



# THE PARISHIONER

## MARCH 2023

THE FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, WOODBRIDGE, CT

*since 1738*

*An Open, Welcoming, and Affirming Church*

**Lent 2023 at First Church Woodbridge**

*~ ~ Sources for Drawing Living Water ~ ~*

North and south, east and west – all across the earth, Christians are immersed in the season of Lent ... 40 days to mirror Jesus' 40 days in the wilderness. It's a season of spiritual practices to grow closer to God so that we may be equipped to be faithful and fruitful followers of the truth and grace of Christ. What a blessing we share!

In Lent, we thirst after God, thirst for what Jesus called the "living water". In John's gospel, the Samaritan woman at the well asks Jesus, "Where can you get this living water?" Rev. Greg Mobley and I are so much looking forward to sharing a special Lenten gathering with all of you to find this living water, together. Join us on Sunday, March 12 after worship ...

### *Sources for Drawing Living Water*

John 4:1-30: Jesus & the Samaritan Woman

### *An Emmaus-style gathering*

Greg and I call this an "Emmaus-style gathering", meaning we are shaping it along the Emmaus scripture. ... On the road to Emmaus, a stranger walked alongside the disciples. They invited him to stay with them for meal together. In the breaking of the bread and in the opening of scripture, they felt their hearts burning and they recognized him – the living Christ.

In the Parish Hall after worship, we'll break bread together (and sup soups), hear an ancient scripture about Jesus' encounter with the woman at well, and talk together about what the Holy Spirit prompts within us. Through this, may we recognize Christ with us and know the way to the living water!

**Save the date – Sunday, March 12:** join us for this thirst-quenching gathering.

*Lenten blessings,*

*Rev. Susan*

P.S. If you can contribute bread or soup, please call the church office to let us know!

## COUNCIL REPORT—February 2023

The February FCCW Council meeting was called to order at 12:35 PM in the Parish Hall. A quorum was in attendance. After her opening prayer, Rev. Murtha presented her report.

Rev. Susan suggested that for summer worship services there could be a lay leader with services being held in the Parish Hall. After discussion, her suggestion was approved by consensus of the Council members. A special Lenten event after worship, will be conducted in March led by Revs. Mobley and Murtha, entitled "Sources For Drawing Living Water." Those who have participated in this event were very impressed with it. Soup and Sandwiches will be served.

The Treasurer's Report noted that almost 90% of 2022 pledges have been met. Income from rental of the parsonage and cell towers provided substantial income for the year. Total operating expenses for the year were below budget, while operating expenses exceeded income for the same period. Income from FCCW Endowment Fund saw, as one might expect, a decline for the year 2022. The 2023 FCCW budget was reviewed with no vote taken as this had been done at the Congregational Meeting.

Trustees reported on the five year projection noting that additional funding support has to be obtained to allow for program development. A restricted monetary gift has been made for use by the Music Committee. It was reported that Trustees are working with an outside auditor to do the 2022 Audit.

The Music Committee reported that Nenad is planning a spring concert with a date to be set. The Christian Education report noted that Rev. Murtha has been working with Forest Vandeflor to begin a Sunday morning children's Sunday Kids Church which will be conducted by Forest assisted by an adult volunteer, Julie Dolan. More volunteers are needed. Deacons reported that they continue to assist with Sunday worship services. In addition they are looking forward to the addition of three new members.

Nominating Committee reported that Bob Touloukian has agreed to serve on Trustees until June with provision that he be on the May ballot for a new term. Three new members, Kathleen Foster, Julie Dolan, and Henry Gates have accepted membership on Deacons. All the noted nominees were approved by Council vote. Personnel reported that the two staff positions of office secretary and Sexton have been reviewed with pay raises of 3% for each. Search & Renewal continues to meet, it was reported, on a monthly basis to assist in helping Rev. Murtha.

Building and Grounds reported that the split tree near the driveway will be removed come in the Spring. The sidewalk archeological dig has begun. The requested grant to the State will be reviewed in March. We have applied for \$124,00 for completion of the sanctuary work. If accepted we will need to raise \$90,000, \$22,000 of which has already been given. TLC reported that repairs of the driveway and abutting lawn are being discussed with the Town Public Works. It was suggested that railroad ties or a berm be place along the driveway. This will be investigated. We still have a situation where cars are parking in the driveway to pick up high school students after school. This matter will be discussed, again, with Town and School officials.

The Writing Profile Team is hard at work, meeting on a regular basis, and preparing all required reports in preparation for seeking a settled Pastor for FCCW. The Giving Team reported that we had a successful giving campaign for 2023 pledges. The process will be reviewed for next year's effort. By Laws reported that there will be some suggested changes for discussion and approval at the May Congregational meeting.

Under new business it was moved that, for a trial period of one year,

- to pause the operation of three standing Boards: Christian Education, Christian Service, Stewardship

to create four new Ad Hoc Teams reporting to Council: Children and Family Ministry Team, Service Projects Team, Giving Team, Development Options Team

Any / all members of the standing Boards are welcome to join the Ad Hoc Teams. In early 2024 these changes will be reviewed and assessed by the Council.

After thorough discussion, these motions were approved.

It was noted at the end of the meeting that planning should begin for the June, Strawberry Festival. The next Council meeting will be on March 6, 12:30 PM in the Parish Hall. After a prayer by Rev. Murtha, the meeting was adjourned at 3:25 PM.

Respectfully Presented, Richard A. Prescott, Moderator



## BOY SCOUT TROOP #907



Troop 907 has been busy since our Court of Honor on Thursday, January 19, 2023. We have held our weekly meetings at the First Church of Christ in Woodbridge. On January 25, 2023, cub scouts of Pack 902 came to visit the troop. They participated in activity with some of Troop 907 younger patrol, while other scouts continued to work on the First Aid Merit Badge with Assistant Scoutmaster Ken Hulse. We ended the meeting with a walk up to the track at Amity High School where we ran a mile.

On Thursday, February 16, 2023, the troop is foregoing our weekly meeting for one of our Fun Scout Night's Out. We will be skiing at Mount Southington. This will be an opportunity for some who have never skied before to those who are experts! It is a great way for us to have some fun. It was a great night and might be the only snow we see in Connecticut all season.



### Marking Life's Passages

We share with you some sad news of the death of a long-time member of the First Church of Christ. Our continued prayers and thoughts for the family!

**Deborah Russell Whitlock Madden**, 75 years old, passed away at Smilow Cancer Hospital on February 22, 2023. There will be a memorial service at the First Church of Christ on Sunday, March 5th at 3:30 pm with a reception to follow at the Parish House.

There will be a memorial service for **Andrew Jacob Hemmerlein**, Joyce Simpson's son, who passed away on March 25, 2022, at the First Church of Christ on Thursday, March 16th at 11 am. There will be a reception following the service in the Parish Hall.



An All-Church Gathering  
First Church Woodbridge

~ **NEW STEPS Part 3** ~

Come hear the updates from  
our new ad hoc Development Team  
as they pursue options to financially  
support FCCW's future ministry!

What will be the duties of your  
next settled minister?  
What's the timeline of the search process?

~ Join us in making FCCW's future! ~

**Sunday March 5, 2023**  
**11:15 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**  
Parish Hall or via Zoom

New Steps Part 3 Zoom Link  
Meeting ID: 965 8397 2550  
(646) 558-8656

Please save the date & join us  
for this conversation + coffee & snacks!

# Sources for Drawing Living Water

with Rev. Dr. Greg Mobley & Rev. Susan Murtha

A LENTEN EVENT

**Sunday, March 12**  
**11:15 to 1:00**

**Soup & bread lunch**  
**Introduction to the scripture**  
**Small group discussion**



On the road to Emmaus... Opening the  
scriptures and breaking bread together,  
their eyes were opened, and they  
recognize him.

FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, WOODBRIDGE  
In the PARISH HOUSE  
5 Meetinghouse Lane (203) 389-2119

## Hoppy Easter Bunny Bash

**MARCH 25th 10:30-12 NOON**

- Live family music with Michele Urban
  - Awesome games ● Scavenger Hunt
  - Fantastic crafts
- BRING THE WHOLE FAMILY!**

Parish House of First Church  
5 Meetinghouse Lane, Woodbridge

FOR MORE INFORMATION  
(203) 936-9356



## HOLY WEEK



### WORSHIP SCHEDULE

**Palm Sunday, April 2**

10:00 a.m. worship service

In-person in the sanctuary & via Zoom

*Luke 18:21-40*

Palm Sunday Reflection: *The Palm of the Open Hand*

**Maundy Thursday, April 6**

7:00 p.m. worship service

In the Parish Hall

Meditation: *Gethsemane: he went a little further*

Tenebrae Service

**Good Friday, April 7**

The sanctuary will be open from 12 noon to 3:00 p.m.  
for personal prayer and reading of scripture

**Easter Sunday, April 9**

10:00 a.m. worship service

In-person in the sanctuary & via Zoom

*Luke 24:1-12*

Easter Reflection: *Deep Dawn*

## FCCW OFFICE HOURS

**Monday - Friday**

**8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.**

## Submission Due Date

*Articles and photos for the*

**April 2023** Edition of *The Parishioner* are due by

**Wednesday, March 22**

**\*Please submit articles and photos by email.**

*office@uccw.org*

**If you would like assistance regarding Zoom, live stream, or website accessibility, please contact Lisa.**

## Weekly Bible Study



All are welcome to visit our Weekly Bible Study every Wednesday morning at 10:30 a.m. in the Parish House. Please visit the Bible Study page on our website for more information and a list of weekly readings.

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

## ZOOM INVITATIONS

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

**An archive of past recordings are available on our website, our YouTube channel, and on Facebook.**

**([www.facebook.com/uccwoodbridge](http://www.facebook.com/uccwoodbridge))**

**Please look to your email for invitations and links to these resources.**

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

## **WORSHIP SERVICE**

**SUNDAY MORNING**

**10 AM**

## Marking Life's Passages

*Contact the office*

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

## ***The Parishioner***

Published monthly by  
The First Church of Christ  
Woodbridge, Connecticut  
06525

**Sunday Worship: 10:00 a.m.**  
Telephone: (203) 389-2119  
Email: [office@uccw.org](mailto:office@uccw.org)

**Interim Minister:** Rev. Susan Murtha  
([pastorsusan@uccw.org](mailto:pastorsusan@uccw.org)) (203) 936-9356

**Pastoral Care:** Rev. Janice Touloukian  
([jantouloukian@gmail.com](mailto:jantouloukian@gmail.com)) (203) 915-1510

**Pastor Emeritus:** Rev. Boyd M. Johnson, Jr.

**Office Administrator:** Lisa Tartaglino ([office@uccw.org](mailto:office@uccw.org))

**Sexton/Custodian:** Bob Turner

**Project Leader for Children's Ministries:** Forest Vandeflor

# March 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Bible Study 10:30 am NMS – 3 to 6:30 pm Musical Folk-9:30 am	2 NMS 2-7:45 Boy Scouts 7 pm	3 NMS 2-7	4 Musical Folk 9:30 am
5 10 am Worship Service 10:10 Kid's Church New Steps Part 3 After worship Memorial Service for Debbie Madden 3:30 pm	6 Lamppost group – 7:30 pm  Council – 12:30	7 Alateen 7 pm Al-anon/AA 7:30 Choir Prac. 6:30 Garden Club 11:45	8 Bible Study 10:30 am NMS – 3 to 6:30 pm Musical Folk-9:30 am	9 NMS 2-7:45 Boy Scouts 7 pm Deacons – 6 pm	10 NMS 2-7	11 Musical Folk 9:30 am
12 10 am Worship Service 10:10 Kid's Church Lenten Event After worship Daylight Savings Spring ahead 1 hour	13 Lamppost group – 7:30 pm	14 Alateen 7 pm Al-anon/AA 7:30 Choir Prac. 6:30	15 Bible Study 10:30 am NMS – 3 to 6:30 pm Musical Folk-9:30 am	16 NMS 2-7:45 Boy Scouts 7 pm Memorial Service for Andrew Hemmerlein 11 am Reception to follow	17 NMS 2-7	18 Musical Folk 9:30 am
19 10 am Worship Service 10:10 Kid's Church	20 Lamppost group – 7:30 pm	21 Alateen 7 pm Al-anon/AA 7:30 Choir Prac. 6:30	22 Bible Study 10:30 am NMS – 3 to 6:30 pm Musical Folk-9:30 am	23 NMS 2-7:45 Boy Scouts 7 pm	24 NMS 2-7	25 Musical Folk 9:30 am Bunny Bash 10:30
26 10 am Worship Service 10:10 Kid's Church	27 Lamppost group – 7:30 pm	28 Alateen 7 pm Al-anon/AA 7:30 Choir Prac. 6:30	29	30	31	

## EASTER FLOWERS

If you would like to donate an Easter Plant to decorate our Sanctuary for the Easter Service, please fill out the form below and return it with your check made out to the **First Church of Christ**. Mark below which plant you would like and the name of the person it is in memory of or in honor of. The list of donations will appear in the Easter bulletin. Please print the necessary information. **All forms and checks must be received in the church office by March 31<sup>st</sup>**. Remember to check if you want to take the plant.

Lily \$S???? each \_\_\_\_\_ Tulip \$S???? each \_\_\_\_\_ Daffodil \$S???? each \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*the office is waiting on prices from Eastside\*\***

GIVEN BY \_\_\_\_\_

IN MEMORY/HONOR OF (CIRCLE ONE)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I will take the plant after the Easter Service. \_\_\_\_\_

Plants left will be used to decorate the church.