



A FEW YEARS AGO, I HAD THE CHANCE TO VISIT THE NORMAN ROCKWELL MUSEUM IN STOCKBRIDGE, MASS. AS POWERFUL AS ROCKWELL'S REPRINTED IMAGES ARE, TO SEE THE ORIGINALS IS EVEN MORE MOVING.

ONE OF HIS MOST FAMOUS POSTERS SHOWS A FAMILY SEATED AROUND A TABLE. THE GRANDPARENTS ARE POISED TO SET DOWN A ROASTED TURKEY, JUST OUT OF THE OVEN. THE IMAGE REPRESENTS ROCKWELL'S vision of ' FREEDOM FROM WANT', part of his famous DEPRESSION-ERA SERIES FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST KNOWN AS THE FOUR FREEDOMS.

IN ROCKWELL'S RENDERING , THE FAMILY APPEARS TO BE ON THE VERGE OF RECITING A BLESSING. THE SCENE SEEMS TO SPRING OUT OF LONG-AGO PAST. WITH AFTER-SCHOOL SPORTS EVENING MEETINGS, AND BOTH PARENTS WORKING LONG HOURS, FEW FAMILIES ARE ABLE TO SIT DOWN TO DINNER AT THE SAME TIME, LET ALONE OFFER A BLESSING TOGETHER.

THE SIMPLE ACT OF GIVING AND RECEIVING BLESSING IS BECOMING A LOST ART. IT'S UP TO US CHRISTIANS TO FIND THE COURAGE TO RESET THE EXAMPLE IN DAY TO DAY LIFE EXPERIENCES.

Continued

I MAKE IT A POINT MYSELF WHEN I COME UPON A CELEBRATION OF SOME KIND IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR TO ASK PERMISSION TO BLESS THE SITUATION AT HAND. THE EXAMPLE OF A BIRTHDAY PARTY IN A RESTURANT GIVES ADDED MEANING TO THE EVENT- IT HAS NEVER FAILED YET. I THOUGHT OF HOW EVEN SEEMINGLY MUNDANE ACTS LIKE PLANTING A GARDEN ARE CELEBRATED AND AND RECITING THE SIMPLE PRASE “ THANKS BE TO GOD” IS ENHANCING OUR WELLBEING IN LIFE. AS WENDELL BERRY SAYS IN HIS POEM” HOW TO BE A POET”, THERE ARE NO UNSACRED PLACES, ‘ ONLY SACRED AND DESECRATED PLACES.’

WHEN WE OFFER BLESSINGS , IT IS A WAY OF EXPRESSING BOTH AWE AND THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORLD WE LIVE IN. LET US FOCUS THIS THANKSGIVING AND TAKE A CUE FROM WENDELL BERRY, AND WRITE BLESSINGS FOR THREE THINGS WE CONSIDER GIFTS IN OUR LIFE RIGHT NOW. MAYBE WRITE BLESSINGS FOR THREE THINGS THAT CHALLENGE US. AN EXAMPLE WOULD BE, A BLESSING FOR A FAILURE, OR LONELINESS, OR FOR A FAMILY IN NEED.

YOUR BLESSING, PLEASE
DENNIS



TIME CHANGE

Daylight Savings time ends Sunday, November 5th, at 2:00 a.m.

Please set your clocks **back** one hour before going to sleep on Saturday evening, November 4th.



GWIM FOOD BANK DONATIONS

Peanut Butter & Jelly, Canned Meats, Cold Cereal, Mac & Cheese, Pasta & Pasta Sauce, Juice, tuna, canned soups-stews-chili, canned fruits, canned vegetables, beans (canned or dried), rice pouches, etc.



Other donations will be welcomed, but these will be the main focus. The food basket will be available each week in the Narthex.



Holiday Fair

**Our Annual Holiday Fair is November 11^h
(see poster insert)**

ATTENTION:

We won't be making any pies this year!



NOVEMBER "BIRTHDAY" WISHES!
Happy Birthday to the following Church Members

Jill Ducham 11/3
Cathryn Phillips 11/3
Leslie Johnson 11/11
Meghan Casey 11/12
Rebecca Casey 11/13
Virginia Auchmoody 11/14
Jaclyn Alessio 11/15

Christy Elwell 11/17
Judy Martin 11/17
Christopher Cicchetti 11/17
Shana Boardman 11/19
Elizabeth Trenske 11/23
Madisyn Silva 11/29



**Decorating for Christmas & Hanging
of the Greens!**

Friday, December 8, 2023 - 11 am.
Volunteers Needed!



CALL TO A SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CHURCH BY-LAWS, A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WATERBURY, INC. WILL BE CONDUCTED ON THE PREMISES OF THIS CHURCH AT 222 WEST MAIN STREET, WATERBURY, CONNECTICUT ON SUNDAY, December 3, 2023. IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE WORSHIP SERVICE FOR THE PURPOSE OF:

- (1) Adopting the Preliminary Budget for 2024
- (2) Election of Officers and Members of the Boards and Committees
- (3) Such other business as may properly come before the Special Meeting.

ALL ACTIVE CHURCH MEMBERS SHALL HAVE THE PRIVILEGE OF VOICE AND VOTE AT THIS MEETING. HOWEVER, NO PROXY VOTES SHALL BE COUNTED.

DATED AT WATERBURY, CT

October 22, 2023

Stuart Post
Corporate Secretary

WISH LIST FOR SAFE HAVEN SHELTER

- ◆ Liquid Laundry detergent
- ◆ Canned Juice
- ◆ Dish Detergent
- ◆ Paper Towels
- ◆ Jars of Baby Food
- ◆ Toilet Paper
- ◆ Women's socks (new)
- ◆ Videos
- ◆ Nintendo Games
- ◆ Women's Underwear (new)
- ◆ Wash Cloths
- ◆ Gift Certificates
- ◆ Pillow Cases - Pillows
- ◆ Hair Brushes
- ◆ Diapers (large & ex-large)
- ◆ Cleaning Supplies
- ◆ Baby Cereal
- ◆ Napkins
- ◆ School Supplies
- ◆ Children's Socks (new)
- ◆ Large Bath towels
- ◆ Fitted twin sheets
- ◆ Children's Underwear (new)



Safe Haven currently provides the following bilingual (English/Spanish) services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault: up to 60 days of shelter for women and their children; individual

and peer group counseling; 24 hour crisis hotlines for domestic violence and sexual assault; legal advocacy information and referral; community education for adults and children; and court based family violence victim advocacy.

Please bring all your donations for Safe Haven on the third Sunday.



From the Director of Music/Youth

Tis the season to be thankful! We are just that, thankful for all that attended or helped with our annual Haunted House Halloween Party. For almost 24 years, this outreach event has become a family tradition with some families that have been coming since we started it and have watched it progress over the years.

Upcoming Events: The annual church fair will be on Saturday November 11th, 10am- 3pm with many different vendors. All we ask is that you spread the word, posters are available in the office and also posted on our Facebook page. If you have Facebook please feel free to share the information. If you would like to help out please see Cathy Crouse, Karen Cotner or myself for where we could use it the most.

Hanging of the Greens: Sunday December 10th at 4pm is the date for the program. This year we will be adding some more contemporary musical selections. The orchestrations for the new pieces are exciting, uplifting and different from what we have done in the past. Again, if you are interested in helping with the program, we would love it if you shared your time and talent with us.

Bell Choir: In a very short period our bell choir has managed to learn at least one musical selection while also working on another. It has been a great time with learning, faith and fellowship. We will continue to meet every other week from 6pm to 7pm with Chancel Choir to follow at 7:30pm. There is no requirement to have to read music in order to play bells, so if you're interested please let me know.

Continued

Chancel Choir: Continues to meet every Thursday at 7:30pm

The Chosen: meets every other Wednesday, 6:00pm we gather and we begin viewing at 6:30pm. Potluck style so bring a dish or dessert to share! This has become a fun evening of Faith, Fellowship and Food so come on down! Schedule may vary based on holidays so keep your eye on the calendar!

Blessing Bag Ministry: Several years ago a member of our youth started this program and it is very easy to do and helped so many. As we begin to enter the winter months, we have to remember that we still have people living on the streets and that this is the season for being thankful and giving. I can't think of a more appropriate time to start. Here is a simple list of items to include; Large zip lock bag, a small washcloth and towel, socks, hand warmers, toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant for male or female, small bar of soap.

*****PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE ANY TYPE OF MEDICATIONS AS WE CANNOT GIVE ANY OF THOSE ITEMS OUT.**

Drumming Ministry- more information will be forthcoming!

I leave you with this: *It is good to give thanks to the Lord,
to sing praises to the Most High.*

*It is good to proclaim your unfailing love in the morning,
your faithfulness in the evening.*

This holiday season remember to be Humble & Thankful! Please keep in mind this Thanksgiving members of our church, surrounding community and world around us in your thoughts and prayers.

Stewart W. Crouse



Hanging of the Greens
December 10, 2023 – 4 pm
First Congregational Church
222 West Main Street, Waterbury

Stewart Crouse, Organist
First Congregational Church Choir
Soloists, Brass, & Organ!

First Choir with soloists & instrumentalists!
Festive opening of the Christmas Season
& Decoration for the Church Holiday,
with added lighting effects bringing
our Sanctuary to Life!

Reception to Follow

Freewill Offering