



The Chimes

January 2025 Edition

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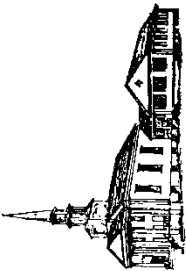
From the Pastor's Desk:

*"Joseph went up to Bethlehem to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time was fulfilled for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son.
- Luke 2:4-6*

Christmas has come and remains within us. Now we turn to the travelers who came to present gifts to the child and inadvertently stumbled upon a despicable plot. They were "tuned in" and were warned not to return and bring news of the child's whereabouts to the king. In that was wisdom.

We may not be as tuned in as the magi were but we have eyes, and ears, and heart enough to see clearly the world around us and respond in the way our faith requires. How might our strengths be needed in this new year? How will we take care of ourselves, our church, our community?

This Sunday we enter the season of Epiphany. An epiphany is an "aha" moment. The season asks us to tune into our sense of wonder and discovery. To be more like the Magi who traveled to find the One - holy, royal - whom the signs had led them to. They didn't expect to run into a paranoid king threatening death to babies, or to be giving gifts fit for a king (gold), a priest (frankincense) or an undertaker (myrrh). But they were open to the unexpected, seeing signs of a different sort of "king" to come, and the possibility of a new age.



I pray that we can go forward lightened, and bearing light into the new year. That light will allow us to the hard work we know is ahead. For now, let us step lightly and lively into this new year with hope.

Peace, *Sue*

**CALL FOR ANNUAL MEETING
OF
*THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF
NORTH STONINGTON***

Notice is hereby given to the members of the North Stonington Congregational Church of the annual meeting to be held on **Sunday, January 26th, 2025** following church services. It will be a hybrid meeting (in-person and via Zoom).

The purpose of the meeting will be to:

1. Act upon the reports of officers and committees of the church;
 2. Hear and act upon the report of the budget committee;
 3. Hear and act upon the report of the nominating committee;
 4. Transact any other business proper to come before said meeting.
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All-Church “Souper” Bowl Sunday – February 9th

Join together after worship to share a meal, ideas and plans for the new year as we look at the calendar and hopes for our congregation. Please bring soup, salad or sandwiches to share. Children are invited to “a Taylor’s boyfriend’s party with friendship bracelets.”



IMAGINE Great Generosity

***Jesus' way is to share, to love one another,
and to seek God.***

On our faith journey we have come to understand that God is a gifting God. We have also learned that generosity leads us to a deeper faith. So, as we focus on gratitude for all that God gives, we will want to respond with our tithes, pledges, offerings and promises – all year long.

Jesus' way can be our way of sharing our support for God's work here. God's Gifts for us become our Gifts to God!

Won't you be more generous through your regular gifts? Gifts of time, talent and treasure.

Now, in January, we need to try to fund our budget and we praise all who can help by giving to the work, the programs and missions of our church community.

As much as you are able, please try to increase the amount you can give annually.

***Through prayer, you will find a way to love;
giving and serving in the way of Jesus.***

Our Generosity Team is leading you to faith through generosity. For more information, please reach out to our pledge program coordinator:

Julie Evans, 860-889-1636

evansjulia889@gmail.com

From your Chimes Editor: Thank you all for your contributions to and help with the Chimes in 2024. Here's looking forward to another year of putting together the Chimes! Best wishes, Sherri Boldt ☺



Women's Fellowship

WF Annual Meeting; please join us!

Hewitt Hall, Wednesday, January 15th NOON

Pot Luck "Chat and Chew"

Our Annual Business Meeting:

We will plan the 2025 calendar of meetings.

We will evaluate the Bazaar & review the final report on the proceeds.

Your comments and ideas are most welcome.

The agenda also includes a financial report for 2024, a vote for our 2025 Budget and Officers, and selection of our recognized women for this coming spring.

Missions for January

The Christmas Fund Collections will continue into JANUARY:

Grace Upon Grace

For more than a century, annual donations to the [Christmas Fund](#) have supported United Church of Christ clergy and lay employees. Advocates of the fund are asking for gifts to help that continue for another 100 years.

“Most Americans live paycheck to paycheck; UCC clergy and lay staff are no exception,” said the Rev. Paul Ramsey, philanthropy officer for the [Pension Boards](#), which manages the Christmas Fund. “Those who donate are providing a nest egg for future generations to support those who have answered the call.”

‘Love requires deeds’

In 2023, more than \$2 million in Christmas Fund grants were distributed through “thank you” gifts, pension and health supplements, ministerial assistance, emergency grants and more — much of it supporting lower-income retirees.

Let us do our best to give to this special UCC Offering. Please use the special envelopes provided at church.

World Vision Child Sponsorship for our 2025 Mission Child.

Please commit to a month sponsorship of \$30.00: If you participated last year let us know you will repeat your sponsorship again this year.

If you want to be a new sponsor, we need people to take part with a donation of \$10 - \$100 for a specific life event in the life of our child: Birthday, School, Holiday, Warmth, Water, etc.

Please make checks payable to CCNS at the beginning of the month and put World Vision Mission Child on the Memo Line.



ESHILE Lushaba

***Let your Hearts Prepare for Joy in the
World!***

We sponsor a Mission Child for World Vision. She is now 5 years old; her birthday is July 13.

Eshile lives in Maseyisini, Eewatini, near western Africa.

She and her family, with our support receive through community programs: sanitation and hygiene programs and they have running water, a school where nutritious foods are served and the children have a nice vegetable garden.

The support and interest we show goes a long way to improving the lives of these children and their communities. Maseyisini has a community program for all these families in the area.

We received a letter this month, and Eshile says she likes chickens (which they raise), milk, ice cream, veggies, cake, and candy.

NOW, in January, it is time to sign up to help with one \$30 dollar monthly gift – Choose your birthday month OR an event in the life of this little girl. Thank you.

MONTHLY MISSION PROJECTS: 2025

January – World Vision Hope Child, PROMOTION & Sign Ups
(for monthly donations & special gifts)

February – Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center (PNC) Fuel Fund

March - UCC One Great Hour collection UCC
Prepare school Kit delivery to Meridan, CT

**April “Cause Contest:” Pick One – Simply Smiles, HELO
Haiti or
UCC Global Disaster Relief and have a speaker**

May Church World Service (CWS) Blanket project

June Tools of Hope project for CWS & Hunger Awareness at
PNC

July & August - PNC Hunger & Start CWS, SCHOOL KITS

September - Habitat for Humanity of Eastern CT
Continue Work on School Kits

October - UCC Neighbors in Need collection.

FALL (Oct. 1 – ~ Nov. 22) - Jammie Grammie PJ collection
with First Baptist Church.

November Provide for the PNC Thanksgiving Baskets

December UCC The Christmas Fund

PNC foods for Christmas

Thanks a Heap!

Thanks to...

- Steve Gadaree for fixing the cold water faucet in the bathroom.
- Mike Noonan and all of our choirs for the wonderful music during the Advent and Christmas seasons.
- Alice Robbins and Renee Celey for their beautiful solos and flautist, Michelle Macina, for her gift of music at our Christmas Eve services.
- The Music Committee, choirs, Gretchen Noonan, and everyone else who contributed all of the fabulous food at the receptions for the two concerts we hosted on December 8th and 15th.
- Kathi Thaxton and Mike Noonan for leading our Cherub Choir with practices and their singing at the December 22nd worship service.
- Steve Gadaree for the lovely handbell solo on December 29th.
- Those families who offered the Advent readings.
- All of our readers for the season, and Christmas Eve.
- CE for the Instant Pageant, and all who help the Sunday School.
- Everyone who helped for our bazaar.
- Mary Bliven for coordinating the booths & workers for bazaar.
- Patty Danley for the lovely bazaar luncheon.
- Peter Davis for providing lovely piano accompaniment at the bazaar luncheon.
- The deacons, ushers and lay readers who serve.
- Everyone who brings bring Sunday snacks.
- All of our dedicated staff members.
- The pie bakers and all who help with fundraising.
- All who gave to the Christmas Fund, which is also known as Vets of the Cross.
- Everyone who gave monetary gifts and food to the Pawcatuck neighborhood Center.
- Every family that kept their pledges up to date all year and every single person who pledged or donated to 2025.
- Folks who support HELO Haiti.
- Julie Evans for contributing the Chimes articles, "What Matters."

Thanks a Heap, continued...

-All of those who joined and assisted with the Instant Christmas Pageant.

-Kathi Thaxton for the green wreaths on the front doors of the sanctuary.

-Sharon Roode, who has spent extra time cleaning and defrosting freezers and baking more pies.

January Birthdays...

- 1** Rev. Sue Latourette
- 3** Jimmy Spavins
- 4** David Lewis
- 7** Sherri Boldt
- 8** Quinn Burnside
- 17** Jane (Janda) Rathbun
- 21** Agnes Terrill
- 24** Marion Pucella-Loutrell
- 27** Kathleen Bond, Alice Watrous
- 29** Nancy Buckeley
- 31** Megan Huckle, Kris Serwinski



... and Anniversaries

- 17** David and Jennifer Land
- 22** Danny and Marty Booker

If we have missed your special day(s) or if there are corrections to be made, please notify the church office at 860-535-0379.

Worship Volunteers

	Ushers	Deacon	Altar Flowers	Lay Reader	Communion	Comments
5-Jan	Joe Serwinski Kris Serwinski	Ron Robbins			Evelyn Bamford Matthew Sander	<i>Deacons' Meeting After Worship</i>
12-Jan	Patty Danley Monica Eppinger	Karen Doble				
19-Jan	Gretchen Noonan Kevin Noonan	Kevin Noonan				
26-Jan	Steve Gadaree Matthew Sander	Julie Clow				<i>Annual Meeting After Worship</i>



Worship Watch - January 2025 **Congregational Church of North Stonington**

Worship at 10 a.m. & streaming online.

Church School at 10:15 Office Hours Mon-Thurs 9 to 1.

5th - Communion Sunday - “Hoping for Wisdom” Isaiah 60:1-6, Matthew 2:1-12. Magi, Sages, whatever we call them, they were wise enough to avoid getting embroiled in politics!

Senior Choir with Michele Macina; Deacons’ meeting; removal of Christmas decorations.

12th - Opening Our Eyes” Isaiah 43:1-7 and Luke 3:15-22.

John the Baptist gives a message that is supposed to help the people see; and Jesus is baptized in their midst.

Senior Choir sings.

19th - “Spiritual Workout” 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 and John 2:1-11. Spiritual gifts we are given to be used for God’s purposes.

Jesus changes water into wine. We may not be able to change water into wine but we can change the world.

Senior Choir and Handbell Choir; 10 am NoSto Market

26th - “Fitness” Luke 4:14-21 and 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a.

Jesus is rejected at Nazareth; The body of Christ is described...how do we carry on Jesus’ work?

Senior Choir and Youth Choir; Annual Meeting after worship.

“As an Open and Affirming church: We respect the worth and dignity of all persons who come into our church family regardless of race, age, marital standing, gender, economic status, mental or physical challenges, nationality or sexual identity. We promise to support one another in our personal struggles, to understand and accept differences in one another, and pray to strengthen our love and acceptance.”

Mission for January: World Vision Hope Child – sign up to donate for our church’s continued support for our child Eshile and her family in Eswatini.