

JANUARY

Upcoming Meetings

Jan ? -6:30 Outreach Mtg
Jan ? - Education Ministry Mtg
Jan 7- 6:30 Membership Mtg
Jan 9- noon & 6:00 Book Club
Jan 10- deadline to submit
committee annual reports to
Camille
Jan 14- 6:30 Property/Finance
Jan 15- 6:30 Council Mtg
Jan 19- 10:45 Budget Review Mtg
Jan 21- 6:30 Worship/Music Mtg
Jan 22- 6:30 Deacons Mtg
Jan 26- Annual Mtg after Service

2020

*This is the
beginning of
anything you
want.*

Hand Bell practice meets at
10:45 a.m. after Sunday worship

Stitches of Love meets every
Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.

Choir practice meets every
Thursday at 7:00 p.m.

Tower Tidings



Congregational Church of Laconia, UCC

January 2020

Pastor's Letter

Dear Friends,

By the time you receive this edition of the Tower Tidings we will be closer to Epiphany (January 6th) than New Year's Day. Depending on how one counts, Epiphany is the day of or the day after the twelve drummers drumming gift! Unlike what most of us think and practice, Epiphany not December 25th marks the end of the season of Christmas.



According to Merriam-Webster, *epiphany* means to have a sudden realization as in "I had an epiphany." In the jargon of the church it is the feast day celebrating the revelation of God incarnate (made flesh) in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. It also is known as the Feast of the Three Kings (or Magi). In the Eastern Orthodox Church it marks the baptism of Jesus.

Is it making too much of a play on words to consider that this year is 2020 and to say that someone who has "perfect" eyesight has 20-20 vision. Now, couple with the religious and secular meaning of *epiphany* and I offer to you the challenge to enter this new year with your eyes open and your spiritual vision 20-20 and perhaps we will have more than just a day of Epiphany but a year of them!

Things to be "looking" for with your 20-20 eyes in 2020: More information from Property & Finance about the budget process, much more from the "Church Leadership for the 21st Century" team, on occasion expect more "experiential" elements in worship (Did you like the Advent Wreath skit?); and more opportunities to serve in mission and outreach locally and beyond.

But not only these things but be looking for the new and exciting ways God might be shining a new light into your life. For our faith is not something we practice while "in church" or doing "churchy things!" God is not just God of the church.

Two of my favorite scripture passages heard during the seasons of Advent and Christmas are from Isaiah and the Gospel of John:

*The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness — on them light
has shined. Is. 9:2*

*The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not
overcome it. John 1:5*

Join me in 2020 seeking like the Magi the many possible epiphanies God has yet to reveal.

Pastor Neil Wilson

Paula's Note

It's not quite January as I write this note but if I hold true to my past behaviors by the time you get this issue of Tower Tidings, my Christmas tree will be down and all the inside decorations will be put away.

It surprises me that I, and the world, seem to move so quickly from the smiling faces of children, festive Christmas music, beautiful sparkling lights all around town, communities appearing to be in harmony and peace to things as usual. How quickly the time of good will to all seems to disappear.

I remember watching the preparations for the New Year's celebration in New York City last year and the very clear announcement that there would be more security and strategies for keeping the celebrants safe in Time Square. Big heavy trucks will block all the roads so that vehicles can't

run into the crowd. Seems unthinkable that this is needed but it is our reality today.

Our society moves so quickly from gazing at the promise and hope of baby Jesus in the manger, to anticipating and preparing for Lent, and the dangers ahead for Jesus. In every newborn baby there is a promise of a wonderful future, and yet there is also fear of danger, illness and scar-city.

As this Christmas season fades, how will we hold onto the light? How will we continue to reflect the light and love of Jesus to the world around us? Our daily actions of love to others will fuel the flame of hope and promises deep within...don't let that light go out!

Pastor Paula



By Derek Waldron

The road is dangerous and full of perils
Reasons to abandon this journey
Rose higher than these burning dunes
Is anyone worth this pain?
Is the end in sight?
Are we being deceived?
Yet step after step
Mile after mile
We carry on with hope

Hope for change
Hope for redemption
Hope for truth
The miles are washed away
The briers removed, sores healed
For as we reach the crest
And look out across the grasslands
A lone star shines in these early hours
Down upon a humble shack
Surrounded by livestock and simple folk
A child of God cries
Blessing us all

A Call to the 195th Annual Meeting of the

Congregational Church of Laconia United Church of Christ
January 26, 2020

The Annual Meeting of the church will be held immediately following worship in the church sanctuary to conduct the following:

- 1) The presentation and vote on the proposed 2020 budget,
- 2) To receive and vote on the Nominating Committee's slate of officers and committee members,
- 3) To receive the reports of all Officers and Committees,
- 4) To present the Church Service Award,
- 5) To act upon any other business that may be brought to the congregation for consideration or action,
- 6) To Install newly elected officers and committee members.

2020 Church Service Award

It's time to consider that special person or persons who have served this church and community in exemplary ways. The award will be presented to the deserving person(s) at our Annual Congregational meeting January 26, 2020. Forms to submit your suggestions are at each entry way. Ask an usher for one!

Nomination Form for Church Service Award

This award is presented each year at the church's annual meeting to "honor and reward those persons or person whose service to the church is above the call of duty."

Person(s) nominated:

Reasons why you are making this nomination:

Your Name (please print)

Date

Phone

E-mail

PLEASE RETURN BY January 12, 2020

- [E-mail](mailto:neil@laconiaucc.org) to: neil@laconiaucc.org
- Mail to: Church Service Award
The Congregational Church of Laconia UCC, 18 Veterans Square, Laconia, NH 03246
- Drop in box in sanctuary or moderator's box in church office

Welcome New Members!

On Sunday, December 8, we welcomed five people into our church membership – Rita and Jerry Krupp, Bob and Rose Marie Phillips, and Rob Apkarian. The Membership Committee requested them to submit information about themselves, and they have shared the following.

from Rose Marie and Bob Phillips:

Bob and I are originally from Michigan and have resided in New Hampshire since 1975. In 2003 we retired from owning and operating a 10 office real estate company serving NH and Maine. Headquartered in Bedford, we became active in the Greater Manchester community and supported charitable endeavors throughout our market area. Our personal mission has always been to support the communities in which we live and work. Our civic and community involvement included serving on several non-profit boards serving Southern NH and the Lakes Region. We were members of the Center Harbor Congregational Church for many years. Upon moving in 2004, we began attending the Congregational Church of Laconia as we wanted to feel engaged in our new community. We were attracted by the level of outreach that we saw.

We are both retired and are enjoying time for a bit of golf and gardening as well as a bit of interesting travel. We are blessed with a son residing in Maine, and a daughter in California. Our granddaughter lives in Oregon. We appreciate the welcome we have received in Laconia.

from Jerry Krupp:

My wife Rita and I were searching for a new, open church that had a good choir. I asked a fellow Rotarian, Rev. Paula Gile, for a suggestion, and she recommended the UCC church here in Laconia. Rita began singing in the choir long before we joined this church, and has enjoyed the opportunity to share her talents. We are impressed with the facility, the outstanding sermons, and the friendliness of the members. We hope our experiences from other churches will be a benefit to this wonderful, blessed church.



from Rita Krupp:

Jerry and I have both had busy, rewarding careers in corporate America, and Jerry has travelled extensively throughout the world. We lived in Paris, France almost four years for his work in acquisitions and ventures. What broad insights we gained from that experience!

After raising five children one year apart, I used my RN and nursing degree to teach for ten years, while pursuing a Masters in Gerontology. I parlayed this experience into a broader opportunity to conduct retirement planning seminars for senior corporate executives. Working with major corporations, I was able to share the life management strategies necessary for a smooth transition. Since my retirement, I have pursued my love of gardening. I'm a master gardener, and involved in several garden clubs in the area. As noted before, I've been singing my whole life, and with many wonderful chorales as we have moved around the country. I'm so blessed to have found a fine choir here. Hopefully, some of the experiences we've had will be useful to our church.

New member Rob Apkarian joins us by transfer from the Franklin Congregational Church. He is an army veteran, and now retired from the US Post Office. Rob enjoys the opportunity to work as a personal trainer, and he has two grown children. We were also happy to learn that Rob was recently engaged to Ronna Duffy, who has been attending church with Rob. She is from Claremont, NH, a retired school teacher, and she has two grown children and two grandchildren.



Warm hugs to India from Stitches of Love!

These children's sweaters were made by Stitches of Love and are now on their way to India with Ann Peck our church's missionary friend from Vermont.

Thank You for Your Support of the Campership Fund

Thank you for your support of the Campership Fund throughout the Advent season. The Educational Ministries Committee sponsored the 2019 Christmas Card and, as a result, received donations totaling \$750. The Campership Fund is in place to provide financial support for anyone interested in attending a UCC church camp or conference. Over the years, the Fund has done so much – sending a child to Horton Center on Pine Mountain, sponsoring a teenager attending a National Youth Event, and supporting an adult participating in a mission trip. With special thanks to Camille for keeping track of all the names listed on the card!



Happy New Year!

Your Worship and Music Committee invites you to bring the last of the Christmas cookies, party mix, and other edible sundries from the holidays to Coffee Hour on Sunday, January 5. We'll all enjoy one last (?) splurge before our New Year resolutions really kick in! Come worship with us! Stay for fellowship too!



Sunday January 19 10:45 a.m. Budget Review presented by Property and Finance

Sunday January 26 following service 195th Annual Meeting
Saturday February 15 The Membership Committee is sponsoring our Annual Winter Potluck and Gift Swap beginning at 6:00 p.m. It is always a good time of fun and fellowship, and just what we all need to warm up the long winter! More details and announcements will be coming.

Update From Paula - In 2020 Bill and I have a few special longer vacations planned, so before booking them we requested from the Executive Committee that I have an additional six weeks of unpaid leave this year. I will continue with my normal responsibilities - just have to be a better planner. Thank you, we are grateful for this opportunity.
 Pastor Paula

*Take pride in
how far you
have come &
have faith in
how far you
can go.*



Happy January Birthdays

Jan 1

Devie Groleau

Jan 2

Allen Gable

James St. Pierre

Karen Anderson

Jan 3

Haily McCarty

Jan 4

Leah McCallum

Grace Vaillancourt

Jan 5

David Williams

Jan 7

Earl Clough

Jan 10

Angela Vaillancourt

Jan 11

Donna Wilson

Susan Ross

John Quimby

Jan 14

Carolyn Furber

Margie Kreidler

Jan 16

Craig Shippee

Richard Bastille

Jan 18

Berton Yeaton, Jr

Jan 22

JoAnne Whitticom

Tammy Emond

Jan 23

Bette Dudley

Jan 26

Priscilla Sanborn

Megan Cross

Reid Vaillancourt

Jan 27

Dot Steuer

Jan 29

Diane Lockwood



Christmas Made Special!



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