

THE BELFRY CHIMES

Sundays in May

May 5, 10:00 a.m.
Music Appreciation

May 12, 10:00 a.m.
Mother's Day Service
Followed by
Congregational Meeting

May 19
God's Work~Our Hands
9:45 a.m.

May 26, 10:00 a.m.
Memorial Day Service

*"For where two or three
are gathered in my name, I
am there among them."*

Matthew 18:20

Year Three: God's Work ~ Our Hands May 19, 2024 9:45 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

"You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give."

Kahlil Gibran, Lebanese-American writer, poet and visual artist 1883 - 1931.

Sunday, May 19, 2024 marks the third God's Work ~ Our Hands event when we have the opportunity to give of ourselves. It is a day when our regular worship service springs into action and is replaced by our service to others.

Sponsored by the Missions Board, this is an intergenerational opportunity for everyone in the congregation to share their gifts, talents and smiles with others in the community. All are welcome to choose an area to assist, and if you are not sure how you can help, reach out to a Missions Board member as there are many roles to fill. Even if you are not able to remain for the entire event, no amount of time is too little.

Details about the various activities and how to sign up can be found on page 2 of The Belfry Chimes. The five areas of God's Work ~ Our Hands for this year are listed below.

- Yard Work or Simple "Handyman" Repairs
- A Sing-Along at Portland Care and Rehabilitation Center
- Sewing dresses for "Dress A Girl"
- Flower Arrangements and Delivery
- Kitchen Crew and Servers

**Whatever your abilities or age may be – there is a place for you!
Join us as we come together to BE the "hands" of God.**

"The favor of the Lord our God rest on us; establish the work of our hands for us— yes, establish the work of our hands."

Psalm 90:17

God's Work ~ Our Hands Returns for Year Three



The 2023 First Congregational Church of Portland's God's Work ~ Our Hands crew.

The 2024 God's Work ~ Our Hands will be held on Sunday, May 19 when all those participating will gather at the church at 9:45 a.m. for a blessing and a photo, before departing for the various assignments and returning to the church by 1:00 p.m. The Missions Board thanks you in advance for your ongoing support in work and role within the community.

- ◆ Those doing *Yard Work or Simple "Handyman" Repairs* will go to their assigned locations to assist homeowners in the community.
- ◆ The *Singers* will head to Portland Care and Rehabilitation Center to share their love of music with others.
- ◆ Those who love to sew will turn pre-cut patterns into beautiful dresses to once again support "*Dress A Girl*" which embraces the motto that "every girl deserves at least one new dress in her life."
- ◆ *Flower Arrangements* (and deliveries) will be created to bring a "little sunshine" to those in our congregation who may be homebound or need to know that we are thinking of them.
- ◆ And finally, the Kitchen Crew and Servers will remain at the church to prepare food, set a few tables, and serve lunch to the volunteers after a couple of hours of work.

You may sign up for this service opportunity in Fellowship Hall or by contacting one of our Missions Board members: Anita Carpene, Beth Gould-Ruitto, Sally Irons, Cari Klick, Sandie Lavoy, Jan Poet, or Cathy Probolus. T-shirts are available to those who sign up and don't have a T-shirt from past years of participation in *God's Work ~ Our Hands*.

Remember: God's Work is in Our Hands!

A Message from Pastor Barry McCarthy

Friends in Christ,

Christianity offers the potential to participate in the ushering in of God's realm and to be a part of the transformation of the world order. That transformation of individuals is accomplished in part through their gathering into groups of believers drawn to Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit. However, for the transformation of this world to occur, we are allowed to be radically enveloped by a way of life that seeks justice, peace, and care for every participant in the human condition. To that end, our individual and collective gifts are necessary in promoting God's Kingdom.

In her wonderful book *Community That Is Christian*, Julie Gorman writes:

By calling them into community, Jesus gave the disciples an opportunity to remold old habit patterns and establish new ones. He constructed for them a model they could remember, recognizing that their life together with him would be the basis for their witness when he was gone . . . The gospel was lived, modeled, and proclaimed in a community context.

This month, we will see that community on display in our congregation in many ways. On May 5, we will celebrate musical gifts on Music Appreciation Sunday. On May 12, we will recognize the work of mothers. On May 19, we will leave the sanctuary and head out into the town for *God's Work Our Hands*. And on Memorial Day weekend, we will recognize those who sacrificed their lives for the freedom of their neighbors. All of these, and more, display our "living, modeling, and proclaiming" of God's love within and beyond the church doors.

May God continue to bless this "community that is Christian."

In Christ,



Greetings from Your Pastoral Search Committee

Greetings from your Search Committee. With the church profile now active, the committee is happy to share that applications have begun to come in. As applications are received, the committee will review all candidates for credentials and begin conducting interviews as part of the selection process. If you wish to view the profile it can be found at <http://oppsearch.ucc.org/id/6087> or you may request a copy from a committee member. We appreciate your prayers and the faith you have put in us.

Search Committee Members: Elaine Law and Beth Gould-Ruitto, co-chairs; Mary Clark, Beau Doherty, Jeffrey Fraulino, Cari Klick, Michael Klick, Rob Lentz, Kristin Medvecky, Karen Rettich and Louise Wright

THANK YOU ... THANK YOU ... THANK YOU

A message from Dave, Amy, William, Aiden and Nathan Jahnke

The Jahnke family would like to once again express our deepest gratitude to our church family for all your support over the last year. Whether it be participating in fundraisers, cards, care packages, prayers, texts, or most recently a sweet gift from deacons after the sudden loss of our beloved dog, Brady, you continue to lift us up and surround us in love during such a difficult time. We are so thankful to have you in our lives.

May the Lord grant you many blessings for all the good that you do!

A message from Jeannette Hodge:

Thank you to our church family for the many expressions of condolences following the death of my brother Kemp Winfree. When I left for a long weekend trip to West Virginia, I expected I would be helping Kemp get settled at home following his anticipated discharge from the hospital, but that was not to be. When I returned home 12 days later, it was with a broken heart and a lifetime of wonderful memories. I am ever so grateful for the many kind words and messages of condolence. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

A message from Nancy Johnson:

I would like to thank the many people who volunteered their help to make the SNE Women's Spring Gathering on April 27 such a wonderful celebration. The women from the conference who planned the day were so appreciative of our hosting the event and continue to praise our church for the wonderful hospitality that we offered. We are indeed blessed.

I also wanted to share that during the worship portion of the day, a ceremony took place in which each church that attended could honor up to two women from their congregation who have contributed much to the life of their church. Phyllis Clark and Linda Cunningham were honored from our church for their dedication and faithful service to our Women's Fellowship and the church for so many years. Below you will find a written statement about them that was included in the program booklet that day.

Phyllis Clark

Phyllis is presently the longest serving active member of our church at 67 years. These words from Proverbs 31:10,26 exemplify her spirit: "She is far more precious than jewels. She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue." Phyllis is indeed a kind soul who thinks the best of everyone and guides and nurtures those around her. Her devotion to the church is unwavering. Here are just a few ways she has shared herself with the church: Sunday School teacher, Deacon, choir member, church play actress, Church Secretary, Financial Clerk, Women's Fellowship President, Treasurer, and Vice President, Prayer Shawl Ministry knitter, and organizer of our yearly hosting of the Red Cross Bloodmobile. Her generosity continues in the community as she is active at the Senior Center and volunteers to sew Teddy Bears for cancer patients. Phyllis is indeed a blessing to all!

Linda Cunningham

For 46 years as an active member of this church, Linda quietly gives of her time, talent and treasure while impacting the church in an unassumingly loud way. She has served on several boards and committees through the years and always makes sure the job gets done properly and on time. She has been treasurer of the church and presently serves as the Women's Fellowship treasurer. She was excellent as our church secretary and has shared her musical gifts as organist of our church, as well as, at other churches in the community. She has a reputation of being a culinary artist and we are fortunate to be the beneficiary of her good cooking. Her devotion and dedication to volunteering expands beyond the church to the community as she is an active member of the Portland Historical Society. Her presence continues to be a blessing to the church.

Congratulations and Thank You to Phyllis and Linda!

Special Congregational Meeting Sunday, May 12, 2024 Immediately following Worship Service

A special congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, May 12 for purpose of voting on the proposed Bylaws revisions, as presented by the Bylaws Revision Committee. The proposed changes to the Bylaws can be found by clicking on the link in this email. Please note that the wording highlighted in yellow is slated for removal, to be replaced with the wording in bold print.

Please review the proposed changes and if you have questions or comments, please contact Kelle Young at kjyoung1@yahoo.com to share your thoughts. To be respectful of everyone’s time, it may be beneficial to communicate suggestions or questions to the committee in advance.

Call To A Special Meeting

The members of the First Congregational Church of Portland, Connecticut are hereby notified of a Church Meeting on Sunday, May 12, 2024 in the sanctuary immediately following worship for the following purposes:

1. To act upon the following changes to the Church Constitution:
2. A. Article II, Section 3: To change the wording “Connecticut Conference” to “Southern New England Conference.” B. To change the “Addendum to a new “Section 7: Open and Affirming Statement.”
3. To receive and act upon the recommendations of the Bylaws Revisions Committee including the establishment of “Ministry Teams” as designated in the printed document available in the narthex.
4. To act upon any other business proper to come before said meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Joe Aresco, President
Diane Burgess, Clerk

PAINTING WITH A PURPOSE

MAY 19, 2024
2 OPTIONS: 11AM OR 2PM
\$35.00/PERSON

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH
183 WILLIAM ST., PORTLAND, CT

JOIN US FOR AN INSTRUCTOR-LED PAINT CLASS TO SUPPORT AIDEN JAHNKE AND THE ENTIRE JAHNKE FAMILY.

A Portland native, 16 year old Aiden began his courageous fight against Leukemia in early 2023. Proceeds for this event will benefit the Jahnke family.

TO SIGN UP, SCAN THIS QR CODE:





Fund Raiser for Aiden Jahnke



Zion Lutheran Church will be hosting a fundraiser to support the Jahnke family. Many of you know Aiden’s story and have reached out asking about ways to help Aiden and his family. This event is a great opportunity for us to come together as a community, have fun and support the Jahnke’s while doing it.

If you can’t make it to the art class, there is an option to just send a donation. All proceeds will go directly to the Jahnke family.

Local artists Taylor Wicke Art and DrewUni Art will be teaching the classes. All are welcome!! Please feel free to share with friends. We are holding 2 classes because we know they will fill up quickly!

Thank you in advance for your support and generosity!

Bee Blessed: Women's Fellowship Gathering and Potluck Dinner **Tuesday, May 14, 2024** **6:00 p.m.**



All women are invited to join our hive of worker bees as The Women's Fellowship gathers on May 14 for the annual potluck dinner, program, and short meeting. World Bee Day is celebrated on May 20 each year in honor of Anton Jansa who is considered a pioneer of modern beekeeping. It is a day to observe and draw attention to the essential role that bees and other pollinators play in keeping people and the planet healthy. Honeybees bless our lives as they are an integral part of our natural world. They pollinate the majority of our crops and trees, giving us the food we eat and the air we breathe. This May meeting will focus on the importance of the bee's presence in our life.

Please come to share a bountiful feast together that you will help provide. Bring your favorite salad or main dish for all to enjoy and you might even think of a recipe that includes honey. Beverages and honey-related desserts will be provided. The meeting will follow the meal, and we hope you will bless us with your presence.

May Calendar of Events

Weekly Events:

Sunday 10:00 a.m.	Worship Service
Sunday 7:00 p.m.	Alanon Meeting
Second Monday evening	NA Service Meeting
Tuesday, 1:00 p.m.	Prayer Shawl Ministry
Wednesday 7:00 p.m.	Living Clean Meeting
Third Thursday evening	NA Hospitals and Institutions Regional Meeting
Thursday 6:30 p.m.	Choir Practice

May Meetings and Events:

Wednesday, May 1, 7:00 p.m.	Membership Committee
Thursday, May 2, 7:00 p.m.	National Day of Prayer Interfaith Service, St. Mary Church
Wednesday, May 8, 7:00 p.m.	Deacons
Thursday, May 9	Nursery School Mother's Day Celebration
Friday, May 10	Nursery School Mother's Day Celebration
Sunday, May 12	Special Congregational Meeting following worship
Tuesday, May 14, 6:00 p.m.	Women's Fellowship Meeting and PotLuck Supper
Sunday, May 19, 9:45 a.m.	God's Work ~ Our Hands
11:00 and 2:00	Aiden Jahnke FundRaiser at Zion Church
1:00 - 5:00 p.m.	NA Board of Directors SubCommittee
Thursday, May 23	Nursery School Memorial Day Parade
Friday, May 24	Nursery School Memorial Day Parade
Sunday, May 26	Deadline for June Belfry Chimes information

Looking Ahead ... Mark Your Calendar

June 2, 3:00 p.m. - There will be a music and art slide show with Eclectica on Sunday June 2 at 3:00 p.m. in the church sanctuary. It is a group that our very talented Kasha Breau performs with, featuring lively music from the 12th century to present day on viola da gamba, violin, hammered dulcimer, accordion, recorders of all sizes, percussion, voice and harp. The slide show coincides with art work from the era of music being played. Admission is \$10.

May 3, 2025 - Goods and Service Auction for NEXT YEAR is being planned, led by Joe and Angela Aresco.

