



# StratChat

## Winter 2016

## From Jonathan's Desk

by Jonathan Roach

I love Advent. It is a time for preparation, getting ready, anticipation. The word Advent comes from a Latin word, *adventus*, which means “coming.” We celebrate the first coming of Christ and anticipate the next coming of Christ. It is a time for looking backwards and looking forward; remembering the past and expecting hope for tomorrow; a time of great joy but also a time of great sorrow.

Congregations have been celebrating Advent since at least the year 380 when the Church Council of Saragossa, in modern day Spain, organized a three-week fast before Epiphany. At Stratham Community Church this year, we will celebrate the four Sundays of Advent with candles, liturgical dance, colors and symbols, a

children's program on December 18th, and reading a series of very powerful scriptures from the Prophet Isaiah.

The Book of Isaiah contains some of the most beautiful and powerful poetry in the entire Bible. If books of Moses are the intellectual brain of the Old Testament, then Isaiah is the heart of the Hebrew Scriptures. In my sermon on Sunday, November 13, I asked us to read the words with our hearts not just with our eyes.

During the Season of Advent, we need to read both the scripture and the world around us with our hearts. Let us welcome the coming of Christ again.



### Winter Sermon Texts:

November 27:	Isaiah 2:1-5
December 4:	Isaiah 11:1-10
December 11:	Isaiah 35:1-10
December 18:	Children's Program
December 24:	Isaiah 9:2-7
December 25:	Luke 2:1-14
January 1:	Luke 2:15-21
January 8:	Rev. Esther Roach
January 15:	Isaiah 49:1-7
January 22:	Matthew 4:12-23

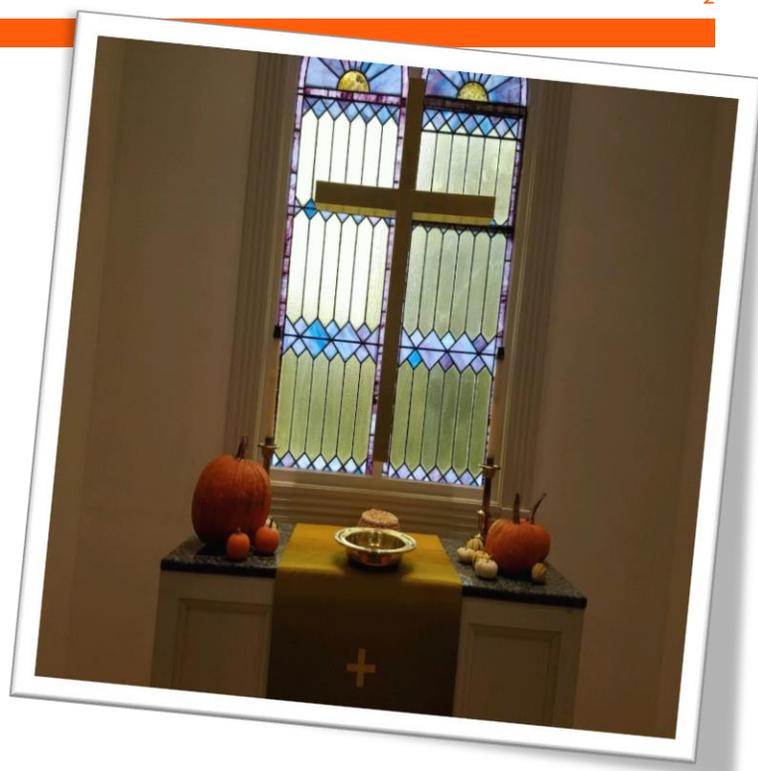
# From the Moderator

by Dave Timmerman

It seems like our fall has come and gone much too quickly as it is my favorite time of year. I am always impressed with everyone's enthusiasm in engaging the Fall agenda and the work of our community focused church. The Trustees and property committee are in the midst of replacing our sill beam in the front of the church with phase one complete and phase two planned for next year. Mission and Justice completed another successful Crop Walk event. Stewardship is finishing up the fall campaign, the Clothes Attic continues to make improvements and grow. SCLC is running at full capacity and is already close to full for next fall. Christine Vanderslice and her team are

doing very well. The Music Program and Diaconate work is always in motion and all are doing a great job.

It is good to get to know Lilly Nutt as she makes her own high energy imprint on our Christian Ed programs as well as Katie Brown who is a very welcoming and helpful presence to all that enter our church. Pastor Jonathan continues to impress us with his energy and sincere dedication to all aspects of our activities. I hear from many people that Jonathan delivers meaningful sermons, calls on the people in need, works very hard and understands what is going on in our church at all times. We are glad he is with us.



Now it is time to shift gears into Thanksgiving, Advent and Christmas which is always exciting but a very busy and stressful time. I am hoping we can all get refreshed with the true meaning of Christmas and not be overburdened with things to do. This is a time to enjoy our families and close friends.

Have a wonderful spirit filled Holiday Season!

## Stratham Circle Learning Center:

The Stratham Circle Learning Center has been busy! We started the new school year getting to know new friends and new routines. We celebrated Fall with a parade and festive songs for parents and families. We visited an apple orchard and had our first fire drill with a visit from the fire department. This year we have added a new classroom. When you are at church on Sunday come check out the Honeybee classroom (This rooms serves as the Nursery on Sunday).

Believe it or not we are already thinking about next fall! We have opened registration for the 2017 school year. If you or a friend are interested in our program call Christine to set up a time to tour the school. We are filling up quickly so if you are interested let us know.



## From the Clothes Attic

The Clothes Attic is fully stocked with Women's, men's, and children's clothing for the Fall season and getting ready for winter. We will start accepting Christmas items Nov. 16th.

We have an overstock sale of several brand-new toys. Come and see our selection!!

Our Hours are:

Wednesdays - 9 am-3 pm and 7 pm-9 pm\*

Saturdays - 10 am-Noon

\*April-November





## Christian Education

### Notes and News:

By: Lily Nutt

For this year's Christmas Program the birth of Jesus told from the star's perspective. Please join Stratham Community Church on December 18th at 10 am for a celebratory service led by our children.

Christmas Pageant parts will be assigned on Sunday November 20th and Sunday November 27th during Sunday School. The pageant will be narrated by children during the church service on December 18th. Please write your child's name and your phone number on the sign-up clip board in the Rust Room.

Pageant rehearsals are immediately following Sunday School on December 4th and December 11th. Children must attend at least one practice to participate.

Jill Green's work schedule has changed and she is no longer able to cover the nursery for SCC. We send our blessings and love to Jill for her wonderful service to our children. The Christian Education committee is looking for a

responsible adult to work in the nursery during church services. The nursery attendant will be taking care of children under the age of 3 and need experience working with children and must pass a state background check. The hours begin before church at 9:45 am until families pick up children after church at 11:15 am. The position pay \$30.00 per Sunday.

Sunday School has been full of new experiences including everything from planting green beans to learning about baptism and covenants. Lily has had a lot of fun getting to know the youth and their families and creating new relationships. Thanks to all the Sunday School helpers: Will George, Thomas Vanderslice, Emma Wheeler, and Sheri Goodrich! All the prep work and dedication to making sure every child has a fun Sunday School experience has truly made a positive impact.

## News and Updates:



### Member-in-Discernment

Our Music Minister, Cheryl Stromski, has entered a new phase of her ministry at Stratham Community Church.

After meeting in discernment with our Board of Deacons and with the Rockingham Association's Committee on Ministry, Cheryl has been accepted as a member in discernment.

A member in discernment is an official role for a member of a United Church of Christ congregation whose gifts for ministry have been recognized by the local congregation and by the regional association of the UCC congregations and who has been approved to continue the prayerful journey toward ordained ministry in the UCC.

On Sunday, November 20th, Cheryl will be preaching and we will celebrate a time of covenant and prayer to recognize her new status in ministry.

### Holly-Fair

Saturday, December 3rd

9:00 am until 1:00 pm in the Henry Rust Room

- Do you have any boxwood greens? (needed by November 27, call Joan Gough [603-686-6116] if you have some to donate)
- Have any costume jewelry? (needed by November 18, deliver to the church office or the Clothes Attic)
- Do you have any white elephant items (needed by Friday December 2, deliver to the Rust Room).

White Elephants for Holly Fair  
Please clean out your cottage/home and send us your clean charming items!! Those Christmas decorations that you don't have room for, baskets, or any item that can be carried out to your car. (No large or heavy items.) As far as books – please only send in cookbooks, and gently used children books.



Cheryl Stromski



Stratham Circle Learning Center

# StratChat Quarterly

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## From the Trustees:

Our beautiful, 189 year old, church building has thrown us a curve. In checking a “soft” spot on the threshold of one of the outside doors leading into the sanctuary, we discovered that the sill beam across the front of the building is rotten and, in many areas, has been eaten by termites.

The workmen that initially installed the beam did a tremendous job. The beam has been in place for over 189 years. The structure has performed very well through all those years. As you would expect, they built a very strong building. Now it is our time to repair it for another 189 years.

We contracted with Dave Perham to open up the affected area with the guidance of Fred Emanuel from Emanuel Engineering. With that inspection, there was a lot of prep work that was done plus analyzing the basic construction of the wall. We now know what needs to be accomplished and have a plan of action to replace the sill beam.

The actual construction will be done in 3-4 sections. We will start at the north corner and work our way across the front of the building. It is important that we manage the job one section at a time to be sure that the building remains strong throughout the process.

With colder weather upon us, we have decided to close up the affected area and begin the repairs in the spring. We will be securing bids from a number of contractors over the winter so that we will be able to begin as soon as the warm weather returns.

The most important part of this project is the safety of everyone. We will be vigilant of the strength of the building throughout the process as we replace the old sill beam. We will do everything that is necessary and safe in the most efficient and cost effective way possible. Your patience and understanding as we progress through the repairs is greatly appreciated.

Board of Trustees