



The Trumpet

NOVEMBER 2025

A publication of the East Woodstock Congregational Church, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



THE GIFTS OF STEWARDSHIP

Some days, it is difficult to find God amidst all the chaos in the world. Though we cannot see God physically, through our words and actions, we can help people feel God's presence in their lives. We are called to make God visible to a world that is aching to be reminded that we are not alone.

We are a church that celebrates and shares God's love. Our Congregation is filled with extraordinary people who share their time, talent, and treasure in many ways. Our community of faith strives every day to make God's love and hope tangible and apparent, through service to others with:

- A monthly food fair for families facing food insecurity
- Team support for a weekly local community kitchen
- Freezer meal program for the sick or those facing a challenging time
- A card ministry surrounding community members with God's love
- A transportation team providing rides to those who have a need
- Weekly coffee hour for fellowship, conversations, and building connections with our church family
- A prayer shawl ministry that literally wraps people in the hand-knit warmth of a soft, beautiful shawl that reminds them of God's enveloping love

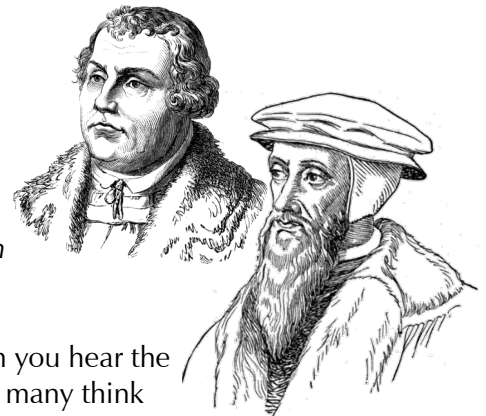
We will celebrate our shared ministry on November 9th, Pledge Sunday. Pledged funds support our church programs, including local and global community

outreach, Christian education, and music. We can all make a difference. **No gift is too small. No dream is too big.** With your help, we can continue to extend God's love to all who walk through our doors and far beyond our walls.

*The Stewardship Committee
Anne Sorensen, Chair*

REFORMATION SUNDAY OBSERVANCE PROVIDES PERSPECTIVE ON CONGREGATIONALISM

October 31st, 1517 was a long time ago. Why does it continue to matter and be remembered in our churches today?



What comes to your mind when you hear the word, Protestant? The first thing many think of is "protest." They think that Protestants started a protest movement, and that we've never moved beyond a protest mentality.

But the truth of the matter is that the Latin word from which *Protestant* derives, namely, *protestare*, has an entirely positive meaning. *Protestare* means "to affirm, to testify, or to proclaim." The Reformation did not begin negatively as a protest movement. It began positively as an affirmation, a testimony, a proclamation.

If *protestare* means to affirm, declare, or to testify, what are we affirming? To what do we bear witness? The Protestant Reformers upheld the priority of grace in all the ways and works of God, the priority of grace in God's approach to us and God's activity within us.

Throughout the year we preach about many things in church. About how we live our daily lives, the choices we make, the habits of our faith. On Reformation Sunday we are brought back to the most important thing – the thing that compelled Luther and others to risk their lives. *On Reformation Sunday, we return to the core of our faith: God loved us first, and God continues to shower us with grace and mercy.*

*Sermon excerpts, Pastor Gary Shahinian, 10.26.25
Illustrations of Martin Luther and John Calvin, Protestant reformers and theologians
Additional information from Spirit of Joy, Lutheran*



The oldest published sermon we possess from North America dates from December 9, 1621. It was titled "Self-Love" and preached by Robert Cushman in Plymouth, Massachusetts. It was delivered to a community enduring deprivation and struggle. Because of that, it still speaks to us today.

Thanksgiving is a time when we think about the Pilgrims and the first Thanksgiving celebration. An important lesson we can learn from them was their insistence that the commonwealth must come before the interests of individuals.

Cushman came from Canterbury in Kent, England, where his religious zeal had brought negative attention to the church authorities. Thus he left England to join Pastor John Robinson's Separatist congregation in Leiden, Netherlands, in 1609. Though a layperson, he was welcomed by Robinson who did not mind the practice whereby the non-ordained deemed to be empowered by the Holy Spirit would be permitted to speak, even preach in religious services. Cushman likely preached to the congregation on more than one occasion before his Plymouth sermon.

The scripture text Cushman used for his sermon was 1 Corinthians 10:24: "Do not seek your own advantage, but that of the other." Like other Puritans, he opposed the growing individualistic ethic that was gaining strength at the time. He urged his listeners to "let this self-seeking be left off, and turn the stream another way, namely, seek the good of your brethren. Please them, honor them, reverence them, for otherwise it will never go well amongst you." The temptation to

seek one's own welfare regardless of the cost to others was particularly strong in colonial situations where resources were limited. Cushman was familiar with the disorder that persisted in Jamestown, and told the Pilgrim audience, "It is reported that there are many in . . . that other plantation in Virginia, which, whilst they lived in England, seemed very religious, zealous, and conscionable, and have now lost even the sap of grace and edge to all goodness, and are become mere worldlings. This testimony I believe to be partly true, and amongst the many causes of it this self-love is not the least."

This message was designed for a particular group of English men and women at a particular time in history. But it laid a foundation for a social outlook that would be continued by the Puritans of Massachusetts, the other residents of the Commonwealth, and eventually to all Americans.

The idea of covenant found in this social outlook formed the basis of the organization of the Pilgrims. They declared themselves to be one body in Christ, setting forth the form of church government that today goes by the name of Congregationalism. They were fond of quoting Matthew 18:20, where Jesus says, "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." All prospective future members of the Plymouth Church were required to subscribe to its covenant.

Formally a covenant is a pact or allegiance among parties binding them in a mutual way to be trustworthy partners with each other. In the Bible, God establishes a covenant with humans as a sacred contract between the two parties. God's people are expected to join in the spirit of the covenantal relationship following God's lead.

A covenantal relationship is more than just one governed by promise or agreement. It is one in which all parties are responsible to each other, but no one is dictated to by the others. Though each party is free from any control by any of the others, the parties agree to listen carefully to each other and to remain in covenant even when conflict occurs. It is doubtful that the Pilgrims would have been able to survive without binding themselves to each other in this covenantal way.

Every church must come together by means of a covenant if it is going to be successful in carrying out Christ's ministries and missions. Let us remember this truth not only during Thanksgiving time but always.

Happy Thanksgiving,

Pastor Gary

MOVIE MATINEE SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 23: *Though Americans are bound by the Thanksgiving tradition, they are as diverse as the many countries and cultures from which they have come. "What's Cooking" is an entertaining 2000 film that shows how Thanksgiving is observed in 4 different homes and the values held by these families. The film is rated PG-13 and suitable for youth. "Then the owner of the house . . . said to his slave, 'Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame.' And the slave said, 'Sir, what you ordered has been done, and there is still room.' Then the master said to the slave, 'Go out into the roads and lanes, and compel people to come in, so that my house may be filled. . . . Then people will come from east and west, from north and south, and take their places at the banquet in the kingdom of God. (Luke 14:15-23; 13:29).*

EXPLORING SAINTHOOD

November 1 marks All Saint's Day, a sometimes overlooked holy day in Protestant congregations. It is not nearly as well known as the day before, All Hallows' (Saints') Eve, better known as Halloween, but is far more important in the life of the church. We observe this coming Sunday, November 2 as All Saint's Sunday, and think of the inspirational people with whom we worship, and those across the world we will never meet. We celebrate fellow Congregationalists who inspire us, and those of other denominations whose lives encourage us. We give thanks for those with whom we agree, as well as those whose views we do not share. Additionally, we remember and pray for our sisters and brothers in Christ who faithfully follow Jesus in places where being labeled a Christian puts them in harm's way.

Crowded With Gratitude

O GOD, Our hearts are crowded with gratitude
as we celebrate the feast of Thanksgiving.
We have come to this our feasting table
with great joy and eagerness,
for we are truly grateful to you, our God,
for all that we have been given.
We pause now and, in silent prayer,
do thank you for the great generosity of Your gifts.
We also thank one another for gifts -
especially for the gifts of love and affection
that we have freely shared.
We are thankful
for all who are present at this our feast
as well as for all those who have labored in love
in order to bring this dinner to our table.
May You, our God, bless this Thanksgiving feast
and all of us who shall share it
in your holy name.

*Edward Hays, Prayers for the Domestic Church:
A Handbook for Worship in the Home
(Kansas: Forest of Peace Books, 1979), 122.*

Remembering Others

O God, when I have food, help me to remember the hungry;
When I have work, help me to remember the jobless;
When I have a home, help me to remember
those who have no home at all;
When I am without pain, help me to remember those who suffer,
And remembering, help me to destroy my complacency;
bestir my compassion,
and be concerned enough to help;
By word and deed,
those who cry out for what we take for granted.

Samuel F. Pugh

The following are the scriptures for this month. You are invited to read them as part of your daily devotions and as preparation for worship. For daily devotions, please go to: sneucc.org/lectionary

November 1

Psalm 119:137-144
Habakkuk 2:5-11
John 8:39-47

November 2 (Communion)

*Twenty-first Sunday
after Pentecost*
Habakkuk 1:1-4, 2:1-4
Psalm 119:137-144 2
Thessalonians 1:1-4, 11-12
Luke 19:1-10

November 9

*Twenty-second Sunday
after Pentecost*
Haggai 1:15b—2:9
Psalm 145:1-5, 17-21
or Psalm 98
Thessalonians 2:1-5, 13-17
Luke 20:27-38

November 16

*Twenty-third Sunday
after Pentecost*
Isaiah 65:17-25
Isaiah 12 2
Thessalonians 3:6-13
Luke 21:5-19

November 23

Reign of Christ
Jeremiah 23:1-6
Luke 1:68-79
Colossians 1:11-20
Luke 23:33-43

November 30

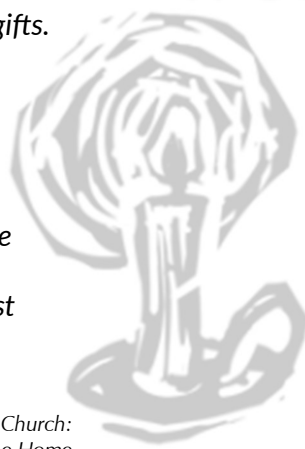
First Sunday of Advent
Isaiah 2:1-5
Psalm 122 Romans 13:11-14
Matthew 3:1-12
or Matthew 24:36-44

worship&prayer

Continuing to pray for...

- Gisela Kaupp, recovering from recent eye surgery
- Ken Marvin
- Joel Morse
- Faith Armstrong
- Sally May
- Lisa Gould
- Dave Norman
- The Children and Family of Amanda (Crowley) & Jerry Zolobkowski
- Our faith community at EWCC as we move through the Search & Call process for a settled pastor

God hears our prayers and surrounds those we pray for with comfort, strength, and compassion in challenging times.





Our Holly Fair is on Saturday, November 8 this year and that means it's time for all EWCC Committees to start working on a themed basket for our Basket Social. The Basket Social is a major part of our Holly Fair and we need everyone's help to continue to make it a highlight. Please contact Kerstin Forrester (call, text, or email) if you need ideas, a basket/container, or help putting a basket together. Thank you for your continued support!

To ensure that we have another successful fundraiser for EWCC, we will need:

- Baked goods - Taryn and Andy Tomkins
- Candy - Diane Morin
- Crafts - Amy Hiller White, Diane Billings, Barbara Hackett
- Homemade jams & jellies - Taryn and Andy Tomkins
- Jewelry - Chairs Marilyn Rath & Carrie Walker
- Baskets - Kerstin Forrester
- New & Like New - Donna Baldyga

If you have any questions, please contact the table Chair person listed above.

Jewelry for the Holly Fair!

The Holly Fair is not that far away; the jewelry room is very popular. It's time to go through your jewelry; imagine how fabulous your unused items would look on someone else. And remember - your contributions directly benefit the church and its mission. Please provide your donations to Marilyn Rath, Carrie Walker or Donna Baldyga. They will be much appreciated by our Holly Fair shoppers! ***Also, please note that we will not be accepting any Christmas items until after Christmas as we are fully stocked for this year's Holly Fair.*

Kerstin Forrester & Marilyn Rath, LBS

LADIES BENEVOLENT SOCIETY

On October 15, 2025, twenty-four people came to enjoy a presentation by Marilyn and Bob Rath and Rodney Rivers. They had recently returned from a trip to Greece and Portugal that emphasized using senses other than sight since Rodney is blind. Not only were the pictures amazing, but their telling of the trip was intriguing and informative. Thank you for sharing this wonderful adventure.

We also held a brief business meeting with focus on the upcoming Holly Fair which will be held on Saturday, November 8 from 10AM to 2PM! We need everyone's help to ensure that we have a successful event. Needed are: baked goods (cookies, breads, cakes, brownies, pies, etc.); homemade jams & jellies; candy; jewelry; crafts; and of course themed baskets! And of course we need you to come and shop early for the holidays.

We have a great agenda for this year with more interesting presentations and fellowship. Our next meeting is Wednesday, November 19 at 1:30PM. Linda Kaplan will help us make some Thanksgiving arrangements! Plan on joining us and share fellowship.

Kerstin Forrester, LBS

committee doings

OUTREACH

Outreach will be providing Thanksgiving baskets again this year through our Covenant to Care ministry. Their social workers will pick up baskets on Monday November 24th. **We are asking for donations of frozen turkeys for the baskets.** Other Thanksgiving items will be gladly accepted. We anticipate at least 25 baskets. *Thank you so much for supporting this important ministry.*

Andy Krofina, Outreach Chair

THIS WAS LEARNED FROM THOSE IN NEED

SNAP BENEFITS FEEDING 42 MILLION AMERICANS MAY STOP IN NOVEMBER BECAUSE OF THE SHUTDOWN.

1. Boxed Mac & Cheese (common) = useless without milk & butter (uncommon)
2. Boxed milk is a treasure for cereal-loving kids.
3. Pasta and spaghetti sauce are everywhere.
4. Canned goods help more - IF opener include (or pop tops)
5. Cooking oil is a rare luxury but essential.
6. Spices, salt, and pepper are true gifts.
7. Tea and coffee make people feel cared for.
8. Sugar and flour are treats.
9. Fresh produce brings huge smiles.
10. Seeds are great in warmer months - growing food helps!
11. Fresh meat is rare.
12. Tuna and crackers make an easy lunch.
13. Hamburger Helper needs ground beef to matter.
14. PB & J are common - sandwich bread isn't.
15. Butter or margarine feels like gold.
16. Eggs are a prized commodity.
17. Cake mix & frosting let kids celebrate birthdays.
18. Dish soap is pricey & ALWAYS needed.
19. Feminine hygiene products are a luxury - women often cry when they get them.
20. Everyone loves Stove Top Stuffing.



SOCIETY—JEANS SUNDAY

November 16th is JEANS SUNDAY! Be a part of this fun & rewarding ONCE-A-YEAR event after worship! Join friends, family, and Church committee members for the annual upkeep of our sacred spaces and church buildings & grounds.

Society members are coordinating indoor & outdoor quick & easy tasks for everyone of

all ages - like polishing, disinfecting, organizing, cleaning windows and gutters, changing light bulbs, raking leaves, and completing tasks that REALLY make a difference in the upkeep of our busy church!

ALL are tasks that don't take long but have a lasting effect (and everything smells so good afterwards!)

Join us for a light volunteer lunch after we finish, and enjoy a great sense of accomplishment & pride! Society members will provide cleaning supplies. Please wear your work clothes to worship, and bring your own favorite step ladder, rake, or leaf blower as needed.

Show your pride as part of our Church family! Sign up in Fellowship Hall or contact Judith Wong judithmillerwong@gmail.com

*Judith Wong
Society*

SOCIETY—COMMUNICATIONS

Our Office Manager, Mary Oliver is working hard to publish our Trumpet, Weekly Reminders, and Worship Bulletins to help keep all members informed. The current Trumpet schedule is to publish each month, except for dual Trumpets in December-January and July-August. Our goal is to publish the Trumpet on the first of each month, with a **submission deadline on the 20th** of the preceding month.

Your contributions are invaluable to this process. Submitting articles to Mary by the submittal date, in either .docx or Google Doc format (unformatted, please!), helps ensure on-time publication. Currently, we mail approximately 35 copies to members; 50 printed copies are available for pickup at the church. Thanks to the help of Sue Converse and Lynn Looby, the Trumpets are prepared for mailing and pickup. And of course, an email is sent to members with the online link.

Please also note that our Office Manager's hours are Monday-Wednesday and Friday mornings, 9AM to 12PM. With these limited hours, the Office Manager's priorities are supporting our Pastor, publishing the Weekly Bulletins, Trumpet, and Weekly Reminder, updating our Website, and maintaining the church calendar. Please help to keep our office costs reasonable by keeping your committee requests for assistance to a minimum. Any questions, please contact any Society member.

We greatly appreciate your support and cooperation as we attempt to keep our lines of communication open and affordable.

*Glen Lessig
Society*



EWCC Google Workspace Training Session during Coffee Hour - Nov 2, 2025

For the past several months, the Society Committee has been working to implement Google Workspace, an online productivity suite, for our church. Workspace will enable us to easily collaborate and share files, access necessary cloud file storage, manage church calendars, and conduct online meetings.

All for no cost!

All committees are currently set up with Shared drives, which are Drives and Folders that allow files to be created and shared with members. All files within the Shared Drives are owned by EWCC, providing us with excellent storage capability for our busy committees' files.

Just a reminder....

We love hearing good news!

Have a special event you'd like to share— a birth, graduation, new job, special honor? Let us know...



Have you changed your phone, email or mailing?

Please let the office know of any changes so you don't miss out on *The Trumpet* or other important messages. You can send any changes or correspondence to Mary Oliver at: churchoffice@eastwoodstockchurch.org.

Children are:
~~the future of the church!~~
Learning
in faith



CAN ADVENT REALLY BE AROUND THE CORNER?

While we have been focused on Communion study and parables, we are also looking to Advent. Our pageant is scheduled for **Sunday, December 14th.**

A **celebratory Potluck** will follow the pageant and service. There will be a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall. Any questions, please reach out to Jessica Weaver Boose or Dorrie Scranton.

HOLIDAY ART & CRAFT FAIR

Will be held on **Saturday, December 6th from 10AM-3PM** here at EWCC. Over 30 area artists & craft folk will have their work on display. For more information



or an application to participate, please contact Karen McFarlin via email: kmcf3470@gmail.com

sharing the good news

WHAT'S IN YOUR POCKET?

One of my end-of-summer rituals is taking my robe to the drycleaners. It is how I satisfy those back-to-school feelings that never go away. It is also how I prepare for our Fall season of Homecoming.

As I handed my robe to the cashier, she said, "Oh, I think there's something in the pocket." I laughed and said, "I forgot to look! It's probably a pen." It was a pen. I always have one handy on Sunday mornings when I visit churches so I can add last minute notes to my greeting, or the bulletin, or to my sermon. I also write some of the prayers that are lifted up so that I can take them home with me and add them to my weekly list.

To my surprise, the cashier reached into the other pocket and began pulling out quite a collection of odds and ends. There was a small, lapel pin that was a hand with rainbow stripes giving the Hawaiian 'hang loose' sign. There was a round, purple magnet with "You Are Loved By God," written in fancy white script. There was a second small lapel pin that was a rainbow with fluffy white clouds on each end.

Next was a red credit card sized set of instructions outlining my constitutional rights with scripts for me to use if I am arrested or ICE comes to my door. Just when I thought she must be done, out came some frog stickers, a small clear glass nugget, and a painted scallop shell that was miraculously intact. My favorite item was a small square with a picture of a sun-dappled path meandering through some green woods. On it is written, "Just because you need healing, doesn't mean you are broken." That card is now on my desk where I can glance at it from time to time.

I find that sentiment comforting in these days when so many things seem to be breaking and broken. Rather than feeling overwhelmed by trying to fix all the broken things in the world, I now remind myself that offering healing through love, empathy, care, and compassion is something I can do. So can each of you!

This pocket-sized collection are just a few of the small tokens I have been given or picked up in my visits to the many churches in my region. As I look at them scattered about my office, each one makes me smile. Each one reminds me of shared worship, an encouraging Word, heartfelt prayers, a favorite hymn, bread broken, and a cup shared. I am reminded of the many ways we connect and are connected with a warm welcome, coffee and conversation, and sometimes, some laughs along with a delicious sandwich or hot apple crisp.

These are the ways great and small that we are woven together as one body in and through Jesus. Jesus last prayer for his disciples, and for all of us, was, "Let them all be one, Abba, just as you are in me, and I am in you...so that they may be brought to complete unity."

So, my question for you today is, what's in your pocket? Or, purse, or briefcase? I hope there is a little something that makes you smile!

Peace, Pastor Carol Steinbrecher
 SNEUCC Area Conference Minister

November



SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY



REMINDER: Fellowship Hall will be in use
from the 1st through the 9th for the Holly Fair.

1

All Saints Day

2

Search&Call
8AM
All Saints
Sunday
Worship 10AM

3

Diaconate
6:30PM

4

Choir 7PM

5

Bible Study
10:30AM
Al-Anon,
7:30PM

6

Bell Choir 7PM

7

Food Fair 9-10

8

Holly Fair
10AM-2PM

9

Worship 10AM
Stewardship
Sunday

10

Tai Chi 11AM
Outreach, 6PM

11

Council
6:30PM
Choir 7PM

12

Bible Study
10:30AM
Al-Anon,
7:30PM

13

Bell Choir 7PM

14

15

Private Event

16

8AM Men's
Breakfast
Worship 10AM

17

Tai Chi 11AM
Society 7PM

18

Choir 7PM

19

Bible Study
10:30AM
LBS, 1:30PM
Al-Anon,
7:30PM

20

Bell Choir 7PM
**TRUMPET
DEADLINE**

21

22

Private Event

23

Worship 10AM
Movie Matinee
(Private Event
Pending)

24

Tai Chi 11AM
Book Club,
7PM

25

Choir 7PM

26

Bible Study
10:30AM
Al-Anon,
7:30PM

27

No Bells
Thanksgiving

28

29

30

Advent Begins!
Worship 10AM

DONATIONS FOR FOOD PANTRY NEEDED

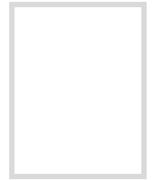
During this time of government shutdown, our food pantry may become a lifeline for those who have interrupted SNAP benefits. The Outreach Pantry is in need of the following staples: Coffee, Flour (2 # bags), Sugar, Peanut butter, Cereal, Pasta Sauces, Canned tomatoes, Canned chicken and tuna. Your generosity is most appreciated!



East Woodstock Congregational Church

Post Office Box 156

East Woodstock, Connecticut 06244



Holly Fair

Saturday, November 8, 2025, 10AM—2PM

EAST WOODSTOCK CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

220 Woodstock Road, East Woodstock, CT

Festive Tables Featuring...

*Baked Goods ❄ Jellies & Relishes ❄ Cookies ❄ Candies (featuring Buck
Eyes) New & Like New Gifts ❄ Jewelry Crafts ❄ Basket Social
Christmas Decorations*

For more information, please call: 860.928.7449 /

www.eastwoodstockchurch.org