

News from the Hill

The Congregational
Church of Easton

January 2018

Minister

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**“For
I KNOW
the plans
I have for you,”
declares the LORD,
“... plans to give you
HOPE and a
FUTURE.”**

Jeremiah 29:11, NIV



Meditations from the Pastor

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage”. **Matthew 2: 1**

I love the wise men in the story of Christ. Here were a group of Gentile, Pagan, religious leaders who were known for practicing magic and astrology possibly in Parthia. They were not Jewish and the birth of a Jewish king promised very little to their people. Yet they looked into the skies and knew something new and wonderful was about to happen and so they set out and traveled for years on foot to bring gifts and honor to the new born Jesus. Just think about the dedication these men felt for the event about to take place. Think about the openness they must have had to see and experience the works of God so strongly that they felt inclined to risk their lives to be apart of it.

I am left wondering as I look around our world if we are as open to God’s leading as these wise men were. Are we in tune with God enough to recognize when he is doing something great? I hope that the answer is yes. However, I fear that many people are not. I fear that for many people God has stopped holding a place of honor in their lives. I know there are people out there wondering, and yearning for God in their lives and in this greater world. So this January, take some time to slow down. Take some time to just breath and to observe the beauty around you. Observe the beauty in nature, **observe the beauty in one another and know that God is doing something wonderful.** We just don’t understand the complexity of it yet. The wise men did not know what they were to find when they came to Judea. Yet they set out on the journey anyway. And they did not know how this baby was going to change the world. They trusted in the signs of God.

This year we need to trust more in God. We need to put God first and bring wonder to our relationship with the Holy. We need to reach out to God seeking new ways to connect with him in deeper more meaningful ways. We need to be open to the possibilities of God all around. In honor of that, we will be doing a book study on *Weird Church* this winter. We will communicate with you soon on the details. In our study, we will rediscover our wonder, our curiosity in the still speaking God, and learn of all the different ways that people are still reaching out to God in their search for a connection with Creation. So I invite you to join us for good conversation and food.



North Dakota holds the record for most snow angels made simultaneously in one place. Back in 2007 it was 8,962 people in North Dakota who plopped down in the snow to waggle their arms and legs to make snow angels.

BOARD OF DEACONS

What a month December has been in the life of our church!

Advent Season brought several opportunities for more meaningful worshiping as well as occasions for necessary and pleasurable fellowship. For example:

- Hanging of the Greens
- Lighting of the Advent Candles by several families
- Sunday School study (Notice the meaningfully decorated display board)
- Cookie Walk fundraiser
- Breakfast with Santa
- Joel Barlow Select Choir Sing Along and reception
- Gift donations for Covenant to Care families
- Baptisms
- The Christmas Pageant
- A small but exuberant choir (Thank you, Carole)
- Christmas Eve Candlelight worship

Last but certainly not least, the congregation received another generous bequest from our benefactress, toward help in paying for the two new furnaces for the Old Academy building.

While many of these noted proceedings are not of the Deacon's responsibility, the Deacons wish to recognize and thank all those who aided in planning and executing the worshiping and fellowship.

Sincere thanks to Rev. Amanda and Jeanne for directions from the office that kept needed supplies and volunteers on schedule.

Further, recognition and thank you to Leon March (& his helpers) for their expertise in setting up props, adding to the ambiance of the Christmas sanctuary; plus all extra necessary tasks the December Confirming Deacon must assume such as the personal touch of the luminaries for the Christmas Candlelight Worship.

At our January meeting (1-7-2018), the Deacons will be hearing the results of the ongoing Stewardship Campaign and the plans for the church Annual Meeting. All past Deacons meeting minutes are available to you in the office.



Boards and Committee

BOARD OF FACILITIES

With help from members who gave some extra funds and our benefactress, we are pleased to announce our new furnaces are paid in full. Many thanks to everyone who participated in our fund drive. We have some minor updates to be done to the heating system when the nursery school is closed for Christmas break, but it should be a small job.

We are still looking into upgrading the lights in the church hall.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Children's Worship and Education

Sunday School continues and we urge all families to feel free to bring friends and family to church. All children are welcome to join us in our Sunday School program.

- Curriculum: All Together Now by Group
 - Our Winter teacher: Connie Wing
- Winter Theme: John the Baptist and Jesus

In January, we will be learning about John the Baptist and the beginning of Christ's life and ministry. Children will learn about Christ's message and work and have fun doing it! We hope your children will join us on Sunday mornings for Sunday School. All children are welcome to come.

TURN AROUND CHURCH COMMITTEE

TAC will be meeting on January 21st to discuss future plans for the 2018 year. We will be planning a game day, more talks, work on our upcoming book study, and some new potential fundraisers. If you have any suggestions please feel free to contact the church office.



Colorado holds the record for the most snow to fall in a single calendar day. On December 4, 1913, 63 inches of snow fell on Georgetown, Colorado.

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN OUTREACH

Next St. Luke/St. Paul's Food Kitchen – January 16th

Menu –

Chicken – any style – or your specialty, Starches, Vegetables, Salad, Fruit, Desserts

At the December 19th Food Kitchen we served 63 meals and a lot for Rev. Alba's shelter in Hartford.

Cooks/Bakers:

Daisy Colonnese, Sara Baczewski, Barbara van Achterberg, Cynthia Landry, Hugh Croll, Claudia Neilsen, Jane Kondratovich, Barbara Trup, Suzanne Herlihy

Prep/Transport/Servers:

Cynthia Landry, Barbara van Achterberg, Suzanne & John Herlihy, Sue & Lucas Farmer

St. Luke/St. Paul's Food Pantry

Non-perishable food is collected on the First Sunday of the month, when we share Communion and **remember those in need of experiencing God's abundance.** They are delivered the day of the food kitchen and can be dropped off at the Old Academy building during the month.

Merton House

Please don't forget your Merton House donations that go toward supporting adults and children who find themselves in need. We continue to collect sample or travel sized toiletries for Merton House. Please drop them off anytime and place in the basket at the entrance to the church hall.

Your donations are greatly appreciated.

THANK YOU . . .

. . . for the gifts and gift cards that were donated to Covenant to Care families for Christmas. Your gifts truly brightened the holidays for many families!

Boards and Committee

STEWARDSHIP

Stewardship Campaign

We have been well underway in our stewardship campaign for 2018. We would like to send out a special thank you to all those who already sent in their pledge card. Remember our pledges help to support our current missions, allow for the development of new missions, support our functions to educate people in the scriptures and ways of Christ in the world, and allows for us to continue to maintain our beautiful historic buildings so future generations will continue to enjoy their beauty. **Everyone's pledge is important and essential** to the life of our church. So if you have not already done so, please fill out your blue pledge card and mail it back to the church. Please remember to send your cards back as soon as possible to help us plan for the coming year. Your participation helps us to continue to serve Easton and our neighboring communities.

Pledge challenge goal 2018: \$65,000

Current Pledge Count: \$46,070

Annual Meeting: *Early 2018 please stay tuned for a confirmed date*



The most snow to fall in a 24-hour period in the United States is 75.8 inches.

In 1921, over six feet of snow fell between April 14 at 2:30 p.m. and April 15 at 2:30 p.m. in Silver Lake, Colorado.



And while we hope we don't get record breaking snow this year, we may have to cancel at some time. If the weather is bad, please check Channel 6 (NBC CT), Channel 8 (News8/My TV9) or Channel 12 (News12 Connecticut).

Serving Schedule

January Confirming and Welcoming Deacon – Jon Stock			
	Ushers & Offering	Collectors	Coffee Hour
January 7	S. Lovejoy	D. Colonnese, C. Partridge	B. van Achterberg
January 14	The Marches	The Twomblys	N. Taranto
January 21	P. McCarty, N. Taranto	The Glasers	S. Lovejoy
January 28	D. Colonnese, T. Linley	N. Taranto, M. Perkins	D. Colonnese

February Confirming and Welcoming Deacon – Daisy Colonnese			
	Ushers & Offering	Collectors	Coffee Hour
February 4	S. Lovejoy	D. Colonnese, C. Partridge	B. van Achterberg
February 11	The Marches	The Twomblys	N. Taranto
February 18	P. McCarty, N. Taranto	The Glasers	S. Lovejoy
February 25	D. Colonnese, T. Linley	N. Taranto, M. Perkins	J. Stock

All of our members and friends are invited to serve as Ushers. If you would like to participate, please call a member of the Board of Deacons or call or email the church office. If you are unable to serve as assigned, please contact the confirming Deacon for the month.

Altar Flower and Coffee Hour Hosting for 2018

The Flower Calendar for 2018 is posted so you can select your special dates in celebration of birthdays, anniversaries or special occasions. You may order or provide the flowers yourself or have the office order them.

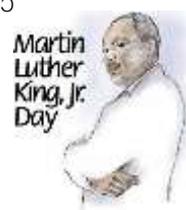
Hosting a Coffee Hour is a wonderful way also to celebrate a special occasion.

- Why: Celebrating a special day with your church family, to welcome people to a moment of fellowship.
- How: Call the church office or send an email if you would like to be on our rotation to host Coffee Hour or would like to just do a special date.

january



2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Happy New Year! Office Closed	2	3	4 	5	6 
7 Epiphany 10 am Worship w/ Communion 11 am Coffee Hour 11:30 Deacons Cove	8	9	10 	11	12 	13
14 10 am Worship 10:15 Sunday School 11 am Coffee Hour 11:30 Memorial Garden	15  Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Office Closed	16 3:45 Food Kitchen St. Luke/St. Paul's	17	18 	19	20
21 10 am Worship 10:15 Sunday School 11 am Coffee Hour 11:30 TAC Cove	22	23	24	25	26 	27
28 10 am Worship 10:15 Sunday School 11 am Coffee Hour NAPS Snowflake Ball	29	30 	31	<p>Igloos can be more than 100 degrees warmer inside than outside. <i>And they're warmed entirely by body heat. Since fresh, compacted snow is approximately 90 to 95 percent trapped air (meaning it can't move and transfer heat) it's a great insulator. Many animals, such as bears, dig deep holes in the snow to hibernate through the winter.</i></p>		

February 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4 10 am Worship w/ Communion 11 am Coffee Hour 11:30 Deacons	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 10 am Worship 10:15 Sunday School 11 am Coffee Hour Cove	12	13	14 Valentines Day ASH WEDNESDAY	15	16	17
18 1 st Sunday in Lent 10 am Worship 10:15 Sunday School 11 am Coffee Hour	19	20 Food Kitchen	21	22	23	24
25 2 nd Sunday in Lent 10 am Worship 10:15 Sunday School 11 am Coffee Hour Cove	26	27	28	<p><u>The dates for Lenten Suppers will be in the February Newsletter.</u></p>		



NEWS FROM THE HILL . . .
THE CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH OF EASTON
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For the new year

Hold fast to your faith (Hebrews 4:14)

Assemble with the saints (Hebrews 10:25)

Pray earnestly every day (1 Thessalonians 5:17-18)

Pray for great blessings (Malachi 3:10)

Yield not to temptation (1 Thessalonians 5:22)

Neglect not your talents and opportunities (Galatians 6:10)

Examine yourself daily (2 Corinthians 13:5)

Work diligently for the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58)

Yield your members to righteousness (Romans 6:11, 16)

Exercise yourself in godliness (1 Timothy 4:7)

Aim for a perfect, mature faith (Hebrews 6:1)

Redeem the time (Ephesians 5:15-16)

—Gus Nichols