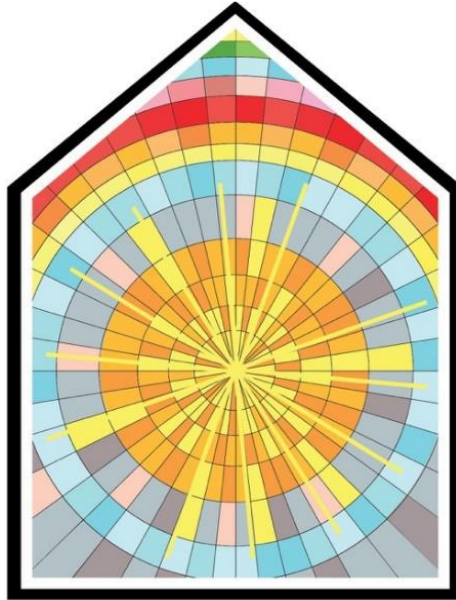


Welcome to
South Congregational Church, UCC
1301 Forbes St. East Hartford, CT 06118



SOUTH
Congregational Church

East Hartford, CT

September 14, 2025

Pastor
Minister of Music
Coordinator of CEFE

Godspotting in Our Stories

The Reverend Kevin Weikel
Jeff Cregeur
Lisa Griffen

Before the First Word: Entering Sacred Space



A Welcome for All: *Good morning, and welcome to worship at South Congregational Church in East Hartford. We are an Open and Affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ, celebrating God's love for all people: of every age, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, need, education level, and income. We welcome diverse beliefs, but not those rooted in hate or exclusion. This is a place for the spiritually curious, not the certain; for those who seek compassion over control. We honor each person's story and make space for questions, growth, and the mystery of God's love made known in Jesus. No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you belong here!*



Meditation: *God's presence breaks into our ordinary days, often in ways we least expect. A bush burning, yet not consumed, turned Moses' life upside down. Where are the "burning bushes" in our own stories? Today we listen for God's call in the unfolding chapters of our lives. In the places we least expect, God is writing holy words across our lives, calling us to notice, to listen, and to follow.*



For Children and the Young @ Heart

Imagine a bush in your yard or neighborhood that begins to glow like fire but doesn't burn up. Draw what it might look like. If God spoke to you from the bush, what would you think? What do you imagine God might say to you? Try writing a short story about what it would be like to have that experience.

Worship Begins † Please stand in body or spirit

🎵 Prelude (*Instrumental*)

Jeff Cregeur, Minister of Music

🗣️ Greeting and Announcements

🗣️ † Passing of the Peace (*Responsive*)

Leader: The Peace of Christ be with you!

People: And also with you!

🎵 † Sung Response

I've Got Peace Like a River

I've got peace like a river, I've got peace like a river,

I've got peace like a river in my soul.

(sing twice)

🗣️ † Call to Worship (*Responsive*)

Rev. Kevin Weikel

Leader: God calls to us in the midst of our ordinary days.

People: We turn aside to see what God is doing.

Leader: God speaks from unexpected places.

People: We take off our shoes, for we are on holy ground.

Leader: Come, let us listen for God's call.

People: We come to worship the One who writes our stories.

🎵 † Opening Hymn

Ours the Journey

Chalice Hymn #458

🗣️ Prayer of Presence and Praise (*Unison*)

George Schoen

God of fire and silence, you meet us in the everyday moments of our lives.

Like Moses, we pause to notice your presence, shining in unexpected places.

We praise you for calling us by name and inviting us into your story of love.

Be present here, and awaken us to the holy ground beneath our feet. Give us

the courage to respond with trust and to follow where you lead. May this

time of worship set our hearts aflame with your Spirit. Amen.

🗣️ Liturgical Response (*Responsive*)

George Schoen

Lay Reader: Where do we spot God?


People: In the middle of our ordinary days.

Lay Reader: Where do we spot God?


People: In the whispers that call us by name.


Lay Reader: Where do we spot God?


People: In the holy ground of our stories.


 Offertory Sentences George Schoen
God calls each of us into the story of love and justice. Our gifts are part of that story — offerings that join with God’s call to free, to heal, and to restore. When we give, we place our lives in God’s hands. Let us give generously, knowing that God is writing through us.


 Offertory Anthem Chancel Choir

 †Doxology Chalice Hymn #46
Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow
Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.


 †Prayer of Dedication (*Unison*)
Holy God, we place these gifts into your hands. Bless them and use them to tell your story of love in this world. May our lives, too, become offerings of service and grace. Inspire us to see your presence in our stories and share it with others. Amen.


 Scripture Reading Exodus 3:1–12 Pew Bible Page 44

 Sung Response ***More Light***
More light, more truth, is breaking from your Word.
More light, more truth, Holy Spirit, help us hear what needs to be heard.
(sing twice)

 Sermon “Take Off Your Shoes” Rev. Kevin Weikel

 †Sermon Response ***I Love to Tell the Story*** Chalice Hymn #480

 Celebrations, Concerns, and Pastoral Prayer Rev. Kevin Weikel

 The Lord’s Prayer (*Unison*)
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

♪ Song of Response and Reflection
Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying Chalice Hymn #305

♪ † Closing Hymn *We've a Story to Tell to the Nations* Chalice Hymn #484

🕊 † Benediction Rev. Kevin Weikel

♪ Postlude (*Instrumental*) Jeff Cregeur, Minister of Music

This Sunday's Service Volunteers:

Ushers: Scott and Mark Davis

Lay Reader: George Schoen

Deacons for the month of **September:** Gary Armentrout and Liz O'Donnell

Audio Visual: Chuck Pelletier, Bob Handel and Elly Milone

Flower Contacts: Lisa Handel and Gayle Juliani

Coffee Hour: Board of Christian Education & Faith Enrichment

Church Prayer List

Together in Prayer: The celebrations and concerns of our church and world

We Continue to Pray For...

- **Members and Friends of the Congregation:**

Nimmi Baker; Georgi Beers; Barbara Benson; John and Phyllis Carella; Bill Fagan; Charlie Goding; Barbara Guthrie; Mary Ann Higgins; the family of Keith Hodder; Macarah and Patrick Lynch; Liz Costa Mayerson; Beth McGinnis; Kim McMenamin; Gene Pellett; Chris Rataic; Russell Turner

- **Family and Friends Connected to the Congregation:**

Cher Allen, friend of Gary Alf; Andrew, friend of the Turners; Mary Anne Barrett, sister of Liz Costa Mayerson; Elijah Bertram, step-grandson of Barbara McNamara's friend, Gail Lopez; Sandy Hodge, sister of a friend of Debbie Rataic; Anthony Manuel, grandson of Debbie Wall; Steve Miller, Matt's brother; Addyson Murphy, great-granddaughter of George and Peggy Schoen; Sam Ranno, friend of the Handel family; Roseann Russell, friend of Debbie Wall; Bill Vendetta, brother-in-law of Debbie Wall; Bill West, brother of Kathy Werkheiser

- **Our Community and the Wider World**

- For all who are displaced by war, violence, or climate disaster. May they find safety, shelter, and welcome
- For the people of Minneapolis, Minnesota, after a terrible act of gun violence at a school and church left families grieving and many feeling afraid. We pray for those who were hurt, for the families who lost loved ones, and for the whole community as they seek healing and peace.
- For the people of Israel and Palestine, where ongoing violence has taken more lives, including those trying to offer care and help. We pray for safety for children and families, for those who bring aid, and for leaders to choose peace instead of war.



Prayer Requests

If you would like to add a prayer to the list on the previous page or schedule a visit with Pastor Kevin, you can call the church office at 860-568-5150, email him at pastor@southucc.org, or text him at 860-324-5630. Texting or calling Kevin's cell is welcome for emergencies, prayer requests, or if you have something joyful or fun to share, like a meaningful story or something that brought you delight. For all other regular church business, please contact him through the church office or by email.

Children in Worship

We are glad to have children in worship. A **Children's Shelf** is located in the Narthex (just outside the sanctuary) and is stocked with quiet activities and toys to help children engage during the service. Children are invited to visit the shelf on their way into the sanctuary, bring items to their pew, and return them after the service. These materials are intended to support children's participation in worship and are for use in the sanctuary.

A Note About Sunday School

South Church has transitioned from a traditional Sunday School model, where children are offered instruction outside of the sanctuary, to an inclusive family centered service for all. A Children's Shelf in the narthex has quiet activities available for younger children, while the worship bulletin offers engaging opportunities for older children and the young at heart. This decision has been made prayerfully and with intentionality, with the focus on creating a Sunday worship experience that promotes fellowship, inclusivity and celebrates all of God's beloved people.

Visitor Cards

If you are visiting for the first time, or if you've been with us for a little while and would like to learn more about South Church, we would love to learn more about you. Visitor cards are available in the pews and at the Welcome Station just outside the sanctuary. Please fill one out and place it in the offering plate or hand it to an usher. We look forward to connecting with you. We also invite you to join us for fellowship time after worship. It's a great opportunity to meet others, ask questions, and feel at home.

Hearing Devices

Hearing devices are available for use during worship service. Please see an Usher if you're in need of one.

Coffee Hour

We invite you to join us for fellowship time after worship. It's a great opportunity to meet others, ask questions, and feel at home.

Bible Conversation and Study

Join us in the **Church Library at 10am** on the **1st and 3rd Wednesdays** of each month.

We'll reflect on past Sunday's readings and sermons, and look ahead to the coming week's scriptures—helping us hear and process God's word more deeply. You may even share an insight that shows up in one of Pastor Kevin's sermons!

All are welcome! No special Bible knowledge needed...just bring an open heart and mind.

Tuesdays at Two Resumes September 16

Join Lisa G and friends as they journey through Jill Duffield's *Appreciate These Things: Eight Ways of Cultivating Compassion*. This eight-week unit of study is grounded in the words of Paul found in Philippians 4:8, "Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things." Come celebrate the gift of hope in the midst of challenging times. Contact Lisa G if you would like her to order you a book from Amazon. The books cost \$18, but please ask Lisa if you would like a donated copy. All are welcome to attend, whether you have a copy of the book or not.

Chicken BBQ September 20 | 6:00pm

Please join us for the Annual Chicken BBQ.

Tickets will be on sale on Sundays after church in the crossroads.

\$15.00 for adults and \$5.00 for children 10 and under.

Volunteer Opportunity at O'Connell Elementary School: O'Connell Elementary School, located at 301 May Road in East Hartford, is looking for classroom volunteers to work with students in grades K through 2 this fall. If you are interested in reading to young children or supporting a small group of learners, please see Lisa G for a volunteer participation sheet that will be reviewed by the school district. This is a wonderful way to support our shared community and to celebrate the littlest among us!

Council Notice

The monthly Council meeting will be held this **Tuesday, September 16**, at **7:00pm** in the church library. All church members are welcome to attend either in person or virtually. The virtual link and agenda will be emailed tomorrow.

This Week at South Church

SUNDAY, September 14

8:00am – Martial Arts/Basement

9:00am – Choir/Sanctuary

10:00am – Worship Service/Sanctuary

MONDAY, September 15

No Events

TUESDAY, September 16

11:00am – Staff Meeting/Pastor's Office

2:00pm – Tuesdays at Two/Library

5:50pm – Council Prep Meeting/Pastor's Office

6:00pm – Martial Arts/Basement

7:00pm – Council/Library

7:30pm – AA/Rms 9&10

WEDNESDAY, September 17

10:00am – Bible Study/Library

6:30pm – Cub Scouts/Rms 9&10, 1&2, Charrier Hall

THURSDAY, September 18

6:00pm – Martial Arts/Basement

7:00pm – Choir/Library

FRIDAY, September 19

7:00pm – Cub Scouts/Charrier Hall

SATURDAY, September 20

6:00pm – Chicken BBQ/Charrier Hall

SUNDAY, September 21

8:00am – Martial Arts/Basement

9:00am – Choir/Sanctuary

10:00am – Worship Service/Sanctuary

11:00am – Deacons Meeting/Library

*Please email/call the office at
office@southucc.org or 860.568.5150
to reserve a room*



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