



# The Link



First Congregational Church of Stoughton, United Church of Christ  
*An Open and Affirming Congregation*

January 2018

## Our Vision

*We are called together to embrace God's transformation of our lives and our world  
by becoming and serving as Christ's disciples.*



To you who show forth the light of Christ,

Happy New Year! I know I've said this before, but I'm amazed at how quickly time passes. We were blessed during Advent as we were guided by the worship theme "Angels Among Us," and then welcomed Emmanuel, God-with-us, at our joyful services on Christmas Eve. Now, we're preparing to enter the season of Epiphany. We'll celebrate Epiphany Sunday on January 7, and then the season of Epiphany will extend until Ash Wednesday, which falls this year on February 14. Epiphany comes from two Greek words *eipi* and *phaino*. Together the two words mean "to show forth" or "appear." In the Epiphany season the church focuses on showing forth or making the Christ Child known to the world. Epiphany reveals who Jesus is and lays the foundation for understanding what he has done for us, the focus of the Lent and Easter seasons. We sometimes call Epiphany the season of light, which is fitting, for daylight will soon be increasing each day. The extra minutes of daylight also invite us to notice the ways God is our light, and has

always been so, working for our good through the life of Jesus - through his ministry of preaching, teaching, and healing.

The events from Jesus' life that we focus on specifically during Epiphany are the visit of the Magi to Jesus (Matthew 2:1-12), the baptism of Jesus (Mark 1:4-11), and his transfiguration (Mark 9:2-9). However, we don't just read about Jesus during Epiphany - we have a standing invitation from God to make Christ known to the world through the way we live our lives.

I pray that the season of Epiphany will be meaningful as we make Christ known to our family members, friends, and neighbors. I pray we will let our light shine forth so that all may know that we walk in the footsteps of the living Christ, the one who came to dwell among us to enact mercy and justice and to bring love to all God's people. Throughout this season may we glorify and praise God for all God has done for us, our church, and the world.

With every blessing for the New Year,  
Pastor Mary



Youth Group/Faith4Life

**Sunday, January 7**

**Faith4Life Church School Class (Mr. Clough)**

*"Tough Questions: Is divorce a sin?"*

10:00-11:30 AM

**Sunday, January 28**

**Faith4Life Youth Group (Marcia)**

10:00-11:30 AM

*"You've Got to Serve Somebody"*

**Sunday, February 4**

**Faith4Life Church School Class (Mr. Clough)**

*"Tough Questions: What does it mean to be born again?"*

10:00-11:30 AM

**Sunday, February 11**

**Faith4Life Youth Group (Marcia)**

10:00-11:30 AM

*"My Treasure"*

**Sunday, February 25**

**Faith4Life Youth Group (Marcia)**

Activity TDB

**Sunday, March 4**

**Faith4Life Church School Class (Mr. Clough)**

*"Tough Questions: What if my friends aren't Christian?"*

10:00-11:30 AM

**Sunday, March 11**

**Faith4Life Youth Group (Marcia)**

10:00-11:30 AM

*"Money, Money, Money"*

For more information, contact Marcia Olson, [baglole.olson@verizon.net](mailto:baglole.olson@verizon.net) or [339-987-1730](tel:339-987-1730).

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### FAITHFUL GENTS

"Faithful Gents meets on the *last Saturday of every month*. Please join us on **December 30 at 9:00 am at Bickford's Restaurant, Oak Street, Brockton**. If you have any questions or need a ride, please contact Bob Kuver at 781-341-2751.



The CE team wishes you all a Happy New Year! We wish you all joy and good health in 2018.

This month's Church School schedule will conclude our learning about the sections of our regular church service, with Responding to God's Call (part 2) on **January 7**, We Are Sent Into the World on **January 14**, and We Worship God on **January 21**.

On **January 28**, the kids will put all that they have learned into practice by participating in the Sunday worship with Rev. Mary! More details will follow. Please let us know if your children will not be able to attend worship that day.

As a preview, February will begin a rotation about the Books of the Bible, where the kids will begin learning about the Old Testament. More details to come in the February Link newsletter.

We hope to see you all at Church School this month!



### Book of Life

#### Death:

**Anna Eagles**, whose graveside service was conducted by Pastor Mary at Knollwood Memorial Park on December 5.



### We are very blessed:

Thank you to all who opened their homes for the Faith 4 Life progressive dinner last month – **Donna Connor, Janet Clough, Sally and Kevin Monahan,** and **Bonnie and Chuck Bittner,** and to **Marcia Olson** for organizing such a fun evening. Thanks also go out to **Ed Porter and Alex Baglole** who worked with **Marcia Olson** to bring over 1500 pounds of unsold Attic Treasurers to Savers thus saving us a dumpster fee, saving still useful items from the landfill and garnered our church \$150 in additional revenue. Heartfelt thanks go to our **Caring Committee**, who mailed out many Christmas cards to the homebound members of our church family.

We are very blessed!



### Lunch with the Pastor

Please join Pastor Mary in the Fireplace Room at **11:45 AM on Thursday, January 4.** Bring a brown bag lunch and she will provide beverages and dessert. This is a nice way to share what's going on in our lives. Bring a friend! All are welcome.



On *Communion Sunday, January 7*, Pastor Mary will remain in the sanctuary after worship to meet with you privately and pray with you. If you are in need of any kind of physical, emotional, or spiritual healing or simply need to know that God cares... please come.

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Throughout our fall stewardship campaign we asked you to follow Jesus and embark on a Journey of Generosity. Several of our members gave witness to the powerful impact our church's mission has had on their lives. Many more of you participated in the first two of our Project 275 congregational conversations on our church's financial viability and future. In our proposed 2018 budget, we challenged you to pledge \$95,000. Your response to God's call has been overwhelming! As of December 17, 2017, our Offerings Clerk reported that 53 church households have pledged **\$104,901** representing an **18.4% increase** over 2017 pledges and covering almost 53% of our operating budget, a feat we have not achieved in many years. We are so grateful for the faithfulness of this church community and the commitment we have made together to ensure that God's love and justice continues to be shared with our neighbors. If you have yet to make your 2018 pledge, please mail it to the church office or drop it in the offering plate on Sunday morning.



**SAVE YOUR BOTTLES AND CANS!** Please save these items from your holiday events and parties and bring them to the church. There is a drop off box inside the church at the bottom of the stairs on the right before the office doors, where items can be left at any time. Many thanks to **Maurine Upton** for volunteering to sponsor this project. Monetary donations are always gratefully accepted and the money collected is used for various church ministries and operational needs.



Beginning in January 2018, **The Link** will be going digital. If you are not currently receiving our emails, you may subscribe by sending your name and email address to [Link@uccstoughton.org](mailto:Link@uccstoughton.org). Or simply fill out the insert in the bulletin with your contact information and drop it in the offering plate. Now would be a good time to make sure we have your current email address on file. And give us the name and email addresses of any of your family members that want to get The Link as well.

**Computers and smartphones not in your comfort zone?** If a printed copy is still your preference, please let the church office know and we will gladly mail you a copy of The Link. A donation of \$10 to defray the cost of postage would be greatly appreciated. Some print copies will also be available in the literature rack in the church lobby.

The Link is also posted on our website at [www.uccstoughton.org](http://www.uccstoughton.org).

### How to Find Out if Church is Cancelled

Once in a very great while, inclement weather or other circumstances may force us to cancel church activities. Safety and common sense should guide your decision about coming to church during inclement weather. If we make the decision to cancel church, we will announce it in the following ways:

- 1) *Church Office phone message:* call 781-344-2371 and listen to the recorded message;
- 2) *Facebook/Church website:* check out the church's Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/firstcongregationalchurchofStoughton](http://www.facebook.com/firstcongregationalchurchofStoughton);  
OR go to our church website, [www.uccstoughton.org](http://www.uccstoughton.org).
- 3) *Email:* we will send out a Constant Contact email to everyone on our mailing list.

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### With the Winter Weather Approaching Please Be Considerate Where You Park

Due to the limited number of spaces in our parking lot, we have signs that say, "*Reserved for Those Requiring Proximity Parking,*" and ask that you leave these for individuals who can only walk short distances. We ask all people who are physically able to consider parking in one of the spots in front of the park on Pierce Street. This frees up spots in the lot for those who really need to park closer to the entrance. Also, we ask you to remember not to park in any spot that has a "No Parking" sign, or in the Fire Lanes. Thank you for your cooperation.



Although the final tally is not yet in, we are close! We are delighted to announce that our 2017 Church Fair raised about **\$13,650**. A million thanks to all who knitted, baked, crafted, cooked, moved tables, carried boxes, set-up tables, organized, decorated, advertised, priced, publicized, dressed up as Santa and his elf, kept track of our proceeds, donated silent auction and Attic Treasures items, attended outside craft fairs, and shopped! We simply could not have done it without all of you!



Please submit any Sunday worship bulletin notices to the church office by **8:30 am on Tuesday**. Articles for the February *LINK* will be due by **January 17**. Contact the church office with any changes or additions to the church calendar.

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## **PROJECT 275 A Year of Dialogue and Discernment**

The third in our series of conversations in Project 275 will be held on **Sunday, January 28**. We will start in the sanctuary at the end of worship and we will then move to the church hall for coffee and a 30-40 minute facilitated discussion led by Jill Taylor. The topic for discussion is **“Do We Stay?”**

Please put the dates of future conversations on your calendar and try to take part in as many discussions as possible.

<b>January 28:</b>	<b>Do We Stay?</b>
<b>March 11:</b>	<b>Do We Go? Part 1</b>
<b>April 22:</b>	<b>Do We Go? Part 2</b>
<b>June 3:</b>	<b>Do We Merge?</b>
<b>June 24:</b>	<b>Wrap Up Session</b>

We need your voice and we want everyone to participate. Child care will be available. We invite you to be in contact with us throughout the year. Here is how you can keep the conversation going:

- Send an email to [future@uccstoughton.org](mailto:future@uccstoughton.org)
- Contact Pastor Mary or any member of the Financial Viability Working Group

Let's pray. Let's talk. And let's move forward in faith to face the future to which God is calling us.

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# **NOTICE**

## **Annual Budget Meeting Sunday, January 21, 2018**

### **ALL MEMBERS, PLEASE PLAN ON ATTENDING**

In keeping with the requirements in the Church By-laws, a congregation-wide meeting will be held on Sunday January 21, 2018 after worship.

The focus of the meeting will be a review of the church's financial position and consideration of the proposed budget for 2018.

#### **Agenda**

1. Opening Prayer
2. 2017 Financial Status Report
3. Consideration of the 2018 budget as presented by the Board of Trustees.
4. Closing Prayer

Copies of the Proposed 2018 budget and 2017 Financial Status Report will be available for review at church by Sunday, January 14.

You may also request a copy via email by contacting the church office at [office@ucc.stoughton.org](mailto:office@ucc.stoughton.org)



**AT HOME, IN NURSING HOMES, AND ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES**  
**For those who wish to send greetings, the following list is included:**

*Jennifer Alholm*  
 156 Dean Street  
 South Easton, MA 02375

*Mary Alholm*  
 2049 Dorchester Ave., Rm 222-1  
 Boston, MA 02124  
 (617) 698-6008

*Wayne Alholm*  
 149 Homeland Drive  
 Whitman, MA 02382  
 (781) 523-1640

*Doris Bamberg*  
 Copley at Stoughton Nursing Care Center  
 380 Sumner Street  
 Stoughton, MA 02072  
 (781) 341-2300

*Amanda Cushing*  
 103 Benson Road  
 Stoughton MA 02072

*Clifford and Amy Fowler*  
 30 Belcher Street  
 Stoughton, MA 02072  
 (781) 344-9573

*Jean Hamilton*  
 4 Capen St. Apt. 203  
 Stoughton, MA 02072

*Nancy Ivaldi*  
 The Arbors at Taunton  
 763 County Street, Apt. 224  
 Taunton, MA 02780  
 (508) 824-4800

*Betty Lambert*  
 19 Rose Street Unit #4  
 Stoughton, MA  
 (781) 436-3416

*Rev. Jean Lenk*  
 63B Stafford St.  
 Plymouth, MA 02360

*David Niven*  
 Elm 103, Brookdale  
 97 Warren Ave  
 Plymouth, MA 02360

*Dorothy Dawe*  
 The Arbors  
 2121 Central Street  
 Apt 112  
 Stoughton, MA 02072  
 (781) 344-8367

*Muriel Rowland*  
 92 Cedar Hill Dr. Apt. 202  
 Windsor, VT 05089

## January 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> COMMUNION NEW YEARS DAY NO CHURCH SCHOOL 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Coffee Fellowship 11:00 AM Healing Prayers 1:00 PM BRC- Sanctuary/2ClassRm 3:00 PM BRC-FH/Kitchen	<b>2</b> 7:00 PM Rel Addiction	<b>3</b> 6:00 AM BRC- FR 7:00 PM Bible Study	<b>4</b> 6:00 AM BRC-FR 8:30 AM N&N <span style="color: red;">Deadline</span> 10:00 AM Prayer Shawl 11:45 AM Missions/Outreach 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	<b>5</b> 6:00 AM BRC- FR 10:30 AM Caring Committee 7:00 PM AA 8:00 PM BRC	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> 6:00 AM Boston Renewal Church 11:00 AM AA
<b>8</b> 10:00 AM Faith4Life Class 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Coffee Fellowship 1:00 PM BRC- Sanctuary/2ClassRm 3:00 PM BRC-FH/Kitchen	<b>9</b> 6:30 PM Cub Scouts 7:00 PM Rel Addiction	<b>10</b> 6:00 AM BRC- FR 7:00 PM Bible Study	<b>11</b> 6:00 AM BRC-FR 8:30 AM N&N <span style="color: red;">Deadline</span> 10:00 AM Prayer Shawl	<b>12</b> 6:00 AM BRC- FR 7:00 PM AA 8:00 PM BRC	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> 11:00 AM AA
<b>15</b> 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Coffee Fellowship 11:30 AM ALL CHURCH BUDGET MEETING 1:00 PM BRC- Sanctuary/2ClassRm 3:00 PM BRC-FH/Kitchen	<b>16</b> 10:00 AM MLK Day of Service 7:00 PM Rel Addiction	<b>17</b> <span style="color: red;">LINK Deadline</span> 6:00 AM BRC- FR 9:00 AM Friendly Service 7:00 PM Crossroads	<b>18</b> 6:00 AM BRC-FR 8:30 AM N&N <span style="color: red;">Deadline</span> 10:00 AM Prayer Shawl 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	<b>19</b> 6:00 AM BRC- FR 7:00 PM AA 7:00 PM CE Meeting 8:00 PM BRC	<b>20</b> 6:30 PM Cub Scouts	<b>21</b> 11:00 AM AA
<b>22</b> 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Coffee Fellowship 11:00 AM Trustees 11:30 AM Confirmation Class 1:00 PM BRC- Sanctuary/2ClassRm 3:00 PM BRC-FH/Kitchen 6:30 PM Faith4Life Bags of Hope (offsite)	<b>23</b> 6:30 PM Cub Scouts 7:00 PM Rel Addiction	<b>24</b> 6:00 AM BRC- FR 12:00 PM UCC Clergy Group 7:00 PM Bible Study	<b>25</b> 6:00 AM BRC-FR 8:30 AM N&N <span style="color: red;">Deadline</span> 10:00 AM Prayer Shawl	<b>26</b> 6:00 AM BRC- FR 7:00 PM AA 8:00 PM BRC	<b>27</b> 4:00 PM Confirmation Retreat (offsite)	<b>28</b> Confirmation Retreat (offsite) 11:00 AM AA
<b>29</b> 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Coffee Fellowship 1:00 PM BRC- Sanctuary/2ClassRm 3:00 PM BRC-FH/Kitchen	<b>30</b> 7:00 PM Rel Addiction	<b>31</b> 6:00 AM BRC- FR 7:00 PM Bible Study	<b>1</b> 6:00 AM BRC-FR 8:30 AM N&N Deadline 10:00 AM Prayer Shawl 11:45 AM Missions/Outreach 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	<b>2</b> 6:00 AM BRC- FR 10:30 AM Caring Committee 10:30 AM Caring Committee 7:00 PM AA 8:00 PM BRC	<b>3</b> 6:00 AM BRC- FR	<b>4</b> 11:00 AM AA



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United Church of Christ

*An Open and Affirming Congregation*

76 Pierce Street, Stoughton, MA 02072

Tel: 781-344-2371

e-mail: [office@uccstoughton.org](mailto:office@uccstoughton.org)

[www.uccstoughton.org](http://www.uccstoughton.org)

Rev. Mary L. Perry, Pastor

Pastor's Study: 781-344-2395

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
PERMIT NO. 46  
STOUGHTON, MA