



OPEN AND AFFIRMING
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

PARISH POST

*Wapping Community Church, United Church of Christ
No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here!*

January, 2025



WCC's Christmas Activities

- **“Music Sunday”** with the Chancel Choir and musical guests on Dec. 7, followed by the **Annual Advent Fair**.
- **The Christmas Pageant and the Living Creche on Dec. 14**
- **Don Dixon played Bagpipes on Christmas Sunday, Dec. 21**



Fall 2025 Mission Giving

What a year 2025 has been! The Outreach Ministry thanks everyone for the generous outpouring of love and support for our many projects. **Here are some of the highlights:**

- Held an Emergency Food Drive to support South Windsor Foodbank (SWFB.) We collected 156 bags of food, hygiene products and paper goods. We also sent a check for \$500.
- Continued partnership as a Foodshare Distribution every other Thursday throughout the year. This culminated in our **Annual Foodshare Luncheon and Coat Distribution on December 4** where we served more than 100 people and distributed 100 coats.
- Working together, SPF and Outreach provided 8 Thanksgiving Dinners to SWFB.

WCC members and friends donated an outstanding amount of money (\$4,725) for gift cards for the holiday programs we traditionally do each year:

- 64 gift cards to SWFB in November for Thanksgiving
- 48 gift cards to MACC Joy of Giving in December
- 77 gift cards for Christmas Gifts for Children which were distributed by our Social Workers (Covenant to Care program)
- 70 Crop Walk walkers raised a total of \$7,344 with \$1,836 going to MACC

Other Donations and Events:

- WCC members donated \$2,170 to help Burke Ridge Farms after the devastating fire at their farm and \$2,500 to Tom Fraise following a very serious car accident in the Fall.
- Outreach provided \$250 to Cornerstone for children's socks.
- Provided gifts through our Touchstones program to 12 shut ins.
- Created and posted 42 new Banners from our Banner Ministry.
- Provided 49 Backpacks for Back to School (Covenant to Care.)
- Picked up and distributed Panera Bread donations 2-3 times a week.
- Held two Community Dinners serving 150 attendees and 35 volunteers at each dinner.
- Held six Foreign Policy Group "Great Decisions" group meetings.
- Prepared 75 CWS hygiene kits sent to Church World Service to use during crisis situations.
- Held a Midwest Food Bank day in January - a MLK intergenerational Service Activity.
- Collected 581 items for Undies Sunday for MACC.
- Held a VBS/Church Member Food Drive to benefit SWFB.
- Donated 150 Mother's Day Blanket through Church World Service.
- Collected \$915 for One Great Hour of Sharing.
- Shared our extra veggies this Summer with SWFB.
- Ongoing Stephen Ministry Christian Care and Prayer Shawl Ministry.
- Continued to support Scouts through our Bottle and Can Drives (see back page for more info!)

... What a list! Stay tuned for upcoming mission opportunities in 2026! Thank you for your love, support, and commitment to doing God's work in our world!

January Calendar

Thurs., Jan. 8 **Choir Rehearsal, 7 p.m., Fellowship Hall**

Sat., Jan. 10 **Midwest Foodbank Sorting Activity, 9-11a.m.**
440 Adams St., Manchester, CT

Sun., Jan. 11 **Worship Services, 8:30 and 10 a.m.**
Confirmation Clas, 8:30-10 a.m., Youth Room
JPF & SPF Youth Groups, 4-6 p.m.

Tues., Jan. 13 **Oscar's All American Grill, SPF Fundraiser, 3-9 p.m.**
Deacon's Meeting, 7 p.m., Earle Smith Reception Room

Wed., Jan. 14 **Foreign Policy Group, "Great Decisions," 7 p.m., Youth Room**

Thurs., Jan. 15 **Foodshare Mobile Pantry, 11:30 a.m., WCC Parking Lot**
Choir Rehearsal, 7 p.m., Fellowship Hall

Sat., Jan. 17 **Fun and Fellowship Game Night, 4-7 p.m., Fellowship Hall**

Sun., Jan. 18 **Worship Services, 8:30 & 10 a.m.**

Mon., Jan. 19 **Martin Luther King Day - Church Office Closed**

Tues., Jan. 20 **Prayer Shawl Ministry, 10 a.m., Earle Smith Reception Room**
Outreach Ministry, 7 p.m., Earle Smith Reception Room

Thurs., Jan. 22 **Choir Rehearsal, 7 p.m., Fellowship Hall**
Stephen Ministry, 7 p.m. Earle Smith Reception Room

Sun., Jan. 25 **Worship Services, 8:30 & 10 a.m.**
Confirmation Class, 8:30 – 10 a.m., Youth Room
Annual Meeting, 11:15 a.m., Community Room
JPF & SPF Youth Groups, 4-6 p.m.

Thurs., Jan. 29 **Foodshare Mobile Pantry, 11:30 a.m., WCC Parking Lot**
Choir Rehearsal, 7 p.m., Fellowship Hall

Save the Date: **Sat., Feb. 28 - SPF Fundraiser - Paint Night, 5:30-9 p.m.**



New Flower Charts: The new flower sign-up charts are posted on the wall outside the Gathering Room. If you would like to provide flowers in memory of or in honor of a loved one, please enter your name and contact number in the space for the appropriate date on one of the charts (communion table or pedestal.) You can buy a bouquet at Stop and Shop or order flowers from a florist like Broad Brook Gardens. You may take your flowers after the 10 a.m. service or designate a person you would like to give them to. You can also call the church office, 860-644-0833, to sign up. Thank you.

Outreach Ministry Helps Our Community

We're Excited to Announce a New Stephen Ministry Class!

Become a Stephen Minister: An Opportunity to Learn, Serve and Grow.

Stephen Ministers are members of Wapping Church who have gone through training and then provide confidential, emotional and spiritual support to people who are going through a difficult time, such as divorce, grief, hospitalization, unemployment, terminal illness, relocation, chronic illness, or loneliness. Being a Stephen Minister may be one of the most rewarding opportunities you will ever embrace.



We will be training a new class of Stephen Ministers beginning in January. To find out more about becoming a Stephen Minister, talk with our Stephen Minister Leader, Nancy Calabrese, at 860-558-8830. Please consider joining this valuable caring, supporting and listening ministry.



MACC Christmas Donations

Gretchen Bickford delivered 48 \$25 gift cards to Phil Leggett, MACC's Community Emergency Food Pantry Manager, totaling \$1,200 generously donated by church members. These cards helped those in need buy food and small gifts this holiday season.

A heartfelt thanks to everyone who donated!

Volunteer at Midwest Food Bank!

Saturday, January 10, from 9-11 a.m.

We'll gather at Midwest Food Bank, 440 Adams St., Manchester, to sort food. Middle school youth through adults welcome. For questions, contact Kristin Abernethy, 860-874-8698.



Touchstones Holiday Giving was a Wonderful Success!

Thank you to everyone who donated items for our homebound church members and those who have a difficult time getting out. The feedback from these folks is always of much appreciation and joy! Bonnie Driscoll did a great job organizing and delivering the donations. Thanks to everyone!

MACC Volunteer Saturdays

Please consider joining us in 2026 for a few hours on a Saturday for fun and fellowship while supporting this vital community organization. The 2026 MACC Saturday dates will be announced soon. Contact Matt Desy for more information: mattdesy01@gmail.com

Youth Shine for Christ

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I can hardly believe we are already in 2026! I am incredibly grateful to all of our Church School volunteers and the Faith Formation Team for their continued dedication and commitment to keeping our program thriving. As we begin the new year, I would love to reflect on how beautifully 2025 came to a close.

Thank you to everyone who helped make the Advent Fair and Christmas Pageant such memorable events. We truly could not have done it without you. We were blessed with meaningful Children's Messages from Reverend Abernethy on both the first Sunday of Advent and again on Christmas Sunday, which helped ground our celebrations in the true spirit of the season.



Erin Murray
Church School
Coordinator

The Advent Fair was a joyful celebration, with a fantastic turnout from our church and wider community. The pizza, snacks, and hot chocolate bar were a big hit, and the creativity on display was truly impressive. Wreath-making, gingerbread houses, and crafts for all ages added to the fun. This year, we were excited to welcome Alter Ego Photo Booth, which brought an extra element of joy and laughter to the event. We were also delighted to have Miss Jenna, the Face Painting Mama, join us; such a special treat for the children. I am deeply thankful to all the volunteers who helped throughout the Community Room and to everyone who donated supplies. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.



Youth Shine for Christ

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Our Christmas Pageant, 'Twas the Night Before Christmas, was a highlight of the season. The children did a wonderful job reading the poem, singing, and participating in this special service. The Living Creche was especially memorable this year. The gentle snowfall created a truly magical atmosphere; every time slot was filled, and the level of participation was simply amazing. Together, these events truly captured the spirit of Advent and Christmas. Seeing our church community come together to celebrate in these ways truly warms my heart. I'm very much looking forward to more meaningful and joyful events in 2026. Thank you all for helping make these moments so special.



SAVE THE DATE: Sunday, March 1st
All Registered 3rd & 8th Graders will receive Bibles.

Church School Schedule January & February

January 4th: Star Sunday with Communion and Children's Message. Teacher Potluck
January 11th: "Jesus' Baptism" Matthew 3:13-17 Faith Formation Gathering in Hartford
January 18th: Group Lesson "Bible Scavenger Hunt"/VBS Meeting
January 25th: "The Disciples" Matthew 4:12-23; 9:9-13; 10: 1-4/Annual Meeting

February 1st: Communion and Children's Message
February 8th: "Salt and Light" Matthew 5:13-20/Faith Formation Meeting
February 15th: Group Lesson
February 22nd: "The First Sin" Genesis 3:1-24/VBS Planning Meeting

We need YOU! Church School can only happen with volunteers. Please sign up here:
[Registration link](#) for volunteers through winter (January 11th-March 15, 2026)

Faith Formation Meetings take place after the 10am service in the Youth Room, next to the elevator on the 2nd floor. Come join us in helping to put on fun, seasonal events at the church. We have very casual meetings. We'd love for you to join us with your ideas! No RSVP required, just show up! Contact Erin Murray with any questions: wappingfaith@gmail.com

VBS Planning Meetings take place after the 10am service in the Youth Room, next to the elevator on the 2nd floor. Come be a part of this exciting ministry that helps plan our fun week of Vacation Bible School! Join us in helping to test Science experiments, make sample arts & crafts, plan special activities, and help decorate. We'd love for you to join us with your ideas! No RSVP required, just show up! Contact Erin Murray with any questions: wappingfaith@gmail.com

Note: We are looking for a couple of strong leaders for a special middle school group for VBS (grades 6-8). Please reach out if you are interested in helping. wappingfaith@gmail.com

Blessings, Erin Murray, Church School Coordinator

JPF and SPF Youth Groups Sang Carols at Evergreen Crossing

JPF and SPF sang carols at Evergreen Crossing in December. We were invited to participate in the lighting of the 8th Hanukkah candle. Micaela lit the candle and the youth were all very attentive. Later SPF went to Sue Mikkelsen's to sing and JPF went to Shirley and Willie Womack's house.

JPF January Schedule

January 11th from 4-6 p.m.

January 25th from 4-6 p.m.



Stewardship Update

We're grateful for everyone who has taken part in this year's Stewardship Campaign. If you haven't had a chance yet, it's not too late. You can share your giving intentions by completing a Giving Card, available in the pews and at the church entrances. You can then either drop it in the offering plate or return it to the church office.

WCC Rings the Salvation Army Bells

In collaboration with the Hartford Kiwanis Club, WCC rang the bells in front of the Salvation Army kettle at the South Windsor Stop and Shop on Dec. 20 and 24 to raise a total of \$3,385. Peter DeMallie was joined by Nancy Calabrese, Anne DeMallie and Tim Wentzell from our church, and Mike Harris, RJ Winch and Linda King-Corbin from the Kiwanis Club. Captain Steven Salmon of the S.A. Northend Hartford Corps informed us that the Salvation Army delivered large bags of Christmas gifts to over 1,000 Hartford families (two per child), plus a dinner and on Christmas Day delivered dinner to 1,000 Hartford shut-ins. What a great way to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ! Peter DeMallie, proud member of Wapping Community Church.

Confirmation Class Visits Temple

This year's confirmation class attended a Shabbat service at Temple Beth Hillel on Nov. 7 to learn more about the Jewish faith. The congregation welcomed us and we were invited up to the alter to see the Torah. The cantor explained each part of the service and we enjoyed a time of fellowship and snacks afterwards.

Foreign Policy Association

WCC is holding a discussion series based on the Foreign Policy Association program "Great Decisions". The first session will be held on Wednesday, January 14, 2026, at 7 p.m. in the Youth Room. Flyers describing the program and 2026 topics are available in the Gathering Room. Booklets containing each week's topics are available in the church office and cost \$30 each. Please pay Larry Brown directly. Thank you.

Eagle Scout Project

Mairi Carchrie-Leigh, a Life Scout from Windsor Troop 1149, will speak to us on Sunday, Jan. 11 about her Eagle Scout project she is working on here. The project is a public hygiene pantry that will contain personal hygiene products such as feminine hygiene, bar soap, laundry detergent pods, toothbrushes and toothpaste. Mairi will be collecting donations for the pantry, and will answer any questions about the project. If you wish to donate items, please bring them in during January.



Scouting and Hartford Kiwanis Club Fundraising Update

In the Spring and Autumn, Wapping Community Church again collaborated with the Hartford Kiwanis Club to conduct two Hartford Scout Bottle & Can Drive fundraisers at the church. Total proceeds from these events was \$6,400. Funds are 100% used to help offset the programming costs for Hartford Girl Scout Troop 10036, Cub Scout Pack 2, and Boy Scout Troop 2. Without these monies, all three programs would be at risk.

The Girl Scout program also functions as Troop Double Dutch, for they compete nationally in Double Dutch competitions, and do quite well. They also see the world outside of Hartford. Behind the scenes, WCC has been meeting with a number of regional Scout leaders and Kiwanis Club members in order to arrive at a program to strengthen the two remaining Scout programs in the city. A third program recently shut down. Our emphasis is to add capable and committed adult scout leaders to Troop 2 so that the boy scouts can regularly meet on a weekly basis, rather than every two weeks, and then to increase the registered number of scouts and develop a well organized program to focus on merit badges and achieving the Eagle Scout Court of Honor for many of these future leaders.

WCC was also instrumental in securing a \$6,000 conditional grant from a South Windsor business to help facilitate this objective. During Advent we also collaborated with the Hartford Kiwanis Club on Saturday December 20, when we rang the bells for the Salvation Army in front of the iconic red kettle for over ten hours. By the end of the evening we had collected an amazing \$2,285 in cash donations, or an increase of \$883 from our Saturday before Christmas effort in 2024. We repeated the bellringing from 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Christmas Eve, and Captain Steven Salmon of the S.A. Northend Hartford Corps informed us that we collected another \$1,100 in donations. All in, donations averaged \$200 an hour for both days – nothing short of incredible.

Thanks to all who volunteered and generously donated to make all four events successful. These are just some of the many events undertaken by our church over the year to help those in need. Blessings. Peter R. DeMallie, proud member of Wapping Community Church .



Church Staff

Ministers, all of the Members of the Church

Rev. Mark B. Abernethy, Senior Minister
Maria Centola, Director of Music Ministry
Kathy Brady, Office Administrator
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HOW TO SUPPORT
Please come to the address posted below on Tuesday, January 13, 2026, from 3:00pm to 9:00pm
<Dine-in or Take-out>

(860) 783-8063

855 Sullivan Avenue, South Windsor