

Christmas Meditation



Greetings Dear Friends and Family,

This season let us step back and breathe in the spirit of the Holy.

“Can you see the Holiness in those things you take for granted –a paved road or a washing machine? If you concentrate on finding what is good in every situation, you will discover that your life will suddenly be filled with gratitude, a feeling that nurtures the soul.”
Rabbi Harold Kushner.

We often remember to be grateful for big events, like Graduations, Weddings, Thanksgiving gatherings. However, it can be more difficult to feel grateful for the small things we do every day. Reminding yourself that eating a meal, for example, is in itself, special and can be very powerful. Your immediate awareness of food in front of you, combining flavors while removing hunger, is a great way to enjoy gratitude as often as you eat. I recently witnessed a gentleman at a meal blessing himself in prayer before a meal and I acknowledged his presence and prayed with him. I gained a new friend.

Another is feeling grateful in the morning for being able to comfortable sleep at night. We gain comfort, satisfaction and peace by practicing mindfulness and gratitude in this repeated fashion.

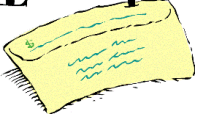
These are examples of giving ourselves presents each and every day and not wait for Christmas to come. Give your presence to another on an ordinary day and that becomes Christmas. Let us give the gift of presence to Jesus on His day in Worship.

Merry Christmas to all and to all Good Health.

Rev. Dennis

The 2025 envelopes will be out in the Narthex (Hopefully) by Sunday December 29th, please pick them up so we can save on postage. Stewardship letters should have been received for all members who have church envelopes with their member number. Those of you who do not have envelopes and wish to pledge and receive envelopes, please call the church office 203-757-0331.

**Offering
Envelopes**



DECEMBER WISHES!

Happy Birthday to the following Church Members

June Gagnon 12/3	Eleanor Raymond 12/21
Noah Sharma 12/06	Christopher Dabbo 12/22
Derek Rodriguez 12/07	Chris McGavran 12/25
Matthew Dabbo 12/9	Maner Tyson 12/29
George Walters III 12/19	



**Fluffing for Hanging
of the Greens!**

Decorating the church for Christmas!
Friday, December 6, 2024 at 11 am.
Volunteers Needed!





Hanging of the Greens
December 8, 2024 - 4:00 pm

First Congregational Church
222 West Main Street Waterbury
First Choir with soloists & instrumentalists!
Festive opening of the Christmas Season
& Decoration for the Church Holiday!

Reception to Follow

Freewill Offering

ATTENTION MEMBERS:

Following the service, we will be hosting a reception in Clinton Hall. It would be greatly appreciated if **church members** could help by bringing cookies, finger sandwiches, and Hors d'oeuvres etc. , **please call Cathy Crouse (203-879-0408) to let her know what you are planning to bring for the reception so she can plan ahead!**

Thanking you in Advance!
Cathy



JOY OF CHRISTMAS DINNER

Wednesday, December 25th

Joy of Christmas Dinner, special collection. This will be another year of serving a wonderful dinner to as many as 400 less fortunate people on Christmas Day. If you would like to donate to this worthy cause, please make your check payable to First Congregational Church and mark in the memo section "JOC Dinner". Please have your donation in by December 19th.



SAFE HAVEN

WISH LIST FOR SHELTER



- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| ◆ Shampoo | ◆ Hair Brushes/combs |
| ◆ Body Wash | ◆ Diapers (large & ex-large) |
| ◆ Paper Towels | ◆ Sanitary Napkins/Tampons |
| ◆ Deodorant | ◆ Children's Socks (new) |
| ◆ Toilet Paper | ◆ Children's Underwear(new) |
| ◆ Women's socks (new) | ◆ Baby lotion/baby wash |
| ◆ Women's Body lotion | ◆ Wash Cloths/ loofah's |
| ◆ Women's Underwear (new) | ◆ Gift Certificates |

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.

All information obtained through counseling remains confidential.

They do not subscribe to Caller I. D. Please bring all your donations for Safe Haven on the third Sunday of the month.



Food Pantry
Donations Needed

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.



“Longest Night” - Service to soothe your heart.



While the Christmas season is a season of joy for most people, it is a very difficult time for those who are recently bereaved, or who have lost loved ones at the holidays. On Saturday, December 21 at 7:00 p.m., Rev. Dennis McGuire and the Rev. Dr. Maner Tyson of Waterbury Baptist Ministries will lead a “Longest Night Service”. We hope that members of

both congregations will join us at Waterbury Baptist Ministries (our chapel on the lower level), and bring friends who are struggling or sad, for this service of healing and remembrance.





Sunday, December 1, 2024
Call to a Special Meeting following Worship
Sunday, December 8, 2024
Hanging of the Greens
4:00 pm – Reception following service
in Clinton Hall

Saturday, December 21, 2024
Longest Night Service - Chapel

Christmas Eve Service – First Church
Tuesday, December 24, 2024- 5:00 pm

Waterbury Baptist Ministries Christmas Eve Service
Tuesday, December 24, 2024 – 7:00 pm



Wednesday, December 25, 2024
12:00 pm to 2:00 pm
Joy of Christmas Dinner – Clinton Hall



From the Director of Music

Welcome December and the Advent season with our last major program for the year. Hanging of the Greens will take place on Sunday December 8 at 4:00pm. If you would like to take part in this memorable program please contact Stuart Post, Cathy

Crouse or myself on how you can help. From walking in with greens or poinsettias to assisting with the reception, your help is needed. You can also help us spread the word either with posters or through social media. If you don't already follow us on social media, please do at First Congregational Church of Waterbury and feel free to like and share the information on the page.

Joy of Christmas Dinner, this dinner has been part of the fabric of First Church for over 50 years, if you are looking for a great way to give back this holiday season, volunteers and donations are always needed. For more information about how you can help out please contact Roxanne in the office.

Finally, I would like to wish each and everyone of you a Merry Christmas & Happy New Year. May you, your families and friends be surrounded by God's Love and the magic of the holiday season.

Blessings
Stewart Crouse
Director of Music