

The REMINDER

First Church of Christ, Congregational, Glastonbury, Connecticut

Member of United Church of Christ

An open, welcoming and affirming congregation

December 2016

Advent and Christmas Worship Services

Sunday, November 27 - First Sunday of Advent, 8:00 and 10:00 a.m.

David Taylor preaching

Special music performed by Arwen Norman (8:00 a.m.) and the Chancel Choir (10:00 a.m.)



Sunday, December 4 - Second Sunday of Advent, 8:00 and 10:00 a.m.

Kate VanDerzee-Glidden preaching

Special music performed by Ginger Kousen (8:00 a.m.) and the Cantabile Trebles, Cherub and Chancel Choirs (10:00 a.m.)

Sunday, December 11 - Third Sunday of Advent

8:00 a.m., A Quiet Christmas Service in the Meetinghouse

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.

10:00 a.m., A Festival Service of Nine Lessons and Carols

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 and worship the newborn King!

Sunday, December 18 - Fourth Sunday of Advent, 8:00 and 10:00 a.m.

David Taylor preaching

Special music performed by Vance Harris (8:00 a.m.) and the Jubilate Ringers and Chancel Choir a (10:00 a.m.)

Saturday, December 24, Christmas Eve Services

4:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Pageant

Our Senior High Fellowship 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; David Taylor will offer a Christmas Eve meditation.

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. David Taylor will offer a Christmas Eve meditation.



December 25 - Christmas Day, One Service at 10:00 a.m.

This informal service will include carol singing, scripture reading and storytelling. Come casually dressed and celebrate the Christmas season 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 and 10:00 a.m.

Church School: 10:15 a.m.
Childcare is provided

Phone Number: 860-633-4641

Fax Number: 860-633-5826

Email: firstchurch@glastonburyfirst.org

Website: www.glastonburyfirst.org

Staff

- The Rev. David Taylor, *Senior Pastor*
davidtaylor@glastonburyfirst.org, ext. 118
- The Rev. Kate VanDerzee-Glidden, *Associate Pastor*, katev@glastonburyfirst.org, ext. 120
- Angela Salcedo, *Director of Music Ministries*
angelasalcedo@glastonburyfirst.org, ext. 116
- The Rev. Gordon Bates, *Minister of Visitation*
- Karin Carlino, *Church School Administrator*
ceadmin@glastonburyfirst.org, ext. 115
- Kathy Ciolkosz, *Administrative Assistant*
kathyc@glastonburyfirst.org, ext. 110
- Valerie Escalera, *Program Administrator*
programadmin@glastonburyfirst.org, ext. 115
- Susan Feller, *Publications Specialist*
publications@glastonburyfirst.org, ext. 112
- Rebecca Fleahman, *Office Manager*
rebeccafleahman@glastonburyfirst.org, ext. 122
- Cheryl Foley, *Child Care Provider*
- Elizabeth Gleich, *Director of Children and Youth Ministries*
elizabeth@glastonburyfirst.org, ext. 113
- Wes Grove, *Facilities Manager*
facilities@glastonburyfirst.org, ext. 121
- Peggy Hartman, *Director of Handbell Program and Childrens' Choirs*

THE REMINDER submission deadline:
Saturday, December 10: January 2017 issue

Update on the Micah House and Chapel

Dear Friends,

We are excited to report continued progress regarding The Micah House and Chapel at the Thomas Hale Homestead project.

The "Building a Legacy" capital campaign received over \$922,000 in pledges from 143 congregation members and friends to create the Micah House. The capital campaign officially ended on August 31. However, anyone who has not yet made a pledge or supplemented their original pledge may still make a contribution.

The capital campaign goal was to raise \$950,000. Our church leaders recommended that the \$27,000 shortfall be funded through an unrestricted estate gift recently received by First Church. On October 30, a congregational meeting was held that approved the church leaders' recommendation.

The next step towards making the Micah House a reality was to receive the appropriate permits and zoning approvals. On November 15, the Town Planning and Zoning Commission conducted a public hearing and approved the Micah House and Chapel project. The approval contains previously agreed upon conditions whereby First Church make a dozen specific but very minor changes in the project design. The Commission likes the project and congratulated the congregation on such a visionary and worthwhile reuse of the historic Thomas Hale Homestead.

We expect that ground breaking for the building will occur in the early spring of 2017. Thanks to all who have supported and will continue to support this project. We believe that the Micah House and Chapel will be a legacy that serves First Church's mission today and for future generations.

Faithfully yours,

Earl Thompson

Chair, Capital Campaign Committee

Jonathan Russell

Chair, Building Committee

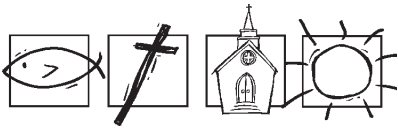
"God has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" ~ Micah 6:8



Are You Able?

We Need You: Time and Talent Forms Available!

It takes many people to keep our church vibrant, and First Church is blessed by all of you who give so freely of your time, money and energy. Thank you! There are so many ways to get involved here at church, and we look forward to working with you! We have our *Time and Talent* form available in the narthex, back lobby and in the office for parishioners to fill out so we know where you feel called to serve. If you have filled it out in the past and your interests haven't changed, then you don't need to fill it out again, because we have that information stored in our database.



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.

The Al Abas Family in Glastonbury



The Al Abas Syrian refugee family is into their fifth month here in Glastonbury and adjusting well to life in the U.S. All five children are in school, with Walid and Mohammad now enrolled in GHS. They're all enjoying their classes, making friends, and getting involved in activities. While Zeyad and Ezdehar, the parents, attend evening English Language Learner classes, driven to Wethersfield by church members, our volunteers are with the children helping with homework and tutoring.

Zeyad finished work at the farm in mid-November with the end of the harvest season, and he has a number of promising leads for jobs. Opportunities are being pursued for part time work for Walid and Mohammad, possibly with one of Glastonbury's many restaurants. Plans are in the works for Ezdehar as well.

IRIS and Yale continue to organize social events for refugees, and the boys enjoyed attending a Halloween party at Yale (see photo). The Committee and volunteers celebrated Sedra's 13th birthday in October, and she demonstrated her English skills by excellently reading aloud each of her cards. Thanks to our nurse volunteers, the family has had all their initial health assessments and vaccinations. Dental visits are progressing.

It "takes a village," and we are incredibly grateful for all the volunteers, including our team of translators. Our volunteers will soon install a new sliding glass door in the home, in exchange for a rent reduction, hopefully before the snow flies. If you'd like to help, please feel free to contact John Dugan or Rosemary Richter.

Mission Immersion Day Thank You!

On November 12, close to thirty youth and adults volunteered their time for our Mission Immersion Day. Our parishioners went to two different sites – Hawkwing in Glastonbury and Habitat for Humanity in Hartford. Thank you to our faithful volunteers for spreading God's love!

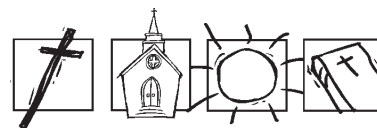


Service Trip with Simply Smiles

As hundreds of past participants will attest, the volunteer service trip to the Cheyenne River Reservation with Simply Smiles is a life-changing opportunity. Adult participants will live and work with Simply Smiles in the town of La Plant on the Reservation. On the trip, participants will be doing home construction projects, working on town-wide events and helping at daily camps, all while learning about the rich Lakota culture! The trip will be **May 13-20, 2017**. If you are interested in learning more, contact Charlie Kuchenbrod at charliek@ctucc.org.



Christian Service



Thanks for the Donations to Carol's Closet!

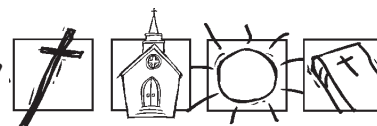
The generosity of our congregation is amazing! Thank you to all who donated paper products and other items to Carol's Closet, the Glastonbury paper pantry. The items given out aren't covered by SNAP (formerly food stamps) and are greatly appreciated by the people receiving them. Thanks to everyone who brought in items!

First Church's "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 or David Taylor.



Building the Beloved Community



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, **Kati Kennedy**
Chair, Stewardship Committee

Diana Ruddick
Church President



Update on Stewardship Progress

As of Friday, November 11, we have received \$694,262 towards our goal of \$750,000. We have yet to hear from 65 members who pledged in 2016, 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!

Pledge Reminders

The end of the year is rapidly approaching. According to IRS regulations, any donations received or postmarked by December 31, 2016 will be reflected in your year-end giving statement. If they do not meet these requirements, they will be reflected in your 2017 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. Pledge giving has been very strong through October and the church is counting on your continued generous contributions to close the remaining \$90,452 gap necessary to meet our 2016 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 2016. Please call Rebecca in the church office with any questions.

Peter Charles, Treasurer

The 2017 boxed sets of offering envelopes will arrive shortly and be announced in the Weekly Word. Please remember they are not numbered. You must print your first and last name so your cash contribution can be included on your giving statement. Thank you!



Children's Ministries



Church School Unit 3: "In the Manger"

Bible Story Reference: Luke 2:1-20

Bible Verses: *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;
- learn to locate the story of Jesus' birth in the Book of Luke.



	<u>Sunday 11/20</u>	<u>Sunday 11/27</u>	<u>Sunday 12/4</u>	<u>Sunday 12/11</u>	<u>Sunday 12/18</u>
<u>K & 1st grade</u>	Games Room 110 Judy Harding	Music Room 206 Courtney & Tatum MacDonald	Cooking Room 205 Beverly Miller	Art Room 103 Adam Garrity	Storytelling Room 111 Kimberly & Andrew Cox
<u>2nd grade</u>	Storytelling Room 111 Kimberly & Andrew Cox	Games Room 110 Judy Harding	Music Room 206 Courtney & Tatum MacDonald	Cooking Room 205 Beverly Miller	Art Room 103 Adam Garrity
<u>3rd grade</u>	Storytelling Room 111 Kimberly & Andrew Cox	Games Room 110 Judy Harding	Music Room 206 Courtney & Tatum MacDonald	Cooking Room 205 Beverly Miller	Art Room 103 Adam Garrity
<u>4th grade</u>	Art Room 103 Adam Garrity	Storytelling Room 111 Kimberly & Andrew Cox	Games Room 110 Judy Harding	Remain in Service for Lessons & Carols	Cooking Room 205 Beverly Miller
<u>5th grade</u>	Art Room 103 Adam Garrity	Storytelling Room 111 Kimberly & Andrew Cox	Games Room 110 Judy Harding	Remain in Service for Lessons & Carols	Cooking Room 205 Beverly Miller

Please note: The Preschool Room is in Room 105. Puppet Troupe is in Rooms 302/303. EXPLORE is in the Youth Room. Some classes are combined for this Unit.

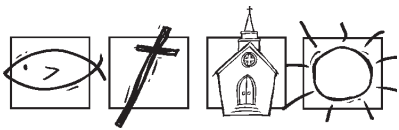
Church School runs until 11:10 a.m. each Sunday. If worship gets out earlier than that, please enjoy some time in Schultz Hall before picking up your children. Thanks for your cooperation!

Childcare Available on Sundays

First Church is blessed with a hired childcare provider, Cheryl Foley, who is here each week to look after our infants and toddlers during Sunday services, along with a wonderful team of volunteers. You can print a registration form or register online.

Donations in the Church School envelopes go directly to the 2016-2017 Church School Mission Project, School Safe Zones. We suggest a children's donation of \$1 per week. Other designated envelopes are available for your pledges and Christmas offerings.





Children's Ministries



Advent Family Workshop

**Sunday, December 4
3:00 – 4:30 p.m., Schultz Hall**

Come join us for crafts, fun and refreshments while exploring how countries around the world celebrate Christmas!

All are welcome!

Bloomfield Backpack Project

Come help to feed the hungry and then share a quick meal together during this service and supper opportunity! In partnership with Foodshare and other local churches, we will be providing backpacks filled with 11 pounds of nonperishable food to 100 Bloomfield children in need. Come join us on the **2nd Thursday of the month from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m.** We are organizing the following groups but **anyone and everyone** is welcome to join us on any date that works for you!



Contact Meredith Krauss at meredana@aol.com to sign up or feel free to sign up on the poster outside of the Christian Education office. Upcoming dates with openings for volunteers are **February 9, March 9, April 13, May 11 and June 8.**

Save the Date! Church School Schedule

Sunday, December 4

- Last day for **Advent Calendar Sales** during coffee hour!
- Last chance to return yellow-star gifts for the Board of Christian Education's **Giving Tree!** All gifts are given to local families through the Glastonbury Department of Social Services.
- **Annual Advent Workshop** in Schultz Hall from 3:00 - 4:30 p.m. Join us for crafts, cooking, fellowship and holiday fun!

Sunday, December 11

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

Sunday, December 18

- Second and Third graders sponsor their **Bake Sale** during Common Fellowship to raise money for our Church School Mission Project – **School Safe Zones!**

Saturday, 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 25

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

Snow Cancellations!

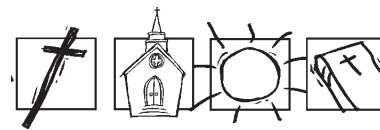
For weekday events, if the Glastonbury schools have a snow closing or early dismissal, any evening programs would be cancelled. For weekend and other snow closings, students and parents will be notified through our email lists. **Snow closings**

will also be posted on WFSB 3, NBC 30, WTNH 8, and on WTIC radio. *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.*





Youth Ministry



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*

***Friday, December 2 – Saturday, December 3:**

SHF Advent Lock In

Sunday, December 4: No SHF

Sunday, December 11: SHF Christmas Party!

Sunday, December 18: Pageant Rehearsal (6:00-8:00 p.m.)
– No SHF

Wednesday, December 21: Pageant Rehearsal (6:00-8:00 p.m.)

Saturday, December 24: Christmas Pageant 4:30 p.m.
Youth arrive at 3:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 25: No SHF – Merry Christmas!

SHF will be headed to Biloxi, MS from **Sunday, April 9, to Saturday, April 15, 2017** for our annual Mission Trip. **The following dates are Mandatory Mission Focused SHF Sessions – February 26 and March 26.** 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.

Junior High Fellowship Schedule

Junior High Fellowship is open to any young person in 6th – 8th grades. Regular fellowship sessions are the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month during the school year from 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. in the Youth Room.

**Denotes Special Time*

Monday, December 12: JHF Christmas Party!

Sunday, December 18: Pageant Rehearsal (6:00-8:00 p.m.)

Wednesday, December 21:

Pageant Rehearsal (6:00-8:00 p.m.)

Saturday, December 24: Christmas Pageant 4:30 p.m.

Youth arrive at 3:00 p.m.

Monday, December 26: No JHF – Happy New Year!

Confirmation Class Schedule

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. Together, we use 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 will be **Sundays from 4:30 – 6:00 p.m. in the Youth Room.**

Sunday, December 4: Regular Class Session

Sunday, December 11: Regular Class Session

Confirmand Christmas Visits

Confirmands will soon be receiving information from us via email regarding Christmas time visits to members of our congregation. Please make sure to keep an eye out for this information. It is up to each Confirmand to schedule their visit at their own convenience.



We Need You!



Christmas PAGEANT

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! Below are the rehearsal dates.

Sunday, December 11: 5:00-6:00 p.m. (Costume fittings and read-through)

Sunday, December 18: Pageant Rehearsal (6:00-8:00 p.m.)

Wednesday, December 21: Pageant Rehearsal (6:00-8:00 p.m.)

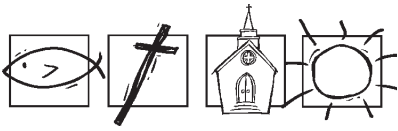
Saturday, December 24: Call for Christmas Pageant 3:00 p.m., Pageant is at 4:30 p.m.

Please contact Elizabeth Gleich at elizabeth@glastonburyfirst.org to sign up!

Senior High Fellowship Advent Lock In

December 2 – 3, 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 a.m.

Students in Senior High Fellowship, get excited for our upcoming Advent Lock-in. It's an extravaganza! Students will spend the night playing games, eating food and learning the meaning of Advent. Permission slips will be emailed to parents and handed out at Fellowship meetings. Please eat dinner beforehand.



Music Ministry



Music at the Meetinghouse Presents...



with the
**Mostly Baroque Players
and Soloists**

A sing-along performance of Handel's most beloved oratorio. All are invited to bring their own scores of Messiah and join in during the choruses. Scores will also be available to borrow.

**Saturday, November 26, 2016
7:30 p.m.**

A donation of \$10 per person is suggested. \$20 family maximum.

*First Church of Christ, Congregational, UCC
2183 Main Street, Glastonbury, CT 860-633-4641*

Cookie Walk and Christmas Bazaar



**Saturday, December 3, 2016
9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.**

Volunteers Needed!!

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

Please contact Courtney King at kcrpking@aol.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 9:30

*Please join us for more upcoming
Music at the Meetinghouse events...*

SILENT FILM SPEEDY

Peter Krasinski, Improvisation Specialist
Saturday, February 25, 2017, 7:30 p.m.

MERRIMACK VALLEY RINGERS

Ring into Spring Concert
Saturday, April 29, 2017, 7:30 p.m.

GREATER MIDDLETOWN CHORALE

Vocal Alchemy
Saturday, June 3, 2017, 7:30 p.m.

Music at the Meetinghouse Presents...

ANNUAL FESTIVAL SERVICE OF NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS



Sunday, December 11, 2016, 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.



Caring Ministry

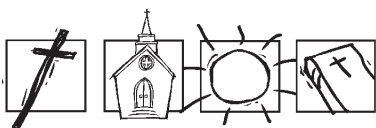


Holy Communion for the Homebound

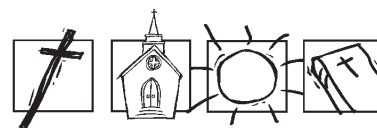
If you are homebound, and would like to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion, a member of the pastoral staff would be happy to come to your home. Please be in touch with Kathy Ciolkosz at the church office 860-633-4641 and let her know of your interest.

Calling Knitters and Crocheters!

Knitters and crocheters will gather on **Monday, December 19, from 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. in the Lehman Library**. Whether you are new to the group or would like to learn to knit or crochet, all are welcome for handicrafts and fellowship. Yarn is provided. Bring a #11 or #13 pair of knitting needles, or a medium to large crochet hook, and receive some instruction. If you have questions, call Chair Judy Burr at 860-643-9368. All 2016-2017 meetings except the June meeting are planned for the third Monday of the month as follows: **January 16, February 20, March 20, April 17, May 15 and June 12.**



Adult Opportunities



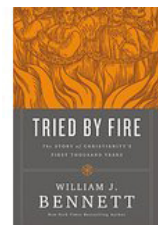
Biography Book Group



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. Our January selection is ***Florence! Foster!! Jenkins!!!; The Life of the World's Worst Opera Singer*** by Darryl W. Bullock. "Madam Jenkins couldn't carry a tune in a bucket: despite that, in 1944 at the age of 76, she played Carnegie Hall to a capacity audience and had celebrity fans by the score. Her infamous 1940s recordings are still highly-prized today. In his thoroughly entertaining biography, Darryl W. Bullock tells of Florence Foster Jenkins' meteoric rise to success and the man who stood beside her, through every sharp note (Amazon.com)." We hope you will join us on **Tuesday, January 10 at 4:00 p.m. in the Lehman Library** for this fun and interesting book discussion. Call or email Valerie Escalera at 860-633-4452 or miguel.escalera@sbcglobal.net with any questions.

Thursday Morning Study Group

In December, the Thursday Morning Study Group will be engaged in looking at the early Christian Church and wondering how it survived! Using Dr. William J. Bennett's recent book, ***Tried by Fire: The Story of Christianity's First Thousand Years***, as a guide, we will explore the history of Christianity. This will take us through December 22, when we will begin another review of the World War II nationwide citizen internment program. We will use a 2015 book by author Jan Jarboe Russell titled ***The Train To Crystal City: FDR's Secret Prisoner Exchange Program and America's Only Family Internment Camp During World War II*** as our guide for this important study. Specific dates have yet to be determined, depending on the group's individual schedules. TMSG gathers in the **Lehman Library at 9:30 a.m. on Thursdays**. All are welcome for these studies. For more information, please email Forbes Warren at fwarren2@cox.net.

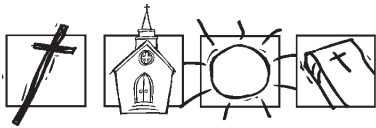


Women's Theological Reflection Group

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. In the past, we discussed prayer, healing, faith journeys, doing justice, finding quiet time, our addiction to hurrying and gratitude. We hope to see you at one of our gatherings from **8:00 to 9:00 a.m. in the Lehman Library**. Please contact Danae Dwyer at danaedwyer@me.com or 860-967-2269 for further information.

Potpourri

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!



Adult Opportunities



Second Sunday Book Club

The Second Sunday Book Club's winter selection is *H is for Hawk*, by Helen MacDonald. With an award-winning, bestselling memoir about a woman who grapples with the unexpected death of a parent through training a goshawk, we are turning from novels to nonfiction to kick off the new year. We will meet in **Lehman Library on Sunday, January 8 at 4:00 p.m.** to discuss this and other great reads. Selections for the remainder of the year are: **March 12: *Ordinary Grace***, William Kent Krueger; **May 7: *Underground Railroad***, Colson Whitehead. If you have any questions, contact Amy E. Thompson at thompson.amy72@gmail.com.



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. We are looking into the book of Esther. Although God is never mentioned in the book, we will see that God is at work to save the people of Israel. All are welcome to **join us in the Parlor each Tuesday morning from 9:45-11:00 a.m.** No book purchase is necessary. Please call Dianne Schwegler at 860-633-6326 for more information and to reserve your copy of the study guide questions.



General Info Corner



Media Ministries at First Church

Watch a First Church service on television...

"Living the Word," each Sunday at 7:30 a.m. and noon
on Cox Cable, Channel 15

Altar Flowers Requested

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. If you are interested, please contact Susan Bonitsky at 860-633-7128 or email kowsz@juno.com.



Prayer Corner

Prayers of healing and wholeness for:

Barbara Harding	Audrey Hernandez	Al Reid
Lois Harwick	Chris Hernandez	

Prayers of sympathy:

Eva Bowden and her family on the death of her husband, Robert Bowden, on November 4. Bob had been a good friend to many here at First Church since he joined in 1954. He remained an active member throughout the years, serving as our Church President 1971-1973 and on the Board of Trustees, Board of Deacons, Human Resources, Stewardship, and as a Church School volunteer. His memorial service was held on November 12.

Carol Loomis and family on the recent death of her nephew, Patrick Long. He was the son of Carol's brother, Richard Long.

Friends of Ruth Griswold, who died on November 12. She was a member since 1990 and a friend to many. A private burial was held on November 21, and her Memorial Service is scheduled for Saturday, January 7, 2017, at 10:00 a.m. here at First Church.

Family and friends of Robert (Bob) Reed, who died on November 12. His memorial service was held on November 18 here at First Church.

IN CASE OF HOSPITALIZATION: New Procedure for Hartford Hospital

If you or a loved one is hospitalized, please make note of the following.

For Hartford Hospital, inform them that you are from First Church of Christ, Congregational in Glastonbury.

For St. Francis Hospital, inform them of Code 17 for First Church.

In addition, if you would like the church to know of any upcoming hospitalization, please give the church office a call at 860-633-4641 to inform the pastoral staff.

WELCOME OUR NEW CHURCH MEMBERS

Sunday, November 13, was a very exciting day in the life of our church! The Church Growth and Membership Committee would like to join our entire congregation in welcoming all of our newest members, listed below.



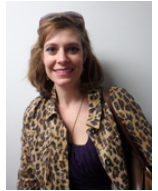
Judy Rozie-Battle and Stanley Battle (P.O. Box 619, Glastonbury, 860-430-9376) Judy and Stanley take pride in that we are an open and affirming congregation. Judy is a Philanthropy Administrator for the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving and enjoys reading in her spare time. Stanley is a Professor/Director at the University of St. Joseph and enjoys physical fitness, reading and any activities related to music and urban education. He was a choir member and soloist in his prior church and is currently in our Chancel Choir.

Carol and Walt Briggs (89 Overlook Rd., Glastonbury, 860-657-6033) Carol and Walt have been attending our worship services since November 2015 and have said that from their first visit, they have found all the members to be so welcoming and friendly. Carol enjoys spending time with family and friends, reading, kayaking and playing word games. Walt also enjoys family time, golf, boating, gardening and reading.



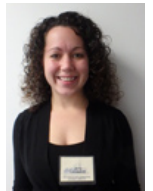
Chelsey, Dylan and Wayne Gellett (111 Ridge Rd., Glastonbury, 636-541-7846) Chelsey and Wayne moved to Glastonbury this year from California. They have two children: Dylan (15), who also joined in membership, and Penny (5). Chelsey is Quality Director for Bel Power Solutions and loves to travel. Wayne is Principle Engineer for Proton Energy Systems. He was active as a church school teacher and youth leader in his former church and has already volunteered in our church school program. Dylan is a student at Glastonbury High School interested in Ju-Jitsu, media training and becoming a Junior High Fellowship advisor.

Pamela and Jason Husband (31 Toll Gate Rd., South Glastonbury, 860-430-1568) Pam and Jason have three children: daughter Lila (8) and twins Griffin and Gerard (6), all registered in our church school program. One of the reasons they have decided to join First Church is for our children's ministry and that they wanted their children to enjoy learning about the Bible.



Kimberly and Andrew King (56 Falcon Lane, Glastonbury, 860-652-8441) Kim and Drew have two daughters: Lucinda (11) and Emmelia Mae (9), both registered in church school. Kim is an art teacher for the Mansfield Public Schools, and enjoys crafts. Drew is a Payments Portfolio Consultant for FISERV and enjoys carpentry, cars and history. He is interested in volunteering for food drives, Habitat for Humanity and the Hunger Walk.

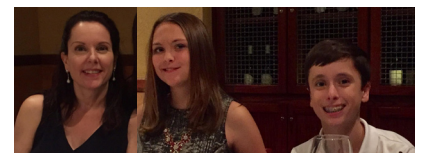
Alexandra Laliberte (24 Ripley Rd., Glastonbury, 860-966-3705) Having grown up in this church, Alex moved back to Glastonbury from Hebron this year. She has a son, Ethan Desroyers (8), a third grader in church school. She is interested in singing, acting, working out and yoga.



Diane and David MacKinnon (206 Limner Circle, Rocky Hill, 713-508-9174) Diane is the Principal of Momauguin Elementary School in East Haven and enjoys yoga, hiking, reading, cooking and painting in her spare time. David is the National Account Sales Manager for MCF (Mitsubishi Caterpillar Forklifts of America) and enjoys running, hiking, golf and travel.

Beverly Shaw (125 Coldspring Crossing, South Glastonbury, 860-633-1120) Joining in absentia, Bev was drawn to First Church for our worship style and is looking forward to renewing her connection to church. She is retired, was active in the bell choir in her former church and enjoys people!

Terry Stephenson (406 Georgetown Dr., Glastonbury, 860-657-9493) Terry has been a realtor for more than 20 years and currently with Berkshire Hathaway. Her interest is in sales and construction, working with and helping people. She has two children: Kylei (15) and Colby (13).



Advent and Christmas Greetings from the Staff

As Christmas Day comes ever closer, we wish for you and those you love all the blessings of this holy season. May the hope, peace, joy and love generously offered to us with the birth of the Christ Child overflow into your lives each and every day!

Peggy We Angela Kate
Karin Rebecca Susan
Jordan Valerie Dan
Amy Kathy Elizabeth



A Christmas Prayer

by Robert Louis Stevenson

Loving God, help us remember the birth of Jesus that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and worship of the wise men. Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world. Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting. Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clear hearts. May the Christmas morning make us happy to be thy children, and Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen.





Giving with Joy!

Building the Beloved Community



Donate to School Safe Zones

Consider giving a donation to this year's Church School Mission Project, ***School Safe Zones***, as a Christmas gift to mom, dad, grandparents, grandchildren, aunts, sisters, teachers, bus drivers or anyone else on your list!

School Safe Zones, a project of Church World Service, is a program that helps revitalize schools in East Africa. Schools are the bedrock of a community's health, well-being, and future, yet the challenges that impoverished schools face can be steep. ***School Safe Zones*** works to provide much needed resources and infrastructure to these schools and communities, including water systems, gates, bathrooms, classrooms, bunk beds and mentorship.

The Church School at First Church of Christ, Congregational, has set a goal of raising \$10,000 to revitalize a school in East Africa through children's offerings, bake sales, Advent calendar sales, and your donations and memorial gifts. Your gift will go directly to this worthy project. Thank you for your support and for helping us achieve our goal!

Support Our Giving Trees: Two Trees – Four Great Causes!

Board of Christian Education Tree: Benefits local families through **Glastonbury Social Services**

As with previous years, the Board of Christian Education's giving tree will benefit Glastonbury Social Services. 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. The deadline for returning the gifts is **Sunday, December 4**.

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

The second 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. We are adopting two families and helping with various needs.

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 11**. 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:

Glastonbury Social Services – yellow stars

Manchester Area Conference of Churches – brown gingerbread cookies

Family Life Education – green trees

Covenant To Care – white snowflakes



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

Our annual tradition of telling the story of the very first Christmas will take place on **December 24 at 4:30 p.m.** Bring your little angels and shepherds and we'll provide them with headaddresses to wear (available in the narthex before the service begins) so that they can be part of this beloved Bible story as it comes to life in our Meetinghouse.



Let your children or grandchildren experience the joy of giving at Christmas by bringing along a baby gift such as diapers, wipes, baby food or a cozy baby blanket. All donations will benefit children at the Manchester office of the Department of Children and Families. The offertory donation boxes will remain for the later services so that older children and adults may also donate items. Thank you!



Purchase SERRV Handcrafts



The Board of Christian Service will offer products from SERRV **for sale during coffee hour until December 18**. 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, jelly, oatmeal and other items people are willing to donate. Please bring food that is not expired or open. Thanks for your help!



Volunteer at Mobile Foodshare or Help Deliver Food to Shelters & Soup Kitchens

Mobile Foodshare is a "farmer's market" style food distribution service that provides fresh produce and other food items to between 90 and 150 lower income people. Foodshare sponsors this service, and it takes place every other Wednesday in our back parking lot (**December 7 and 21**). If you are interested in volunteering (adults, youth and children are welcome!), contact Sally Riddell at 860-657-8715.

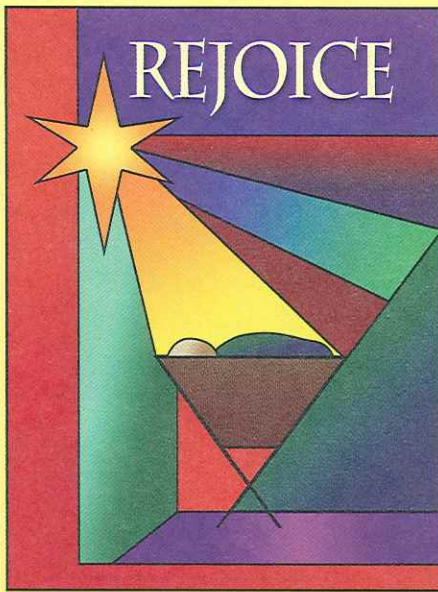


Besides distributing food to needy people in our parking lot twice a month, our volunteers collect food from ShopRite in East Hartford, bringing 500 to 1,000 lbs of meat, produce, baked goods and groceries weekly to shelters and soup kitchens in Hartford. If you would like to help, please contact John Dugan at 860-659-2193 or Paul Fraleigh at 860-643-1571.

Reading Changes Lives! Volunteer with Children at Fred Wish School

Fred Wish School is an Elementary School on Barbour Street in Hartford. During the past three 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 grammasal@att.net.





CHRIST IS BORN

Advent and Christmas, 2016

Dear Friends,

Love has a name – Jesus.

Love has a place - our hearts.

Love has a story.

And it's not finished yet.

– Author Unknown

You know the details of the amazing Christmas story – an emperor's decree, an angel's message, the long journey to a home village where only shelter fit for animals was available, the baby's cry and the shepherds' witness. And yes, we know the world into which Jesus was born was one that needed to change and that the people longed for hope. The birth of Jesus is a high point in our own story of faith, and yet it is one we often take for granted and forget to share.

Friends, again, we are blessed with the opportunity to tell this beloved story with our words and with our actions. Hope is born again. Peace lives. Joy should be shared. Love abounds. It is our responsibility to share this story over and over again.

This year, let us proclaim the story of Jesus' birth, by giving the gift of love through our annual Christmas offering, which will be divided equally among five 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.

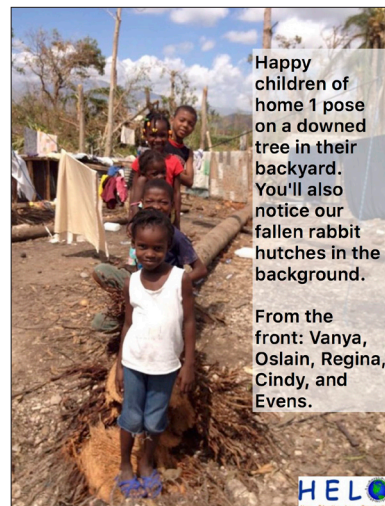


HELO is a mission that provides home, education, love and opportunity to orphaned and abandoned children in Haiti. In 2010 – 2011, First Church sponsored Telemaque, a child living at HELO. Our congregation raised over \$11,000 to take care of Telemaque for 10 years while he grows up under the love and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



All of these organizations are sharing the story of love with our neighbors near and far. We invite you to let love be the center of our faith and lives this day and always!

Peace,

David and *Kate*

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 \$14.50 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 5** with your check, payable to The First Church of Christ, Congregational, or cash.*