A Publication of the United Church of Christ, Congregational, 6 Lexington Street, Burlington, MA 01803
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JANUARY 2025 HILLTOP HERALD

Rev. Andrew Harris
Pastor

Chris Stahlnski
Moderator

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Dear UCC Burlington Church Family,

The Apostle Paul writes that in Christ we are many members of one body. One of the things I love about the congregational church is that we strive to *embody* this teaching. Each member brings their unique gifts to share with the congregation in their own unique way. We come together as one body – teachers that teach, singers that sing, prayers that pray, bakers that bake, preachers that preach. Together, we make the church, delighting in God's gifts and the way God brings us together to add up to something more than the sum of our parts.

On Christmas Eve, our new bell choir made their debut. It was a beautiful performance but, more than that, it was the perfect encapsulation of the many-members-one-body ethos the church seeks to live into. Together, the members of the bell choir make one instrument. Each person is like the string of a guitar. Each hand is like a key on a piano. Each eye, ear, and hand, each person, comes together to make one instrument, one song, to glorify God and sing the good news of God's love to heaven and earth.

As we enter the new year together, let us think about our gifts that we share with the congregation. Not all gifts are easily apparent. While we may see the visible and audible gifts of our musicians, lay preachers, and volunteer coordinators from our pews, we don't see the underlying gifts of courage, faith, or hope. While you may find it hard to identify or imagine your visible gifts (a relatable problem!), it's impossible to deny your interior gifts of courage, hope, and love. If you have any of these spiritual gifts (and you do) then you have gifts to share with the church, with one another, and with God.

How is God calling you to share your gifts with the world in 2025? Pray about it then get back to me, because the church needs many members, with our many unique gifts, to glorify God and share the light and love that we feel in our souls with our community and with the world.

Peace,

Andrew

SAVE THE DATE
ANNUAL MEETING/LUNCHEON
FEBRUARY 2, 2024

Join us for our 292nd Annual Meeting. After worship we will have a light lunch in Sewall Hall and then return to the sanctuary for the meeting which will also be on Zoom. There will be a signup sheet for food items. We also need childcare downstairs in Skelton Hall during the meeting. It will be Zoom livestreamed so you can still vote while providing childcare.

Church DEACONS Plans were finalized for poinsettia foiling , delivery and for Christmas Eve services.

There was extensive discussion about coffee hour. People sometimes show up with food even though they didn't sign up to bring something. While extra food isn't a bad thing and is always enjoyed, this can be confusing for the host and the bakers who have signed up. The Time and Talent Survey (T&TS) showed more people signed up to host, which should largely eliminate the need for the same people to do it so often. Donna Flecchia will add a second host position to the online sign up, and there will be a standard number of tables and chairs left up in Sewall Hall so that the hosts don't have to put them up each week. In addition, if there aren't enough hosts or bakers signed up a couple of weeks before a coffee hour, a deacon will reach out to people who signed up recently through the T&TS and ask them to fill the slots.

There was also much talk about children at coffee hour. We need to keep everyone safe during this community time. Sometimes youngsters show up from Sunday school or the nursery before their parents come to coffee hour, and energetic children often run or jump off the stage, which could result in injury to themselves or others. We'll try setting up an activity center for them and if that doesn't work, we'll try something else.

Andrew would like others to do the children's time during worship occasionally. If anyone would like to do this, please contact him.

Plans are underway for a potluck dinner and karaoke night, likely on Saturday evening, February 15.

HOW TO RECYCLE YOUR CHRISTMAS TREE!

You can put your tree out to the curb for the town to pickup! Can you take a tree from our fundraiser and add to your curb? (two trees allowed per household) Or you can do something fun!

The goats at **Channell Homestead in Hanson** have enjoyed eating the trees since 2018. The family-owned farm says that the trees are like a sweet treat that helps naturally deworm the animals. You can drop off your tree outside the farm's front gate at any time. But make sure it is free of tinsel, ornaments, ribbons, pesticides, and fire retardants.

If you are someone who likes to keep your tree up a bit later, they are hosting a drop-off event on January 11. Visitors will be able to come from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. to drop off their trees before snuggling their goats and rabbits! "It's definitely a great family event, and the goats are super socialized and friendly," Channell said.

The best part is after you gift the goats your tree, you can spend an hour cuddling them. "It's almost like a therapy session with the goats," Channell said. "I know it sounds funny, you don't really get it until you do it." Channell recommends bringing carrots to feed both the rabbits and goats at the event.

(Also there are goat farms in Holliston, Georgetown and others closer to home.)

NEWS FROM CHRISTIAN ED

On December 15 The Sunday School ruled! They read for the Advent lighting and performed the Skit "The New Star".
Great job!

On December 22 our carolers braved the cold to sing at 5 homes. We were so happy to see our friends and enjoy each other's company while caroling. Thanks to the group! (The Musselman and extended family are missing from the picture , but were there and shared their voices).

LOOK WHAT'S COMING UP IN SUNDAY SCHOOL

January 5-Sunday School provides coffee hour. Please meet in Sewall Hall at 10:30. The kids will not be in worship.
January 12-All ages worship, Sunday School in church for the entire service.
January 19-MLK Weekend. Will work on an MLK lesson
January 26-Science Sunday

NURSERY CARE

Childcare care is provided to newborn up to age 4.

CE is urgently looking for a paid nursery attendant Sundays 10 am-12pm. This can be every Sunday or a job share. The candidate must be 17 years or older & will be CORI'd. Ask around, you never know who may be interested.

MISSIONS UPDATE!

RED WAGON

The Burlington pantry is always in need of the following items:

Diapers all sizes and Wipes

Please bring to worship on January 26th and we will bring forward during worship. You can always make a donation to the pantry. Payment should be made to PHP and mailed directly to PHP, P.O. Box 343, Burlington, MA 01803

CRAFTING FOR A CAUSE

In 2024 we made prayer shawls, prayer squares. blankets, hats, mittens and scarves which we donated to various organizations. We had six or more regular attendees and several people who worked at home and donated what they made to us. We hope you continue to creatively support this much appreciated outreach of our Church. Most of our hats, scarves and mittens went to Coat Boston or to the Cambridge Street closet. Blankets were donated to Project Linus.

We will start our weekly Thursday afternoon meetings sometime in January.

MISSIONS TREASURER'S REPORT

In November $2400 was donated to the UCC to aid in the recovery efforts due to the destruction caused by Hurricane Helene. The total collected for Neighbors in Need was $417.25. This will be forwarded to the UCC, helping to make us a 5 for 5 church.

In December $500 was paid to Strengthen the Church and another $500 to the Christmas Fund-Veterans of the Cross, completing the contributions that make us a 5 for 5 church.

MISSIONS NEWS / DONATIONS

A heartfelt thanks from Mission on your generous support of our many fund raisers this year and especially for the several in December. Final totals for the Christmas offering will not be available until later in January. The offering was split with 50% going to the national UCC Hurricane Relief project and 50% going to support the work of this Church. Additionally Deacons sent the $300 love offering from November and Missions donated $2,400 to this relief effort. In January we will send 50% of your Christmas offering to the UCC Hurricane relief efforts too.

We gathered slightly used coats, hats, gloves etc. for the Cambridge Street Closet. These will be given to those students in the Burlington schools who need them.

We gathered new coats, accessories and gifts for Coat Boston. These are distributed through 30 Community -based organizations and Boston public schools. In 2023 year over 1000 coats were donated to children in need in Boston. Total numbers for 2024 have not yet been made public.

Additionally, you donated pajamas, sweatshirts etc. to PHP to be given to the children of their clients.

Thank you for being so generous and may you have a healthy and happy New Year

JOYS AND CONCERNS

Shirley Fong's mom Mary
Deana's sister and brother-in-law,
Linda and Jim Sutton
Kay Shute
Julie Lewis's cousin Alicia
David Leonard's sister Lucinda
Nancy Davis's son George
Barbara Naddaff's daughter Nancy
Laura Nowell's cousin Nigel
Molly and Family
Joan Zink's daughter Jen
Christa Brown
Tom Killilea's brother Jim
Bobbie Killilea's sister Karla
Carpenter Family
Claire Simas, niece Janice and
daughter Marianne
Lynn and Lee Tirrell's friend Bob
Sarah Tredeau's friend Megan
Sally Willard's friends Maureen and Jack
Chris Stahlinski's sisters

Brian Gionet's Dad
Roberta Low
Shirley Garside's daughter Lynn
Jessy McNeil's sisters Grace and Joyce
Skip Glancy's sister Dorothy
Marilyn Langley's brother Bill
Kelly Sievert
Bill Hitchcock
Jan Blandino's grandson Toby, her
Daughter Brenda and Son-in-law Rick
Ginger Mungillo's daughter Cindy and
Ginger's son Jim
Jean Bastos
Barbara Garland

Mother Earth!

CONDOLENCES:

Our deepest sympathy to Stephen Landry, our Sexton, on the passing of his mother Thelma Tibbitts. Prayers to Thelma's family and friends. She was a very talented woodcarver. Thelma was a member of our church family and will be greatly missed.

WEDDING NEWS:

Congratulations to Sam McNeil and Brenna Tredesco on their recent marriage. Jessy and Dave are so excited for them. Blessings for a wonderful life together.

JANUARY BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

6 Nelson Eby
7 Ali & Peter Wisniewski
8 Kathy Olney
18 Bev Maher
19 Erin Killilea
21 Dante Ramirez (Killilea)
22 John Heald
22 Lucas Clark
26 Stephen Landry (Sexton)
28 Tom Killilea
29 Jan McScheffrey
31 Kristin Duran

WORSHIP PARTICIPATION

January 5 Communion Worship

Communion Prep:	Chris Stahlinski
	Lucy Damiani
Pastor:	Rev. Andrew Harris
Organist:	Brian Gionet
Lay Leader:	Debbie Claar
Head Usher:	Dave McNeil
Usher:	Deb Glancy
Greeter:	Andie Joseph
Flowers:	Poinsettias
Collector:	Deb Raymond
Nursery:	
Sunday School:	Deb Raymond
	Donna Ferro
Coffee Host:	Deb Raymond
Baker:	Sunday School

January 12 Worship-Love Offering

Pastor:	Rev. Andrew Harris
Organist:	Brian Gionet
Lay Leader:	Chris Stahlinski
Head Usher:	
Usher:	Sally Willard
Greeter:	
Flowers:	
Collector:	Marge Zamanian
Nursery:	
Sunday School:	Deb Raymond
	Donna Ferro
Coffee Host:	Andie Joseph
Baker:	Donna Flecchia

January 19 Worship

Pastor:	Rev. Andrew Harris
Organist:	Brian Gionet
Lay Leader:	Lucy Damiani
Head Usher:	
Usher:	
Greeter:	Chris Stahlinski
Flowers:	
Collector:	Dick Butler
Nursery:	
Sunday School	Deb Raymond
	Donna Ferro
Coffee Host:	Andie Joseph
Baker:	Marcia Rich

January 26 Worship-Red Wagon

Pastor:	Rev. Andrew Harris
Organist:	Brian Gionet
Lay Leader:	Sally Willard
Head Usher:	Deb Glancy
Usher:	
Greeter:	
Flowers:	
Collector:	Marcia Rich
Nursery:	
Sunday School:	Deb Raymond
	Donna Ferro
Coffee Host:	Deb Glancy
	Chris Stahlinski
Baker:	Deb Glancy

If you would like to volunteer please use this link:

https://signup.com/client/invitation2/secure/567269842043/true#/invitation

January 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 **Happy New Year!** **9-1p Meditation Rental in Sanctuary**	2 1p C4C TBD **6:30p Scouts**	3	4 **10a Funeral For Thelma Tibbitts**
5 10:30a Communion	6 **6:30p AA** 7p Trustees	7	8 2p Bible Study 7p Choir	9 1p C4C **6:30p Scouts** 7p Deacons	10	11 **Mohan Rent Noon setup 1-4pm**
12 10:30 Worship Love Offering Sunday School	13 **6:30p AA**	14	15 2p Bible Study 7p Choir	16 1p C4C **6:30p Scouts** 7p Missions 8p Pub Theology	17	18
19 10:30a Worship Sunday School	20 **MLK Holiday Office Closed** **6:30p AA**	21 7p PC Mtg	22 2p Bible Study 7p Choir **Annual Reports DUE For handout January 26**	23 1p C4C **6:30p Scouts**	24 Copying Annual Report for Handout on Sunday!	25 **Hanif Rental 4p Setup 5-10pm**
26 10:30a Worship Red Wagon Sunday School **Razia Rental 2:30 setup 3:30-6:30p**	27 **6:30p AA**	28	29 2p Bible Study 7p Choir	30 1p C4C **6:30p Scouts**	31	

UCC Congregational
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Address Service Requested

TO:

JANUARY 2025 HILLTOP HERALD NEWSLETTER