



# The Church Caller

*A monthly publication of the Ellington Congregational Church, UCC*

*July 2023*

Sunday Worship 9:30  
Church School 9:30  
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!*

## THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT

**"Teacher, which is the most important commandment in the Law of Moses?" Jesus replied: "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul and all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments."**

**Matthew 22:36-40 NLT**

### Upcoming Events

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

Mid-Week Faith and Fellowship  
Early career adults  
Wednesdays 6:00 pm

TELOS Mission Trip  
July 8 - July 15

July 16 Sunday Worship  
TELOS Reflections

July 22  
Blood Drive

July 23  
Sunday Worship  
Auctioned Theme

Sept 10  
Rally Sunday

August Caller Items  
Due July 15

Weekly Announcements  
Due on Tuesdays

This month we will begin the next step in our interim process - examining where we are as a church community, right now. With a focus on "The Present", our consistent backdrop will be The Greatest Commandment.

We will follow the same format, with small group discussions leading to a large group gathering to review what everyone has discovered. In examining our present, we will look at current situations and practices such as our worship, governance, demographics, mission work, projects, and events. We will examine our wider community and our impact in the world. All of this will help us to move into the final phase when we discuss our future.

If you had already signed up to be part of the discussions, you do not need to do anything - you will be contacted by your small group facilitator.

However, if you had not participated previously, you may be added to the groups now. Please call or email Caroline in the office. [officeadmin@eccucc.org](mailto:officeadmin@eccucc.org) - 860-871-6606.

We expect the summer months may make it harder to get dates that will work for everyone. It is more important to have full participation than to get this done quickly without everyone's availability. We need to allow time for additional people to sign up, a facilitators briefing, and then scheduling. So this phase will probably take all of July and August before we can reconvene in a large group session.

All are welcome to participate. We encourage our young adults, recent confirmands, non-member friends, and anyone interested in our future direction to be involved.

Please don't miss this opportunity to have your voice heard.

## Shopping Cart Ministry July Most Needed Items

School is out for the summer soon - please keep the children in mind when you shop.

- 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 as 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.*

### YOUR IMPACT ON OUR MISSIONS WORK

You probably realize that your financial contributions to ECC support the operations of our organization. From staff to facilities and supplies, the church does not run without that support.

But did you know that 10% of your pledged amount goes to our missions work? Of that, 37% goes directly to ECC missions projects as determined by the Missions committee. So, for someone who pledged \$5,000, their contribution to the ECC missions would be \$185.

The Missions committee carefully considers requests that they receive for help from local, regional, national and international organizations. They work to balance the reach of our support as well as to align it with the ECC Mission Statement.

If you would like to make an even bigger impact, you can donate directly to the Mission Committee any time during the year.

As always, the committee thanks the generosity of our congregation!



### Time for a summer cleanout?

Help Support the Cheyenne River  
Sioux/Lakota Tribe (CRST) in South Dakota.

Please consider donating gently used: Winter Coats, Jackets, Hats, Gloves and Snow Pants (children's sizes too) Year around ECC collects these items and donates them through Hawkwing, Inc. To donate, bring the items to church and place them in the blue bin under the coat rack downstairs off of the Social Room.

If you have any questions please contact Vickie Oravits at [oravitsv8@gmail.com](mailto:oravitsv8@gmail.com).

Thank you, Chas Gross,  
for setting up the livestream  
technology and running it  
every Sunday so that many of  
us can be part of worship  
when we can't be there in  
person.



## Prayer Shawl Group



The Prayer Shawl Group had their last meeting of this program.

The next meeting is September 28, 2023

Thank you everyone, and enjoy your summer!



**Thank you for your support!**

30 children aged 3yr - 5th grade spent the week learning about when and how to *Shine Jesus' Light!*

**Looking for & sharing their God Sightings, playing games, experimenting, creating, singing and hearing Bible stories**



## Summer L.I.G.H.T.

Learning In God's House Together

Summer L.I.G.H.T. returns on June 4th during ECC's single 9:30 service. The last session will be on August 27th.

\*No Summer L.I.G.H.T. on July 9th or 16th \*

One-room school house program: 3 yrs - 5th grade.  
Children will start in the Sanctuary with their families.

**Older youth may help lead the sessions.**  
**Volunteer opportunities for both adults and youth 6th grade and older!**

Contact Lee Carman, Director of Christian Education,  
for more information.

Phone: (860) 871-6606 Email: [christianed@eccucc.org](mailto:christianed@eccucc.org)



**Mission Trip:  
July 8th-15th**



Youth and chaperones will spend a week alongside other church youth groups in Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

We will work with a local organization, Helping Hands, building, landscaping and painting for individuals that need assistance.

~hear stories from the trip during 7/16 worship~

## Cornerstone Community Kitchen Volunteers Needed



Now Forming an ECC Team to work at the kitchen one Thursday/month. Choice of:

- Prep 1-4 pm
- Serve 4-6 pm
- Both prep and serve

- Meals for “eat in” or “take out” to about 40 to 50 clients
- Excellent rewarding opportunity for hands-on direct community service

For further information or to sign up: Carolyn Bunick  
860-871-8689 or carolynbunick@yahoo.com

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).



## Midweek Faith & Fellowship



For 18 yr - early career adults  
Wednesdays @ 6pm

Gathering Wednesdays @ 6pm  
over the summer

**Not just for ECC young adults: A faith-based opportunity to meet others embarking on the next chapter of their lives following high school graduation.**

Community doesn't end at graduation - neither do relationships. They just change.

Spend time deepening relationships and your faith by engaging in conversation and activities with other young adults in the community!

Contact Lee Carman at [christianed@eccucc.org](mailto:christianed@eccucc.org) for more information.



TELOS is no longer collecting bottles and cans. Please donate your returnables to a different organization/group over the summer.

Hopefully, the collection will resume after Labor Day. Thank you for your support!





## 61st ANNUAL FARMHOUSE FAIR

- Decorative food kits
- Christmas décor
- 18" doll clothes
- Pet toys and goodies such as cat wand toys, cat nip bags, dog coats, dog biscuits, and any animal-themed items
- Any items made from fibers like yarn and fabric, such as quilts, clothing, blankets, kitchen items, baby items, h
- Kids Corner – new or gently used items that kids will want to purchase as Christmas gifts

Questions can be directed via email to [jenniferatraynor@yahoo.com](mailto:jenniferatraynor@yahoo.com)

## YOUR SUMMER HOMEWORK....

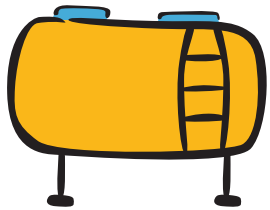
### FARMHOUSE FAIR

SAVE THE DATE!

NOVEMBER 3-4, 2023

*Home-made and Hand-made  
Held in our traditional indoor style*

We would love YOUR hand-made item donations to support the church! This is the list of what we need that you can work on over the summer. We're looking for items or kits that people might purchase at the fair, such as:



## Help ECC Earn Rebates & Save Money on Home Heating Oil 2023-2024 Season

Since 1998, ECC has worked with local oil providers to offer our members special programs which also provide a rebate back to ECC. Both Automatic TLC Energy (HOP Energy) of East Hartford (860-528-4328) & Andrews Oil and Gas Services of South Windsor (860-528-0766) are participating this year.

We want to expand our group to make an even bigger impact. You, your extended family, friends, and neighbors are encouraged to join us on this great, money saving program.

We have not finalized an offer from TLC yet - please stay tuned for details. Their program requires that people sign up before the end of July.

Andrews Oil is offering their usual service contracts and a rebate to ECC for gallons purchased. Call 860-528-0766 for details and mention the ECC group program. Andrews Oil needs to know before the heating season.

Please call me with any questions about these companies, their programs, and enrollment. Thanks for your interest, David Feindel (H) 860-872-2232



# SEASON OF THE BAGS OF GOLD/TALENTS

Did you decide on a project yet? Need help finding or developing your ideas?

There are successful projects that were done in the past, and we can help you plan them out.

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

## Custom-made Cornhole Set

**ONLY \$125! Your choice of theme!**

Includes custom wooden cornhole board set (2 boards) plus (8) bags

See boards below that David and Lisa Sirag have made for family.

These usually cost around \$300 online.

**Offered for only two weeks through July 15th. The first call to  
Lisa Sirag at 860 558 3291 will win this prize!!**

All proceeds will go to the ECC Season of Talents.



## Computer Services

Is your computer giving you problems?

Need help with a printer?

Moving to a new computer?

I can help you with any of your home computing problems or questions. I can work with both Windows and Mac's.

Please call or email me at  
[brian.cocuzzo@gmail.com](mailto:brian.cocuzzo@gmail.com)



# SEASON OF THE BAGS OF GOLD/TALENTS

## PREACHER'S GONNA PREACH YOUR TOPIC!

Silent Auction - Now through July 16th

Highest bid chooses a topic for Pastor Joanne's sermon, given on July 23rd

**To enter:** Call or email Caroline in the office with your bid. Do not submit your topic with your bid. Highest bid will not be revealed until July 16th during Fellowship Hour.

No political topics

Look forward to ...

**Baked Goods by Laurie**  
**Small Quilt by Penny**

### Grandmother Zina's Heritage Cinnamon Buns



**\$1 each**  
Each Sunday  
until Labor Day  
during  
Fellowship Hour

### Be Part of the New Pew Picture Directory!



Please send us your or your family's picture if we did not take your picture at church. Please email your picture to: [outreach@eccucc.org](mailto:outreach@eccucc.org).

If you are a member or a regular visitor at ECC, we'd love to have you in the album. Each family in the album will also receive their own to take home.

### Advertisers! Find Your Place in the Pews!

- \$100
- 4" x 2.5"
- Full color
- Professional Graphic design included

Please contact Jill to place an ad  
[860-810-8993](tel:860-810-8993) or [outreach@eccucc.org](mailto:outreach@eccucc.org)

- Reach over 350 members and visitors
- 75 directories in the pews with additional directories to members
- Given out to new members when they join
- Will remain in the pews for at least 12 months
- Professionally printed & bound on high quality stock

## **Update - Afghan Refugees sponsored by the extended Mangold Family**

In 2021, President Biden placed an Executive Order to enhance programs to resettle refugees. American citizens could become part of the solution. On Thanksgiving in November 2021, Matt and Tammie Mangold's extended family prayed about and discussed what they could do to support a refugee family from Afghanistan. Tammie said that they were hearing about the Afghan refugees at military bases waiting for placement. Once the U.S.-supported regime collapsed in Afghanistan, those who fought in the military against the Taliban were at risk for persecution.

The extended Mangold family joined a new program called Sponsor Circles, and named their circle Open Arms Sponsor Circle. They welcomed a nephew and uncle (father's brother) and helped provide initial support as the refugees began a new chapter in their lives in the US.

Both the nephew and uncle had served in the military as did the nephew's own father. There are 12 family members still in Afghanistan who also wish to come over to the United States, but have been unable to do so. It is a terribly slow, bureaucratic process. The father of the nephew who also served in the military is still in Afghanistan with his family. He is in hiding. The Taliban has searched their home multiple times.

Initially, the Mangold family was sponsoring the two men, but a third family member (uncle on the nephew's mother's side) has since joined them. Two of the three of them have jobs.

The uncle who is not working is taking English classes through the Vernon Adult Ed program. The nephew also took the English classes to gain confidence with his English skills, but has already tested out of the program. They have worked very hard to become proficient English speakers.

They share a small apartment and hope to save up for a larger space. They have become self-sufficient, but have had challenges. For example, in order to pay in-state tuition at a community college in CT, a one year's residence is required. Otherwise, the tuition is charged at out-of-state rates which is three times higher than the in-state tuition. So, taking a class required a one-year wait to avoid paying the out-of-state residents' rate. Tammie has already started to affect changing this policy by bringing it to the attention of our State Rep. Jamie Foster, who is working on it.

ECC donated \$2,000 to the Open Arms Sponsor Circle in 2022. This was a direct contribution to help with the financial requirements to assist their refugee family in relocating. The money was contributed through our Missions Committee, which is funded by a percentage of our pledges. Our pledges have helped to support this beautiful mission.

The refugees from Afghanistan have since become friends of the Mangold family. They attended the Memorial Day parade together, and celebrated Memorial Day with the Mangolds. They expect to work hard as they carve out their place in the United States, and do not need additional financial support at this time. The Sponsors Circle provided the framework, and the extended Mangold family modeled loving and serving others as we are called to do as Christians. Hebrews 10:24 encourages us, stating: And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.

*As told to Sharon McLaughlin by Tammie Mangold*



## **MEET THE COMMITTEE – GROWTH and NURTURE COMMITTEE**

Our Bylaws enumerate three primary duties for the Growth and Nurture Committee. These are to attract people to the church, to welcome those who come, and to assimilate new members into the life of our church.

Some of the ways that Growth and Nurture has fulfilled these duties is by administering our mentor program for new members, preparing and attending new member orientation sessions, and welcoming new members during Sunday services. They also work with the Outreach and Media Coordinator to arrange church advertising and develop programs to nurture our church members and to strengthen church community ties.

The committee has created some intergenerational programs that were open to the community and to members and friends, such as new member dinners, Fall Family Fun Night, a town-wide scavenger hunt, a Zoom drawing class, a November gratitude challenge, weekly walks in Arbor Park, and creating baskets for ECC's high school seniors. During Winterfest, the Growth and Nurture Committee has sponsored very successful Gingerbread House competitions which is planned again for this year.

The Welcoming Ministry that they administer along with the Diaconate is a structured process for recognizing visitors and helping them to get acquainted with ECC at the visitor's pace, making them comfortable and providing them with information to help them learn and become involved.

The gift of administration with skills like planning, organizing and completing tasks within deadlines is a spiritual gift that would be a good fit with Growth and Nurture. Many of the projects undertaken by Growth and Nurture include some organizing, planning, and following through. The spiritual gift of exhortation which is defined as offering comfort and encouragement to others is a beautiful gift that Growth and Nurture members may have. As members of our faith community are comforted and encouraged, especially new members or those needing additional care, exhortation is another great fit for a member of the Growth and Nurture Committee. Serving is another spiritual gift that is very beneficial to the Growth and Nurture Committee. Hospitality is a form of service, and welcoming visitors, new members and the community is a very core part of our Growth and Nurture mission. Finally, the spiritual gift of leadership, including motivating the church body to achieve church goals is a wonderful gift for a Growth and Nurture member.

Growth and Nurture is a fun, creative committee that works to bind our church community closer together. The variety of spiritual gifts that would enhance the work of the committee include, but are certainly not limited to what is listed above. If you enjoy welcoming newcomers and helping engage and include people into our faith community, Growth and Nurture may be the perfect place for you.

Please contact Jeff MacAvoy, [julienjeffrey@aol.com](mailto:julienjeffrey@aol.com), Chair of Growth and Nurture, if you are interested in joining this committee or would like additional information. You can also find Jeff most Sundays during fellowship hour saying hello to everyone he sees!

# 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.*

*Luke 21:30 As soon as they come out in leaf, you see for yourselves and know that the summer is already near.*

Dear Women of ECC,

We were so pleased that our general Women's Fellowship membership voted to add an extra scholarship this year for a total of three \$500 scholarships. Our very worthy recipients are Laurel Feindel, Owen Feindel and Samuel Forst. Best wishes and blessings to these students of higher education.

We are fully in summer, now. Our schedules are a bit lighter, too. Our slate of officers for the program year of 2023-2024 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. These are Penny Gates, Sharon McLaughlin, Janice Schaeffer and Janet Wieliczka**, all of whom have served several terms on the Executive Board. If you are interested in serving on the Executive Board, please see Penny Gates.

**Sacred Stitches will not be meeting in July or August. They will begin meeting again on the third Thursday of each month from 9:00 a.m. to noon in September, and their next meeting is Thursday, September 21, 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.

Please watch the bulletins and emails for upcoming workshops for the Farmhouse Fair. The dates of the Farmhouse Fair are Friday, November 3 and Saturday, November 4, 2023. The Farmhouse Fair always generates lots of excitement.

Our next Women's Fellowship Executive Board meeting is Friday, September 8, 2023 at 1:00 p.m. on Zoom.

Blessings,

Penny Gates and Sharon McLaughlin, Co-Presidents

# Thank You to Our Many Volunteers

The number of hours that our volunteers provide to keep our church running is surprising and even amazing. There are so many places where members and friends step up, and we would not have an active, working church without them. And we simply could not afford to pay for the many positions and service that our church volunteers provide.

On any given month, there are at least 63 volunteer hours that happen for Sunday worship-service. That includes ushers, deacons (more than one on a communion Sunday), at least one teacher, a videographer, a lay reader, and about 9 choir members. On Sundays with our Senior Bell Choir, you can add another 12 hours per worship service. One estimate of the total number of volunteer hours on a “regular” month is about 930 hours. (This would not be during a Farmhouse Fair month, for example.) Our agreements with paid staff total about 530 hours per month. It is very clear that volunteers are essential to the smooth running of our church and all of our programs and ministries.

Just the bylaw positions alone (officers, and permanent boards & committees) number 97 positions. During our nominating/recruitment in the fall, we are rightly focused on filling these positions from Moderator to Clerk to Historians, to Trustees, to Diaconate and more. However, there is so much more that goes on at our church, and people are stepping up in many ways to enhance our church activities.

We have Ad Hoc committees, such as HR, the Worship Visioning Team, and Ad Hoc Interim Assistants, as well as ministries such as Prayer Shawl, Sacred Stitches, Prayer Group, Friendship Class and Caritas. The Senior Choir, the Senior Bells and our talented musicians are an integral part of our worship service. Don't forget our lay readers who are not part of a committee, but serve during worship every week. Then there are teachers, youth leaders, confirmation mentors, and confirmation assistants. We have our videographer and backups for streaming, a computer person, some Zoom volunteers, a sound system person for outdoor services, a whole group of people who set up and take down the creche for every Advent season and so many more behind-the-scenes people, many of whom are not in the spotlight but still critical to our success.

We have garden & labyrinth caretakers, buyers for kitchen supplies, decorators for seasonal, outdoor décor, a clock/time volunteer, another for our carillon, a volunteer who assembles the bulletins and straightens the materials in the pews every week and a photographer. We also benefit from professional services donated such as attorney's fees and advice. Our Fellowship Hour is amazing and again, all done by volunteer hours. This is all in addition to our “official” positions such as our Treasurers, Financial Secretaries, Auditor, Board of Christian Education, Growth & Nurture Committee, Stewardship Committee, Ushers and more. Of the 14+ people who spend a couple of hours each month at the Prudential Committee meeting, most are also volunteers. Over 60 people participated in the small group meetings as volunteers and 8 also acted as facilitators of those small groups. Finally, we have auxiliary groups such as Women's Fellowship, and the Winterfest Committee who not only provide community outreach, but real financial benefits to the church for their work. There are also special projects like Blood Drives and other events. There are many people who provide Christian service to our church.

Let us take a moment to reflect and offer deep gratitude on the many who offer their time and talents to our church and its ministry, or who have done so in the past. Volunteer hours are not “free” hours. The time/cost is paid for by the person rather than the church, but there is still a cost. Everyone's time, staff or volunteer is valuable and not unlimited. Our church is so blessed to have many collaborative hands doing God's work. Thank you so very much to all of our church volunteers past and present!

Submitted by Sharon McLaughlin on behalf of the Prudential Committee





## Trustees Corner

July 2023

Romans 8:14: *For those of you who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. (NIV)*

The project of bringing the fire doors up to code continues. Most of the actual door replacements have happened, and installation continues as materials become available. The installed doors are gray in color, and are coming directly from the factory. There will be some painting or touching up as needed.

There are also two wooden-panels that need to be replaced with fireproof panels in the ceiling, which are also required to bring the church up to code per the Fire Marshal. One panel is above the steps to the choir loft outside of the pastor's office. The other is at the top of the stairs at the front of the church where the ladder is that goes up into the steeple.

The air conditioning units in the Sanctuary and Social Room have been serviced for the summer. Window units have been installed in the offices and room 201.

The final toilet-seat has been installed in our church, thank you to Chris Pettigrew! There will be new, toilet-paper holders installed as well.

Finally, the Trustees are looking at the options for replacing our office safe. There will be a drop-in feature just like the current safe offers.

Blessings,  
Chas Gross, Chair of Trustees

### **BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

To obtain copies of the minutes from the Boards and Committees, please contact the following:

Prudential minutes - Betsy Cottle, Clerk  
All others - Lisa Sirag, Historian



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

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

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Children Faith Formation  
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[musicdirector@eccucc.org](mailto:musicdirector@eccucc.org)

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

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

**Jill McAllister**, Outreach &  
Media Coordinator/ Website