

Congregational Church of Hooksett

December 2023 Newsletter



Contact Us

Congregational Church of
Hooksett

5 Veterans Drive

Hooksett, NH 03106

(603) 485 - 9009

office@hooksettucc.org

www.hooksettucc.org

Rev. Kerry Richardson,

Interim Pastor

pastor@hooksettucc.org

Jacki Mead, Admin. Asst.

office@hooksettucc.org

Donna Marshall, Interim

Choir Director

hooksettdmarshall@gmail.com

Jan Bordeleau,

Accompanist



Kerry's Corner:

Greetings my brothers and sisters in Christ,

I think we can all agree that December is a very busy month. I am hoping that we can all take time to fully appreciate the reason for the season. I am excited to share some events and opportunities for everyone to enjoy. First, I will be presenting an Advent series starting on Thursday November 30th at 6pm. The series will run through December on Friday nights at 6pm. December 10th at 3pm you are invited to accompany a group who will be attending the New Hampshire Gay Men's Chorus at the Derryfield School. On December 16th at 10am there will be a Gingerbread making competition held in fellowship hall all necessary items will be provided (feel free to bring your own "extra" accouterments) December 21st will be the Holiday Blues service, a service for those who struggle with this time of year. Christmas Eve day the very talented Kerrin Gullison has prepared a Christmas Pageant for the whole family. I have read it and I think it's well done. If you have any questions about any of the events, please feel free to contact me at 603 620-0235.

Lectionary Readings for December

December 3

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Isaiah 64:1-9

Psalms 80:1-7, 17-19

1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Mark 13:24-37

December 10

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Isaiah 40:1-11

Psalms 85:1-2, 8-13

2 Peter 3:8-15a

Mark 1:1-8

December 17

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

Psalms 126 or Luke 1:46b-55

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

John 1:6-8, 19-28

December 24

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

Luke 1:46b-55 or

Psalms 89:1-4, 19-26

Romans 16:25-27

Luke 1:26-38

December 31

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS DAY

Isaiah 61:10-62:3

Psalms 148

Galatians 4:4-7

Luke 2:22-40

Most importantly, I hope that we all can look forward to the season with anticipation, but let's not hurry to the finish line, there is much to see, to hear and to feel. Let's journey together, pack light. Blessings,

Your servant in Christ,
Pastor Kerry

From the Diaconate:

Luke 2:11-12

Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.

Greetings from the Diaconate

Our church will be decorated by December 3rd as we begin our weekly journey of Advent to prepare for the coming of our Lord and Savior.

Each week we will light an Advent Candle:

Week 1- Hope (Purple)

Week 2- Peace (Purple)

Week 3- Joy (Pink)

Week 4- Love (Purple)

Please plan on joining us for the following services:

December 21, 6:00 PM Blue Christmas

December 24, 10:00 AM Christmas Pageant

December 24, 5:00 PM Christmas Eve Service of Readings and Carols

December 31, 10:00 AM Fifth Sunday, a Music Sunday, and a homily

Pastor Kerry is planning an Advent Series beginning on Thursday, November 30th at 6:00pm.

If you'd like to contribute flowers for our Christmas Eve Service, please consider bringing in a Poinsettia or Cyclamen to place on the Altar and take them home with you to enjoy.

Everyone is enjoying coffee hour! We are grateful for all who bake food!!

The first Sunday of the month, we provide a cake to celebrate all the birthdays for the month. Please think about volunteering some of your time, along with the deacon of the month, to pour coffee, juice, and cleanup. The deacon will make the coffee and set things up. The sign-up sheet is located by the goodie table in the dining room.

We wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy Healthy New Year!
Christmas Blessings

Bill Andrade	Joan Cote
Bonnie Boucher	Kathleen Dube
Andrea Brown	Mary Ellen Kresel
Walker Brown	Paula Vaughn
Kim Fischer	Nancy Vaughan

From The Hooksett Community Kitchen:

Please join us for our monthly meal on Monday, Dec. 18th from 5-6 pm. Troop 603 will be serving our meal this month. The meal features spiral ham, mashed potatoes, vegetable, bread, and dessert. All are welcome!



From the Trustees:

Well, believe it or not, December has arrived! I'm a bit surprised that another year has almost passed us by! The older I get, the faster they go!

The exterior security lighting on the building is completely installed, and every doorway is well lit up at night. Between the new lighting and the lights on the island, you can read in the parking lot!

We are still collecting items for Savers. Please bring your donations to church on Sunday or call the church to make arrangements to drop off the items. We can also arrange a pickup if necessary. The items that we don't take to Savers, we will use at our yard sale in the spring.

The Independent Service Network of New Hampshire held their first dance in the Fellowship Hall on 11/6. There were about 10 clients and their support people in attendance. They also have done leaf clean-up twice in our parking lot.

We held our first Budget Meeting on 11/12. Once we receive the budget requests from all the Committees, we should be able to finish the Budget for 2024. We will present it at the Annual Meeting.

We also had a "real" fire alarm test on 11/12. The firemen from the station across the bridge came over and pulled the alarm. They said that we did a great job evacuating the building. However, the next day I heard from Ian Tewksbury at the Hooksett Fire Dept. He sent me a picture of the curve and cars parked by the tall trees. He said that we shouldn't be parking there because it doesn't allow for the firetrucks to enter the parking lot. This would hinder things during a real fire. So, please refrain from parking in that area. Thanks!

We will be having a women's AA Group start holding meetings in Fellowship Hall on Thursday evenings in January. They have been attending the Saturday meetings but they would like a group of their own.

I signed a contract to have the garage roof replaced. The company arrived on 11/20 to do the job. They stripped 2 layers of very old

LIFT THEN
PULL HANDLE

PULL FOR
FIRE

November's Hooksett Food Bank Collection is Canned Meat



shingles and replaced them with Hunter green ones. The work was done by DeFrancesco Roofing in Derry. It looks great!

The loam is finally all spread around the church building. Thank you to everyone that helped with this project. The tarp and loam have disappeared from the parking lot just in time for the plow trucks!

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

From The Community Outreach Committee:

Greetings!

Outreach has been busy preparing for the Christmas season! There are always ways to provide for those around us. This month we have the Angel Tree up in the Vestry. Our committee is asking the Congregation to help make this Christmas memorable for a few families. Similar to last year you will find ornaments on the tree that say "\$25 Walmart". Allowing families to personalize their gifts makes it more meaningful. If you would like to purchase gift cards from Walmart please hand them to Pastor Kerry or an Outreach member by December 10th as we would like to give the families time to shop.

Next, We have almost reached our 5 for 5 goal. This year our church has given to One Great Hour of Sharing, Our Church's Wider Mission, Strengthen Our Church and Neighbors in Need. The Christmas Fund is our last gift. This provides money to retired pastors in our area. This collection will be happening on Sunday, December 17th and December 24th (morning service). Thank you very much for your help in this.

Last, Community Outreach would like to hear from you! We are getting ready to fill in our 2024 calendar with different causes and outreach. We will be sending out a form to the congregation online and in person to ask you what causes are near and dear to your heart. We will then consider these as we plan out our year. Please keep an eye out for this form in the next week and a half.

Blessings,

John Vaughn, Bonnie Boucher, Kathleen Dube, Kathleen Murphy and Kristen Hamilton

From The Music Committee:

As we have become more and more familiar with our new hymnal, there have been a few chuckles over some of the hymns that have the first verses in other languages. But truthfully, so much of who we are has come from other places and other peoples. As we listen to "Here Comes Santa Claus" and all the other holiday tunes, it is hard not to focus on the jolly man in the bright red suit. But what is it about him and Christmas?

Who is this Santa Claus? Well, according to the website aptly named celebratingholidays.com, "The name Santa Claus is the English form of the Dutch name for St. Nicholas: Sinterklaas." Saint Nicholas was a kind and



generous man born in modern day Turkey in the third century. He became a cleric who devoted his life to God and encouraged others to live similarly. After his death on December 6, the tradition of gift giving was begun in his memory. Later, his birthday and Christmas were combined, but Christian leaders didn't like the fact that he was taking focus away from Christ. German families began "teaching their children about the real gift giver, Kriss Kringle, which is the English form of the German name for 'Christ Child.'" Ironically, the names Kris Kringle and Santa Claus became connected with St. Nicholas. Santa didn't get his "jolly-ness" until the poem "Twas the Night Before Christmas" was written in 1823 to make St. Nicholas a more friendly image. And there you have it...Santa in a nutshell. Click on this link to read more. https://www.celebratingholidays.com/?page_id=12863

Whether it's Santa or Jolly Old St Nicholas or Mary's Boy Child or Immanuel, most of the songs that ring out this time of year remind us that it is generosity, the power of giving, and the greatest gift of all, our Lord Jesus Christ and salvation that make these days so special. So, Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas and may there be Joy to the World this Christmas season.

From the Prayer Team:

Ephesians 4: 1-16, 25-27 & 29-32

The Prayer Team wishes you and yours a most blessed Christmas season. We lift you all in prayer and invite you to reach out to us for special prayers for you, loved ones, friends, or our world and its people. prayer@hooksettucc.org. May your hearts be filled with the warmth of God's love.

A reading from Dietrich Bonhoeffer:

Christ is still knocking. It is not yet Christmas. But it is also not the great final Advent, the final coming of Christ. Through all the Advents of our life that we celebrate goes the longing for the final Advent, where it says: "Behold, I make all things new" (Rev. 21:5). Advent is a time of waiting. Our whole life, however, is Advent – that is, a time of waiting for the ultimate, for the time when there will be a new heaven and a new earth, when all people are brothers and sisters and one rejoices in the words of the angels: "On earth peace to those on whom God's favor rests." Learn to wait, because he has promised to come. "I stand at the door..." We however call to him: "Yes, come soon, Lord Jesus!" Amen.

In the month to come and every one after that, Lord, we ask for the wisdom, the strength and the confidence to carry this message of hope and love deep in our souls and be the blessings in this world that we are meant to be with you, through you, and for you. In the name of the one who loves us, saves us, and will come again for us--our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.



From the Memorial Committee:

Greetings from the Memorial committee. We continue to address requests for funds from Memorial accounts. This past month, the Diaconate asked to use \$100 to purchase two new candle lighters.

As the church prepares for the shift in by-law changes we wanted to let you know that this is our last newsletter submission. The Memorial Committee and all of its responsibilities will be absorbed into the new Finance Committee. This new committee will be blessed with members who have strong financial backgrounds and will manage our church's memorial money well in addition to other church funds.

We appreciate the Congregation's trust in the Memorial Committee to take care of and oversee memorial funds.

God bless,

Mary Ellen Kresel, Paula Vaughn, Amy Byers, Kristen Hamilton

From the Christian Education Team:

As we wrap up November and our thoughts on a theme of gratitude, we move into December and change our wheels to Giving. There's lots to be thankful for as we continue through this holiday season. The Sunday school will learn about why it's important to give and help others instead of just receiving in the holiday season. We hope to continue reading books, creating crafts, watching videos and playing games that reinforce Giving and the season of Advent along with the best of all, dancing. As we're dancing toward a new year we hope that Christian Education can provide our kiddos a safe space to be where they can think about what they can do for others, and how they can be part of the change they want to see in the world.

Blessing,

Jeff and Kristen Hamilton



Other News:

We have started digital announcements again. Before church, announcements will be displayed in a slideshow format on the TV in the Vestry and after church on the TV in Fellowship Hall. If you have an

announcement that you would like to add to the slides please let Kristen Hamilton know via email: kduvs@yahoo.com.

Last, our Church TVs are equipped with Google Chromecast. This allows us to “cast”, or send something to the TV without hooking a computer up to it. With this said, the Church is looking for 2 tablets or unused smartphones that we can sync Chromecast to. Think of these as remote controls. If you have a smartphone or tablet that does not get much use anymore, please consider the Church as it’s next home. Please contact Kristen with any information on a device.



FUNDrive® fundraising is eco-friendly and friend-friendly! Just share your organization's referral link [AAW-FN8](#) to spread the word about FUNDrive fundraising. By using your link, you will get credit for the referral and they will get the opportunity to earn a bonus too!* It's win-win.

[*Terms and conditions apply.](#)

Happy fundraising,

Kristi Sisay

The FUNDrive® Team

11400 SE 6th St #125 Bellevue, WA 98004 US

M: 603-288-7440 | E: ksisay@savers.com

[Website](#) | [Blog](#) | [Facebook](#)

Winter is the best time to get cozy, relax and read! Read any great books? Ready for another? Bring in your books to share and take one. We have set up an area inside the ramp door for this purpose. There are several puzzles as well. Please help yourself!

Want to know what is going on throughout the NH Conference of the United Church of Christ? Click this link to sign up for their weekly digital newsletter: <https://tinyurl.com/y9kct9zj>

