

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."

SOUTH BRITAIN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

693 SOUTH BRITAIN RD.
SOUTHBURY, CT 06488

Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.

Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song. -Psalm 95:1-2



Lenten greetings!

Dear Family in Christ,

As we begin this Lenten season together, we know that God is with us in this journey. Lent is all about preparing. Preparing our hearts for celebration of the resurrection of Christ and realizing our empowerment from the gift of the Holy Spirit. The definition of Lent is the 40 weekdays from Ash Wednesday to Easter. Popular thought is to fast from food, but it doesn't always mean that we need to give up food. It is meaningful when we see it as a time of repentance. That is not a feeling of shame, but an awareness that sin separates us from God. Repentance means to change our direction as we seek resolutions in ways to do that.

I would like to suggest that resolutions have a different focus. Rather than meeting self-set, self-motivated goals, we focus on goals established by God. Self-set goals are risky and may even rebel against God. Instead, let our resolutions during Lent focus on listening for God's leading in our lives. If that seems intimidating, just know the grace of God is sufficient (2 Corinthians 12:9) to help us through understanding God's leading. *Lent fasting* can lead us to God's goals as we sense holiness all around us and lift our praise to God at all times.

I hope you will join me in attending the Lenten series in our community churches and as we look forward to this opportunity to break bread, pray, praise and share together in worship. SBCC will be hosting the Lenten supper on March 22 at Southbury UCC



at the 6 pm supper followed by a shared worship.

These are times to listen for God's leading on this road with Jesus and to join brothers and sisters throughout the community.

May our understanding of God's work in this community be enlightened and expanded and lead to revival in our hearts.

Be blessed and give a blessing,

Pastor Donna

BIBLE STUDIES

- Daytime Bible Study: Wednesday @ 11 a.m. in the Gathering Room.
- Our next Loss and Grief Group: Wednesday, March 8, 9:30 -10:30.

LECTIONARY READINGS - March 2023

- March 5 Gen. 12: 1-4a; Ps. 121; Rom. 4:1-5, 13-17; John 3: 1-17;
- March 12 Ex. 17:1-7; Ps. 95; Rom. 5:1-11; John 4:5-42;
- March 19 1 Sam. 16:1-13; Ps. 23; Eph. 5:8-14; John 9: 1-41;
- March 26 Ezek. 37:1-14; Ps. 130; Rom. 8:6-11; John 11:1-45

OUTREACH

A big THANK YOU to everyone for your support of the ‘Souper Bowl’ where we collected 230 cans of soup for the Food Bank! In addition to enough soup to fill our adopted shelf, we were also able to present them with a check for **\$1300**, including over **\$1000** collected at the pancake supper!



The month of March, we will be collecting for the Southbury Fuel Bank and UCCs One Great Hour of Sharing. You may donate via One Church or via the collection plate (or mail-in to the office). Just be sure to mark any check with its intended recipient (Fuel Bank or OGHS). One Great Hour of Sharing® is one of four special mission offerings of the UCC. This Lenten offering supports the disaster, refugee, and development ministries of the UCC within Wider Church Ministries. You will see signage on the bulletin boards in the Parish Hall entry.



Easter will be here before we know it. We will be contributing gift cards towards 20 Easter Baskets for Covenant to Care again this year. Beginning in March, you may donate money towards this effort through One Church or a check clearly marked in the note area for Covenant to Care Easter.



Clean out your closets for April!

We will be having a pop-up boutique again this year, and this time we will be including men's clothing as well. The current plan is to have this open to the public as we did last year for a two week period: April 16 - April 30.



We are considering the recipient for the proceeds as well as our pricing for this year. Watch for further details in the next PP, but start cleaning those closets now!



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

FAITH FORMATION

Crossing the Street and Lent

I remember as a child in Riverside, RI, walking to my best friend Cookie's house up the street. My mom would walk me there. When we got to her house we had to cross the street. It was fun, but also a teaching moment, which was repeated many times. Stop, Look, and Listen! These words keep us safe as we go to lots of exciting places. As an adult I have repeated those same words to my son and many other children throughout the years, as they got ready to cross the street.

If we are going to keep safe while we are on our life's many journeys, crossing many streets, we need to Stop, Look, and Listen. Our lives are so busy and rushed, we sometimes forget these words. Lent is a great season to slow down and reflect. It is a time to STOP, to LOOK around and think about what we are doing and, are we doing what God wants us to do? Are we following his plan? Are we Listening to God by reading the Bible and praying? Let's slow down and reflect on this Lenten season. Let's STOP, LOOK, and LISTEN so we may experience our lives safely as we enjoy our life's journey that God has for us.

Dear God,

Help us remember to take the time to Stop, Look and Listen when we are crossing the street. Help us also to Stop, Look, and Listen especially during this time of year called LENT.

Amen.

* Parts are taken from Sunday Children's Focus

Blessings,

Krista, Jodi, JoAnn, Tracy

IF YOU LOVE JELLY BEANS THIS IS FOR YOU!!!

What one is your favorite? I love the black ones.

Jelly Bean Prayer

RED is the robin; we see her in spring.
 She feeds her babies, sheltered under her wing.
BLACK is the soil where seeds sprout and grow
 Look closely and see so much life down below.
GREEN are the leaves on the flowers and trees.
 They shelter the animals, insects, and bees.
WHITE is the color of the clouds way up high.
 What interesting shapes do you see in the sky?
PINK, YELLOW, and ORANGE make a beautiful sunrise.
 It reminds us of hope. It's a daily surprise.
 All of these colors are the colors of spring.
 They show us God's love and the new life God can bring.

From *Faithful Families for Lent, Easter, and Resurrection* by Traci Smith
 (Chalice Press: 2022. Shared with permission)

OPEN AND AFFIRMING



We were tagged by the UCC Open and Affirming FB page. LOT's of 'welcome' comments attached to the post:

https://www.facebook.com/UCC.Coalition/posts/6330540540341563?notif_id=1677272406548111¬if_t=mention&ref=notif

Lord, when the needs of your world meet with my abilities, may I hear your call. (Helen DeBevoise)

PUBLIC RELATIONS

FREE
community
event

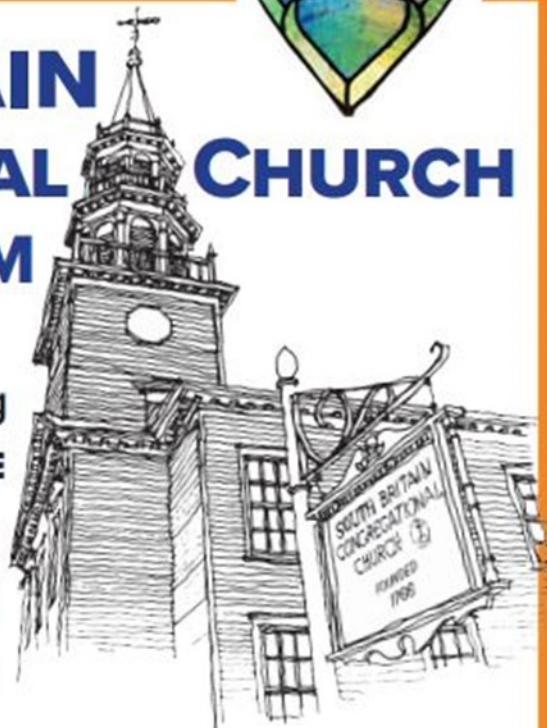
**JOIN US FOR
KARAOKE
AND  PIZZA PRO MC**

**FRIDAY, MARCH 24
6:30 – 8:30 PM**

**SOUTH BRITAIN
CONGREGATIONAL  CHURCH
GATHERING ROOM**

Use **CROSSWALKS** provided
from **PARKING LOT**. Gathering
Room is in the **PARISH HOUSE**
across from the church.

**693 South Britain Rd
(Rt 172) Southbury CT**



MORE INFORMATION: 203-264-5890



We are going to switch things up in March. There will be no ping pong on St. Patrick's Day (March 17), but we are planning on a Karaoke Night on Friday, March 24.

ADVERTISING – We are going to try advertising in the Heritage Village Bulletin, so be on the lookout.

Blessings to all, Lissa

PR Committee – Lissa Pine, Chair; Gary Tolin,

P.S. WE NEED MORE MEMBERS!

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

LOOKING FOR A WAY TO SERVE THE CHURCH?

With a pastoral search underway, this is an important time in the life of our church family. We are fortunate to have an excellent leadership team in place, but one spot on that leadership team remains vacant. When our previous Chair of Council needed to step down, Carl Dunn, who had agreed to serve as Vice Chair, moved up to fill the Chair's position. Since then, the Nominating Committee has been unable to fill the position of Vice Chair. If a new Vice Chair of Council were to step forward now, he or she would have the advantage of on-the-job learning through attending Council meetings prior to becoming Chair after Annual Meeting. No one is too old, too young, too busy or too new to the church to serve in this position. You don't have to be retired; over the years, many people have served in this position while working full-time and raising a family. There is much help available. The most important qualifications are a love of the church, an open heart and a willingness to serve. We ask that each person reading this message prayerfully consider if they might be called to serve the church in this way. Jean Dunn, on behalf of the Nominating Committee

Jdunn463@hotmail.com 203-217-5711

FLOWER COMMITTEE

Thank you to all who have signed up for flowers in March and April – all the dates on the calendar are filled in through April!



EASTER flower envelopes will be placed in the pews in mid-March, so if you'd like to contribute to flowering the sanctuary for Easter, be on the lookout.

Cathy Crowdis, Linda Long, Cathy Somers



MEMORIAL GARDEN

Call Bud Bennett, Krista Judson, Ralph Kubista, Lainie Jedlinsky, Sharon Stiles or the office for information.

PRAYER GROUP

Prayer group meets every other Thursday at 4:30 pm in the Bassett Room in the Parish House. The next meeting will be Thursday, March 9th, followed by Thursday, March 23rd. All are welcome.



CHURCH COUNCIL— MODERATOR

2-28-2023 Just a dream about counting.

Dear Church Family and Friends,

What a great day, THE Day, THE Only Day known as THE Tuesday after Presidents' Day, THE Fat Tuesday of all Tuesdays and THE Shrove Tuesday all pointing to LENT. What a blessing on THE Day when the congregation counted, and it became an unforgettable renewal of Spirit.

Can I have a Hallelujah!?

Now that I have all your attention. I want to talk about the counting of recognition in all we see, invite, and draw into our worship and hospitality spaces.



The UCC each year asks us to record attendance totals and facts about the church in what is called the Yearbook. Each year we try to be as accurate as possible. Truthfully, we have not always been accurate, but we put in the effort and each year we improve.

However, I am not here to pass judgment about accuracy in the numbers we enter. I am here to help us recognize a number we have never reported in the Yearbook.

The UCC asks; Can you tell us the number of people (non-members), in your “neighborhood” or “community”, who have come to your church this year for anything? Examples: worship, bible study, stop by for a chat with the Pastor, choir practice, ping pong, memorial service, Shrove Tuesday Supper, etc., etc., etc., and.....everything else.

So, for practice do this. How many of our “neighbors” (not members) came to enjoy our Shrove Tuesday Supper on February 21st? I heard someone claim there were 150 people in the building in total, if that is any contextual help? Let me know what you think the number is? _____.

Cont.

Here is my California Dreaming Guess 72 neighbors. Note, I was there in spirit.

What is your guess? or our best estimate _____ This can be a team effort if you wish.

Of course, this is not about the Hall of Fame for the best counting church... Right? But it is an interesting, encouraging, and positive thing to do.

This counting thing helps in many other ways. It helps confirm the following:

What does God want our purpose to be? Was this a meaningful activity?

Filled everyone's spirits?

Did it bring back the community?

Did it encourage each other and were we grateful?

Did this help others and meet their needs?

Do we do this again? What's next?

See below for more.

The bigger picture. Extra Credit. Can you help by completing the following list and columns? Context: Any future calendar year. Add activities not named and guess the number of outside visitors. I think we will be amazed at the total at the end of this exercise. Turn in your estimates to Nancy in the office.

South Britain Congregational Church - Visitor Estimates

| By | Annual Visitor Count | |
|--|----------------------|------------|
| Activity | Carl's Guess | Your Guess |
| Church Services | 52X2=104 | |
| Memorial Services | 8X30=240 | |
| Bible Study(s) | 40X2=80 | |
| Walk-ins | 10 | |
| Victorian Tea | 30+7 children | |
| Apple Festival - Wild low Guess | 350+ 15 vendors | |
| Pancake Supper | 72 | |
| Souper Bowl Sunday | 10 | |
| Those who Use the PH | | |
| CT Chorale 30X10 | 300 | |
| Dance Group 14X5 | 70 | |
| Boy Scouts 20X10 | 200 | |
| Girl Scouts 10X10 | 100 | |
| A. A. 10X10 | 100 | |
| etc. | | |
| Special Events and Concerts | 70 | |
| Lenten Activities - soup and pray | 9 | |
| Blue Christmas | 10 | |
| Prayer Group(s) | 6 | |
| Maundy Thursday | 8 | |
| Ash Wednesday | 3 | |
| Spring Cleaning Day | 4 | |
| Potluck Thursday each month 10 | 90 | |
| Ping Pong | 60 | |
| All Saints Day | 5 | |
| St. Francis Blessing animals | 5 | |
| Keep listing activities etc. etc. | etc, | |
| repeat | | |
| repeat | | |
| Total Estimated Visitors, Potential Touch points, Our Neighbors and Impact on the community | | |

We have not even counted everyone in this example

This is meaningful!

What do you think? Or is this California Dreaming?

Cont.

Rough total of potential touch points, new neighbors, and impact in the community.

Total 1213 or more +/- 100

--and we haven't even counted everyone we potentially touched. This is meaningful!

What do you think? And this was just California Dreaming.

C N Dunn
Member and Moderator

SCHOLARSHIP

Scholarship Applications will be available on SBCC's website home page and hard copies in the church office beginning Sunday, March 5, 2023. Eligible recipients are persons actively affiliated with the South Britain Congregational Church who will be attending college, technical school or are pursuing educational programs for career enhancement or career change.

Personal or family financial statements are not required. Applications are due in the church office by Sunday, April 2, 2023. Awards will be presented in church on Sunday, May 14, 2023.

Click here https://www.southbritainchurch.org/?page_id=28460 for the SBCC Scholarship Fund web page with a link to the application or check the website home page with a link to the Scholarship Fund. There are a few copies of the application in the church office as well.

The committee members this year are:

Joan Kubista, Barbara Quinn, Margie Nichols, Judy Pierpont, June Bennett, Chair

STEWARDSHIP

WHOM DO YOU TRUST?

The Stewardship Committee wants to hear from you! Please tell us: ***whom do you trust and why?*** Please take a quick moment to email us at sbcc.stewardship693@gmail.com with your answer. We look forward to hearing from YOU!

FROM OUR CHURCH FAMILY

The Way Back Is Known

Dear members and friends of the most loving and giving church I have ever known,

Our true leader is God. We are God's people, God's offspring, and as such we are God's representatives on earth. We are meant to be role models.

We can easily know what side of life we have been living on by the fruits we are experiencing, therefore, releasing out into the world.

The ways of the world tend to produce the fruits of anxiety, stress, lack of sleep, judgments, wanting our way, making others wrong, gossiping, frustration, anger etc.

Paul told us to think on good and lovely things and that the fruits of this spirit would be love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

If we choose God then we must get rid of all that is not of God.

Loving,
KathySue



Sometimes we wonder;

The Congregational Church, or Congregationalism, is a Protestant faith that's committed to the autonomy of the congregation.

True to its name, the Congregational Church is governed by the congregation. Instead of being dictated by a single individual, organization, or group of church elders, the Congregational Church avoids any sort of hierarchy, maintaining that the church only answers to God. Their recognition that Christ has ultimate authority over the church is the cornerstone of their faith.

Congregational-style church governments are found in many Baptists and non-denominational churches, but Congregational churches are unique because they are affiliated with the United Church of Christ, the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches, or the Conservative Congregational Christian Conference, all of which share a common history with the New England pilgrims. In fact, the Congregational Church has long been known as the "Church of the Pilgrims" because it was founded by the Puritans who moved to the new world in search of religious freedom in the early 1600s.

Thanks Cathy, sometimes we need a reminder

Joe

“A rather unusual but impressive event took place in our church on July 22, 1965, when members and friends were invited to attend the ordination of Father Charles Jerome as a priest in the Old Roman Catholic Church. One of the bishops attending this ceremony was so impressed by the beauty of our church that he expressed the wish to have his funeral service conducted in this church, and this last wish of the Most Reverend Cyrus Augustine Starkey, D.D., Primate, Old Roman Catholic Church, was realized in December of this past year.”

“The Reverend John Kripas of the Sacred Heart Church in Southbury was a guest speaker in our church in January 1967. This event, in which a priest of the Roman Catholic Church participated in a Protestant church worship service in our community, was the first of its kind in Southbury.”

In 1973, Josephine Blersch, church historian, wrote the following:

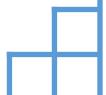
“Women are encouraged to wear slacks to church – the objective is to come to church and be warm.”

1955 Quote from Helen T. Clapp, chairman of the Flower Committee regarding flowers in church:

“The Flower Committee suggests that flowers are not only decorative but definitely a form of worship.” This quote was repeated many times over the years in the Annual Reports.

Until next time.....

June Bennett



NEWSY NUGGETS

LABONNE'S 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



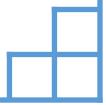
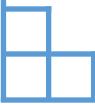
SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER

The return of the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper was a success on so many levels. We proudly served over 150 people and raised \$1000 for the Food Bank. The Pancake Supper has been a longstanding tradition at South Britain Congregational Church and was deeply missed during the pandemic.

I wish to thank all the hardworking volunteers who helped make this event a wonderful community gathering. A special shout-out to **The Laurel Diner** for donating their world-famous hash for the event. The Laurel Diner is another Southbury institution that many of us have known our entire lives. Good conversation, laughter, greeting old friends and making new ones were some of the best outcomes of the evening. I even got a great recommendation of a TV show I could stream.

I would also be remiss, if I didn't say how thankful I am for the generous monetary donations that helped make this offering free to our community.

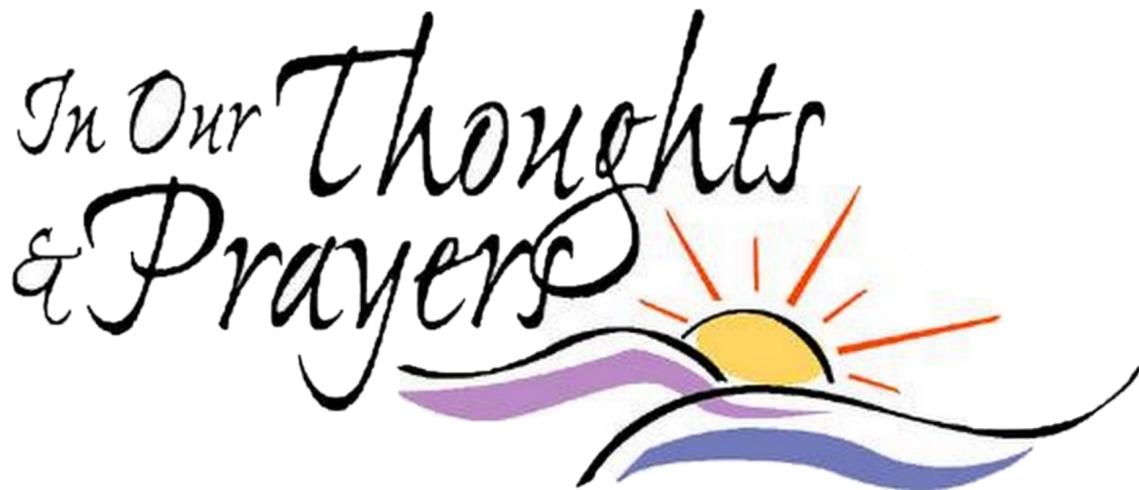
For now, the griddles have been cleaned and the spatulas are laid to rest until next year... Or maybe until some other community meal?



Gratefully submitted by Laurie Hornbecker with an additional thank you to the planning committee who worked diligently with me; Cathy Somers, Krista Judson, Francesca Sergi, and Lainie Jedlinsky.







Audrey
Joan & Carl
Cathy
Jillian
Rabbi Carmit Hassai
Family of Bambi E.
Faye D.

Taylor
Jenny
Dr. Pat S., Lydia
Gary
Nora
Kevin G.
Johanna M.
Denise

Rob K.
Maria
Susan S.
Nancy & Chuck D.
Prayers for peace in our schools.
Prayers for all suffering with chronic pain.

Eileen
Gail
Jeanne
Bradley Family

John & Carol S.
Nurse Betty

Gail
Judy M.
Tracy G.
Marie S.
Bob

Mary Beth
Steven
Leslie
Tyre

BULLETIN BOARD



| March | | |
|-------|------------------|----|
| | Timothy Schaake | 1 |
| | Rob Crowdus | 8 |
| | Michaela Hartman | 15 |
| | Curt Perry | 16 |
| | Judy Pierpont | 20 |
| | John Watson Jr. | 20 |
| | Maggie Blersch | 24 |
| | Barbara Ryner | 26 |
| | Anna Lowell | 26 |
| | Debbie Hull | 27 |
| | Tom Lavoy | 27 |
| | Rob Mitchell | 27 |
| | Brenda Beard | 28 |
| | Brian Lang | 28 |
| | Jesse Shepherd | 30 |
| | Tracy Watson | 31 |



**Join us on March 12th
At coffee/fellowship hour
As we celebrate our dear friend
Wayne Gunther
And to thank him for sharing
his love, talented gift, and time
with us for so many years**

P.S. "Anyone wishing to donate an appetizer to Wayne's retirement celebration on March 12th should reach out to Laura O'Meara, Text: 203-214-8687 or laura0103us@yahoo.com. Thank you!"



News From New Start Ministry

New Start Ministry is beginning preparations for receiving another refugee family this Spring. We have need for volunteers to help in the following areas:

Child Care: Coordinate and provide child care as needed for the family.

Education: Coordinate with school officials and teachers to assure that all children in the refugee family are properly assigned, and that they receive ESL tutoring.

Housing: Identify appropriate, safe rental housing options in cooperation with other team members; liaise with the landlord; assure the rented premises are safe and in order; mentor the family members on proper use of appliances, electronic entry systems, mail boxes etc.; explain how to submit work orders for repairs.

Social Media: Leverage social media and personal contacts to spread the good news about refugee co-sponsorship; assist with inviting volunteers to join the team.

Social Services / Benefits: Assist the family with registering with SSA, and for all CT DSS benefits to which they are entitled. Mentor the adult family members in proper use of SNAP and other benefits.

Transportation: Research public transportation options; recruit and schedule volunteer drivers to accommodate appointments made by other team members; teach the family members how to use the bus system; guide the adult family members through the DMV maze to get their learners' permits; arrange for driving lessons and guide family toward their licenses.

Think you might be interested? Have questions? Please contact Susan Suhr [susan.e.suhr@gmail.com / 203-231-2992] for more information. We also encourage you to check out our website – newstartministryct.org – and to follow us on FaceBook – New Start Ministry CT.

Submitted by Jean Dunn



BOOK CLUB: We will be meeting during Fellowship Hour in the Gathering Room this Sunday, March 5th to discuss our latest book 7 Days of Simplicity by Jen Hatmaker. Please join us whether you've read the book or not as it's a universal topic. (Watch next month's Post for our next book club selection.)

March 1-29 Wednesdays "Lent on the Road" (see flyer below)

March 4, Memorial Service for Bambi Engelman, 11:00 AM, with reception following.

March 12, Retirement Celebration for Wayne Gunther, during Fellowship Hour

April 2, 10 a.m. Palm Sunday Service

April 6, 6 p.m. Simple Supper and Tenebrae Service

April 9, 8 a.m. Sunrise Service and breakfast

10 a.m. Worship Service

May 6, 10:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. We're getting ready to welcome spring with our annual craft and vendor fair. We'll host vendors inside the Gathering Hall as well as on the church green. Please invite anyone who may be interested to apply to join our wonderful variety of goods, hand crafted items and unique offerings. The vendor registration link is available on the church website.



For more info contact sbcc.events693@gmail.com

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. |
| Wednesdays | Bible Study, 11 a.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 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). |



SOUTHBURY & WOODBURY LENT ON THE ROAD

March 1

St. James Lutheran Church
111 Peter Rd., Southbury
Rev. Abby Johnson

March 8

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
294 Main St. South, Woodbury
Rev. Tuesday Rupp

March 15

United Methodist Church
4 Church St., Woodbury
Rev. J. Michael Cobb

March 22

Southbury United Church of Christ
283 Main St N, Southbury
Rev. Shawn Garan and
Rev. Donna Cassity, of SBCC

March 29

Church of The Epiphany (Episcopal)
262 Main St. North, Southbury
Rev. Marston Price

Wednesdays

6:00 PM Simple Supper
7:00 PM Worship



During this Lenten season, let us journey together as people of the Christian faith from many traditions!

You are invited to gather for a simple supper and worship service each Wednesday evening at a different church in our community. Come fellowship with new neighbors around the table, experience new sacred spaces, and worship the same God in new or different ways. All people of any faith welcome.