

JANUARY 2020 NEWSLETTER

REV. DR. BETH HOFFMAN, PASTOR

LISA MARSHALL, MUSIC DIRECTOR

# *THE ECHO*

*First Congregational Church of Eliot  
United Church of Christ*

*1361 State Road, Eliot Maine 03903    [eliotucc.org](http://eliotucc.org)*



## **Annual Meeting January 26**

First, we will share a potluck meal and then we will share in the work of the church!

Last names A-L please bring a MAIN DISH to share and M-Z please bring a SIDE DISH. Church business is hungry work!

The members of the First Congregational Church of Eliot, Maine are hereby notified of the Annual Business Meeting to be held in the Parish Hall at 11:45 p.m. right after the 11:00 potluck luncheon on January 26, 2020. The following articles will be taken up:

- To hear reports and recommendations of the church officers, fellowships, boards and committees.
- To hear the minister's report and reflection.
- To approve the church budget for the year 2020 and vote on the same.

# ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS

## AND THE NEW YEAR ...

While we like to put the wise ones into the Bethlehem scene on December 24th it really was quite some time before they arrived and brought their gifts and honor to the baby king. So the work of Christmas is still important long after the sheep and the shepherds have gone back to the fields. We still need to imagine and work for hope, peace and love in the world. And there is no better people to do the wishing and working than the people of faith, like those of us at FCCE. Join in each Sunday morning of worship and maybe this year chose a new way to be faithful on Monday. Try a new group, volunteer to be a liturgist, teacher or usher. Step up to be a deacon, attend craft night or help out with the Blueberry Fest. Find a way to be a gift for the Baby Jesus in 2020!  
All Jesus wants for Christmas is us!

Once upon a time, I would sing the song "All I want for Christmas" and really wish for my two front teeth. Young, toothless and wondering what I would grow up to be, I wanted to serve God, even at a young, young age, but toothless me could never have imagined that someday I would be a part of such a vibrant, hopeful and hard working congregation and have the joy of preaching and teaching each week. I could never imagine that my country congregation would host a Christmas Eve service that would be standing room only, year after year.

I never would have thought that I would co-lead worship each week with a music director that brings the gospel to life in song, and brings the sanctuary to symphonic sound that far exceeds what you might expect from a small church. Never could I list all the of the ways that my reality as your pastor far exceeds my imagination long ago and I I am so grateful .

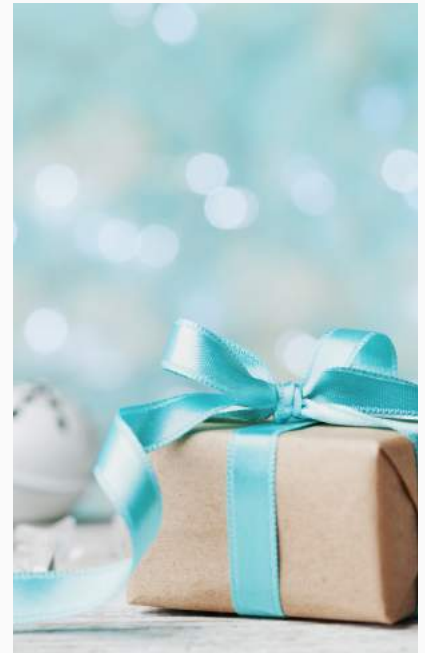
And yet while I am no longer wishing for Christmas to bring me my two front teeth, I do have a wish for our sanctuary. Of course I wish for hope, peace, joy and love and I wish for a music stand!  
Just like there were practical things that the Wisemen needed to reach the Prince of Peace, like camels, blankets and directions, we have some practical needs for worship and we could really use some solid metal music stands, three of them!  
So if you would like to help us bring the gift of music to the King of Kings, perhaps you would like to make a gift of a music stand.  
I no longer wish for my two front teeth but I wish for you to know the gift of Christ, the gift of being a devoted disciple, and the gift of peace for all of us in the year of 2020. Teeth or no teeth, come just as you are and I'll see you in church!

Much love and joy to you,

Pastor Beth

*Are you considering how to give of yourself to the Baby Jesus this year? Are you listening for a call to deepen your discipleship? Please pray about how you might serve at your church with your gifts. Please reach out to Moderator Joan Donhauser if you would like to learn where you might serve in 2020 .*

*When the song of the angel is stilled, when the star in the sky is gone, when the kings and princes have found there way home... the work of Christmas has begun...*





## *Epiphany Concert with all the church choirs*

*Monday January 6 7PM*

*St Mark's Methodist Church in Kittery*

*Everyone is invited to celebrate and enjoy*

### **MAKE ONE TAKE ONE**

Pastor Beth is hosting a monthly craft night for all who are interested (men and women). Come with 5 dollars for the materials and then make one to take home and make one to store away for Christmas Fair 2020. Let's begin now and give new life and spark to the well valued tradition of the fair. Good fellowship and good fun! Make one and take one on **January 14- 6pm.**

### **WOMEN AT THE WELL**

FCCE has two vibrant women's fellowship groups and you are always invited to both. Women at the Well will meet at **6 pm on Wednesday, January 15th** in the fellowship hall.

### **ANNUAL REPORTS**

Hey, leaders of committees, teams and boards! It is time to start reflecting and writing on our year as a church. Please consider where you wish to go in the new year, what you especially liked about this past year and what dreams you have for our faith community. Reports need only be a paragraph or two but all of them need to be into Lisa Marshall by January 12th. Thank you for your great work and wonderful love for the church..

### **COMMUNION SUNDAY JANUARY 12**

Pastor Beth has been asked to participate in a service of release for a retiring clergy colleague in Auburn Maine on January 5th. With your blessing, she will be away on our traditional communion Sunday and so we will celebrate the sacrament on the 12th. Deacon Jeffrey Pelkey will be offering The Word and leading worship on January 5th.

### **SOUPER BOWL MONTH**

We team up with the Ladies Circle as they coach us to alleviate some of the community hunger and use the January month run up to the Super Bowl to collect at least 200 cans of soup. Can we do it? The challenge has begun!



### **MORE USHERS NEEDED**

It takes the work of many to lead worship, provide good hospitality and be a welcoming church. The deacons are looking for more people to volunteer as usher. If you might consider this valuable but easy role in the life of the church, please talk to Pastor Beth or Lisa Marshall.



### **LADIES CIRCLE**

On Wednesday December 4, 15 ladies met for our monthly meeting at 11:30 with Pot Luck Lunch followed by our regular meeting at 12:30 and a Yankee Swap to finish our day. Delicious dessert was provided by Nancy Hoyt. Our next meeting will be on Monday January 6th, because the first Wednesday comes on New Years Day. We will meet at 11:30 for a Hot Soup Lunch provided by Jane Spinney and dessert by Sue Bicknell. We will start bringing in canned soup and crackers for Footprints. Our February 5th meeting will be at 11:30.

We are asked to bring a sandwich and dessert will be provided by Nancy Hoyt and Joan Pelkey.

We will once again put together Valentine's Day bags for women at Footprints. Bring in small items to be put into the bags. Such as lotion, shampoo, candy, etc. March 4 we will go to Norma's in York for lunch.

The next Monday Night Craft Group meeting will be March 2 for a Pot Luck Supper at 6 PM.

Come with comments about the fair and new ideas for next year.

### **CHRISTMAS FUND**

A few pastors retire with a degree of financial security. Most, however, do not - either because they have been willing to serve smaller, struggling congregations, or because of all the times they have given from their own pockets to provide a meal, a hotel room, or supplies for Vacation Bible School.

The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund supplements the small pensions of some UCC clergy and lay employees and their families, helps some retired clergy pay for health insurance, and sometimes keeps the heat on.

Your gifts are needed more than ever to help the growing number of retirees whose low-income annuities make it difficult to meet increasing living costs. This is your opportunity to participate in God's promise of renewal by enabling this ministry of compassion and care. Please donate to the Christmas Fund January 5 and 12 and 19 of 2020



## **SUNDAY SERVANTS**

**5**

Liturgist and Preacher: Jeffrey Pelkey

Sunday School: Family Worship

Ushers: Linda Gove and Julie Pelkey

Fellowship Hour: The Cresta Family

**12**

Liturgist: Pastor Beth

Sunday School: Linda Downey and Laurie Troy

Ushers: Joey and Holly Cresta

Fellowship Hour: Nancy Hoyt and Nancy Hundley

**19**

Liturgist: Linda Gove

Sunday School: Linda Downey and Laurie Troy

Ushers: Richard and Joan Donhauser

Fellowship Hour: Laura Shontag

**26**

Liturgist: David Caswell

Sunday School: Linda Downey and Laurie Troy

Ushers: Brad and Jen Swanson

Fellowship Hour: Potluck

Sanctuary Steward: Linda Gove

Lead Greeter: Doris Grover

Deacon of the Month: Dayle Shiverick

## **BIRTHDAYS**

6 - NANCY HARDY

13 - PAULA CASWELL

13 - TODD DONHAUSER

13 - HAILEY LONERGAN

13 - DICK PRUETT

21 - GEOFFREY BERG

21 - SARAH CASWELL

21 - RACHEL GOVE

21 - DORIS GROVER

22 - MARILYN HAMM-BLAND

# **What gift do you bring?**

**The mouse taught us that we all have something to share with the Baby Jesus**



January  
2020

**First Congregational Church of Eliot, UCC**  
**www.eliotucc.org 439-1105**  
**1361 State Road, Eliot, ME 03903**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Worship 10am weekly			1 	2 8am Exercise 4-7 Bluegrass 6:30 Choir	3 8am Exercise	4
5 Choir 830 Worship	6 11:30am Ladies Circle 7pm Epiphany concert at St. Mark's	7	8 10:30am Sr. Citizens 1-7pm Banjo Lessons	9 8am Exercise 11-3pm Garden Club 4-7 Bluegrass	10 8am Exercise	11
12 Choir 830 Worship Communion	13	14 Craft Night with Pastor Beth 6pm	15 1-7pm Banjo Lessons Women at Well 6pm	16 8am Exercise 4-7 Bluegrass 6:30 Choir	17 8am Exercise	18
19 Choir 830 Worship	20 MLK, Jr. Day	21	22 1-7pm Banjo Lessons	23 8am Exercise 4-7 Bluegrass	24 8am Exercise	25
26 Choir 830 Worship <u>11:30 Annual Meeting and Potluck</u>	27	28	29 1-7pm Banjo Lessons	30 8am Exercise 4-7 Bluegrass	31	