



### The Bolton Congregational Church, United Church of Christ

228 Bolton Center Road, Bolton, CT 06043 ~ (860) 649-7077 ~ [www.boltoncongregational.org](http://www.boltoncongregational.org)

*The vision of the Bolton Congregational Church UCC is to be true to the model and example set by the early Church of the Apostles, in our own time.*

### From the Pastor...

The end of one year, the beginning of the next. A time to reflect on the past, and set our intentions for the future.

January, in the annual cycle of church life, is a time for numbers. It is the month when we put together our annual report, and amass all of the statistics about what happened the year before - our finances, our attendance, our programs. January is a number-heavy month.

I know many of you are eager for our church to grow, so last year at this time I wrote about how a church grows. Our first instinct is to get new members. A second instinct is to re-engage lapsed members. These are both true and deserve time and attention – but NOT because we want higher attendance. Engaging new people is important because we believe there is something special about the gospel, and want to spread the Good News to others. Re-engaging lapsed members is important because we value our relationships.

Instead, when we want to see more people in worship, we first look at ourselves. The easiest way to grow in attendance is for all of us to commit to coming more often. For example, forty people coming once per month averages to ten people per week, but if they all come on the same day our attendance would jump from 90 to 120 without adding a single new member.

Just as you set your intentions to give of your financial resources, now is a good time to set your intentions to give of your time. What would it look like to set aside one hour every week to listen to the stories of our faith, to pray for one another, and to sing praises to God?

Of course, numbers only tell part of the story. So while January is a time when we will be bombarded with facts and figures, remember that the church is always so much more than what we can put on paper.

The church is the living embodiment of Christ. Following the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we will continue to reflect on our history as a church, and boldly move into the future.

*Pastor Nicolette*

### NOTICE OF THE 2019 ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Bolton Congregational Church UCC will be held on Sunday, January 27, 2019 in the meetinghouse following the 10:00 a.m. worship service.

The purpose of the meeting will be the following:

- I. To review and approve the reports of the various boards, committees, and staff;
- II. To review and approve the reports of the Church Clerk, Treasurer, and Financial Secretaries;
- III. To elect the officers and board members for 2019;
- IV. To approve the proposed budget for 2019;
- V. To conduct any other business which will properly come before the congregation.

In the event of cancellation due to extreme bad weather, the Annual Meeting will be held the following Sunday, February 3, 2019, following the 10:00 a.m. worship service.

Every effort will be made to make the annual report available the Sunday before the Annual Meeting.

I would ask that anyone responsible for preparing a portion of the Annual Report do so and submit it to the church office no later than **Tuesday, January 8** so that the report can be compiled and distributed in a timely manner. Please email your information to [boltonucc@gmail.com](mailto:boltonucc@gmail.com).

*Bill Dakin*  
Moderator



## ~ Christmas Services and Schedule ~

### **Christmas Pageant – December 23<sup>rd</sup>**

10:00am service only

### **Christmas Eve – December 24<sup>th</sup>**

- 6:00pm – *Traditional Worship* – Sanctuary, with music featuring our choir and organist, Mary Lou Prescher.
- 8:00pm – *Cozy Christmas Eve* – Chandler Hall, with music featuring Lynn Tracy, our Thursday Night Storytelling musician.

### **December 30<sup>th</sup> – First Sunday after Christmas**

10:00am Service Only

## **Worship Schedule for January**

### **Sunday, January 6 – 8:45 a.m. & 10:00 a.m.**

*First Sunday after Epiphany*

*Matthew 2: 1-12*

**Message:** "Visitation" ~ Pastor Nicolette

### **Sunday, January 13 – 8:45 a.m. & 10:00 a.m.**

*Second Sunday after Epiphany*

*Matthew 2: 13-23*

**Message:** "Lamentation" ~ Pastor Nicolette

### **Sunday, January 20 – 8:45 a.m. & 10:00 a.m.**

*Third Sunday after Epiphany*

*Matthew 3: 1-17*

**Message:** "Proclamation" ~ Pastor Nicolette

### **Sunday, January 27 – 8:45 a.m. & 10:00 a.m.**

*Fourth Sunday after Epiphany*

*Matthew 4: 1-17*

**Message:** "Temptation" ~ Pastor Nicolette

**Annual Meeting Sunday**

## **Holiday Hours for Pastor / Church Office**

The Church Office will be closed from Friday, Dec 22<sup>nd</sup> thru Friday, Jan 5<sup>th</sup>. The office can be opened on Jan 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> by appointment only. If you would like to make an appointment or have an urgent need during this time, please call or text Pastor Nicolette at 517.927.8739 or email her at [pastornicolette@gmail.com](mailto:pastornicolette@gmail.com).

## **Caregiver Collective**

**Sunday January 13<sup>th</sup> at 11:30am**

The life of a caregiver is often hectic – not only are you taking care of your own needs (appointments and obligations), but as a caregiver you are also helping the person you care for meet theirs. If you are caring for someone you love, please join us to share the joys and challenges of this experience.

## **Financial Update**

Thank you to everyone who has turned in a 2019 Intention to Give. These intentions help the finance team to create a faithful and accurate 2019 budget. We will begin preparing the 2019 budget based on what we have received as of Sunday, Jan 6<sup>th</sup> and would appreciate receiving your information by then. Forms are available in the church narthex.

Based on our information to date, we are expecting to end this year in the red, although with a smaller deficit than initially projected.

Working together, we make our church a vibrant, healthy, joyful, and faithful community where God is worshipped through our words and actions. Thank you for all of the ways that you give – whether in the plate, or in another way.

**From the Finance Team**

## **Festival of Trees**

Thank you to the entire planning team, as well as to all of the volunteers who stepped up over the weekend to help make our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Festival of Trees a great success! We admired about 25 trees decorated by the church, non-profits, and businesses, welcomed 400 friends and neighbors over the course of the three day event, and provided dozens upon dozens of goodies.

Congratulations to our winners:

### **Full Size Tree**

1<sup>st</sup> Place – Boy Scout Troop 73 (\$400)

2<sup>nd</sup> Place – Girl Scouts (\$200)

3<sup>rd</sup> Place – Bolton Lions Club (\$100)

### **Table Top Tree**

1<sup>st</sup> Place – Bentley Memorial Library (\$300)

2<sup>nd</sup> Place – Bolton Heritage Farm (\$200)

3<sup>rd</sup> Place – Bolton Land Trust (\$100)

**WE STILL NEED VOLUNTEERS** to help with the taking down of the trees and straightening up of Chandler Hall.

**Thursday January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5-8pm**

**Friday January 4<sup>th</sup>, 10am-1pm**

**Saturday January 5<sup>th</sup>, 10am-1pm**

Please come if you are available!!!

## Storytelling Resumes!

Our evenings of storytelling and music will begin again on Thursday, January 17<sup>th</sup>, in Chandler Hall at 7:00 pm.

Please contact Pastor Nicolette if you have something you would like to share as we enjoy the opportunity to listen and reflect on the stories of "your lives".

Please join us in Chandler Hall on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month for the following story themes:

- January 17 – The Past
- February 21 – The Present
- March 21 – The Future
- April 18 – The Third Thursday is Maundy Thursday – we hope you will join us for an evening of remembering that very special night.

## Monday, January 21<sup>st</sup> is



## Winter is Here...

A reminder that **on Sunday mornings**, church will occur as scheduled, except in extreme weather circumstances (in consultation with the Deacons, and under the advisement of our first responders). If church is in fact closed, the local TV stations (WFSB - CBS, WVIT- NBC and WTIC - FOX) will be notified and closing information will be posted. This is both for your safety, and for the safety of our first responders who will have enough on their hands without potential accidents. **On weekdays**, the office will be closed if the Bolton Public Schools are closed. If you are uncertain if the office will be open, it is best to call ahead.



## Prayer Shawl Ministry

We are a dedicated group of knitters meeting on the fourth Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. year round in the lower level of the meetinghouse. Our next meeting will be on January 28, 2019.



Anyone can make a request as a gift of caring, comfort, or for the joy of a celebration. There is never a charge. Sometimes we take on special requests to knit other items of need and we enjoy the change.

We do appreciate your generous support and donations of yarn, needles and money.

Visitors are always welcome at our meetings...we enjoy teaching new knitters and we will continue to support your learning ongoing. It is a social evening...you can come anytime, no commitment. You may make requests or direct any questions to Dot Lessard, Barbara Maheu, or any member of our knitting group.

*Dot Lessard*

Prayer Shawl Ministry

## Crafters'/Store Corner

The Store was quite busy during the holidays. We had many volunteers who "staffed" the Store during the Festival of Trees and we were able to contribute \$290.00 to that event. This event brought much attention to the Store from the community, as many were very surprised that we were here and were equally surprised at the quality and types of items that we offered and it was a great start to our holiday season. Once again, we were able to give the Sunday school students \$3.00 gift certificates to the Store and they always have fun making purchases with their "very own money". Their selections often come as a big surprise to us as many of the children spend a great deal of time shopping for family members or friends.

We want to thank Jane and Dye Hooper for their huge donation of items that spanned several generations. We want to thank them for thinking of the Store as they downsize and move to smaller quarters. We know how difficult this task is and want them to know just how fortunate we feel to be the recipients of so many of their family treasures. We are in the process of sorting through and hope to be adding them to the store over the next several months. "THANK YOU" Jane and Dye for your thoughtfulness, generosity and continued support.

And of course, thank you to everyone (volunteers, donors, shoppers, etc) who supports the Store. It is YOUR store and it would not exist without each and every one of you. You have made it possible for us to continue to support the missions of our church throughout its many years.

We look forward to working together with you in 2019. Store hours: Sunday 9:30 a.m. - 12.00 p.m. (usually on a self-serve basis) Tuesday 10:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. staffed

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!

Lynn Ralston

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## Church School News...

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Happy New Year to you all!

I hope this article finds you well and that you were able to enjoy your Christmas and New Year. We hope you are able to be in Church on December 23<sup>rd</sup> to see the children perform in the Christmas Pageant. It is a "new pageant" this year and will be a truly wonderful and entertaining show. The children never let me down. They bring such joy into the Church and help you truly feel the presence of God. Last year we had the Christmas Ninja and this year we had a visit from Optimus Prime. Who would have known that a Transformer was there to welcome the baby Jesus!

We have changed our Sunday school classes around a bit again this winter. Our Kindergarten and Pre-K students will go back to having their own separate class and the rest of the children will be together. I could use a few more volunteers to help with the Pre-K/K class and to be available to substitute for either class if needed. Please let me know if you are able to do this.

Our Confirmation classes will begin on January 27, 2019 at the Annual Meeting and will continue through May. They will generally be held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of each month in Chandler Hall from 12:00-3:00pm and will include a lunch. If anybody would like to provide lunch for one of our Sundays please let me know. We would greatly appreciate it. There are currently 5 students signed up.

*Jessica Romeo*

Director of Christian Education

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## A "Thank You" From the Past

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A church member received the following text message. This family suffered a total loss from a fire two years ago and our church generously took up a collection to help them through. We don't often directly hear from the many people our charitable works help, but this family member took the time and we thought it was worth sharing.

### ♦ Broad Brook, CT

**From the family of the house fire in vernon from Christmas 2016 we want take some time out and just say thank you to all who went out their way and helped our family.. its been a kinda rough, rocky road for us mentally and emotionally these past 2 years but we will remain in God's hands everytime Christmas is around the corner i can't help but think of you all.. thank you once again** ❤️❤️❤️❤️❤️❤️❤️❤️

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## Chandler Book Nook

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*"Books are the quietest and most constant of friends; they are the most accessible and wisest of counselors, and the most patient of teachers."* ~Charles William Eliot



## Chandler Book Nook

Happy New Year...2019!

After a busy holiday season, we anticipate that you, like us, look forward to settling down with a cup of tea and a good book.

The Book Nook is re-energized for 2019 and open for business!

Many of you have seen the beautifully renovated Chandler Hall...just completed. When you come to visit, don't forget to stop by and browse the bookshelves. Our collection continues to expand and evolve. Our goal is to offer diverse subjects, to contribute to a richer spiritual life.

If you have recently read any inspirational books, we'd love to hear about them. We are always looking for new titles for Chandler Book Nook.

The Library Ladies,

Linda Brown

Denise McLennon

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## From the Board of Missions

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A HUGE "thank you" to all who were able to contribute to The MACC Joy of Sharing Program. This year's response was overwhelming as the congregation provided more than just a meal, but almost a week's worth of groceries to each family for Thanksgiving and then, again at Christmas, another week's worth of groceries AND store gift cards to purchase presents for under the tree. We are a very blessed and giving congregation and the Board of Missions is ever grateful for your support of our important work. Thank you and Happy New Year to each and every one of you!

*Lloyd Pedersen*

Board of Missions

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## Our Joys and Concerns

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**Birthdays...** Shirley P., Zoe F. (5<sup>th</sup>), Janet F., Barbara M., Tyler S. (10<sup>th</sup>), Todd D., Joel M. (9<sup>th</sup>), Lee F., Joel W (30<sup>th</sup>), Andy S's grandson (23<sup>rd</sup>) and daughter Sharon's (14<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration with her new heart), Paula L,

**Anniversaries...** Nicolette's 10-year anniversary of her ordination; Sue and Marc S 45<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary;

**Other Joys...** Andy and Doug have a 3<sup>rd</sup> great-grandchild on the way; having young families and their children in church; Dick B's surgery went well; the Prayer Shawl Ministry; Kay is home and feeling much better; Debbie B's granddaughter's kind generosity; Madison W's kindness in donating a newly won doll; family visiting from out-of-state; gratefulness for finding that "special" someone; Trip B shared his joy of serving on the Board of Missions; the joy and peace of acceptance; the movie "Green Book"; having Herb in choir and worship;

**Hospitalized, ill, surgery, etc...** Pam C, friend of Barbara M's; friend of Debbie K's, Arlis B's brother, several church members.

**Concerns...** all the people and their families dealing with addiction and mental illness; those affected by the earthquake in Anchorage, AK; test results for Robbie K and friend of Debbie K; Donna F's parents home dialysis treatments; Valerie K's father-in-law's Alzheimer care; anniversary of Amy B's mom's passing; those who are remembering and missing family members who have passed; Cathy S's friend undergoing dialysis; remembering birthdays of parents who have passed; Arlis B's friend on kidney transplant wait list; Sharon W's sister's oncology results; Pam C;

### Bereaved...

**Other...** Donna P is grateful for the support during her time of grief; Kathy M prays for her mom and others who are experiencing a first holiday without their spouse; Tom M is grateful to help a friend who is caring for his 96 year old uncle and for all the care givers; Helena T sends joyful prayers to all who have accomplished a task that seemed undoable; Herb F is out of hospital and grateful to be volunteering and hoping to return soon; traveling prayers for all who are heading off to be with family and friends;

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## Hymnal Update

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Our Glory to God hymnals are in the pews! The decommissioned red, blue, and green hymnals are now available to the families of those in whose name they were given. You may contact the church office by January 11<sup>th</sup> if you would like to request a specific hymnal or hymnals. Beginning in February, the remaining hymnals will be available to other individuals interested in having a copy for their personal library.

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## Lenten Devotional

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The period of time before Easter, known as Lent, is a sacred time of reflection and preparation. It is generally a time when people find ways to recommit themselves to spiritual practices. This year, we hope to create a Bolton UCC Lenten Devotional – a booklet of forty brief reflections written by you, to share with one another. Think about a favorite passage you might want to share with the community, and a paragraph or two of what this passage means to you. More information, including dates for some writing workshops, will be in the February newsletter.

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## Charitable IRA Distributions

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If you are impacted by minimum distribution requirements, did you know that if you make a charitable gift to the church as a direct transfer from your IRA, that gift is not counted towards your Adjusted Gross Income? As the tax laws change, this is a great way to financially support the church while still receiving some tax benefits. Of course, to find out more about this and other ways to give, see your personal financial advisor.

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## Church Office Position

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We are thankful that Lori Boyd has been temporarily filling in for this position, but it's now time to diligently look for a permanent replacement. We will be posting for the position this month and will keep you updated here and in the Church Chirps.

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## Many Thanks to Banner Water

...for donating their time and talent to fixing our water odor issues in the church parlor bathroom and in Chandler Hall.



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Seen Banning  
CT Lic. 281776

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## From the Heart

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Happy New Year!!

As we begin the New Year with the winter settling in, we are reminded of others who are still in need of warmth and comfort.

As you know, "From the Heart" collects fleece and knitted/crocheted blankets all year long. We recently received a wonderful donation of baby blankets and our contact at Covenant to

Care mentioned how needed these still are. She also commented on the teen sized blankets which are always increasing in need.

If you enjoy to knit or crochet, please consider making a blanket as a winter project, knowing the need is great and you will be helping someone who could really use it.

If you don't have the time or resources to make a completed blanket, but have enough time to make a square, please check out our "Squares of Care" program on our website at [www.fromtheheartct.com](http://www.fromtheheartct.com). "From the Heart" collects 10" x 10" squares that we attach to other square donations to create unique and completed blankets. You can use any color and any pattern you like which makes the blankets fun and unique....as each child is.

And...we love those fleece blankets as well! We have patterns and pictures on our website for the Fleece Knotted Blankets, but there are several different ways to make them. It is a fun project from selecting the fleece pattern to putting them together...why not give it a try?

Or...last but never least, the after holiday sales are sometimes the best way to find a great deal on the fleece blankets so please keep your eyes open for the deals if you would like to help and are not necessarily crafty.

"A Kind Gesture can reach a world that only Compassion can heal", Steve Maraboli.

Thank you for all your support and Happy New Year again!

Laura Ann  
"From the Heart"



Wishing you all a  
Blessed, Healthy, and  
Happy New Year!

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*From the Signpost Staff*

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## Men's Group Meeting

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### Men's Group

The Men's group will meet next on January 24<sup>th</sup>, at 11:00am in Chandler Hall.

Bring a bag lunch and stay for the movie! All are welcome.

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## Upcoming Event

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# The Work That Reconnects



Restoring ourselves  
our ecology  
and our inter-being.


Bolton Congregational Church  
Chandler Hall  
Bolton, CT

January 26, 2019  
8:45am – 4:30 PM

This is an outside, non-profit organization that will be hosting a workshop at our church and all are welcome to attend. If interested, please visit their website at <https://workthatreconnects.org> and select the event for more information and/or registration.

# january

## 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>† <b>Sunday Worship Services:</b>            8:45am – Traditional            10:00am – Family &amp; Church School            (Unless otherwise noted)            Church Store Open:            9:30am-12:30pm</p>	<p><b>31</b>             Office Closed</p>	<p><b>1</b>    <b>Happy New Year!</b>            New Year's Day            Office Closed</p>	<p><b>2</b>            Choir – 6:30pm            Board of Deacons            7:30pm            Refugee Recovery            7:00 pm            Office Opened by            Appt. Only</p>	<p><b>3</b>            Festival of Trees Clean-Up            5:00-7:00pm             Office Opened by            Appt. Only</p>	<p><b>4</b>            Festival of Trees Clean-Up            10:00am – 1:00pm             Al-Anon            7:30pm            Office Closed</p>	<p><b>5</b>            Festival of Trees Clean-Up            10:00am – 1:00pm</p>
<p><b>6</b>  <b>Communion Sunday</b>             Board of Missions            11:30am             Pastoral Relations            11:30am             Epiphany</p>	<p><b>7</b></p>	<p><b>8</b>            Time to Socialize/Crafters            10:00am            Church Store Open:            10am-3pm            Finance Team            6:30pm            Board of Stewardship            7:30pm</p>	<p><b>9</b>            Choir – 6:30pm             Church Council            7:30 p.m.             Refugee Recovery            7:00 pm</p>	<p><b>10</b></p>	<p><b>11</b>             Girls Club            6:00-9:00pm             Al-Anon            7:30pm            Office Closed</p>	<p><b>12</b></p>
<p><b>13</b>             Caregiver Collective            11:30am             1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Epiphany</p>	<p><b>14</b></p>	<p><b>15</b>            Time to Socialize/Crafters            10:00am            Church Store Open:            10am-3pm</p>	<p><b>16</b>            Choir – 6:30pm             Refugee Recovery            7:00 pm</p>	<p><b>17</b>            Storytelling            7:00pm            "The Past"</p>	<p><b>18</b>             Al-Anon            7:30pm            Office Closed</p>	<p><b>19</b></p>
<p><b>20</b>             Board of Christian Ed            11:30am             2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany</p>	<p><b>21</b>             Martin Luther King Jr. Day</p>	<p><b>22</b>            Time to Socialize/Crafters            10:00am            Church Store Open:            10am-3pm</p>	<p><b>23</b>            Choir – 6:30pm             Refugee Recovery            7:00 pm</p>	<p><b>24</b>            Men's Group            11:00am</p>	<p><b>25</b>             Girls Club            6:00-9:00pm             Al-Anon            7:30pm            Office Closed</p>	<p><b>26</b></p>
<p><b>27</b>  <b>10:00 Service Only</b>  <b>ANNUAL MEETING SUNDAY</b>            11:15am             Confirmation Class            11:15am – 3:00pm             3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany</p>	<p><b>28</b>            Prayer Shawl Gathering            7:00pm</p>	<p><b>29</b>            Time to Socialize/Crafters            10:00am            Church Store Open:            10am-3pm</p>	<p><b>30</b>            Choir – 6:30pm             Board of Deacons            7:30pm             Refugee Recovery            7:00 pm</p>	<p><b>31</b></p>	<p><b>1</b>             Office Closed</p>	<p><b>2</b></p>