

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 2025



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



Looking Ahead in March & April

March

Sunday, March 2 – Communion Worship, 10am

Tuesday, March 4 – Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, 5-7pm

Wednesday, March 5 – Lent begins

Sunday, March 9 – D.R. and Celebration Sunday, 10am; monthly celebration follows; Daylight Saving Time - turn clocks ahead one hour

Tuesday, March 11 – Lenten Book Study, 1pm

Thursday, March 13 - Board of Deacons, 3pm; Music Committee, 4pm

Saturday, March 15 – Memorial Service for Joanne Myska, 10am

Sunday, March 16 – Worship, 10am; Finance Committee and MLK Committee to meet following worship/fellowship

Tuesday, March 18 – Lenten Book Study, 1pm

Wed., March 19 – Outreach Committee, 1pm

Sunday, March 23 – Worship, 10am; Church Board meets following worship/fellowship

Tuesday, March 25 – Lenten Book Study, 1pm

Wed., March 26 – Friendship Time, 12-2pm

Sunday, March 30 – Worship, 10am; Deadline for

ordering Easter flowers

April

Tuesday, April 1 – Lenten Book Study, 1pm

Sunday, April 6 – Communion Worship, 10am

Tuesday, April 8 – Lenten Book Study, 1pm

Thursday, April 10 - Board of Deacons, 3pm; Music Committee, 4pm

Sunday, April 13 – Palm & Celebration Sunday, 10am; monthly celebration follows

Tuesday, April 15 – Steeple Signal deadline for May-June issue

Wed., April 16 – Outreach Committee, 1pm

Thursday, April 17 – Maundy Thursday Service, 7pm

Easter Sunday Worship, April 20 – Sunrise Service at Merriman Cemetery, 6am; regular worship in sanctuary, 10am; Easter Egg hunt follows

Sunday, April 27 – Worship, 10am

SAVE THE DATE:

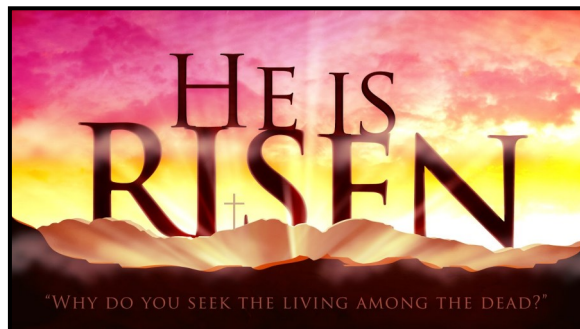
Spud Night - May 3, 5:30-7pm!

Check announcements for the Church Board and Finance Committee meetings in April.

The Pastor's Lenten Ponderings

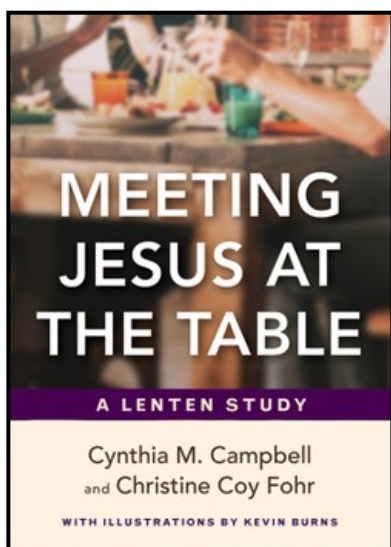


I once had a call from a member of our church family. As we chatted, they said that they had a question about Lent: With Ash Wednesday being on March 5, and Lent being 40 days long, how come the math doesn't work – it's more than 40 days from March 5 until Easter on April 20? Good question!



The answer is that Lent is 40 days from Ash Wednesday to Easter, excluding Sundays. Sundays are not counted because we celebrate Jesus' resurrection every Sunday. In addition, 40 days are observed in the Lenten season in memory of the 40 days Jesus spent being tempted in the wilderness.

This year, I invited our entire church family to join in observing Lent together. On five consecutive Tuesdays that begin on March 11 and conclude on April 8, we will take a Lenten journey. Each Tuesday at 1 p.m. we will gather in the parlor to discuss "*Meeting Jesus at the Table*" by Cynthia M. Campbell and Christine Coy Fohr.



I would also like to invite you to join our faith community for our Easter week observances: Our Maundy Thursday service is on April 17 at 7 p.m.; Easter Sunrise service at 6 a.m. on Easter morning, April 20; our 10 a.m. Easter worship service which will be followed by our annual Easter Egg Hunt.

Whether you join us for our Lenten book study or our Holy Week services, I urge you to spend the 40 days of Lent in reflection and preparation for the greatest celebration of our Christian faith – Easter, the day of the resurrection of our Lord. On Easter, Christ triumphed over the grave, leaving behind an empty tomb to forever remind us He is not dead, He does not sleep, He is alive!

In Christ,
Pastor Sharon

Church Event honors Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. for 27th Year

Our church was proud to host the 27th annual Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration on Jan. 26 featuring guest speaker, Stephanie Thomas, Connecticut's 75th Secretary of State. Two students, Vaidehi Patel of Joseph A. DePaolo Middle School and Ekam Singh of John F. Kennedy Middle School, were honored. A special reception followed. This event is the only one in Southington that honors Dr. King.

The Rev. Sharon Holt commented, "Dr. King was far more than the leader of the Civil Rights Movement in the middle of the 20th century in America; Dr. King had a vision for all people to flourish under just laws, equitable distribution of wealth and equal protection under the law...Dr. Martin Luther King was assassinated 57 years ago this year on April 4, 1968. His legacy lives on in the hearts and minds of seekers of peace and justice for all. We are proud to honor him today."

Focusing on the theme, "Serving the Least of These," Thomas remarked in part: "Dr. King once said, 'Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.' So let's not be silent. Civic engagement isn't just about voting, it's about showing up, speaking up and being a



See **MLK** on next page

MLK continued

voice for the ones who can't find their voice.

"Let's remember that being informed and engaged isn't about taking sides, it isn't about politics. It's about taking responsibility to help shape the policies that affect our lives and the lives of those we're

called to serve. Dr. King believed in the power of collective action to create change. I believe it too. Do you believe it?... Every person here today has the power to make a difference... Now let's get to work."

Thank you to everyone who makes this event a success each year.

News from the Pews



Daylight Saving Time

Daylight Saving Time is Sunday, March 9. Move your clocks ahead one hour or else you'll be late to church!

D.R. Sunday is March 9

The Dominican Republic Mission Team, based in Wallingford, began sending short-term teams to volunteer in LaRomana, DR in 1990. Since that first team of 11 volunteers, thousands of people of all ages and from all over the United States have had the privilege of serving.

On Sunday, March 9, we will welcome John Powers, the Mission Team coordinator since 1990, and his wife, Aimee, to be part of our church service to uplift this amazing ministry and who also will join us during fellowship hour with more information and to answer any questions.

2025 Mission Trip dates are:

Week 1 – Friday, June 27 to Saturday, July 5

Week 2 – Saturday, July 5 to Saturday, July 12

Week 3 – Saturday, July 12 to Saturday, July 19

Our church has sent volunteers on DR Mission trips through the years. It is our prayer that people from our church will once again be a part of this amazing experience. We are also in need of sponsors and prayer partners to support this opportunity.

The cost of the trip will be shared between our church and also a portion provided by the volunteers. Participants are responsible for acquiring their own passports. Registration is beginning. Questions? Feel free to contact Joyce Olore at (860) 276-8061, jsolore@aol.com; Linda Lamy at (860) 283-6734, lindalamy8@gmail.com; or Pastor Sharon.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

Our Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper will be held March 4 from 5 to 7 p.m. The delicious



menu includes pancakes, sausage, fruit, juice and coffee. There is no charge to attend but freewill donations are welcome to benefit the Deacons Fund.

Outreach Update

On behalf of all of the volunteers of The Closet and the staff of Southington Community Services, thank you very much for the generous donation of hats, scarves, socks, underwear and T-shirts, lap blankets and gloves/mittens. We have so many clients who need all of these items, especially during our cold winter! And a special thanks goes out to Keith Choquette for volunteering at the food pantry and delivering our donations!

Due to the winter weather keeping us at home on two Sundays in a row, we will extend the America for Christ offering through March 9. Envelopes can be found on the table in the Narthex. The World Mission Offering begins March 16.

Annual Meeting

Approximately 36 people attended our annual meeting on Feb. 23. Moderator Jean Chinigo passed the gavel to Jon Burdeshaw who will serve as the moderator until 2030.

Lenten Book Study

We are preparing for our annual five-week Lenten book study led by Peg Lewis. This year, we'll be discussing "Meeting Jesus at the Table" beginning Tuesday, March 11 at 1 p.m. See Peg Lewis if interested in the Lenten Book Study.

FBC Book Club

As a result, the FBC Book Club is taking a hiatus during March and April and will resume meeting on the third Tuesday of the month on May 20 at 1 p.m. Ginni will be mailing out descriptions of the top three suggestions and the group can decide what to read in the next few weeks.

See **Book Club** next page



Book Club continued

Each book club meeting is offered via Zoom in addition to meeting in the parlor. Notices and the Zoom link will be sent out in advance of each meeting. Everyone is welcome – even if you haven't read the book or didn't like it! To receive the emails and/or the Zoom link, contact Ginni at vlbutler@sbcglobal.net or call her at (860) 628-5014.



Friendship Time! We have held several Friendship Times to chat, play games, color and just have fun. The next Friendship Time will be Wednesday, March 26, noon to 2 p.m., in Fellowship Hall. Bring your lunch and games, knitting, photos or coloring books. We will provide a beverage and a treat. Need a ride? Ask Ginni.

Volunteer Opportunity: Are you interested in reading scripture or being a worship leader? We'd love to have you. No experience required! If you would like to volunteer, please see Barbara McKay. We can work around your schedule. Thank you for serving our church!

Steeple Signal Deadline: The next edition of The Steeple Signal will be May-June 2025. Deadline is April 15. Share your milestones or news with our church! Email Robin Michel at robin.leemichel@gmail.com.



Easter News

Worship

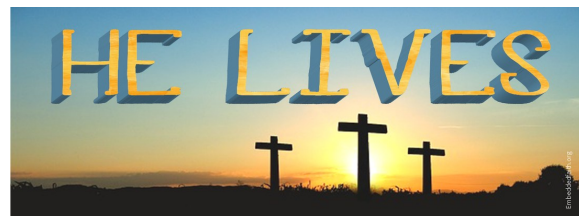
Our Easter Week begins with our Palm Sunday service on April 13. The Maundy Thursday service will be observed at 7 p.m. The Easter Sunrise service will be at 6 a.m. at Merriman Burying Ground/Cemetery on Marion Avenue at the corner of Nutmeg Drive. The regular Easter Sunday service will be held at 10 a.m. in the sanctuary. The annual Easter Egg Hunt will follow.

Easter Flowers

We will receive the order forms for Easter flowers in the next few weeks. As usual, we will purchase tulips, daffodils and lilies. The order forms will be distributed at the church, emailed and posted online when they become available so watch the announcements. (Did you know that we purchase our flowers from Michael's Greenhouses in Cheshire? It was started in 1969 by Mickey Arisco – the brother of our own Tony Arisco!)

Easter Candy Donations

We appreciate donations of individually wrapped candy for our annual Easter Egg Hunt planned for after worship on April 20. Candy can be put in the office or left with a note in the kitchen. The deadline is April 6. Thank you!



Celebrations!

March

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

April

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



In Sympathy

We offer sympathies to the family and friends of Joanne Myska who passed away on Feb. 11. She was very active in the church's children's ministries whether it was as a trip chaperone for the youth groups, gathering Sunday school supplies, or having inspirational gifts and crafts for the children around the holidays. A memorial service will be held at our church on Saturday, March 15 at 10 a.m.



Fellowship Hour Help

Thanks again to everyone who has been helping with our Fellowship Hour. Anyone is welcome to help whether it is hosting, setting up, serving, bringing goodies, cleaning up, etc. Please call Ginni (860-628-5014) if you plan on bringing a refreshment.



From Our Music Director:

Hello everyone,

Music is an integral part of our worship and you can be part of that. Even if you don't read music, you can join our Singing Ensemble and the Bell/Chime Ringers to share your love of music with the congregation.

Our rehearsals occur before the service several times monthly. We typically perform once each month. Questions? Please email me at ctu246040@gmail.com, or see me at the Sunday services. Thanks - *Les Marsh*

Bulletin Board

Our bulletin board in the Narthex is beautifully decorated by Linda Lamy – its inspirational art and quotes welcome us to worship. Would you like to share your ideas and skills to beautify this display? Linda would love to speak to you!

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.

Bloomin' News

Want Flowers?

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 at 12 p.m. to include it in the bulletin. Questions? Call Robin Michel, (860) 620-2989.

Flower Coordinators 2025

March: Dot Amundsen (860) 929-8131

April: Robin Michel (860) 620-2989

May: Joyce Olore (860) 877-3417

June: Ginni Butler (860) 628-5014

July: Joyce Olore (860) 877-3417

August: Robin Michel (860) 620-2989

September: Peg Lewis (860) 384-4123

Monthly Compassion Sunday Donations to Community Services

We continue to help the community with the weekly offerings to our local food pantry. To assist Southington Community Services in filling their shelves with ample amounts of items, we are suggesting the following items to be donated during each month. Please know that this is a suggested list and other items are always gladly accepted as well at any time.

January: canned vegetables

February: deodorant

March: canned fruit

April: shampoo

May: pasta sauce

June: pasta

July: cereal

August: children's snacks

September: peanut butter

October: jelly

November: canned meats, corned beef, tuna, etc.

December: hand/bar soap



October: Joyce Olore (860) 877-3417
November: Dot Amundsen (860) 929-8131
December: Robin Michel (860) 620-2989

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. Have ideas or want to help? See Margaret Shigo-Zembko.



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 and on our Facebook page are included in prayers during the week. Requests? Contact Robin or Ginni.

Church Website

Our website is www.firstbaptistsouthington.org. Worship service information, events, The Steeple Signal and more info are on the site. You can also see photos and watch our worship services on our Facebook page "First Baptist Church –

Southington, CT." If you would like to join our virtual worship, contact Pastor Sharon.

Let's Celebrate!

FBC Recognized in National Newspaper

First Baptist Church and Laureen Galayda were recognized in The Washington Informer, a weekly newspaper based in Washington, D.C., for its mission in promoting Black History Month including a profile of Mary McLeod Bethune. "I could be here all day telling you what she accomplished in her 80 years...Her influence on America is one of the reasons that our church honors Black History Month every year," Laureen was quoted as saying. It's nice for FBC to be nationally recognized!

Lori Koritkowski Retires!

Church member Lori Koritkowski recently retired as deli manager at Stop & Shop where she worked for approximately 25 years. Your retirement was well deserved – enjoy every moment!



Welcome to the World!

Congratulations to Stefanie and Joshua Letizio who welcomed their baby boy on Feb. 20! Lee Burhoe is the proud Gigi and also celebrating is Hudson's Grandma Linda Lamy!

Our Spud Night & Silent Auction Will Soon Be Here!



Spread the news to family and friends to join us on Saturday, May 3 for our annual delicious hand-crafted baked potato extravaganza. Mark your calendar to reserve that evening for a great time together from 5:30 to

7 p.m. or just drop in for take-out too.

On Sunday, April 6 and April 27 after the service, you'll also have the opportunity to become a Spud Night sponsor. There will be a table in Fellowship Hall where you may select your favorite baked potato toppings or other items needed by sponsoring for a few dollars.

Also, you are welcome to donate new or regifted

items for our auction by April 27. Feel free to talk with Linda Lamy (860-878-5310) or Joyce Olore (860-877-3417) if you have any questions or would like to volunteer to help the night of the event. This year our fundraiser will benefit our mission opportunities such as assisting in sponsoring our volunteers serving on the Dominican Republic Mission Team this summer and the church's general fund.

Auction Basket Making

Are you feeling crafty and want to create an auction basket or two, or do you just want to come by and help with some Spud Night preparations? Then please join us downstairs in the basket room on either Friday, March 21, from 1 to 3 p.m., or on Monday, April 7 from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Call Linda if you plan on helping. Thanks so much!