



The Newsletter

First Congregational Church of Westfield

September 2026

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to share that, through our partnership with Southwick UCC, Rev. Kristie Rubendunst will serve as Bridge Minister from August 31, 2026, through February 28, 2027.

Rev. Kristie will divide her time between our congregation and Southwick UCC on Mondays and Tuesdays, with the exact schedule and locations still being finalized. She will also preach at both churches on Sundays, and we will continue our practice of holding a shared worship service on the last Sunday of each month. Urgent calls, emails, or text messages received outside her scheduled working hours or on her days off will first be directed to lay leadership and, if necessary, escalated to Rev. Kristie.

We invite everyone to join us for her first worship service on **Sunday, September 6**, as we gather to welcome her into our church family and begin this new chapter of ministry together. As Rev. Kristie begins her work among us, we ask for your prayers, encouragement, and support. By extending a warm welcome, participating in the life of the church, and working together in a spirit of faith and fellowship, we can help make her ministry with us a meaningful and fruitful experience for all.

Blessings,

Daniel

Daniel Koehne. Moderator



TO: MEMBERS OF FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

SUBJECT: SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

In accordance with the by-laws of the First Congregational Church, Westfield, MA, Article VIII, Section 3, a Special Congregational Meeting has been called on Sunday, September 20th at 10:30 AM.

The purpose of the meeting is to "Decide if we want to continue to partner with Southwick or if we want to search for a full-time settled minister for First Congregational Church."

The Congregation will be provided information in advance of the meeting about the benefits of a full-time or part-time/shared minister. This vote will allow the search committee to proceed.

Janet St. Jean, Clerk

Family Ministries

The Family Ministries Committee has been busily lining up events for the fall. Here is a list of activities that you might enjoy:

Disc Golf – September 20 at 1PM. Marc Winer will lead the pack in this exciting event.

Community Lunch and Board Games - September 27 after church. This is a combined service with Southwick, and everyone is invited. We will provide the main course. You can bring salads and desserts. And, if you have a favorite game, bring that too.

Annual Halloween Party - October 24 from 2:00-4:00 – The entire Westfield community is invited. The event is free for all. Games, candy, a photo op, pumpkin decorating, and lots of fun for all ages.

Thunderbirds Game – Friday, November 6. We have great seats booked!

African Drumming - Dates TBA – Janet St. Jean will lead this fun and popular event which is open to all ages.

Stay tuned for detailed information on all these exciting activities.

The Family Ministries Committee is looking for pictures from your spring/summer adventures. Has anyone in your family graduated? Or gotten married? Or had a great adventure (at home or otherwise)? We would like a picture to put on the bulletin board in the hallway between the sanctuary and Fellowship Hall. We love the pictures we put up last fall/winter, but they are now out of date! Please send all pictures to Janet St. Jean. You can text or email: janetstjean@comcast.net or 413-563-5156.

Do you have any ideas you would like to share with us? Don't hesitate to talk with us any time. We want to continue to make this church a family place for everyone.

Co-Chairs, Mara Winer and Gail Ives
Members, Cindy D'Angelo, Linda Hauk, Amy Platt,
Janet St. Jean, Marc and Michelle Winer and Jim Yesu



**First Congregational Church
of Westfield**
"Family Ministries"
"Disc Golf"
Sunday, September 20th 1PM
Allen Tree Farm Disc Golf
14 North Road
Westfield MA 01085



What to bring: Water, Comfortable Clothes and shoes to walk/hike in the woods, Bug Spray.
Event is free for all ages, and discs will be provided if needed. Instruction will be given at the start.
We will play 6-9 holes
Marc Winer will lead the pack.
in this exciting event. Please sign up on the Coming Events board or call the church office.
568-2833.



Welcome Rev. Kristie Rubendunst:

The Rev. Kristie Rubendunst is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ who offers thoughtful, engaging preaching and a compassionate pastoral presence. Her ministry is grounded in a deep sense of wonder at the beauty and complexity of God's Creation and shaped by devotion to Jesus, and to the compassion, justice, and community embodied in the Way of Life he taught.

She is passionate about nurturing spaces for reflection and connection, inviting people to consider how faith calls us to care for one another, serve our communities, and work toward a more just and generous world.

A graduate of Yale Divinity School and Hartford International University for Religion and Peace, Rev. Kristie has served congregations across Connecticut in both pulpit supply and transitional ministry settings. She is grateful for the opportunity to be with congregations in worship, sharing in prayer, reflection, and the work of listening for God's presence together.



First Congregational Church
of Westfield
"Family Ministries"
presents

"Community Lunch and Board Games"

September 27th after Church

Main Course will be provided

Please bring salads or desserts!

If you have a favorite game,
bring that too!



September Newsletter- World Service Committee

John 6:35 Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life; he who comes to me shall not hunger, and he who believes in me shall never thirst.

Thank You

Our Community Table/Westfield Soup Kitchen: Thank You to each person who has baked a dessert, assisted with meal preparation, delivered meals, and/or assisted in serving the meal. We could not serve the community without your generosity and assistance.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR GIVING OF YOUR TIME AND RESOURCES

Westfield Food Pantry: 3rd Sunday of each month: Each month we bring items for the Westfield Food Pantry. Items that are requested include Spaghetti sauce, Soup, Crackers all types, Macaroni & Cheese, Tuna fish, canned vegetables, Cereal, Canned Fruit, Peanut Butter, Jelly.

The **2nd Sunday** in each month your WSC will make an announcement for the items that are in short supply at the Food Pantry. This month they were asking for Pasta sauce, cereal, peanut butter, crackers.

Our Community Table/Westfield Soup Kitchen - 4th Tuesday of the month: We will need desserts for the meal. Cupcakes, cookies, brownies, sheet cakes are greatly appreciated by those who share a meal at the soup kitchen. Each donation must serve **24** people. If you are willing to bake a dessert, please contact **Nancy Condon**, Goodie Guru at 413-297-0778 or at nancy@paddleforwater.net. Tuesday bring your dessert to the church by 2:00pm or take it to the Soup Kitchen at 101 Meadow Street between 4:00 & 4:30. It would be great if you could stay and help. **CALL Cindy or Mayme** to learn how you could help.

Westfield River Elementary School: Thank you for your support for this mission project. Should there be any questions you can ask Nancy Condon or Ray Salois who are the direct liaisons to Westfield River Elementary School. The World Service committee is using the budget figure to reimburse teachers with their purchases of supplies that the school system cannot supply. We are keeping very accurate records of all reimbursements.

Mission Funds: This month we are sending donations to UCC Our Church's Wider Mission, Kinship, Salvation Army, National Military Family Association

Monthly Highlights: Each month your WSC will highlight one or two of our missions. This month we are highlighting: Our House and The Kinship Program

Our House is located on 48 Broad St in Westfield. The mission is to help homeless young adults' ages 18 thru 24 years of age to improve their lives by offering the skills sets needed to obtain their high school Equivalency Credential and move forward in their lives. Each resident is given an individual apartment with a kitchenette and communal living space so they can learn to live independently. Gail Ives, Ray Salois and Darlene Biggs did a tour of facility on August 6th with the director Kate Phelon.

The Kinship Program is located in Westfield High School. The mission is to help students between 14 to 19 years of age. This group of students could be experiencing trauma and/or financial hardships. The program assists with school supplies, groceries, clothing, medical help, and other essentials needed in life. The program usually has about 30 kids in need of help. The joint effort of Kinship program, Boy/Girls club program and YMCA program have helped young people to be able to move forward and stabilize their lives.

YOUR CHARITABLE DONATIONS: QCDs: Do you know what a **QCD** - Qualified Charitable Distribution is? You can use Qualified Charitable Distribution (**QCDs**) if you are aged 70 ½ or older, you can make contribution directly from your traditional IRA to a qualified charity. You can donate up to \$100,000 per year without it being considered taxable income, this lowers your gross income (**AGI**) and you do not have to pay tax on the distribution. You can use google or another search engine on a computer for more information or talk to your financial adviser if you have one.

First Congregational Church is a qualified charity.

This could be a wonderful way to support your church and charitable giving. Pray about it and see where God is leading you.

Prayers: Prayers are needed in so many areas of the World. Please pray for Peace and God's Spirit to touch the lives of country leaders. Pray that peace will be restored.

World Service Committee: Ray Salois (chair), Nancy Condon, Gail Ives, Dorothy Cichonski, Jennifer Waldorf, Barbara James.



September Hour Schedule

Sept 6th—Team #5

Lori LaPlante, Michelle Winer, Mara Winer, Janice Longstreeth

Sept 13th –Team #6

Bob and Jenniifer Waldorf, Elizabeth and Al Cincotta, Nancy Condon, Anne Houlihan

Sept 20th —Team # 7

Martha Roman, Alice Flyte, Julie Kraus, Nancy Chamberlin,
Brad and Deb Alm,

Sept 27th - Family Ministries Lunch and Board Games

Bring and side or Dessert



**Please watch for weekly emails from
First Church for an updated calendar of events.**

**If you have not been receiving them or would like to, please let the office
know your email. Fccwestfield@outlook.com**

First Congregational Church of Westfield



September 2026

SUN MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT

	Church Office Hours Monday –Wednesday 9AM-1PM	1	2	3	4	5
6 9:30 AM Worship Communion Sunday Welcome Rev. Kristie Rubendunst 10:30 Fellowship	8 Happy Labor Day To ALL Of You Office Closed	9 7:00 PM Church Council	10 10-2 Blessed Buys 12:15 Food Truck	11 10-2 Blessed Buys 12:15 Food Truck	12 10-2 Blessed Buys	13 9:30 AM Worship Homecoming Sunday Brunch Fellowship
13 9:30 AM Worship Homecoming Sunday Brunch Fellowship	14 12:15 Food Truck	15 6:30 PM World Service Committee	16 10-2 Blessed Buys 12:15 Food Truck	17 10-2 Blessed Buys 12:15 Food Truck	18 10-2 Blessed Buys	19 10-2 Blessed Buys
20 9:30 AM Worship 10:30 Special Congregational Meeting 10:30 Fellowship 1:00 PM Disc Golf	21 12:15 Food Truck	22 3:00-5:30 PM Soup Kitchen Autumn Begins	23 10-2 Blessed Buys 12:15 Food Truck	24 10-2 Blessed Buys 12:15 Food Truck	25 10-2 Blessed Buys	26 10-2 Blessed Buys
27 9:30 AM Worship Joint Worship with Southwick 10:30 Family Ministries Lunch and Board Games	28 12:15 Food Truck	29 6:30 PM Diaconate	30		Fccwestfield@outlook.com Office Phone 568-2833	

Deacons Corner

There is a children's poem along with hand motions that begins with the hands with interlocking fingers on the inside. The poem goes "here is the church", then the index fingers make a steeple and the poem continues with "here is the steeple." Then the thumbs open and the hands turn inside out and the poem ends with, "look inside and see all the people."

First Congregational Church is all the people. Although we bid a sad farewell to Rev. Paul in mid-August, his presence with us for four and a half years brought new initiatives and a light to our congregation.

Beginning in September we will be served by a bridge pastor, Rev. Kristie Rubendunst. We will share her with Southwick. We will continue with our weekly worship services at 9:30 with the last Sunday of the month being a combined service, alternating between the two churches. Rev. Kristie will also be at the church one day a week.

Please know that each member is assigned to a Deacon. We are here to support all the members. If you are in need of a visit or call, please either call your deacon or the church office who will then contact the Deacon. We will work with Rev. Kristie to coordinate any pastoral visits.

We are the church as the poem says and we are all ministers to each other. During this time of transition, reach out to each other and your Deacon.

Martha Roman, Senior Deacon

Deacons

Brad Alm, Deb Alm, Dorothy Cichonski, Nancy Condon, Neville Crabbe, Tina Dunlop, Cindy Gaylord, Anne Gelinis, Mayme Lajoie, Janice Longstreeth, Ann Mundy, Martha Scavotto

9/2 Ray Salois
9/4 Marc Winer
9/4 Madeleine Hamel
9/7 Albert Cincotta
9/19 Diane Bray
9/25 Elizabeth Niergarth
9/26 Bob Brownlee
9/27 Brad Alm



Blessed Buys Thrift Shoppe

September Sale

Open Thursdays & Saturdays
10AM-2PM

A Mission of:
First Congregational Church of Westfield



First Congregational Church
of Westfield

20 Broad Street
Westfield, MA 568-2833

Friday October 2nd - 4PM-7PM
Saturday October 3rd 9AM-3PM

Stewardship Moment

Peter 4:10 *Like good Stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.*

What is Stewardship?

Stewardship is defined as using Time, Talents and Treasure for God's Will to be done on Earth.

Let's think about TALENTS!

Talents can be used for:

Praying with other people. We all have prayer talents but maybe not sure how to use them. Pray about it.

Sharing of your Talents, such as helping others mentally and physically with your smile, kind words, and the special gifts that we all have. Your Talents may include baking, cleaning, organizing, physical things like cutting lawns, singing and playing musical instrument. The extent of our talents can be enormous if we look to God through our prayers.

Donating your time to an organization like your church, local food pantry or any other organization that promotes God's will and your desires to do God's will.

God Bless you all

Stewardship Committee: Ray Salois, Ken Longstreeth, Jennifer Barkyoub

**Call or email the Church Office about
Hospitalizations and Prayer List Updates
fccwestfield@outlook.com 568-2833**

If you know of someone in the congregation who has been hospitalized, has upcoming surgery or is in need of our prayers, please call the church office .
Any updates to the prayer list are appreciated.

*First Congregational Church
of Westfield*

18 Broad Street

Westfield Ma 01085

September 13th 9:30AM

Worship Service

Followed by Brunch



First Congregational Church of Westfield

18 Broad Street

Westfield, MA 01085

Office (413) 568-2833

SEPTEMBER
newsletter