

# The Visitor

March/April 2024

## FROM THE PASTOR'S PEN..

Happy Spring, Brothers and Sisters in Christ, I bring you the joy of spring, the joy of our prayers, and the joy of fellowship. Our last newsletter was January/February; since that time, what has been happening in your life? Do I know, have you called, have you come to visit? We have been blessed with only one storm that closed the church due to a parking ban. Otherwise, we have been here waiting for you. We had a drive-up Ash Wednesday event to begin Lent, and we had about 25 grateful people that stopped for ashes. We have been hosting Soup and Sanctuary every Wednesday with our last one being March 20th. We will then have a Foot Washing service at 6 pm followed by a Service of Tenebrae, beginning at 7 PM on Thursday, March 28th. Twice a month beginning March 13th, we will host Midnight Run, a bag lunch program for those that need some additional TLC in the Meriden community. These lunches will include a juice box, a peanut butter sandwich and some snacks; we can always use donations of any ingredients. And I want you to feel invited to help us make sandwiches (4:30 pm) or hand them out beginning at 5:30PM.

It is such a joy to be among the people of God, and you are such wonderful stewards of this building and even more. Thank you to the people God brings to this community through Blood Drives, Mammography Bus visits, feeding His sheep, providing a place for fellowship for both members and non-members and friends all; all of the activities we do connect us more to the one body. Did you know we now have a monthly fellowship group which meets on the 2nd Wednesday of the month? We begin with pizza or potluck and then have some kind of activity. We have scheduled our March fellowship for Saturday March 16, as Soup and Sanctuary will take place on the Wednesday as scheduled in our Lenten program. Saturday will be a Paint and Sip and you don't need to be an artist as it is amazing what you will create as we follow directions of our artist Jessica Dey. We will begin at 1PM; there is a cost of \$25 for the necessary supplies. Teens get a scholarship of \$15 so their cost is only \$10. There is only room for 20 participants, so RSVP to Meg to reserve a spot. We are hoping for someone to teach us line dancing in April. What would you like to do? As the crocuses are beginning to sprout by the office door, I am encouraged that warmer weather is not far away.

As death gives way to new life, so too is the energy among God's people; joy fills us, and brings us into community for each other, even if you don't share in His joy at this moment, our prayer is you will find a welcome here and we will hold space for you to explore whatever you are feeling. Even as strangers we love you, and value your journey. As the stone was rolled away for everyone to experience His joy, we wait to share it with you.

***May the Spirit of Easter call you to be among your people.***

***You are always welcome.***

***Pastor Kathy***

## IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES

March 13th

**Midnight Run**

**5:30**

Lenten Program

6 pm

March 20th

Lenten Program

6 pm

March 24th

**Easter Program**

Meriden Public Library

1-3 pm

March 13th

**Midnight Run**

**5:30**

March 16th

**Painting Party**

**2 -4 pm**

March 28th

**Maundy Thursday**

**Program**

**6pm**

March 29th

**IT at Jordan's**

March 29th

**Good Friday**

**sanctuary open**

**10 am - 1 pm**

March 31st

**Easter Sunday**

**service at 10 with**

**Annual Egg Hunt**

# Church News

First Church has been keeping busy the last few months. We've had concerts, another blood drive--with more coming! We're in the middle of the Lenten season with more to come and we have our first mammogram bus of the season coming in April.

We had our first New Member Sunday since Covid on January 21st where we welcomed 4 new members: Norman Hoedtke, Bill Klaneski, Cynde Klaneski and Jim Chapman. We've hosted Olde Church Concerts on the first Friday of each month with 100+ attendance and wonderful response to the Church Ladies' meals. We have two more inside concerts before the season ends so try to come by and check them out. Ash Wednesday saw Pastor Kathy outside giving ashes and blessings to all who stopped by. Lenten Soup and Sanctuaries have been going weekly on Wednesday's and they start at 6 pm. Soup, salad, bread, dessert are served and then we go into the sanctuary for a short program. Let us know if you'd like to join--just contact the office. The American Red Cross came in on February 16th and hosted another blood drive--we have another scheduled for April 22nd and possibly another in May--we'll make an announcement if that happens. The blood drive was very well attended with 33 donors. We will be collecting change for the month of March in recognition of the two-year anniversary of the War in Ukraine. If you have any change to donate or would like to write a check please bring it to the office and we will be donating the monies to World Central Kitchen again.

We have a lot going on in the next few months so check the calendar and flyers in the following pages. Please share the information about our upcoming blood drive and mammogram bus. We have a trip with our youth group planned for March 29th (Good Friday) to go to IT at Jordan's furniture. This is a climbing facility that we went to with the kids last year and they loved it so it's on the calendar again. If anyone would like to attend please contact the office as we'll be ordering the tickets soon. Also attached is the memorial form for Easter Sunday. If you are doing memorials please return this to the office by March 24th. Also coming up is our annual Food Drive for the Meriden Soup Kitchen which will be done on April 14th. The enclosed flyer shows what is most needed and donations will be weighed and delivered to the Soup Kitchen on Monday, April 15th.

Please look for information on future spring events in May--Senior Center Health Fair on May 8th and Mother's Day Breakfast before service on Mother's Day May 12th.

## OFFICE HOURS & SERVICES

### First Church Office Hours

Tuesday-Friday 9 am-1 pm  
Closed Mondays.

### FCC Sunday Service

10 am

TCC--12:30 pm in Smith Hall  
Overcomers Tabernacle: 11 am

### Saturdays

Lighthouse Ministries  
9 am-12 pm in Smith Hall

### NA Meetings

Monday & Thursday  
6:30 PM--Smith Hall

Office Number: 203-235-5704

Email:  
[secretary@fccmeriden.org](mailto:secretary@fccmeriden.org)



**Sunday Worship is recorded and available online.**

**Go to [www.fccmeriden.org](http://www.fccmeriden.org) and click on "Virtual Worship" or contact us to be put on the email list for the link.**

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram and check out our website at [www.fccmeriden.org](http://www.fccmeriden.org)



# SO WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING LATELY...



## Blood Drive



### First Congregational Church

62 Colony Street  
Meriden, CT 06451

(held in church hall)

**Monday, April 22, 2024**  
**11:00 to 4:00 p.m.**

Please call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767)  
or visit [RedCrossBlood.org](https://RedCrossBlood.org) to schedule an appointment.



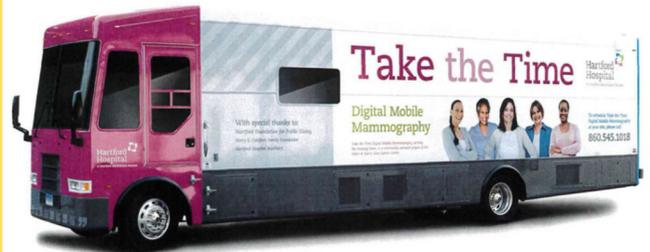
Streamline your donation experience and save up to 15 minutes by visiting [RedCrossBlood.org](https://RedCrossBlood.org)/RapidPass to complete your pre-donation reading and health history questions on the day of your appointment.



Download the Blood Donor App | [redcrossblood.org](https://redcrossblood.org) | 1-800-RED CROSS | 1-800-733-2767

## Take the Time

### Mobile Mammography



Hartford Hospital's Digital Mobile Mammography coach is coming. Take the time to visit us for your screening mammogram.

Mammograms can save lives.

These screening mammograms are offered for women age 40 and older who have not had a mammogram in over a year.

Date: **April 2, 2024**

Time: **8:00 am – 1:15 pm by appointment**

Place: **1265 Miller St., Meriden, CT 06450**

Contact Person: **Shanae/Elizabeth**

Telephone: **860-972-1243 for appointment**



**Easter  
Egg-Stravaganza!**  
**Sunday, March 24th**  
**1:00pm - 3:00pm**  
**Meriden Public Library**  
**105 Miller Street**

**HOP THROUGH THE LIBRARY  
TO COLLECT TREATS!**

**Selfies w/ the  
Easter Bunny**

460 Liberty St. Meriden CT 06450  
 203-630-4259  
 Meridenrecreation@meridenct.gov

*Helping the Homeless in Meriden*

**FIRST CHURCH  
OF MERIDEN**

**MIDNIGHT RUN  
FOOD DISTRIBUTION**

**Wednesdays**  
 March 13th  
 March 27  
 April 3rd  
 April 17th  
 May 1st

**5:30 PM at First Church**  
 62 Colony Street,  
 Meriden

Midnight Run is a ministry that makes sandwiches and bagged lunches for the homeless in New Haven and we are working to bring this ministry to Meriden. If your organization would like to join us in this ministry by taking a turn making these lunches, please email First Church for details:  
 secretary@fccmeriden.org.

**SUMMER CAMP STAFF NEEDED!**

Nestled on the banks of Hamburg Cove in Lyme, CT Camp Claire is seeking Junior & Senior staff aged 16 and up!

June 22 through August 17, 2024

**Room & Board INCLUDED!**

Be part of a fun loving family atmosphere and help give kids some of the best times of their lives!

We offer a wide range of classes & programs in a classic summer setting which has been going strong since 1916.

**+ We are also seeking Nurses! +**

If you know someone who may be interested in any position, please forward our information!

**Questions?**  
**Contact: [info@campclaire.org](mailto:info@campclaire.org)**

*Take a photo & Forward!*

**APPLY!**

**AND THE NEED GOES ON!**  
**CAN YOU SPARE SOME CHANGE?**

WE ARE COLLECTING CHANGE TO HELP THE CONTINUED NEED IN UKRAINE THROUGH THE EFFORTS OF WCK.  
 DON'T HAVE CHANGE ON YOU?  
 CONSIDER DONATING BY CHECK OR ONLINE  
 MAKING A CHECK PAYABLE TO  
 "FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH"  
 WITH "WCK" IN THE MEMO LINE.

or go to [www.fccmeriden.org](http://www.fccmeriden.org) to make your donation now!

**"Food is a Universal Human Right" --  
WCK**

Do unto others as you would have them do unto you--Luke 6:31

**FRI FEB 2: GREG GREENWAY  
KALA FARNHAM**

**FRI MAR 1: DANIELLE HOWLE  
RACHEL SAGE  
STEPHEN CLAIR**

**FRI APR 5: DANIELLE MIRAGLIA  
TRACY WALTON  
MICHAEL BURNS**

**FRI MAY 3: RUPERT WATES  
THE DECKER BANDITS**

**FRI JUNE 21:  
MAKE MUSIC DAY!!**

**discover  
MERIDEN**



First Congregational Church of Meriden  
**FOOD DRIVE**  
Sunday, April 14

17th Annual  
**Food Pantry Drive**  
to benefit the  
Meriden Soup Kitchen

April 14, 2024



**FEED THE  
HUNGRY**

### Most Needed Items

*All items should be in non-breakable packaging (no glass please).  
We cannot accept any dented cans or items that have previously been opened.*

The food items we most need include :

- > Canned soups and broths
- > Canned vegetables (corn, peas, carrots, green beans, potatoes)
- > Crushed tomatoes
- > Instant mashed potatoes
- > Applesauce in individual serving containers
- > Elbow macaroni and other pasta (except spaghetti and lasagna)
- > Butter, Italian dressing
- > Milk in containers that don't need refrigeration
- > Paper towels

Note: we currently have plenty of salt and rice on hand. However, all non-perishable foods are very needed. Please note that large size cans or cans with pop tops are much easier for our volunteers to use.

Please bring your donations into the church sanctuary on Sunday, April 14 and place in the chancel. If you cannot attend that Sunday, please bring to the church office prior to April 14.

**Thank you!**



# "Light the Night"

Campaign

*John 1:5 "The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it."*

**February 2024**

2/11/24-2/17/23

In dedication and memory of Loved Ones  
by Sue & Bruce Burchsted

2/18/24-2/24/24

In Memory of Eric Klaneski  
By Cynde & Bill Klaneski

**March 2024**

3/31/24-4/6/24

In dedication and memory of Loved Ones  
by Bill & Janice Bryant

Please consider donating a week in dedication or memory of the special people or an event in your life by lighting the lights in front of the church. The proceeds from the *Light the Night* fund go to the Restoration and Maintenance fund of the church. This helps to defer costs of larger maintenance projects. The suggested donation is \$100. If you have any questions, or would like to reserve a week, please contact the office.



## EASTER FLOWERS AND MEMORIALS

If, in memory or recognition of a loved one, you wish to make a contribution toward an EASTER FLOWER which will be used to beautify the sanctuary on Easter Sunday, March 31st, please fill out the required form below. If you are planning to take your flowers, please do so on Easter morning after service. Please see the updated list of flowers to choose from on the back of this form.

Do you wish to **DONATE** the Flower? \_\_\_\_\_  
Do you wish to **TAKE** the Flower with you? \_\_\_\_\_

**YOUR MEMORIAL SHOULD BE IN THE CHURCH OFFICE BY**  
**Sunday, March 24, 2024**  
**(FLOWER ORDERS NEED TO BE IN BY MARCH 10<sup>TH</sup>)**

In memory/honor of \_\_\_\_\_,  
I wish to contribute \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for THE MEMORIAL FLOWER FUND  
(Hospital Flowers) (\$10.00 is recommended amount for each plant)

I would prefer my contribution go to the following fund:

SCHOLARSHIP FUND \_\_\_\_\_ MUSIC \_\_\_\_\_  
RESTORATION/MAINTENANCE \_\_\_\_\_ LIGHT THE NIGHT (\$100) \_\_\_\_\_  
MERCY TOUCH ORPHANAGE \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*CAMP CLAIRE: CAMPSHIP \_\_\_\_\_  
MAINTENANCE \_\_\_\_\_  
BEAUTIFICATION \_\_\_\_\_  
FAITH FORMATION \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*For all contributions going to Camp Claire Funds, the form goes to First Church.  
**The checks are to be made out to Camp Claire** and either send your check directly to Camp Claire, Inc., P.O. Box 702, Lyme, CT 06371 or attach to the form being given to First Church and we will forward the checks to Camp Claire.

**FOR ALL OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS, PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, 62 COLONY ST, MERIDEN, CT 06451 AND LABEL "LILY" OR NAME OF FUND. IF YOU ARE DONATING TO MORE THAN ONE FUND, THERE NEEDS TO BE A CHECK FOR EACH INDIVIDUAL FUND. THANK YOU!!**



**Don't forget about memorial giving online with VANCO!**  
1. Open the FCC website at [www.fccmeriden.org](http://www.fccmeriden.org)  
2. Click on the yellow box "Giving"  
3. Click on "Online Giving for computers" or "Online Giving for mobile devices"  
Just follow the instructions and you can designate your memorial

For office use.  
Check # \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_