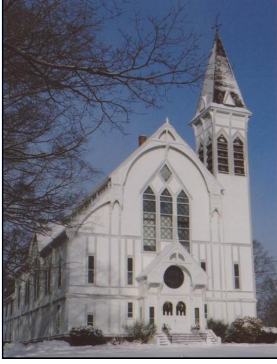


# ***FROM the HILL***



## ***First Congregational Church of Georgetown***

**7 Andover Street, P.O. Box 200**

**Georgetown, MA 01833**

Telephone: 978-352-8443

Email: [churchoffice@georgetowncongregational.org](mailto:churchoffice@georgetowncongregational.org)

Website: [www.georgetowncongregational.org](http://www.georgetowncongregational.org)

**December 2017**

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*"Give light, and the darkness will disappear itself"*

*Desiderius Erasmus*



Traveling down the road in the early dark of December, I always look to one house that is awash in bright Christmas lights. It is

the one that makes the Christmas songs playing on my radio come alive. It never fails to bring light back into my cold heart.

It is also a reminder to me that it is the sharing of our light that brings others out of the darkness. There are professors in North Florida State who take regular toys and modify them so children with challenges can enjoy the toys everyone else are using. It keeps those children connected with the world and culture around them. That is the Professors' light.

And what is your light, that you share this season? I recall that God came to touch this world, not as a big wig, but as a child-humble and kind. The message in Jesus'

arrival in a stable as a gentle surprise is that the light arrives wherever and whenever.

" 5. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

6. Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;

7. rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness."

Philippians 2:5-7 (NIV)

May the light of Christmas bring joy to you this December!

*Pastor Lorraine*

*Our Church Mission Statement:*

*"To nurture those in our own faith community  
and to act on our faith by reaching out to others."*

We are an Open and Affirming church of the United Church of Christ.

## Greetings From the Diaconate

*"Christmas waves a magic wand over the world, and behold,  
everything is softer and more beautiful."*

Alecia, Emily, Janice, Kristen and Gladie wish each of you perfect moments during this very special season. Those special moments could be the simple aroma of freshly baked sugar cookies, the smell of a pine bough laden with "Oh..remember this one ornaments..." and making new memories with old friends.

We share the lighting of advent candles, signifying the coming of the celebration of the birth of Christ. Add to that the beautiful sounds of Christmas, carols being sung, our very own bell choir and the sweet voices of our choir sharing their talent and love of our church.

We also share the meaningful and loving messages from Reverend Lorraine, together with the reading of Christmas stories of peace and joy.

As Haleigh Harris pointed out in her stewardship presentation, the gathering together on Christmas Eve for our candlelight service is one of our most beloved traditions. Beauty and peace is so evident on that special night.

Please read all of the information in this December newsletter, we are brimming with events this month. Take in your favorite ones, maybe try some new ones! Gingerbread houses, a hot chocolate and Christmas cookies buffet, hosted by your diaconate promises to be yummy and and so much more. All these events add to your Christmas memories.

May the light of the Star in the East cast Christmas magic over each of you and may your hearts smile this glorious Christmas season.

*Gladie Kneeland,*  
Chair, Diaconate

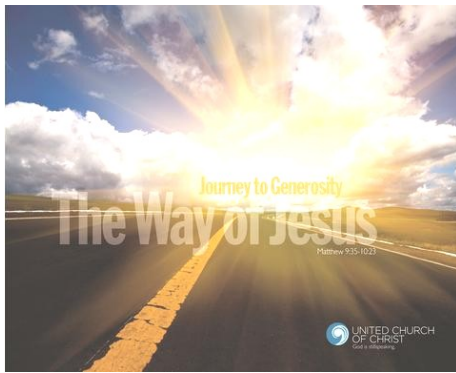
*Join us as we celebrate the birth of Jesus!*



**Christmas Pageant Sunday  
December 17 at 10:30am**



**Christmas Eve Service of  
Carols and Candlelight  
Sunday December 24 at 7:00 pm  
Bell Choir will bring us holiday music.**



## Stewardship Update

We thank all who have contributed to the 2018 pledge drive. If you have not already done so, please take a few moments to fill out your pledge card and place it in the offering plate on Sundays or mail it to the church. A reminder that pledge cards are located in the narthex or they can be mailed to you if needed.

Thank you for your generous spirit!



Because I will be having knee replacement surgery on December 26 and be out of work 4-6 weeks, I need to set up a schedule of volunteers who would be able to be in the office to answer the phones and do some light office work, Monday - Friday, 9am - 12pm(noon). I will be working on some things from home but will need to have someone there to print documents I have created.

If you are willing and able to help out, even just to answer the phones and door please let me know so I can create a calendar of helpers for Pastor Lorraine.

Thank you,

Marilyn (978-352-8443 or [office@georgetowncongregational.org](mailto:office@georgetowncongregational.org))

**NewsLetter**  
**DEADLine**

**ALSO,**  
**December 7th**

## Storm Cancellations



In the event of a Saturday night or Sunday morning snowstorm or blizzard this winter, you can check with Channel 7 (NBC) or Channel 56 (CW) for storm closings. If you want to know if church is cancelled just tune in to the TV listings on these channels.

There is also a mobile app that you can download for free by searching WHDH in the app store and view storm status anywhere, anytime.

## Women's Guild



Guild Members will meet at Noon on **Friday, December 8th**, for their Annual Christmas Luncheon. Featured on the entrée will be Nason's Stone House *turkey pies*, followed by a *Cherries Jubilee dessert*. Your **reservation** and check/cash in the amount of \$8.00 must be in by **Sunday, December 3rd**. (Please make check payable to Joan Chatterton).

Following the luncheon, Kim Knapp, Mary Ann Nelson and Allan Barlow will provide wonderful Christmas music to kick off the Advent Season.

Newcomers are welcome! As in the past, we ask that everyone bring gifts for Ruth's House - men's, women's and children's socks. Ruth's House is an amazing mission located in Haverhill, and one that the Guild has supported for many years.



### Church Pantry Sunday is December 3

**Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays**

**9:30 am—11:30 am**

With Thanksgiving around the corner, non-perishable protein foods delivered to our Church Pantry, will be appreciated. We have several families and single adults who use the Pantry, and Thanksgiving meals puts an extra strain on these struggling families

Pets are cared for too!

The Pantry will be monitored for overstock in certain items. **Extra food items will be taken to Our Neighbors' Table in Amesbury** where there is a large food pantry that serves twelve area towns, including Georgetown. We want you to know your contributions will always be used - either by visitors to our pantry, or to a larger one.

**Some Suggestions are:** Juice Boxes Canned Tuna Canned Chicken

Mayonnaise Spaghetti Sauce Hot Chocolate Mix

Canned Pasta Meals Coffee Kraft Mac & Cheese

**Also in demand:**

Shampoo

Toilet paper

Paper Towels

Since we no longer accept refrigerator or freezer items we will gladly accept grocery store gift cards. To enable families to pick up fresh meats, eggs and milk.

**Pet Pantry Items:** We now offer pet food to help families keep their animal companions fed and healthy.

canned and dry food      treats      supplies for God's small creatures.

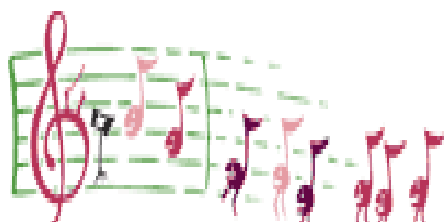


**It will be here before you know it!**

## **Annual Meeting, January 28, 2018**

Please prepare your team's **Annual Report** and send it into the office email [office@georgetowncongregational.org](mailto:office@georgetowncongregational.org) by Thursday, January 10th.

Teams are asked to get their **2018 Budget** into the Finance team ASAP so they can prepare a report for the **January** Finance Meeting.



## *Music Rehearsals Resume*

**Our music rehearsals for The Fall are as follows:**



### **Choir** *Rehearsals*

**Senior Choir:** All welcome regardless of ability to read music. Only the desire to sing is necessary. Anyone under 6th grade please speak to Bob Knapp.

Tuesdays @ 6:30pm: December 19 and 26

Tuesdays @ 7:30 pm: December 5



**Bell Choir:** Ability to read music. Any age welcome.

Tuesdays @ 6:30pm: December 12, January 2

Tuesdays @ 7:00pm: December 19



**Band:** Instrument required. If you don't have one but can read music speak to Bob Knapp. There are always rhythm instruments if nothing else!!

Tuesdays @ 7:00pm: December 19

Tuesdays @ 7:30pm: December 12, January 2





**PRESENTED BY THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH YOUTH PROGRAM**



*Get out your aprons & chef hats!  
Our 3rd Annual Gingerbread House Contest!*

On Sunday, December 10th following Worship Fellowship Hall is turning into Santa's tiny village. We are having our Annual Gingerbread House Decorating Contest. Entry fee is \$5.00.

**Here is what you will need:**

A constructed Gingerbread House of your choosing on a cookie sheet/ tray. Kits are available at CVS, Walmart and craft stores (Wilton's has a good kit), or if you are really energetic you may make your own!

**\*\*You will need to assemble the house the night before.\*\***

All your candies, frostings, cereals and any edible delights you would like to add to your house (the kits come with the basics). **\*\* You will decorate your gingerbread house at after church on December 10th.\*\***



We will have a table in the center of the room with all sorts of extra goodies you can use for decorating your house and welcome the donation of anything you do not need to the table so there is more to share! (who needs a whole bag of M&M's or Gum Drops to decorate their house?!) More fun to share!!

We will wrap them up in cellophane and hold them on display for the next Sunday when we will vote for your favorite.

**Join us after Worship on December 10th  
for a special Cookies & Cocoa fellowship.**

*See you all there to participate or just watch and enjoy the fun!!*

## Outreach News

### THE MISSION OF H.O.M.E.

(Homemakers Organized for More Employment)

*"We must realize the truth of ourselves - we are one human family. One a part of the other. My old work horse Teddy, and the fancy registered horse visiting us, had no trouble eating out of the same dish. We must discover the same"*

Sister Lucy Poulin, Founder of H.O.M.E. since 1972.

**H.O.M.E.** is at the frontlines of the 'basic needs system'. Those who knock at their doors are people fleeing abuse, others who simply made bad decisions and need to start over, veterans and seniors who are stumbling around in poverty within a system that doesn't offer reprieve. These are only a few. There are others; many are families who are realizing hard times.

Since last January, 125 people moved from shelter into permanent housing; during that same time, twenty-five more people came for emergency shelter than the previous year.

The Food Bank provided 35 more food boxes in January than during the same time in 2016. H.O.M.E.'s back-to-school program met an increase in need of school supplies from 45 in 2016 to 81 for the current school year.

Every year there are more people needing help in Northern Maine, an area where folks are as poor as in the hills of Appalachia. Perhaps the following numbers will show the magnitude of H.O.M.E.'s Ministry, a Beacon of Light in a night of poverty.

- 81 children received backpacks filled with school supplies;
- 450 adults and children received Christmas Gifts in 2016;
- 12 Daycare children enrolled year round;
- Volunteer groups worked 8,256 hours; individuals worked 2,145 hours during the year;
- 63 Food Boxes distributed monthly from the Food Bank;
- Soup Kitchen serves 30 people daily;
- 64 shelter beds provided on any given night;
- 18 units of transitional housing provided year round;
- 8 units of subsidized housing provided year round;
- 10 Adult education programs provided.

Through services, stewardship of resources, home building with timber from H.O.M.E.'s mill, growing and harvesting crops, and shared responsibilities, this organization brings forth new possibilities for low income families.

**We're looking forward to our Annual Christmas Tree for H.O.M.E.** It will be gracing our Narthex on Sunday, November 26, adorned with tags representing the wishes of the children at H.O.M.E

*(Continued on page 8)*

## Outreach News

(Continued from page 7)

**Please choose your tag/tags and plan to return your gifts to the tree on Sundays, December 3rd & 10th.** There is one child's wish per tag. Wrap your gift/gifts in holiday paper and tape the tag securely to the package. If you choose to purchase a gift card, please put it in a box and wrap it, or put it in a card, then in a gift bag and tape it closed so it won't get lost! It is important that each gift be returned with the tag. Take note of the highlighted, coded numbers on the tag/tags that you take from the tree. You will see a chart next to the tree. Sign your name next to the corresponding numbers on this chart. Thank you for taking a few minutes of your time to signup! Keeping track of these gifts is a huge help to the Outreach Team.

### HIGHLIGHTS:

**\*BRING GIFTS BY SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10th**

**\*ATTACH TAGS SECURELY**

**\*PUT YOUR NAME ON THE CHART OPPOSITE THE CODED NUMBER.**

Thank you for your support and love for the Children of H.O.M.E.



## Light The Church Fund



Contributions for lighting the church can be made in memory of loved ones or in honor of someone special. If you would like to make a contribution or need more information please contact JoEllen Fielding at 978-352-6904.

*The steeple will be lit in December in loving memory of  
Carl Soper, by his wife Ruth.*

*The steeple is also lit in December in celebration of  
Carol Sheehan, by Pam Sheehan*



Marie Birdsall	Iris Edwards	Carol Sheehan
Brigit Bratland	Holly Harris	Tracy Southwick
Betty Bruce	Evelyn Hills	Michael Tardy
Toni Cassidy	Michael Lee	Elizabeth Thomas
Donna DeSisto	Emily Moore	Charlotte Winter
Catherine Dougherty	Jody Moore	Joycelyn Wormell





Each month we have a group of people who meet to talk about books selected by members. Meetings are held in different houses or at the church. If you are interested in attending a meeting, contact the Church Office or any of the people listed below to get directions to that month's meeting.

All are welcome and you do not have to RSVP to attend. Below is a list of the books they will be discussing in the coming months in case you want to get the book ahead of time or you might just be looking for a good read.

Date	Title	Author	Hostess/Location/Phone No.
Dec. 6, 2017	The Underground Railroad	Colson Whitehead 2016	Karen Young 11 Monroe St Karen: 978-352-2697
<b>2018</b>			
Jan. 31, 2018	God Pretty in the Tobacco Fields	Kim Michelle Richardson	JoEllen Fielding Location: Church JoEllen: 978-352-6904
Feb. 28, 2018	The Whole Town's Talking	Fannie Flagg 2016	Gladie Kneeland & Ruth Soper Location: Church? Gladie: 508-523-5990
Mar. 28, 2018	The Summer Before the War	Helen Simonson 2016	Alecia Balduf Alecia's house: 3 Bayberry Lane Alecia: 978-835-9094

## Sign Up for Greeters & Offering Collectors



We are looking for individuals, friends and families to serve as greeters on Sunday morning (you will never have to do it alone). If you would like to sign up please see and usher or contact the church office at 978-352-8443.



Dear Diaconate Members, and Congregation

Many thanks for the beautiful pink rose given to me in honor of my Birthday. There are some perks to reaching this senior age, and one of them is being remembered by my Church Family with this lovely tradition!

*Love, Joan Chatterton*

Your kindness is greatly appreciated. Thank you for thinking of me. I'm slowly improving. Hope to be at the next Guild meeting.

Millie Gangloff

**FUNDS FOR THE UCC DISASTER FUND USA** continue to grow. We have received \$2,045 to date, and anticipate that a generous portion of the Advent Offering will be added. Many thanks for your thoughtful giving to help victims of the natural disasters that ravaged many parts of our country this fall.

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS FOR RUTH JONES** - A note received from Ruth Jones' daughter, Nancy, tells us that her Mom has recently been transferred from her assisted living apartment of many years to a nursing facility nearby, with a connection to Hospice. Ruth now needs more assistance. The Birthday card we all signed for her in honor of her 101th celebration last month has been transferred too, and is hanging on the wall of her new room.

The address is: 739 East Park Center Blvd., (# 158) Boise, ID 83706. Nancy wants us to know that Ruth is still doing fairly well but needs more care, and that she loves hearing from us.

### **From the Member-at-Large**

The Church Council is very interested in your ideas as to how we can grow spiritually as a church. How can we expand what we do well so that it reaches beyond our own walls? Please share your thoughts with me or with any of the Council members. Other thoughts and concerns may be told to me as well at any time.

Our new Member-at-Large to the Council is Joanne Kelly.