



First Congregational Church of Southington

# FaithWorks

Volume 56 Issue 11

December 2016



CHRISTMAS IS THE CELEBRATION OF THE BIRTH OF JESUS, THE SAVIOUR OF MANKIND

## Christmas eve worship

5:00pm

### FAMILY CHRISTMAS

Branches, our ContemporaryWorship Band  
The Ceremony of Lights

10:00pm

### CANDLE LIGHT COMMUNION

Our Gallery Singers    The Ceremony of Lights  
Holy Communion    **Pastor Ron's Christmas Message**

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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
37 Main Street, Southington, CT 06489  
860-628-6958/ Fax 860-621-0402

[fccsouthington.org](http://fccsouthington.org)



E-mail: [office@fccsouthington.org](mailto:office@fccsouthington.org)

### OFFICE HOURS

Monday—Friday, 9am—1pm

### SUNDAY SERVICES

8:00AM Chapel Communion

9:30AM Traditional Worship

11:15AM T.G.I. Sunday Contemporary

### FOR PASTORAL EMERGENCIES

Call 860-628-6958 during office hours  
or our Pastoral Emergency line: 860-385-4884

Pastor Ron [rbrown@fccsouthington.org](mailto:rbrown@fccsouthington.org)

Pastor Rachel [rachel@fccsouthington.org](mailto:rachel@fccsouthington.org)

**Ministers to the World:**  
*The Whole Congregation*

### STAFF

Senior Pastor	Rev. Dr. Ronald B. Brown
Associate Pastor	Rev. Rachel J. Bahr
Minister of Music	John R. Parsons
T.G.I. Sunday	Steve Nyren
Music Coordinators	Melissa Mirisola
Directors of Christian Education	Karlene Archambeault Carole Lantz
Tech/Communications	Dawn Gambacini
Office Coordinator	Mira Morel
Custodian	Lynn Bushnell
Collector	Ray Dischiono
Bookkeeper	Allison LeBarron



- Fred Nyren and family grieving the death of his brother, Bob Nyren (10/28).

Continued prayers for Callum Roberts, Peggy Thibodeau, Sandi Reed, Joan Salamon, Todd Lawson, Cathy Bruno, Rita Williams, Fran Sperry, Diana Putnam, Mary Bugbee, Carolyn Beadle, Mitzi Cronin, Betsy Roberts, our Stephen Ministers and care-receivers, and Caring Ministry team and friends.

## Visit Our Online Calendar

at [FCCSouthington.org/events](http://FCCSouthington.org/events)



## Prayer Shawl Ministry

Our shawls are given to those in need of comfort, whether from illness, sorrow, loneliness or loss. Prayer shawls are available upon request to church members and their friends and family.

If you knit or crochet, consider making and donating shawls to our ministry. Patterns, needles and yarn are available if needed. Call Gloria, 860-628-0415 or Kathy LaBarre, 860-628-2904. Please pin a tag with your name on each shawl you knit/crochet.

## Church Security

When your committee or group leaves a meeting room, please close and LOCK any windows you **may have opened, and turn off the lights.** If you're the last group to leave the building, please be sure the doors are locked and latched closed.

## Prayer Circle

Tuesday afternoons at  
4:00 p.m.

Meets in the Parlor.

Join us as we lift our  
joys and concerns to the Lord. Drop your  
prayer request in the collection basket or in  
the folder outside the church office.



## Pastor Ron on Sabbatical during January

As part of our ongoing support for our pastors, FCC offers a three-month sabbatical for every five years of pastoral service. Pastor Ron was originally eligible for this benefit in January 2016, and had planned to take the sabbatical last summer, but he chose to delay his time away because of the many staff transitions our church has experienced.

Now that Pastor Rachel is established in her ministry here, the Board of Deacons approved a **“split sabbatical” for Pastor Ron during 2017**. He will be on sabbatical during January and again during June and July. Pastor Rachel will provide coverage during those months and we may even have a guest preacher or two.

## Another Successful Chicken Pie Supper

We served 200+ dinners this year! A big thank you to all that helped out in the kitchen cooking, those that peeled and prepped the food, prepared the hall, and those that donated items for the dinner. Also, thank you to our wonderful serving staff and the fantastic clean up crew. Without all of you the dinner would not be such a success! We look forward to honoring a graduating senior or two with a **scholarship during Children’s Sunday**. **High School Seniors** should watch for the applications in the mail in early spring.

## Thank You to...

- Everyone who baked a cake for the All Church Birthday Party!
- All who attended the Advent Wreath Workshop Potluck
- Our Bread for Life volunteers: Shirley Campbell, Mary Carter, Christine Dzierlatka, Michael and Linda Ericsson, Jarvis Lord, Maureen Lyon, Steve Palmieri, & Bev Ryan.
- All who donated and purchased items from the BOMA bake sale. We raised \$374.40!



## Advent Worship Series

### God Bless Us Everyone: The Redemption of Scrooge

During our Advent worship services, we will be on a journey that takes a look at our how God blesses each and every one of us with the ability to be transformed. The chimes of the clock-tower **bells in Charles Dickens’ classic novel, A Christmas Carol, provided a wake-up call for Ebenezer Scrooge** and turned him from his resentment, fear and isolation. Each week during Advent we will hear the bells ring just as Scrooge did on that transformative night, and reflect on how Jesus advent into the world offers the possibility that everything can be transformed. Please join us for worship each Sunday of Advent as we use A Christmas Carol to explore the ways that gift given at Christmas can transform our lives.

# Christmas Eve Worship

5:00pm

## FAMILY CHRISTMAS

Ceremony of Lights  
Branches, our Contemporary  
Worship Band

10:00pm

## CANDLE LIGHT COMMUNION

Gallery Singers Ceremony of Lights  
Holy Communion  
Pastor Ron's Christmas Message

# Christmas Day Worship



10:00 a.m. Traditional Worship Service  
(no other services will be held)

# New Year's Day Worship



10:00 a.m. Contemporary Worship Service  
(no other services will be held)

## December/January Worship at FCC

Worship at 8:00, 9:30 and 11:15 a.m.  
(except as noted below)

December 4: Second Sunday of Advent  
Advent Sermon Series: God Bless Us, Everyone  
The Rev. Dr. Ronald B. Brown, preaching

December 11: Third Sunday of Advent  
Advent Sermon Series: God Bless Us, Everyone  
The Rev. Rachel J. Bahr, preaching

December 18: Fourth Sunday of Advent  
Advent Sermon Series: God Bless Us, Everyone  
The Rev. Dr. Ronald B. Brown, preaching

December 25: Christmas Day  
One Service: 10:00 a.m.  
The Rev. Dr. Ronald B. Brown, preaching

**January 1: New Year's Day**  
One Service: 10:00 a.m.  
The Rev. Rachel J. Bahr, preaching

January 8: Star Gift Sunday/Epiphany  
The Rev. Rachel J. Bahr, preaching

January 15: Second Sunday of Epiphany  
Lisa Eleck, preaching

January 22: Third Sunday of Epiphany  
The Rev. Rachel J. Bahr, preaching

January 29: Fourth Sunday of Epiphany  
The Rev. Rachel J. Bahr, preaching

Please visit our Worship This Week page for the most up-to-date information about worship services: [FCCSouthington.org/worship-this-week](http://FCCSouthington.org/worship-this-week)

## BULLETIN BOARD

### Card and Game Night for Adults



Friday, Dec. 16,  
Jan. 20, Feb 17  
at 7:00 p.m.

A great night out with the adults of your church family! Bring a friend and a favorite game, or play something new. Beverages will be provided, but please bring a small snack to share.

### Morning Women's Group

On Tuesday, December 13 at 11:30 a.m. we will meet at the Manor Inn, for our annual Christmas Luncheon. Those who wish to participate may bring a \$5 grab bag gift. Please call Bev Ryan at 860-666-8874 with questions.

### Church Council Meeting

All are invited to our next meeting Monday, January 16 at 7:00 p.m. in room 201/202.

### An Afternoon with Bernie Siegel

The Psychology of Illness and the Art of Healing  
Saturday, December 10th, 2-4pm

\$35

Held in the FCC meetinghouse and hosted by SoulSpace Yoga & Wellness. To register, send your check payable to SoulSpace Yoga, 26-28 West Main St, Plantsville, CT 06479. Questions, email Crystal Sullivan, [casullivan108@gmail.com](mailto:casullivan108@gmail.com).

### The Most at Peace Café

Friday, December 30  
6:00 p.m.



Join us for a night of live music featuring "The Most," as well as other local bands. Doors open at 5:30pm. Admission: \$12 Listen to their music at [themostbandct.bandcamp.com](http://themostbandct.bandcamp.com).

The Most is an eclectic math rock band from Southington. Their sporadic style utilizes genre-blending changes and innovative grooves to take listeners on a melodic journey. Their goal is to bring orchestration and technicality back to rock and roll in a new and refreshing way, while keeping in touch with the rawness of unbridled passion that lives at the heart of their punk rock roots.

### Men's Retreat!

Join the men of FCC at Silver Lake Conference Center January 28-29, 2017 to explore spirituality using our unique gifts that make a difference for our church and community. Cost is \$125 and the deadline to sign up is December 15. Sign up outside



**Pastor Ron's office and send in your \$50 deposit.** Please email Pastor Ron with questions: [rbrown@fccsouthington.org](mailto:rbrown@fccsouthington.org).

## Pastor Ron's Message the Morning after the Presidential Election

Early this morning one of the most divisive and bitter presidential election campaigns in our collective memory finally ended. Now that the votes have been counted, some are rejoicing and hopeful about the future of our nation—others are grieving and deeply afraid that the divisions revealed in this campaign will grow deeper.

For now, it is important to feel what we feel, but soon we must move into the future. It is what happens now that the election is over—how we treat one another, how we respect one another, how we love one another—that will make or break our future. Now is the time for us to listen deeply and to work **compassionately in the pursuit of liberty and justice for all God's people. It is the church's particular gift to seek unity even in our vast diversity.**

So I hope that you will join me in faithful prayer for our great country. I pray that all our elected leaders will embrace their new and continuing responsibilities with decency, humility, integrity, wisdom and a commitment to the truth. I pray that they will demonstrate leadership and character that will model for **our children the best that we can be. William Sloane Coffin once said, "the world is too dangerous for anything but truth, and too small for anything but love."** I pray that we will always have the courage to speak truth when there is danger, and the audacity to risk love when we encounter animosity.

In faith,  
Pastor Ron

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### Apple Harvest Update

Yes, it rained again during both weekends of the **festival but we didn't let that dampen our spirits!**

We managed to peel over 1300 hundred pounds of apples (or 4500 apples if you were keeping count.) I always try to remember to count the number of crisps we baked. This year it was more than 60 and that was with the two rainy days!

This festival is our largest fundraiser for the church and needs a whole lot of volunteerism to be successful. And we had the volunteers this year: More than 100! Thank you ALL very much! We had apple peelers, crisp bakers, money takers, ticker sellers for the baskets, order takers in the outside booths and inside, and bakers for the bake sale. We are still waiting for our final numbers to come in however, it looks like we made upward of \$20,000 this year between the kitchen and the vendor rentals!

And now, we rest....until next year!

### Fire Drill Review

On October 30<sup>th</sup> we held our annual fire drill; thank you to all who participated. The evacuation times are: 9:30 – 4 minutes and 45 seconds; 11:15 – 3 minutes and 17 seconds.

We continue to deal with the challenges of evacuating people who have mobility issues, especially those in the balcony, and making sure that every one leaves the church property in a timely manner. If you have suggestions that might help us, please contact a member of the Safe Conduct Board.

**While we acknowledge that this is "only a fire drill," it is in our best interest to treat this as if it were an actual emergency so we will be able to respond appropriately and keep everyone out of harm's way.**

Thank you helping us keep you safe.

Your Safe Conduct Board: Rich Enright, Dan Gabree, Scott Garver, Dave Hagen, Carole Lantz, Nora Matthews, John Mulrooney, Julie Wendt

Don't Miss the FUN on..

# HOSPITALITY NIGHT!



FOOD...

FUN...

FRIENDS...

AND FESTIVITIES FOR ALL

**Friday, December 2  
from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.**

In conjunction with the Downtown Merchants' Association Hospitality Night, FCC will be hosting a jolly-good time in Memorial Hall.

**Christmas Tag Sale... Bake Sale...**

Drawing... Christmas Music...

Fun for kids and adults!

Don't miss the tree-lighting ceremony on the Green at 6:00 pm. Join us for some holiday fun!

## The Magic of the Bells!

Have you ever watched the Celebration Ringers and thought about how fun it seemed and how beautiful it sounded? Musical experience is not required. Practices are typically Monday evenings at 7pm. Contact Patty Nichols at [patty.a.nichols@gmail.com](mailto:patty.a.nichols@gmail.com) with questions.

## Star Gift Sunday is Coming

Sunday, January 8 is Epiphany Sunday and the day when we traditionally have members of our church family share the stories of how they have been guided by their Star Gifts over the past year. If you would like to share your star-gift story, please contact Pastor Ron as soon as possible.

Drop in Collection Plate/Bring to Office

# CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA ORDER FORM



**Cost: \$15.00**

**Orders Due By: December 11**

All orders **MUST** be received by this date as our supplier needs two weeks to process the order.

Ordered by \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Given by (as printed in bulletin) \_\_\_\_\_

I will purchase \_\_\_\_\_ red double-poinsettia plants at \$15 each.

In memory of \_\_\_\_\_

In honor of \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I will take my plants with me after 10:00 a.m. service on Sunday, 12/25.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will leave my plants.

Please make all checks payable to:

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH** and in Memo, POINSETTIA

Send to: First Congregational Church  
Flower Committee  
37 Main Street, Southington, CT 06489

Questions? Call Faith Sullivan, 860-276-9583

## Spiritual Formation

### Bible, Bagels and Banter

Join Pastor Ron before work for tasty bagels, brief Bible study and stimulating conversation on Dec. 1 and 15 in Memorial Hall from 7:00-7:45 a.m.

On December 1 we will conclude our study, Great Themes of the Bible. If we view the Bible as one whole document, what is it saying? What are the big messages by which interior messages are to be interpreted? Men of all ages are welcome to join us **for this engaging conversation. You don't need to have attended the previous sessions!** On Dec. 15 we will take our ever popular Christmas quiz. How well do you know the Christmas story? Join us to find out! **(The Men's Bible Study will not meet in January as Pastor Ron will be on sabbatical.)**

### Weekly Wednesday Bible Study

Bible Study at The Orchards meets in the South Living Room of The Orchards located at 34 Hobart Street in Southington. Several residents of The Orchards attend this Bible study, but it is open to everyone. We meet every Wednesday from 10:30-11:15 a.m. to study the scripture passages that will be read at the FCC worship services the following Sunday. (We will not be meeting on Wednesday, December 28 or January 4.) All are welcome!

#### Bible Study



*Christmas is a time to remember loved ones both here and in heaven.*

Join us for our annual



## Service of Remembrance

**Monday, December 5  
7:00pm  
in our Meetinghouse**

## FAITH FORMATION

### Between Us—Women's Online Spiritual Formation Community

We are excited to offer a digital spiritual connection for women via Facebook. All ages of women are invited to join us for an hour of provocative conversations of faith that intersect our daily lives. Find the group link on the [FCC Southington Facebook page](#). We hope you will join in!



### Attention Young Adults

All 20- and 30-somethings are invited to join us at Noodles & Company in Southington every Tuesday night at 6:00 p.m. **for friends, fun, and faith. We use a curriculum called "Wired Word" which brings discussions of faith into modern Christian living.** Please email questions to [Rachel@fccsouthington.org](mailto:Rachel@fccsouthington.org).

## Pastor Ron's Message:

It's Advent, and it couldn't have come at a better time, because I think we need a little Christmas.

The Arts at Angeloria's, a wonderful arts organization established by FCC member, Lori Holm, is presenting the Broadway musical, *Mame*, this month. I love that story. It surrounds the wacky life of the eccentric Mame Dennis and her bohemian, intellectual artsy circle that is disrupted when her 10-year-old nephew, Patrick (played by Julianna Aulbach in Lori's production), is entrusted to her care. Soon afterward she loses her fortune in the 1929 stock market crash. In response to losing almost everything she sings this song:

We need a little Christmas,  
Right this very minute  
Candles in the window,  
Carols at the spinet  
For I've grown a little leaner, grown a little colder  
Grown a little sadder, grown a little older,  
And I need a little angel sitting on my shoulder  
I need a little Christmas now

I think we all need a little Christmas now. But sometimes when we need Christmas the most, it doesn't make sense. It's an improbable story, hard to believe, filled still with mystery, wonder, hope.

Can God overcome the odds?

An oppressive government requiring its poor citizens to travel miles for a census, a pregnant, unmarried woman called blessed among women making that journey when she is nine-months-pregnant, a man, a carpenter by trade, who didn't understand, but knew he must believe, unwashed shepherds the first to hear about it all, magi bearing gifts, angels flying around everywhere—

The whole thing just doesn't make a lot of sense. But we need this story, because we need God. God is coming to us as a baby, and babies change lives.

We need a little Christmas, right this very minute...

Advent Blessings,

*Pastor Ron*

# Heifer Farm Holiday Open House

Heifer International  
216 Wachusett Street  
Rutland, MA



December 3, 4, 10 & 11, 2016  
10:00 am to 4:00 pm each day

Creating memories, giving thoughtful gifts and enjoying good food are all part of our holiday seasons. Heifer Farm invites you to a special event with a Living Gift Market so you can honor family and friends with a purchase of an animal gift that will share joy. Take home a special gift card and your photo with a goat! Warm yourself with hot chestnuts at the bonfire; take a hayride; enjoy delicious homemade soup, baked goods and hot cocoa. Before you go, decorate a gingerbread cookie or stop into the Shop@Heifer for fairly-traded gift items, books, jewelry, and Heifer items. Enjoy free admission with a canned good donation which will be given to the Worcester County Food Bank. We greatly appreciate your support! For more information, call [508-886-5000](tel:508-886-5000) or email



## Small Groups

Do you have a special interest or skill that you think others might be interested in?

*Why not start a Small Group?*

Contact the church office, 860-628-6958.

## Did You Know....

Our monthly newsletter is online at [fccsouthington.org/newsletter/](http://fccsouthington.org/newsletter/)

If you prefer to view your newsletter online rather than receive a copy in the mail, call 860-628-6958 or e-mail us at [office@fccsouthington.org](mailto:office@fccsouthington.org).

Have you moved?

Changed your phone number or e-mail?

Please contact the church office with your new information.



## We'd Like Your Opinion!

What do you think about this FaithWorks newsletter? Is it useful? Is it boring? Do you have ideas about what would make it better? Please call the church office at 860-628-6958 or email [happenings@fccsouthington.org](mailto:happenings@fccsouthington.org) to help us meet our church family's information needs!

## 20's/30's Young Adult Group

All 20- and 30-somethings are invited to join us at Noodles & Company in Southington every Tuesday night at 6:00 p.m. for friends, fun, and **faith**. We use a curriculum called "Wired Word" which brings discussions of faith into modern Christian living. Please email questions to [Rachel@fccsouthington.org](mailto:Rachel@fccsouthington.org).

## “Tunes for Todd”

### Benefit Dinner and Concert

Saturday, December 3 at 5 p.m.

Join Branches, Blackberry Pines and Small Town Gamblers in a pasta dinner and concert to benefit Todd and his family as they proceed with the **treatments for Todd’s pancreatic cancer.** Tickets are \$20 each for dinner and the concert (children 5 and under are free), and can be purchased in the church office. Thank you for your support!

## Hospitality Night

This year the Southington Downtown Merchant Association’s **Hospitality Night will be** Friday, December 2 from 5:30—8:30 p.m. There will be a bake sale, a Christmas tag sale, refreshments, the Gratitude Board, music, tables for our **church’s missions and activities, and generally** lots of holiday spirit! Mark your calendar and be sure to join in the fun or help us extend radical hospitality toward our neighbors.

*Christmas is a time to remember loved ones both here and in heaven.*

Join us for our annual



## Service of Remembrance

**Monday, December 5**

**7:00pm**

**in our Meetinghouse**

### Save These Dates:

Friday, Dec 2	Hospitality Night
Saturday, Dec 3	Todd Lawson Benefit Dinner and Concert
Sunday, Dec 4	<b>Pastor Rachel’s Installation Service (4:00 p.m.)</b>
Monday, Dec 5	Service of Healing and Remembrance
Saturday, Dec 10	An Afternoon with Bernie Siegel
Friday, Dec 16	Game Night for Adults
Saturday, Dec 24	5:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Family Worship 10:00 p.m. Candlelight Worship
Sunday, Dec 25	10:00 a.m. Christmas Day Worship (one service)
Friday, Dec 30	The Most in Peace Café
Sunday, Jan 1	<b>10:00 a.m. New Year’s Day Worship (one service)</b>
Wednesday, Jan 11	Mission: Racial Justice planning meeting
Jan 13—15	Confirmation Retreat at Silver Lake
Jan 20	Game Night for Adults
Wednesday, Jan 25	Racial Justice Programming
Jan 28—29	<b>Men’s Retreat at Silver Lake</b>

Check our online calendar any time at [fccsouthington.org/events](http://fccsouthington.org/events).

# Missions



We are a small group of quilters who meet every other Wednesday from 10:00 – noon in room 201/202 to quilt and enjoy fellowship.

**Not a quilter? Join us and we'll give you an easy job to do or come for the fellowship.**

At the Southington Hospitality Night (December 2<sup>nd</sup> from 5:30 – 8:30) we will have a table of items our members have made for sale. There will be a wide selection of items; please visit us - you can do some Christmas shopping and support our ministry. Meeting dates: December 21, January 4, January 18

December 7<sup>th</sup> is our off-site Christmas lunch  
Questions? Contact Carole Lantz

## Caring Ministry

On Monday, December 12 at 12:00 p.m., we will hold our annual Christmas Luncheon. In general, meetings are held on the third Monday of the month (January 16 at 11:00 a.m. is the next meeting). Please mark your calendar and join us. All are welcome!

[Meal Ministry](#) for you or a church member who is going through a difficult time, surgery, etc.

[Transportation Ministry](#) If you are in need of a **ride to church or a doctor's appointment, or if you are able to provide rides occasionally to church and/or doctor's appointments.**

Please call *Carolyn Mansolf*, **860-621-5082**.

## What Is Stephen Ministry?

*"Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ"* -Galatians 6:2, NRSV

Stephen Ministry is the one-to-one lay caring ministry that takes place in congregations that use the Stephen Series system.

Stephen Ministry congregations equip and empower lay caregivers—called Stephen Ministers—to provide high-quality, confidential, Christ-centered care to people who are hurting.

<https://www.stephenministries.org/stephenministry/default.cfm/917>

To be a Stephen Minister you will need to complete 50 hours of training; classes will be held at our church on Thursday evenings from 7:00 – 9:30 pm, January 5 – May 6, 2017.

To sign up or receive more information please contact Sam Hendrickson at [samh41@att.net](mailto:samh41@att.net) or 860/302-5944.

## Ecuador Foundation Fund Update

We have been busy raising money for Fundacion Sor Dominga Bocca, the foundation for abused and neglected girls in Guayaquil, Ecuador.

This year, the Bike Run and our Annual Banquet **brought in a total of \$5,455 and Gordon Ellis' concert in Peace Café brought in an additional \$582.** Every cent of this money will be sent to the foundation to pay for food as well as other needs (such as residential, educational, psychological and medical needs) of the girls of the foundation. These girls have experienced so much horror in their young lives that their needs are great. I just got word from the foundation that the girls have finished their first semester of the Ecuadorian school year, and they all received good grades! I am so proud of our girls, as I am sure you are.

As always, thank you so much for your ongoing support. If you have questions or want to donate, please contact Clare Lindsey at 860-628-0298.

# Missions

**Christmas Giving Tags** – Help make Christmas brighter for a child in need! Gift tags will be available after 9:30 and 11:15 services in Memorial Hall beginning Nov. 27 - Dec. 11 and a Board of Missions member will have tags for anyone interested at the 8:00 services. The tags will give the child's name, age, and a gift they are hoping to receive. Unwrapped gifts must be brought to Memorial Hall by Sunday, December 18 in order to get them to DCF in time for Christmas.

## **Bell Ringing for the Salvation Army**

Saturday, Dec. 10 from 9am—9pm

Sign up to be a bell ringer at Stop & Shop (both entrances) for a one hour shift. When we ring the bell for the Salvation Army, 90% of what is raised by the bell ringers during December is given to our town to help the Southington residents in need. **The remaining 10% is used in the Hartford Area. Please sign up outside Pastor Ron's office.**



**Adopt a Southington Family In Need** for Christmas Giving. Call Southington Community Services - 860-628-3761

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## **Family Promise**

In early 2017 the Connecticut Chapter of Family Promise will be opening their doors to families in need of temporary housing. Our job at the First Congregational Church of Southington is to host these families, give them a comfortable place to sleep, feed them nutritious and delicious meals, and be welcoming hosts. We are very excited to be a part of this nation-wide effort to help homeless and low-income families achieve sustainable independence through a community-based response. There will be updates coming soon regarding donation items and volunteer jobs, and that's where Family Promise needs you. Please contact Becca and Lisa Hasko at [becca.hasko@gmail.com](mailto:becca.hasko@gmail.com) with questions.

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## **Chair Yoga!**

Mondays at 10am  
in our Choir Room



This is a gentle yoga class. All donations (\$5 suggested) to benefit the girls of Fundación Sor Dominga Bocca in Ecuador.

## **“Is Systemic Racism Really a Thing? And why would I need to learn about it?”**

All are welcome to join us as we continue our exploration of racism Wednesdays, January 25, and February 8 and 22 at 6:30 p.m. More details to come soon.

Want to help plan upcoming events? We will hold a planning meeting on Wednesday, January 11 at 6:30 p.m. **If you can't make it to the planning meeting but have ideas for events and topics, please email [happenings@fccsouthington.org](mailto:happenings@fccsouthington.org).**

Please visit [FCCSouthington.org/share](https://FCCSouthington.org/share) for more info, and sign up for our [racial justice newsletter](#).

## Church School News

### Our kids are “WITH” God

And they know how to show it! At our November Children’s Chapel service, the 2<sup>nd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> graders told us that Jesus taught us how to pray with the Lord’s Prayer, but they wanted to show us how to pray with a cheerleading exercise. They held giant letters and explained the WITH prayer:

W stands for “Wow!” Because God created this amazing world with a lot to say wow about.

I stands for “I’m sorry” because we are always doing things and saying things that we shouldn’t.

T stands for “Thanks” for our many blessings that we are thankful for.

H stands for “Help” because no matter how old or smart we are, we all need help sometimes and there are plenty of times that others need help too.

So, we can remember that we can pray anytime because God is always “WITH” us.

The children always provide the music for Communion and the collection of our offering at our Children’s Chapel services and this month, 3 girls surprised us with gifts of their talents. Claire played for the entire 9:30 a.m. service. At the 11:15 a.m. service, Adrianna sang a song she had written to the tune of “Jesus Loves Me” and Katrina sang “In a Bud There is a Flower.”

This next generation will be leading us in the not-too-distant future and they are not afraid to jump in and share their gifts even at the last moment. Adrianna and Katrina had not practiced at all until they stepped up to the piano and Claire didn’t even have her music with her! The others lead the various parts of the service, reading and praying and cheerleading. I’m so glad that our kids feel comfortable enough to step up and help lead worship. We are truly blessed to witness our children enthusiastically worshipping God.

~ Karlene

### Advent Church School Mission Project

This year, we will be asking children of all ages to bring in change for our “Change For the Sake of Change” collection. After Advent is over, the Middle School Youth Group will use the collected donations to go shopping for “Gifts for Baby Jesus” which will be donated to babies in need. In addition to your change we will gladly accept bills and checks (made out to FCC with “Change for the Sake of Change” in the memo.)

### Church School Calendar

December 4: Children in 2 – 8 grade will start in church so they can hear the special Advent children’s sermon (no chapel service)

December 24: Christmas Eve Contemporary / Family Service @ 5:00 p.m.  
Children should bring their “Change for the Sake of Change” baggies to the service\*

December 25: Christmas Day service at 10:00 – no church school or nursery care

January 1: New Year’s Day service at 10:00 - no church school or nursery care

## Youth News

### Confirmation

Sunday, December 4: 4—5:30 p.m.

Sunday, December 11: 4—5:30 p.m.



Confirmation Retreat @ Silver Lake  
January 13—15 **we're headed to Silver Lake for a meaningful weekend together in a beautiful place! We'll learn about the UCC, and the roots of our fabulous denomination, and have a blast together in God's Country. Hopefully it will have snowed and we'll sled down the hill on mattresses.** Cost for the retreat is \$175; Make checks out to FCC, and turn into Pastor Rachel by November 27. Scholarships are available. Please speak with Pastor Rachel. All Confirmands are expected to attend.

### High School Youth Group

December 11

Come on out for youth group decorate your own **pizza night and a good Ol' Yankee Swap (re-gifts only; no purchasing gifts please!)** 5:30-7:30pm, remember to bring a friend with you!

December 30

Come on out for our Youth Group Lock-in or out-**regardless you won't want to miss out on this night! What are we doing? We'll hear Nick Hasko's band The Most, right in our very own Peace Café. We'll need your help, invite your friends, and be ready to lend a hand. Once the band is finished, we'll set-up Peace Café as our makeshift living quarters. Timeframe: TBA Packing List- sleeping bag/pillow, bringing a twin air mattress is advised, PJ's**

January 22

Youth Group is focusing on relationships- come on out for a fun night, when we examine the good, the bad, and the ugly in ourselves and our relationships. 5:30-7:30pm, remember to bring a friend with you, or maybe a frenemy.

### Middle School Youth Group

December 2

As a youth group we will participate in **Hospitality Night; we're going to be serving cider and selling edible snowpeople.** While taking turns selling our wares, we will also have a treasure hunt, inside the church- **you won't want to miss out!**

December 16

We welcome you out for a fun night at church! We will have a white Elephant gift exchange party (no purchased gifts- only regifts). Prize for **most funny and most bizarre. We'll eat some pizza, bring \$5, and we'll play some other holiday themed games.** We will also have a service project to work on. Invite your friends, all are welcome. 5:30-8pm.

January 27

Come on out for MSYG, 5:30-8pm- **we'll have a pizza dinner with friends, and play some games.** Then we will turn our attention to a service project. During Advent our church family gathered coins and monies for baby Jesus. We will take these collections to the store to meet some material needs of young people in our community.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
37 Main Street  
Southington, CT 06489



# Merry Christmas

Blessings from your church staff.

*Mia*

*Lisa*

*Pastor Ron*

*Katherine*  
*Melissa*

*Carole*

*Ray*

*John P.*

*Lynn*

*Keegan*

*Dawn*

*Allison*

*Fere*

*Rachel*