



## **REFLECTION DECEMBER 2025 IT'S A HOSPITALITY SEASON . LISTEN**

“ Martha Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things, there is a need for only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part.” ( Luke 10: 41,42)

We often get so busy with our inflexible schedules that we can't hear what others are saying, and we miss opportunities for enrichment. Jesus says that Mary, not Martha, has chosen the better part because Mary is fully present to her guests.

Martha becomes preoccupied with the tasks themselves. How often we get frantic with everything that needs to be done when company is coming. We get short tempered and the real purpose behind the event- loving service of others. The remedy to this frantic activity and poor disposition lies in sharing the preparation tasks and starting early. In a family or community situation, all members can share in preparing for the feast so that all can share in the hospitality of listening and fellowship that follows the feast.

Listening is the ability to be present to others. It is a chosen way of being. The fruit of deciding over and over that people are more important than tasks. We can always get back to the task, but we may not get another opportunity to be present to our children, our spouse, or to a stranger.

Jesus is the model listener. He's a frequent dinner guest, loves weddings, and always has time for people, especially children and those who are hurting. Granted he doesn't have a nine to five job, kids to drive everywhere, shopping to do, committees to serve on. However, with all our responsibilities, may we stop for a moment to make a difference in someone's life each and every day and just listen.

Jesus, you are always, the guest, the visitor, the caller. Remind us to drop what we are doing that we might listen to your voice in others and respond. Help us keep close to you throughout the day, ready to meet you when you call. Let us add loving touches to our tasks of service.

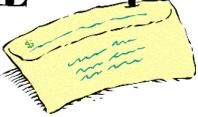
Merry Christmas to all and to all Good Health.

*Rev. Dennis*



**The 2026 envelopes will be out in the Narthex (Hopefully) by Sunday December 28<sup>th</sup> , please pick them up so we can save on postage.** Stewardship letters should

**Offering Envelopes**



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.



**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! Sunday  
Dec 7<sup>th</sup> - Decorating the church for  
Christmas! Friday, December 12, 2025 at 11 am.  
Volunteers Needed!**



**ATTENTION MEMBERS:**

Following the **Hanging of the Greens 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***

**December 25<sup>th</sup>**

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 19<sup>th</sup>.

# SAFE HAVEN

## WISH LIST FOR SHELTER



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



## *“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 Sunday, December 21 at 6:00 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.

## **Light-Up Night following Longest Night**

**Service - 7:00 pm - Out on Front Lawn**

**Help us light up Waterbury on the Longest Night of the year!**

**Caroling, Hot Chocolate, Cookies!**

**Living Manger and a church lit up like a Christmas Tree!!!**

**Free Holiday fun for all!**





Sunday, December 7, 2025  
**Call to a Special Meeting following Worship**  
Sunday, December 14, 2025  
**Hanging of the Greens**  
**4:00 pm – Reception following service**  
**in Clinton Hall**

Sunday, December 21, 2025  
**Longest Night Service – Chapel 6 pm**  
**Light Up Night – 7 pm**

**Christmas Eve Service – First Church**  
Wednesday, December 24, 2025- 5:30 pm

**Waterbury Baptist Ministries Christmas Eve Service**  
Wednesday, December 24, 2025 – 7:00 pm

*The*  
**Joy of**  
Christmas

Thursday, December 25, 2025  
**12:00 pm to 2:00 pm**  
**Joy of Christmas Dinner – Clinton Hall**



## ***From the Director of Music***

December begins one of our busiest months not only as the music department but as a Congregation as a whole. We have several important events coming up this month to help celebrate this holiday season, if you have an interest in taking part please reach out. Since September, the choir has

been working diligently on music for Hanging of the Greens and Christmas Eve and this year the addition of Light-Up Night.

Hanging of the Greens will be on Sunday, December 14th at 4:00pm with a reception to follow. For the reception, please contact Karen Cotner or Cathy Crouse, to assist with the main program please reach out to me.

Sunday, December 21, is the Longest Night Service held in the Chapel at 6:00pm with Light-Up night to follow out in front of the building. Our Bell Choir will be present along with some choir members from Waterbury Baptist Ministries and First Church. Choral pieces will consist of a mix of sacred & secular and familiar to everyone. If you would like to take part please let me know asap. For more information about Light-Up night please see the poster or contact Jason Polaski, Jay has put a lot of time into this program which is promising to be a great addition to our traditions. If you have any interest in helping set up lights outside please let me know.

With a positive response to this year's Maundy Thursday service, we hope to create the same vibrant atmosphere for this Christmas Eve. Stay tuned!

**Continued**

Over the past couple of months the confidence of our Bell Choir has grown, we invite anyone who might be interested in playing to join us on Thursday evenings at 6:30pm. The group is excited to share with you what they have been working on!

A huge thank you to all who made this year's Church Fair possible and successful, we have already begun thinking about next year!

Building Information, as we have entered that time of year and anticipated programs are coming up, please keep your eye on local news stations and church facebook page for potential closings or cancellations due to inclement weather.

Let us open our hearts and minds to welcome the birth of the Christ Child.

Have a Blessed & Merry Christmas!  
Stewart Crouse  
Director of Music



## A Special Thank You

Rev. Dennis and our church family,  
We are grateful not only for your continual prayers and well wishes, but also for your generosity. The dinners from LaBonne's were delicious and a wonderful break from **COOKING!!**



Matt and I are blessed to be recipients of such love and thoughtfulness.  
Blessings,  
Matt and Marilyn Dabbo