



Christ Congregational Church, UCC An Open and Affirming Congregation *Creating Beloved Community*

Volume 41 No 1

Be The Church

January 2021

WORSHIP AND PROGRAMS:

Worship: Remotely on our website, Facebook page, or Nearly Weekly

Sundays, 9:55AM
(Music starts at 9:50)

Regular: Remotely

Bible Study: Wednesdays, 10AM

Hymn Sings: Wednesdays, 6:45PM

Fiber Fellowship:
2nd & 4th Tuesday, 5:00PM



Board Meetings: ZOOM

Christian Ed: Jan. 6, 6:30PM

Council: Jan. 21, 7PM

Deacons: Jan. 7, 7PM

Finance/Property: Jan. 14, 7PM

Media/Tech: TBD

Missions: Jan. 5, 6:30PM

Music: Jan. 10, 11:30PM

OCC: Jan. 11, 10:30AM

Vitality: Jan. 14, 7PM

PASTOR'S PAGE

I always love the beginning of a new year. I love the feeling of nothing but possibilities being in front of us, coming up with new resolutions, and knowing that at the very least I've survived one more trip around the sun. I've heard plenty of people say that things can only get better in 2021, that we can all finally leave such a crummy year behind us – but I think it's worth reflecting upon the positives too. For my own part, 2020 is the year that moved me through search and call and ultimately brought me to be your pastor! As a congregation you have not only survived, but thrived, through difficult circumstances: the retirement of a long term pastor and the transition that follows, maintaining Beloved Community in the midst of a global pandemic, and continuing to discern how to pursue your newly discerned strategic pathways. These are not small things.



This year I'm excited to share with you an annual tradition that I've always loved – star words! You will each receive a star from us here at the church, and your star will have one single word on it. The idea is that you will allow your word to work on you, with God's help, throughout 2021. You can put it in a prominent place where you'll see it every day – or you can commit your word to memory and reflect on it when it comes to you – the practice is yours to do with what you will. My hope is that these words will help you to see how it inspires us and moves us throughout the year, in big and small ways. Star words aren't exactly the same as a New Year's resolution – if you receive the word kindness it might not necessarily mean you need to be more kind to others, it could mean that you need to be more receptive to kindness from those around you or that you might find ways to be more kind to yourself. I invite you to share your star words with us on social media and in our daily conversations and to share how they're working on you.

Indeed, in many ways, 2021 has potential to be much better than 2020 – but that's only because God is always pursuing us with potential. I pray that your new year will be blessed and full of reminders that God is never far from us, no matter where we are.

Blessings and Peace,
Pastor Jeff



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION YOUTH NEWS

Sunday School

This past month, Sunday School at home focused on spiritual practices for Advent, Christmas and Epiphany. Using activities from Traci Smith's book, *Faithful Families For Advent and Christmas* – our Sunday School families have been making advent wreaths, having Hot Chocolate Gratitude Parties and taking Silent Night Star Walks to prepare for and celebrate the birth of the Christ child. Our next set of Sunday School @ Home boxes are being prepared and will be ready soon. If you would like a kit for your family, please reach out to the church office (508-586-3022).



Youth Group

Snow and cold weather couldn't stop the Youth Group from gathering this past month for fun Christmas celebrations! We gathered outside for a Christmas Party complete with games and a White Elephant Gift exchange and on a very chilly evening we went to LaSalette to see the lights turn on. This month, we'll be meeting twice for outside gatherings on Sunday January 17th and 31st from 1-2:30pm. Stay tuned for more info!



Confirmation

Our confirmation class has been going strong through the end of year! We've been exploring our baseline beliefs and considering what the importance of choice in lives of faith. This month we'll continue on with our *Confirm Not Conform UCC* curriculum and begin exploring prayer and the history of Christianity.

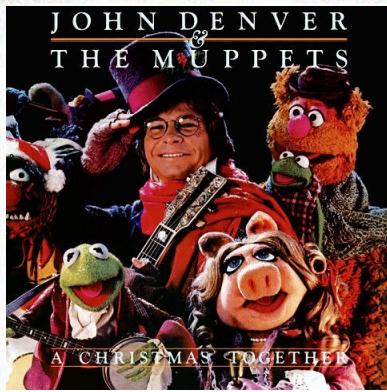
January Classes:

January 3rd – Teach Us To Pray

January 17th – Tradition: The Nicene Creed

January 31st – Tradition: Church History Continued





Notes from Murray

Our usual tradition for Christmas decor in our house is to decorate on the day after Thanksgiving and to acquire our Christmas Tree. When I say "acquire," I mean just that. Since we live in a wooded area, some years, we have simply dug up or cut down a tree in our yard. They had a tendency toward the Charlie Brown type of tree, but they were charming in their own way. When that day came, I was very eager to get things going! We went to a local person for our tree this year. Once home, we took out our decorations and started listening to the John Denver and the Muppet's: Christmas Together CD. I sent Eddie a few small videos with the music so he could hear that which we have played on this day since he was a small boy. Music makes an imprint.

This month has been a flurry of activity in the music program! We have feverishly been creating music for services and it has been very satisfying to hear the amazing music and see David's expressive interpreting. I wish to especially thank Sylvia for her thousands upon thousands of notes played this month! Jillian Larson has been amazing and has created so many videos for us, I am sure she is doing it in her sleep, too! Alisa, our soprano soloist, has had to do a lot more singing due to the fact that I have been ordered to take vocal rest for a time. David Wilcox has interpreted so wonderfully for our videos and captures the essence of every song we do! We have also been privileged to have some of our choir members and Katrina Clinton create some videos for us, as well. We have a very talented church and look forward to a time when the choirs and bells groups, and youth musicians can all gather again to create a joyful noise in person. Soon and very soon!

Thank you to the Chancel Choir for their reading of A Christmas Carol (and some fun things for the Christmas Concert, too!). It was a nice evening listening to words of redemption and hearing promise that generosity is its own reward and so much of what Christ Congregational Church is about.

I wish all of you a Happy New Year and look forward to a time when we can all gather again without the strain of distancing.

[Here is one more song](#) from my "past" that I would like to share with you for Epiphany. The soloist is Christòpheren Nomura who was at NEC with Sylvia and me 'back in the day.'

Sincerely,
Murray



ORGAN COMPLETION COMMITTEE

FROM THE ORGAN COMPLETION COMMITTEE: IN MEMORIAM

We share with you our sadness on the passing of Eleanor Calvin, member of this committee since its formation in 2015. We celebrate her life and her contributions to the church and to the completion of the organ, giving of her time, talent and financial resources.



Eleanor died on Christmas Day 2020 at the age of 90. She was widely regarded as a pianist and piano teacher, had taught public school in Raynham for many years, and served as church organist or music director in several churches over the years. She held a Master of Music degree from the New England Conservatory, Boston, MA; a ChM (Choirmaster degree) from the American Guild of Organists; the Kodaly Certificate for Musicianship and Teaching; served as President of the Schubert Club, and was a member of the Southeastern Mass. Chapter of the American Guild of Organists.

Eleanor played for several of the early Midday Music programs to support Project Pipes.

We were blessed to have her among us, and by her enthusiastic work for the “completion of the organ.”



PROJECT PIPES:

620 by 2020

*Our goal: \$166,000
to install 620 pipes
to complete the
Choir Division
on the Austin Organ
Opus #2759*

*We have surpassed our
goal !!*

*Any donations received above
our \$166,000 goal will stay in a
designated fund for organ
maintenance.*

**ORGAN COMPLETION
COMMITTEE**

**CHRIST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UCC
BROCKTON, MA**

620

550

440

320

210



Rest in Peace Eleanor Calvin
June 16, 1930—December 25, 2020



**This Great Blue Heron:
A Metaphor for Our Church!**

(Family Joke: In our home, whenever one of us declares that something is a metaphor, the other asks quizzically, "What's a metaphor!?" And the response always is, "Anything you want it to be for!")

On the inlet side of Bunche Beach in Fort Myers, this Great Blue Heron had just come through a dark, early morning storm! She then flew to the tippy top of a beachside tree and was continuously shifting her weight on her branchlike legs and ruffling her feathers, trying to find her balance and dry herself. She was resting and re-energizing, waiting to take flight...

And so it is with our Beloved Community of Christ Congregational Church, United Church of Christ. We have come through a dark and swirling storm of COVID-19 in 2020! We are perched mentally, perhaps precariously, shifting, waiting, drying our tears, re-energizing, testing our balance points, preparing for the winds of Spirit so we can take full flight into 2021 - once again, into our mission and ministry of Jesus!

2021 cannot come soon enough!

So... what can we do now to support and strengthen this long awaited and hoped for, re-energized, Breath-of-God Flight?

Please continue to support this Beloved Community with gifts of Time, Talent, and Treasure!

Please fulfill pledged offerings for 2020, if you are able.

Please return 2021 Pledge Forms. If you need a Pledge Form, visit "Download Your Stewardship Packet Here" or call the church office at 508 586-3022.

Please make any extra offerings and gifts as the winds of Spirit move you!

Please mail in a check: 1350 Pleasant St, Brockton MA 02301

Please use the Donate/Donate Now button at brocktonucc.org

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:11

Praise and thanks to God!

With great love and hope, Your Stewardship Committee





STEWARDSHIP SNIPPETS

(Not Snippy! Just Zippy!)

Unfolding Grace, Abundant Hope - A BOLD “Thanks” Giving

- * An appreciative and loving Stewardship Thank You to all in this Beloved Community of Christ Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, for faithful, supportive, and bold participation during this Pandemic 2020-2021 Stewardship Pledge Experience! What challenges we all have faced in 2020! What creativity and adaptability we have exhibited in the face of these COVID-19 challenges!
- * Here’s the Stewardship Pledge Update as we prepare to WELCOME the New Year! These are Matt Howard’s observations based on data supplied by Jen Brosky:
 - + Currently, we have received 60 pledges representing 79 people.
 - + 80% of the pledges received have been maintained or increased over last year!
 - + Of the increased pledges, the average increase is 15%!
 - + 33 pledges (based on last year’s list) are pending. We realize that some of these pledgers might need reminders, and some may not be able to pledge, yet, because of unsure economic times. We remember that we are Community, and we hold each other up during hard times! We are all in this together!
 - + Matt, Chair of Stewardship, says that all in all, in a pandemic, we are thrilled with the data, thus far. We do have follow-up to do, but we are making strong progress!
- * If you need a Pledge Form so that you may complete your Pledge for 2021, please visit “ Download Your Stewardship Packet Here!” or call the church office at 508 586-3022.
- * Please return your 2021 Pledge Forms by dropping them by the church office during open hours (if permitted) or by mailing them to the church.
- * New Year’s Blessings to all as we enter 2021! Thanks be to God for loving, nurturing, guiding, and persistently motivating us! We know we are not alone but together in Beloved Community! Truly, Jesus lives and works among us and through us!
- * God tells us - “See, I am doing a new thing! Now, it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the desert!” (Isaiah 43)



Praise and Thanks to God! Your Stewardship Committee

Thank you so much for the poinsettia plant, care & home communion kit - will use it on Christmas Eve - once a Deacon - always a Deacon. I have so many memories of our lives on many committees and choir. Wednesday was my morning to work in the office folding programs (with a brick) and mailed about 17 to shut in's. I look forward to receiving the monthly bulletins and so many pictures (thank you Karen A). I share the December picture of the altar for Christmas. So peaceful and serene. I keep up with news of people I remember. Talk with Paula Stevens every Thursday morning. Hopefully this new vaccine will give us real hope for and to this very trying time in our lives. I am staying good - so far. I walk all over with my walker. Enjoy getting cards with notes from various committees. Especially Jeff Illsley for prayers and flowers.



Sincerely,
In Christian Love,
Edyth Liolios

December 28, 2020

Hello Deacons,
I want to thank you for the pretty poinsettia plant and th communion items. Nice surprise. Thank you Jan Howard for delivering the above items and message too. I hope everyone had a enjoyable Christmas and to have many good wishes for a Happy New Year. Take care.

Sincerely,
Jean Purificatio

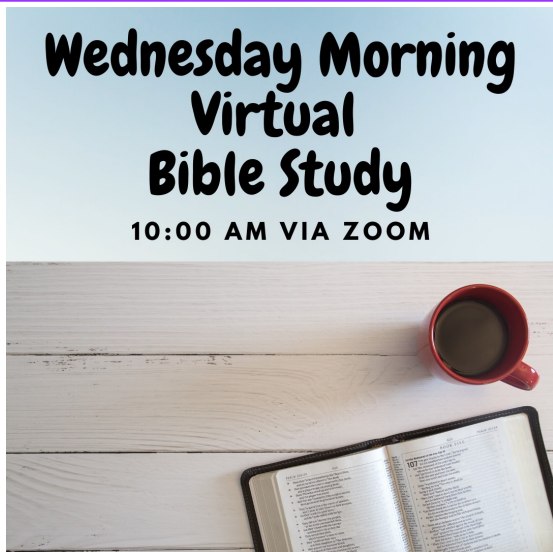




JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Wishing all the best on your Birthdays

Louise Duhamel, Nelda Hayes, Shirley Bamford, Mark P. Deyoe, Rev. Rollin Johnson, Jessica Gross, Isabella Morales, Larry Jones, Christopher Williams, Marilyn Fairbanks, David Wilcox, Geneva Prince, Lindsay Kennedy, Rebecca Lacourse, Lelah Dickerson-Sinclair, Sandra Hill, Tim MacIntyre, Malikai Swisher Rosa, Mark W. Deyoe, Kristine Blanchard, Amy Brooks, Eva Lomba, Ethan Harrigan, Thomas Jones, Bill McCarthy
(listed in order of day of month from 1 to 31)



Wednesday Morning Virtual Bible Study

10:00 AM VIA ZOOM

Join us for Wednesday morning Bible Study group. Regulars and newcomers alike are welcome to drop in and check out this adult faith formation opportunity. The group discusses the lectionary scripture readings each week. Hope to see you there!

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84061103224>

Meeting ID: 840 6110 3224

+1 929 205 6099 Password: bible or (423861 if calling by phone)



We pray for the families of Eleanor Calvin, Janet Ruth Farr Kidd Bertaut and David Clinton, may they rest in peace.

*"Be Still
And
Know that I am God"*
Psalm 46:10



Weekly Silent Prayer Group on Zoom

Tuesdays from 7 PM to 8 PM

I would like to invite you to join me every Tuesday in January to learn about and experience silent prayer time. Please email me at deb@act-cpa.com or text me at 508-410-3476 to get the zoom link emailed to you.

Peace, Deb Bowman

**Join us for an Advent themed
Breakfast and Beliefs
January 9th 9-11 AM**



The previously scheduled Advent session of Breakfast and Beliefs program has been postponed to Saturday, January 9th. Our presenters will be Bob Cutting, Leigh-Ann Larson, and David Wilcox! To join that program, please use the link below.

[BREAKFAST AND BELIEFS LINK](#)

To call into the meeting use the following phone number:
+1 929 205 6099

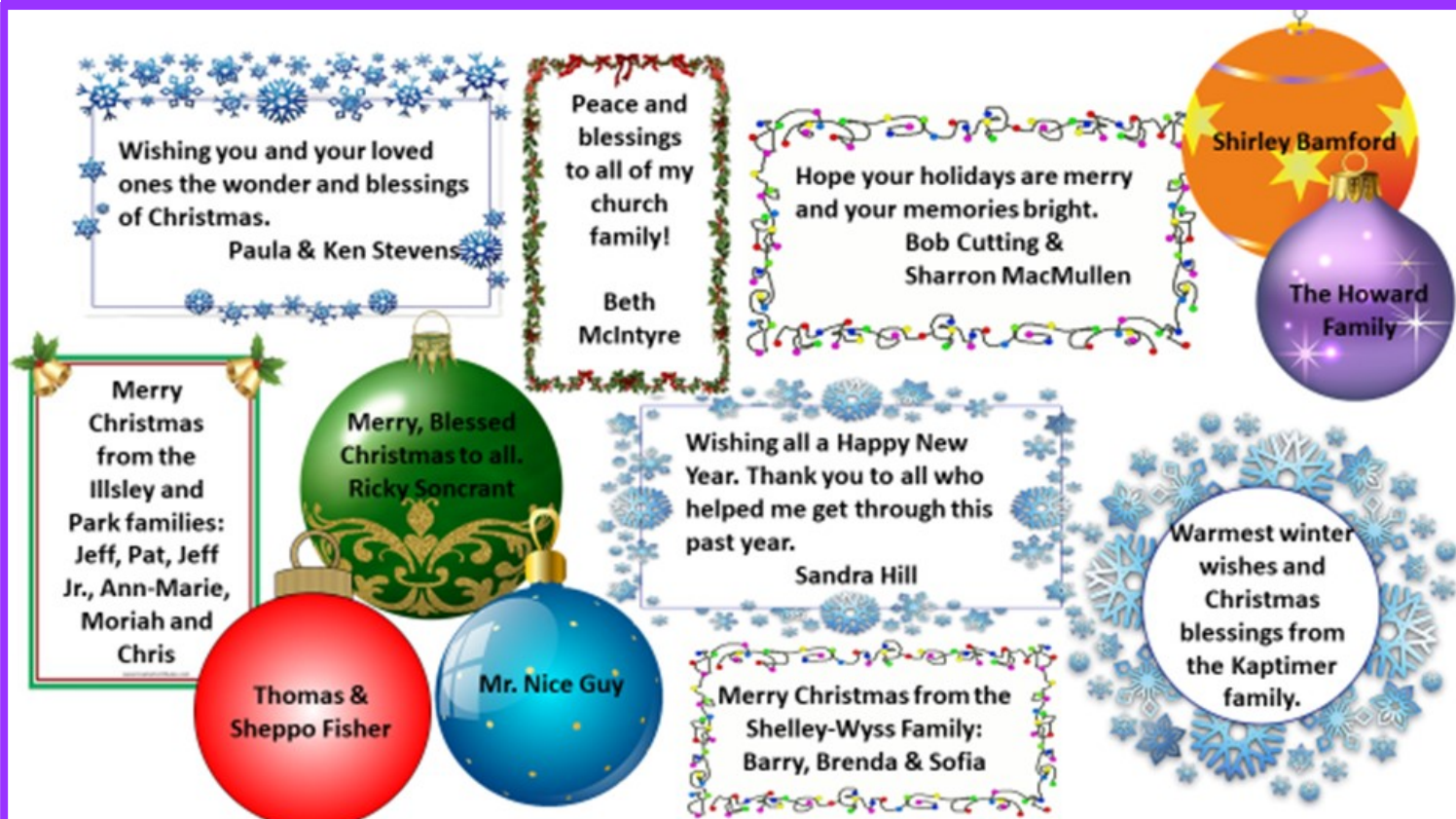
If you are prompted to use a pass code it is: 207535

WANTED: 2021

Calendars for Veterans at Brockton V.A. Hospital. Please leave or send the calendars to the office and the Missions Committee will deliver them.



The Missions Board invites you to bask in the warmth of these holiday greetings from contributors to our virtual Christmas Card Tree:



A Note from the Moderator...

Barry Shelley

We've all heard jokes about committee meetings. Usually such jokes play on the cliché that committees are inept and a waste of time. Consider, for example, the following:

"Meetings are indispensable when you don't want to do anything." -- John Kenneth Galbraith

It's true that committees can be ineffective if a clear sense of purpose, advance planning, and good facilitation are lacking. However, though as a fellow economist I hesitate to disagree with John Kenneth Galbraith, I believe that the special, temporary task forces Council has appointed during the past year have provided critical leadership in our commitment to address certain complex timely issues. We continue that process with the recent appointment of two new task forces. Both were recommended by the now disbanded Financial Planning Task Force (FPTF) in their report to Council. You may remember my mentioning these two new task forces at our recent annual meeting.

The first is the **Phase 2 Financial Support for Ministries Task Force**. This team will spend the next year continuing the work of the outgoing FPTF in exploring and implementing significant income raising endeavors that align with CCC's mission and values. Ideas identified as potential starting points include the following: childcare and/or pre-school in the wing of our building; a year-round thrift shop; music, arts, and family entertainment; proactive marketing of rental spaces; and expanded use of our kitchen. Do you have ideas and/or want to work on these critical matters? We're recruiting now in anticipation of a first task force meeting in January. Sue Koza has agreed to chair this task force; so far, Lisa Sparling, Deb Bowman, and Sheppo Fisher (ex-officio) have agreed to serve as members. Contact Sue or me if you are interested.

The second new body is the **Staffing Model Task Force** that is charged with assessing our current staffing model and its strengths and weaknesses for carrying out our mission in these times; exploring alternative staffing models; and submitting a report—including any recommendations for change—to the Council by June 1, 2021. This task force is being structured in a representative way in order to maximize a holistic approach and minimize any competition between those loyal to existing staff areas. It will be co-chaired by Pastor Jeff and Councilor-at-Large Doug Anderson, with three additional members, each representing one of the three Boards that supervise staff: Music, Christian Education, and Finance and Property. Each of those boards will appoint a representative at their next meeting. We invite you to share any resources or ideas about church staffing models with Jeff and Doug.

So, Dr. Galbraith, we trust that committees can be more effectual than you may think. (Ask me sometime about my very pleasant two-hour drive alone with J. K. Galbraith.)



Imagine That!

IMAGE- IN THAT!

(A column on Visual Arts by Katrina Clinton)

TIMING

In photography, the shutter speed determines the moment and duration of an exposure. A fast shutter speed can catch droplets of water mid air. A slow shutter speed can blur a runner's speed, capturing the intensity of a race.

Photographers spend a lot of time waiting for "just the right moment" to push the button and open the shutter for the magical picture of perfect timing. It is said that there are no such things as coincidences. I like to call them "God-Instances" for there always seems to be a Holy Hand that brings a confluence of people and situations together to create a moment of Grace in our lives.

What about the TIMING of Covid-19 in 2020 when technology and science are ready with creative answers like Zoom and livestream and vaccine discovery? And here it is 2021 with a new set of possibilities! I wonder what the TIMING of God-Instances will be like for us as we greet the New Year.

Below are some photos that illustrate the importance of TIMING: capturing that one moment of surprise and awe before it is lost to the movement of time.



I want to thank the Deacons for the lovely poinsettia brought to me for Christmas. It really lifted my spirits. Thank you all!

Peace & blessings,

Alice Farnsworth

Merry Christmas from our new home in S. Williamsport, Pennsylvania. Sorry that the pandemic prevented us from saying a proper goodbye. We miss everyone and Thank you for all the cards and notes we have received wishing us well. We are enjoying the services and send Pastor Jeff and family a warm welcome from afar. Happy New Year to all!

In Christian Love,

Diane, Lisa and Alisabeth (Ally)
Landerholm



12/16/20

To Jeff and the board of deacons,

Thank you so much for the beautiful poinsettia. Now that old man winter is here, it sure brightens up my home. Hope everyone has a Merry Christmas!

Sincerely,
Linda Alvilhiera

Dec. 28, 2020
Christ Church,

Thank you for the beautiful Christmas plant that was delivered by Jeff Illsley. It is sitting in my living room catching a few rays of sun.

Anna Thomas



Deacons & Others,

Thank you so much for the poinsettia and communion elements. It means so much for us to keep in touch with our church during the pandemic. Prayerfully by another Christmas we will worship together. In Christian Love!!

Christmas blessings to all,

Shirley Bamford

Christmas 2020

The Christmas Poinsettias and Memorial Donations are Given to the Glory of God
and in Loving Memory of:

A

Merton L. (Sonny) Alden, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Merton L. Alden
Terrence "Terry" L. Alden
Christopher Allen
Harry & Jennie Allen
Nicole Allen
David H. Anderson
Jeannine L. Anderson
Aida Azoukou

B

George & Constance Bamford
Horace W. Bamford
L. Elsie Bamford
Sandra Ellen Bamford
Joseph Barbour
Endicott & Marguerite Bennett
Larry Bennett
Geoffrey N. Berry
Richard Bouthilette
Alice & George Boyer
Anne Brooks
Richard & Leona Brooks
Frances Burke

C

Amy & George Cahill
John A. Campbell
Martha E. Campbell
Rev. Warren C. Campbell
Robert E. Campbell
Blanche Cavanaugh
George Cavanaugh
Joseph A. Clark
Joseph D. Clark
Russell Clark
Bud Copeland
Ryan Copeland
John & Dorothy Copley
Abraham V. Courtney
Eva V. Courtney

D

Mr. & Mrs. Howard W. Dalton
Mr. & Mrs. Walter Dalton
Mr. & Mrs. Albert D. Daniels
Clifford Davis
Eric Davis
Robert L. Day
Stephen Degrechie
Frank DePaola
Mr. Joseph Dodd
Mrs. Mabel Dodd

Peggy Dunford
Shirley Dunford
Peggy Dunham
Daniel E. Dunklee Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel E. Dunklee Sr.

E

Harriet G. Eastman
Kerry Eckstrom
Wayne Eckstrom
Sandra Engley
Mrs. Florence Erickson
Patricia Ewel

F

Irene Ferguson
Russell Ferguson
Allen & Connie Fisher
Bernice Fisher
Harold & Marjorie Fisher
Jo Mary Samuelson Fisher
George P. Floyd, Jr.
John & Theresa Forest

G

Zoey Gardner
Bob & Mary Gibson
Howard & Carolyn Gill
Archer I. Gillpatrick
Helen L. Gillpatrick
Kenneth W. Gillpatrick
Lura A. Gillpatrick
Phyllis M. Gillpatrick
Ruth Bader Ginsburg
Noah Goodale
Shirley Goodale
Guy Gove

H

Mr. & Mrs. Richard Haase
Raymond & Dorothy Hall
Constance Hallamore
Harold H. Hallamore Jr.
Francis & Alice Hathaway
John C. Hathaway
Alton F. Hefler
John & Euria Hefler
Janet Higgins
Fredericka Hixon
Trent Hixon
Dorothy Lendh Holland
Sister Helena Holland
Vincent G. Holland
Marcus M. Hollis

Mr. & Mrs. Edwin J. Holmquist
Mr. Robert Holmquist
George & Arleen Hutt

I

Mr. & Mrs. Arthur E. Illsley, Sr.
Mr. & Mrs. Arthur E. Illsley, Jr.

J

Mr. & Mrs. Charles Jewell
Aaron Johnson
Bob Johnson
Constance "Penny" Johnson

K

Ilijah Kaptimer
Frank & Elsie Kittredge

L

Carl W. Landerholm
Mr. & Mrs. C. W. Landerholm
Emily Lawson
Frank Lawson
Charles Liolios, Sr.
Gail Loughlin
Mr. & Mrs. Earle G. Lovell
Mr. & Mrs. Earle W. Lovell
Ronald & Charles Lovell

M

Corinne M. MacIntyre
J. Gordon MacIntyre
Mary C. MacIntyre
Z. E. & Joanna MacIntyre
Mr. & Mrs. William L. Marine
Walter & Flora Marlenga
Robert & Patricia McCrone
Mr. & Mrs. James McGunnigal
Mr. & Mrs. Patrick McGunnigal
McIntyre Family Loved Ones
Mr. & Mrs. James Metcalf
John Molander
Margaret & Arthur Molander
Mark Molander
Rita & Arthur Molander
Babe Moline
Christopher Munsch
Evelyn Munsch
Maurice "Mike" Munsch

P

Kimberly Paananen
Leo Paananen
Henry W. Park
Methyl Park
Ethel Parlow
Ray Placentino

Dick Pope
Joseph A. Prioli

Q

Ryan Daniel Quesnel

R

Doris Richmond
Mr. & Mrs. Philip A. Rooney, Sr.
Mr. & Mrs. Philip A. Rooney, Jr.
Earl Russell

S

Cutty Samuelson
Faith Samuelson
Mr. & Mrs. Arthur B. Sawyer
Arthur C. Sawyer
Lorraine E. Sawyer
Fred & Palmira Seaberg
Walter Seaberg
Margaret A. Sheppard
Richard Sheppard
Terry Sheppard
Vivian Sheppard
Linda Siegrist
Mr. Herbert S. Simmons
Thomas Simonis
Mr. & Mrs. Herbert J. Sinclair
Flora & George Smith
George W. Smith, Sr.
Helen L. Smith
Robert M. Smith
Robert E. Soncrant
Ethyl Southworth
Winslow & Doris Staples
Scott & Jayne Stevens

T

James C. Thomas, Jr.
Margaret Tower

U

Urban Family Loved Ones

W

Anna Watt
Malcolm Laird Watt
Beverly & Bedford "Bud"
Wheaton
Douglas & Doris Wilbur
Clifton & Mabel Wilsey

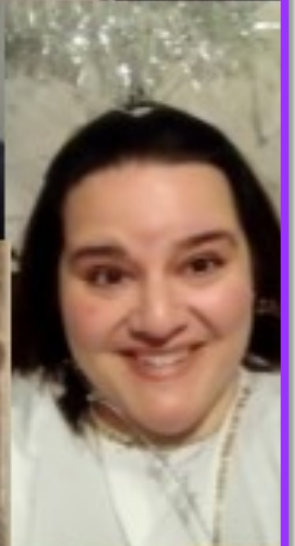
Y

Mrs. Mildred Yecius
Billy Young
Charlie Young





Thank You!



A big thanks to everyone who helped create an awesome Christmas Pageant!

Missed the pageant? You can still catch it online— <https://tinyurl.com/y8notb5w>





CONTACT US

CHRIST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC

1350 Pleasant Street
Brockton, MA 02301-2840

Tel: 508-586-3022

Fax: 508-583-7156

Web: brocktonucc.org

Email: office@brocktonucc.org

Office Hours:

Monday thru Thursday:

9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Sunday Worship Time: 9:55 a.m.

CREATING BELOVED COMMUNITY

Whoever you are, and wherever you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here!



Christ Congregational Church, UCC

1350 Pleasant St.

Brockton, MA 02301-2840