

# Church Chatter

## April 2024

*A publication of Ledyard Congregational Church, United Church of Christ.*

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### *A Message From Pastor Pat*

#### A Unique Opportunity

Save the date! Sunday, May 5, 2024 from 2:00-3:30 we will welcome the Rev. Melissa Splinder-Smith, Associate pastor in Norwich, to talk with us about the blessing of being human. Her talk is entitled: Our Whole Lives: The Complexity of our Sexual Identity. This presentation invites conversation and reflection about the many aspects of sexual identity, including how we understand ourselves in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and how we can support the experience of our younger members.

Youth today are growing up in a world where they are blessed to have choices about how to name and express their authentic selves. The progressive church has been woefully silent on this matter and the dominant "religious" voices are about exclusivity, hate and judgement. This is our opportunity to be part of a positive conversation.

When a child is baptized at our church, we ask the congregation if they will support the family as they

seek to raise their child and have them grow into their faith. This is a concrete way we can support families as they help their children grow up with a positive body image.

How different might your life have been if you had grown up in an environment that taught a healthy theology of sexuality? How different might your life have been if you grew up in an affirming community that supported you as you grew through the tempestuous teen years?

This is a concrete embodiment of what I say every Sunday, "Whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here." It is such a gift that young people today are able to feel they are loved by God exactly as they are! It is also encouraging to know there are religious communities throughout the United Church of Christ are working hard to assure that everyone feels welcomed and affirmed as a child of God!

*Continued on page 2*

Continued from page 1

Come and learn more about the language people are using to describe sexuality, and how each one of us has a complex and unique sexual identity. This is a unique learning opportunity for us all. It is also a way to support young families as they seek to raise their children without some of the religious baggage most of ended up with as we grew up. There will be time for questions after her presentation.

This presentation is appropriate for high school age youth and for middle school youth accompanied by an adult. Childcare for ages 2 and up will be provided. Snacks too!

I hope you will join us for this important conversation whether you have children or not. It is a conversation that needs the support of the entire community.

Faithfully,  
Pastor Pat

*Ledyard Congregational Church wishes the following people happy birthdays and anniversaries and a blessed year ahead!*



*April Birthdays*

Jim Seaton	4/3
Julia Austin	4/5
Lilyth Dozier	4/5
Andrea Barbour	4/8
Alicia (Ganz) Graves	4/10
Marge Wilson	4/11
Joan Jirsa	4/14
Ashley Kornatowski	4/15
Sara Holdridge	4/17
Steve Foltz	4/19
Tom Olson	4/20
Jonathan Schilke	4/23
Rob Burns	4/29
Lexi Hansen	4/30



*April Anniversaries*

Bill & Jill Thorne	4/3
Steve & Brenda Foltz	4/23
Stephen & Dolly Hayes	4/24
Gerard & Alanna Johnson	4/24
Kevin & Gay Collins	4/28
Bill & Kathie Saums	4/30

**Church Office Hours**

The church office is now open on  
**Tuesday, Wednesday, &  
Friday 8:30am-2:30pm.**  
Phone: 860-464-9926

Email:  
[ledyard.cong.church@gmail.com](mailto:ledyard.cong.church@gmail.com)

Website:  
[www.ledyardcongregational.org](http://www.ledyardcongregational.org)



*Love & blessings for our members & their families who serve our country.*

Bill Barnes            Oliver Murphy  
Tye Frazer            Troy Hedman  
Kyle Murphy

**From the Pastor's Desk**

**Office Hours**

Wednesdays & Fridays  
8:30 a.m. — 12:30 p.m.

Please call or text 401-499-7752, or email [pliberty57@gmail.com](mailto:pliberty57@gmail.com) to set up an appointment. Other times are available by request, please don't hesitate to ask!



**WEDNESDAY NIGHT**

**BOOK STUDY**

**7:00 p.m. in the Holdridge Library**

We will be continuing our study of the book, *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time. The Historical Jesus & The Heart of Contemporary Faith*, by Marcus J. Borg.

Books are available from Amazon and other book sellers. It is helpful if each family has their own book.

*Hope to see you there.*

*Please Keep the Following People and Families in Your Prayers*

Thank you for keeping these people in your prayers this month. It is our intent to continue to review and update the list as the information becomes available. That is where we need your help. If you know of someone who would like to be on the list, or be removed, please contact the church office (860) 464-9926, Jeanne Allyn (860) 464-9316, or Janet Barnet (860) 287-6322. Please include the name of the person(s) to be added/deleted as well as your contact information. Thank you!

- The family of Peg Ayer
- Deb Betz
- The family of Bill Dambach
- Bill Dawson
- Fred
- Joan Jirsa
- The family of Ellen Lawrence
- Cindy M.
- Johanna Nolan
- Jim Seaton
- Jim Sorensen
- Jeanne and Roy Warren
- Ethel Watson
- Marge Wilson



*April Scripture Readings*

*Sunday, April 7*

**Second Sunday of Easter**

Acts 4:32-35 • Psalm 133 • 1 John 1:1-2:2 • John 20:19-31

*Sunday, April 14*

**Third Sunday of Easter**

Acts 3:12-19 • Psalm 4 • 1 John 3:1-7 • Luke 24:36b-48

*Sunday, April 21*

**Fourth Sunday of Easter**

Acts 4:5-12 • Psalm 23 • 1 John 3:16-24 • John 10:11-18

*Sunday, April 28*

**Fifth Sunday of Easter**

Acts 8:26-40 • Psalm 22:25-31 • 1 John 4:7-21 • John 15:1-8

**Linda C Davis Food Pantry  
Wish List 3-18-2024**

- |                    |                               |                             |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| * Coffee Creamer   | * Stewed Tomatoes             | * Tall Trash Bags           |
| * Mustard          | * Tomato Paste                | * Baby Wipes                |
| * Ketchup          | * Tomato Sauce                | * Shampoo                   |
| * BBQ Sauce        | * Tomato Sauce                | * Toothbrushes              |
| * Oatmeal          | * Baked Beans – Large & Small | * Feminine Hygiene Products |
| * Cereal           | * Corned Beef Hash            | * Liquid Soap               |
| * Applesauce       | * Cup of Noodles – Beef       | * Deodorant – Male          |
| * Peaches          | * Chicken Broth               |                             |
| * Pears            | * Chicken Gravy               |                             |
| * Mandarin Oranges |                               |                             |
| * Peanut Butter    |                               |                             |



## Faith Formation and Sunday School



In February and March, we extended our exploration of Home to include: our own homes, homes in different parts of the world, and the importance of family, neighbors, neighborhoods, love, and prayer. We heard from our children that people all over the world have a lot in common: the need for water, food, and shelter; the need for love. We learned that we pray so that God will recognize us and we will recognize Him, to ask for what we want and need, and to show thanks for what

we receive. We learned that it is easy to talk to God through prayer, as he is our friend.

The study of home extended beyond Sunday School, as families created posters showing the things that they value in their own homes. We all learned a lot by listening to each child. In April we will display these posters as part of a service dedicated to Home.

Gabriela's South Sudan well project continues to move forward. A contribution to the **Iron Giraffe Challenge** has been made under the name Team Ledyard, assuring an

entry into the raffle to have someone from **Water For South Sudan** speak to our group. To date, Team Ledyard has donated \$4241. The Faith Formation Team celebrates Gabriela's vision, and is grateful to Missions and all the individual donors who have made this possible. Donations are still coming in, and you are invited to earmark them for this project. In April Gabriela will speak to our local Rotary Club about the project. Gabriela's stand for the cause of providing potable water and freeing young girls to go to school is an inspiration to us all.

In April we will begin a study of Spring and Garden--Beginnings and Renewal. We will plant seeds that we plan to transfer to an outdoor children's garden. It is our hope that those of you who enjoy gardening will educate and inform us and join us in digging in the earth.

### Looking Ahead:

Mark your calendar for Sunday,  
May 5th, 2:00-3:30 p.m. in  
Fellowship Hall

The Faith Formation Team will be sponsoring an **Our Whole Lives** workshop by Melissa Spindler-Smith, Youth Minister at Park Congregational Church. See Pastor Pat's article on pages 1-2 for more details.

Dolly, Anita, and the Faith Formation Team

Artreach presents

# MUSIC HEALS!



busting stigma one song at a time

**Our annual music showcase**  
and  
**The Color of Sound** art show



**Friday, April 5 &  
Saturday, April 6**  
**7:30 pm**  
Doors open at 6:30 pm  
for the art show.

**Chestnut Street Playhouse**  
24 Chestnut Street  
Norwich, CT 06360

**More info and tickets:**  
<https://our.show/musicheals>

"We're excited for our first live performances of 2024. Join us for the Music Heals Coffeehouse to hear Artreach members perform a song selection of their choice, backed by our fantastic band. You'll hear music ranging from Barbra Streisand to Bowie!" This is an evening you won't want to miss especially since **Kathy Smith**, a member of LCC will be performing!



## PROSTATE CANCER

### Support Group

The Prostate cancer Support Group is now meeting at the Ledyard Congregational Church, 722 Colonel Ledyard Highway in Ledyard.

We will meet in the Lester Room on the third Tuesday of the month from 7:00-8:30pm.

All men are welcome to join us. Spouses are welcome as well!

For more information and questions please contact John Clark at **(860) 464-7651**  
Thank you.



## LCC Church Calendar

Our church calendar is on our website: [ledyardcongregational.org](http://ledyardcongregational.org) and also on Breeze! The calendar is updated frequently so be sure to check it out often.

Not on Breeze yet? Contact Chris via email: [chrisschuft@gmavt.net](mailto:chrisschuft@gmavt.net) or via phone: 802-488-0802 and he will get you up and running.

Board and Committee chairs have the ability to add events to the calendar in Breeze. Additionally, you can also email your meetings and events to the church office and ask for it to be added.

## Men's Fellowship

Certainly, encompasses tasks around the church, shoveling snow, painting offices, putting up signs, etc. But that is normally only one or two men working closely enough together to have a conversation. Often, shoveling snow for example, spaces the men out so a conversation isn't possible.

But God asks us to "therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are (not yet) doing" (1 Thessalonians 5:11). Can't we get together just once a month, that's only 12 days a year, "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works,... encouraging one another,..." (Hebrews 10:24-25)?

Men should meet together to

"bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2). And this is helped, "as iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another" (Proverbs 27:17).

If you would like to talk about this or are interested in starting to shape the missing portion of our Men's Fellowship let me know, either during coffee time after church or email me:

[rehasson@outlook.com](mailto:rehasson@outlook.com) text or call 860-861-8933. The link below will give you more information about why men need church based small men's groups.

<https://withallwisdom.org/2021/02/01/five-reasons-men-need-regular-fellowship-with-other-men/>



## Help Us Honor the Class of 2024!

We would like to celebrate this year's high school, college, and those graduating from a special programs. Please email the names of your children, grandchildren, or anyone else you know of to: [chrisandmeri@gmavt.net](mailto:chrisandmeri@gmavt.net) and I'll be sure to honor them all in the June issue of the Chatter. ~Meredith



## Attention Board and Committee Chairs

Make sure that you update the Breeze calendar on upcoming meetings and events.

If you have any questions about how to make updates, please reach out to Chris Schuft ([chrisschuft@gmavt.net](mailto:chrisschuft@gmavt.net)) for answers. Thank you.



# Pancake Breakfast

Hot coffee, orange juice, pancakes, sausage, eggs, and more!



APRIL 6, 2024  
7:30-10AM



Ledyard Congregational Church  
Fellowship Hall  
722 Colonel Ledyard Hwy.  
Ledyard, CT  
Questions: contact Jean Scialabba @ 860-908-9051

All donations will benefit Days for Girls International CT Chapter in making and distributing reusable feminine hygiene kits for girls around the world!



**BIBLE STUDY  
CONTINUES  
ON  
WEDNESDAY  
MORNING**



In the Holdridge Library  
10:00—11:00 a.m.



**FREE**



Join us the first Saturday of each month in Fellowship Hall from 7:30-10:00 a.m. Enjoy a delicious breakfast of fresh hot coffee, orange juice, pancakes, sausage, scrambled eggs, and chip beef!

Come and sit for a while. Enjoy conversation and fellowship!

Each month, all profits from the free-will donations will go to support the featured organization.

**Saturday, April 6th**

The featured organization is Days for Girls.

**Saturday, May 4th**

Come one, come all! Come out to the church's pancake breakfast this Saturday. You'll get a delicious start to your day -- along with musical entertainment! The free-will offering will go toward the church's music ministry.

**Saturday, June 1st**

The featured organization will be the Ledyard Little League.

**ALL ARE WELCOME!**

# From the Historian's Desk



**Sunday, April 7, 2024, Holdridge Library, 11 a.m.**  
**The next 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee meeting**

All are welcome – the more the merrier. If we run out of space, we can always move to Fellowship Hall or Social Hall, so join us and bring your ideas.

At the last meeting we had a wonderful discussion of ideas and possibilities of ways to celebrate our upcoming 300<sup>th</sup> birthday, both Ledyard Congregational Church and Ledyard Ecclesiastical Society. We hope to make much of this a town celebration, as well as our own, since 1725 marks the origin of what became the Town of Ledyard (many years later).

We have plans and proposals in various stages –

- A kick-off Bill Dinner with the Bill library Association, planned for early fall 2025 (celebrating an old town tradition and our connection with the library)
- Tours of various historical properties in town, either as an event or maybe as a “passport”

project for people to do on their own time, or some combination of these

- Cemetery tours, with costumed docents (featuring historical church members)
- Historical skits and activities
- Perhaps a caravan or tour to our “Mother Church” (Groton)
- A visual representation of 300 (paper chain, one-page-per-year sheets, luminaria, ???)
- A gathering of church photos as a slide show
- A research project to learn about the earliest members (and some others of note through the years) and introduce them to the current congregation.
- Maybe a capital improvement to our facilities and/or a contribution to enhance the community at large to mark the occasion
- A rededication service, perhaps as a conclusion to the celebrations in late 2026

With the exception of the Bill Dinner, the timing of these events has not been planned. At this meeting we hope to (1) make further progress on a **list of which events we choose to do** (limiting the number of large events), how they will work and in what sequence, and (2) **a proposed schedule** to present to the semi-annual meeting in August. It would be good if we can (3) **begin to split up responsibility** for the planning of each event so we do not all have to

be thinking of it all at once! As time passes, event subcommittees could plan, anticipate needs, and welcome interested volunteers for their specific project. We hope to avoid major conflicts with other area events, but probably won't be able to completely do so. Let us know if you are aware of potential conflicts.

At this meeting, we also hope to (4) **plan a float or banner for the Memorial Day parade this year**, welcoming people to the church and providing a heads-up for the celebrations to come.

Please join us!  
Carol Ganz, Church Historian,  
[coowagnz@aol.com](mailto:coowagnz@aol.com), 860-608-9691

**Issues of the Church Chatter Are Available on the Church Website**

Did you know you can find this issue of the Chatter plus the past two months on the church website?

Just go to: [Ledyard Congregational Church.org](http://LedyardCongregationalChurch.org) and click on the Chatter drop down box.

A message from

# MISSIONS

## Tote for Linda Davis Food Pantry Donations

We continue to collect donations for the food pantry. You can bring your donation to church on Sunday or to leave anytime in the tote on the walkway outside the entrance to the church offices which we will be checking periodically.

On the first Sunday of each month, which is also Communion Sunday, the tote will be brought up to the Sanctuary to receive donations which we will be dedicating as part of our offering. This will give us a chance to acknowledge our continuing commitment to providing needed items to help support the food pantry. Please be sure to check the expiration date on all items you are donating! Please see the list of items currently needed on page 3.

## Water for South Sudan

Gabriela Di Filippo's mission to raise money for the drilling and upkeep for wells in South Sudan has now raised over \$4,241.00! Our hearts are filled with gratitude for this remarkable and amazing young woman. Way to go Gabriela!



## Red Cross Blood Drives

Thank you to all our donors and volunteers at our Blood Drive back in

February. Our next drive is scheduled for Wednesday, May 8th from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., in Fellowship Hall.



We continue to be committed to holding Blood Drives as an ongoing mission of our church and are grateful for the support we receive from our community and church members and friends.

## Easter Baskets for the Children in Safe Futures Shelters

Thank you to everyone for your donations to help fill the Easter baskets for the 22 children living in Safe Futures shelters. We thank you for helping us put a smile on the faces of all these children!

## Monthly Community Suppers

Our monthly community suppers on the 3rd Thursday of the month continue to be well attended with about 50 people attending each month, including both church members and members of our community. These are all made possible thanks to our volunteers and all our cooks. If you haven't attended one of these suppers, you have been missing out on some great meals!

## Blanket Sunday

### Mother's Day Sunday, May 12th

We are continuing to participate in the Church World Services Blanket Sunday and will be inviting you to

purchase a blanket(s) at \$10.00 each in memory of or in honor of someone. As in the past, we will have blanket gift cards, which you can take to send an acknowledgment of your gift. More information will be in upcoming weekly email blasts and the May Chatter.

Your Mission's committee continues to be amazed and grateful for the ongoing support from our church family in all our outreach endeavors. We continue to meet and define our mission and brainstorm new ideas. We welcome any ideas/suggestions.

Thank you from your Missions members; Janet Barnett, Vicky DeFilippo, Kathy Fletcher, Pastor Pat, Sara Holdridge, Anita Merando, Dee Potter, Meredith Schuft, Ellen Seeman, & Jill Thorne.

## Welcome New Members

Welcome to our new members who joined us on Sunday, March 3, 2024.

- Tom and Bobbi Bushaw
- Kathy Fletcher
- Anita Merando
- Beth Smith
- Joe and Victoria Woodmancy

We are honored to have these wonderful people join our church family. Please be sure to welcome them during coffee hours!



### Help Needed for Church Council!

We are still in need of a secretary to Council. The duties of this volunteer position are simply taking notes at the Church Council meetings.

The Council meets monthly, but if you cannot attend a particular meeting, there are always people happy to fill in. It's a good way to know first-hand what's going on at church, too!

If you could help out, please contact ether Sue Burns or Bill Barnes



Just a friendly reminder...

**MAY** Chatter Deadline is **MONDAY APRIL 15th.**

Please email your article to me by the 15th at: [chrisandmeri@gmavt.net](mailto:chrisandmeri@gmavt.net). As a reminder, putting the Chatter together is like trying to put a puzzle together without knowing how many pieces or what the size of those pieces will be until I get everyone's submissions. Your early, or at least on time submission will make my job that much easier!

Thank You, Meredith Schuft

# APRIL COMMUNITY SUPPER

Come join us at the Ledyard Congregational Church on the third Thursday of every month.

Thursday, April 18, 2024, will have an international theme which will include breads & rolls, salads, fruit, and desserts!

Supper will be served at 5:30pm.

This FREE supper is open to all!

Come and sit for a while.

Enjoy a hot meal, conversation, and community!

Enter through the double doors into Fellowship Hall (Bill Library side).



*Please let the church office know if someone is ill, hospitalized or in need of a visit or phone call!  
806-464-9926.*

*Thank you!*

### Church Safety Update

The doors to the church are unlocked while the church office is open and people are there.

As a courtesy to Alicia, please enter via the door near her office so she is aware of visitors.

Thank you!

# Women's FELLOWSHIP

## Tuesday, March 12 Meeting

Our March 12 Women's Fellowship meeting included creating some Spring Cheer baskets to give to those who perhaps needed a little cheer. We assembled 16 baskets which were then delivered to the delight of many of the recipients. As Dee Potter said, "we delivered a basket and I wish you could of seen him smile. That alone was worth the trip".



## Tuesday, April 9th Meeting We will meet in Social Hall from 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Our guess speaker for the evening will be Anita Merando and her topic is "Everybody Writes". She said "Everybody Writes? My teachers would have quibbled with this declaration. In this presentation, I will shed some insight into the reading and writing process from the experience of a child with a literacy

disability who became a teacher who views learning as a transformational process. Everybody writes—we just have to widen the definitions to include writing as thinking, composing, conversing, and any other process that inspires and brings clarity to generating ideas. Committing words to paper will follow in due course. This will be an interactive presentation. Bring your favorite writing tools, and let's explore the writing process".

## Save the Date for the Women's Fellowship Bake Sale!

We are planning on holding a bake sale during the **Ledyard Garden Club's Annual Plant Sale Saturday, May 18<sup>th</sup>**. Prior to COVID, this was a very popular event and we are looking forward to reviving it. Details are still being finalized, so watch for updates.

Women's Fellowship is open to anyone who would like to join us. You do not need to be a member of Ledyard Congregational Church. Feel free to bring a friend!

If you have any questions, comments or ideas for topics you think would be interesting, please feel free to contact me and I will pass it along to our Program committee.

Meredith Schuft, Chair  
Email: [chrisandmeri@gmavt.net](mailto:chrisandmeri@gmavt.net)

## New Members' Class

**Sunday, April 28th**  
following worship in  
the Holdridge Library

**Thinking about membership at LCC? Join us for discussion, Q and A about the church, the UCC and more. All are welcome and there is no obligation to join if you attend the class. Come and learn more about LCC!**

## Update Your Information

We would like to be sure to have your most current contact information (names of family members, address, phone numbers, email, important dates, and/or any other updates) and to announce your birthdays and anniversaries in the monthly Chatter newsletter.

Email updates:  
[ledyard.cong.church@gmail.com](mailto:ledyard.cong.church@gmail.com).  
Thank you!

*United in Spirit and  
inspired by God's grace,  
we welcome all, love all,  
and seek justice for all.  
We are the United Church  
of Christ.*



## Spiritual Gifts Workshop

PLEASE SIGN UP AT THE TABLE IN FELLOWSHIP HALL

\*Saturday, April 20, 1:00-2:30 p.m. (Childcare provided. Please indicate if needed on sign-up sheet.)

\*Or Wednesday, April 24, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

God's promise is that everyone (even you!) is given at least one gift by the Holy Spirit. The gifts of the Spirit include qualities like love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, self-control, wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, discernment of spirits, encouraging, giving, leadership, mercy, and helping. It also includes fruits like Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor, Teacher and Shepherd.

Come learn about which spiritual gift(s) you have and how you can nurture the gift(s) and use them in daily life and in the church.

## The Baptisms of Bexley Alida Wessel, daughter of Alicia Wessel on Sunday, March 10th and Marlee Madison Burns, daughter of Tommy & Sara Burns and granddaughter of Rob & Sue Burns on Sunday, March 17th





# *Church Chatter*

## *April 2024*

*A publication of Ledyard Congregational Church, United Church of Christ.  
Whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!*

Ledyard Congregational Church  
722 Colonel. Ledyard Highway  
Ledyard, CT 06339

Phone: 860-464-9926

Email: [ledyard.cong.church@gmail.com](mailto:ledyard.cong.church@gmail.com)

Website: [www.ledyardcongregational.org](http://www.ledyardcongregational.org)

Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m. in the  
sanctuary, also via Zoom and FaceBook



*April*

*2024*



Time Dated Material  
Return Service Requested