



**April 1, 2024**

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# First Congregational Church

2301 Main Street

Stratford, Connecticut 06615

## APRIL HAPPENINGS



**April 7**

**Communion and Red Bag Sunday  
10:00 AM Worship in Person and Zoom**

**April 13**

**Women's Service League Meeting**

**April 14**

**10:00 AM Worship in Person and Zoom**



**April 15, April 22 & April 29**

**When We Walk By-Book Club on Zoom**

**April 17 & April 24**

**Spring Bible Study at 7pm**



**April 21 - Youth Sunday**

**10:00 AM Worship in Person and Zoom**

**April 28**

**10:00 AM Worship in Person and Zoom**



## It Takes a Village to Raise a Pastor

This morning, I woke up thinking about all the people who over the years have impacted my life and led me to where I am today. Honestly, there are far, yes way far too many to name. But there were some that were pivotal. I hope you will bear with me as I mention a few of them. The first was my Sunday School teacher when I was thirteen. His name was Mr. Overton. Mr. Overton not only taught us but spoke with us, listened to us, and even had us over for hot dogs. You must realize that my father had just died, we had just moved, and he was an adult presence that I sorely needed. Later, when I was a senior in high school, I began attending church again because he was the Senior High Sunday School teacher. He was also the deacon who knocked on my door one night and asked me to preach for youth Sunday, my first sermon. That changed everything. There was a fellow classmate, David Hylton, who may even join us on May 26<sup>th</sup>. David kept inviting me to these crazy Jesus freak, charismatic meetings that I finally agreed to attend. Another classmate was Billy Cox. When I preached my first sermon, Bill was there encouraging and supporting me. He was always there for all the big events in my life; always there to tell me, "You can do this." He was in my wedding. He drove from Virginia to Massachusetts to attend my graduation from Seminary. He was present three years later when I was ordained. In high school, he and I would sometimes drive around in the car singing praise songs together. We sounded terrible, but not to God. Bill died in an automobile accident when I was thirty. I have never gotten over it. The one I mention next may seem inappropriate, but I would not be honest if she had not been pivotal. That was my x-wife, Dail. She was brilliant, a masterful pianist, and a great writer. She worked crummy jobs to get me through seminary. She typed all the papers I wrote and was my chief editor. Remember this was the caveman days before computers. I could never have done this without her. And of course, Sam. I belonged to a prayer group with a number of pastors when we were discussing the challenges the spouses of pastor's face.

-Continued on next page

Two of the pastors spoke up and said, "IT'S SO MUCH HARDER TO BE A PASTOR'S SPOUSE THAN IT IS TO BE A PASTOR!" Both had been pastor's wives before becoming pastors. I believe that to be true. Many hours here meant I was gone a lot. She never complained but always encouraged me and became a partner in my ministry. She was the one who grounded me, comforted me, and helped me to see things from a different perspective. The main thing she did these past twenty years was keep me laughing. You may not know this, but we were married only a week when we moved here. I recently found a card in my desk from her, celebrating our one-month anniversary. I could never have done this without her.

Then there was you. I have never pastored a church so hospitable, so loving, so affirming. I never served a church where members sent me cards telling me how much they appreciated me, or how much they liked last week's sermon. NEVER! We have never gone through a holiday when someone in the church has not asked us over since we had no family here. I cannot tell you how many holidays before coming here, I have spent alone. I have loved being a pastor. Even more I have loved being your pastor. I have had the most gifted staff, lay leaders, and musicians who made me look so good. I am so appreciative of all the people who helped me to get where I am today, but most of all, I have appreciated the opportunity of serving you these past 20 years.

Thank you for your faithfulness and your heart,

Reverend Ed Rawls





**APRIL 2024**

- April 7, 2024 Second Sunday of Easter/Communion and Red Bag Sunday. Scriptures: Acts 4:32-35, Psalm 133, 1 John 1:1-2:2, John 20: 19-31
- April 14, 2024 Third Sunday of Easter. Scriptures: Acts 3:12-19, Psalm 4, 1 John 3:1-7, Luke 24:36b-48
- April 21, 2024 Fourth Sunday of Easter/Youth Sunday. Scriptures: Acts 4:5-12, Psalm 23, 1 John 3:16-24, John 10:11-18
- April 28, 2024 Fifth Sunday of Easter/Contemporary Music Worship Service. Scriptures: Acts 8:26-40, Psalm 22:25-31, 1 John 4:7-21, John 15: 1-8

## WOMEN'S SERVICE LEAGUE

### WOMEN'S SERVICE LEAGUE MEETING –

The Women's Service League will meet on Saturday, April 13th at 10:00 AM. Our guest speaker, Riley Branyan, a freshman at Trumbull High School will talk on "The Impact of Mental Illness on Teens in 2024". Riley will begin speaking promptly at 10:20, so please plan on arriving prior to 10 am.

We will meet in Upper Packard Hall. Refreshments will be served. We look forward to seeing our members and cordially invite anyone interested in attending.  
Gail McCarthy and Judy Therrien, co-chairs

### Message from Women's Service League

Thank you all for participating in the Women Service League Bake Sale by baking or purchasing breads on Palm Sunday. The proceeds were added to our account for upcoming projects. Thank you again!

Dear Church Family,

I have decided after twelve years to step down from heading up the Lord's Kitchen for First Congregational Church. If you are interested in replacing me, I am willing to go over the procedure that is necessary to volunteer for the position of lead person. It is a very rewarding experience and demonstrates how "Love Come First" from our church in the community. Please contact Jean Martire at 203-215-8422 or [jeanmartire23@gmail.com](mailto:jeanmartire23@gmail.com) if you are interested and or have any questions.

Thank you,  
Jean Martire

## SOCIAL MEDIA



**BOARD OF TRUSTEES—FINANCIAL UPDATE**

**IMPORTANT FINANCIAL INFORMATION - FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Year to Date Updates as of February 29, 2024

Total Income <i>(Pledges, fundraisers, rentals, etc.)</i>	\$40,717
Total Expenses <i>(Compensation, church operations, etc.)</i>	\$59,005
Total Operating Deficit	\$18,288
Total transfers from our investments <i>(Operating Budget &amp; Capital Expenses)</i>	\$0
Investment Portfolio YTD Change	<b>UP</b> \$111,288


*This information is intended to facilitate discussion and understanding. We will publish monthly data to keep you informed.*

LET'S ALL DO ALL WE CAN TO KEEP OUR CHURCH FINANCIALLY HEALTHY AND ABLE TO COMPLETE OUR MISSIONS OF ACTIVELY PROVIDING LOVE TO NEIGHBORS,

**ADVERTISEMENTS**

**FIRST ECCLESIASTICAL  
SOCIETY OF STRATFORD, Inc.**

Open to church members only.  
For information, please contact:  
William Cabral, Chair,  
[billc36114@sbcglobal.net](mailto:billc36114@sbcglobal.net)



or Walter Dunbar, Vice-Chair,  
[walter.dunbar@att.net](mailto:walter.dunbar@att.net)

**Kate Sterling Bunnell Scholarships**

Available to Stratford students



For more information, contact:  
Carol Haberlin, Scholarship Officer  
[KateSterlingBunnell@gmail.com](mailto:KateSterlingBunnell@gmail.com)



## SILVER LAKE SUMMER 2024 CONFERENCE REGISTRATION AND SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

**Information:** The 2024 Silver Lake Summer Conference information is available on-line this year on the website, <https://www.SilverLakeCT.org>. On their website you will find the summer camp flyer which includes the summer conference calendar; a camp information and session guide; the registration and health forms, as well as helpful information for parents on what to bring and how to prepare for camp. Silver Lake has an Open House scheduled for Sunday, May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024 from 1:00pm to 5:00pm, for those who are interested.

**Registration:** Early registration is encouraged as some conferences do fill up quickly, before the start of summer. You can register via mail or online at <https://www.SilverLakeCT.org>.

**Scholarships:** Scholarships are available from three sources. Each source has a different deadline and submission method, therefore, please read below carefully:

Scholarships are available from First Congregational Church for our Sunday School children who wish to attend a Silver Lake Summer Conference. **Application Deadline: Sunday, April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024**

Scholarships are available from The Fairfield East Association for youth attending a Silver Lake Summer Conference. **Application Deadline: Monday, April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

Scholarships are offered directly from Silver Lake.

**Application Deadline: Please contact Silver Lake directly for their deadline.**

**Church Scholarship:** The First Congregational Church scholarship application form can be found on the table outside the Sunday School office. The form will also be sent out via email to Sunday School parents. The completed Church scholarship application should be returned via email to Carl Larsen at [cwlarsen@yahoo.com](mailto:cwlarsen@yahoo.com). The email Subject Line should read: ***“Silver Lake Scholarship Application”***

**Fairfield East Scholarship:** The Fairfield East scholarship application form has been included in the weekly *“Note from Your Pastor”* email. The form can be found on the table outside the Sunday School office and will also be sent out via email to Sunday School parents. The completed application form must be returned via email, **directly to The Fairfield East Association Executive Committee** (contact information is listed on the application form).

**Please note:** *You will need to have Pastor Rawls sign your application form, therefore, please plan accordingly to obtain his signature and meet the submission deadline for the scholarship form.*

**Silver Lake Scholarship:** For more information about scholarships offered from Silver Lake, please contact their office directly at 860-364-5526 or [slcrc@silverlakect.org](mailto:slcrc@silverlakect.org) to request information, complete the application form and obtain the scholarship application deadline.

If you have any questions, please contact Jacqui Owens (Director of Youth Ministry), Carl Larsen (Co-Chair, BOCE) or Amy Elias (Co-Chair, BOCE).



## FIRST CHURCH STRATFORD

## MUSIC NOTES

Thank you to the members of the Chancel and Festival Choirs for a wonderful Palm Sunday Cantata! The Music Department appreciates everyone who continues to support our program. Please consider joining us this spring. Musicians are also needed for New Music Sundays.



## Chancel/Festival Choirs

Thank you to everyone who sang with our Festival Choir this season! Both the Chancel and Festival Choirs will sing in Pastor Ed's final service on May 26. For those who wish to sing on May 26, as well as on Pentecost Sunday (May 19), rehearsals begin on May 9. All rehearsals are held in the sanctuary, beginning at 7 PM. New members are welcome!

## New Music Sundays

Middle and high school aged youth are invited to share their musical talents on special Sundays throughout the year. Singers and all types of instrumentalists are welcome. The next New Music Sunday is in April. Please contact Chancel Choir Director Allison Fay at [allisonfay@gmail.com](mailto:allisonfay@gmail.com) for details.



MUSIC DEPARTMENT



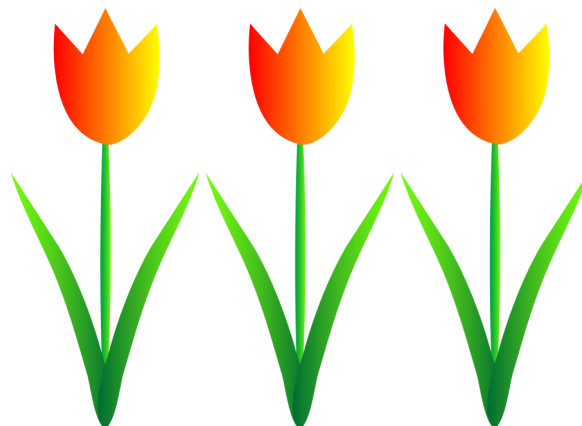
## **OUR SPRING BIBLE STUDY 2024**

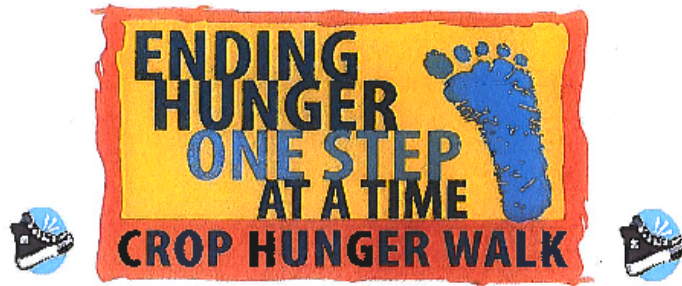
Our Spring Bible Study on the Book of Acts will begin on April 10<sup>th</sup> and run for eight consecutive Wednesday evenings concluding on May 29<sup>th</sup>. We will begin promptly at 7:00 pm and finish no later than 8:30 pm. We will meet in the conference room.

The study book will cost \$12.00 and can be paid on the first night of class or beforehand if you like. Checks can be made out to First Congregational Church with a note in the memo line stating Acts study. If you want to pay with cash, please bring exact change.

The Book of Acts is the second volume in the unified, two-part work that is known today as Luke-Acts. Both books were written by the same author. Whereas the Gospels told the story of Jesus and his life with his Apostles and his suffering, death, and resurrection, the Book of Acts continues forward after Jesus is taken up into heaven and tells the story of the Apostles and the beginning of what became the Christian church. The ministries of Peter and Paul are highlighted in this volume.

If you are interested in joining us, please contact me at (203) 997-2213 or [steve.j.wasko@gmail.com](mailto:steve.j.wasko@gmail.com). You can also text me at the same number. Please include your name and email address so I can include you in group emails. Blessings.





CROP Hunger Walk - It's our 50th!

Sunday, May 5, 2024 at 1:30pm-4pm for 2+ mile walk (Rain or Shine)

Beginning at United Congregational Church

2200 North Avenue, Bridgeport , CT

25% of monies raised goes to hunger related programs  
in the Bridgeport Area.

For more information go to [www.crophungerwalk.org/bridgeportct](http://www.crophungerwalk.org/bridgeportct)

For any questions,  
please see Lynne Pert or a member of the Board of Benevolence.



**ADVERTISEMENTS**

***Union Cemetery Association***

23 Temple Court  
Stratford, Connecticut 06615



*Burial Plots Available*

**Contact: Janet M. Jennings**

Office: 203-375-4932

Cell: 203-583-1731

**CONGREGATIONAL BURYING GROUND  
STRATFORD, CT 06615**

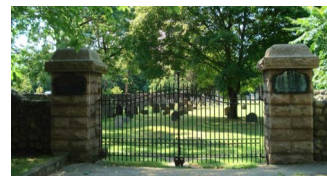
*(Established in 1678)*

Located in back of the Stratford Library and  
Sterling House Community Center

Columbarium Spaces Available \$1,000.

For Information:

Call Bill Cabral @ 203-377-6903



**THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE**

Our Stewardship theme for this year will be **Stewardship, “A Spiritual Journey.”** In the next few months, we will be talking about stewardship from a spiritual perspective. This will be done through monthly courier articles, bulletin inserts, and maybe even an occasional stewardship moment during worship service. Have you ever thought of Stewardship as a spiritual journey? Most of us are used to language such as time, treasures, and talents when referring to stewardship, but we are going to explore the notion that stewardship is not only a Spiritual discipline, but also a journey of faith.

When I think of how far that I have come in my understanding and application of stewardship in my church life, I can say, without hesitation, that it has been a spiritual journey. From my youth as a Catholic to my conversion to the Protestant faith as a young man I have come to better understand that stewardship (my time, my financial resources, my talents, and my service) are a **faith response** to a God that has provided for all my needs.

I came across a quote that I really like that exemplified what we will be talking about with our theme this year, “True Christian resource-raising is the act of joyful actions that encourages individual spiritual transformation by helping donors become rich towards God spiritually.”

Our entire committee is so grateful for all that you do for our church by giving of your time, treasure, talents, and service. As we all continue our faith journeys, may we open our hearts to view stewardship as a spiritual journey that is evolving and growing for all of us.

**Your Stewardship Committee; Steve Wasko (co-chair), Lynne Pert (Co-chair), Judy Therrien (recording secretary), Christine Churchill, Ingmar Eggen, Virginia Millington, Jennifer Nyquist, Helen O’Brien, and Carol Vass.**



**THANK YOU** to all who have returned their 2024 Pledges. Your generosity will allow us to continue our commitment to the church and the community in the New Year – dedicated to the three great loves - **Love of Neighbor, Love of Children** and **Love of Creation**. For those who still have not returned their 2024 pledges, please do so ASAP. We are a church where LOVE comes first!

<i>2024 Pledge Campaign Returns as of February 18, 2024</i>				
<b>Date</b>	<b>Operations</b>	<b>Benevolence</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Number of submit a Pledge Card</b>
2023	228,806	40,892	269,698	86
<b>2024</b>	<b>226,960.</b>	<b>33,990.</b>	<b>260,950.</b>	<b>81</b>

## SOCIAL JUSTICE TEAM

### Do you know ALICE?

ALICE is our friend, neighbor, coworker, and family member.

ALICE cares for our children and aging parents, fixes our cars and works in our local grocery stores, retail stores and restaurants.

ALICE is sitting in our pews and volunteering in church activities.

#### **ALICE: Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed**

In Connecticut, more than 550,000 households are ALICE, with income above the Federal Poverty Level but below the state's basic cost-of-living threshold as defined in the 2023 ALICE Report.

ALICE workers are retail workers, nursing assistants, childcare workers, home health aides, maintenance workers, teacher assistants – *workers essential to us and our community*. ALICE households are one emergency away from a financial crisis impacting their ability to feed their families, heat their homes, maintain their housing, and ensure their medical care. Some of our ALICE neighbors are experiencing homelessness despite working full time plus.

#### **Demographics about Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed**

- **60% of CT's most common job occupations pay below \$20/hour**
- **In Stratford, 45% of people are ALICE (21,187 households)**
- **The youngest of us (under age 25) and oldest (age 65+) households face the highest rates of hardship**

#### **Why do so many feel they are working hard and getting behind?**

##### **Look at the Household Survival Budget guidelines**

- 1 adult with 1 child = \$65,244 annually (hourly wage of \$32.62)
- 2 adults with 2 children = \$127,812 annually (combined hourly wage of \$63.91)
- Senior citizen couple = \$68,292 annually

**What do we do?** We first need to become knowledgeable. What is changing +/-? What could make a difference? Who should get tax credits? Do we invest in childcare subsidies? Which businesses do we support? Is education the answer? There are many questions to ponder in our hearts and minds. What actions are needed? Voting is one way to participate.

Want to know more? Here is a link to the ALICE report by the United Way-  
<https://alice.ctunitedway.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/WesternCT.pdf>

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

### Trustees Corner

We are purchasing new card tables for UPH to replace our ancient ones. The tables are \$60.00 each and our hope is to get at least 6. If anyone would like to contribute to a new card table or any amount for a table we would be very grateful. A check written for any amount to FCC with card table in the memo would be perfect. It can be mailed or given to Don Coulson or myself or put in the collection plate on a Sunday. You can see one of the tables in UPH now. Thank you for your generosity.

Beth Turner, Trustees

## BOARD OF BENEVOLENCE

### The Board of Benevolence will once again have a Tag Sale in the Fall 2024

**Tag Sale items can be dropped off NOW** during office hours 9am -2pm or on Sundays to the PreK classroom downstairs (the last classroom on the left hand side just before the double glass doors). **Everything accepted but furniture, electronics and clothes.**

**If you have items to donate and aren't able to drop them off, please contact Cindy Buckley and she will make arrangements to pick them up.**

**Any questions can be directed to Cindy Buckley: 203-923-5505.**



## A NOTE FROM THE TECHNOLOGY TEAM



"Technology Alert: For those who attend our services in person, please be aware that the Sanctuary audio and video recording system is operating at all times. The system may pick up conversations and images that occur some distance away from the microphones and cameras."



Every April Autism Speaks celebrates [World Autism Month](#), beginning with the United Nations-sanctioned World Autism Awareness Day on April 2. This year marks the 17th annual World Autism Awareness Day.

Autism, or autism spectrum disorder (ASD), refers to a broad range of conditions characterized by challenges with social skills, repetitive behaviors, speech and nonverbal communication. According to the Centers for Disease Control, autism affects an estimated [1 in 36 children in the United States today](#).

We know that there is not one autism but many subtypes, most influenced by a combination of genetic and environmental factors. Because autism is a spectrum disorder, each person with autism has a distinct set of strengths and challenges. The ways in which people with autism learn, think and problem-solve can range from highly skilled to severely challenged. Some people with ASD may require significant support in their daily lives, while others may need less support and, in some cases, live entirely independently.

Several factors may influence the development of autism, and it is often accompanied by sensory sensitivities and medical issues such as gastrointestinal (GI) disorders, seizures or sleep disorders, as well as mental health challenges such as anxiety, depression and attention issues.

[Signs of autism](#) usually appear by age 2 or 3. Some associated development delays can appear even earlier, and often, it can be diagnosed as early as 18 months. Research shows that early intervention leads to positive outcomes later in life for people with autism. If you have concerns about your child's development, early intervention is important. Learning the signs, examining your child's developmental milestones, and getting an evaluation and treatment as early as possible can make a lifetime of difference.

Any questions: Please don't hesitate to contact your Parish nurses, Jane & Sue





## Scholarship Opportunities

The Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce that the following scholarships are now available:

- **The Kate Sterling Bunnell Scholarship Endowment Fund** - This scholarship was established through the generosity of the late Catherine T. Mitchell. It offers financial assistance for college expenses to Stratford-resident students, based on financial need, without regard to academic achievement, sex, race or creed. Graduating high school students and undergraduate college students may apply. Applications are available on the following website: [www.firstchurchstratford.org/scholarship](http://www.firstchurchstratford.org/scholarship) . **Deadline is May 24, 2024.**
- **First Congregational Church Scholarships** - The following scholarships are available to students pursuing an undergraduate degree, who are members of First Congregational Church as of Jan. 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year. Students may apply more than once as they continue to be enrolled in a full-time undergraduate program, but priority will be given to graduating high school seniors.
  - **The Frances C. and Harriet B. Blakeman Memorial Scholarship** of \$5,000 given by the Board of Trustees. This is in recognition of their devotion and generosity to First Congregational Church.
  - **The Jim and Ella Cebik Memorial Scholarship** of \$1,000 is funded by a grant from their son, the late Roy Cebik.
  - **The John Miller Edward Zorn Memorial Scholarship** of \$1,000 if funded by a grant from his father, the late Bob Zorn.

(The criteria for judging the above three scholarships will be scholastic achievement, church and community activity involvement, leadership qualities and achievement potential. )

- **The Joel and Mary Vodola Sacred Music Scholarship** of \$5,000 is funded by a grant from Rev. Esther Vodola. Limited to a student at any level majoring in music, or secondarily, education.
- **The Edna Viner Memorial Scholarship(s)** of \$5,000 or more, funded by a bequest from the late Edna Viner, is for **graduate students only.** Graduate students may apply more than once for this scholarship, but priority will be given to first time applicants.

Applications are available on the following website: [www.firstchurchstratford.org/scholarship](http://www.firstchurchstratford.org/scholarship) . **Deadline is June 1, 2024.**

Carol Haberlin, Scholarship Committee Chairperson

Email: [KateSterlingBunnell@gmail.com](mailto:KateSterlingBunnell@gmail.com)



## **Kate Sterling Bunnell Scholarship Fund**

This scholarship was established through the generosity of the late Catherine T. Mitchell. It offers financial assistance for college expenses to Stratford-resident students, based on financial need, without regard to academic achievement, sex, race or creed. Graduating high school students and undergraduate college students may apply. Scholarship awards range from \$1,500 - \$3,000/yr. This scholarship is renewable for all (4) years of full-time undergraduate studies. (Minimum of 12 credit hours per semester).

Applications are available at the following website:

[www.firstchurchstratford.org/scholarship](http://www.firstchurchstratford.org/scholarship)

**Deadline is May 24, 2024**

Carol Haberlin, Scholarship Committee Chairperson

Email: [KateSterlingBunnell@gmail.com](mailto:KateSterlingBunnell@gmail.com)



# Gift Card Year-Round Fundraiser

For the past few years, FCC Stratford has participated in an important fundraising program that allows participants to donate money to the church just by purchasing gift cards through the church. There are more than 400 retailers available in the program through RaiseRight. These include grocery stores, home improvement stores as well as some of your online favorites like Amazon. FCC Stratford buys the gift cards at a discount and sells them to you at face value. The church receives the difference as a commission for directing spending in this way.

We want to grow participation in this program because it's an easy way to raise significant amounts of money for the church simply by harnessing the spending and gift giving habits of our congregation, friends, and families.

There are two ways to help:

- (1) Don Coulson and Amy Elias are available in Upper Packard Hall most Sundays after church. They keep a limited number of regularly used gift cards on hand with retailers like Shop Rite, Stop and Shop, Big Y, Walmart, Amazon, and Home Depot for same day purchase for use.



There is also an extensive list of almost any retailer you can think of that you can purchase for physical delivery the following week. Many congregants use this program to buy gifts for loved ones and friends. Simply bring a check made out to FCC Stratford or bring cash.

- (2) You can also participate more independently by logging into [www.raiseright.com](http://www.raiseright.com) or by downloading the RaiseRight app.



Here is a helpful link to register with the church: <https://www.raiseright.com/enroll?enrollCode=9D7L7BDC55169>.

You'll need to use the church's enrollment code to participate — 9D7L7BDC55169.

You can order the gift cards online using your bank account or credit card or you can ask us to order cards for you to pick up at the church the following Sunday. Cards can also be delivered to your home for a small fee. The app/website also allows you to create an electronic wallet where you can store cards that you purchase by e-delivery.

A list of the participating retailers and the commissions that they pay can be seen by going to: <https://www.raiseright.com/brands>

For questions concerning gift cards, you can contact Amy Elias at [CongoCardsStratford@gmail.com](mailto:CongoCardsStratford@gmail.com) or 917-567-0246.

## MAY COURIER SUBMISSION

### **Submission of information for the Courier: The May Courier deadline will be**

**April 18, 2024.** Send all submissions for the Courier via the church email at [firstchurchofstratford@yahoo.com](mailto:firstchurchofstratford@yahoo.com) to help make the production of the courier easier to process. **Articles should be no more than two pages, ideally only one page if possible.** We will continue to send the courier via email. If you know of someone who isn't receiving it by email and would like to receive it by mail or email, please notify the office.

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation

Sandy O'Neill, Church Administrator



## ADVERTISEMENTS



Main: 203.226.0603 Fax: 203.226.0200

*"Financial Advisors to the First Ecclesiastical Society of Stratford"*

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[crestwoodadvisors.com](http://crestwoodadvisors.com)

203-455-1639

Handy Handler

Jason  
Handler  
Owner

[jhandler2@gmail.com](mailto:jhandler2@gmail.com) Stratford, CT 06615

CT HIC: 0670758

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**Bonnie Reynolds**  
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504B Bridgeport Avenue  
Shelton, CT 06484  
203-895-8227 Cell  
203-924-1000 Office  
[bonniereynolds@bhhsne.com](mailto:bonniereynolds@bhhsne.com)

A member of the franchise system of BHH Affiliates, LLC

## CHURCH FUNDRAISING

Dear Members & Friends,

Since Amazon Smile shut down their charity giving program at the end of February, I would like to suggest another charity giving site that you may wish to try called **iGive**.

If you don't have an iGive account already, all you need to do is go to **iGive.com** and create an account.

Then select **First Congregational Church of Stratford, CT** as your charity. That's it.

You do all your online shopping from the iGive website. Instead of going to several websites to order things, iGive has over 2000 stores to choose from including your favorite ones right on their site. For convenience, you can also bookmark your favorite stores on iGive. You can use the iGive search feature to find an item you are looking for, as well.

Your purchases must be ordered through the iGive portal to generate rewards for the church.

These rewards are figured at various percentage rates. Unlike Amazon Smile, every purchase made through iGive generates a reward for the church.

Our church link is:

<https://www.iGive.com/FirstCongregationalChurchStratfordCT>

or

Check out our QR code which makes it even easier!

I hope you will give **iGive** a try.

Virginia Millington



For more information, go to **iGive.com**.



## ADVERTISEMENTS



*Dennis & D'Arcy  
Funeral Home*

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Richard G. Ross

Attorney at Law

203-381-0092



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Stratford, Connecticut 06614

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\*Probate Administration

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# ADVERTISEMENT NOTICE



Do you own a small business?

Would you like to help out the church and at the same time generate more customers?

We invite you to place an ad in the Courier. For as little as \$18 a month you can have a business card size ad appear each month in the Courier.

To get started or to learn more please contact

Beth Turner, after worship or [elturner@optonline.net](mailto:elturner@optonline.net)

Dick Ross, 203-375-6807, [rgrclo@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rgrclo@sbcglobal.net)

# ADVERTISEMENTS

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Portfolio Management Director

Senior Vice President

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[joseph.pramer@morganstanley.com](mailto:joseph.pramer@morganstanley.com)

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\*Serving First Church

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## *Adzima Funeral Home*

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*Stratford, CT 06614*

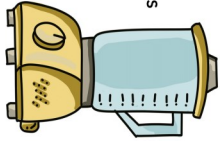
*(203) 375-2200*

# SOMETHING OLD, Something New

Use scrap paper to fuel new growth and make a gift that keeps on giving.

### What you need:

- Scrap paper
- Water
- Herb or flower seeds
- Blender
- Strainer
- Cookie sheet
- Towel
- Adult help



### What you do:

1. Tear the scrap paper into strips and place in a bowl. Cover the paper with water and let it soak overnight.
2. Pour the mixture into a blender and blend about 10 seconds.
3. Strain and squeeze the paper pulp to remove excess water. Place in a bowl.
4. Sprinkle seeds over the pulp and mix to incorporate them into the pulp.
5. Shape the pulp into a flat layer on the cookie sheet. Use a towel to soak up excess water. Allow the paper to dry completely.
6. Tear paper into shapes or fold into a card. You can plant the paper directly into soil. Water it and then watch your plants grow!



Alexandra Coralian — 4/5

Remi Rodriguez — 4/3

Hailey Greist — 4/6

Christian Jockers — 4/14

Joshua Bacon — 4/16

Kiersten Nyquist — 4/24

Tess Heaphy-4/27

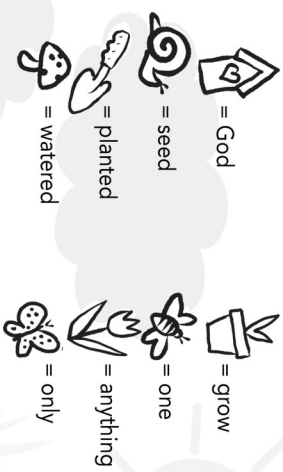
# PUZZLE

## PLANT, WATER, GROW

Building a faith community takes work. How did the church in Corinth come to be?

Directions: Use the code to fill in the words and complete a teaching of the apostle Paul.

### KEY



I \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_, Apollos \_\_\_\_\_ it,

but \_\_\_\_\_ has been making it \_\_\_\_\_.

So neither the \_\_\_\_\_ who plants nor the \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ who waters is \_\_\_\_\_.

but \_\_\_\_\_, who makes things \_\_\_\_\_.

1 Corinthians 3:6-7, NIV

Answer: planted, watered, God, grow, one, anything, only, God, grow, watered, God, grow, one, anything, only, God, grow



# April 2024



\*Worship Services are in person and online with Zoom. The Centering Prayer gatherings on the calendar are online Zoom meetings. If you are interested in attending any or all of these meetings and do not have the Zoom code, please contact the church office or the minister.

**Sun                  Mon                  Tue                  Wed                  Thu                  Fri                  Sat**

	<p>1 6:30pm-8:30pm The Broadway 7pm Church Council on Zoom 7pm Boy Scouts</p>	<p>2 10am Yoga 4:30 pm Prayer with Linda on Zoom 5:30pm-8:30pm The Broadway</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4 7pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7:15pm AA</p>	<p>5 4:30pm Prayer with Linda on Zoom 5:30pm-7:30pm The Broadway</p>	<p>6 10am AA</p>
<p>7 Communion and Red Bag Sunday 10am Worship &amp; Sunday School 11:15 Fellowship / Confirmation Mtg 12pm-3pm N-AIM Church</p>	<p>8 6:30pm-8:30pm The Broadway 7pm Trustees Mtg on Zoom 7pm Boy Scouts</p>	<p>9 10am Yoga 4:30 pm Prayer with Linda on Zoom 5:30pm-8:30pm The Broadway 7pm SJT on Zoom</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11 5pm CT Hospice Grief Support Group 7pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7:15pm AA</p>	<p>12 4:30pm Prayer with Linda on Zoom 5:30pm-7:30pm The Broadway</p>	<p>13 10am AA 10am WSL Meeting</p>
<p>14 10am Worship &amp; Sunday School 11:15 Fellowship/ Stewardship Mtg 12pm-3pm N-AIM Church</p>	<p>15 6:30pm-8:30pm The Broadway 6:30pm When We Walk By on Zoom 7pm Boy Scouts</p>	<p>16 10am Yoga 4:30 pm Prayer with Linda on Zoom 5:30pm-8:30pm The Broadway</p>	<p>17 7pm Bible Study w/ Steve Wasko 7pm Ecclesiastical Meeting /Boardroom</p>	<p>18 5pm CT Hospice Grief Support Group 7pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7pm Deacons Meeting 7:15pm AA</p>	<p>19 4:30pm Prayer with Linda on Zoom 5:30pm-7:30pm The Broadway</p>	<p>20 10am AA</p>
<p>21 Youth Sunday 10am Worship &amp; Sunday School 11:15 Fellowship / BOB Mtg 12pm-3pm N-AIM Church</p>	<p>22 6:30pm-8:30pm The Broadway 6:30pm When We Walk By on Zoom 7pm Boy Scouts</p>	<p>23 10am Yoga 4:30 pm Prayer with Linda on Zoom 5:30pm-8:30pm The Broadway</p>	<p>24 7pm Bible Study w/ Steve Wasko</p>	<p>25 5pm CT Hospice Grief Support Group 7pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7:15pm AA</p>	<p>26 4:30pm Prayer with Linda on Zoom 5:30pm-7:30pm The Broadway</p>	<p>27 10am AA</p>
<p>28 Contemporary Music Worship Service 11:15 Fellowship 12pm-3pm N-AIM Church</p>	<p>29 6:30pm-8:30pm The Broadway 6:30pm When We Walk By on Zoom 7pm Boy Scouts</p>	<p>30 10am Yoga 4:30 pm Prayer with Linda on Zoom 5:30pm-8:30pm The Broadway</p>				