



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
HAWORTH, NEW JERSEY

God is still speaking

Dear "new" family of faith,

Grace and peace to one and all! Happy New Year 2016 and Happy Epiphany!

This New Year is an exciting time for us as we begin our ministry together! I am humbled and privileged to be your new Part Time Pastor...and look forward to getting to know you all and building our relationships with one another and with God!

You have overwhelmed me with your generosity, your support, your enthusiasm and your welcome! Thank you from the bottom of my heart! I will never forget your beautiful affirmation as you greeted me with cheers and the children's instruments after the vote! And of course, the delicious luncheon and cake and gift and and and....words seem inadequate to express my gratitude!

As many of you already know, I am still 'new' to the area and will need your advice and patience as I learn my way around Haworth and the New Jersey Association of the Central Atlantic Conference of the UCC. Although we were raised in the Presbyterian Church, my husband Bob and I chose to become part of the United Church of Christ in the Rochester area when we looked for a church for our young family. From the moment we walked into the Irondequoit UCC, we were welcomed, included and invited to be part of that congregational family. One of my hopes for us as a congregation is that we will 'widen the circle of welcome' to visitors and neighbors while always valuing the wisdom and needs of current members and friends. We **are** the denomination where 'all are welcome.'

Please let me know where, when and how we can get together for a cup of tea or coffee and conversation! I am open to small groups or individual times - in homes, or at church, or at the local coffee shop. I value your ideas and wisdom. And know that while my title is 'part time' - I am only a 'phone call' or email away whenever there is an urgent need. I will try to put in each week's bulletin my intentioned schedule for the following week - but flexibility is also important! Monday is the day of my scheduled harp lesson and usually my required playing time for patients and staff at Valley Hospital - but again, if you need to reach me, phone and leave a message or send an email and as soon as I leave the hospital, I will check for messages and get back to you. (Unfortunately, we are required to turn off our cell phones when we play.)

As we enter these 5 Sundays of Epiphany, let us remember that this is the season of Light, of Good News, of Extravagance, of Glory! We will celebrate Epiphany Sunday on the 10th and also the Baptism of Jesus. January 18-25 we celebrate the week of Prayer for Christian Unity and the Rev Martin Luther King Jr. and January 31 is Health and Human Services Sunday. And then Ash Wednesday sneaks up on us quickly this year on February 10th. Please let the Deacons and me know if you have ideas for Lenten studies or events you would like.

“I am the church! You are the church! We are the church together!”

With blessings, love and in faith,

Rev Lauri

Ministry for Children and Youth

Emma Nathanson, Director

The time between our Thanksgiving performance and the Christmas Pageant was a time of transition for our Sunday School program. Sarah Stoeckel, our beloved music instructor, moved to North Carolina. Our young people were so sad to lose her. Sarah worked hard to challenge our children with choir music and they exceeded our expectations. We are so grateful for the time we had with her and we wish her all the best as she, John, Claire, and Johnny embark on their new adventure!

When all of us on the MCY committee were wondering how we would handle music for the Christmas pageant, Jane Keitel stepped up and offered her time to help make sure the pageant was a success. Jane continued working on the songs Sarah started with the children, and she directed music during the pageant. She, along with Bridge Fellowship, also spent HOURS working on the sound system to make sure we had working microphones! **Thank you, Jane!**



Property Stewards Jan Farrington, Chair

Once again the Christmas elves have transformed the church into a festive celebration of our Savior's birth, expressing Hope, Peace, Love and Joy for all. Justine, Rachel and Sabrina, members of our youth group, decorated the Advent wreath with greens. Rose, Carol, Jen and Jan put together the huge tree in the chancel, not without a few adventures. Janet, Emily and Josh Lamond arranged the lights on the tree, then hung the garlands and banners in the Nave and the giant wreath in the Narthex. Rose unpacked and arranged the beautiful Nativity scene on the former communion table in the Narthex. Many more members and friends donated poinsettias to add to the beauty of our church and the season. Thank you, one and all!

A HUGE, GIGANTIC, INCREDIBLY HEARTFELT THANK YOU to MARK STEGALL and his friend Charles, who installed 48 LED bulbs in every light in the Sanctuary, Narthex, Lounge and Bell Tower. We are so grateful for this donation of time, effort and materials. Watching Mark and Charles erecting, moving and scrambling up and down a huge scaffolding was an awesome experience. This was truly a magnificent gift to our church. And the bulbs should last for 26,000 hours!

Rose Pero's Playgroup...

Wednesday mornings, 9:30-11:00am, Rose offers a Playgroup Get-Together in Fellowship Hall for all parents/grandparents and their infants/preschoolers. As the children play, you will have the opportunity to make new friends and share experiences.

The Playgroup, along with coffee, tea and refreshments are available at no cost. Everyone is welcome; come on over and get to know your neighbors!

Please phone Rose at (201-768-0537) if you have any questions.

Mission Outreach and Social Action

Darlene Wilson

For our annual **Christmas offering** this year, the Mission Outreach and Social Action committee has recommended to the Leadership Team that we allocate two-thirds of our collection to **Eva's Village** in Paterson and one-third to **The Christmas Fund**. Please read below to learn more about these worthy beneficiaries.

EVA'S VILLAGE

Eva's Village began as a soup kitchen in Paterson, NJ in 1982. Today, they are one of the largest and most respected anti-poverty programs in New Jersey, maintaining a consistent "Four Star" (most preferred) rating by Charity Navigator. Our donation to Eva's Village provides us with the opportunity to **give locally** to a uniquely progressive and comprehensive non-profit social service organization dedicated to fighting homelessness and poverty.

Serving 350 hot lunches 365 days a year to the homeless and working poor echoes Eva's humble beginnings serving soup to 30 hungry people, but they also offer so much more. Among the services that they provide to the community are food, shelter, substance abuse treatment, primary medical and dental care, transitional and permanent housing options, parenting classes, play therapy, personal finance workshops and job training. In 2013, Eva's established "The Culinary School" to provide job training and placement for adults interested in working in the food service industry.

The mission of Eva's Village is to "feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, treat the addicted and provide medical and dental care to the poor with respect for the human dignity of each individual." In the words of our own Jeanne Martin, "*Eva's does amazing work!*"

THE CHRISTMAS FUND FOR THE VETERANS OF THE CROSS & THE EMERGENCY FUND

This ministry, administered by the UCC Pension Boards, takes care to remember those who serve our church. Our donations will help provide financial aid to lower-income retired and active UCC ministers and lay employees, as well as their surviving spouses and families, who face unforeseen crises and overwhelming financial demands. Our support includes pension and health premium supplementation, emergency assistance, and Christmas thank-you gift checks, but donations to The Christmas Fund are not dispersed solely at Christmas. After Hurricane Katrina, the Christmas Fund paid two quarters worth of insurance premiums for ten retired clergy who were displaced in the FEMA-declared zip codes and an additional \$5,000 towards premiums of active clergy in those same affected zip codes.

In the business of caring for others, **many clergy feel uneasy asking for help for themselves**. According to Rev. M. Douglas Borko, former director of ministerial assistance at the Pension Boards, "I try to reassure them that they've worked their whole lives for the church. **The church is an institution that cares for its people**, and they've been doing that through their whole ministry. Now it's time for them to be cared for in their hour of need." The Christmas Fund provides critical assistance to clergy in need while preserving their dignity.

As we count our many blessings this holiday season, let us take the opportunity to give and share what we can with those who will benefit so greatly from the loving and giving spirit of the First Congregational United Church of Christ, Haworth, NJ.

Blessings to you to during this holiday season and Best Wishes for 2016!

Women's Fellowship Meeting...
Thursday,
February 4, 2016
11:45am

President of the Month: Jen Chin

Program: Black History Month. Lee Benjamin will tell us about African American Month. Health kits will be assembled.



Devotional: A True Story

Please bring a sandwich. Dessert and coffee/tea will be provided.

All are welcome. Please join us!

Your Prayers Are Requested For...

- ✚ Tom Haschmann and Traci Reynolds, life-time friends of Rev. Lauri.
- ✚ Deborah Mancini (Rose Pero's cousin), Lauren Babroski, Mike Maslanek, Sandra DeLorenzo, Regan Norwood, Marcy Baumbach, Bob Robertson, Rita & AnnMarie Jenneck, John Castellucci, Tom Meyer, Robert Kanwisher's Family, Anita's cousin, Dominic, Ann Arrigo, Bob Duchacek, Dan Taylor.
- ✚ For peace in our country and around the world, our military and leaders.
- ✚ Everyone and every living creature experiencing hurt and pain of any type.
- ✚ All of God's creations.
- ✚ Everyone devastated by unemployment or under-employment.

Please feel free to call the office (201-384-1063) 24/7 with a request of any kind.

January Birthdays!

- 6—Michael Maslanek
- 12—Edna Panbakker
- 27—Bob Duchacek



February Birthdays!

- 6—Jan Farrington
- 17—Rose Pero
- 18—Alice Marcus
- 22—Emily Johl



With Our Sincere Sympathy to the Boyd Family

Aubrey Boyd, MaryLou's beloved husband of 66 years, went to be with his Lord on January 1, 2016. He was the devoted father of Kathy and John Hicks and Ruth and Michael Petrucelli. Aubrey was the loving grandfather of Laura and Michael Petrucelli.

If you would like to send a card or note, MaryLou's address is: 227 Maple Street, Haworth, NJ 07641.

If you would like to remember Aubrey with a donation to the Haworth Ambulance Corp., Borough of Haworth, 300 Haworth Avenue, Haworth, NJ 07641. Your thoughtfulness would be most appreciated by his family.

In your hands, O Lord, we humbly entrust our brothers and sisters. In this life you embraced them with your tender love; deliver them now and bid them eternal rest. The old order has passed away: welcome them into paradise, where there will be no sorrow, no weeping or pain, but fullness of peace and joy with your Son and the Holy Spirit forever and ever. Amen.

The Friday Lunch Bunch...

If you would like to take a break, and share fellowship, conversation and dessert, come to the Friday Lunch Bunch get-togethers from 11am-1pm! The ladies meet in Fellowship Hall weekly. Come as often as you like. Bring a sandwich, dessert is provided on a rotating basis.

One of Michelle Dockery's, (Lady Mary of Downton Abbey) favorite lines:

"All we can do is travel hopefully."

The *Annual Meeting* of

The First Congregational United Church of Christ

will be held on *Sunday, February 7, 2016* immediately following worship

To All Members and Friends:

The above notice constitutes an official call to the meeting in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws of the church.

At the meeting, new officers and department members will be elected, the budget will be presented and voted upon and other church business will be conducted. Please plan to attend and give the above agenda your thoughtful consideration.

Copies of the 2015 Annual Report will be available on the table in the Narthex prior to the meeting. If you are unable to pick one up, please call (201-384-1063) or email (ucchaworth@verizon.net) the church. The proposed budget will be available at the meeting.