



THE GOOD NEWS *from the Belfry*

a Monthly Newsletter of the

First Congregational Church of Haddam and
the Higganum Congregational Church
United Church of Christ



APRIL

in the 2018th Year of our Lord
Caring for God's Earth



Higganum Congregational Church
First Congregational Church of Haddam
Returned mail to
23 Parsonage Rd.
Higganum, CT 06441

Address Service Requested

Church websites: higganumchurch.org and haddamchurch.org

APRIL WORSHIP SERVICE – Sundays at 9:30 a.m. at HIGGANUM CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
Christian Education and Child Care provided during Sunday Worship Service

Be glad in the Lord always! Again I say, be glad! Let your gentleness show in your treatment of all people. The Lord is near. Don't be anxious about anything; rather, bring up all of your requests to God in your prayers and petitions, along with giving thanks. Then the peace of God that exceeds all understanding will keep your hearts and minds safe in Christ Jesus.

From now on, brothers and sisters, if anything is excellent and if anything is admirable, focus your thoughts on these things: all that is true, all that is holy, all that is just, all that is pure, all that is lovely, and all that is worthy of praise. Practice these things: whatever you learned, received, heard, or saw in us. The God of peace will be with you.

Philippians 4:4-9 Common English Bible

Church~

I think we all need a good dose of encouragement and affirmation. I can't say for sure what is the cause of our current corporate weariness or malaise. It may be March coming in like a Lion rather than a Lamb. It may be the cold and snow, snow and more snow. It could be too many days spent without electricity. Perhaps we are also experiencing some "growing pains" in our shared ministry. Many of us are impatient for Spring and warmer weather. All these things and more are contributing to many of us struggling to "Be glad in the Lord always!"

Paul wrote the words above to the Church in Philippi where usual church things went on, like conflict which undermined the health and mission of the church. Paul was calling them to forgive and encourage one another. Let's take

these words personally, as if they were written to us. Let's claim them as a Love Letter to the Church in Haddam and Higganum.

Church, be glad in the Lord and bless one another by being gentle with one another and all you meet. We will benefit by opening ourselves up to seeing the nearness of God in the smiles we share and the kind words we hear when we're gathered in fellowship. Right now, we've got to stop being anxious!

Pray— articulate to God what it is you want or what it is you are afraid of— and pray some more. Give thanks, count your blessings, tell God and each other what you are grateful for. There are so many things going well in our ministry together... so many things to be grateful for in our combined ministry. When we do these things we do experience a peace beyond our comprehension and we feel safe in our bodies and souls.

Our purpose as the body of Christ in Haddam and Higganum is to shine before others by focusing on the excellent, praiseworthy, true and just things happening in our midst. We can and are doing this! We can share the Good News we have experienced and are doing our best to live out.

There is an aspect to being "Glad in Lord" that is not a mindless giddiness but rather a rejoicing in the midst of long winters and power outages (of all kinds). God loves us unconditionally. We are a part of a fellowship of believers who rejoice with and support one another. Spring is coming and summer will be close behind.

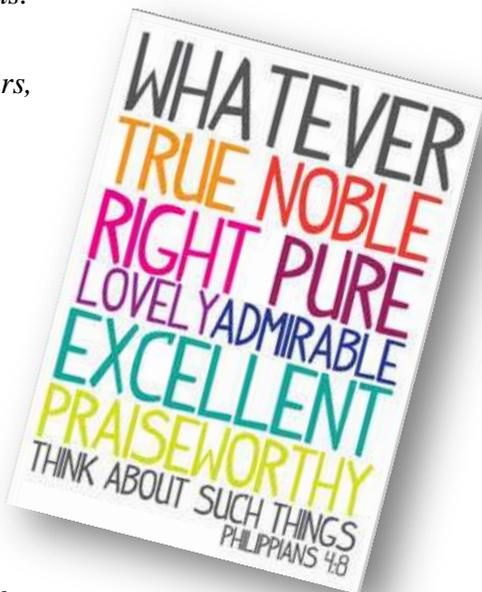
Abundant Blessings,

Tomi

Worship Schedule:

Sunday worship services will be at
9:30 a.m. at the following locations:

April	Higganum Congregational Church
May	First Congregational Church of Haddam
June	Higganum Congregational Church
July	First Congregational Church of Haddam



NO FOOLING, HAPPY EASTER!

Hopefully Easter was a good one and
No Fooling Spring is on its way!

After some April showers we are surely heading in the right direction of better weather, trees budding, flowers emerging from their winter nap and many birds preparing nests for new arrivals.

As for the H.C.C. Trustees we will be putting away the snow shovels and sidewalk salt. Then working to return the church driveway and parking lots back in top shape after winter plowing. We will also be raking, patching lawn and trimming a few broken branches from the Nor'easters of March.

All is well as we survived another winter with little or no damage!

We are planning on a Spring Clean Up...
Date TBA! Stay tuned!

Thanks for your support,

Submitted by,
Brian Thayer,
Chair, HCC Board of Trustees



The Diaconate of FCCH were sorry to learn that the Carlin Family (Chris, Anita, Mika, Kai and Omi) will be leaving the Diaconate after Easter Sunday. They reside in Chester and their children have developed friendships in their community and churches.

We wish them the best God has to offer.

RELAY FOR LIFE TEAMS FORMING

One of our Ministry Goals is to increase our visibility and service in the community. Would anyone be interested in participating with Relay for Life on **Saturday, June 23, 2018** at HKHS? The event is different this year – starting at noon and running until 10 pm (no overnight!) There will also be a fire truck pull event! We could start a team or help out at the event (ex: setting out luminaries). I have participated for all 12 years, first as part of a school team and for the past 7 years as a breast cancer survivor on the Pink Ladies Team. There are about 50 local survivors that attend and receive a wonderful meal organized by the Haddam Junior Women's Organization, as well as Boy Scouts and the Lions Clubs participate. So how about you??? If interested in any way please contact me: **Sue Craffey** at jcraffey@snet.net



COUNCIL MEETING

During April, Council meetings apparently are The Place to Be, as there are not one, not two, but three meetings to attend. Yahoo!

JOINT COUNCIL

A joint council meeting will be held on **Tuesday, April 3rd** at 7 p.m. at FCCH

FCCH

The next meeting of the FCCH Church Council will be **Tuesday, April 10th** beginning at 7 p.m.

HCC

The next meeting of the HCC Church Council will be **Tuesday, April 17th** beginning at 7 p.m.

Council meetings are open to all Church members, however only members of the Council shall have a vote as provided in our Bylaws.



OPPORTUNITY FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICE

On **Saturday, April 28** from 10am - 1pm we will be supporting the *Haddam Volunteer Fire Company* at their **Open House and Recruitment Drive** at Station 1 located at 439 Saybrook Road. This will be a family-friendly event where HVFC will have a Tent/Table set up to answer questions, leading tours of the firehouse and the apparatus and some live demos. The Junior Division, Ladies Auxiliary and possibly Haddam Ambulance will also be on site recruiting volunteers.



Our Congregations will provide hot dogs, popcorn, drinks and some baked goods. We will also share information on our ministry.

We need volunteers to set up, cook, serve and clean up. Please look for a sign up sheet; members and friends of all ages are welcome to be a part of this. Also if you are willing to donate or shop for items, we can use your help.

This project fits in well with our shared congregational goals for 2018!

WITH YOUR VOICE, WE CAN DO MORE

The combined FCCH/HCC choir has been working very hard on the Holy Week music that you heard on Palm Sunday and Easter. If you like what you heard, we would love to have you join us. We rehearse on **Thursday evenings at 7:00 PM**. The more voices we have, the more challenging music we can sing.



Submitted by John Anderson

HAVE WE GOT TAG SALES!!

Both church communities are having Tag Sales on **Saturday May 5th** as a part of *Haddam Junior Woman's Club Town Wide Tag Sale*.

It is time to clean out your closets, check out your cellar, and begin to downsize for the benefit our churches.



Items neatly boxed can be brought to FCCH beginning in mid-April. The FCCH tag sale will include a bake sale. There will be coffee and homemade doughnuts.

HCC's Tag Sale is being organized by Pam Crum. Items for donation may be left in either the garage or the basement of HCC. The event will feature the return of the popular hot dog stand and popcorn.

Watch for flyers and additional information in the coming weeks.

CHURCHES WITH A MISSION

Here are opportunities to make a small difference.....

1. **College Exam First Aide Boxes**
Please see related article in newsletter.
2. **HES Backpack program**
We continue to collect food items to fill the backpacks each week.
3. **Haddam Food bank or Amazing Grace**
There is a monthly collection of staples- peanut butter, jelly, tuna, mayonnaise, cereal, cooking oil, canned fruit, pasta and sauce. These items are given to the Haddam Food bank or Amazing Grace in Middletown.
4. **Connecticut Diaper Bank**
We will be selling Mother's Day cards in April. The proceeds will go to the Connecticut Diaper Bank.
5. **Serrv Sale for Habitat for Humanity**
Please see related article in newsletter.

*Submitted by Virginia Evensen
FCCH Christian Service Committee*

ITN DRIVER HELPS OUR OWN

Kim Radowiecki recently shared her excitement and happiness over the recognition for the kind volunteer who has helped her in so many ways!



Donald Jensen

photo credit: Wethersfield Life March 2018
Volume 5, Edition 6

A story appearing in the March edition of Wethersfield Life says the Wethersfield native, Donald Jensen is one of the busiest drivers for ITN Central Connecticut. ITN stands for Independent Transportation Network.

Don travels all the way from Wethersfield to bring Kim to appointments or anywhere else she needs to go. ITN needs more volunteers like Don. Please read his uplifting story at https://view.publitas.com/p222-6222/wl_0318_layout/page/1

Please keep Kim, Don, his wife Linda, and her hospice aide, Darleen, in your prayers.

Submitted by Kim Radowiecki



EARTH DAY – SUNDAY APRIL 22

WHAT IS EARTH DAY?
Ever wondered how Earth Day started? This observance arose from an interest in gathering national support for environmental issues.



In 1970, San Francisco activist John McConnell and Wisconsin Senator Gaylord Nelson separately asked Americans to join in a grassroots demonstration. McConnell chose the **spring equinox** (March 21, 1970) and Nelson chose April 22.

Source: <https://www.almanac.com/content/earth-day-date-activities-history>

In researching the topic for this article, I learned and now share with you that the 2018 Earth Day campaign is focused on addressing pollution caused by the proliferation of plastics in our world.

From poisoning and injuring marine life to disrupting human hormones, from littering our beaches and landscapes to clogging our waste streams and landfills, the exponential growth of plastics is now threatening the survival of our planet.

In response, Earth Day 2018 will focus on fundamentally changing human attitude and behavior about plastics and catalyzing a significant reduction in plastic pollution.

Source: <https://www.earthday.org/campaigns/plastics-campaign/>



So what will you do this Earth Day?
Here's an easy idea. Take a hike and take a garbage bag. Fill up the bag as you enjoy your surroundings. Leave the trail better than you found it.

Thank You



St. Vincent de Paul
Middletown

MEETING NEEDS, OFFERING HOPE.

February 26, 2018

First Congregational Church Haddam
905 Saybrook Road, Po Box 215
Haddam, CT 06438

Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for providing such a wonderful Sunday evening meal for our guests on February 25th. They enjoyed the delicious meal of Chicken casserole, corn, salad, bread, dessert and lemonade. What a great meal you provided for our guests. They thoroughly enjoyed it!

You will be happy to know that you served 100 meals. We also appreciate the 8 volunteers who did a wonderful job serving and cleaning up afterward. You are all to be commended for a job well done.

Sincerely and gratefully,

Zully Torres
Administrative Assistant
Program Coordinator

677 Main Street, PO Box 308
Middletown
CT 06457-0398

www.svdmiddletown.org

P / 860 344-0097
F / 860 343-0023



A big thank you to the knitters at the Saybrook of Haddam and Rebecca Williams and Alexa Flora for creating our wonderfully cute Easter bunnies!

SUPER SATURDAY

Beginning in 2010, each spring and fall, the UCC Massachusetts Conference holds a Super Saturday event - a full-day of skill building, networking and discussing best practices. Each event offers numerous workshops, a keynote address, worship, a marketplace of vendors and ideas and an opportunity for church leaders, both clergy and lay, to network with one another. Now that the Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut Conference are coming together to form one Conference we are invited to benefit from this Super Saturday Event.

This year four from HCC/FCCH attended this event on Saturday, March 17 – Pastor Tomi, Terry Smith, Sue Craffey and Amy Harlow. Each attendee participated in at least one workshop, most in two. Terry and Sue attended the Whole Church Evaluations' workshop Terry attended a workshop on 'Leading with Core Values' while Sue took part in 'WISE for Mental Health' (more on the latter below). Amy Harlow attended an interesting and timely workshop regarding Sunday School and Youth Ministry – please read her article on Page 9 of this newsletter.

Terry Smith notes “each of these two sessions pointed out to me that our congregations should pause to consider how to evaluate how well our churches identify the purpose of our existence and then how well we achieve that purpose”. Sue added “[this] workshop illuminated how different the view on this type of evaluation is compared to traditional evaluations.” Terry further added “a first step would be to identify our core values and then use those to determine” the following:

1. “Why” (our purpose gifted by God to serve); mission
2. “What” our churches want to achieve; what impact we want to make, what results do we want to see? What do we feel God is calling us to do and be in this time and place?

3. “How” do we accomplish the ‘What’; these are the actionable goals. These actions are assigned to us and can be part of our personal evaluation to determine how well we are doing to meet these goals

If we want to start a program like this, we will all need to join together to determine core values and identify our purpose/mission, the impacts we want to see and the goals/actions to accomplish these. Sue added “it is a huge process, but with guidance we can work towards this together.” She also noted “the Ministry Goals that were adopted earlier in year are a wonderful place to start.” Terry intends to bring this subject to the Church Councils and Diaconate to discuss.

WISE for Mental Health

WISE stands for Welcome, Include, Support and Engage. It is a process similar to Open and Affirming (ONA) and can take years to be officially designated, which explains why only 7 churches in the U.S. have received this honor. I learned of techniques to include in our worship of inclusion of those individuals and their families who are dealing with mental health issues, a sometimes hidden disease.

There was no resting during the day-long event as even lunch featured activities for the attendees such as the event Sue took part in on Global Ministries about a UCC School in South Africa

Sue ended her report by remarking “it was an interesting experience. Although it was a long day, I loved the camaraderie of the UCC Conference people, the Celtic Music, Guest Preacher and lots of green!”



Submitted by Terry Smith and Sue Craffey

CONFERENCE MINISTER OUR GUEST PREACHER SUNDAY, MAY 6



The Rev. Kent J. Siladi, Conference Minister of the Connecticut Conference, United Church of Christ will be our guest preacher on **Sunday, May 6, 2018**. He is also willing to meet with members following worship for a presentation, with a time for questions and answers. Please plan to attend.

Rev. Siladi began his ministry as Conference Minister in July of 2013.

Prior to that time, he was the Conference Minister of the United Church of Christ in Florida for six years. He was on the Conference staff of this Conference for 10 years, serving as a Regional Minister. He served as a local church pastor for sixteen years in two churches of the Connecticut Conference (Brookfield and North Guilford).

Rev. Siladi has been involved in all of the settings of the United Church of Christ. He has served in the local church as pastor, in the Association setting as a chairperson and member of a Committee on Ministry, in the Conference setting as staff and in the national setting as a participant in the UCC History, Theology and Polity Network. He chaired the General Synod 25 Nominating Committee and was the host Conference Minister for General Synod 28 in Tampa. He currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Cornerstone Fund. He is the Treasurer of the Council of Conference Ministers. He is one of the writers of the UCC "Affirming Faith" Confirmation curriculum and has written for various faith-based periodicals. He served as the co-chair of the Search Committee that selected the Rev. Dr. John C. Dorhauer as the General Minister and President of the UCC.

As Conference Minister his primary responsibilities include offering a ministry of leadership and relationship, communicating the mission and ministry of the Connecticut Conference, providing programmatic and Conference staff oversight, assuring business and financial oversight and representing the Connecticut Conference to the wider church.

Rev. Siladi is a graduate of Nasson College and Yale Divinity School.

serrv SALE

When was the last time we held a *serrv* Sale? A year ago; probably more. The HCC Outreach Committee aims to change that by bringing this event back. For those of you unfamiliar with *serrv*, "it is a nonprofit, fair trade organization that since 1949, has empowered small-scale artisans and farmers to earn a fair living from their work..." Baskets, pottery, jewelry, clothing and food items represent some of their endeavors and offerings.

SAVE THE DATE.

April 8th after worship service in HCC's fellowship hall will mark the return of the *serrv* sale. Catalogues and order forms will be available. Think about a purchase for Mother's Day, Father's Day, wedding or simply something special for yourself. No payment required until the items are delivered.

The proceeds from this sale will be sent to Habitat for Humanity.

Any questions please ask Carol Matregrano.
cmatregrano@gmail.com.
860-345-8244.
or Peg Lewis.
pegnpaul.lewis@snet.net.
860-345-3292



MORE FROM SUPER SATURDAY

As reported earlier in this newsletter, Amy Harlow recently attended the UCC Super Saturday conference hosted by the Massachusetts UCC. The workshop she attended was titled "Is this the End of Sunday School and Youth Ministry?" The workshop was led by Debbie Gline Allen, Consultant for Christian Education and Youth Ministry for the Massachusetts Conference, UCC. Amy would like to share with you what she learned in her own words.

So is Sunday School and Youth Ministry dying? Studies show youth attendance is down across the boards and after confirmation, attendance drops drastically again. So what can we do? What will change that trend?

Relationships, relationships, relationships. Studies show that "the active presence and engagement of an intentional and consistent adult relationship (parent, grandparent, mentor, minister) is the single greatest influence on a young person's faith." Building those relationships can happen in many ways. One study showed that children build relationships by being part of services. That same study showed that adults that had positive childhood memories of being in services were more likely to attend church as adults. Being involved in intergenerational activities can also help to form relationships.

*Children learning about worship
and God from adults around them;
AND adults learning about
worship and God from the
children around them*

(Matthew 18:3)

Forming strong relationships with our youth will give them the tools they need to face the challenges of life and guide and build their faith.

In many ways our churches provide opportunities that would foster these types of relationships. I am hoping to find new ways to provide the chance to intergenerationally mingle. If there are any activities that you think might provide that opportunity please email me at amyharlow.ucc@gmail.com

Resources:

San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 2007
Powell, Kara E. & Chap Clark, Sticky Faith
<http://www.stickyfaith.org/>:
Everyday Ideas to Build Lasting Faith in Your Kids,
Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011
Roehlkepartain, Eugene C., The Teaching Church:
Moving Christian Education to Center Stage,
Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993
Westerhoff, John H., Will Our Children Have Faith? (Third Revised Edition),
Seattle, WA: Morehouse Publishing, 2012
Yust, Karen Marie, Real Kids, Real Faith: Practices for Nurturing Children's Spiritual Lives,
San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 2004

Submitted by Amy Harlow
Title

A BUDGET CHECK

As of March 20th we are almost a quarter of the way through the year. Currently, HCC is breaking even with offerings and income equaling our expenses. Fundraising events will begin in the spring which will help our financial position going into the summer months. Members have been keeping up with their pledges with about 21% of pledges received. For the moment HCC's finances are stable. Please keep those pledges coming in.

Submitted by Bruce Kocsis
HCC Board of Finance



*Summer, fall, winter, spring,
The seasons rotate as each brings
Its special beauty to this Earth of ours.
Winter's snow and summer's flowers;
Frozen rivers will flow come spring,
There is a renewal of everything.*

~Edna Frohock

Summer Camp for You!



Silver Lake

Progressive Christian Values

Community • Inclusion • Justice • Love

Connecting with something bigger than ourselves

Silver Lake staff, counselors, and deans are ready to introduce you to camp! Take a tour on foot or hop on the hayride. See cabins and winterized buildings, find out where the Freds (bathrooms) are, and check out the ropes courses and the waterfront.

A visit to Silver Lake before camp is the best way for a first-time camper to know what to expect — you might even run into a new friend who will be in the same conference this summer! We'll provide the cookies, you bring your questions. See you there!

**OPEN
HOUSE**

Sunday, May 20

2-4 p.m.

RSVP for Open House
to skcc@ctuicc.org
by May 12.


**SILVER
LAKE**
Conference Center
Sharon, CT

Explore all Silver Lake has to offer you online at

www.silverlakect.org

The Outdoor Ministry Program of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ

The Jungle Book

Admission - \$5 per family

Friday,
April 27, 2018

Doors Open – 6:30 pm
Movie Starts – 7:00 pm

Come Comfy - pajamas welcome.
Bring blankets and pillows. Snacks
and drinks will be available for a
donation. Proceeds will go to our
Silver Lake Scholarship Fund.



Location – Fellowship Hall at First Congregational Church of Haddam 905 Saybrook Road
Please contact the churches main number with any questions -
(860) 345-2742

6th Annual Haddam Congregational Mission Golf

Sunday, June 10, 2018



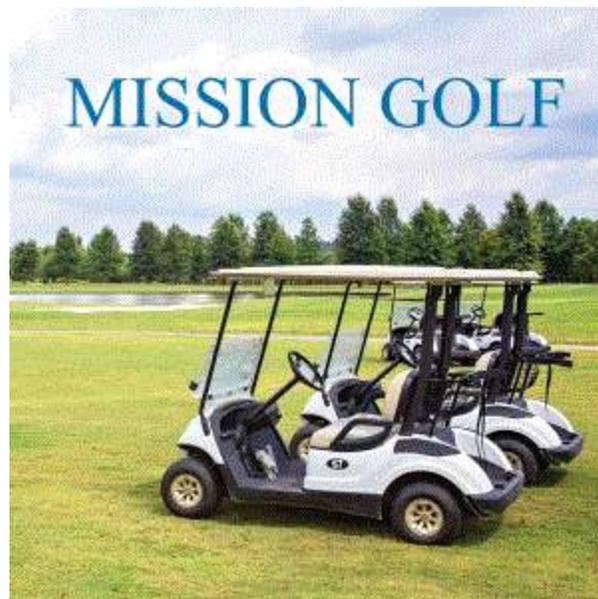
Quarry Ridge Golf Course

9 Rose Hill Road, Portland, CT 06480



Golfers Fee: \$135. Includes: Lunch, Cart, Greens Fees, Buffet Dinner, On-the-Course Competitions, & Raffle!
Dinner only: \$30 (Check made payable to: FCCH)
 Dinner will be served at 5:30pm.

Registration begins at 11:30am ~ Shotgun Start: 12:30



Player Registration

Mail to: The Congregational Church of Haddam
 P.O. Box 215 Haddam, CT 06438 ~ 860-345-2742

Player #1: _____
 Phone: _____ email: _____

Player #2: _____
 Phone: _____ email: _____

Player #3: _____
 Phone: _____ email: _____

Player #4: _____
 Phone: _____ email: _____



Moses and the water hazard

Sponsorship Form

PLATINUM SPONSOR: \$500
 Sign on 5 Tee Boxes
 Banner at Registration Table

GOLD SPONSOR: \$300
 Sign on 4 Tee Boxes

SILVER SPONSOR: \$200
 Sign on 3 Tee Boxes

TEE SPONSOR: \$100
 Sign on 1 Tee Box

CHARITABLE CASH DONATION: \$ _____

Sponsors Name: _____

What would you like your sign to say?: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

To pay for your registration, sponsorship, or to make a donation send a check to FCCH, P.O. Box 215, Haddam, CT 06438 or go online to www.haddamchurch.org to pay with a credit or debit card



MEMBERS' CORNER

The following 'shout outs' have been submitted for your reading pleasure.

A big thank you goes out to Mark Songson and Mike Battistoni for cleaning up a broken tree at FCCM after one of the March Nor'easters!



Kristin Battistoni

A huge thank you to all who came here to help on Service Sunday. The timing turned out to be fortuitous, as you were able to help with recovery from March Nor'easter #2, digging out and springing forward, both in and outside the house.

*Kim M.
Radowiecki*



Do you have a special message to share with your HCC family? If so, send it in for the Members' Corner!



APRIL CELEBRATIONS

Congratulations and best wishes for many more

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Congratulations and Many More to:

3	Blair Craffey
4	Mona Johanson
6	Rachel Roberts
10	Debbie Evert
14	Ronnie Reardon
18	Jim Aduskevich
19	Elizabeth Ellsworth
20	Norm Manning
21	Alison Thayer
23	Jesse Ricker
22	Wayne Paradis
24	Paul Hoover
25	Mitchell Bragoni
27	Kris Tupay
28	Evan Gras
29	Will Malave

Liam Everett Monroe

Elizabeth Aduskevich

Kelly Burns



Happy Anniversary to:



10 Greg Shields and Sue Henehan

13 Ray and Maria Pierdomenico

16 Mike and Jill Barile

Our Staff

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Church Office Hours
Tuesdays and Thursdays
from 11 am-3:30 pm.

Please send your announcements to be included in the next edition of the newsletter to HCCBelfryEditor@gmail.com by the 20th of each month.