



January 2026



THE STEEPLE

"We aim to be a loving, caring family of God, with Christ as our head, reaching out amongst ourselves and to the larger community to address spiritual beliefs, social needs and moral issues, guided by the teachings of Jesus."

Congregational Christian Church of Somerset, UCC



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Facebook.com/CongregationalChristianChurchSomerset



Pastor Notes -----

Happy and Blessed New Year Everyone, I hope and pray you have all managed over the holiday season to find plenty of time to give thanks and praise as well as find some down time for prayer, scriptures, rest and reflection. At the December Standing Meeting, I was asked to write a piece for the Steeple to explain a bit about some of the different funds we have at the church.

Let us begin with the General Fund. We start here as this is the most common fund of the church. This fund pays all the bills, the staff, and all the miscellaneous things that come up throughout the year. This is where each committee has a budget approved to work with each year. This budget is specifically for the church and is financially supported by your pledges and financial gifts throughout the year. We, the church members, approve this budget at our Annual Meeting. If you are not yet a member and would like to be please speak to Pastor Cheryl.



Unfortunately, it seems that this year, our pledges have dropped as many have not returned their pledge cards. If you have been prayerfully considering what you can give, please submit your pledge amount to the church. We need to establish a budget, and it is hard to do without knowing what we have. Thank you.

Let us move on to the Benevolent Fund. The term Benevolent itself has maybe gone out of style. What a shame. It means compassionate, altruistic, kind, and generous. Years back the church had a system in which the General Fund and Benevolent Funds were linked. At one point, the General Fund would give 15% of all the funds collected for the General Fund to the Benevolent Fund each year. Those funds would then be distributed by the Social Action Committee. The Committee prayerfully comes together with suggestions from the church and some research to give these funds away. The goal was 1/3rd local, 1/3rd national, and the final 1/3rd would be global ministry work.

PASTOR CHERYL con't

Over the years this has changed as the budget and pledging have changed. Currently the Benevolent Fund is still available but is now funded through each giver's personal choice to fund this ministry. This is one of the reasons pledging is so important. It helps us better understand what we may be able to do for God's people in the coming year. Social Outreach continues to manage the funds and meets either late December or early January to distribute the funds received over the past year. Usually, we try to help the hungry, homeless, abused, and organizations that serve these communities. If you know of a good ministry that you think should be considered, please let the committee know of it. If you would like to serve on the Social Action Committee, please sign up in the Fellowship Hall. The Nominations List is on the middle bulletin board.

Another fund that supports local outreach is the Discretionary Fund. This fund is held by the pastor. The Deacons are also participants with this fund. The only way this fund receives any money is through your giving. The Discretionary Fund helps when people in the church or in the local community are in need, usually it is an unexpected financial strain. Often it helps people with heat, car issues, medications, and food. If you are in need or know someone who is, please speak to Pastor Cheryl. If you can assist to support with this fund, please note that on your financial gift, so it will go to the appropriate place.

The Memorial Fund is not to be confused with the Memorial Tree which stands in the hallway to the Sanctuary. Although they do have some things in common. The Memorial Fund is made from gifts received to the church in memorial of one who has died. These funds go to a different account that only the interest is used. So, in fact, funds given to the Memorial Fund give year after year after year. The Memorial Tree represents those who have received over \$500 in financial gifts to the Memorial Fund. Often the interest we receive is used to make up shortages to the General Fund. Wouldn't it be great if we could use these funds in a different way? Or even get to the point we could reinvest them for the future?

Please note that there is also a Memorial Garden which is behind the church. The Memorial Garden is grave cremation sites only. There is also the Purinton Cemetery which you will find some very old headstones in the very back corner of the church grounds. The gardens are always in need of care especially through the spring to fall. Maybe you could help?

The Community Outreach Program formerly known as the Parish Nurse Fund is now linked with Social Action forming Social Action & Outreach. It is a little different from Benevolent as the funds that support the Community Outreach Program traditionally come from the Hathaway Trust. The Hathaway Trust is a Somerset Trust that is a ministry of the Congregational Christian Church. Years ago, the Hathaway sisters, with assistance of Reverend Emery, created the Hathaway Trust. Each March the notice comes out for grant requests in the local paper. All requests must be complete and submitted by the end of April via the address given in the paper. The Hathaway Trust Board is made of the Chair of the Selectmen of Somerset, the Pastor of this church, and currently the attorney who helped develop the Trust. We meet in June to make decision on grants. The funds are generally distributed from the end of August to early September. Do you have an idea for our church this year?

Finally, the Emery Scholarship. The scholarship only receives funds that are given directly to the fund. In the past we have been able to give out scholarships to our young people going off for further education. Over the past few years, we have not had any requests for this fund. A review of the Scholarship fund is being considered to include classes and education seminars for church members to grow in their church interests and thus bring that training back into the Congregational Christian Church. A resource to be a wider resource. But this is only a conversation right now.

There are also some investments that are managed via our Trustees. If anything has been missed, please let me know. Over the course of the year, we have some specialty collections. Examples are One Great Hour of Sharing, Neighbors in Need, and Mother's Day blankets and Father's Day tools. If you ever have any questions on the financials of the church, ask or attend a Standing Meeting. If ever you need assistance, please do not hesitate to ask. Finally, I will ask again that you please get your pledge cards in ASAP. If you need a pledge card, simply ask in the office.

Our Annual Meeting is scheduled for February 22nd.
We hope you will join us in serving the Lord, our God, together.

Peace and Blessing to You All, *Reverend Cheryl Rieder*

*Poinsettias
Gracing our Altar for Christmas*

~ In Memory of ~

Michael Reynolds, Donald Gray from Susan Reynolds

Janice Gray, Eric Engel from Susan Reynolds

Loved Ones from Karen Rousseau

Thomas E. Marsden from Betty Marsden

Mapril Ferreira from Arminda Ferreira

Aida Ferreira from Arminda Ferreira

Family from Cathy Baker

Loved Ones from Russell & Nancy James

Family & Friends from John & Nancy Possinger

~ In Honor of ~

Our Church from Pastor Cheryl Rieder



Social Action & Outreach

- November food donations were taken to the Church of Our Saviour for the Annelle Delorme-Hagerman Food Pantry. Any food donated after it was picked up will be given to them in early January.
- We would like to thank all who participated in our Annual Christmas Gift Program. Many church members and friends – yoga group members and others in our community participated by buying gifts requested by the students in our elementary schools. 35 children received gifts of toys, clothing and books. The school libraries were also given books donated by Ashley Dupre.

Religious Education - Children

- Students participated in meaningful activities that encourage learning, discussion, and growth in their faith. Special attention was given to preparing students for the Christmas service. Families are always encouraged to remain involved throughout the year and special activities.

Fundraising

- The Committee encourages all members with fundraising ideas to take initiative and bring those ideas forward. This committee is made up of everyone willing to help and support fundraising efforts, and continued creativity and involvement will be key to building on this year's success.



Can't make it to service this week? *We will miss you!*

But.... you can watch and worship with us via Facebook from your home.

Here's the Link [facebook.com/CongregationalChristianChurchSomerset](https://www.facebook.com/CongregationalChristianChurchSomerset)

Save
the Date

for Poss & the Kids!

PERFORMANCE DATES

February 7th at 6pm

and

February 8th at 2pm

Are you going to Yoga this week?



**Gentle Chair Yoga
in Fellowship Hall
with Pat Fox.**

Stop in on Mondays at 9:30am.

Cost is \$5.

Contact Karen R. for info.

To Present Play In Pottersville Friday Night



Members of the Philathea class of the First Christian church of Pottersville, who are to present comedy, "Hoosting Bridget" in the Town hall, County street, Pottersville, Friday evening, for the benefit of the church fund. Appearing in the photo from left to right are Mrs. Lucy Gray, Ada Hathaway, Mrs. William Miller, Mrs. Annie Smith, Mrs. Gladys Gifford and Mrs. Margery Geime.

[April 5, 1927]

CREDIT: Friends of The Somerset Historical Society

**The Deacons Invite You to
Coffee & Conversation**

Mondays 11am

Stop by the Rise Café for a relaxed time of conversation.

900 County St, Somerset

You may enjoy a few laughs. We chat about everything!



STANDING COMMITTEE

November 16, 2025 approved with corrections 12/14/25

Meeting Attendees: Barbara Smith, Karen Rousseau, Lisa Mathieu, Carol Caetans, Pastor Cheryl Rieder, Betty Marsden

Visitors: June Murphy, Lisa Levasseur Call to Order: 11:27am

Prayer: Pastor Cheryl

Report of the Clerk: accepted

Report of the Treasurer : accepted

Minister:

- Christmas Eve Services to be held at 4pm for children & families, 5:15pm Luminary reading, 6pm Service to include carols.
- A Community Service of Thanksgiving is to be held at the Somerset Baptist Church A.B.C. on 11/23/25 at 1:30pm in conjunction with the Congregational Christian Church of Somerset.
- Pastor continues pastoral visits to congregation members.
- 4 readers needed for advent candle lighting.

REPORT OF COMMITTEES:

Property

- Replaced 21 light bulbs with LED bulbs (20 yr. life span)
- Drainage pipe in backyard was damaged. A protector to be put in place.
- Inspection by Building & Fire. No additional venting needed in kitchen in order to utilize the stove due to window access.
- Documentation needed about fireproofing on stage curtains.
- Additional tables requested for use downstairs. Proposed and agreed.

Fundraising

- Christmas Bazaar slated for 11/22/25 from 9am-2pm
- Luminaries order continue to come in.

Deacons

- Soup and bread luncheon to be held on 11/23/25 during Fellowship.
- Bible study begins 11/19 "Christmas in the Four Gospel Houses"
- Collections at the Joint Community Service on the 23rd will be given to the Episcopal Church Mission.

Faith Community & Christian Outreach

- White Gifts are due 12/7/25

Memorial Garden & Purinton Cemetery

- Gravestone Preservation Co. LLC submitted invoice for the cleaning of the large stone. Submitted to the Treasurer for payment. They offered to clean the remaining stones at a lower cost than for the larger stone. Proposed and accepted.
- Question proposed if there were more burials in the Purinton Cemetery than we were aware of. Betty Marsden offered to pay for the ground penetrating radar to see if there are additional burials.

Pastoral Relations

Pastor's Evaluations are complete. Committee will meet to collate results and present at January Standing Meeting.

Media

Lacey continues to take photographs of the sanctuary and at events.
Don continues to research licenses for streaming.

Old Business

- No further info on children yoga proposal. Tabled.
- Cleanup of yard overgrowth started.

New Business & Communication

- Ceiling in hall outside sanctuary need to be repaired.
- Window blinds in Pastor's office and secretary's office need to be replaced. Proposed and accepted.
- AED in hallway needs to have battery checked.
- Stewardship needs 2 members to share duties
- Scholarship proposed change to expand the program to include professional development and Christian Summer Camps. To be presented at the annual meeting for congregation vote.

Meeting Adjourned at 12:49pm. Next Meeting 12/14/25

Respectfully Submitted, Janina Asselin, Clerk

What's Happening in January

January 5 - 1pm Social Action & Outreach Meeting (Community Coordinator & SAM)

January 11 - Standing Committee Meeting

January 18 - Deacons Meeting



THIS GROUP IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Grief Group Self Support

WEDNESDAYS 11am-12pm

WHY: To help you find comfort among those with understanding.

WHO: To all who are 18 or older who are experiencing grief and loss.

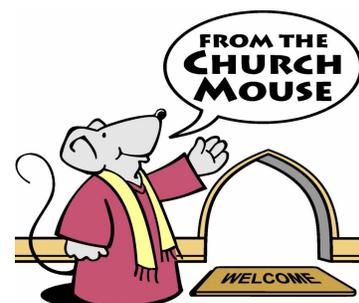
WHERE: Congregational Christian Church of Somerset
1411 County St, Somerset. Enter left door.

The group is held to confidentiality. You are welcome to stop in to any or all sessions.

Annual Meeting Sunday February 22, 2025

STORM DATE March 1, 2026

*Every job has its
instructions and
frustrations. Each has
personal challenges that
have to be met without
losing your temper.*



In the Words of The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The surest way to be happy is to seek happiness for others.

Martin Luther King Jr.

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY - MONDAY, JANUARY 19, 2026

Let's Ask "All" about the month of January

Naming & Origins:

- Named for Janus: January comes from the Roman god Janus, who has two faces, looking forward and backward, symbolizing beginnings and transitions.
- Originally Not a Month: The early Roman calendar had only 10 months; January and February were added later.

Weather & Nature

- Coldest Month: It's generally the coldest month in the Northern Hemisphere (warmest in the Southern).
- Wolf Moon: The January full moon is often called the Wolf Moon, named for howling wolves.
- Quadrantid Meteors: A strong annual meteor shower peaks early in the month.

History & Events

- Emancipation Proclamation: Abraham Lincoln issued it in 1863.
- Ellis Island: Opened January 1, 1892, as a major US immigration point.
- First US Computer: Built in 1946.
- Euro Debut: The currency officially launched in 1999.

Birthstones & Symbol

- Birthstone: Garnet.
- Flower: Carnation.
- Zodiac: Capricorn (until Jan 19) and Aquarius (Jan 20 onwards).



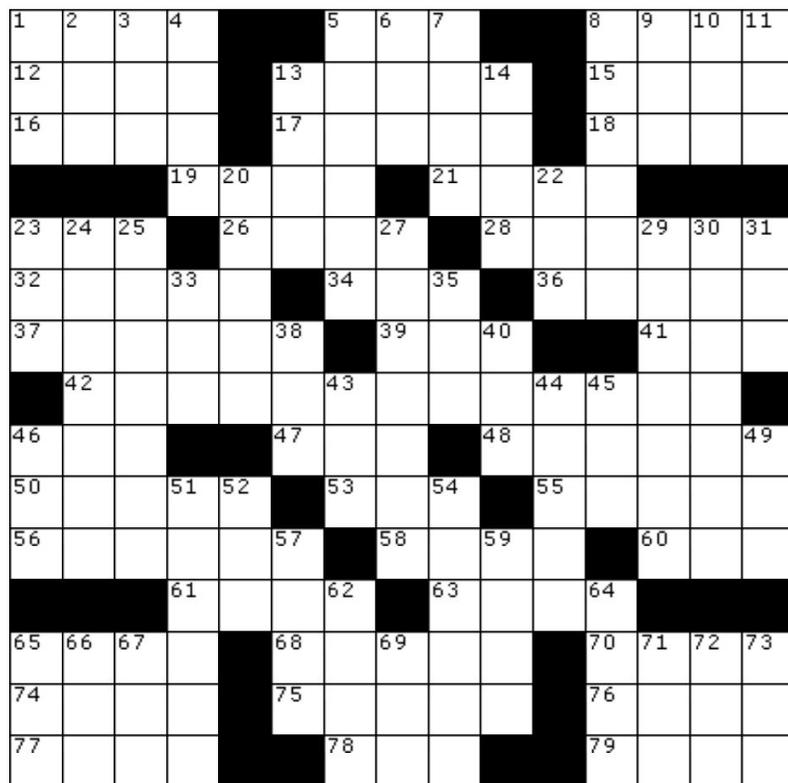
Sending Birthday Blessings to

Maria DeMello
Bette Goncalves
William Grady
Lois Robinson
Euan Woodcock



Nancy & Russell James - January 16

January Crossword



ACROSS

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 Eve's son | 17 Hymn of praise | 32 Similar |
| 5 Silent | 18 Thought- provoking | 34 Farming club (abr.) |
| 8 Cheer | 19 Fees | 36 Country house |
| 12 Fly alone | 21 Lemons | 37 Brain |
| 13 Fertile desert area | 23 Representative | 39 Pride |
| 15 Ceases | 26 Nip | 41 Spoil |
| 16 Secret of Samson's strength | 28 Visitors | 42 Our wish for you! (4 wds.) |

- 46 North northeast
 47 Old Testament city
 48 Holiday for Jesus' resurrection
 50 Brag
 53 Hole
 55 Summary
 56 Passionate
 58 Instrument to guide oxen
 60 Sing
 61 Particle
 63 Soviet Union
 65 Popular American desserts
 68 Percolate
 70 Secondhand
 74 Tropical edible root
 75 Slow down
 76 KJV pronoun
 77 Last word of a prayer
 78 Cousin
 79 Place for the wicked

DOWN

- 1 Fire remains
 2 Constrictor
 3 Samuel's mentor
 4 The ___ is my shepherd
 5 Geological formation
 6 North American nation
 7 Meek
 8 Body of water parted by God
 9 Single
 10 Lyric poem
 11 Cooking measurement
 13 Overt
 14 Priggish
 20 Expend (2 wds.)
 22 Failure
 23 Scrap
 24 ___ Roosevelt
 25 Dunce
 27 100 ___ = 1 DM
 29 Scrape
 30 Henry David ___
 31 Stood opposite
 33 Car brand
 35 Ripen
 38 Resort hotel
 40 IOU part
 43 Shriek bark
 44 Lawns
 45 Compass point
 46 BB association
 49 Revolutions per minute
 51 To every thing there is a ___
 52 Explosive
 54 Fruit Loops bird
 57 Said
 59 Colorless
 62 Blessed are the ___
 64 Great-grandmother of David
 65 School group
 66 A name of God
 67 Bard's before
 69 Boxer Muhammad
 71 That girl
 72 Conger
 73 Delaware



ZUMBA®

with Tracy + Kelly

Congregational Christian Church
1411 County St, Somerset
Tuesday and Thursday
6:00-7:00pm
\$30/month

To register - contact Tracy at
508-415-3638

January 2026

SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				Happy New Year! 6-7pm Zumba	2 6pm Theatre Practice	3
4 10:00am Worship w/Children's Bible Stories & Craft	5 9:30am Yoga 11am Rise Café Meet 1pm Outreach & Social Action Meet	6 Epiphany 8am-12pm SECRETARY in OFFICE 6-7pm Zumba	7 11am Grief Support Group	8 SECRETARY in OFFICE 3-7pm 6-7pm Zumba	9 6pm Theatre Practice	10
11 10:00am Worship w/Children's Bible Stories & Craft STANDING COMMITTEE MEET	12 9:30am Yoga 11am Rise Café Meet	13 8am-12pm SECRETARY in OFFICE 6-7pm Zumba	14 11am Grief Support Group	15 SECRETARY in OFFICE 3-7pm 6-7pm Zumba	16 6pm Theatre Practice	17 10am Prayer Group
18 10:00am Worship w/Children's Bible Stories & Craft DEACONS MEET	19 <i>Martin Luther King Day</i>	20 8am-12pm SECRETARY in OFFICE 6-7pm Zumba	21 11am Grief Support Group	22 SECRETARY in OFFICE 3-7pm 6-7pm Zumba	23 6pm Theatre Practice	24
25 10:00am Worship w/Children's Bible Stories & Craft	26 9:30am Yoga 11am Rise Café Meet 4-8pm SECRETARY in OFFICE 5pm Weight Tr for Wmn 1	27 6-7pm Zumba	28 11am Grief Support Group	29 SECRETARY in OFFICE 3-7pm 6-7pm Zumba	30 6pm Theatre Practice	31

SECRETARY
in OFFICE on SUNDAYS 8am-10am

CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF SOMERSET

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