



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

Volume 43 No. 1

Be The Church

January 2023

### WORSHIP AND PROGRAMS:

Worship: Remotely and On-Site

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

**Regular: Remotely**

Adult Choir:  
Wednesdays, 6:45PM

Adult Hand Bells:  
Wednesdays, 6PM

Daytime Hand Bell Group  
Wednesdays, 3:15pm

Bible Study: Zoom  
Wednesdays, 10AM

Fiber Fellowship: Zoom  
2nd Tuesday, 6PM

Prayer Shawl Ministry  
Wednesdays, 10AM

Quilt Guild:  
3rd Tuesday, 1PM



**Board Meetings: ZOOM**

Christian Ed: Jan. 12, 6:30PM

Council: Jan. 19, 7PM

Deacons: Jan. 5, 7PM - **On-Site**

Finance/Property: Jan. 12, 7PM

Media/Tech: Jan. 17, 7PM

Missions: Jan. 11, 7PM

Music: Jan. 3, 7PM

Vitality: Jan. 15, 11:15AM

### PASTOR'S PAGE

*"Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you."*  
~Isaiah 60:1~

Reliability. *THAT* was my star word for 2022. **RELIABILITY!** The Holy Spirit had the nerve to put the word *reliability* on my heart, to pray on and reflect on and think about... and then 2022 felt anything BUT reliable. For most of 2022 I felt unmoored and unsure – insecure in ways I'd never felt insecure before. But, as it always goes with God and God's Spirit, we've come full circle to a new year and a new epiphany – and on Sunday we'll all get a new star word.

For those who aren't familiar with our practice of star words – on the Sunday following Epiphany each year we hand out paper stars with words on them, and the practice is meant to have you reflect prayerfully on one word throughout the coming year so that you can see what God might inspire from it. Each year when we get to this point (the week before star words go out) I always take an extra moment to reflect on the previous year's word.

This year I'm realizing my star word wasn't for me, or for me to strengthen any sort of virtue within myself. I think the Spirit knew I'd need a word like "reliability" to be reminded of just how reliable God is through God's people and Beloved Community. Sometimes star words can do that – they can inspire you to look outward. Much like the magi we celebrate at epiphany – who struck out from all that was familiar to follow a mysterious astronomical phenomenon, leading them on a long and sometimes perilous journey – this outward looking posture usually leads to miraculous discoveries.

So, if you still have your star word (whether it's prominently displayed in a visible spot, or stuffed at the bottom of your purse or wallet) I invite you to look at it and to think about all that your star word has meant for you this past year. If you don't still have it, that's completely OK too, but I invite you then to think about what you want to ask the Spirit to lead you to in the coming year. As I said on Sunday, we'll have plenty of opportunities together to move in miraculous directions in the coming year – and we can trust on God to be reliable in moving with us.

Blessings and Peace,

Pastor Jeff



# thank you



*“...It was no messenger or angel but his presence that saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.” ~Isaiah 63:9~*



Yesterday Pastor Jeff shared part of our family’s story from the past twelve weeks as we’ve welcomed Judah into the world, but as we’ve also navigated the world of medical complexity. Without getting too technical, Judah is medically complex because of a genetic difference in one of his genes that caused his kidneys to develop differently – which resulted in Judah being born with non-functioning kidneys, placing him in end-stage renal failure from the day of his birth. This has led to many twists and turns, highs and lows, and 58 total days with Judah admitted at Boston Children’s hospital – and through it all this Beloved Community has prayed for us, walked with us, cheered us on, shared meals and other tangible support, and the list goes on and on. We wanted to write to you all in this month’s Courier to, above all, say thank you from the bottom of our hearts for all of the ways you have supported our family. The past 3 months have been the most difficult chapter in both of our lives, and we could not have made it through without your love and support.

We’re also incredibly excited to be returning to all of you in person, to get back into the ebb and flow of congregational life and to reconnect with all of you. When you see us in person we will always be masked – because any fever that Judah would get from something he might catch will almost certainly result in a 48 hour admission to Boston Children’s hospital. We don’t expect the church to impose a strict mask mandate on our behalf (so folks can still continue to use their best judgement, as has been our church’s policy) but Pastor Jeff will have a box of masks in his office going forward – and we ask anyone who is visiting with Pastor Jeff in his office to wear a mask to protect our family. We are also more than happy to answer any questions you have about how to best be in relationship with our family.

This congregation truly is a Beloved Community, strengthened and held together by God’s grace and compassionate love. We have felt that over the past twelve weeks: Dani as she spent many nights alone at Boston Children’s hospital, Jeff and Ivyn as they’ve gone on adventures and tried to keep things “normal”, and Judah who has felt and responded to all of your prayers. It isn’t hyperbole for us to say that we’ve experienced the literal presence of God that this passage describes, and all of you have had a part in that. Thank you, and God bless you all in this new year!

Blessings and Peace,  
The Kardiscos (Pastor Jeff, Dani, Ivyn, and Judah)

# Night Before New Years Eve Party!



After a long hiatus, we were thrilled to bring back our Night Before New Year's Eve party. It was a great turnout with people of all ages. The guests came and enjoyed delicious food, made by many in our Congregation. Cubey was back to DJ for our party! He brought an excitement that got the crowd going. There was dancing and plenty of FUN games (with prizes)! We also made sure to celebrate Pastor Ann-Marie with a cake enjoyed by all the children and families she treasured so much. After an evening filled with so much joy, we had a sparkling toast to ring in the new year! It definitely would seem unanimous that everyone can't wait until next year for another wonderful end to 2023. Thank you from Vitality (Michelle, Lorraine, Maryann & Elisha) and CE (Cathy, Matt, Bridget, Brenda & Alisha)

Dear friends,  
This past year, I've made a point of including more photos of our spiritual formation ministry here at CCC. They always seem to do a better job of sharing our beautiful, silly, and sacred moments together than my words ever could. Below and on the following page are some of my favorite moments from the past year or so (I say **some** because trying to include ALL of them would have made the Courier about 20 pages too long!).

As I write this, we are still in the season of Christmas, celebrating the birth of Jesus (what an amazing thing for God to show up in the midst of humanity as a baby!) and waiting for the Magi to arrive with their gifts on Epiphany. It's also a great time consider the gifts of HOPE, PEACE, JOY and LOVE that continue to be birthed into our world by God - gifts that we are called to nurture and share with others.

My ministry within our Beloved Community will come to an end shortly. As I reflect back on my time with you all, I am filled with **HOPE** - we have been blessed with amazing children and youth in our congregation. Seriously, these tiny theologians are already thinking deeply about God's call to us and living out their faith in the world. They are an essential part of our congregation's present and I am hopeful for our collective future knowing that they will continue to shape this and our wider communities. I also feel **PEACE** knowing this ministry is in great hands, with a wonderful Christian Ed. Board, excellent volunteers and loving adults who share God's love with our young folks. **JOY** is always present in a ministry like this. Looking over these photos, seeing these faces - it's the kind of joy that bubbles up and overflows! Finally, please know that while I will be leaving soon, I will always have so much **LOVE** for the the folks in this congregation and will carry with me the love you all have shared!

- Rev. Ann-Marie





**A YEAR IN FAITH FORMATION AT CCC**





*And Night Shall Be No More. Happy New Year to all! We have rounded the bend and the days are gradually getting longer. As we start our journey toward Easter (April 9th), Lent (Feb. 23) is right around the corner. We have just passed the most sublime of seasons - Advent - and are within the twelve days of Christmas. Epiphany is January 6, when we celebrate the journey of the wise ones to see the baby, Jesus. This is when we focus on the journey from darkness to light. The choir had the privilege of singing one of the all time masterpieces of choral literature on Christmas Eve, E'en So Lord Jesus, Quickly Come. The sanctuary was near full with current members and many newcomers or those we haven't seen for a while. Paul (composer) and Ruth (poet) Manz wrote this piece when their child was deathly ill. They were at a very low point in the situation when the words from Revelation came to Ruth. The couple believes strongly that the child survived by the power of prayer. The text toward the end of the anthem is extremely poignant:*

*"E'en so Lord Jesus, quickly come,  
And night shall be no more;  
They need no light nor lamp nor sun,  
For Christ will be their all.*

Night shall be no more. As we have celebrated the birth of Jesus and his advent on Earth, we would do well to turn our eyes and hearts toward his teachings and the light he has brought to us. I know the choir enjoyed preparing this anthem and thinking of these words several times during the Advent season as we heard the worst of headlines of the world; Ukraine, Buffalo, Indiana, and so many more devastating events. As we go into the period of Ordinary Time which leads to the 40 days of Lent, don't forget to turn often to Jesus as the most profound of examples of faith and courage during the most troubled time. Take time to contemplate His journey and his calling: to open the eyes of the blind, to bring out prisoners from the dungeon. As we venture forth into the New Year, let us be free from the dungeon of our busy lives and look to the light that God has created. Let us do this frequently and with wonder!

[Here is a lovely recording](#) of the anthem by Paul and Ruth Manz. Feel free to listen and meditate on the words.

Thank you to all of those who participated in the music of the Advent season and the beautiful Christmas Eve service. We hope many more will consider raising their voices, including the young and young at heart! If you or someone you know has interest in joining in making music, please reach out to Murray and ask any questions.

Sincerely,

Murray

# FROM THE BOARD OF MUSIC

## Christmas Thank You



Special appreciation to our staff, Murray Kidd and Anton Feinberg, special soloists and groups, and all the members of the choirs and hand bell groups for beautiful music during Advent and for Christmas Eve.

## Arts & Music Planning Group and Survey

This group, made up of Donna Costa, Audrey Jones, Candy Savage and Betsey Serjak, will meet via Zoom on Tuesday, January 3 at 7 pm. If you are interested in learning more and sitting in on the discussion, please let one of the folks listed above know. We would love to have your input.

**AND** if you haven't done so already, please respond to our brief survey to help our planning in the coming years. Printed copies are available in the narthex – just return to the Board of Music mailbox in the office, or use this link to complete the survey online:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LLYSXZH>

**Board of Music:** Donna Costa, Henok Kaptimer, Leigh-Ann Larson, Luane Rich, Candy Savage and Murray Kidd (ex-officio)



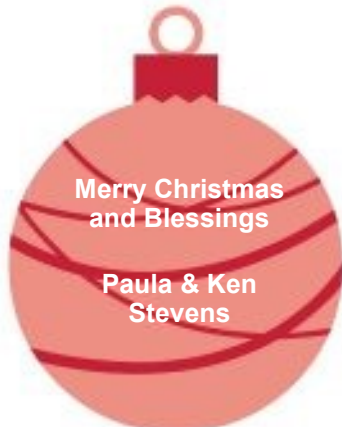
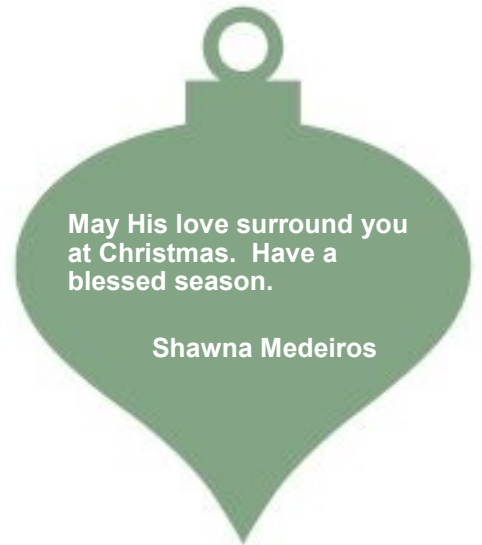
**JOIN US!!!**

**FAREWELL RECEPTION FOR  
PASTOR ANN-MARIE ILLSLEY**

**Sunday, January 8, 2023**

*following Fellowship Hour, Council  
will host a Luncheon to celebrate  
Pastor Ann-Marie, and  
thank her for all she has been and  
done in service to  
our Beloved Community.*

# MISSIONS CHRISTMAS CARD TREE







**A**

Merton L. (Sonny) Alden, Jr.  
Mr. & Mrs. Merton L. Alden  
Terrence ‘Terry’ L. Alden  
Christopher & Nicole Allen  
Harry & Jennie Allen  
Aida Azoukou

**B**

Forrest Bailey  
Priscilla Bailey  
George & Constance Bamford  
Horace & Shirley Bamford  
L. Elsie Bamford  
Sandra Ellen Bamford  
David & Edith Benjamin  
George & Alice Boyer  
Anne Brooks  
Bernie & Aida Bruns

**D**

Mr. & Mrs. Howard W. Dalton  
Mr. & Mrs. Walter Dalton  
Mr. & Mrs. Albert D. Daniels  
Jeffrey Dawson  
Mr. Joseph Dodd  
Mrs. Mabel Dodd  
Daniel E. Dunklee Jr.  
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel E. Dunklee Sr.

**E**

Harriet G. Eastman  
Kerry Eckstrom  
Wayne Eckstrom

**F**

Allen & Connie Fisher  
Bernice Fisher  
Harold & Marjorie Fisher  
Jo Mary Samuelson Fisher  
John & Theresa Forest  
Margaret Fuller

**G**

Bob & Mary Gibson  
Barry Goodwin  
Louise Goodwin

**H**

Mr. & Mrs. Richard Haase  
Alton F. Hefler  
John & Euria Hefler  
Janet Higgins  
Dorothy Lendh Holland  
Vincent G. Holland  
Bruce Holmquist  
Robert Holmquist  
Mr. & Mrs. Edwin J. Holmquist  
George & Arleen Hutt

**I**

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

**J**

Aaron Johnson  
Bob Johnson  
Constance ‘Penny’ Johnson  
Carlos Carrillo Joubert

**K**

Frank & Elsie Kittredge  
Edward Koza

**L**

Carl W. Landerholm  
Lendh Family  
Charles Liolios, Sr.  
Mr. & Mrs. Earle G. Lovell  
Mr. & Mrs. Earle W. Lovell  
Ronald & Charles Lovell

**M**

Walter & Flora Marlena  
Mr. & Mrs. James J. McGunnigal  
Mr. & Mrs. Patrick McGunnigal  
Mr. Stephen McGunnigal  
McIntyre Family Loved Ones  
Linley Menard  
John Molander  
Margaret & Arthur Molander  
Mark Molander  
Rita & Arthur Molander  
Babe Moline  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Murray

**P**

Alice Pickett  
Ray Placentino  
Robert & Ruth Poole  
Sandy Poole  
Dick & Alice Pope  
Joseph A. Prioli

**Q**

Ryan D. Quesnel

**R**

Rich Rajunas  
Elva Lendh Rayment  
Susan Reynolds  
Michaela Ronan  
Philip & Judith Rooney  
Betty Russo

**S**

Cutty Samuelson  
Faith Samuelson  
Clyde Savage, Sr.  
Duane Savage  
Mabelle Savage  
Richard Schofield  
Margaret A. Sheppard  
Richard Sheppard  
Terry Sheppard  
Vivian Sheppard  
Linda Siegrist  
Mr. Herbert S. Simmons  
Mr. & Mrs. Herbert J. Sinclair  
Robert E. Soncrant  
Ethyl Southworth  
Winslow & Doris Staples  
Scott & Jayne Stevens

**T**

Ruth Dunklee Taylor  
James C. Thomas, Jr.

**U**

Urban Family Loved Ones

**W**

Beverly & Bedford ‘Bud’ Wheaton  
Douglas & Doris Wilbur  
Clifton & Mabel Wilsey

**Y**

Mrs. Mildred Yecius



Meal Train for  
The Kardisco Family



TO SUPPORT VISIT:  
[HTTPS://WWW.MEALTRAIN.COM/TRAINS/  
5MG3MW](https://www.mealtrain.com/trains/5MG3MW)

OR CALL/TEXT LAUREN AT 508-468-0834



Brockton UCC Missions

THANKS YOU FOR  
**WARMING HEARTS & HANDS**  
THIS CHRISTMAS SEASON

♥ Ingathering of food will take place  
quarterly throughout 2023  
(to stock our community pantry)

♥ Christmas card tree generated funds  
to be donated to Rose Conservatory



♥ New hats & gloves collected  
will be donated to Old Colony Y



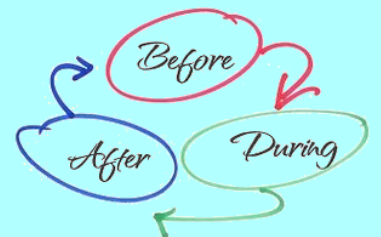
**A NOTE FROM THE MODERATOR**

2022 has come to a close, and with it, a time to reflect. We saw a gradual resumption of in person activities, long denied by the pandemic. We welcomed our sisters and brothers from Stoughton First Congregational Church, grieving with them on the closing of their church, but pleased that they have found a church home here. We celebrated milestones as well as mourned losses, with members and friends of our Beloved Community. We awaited the arrival of Baby Judah with excitement, then committed the full force of our love and prayers to his strength as he faces serious health challenges.

2023 is ahead - a year full of possibility. We have mixed emotions as we welcome Pastor Jeff back from parental leave, immediately followed by bidding farewell to Pastor Ann-Marie. We appreciate her lifelong membership and devoted service to our church family, and wish for her wisdom, grace and fulfillment as she answers her call to ministerial leadership of the First Congregational Church of Walla Walla, Washington. We stand with Pastor Jeff, Dani and Ilyn as they navigate the journey of managing this new normal of caring for a medically fragile child. We will walk the path with them, under God's guidance.

There is much to be grateful for, and much to do to build a stronger church family. As we forge ahead into the New Year as a faith community, we offer our God given will and energy in continued service to our church family, our local communities and wider missions of social and racial justice. We will do all this in the spirit of God's love for us. Happy New Year to you and yours!

~Sue Koza, Moderator



Thank you to the church  
for the poinsettia. It  
really brightened my day

Best,



Ann Clark

Dec. 29, 2022

Dear Christ Church,  
Thank you for the Poinsettia plant. It is  
beautiful. Jeff Illsley's cookies were very  
delicious also.  
I also want to thank the Deacons for  
sending me cards throughout the year.



Anna Thomas

To the Board of Deacons....

Thank you for the beautiful  
poinsettia delivered by Janet  
Eckstrom. A wonderful gift of  
remembrance.



Love to all,

Nelda Hayes

Thank you Deacons of Christ  
Church for the beautiful poinsettia.  
Sorry I wasn't home to accept it in  
person, but it was a lovely surprise  
on my door-step when I did get  
home.



Thank you again,  
God Bless,

Ruth Copeland

# JANUARY BIRTHDAYS



## Wishing all the best on your Birthdays

Nelda Hayes, Mark P. Deyoe, Jessica Gross, Isabella Morales, Larry Jones, Christopher Williams, Marilyn Fairbanks, David Wilcox, 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)*



## COMMITTEE

Hello Everyone!

Please continue to bring to church your redeemable cans and bottles. Put them in the two tall cardboard containers in Fellowship Hall. The funds from these go for the children's programs. Recently we recycled over 500 of these cans and bottles! Thank You!

George Manoogian  
AKA Mr. Nice Guy

## BE THE CHURCH

*Protect the environment.* Care for the poor.  
*Forgive often.* **Reject racism.**  
**Fight for the powerless.**  
*Share earthly and spiritual resources.*  
*Embrace diversity.* Love God. Enjoy this life.



We pray for the family of Esther Stuart (sister-in-law of David Stuart, may she rest in peace.



Please mark your calendar for Pastoral Housing Cottage meetings on...

**Monday, January 9th at 7 pm via Zoom**

**Wednesday January 11th at 5:30 pm**  
in person at the church.

## SAVE THE DATE! FIELD TRIP TO WORSHIP WITH ASYLUM SEEKERS

In case anyone is interested in a Sunday morning Field Trip for Worship...

I (Doug Anderson) will be going to morning worship on Sunday January 22, 2023 at the Hadwen Park Congregational Church (UCC) in Worcester. LGBTQ Asylum Seekers will be leading the service. They will be sharing their stories of terror as they escaped their home countries. They will also share how God helped them to somehow connect with a small Worcester Congregation which provides housing as well as help with the Asylum process.

Join me to car pool perhaps or meet me there. For more information get in touch with Doug Anderson (617)417-2614 or douginmass@gmail.com



## ZOOM Fiber Fellowship & Crafts

Meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday  
From 6:30 - 8:30 PM  
Come Knit, Crochet,  
Needlepoint, crafts, etc.  
Or just come for the  
fellowship!!

(call or email office for zoom link)



## COMMON THREADS QUILT GUILD



Show and tell at the cookie swap showed a new flannel quilt by Janet Eckstrom

A cookie swap was enjoyed at the December meeting with dessert and coffee served.

Next meeting will be Tuesday, January 17<sup>th</sup>, at the church in the quilt craft room from 1-3pm. We will be working on NICU quilts. Hope to see you there. This guild is open to anyone interested in quilts and their construction. Questions? call Nelda at 508-238-6004 or Janet at 508-583-0505.



*Prayer  
Shawl Ministry*



The Prayer Shawl Ministry meets every Wednesday in the library from 10—12 PM.

Here are some of our new and old members with lovely knitted shawls that were blessed by Pastor Ann-Marie Illsley.





## Meet the Leadership Development Committee



Lisa Sparling



Barry Shelley



Deana Colby



Matt Howard

**Leadership Development** is a committee that strives to match the talents and interests of church members with the needs of our church boards and committees and other volunteer roles. Please keep an eye out over the next several months for information about the many ways you can contribute to our congregational community and to our mission, both locally in the Brockton Area as well as more broadly in our nation and the wider world.



### “BE THE (NEWLY WOVEN) CHURCH” CAMPAIGN 2023

We are looking forward to all the wonderful things we can accomplish together in our new woven community. Please look forward to a new survey and we'd love to hear from our Stoughton family on how things have been done with their committees.

# Musica DIVINA

*By: Anton Faynberg*

STARTING AT 6:00 PM  
ON THE FIRST AND THIRD FRIDAY  
OF EVERY MONTH

at Christ Congregational Church, UCC

## CONTACT US

**CHRIST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC**

1350 Pleasant Street  
Brockton, MA 02301-2840

Tel: 508-586-3022

Web: [brocktonucc.org](http://brocktonucc.org)

Email: [office@brocktonucc.org](mailto: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