

Congregational Church of New Fairfield, United Church of Christ
20 Gillotti Road, New Fairfield, CT 06812
203-746-2865 office@ccnf-ucc.org

CANDLELIGHT - DECEMBER 2025

Hello Beloved Children!

It is hard to believe that we are actually here in the Season of Advent. Waiting and preparing our hearts and minds in a way for Christ to come into our world. And it is needed! There is so much competing for our attention and time, our energy and effort. Our worship services have been focused on our fears and how we can see and trust in God's presence and work in our lives and world. I hope you can make time to join us for worship on Sunday mornings at 10 either in person or online.

We also have our evening prayer worship service on Dec 16th and the Longest Night Service on Dec 21st, both are at 7pm. These are two opportunities to step away from our busy and stressful lives and center ourselves in God. Our Christmas Eve service will be on Wed, Dec 24th at 5:30pm. We always look forward to gathering together in worship celebrating Christ, singing carols, listening to our choir, hearing the familiar scripture and of course candlelighting during Silent Night, concluding with Joy to the World. We hope you can join us for this special service.

The church is decorated for Christmas and the creche is outside now. Thank you to all who made this all possible this past Sunday. It certainly helps us all get into the spirit of the holiday. You will see an order form for poinsettias in this newsletter and in the bulletin. These plants will decorate our sanctuary on Christmas Eve and may be brought to your home after worship.

Blessings and peace,
Pastor Liz

Christmas Worship Schedule: Special Christmas and New Year Services

Please plan to join the congregation for these special Christmas services:

Sunday, Dec. 14, 10 a.m.	Worship with Christmas Pageant
Sunday, Dec. 21, 10 a.m.	Worship
Sunday, Dec. 21, 7 p.m.	Longest Night Worship Service
Wednesday, Dec. 24, 5:30 p.m.	Christmas Eve Worship
Sunday, Dec. 28, 10 a.m.	Worship and Hymn Sing
Sunday, Jan. 4, 10 a.m.	Worship with Communion Service



Stewardship

Stewardship

What More Could I Have Done?

"What more could have been done for my vineyard than I have done for it? When I looked for good grapes, why did it yield only bad?" Isaiah 5:4

Stewardship Sunday this year was on November 16, 2025. In the weeks prior to Stewardship Sunday we were blessed to hear from some of our members why the church is important to them. Greg Slomba, Lauren McCormick, Mike Iadarola, Pam Dohan, and Katy Johannssen shared their thoughts and many of us could see ourselves in their stories. They spoke of a community where we can feel part of a family,

enjoy support in times of need, serve others and enjoy a sense of belonging. If you didn't see all of their talks you owe it to yourself to go to the church YouTube channel and watch them for yourselves. You will never be prouder to be part of our church family.

A church's finances are about more than heating bills and salaries. Your pledge doesn't just feed the hungry, it gives our members and children a chance to cook and serve the food. Your pledge provides a place where old and new friends can gather, worship and catch up on the week's events. Our church is a place where we can close the door and confide in our pastor. Our Thrift Shop team folds clothes, sells them and the proceeds buy yarn that turns into prayer shawls and hope. When you invest your money in our church community we can look up together with gratitude to a God who sets the example of how we should love each other. Please generously support the church with your pledge. Please share the good news of our church community and invite people to visit our services. People are looking for a place to belong and join fellow travelers on this journey; as Mike Iadarola said, don't keep our church a secret. Many of us have already sent in our pledge cards. Let's do our share, so we can continue to serve each other and our community next year.

Will Anderson, Stewardship Team

STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

The goal this year is 100% of our members returning their pledge cards. As of 12/9/25, the rate of return for member acknowledgment is 41%.

We have received 59 pledges, 52 from members and 7 from friends of the congregation to date totalling \$103,754. Please take some time to fill out and return your pledge cards.

THANK YOU TO ALL who have made a financial commitment to support the church and its ministries.

Carl Anderson	Robert Ebbessen	Todd & Lori Opsal
Nora & Mark Anderson	Karen Engstrom	Judith Paniccia
Will Anderson	Patrick & Heidi Finlay	Dee Poquette
Stancy Armstrong	Lori Generali	Cheryl & John Reiner
Melissa Ballas	Donald & Judy Hatch	Patrick & Brenda Sacco
Kenneth & Dot Bass	Michael & Regina Iadarola	Elizabeth Schalkham
Linda Bass	Brian & Katy Johannssen	Pamela & Richard Schretzenmayer
David & Mary Bevan	Evelyn Joudy	Linda Seiler
Cassie & Will Boylon & Family	Fred & Sally Kile	Marcia Semchyshe
Geraldine Brenia	Louise & John Kohany	Greg Slomba & Stephanie
Gail Burger	Matthew & Lindsey Mapes	Shaughnessy
Hazel Burger	Ryan & Lauren McCormick	Gretchen Skidmore
William Burger Jr.	Carolyn McShane	Susan, Amber & Aaron St. Hilaire
Bart & Adele Carey	Dorothy Milovic	Donna Tescione
Steve & Barb Coelho	Marie Moore	Bill & Agnes-Betty Trimpert
Christine Cook	Jayne Morin	Sue & Ronald Webb
Teri Czudak	Sue Newton	John White
Nicholas & Pamela Dohan	Dorothy Norman	Greg & Katie Williams
Win & Kathy Donaldson	Darren & Stephanie O'Connell	Liz & Tracy Yoho
Richard Doscher	Rose O'Connell	John & Doris Zegley



WORSHIP & MINISTRY

We welcome new members Nora and Mark Anderson and Melissa Ballas, who recently joined the congregation. Please take a moment to introduce yourselves and welcome them.

Looking beyond the holidays, please mark your calendars for “Undeck the Halls” on Jan. 11, 2026.

Worship & Ministry members are happy to assist you or answer any questions you have regarding regular, holiday and special service offerings. Members for 2025-2026 are Bart Carey, Pamela Schretzenmayer, Julie York and Doris Zegley. We look forward to speaking with you!



FAITH FORMATION

As the holiday season approaches, we at Faith Formation have been hard at work bringing our curriculum alive each and every Sunday morning. Throughout the month of November our students learned many important lessons from the Book of Luke, including stories of Zaccheus, the Sadducees and the Pharisee and the Tax Collector. We looked at how God rewards and blesses those who are humble and remain faithful even in difficult times. We also looked at those who have lost their way and how God takes a special interest in those in need of saving, no matter how far they stray. Students tackled many different activities surrounding those lessons, incorporating creativity in art and design and thinking about how the stories connect to their own lives and experiences. We eagerly look ahead to December which will bring our annual Christmas Pageant on Sunday the 14th.



The children have also been contributing to Church wide projects, including helping to make lunches for Dorothy Day with Compassionate Kids. It was awesome to see how willing they were to give their time to make sandwiches and cookie bags for the less fortunate.

Compassionate Kids
little hands ~ loving hearts



Come to our Evening Prayer Service

Each month, evening prayer services are held on the first and third Tuesday at 7 p.m. These services are a chance to pause during your busy week and spend a little time in peaceful worship. Come, catch your breath, feel closer to God. These services include communion, and are not live streamed. The next service will be on **Tues, Dec. 16th at 7pm.**

TREASURER'S REPORT - November 2025
as of 11/30/2025

INCOME/EXPENSE COMPARISON

INCOME SOURCE	11/2025
OFFERTORY COLLECTIONS	\$5,771.00
PLEDGES	\$11,679.93
THRIFT SHOP (including St Pauly's Corp)	\$3,422.62
PARSONAGE RENT	\$2,100.00
TRANSFERS IN FROM CCNF Teams & Clubs	\$2,000.00
OTHER	\$559.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$25,532.55

EXPENSE	11/2025
PAYROLL	\$14,267.78
BUILDING & MAINTENANCE	\$4,521.01
OTHER MINISTRIES	\$15,897.61
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$34,686.42

NET OPERATING PROFIT/(LOSS) FOR MONTH **(\$9,153.85)**

Respectfully submitted by Greg Slomba, Treasurer

MISSIONS at CCNF



DOROTHY DAY HOSPITALITY HOUSE

Girl Scout Troop 50294 were instrumental in helping to cook, prep and serve food to Dorothy Day clients this month. They rolled two large trays of meatballs and cooked 10 pounds of pasta for the meal this month! At Dorothy Day they helped to prepare all the food which includes preparing bag lunches, boxing salad, cutting up desserts, and dishing up the delicious meal and then serving the meal. They also helped to sort the many donations that came into the agency. Thanks so much to Mark Anderson for lending his scouts, and to Elissa Leone and Will Anderson for helping with the cooking, and to Nora Anderson, Bonnie Lees, Sue Newton, Stephanie Shaughnessy and Liz Yoho who served along with the Girl Scouts.



We are preparing for this month's cook night which falls on Tuesday, December 23 at about 5 and serving at Dorothy Day on Christmas Eve Day from 1-4:30pm. Please sign up in Pilgrim Hall on the clipboard if you are willing to assist. Thanks to all who have assisted with cooking and serving at Dorothy Day this year.



(Photos: on top & left, December cooking; on right, November serving at DDay)

THANK YOU TO OUR THRIFT SHOP CREW!



Our Thrift Shop Team does an amazing job! Their sales for Dec. 6th were \$1417, with an additional \$86 from the special congregation sale on Sunday! And that does not include the income from St. Pauly's. They are more actively pursuing some online sales with the help of Melissa Ballas. This is already proving to be very successful as they have made \$475 in the last month! This is of course a holiday time but we are very excited to see how these sales will increase our revenue. None of this would be possible without the work and effort our volunteers give to the congregation with this ministry. Our wonderful volunteers were Melissa Ballas, Lisa Contreras, Oscar Contreras, Vivian Cicale, Maryann Gillotti, Tara Laverty, Marie Moore, Dotty Norman, Joanne Riccoboni, Frank Saunders, Fanny Sequenza, Ann Taylor, Del Taylor, and Skyla Vecchia. The next Thrift Shop sales dates will be Dec 20, Jan 3 and 17, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.



PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY - Tuesday, Jan. 13th at 7:00 pm

The Prayer Shawl Ministry meets the 2nd Tuesday of the month and would love to have you come try out some purposeful crafting. Join them to knit or crochet or loom and for some fellowship in the conference room. All ages welcome. Bring size 13 knitting needles (long or circular), a size K or N crochet hook, or a long rectangular loom. Yarn will be supplied. The shawls we make are a loving gift for anyone in need. For more info, email prayershawl@ccnf-ucc.org.

We are always looking for folks to join in the effort of making prayer shawls. Watch for an announcement of a Sunday after church in January to gather and learn how to knit or crochet a shawl. This is a vital ministry of our congregation and the shawls are so appreciated by the recipients. Thank you to all who are working on making these warm and fuzzy reminders of God's love.

If you would like to request a shawl, please call 203-746-2865 or email prayershawl@ccnf-ucc.org.



**American
Red Cross**

BLOOD DRIVE THURSDAY, JAN. 29, 12 - 5 PM

Appointments are being taken now for the next blood drive at CCNF. To make an appointment, visit:

<https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/find-drive>



Compassionate Connections Ministry ~ Give the gift of yourself

There are many ways to participate in this care-giving ministry. You can offer to:

- make calls or visits to folks to check in,
- send a card to those on our prayer list,
- make prayer shawls,
- arrange or deliver flower bouquets,
- lift others in prayer through our prayer chain.

We will be renewing commitments for the new year and inviting new people to participate. If you didn't return the Compassionate Connections Card included with your pledge packet, you can still join by simply filling out a card and putting it in an offering plate. Please consider joining us in this care-giving ministry.

"I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

~ John 13: 34-35



GRIEF SUPPORT WORKSHOP - SAVE THE DATE

Jan 18, 2025 at 1pm in Pilgrim Hall

Join us for a workshop on coping with grief and loss. This workshop will be led by Sheila Russo, MSW. There will be resources and a time for questions and sharing. You are not alone in your journey, come and find some support and care.



WOMEN'S MINISTRY

The Women's Ministry welcomed the holiday season on Saturday, November 22 by attending Ann's Place - Festival of Trees. There were over 150 decorated trees, wreaths and other items donated to take a chance on and hopefully win. Our very own Pastor Liz was lucky enough to win two Christmas trees!! CCNF donated a tree- with a theme-



Little hands, Loving Hearts. Thanks to all who helped create ornaments for the tree. The Mission Team looks forward to donating another tree next year.

Ann's Place provides help and hope to those living with cancer and to their loved ones. Their clinical social workers, facilitators and wellness experts provide a host of services aimed at improving quality of life during and after cancer.

Ann's Place relies on the generosity of donors to be able to continue providing these services free of charge.

A TIME FOR FELLOWSHIP

Remember, if you are available to assist with fellowship after the Sunday worship service by providing snacks or helping with a simple set up or clean up, please sign up in Pilgrim Hall or call the church office at 203-746-2865. Thank you to those who have pitched in recently, and to Doris Zegley for coordinating.



Christmas Flowers

Help decorate our sanctuary for Christmas Eve Worship at 5:30pm.

If you would like to give memorial flowers to be used to decorate the sanctuary for Christmas Eve, you may order them by Sunday, December 14th.

Please fill out this form and give to the office with money for the cost of the poinsettias, \$10 each. You may designate to take your flowers home after worship or to be given as a gift to someone.

Name: _____ Contact Number: _____

In Memory of: _____

of Poinsettias _____ Cost \$10 each. _____ check _____ cash

____ I would like to take mine home _____ I would like mine to be donated