# ST JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH EPISTLE

A CONGREGATION
OF THE
EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN CHURCH
OF AMERICA

#### IN THIS ISSUE:

The Work of the Church

Council Updates

Holy Week Worship

**VBS: Operation Restoration** 

Lent on the Road THANK YOU

Preschool Fundraiser

Our Outreach Tree

Earth Day 2023

**Outreach Efforts** 

Stewardship Thoughts

In Our Prayers

And more...



### ST. JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

111 Peter Road, Southbury CT 06488

www.stjamesct.org

@stjamesctlutheran

203.264.6446

stjamesctlutheran@gmail.com

Rev. Abigail Lilja Johnson, Pastor

(she/her)

pastor@stjamesct.org

203-450-6454 (call or text)

#### Mission

We affirm and spread the Word of God in all areas of life. We focus on nurturing, serving and uplifting our members and local community by practicing love in action as exemplified by Jesus Christ through our preschool and other outreach services.



#### Vision

We believe we are saved by God's grace through faith alone, proclaiming our faith in the Holy Trinity. As church, we manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ, by joining in prayer and action. We worship together as a community through reading of the Word, celebration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness and service. We see our shared Christian faith as an integral part of our daily lives and use the gifts of the Spirit for our lives together and for our callings in the world.

#### **CHURCH STAFF**

Genie Bisch
Parish
Administrator

Abigail Manville

Media &

Communications

Leslie Broch

Director of
St. James Preschool

Please contact the office **before** dropping by should you require assistance.

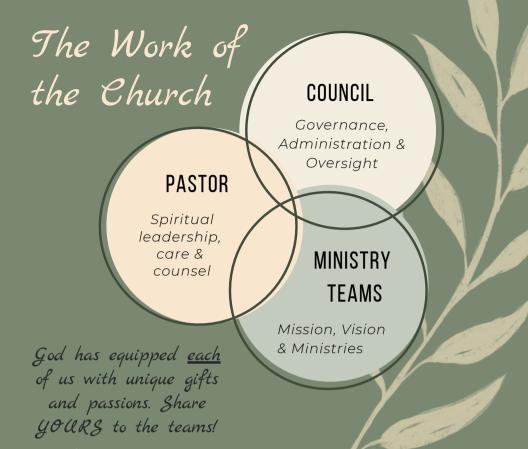
Building is locked at all times for security. Thank you!

$\mathop{Apr}_{\mathcal{S}}$	il 2023	T	Regula h W	r calendar up ttps://stjames T	dates on our ct.org/calend	r website dar/ S
* Rescheduled from regular time/date						1 VBS Volunteer Registration
2	3	4	5	7pm Maundy Thursday Worship	7 7pm Good Friday Worship	9am Guided Meditation 9:30am Men's Group 10:30am Spring 11:30am Rice Shelf
Palm Sunday				Maundy Thurs	Good Friday	Holy Saturday
7am Sunrise Worship 10:15am Traditional Service	10 Easter Monday	11 1pm Women's Group *2:30pm Worship & Music	7:30pm Preschool Board	13	14	15  Epistle Contributions
16	VBS Registration opens for Church families	18 1pm Evangelism 4pm Fellowship	19	20 7pm Finance & Property	21	9:30am Women of the ELCA Gathering
23	7pm VBS VBS Registration opens for past attendees	25	26 7pm Council	27	28	29
New 30				>	! М	

New
Members
Celebration
Service

Mark your calendar! Annual Congregational Meeting will be Sunday, June 4, 2023 after service.

WEEKLY EVENTS											
S	М	Т	W	Т	F	S					
9:00am Adult Forum 10:15am Worship w/ Sunday School	8:00pm AA	9am-12pm Parish Admin. 11:00am Staff Meeting 12:00pm	1:30-3:30pm Fika w/ Pastor 7:30pm Bible Study 8:00pm AA	9am-12pm Parish Admin.	2:30-5pm Parish Admin.						
		Meditation Call			Pastor Sabbath	Pastor Sabbath					



#### CHURCH MINISTRY TEAMS

All Members & Friends of St. James

#### Worship & Music

• includes Altar Guild, worship serving roles

#### **Faith Formation**

 includes Adult Education, Youth & Family Ministry, Gustafson Scholarship Fund

#### **Fellowship**

• includes Men's Group, Women's Group

#### Outreach

 includes St. James Preschool, Mission Endowment Fund for special gifts

#### **Evangelism**

includes James Ministry for care & hospitality

#### **Properties**

**Finance** 

### OFFICE OF THE PASTOR

# FIKA with PASTOR

Wednesdays 1:30 - 3:30 PM at Starbucks in Southbury

All are welcome to this daily Swedish tradition of a coffee break with friends



#### MEET PASTOR ABBY

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

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

#### REPORTS & NEWS

## WORD & SACRAMENTS

#### From March

No baptisms, funerals, or weddings; Lutheran Home worship service

Wilderness series in Lent, including the Lent on the Road worship

### FROM HER BOOKSHELF

This Day: Collected & New Sabbath Poems by Wendell Berry

For nearly 35 years, Berry has been writing Sunday morning poems while walking his farm; reflections on memory, family, animals, home, love, faith, and gratitude.



# PASTORAL CARE & COUNSEL

### **2nd Quarter Focus:** Invitation & Welcome

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

#### WIDER CHURCH & PUBLIC THEOLOGY

Artist for Mustard Seed Ministries, faith ed. materials for kids

"Backpacking as Spiritual Practice" article for NE Synod Green Team magazine

### CONTINUING EDUCATION

#### February - May

"Community Organizing for Climate Justice" online course, PLTS in CA

# CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL



The role of Council includes leading in mission, goals and priority; overseeing administration; involving members in all areas of church; responsible for financial and property matters of the church, including staffing, and general oversight of governance.

St. James' members are voted to Council at the June congregational meeting, and positions are decided by Council members annually. Members may serve up to 2 consecutive 3-year terms.

#### REPORTS & NEWS

#### **Administration Clean-Up**

Overhaul of internal organization, including budget management and communication strategies, reimbursement and rental forms, financial systems and processes

#### **Task Force Subgroups**

Over the last several months, multiple subgroups formed to focus on various topics, including

- Job Descriptions & personnel reviews
- Church Membership Roster
- Preschool support

#### Candidacv

St. James member Jennifer Beaudean-White, is beginning the candidacy process in the NE Synod to become a pastor in the ELCA! We celebrate, support and pray for her as God works in her continued discernment.

Council meets 4th Wed. of the month, 7:00-8:30pm



#### MEMBERS

#### Officers

- 1. Kathy Haddy, President
- 2. Linda Bedard, VP
- 3. Donna Peterson, Secretary
- 4. Neil Johnson, Treasurer
- 5. Ellen Hubina, Assistant Treasurer
- 6.Curt Haedke, Financial Secretary

#### Liaisons

- 1. Jan Carnaroli, Worship
- 2. Liz Skinski, Faith-Form.
- 3. Lucia Dressel, Fellowship
- 4. Diane Mladjen, Preschool
- 5. Lynn Morrison,

Evangelism & Outreach

6. Tony Salvatore,

**Properties** 

Emilie Ulc, Youth Rep.

Rev. Abigail Johnson

## **HOLY WEEK**

April 2 - April 9

#### Come to the Cross



04/02 Palm Sunday *Pageant* 10:15am



04/06 Maundy Thursday *Communion* 7:00pm



04/07 Good Friday *Tenebrae* 7:00pm



04/08 Holy Saturday *Meditation* 9:00am



04/09 Easter Sunday 7:00am outside & 10:15am Communion

# **EASTER**

April 9 - May 27

#### Restored & Fulfilled

Christ is risen - let's celebrate! Easter is the joyful spring season of rebirth and restoration. As Jesus is raised from the dead into new life, so are we - praising such great love that creates a fresh start. Christ's salvation is for all creation and God's desires for us all to live together in joyful harmony and wholeness with all the earth.

Liturgical Color: Gold/White

Season's Guest:

Special Observances: Resurrection of Our Lord April 9

# **WORSHIP & MUSIC**

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



"It was beautiful. It didn't feel like being a member of just one club, not just a Lutheran - I felt like a Christian, alongside all my fellow Christians."

- St. James member

On March 1, St. James hosted the first evening of this new series. As people of more than 6 congregations, we worshipped as one body, singing with one voice. Together, we created a beautiful prayer flag as we set off on the journey "into the wilderness," hung in each church following to bless the "base camp" space and literally tie us together.

#### Meditation

Explore connection to the Holy Spirit through mindfulness practices; offered via phone and podcast weekly. Guided meditation offering on Holy Saturday 9AM, led by Pastor Abby





#### Sunday Worship Outdoors

Resumes in spring: April-June, monthly July-August, weekly Sept.-Nov., monthly (all weather permitting)

# SERVING IN WORSHIP

LITURGY MEANS "THE WORK OF THE PEOPLE" IN GREEK

**April 2 Palm Sunday** 

Altar Guild: Judy Katzmark Ushers: Judy Katzmark & TBD Lector: Gary Kline & Lucia Dressel

**Asst. Minister:** Mary Ewert **Cantor:** Karen Lampiasi

**Counters:** Barbara Manville & Bob Morrison **Sunday School:** Meghan Colasanto, Emilie

Ulc

**April 7 Good Friday** 

Altar Guild: Ushers:

Lectors: Liz Skinski, Gary Klein, Donna

Peterson

Cantor: Judy Katzmark

Counters:

April 16

Altar Guild: Lynn Morrison

Ushers: Bob Morrison, John Dressel

Lector: Linda Bedard

Asst. Minister: Karen Lampiasi

Cantor: Lynn Morrison

Counters:

Sunday School: Megan Buchanan, Barbara

Manville

April 30

Altar Guild: Priscilla Terhune

**Ushers:** Jacque Matthew, Judy Katzmark

Lector: Meghan Colasanto Asst. Minister: Liz Skinski Cantor: Karen Lampiasi

Counters:

Sunday School: Lauren Lyons, Janis

Salvatore

**April 6 Maundy Thursday** 

Altar Guild: Ushers:

Lector: Diana Larson

Asst. Minister: Lynn Morrison

Cantor: Neil Johnson

Counters:

April 9 Easter

Altar Guild: Paulette Calderone Ushers: Jacque Matthew, Judy Lee

Lector: Lucia Dressel Asst. Minister: Liz Skinski Cantor: Lucia Dressel

**Counters:** 

**Sunday School: No SCS** 

April 23

Altar Guild: Judy Lee

Ushers: Gary Kline, Tony Salvatore

Lector: Curt Haedke

Asst. Minister: Lynn Morrison

Cantor: Curt Haedke

Counters:

Sunday School: Mike Lyons, Jan

Carnaroli



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





#### **Adult Forum**

Sundays @ 9:00 - 9:50 AM, in person

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

#### This Season of Easter...

The Reluctant Witness by Don Everts April 16 - May 21 (6 sessions)



#### **Midweek Meditation**

Tuesdays @ 12:00 PM, via phone call

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

#### **Bible Study**

Wednesdays @ 7:30 - 8:30 PM, on Zoom

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

#### **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!

#### SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sundays 10:30am Grades PreK-5

Dismissed midworship for a brief lesson and activity in art, music, storytelling, games, and more. Lead by 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 monthly 4:00pm @ rotating churches Grades 6-12

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. Our last SCS is planned for May 21st and Youth look forward to participating in the worship service for our annual picnic on June 11th

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.

Meetings are held every other month (Next May 2nd at 7:15pm).

#### **VBS PLANNING**

A planning group has met a few times to brainstorm and begin planning for vacation bible school 2023! VBS is currently being planned for July 17th-21st - if you couldn't make the meeting, but would like to be involved please let us know! It takes a village and we will need teachers, behind the scenes help, music, crafts, science, games, etc. Please tell us where you would best like your gifts to be used! You do not have to commit for all of VBS if part works better - just let us know. Contact Lauren Lyons 203-982-8415

lyonsden1133@yahoo.com or yafm@stjamesct.org. VBS planning meetings will be held at church the 4th Thursday of each month at 7pm - all are welcome!

Look for volunteer registration email to be coming out soon!!!



Fellowship

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

Save the Date! Annual Church Picnic! Sunday, June 11, 2023 at Ballantine Park Pavilion, 611 Old Field Rd., Southbury, after service.



#### Meals Ministry - James Ministries

If you have ever faced a difficult time, you know how comforting it is to receive a casserole, or a fruit bread, etc., from a friend. We have organized, and been in

"operation" now for over a year, with 12 team members on our Meals Ministry, and have delivered to 40+ folks at St. James. A time to reach out when there is a need - such as a new baby, a death in the family, serious illness, recuperation from surgery, shut-in, etc. If you would like to be part of this "caring ministry" email or call Lynn Morrison (edgelake@aolcom or 203-426-7749).

#### Women's Fellowship/ James Ministries Meets 2nd Tuesday @ 1pm in the small chapel

Women's Fellowship and James Ministry invite all interested to join the Naugatuck Valley Conference Women of the ELCA as we reconvene in Torrington as "Women of Hope". Our own Pastor Abby will be the guest speaker on her trip to Hope Academy and the offerings will benefit the girls there, both monetary and in kind gifts. Please see Judy Katzmark for registration information.

#### Evangelism Meets 3rd Tuesday @ 1pm in the small chapel

We are ALWAYS looking for folks who would like to join our Evangelism Team - this is a beautiful and wonderful opportunity to engage with others focused on spreading the Good News of Christ, and our only and true Salvation. We meet each month, 3rd Tuesday, 1 pm. Contact Lynn Morrison (203-426-7749, edgelake@aol.com) for an update of planned activities/events!





#### Our kids can be menders of the universe

But, you think, they're just kids! How can they be menders of the whole universe? At Operation Restoration, they will practice being universe menders, because that's exactly how God made all of us. Your kids have been given the power to feed, heal, forgive, pray, and rest—essential tools to help repair all that has gone wrong in the world. They'll learn more about their mending powers at Operation Restoration Vacation Bible School!

Place: Saint James Lutheran Church

Dates: July 17-21, 2023 Time: 9:15am- 12:15pm

All kids who have completed grades preK4 through 5th grade are invited to grow in faith as they play, learn, sing, and work to be menders of God's creation. Registration will open through the stjamesct.org website in the upcoming dates as follows:

April 1st - Open Registration for Volunteers

April 17 - Open registration to church families

April 24 - Open registration to past VBS attendees

May 1 - Open registration to preschool and general registration

July 1- Registration Closes



# ST JAMES PRESCHOOL

203-264-6448 stjameslutheranpreschool@gmail.com Leslie Broch, Director



The preschool is enjoying the change of seasons! We are looking forward to the first buds, new grass and t-shirt days! We are excited for all of the exploration and learning, both inside and out, as we embrace all that spring has to offer. One of our favorite recent activities was partner coloring mixing...with high fives!





### SAVE THE DATE! Ulla McGee Scholarship Fund

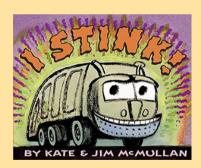
April 19th

Enjoy a delicious meal from a a local business while supporting the Ulla McGee Scholarship Fund!

Julio's Wood Fired Pizza & Grill Wednesday, April 19th

Please mention you are supporting the St. James Preschool Scholarship Fundraiser.

Thank you for supporting the community!



#### STORYTIME

WITH PASTOR ABBY

In honor of Earth Day...
"I Stink"
by Kate McMullan
illustrated by Jim
McMullan



This is an incredibly generous congregation with a lot of heart for outreach locally and globally. We are resurrecting a group to get together semi-annually to coordinate all the outreach efforts and ensure smooth communication as well as assist with ensuring financial disbursements are timely. We met in May and started putting some details into the outreach tree in our gathering area so all can be aware of upcoming outreach projects and who to contact. If you help with an outreach project but weren't able to attend, please get an update to Lauren Lyons so it can be included. 203-982-8415 lyonsden1133@yahoo.com. We plan to meet again this fall.

#### Coming Soon! Americares Homefront Day

Though it may not feel like it quite yet, spring is right around the corner and so is another year of Homefront Day. Stay tuned for more details. If interested contact Lauren Lyons, 203-982-8415 with questions.

#### Guatemala 2024

#### 2024 Mission Trip

St. James is traveling with "bold humility" to visit Hope Academy, our outreach partner in Guatemala next winter. If you are interested in participating and want more information, contact Jenifer Beaudean, jenny@foureyedfish.com

#### 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 the following families 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). There are a few open months – contact Lauren Lyons if you are able to help. You can opt to stock the shelf or they will stock it for you!

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

April – Cub Scout Bear Den Pack 162 May – St. J Men's Group June – Colasanto family July – August –



Dear St. James.

I'd like to share with you a very special part of our St. James history and heritage, our Outreach Tree.

According to Pastor Fred McGee, our former pastor of 30 yrs, it all began some 30 yrs. ago when long time members Jack and Karen Lauf first entered our driveway on Peter Road.

Jack was awe struck by the appearance of this very tall and stately Oak Tree at the top of our driveway, especially the enormous branch that extended some 75 feet out from it's trunk and hovered precariously just 8 feet from the ground as though God had sent an angel to provide support.

Jack was a multitalented individual. He was a very successful banker, real estate broker, musician, author, artist and poet to name just a few. I was blessed to have been one of his countless friends and I visited him often in the Village and later in Pomperaug Woods.

#### OUR OUTREACH TREE

When I first stepped on St. James' ground I paused, and as I looked around, There in all it's majesty Stood tall and strong, "THE OUTREACH TREE".

A sturdy trunk grew firm and high. A mighty branch though, caught my eye. How can that limb have so much strength That it won't snap at such a length?

When winter snows bend low the bough Will ladened limb just tumble now? And when Spring rains and winds abound Will outreach arm lay on the ground?

For many years I've watched it hold Through snow and ice and bitter cold, With wetted leaves, through storm and gale Still reaching out in sleet and hail.

Take the time, go there and ponder
The message of that tree out yonder.
I gaze in wonder year to year,
Was it God who dropped that acorn here?



Surely there will come a day
When outreach tree will rot away.
But if her message takes root here
We'll drop acorns, far and near.

Two of his greatest talents are on display in our gathering area, his poetry and his painting of our Outreach Tree. Twenty six years ago in 1997, Jack painted this most beautiful picture of that tree and branch. Eight years later, in 2005 he wrote the most eloquent and meaningful poem about that enormous branch and what it symbolizes. I encourage and invite you to witness his work during Coffee Hour. In January 2019 at age 93, Jack passed away and I honored him by displaying his painting and reading his poem at his celebration of life service.

So Jack, I hope you're listening and smiling down on us, because I have some good news to report! I recently gave those angels a must needed lift by installing a 10,000 LB. basement "Jack" under your branch.

My hopes and prayers are that 50 yrs. from now when we celebrate our 100th Anniversary, one of our children, grandchildren, or great-grandchildren. will be sharing the good news that our Outreach Branch and the Symbolism it stands for, are still alive and well.

Peace, Jacque Matthew



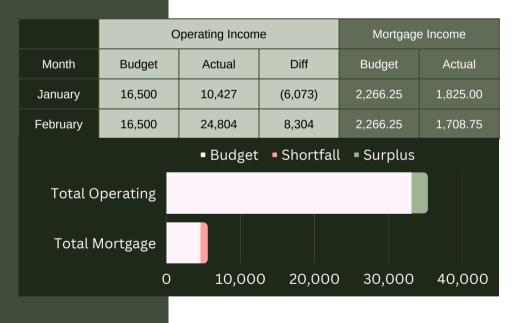
- \* Clean up some trash when you are out on your walk! Be sure to wear gloves and wash your hands immediately after coming
- \* Change your bulbs Replacing one regular light bulb with a compact florescent light bulb will save 150 pounds of carbon dioxide per year.
- \* Try your hand at compost. Non-meat and dairy food scraps decompose into wonderful soil when given time and a protected place. Coffee grounds are a wonderful addition.
- \* Recycle you can save 2400 pounds of carbon dioxide by recycling half of your household waste.
- \* Move your thermostat up 2 degrees in the summer and down 2 degrees in the winter can save 2000 pounds of carbon dioxide per year.
- \* Plant a tree each tree can absorb one ton of carbon dioxide over its lifetime.
- \* Turn off electronic devices when not using them.
- \* Purchase Lutheran World Relief or Equal Exchange Fair Trade Coffee. A portion of all coffee sales through the LWR Coffee Project supports LWR partners and projects overseas.

### Parish Support

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

Financial Report as of March 16, 2023 A steward is one to whom certain property is entrusted to be managed according to the will or direction of the owner. A faithful steward does not hide or bury the resources or fail to be trustworthy in conducting the master's business as was the case with the third servant in the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30). We have the responsibility to use the gifts given to us in a loving, gracious manner as we faithfully carry out our master's will. Because of our faithfulness, we will hear the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant" (verse 21).

In 1 Peter 4:10, we read that the Holy Spirit gives each of us different gifts that are to be used in service to others. "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace" (1 Peter 4:10). God wants each of us to be more than spectators. It is God's will that we understand and fulfill the tasks that He gives to each of us. With the gifts that God has entrusted to us, we function together as God's people and make the Body of Christ function for His glory. The good of all is enhanced when we make our contribution.



Current Fund Amounts







Music



### In Our Prayers

Jordyn Neeb
Rich Neeb
Nicole Keller
Brian Mons
Janet Benzell
Caroline Kaiger
Tim Peterson
Diana Larson

Paul Meberg
Ed Mueller
Alejandro Alvarado
John Raslear
Chris Salvatore
Douglas Calderone
Thomas Senerchia
Sonja White
Taylor Morrison

Fr. Leo
Kaitlyn Franco
Yvonne Bogue
Avery Lee
Clare Vanderwerdt
Emma Cavanagh
Olivia Cavanagh
Gary Cavanagh

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 Christine Granskog, Julie Johnson, Grace Warren, LaRayne Rogers, Eleanor Sydlo, Ezekiel Kelly, Joan Supp, Judy Staskiewicz, Steve Mattson, Andrew Gardner, Dennis Tino, Norma Jean Tino, Lucille Chayt, Lou Miller, Ed Bostrom, Renzo Phibbs and Becky Cavanagh

#### 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.