

First Baptist Church of Southington

581 Meriden Ave.

Southington, CT 06489-3901

An American Baptist Church ABCUSA

Telephone: 860-628-8121

www.firstbaptistsouthington.org

Ministry Team:

The Rev. Sharon R. Holt, *pastor*

The Rev. Peg Lewis, *associate pastor*

Director of Music: Les Marsh

Newsletter Editor: Robin Michel

Church Office Hours - Please call Pastor Sharon before coming to the church

Email:

Pastor.sharon@firstbaptistsouthington.org

Visit us on Facebook:

First Baptist Church - Southington, CT



November-December 2023



Sunday Worship at 10am: in-person, via Zoom and on Facebook Live

Looking Ahead in November & December

November

- Nov. 4 Tag Sale, 8am-2pm
- Nov. 5 Communion Sunday 10am, All Souls Day - **Move Clocks Back!**
- Nov. 9 Board of Deacons 3pm, Music Committee 4pm
- Nov. 11 Veterans Day
- Nov. 12 Worship 10am and Celebration Sunday
- Nov. 15 Outreach Committee 11am
- Nov. 19 Worship 10am, Church Board follows
- Nov. 21 Book Club 1 pm
- Nov. 21 Community Interfaith Thanksgiving, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 7pm
- Nov. 23 Happy Thanksgiving!
- Nov. 26 Worship 10am, Hanging of the Greens



December

- Dec. 3 Communion Sunday 10am
- Dec. 10 Worship 10am and Celebration Sunday
- Dec. 12 Blue Christmas, First Lutheran Church, 7pm
- Dec. 15 Deadline for The Steeple Signal
- Dec. 17 Worship 10am
- Dec. 24 Worship 10am, Christmas Eve Service of Lessons & Carols, 6pm
- Dec. 25 Merry Christmas!
- Dec. 31 Worship 10am, Happy New Year!

Board of Deacons, Music Committee and Book Club will not meet in December

The Pastor's Meanderings

In late September I boarded a jet that was the first of two flights on my way to visit Turkey. Upon landing in Istanbul, Shirley Myers, my travel buddy, and I were picked up in a luxurious limousine, complete with shocking pink interior, and whisked away to our fabulous hotel, The Ottoman Legacy. Built in 1911, the Legacy is featured on the



Turkish 20 lira bill. We were immediately immersed in the history and beauty of Istanbul. We also had the great good fortune to be in the middle of a wonderful shopping district near the Grand Bazaar.

After orientation and dinner on the first night, we fell into bed exhausted. At 5:55 the next morning, I was awakened by the sound of the Islamic Call to Prayer from the “New Mosque” whose foundation was laid in 1597 C.E. The call is haunting and beautiful, it resounds from every minaret in cities, towns and villages, and is the first of five calls to prayer recited each day by a muezzin who is specially trained to call the faithful to prayer.

The Call to Prayer is universal and never varies. Its first call in Arabic is, “God is the Greatest, God is the Greatest,” followed by, “I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except God.”

As I listened to the city stir to life, I added my own prayers of God’s greatness and echoed the affirmation that I, too, bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except God. The Call to Prayer was a fitting and appropriate start to each day for me.

During the almost two weeks of my Turkish adventure, which unfortunately also included a visit to the hospital in Cappadocia, was steeped in an exploration of the history and culture of the people who inhabited this ancient country that forms part of the heart of Christian, Islamic and Jewish traditions.

I was awestruck while visiting the remains of ancient Troy, seeing the caves that have been occupied by families in Cappadocia for centuries and visiting the ancient spa at Pamukkale, where Cleopatra soaked in

the hot springs.

But by far, the greatest experience of the trip was exploring Istanbul, formerly Constantinople. It is steeped in history and filled with the same sights, smells and sounds that have infused it with life for millennia. We shopped at the Grand Bazaar amidst the joyous, lively haggling of gold sellers, rug merchants and silk traders.

I closed my eyes and was transported to the ancient days of Byzantium; the spice market is as it existed long ago sending the aroma of exotic spices through the air. Women in modern dress walked side-by-side with women in burkas, engaged in lively conversation. Imams walked to and from the mosque as they carried out their holy duties.

At the same time, the world intruded on our sojourn through history in the form of a new outbreak of war in the Middle East on our last Saturday in Turkey. The war felt very close to us as we nervously waited to take off from Istanbul International Airport. Two airports in nearby Syria were bombed the morning we departed. We were happy once we were on our way to Charles De Gaulle Airport in Paris and finally on U.S. soil again in New York.

I am blessed to have made this journey and blessed to be safely home once again.

In Christ,

Pastor Sharon



Tag Sale on Nov. 4!



All hands on deck! Our all-church tag sale is scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 4. Please plan on joining us to help make this another successful event!

- Set up will be from 9 a.m.-6 pm. each day, Oct. 30 to Nov. 3.
- Donations will be accepted from Oct. 30 to Nov. 2. (Please, no donations on Friday, Nov. 3. We need that day to make certain all items are priced, and we are ready for our 8 a.m. opening on Saturday.)

Any amount of time that YOU can give is greatly appreciated. There are tasks for everyone!

Many volunteers are needed on tag sale day itself. Can you volunteer a few hours? Please reach out to Joyce Olore, 860-877-3417 (call or text).

Thank you!

News from the Pews



Rally Day 2023 on Sept. 10 was great fun featuring our delicious church cookout and potluck, fellowship, board games and cornhole! Thank you to the Board of

Deacons for providing hamburgers, hot dogs and beverages. So glad you could join us!

Cleanup Day

A group of six hardy souls showed up early on Oct 14 to wrestle invasive oriental bittersweet and virginia creeper vines out of the arborvitae that grow along the edges of the parking lot. We were able to pull a lot down and to cut other hard-to-reach vines off at the root; we also raked out leaves that had gathered. Others of us cleared vines out of the shrubs at the front of the church, picked up brush underneath the big evergreen tree, and dug out weeds beside the front steps and along the sidewalk. Many thanks to those who put in



two active hours; we warmed up quickly! There will be more to do in the spring of course, and we look forward to an even bigger work crew next time.

– Peg Lewis

Right Hand of Fellowship

On Sept. 10, First Baptist Church was happy to welcome Carl and Sharon Hoffman with the Right Hand of Fellowship. The Hoffmans moved from Tennessee to Connecticut a year ago to be closer to family and live in Naugatuck.



Updates from Your Outreach Committee



Our church family is so generous with their support. We were able to send \$954 in support of those in need in Maui. Thank you so much for your financial support in the special One Great Hours of Sharing offering and all other offerings collected when disasters arise.

Looking forward:

- Salvation Army Bell Ringing volunteers from the First Baptist Church are needed for Saturday, Nov. 18. Please see Peg Lewis if you are willing to give an hour of your time to ring the bell at Tops Market.

- Retired Ministers & Missionaries offering was collected during October - Although this publication is early November, we would be happy to pass additional donations on!

- Southington Community Services Christmas gift tags will be available shortly. We would appreciate your support in helping those in our community have a Merry Christmas. Please note that this year SCS is asking for gifts to be unwrapped and placed in a gift bag with the tag attached.

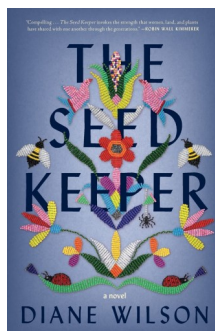
- The hat, scarf, mitten tree will be set up in Fellowship Hall in December for donations of warmth items for our community. Look for updates in the bulletin announcement sheet.

Compassion Sunday

We continue to support Southington Community Services with donations of hand soap, laundry soap, dish soap and other personal care items that are not available through FoodShare or other sources. Thank you for your ongoing support.

Book Club

The FBC Book Club is starting its second season on Tuesday, Nov. 21 at 1 p.m. in the parlor. November's book is "The Seed Keeper" by Diane Wilson. Books can be borrowed from other book club members, the public library, purchased at various locations or obtained online. Everyone is welcome – even if you haven't read the book or didn't like it! If the Book Club decides to meet in December the date will be announced.



Questions? Contact Ginni Butler at 860-628-5014.

Community Interfaith Thanksgiving Service

The traditional Community Interfaith Thanksgiving

Service will be held Tuesday, Nov. 21, 7 p.m., at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 750 Meriden Waterbury Turnpike, Plantsville. Everyone is welcome.

Hanging of the Greens

Join us for the traditional Hanging of the Greens on Sunday, Nov. 26 following worship and refreshments. We will decorate the sanctuary – it's a wonderful time of fellowship and friendship. Thanks so much for your help!



Blue Christmas

There will be a Blue Christmas service at First Lutheran Church, 232 Bristol St., on Tuesday, Dec. 12 at 7 p.m. Blue Christmas is a worship and prayer service especially for those who find the holidays difficult and sad for a variety of reasons. The service is hosted by the Plantsville Funeral Home. Participants are The Rev. Sharon Holt, First Baptist Church; The Rev. Carl Kramer, First Lutheran Church; and The Rev. Shelley Nyren, Interfaith Ministry. All are welcome to the service and the reception that follows.

From Our Music Director

Hello everyone,

I'd like to let everyone know that during December, Mckenzie Joseph will be a guest vocal soloist during worship. She graduated from Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts. She currently attends Sacred Heart University. She has performed at the First Congregational Church of Southington. We look forward to hearing Mckenzie share her voice and music with us.



Christmas Eve Music

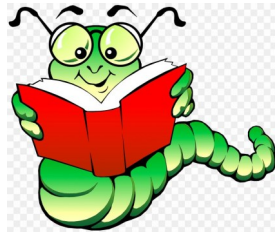
Please join us for our beautiful Christmas Eve Service of Lessons & Carols at 6 p.m. Guest musicians Nanci Newton, Linda Lamy and John Myska will enhance the service with joyful and inspiring music. Please come and join us for a beautiful, prayerful start to the Christmas season.

You're Invited

People interested in singing with our vocal ensemble or trying their hand at bells or chimes are always welcome. Just come and ask! – *Les Marsh*

Willy Says: Get Your Christmas Books Now!

Willy, our resident bookworm, is encouraging everyone to stop by our library to discover a world of great books. There are many inspirational Christian books to help us along our spiritual journey. Devotionals to inspire, encourage and heal us in our daily lives. Biographies to learn more about famous people from presidents to movie stars. Lots of wonderful fiction written by secular and Christian writers. And there are children's books as well for all ages.



With Christmas coming up soon, you may want to cozy up with holiday reads written by our favorite authors. Some of our dozens of Christmas titles include: "Purpose of Christmas" by Rick Warren; "Gideon's Gift" by Karen Kingsbury; "Shepherds Abiding" by Jan Karon; and many more. We also have Christmas-related DVDs!



Come and check out our library or the books on the rolling cart in Fellowship Hall. It's easy to check out – just write your name and the item title on the list.

By the way, we need more modern fiction books – we welcome donations of Christian, spiritual or inspirational books!

Do you have any ideas or want a particular book? Just chat with Margaret Shigo-Zembko, our librarian!

News from Kristy Engel

Our church helps support Kristy Engel, a global consultant for health with International Ministries. In late September she shared this news: "In about six months I will be returning to Eastern Europe for a YEAR to continue working with Ukrainian Internally Displaced Persons (IDP's) by invitation of Hungarian Baptist Aid and the Transcarpathian Baptist Charity!



"I'm so excited to continue working with IDP's who have limited access to health care and help build systems to make sure they receive appropriate services. Please keep the next few months in prayer as there are a LOT of logistics to get into place, including

some specialized training for my dog, finding a home, vehicle, raising funds, etc. I'll send out a newsletter soon to let you know how you can help. Thank you for all who continue to remember Ukraine and all of the people who need encouragement."

Fellowship Hour

We are happy to offer Fellowship Hour in the hall following worship. Everyone is welcome to host or assist or donate treats or beverages. However, to ensure we don't have too many snacks on the same Sunday, if you plan to bring something, please contact Ginni Butler at 860-628-5014 by that Saturday.

Bulletin Deadline

The deadline for submission of notices for our weekly bulletin insert is 12 p.m. on Tuesdays. Please email them to pastor.sharon@firstbaptistsouthington.org or drop them off at the church office. Stay in Touch!

Bloomin' News

For regular Sundays, flower signup sheets are posted in the narthex. If you would like to give flowers on a specific Sunday, write your name and phone number on the form. Please call that month's flower coordinator so she doesn't also provide flowers. If you are unable to shop, we are happy to get the flowers for you.

Pastor Sharon needs the dedication information by Tuesday noon to include it in the bulletin. Questions? Call Robin, 860-620-2989.

Flower Coordinators 2023

November - Dot Amundsen - 860-747-8188

December - Robin Michel - 860-620-2989

Christmas Flowers



The order forms for Christmas poinsettias will be available mid-November. Keep an eye on the announcements and on the narthex table to get your form. The deadline and details will be announced.

Prayer Requests

If you have a prayer request, feel free to write it in the prayer book located on the table in the parlor. Prayer requests made on Sundays are included in prayers during the week. Questions or requests? Contact Robin or Ginni.

Oh, By the Way

Janet Mellon honored

Janet Mellon, director of Southington Community Services and member of our church, recently received Rotary International's highest honor. The Paul Harris Fellow Award was presented at a special dinner held Oct. 25 at the Aqua Turf Club. Other honorees were Donna Ayer, Missy Cipriano, Dawn Miceli and Rachel Wache. Congratulations!



Jon Burdeshaw races

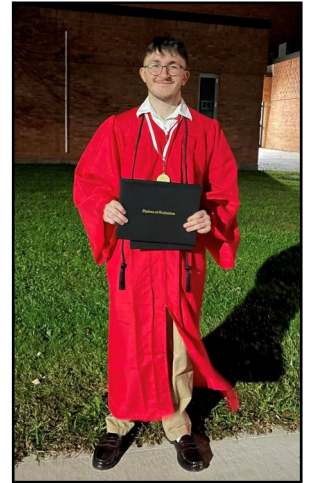


Jon Burdeshaw started endurance running 12 years ago in honor of a friend who lost his life in a Marine Corps helicopter accident. "In his honor I've run the Marine Corps Marathon many times," Jon said. On Oct. 22, he ran a 50K (32-mile) marathon called Bimblers Bluff 50K which runs through some beautiful woodland trails, mostly in Guilford. Proceeds from the race go to several land conservation charities in Guilford and surrounding towns. "The

biggest reason for running the race this year is that I turn 50. I did well for what I am able and finished the 32 miles in 7:39," Jon said. Wow!

Alec Chinigo graduates

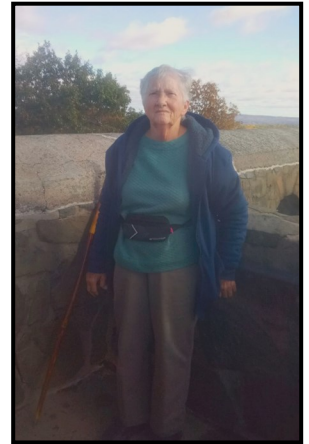
Alec Chinigo recently graduated from the Electrician Training program at Lincoln Technical Institute with a certificate of diploma. He is now eligible to seek employment as an electrician apprentice. Kudos to you, Alec, and good luck in your journey!



Ethel Graham's birthday tradition

How do you spend your birthday? While most of us stay home and eat cake, Ethel Graham has made it her birthday tradition to hike to the top of Sleeping Giant State Park! Kudos to you, Ethel – you are an inspiration!

**The Steeple Signal deadline for the January-February 2024 issue is Dec. 15. Share your news and milestones!



Birthdays & Anniversaries



Birthdays

November

- 1 Rebecca Maheu
- 2 Amy Burdeshaw
- 4 Margaret Shigo-Zembko
- 7 Tyrone Mellon
- 8 Johnathan Tata
- 9 Kevin Palmieri

- 12 Cheryl Hilton-Campbell
- 14 Jon Burdeshaw
- 25 Pastor Sharon Holt
- 26 Gene Hilton
- 30 Phillip Dixon Sr., Jen Howes-Egan

December

- 1 Janet Mellon
- 3 Elizabeth Tata
- 5 Youngsun Kim
- 10 Debbie Urso

- 11 Regina Jones
- 12 Danny Orlando
- 16 Adrianna Palmieri
- 18 Linda Mikosz, Tiffany Steele
- 19 David Mikosz
- 20 Joyce Olore, Gina Palmieri
- 23 Cassie Callaghan
- 25 Lisa Anne Murray
- 28 John Galayda Jr.

Anniversaries

- December
- 29 Kim & Kyle Neilson



Happy 25th Anniversary to Troy & Regina Jones who celebrated this milestone in October!

