

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



January-February 2024



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

Looking Ahead in January & February



January

Jan. 1 Happy New Year

Jan. 7 Epiphany Sunday and Communion 10 a.m.

Jan. 11 Board of Deacons 3 p.m., Music Committee 4 p.m.

Jan. 14 Worship 10 a.m. and Celebration Sunday

Jan. 16 Book Club 1 p.m.

Jan. 17 Outreach Committee 1 p.m. special time

Jan. 21 Worship & Martin Luther King Jr. Observance 10 a.m.

Jan. 28 Worship 10 a.m.; Board meeting after worship/fellowship

February

Feb. 4 Communion Sunday 10 a.m.

Feb. 8 Board of Deacons 3 p.m., Music Committee 4 p.m.

Feb. 9 All committee reports are due for the Annual Report by 5 p.m.

Feb. 11 Worship 10 a.m. and Celebration Sunday

Feb. 18 Worship 10 a.m.

Feb. 20 Book Club 1 p.m.

Feb. 21 Outreach Committee 11 a.m.

Feb. 25 Worship 10 a.m.; Annual Meeting follows worship - lunch provided

****Note: Easter is early in 2024 - March 31!**



Annual Meeting Set for Feb. 25

Our Annual Meeting will be held Sunday, Feb. 25 following worship. Lunch will be provided. Committee and board reports are due to the pastor no later than Feb. 9 by 5 p.m.

The Pastor's Ponderings for the New Year



Wow - It is 2024 already! Where did the time go? I just finally got the hang of writing 2023 on my checks! As we move forward into the new year, I am excited for our future here at First Baptist. Last year we welcomed nine new members and several more are planning to join in 2024. We

now have some newer members and friends who will bring fresh ideas and energy to our church in the coming year.

As we prepare for our Annual Meeting on Feb. 25, the Nominating Committee will be looking to add fresh faces as well as familiar faces to our boards and committees. I would like to invite and encourage everyone to take a fresh look at all of them and decide what you might like to join. While some of our boards and committees require that you be a member of the church, some do not. Those serving on the Board of Deacons, Finance Committee, Nominating Committee and Auditors must be members of the church.

Members of the Buildings and Grounds, Missions and Outreach, and Christian Education Committees do not have to be members of the church.



Since our church is self-governing, every member of our boards and committees is crucial to fulfill the calling of Christ in this place. If you would like to explore becoming a member of a board or committee, I encourage you to speak with me. I would be happy to steer you to a specific committee or board chair for further conversation of duties and responsibilities involved in participation. If you would like a copy of our By-laws to read the outline of what each committee/board does, I would be happy to provide you with a copy.

My hope and prayer is that many of you will embrace the concept of serving our church in some official capacity in the coming year.

In Christ, *Pastor Sharon*

Welcome Aboard Flight #2024

We are preparing for an on-time departure into the New Year.

Please make sure your Attitude and Actions are secured and locked in an upbeat and upright position.

All self-destructive thoughts should be turned off at this time and remain off forever. Any negativity, hate, and discouragement must remain completely stowed.

In the unlikely event we lose Altitude while under pressure, simply reach up and pull down a Prayer.

Prayers will automatically activate if you have Faith. With Faith, you will be able to assist other passengers.



There will be NO BAGGAGE allowed on this flight.

Now, Captain God has cleared us for takeoff.

Our first destination is Love, with continuing stops at Peace and Joy.

Before you deplane make sure you don't leave any of your Hopes and Dreams behind. If there's anything we can do to make your flight more enjoyable, please do the same by paying it forward.

We wish you a pleasant flight! Have a Happy New Year! And may God bring you and your family much peace and joy.

Author Unknown, submitted by Joyce Olore

News from the Pews

Recapping Special Services

Pastor Sharon and other members of the Southington Interfaith Clergy Association participated in the Thanksgiving Service held Nov. 21 at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Les Marsh, our music director, led the combined choirs in special music for the occasion. Pastor Sharon and Les were also pivotal in the Blue Christmas Service held in conjunction with Plantsville Funeral Home on Dec. 12. This annual observance provides comfort and prayer to those who are grieving.



Tag Sale Update

What an outcome - Our tag sale total has reached \$6,700! To be exact, it is \$6746.10!

Thank you everyone for your support! As they say, "It takes a village to bring up children" and that's the case here for our tag sale. So many volunteers came out to donate, sort and price during prep week. Many brought their friends and family to come and help as well! And the turnout of volunteers for the day of the sale as well as cleanup was awesome!

As a special bonus, volunteers enjoyed lunch during the week and on Saturday made by the terrific chefs at First Baptist. It was wonderful to be able to take the time to rest and break bread with our extended church family at lunch time. All told, it takes hundreds of hours to make this happen. Thank you to everyone for making this another successful event at First Baptist!



Attorney General to serve Connecticut since the office was established by the state constitution in 1897. He first took office in 2019 and is currently serving his second term. He is a national leader in many of the most consequential lawsuits and investigations in our country today. Tong works every day to safeguard our civil rights and freedoms, fighting alongside state attorneys general nationwide to protect the rights of women, minority communities, immigrants and the LGBTQ+ community. He is the first Asian American elected to statewide office in Connecticut, and the first Chinese American to be elected Attorney General nationwide."



A special reception will follow the worship service. Don't miss this historic event!

Updates from Your Outreach Committee

- Thank you to all our "angels" who adopted gift tags and bought special presents for clients of Southington Community Services. You really made the holidays something to celebrate!

- Thank you for all the generous donations made to the Southington Community Services food bank. Your donations mean so much to the individuals in our community who are struggling to make ends meet. Including personal items as well as laundry and dish soap has certainly been a welcome blessing!

- The Mitten Tree was a tremendous success yet again this year. It was fun to come in every Sunday to see all the new 'ornaments' adorning the tree. The extra box filled up quickly! Thank you for your 'warm wishes' for individuals in our community. We will keep the tree up through mid-January for your cozy donations.

- Our budget commitments were fully met in 2023 and we were able to share additional mission donations with many others. Our church family is so generous with their giving. The Outreach Committee is grateful for your ongoing support.

Save these Dates

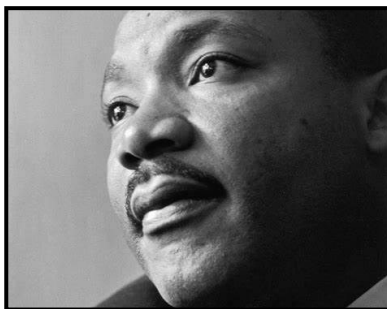
Our annual **Spud Night and Silent Auction** is in the works for either Saturday, April 20 or 27 pending approval. Stay tuned for updates or ask Linda Lamy!



The cleanup crew

Martin Luther King Jr. Observance

Our 26th Martin Luther King Jr. Observance will be held Sunday, Jan. 21 during the morning service. Our theme this year is "Justice at Work." We are excited to announce that our guest speaker will be State of Connecticut Attorney General William Tong. Music will be provided by Saul Olivas of the Mariachi Academy of Wallingford Connecticut. And as is customary, we will be recognizing two middle school students who exemplify the legacy and mission of The Rev. Dr. King.



According to the state website bio, "Tong is the 25th



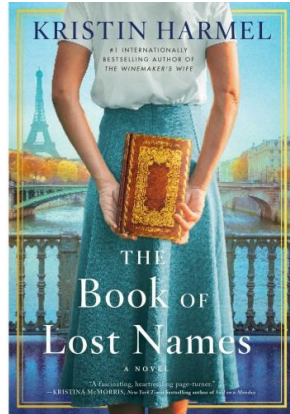
As you are getting organized in the new year, remember we will be collecting this spring for our **Savers Fundraiser**. Stay tuned for updates or ask Linda Lamy.

Book Club

The FBC Book Club will meet Tuesday, Jan. 16 at 1 p.m. in the parlor.

January's book is "The Book of Lost Names" by Kristin Harmel. 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! Questions?

Contact this month's Book Club leader, Joyce Olore at (860) 276-8061.



From Our Music Director

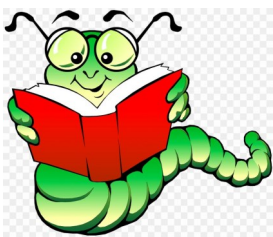
People interested in singing with our vocal ensemble or trying their hand at bells or chimes are always welcome. We present special music during the worship service once each month. Just come and ask for more information! Bells will play Jan. 28. – *Les Marsh*



Fellowship Hour Update

Looks like everyone really enjoys our Fellowship Hour in the hall following worship! We'd like to give everyone an opportunity to host - have you ever thought about hosting a particular Sunday? Or you can also sign up to bring treats or a beverage. The sign-up list will be on the table in Fellowship Hall. Thanks for your assistance!

Willy Says: Check out Our Church Library!



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. Questions? Ask Margaret Shigo-Zembko, our librarian!

Thank you!

Thank you to everyone who brought the delicious goodies for our Christmas Eve brunch.

And thank you to the Flower Committee for the lovely cornucopia display! And the poinsettias were spectacular!



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 flower dedication information by Tuesday noon to include it in the bulletin. Questions? Call Robin, (860) 620-2989.

Flower Coordinators 2024

- January - Ginni Butler – (860) 628-5014
- February - Peg Lewis - (860) 384-4123
- March - Dot Amundsen - (860) 747-8188
- April - Robin Michel - (860) 620-2989
- May - Joyce Olore - (860) 276-8061
- June - Ginni Butler - (860) 628-5014
- July - Robin Michel - (860) 620-2989
- August - Joyce Olore - (860) 276-8061
- September - Peg Lewis - (860) 384-4123
- October - Joyce Olore - (860) 276-8061
- November - Dot Amundsen - (860) 747-8188
- December - Robin Michel - (860) 620-2989

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.

Steeple Signal Deadline

The next issue of The Steeple Signal will be March-April 2024. Deadline is Feb. 15. Email Robin at robin.leemichel@gmail.com.

Baby News!

Shirley Mason is a great-grandmother! Her great-granddaughter Alayna Grace, who was born Oct. 11 to her parents Tori (Shirley’s grand-daughter) and Evan Bensko, is thriving!



Our ‘Army’ of Bell Ringers



Thank you to everyone!

Birthdays & Anniversaries



Birthdays

- 22 Sarah Strosahl-Kagi
- 25 Shirley Mason
- 27 Marvin Choquette

January

- 1 Jason Urso
- 13 Liz Harwood
- 17 Phyllis Wade
- 30 Amanda Olore

February

- 1 Raegan Burdeshaw
- 3 Archie Graikoski
- 4 Rudy Cabata
- 8 Ted Cabata, Gary Lamy
- 14 Caleigh Cunningham
- 21 Lily Dixon

Anniversaries

January

- 6 Bill & Barb McKay

February

- 10 JoAnn & John Myska
- 27 Linda & Tom Salzer

Belated happy birthday to Keith Choquette who celebrated his birthday on Nov. 10.

Our Christmas Season Photo Album

What a wonderful Christmas Season we had. Thank you to everyone who helped to hang the greens. And those who rang the bell for the Salvation Army outside Tops Market. And those who lit the Advent Candles.

And those who wore pajamas to our Dec. 24 morning service. And those who read and performed at the Christmas Eve Service. We are truly blessed!



Happy New Year!