

THE PARISH POST

Newsletter of The First United Church of Christ
(Congregational), Milford, Connecticut



March 2021

Phone: 203.877.4277
milfordfirstucc@yahoo.com
firstchurchofmilford.org

Church Staff:

Senior Pastor

Rev. Adam E. Eckhart x302

Associate Pastor

Rev. M. Ashley Grant x303

Minister of Faith Formation

Kelsey DeCarlo x309

Minister of Music

Daniel A. Brownell x308

Sexton

Mark Byers x306

Office Administrator

Nicole Moore x300

Church Officers & Chairpersons

Moderator: Ann Sabo

Vice Moderator: Will Osanitsch

Clerk: Allison Britting x305

Assistant Clerk: Debra Rich

Treasurer: Bob Rich x301

Assistant Treasurers:

Pam Trotto, Paul Goglia &
Jim Rich

Financial Secretary:

Judy Haley x301

Asst. Financial Secretary:

Members-at-Large

Nina Kienzle & Carol LaBrake

Christian Outreach:

Church Historian:

Ardienne Damicis

Diaconate:

Marlene Sanchez & Karen Testone

Faith Formation:

John Haas

Music: James Sykes & Alison Gottsegen

Personnel: Marilyn Cormack

Stewardship:

Steve Perrett & Michele Olsson

Trustees:

April Preiss

Adam's Message: Basking in the Sun

The week before Presidents Day, southern Connecticut had multiple snow events. Milford Public Schools only had one day of in-person school that week, on Thursday, and because of some snow that had fallen the evening before, school started late and ended at its pandemic-normal time: a three-hour school day!

When I walked to my daughter's bus stop that afternoon, it was the first time I felt sunlight on my face in days. The sunlight brought a couple things to mind.

I was reminded when, at a field practice or football game, the sun would peek out from behind the clouds, my marching band would cleverly cheer: "Sun god, sun god: Ra, Ra, Ra!"

I was also reminded of how little some of us have basked in the sun this pandemic winter. Between the chilly, cloudy weather and the concern many have about getting close to other people, there just hasn't been much reason or opportunity to go out and catch some rays. Yet we need exposure to the sun to transform cholesterol into vitamin D, a vital process for the human body! Basking in the sun also reminds us that we depend on the sun for the ability to live.

Worship is like basking in the sun. Worship is our faithful way of reminding us that we depend on God for our very being. In worship, our exposure to the sacred music, prayers, scriptures and sermons transforms us and activate our faith. Sharing that experience with others reminds us that we are not alone—even if we are not physically together, we are spiritually bound by our reliance in God.

At worship, we look to the example of Jesus, in effect, cheering: "God's Son, God's Son: Rah, rah, rah!" Especially now that we have entered Lent, our worship helps us look to the life of Jesus, to the presence of the Holy Spirit, and the love of God, and to bask in God's life-giving being.

So, as we approach Spring I invite you to get a little sunlight in your life and to catch some spiritual rays from God's shining love as well!

God's Peace, **Adam**

Notice: Update Your Phone Number

Please remember to UPDATE your PHONE NUMBER if you are no longer using a landline or are predominantly using your cell phone as primary. Call the Church Office @ 203-877-4277. Inquiring minds want to know!

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Spiritual Life

We are creating many opportunities to attend to the Spiritual Lives of each one.

Some include:

Lenten Reflection — Monday ([website](#))
 Hymn Meditation — Tuesdays ([Facebook](#))
 Lenten Meditations — Thursday ([Facebook](#))
 Spiritual Practice Sheet — [Ask Kelsey](#)

Sunday

9:00 AM Worship Sanctuary
 ([Reservations required](#))
 9:30 AM Hymn Sing ([Facebook](#))
 9:30 AM Sunday School ([Zoom](#))
 10:00 AM Worship ([YouTube](#))
 10:45 AM Virtual Coffee Hour ([Zoom](#))
 7:00 PM Tuesday Meditation ([Zoom](#))

Prayer List & Intercessions

Share a Prayer Request:

Revashley@firstchurchofmilford.org Revadam@firstchurchofmilford.org
 or milfordfirstucc@yahoo.com

Now is an important time to lean into our prayer life. Please continue to share updates on individuals whom you have added to the prayer list in recent weeks. And if you have new additions for prayer, please share those with us via email. If you have a request that involves a call, please include your information in the email and a best time to contact you.

Pastoral Office Hours

Schedule reflection time with Revs. Ashley or Adam

Each pastor will be available to arrange meetings indoors or on our lovely First Church grounds, by the Memorial Garden. We will practice safe distancing. (Weather permitting for the outdoor meetings!)

Simply fill out the form so that they can get in touch with you to schedule a time that is convenient for you. Available times include Monday - Thursday mornings or upon special arrangement. How to schedule:

<https://forms.gle/dgTVhV2h16fS1SD76>



**First United Church of Christ, Congregational
Officers, Committees, and Ministries serving terms 2021/22, 2022/23, 2023/24**

OFFICERS (yearly term):

Moderator	Ann Sabo
Vice Moderator	Will Osanitsch
Clerk	Allison Britting
Treasurer	Bob Rich

ASSISTANTS to OFFICERS (yearly term):

Assistant Clerk	Debra Rich
Assistant Treasurer	Paul Goglia
Assistant Treasurer	Jim Rich
Assistant Treasurer	Pam Trotto
Assistant Treasurer	Judy Haley
Financial Secretary	
Assistant Financial Secretary	

STANDING COMMITTEES (yearly term):

Historian	Ardienne Damicis
Members at Large	Nina Kienzle
	Carol LaBrake
Memorials (at least 3 members)	
	Mark Byers
	Tim Canavan
	Lloyd Jacobs
	Barbara Matthies

STANDING COMMITTEE (three-year term)

Personnel (at least 4 members; no more than 6 members)

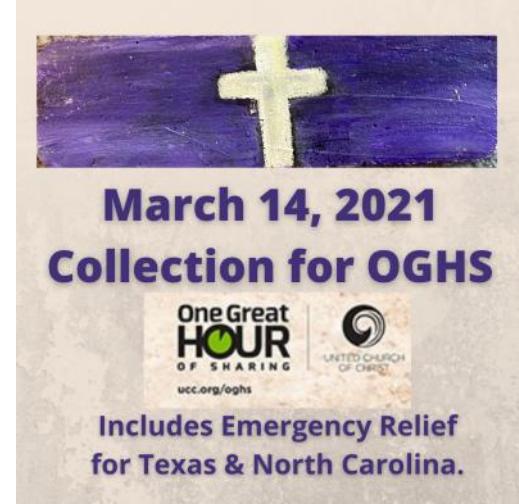
TERM ENDING --	January 2024	January 2023	January 2022
	*Marilyn Cormack (2)		Robin Lewis (1)
	Rev. Suzanne Wagner (1)		Dave Weaver (1)

MINISTRY MEMBERS (three-year terms)

TERM ENDING --	January 2024	January 2023	January 2022
<u>Christian Outreach (at least 10 members)</u>			
	Angela Arpino (1)	Kristen Ayer (1)	Letty Corrado (1)
	Peggy Furanna (1)	Marisol Cummings (2)	Carolyn Miller (1)
	Sandy Jaynes (1)		
	Sharon Poole (2)		
	Esther Wilson (1)		
	Marlys Youngberg (1)		

Diaconate (at least 12 members)

Shelly Bartha (2)	Karen Davoli (1)	Lara Edmondson (2)
Oxines Rene (1)	Erik Wattnem (1)	*Marlene Sanchez (2)
Jim Tweedie (2)		*Karen Testone (2)
Patty Weller (2)		



MINISTRY MEMBERS (page 2):**TERM ENDING -- January 2024**Faith Formation (at least 10 members)
 Joanna DeSimone (2)
 Susan Diamantis (1)
 Sara Riedel (1)
January 2023
 Erica Eliashevsky (1)
 *John Haas (1)
 Dina Pasacreta (1)
January 2022
 Kyrah Keating (2)
 Ken Kienzle (1)
 Melissa Schwartz (1)
Music (at least 6 members)
 *Alison Gottsegen (2)
 Lisa Roy (1)

 Amy Brownell (2)
 Bill Doolittle (1)
 Jimmy Jeffery (1)
 Shawn Jeffery (1)
 Chuck Roy (1)
 Bridget Sanchez (2)

*James Sykes (2)

Stewardship (at least 7 members)

Jasmine Gilbert (1)

 *Michele Olsson (1)
 *Steve Perrett (2)

Ed Burns (1)

Trustees (at least 10 members, plus the Treasurer)
 Joe Serapiglia (1)
 Mike Tylutki (1)

 DJ Dineson (1)
 Tina Keating (1)
 *April Preiss (2)
 Rob Thomas (1)
 John Torento (2)
 Peter Whitsett (2)
APPOINTED POSITIONS

Funeral Coordinator(s) Robin Lewis

Hospitality Coordinator(s) Ann Sabo

Ushering Coordinator(s) Deacons

Wedding Coordinator(s) Carole Britting

Parliamentarian Joe Jeffery

Publicity Lorrie Quirk; Sue Bernor

*Denotes Chairperson(s)

Number in () next to Committee Member NAMES denotes term number.



Tuesday, March 2
Consider registering for
“State of Creation”
A Webinar offered
through UCC.org.



February 2, 2021

THE FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
 34 W MAIN ST
 MILFORD CT 06460-3310

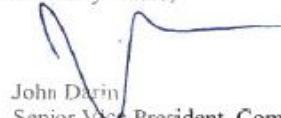
Re: SBA PPP LOAN #66139

The Milford Bank is pleased to inform you that the SBA has reviewed your PPP Loan Forgiveness Application and has forgiven your PPP loan debt in the amount of \$75,015.00

We strongly advise you to maintain this letter, your initial PPP Loan Application, the Loan Forgiveness Application and all supporting documentation for a period of 6 years as required by the SBA. The SBA or other Federal Agencies may request that documentation from you in the future.

Thank you again for your continued business relationship with The Milford Bank.

Sincerely Yours,



John Darin
 Senior Vice President, Commercial Lending

33 Broad Street * Milford, CT 06460
 203-783-5700

From the Treasurer & Financial Secretary

	Budgeted	Pledged*	Collected
Pledges	\$ 335,000	\$ 262,836	\$ 34,153
Unpledged	\$ 30,000	-	\$ 4,906
Plate	\$ 9,000	-	\$ 25

* Based upon Pledges received

Last updated: 02/15/2021

Dear First Church Congregation,

Last year, as the pandemic began, we invited people to give to the Matthew 25 fund: the discretionary fund used by pastors to help people in need, and which is seeking in this time to especially help people impacted by the pandemic. Both at Eastertime and in subsequent months, the Matthew 25 fund has received over \$12,000 in donations! Thank you so much for your generous sharing!

Matthew 25 funds have primarily been spent over the past year to help local people in crisis, many of them impacted by the pandemic. It has helped people stay in their apartments by helping with rent and enabled people to keep the heat on. This has included helping people who have been laid off due to COVID or who came down with COVID and had to quarantine, not able to collect a paycheck during that time.

We have given grocery gift cards to help food closet clients pay for milk and produce. Matthew 25 has helped a few families outside of the White Gift ministry pay for Christmas gifts for their children and sent money to IRIS (Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services) to help pay for holiday gifts for area refugee kids.

In addition, we have also passed along some finances to other local organizations, United Way's COVID relief fund and Keeping Milford Warm among them. In the fall of 2020, we passed along a donation to the Cornerstone Project to help the Nambale Magnet School in Kenya pay for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as it returns to in-person school.

Thank you again for those who have supported the Matthew 25 fund! For those who are interested in supporting others in need, you can give on the church's giving page (firstchurchofmilford.org).

God's Peace, Adam

The Last Days of Jesus: A Four-Session Bible Study on Mark 14-15

Thursdays of March (4, 11, 18 & 25)—6-7 PM—Led by Rev. Adam

Go to firstchurchofmilford.org for the Zoom link

The last days of Jesus' earthly life take up a large amount of the Gospel stories, but we tend to race through those stories during Holy Week. Take this opportunity to read and reflect on these crucial stories of Jesus as told by Mark, the first Gospel writer. No prior biblical experience necessary and if you don't have a Bible we will post the verses on the Zoom screen! No RSVP necessary but you are welcome to contact milfordfirstucc@yahoo.com to let us know that you are attending.



Worship Participants Needed For Winter/Spring 2021 In-Person & Online

We are looking for worship participants and helpers:

9 AM Indoor Worship (Usher & Liturgist)!

10 AM Online Worship

(Liturgists can record and submit by Wednesday prior to the dated service.)
Check [here](#) to review available slots and to sign up.

The Reach

Outreach Ministries with First Church

Looking Towards the Future

By Esther Wilson

When you think about being excited because you have plans for the night, you probably flash back to times when you'd be meeting a friend for dinner, having a date at the movie theater, or shopping at the mall with your family. But in the sameness of pandemic days, for me that excitement was leaving the house on a Thursday night in order to sit in church (six feet apart and wearing masks) with a group of other folks and talk about Christian Outreach.

In times when for extended periods I often don't see another face than my immediate family members, just being in a group of new people and talking about something different was enough excitement to draw me out of the house. As we discussed the history and purpose of Outreach, it was clear that the pandemic affects this as well as everything else. Whether the availability of volunteer hours, the way we collect for food or clothing drives, or the types of ministries available to support, our changed reality continues to challenge the work of meeting the needs we see both inside and beyond our congregation.

In the past year, Outreach has striven to rise to the occasion by providing food, stimulating greater financial support to our benevolences, carrying out social responsibility, being involved in our community, providing medical equipment through Emma Davis, hosting the White Gift Ministry, and sending thank you notes to our givers.

As we look towards the future year, please keep us in prayer and stay tuned for ways that you can be involved in the many charitable opportunities provided by our church's Outreach Ministry.



Farmer's to Families: Churches & Community Working Together to Feed Neighbors

By Peggy Furanna

I attended the food drive today (February 12) hosted at Kingdom Life Christian Cathedral. I saw the notice for volunteers on our Church Facebook page and signed up. Even with the cold weather the volunteers were blessed with so many people coming through and appreciating the food.

When the people would drive up, the only questions they were asked was how many boxes did they want. Each box contained 35 pounds of food including: milk, proteins, vegetables, fruit and bread or a dessert. Guests were encouraged to take extra boxes to neighbors, friends or family in need.

My shift ran from 3 PM-4:30 PM, and I directed traffic as the people were leaving the parking lot. What a great mission! Thanks for posting this opportunity, and I hope others help when they are able.

To hear more about what it is like to volunteer, speak with Rev. Ashley, David G-E, Lara Edmondson, Carolyn Miller or Ann Sabo.

Upcoming Distribution Dates:

March 4, 2021 (first shift 3:00 PM)

March 18, 2021 (first shift 3:00 PM)

Sign Up online.

One Great Hour of Sharing March 14, 2021 Offering

By Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson



One Great Hour of Sharing® is one of four special mission offerings of the United Church of Christ. This Lenten Offering supports the disaster, refugee, and development ministries of the United Church of Christ within Wider Church Ministries.

When you share your gifts to OGHS, you Let Love Flow. Your generosity ensures that, even in the midst of uncertainty, the transforming power of love will continue to change the lives of those who are most vulnerable among us.

The COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare structural inequities that contribute to increased poverty and injustice. On full display is the plight of the working poor who have lost jobs, are on the brink of homelessness, and are waiting for hours in long lines at food pantries.

Deadly wildfires, hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, and wars have left people homeless, families grieving loss of loved ones and entire communities awaiting assistance for long term disaster recovery.

Refugees and asylum seekers are left in limbo, languishing at borders waiting for welcome. Many have been displaced by economic conditions, war and climate change. Among the millions of refugees are families looking for safe places that they can call home.

In the midst of these despairing moments, the United Church of Christ is able to offer hope as we stand in solidarity and mutuality with communities suffering and in need. Through Wider Church Ministries, the United Church of Christ fulfills its commitment to respond to a variety of global and local concerns by providing advocacy, sustainable development resources, long term disaster recovery support, and assistance for refugee and asylum seekers, working in collaboration with our partners locally and globally.

Sandra, a Congolese refugee, was welcomed and resettled in 2018. She is one of more than a dozen refugee women using skills she learned in RefugeeOne's Sewing Studio to make face masks as a way of giving back to the place she now calls home.

RefugeeOne is one of the partners engaged in refugee and sustainable development programs supported by your generous donations to One Great Hour of Sharing.

With your gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing, we are able to be present for the long term in disaster recovery, as we partner with churches and organizations around the world to walk with families as they rebuild their homes and lives.

Thank you for your gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing, as together we build a just world for all.

With Gratitude and Hope,
Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson
AGM, Wider Church Ministries
and Co-Executive Global Ministries

March 14, 2021—OGHS Collection

We will collect the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering. Our worship will incorporate the resources and impact of this offering to the wider church community. Online giving is available at: <http://bit.ly/FirstChurchGive> or checks may be mailed to the church with "OGHS" in the memo line.

First Church Food Pantry

The Food Closet is very grateful for the continued support of the members and friends of First Church. We continue to see unprecedeted need in our community, and we feel blessed to be able to make a difference for some families. We always need: laundry and dish detergent (smaller sizes), coffee and tea bags, paper towels and toilet paper, and cleaning supplies (wipes, sprays). Right now we do **not** need any canned vegetables.

Items may be brought to the food closet any Tuesday from 10am-2pm, or to an In-Person 9:00 Worship on Sunday morning. Or you may contact Ann Sabo (203-623-0993) to arrange a convenient drop-off.

Easter Food Baskets - Are you or someone you know in need of a food basket for an Easter meal? Let us know by March 12th. To request, call the church office at 203-877-4277.

Emma Davis Medical Ministry

Our [Emma Davis Medical Ministry](#) continues to operate during COVID-19, however, they **will not be accepting any donated equipment or returns at this time**. Emma Davis Medical Ministry asks that all requests are made through the church office at 203-877-4277. Please do not contact ministry members directly. Thank you very much.

VOLUNTEER: GET INVOLVED

By Rev. Ashley Grant

There are many ways to reach out to others, whatever your circumstances. Sometimes it is a challenge to know how to help, where to help and what is required. As a part of our Outreach efforts, we want to curate some opportunities for you.

You'll find a page on our website called: ["VOLUNTEER"](#) under the Ministries Heading.

Visit this work in progress page. Follow the link to consider if the opportunity is right for you. Even if it isn't a good fit, consider praying for the ministry or program and those served by it.

Let us know of volunteer opportunities. Send Rev. Ashley information and a link.

**Changing Diapers. Changing Lives.
One bottom at a time.**



FREE DIAPERS FOR MILFORD FAMILIES IN NEED!



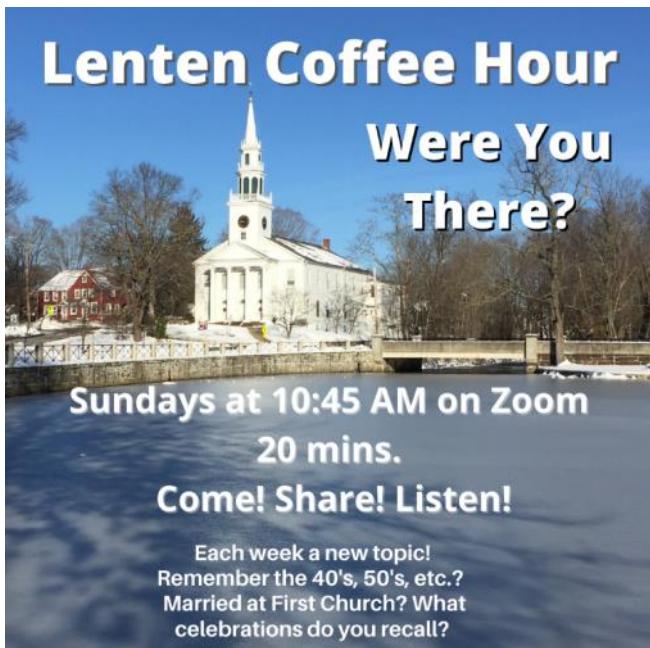
Hello from Stewardship!!

In the midst of winter storms, we are beginning to see signs of spring. The Stewardship Ministry is working together during this new year, and in the time of lent, to reflect on what our year will look like and how to engage the entire congregation. We are currently doing a book study on Henry Nouwen's, [A Spirituality of Fundraising](#). Nouwen speaks to fundraising being a "form of ministry." He says that real Stewardship presents the "vision that is amazing and exciting. We are inviting you to invest yourself through the resources that God has given you – your energy, your prayers, and your money – in this work to which has called us." We invite you to "hoodle" on these words during this time of reflection – sit in the garden and let us know what you find exciting, what you are looking for, what you are thinking about. We are all drawn together by God, what does this relationship look like for us?

Stay warm, stay blessed, and know that you are loved!

~Michele

THE SEASON OF LENT



[Zoom](#) with us for Coffee Hour.

Feb. 21 – We heard from members who were here, at First Church, when we had a basketball court. They recalled memories from the 30's, 40's and 50's!

Feb. 28 – Were you there, at First Church, when the Plymouth Building and Woodruff Chapel were built? Do you remember Sunday School out there or musicals that were performed? Do you remember when the church joined the United Church of Christ?

Mar. 7 – Were you married at First Church? Come and share your stories, and we would love to see a picture!

Mar. 14 – Were you there, at First Church in the 1960s or 1970's? How was Milford different around the church?

Mar. 21 – Were you there, at First Church in the 90s or 00s? What was youth group like? Did you do any of the travel ministry?

Mar. 28 – What celebrations were you at First Church to celebrate? Confirmations? Eagle Scout Ceremonies? Paying off a mortgage? Mission Trip?



Lenten Monday Reflections –
 Visit the [Website](#) for a weekly reflection.



Lenten Meditation Series – Thursdays during Lent on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#). Join us for a 7 minute meditation in music and word.





**Lenten
Labyrinth**
with guided
meditation booklet
& soundtrack
Begins
March 13
Plymouth Lawn

An outdoor labyrinth with guided meditations and soundtrack will be available in March. More information to come!

Thank you to all of our contributors. Senior Pilgrim Fellowship and the Kaminskis painted the bricks that will line the labyrinth.




I come to the garden
Outdoor Prayer Vigil
March 13, 2021 -7 PM

**Mark the Year of Closure,
Remember the losses, Light a candle,
Listen to the music of Lent,
Walk the Labyrinth.
Masks Required**

Join us in the Memorial Garden for this prayer vigil to mark the year anniversary of closures around us due to COVID-19.

Come and pray. Light a Candle.
Remember those whom we have lost.
Remember ways of life changed. Listen to the music of Lent.

Some spaced seating will be available, but feel welcome to bring a camp chair. Masks required.

If you would like to help with hospitality, considering [signing up to usher](#).

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

Before March 28: Palm-A-Palooza Help us deliver palms to 400+ church families!

While we cannot all safely gather for some of our favorite faith traditions, we CAN reach out and bring a tradition to our congregation.

We're looking for MANY volunteers to deliver palm bunches to 400+ church families! Based upon the amount of time you have to give, we'll match you up with a palm delivery route in your general neighborhood.

For dates and details, see the signup form: <https://forms.gle/3VHovFWGjfasKYUF8>

Questions? Call/text Nina at 781-248-8801 or email kienzlefam@gmail.com

March 28: Palm Sunday worship
9 AM in-person; 10 AM online

April 1, 2021 Maundy Thursday – 7 PM
Virtual Worship with Gospel Lessons & Recalling The Last Supper

April 2, 2021 Good Friday – 10 AM
Outdoor Faith Experience for all ages
Do Good Friday

Easter – 7 AM Sunrise Service on Plymouth Lawn; 9 AM In Person Worship (RSVP); 10 AM Online Worship.

Planning for Easter Sunday
We want to hear from those who would like to attend in person worship on Easter morning. Based on the RSVP for the in-person 9 AM Service, we will gauge interest. If the sign-up fills to capacity, we will gladly add an in-person worship.

Easter Sunday
April 4, 2021
Worship RSVP
7 AM (Plymouth Lawn)
9 AM (Main Sanctuary)



Join us in a walk to alleviate suffering.

Sign Up begins March 7, 2021

Suggested donation of: \$10/individual or \$25/family. (Additional donations/sponsorships welcome!)

Donations benefiting: Mental Health Services & Disaster Relief to Texas & Equal Justice Initiative.

April 2—Start at Main Church Sanctuary Outside Steps at 10 AM. Pick up Cross—to carry, like Jesus who bore the suffering of the world.

Options to walk/run to designated spot –1.5 miles away—for a 3 mile journey, or any lesser amount that meets your needs.

Final destination: Woodruff Chapel.

Refreshment & Blessing to give thanks for the Good Done on that Friday.
Leave a Message of Hope on a Sign.

Duration of Event: 10 AM – Noon

Go at your own pace. Walk solo or with your pod.

Youth Ministry

You are not alone...

By Rev. Ashley

The mini devotion that we shared a couple weeks ago was based on this quote from Shannon Alder: "One of the most important things you can do on this earth is to let people know they are not alone." How has someone reminded you that you are not alone? How have you reminded another?

Part of growing up is learning to recognize loneliness in oneself and in others. God's gift to us is the promise to be with us and draw us into the beloved community who looks out for each other. We are each other's reminder.

In Senior Pilgrim Fellowship and Confirmation, we took some time to get to know each other through asking questions. The fun starts when someone shares about their Camaro or that the super-power they would like to have is teleportation.

Let people know that they are not alone.



Thank you to everyone who helped with and donated to the Can & Bottle Drive. We raised \$965.00!!

Becoming My Best Self

We have a new series for our High Schoolers: Becoming My Best Self. Starting Feb. 28, we kick off our series with Cooking for My Family. Participants will receive a box of ingredients. After a cooking lesson with Michele Olsson via

Zoom from the First Church Kitchen, youth will prepare a meal for their family. If your youth would still like to participate, contact Rev.



Ashley at srpfmilford@gmail.com.

Upcoming topics for this series include: Money (Budgeting/Earning & Saving); Independent Living Skills; Getting Somewhere (Car Care & Transportation); Leadership; and "Do Unto Others" (service).

Schedule for SrPF

Feb. 27--Deliveries for Meals

Feb. 28—5 PM Cooking Lesson on Zoom;
7 PM Share pictures of meals

Mar. 7 – Laying out the Labyrinth

Mar. 14 – Checking in with our Seniors & Eggstravaganza

Mar. 21 – Becoming My Best Self Session

Mar. 28 – EGG HUNT (Driving)
(Pre-registration required)

Apr. 2 - Do Good Friday -
Walk to Alleviate Suffering

Apr. 4 – Easter Sunrise Service

Apr. 11 - Discovery Museum Adventure Park
(Pre-registration required)

April 18 – Becoming My Best Self Session on
Getting Somewhere (Car Care &
Transportation) with Rob Arpino – Parking Lot

May - (TBD) Service Work Trips to Silver Lake
- one for Youth and one for young adults

Faith Formation

If you have any questions regarding Faith Formation opportunities or ideas to suggest, please reach out to Kelsey DeCarlo, our Minister of Faith Formation, or John Haas, our Faith Formation Ministry Chair. We are still in need of volunteers both for our Sunday School and Youth Group programs! If you are ready to answer this call or even just to learn more, please let Kelsey know at faithformationminister@firstchurchofmilford.org ...

Sunday School

Under the guidance of our teachers, our Sunday School is currently learning the stories of Jesus' teachings in the New Testament. Our teachers are Angela Arpino and Bill Katt for PreK-2nd grade and Margie Ruggeri and Morgan Preiss for 3-7th grade. We continue to meet at 9:30am on Sunday mornings to learn more about our faith and the stories found in the Bible.

Many of our Sunday School youth are participating in upcoming skits for worship services! Keep an eye out for our youth, helping teach us lessons from the Bible in our pre-recorded services!

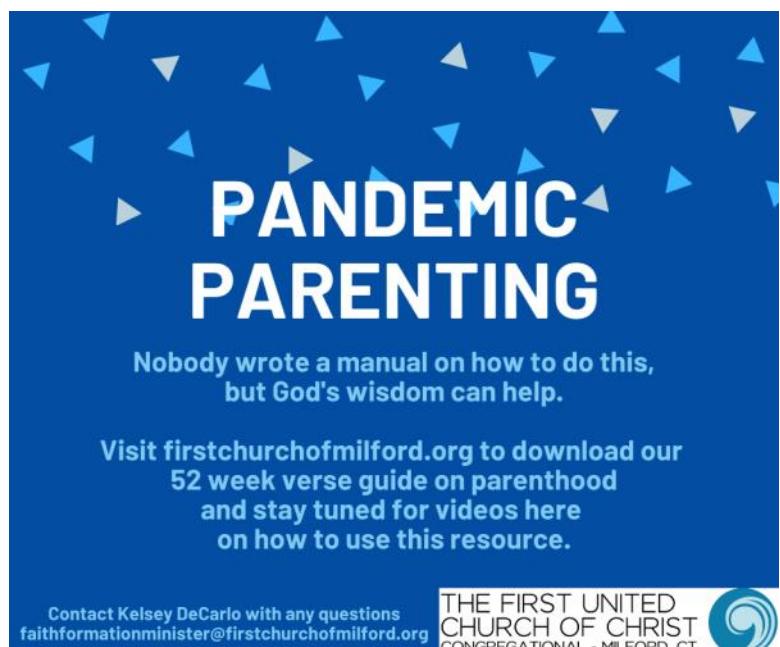
Junior Pilgrim Fellowship

JPF had an incredible 12-hour Rock-a-Thon on February 13th, raising funds to support the Emma Davis Medical Equipment Ministry as they have had to continue to adapt to the pandemic! We spent time learning from each other as well as members of the congregation, getting to know each other better, and doing fun activities like making rocking chairs from clothespins! While our Rock-a-Thon and JPF meetings look different this year, our focus on supporting the youth of our Church continues. Our youth continue to be incredible at caring for each other, making sure everyone is safe and comfortable when we gather in person and online.

If you feel called to serve as an adviser for this group, Kelsey would love to chat with you! The time commitment is about an hour a week, and the reward is unquantifiable!

Confirmation I

Our Confirmation youth continue to gather and learn about their faith. Our Feb 21st meeting focused on Psalm 62 - take some time to read it and share what speaks to you with Kelsey at faithformationminister@firstchurchofmilford.org !



Contact Kelsey DeCarlo with any questions
faithformationminister@firstchurchofmilford.org

THE FIRST UNITED
CHURCH OF CHRIST
CONGREGATIONAL - MILFORD, CT



Music Ministry

Greetings from the Music Ministry! We hope that the New Year finds you healthy and safe during these unprecedented times. We want you to know that we are committed to presenting meaningful musical experiences in virtual format and otherwise, and to helping work with the wider church to promote its sustainability and health, both now and in the future.

We have a number of exciting events and opportunities for you to engage in music with us. Remember that musical talent or experience is not a requirement; God's musical congregation is open to anyone who wishes to praise God.



Hymn Madness!!!!

Let's get ready to...hymnodize!!!! We're launching a fun take on March Madness for this Lenten season, in which you have the chance to help us pick the church's favorite hymn. There is a bracket online that you can download and print, and try to predict a perfect bracket for bragging rights!

Tune into the Sunday morning hymn sings to participate. Comment on the hymn sing Facebook event, and the meditations throughout the week and then check in the next week to see the big bracket in the Choir Room get updated. Check out the [article on the website](#) and...LET'S GET READY TO SING!!!

Lenten and Easter Music Projects

Lend your voice for hymns in the Lenten and Easter season including the Hallelujah Chorus for Easter. Contact Dan Brownell (musicminister@firstchurchofmilford.org) if you'd like the materials to participate. All are welcome; Dan is happy to assist.



Jolly Beggars Concert Online- March 2020

We are working on hosting a Jolly Beggars concert online for the week leading up to and beyond St. Patrick's Day. Look for the [registration page](#) on the website, and make sure you sign up. The Music Ministry Concert Fund is underwriting the concert, so its free of charge, but we need you to register, so that we can get you the unsearchable YouTube link which will be available for the entire time. You can watch multiple times as you prepare for and celebrate St. Patrick's Day.

Organ Concerts

A few years ago, we dedicated an Annual Organ Concert Series to Frank Mulheron, one of the most beloved former music directors of First Church. In the year 2021, Frank would've turned 90 years old, so this year we re-dedicate this series, and commit to its continued success.

We will be presenting two organ concerts between now and just after Easter. On March 5th, join us on YouTube to hear organ music inspired by the Lenten season. Then tune in on April 9th, the Friday after Easter, for a special resurrection themed concert, with joyful organ music for post-Easter, and a special performance of the winner of Hymn Madness.

The Wilcox Memorial Annex

by Ardienne Damicis, Church Historian

Marilyn May asked me if I knew anything about the Wilcox Memorial Annex. I sent her the information from Ray Cable's timeline of events at church. For 1923 he wrote, "A gymnasium and parish house were built at the rear of First Church as a gift by Mrs. Clark Wilcox in memory of her husband. The old one story chapel of 1851 and the church kitchen of 1887 were raised to the second story level and converted into the top floor of the new addition." For 1959-1964 he wrote in part, "A vast building improvement program was accomplished.... The third and final phase consisted of the renovation of the top floor of the parish house and the erection of a mezzanine floor and Fellowship Hall in the space formerly occupied by the Wilcox Memorial Gymnasium of 1923. The new floor level contains a modern choir room, expanded church office space, a pastor's study, church board room, and an office for the Director of Religious Education."

In reply she gave me a biography of Clark Wilcox by Joseph Barns, Esq. and news articles on the subject. (You always get more information from Marilyn than you give.) Clark W. Wilcox was born in 1853 to Capt. John W. Wilcox and Anna M. Davidson of Milford. He has roots here which date back to at least the Revolutionary War. Clark moved to Brooklyn, NY in 1875, and got involved in the hat industry. He developed a huge business in clothing called Wilcox's Millinery. He and two of his brothers ran the business. They boasted that they sold "the Best Hats in New York." Their ad in the Brooklyn Daily Eagle, showing their hats cost two to five times their competitors, showed they had cornered the "luxury hat" market in Brooklyn.

He summered at Walnut Beach and was a great benefactor of the Village of Milford. After 33 years in 1909 he moved full time back to Milford. He owned many properties in town. He purchased 10 acres on Welch's Point Road and built a \$30,000 "cottage" he called "Eveningside Mansion." He also purchased the property which today is "Wilcox Park." He gave the 12 acre parcel along the harbor as a bird sanctuary in perpetuity to the city on August 28, 1909.

Clark W. Wilcox died Nov. 1, 1920, at the age of 66. He was survived by his widow, Mrs. Florence Wilcox; three daughters, Miss Hazel Wilcox, Mrs. Helen Bishop and Mrs. Ruth Brown; a sister, Nellie; and two brothers, Lorren and George Wilcox. (Brooklyn Eagle, Nov. 1, 1920).

"Milford Church to Observe 100th Anniversary of Society," is a headline in the Bridgeport Telegram on May 22, 1923. "Celebration to Mark the Beginning of Church Extension Program... Break Ground for Wilcox Memorial." The article says that plans and specifications are already accepted and made possible through the generosity of Mrs. Wilcox in memory of her husband of \$21,000 which when combined with other improvements will cost \$27,000.

An article in the Bridgeport Telegram on Dec. 3, 1923, tells that the Wilcox Memorial was formally presented to First Church by Mrs. Clark Wilcox in memory of her husband. "The Memorial building occupies the north end of the church with an auditorium of 20 foot ceiling with space for gymnasium, indoor games, and sports as well as other church work. There are dressing rooms, toilets, etc. on this floor. (In another paper Ray Cable writes that, "In the era when no adequate local gymnasium facilities existed, the church built one with the aid of a generous financial gift from Mrs. Clark Wilcox.") A modern up-to-date kitchen also occupies one corner of this floor. A balcony around the hall may also be utilized for class purposes. The original part of the building which is now the second story has had the stage widened and women's parlor built on the north corner. A player-piano, a gift of Fredus M. Case, has been placed in the parlors. Doors lead from the balcony and the second floor to the main church building.

"Highway improvements in connection with the new addition, together with a retaining wall to be built by the town on the banks of the Wepawaug River will add greatly to the attractiveness of the surroundings as well as being a continuation of the town's park system."

CARE MINISTRIES

Baptisms

Samson Salvio

We pray for these our members, friends, and family members:

Doreen Anderton, Joe Arpino, Lonnie Billups, Raymond Britting, Carol, Mark Cerrone, Colton, Micheal Demby, Diane and Michael Ferreira, Jane Flader, Susan Gilbert, Richard Gillian, Mary & Michael Hanke, Hayden, Jeff, Geri Jensen, Jim, Laurie Jones, Ken & Georgia Karageorge, Connie Kasparian, Diana Kate, Vinnie, Barbara Lewis, Linda, Eric and Dimi Linde, Lindsay, Mike Lucas, Sara McCarvill, Pam McMahon, Anthony Muoio, Bonnie, Tom, Will Osanitsch, Zachary Pagnani, Dana Parrott, Emily Perrett, Jean Phillips, Joan Rainey, Carmen Ramos, Paul Rice, Wendy Riling, Anthony Roberto, Sue Roots, Louis and Marlene Santoro, Melissa Schwartz, John Schwerk, Sally Gage Sherman, Rita Singer, Catherine Springsteen, Gwen Stiewing, Zack Swan, Tom, Jeanie Ulrich, Dolly von Hacht, Stan Youngberg

In Memoriam:
*Iboyla Augsztin
 Marilyn ("Mae") Bennett
 Trevor Van Hise*

Parish Post Sponsors

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Karen Geanacopoulos

The Parish Post is distributed 6 times per year both electronically and by mail. We want everyone to have the connection with First Church. To effectively reach out, we need you to let us know if you want a printed copy or if you want us to send them via email.

For those of you that choose to receive it via email we have updated our distribution method utilizing Constant Contact. Kindly let the office know if your email address has changed recently. Contact Nicole at 203-877-4277 or milfordfirstucc@yahoo.com

As we have each year, we solicit sponsors to help defray the cost of printing and mailing the Parish Post. It is that time again. If you have supported us in the past and would like to donate to this program again, as a Sponsor, and be recognized as having supported the Parish Post, please send your payment to First Church and indicate 'Parish Post Sponsor'. The suggested donation is \$150. We are grateful for every donation so that we can continue to keep everyone informed of the many activities, events and needs of our Ministries and Members.

If you would like to become a Sponsor, please contact the office so we can add you to the Sponsorship list.

EASTER FLOWERS OR MUSIC DONATIONS

If you would like to donate an Easter Flower or make a donation to the Organ Fund or Holiday Music Fund, please fill out the form below and return it to the Church Office with your payment no later than **March 26th**. We will purchase an assortment of 6-inch potted Easter Lilies, Daffodils, Tulips & Hyacinths, or 8-inch potted Hydrangeas. If you prefer, you can go to our website (www.firstchurchofmilford.org) to make your donation online.

I would like to purchase an Easter Plant (\$12.50 each) _____
 I would like to purchase a Hydrangea Plant (\$25.00 each) _____
 (please place a check mark by the plant you will be purchasing)

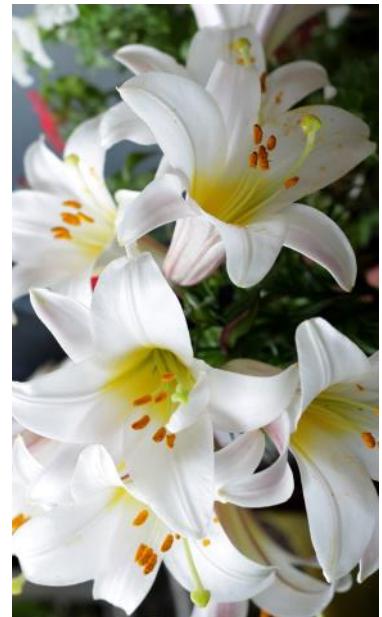
Memory of or Honor of (please circle one and add name below)

 Given by _____

I would like to take my plant home.

I would like to donate my plant to a shut-in.

Daytime phone number in case of questions: _____



Music Donations

I would like to make a donation in the amount of \$_____ to the **Organ Fund**.

I would like to make a donation in the amount of \$_____ to the **Holiday Music Fund**.

If this (these) donation(s) are in **honor or memory of** someone, please complete the lines below.

Memory of or Honor of (please circle one and add name below)

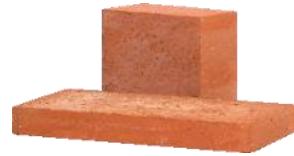
 Given by _____

Daytime phone number in case of questions: _____

****When mailing orders to the church, please write
"Easter" on the envelope. Thank you!***



Personalized Brick Sales



The church is receiving orders for personalized bricks lining the walkway in front of the Meetinghouse. They could be in memory of someone in our lives who has passed or in honor of someone living who is still a part of our life.

The bricks can be purchased for \$125 online by clicking the link firstchurchofmilford.org or by completing the hard copy form below. Each brick is 4 x 8 inches with three lines of space for lettering. Each line can hold up to 18 characters.

Proceeds from brick sales will benefit the church's operating fund which helps maintain the grounds and historic meetinghouse. All bricks purchased will be etched and installed after Easter 2021. We will let you know when they will be dedicated so you can see your bricks at that time. If you have any questions, please contact Carol LaBrake at 203-430-8806 or email her at clmfdct@gmail.com.

MAIL IN FORM

Complete the information below and send with your check for \$125 payable to First UCC to

The First United Church of Christ (Congregational), 34 West Main Street, Milford, CT 06460

Please print BRICK ORDER on the envelope and memo field of your check.

Print only one character per block. All letters, punctuation, and spaces count as one character. Each line of text will be centered on the brick. Note: All orders will be reviewed and must be approved prior to acceptance.

Line 1

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Line 2

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Line 3

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Your Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone Number _____

**The First United Church of Christ
(Congregational)
34 West Main Street
Milford, CT 06460**

Return service requested.

Time Dated Material
Please deliver by March 5, 2021

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March-early April 2021 SERVICES

See firstchurchofmilford.org for
other social media/teleconference events

Sunday, February 28 - 2nd Sunday in Lent
9:00 AM Worship Sanctuary
9:30 AM Hymn Sing Facebook
9:30 AM Sunday School Zoom
10:00 AM Online Worship YouTube

Sunday, March 7 - 3rd Sunday in Lent
9:00 AM Worship Sanctuary
9:30 AM Hymn Sing Facebook
9:30 AM Sunday School Zoom
10:00 AM Online Worship YouTube

Saturday, March 13
7:00 PM- Memorial Garden
I Come to the Garden
Outdoor Prayer Vigil -
Marks the Year of Closure,
Remembering ways of life and those lost
due to COVID-19

Sunday, March 14 - 4th Sunday in Lent
9:00 AM Worship Sanctuary
9:30 AM Hymn Sing Facebook
9:30 AM Sunday School Zoom
10:00 AM Online Worship YouTube

Sunday, March 21 - 5th Sunday in Lent
9:00 AM Worship Sanctuary
9:30 AM Hymn Sing Facebook
9:30 AM Sunday School Zoom
10:00 AM Online Worship YouTube

Sunday, March 28 - Palm Sunday
9:00 AM Worship Sanctuary
9:30 AM Hymn Sing Facebook
9:30 AM Sunday School Zoom
10:00 AM Online Worship YouTube

Thursday, April 1 - Maundy Thursday
7:00 PM Virtual Worship with Lessons and
The Last Supper

Friday, April 2 - Good Friday
10:00 AM Do Good Friday -
Walk to Alleviate Suffering - (Sign Up needed)

Sunday, April 4 - Easter Sunday
7:00 AM Sunrise Service - Back Plymouth Lawn
9:00 AM In-Person Worship Sanctuary (RSVP)
10:00 AM Online Worship YouTube