



THE PARISHIONER FEBRUARY 2022

THE FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST
WOODBIDGE, CT

An Open, Welcoming, and Affirming Church,
since 1738

Sunday Worship: 10:00 a.m.

Telephone: (203) 389-2119 Fax: (203) 389-2110 Email: office@uccw.org

CT Conference Website: www.ctucc.org

Website: www.uccw.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/uccwoodbridge



A Letter from our New Interim Minister, Rev. Susan Murtha:

Dear New Friends at First Church of Christ Woodbridge,

First, thank you very much for your patience over the past months as I completed my interim ministry at the United Church of Christ, Southbury. I am delighted to be called as your Interim Minister in Woodbridge and I very much look forward to beginning our ministry on February 1st – learning about your personal and community faith journeys, and leading your congregation through a faithful and fruitful “all-church” process of discussion, discernment, and decision-making about your future. That’s a mouthful, I know! So, what’s first? ...

“Sessions with Susan”!

Please stay-tuned for updates about how to join one of these six small group sessions – at the church or via Zoom – in the month of February. This is our first step and we want *every member of FCCW* to participate in one these sessions! Note that I plan to create the schedule for these small group conversations before I arrive on February 1st (or shortly thereafter); so, keep your eyes out for the options coming your way.

Since we will get to work quickly, I thought a few words of introduction here may be helpful and of interest:

I am a Connecticut native, though I have lived and/or spent extended periods of time in a few other states and countries. My 36-year-old son, his wife and two children live in California and visit with family in Connecticut for extended stretches. Simon is an engineer working on the autonomous vehicle project (aka the self-driving car) and his wife, Sarah, works in the field of corporate environmental sustainability. And yes, their children, ages 6 and 3, are the light of life!

Backing up a bit ... Raised as a Roman Catholic, my personal search for spiritual and religious nurture began in my college years as an engineering student. (Yes, engineering is a multi-generational theme in my family!) Among the richest of my experiences were six years worshipping with the Quaker Friends in northeast Connecticut. It was in the prayerful silence of those Sunday gatherings that I first heard God’s call to preach the Gospel, though it would take some years until I acted upon that call. In my late-twenties, I left my engineering career to be a stay-home mom and homemaker. Our family found a church home at First Church of Christ in Mansfield, and it was there that clergy leaders and church members encouraged me to pursue a vocation in ministry. My years as a part-time seminarian at Andover Newton Theological School (1997 graduate) were blessed and prepared me so well for church ministry. In 2011, my then Regional Minister encouraged me to take the trainings for intentional interim ministry; I did, and it became a second calling for me. For the past 10 years, I’ve been serving as an interim minister to churches in transition. It’s an honor, a challenge, and a deep blessing to lead and guide congregations through seasons of significant change.

There’s more, but that’s enough for now! Fun fact: Epiphany is my favorite season in the church year. In this season between Christmas and Lent, we rejoice that God’s light and truth and grace are shown forth to all the world. I look forward to meeting you and your world in mid-Epiphany!

Epiphany’s blessings!
Rev. Susan Murtha,
Interim Senior Minister



“THINKING OUT LOUD”

Usually in this space I report on the latest FCCW Church Council meeting. To that end I can note that the vast majority of time spent at the January meeting, which was only conducted a few days ago, was devoted to discussing and approving the 2022 Annual and Capital Budgets as received from Trustees for submission to the January Congregational Meeting. While the financial life of our church is critical and most certainly very important to supporting our church's future, I kept coming back in my thought process to the fact that our future really lies in our individual, personal support of our beloved "church on the green." If we do not have personal, individual participation in Sunday morning worship services, Sunday School, Bible Study, Committee meetings, Church suppers, Women's/Men's Fellowship, the Strawberry and other food festivals, on and on; we are nothing but a "set of buildings on the green!" Just another historical building which could easily be a museum with a long and interesting history and unique, decoration and design. People, I believe, are what bring life to our church. Without you, and you, and you, there will be no life in FCCW!

As of February 1st, the Rev. Susan Murtha, as Interim Minister, will begin, over a period of time, to lead us onto roads and in directions which we, and only we, can determine as to which ones will bring life and meaning back into our church's being and mission. My friends, as I stated in my last report: It is time for reasons to support FCCW, not excuses not to! We are at THE crossroads in the life of our church. Will you be there? I hope so. In closing, I share with you a poem, with which, I know, you are all familiar. Its meaning and theme have been on my mind for a few days, as I thought about what thoughts to share with you this month. I believe it has meaning and message for us as we come to a time with choices to make in deciding which road will we, at FCCW, take?

Respectfully, Richard A. Prescott, Moderator

**“THE ROAD NOT TAKEN”
by Robert Frost**

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I--
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

Sanctuary Restoration Update January 19, 2022

Close-out reports have been submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and to the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven who each provided generous grants that supported “Phase One” of the sanctuary restoration. The state grant will take several weeks to process and will obligate the FCCW to a 15-year historic easement on the sanctuary.

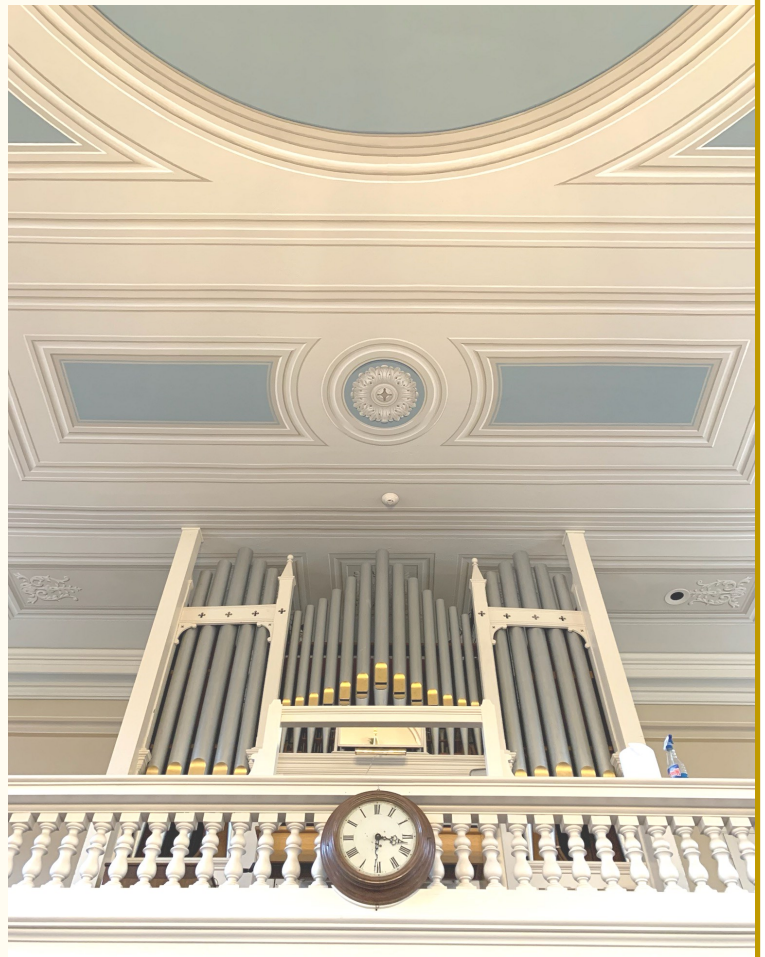
Erin Fink (SHPO) and Mike Forino (Preservation, CT) made a site visit to the FCCW on January 12. They were very pleased with the quality of “Phase One” work. SHPO has approved the church using the John Canning Company to complete the “Phase Two” decorative work on the plaster walls, under balcony, and the apse/chancel. A SHPO 50/50 matching grant of up to \$200,000.00 will be available for application later this year. They have advised we consider inclusion of the repainting of the narthex and the three stairwells, work on the pews, and improved ADA accessibility to the application. SHPO does not allow funding for a new carpeting and/or pew cushions. When the current surge of Omicron Covid subsides, an after-church meeting will be called to discuss the scope of the Phase Two work and to decide how much more financial investment the congregation wish to make to complete the sanctuary restoration.

With congregational approval of the 2022 budgets on January 30, we will contract with Mr. Edwin Catalan to paint the wood trims of the sanctuary.

Happy New Year, *the Sanctuary Committee*

Quote of the month:

“I was overwhelmed by the beauty of the interior of this historic edifice now that it has been cleaned and newly painted. With the light pouring through the windows Sunday, the soft blue of the ceiling, the organ’s glistening massive pipes and the vibrant evergreen star in the chancel in particular were a revelation to believer and agnostic alike.”



UPCOMING



Welcoming Reception for Rev. Susan Murtha

On Sunday, February 6th, following the 10:00 a.m. church service, there will be a meet and greet reception in the Parish House to welcome our new Interim Minister, Rev. Susan Murtha. Rev. Murtha is coming to us from the United Church of Christ in Southbury. She comes highly recommended, and we are pleased to welcome her on this, her first Sunday with us.

If you are interested in making any finger foods for the reception, please contact either Penny Rogers (203-530-2486) or Sue Stoddard (203-453-1255).



BOY SCOUT TROOP #907 FEBRUARY 2022 UPDATE

Due to COVID-19 concerns, your First Church of Christ Scouts BSA Troop 907 had to postpone its January Court of Honor, which was scheduled for Thursday, January 6th. This is being rescheduled for February, but as of this writing, the date has not been finalized. The troop also has been experiencing a higher-than-normal health risk and cancelled two in person meetings in January, holding small group advancement zoom meetings instead.

In February, the troop will be going to Mount Snow in Vermont the weekend of February 11-13. Staying at Steve Burt's family house, the plan is to ski Saturday, dinner at club house at the complex there, and then coming home late Sunday morning before the Super Bowl. Families of scouts are also invited and can ski with the troop; however, they need separate housing. Portions of this trip are covered by the troop's fundraisers; however, everyone pays their own way for lift tickets etc., but our troop will arrange for a group discount.

This troop is very active and instills tremendous values in our youth, and it has grown recently but there is always room for more scouts, and especially for additional adult support.
Please let me know of your interest.

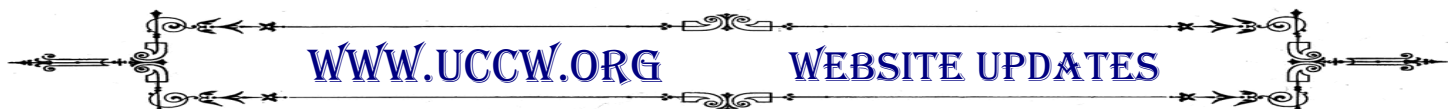
Best wishes,

Richard Forselius

Troop 907 Committee Chair/Chartered Organization Representative

Email: forselius@snet.net

<p>SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP</p> <p>MINISTER SCHEDULE 2022</p> <p>10AM</p>	<p><u>FEBRUARY</u></p> <p>2/6 Rev. Susan Murtha</p> <p>2/13 Rev. Greg Mobley</p> <p>2/20 Rev. Susan Murtha</p> <p>2/27 Rev. Glenn Dulko</p>	<p><u>MARCH</u></p> <p>3/6 Rev. Susan Murtha</p> <p>3/13 Rev. Greg Mobley</p> <p>3/20 Rev. Susan Murtha</p> <p>3/27 Rev. Raquel Irizarry</p>
<p><u>APRIL</u></p> <p>4/3 Rev. Susan Murtha</p> <p>4/10 (<i>Palm Sunday</i>) Rev. Greg Mobley</p> <p>4/17 (<i>Easter Sunday</i>) Rev. Susan Murtha</p> <p>4/24 Rev. Karl Duetzmann</p>	<p><u>MAY</u></p> <p>5/1 Rev. Susan Murtha</p> <p>5/8 Rev. Greg Mobley</p> <p>5/15 Rev. Susan Murtha</p> <p>5/22 Rev. Walter Pitman</p> <p>5/29 Rev. Raquel Irizarry</p>	<p><u>JUNE</u></p> <p>6/5 Rev. Susan Murtha</p> <p>6/12 Rev. Greg Mobley</p> <p>6/19 Rev. Susan Murtha</p> <p>6/26 Rev. Karl Duetzmann</p>



Sanctuary Restoration - View New Photos!

*Thank you Joyce Simpson for continuing to submit photos to our website!
A schedule of restoration work is also available for reading.

Love Our Sunday Music?

Visit the Music page for information on Sunday music and musicians.

Guests and Archives

On our "Honored Guest" page, you can find photos and brief biographies of our guest preachers, including the dates of their visit to FCCW. Click on the date to be **instantly connected** to the Worship Service!

Sunday Volunteers, Donations, and a Great Big "Thank You!" to All

Thank you to so many of you who contribute so much of yourselves each week. Volunteer today!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

A lot of amazing stuff is going on at the church these days! Find out the "whats" and "whens" and learn how you can more fully experience parish life at FCCW!

Facebook

FCCW Facebook page is growing in popularity! "Like" and Comment on your favorite photos and read about exciting events to come. Announcements like event/meeting date changes or postponements are posted here as well.

***YOUR** feedback is always welcomed, as our mission is to continue to improve! Email me if you need assistance. I look forward to your suggestions and photo/article submissions!

JoAnna Rubino Email: growfirstchurch@gmail.com

FCCW OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Friday
9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.



ZOOM Invitations and Live Streaming



Everyone is encouraged to gather
at the Meetinghouse for the 10:00 a.m.
Sunday Service!

All *Worship Services* are live streamed on our website
and on our YouTube channel.

Video recordings are available on our website, our
YouTube channel, and on Facebook.
(www.facebook.comuccwoodbridge)

Please look to your email for invitations
and links to these resources.
We will continue to use Zoom for all of our
Worship Services.



Submission Due Date

Don't forget!

Articles and photos for the **March 2022** Edition
of *The Parishioner* are
due by **Wednesday, February 16th.**

*Please submit articles and photos by email.
If you would like assistance
regarding Zoom, live stream, or website
accessibility, please contact JoAnna.
growfirstchurch@gmail.com



Volunteers Needed

What's more fun than coffee hour?
*Hosting coffee hour! Sign up on your
own or join forces with a friend!*

**What's more fulfilling than listening
to scripture?**
Reading scripture at Sunday Service!

What is more beautiful than a rose?
Altar flowers to honor a loved one.

**What's more fun than crooning like
Sinatra in the shower?**
Singing like an angel in the fccw choir!

Contact the office for more info on how
you can share your gifts with the parish.
Thank you FCCW Volunteers!

Marking Life's Passages

*Contact the office
with any birth or death notices, baptisms,
or memorial service dates.*



Weekly Bible Study

All are welcome to visit our Weekly Bible Study that
takes place every Wednesday morning at 10:00 a.m.
Meetings are currently being held inside the Parish Hall
or outside in good weather. Please visit the Bible Study
page on our website for more information and a list of
weekly readings.

<https://www.uccw.org/bible-study>

The Parishioner

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Woodbridge, Connecticut 06525

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Pastor Emeritus: Rev. Boyd M. Johnson, Jr.
Office Administrator: Lisa Tartaglino
Audio/Visual: Charlotte & Emma Lindskog

NEXT PARISHIONER DEADLINE: WEDNESDAY, February 16, 2022 (a firm date)

E-mail articles and photos to: growfirstchurch@gmail.com

February 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>6 10:00am Church Worship Service 11:00am Reception for Rev. Susan</p>	<p>7 7:30pm AA - Lampost Group</p>	<p>1 7:00pm Alateen 7:30pm Al-anon 7:30pm AA</p>	<p>2 9:30am Musical Folk classes 10:00am Bible Study 2:00pm Music School</p>	<p>3 2:00pm Music School 6:00pm Boy Scouts Court of Honor (Parish Hall)</p>	<p>4 2:00pm Music School</p>	<p>5 9:30am Musical Folk classes</p>
<p>13 10:00am Church Worship Service</p>	<p>14 7:30pm AA - Lampost Group</p>	<p>15 7:00pm Alateen 7:30pm AA 7:30pm Al-anon</p>	<p>16 9:30am Musical Folk classes 10:00am Bible Study 2:00pm Music</p>	<p>17 2:00pm Music School 7:00pm Boy Scouts</p>	<p>18 2:00pm Music School</p>	<p>19 9:30am Musical Folk classes</p>
<p>20 10:00am Church Worship Service</p>	<p>21 7:30pm AA - Lampost Group</p>	<p>22 7:00pm Alateen 7:30pm Al-anon 7:30pm AA</p>	<p>23 9:30am Musical Folk classes 10:00am Bible Study 6:30pm Choir Practice</p>	<p>24 2:00pm Music School 6:30pm Trustees 7:00pm Boy Scouts</p>	<p>25 2:00pm Music School</p>	<p>26 9:30am Musical Folk classes</p>
<p>27 10:00am Church Worship Service</p>	<p>28 7:30pm AA - Lampost Group</p>					