



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!*

February, 2025



Rev. Mark Leads the Children's Message on Star Sunday, and Children Participate in Martin Luther King lessons.

A Melody of Thanks for Ann St. Denis and Marika Kraus

Our deepest gratitude to Ann St. Denis and Marika Kraus for their dedication to our church's music program. From playing piano to helping guide the Chancel and Children's Choirs, they've been a true blessing. Their hard work and talent help keep our music ministry on the right path, and we're grateful for their service in bringing both music and spirit to our church family.

Thank you, Ann and Marika, for sharing your gifts and making our music program truly sing! Thanks also to Maria Centola, WCC Director of Music Ministry, for creating a wonderful and diverse music program for all of us to enjoy!



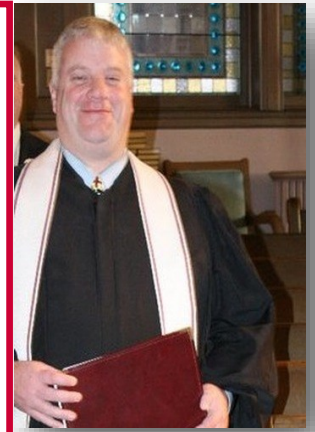
Left with the microphone, is Marika Kraus, center is Maria Centola and right is Ann St. Denis.

Thank You!

“A Recommendation”

I recently finished reading a book entitled, The Boys of Riverside: A Deaf Football Team and a Quest for Glory. Written by Thomas Fuller, who is a reporter for the *New York Times*, the book chronicles the 2021 and 2022 seasons played by the football team at the California School of the Deaf in Riverside, California. The book is entertaining and a fairly quick read, but there are two main reasons why I recommend the book to all of you.

First, if you are a football fan like me, I think you will find yourself engrossed with the story of how those two seasons unfolded. In a school with only 168 total students, it's remarkable how much the California School for the Deaf football team was able to accomplish on and off the field. Complete with descriptions of many game highlights and full of biographical stories about a number of the players on the team, it's not surprising to me that the book has been so widely read since its publication in August of 2024.



**Rev. Mark
Abernethy
Senior Minister**

Second, the book is full of fascinating insights into the deaf community, the history of deaf schools in our country and how deaf people communicate through sign language. As a hearing person, I learned a great deal from this book about everyday occurrences I typically take for granted. At the same time, I have a newfound appreciation for what it's like to be deaf and to be highly successful on a football field. For years I have been captivated by the sounds of football. In fact, football is often marketed to its fans by the various sounds involved in each game. But I had never before considered what it would be like to play football in silence.

During these cold winter days and nights, picking up a good book to read is one of my “go to” activities. If you are similarly inclined, The Boys of Riverside might be exactly the kind of book you want to turn to. Any book where I can turn the pages quickly and learn something at the same time is a big win! (no pun intended)

Peace and blessings, *Mark*

The Jolly Beggars Return!

We're excited to welcome **The Jolly Beggars** back to our church for a special performance of beautiful Irish music!

Join us on **Sunday, March 2nd** for their live music at both the **8:30 a.m.** and **10:00 a.m.** services. It's sure to be a joyful and inspiring way to start your Sunday — don't miss it!



February Calendar

- Thurs., Feb. 6** Community Dinner Planning Meeting, 10 a.m., Earle Smith Reception Room
Choir Rehearsal, 7 p.m., Fellowship Hall
- Sun., Feb. 9** **Worship Services, 8:30 and 10 a.m.**
Faith Formation Mtg, 11 a.m., Erin's office, 2nd floor
Youth Council Meeting, 7 p.m., Youth Room
- Tues., Feb. 11** Deacons' Meeting, 7 p.m., Earle Smith Room
Pollinator Pathway Meeting, 7 p.m., Fellowship Hall, All are welcome.
- Thurs. Feb. 13** Community Dinner Planning Meeting, 10 a.m., Earle Smith Reception Room
Foodshare Mobile Pantry, 11:30 a.m., WCC Parking Lot
Choir Rehearsal, 7 p.m., Fellowship Hall
- Fri., Feb. 14** **Happy Valentine's Day!**
- Sun., Feb. 16** **Worship Services, 8:30 and 10 a.m.**
- Mon., Feb. 17** **President's Day, Church office closed.**
- Tues., Feb. 18** Prayer Shawl Ministry, 10 a.m., Earle Smith Room
Outreach/Witness Ministry, 7 p.m. via Zoom
- Thurs., Feb. 20** Community Dinner Planning Meeting, 10 a.m., Earle Smith Reception Room
Choir Rehearsal, 7 p.m., Fellowship Hall
Stephen Ministry, 7 p.m., Earle Smith Rm.
- Sun., Feb. 23** **Worship Services, 8:30 and 10 a.m.**
SPF Chili-Brownie Cookoff, 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m., Community Room
- Thurs., Feb. 27** Community Dinner Planning Meeting, 10 a.m., Earle Smith Reception Room
Foodshare Mobile Pantry, 11:30 a.m., WCC Parking Lot
Choir Rehearsal, 7 p.m., Fellowship Hall



Save the Dates

Sunday, March 2 - The Jolly Beggars Musical Group will play at both services.

Sunday, March 2 - Church World Service Volunteer Activity: Packing Hygiene Kits for people affected by fires, floods, hurricanes and other disasters. All are welcome!

Saturday, March 8 - Midwest Food Bank Volunteer Activity - more details on page 4.

Wednesday, March 5 - Ash Wednesday, service at 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, March 29 - Annual Paint Night - SPF's fundraiser for their mission trip to Philadelphia in July. Details and information about sign ups on page 7.

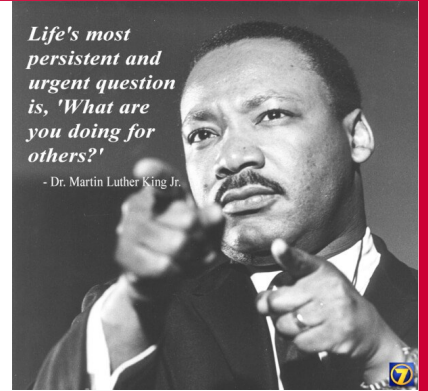
Outreach Ministry Helps Our Community

Celebrating MLK Day with a Winter of Service!

In honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. we have once again set up two opportunities for service in March. These are great events to show your children about volunteering and helping others. We held both events last year also. Please consider participating!

Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'

- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.



- Sunday, March 2nd - Creating Hygiene Kits for Church World Service., Community Room** We'll be putting together items for people who have experienced a natural disaster, such as a fire, a flood or a hurricane. It's a great multi-generational mission opportunity that will be held after the 2nd worship service on **March 2nd**. All ages can easily participate in putting together these packages and it's wonderful to know that we have helped in a small way to bring a little comfort to those experiencing a natural disaster. No sign up is necessary for this activity.
- Saturday, March 8th - We'll head over to Midwest Foodbank in Manchester.** In past years we have re-packaged bulk food into family-sized amounts. It's an easy activity open to anyone 8 yrs and older but it does require standing for a few hours. Please note that children under 12 do need a parent at the event with them. **If you are interested, please call Kathy, 860-644-0833, in the office, or email, wappingoffice@gmail.com, and she will add your name to the "interested list". The actual sign up link will be sent closer to the event date.**

Community Spaghetti Dinner

Friday, Mar. 14, 4-7 p.m.

Come join others in the greater community for a delicious spaghetti dinner in the Community Room. Bring your family and invite friends to join you.

There will be spaghetti and meatballs, salad, bread, coffee, tea and lemonade. For dessert we'll have ice cream. Everyone is welcome!

We could also use some help with planning the dinner - please join us! We have meetings every Thursday at 10 a.m. in the Earle Smith reception room on the first floor.



March is a Month of Undie Sundays

During the month of March, we will be accepting donations of NEW socks and underwear for Cornerstone and MACC. Any donations are appreciated, however there is a specific need for:

- Women's Crew Socks,
- Women's small undies
- Men's small boxers and briefs
- Men's X-LG boxers and briefs



Please leave your donations in the marked blue bucket in the Gathering Room. Thank you!

Thank You for Donating to Covenant to Care Christmas Gifts for Children

We would like to thank everyone who donated to our Christmas gift cards through Covenant to Care this year. We were able to provide 70 gift cards of \$25 each to either Target or Walmart for our social workers to give out to families. Thank you for sharing so generously. You helped make Christmas a bit brighter for children.

Kids' Korner by Erin Murray

Dear Church School Families,

As we enter the month of February, we are reminded of the beautiful example of the Holy Family - Jesus, Mary, and Joseph - and the importance of strong family bonds rooted in love and faith.



Erin Murray
Church School
Coordinator

Bible Stories and Happenings in February & March:

February 2nd: Communion/Children's Message by Toni Clay/VBS Meeting

VBS Meeting after the 10am service in Erin's Office. Come help us plan VBS 2025 "Discovery on Adventure Island."

February 9th: "The Disciples" Luke 5:1-11, 8:1-3/Faith Formation Meeting

Faith Formation Meeting after 10am service in the Youth Room. 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

February 16th: "The Beatitudes" Luke 6:17-26

February 23rd: "Joseph Feeds His Family" Genesis 45:3-11, 15/Chili & Brownie Cook-off

March 2nd: Communion/ Children's Message by Peter Delaney/Intergenerational Mission Opportunity during Fellowship Cafe

Come help make emergency hygiene kits for families in need. All are welcome to participate.

March 9th: "Tempted" Luke 4:1-13/VBS Meeting

VBS Meeting after the 10am service in Erin's Office. Come help us plan VBS 2025 "Discovery on Adventure Island."

March 16th: "Youth Sunday" Wear your Church School t-shirt/Faith Formation Meeting

Faith Formation Meeting after 10am service in the Youth Room. 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

March 23rd: "Parable of the Fig Tree" Luke 13:1-9 - Intergenerational Resurrection Garden Activity

March 30th: "The Prodigal Son" Luke 15:1-3, 11-32/Interfaith Discussion Event

Important Dates & Family Activities

Sunday, February 2nd VBS Meeting at 11:15 a.m. in Erin's Office

Sunday, February 9th Faith Formation Meeting in the Youth Room at 11:15 a.m. Come help plan annual events such as VBS, Advent Fair, Christmas Pageant, and more!

Sunday, March 2nd Intergenerational Mission Opportunity during Fellowship Cafe. Come help make hygiene kits during Fellowship Cafe.

Sunday, March 23rd Intergenerational Lenten Event: Resurrection Gardens during Fellowship Cafe at 11:15 a.m.

Sunday, April 6th Bible & Faith Chest Sunday, 3rd & 8th Graders

Sunday, June 8th Children's Choir

Monday, June 23 - Friday June 27th 9a.m.-12:30p.m. VBS "Discovery on Adventure Island"

Want to volunteer for VBS? Please check out our link:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Dk_bt82mUXHv80CfMi40q-irMax3EqchOehbRgQUv08/edit?usp=sharing

VBS Registration:

<https://forms.gle/jRw1Du6wu8WEeeiw6>

We encourage you to:

Pray together as a family: Use this month to reflect on the Holy Family and how their example can strengthen your family unit.

Incorporate faith conversations at home: Discuss the Bible stories we are learning in class and how they can apply to everyday life.

Volunteer in our church school: We are always looking for helping hands to make our programs even more enriching for our students.



We're still looking for volunteers to teach Church School. We can't run our program without you! Please visit the following link to sign-up to help out when you can. Spring Sign-up Genius:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040C4AADAA2BA4FC1-54037935-winter>

From one of our very own happy teacher's at Wapping Community Church, **"I try to sign up once a month. One Sunday teaching and then 3 other Sundays to enjoy church."**

Thank you for your continued support and partnership in nurturing your children's faith journey. Blessings,

Erin Murray

Church School Coordinator

wappingfaith@gmail.com

P.S. Don't forget to check our website for updated information and important announcements!

**SPF’s Chili-Brownie Cook-off Fundraiser
Sunday February 23 at 11:15 a.m. in the Community Room**

The Chili-Brownie Cook-off is a fundraiser for the SPF Mission Trip to Philadelphia in July. The cook-off takes place after the 2nd service in the Community Room at 11:15 a.m. You’ll get a chance to taste many kinds of chili and brownies, vote on your favorite and visit with friends. It’s \$5 for adults and \$2 for ages 10 and under.

Cooks are still needed to make chili and brownies. The entrant fee is \$15. Please contact Pat Brown, at 860-559-5132, or email her at Pes355@aol.com.

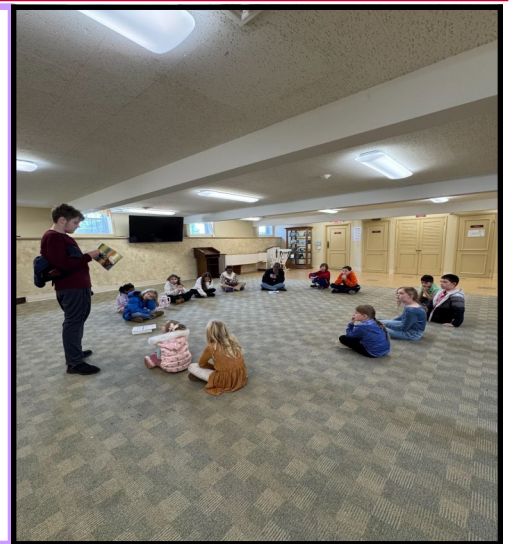


JPF News

JPF will meet on Sunday, February 23rd from 4-6 pm at church. All Middle School youth are welcome to attend!!!

Call Patty Albrecht, 860-670-8058, for more information or questions.

Right, recent church school activity in Fellowship Hall.



Stewardship Pledge Results

Stewardship Drive

	Number Pledges	Total Pledge	Non-Pledged Projection	Total Projection	Total Actual
2021	121	\$ 258,808	\$ 61,132	\$ 319,940	\$ 333,399
2022	144	\$ 292,468	\$ 48,767	\$ 341,235	\$ 345,347
2023	130	\$ 257,254	\$ 86,070	\$ 343,324	\$ 325,876
2024	104	\$ 250,024	\$ 85,610	\$ 335,634	\$ 325,178
2025	86	\$ 216,268	\$ 111,890	\$ 328,158	

The amount pledged for 2025 was about \$34,000 less than for 2024. Over the last several years, the trend has been a decrease in pledging, with a much smaller drop in overall giving, as seen in the above chart. UCC resources show that this trend is happening in other churches, too.

Finance has adapted to these giving changes by forecasting the unpledged portion of our contribution income. The above table shows that the average forecast error for the last four years was about \$11,000 (3%). The forecasted number is used for the budget presented at the Annual Meeting.

The Stewardship Team thanks all the generous members who have pledged for 2025, made regular contributions throughout the year, or donated cash contributions to the offering plate. Your contributions make our Mission and Ministry possible.

Book of Life



Entered into Eternal Life

Diana (Hurley) Baker

May 5, 1939 – January 27, 2025



Stephen Ministry

Stephen Ministries is a program that began here in 2008, training many members of our congregation to provide one-to-one Christian care to our members and beyond.

Today, WCC is one of the 136 churches in our state which has an active group of Stephen Ministers offering free, confidential, emotional and spiritual support to people who are going

through a difficult time. This may include such issues as divorce, loneliness, illness, job loss, and many other difficult life changes.

If you or someone that you know of could benefit from the care of a Stephen Minister, please contact Rev. Abernethy or Nancy Calabrese at 860-558-8830.



Flowers for the Sanctuary

You can brighten up the sanctuary on Sundays! Just sign up on the flower sheets on the 2nd floor outside of the Gathering Room. You can call Broad Brook Flowers (they deliver to the church) or go to Stop & Shop and buy a bouquet to put on the pedestal or the communion table in honor of or in memory of a loved one. You can take your flowers home or we can deliver them to someone in need of cheering up. Contact the church office with questions. Thanks for giving flowers!

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
Erin Murray, Church School Coordinator

Phone: 860-644-0833
Email: Wappingoffice@gmail.com

1790 Ellington Road, South Windsor, CT 06074
Website: www.Wappingchurch.org
www.facebook.com/WappingCommunityChurch

Volunteering

Office: Would you like to help answer phones or assist with mailings once in awhile? Please contact us.

Outside Sign: If you would like to find out how the quotes and sayings end up on the sign out front, let us know! You can help.

Call Kathy in the church office for these and other opportunities. We can use some assistance. Thanks. 860-644-0833.