

Congregational Church of New Fairfield, United Church of Christ  
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*CANDLELIGHT - MARCH 2026*

Hello Beloved Children!

It is only a couple of days until spring but it is still so cold and dreary outside. We have all endured one of the snowiest winters we have seen in a long time. I don't know about you but I am feeling done, spent, ready for this to be over. I need some bright sunshine, warm days, hope, and peace! And there is hope. Hope in the light at the end of the day which lasts so much longer now. And hope the light of Christ that is ever present, ever present in our lives. We just need to sometimes open our eyes to it, to take the time to recognize it and acknowledge it.

It is easy to get overwhelmed by the problems and challenges of our world. It doesn't take much exposure to those influences to feel the pressure increase, to feel like you can't take it anymore, to feel like you just want to go back to the 'old days'.

But we are moving forward, moving towards God's plan of transformative love. It will happen in God's time and we do not know how it will be manifested but we can trust that God has a plan to keep working with us. God will continue to create good out of the messes we create, out of the choices we make, out of the harm we do.

As we continue on our Lenten spiritual journey, the path will continue to get darker. But we have the benefit of knowing the ending. We know the joy of Easter morning that awaits us. Let's continue to support each other as we travel together, holding onto the hope that comes from trusting in God's love, mercy, forgiveness, and grace. Let us take the time to worship together in the coming weeks to recognize the ways that God's love has been given to us. Jesus has model for us the way that we are called to live as God's beloved. Let us gather together to support each other in that journey of discipleship.

Blessings and peace,  
Pastor Liz



**SERVICES**

<b>Sunday, March 29, 10 a.m.</b>	<b>Palm Sunday Worship followed by our Annual Easter Egg Hunt</b>
<b>Thursday, April 2, at 7 p.m.</b>	<b>Maundy Thursday service</b>
<b>Friday, April 3, at noon</b>	<b>Good Friday service</b>
<b>Sunday, April 5, at 6:30am</b>	<b>Sunrise Worship in the Garden followed by an Easter Breakfast</b>
<b>Sunday, April 5, at 10 a.m.</b>	<b>Easter Sunday Worship service</b>



## WORSHIP & MINISTRY

*"Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually."*

- 1 Corinthians 12:27

Worship & Ministry members are happy to assist you or answer any questions you have regarding service offerings. Members for

2025-2026 are Bart Carey, Pamela Schretzenmayer, Julie York and Doris Zegley. We look forward to speaking with you!

Welcome to the newest members of the body of Christ!

Chase and Greyson Bishop were baptized during the March 8th worship service.



(Pictured at right, Pastor Liz with the Bishop family, Greyson, Shannon, Chase and David))



## 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, April 7th at 7pm.**



## FAITH FORMATION

Spring is finally upon us as we turn the page on the deluge of snow and ice this winter. Faith Formation has traversed through many different stories and talking points in the past couple of months, centered on some of Jesus' most important lessons. Salt & Light, The Light of the World and Woman at the Well all made profound

statements about being a shining example in the world, even when it's difficult. The takeaway from those stories and many others continue to be that God wants all of us to not only share God's love, but to be kind, compassionate, caring of others and helpful to those in need.

Students worked through 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. The children have taken on tasks for Lent, doing good deeds at home and in the community, while sharing them on hearts displayed in the church.

As always, we continue helping to make lunches for Dorothy Day with Compassionate Kids. The kids and members of the congregation are always eager to help. We eagerly look ahead to getting outside in the spring and continuing our wonderful curriculum.



## FEA SCHOLARSHIP AVAILABLE FOR SUMMER CAMP

Registration is now open for the last summer of camp at Silver Lake in Sharon, CT. To help more youth enjoy this special summer, the Fairfield East Association is offering scholarships. Visit <https://www.silverlakeect.org/campsessions> to register for camp, and then contact the church office for a form to apply for a scholarship.

## SAVE THE DATE!

**Saturday, March 28th at 6pm**

The ASP Team, youth and leaders are so excited about the 3rd annual Chili & Mac Challenge. This will be held on Saturday, March 28th at 6 pm. Do you think last year's winners can be beat? Maybe you want to dust off your recipe boxes to find that secret recipe! Keep your eye out for the scoop and further information but plan on dinner at CCNF to help raise money for our youth work trip to Appalachia.



Stewardship

### STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

Our recent church stewardship drive has been an important moment for reflection, gratitude, and renewed commitment to the future of our congregation. First and foremost, we want to extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who prayerfully considered their commitment and submitted a pledge for 2026. Your willingness to support our church's mission is deeply appreciated and demonstrates the faith and dedication that keep our community strong.

At the same time, the results of the drive remind us that we still have work to do. This year, 66% of our members committed financial support to our church. The total value of those pledges is \$149,988, which represents 48% of our annual 2026 budget of \$313,246. While we are grateful for every pledge received, these numbers show that we still have a mountain to climb together.

Stewardship is not only about maintaining the present; it is about honoring the past and securing the future. The people who came before us sacrificed their time, talent, and treasure to build and sustain this church so that we could gather here today. In the same spirit, we have a responsibility to ensure that those who come after us will also have a place of faith, fellowship, and worship.

The good news is that every incremental step makes a difference. Small commitments add up in powerful ways. Imagine if each of us bought the church a "cup of coffee" each day—setting aside just a few dollars more to place in the offering plate. Over time, those simple acts of generosity can have a meaningful impact.

There are also many other ways to help. Perhaps you have an idea for a fundraiser—if so, consider bringing it forward and seeing it through to completion. Take ownership, gather support, and make it happen.

Finally, one of the most powerful ways to strengthen our church is to grow it. Invite friends, neighbors, and family members to attend services with you. Building our congregation helps sustain our mission. As Romans 10:14-15 reminds us, *faith begins when the message is heard – and the message cannot be heard unless someone is willing to share it.* We are called to share the good news and welcome others into the life of faith.

Yours in faith,  
Michael Iadarola  
Stewardship Committee

**Be Proud of Our Church and Share It with a Friend! - Don't Keep Us A Secret**

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

Carl Anderson	Patrick & Heidi Finlay	Todd & Lori Opsal
Nora & Mark Anderson	Lori Generali	Judith Paniccia
Will Anderson	Teri & Jerry Gentry	Dee Poquette
Stancy Armstrong	Maryann Gillotti	Lynne Purtle
Laura Baird	Donald & Judy Hatch	Lynn Raymond
Melissa Ballas	Richard Hatch	Cheryl & John Reiner
Vinnie Bartolini & Bonnie Lees	Irene Howard	David Riccardi
Kenneth & Dot Bass	Jaqueline Hutchings	Patrick & Brenda Sacco
Linda Bass	Michael & Regina Iadarola	Stephanie Sacco
David & Mary Bevan	Brian & Katy Johannssen	Elizabeth Schalkham
Cassie & Will Boylan & Family	Evelyn Joudy	Peter & Alicia Schmitt
Ralph Brechter	Fred & Sally Kile	Pamela & Richard Schretzenmayer
Geraldine Brenia	James & Nancy Kile	Linda Seiler
Gail Burger	Louise & John Kohany	Marcia Semchysen
Hazel Burger	LaBrie Family	Greg Slomba & Stephanie
William Burger Jr.	LaTourette Family	Shaughnessy
Bart & Adele Carey	Elissa Leone	Gretchen Skidmore
Vivian Cicale	Todd & Dawna Lovejoy	Steve Snyder
Steve & Barb Coelho	Matthew & Lindsey Mapes	Susan, Amber & Aaron St. Hilaire
Christine Cook	Ryan & Lauren McCormick	Richard & Louise Stein
Teri Czudak	Carolyn McShane	Donna Tescione
Danielle Czudak & Ryan Ferris	Dorothy Milovic	Bill & Agnes-Betty Trimpert
Laura (Nan) Delohery	Marie Moore	Sue & Ronald Webb
Nicholas & Pamela Dohan	Jayne Morin	John White
Win & Kathy Donaldson	Calvin Nafziger	Greg & Katie Williams
Janice Donnelly	Naomi Nafziger	Liz & Tracy Yoho
Richard Doscher	Sue Newton	Chris & Julie York
Robert Ebbessen	Dorothy Norman	John & Doris Zegley
Karen Engstrom	Darren & Stephanie O'Connell	
Robert & Donna Fairchild	Rose O'Connell	

### THANK YOU TO OUR THRIFT SHOP CREW!



**Our Thrift Shop Team will be open on Saturday, April 4th and 18th from 10am - 1pm.**  
Come in and find a bargain.

The online sales program is going well. Our thrift shop volunteers find gems in the donation bags and Melissa Ballas lists them online for sale.

If you have a specialty clothing item that is new or in fantastic condition maybe you would want to donate this to the Thrift Shop for its online sales. While not everything is as wonderful as we think or wish, the church does benefit from this new way to sell merchandise.



# MISSIONS at CCFN

## DOROTHY DAY HOSPITALITY HOUSE

Our congregation has been supporting the ministry at Dorothy Day Hospitality House for decades! Thank you to all our volunteers who allow us to be a part of this ministry to those who are hungry in our area. Our Thrift Shop also supplies the clothing ministry with needed articles to be shared free of charge.

Our March service days will be Tuesday the 24th for cooking and Wednesday the 25th for serving. If you'd like to help on either of these days, sign up in Pilgrim Hall or call the church office at 203-746-2865.



*Serving at  
Dorothy Day*

## Let's Talk About... by Stephanie Shaughnessy



Last month I was able to chat with Vinnie Bartolini, church member and volunteer at FiSH in New Fairfield, one of the organizations which the mission team and church support yearly. He has been volunteering with FiSH since 2022 when it started in New Fairfield.

This is a volunteer organization which provides rides to New Fairfield seniors for any medical type appointment within a 15 mile radius. Presently, there are approximately 20 volunteers which make up the board, schedulers and drivers.

When an individual needs a ride they will call the agency (203-312-5627) and speak with a scheduler. The scheduler then puts on a spreadsheet and sends an email to all available drivers to see who is able to provide the ride.

In addition, FiSH keeps a lending closet of medical equipment. This closet is located in Sherman and for more information re these supplies you can call FiSH. They are not accepting any donations presently due to a very full closet.

In order to raise money, on a twice monthly basis, FiSH volunteers also volunteer at a local Church Bingo and they receive some of the evening earnings which helps to fund the umbrella insurance of the organization. (Volunteers do utilize their own insurance if there was ever an accident.)

Vinnie also is a lead in organizing a mile walk/run to raise additional funds for FiSH. He hopes to be hosting in June and will provide additional information when it is available.

FiSH is always looking for additional volunteers, especially drivers, so if you have some extra time and would like to volunteer for an excellent organization- please call 203-312-5627.

Thanks so much Vinnie, for sharing your knowledge of FiSH with us!

## 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.