

MEETINGHOUSE

THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF GREENWICH *monthly*



LENTEN OFFERING

PROJECTS 2019

WORSHIP WITH US

Every Sunday at 10 am

FCCOG declares itself to be open and affirming: open to all for participation, membership, leadership, and employment, and affirming of all who wish to join us as children of God. We continue to give thanks for God's guidance in our journey of faith.



First Church of Greenwich

An Open & Affirming UCC Congregation

108 Sound Beach Avenue • Old Greenwich CT 06870

203-637-1791 • www.fccog.org • [f @fccogct](https://www.facebook.com/fccogct)

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Reverend Dr. Thomas L. Stiers

Reverend Sally Colegrove



JUNE 2019 HIGHLIGHTS

- June 2** Children's Sunday
- June 3** FCCOG's Women's Bridge
- June 8** SOS (Sanity on Saturdays) Group for Busy Women with Kate Collins
- June 16** First Greenwich Point Service at 10 am
- June 19** Church Council Meeting
- June 23** Annual Church Meeting
- June 26** Caring Ministries Picnic at Tod's Point
- June 30** Open & Affirming Sunday

See page 10 for complete calendar

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A Note from Our Treasurer: Summertime Reminder

Please remember to pay your pledge during the summer months. That will help the church's cash flow and its ability to pay for ongoing expenses. Payment may be made by check or credit card (via [MyFirstChurch](http://MyFirstChurch.com)), with stock or as a donation from an IRA. Thank you for supporting First Church!

From the Interim Senior Pastor

June is busting out all over! Praise God for the beauty of Old Greenwich at this time of year. We are so blessed with the abundance of trees, flowers and of course the beach. Someone (who will remain anonymous) told me that things will start to slow down now as kids get of school and folks start making vacation plans. Fingers crossed?



Lots of exciting Sundays are coming up; June 2nd is Children's Sunday, June 9th Confirmation Sunday, June 16th is the **First Beach Sunday at Seaside Garden** at 10am. I'm looking forward to participating in that for the first time while here. Staff is going on Retreat Tuesday and Wednesday June 11-12 in Stony Point, NY. This will be a welcome time of regrouping after the Program year and we will be making plans for the upcoming Program year. Let us know if you have some ideas for us to mull over while we are there.

The National UCC Synod is in Milwaukee June 21st-25th and Patrick is attending as your delegate. Avery and I will be here to preach and counsel as you need it. To wrap the month up, June 30th is Open & Affirming Sunday and we'll be sharing some special music and prayers.

As your Interim Pastor I am now 10 months in and feel I have gotten to know quite a few of you. It's been great so thank you for the opportunity to continue to serve you. Prayers for your Search Committee as you anticipate the Call of a new Settled Pastor. It is in God's hands so patience is practiced and gratitude extended to the Search Committee.

Blessings in this beautiful month,

Carla

Reverend Carla Dietz
Interim Senior Pastor

Did you know...?



All the services at FCCOG are live-streamed on YouTube? Now you can visually enjoy each Sunday's worship service online. Click [here](#).

Hello, Summer!

A special all-church worship and picnic at 10 am on June 16 at the Seaside Garden at Greenwich Point (near the Old Greenwich Yacht Club, about half-way around the Point) will kick off the season. All are welcome on this special day, resident or not; simply state at the entrance that you're coming for First Congregational Church service. Please bring a picnic lunch to enjoy with your church community after worship **Please note: there will be no Auditorium worship service on June 16.** Should weather be bad that morning, we will revert to the Auditorium at 10 am.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Summer Service Schedule at Greenwich Point

June 16: 10 am All-Church Worship and Picnic at the Seaside Garden

8 am Beach Services at Greenwich Point

June 23 and June 30

July 7, 14 and 21

August 4, 11 and 18

September 1

Cover Story: Lenten Offerings 2019

The First Church Auditorium buzzed with activity on Sunday, April 28 as almost 150 members and friends gathered to put their faith into action to make a difference in our world for a Sunday of Service.

Together, we acted on Jesus' call to feed the hungry and love our neighbors with three different volunteer projects. Despite the drizzle, about 40 headed out to do spring clean up and mulching at the Greenwich Community Garden while another dozen did spring planting at Pilgrim Towers in Stamford. The remaining 100 worked the various stations for the food-packaging project for Rise Against Hunger where in less than two hours 10,156 meals were assembled.

What a joyous event where we worked side by side from youngest (7 months) to oldest (90+) to help alleviate hunger locally and across the globe using scales, scoops and shovels.

Thank you to all who contributed to make this year's Lenten Offering a huge success.

Church Life

Hats Off Book Study Group

Our book study group "Hats Off" has finished its Spring reading with **"The Island of Sea Women"** by Lisa See. Our novel takes place on the island of Jeju, South Korea.

This beautiful, thoughtful story illuminates a world very different where the women work as divers and the men take care of the children. We planned to end our season of reading with a beachside luncheon. Click [here](#) for a review.



Stay tuned next fall when we will begin another year with wonderful book selections, friendly readers and interesting discussions.

Women's Fellowship April 24th Trip

A group from Women's Fellowship had a delightful day visiting Marquand Chapel at Yale Divinity School. We met Olga Hartwell, FCCOG member and Yale Divinity School student, for a tour. We also enjoyed an outdoor worship service in which the students participated with songs, poems, and readings. Kristen Jacks arranged for us to have a delicious lunch at the nearby Lawn Club.

As you can see from the photo, it was a beautiful day with a clear blue sky.



Front row, L to R: Kristen Jacks, Debbie Berner, Prill Myer, Barbara Norrgard. Back row, L to R: Olga Hartwell, Chris Hartwell, Linnea Stenberg.



Flowers

Please contact **Judy Gordon at 203-637-8575** if you would like to provide flowers for the Sunday morning worship services in June.

Why am I a part of the Kettle Quilters?



We share a few responses to this question.

One quilter wrote: "I have sewn all my life and enjoy sharing my talent with other women who have grown up doing the same. We are a great mix of women who have just had babies to great grandmothers who enjoy sharing stories from the past and present. I love catching up on all the latest local news. It's fun to watch a quilt being put together piece by piece. And how proud to see the completed project."

And another: "I have been quilting for a long time. When I saw that the church had a quilting group I joined to help out making quilts to be sold and the profit will go to charity. Another reason was that I got to meet other people. I enjoy belonging to a group."

There are more stories to be told. Reminded of the stained glass window in the Meetinghouse that echoes Acts 20:35, "*It is more blessed to give than to receive*". We strive to do our best work that reflects in a quilt that we are proud of and resulting in giving back to the community. Come and try us out through the summer on Mondays from 9 - noon in the Binney Room or kettlequilters@gmail.com.

The Women's Fellowship would like to congratulate Judy Goodchild, the winner of the 2019 Raffle Quilt.



Avery's Book Corner

My recommendation for June is *The Moment of Lift* by Melinda Gates. It is "a powerful, poignant, and ultimately humble call to arms." (Tara Westover, author of the New York Times #1 Bestseller *Educated*) and has been hailed as "an urgent call to courage" by Brené Brown, author of the New York Times #1 bestseller *Dare to Lead*.



Women's Fellowship Annual Luncheon

The Women's Fellowship annual meeting on May 15th was an enjoyable time of fellowship for FCCOG women. We had about 40 in attendance, including our guest speakers, all three Pastors, and the Kettle Quilters group. A tasty lunch was provided by *A Delicious Affair Catering*. The group also enjoyed piano music provided by John Carroll, Carla's husband.

Co-Presidents Linnea Stenberg and Barbara Norrgard thanked the Women's Fellowship Board members for their work over the past year. Donna Hascher, Church Council Chair, presented the 2019-20 slate which was unanimously approved.

Sheila Bennett, Allocations Chair, explained the grant process followed by the committee. The total grants awarded were \$158,600 to 45 recipients.

These funds are provided by sales from the Rummage Room, the church thrift shop. Ticket sales from the Quilt Raffle are also contributed to Allocations. Hilary Lawrence introduced the members of the Kettle Quilters. Judy Goodchild had the winning ticket for this year's beautiful quilt.



Two of the grant recipients shared overviews of the work of their organizations:

- Vincent Santilli, CEO/Executive Director of Homes for the Brave, described the housing and services provided for both men and women veterans. More information at www.homesforthebrave.org.



- Natalie Gaudette, Development Director of Mercy Learning Center, described the literacy and life skills training offered to low-income women. More information at www.mercylearningcenter.org.





Our children have collected donations for Heifer in order to fund the purchase of animals to help the world's needy families sustain themselves and to start businesses that supply food for others. This will be our last Sunday to donate to this important program. For more information, visit www.heifer.org.

**Be part of a great team!
Join us & be a Church School Teacher!**

It is not too early to be filling the teaching spots for next year (September 15, 2019 through June 7, 2020). There is a sign up easel in community hour this Sunday and we hope you give this great thought and prayer. No experience necessary!

We know many of you have taught for several years and for that we are very grateful. In the past, we have asked parents to teach two years (or volunteer in another way in the Church School) for each child you have in church school. This is one reason we have been so successful in providing a good program because everyone helps do it.



Please contact Rosemary if you would like to explore this opportunity and learn how easy it is to do!

JUNE HIGHLIGHTS

**SUNDAY, JUNE 9
CONFIRMATION SUNDAY**

**SATURDAY, JUNE 15
FIRST CHURCH VOLUNTEER DAY
AT NEIGHBOR TO NEIGHBOR**

Please join other church members to stock the food pantry, sort, and display donated clothing and linens.

Time: 8:30-10:30 or 10:30-12:30
Location: Neighbor to Neighbor
(248 East Putnam Road, Greenwich)

This is a great opportunity for a parent/child team or adult and friend. **Children under 15 years of age need to be accompanied by an adult.**



Visit www.ntngreenwich.org.

Interested or have questions about any of these opportunities? Please email [Rosemary Lamie](mailto:Rosemary.Lamie) or call 203-637-1791 x820.

**Spring into Action:
Did you know that the Wellness Committee provides resources for motivation toward healthier lifestyles?**

As I write this we are enjoying some warmer weather. Hopefully this will motivate us to get outside more often and take up some new activities. Spring is a time of hope and new beginnings, and a good time for making some healthy lifestyle changes.

In the Parish Nurse's office, there is a lending library of books and materials to help nourish one's mind, body and soul. There are recipes, motivational recordings, and a variety of healthy diet plans available.

As your Parish Nurse, I'm available for motivation and confidential consultation. If you would like any inspiration, support, or resources for your own spring health initiatives, come see me in my office (to the right of the Auditorium stage).

I'm here Sundays 10 am - 12 pm, and Tuesdays & Wednesdays by appointment. I can be reached at extension 821 or email susana@fccog.org.

During Community Hour on May 26, the Wellness Committee offered information on preventing and detecting skin cancer. If you missed it and would like some information, stop by the Parish Nurse's office for materials. I also recommend this website for education about identifying suspicious moles: <https://impactmelanoma.org/resources/know-your-moles>.

Additional websites for skin cancer prevention information:

- www.cancer.org
- www.sunsafety.org
- www.skincancer.org

A Bit More History of First Church

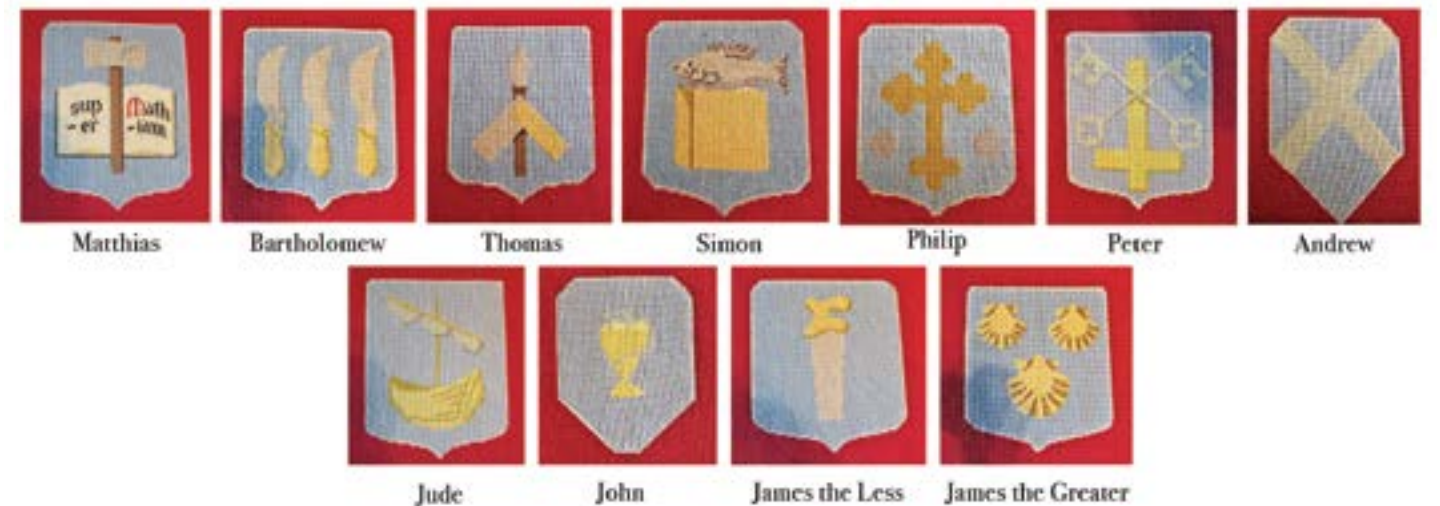
by Pat Larrabee

The Old Deacon Pew Cushions

You've probably noticed by now the old pews in the Auditorium, which were saved but hidden behind the choir. The cushions on those old deacon pews were needle-pointed by Rev. Marion Faye Stickney. She was hired in 1954 as Director of Religious Education. Even though she was ordained, she was not allowed to give sermons because she was a woman.

In those days, the choir sat in pews facing each other. In front of the choir pews were the deacon pews with the cushions, each representing one of the twelve disciples. Here are the symbols of the Apostles.

Thanks to Ruth Reed bringing back this information from Sally Colegrove!



Matthias

Bartholomew

Thomas

Simon

Philip

Peter

Andrew

Jude

John

James the Less

James the Greater

In the Spotlight: Our Communications Specialist

by Pat Geismar



Constantine, Algeria

Dalinda Rioseco began her life in Constantine, Algeria. She was born to parents working as missionaries there. Her Dad was from Minnesota, her mother from Saskatchewan, Canada and they met at the Prairie Bible Institute in Alberta, Canada. On completion of their studies, her Dad was sent to Tunisia and her mother to Libya. After several years of courtship

by "snail mail" they were married in November 1961 in Tunisia and settled in Algeria in 1962.



Roman ruins in Carthage, Tunisia

Dalinda's early schooling was at a French Swiss school in Tunis. When she was 6 years old, she, her parents and two older brothers moved to Casablanca, Morocco, at the request of the North Africa Mission. Dalinda's father was asked to start a non-denominational Christian church for converted Muslims which was "planted" in the family's converted garage. Her father always had a special place in his heart for the North African people and had great respect for the culture and insisted that their home and their lifestyle reflect that of the Moroccan society. So no Christmas trees for the holidays and no eating with "the guys"!



Brothers John and Philip eating North African-style with Dad's friends.

Dalinda had two older brothers and the three kids attended Arabic schools in pre-K and the French school thereafter. In 1980 the Mission celebrated its Centenary and

the family drove from Casablanca, Morocco to the mountains in eastern France to attend. This was Dalinda's first chance to meet "...other kids like me"! At the end of eighth grade she left home for a Canadian boarding school in the southwestern part of Germany, near the French Alsatian border. After graduation from the Black Forest Academy, Dalinda left for Boston to study fashion design.



Black Forest Academy Women's Soccer Team, 1985

By age twenty-one, she had saved enough money to matriculate at the Massachusetts College of Art. By graduation, fashion design had morphed to graphic design, as that is where the jobs were. Dalinda continued her education at SUNY Purchase, graduating in 1993 with a degree in Fine Arts and Arts Management.

Dalinda married in 1995 and lives in Greenwich with her two children – a daughter Amaia, who will graduate from Emerson College in Boston next spring, with a degree in Film Production and Art History. Her son, Tristan, will graduate next year from Iona Prep and wants to pursue study in Marine Biology. Dalinda is divorced now but both she and her ex-husband live in Greenwich and are committed to co-parenting their two children.



Dalinda with her mom Lillian, daughter Amaia and son Tristan.

When her children were young, Dalinda ran her own graphic design business. In the late 2000s as

In the Spotlight, cont'd

orders slowed, she enrolled in an intensive teaching certification course to teach French. On completion, she was hired to teach K – 5 classes at Julian Curtiss in the morning and 6 – 8 classes at Central Middle School in the afternoon. After five years, she moved on to French-English translation work for various companies.

Dalinda's passion is sculpture, using a variety of mediums and playing with light to create both mystery and illuminated works. "I am happiest when I am using my creativity!" Graphic design and marketing are practical applications of those

creative skills. In a few short months, she has created a new logo for First Church, enhanced the church's visibility on social media and the press, and brought color and variety to online and printed materials.

In her words, "I am very happy here. I am entrusted to do what I do and that goes well with my work ethic. I am appreciative of the time and space I've been given and I feel supported all the time."

Dalinda, we welcome you. We are so pleased that you have joined the First Church family.

From the Church Council

Security and Safety at First Church

Since September 2018, the Clergy, staff and Church Council have been involved in exploring different ways to make our campus safer and more secure. Several upgrades have already taken place with the restoration of the Education Wing including fire proof doors, up to code electrical systems, better lighting in the parking lot, and additional cameras, just to name a few. Additional upgrades are incorporated in the Meetinghouse renovation, but more can be done.

On January 9, 2019 we held an Active Shooter Training seminar with a local security consultant, also a retired Greenwich Police Officer. On February 26th we held another workshop with two local police officers from the Community Impact Division for Emergency Preparedness.

On Tuesday, May 7, Carla and Donna Hascher attended a meeting entitled "House of Worship Security Preparedness Summit" at the Greenwich Police Department. This summit was created in light of the numerous recent acts of violence in religious institutions in the United States and globally. It was by invitation only and not open to the public. Over 60 people attended from the numerous churches and synagogues in Greenwich. All had legitimate concerns for the safety of their places of worship. We are not alone in this concern.

Police Chief James Heavey ran the meeting and invited several speakers including First Selectman Peter Tesei, Police Captain Robert L. Berry, an FBI agent, the Anti-Defamation League and Sergeant John Thorme, Community Impact Officer with whom we have met here at First Church. Overall, the summit was extremely informative, and we will be scheduling a physical security assessment with Sgt. Thorme for both the Church, its offices and the Preschool.

One of the big messages was to be prepared for the unexpected, whatever that may be. Whether a power outage, a flood, a severe storm, fire or an unwanted, aggressive visitor, we should have a plan for evacuation and a protocol for dealing with any situation.

Several resources were shared with everyone that attended the summit.

It is our conclusion we need to form a Task Force Team to explore all these resources and see which are applicable to our community and put forward an Emergency Action Plan that will be shared with the Congregation and practiced.

If you are interested in joining this Task Force Team, please email Donna.



June 2019 Church Calendar

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 AL-ANON Newcomers 9:30-10am AL-ANON Meeting 10-11am
2 CELEBRATION SUNDAY Child Care 10-11am Worship Service 10-11am Community Hour 11am-12:30pm Youth Choir Rehearsal 11:15am-12:15pm	3 Quilters 9am-12pm FCCOG Women's Bridge 11:30am-4pm	4 Building Meeting 10am-11:30am Pastoral Care Meeting 11am-12pm FCCOG Staff Meeting 12:30-1:30pm Faith Formation Meeting 7-8:30pm	5	6 Hats Off 10-11:30am	7	8 AL-ANON Newcomers 9:30-10am AL-ANON Meeting 10-11am SOS Group for Busy Women with Kate Collins 3:15pm
9 Child Care 10-11am Worship Service 10-11am Community Hour 11am-12:30pm Caregivers Support Group 11:15am-12:15pm Youth Choir Rehearsal 11:15am-12:15pm	10 Quilters 9am-12pm Rummage Room Committee Meeting 1:30-2pm	11 Building Meeting 10am-11:30am Pastoral Care Meeting 11am-12pm FCCOG Staff Retreat	12 FCCOG Staff Retreat	13 Preschool Board Meeting 9am-12pm Hats Off 10-11:30am Personnel Committee Meeting 7:30-9pm	14	15 Volunteer Day at Neighbor to Neighbor 8:30-10:30am and 10:30am-12:30pm AL-ANON Newcomers 9:30-10am AL-ANON Meeting 10-11am
16 Greenwich Point Worship Service and Picnic (weather permitting) 10am Child Care 10-11am Worship Service (ONLY if Beach Service cancelled due to weather) 10-11am Community Hour 11am-12:30pm	17 Quilters 9am-12pm	18 Building Meeting 10am-11:30am Pastoral Care Meeting 11am-12pm FCCOG Staff Meeting 12:30-1:30pm Welcoming Committee Meeting: 7-9pm	19 Preschool Board Meeting 9:30-11:30am Church Council Meeting 7-9pm	20	21	22 AL-ANON Newcomers 9:30-10am AL-ANON Meeting 10-11am
23 Greenwich Point Worship Service (weather permitting) 8-10am Child Care 10-11am Worship Service 10-11am 348th Annual Meeting 11am-12:30pm	24 Quilters 9am-12pm	25 Building Meeting 10am-11:30am Pastoral Care Meeting 11am-12pm FCCOG Staff Meeting 12:30-1:30pm Prayer Shawl Committee Meeting 6:30-8pm	26 Caring Ministries Meeting 7:30-9pm	27 Hats Off 11-11:30am	28	29 AL-ANON Newcomers 9:30-10am AL-ANON Meeting 10-11am
30 OPENING & AFFIRMING SUNDAY Greenwich Point Worship Service (weather permitting) 8-10am Child Care 10-11am Worship Service 10-11am Community Hour 11am-12:30pm						

SAVE THE DATE!

Annual Meeting Date Announcement

The 348th Annual Meeting of the First Congregational Church of Greenwich is hereby called for **Sunday, June 23, 2019, immediately following the 10:00 worship service in the Auditorium.**

- To hear the Annual Reports of the Pastors, Officers, Committees, Organizations and Departments;

- To elect Officers for the ensuing year;
- To adopt the budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2019
- To transact such other business as may properly come before the meeting.

Note: Child Care and snacks will be available in the Undercroft for children during the meeting.

Newest FCCOG Members

We welcome the following new members to our Church Community!



Dave and Sue Eaton



John and Katie Magovern



Pamela Cheng and Alfredo Egas

Music & Arts at First Church

by Dr. Craig Scott Symons

Music Sunday was a tremendous success and the weather cooperated wonderfully. All five of our choirs sang and rang beautifully, along with solos from John Russell and Tom Woodman. Strawberries and croissants were enjoyed outside in the sunshine following worship. We are grateful for all those who participate in the music ministry of First Church.



Summer is the best time to ponder how you can share your talents and gifts as part of the Music Ministry at FCCOG. There is an opportunity to join the Summer Choir whenever you're in town during June, July, and August to share your voice and be a leader in worship on Sunday mornings. Rehearsals begin at 9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium and last for 30 minutes, and the choir is "summer casual", without choir robes. Then we have a short break for coffee, treats, and fellowship before heading back into worship at 10:00 a.m. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to take part in this choir experience. Email [Craig Symons](mailto:Craig.Symons@fccog.org) or call Craig at 203-637-1791 x822 for more information.



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From First Church Preschool



**FIRST CHURCH
PRESCHOOL**

"Learning Through Caring - For Ourselves, Each Other & Our Earth!"
Preschool of First Congregational Church of Greenwich, CT

Still need something fun for your kids to do this summer?

We have limited spaces available in our Summer Program at First Church Preschool. Call today!

Are you looking for a great preschool program for your 2 - 4 year-old?

Come see us! Spaces still available for the 2019 - 2020 school year.

**Call 203-637-5430 for more information or a tour.
Visit our [website](#).**

NEWS FROM THE RUMMAGE ROOM

191 Sound Beach Avenue, Old Greenwich

Thank you everyone for donating to The Rummage Room. We appreciate it and so do all the charities that we donate to.

We have been receiving some great donations that are flying out the door, so keep them coming. Our customers love all of the clothing and the unique specialty items we receive.

Manager Leanne's Wish List: Ladies Spring Scarves, Children's Shoes, Men's Spring Suits

Thank you again to all of our volunteers - our store could not run without all of your wonderful help.

Shop Hours:

**Mon. - Fri. 10 am - 5 pm
Sat. 10 am - 1 pm**



Donation Hours:

**Mon. - Thur. 9:30 am - 4:30 pm
Fri. and Sat. 9:30 am - 12:30 pm**

Thought for All:

To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow.

- Audrey Hepburn