



# THE GOOD NEWS

## *From the Belfry*



JULY 2024

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

### Worship Schedule

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July worship is at the  
**Haddam Campus**  
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### July Lectionary

#### July 7<sup>th</sup>

*Seventh Sunday after Pentecost*

Communion

2 Sam 5:1-5, 9-10

Ezek 2:1-5

Psalms 48

2 Cor 12:2-10

Mark 6:1-13

#### July 14<sup>th</sup>

*Eighth Sunday after Pentecost*

2 Sam 6:1-5, 12b-19

Amos 7:7-15

Psalms 24

Eph 1:3-14

Mark 6:14-29

#### July 21<sup>st</sup>

*Ninth Sunday after Pentecost*

2 Sam 7:1-14a

Jer 23:1-6

Psalms 89:20-37

Eph 2:11-22

Mark 6:30-34, 53-56

#### July 28<sup>th</sup>

*Tenth Sunday after Pentecost*

2 Sam 11:1-15

2 Kings 4:42-44

Psalms 14

Eph 3:14-21

John 6:1-21



### Ron Booth Memorial Golf Outing

Sunday, September 15, 2024

This is the church's biggest fundraiser of the year, and we need everyone's help to make it a success!

Areas where you can help include:

- Soliciting sponsors and/or becoming a sponsor
- Soliciting raffle prizes and/or donating raffle prizes
- Administrative duties (making copies, stuffing envelopes, writing thank you notes, etc.)
- Helping at the dinner
  - Setting up and taking down tents/tables/chairs
  - Setting the tables and arranging table decorations
  - Selling raffle tickets or helping with raffle setup
  - Helping with food preparation and/or serving
  - Supplying appetizers
  - Cleaning up after the event
- Helping at the golf course
- Forming your own team to golf with!

Registration is now open. Watch for the registration form in your mailbox or register online using the QR code on page 7.



### *Visioning Team Update*

*See page 8*



## Message from the Pastor

Hello Friends,

"Ordinary times" this summer are anything but ordinary! Our visioning process has begun as our council has hired consultant Rev. Nickerson to facilitate our visioning process. We are encouraging everyone to share in the process in whatever way makes sense to each person.

The materials are available to everyone, and anyone can email Rev. Nickerson with questions at [NickersonP@comcast.net](mailto:NickersonP@comcast.net).

Many of us are "doers", and our instructions for "visioning" are more "right brain," so this process challenges us to discover new ways of "doing". It also requires faith. We must believe that God will help us to find our way forward.

How can you join our visioning process? You can do just about anything that shares your sense of God with us.

You can be at home and pray for our church, or pray for a global or local mission you care about. We will mark these on maps so we can all see. You can share meals to brainstorm ideas and let us know what you come up with. You can email us your visions and we can share them with others on Sundays. You can read scripture, send us songs that are meaningful to you, and we will think about them, too. You can interview members from other churches, other interest groups, businesses, or nonprofits, and ask for their ideas for new ways to use our properties that express God's love in our community.

Really, the first step of the visioning process is for us all to begin to share amongst ourselves what connects us to God's larger presence. What makes us a church together?

As we begin to understand and share our larger vision of God, and our larger vision of our new church, we will begin to discern our purpose together and where God is leading us as a new combined church.

At Sunday's visioning meeting, someone shared a song by John Lennon (see sidebar).

We are one community, and we have traveled a long journey to get to this day. We have the power to make meaningful choices. One is to practice living in peace together. As the world around us is torn in conflict, can we imagine ourselves sharing our world? Our roots and relationships are deep. Let's dream together and see how God helps us to shape our vision.

May you find yourself surprised by a renewal of God's living presence in your life.

Blessings and regards,

*Rev. Hilary*

Imagine there's no heaven  
It's easy if you try  
No hell below us  
Above us, only sky

Imagine all the people  
Livin' for today  
Ah

Imagine there's no countries  
It isn't hard to do  
Nothing to kill or die for  
And no religion, too

Imagine all the people  
Livin' life in peace  
You

REFRAIN:

You may say I'm a dreamer  
But I'm not the only one  
I hope someday you'll join us  
And the world will be as one

Imagine no possessions  
I wonder if you can  
No need for greed or hunger  
A brotherhood of man

Imagine all the people  
Sharing all the world  
You

REFRAIN



### Visioning Prayer Map

Submitted by Rev. Hilary

Many of us are still just beginning to hear about the visioning process we are undertaking at UCCHH. We are undertaking this process under the guidance of Rev. Paul Nickerson, who is available to all our church members at [Nickersonp@comcast.net](mailto:Nickersonp@comcast.net)

Our first step is to reach out and get as many people connected to our visioning process as possible. We'd love to have people praying at home, and talking with their friends, neighbors, and community connections, about their vision for our newly combined church.

We have been sharing scriptures about biblical visions from the past to get us going. We are also praying for a map of our community and taking prayer walks around town to notice our community in new ways and pray for all that is going on here in our neighborhoods. We are praying that God will strengthen our church's connection to our community and will reveal new visions for our future, through our connections and our prayer life together.

Our prayer map will be on display in July in our Haddam building, and we hope you will join us, taking a walk and sharing your reflections, or sitting at home, praying for our town.



### Memorial Garden

Outdoor Services

June 30<sup>th</sup> & August 25<sup>th</sup>  
9:30 am

Come join us for worship in the UCCHH Higganum Campus Memorial Garden. Let the beauty of God's creation surround you and uplift you! Please remember to bring your own chair.

**NOTE:** There will be no summer services at the gazebo on the Higganum Green this year.



### Thursday, July 4

The church office will be closed.

### SNEUCC Annual Meeting

#### Summary

Submitted by Rev. Hilary

The SNEUCC annual meeting this June opened us up to some exciting new resources and support. You will begin to see more signs of our ministerial collaboration as the year progresses.

- We will have access to some advertising templates that allow us to insert our own pictures.
- We now have a new game, Grow Your Church, which is based on research from UCC churches across the nation. As we play this game and report on our experiences, our church will provide information that will be used to continue to revise the game.
- Ministers will have more opportunities to receive training in evangelism and preaching
- The "Just Peace Players" will come to perform for us. This is a group of UCC ministers who write and perform plays about peace and justice. They have a grant to visit churches in the SNEUCC, and we are sharing calendars to select a date for their first visit in September or October.
- More to come!



The results of the recent church survey can be reviewed [HERE](#). Thank you to Glen Stebbins for organizing the survey and compiling the results.



### Bread For Heat Ministry

SATURDAYS

June 1<sup>st</sup> – October 19<sup>th</sup>  
Higganum Farmers' Market  
9 am – noon

We're looking for people to help sell! See Nancy Soneson or sign up online [HERE](#).



# Outreach/Mission

Submitted by Sue Craffey, Outreach Co-Chair

## Haddam Social Service Wish List

To help support our community, we will publish a wish list monthly supplied to us by Haddam Social Services.

July Wish List:

- Toilet paper
- Shampoo
- Snacks/chips
- Mayonnaise
- Laundry detergent
- Snacks for kids
- Wet dog food

Donations can be dropped off in the box outside their office on Jail Hill Road or given to a Mission Outreach member to transport.



The **Strengthen the Church Offering** collected \$390.00.

We hope you found the presentation by Howie Field from **The Nathaniel B. Field Memorial Foundation** on June 23, 2024, informative as well as moving. For more information, please see their website <http://www.nathanielfield.org> As of June 20<sup>th</sup>, over \$500 was collected with more to come!!! Thank you to all who supported this very worthwhile foundation.

### CWS School Supply Collection



Yes, we are doing CWS school supply bags in August, and the sales are starting. There were leftovers from last year; I will let you know what supplies are still needed. We hope to collect enough supplies for 25 school bags.

Please remember to save your pull tabs from your summer beverages and cat/dog food cans. Collecting pull tabs is an easy way to raise funds for the Ronald MacDonald House Charities!!!

The next **Pennies for Heaven** collection will go towards medical costs for a 4-year-old friend of Alexa Flora who has been on our prayer list for several weeks.

## July Meetings

No choir practice is scheduled for July

**Worship Team**, Thursdays, 6 pm (LH)

**Bread Ministry**, Fridays, 9 am – 2 pm (Haddam)

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**Property**, July 8, 5:30 pm (Lewis House)

**Diaconate**, July 8, 7 pm (Lewis House /Zoom)

**CE**, July 9, 6:30 pm (Lewis House/Zoom)

**Outreach**, July 15, 7 pm (Lewis House/Zoom)

**Council**, July 16, 7 pm (Lewis House)

**Vision Team**, July 17, 7 pm (Lewis House/Zoom)

## Trinity House Update

Submitted by Greg Shields, Moderator

As most of you are aware, the Congregation voted, by a clear consensus, to sell the Trinity House property at a special Congregational Meeting held on April 28<sup>th</sup>. Following that Meeting members of the Property and Finance Committees met to proceed with the sale of the Trinity House. We obtained two assessments of the value of the property based on both the building and property and on comparative recent sales (“comps”). We received an offer from Kevin Dodd on behalf of the Valley Railroad to purchase the property “as is” for \$285,000. Members involved voiced unanimous agreement to accept this offer. It will save the Valley Railroad and the Church the cost and uncertainty of listing the property and will expedite the transaction. Jeanne Messick (for Cloutier & Cassella) is handling the legal work. We hope to close on the sale within the next thirty days. Both the Finance and Property Committees are actively discussing how to utilize the proceeds of the sale, as several capital expenses need to be addressed. If you have any thoughts or concerns, please address them to me, or members of either Committee.





# Music News



As we move through the summer, our choir is on something of a hiatus from our usual Thursday night-rehearsals. We continue to meet on Sunday mornings for a brief rehearsal and sing music that the choir is already familiar with. However, behind the scenes, we are already making preparations for the music we will present at Christmas time. We are very excited that there will be special music for Christmas this year. Please stay tuned for more information.



If you would like to join our choir, we resume rehearsals immediately after Labor Day. We rehearse each week on Thursday evening at 7pm and sing each week on Sunday morning. We would love to have you come and lift your voice with us.

One of the more interesting topics of conversation that I have had with people is about which music we should be singing. I've heard from many people when we have done a favorite musical selection that is meaningful to them. I have also heard about people's preference for styles of music, hymn titles, and even hymnals. When selecting the music for our worship services, we meet weekly for a staff meeting with Reverend Hilary to try to find a balanced program of music that supports the messages of the scripture readings and the sermon, while still trying to include music that we think you will all know and love. Please remember that we need your feedback, even when you don't love a piece of music. But also, please remember that a piece of music that may be your favorite may be someone else's least favorite. I truly welcome the opportunities that I have had with members of the congregation about the musical selections as I settle in as your Music Director.

*Brian Frazier*  
UCCHH Music Director

## Haddam/Higganum Loves Classical Guitar!

Over 120 people attended the Candlewood Farm Arts Foundation Classical Guitar Concert on June 23<sup>rd</sup> at the UCCHH Higganum Campus. Although the sanctuary was a little hot, the concert was a delight!



[Click for the Prayer List](#)

Note from the church office:

*We would like to keep our prayer list as current as possible and will be reviewing entries monthly. Please contact the office to restore any prayer concerns that may have been prematurely removed.*



The **Outreach Committee** will be hosting coffee hour in July. The August schedule is as follows:



- August 4 . . . . . CE Committee
- August 11 . . . . . Delegates & At-large members
- August 18 . . . . . Bread Ministry
- August 25 . . . . . Property Committee

### June Worship Attendance

- June 2 . . . . . 51
- June 9 . . . . . 47
- June 16 . . . . . 42 (Father's Day)
- June 23 . . . . . unavailable
- June 30 . . . . . 32



**Caring Connection**

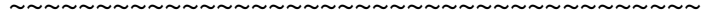


**Caring Connection**

Don't hesitate to contact one of the following Caring Connection members if you, or a member you know, could use a caring hand (or a meal or two).

**Caring Connection contacts:**

- Sue Craffey . . . . . 860-338-0216
- Sue Henehan . . . . . 860-212-4807
- Dave McComas. . 860-978-0462
- Rev. Hilary . . . . . 860-316-3837



**Sunday Services Stream Live on YouTube!**

We live stream each Sunday service - just tune in at 9:40 a.m. to watch live or watch previous recordings. Click [HERE](#) to get started!




**Zoom Login Information**

**ID: 391 987 2707**  
**Password: 90523**  
 Phone call-in number: +1 646 558 8656



**Card Angels**

Thurs., July 25<sup>th</sup>  
5 pm ~ Lewis House

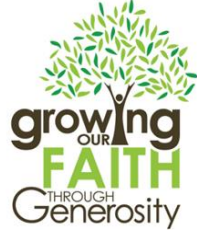
Come make homemade cards. For more information, please contact Jesse at [cardangelsct@gmail.com](mailto:cardangelsct@gmail.com)



**Church Documents**

Click on the links below to view various church documents.

- June Council Minutes – [June 18, 2024 \(Draft\)](#)
- May Council Minutes – [May 21, 2024 \(Approved\)](#)
- April Special Meeting Minutes – [April 28, 2024 \(Draft\)](#)
- [UCCHH Annual Report for 2024](#)
- [UCCHH Annual Meeting Minutes](#)
- [UCCHH Bylaws](#) (updated 1/28/24)
- [UCCHH Policies](#) (updated 5/22/24)



**Stewardship & Pledge 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.

<b>2024 UCCHH Budget:</b>	<b>\$ 256,218</b>
<b>No. of pledging units to date:</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Total amount pledged to date:</b>	<b>\$106,655</b>
<b>Collected YTD:</b>	<b>\$59, 484 (56%)</b>

[Download a Pledge Card](#)

PLEDGE ENVELOPES

If you would like pledge envelopes, please see our collector, Judy Hodgson, or contact the church office.

**Church Contact Information**

Rev. Hilary McLellan  
[revhilarymclellan@outlook.com](mailto:revhilarymclellan@outlook.com)  
 (860) 316-3837  
 Office hours: Tues. 9 am – noon  
 & Thurs. 5pm – 9pm

**NOTE:** Rev. Hilary will be on a retreat 7/29 – 8/4

Amy Harlow, CE Director  
 Brian Frazier, Music Director  
 Nancy Soneson, Office Administrator

[fcchaddam@gmail.com](mailto:fcchaddam@gmail.com)  
 (860) 345-2742

Church office hours: Tues. & Thurs., 9 am–1 pm  
 Office address: 905 Saybrook Rd, PO Box 215  
 Haddam, CT 06438



July 2023



UNITED CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF  
HADDAM AND HIGGANUM

# RON BOOTH MISSION GOLF OUTING

SEPTEMBER 15, 2024  
LYMAN ORCHARDS PLAYER COURSE

8:30 AM SIGN-IN  
9:30 AM SHOTGUN START

REGISTRATION INCLUDES GREENS FEE, CART, LUNCH,  
AND GRILLED STEAK/CHICKEN DINNER  
OVERLOOKING THE CONNECTICUT RIVER.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR  
TO REGISTER, SCAN THE QR CODE.





## Visioning Process

Submitted by Lori Chadwick

**Do we expect to have a “VISION” like Moses or other Biblical prophets? Maybe, maybe not. But we can and must IMAGINE where it is God is calling us and what is our PURPOSE.**

**Creating a vision for the future of our church involves deep reflection, communal input, and strategic planning.**

As the Vision Team proceeds, our church needs its members' support by providing feedback and guidance to help all of us unite behind a common belief in the future of UCCHH. The Vision process will not address the sale or retention of church property, although it likely will clarify how best to utilize what we have/keep.

### Members of the Vision Team

- Greg Shields and Sue Henehan
- Judy Hodgson
- Lindamae Peck
- Alexa Flora
- Glen Stebbins
- Ginny Evenson
- Hilary McLellan
- Kristin Battistoni
- Alan and Lori Chadwick

By following a structured approach, our church can develop a clear and compelling vision for the future, grounded in prayer and scripture, informed by the needs of our community, and supported by a concrete implementation plan.

We have a professional coach working with us. Most of the team met with Rev Paul Nickerson on 4/27 and again by Zoom this past Wednesday. The next meeting is scheduled for July. Working with Rev. Nickerson will help keep us moving forward and on target.

### What the Visioning Process is Not

Understanding what the visioning process is not can help avoid common pitfalls and misconceptions:

#### 1. A Quick Fix:

- **Not an Instant Solution:** The visioning process is not a quick fix to immediate problems. It is a long-term strategic effort aimed at sustainable growth and impact.
- **Requires Patience:** It requires time, patience, and ongoing commitment from the congregation and leadership.

#### 2. Top-Down Dictate:

- **Not Solely Leader-Driven:** While leadership plays a crucial role, the visioning process is not a top-down mandate. It should involve input from the entire congregation to ensure buy-in and ownership.
- **Inclusive and Participatory:** Effective visioning is inclusive, involving diverse voices and perspectives within the church community. We aim for 100% participation!





3. **A One-Time Event:**

- **Not a Single Workshop:** Visioning is not just a one-time event or meeting. It is an ongoing process that includes regular review and adjustment. We have a professional coach working with us. We have met twice now and all feel that his input and feedback will contribute to our success.
- **Continuous Engagement:** It requires continuous engagement, reflection, and adaptation as circumstances and community needs evolve.

4. **Focused Only on Internal Needs:**

- **Not Inward-Looking:** The process is not solely about addressing internal church needs. It also involves understanding and responding to the broader community's needs.
- **Externally Oriented:** The vision should extend beyond the church walls, aiming to make a positive impact on the wider community.

5. **A Mere Marketing Exercise:**

- **Not Just Branding:** Visioning is not about creating catchy slogans or branding. It's about defining a meaningful and actionable path for the church's future.
- **Substance Over Style:** It emphasizes substantive goals and strategies over superficial appearances.

## What guides the Vision Process

### 1. Prayer and Scripture Foundation

**Why it's important:** Establishes spiritual grounding and seeks divine guidance and ensures alignment with biblical principles and values.

### 2. Understanding Our Community

**Why it's important:** Helps identify the needs, challenges, and opportunities in the community, and ensures the church's mission and vision are relevant and impactful.

### 3. Developing a Purpose Statement

**Why it's important:** Clearly articulates the core reason for the church's existence and provides a foundation for all activities and initiatives.

### 4. Crafting a Vision Statement

**Why it's important:** Paints a picture of the desired future and direction of the church and motivates and unites the congregation towards common goals.

### 5. Developing an Implementation Plan

**Why it's important:** Translates the vision into actionable steps and goals and provides a roadmap for achieving the desired future.



## Where we are so far

### 1. Working on

- **Prayer and Scripture Foundation:**
  - Prayer Team to pray the Vision Team through the process.
  - Working with a Scriptural focus during the worship service including responses from members of the congregation
- **Understanding Our Community:**
  - Studying the demographics of our community
  - Identifying and interviewing Key Members of the community

We meet again on Wednesday, June 26<sup>th</sup> to continue improving the Prayer and Scripture Foundation. Feedback is welcome and we encourage you to participate in the Scripture activities presented each Sunday.

We should have the demographic information needed and begin to address who in the community we want to interview.

Please **PRAY** for the team and this process, it's very important to the future of UCCHH. We need you to be involved in this process and encourage you to share your hopes and dreams. That is what Visioning looks like!

## Photo Album



*Welcome to Brian Frazier,  
our new Music Director!*





Celebrating our Graduates on June 16<sup>th</sup>!



Coventry Choir Concert performed on May 28<sup>th</sup>

Pride Parade  
June 1<sup>st</sup>

