

JANUARY 2023

ST JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH EPISTLE

A CONGREGATION
OF THE
EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN CHURCH
OF AMERICA

IN THIS ISSUE:

- A Letter from Pastor
- Worship Updates
- "All In" Pageant
- Apple a Day
- Mens Fellowship
- VBS Planning
- Upcoming YAFM Dates
- Guatemala Outreach
- Preschool 2022
- Poinsettias Rememberence
- In Our Prayers
- And more...



ST. JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

111 Peter Road, Southbury CT 06488

www.stjamesct.org

[@stjamesctlutheran](https://www.instagram.com/stjamesctlutheran)

203.264.6446

stjamesctlutheran@gmail.com

Our building is locked at all times for security; please call ahead.

Rev. Abigail Johnson, Pastor

(she/her/hers)

pastor@stjamesct.org

203-450-6454 (call or text)

CHURCH COUNCIL

Kathy Haddy	<i>President</i>
Linda Bedard	<i>Vice President</i>
Donna Peterson	<i>Secretary</i>
Jan Carnaroli	<i>Worship</i>
Liz Skinski	<i>Faith Formation</i>
Lucia Dressel	<i>Fellowship & Comm.</i>
Diane Mladjen	<i>Preschool</i>
Lynn Morrison	<i>Outreach & Evang.</i>
Tony Salvatore	<i>Finance & Properties</i>
Emilie Ulc	<i>Youth Rep.</i>
Rev. Abigail Johnson	<i>ex-officio</i>

CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

Genie Bisch	<i>Parish Admin. & Preschool Admin. Assistant</i>
Abigail Manville	<i>Media & Communications</i>
Leslie Broch	<i>Director, St. James Preschool</i>
Diane Peterson	<i>Organist</i>
Curt Haedke	<i>Financial Secretary</i>
Neil Johnson	<i>Treasurer</i>
Ellen Hubina	<i>Asst. Treasurer</i>

*Please contact the office **before** dropping by should you require assistance.
If you desire use of the office space, please schedule time **outside** the
Parish Administrator's working hours. Thank you!*

January 2023

Regular calendar updates on our website
<https://stjamesct.org/calendar/>

S M T W T F S



1	2	3 2:30pm Worship Planning 7pm YAFM	4	5	6 Forward Leadership Retreat @ Camp Calumet	7
8 4pm Youth Group	9	10 1pm Ladies' Fellowship	11 7:30pm Preschool Board	12 10:45am Worship @ The Lutheran Home	13	14 9:30am Men's Group 11:30am Rice Shelf
15	16 MLK Jr. Day 	17 1pm Evangelism 4pm Fellowship No Bible Study	18 No Fika w/ Pastor	19 7pm Finance & Properties	20	21
Epistle Contributions Pastor Abby visiting our outreach partner in Guatemala: Hope Academy for Girls						
22	23	24	25	26 7pm VBS Planning	27	28
29 11:30am Congregational Budget 2023 Meeting	30	31	<div data-bbox="484 950 1016 1104" data-label="Text"> <p>SAVE THE DATE! Sunday, January 29, 2023, 11:30 AM CONGREGATIONAL BUDGET MEETING</p> </div>			

WEEKLY EVENTS

S M T W T F S

9:00am Adult Forum	8:00pm AA	9-11am Parish Admin.	12:30pm Meditation Call	9-12pm Parish Admin.	2:30-5pm Parish Admin.	
10:15am Worship w/ Sunday School		11:00am Staff Meeting	1:30-3:30pm Fika w/ Pastor			
		6:00 PM Bible Study	8:00pm AA		Pastor Sabbath	Pastor Sabbath

OFFICE OF THE PASTOR



MEET PASTOR ABBY

Whether in celebration, grief, doubt, or curiosity of faith, she happy to meet with you at a time and place that suits you well.

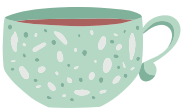
Observes Sabbath Fridays & Saturdays. Please call for pastoral emergencies.

FIKA with PASTOR

In Swedish, "fika" refers to the cherished daily practice of a coffee break and sweets with a friend.

**Wednesdays
1:30 - 3:30 PM
at Starbucks,
Southbury**

Anyone is welcome to come for a warm mug and warm chat!



FROM HER BOOKSHELF

**Wintering:
The Power of Rest
and Retreat in
Difficult Times
by Katherine May**

The transformative power of rest and retreat with lessons from literature, mythology, and the natural world.

REPORTS & NEWS

WORD & SACRAMENTS

From December

No baptisms, funerals, or weddings.

Monthly worship service for residents at The Lutheran Home.

PASTORAL CARE & COUNSEL

Jan. 6-7

Forward Leadership

Ongoing spiritual guidance & support for individuals, families, ministry teams, & community.

WIDER CHURCH & PUBLIC THEOLOGY

January 8th NE Synod EcoSpirituality group leader (on Zoom)

January 15 Interfaith MLK Jr Event

CONTINUING EDUCATION

January 16-23

Traveling to outreach partner, Hope Academy, Guatemala

A WORD FROM PASTOR



Dear Beloved Community,

The first snow. A rush of excitement hits me along with the cold air as I open the window to gaze at the crisp, white yard. It's the christening of a season that brings with it cozy comforts, family time, and adventures outside for me. Snowflakes usher in a restorative quieting that puts me back in sync with nature, my God, and myself.

But not all share this love affair for winter. For those who suffer from Seasonal Affective Disorder, winter is not a particularly welcomed season. This mood disorder is characterized by depression that sneaks in annually with the cold, no matter how quickly one shuts the window. Mental health became a popular topic of discussion during the pandemic, more than ever before. The emotional conditions with which we all lived - fear, anxiety, sadness, isolation - became a point of mutual empathy and affirmation of that which we all experience from time to time but rarely talk about. And yet, being made in God's image, we are beautifully layered and complex beings, worthy of good care in all our expressions of self.

In Matthew, Jesus instructs his followers, saying "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." Therefore friends, let us not be embarrassed, stigmatized, or conflicted about caring for our mind. Christ is concerned for your whole well-being, as all parts of us are known and loved by God. All parts of ourselves are valued in living for God and with God. In the same way we have brushing routines for our oral care, exercise routines for our physical, and certainly spiritual routines like church caring for our soul, let us also make space for those routines that care for our mental health. Perhaps caring for your mental health includes regular visits with a therapist (I love mine!), medications and treatments, daily practices and breathing exercises, some time alone or some time with people.

However you greet winter at the window, may you remember to take care of your mental health this season and always.

Peace, Pastor Abby Johnson and Thule

CHRISTMAS

Dec 25th - Jan 5th

Peace & Presence

In Christmas, we celebrate God's peace and presence; sharing in our life and embodied in Jesus.



Liturgical Color:
White

Season's Guest:
*A Christmas surprise...
Chickens from the Manville
Family Farm during our
Christmas Eve Children's
Message!*

EPIPHANY

Jan 6th - Feb 21st

Discover & Connect

Epiphany is the season of introductions and "ah ha" moments. As the Wise Men travel to see and know the Messiah, we treasure that God sees and knows us deeply. In this time, we seek to foster curiosity, connection & compassion.



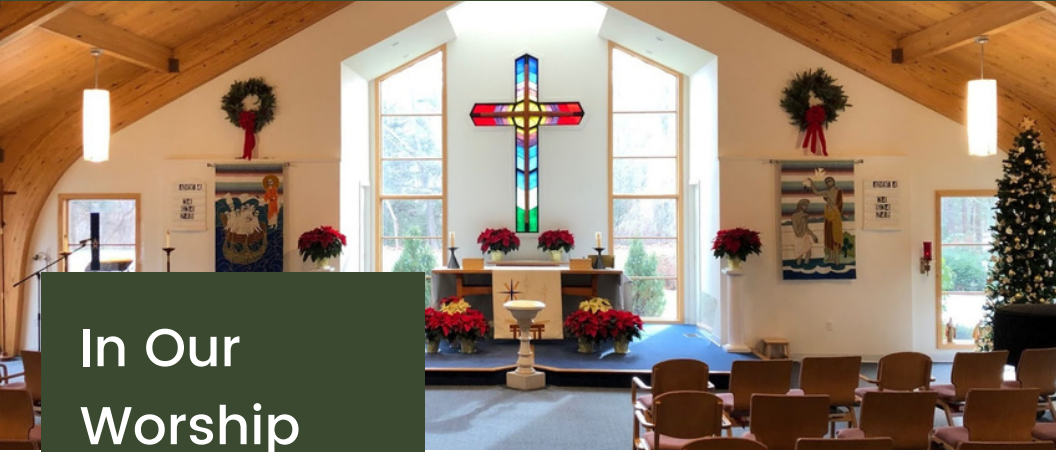
Liturgical Color:
Green

Season's Guest:
Rev. Linda Kraft - Jan. 22

Special Observances:
Feast of Epiphany, Jan. 6
Baptism of Our Lord, Jan. 8
Transfiguration, Feb. 19

WORSHIP & MUSIC

Join our planning meeting 1st Tuesdays @ 2:30PM



In Our Worship

THE GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together; may include confession & forgiveness, baptisms.

THE WORD

God speaks to us in scripture, song preaching, and prayer.

THE MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of the Jesus Christ at an open table for all.

THE SENDING

Now fed and refreshed, God blesses us and sends us out into the world to serve.

Earth Stewards

To save paper, we will begin returning bulletins to the baskets in the back of the sanctuary for reuse. Day inserts may be taken home.



Be Creative

Let us be peaceful, & playful, enriched by traditions & inspired by newness! What ideas for worship do you have? Join the planning team or share with Pastor.



The All-In Christmas Pageant

On Advent 4 Sunday, Dec. 18, **everyone** got to join in the fun and journey with the Holy family towards Christmas - dressed as angels, shepherds, wise people, and animals! A joyful service filled with childlike wonder and holy playfulness, followed by a cookie swap and decorating the sanctuary for Christmas. Thank you to ALL!



SERVING IN WORSHIP

LITURGY MEANS "THE WORK OF THE PEOPLE" IN GREEK

January 1st

Altar Guild: Judy Katzmark

Ushers:

Lector: Liz Skinski

Asst. Minister: Karen Lampiasi

Cantor: Karen Lampiasi

Counters: Steven Ulc, Catherine Ulc

Sunday School: No Sunday School

January 15th

Altar Guild: Lynn Morrison

Ushers: Judy Katzmark, Tony Salvatore

Lector: Linda Bedard

Asst. Minister: Jan Salvatore

Cantor: Lynn Morrison

Counters:

Sunday School: Chris Salvatore, Kathy Haddy

January 29th

Altar Guild: Paulette Calderone

Ushers: Jacque Matthew, John Dressel

Lector: Barbara Manville

Asst. Minister: Karen Lampiasi

Cantor: Curt Haedke

Counters:

Sunday School: Meghan Calasanto, Megan Buchanan

January 8th

Altar Guild: Paulette Calderone

Ushers: Jacque Matthew, Judy Lee

Lector: Lucia Dressel

Asst. Minister: Lynn Morrison

Cantor: Liz Skinski

Counters: Jacque Matthew, Neil Johnson

Sunday School: Kathia Hubina, Lauren Lyons

January 22nd

Preaching: Rev. Linda Kraft

Altar Guild: Priscilla Terhune

Ushers: Gary Kline, Jeff Nadasen

Lector: John Dressel

Asst. Minister: Mary Ewert

Cantor: Neil Johnson

Counters:

Sunday School: Liz Skinski, Linda Bedard

CONTACT:

Cantors: Diane Peterson

Assistant Ministers: Liz Skinski

Sunday School: Lauren Lyons

Ushers: Jacque Matthew

Altar Guild: Paulette Calderone

Lectors: Judy Katzmark

Counters: Curt Haedke

Coffee Hour: Lynn Morrison

An Apple A Day



Tripledemic

Just after two Covid winters, this season of flu, RSV(Respiratory Syncytial Virus) and Covid are setting up to be one of the worst on record and it started two months early. Hospitalizations of all three are rising. RSV appears to have peaked overwhelming pediatric care systems. About one in seventy babies under six months of age have been hospitalized since October. RSV hospitalizations in older adults have been the highest in the past three seasons. There is no vaccine yet for RSV, but experts predict one will be available soon.

Flu hospitalizations among the elderly are expected to rise in the next several weeks. The predominant type of flu circulating now is H3(Influenza A). So far this season there have been 150,000 hospitalizations and 9,300 deaths. The available vaccine for the flu this year is a good match.

Covid-19 is still here. There are about a half dozen versions of Omicron competing for dominance. BA.5, the dominant summer variant, is still causing half of the infections. BQ.1 and BQ1.1 are trying to outcompete B.5. Each variant appears to survive by evading the immune defenses and transmissibility is about 150 percent greater than the original alpha variant. Covid hospitalizations are rising. As the winter comes and activities move indoors cases have increased. This past week in CT, Covid rates increased by 7 percent. The latest Covid booster is a good match to protect against severe disease and hospitalization. Those people with immunocompromised systems for any cause have an increased risk of severe disease.

As with all viral diseases, wash hands, use hand sanitizer, wear a mask in gatherings, and avoid crowds. Stay home when you are sick. Consult your primary doctor for vaccine recommendations. Consult the CDC website for further guidelines for each virus.



Fellowship Team

Meets 3rd Tuesday @ 4PM via Zoom, See Barbara Manville

As we look forward to the New Year, we are inviting those interested, to join us on the Evangelism Team. Reach out to those around you, be part of the invitation to COME and SEE the GOODNESS of the LORD - at ST. JAMES!

Coffee Hour

Sundays @ 11:30am in Entrance Hall

Coffee Fellowship always needs some of your delicious, tasty treats to enjoy with our tea or coffee following Worship. Sign up, please, in the Gathering Room, to help out once in a while! Bob Morrison sets up the coffee - so just bring something to knosh on!! See Lynn Morrison, edgelake@aol.com or 203-426-7749!



Men's Fellowship Group

Meets 2nd Saturday @ 9:30am
in Fellowship Hall

Five brave ambitious souls showed up in 25 degree weather as men's fellowship members were recruited to help set up the nativity scene and adorn the front of our sanctuary with lights. Come join us in the new year as our new meeting time will change to 9:30 am the 2nd Saturday of the month.

Ladies' Fellowship Group

Meets 2nd Tuesday @ 1pm in Fellowship Hall

In December, Ladies' fellowship had a wonderful time at their tea conversing and enjoying scones, clotted cream, jam, tea sandwiches, and decadent desserts along with our tea (each person had their own pot and flavor).



Faith Formation

Adult Bible Study

Tuesdays @ 6:00 - 7:00 PM, on Zoom

A casual conversation on Sunday's assigned readings and time for prayer. Come as you are, no preparation needed.

Midweek Meditation

Wednesdays @ 12:30 PM, Phone call

Original 2-minute guided meditations recorded by Pastor Abby; subscribe on our website homepage or listen on the podcast

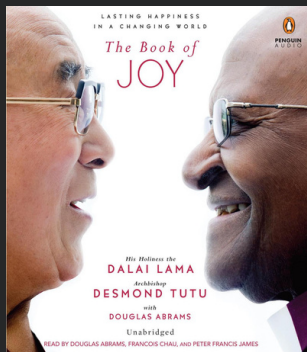
Adult Forum

Sundays @ 9:00 - 10:00 AM,
in the Prayer Chapel

Studies of books, scripture, or social issues
where faith and the world meet.

This Epiphany, Jan. 8 - Feb. 19

The Book of Joy by His Holiness Dalai Lama
& Archbishop Desmond TuTu



Podcast: A Steadfast Branch

A weekly podcast for all ages, listen for free online or on Spotify. Faith-formation offerings such as sermons, devotionals, kids chats, blessings, meditations, and interviews with the wider church community





FAITH FORMATION... FOR KIDS!

Youth & Family Ministry Team
1st Tuesdays, 7:00 PM

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sundays 10:30 AM
Grades PreK-5

Dismissed mid-worship for a brief lesson and activity - art, music, storytelling, games, and more - in the Fellowship Hall with rotating teachers.

CONFIRMATION

TBD
Grades 6-8

A deeper study in Lutheran tradition and Christian faith in affirmation of baptism.

If you're interested, see teacher Lynn Morrison to enroll.

YOUTH GROUP

2nd Sunday of the month
Rotating hosting church
Grades 6-12



January 8, 4:00 PM - Epiphany Party

This month hosted by Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Trumbull

ST JAMES YOUTH AND FAMILIES

yafm@stjamesct.org

A small but mighty group is working hard to continue youth and family programming this year. Thanks to all who are helping with teaching Sunday school during services.

Some upcoming events to get on your calendar include:

Feb 11th - Help stock the food bank and sledding (weather permitting!) Meet at the church at 11:15am

Feb 21st - Pancake Dinner at church, roughly 6:30pm

March 25th - Spring hike and pretzel making, hike location TBD

ALL are welcome to join!!!! If you have interest in helping with any of the YAFM programming please contact Lauren Lyons lyonsden1133@yahoo.com or Liz Skinski liz.skinski@earthlink.net



"Creating an environment where open minds and open hearts can see, hear, and feel the love of God."



It's not too early to start planning and organizing for VBS 2023! The initial meeting for this group will take place on Thursday, January 26, 2023 at 7:00 pm. It will be held at the church with a zoom option.

Please take the time to prayerfully consider whether you are available and willing to gather monthly with other members to begin the planning—identifying curriculum, revising and updating policies and procedures, recruiting volunteers, and gathering supplies for another fantastic week of VBS this summer.

If interested in learning more, please reach out to a Youth and Family Ministry Team member. You may also speak with Liz Skinski, Council Liaison, or leave a message with Genie in the church office.

Thank you.

OUTREACH MINISTRIES

God's work, our hands



THANK YOU ALL

Dorothy Day House: Blanket & Coat Drive

Many thanks for the generous outpouring of gently used coats, blankets, hats and mittens for all ages that were distributed to the less fortunate in greater Danbury. 8 very full bags were collected!

Southbury Needy Fund: Gift Exchange

Your amazing generosity supplied gifts for 9 different children from 4 different families in need! Thanks to all who participated in the amazing outpouring of love for those in need in the community and around the world. Small lights shine brightly in the darkness....

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Hope Academy, Guatemala: Vitamins & Funds

Pastor Abby is traveling to visit our outreach partner in January. She is collecting children's chewable vitamins to donate. You can also gift funds to their build project, a second story on the school as they expand into Grades 7-9!

Due Jan. 15

Don't forget the rice shelf!

The food bank often struggles during the cold winter months, please be sure to continue to provide donations of boxed rice so we can keep the shelf well stocked. Many thanks to those for signing up to help with getting our rice donations to the Southbury Food Bank (88 Main Street South, in the same complex as the Rathskeller Restaurant). Contact Lauren Lyons if you are able to help. You will drop the rice outside the food bank and their staff will stock the shelf. Mask required please.

Food Bank Stocking
Hours: 2nd Saturday of
month from 11:15-12:30
pm. Call (203)721-0377 to
make other
arrangements.

January – Jacques
February – YAFM
March –
April –
May –

**RECURRING
2ND
SATURDAY**

ST JAMES PRESCHOOL

203-264-6448

stjameslutheranpreschool@gmail.com

Leslie Broch, Director



The holiday season flew by in a flash but we had lots of fun incorporating learning and interesting materials into our days. The children enjoyed learning about holiday traditions in Germany (Danka, Frau Skinski!), Sweden (Tack, Pastor Abby!) and Hanukkah (Toda, Mrs. Broch), in addition to sharing about their Christmas traditions. As we come into January, we are SO excited for snow and ice exploration!



STORYTIME

WITH PASTOR ABBY

We will be learning about our fellow preschool friends at Hope Academy in Guatemala through story and art!

We'll create some special letters which Pastor Abby will deliver to our penpals this month.

ST JAMES PRESCHOOL

2022



“
GLORY TO GOD
IN THE
HIGHEST, AND
ON EARTH
PEACE, GOOD
WILL TOWARD
MEN.

LUKE 2:14

THE POINSETTIAS
WERE GIVEN TO THE
GLORY OF GOD BY
THE FOLLOWING:

The Bedard Family: *To the glory of God In memory of Robert and Catherine Bedard and Anna Rose Waak.*

The Bisch Family: *To the glory of God In memory of Tom and Naomi Griffin and all we have loved*

Paulette Calderone: *To the glory of God in memory of Paul Calderone.*

Judy Katzmark: *To the glory of God in memory of Paul Katzmark.*

Gary Kline: *To the glory of God in memory of Patricia & Gary S. Kline, Loretta Kline, and Robert Austin.*

Jeff & Barbara Manville: *To the glory of God in memory of Richard & Dorothy Manville.*

Jacque Matthew & Family: *To the glory of God in loving memory of Sonia Matthew.*

Lynn Beudean Morrison: *To the glory of God in memory of Rev. Jack Beudean; Alma Morrison.*

Donna Peterson: *To the glory of God in memory of Lou Pesce and in honor of Anne Peterson.*

The Siegles: *To the glory of God in honor of Julie Johnson.*

Liz & Tim Skinski: *To the glory of God in memory of Hilda and Joe Steigerwald.*

Priscilla Terhune: *To the glory of God in loving memory of David Terhune; Janet Behrendt; LaRayne Rogers.*

To the glory of God in memory of the Nickel, Knutson, O'Shaughnessy, Salvatore, Damiani, Pagliaro, and Meissner Families.

To the glory of God in memory of Karl & Susie Noffbe



Parish Support

Financial Team & Property Team meets together 3rd Thursday @ 7PM



Many thanks to Lynn and Bob Morrison for the lovely new benches outside. They make a wonderful place to sit and enjoy God's presence.

Financial Report

Your offering may be mailed to **111 Peter Road** and the mail is collected daily, or your donation may be made online on our website. As you are able, please continue to help us be the hands of Christ.

Saint James Lutheran Church 2022 Monthly Budget to Actual As Of December 14th, 2022						
Month	Operating Income			Mortgage Income		
	Budget	Actual	Diff	Budget	Actual	Diff
Jan	16,000.00	10,602.00	(5,398.00)	2,228.33	1,673.75	(554.58)
Feb	16,000.00	11,434.00	(4,566.00)	2,228.33	1,843.75	(384.58)
Mar	16,000.00	11,794.00	(4,206.00)	2,228.33	2,003.75	(224.58)
Apr	16,000.00	16,746.00	746.00	2,228.33	3,937.75	1,709.42
May	16,000.00	15,626.00	(374.00)	2,228.33	1,978.75	(249.58)
Jun	16,000.00	12,826.00	(3,174.00)	2,228.33	1,858.75	(369.58)
Jul	16,000.00	17,732.37	1,732.37	2,228.33	1,668.75	(559.58)
Aug	16,000.00	19,141.00	3,141.00	2,228.33	2,228.75	0.42
Sep	16,000.00	15,356.00	(644.00)	2,228.33	1,838.75	(389.58)
Oct	16,000.00	23,595.00	7,595.00	2,228.33	2,173.75	(54.58)
Nov	16,000.00	16,301.00	301.00	2,228.33	2,627.95	399.62
Dec	16,000.00	12,419.00	(3,581.00)	2,228.33	1,278.75	(949.58)
Total	\$ 192,000.00	\$ 183,572.37	\$ (8,427.63)	\$ 26,740.00	\$ 25,113.20	\$ (1,626.80)
Last Year Operating Income - January 1st, 2021 to Nov 30, 2021					\$ 185,974.82	
Last Year Mortgage Income - January 1st, 2021 to Nov 30, 2021					\$ 23,792.00	

Current Fund Amounts



\$21,138.03
Bell Tower



\$1,857.00
Organ



\$805.00
Organ & Music



\$0
Landscaping

In Our Prayers

Jordyn Neeb
Rich Neeb
Nicole Keller
Dennis Tino
Diana Larson

Brian Mons
Janet Benzell
Warren Family
Douglas Calderone
Paul Meberg

Caroline Kaiger
Becky Lilja
Mike Kolodziej
Jean Kolodziej
Ed Mueller

Please also keep Tim Peterson and all those who serve in the military, in your prayers.

We also give thanks for all the saints, especially Julie Johnson, Grace Warren, LaRayne Rogers, Eleanor Sydlo, Dennis Tino, Ezekiel Kelly, Joan Supp, and Judy Staskiewicz

Prayer List Updates:

The prayer list is edited by request and the full list was reset following All Saints Sunday. To add to the prayer list or request a name remain on the list, please see Pastor Abby or Liz Skinski.

Prayer alerts are sent via email by Pastor Abby; subscribe on our website. If you wish to receive alerts by phone call or text, please see Karen Lampiasi to be added to the list.

Please join us for Worship on Sunday mornings at 10:15 am for worship at 111 Peter Road, Southbury, CT. Masks are optional; we ask all to review CDC and CT guidelines to make appropriate choices for your household.