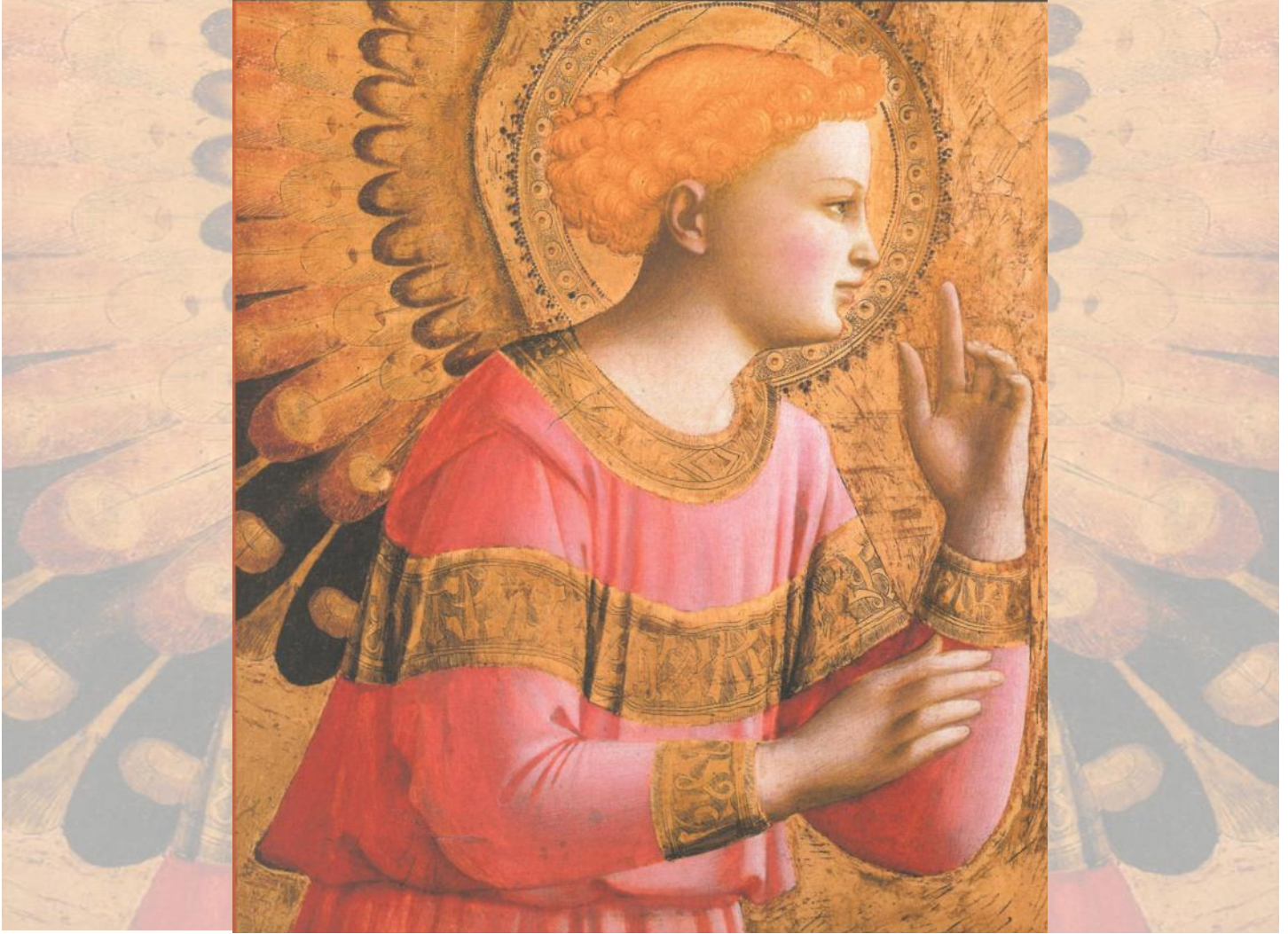


# APRIL 2025



Dear Friends,

*"Behind the monastery, down the road, there is a cemetery of worn-out things where lie smashed china, rusty metal, cracked pipes and twisted bits of wire, empty cigarette packs, sawdust, corrugated iron, old plastic, tires beyond repair: all waiting for the Resurrection, like ourselves."*  
-Ernesto Cardinal, *The Gospel of Solentiname*

Walking up the sidewalk towards our church a few Sunday mornings ago, we had to dodge the tents set up on our front lawn. Our young people participated in the annual Sharing Humanity night and slept outside under chilly skies in order to experience the hardships of being unhoused. This FCCOL Youth Group tradition is one that dates back nearly 20 years. It has had many names; Box Night, No Room at the Inn and now we call it Sharing Humanity Night.

While it's true we want our young people to have some real-life exposure to the needs, challenges and reasons for homelessness, we also want them to understand what Jesus meant when he said to the disciples, "when you gave a meal to someone who was hungry, when you gave them a coat, when you visited them in prison, you did this for me" (Matthew 25: 35-40).

Ultimately though, we want all of our kids to know first hand what matters most about this faith business we call "church". And that sharing our humanity and loving "the other" across the divides of stigma, separation and arbitrary boundaries is essential to becoming more human ourselves. We talk together about the power of listening to another's story and knowing a person's name and how that dignifies each person and lifts up the divine signature within each person. We all become more human ourselves; and that experience changes you for the rest of your life.

Therein lies the hope for our world.

(continued on page 6)

# HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING AT FCCOL



## Choir Schedule

To all members of the Choir - Thanks for all your wonderful singing in March!

Here is what April's schedule is looking like:

**Wednesday, April 2:** Rehearsal at 7:30 pm

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

**Wednesday, April 9:** Rehearsal at 7:30 pm

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

**Wednesday, April 16:** Rehearsal at 7:30 pm

**Maundy Thursday, April 17:** Singing at the 6:00 pm service with a rehearsal at 5:15 pm.

**Easter Sunday, April 20:** Singing at the 9:00 am and 11:00 am service with a rehearsal at 8:15 am

**Wednesday, April 23: NO REHEARSAL.**

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

**Wednesday, April 30:** Rehearsal at 7:30 pm

**Sunday, May 4:** Singing at the 10:00 am service with a rehearsal at 9:15 am

Many thanks and best wishes to all,  
Simon

## Old Lyme Ringers Notes

The Old Lyme Ringers continue to keep busy preparing and learning new music for Lent and Easter. On March 30, the group will be performing an amazing arrangement of the familiar hymn "Fairest Lord Jesus." The piece is entitled "Meditation on Beautiful Savior." For Easter Sunday, April 20, in both the 9:00 and 11:00 services the ringers will be playing an arrangement of an old French carol entitled "Now the Green Blade Riseth." This piece not only uses the familiar technique of ringing, but also includes the use of mallets and the martellato technique.

## ReBillion

Our children & youth handbell choir has been working hard on their piece that they will perform on Palm Sunday, April 13. The piece is entitled "Let Happy Hosannas Ring." The children have been learning five new techniques for this piece: the Shake, Thumb Damp, Swing, Pluck, and Martellato. They are a wonderful group and include Anderson Brant, Noah Brant, Lucy Byers, Zoey Dowd, Augie Jungkeit, Devon Kiem, Colton Lodge, Allie Mock, Anna William Fitzpatrick-Nager, Connor Rice, David Rice and Lucy Vautrain. Their ringing season will conclude on Palm Sunday, and we wish them well on this day!

## Ladies Who Stitch (LWS)

Spring has sprung and we've stored most of our cold weather creations to make room for seasonal and newer items. However, if you are traveling, or need to purchase mittens, scarves, hats, etc. for yourself or for gifts, just ask us - such things are easily accessible. The April 8th TBS luncheon will again give us a chance to display our things in the Fellowship Hall - but in the meantime, check us out in the \*Partnership Store.

**Greeting Cards:** We make packets of gift tags by recycling greeting cards of all kinds. Your donations are welcome and they can left be on the alcove counter behind our curtain in the Sheffield Auditorium.

**Woman's Exchange/Lyme Tree:** Located beside Subway in the Big Y plaza, this unique gift shop is a treasure trove of beautifully handcrafted items. Lyme Tree is open Wednesday - Saturday from 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., is run by volunteers, and its profits are donated to charities that support women and children. Some items from Ladies Who Stitch are consigned there.

**\*The FCCOL Partnership Store,** across from the Fellowship Hall, features goods from Palestine, Haiti, and Tribal Crafts as well as creations from Ladies Who Stitch. We call it guilt-free shopping since all proceeds go directly to the artisans, or to FCCOL outreach missions. LWS opens the Partnership Store on Sundays after the service, Mondays during our working hours, Wednesday around choir practice, and during most large in-house FCCOL activities. Also, our fabulous sexton, Sean, and/or our fabulous office manager, Anne, are happy to assist with store purchases by special request. Call the church office 860.434.8686 during working hours.

**Ladies Who Stitch regularly meet on Mondays from 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. in the Sheffield Auditorium - with a lunch break in the library at noon. Visitors, shoppers, and potential new members are always welcome.**

Questions: Contact Eunice via email ([eunicetaylor@me.com](mailto:eunicetaylor@me.com)) or stop by on a Monday.

## God's Neighborhood

"The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members." – **Coretta Scott King**

We all live in communities. In Sunday school this month, we continue to learn and celebrate the communities we're all a part of...with our families, friends in school, friends in church, and our neighbors here and around the world. Living in a community is what we are designed to do! Do we live in a community intentionally, with great care and love for our neighbor? Or do we live in a community carelessly and risk hurting others unintentionally? Living in a community intentionally is a faith practice because it lets us turn our everyday interactions with others into something holy and full of God's love.

**Sunday, April 6:** As Spring blooms all around us we'll notice all the ways God's beauty shines in its uniqueness and diversity. We'll read Psalm 139:14 which reminds us "I thank you, God—you're breathtaking! Body and soul, I am marvelously made!" In JPF, our middle schoolers will host guest librarian, Nike Desis, as she helps us to explore the vocabulary of respect we use every day to address one another in conversation. She and her high school assistants will help us to plan an adult forum for our community about this topic.



**Sunday, April 13:** It's Palm Sunday! We'll participate in a parade of palms during the church service and then, read the story of Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem on a donkey from the gospel of Luke 19:28-40 (which begins what we call "Holy Week"). Our Youth Group will be hosting guest and church member, Carolyn Wakeman, who will share her work with the Witness Stones and her research into the enslaved people of Old Lyme dating to the 1600's-1800's. We'll learn the names and stories of those people who were enslaved in our community and for whom we've honored by placing Witness Stones plaques on the front lawn of

our church. Students will help to clean the Witness Stones together as a service project. Our Youth Group students are asked to provide a snack or drink to share during their meeting.

**Tuesday, April 15:** Happy Vacation! Our Youth Group will take the train into NYC to tour the Statue of Liberty and then the Ellis Island Museum to learn about the great migration to the U.S in the 1800's. Meeting at 8 am at the church to go from there.

**Sunday, April 20:** Happy Easter Sunday! We have two church services today at 9:00 and 11:00 (and a sunrise service at 6:00 am at Griswold Point). There's no Sunday School today!



**Sunday, April 27th:** We'll celebrate Earth Week with a Flower Sale this Sunday! God's Neighborhood will plant flowers and help in some way in the sale of spring flowers to raise money for the Heifer International Nonprofit Organization.

**Prayer to Share:** Sometimes poems are the perfect prayer...since April is poetry month, here's a famous spring poem by e.e. cummings.

i thank You God for most this amazing  
day: for the leaping greenly spirits of trees  
and a blue true dream of sky; and for everything  
which is natural which is infinite which is yes

(i who have died am alive again today,  
and this is the sun's birthday; this is the birth  
day of life and of love and wings: and of the gay  
great happening illimitably earth)

how should tasting touching hearing seeing  
breathing any—lifted from the no  
of all nothing—human merely being  
doubt unimaginable You?

(now the ears of my ears awake and  
now the eyes of my eyes are opened)

# FCCOL Moth Storytelling Night Potluck



Join us for a evening of good food, good friends, and good storytelling! We will meet in the FCCOL Fellowship Hall on Friday April 4<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 for a Potluck Dinner and to hear an assortment of short Moth-style stories. Open to all - please bring a dish to share and a friend (no reservations necessary)!

Questions? Contact Tom Sherer: [tesjr299@outlook.com](mailto:tesjr299@outlook.com)

If you would like to help with the potluck setup/cleanup, please contact Deb Heminway: [dheminway9@gmail.com](mailto:dheminway9@gmail.com)



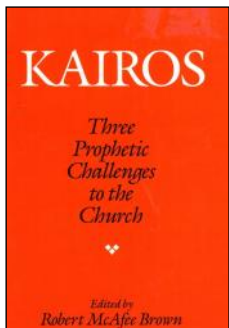
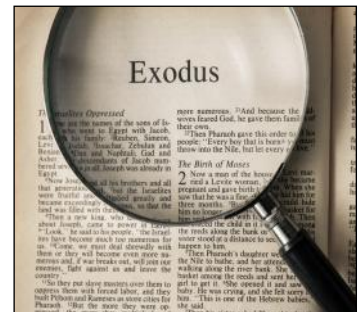
## ARC BLOOD DRIVE

There will be an American Red Cross Blood Drive at the First Congregation Church of Old Lyme on Thursday, April 17th, 2025, from 1:00 pm - 6:00 pm.

Please see the link below to make an appointment before arriving. <https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/donation-time>

## Adult Bible Study: "Goodness, Greed and Grace: Join us as we will begin reading the Book of 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 will be every Thursday at 11:00 am in the Hoag Parlor and on Zoom. Email: [fccol@fccol.org](mailto:fccol@fccol.org) for the zoom link.



## Reading the South African Kairos Document

Members and friends are invited to gather for a reading and study group of the South African Kairos Document with Steve or Laura. Written at the height of the apartheid struggles in South Africa in 1985, this brief theological statement remains stunningly relevant. We'll meet every Thursday at 12:00 noon, in the Hoag Parlor, immediately after the weekly Bible study. Copies of the Document will be available in the church Narthex, on the table at the bottom of the stairs between the Meetinghouse and the Fellowship Hall, and in the church office. Email: [fccol@fccol.org](mailto:fccol@fccol.org) for the zoom link.



Time: Saturday, April 5, 11am – 1pm EDT  
Location: New London Superior Court, 70 Huntington St, New London, CT 06320

Our event will take place at the intersection of Huntington and Broad Streets in New London CT. Signs and voices welcome, but no bullhorns, bad attitudes or violence allowed. We protest peacefully, now and always.

For more information visit: <https://www.mobilize.us/dsoff/>

## DANTE'S PARADISO

On Maundy Thursday, April 17th, we will return to Dante for the third and final part of *The Divine Comedy* - the *Paradiso*. It's an often overlooked and under read section of the poem, as many readers have preferred the creative torments of the *Inferno* and the *Purgatorio*. But it's actually a beautiful and moving finale to the entire poetic journey - and it's loaded with theological and psychological, as well as social and political insights. Where the *Inferno* demonstrates the violent disorder that besets human lives and societies governed solely by self-interest, and the *Purgatorio* demonstrates what it is to heal from those disorders, the *Paradiso* is bold enough to imagine what flourishing human lives and communities might look like, refracted through the lens of a Divine love.

As in previous years, we'll be reading the entirety of the poem aloud on Maundy Thursday, following our traditional service. We'll begin at 7, and continue well into the night. Individual readers are encouraged to sign up for particular cantos. There are 33, and so we'll need 33 readers - there are still a few available! Those who have already signed up can pick up their assigned cantos in the church office. And, like the previous two years, commemorative posters will be made for the evening.

For those who might be interested, a few enthusiasts have been meeting on Mondays at 6:30 in the Hoag Parlor to read selected cantos. The conversations are lively, and we've been uniformly inspired by the insights that emerge from lingering with Dante's images. All are welcome to join us as we prepare for Maundy Thursday.

There are any number of worthy translations, but we've been favoring the Hollander and the Palma translations. If you're interested in some of the secondary literature, Peter Hawkins' *Dante's Testaments* is highly recommended, as is his lecture on the *Paradiso* found in *Undiscovered Country*. Another brand new resource is a history of the *Commedia* and its influence on the world, written by Joseph Luzzi: *Dante's Divine Comedy: A Biography*.

(continued from the cover)

It's why here at FCCOL we travel to Cuba and South Dakota, Palestine and New York City, Haiti and West Africa and New London. Granted, Sharing Humanity night is only for one night and our kids all have blankets and beds waiting for them at home. However, hearing from someone who has lived the experience of being without shelter makes the reality of what so many face in our community more than real. Who knows, maybe one or two of our young people will solve the intractable problem of homelessness and lack of affordable housing once and for all someday soon!

Thanks to church member Dana Dixon, a counselor at the Homeless Hospitality Center, we were able to meet and hear the story of Mr. Russell, a 70 year old who joined us for tacos in our Fellowship Hall. As he said, "I never thought I'd reach this age, and end up homeless!"

We are so proud of all of our young people and their commitment to this project. I also want to thank our Director of God's Neighborhood, Jolene Brant and Erin and Justin Cameron for chaperoning the overnight shift. You'll know them by their weary eyes and their halos!

According to the CT Coalition to End Homelessness, the numbers of those living without shelter has been on the rise in Connecticut for the past few years, which experts say is a result of rising rents and lack of affordable housing. The latest data showed that there were more than 5,000 people experiencing homelessness in our state in 2024.

Sadly, the number of people living in their cars or tents (if they have them) is rising- not just nationally but here along the shoreline. Last month, the Homeless Hospitality Center reported in their newsletter that 100 people had sought shelter, their highest number ever. If they're lucky, some people do get a bed or a corner of the floor; however, many end up under bridges or in the woods.

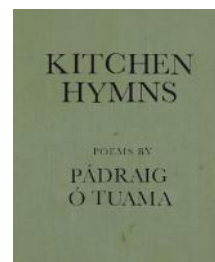
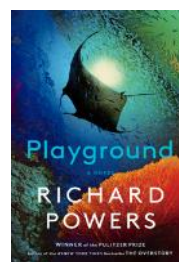
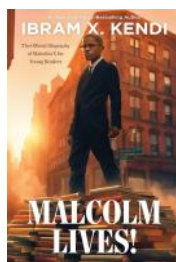
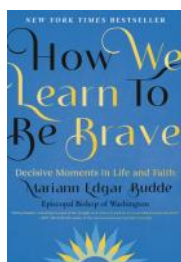
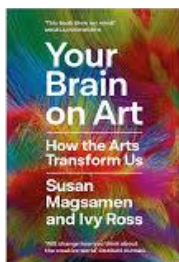
When I drove Mr. Russell home to the center, a staff member met us in the parking lot. When she heard we were from FCCOL she said, "you're the church that makes those amazing bags for our guests!" She went on to tell me how much people appreciate those handmade bags (created by the Ladies Who Stitch). She shared a story of when she recently gave a floral bag to a couple living outside. For the first time in a while they perked up and came inside to do laundry because they didn't want to get their new bag dirty. Said the staff member, "Those bags are so much more than bags. They are dignity."

In this month's issue, you'll find our Holy Week services and events taking us from Palm Sunday to Easter. For Maundy Thursday, April 17th, we are offering a special service of communion and music at 6:00 p.m. followed by the reading Dante's third and final part of the Divine Comedy, Paradiso. Steve tells me there are still a few openings left if you'd like to join us in reading a canto. Sign-ups in the main office.

As we journey through Holy Week together in this challenging time, you may want to sit with the Nicaraguan paintings of the Stations of the Cross on exhibition in our meetinghouse through Holy Saturday. They depict the Passion story as told through the artists of the Solentiname community in Nicaragua in the 1960's-1980's.

As we journey to the cross of Good Friday on our way to Easter, we remember all the communities of the world suffering under oppression today. We pray and practice resurrection where we see it, sharing our humanity each step of the way.

With love,



**Reading:** *Your Brain on Art: How the Arts Transform Us* by Susan Magsamen and Ivy Ross, *How We Learn to be Brave* by Maryann Edgar Budde, *Malcolm Lives!* by Ibram X. Kendi, *Playground* by Richard Powers, *Kitchen Hymns* by Padraig O'Tuama.

## The Benevolent Society April Luncheon

Come join us for some fellowship, delicious food, and an entertaining program at The Ladies Benevolent Society second Spring luncheon on Tuesday, April 8<sup>th</sup> from noon to 2pm in Fellowship Hall. Chef Rick promises a delicious chicken recipe with all the fixings.

As always, the luncheon program begins at 1pm, and this is one that should not be missed! There will be a presentation by Lucretia Bingham, grand-daughter of Hiram Bingham who rediscovered Machu Picchu. Ms. Bingham, a writer and a painter, who followed her grandfather's steps along the Inca Trail will present "Invaders of an Ancient Culture: Conquistadors, Explorers and Tourists in Peru".

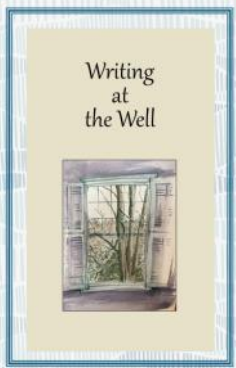
Suggested donation for the luncheon and program is \$5 per person, plus a nonperishable food item for our food bank or a package of disposable diapers for our diaper bank. If you plan to join us at the luncheon, please call the FCCOL office at (860) 434-8686 by Friday, April 4<sup>th</sup> to make a reservation so we can be sure to have enough food prepared for all to enjoy.

## Trans Parent Group

For Parents, Caregivers and Family Members of Trans Youth/Young Adults: Our 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, April 23rd at 5:30 in the Hoag Parlor. For more information email us at: [fccol@fccol.org](mailto:fccol@fccol.org).

## Writers at the Well

Friday, April 25th at 10:00 am. 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. Copies of our Poetry book available in the Narthex or the Church office.



## Grief Group

This monthly support group is for those who have lost a loved one and those struggling with other losses. Next meeting: Wednesday, April 30th from 5:00-6:00 pm in Hoag Parlor.

## Witness Stones

Please join us after church on Palm Sunday to help clean the Witness Stones. We're hoping to form a few teams to clean along Lyme Street, near Duck River Cemetery and in the Black Hall region. Sign up at Fellowship hour or by emailing Laura.

## The New London Meal Center

During the last thirty plus years our Mission Board has supported The New London Meal Center on the fourth Sunday of every month, serving a healthy meal at the Center which includes sending meals to the Homeless Hospitality Center. Various church committees, and other groups, such as the Senior Choir, and Senior PF are assigned a month to provide a meal and servers. The Meal Center operates Monday through Friday with a small staff and many volunteers to serve lunch and dinner to many hungry clients who might not otherwise consume warm, healthy meals.

Once a month a dinner meal is served on Saturday, but otherwise some of the clients haven't eaten a decent meal since their last one on a Friday evening at The Center. **We are always in need of people who are willing to help out\*** Each month we meet on the 4th Sunday at the church at 3:30 to pick up prepared food and donated drinks plus food, and then carpool in to the Center. We serve promptly from 5:00-6:00. On occasion we have served as many as 170 meals to very hungry and appreciative clients. It remains a very important mission supported by our church.



If you have questions and are interested in helping out any month, you may contact Julie Kuja at [julie.kuja@yahoo.com](mailto:julie.kuja@yahoo.com).

**\*Either by cooking or shopping for items ahead of time or helping when we serve at the site.**

## Diaper Bank Saturday: Quarterly Update

In 2020, when the Diaper Bank opened its doors, our goal was to serve 30 babies each month. As a result of COVID, diaper banks were established in cities, and many guests were referred to their place of residence for diapers. FAST forward to now, we have returned to what we anticipate will be realistic numbers as the year progresses.

SIZE	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH
Newborn	1	0	0
Size 1	0	1	0
Size 2	4	2	1
Size 3	10	5	3
Size 4	8	5	6
Size 5	6	5	3
Size 6	8	8	5
Size 7	4	3	3
3T/4T Pull-ups	1	1	1
4T/5T Pull-ups	4	3	3
5T/6T Pull-ups	3	2	3
TOTAL	49	35	28

### Homeless Hospitality Donations

We are grateful to everyone who helped with the donations of socks and coffee for the Homeless Hospitality Center of New London. Their request for canes (used canes are just fine!) and ground coffee and socks will continue. Please bring them to church and leave them with the deacons at the front door if you have one to donate; or bring it to the church office during the week. Many thanks.

### Sunday Flowers

We're scheduling members and friends who would like to provide pulpit flowers for Sundays. To sign up, call Jill Harned, 603-398-9004. Thank you!

### 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. Even a room to rent for a period of time would be greatly appreciated.

### Caretaker Position Available

Aldrean (Al) Chuma is a professional caregiver and available to offer any assistance you may need with your loved one at home. Part-time and full-time hours. References available at: #917-957-3963.

### Vehicle Wanted

Our caretaker, Bill Slivinski, is in need of a car. Please let us know if you can help. Call 860-434-8686. Thank you.

### Caretaker Available

Guili, who has worked with some of our families in the past, is seeking a fulltime, live-in, 24/7 caretaker position. She can be reached at 860-391-5691. References upon request.



# Easter Schedule 2025

## Maundy Thursday April 17th, 2025

A 6:00 pm service of communion and sacred music.

A reading of Dante's "Paradiso" will follow at 7:00pm.

## Good Friday April 18th, 2025

The Meetinghouse is open for prayers and meditation.

## Easter Sunrise Service April 20th, 2025

6:00am at Griswold Point  
(if you need directions call the church at  
860-434-8686).

## Easter Sunday 9:00 am & 11:00 am Worship Services

Join us for a coffee and a light breakfast between services.

Childcare will be provided at the 9 o'clock service.

Sunday school will not meet, but will resume on April 27th at 10:00 am.



## Environmental Committee Homegrown National Parks – brainchild of Douglas Tallamy

On the dwindling “*Good News*” front, this just in:

The progress map at Homegrown National Parks (HNP) <https://homegrownnationalpark.org/about-us/> places the state of Connecticut at #6 in terms of native plant cover, (as I understand the map!)

I heard Entomologist Douglas Tallamy at the University of Delaware speak at the Hartford Garden show a couple of weeks ago, and am thrilled at this idea. HNP is grassroots call-to-action. Part of their mission is to help people understand the biodiversity crisis by breaking it down to a clear problem with a science-based solution, which is to add native plants and remove invasive ones everywhere that we live, work, learn, pray, and play.

*“Our National Parks, no matter how grand in scale, are too small and separated from one another to preserve (native) species to the levels needed. Thus, the concept for Homegrown National Park, a bottom-up call-to-action to restore habitat where we live and work, and to a lesser extent where we farm and graze, extending national parks to our yards and communities.” - Doug Tallamy*

HNP is a free to join organization that helps folks restore the natural landscape. The concept is simple: replace half of your lawn (or more if you wish!) with native species. Lawns are nice and have their place and use, but do we *really* need such big ones? They are expensive! The lawns are deserts to native insect life, which underpins *so* much else.

I urge you to check out the website, and see what you might do to enliven your own yard. Get your own ‘park’ on the map!

-Mariette Brown



## GIVING MATTERS - GOOD MORNING and HELLO!

For those of you who do not know me, I am Candy Stanberry. I am now a PLEDGING MEMBER of the First Congregational Church of Old Lyme and a member of the Board of Stewardship.

I've been involved with the FCCOL for many years- as a pastoral counselor with my husband, Dr. Mark Stanberry, a speaker at Women's Retreats at Camp Claire, a co-leader of the original caretakers group, a contributor to a cancer support group co-lead by my husband and Carleen, and as a speaker with my husband at Adult Forums on mental health issues. *Although we donated our time and money, we were not members and we did not pledge.*

**So what changed?** My husband unexpectedly became very ill. We were supposed to have another 5 years that turned into 5 months. And what seemed like all of a sudden, my husband was in Hospice Care at MMH- a truly wonderful place. We had supportive family and friends with us, but we also had Carleen. Carleen sat with Mark, held my hand, and offered the most comforting prayers I've ever heard. She did not try to explain the unexplainable- why good people die young. She offered comfort, care, thoughtful words, and help.

When Mark died, I was scared, sad, angry, confused, and frightened. But, Carleen made sure **I never got lost**. We were able to plan a beautiful memorial service and reception here at the church. These were wonderful celebrations of my husband's life. The following year, Carleen married our son, Matthew, and his fiancé, Ann. This was actually their third marriage to each other but that's a long story that we don't have time for today. Having Carleen with us made this beautiful occasion a heartfelt celebration of love.

Being involved with the church grounded me and gradually helped me move forward. No one asked me to pledge or become a member. Our church offers so much: worship, children's services, youth group, music including choirs, Old Lyme Ringers, African music, New Orleans jazz, and hymn sings, adult forums, monthly lunches, potluck, Haitian and soup bowl dinners, mission trips, white elephant sales, Ladies Who Stitch, The Benevolent Society, bible studies, support groups, counseling and so much more. **These activities bring people together encouraging all of us to be more aware of and caring for each other.** As I began to participate in more of the activities, I gradually and much too slowly learned that becoming a member and, if you are able, pledging is important. Why? Because we need to know that these activities and services **are, or are not**, important to you. We need to know you care. And, we need to be able to make and keep budgets so we can plan the life of our church.

Last year, Carleen asked me to join the Board of Stewardship. She asked, I said yes, having no idea the responsibilities of this board. Raising money is definitely not my forte. But here I am sharing my story to remind all of you that **our church is a very special place with very special people.** *And yes, I am asking you to become a member and if you are able, to make a pledge.* We need to know you care and value all we do. Thank you for listening. God bless you all and the First Congregational Church of Old Lyme.

Candy Stanberry

# APRIL 2025 CALENDAR

**Pottery Class** with Paul Fitzpatrick-Nager *Tuesday, April 1st at 6:00 pm* in the Pottery Studio.

**Pottery Class** with Paul Fitzpatrick-Nager *Wednesday, April 2nd at 6:00 pm* in the Pottery Studio.

**Old Lyme Ringers Rehearsal** *Wednesday, April 2nd at 6:30 pm* in the Fellowship Hall.

**Choir Rehearsal** *Wednesday, April 2nd at 7:30 pm* in the Sheffield Auditorium.

**Bible Study** *Thursday, April 3rd at 11:00 am* in the Library.

**Reading the South African Kairos Document** *Thursday, April 3rd at 12:00 pm* in the Library.

**ReBbellion Rehearsal** *Thursday, April 3rd at 4:15 pm* in the Fellowship Hall.

**Moth Stories and Potluck Supper** *Friday, April 4th at 6:00pm* in the Fellowship hall.

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

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

**Dante *Paradiso* Reading Discussion Group** *Monday, April 7th at 6:30 pm* in the Hoag Parlor.

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

**Pottery Class** with Paul Fitzpatrick-Nager *Tuesday, April 8th at 6:00 pm* in the Pottery Studio.

**Ballroom Dancing Class with Sean McCarty** *Wednesday, April 9th at 10:00 am* in the Fellowship Hall.

**Pottery Class** with Paul Fitzpatrick-Nager *Wednesday, April 9th at 6:00 pm* in the Pottery Studio.

**Old Lyme Ringers Rehearsal** *Wednesday, April 9th at 6:30 pm* in the Fellowship Hall.

**Choir Rehearsal** *Wednesday, April 9th at 7:30 pm* in the Sheffield Auditorium.

**Bible Study** *Thursday, April 10th at 11:00 am* in the Library.

**Reading the South African Kairos Document** *Thurs, April 10th at 12:00 pm* in the Library.

**ReBbellion Rehearsal** *Thursday, April 10th at 4:15 pm* in the Fellowship Hall.

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

**Palm Sunday** *April 13th 10:00am Worship Service.*

**Ladies Who Stitch** *Monday, April 14th at 10:00 am* in the Sheffield Auditorium.

**Dante *Paradiso* Reading Discussion Group** *Monday, April 14th at 6:30 pm* in the Hoag Parlor.

**Board of Trustees Meeting** *Tuesday, April 15th at 7:00 pm* in the Library.

**Old Lyme Ringers Rehearsal** *Wednesday, April 16th at 6:30 pm* in the Fellowship Hall.

**Choir Rehearsal** *Wednesday, April 16th at 7:30 pm* in the Sheffield Auditorium.

**ARC Blood Drive** *Thursday, April 17th from 1:00 pm -6:00 pm* in the Fellowship Hall.

**Maundy Thursday Worship Service** *Thursday April 17th at 6:00 pm* in the Meetinghouse.

**Dante's Paradiso Reading** *Thursday April 17th at 7:00 pm* in the Meetinghouse.

**Good Friday** *April 18th* the Meetinghouse will be open for Prayers and Meditation.

**May Newsletter Deadline** *Friday, April 18th.*

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

**Easter Sunrise Service** *Sunday, April 20th at 6:00 am* at Griswold Park.

**Easter Sunday Worship Services** *April 20th at 9:00 am and 11:00 am* in the Meetinghouse.

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

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

**TransParent Group Meeting** *Wednesday, April 23rd at 5:30 pm* in the Hoag Parlor.

**Choir Rehearsal** *Wednesday, April 23rd at 7:30 pm* in the Sheffield Auditorium.

**Bible Study** *Thursday, April 24th at 11:00 am* in the Library.

**Reading the South African Kairos Document** *Thursday, April 24th at 12:00 pm* in the Library.

**Newsletter Folding** *Thursday, April 24th* in the Library.

**Writers at the Well** *Friday, April 25th at 10:00 am* in the Hoag Parlor.

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

**Musical Masterworks Concert** *Saturday, April 26th and at 5:00pm and  
Sunday, April 27th at 3:00 pm* in the Meetinghouse.

**New London Community Meal Center** *Sunday, April 27th.*

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

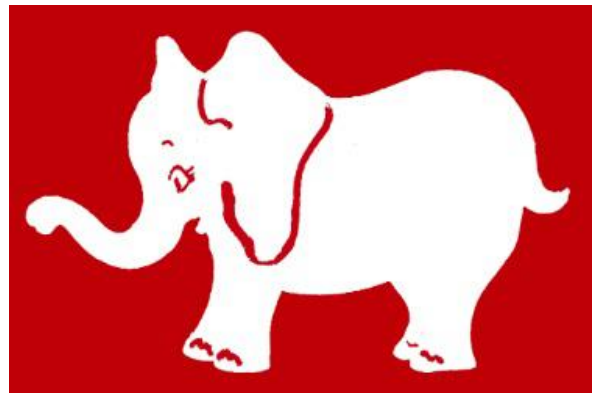
**Grief Group Meeting** *Wednesday, April 30th at 5:00 pm* in the Hoag Parlor.

**Choir Rehearsal** *Wednesday, April 30th at 7:30 pm* in the Sheffield Auditorium.

## 87th White Elephant Sale – 2025

This will be our **87th** WES which began back in the 1930's. It has been a great success over the years thanks to the support of all the volunteers and those who donated. In the post Covid era, we have grown each year and 2024 was the **BEST** day gross sales ever!

Start gathering those unwanted toys, clothes, books and one of a kind items so you'll be ready when drop-off begins Thursday, June 26th through July 2nd for 6 days with time out on Sunday. Don't miss out on your opportunity to donate those treasures but remember - Quality Items Please. More to follow on the type of items needed, drop off times and any limited pick-up service. To see the 2025 calendar, a list of the items that we will accept and pictures of past year's fair including the YouTube videos, please look for more info on the church web site [www.fccol.org](http://www.fccol.org).



### This year's sale dates are:

**Friday, July 11th 9:00 to 2:00**  
**Saturday, July 12th 8:00 to 12:00**

As usual the WES board reviewed the 2024 sale and responded to comments - a number were incorporated in an attempt to make for a safer and better shopping experience.

With such a large organization, there is turnover each year with folks 'retiring or moving' after years of service. We always need volunteers for set-up, selling, cleanup and especially with intake during the week to unload and sort, as the parking lot gets quite busy with cars dropping off items.

As always we are in need of additional department co-chair folks and hope you will consider stepping up with others to help run a department. Two or three seem to work well sharing responsibility and all that fun you'll have. Current openings include:

Appliances – Chair or (2) Co-chairs

Kitchenware - Co-chair

Large Furniture - Co-Chair

Worker Refreshment on Sale days – Chair

Parking attendants

**If you can spare a few hours or more, come on down and join us. It's a great time and you meet some real nice folks. Each year we have 200+ volunteers and can always use more. If interested, please call the church 860-434-8686 or any one of the following area coordinators:**

Anita Allen 860-227-6850

Bob Davis 860-884-7568

Nathalie Fogg 860-451-8460

Roxie Gallagher 860-227-4649

Jane Marolda 860-859-2497

Dave Pellerin 860-885-8928



# 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](mailto:fccol@fccol.org)

Website: [www.fccol.org](http://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 May Newsletter is Friday, April 18th.

Please e-mail the church office at [fccol@fccol.org](mailto: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.*