

Church Events for January & February 2014

First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ
at 10 Station Rd in Hartland, Vermont 05048

Rev. Lucia Anne Jackson, Pastor

Facebook: [HartlandCongregationalChurch](https://www.facebook.com/HartlandCongregationalChurch)

Church Telephone: (802)436-2224 or via email at RevLucia13@gmail.com

Dear Members & Friends -- These are troubling times. There are many places in our world in need of God's healing, love and peace. Perhaps, you, like I, wonder how God calls us to respond to the needs of people both in our community and far away from it. We know there are many who are hungry – hungry for food, for belonging, for stability, for faith. We know that are places of violence and unrest and wonder how to bring peace to such a world. Even when the world seems troubled and uncertain, the church is the place where we can find comfort and support as well as challenge and strength and wisdom. It is a place where we can ask difficult questions and prayerfully receive equally challenging answers. The church is where we can be ourselves – welcome, loved and cherished – warts and all!

There are many people who wonder if the church is still a viable institution. Do we still have something to say? To do? To be? In today's world? Can we make a witness in the world that makes a difference? The United Church of Christ proclaims that "God is Still Speaking!" We at FCCH share that belief. How do we live it? Proclaim it? And share it? Come be a part of the church community where you have a place at the table, where you have a voice, where you are needed and where you can come home this Advent and Christmas.

See you in church – Lucia

Worship and Church School:

*Looking for the sacred amidst all the holiday busyness?
Join us (& invite a friend too) for Worship and Church School!*

Sunday, Nov 30th *First Sunday in Advent: HOPE*

Worship & Regular Church School 11:30 Adult Bible Study

Sunday, Dec 7th *Second Sunday in Advent: PEACE*

Worship with Communion & Regular Church School

11:30 Adult Bible Study

6:00 Advent Workshop – fun for everyone!

Sunday, Dec 14th *Third Sunday in Advent: JOY*

Worship & Regular Church School 11:30 Adult Bible Study

Sunday Dec 21st *Fourth Sunday in Advent: LOVE*

Worship: "A Christmas Pageant"

All Children in Worship for the Pageant.

Wednesday, Dec 24th at 7:00 pm

Candlelight Christmas Eve Service

of Lessons & Carols

Sunday, December 28th Worship & Service of Light for the past year and the year to come, Family Sunday

Sunday, January 4th Worship – *Epiphany Celebration*

Worship leader: Amanda Swoyer, Family Worship

Sunday, January 12th *Worship with Communion*, Church School

11:30 Adult Bible Study

Sunday, January 18th *Worship – Martin Luther King, Jr Sunday*

Regular Church School 11:30 Adult Bible Study

Sunday, January 25th *Worship*, Regular Church School

11:00 Annual Congregational Meeting

Board of Christian Education News and Notes:

Advent is a busy and joyful time for Church School! Join us for the Church School rotation on the Prophet Isaiah, the Christmas Pageant and THE ADVENT WORKSHOP! The Advent Workshop is an event for all ages – for the crafty and the craftily challenged. Everyone is invited! Bring a dessert to share on Sunday, Dec 7th 6:00 – 7:30! We will start with making cards, wreaths, ornaments and more and finish with a short worship service in the sanctuary.

Session 3 - Advent Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 9:6-7 "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon his shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" - Isaiah 9:6

Sunday, November 30th – 1st Sun in Advent, Regular Church School
Sunday, December 7th – 2nd Sun in Advent, Regular Church School
6:00 ADVENT Workshop for all ages!
Sunday, December 14th – 3rd Sun in Advent, Regular Church School
Saturday, December 20th – Pageant Rehearsal 9:00 – 11:00
Sunday, December 21st – 4th Sun in Advent – Pageant Sunday
Wednesday, December 24th – 7:00 Christmas Eve Worship Service
Thursday, December 25th – MERRY CHRISTMAS!!
Sunday, December 28th – Family Sunday – New Year's Candlelighting
Sunday, January 4th – Family Sunday

Session 4 - - Beatitudes: Peacemakers Matthew 5:1-12
"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called children of God." - Matthew 5:9

Sunday, January 11th – Regular Church School
Sunday, January 18th – Regular Church School
Sunday, January 25th – Regular Church School
Wednesday, January 28th 7:00 CE BOARD MEETING
Sunday, February 1st – Communion, Regular Church School
Sunday, February 8th - Regular Church School
Sunday, February 15th - Regular Church School

Christmas Pageant

**Calling all children and adults interested in the Christmas Pageant!!!
We need you to come for one rehearsal on Saturday, December 20th 9:00 – 11:00**

The Pageant is in Worship on Sunday, December 21st.

**Please speak with a member of the Christian Education Board or Lucia if interested in participating.
And invite a friend to join the pageant!**

Are you between the ages of 1 and 100?

*Are you looking for a fun family
ADVENT event?*

*Are you interested in celebrating the
reason for the season?*

**YOU ARE INVITED to
The Advent Workshop**

Sunday, December 7th 6:00 – 8:00

*Simplicity, tradition, community,
celebration for all ages.*

Please bring a desert or snack to share.

"Unwrapping Our Gifts"!

a whole new kind of group study experience

"Unwrapping Our Gifts" will join your faith to the real world, connecting Sunday morning with the rest of your week and life. We will explore the biblical vision that all Christians (not just the ordained) are Ministers - gifted by God. Through imaginative Bible studies, case studies, guided journaling, story telling and group discussion, we will discover our gifts and strengthen our personal ways of ministering in our workplaces, homes, community, relationships and world.

This adventure - for indeed discovering our gifts is an adventure- begins in mid January and continues weekly through mid March plus a one day retreat. Please speak with Amanda if interested!

JOIN US!

**Make the 8 week commitment to
Unwrapping Our Gifts -
YOU WILL BE GLAD YOU DID.**

Leadership Team:

Daun Smith & Amanda Swoyer

Ladies Benevolent Society News:

Thursday, Dec 4th at 12:30 - **Christmas POTLUCK luncheon and Yankee Swap.** Bring a casserole, salad or dessert for the luncheon and a wrapped gift for the Yankee swap! Wrap your gift beautifully for the best wrapped gift prize! Gifts may be new, used, regifts, silly or something really nice. Everyone invited to the Christmas luncheon and Yankee swap!

Saturday, Dec 13th - 10:00 - 12:00

Christmas Cookie Walk and Silent Auction.

Donated Cookies needed - please deliver to the church on Friday the 12th from 9:00 - 11:00 or Saturday morning by 9:30. And **PLAN ON ATTENDING** the Cookie Walk! You can fill a box with a variety of yummy Christmas cookies. Silent Auction will run on Saturday 10:00 - 12:00 and again on Sunday morning 11:00 - 11:45. **ALL BIDS FINAL** at 11:45.

Tell your friends! Better yet, bring your friends!

MUSIC NEWS!

***Music celebrates all the gifts of the Christmas season
- please join the choir this Advent
and share your voice!***

Choir Rehearsal schedule for Advent and Christmastime:

******Fridays in December (5th, 12th & 19th) at 5:30
and Sunday mornings at 8:30 to sing in
Worship each Sunday.***

*****Rehearsal Sunday, Dec 21st at 11:15 &
Wed, Dec 24th at 5:45 for
Christmas Eve worship at 7:00.***

2015 Pledge Update from the Treasurer

A BIG THANK YOU to all who have returned your pledge slips for next year! As of November 21, we have received 75% of the expected pledges, with most including a 7% increase for 2015. We are about \$28,000 short of our pledge goal of \$78,436 and still need your help. A pledge is a personal decision. As you think about what you are able to give financially, we hope you will consider what Hartland Congregational means to you. Below is a chart showing 2.5%, 5% and 10% pledges at various levels of income. When broken down simply like this, weekly or monthly giving is about the cost of one ordinary expense.

	-----Annual Income-----			
	\$10,000	\$20,000	\$50,000	\$100,000
2.5 % pledge	\$250	\$500	\$1,250	\$2,500
given weekly	\$5	\$10	\$24	\$48
given monthly	\$21	\$42	\$104	\$208
5 % pledge	\$500	\$1,000	\$2,500	\$5,000
given weekly	\$10	\$19	\$48	\$96
given monthly	\$42	\$83	\$208	\$417
10 % pledge	\$1,000	\$2,000	\$5,000	\$10,000
given weekly	\$19	\$38	\$96	\$192
given monthly	\$83	\$167	\$417	\$833

Thank you again for your thoughtful and prayerful pledge consideration this year. If for any reason you need an additional pledge slip, please don't hesitate to email Linda at genovese2137@comcast.net or give the church a call (436-2224).

We would appreciate receiving all pledges by December 1 to complete our year end planning. Linda Genovese, Treasurer

Board of Missions & Outreach

always: **Hartland Local Food Shelf** – non perishables can be dropped off here or at Damon Hall anytime or at the UU on Friday mornings 8:00 – 10:00.

December – **Hartland Christmas Project** (details below)

Habitat for Humanity, Densmore Hill – Sierra Project – volunteers needed On Friday, Dec 5th and Sat, Dec 13th 9:00 – 3:00. Speak with Lucia if interested.

Hixon House Dinner: team leaders for December 30th are Vicki & Jim Lawrence and Larry & Jeannie Frazer.

Hartland Christmas Project - There are many ways that you can support the Hartland Christmas Project:

* You can choose an ornament to **shop** for a Hartland Christmas Project Family.

* **Donate Food:** Foods with meat are great. Spaghetti sauce with meat, beef stews, hearty soups etc. Instant and brewing coffee. Everyone loves coffee and this is an item that isn't often donated. Powdered milk, hot cereals, hot chocolate. Canned veggies, fruits, toilet paper, paper towels, laundry soap, and dish soap.

* And You can bring in warm mittens, gloves, hats, scarves & socks to hang on the **Mitten Tree** in the sanctuary.

* And the Christmas Project is **collecting donations** of: usable household items, good winter clothing, nice gently used games and toys and books, warm blankets. You may drop off donations starting Dec 8th, but please no used car seats!

All gifts and donations must be turned in by Dec 15th

* And Please help **sort** donations on Dec 15th at 9:00

* Free Rummage on Friday morning 9:00 – 11:00 and help needed for **clean up!**

Remember your neighbors in this season of generosity and abundance!

JUNIOR HIGH YOUTH: (7th & 8th grade)
SENIOR HIGH YOUTH (9TH - 12TH grade)

*Sunday, November 30th - **Dartmouth Hockey** (v. Boston University) - meet at the church parking lot at 3:00. Adult drivers welcome! (and needed) Email Lucia to sign up. Youth: \$6 Adults: \$10.00 (ticket money due on the 23rd)

*Sunday, Dec 7th 6:00 **Advent Workshop** FCCH (UCC)
Everyone welcome!

*Sunday, Dec 14th - **Youth Group Meetings** at FCCH (UCC)
- Christmas Party with Yankee Swap! 5:00 - 6:15 Jr Highs
6:30 - 8:00 Sr Highs

*Sunday, Jan 11th - **Youth Group Meetings** at FUSH (UU)
5:00 - 6:15 Jr Highs 6:30 - 8:00 Sr Highs

*Sunday, Jan 18th - **Youth Mission Trip Brunch** at FUSH (UU)
all Mission Trip 2015 participants expected to help! Parental support needed!
6:30 - 9:00 **Sr High Game Nite** at FCCH (UCC)

*Sunday, Jan 25th **Youth Group Meetings** at FUSH (UU)
5:00 - 6:15 Jr Highs 6:30 - 8:00 Sr Highs

*Sunday, Feb 8th **Youth Group Meetings** at FCCH (UCC)
5:00 - 6:15 Jr Highs
6:30 - 8:00 Sr Highs (\$20 pizza donation due)

*Sunday, Feb 15th - **Youth Mission Trip Brunch** at FUSH (UU)
all Mission Trip 2015 participants expected to help! Parental support needed!

SAVE THE DATES

:Mission Trip 2015 July 26th - August 2nd 2015

What is the "Mission Trip" and who can go on it?

The mission trip is an annual, week-long service trip to New Haven, Connecticut, where we partner with social service agencies to help out with work they need to do. Younger youth work with Christian Community Action, New Haven Home Recovery and Downtown Evening Soup Kitchen. Older Youth work with Habitat for Humanity. We work hard and live for the week on the floor of a church in the area. We also take some time to have fun, to reflect and worship, and just to hang out together. 8th grade graduates and above are invited to join us on the trip and we require that anyone intending to come on the trip participate in the fundraising brunches throughout the year. This year's trip will take place July 26–August 2, 2015 -- we will lead worship for both churches in a combined service on August 2nd.

LOVE BUZZ RETURNS!!! Remember that Equal Exchange Coffee and Tea and CHOCOLATE are for sale - available from Lucia. Proceeds benefit the Youth Mission Trip, but more importantly - Equal Exchange products are fairly traded and organic - benefitting the environment and the local growers!

Call to Annual Meeting – Sunday, January 25th immediately following worship. All Boards, Committees and organizational components (such as LBS, Music etc.) should submit their reports by January 11th so we can post them for people to read prior to the meeting. This will save much time at the meeting as we would not need to read each report at the meeting, just discuss and vote on them. – Dave Hale, Moderator

* * *

Men's fellowship news: Suppers start January 17th and this year run for SIX Saturdays. Darryl and Sherry Calkins are the first set while Larry & Jeannie Frazer are the second set. Speak with the Calkins or the Frazer to join a Roast Beef Supper team or to volunteer for an evening!

First Congregational Church of Hartland, UCC
PO Box 454,
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Magnifying God *My soul magnifies the Lord....Luke 1:47*

We hear Mary's song each Advent and revel in its beauty and radical proclamation. But I wonder if we skip too quickly past this odd first phrase. What does it mean to "magnify" something? We use a magnifying glass to make something look bigger to us; the magnification of microscopes helps us see small things as they look bigger. But how can we make God look bigger to us; why would we want to when God is already so big?

The way Mary uses the word is slightly different than this. Her soul, she says, *proclaims* the greatness of God. She is so overwhelmed by her growing understanding of what God is about to do that she can't say, or sing, enough about how amazing God is. She proclaims this not only through a magnificent song, but in her body as she nurtures her child and in her steadfast faith which she holds as a witness to God's work in the world. By her actions as well as her words, she proclaims the wonder that is God.

This Advent and Christmas, how is your church magnifying God in your community? What does God ask of you in order to help give birth to the promises of which Mary sang? How is God's greatness manifest in the life of the Spirit being born in your life and faith community? May your spirits rejoice with Mary as you see God at work in you!

Rochelle A. Stackhouse is the Senior Minister of The Church of the Redeemer, United Church of Christ, New Haven Connecticut.

God is still speaking,



This resource is a free service and is made possible by your gifts to Our Church's Wider Mission.