

# E-Tidings

**Avon Congregational Church**  
**avon-church.org**



**January 8, 2028**

## **A time for Renewal...**

Sure, folks lament winter...slush, darkness at 4:30, the need to scooch up the thermostat regardless of the cost of oil... but...

Perhaps, as we have learned time and again from the stories of our faith, we invite this 'time of fallow fields' to be our time for renewal.



Noah trusted God would eventually land the ark and end the endless seasickness, even though I'm sure the realities of mucking out the two-by-two of every animal on earth became a daunting task, to say the least. Moses certainly tried to keep up the spirits of the marauding Israelites who followed him from captivity into a desert, but we know they were disgruntled. And the time from placing Jesus in a tomb till the realization that he walked among them must have felt like a lifetime to the disciples.

Patience is a virtue with which I struggle. Maybe you do too. Yet, in this time of waiting for the earth to turn once again toward the warming sun, why not explore our own possibilities to provide warmth and spring-like renewal for ourselves and others.

Take a walk and notice the magnificent architecture of our beautiful New England trees. Take in the wonder of a busy bird feeder. Look into your local libraries' opportunities for programs and peruse books in a subject area new to you. Write a letter to a friend or relative who will take special delight in the message. Work on new recipes. Be decadent and take a bubble bath. Clear your calendar and invite an acquaintance (who very well could be a new friend) for a cup of coffee. Partake in your church's choirs, food ministries, bible studies and develop a spiritual practice around how you approach your faith.

Let 'old man winter' howl, and mother earth rest till spring. With each other here at Avon Congregational Church, there is no reason we can't keep the home fires burning and the meaningful life deepening like a new spring's bloom!

Winter Blessings All,  
Pastor Chris



### Worship and Hospitality Volunteers for Sunday, January 12<sup>th</sup>

Trustee – Dick Lytle, Reader – Cindy Stanfield, Usher – Sandy Lytle, Videographer – Betsy Van Loon, Prayer Partner – Betsy Van Loon, Host & Hospitality – Sally Albrecht and Ellen Matos

**Flowers for Worship Services** – The 2025 Flower Sign-Up Poster is up on the main hall bulletin board! All are invited to sign up to provide a bouquet of flowers for the table in front of the pulpit on Sundays. Questions? Contact Trudy Desmangles at [Trudy.desmangles@gmail.com](mailto:Trudy.desmangles@gmail.com). The flowers are yours to take home after the worship service on Sunday, or you may request that they be given away. **We are currently looking for a volunteer to provide flowers for this Sunday service, on Jan. 12<sup>th</sup>.**



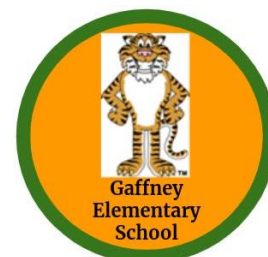
**Coffee with the Pastor** at the Coffee Trade (21 West Main St.) Come by for conversation and fellowship. Pop in or stay for the hour. If you haven't tried it, check it out – we have lots of fun! See you there!

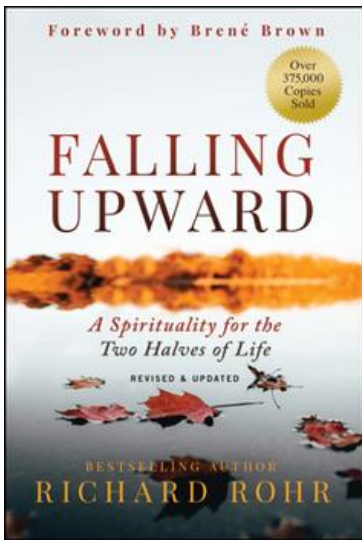
**January Stone Soup** - Please join us on **Monday, January 13<sup>th</sup> at 2 pm** in the church kitchen to make spinach lasagna for the clients of the Loaves & Fishes soup kitchen. All ingredients are provided through generous monetary gifts to this ministry.



**Outreach Ministry Meeting** – The Outreach Ministry will be meeting on **January 19** at 11:30 AM in the library.

**Christian Service & Outreach Opportunities** - Interested in trying something new? It's a new year and calendars are being planned for our Outreach ministries. Our Hands On Hartford Food Backpack program has openings on Wednesday mornings from 9:39-11:30 am on January 22, April 23 and May 7. Our Loaves & Fishes food - serving on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of each month from 11:00 AM -1:00 PM is being scheduled now. We have a rotating group of volunteers, so it's a perfect time to try it out. Our Gaffney Elementary School 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading program has room for more tutors. This is every Tuesday from 11:00-12:30 during the school year. To learn more about these programs, please contact Beth Ferrari, Kathy Hine or Marcia Cox.





**Fireside Bible & Book Study at the Parsonage** - Pastor Chris is offering a small group study at the parsonage using Richard Rohr's book, "Falling Upward" and delving into Jesus' Beatitudes. **We'll meet Monday evenings at 6:30 pm for 3 weeks starting Jan. 27<sup>th</sup> and concluding Feb. 10<sup>th</sup>.** This study will offer a profoundly deeper understanding for one of life's mysteries we all experience. Ironically, we grow spiritually by *getting it wrong* in the first half of life. Give yourself the gift of seeing your past *falling down* as spiritual fodder for *falling upward* toward spiritual joys that will sustain the rest of your days. \$20 suggested donation for cost of the book. **Space is limited to the first eight people** who sign up by speaking with or emailing [Pastor@avon-church.org](mailto:Pastor@avon-church.org). If snowy weather on any Monday, Tuesday will be the snow date.



**First Friday Dinner at Avon Congregational Church, 6 West Main St., on February 7<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 – 7:00 PM.** Join us for Swedish meatballs, egg noodles and carrots and special Swedish limpa bread, and our popular "Dessert Buffet", which includes coffee and tea to complete your dining experience. **Cost is \$20 per person.** Take-out is available. For more information, call the church office at 860-678-0488 or email us at [secretary@avon-church.org](mailto:secretary@avon-church.org). No reservations necessary.

**Huge Avon apartment for rent!** Avon Congregational Church has a spacious 3<sup>rd</sup> floor walk-up apartment available with 3-bedrooms and 1 bath at 12 West Main St., Avon - right next door to the church! Rent is \$1700/month, including heat and hot water - tenant only pays for electricity - and there is a washer and dryer in the unit. This bright, sunny unit has a whopping 1500 square foot of living space but does have lower ceilings so likely won't appeal to renters much taller than 6.' Great walkability to Dom's, DaCapo's, Bruegger's, The Coffee Trader, and Whole Foods! Contact Trustee Sally Albrecht if you need additional information. 860-306-4698 / [Sally.Albrecht@CBmoves.com](mailto:Sally.Albrecht@CBmoves.com)



**Social and Environmental Justice Ministry** - It has been 4 years since the Social and Environmental Justice Ministry ("SEJ") formed with the mission of educating the congregation about issues that impact our community and each other. After a survey was conducted that provided direction regarding topics of interest to the Congregation, we set out to present a wide variety of topics including racism, political vitriol, environmental impacts, human trafficking, and firearm safety, to name a few. We also raised awareness by celebrating and speaking to awareness months, hosting a group read, held the first community wide Pride picnic in the area, and sponsored a "green" festival. These are just some of the actions that have been taken by SEJ in the past four years.

It is time for us to once again ask, what are you interested in learning more about? This time we will create a two-step approach to our survey. First, for the next three weeks we will have a flipchart posted in Fellowship Hall. This flip chart is intended for people to put down ideas of potential topics that they would like to explore. No idea is too silly or strange; we want everyone to just brainstorm the topics in which they have an interest. Based on the ideas generated, we will then send out an electronic survey monkey (hard copy will also be available) to have people rank the ideas so we can tell what the majority of the Congregation is interested in. We will begin the survey in February, and anticipate that you will have two weeks to turn in your results.

Your opinion is critical for the SEJ to be able to present content and programs that are of interest to the community. We are not asking you to do anything to bring the content to life, just to tell us what you want us to do.

We look forward to hearing all your ideas.



Free Drum Set available. Includes bass drum, floor tom, snare drum and two tom-toms. Drums may be picked up during office hours, Monday – Thursday, 9 AM – 2:30 PM or on Sunday following worship. If interested contact Music Director Karen Levan or the church office at 860-678-0488.

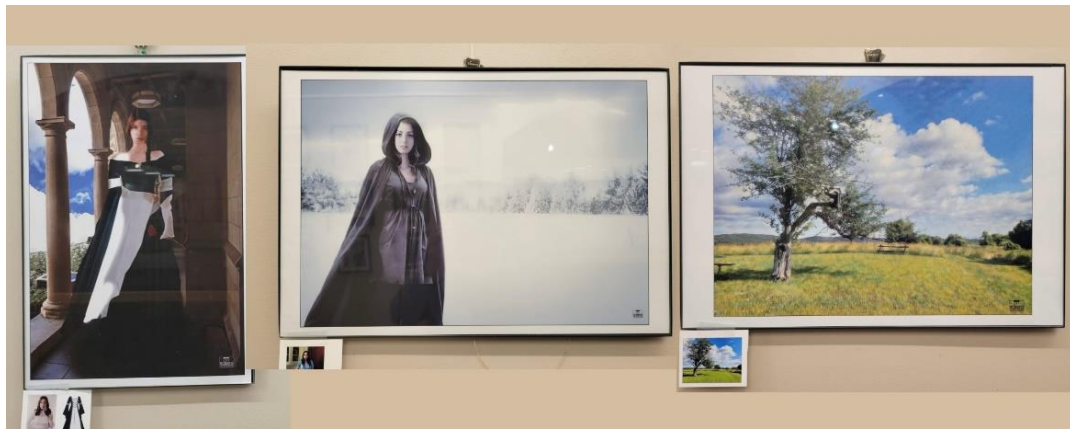
# Blessing Pastor Jennifer as she transitions to a new ministry!



## Happenings in our community

**Looking for something to do on a cold day in January?** ACC parishioner David Robbins invites you and your friends to check out his photography exhibit, currently on display at the Simsbury Public Library (725 Hopmeadow Street) during the month of January.

David graduated from Rochester Institute of Technology's commercial photography program back during the days when large format film was king, and the "wet" darkroom was the only way to process and print photos. Today his specialty is commercial and product photography, along with portraits. David's influences are Irving Penn, Richard Avedon, and that early 1960's "Vogue fashion look". His hoped-for approach is like that of Annie Leibowitz: a lifestyle portrait that shows more of the subject's personality. David currently lives in Simsbury with his wife, Kate, and Gypsy, his Cavalier King Charles Spaniel. If you have any questions for David, he can be reached at [davidrobbins62@comcast.net](mailto:davidrobbins62@comcast.net) or at (203) 521-7539.



### **Question. Persuade. Refer.**

Three simple steps that anyone can learn to help save a life from suicide.

**As a QPR-trained Gatekeeper you will learn to:**

- recognize the warning signs of suicide
- know how to offer hope
- know how to get help and save a life



# QPR WORKSHOP

Wednesday, January 29, 2025, 5:30 pm- 7:00 pm  
Avon Library Community Room

This free 90-minute training will be run by Justine Ginsberg, BSN, RN *Justine is the Community Health Coordinator and Program Director - RGH for Farmington Valley Health District.*

**If you are a:**

*Parent, Caregiver,  
Veteran, Educator,  
Teenager, or a  
compassionate human,  
you are welcome to  
attend this workshop.*

QPR stands for Question, Persuade, and Refer. Three simple steps that anyone can learn to help save a life from suicide. Just as people trained in CPR and the Heimlich Maneuver help save thousands of lives each year, people trained in QPR learn how to recognize the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to question, persuade, and refer someone to help. Each year thousands of Americans, like you, are saying "Yes" to saving the life of a friend, colleague, sibling, or neighbor. QPR can be learned in our Gatekeeper course in as little as one hour.



## **Livestreaming Services and Accessing Church Social Media**

**Sunday services are accessible on the Avon Congregational Church Facebook page and our YouTube channel. The links for those are below:**

<https://www.facebook.com/avoncongregational> or  
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC9C9s7fZ28HKpSllaoeGZfQ>

For information about Avon Congregational Church, click on the following link:

### **The Avon Congregational Church Website**

[www.avon-church.org](http://www.avon-church.org)

**Most events and lots of pictures are often posted to our ACC Facebook Page**

## **Our Statement of Inclusion**

In keeping with the life and teaching of Christ Jesus, we joyfully and unconditionally welcome all people of any age, gender, sexual orientation, race, culture, ability or social or economic status into our community of faith. We affirm the humanity of all people as unique individuals made in God's image. We also affirm the special gifts that each person has to offer. We invite all to participate in the full life of the church and covenant of our Christian community.

## **Staff Contact List – Online Church Information**

Rev. Chris Solimene, Pastor

[pastor@avon-church.org](mailto:pastor@avon-church.org)

Karen Levan, Dir. of Music Ministries/Organist

[music@avon-church.org](mailto:music@avon-church.org)

Jolene Tefoe, Dir. of Avon Nursery School

[ans@avon-church.org](mailto:ans@avon-church.org)

Kathy Smith, Office Manager

[secretary@avon-church.org](mailto:secretary@avon-church.org)

John Carlson, Finance Administrator

[administrator@avon-church.org](mailto:administrator@avon-church.org)

Gene Martin, Sexton

Tom Keough, Sexton

Church Address: 6 West Main Street, Avon, CT 06001

Church Phone Number 860-678-0488

Church Website [www.avon-church.org](http://www.avon-church.org)

Church Wi-Fi: avonchurch



Scan for giving

## **Steering Circle 2024 – 2025**

Moderator – Susan Elliott; Treasurer – Bob Linderman; Clerk – Jerry Humble;  
Worship – Sue Crowther and Laurie Petrin; Nurturing – Donna Lynn Young  
and Lee Egan; Outreach – Marcia Cox and Kathy Hine; Support – Beth Ferrari and  
Betsy Van Loon; Members – at - Large – Sally Albrecht and Don DelCegno