

First Congregational Church of Eliot
United Church of Christ
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
THE ECHO |
JANUARY 2018

PASTOR: REV. DR. BETH HOFFMAN

Belong Believe Become

CONCERT

Kittery-Eliot Clergy
Association's annual Epiphany
Concert, featuring the choirs of
the area churches.

Hosted by St. Mark's in Kittery.
Please plan to be there! **Our
choir is hopeful for your
support JANUARY 6 AT 7
PM**



200 CANS OF SOUP?

Can we line the sanctuary with
cans of soup this month? Of
course we can! Maybe we can
even reach 250 this year!

PLEASE BRING IN SOUP CANS
EVERY SUNDAY THROUGH
THE MONTH OF JANUARY AS
WE STRIVE TO SUPPORT

ANNUAL MEETING

JANUARY 21

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 SIDE DISH to share and M-Z please bring a MAIN 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 12:00 p.m. right after the 11:00 pot luck lunch on January 22, 2018. The following articles will be taken up:

- To hear reports and recommendations of the church officers, fellowships and committees.
- To hear the minister's report.
- Minister's comments.
- To approve the church budget for the year 2018 and vote on the same.

This notice duly posted for the January 1, 2018 in accordance with By-Law article XVI.

Boards and Teams and Committee Leaders, please note that...

ANNUAL REPORTS

All reports for the 2018 Annual Report are due in the office no later than Friday, January 5th.

Please talk to Pastor Beth or Lisa Marshall or if you need assistance.

Due to family illness, Pastor Beth will be holding office hours by appointment only for the winter hours. Don't hesitate to call her cell at 603-620-5348 or the church office at 207-439-1105 and leave a message about need and hope. She is thrilled to have time with you! Just need to schedule the hour because she is doing a lot of Boston traveling in the new year. Thank you for understanding.



LADIES CIRCLE

For our December meeting, everyone was asked to bring a Christmas item from home to be the decorations for our table. Each was given a number and then voted on. Pam Lankford's musical piano player won. As usual, the food for the Pot Luck luncheon was great! Pastor Beth was able to join us, as was Diane Burbank. 18 ladies enjoyed a Yankee Swap with many good items. A new coffee pot was voted as were the usual cash gifts to the various charities and persons.

Monday night Craft Group will meet on January 8 with a Pot Luck supper at 6 P.M.

The Ladies Circle meeting January 3rd at 11:30 will be with Hot Soup by Jane Spinney and dessert by Sue Bicknell. This is the month to collect cans of soup for Footprints, hoping to collect more than 100 cans with the help of the whole church.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Thank you so much to all the teachers who have given our students such good experiences these past 4 months. It can only be even cooler as we move into the new year and the winter season.

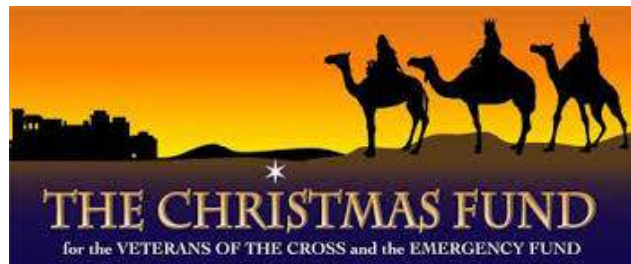
It has been great fun taking our field trip adventures and we will pick that back up in February. Suggestions for fun locations to visit are welcome please talk to me about your ideas.

Thank you to everyone who purchased a wreath in support of our Christian Education budget and now let's bring in 100 cans of soup to support the mission of feeding others in a souper bowl sort of way!

Finally, what a great Christmas Pageant! Lots of people told me that it was the best pageant ever. I don't know about that but I do know we have the best kids, the best teachers, the best church and the best Grinch ever!!

Thanks!- **Lydia Hoffman**

CHRISTMAS FUND MISSION COLLECTION



Some pastors retire with a degree of financial security. Many, 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.

The Christmas Fund also supports active clergy and lay employees who have medical emergencies or unexpected misfortunes that require more money than they have in their bank accounts. All told, this offering contributes more than \$2 million a year in assistance to clergy and lay employees.

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 7 and 14 and 21 of 2018.**

FROM THE PASTOR

Dear beloved friends in Christ ,

What a wonderful Christmas Eve Sunday I was privileged to share with you all. Christmas Eve morning was snowy and cold and yet we had a good turnout and a very special service. Thank you to those who performed the role of shepherd and angel and little boy, and thank you to Ann Salzer and her wonderful ensemble of George Salzer, John Marshall, Lydia Hoffman and our extraordinary Music Director, Lisa Marshall. Their beautiful musical offering was enchanting and perfect for beginning our morning worship and Ann sang like an angel!

George also offered a beautiful rendition of "Mary Did You know" and took everyone's breath away! Prayers of thanksgiving for the ministry of Lisa as she gave us deeply powerful music for both our morning and evening Christmas Eve service. The choir was reverent and the ensembles were sparkling! And if you

heard the music offered by Dana Tobey and John Marshall during the offering, you were left speechless. What a remarkable music ministry we have! We are truly blessed.

If you joined in our Christmas Eve service at 5 pM then you knew it was standing room only! Not only was there stunning music and carols, there was the traditional bringing of the baby to the manger (Thank you AL Morin and Liam Quinn). We heard the traditional scriptures beautifully shared by the voices of Brooke and Blake Downey.

There was the traditional lifting of the candle light and several of our friends under the age of four, were so excited that they received the "special cool candles" that were battery operated. **THANK YOU CHURCH, FOR BEING SO WELCOMING TO YOUNGEST ONES!**

And this year we had the not so traditional appearance of Santa Clause, who surprised us to read the children his favorite story ever about

the baby who was born in Bethlehem. Joy and wonder filled the faces of our children and curiosity filled the faces of our adults. "I couldn't figure out who Santa Claus was!" "I didn't recognize Santa. His face wasn't familiar." "Who is St. Nick?" were some of the fun questions I was asked as Santa sang with us and shared the

. (con't next pg 6)





**First Congregational Church
of Eliot, UCC**

www.eliotucc.org 439-1105

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p><i>Worship</i> 10am <i>weekly</i></p>	<p>1 </p>	2	<p>3 11:30am Ladies Circle 1-7pm Banjo Lessons</p>	<p>4 8am Exercise 4-7 Bluegrass</p>	<p>5 8am Exercise Annual Reports due to office</p>	<p>6 Choral Epiphany Concert 7pm at St Mark's Kittery</p>
<p>7 <i>Worship</i> <i>Holy Communion</i></p>	<p>8 7pm Craft Group</p>	<p>9 6pm Deacons</p>	<p>10 10:30am Sr. Citizens 5:30 Property Board 1-7pm Banjo</p>	<p>11 8am Exercise 12-3pm Garden Club 4-7 Bluegrass</p>	<p>12 8am Exercise</p>	13
<p>14 <i>Worship</i></p>	<p>15 <i>MLK , Jr. Day</i> 7pm Craft Group</p>	<p>16 6pm Council</p>	<p>17 1-7pm Banjo Lessons</p>	<p>18 8am Exercise 4-7 Bluegrass</p>	<p>19 8am Exercise</p>	<p>20 ECHO ITEMS DUE</p>
<p>21 <i>Worship</i> <u>11:30 Annual Meeting and Potluck</u></p>	<p>22 7pm Craft Group</p>	23	<p>24 1-7pm Banjo Lessons</p>	<p>25 8am Exercise 4-7 Bluegrass</p>	<p>26 8am Exercise</p>	27
<p>28 <i>Worship</i> 11:30 C. Ed.</p>	<p>29 7pm Craft Group</p>	30	31			

(Pastor Beth Con't) Light of Christ with us.

Who indeed? as people wondered who our Santa was, I invited everyone to just trust the joy and mystery. Santa Claus could be any of us. So it is with the face of Christ. Any of us could be the face of Christ, the body of Christ. Any encounter with a brother or sister in faith could be an encounter with the Christ. "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me" (Matthew 25:40, 45).

His or her face may not be familiar to you but trust the joy and trust the mystery. Share the light of Christ with others and "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as though you were working for the Lord and not for people" (Colossians 3:23). The apostle Paul teaches that we are to work as though we are "working for the Lord and not for people." His or her face may not be familiar to you but trust the joy and trust the mystery and keep the Spirit of Christmas in your heart all year long! Love and peace, - *Pastor Beth*



JANUARY SUNDAY SERVANTS

Fellowship Hour

- 7 Nancy Hoyt and Jan McMullen
- 14 Jean Paulatonio and Sonya Quinn
- 21 Jane Spinney and Sue Beattie
- 28 Laurie Troy and Loretta Downey

Ushers

- 7 Linda Gove and Walter Gove
- 14 Loraine Boyer and Dick McKenney
- 21 Dave Caswell and Paula Caswell
- 28 Brad Swanson and Jen Swanson

Nursery

We always have a caregiver available for our littlest ones and all are always invited to stay for full worship.

Church School Adventures
JANUARY IS MUSIC MAGIC with
Josh and Rachel Roberge and
Loraine Boyer

Liturgist

- 7 Linda Gove
- 14 Dick Bogh
- 21-Joan Donhauser
- 28- Jane Spinney

Deacon of the Month

Loraine Boyer

Sanctuary Steward

Linda Gove



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
- 30 - Rosemary Corriveau
- 31 - Janice Bowden