



The REMINDER

First Church of Christ, Congregational, Glastonbury, Connecticut

Member of United Church of Christ

An open, welcoming and affirming congregation

December 2017

Advent and Christmas Worship Services

Sunday, December 3 – First Sunday of Advent, 8:00 and 10:00 a.m.

David Taylor preaching

Special music performed by Peggy Hartman, oboe (8:00 a.m.) and the Cherub and Chancel Choirs (10:00 a.m.)

Sunday, December 10 – Second 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 worship the newborn King!

Sunday, December 17 – Third Sunday of Advent, 8:00 and 10:00 a.m.

Kate VanDerzee-Glidden preaching

Special music performed by Lola Elliott-Hugh (8:00 a.m.) and the Chancel Choir (10:00 a.m.)

Sunday, December 24 – Christmas Eve Services/Fourth Sunday of Advent

10:00 a.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.

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 31 – First Sunday after Christmas, *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 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 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:
Sunday, December 10: January 2018 issue

You are Invited - to Elizabeth's Ordination!

At a congregational meeting on November 19, First Church voted to extend a call to Elizabeth Kathleen Gleich to assume the position of Associate Pastor for Children and Youth Ministries. With that affirmation, the New Haven Association of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ will now gather in our Meetinghouse for a Service of Ordination on **Sunday, December 3, at 3:00 p.m.** In addition, representatives from the Hartford East Association, of which First Church is a member, will be present to conduct a Service of Installation. The service, followed by a reception, will be a festive and celebratory moment in both Elizabeth's life and in the life of this congregation – choirs will sing, voices will shout for joy, children will rejoice, prayers will be offered, gifts will be given and God will be greatly pleased! It is not often that a congregation has the opportunity to host an ordination – be sure to mark your calendar and to come on out for this joyous and happy occasion!

A Church with a Big Heart!

Once again, the members of this beloved family of faith have responded generously – from the heart – to two recent appeals to aid our neighbors near and far to recover from recent natural disasters.



Early in the summer, the United Church of Christ issued an emergency appeal to aid the people of East Africa who are suffering under the catastrophic effect of an historic famine. To date, First Church members have contributed over **\$7,000**, which will be sent to partner churches and agencies in South Sudan and drought-stricken Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya. These funds will help with mobile clinics, safe water, nutrition supplements, safe water, fast-maturing seeds and farming tools.

Likewise, this church family has responded with glad and generous hearts to the needs of our neighbors “next door” in Texas, Florida, Puerto Rico and other disaster-hit areas of our own country. Over **\$5,000** has been given to First Church to be sent on to the United Church of Christ's “Emergency USA Fund.” The UCC nationally is committed to long-term relief efforts, and to filling gaps in services through spiritual care, community organizing, repair and reconstruction of homes, tools, building material and volunteer coordination.

With its big heart, this beloved community is doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with God!

Micah House and Chapel Update: December 2017

Season's greetings from the Micah House and Chapel at The Thomas Hale Homestead!! As we gather to rejoice in the birth of Jesus, just look outside and revel in the continuing progress towards the dawn of First Church's miracle for our congregation and community. George Fay, the project's contractor, and his team have completed the rebuilding of the exterior of the Hale House and the exterior shell of the new Micah Chapel. Here are the most recent construction highlights:

- Completion of the exterior trim and siding
- Installation of patio stone pavers
- Rough installation of plumbing, electrical, HVAC and fire sprinkler systems
- Rough landscaping grading
- Connection of the fire line to MDC main line

Once these items are installed, the finishing touches, including sheet rock, trim, and painting, will be initiated.



Just as a reminder, for safety's sake, please don't talk to the contractors as they work on the Micah House and Chapel. Everyone is excited and curious about the construction but distracting a contractor from their work is a potential safety hazard! Please direct all questions to Jonathan Russell, Mick Gifford or Walt Briggs who continues to provide hands-on financial and construction oversight. Estimates of sweat-equity cost savings to date exceed \$60,000. People are asking – how can I help? Please contact Jonathan Russell at cjjc5@cox.net to learn of volunteer opportunities.

Take a moment to look outside when you are visiting church or attending Sunday worship services. Even better – check out the First Church live webcam at: <http://www.glastonburyfirst.org/micah-house-and-chapel-thomas-hale-homestead>, which shows in real time the current work towards revitalizing the historic Thomas Hale Homestead into the Micah House and Chapel.

This project, dedicated to God, perfectly captures the Christmas season spirit. The rebirth of Micah House and Chapel at The Thomas Hale Homestead is our beloved faith community's gift that will serve First Church today and for future generations!!

“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

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!



Advent and Christmas Books Available from the Church Library

With the Advent of Christmas here, it is the perfect time to awaken our hearts to God's presence. In the Church's Lehman Library there are books for adults and children rich with the story of Advent and Christmas. As we anticipate the joy of the season, help your children learn the true meaning of the season and seek peace yourselves with the library's literature. If you are looking for a specific book title, know that a list of both the adult and children's collection is now in the binder on the counter near the checkout box. Merry Christmas!

~ Wanda Bates, Karen Fecko and Katharyn Laudone



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.

Mission Immersion Day Thank You!



On November 11, more than thirty youth and adults volunteered their time for our Mission Immersion Day. Our parishioners volunteered at various sites that serve children and families in need throughout the Greater Hartford area. Our four sites included packing holiday gift packs for children on the Cheyenne River Lakota (Sioux) Indian Reservation in South Dakota through Hawkwing, working on a Veterans building project in East Hartford through Habitat for Humanity, sorting

fresh produce at the Foodshare warehouse in Hartford, and serving a hot lunch meal at St. Vincent DePaul Soup Kitchen in Middletown. Thank you to our faithful volunteers for spreading God's love!



Rummage Sale Update

Thank you to all our volunteers and all our shoppers who supported our rummage sales this year! The October sale raised more than \$3,500 and the spring sale raised more than \$3,000 to support the programs of the Board of Christian Service.

Reading Changes Lives: Volunteering at Wish Elementary School

Fred Wish School is an Elementary School on Barbour Street in Hartford. During the past several 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.



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 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 David Taylor or Kate VanDerzee-Glidden.

It's Time to "Cape Up" – for Children!

First Church's outreach to children includes agencies and programs that are as close as Hartford and Manchester, and as far away as Haiti and Mississippi. Our Board of Christian Service directs some of our mission dollars to these programs, as well as encourages us and informs us how we can get involved personally. Visit the following websites to learn more about how you can "cape up" for children:

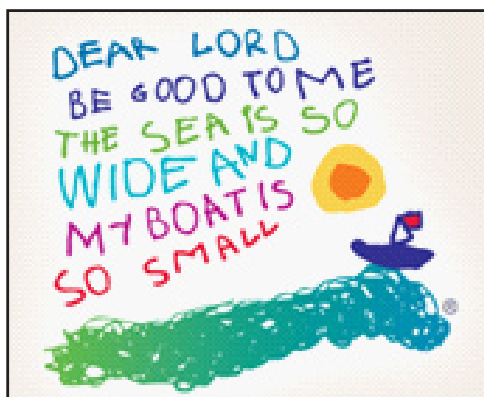
- Covenant to Care for Children** <http://covenanttocare.org/new/>
- Family Life Education** <http://www.familylifeduc.org/index.php/en/>
- Hartford Food System** <http://www.hartfordfood.org/>
- Hands on Hartford** <http://www.handsonhartford.org/>
- hawkwing** <https://www.hawkwing.org/>
- H.E.L.O. of Haiti** <http://www.helohaiti.org/>
- Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services** <http://www.irisct.org/>
- Bloomfield Backpack Project** <http://www.glastonburyfirst.org/mission-opportunities>
- Fred Wish Elementary School** <http://www.glastonburyfirst.org/mission-opportunities>
- Interval House** <https://intervalhousect.org/>
- Manchester Area Conference of Churches** <http://macc-ct.org/>
- Mercy Housing** www.mercyhousing.org
- Silver Lake Conference Center** <http://www.silverlakect.org/>
- South Park Inn** <http://southparkinn.org/>



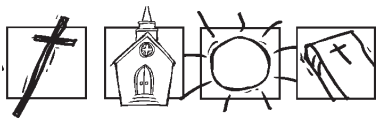
The Policy Advocacy Ministry of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ regularly follows issues that affect the lives of children in our state – issues such as hunger, housing, health care and other social services. This advocacy ministry of the Connecticut Conference invites your participation in improving the quality of life for all the citizens of our state. To learn more: <http://www.ctucc.org/economicjustice#How%20Advocacy%20Works>. The Legislative Advocate for the CT UCC is Michele Mudrick, a member of First Church. Michele can be reached at: michelem@ctucc.org.

The United Church of Christ has a long history of advocacy on behalf of the needs and rights of children. Policy advocacy – lobbying for public policy on behalf of children – goes as far back as Congregational Churches of New England working for dignity and opportunity for the children of slaves. By becoming a member of the Justice and Peace Action Network (JPANet) of the United Church of Christ, one can become a part of our denomination's grassroots advocacy network which both educates and engages its members in shaping public policy in keeping with God's vision of a just and loving society. For more information, go online to: http://www.ucc.org/join_the_network.

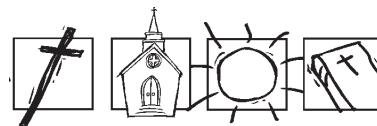
The Global Ministries of the United Church of Christ also offers a variety of ways to care for children. For example, Global Ministries has a Child and Elder Sponsorship Program which partners with agencies and churches all over the world to provide services that create opportunities and affirm dignity. Visit their website for this and other opportunities to help children of all ages: <http://www.ucc.org/wcm>.



Since 1973, *The Children's Defense Fund*, in partnership with the United Church of Christ, has been in the forefront of advocacy for the children of our nation. The Children's Defense Fund Leave No Child Behind® mission is to ensure every child a Healthy Start, a Head Start, a Fair Start, a Safe Start and a Moral Start in life and successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities. One way to get involved with the *CDF* is to sign up to receive notifications to help end the scourge of Childhood poverty in this rich nation. Despite a nationwide drop in poverty, children remain the age group with the highest poverty rate. For more information, go to <http://www.childrensdefense.org/take-action/>.



Opening Doors and Building Bridges



We Need You: Time and Talent Forms Available!



Are You Able?

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! Each fall we have our **Time and Talent** form available and encourage parishioners to fill it out so we know where you feel called to serve. **These forms are available in the back lobby and the narthex.** If you have filled one 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. There are so many ways to get involved here at church, and we look forward to working with you!

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 2018 Stewardship Campaign Progress



As of Friday, November 10, we have received \$671,005 towards our goal of \$775,000. We have yet to hear from 81 members who pledged in 2017, 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!

2017 Pledge Reminders

The end of the year is rapidly approaching. According to IRS regulations, any donations received or postmarked by December 31, 2017 will be reflected in your year-end giving statement. If they do not meet these requirements, they will be reflected in your 2018 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 \$92,708 gap necessary to meet our 2017 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 2017. Please call Rebecca in the church office with any questions.



Steve Jackson, Treasurer

Please pick up a boxed set of 2018 offering envelopes in Schultz Hall. 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!



Church School Unit 3: "Good News!"

Bible Story References: Matthew 1:18-24, Luke 1:2-56, Luke 2:1-7

Bible Verses: *For nothing will be impossible with God.* (Luke 1:37)

"She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus." (Matthew 1:21)

"My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior." (Luke 1:46-47)

Main Idea: The first people to hear the good news of Jesus each had a special role to play in introducing the news to the world. Each of us is called to share the Good News of God's Son, Jesus.

Objectives: By the end of this unit children will:

- Develop the necessary Bible skills to locate the birth stories in the books of Matthew and Luke;
- Learn that ordinary people were chosen by God to play a role in Jesus' coming;
- Discover ways to share the good news with others through word and deed;
- Learn the difference between Matthew's and Luke's accounts of Jesus' birth;
- Explore ways we can share good news today.



	<u>Sunday 12/3</u>	<u>Sunday 12/10</u>	<u>Sunday 12/17</u>
<u>K & 1st grade</u>	Storytelling Room 110 Jennifer & Thomas Anglim	Art Room 103 Adam Garrity	Cooking Room 205 Chelsea Cooper
<u>2nd grade</u>	Art Room 103 Adam Garrity	Storytelling Room 110 Jennifer & Thomas Anglim	Music Room 206 Peggy Hartman
<u>3rd grade</u>	Art Room 103 Adam Garrity	Storytelling Room 110 Jennifer & Thomas Anglim	Music Room 206 Peggy Hartman
<u>4th grade</u>	Music Room 206 Peggy Hartman	<i>Remain in the Service with families</i>	Games Room 110 Judy Harding
<u>5th grade</u>	Music Room 206 Peggy Hartman	<i>Remain in the Service with families</i>	Games Room 110 Judy Harding

Please note: The Preschool Room is in Room 105. Puppet Troupe is in Room 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!

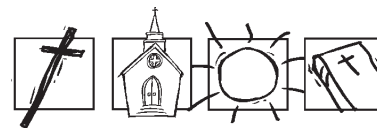


Bloomfield Backpack Project

In partnership with Foodshare and other churches, we provide backpacks filled with 11 pounds of nonperishable food to 100 Bloomfield children in need. **On the second Thursday of every month from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m.**, we send groups of kids and adults to pack the backpacks for the children. All are welcome at this meaningful mission opportunity! Contact Bryce Grissom at brycegrissom@gmail.com for more information or feel free to sign up on the poster outside of the Children and Youth Ministries office. The remaining 2017-18 dates are **December 14, January 11, February 8, March 8, April 12, May 10 and June 14.**



Children's Ministries



Church School Schedule

Sunday, December 3

- 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!** Gifts are given to local families through Glastonbury Department of Social Services.

Sunday, December 10

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

Sunday, December 17



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

Sunday, December 24

- **A Baby for the World! Gift Giving** at all services!
- **Christmas Pageant** at 10:00 a.m. Children may choose to dress as a shepherd or angel as they help us celebrate and remember the birth of Jesus!

Sunday, December 31

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

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 **10:00 a.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 Elizabeth Gleich at elizabeth@glastonburyfirst.org to sign up! Below are the rehearsal dates.

Sunday, December 10: 5:00-6:00 p.m. (Costume fittings and read-through)

Sunday, December 17: Pageant Rehearsal (6:00-8:00 p.m.)

Wednesday, December 20: Pageant Rehearsal (6:00-8:00 p.m.)

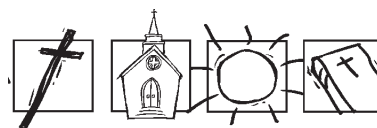
Sunday, December 24: Call for Christmas Pageant 8:30 a.m. Pageant is at 10:00 a.m.

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



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*

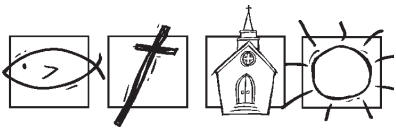
- Monday, December 11:** JHF Christmas Party!
- *Sunday, December 17:** Pageant Rehearsal (6:00-8:00 p.m.)
- *Wednesday, December 20:** Pageant Rehearsal (6:00-8:00 p.m.)
- *Sunday, December 24:** Christmas Pageant 10:00 a.m. Youth arrive at 8:30 a.m.

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

Sunday, December 10: Regular Class Session

Confirmand Christmas Visits: Confirmands will soon be receiving information from us via email regarding Christmas season 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.



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*

- ***Sunday, December 3:** No SHF
- Sunday, December 10:** SHF Christmas Party!
- Sunday, December 17:** Pageant Rehearsal (6:00-8:00 p.m.) – No SHF
- ***Wednesday, December 20:** Pageant Rehearsal (6:00-8:00 p.m.)
- ***Sunday, December 24:** Christmas Pageant 10:00 a.m. Youth arrive at 8:30 a.m.
- ***Sunday, December 24:** No SHF



SHF will be headed to Memphis, TN from **Sunday, April 8, to Saturday, April 14, 2018** for our annual Mission Trip. **The following dates are Mandatory Mission Focused SHF Sessions – January 21, February 25 and March 25.** 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



Cookie Walk



and Christmas Bazaar

Saturday, December 2, 2017

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 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

Congratulations!

We congratulate **Micah Krauss** 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).

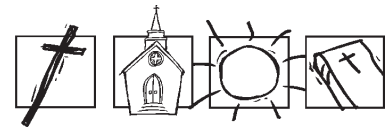


Halloween Fun!





Music Ministry



Music at the Meetinghouse Presents...

ANNUAL FESTIVAL SERVICE OF NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS



Sunday, December 10, 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.

Boston Choir Trip

December 16, 8:00 a.m. – 7:30 p.m.

The Cantate and Cantabile Choirs will travel to Boston on **Saturday, December 16**, to sing Christmas Carols at Faneuil Hall Marketplace.



The trip will entail a morning visit to the Boston Science Museum, lunch at Faneuil Hall Marketplace, Christmas shopping and singing on the grounds of the Marketplace from 2:00-3:00 p.m. **Please confirm your child's participation on this trip by December 4.**

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

SONATA SWING QUARTET

Bolling You Over

Saturday, February 10, 2018, 7:30 p.m.

ACOUSTIC EIDOLON

A Blend of Celtic, Flamenco and Americana

Saturday, April 28, 2018, 7:30 p.m.

ROSS TUCKER AND

THE HOT CAT JAZZ BAND

Blues, Beatles, Buffett and More. . .

Saturday, June 2, 2018, 7:30 p.m.

Lessons and Carols Run-Through Rehearsal

Saturday, December 9

- 8:00-8:30 a.m. Jubilate Ringers
- 8:30-9:30 a.m. Mallet Ringers
- 9:00-11:00 a.m. Cantate/Cantabile Choirs
- 9:30-11:00 a.m. Chancel Choir



Adult Opportunities

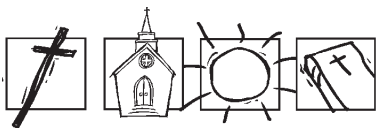


Women's Theological Reflection Group

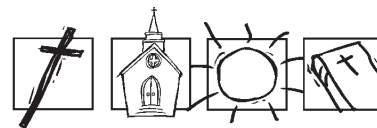
We invite all interested First Church women to join us on the **third Wednesday of each month** to discuss a variety of faith questions, reflect on our personal journeys and share friendship and community. In the past, we discussed prayer, healing, faith journeys, doing justice, finding quiet time, our addiction to hurrying and gratitude. We often circulate short articles of interest to those who attend, but there is no homework - the resources we share are for those who wish to learn more about the topic before we meet. 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

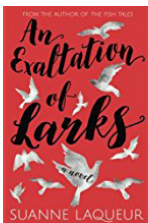
What is Potpourri? It's breakfast and fellowship on the **first and third Tuesdays of each month at 7:30 a.m.** The church kitchen is alive with coffee, conversation and a delicious breakfast cooked up by Al Reid! Come anytime, a place is always set for you!



Adult Opportunities



Second Sunday Book Club



The Second Sunday Book Club meets on the **second Sunday of every other month in the Lehman Library at 4:00 p.m.** to discuss a selected book as well as other great reads we are enjoying. We hope you will join us for one of our upcoming meetings this year! We will meet on **Sunday, January 14 at 4:00 p.m.** to discuss *An Exaltation of Larks* by Suanne Laqueur. If you have any questions, contact Amy E. Thompson at thompson.amy72@gmail.com.

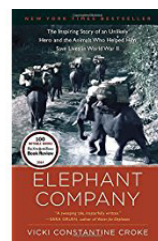
More selections and dates are:

Sunday, March 11: *Everything I Never Told You*, Celeste Ng

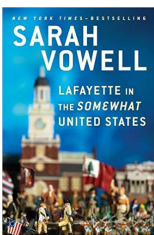
Sunday, May 6 (note this is the first Sunday due to Mother's Day): *Station Eleven*, Emily St. John Mandel

Biography Book Group

The Biography Book Group meets every other month in the Lehman Library to review a book and enjoy fellowship in an informal setting. We invite you to join us for any of our upcoming selections. For our **January 16** gathering we will read *Elephant Company: The Inspiring Story of an Unlikely Hero and the Animals Who Helped Him Save Lives in World War II* by Vicki Croke. This is the remarkable story of James Howard "Billy" Williams, "whose uncanny rapport with the world's largest land animals transformed him from a carefree young man into the charismatic war hero known as Elephant Bill...Part biography, part war epic, and part wildlife adventure, *Elephant Company* is an inspirational narrative that illuminates a little-known chapter in the annals of wartime heroism (Amazon.com)." Please call or email Valerie Escalera at 860-633-4452 or miguel.escalera@sbcglobal.net with any questions.



Thursday Morning Study Group



In December, TMSG will be looking at two questions of concern to some: *What influences did other countries have on the outcome of the American Revolutionary War and what factors can we claim are real to those who have 'died' and returned to talk about it?* We will be using Sarah Vowell's book *Lafayette in the Somewhat United States* for the former, and *Seven Lessons From Heaven* by Mary C. Neal, M.D. as a reference for answers to the latter. We plan to meet on **December 7, 14, and 21** to discuss these two questions to our satisfaction. Please feel free to join us whether or not you have read the reference material. Please contact Sally Brown with any questions at saldaybrown@aol.com. We meet in the **Lehman Library at 9:30 a.m. on most Thursdays.**

Join with Other Nature Lovers: First Church Outside Group!



Attention all nature lovers! In the spring, we formed a new group where we gather monthly for a time of fellowship and learning. We have also started taking on special projects, including our summer Sunday morning farm stand and hikes. Stay tuned for our next hike date! **We meet the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. We hope you can join us on December 12!** Anyone is welcome to join. Whether you enjoy nature photography, hiking, feeding the birds, gardening or just sitting outside and taking in all that God has created, we want you! If you have questions or want to get involved, please contact Tracy Kavanaugh at lilypadprints@gmail.com or 413-250-3838.

Come Join the Latter Day Marthas

What can happen when a few women decide to sit around a table and discuss frankly their own spiritual direction? A most beautiful thing. The birth of a new community fortified by authenticity, tolerance and vulnerability. A refreshingly raw group of women, not religiously pretty, but gorgeous in their willingness to share with one another their introspective journeys. Searching has become a lesser part of our communal landscape than finding. We are all Latter Day Marthas (Martha was the sister that just didn't get it) with one unified front – we desire movement toward God and we want to talk about that. Some of us are stumbling, some are dancing and usually it depends on the day. **You are invited to join our conversations on the second and fourth Thursdays at 5:45 p.m. in the Lehman Library.** Please contact Danae Dwyer at danaedwyer@me.com or 860-967-2269 for further information.



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



Do you knit? 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. The First Church Prayer Shawl Ministry will be meeting **Monday, December 18 in the Lehman Library from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.** Yarn will be provided. Bring size 11 or 13 knitting needles. Don't know how to knit? We can teach you. If you don't have needles, we have some we can lend. Come share your knitting, and our company! Questions? Contact kathysalk@gmail.com. **We now have morning Prayer Shawl meetings, too!** If you are interested, please email Sonmi at szzmanto@gmail.com for dates and times.

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.



General Info Corner



Prayer Corner

Prayers of joy for:

All the newest members we are blessed to have joined First Church on November 12. *Welcome!*

Prayers of sympathy for:

Tanya and Alan Schultz, Jr. on the death of Tanya's brother, Ryan Fellows, on October 29.



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. 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. 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.

Our Television Ministry

For a number of years, First Church's Sunday worship service has been broadcast over the public access channel of Cox Cable. When this media ministry first began, there were financial resources set aside for personnel to first tape and then edit the services for delayed presentation on the Cox channel. In time, this taping and editing was wonderfully and faithfully picked up by a small group of volunteers. Until recently, the taping was done first by Jim Jackson alone, then later Paul Giguere joined the team. But throughout this process, Jim Jackson has been our sole editor of the services to prepare them for broadcast by Cox. Thank you, Jim, for your faithful service! This ministry was committed to reaching shut-ins, the elderly, potential new members and the general public. But throughout this wonderful ministry, we have had no way of knowing the breadth of its outreach. We are aware, however, of the hours and hours of volunteer effort that have been needed to put into this work. Moreover, our Media Committee has begun the exploratory work of possible other, albeit computer-based, means of transmitting our service to church members and to the community, i.e., livestream, a YouTube channel, Facebook.

Therefore, we have made the difficult, but we believe prudent, decision to cease the broadcasting of our services on Cox Cable as of January 1. Our sermons can still be heard on podcasts by visiting our website. We look forward, at some time in the future, to announcing some new ways to view and experience our worship of God here at First Church. Meanwhile, the in-person, "live" participation in our Sunday morning worship is probably still the best way to experience the beautiful love of God in this beloved community!

WELCOME OUR NEW CHURCH MEMBERS

Sunday, November 12, 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.

Gary Case and Michele Mudrick (79 Laurel Trail, Glastonbury, 860-633-3612) Known to several First Church families, Gary and Michele have been worshipping with us since 2015. They have two children, Garrison (13) and Vivian (11), who are registered in our Church School program. Gary is an attorney with Acstar Insurance Company and enjoys traveling and playing golf. Michele is a legislative advocate for the CT Conference of the United Church of Christ. She also enjoys traveling, swimming, hiking and being outdoors.



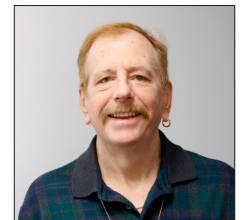
Penny Dalenta (49 Main Street, Wethersfield, 860-436-3021) Retired from the Manchester Public Schools, Penny enjoys photography, travel, music and choral directing. She is a piano accompanist and also enjoys taking part in musical productions.

Christopher Emmens and Stephanie Emmens (59 N. Condor Dr., Rocky Hill, 860-989-7450/ 603-860-7398) New to the area, Christopher and Stephanie moved from Maryland in 2016. They have two children, Gwendolyn (3) and Theodore (8 months). Christopher is on the Quinnipiac University staff, and Stephanie is an audiologist with Connecticut Children's Medical Center. They like the UCC open and affirming for all stance this church has and lives by.



Austin Fischer and Sara Fischer (142 Stevens Lane, Glastonbury, 860-218-0036) Austin and Sara have been attending First Church since they moved to Glastonbury in 2013. They have two daughters, Nora (4) and Layla (2), both of whom were baptized here. Austin is employed by Travelers Insurance, and Sara is a teacher for Regional District 17. She was a church school teacher in her former church.

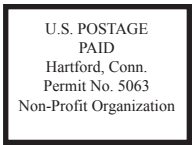
Greg Kelley (537 Bell St., Glastonbury, 860-659-3683) Greg has lived in Glastonbury since 1984 with his wife, Sue. He was first introduced to our church, and continues, through the AA outreach held here. When not working at his courier job, he enjoys reading, gardening, walking and attending Bible study.



Neil O'Brien and Patricia O'Brien (77 Abbey Rd., East Hampton, 860-652-5753/860-316-7170) Neil and Pat are parents to First Church member Sean O'Brien. They also have two daughters, Kaya Mae (7) and Ivy Grace (2 1/2), both of whom were baptized here in July. Pat is a nurse practitioner at Middlesex Hospital Cancer Center, and Neil is an insurance agent for New York Life. They have decided to join as members because they love the community outreach and the example it provides for the children.

Maryellen Szwez (324 Founders Rd., Glastonbury, 860-430-5755) Maryellen and her husband, Alex, moved to Glastonbury in 2008 from Wethersfield. They have two children, Eli (8) and Bennett (6), both registered in Church School. Maryellen is a project manager for Travelers and enjoys photography and running in her spare time.





Return Service Requested.

An Advent and Christmas Message from the Staff



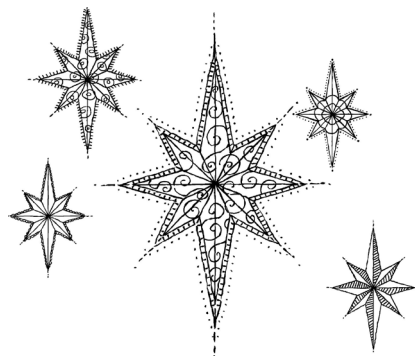
In the words of poet Ann Weems,

*Into this silent night
as we make our weary way
we know not where,
just when the night becomes its darkest
and we cannot see our path,
just then
is when the angels rush in,
their hands full of stars.*

May the light of the Christmas stars
lend light to your life, and fill your
heart and soul with wonder.

A blessed Christmas to all!

*Peggy WE Angela Susan Kate
Karin Rebecca Valerie Pat Kathryn Elizabeth*



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 4 with your check, payable to The First Church of Christ, Congregational, or cash.



Advent and Christmas, 2017

Dear Friends,

Madeleine L'Engle's beautiful poem, *First Coming*, includes these words,

*He did not wait till the world was ready,
till people and nations were at peace.
He came when the Heavens were unsteady,
and prisoners cried out for release.*

And we need not wait to proclaim our joy at our Savior's birth by sharing our love with our neighbors who cry out for release, release from – hunger, the cold, homelessness, despair or hopelessness.

Each year, we have the opportunity to give 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 lunchtime meal to the hungry of Hartford.

Madeleine L'Engle's poem concludes with these words,

*We cannot wait till the world is sane
to raise our songs with joyful voice,
for to share our grief, to touch our pain,
He came with Love: Rejoice! Rejoice!*

This Christmas season, let us raise our voices to touch the pain of our world – let us raise our voices with love!

Peace,

David and *Kate*



Giving with Joy!



Donate to Little City Sprouts

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



Little City Sprouts is a Farm to Preschool program of Hartford Food Systems, providing preschool children with the opportunity to know about, grow and taste fresh, healthy food through food-related field trips, gardening, nutrition and cooking lessons designed for them. The program encourages preschoolers across the city of Hartford to get excited about adopting healthy lifestyles. The Church School at First Church of Christ, Congregational, has set a goal of raising \$10,000 to help **Little City Sprouts** expand their reach to many more Hartford "sprouts" and their families 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 – Five 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 3**.

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

The second tree is sponsored by the Board of Christian Service and will benefit four 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 fourth is **Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services (IRIS)**, and we are providing refugees with basic necessities, like socks, coats, etc.



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 17**. 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**

Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services – red snowmen

Family Life Education – green trees

Manchester Area Conference of Churches – brown gingerbread cookies

Covenant To Care – white snowflakes

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

On **Sunday, 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 **10:00 a.m.** Children will be given the opportunity to dress up as a shepherd or angel, and these headdresses 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 17. 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!



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 **three ways to get involved** with Foodshare here at First Church.

- 1. 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.
- 2. 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 ctsdncmfolk@gmail.com or 860-430-2123.
- 3. Volunteer to 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. To help, please contact John Dugan at 860-659-2193 or jdugan1967@gmail.com or Paul Fraleigh at 860-643-1571.

Provide a Warm Welcome for Refugees

We are holding a winter coat drive for refugees. Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services' need for warm clothing is urgent, as they are now welcoming a large group of families, who will come with little or no winter clothing. If you are able, please bring in new or gently used and clean coats, boots, hats, scarves, warm mittens and gloves. All sizes and genders are needed, especially children's and men's size small. Please leave your donations in the back lobby in the marked box **before November 30**. They will then be delivered to IRIS so that they can be shared with refugees who need these warm clothes. If you have questions, please contact John Dugan at 860-989-9430 or jdugan1967@gmail.com. Thanks for your generosity!

