



# The Church Caller

A monthly publication of the Ellington Congregational Church, UCC

May 2023

Sunday Worship 10:00

Church School 10:00

Intentional Interim Pastor Joanne Myer

Director of Music Julie LaRocca

Director of Faith Formation Lee Carman



*Whoever you are and wherever you are on your faith journey, you are welcome here!*

## Upcoming Events

Visit [www.eccucc.org](http://www.eccucc.org) for details



Friendship Class

May 2, 2023

1:00 pm

Rm 201



Youth Confirmation Sunday

May 7, 2023

10:00 am

Sanctuary



Sacred Stitches

May 18, 2023

9:00 am

Social Room



Blood Drive

May 19, 2023

12:30 am - 5:30 pm

Social Room



T.E.L.O.S. Car Wash

May 20, 2023

9:00 am - 12:00 pm

Rocky's Hardware



Children's Sunday

May 21st

Children's Sunday

May 21, 2023

10:00 am

Sanctuary



Prayer Shawl Meeting

May 25, 2023

9:30 am

Social Room



Whole Church Meeting

June 4, 2023

11:30 am

Social Room



**June 4, 2023**

**Immediately after the worship service an All Church Pot Luck Meal & Meeting**

An All Church Pot Luck Meal and Meeting will be held in the social room to share and discuss the Small Group information and Pastor Joanne's information concerning the past.

A "Service For Moving Forward" will follow the Pot Luck Meal and Meeting.

**Childcare will be provided during the meeting.**

For the Pot Luck Meal:

Last names A-M - Bring a Main Dish

Last names N-Z - Bring a Side Dish

Board of Deacons will provide desserts, coffee and juice service.



## Joanne's Jottings

What we have been doing since I joined you in January 2021 has been a "labor of love." It is a labor of love to honor the memory of those who have blazed a path before us; it is a labor of love for those to whom we now minister; it is a labor of love for those to whom we will minister in the future. As Christians, we do this hard work of reviewing who we have been, who we are, and who we will become in the name of God through Christ Jesus.

In 1 Corinthians 13, the Apostle Paul wrote this well-known and respected passage: "Love is patient, love is kind. Love is not boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance. These three things will last forever – faith, hope, and love – and the greatest of these is love. Love will surely last forever!"



This must be our hymn-song as we continue to move forward. And we are moving forward. It will be a good thing to have everything in place before searching for a new pastor. This process takes time and I ask for your continuing patience. We cannot and should not rush this process. Our small groups have met and now it is time to hear the resulting information from those discussions. I will also have information that all of you need to hear.

I need to remind you that COVID definitely made the Intentional Interim Ministry work difficult. My first steps were to learn to know the faith community, learn to know the dynamics of the Sunday service, and then talk with as many people in the faith community as possible to learn about any problems. I knew from Chuck Erickson (then, Interim Regional Minister before his retirement) that there was division concerning the vote for a new pastor. The congregational meeting was held by Zoom which was certainly not ideal, but necessary. Again, COVID and the required isolation made certain steps necessary. The vote was 58 in favor of calling The Rev. Dr. Jay Terbush as ECC's settled pastor, and 42 not in favor of calling him. When Chuck shared that news with me, I knew something was amiss. Votes like that just don't usually happen; that is outside the norm and immediately a red flag goes up in an IIM's mind. Also, per ECC, an 85% positive vote is needed to call a settled pastor. The Search team had done much work and prayed constantly in the work that they did. Needless to say, they were devastated and some still are feeling emotional and confused about that time. The Search team was formed right after the Visioning team completed their work. Again, the Visioning team did much work and prayed constantly. There is no easy way to say this but it must be said: Some on both the Visioning team and the Search team felt, and still feel, that they were disrespected and unappreciated. We will speak about this and hopefully do something about it at the meeting on June 4th.

Please encourage those who have left us to come back for the June 4th meeting. It will be a very important gathering; actually more important than meetings about the present and future. We cannot properly move on without "clearing the air." Some of you may not think this is important, but the process has proven to be successful over and over again. We need to remember that Ellington Congregational Church was not established and has not continued without problems in the past. It is likely that the ECC congregation of the future will also have problems. It takes all of us, even if we are unhappy with the process or what has been, to be disciples and do God's work. Those of us in faith communities represent a microcosm of the world. We have all the problems and disagreements that plague the world. However, we are different in that we have chosen, as Christians in a binding covenant with God, to respect one another and each other's opinions and do the work God intends. We are all on our own spiritual journey, and concerning that spiritual journey, one thing that has been made clear by Christ Jesus is that we are commanded to love one another and our neighbor as we love ourselves. As I have said from the pulpit many times, we do not have to agree, we do not have to like someone's behavior, but we are called (by the covenant with God) to love one another as children of God. We are commanded to agree to disagree in Christian love and to love one another as children of God no matter what else occurs.

Since COVID, our mainline churches will not be the same. They were declining before COVID. We all need to embrace change whether we want to or not. Look around, the world is forcing change. One more statement: I am, every day, performing the duties of a settled pastor as well as those of an Intentional Interim Minister. I do all the things that a pastor does; I have experience with every age and many situations. I have much education and training. We have been moving forward and doing exciting things while I have been with you. We do not have to wait for a settled pastor to move on. We can move on while still doing the work needed to attract many candidates to lead you into the future.

What supplies the faith community and the Intentional Interim Minister with the courage and hope needed for this ministry is the promise that God's Spirit is at work in all things. Please know that I am blessed and honored to be with the ECC faith community. I have grown to love and respect all of you and the work you do in God's name. I give thanks for all of you every day.

Peace, Blessings, and Much Affection to You,

*Pastor Joanne*

## Eastertide

This sacred season of Eastertide extends for fifty days from Easter Sunday to Pentecost Sunday. It is suggested that these days be celebrated as one great Sunday. On the fortieth day after Easter, Christians celebrate Christ's ascension into heaven where Christ sits at the right hand of God. This year, Ascension Day is on Thursday, May 18th.

During the coming Sundays, we will share how Jesus appeared to the apostles at different times and places during those forty days. After Jesus came out of the grave or arose from death (the Resurrection), he appeared to the disciples (minus Judas Iscariot who had been killed) and perhaps other apostles to let them know he had truly risen from death. In order to send them out to teach about God and God's "Right Way for Living," Jesus breathed the Holy Spirit into them. Pentecost Sunday falls on May 28th this year and commemorates the giving of the Holy Spirit by God to all the other apostles who would be spreading the word of God. It also commemorates the beginning of what would become the Christian church, and its mission to everyone in every nation.

Please keep Easter singing in your heart as you go about your daily life. It will certainly make life better.



Support our Youth  
on Confirmation  
Sunday,  
May 7 during  
Worship, and  
Fellowship Hour  
after!



## Vacation Bible School

**Registration  
Open!**

June 19th - June 23rd

9am - noon

**\$40 per child/week**

**\$75 max per family**

Includes: daily snack, craft, science,  
story time & games!

Register at [eccucc.org](http://eccucc.org) or call 871-6606!

**ECC**  
**SUMMER WORSHIP**  
**9:30 AM** STARTING  
**MAY 28**

**ORION**

888-737-2873  
[orionprotectivesvcs.com](http://orionprotectivesvcs.com)

Thank you to Orion Protective Services in South Windsor for providing us with professional overnight security during our Easter Prayer Vigil on both Friday and Saturday nights. They generously donated their service to us this year and we are very grateful! Please keep them in mind if you have any security requirements.

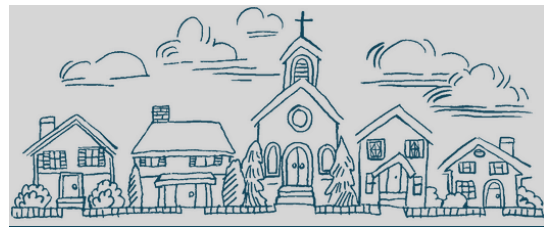
## Shopping Cart Ministry May Most Needed Items

The board of missions was able to provide vegetables in February to the Food Pantry, for which they were very grateful.

These are their current requests:

- Canned fruit
- Ramen noodles
- Spaghetti sauce in plastic jars (such as Francesco Rinaldi)
- Canned pasta
- Cans of condensed soup
- 4-packs of pudding cups
- Pouches of instant potatoes
- Rice side dishes (such as Rice-A-Roni, Knorr side dishes)
- Packages of cheese filled or peanut butter filled snack crackers

**All other canned and boxed donations are greatly appreciated, as well a grocery store gift cards.**



## 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.*

*"Carry with you maps and strings, flashlights, friends who make you sing, and stars to help you find your space: Music, hope and amazing grace."*

*Mary Chapin Carpenter*

## Your Food Donations Make a Difference

From Lee Hayward at Cornerstone:

"As you might expect, the number of families seeking food assistance from the Cornerstone Food Cupboard has increased markedly in this challenging economy.

Our total number of enrolled families is over 600 representing over 1,500 individuals. Of course, they do not all come for food each week. However, one year ago, we were preparing 120 bags of non-perishable foods for distribution each week. Currently, we are preparing 180 bags."

The Maternity Care and Family Planning Center has been a mainstay at Rockville General Hospital for more than thirty years. The Center provides prenatal and postpartum care for women who are uninsured or under-insured. Women who receive prenatal care through the Center have access to ultrasounds, laboratory services and the option of attending Group Prenatal Care through "Family Circles", which promotes the health of the mother and baby.

## Mother's Day - May 14

Mother's Day Cards will again be on sale during Fellowship Hour on April 30, May 7th, and May 14th.

The cards are \$5.00 each and will support Rockville Hospital Maternity Care Center.





**The Stewardship Talents Project  
from now on to be known as  
ECC'S SEASON OF THE TALENTS,  
THE BAGS OF GOLD**

In Matthew 25, Jesus told the Parable of the Talents. In this parable, the wealthy man gave money (talents) to his three servants. A talent as described in the New Testament weighed 129 lbs., 14 oz. This could be gold, silver, other precious metals, ivory, or frankincense. Two of the faithful servants put the money to good use and multiplied the master's money. The one who got five traded it into ten. From this example, the Talents Project asks volunteers to take a \$10 investment (in the form of a bag of ten gold pieces) and, using their "talents," see how far they can multiply this money as a fundraiser for the church. Pastor Joanne previously spoke about the Talents Project and had those who already had their project in mind go forward and get their bag of ten gold pieces. Seven "bags of gold" were given out.

A faith community like ours remains united when the people in that community know they are learning and doing worthwhile and important things according to God's teaching through Christ Jesus. The parable isn't really about financial investments. It's about each one of us exploring the creativity and the wide variety of gifts we have been given by God. This is something that helps us to believe in God without being able to see God. Each one of us is uniquely created and creative. God wants us to use ourselves to further God's ministry and mission in the world.

Whatever we've been given we are encouraged, through Jesus' teachings, to use for God's purpose. We are to invest our lives, our skills, our faith, our abilities, and our creativity to further God's work in the world.

So, use your creativity and your God-given gifts to turn our bags of gold into more funds for ministry and mission here at ECC. We have a whole season until the end of September to think and do – plenty of time to be creative. There are many places to sign-up and soon there will be a list featuring the projects from our faith community participants.

If you would like to join in but are stuck for ideas or are looking for a partner or partners, please talk to Laurie, Jol or Sharon M. We will be happy to help you out.

Laurie Hazleton (860) 878-9223 Lhazleton@aol.com  
Jol Spowles (860) 870-9713 Jols0706@hotmail.com  
Sharon McLaughlin (860) 875-8808 Sharjmw@aol.com

For those who are interested, please give us your name, phone number and e-mail on the form below, which will also be available in the narthex, and drop it in the collection plate. If you know what you would like to do, please fill that in as well. If not, then we will give you a call back to help you with ideas.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Brief Description of Project Idea (If you have one):

“Well done, good and faithful Servant...”

# 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.*

Psalm 32:11 Rejoice in the Lord and be glad, you righteous; sing, all you who are upright in heart!

Dear Women of ECC,

Happy May! We are very happy to report that Women's Fellowship held a special meeting on Sunday, April 16 to approve a one-time donation to TELOS of \$1,500 to help defray the costs of their mission trip this year. Those who oversee TELOS are already planning new approaches to future trips for reducing costs and fundraising to increase receipts. As you may recall, TELOS reported needing an additional \$10,000 for this year's trip and requested financial help in the appeal letter sent off on April 4, 2023 to the congregation. In the meantime, Women's Fellowship is one of several groups and individuals willing to step up to help this year and Women's Fellowship approved a \$1,500 donation. There is still more needed, but Women's Fellowship wanted to help our TELOSians toward their financial goals for this year's trip to Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

Please prayerfully consider helping the Farmhouse Fair this year. We are looking for someone to chair our Everything Animals Room and we already have some volunteers for making things and for working in the room. The Farmhouse Fair provides the receipts for Women's Fellowship to make contributions, and support the church. Please see Jen Traynor or Penny Gates if you are willing to step up to chair a room.

We are presenting a slate of officers for the upcoming program year of 2023-2024, which includes Co-Presidents Penny Gates and Sharon McLaughlin; Secretary, Dottie Marshall; Treasurer, Jan Schaeffer; Assistant Treasurer, Janet Wieliczka; Chaplin, Cassie Miller; Kitchen Chair, Laurie Hazleton; and Farmhouse Fair Chair, Jen Traynor. Dottie Marshall also fills the roles of Prudential Rep. and Hospitality Chair. We still need a Program Chair and, there are several members on the Board for whom our 2023-2024 program year will be their last year. We are looking for new leadership, so if you have any interest in joining us, please see Penny Gates.

Our officers are elected each year at our Annual Luncheon, which is scheduled for June 27, 2023 at noon at Figaro's restaurant in Enfield CT. All women of the church are invited to attend. Signups will be in June. Women's Fellowship is holding the cost to \$22 per person. The entrée choices are chicken francese, veal marsala, or stuffed filet of sole.

Sacred Stitches meets on the third Thursday of each month from 9:00 a.m. to noon, and their next meeting is Thursday, May 18, 2023. Everyone who wants to sew is welcome to join. Please contact Jan Schaeffer at 860-875-5581 with any questions.

Our coat collection for hawkwing continues. Please place clean, gently-used coats in the bin in the narthex.

Our next Women's Fellowship Executive Board meeting is Friday, May 12, 2023 at 1:00 p.m. on Zoom.

Blessings,

Penny Gates and Sharon McLaughlin, Co-Presidents



**T.E.L.O.S. Car Wash**  
**Saturday, May 20th: 9am-noon**  
**Rocky's Hardware in Vernon**

## Fellowship Hour

Each Sunday after worship, we invite all to join us for fellowship in the Social Room. It's a great time to reconnect and meet new people who may be visiting for the first time.

People are needed to help with the snacks and clean up after. Please call or email Cassie Miller at [cassandrasmiller22@gmail.com](mailto:cassandrasmiller22@gmail.com) if you would like to help.

Thank you!

### Children's Sunday

May 21st



Join us for a special worship service on Sunday, May 21st.  
 Theme: We Are All God's Children!

Come to Fellowship Hour after to celebrate all the hard work the children have done over the year.

The Growth and Nurture Committee encourages you to wear your name tag at worship service and any other ECC gatherings. This small act goes a long way to fostering relationships and helps newcomers feel welcomed.

Missing a name tag? Please fill out the form in the narthex and leave it in the collection plate or contact Caroline in the office - [officeadmin@eccucc.org](mailto:officeadmin@eccucc.org).



How will you help make ECC's community outreach event a success?

**Check out the VBS job board in the Social Room!**

Thank you, Jeff McAvoy, for reaching out to visitors and members and making everyone feel welcomed at ECC!

## MEET THE COMMITTEE – MEMORIAL

This month we are highlighting the Memorial Committee, who works behind the scenes to oversee the administration of our memorial gifts.

Memorial gifts sent to the church to honor past friends and members, fall to the Memorial Committee who track the gifts, consult with the families about using the gifts, and send acknowledgements to the families and contributors.

They also keep our Book of Remembrance updated.

The Memorial Committee meets as required, but usually not more often than monthly. They consider suggestions for the use of the funds, present projects and costs to the Trustees for financial authorization, and carry out projects authorized by the Board of Trustees.

The Memorial Committee also oversees our Memorial Garden and Labyrinth which is on the north side of the Education Wing and Sanctuary. The garden and labyrinth were established in 2008 to commemorate the 275th anniversary of the Ellington Congregational Church. It was funded by contributions to the Memorial Fund and sale of engraved Memorial River Rocks forming the outer circle of the labyrinth. They are beautiful spaces for mediation and reflection. If you would like to learn more about how to walk the labyrinth, here is a link: <https://www.eccucc.org/pages/the-labyrinth>

The spiritual gifts of the members of the Memorial Committee include service to others and offering encouragement, comfort and hope to those dealing with a loss. Service takes many forms, from administration and record keeping to helping to keep the garden and labyrinth beautiful. If you enjoy gardening and working outside, or feel called to kindly interact with families during their times of loss, this committee may be the right fit for you.

Please contact Jill McAllister, who is part of our Nominating Committee if you are interested in joining the Memorial Committee or would like additional information. You may email Jill at [outreach@eccucc.org](mailto:outreach@eccucc.org) or speak with Pastor Joanne about any our Boards & Committees.



## SAY CHEESE!

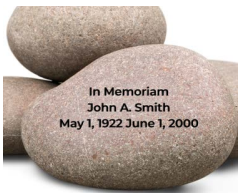
### A New Picture Directory is Coming!

Get ready to have your pictures taken over the next several Sundays during Fellowship Hour, or email your family photo to [outreach@eccucc.org](mailto:outreach@eccucc.org). There is no cost to get your picture taken and we will not be selling photo packages.

We are selling ad space to help pay for the printing as well as to raise money for the Bags of Gold talent project. Please speak with Jill McAllister for more information about advertising your business.







The Memorial Committee are taking orders for  
**Labyrinth Engraved River Rocks**  
Deadline for current orders is June 1, 2023

The Two sizes offered this year are: 6” - 8” river rock = \$95.00 and/or 8” - 10” river rock = \$125.00  
The purchase of your river rock includes a contribution toward the beautification and maintenance of the garden. Donations for upkeep may be made at any time.

Some suggestions for your engraved rock:

In Memoriam  
John A. Smith  
May 1, 1922 June 1, 2000

In Honor of  
John and Mary Smith  
(given by their children)

The Smith Family  
Mr. and Mrs. John A. Smith  
July 15, 1945  
(for an anniversary)

(Other phrases)  
In gratitude ...  
In celebration ...  
In loving memory ...

If mailing, please mail the check and form to ECC Memorial Committee,  
PO Box 216, Ellington CT 06029  
Attach a second sheet for orders of more than one rock.

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PLEASE PRINT ALL INFORMATION CLEARLY

Enclosed is \$\_\_\_\_\_ for (please check): \_\_\_\_\_6”-8” \_\_\_\_\_8”-10”

Enclosed is \$\_\_\_\_\_ donation towards annuals/up-keep.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ (in case we need to clarify information)

ENGRAVING ON RIVER ROCK (print clearly just as you wish it to be engraved on the rock)

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If you prefer, you can order online and/or pay online. Go to <https://www.eccucc.org/the-labyrinth/pages/memorial-garden-and-labyrinth-memorial-stone-orders> to order online, and go to <https://www.eccucc.org/pages/make-your-offering> to pay on Tithely. Select “River Rocks” if you choose to pay this way.

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

## ECC Contact Information

**860-871-6606** [www.eccucc.org](http://www.eccucc.org)

*Church Office Hours: Tues - Fri 9:00 am - 2:00 pm*

*Office email: [OfficeAdmin@eccucc.org](mailto:OfficeAdmin@eccucc.org)*

[officeadmin@eccucc.org](mailto:officeadmin@eccucc.org)

**Caroline Takach**, Office  
Administrator

**Location/Shipping Address**

72 Main Street

**Mailing Address**

P.O. Box 216,  
Ellington, CT 06029-0216

**Fax** 860-871-5932

**WIFI for Sanctuary and  
Social Room:** ECCwifil  
pass: 2019churchECC!

**The 24/7 church answering  
machine provides  
instructions for urgent call  
service .**

**Pastoral Emergencies,**  
concerns or prayer requests,  
call Pastor Joanne at  
**860-872-9222.**

[pastor@eccucc.org](mailto:pastor@eccucc.org)  
**Joanne Myer**, Intentional  
Interim Minister

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**Lee Carman**, Youth &  
Children Faith Formation  
Director

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**Juliane 'Julie' LaRocca**,  
Director of Music

[outreach@eccucc.org](mailto:outreach@eccucc.org)  
**Jill McAllister**, Outreach &  
Media Coordinator/ Website