



## GOOD NEWS June 2023

St. Andrew Church's "Why" Statement...

**To come together as a worshipping community, nourished by God's love so that we may reflect God's love to others.**

Adopted April 2023

### Pastor's Message

Dear Friends,

Call this a season of discernment.

As we continue to move through this time of transition seeking to determine the future path and shape of ministry for St. Andrew Church, we are called to be especially attentive and available to the guiding and nudging of the Holy Spirit.

Discernment, we discover, is best rooted in prayer — prayer that doesn't ask God to do for us what we think God should do, but that opens us to understand God's purposes and ways for us. "Humility, awe and wonder permeate the life of a congregation that practices discernment," Susan Beaumont has written.

So the summer season will not be a time to sit back and relax as we seek to discern. Rather the days ahead call for thoughtful, expectant prayer, careful and constructive conversation with one another and with new conversation partners, the willingness to be surprised and the courage to follow the Spirit's leading.

With the current reality, pointed out at our May 21 transition meeting after worship, that it will be quite challenging to call a full time pastor in the near future, it is essential for this congregation to consider alternative avenues for life giving ministry in this place and in the greater Bristol community.

The first step in exploring potential new paths toward future ministry will come on June 14 when we have been invited along with folks from three neighboring Lutheran congregations, all in some phase of transition — Gloria Dei and Zion Churches in Bristol and Grace Church in Plainville, to share openly where we are on our journeys in ministry. Please read carefully the invitation letter from Pr. Steven Wilcox, Associate to the Bishop of our New England Synod, included in this newsletter. I encourage your participation. Together we are being called to be a community of open communication, prayer, discernment and hope.

As we lean expectantly and trustingly into the days ahead, I invite your prayers and participation in the process of discernment. And let this prayer from the liturgy of Evening Prayer in our Evangelical Lutheran Worship book continue to be a starting place for your prayers:

*O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Your partner along the way,  
Les Swenson,  
Transition Pastor

## WORSHIP

*Return to the Lord your God, who is gracious and merciful,  
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.*

**Get into the rhythm of life and renewal, worship with us on the regular!** As God's people, we gather together in the presence of God and find rest, solace, a bit of grace for ourselves and others. It's called worship. We worship in person **Sundays at 9:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary**. Sunday's service is streamed on Facebook and YouTube:

<https://www.facebook.com/Standrewct/>; [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLSSna5Ti\\_WSwRJ\\_ySbMA3Q](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLSSna5Ti_WSwRJ_ySbMA3Q).

Following the live stream, the video of worship will be posted so that you can worship as you are available any time after that.

All these sessions will be via Zoom, and will conclude with a brief order of evening prayer.

### Summer Worship Notes...

- Sunday, June 11, will be the last Sunday our wonderful choir will be singing until the fall season unfolds in early September. Our hymns of gratitude to all the members of the choir, to the Bell Choir, instrumentalists, and to Gwynne Hopko who is continuing in her fine leadership of this congregation's ministry of music. We are all grateful for the disciplined, faithful and joy filled ministry shared by all our musicians.
- The first of two liturgies designed for summer Sundays will begin on June 11, the second in mid-July. Lively and familiar hymns and hymn tunes await you in both as we lift our summer praises to God.

## PARISH NEWS

### New England Synod Assembly, June 9-10

Jill Little will be serving as St. Andrew Church's delegate at the annual New England Synod Assembly at the DCU Center in Worcester, MA on June 9-10.

Theme for the Assembly will be *A Church Born in the Tomb: Death and Resurrection in the 21st Century Church*. Among the topics to be addressed at the assembly: plans for the 2024 bishop election process, follow-up report on the anti-racism group, presentations on collaboration projects from around the synod, and a conversation about the many ways we are seeing death, resurrection and new ways of being the body of Christ in this century. Worship and a variety of workshops will also help fill the agenda for a busy two days.

Watch for a report on the assembly's conversations and decisions in the next newsletter.

**Invitation to Participate in Conversation  
With Bristol/Plainville Congregations  
During this Season of Discernment**

Dear Bristol area congregations,

In fall of 2022, a number of transitions in the ELCA churches of Bristol and Plainville caused us to enter a time of parallel discernment, giving each congregation an opportunity to assess its own energy, purpose, and hopes for what comes next. The hope was for each individual congregation to discern their path and to identify any opportunities for collaboration and deepening relationships around our shared mission across congregations. Thank you for engaging this challenging work in each of your own contexts.

In consultation with your transition pastors and consultants, we would like to host an evening of conversation with me, Pr. Steven Wilco, Associate to the Bishop, to lift up some of the good discernment work that has taken place in each congregation and talk together about hopes for what comes next individually and together. This conversation is one of information sharing, not one of decision making. We come with no preconceived assumptions about formal or informal partnerships that could emerge in the future but with the recognition that relationship building and open communication across our congregations is always a fruitful endeavor.

**You are invited for conversation:**

**First Congregational Church, UCC  
31 Maple St.  
Bristol, CT**

**on June 14 at 6:30-8 p.m.**

Light refreshments will be provided. We hope that members of the church councils and transition teams will make an effort to attend if possible, but consider the invitation open to anyone from the congregations.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact your transition pastor/coach or reach out to me directly at [swilco@nesynod.org](mailto:swilco@nesynod.org).

Peace,  
Steven

## A Prayer of Blessing and Encouragement for This Time of Discernment and for All Seasons of Life Together

*May the God of Surprises delight you, inviting you to accept gifts not yet imagined.  
May the God of Transformation call you, opening you to continual renewal.  
May the God of Justice confront you, daring you to see the world through God's eyes.  
May the God of Abundance affirm you, nudging you towards deeper trust.  
May the God of Embrace hold you, encircling you in the hearth of God's home.  
May the God of Hopefulness bless you, encouraging you with the fruits of faith.  
May the God of Welcoming invite you, drawing you nearer to the fullness of God's expression in you.  
May God Who is Present be with you, awakening you to God in all things, all people, and all moments.  
May God be with you. Amen.*

Elizabeth Eiland Figueroa  
from IgnatianSpirituality.com

## FAITH FORMATION

### WEDNESDAY WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY – 7 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Please consider building community at our weekly Bible study on the parables of Jesus. Come in person Wednesday night 7-8 pm in the fellowship hall or phone in. No questions are out of bounds and snacks are provided. The Prodigal Son, Great Banquet, Pearl of Great Price, and Vineyard and Laborers are all discussed soon to be met by others. Please invite your friends. Questions, call Matt Stojanov for more information (203) 768-7194.

**Scholarship Applications:** Graduating high school seniors and students currently enrolled in a post-secondary program are welcome to apply for this scholarship, which awards up to \$500 in scholarship(s) to eligible members annually. Applications are due in the church office ([churchoffice@standrewct.org](mailto:churchoffice@standrewct.org)) by **June 30, 2023**.

**The Pastor Perry and Sally Beaver Scholarship Application can be found here:**

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/16OpPurAOT4aOM9uIVJd-zlim9P9u3WY4/view?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/16OpPurAOT4aOM9uIVJd-zlim9P9u3WY4/view?usp=share_link)

## OUTREACH & MISSIONS

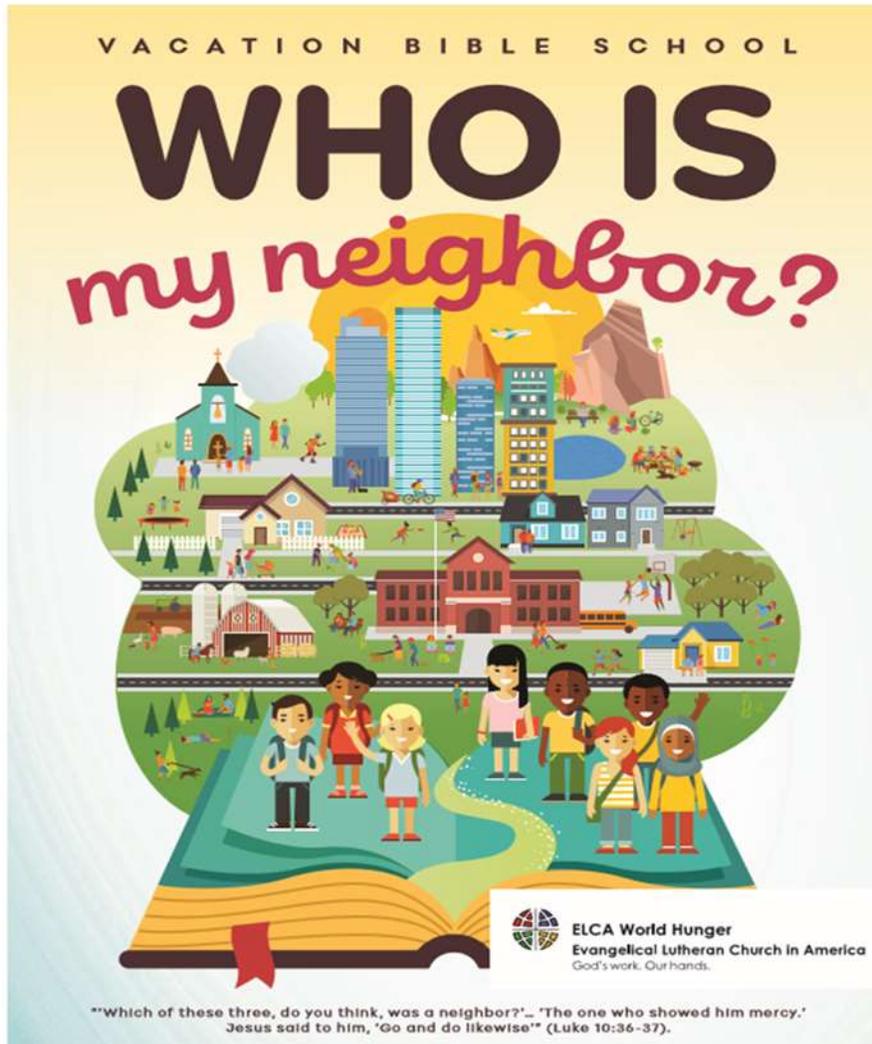
**GROCERY CART CHALLENGE:** "HUNGER IS NOT ON SUMMER VACATION" - please continue to support our shopping cart throughout the summer by picking up a few things while grocery shopping. Food insecurity continues to be high in our town, so anything you can give is welcome.

**Cozy Cover Ministry:** A huge thank you to all who have left donations for the Cozy Cover Ministry and the Greeting Card Ministry. All will be used. Anyone interested in becoming part of these activities, please call Trudi @ 860-583-0554.

Also, will the crafter who created and donated the outstanding quilt with the pocket and cross, please call Trudi. May our Lord continue to bless these generous friends.

You may not be able to donate anything. Your prayers for the success of these Ministries are the **very** best donations and bring glory to the God we serve."

## PARISH LIFE



## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2023

July 17-21, 2023

5:30pm to 8:00pm

Includes dinner for your child

FREE

For kids entering Pre-K\* to kids entering 6th grade

\*must be potty-trained

Registration begins May 1, 2023

VBS is in need of a games person and fulltime 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teachers.

Please contact Arlene Creswell at [aswellone@comcast.net](mailto:aswellone@comcast.net).

For more information see the St. Andrew Website at [www.standrewct.org](http://www.standrewct.org)

## STEWARDSHP

### OUR DAILY BREAD



**Electronic Offering:** are you ready to start using automatic electronic giving? We can walk you through it, it is incredibly easy and you get an email every week (or month, your choice) confirming your offering. Go to [standrewct.org](http://standrewct.org) and click the Donate button. You can make a one-time donation, set up weekly or monthly offerings, all in just minutes! See Bob H. or Arlene C. for info/assistance.

**Service Stewardship:** if you've ever thought about serving but were afraid to ask....now's the time to take that step! We have opportunities to serve in the areas of worship, outreach, parish life, from one-time to short-term duties. Many hands make light work. Training is always provided :0) See Bob H., Arlene C. or any Council member for more details.

### JUNE BIRTHDAYS

3 Lois St. Pierre	14 Dominic Massaro
3 Arlene Creswell	15 Renae Smith
4 Brian Tessman	15 Caden Tampellini
6 Heidi DellaBianca	17 Thomas Valentukonis
7 Sorrell Alexander	17 Irene Nelson
8 Carlina Mazarella	19 Robert Boisvert
9 William Flaherty, Jr.	20 Laurie Ellsworth, Jr.
9 Roger Narvesen	21 Ralph Landrette
9 Skylar Neumann	21 Melanie Cruz
10 Joyce Killiany	21 Thomas Golden
10 Rusty Cunningham	22 Leslieann Koonz
13 Sharon Modeen	22 Margaret Beauregard
13 Anne Aurand	23 Raymond Ellsworth, Jr.
13 William Golden	25 Kathleen Winter
13 Nikolas Shackford	26 David Sonstrom
14 Luis Cardenas, Jr.	26 Nolan Humphrey

### CARING FOR EACH OTHER AND FOR THOSE IN OUR COMMUNITY

**Remember in your prayers...those known to us in need of healing: We offer prayers of thanksgiving and supplication for:**

- those known to us in need of healing: Bill Murtha, Arthur Potz, Jim Prior, Callum Rescsanski, Paul Rescsanski, Charles Schissler, Steven Siecienski, Johanna Tessman, Carole Wedler, Trudi Wedler, Marge Pearson, Anna Zurell, Nancy Denehy, Susan Provenzano, and all those in nursing homes and the homebound: Marie Ouellette and Jean Wentland.

A gift was given, to the Glory of God, in memory of Eleanor O'Regan, by:

Joan Strecker

Joan and Louis Usala, Jr

Kathleen and Eric Waltz

Joan and Bob Lagasse

Bob and Vera Herold

Roy and Rosemarie Tessman

A gift was given, to the Glory of God, in memory of Nick Ferro, by:

Ms. Alfreda Ahl

**Purpose Statement**

***We are committed to seeking out people for membership in Christ's family, studying God's Word together that we may grow in his grace, strengthening our lives with regular worship and fellowship and sharing our time, talents, and treasure that Jesus will be known to all people through our words and deeds.***