



THE GOOD NEWS

From the Belfry

JANUARY 2025



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

January Worship Schedule *Higganum Campus*

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#### January 5

*2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Christmas*

Jer 31:7-14

Sirach 24:1-12

Psalm 147:12-20

Wisdom of Solomon 10:15-21

Eph 1:3-14

John 1: (1-9), 10-18

#### January 12

*1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Epiphany*

Isa 43:1-7

Psalm 29

Acts 8:14-17

Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

#### January 19

*2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany*

Isa 62:1-5

Psalm 36:5-10

1 Cor 12:1-11

John 2:1-11

#### January 26

*3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany*

*Annual Meeting*

Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10

Psalm 19

1 Cor 12:12-31a

Luke 4:14-21



### *A Message from the Pastor*

Greetings Friends,

May the grace of the Lord fill your hearts with hope, peace, love, and joy.

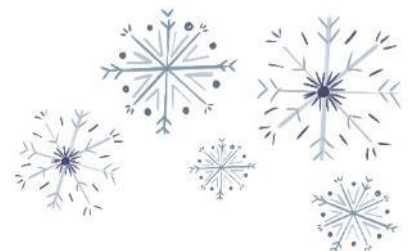
As we prepare for our New Year, let's open our hearts to "celebrate the lowly" together. Think small. We are a small congregation with a mighty impact... God's daily love is constantly entering our lives in small, often fleeting, moments.... The Christ story reminds us that miracles, meaning, and sacred purpose all begin in the small babe, a humble place, and the desire to bring gifts... "Less is More."

Loving God and neighbor can start in the smallest ways. We can begin with nothing, simply making more room in our hearts for God's presence. As we devote small moments to reflecting upon and magnifying God's love, we create joy and appreciation in our lives. This flows into our community, strengthening our bonds and our shared purpose.

In preparing for a New Year, let us rejoice in this: We need only the slenderest of means to share the greatest of gifts: God's love!

Blessings and regards,

*Rev. Hilary McLellan*



# CHRISTMAS COOKIE WALK



**Thank you to everyone who helped with our annual Cookie Walk!**

**The total amount profited was \$5,242.**

**Three cheers to Linda Hansen for organizing this fundraiser!**



## UCCHH 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting

Sunday, January 26, 2025  
Higganum Campus  
Following the morning service

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting of the United Congregational Church of Haddam and Higganum (UCCHH) will be held on January 26, 2025, following worship service in Higganum. The agenda is:

- The hearing and approval of Officer and Committee 2024 reports
- The election of Officers and Committees for 2025
- The adoption of the proposed 2025 budget
- The transaction of any other business

Terry Smith, Clerk

## Officer & Committee Reports

All annual **report submissions** from officers, boards, and committees are due on or before **January 13<sup>th</sup>** to the Clerk, Terry Smith. Reports should be a Word or Excel document, NOT a pdf.

### Reports are needed from:

Clerk, Council, Hospitality, Historian, Pastoral Relation, Bylaws, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, Diaconate, Membership, Flowers, Memorial, Property Committee, Memorial Garden, Christian Education Committee, Music Committee, Mission/Outreach Committee, Delegates to the Wider Church, Finance Committee, Stewardship, Fundraising (Ron Booth Mission Golf, Yuletide Quilt Show, Cookie Walk, Tag Sale), Investment/Endowment, Minister's Report, Other Reports, Nominations for 2025, and Budget for 2025.

Join the Annual Meeting  
Through ZOOM

Zoom meeting ID: 391 987 2707  
Zoom meeting Password: 90523

**The meeting should start around 10:40 am.**

## Visioning Update

Submitted by Lori Chadwick

The Vision Team has achieved a major milestone. We have developed a Purpose Statement that we will present to the congregation for a vote to adopt as the Purpose Statement for the United Congregational Church of Haddam and Higganum at the Annual Meeting on January 26, 2025.

Please know that the Vision Team has been working hard with the help of a coach to develop this statement. We hope you have been following us during this process and that the statement resonates with you as it has with the Vision Team.

The statement follows:

**United as an inclusive congregation, following Christ's message, growing through worship, fellowship, and service, striving towards a just, loving society.**

## Outreach/Mission News

Submitted by Sue Craffey, Outreach Co-Chair



GIVING TREE

A HUGE THANK YOU for making a local family's holiday wishes come true!!! We provided Christmas gifts, with little advance notice, for a 17-year-old girl, a 16-year-old boy, and a 15-year-old boy. I was extremely impressed by HK Youth and Family's devotion to this community project and I look forward to more combined projects in 2025.

**Cookie Walk 2024** was a huge success with 70 platters created and sales on December 14<sup>th</sup> totaling over \$5,200.

**Quilt Show 2024** was another huge success with record-breaking attendance yielding a profit of \$4,294.

We are continuing the **Pennies from Heaven Collection** for Lincoln until the end of February. He is at the top of the heart transplant waiting list but has had to stay in the hospital in Boston since last April. The family started a GoFundMe campaign last spring which raised funds to help cover the expense of renting an apartment near the hospital. Our goal is to raise funds to purchase gift cards that can be used anywhere: food, clothing, gifts...etc. Lincoln's birthday is the end of February and what a gift of support we can bring.



**Pull Tabs:** Remember to break off the pull tabs from your favorite carbonated beverage, soup, cat, or dog food can to bring in for the Ronald McDonald House Charities! My son-in-law benefitted from their generosity when my daughter was admitted to the hospital for an extended period in Bangor, Maine this past summer. We need to collect a minimum of 5 pounds.

**Save the Date:** Harvest Home Supper at St. Stephens Church in East Haddam, March 9, 2025.

As I reflect on how our church supports our many diverse mission and outreach opportunities, I feel so blessed! We do A LOT! But, we couldn't without your support. Please see our report in the 2024 Annual Report for a summary of 2024!



### Card Angels

Thurs., January 23<sup>rd</sup>  
5 – 7:30 pm ~ Lewis House

Come make homemade cards for people in cancer treatment centers and nursing homes. For more information, please get in touch with Jesse at [cardangelsct@gmail.com](mailto:cardangelsct@gmail.com)

### 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



### UCC Christmas Fund

The UCC Christmas Fund collection was held on December 22<sup>nd</sup> and December 24<sup>th</sup>, collecting \$625. The Christmas Fund supports active and retired UCC clergy and their families.

YULETIDE  
**QUILT**  
*Show*  
**& Holiday Bazaar**

Thank you to everyone who donated to and helped with the Quilt Show this year!

**We profited \$4,294!**



Thank you to the **Outreach Committee** for providing coffee hour refreshments for January. See page 6 for the 2025 Hospitality Schedule.



Submitted by Brian Fraizer, Music Director

**"A New Year of Praise and Renewal: The Role of Music in Worship"**

As we step into the new year, the church music ministry invites us to reflect on the power of music in shaping our worship experience. January is a time for new beginnings, and what better way to start the year than by lifting our voices in praise? Music in worship serves not only to glorify God but also to center our hearts and minds as we embark on a fresh chapter. Whether through hymns, anthems, or contemporary worship songs, each note and lyric offer us an opportunity to renew our spirits and commit ourselves once again to God's calling.

In this season of renewal, we are reminded of the biblical invitation to "sing to the Lord a new song" (Psalm 96:1). Just as the turning of the calendar represents a fresh start, so too does each song we sing. As we gather in worship, we join in the eternal song of praise that transcends time and place. January is a perfect moment to introduce new music, explore familiar hymns with fresh insight, and discover new expressions of worship. Through music, we connect with both the ancient tradition of the church and the vibrant, living faith we share today.

The songs we sing during this month also help us express gratitude for God's faithfulness. As we reflect on the past year and look ahead to the new one, worship music can become a vehicle for both thanksgiving and hope. Hymns like "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" remind us that God's love never changes, while contemporary songs like "10,000 Reasons" encourage us to begin the year with a heart full of praise. As the church body, we lift our voices together, declaring God's goodness and trusting in His ongoing work in our lives.

In the coming weeks, let us embrace the opportunity to engage deeply with the music of our worship. As we sing, pray, and reflect, may our hearts be open to the renewal that only God can bring. Music is not just an expression of emotion but a tool for spiritual formation and a means to draw closer to God. Let January be a month where our praise is not only a reflection of the new year but a celebration of the new mercies we receive daily from our faithful Creator.

**Stewardship & 2025 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 2025 year.

If you haven't pledged yet, it's not too late. Pick up a pledge card in the Haddam church vestibule or Higganum church social hall. Alternatively, download the card below and mail it to the church office.

[Download A Pledge Card Here](#)

If you would like pledge envelopes, please see our Collector, Judy Hodgson.

*Thank you for your generosity!*

**January Meetings**

**Study Group**, Tuesdays, 9 am (LH)

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

**Choir Practice**, Thursdays, 7 pm (Haddam)

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**Vision Team**, January 8, 7 pm (LH/Zoom)

**Property**, January 13, 5:30 pm (Lewis House)

**Diaconate**, January 13, 7 pm (LH/Zoom)

**Christian Ed**, January 14, 6:30 pm (LH)

**Council**, January 21, 7 pm (LH/Zoom)

**Annual Meeting**, January 26, 10:30am (Higganum)



[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.

**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.

They can be in celebration of a special event or in memory of a loved one – any reason will do!

**Inclement Weather?**

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

**December Worship Attendance**

|               |             |
|---------------|-------------|
| December 1    | 40          |
| December 8    | unavailable |
| December 15   | 37          |
| December 22   | 48          |
| * December 24 | 125         |
| December 29   | 28          |

\*includes Christmas concert and service



**Church Documents**

Click on the links below to view various church documents.

- December Council Minutes – [December 17, 2024 \(Draft\)](#)
- November Council Minutes – [Nov. 19, 2024 \(Approved\)](#)
- [UCCHH Annual Report for 2023](#)
- [UCCHH 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting Minutes](#)
- [UCCHH ByLaws](#)
- [UCCHH Church Policies](#)

**Zoom Login Information**

ID: 391 987 2707  
 Password: 90523

Phone call-in number: +1 646 558 8656



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.



## 2025 Monthly Church Schedule and Hospitality Schedule

(All members are encouraged to participate)

| <u>Month</u>            | <u>Campus Location</u> | <u>Organization(s) Responsible for Hospitality</u> |
|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| January                 | Higganum               | Mission/Outreach Committee                         |
| February                | Haddam                 | Property Committee                                 |
| March                   | Higganum               | Diaconate                                          |
| April                   | Haddam                 | Christian Education Committee                      |
| May                     | Higganum               | Finance Committee                                  |
| June                    | Haddam                 | Music Committee                                    |
| July                    | Higganum               | Mission/Outreach Committee                         |
| <b>August</b>           |                        |                                                    |
| August 3                | Higganum               | Christian Education Committee                      |
| August 10               | Higganum               | Delegates & At Large Council Members               |
| August 17               | Haddam                 | Bread Ministry                                     |
| August 24               | Haddam                 | Property Committee                                 |
| August 31               | Haddam                 | Property Committee                                 |
| <b>September Haddam</b> |                        |                                                    |
| September 7             |                        | Officers                                           |
| September 14            |                        | No Service – Golf Outing                           |
| September 21            |                        | Memorial Garden Committee                          |
| September 28            |                        | Bread Ministry                                     |
| October                 | Higganum               | Music Committee                                    |
| November                | Haddam                 | Diaconate                                          |
| December                | Higganum               | Finance Committee                                  |

Photo Album

**2024 Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service**



**2024 Cookie Walk**



Advent and Christmas

