



# Church Chatter

## December

### 2025

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

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#### *A Message From Pastor Pat*

In this time of upheaval, we find trust is fragile, truth contested and spaces between us feel harder to cross. Divisions stretch far and wide. The constant churn of political tension can leave us feeling anxious and uncertain. Community can feel strained and connection is harder to



come by. Hearts are weary and souls unsettled. People of all perspectives are searching—not just for answers, but for understanding, healing and hope. The ache is not weakness; it is a holy longing—a sacred desire for a world made whole. From this longing comes the will to dream—a persistent courage to imagine, resist and rebuild a better world.

**The Will to Dream** is an Advent invitation rooted in prophetic imagination and in the sacred practice to see beyond what is and move toward what could be. In these weeks of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany we will plumb the wisdom of the prophets, lament systems that value power over

*Continued on page 2*

Continued from page 1  
people and dream of what could be, what can be, when we embrace the message of the Incarnation.

On the table outside my office there are individual devotional booklets, devotions for families, family activities and more. Please join in the Advent rhythm and make use of these materials.

I look forward to sharing the Advent, Christmas and Epiphany season with you.

Faithfully,  
Pastor Pat

## Annual Reports Timeline



We are at that time of year again, already thinking of the annual meeting! All information for the annual report **MUST** be submitted to Bridney by the end of the day

**Sunday, December 28th.**

Timely submissions are always greatly appreciated by those responsible for creating the Annual Report

If you are able to get your reports ready before the deadline, please submit them whenever they are ready. This will be a great help to her as she has a lot to compile for this

### *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 or Jeanne Allyn (860) 464-9316. Please include the name of the person to be added/ deleted as well as your contact information.*

*Thank you!*

- Doug C.
- Bill Dawson
- Fred
- Family of Dave Foltz
- Joan Jirsa
- Cindy M.
- Johanna Nolan
- Jim Sorensen
- Roy Warren
- Marge Wilson

report, and this is her first year doing the report.

We plan to have the draft report completed and printed two weeks prior to the meeting ( Sunday, January 11th) which is scheduled for **Sunday January 25th.**

More information, with a list of Boards and Committees responsible for reports, can be found on page 7.

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



## December Birthdays

Logan Godfrey	12/2
Ellen Brentson	12/4
Tom Schilke	12/8
Janice Lehner	12/10
Fred Allyn III	12/14
Chris Schuft	12/17
Cari Barnes	12/20
Ernie Celotto	12/24
Hannah Lawrence	12/28
Alexander Wellman	12/28

## From the Pastor's Desk

### Office Hours

Wednesdays & Thursday  
9:30 a.m. — 1:00 p.m.

Other times are available by appointment, please don't hesitate to ask!

Email: pliberty57@gmail.com  
Cell: (401) 499-7752





### Join us for Christmas Eve Worship Services

**7:00 p.m.** is a family centered service. Join us for a celebration of the nativity and a festival worship including Christmas Carols, joyous liturgy and candle lighting.

**9:00 p.m.** will be the Blue Christmas service for healing and grace.



There will be cocoa, cider and cookies served following the 7:00 p.m. service.

**All are welcome to join us as we celebrate the birth of Jesus.**



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

Troy Hedman

Tye Frazer

Kyle Murphy

Oliver Murphy

### December Scripture Readings

#### Sunday December 7

##### Twenty-first After Pentecost

Isaiah 11:1-10 • Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19 • Romans 15:4-13  
• Matthew 3:1-12

#### Sunday December 14

##### Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost

Isaiah 35:1-10 • Psalm 146:5-10 or Luke 1:46b-55 • James 5:7-10  
• Matthew 11:2-11

#### Sunday December 21

##### Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost

Isaiah 7:10-16 • Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19 • Romans 1:1-7  
• Matthew 1:18-25

#### Sunday December 28

##### Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost

Isaiah 63:7-9 • Psalm 148 • Hebrews 2:10-18 • Matthew 2:13-23

### Red Sleigh Bazaar

Thank You!



A heartfelt thank you to all those who helped make the 2025 Red Sleigh Bazaar a success—and it was many, many people! There were hours put into beautiful handicrafts, pies, baked goods, beans and salads, and beautiful cookies for the cookie walk—thank you! To those who prepared food and helped with the luncheon, those who created the traditional heart ornaments, those who helped with/donated jewelry, and those who donated items for the basket raffle—thank you! A huge thank you to the talented Ellen

Seeman for making the baskets all look so beautiful! And where would we be without the publicity? Thank you Jody and Bridney for doing an amazing job of getting the word out.

***To those of you who were willing to take charge of a “booth”, I can’t thank you enough.*** Because of you, the bazaar is still taking place and runs like a well-oiled sleigh. As of this writing, the profit was \$6,249 -- very much in line with last year.

It was a wonderful day of uniting members for a common purpose. Your time, effort and support were very much appreciated.

Sue Burns

## A message from **MISSIONS**

### Linda Davis Food Pantry

#### Donations

For December we are going with **Donor's Choice** for our food pantry donations! Kids will be out of school for two full weeks, so maybe some extra **quick grab and healthy snacks**? Other suggestions are for items that are often overlooked such as **Personal Care items**: Kids Toothbrushes, Kleenex, and Lotion. Also **Household Products**: Aluminum Foil, Laundry Detergent, Dish Soap, and Paper towels. When you grocery shop, please add a few items for the pantry to your cart. Then bring in your items on Sundays and place them under the table in the front of the sanctuary. You can also drop off items in the tote under the walkway to the church offices or in the box inside the Atrium.

On the first Sunday of each month, we will dedicate all the donations from the previous month as part of our morning offerings and then start collecting a new food item.



### Red Cross Blood Drive Wednesday, December 17th 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Having people sign up to donate ahead of time is helpful! That way we can be sure we have enough staff on hand to expedite the process. It's easy to do! You can call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767),

visit RedCrossBlood.org or use the QR code on the poster on page 13. Not sure of your schedule? Walk-ins are always welcome!

If you are interested in volunteering during the drive or donating snacks (wrapped individually), please contact Jill Thorne at [gbthorne@sbcglobal.net](mailto:gbthorne@sbcglobal.net) or via phone 860-912-0924. Your help is always welcome!

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. The next drive will be held on Wednesday, February 25th.

### December Community Supper Thursday December 18th

5:30 p.m. in  
**Fellowship Hall**

Our December theme is **Loaves & Fishes**. Not to worry, there will be plenty of different foods to choose from! Come and see what our amazing cooks come up with.

This **FREE** supper is open to all! Come and sit for a while. Enjoy a hot meal, conversation, and community! There is a sign-up sheet for both food items and helpers on the table in Fellowship Hall. Please consider adding your name wherever you can. Then come and

join us for a fun evening! All are Welcome!



### The Christmas Fund for the Veteran of the Cross will be Received on Sunday, December 21st "Be The Light"

"For over one hundred years, The Christmas Fund has provided direct financial assistance to the healers in all our lives: retired and active UCC ministers, church workers, and their families. You are part of the community of The Christmas Fund, whether you donate at Christmastime, benefit directly from our grant or leadership programs, or simply believe in our mission to help secure the financial foundation of those engaged in the life of the church.

Please consider donating today to ensure more healers receive the loving support of the Church in their moment of deepest need. The Christmas Fund was here for them. And regardless of who you are or what brought you to the United Church of Christ, The Christmas Fund is here for you.

Your gift is more than just a

testament to your belief in the values of the United Church of Christ, it is a critical lifeline for those who depend on our grant programs for care and support. Thank you again for your generosity."

*Above text was provide by the UCC as a 2025 Email template.*



### Helping Our Neighbors Stay Warm This Winter with Wool Blankets

An estimated **150 people** are currently living outdoors in southeastern Connecticut. To prepare for the cold months ahead, the **New London Homeless Hospitality Center (NLHHC)** is partnering with **St. Vincent de Paul Place (Norwich)** and **Project HOPE (Willimantic)** to respond to what they feel is an unprecedented number of individuals living without shelter.

What they need are **Warm Wool Blankets!** Our Missions Committee will be collecting blankets during November....and even longer if necessary. Here's how you can help:

- ★ Donate a gently used **WARM** wool blanket. Please make sure the blanket is clean and free of any moths or insects.
- ★ Purchase a new wool blanket wherever you like to shop.
  - Donated or purchased blankets may be left in the

- box provided in Social Hall.
- ★ A donation of \$40 will allow Missions to purchase a blanket suggested by the NLHHC.
- Checks should be written to LCC with "Wool Blanket" noted on the memo line. Envelopes for cash and check donations will be available in the church pews and can also be mailed to the church or be left in the Church Clerk's mailbox outside the offices.



### Ledyard Social Services 2025 Adopt- A-Family

We are once again participating in the **Adopt-A-Family** program this year. Tags with gift requests are hanging on the small tree in Fellowship Hall. Take a tag, fill in the top with your information, separate the bottom half with the gift information. Take that half with you and put the top half back on the tree. After purchasing the gift, attach the gift information tag to the UNWRAPPED gift and return both to church. Please make sure to return your gift by **Sunday, December 14<sup>th</sup>**.

### Socks, Hats, and Mittens Tree

Once again, there will be a Christmas tree in Fellowship Hall and we are inviting you to fill it with **WARM** hats, mittens/gloves and socks.



Let's spend December filling every branch with items to help keep our homeless population warm this winter.

In January, we will distribute all the items to local organizations to hand out to those in need.

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. You can contact Meredith Schuft at [chrisandmeri@gmavt.net](mailto:chrisandmeri@gmavt.net) (802) 363-3808 and/or Jill Thorne at [gbthorne@sbcglobal.net](mailto:gbthorne@sbcglobal.net) (860) 912-0924.

Thank you from your Board of Missions.

### Lights Out and Doors Shut!



Don't forget to **turn out all lights** and **close all interior doors**. Electricity rates have doubled in Connecticut and all interior doors must be closed when the building is not in use. This is necessary for managing energy costs and fire safety purposes

**THANK YOU!**



## FAQs On our New Keypad Lock and Alarm Systems

### KEYPAD DOOR LOCKS

#### How do I enter the building through a new keypad lock?

- Just enter the same 4-digit PIN used with the alarm system.
- You can also enter by waving a keyring FOB or wallet size card in front of the lock. Ask Rob Burns to assign one of these to you.

#### Why does alarm panel still beep when I enter?

- The lock system and the alarm system are independent from one another, so you may still need to disarm the alarm system at the panel or by using the Total Connect app on your smart phone.

### ALARM SYSTEM

#### When I enter the building, why does the alarm panel near the entry door beep at me?

- Beeping at the panel warns you the partition you entered is armed. You have 60 seconds to disarm at the alarm panel before the alarm siren is triggered.

#### What is a partition?

- There are 3 sections (or partitions) of the church. Each partition has a control panel associated with it, located near keypad entry doors.
- \* P1 - Office area (including Music Room)
- \* P2 - Fellowship Hall

(including Lester Room)

- \* P3 - Sanctuary (including Social Hall)

#### When I re-arm the partition, why does the alarm panel again beep?

- Beeping now warns you the partition is armed. You have 60 seconds to exit. Opening the exit door after that will again trigger the alarm (after 60 seconds).

#### What's the difference between arming "away" and arming "stay"?

- Arming away activates motion sensors as well as entry/exit doors, while arming stay excludes motion sensors. Stay mode is especially useful when you plan to be in the church alone for an extended period. Any visitor through an entry door will still need to disarm the system to prevent the siren from being triggered.

#### Why is the siren immediately activated when I enter another partition through an interior door?

- If you enter an armed partition from an interior door, active motion sensors will immediately trigger the alarm siren.

#### Can I disarm multiple partitions from a single panel? YES

- You can arm or disarm multiple partitions from a single panel by entering the associated partition number(s). For example, to disarm partitions 1 and 2 simultaneously at the panel, enter your 4-digit PIN, then 1 (for OFF), then 12 (for both partitions), then press the

star key (\*).

#### Is there an easier way?

- An easier way to arm/disarm is by using the Total Connect app on your smart phone. If you haven't added this to your phone, ask Rob Burns to help set you up.
- Also note these Panel operation shortcuts:
  - \* # 2 (arm away single partition – no PIN needed)
  - \* # 3 (arm stay single partition – no PIN needed)
  - \* [PIN] 2-0 \* (arm away ALL partition )
  - \* [PIN] 1 0 \* (disarm ALL partitions)

#### Other questions or want to test yourself with system operation?

- Talk to Rob Burns at church or call anytime @860.235.3208



#### JANUARY Chatter

Deadline is **MONDAY, DECEMBER 15th.**

Please email your article to me by the 15th at: 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. The Chatter has also increased from 12 to 20 pages, which has added significant time to the production time!

Thank You, Meredith Schuft

## Reports for the 2025 Annual Report

The following reports are due by **Sunday, December 28<sup>th</sup>**.

Please email them directly to Bridney at [ledyard.cong.church@gmail.com](mailto:ledyard.cong.church@gmail.com).

If you have questions, please contact Bridney (860) 464-9926 or Chris Schuft (802-488-0802).

Thank you!!

- Pastor's Report
- Church Council
- Church Office
- Historian
- Church Clerk
- Boards:
  - \* Missions
  - Social Justice Team
  - \* Trustees
  - Property
  - Finance
  - \* Deacons
  - \* Stewardship
  - \* Hospitality
  - \* Faith Formation
- Music
- Treasurer
- Financial Review Officer
- Webmaster
- Women's Fellowship
- Ecclesiastical Society

**LCC**  
— ANNUAL —  
**MEETING**  
**SUNDAY, JANUARY 25TH**  
FOLLOWING  
MORNING WORSHIP

**Announcement!**  
The writing group is now on hiatus until January. Watch for updates and hope to see you then!  
All are welcome!

Sponsored by the LCC Women's Fellowship.

### Key-Code and/or FOB Holders

If you have a key-code and/or FOB, you are expected to let yourself into the building. During office hours, use the ring camera just to let Bridney know you are here, then let yourself in.

### All Visitors

Please ring the door chime and our admin will respond as quickly as possible. Please be patient.

Thank you

**Press Here to summon Bridney**

### 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: [ledyardcongregational.org](http://ledyardcongregational.org) and click on the Chatter drop down box.

## Ledyard Congregational Church Social Justice Team

The Social Justice team has adopted Micah 6:8 as our guiding verse, *"He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"*

### **The LCC Social Justice Team asks you to join us in prayer during the month of December International Day of Persons with Disabilities**

Since 1992, the United Nations has celebrated International Day of Persons with Disabilities on December 3rd. This is a time to recognize the dignity of people with disabilities and to work towards total integration of people with disabilities into all aspects of life.

*Dear God may those who are differently abled experience that they are essential members of our human family as children of God. May we celebrate their gifts and respond to their challenges with solutions that honor all that you have commanded of us. Each of us was made in the image of our loving God. May we grow in our appreciation of, and find the resources to respond compassionately to the many ways we can help create a more accessible and inclusive world for all.*

**December celebrates Universal Human Rights Month**  
In 1948 The United Nations recognized the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which recognizes the dignity and inalienable rights of all human beings. It was a milestone document that led to the adoption of more than seventy human rights treaties around the world. Yet, we know that there are many who live without adequate food, lodging, and health care, and are under threat due to their gender orientation, religious beliefs, political beliefs, color of skin, or economic status.

*Dear Lord who loves all people without exception, we ask that you protect the most vulnerable around the world. Open our hearts to a deeper understanding of all needs, and guide us to respond in ways that honor your commandment to love our neighbors. Guide the leaders of the world to see all people as members of your family to be treated with love and respect.*

### **Winter Celebrations of Light**

As Christians, we know that the birth of Jesus is the beginning of a journey that lights our way and guides our actions as we strive to live on earth as in heaven. Throughout the world, there are both secular and spiritual celebrations of light, some that precede modern Christianity. These celebrations symbolize many

common beliefs: triumph of good over evil, hope and renewal, divine presence, spiritual enlightenment, and community togetherness.

*Dear Jesus who taught us to walk in the light of God's love, and showed us in both parable and by deed that everyone must strive to be a loving neighbor, help us to live a life of love that is worthy of your teachings. Help us to recognize the common desire of people to live in the light of a just world. May these varied celebrations of all that is light and good bring us closer together as a diverse family, recognizing that we are all children of our loving God.*

The Ledyard Congregational Church Social Justice Team has been busy in the past few months. In addition to the monthly Pop-In Prayer, co-sponsored by the Deacons, we invited Jessica Patterson-Kibbe from **Safe Futures**, which supports victims of domestic and sexual violence, sexual abuse, trafficking, child abuse and elder abuse, to participate in a dialog sermon with Pastor Pat. It is hard to summarize all that we learned from Jessica. Here is a sampling,

- The invitation to speak at LCC was the first time that a representative of Safe Futures has been invited into a church sanctuary to tell their story.
- One in four women and one in seven men are victims of domestic violence.
- There are currently 100 children

receiving services from **Safe Futures**.

- The contributions that we make to Safe Futures helps to reestablish trust in the greater community. We help victims learn that while someone or group has hurt them, there are many more people who will help.
- Safe Futures is available to respond to community needs 24 hours a day, and services are 100% free. On average, it takes 5 emergency calls for a person to leave an unsafe situation. Leaving is the most dangerous time in a victim's journey. Letting people know that the staff of **Safe Futures** is there for them 24 hours a day to facilitate their safety is an important message that people need to hear.
- They offer housing, counseling, and work in collaboration with all CT police departments and local hospital emergency rooms. They provide children's services, court advocacy and many other services that, for reasons of client safety, they cannot share.
- Safe Futures is both federally and state funded and also relies on private donations.

The Center for **Safe Futures** is targeted to open in 2026, and will be the only comprehensive facility east of Hartford. This will allow clients to go to one central location for the seven plus services needed to support transition to an independent life.

Jessica's message, while urgent and heartbreakingly, was hopeful as she shared her assurance that the work is making a difference, and presented a forward looking vision for a time when these services will no longer be needed.

Pastor Pat reminded us that it is not God's will that people live under constant threat of violence. It is very much the work of the Church to tend to those who are suffering. It is our sacred work to support those who are striving to reclaim their lives. The issues of domestic violence are the concern of the Church.

The Social Justice Team, under the umbrella of Faith Formation and Missions, looks forward to bringing more dialog sermons to Sunday service.

### Social Justice Team Meeting, December 18 @ 4:00-5:00 p.m.

The Social Justice Team Meets the third Thursday of each month in the Holdridge Library at 4:00. Join us for conversation and planning on the many ways we can support our community as we promote the love and justice of Jesus. Then join us in the Pop-in Prayer, stay for the Community Supper.



### Pop-in Prayer, Thursday, December 18 5:00-5:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary

In December we will pray for all who are living with economic, housing, and food insecurity.

When you've been feeling overwhelmed, what can you do? The Bible encourages us to come together in prayer for wisdom, for discernment, for comfort. "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." Matthew 18:20. Whether you pray silently or are moved to share your prayer aloud, whether you can stay for a few minutes or half an hour, you are welcome to join us in prayer.



### PROSTATE CANCER

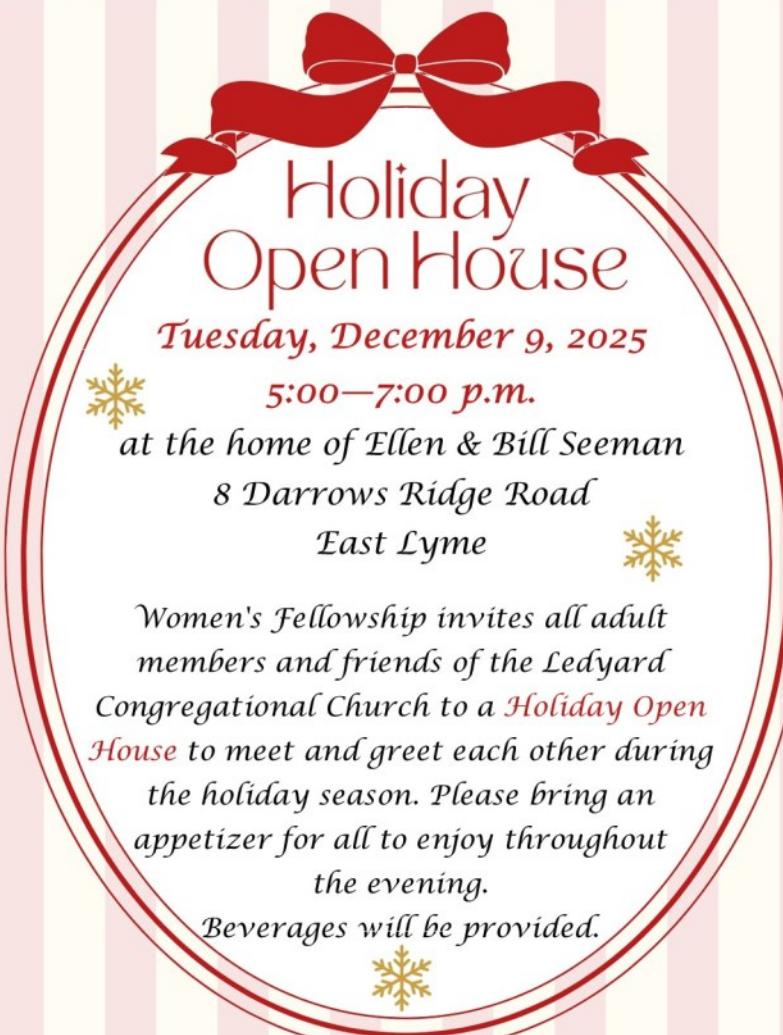
#### Support Group

The Prostate Cancer Support Group is now meeting at John and Donna Clark's home.

We meet 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 meeting location and questions please contact John Clark at 860 464 7651. Thank you.



**Holiday Open House**

**Tuesday, December 9, 2025**

**5:00—7:00 p.m.**

**at the home of Ellen & Bill Seeman**

**8 Darrows Ridge Road**

**East Lyme**

*Women's Fellowship invites all adult members and friends of the Ledyard Congregational Church to a **Holiday Open House** to meet and greet each other during the holiday season. Please bring an appetizer for all to enjoy throughout the evening.*

*Beverages will be provided.*

**RSVP by Sunday, December 7th.**

*By phone: 860-884-3414*

*Email: [evseeman@gmail.com](mailto:evseeman@gmail.com) or use the QR code!*

*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!*

 **Worship Readers**

If you would like to be added to the list of volunteers to be a worship reader please contact Beth Smith ([fraugurusan@yahoo.com](mailto:fraugurusan@yahoo.com)).



**FREE!**  
**Pancake**  
**Breakfast**

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, December 6th**  
All donations will help cover the costs for our Rainbow bench and transportation. Our Caps and Lids collection is going fast and we hope it won't be long before we have our bench!

**Saturday, January 3rd**  
All donations will go to **Safe Futures**. More information about this organization can be found in the **Social Justice Team** article on page 8.

**Saturday, February 7th**  
All donations will go to our local Girls Scout troops 63060 and 63155.

Thank you for your continuing support for all the organizations!

**ALL ARE WELCOME. JOIN US!**

# Women's FELLOWSHIP



## Our Annual Holiday Open House

Tuesday, December 9<sup>th</sup>

5:00-7:00p.m.

At the home of Ellen & Bill Seeman

8 Darrows Ridge Road, East Lyme

All adult members and friends of Ledyard Congregational Church are invited to our Holiday Open House to meet and greet each other during the holiday season. Please bring an appetizer for all to enjoy throughout the evening. Please see the poster on page 10 with information on ways to RSVP or please let Ellen know if you will be attending. Hope to see you there!

## JOIN US FOR A Tea Party



Tuesday, January 13th

Plans for January are still in being pulled together, but we are planning on an afternoon tea. Watch for more details in emails and the weekly E-Blast.

The Program Committee for 2025-26 is Beth Smith, Meredith Schuft, and Jill Thorne. Please contact any one of us if you have a program idea you'd

**DECEMBER**  
*Community Supper*

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2025

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

Thursday, December 18th, our theme will be **Loaves & Fishes & More!**

Come and see what our amazing cooks come up with. There will be lots of great food, besides loaves and fishes, to choose from!

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).

like to suggest. Watch for more updates in the monthly Chatter, weekly E-blast and emails!

Women's Fellowship is open to anyone who would like to join us for any of our activities. You do not need to be a member or even a regular attendee of LCC. Feel free to bring a friend!

**All are Welcome!**



## 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. All board and Committee chairs make sure that you update all your upcoming meetings and events!

## From the Historian's Desk



Again this month we turn to Joshua Hempstead of New London to learn what was happening in the region. Some of this directly bears on the Groton church and their sad state at the time we left.

From Hempstead's diary December entries: "fryd 3 fair. I was at home al day Cutting gr stones. Ye Mr Wood [ ] of Groton died Wednsday night with a long Sickness [this] day buried."

Checking the *Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of Connecticut*, v. 1 and 2, published by the General Association (later the Connecticut Conference), I found that Rev. Ephraim Woodbridge, who had served the church in Groton since his ordination as their first settled minister in 1704, was dismissed in 1724 and died in December 1725. It was Ephraim's son Dudley who had accompanied Samuel Seabury as students at Yale, and then at Harvard, and had recently graduated together. It seems Rev. Woodbridge's dismissal must have stemmed from his illness the previous year, and no successor is listed until November 1727, when

Rev. John Owen began his pastorate. It is to Rev. Owen that we are indebted for the list of those in the North Parish as of 1727, entered into the records of the Groton church. That is our only record of our church for almost the first century, although we are fortunate to have society records.

Joshua goes on to record that he spent December days cutting gravestones, slaughtering more livestock, salting beef and pork for storage in the attic and the cellar, searching for his sheep, preparing documents, surveying and gathering wood. At one point he and John Congdon took three cows across the river headed for Stonington, which must not have been an easy task.

On Sunday the 12<sup>th</sup>, "Mr ad pr. at Groton & Mr. Seabury here." This sounds like a pulpit exchange. I wonder if Mr. Seabury was recent graduate Samuel, soon to preach temporarily for us, or his father Deacon John. Hempstead also gives us some insight into how things were done regarding taxes. Monday afternoon December 13 "I paid all my Rates in Money." The next afternoon, he met with Mr. Chapman and Mr. Prentiss at Mr. Adams' house and they "pd him his full Sallery for last year." They also paid Apply and George Wright their due. Saturday afternoon the 25<sup>th</sup> he spent with the Townsmen finishing t [own] accounts. They were

wrapping up the town finances for the year.

### COMING UP:

**Sunday, January 18, 11 a.m., Holdridge Library** – the Anniversary Committee will meet. This means anyone who has any interest at all in the planning of our 2026 activities, finishing up our year of celebration. We need to plan a service (rededication?) for some time in the fall, as well as anything else we may want to add to the schedule. It has been suggested we do another Bill Dinner, but that will need someone to chair and organize the event.

**Sunday, March 29, tentatively 4 p.m., Fellowship Hall** – "Getting to Know our Church and Community Ancestors" Pot Luck. Please join us as we hear about the lives of a variety of individuals throughout history. This should be a fun event!

Carol Ganz, LCC Church Historian

## Safe Church News

### **Emergency evacuation Maps**

Emergency evacuation Maps have been placed in prominent locations around the church. These maps indicate both primary and secondary exit routes. Please take note of these maps and the two exit strategies each map offers.

## A Note From Stewardship



Have you made your pledge of support to our church for 2026? If yes, thank you. If not yet, please take a minute to do it. In Rev. Pat's Stewardship sermon on Stewardship Sunday, she made the point that a pledge is a commitment you make to the ministry of our church. We have been given this ministry from our ancestor, we are now stewards of this ministry, and we will pass it on to the next generation. Making a pledge is an overt act that you make to declare your commitment to this ministry and our mission. Our mission is "We are followers of Jesus, united in Spirit and inspired by God's grace to bring justice and love to all".

You should have received a pledge card in the mail with a return envelope. If you don't have a pledge card there are cards and envelopes on the table in the narthex. In the Thursday email blast, you will find a link to our online pledge card. You can make your pledge online or you can fill out a pledge card, put it in an envelope and either place it in the collection plate or leave it in the treasurer's mailbox by the church office. Whether on paper or online, your pledge is confidential and will only be seen by our treasurers.

Thank you and, if you haven't



**DECEMBER**  
**PANCAKE BREAKFAST**

**Help us Raise Money for Production and Travel Expenses for our Rainbow Bench!**

**Saturday, December 6, 2025**  
**Ledyard Congregational Church Fellowship Hall**  
**7:30-10:00 a.m.**

**We are making great progress toward our goal of 200lbs of caps & lids for our bench! We currently have 130lb and more to sort!**

**Come and join us for this FREE breakfast open to all.**



**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!**



**Hope to see you there!**

We are an ABC Promise Partner of the Green Tree Plastics, LLC (A Bench for Caps) Program!

Green Tree Plastics, LLC, is an environmentally friendly company which manufactures recycled plastic products using 100% recycled plastics, no hazardous chemicals, no non-organic fillers, and no non-organic color concentrates!

already done so, please make a pledge to our church ministry. With your commitment, we are able to continue and expand on our support of our church and our outreach to the community and the wider world.



## Name Tags

We are all encouraged to wear name tags on Sundays. If you need a name tag or have misplaced yours and would like a new one, please contact Beth Smith.

[fraugurusan@yahoo.com](mailto:fraugurusan@yahoo.com).

Thank you!

## HELPING OUR NEIGHBORS STAY WARM THIS WINTER WITH WOOL BLANKETS

An estimated **150 people** are currently living outdoors in southeastern Connecticut. To prepare for the cold months ahead, the **New London Homeless Hospitality Center (NLHHC)** is partnering with **St. Vincent de Paul Place (Norwich)** and **Project HOPE (Willimantic)** to respond to what they feel is an unprecedented number of individuals living without shelter.

What they need are **Warm Wool Blankets!** Our Missions Committee will be collecting blankets during November....and even longer if necessary. Here's how you can help:

- ★ Donate a gently used wool blanket. Please make sure the blanket is clean and free of any moths or insects.
- ★ Purchase a new wool blanket wherever you like to shop.
  - Donated or purchased blankets may be left in the box provided in Social Hall.
- ★ A donation of \$40 will allow Missions to purchase a blanket suggested by the NLHHC.
  - Checks should be written to LCC with "Wool Blanket" noted on the memo line. Envelopes for cash and check donations will be available in the church pews and can also be mailed to the church or be left in the Church Clerk's mailbox outside the offices.

The Missions Committee thanks you for your consideration of this project.

### WEDNESDAY NIGHT

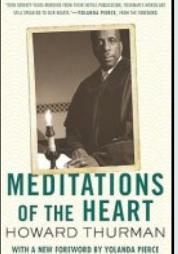
#### BOOK STUDY

#### GROUP

7:00-8:00 p.m.

in the

**Holdridge Library**



We just started a new book,

**Meditation of the Heart** by **Howard Thurman.**

Howard Thurman's **Meditations of the Heart** is a beautiful collection of over 150 prayers, poems, and meditations on prayer, community, and the joys and rituals of life by one of our greatest spiritual leaders. Thurman, a spiritualist and mystic, was renowned for the quiet beauty of his reflections on humanity and our relationship with God.

First written for and shared with his congregation of the Church for the Fellowship of All Peoples in San Francisco, California, these meditations sustain, elevate, and inspire. They are a universal beacon of hope and endurance for people of all faiths seeking to meet the challenges, uncertainties, and joys of everyday life with a renewed and liberating faith.

All are welcome to join in our lively, thought-provoking, and just fun discussions.

Please enter through the atrium door by the church offices. Hope to see you there!

## Join us for **FAMILY CHIME TIME**

We have begun to play and experiment with different ways of making music with some of our youngest church members! We're starting with singing and getting to know how Boom whackers work and will eventually learn to ring hand chimes.

### When do we rehearse?

We meet most Sunday mornings directly after Sunday School for 15-20 minutes and all ages are welcome to join us in a fun exploration of creativity and expression.

Please direct any questions you might have to Bonnie Denton.  
860.389.1862.



### Keep Those Caps and Lids Coming For Our Rainbow Bench!



Thank you to everyone who participated in our **Sorting Party** on Sunday, November 9th. We added another 30 pounds! Total cleaned and sorted, 120lbs and we still have bags left to sort!



**GIVE SOMETHING**  
**That Means**  
**Something®**

## Blood Drive Ledyard Congregational Church

Fellowship Hall  
722 Colonel Ledyard Highway, Ledyard

**Wednesday, December 17, 2025**  
**11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

Please call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or visit [RedCrossBlood.org](http://RedCrossBlood.org) and enter: LedyardCong to schedule an appointment.

Give a gift, get a gift! Give blood 12/8-18 & get a \$15 Amazon Gift Card by email! [rcblood.org/gifts](http://rcblood.org/gifts)



**Schedule your blood donation appointment today!**  
1-800-RED CROSS | [RedCrossBlood.org](http://RedCrossBlood.org) | Download the Blood Donor App

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Watch for our next **Sorting Party** and plan to join us. It's a really simple and fun process and it's rewarding to see the progress we are making towards our end goal of 200 lbs.

**Save the Date! We will have another "weigh-in" with the Kids to Mark our Progress on Feb. 15th**

Not sure if a cap or lid is acceptable? Check out the large chart on the table in Fellowship Hall and be sure to take a flyer with you to refer to at

home. PLEASE MAKE SURE ALL CAPS AND LIDS ARE CLEAN! ALSO, SOLO LIDS ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE.

A big thank you goes to Ellen Seeman who brought us the idea for this project! The involvement from our church members, community members and lots of our family members has been truly rewarding!

Thank you from Missions and  
Faith Formation

## Faith Formation and Sunday School



### A Sunday School Teacher, Again

When I think back on my early days of teaching Sunday School, it amazes me how much life has changed—and how much, in some ways, it hasn't changed at all.

I first stepped into a Sunday School classroom when my own children were babies. Life was heavy then. My husband was sick and money was tight. Sundays were supposed to be my moment to breathe and hear the sermon, but my little ones had other ideas—they wanted me downstairs.

And then one day I thought: I had a teaching degree. I had experience. I was already downstairs with the kids. And though I couldn't give financially, I could give this.

So I joined Faith Formation and starting teaching, and I loved it! I loved the energy of a multi-age classroom. I loved inviting members of the congregation to join us so the kids could see that the church was bigger than just their small circle. I loved the collaboration with Laurie Hedman and Kim Williams, and especially the gentle wisdom of Judy Dolphin, who became a mentor to us all.

Those ten years of teaching were a gift I never expected. And the highlight, every year, was the Christmas Pageant. There was nothing quite like pulling out those old costumes from the '70s (including ones I once wore as a kid!), welcoming the famous squeaky sheep, and rejoicing every time a baby in the congregation could play the role of Jesus. It always felt like Christmas magic.

Eventually, life shifted. My children grew up. I went back to work. Time got tighter, and volunteering didn't fit the way it once had.

But last spring, during a Pancake Breakfast, DeeDee O'Donnell mentioned she wanted to start helping with Sunday School—she just wasn't sure where to begin. We started brainstorming, and by the end of breakfast, I had the fever again. Sunday School was calling me back.

What a joy it has been to return—this time with a new pastor, a passionate Faith Formation team, and fresh energy for building a loving, UCC-grounded experience for our youngest members. Anita Merando has been a steady presence and a new kind of mentor, keeping us grounded and reminding us at every meeting, "There is so much to celebrate!"

And she's right.

One of the most beautiful parts of this journey is seeing how life circles back to church. I recently found my old 2nd-grade Bible—the one with my name stamped in gold on the cover. I remembered being one of ten kids in a single grade-level class, separated by those mint-green moveable dividers. And now, here I am again, sitting in the same room, at a very similar table, and teaching with Ashley and DeeDee—watching a new generation discover God's love and what it means to share that love with others.

Thank you, LCC, for nurturing children, teens, young adults, and adults of every age. In many ways, the whole church is one big Sunday School—a lifelong practice of learning, growing, and forming our faith together.

As the Christmas Pageant returns to our sanctuary again this year (thank you Ashley Kornatowski!) —*there truly is so much to celebrate.*

*Lisa Ann Curtis*

Faith Formation Team meets the second Wednesday of each month at noon in the Holdridge Library. Our next meeting is December 10th.

All our welcome to join us!

## Help Needed for Church Council!

We are in need of a secretary to Council. The duties of this volunteer position involves taking notes at the Church Council meetings and distributing to Council members for review.

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 either Chris Schuft or Bill Barnes.



## Monday Morning Bible Study

### The Wednesday Morning Bible Study Now Meets on Mondays!

Each week we meet on Monday morning from 10:30-11:30 a.m. in the Holdridge library and discuss the scripture for the upcoming Sunday in a relaxed and fun setting.



All are welcome!



### Ledyard Congregational Church, United Church of Christ Open and Affirming Statement and Non-Discrimination Declaration

#### Open and Affirming Statement

*"There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus."* [Galatians 3:28]

As we are one in Christ, we are called to accept and respect one another. We commit ourselves to work diligently to end all oppression and discrimination which afflicts God's people in our society. We seek to explore new ways of affirming our faith in community according to the wisdom of the Gospel. We work, as individuals and as a community, to become more Christ-like in our love for one another.

Love is a unifying and strengthening force within the Christian faith, and we, the members of the Ledyard Congregational Church, hereby declare ourselves an Open and Affirming Church and welcome into full participation members and staff of every sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.

Jesus teaches us to welcome all God's children. As we grow together in faith and love, we will strive to

celebrate the diversity in which God has created us. As followers of Christ, we seek by this affirmation to be faithful to his commandment, *"love one another as I have loved you."* [John 15:1]

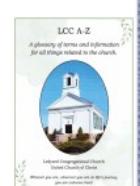
#### Non-Discrimination Declaration

We welcome into full participation all who seek to follow Jesus, including persons of every age, gender, race, national origin, faith background, marital status and family structure, mental and physical ability, economic and social status, and educational background, to share in the life, leadership, ministry, fellowship, worship, sacraments, responsibilities, blessings and joys of our church family.

*Adopted at the Ledyard Congregational Church's Semi-Annual meeting August 24, 2025.*

### LCC A-Z

A-Z has been updated and will continue to be updated on an as needed basis. If you have additional corrections, please send them to Beth Smith ([fraugurus@yahoo.com](mailto:fraugurus@yahoo.com)).



A link is also available in the weekly E-blast and hard copies are on the table in Fellowship Hall.

## COFFEE HOUR HOST NEEDED!



Coffee hour fellowship is an integral part of our worship and church community. It's a time to catch up, meet new people, check in on church family, make plans, and even have short meetings! The generosity of our coffee hour hosts is a major part of this time of connection. We offer food and drink, feeding bodies while the

time in community nourishes our hearts and souls. And it's incredibly rewarding. Each time I've served as coffee hour host, I leave feeling a little lighter, more joyful and certainly more connected to our church family.

As of this writing, our pool of regular hosts stands at 4, which is a bit challenging. While there is no ideal number of hosts, 8 works quite well and more would certainly be welcome. The tasks are simple and straightforward, and there is an invitation to serve in the regular rotation, as an alternate, or even as an assistant! We also recognize that

hosts have expenses when preparing for coffee hour and are making plans to reimburse hosts in the future.

If you'd like to join us in any way, please contact me either by phone, text, or email. If you have suggestions, comments, concerns, or even requests regarding coffee hour, please direct those to me, too!



Bonnie Denton at [860-389-1862](tel:860-389-1862) or [bonniedenton@live.com](mailto:bonniedenton@live.com).



### Small Group Circle Ministry Will begin in January

#### Facilitator(s)

Tom and Bobbi Bushaw	Leslie Stasko	Connie Busch	Beth Smith
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#### Participants

Tom Bushaw	Leslie Stasko	Connie Busch	Beth Smith
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Bobbi Bushaw	Rich Potter	John Clark	Rob Ayer
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Mary Jane Duback	Dee Potter	Donna Clark	Beth Ayer
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Pat Barnes	Karen Rhoades	Dolly Hayes	Meredith Schuft
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Ellen Stasko	Jim Rhoades	Astrid Williams	Chris Schuft
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Mark Stasko	Ellen Seeman	Anita Merando	Kristie Lindgren
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Dave Holdridge	Sue Burns	Gary Melanson	Jim Cochrane
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Sara Holdridge	Rob Burns	Esther Brown	Jill Thorne
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Vernon Kellogg
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Thank you to Everyone  
who Signed-up to be a  
Part of Our New Small  
Group Circle Ministry

The groups will start meeting in January. The purpose of the groups is to foster fellowship and have a safe place to talk about life and faith.

Participants have now been organized into a group and facilitators have been chosen. Your facilitator will be contacting you soon to set up your first meeting.



## Looking for Greeters for Sunday Morning Worship Service

We are looking for people to help with greeting people to our Sunday morning worship services. It's a great way to lend a hand in welcoming everyone.

If you are interested being one of our happy and friendly greeters on Sundays, please speak with Beth Ayer after church or contact her via email: [girlsmomX3@comcast.net](mailto:girlsmomX3@comcast.net) or by phone: [\(860\) 608-5951](tel:(860)608-5951).

## Soon and Very Soon the 2025 Advent Devotional



The Stillspeaking Writers invite you to plan your Advent observances around the theme, *Soon and Very Soon* which is the title of their 2025 Advent Devotional. The theme acknowledges our need for radical hope, and encourages us to prepare for God's best. It reflects the tenor of Romans 13:11-12, "Salvation is nearer to us than when we became believers. The night is far gone; the day is near."

Copies are now available on the

table outside Pastor Pat's office. Please take a copy

The Stillspeaking Writers' Group is composed of United Church of Christ ministers and writers who collaborate on resources for people in the church, outside the church, and not sure about the church.

The Still Speaking Writers' Group is known for its whimsical piety, providing progressive theological reflection for Christians who strive to be literate (but not literal) in their faith.



## Christmas Poinsettias 2025



Would you like to help beautify the sanctuary for Christmas with a Poinsettia in honor of or in memory of someone? To do so, simply fill in the information below and make a check out to [Ledyard Congregational Church with Poinsettia on the memo line](#). Poinsettias will be purchased for you at **\$18.00** each. Mail the completed form along with your check to [Ellen Seeman, 8 Darrows Ridge Rd., East Lyme, CT 06333](#) to be received no later than [DECEMBER 14th](#). You may also turn in your order by leaving it in the Clerk's mailbox. **Please print clearly!** Order forms are also available on the table in Fellowship Hall.

Your Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) to be remembered:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) to be honored:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Number ordered: \_\_\_\_\_ Check enclosed for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ made payable to Ledyard Congregational Church



# Church Chatter

## December

### 2025

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

#### Church Office Hours

Monday through Thursday

8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Phone: 860-464-9926

Email:

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

Website:

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

Ledyard Congregational Church  
722 Colonel Ledyard Highway  
Ledyard, CT 06339

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

Along with Sunday School, and  
Nursery/Childcare

*December 2025*



Time Dated Material  
Return Service Requested