

Church Events for Advent & Christmas 2017 and Epiphany 2018

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

Rev. Lucia Anne Jackson, Pastor

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Dear Members & Friends – Yes, I admit it, the Christmas music is playing. My family expects it this time of year and knows that we wait until the day after Thanksgiving and then the Christmas music is ON – in the house and in the car and in the office.

Nothing gets me in the ‘Christmas Spirit’ like Christmas music! How about you? Is it baking? Or decorating? Or singing “O Come, O Come Emmanuel”? Is it the Advent Candles on the table? Or setting up the Creche? This season is full of traditions, more so than any other season.

*And yet, and yet. It is full of contrasts as well. Because of the rich traditions, those who are lonely feel especially isolated, those who are grieving feel deep sorrow, those who are estranged from a loved one feel significant distress. You know the contrasts. If you or someone you know is lonely or grieving this season, consider the **‘Blue Christmas Service’ on Dec 3rd at 4:00.** A Service that acknowledges through prayer, scripture, music, silence and community the emotional and spiritual challenges felt especially in this season.*

May you find Joy in the midst of busyness and be filled with both Hope and Peace this Advent. 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, Dec 3rd *1st Sunday in Advent: “For What are you Waiting?”*
Worship with Communion & Regular Church School
11:30 Advent Workshop – fun for everyone!
4:00 Blue Christmas Service

Sunday, Dec 10th *2nd Sunday in Advent: “Who is in your family tree?”*
Worship & Regular Church School, 11:15 Pageant Rehearsal
4:00 Christmas Carol Sing along, Hot Cocoa & Cookies!

Monday – Friday -- Hartland Christmas Project Week!

Sunday Dec 17th *3rd Sunday in Advent: “Music of the Season”*
Family Worship -- All Children in Worship

Sunday, Dec 24th *4th Sunday in Advent “Ready or Not . . .”*
Family Worship – all children in worship

Sunday, Dec 24th at 7:00 pm
***Candlelight Christmas Eve Service
of Lessons & Carols***

Sunday, Dec 31st New Year’s Worship Service – lighting candles for memories of the year past and in hopes for the year to come plus Chalking the Door. An intergenerational service.

Sunday, January 7th Worship with Communion,
Rev. Constance Moser preaching, Church School

Sunday, January 14th Worship – Martin Luther King, Jr Sunday,
Church School

Sunday, January 21st Worship & Church School
Annual Meeting and Potluck Luncheon

Sunday, January 28th Worship & Church School

Board of Christian Education News and Notes:

The children have all settled in nicely to a new church school year. We have learned how to be stewards of God's creation, and how to be stewards to each other. We followed Moses and the Israelites as they wandered in the desert. We have learned the 10 Commandments and the Lord's Prayer. We have shared the qualities of leadership with you, our church family.

Now it's on to Advent, one of my favorite times of the Church year! We are planning a very special 'pageant', so stay tuned!

I am so thankful for this time I spend with these wonderful children, and also for the support I receive from you and from my trusted volunteers!

Happy Thanksgiving to all of you! MaryJo Ramsey, DCE

Advent is a busy and joyful time for Church School! Join us for the Church School series on Advent, The Carol Sing (Dec 10th) 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 3rd 11:15 – 1:00! We will have hot pots of Chili for lunch and be making swags, cookies, ornaments, candles, cards and more.

Then on Dec 10th we have the Rehearsal right after church for the Church School dramatic presentation of the song "Angels Hovering Round". (with costumes of course)

Advent

Sunday, December 3rd – 1st Sun in Advent, Communion,
Regular Church School

11:15 ADVENT Workshop for all ages (following worship with lunch)

Sunday, December 10th – nd Sun in Advent, Regular Church School

11:15 Rehearsal

4:00 Carol Sing and Storytelling

Sunday, December 17th - 3rd Sun in Advent – Family Service! (all ages)

Sunday December 24th – 4th Sun in Advent – Family worship

Sunday, Dec 24th – 7:00 Christmas Eve Worship Service

Monday, December 25th – MERRY CHRISTMAS!!

The ADVENT & CHRISTMAS Calendar of Events:

(See details for each event elsewhere in this newsletter. Put this page on your refrigerator or bulletin board – ALL the dates on ONE page)

Sunday, Dec 3rd 1st Sun in Advent Worship & Church School

11:30 Advent Workshop – fun for everyone!

4:00 Blue Christmas Service

5:00 Jr Youth Group 6:30 Sr Youth Group

Thursday, Dec 7th at 12:00

LBS Christmas POTLUCK luncheon & Yankee Swap

Saturday, Dec 9th – 10:00 – 12:00 Christmas Cookie Walk

Sunday, Dec 10th 2nd Sun in Advent Worship & Church School,

11:15 Pageant Rehearsal

4:00 Christmas Carol Sing along, Hot Cocoa & Cookies!

5:30 Youth to move HCP donations, Pizza party & games

Monday (11th) – Friday (15th) -- Hartland Christmas Project Week!

There are many ways to support the Christmas Project

Sunday Dec 17th 3rd Sunday in Advent

Family Worship -- All Children in Worship

5:00 & 6:30 Youth Group Christmas Party!

Sunday, Dec 24th 4th Sunday in Advent

Family Worship – all children in worship

Sunday, Dec 24th at 7:00 pm

***Candlelight Christmas Eve Service
of Lessons & Carols***

MONDAY, December 25th – MERRY CHRISTMAS!!!

Sunday, Dec 31st New Year's Worship Service – lighting candles for memories of the year past and in hopes for the year to come plus Chalking the Door. An intergenerational service.

Ladies Benevolent Society News:

Thursday, Dec 7th at 12:00 **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, re-gifts, silly or something really nice.

*Everyone invited to the Christmas luncheon and Yankee swap!
You don't want to miss this FUN event!*

Saturday, Dec 9th – 10:00 – 12:00 **Christmas Cookie Walk**

Donated Cookies needed – please deliver to the church on Friday the 8th 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. 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:

****Thursday, Nov 30th & Dec 7th & 21st at 5:00
and Sunday mornings at 8:30 to sing in
Worship each Sunday.*

***Rehearsal Sunday, Dec 17th at 8:30am for
Christmas Eve worship at 7:00.*

Stewardship Committee – Late November 2017

As always, we are grateful for your thoughtful response to our annual stewardship drive.

And we thank YOU for your generous support.

As of **November 16th**, we have received **39** pledges with an average increase of **4%** for next year!! We are getting there - but we still need your help.

We are about \$32,000 short of our pledge goal of \$80,000. If you have already returned your pledge, thank you. If you haven't—we hope to hear from you soon!

We all know that our church is so much more than Sunday worship.

Already returned your pledge—or just want to do more? Find a way to volunteer this fall and next year. Sign up to usher. Sign up to host a coffee hour. Find a committee that interests you. Or – best of all hopes – help grow our church by inviting a friend to worship service some Sunday over the holidays.

With sincere gratitude from the Stewardship Committee,
First Congregational Church of Hartland, UCC

Pat Richardson, Tom Ramsey,

Linda Genovese and Rev. Lucia Jackson

PS: If you need a **pledge slip**, phone the church at 436-2224, or just download one from our website <http://www.hartlandcongregationalchurch.org/>

Call to Annual Meeting and Potluck Luncheon on Sunday, January 21st immediately following worship.

All Boards, Committees and organizational components (such as LBS, Music etc.) should submit their reports by January 15th 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. Please bring a potluck dish to share at the luncheon! – Brian Porto, Moderator

Men's fellowship news: Suppers start January 20th and this year run for SIX Saturdays. Larry & Jeannie Frazer's crew for the first set, the Calkins crew are the second set. Speak with the Frazers to join a Roast Beef Supper team or to volunteer for an evening!

Our church has an "online" presence where you can see photos, read sermons, , announcements, updates, special events, church calendar and links to interesting articles.

Even if you are not on Facebook, you can see the church page!!! The **Church Facebook** page is:

<http://www.facebook.com/HartlandCongregationalChurch>

YOU can take this LINK and click it or paste it into your browser to be taken there directly.

AND we have an up-to-date **Website!!** This is a terrific tool for the **CHURCH CALENDAR**. Because do you ever wonder what is happening at church? When the meeting starts? Is there Youth Group this week?

Simple go to the Church Website at:

Hartlandcongregationalchurch.org

Click on "CALENDAR" and there it is – the church calendar of events!

Our Church is an active, vibrant congregation.
We are small but mighty!! All of the worship and music, outreach and fellowship, mission events and study, youth and children activities need to be supported and organized. If you enjoy the life of this church, if your soul is fed by some part of our ministry or if you have ideas or suggestions for change or if you want to get to know your church and the people in it, then consider participating on a board or committee to help support the life of our church. YES, it is that time of year again –nominating! There are positions on all of the church boards – if you are interested in serving please speak with Martha McGlenn or with Lucia.

YOU ARE NEEDED.

Are you between the ages of 1 and 100?

Are you looking for a fun Advent event?

Are you interested in celebrating the reason for the season?

*You are invited to **The Advent Workshop***

Sunday, December 3rd 11:15 – 1:00.

Plus hot chili for lunch!

Simplicity, tradition, community, celebration for all ages.

Please bring a desert or snack to share.

The Hartland Christmas Project

The Christmas Project is an incredible outpouring of generosity and compassion. It is a miracle of community and faith, of churches working together.

Hope, Peace, Joy and Love abound.

How can you help?

* You can choose an ornament to **shop** for a Hartland Christmas Project Family. *Return by Dec 11th.*

* **Donate Food:** Foods with meat are great. Spaghetti sauce with meat, beef stews, hearty soups etc. Instant and brewing coffee.. Powdered milk, hot cereals, hot chocolate. Canned veggies, fruits, toilet paper, paper towels, laundry soap, and dish soap.

* 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 4th, but no used car seats or shoes! *All gifts and donations must be turned in by Dec 11th*

* And Please help **sort** donations on Dec 11th at 8:00

* 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)

*Sunday, Dec 3rd 11:15-1:00 you and your family are invited to the **Advent Workshop** - a hands on event for all ages! (here)

*Sunday, Dec 10th 4:00 **Carol Sing & Hot Cocoa**

5:30 volunteering for the **Hartland Christmas Project!**

Followed by Pizza and games!

*Sun, Dec 17th 5:00 - 6:15 (here) for our Youth Group **Christmas Party!** Bring a silly wrapped gift (regifting welcome).

*Sunday, Jan 7th & 21st 5:00 - 6:15 **Youth Group at the UU**

*Sunday, Jan 28th -9:00 -1:00 Youth **Mission Trip Fundraiser**

Brunch here - all Mission Trip 2018 participants expected to help! Parental support needed!

SENIOR HIGH YOUTH (9TH - 12TH grade)

*Sunday, Dec 3rd 11:15-1:00 you and your family are invited to the **Advent Workshop** - a hands on event for all ages!

*Sunday, Dec 10th 4:00 **Carol Sing & Hot Cocoa**

5:30 volunteering for the **Hartland Christmas Project!**

Followed by Pizza and games!

*Sun, Dec 17th 6:30 - 8:00 (here) for our Youth Group **Christmas Party!** Bring a silly wrapped gift (regifting welcome).

*Sunday, Jan 7th & 21st 6:30 - 8:00 **Youth Group at the UU**

*Sunday, Jan 28th -9:00 -1:00 Youth **Mission Trip Fundraiser**

Brunch here - all Mission Trip 2018 participants expected to help! Parental support needed!

SAVE THE DATES

Mission Trip 2018 - July 22 - 28, 2018

ADVENT GIFT for the Community

*YOU ARE INVITED to
Seasonal celebrations for everyone:*

The Advent Workshop

Sunday, December 3rd 11:15 – 1:00

Bring a dessert to share

A Blue Christmas Service

Sunday, Dec 3rd 4:00

*A time set apart to acknowledge what is hard about this season
- an empty seat at the table, no table at all, a broken dream,
loneliness, grief, fear or worry. Sadness in the season of Joy.
Loneliness in the season of family gathering.*

Cookie Walk

Saturday, Dec 9th 10:00 – 12:00

The Carol Sing along & Hot Cocoa

Sunday, December 10th 4:00 – 6:00

Hartland Christmas Project Week!

Monday, Dec 11th – Friday, Dec 15th

**The “Music of the Season” service with
Special Church School presentation –
*A Family Service***

Sunday, December 17th 10:00 worship

**The Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
of Lessons and Carols**

Sunday, December 24th 7:00