

# The Meetinghouse News

The First Congregational Church of Madison

March 2023

## Minister's Reflection

The season of Lent begins with the story of the Holy Spirit leading Jesus into the wilderness where he is tested or tempted, depending on your translation, by the devil. Or Satan. Or the Slanderer. Again, much of it depends on which translation you're reading.

Much has been made of this journey into the wilderness. Over the years, it has come to symbolize the progress towards a more centered life, one grounded in the alternative values of God. Three times Jesus is offered an expression of worldly power, and three times he rejects the temptation to use his power for his own ends.

In light of this, it is possible to view the season of Lent, stretching 40 days towards Easter, as a progress we take as a church year; a time to reflect on those values and practices that set us apart a little from the claims the wider culture so often makes upon us.

In Matthew's gospel, when Jesus comes out of the wilderness, he immediately sets about building his community of disciples, preaching on the imminence of God's kingdom and the values it expresses. We know them well, because they have given shape to our life for over 300 years: love God with your whole self and love your neighbor as yourself. In a world that often seems hostile to the idea of an expansive sense of community and a radically extravagant practice of welcome, it is the church that must be willing to risk a time in the wilderness, to find renewed faith and focus on the mission that Christ calls us to embody in all that we do. May the blessings of this season—discernment and wisdom—bless these time for each of you.

Peace, Todd

## Red Cross Blood Drive—March 22nd at First Congregational Church

It's always a pleasure for First Church to host the Red Cross. As always, they find themselves very much in need of blood donors this time of the year, so we encourage you to join us in donating blood in March.

To set up an appointment, you can follow this link to their website: <https://www.redcrossblood.org/>  
Or if you'd prefer, you can call them at (800) 733-2767

Many thanks to you all.

# Thank You

FOR YOUR PLEDGES

We are so grateful for your generous support of our ministries at FCC!

Pledges for giving in 2023 exceeded \$260,000!



The Ministers and Staff at FCC thank you for your generous Christmas Gift!

We are grateful for your thoughtfulness and words of appreciation, which mean so much!



## Worship with Us!

### Sundays 10 am

#### ***Worship Indoors***

*Join us in the sanctuary for worship.  
Masks are recommended.*

#### ***Worship Virtually***

*Worship will be livestreamed on Facebook  
([www.facebook.com/fccmadison](http://www.facebook.com/fccmadison))  
and YouTube:  
[www.youtube.com/@fccmadisonct/streams](http://www.youtube.com/@fccmadisonct/streams)*

#### ***Worship on TV or our Website***

*You may watch the service on Madison Public  
Access, and on YouTube or Facebook*

<b>March 5</b>	<b>2nd Sunday in Lent</b>
<b>March 12</b>	<b>3rd Sunday in Lent</b>
<b>March 19</b>	<b>4th Sunday in Lent</b>
<b>March 26</b>	<b>5th Sunday in Lent</b>
<b>April 2</b>	<b>Palm Sunday</b>
<b>April 6</b> 7:00 pm	<b>Maundy Thursday</b>
<b>April 9</b>	<b>Easter Sunday</b>

## Help Lead Worship!

Would you like to participate in worship by reading scripture? We'd love to hear your voice sharing the Good News. Would you like to carry the Bible in and lead the Call to Worship?

Or serve as a greeter?

Contact Rev. Todd at  
[tcvetter@gmail.com](mailto:tcvetter@gmail.com)

### ~ ONGOING PROGRAMS ~

#### **All are welcome!**

**Men's Group**—Tuesdays 8 am in the Parlor  
Join us for coffee and conversation!

Contact [rickking30@gmail.com](mailto:rickking30@gmail.com)

**Bible Study**—Wednesdays 10 am in the chapel and on zoom. Join us to engage the scriptures that shape our faith!

No experience necessary.

Come every week or whenever you can.

Contact: [tcvetter@gmail.com](mailto:tcvetter@gmail.com)

**Connection: A Ministry for Women**—  
Mondays in March

March 6, 13, 20, 27 @ 7 pm in the Parlor.  
Join us for a special program on Spiritual  
Wellness

All are welcome!

Contact [svetter@fccmadison.org](mailto:svetter@fccmadison.org)  
for more info

## Tuesday Newsday

Sign up for our weekly email, the Tuesday Newsday, and stay up-to-date with everything that is happening at FCC.

To sign up, send an email to:  
[mainoffice@fccmadison.org](mailto:mainoffice@fccmadison.org)

## Easter Dedication Form

It is a tradition at FCC to decorate the Meetinghouse with Tulips or Daffodils. You may purchase one (or more) using this form. Be sure to indicate whether you wish to take the plant home with you, *after* the 10:00 a.m. Easter service, or give it to Wally to be planted on Church grounds.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please print my dedication as follows:

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Please check one of the following:

\_\_\_\_\_ Tulips



\_\_\_\_\_ Daffodils

\_\_\_\_\_ I wish to pick up my plant *after* the 10:00

a.m., April 9th worship service

\_\_\_\_\_ Plant on Church grounds

Please make your check of \$12.50 (for each plant) payable to:

The First Congregational Church marking it "Tulip or Daffodil"

You can drop this form with your check in the offering plate, bring it by the office or mail it.

***Forms and payment must be in the church office by Friday, March 22nd***

***The last day to order Tulips or Daffodils is Wednesday, March 22nd***

**(Please print clearly all information)**

### Opportunity to Serve

Help prepare and serve meals for CCA!

We are excited to partner with Christian Community Action at their New Hope Housing Program at 168 Davenport Ave. New Haven. FCC Madison will be providing and serving a well balanced, nutritious dinner for the tenant meetings on March 7th, April 28th, and May 2nd. We will also be doing a craft with the younger children while the program directors meet with the tenants. FCC children are encouraged to come help! You only need to commit to one date. Here's how you could help: make the main course, vegetable, salad, cookies or donate juice, paper plates, napkins, and cups. Or you could volunteer to come and serve the food and clean up. Also, you could supervise the craft with the children. CCA expects about 30 adults and 8-10 children. Anyone working with the children needs to have a background check done first; just call FCC (203-245-2739 x 10) and Debbie Scillia, our office manager, will help you. If you'd like to participate, contact me at [susanne.kos1@gmail.com](mailto:susanne.kos1@gmail.com)



**Meaghan McKenney** moved to Madison just about four years ago.

She is a 7<sup>th</sup> grade English teacher in East Haven and is also pursuing her second graduate degree in cross-certification to become a school librarian. She has always taught in underfunded schools and

find she connects best with God when she is reaching the hearts and minds of children who exist in these spaces. Meaghan loves reading, gardening, cooking, ballet dancing and exploring the city with her children (Finn and Emme) and friends. She didn't grow up with a strong faith, only discovering and exploring what God meant to her as a college student. As she's grown in her understanding of herself and God, she is grateful that this unfolding of God's purpose is a never-ending journey. She loves attending church with her children and seeing how they experience the love of God throughout their weeks.





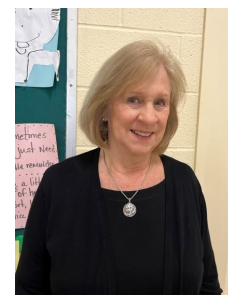
**Don and Vickie Williams** moved to Killingworth from Westfield, NJ, last May. Don is a retired strategic advisor for Educational Testing Service and previously worked in finance for other organizations including the New York Times. Vickie is continuing her journey as a painter in retirement after teaching preschool and art to kindergarteners. They both enjoy being in a beautiful area with the beach so near. They were active members in the Presbyterian Church in Westfield for over 35 years. They have two adult sons who live with their wives in Alexandria, VA, and Madison, CT.

**Marilyn Linn** has lived in Madison for 40 years. She has three children—one in Branford, one in Old Saybrook and one in Philadelphia—5 grandchildren and 3 great grandchildren. She feels blessed to have most of them within driving distance. Marilyn likes to read, walk, visit with friends, bake goodies and entertain at home.



**Janice Novak** moved to Guilford, with her husband, 5 years ago. She has two adult daughters, 4 grandchildren and 3 cats. Before retiring, she was a middle school para-professional working with students needing assistance to remain in mainstream education. She has traveled extensively around the world and has been to every continent. Going on African safaris are her first choice of travel destinations. At home, she enjoys researching her genealogy for Daughters of the American Revolution membership, cooking ethnic foods, baking, playing with her grandchildren and walking in nature with her husband.

**Sally Frissell** found Madison after spending 2.5 years in a tiny apartment in New York City during the pandemic. She has a nice “get away” apartment close to shops and cafes and ½ mile walk to the beach—just what she needed! Sally worked for 50 years as a flight attendant and is now retired after spending most of her life traveling. The airlines gave her the opportunity to do volunteer work in several countries through “Young Wings” and on her own spending most of her time in Cambodia working with children. In her free time she enjoys walking and exercise classes, cooking, sewing, knitting and socializing.



**Keith Costa and Frances Taylor** live in the Captain Eber Judd house (circa 1740) on Boston Post Road in downtown Madison. Keith is a Partner in the New York-based law firm of Barclay Damon LLP with his office in both New Haven and Manhattan. He proudly served many years with the US Dept. of Justice in both New York and CT before rejoining the private sector in 2001. Frances is a piano teacher at both the Neighborhood Music School and The Country School, as well as having a private piano studio in Madison. She previously taught piano as a faculty member of Rider University’s Westminster Choir College in Princeton, NJ and at both the Mannes College of Music and 92<sup>nd</sup> Street Y in New York City. Keith and Frances have been happily married since July 1990. They have three children (Ryan, 29; Emily, 26; Caitlin, 24). Keith is a lifelong sailor and both an avid golfer and tennis player. Frances also loves tennis, yoga and daily walking.

**Mike Johnson** moved here a year ago to be near his son & family, for support during his cancer battle and help with care of his wife, Annalee, who has advanced dementia. Annalee is living at Artis Senior Living in Branford. Mike is a retired Manufacturing Engineer and has worked in a variety of locations supporting manufacturing building metal products, electronics, Airplanes and SUVs. He spends his free time mainly just being retired and visiting his medical team. He participates in Bible study at Solstice, where he lives. He also sings in 2 groups in the area—the Branford Chorale and the FCC choir. Mike and Annalee have 2 sons. Ryan lives in Madison with his wife Jill and their college son, Quinn. Quinn is a sophomore at URI. His other son, Matt, is currently in Virginia. He’s a LtCol in the Army and works at the Pentagon. He and his wife, Ryan Leigh, have 3 kids, Abby, Chase and Logan.







Here's where to get the latest scoop on what's happening musically in the church!  
For even more information, call Nathan at: (203) 245-2739, ext. 14.



## EASTER HANDBELL ROTATION

The first Handbell rotation of the year is coming up! Each four-week rotation is scheduled with four Thursday night rehearsals (6:00-6:45 pm in the church balcony) before we play the following Sunday. Play as many (or as few) rotations as you like!

**As long as you are over 12 years old, you know your right from your left, and you can count to four, you are ready to ring!** I only ask that you are able to make at least three out of the four rehearsals.

Even if you have never picked up a handbell or can't read a note of music, you are still strongly encouraged to try it out. The music is arranged to fit your skill level, and we always have a great time.



Cleaning the handbells back in 2018!

This first rotation of 2023 will be preparing to play for Easter Sunday, so here is the schedule:

- **Thursday, March 16th, 6:00-6:45 pm:** rehearsal
- **Thursday, March 23rd, 6:00-6:45 pm:** rehearsal
- **Thursday, March 30th, 6:00-6:45 pm:** rehearsal
- **Thursday, April 6th, 8:00-8:45 pm:** rehearsal—*Note: this takes place immediately after the 7:00 pm Maundy Thursday service, so the start time may be a little before or after 8:00 pm.*
- **Sunday, April 9th, 10:00 am:** play for Easter Sunday

Just let me know ([nbayreuther@fccmadison.org](mailto:nbayreuther@fccmadison.org)) if you'd like to play so I can prepare music for you. Thanks, and I hope to see you!

## SING FOR MAUNDY THURSDAY AND EASTER

We have had a wonderful surge of new singers in the Adult Choir since the fall, and I would love to keep it going! One of my favorite services is the Maundy Thursday service (April 6th at 7:00 pm), and the Adult Choir will be singing some absolutely gorgeous Lenten anthems accompanied by a string quartet. Then, on Easter Sunday, we will be accompanied by brass and percussion as we lift our voices to give praise to our risen Lord!



Because the music we will be singing is fairly intricate, I ask that anyone interested in singing with the Adult Choir for these two services **start coming to Thursday night (7:00-8:30 pm) rehearsals beginning no later than Thursday, March 16th.** Contact me ahead of time, and I will have a choir folder ready and waiting for you when you arrive to rehearsal.

I hope you'll take advantage of these musical offerings. I'm really looking forward to all the music that will be presented during Lent, and I would love for you to take part.



**MUSIC  
AT THE  
MEETINGHOUSE**  
Presents:



# **FIVE FRIDAYS LENTEN CONCERT SERIES**

## **12:15-12:45 pm**

Free, half-hour lunchtime organ  
recitals performed by local organists

**March 10: STEPHEN GAMBOA-DIAZ**

**March 17: WILLIAM HIVELY**

**March 24: KATHLEEN COOPER**

**March 31: GLEN SEGGER**

**April 7: NATHAN BAYREUTHER  
with vocalist PHRED MILESKI**

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF MADISON**

26 Meetinghouse Lane • Madison, CT 06443  
203-245-2739 • [nbayreuther@fccmadison.org](mailto:nbayreuther@fccmadison.org)





Mission Trip 2023

Change the World, Transform Your Life

All in one week in central Appalachia.

June 24 to July 1 2023

Contact Todd Vetter at [tcvetter@gmail.com](mailto:tcvetter@gmail.com) with any questions.

Or ASP's website at [www.asphome.org](http://www.asphome.org)



Our Youth will once again be selling Fair Trade coffee to raise money for this year's service trip to Appalachia. Bags are \$15 each  
Ground and whole bean are available.

Look for them at coffee hour!

## Connection— Women's Ministry



### Special Lenten Program on Spiritual Wellness

What better time than Lent to explore spiritual wellness? In this Lenten study, facilitator Rev. Stephanie Haskins will explore four practices of spiritual wellness: slowing down, being in the body, practicing generous silence, and cultivating spiritual friendships. Come be renewed for Lent and your life!

4 Mondays in March: March 6, 13, 20, and 27  
7:00-8:30 p.m. in the Parlor.

*Rev. Stephanie Haskins is ordained in the United Church of Christ and serves as the Director of Religious & Spiritual Programs and College Chaplain of Connecticut College in New London, CT. A native Iowan, she spent 13+ years pastoring congregations in Iowa, Massachusetts and Connecticut. She currently lives in Waterford, CT and has a passion for contemplative*



Congratulations to **Anna Vlieks** for being a finalist in the Climate Hope Card Contest held by the UCC! Over 880 works were submitted by kids ages pre-k - 17 from 339 churches in 44 states

and WDC. We are so proud of Anna, her beautiful artistic abilities, her sweet heart and her care for our Earth. The winning artwork will be placed on advocacy postcards which will be delivered to elected officials calling for climate action. See the other finalists and the winning artwork by visiting: [youtube.com/watch?v=HH7aGX33N7Y](https://youtube.com/watch?v=HH7aGX33N7Y). Find out also how the UCC is continuing the work of Rev. Benjamin Chavis Jr, a minister in the UCC who was a leading figure in the birth of the environmental justice movement in the 1980-90s. Rev. Chavis worked with Martin Luther King Jr. and coined the phrase "environmental racism".

## Soup & Bingo

March 4th at 5:00 p.m.



**Soup & Bingo**

**Saturday, March 4th at**

**5:00 p.m.**



All adults, children, and friends are invited to **Soup & Bingo** on Saturday, March 4th at 5:00 p.m. in Hubley Hall.

Fellowship will provide a variety of homemade soups, mac n cheese and chili. Those attending are asked to bring a dessert or soup to share.

Bingo cards are \$3 each or 4/\$10. Remember to bring coins, buttons, M & Ms, or something to mark your Bingo cards!

Sign up on the Fellowship bulletin board in Hubley Hall by February 26th or email [adamhubley@aol.com](mailto:adamhubley@aol.com).



# The First Congregational Church of Madison

26 Meetinghouse Lane, Madison, CT 06443

Overlooking the Green

*An Open & Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ*

Non-profit  
U.S. Postage  
Paid  
Guilford, CT  
Permit #271

Change  
Service  
Requested

## The Meetinghouse News March 2023

This newsletter is available on our website and via email. If you would prefer an electronic version to a paper copy, please let the office know.

Mainoffice  
@fccmadison.org

### Sunday Worship

10:00 a.m.

Join our livestream worship on Facebook.com/fccmadison

Or watch it later in the day from our website:  
fccmadison.org

Our Worship Service is broadcast on Madison Access TV Channel 18, Sunday at 12:00pm and 10:00pm, check their listings.



**The Rev. Todd C. Vetter**  
*Senior Minister*

**The Rev. Sarah E. Vetter**  
*Minister of Community Life*

**Phone:** 203-245-2739  
**Fax:** 203-245-3341  
**E-mail:** mainoffice@fccmadison.org  
**Website:** www.fccmadison.org  
**Facebook:** fccmadison  
**Church Office Hours:**  
9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Monday - Friday



**GO.BE.LOVE.**

