



# THE GOOD NEWS *from the Belfry*



Monthly Newsletter of  
The First Congregational Church of Haddam  
And Higganum Congregational Church

Open and Affirming  
Members of the United Church of Christ



In the Year of Our Lord 2022



Higganum Congregational Church and  
First Congregational Church of Haddam  
P.O. Box 215  
Haddam, CT 06438

Church websites:

[HigganumChurch.org](http://HigganumChurch.org) and [HaddamChurch.org](http://HaddamChurch.org)



Hello Friends and Family in Christ,

Welcome to the season of Advent. During Advent, we look forward to the birth of Christ. Advent is a time when we reach through all darkness in our lives and intentionally focus on hope, joy, love, and peace. It is a time to repair relationships, to re-establish our hope of new beginnings, and to stretch ourselves to live into a new life in Christ or a new vision of how to live out our Christian lives.

Isaiah 9:6-7 is a prophesy of old that we often read during this time of the year: "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be upon his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and of Peace, there will be no end."

Isaiah's vision was born in a time of great darkness, yet it was a vision of profound Light, Justice and Peace. Isaiah predicted that a time will come when human government will be ruled with Wisdom and Justice, and Peace will rule all the earth. This vision and hope gave people something to strive toward, and something to unify their worship practice as they continued to walk in oppression.

Some of us may be feeling, this time has been too long in coming.

Some of us may be despairing that they will never see this time.

Others may be wondering, If the time doesn't come in our lifetime, if it hasn't come in the lifetime of our parents nor their parents, why should we believe in this prophesy?

Why have Isaiah's words been held for centuries as sacred and true? Why is Jesus considered the fulfillment of these prophecies, even though he lived over two thousand years ago and still we do not experience a humane government of Peace, Justice and Wisdom that brings prosperity to all of humanity? How can we continue to express

hope in what has been proved century after century to be a hollow dream?

I believe in this dream, and it is not hollow in my heart. My heart, in its deepest struggling with the darkness of anxieties or pains it has encountered, is able invite Christ in. I invite the mystical presence of Christ, to dwell within me, to live within my heart. And there Christ dwells, as a perpetual fountain and wellspring of Peace, Wisdom, Joy, and Love.

Sometimes I do not have the answers. Often, I do not have the answers. Instead, I have questions, anxieties, doubts, frustrations and fears. I experience pain and loss that do not feel like the fulfillment of Isaiah's words.

Yet when I quiet my own attempt to control or resolve my troubles, and instead seek God's presence, I begin to enter the eternal Advent moment of facing darkness with the hope of Light. Bringing Light into darkness can be as simple as sharing reassuring words with others.

Take a moment to consider how your own spiritual journey of Advent can include the self-care practice of seeking the places where you personally resonate with God's presence. Simply by seeking God's presence, and inviting God into any darkness you are experiencing, you may experience the fulfillment and truth that Christ is a living presence in your life, dwelling within your heart, and you may begin to believe the words of old, and experience the government of eternal peace reigning in your life.

My prayer for you is that the Light overcome all Darkness, and the Peace of Christ be with you this season.

Amen,  
Rev. Hilary McLellan



## Congregations Approve Church Merger

On November 20, 2022, both churches (FCCH & HCC) held congregational meetings. The agenda was to vote on the acceptance of three Merger Resolutions, including the Plan of Merger (and it's Exhibit A - Bylaws).

FCCH approved the three resolutions by a 100% vote (32 votes). HCC approved the three resolutions by a 97% vote (30 'yes' votes, 1 'no' vote, 1 Abstain)

Official meeting minutes [HERE](#).

This approval satisfies the legal requirements for documentation to be submitted to the state requesting the merger of our two churches. The Moderators will be submitting this document, 'Certificate of Merger'.  
Terry Smith, Clerk



The 2022 Officer, Board and Committee reports are **due January 9, 2023**.

Please send the FCCH reports to Clerk, Patty Blodgett and the HCC Reports to Clerk, Terry Smith. Please submit them in either Microsoft Word or Excel.

For your reference, here are copies of the 2021 reports: FCCH Annual Report [HERE](#), HCC Annual Report [HERE](#)

The 2023 Nominations and Budget will be submitted separately, so only send your 2022 activity.

Please contact the Clerks if you have any questions.  
Terry and Patty

## December Worship Services Sundays 9:30am

### First Congregational Church Of Haddam

with Rev Hilary McLellan

#### December 4<sup>th</sup>



Second Sunday of Advent

#### December 11th

Third Sunday of Advent

#### December 18th

Fourth Sunday of Advent

#### December 25th

Lessons and Carols

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## Advent Worship Services

### Higganum Congregational Church

#### Wednesday, December 14th

7:00pm

Blue Service

A quiet seasonal worship service  
for those who grieve.

#### Saturday, December 24th

7:00pm

Christmas Eve Service

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## SERVICE STREAMING



Access to the service by livestream on YouTube is provided. Visit and subscribe to our YouTube Channel

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC7SxL2fMB-DZu4BxaM6hWNg> on Sundays at 9:35am or anytime to view archived streams.

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## 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas Cookie Walk



**December 17<sup>th</sup>  
9 a.m. - noon**

Thank you to everyone who helped with the 50 plates of pre-ordered cookies on December 1<sup>st</sup>. The plates looked gorgeous! The regular Cookie Walk will be Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>. Come early – we sell out fast!

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### CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA ORDER



Our churches will be graced with Poinsettia plants this year. Please complete the [Order Form](#) and drop off with payment to the Church Office by **Sunday,**

**December 4th** or contact Ginny Murphy at [gjscmmurf@comcast.net](mailto:gjscmmurf@comcast.net). Please make checks payable to HCC.

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### CHURCH HOSPITALITY

FCCH Finance/Prudential and HCC Board of Finance/Board of Trustees, will host fellowship in December.

***Thank you volunteers!***

### COMMUNION AT HOME

Would you like to receive communion at home? If so, please contact the Church office at 860-345-2742 or [fcchaddam@gmail.com](mailto:fcchaddam@gmail.com) and your request will be shared with Rev. Hilary.



### PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY



Our Prayer Shawl Ministry will meet at 10am at HCC on the **first Wednesday of every month**. Newcomers are welcome to join us! For more information on this ministry, please contact Carol Ricker or Edie Williams.

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**CE's Wacky  
Wonderful  
Wednesdays!  
December 21<sup>st</sup>**

Join us for CE Fellowship in the form of movies or games from 6-8 pm on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at the Higganum Congregational Church in Fellowship Hall. Pizza and popcorn will be available for purchase. Parents are welcome to drop off their children (3 yrs+) or stay and enjoy the night.

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### MISSION OUTREACH UPDATE



Thank you to everyone who helped make our Thanksgiving Dinner project a success. The Scout troop decorated the boxes. Many people contributed items for the dinners. The boxes were delivered to the food pantry in time for Thanksgiving Dinner.

The Mission/Outreach committee of the United Congregational Church of Haddam and Higganum will be looking for new ideas to reach out to people in need in our community and in the world in the coming year. We are always happy to get your input!



## MUSIC MINISTRY TEAM MUSICIANS



We welcome **Kevin Dodd** who has joined Joel Spinetti in sharing their musical gifts during worship.



## INTERCESSORY PRAYER

Click [HERE](#) for the current Prayer List.

*The need for prayer is sometimes personal and difficult to clarify. We would like to keep our prayer list as current and active as possible. Since often we do not receive the good news of recovery, we will remove names monthly. Please feel free to contact the church office to restore any prayer concerns that are removed prematurely. There is no time limit on prayer concerns.*



## HaRRP: Haddam area Refugee Resettlement Project

Join us in welcoming the Khanuddin Family to Haddam!



Father - Azan Khan, Mother – Jana, Daughter Muska 9<sup>th</sup> grade, Son –Jahanzib 6<sup>th</sup> grade, Daughter – Afsana 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, Son – Rahan 1<sup>st</sup> grade.



## Oh, What A Sight!

We had over 150 quilts and quilted items displayed in the FCCH 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Yuletide Quilt Show held on December 3<sup>rd</sup>. The sanctuary looked beautiful!

Congratulation to Lisa Burr, who for the second year in a row, took home the Visitors' Favorite Award.

THANK YOU to everyone who helped, visited and donated - you are part of our success! We made over \$3,000 again this year – all of which will go to our many mission and outreach projects.

# Coffee House

## Live Music & Game Night



**December 9 | January 13 | February 10**

for HK Backpack Program | for Haddam Fuel Bank | for Haddam Food Pantry

**7-9pm**

**Open to the community! All are welcome!**

**Higganum Congregational Church  
23 Parsonage Road, off RT 154, on the hill**

**ACOUSTIC FOLK & LIGHT ROCK** will be performed by **LOCAL MUSICIANS**. Patrons may enjoy card games and board games. **REFRESHMENTS** will be available. **DONATIONS** appreciated to benefit the church general fund and a designated charity each month.



# A Few Quilt Show Photos





# DECEMBER MEETINGS & EVENTS

Updates can be found on our Online Church Calendar [HERE](#).

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**Adult Faith Formation Bible Study** with Rev. Hilary Mondays, 10am (Lewis House / Zoom)

**Choir Rehearsal** Thursdays 7pm (FCCH)

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**Prayer Shawl** Wednesday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, 10am (HCC)

**Coffee House Music Night** Friday, December 9<sup>th</sup>, 7pm (HCC Social Room)

**JT Diaconate** Monday, December 12<sup>th</sup>, 7pm (Lewis House / Zoom)

**Blue Worship Service** December 14<sup>th</sup>, 7pm (HCC)

**Cookie Walk** December 17<sup>th</sup>, 9 am - noon (HCC)

**Board of Finance** December 19<sup>th</sup>, 7pm (HCC)

**JT Church Council** Tuesday, December 20<sup>th</sup>, 7pm (Lewis House / Zoom)

**3W's Wacky Wonderful Wednesday!** December 21<sup>st</sup>, 6-8pm (HCC)

**Christmas Eve Service**, December 24<sup>th</sup>, 7pm (HCC)

**Lessons & Carols**, December 25<sup>th</sup>, 9:30am (FCCH)

**Belfry Articles Due** Sunday, January 20th to [BelfryEditor@gmail.com](mailto:BelfryEditor@gmail.com)



There will be an immediate need for assistance in the church office. Please reach out to Rev. Hilary if you are interested.



## Winter Concert

**Sunday, December 4, 2022 - 3:00pm**  
**John Winthrop Middle School, 1 Winthrop Road, Deep River, CT**

Cappella Cantorum Masterworks Chorus will perform:

- *Gloria* (Antonio Vivaldi)
- *O Magnum Mysterium* (Morten Lauridsen)
- *Fantasia on Christmas Carols* (Ralph Vaughan Williams)
- *Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas* (Hugh Martin & Ralph Blane)

Music Director Simon Holt will conduct, and the chorus will be accompanied by the Cappella Cantorum Orchestra.

Ticket prices are \$15 for students, \$30 for adults and \$35 at the door. Tickets may be purchased in advance through any chorus member, on our website through the link below, or by calling 860-532-0454.

**We look forward to celebrating this joyous holiday season with you!**

**See John or Liz Anderson for tickets for this concert.**



## ZOOM LOGIN

Please use the Zoom login below for access to FCCH HCC meetings, adult education, and fellowship programs.

**ID: 391 987 2707**

**Password: 90523**

**Phone call-in number: +1 646 558 8656**





**GIVING INFORMATION**

Our Ministry and Mission are maintained by your generosity. Thank you for supporting FCCH and HCC with your gifts of Time, Talent, and Treasure. Financial contributions may be made at in-person worship services or mailed to the addresses below anytime.

First Congregational Church of Haddam  
P.O. Box 215  
Haddam, CT 06438

Higganum Congregational Church  
23 Parsonage Road  
Higganum, CT 06441

Online gifts to FCCH may be made [HERE](#). It also should be possible to set up direct payments from your own bank to either FCCH or HCC; contact your bank for more information.



- 3 Alan Hansen
- 3 Tracy Thompson
- 4 Barbara Fernandez
- 4 Sue Craffey
- 5 Peter Aduskevich
- 5 Ryan Andrew Starr
- 6 Jen Lee
- 6 Andrew Chadwick
- 9 Timothy Hansen
- 13 Jordan Dole
- 14 Gail Hollenbeck
- 15 Deb Duval
- 17 Kyle Buracchi
- 18 Alan Chadwick
- 18 Ashley (Grenman) Araujo
- 19 Ceclia Chadwick Pulaski
- 21 Lindamae Peck
- 23 Gavin Chase Starr
- 28 Joshua Bobbish
- 29 Dani Paradis
- 30 Callie Elizabeth Starr
- 31 Carol Smith



**CONTACT INFORMATION**

Email: [fchaddam@gmail.com](mailto:fchaddam@gmail.com)  
Phone: (860) 345-2742 & (860) 345-4304

*The church email & voicemail are only monitored during office hours.*

**OFFICE HOURS**

Mondays and Tuesdays 9 – 12 noon

**REV. HILARY'S CONTACT INFORMATION**

Email: [RevHilaryMcLellan@outlook.com](mailto:RevHilaryMcLellan@outlook.com)  
Phone: (860) 316-3837.

Photos from the visit to The Pastor's Library by Rev. Hilary, Lindamae, and Alexa.

