Acting Senior Pastor – Reverend Shannon Wall – revwall@nmchurch.org
Music Director – Sarah Fay – musicdirector@nmchurch.org
Manager of Church Operations – Nicole Henderson – nhenderson@nmchurch.org
Bell Choir Director – Sarah Albright – bells@nmchurch.org
Director of Christian Education– Becky Passero – cedirector@nmchurch.org
Moderator – Susan Chapin – moderator@nmchurch.org
Vice Moderator – Michael Curley – vicemoderator@nmchurch.org
Treasurer – Evelyn LeCates – treasurer@nmchurch.org
Recording Secretary – Evelyn Sandberg – secretary@nmchurch.org
Financial Secretary – Deborah Staib – financial@nmchurch.org
Room Manager – Mike Bensema – pr@nmchurch.org
Steeple Editor – Janet Wittmann – steeple@nmchurch.org

Office Hours: Monday to Thursday 9:00-12:00 Noon.
Office Phone: 860.354.8232  (Answering Service available 24/7)
Fax Line: 860.354.4327
E-mail: church@nmchurch.org
Web site: www.nmchurch.org
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<td>Healing Circle</td>
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<td>Fall Cleanup</td>
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<td>November 21</td>
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<td>November 25</td>
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<td>Remembrance Sunday / Friendship Sunday</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Gift Basket Sale</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Senior Youth Group</td>
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<td>December 2</td>
<td>Worship Service - Communion</td>
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<td>Advent Chili Luncheon</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Christmas Concert</td>
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<td>See page 16</td>
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Please join us in Fellowship Hall after the Sunday worship service. Have a cup of coffee or tea while you enjoy a snack and some friendly conversation!

Don’t forget that there will be freshly baked crumb cake on Communion Sundays!
Pastor’s Page

Since my dad was in the Foreign Service, I grew up moving every 2 years or so. By the time I graduated from high school I had attended eight different schools. So, I spent a lot of time being the “new kid.” I learned pretty quickly to assess a new place, culture, and dynamic. As the somewhat older “new kid,” I bring an opportunity for the church to see itself through the eyes of someone who might come in our doors for the first time—or perhaps even come into any church for the first time.

And what have I seen during my first month or so at The First Congregational Church of New Milford? I see a big, energetic church with lots of children and teens, thriving programs in Christian education and music, a heart for mission and social concerns, and many other small groups and ministries. I see people who genuinely enjoy being around each other, many active lay leaders, and a willingness to try new things to keep this church thriving and growing.

I sense, too, an undercurrent of nostalgia for when the church was even bigger, with more kids, and more resources to fund its ministries. For all of us who have watched all denominations lose members and dollars, it is natural to long for more prosperous times. But I have spent the last two years doing pulpit supply for dozens of churches in this area, and I can tell you firsthand that the leaders there would look at this church and admire what we have here—there is much good to celebrate!

My hope is that our time together will be one of building on the considerable strengths that you already have; perhaps letting go of things that once made sense but now no longer serve you; and planting some seeds that may flourish into new, vibrant ministries. And, since I take seriously Jesus’ commandment to “go, make disciples of all nations,” I hope that we welcome a good many new people into our midst—people who need the hope and home that we have here.

Yours in Christ,

Shannon

Pastoral Care

I am available for pastoral care or just conversation. If you or someone you know would like to talk with me in the office or have a hospital or home visit, please let me know and we will arrange a mutually agreeable time. I have had a few people come to talk with me and have begun some home visits with people who can’t get to church often. Contact me at revwall@nmchurch.org or 845-505-3003.
Deacon’s Bench

I cannot help but be impressed. There seems to be a common theme in this church - every time something needs to get done, the great people that make up our congregation step up to the plate and use the wisdom that God gave them to handle every situation!

Great things are happening in our church. We are hearing the powerful messages of God from our Acting Senior Pastor, Shannon Wall. Our Christian Education Group has started the new season with so much enthusiasm. We are seeing more new faces in church than we have in a long time. The “Raise the Roof” work is nearing commencement. And so many other committees that do God's work with such passion!

Psalm 32:8  “I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with my eye.”

For the Board of Deacons,
Ed Falcone

Prayers

Anyone wishing to submit a prayer request during the week, or to alert the pastor to a need or a member you have not seen in church for a while is asked to call the church office at 860-354-8232. We have an answering service, so you can call at your convenience, anytime day or night.

Saturday, November 3rd

Veterans’ Day, November 11th
Confirmation Class

On October 14th the congregation was introduced to the 2018-19 Confirmation Class: Samantha Baranowski, Elizabeth Berry, Gretchen Davis, Ruby Hangac, Emma Losito, Jake Losito, and Abbey Sarich.

Confirmation will be co-taught by Christian Education Director Becky Passero, Retired Rev. Dr. Patricia Nicholas, and Deacon Joan Vill, along with noted guest teachers. The class and their sponsors will meet from November 2018 through April 2019, on the second Sunday each month, from 8:00-9:15am in Parish House Room 3. (Breakfast will be provided.)

The class will also take field trips to the local mosque in Danbury, Temple Sholom here in New Milford, and The Cloisters in New York City. Four community service projects will also be required. Following is the list of topics to be covered each class.

- **November 11, 2018**
  - Basic Bible - Old and New Testaments

- **December 9, 2018 (Ross Detwiler)**
  - History - Local and United Church of Christ

- **January 13, 2019**
  - The liturgy, worship and sacraments

- **February 10, 2019 (Peggy King)**
  - Christian life: Morality (familiarity with the Ten Commandments)
  - Applications of the Ten Commandments across every area of contemporary life.

- **March 10, 2019**
  - Life of Jesus - Advent and Lent

- **April 14, 2019 (Christine Costable)**
  - Christian life: Prayer
  - Discuss and try out different ways to pray, look at biblical teachings on prayer, and discuss the importance of setting aside time to actually pray. What is “mindful meditation” and how can it help with prayer.

The Confirmation Service and Luncheon is tentatively scheduled for Sunday, May 5, 2019.

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**Church Lady Bakers**

It just wouldn’t be Thanksgiving without apple pie! Order yours before November 10, for pickup on the Sunday before Turkey Day (November 18). For just $15, you will get a frozen, made-from-scratch pie, ready to bake at your convenience. Contact Jan Wittmann at 860-355-1634 or steeple@nmchurch.org. All proceeds benefit the General Fund.
In Loving Memory:

Catherine Clarke Morey August 28, 2018

Friendship Sunday

On Sunday, November 25, we will have a celebration of friendship during our 10 am worship service. The theme of the service and the sermon will be friendship, and the whole morning will be “new people” friendly, with hymns that are familiar. If you have friends who are looking for a faith community or have said, “Maybe I’ll come to church with you one day,” this would be a great Sunday to invite them. Or perhaps you have special church friends—why not call them and make sure that they are at church that day so that you can sit together? Friends are such a blessing—let’s celebrate one another!

Healing Circle

Healing Circle will be held the second Friday of every month. The next meeting will be on November 9 in the Auditorium of the Parish House. This healing circle is free of charge, and open to all.

The Chapel Stitchers

The Chapel Stitchers prayer shawl ministry will meet on our regular second Sunday of the month, November 11th. Join us for a time of faith and fellowship as we stitch and share. We will meet in the Taylor Room following coffee hour. Beginner and advanced stitchers are welcome to join us. If anyone is in need of a shawl for healing, celebration, or caring, please see Leslie Schlemmer or call the church office.
Being a Christian is like being a pumpkin!

God picks you from the patch and brings you in.

(John 15:16)

Then He washes all the dirt off of you.

(2 Corinthians 5:17)

He opens you up and scoops out all the yucky stuff. He removes the seeds of doubt, hate, and greed.

(Romans 6:6)

Then He carves you a new smiling face.

(Psalm 71:23)

And He puts His light inside you to shine for all the world to see.

(Matthew 5:16)
**Investment Committee**

The Investment Committee is proceeding with realigning the church’s investments. The new “Total Return” strategy replaces the income-centered strategy employed in recent years. This change is in the best long-term interest of the church in that it positions the portfolio to grow over time. This will maintain the purchasing power of the funds while providing income and growth for the church to use on an annual basis.

This change can only be successful if the church lives within its means. In the past, more money was needed from investment funds each year than was earned in income and growth, thereby reducing the principal significantly. With careful spending this year, the church has reduced its average monthly draw from invested funds. Although the church draws exceeded the income generated by the investments for the first seven months of 2018, no money has been withdrawn since August.

Most of the money to fund the annual operating budget **must** be met by member pledges. As you consider your pledge for next year, carefully think about the value that the church provides for you and your family week in and week out. It is the money received from pledges that makes the work of our church possible.

If we are able to increase our level of pledged giving, the church can provide the services you expect, and the church endowment funds can continue to grow and provide incremental funding far into the future.

Dave Elmore, Chair

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**Offerings / Pledges**

For those of you who checked off on your pledge form that you wanted envelopes, they are in the back of the Sanctuary. In addition, annual contribution statements have been mailed. If you have any questions regarding your General Fund giving, feel free to email Deb Staib, Financial Secretary financial@nmchurch.org; for Raise the Roof contribution questions, please contact Evelyn LeCates treasurer@nmchurch.org
Men’s Breakfast

Saturday, **November 17** – start this fall morning with a hearty meal! We’ll begin cooking at 7:45 if you’d like to pitch in, then be ready to eat at 8:30. Bring a friend if you’d like, and potluck contributions are always welcome. Please contact Dan Martin for more information, or to be added to the email reminder list.  daniel.k.martin@gmail.com

This month, we will head outside for Fall Cleanup Day after we’ve eaten our fill. Enjoy the companionship at breakfast, then pitch in with rakes and leaf blowers.

It’s Time for a Fall Cleanup!

Many hands make light – quick! – work. Fall clean-up is scheduled for November 17 from 9am – Noon. Please consider volunteering that morning. See Trustee Cary Westfall, with any questions.

Sunday Bulletins

You may have noticed some changes to the Sunday worship bulletin. Other than adding a children’s message, which will be once a month or so, we have not made changes to the order of worship per se. The changes are generally to describe more completely what we are already doing for the benefit of new people who are coming through the doors. Some may have been to other churches, and others may be entirely new to church. Things that we take for granted, like the words to the Lord’s Prayer, are helpful. We will also be making some large-print bulletins available for those who need them.

Articles are due to Nicole Henderson nhenderson@nmchurch.org by Tuesday for the weekly Parish Notes.
Join us for our
Christmas Portrait Fundraiser

Saturday November 3, 9 a.m. to 11:30
Wednesday November 7, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Saturday November 10, 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

$25 per 10 minute session, includes one high resolution digital image and print release suitable for Christmas cards.
Up to 3 poses per session
Prints are available for purchase.
Well behaved pets are welcome.

Call the church office to reserve your time slot.
First Congregational Church of New Milford
36 Main St.
New Milford, CT 06776
860-354-8232
Email Mike at pr@nmchurch.org with questions
Social Concerns and Missions Committee

In September and October we had two focus areas:

- **Walk A Mile For A Meal**
  - This benefited the New Milford Food Bank
  - Our church has always participated in this event, and really stepped up this year!
  - This year, the event ended at our Parish House - which was a great way to "shake hands" with the community!
  - We had lots of walkers, and our wonderful church bakers provided a massive amount of delicious home baked cookies for the participants.
  - The wide participation of our membership was fantastic, and we showcased our church in a very positive light!

- **Emergency Hygiene Kits**
  - Our congregation has always been responsive to the needs of others. This year, we participated in the Church World Service Hygiene Kit program. This program provides personal cleaning kits for disaster areas around the world.
  - We asked members to shop for, and assemble kits from a list provided by CWS. The response was very good, and we provided 86 Kits!

In November, we will be working on the Easley Turkey program. Our church works with St. Johns to enable this program that provides meals on Thanksgiving. We will ask members to provide turkeys that we will clean and bring to St. Johns on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving. We will be looking for donations, and volunteers to clean turkeys, help set up at St. Johns, and to help drive meals on Thanksgiving morning.

Dan Martin, Chair
**Whiffenpoofs Concert**

Every year, a group of rising Yale seniors are selected to be in the Whiffenpoofs, the world's oldest and best-known collegiate a cappella group. Founded in 1909, the "Whiffs" began as a senior quartet that met for weekly concerts. Today, the group has become one of Yale's most celebrated traditions.

The Roger Sherman Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution presents the famed Yale Whiffenpoofs in concert, to benefit our Raise the Roof Campaign. The group will perform in the sanctuary on **Friday, November 2, 2018** at 7:00pm. Tickets may be purchased at [https://wiffs.eventbrite.com](https://wiffs.eventbrite.com) ($35 / $55 VIP / $10 student) Contact Stephanie with any questions 860-372-8389.

**Food Pantry**

Non-perishable foods are gratefully accepted, but cleaning supplies are also needed. Government subsidies do not cover the purchase of laundry detergent or basic home cleaning products. Also appreciated are personal care items. If you travel, and do not use the little bars of soap and bottles of shampoo provided by hotels, please take and donate them! You may leave donations in the hutch by the side entrance to the sanctuary, and they will be brought to the New Milford Social Services office for distribution to those in need. The first Sunday of each month is Food Pantry Sunday - there are envelopes tucked into the bulletins for monetary contributions as well.
Baby Bundles

Baby Bundles is a program which each month provides diapers to families in need in New Milford. Our church supports this mission through the collection of money and diapers on the 2nd Sunday each month. Please consider bringing packages of diapers and/or baby wipes to the church for collection, or make a monetary donation using the envelope provided in the bulletin. If you have any questions please contact Jan McCarthy, Baby Bundles Chairperson, at j.mccarthy101@sbcglobal.net. Help is needed to supervise the double doors in the Parish House from 4:30 - 5:30 PM on Baby Bundles distribution Wednesdays. If you have the time to volunteer, please contact Jan McCarthy or call Nicole Henderson at the Church office. Thank you!

Remembrance Sunday, November 25

Book of Remembrance: Memorials given to the Book of Remembrance by our church family and friends will be dedicated in memory of those dearest to their hearts. Contributions are put into a special fund and are used to enhance the beauty of the church and its spiritual ministry. Donations may be sent in any time of the year to the church office, in care of the Book of Remembrance. Those gifts received later than November 4 will be dedicated next May. The list will be posted on the bulletin board by the side door entrance of the church on November 11 and 18, for review.

A Russell Ayre Scholarship: With your generous support we are able to offer financial assistance to deserving college students. Donations of any size may be sent in any time of the year to the church office, in care of the Scholarship Committee. Please indicate who your gift is in memory/honor of, as well as to whom an acknowledgement should be sent. Those gifts received later than November 4 will be dedicated next May. The list will be posted on the bulletin board at the side door entrance on November 11 and 18 for review.

Donation forms are on the following page.
Please note: The A. Russell Ayre Scholarship and the Book of Remembrance are two separate checking accounts. Please make check payable to: The First Congregational Church, and in the memo write either Book of Remembrance OR A. Russell Ayre Scholarship.

Book of Remembrance Committee

Donor(s): ____________________________________________________________

Address: _____________________________________________________________

In Memory of: _________________________________________________________

Amount Enclosed: _____________________________________________________

Send Acknowledgement to: _____________________________________________

Address: _____________________________________________________________

A. Russell Ayre Scholarship Committee

Donor(s): ____________________________________________________________

Address: _____________________________________________________________

In Memory of: _________________________________________________________

or

In Honor of: __________________________________________________________

Amount Enclosed: _____________________________________________________

Send Acknowledgement to: _____________________________________________

Address: _____________________________________________________________
Gift baskets - a themed group of goodies, decoratively presented in a nice basket – what’s not to like? They are fun to receive, and also fun to prepare. They are the perfect solution for that difficult-to-buy-for person on your list, and baskets make wonderful host/hostess gifts.

For our next event, we are requesting everyone’s participation in donating items for our fundraiser. Even if you’re unable to complete a basket, please donate small gift items – we will combine them with others of a similar theme to create a bountiful basket.

For more ideas and information, please see Barbara McGiver or email her at barbaramcgiver@yahoo.com. The sale will take place from November 11th through December 16th, in the Chapel.

**The Steeple**

We hope that everyone enjoys the convenience of having our newsletter available online. This saves hundreds of dollars in the church budget, as well as helping our environment by using less paper, ink and other precious resources. Hard copies will be available in the back of the Sanctuary, side entrance of church and in the Parish House hallway. Please contact Nicole Henderson at the church office if you need to make different arrangements.

Deadline for submissions to be included in the Winter (December/January) issue is Monday, November 19. Please send articles and news to Jan Wittmann (steeple@nmchurch.org).

**Constant Contact**

The Board of Deacons publishes an e-mail newsletter periodically to the congregation. The First Congregational Church of New Milford Happenings tries to highlight upcoming events and dates within the church. It does not replace the content of The Steeple sent to you via the U.S. Postal Service. If you currently do not currently receive this via e-mail and would like to, please e-mail fccnm10@gmail.com to be added to the mailing list, or call the church office with your updated e-mail address. Thank you.
Music Committee

The annual Christmas Concert will be Sunday, December 9 at 4pm. Make your plans now because that’s just a bit more than a month away. Sarah Fay and Sarah Albright have put together a splendid concert this year with some new music, new arrangements of Christmas favorites, and traditional anthems. The concert will feature our Christmas Choir and Village Ringers Bell Choir.

The Christmas Choir is welcoming back Dan Martin, Sara Strait and Jeff Gammons. The choir has added extra rehearsal time to prepare for this outstanding show. So, please make it a date and invite your friends. The Christmas Concert is one way our church gives back to the community. Spread the joy by bringing some new people to enjoy our wonderful holiday tradition.

The bell choir played its first Sunday service of the year on October 14. It will play again on Nov 25 and then again for the Christmas Concert in December.

The Senior Choir welcomed a new member in October. Anne Olson, who has sung for many years with the Christmas Choir, has joined the alto section. It is wonderful that Anne is now singing with us every Sunday.

Dave Elmore, Chair

Emergency Shelters

A reminder from CERT, New Milford’s Community Emergency Response Team: During a widespread power failure or other town emergency, would you know how to find out if an emergency shelter is open and where it is? It’s easy – just call 2-1-1. The shelter will provide meals and a safe place to sleep, but there are some things you should bring with you. You will need emergency contact and medical information, a blanket and pillow, clothes for a couple of days, personal hygiene items, medications and some food items if you have dietary restrictions. Make sure you bring medical necessities such as glasses, walkers, hearing aids, etc. And don’t forget to pack something to occupy your time, like reading materials, cell phones, games or crafts. It’s always good to have a packed bag ready to grab and go in any emergency but especially now as we head into winter weather. Be prepared – stay safe!
Thank you!

- Thanks to Peter Richardson, Bill Jackson, and John Wittmann for helping with some fall projects in the Parish House
- Thank you to Dawn Kraft for continued help in the church office on Thursday mornings.

Planned Giving

That’s the name that has come to be associated with gifts to your church or other charity that happen after your lifetime. Simply put, you plan now, for a gift that will occur later. In our church, we recognize those who have declared they have arranged for a planned gift by receiving them as members of the Deacon Roger Sherman Society. (We also give special recognition to our Sunday School Teachers, our Deacons, the people who help collate and mail the Steeple, and so on.)

There are many ways to make a planned gift, and depending on your unique circumstances, some methods are better for you and for the church than others. Contact the Church Office for more details.

The simplest and most direct way to make a planned gift is to include the church as a beneficiary on your life insurance policy. Your insurance agent can guide you on the specific forms and options available from your insurance company. Just tell them you want to add a beneficiary; the agent will take it from there.

When you have arranged your planned gift, be sure to let one of our Pastors know – no details, just that you made arrangements – so we can appropriately recognize your generosity. For your convenience, you may use the form below.

THE DEACON ROGER SHERMAN SOCIETY

A gift to First Congregational Church of New Milford is in my (our) estate plans.

☐ Yes! Please count me (us) as a Member of The Deacon Roger Sherman Society.

Please Print Name(s) as you would like them to appear on recognition documents
Thank you for donating to The New Milford Food Bank. We hope you will help us with our effort to stock our shelves with healthier food options.

### LOW SODIUM
- Less than 140 mg for Veggies
- Less than 200 mg for Beans
- Less than 480 mg for Soups/Broths

### LOW SUGAR
- No added sugar or syrup to canned fruits & vegetables
- Less than 6g for Cereal

### LOW FAT

### WHOLE GRAIN

### NATURAL
- Gluten-Free
- Organic
- No Hydrogenated Oils

Please consider before buying:

See below for complete List of Needed Items

### Accepting Donations of New or Gently-Used Reusable Shopping Bags

Thank you for donating to The New Milford Food Bank. We hope you will help us with our effort to stock our shelves with healthier food options.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Canned Fruit in Natural Juice</th>
<th>Macaroni &amp; Cheese</th>
<th>100% Fruit or Vegetable Juice (bottle or lunch box size)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Canned Soups/ Broth</td>
<td>Seasoned Rice/Pasta (i.e. Rice-Roni/ Near East)</td>
<td>Shelf Milk 1%-2% Fat</td>
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<td>Canned Vegetables</td>
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<td>Canned Beans</td>
<td>Natural Peanut Butter or Other Nut or Seed (Sun) Butter</td>
<td>Hot Chocolate</td>
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<td>Bagged Beans</td>
<td>Fruit Spread/Jelly/Jam</td>
<td>Water</td>
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<td>Canned Meals (Ravioli/ Stews/ Chili)</td>
<td>Cereal and Oatmeal</td>
<td>Desserts/ Bread Mixes</td>
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<td>Lentils or Barley</td>
<td>Pancake Mix/Syrup</td>
<td>Baby Food/ Formula</td>
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<td>Quinoa</td>
<td>Condiments [Mustard, Ketchup, etc.]</td>
<td>(Limited space for:</td>
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<td>White or Brown Rice</td>
<td>Baking Ingredients [i.e. Flour...]</td>
<td>Eggs/ Milk/ Butter/ Fresh Fruit/ Vegetables)</td>
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<td>Wild Rice</td>
<td>Salad Dressing</td>
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<td>Pasta</td>
<td>Spices/ Herbs/Oils</td>
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<td>Jar Sauce</td>
<td>Granola Bars</td>
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<td>Diced Tomatoes</td>
<td>Crackers</td>
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<td>Canned Tuna, Salmon, or Chicken</td>
<td>Baked Chips/Gold Fish</td>
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<td>Dried Fruit [i.e. apples...raisins]</td>
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Sunday, December 2, 2018
Annual Advent Chili Luncheon and Workshop Fellowship Hall.
Bring a container of chili to share.
Grilled cheese and Mac & cheese too!
Crafts, food and fellowship for ALL!

Annual Christmas Pageant

Sunday, December 16th during the 10am service

Don’t miss this special service when our church school presents a unique point of view of the traditional nativity story!
Important Dates for Church School and Youth Group:

November 6th — Santa Fund Shopping Grades 5th-12th
Danbury Fair Mall 10am-1pm
Wrapping at the church till 2pm!
Bring Friends!!!

November 17th — Fall Clean-up 9am (*Service Project Opportunity*)
8:30am Breakfast in Fellowship Hall

November 25th — Senior Youth Group Meeting
5-7pm Fellowship Hall — Dinner provided

December 2nd — All Church Advent Workshop and Chili Luncheon
Fellowship Hall 11am — Bring a container of chili to share in our big pot o’ chili!

December 15th — Pageant Rehearsal with light brunch 8:30am
Fellowship Hall/Sanctuary

December 16th — 10am Pageant Sunday and
11am Brunch

December 30th — Special All Ages Class in the Taylor Room