



WEST CHELMSFORD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

242 Main Street, North Chelmsford, MA 01863

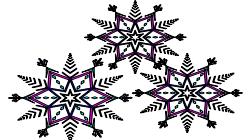
Pastor: Rev. A. Mack Hagins

Tele. # 978-251-4834 email: office@wcumc.us

Church website: wcumc.us

*WCUMC Faith, Family, and Future are the
Cornerstones of this nurturing community.*

JANUARY 2019 NEWSLETTER



From the Pastor's Desk

The last few weeks, during Advent and Christmas, are one of the most significant (and busiest) seasons of the church year, so there's been lots to do around the church. It is also a busy time in my family life, as it is in yours. And so for the last few weeks I have found myself saying more and more often, "I'll deal with that after Christmas." The Christmas holiday looms so large in front of us that it is hard to think of anything else. I needed to get some routine work done on my car, but I decided: I'll think about that after Christmas. I needed to organize a meeting of a committee in our district that I chair, but I decided: I'll think about that after Christmas. And on it goes as Christmas approaches and our focus gets narrower and narrower. Just before Christmas I realized I probably shouldn't do so much putting things off until after Christmas, and I need to think about a better way to handle the holidays; I decided to think about that, too after Christmas.

But as I am writing this article, Christmas has already come and gone. And now that "after Christmas" time has arrived. The car still needs to be repaired, and that meeting still needs to be organized. My guess is that you have a list of "after Christmas" tasks as well.

As we begin a new year there are always concerns and tasks left over from the previous year. Whatever you left to "deal with after Christmas" still needs to be dealt with. For all the good that the holidays do in our lives, they can also be a convenient excuse to avoid what we don't want to deal with. In my case, car repairs certainly fit that description!

But by the grace of God, the holidays can better prepare us for what we need to do in the new year. The holidays don't change our after-Christmas to-do lists; but they can change **us**. It is my hope and prayer that the Advent and Christmas seasons gave you and me a renewed faith in a God who keeps promises, and who loved you and me and the rest of the world enough to send Jesus Christ as one of us - God in human form - to redeem a broken world to a loving God. As God's redeemed people we are empowered by God to live faithful lives and to face the challenges of our lives with grace and hope. That's a great truth for us to deal with after Christmas, or at any other time.

Rev. Mack





Worship Services in January

January 6th - 9:30am – Worship Service – Holy Communion

Epiphany Sunday
9:30am - Sunday School

January 13th – 1st Sunday after the Epiphany

9:30am - Worship & Nursery Care
9:30am – Sunday School

January 20th – 2nd Sunday after the Epiphany

Human Relations Day (offering)
9:30am – Worship & Nursery Care
9:30am – Sunday School

January 27th – 3rd Sunday after the Epiphany

9:30am – Worship & Nursery Care
9:30am – Sunday School

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**Happy New Year – 2019**

## Church Office Information

- The Church Office is open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, from 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. (978-251-4834)
- We have 4 E-mail addresses: office@wcumc.us – for general church business.  
revmack@wcumc.us – e-mail for Rev Mack  
music@wcumc.us – for Karen Leonard, Music Minister  
christian-ed@wcumc.us – for Sarah Laflamme, Christian Ed Director
- Our Website is wcumc.us
- Items for the **Sunday bulletin insert** are due in the church office by **Wednesday morning**.
- Items for the **monthly Newsletter** are due in the church office on the third Monday of each month. **All articles must be signed**

**February 2019 Newsletter – All articles are due by January 21<sup>st</sup>**



Greetings Friends:

I wanted to offer some notes on the 2019 Stewardship results and how they have shaped the 2019 Budget process.

On December 17 the Finance Committee presented a proposal for the 2019 budget to the Administrative Board. We are expecting a 2019 income level that is \$10,000 short of our 2018 budgeted level, but close to the level we actually received for 2018. We reached that level largely because of your generous response to our requests in November and December after the pledge drive. Our expenses are also expected to be slightly less than 2018, but only because we level-funded all the church staff salaries and also recommended smaller cuts across several other committee requests. These cuts namely come in the areas of Missions and Music.

Despite these cuts in the expense lines, the 2019 budget is projected to create a \$13,538 deficit. We will cover this deficit by drawing on the churches savings funds which largely come from our Fair, Rummage and Prior Year Reserve savings accounts. So have no fear: we will certainly be able to pay all our bills in 2019 despite the lack of income to balance against our expect expenses.

I also need to make you aware that our 2018 budget was passed with an \$11,000 deficit built into it. At our last assessment of the 2018 income levels we anticipate that 2018 will close between \$11,000 to \$14,000 in deficit. We have not seen this type of deficit in our net income since 2013. (2017, 2015 and 2014 all posted as modest surplus years. 2016 was nearly balanced year end.)

The prospect of two subsequent years with significant income shortfalls is worrisome for our financial stability. The Finance Committee further recommended that we seek to temporarily reduce our Mission Shares paid to the Annual Conference by \$10,000. The Mission Shares are our annual payment to the Annual Conference as part of our commitment to the United Methodist Church. We are proud that our church has a long history of paying those Mission Shares in full for many years. The Annual Conference offers a relief program to churches that find they are having income/expense issues. The primary reason we are applying for this is to lessen the impact on our reserve savings while we also explore and bolster ways to improve out income levels through improved Stewardship messaging and a focused effort on increasing church membership.

I appreciate that finances and money is something many of us are not always comfortable discussing openly or often. I further want each member of the church to truly understand that these shortfalls are not an indication of slipping dedication to our church's stewardship message. The primary issues we face financially are driven mostly by pledging families that we lose from time to time. That is where our focus needs to be and that is where our Stewardship and Evangelism efforts need to focus.

The fact is that our church has been a very strong church in our overall stewardship. We have seen a steady increase in the number of families that make the commitment of making a written pledge. We have also slowly seen year after year more families actively increasing their pledges. We certainly would be in far worse finance shape if our stewardship efforts were failing. In late November we knew we were in a tight spot with pledges. As a committee we put that challenge to the congregation and you responded. We were able to raise our expected income at that time by another \$10,000; otherwise our situation for 2019 would be much worse. This helps tremendously and is a promising sign for the future of the pledging families that we currently have. So I don't want anyone to walk away from the current news with the wrong message.

Thanks so much for your continued support. As always please never hesitate to ask myself or any member of the finance team for more information. We make all the monthly numbers available to the administrative board and we are free to discuss them with anyone who is interested.

Best Regards,  
Mike Warren  
Chairman Finance Committee.



Dear Church Family: Thank you so much for all the thoughts, prayers, calls, cards, and visits after my recent hip surgery and cancer diagnosis. Also, thank you to Rev. Mack who brought me a beautiful prayer shawl. I will bring the shawl to treatments with me and wrap myself in your prayers.

Thank you, again! Roberta Stratton

Dear Church Family: Thank you for your thoughtful card after the death of Gail's father, Barclay Bloomgarden. We appreciate it very much in our time of sorrow. Gail, Peter, and Maggie Torkildsen

Dear WCUMC family: Elsie and Dave would like to thank our church family for all the offers of rides, food, calls, and cards we have received during the last few weeks. What an awesome family we have at WCUMC. It is very comforting to have people around us we can call on when we are in need. Thanks again!



Divine Readers- The Faith based book club will be meeting on Monday January 29th at 7:00pm in the Education Building. This month we will be discussing the Non-Fiction book; Cold-Case Christianity. A Homicide Detective Investigates The Claims of the Gospels. Bring your coffee and join us for fellowship and discussion of our faith. Men and women are all invited. See you then. Any questions call or email Cathy Order 978-692-8206/ [orderc@verizon.net](mailto:orderc@verizon.net). The book list is located on the Bulletin Board in the Vestry.



**Baptism Pictures and Memories** – On Sunday, Jan. 13 our worship service will focus on baptism. Our gospel reading will be Luke's account of the baptism of Jesus. We will celebrate an infant baptism, and also renew our own baptismal vows.

Do you have a picture from your own baptism, or the baptism of one of your children? If so, we invite you to bring it with you to worship to hold in your hands during the worship service. If you don't have a picture, or you don't know much about your baptism, then use the days before Jan. 13 to have a conversation with your loved ones about this special moment.

Rev. Mack

# Christian Education News

## Coming Soon!

### Winter Epiphany Festival and Potluck Dinner

The Christian Education Committee invites you to celebrate the winter season and the start of Epiphany on January 6<sup>th</sup> following the worship service! At 11:00am we will have a fire going in the backyard and some craft activities inside. Since it looks like we won't have any snow on the ground, we will provide some pretend snow activities including building some human snowpeople! The Christian Education committee will be providing drinks, pizza, and hot dogs to roast over the fire for lunch! You are welcome to bring food to share! We will end the event with the serving of the King's Cake with a special prize for whomever finds baby Jesus in their piece of cake! If you have any questions, please speak with a member of the Christian Education Committee.

### Children's Musical Rehearsal start Jan 13th!

If you have been cast in the children's musical, rehearsals start on January 13<sup>th</sup> from 1pm – 3pm. Tom Laflamme will have scripts available at the worship service on January 6<sup>th</sup>. The musical will be presented as part of the Children's Sunday service on March 17<sup>th</sup>.

## What's happening in SS?

### Worshiping in the Sanctuary

Since the Sunday School program worshiped in the sanctuary for the whole hour a couple of times in December, they will not be staying for the whole hour in January. This will give time for the teachers and children/youth to reconnect after such a long time without being in the classroom. Stay tuned to future newsletter articles to find out the next time the Sunday school program will worship for the whole hour with the rest of the church family.

## Connecting with Christ

### The Christmas Invitation to Love

As we move into this season of Christmas and then Epiphany we are invited to await the renewal of "love divine" within our own troubled hearts and the world. There are many legitimate fears in our society, but as we remember Christ's birth and move through his life of ministry and eventually death and resurrection let us remember that God is more powerful than our fears. Time and again in the bible God's love brings peace to individuals and the world. Over this season you are invited to reflect on the words of our hymn, "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling" as we strive to bring God's love into the world.

Love divine, all loves excelling joy of heaven, to earth come down;  
Fix in us thy humble dwelling; all thy faithful mercies crown!  
Jesus thou art all compassion, pure, unbounded love thou art;  
Visit us with thy salvation; enter every trembling heart.

If you have any questions or comments about our Christian Education Program please contact:

Sarah Laflamme

Christian Education Director

[Christian-ed@wcumc.us](mailto:Christian-ed@wcumc.us)

978-320-4090

Harry Johnson

Chairperson, CE Committee

[johnson3rd@verizon.net](mailto:johnson3rd@verizon.net)

978-251-8587

## *Inspiration Corner*

Struggling with health problems is proving hard for me. Questions like *Is God listening to me? Or Am I getting the best care or right care? What's in store for down the road?* Keep popping into my mind. I say I have faith and I do know God knows my condition. Here is an example of how I know. Each morning I get up and take time for devotions. Each day lately a flyer in my Bible would fall out, so the other day I took time to read it. Just take the time to look for God's hand as you never will find it otherwise and keep this article in your Bible, because you'll never know when you need it.

Elise Wilson



## *Evangelism Committee*

**Happy New Year to all!**

***COMFORT SUPPER - SATURDAY, JANUARY 26, 2019, at 5:30 PM***  
***(Snow date February 2, 2019)***

We will be having our Comfort Supper on Saturday, January 27, 2018 at 5:30 PM in Fellowship Hall. All kinds of comfort food are welcome: soups, stews, chili, and casseroles. Feel free to share a favorite of yours or your family! We also welcome crackers, breads, rolls, and of course, desserts! Please bring a recipe card with the ingredients in your dish listed. This is a relaxing evening for all ages. Round up your family members and friends to come and share fellowship.

A musical group "Still Working" will be playing for us after dinner. They play a variety of Christian music that is fun for all ages! Help us welcome them and share our faith through music.

Debbie Allen, Chairperson





***Mark your calendar for the up-coming Scholarship Dinner and Music Program - Saturday March 9<sup>th</sup>!***

The West Chelmsford United Methodist Church is fortunate to have, as one of its programs, a college scholarship for graduating high school seniors planning to continue their education. While the dollar amount will not determine whether or not the student will be able to attend college, it is an indication to these young people that their church continues to care for them.

The annual Scholarship Dinner supports this program. It also provides an opportunity for fellowship-before, during and after the meal! Please reserve the date, Saturday March 9<sup>th</sup> at 5:30.

Celebration of Music: A special music program, under the leadership of Karen Leonard, will follow. Please consider sharing your talents and participating in the program.



**Policy on Church Services During Bad Weather**

It is the time of year when our church activities can be affected by bad weather. We will plan to have a service at our usual 9:30am time on snowy Sundays. The parking lot should be plowed and we ask those who come to park there and not on the street, if at all possible. We will try to communicate any change of schedule on such Sundays in the following ways:

1. People who have particular responsibilities on a Sunday will be notified by phone by the pastor or other church leaders.
2. We will communicate with the rest of the congregation by putting an announcement on the church voice-mail system (978-251-4834), by posting the information on the homepage of our webpage ([wcumc.us](http://wcumc.us)), and by listing the information on TV on WCVB (Channel 5).



In general we urge everyone to use your own best judgment as to whether you should drive in the weather on a given Sunday.

Reverend Mack



## Prayer List

In the Sunday bulletin under “Let us remember these people in our prayers,” we list those with prayer needs. Our Monthly Newsletter carries a list of more “on-going” concerns to bring to God in Prayer.

We will keep the description you provide as general or specific as you indicate. Please let us know what you would like included. We also encourage you to clip out these names and keep them in your prayers.

If you would like your name to be added or removed from any of the prayer lists, please contact the church office.

It's never too late for a note, a card, or a call.

Roberta Stratton, hip surgery and cancer treatments

Irv Jones, at home after being hospitalized

*Thinking  
of  
You*

### **Those who are at home or in nursing homes:**

Edna Macpherson – At home

Lenore Reynolds – Sunny Acres, Chelmsford

Pat Rienstra – Life Care Center of Nashoba Valley, Littleton, MA

Lorraine Anderson – 2 Technology Dr., N Chelmsford

Mitzi Curry – D’Youville Senior Care Center, 981 Varnum Ave. Lowell

### **Prayer list for on-going health needs:**

Ken Weinbeck

Judi Hill

Jen Weinbeck’s friends, Mike and Sarah

Margaret Wilkinson’s niece, Julie

Rebecca Markey’s brother, Dennis Woodruff



## Human Relations Day is January 20, 2019

**TOGETHER, WE EXTEND A HELPING HAND TO THOSE IN CRISIS  
SO THEY CAN OVERCOME FORMIDABLE OBSTACLES.**

Turn on the news or drive around the outskirts of your town and you will find what Jesus called “the least of these.” Those living in the margins of society, struggling to survive. People like:

- An immigrant teenager in Texas’ poorest county, being recruited by a local gang
- A father struggling for sobriety in Little Rock, Arkansas
- An Oklahoma woman recently released from incarceration looking for work

Over and over Jesus served people like this, embracing them. And that’s what we want to model as the people of The United Methodist Church. To continue the ministry of Jesus we established Human Relations Day as a Special Sunday that calls all of our churches to participate in helping all God’s children to realize their potential.

### Will You Support the Ministry of Christ Among Those on the Margins?

Will you continue to support Human Relations Day? Will you continue nurturing at-risk youth, strengthening communities’ self-improvement efforts and advocating for the oppressed?

Rev. I Malik Safir, whose church works with those gripped by addiction in Little Rock, sums up the work of Human Relations Day by recalling Jesus’ story of the Good Samaritan: “to meet the poor, the disadvantaged and the underserved at the places where others have robbed them and help them to recover from the wounds of social inequality.”

**TOGETHER, WE EXTEND A HELPING HAND TO THOSE IN CRISIS SO THEY CAN OVERCOME FORMIDABLE OBSTACLES**



***Open Pantry Donation/St. Paul's Meal***

Remember to bring a food donation for the Open Pantry. Also you can sign up on the poster in the church for the next meal at St. Paul’s Meal at Eliot Presbyterian Church in Lowell, on Wednesday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>.

# JANUARY



# 2019

| Sunday                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Monday                                                                                                                                               | Tuesday                                    | Wednesday                                                                                                            | Thursday                                               | Friday                                                                            | Saturday                                                                                                                                             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                      | <b>1</b><br><i>Happy New Year</i>          | <b>2</b><br>7:00pm-Christian Ed<br>7:00pm-LSUMC<br><b>7:30pm-Festival Ringers</b><br>8:00pm - LSUMC                  | <b>3</b><br>6:30pm-Children Choir<br>7:30pm-Sr. Choir  | <b>4</b><br>7:00pm-Cub Scout Pack meeting                                         | <b>5</b><br>10:00am Cub Scout Pinewood Derby<br><br>4:00pm-Girl Scout 75032                                                                          |
| <b>6</b><br>9:30am-Sunday School<br>9:30am-Worship service and Nursery care<br><b>10:30-Fellowship, Winter Epiphany Festival</b><br><b>12:30pm-Sr. MYF</b><br>4:30pm-Boy Scout Leaders<br>7:00pm-LSUMC | <b>7</b><br>4:00pm-Girl Scouts<br><b>7:30pm - Evangelism</b><br>7:30pm-A.A.<br>7:30-Boy Scouts                                                       | <b>8</b><br><b>7:30pm-Staff/Parish</b>     | <b>9</b><br>6:30-Scout Den Meeting<br>7:00-LSUMC<br><b>7:30pm-Festival Ringers</b><br>8:00pm - LSUMC                 | <b>10</b><br>6:30pm-Children Choir<br>7:30pm-Sr. Choir | <b>11</b><br>6:30pm-Den Meeting<br>7:00pm-Den meeting                             | <b>12</b>                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>13</b><br>9:30am-Sunday School<br>9:30am-Worship and Nursery care<br><b>10:30-Fellowship</b><br>4:30pm-Boy Scout Leaders<br>7:00pm-LSUMC                                                            | <b>14</b><br>4:00pm-Girl Scouts<br>7:30pm-A.A.<br><b>7:30pm-Finance</b><br><b>7:30pm-Trustees</b><br>7:30pm-Boy Scouts                               | <b>15</b>                                  | <b>16</b><br>6:30-Scout Den Meeting<br>7:00pm-LSUMC<br><b>7:30pm-Festival Ringers</b><br>8:00pm-LSUMC                | <b>17</b><br>6:30pm-Children Choir<br>7:30pm-Sr. Choir | <b>18</b><br>6:00pm-Wedding Rehearsal<br>6:30pm-Den Meeting<br>7:00pm-Den meeting | <b>19</b><br>10:00am-Stratton/Streeby Wedding<br>11:00-Hall in use<br><br>5:00pm-Cub Scouts                                                          |
| <b>20</b><br>9:30am-Sunday School<br>9:30am-Worship and Nursery care<br><b>10:30-Fellowship</b><br>4:30pm-Boy Scout Leaders<br>7:00pm-LSUMC                                                            | <b>21</b><br>4:00pm-Girl Scouts<br><b>7:30pm-Council on Ministries</b><br>7:30pm-Boy Scouts<br>7:30pm - A.A.                                         | <b>22</b><br>7:00PM-CS Pack 70 Den Meeting | <b>23</b><br>St. Paul's Meal at Eliot Presbyterian<br>7:00pm-LSUMC<br><b>7:30pm-Festival Ringers</b><br>8:00pm-LSUMC | <b>24</b><br>6:30pm-Children Choir<br>7:30pm-Sr. Choir | <b>25</b><br>7:00pm-Den Meeting                                                   | <b>26</b><br><b>5:30pm – Soup &amp; Comfort Food Supper</b><br> |
| <b>27</b><br>9:30am-Sunday School<br>9:30am-Worship and Nursery care<br><b>10:30-Fellowship</b><br>4:30pm-Boy Scout Leaders<br>7:00pm-LSUMC                                                            | <b>28</b><br>4:00pm-Girl Scouts<br><b>7:00pm-Divine Readers</b><br>7:30pm-A.A.<br>7:30pm-Boy Scouts<br><b>7:30pm-Joint Committee</b><br>WCUMC, LSUMC | <b>29</b>                                  | <b>30</b><br>7:00pm-LSUMC<br><b>7:30pm-Festival Ringers</b><br>8:00pm-LSUMC                                          | <b>31</b><br>6:30pm-Children Choir<br>7:30pm-Sr. Choir |                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                      |

11:00am – Celebration Ringers & Celebration Singers – rehearsals on Sunday January 6, 13, 20, 27