The Church Caller

A monthly publication of Ellington Congregational Church *December 2021*

CELEBRATING ADVENT & CHRISTMAS SUNDAY 10:00 A.M. WORSHIP SERVICE

Sunday, DECEMBER 5TH
SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
PEACE
SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION
HANDBELL SUNDAY
MALACHI 3:1-4
BARUCH 5:1-9
LUKE 1:68-79
(ZECHARIAH'S PRAYER)

Sunday, DECEMBER 12TH
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
JOY
SENIOR CHOIR CANTATA
~NATIVITY~
LAY LED BY CASSIE MILLER

Sunday, DECEMBER 19TH
FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
LOVE
AN INTERGENERATIONAL WORSHIP EXPERIENCE
CHRISTMAS PAGEANT –
A PLAY AND CAROL SING
WRITTEN BY LEE CARMAN,
DIRECTOR OF FAITH FORMATION

Tuesday, DECEMBER 21ST
HOPE-FILLED BLUE CHRISTMAS
★ 7:00 PM SERVICE ★

Friday, DECEMBER 24TH
REJOICE!
CHRISTMAS EVE
5:00 PM ~ FAMILY-FRIENDLY
10:00 PM ~ CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

Sunday, DECEMBER 26TH
FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS
ALL CHURCH LAY LED WORSHIP
WITH LESSONS & CAROLS
BY WADE OVERGAARD AND
JULIANE LAROCCA

Pastor Joanne's Jottings

It was certainly spiritually fulfilling to decorate our beautiful Sanctuary for the Advent/Christmas season on November 21st. Having the children present and helping with the decorations is something that they will always remember. Reading Bible verses and learning about why we "Hang the Greens" helps to provide a religious and spiritual foundation for them. It is also a good review for us adults as well.

This month of December at ECC will be filled with beautiful music, the continuing Advent Litany, a children's pageant written by Lee Carman, and so much more! I pray that everyone who enters our beautifully decorated Sanctuary during this season will take a deep, relaxing breath and feel surrounded by the unconditional love of God. We will be together in unity as God's Disciples through Christ Jesus. Jesus always brings us a new beginning: A fresh, new taste of hope, peace, joy, and love. A fresh new taste of life! What a wonderful way to spend the month and begin a new year!

Your Sister in Christ,

Joanne

Amazing Advent - We are offering a gathering of Ellington Congregational Church's faith community as we journey together through the four weeks of Advent, reflecting on how we can prepare our hearts and homes for Christ's birth in the world as it is today. Let us get together for a weekly circle of faithful to share inspirational readings, traditions and experiences to illuminate what the true meaning of Jesus' birth is. We invite you to join us to take a time-out to step away from what can be a frenzied time of parties, bright lights and shopping to be with us to prepare for the birth of Jesus. Join us!

Led by Sharon McLaughlin
Sunday evenings on zoom at 7:00 p.m.
12/5; 12/12; 12/19
Wednesday mornings on zoom at 10:00 a.m.
12/1; 12/8; 12/15; 12/22

Zoom link will be sent once a week.

Hope-filled Blue Christmas Service

Holidays are not always a merry or happy time for everyone.

With prayer and hymns we will give thanks for God's gifts of Hope, Love, Joy and Peace.

We invite you to join us for this service of reflection, comfort, healing, grace and hope.

Tuesday, December 21, 2021
7:00 p.m. ~ Sanctuary

All Are Welcome

Please Extend to Family
Friends
&
Neighbors

HOLD THE DATE:

CALL TO THE

ANNUAL MEETING

of the

Ellington Congregational Church

United Church of Christ

Thursday, January 27, 2022

Congregational Meeting

More info to come!

Re-Opening Team Update:

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.
Romans 15:13 (NIV)

This journey with COVID has certainly been bumpy and uncertain. The Enfield Senior Center suspended activities such as cards and coffee until after Thanksgiving because of a cluster of cases that brought about two hospitalizations, so far (as of this writing, November 12). We have been cautiously moving forward, and hopefully will continue down that path. The next (winter) surge is being predicted, but should be mitigated by many more vaccinations, and the next group of children, age 5-11 are being vaccinated, now.

The trending of the numbers is not consistent. Thankfully, as of this writing (November 12), Ellington is in yellow on the State of CT code alert map. This is an improvement from last month when we were in orange. Gray is best, yellow is second best, orange is not great and red is the worst category. We continue monitoring numbers, maps and reports from the CDC, State of CT guidance, and the limited information from the UCC conferences. We also consider feedback from local churches, businesses and municipalities. The Re-Opening Team is meeting bi-weekly to stay current with what is happening with the pandemic. (Please remember that the COVID situation

is very fluid and can change fairly rapidly. There is also about a two-week lag time from submitting our article to distributing the *Caller.)*

We have much to look forward to during the Advent and Christmas season. Besides the greening of the Church (a wonderful service), we have special music and events planned for December 5th (Bells), December 12th (Cantata) and December 19th (Pageant). Fellowship Hour plans include Christmas cookies during each of the three afore-mentioned Sundays in December, compliments of Women's Fellowship, BCE, and Memorial & Missions. All of these activities are predicated on COVID numbers and guidance.

The Winterfest Café will be open for business downstairs, with inside seating from 4-6:30 p.m. on Saturday, December 4, 2021 as long as the COVID numbers stay reasonable. The town organizations appear to be focusing on a reduced version with most activities happening outdoors. The Ellington Historical Society is holding their event indoors for Winterfest.

As the COVID numbers continue to vacillate, and we are not out of the woods, yet, **we are continuing to require masking for everyone inside, vaccinated or not.**

Current Protocols - Mask Requirements:

1. Masks will continue to be required for all indoor services, programs and guests of the church, including children age 2 and older **for everyone.**
2. Children under the age of 2 are exempted from mask rules.
3. As per State of CT mask mandates, **masks are not required outside** but they are an option when gathering in larger groups.
4. Regarding Fellowship Hour, which is being held inside now in the Social Room, please keep your mask on while walking around, but once seated masks may be removed to eat and drink.

Virtual meetings will continue being offered indefinitely and are still encouraged. Please contact the church office to reserve a room for meeting at sec-eccucc@sbcglobal.net

Recorded worship will also continue being offered on the church website and Facebook.

Contact us at reopening@eccucc.org

Blessings, Re-Opening Team
Chas Gross, Chair; Mary Iovine; Sharon McLaughlin; Robin Miller; Joann Scott; Dawn Stone

A WORD FROM THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The fourth quarter of the calendar year is when the Nominating Committee at ECC does most of its work. ECC is a congregational church and takes its direction from you, the congregation. We have both the privilege and responsibility of helping govern our church. As you may know, there is system and organization of Officers, Boards, and Committees in place that are charged with developing the programs and planning the courses of action that will direct the future growth of our church. Each group is between 4 and 16 members who normally serve on a "rotational basis". For example, the Board of Trustees consists of 6 members, 2 of which rotate off, and replaced with 2 new members, each year.

However, this year at a special congregational meeting, we voted to suspend the required terms and size of our Boards and Committees due to challenges with COVID and with filling positions. We have thankfully filled most of our Boards and Committees, though some were filled with a smaller number than typical. We do have needs particularly for Stewardship, Growth & Nurture, the Board of Ushers, the Nominating Committee, and Fellowship Ministry. There are also some officer positions still open, such as Assistant Moderator, Assistant Clerk, Historian, Assistant Historian, and HR Assistant. We need people with a variety of talents who are willing to serve. If you have an interest or would like more information, please make yourself known to our Moderator, Cathy Leonard; Peg Doffek; or me. Our goal is to staff a committee with folks who have experience with folks who do not. It is the blending of experience and fresh ideas that fuels growth.

Most committees meet once a month, and their ongoing service and work are vital to the health of our

church. Lay volunteers have a role in everything from mentoring new members to offering hospitality, to participating in our worship service. Please open your hearts and minds and share your time and talents. We look forward to hearing from you.

On behalf of the ECC Nominating Committee,
Sharon McLaughlin, temporary NC helper

The 2022 Offering envelopes will be available in December in time to begin the new year. If you are not currently using envelopes or a giving number, and would like to, please call or email the Church Office to make arrangements. Thank you!

REMINDER:

JANUARY Caller Deadline

December 15, 2021

TRUSTEES CORNER

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ that you are serving.

Colossians 3:23-24(NIV)

The final month of the year and the first month of the new year are busy ones for the Trustees and Treasurers. As we move into the final weeks of the year, we are working on the church budget for 2022. The budget process actually begins with the Stewardship Committee and the Stewardship Campaign. We review projected income, which is the starting point for the next year's budget. The biggest component of the income section is the pledged offerings. We offer our thanks and appreciation to all who have pledged for 2022.

There will be times over the year when a group, committee or member would like to present a request to the Trustees for an unfunded purchase, event, or program for our church. The Trustees are more than willing to listen, but we also need some basic work done in advance. For example, we needed to upgrade the sound system a few years ago. We received a proposal, which identified the problem, included the cost breakdown and recommended the preferred solution. This is what the Trustees need to move forward on projects.

We have chosen a vendor to reset and regrade the sidewalk. We have another new project moving forward, which is a keyless entry and access to the backdoor with an automatic door opener (hitting a button to open the double backdoors).

You may have noticed that the steeple clock is firmly fixed at 10:00 at all times. Along with the clock repair, we are also working on repair of our 1,400-pound church bell and the wood surrounding it. The Trustees have received a proposal and are reviewing the components.

The roofing vendor is currently scheduled to start in mid-November with labor, supplies and weather always impacting the timing of projects like this one. Hopefully the sanctuary and steeple roof project will be completed by December 1, 2021. The driveway closest to the church will need to be blocked during the week during the roof replacement. It should not interfere with weekend activities.
The Re-Opening Team continues to report to the Prudential Committee and to the Trustees. The current protocols are listed in the article by the Re-Opening Team.

Blessings and Merry Christmas!
Chas Gross, Chair of Trustees

From the Diaconate

As the children's nursery rhyme song goes…'Christmas is coming, the goose is getting fat, please to put a penny in the old man's hat…" As we prepare for Christmas 2021, it will look different from Christmas 2020 thanks to the availability of the

COVID-19 vaccines. Hopefully by 2022 Christmas will look more like 2018!

The supply chain and worker issues we have all been hearing about have now affected ECC.

At communion on November 7th we used our last pre-filled communion chalice goblets. Just order some more, you say. Easier said than done. Our supplier, *TRUEVINE,* is having the same problems that so many other companies, restaurants and grocery stores are having, not enough employees. Since all *TRUEVINE* orders are filled on request, there is a backlog of orders. The earliest they can deliver our order is in time for Christmas Eve! Therefore, plan B was initiated.

For communion on November 28th, the first Sunday of Advent, and the following Sunday, December 5th, we will be using a different single serving communion cup which is shown below. The wafer is located below the thin covering and the juice is accessed below that. <u>This wafer is not gluten free.</u>

First, bend the tab in front of the cup down and then carefully peel back the thin cellophane cover on top to reveal the wafer. Take and eat when instructed by the pastor. When time to share the cup, carefully peel back the whole tab to reveal the juice. Drink when instructed by the pastor.

These cups are more challenging than the chalice goblet we are currently using but they are what we were able to obtain. We are still not able to use the regular silver communion service for health and safety reasons.

The Joyous Season of Christmas is here and moving rapidly toward the day of the Christ Child's birth. Let us rejoice and be glad!

Peace and Blessings,
Dawn Stone for the Diaconate

Volunteers, Thank you for all your support in assisting the Church Office this year. Your time and talent is greatly appreciated!

The Church Office will be closed on Friday, December 24th and Monday, December 27th for the long Christmas weekend. Wishing you and yours a very blessed

The Church Office will have limited hours December 28th, 29th, 30th & 31st.

At all times the church answering machine provides instructions for urgent call service and is on 24 hours a day.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

The Prayer Shawl Ministry does not meet in December. The next meeting will be on Thursday, January 27, 2022.

Shawls and lap robes for men and women are available in the room off the Narthex. Please help yourself.

FRIENDSHIP CLASS

Friendship Class meets the first Tuesday of the month September - June at 1:00 p.m. in Room 201.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, December 7, 2021.

For December we will be addressing a Christmas Card, please bring a card or two. There will be names and addresses available to send to and in each card we will enclose a message and a Pocket Prayer Shawl.

As a reminder, there will be a book study beginning in February. The title of the book is *"A Time For Mercy"* by John Grisham. You are welcome to join us. Dottie Marshall and Janice Starkweather will be leading the study.

I am giving you the title of the book now so you have time to purchase the book and read it, then join us for the discussion at our meeting in February.

Come and join us. See old friends and make new ones.

Best Wishes,
Dianne Durgan

ANNUAL REPORT DUE DATE

The ***deadline*** for electronically submitted reports **and** reports that require typing or significant formatting is ***December 31ST*** and the ***deadline*** for financial documents is ***January 14TH***. If you need a copy of last year's report or have any questions, email or call the church office. THANK YOU!

Stewardship 2022

"You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."
Jeremiah 29:13

A sincere thank you to those who have completed and sent in their pledges so far. We appreciate your generosity and willingness to continue "Stewardship as Discipleship". If you have not had a chance to pledge yet, please send your completed pledge form to the church office.

You can also make your pledge online at
www.eccucc.org

Pledge/Contribution Receipts...2021

PLEASE KEEP IN MIND: 2021 Contributions need to be received by the Church Office by 8:30 a.m. on December 31st (changed the date since the last Caller publication from the 30th to the 31st) for the accounting year deposit. All contributions received after this deadline will be accounted on your 2022 1st quarter statement.

When submitting a check, please always write your giving/envelope number, and the year for which the offering is intended on the check memo/for line.

Thank you for your attention, understanding and for your financial support of the mission and ministries of the Ellington Congregational Church.

MISSIONS is on a mission

As the Board of Missions,
we exemplify a heart full of love,
an ear ready to listen,
and a hand willing to help.

What Missions has recently accomplished and is currently working on towards being accomplished:

Contributed/donated/in 'the works':

- $350.00 for Vernon Human Services.
- Hams delivered to the Cornerstone Soup Kitchen Christmas dinner.
- Food Gift Card request letter.
- $350.00 for Ellington Human Services.

the Joy is in the giving...

Fall and into holidays is a busy time for Missions. In October, we collected Christmas Toys for children distributed through *hawkwing*, on the Cheyenne River Lakota/Sioux Reservation, South Dakota. We are grateful to our congregation for their generosity in donating toys. Missions also contributed $350 to the reservation.

In October, we had a 5th Sunday collection. Missions requested hair and toothbrushes for New Hope Shelter and once again ECC members filled the big gray bin with BRUSHES!! Cornerstone was

so happy to receive them. To everyone – thank you!

Now in November it is Stewardships food-bag collection time. These food bags support clients at our local food banks at Thanksgiving time. Thanks to Stewardship for all their efforts each year.

December brings Missions Annual Gift Card collection to be purchased at Big Y and Stop &

Shop. They are presented to local food pantry's to assist their clients in purchasing food for the Christmas holiday. When you receive your letter from Missions, please consider a gift card purchase again this year. It means so much too so many.

Missions has also made plans to purchase hams to be given to the Soup Kitchen for Christmas Dinner. They serve the ham dinner to families who have their meal there on Christmas Day. This has also become a tradition for Missions.

To our congregation that supports our endeavors, the Board of Missions again says thank you and 'may God bless you for all you do'.

1st Class Letter mailed November 16, 2021

Blessings of the season

The nights are cold now, and the stars shine brightly in the dark sky.
We're warm in our home, where the lights of the tree sparkle and the stockings and presents await the morning.
For on this night, over 2,000 years ago, a savior was born in a humble stable.
Throughout his earthly life, he taught us to love one another and to reach out to those in need.
When we reach out, Christmas extends beyond ourselves and our own family and friends to others.
The blessings we will receive by doing so is, in a way, a present we will give ourselves — for sharing what we have with others is what Christmas means to me.

Bernadette Gentry
Granby, CT

(Journal Inquirer Editor's Note: This letter first ran in the Journal Inquirer in 2017. reprinted with permission)

Each year, Ellington Congregational Church Board of Missions asks members of the congregation to purchase $25 dollar gift cards from *Big Y* or *Stop & Shop*. We then give them to our local food banks - *Ellington Food Bank, Crystal Lake Community Food Pantry, the HVCC Food Pantry and The Cornerstone Cupboard.* They use them to help those in need at Christmas time to purchase food for their families.

Can we count on your continued support for this most needed gift.

We would ask you to put the gift card with the activation receipt in the enclosed envelope and mail them to the church office by December 19 or drop-off any Sunday in the offertory basket while attending worship.

Thank you for sharing. *Merry Christmas 'and may God Bless you'.*

Board of Missions

Your impact is helping...

Nov. 3, 2021

Hi Sue,

Glad to hear from you. Here is some updated information about the Cupboard:

We currently have 307 families registered for food assistance and these families represent 781 individuals. All of our families were recertified in July and August affirming their eligibility for food assistance. Our numbers have started to increase once again. This past week we registered 8 new households. We are still in our pandemic mode providing prepackaged bags of food to our clients. We are so limited on space in the Cupboard that we could not possibly have social distance between clients who are shopping. We will revisit this after the first of the year and hopefully by then we will have a better idea as to the COVID impact.

We did well during the summer with availability of food, thanks to the great ongoing support from Ellington Congregational and St. Bernard's. Your support truly makes a difference in the lives of our families. I am pleased to also inform you that we had very few volunteers leave because of COVID. Currently the Cupboard has 44 volunteers.

Some of the Big Y cashiers and baggers now recognize me thanks to your donations of gift cards. They always thank me for what we do at the Cupboard, and I thank you and your parishioners!

Lee Hay

Shopping Cart for the December Food Pantry

Pouches of Instant Mashed Potatoes
Instant Soup Packets for Chicken Noodle Soup
Cream of Chicken Soup
Cream of Mushroom Soup
Ramen Noodles
Small Boxes of Muffin Mix (Jiffy Mix)
Small Plastic Bottles of Salad Dressing
Instant Hot Chocolate

We greatly appreciate all donations, including grocery store gift cards!

THANK YOU!

We give God thanks for the life of

Sharon Gluhosky

Noah Godleski

Our sympathy is expressed to all the family and friends of Sharon and Noah.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Matthew 5:4

Women's Fellowship News

The Women's Fellowship of the Ellington Congregational Church is open to all members and friends of the church. We encourage you to participate in our organization.

"Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others,
faithfully administering God's grace
in its various forms."

From The Message, 1 Peter 4:10

Dear women of ECC,

The Women's Fellowship Executive Board wish a Merry Christmas to you and your families. We are delivering a small Christmas gift during the month of December to some of those facing health and other challenges at this time of year.

Women's Fellowship has been shopping to provide our church with a new Christmas tree for our sanctuary. The Executive Board has also agreed to provide Christmas cookies for the Fellowship Hour on December 5, 2021.

We are actively seeking a Chair or Co-Chairs to lead the Farmhouse Fair activities as we move toward our 60th Annual Farmhouse Fair in 2022. Please see Penny Gates if this is something that you are considering or if you have any questions.

Hopefully you will make some time to reflect and pray during the season of preparation and finally, the celebration of the birth of our Savior! The holiday seasons are also a wonderful time to remember and to count our blessings. Speaking of counting our blessings, Leigh Lezotte is a wonderful blessing to our church. She does so much behind the scenes to keep things moving smoothly and we are so grateful for Leigh. We are also especially thankful for Scott Noble, and all of the ways that he offers help and guidance to us. Thank you, Leigh and Scott!

We are already planning for our 2022 Women's Fellowship Annual Budget. On Sunday, January 9, 2022 please remain in the sanctuary for a brief Women's Fellowship meeting to approve the 2022 Women's Fellowship Annual Budget.

Here are two links to Christmas recipes:

Snowball Cookies and Cream Cheese with Pepper Jelly

The first link is a melt-in-your-mouth pecan cookie: https://www.landolakes.com/recipe/20055/snowball-cookies/

The second link is an easy appetizer or snack and very festive – you could use red and green pepper jelly
https://www.theseasonedmom.com/cream-cheese-and-pepper-jelly/

Next Women's Fellowship Executive Board Meeting, December 3, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. in Room 201.
Wishing you all a Merry Christmas!
Blessings,
Penny Gates, Acting President

Next
Women's Fellowship
Executive Board Meeting
November 5, 2021
1:00 p.m.
Zoom

As a reminder, there will be a meeting of the Women's Fellowship on January 9th following the 10:00 am worship service in the Sanctuary to vote on the 2022 budget. All women of the church are invited to attend this brief meeting. Thank you.

hawkwing: Women's Fellowship collects clean gently used washable coats and washable new items for the Lakota people in South Dakota and the items are distributed through the efforts of *hawkwing*, a non-profit organization. The box is located in the Narthex for depositing clean washable (please, no dry cleaning items) coats & wearables in good condition, and Jan Danforth faithfully collects and stores them each week. (Thank you Jan D.) Our congregation has been extremely generous in their donations and every donation makes a difference, so thanks! For additional information about this mission, the website is www.hawkwing.org. Janet W. and Peg D. coordinate the *hawkwing* missions for our church.

Is your **CALLER** missing, soggy, pup chew it?
Visit **www.eccucc.org** to read past editions and the current edition of the monthly publication The Church CALLER.

Bright and in beautiful color. Enjoy!

THANK YOU TO ALL THE HEROES

THANK YOU FRED BIRD

For taking time out of your day, family and business to assist just this year, ECC with photo's of Easter, outdoor worship, Halloween in-person worship; Trunk-or-Treat, communion table, head-shots for the website of the Sr. Pastor and Director of Music, updated picture of ECC for the website, bell tower and so many more over the years. Your time and talent is so appreciated and ECC could not be more thankful for all you do and have done.

Thank you.

The Church Family News

BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH

Dec. 1	Tess Eckhardt
Dec. 2	Nicholas Koehnke
Dec. 3	Aaron Hinze
Dec. 4	Marcia Hesse
Dec. 6	Charity West
Dec. 6	Shannon Close
Dec. 8	Charlotte Byam
Dec. 9	Erin Chichlowski
Dec. 9	Matthew Chichlowski
Dec. 15	Autumn Flickenschild
Dec. 15	Max Eckhardt
Dec. 16	Joy Cloukey
Dec. 17	Sam Walch
Dec. 18	Laurie Hazleton
Dec. 18	Charles Firetto
Dec. 21	Amanda Leonard
Dec. 27	Larissa Morse
Dec. 28	Scott Noble
Dec. 28	Julie Gross
Dec. 28	Brooke West
Dec. 29	Olivia Ledoux
Dec. 30	Joanne Raulukaitis

To announce your special happenings, i.e., birth, engagement, wedding, graduation, or if you see that we do not have you acknowledged in the Birthday and/or Anniversary announcements, please call the church office or send an email. Thank you!

PRAYER GROUP & PRAYER CIRCLE

The Prayer Group **prays one hour every Tuesday at 10:00 a.m. in Room 201** for people in need. If you need prayers for someone or would like to be included in the Prayer Circle, or would like to pray with the Prayer Group please contact Dottie Marshall or the church office at sec-eccucc@sbcglobal.net

Hospitalized

since the last Caller

Thankfully, no one to list.

If admitted to the hospital and would like a visit by a Pastor...

- Please **CALL** the church office as soon as you know you will be admitted.
- In your admitting process, you will be asked if you are part of a local faith community (church). If so, please answer **YES**, and give the name and town of your church.
- You will also be asked if you want your name released to representatives of your church. If so, please answer **YES**.

<u>If you say no</u>, or if you do not give the name of your church, the hospital will not be able

to release your name to Ellington Congregational Church.

If you forget, Urgent Call Service is available at all times by calling the church and listening to the answering machine as it provides instructions.

Service People on Active Duty

The following list contains people called to active duty. Please keep them and their families in your prayers. If you know of someone who should be on this list (or have a correction or status update: home safe, deployed, honorable discharge, retired, etc.), please contact the church office at 860-871-6606 or sec-eccucc@sbcglobal.net. Thank you.

Full Name	**Submitted by**
143rd Regional Support Group CT Army National Guard	
250th Engineering Battalion Army National Guard	
Allysson Belval	
Bill McDonald	
Chelsea Hinton	Jay Walpole
Chris Perrett	Moriah Nutt
Chris Saucier	
Curtis Hany	Patti & Mark Hany
Damon Matus	
David Johnson	Karen & Aaron Johnson
Del Plato	
Drew Blunt	
Dylan LaMothe	Joan McCarthy
Eric	
Ethan Parlante	Carolyn Ladd
Evan Peterson	
Frankie Valentin	Lucie Parisi
Gary Feldman, Jr.	
Greg Fearnley	
Ian Rivers	
Jessica Lannan	
Jim	
Jon Sanchez	Dawn Stone
Josh Long	Karen McCarthy
Josh Smidge	
Justyn Manning	Dawn Stone
Larry Oliver	
Lewis Hursh	
Matt Boulem	Banks Family
Nick Audette	Dawn & Basil Stone
Nicole Walsh	
Sean Belmont	George & Marty Nickerson
Thomas Allen	Lucie Parisi
Tim Moynihan	Victoria Liegl
Zach Hazzard	Jon Allen

Faith Formation News

(Church School, S.E.E.D., T.E.L.O.S.)

Masks for church school, S.E.E.D. & T.E.L.O.S. youth groups:

All faith formation activities will follow the mask requirements of the Ellington Public school system. All participants will be required to wear masks regardless of their vaccination status through December. Updates will be shared regularly with registered families.

2021-22 Church School offered two ways!

The Sunday morning church school program is for children 3 years through entering 5th grade. There will be 2 age groups: preschool – 2nd grade & 3rd – 5th grade.
Digital registration continues year round at https://forms.gle/wf7L5L2RRAmx32WL9

In the ever-changing landscape of the CoVid-19 pandemic, families need the ability to choose what works best for their households. This may change from one week to the next; that's okay. Families have 2 options to choose from each week:

- A virtual, interactive church school is offered via Zoom 9-9:45 am
- In-person church school is offered during the 10 am worship service

Classes have returned to being held in the classrooms in the education wing. All are masked and currently snacks are not offered so that masks remain in place.

Children in the virtual classes have had discussions and completed activities on the topics of: Thankfulness (Jesus heals ten lepers), All Saints Day, and God as our protector.

Children have had discussions, played games, and completed activities on the topics of: Christians are like pumpkins, Jesus heals ten men, Thankfulness and Gratitude.

S.E.E.D. youth group:

Students Encounter and Experience Discipleship

Youth in 6th – 8th grades meet twice a month on Sundays (4:30 – 6 pm). Youth stuffed fleece bears to be given to children, had discussions and completed team building activities. Youth joined TELOSians in enjoying corn mazes on Halloween.
Digital registration continues at https://forms.gle/kwx1mujmi6J9cUVPA

T.E.L.O.S. youth group:

Teens Experience Living Out the Story

Youth in 9th – 12th grades meet most Sundays (6:30 – 8 pm). Youth have sorted many bottles and cans, enjoyed the game Spoons, roasted marshmallows around a fire pit, and explored corn mazes on Halloween. Youth from S.E.E.D. joined us. Digital registration continues at https://forms.gle/iQ6BURWj2eUqFZbB9

Scrip is a year-round T.E.L.O.S. fundraiser! – See next page…

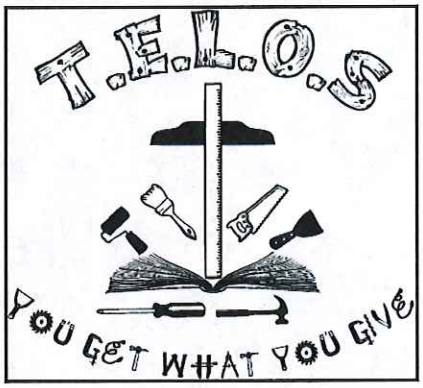
Help **T.E.L.O.S.** raise money for this summer's Mission Trip:

Visit the SCRIP Gift Card table in the Social Room!

- Choose from gift cards on hand
- Pay by check, cash or debit/credit card
- Take the gift cards home with you

Gift cards are purchased at face value.

T.E.L.O.S. earns money from SCRIP!



Some of the retailers we'll have gift cards on hand for are:

Dave & Buster's	Dunkin' Donuts	Panera Bread
Great Harvest Bread	Starbucks	Stop & Shop
Subway	Sweet Frog	Target
Walmart	TJ Maxx/Marshalls	HomeGoods

Looking for a different merchant?

Purchase gift cards of other brands and pick-up the following Sunday!

Contact Lee Carman or Linda Redekas with questions!

T.E.L.O.S.

Rakes leaves to raise money toward the summer mission trip!

GATEKEEPERS – December 2021

Sunday 10:00 A.M. In-Person Worship Service	DEC. 5TH SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT BELL SUNDAY HOLY COMMUNION	DEC. 12TH THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT SENIOR CHOIR CANTATA	DEC. 19TH FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT PAGEANT	DEC. 26TH FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS LESSONS & CAROLS
Lay Reader:	Alice Sprowles	Dawn Stone		Jol Sprowles
Deacons on Duty:	Dave Feindel Matthew Mangold Joann Scott	Laurie Hazleton	Matthew Mangold	Alice Sprowles
Ushers:	Cassie Miller Ingrid Royle	BJ Aldrich Mary Iovine Dottie Marshall	BJ Aldrich Jol Sprowles	Robin Miller Jol Sprowles

	DEC. 21ST HOPE-FILLED BLUE CHRISTMAS 7:00 P.M.	DEC. 24TH CHRISTMAS EVE 5:00 P.M.	DEC. 24TH CHRISTMAS EVE 10:00 P.M.
Lay Reader:	Dawn Stone		Cassie Miller
Deacons on Duty:	Jane Scordato	Marcia Hesse	Dave Feindel Alice Sprowles
Ushers:		Mary Iovine	

NOTES FROM GROWTH AND NURTURE

It is hard to believe that it is December, and our last Caller of 2021! Thank you to everyone who participated virtually in our November Gratitude Challenge. For those who completed the challenge, we hope you found it meaningful in some way.

December is a busy month, but we hope you will find time to create a gingerbread house for our virtual contest! Please see the full-page flyer for more information. We wish you all a very Merry Christmas!

Community Gingerbread House Contest

Virtual Presentation and Voting
Public welcome!

Prizes will be awarded and the judges will be... The Public!
Voters will be entered to win a prize too!
All ages are welcome to compete

Entries Due 12/21/21
Voting open 12/22/21 through 12/27/21
Winners announced 12/28/21

Instructions:

- All materials used in making your gingerbread house should be edible with the exception of the base you are building on.
- To submit your entry, please go to www.eccucc.org and click on the tab at the top of the page "Gingerbread House Contest".
- Email 3-4 pictures of your creation to outreach@eccucc.org by Dec 21, 2021.

Please know that pictures will be posted publicly on the church website and on social media. Your submission implies your permission to do so. Please do not include pictures of children or adults.

Ellington Congregational Church Presents

Winterfest Cafe

Saturday, December 4, 2021

Come in from the cold for some home-cooked comfort food!

Continuous seating in the Social Room

4:00 - 6:30 pm

Family-friendly affordable menu:

Macaroni & Cheese

Chili

Chicken Noodle Soup

Grilled Cheese

Beverages and Brownies!

Entrance through side door; Exit through back door

Masks required for everyone until seated

Ellington Congregational Church

72 Main Street, Ellington CT

www.eccucc.org

COMMUNITY CORNER

Town of Ellington has a full list of all the Winterfest happenings:

www.ellington-ct.gov

Winterfest & Town Wide Community Events

Saturday, December 4th

All are Welcome - Come Join the Celebration!

BSA Troop 96 - Hours 8:30am-2:30pm
Christmas Wreath Fundraiser – Town Green

Farmers Market - Hours 9am-11am
Winter Market Kick-Off - Ellington High School

Historical Society
Hours 10am-7:30 pm
Self-Guided House Tours
Holiday Market Place, Nellie's Mercantile and Vintage Wares Barn
Fill a sleigh with unwrapped toys for Cornerstone Foundation
Holiday Backdrop for Photo's
Hours 3pm-7:30 pm
Refreshments available at both Adult & Kids Hospitality tents
Bonfires
Caroling after parade

Fill the Shed at **Kloter Farms** with non-perishable food items

On the Green - Begins about 3:45 pm
Children sing
Comments from Town officials
Mr. & Mrs. Claus, Frosty and Rudolph with photo ops (distanced)
Tree lighting
5:15 pm the Torch Light Parade kicks-off

Ellington Congregational Church
Winterfest café
4-6:30 pm continuous seating
Family Friendly Affordable Menu
Church Elevator Access Accessible Entrance from the Back Parking Lot

Ellington Agway Stuff a Stocking Event 8a-5p
Take 20% OFF most items* you can fit into a stocking with minimum $3 donation to **Ellington Cub Scout Pack 96**.
*Some restrictions apply, see website.

DECEMBER 2021 – ELLINGTON CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Outdoor Activities are Weather Permitting.	**Church Office Hours Monday – Friday 8:00 am – 2:00 pm unless noted.**	**Weekly Bulletin Announcement Deadline TUESDAY of each week unless noted.**	1 8:45a Arts from the Heart – back lawn or SR 10a Amazing Advent-zoom	2 7p Sr. Choir-sanctuary	3 9a Organ Tuning-sanc. 1p W.F. Executive Board-201	4 Town-Wide Winterfest 10-11a TELOS Bottle & Can Drop Off – Shed
5 9a Church School-V 10a Communion, Bell Sunday, Second Sunday of Advent-PEACE Recorded & In-Person Worship & SS 11:30a Sr. Bell Rehearsal-201 4:30p S.E.E.D.-SR 6:30p T.E.L.O.S.-SR 7p Amazing Advent-zoom	6 **8a-9:30a Church Office Hours Today** 6:30p Troop 96-SR & 105	7 10a Prayer Group-201 1p Friendship Class-201 6:45p Growth & Nurture-zoom 7p BCE-zoom 7p Diaconate-zoom	8 8:45a Arts from the Heart – back lawn or SR 10a Amazing Advent-zoom 7p Worship Visioning Team-201 7p Troop 96 Cmte. Mtg-SR	9 9a Sacred Stitches-SR 7p Sr. Choir-sanctuary	10	11 Poinsettia Delivery
12 9a Church School-V 10a Third Sunday of Advent-JOY Recorded & Lay Led In-Person Cantata Worship & SS 11:30a Sr. Bell Rehearsal-201 6:30p T.E.L.O.S.-SR 7p Stewardship-zoom 7p Amazing Advent-zoom	13 **8a-11a Church Office Hours Today** 12:30p Missions-off site 6:30p Troop 96-SR & 105 7p Trustees-zoom	14 10a Prayer Group-201 6p Cub Scout Pack Meeting-SR	15 **JANUARY CALLER DEADLINE** 8:45a Arts from the Heart – back lawn or SR 10a Amazing Advent-zoom	16 7p Sr. Choir-sanctuary	17	18 TBD Pageant Rehearsal-sanctuary
19 10a Fourth Sunday of Advent-LOVE Recorded & In-Person Pageant Worship 11:30a Sr. Bell Rehearsal-201 4:30p S.E.E.D.-SR 6:30p T.E.L.O.S.-SR 7p Amazing Advent-zoom	20 6:30p Troop 96-SR & 105 7p Music Cmte.-phone 7p Prudential-zoom	21 *First Day of Winter* 10a Prayer Group-201 6p Cub Scout Pack Meeting-SR 7p Hope-filled Blue Christmas Service-sanctuary	22 10a Amazing Advent-zoom	23 7p Sr. Choir-sanctuary	24 *Christmas Eve* **Church Office CLOSED** 5p Christmas Eve Service 10p Christmas Eve Service	25 *Christmas*
26 10a First Sunday after Christmas Lay Led Lessons & Carols Recorded & In-Person Worship	27 **Church Office CLOSED**	28 **Church Office TODAY 8a – Noon** 10a Prayer Group-201	29 **Church Office TODAY 8a – Noon**	30 **Church Office TODAY 8a –Noon**	31 *New Year's Eve* **Church Office TODAY 8a –Noon** ▶ **Last Day to Accept 2021 Contributions Due by 8:30am** ▶ **Annual Reports Due**	**Meeting Dates and Times Subject To Change.** (Updated 11/29/2021)

THE CHURCH CALLER
Ellington Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
P.O. Box 216
Ellington, CT 06029-0216

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(TIME VALUE December 1, 2021)

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Mission Statement
Ellington Congregational Church
United Church of Christ

To be a dynamic and nurturing community
called by God's grace
to know Christ and make Him known
through worship, love, and service.

Adopted September 15, 2019

CHURCH STAFF
The Rev. Joanne Myer, Intentional Interim Minister
Juliane (Julie) LaRocca, Director of Music
musicdirector@eccucc.org
Lee Carman, Director of Faith Formation
christianed@eccucc.org
Jill McAllister, Outreach & Media Coordinator
outreach@eccucc.org
Leigh Lezotte, Church Secretary

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:
8:00 A.M. – 2:00 P.M. Monday - Friday
Closed Holidays & Weekends
Sec-eccucc@sbcglobal.net

HOW TO CONTACT THE CHURCH
Office & Answering Machine: 860-871-6606
Fax: 860-871-5932
Location & Shipping Address: 72 Main Street
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 216

Web Page: www.eccucc.org
The Church Caller in color print located on-line.