

OCTOBER 2024



Dear Friends,

Today, Paul and I walked over to see how the Lyme-Old Lyme Share Garden was growing this late in the season. We meandered past the renovation of the Senior Center and the expansive soccer fields at Town Woods Park. Back behind the barn is the most extraordinary community garden. As we walked around it, the heavy faces of autumn sunflowers and ripening beefsteak tomatoes were offering their last fruits. My eye was also caught by the abundant rows of radishes, green lettuces, eggplant and beets yet to be harvested. Everything that grows in the Food Share garden is donated to SSKP and the United Way in order to counter food insecurity of our neighbors and provide a bounty of fresh vegetables and source of healthy nutrition for all.

Founded in 2021 by Jim Ward and countless volunteers, the Food Share Garden is supported by many organizations, including FCCOL and individuals who have supported this collective endeavor. Over the past 3 growing seasons, we've watched it flourish into an ever expanding garden of fresh produce and bounty. To date, the garden has contributed over 5,000 pounds and counting!! There's something miraculous growing here, as well. How the gifts of mutual commitment, compassion and community can take an empty field and turn it into a harvest of possibility and generosity.

A couple of weeks ago, I attended the Shoreline Basic Needs Task Force meeting, another sign of fruitful collaboration among our local organizations- this time, with those leaders seeking to strengthen families' access to food, housing and basic needs in our region. At the meeting I learned that

(continued on page 4)

HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING AT FCCOL



Senior Choir Schedule

To all members of the Senior Choir - Thanks for such an uplifting start to the new season!

Here is what October is looking like:
Wednesday, October 2: Rehearsal at 7:30 pm

Sunday, October 6: Singing at the 10:00 am service with a rehearsal at 9:15 am

Wednesday, October 9: Rehearsal at 7:30 pm

Sunday, October 13: Singing at the 10:00 am service with a rehearsal at 9:15 am

Wednesday, October 16: Rehearsal at 7:30 pm

Sunday, October 20: Singing at the 10:00 am service with a rehearsal at 9:15 am

Wednesday, October 23: Rehearsal at 7:30 pm

Sunday, October 27: Singing at the 10:00 am service with a rehearsal at 9:15 am

Wednesday, October 30: Rehearsal at 7:30 pm

Many thanks and best wishes to all,
Simon

Handbell Notes

Help! Help! The Old Lyme Ringers are desperately in need of \$1,695.00. This amount will reach our goal of purchasing the upper octave of our handbell set. The new season will begin in November, and we need the funds soon to order the bells, so that they are here when rehearsals begin. No gifts were received during the summer, but we are hoping and praying that this fall

some kind souls will dig deep in their pockets and help us complete this project. No gift is too small, and we truly appreciate every gift that has been given and will be given. Won't YOU consider a special gift to make our ringers happy and fulfilled?

A reminder to the Old Lyme Ringers that rehearsals will resume on Wednesday, November 13, at 6:30 pm, in Fellowship Hall. A fun season of wonderful music is awaiting you! I am looking forward to seeing you soon!

Ladies Who Stitch (LWS)

Cooler weather is fast approaching and while most of our winter creations (hats, mittens, scarves, shawls, throws, quilts) are still in storage, we can easily access them if needed. Just ask when you visit the Partnership Store on Sundays, and while you are there check out our new "LWS Sale Corner."

Incidentally, when you spend \$25 or more on items from Ladies Who Stitch, you can choose a free LWS gift - see the list of items priced at \$4.00 or under, posted in the store.

At the September LBS Luncheon, the speaker, Julie Martel, a former Peace Corps volunteer, surprised us with a gift of six large pieces of African fabric. Stay tuned to see what we create using them. Julie spoke eloquently of her continued work with the non-profit REVE Kandale Foundation in DR Congo. (<https://www.peacecorpsfriendsofdrcongo.org/reve-k>)

In addition to donating several LWS

creations for FCCOL gifts, we also have a collection of baby hats, afghans and socks ready to donate to the York Women's Prison. This is in response to a need mentioned in the September FCCOL newsletter. It is wonderful to have so many beautiful creations, especially from our knitters, to donate to worthy causes.



As of mid-September, we have sold more than 30 pairs of the women's jeans donated to the White Elephant Sale. With four more sale days (September 18, 21, 23 and 30) we expect that number to increase. When finished, we will sort the remaining jeans into three categories - donating them to Haiti and the New London Homeless Hospitality Center, or designating them for denim creations by LWS.

Ladies Who Stitch meet every Monday in the Sheffield Auditorium from 10:00 am 2:00 pm. We open the Partnership Store during these hours, and visitors, shoppers, curiosity seekers, and new LWS members are always welcome.

Questions: Contact Eunice Taylor via email - eunicetaylor@me.com
Submitted by Eunice Taylor,
Coordinator for Ladies Who Stitch

Ladies Benevolent Society October Luncheon

Come join us for some fellowship, delicious food and a wonderful program at the LBS luncheon on Tuesday, October 8th beginning at noon. Homemade baked lasagna is on Chef Rick's menu, accompanied by toasty garlic bread, cold Italian dressed vegetables, and something sweet to end the meal.

Following the luncheon we are delighted to welcome two local musicians. Dave Grigoire is an Old Saybrook resident who has been playing acoustic guitar since age 14, and has been actively engaged in song writing for the past ten years. Joining him will be Steve Knauth, a resident of Ivoryton. Steve began writing music while in his high school band back in the 1960's and



writes his own music now. He plays guitar, bass and harmonica, and he was the original bass player for the 1970's band Little Roger and the Goosebumps.

Recently, both artists have been performing in the folk/blues band Crows in the Meadow. Please join us for their program and be utterly beguiled.

Suggested donation for the luncheon is \$5 plus an item for our food bank or our diaper bank. Please call FCCOL (860-434-8686) by Friday, October 4th to make a reservation.

God's Neighborhood

Peace Partners: Meet you at the Peace Table!

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.

Matthew 5: 9

During the month of October we'll

read the Peace Table, a storybook Bible. Each Sunday School class will explore what it means to be a peacemaker and learn about peacemakers around the world and around the table. They will engage in science projects and service projects. We'll explore the ways we share care and kinship with all of God's creation great and small. We'll add to our "peace tables" downstairs in every room and we will learn how to cultivate peace with God, within ourselves, with others, and peace with nature including land and oceans. Our students will experience the outdoors around the church during Sunday school in order to find peaceful places and to read together throughout October.



Youth Group Winter Clothing Drive: October 1st-25th

Our Youth Group will be collecting winter clothing, socks, hats, gloves along with small toiletries every Sunday to donate for the upcoming Breakfast Run on October 26th. Bins will be placed in Fellowship Hall and drop off is in the Sheffield auditorium on stage. Thank you in advance for your kindness and generosity as the unhoused that we serve always look forward to "Old Lyme" coming into the city!

Our Ellis Island trip is postponed until April vacation.

Youth Breakfast Run, Saturday, October 26th!!

Our Youth Group will be driving into NYC beginning the trip at 6:30 in the morning at FCCOL to then travel to Dunkin Donuts, then into NYC (location TBD) where we will be handing out the donations from our Winter Clothing Drive to people who are in need, along with breakfast and

lunch. This is always a wonderful experience for our students. If you would like to join as a chaperone, reach out to me, Jolene 860-460-9511, or if you'd like to send your student (middle school aged and up) with us we will take very good care of them! We have reserved 20 tickets for the Matinee for Hamilton, following the breakfast Run. RSVP with Jolene Brant: jmbrant2023@gmail.com or 860-460-9511.



Save the Date: Saturday, Nov. 9th Mashantucket Pequot Museum & Research Center 10:00 am till

whenever everyone is ready or after lunch (museum closes at 4pm). This is a self guided tour with our whole group. Parents, please come with your children that are 3rd grade and under. Otherwise we are asking the Youth Group to find buddies that they will look out for with us throughout the time at the museum. Bring a lunch or we are looking at the cost of the express lunch. Reach out to me at

jmbrant2023@gmail.com to sign up to go. \$13 for Youth Ticket \$18 for Adult ticket. And these are group rates. The following Sunday we will do a craft together in Sunday School and it will be inspired by this trip! If you have any questions please always feel free to call me 860-460-9511.

With love, Laura and Jolene

Memorials

Janet Bent

Peter Carlson

Thomas Fowler

Fleur Lawrence

Dave Preston

Judy Simmons

Jane Stubenbord

Dear Friends, (continued)

the latest data from the United Way reports that in Middlesex County alone 1:8 people struggle with hunger and 1:6 are food insecure. Never mind the need for housing. If you're interested in learning more, Here's a link to the report:

<https://www.middlesexunitedway.org/sites/middlesexunitedway/files/2023-09/Middlesex.pdf>

We now know that many neighbors are struggling to cover basic needs and nearly 10% of our region were registered guests at Shoreline Soup Kitchens & Pantries. Thankfully, through SSKP, and with the support and volunteer hours of many of you, more than 1,000,000 pounds of food was given out this past year!

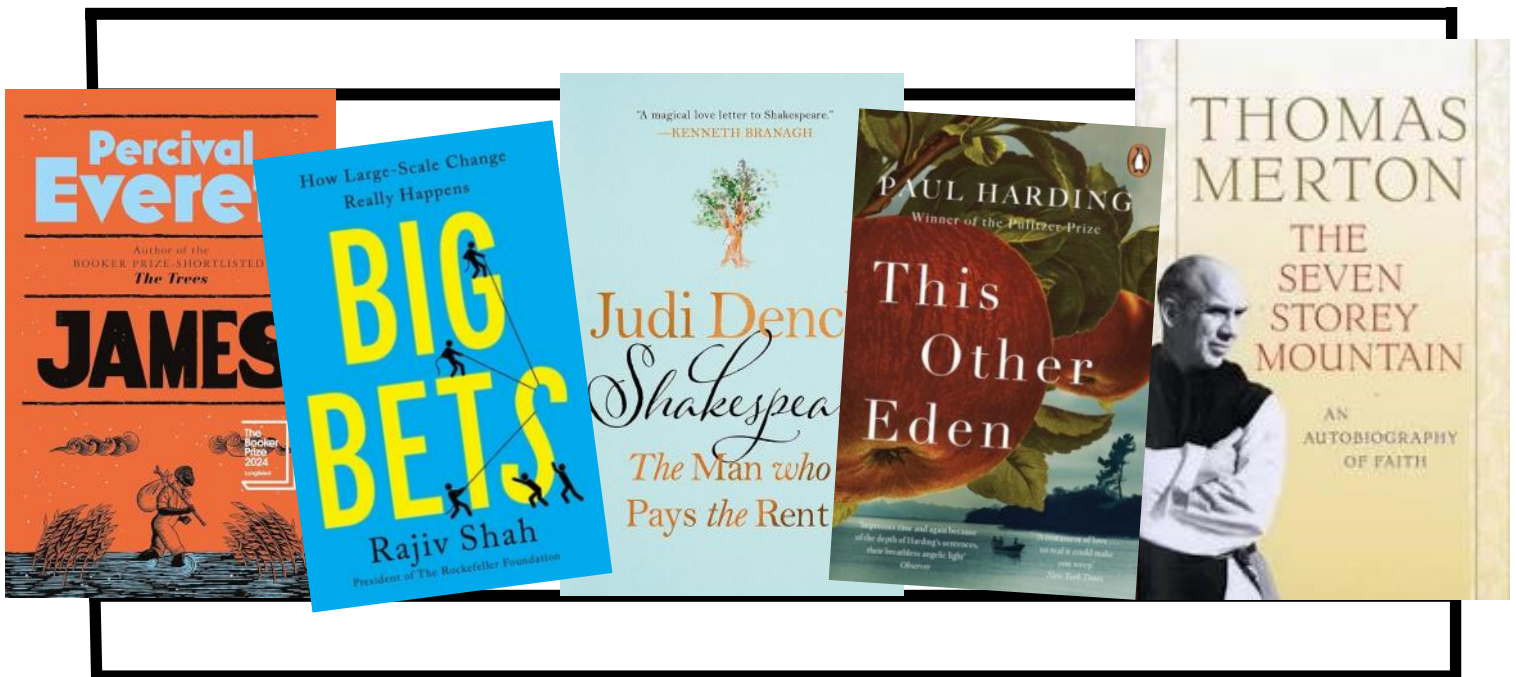
The need continues to be great. And our efforts do continue to make a considerable difference, especially when we join together to multiply our actions. Whether you show up to help at the food pantry on a Saturday morning, cultivate veggies from the Share Garden, serve as a church committee member on Deacons or Trustees, help out in our Sunday School program and pledge during our Stewardship Campaign, we are grateful for all that you give.

With your presence and partnership here at FCCOL, we can continue to turn the seedlings of a big idea into a flourishing garden of sustenance and delight. Within these Fall pages, you'll find the latest on events, activities and offerings from small groups to Adult Forums, LBS lunches, choir schedules and future expeditions of faith. Hope to see you soon!

With love,



Reading: *James* by Percival Everett, *This Other Eden* by Paul Harding (thanks Carleen), *Big Betts* by Rajiv Shah, *Shakespeare: The Man Who Pays the Rent* by Judi Dench, *Seven Storey Mountain* by Thomas Merton. Listening to: Jon Batiste and every song he's ever recorded!



CHURCH CONSULTING ENGAGEMENT WITH THE CONVERGENCE FIRM.

As many of you already know, our church has entered into a consulting engagement with a company called Convergence. This is a very important undertaking for our church.

The purpose of this initiative is to have Convergence help us plot a course for the future that will keep us vibrant and growing in the face of nation-wide changes in the church experience for many people. Convergence has deep experience in advising churches like ours, and they have a broad nation-wide perspective.

The first step in this process is to conduct a church-wide survey that will give our consultants, and us, a clear picture of our congregation as we are today. The more members and friends that participate in this survey, the more valuable and productive our work with Convergence will be.

When you receive this survey – either by US mail or email – please give it your thoughtful and prayerful consideration. (Instructions will accompany the survey request.) The survey is completely anonymous – no personal information is asked for or desired. There will be opportunities for feedback and discussions with the consultant over the next few months. (See the second step below.)

The second step in this process will be opportunities for all of us to participate in two web-based seminars. They will be conducted over the internet using Zoom, and will be presented at two Adult Forums on October 20 and October 27. These will be presented by Rev. Cameron Trimble, a principal at Convergence, who is nationally recognized in fields such as cultural shifts impacting churches.

October 20 is entitled **The Great Unveiling**, and October 27 is entitled **Creative Churches: A Virtual Tour of Growing Churches Changing Their Communities.**

For either or both sessions, you may participate here as a group during the adult forum(s), or you may participate at home if you desire. An Internet link will be provided.

Helping guide and assist us in this effort will be our “Convergence Task Force”: Bill Belluzzi, Jolene Brant, Ellen Calkins, Cara Cheung, Beth Hamilton, John Kiker, Jim Matschulat, Sean McCarty, Bob McCracken, Elizabeth Nocera, Dan Renn and Tom Sherer.

Adult Bible Study: Goodness, Greed and Grace: Journeys through Genesis and Exodus

Curious about what we do in Bible Study? Wondering about the problem of evil and where the heck God might be found on any given day? Bible Study begins Thursday, September 26, 11-12. Hybrid format in person and on Zoom. Join us for rich discussion and wanderings as we pick up our reading of Genesis with Joseph, his brothers and that famous technicolor coat. Our companion book this fall will be *Reading Genesis* by Marilynne Robinson. Robinson wrote, *“The whole of human existence is like some sweet parable told in the most improbable place and circumstances...God values our humanity. One of the things that's fascinating about the Hebrew Bible is that it declared and was loyal to the fact that God is good and creation is good.”*

Monthly Support Group

For Parents, Caregivers and Family Members of Trans Youth/Young Adults: Our newly forming group will provide conversation, support, community and education for parents and caregivers around the issues of transgender, nonbinary, and gender-diversity. Join us for an informational meeting held at FCCOL on Wednesday evening, October 23rd from 5:30-6:30...For more information: fccol@fccol.org.

Writing at the Well

Friday, October 18th, 10:00-11:30. Join us as we meet once a month to write pages together and share our spiritual journeys as we go. Using informal writing prompts, participants give voice to memories and the stories that make up our lives. No writing experience necessary...just a willingness to pay attention and tap into the wellspring. Meeting in the Hoag Parlor.



Grief Group

This monthly support group is for those who have lost a loved one and those struggling with other losses. Next meeting: Wednesday, October 30th 5:30-6:30 pm in Hoag Parlor.



The Hartford Courant
Published on September 20, 2024
By Rev. Steven R. Jungkeit, Ph.D.

It's Time to Tell - and to Learn - a Better Story about Haiti

In the winter of 2020, just before Covid stopped the world, I sat with a friend on a hillside overlooking Deschapelles, Haiti on a clear starry night. There were scarcely any lights to be seen, for few people in that remote valley have electricity. But the world around us was alive with sounds. From numerous directions, we heard the sounds of Vodou drumming, as people conducted nighttime ceremonies. From other locations, we could hear the sounds of church services, with people singing hymns and worship songs. Occasionally the sound of conversation could be heard interspersed with the music, and sometimes laughter. The night was alive with a kind of sensual wonder, and even though vast poverty surrounded us, I couldn't help but marvel at the richness of Haitian culture, and the gifts it has offered the world.

If only more people in the United States understood the beauty and vitality of Haiti and its people. The racist and xenophobic lies of Donald Trump and J.D. Vance have cruelly stigmatized Haitians in Springfield, Ohio, demonizing them simply for being there. It's an ugly behavior with a long history from all sides of the political spectrum in the U.S. Such remarks render even more precarious a population that has already suffered, and survived, much. For the sake of Haiti and Haitians, it's time to tell - and to learn - a different story.

There are, of course, Springfields all across the United States, where significant populations of Haitians live. But that's especially true in Connecticut. In the southeastern corner of the state where I live, Norwich and New London have thriving Haitian communities. But the same is true of Hartford, New Haven, Bridgeport, Waterbury, and countless other cities throughout our state. Haitians are our neighbors, and they make the places that we live better and more vibrant for their very presence.

Now is the time to reach out to those communities. Now is the time to say that we're glad that you're here. Now is the time to offer our support in any way we can, as threats, rumors of violence, and slander directed toward Haitians have increased. Now is the time to thank our Haitian neighbors, for enduring so much, and for making our world, and our state, a more vibrant place.

But now is also the time to educate ourselves, and to celebrate the gifts of Haitian history and culture. We can do that by reading the monumental histories of the Haitian Revolution written by C.L.R. James (*The Black Jacobins*) or Laurent Dubois (*Avengers of the New World*). We can do that by queuing up exemplary music from Haiti and its diaspora on our streaming accounts (RAM, Boukman Eksperyans, Leyla McCalla, Lakou Mizik, or countless others). We can do that by understanding better the complex genius of Haitian Vodou (start by reading *The Sacred Arts of Haitian Vodou*, but continue on to works such as *Nan Domi*, by Mimerose Beaubrun or *Tell My Horse*, by Zora Neal Hurston). We can study the beauty of Haitian art, and appreciate the literature that has emerged from Haiti (start with the exquisite writings of Edwidge Danticat, but try others as well, like Jacques Roumain and René Depestre). Don't forget the searing and profound films of Raoul Peck (*Exterminate All the Brutes*, for example) one of the most innovative filmmakers on the planet today. And let us not forget to eat. You haven't lived until you've tried piklis, a spicy Haitian vegetable mixture that will elevate your consciousness. You can find it in Norwich, at Mommy's Delicious Food, or in Bridgeport, at Manje Lakay.

Above all, though, let us not forget the people, or neglect their stories. Let us not ignore the many gifts they have given to Connecticut, to the United States, and to the world itself.

I can't reproduce that night in Deschapelles, but in a way Connecticut is a lot like that hillside: if you know how to listen (and see, taste, touch, and smell), the gifts of Haitian culture are all around us.

Now is the time to listen well, that we might come to tell, and to learn, a better story about Haiti.

Rev. Steven R. Jungkeit, Ph.D.

Steve Jungkeit serves as the Senior Minister of The First Congregational Church of Old Lyme. The Crosby Fund for Haitian Education, one of the ministries of FCCOL, was founded twenty years ago by Becky and Ted Crosby to help Haitian young people receive an education, which is not free in Haiti, and is an expense that most Haitians cannot afford.

LADIES' BENEVOLENT SOCIETY BUDGET FOR 2025 (8/27/24)

LBS INTERNAL NEEDS proposed

WES/EIW expenses for 2025	15,000
Old Lyme Historical Society calendar pages to adv. 2025 WES & EIW	288
Postage, paper	100
Luncheon expenses, programs	1,200
Kitchen equipment and supplies	1,000
Miscellaneous (reserved for unexpected expenses)	500
Reimbursement for groceries purchased for NL Soup Kitchen ministry	400
Total operating reserve for LBS internal needs:	\$18,488

MISSION GIFTS to be made in 2025*

FCCOL Pledge	30,000
FCCOL Major Maintenance Escrow Fund	5,000
Diaper Bank for distribution at FCCOL Food Pantry	3,000
Church World Service / One Great Hour of Sharing	2,000
Crosby Fund for Haitian Education	6,000
Cactus Jack Fund for Pediatric Assistance in SECT	500
Charley's Closet (rehabbed mobility devices), Guilford Interfaith Volunteers	500
Estuary Council of Seniors, Inc., Old Saybrook	1,000
Hospice Care:	
The Connecticut Hospice, Branford	500
Hospice & Palliative Care, Middletown	500
Literacy Volunteers—Valley Shore, CT, Inc.	250
Lymes Senior Center	1,000
Lymewood Elderly Housing (nfp operated by Elderly Housing Mgmt, Inc.)	200
New London Homeless Hospitality Center, Inc.	8,000
NLHHC, Veteran's Housing (Maj. Edw. Good House)	2,000
A Sacred Place: The Barbara Fund	2,000
Safe Futures, New London	3,000
Shoreline Food Pantry & Soup Kitchen	3,000
Tribal Crafts	2,000
Total LBS Mission commitments	\$ 70,450

TOTAL LBS Budget for 2025 \$ 88,938

* FCCOL estimates that about a third of the annual FCCOL operating budget directly supports Mission outreach to the community and the wider world. None would be possible without a sustained investment in the core facilities of FCCOL which at once launch, house, and nurture all of these efforts.

Environmental Committee

Five Symptoms of Nature Deficit Disorder, and How Mindfulness Can Help

The following is a lightly edited introduction to a program offered at Kripalu Center for Yoga, and offered by Micah Mortali. Some here may remember Micah as the son of a previous church secretary, Georgia Watrous. He writes:

It's no surprise when the average American spends [90 percent of their life indoors](#) and [11 hours a day on screens](#) that people feel disconnected from nature, and the source of life. Our collective tech addiction is a huge factor in the epidemic of Nature-Deficit Disorder—a term coined by Richard Louv, author of *Last Child in the Woods*. "Nature-deficit disorder describes the human costs of alienation from nature, among them: diminished use of the senses, attention difficulties, and higher rates of physical and emotional illness," Louv wrote.

But mindful time in nature can reconnect us with the "[more-than-human world](#)" in which we live. Here are five symptoms of Nature Deficit Disorder, and practices that can help counteract this deprivation that has become so endemic to our culture.

The symptom: Directed Attention Fatigue Directed attention is when we willfully hold our attention on a single focus, filtering out other distractions in the environment. Most of us live lives of directed attention; our jobs require us to sit and focus on one thing for long periods of time, which typically leaves us distracted and irritable. [Research shows](#) that directed attention fatigue lowers our self-regulation and makes us more aggressive, less tolerant, and less sensitive to social cues.

The antidote: Practice nature meditation as a form of "fascination attention." Researchers Stephen and Rachel Kaplan describe "fascination attention," in which we don't try to focus but simply allow our attention to be drawn to and fro, as the remedy for directed attention fatigue. "If you can

find an environment where the attention is automatic, you allow directed attention to rest," Stephen explains. "And that means an environment that's strong on fascination." Humans evolved in an environment that required fascination attention for survival; we needed to be able to focus on multiple pieces of information in our surroundings in order to avoid danger, find food, etc.

To balance directed attention with fascination attention, incorporate nature meditation into your daily routine. Nature meditation is done with the eyes open. Sitting at the foot of a tree in the forest, (or even gazing out a window,) activate conscious breath as you bring your attention to what's moving on the earth, through the woods, and in the sky. Rather than a single-pointed meditation focus—as on a flame or a mantra—this is a practice of open awareness.

The symptom: Place Blindness First identified by Richard Louv, "place blindness" describes the way in which people are losing their relationships with the land on which they live. Today, the digital world has become more real to us than the ecology outside our homes and workplaces. Place blindness begins in childhood; kids spend far less time in unsupervised outdoor play. According to the [Nature of Americans National Report](#), children 8 to 12 years old spend three times as many hours with computers and televisions each week as they do playing outside.

The antidote: Visit a sit spot all year round. Relieve place blindness by choosing a "sit spot"—a place in your yard or a nearby park that you can return to again and again, in every season, observing the land and the behavior of the flora and fauna as time passes. Even five or 10 minutes a day (or as often as possible) spent in your spot will result in a growing bond with the specific landscape in or near your home.

The symptom: Sensory Anesthesia Another result of our indoor, screen-focused lifestyle is what Louv calls "sensory anesthesia"—becoming

disconnected from the feedback that we receive from nature through our five senses. This disconnection has both individual and societal ramifications: When we lose our visceral, tactile relationship with nature, we are less likely to notice changes in our immediate or larger environment, and thus less able to respond skillfully to what's happening.

The antidote: Walk barefoot on the earth. Walking with awareness and without shoes can be a profound experience. Recently, a guest at Kripalu shared with me that it had been 24 years since he walked barefoot on the grass. When he did so during our session, he almost fell four or five times; all those years of walking in shoes had changed his proprioception. He no longer remembered how to keep his balance on the ground without the support of his shoes.

Another great way to counteract sensory anesthesia is to meditate on the sound of water—a creek babbling or the ocean waves. Close your eyes or maintain a soften gaze, connect with your breath, and let your attention rest on the sound. Or you might take a mindful walk incorporating the sense of touch—running your fingers over the bark of trees, the moss on a rock, the pebbles underfoot, the smooth surface of a stone. I call it "hiking with your hands."

The symptom: Species Loneliness We evolved in relationship with other beings on this planet, but today we engage in very limited contact with other species, beyond our household pets. If we don't have a bond with the wild creatures with whom we share the natural world, we won't realize it if they begin to disappear. Place blindness extends from the land to the living things that move upon it.

The antidote: Observe the life around you. Whether you live in an urban, suburban, or rural environment, you can watch birds and squirrels, frogs and lizards. Listen for birdsong early in the morning and at dusk. Keep your eyes open for the tracks of animal friends in the snow or

mud, observing the stories they leave for us on the ground as they pass.

When we do nature meditation practice by the brook at Kripalu, there's always a frog who begins to croak into the silence. I can't tell you how meaningful that is for people—the experience of sharing a moment with a non-human relative.

The symptom: Taking Without

Giving We often speak of nature in terms of what it can give us—health benefits, recreation, fuel for our fires or vegetables for our meals. Beginning a few hundred years ago, organized religion began inculcating the idea of nature as something that needed to be tamed or subdued.

Moreover, we typically think of the natural world as inert—a collection of objects rather than living beings. We

refer to animals as “it.” By contrast, the Lakota and other Native American cultures often think of not only animals but also stones, trees, and soil as alive.

The antidote: Offer gratitude and care. We can reframe our relationship with the more-than-human world by consciously offering gratitude for what we receive, and by acknowledging the lives of the living things around us. True, we might not know an animal's gender on sight, but we could ask when we note its tracks or scat, “I wonder who that was?” or note, “A friend passed by.”

At its most basic essence—the breath—our relationship with nature is reciprocal: We inhale and take in oxygen from the trees; we exhale and the trees take in the carbon dioxide they need. We can practice occasionally

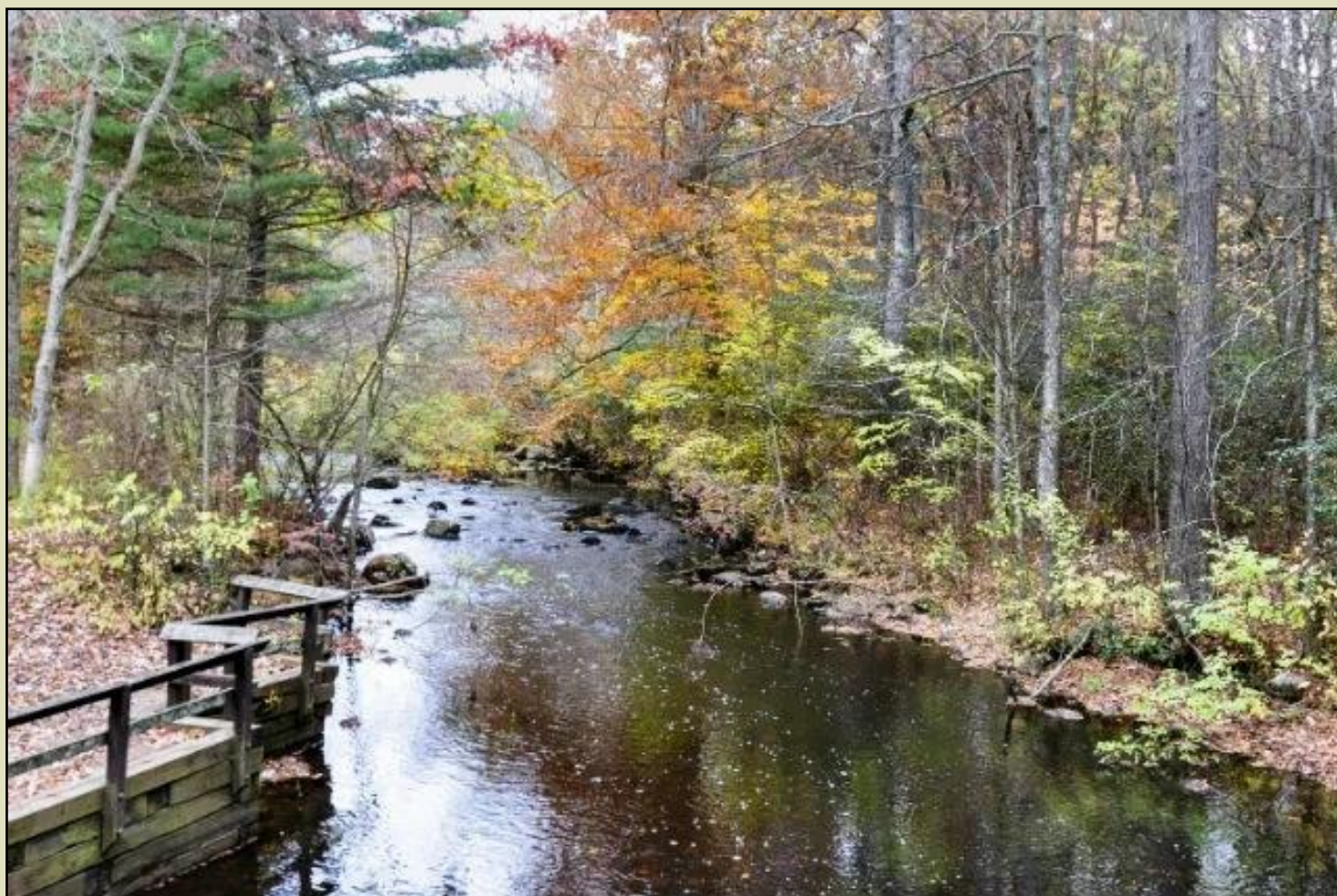
bringing that interaction into conscious awareness, along with gratitude for what we receive in this exchange of prana.

“Knowing that you love the earth changes you, activates you to defend and protect and celebrate,” writes Robin Wall Kimmerer, author of *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants*. “But when you feel that the earth loves you in return, that feeling transforms the relationship from a one-way street into a sacred bond.”

Thank you, Micah!!

Here is a link to the story:

<https://kripalu.org/resources/five-symptoms-nature-deficit-disorder-and-how-mindfulness-can-help>





Niantic Community Church

**A Three-Part Anti-Racism Series
offered by Niantic Community Church
at the East Lyme Public Library**

Saturdays 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

October 5, November 2, December 7, 2024



*All Are Welcome to attend. Space is limited, pre-registration with the library is required.
Facilitated by Aqua Drakes and Katie Burton of Drakes and Burton Consulting.*

Session 1 - History of Race – October 5

An introduction to basic vocabulary, historical precedents, and current conditions of race in our country. The presentation demonstrates how race was created, maintained, and manipulated throughout U.S. history. Past/present connections show how legacies of injustice shape systems and society in the 21st century. The program concludes with an opportunity for questions and discussion.

Session 2 - Allyship in Focus – November 2

An overview of the insidious ways racism manifests in our lives today and the opportunities allyship provides to counter that inequity. Facilitators show participants how liberal and progressive ideologies, especially those held by white people, maintain and contribute to racist systems. The program concludes with opportunity for open discussion.

Session 3 - Allyship in Action – December 7

Empowers participants to enact anti-racist strategies and allyship in their own lives. Through scenarios, scripts, and an emphasis on language and color consciousness, facilitators provide a range of actions applicable for workplaces, schools, and interpersonal relationships.

Register at the East Lyme Public Library at: <https://www.eastlymepubliclibrary.org/events>



We highly recommend people register for all three sessions, but it is not required. Niantic Community Church is grateful to PARJE (Public Arts for Racial Justice) for the financial resources to offer this important series at no cost to those attending.

Contact for questions: 860-287-0406.



Board of Missions (BOM): 2024 Mission Investments - So Far

For Budget Year 2024, the Board of Trustees allocated \$60,000 to support FCCOL missions, United Church of Christ (UCC) benevolence and local and international non-profit agencies. Of the \$60,000 budgeted the Board of Trustees holds back 10% until the end of the fiscal year to assure the church meets or exceeds its budgeted income. In addition to this years allocation, the BOM has access to nearly \$12,000 in savings from 2023. In its meetings the BOM discusses and votes on fund allocations to the various FCCOL entities and non-profits. For 2024 the Board made the decision to focus most non-FCCOL allocations on local non-profit agencies. The board is grateful for the funds provided by the congregation to support FCCOL missions and local non-profits.

Budgeted Allocations:

UCC Benevolence:	\$14,500
Mission Education Funds (Green Grass, South Africa, Israel/Palestine Scholarships; Youth Civil Rights trip)	\$4,400
Direct Partnership Support (Tree of Life, Haiti)	\$6,000
Partnership Committees	\$1,000
Projects (Environment Committee, New London Soup Kitchen reimbursement, Diaper Bank)	\$5,500
Connections (Amos Resources – support of the interfaith New London social justice project; World Central Kitchen – Gaza; Fire Rebuilding Fund for Martin Luther King Church)	\$3,500

Total \$34,900

Local Non-Profits:

Chaplain Support L&M and Middlesex Hospitals	\$500
Southeastern CT Habitat for Humanity	\$1000
Safe Futures (Domestic Violence Agency)	\$500
DINE (New London Soup Kitchen)	\$3000
Thames River Family Program (Housing and Support)	\$750
Martin House (Housing and Support Services)	\$750
Alliance for Living (HIV/AIDS; Substance abuse, Homelessness)	\$1,000
A Sacred Place (Support Services for incarcerated women in Niantic)	\$1,000
Homeless Hospitality Center (Housing and support services)	\$7,500
Covenant Shelter (Emergency Shelter for families and individuals)	\$1000
Fresh New London (Grows food, teaches skills, provides fresh produce)	\$1000
Lyme/Old Lyme Food Share (grows and provides fresh food)	\$500

Total Non-Profits: \$18,500

Other: UNRWA (United Nations Agency working solely with Palestine Refugees in the Middle East)
\$250

Total 2024 Budgeted Allocations: \$ 53,650

GIVING MATTERS

Soon over 600 FCCOL members and friends will be receiving a letter requesting spiritual and financial support for our church for 2025. This request deserves our thoughtful attention. Why? Because FCCOL depends on the financial support of our members and friends for over three quarters of the funds needed to sustain its work on an annual basis. Why a Commitment card? Because the completion of your commitment card enables FCCOL to plan its expenditures. Guided by the Spirit and funded by members and friends, the Congregation is working together to help make our world more compassionate and more just. Your commitment connects you to that important work.

Please make a quiet moment to give your 2025 commitment card your prayerful consideration. The “*Who We Are Brochure*” enclosed with your card describes the major faith-building ministries our support makes possible. New this year is an opportunity to honor or dedicate your gift to the memory of someone who has made a difference in your life. Please know that your giving matters to those FCCOL serves and those FCCOL strives to serve.

Thank You – Your 2025 Board of Stewardship



BLOOD DRIVE

There will be an American Red Cross Blood Drive at the First Congregation Church of Old Lyme on Thursday, October 10th from 8am -6pm. Please see the link below to make an appointment before arriving.

What are the benefits of donating blood? reduce stress, improve your emotional well-being, benefit your physical health, help get rid of negative feelings, provide a sense of belonging and reduce isolation.

<https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/donation-time>



FCCOL is establishing a
Memorial Fund in memory of
Rev. David W. Good

which we hope will continue
to fund ministries to which
David was devoted.

Please mark your donations
“David Good Memorial.”

Thank you.

Women's Wellness Retreat: The Sanctuary of Friendship

Save the date: Saturday, Nov 2nd, 2024. This year, we're invited to a wellness retreat including lunch, yoga and storytelling with women refugees from the New Haven area. We're hoping to meet in Stony Creek from 10:00-2:00. More details to come. To register and get more information, emails to Anne at fccol@fccol.org.

October Adult Forums: Visioning Church Together

Following our church service we'll meet with Convergence Consultant, Cameron Trimble who will appear virtually, for a presentation and an interactive discussion. Join us in Sheffield Auditorium at 11:30am on Sunday October 13th, Part 1, and Sunday, October 27th, Part 2.

Poll Chaplain/Peacemakers wanted!

Faiths United to Save Democracy (FUSD) are training clergy and lay volunteers to be a "moral and calming presence" at poll sites on November 5th, Election Day. One must be certified and trained on-line for this voluntary position through www.TurnOutSunday.com.

Laura has been trained and is heading to Philadelphia via train for Election Day. Feel free to contact her if interested at lfitz.nager@gmail.com.

Weekly Sunday Flowers

We're scheduling members and friends who would like to provide pulpit flowers for a week. If desired, flowers can be given in memory of a loved one, with the loved one(s) mentioned in the bulletin. Flowers or greenery can be fresh from your garden or ordered from florist. A house plant from home displayed for the morning would be lovely, as well. To sign up for a future week, please call Jill Harned, 603-398-9004. Thank you.

Hosting Weekly Fellowship Hour

Hosting a fellowship hour is a greatly appreciated way to contribute to our community. Just bring a few snacks, milk and Half and Half. Platters, pitchers, etc. are all available in the church kitchen and the coffee is prepared by the generous members of the Coffee Committee. If you are interested in volunteering to host one Sunday morning in either November, December or January, please contact Wendy Knight at wendyknight@gmail.com.

2025 FCCOL Members and Friends and Staff Directory

In the coming months the office staff will be working on an updating the FCCOL Directory for the church. You will be contacted either by email, or phone or snail mail. We will be updating addresses, phone, numbers, adding emails and cell phone numbers, in hopes of making communications easier throughout the church. Pictures may be optional, and this is the time to set a preference for communications from the church either email or digital communications and or direct mail.

Housing Wanted

We regularly hear from folks who are in need of an affordable rental. If you have any information that could be helpful, please let Anne in the office know. One woman we know of would be grateful even for a room to rent for a period of time.

Seeking Employment

Guli Gvelesiani, I have lived in Old Lyme and worked for 7 years as a live-in caregiver for a church family. I can provide live-in caregiving for families in Old Lyme and other locations in CT. 860-391-5691.

OCTOBER 2024 CALENDAR

Senior Choir Rehearsal *Wednesday, September 2nd at 7:30 pm* in the Fellowship Hall.

Church Council Meeting, *Thursday, October 3rd at 7:00pm* in the Library.

Food Pantry and Diaper Bank *Saturday, October 5th at 8:30 am* in Fellowship Hall.

Communion Sunday *October 6th at 10:00 am.*

Ladies Who Stitch *Monday, October 7th at 10:00am* in the Sheffield Auditorium.

Environmental Committee Field Trip Offshore Wind in N. L. *Monday, Oct. 7th at 11:30 am.*

Ladies Benevolent Society Luncheon *Tuesday, Oct. 8th at 12:00 pm* in the Fellowship Hall.

Board of Trustees Meeting *Tuesday, October 8th at 7:00 pm* in the Library.

Ballroom Dancing *Wednesday, October 9th at 10:00 am* in the Fellowship Hall.

Senior Choir Rehearsal *Wednesday, September 9th at 7:30 pm* in the Fellowship Hall.

ARC Blood Drive *Thursday, October 10th from 8:00 am -6:00pm,* in the Fellowship Hall.

Bible Study *Thursday October 10th at 11:00 am* in the Hoag Parlor.

Food Pantry *Saturday, October 12th at 8:30 am* in Fellowship Hall.

Nehantic Heritage Day *Saturday, October 12th from 1:00-4:00pm* in East Lyme at McCook Park.

Musical Masterworks *Sat, Oct 12th at 5:00 pm and Sunday, Oct 13th at 3:00 pm* at FCCOL.

Convergence Adult Forum Part I *Sunday, Oct. 13th at 11:30 am* in the Sheffield Auditorium.

FCCOL Office Closed *Monday, October 14th* for Indigenous Peoples Day

Senior Choir Rehearsal *Wednesday, September 16th at 7:30 pm* in the Fellowship Hall.

Bible Study *Thursday October 17th at 11:00 am* in the Hoag Parlor.

Board of Stewardship Meeting *Thursday, October 17th at 4:00 pm* in the Library.

November Newsletter Deadline *Friday, October 18th.*

Writers at the Well *Friday, October 18th at 10:00 am* in Hoag Parlor.

Food Pantry *Saturday, October 19th at 8:30 am* in Fellowship Hall.

Ladies Who Stitch *Monday, October 21st at 10:00am* in the Sheffield Auditorium.

Ladies Benevolent Society Meeting *Tuesday, Oct. 22nd at 10:00 am* in the Library.

Board of Deacons Meeting *Tuesday, Oct. 22nd at 7:00 pm* in the Library.

Senior Choir Rehearsal *Wednesday, October 23rd at 7:30 pm* in the Fellowship Hall.

Bible Study *Thursday October 24th at 11:00 am* in the Hoag Parlor.

Food Pantry *Saturday, October 26th at 8:30 am* in Fellowship Hall.

God's Neighborhood Youth Breakfast Run *Saturday, October 26th at 6:30 am.*

Convergence Adult Forum Part II *Sunday, Oct. 27th at 11:30 am* in the Sheffield Auditorium.

Ladies Who Stitch *Monday, October 28th at 10:00am* in the Sheffield Auditorium.

Grief Group *Wednesday, October 30th at 5:30 pm* in Hoag Parlor.

Senior Choir Rehearsal *Wednesday, October 30th at 7:30 pm* in the Fellowship Hall.

THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF OLD LYME

Staff

The Rev. Dr. Steven R. Jungkeit, Senior Minister (860-434-8686)

The Rev. Laura Fitzpatrick-Nager, Senior Associate Minister (860-304-9096)

The Rev. Carleen R. Gerber, Associate Minister (860-304-2070)

Simon D. Holt, Director of Music (860-705-3037)

The Rev. Rebecca T. Crosby, Minister for Haitian Outreach

Rebecca A. Francisco serves as minister to the South Lyme Union Chapel

Jolene Brant, Director of Youth Education/Junior & Senior Pilgrim Fellowship Leader

Rachael Jungkeit, Director of Children's Music

Robert McCracken, Church Administrator

Anne Koczka, Office Manager

Julie Mardjekaj, Bookkeeper

Sean McCarty, Sexton

Church Office Tel: 860-434-8686

Fax: 860-434-1135

e-mail: fccol@fccol.org

Website: www.fccol.org

Sunday Worship - 10:00 a.m.

South Lyme Union Chapel Worship - 9:00 a.m.

Counseling and Psychotherapy Tel: 860-434-3813

Cary Walker, LCSW

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF OLD LYME, Member U.C.C.

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The submission deadline for the November Newsletter is Friday, October 18th.

Please e-mail the church office at fccol@fccol.org if you want to be added to or removed from the newsletter mailing list, or receive your copy digitally!
Thanks for your help!



The reproduction of our Meetinghouse is from a sketch by William Steeves.