



The Church Caller

A monthly publication of the Ellington Congregational Church, UCC

May 2024

Sunday Worship 10:00 / Church School 10:00
Intentional Interim Pastor Joanne Myer
Director of Music Julie LaRocca
Director of Faith Formation Lee Carman

*Whoever you are and wherever you
are on your faith journey,
you are welcome here!*

THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT

“Teacher, which is the most important commandment in the Law of Moses?” Jesus replied: “You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul and all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments.”

Matthew 22:36-40 NLT

Upcoming Events

Visit www.eccucc.org for details



Friendship Class
May 7, 2024
1:00 pm - Rm 201



Deacon's Retreat
May 10 & 11, 2024
Silver Lake Camp &
Retreat Center



FHF Workshop
May 14, 2024
7:00 pm - Rm 201



Blood Drive
May 17, 2024
12:30 - 5:30 pm



Women's Fellowship
Guest Speaker
TBD
7:00 pm - Rm 201



Bell Choir Sunday
May 19, 2024
10:00 am



Prayer Shawl
May 23, 2024
9:30 am - Social Room

Being a Steward Leader

On behalf of the Stewardship committee, I welcome you to this spring morning. Now I'm usually the guy standing up here asking you for money. And yes, while monetary support is always helpful to everything this church does, I am here today to talk about the other two equally important aspects Stewardship: Time and Talents.

While many Christians associate stewardship with tithing or making donations, biblical stewardship goes much, much deeper. Time and Talents helps to give Stewardship its grander scale and more inclusive nature to other important areas of your life – bringing purpose beyond everyday issues and tasks. It is when the three pieces of Stewardship: treasure, time, and talents are held together as the whole, that we get the true meaning of what is to be good Disciples of Christ.

It is about taking care of the things that we care about, not only in regards to our church, but as means of experiencing a good and meaningful life. Two important bible verses bring this idea to heart:

From 1 Peter 4:10 – “Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.”

And in 2 Corinthians 9:6 – “Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.”

In the first verse, God calls everyone to be good stewards. But why is that? From the second verse, we get our answer. We are told that that this can, and will, result in growth. Growth of spirit, growth of humanity, and growth of community. Growth that will literally and figuratively “feed us” as children of God. It’s an important and distinctive way of looking at and living our lives, that is nothing short of transformational. There is real power and real meaning to being fully invested in something bigger than yourself – something that will outlast you. This is what is meant by being a Steward Leader.

How does being a Steward Leader differ from other forms of leadership? Most people think about leadership as some kind of hierarchy, that forms from the top down, and mingles the idea of leadership for the sake of authority and prestige. But true leadership works up, down, sideways, and any which way you can imagine. Being a Steward Leader is not about waiting for a heroic leader to come and save us – it offers the powerful and inspiring idea that leadership starts with each and every one of us – that each of us has a place to serve.

When we talk about the disciples of Christ – do we think about a top-down organization? Did they have a corporate ladder that required memos and dictates up and down the leadership chain? No, as Pastor Joanne has talked about in previous sermons; especially during the turmoil and confusion after Christ’s death, resurrection, and eventual ascendancy – everything was in disorder and confusion. And to keep the emerging embers of their message alive for a fledgling religion we now call Christianity, everyone had to do their part. The disciples eventually came to understand that the important teachings of their instructor was much larger than their own fears and discomforts. Where would we be if they did not embrace the idea of giving their time and abilities to something far greater than their everyday lives?

Stewardship has a broad, broad definition. It is basically everything we do for the church, rooted in the resurrection and in the teachings of Christ. When you have a Stewardship perspective, it makes life infinitely more relational, intentional, and transcendent. It frees us from ordinary troubles and provides a greater context of perspective and goals. A Steward Leader is someone that takes up the reins of life and takes on something that is bigger, and that will have a lasting effect. We are all Steward Leaders, all Disciples of Christ. You are here, and you are part and parcel of God’s message. We have the grace and fortune of being surrounded by talented, kind, caring, and prayerful people within our church. We are each part of the Ellington Congregational team.

But more is needed.

We have a number of ways that this church community works to be good stewards: through our mission’s work, donations that go regularly to community organizations. This also shows through our weekly food donations, our twice-yearly food drives, our work with Hawkwing, shut-ins, TELOS mission trips, prayer groups, winter coat drives, adopt a family program, our weekly services, our lay readers, our incredible music program, our services to the church building and upkeep, and of course our donations – and these just name a few – I know I am leaving out so much more. But you’ll notice that all of these things have one very simple thing in common. They need people – us – to make them work.

It is our gifts of time and ability that allows the light of Christ to shine out into the world from this small town of Ellington, CT. We to have this palace of community, built and provided for each of you, by each of you.

So I ask: give more, be more, become more involved. Join a committee, volunteer for something, and of course, give as much as you are able. You won't regret it. You will be on a path to being a Steward Leader, and will have the boundless benefits of supporting and uplifting this beautiful and rare place we call ECC – a place that will outlast you, outlive you, and will help make our world a better place for generations to come. Be a good and faithful Steward.

Thank you and God bless.

~ Bryan Forst, Chairperson of Stewardship Committee

FELLOWSHIP HOUR

Fellowship Hour generally follows the worship service.

Please join us after the service, downstairs in the Social Room.

It is a favorite Sunday ritual and gives visitors, friends and members of the congregation a chance to socialize over delicious foods, a nice cuppa, and some fun activities.

Please remember to wear your name tags!

CALLING ALL COOKS AND BACKYARD CHEFS



We are very grateful to Cassie, chairperson of Worship Fellowship Hour, and her team of volunteers, Marci, Bobby, Marilyn, Carol, Jol, Irv, the Crane family, the Loomis family, the Pizzatoli family and everyone else who has supported this ministry.

Cassie is taking a break over the summer to refresh for the Fall. We need one or two people, male or female, to oversee all after church summer social hours. This social hour time is an extension of worship and VERY important for the unity of our faith community.

Men and women please consider this worthwhile opportunity.



You will be trained and volunteers will assist you each week. This is a wonderful way to show off your creativity and imagination! All decorations will be provided.

Contact Cassie @ 860-819-1393 or
Pastor Joanne @ 860-872-9222.

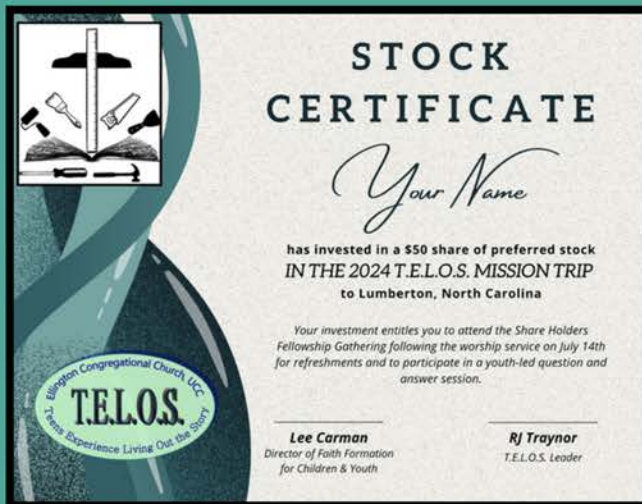
Are you invested in T.E.L.O.S.?

Buy a share in the 2024 mission trip!

~\$50 per share~

Perks of investing:

- Added to the private Facebook group - allows you to see daily posts and photos
- Postcard mailed from NC by a Telosian
- Email from youth during the trip
- Attend the Share Holders Fellowship Gathering after worship on 7/14 for refreshments, Q&A, & testimonies



Purchase during Social Hour beginning 4/14 or by emailing Lee at christianed@eccucc.org

Join us for VBS Day Camp!



June 24th - 28th, 9am - noon

Ages 3 yrs thru 6th grade

www.eccucc.org

We will be holding the VBS - Day Camp during the week of June 24th - 28th, 9 am - 12 noon. This year's theme is Operation Restoration: Mending God's World. Each day kids will travel through stations: music, story, crafts, science/nature, and games.

The cost for this year's program is \$20 per child with a max per family of \$35. Daily snacks included. Checks may be mailed to ECC, P.O. Box 216, Ellington, CT 06029. Make checks payable to "ECC" with "VBS" in the memo line.

You may register online at <https://www.eccucc.org/news/vacation-bible-school> or call the church office: 860-871-6606

Email Lee Carman with questions at christianed@eccucc.org

Shopping Cart Ministry May Most Needed Items

Cornerstone is requesting:

- Boxes of dry pasta
- Peanut butter
- Boxes of macaroni and cheese
- Spaghetti sauce in plastic jars (such as Francesco Rinaldi) or cans
- Cans of condensed soup (especially chicken noodle and tomato)
- Pouches of instant potatoes
- Canned pasta
- Rice side dishes (such as Rice-A-Roni, Knorr side dishes)

Crystal Lake Food Pantry is requesting:

- Canned pasta,
- Ground coffee,
- Canned pineapple,
- Applesauce
- Canned corn



MISSIONS is on a Mission

As the Board of Missions, we exemplify a heart full of love, an ear ready to listen, and a hand willing to help.

Lee Hayward, the Director of Cornerstone Food Pantry, would like us to know that the number of families seeking food assistance from the Cupboard continues to grow by 25-30 each month, which means we need more nonperishable food items each month.

Grocery Store Gift Cards are also greatly appreciated!

Mother's Day May 12

Mother's Day Cards will again be on sale during Fellowship Hour on April 28, May 5th, and May 12th.



MISSIONS BIRTHDAY BAG PROJECT

**Celebrate Your Birthday
By Helping Someone Else
Celebrate Theirs!**

Suggested Donations

- Party Bag
- Cake mix & frosting
- Party themed: paper plates, paper napkins, paper/plastic tablecloth
- Plastic cutlery
- Candles

Optional:

- Party hats
- Decorations.

Please put your donation in
the grocery cart



Next Blood Drive - May 17 In the Social Room

To donate blood, please make an appointment
with the Red Cross by calling
800-REDCROSS or visit their website:
<https://www.redcrossblood.org>

Volunteers Needed - It's easy! Two Shifts Available: 12:00-3:15 and 3:00-6:30.

- 2 people per shift to work at the registration desk
- 1 person per shift at the canteen
- 2 people to help with the room breakdown Friday around 6:30 pm. This usually takes less than an hour.

If you have not worked at the blood drive before, the Red Cross will provide training.

Please call the church office to volunteer: 860-871-6606

GREAT JOB ECC TEAM - YOU MADE US PROUD!

This group from ECC participated in the Rebuilding Together project in Manchester on April 27. Thank you to Tammy Mangold for organizing this mission trip. "The homeowners were so grateful for everything we did. She told me that it brings tears to her eyes to think that we all gave up a Saturday to help them the way we did." Thanks to you all!!



If you find yourselves or loved ones hospitalized, either planned or unplanned, please reach out to Pastor Joanne, Laurie Hazleton or the Office.

You can never have too many positive thoughts and prayers.

Thank you, Jennifer Traynor, for chairing the Farmhouse Fair again this year, and also serving as Women's Fellowship Chairperson for the upcoming year!!



SUMMER HOURS WILL NOT CHANGE
Please note that the Board of Deacons has decided not to change worship time this summer. Worship will continue to start at 10:00 AM throughout the summer.

The Growth and Nurture Committee encourages you to wear your name tag at worship service and any other ECC gatherings. This small act goes a long way to fostering relationships and helps newcomers feel welcomed.

Missing a name tag? Please fill out the form in the narthex and leave it in the collection plate or contact Caroline in the office - officeadmin@eccucc.org.



Deacon's Retreat

The Deacon's Retreat is rescheduled for May 10th & 11th, at the Silver Lake Camp & Retreat Center in Sharon CT.

It is free to you should you want to join us. Please let Pastor Joanne know, pastor@eccucc.org, or phone 860 872 9222, or contact Caroline in the office if you wish to come.



Prayer Shawl Ministry

Join us May 23rd in the social room for our monthly meeting where we knit and crochet amazing shawls to bring comfort and warmth to anyone who is in need. The maker begins with a prayer for the recipient as she lovingly weaves her yarn in a pattern. Refreshments are provided as well as warm conversation.

Women's Fellowship News

The Women's Fellowship of the Ellington Congregational Church is open to all members and friends of the church. We encourage you to participate in our organization.

Hebrews 10:24-25 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another-and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Dear Women of ECC,

We are very excited to be offering a new slate of officers for the program year which begins June 2024 and runs until the following June. It is with great pleasure that we announce Jennifer Traynor for President, Cathy Leonard for Vice President, Bethany White for Secretary, and Jan Danforth for Treasurer. We are very grateful that Jen also remains on as Chair of the Farmhouse Fair, Laurie Hazleton stays on as Kitchen Chair and Cassie Miller remains our Chaplain. Our general Women's Fellowship will be voting for our new officers in May and they will be installed at our June Annual Meeting/Luncheon. We are still looking for an Assistant Treasurer.

The next Farmhouse Fair workshop is **Tuesday, May 14, 2024** at 7:00 p.m. in Room 201.

Our **Annual Luncheon/Annual Meeting** will be held on **Sunday, June 30, 2024** at Figaro's Restaurant in Enfield. More details will be forthcoming.

Please save the dates! Our Farmhouse Fair is early this year – **Friday, November 1, and Saturday, November 2, 2024.**

Blessings, Penny Gates and Sharon McLaughlin, Co-Presidents



Next Farmhouse Fair Workshop

Tuesday, May 14

7:00 PM in Room 201

All are invited to help create these adorable winter table decorations to be sold at the Farmhouse Fair. Materials will be provided. We have lots of fun so please join us!

THE CHURCH CALLER
Ellington Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
P.O. Box 216
Ellington, CT 06029-0216

ECC Contact Information

860-871-6606 www.eccucc.org

Church Office Hours: Tues - Fri 9:00 am - 2:00 pm

Office email: OfficeAdmin@eccucc.org

officeadmin@eccucc.org

Caroline Takach, Office
Administrator

Location/Shipping Address

72 Main Street

Mailing Address

P.O. Box 216,
Ellington, CT 06029-0216

Fax 860-871-5932

**WIFI for Sanctuary and
Social Room:** ECCwifil
pass: 2019churchECC!

**The 24/7 church answering
machine provides
instructions for urgent call
service .**

Pastoral Emergencies,
concerns or prayer requests,
call Pastor Joanne at
860-872-9222.

pastor@eccucc.org
Joanne Myer, Intentional
Interim Minister

christianed@eccucc.org
Lee Carman, Youth &
Children Faith Formation
Director

musicdirector@eccucc.org
Juliane 'Julie' LaRocca,
Director of Music

outreach@eccucc.org
Jill McAllister, Outreach &
Media Coordinator/ Website