



# THE GOOD NEWS *from the Belfry*



Monthly Newsletter of  
The First Congregational Church of Haddam  
and Higganum Congregational Church

Open and Affirming  
Members of the United Church of Christ



In the Year of Our Lord 2022



Higganum Congregational Church First  
Congregational Church of Haddam  
*Returned mail to*  
P.O. Box 215  
Haddam, CT 06438

Address Service Requested

Church websites:

[HigganumChurch.org](http://HigganumChurch.org) and [HaddamChurch.org](http://HaddamChurch.org)



Greetings all Friends, Neighbors, Seekers and Those who Wonder,

As we move into the end of our Easter Season and toward Pentecost, I am praying that you are finding places to experience the living presence of Christ in your life. The word "eminence" is what the season is all about. Eminence is a flowing forth from the spiritual, that can become manifest in the physical. Water is emanant from the earth as Spirit is emanant from the workings of our relationship with God. The more time we give to our relationship with God, the more we feel God's eminence in our daily lives. Easter is the season of Jesus' eminence in visions, encounters, dreams, and spiritual moments. It is also the season when we practice what it means to have one foot solidly on the ground in our lives, and the other foot anchored in a transcendent reality of God's living presence in our lives.

Strangely, one way that we experience God's living presence is by communing with our own "dead". Our understanding of our life in the spirit can come alive when we know the living influence of those whom we have loved, whose lives are now past. Though we cannot share with them in the same ways as when they were alive, we have access to a sense of them. We know their spirit. We know how they would think or respond to a situation. We can feel their presence laughing with us at something they would find especially funny. Or we can feel the way something could irk them. Although they are gone, when we seek it, we can find who they are, intact somehow, not just in our memories, but in a "feeling" of their presence.

One way we make room for this is by keeping a place in our physical world to honor those who have come before us, for those we've loved, and those who have prepared our ways in life. Our memorial garden is such a place.

Here we can stroll to contemplate those whose lives have touched ours and honor those relationships. Here we can pause to remember those relationships and absorb their spiritual inheritance. Here we can integrate their struggles and meanings into meaningful contribution as we confront the current struggles of our daily lives. As we fully embrace the lessons of the past and the trials and triumphs of lives past, our life becomes richer, and our paths are smoothed. Truly they have gone before us and have made the rugged places plain, and surely when we pause to reflect upon our formative moments with them, they give us hidden riches. We find secret places in our souls that protect us from all harm and from those secret places, an eminence of Love flows forth and becomes our shield against all trouble.

Recently I went to the 30th year Miner's Memorial in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia. The Westray Mine, a coal mine which had opened on September 11th, 1991, had an underground methane explosion on May 9th, 1992 that killed 26 miners. This was the second largest mining disaster in Canadian coal-mining history--in 1958, 75 miners were killed in an explosion in Spring Hill, Nova Scotia. At the Westray mine, 11 miner's bodies were never recovered, and a memorial park now stands above them with a memorial statue containing rays of light for each of the 26 men, with their names and ages, proclaiming, "Their light shall always shine." When I got to New Glasgow, the motel lobby was filled with miners who had traveled from all over Canada to commemorate the 30 year anniversary of this tragic loss, and I witnessed the profound meaning these miners wanted to share with each other and with the world.

A bus from Toronto brought "The Men of the Deeps" choir, and these men were in the lobby, singing old mining songs, playing guitar and violin, talking about their friends lost and about the role of coal mining unions in the securing of labor laws and human rights. Their mission as a choir is share this legacy with the younger generation, to use their music to talk about their dying way of life and to honor those who died in tragedies such as what occurred at Westrays, uplifting their role in the fight for workers' rights. In the motel lobby, these men shared memories and shed tears, sang songs, and listened to each other deeply and respectfully. One man talked about his mother who passed away this year and played a tune on his violin for her. Though the atmosphere was casual, the sharing was profound.

The words of Isaiah 45:2,3 "I will go before thee and make the rugged places plain, and I will give thee the hidden riches of secret places," were manifest to me in these miners: I saw Jesus in their fellowship although no one mentioned Jesus' name. They gave me a spiritual conviction and clarity about the meaning and purpose of memorials in our lives, and my sense of the importance of our little Memorial Garden in Higganum was magnified exponentially.

May we all find moments to embrace the spiritual dimensions of our lives, and to remember and celebrate our loved one's past. May we live into the lessons of old and be sheltered by those who have come before us. May we pass on our lessons to all those with whom we share daily life.

Peace,

Rev. Hilary McLellan



### **A NOTE FROM YOUR MODERATORS**

Questions remain on the table regarding congregational approval of the new church name. Though a vote was taken on May 1st, the issue may and probably will be revisited once we have legal guidance on how to meet the needs/demands of the State of Connecticut. Stay tuned for further developments. Again, my apologies for contributing to the confusion.

Please take note of the Nominating Committee update in the May 15th Sunday Bulletin. This committee was empowered to begin to fill out our new church slate of officers and committee members at the May 1st joint congregation meeting. We will have to wait on legal counsel as to when the new slate will be able take office. We will be ready to be off to a good start thanks to the Nominating Committee's work. We encourage everyone to make contact with Lindamae Peck or John Anderson to express your interest serving in a position in the new church.

Once again, thanks to all who contribute in so many ways to make our congregations a vital part of our community.

John Edmondson      Greg Shields  
Moderator FCCH      Moderator HCC

### **REPORTS AND MEETING MINUTES**

**May JT Council** [HERE](#)  
**May JT Diaconate Council** [HERE](#)  
**May JT Diaconate** [HERE](#)  
**May JT Congregational Meeting** [HERE](#)

#### **Annual Reports**

Higganum Congregational Church [HERE](#)  
First Congregational Church of Haddam [HERE](#)

**Revised May 1st New Church ByLaws** [HERE](#)



## WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

43 on May 1 Communion Sunday followed by JT Congregational Meeting (sunny, beautiful)

34 + 2 dogs on May 8 Mother's Day (sunny, nice)

41 + 1 dog on May 15 (warm, overcast)

34 on May 22 (hot, humid)

41 on May 29 Memorial Day Service (warm, beautiful)



## COVID GUIDELINES

We will continue with **“Mask Optional”** during worship, when speaking from the Chancel or singing, in Sunday School, and any other time on the churches’ property. Distance seating during worship is available. Either door may be used to enter/exit the church, and **we will resume holding Fellowship outside after worship.** View our complete Covid-19 response [HERE](#).



## CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Drop by or call the church office on Tuesdays from 9am -12 noon\* and Thursdays from 1-4pm\*.

*\*The Church Office voicemail and email are monitored during posted office hours. If you need to speak with Rev Hilary outside of these days/times, please text or call her church cell phone at 860-316-3837.*



## JUNE MEETINGS

*Please contact Committee Chairs for agendas and additional meeting information.*

**“What’s the Word?” Bible Study with Rev. Hilary** Mondays, 10am (Lewis House/Zoom)

**Choir Rehearsal** Thursdays 7pm (FCCH)

**Bread Ministry Baking** Fridays 9am (FCCH)

**Prayer Shawl** Wednesday, June 1st, 10am (HCC)

**HaaRP Meeting** Thursday, June 2nd 7pm (Lewis House/Zoom)

**Children’s Kindness Camp Meeting** Monday, June 6th, 7pm (HCC)

**Zoom Sunday School** Friday, June 10th

**JT Diaconate** Monday, June 13th, 7pm (Lewis House / Zoom)

**JT Mission Outreach** Tuesday, June 14th 6:30pm (Lewis House/Zoom)

**SNEUCC Annual Meeting** Saturday, June 18th, 9am-2:30pm (online)

**July Belfry Articles Due** Monday, June 20th to fcchaddam@gmail.com

**HCC Finance** Monday, June 20th, 7pm (HCC)

**Joint Council** Tuesday, June 21st 7pm (Lewis House/Zoom)

**Quilt Group** Wednesday, June 22nd, 6:30pm (FCCH Fellowship Hall)



Please use the Zoom login below for access to FCCH and HCC meetings, adult education, and fellowship programs.

**Meeting ID: 391 987 2707**

**Meeting Password: 90523**

**Phone call-in number: +1 646 558 8656**



**“WHAT’S THE WORD?”**

"What's the Word?" Bible Study resumes on **Mondays at 10am**. Join Rev. Hilary to discuss how our Lectionary readings are speaking to us and how we are responding. Included is a video series **“Beyond Belief”** with discussion to follow from the Living the Questions curriculum. Join us in the Lewis House or on Zoom.



*“Everyday has happiness in and around it, sometimes you have to find it. That’s why I came looking for you. I needed to find you.”*

The above is a text message that I received from a friend the day after the school shooting in Texas. I admit that the heaviness I felt from the night before had not been assuaged by sleep. I woke up with such frenetic, grief-filled energy that my body physically ached. Therefore, his “good morning” text was met with my suspicion in questioning just how “good” it could be. His response is what you see above.

The grief, pain, and anger are real as we grapple with yet another mass shooting on the heels of the racially motivated shootings in Buffalo, NY, and California. No platitudes, prayers and well wishes can magically make things better. However, my friend’s text reminded me that in the midst of so much pain and suffering there are people out there looking for something...whether they call it happiness,

love, safe-space, comfort, or solidarity.

**As my friend (a non-Christian) was light and love for me, he reminded me of our call as the Church of Christ to bear witness to God’s light and love in the world. Light and love that refuses to be snuffed out by the crucifying realities of our time.**

Therefore, I beseech you, siblings in Christ, to explore how we want to not only engage in some just praxis around transforming broken systems and structures, but also in how we can respond to those in pain who come looking for happiness, love, safe-space, comfort, or solidarity in the struggle. May our congregations be places where those searching are deeply welcomed, encounter the Divine, and declare “I needed to find you.”

Blessings,  
*Isaac*

**Rev. Isaac Lawson** (he/him)  
*Area Conference Minister, South Central Region*



**INTERCESSORY PRAYER LIST**

Click [HERE](#) for the current Intercessory Prayer List. Please contact the church office if there are prayer requests that you would like to add or remove.



**Sundays 9:30am**

with Rev Hilary McLellan

**Higganum Congregational Church**

**June 5th**



Holy Communion  
Pentecost Sunday

**June 12th**

Trinity Sunday  
Children's Sunday

**June 19th**

Second Sunday after Pentecost

**June 26th**

Third Sunday after Pentecost

**COMMUNION AT HOME**



If you would like to receive communion at home, please contact the Church office at 860-345-2742 or fcchaddam@gmail.com and your request will be shared.

**SERVICE STREAMING**



Visit and subscribe to our YouTube Channel for access to services on Sundays at 9:35am or any other time to view archives.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC7SxL2fMB-DZu4BxaM6hWNg>

**LAY READERS**

Would like to be a reader during Sunday service? All ages are welcome! No experience necessary and we can give you a few pointers! Contact the church office if you are interested.

**FLOWERS FOR THE ALTAR**



A sign-up sheet is available in church to donate flowers for the altar. You will have the option to include a dedication which will be printed in the bulletin.

**CHURCH HOSPITALITY**



Fellowship and refreshments will be enjoyed **outdoors** after worship!

The Music Committee and Choir will host during June.

*Per our Covid safety procedures: Food and drink should be pre-portioned, self-serve for individual pick up (food items wrapped or plated, not self-serve, and beverages prepackaged or poured by a host wearing mask and gloves). As weather permits, doors and windows may be open.*

**CHOIR REHEARSAL**

Join us for practice on Thursday evenings at 7pm at FCCH. Newcomers are welcome and asked to contact the church office before attending so your music can be prepared.



Hello from CE!  
 We are proud to announce that Children's Kindness Camp, CKC, has a really cool logo, designed by high school student Neal Scheppach. Here is his design:



We just love it! We have some very talented high school graphic design students! We were impressed with all the designs submitted.

CKC is a huge undertaking and we sure could use all the help we can get!

Please email [amyharlow.ucc@gmail.com](mailto:amyharlow.ucc@gmail.com) if you have an interest in volunteering. Every little bit counts and is a very big help! Thank you for your continued support.

**CKC will be held August 15-19th from 9-12noon.** Early drop off and afternoon childcare will be available for children enrolled in CKC.

Peace and blessings

Amy

### SUNDAY SCHOOL

Join Miss Amy for Sunday School in-person and on Zoom. **The 2022** schedule for both can be found [HERE](#).



### DAD'S CHANGE DIAPERS TOO Honor the Father figures in Your Life by Donating to The Diaper Bank of Connecticut for Father's Day

The JT Mission Outreach Committee of FCCH and HCC is again hosting a Diaper Drive to benefit The Diaper Bank of Connecticut! We had a successful drive for Mother's Day. Let's do it again!! (appropriate since you keep having to change diapers again too )

The Diaper Bank works to bring basic health needs - including 75,000 diapers each week (which only meets 20% of the need) to low-income individuals in our state who are struggling to make ends meet.

Prior to the pandemic, 1 in 3 Connecticut families couldn't afford enough diapers for their infants and toddlers, and the need has skyrocketed over the past year. The CDB works with over 50 agencies throughout the state. **\$25 will supply enough diapers for one baby for one month.**

Without an adequate supply of clean diapers, babies are more likely to suffer from diaper rash, urinary tract infections and other medical problems. Diaper need also forces parents and caregivers to miss school and work, making it harder to break the cycle of poverty.

In addition to diapers, the CDP also helps supply incontinence and menstruation products to those in need.

**To learn more or to donate to the FCCH HCC special page, click this link: [The Diaper Bank of Connecticut!](#)**

Or mail a check to Ginny Evenson indicating that it is for the diaper drive. **Make checks payable to FCCH.**

*A card to inform your honoree of your donation may be printed from the web site after you make an online donation or may be picked up at church.*



## HADDAM AREA REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PROJECT (HaRRP)

By the time you are reading this update two major milestones will have been met.

1. **The Community Meeting at the Library.** On May 25th. One big question we can't answer yet: How many were in attendance?
2. **The Application will have been sent to IRIS** (Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services) and we will change our focus on getting to "The Green Light" status. Green Light status is when we are ready to accept the Family that will be in our care and nurturing.

**There are so many people who have helped get to this point.** The committees that are required to prepare the application have formed and completed much of the preplanning required. Examples are the Finance, the Publicity and the Healthcare Committees. We have our Logo, preliminary budget, bank account and method of payments ready to clear the way to accept monetary donations.

In addition to preparing the application a lot of work has been accomplished in preparing Trinity House for occupancy. The committees preparing the property have had many paint parties, floors have been refinished and gathering the household items are well underway.

**The next phase of work** will include the continued training of all volunteers with the IRIS training tapes and including our Safe Church policy for all volunteers having contact with Refugee minors.

Preparing teams to help with transportation, learning English, Child Care, Doctor and Dentist visits and setting up systems to track all the activities and complete documentation required by IRIS and the US government.

**The task of raising the funds to support this effort is also a major focus at this time** and so we would ask that you consider making a donation. Checks can be made payable to HaRRP and placed in the plate on Sundays or mailed to either church. Online donations can be made [HERE](#) or through the general Online Giving page [www.HaddamChurch.org/donate](http://www.HaddamChurch.org/donate)



## UPDATE: JT MISSION OUTREACH

THANK YOU, THANK YOU! Our Mother's Day opportunity to support the Connecticut Diaper Bank was very successful - over \$500 was raised for this project that provides diapers for babies and incontinence supplies and sanitary supplies for adults. Our donation page will be available through mid-June. We will offer this project to honor the father figures in our congregation in June.

The two winter sewing projects are nearly completed. We made over 30 cloth school bags for Church World Service that will be filled with school supplies in late July when there are sales. We are completing Christmas stockings for Solnit Center in Middletown. Thank you to everyone who sewed on these projects.

## SPRING AND SUMMER PROJECTS

TAG SALE was on May 21st at the HCC campus. The proceeds will be divided between the two churches.

ANGELRIDE, a charity bicycling ride was held on May 28th. We will be providing peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for the Rest Stop in Higganum. This bike ride is raising money for a CT summer camp program for children who have been severely burned.

BREAD MINISTRY will begin making bread the first week in June. Bread will be sold at the Higganum Farmers Market on Fridays. Come early as it sells out quickly. We need sellers. Nancy Soneson will be coordinating this part of the project. Plan to participate-it is fun to be at the market.

## SAVE THE DATE

The Haddam-Killingworth CROP WALK will be held on October 2nd at Chatfield Hollow if COVID is under control. It is possible that we might have to do virtual walks if it is not safe to be in crowds. More information to be

forthcoming.



## PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

Our Prayer Shawl Ministry will meet at 10am at HCC on the **first Wednesday of every month**. Newcomers are welcome to join us! For more information on this ministry, please contact Carol Ricker or Edie Williams.



## JOIN IN QUILTING

Do you have a quilt project that needs finishing? Would you like to spend some time working on your project with others who like to sew? Our Quilt Group and will meet in **FCCH Fellowship Hall at 6:30pm most 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month. This month, we will meet on June 22nd only**. The space is great for laying out fabric with lots of outlets to plug in sewing machines. Advice is available to help you plan your projects. If you are interested, please leave your name in the office or speak with Dena or Ginny Evensen.



## *Bread For Heat*

### ARTISAN BREAD MINISTRY

We will be selling our artisan bread again this year at the **Higganum Farmers' Market** on Friday's from 3 pm - 6 pm starting on June 3rd.

This program has been a success due to the many volunteers who sell the bread at the Market. If you are interested in selling, please sign up [HERE](#). (Don't worry, you won't have to sell all by yourself!) Thank you!



## GUITAR CONCERT HCC

Mark your calendars for a **free concert on Sunday, June 19th at 4pm**. HCC will host one night of the Candlewood Farm Arts Foundation Concert Series featuring **classical guitarist, Jason Vieaux**. Jason began his musical training at the age of eight, after which he continued his studies at the Cleveland Institute of Music. In 1992, Vieaux was awarded the Guitar Foundation of America International Guitar Competition First Prize, the event's youngest winner. You can preview Jason's music [HERE](#). For more information visit: [www.candlewoodfarmartsfoundation.org](http://www.candlewoodfarmartsfoundation.org)



## A PERSONAL NOTE OF GRATITUDE

On behalf of the AngelRide community and the Children's Burn Camp, I thank you for your support of this year's AngelRide - from well-wishes and donations to making PBJ sandwiches (almost). The weather forecast on May 28 caused us to close part of the route and AngelRide cyclists did not pedal through Haddam and Higganum as planned. The 33-mile and 64-mile routes were kept closer to the Start/Finish at the Essex Fire Department. We hope next year's route will include the beautiful scenery (and some hills) of the Haddam Higganum area. We are a resilient and dedicated bunch and rolled with the events of the day. Many miles were logged, many cow bells were rung as cyclists crossed the finish line, and over \$77,000 and counting was raised for the campers! You have joined us in [making a difference in the lives of young burn survivors](#) and I am grateful, Lynn Pandiani



## THE MEMORIAL GARDEN

Located behind the Higganum Church is a quiet place surrounded by trees and plants where one can sit and reflect upon the names etched in stones lining the pathway.

**Our Sunday, May 29th our 9:30 am worship service moved from Haddam to Higganum to emphasize the theme of Memorial Day.** Pleasant outdoor fellowship followed, with an opportunity to stroll our Memorial Garden, remember friends and family no longer present, offer special prayers, and dedicate any new stones.

*You can purchase a stone in memory of a friend or relative by contacting Dick Matregrano or the church office.*









**Congratulations to our church members Ginny, Terry, and Hollis!**

**Hollis Burr's** service to her hometown of Higganum includes involvement in the Haddam Volunteer Fire Company Auxiliary since 1966. She is involved with Tobacco Flywheelers Tractor Show with her family. She is a lifetime member of Haddam Congregational Church and on many committees with these organizations.

**Virginia Evensen's** service to our community of Haddam includes Girl Scout Leader, Teacher & Superintendent of Sunday School for First Church of Christ Haddam; Board of Directors of Brainerd Library and Haddam Public Health. Chairperson for many committees at her church, especially the Bread for Heat program for which she baked and sold bread as a church ministry, with proceeds going to the Haddam Fuel Bank.

**Terry Smith's** service to our community of Haddam includes being an active member of the Haddam Historical Society where the children of Haddam are fortunate to have Terry in charge of the 5th grade Kite-Making program. Terry has been a member of many committees at the Haddam Historical Society. He is an active member of the Higganum Congregational Church, serving on many committees, where he was instrumental in establishing lines of communication between

The Haddam Killingworth Hall of Fame was established in 2009 to honor individuals in recognition of exemplary commitment to the service of children and outstanding record of service to the community.

The 2022 inductees are: Louis Annino, Sr., Hollis Burr, Marijean & the late Carl Conrad, Virginia Evensen, Richard Hickish, Terry Smith, Joseph Zaiantz



the Higganum Congregational Church and First Church of Christ Haddam resulting in both congregations forming a new church in September of 2021.

You may read about their brief bios: Ginny [HERE](#), Terry [HERE](#), Hollis [HERE](#)

Here are some of our church family in attendance:



## SAVE THE DATE!



## GIVING INFORMATION

Our **Ministry** and **Mission** are **maintained** by your **generosity**. Thank you for how you support FCCH and HCC with your gifts of Time, Talent, and Treasure. Financial contributions may be made at in-person worship services or mailed to the addresses below anytime.

**First Congregational Church of Haddam**  
**P.O. Box 215**  
**Haddam, CT 06438**

**Higganum Congregational Church**  
**23 Parsonage Road**  
**Higganum, CT 06441**

Online gifts to FCCH may be made [HERE](#). It also should be possible to set up direct payments from your own bank to either FCCH or HCC; contact your bank for more information.



- 2 Susette Christensen
- 7 Sam Crum
- 10 Carol Matregrano
- 10 Mike Barile
- 12 Allan Johanson
- 15 Candy Casale
- 16 Chris Rothstein
- 18 Suzanne Ellsworth
- 19 Greg Shields
- 19 Nancy Soneson
- 23 Carolyn Murphy
- 24 John Madsen-Bibeau
- 25 Linda Hansen
- 25 Ginny Murphy
- 29 Gene Porter



- 2 Sam and Pam Crum
- 7 Christine and Wade Beecher
- 18 Gene and Laura Porter
- 19 Walter and Joan Bragoni
- 29 Don and Jan Berry