First Baptist Church of Southington
581 Meriden Ave. Southington, CT 06489-3901
An American Baptist Church ABCUSA
Telephone: (860) 628-8121
https://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

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

THE STEEPLE SIGNAL



November-December 2026

Upcoming Dates



November

Sunday, Nov. 1: All Saints and Communion Sunday, 10am
Saturday, Nov. 7: Annual Tag Sale, 8am-2pm
Sunday, Nov. 8: Sunday Worship, 10am
Tuesday, Nov. 10: Friendship Time, 1-3pm
Wednesday, Nov. 11: Veterans Day
Thursday, Nov. 12: Deacons, 3pm; Music Committee, 4pm
Sunday, Nov. 15: Celebration Sunday, 10am; monthly celebration follows
Tuesday, Nov. 17: Book Club, 1pm, Zoom available
Wednesday, Nov. 18: Outreach, 1pm
Sunday, Nov. 22: Pledge Sunday and Worship, 10am; deadline to order Christmas poinsettias & gifts
Tuesday, Nov. 24: Interfaith Thanksgiving Service, St. Aloysius, 7pm
Thursday, Nov. 26: Happy Thanksgiving
Sunday, Nov. 29: First Sunday of Advent, 10am, followed by Hanging of the Greens

December Calendar continues inside

The Minister's Meanderings: Travels are God's Gift

I consider the ability and means to travel and experience different cultures a true blessing from God. In October, I was privileged to visit Portugal and Spain. I spent a week cruising the Douro River in Portugal and two days in Madrid, Spain. It was an amazing immersion in two wonderful, vibrant cultures that included fantastic scenery, amazing food, visiting small villages and learning Portuguese folk dancing.



While the trip was certainly a joy, I did face a challenge; my cellular phone decided to give up the ghost about halfway through the trip. Until you've experienced it, this may not seem like a big deal. In reality, it is horrifying. Imagine being in a foreign culture where you don't know the language, thousands of miles away from your friends and family, with no way to communicate. I also was left with no way to take photographs or communicate effectively with others on my trip while we were separated from one another. I was dramatically reminded that we live in a culture that is utterly dependent on technology for everything from reading menus (via QR codes) to talking and texting one another, to documenting once in a lifetime experiences via photos.

However, I relearned some very important lessons while incommunicado. Our faith teaches us to love our neighbor as ourselves. This level of love does not discriminate between those who are from our own country, speak our language, or believe as we believe. My isolation while abroad provided me with an important reminder of how interconnected we are. Once I was able to communicate to others that my phone wasn't working, we found other ways to communicate through rough "sign language", hand-drawn maps and gestures. I was heartened by how kind complete strangers were when generously offering me assistance. People on the street would not just tell me how to get somewhere, they would walk me there. When I had trouble finding a taxi in Madrid (after going to the authorized Apple store to see if they could fix the phone – they couldn't), four members of the Policia Nacional found a taxi for me and escorted me to it, ensuring the driver knew exactly which hotel I was going to. We parted smiling and blowing kisses to one another through the window.

The words, "Love your neighbor as yourself" resonated anew with me. Now that I am safely home, and my phone is fixed, I am grateful for the commonalities that unite us rather than the issues that divide us.

In Christ,
Pastor Sharon



Let's Stay Healthy

Flu/cold/allergy season is coming up, and we want to make sure that we all stay as healthy as possible. Let us agree that if we are not feeling well, we will stay home and take care of ourselves.

December Dates to Remember

Saturday, Dec. 5: Nativity Set Up
Sunday, Dec. 6: Communion Sunday, Second Sunday of Advent, Nativities Sunday, and Bring a Friend to Church Sunday, 10am
Wednesday, Dec. 9: Friendship Time Holiday Gathering, 1pm – featuring a Cookie Swap!
Thursday, Dec. 10: Deacons, 3pm; Music Committee, 4pm
Sunday, Dec. 13: Celebration Sunday and Third Sunday of Advent, 10am, the monthly celebration follows
Tuesday, Dec. 15: Blue Christmas, location to be announced; The Steeple Signal deadline for Jan.-Feb. 2026
Sunday, Dec. 20: Worship and Fourth Sunday of Advent, 10am
Thursday, Dec. 24: Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols, 6pm
Sunday, Dec. 27: Worship, 10am
Thursday, Jan. 1: Happy New Year!
Sunday, Jan. 3: Communion Sunday
Sunday, Jan. 10: Epiphany observed, 10am, Unhanging of the Greens
Outreach will not meet in December.

Other meetings will be announced.

News from the Pews

Tag Sale News

The cars started arriving at 6 am and the line at the door began at 6:50 am for our 8 am starting time. Our tag sale is well-known in the community and anticipated by many! Thank you all for the support you provided for this year's tag sale.



A great deal of work went into collecting items, sorting, placing and pricing items, working at the sale, helping to break it all down on Saturday and Sunday.

A special shout-out to our soup and sandwich makers, cookie and cake bakers, and beverage and chip donators who helped sustain the strength for all the volunteers.

As of this writing, we have taken in $6,168 and the number is not final! What a great outcome! Thank you all again*! -Joyce Olore and Dot Amundsen*

From the Outreach Committee

We have received a very nice thank you note from Church World Service in appreciation for the $900 we sent for blankets. We also received a



thank you letter from IRIS (Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services) which described some of their new programs to support immigrant youth (here legally) with language and skills training.

We continue to be concerned about food and fuel insufficiency in our town and state. Southington Community Services has had empty food shelves and many more applicants for fuel assistance in these difficult days. Similarly, Connecticut Foodshare needs food and especially funds for diesel fuel so they can make deliveries throughout the state. We are glad that we as a church can contribute toward meeting some of these needs, and encourage you as individuals to give as you can also. We have some wonderful volunteers from our church to Southington Community Services and Friends of the Library as well. We are grateful to be such a giving congregation with our material resources and with our time as well.

Nativity Display and…
Bring a Friend to Church Day!



On Sunday, Dec. 6, we will be hosting an international Nativities display in the parlor. If you have a nativity from another country you would like to share (and can bring it in on Saturday, Dec 5) see Peg Lewis or Dot Amundsen. We will be setting up some tables in the parlor on Saturday and arranging the displays. Then all plan to bring a friend to enjoy worship, fellowship time and the nativities on Sunday, Dec. 6.

Recapping the Church Picnic!



We had a great time at our annual Church Picnic, sponsored by Board of Deacons, held on Sept. 13, following worship. Thank you to our cooks for grilling burgers and dogs and all of those who brought delicious side dishes or desserts. Displays and games were also the order of the day! During worship, Gabe and Noah Zamorano told the congregation about serving in the Dominican Republic.

All-Saints Sunday



On All Saints Sunday, Nov. 1, we remembered those associated with our church who have died in the past year. Individuals were Barbara Adams, Winston “Jiggs” Adams (Shirley Mason’s brother), TSGT Donald Dorman, Carl Hoffman and the Rev. David Strosahl, a former pastor.

Celebration Sunday

Celebration Sunday in November will be held Nov. 15.

Keeping Neighbors Warm



Thank you to Pastor Sharon, Ginni Butler, Barbara McKay and Kim Neilson for distributing coats to residents of a senior living community courtesy of Southington Community Services.

Christmas Poinsettias



See the form on last page to order Christmas poinsettias or memorial gifts. Deadline is Nov. 22. They will be available on the narthex table, the website, and Pastor Sharon will also email them.

Interfaith Thanksgiving Service

The Southington Interfaith Clergy Association will be hosting the traditional Thanksgiving week worship service. 7:00pm on Tuesday, November 24, St. Aloyisius.

Warming Tree



In December and January, we will have the Warming Tree in Fellowship Hall. Please feel free to donate underwear, socks, gloves, mittens, and other cold weather wear. Donations will be given to Southington Community Services to distribute to their clientele. Thank you!

Blue Christmas

The holiday season can be stressful and evoke sadness in those who may be grieving, are estrange-ed from family, have lost their job or have nowhere to go. The feeling of loss may be overwhelming, especially during the holiday season.

To offer comfort and hope, faith communities and Plantsville Funeral Home offer this service. Blue Christmas will be held this year at St. Aloysius Church, 254 Burritt St., Plantsville, at a date and location to be announced. Pastor Sharon will provide the information as December nears.

Friendship Time



Friendship Time will be held Tuesday, Nov. 10, 1-3pm. In November, we will be making Christmas cards for a person whose name will be selected at random. Bring extra cards or crafting sup-plies if you would like to make one. December Friendship Time will be held Wednesday, Dec. 9, 1-3pm. Bring your card and three dozen cookies if you would like to participate in the cookie swap. We always have time to play games, have snacks and share lots of laughs. Bring a friend!

Hanging of the Greens



Hanging of the Greens will be held following worship and fellowship time on Sunday, Nov. 29. We will be “unhanging” the greens on Sunday, Jan. 10 after worship and fellowship. Many hands make light work!

2027 Dominican Republic Mission Trip Info



The First Baptist Church of Wallingford started organizing short term mission trips to La Romana in the DR 35 years ago. The first team consisted of 11 volunteers and has grown to thousands of people of all ages and from all over the United States. First Baptist Southington has participated for multiple years, and we would love for this tradition to continue.

The details for the 2027 mission trip have been finalized!

One-week trips:
Week 1: June 25 - July 3
Week 2: July 3 -July 10
Week 3: July 10 to July 17

Cost for one week: $1650. Registration is online at www.drmissionteam.org/ Zoom meetings and payments will begin after the first of the year.

If you are interested in becoming part of this experience, please reach out to Joyce Olore or Linda Lamy. The Outreach Committee is committed to supporting you!

Library News



Willy the Bookworm and his friend Margaret Shigo-Zembko are asking for new novels that you would like to donate to the church library. We do have some new books on the book cart including "Theo of Golden," "An Inconvenient Widow" (about Mary Todd Lincoln), and "The Calamity Club." We'd love more to put on our book cart!

All types of books have been coming into our church library – and Willy the Bookworm encourages YOU to borrow them! Our library has 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.

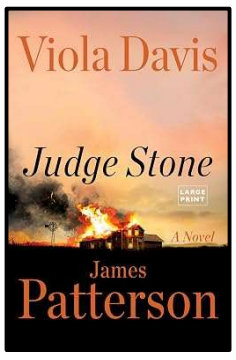
Fellowship Coffee Hour

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. There are still plenty of openings to host - And lessons are available on making coffee and setups. Please let me know if you're interested. And thank you to all our helpers and those who contribute goodies. – *Thanks, Ginni*

Prayer Requests

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

FBC Book Club



The FBC Book Club will meet Tuesday, Nov. 17 at 1pm to discuss "Judge Stone" by James Patterson and Viola Davis. It was published in 2026 so you may have difficulty borrowing it but you can ask someone who may already own the book and can share.

The FBC Book Club meets on the third Tuesday of the month in the parlor. It can also be offered via Zoom if you can't attend in person Everyone is welcome – even if you didn'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.

Donations to Community Services

We continue to help our community with the weekly offerings to our local food pantry. Items can be left in the basket in the narthex or donations can be dropped off at Southington Community Services, 91 Norton St., Plantsville.

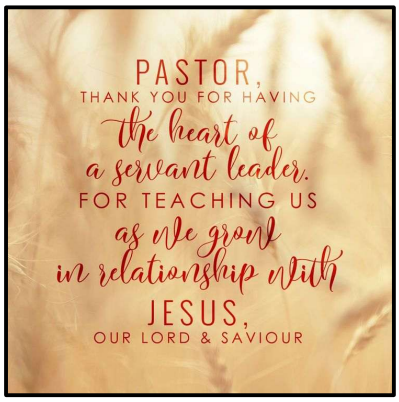


To assist Southington Community Services in filling their shelves with ample amounts of items, we are suggesting what to donate each month. Other items are always gladly accepted.

November: canned meats, corned beef, tuna, etc.
December: hand/bar soap

Thank you, Pastor Sharon

In October, Barbara McKay, head of the Board of Deacons, presented a flower bouquet and thank you card on behalf of the church to Pastor Sharon. October is Pastor Appreciation Month.



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*



Volunteer Opportunities

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!

Bulletin Deadline

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

Flower News

Thank you, Dot, for your beautiful fall arrangement in the sanctuary!



If you would like flowers for a regular Sunday, 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 12pm to include it in the bulletin. Questions? Call Robin Michel, (860) 620-2989.

These are the upcoming flower coordinators:

November: Dot Amundsen (860) 929-8131
December: Robin Michel (860) 620-2989
January: Ginni Butler (860) 628-5014

Church Website and Social Media
Our church website https://firstbaptistsouthington.org has worship service information, events, The Steeple Signal, and more 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 Sunday worship services via Zoom, contact Pastor Sharon.

A Great Year for Boy Scout Troop 17 at the Apple Harvest Festival



Each October, the Town of Southington comes alive with the annual Apple Harvest Festival, and for Boy Scout Troop 17, its food booth, where Scouts serve up crowd favorites including loaded baked potatoes and meatball grinders.

Preparing for the event is no small task. In the week leading up to the festival, Scouts gather to clean, wrap, and prepare thousands of potatoes and help set up the booth on the festival grounds.
Over the course of two busy weekends, from Friday evenings through Sunday afternoons, Scouts take orders, interact with customers, and keep the operation running smoothly, while troop leaders and Scout families work behind the scenes cooking and assembling orders. This year was especially successful, with the troop selling out of baked potatoes and meatball grinders nearly every day.

The proceeds from the Apple Harvest Festival fund much of the troop's annual program, helping to support camping trips, activities, equipment purchases, and other Scouting opportunities throughout the year. Most importantly, the fundraiser helps subsidize summer camp, allowing every Scout the opportunity to enjoy a week of camp at an affordable cost to their family. Beyond fundraising, the event provides valuable lessons in teamwork, responsibility, customer service, and the rewards of hard work, all while building friendships and creating lasting memories.

Troop 17 would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the many members of our church family who stopped by the booth to support the Scouts. We hope you enjoyed your baked potato or meatball grinder, and we look forward to serving you again at next year's festival! – *Jon Burdeshaw*

Welcome to the World!



Proud parents Ben and Melissa Lamy welcomed new baby Elodie Leona Lamy on Sept. 19 at 1:12 a.m. Siblings are Wesley and Charlie. Baby Elodie weighed 6 lbs 3 oz and measured 19-3/4 inches. Congratulations to Grandma Linda Lamy and family!

Happy Birthday, Ethel!



Ethel's extended family hoste d a very festive 90th birthday party at our church on Oct. 17. The event included lovingly created timelines and memorabilia. Congratulations!



Christmas 2026

Remember or Honor Your Loved Ones with Flowers or a Memorial Gift

Please use this form to remember or honor a loved one with a beautiful poinsettia or memorial gift on Christmas Eve. Please submit your order by Sunday, Nov. 22 to Robin Michel.

The flower/gift list will be printed in the Christmas Eve bulletin and the January/February Steeple Signal. Please make your check out to "First Baptist Church of Southington" with "Christmas flowers/gift" on the memo line.

Indicate the QUANTITY and COLOR of poinsettias you want. You can take your poinsettia home after the Dec. 24 Christmas Eve worship service or let us know if you wish us to give it to someone who is homebound.

(Qty) 6-inch red or white poinsettia @ $10 ea. Total: $_____

OR

Gift $_____

Designation of memorial gifts: General fund, deacons, music, missions, etc.

_____

In Memory of Person: _____

OR **In Honor of** Person: _____

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

_____

$_____ Amount enclosed OR $_____ Amount still due

Your name & number in case Robin has questions:

_____

Questions? Call Robin Michel, (860) 620-2989
or robin.leemichel@gmail.com