

Senior Minister Search Committee

Francesca Caponetti

Francesca has been a member at First Church for 6 years. She is currently a stay at home mother of 3 children— Marisa 5yrs, Ava 3yrs, and Nicholas, 4months. What she hopes to contribute to this search process is an open mind and a open heart, to be hardworking and keep a strong faith. She feels blessed to be a part of this process.

Mario Chiappetti

Mario and Lydia have been attending First Church since they moved to Simsbury from Basking Ridge, NJ in 2000. Mario has been in the property/casualty insurance business for over 30 years. They have two children, Caroline and Chris. Mario has been an active member of the Sunday Morning Book Group for several years and is a member of the recently created Prayer Group. He is extremely excited and honored to be part of this Committee.

Leonard Clough

As an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ, he has been a successful candidate twice for pastoral positions and, after retirement, has served on another search committee. He is married to Betty Keirstead, and welcomes being a member of the search committee charged with the task of finding a new Senior Minister.

Rick Dupree

Rick and his wife Laurie were married at First Church, where they have been members for 18 years. He has three daughters: Natalie (16), Samantha (11) and Monique (11). Rick served on the Board of Finance and is a new member to the Mission Board. Rick works at Travelers, where he is a Vice President of Reinsurance Operations.

Louise Gould

She joined the church in 1974. Over time she served on the Board of Christian Education, as an Elder and as President of the Church. Her husband Frank and she both enjoy singing in the Chancel Choir. They have two grown sons, who grew up in this church. Joel, his wife Judy and children live in California. Ben and his wife Sarah and son live in New York. On August 1st she will be retiring as Professor of Mathematics Education from Central Connecticut State University. Textile arts (often related to Mathematics) are a serious diversion. She sews, spins (yarn), knits, weaves and plays with beads.

Andy Granger

He is married to Christine Granger with 3 awesome kids (Hannah, John, and Mick). He joined the church 7 years ago, after moving to Simsbury. Since joining, he has been an usher, a greeter, an Elder, and on the Open and Affirming Committee. He also played Joseph a couple of times in the Christmas pageant. He is a stock trader for Keefe Bruyette and Woods. In his free time he has been very active coaching his kids in whatever sports they want to play. He is happy to be part of this committee, and hopes our efforts will benefit the church for generations to come.

Karen Palotti

Karen has lived in Simsbury over 20 years and attended First Church for most of them. She has taught Sunday School, participated in a bible group, served on the Music Committee, and plays Bells with the choir. She has 3 sons and 3 grandsons and works at Fitzgerald's in the upstairs office.

Mark Scully

Mark has been worshipping in the UCC for thirty years. Having grown up Catholic, Mark and his wife Ieke, a lifelong Presbyterian, wanted to worship together and found their first church home in the Congregational Church of Burlington, CT. Over the years, Mark has been involved primarily in two areas: Stewardship and small group ministry. Some of Mark's fondest and most spiritual memories of First Church have taken place in the setting of a small group of members, exploring and challenging their faith together.

Barbara Spear

Barbara has a long history with First Church including having been confirmed here, having been married here (to Roger Spear), and having both of her children baptized here. More recently she feels inspired by the fellowship through her involvement as a facilitator for one of our women's small groups as well as a volunteer planner for several of the women's retreats. She feels honored and privileged to have been chosen for this important work.

Jim Trimble (ex-officio)

Jim has been a member of First Church for over 25 years. In that time he has taught in the Sunday School program, served on the Board of Stewardship, Board of Finance, as Treasurer, and currently as President. Jim is the Director of the Actuarial Science program at UConn. He and his wife Sue have 3 grown children living in Maryland, California and Texas, which gives them an excuse to travel to see the Packers and Mets play in many different states.

Melinda Westbrook

Melinda, Wayne and her family have been members of First Church for over 20 years. She taught Sunday School for several years, was a PF chaperone on mission trips and served on the Personnel Board before becoming Vice President and then President of the congregation. Melinda sings with the Women's Praise Choir and participates in Bible Study on Sunday mornings. She works at Aetna, where she is Assistant Corporate Secretary and legal counsel to Aetna International and the Aetna Foundation.