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JANUARY 2025

SECOND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH NEWSLETTER

Church Updates

Please watch your email for updates to our Sunday schedule or any other news published in this newsletter.

We invite everyone to join us on each Sunday in January.

Communion Sunday will be celebrated on the first Sunday, January 5th.



Second Congregational Church's Food Pantry is open on Fridays at 10:00 - 11:45 a.m.

We hold our Food Pantry on Fridays at 10:00 - 11:45 a.m. and we're open every Friday throughout the year. The Pantry will be closed on Friday, December 29th (immediately after Thanksgiving).

Contact Information

Second Congregational Church
385 North Main Street
Manchester, CT 06042
(860) 649-2863
Email: secondcongo@385.necoxmail.com
Website: www.secondmanchesterucc.org

Reverend James Mercurio
Email: pastorjim2889@gmail.com

Office Hours for Reverend Jim:
Tuesdays, 9:00 am - 11am

Alicia Stancliffe, Secretary
David Wallace, Director of Music

Our Mission Statement

"We, the members of Second Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, welcome all people who seek to know God and God's will. We invite all people to join with us as we serve the church, the community of Manchester, our nation and our world. We believe that all people are children of God and loved by God and all are called to be members of Christ's body. We seek with others of every age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and physical or mental ability to faithfully live out the gospel call."

A New Year, A New and Familiar Mission: An Invitation for the Church to Reimagine

As the calendar flips to a new year, I engage in the familiar ritual of reflecting on the past while starting to and setting intentions for the future. This year, I propose the Church embark on a similar journey, but with a deeper purpose: to redefine its mission and vision for the years to come. This will take place in the coming months as we ask the following questions of:

“Who are we, Who were we and who do we see ourselves to be in the future”

We will not simply be looking to update our goals; we will be actively seeking to understand who God is calling us to be in this community and how we can best fit the calling God has put on our hearts.

The re-visioning process will involve a series of community gatherings, prayer sessions, and small group discussions. I will invite members of the congregation and participants in the church's current ministries to share their hopes, dreams, and concerns for the church's future.

I believe the Second Congregational Church is at a pivotal moment in its journey as it plans the path of the future and for its people. To do this I believe we need all input from all walks of people. Like making maple syrup, there needs to be gallons of sap before a pint of syrup is realized.

We will be collecting data (sap) from the whole community in the form of surveys, conversations and social gatherings. We will then have a select group to boil it down till we have the sweet syrup of a discerned plan for the church to sample and decide.

I believe God's will is revealed through the collective wisdom and discernment of the people and we need a lot of participation from all of you. We will be learning the skill of intentional listening while seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit, so we can discern a clear path forward.

We will have the opportunity to share in each other's stories as we celebrate, discern, and find our meaning in church.

Some of the key questions the church will be exploring include:

- **Who are we as a church?** What are our core values and beliefs and how do our practices say this?
- **What are our unique gifts, talents, and passions?** How can we best utilize our gifts, graces, and passions to serve God and others?
- **What are the greatest needs in our community?** How do our gifts and graces address those needs in a meaningful way?
- **What does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus Christ in today's world?** How can we develop and live out our faith with authenticity and impact?

The outcome of this process will be a renewed mission statement and a refined vision for the future. This will help us in the church's decision-making, resource allocation, and ministry efforts in the years to come.

I will be encouraging the Second Congregational Church to invite the entire community to join us on this exciting journey of faith and discovery. Whether they are a long-time member or a newcomer, every voice is valued and their participation is welcomed.

I believe that this is a time of new beginnings for our church, and together, with the help of God we can build a vibrant community of faith that makes a real difference in our community and the world.

The first study will kick off in February as we explore the book *Vital Vintage Church* by Michael Piazza and *Take this Bread* by Sarah Miles.

Christ's love and peace be with you as we enter this new year with a renewed spirit of church together!

Blessings,

PJ

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS. . .

Barbara Sankey

Jesse Rich and family

Trudy Condio-Robinson's father
and mother

Mrs. Barbara Bolduc

Deanna Ouellette's boyfriend,
Dave, who has stomach cancer

Debra Vigneault, friend of Laurie
Carlo

Judy, friend of Carol Clark

Shirley, friend of Janis Harwood.

Nancy Milton

Beth Klezak, friend of Pantry

Jamie Winn, Scott Streeter's wife

Jim, Jerry, and Alan Parkington,
Cindy's brothers

Debbie and her husband, Andy,
friends of Janis Harwood.

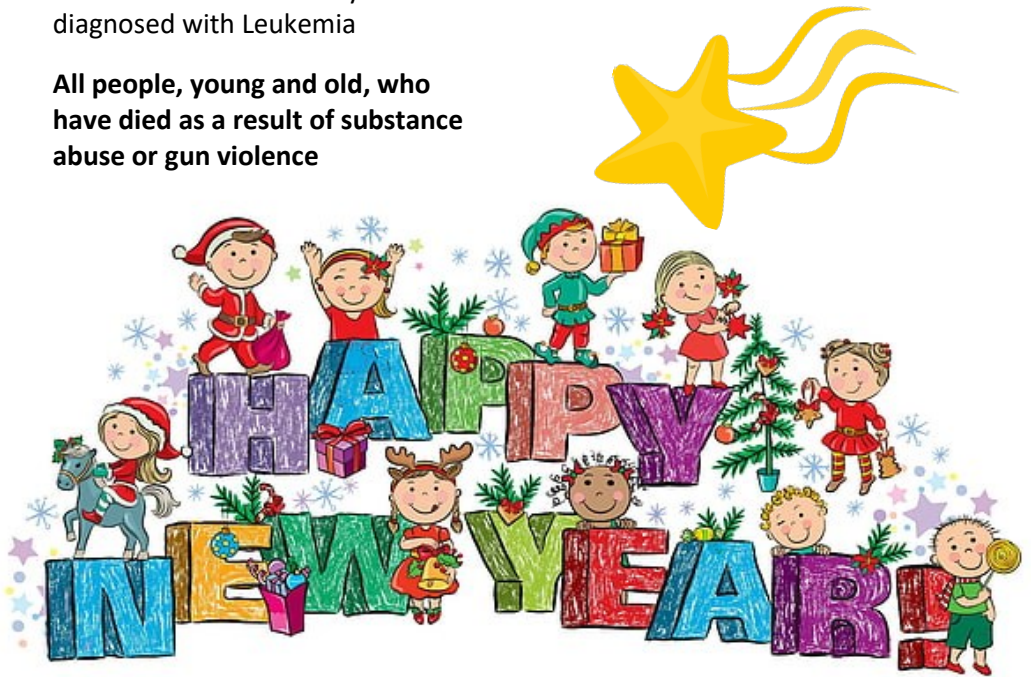
Jeff Baker, brother of Debbie
Streeter who has recently been
diagnosed with Leukemia

All people, young and old, who
have died as a result of substance
abuse or gun violence

Birthdays

1/4 Matthew Clark

1/5 Lynn Pemberton Locke



LAY READER SIGN UP SHEET

If you are interested in reading scripture on a Sunday morning, please sign up on the sheet posted on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall or contact Dana McCarthy. **We need readers for January 19th and dates going forward into February.** Thank you.

COFFEE HOUR SUPPLIES ARE NEEDED

We can always use DECAF and regular coffee if you see any good sales. Also, we need juices, sugar, napkins and 6oz juice cups. We also occasionally need Half and Half. Thank you!

FOOD PANTRY AT SECOND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

We hold our Food Pantry on Fridays at 10:00 - 11:45 a.m. and we're open every Friday throughout the year. On the few Fridays we need to close, it will be announced in the Sunday Bulletin and "Chatter" newsletter.

PUBLICITY

Just a reminder, most publications like to receive submissions 4 weeks in advance so please plan accordingly when sending me information for upcoming events that you would like me to publicize. I can be reached at ddstreeter1@cox.net (preferred), home 860-643-8637, or cell 860-331-0562 (text).



ALTAR FLOWERS

January: TBA

LAY READERS SCHEDULE

Jan. 5 Lynne Pemberton-Locke
Jan. 12 Sharon Slater
Jan. 19 TBD
Jan. 26 Tony Falcetta

COFFEE HOUR

January: Outreach
February: Flower & Altar

DEACONS SCHEDULE

Jan. 5 Dean Anderson & Trudy Condio-Robinson
Jan. 12 Sharon Slater
Jan. 19 Louise Leitao
Jan. 26 Bruce Fortuna



OUR GIFT GIVING CAMPAIGN RECIPIENT TREE

Hi everyone this is Matt Clark Carol Clark son. My mom has been telling a lot of my church family has been asking about me so I just want to let everyone know that I am doing very well here in Phoenix, AZ. I'm working for Honor Health Medical Center and I love it. I do a lot of volunteer work for the American Legion helping out veterans. I do miss my church family very much and I hope everyone is doing very well. I want to wish everyone a Happy and healthy New Year.

Love,
Matt Clark



Mental health is
a universal
human
Right

*"God will not falter or lose heart until
justice prevails throughout the earth."*

(Isaiah 42:4)

Thank You!

for supporting **Neighbors in Need!**



The Outreach Committee would like to thank everyone for their generous contributions to our Neighbors in Need collection. We collected \$347, which is over \$50 more than we collected last year! That amount was then matched by a donation from Reverend Jim. Thanks very much to everyone!

A MESSAGE FROM LISA TROMBLY

Happy New Year to my Church Family! Thank you for your prayers, encouraging words, rides, meals, calls during the scariest time of my life! I thank God every day for each and every one of you!

THE DEADLINE FOR THE FEBRUARY ISSUE OF "CHATTER" IS
MONDAY, **JANUARY 16**



WE'RE SELLING STAINED GLASS WINDOW CARDS!

The cards, which are shown above, have photos of our church's beautiful stained glass windows on them. Please see Lisa Trombly if you are interested in purchasing the cards. You may contact Lisa at

A REMINDER

A reminder to everyone with email, Facebook, Twitter, or any other social media connections. Please post our events on your pages and email info to your local contacts. This helps so much to get the word out about us and really does bring more people through our doors! Please visit us on Facebook at: www.facebook.com/385northmain/

Scan this QR code with your cellphone camera
to rate our church on Google!

It's a **FREE** way to contribute and help improve
our online algorithm!



From the Outreach Committee: Attention RADA Lovers!

You can purchase Rada Cutlery at our online site. If you are in need of their great knives and other products for yourself or as a gift and can't wait until the next Craft Fair, please visit <https://radafundraising.com?rfsn=6207504.0de3dd>. If you have any questions or problems with the site or need a code number for a product please reach out to Debbie Streeter at ddstreeter1@cox.net or 860-643-8637.



THANK YOU for supporting our fundraiser through Rada Cutlery – well known for quality Made in the USA products. Every purchase you make using our unique shopping link **helps support Second Congregational Church!**

****NEW!**** To get \$5 OFF on shipping on orders over \$35, enter the code **SHIPDEAL** at checkout.
Expires 7/31/25



BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE

FEATURED IN THE CHRISTIAN POST



Our recent Blue Christmas service was a heartfelt and meaningful event that touched many in our congregation and community. This special service provided a safe and sacred space for those navigating grief, loss, or hardship.

The impact of this offering extended beyond our church walls, as The Christian Post featured our Blue Christmas service in an article written by journalist Michael Gryboski. The article highlighted the growing importance of such services in addressing the emotional needs of individuals during the holidays.

The event reminded us all of the importance of supporting one another and offering hope to those who may feel overlooked or burdened during this time of year.

For those who would like to read the full article, it is available on The Christian Post website, with a link shared on Our church's Facebook page.



NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

The Second Congregational Church of Manchester, Connecticut

In accordance with Article XXIII, Section 3 of the Bylaws, you are notified that the annual meeting of The Second Congregational Church of Manchester, CT will be held on Sunday, January 19, 2025 at 11:00 a.m. at the Church, 385 North Main Street, Manchester, CT.

Business to be transacted at this meeting shall include:

1. Receive reports from church committees for the calendar year 2024
2. Act upon the budget for the Church for 2025 as presented by the Board of Trustees
3. Elect committee members and officers of the Church for 2025 as presented by the Nominating Committee
4. Consider a recommendation from the Board of Trustees for the Church to commit to a mortgage on the property to fund capital improvements to the property. Those improvements will be discussed in detail at the annual meeting.
5. Any other business to properly come before the annual meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Clair Leighton, Church Clerk

Alan Lamson, Moderator

December 26, 2024

Provided in writing to all members of the Church in the "Chatter" on about December 31, 2024

Published in the Church bulletin on Sunday, December 29, 2024; Sunday, January 5, 2025; Sunday, January 12, 2025; and Sunday, January 19, 2025.

Posted on the Church bulletin board on or before January 1, 2025

Article XXIII, Section 3a of the By-laws requires notice of the meeting at least 5 days prior to the meeting in writing to all active members.

January 2025

Second Congregational Church
385 North Main Street
Manchester, CT 06042

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
29 10:00 am: First Sunday of After Christmas Worship Service with Communion, led by Reverend James Mercurio Following Worship: Coffee Hour	30	31	1 New Year's Day	2	3 10:00 - 11:45 am: Food Pantry	4
5 10:00 am: Second Sunday After Christmas Worship Service, led by Reverend James Mercurio Following Worship: Coffee Hour	6 Epiphany	7	8	9	10 10:00 - 11:45 am: Food Pantry	11
12 10:00 am: Baptism of the Lord First Sunday after Epiphany Worship Service, led by Reverend James Mercurio Following Worship: Coffee Hour	13	14	15	16 Deadline for February issue of Chatter	17 10:00 - 11:45 am: Food Pantry	18
19 10:00 am: Second Sunday after Epiphany Worship Service led by Reverend James Mercurio Following Worship: Coffee Hour	20	21	22	23	24 10:00 - 11:45 am: Food Pantry	25
26 10:00 am: Third Sunday after Epiphany Worship Service led by Reverend James Mercurio Following Worship: Coffee Hour	27	28	29	30	31 10:00 - 11:45 am: Food Pantry	

AA Meetings are held on
Mondays at 7:30 pm.

Alanon Meetings are held
on Thursdays at 7:30 pm.

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