



# Leverett Church Clarion

Monthly Newsletter

First Congregational Church of Leverett, Massachusetts

*An Open & Affirming member of the United Church of Christ*

[www.LeverettCongregationalChurch.org](http://www.LeverettCongregationalChurch.org)

Lee Barstow, Pastor

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December 2025

## ***Message from the Church Council***

Seasons greetings to all. We are now into one of the busiest and most celebrated seasons of the church. It is now Advent, and we are moving steadily towards another year celebrating the birth of Jesus. “Advent” is derived from the Latin word for “coming,” and excitement is building as we



anticipate the coming of Christ with the birth of Jesus. In church, the countdown is done through the lighting of the candles on the Advent wreath – one each Sunday before December 25. Some of us at home may also celebrate with the opening of the “doors” or “windows” of the Advent calendar. As children, my brother and I always looked forward to opening one window each day as we

approached Christmas. Our calendar was a simple one of cardboard and if I recall correctly inside each window was a simple picture of an object related

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| UPCOMING WORSHIP       |   |
|------------------------|---|
| December 7             | Rev. Alice Goodwin-Brown                  |
| December 14            | Rev. Alice Goodwin-Brown                  |
| December 21            | Rev. Randy Hyvonen                        |
| December 23<br>Tuesday | Rev. Randy Hyvonen<br>Candlelight Service |
| December 28            | Rev. Randy Hyvonen                        |

***“For unto us a  
child is born”***

Isaiah 9:6



## *Letter from Lee*

*Pastor*

December 2025



**Dear Lee —**



**This message is for you, Lee — we of the Leverett Congregational Church community wish you well as you continue your recovery.**

**— From all of us**

### ***The Mountain Goats are on the Run again***

With your support, Team Mountain Goats **raised \$1,200 for the Survival Center in Amherst** during the Hike for Hunger month, and our team is this year's winner in the category of most miles hiked. Now, **Team Mountain Goats is on the run**. Our team will participate in the Hot Chocolate Run on December 7 in Northampton.

For the team's next adventure, two more goats joined the team, which is now five goats strong. Mara and Susan, our new team members, will walk the Hot Chocolate Run 3K together with Ninette. Brett and Lale, the latter of which has never run a race, will run the 5K Hot Chocolate Fun Run. Brett and Lale have already started training and some mornings it is very hard for Lale to walk, as muscles, she didn't even know she had, hurt.



Race done, stretch time

Please continue to cheer our team on, and support our contribution to the work of Safe Passage Northampton, which is the Hampshire County organization addressing domestic violence. You can make a donation by December 7 to Safe Passage through our team's page here:

<https://p2p.onecause.com/hcr2025/lale-rothmueller-luce>

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to Christmas. Other calendars are more elaborate and may contain figures or candy treats. Gordon opened the door one day and I had the next, so we each had 12 doors to open.

This year, last Sunday (November 30) was the first Sunday of Advent and we lit the first candle – the Candle of Hope. The reading was particularly relevant this year, given the turmoil around the world: “Isaiah the Prophet foretold the birth of Christ, one who would herald a new era of peace, where the wolf would lie down with the lamb; an era of justice, where no one would go hungry, and all would be treated with dignity and fairness.” What a wonderful world it would be if everyone followed this path.



We'll be lighting the Candle of Peace on Sunday, December 7, followed by the Candle of Joy (on the 14<sup>th</sup>) and the Candle of Joy (on the 21<sup>st</sup>). Reverend Alice Goodwin-Brown will lead our service for the next two Sundays and Reverend Randall (Randy) Hyvonen will finish the month for us, including the Candlelight Service on Tuesday, December 23.

I spoke with Lee today and he is doing much better...still a bit tired and lacking stamina, but he is getting stronger every day. He emphasized that he is really looking forward to returning to the pulpit in January. Again, he expressed his sincere gratitude to the church for giving him time to recuperate.

We're looking forward to seeing you either in person or on Zoom during this holiday season. In the meantime, God bless all of you, your family and friends. May we all make the world a better place through our thoughts, words, deeds, and prayers.

With Blessings to All,  
Ralph Tiner, on behalf of the Church Council

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## MISSIONS NEWS—December

**Note: We will collect for the Christmas Fund in January**  
**(Support for active and retired UCC clergy and lay employees)**

### Community Network for Children

#### ***Food Cards for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Beyond***

Thanks to your continuing generosity, we've already delivered \$430 of food gift cards to the CNC to distribute to families struggling to make ends meet. What a gift, to give our neighbors in need the freedom to spend those dollars in a way that best serves their family's needs.



Your gifts will be gratefully received throughout the month of December. In these dark months of winter, electric and heating bills are an added burden to those in need, making these seemingly small gifts mean so much. You can purchase cards for \$25, \$30, or \$50 from Stop & Shop, Big Y, or ALDI or donate money for their purchase. Your support will go a long way, bringing greater peace of mind to many struggling families in our neighborhoods.

#### ***CNC Closet Schedule***

The CNC Closet provides FREE clothing for young children, newborn through elementary age.



CNC Children's Closet schedule for the coming Thursdays, from 8:00 am - Noon and by appointment if unable to make this time:

- December 4, 11, 18 OPEN
- January 8, 15, 22, 29 OPEN

The Franklin Hampshire area **Diaper Bank** continues to supply us with disposable diapers we can offer to families for free. You can also find

*(Missions Report: Continued on page 5)*

*(Missions Report: Continued from page 4)*

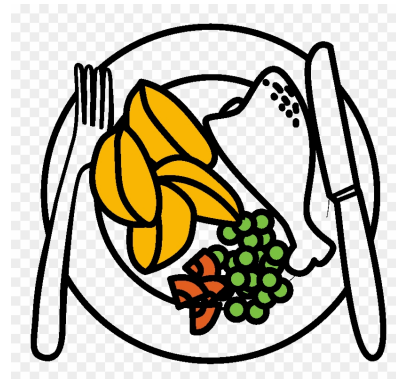
information about other available resources. We are located at the Dixon House, 4 Montague Road, Leverett. Call/Text or email Gillian Budine, CNC Program Coordinator (978) 935-4909 or [cnccoord@erving.com](mailto:cnccoord@erving.com).

Visit the CNC website for more information about the services we provide in our community to families with young children <https://sites.google.com/erving.com/cncprogram/home>.

### **Meals on Wheels**

Again, this year we will be contributing the collection from the Candlelight Service to Meals on Wheels. The services Meals on Wheels through the Life Path organization offers have a huge impact on our local community. Fifty volunteers deliver free hot meals daily to those in our community who cannot prepare meals themselves.

Microwaveable frozen meals provide simple meal preparation for dinner and weekends. This one act has so many benefits such as helping shut-ins beat isolation, giving their loved ones peace of mind knowing someone is checking in on them often, as well as ensuring they receive daily nourishment. More than anything, most people wish to stay in their homes as long as they are able and Meals on Wheels makes that possible.



### **How to Donate**

You can choose to donate the easiest way for you: by mailing your check made out to Leverett Congregational Church (write "CNC" or "Meals on Wheels" in the memo line), PO Box 324, Leverett MA 01054 OR donate online at <https://www.leverettcongregationalchurch.org/donate>. Choose any of the three categories, but click on the "Write us a comment" box and let us know where you would like your contribution to go, (CNC or Meals on Wheels, for example). If you're attending church you can put money in an envelope for CNC and place it in the collection plate.

Claudia Gere for the Missions Committee

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***Prayer notes*****Bill Anderson**, *friend of Lee Barstow***Lee Barstow****Andrew Botieri**, *friend of Claudia Gere***Bill Brower**, *Judy Ricker's brother-in-law***Chris Chicoine**, *brother-in-law of Lee's friend Kaleigh Won***Joan E.**, *friend of Mary Hankinson***Alice Field****John Field***The family and loved ones of **Mary Franks**, friend of the congregation, who died in January***Barbara Goodhind***The family and loved ones of **Frankie Hankinson** who died October 7***Mary Hankinson** *now living with family in Vermont***Joshua Kalev**, *husband of Betty Wilson's granddaughter Selilah Kalev***Stasi Kanyuck**, *daughter of Marg and Jack Kruse, granddaughter of Betty Wilson***Karen**, *Mary Kealy's godchild**The family and loved ones of **Michael Katz** who died in the Fall of 2024***Kieran Kealy**, *brother of John Kealy & Mary Kealy**Church neighbor **Roy Kimmel**, husband of Cynthia Thomas Kimmel, died in August***Nancy Lane** *Patti Lane's sister in Idaho, daughter of the late Russell Lane***Jean Larouche**, *friend of Lee Barstow***Hilda Nachman**, *aunt of Aida Markiw***Martha Napierski**, *niece of Alice Field, as well as Martha's husband, Edward**Family and loved ones of **Hugh O'Brien**, friend of John and Sally Kealy***Julia O'Kelly**, *Mary Ryan's niece**The family and loved ones of **Jack O'Kelly**, Mary Ryan's nephew***Alice Oram**, *friend of Lee Barstow***Marijke van Parijs**, *sister of Elsje Sturtevant***Dan Perkins**, *son of Jim Perkins and father of Alise Perkins**(Prayer notes, Continued on page 7)*

*(Prayer notes, continued from page 6)*



**Charlie Paulin**

**Esther Poldvee**, *friend of Tracey Field*

**Flip Rosenberry**, *friend of Lee Barstow*

**Roxana**, *friend of Mary Kealy*

*The family and loved ones of **Erika Schütz**, including her niece Ninette Rothmüller, her great niece Lale Rothmüller, and Erika's husband Herrmann Schütz*

**Michèle Smith**

**Cat White**, *Mary Hankinson's niece*

*The family and loved ones of **Betty Wilson** who died July 6, 2025. She was the wife of Rev. Fred Wilson, our pastor 1994-2004.*

*Victims of injustice & violence against each other and our earth*

**Prayer updates:** If you would like to add a person here, please leave a message on the church phone, 413-548-9199, or contact Lee Barstow, leebarstow@gmail.com; Judy Ricker, judyricker@aol.com; or Sarah Roys, royssarah2@gmail.com

The December 2025 lectionary can be found here —

<https://tinyurl.com/458nypku>

***Remember our lonely  
collection plate***

***You can mail*** your offering  
to Leverett Congregational  
Church

PO Box 324, Leverett MA 01054

• ***Or give online at***

[www.leverettcongregationalchurch.org/donate](http://www.leverettcongregationalchurch.org/donate)

***OR*** find collection plates at the rear of  
the sanctuary when you attend in  
person



#### December Celebrations

|                       |               |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| Dave & Amy Rice       | December 2 A  |
| Sarah Roys            | December 9 B  |
| Carrie Burke          | December 15 B |
| Lale Rothmueller-Luce | December 22 B |
| Beth Logan Raffeld    | December 31 B |

A=Anniversary B=Birthday





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United Church of Christ  
4 Montague Road  
PO Box 324  
Leverett, MA 01054



### **Calendar**

**December 23 (Tuesday) — Candlelight  
Service, 7 pm**

December 2025

### **Lee Barstow, Pastor**

Office Hours (Dixon House):  
Sundays following worship, by  
Appointment, in ordinary times  
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**Newsletter deadline:** January 2026 issue  
Tuesday, December 30, 2025  
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