

First Congregational Church of Eliot
United Church of Christ
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
THE ECHO |
DECEMBER 2017

PASTOR: REV. DR. BETH HOFFMAN

Belong Believe Become

Stars in the Sky
and
Stars on the Screen

Christmas at the Movies.

An invitational sermon series.

Nov 26 The Polar Express
Dec 3 It's a Wonderful Life
Dec 10 A Charlie Brown Christmas
Dec 17 The Grinch

**Sundays in Advent at
First Congregational Eliot**

Eliotucc.org

LADIES CIRCLE

Our November meeting was held on Monday Nov. 6 at 9:30 a.m, when we started to set up for the Christmas Carole Fair which was on Saturday November 11. Lunch was at 11:30 when we enjoyed sandwiches provided by the Ladies Circle. Helen Searles had dessert.

Our December 6 meeting will be a Pot Luck luncheon at 11:30. Lunch will be followed by our business meeting. We will then have a Yankee Swap. Be sure to bring a gift worth at least \$5. If you did not bring a gift for the Maine Youth Center in Portland they should be brought at this time as the Lions will be taking them after their December 12th meeting.

Meetings in January and February will be at 11:30. All ladies are welcome to join us on the first Wednesday of each month.

CRAFT FAIR RAFFLE WINNERS

\$50 Market Basket	Linda Ross
\$50 Shaw's	Dottie Edson
\$50 Hannaford	Sonya Quinn
Weatherwane	Jane Spinney
Carl's Market	Sonya Quinn
#236 Grill	Jeannie Morin
Infinity Massage	Jean Paulantonio
Norton's Garage	Jan Veino
Fogarty's	Brad Swanson
#236 Variety	Pam Strout
Jetto's	Bruce Locke
Guy's and Dolls	Beth Dubois
Tammy's	Barb Sullivan
Eliot Small Engine	Jane Spinney

CHRISTMAS PROJECT SHARE

It is time to think again about the Project Share Program that is coordinated by the Eliot Lions Club. As you know, this program is a coordinated effort to collect and distribute nonperishable food to those families in need in Eliot. Our church plays a very important role in this program. First of all, members bring in food donations to the church. Donations can be deposited in the box under the table in the church narthex. The school system also has a program for collecting food for Project Share.

Our church will again donate the use of the Thrift Shop area to store all food collected, which is then delivered to the families. Some of our members have helped with the sorting and packing of the food for individual families. The food will be brought to our church around 9:30 a.m. 12/14/17 for Christmas. We will begin the process of sorting on those two days. The completion of sorting, plus packing, will be completed starting at 9:00 on 12/15/17. The food will be delivered to the families 12/16/17 by the Boy Scouts.

On behalf of the Eliot Lions Club, I would to again thank our church for its important role in making this great service happen.-Dick Bogh



FROM THE PASTOR

Psalm 121 I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.

These days and most nights this is the scripture my mom quotes to me when she calls me from her room in a Boston hospital. She recites and remembers the King James version from her childhood as she calls me, her child and talks about both her fear and her faith .

Diagnosed with Acute Myeloid Leukemia just a few days ago, my mom, whose name is Faith Hope, is fighting the fight, and undergoing a very aggressive treatment that hopes for a cure. She is strong, faith filled and working hard to beat this catastrophic disease. And as her family, are all banding together in hope.

And it is very hard.

As I stood before you in Sunday morning worship and shared this news and begged for your understanding as I support my father, mother, sister and children in this hard struggle, you gave me your prayers and your promise of love and understanding. And I felt buoyed and blessed.

After worship, someone mentioned that I should have been at the hospital rather than in the sanctuary that day. While I appreciated the generous offer of time away, I can say without a



(MY SISTER GG, MY MOM, FAITH AND ME,
-CHRISTMAS , 1975)

doubt, that I needed to be with you all.

Only hours after learning the hard news that would change my family forever, I wanted to be with my faith family. I wanted to worship God in that raw vulnerability and I needed to be vulnerable with you all. This is very hard. You make it easier.

My help comes from you. My help comes from God. These past days have brought me to my knees, many times. In grief, in anger, in thanksgiving, in exhaustion, in gratitude and in prayer. As the days turn to weeks and the weeks turn to months in the face of this cancer, I shiver at the long road ahead, and so I wrap myself in your generous hugs, incredible letters, amazing gifts and the oh so helpful meals of mercy. I rest in your talents of leadership and the healthy state of our congregation. I have long known that you take good care of each other. I now know that care first hand. One breath at a time, my family moves through this and I can hardly wait for Sunday morning to come around again.- **Pastor Beth**

DECEMBER SUNDAY SERVANTS

Fellowship Hour

3 Jennifer Swanson and Dottie Edson
and friends
10 Jane Spinney and Joan Pelkey
17 Joan Donhauser and Julie Pelkey
24 Christmas Eve day, no fellowship hr.
31- Peggy Gray and Robin Wheeler

Ushers

3 Brad Jen and Parker Swanson
10 Peggy Gray and Robin Wheeler
17 Sunday School Kids
24 morn- Ushers needed
24 EVE- Rob and Sonya Quinn
two more volunteers needed
31 Mark and Lydia Hoffman

Nursery

We always have a caregiver available
for our littlest ones.

Church School Adventures

DECEMBER IS PAGEANT

**PRACTICE FUN! Lydia is excited to
see you all!**

PAGEANT on DECEMBER 17

Dec 31 is Family Worship

Deacon of the Month Jan McMullen

Sanctuary Steward

Linda Gove



Birthdays

2 - Pat Witham

3 - Sandy Norris

7 - Sylvia Joy Bonafede

8 - Dot Manson

9 - Jennifer Swanson

10 - Bob Hundley

20 - Marcia Goss

21 - Angela Marshall , JustIn Pelkey

22 - Dick Bogh

23 - Steve Cultrera

28- Gabe Hoffman Karl Koch Jacob Theriault

30-Jeffrey Pelkey



THANK YOU for a wonderful Stewardship Season. There is still time to make a pledge, a faith promise or a one time gift to the future of our amazing church community. Please pray for the mission and ministry of FCCE in 2018



PASTOR BETH WAS HONORED TO STAND AT HOME PLATE AND WELCOME EVERYONE TO GIVE THEIR GIFTS OF PRAYER, HOPE AND PLEDGE.

THANK YOU NOTES

Friends,

Thank you all for your cards, calls and prayers for me during this difficult time. Hopefully by December 6 I will have my last trip to Boston. Again, thank you all. Carole Shirk

Thank you from the family of Dick Mills

Judy Mills, Marion Eldredge and Brian and Susan Eldredge would like to thank everyone for their cards, positive thoughts and prayers during this difficult time.

Thank you from the Hoffman/ Follum Family.

As Pastor Beth's mom remains in Mass General, her family is most grateful for all the amazing help. The cards and letters are super important to Faith's spirit and hope. Please keep them coming. The meals of mercy are a great help to her father, Rod as he and Beth go back and forth during the week under difficult circumstances.




Beth is incredibly touched by the hat she was given and she wears it like a talisman even when she is not cold and Rod is so thankful to the two people who came and stacked his woodpile after the storm blew it down. Mark is especially happy for the banana bread, cookies and snacks that find their way to the front pew on Sunday mornings for trips to Boston.

The prayers are the greatest gift of all.

Love, Rod, Faith, Beth, Mark, GG, Gabe and Lydia. The Follum/Hoffman family



First Congregational Church
of Eliot, UCC
www.eliotucc.org 207-439-1105

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
**weekly Worship 10am					1 Exercise 8am	2
3 ** ADVENT II Communion Baptism 8:30am Choir	4	5	6 11:30am Ladies Circle **1-7pm Banjo ~ Weekly	7 Exercise 8am ** Bluegrass 4-7pm (Weekly)	8 Exercise 8am Taste Away Café 4-7pm	9
10 ** ADVENT III C.E. Penny Collection 8:30am Choir	11	12 Deacons 6pm	13 11:30 Senior Citizens ** 5:30 Property Board	14 Exercise 8am **	15 Exercise 8am	16
17 ** ADVENT IV Finance Com. 11:30 8:30am Choir	18	19 Council 6pm 6:30 ~ Choir	20 **	21 Exercise 8am **	22 Exercise 8am	23
24 10am Worship Christmas Eve Worship 5:00pm 	25 	26	27 **	28 Exercise 8am **	29 Exercise 8am	30
31 ** New Year's Eve 	DECEMBER 21 Leaning Towards the Light. Blue Christmas 8PM hosted by Kittery Eliot Clergy The Buoy. Government Street, Kittery					

LOOK!



The Pastor and the Christian Education Director are postponing the Confirmation Community until January.

If you have signed up you are all set and will get the go out to dinner invite in the new year.

If you aren't sure if you want to do this, there is still time!

If you said no, you can now change your mind.

All teens are welcome and encouraged!



Christmas Pageant
December 17th 10AM

All youth and children are invited to play a part.
Rehearsals are on Sunday mornings at 10am
Adults invited to help with costume and set.

Text or talk to Lydia at 603-913-4824

Epiphany Concert January 6 at 6PM St. Mark's
Come support and enjoy all the choirs .

WAIT FOR IT!

Love is about to come down on December 24th!

CHRISTMAS EVE FAMILY WORSHIP SERVICE

5:00PM This is a new time for FCCE. Tell everyone!

no 7pm service

There will also be a 10AM service on the 24th.

