Dear Friends and Church Family,

There’s nothing more that we could want than peace. From a world that forever seems to talk about or live in war, to family arguments and disagreements that have left us crushed under the weight of disappointment and sadness, it seems like peace is far from us.

The Hebrew word for “peace” is the word “shalom”. It means “to be safe, sound, perfect, complete, nothing lacking”. Can this be our reality? Yes it can be, and more.

For when we fear the Lord and obey His commandments, we experience shalom.

This Advent and Christmas season, we will journey together to the manger to find our shalom as we hear how “God with us” can give us hope and strength to face whatever our days may bring.

“God with us” offers peace and prosperity, abundance and joy.

On the journey,

 Pastor Donna

May this season bring you good health as you dwell in the presence and holiness of our God.

Advent Blessings and Merry Christmas Blessings.
**Advent Message From the Pastor**

- **November 29 to December 20** we will journey in our Bible Study Series entitled “Shining Bright” as we dive deeply into: Hope, Peace, Love, Joy on Tuesdays at 1 pm.

- **December 15** 7 p.m. "Blue Christmas Service” with Pastor Shawn Garan and Pastor Donna Cassity. For those who feel like this season of the year is not a joyful time and perhaps even experiencing grief, come and experience wholeness and a place to release emptiness and be filled with peace.

- **December 24** Christmas Eve service 5 p.m.

- **December 25 Christmas Day Service** 10 a.m. Lessons and Carols

- **January 1.** New Year’s Day Service 10 a.m. with Jim Willis preaching

And on each of the 4 Advent Sundays we will journey together in a sermon series entitled “God With Us”.

**Bible studies**

Daytime bible study: Tuesdays @ 1 p.m. in the Gathering Room.

Our next Loss and Grief Group: Wednesday, December 14, 9:30 -10:30.

**LECTIONARY READINGS - December 2022 - God With Us**

**December 4**
Isaiah 11: 1-10; Psalm 72: 1-7; Romans 15: 4-13; Matthew 3: 1-12.

**December 11**
Isaiah 35: 1-10; Psalm 146: 5-10; James 5: 7-10; Matthew 11: 2-11.

**December 18**
Isaiah 7: 1-16; Psalm 80: 1-17; Romans 1: 1-7; Matthew 1: 18-25.

**December 25**
Isaiah 52: 7-10; Psalm 98; Hebrews 1: 1-14; John 1: 1-14.
**Open and Affirming**

SBCC received our official ONA status from UCC this November. The words ‘open and affirming’ have been added to our website and our Facebook page. A press release will be placed in local papers in the near future.

The ONA team will continue to attend training sessions and will offer discussion and idea exchange opportunities for anyone in the congregation who would like to meet, as well as learning opportunities during fellowship hours.

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**Prayer For Our Community**

God, Lord of all creation, lover of life and of everything, please help us to love in our very small way what You love infinitely and everywhere. We thank You that we can offer just this one prayer and that will be more than enough, because in reality every thing and everyone is connected, and nothing stands alone. To pray for one part is really to pray for the whole, and so we do. Help us each day to stand for love, for healing, for the good, for the diverse unity of the Body of Christ and all creation, because we know this is what You desire: as Jesus prayed, that all may be one. We offer our prayer together with all the holy names of God, we offer our prayer together with Christ, our Lord. Amen (Father Richard Rohr)
OUTREACH

December will be a very busy month for Outreach! Beginning the last Sunday in November, and continuing until right before Christmas, we will have our Fair Trade holiday shopping tables set up each week during hospitality/coffee hour. Come shop for unique gifts that provide an income to small businesses or individuals through Fair Trade. Ornaments, jewelry, accessories, and home items will be displayed and quantities are limited so shop early!

We will have our Angel Tree again this year. We have committed to Greater Waterbury Interfaith Ministries (GWIM) that we will provide a gift for each of 20 children. Jean Mitchell will be coordinating this effort, so look for her during coffee hour. You can select your ‘angel’ which lists their wishes. All gifts must be returned to the church by December 18th as they will be picked up the following day by GWIM.

We will also do our annual Christmas Collection for retired UCC clergy so watch for envelopes in the pews.

Looking ahead to the New Year - we will resume our monthly sandwich brigade in January, providing 400 pb&j sandwiches to the soup kitchen, so keep an eagle eye out for creamy peanut butter and jam sales. January is also the month that we collect for the Southbury Fuel Bank and we know that energy costs right now mean the demand for their support is likely to be quite high this year.
The Food Bank is always a busy place. The Holidays are no exception. We were delighted to deliver 64 cans of chowders and creamed soups in November. The food bank volunteers are always extremely appreciative and welcoming. The need is ever present as is your continued generosity.

Creamed soups and chowders are the shelves we keep full at the Food Bank! Thank you all for sharing throughout the year with our neighbors!

Faith formation

This Advent please join us in our collection for the Food Bank and our little food pantry by following the Reverse Advent Calendar. Each day put something non-perishable in a bag. There will be a large box in the Gathering Room where you either leave your items weekly or at the end of the month. There are copies of the calendar and a decorative bag available in the Hall or you can use one of your own. Any questions please ask Krista.

HOPE, JOY, PEACE, LOVE!!! Light a candle as we wait for Jesus. Please join us on December 4th, following church, for our December church-wide craft.

Church School will meet on December 11 and 18. Lessons will follow the road to Jesus’ birth. There will also be a Christmas craft.
FOR PEACE ON EARTH
Peace on Earth begins in our hearts, or between two people.
We pray for peace in our families.
We pray for peace in our homes.
We pray for peace between all.
Let peace for the world begin in our Hearts.
No peaceful act is too small to start changing the world.
Let us Light the Candle of Peace as we await the birth of Jesus. Amen.

- Traci Smith

Blessings,
The Faith Formation Team
**Book Club**

A Man Called Otto (the new Tom Hanks movie based on our last Book Club, A Man Called Ove, will be released on Christmas Day 2022. A Book Club field trip to see it at Riverview Cinemas in Southbury is planned for the first week of January 2023. All are welcome. Stay tuned for the exact day and time.

Our next book is 7 Days of Simplicity by Jen Hatmaker. Jodi purchased 10 books. See Jodi if interested in a book or to find one for you. A meeting of the club will take place after church on Sunday 1/29/2023.

**Church Library**

*Something to make your visit to our Church Library a bit more enjoyable -*

Thanks to a great idea from JoAnn Bolin, there is now a supply of water bottles underneath the table holding the Keurig coffee pot. If you’ve tried to add water to the coffee pot, you already know how difficult it can be (the carafe doesn’t fit under the water faucet!). Please use the water bottles as needed to make your coffee - and enjoy some time in our library!
Public relations

Christmas Ads were placed in *Voices* (including our Blue Christmas Service) for the following issues: December 7, 14, and 21.

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Join us

**BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE**

for those who mourn

**Thursday, Dec. 15, 7 PM**

**Christmas Eve**

5 PM

organ, choir, bells & flute

**Christmas Day**

10 AM

South Britain Congregational Church

693 South Britain Rd. (Rte. 172) Southbury, CT

203-264-5890 | SouthBritainChurch.org
Ping Pong and Pizza was an intimate affair, which was especially nice. This month, we are skipping the event since there are lots of other things to do, like the Victorian Tea! We will reconvene on Friday, January 20, 2023.

We are reactivating Instagram. Cathy Somers has agreed to post Church news on FaceBook and Instagram!

If anyone out there would like to join our PR committee, please don’t hesitate to be in touch!

Thank you to our intrepid members, Bambi Engleman and Gary Tolin. – Lissa Pine

Flower committee

Poinsettias will grace our sanctuary again this December. Anyone who would like to contribute toward their purchase may donate by using the little brown envelopes located in the pews. There is no specific amount, just give whatever you are able to. Be sure to note who or what the donation is in honor or memory of so Nancy can compile the list for the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day bulletins. You may take your poinsettia AFTER the Christmas morning service. Any left will be distributed by the Deacons to the home-bound or our friends in assisted living.
**Memorial Garden**

I had the pleasure of running into a visitor to the Memorial Garden recently. The comments were heart warming to me and may be to you. “I don’t get here often but when I do, I feel at peace. I did not realize how much having the Memorial Wall would mean to me.” We are fortunate to have the Memorial Wall and Garden here at SBCC.

For information, call the church office or any committee member.

Helena Jedlinsky

**Property Committee**

A MESSAGE FROM THE PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Over the years the church Property Committee has been given the responsibility for making final decisions relating to requests for changes to the esthetic or historical appropriateness of our interior facilities.

To help facilitate this responsibility, in 2013, the decision was made to establish an ad hoc Decorating Assistance Committee.

When needed, the Property Committee will seek their advice. The goal is to ensure that thoughtful and informed decisions are made that reflect the feelings of the church members. Discretion and awareness of the sensitive nature of all requests will be carefully considered. Final decisions are made by the Property Committee.

Examples of areas included are paint colors, fabric and carpet choices, wall hangings, new and donated furniture, window treatments, pictures, mirrors, and lighting.

It should be noted that in certain areas, for historical reasons, or to honor the wishes of persons to whom areas have been dedicated, the decor is basically permanent and should not be altered without careful consideration. These areas are: the interior of the church, the Dorothy and Henry Bassett Meeting Room and the Jessie Gates Parlor/ Dorothy Collister Library.

The members of the Decorating Assistance Committee are: Judy Pierpont, Chuck Crowdis, Cathy Schade and June Bennett
FROM OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Jodie Richardson’s picture was incorrectly identified in the All Saints Section of the November Parishioner’s Post as Diane Hynd. Here are the two pictures with correct names. Both were long-time members of this church and both are greatly missed.

Diane Hynd        Jodie Richardson

The Simpson & Humiston family would like to thank those that provided meals when all of us were stricken with covid-19 right after Thanksgiving. We have been blessed with prayers, and meals by our church family (containers will be returned to the Parish office). Because we were all fully vaccinated and had the latest booster we weathered the storm, with mild symptoms.

-Joe Simpson
A marker was unveiled Sunday, November 13, outside the South Britain Congregation-al Church, 693 South Britain Rd., to recognize how, in 1937, Southbury rejected a Nazi train-ing camp. The marker was unveiled by Hughie Humiston, the oldest member of the congrega-tion, and Laurie Hornbecker, daughter of Joyce Hornbecker, former town clerk and historian, who contributed significant research describing the events that took place 85 years ago. (Zukus-kas photo)
The American Legion post here in Southbury will once again participate in the Wreaths Across America program by laying wreaths on the graves of veterans in the cemeteries here in town.

Saturday, December 17th at noon, a very short ceremony will take place at Ballantine Park, after which groups will disperse to the South Britain Burying Ground or Pine Hill cemetery to place the wreaths. We are seeking volunteers for South Britain.

Anyone interested in participating should reach out as soon as possible to Cathy Somers at csomers254@earthlink.net or by leaving a message at 203-264-5178.

**Bulletin board**

- Judson Jazz Quartet will be playing at Aquila’s Nest Winery in Sandy Hook on Saturday, December 10th, 5-8 p.m.
- On Sunday, Dec. 11, Judson Jazz Quartet will be playing at the Reverie Brewery, Newtown, from 2 - 5 p.m. Come enjoy the holidays!
SBCC Women's Christmas Dinner

Wednesday, December 14
7 PM
Gathering Room

What a perfect time of year to come together in celebration!

Sign-up for this happy get together will begin on Sunday, November 6th during Fellowship Hour.

Tickets are $25 pp for a catered buffet dinner.

Please see Chris Dreton or Jodi Mitchell with any questions.

“Christmas will always be as long as we stand heart to heart and hand in hand.” –Dr. Seuss
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<td>Francesca Sergi (Graziano)</td>
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<td>Cathy Somers</td>
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<td>Amy Smith</td>
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December Calendar

Every Week

Sundays: Worship, 10:00 a.m. Fellowship Hour, 11:00 a.m.

Tuesdays: Knit-Wits, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Fridays: AA Meeting, 6 - 9 p.m.
Dance, 4 - 6 p.m.

Every Month

1st Sunday Outreach

3rd Sunday Deacons (following services)

2nd Tuesday Finance Committee, 4 - 5 p.m.

1st Wednesday Faith Formation 5:30 p.m.

1st Wednesday Stewardship (beginning in October) 7 p.m

2nd Wednesday Loss and Grief, 9:30 - 10:30 a.m.

3rd Wednesday Trustee’s Meeting

4th Wednesday Church Council, 7:00 p.m.

1st Thursday Property, 7 p.m.

2nd Thursday ONA, 10 a.m.

2nd Thursday Public Relations, 5:30 p.m.

1st Friday Parishioner’s Post published (Submissions due the Monday prior).
Christmas Eve Service, Saturday, December 24, 5 p.m., featuring special music with the Organ, Bells, Choir and Flute.