

The First Congregational Church of Old Lyme

SUMMER 2026



Dear Friends,

As I write, a soft spring rain is falling, cooling the air after a few days of sweltering temperatures. I've made my peace with winter, but I confess to a feeling of delight when the temperature climbs north. Maybe it's the pleasure of sleeping with an open window, and the breeze of a fan passing across the bed. Maybe it's the enjoyment of lighter foods - fresh grown, crisp, multi-hued, and delicious. Maybe it's the memory of childhood play that gets invoked when the days become warm. Or maybe it's the sheer relief that comes with slightly more relaxed schedules in the summer months. Though the heat has broken this morning, there is a kind of promise in the air that I find nearly impossible to resist.

Many things are slowing down around FCCOL for the summer months, though there are still plenty of activities and events happening at the corner of Lyme St. and Ferry Rd. Preparations for the White Elephant Sale are under way. On June 14, we'll be celebrating a new batch of confirmands in our service. And on June 21, we'll welcome our Cuban (and Colombian) friends back to FCCOL, as we celebrate Juneteenth, but also as we honor the African spiritual expressions that have nourished life throughout the Americas. And on June 28th, we'll celebrate Pride Sunday, with a guest preacher who will help us continue to expand our notions of the sacred, of sex and gender, and of what it means to live fully embodied lives. June promises to be a full and meaningful month in the life of our community.

Life certainly won't stop after that. The White Elephant Sale will command our attention in July, and then in August a small delegation will be traveling to Brazil to explore the healing arts and spirituality of the African traditions of Salvador.

HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING AT FCCOL

FCCOL Choir

Thank you for all your wonderful singing in May and indeed the whole of the season! We have a few more weekly rehearsals before we stop for the summer and then there are two Summer Sing Sundays to look forward to! Here is what the rehearsal and service schedule is looking like:

Wednesday, June 3: Rehearsal at 7:30 pm

Sunday, June 7: Singing at the 10:00 am service with a rehearsal at 9:15 am

Wednesday, June 10: Rehearsal at 7:30 pm

Sunday, June 14: Singing at the 10:00 am service with a rehearsal at 9:15 am

SUMMER SING SUNDAYS

Sunday, July 19: Singing at the 10:00 am service with a rehearsal at 9:15 am

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

Many thanks and best wishes to all.
Simon

Handbell Notes

Handbell Fund Drive

We want everyone to be aware that there is a drive to complete our set of handbells. We currently own four octaves of bells, but another octave is needed to play additional music and to start a six-member youth ensemble using larger bells. We are hoping to raise the funds soon, so that the bells can be ordered and be here at the beginning of rehearsals in mid-September. The cost of these bells, their cases, and additional supporting equipment is nearly \$30,000. The good news is that we are already

slightly over half-way to our goal in gifts and pledges. Will YOU be willing to help meet our goal? If you have questions, please speak with Gary Jungkeit for more information.

New Adult Handbell Choir

There is an interest by a number of people to start a new handbell choir for adults who have little or no experience in reading music and playing instruments. We need a minimum of 8 people to make this new venture work, and already five people have signed up. Time of practices will be determined by the ringers, and rehearsals will begin in the fall. Contact Gary Jungkeit by phone or text (423-782-6308), or contact the church office, if you are interested in being part of something new!

Handbells in the Summertime

A number of people express to Gary that they are saddened when the regular handbell season draws to a close in May. Never fear! In the months of June, July, and August a handbell quartet will be playing on the last Sunday of the month to satisfy those who like to ring and for those who like to hear handbell music in worship. Bells will continue to fill the Meetinghouse in the summertime with JOY!

Ladies Who Stitch (LWS)

By the time you read this, we will have only two more working Mondays, June 1st and 8th, before beginning our summer break. We've had a fabulous and productive year and are grateful for the creativity of our team as well as for the many donations and sales that have supported our efforts.

Our creations will be available in the Partnership Store during the White Elephant Sale and most Sundays following church services. We also have a

number of things consigned at Woman's Exchange/The Lyme Tree gift store in the Big Y plaza. The Partnership Store offering treasures from Haiti, Palestine, Tribal Crafts and Ladies Who Stitch can also be accessed by contacting the church office during working hours (860.434.8686) to ask Office Manager, Anne, or Sexton Sean to assist.

Beginning September 14th, **Ladies Who Stitch** will again meet regularly on Mondays from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the Sheffield Auditorium. If you have questions, notify the church office, or contact Eunice via email - eunicetaylor@me.com.

God's Neighborhood

Thank you so much to our Teachers of God's Neighborhood, we appreciate you and your time more than we can express. Thank you, Melissa DaPonte, Kristen Byers, MaryBeth Franco, Mary Bradford, Bradley Mock, and Rachael Jungkeit! We couldn't do what we do without your support. Thank you!



Moreover, to our Teachers Assistants,



thank you so much for all of your hard work and your steadfast support throughout the year! Thank you to

Maggie Thuma, Ellison Lodge, Naomi Cameron, Joe Kazadi, Finn Barrett, Julia Clark, Annabelle Coppola, Charlotte Thuma, Maeve Gosman, McCoy Gosman, Gabi Clark, Clarissa Mock, Miles Coppola, Anna Williams-Fitzpatrick-Nager, and Trent Cameron. We appreciate you all!



enjoyed this year getting to know you and growing our bonds while sustaining God's

Thank you to our families for all of your support throughout this year. You helped tremendously, and we really



Neighborhood and making it what it is. Thank you so very much!!

We'd also like to honor our high school and college graduates!!! Congratulations on this great achievement!! As Dr. Suess writes in *Oh, the Places You'll Go!*, "Today is your day! Your mountain is waiting. So... get on your way!"

Save this Summer Date:

June 14th is Confirmation Sunday, honoring our Confirmands and their mentors.

We will also be honoring our high school and college graduates on this Sunday.

And this is the last week of Sunday school until September. Have a wonderful Summer!

Memorials:

Alan Bradford

Tommy Starkweather

Upcoming Weddings:

Steve Crabtree and Nancy King

Sarah Behringer and Salvatore Fava

Upcoming Baptisms:

Joseph Muench, Parents - (Rebecca Snelson & Joseph Muench)

Ellie Swaney, Parents - (Alex & Eric Swaney)

Grief and Loss Group

Our monthly support group is for those who have lost a loved one and those struggling with other losses. We meet the first Wednesday and will resume again in September.

Weekly Bible Study

Please join us as we discuss The Book of Leviticus. We will meet Thursday, June 4th and June 11th from 11:00 - 12:00 pm in the Library. Call or email the church for the Zoom link. Bible study will resume after the summer break on September 17th.

TransParent Group Meeting

For Parents, Caregivers and Family Members of Trans Youth/Young Adults: Our group provides conversation, support community and education for parents and caregivers around the issues of transgender, nonbinary, and gender-diversity. Meets monthly on the 3rd Wednesday of every month 5:30-6:30. The next meeting will be in September.

ARC Blood Drive



The summer Blood Drives at FCCOL of Old Lyme will be on Thursday, June 11th from 8-6pm and August 13th from 1-6pm in the Fellowship Hall.

Writing at the Well

Join us on again in September in the Hoag Parlor as we meet 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.

Weekly Offering Table Flowers

If you would like to provide flowers for our communion table on a Sunday in honor of or memory of someone special in your life or a meaningful occasion, please call Jill Harned at 603-398-9004 to reserve a date. Thank you

New Additions to the Church Library

John Fugelsang's *Separation of Church and Hate: A Sane Person's Guide to Taking Back the Bible from Fundamentalists, Fascists, and Fleece-Flocking Frauds; To Catch at Waves*, a book of poetry by the late Emmett Jarret of St. Francis House in New London; and James Baldwin's *Go Tell It on the Mountain*, the novel that established the author's reputation with his own story about growing up as the son of an Evangelical minister in Harlem. For some clever beach reading: FCCOL fan Dave Eggers's *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius*.

IRIS (Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services)

IRIS is helping the homeless and is especially in need of twin-sized bedding, personal care items, kitchen items (including dishes, glassware, baking pans, cookware) and diapers. Gift cards (e.g. to Walmart) are also welcome. A FCCOL volunteer regularly travels to New Haven to deliver collected items. LWS will help by accepting new and gently-used donations for IRIS and for the New London Homeless Hospitality Center. Please leave donations on the Sheffield Stage clearly marked "LWS." During the WES set up please leave Items in the church office on the 2nd floor.

Summer Sing

This summer we will be holding two Summer Sings, or better known as "Turn up to FCCOL at 9:15am and rehearse for the 10:00am service." These will take place on July 19th and August 9th. Please mark your calendars! We hope many of you will join us! Open to all.

Yoga with Isabelle Barbour

Isabelle has been practicing yoga for 20 years and is a certified 200 hour Kripalu yoga teacher. In her yoga classes she guides participants to notice the body, breath, and mind without judgement. Please feel free to reach out to Isabelle with questions or comments (isabelle@isabellebarbour.com). Classes for the summer are gentle Tuesday Happy Hour Yoga 5:30-6:30.

Southeast Alliance for Interfaith Leadership (SAIL)

Two weeks ago, delegates from FCCOL and more than a dozen other religious institutions from Southeastern CT met in New London to share justice-related stories that were raised during “house meetings” that each faith community had held. On April 29 some 75 delegates convened to ratify five justice-related focus areas that resonated the most with the people who participated in the house/church meetings. At this meeting the formal name of this initiative (SAIL) was adopted.

The justice-related focus areas selected for further investigation are: Homelessness/Affordable Housing, Mental Health, Immigration, Maintaining Utility Service for those who can't pay their utility bills, and delivering accessible Methadone Treatment in the New London area.

Members from SAIL will meet over the summer to research and identify possible pathways to resolution for each of the five focus areas. The group's plan is to convene again in the early fall to review the research conducted prior to adopting the one or two issues that SAIL will address to make positive social justice change. SAIL – We are rocking the boat for justice!

The New London Meal Center (DINE)



NEW LONDON COMMUNITY 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 Choir and Senior PF, are assigned each month to provide a meal and servers. The Meal Center operates Monday through Friday with a small staff relying on volunteers to serve lunch and dinner to many hungry clients who might not otherwise consume warm, healthy meals.

We always need people who are willing to help out either by cooking a simple casserole, or shopping for items ahead of time, or helping on a Sunday evening when we serve at the site. We provide easy recipes and can reimburse you for the cost of the ingredients if that would be helpful

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 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 or can help out any month, please contact the office at 860-434-8686.

(continued from "Dear Friends" on the cover)

Even so, I hope there will be time for all of us to slow down just a bit. I hope there will be time to connect with friends and with family in ways that our schedules don't fully allow during the other seasons. I hope there will be time for play, for travel, and for expanding our horizons. And I hope there will be time for reading.

Here are a few books I'm hoping to get to this summer. I've been enjoying Solvej Balle's series *On the Calculation of Volume*, about a woman caught in a time loop that has her repeating Nov. 17th again and again. Four volumes of a projected seven have been published so far, and I've read the first two. Volumes three and four await. It's a strange kind of page-turner, but I've been hooked. I'm hoping to get to a few classics, like Thomas Mann's *Buddenbrooks*, or Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, neither of which I've ever read. And I'm planning to continue a practice that I began last summer, reading James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* out loud - paragraph by paragraph - with two friends every morning. We ponder a few pages every day, and then we move on to other things. At the rate we're going, we'll finish the book sometime in the 2030's. Who knows what else will vie for my attention. I'm looking forward to finding out.

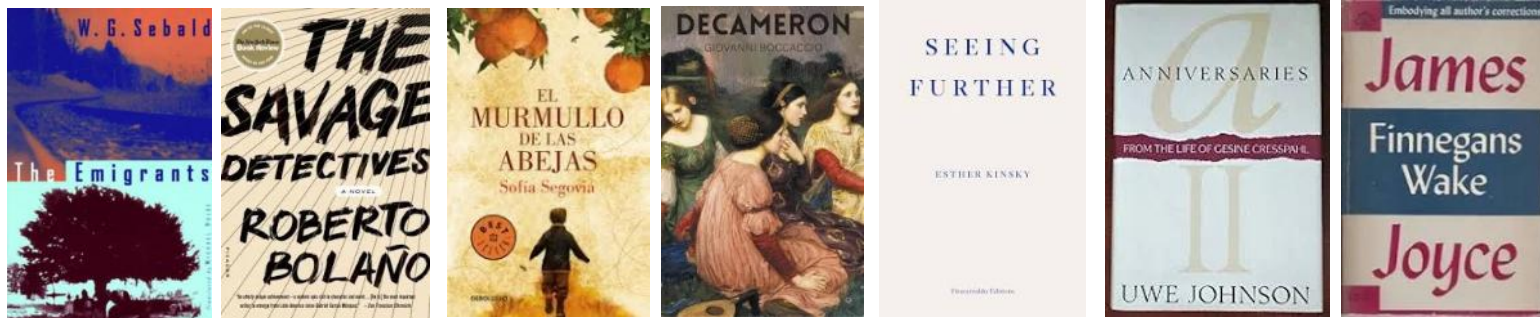
I'd also love to hear what (if anything) is calling to you this summer. What books are you finding alluring? What travels are you looking forward to? What visit will be most meaningful? What are the ways you'll connect with those around you?

Wherever your path leads this summer, I hope there will be blessings, good surprises, rich conversations, and yes, a few good books.

Stay human, and we'll see you soon!

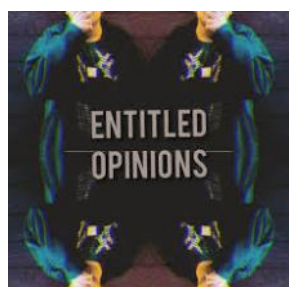
Steve

Reading: *The Emigrants*, by W.G. Sebald; *The Savage Detectives*, by Roberto Bolaño; *El Murmullo de las Abejas*, by Sofia Segovia; *The Decameron*, by Giovanni Boccaccio; *Seeing Further*, by Esther Kinsky; *Anniversaries, Vol. 2*, by Uwe Johnson (portions); *Finnegans Wake*, by James Joyce (portions); *The King James Version of the Bible* (portions).



Listening: *Entitled Opinions* (podcast); *Perfume Genius*, various albums.

Watching: *The Pitt*, Season 1 (HBO).



The Crosby Fund's Summer Camp in Haiti:

For the past 10 years, The Crosby Fund has made it a priority to bring happiness, laughter, and meaningful activity to the youngest members of the Deschapelles community by offering a summer camp program for children ages 5 to 13. Each session of camp is filled with a variety of activities designed to engage young minds and bodies. From arts and crafts and singing, dancing and sports, campers are given the chance to explore their creativity, build friendships, and simply enjoy being kids in a time of great struggle for Haiti. The program is led by our dedicated Haitian staff alongside volunteers and participants from the broader community. The Crosby Fund also recognizes that for many children in the Artibonite Valley, access to formal education remains a significant challenge. With that in mind, camp



organizers weave educational elements into the daily schedule, offering campers a valuable opportunity to learn even when, in many cases, formal schooling remains out of reach. This year presented its share of difficulties. Ongoing unrest across Haiti cast uncertainty over many community programs and events. Yet despite these challenges, The Crosby Fund is proud to share that summer camp took place as planned — a testament to the resilience of the Deschapelles community and the unwavering commitment of our staff who makes this program possible. A total of 90 local children were able to attend, filling the camp with the energy, enthusiasm, and hope that these young participants always bring.

Their smiles remind us exactly why this work matters.



FCCOL Immigration Ministry

The FCCOL Immigration Ministry is tasked with assisting our immigrant neighbors who have experienced hardships because a family member has been detained by I.C.E. or deported to another country. We provide transportation to immigration meetings and medical appointments, prison visits, and translators when needed. We also provide food assistance and clothing. Carolyn and I are members of the CT Interfaith Ministry group. This group is associated with a group of Immigration lawyers.

Not sure how *you* can help? Here are a couple ideas:

1. We have recently begun a collaboration with NLID (New London Immigrant Defense) which is a newly formed rapid response group. NLID has been placing informational flyers in New London, Groton, and Norwich. Though a couple of our FCCOL volunteers have helped them do this, they would welcome more volunteers. If you think you are interested in joining them, please contact us at Lovingkindness025@gmail.com for dates, times, and locations.
2. Talk with people in your circle about the support we provide for our immigrant neighbors. Eventually word will spread into the larger community that we can help. Remember that our immigrant neighbors are very afraid and will need time to process whether we are to be trusted. As we help more people the word will spread and others will begin to believe we *can* be trusted. It is a slow process but worth it.

Thank you to our wonderful volunteers who have been working with families in need; some on a weekly basis since October. Your support makes the lives of others better.

Our FCCOL volunteers have been ready to step up for almost a year. If you haven't been called to do anything yet this does not mean volunteering and participating in Red Folder trainings has been for nothing. We might not have a lot to do right now but we are here, we are talking/working with our colleagues in CT, and because of you we are ready to help at a moment's notice.

Thank you to all of you for volunteering and patiently waiting in the wings for your moment to lend a hand. If you have not signed up to be on our volunteer list, and want to, please either send us an email at: lovingkindness025@gmail.com or speak directly to us at church.

Peace and Love to you all!

Christine Harrington and Carolyn Hartsfield 7

All This Sainted Difference: A Spiritual Pilgrimage to Brazil August 10-20, 2026

In her poetry collection *The Cachoeira Tales*, Marilyn Nelson writes of a contemporary group of pilgrims, each with a story to tell, traveling together not to Canterbury, but to Cachoeira, Brazil. There, the pilgrims encounter the Sisters of Our Lady of the Good Death, who blend African, Indigenous, and Catholic ritual



elements. Founded by those who had been enslaved during the 19th century, the sisterhood was established to serve the poor, while keeping alive the sacred traditions of Africa, handed down as a precious inheritance from one generation to the next. Every year in Cachoeira, the Sisters offer a three-day celebration of music and of dance, where the Orixas (African divinities who bear a striking resemblance to Christian saints) come in order to bless, heal, chasten, and encourage contemporary people. It is in Cachoeira that the

pilgrims in Marilyn's poems converge. And it is in Cachoeira that pilgrims from FCCOL shall converge this coming August.

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to explore the African ritual traditions of Brazil. Visiting not only Cachoeira, but locating ourselves in and around the city of Salvador, we'll encounter the rituals, music, dance, foodways, and visual art that have sheltered and protected human lives through generations of hardship. We'll visit *terreiros* (house temples) around the city and throughout the surrounding countryside. And we'll discover how these dynamic and aesthetically charged spiritual systems (Candomblé and Umbanda) have evolved across time. The centerpiece of our journey will be the Feast of Our Lady of the Good Death, where we shall witness how the Sisters become a living bridge between this world and the other.

Designed to resonate and to link with our travels to Haiti, Cuba, New Orleans, and West Africa, our pilgrimage to Cachoeira and Salvador will be organized with the help of our friend Ned Sublette, and his vast network of contacts in Brazil. It is a fabulous opportunity to explore a beautiful part of Latin America (it will be winter in Salvador, meaning we can expect temperatures in the 70's and 80's), together with the history and spirituality of the African descended peoples of Bahia.

Contact Steve Jungkeit for more information, at steven@jungkeit.net.

In my capacity as a Board of Mission member, as well as a gardener, I've had the pleasure of meeting with three of the local 'pantry gardens' - volunteer run gardens that provide fresh produce over the summer, and sometimes through the winter, for the food pantries.

I'll introduce each one briefly here and highlight their strengths and achievements. Visiting with the organizers and board members of the gardens is always energizing because of their combined commitment to feeding the hungry and love of gardening. Each of these gardens run on volunteer power, and working in them is always an enriching, educational community experience. Most of them work Saturday, Tuesday and Thursday mornings, but their websites will give specific times.

Common Good Garden (CGG) just passed their 20th anniversary! About 3/4 of an acre behind Grace Episcopal Church in Saybrook, this garden produces an average of about 10,000 lbs. of produce a year! They have over 50 4x20' beds in cultivation. Food from this garden goes to the Shoreline Soup Kitchen and Food Pantry. In addition to growing all this food, they also have a cadre of drivers that go around to the local farm stands and gather an additional 10,000 lbs. of produce over the season to distribute, thus doubling their impact with a small bit extra effort.

They are an all-natural garden, using no chemical pesticides or herbicides, and no chemical fertilizer. A tall deer fence around the different areas protects the plants. There is an extensive composting area that turns all the grass clippings, used up vegetable plants, weeds, coffee grounds from Ashlawn, and leaves into the food for each of the beds. Aside from a few amendments that soil tests show is needed, CGG is pretty much self-sustaining. Starting in late March with harvesting asparagus, rhubarb and overwintered spinach, and planting onions and cold crops like beets and rutabagas, they go until mid to late October with winter squashes before finally closing the garden.

East Lyme Giving Garden (ELGG) - started about seven years ago is ambitious in its scope and vision. It is next to Flanders Baptist Church. They have approximately twice the area planted that CGG does, but because they are still getting their systems designed and in place, their production last year was about 1.5 times that of CGG. (They have 46 4x120' long beds in cultivation). All their food goes to the Gemma Moran Food Center in New London for distribution to the New London pantries.

ELGG practices a slightly different method of gardening, focusing on *regenerative* gardening, which means not only feeding the plants naturally, but protecting and repairing the soil. This is done by planting cover crops over the winter and not tilling the soil before planting. This garden has more infrastructure in place, with permanent trellises and row covers over a lot of the beds, as well as an electric fence to keep out the deer. They also produce their own compost, in four 64' windrows which they turn with their tractor. Last year was their 2nd year, and the compost system produced over 85 yards of finished compost. This garden will be a force of nature in the years to come!

Finally, the Lyme Old Lyme Food Share Garden (LOLFSG) - This Garden was started in 2021 by Jim Ward, and almost as soon as the words were out of his mouth there were people lining up to help get it going. It is located on town property behind the playing fields at the senior center. It is about the same size as CGG, and they have received a lot of mentorships from the ELGG. Since this garden is also young, their production is less than it will be in the future. Last year they produced about 6,500 lbs. of fresh food. There is also a new hoop house on site that provided fresh greens through last winter!

In addition to growing food for Gemma Moran, they also contribute to mobile markets which take produce into underserved areas. LOLFSG is working at building community and growing future gardeners. They have recently partnered with the Old Lyme Middle school in getting the greenhouse renovated and put to use starting seedlings for the spring plantings.

Unfortunately, Mr. Ward passed away unexpectedly about a year and a half ago. I asked Peter Hunt, and Jim Ward's wife Sheila, both currently on the board, what they were most proud of about the garden, and after a moment they agreed they were both really proud that the garden is still growing - a testament to the strength of the community Jim has built around this mission.

So, step out some summer morning and see who you might meet at one of these gardens! It's always fun and I ALWAYS learn something new. As we now know, dirt under your nails *is* good for your brain.

The Thames River Community Service – A Place Unlike Any Other

The facility was quiet when I entered the lobby of the Thames River Community Service. This apartment building located in Norwich was constructed explicitly to house mostly low-income young mothers who are high school graduates between the ages of 18-24 and their children. All were previously living in unstable conditions. They come from all over the state and they may stay for just one year. Most are there for 6-8 months and exit to a positive home opportunity. During their time at Thames River, they work and their children are in daycare, hence the quiet building.

There are 24 fully furnished apartments, each with a living/dining room, kitchenette, generally two bedrooms and a full bath. Laundry facilities are located in the basement. Transportation is an issue, so many walk to work at the nearby Mohegan Sun facility primarily doing maintenance and food service related jobs. Residents participate in workshops such as crisis counseling, employment opportunities, financing and budgeting. Liberty Bank in Groton partners by providing financial literacy workshops. The rent for the subsidized apartments is \$250 per month. UConn provides monthly cooking classes. The lobbies and hallways are decorated with warm and welcoming furnishings and artwork, making it feel like home.

Michael Vas is the Executive Director of the facility. As he generously gave of his time to provide a tour, he was clearly proud of the facility and the focused support given to the residents. So how can FCCOL help support this unique, highly effective facility? By providing adult, infant and toddler clothing for their giving closets, especially for newcomers, children's toys and books, car seats and strollers, single bedsheets and towels. Perhaps items remaining after the White Elephant Sale can be donated directly to be added to their closets. Together we can enhance the lives of these young people and help provide them with a greater, more stable future.

By Dale Bernardoni, Board of Missions

A Moment for Stewardship

by Mike Gentry

Stewardship is the careful, responsible, and ethical management of resources—such as time, talents and treasures entrusted to one's care. It focuses on sustainability, accountability, and making decisions that benefit a broader community and future generations, rather than just the individual or individual organization.

Our annual stewardship campaign has been very successful in allowing us to share our 'treasures', providing the resources to maintain the beautiful properties and support our far-reaching missions and programs that touch organizations all over the world. In this moment for Stewardship I would like to talk about the other two resources referenced above, our time and talents and how I believe the White Elephant Sale provide us all with a near term opportunity to use our time and talents to support not only the 'treasures' of the church but another import resource, our culture.

The WES has been going on since 1936. While there are other garage and rummage sales held by other organizations throughout the year, few can match the size, color, camaraderie and excitement of this one. Residents and visitors will often plan their summer vacations around it. I want to talk about the camaraderie. Each year we involve over 200 volunteers to plan, staff and manage 9 hours of sales, but it takes hundreds of hours to complete the sale. I have been involved with some element or another for over 30 years. Many of you have been involved longer. My wife Cathy sometimes worries as I mature that it might be time to sit back and watch a little more. Then she sees me come home from a day working up to and at the sale and the look of tired satisfaction tells her not yet, maybe next year. That satisfaction comes from the camaraderie I enjoy every day I help. The satisfaction from helping is part of it, but it is also due to the friendships, the willingness to get involved, the people who bring their children, grandchildren, friends and neighbors to help. In another word, the camaraderie. This is a community event, not only attended but planned, managed and implemented by a much wider circle. And we all can help. If you have a new neighbor or new friend you want to get to know better, invite them to help. If you want to get closer to your child or grandchild, bring them to help. There are other articles in this newsletter that provide numbers to call to volunteer for many positions. If you can help with setup on June 20 or July 9 or cleanup on July 11, please call me at 860 608 3223 or email gentrme@comcast.net. Pickup trucks are always needed. And once again, thank you for everything you do to support this church. You have enriched the lives of my family for the 40 years we have lived in Old Lyme.

2026 White Elephant Sale (88th) – Volunteers Needed

In prior years more than 200 folks have helped in some way or another..... sorting, organizing, outside setup, selling or cleanup after the sale. Even a few hours of your time will be greatly appreciated. You will have a great time, meet new friends and have a rewarding experience.

For those of you who would like to help, please call one of the department heads listed below and volunteer to work in an area that interests you, or just show up during intake days and give us a few hours in any area you would like.

Thank you in advance.

Jane Marolda 860-608-0257
Mike Gentry 860-608-3223
Scott Mahon 860-949-5422
Deb Heminway 860-625-3144

Jayne Brundage 860-918-1321
Rick Strickhart 860-304-4132
Marianne Baez 860-608-8321



2026 Calendar

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				JUNE 18 Pre-setup inside Hang signs, move tables, etc.	JUNE 19 Pre-setup inside Milk crates, tubs, etc.	JUNE 20 INSIDE SET UP 9-2 pm
				JUNE 25 INTAKE 9-2 pm	JUNE 26 INTAKE 9-2 pm Workers Lunch	JUNE 27 INTAKE 9-2 pm
	JUNE 29 CLOSED SORT & PRICE	JUNE 30 INTAKE 9-2 pm	JULY 1 INTAKE 9-2 pm	JULY 2 INTAKE 9-2 pm Workers Lunch	JULY 3 CLOSED Sort and Price	JULY 4th CLOSED
	JULY 6 SORT & PRICE 9-2 pm Move Art to Narhex Clean up & Finalize inside set-up	JULY 7 SET UP OUTSIDE 8-12 pm Big tents, sport goods, coffee, plant, baked goods, Toy Fly. Empty tables from garage	JULY 8 CLOSED SORT & PRICE FINALIZE ANY REMAINING OUTSIDE SET-UP.	JULY 9 SET UP OUTSIDE 8 AM>>> WORKERS LUNCH	JULY 10 SALE 9-2 PM	JULY 11 SALE 8-12 PM Clean up & Snacks 12 pm



2026 White Elephant Sale (88th) – Donations

Intake – Again we are keeping intake to only 6 days, from 9 am -2 pm and NO nights. Please bring your items to the church Ferry Road parking lot entrance beginning Thursday, June 25th – July 2nd (except for June 28th and 29th). See the calendar on the previous page. The side driveway will be closed to parking during intake.

Quality of Donations – We are being more selective each year. We have to be able to sell the item in two days (nine hours total) or else give it to one of our many recycling groups. By insisting on clean, saleable items we can reduce the sorting, handling and disposal of damaged or broken items. As always, we are grateful for your donations. Sorting them in advance really helps us out.

Donating Large Furniture – We are LIMITING the amount of large furniture that we will accept this year. We are not planning any pick-up service due to manpower constraints, unless we find trucks and volunteers are available. If you do have a piece to donate and are wondering whether or not we will accept it, please call the church office (860-434-8686) anytime, night or day, and hit the White Elephant Sale call back line – leave a message with all the particulars. We will contact you to discuss your large furniture donation.

Thank you in advance.



Baked Goods for the White Elephant Sale

Thanks to everyone who made 2025 such a tasty success!!! We made it over the \$1,000 mark for the second year in a row, all from the sale of cookies and pies and brownies and all kinds of surprises you made and delivered for the White Elephant Sale. Please set aside time again this year to make your favorite treats. Just bake, label with a description and note whether there are nuts/no nuts (it's helpful if cupcakes, brownies and cookies are wrapped in half-or-full dozen packages). You can drop off in the church kitchen on Thursday afternoon, July 9th, or pull up to the bakery booth at the front of the church on the morning of the sale, Friday, July 10th, between 7:30 and 9AM. THANKS!!



WE CANNOT ACCEPT:

Dirty or broken items or junk items	Gas cans with gas or kerosene
Appliances (large):	Guns, knives, weapons
Air conditioners	Magazines, newspapers
Refrigerators, freezers, stoves	Mattresses / Box springs
Washers, Dryers	Bed frames only
Bike helmets (used – safety concern)	Paint
Books: technical or textbooks	Phones
Encyclopedias	Punch bowls
Car seats – safety liability	Rugs
Cribs (used) – safety liability	Scanners
Chemicals	Stereo equipment, Speakers
Computers, monitors & software	Skis – old style downhill
Furniture:	Used stuffed animals
Stuffed sofa/chairs or sofa beds	Tires
Particle board	Treadmills
Dinning Room sets	Large artificial Christmas Trees
Lamps (floor or table)	(unless working & complete)
Lights or fans (ceiling)	Christmas tree stands
TV's – all styles	Single chairs, not in good shape
TV / Entertainment tables	

WE WILL GLADLY ACCEPT (Quality Please!)

Antiques, Fine China, Silver	CD's & DVD's (family content)
Appliances, small (working)	Furniture (not on the "will not accept list")
Art, sculpture, posters, frames	
Baskets, vases, decorative bottles	Gifts, sundries, knickknacks
Bedding, linens	Jewelry: costume and fine
Boats, canoes, kayaks	Kitchen items, dishes, cookware
Bicycles, tricycles	Luggage – soft sided
Books: Nonfiction, fiction	Luggage – steamer trunks
Books: children's	Musical instruments
Christmas and holiday decorations	Plants, containers
Clothes: Children's, Men's, Women's	Shoes – all sizes and styles
Clothes: Fine, fashion	Skis (downhill must be shape style)
Clothes: Vintage, costume	Sporting goods (good condition)
Clothing accessories	Tools (house and garden)
Collections	Toys (new or gently used)
Curtains, drapes	Un-used stationary & supplies

JUNE, JULY AND AUGUST DATES TO REMEMBER 2026 CALENDAR

June 2026

Ladies Who Stitch *Monday, June 1st at 10:00 am in the Sheffield Auditorium.*
Yoga with Isabelle *Tuesday, June 2nd at 5:30 pm in the Sheffield Auditorium.*
Board of Missions Meeting *Wednesday, June 3rd at 4:00 pm in the Library.*
Choir Rehearsal *Wednesday, June 3rd at 7:30 pm in the Sheffield Auditorium.*
Church Council *Thursday, June 4th at 7:00 pm in the Library.*
Cup-of-Joe Café *Saturday, June 6th at 8:30 am in Library*
Food Pantry and Diaper Bank *Saturday, June 6th at 8:30 am in Fellowship Hall.*
Tommy Starkweather Memorial Service *Monday, June 8th at 11:00 am in the Meetinghouse.*
Ladies Who Stitch *Monday, June 8th at 10:00 am in the Sheffield Auditorium.*
Yoga with Isabelle *Tuesday, June 9th at 5:30 pm in the Sheffield Auditorium.*
Board of Trustees Meeting *Tuesday, June 9th at 7:00 pm in the Library.*
Choir Rehearsal *Wednesday, June 10th at 7:30 pm in the Sheffield Auditorium.*
Red Cross Blood Drive *Thursday, June 11th, 8:00 am - 6:00 pm in Fellowship Hall.*
Bible Study *Thursday, June 11th at 11:00 am in the Library.*
Board of Stewardship Meeting *Thursday, June 11th at 4:00 pm in the Library.*
Food Pantry *Saturday, June 13th at 8:30 am in Fellowship Hall.*
Confirmation Sunday *June 14th at 10:00 am in the Meetinghouse.*
Yoga with Isabelle *Tuesday, June 16th at 5:30 pm in the Sheffield Auditorium.*
WES Pre-Set Up, *Thurs. 18th, Fri. 19th and Sat. 20th.*
Food Pantry *Saturday, June 20th at 8:30 am Curbside Only.*
WES Indoor Set-up *Saturday, June 20th from 9:00 am till 12:00 pm.*
Juneteenth Sunday Service *June 21st at 10:00 am in the Meetinghouse.*
Yoga with Isabelle *Tuesday, June 23rd at 5:30 pm in the Sheffield Auditorium.*
Board of Deacons Meeting *Tuesday, June 23rd at 7:00 pm in the Library.*
WES Intake Begins, *9:00 - 2:00 pm. Thurs, 25th, Fri. 26th, Sat. 27th, Tues. 30th*
Food Pantry *Saturday, June 27th at 8:30 am Curbside Only.*
New London Community Meal Center (DINE) *Sunday, June 28th departing FCCOL at 3:30pm.*

July 2026

Final WES Intake Days *Wednesday and Thursday July 1st and 2nd from 9:00 - 2:00 pm.*
WES Set-Up *Continues Friday, July 3rd. and Monday, July 6th through Thursday, July 9th.*
WHITE ELEPHANT SALE *Friday and Saturday, July 10th 9:00 - 2pm and 11th 8:00 -12:00 pm.*
Food Pantry *Saturday, July 18th at 8:30 am in the Fellowship Hall.*
Summer Sing Sunday, *July 19th. at 10:00 am in the Meetinghouse.*
Food Pantry *Saturday, July 25th at 8:30 am in the Fellowship Hall.*
New London Community Meal Center (DINE) *Sunday, July 26th departing FCCOL at 3:30pm.*
Board of Deacons Meeting *Tuesday, July 28th at 7:00 pm in the Library.*

August 2026

Food Pantry *Saturday, August 1st at 8:30 am in the Fellowship Hall.*
Red Cross Blood Drive *Wednesday, August 5th 1:00 - 6:00 pm in Fellowship Hall.*
Food Pantry *Saturday, August 8th at 8:30 am in the Fellowship Hall.*
Summer Sing Sunday, *August 9th at 10:00 am in the Meetinghouse.*
Brazil Trip *departs Monday August 10th - 20th.*
Red Cross Blood Drive *Thursday, August 13th 1:00 - 6:00 pm in Fellowship Hall.*
Food Pantry *Saturday, August 15th at 8:30 am in the Fellowship Hall.*
September Newsletter Deadline *Wednesday, August 19th.*
Board of Stewardship Meeting *Thursday, August 20th at 4:00 pm in the Library.*
Food Pantry *Saturday, August 22nd at 8:30 am in the Fellowship Hall.*
New London Community Meal Center (DINE) *Sunday, August 23rd departing FCCOL at 3:30pm.*
The Benevolent Society Meeting *Tuesday, August 25th at 10:00 am in the Library.*
Board of Deacons Meeting *Tuesday, August 25th at 7:00 pm in the Library.*
Food Pantry *Saturday, August 29th at 8:30 am in the Fellowship Hall.*

Staff

The Rev. Dr. Steven R. Jungkeit, Senior Minister (203-430-3208)

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)

Gary Jungkeit, Director of Handbells

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

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

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

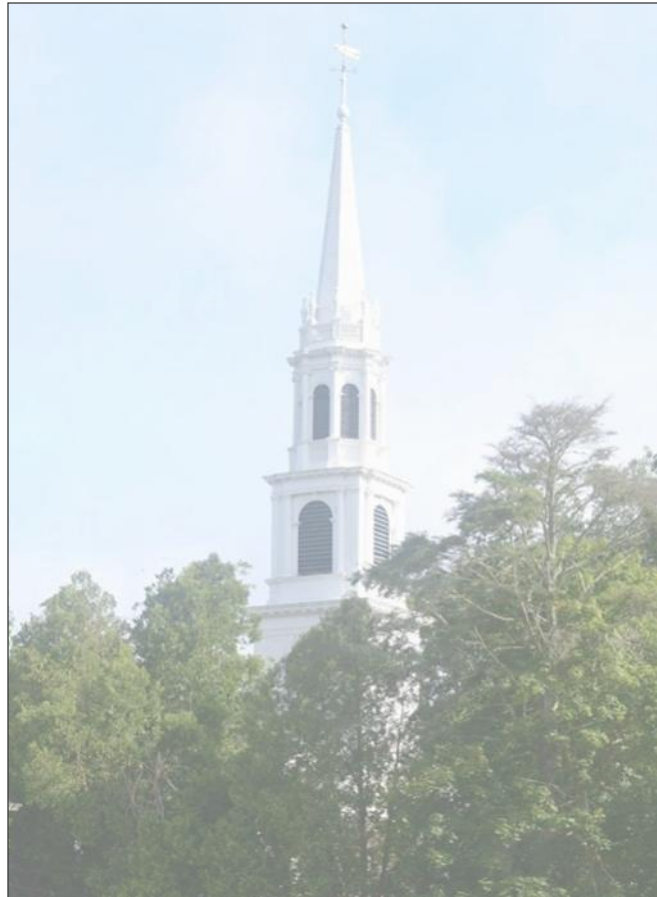
Sunday Worship - 10:00 a.m.

South Lyme Union Chapel Worship - 10:00 a.m.

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

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The submission deadline for the September Newsletter will be Wednesday, August 19th.

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!

