

The Parishioner's Post

OUR CHURCH'S MISSION STATEMENT

"To be a dynamic, welcoming, and caring community of Christian faith by weaving the thread of Christ into the tapestry of our lives."



Dear Family in Christ,

Well, here we are in 2023 and as I reflect on the past 31 days all I can say is thank you! What a wonderful December it has been as we celebrated the Advent and birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. I want to take this moment to thank so many of you who offered cards and special notes as well as many gifts during December. I don't believe I've ever received so many and felt so much love that filled me with joy.

I also want to say thank you to many of you who participated in the events in December, too many to name here. But it goes without saying that everything from the beautiful decorations everywhere to the Victorian Tea (and everything in between) added so much to the season of hope, peace, love and joy. Christmas Eve and Christmas Day was a great turnout despite the frigid cold from the wind storm. Despite the loss of electricity for many (including us down at 639), we had a good

turnout in worship both days!

A special thanks to my staff: for Nancy and her tireless work in bringing all the details of this month together. Jenny and Dennis Li along with the choir who brought gifts of music and the message of Christ in so many ways. Their talents always bring comfort to my soul as I am sure to all of you as well. Krista Judson who brings so many gifts of creativity, but especially to the intergenerational opportunities that we share in faith together. And to Chuck Crowdus for his positivity and gifts in technology that never cease to amaze me. I'd like to say a word about Wayne Gunther. We continue to keep him in our hearts and prayers in hopes that he recovers and can be with us. He is greatly missed.

I am thankful to the trustees and all the work they do in overseeing the property and fixing many things that do not go unnoticed!

Finally, to the deacons who tire-

SOUTH BRITAIN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

693 SOUTH BRITAIN RD.
SOUTHBURY, CT 06488



lessly help to assist in worship and offer care of the flock. I thank Joe Simpson and the team for all they do to make ministry a blessing.

As we enter 2023, I am excited to bring some new ideas in ministry, reaching out to the community and having another fun potluck Holy Conversation with you. Stay tuned.

In the meantime, have a wonderful month as we enter the light of Epiphany.

In Christ,

Pastor Donna

BIBLE STUDIES

- Daytime Bible study: Tuesdays @ 1 p.m. in the Gathering Room.
- Our next Loss and Grief Group: Wednesday, January 11th, 9:30 -10:30.
- Prayer Group: Wednesday, January 11th, 4:30.

LECTIONARY READINGS - January 2023

January 1: Isa. 63: 7-9; Ps. 148; Heb. 2: 10-18; Matt. 2: 13-23.

January 8: Isa. 42: 1-9; Ps. 29; Acts 10: 34 - 43; Matt. 3: 13-17

January 15: Isa. 49: 1-7; Ps. 40: 1-11; 1 Cor. 1: 1-9; John 1: 29-42.

January 22: Isa. 9: 1-4; Ps. 27:1, 4-9; 1 Cor. 1: 10-18; Matt. 4: 12-23.

January 29: Mic. 6: 1-8; Ps. 15; 1 Cor. 1: 18-31; Matt 5: 1-12

OPEN AND AFFIRMING

- We wish everyone a very Happy New Year filled with love, acceptance, good health, peace, and joy!
- We would like to share this passage from the Daily Word, a Unity publication:
 - I affirm peace, dignity, and equality for all people.
 - All people deserve to be treated with respect and dignity, no matter the country of origin, culture, ethnicity, or belief system - we all have the right to live in peace. Likewise, we all have the sacred responsibility to treat others the way we would like to be treated. This awareness guides my thoughts today as I offer a blessing for humanity.
 - I envision us surrounded by love, peace and safety. I behold the divine identity we share - the spirit that connects us and joins our hearts as one. We are beings of light, and we shine the light of hope and understanding. We bless the world with a dazzling spectrum of gifts. Each of us is an integral part of the world's goodness. Amen.

Cont.

- First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone..so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity ~ 1 Timothy 2:1-2

OUTREACH

Outreach sends a big “Thank You” to everyone who supported our Angel Tree and our Fair Trade sales in December. We were able to make Christmas a little bit better for 20 children and I am sure you made some friends and family happier with your Fair Trade gifts.



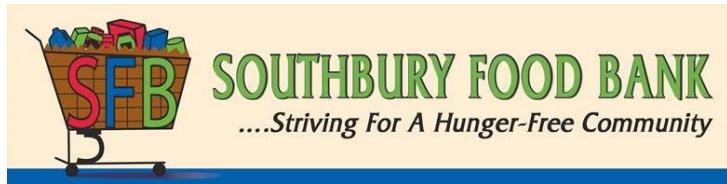
Our sandwich brigade kicks off again this month. If you would like to participate, just let Cathy Somers (csmers254@earthlink.net or 203-525-6565) know. We need 10 volunteers and so far we have five. The supply bags will be ready for **pickup on January 19th** to be **returned on January 22nd**. The bag contains 4 loaves of bread, pb&j, a hairnet and gloves. You will need to use your own plastic wrap, but everything else is provided. If you return your bag early, please put it in the commercial fridge in the Parish Hall kitchen.



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. Our January offering, which will be much needed this year, will support the Southbury Fuel Bank. You may make your donation through One Church or by putting your cash/check in an envelope in the offering plate. Just be sure to clearly mark that

it is for the Fuel Bank.





The Food Bank is always a busy place. 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.

Char Moll, Jean Mitchell, JoAnn Bolin, Lillian Groody, Lynn Plourde, Pam Hein, Cathy Somers (chair)

TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees is entrusted with the task of preparing the church budget, reporting income and expenditures versus the budget, raising the funds to carry on the work of the church, and assuring accuracy and integrity of all financial transactions.

The first half of this year presented several financial challenges to the committee. In December, Finance reported shortages in operating cash flow and cash reserves.

Replacing the fire alarm system which was destroyed by a lighting strike, was skillfully handled by Finance and Property committees without any out of pocket expenses from the church.

Anticipated rising fuel bills and increases in cleaning service costs for the Church and Parish Hall will put a substantial drain on resources.

Lack of help for various committees is also a concern. The Finance Committee is 2 members short and no one has stepped forward to handle the 2023-2024 Stewardship Campaign.

All this is the backdrop in our pursuit to hire a full time pastor with a package that will attract qualified candidates.

Currently we are meeting the financial challenges of the church and are on good footing for the short term.

Respectfully submitted,

The Trustees Committee: Sal Graziano- Chair; David Karraker- V. Chair; Pam Hein- Secretary; Ken Bolin- Treasurer; Curt Perry- Finance Committee; Kim Lowell- Property Committee; Krista Judson- Property; Amy Smith- Stewardship and Apple Festival; Laurie Hornbecker- Stewardship

SEARCH COMMITTEE

The Search Committee has been diligently working to complete the church profile. In December the church-wide survey was completed and compiled. Fifty-four people completed the questionnaire. The congregation voted that the top 3 areas of focus for our next settled pastor should be:

1. Relates sermons to daily life.
2. Grow and develop our church family.
3. Provide Pastoral Care.

Before we can complete our church profile, we are scheduling a church meeting to inform the congregation of the survey results and discuss some very real financial concerns that we have before we can put SBCC Profile on the UCC website.

This meeting will be Sunday January 29, at 11:30 AM right after service.

Please make every attempt to be at this very important meeting.

We would like to thank everyone for their patience with this process.

Respectfully submitted,

SBCC Search Committee: Sal Graziano, Laurie Hornbecker, Jeanne Crane-Shepherd, Laura O'Meara, Gary Tolin, Barbara Quinn

FINANCE

Happy New Year, the official start of the tax season. Annual Giving Statements will be issued by the end of next week. Please watch for your giving statement in your email. Requests for a printed copy may be made to Laurie Hornbecker as noted below or by leaving a message in the church office.

As of this writing and the halfway mark for our “Together We Can Do More” Pledge Campaign, we have received 40% of the total pledged amount. One might expect us to be at 50% since we are halfway. We all give in different amounts and with different schedules, so this percentage may be a bit misleading. Some of us give weekly, monthly, quarterly, semi-annually, yearly, or whenever the Holy Spirit moves us. If you have any questions about whether your individual pledge is up to date, you can login to your personal One Church account and view your giving record or you may contact me directly.

Your SBCC financial secretaries are happy to help.

Laurie Hornbecker lhornbecker@aol.com, 203-509-4027, Francesca Sergi

PROPERTY

Fire safety and cleanliness was the focus of property the past few months. Lightning struck and ruined our fire alarm system this fall. We were able to update the system to the latest technology and have one of the few wireless systems in town.

Property also worked to find a new cleaning service for our church. They started right before Christmas and our church and parish house look amazing. We are happy with the change and hope that you are too. Thanks so much to all those who helped with the switch, you are appreciated more than you know.

We hope you all have a happy and healthy new year.

Members: Bud Bennett, Laura Bennett, Krista Judson, Rob Quinn, Don Sharpe, Joseph Simpson. Curt Perry and Kim Lowell (co-chairs)

FAITH FORMATION

- Advent was busy for Faith Formation. We began with the SBCC 2022 Reverse Advent Calendar. Each day of Advent, instead of getting a prize, you add a food item to your bag. Each day gave a suggestion. The bags have been collected and will be dropped off at the Southbury Food Bank and our own Little Food Pantry. Several members said they had lots of fun filling their bags.



- Jodi Mitchell headed up our church advent candle craft project. 20 households participated in making their own Advent candle trays. **Hope, Peace, Love and Joy** for the 4 Sundays prior to celebrating **The Birth of Jesus**.



- The third Sunday our wonderful children spent church talking about Peace and Love and the coming of Jesus. Each put together a Nativity Wreath to hang up at home.

Cont.

- Week four Joy, the children found and placed the camels and 3 wisemen in the crèche. Joy is felt deep in your heart. You can bring someone Joy with a smile, a kind word or simple act of kindness.



- Stop by the parish hall to see their Joy Snowflakes. Let's all bring joy to ourselves and others through one act of kindness each in 2023.



Prayer of Kindness

O Lord, Give me strength today to show kindness in all I do. Help me to open my arms to those less fortunate and extend my hand to those who May need it, so they may see You in my kind words and actions.

Amen.

Author unknown



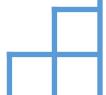
UPCOMING:

Church School will meet on January 15th and 22nd. On the 22nd we will be making cookies for GWIM. This will be our January community service project.

Book Club will be meeting in February, date to be announced. The book is “7 Days of Simplicity”. All are welcome to attend to talk about living lightly and simply.



Blessings,
Krista



LIBRARY

Stop by your church library to find a devotional to help see you through the New Year, and while you're at it, help eat up the Christmas candy in the jar on the library table - hate to see it go to waste.

If you have any ideas to make our library more user friendly or comfortable, please let us know!

Just see Chris Dreton or Cathy Somers.

FLOWER COMMITTEE

Thank you to those who donated towards the beautiful poinsettias that graced the church for Advent and Christmas. It was a stunning setting.

There are plenty of open Sundays for you to provide flowers or plants for our worship service. The sign-up sheet is in the gathering room on the attic door. Please consider signing up; you can always call Nancy in the office if you can't get to the gathering room in person.

Members: Cathy Crowdus, Linda Long, Cathy Somers

HOSPITALITY

Our committee is an “as needed” committee. We provide the food & set up for Memorial luncheons after a funeral, meetings & get togethers etc. where a meal or snacks are needed.

We have 10 terrific ladies:

Cheri Fickett - Chairman; Linda Long - Co chairman; Krista Judson; Judy Grimes; Jeanne Shepherd Crane; Joan Kubista;

Chris Dreton; Ann Walters; Barbara Ryner

Plus many volunteers!

NEWSY NUGGETS

WOMEN'S CHRISTMAS DINNER

Twenty-one of us had a wonderful time at the Church's Women's Christmas Dinner on Wednesday, December 14. We missed those who had to cancel due to illness but we hope everyone is fully recovered and all ready for the New Year. Thank you to Nardelli's in Southbury for furnishing us with enough food to feed an army - and it was delicious! Christmas music, laughter and good food all made for a wonderful evening of fellowship and friendship.





LABONNES' RECEIPTS - We will continue to collect receipts from LaBonne's Market for their Cash for Charities Program in 2023. If you shop at any of the LaBonne's markets, save your receipts and drop them off in the box in the Gathering Room . If you have friends and neighbors who also shop at LaBonne's, their receipts are just as good . It's cash for the church! We collected close to 1000 receipts in 2022 and I am still working to determine the total dollar amount for the church.

Ken Bolin



Prayer Group Forming

- Throughout the Bible prayer is described as necessary to maintain a relationship with God. The new year will be more of the same challenges for the world including our small community. But opportunities for change are growing even for the good. Throughout history the greatest change occurs during turmoil and uncertainty. I feel this is going to be a seminal time in history.
- No matter what could happen we all need to fortify our faith and hope through prayer. Through all possibilities good, bad, or unsure, we will all need connection with God. Further, all of us need connection with each other to maintain our wellbeing, our equilibrium, and our happiness.
- Therefore, I am moved to organize a prayer group. We did this during the last cycle of change with the pandemic and moving into 2021. It proved to be successful in many ways, individually and collectively.
- So, here we go! Anyone is invited to join me and others **next Wednesday January 11th at 4:30pm in the Parish House**. All one needs to do is **email your desire to attend by Tuesday the 10th**. This helps me organize the place and participation properly. I will also provide further instructions for the first prayer group meeting after your email confirming your participation.

Cont.

Here are some other things to think about for the prayer meeting:

- § Prayer works in unifying ways.
- § God loves the shy and the uncertain and the bold.
- § We will pray together, and the spirit will move us into an organic flow.
- § Support will come naturally from all.
- § Prayer is a conversation with God.
- § Future meetings may bring prayer discussion, and concepts, and variations. An example may be learning how to pray through scripture.
- § Future prayer group meetings will probably last for 30-35 minutes: more or less at times.

Thank you for considering this and I look forward to hearing from you. Let me know if you have any questions. Send me an email to confirm your participation.

1 Timothy 2:1-- I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people

Psalms 42: 8 -- By day the Lord directs his love, at night his song is with me— a prayer to the God of my life.

Carl Dunn

203-464-4457

carleton.dunn@gmail.com

HAPPY New Year

Greetings from our Congregation for a Happy and Healthy 2023! (photo courtesy of Ken Bolin).



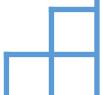
Happy New Year from Sal, Francesca , Ahlani and Lainie!



Judson's Family Christmas! Happy New Year to all!



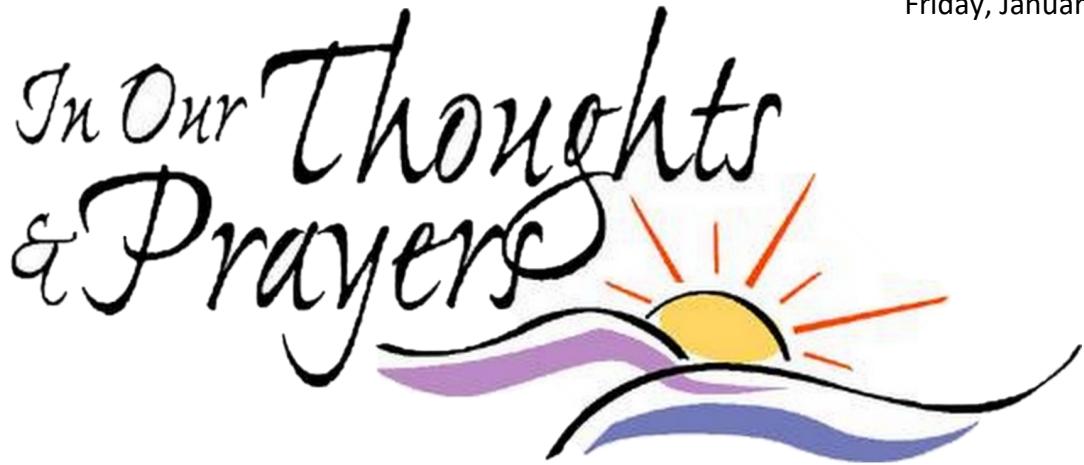
Faith Formation Snowflakes





Judson Jazz at Aquila's Nest, Sandy Hook during the holidays.





The Family of Glen Bennet	John & Carol Schaake
Judy M.	Nurse Betty
Tracy Groody	Taylor
Johanna Metzler	Lillian Groody
Dr. Pat Scotti, Lydia	The Rod Linkous Family
Bob	Maryanne Muscolino
JoAnn Bolin	Prayers for the Gouveia family
Marie Sandstrom	Baby Emet
Rob Kalbaugh	Bambi E.
Jerry	Faye DeForest
Maria	Kota
Susan Stone	Kevin Graham
Nancy & Chuck Diddia	
Rabbi Carmit Hassai	

We sometimes post first name only when listing individuals for prayer, This is done due to privacy as requested or information limitations. If you would like phone number etc... please see Nancy, and we will provide if available.

BULLETIN BOARD



January		
	Faith Kuehn (Josephine Blersch daughter)	2
	Jeffrey Thomas	3
	Jodi Mitchell	6
	Lainie Jedlinsky	7
	Betty Presnell	8
	Joseph Naylor	13
	John Potz, Jr.	13
	Phil Valenti	16
	Olivia Cody	16
	Michelle Dahl	19
	Jared Isbell	19
	Andrew Dahl	20
	Kevin Sullivan (Bob and Harriet Harrison's son in law)	20
	Ann Walters	22
	Linda Long	25
	Susan Mahoney	28
	Jillian Cody (Ralph Kubista's granddaughter)	29

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
3 rd Sunday	Deacons (following services)
2nd Tuesday	Finance Committee, 4 - 5 p.m.
1st Wednesday	Faith Formation 5:30p.m.
1st Wednesday	Stewardship (beginning in October) 7 p.m
2nd Wednesday	Loss and Grief, 9:30 - 10:30 a.m.
3 rd Wednesday	Trustee's Meeting
4th Wednesday	Church Council, 7:00 p.m.
1 st Thursday	Property, 7 p.m.
2 nd Thursday	ONA, 10 a.m.
2 nd Thursday	Public Relations, 5:30 p.m.
1st Friday	Parishioner's Post published (Submissions due the Monday prior).



- **PRAAYER GROUP FORMING:** Anyone is invited to join Carl Dunn and others **next Wednesday, January 11th at 4:30pm** in the Parish House. All one needs to do is **email your desire to attend by Tuesday, the 10th**. careltondunn@gmail.com
- **A Church meeting with the Search Committee. This meeting will be Sunday, January 29, at 11:30 AM** right after service.
- **Life Line Screening will be at South Britain Congregational Church on Thursday, February 9, 2023.** To register for your appointment and to receive the special discount, please call 1-800-640-6307 or visit LLSA.SOCIAL/HC .
- **We will have a NEW MEMBER INFORMATIONAL CLASS on February 12, 2023 following the service at 11:30 in the Bassett Room.** Anyone interested in learning more about SBCC, please contact the church office at 203-264-5890.