

The Steeple Chimes

FEBRUARY 2021

Columbia Congregational Church

United Church of Christ

Established in 1720



Mission Statement

The Columbia Congregational United Church of Christ as part of the United Church of Christ and the worldwide Christian Church is called by God to be disciples of Jesus, the Christ. Therefore, the mission of the Columbia Congregational United Church of Christ is to worship God and to preach and teach the Gospel of Christ; to promote Christian fellowship among our members and friends, and to live in Christian fellowship with the Church Universal and the whole creation; that we might live faithfully, serving God and humanity, and striving for righteousness, justice, and peace.

Staff:

The Rev. MaryAnn Purtill, Pastor

Cell: 860-633-5833 eMail: ccchurch@snet.net

Alexander Chiu, Organist and Choir Director

Michele LaBrec, Administrative Assistant

Phone: 860-228-9306 eMail: ccchurch@snet.net

Columbia Congregational Church February 2021 Pastor's Message

Dear Friends in Christ,

I LOVE beginnings!

I love beginnings for the future it promises.

I love beginnings for the anticipation of what is to come.

Like the beginning of a new year, with all the blessings that lay ahead of us.

Like the beginning of a new ministry, with all the wonderful ways we can serve God together.

Like the beginning of new relationships, with all the discoveries of gifts and talents. It is at the beginning of something that our imaginations can run wild with possibilities.

Like when an artist stands before a blank canvas...the possibilities are endless.

Granted, this can be as much frightening as it is exciting.

I doubt any of us stood at the beginning of last year and understood how frightening the year 2020 could become.

Our holy scriptures begin with the words, "In the beginning....", and proceed to detail God's creative power and wisdom. In six days, our natural habitat known as Earth is created and populated. On the final day God blesses all that work with a Sabbath Day, when ALL of creation is infused with God's holy spirit. Thus, we are surrounded by God in all we see, hear, touch and smell. This Sabbath Day is when we worship, praising God for not only for the beauty of the earth but the beauty within each of us.

And so here we are, you and I, at the beginning of this new year, about to embark on a new ministry, building new relationships, as we work together to serve God's creative power and wisdom.

I pray you will join with me to serve God faithfully, and to serve God joyfully, and to praise God fully.

Now...as I am writing to you, I am looking at the many boxes of my "stuff" that I have yet to unpack.

You know... the "stuff" we need to have around us, that makes our living feel like home. The word "home" is such a simple word, yet packed with meaning.

It can invoke many feelings and evoke all sorts of memories.

For me "home" is where I am comfortable, and where I can be myself.

It is a place of hospitality, and welcoming. A place where love surrounds us, and where peace is found. I am sure each of you has your own way of defining it too.

Now that all my "stuff" is in one place I anticipate worshipping with you as your new pastor. February 1st is my first official day as your new minister, and since we cannot meet in person, please feel free to email, text, or call me.

I very much want to hear from you.

Better yet, **come to worship on Sunday February 7th** when we will celebrate Holy Communion; the sacrament in which God beckons us to be at "home", offering us a place at the table where we are surrounded by amazing grace, nourished with God's creative spirit and wisdom, and redeemed with steadfast love.

With Faith, *Pastor MaryAnn*

*Second Saturday Sustenance -
February 13th*

Chili and Corn Bread to go!

**ORDER and PAY BEFORE Feb. 7th & PICK UP Feb.
13th**

Click here to download an order form or place your
online order!

[https://columbiacongregationalchurch.org/Sustenance Saturdays](https://columbiacongregationalchurch.org/Sustenance%20Saturdays)



Any questions? **Email us at CCChurchFair@gmail.com**

Second Saturday Sustenance — February 13th



Order our **Chili & Corn Bread** to go! Pre-ordered, drive-thru pick-up service only.

Pick up at Columbia Congregational Church between **1 and 3 PM Saturday Feb. 13th**

ORDERS and PAYMENT must be received **BEFORE FEBRUARY 7th**

Any questions? Email us at CCChurchFair@gmail.com

***** Order form *****

____ quart(s) Chili (ground beef & kidney beans) @ \$12 each \$ _____
____ pint(s) Chili (ground beef & kidney beans) @ \$6 each \$ _____
____ quart(s) Vegan Chili (sweet potato & black beans) @ \$12 each \$ _____
____ pint(s) Vegan Chili (sweet potato & black beans) @ \$6 each \$ _____
____ Mini-loaf(s) Corn Bread @ \$4 each \$ _____
____ Mini-loaf(s) Gluten-free* Corn Bread @ \$5 each \$ _____
Total # ____ items Total \$ _____

** Note: The corn bread contains wheat flour. All other products including Gluten-free Corn Bread may be contaminated by small amounts of wheat but do not include wheat products. Chili recipes are mild-to-medium spicy. Mini-loaves are 5" x 3".*

Name:
Phone:
Email:

Pay by **Check**: Mail your completed order form with check payable to Columbia Congregational Church Fair PO Box 177 Columbia, CT 06237

Or Use our website to fill out your order and pay online with **PayPal**:
https://columbiacongregationalchurch.org/?page_id=16952

*Check our website www.columbiacongregationalchurch.org
or our Facebook page, Columbia Congregational Church, for next month's offering!*



Are you ready for the SOUPER BOWL?

We mobilize with a national effort and direct local impact to support the Covenant Soup Kitchen in Willimantic each year through the Souper Bowl.

We will be accepting donations on Super Bowl **Sunday, February 7, 2021.** This year's theme is **Bigger Than the Bowl.**

Please consider a generous donation to help feed our neighbors through the Covenant Soup Kitchen.

Checks can be written out to the Columbia Congregational Church with the notation Souper Bowl. Thanks in advance for your donation.

It's time to Plunge!

It Covenant Soup Kitchen's 10th Anniversary Plunge for Hunger this year and while we are sad that COVID is keeping us apart, we hope you will find a way to come together to participate in our virtual Plunge!

The Jeffrey P. Ossen Family Foundation and the Leo and Rose Pageau Trust are hoping to inspire you by matching every dollar you can raise, up to \$80,000!

We ask you come up with a fun, creative and safe way to plunge and ask your friends and family to sponsor you. We hope you share a photo or video on social media. You can take your plunge anytime between now and the end of February.

It has been a tough time for so many people and we are very grateful for the unwavering support of the community.

You are the reason the soup kitchen can be there to help. Thank you!

Where to find community help:

Town of Columbia, Social Services

Katie Wilt, Community Social Services Coordinator

323 Route 87 Columbia, CT 06237 (mailing address)

860-228-0110 x128, email: kwilt@columbiact.org, meet virtually by Zoom

(Typical office hours: Monday & Tuesday, 8:30 am - 5:00 pm)

- Learn about what programs you may qualify for
- Get referrals to appropriate programs/services
- Talk with a social worker
- If you are having any issues with eligibility/benefits

Available by phone: 860-228-0110 x128

CLOTHING ASSISTANCE

Lebanon Children's Clothing Wardrobe

Free children's clothing. By appointment only via email lebanonccw@gmail.com Located in the Redeemer Lutheran Willimantic, CT,

Free clothing for adults and children. Shopping hours are 9 a.m. – Noon on Tuesday, Thursday and the first Saturday of the month. 15 minutes allotted to shop for clothing. Only one family member can shop at one time. Must make an appointment by calling 860-456-7270 ext 15.

OME GOODS

Windham Area Interfaith Ministry (WAIM) 866 Main Street,
Willimantic, CT. Website: waimct.org

Free linens, dishes, pots and pans, lamps and furniture. Can shop 15 minutes for pantry and furniture. Only one family member at a time. Must make an appointment by calling 860-456-7270 ext 15.

FOOD ASSISTANCE

Columbia Food Bank

Delivers food to families in need on Tuesday mornings. Call Bernadette Derring at 860-228-0759.

LOCAL FOOD PANTRIES

Andover – 860-208-3226 – Andover Congregational Church – 359
Route 6

Bolton – 860-647-9196 – Bolton Social/Senior Center – 104 Notch
Road

Colchester – 860-537-7235 – Colchester Town Hall - 127 Norwich
Ave

Columbia – 860-228-0759 – Beckish Senior Center – 188 Route 66

Coventry – 860-742-5324 – Coventry Town Hall – 1712 Main Street

East Hampton – 860-267-6720 – 43 West High Street – next to St.
Patrick's

Hebron – 860-228-1681 – HIHS - 20 Pendleton Drive

Marlborough – 860-295-6008 – Marlborough Food bank - 3

Wilhenger Drive

Other resources – 211 or foodpantries.org

Mobile FoodShare Van

Every other Thursday from 1:00 - 1:30,

Anyone can participate. Drive thru line at Beckish Center and food will be placed in your trunk.

Beckish Senior Center

188 Route 66

Columbia, CT

HEATING ASSISTANCE

GET HEATING ASSISTANCE FOR YOUR HOME!



The **CT Energy Assistance Program** and **Operation Fuel** are accepting applications now. You can apply to both programs from the comfort of your own home, with a local social service agency, or Katie Wilt, Town of Columbia Social Services Coordinator, can be contacted to help assist with the process!

CT ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Eligibility:

See website for income requirements

***There is a liquid assets test as an additional basic eligibility requirement. For homeowners, the first \$15,000 in liquid assets, and for other households, the first \$12,000 in liquid assets, is disregarded. Any amount over that limit, when added to the annual gross income must be below the income guidelines.**

(liquid assets includes: checking, savings, CD's, stocks/shares, bonds, annuities, certificates of deposit and individual retirement accounts. *Individual Retirement Accounts are considered to be liquid assets if the accounts are in the name of a household member who is 59-and-one-half years old or more.*)

How to Apply:

How to Apply:

Option 1: Visit www.ct.gov and type in Energy Assistance in the search bar

- a. Click on the first result, Energy Assistance – Winter Heating
- b. Click on APPLY (left hand side)
- c. Answer heating question and type in your zip code
- d. Click on Download Application

- e. To submit your completed application, you can e-mail shirley.riemann@accessagency.org or mail it to the following address:

The ACCESS Agency, Inc.
Attention: ACCESS Energy Department
1315 Main Street, Willimantic, CT 06226

Option 2: Schedule a tele- appointment by contacting ACCESS Energy Department

Phone: 860-450-7487 (Willimantic) or by email: shirley.riemann@accessagency.org

Option 3: Contact Katie Wilt at kwilt@columbiact.org, or 860-228-0110 x128 (She can download the application and assist in filling it out and sending it to ACCESS.)

Important Deadlines:

- 3/21/21 Deadline for fuel authorizations
- 5/3/21 Last day that a household can apply to establish eligibility for benefits unless the household is utility heated and has a shutoff notice for its primary source of heat.
- 5/14/21 Last day that utility heated household with a shut-off notice for its primary heat can apply to establish its eligibility for benefits.

OPERATION FUEL

An Operation Fuel energy grant is not an entitlement to all Connecticut residents, however if your income is under 75% of the State Median and you have applied to Energy Assistance but are over income or exhausted benefits you may qualify for oil or utility help.

Eligibility:

See website for income requirements

How to Apply:

Option 1: Online at <https://operationfuel.org/gethelp/>

Option 2: Contact Operation Fuel directly at opfuelapplications@operationfuel.org or call (860) 243-2345

Option 3: With Windham Area Interfaith Ministry by calling 860-456-7270, ext 12

Option 4: Contact Katie Wilt to virtually assist with the online application. (kwilt@columbiact.org, or 860-228-0110 x128)

The Town of Columbia has a Fuel Bank for emergencies after the above programs are utilized. Please contact Katie Wilt to apply or for questions. kwilt@columbiact.org or 860-228-0110 x128.

Mental health clinical services for youth, parents and their families.

AHM - Skilled therapists specialize in the treatment of anxiety, discipline strategies, family transition, using strengths, depression, and more. Contact them at 860-228-9488 to make an appointment or for more information.

<https://ahmyouth.org/programs-services/clinical-services/>

COLUMBIA FOOD PANTRY

If anyone is interested in donating food items to the Columbia food pantry here is a list of their most needed items:

Pasta & Sauce

Peanut butter & Jelly –

Cereal – healthy types and kid friendly

Oatmeal packets

Soups – Many need lower sodium soups

Snacks – Chips – cookies – crackers, etc

Pudding snacks & Jello Snacks

Ramen & Mac n Cheese

Rice packets

Ready meals – like Lipton rice meals – bowl meals, etc

Juice – apple, orange, grape

Any fresh produce & Fruit

Canned tuna & Chicken

The pantry has an ongoing need for egg cartons.

Please call Bernadette at 860-228-0759 if you have any questions.

Update on the 300th Anniversary Book

We printed 85 copies of the anniversary book and they are all gone! We did save one for the new pastor, for whenever he or she may arrive. Please leave your name and contact information with Michele if you want one in the future. We can't re-order just one or two copies, but can order a small batch, if there is enough interest. Hope you all enjoyed the publication as part of our "Covid" anniversary celebration. Jan Thibodeau

CHURCH WEBSITE

The church Website is now secure, we have a valid Certificate and HTTPS: as part of our Domain name. (**HTTPS** (Hypertext Transfer Protocol Secure) is an internet communication protocol that protects the integrity and confidentiality of data between the user's computer and the website.) Basically this means any data on our site is secure and encrypted for our member's safety. I have received notes before from members who were afraid to make online donations or pledges because our site was displayed as "Not Secure" in their web browsers. This has been corrected and our site is now been certified by our web host and in independent certification company.

<https://columbiacongregationalchurch.org/>

**To Contact Pastor Purtil
Please Call or Text Directly:
860-633-5833
eMail: ccchurch@snet.net**

**To contact Michele LaBrec
Now working from home: Please
Call or Text Directly:
860-734-3899
eMail: mlabrec2018@yahoo.com**

**REMEMBER OUR HOME BOUND AND
FRIENDS RESIDING IN CARE CENTERS . . .**

Dot Davis

Mansfield Center
for Nursing and Rehabilitation
100 Warren Circle
Storrs, CT 06268

Jean Peters

Hattie Ide Chaffee Home
200 Wampanoag Trail, Room 15
East Providence, RI 02915

Mary Jane Johnston

C/O Westview Health Care Center
150 Ware Road
Dayville, CT 06241