

News from the Hill

The Congregational Church of Easton

December 2021



Minister

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Office Hours

Monday-Friday
9:30 am to 1:30 pm

She will give birth to a son,
and you are to give him the name

Jesus,

because He will save

His people from their sins.”

Matthew 1:21



"The dark and ugly side of Christmas is sin. The heart of Christmas is this: Christ came into the world to save sinners. And the real beauty of Christmas is to understand the ugliness that it cures. If there were no sin, there would need to be no Christmas".



John MacArthur

This Advent I have felt a lot more contemplative than normal. I think about all that has happened in our world in the past couple of years and my own frustrations with the state of the world and at times my own exhaustion around caring and then I feel guilt and shame. I am reminded this Advent, that I am not perfect in my faith. I am not without sin and fault. Yet in these realizations, in these moments of clarity, we can all truly confess the hope of Christ, the hope of the season.

A large part of the season of Advent is to recognize the reason for Christmas in the first place and that was to offer salvation to a world of sinners. Christmas came because the world needed hope to pull them out of the despair of the harsh realities of this world. Hope that in God, in Christ, there was a way out of the harshness all around. This is the light shining in the darkness this season. This is the light that **offers to brighten our worlds. Let's not allow for the state of humanity to drag us down** this Christmas season. Let us enter into this season hopeful that Christ will work in our world reminding us that he is present and that he has come to our sinful world to offer life.

In that hope let us find joy in the promise. So remember to join us for our many activities this Advent. Join with us as we participate in feeding the hungry with our monthly food kitchen, help us provide gifts for the children of covenant to care reminding each family that there are still people who care to make this world a better place, join with the Joel Barlow Select choir in our annual Christmas Carol concert as we praise God for the gift he gave us, purchase some sweet holiday treats from our Cookie Walk to help sweeten your days and that of others, and lastly but not least join with us on Christmas Eve to honor and celebrate the gift of light to the world coming to our lives this year. Please read the rest of our newsletter for more details on how to live into the hope of the Christmas season rejuvenating our faiths amidst all the chaos around us.



Deacons

As you probably already know, Revered Amanda became a member of our church last month. A great joy for our church family, Further, we look forward to her Installation as our Pastor on Sunday January 25th. Specific details will be coordinated with the denomination with more information to follow. Save the date to celebrate with her and our church family. Our agreement to covenant with her indicates that we are pledging our prayers and support in the stewardship of time, talent and monetary contributions. Support and input from each of us is vital and valuable to our church family and to her.

The Advent season began on November 28. The first ritual was low key as we are still worshipping in the fellowship hall as we await the completion of the installation of the new furnace. Hopefully, we may be able to have worship and the *"Hanging of the Greens"* **rite in the sanctuary on December 5 even the though the job may not be totally finished.**

The Joel Barlow Christmas Caroling event takes place Saturday December 11th at 6:30 PM with an alternate weather date reserved for December 18. Present pandemic regulations allow this group to sing in our Sanctuary, but with certain restrictions. Our new heating system can operate; but doors must remain open for ventilation reasons. Only choir members can sing.

Attendees must wear masks and may not join in the singing.

This month, Communion Service will be on December 12th

Christmas Eve worship will be at 5:30 pm on December 24th

Worship on Sunday December 26th will be available via YouTube.

The Deacons wish all of you a most *Happy Christmas and Health* throughout the New year.

The next Deacon's meeting will be January 2nd at 11:30 AM.

Board members are: Daisy Colonnese, Jon Stock, Leon March, Sara Trup, & Nathalie Taranto.



**December
19th**

Christmas Pageant



**Everyone is Welcome
Come Take Part in the Pageant.
Please let the office know if you would like to join us.**

Turn Around Church

TAC

Thank you to everyone who volunteered at our
cookie walk this year!

Ways to Support our Turnaround Process

1. Regular church attendance and giving
2. Inviting friends, family, and neighbors to join us on Sunday mornings
3. Support our many outreach projects
4. Sharing ideas for church growth, fellowship, education, and finance
5. Volunteering to sit on committees



Next Bridgeport Rescue Mission Food Kitchen Menu for December 21st

Chicken—any style—or your specialty, Mac and Cheese, Vegetables, Salad, Fruits, and Desserts.
For questions or to make monetary donations towards miscellaneous items, please contact the office.

We could always use more volunteers to transport. Please note that we will be meeting at the church until 4:00 pm on Food Kitchen Tuesdays.

Food may be dropped off and put in the freezer or refrigerator ahead of time. Please mark that it is for the Soup Kitchen. Paper/pens/tape are next to the refrigerator.

On the day of the soup kitchen, food should be fully defrosted and delivered to the church hall by 3:00 pm. Volunteers are asked to arrive by 4 pm to help load cars.

Thanks to our cooks, bakers and shoppers: Barbara Trup, Connie Wing, Daisy Colonnese, Susan March, Sue Farmer, Nathalie Taranto, , Caren Laskay, and Rev. Amanda

Thanks to our preppers, transporters and servers: Cynthia Landry and Sara Scoran

Merton House — 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.

Christmas Gifts for Families of Covenant to Care

Our adopted Social Worker Jorge Ball has given us the names of families who need some help with Christmas gifts this year.

If you would like to bless these families and play “Santa” for someone in need, there will be an opportunity at the

Hanging of the Greens Service

on December 5th

If you cannot attend, check the sign up sheet or call the church office .

Gifts should be in the church hall by Saturday, December 18th.



Stewardship Campaign

Typically, this is the time of year where we ask people to consider their donation for the next fiscal year. Donations are essential to the life of our church and your donations have allowed for us to continue on our work in Christ extending our ministry each and every year, so we can continue to make a difference in the lives of our parishioners, local community, and community at large.

We are very grateful and appreciative to each and every one of you for your continued generosity to our church community. We would not be where we are today without the various ways that you support the work that we do. To that end, the council, who are diligently working and planning for 2022, would like to have a clearer idea of people's intentions for pledging in 2022. This number helps us plan for our goals for the coming year. So we would greatly appreciate it if friends and congregants alike would be willing to recommit themselves to pledging. Please fill out the form below and send it back or you may email or call the church office with your pledge intentions.

Many Blessings and Thanks,

Rev. Amanda Ostrove

Pastor



Great News!

The New Heating System will be ready for the December 5th

Greening of the Church Service!

Although the propane tank excavation will not have occurred, temporary tanks will be in place to allow operation of the new furnaces

Also, the air ducts will have been cleaned to ensure a clean environment

A Special Thank You to our Benefactress for Making this Possible!





Annual Cookie Bake Sale!

It's Almost Here!

Saturday, December 4th

9:00 AM to 12 :00 PM

Join us for the Holiday Cookie Bake Sale. Preorders were due by December 1st. But it is not too late! Pick up some delicious holiday treats at the door where assorted boxes will be available. Tell your friends and neighbors about it too.

Hanging of the Greens

Sunday, December 5th at 10 am

*Join us as we celebrate the traditions
of Christmas with readings
& songs of the season!*



*Join us for An Evening of Carols with the
Joel Barlow Select Choir on
Saturday, December 11th at 6:30 PM
in the Church Sanctuary*

Come enjoy the talent of the select choir as we celebrate the season with an evening of Carols and Christmas Songs

We'll end the evening with some hot chocolate & cookies on the Church lawn.

Bring the kids! Bring your friends!

(Snow Date Saturday, December 18th)



Thanksgiving Baskets

Thanksgiving Baskets for Covenant to Care

Thanks to everyone who provided gift cards and food for the families from Covenant to Care for Thanksgiving.

We made up *11 bags* of food and *gift cards*!

Your continued support is much appreciated by the families and by our adopted Social Worker, Jorge Ball.

Christmas Eve Choir

Everyone is invited to join the choir!

If you would like to sing in our

Christmas Eve Choir,

please speak to Rev. Amanda.

Choir rehearsal dates will be announced.



Bridgeport Rescue Mission is Requesting Blankets

Please donate any New and Unused Blankets

Donations will be Collected until *January 31st*.

Drop off is at the Church Office during business hours!



A Christmas Cradle

Let my heart the cradle be
Of thy bleak Nativity!
Tossed by wintry tempests wild,
If it rock thee, Holy Child.
Then, as grows the outer din,
Greater peace shall reign within.

John Erskine



Upcoming Events

5 th Annual Cookie Walk	Saturday, December 4 th , 9 AM – 12 PM
Hanging of the Greens	Sunday, December 5 th , 10 AM in the Sanctuary
Joel Barlow Concert	Saturday, December 14 th (<i>snow date 12/18</i>) 6:30 PM in the sanctuary
Christmas Pageant	Sunday, December 19 ^h , 10 AM
Christmas Eve Service	Tuesday, December 24 th , 5:30 PM
Sunday after Christmas	Sunday, December 26 th , YouTube only

Keep an eye out for details about these events in the coming week's bulletins.



Christmas Poinsettias



Poinsettias are among the most beautiful decorations in our sanctuary at Christmas time. This year, we will have “virtual” Poinsettias with a few decorate our church sanctuary. Your gift of a “virtual” Poinsettia will be used for Outreach. You may purchase either in honor or memory of a loved one. The list of donor and dedications will be included in the Order of Worship.

If you wish to purchase a “virtual” Poinsettia you will continue to remember and honor loved ones. The “virtual” Poinsettias offering is \$18.00.

Name: _____
(*exactly as you want it to appear in the Order of Worship*)

In memory of _____

In honor of _____

“Virtual” Poinsettia order

_____ @ \$18.00 each

Virtual Total \$ _____

Please make check payable to: **The Congregational Church of Easton** and memo: “**Virtual Poinsettias**” Order forms with checks can be mailed or left in the church office or put in the offering plate.

Virtual Orders by December 16th





December Welcoming and Confirming Deacon — Leon March			
	Offering	Collectors/Counters	Coffee Hour
December 5	Leon March/ C. Nielsen	The Twomblys	Barbara and Sara Trup
December 12	S. Lovejoy / B. Trup	D. Colonnese/ N. Taranto	Jon Stock
December 19	Leah and Kailey Baczewski	The Twomblys	Daisy Colonnese
Christmas Eve	P. McCarty / P. Doremus		No Coffee Hour
December 26	YouTube	YouTube	YouTube

January Welcoming and Confirming Deacon — Jon Stock			
	Offering	Collectors/Counters	Coffee Hour
January 5	Leon March/ C. Nielsen	D. Colonnese, N. Taranto	TBD
January 12	S. Lovejoy/ B. Trup	The Twomblys	TBD
January 19	P. McCarty, P. Doremus	D. Colonnese, N. Taranto	TBD
January 26	D. Colonnese, T. Linley	The Twomblys	TBD

If you would like to participate in worship by doing the offering, or hosting coffee hour, 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 church office.

Altar Flower and Coffee Hour Hosting for 2020

Please see our **Flower Calendar** for 2020 If you would like to celebrate a special date of a birthday, anniversary or other special occasion. You may order or provide the flowers yourself or have the office order them (\$35.00).




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.

December 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4 Cookie Walk 9-12
5 <i>Hanging of the Greens</i> 10 AM Worship 11 AM Coffee Hour	6	7	8	9	10	11 Joel Barlow Concert 6:30 pm (12/18 snow)
12 10 AM Worship 11 AM Coffee Hour COVE	13	14	15	16	17	18
19 10 AM Christmas Pageant 11 AM Coffee Hour	20	21 Food Kitchen 4:00	22	23 Outreach Meeting 12:30 Zoom	24 Office Closed 5:30 PM Christmas Eve 	25 Merry Christmas!
26 10 AM YouTube Worship	27	28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve!	

January 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 
2 10 AM Worship w/Communion 11 AM Coffee Hour 11:30 Deacon's Meeting	3	4	5	6 Epiphany	7	8
9 10 AM Worship 11 AM Coffee Hour	10	11	12	13	14	15
16 10 AM Worship 11 AM Coffee Hour	17 MKLJr. Day Office closed	18 Food Kitchen 4:00	19	20	21	22
23 10 AM Worship 11 AM Coffee Hour 11:30 TAC Meeting	24	25	26	27	28	29
30 10 AM Worship 11 AM Coffee Hour	31					

Christmas Eve
Candlelight Service

5:30 PM



NEWS FROM THE HILL . . .
THE CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH OF EASTON
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