



**THE BELL TREE**  
AN MCCC PUBLICATION

*A Newsletter for the Month of*  
**FEBRUARY 2022**

*The Mount Carmel Congregational Church*  
*(A United Church of Christ)*  
*3285 Whitney Avenue, Hamden, CT 06518*

## **From the Pastor's Desk...**

Dear Members and Friends,

I have missed you all this past month. I would have never imagined that we would have to return to online-only services this month, but with several of our members contracting Covid-19 this month, I thought it was important to stay cautious. I hope that all of you who have been sick or quarantined are feeling better. Hopefully on Sunday February 6<sup>th</sup>, we will be able to return to in-person worship; I do look forward to seeing all of you. Like many of you, I am disappointed about having to cancel and postpone things yet again, but we will get through this. I am grateful to Reverend House, who had stepped in to officiate Harley Tomlinson's funeral while I was quarantining after exposure to my 5-year-old granddaughter with Covid-19. I am grateful to Debbie Wooley who quickly pivoted with the situation and has been holding Church School over Zoom these past few weeks, to Tom Duffy who now streams our weekly services, and to Leon Fital who is playing the organ while Lynda recovers from her knee surgery.

I have been with you all for 18 months, and I am hoping we can return to some kind of normal soon. As Valentine's Day approaches this year, I am thankful for all the love in my life that keeps us going. Love can never be cancelled, and love never dies. Human love may sometimes fail us, but God's love is eternal. As St. Paul wrote to the Church in Rome, "Nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God" (Romans 8: 39).

On the topic of love, I have seen the beautiful cemetery that you have here in Hamden, and I noticed that playwright and novelist Thornton Wilder is buried there. This reminded me of a quote from his book, *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*, in which he writes, "There is a land of the living and a land of the dead and the bridge is love, the only survival, the only meaning." Happy Valentine's Day to all of you!

In God's Love,  
Rev. Olivia Robinson

## FEBRUARY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

We look forward to resuming in-person worship in the Church on Sunday, February 6<sup>th</sup>. Please join us at 10am for service, and dress warmly!

<p><b>February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022</b>  <b>Holy Communion</b>  <i>Fifth Sunday after Epiphany</i>  <b>Scriptures:</b> Isaiah 6: 1-18                  Luke 5: 1-11  <b>Sermon:</b> “A Surprising Catch”</p>	<p><b>February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022</b>  <b>Superbowl Sunday</b>  <i>Sixth Sunday after Epiphany</i>  <b>Scriptures:</b> Psalm 1                  Luke 6: 17-26  <b>Sermon:</b> “Sermon on the Plain”</p>
<p><b>February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022</b>  <i>Seventh Sunday after Epiphany</i>  <b>Scriptures:</b> Genesis 45: 3-11, 5                  Luke 6: 27-38  <b>Sermon:</b> “Loving Your Enemies”</p>	<p><b>February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022</b>  <i>Transfiguration Sunday</i>  <b>Scripture:</b> Isaiah 55: 10-13                  Exodus 34: 29-35                  2 Corinthians 3:12 - 4:2                  Luke 9: 28-43  <b>Sermon:</b> “Astounding Glory”</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS</u></b>  <i>Happy Birthday Wishes Go to the Following:</i>                  Mark Leach                      February 10<sup>th</sup></p> <p>If you would like to add your name to our birthday list, please contact our office.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Protocols for In-Person Worship</u></b></p> <p>You can find our updated protocols on in-person worship by visiting our website at <a href="https://mccucc.tiny.us/covid">https://mccucc.tiny.us/covid</a>. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.</p>

## FINANCIAL REPORT: DECEMBER 2021

Following is the financial report for December 2021. **REMINDER: Do not file your taxes until after you have received a notice that you donation has been processed.** If you have any questions, Ellen can be reached at [treasurer@mccucc.com](mailto:treasurer@mccucc.com).

<b>Income:</b>	Pledges and Offerings:	\$13,078.00
	Other Income:	\$3,339.00
	Total Income:	\$16,417.00
<b>Expenses:</b>	Total Expenses:	\$10,580.46
<b>Net Income:</b>	<b>Gain</b>	\$5,836.54

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## Outreach

### *9<sup>th</sup> Annual Chili Bowl*

It is that time of year again: Time for the Habitat for Humanity/Sleeping Giant Build's 9th Annual Chili Bowl! Due to the ongoing pandemic, this year's event will be virtual as it was last year. You order your chili package online and pick it up at Spring Glen Church on Saturday, February 12<sup>th</sup> between 3 & 4:30 pm. The virtual part of the event includes live music, a silent auction, and a chili cooking class. Tickets are \$35.00. See the flyer included in this newsletter for more details.

Thank you,  
-Debbie Wooley

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## CE/Faith Formation News - Kids

Church school has now gone online. We are Zooming our lessons when everyone is available on Sunday morning before church. This seems to be the best solution for now until we are able to meet again in person.



The children are now participating in the “Ark” project. “Ark” stands for “Acts of Random Kindness” and participants are part of the “Kindness Coalition.” The ark is a small yellow bank. The idea is to put a coin in the ark everyday and at the end of the month give it to someone in need or to a charitable organization. What we are going to do at Mt Carmel is turn in our monies to Ellen for the Deacon’s Fund to help people as the need arises in our community. This project was started by Rabbi Hecht of Hamden and various local businesses. If you would like to be part of this, you may pick up an ark at the following locations: Alltown Fresh, Liberty Bank, ShopRite, Ion Bank, Chabad of Hamden & Webster Bank.

-Debbie Wooley

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## Stewardship Update

The Stewardship Committee would like to thank everyone who has made a pledge commitment during this Stewardship Campaign 2021-2022. Your current and past generosity and support of our congregation is greatly appreciated.

If you have not made a pledge commitment it is our hope that you will consider doing so in order for our church to continue to meet our financial obligations. To date we have received 40 pledges totaling \$72,184 which includes a stock pledge. If you are unable to pledge on a weekly or monthly basis, we ask that you consider a special one-time gift of any amount.

We also thank those members and friends who continue to worship with us and give on a regular basis. Thank you all for giving joyfully and generously. We can count ourselves blessed.

God bless you, stay safe and well,  
Carmen, Sara and Sandee

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## Midnight Run and Columbus House

Midnight Run and Columbus House need your help! We all miss doing Midnight Run. It is a worthy and satisfying mission which also provided us fellowship. We can't do that now but we can provide aid to the same people by contributing to Columbus House. This is a very busy time for them, providing shelter from the bitter cold to a vulnerable population. They also provide professional staff to assist the organizations that help Hamden's homeless.

If you are missing Midnight Run and would like to contribute to Columbus House, please send your checks to;

Columbus House  
PO Box 7093  
New Haven, CT 06519-0093

### A few facts about Columbus House

- Columbus House helped 650 households move into housing since the Pandemic began. 177 of those were veterans.
- Columbus House helps clients get SS cards, birth certificates and other IDs they need for employment.
- Three months is the average time a client stays in the shelter.

If you have any questions please call Diane Scott (203-248-3998), or [dianescott@iname.com](mailto:dianescott@iname.com).

Thank You!

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## Search Committee - Update

Our Church Ministerial Employment Opportunity continues to be posted on the UCC Ministry Opportunities website. We have not received any applications to date but are confident we will now that the holidays have passed, and a new year has begun. Our posting can be seen here at <https://mccucc.tiny.us/pastorsearch>. Please feel free to contact any member of the committee with questions.

Sincerely,  
Your Search Committee

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## **GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Joys and Concerns.** If you wish to have a joy or concern announced during worship, please forward to them to Aren at [office@mccucc.com](mailto:office@mccucc.com) or call the church office at (203) 248-7408.

**Pastoral Visits.** If you are planning on having a procedure done at one of the local hospitals, please let Reverend Olivia know so that she can plan a pastoral visit. Hospitals no longer call local churches with information about their patients. The church depends on others letting us know, and we thank you in advance for your assistance.

**Bible Study.** Bible Study will continue to be held on Wednesday nights at 7pm over Zoom. Hosted by Reverend Olivia Robinson, our Bible Study seeks to help our members develop a greater understanding and appreciation of scripture through thoughtful examination and discussion. If you would like to learn more about the lessons found in the Bible, reflect on what those lessons mean to you and your life, or just find a place to talk about those lessons with other people, then this group may just be the best fit for you. If you would like to sign up for Bible Study, simply follow our Zoom link, which can be found in our weekly reminder email or on our website.

**Committee Openings.** These committees need volunteer members to meet their minimum requirements as specified by the bylaws: Deacons-2 more; Trustees-1 more; Music Committee-3 more. If you would like to try out a committee (attend a meeting with no obligations), please contact the committee chair(s): Leon Fiftal-Music; Bev Jurkiewicz-Deacons; Val Duffy and Diane Scott-Trustees.

**Church and Hall Cleaning.** We are looking for more volunteers to help with cleaning the church and parish hall. For more information, please contact Noelle Ioime by phone at (203) 605-7171 or by email at [noelle\\_i@hotmail.com](mailto:noelle_i@hotmail.com).

**Coffee Hour.** Coffee Hour volunteers are needed for the months of February and March. If you would like to sign up for a Sunday, please contact the office or use the signup sheet located in the Church Hall.

**Altar Flowers.** Altar flowers are needed for the months of February and March. If you would like to sign up for a Sunday, please contact Karen Amato or use the signup sheet located in the Church Hall.

**Parish Hall Rentals.** If you or anyone you know would be interested in renting out our parish hall to host a meeting, service, or a small private event, please feel free to visit our website for scheduling, rates, and conditions.

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**Saturday, Feb. 12, 2022**

Habitat for Humanity/Sleeping Giant Build is thrilled to present the 9th Annual Chili Bowl in support of our mission to reduce poverty housing by providing home ownership opportunities for low-income working families in the Greater New Haven area. All proceeds from the 9th Annual Chili Bowl – and Online Silent Auction – will help fund our 13th Habitat for Humanity home.



Join us on Zoom for a fun evening as you sample chilis from area restaurants then enjoy music, games, a chili cooking class, and vote for your favorite chilis.

## The Official Program

### Online Silent Auction - Details Below

Begins Friday, Feb. 11, 9:00 AM

Ends Sunday Feb. 13, 9:00 PM

### Chili Bowl Program - February 12

Tailgate	Pregame	Game Time!	Postgame
<b>3:00-4:30 PM</b> Pick up your chili package at Spring Glen Church (Hamden)*	<b>6:30-7:00 PM</b> Music by Gary D	<b>7:00-8:00 PM</b> Have loads of laughs playing in a virtual game show featuring exciting team trivia and hilarious party games! **	<b>8:00-8:30 PM</b> Announce Chili Bowl winners
Warm up your chili at home and get ready to log into Zoom by 6:30 PM	Chili Cooking Class		On-Line Silent Auction update
Hang out with your friends in a private Zoom room			

## Order Chili Bowl Sampler Packages at [bit.ly/sgbchili](https://bit.ly/sgbchili)

Order by February 5

- Meat Chili Bowl Package - \$35**  
Four, 4 oz. meat chili samples, bread, dessert, and access to all entertainment.
- Vegetarian Chili Bowl Package - \$35**  
Two, 8 oz. vegetarian chili samples, bread, dessert, and access to all entertainment.
- Extra Meat or Vegetarian Sampler - \$10**  
Only available in combination with a Chili Bowl package order.
- Entertainment only - \$20 per person**

Thank you to our generous chili donors:



Join the "Chili Showdown" and vote for your favorite.

## Silent Auction

Visit our Online Silent Auction for a tempting selection of items including gifts cards and great merchandise all donated by our sponsors.

The online auction site is easy to use. Access the auction at [32auctions.com/chili22](https://32auctions.com/chili22) to browse the auction items and place your bids! No need to enter payment information until you win a bid. See [bit.ly/sgbchili](https://bit.ly/sgbchili) for details on how to bid and receive the items you win.

Be sure to check [bit.ly/sgbchili](https://bit.ly/sgbchili) for more information or contact [info@sleepinggiantbuild.org](mailto:info@sleepinggiantbuild.org)

\*Food is prepared and packaged by local restaurants.

\*\*Watch your email for a team roster request. We'll form teams for guests not on a pre-assigned team.



**Mount Carmel Congregational Church**  
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203-248-7408

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**Officers:**

President: Tom Duffy  
[thomasduffy67@gmail.com](mailto:thomasduffy67@gmail.com)  
Clerk: Beverly Jurkiewicz  
Board of Deacons: Bev Jurkiewicz, Chair  
Board of Trustees: Val Duffy, Co-Chair:  
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Diane Scott, Co-Chair:  
[DianeScott@iname.com](mailto:DianeScott@iname.com)