

# THE PARISHIONER

**THE FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, WOODBRIDGE 1738-2020**

**An Open, Welcoming, and Affirming Church**

**Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m.**

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**CT Conference Website: [www.ctucc.org](http://www.ctucc.org)**

**Visit us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/uccwoodbridge](http://www.facebook.com/uccwoodbridge)**

**October 2020**

## **Welcome Back Shepard!**

Depending on how you receive your copy of the *Parishioner*, the Rev. Shepard Parsons may already have returned from his leave and resumed his duties as our pastor by the time you read this. We welcomed Shepard “home” on October 1, and look forward to his continued ministry at First Church. With the pandemic still raging it has seemed like a longer than usual three months and we look forward to Shepard resuming the helm at our Sunday services. Jack Jones has been working to get the sanctuary set up for live streaming, but until that is finalized, Shepard will resume conducting ZOOM services at our usual time, 10:00 a.m., beginning on Sunday October 4th. Shepard’s return happens as the church tunes up for the important 2021 stewardship campaign so expect to hear from the Boards of Stewardship soon.

With Shepard’s return, we also have a good-bye to say and some thanks to extend to those who covered for Shepard. Thank you to the Rev. Scott Morrow of the North Haven Congregational Church for allowing us to tap into their church’s services streamed on You Tube. Scott also provided pastoral care starting in July and I have heard words of appreciation from members with whom he was in touch. The Rev. Mary Nelson kindly provided pastoral care coverage when Scott was on vacation. Thanks also to the Rev. Anya Powers for providing services while we were getting set up with North Haven and on Labor Day weekend. It is always a blessing to see one of our former interns, now an ordained minister, in the pulpit. I also want to thank the Board of Deacons for getting our services covered over the summer and their work in preparation for the upcoming Fall.

Bill More



*For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven.*  
Ecclesiastes 3:1



At the September Council meeting I raised the issue of conflict. I have noticed that the tone in which some of us communicate our differences with each other has become somewhat heated in the past few months and feel that we need to address this head on so that differences in the church can be settled in an amicable way that does not divide the congregation. We all have our own views about the church and we need to be cautious in how we express them knowing that other may or may not share the same view. I suggested to council that when they reconvene in October under a new Moderator that the issue be on the agenda to which Council via a motion, agreed. I suggested that they consider whether we need to get some outside assistance in resolving our differences. The goal is to help the church move forward with enough unity to make out our pandemic stalled renewal process a success.

By the time this issue of the *Parishioner* is published, we will have had our September Congregational meeting with an agenda that combines the usual Fall meeting budget agenda with the agenda from the Annual meeting which we postponed due to the pandemic. Thus, we will have held elections for new Moderator, Clerk, and positions on Boards and Committees for positions that begin on October 1. Nominating has worked hard over the summer looking for candidates with little success. Although we will be opening up for nominations from the floor, we may have several positions unfilled. Let me remind you that between elections, positions can be filled via appointment by Council. So, if you decide at a later date that you are interested in serving as an officer or board/committee member, please be in contact with a member of the Nominating Committee; Judi Reynolds, Penny Rogers or Janice Touloukian.

As I close out my terms as Moderator, I would like to thank the congregation for their support; particularly Shepard, members of Council and those in the congregation who have supported me in my efforts and corrected me in my missteps. I also want to thank Bob Turner for his diligence, and Carole Prescott, Al Jarvis, Cathy Hubbard, and JoAnna Rubino who together have covered the church office, either as staff or as volunteer fill-ins, during my tenure.

Unfortunately, Covid will be a major factor in determining what First Church looks like in the near future, but I am hopeful that the church will come out on the other side of the pandemic stronger and more unified.

Bill More, Moderator



## **BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS REPORT, SEPTEMBER, 2020**

General maintenance and grounds keeping has continued during the Covid shut-down.

A new well pump was installed at the Parsonage when the (very) old one failed.

Tree and building damages sustained during the two major summer tropical storms are either repaired or contracted for repair. Both Jim Rosson and the Woodbridge Public Works Department did a fantastic job cleaning up. Thank you both.

Bob Turner has repaired and installed storm windows in the choir practice room. He is also working on repairing some broken shutters.

Jeff Stauffer will replace broken shutters and one window pane damaged in the storms.

Joyce has been weeding the flower beds in preparation for the scheduled fall bush trimming and later mulching.

Jack Jones supervised the installation of Wi-Fi in the Sanctuary and is currently arranging for the equipment and software that will allow live streaming of events and Sunday Services from the Meetinghouse.



## John Lewis Banner at the First Church of Christ, Woodbridge

Muffy German has volunteered her professional calligraphy skills at the First Church of Christ, Woodbridge for many years. She recently created a beautiful and meaningful piece with three quotes from Congressional Representative John Lewis who died at age 80 on July 17, 2020. He was a towering force who frequently put his life on the line as a non-violent civil rights and voting rights activist.

Muffy's work was shown at the Bethany Library Art Show and will also be shown by the Mystic Calligrapher's Guild. The Church Council has approved the work be displayed as a banner on the front panel of the Meetinghouse. There will be no cost to the church. Please come by to see it.



\* Please note that the flower border above has been used to highlight the illustration and is not a part of the banner itself.

## **Christian Services**



News from the Board of Christian Service

During the last year we have contributed to the following non-profits:

Global Ministries (UCC and Disciples)  
Doctors without Borders  
Boys and Girls Club of Ansonia (Greater Naugatuck Valley)  
Appalachia Service Project  
Woodbridge Food and Fuel Fund  
Columbus House stocking project  
7th District 3 Baptist Churches in Louisiana to rebuild after arson  
Mosque Temple in New Haven toward repair of arson fire  
Family ReEntry  
New Haven Scholarship Fund

Since the outset of the covid-19 pandemic, the Board made special donations to the following four organizations for their special needs, especially food, housing, and medical necessities:

Christian Community Action, New Haven  
Continuum of Care, New Haven and 40 group homes statewide  
Columbus House, New Haven and vicinity  
Spooner House, Shelton

We have also researched and contributed in September to the Christian Baptist Church in Lake Charles, Louisiana for special needs in the aftermath of the hurricane there as well as ongoing pandemic related needs. The pastor there, The Rev. Alexander, expressed his deep appreciation for this assistance. Among other outreach, the Lake Charles church partnered with World Vision to distribute relief supplies on September 8. They have also used their web resources to communicate health and safety information to the community.

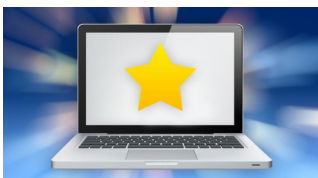
Some of the response to our local support are quoted as follows:

Continuum of Care personally wrote “a million thanks to the congregation for their generosity”.

Columbus House wrote “We can’t thank you enough for your contriution during the covid-19 pandemic.”

Christian Community Action wrote “ We rejoiced and gave thanks upon receipt of this generous donation. Through this act of generosity, this donation will make a significant difference in the lives of those who are experiencing homelessness, seeking emergency assistance for basic needs, and coping with the challenges of poverty”

Thanks to all who have supported this significant outreach. If any one has any questions or suggestions, contact Jinny Schneider, 203-393-3721.



### **Website Update**

Information about the Church and what is happening is available for everyone who has internet access on our church website: [uccw.org](http://uccw.org). There is a calendar and current news.



First Church of Christ's  
Christian Education Program  
Presents  
the first annual  
**Care Pumpkin  
Project!**

**OCTOBER 2020**

This month, our Christian Education program is proud to announce the coming of our first annual "Care Pumpkin Project"!

If you enjoyed our "Care Planter Project" this spring, or wished you had taken part, here is another chance to spread God's love and joy throughout our community.

Below is a description of how you can support this project.

**"Care Pumpkins"**  
(more than just a pumpkin!)

Enhanced with a few special touches, **the package includes:**

- A locally grown, medium-sized fall pumpkin with a festive bow
- A locally grown 8" potted chrysanthemum of varying colors
- An autumn themed waterproof table mat on which to display your pumpkin and plant, hand crafted by our Sunday School students.
- A personalized card, thoughtfully written and illustrated by members of the youth group.

**Ordering Ahead:**

Invites to order a Care Pumpkin Package will be emailed to congregation members, put on the website, and announced at Sunday Services.

Members can order Care Pumpkin Packages for themselves or for others. You may choose to compose a special message of your own in addition to our original card.

**Orders must be received by Friday October 19th.**

**Pick-Up Info:**

Care Pumpkin orders will be displayed on the front steps of the Meeting House and available for **pick up on Saturday October 24<sup>th</sup> and Sunday October 25<sup>th</sup>**. Details regarding pick-ups will be announced at a later date

**Pricing:**

Care Planters will be available for a \$30 donation.



Recalling the joy of...

—The Arts and Music Festival, October 2019—



“What a great event last year -- here's looking forward to the success of all our festivals to come!”  
— Bobbi Griffith







### Slowly Coming Together

It is a relief to see that our community is taking slow and careful steps as we begin to reassemble. Here, at the First Church of Christ, we continue to take every precaution necessary to keep one another safe and healthy while keeping fear and stress at a minimum.

You will be kept apprised of changes as they occur via our website, [www.uccw.org](http://www.uccw.org). Please continue to pray for one another and for the prosperity of our community as we journey toward a blessed reunion of in-person fellowship.

The office is currently open **for essential business by appointment only**, Tuesday through Friday, from 10:00 a.m. - 12 :00 p.m. Email JoAnna at [office@uccw.org](mailto:office@uccw.org) to request an appointment.



### ZOOM Meeting Schedule

All are welcome to join our weekly Zoom Meetings online or by phone. You will find the links for each meeting, every week, in your email. Please email JoAnna if you need assistance.

[office@uccw.org](mailto:office@uccw.org)



<b>Sundays</b>	<b>10:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Sunday Service</b>
	<b>11:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Sunday School (F.L.O.C.K.)</b>
	<b>6:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Youth Group (F.U.S.E.)</b>

### Lay Readers for Worship

We are in need of volunteers to read ,via Zoom , for Sunday Worship. Anyone, including youth, who would like to participate is encouraged to email JoAnna at [office@uccw.org](mailto:office@uccw.org).

### Weekly Bible Study

Information regarding Bible Study meetings will be posted on our website. Parishioners will be notified of upcoming dates and details by email as soon as they are available.

### Marking Life's Passages

N/A

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#### **The Parishioner**

Published monthly by  
The First Church of Christ,  
Woodbridge, Connecticut

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***NEXT PARISHIONER DEADLINE IS WEDNESDAY, October 21, 2020 (a firm date).***