



# TIDINGS



Rev. Laura Fitzpatrick-Nager

January/February 2017

## *A LETTER FROM LAURA*



January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017

Dear Beloved Church,

Happy New Year! As we pack away our Christmas ornaments and turn the page of a new 2017 calendar, we may wonder at how to keep the sacredness of Christ's birth, manglers and our Immanuel, God -with- Us, uppermost in our hearts.

How shall we "be church" together in this coming year?

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We are thrilled that Loving Spoonfuls opened this week for its 4<sup>th</sup> season, serving soup, nourishing treats and friendship on Tuesdays from 12:00-5:00 to whomever walks through our doors. This act of hospitality is a star-filled light in the darkness and beautiful way to warm the neighborhood.

Also, in the winter months of January, February and March, we're starting a film and conversation series beginning with *Selma* (PG-13) on Friday night January 13<sup>th</sup>. At 7 pm. It's free and includes popcorn and hot cocoa! Stay tuned for more information. We'll also host other films that offer rich opportunities for sacred conversations on justice issues affecting us all.

God's Garden continues to grow and offer our children a fun and creative way to grow in faith as God's beloved. Also, we're excited that our youth group is invited to join with other churches and make peace poles later this month with other teens in Old Lyme on Saturday, January 28<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm. On February 26<sup>th</sup>, we'll also be hosting a Fellowship Forum for parents called "God Talk: How to Talk to our Kids about God."

(cont'd on page 3)



# Church News

## The Christmas Tea and Children's Fair Update



The Christmas Tea and Children's Fair was held Saturday December 10th from 10am-2pm. Thank you for all your help!

We had photos with Santa, cookie decorating, cookies by the pound, hot chocolate and cookies served, the pennywise room just for kids to shop for 25 cents per item and we wrapped their gifts for free! Mrs. O had her pinecone craft and parents could shop at the White Reindeer table.

As of this writing we have collected \$1594.54 to be divided equally to The East Haddam Fuel Bank and The East Haddam Food Bank.

Gratefully,  
Patti Lombardo and Kathy Sewell



## *Birthdays*

### JANUARY

- 7 - Wayne Lombardo, Michael Sewell
- 9- Allison Ballek
- 14- Nicholas Kinsman
- 18- Brittany Lombardo
- 19- Scott Feulner
- 20- Sharon Fritz
- 26- Brenda Collis



### FEBRUARY

- 8- Susan Kinsman
- 9- Justine Cancryn
- 10- Kathy Lisowicz
- 11- Kathy Sewell, Kathy Guidi
- 18- Anita Ballek
- 20- Nadine Lisowicz
- 21- Karan Conover
- 23- Julia Freeman, David Nelson

(Cont'd from page 1)

And we'll keep inviting neighbors to come and share their faith stories during Fellowship Forum talks as we learn about our neighbors with other faith traditions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism and Islam. On the 2017 calendar, too, are friendship retreats with refugee women scheduled for the early and late spring.

And to keep the music going, our 3<sup>rd</sup> February Valentine Coffeehouse is scheduled for February 10<sup>th</sup>. Let us know if you'd like to play or sing for this evening of great music and fun.

These acts of growing light are all part of what theologian and poet Howard Thurman called "The Work of Christmas":

*When the song of the angels is stilled,  
When the star in the sky is gone,  
When the kings and princes are home,  
When the shepherds are back with their flocks,  
The work of Christmas begins:  
To find the lost,  
To heal the broken,  
To feed the hungry  
To release the prisoner,  
To rebuild the nations,  
To bring peace among the people,  
To make music in the heart.*

May it be so, as we dream, imagine and witness to the Spirit moving among us . We'd also like to listen more closely to what draws you (and your family) through our doors for worship, fellowship, outreach, special events and service? What are you seeking and how might First Church be a part of that? What role or roles might you want to play in the life of our church this year? Drop us a line, call or stop in...your presence makes a huge difference as we walk the journey of faith together!

May this New Year fill you and yours with a sense of God's grace and hope for our world and one another as the holy and joyous work of Christmas unfolds.

Blessings all around,  
Laura



## Loving Spoonful Snack Bar



**Loving Spoonful Snack Bar** is beginning it's 4th year of serving our community with something warm to eat! It will be open **Tuesdays** starting **1/3/2017 from 12 noon – 5:00 pm.** This time overlaps the hours for the **EH Food Bank and EH Clothing Bank.** Volunteers are needed for the afternoon shift, 2:00-5:00. The morning shift 11:00-2:00 can also use people to fill in as needed. We're also in need of soup chefs, bakers, donations of beverages and monetary donations to purchase grinders each week.

Sign-up sheets will be available in the fellowship or you can contact Patti Lombardo, [wjpalombi@yahoo.com](mailto:wjpalombi@yahoo.com) or evenings at 860-873-9835.

**Thank you for your help and support. Together we'll offer our community assistance to get through the winter months.**



**Outreach is in need of members to coordinate and help carry out programs that can make a difference in our town, our state, our country and our world. Please consider joining the committee and sharing your talents to build our Outreach presents here at First Church.**

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## Board of Membership Resources

The members of The Board of Membership Resources are , Sue Merrow, Michael Sewell, Heather Vigue and Kathy Sewell.

**Members are needed on the Board of Christian Outreach and the Hospitality Committee.**

Many of us are on 2 or 3 or more committees and we are being stretched thin. We need new blood to help. More hands, less work. Not to mention more fun!

**Contact one of the people above if you are interested in helping our church grow.**



## MARTS' House

On December 13<sup>th</sup>, Reverend Laura, Ana Boggiatto, and I attended Mart's House Christmas Party. Members of the First Congregational Church of Guilford's prison and re-entry ministries also attended as long-term supporters of Mart's House. It has been funded for over twenty years to date!

Mart's House is supported housing for women newly released from correctional facilities. These amazing women are re-building their lives. They are continuing with their education, working to support themselves in steady jobs and mending their relationships with their families. They live together, tease each other and support each other. They have become a family. A professional staff is always available for assistance and guidance as well.

At the party, we devoured a catered lunch and desserts and presented the three backpacks from our church filled with grooming items as well as, prayer shawls. I was touched by the depth of appreciation and gratitude shared for what we brought them. As part of the festivities, we sang The Twelve Days of Christmas and had a Yankee Swap – the whole evening was full of laughter. A great time was had by all! We prayed together and each woman shared her personal story and what she was thankful for. One resident had been newly released after being in prison for over 23 years.

Let us hope and pray these programs will continue to be funded by the State of Connecticut for the next fiscal year. Mart's House offers miracles and new life to those who need it most.

Lydia Sherman

### Back Pack Ministry



This is a great time to **purchase Backpacks** to be filled with a collection of personal hygiene items that will be distributed by the **Prison & Re-entry Ministries** to women upon release from York Correction Institute. Look for the sales and pick up a backpack to donate!

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### Family Directory Updates

*Margaret Charney's phone # is 860- 537-3323  
Helmut & Rose Dijer live in East Hampton 06424*

*Joan & Don Osalza no longer have a landline. Their phone numbers are; Don- 860-949-5058 and Joan- 860-334-7785*

*If you notice any incorrect addresses, phone numbers or email addresses contact Kathy Sewell.*



### First Church Cemetery Association

The First Church Cemetery Association is looking for a volunteer secretary to take and transcribe the minutes of its annual meetings held in June of each year. The meetings are held in the Fellowship Hall of the church in the early evening. Anyone interested in joining the Cemetery Association in this capacity, please see Karl Stofko, president of the Association.

The Association is also looking for a reliable carpenter and painter to make repairs to the exterior of the cemetery building and to apply a fresh coat of paint. If you know of a reliable person who would like to give a job estimate, please see Karl Stofko. We would like the work to be completed in the spring of 2017.

Respectively Submitted, Karl P. Stofko  
President and Superintendent

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### Quilting on Tuesdays

Quilting will continue on Tuesday mornings from 9-noon.  
We meet downstairs in the multi-purpose room.

**Contact Margaret Charney for more information.**







**Jan 13th** 7pm Winter Film Series, Selma (PG-13)

**Jan 22<sup>nd</sup>** Youth Group meeting following Fellowship Hour 11:30-12:15

**Jan 29<sup>th</sup>** 2nd Annual Recovery Sunday during worship we will honor the journey of recovery with folks who have been on the path of addiction and grace as they help others in need.

**Feb 5<sup>th</sup>** Fellowship Forum: *Knowing Our Neighbors: My Faith Journey as a Muslim* Join us for this first in a series called Knowing Our Neighbors as we learn about different religious traditions. East Haddam resident, Zahra Tariq will share with us her personal journey of faith as a Muslim woman and her experiences living in the United Arab Emirates.

**Feb 10<sup>th</sup>** Winter Valentine Coffeehouse

**Feb 12th Stewardship Campaign 2017-2018 Kick off; Stewardship is Heart Work**

**Feb 26<sup>th</sup>** Fellowship Forum for parents and grandparents called "God Talk: How to Talk to Kids about God." Let's share some stories, insights and questions. Led by Pastor Laura and Christian Ed Director, Val Seaver.

### SAVE FOR MARCH-APRIL:

**March Fellowship Forum: *Mission Trips and Partnerships: Where shall we go? Come join the conversation and share your ideas and past experiences with mission trips as we explore possibilities for the future.***

**March 18<sup>th</sup>:** Women's Friends Retreat, Mercy Center



### God's Garden

January holds for us a lot of excitement in God's Garden. We will begin our journey through the New Testament and study the teachings of Jesus through Art, Music, Story-

telling and Dance.

Christian Ed would like to try new teaching approaches this year but we need YOU to make that happen. Please let us know if you are interested in volunteering to assist in Sunday school! It is fun and a great way to learn about the bible.

See Val if you are interested.

Blessings,  
Val Seaver  
Director of Christian Education



## Stewardship Campaign 2017-2018 February 12, 2017– April 9, 2017

“As the Days Begin to Lengthen.....”

Now that Christmas, with all its joys and celebrations, is a warm memory, it's time to turn our hearts toward the work of joyfully sustaining all the promise that Christ's birth brought with it. For us here at First Church, this means looking into our hearts and making a commitment to our church's ongoing work. We call it “stewardship,” which means “the responsible planning and management of resources,” and this year once again we will be asking you to consider what you can pledge in support of First Church. Our theme this year is **“Stewardship is Heart Work.”** and we want you to know that the *commitment* you make when you pledge support is just as important as the *amount* that you pledge. Those commitments will allow the folks who do the hard work of running our church programs to plan wisely and manage thoughtfully. And pledging is a chance for each of us to think about what First Church means in our lives and the life of our community, and that puts the “**heart**” in “**heart work**.” You'll be hearing more as the days continue to lengthen, and in the meantime, thank you for all you do to keep our church heart beating strong.





### From the Sanctuary Committee

Worship Services for the months of January, February and March, except for the first Sunday of the month, will be held in the Fellowship Hall.

Small plants or arrangements would help to brighten up the cold winter days.



**Next issue we will have forms for the Easter plants! Easter is April 16th!**

### East Haddam Fuel Bank

**Please note that the next 5th Sunday for Fuel will take place January 29, 2017.** You may contribute at anytime by sending a check made out to First Church of Christ, PO Box 445, East Haddam, CT. 06423. Please note EH Fuel Bank on the memo line.

Karl P. Stofko, treasurer

**Many Thanks for your Generosity!**



### The East Haddam Clothing Bank

**The East Haddam Clothing Bank** is located on the lower level of the church. You may enter through the back entrance.

**The hours are ,the 1st and 3rd Tuesday afternoons from 2:30 –5:30pm. You may drop off your clean, gently used clothing during these hours.** As there isn't any storage space available, they ask that you bring seasonal clothing only.



### The Monday Morning Guys

The Monday Morning Guys are a group of gentlemen who love this church and lovingly maintain it. Their numbers are getting smaller and they need some new blood!

Are you retired?

Do you work 2nd or 3rd shift?

Do you have a couple of hours on Monday mornings?

If you answered "yes" to one or more of these questions, call one of the gentlemen named below;

**Larry Fraser, Don Osalza, Don Messmer, Roy Butler, Joe Dawson**





## Prayers, Joys and Concerns

The Prayer Chain is one of the Ministries of First Church. If you would like to pray with this group, there is a sign up sheet in the Fellowship Hall. For more information please contact Barbara Bernard at [barbara-bernard@sbcglobal.net](mailto:barbara-bernard@sbcglobal.net) or call 860-705-8842.

### God is still listening to our prayers for:

Perley, Bob Johnson, LuAnn, Marilyn, Bill, Eileen Carney, Will, Lillian Sewell, Stella, Nancy, Marie, Helen, Suzanne, Rosa, Glen Landers, Lisa, Georgianna, Beverly, Jean, Randy W, Wayne, Dorothy, Pauline, Karen Z, Patty, Liz, Baby Emma, Emmitt, Patrick, Beth, Paul, Joanne, Sandy, Kim, Emma, Mike, James, Cindy, Emma's Friend, Laurie N, Amanda, Joe, Tommy, Debi, Susan G, John, Mark, Linda, Irene, Jennifer, Robert, Glendoris, Carol & Hank, A bride, Kenny, Cindy, Dominic, George's family, A local family, Kelly, Rob, Rick, Anna, Madeline, John, Charlie, Rose, Eddie, Timea, Julie, Don, Lisa, ,Paul, Will, Connie, Laurie



**Winter is Here!**

**Please be careful as you drive in bad conditions!**

Watch Channel 3 News Station for any **Cancellations** of Worship Services and meetings.

**If in Doubt, Don't Go Out!**





We will be printing and mailing fewer copies of the Tidings beginning in January 2017.

We will continue to email the Tidings and post on our website.

You can contact me at schleppsister35@gmail.com.

The deadline for the March/April 2017 Tidings is February 15th. This will be the Lenten/Easter edition.

This is a good advertising tool for any events coming up!

Blessings, Kathy Sewell

## Join Our Online Mailing List

Receive (optional) subscriptions of: weekly Word & Worship Notes, Prayer Chain updates, and Severe Weather Alerts for worship cancellations.

- Help us save paper and reduce printing and postage costs.

### How to join?

- Visit [FirstChurchEH.org](http://FirstChurchEH.org) and enter your email address under "Join Our Mailing List" in the right column.
- Visit our Facebook page and click on "Join Our Mailing List."

Scan this QR Code right now with your tablet or smartphone.



Our mailing list is never shared or sold. We may, however, occasionally pass along an offer from affiliated organizations that we think you may be interested in.

## Our email has changed!

Please note that the general church email address has changed from **firstchurcheh@juno.com** to **contact@firstchurcheh.org**

First Church of Christ, Congregational  
499 Town St  
PO Box 445  
East Haddam, CT 06423



TIDINGS  
JANUARY/FEBRUARY  
2017

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**Lectionary Series**

| January                           | February                           |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1-Rev 21:1-6a<br>Matt 25:31-46    | 5- Ps 112:1-9(10)<br>Matt 5:13-20  |
| 8- Acts 19:34-43<br>Matt 3:13-17  | 12- 1 Cor 3:1-9<br>Matt 5:21-37    |
| 15-Ps 40:1-11<br>John 1:29-42     | 19- Ps 119:33-40<br>Matt 5:38-48   |
| 22- 1 Cor 1:1-10<br>Matt 4- 12-23 | 26- 2 Peter 1:16-21<br>Matt 17:1-9 |
| 29-1 Cor1:18-31<br>Matt 5:1-12    |                                    |

**Contact us**

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