



November 30, 2023

The bi-weekly newsletter of
Barrington Congregational
Church, United Church of
Christ.

If your email platform lets you see only part of this email, then click on the following link to [View as Webpage](#). We don't want you to miss anything! You'll know you've reached the end when you see 'THE END!' in green.

Calendar

*Office Hours: Mon - Fri, 9:30 am - 1:30 pm.
Closed on Federal and State Holidays & where otherwise noted*

Our **Sunday morning services are livestreamed**
for those unable to attend in person. They can be viewed on
[our Facebook page](#) or on [our YouTube channel](#) - either live or watched later.
Only once the service is over, can it be found on [our website](#).
The **Sunday worship bulletin** is also posted to [our website](#).

Sun, Dec 3 First Sunday of Advent

8:45 am FFaYM meeting, Library
10 am Worship Service with Communion, Church School

Mon, Dec 4

6 - 7 pm Youth Group Silent Retreat, Sanctuary

Tues, Dec 5

10 am Staff meeting, Dale's office
3 pm GMTF meeting, Library
6:30 - 9 pm Knitting for Others group, Library and via Zoom

Wed, Dec 6

7:30 pm Choir rehearsal, Vestry

Thurs, Dec 7

8:30 - 9:30 am Coffee Chat, Thrive Tribe Cafe
1:30 - 3 pm Women of Faith Reading Group, Library

Sun, Dec 10 Second Sunday of Advent

9 am - 12:15 pm OWL class, Library
10 am Worship Service, Church School
2 pm RI Association UCC Annual Meeting, Fellowship Hall

Mon, Dec 11

10 - 11 am Bereavement Group, Library
6 pm Youth Group & Congregation meet at La Salette entrance to tour Christmas Lights
6:30 pm Buildings and Grounds meeting, Vestry

Tues, Dec 12

10 am Staff meeting, Dale's office
7 pm Church Council meeting, Zoom

Wed, Dec 13

Noon *Deadline for eBridge*
7 - 8:15 pm Bible Study with Dale, Library
7:30 pm Choir rehearsal, Vestry

Thurs, Dec 14

8:30 - 9:30 am Coffee Chat, Thrive Tribe Cafe
9:30 am Meet in church parking lot to carpool to Federal Hill House
10 am Mission & Justice (and anyone else interested) tour Federal Hill House

Sun, Dec 17 Third Sunday of Advent

10 am Worship Service, Church School

For the complete church calendar visit <http://bccucc.view-events.com>
Send calendar information to office@bccucc.org

Sunday, December 3

Advent Candle Lighters needed

Volunteers are needed to read the short liturgy and light the Advent candles at the **10 am service on Sundays, December 3, 10, 17 & 24**, and at the **8 pm service on Christmas Eve**. Volunteers can be individuals, couples or families.

To volunteer for any of these dates, contact Rev. Dale Azevedo at dale@bccucc.org or (401) 246-0111 x 103. Thank you.



Spice Kits for Crossroads - baskets available this Sunday

Throughout Advent we will be collecting spice kits for our neighbors at Crossroads. Similar to the Welcome Home baskets but much smaller, the Spice Kits are basically starter spices for folks entering their own homes with the support of Crossroads. Suggested items are salt, pepper, garlic powder, onion powder, vanilla, oregano, sage, parsley, etc.

BCCUCC will provide baskets on the **first Sunday of Advent, December 3**, for congregation members to take, fill and return throughout the Advent Season. All of the baskets should be returned **by the morning service on December 24**.



Chancel Fund donations requested

Every Christmas we invite the congregation to make donations to The Chancel Fund which is used to pay for the plants that decorate the sanctuary at Christmas, as well as the plants that are delivered by the deacons to our homebound, sick and recently bereaved. Donations to the Chancel Fund, in any amount, may be made in memory of a loved one, or in thanksgiving for, or celebration of, someone or something (a

person, birthday, anniversary, etc). The donors and dedications will be listed in the Christmas Eve worship bulletin.

Donation forms and envelopes will be included in the church bulletins on November 26, December 3 and 10. You can also make a donation to the Chancel Fund by....

EITHER: [Download a Chancel Fund donation form](#) at this link, fill out the requested information then drop off /mail to the church office or put in the offering plate, together with a donation check in any amount.

OR: [Donate online from our church website.](#) Use the Tithe.ly link on our donation page, designate your donation for 'Chancel Fund (Christmas flowers)' and then add your dedication in the memo box. Be sure to include who is making the donation as well as if it's given in memory, celebration, or in honor of someone or something.

We ask that all donations and dedications be received in the church office **by Monday, December 11.** Thank you for your donation.



Looking ahead.... **Services on Sunday, December 24** 4th Sunday of Advent AND Christmas Eve

Sunday, December 24 Services

Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday this year. As a result we will celebrate the Fourth Sunday of Advent in the morning and Christmas Eve in the evening.

10 am Advent 4: All Ages Worship Service including a Paper Bag Christmas Pageant (*see later*)

8 pm Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols. This traditional service features music from the choir and congregational singing of carols.

Both services will be held in the sanctuary and will also be livestreamed for those unable to attend in person. All are most welcome. Please note:

- Nursery care will not be offered at either of the services on December 24.
- There are no services on Christmas Day, December 25.



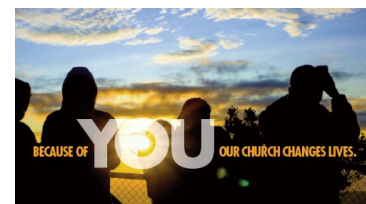
Ways to get involved in December....

Stewardship Update

Are you able to make a commitment to financially support our church?

As of 11/30/23 the church has received 62 Giving Cards from members and friends making a financial commitment for 2024. Many thanks to those that have already made a commitment. Giving Cards were mailed out again this week. We invite you to prayerfully consider making a financial commitment in advance for 2024.

If you intend to return a Giving Card we hope to hear from you soon. Our Finance Team and Church Council are working hard on the 2024 budget and many of their decisions are based on these financial commitments. You may mail your Giving Card,



place it in the Offering Plate or email Financial Secretary Pat Stoddard (pat@bccucc.org) with your financial commitment and she will confirm receipt of your email and the amount.

Because of You our church changes lives! Your financial support allows us to continue to change lives in the local community and beyond.

Youth Group Silent Retreat

On **Monday, December 4** from **6 - 7 pm**, all youth grades 5-8, 2022 Confirmands, and Junior Youth Group are invited to join Rev. Racquel in the church for their second annual **Silent Retreat**. In the stillness of this hour, they will light candles, hear quiet Christmas hymns, and offer some Christmas themed readings. Youth receive gift bags and share in the readings and candle lighting. Parents are welcome to stay as well for this respite of quiet before the busy-ness of the season.



BCCUCC to host RI Association Annual Meeting

Call to the 5th Annual Meeting of the Rhode Island Association

Southern new England Conference, UCC

A Pilgrimage and Winter Party!

All clergy and delegates of the Rhode Island Association are invited to attend the 5th Annual Meeting of the Rhode Island Association to be held at Barrington Congregational Church, UCC, on **Sunday, December 10, 2023, at 2:00 PM** in the afternoon.



This festive afternoon will consist of

- a time for fellowship and gathering (with multiple varieties of homemade Christmas cookies and hot cider!)
- an exploration of the meaning of pilgrimage during this holy season
- a time of worship
- and the 2023 Annual Meeting of the RI Assoc.

To register, just click here: [2023 RI Association Annual Meeting Registration Link](#)

Visitors are welcome in addition to the clergy and delegates.

Worship will start at 2:00 PM, and the agenda for the afternoon includes:

- General connection and worship among our clergy and churches.
- Voting on a slate of officers and members of the Executive Committee, Committee on Ministry, and Nominating Committee.
- Voting on the proposed 2024 association budget.
- Any other business than may come before the association.

So, come catch up with old friends, make new friends, and be part of the movement of God's spirit among us.

3 more Delegates needed: Church members interested in being a delegate from BCCUCC to this meeting should contact Rev. Dale Azevedo at dale@bccucc.org or 401 246-0111 x 103. BCCUCC can send 5 delegates plus our clergy - we have two already and would like to send our full compliment, so are looking for 3 more.

Congregational Trip to LaSalette Shrine

On **Monday, December 11**, all of the congregation are welcome to join Rev. Racquel and family **along with the BCCUCC Youth Group families** to visit La Salette Shrine in Attleboro MA

LA SALETTE SHRINE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS



<https://lasaletteattleboroshrine.org/christmas-festival>

We will **meet at the Shrine entrance at 6 pm**. Please feel free to tour the grounds as a group or as individuals. La Salette offers gift shops and a snack bar. Bundle up, sip hot cocoa, and soak in the season of Advent surrounded by thousands of lights. All are welcome.

Mission and Justice Team to visit Federal Hill House - all invited

On **Thursday, December 14** the M&J team invites the congregation to join them for a visit to Federal Hill House and receive a VIP tour at 10 a.m. of this community partner. Church member Kim Fernandez is it's director and she will provide an informational tour to educate the group about their work and the role they have in the community. Interested in joining? We'll **meet at the church parking lot at 9:30 am** on the 14th to carpool. For more information contact Nancy Arena (nancy.arena@outlook.com or (401) 246-0212), or Rev. Racquel (racquel@bccucc.org or (401) 246-0111 x 104).



FEDERAL HILL HOUSE

Paper Bag Pick-Up Christmas Pageant

Who loves a Christmas Pageant? At BCCUCC, we do!!

This year's Christmas Pageant will be included in the **Sunday, December 24, 10 am service**. It is a Paper Bag Pick-up Pageant. Costumes for all roles, ages, and sizes will be available in the vestry on Christmas Eve morning. Anyone who would like to participate may come early to pick their character(s) costume, dress, and embody the Christmas Story. The story will be read by the narrator(s).

Volunteers are needed to sort, bag, and label the costumes. We will also need stage managers to help send the characters into the sanctuary as their stories are told. We will need several Magi as the pageant will end with a procession of spices to the awaiting cars of Crossroads volunteers (see *'Spice Kits' article earlier*). To volunteer, please contact either Rev. Racquel Ray (racquel@bccucc.org or 246-0111 x 104) or Andrea Bullard (andrea@bccucc.org or 246-0111 x 107).

Congregation members who would like to participate are also encouraged to create their own costumes at home to wear to church on Christmas Eve morning.



Christmas Eve Readers needed

Several volunteers are needed to read scripture at the **8 pm** Christmas Eve service of Lessons and Carols. To learn more or to volunteer contact Rev. Dale Azevedo at (401) 246-0111 x103 or dale@bccucc.org.



'Tis the season of giving

Giving Tree

The Mission and Justice Team will once again support the **Women's Resource Center** and its **Adopt-A-Family** campaign. During a recent Stewardship Moment, Becky Knight described the mission of the Women's Resource Center and the many services provided to victims of domestic violence and their families. She made it clear that domestic violence occurs throughout the state of Rhode Island and impacts a variety of socioeconomic groups. The need for assistance is greater than ever due to food insecurity, financial hardship, and the lingering impacts of the pandemic.



The Women's Resource Center will use donations to buy gift cards for families in need. We are hoping to bring holiday joy to as many families as possible. Donations should be given to the church office as cash, check, or online through Tithe.ly on the church website. Checks should be made out to "BCCUCC" with "Women's Resource Center" written in the memo line. For online donations from the church website, click on <https://bccucc.org/donation/> to take you to the 'Giving to BCCUCC' page. In the middle is a link to Tithe.ly through which you can donate, either using a credit card or directly from your bank. Use the drop-down menu to have your donation go to 'Women's Resource Center.'

The Women's Resource Center would prefer to receive donations **by December 4**, so that the staff has time to buy the gift cards and present them to families. However, Mission & Justice will run the campaign **through December 24**. All monies raised, both before and after December 4, will be given to the Women's Resource Center. Questions? Contact Nancy Arena at nancy.arena@outlook.com or by calling 401-246-0212.

Thank you for your donation!

Mitten Tree

The Mission and Justice Team will sponsor a Mitten Tree to receive donations of warm hats, gloves, scarves, and mittens etc. - both purchased and handmade - for children, youth, and adults of all sizes. Again this year the mitten tree is upstairs in the sanctuary and will remain there **through the end of December to receive donations**. The congregation is asked to place their donated items on or under the tree before or after the worship service. All donated items will be given to organizations serving individuals and families experiencing financial hardship. If anyone wishes to make a donation, but is not currently attending in-person worship, please contact Nancy Arena at (401) 246-0212 or nancy.arena@outlook.com to arrange for pick-up. Thank you for your donation!



Staff End of Year / Christmas Gift

A message from Dale and Racquel...

"During advent you will find in the pew racks an envelope marked "Staff Christmas Gift." We are blessed to have wonderful people working here who give more hours to our church than expected or are compensated for. We therefore invite you to join with us in giving them a gift during these holidays. Your gifts will be divided up among several different people; Christine and Pat in the office, Andrea who works with our children, Matthew at the keyboard, and Jay and Frank on the custodial staff. Each staff person will receive this gift according to the number of hours they work. Thank you ahead of time for your generosity."



Please make checks payable to 'BCCUCC' and mark the memo line 'Staff Gift'. They can be put in the offering plate or sent to the office. It's also possible to make an online donation using Tithely from our church website's donation page <https://bccucc.org/donation/> and choosing 'Staff Christmas Gift' in the drop-down menu. Thank you.

Looking ahead to January...

New Year, New You - Jumpstart Your Health!

Are you interested in learning more about plant based eating? Are you struggling with chronic health issues and looking for nutrition support?

Rev. Racquel Ray is partnering with Plant Docs and Dr. Sandra Musial to host a **New Year, New You plant based nutrition Jump Start program** in January. This program will run on Thursday nights in January with a mix of in-person and zoom classes to learn more about how to incorporate more plant based elements into our daily routines. Zoom nights are cooking classes taught by Dr. Musial from her kitchen as students cook together in their own kitchens too. [More information about the program](#). Please contact Rev. Racquel to sign up or if you have questions at racquel@bccucc.org or (401) 246-0111 x 104.

Dr. Musial will also speak during worship on **Sunday December 31**.



Ongoing groups and events

(listed alphabetically)

Bereavement Group

This support group is open to anyone (not just church members) who has lost a loved one at any time and new members are always welcome. The group meets once a month from **10 - 11 am** in the church library. Upcoming dates are: **Monday, December 11**. For more information contact one of the facilitators, Betsy Brenner at betsybrenner3@gmail.com or 245-8031, or Aubrey Atwater at aubreyfolk@aol.com or (401) 392-1909, or Rev. Racquel Ray at racquel@bccucc.org (401) 246 0111 x 104.



Book Group

The Book Group next meets on **Tuesday, December 19** at **10:30 am** in the church library. They will discuss *Dust Child* by Nguyen Phan Que Mai. [Book review](#).

For more information about the group contact Helen Schall at helenschall@hotmail.com or 401 245-4724. All are welcome.



Choir rehearsals

If you enjoy singing, why not join the church choir - no audition needed! Rehearsals are on **Wednesday evenings** from **7:30 - 9 pm** in the Vestry. To learn more, speak with our music director Matthew Marion after church or at (401) 954-7107 or mmarion1811@gmail.com. Or speak with any choir member - they'd love to have you join them.

Come make a joyful noise to the Lord!



Coffee Chats with Racquel and others

On **Thursday mornings** Rev. Racquel and others meet at Thrive Tribe Café, 60 Maple Ave, Barrington from **8:30 – 9:30 am** for coffee and conversation. All are welcome to join them any time they can make it. Note: they still meet even when Racquel is away.



Knitting for Others Group - in person and via zoom

The Knitting for Others Group meets both in person and via zoom on the first Tuesday of each month, and next meets on **Tuesday, December 5** from **6:30 - 9 pm**. Feel free to stop into the library or join the call at any time and stay as long as you like. All knitters and crocheters are invited to participate and new faces are very welcome. For more information on the group, contact Nancy Arena at (401) 246-0212 or nancy.arena@outlook.com.

Zoom information isn't included here for security reasons. It was in the email sent to the congregation.



Loaves and Fishes Backpack Program

BCCUCC continues the collection of food bags to be given to the families of 25 students at DelSesto Middle School in Providence who are experiencing food insecurity. We continue to partner with *We Share Hope* (<https://wesharehope.org>) to provide food to those in need & also with *Books are Wings* who donate free books for the students. (<https://www.booksarewings.org>).



BCCUCC supplements the food donations to fill the bags. We collect the following items in the box in the narthex as you go up the stairs to church: **peanut butter, bread, jelly, oatmeal, canned tuna, rice and beans, pasta and sauce, fruit cups, granola bars and shelf stable pudding**. Thank you to those who supported November's collection.



Use [December's SignUpGenius link](#) to sign up to donate specific items, being sure to indicate how many of an item you can donate. If you need help signing up please call the church office (401) 246-0111.

The **deadline** for December food donations is **Sunday, December 17** and the **packing of the bags** will take place on **Wednesday, December 20** at **4 pm** in Fellowship Hall for anyone interested in helping put the bags together. Contact Jay Buckley pbuckley6@cox.net or 578-6533 if you can help, or with any questions.

Women of Faith Reading Group

The group welcomes women of all ages from BCCUCC as well as other churches and faith traditions. They meet for discussions on books, faith and life on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month from **1:30 - 3 pm** in the church library. Their next meeting is on **Thursday, December 7**. For more information - including what they're currently reading - contact Jane Tonn at 289-2349 or jtonn2@cox.net



Youth Group

The Youth Group (for grades 5 - 8) gathers most weeks throughout the year on **Mondays** from **6 - 7pm**. Youth group meetings consist of fun and fellowship, simple dinner (usually pizza) and a closing prayer service. When the weather permits, they'll meet on the terrace, labyrinth, and playground. *Note: There is no youth group when Barrington Public Schools have a day off.*



Upcoming meetings are **Mondays, Dec 4 & 11** with special events planned for each of them (*see earlier in this newsletter*). All youth grades 5 - 8 are welcome to attend.

For more information, contact Rev. Racquel Ray at racquel@bccucc.org or (401) 246-0111 x 104.

Don't forget that youth participating in any programs at church must be registered.
[Registration form](#)

Conference Happenings

Keep up to date with our Conference - SNEUCC

The Southern New England Conference, UCC (SNEUCC), publishes several newsletters - one of which comes out weekly and is titled '**5 Things to Know and Share**'. Read the latest edition [at this link](#) and sign up to subscribe and get it sent to your inbox.



Southern New England Conference
United Church of Christ
Living the Love & Justice of Jesus

[Click on this link](#) to see the archive of all of the different SNEUCC newsletters - and subscribe to any that are of interest to you.

Community News

Bristol County Chorus - Christmas Concert - Dec 9

The Bristol County Chorus will present their 42nd annual Christmas concert on **Saturday, December 9** at St. Mary's Church, 330 Wood Street, Bristol, RI, at **7:00 PM**. The Chorus, accompanied by a professional chamber orchestra, will be conducted by Director of Music Nicholas Rocha. Presenting, "HARK" - the program features festive, colorful holiday music, and Dan Forrest's arrangement of The Huron Carol.

Tickets are \$20.00 in advance, and \$25.00 at the door, and are available locally at the George Hail Library in Warren, at Paper Packaging and Panache in Bristol, and online through brownpapertickets.com. Be sure to follow and check the group's Facebook page for additional information (www.facebook.com/bristolcountychorus).



Performance of Handel's Messiah - Dec 10



Sunday, December 10 at 3 pm at The Vets.
RI Philharmonic Orchestra & The Providence Singers. [Tickets](#)

Worth repeating

The Pastors' Blog

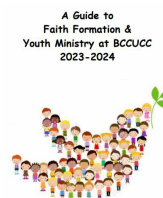
The latest blog was written by Dale and titled 'The Creative Spark'. If you missed it earlier, you can [read it here](#).



Want to know more about our children and youth programs?

[The 2023-2024 Guide to Faith Formation and Youth Ministry at BCCUCC](#) has a lot of information about the various programs we offer for children and youth at BCCUCC including our Church School, Youth Group, and OWL programs.

Printed copies of the booklet are available for pick up from the narthex table in church, or from outside Andrea's office. If you have questions, please get in touch with our Faith Formation Director, Andrea Bullard at andrea@bccucc.org or (401) 246-0111 x 107m who'll be happy to answer them.



Sunday mornings at BCCUCC

Services livestreamed to Facebook and YouTube

All are invited to join us for our **multi-platform worship service** at **10 a.m.** on Sunday mornings - either in person or online.



Masks are optional but we do ask that if you're feeling unwell or have symptoms, that you please stay home and watch online. We continue to run large HEPA air filters in the sanctuary and also have HEPA air filters in most spaces in our Education building.

For those unable to join us in person, the services are livestreamed so they can be watched online - either live or later - at

- the church's Facebook page www.facebook.com/bccucc
- or [our church's YouTube Channel](#)

Please note that the service can no longer be watched LIVE on our website. However a recording of the service can be watched once the service is over and it's been posted to the Livestream page of the church website <https://bccucc.org/live-stream-2/>

A link to the [Sunday bulletin](#) can be found on our livestream page.

Nursery Care

The Nursery is available every Sunday morning to provide loving care for infants and children aged 0 - 3 years old. Parents/guardians are welcome to drop off their child/children in the nursery located in the Education building before going to the worship service.



The **Nursery Nook**, located directly below the sanctuary, is another option for parents with wiggly children of any age to retreat to and still hear the service on the loud speaker down there.

We love the sound of children in worship so parents are welcome to keep their infants and children with them in the sanctuary if they wish. For those who would prefer to worship without distraction, we provide these other options.

Note: Nursery Care will not be offered at either the 10 am or 8 pm services on Sunday, December 24, Christmas Eve.

From the church office

Church office hours

Our regular church office hours are Monday - Friday, 9:30 am - 1:30 pm. Closed on Federal & State holidays.



Deadlines for Announcements and eBridge

The deadline for receiving information for inclusion in the eBridge and the Sunday Announcements is **Noon on the Wednesday prior to publication.**

Deadline for next eBridge is **Wed, Dec 13**. Send information to Christine at office@bccucc.org.



Do you need a Name Tag?

If you would like a nametag please contact the church office at office@bccucc.org or call (401) 246-0111 and let us know what name you'd like on the nametag and your preference for a clip, pin or string holder. Nametags are stored on the rack in the vestry hallway, or you can keep it in your car or purse where you can easily find it on a Sunday morning.



Online donations to the church through our website

Our church website (www.bccucc.org) is capable of accepting online donations. [Watch a brief video](#) (30 secs) on how to do this, or read the following instructions: There's a red 'DONATE' button on the right side of the black menu bar near the top of each page of the website. Clicking on it will take you to the 'Giving to BCCUCC' page. In the middle is a link to Tithe.ly through which you can make a donation to the church either using a credit card or directly from your bank. (No need to set up an account). You are also able to designate where you would like your donation to go (pledge, gift, memorial gift, Deacons' Fund, etc).



Questions? Contact Pat Stoddard, Financial Secretary at pat@bccucc.org or (401) 246-0111 x 102.

[Visit the 'Giving to BCCUCC' page.](#) OR you can use this QR code to take you directly to our giving page.



Contact us

Dale dale@bccucc.org (401) 246-0111 x 103 *Senior Minister*

Racquel racquel@bccucc.org (401) 246-0111 x 104 *Associate Minister for Congregational Life*

Christine office@bccucc.org (401) 246-0111 x 101 (or just stay on the line) *Office Administrator*

Pat pat@bccucc.org (401) 246-0111 x 102 *Financial Secretary*

Andrea andrea@bccucc.org (401) 246-0111 x 107 *Faith Formation Director*

Matthew mmarion1811@gmail.com *Music Director*

Church Office Hours: Open Monday – Friday, 9:30 am – 1:30 pm.
Closed on Federal and State holidays.

Building Security: The Education building remains locked at all times, even when the office is open. Please ring the bell for entry and we'll be happy to let you in - or use the code on the keypad if you have it.

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THE END !