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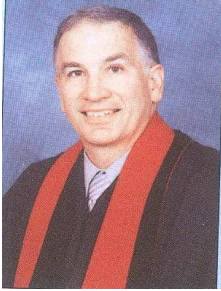
THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

P.O. BOX 237, Main Street
East Hampton, Connecticut 06424

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THOTS FROM TOM



The winter season is here! Do you have the spirit? A few years ago my daughter Alicia gave me a nice warm red long-sleeved pullover shirt that has the words “Bah Humbug” emblazoned across the front. I wear it proudly, although what I am a

humbug about is the sheer commercialization inherent with our Christmas season. Perhaps because of our unfortunate economic crisis, our culture may be returning to a more fundamental observance of Christmas, at the sad expense of many merchants and stores who depend so heavily for their continued existence on consumer purchases at this time of the year. People cannot now afford to spend more than they spent last year, so in their Christmas gift giving they may be looking for a more simple, less lavish way to share their love with family and friends.

As we celebrate the birth of the one who came to live with us, cry with us, celebrate with us, die for us, and come back to life for us, our Savior Jesus Christ, may we take heart and have faith that even though times are hard and difficult, we are not forsaken or alone. A name we often use for God at this time of year is “Emmanuel”, which means “God with us.” God is with us, and will see us through, as God has seen his people through so many other difficult and hard times. While the future ahead is largely unknown, we must cling to one another and to God in the faith that binds us together. Romans 8:28 states: “We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.” All things will work out for good, better times are coming, and in fact, we are in those times now, with the pres-

ence of the living Christ with and among us, who is helping us to find our calling in him, according to his purpose.

So as you are able, enjoy the month ahead. Advent is a season of anticipation. This year, and in the year ahead, we have much to anticipate, starting with the anticipation of the birth, and even the return, of our savior. May it all be good with you, and your family.

Looking ahead to things this month, please be sure to attend the Plum Pudding Festival, which will be held at 5:30 p.m. on December 7. Bring a covered dish to share during our meal. Keumok, our music director, has an interesting and fun program planned; and of course, we will close the evening with the plum puddings! Our Christmas Eve Candle Lighting worship service will be held at 7:00 p.m. The choir will be singing, and we will have a service of lessons and carols, with members of the Diaconate reading the lessons. Please plan on attending this special service.

On a personal note, Lois and I wish all of you a wonderful holiday season. May your Christmas be memorable and joyous, and may your new year be fun and full of meaning. I will be taking some time away, beginning on Christmas day, and ending on January 2. On Sunday, December 28, in my absence, the deacons will be leading a service that features the singing of Christmas carols. This is a particularly meaningful service, one that evokes many memories of Christmases past.

Have a blessed holiday season!

Peace,

Tom

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Christmas Eve Candlelighting Service

Our traditional Christmas Eve candlelighting service will be held at 7:00 p.m. on Christmas Eve in our sanctuary. This service will feature scripture lessons and carols from our Pilgrim Hymnal. We will conclude the service as we do every year with the singing of "Silent Night" by candlelight. Come early, to get a seat. Note: this is a family service; your young children are welcome to sit with you. Childcare will not be provided for this service.

READERS

Readers are needed for the following Sundays in Advent:

December 7th (Second Sunday)

December 14th (Third Sunday)

December 21st (Fourth Sunday)

Christmas Eve

We need Families, Groups, Individuals, Church School classes...

Please sign up in Fellowship Hall or call the church office at 267-4959.

HOW CAN I SERVE??

There are positions available on various church boards and committees...please look for the large yellow backed poster in Fellowship Hall...if you have any questions, feel free to call a member of the nominating committee.

Karen Gallmon 267-4169, Teri Schlosser 267-6150, Carolyn Wellman 267-8317 or Joyce Jasenski 267-9702.

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS.

"Happy Birthday" to all those celebrating a birthday this December .

MUSIC COMMITTEE

It's that time again for Carols, Candles & Plum Pudding.

Come usher in the Christmas season with your family & friends Sunday, December 7th @ 5:30 in Fellowship Hall, The evening starts with a potluck dinner, so please bring a dish to share a hot dish or salad. The choirs will sing, we hope to have a children's choir, the Bell choir will ring, you will sing carols and then the lights will go down and the plum puddings will arrive for us all to enjoy. Please sign up in Fellowship Hall to bake Plum Pudding, the recipe is provided for you or we also need some cookie bakers to bring a dozen cookies. Looking forward to see you there!!!!!!

If you would like to try out choir, how about joining for the Christmas season? That's only 3 rehearsals and 4 Sunday Mornings and the Christmas Eve

Service. Rehearsals are Thursday's 7:30 to 9:00 and Sunday Morning @ 9:00. We need all voices. Come join us!!!!

BOARD OF DEACONS

"From the Board of Deacons - A few months ago we included a questionnaire in the Chatter related to the summer services. We only had a few replies. If you had not previously filled out a survey, please take a few minutes to complete the included survey and leave it in the Diaconate mailbox at the church or place in the collection basket. We want the feedback so as to improve next summer. Thank you."



Y2K Calendar

Wednesday December 3rd

Taco Night

Bring \$4 for make your own tacos!

Friends Welcome

Wednesday December 17th

CHRISTMAS PARTY

Potluck- Bring a dish to share
that has the color red, green or both

Yankee Swap gift game

Bring a \$5 wrapped unisex item to play

Friends welcome!

Women's Potluck

Monday December 1st

at 6:30 PM

At the home of Donna Marsden

32 Meeks Point Road 267-2853

Bring a dish to share and join us in the
after Thanksgiving before the Christmas
rush interlude!

Calling All Shoppers!

Saturday December 13 and Sunday December 14
are "Seeds of Hope" days at 4 of our village mer-
chants!

Whatnot Cottage Kids, Red Door Boutique, Tin-
kling Tea Cups and Bella Victoria have offered to
donate 10% of income earned to local nonprofit
groups on their chosen dates. What a great way to
support our local businesses while raising money
for our mission trip.

Stop in at any of these merchants, have a meal, or
purchase a gift or two from the fine selections, then
be sure to tell them you are shopping on behalf of
the Congregational Church of East Hampton and
10% of your purchase will be donated to our mis-
sion trip to Back Bay Mission Biloxi, Mississippi!
Your family and friends can also participate! Just
remember to tell the cashier you are supporting the
Seeds of Hope mission trip from the Congrega-
tional Church of East Hampton. The only require-
ment is that this offer cannot be used with any cou-
pons for discount buying. Thanks and happy shop-
ping!

Helping Hands

Be sure to let Jill Walker (267-7180) or the church
office know if you or someone you know of from
our church family is in need of some extra helping
hands. We have folks that are able to make meals,
provide rides or a friendly visit. We also have
helping hands available for light household chores
that you may temporarily not be able to complete.

Seeds of Hope Update

*** Thanks to everyone that purchased calendars
and Christmas greens. Items can be picked up on
Sunday December, 7th in Fellowship Hall. There
are still a few calendars available for purchase until
they are all sold

*** A \$100 deposit check (payable to the church)
is due to hold your place on our trip to Back Bay
Mission in Biloxi Mississippi June 28- July 4th.

See Jill with any questions

***Next meeting is Sunday January 11th at 11:30 in
the lounge

*** Scrip cards ordered by 12/14 will be available
by 12/21. Also- remember to use GOOD-
SEARCH.COM for any web searches and to shop
online at hundreds of businesses that will donate a
percentage of the sale. Type in East Hampton Con-
gregational Church on the requested line, then click
verify and you're good to go!



Church School Pageant Schedule

Pageant date is Sunday, December 21.

Rehearsal will be Sunday, December 7th right after church for 1st grade-High School.

On Sunday, December 14th all grade levels will be rehearsing.

FINALLY on SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21 at 8:45 there will be a full run through. Pre-K/Kind to arrive at 9:30 to prepare for pageant.

There will be a cookie party for all after the pageant!!

COSA NEWS

MERRY CHRISTMAS

Tis the season for the spirit of giving. Be sure to check out all the opportunities to help out our community this Christmas season! Take a tag or two from Christmas tree in Fellowship Hall to help families meet everyday needs during this difficult time. You can buy diapers or scrip cards for gas or groceries for needy families for Middlesex Family Advocacy. You will also find tags for Christmas gifts for kids. Also, each year we decorate the giving tree with donations of hats, gloves, mittens, and scarves for the needy this winter. The tree will stay up until after the holiday, and the items will be distributed in January.

COAT DRIVE

Thank you to everyone who has donated winter coats for the New Britain Street ministry. They will be much appreciated.

PROJECT THANKSGIVING

Thank you to all those folks who donated items for the food bank. Your contributions were greatly appreciated!

CURRENT FOOD BANK NEEDS:

Mac & Cheese
Canned Fruit
Peanut Butter
Canned Tuna
Spaghetti Sauce

COUNCIL NEWS

By-Law revision

A sub-committee of Council has been revising the By-Laws to better align them with how our church operates today.

The draft of the revised By-Laws will be presented at the November Council meeting for all committee's to review. There will be a By-Law hearing on January 4th, 2009 for the congregation to review the proposed changes before the annual meeting.

DECEMBER USHERS

Dec, 7th	Jeanette Knotek Jane Christopher
Dec, 14th	Martin Bartel Deb Robinson
Dec, 21st	Christine Tkaczyk
Xmas Eve Dec, 24th	Jill and Rick Walker Joanne Kneeland
Dec, 28th	

January ushers are needed, please sign up under clock in Fellowship Hall. Thanks to all who help usher throughout the year, it is greatly appreciated!

MERRY CHRISTMAS

