



# THE GOOD NEWS

## *From the Belfry*

### FEBRUARY 2024



*The Newsletter of the United Congregational Church of Haddam and Higganum  
A member of the United Church of Christ*

## **February Worship Schedule** *Higganum Campus*

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### **February 4**

*5<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany*

Isa 40:21-31

Psalms 147:1-11, 20c

1 Cor 9:16-23

Mark 1:29-39

### **February 11**

*Guest Minister, Rev. Toni Smith*

*Transfiguration*

2 Kings 2:1-12

Psalms 50:1-6

2 Cor 4:3-6

Mark 9:2-9

### **February 18**

*New Member Reception*

*1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Lent*

Gen 9:8-17

Psalms 25:1-10

1 Peter 3:18-22

Mark 1:9-15

### **February 25**

*2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Lent*

Gen 17:1-7, 15-16

Psalms 22:23-31

Rom 4:13-25

Mark 8:31-38

Mark 9:2-9



## *A Message from the Pastor*

Hello Dear Friends,

Because it has been a month that comes in the bleakest midwinter, February is a time when people experience the brittle fragility of life. It is the most cold, the most lonely, the most dark and difficult month of our year. Many of us travel to some southern vacation spot, simply to evade the full feeling of February.

Yet it is in this dark cold loneliness that the season of Epiphany brings us meaning. It is in Epiphany that we seek God's light and learn new ways to share our own light with others.

Perhaps the brightest message of Epiphany is that throughout the cold dark loneliness of life, God's light is still shining upon us, still leading and guiding us. No matter how discouraged we feel, we still have an inner light that grows when we share it with others. This spark of light is the Love and shelter that God gives to us in all times of darkness.

Let us remember this February that love is our inheritance and our legacy. It is something that increases when we give it away, and is God's way of animating us all. This February, remember to share love. Remember that you belong with people who care. Reach out and share the caring love of Epiphany Light.

Blessings and regards,

*Rev. Hilary*



## February Meetings

**Study Group**, Tuesdays, 9:30 am (LH)  
**Worship Team**, Tuesdays, 10:30 am (LH)  
**Choir Practice**, Thursdays, 7 pm (Haddam)

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**Property**, February 12<sup>th</sup>, 5:30 pm (Lewis House)

**Diaconate**, February 12<sup>th</sup>, 7 pm (LH/Zoom)

**Christian Ed**, February 13<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 pm (LH)

**Outreach**, February 19<sup>th</sup>, 7 pm (LH/Zoom)

**Council**, February 20<sup>th</sup>, 7 pm (LH/Zoom)

## Outreach/Mission News

Submitted by Sue Craffey, Outreach Co-Chair

We received numerous genuine thank you notes from the charitable organizations we donated funds to in 2023! The vast majority are located in CT!

We are in the planning stage for 2024 BUT since it's winter...let's sew! We are looking for Christmas fabrics to create Christmas stockings for the Solnit Center as well as any fun prints that would be useful for the Church World Service school bag project.

We will probably have a shelf-stable milk and healthy snack collection in February for the HK Backpack Program.... stay tuned!!! Healthy snack ideas: individual fruit cups, applesauce, granola bars, etc.

Pennies from Heaven has returned!!!! Save that loose change! Also save those pop tabs for Ronald MacDonald House charities! Easy to do!!!!

We are cooking and serving dinner at Harvest House at St. Stephens in East Haddam on March 10<sup>th</sup>. We are looking for cooks/servers for this community event. If interested, please contact Sue Craffey or Ginny Evensen.

**Caring Connection:** We have some frozen meals that need distributing from our freezer so we can restock. Do you know of anyone who would benefit from a meal, please let us know. This simple act of kindness is beautiful!

## Christian Education

Submitted by Amy Harlow, CE Director

Hello from CE! February will bring many exciting things! The Coffee Hour Contemplations topic will be on coping with stress. Join me after service during coffee hour for scriptures, personal testimonials, frank discussions and prayers.

On 2/16/2024 CE and Stewardship will be holding a Valentine's Date Night Out event. Babysitting will be provided from 6pm-10pm for ages 3+. All proceeds will go to the general fund. Cost TBD.

CE is also trying to plan a sewing up-cycle evening later in the month. When details are finalized, an announcement will be made during services. Sew exciting!!!

Happy Valentine's Day ❤️ and thank you for all your continued support!

Amy

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Do you know anyone interested in joining our upcoming confirmation class? If so, please reach out to our CE Director, Amy Harlow.  
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## ANNUAL MEETING

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting of the United Congregational Church of Haddam and Higganum was held on **January 28, 2024** following worship service. The agenda included committee reports, the treasurer's report, and bylaw changes.

Click on the links below to view the meeting minutes and the 2023 Annual Reports.

[UCCHH 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Report](#)  
[UCCHH 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting Minutes](#)

## Music Ministry

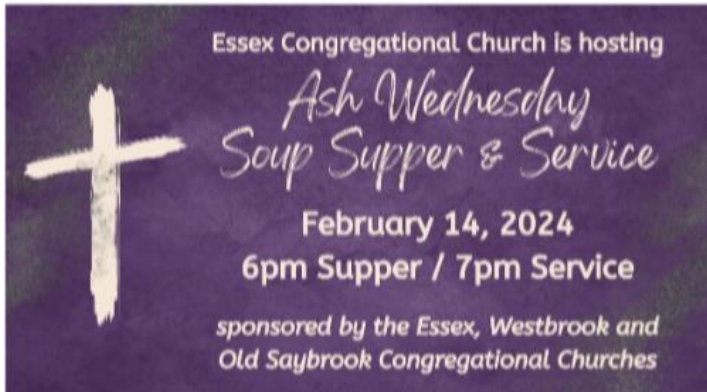


Thank you to **Daniel Kendzior** for leading music during worship in January.

**MUSIC NEWS** Starting in February we welcome guest musician **Dr. Brian Frazier**. Brian lives in Old Saybrook and works at Great Oaks Charter School in Bridgeport as the Director of Special Programs. Before becoming a school administrator, he was a music teacher and church organist for 13 years. Brian has a Master’s in Music Education and Choral Conducting from the Hartt School at the University of Hartford, and a doctorate in Educational Leadership from Capella University.

## Ash Wednesday Service

UCCHH will not have an Ash Wednesday service but you are invited to join Essex Congregational Church for a Soup Supper & Service starting at 6 pm.



## INTERCESSORY PRAYERS



[Click for Prayer List](#)

Note from the church office:  
We would like to keep our prayer list as current as possible and will be reviewing entries on a monthly basis. Please contact the office to restore any prayer concerns that may have been prematurely removed.

## IN SYMPATHY



Gene W. Porter, an active member of our church, passed away peacefully, with his family at his side, on January 5, 2024. Over the course of six decades, he served as a deacon, Sunday school teacher, treasurer and member of the choir. The night of the sanctuary fire, Gene entered the burning building and saved several important church treasures. Gene and his beloved wife Laura were married in the Haddam church in 1955 and all their children were baptized there.

*“Well done, good and faithful servant!” – Matthew 25:23*

## Stewardship &

## 2024 Pledge Drive Update



Thank you to all the friends and members of the United Congregational Church of Haddam and Higganum who have submitted their pledges for the 2024 year.

**2024 UCCHH Budget: \$ 256,218**

**No. of pledging units to-date: 40**

**Total amount pledged to-date: \$ 98,264**

If you have not pledged yet, we encourage you to do so as soon as possible.

[Download A Pledge Card Here](#)

Pledge cards may be mailed to the church office or placed in the offering plate during Sunday worship.

*Thank you for your generosity!*



## Adult Bible Study

Pastor Hilary and the Tuesday Adult Bible Study group invite you to join them for the *Saving Jesus Redux*, a twelve-part series developed by Living the Questions. The group meets Tuesday mornings at 9:30 am in the Lewis House and on Zoom. You can check out the curriculum [HERE](#). If you have a problem playing the videos, please contact the church office.



## OPEN SEW & QUILT WITH DENA LIEDKE

February 3  
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
Haddam Campus

RSVP Dena  
sewdena22@gmail.com

\$5 Donation to the church

Bring: Machine, projects, supplies, lunch and snacks

## CHURCH HOSPITALITY



The **Property Committee** will be hosting coffee hour/fellowship in February. The **Diaconate** will host in March.

A big thank you to the Mission/Outreach Committee for hosting in January.

## Church Documents



Click on the links below to view various church documents.

- January Council Minutes – [January 16, 2024 \(Draft\)](#)
- December Council Minutes – [December 19, 2023 \(Approved\)](#)
- [UCCHH Annual Report for 2024](#)
- [UCCHH Annual Meeting Minutes](#)
- [UCCHH Bylaws](#) (updated 1/28/24)
- [UCCHH Policies](#) (updated 1/28/24)

## Help Decorate our Sanctuary!



A floral arrangement sign-up chart is located in the Higganum Campus Social Hall. Please sign up to provide flowers for our chancel.



### Zoom Login Information

**ID: 391 987 2707**  
**Password: 90523**

Phone call-in number: +1 646 558 8656

## Inclement Weather?

Make sure you check WFSB Channel 3 or wfsb.com to see if the Sunday Service is still on.

Look for UNITED CHURCH OF HADDAM & HIGGANUM

## January Worship Attendance

|            |       |          |
|------------|-------|----------|
| January 7  | ..... | canceled |
| January 14 | ..... | 37       |
| January 21 | ..... | 31       |
| January 28 | ..... | 35       |

## Sunday Services Live on YouTube!

We live-stream each Sunday service - just tune in at 9:40 a.m. and watch live or watch previous recordings. Click below to get started!



SILVER LAKE  
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Southern New England Conference  
United Church of Christ  
Living the Love & Justice of Jesus





Our Ministry and Mission are maintained by your generosity. Thank you for supporting UCCHH with your gifts of Time, Talent, and Treasure.

Financial contributions may be made at in-person worship services or mailed to the following address

**United Congregational Church of Haddam and Higganum**

Attn: Collector  
P.O. Box 215  
Haddam, CT 0643

Make checks payable to: UCCHH

Automatic payments for your pledge can be set up for most banking institutions; contact your bank for more information.

**Online Giving**

Visit [www.haddamchurch.org](http://www.haddamchurch.org) and click on *Online Giving* on the menu bar.

OR



The QR Code will bring you directly to our secure Online Giving page.



**Church Contact Information**

Rev. Hilary McLellan  
[revhilarymclellan@outlook.com](mailto:revhilarymclellan@outlook.com)  
(860) 316-3837

Office hours: Tuesday & Thursday, 9 am – noon  
or by appointment

**Rev. Hilary will be on vacation Feb. 11- 17**

Amy Harlow, CE Director  
[amyharlow.ucc@gmail.com](mailto:amyharlow.ucc@gmail.com)

Joel Spinetti, Choir Director  
Kevin Dodd, Organist  
Nancy Soneson, Office Administrator

(860) 345-2742  
[fcchaddam@gmail.com](mailto:fcchaddam@gmail.com) / [www.haddamchurch.org](http://www.haddamchurch.org)  
Church office hours: Tues. & Thurs., 9 am – 1 pm  
Office address: 905 Saybrook Rd, PO Box 215  
Haddam, CT

**Words From the Conference Minister**

January 17 2024



*One of the things I liked about [Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.] was that he didn't pretend to be a great powerful know-it-all. I remember him discussing openly his gloom, depression, his fears, admitting that he didn't know what the next step was. He would then say: "Take the first step in faith. You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step."*

Beloved, I cannot pretend as if we are not entering 2024 with an ongoing war raging in Ukraine and another deadly one in Gaza. I cannot pretend as if families – as well as many of our congregations – are not struggling to keep pace with rising costs. I also cannot pretend as if the Southern New England Conference or your ACMS (including myself) have all the answers – we don't.

Like you, we are taking the first steps on a staircase that we can't yet fully see. My hope is that we not only step in faith like you, but that we step in faith WITH you! We need one another to not only survive but to envision and build the just, war-free future our faith compels, and children deserve.

Beloved, along with your association's Committee on Ministry, I am your covenant partner in mission and ministry. I have setup through Calendly times just to be in conversation with you. Especially as we enter an election year, please know that you are NOT alone. You have the power of the Holy Spirit sustaining you, your association supporting you, and your conference doing its best to resource you. Instructions on how to setup a time with me through Calendly is below, please take advantage of it.

Warm regards,

*Isaac*



**Southern New England Conference**  
United Church of Christ  
*Living the Love & Justice of Jesus*

**Super Saturday 2024**

March 9<sup>th</sup>

9 am – 4 pm

Southbridge, MA

Photo Album



The members of the Memorial Garden Committee hard at work.



CE Director, Amy Harlow, at the 2023 Stupid Cupid Steampunk Weekend Extravaganza. She made the front cover of the December 31, 2023 Arts & Entertainment section of The Courant!