



# The Voice



January 2024

10 Woodland Street Hartford, CT 06105



## From the Pastor's Desk

A new year! How appropriate for our church, because of the incredible juncture at which we find ourselves. So many important things will happen in this new year, such vital conversations about the future, and deeply meaningful decisions to be made about the present and the future of our church!

I want to share with all of you an overview of the process and earnestly invite your participation. There are three related ways we will go about discerning our values and our focus for the next several years.

**First**, there will be information from the all church survey. The data has been collected and by the end of the month of January, we will begin to share it through whole church gatherings during Second Hours and zoom meetings. We will be making the whole survey results available to anyone that wants them. Plus we will be asking ourselves what the data means and how it illuminates who we are and what we want to be and to do for God.

**Second**, we will engage in one on ones. The church has a history of doing these and so many people have found them to be valuable and fun, as well as helpful in strengthening bonds between people. We will be organizing these to happen from the middle of February until into the spring. These conversations will also bring forward the hopes and dreams of each of us for the church.

**Third**, we will have a number of post worship discussions (like Second Hours) with the broad purpose of talking together about the future of our church. Watch for scheduling information about in person and zoom. Four of these will focus on these vitally important issues:

1. **Music at Immanuel.** The departure of Mark Singleton as our Director of Music, as sad as that is for many of us, is also an opportunity. We will discuss what we have appreciated about our music program, share ways some might like to see changes in music for worship and reaffirm our desire for our music to be excellent in our life together.
2. **Children and Youth programs.** We will ask how to attract young families and consider what tried and true programs and new activities can bring families to our church.

3. **Outreach to the City.** Immanuel is a church that has deep roots in Hartford's history and most of us want to remain a vital part of the neighborhood and making a difference in people's lives. What do we do that we want to continue? Are there some initiatives to give up and or new ones to start? How do we live out our presence as part of this city?
4. **10 Woodland Street.** This is where the church has been for 125 years. Do we continue to minister from our current building? Or should we move somewhere else? What do we need to do to maintain the building? Should we do a capital campaign to raise substantial funds to do some much needed repairs and upgrades?

So this is going to be a very important year for our beloved church! I am enthusiastic about prayerfully and carefully discerning the future of our church. *Dr. Jay*



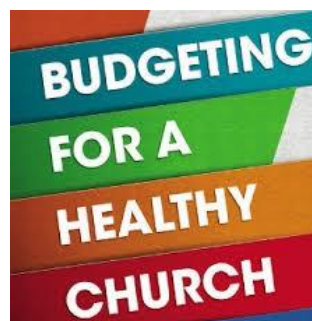
### **Call to the Annual Meeting: Sunday, January 28, 2024**

The Annual Meeting of Immanuel Congregational Church, UCC, 10 Woodland Street, Hartford, Connecticut, 06105, will be held on Sunday, January 28, 2024, following the 10am worship service. The meeting will receive reports, adopt the budget, elect officers and transact other business proper to come before the meeting.



### **Let's Do Lunch!**

The Membership Committee invites you to **"Lunch After Church" following the Annual Meeting!** It's a casual way to get together and connect with ICC members and friends. It's totally informal...no sign-ups or reservations...just show up! We'll gather for this lunch **at First and Last Tavern, located at 939 Maple Ave., Hartford.** We'll meet around 12:30pm to eat, visit, and enjoy beverages! Come enjoy some great, homemade Italian food! Just bring a few bucks and your appetite!



### **Congregational Conversations about Immanuel's 2024 Budget**

Over this year, Immanuel's expenses and income sources have been carefully reviewed by two different budget task forces, as well as by our staff and several of our standing committees, and finally by Church Council and the Board of Finance. As most of you know, we have been spending more than our income for several years and taking more out of our endowment than is recommended to pay our operating expenses. We have determined that we need to work toward a balanced budget through increases in our income and making carefully considered reductions in our expenses. We have faced some really difficult decisions regarding reducing our expenses.

We are working toward a balanced budget for 2025 and some of the things which we are considering directly impact our staff compensation and benefits. As we work toward finalizing a budget for 2024, the church leadership is wanting and needing to share our thinking and to hear from you your priorities and ideas. We know that the considerations are challenging and some of the ideas for expense reduction are painful. So we are scheduling several gatherings to share with you and to hear from you.

We have two listening and discussion sessions in January:

- **Wednesday, January 10 at 7pm (via Zoom)**
- **Sunday, January 14, following worship (in-person)**

Please plan to attend one or both of these important gatherings.



**Church Council Meetings take place the third Monday of each month; Minutes are available here.**

Minutes and reports from Council meetings are available electronically in *The Voice* each month. You may also request a hard copy from the Council Clerk, John Scully. If you are interested in attending a meeting, please email John prior to that meeting at [jdscully@comcast.net](mailto:jdscully@comcast.net). He will provide you with an agenda and a Zoom link or meeting location.

Click [here](#) for the December Council Meeting minutes.



**Y'all Drop In Choir: Join Us!**

From now through April, ALL are invited on the second Sunday of each month (the first Sunday in May) to sing with our Immanuel choir. Arrive at church for rehearsal at 9am on these Sundays to be part of the action, fun and beauty of honoring God in song. No musical experience necessary; just open hearts! **First drop-in date is January 14<sup>th</sup>**. Hope to see you!



**We Are the Church!**

What a blessing it was to hear from all of our stewardship speakers this year! A special thank you goes to Buck Rogers, Bob Willard, John Scully, Lois Arsenault, Jack Zappulla, Edith Tresner, Roland Axelson, Alex O'Neil, Sam O'Neil, Jim Kew, Sally Taylor, Steve Law, Carolyn Lester, Frankie and Johnny DeWander, and Jennifer Gaudet. Each of you

shared your own personal story about what stewardship means to you, with each message so unique. You made us laugh and you made us cry. You made us think about what stewardship means, and you caused many of us to make or increase our pledge for 2024. As of this printing date, 93 pledges have been received, 71 of which were increases from 2023, for a total of \$422, 635. A sincere thank you to all the members of our congregation who made this happen, but especially to our amazing, passionate speakers. Thank you for being such generous, cheerful givers, for telling us why you share your treasure with the church, and for sharing your time and talent with us. Together, we are the church, and each of you made a difference. Thank you so much. You have blessed us all!

The Stewardship Committee



**A Message Well Worth a Listen!**

Click [here](#) to view this inspiring 6-minute message from the Executive Conference Minister of our Southern New England Conference, Rev. Darrell Goodwin.



## Let's bring our history alive

In 2024, we the members and friends of Immanuel

Congregational Church will find a number of ways to mark two very special anniversaries: 200 years since the founding of our oldest church ancestor, North Church, in 1824; and in the fall, the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our beautiful building and its stunning sanctuary.

For now, we invite you to

learn about North Church by diving into a study of its famous minister, the Reverend Horace Bushnell whose name is familiar to most Hartford residents (Bushnell Park, Bushnell Memorial Hall, etc.), but whose story is not!

Beginning Tuesday, January 16<sup>th</sup>, and continuing for 3 weeks, Dr. Jay and I will lead a study of the biography "Of Singular Genius, Of Singular Grace", written by the Reverend Robert Edwards about Horace Bushnell. Meetings will be in person at 10am at the church, or by Zoom at 7pm. To request a copy (while they last), contact Sue in the church office, [immanuel06105@gmail.com](mailto:immanuel06105@gmail.com), 860-527-8121. Or please search on E-bay or Amazon for a used copy, as the 1992 book is out of print. Hope you will join us — let's see what we can learn about our history!

Questions? Please reach out to me, Sally Taylor, [sallytaylor@comcast.net](mailto:sallytaylor@comcast.net).



## FLOWER SPONSORS NEEDED

Everyone has something to celebrate or a special person to honor or remember. Why not do so by sponsoring flowers on Sunday morning? After service, the flowers are divided into smaller arrangements and delivered to

members and friends of the church who are ill, recovering, celebrating a birthday or special anniversary, or as a thank you.

**Flower sponsors are needed on January 21<sup>st</sup> and February 4<sup>th</sup>.** Contact Judi Gilligan at [judith.gilligan@gmail.com](mailto:judith.gilligan@gmail.com), 860-563-3072, if you are interested in sponsoring on one of these dates or if you would like to reserve a future date.



## Youth Group Spreads Christmas Cheer!

Our amazing youth group gathered at the Immanuel House in the afternoon of December 3<sup>rd</sup> to spread some holiday cheer. The air was filled with laughter,



creativity, and the spirit of giving as our young people engaged in various festive activities and conversation with a room full of residents. The highlight of the day was undoubtedly the crafting session, where our talented youth created adorable reindeer side by side with the residents that brought smiles

to the faces of everyone present. The festive spirit continued as the youth organized multiple rounds of Holiday BINGO. Excitement and anticipation filled the room as participants eagerly awaited their chance to shout "BINGO!" and claim a prize. The games were not just about competition but also about creating a joyful and inclusive atmosphere where everyone felt like a winner. It was heartening to see the bonds forming among our youth and the residents of Immanuel House, transcending generational gaps and fostering a sense of community. We all gave and received that day!



## Interfaith Service for Mayor-Elect Arunan Arulampalam

On Thursday, January 4<sup>th</sup>, all are invited to come together as a Greater Hartford community to lift up the city in prayer across all religious traditions. The service will begin at 10:30am at Center Church, 675 Main Street. After the conclusion of the service, there will be a procession to The Old State House for his swearing in, which begins at 12pm.



## Rev. Kent Siladi Announces His Retirement

We wish past Immanuel member and UCC Connecticut Conference Minister all the best as he retires from his role at UCC’s Director of Philanthropy.

From Kent’s retirement announcement: “...At the end of the day, I’m most grateful for the relationships I have cultivated during my time in ordained ministry. The impact that the UCC people of faith make every day for the sake of the Gospel is an incredible thing to behold. The best days of our witness are yet to come. I will be holding all of you in my prayers, and I ask the same as I take my leave from this ministry. Thanks be to God for God’s generous gift of grace so freely bestowed upon us.”



## Weather Watch

During the winter months, information regarding any event cancellation or the closing of Immanuel Church due to inclement weather will be communicated via all-church emails, posted on the church Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/iccucc> and on the church website, [www.iccucc.org](http://www.iccucc.org), and broadcast on: WFSB-TV (Channel 3), NBC, FOX CT and these CBS radio stations: WTIC AM (1080) WRCH FM (100.5), WTIC FM (96.5) and WZMX FM (93.7). The information will also be available on-line at: [www.wfsb.com](http://www.wfsb.com), [www.nbcconnecticut.com](http://www.nbcconnecticut.com) and [www.foxct.com](http://www.foxct.com).

## Collection of Items for the Hands On Hartford Food Pantry

Immanuel has been collecting non-perishable foods for the Hands on Hartford Food Pantry weekly since the beginning of October. Your amazing response has been heartwarming and so appreciated by the food insecure. There is a definite need for your assistance. Hands On Hartford never turns anyone away, so our help is needed now more than



ever.

Buy a little extra each time you go to the grocery store - a box of cereal for your own family, and a box of cereal for Hands On Hartford. These are the items most needed by the Pantry:



## Faith Congregational Church Receives Sacred Places Grant

Our Faith Church colleagues in Christ were awarded a \$100,000 grant to address external masonry structures, water infiltration, and roof repairs, among other issues. The church was 1 of only 16

churches across the country that received over \$3.5 million in funding, training, technical assistance and capacity-building support. Read the full article by clicking [here](#). Congratulations, Faith!



- Boxed Cereal
- Oatmeal
- Pasta
- Rice
- Pancake Mix
- Canned Fruit

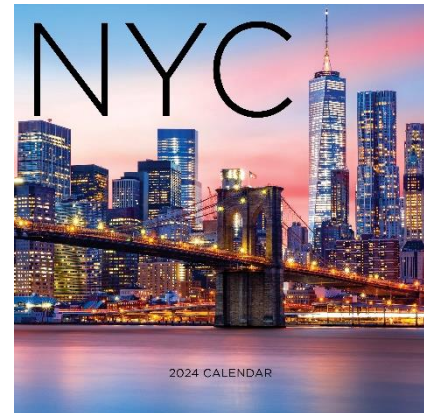
The deacons are asking you to bring non-perishable food items to our Sunday services (the grocery collection cart will be out each week). You don't have to necessarily limit yourself to those items on the list. Don't forget our gluten-free friends.



### Room for Rent?

The church has been alerted to the need for a room for rent for a modest sum for 3-6 months for a 25-year old, drug-free young woman diagnosed with PTSD from an abusive childhood who is looking to turn her life around. This woman needs a bit of time to continue seeing her therapist, to find a vocation and to regain her confidence in herself. Hands On Hartford and Journey Home are also trying to assist her.

If you want more information, or think you can help, please contact the church office, [immanuel06105@gmail.com](mailto:immanuel06105@gmail.com), 860-527-8121. Thank you!



### Request for Calendars and Christmas Cards

Immanuel's calendar ministry is still going strong, thanks to Immanuel Member Shirley Kline! Christmas cards are also much appreciated! If you have colorful, picture calendars and/or Christmas cards to contribute to brighten walls and lives, please leave them in the basket in Fellowship Hall, or contact Church Administrator Susan Fisher, [immanuel06105@gmail.com](mailto:immanuel06105@gmail.com), 860-527-8121.

## *The Deacons Invite You To An All-Church Brunch*

January 21, 2024

Following the 10:00 a.m. Service

Immanuel Congregational Church



It's time to gather and enjoy each other's company in Fellowship Hall.

If you are able, please bring a dessert to share.

We hope to see you there!

Free-will offering.



## United Nations Climate Conference (COP28) – A View from Dubai

A. Karim Ahmed

This year, the United Nations held its 28<sup>th</sup> Climate Conference (COP28) in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE) in late November/early December. This year's affair was planned like a huge "four-ring circus", with three green-zones (open to the public, with numerous exhibits) and one blue-zone reserved for the delegates (like myself) from different countries and non-governmental organizations. In all, over 80,000 attended this year's conference.

The choice of Dubai for COP28 was itself controversial, since it is a modern hub of a Middle-Eastern petrostate, whose main revenue comes from the export of fossil fuel products. Nevertheless, the conference did not end as an unmitigated disaster, as many critics had earlier forecasted. Two key decisions were made at COP28, whose overall impact will be felt in future years.

The first occurred at the opening day of COP28. Following on the decision made at last year's UN Climate Conference held in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt (COP27), the conferees at COP28 announced the formal setting of a Loss and Damage Fund. This Fund will be administered in interim by the World Bank through an independent board. It would financially assist vulnerable communities in low-income countries from the adverse impacts of extreme weather events and other climate-related disasters. Unfortunately, the amounts pledged thus far by many developed countries – in the vicinity of \$700 million – does not begin to match the amount that will be needed, i.e., around \$400 to \$500 billion per year.

The second decision was made in the early morning hours of COP28's last waning day. After intense behind the scene negotiations, the conferees agreed to a compromised declaration, which was stated in the following language: *"Transitioning away from fossil fuels in energy systems, in a just, orderly and equitable manner, accelerating action in this critical decade, so as to achieve net zero by 2050 in keeping with the science."* (Paragraph 28(d) of the Decision Document).

Although the above statement disappointed many activist representatives – they had wanted a stronger wording of "phasing out of fossil fuels" – it was considered a success by many others, since the term "fossil fuel" itself had never appeared in any earlier COP declarations. Ultimately, urgent actions on the part of many developed countries and petrostates in significantly reducing their carbon emissions will be critical, not how they stated their intentions.

In sum, like other UN-sponsored COP meetings in the past (such as the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement), this year's conference was a mixture of some solid advancement and many loose ends. For a lot of work will be needed by the world community to meet the 1.5 degree Celsius level by mid-century.

# JOIN IN THESE UPCOMING GHIAA EVENTS



## Racial Justice Training

Join us for a Zoom training series on Tuesday mornings, beginning January 9<sup>th</sup>, as we dig into privilege and power, identity and vulnerability, common language and shared struggle. This training includes a case study portion where we will engage with actual incidents that have occurred and practice how we disrupt racism in real time. If you have already participated in this training, we hope you will identify someone else from your congregation who might benefit from the experience and encourage them to take part. Registration and further info is available at [www.clijct.org/trainings](http://www.clijct.org/trainings)

## Concert: The Afro-Semitic Experience

Our friends at Congregation Beth Israel invite us to join them for a soulful and inspiring concert on Sunday, January 14<sup>th</sup>, at 4:00 pm. You can find more information and purchase tickets \$10/each, free for children 12 & under, at [www/cbict.org](http://www/cbict.org). Let’s deepen our relationships through joy and justice intertwined!

## GHIAA Next Steps

Save the date for an all-GHIAA zoom on Tuesday, January 16<sup>th</sup>, from 7-8:30pm, to hear about our next steps for issue action, as well as plans for a new round of house meetings to begin identifying our next slate. Please also join us on Tuesday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>, from 7-8:30pm, for a second zoom session at which we’ll dive into house meeting planning together.



# January Birthdays



|           |                          |           |                            |
|-----------|--------------------------|-----------|----------------------------|
| <b>3</b>  | <b>Christopher Jeter</b> | <b>15</b> | <b>Nadine Francis West</b> |
| <b>5</b>  | <b>Molly McKelvey</b>    | <b>18</b> | <b>Daphne Donahue</b>      |
| <b>8</b>  | <b>Barbara Gordon</b>    | <b>19</b> | <b>Nancy Rion</b>          |
|           | <b>Wesley Jackson</b>    | <b>20</b> | <b>Savanna Santiago</b>    |
| <b>10</b> | <b>Gabriel Colon</b>     | <b>21</b> | <b>Thalia Cuevas</b>       |
|           | <b>Justin Salvio</b>     | <b>22</b> | <b>Emily Banks</b>         |
| <b>11</b> | <b>C. Avery Buell</b>    | <b>23</b> | <b>Gail Hilliard</b>       |
|           | <b>Queenie Collins</b>   | <b>25</b> | <b>Carol Buckheit</b>      |
| <b>12</b> | <b>Carter Rion</b>       | <b>26</b> | <b>Stephen Pillsbury</b>   |
| <b>13</b> | <b>Margaret Price</b>    | <b>30</b> | <b>Sally Taylor</b>        |
| <b>14</b> | <b>Rion Singleton</b>    |           |                            |



# January 2024

| Sun   | Mon   | Tue  | Wed   | Thu  | Fri   | Sat  |
|---|---|--|---|--|---|--|
|   | <b>1</b> New Year's Day<br>Church Office Closed   | <b>2</b> 11am Staff Holiday Luncheon   | <b>3</b>  | <b>4</b> 7:30pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal  | <b>5</b> 1pm Music Committee Meeting              | <b>6</b>   |
| <b>7</b> 8:30am Bible Study<br>9am Chancel Choir Rehearsal<br>10am ICC Epiphany Worship<br>10am Church School<br>10am Riverfront Worship<br>5:30pm Youth Group  | <b>8</b> 7pm Zoom Diaconate Meeting<br>7pm Zoom Board of Finance Meeting                      | <b>9</b> 9am Zoom South Marshall Street Interfaith Coalition Meeting<br>11:30am Staff Meeting<br>7pm Zoom Board of Christian Education Meeting   | <b>10</b> 7pm Zoom Congregational Budget Discussion   | <b>11</b> 12 Noon Dances w/the Divine Art Show Hanging<br>5pm Zoom Social Action & Mission Committee Meeting<br>7:30pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal | <b>12</b>   | <b>13</b>  |
| <b>14</b> 8:30am Bible Study<br>9am Y'All Drop In Choir Rehearsal<br>10am Worship<br>10am Church School<br>11:15am Congregational Budget Discussion<br>4pm Afro-Semitic Experience Concert at Beth Israel | <b>15</b> Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day<br>Church Office Closed<br>7pm Council Meeting | <b>16</b> 10am In-person ICC History Book Discussion<br>11:30am Staff Meeting<br>4pm Hartford's Proud Drum Corp Rehearsal<br>7pm Zoom ICC History Book Discussion<br>7pm Zoom GHIAA Action Issues Update           | <b>17</b> 4pm Hartford's Proud Drum Corp Rehearsal<br>6:30pm PFLAG Meeting<br>7pm Zoom Environmental Action Committee Meeting | <b>18</b> 4pm Hartford's Proud Drum Corp Rehearsal<br>7:30pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal   | <b>19</b>   | <b>20</b>  |
| <b>21</b> 8:30am Bible Study<br>9am Chancel Choir Rehearsal<br>10am Worship<br>10am Church School<br>11:15am Brunch for All<br>5:30pm Youth Group   | <b>22</b> 4pm Hartford's Proud Drum Corp Rehearsal<br>7pm Zoom GHIAA Core Team Meeting        | <b>23</b> 10am In-person ICC History Book Discussion<br>11:30am Staff Meeting<br>4pm Hartford's Proud Drum Corp Rehearsal<br>7pm Zoom ICC History Book Discussion<br>7pm Zoom GHIAA House Meeting Planning Session | <b>24</b> 4pm Hartford's Proud Drum Corp Rehearsal<br>7pm Zoom Property Committee Meeting                                     | <b>25</b> 11am ICC Serves at Loaves & Fishes<br>4pm Hartford's Proud Drum Corp Rehearsal<br>7:30pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal                     | <b>26</b> 6pm Youth Our Whole Lives (OWL) Session | <b>27</b> 10am Youth Our Whole Lives (OWL) Session |
| <b>28</b> 8:30am Bible Study<br>9am Chancel Choir Rehearsal<br>10am Worship<br>10am Church School<br>11:15am Annual Meeting<br>12:30pm All-Church First & Last Tavern Outing                              | <b>29</b> 4pm Hartford's Proud Drum Corp Rehearsal<br>7pm Council Meeting                     | <b>30</b> 10am In-person ICC History Book Discussion<br>11:30am Staff Meeting<br>4pm Hartford's Proud Drum Corp Rehearsal<br>7pm Zoom ICC History Book Discussion  | <b>31</b> 4pm Hartford's Proud Drum Corp Rehearsal  |  |   |  |



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

FARMINGTON AVE AT WOODLAND ST | HARTFORD CT | 06105

OFFICE HOURS M-F, 11AM-4PM | 860-527-8121 [WWW.ICCUCC.ORG](http://WWW.ICCUCC.ORG) |

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