

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



March - April 2024



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



save the date

Looking Ahead in March & April

March	April
March 3 Communion Sunday 10 a.m.; those interested in church membership can meet with Pastor Sharon in the parlor after fellowship	March 31 Easter Sunday: Sunrise Service 6:45 a.m. Merriman Cemetery; Regular Worship 10 a.m. sanctuary; Easter egg hunt follows
March 5 Lenten Book Study 1 p.m.	April 7 Communion Sunday 10 a.m.
March 10 Daylight Saving Time (move clocks ahead one hour), Worship 10 a.m. and Celebration Sunday	April 11 Board of Deacons 3 p.m., Music Committee 4 p.m.
March 12 Lenten Book Study 1 p.m.	April 14 Worship 10 a.m. and Celebration Sunday
March 14 Board of Deacons 3 p.m., Music Committee 4 p.m.	April 15 Steeple Signal deadline
March 17 Worship 10 a.m., Church Board meeting after fellowship	April 16 Book Club 1 p.m.
March 19 Lenten Book Study 1 p.m.	April 17 Outreach 1 p.m.
March 20 Outreach 1 p.m.	April 21 Worship 10 a.m.
March 24 Palm Sunday 10 a.m.	April 27 Spud Night & Silent Auction 5:30-7 p.m.
March 28 Maundy Thursday 7 p.m.	April 28 Worship 10 a.m.

The Pastor's Ponderings on our Lenten Journey

We began our Lenten journey this year with a Nor'easter that brought us a foot of snow. Thankfully, we had already decided to postpone our Shrove Tuesday pancake and sausage supper, rebranding it Shrove & Seven and had "breakfast for supper" a week later.

From February 14 to March 28 we will observe the season we refer to as Lent. It is a journey we take together and alone as we, once again, prepare ourselves for Jesus' betrayal, trial, death and resurrection. It is a solemn observance that invites and encourages us to contemplate what the meaning of Jesus' time on earth means to us today. It is a time to withdraw from the world for a time of prayer, sacrifice and renewal. Unlike Christmas, which is certainly an "extraverted" time where we spend hours rushing about, decorating, celebrating, lavishing gifts upon friends and relative, Lent is more "introverted," calling us to examine ourselves in relation to Christ and to others.

This year, our Lenten book study will focus on the book "Lent in Plain Sight" by Jill Duffield. It is a series of devotionals intended to be read each day during this holy season. We began meeting on Tuesdays at 1 p.m. on Feb. 20 and will continue to March 19. I hope you will consider joining us for this study and thank Peg Lewis for her leadership. If you cannot join us, I encourage you to purchase the book and use it as a private Lenten devotional. It is available at Amazon, or I would be happy to order a

copy for you.

We will observe Holy Week starting on Palm Sunday, March 24. Our traditional Maundy Thursday service is at 7 p.m. on March 28, when we remember

Jesus' last supper with his disciples and the command that he gave them - and us - to love one another as He has loved us. Friday and Saturday are spent waiting, praying and hoping for the joy that dawn brings us on Easter morning, March 31, when we celebrate Christ's resurrection at our Easter Sunrise service at the Merriman Cemetery at 6:45 a.m. At 10 a.m. we will continue our Easter observance with worship followed by our annual Easter Egg Hunt (rain or shine).

On behalf of our congregation, I invite you to join us for our Lenten, Holy Week and Easter observances.

In Christ, *Pastor Sharon*



News from the Pews

Martin Luther King Jr. Program features State Attorney General William Tong



Guest speaker State of Connecticut Attorney General William Tong urged congregants to speak up and act for justice during his remarks at the 26th Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration held Jan. 21 at First Baptist Church. Tong shared his family's story of immigration and assimilation, and primarily addressed the injustices felt by immigrants and others who are "unseen." He also recounted stories about Connecticut immigrants, how they've successfully fought deportation and were able to remain in the state.

In addition, two eighth-graders, Neo Reyes, of Joseph A. DePaolo Middle School, and Lyla Gilbert, of John F. Kennedy Middle School, each received recognition and honors "for demonstrating the spirit of Dr. King at school and at home." After remarks by the respective school principals, Tong presented the awards. Nearly 100 people attended and many

stayed for the reception following the service. First Baptist Church is proud that it continues to present the only Martin Luther King Jr. event in Southington.

Shrove Tuesday Plus Seven

A snowstorm on Shrove Tuesday did not dampen the enthusiasm of our church pancake fans – we just moved our Pancake Supper to Feb. 20 to enjoy an evening of fellowship and, of course, pancakes, sausage, juice and coffee. A record number – 44 people – attended this Board of Deacons event and we raised \$358 for the Deacons Fund. Thank you!



Daylight Saving Time

Move your clocks forward one hour on March 10 or else you will be late for church!



Forms for Easter Flowers/Gifts Available
Forms to order Easter flowers or make memorial/honor gifts are now available in the narthex, as an attachment with the emailed announcements, on

our website and the last page of this issue of The Steeple Signal. The deadline has been extended to Sunday, March 10. Questions? Feel free to call Robin at (860) 620-2989 or robin.leemichel@gmail.com.

Mark Your Calendars!

Savers Fundraiser

It will soon be time for spring cleaning. Our proposed annual Savers “soft goods” collection welcomes any clean, soft goods such as clothes, bedding, coats, belts, fabric toys, pocketbooks, vinyl/leather soft luggage, shoes, linens and also boots. Please invite family and friends to join in as our goal is 4,444 pounds of donations which is about 430 bags. We can do it!



Thank you for placing your donations in kitchen-size trash bags – usually the white ones. We will be collecting the entire month of May.

If you have any questions or need a drop-off time other than when the church is open, contact Joyce (860) 276-8061 or jsolore@aol.com or Linda Lamy (860) 878-5310 or lindalamy8@gmail.com.

Our Spud Nite and Silent Auction Is Back!

Spread the news to family, friends and neighbors that our long-awaited Spud Nite is Saturday, April 27 from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Our freshly baked potatoes will have array of toppings to choose from ... unless you indulge in the “Garbage Can Potato” with everything on it! The cost is only \$8 and includes a beverage and dessert. There will be both dine-in and takeout too.

You are welcome to donate or regift new items to the silent auction. Your donations are greatly appreciated. On Sundays, April 14 and 21, you’ll again have an opportunity to be a “Spud Sponsor” by donating a few



SPUD NITE

& Silent Auction

To benefit ministries of the church

Sat. April 27

5:30 pm – 7 pm Continuous serving

Tickets only \$8 * Children under 5 – FREE *

At the door

Delicious Big Baked Potatoes with Choice of Toppings

Join us for a great night at First Baptist Church!

581 Meriden Ave. Southington
860-628-8121

WIDE VARIETY

OF AUCTION ITEMS

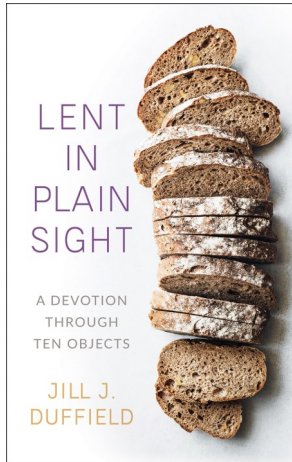
THEMED BASKETS,

& GIFT CARDS TOO

dollars to sponsor a topping or other items needed for the event. For more info and if you would like to be a volunteer, please talk with Joyce Olore or Linda Lamy. This fundraiser will benefit the church's general fund and support mission opportunities.

Lenten Book Study

The Lenten book study of "Lent in Plain Sight" by Jill Duffield continues on Tuesdays through March 19. The group, led by Peg Lewis, meets in the parlor at 1 p.m. The book description states, "God is often at work through the ordinary: ordinary people, ordinary objects, ordinary grace. In this devotion for the season of Lent, Jill J. Duffield draws readers' attention to ten ordinary objects that Jesus would have encountered on his way to Jerusalem. Through the ordinary, God communicates epiphanies, salvation, revelation, and reconciliation. It is through the mundane that we hear God's quiet voice."



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Fellowship Coffee Hour

Thank you to Margaret and Sharon P. who teamed up to be our newest Fellowship Hour hosts – you did a great job and they're willing to do it again! Diana Raymond helped Joyce in hosting recently – Diana, you are a natural! We're hoping that a few more of you would like to be a Host for our wonderful Fellowship Hour. We can show you how you can make so many people happy by serving coffee, tea and beverages, baked goods and sometimes other items. Please let me know if you're interested – Thanks, *Ginni*



are not covered by Connecticut Foodshare. We welcome the following items for our collections basket: liquid dish detergent, small size laundry detergent, shampoo, bars of hand soap. Thanks in advance for providing these non-food, but very necessary, items. Your donations to Southington Community Services are so welcome!

From Our Music Director:

Hello, First Baptist.

We have the following events coming up.

On March 17, Lisa Cote and Steve Nyren will share their music at our service



On April 14, we will have Mekenzie Joseph returning to us. We really enjoyed her beautiful voice when she sang during an Advent worship service.

During our Easter service, both our Bell Ringers and Singing Ensemble will share their joyous Easter music. Bells will practice before services at 9 a.m. and the Singing Ensemble will practice after the services on March 17 and 24.

On March 31, Easter Sunday, bells will practice at 9 a.m., the Singing Ensemble at 9:20 a.m.

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



Easter Candy Donations

We appreciate donations of individually wrapped candy for our annual Easter Egg Hunt planned for after worship on March 31. Candy can be put in the office or left with a note in the kitchen. The deadline is March 24.

Outreach Committee Updates

The America for Christ offering is currently underway. Your contribution goes a long way to support ministries within the United States and its territories. "Because of God's great love we are not consumed, for God's compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness." – Lamentations 3:22-23 (NIV)

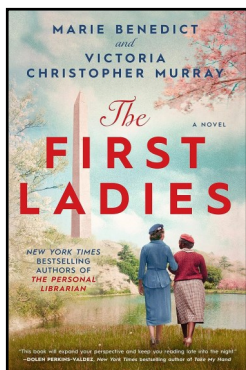
AMERICA FOR CHRIST OFFERING 2024

GRACE upon GRACE

Thank you for your ongoing support of our Southington neighbors in need. Southington Community Services needs personal care items which

Book Club to Meet April 16

The FBC Book Club will next meet Tuesday, April 16 at 1 p.m. to discuss “The First Ladies” by Marie Benedict and Victoria Christopher Murray. This novel is about the extraordinary partnership between First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt and civil rights activist Mary McLeod Bethune.



Questions? Contact this month’s Book Club leaders, Sharon Kupiec or Shirley Mason.

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. Wonderful fiction written by secular and Christian writers.

Check out our new books! - “The Nightingale” by Kristin Hannah, “Every Breath” by Nicholas Sparks, and The Book of Lost Names” by Kristen Harmel.

Please Note:

The next Tag Sale will not be until November. Please DO NOT bring items and leave them on the stage at this time. We need every inch of space on the stage for our Savers fundraiser. We had over 400 bags donated last year and hope to increase it in 2024! Thank you.

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 and contact the flower coordinators: March - Dot Amundsen - (860) 747-8188; April - Robin Michel - (860) 620-2989

Pastor Sharon needs the dedication information by Tuesday noon to include it in the bulletin.

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. Requests? Contact Robin or Ginni.

And Let’s Celebrate...

Spencer Burdeshaw! We are so proud to announce that Spencer Burdeshaw is the recipient of the CT Association of the Arts Award representing South End Elementary School along with another student! Spencer, a fifth-grader, was chosen by his art and music teacher for this award which reads, "The award is designed to recognize students at the elementary level who demonstrate outstanding ability in the performing or visual arts and maintain a high level of citizenship and cooperative skills." The son of Jon and Amy Burdeshaw, Spencer was recognized at a banquet in early February.



We are proud of you, Spencer!

Birthdays & Anniversaries



**Birthdays
March**

- 1 Zachary Jones
- 6 Ethan Amundsen, Rona Corrigan, Emily Olore
- 8 Dante Jones
- 14 Mildred Pugh
- 23 Katie (Corrigan) Studer
- 28 Melanie MacDonald

April

- 3 Abby Corrigan
- 6 Barbara Burkhardt
- 9 Claressa Maheu
- 13 Rita Cabata
- 21 Doug Spain
- 30 Emily Lamy

And happy belated birthday to Jean McKay whose birthday was Feb. 3!

Anniversaries

There are no anniversaries in March or April.

**Last chance to order Easter flowers or
have a memorial gift listed for Easter!**



Easter Sunday, March 31, 2024

*Remember or honor your loved ones
with flowers or a memorial gift*

Please use this form to memorialize or honor a loved one with beautiful flowers or a gift on **Easter Sunday, March 31**. You can place this completed form and payment in the offering box in the narthex or return it to the church office. The flower/gift list will be printed in the Easter Sunday bulletin and May/June Steeple Signal. Please make your check out to "First Baptist Church of Southington" with "Easter flowers/gift" on the memo line.

Deadline is Sunday, March 10.

You can take your plant home after the Easter service unless you would like to have it given to a shut-in. Questions? Contact Robin Michel, (860) 620-2989 or email robin.leemichel@gmail.com.

Please fill in the number of flowers you are ordering or the information for a memorial gift.

- (#) **Lilies** (6-inch pot) \$12
(#) **Tulips** (6-inch pot) \$8.50
(#) **Daffodils** (6-inch pot) \$8.50
() **Gift** \$ _____

\$ _____ Amount included or **IOU** _____

In Memory of or **in Honor of** as you would like it listed (circle one):

Giver's Name (as you would like it listed):

Designation of gifts, i.e. general fund, music, missions, flowers, etc.

Your name & phone # in case of questions: _____

Stay in touch! www.firstbaptistsouthington.org or on Facebook: "First Baptist Church - Southington, CT"