



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



in the year 2019th of our Lord
Summer Edition



Higganum Congregational Church
First Congregational Church of Haddam
Returned mail to
P.O. Box 215
Haddam, CT 06438

higganumchurch.org and haddamchurch.org

Address Service Requested

WORSHIP SERVICES

Summer Sundays at 8:00 a.m. JULY 7th to SEPTEMBER 1st at the Higganum Gazebo
Sundays at 9:30 a.m. JULY 7th to AUGUST 11th at Higganum Congregational Church
AUGUST 18th and 25th and SEPTEMBER at First Congregational Church of Haddam

Dear Haddam and Higganum Friends,

Summer travel is a tradition. While our school calendar has its origins in an assumption young people are working in food production in July and August, for most families today the summer break means kids' schedules are freer. Warm weather inspires visits to shorelines and mountains, amusement parks and zoological gardens. 'Tis the season of, "**Are we there yet?**"

With folks in and out of church, summer can be a challenging time to progress on the work of the interim, and I have learned to adapt over the years. I remain acutely conscious of the ticking clock under which I engage churches in self-reflection and planning, but generally I put off significant work for the fall.

The multiple strands in which we are involved here at FCCH and HCC, though, have inspired me this year not to write off the summer entirely. I was very pleased with both the turn out and the work done at our June 23rd Lens Exercise. Members of the two congregations generated self-descriptions and identified ministry priorities that will assist the Pastoral Search Committee, your Working Groups, and myself in our efforts. (A transcription of the materials is included on Pages 8-9 here and will be posted at both churches.)

As a follow up, and understanding that some active leaders may necessarily be absent, I would invite your participation in two additional meetings this summer: one **for HCC members following 9:30am worship on July 21st**, and the other for **FCCH on July 28th**. These meetings will be held in the HCC Sanctuary.

Working Group updates will have been presented on **Sunday, July 14th**. Several of the Working Groups in which I have been participating need feedback, in particular *church-specific* feedback. The July 21st HCC and July 28th FCCH gatherings will be an opportunity to provide this guidance and to plan for the agendas of Special Business Meetings the two churches may call in the fall.

For those unable to attend, please be assured that notes will be taken and shared. It is my intention and the express intention of all your

leaders to have the interim process work be transparent and to involve all stakeholders! In that spirit, please feel free to reach out to me this summer if you have questions, concerns, or insights to share.

We aren't "there yet," but we are on the way.

- Pastor Michelle

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please note Pastor Michelle's contact information: Cell (860) 597-4223
Email: mmadsenbibeau@gmail.com

Pastor Michelle's summer Office Hours vary. Please contact her to be sure of her presence if you intend to stop by!

"Ch-ch-changes"

The interim is a season of change, and we have biblical resources to understand leadership transition. During her summer sermon series on "Ch-ch-changes," Pastor Michelle will introduce (or re-introduce) us to some biblical characters who experienced or led change: the patriarch Jacob (July 14th), the prophets Elijah and Elisha (July 21st), and the New Testament preacher John the Baptist (July 28th).



In January a number of small Working Groups were formed to research and make proposals to the congregations regarding issues connected to shared ministry.

Our next update from these joint Working Groups will be following 9:30am worship at Higganum Congregational Church on **Sunday, July 14th**.

Working Group Chairs: *please be present or send a representative to share your information.*

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Quilt Show Organizational Meeting – Friday, July 12 at 10am at FCCH

Joint Diaconate Meeting – Monday, July 29 at 7pm at FCCH. August 12, 2019 at 7:00 pm.

Christian Outreach Meeting – Monday, August 12 at 7pm at FCCH

Joint Council Meeting – Tuesday, August 13 at 7pm at FCCH.

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

HCC Board of Finance – Monday, August 19 at 7pm at HCC

SUMMER CHURCH SCHEDULE

July

Higganum Congregational Church - 9:30am

August 4 & 11

Higganum Congregational Church - 9:30am

August 18 & 25

First Cong. Church of Haddam - 9:30 am

July, August & September 1

Higganum Gazebo - 8am

Summer Hospitality Hour - following church services: Informal hospitality hour - all are welcome to bring food/beverage to share.

Pulpit Supply- Rev. Toni Smith will lead the service on September 1.

- Terry Smith

Gazebo Services



For those who like an early service and a beautiful natural setting where pets are welcome!

At 8am on summer **Sundays July 7th through Labor Day weekend**, invite a friend (two- or four-legged) to join you for worship at our casual summer worship services at the Higganum Gazebo led by FCCH and HCC volunteers and Interim Pastor Michelle.

DIACONATE NEWS

Summer is “supposedly” here, and hopefully this rain will stop! Coffee Hours at each church will be more informal and simpler. If you are attending, bring something simple to share, like fruit, cheese/crackers, or cookies.

Your Shepherd will contact with you this summer to update you on all our events. If you haven't met Pastor Michelle, stop in to worship... it is a pleasant experience!!!

Please check the church website or our weekly bulletin for more info. Please feel free to reach out to your Shepherd if you have a need or any Deacon will gladly assist you.

- Sue Craffey

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS!



On Sunday, June 2nd, we welcomed four new members. Pictured above with their membership sponsors are:

Stephanie Parker, FCCH
(Sue Craffey, sponsor)

Dena Liedke, FCCH and HCC
(Ginny Evensen, sponsor)

Dave McComas, HCC
(Terry Smith, sponsor)

Brian Reyes, FCCH
(Mark Soneson, sponsor)

“Ministries of Work”

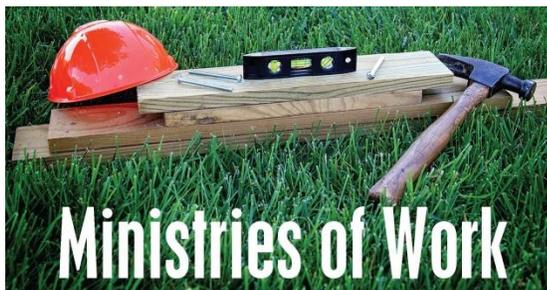
Our 9:30am services in August will lift up the work individuals do beyond the doors of the church in their daily lives. Those now or previously active in family ministry (caring for children, youth, and adults), in medical work, as peace officers, or in education are invited to be in touch with Pastor Michelle to assist in planning.

Sunday, August 4th, at HCC
Ministries of Family Life

Sunday, August 11th at HCC
Ministries of Healing and Medicine

Sunday, August 18th at FCCH
Ministries of Safety and Service

Sunday, August 25th at FCCH
Ministries of Learning and Education



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION INFORMATION

SILVER LAKE CAMP

We have at least four Campers participating at Silver Lake this summer. Please remember to keep the outdoor ministry of Silver Lake in your prayers throughout the season, and drop our Campers notes at the address below during their sessions so they know they are in your thoughts!



Conferee's Name
Title of Conference
S.L.C.C.
223 Low Road
Sharon, CT 06069

<u>Camper</u>	<u>Conference</u>	<u>Dates</u>
Alex B.	MACH 1	7/7-7/13
Brigitte B.	Whatcha See	7/21-7/27
Conner M.	Carry the Torch	7/21-7/27
Luke M.	Carry the Torch	7/21-7/27

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL



HUMC and St. James
Episcopal Church Vacation
Bible School

Mon-Friday, July 15-19,
5:30-7:30 pm. Higganum
United Methodist Church

HUMC and St. James Episcopal Church are hosting “Hero Central” Vacation Bible School. This superhero adventure experience includes music, Bible fun, cool crafts, hands-on mission work, delicious dinner/snacks, games and more. Children, pre-school-6th grade are invited to participate. To register call 860-345-4622/email: vbsofhigganumumc@gmail.com.

CONFIRMATION CLASS

Our Christian Education Ministry, Director of Christian Education Amy Harlow, and Pastor Michelle are at work planning for a 9-month Confirmation program to be offered to middle and senior high youth during the 2019-20 school year.



Eligible students present in worship at our June 9th service received a copy of *OMG: Devotionals for Teens and Young Adults* and a brief questionnaire regarding their areas of interest to help with planning. (Please remember to complete and return these!)

If you did not receive your materials, or for more information, please contact Amy or Pastor Michelle.

FCCH QUILT SHOW

An organizing meeting for FCCH's annual Quilt Show fundraiser will be held on Friday, July 12th at 10am at the church. Join us!





FROM THE HCC TRUSTEES

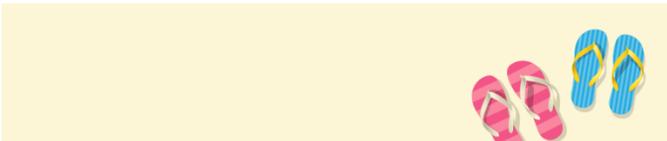
Now that Summer has finally arrived, after a very wet Spring, we will be continuing on some repairs to the parking lot steps, overseeing the maintenance of the lawn, grounds, buildings and any other repairs as they arise.

We wish you a safe and enjoyable summer where ever it may take you!

Calm waters, light winds and safe voyages.

Blessings to All
HCC Trustees

Submitted by:
Brian Thayer
H.C.C Trustees



THANK YOU!

From the FCCH
Mission Golf Tournament Committee:

We extend a heartfelt thank-you to all the members of both congregations and all our sponsors for making our 7th Mission Golf a success. Without the help from so many, we could not make this happen.

- Submitted by Steve Bull



HK RELAY FOR LIFE

Haddam Killingworth Relay for Life was founded 11 years ago. At the time, I worked as the building substitute at Burr Elementary. The staff created a team called "Colors of Hope" which grew to be actually two teams as so many were involved, including me. I belonged to this team until I fought a battle with breast cancer in 2011 and the following year created "Pink Ladies" with my co-captain Teri Everett.

As I think back about 50 years, Cancer was never discussed, and it was rare to know someone to have it. I only had a young cousin die from a brain tumor in the early 1960's. Now, cancer is everywhere! Yes, medicine is discovering it at earlier stages and can differentiate types more easily. Treatment and support has come a long way too and changes all the time. Just before I had my breast/lymph node surgery, a study found that there was no reason to take up to 20 lymph nodes when only maybe 5 will do just as well. I was one of the first patients at Middlesex Hospital to get that good news. This decreased my chances of lymphodema drastically....which is a very painful swelling condition.

I wish to thank all who helped support HK Relay for Life this year. Help was needed to pick up donated food for the Survivor / Caregiver Dinner. Quite a few parishioners assisted Dawn Alger (Haddam Jr Women's Club) with this very special meal. Also, 42 purchased luminaries in honor or memory of a loved one that lined the inside of the track. This raised \$275 for the American Cancer Society!

I hope that many of you had a chance to stop by Relay, especially at dusk to see the luminaria!

- Sue Craffey





BACKPACK MINISTRY

As HES closed their doors for the final time, our backpack mission is drawing to a close as well. We are continuing to provide gift cards from Ming's for our four families until the new school year begins. The pantry food is packed and will be delivered to Jessica Condil, social services, to be distributed as needed. Twelve backpacks will also be donated.

For many years, HCC has been collecting food, monetary donations, stuffing backpacks and delivering them on Thursday morning. We could not have accomplished this without the generous donations of many individuals from our caring congregations and community. Thank you and blessings to all as we move forward.

- Carol Matregrano



BREAD FOR HEAT MINISTRY

East Haddam Farmers' Market
Saturdays 9:00 am – 1 pm
June – September

Join our bread ministry team!

All proceeds go to the Haddam Fuel Bank.

CHRISTIAN OUTREACH

Backpack Ministry

The Fathers' Day project raised about \$140 for the Backpack Summer program. This money will be used to purchase gift cards from Higganum Market for the families who received weekend food filled backpacks during the school year. We made greeting cards that were available for sale to decorate as you wished. The message inside stated that a donation was made in honor of the recipient to support the Back pack program. Thank you to everyone who participated.

Strengthen the Church Offering

The UCC Strengthen the Church offering was received early in June and will be sent to the conference office as a donation from both churches. Thank you for your donation.

Fire Donation

We sent a message of support and a donation to the Mosque in New Haven that was severely damaged by fire. When the FCCH church was destroyed by fire in 1979, donations and letters of support from congregations all over the country were received and appreciated. We have had a chance to help another congregation in a time of need at this time.

Bread for Heat

The BREAD MINISTRY is in full production. Bread is assembled on Tuesday, baked on Friday morning and sold on Saturday at the East Haddam Farmers' Market at Ballack's Garden Center. We need help selling bread. Please contact Ginny Evensen or Nancy Soneson if you are able to help. Come and buy our bread and help keep a Haddam family warm in the winter.

- HCC & FCCH Christian Outreach

HARVEST HOUSE

On Sunday, August 25th HCC will provide the Harvest House evening meal at St. Stephen's parish, East Haddam. Speak with Carol Matregrano if you would like to know more about this opportunity to serve our neighbors.

UCC NEWS

Delegates from all over the United Church of Christ gathered in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, from June 21 to 25 for the 32nd General Synod. Reports and news from the gathering may be found at <https://www.ucc.org/news>. Of particular local interest was the action of the Synod to approve the Together As One plan.

Synod Approves Replacing Three Southern New England Conferences With One



By Tiffany Vail, Associate Conference Minister for Communications
(<https://www.ctucc.org/newsdetail/synod-approves-new-conference-for-southern-new-england-12838959>)

Delegates to the United Church of Christ's national meeting on Monday overwhelmingly approved a request by its three conferences in Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island to dissolve and join together to form a new conference.

The vote was 601 to 90, with four delegates abstaining. The new conference, not yet named, will officially come into being on Jan. 1.

"I believe that the Holy Spirit is doing a new thing in our midst – provoking us into new forms of church for such a time as this," said the Rev. Jocelyn Gardner Spencer, pastor of the First Congregational Church of Woodstock, Conn., and moderator of the newly forming conference.

"Building this new institution is an opportunity to reexamine the patterns and practices that hold us back from fully embodying the gospel. We are shifting from independence to interdependence, from ownership to stewardship, from competition to collaboration," Gardner Spencer said.

Two delegates – one from Massachusetts and one from Connecticut – questioned the need for the merger during the floor debate. But others, including two youth from Massachusetts, called the step a necessary adaptation to change.

In the days leading up to the vote, staff and board members of the three conferences met

with other conference caucuses, spoke at a hearing attended by 70 people, and held countless one-on-one conversations with delegates about the proposal.

One concern repeatedly raised was the concentration of resources, wealth and power in the new southern New England conference, which will comprise approximately 625 churches and 138,000 members and have about 100 General Synod delegates.

LOOKING AHEAD

SAVE THE DATES:

Wednesday, September 18, 2019.

In response to interest expressed at Cottage Meetings about the type of education clergy receive. Pastor Michelle has invited three clergy at various stages in their careers to come share about their call, preparation, and ministries. There will be a potluck supper and a panel discussion. Please plan to attend.

Tuesday, September 24, and Saturday, September 28, 2019.

Plans are taking shape for our congregations to host an informational Plastics Forum at HCC the evening of Tuesday, September 24th, in partnership with the Interreligious Eco-Justice Network. We also will take the lead in forming a local team to participate in Connecticut River Conservancy's 23rd Annual Source to Sea Cleanup that weekend. The Tuesday evening event will include a meal and screening of the short film *A Plastic Ocean*, plus opportunity to discuss the efforts of the town of Haddam as regards plastic waste. **Please speak with Pastor Michelle to be part of the FCCH/HCC planning team.**



(For more information about the work of these organizations, visit: <https://irejn.org/> and <https://www.criver.org/our-work/source-to-sea-cleanup/>.)

LENS EXERCISE: Who?

- Who is [your church] as regards heritage, people, story?

Higganum Congregational Church

Socially and economically diverse individuals who work together to serve God and meet the needs of the congregation and community.

Notes:

- “See a need, do it”
- Origin as a working class church
- Economically and socially diverse but work together
- Jobs
- Industrial/farming heritage
- Yankee
- Meets needs of community/congregation

First Congregational Church of Haddam

An historically important, traditional church that has survived adversity and looks forward to serving and welcoming all.

LENS EXERCISE: Where?

- People groups to whom you are called to minister
- Needs in the community

Higganum Congregational Church

1. Schools
2. Individual community members with housing [issues]
3. Hungry
4. Sick
5. Homeless
6. Music Lovers
7. Congregational members with needs (meals, food, snow, yard)
8. Needy (gifts, backpack)
9. Spiritual needs ministry to others (Gazebo)
10. Troubled children/adults

First Congregational Church of Haddam

1. Youth
2. Needy (food)
3. Heat
4. Spiritual
5. Members
6. Community space
7. Sick and afflicted
8. Community needs
9. Global Outreach
10. Seniors



Interim Process
LENS Exercise

INTERIM PROCESS CORNER

The responses on this page and the following come from an all-members-and-friends-invited interim workshop facilitated by Pastor Michelle on Sunday, June 23rd. Higganum and First Haddam groups worked separately and then shared their findings with each other.

Plan to attend the Working Group Updates on July 14th and then one of our next interim process meetings on Sundays July 21st (Higganum members) or July 28th (Haddam members) following 9:30am worship at HCC.

LENS EXERCISE: What?

- List current or former programs of [your church]
- **Green** are 5 chosen to represent church's "Who"
- Red Dots: Individuals chose up to three programs/ministries important to them that address a group or need listed under "Where?"

Higganum Congregational Church

YFS		Easter baskets	
Flood Repair NY		Middletown House	*
Friday Night cards		Progressive dinner	**
Vietnamese family		SERRV	
Mitten Tree	**	Habitat	
Backpack	****	Music	Organ Concert *****
Prayer Shawl	**		Shoreline Singers
Golf Tourn	****	Historical Society Storage	
Cookie Walk		Rental Space	
Harvest Fair		Outreach	*****
Tag Sale		Helping members clean up, etc.	***
Flower sale- Mother's Day		One Great Hour, etc.	*
Meals for members	**	Sunday School	
8:00 Service Sunday	**	Confirmation	**
Memorial Garden	**	Silver Lake \$	
College care packages		UCC Kits	
CROP Walk		Backbay Mission	

First Congregational Church of Haddam

Bread ministry (*linked to other local programs addressing basic needs)	****	Community dinners/fundraisers	
Music and choir	*****	Tag Sale*)	
Quilt show	*	St. Vincent de Paul (*)	*****
Christian Education	*****	St. Stephen's Supper (*)	
Hat and Mitten Tree		Amazing Grace/Food Bank (*)	
Golf Tourny		Pennies from Heaven	
Summer Gazebo		VBS	*
CROP Walk		Family Christmas Gifts	*
Youth Group/Giv ²	****	Worship together	**
Silver Lake		Easter Sunrise	*
College Care Packages		Church World Service programs- buckets, hygiene	*
Superbowl of Caring		Nursery School	
Furnish apartments		Children's Choir	
RFL		Confirmation Class	
YSOP		Women's Retreat	
Children's pageant		Prayer Shawl	

MEMBER'S CORNER



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

COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Cynthia L. Sarris, LCSW, is a psychotherapist and a certified yoga instructor, and also a Deacon and member at The Congregational Church in Killingworth, UCC. Monday evenings she and her colleagues lead Yoga at FCCH (or in good weather at the Haddam Meadows). To learn more about our community partner, contact Cindy at 860-395-9110 or visit her website (<https://talktherapyandyoga.com/>).

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT SEARCH

As of print time, the small hiring committee for our church Administrative Assistant (Ralph Livieri, Nancy Soneson, and myself) have reviewed a large number of resumes received through our posting at Indeed.com, invited several candidates to correspond with additional information, and selected and interviewed two candidates. We hope to complete the search and be able to introduce our new employee in the next weeks. Please listen in worship for additional information.

- *Pastor Michelle*

Our Staff

Pastor Michelle Madsen-Bibeau mmadsenbibeau@gmail.com
Position Open - Administrative Assistant fcchaddam@gmail.com
Amy Harlow, CE/Faith Formation Dir. amyharlow.ucc@gmail.com
Church Office 860-345-2742 or 860-345-4304
Email Coordinator fcchaddam@gmail.com

Belfry Editor
BelfryEditor@gmail.com

Current Church Office Hours

*Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2-6:30pm
(Call ahead to confirm: likely to change with new staff.)*

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

SUMMER CELEBRATIONS

July

- 2 Amanda Chadwick
- 3 Bridget Harry
- 4 Christine Beecher
- 10 Paul Nightingale, Kyle Tupay
- 15 Jason Lonergan
- 16 Lydia Brassard, Chris Morin
- 17 Kim Radowiecki
- 19 Sue Kocsis
- 20 David Negrelli
- 22 Denise Bouchard, AJ Livingston, Terry Smith
- 23 Jack Calhoun
- 25 Danny Richmond
- 26 Dick Matregrano, Betsey Booth, Nolan Sheppard
- 27 Colin Ellsworth
- 28 Sarah Shields, Kelly Beth Paradis



August

- 2 Charlotte Morin
- 7 Elizabeth Anderson
- 8 Pam Crum, Marissa Sarmuk
- 9 Jack Moore
- 12 Alli Sanford, Donna Turnage
- 15 Mary Alice Matulevich
- 16 Austin Paradis
- 18 Dick Williams
- 19 Oliver Brassard, Ryan Walker
- 21 Logan Craffey
- 25 Jacob Saglio
- 30 Neal Blodgett, Tyler Gras
- 31 Edie Williams



- July 17 Jack and Ginny Murphy
- July 23 Clark and Kamilla Gardner
- August 3 Bryan and Kristen Gras
- August 11 David and Jamie Beckman
- August 24 Dick and Carol Matregrano
- August 29 Peter and Mary Aduskevich
- August 29 Terry and Carol Smith (60 years!)

We apologize for any errors during our office transition! Please contact the Editor with omissions or corrections.
