSPITALIZATION:

Hospitals can't release information to us, so if you or a loved one is hospitalized and would like a visit, please make note of the following. In addition, if you would like the church to know of any upcoming hospitalization, please call the church office at 860-633-4641 to inform the pastoral staff.

For Hartford Hospital, inform them that you are from First Church of Christ, Congregational in Glastonbury. For St. Francis Hospital, tell them Code 17 for First Church.

Driveway Fire Lanes

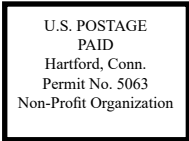
As we are in the midst of another program year with many activities and events at the church, we offer this gentle reminder to observe the "No Parking – Fire Lane" signs in our church driveway. Cars should not be left parked, unattended, in these "No Parking" areas. Thanks for helping to make our church a safe place for all!

Snow Cancellations!

For weekday events, if the Glastonbury schools have a snow closing or early dismissal, any evening programs would be cancelled. For weekend and other snow closings, students and parents will be notified through our email lists. **Snow closings will also be posted on WFSB 3, NBC 30 and WTNH 8.** As always, if you determine it is not safe to drive to a program, please stay home. We urge extra caution and discretion with young drivers.



THE REMINDER submission deadline:
Tuesday, December 10: January 2020 issue



Return Service Requested.

The poet Ann Weems writes,

*The silence breaks into morning.
That One Star lights the world...
Let it begin with singing and never end!
Oh, angels, quit your lamenting!
Oh, pilgrims, upon your knees in tearful prayer,
Rise up and take your hearts and run!*

Betsy
Keith
Daniel
Katie
Rebecca
Valerie
Peggy
Susan
Angela
Karin
Lauren
Amy
Jenny
Webb

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

For this sacred and holy season, the staff of First Church wishes for you and those you love a time of hope, peace, joy and love as that One Star lights our world and as our hearts leap and run into the New Year!

Christmas Poinsettias, Wreaths and Memorial Donations

GIVEN BY: _____

Please Print Name(s) Clearly

You may purchase a red poinsettia to be used in our Meetinghouse for the Christmas Services. You may leave the plant for a homebound church member to enjoy or take it home and enjoy it yourself. (Please do not take your plant until after the 11:00 p.m. service on Christmas Eve.)

I am ordering _____ Poinsettias at \$14.00 each = _____

Will leave plant(s)

Will take plant(s)

Each year our church is beautifully decorated with wreaths to celebrate the holiday season. Please consider making a donation to help defray the costs. Any amount is greatly appreciated. Please note that all wreaths are to be left in the church.

Wreath Donation \$ _____

Please consider giving a donation in memory or in honor of a loved one.

Donation \$ _____

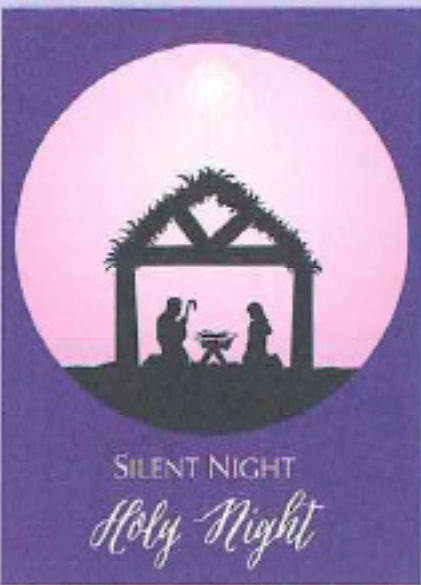
Please indicate if you would like your plant or donation to be in Memory or Honor of anyone **[Please Print Clearly]**:

IN MEMORY OF _____

- or -

IN HONOR OF _____

Completed forms should be left in the offering plate, or returned to the Church office by 9:00 a.m. on Monday, December 2 with your check, payable to The First Church of Christ, Congregational, or cash.



Christ the Savior is Born!

Advent and Christmas, 2019

Dear Friends,

Mother Teresa of Calcutta once said,

"At this Christmas when Christ comes, will He find a warm heart? Mark the season of Advent by loving and serving the others with God's own love and concern."

Let us truly mark this holy and sacred season of Advent and Christmas by loving and serving others with God's own love and concern. When we bring this love and concern into the world, hope is born once again as we share that love with our neighbors who cry out for release, release from – hunger, the cold, homelessness, despair or hopelessness. Hope is born again in the faces of children and the aged and as we brighten the dark corridors of our world.

Each year, we have the opportunity to give the gift of God's own love through our annual Christmas offering, which will be divided equally among six organizations. Please make your check payable to **First Church**, with the memo line, **Christmas offering**.

The **Glastonbury Fuel Bank** provides assistance to those needing help with fuel heating costs. With the cold, harsh winters that we have seen in recent years, this fuel assistance program is more vital than ever for our neighbors in the Glastonbury community.

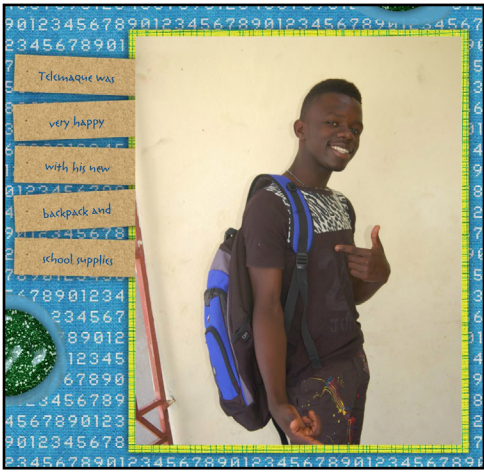


Manchester Area Conference of Churches (MACC) provides food, shelter, and other assistance to those in need, including outreach from social workers. Our Confirmation program and our Board of Christian Service have ongoing, hands-on relationships with MACC.

The **Horace Bushnell Children's Food Pantry** has a long history of being a source of good, nutritious food for those in need. Unfortunately, food insecurity is a reality both in Hartford and in suburban communities like Glastonbury. We deliver the items

collected at First Church to this pantry, as well as to MACC.





HELO is a mission that provides home, education, love and opportunity to orphaned and abandoned children in Haiti. In 2010 – 2011, First Church sponsored Telemaque, a child living at HELO. Our congregation raised over \$11,000 to take care of Telemaque for 10 years while he grows up under the love and care of HELO.

Hands on Hartford, in partnership with community groups and individuals, strengthens community in Hartford by responding to

people in need through programs that change lives and renew human possibility. People in need of food, housing and more economic security benefit from the amazing work of Hands on Hartford. We volunteer four times a year to serve a lunchtime meal to the hungry of Hartford.



Family Promise of Central Connecticut is the organization with whom we work to provide shelter – and hope – for homeless families. First Church, through Family Promise, is working to fight homelessness, one family at a time, by assisting families with children to remain intact and to become self-sufficient.

This holy and sacred season, let us once again bring hope to the faces of children – young and old and near and far – as we share God’s love and concern through our annual Christmas offering!

Lots of love,

Paul and Kate





Giving with Joy!



Donate to South Park Inn



Consider giving a donation to this year's Church School Mission Project, **South Park Inn's dining area renovation project**, as a Christmas gift to anyone on your list! Cards will be available to acknowledge your gifts.

South Park Inn has operated on Main Street in Hartford for 35 years, providing housing, food and assistance to homeless residents. In an ongoing relationship, First Church provides both financial assistance and a helping hand to the agency and the families who live there. Now, responding to their need for improvements to their dining area, we are committed to ensuring they are able to provide safe, healthy, delicious meals, in a warm and welcoming environment to anyone who walks through their doors. Our goal is to raise \$10,000 to support South Park Inn.



Support Our Giving Tree and Giving Train: Four Great Causes!

Board of Christian Education Giving Train: Benefits local families through Glastonbury Human Services

As with previous years, the Board of Christian Education collects gifts for Glastonbury Social Services, but this year we have a Giving Train. When you return your gift, please make sure to include the **train** tag in the bag or taped to the box, and please do not wrap the gift. The deadline for returning the gifts is **Sunday, December 8.**



Board of Christian Service Giving Tree: Benefits Covenant to Care, Family Life Education, and MACC.



The tree is sponsored by the Board of Christian Service and will benefit three different organizations. The first is **Covenant to Care**. Our liaison from First Church works with social workers at the Manchester Department of Social Services to assist families who find themselves in a time of crisis or transition.

The second beneficiary is **Family Life Education**, which is located in the Parkville neighborhood of Hartford and is dedicated to building a stronger community by engaging and strengthening families through youth development and support and family services.

The third organization is **Manchester Area Conference of Churches (MACC)**, which provides food, clothing, outreach and advocacy services for the unmet basic needs in the community.

The tags selected from the Board of Christian Service tree need to have the unwrapped gifts delivered to First Church no later than **Sunday, December 15.** When you return your gift, please make sure to include the tag in the bag or taped to the box, and please do not wrap the gift.

Each organization will have a different tag as follows: **Family Life Education – yellow star**

Manchester Area Conference of Churches – red ornament

Covenant To Care – green Christmas tree

Participate in “A Baby for the World” Gift Giving on Christmas Eve

On **Tuesday, December 24**, our Senior High Fellowship will present the story of the birth of Jesus with music and pageantry at this service designed especially for the youth of our congregation at **4:30 p.m.** Children will be given the opportunity to dress up as a shepherd or angel, and these headaddresses will be available in the narthex before the service begins.

The children of First Church will remember and celebrate the birth of Jesus by participating in a special offering that will go towards babies in our community who need help. We ask that each child bring one of the following items to this service as an offering during the pageant: **baby food, formula, warm blanket, diapers or wipes.** During the offertory, all of the children will be invited to come forward to the manger and donate their gifts in the designated boxes. These boxes will remain for the later services so that older children and adults may also donate items. All items will be donated to babies in the Greater Hartford Area through Covenant to Care. Thank you!





Purchase SERRV Handcrafts



The Board of Christian Service will offer products from SERRV for sale during coffee hour until **December 22**. You're sure to find things that will make wonderful Christmas gifts for the people on your list! SERRV is a nonprofit organization whose purpose is to promote the social and economic progress of people in developing regions of the world by purchasing and marketing their handcrafts in a just and direct manner. A significant amount of the retail cost of items is returned to those economically impoverished artisans. The items are beautiful, so buy a present or two and support a good cause at the same time!

Bring in Peanut Butter, Jelly and Oatmeal for our Ongoing Food Collection

First Church has had a long tradition of collecting food items for our neighbors in need. Our donations go to Horace Bushnell Children's Food Pantry in Hartford and Manchester Area Conference of Churches (MACC). Please continue to bring in food for our neighbors in need. There are two baskets at church (one in the back lobby and one in the narthex) where the food is collected. **In December, we're asking for contributions of peanut butter, oatmeal and other items people are willing to donate.** Please bring food that is not expired or open. Thanks for your help!



Opportunities to Volunteer with Foodshare!



Foodshare's vision is for a community where all people can get the food they need. As the region's food bank, they work toward that vision by getting food donations from the food industry and distributing them to 300 food pantries, community kitchens, homeless shelters and other partner programs. There are **two ways to get involved** with Foodshare here at First Church.

Volunteer when the Mobile Foodshare truck comes to our back parking lot every other Wednesday morning at 10:00 a.m. This is a "farmer's market" style food distribution of fresh produce and other foods, and it takes many volunteers to serve everyone who comes. If you are interested in participating (adults, youth and children are welcome!), contact Sally Riddell at 860-657-8715 or sally.m.riddell@gmail.com.

Volunteer at Foodshare's Regional Market in Hartford on alternating Wednesday mornings to help sort and package the produce that gets given out on the Mobile Foodshare truck at various sites across the state. **Volunteers gather in the church parking lot at 8:00 a.m. to drive in together, and the shift is from 8:30-11:30 a.m.** If you are interested in learning more, please contact Jim Hartung at ctsdncmnfolk@gmail.com or 860-430-2123.

Carol's Closet Collection

We support Carol's Closet, a paper pantry that was started by the members of St. James Episcopal Church in 2015. The paper pantry serves the elderly and low-income families of Glastonbury who do not have the resources to purchase paper products. These products can't be purchased with food stamps/SNAP. If you are able, **please donate needed items, including men's and women's deodorants, toothpaste, toothbrushes, shampoo, toilet paper (packs of four or smaller) and individually wrapped rolls of paper towels.** You can leave the items in the box in the back lobby. If you are interested in helping, please contact the Board of Christian Service Carol's Closet coordinator Sarah Proulx at sarahb3982@gmail.com or 860-208-6397.



Volunteer at Wish Elementary School



Reading changes lives! Fred Wish School is an Elementary School on Barbour Street in Hartford. For years, volunteers from First Church have been helping the kindergarteners with basic reading skills. We hope to encourage their love of reading by spending time with each child reading books, talking about what excites them and what they have learned from the stories. Books appropriate for their grade level and skills are provided. It is rewarding to see their progress and how proud they are when they begin to read to us. **Volunteers are asked to spend two hours weekly on a day of their choice. We are assigned two students and spend 30 minutes with each child.** If you are interested or have questions, please contact Sally Riddell at 860-657-8715 or sally.m.riddell@gmail.com.