



January 2026 Reflection

At this time of year I look out my cold snowy window pane: A field of brightening green grass as winter doldrums slip away, stretching muscles being limbered up after months of relaxation, loudening pops of the ball in the glove as arms and shoulders loosen, sprays of infield dirt as speedy runners slide into crisp white bases, ever more solid cracks of the bat as swings grows sweeter, fans in the stands reliving memories of ballparks, ballplayers, and ages long gone., Shouts of venders peddling peanuts, cracker jacks, and hot dogs, A time of hope that a championship awaits when spring meanders into fall.

Yes poetry and baseball are my passion. Poetry builds community. Baseball is about community too. It's a unifying force, a common language that bridges gaps and builds teamwork, perseverance, and sportsmanship are celebrated.

That sounds like what church is. It's not the building but sharing a common goal and going out to where the people are and meeting them in the moment of this wonderous life.

What is your passion this new year?

What do you want to be when you grow up?

Dream it, then do it! Life is a precious present.

Happy new year!

Rev. Dennis



Scholarship Information 2026

"Scholarship New Applications and Scholarship Renewal Applications will be

available in the Church Office after January 10, 2026. You can pick them up between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. or you can call us and we will mail one to you. They are also available online at <http://firstchurch-wtby.org>." All new and renewal applications have a deadline of March 25th – no exceptions.



FOOD BANK DONATIONS

COMMUNION SUNDAY

Peanut Butter & Jelly, Canned Meats, Cold Cereal, Mac & Cheese, Pasta & Pasta Sauce, Juice, & Tuna



Other donations will be welcomed, but these will be the main focus. The food basket will be available each week in the Narthex. Although we ask everyone to bring in items the first Sunday of every month, you can still bring them in on the 2nd, 3rd, & 4th Sunday. We will be collecting donations this month on the first Sunday in January. **The Food Pantry is serving more people than ever, so our generous support is needed more than ever.**





2025 ANNUAL REPORTS DUE

All Board and Committee Annual Reports are due in the Church Office no later than **January 20, 2026**. This date allows time for them to be typed, printed and available to members prior to our Annual Meeting. If you wish you can email the report to me at rox252@comcast.net. Or you can drop it off to the church office. **The Annual Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, February 8, 2026.**



Stewardship 2026

Just a note to all Church Members who have not submitted their pledge for 2026: Please mail it to the church office or leave it in the offering plate on Sunday morning. We pray God's guidance and await your faithful response. **AND PLEASE PICK UP YOUR ENVELOPES IN THE NARTHEX!**



Thank You

To all who helped serve, contribute and donate their time for the Joy of Christmas "Dinner". A special thank you to Karen Cotner and the

Committee for volunteering their time to organize and make this happen. Also, to THANK Chef, Mike and his team of helpers and of course thanks to George for always organizing it all in Hearth Room Kitchen and Clinton Hall.



CALL TO THE ANNUAL MEETING

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CHURCH BY-LAWS, THE ANNUAL 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, FEBRUARY 8, 2026 IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE WORSHIP SERVICE FOR THE PURPOSE OF:

- (1) To accept all Annual Reports from the Officers and various Committees and Boards,
- (2) Such other business as may properly come before the Annual 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 _____

December 2025

Stuart Post, Corporate Secretary

***Snow Date February 15, 2026**



WISH LIST FOR SAFE HAVEN SHELTER



WISH LIST FOR SAFE HAVEN SHELTER

- ◆ Shampoo
- ◆ Body Wash
- ◆ Paper Towels
- ◆ Deodorant
- ◆ Toilet Paper
- ◆ Women's socks (new)
- ◆ Women's Body lotion
- ◆ Women's Underwear (new)
- ◆ Hair Brushes/combs
- ◆ 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.



NOTES FROM OUR Director of Music

As we step into a new year, I give thanks for the gift of music in our Worship and community life here at First Church. Music has the unique ability to draw us closer to God and to one another- from the heartfelt Congregational singing to the sacred beauty of Choral Anthems that lift our spirits and focus our hearts on praise. Throughout January we will continue to explore the music that reflects the season of Epiphany-a time when the Light of Christ shines into the world.

To quickly digress back to December, I would like to thank each and everyone who participated in the Hanging of the Greens from the Chancel Choir, Bell Choir, extra musicians, decorators to our reception committee, you all made this program possible! In the coming months we'll continue preparing for special seasonal music including musical offerings for Lent & Holy week. Music at First Church isn't just something we hear-it's something we live together as we worship and serve.

Christian Cinema, The Chosen, AD The Bible Continues dates will be posted and will be weather dependent. The watch parties for these two shows is a great time for us to share a meal together and discuss what we are watching. I encourage all those who are able to attend.

Continued

As a reminder, please keep your eye on local news stations and our facebook page in the event of inclement weather in the event of the cancellation of scheduled events.

Wishing you all abundant Blessings & Good Health this coming year.

Stewart Crouse



Condolences

Our condolences go out to the family and friends of George R. Chaivanik who joined the Church Eternal & Triumphant on Thursday, November 27, 2025. We will continue to keep his family and friends in our thoughts and prayers.



JANUARY "BIRTHDAY" WISHES!

Happy Birthday to the following Church Members

Terri Alessio 1/3

Luca Bianchini 1/22

Jennifer Polaski 1/13

Elizabeth Manners 1/25

Mario Liburdi 1/16

Carol Ashley 1/26

William Cone 1/17

Marissa (Liburdi) Ventura 1/26

Grace Sweeney 1/20

Zachary Corcoran 1/26

