

The Old Man's News

Mt. Sinai Congregational Church, UCC - December 2023



Events @ Mt.SinaiChurch

Mt. Sinai Church's **Holiday Bazaar**

"I have been waiting for several years for this event to take place again!"

The Holiday Bazaar held at Mt. Sinai Congregational Church on November 11, 2023 was truly a successful, enjoyable event. The parking lot was full all day reflecting a brisk turn-out of shoppers



and supporters from the community as well as the church. The vendors who participated provided a wide variety of

wonderful shopping opportunities for unique, handcrafted gifts. Our own Friendly Circle of crafters as well as others from the church community donated lovely, unique items as well.

The Basket Raffles, called the Snowflake Auction and the Super Raffle, were highly successful as well. All items in the baskets and Super Raffle were donated by church members, friends and relatives and businesses in the surrounding area. Many, many raffle tickets were sold and the winners were delighted with their good fortune.



The Bake Sale of scrumptious baked goods of cookies, brownies, bread and bars of all varieties

was so successful they sold out by 1:30! The food sold by the Men's Breakfast Group was also a roaring success. And there was a Vintage Room that contained dolls and other items that were purchased by those looking for unique older finds.



Our Red Barn, which is Mt. Sinai Congregational Church's thrift shop, was brimming with shoppers as well.

The Red Barn, open from May through mid-November had a very successful last day of the 2023 season. (The sales of all donated items at the Red Barn provides monthly support for our church and its missions.) The Red Barn proceeds from Nov. 11 alone contributed over \$1,300 to the total raised for the Holiday Bazaar.



Continued on page 2 ...

Mt. Sinai Church's **Holiday Bazaar** Continued from page 1

A BIG THANK YOU goes out to each and every person who volunteered their time, talents, donations and moral support to this fundraiser which yielded over \$9,000! Perhaps more importantly, this event provided warm and welcoming fellowship, community engagement **and** lifted our spirits in this post-pandemic era. One of the first people to walk in the door commented "I have been waiting for several years for this event to take place again!" The Holiday Bazaar took place for several years pre-covid and members of the community as well as Mt. Sinai Congregational Church came annually to do their holiday shopping.



We look forward to our next Holiday Bazaar in November of 2024!

Diane Corson, Event Coordinator

We had a busy month of giving here at Mt. Sinai Church

WE GOT A THRILL FROM THE CHILL

Team **North Pole Karen** jumped into the water again to raise funds for the Special Olympics !



Thank you to everyone who sponsored us!



Thanks to all for your generous donations to our Thanksgiving Food Drive to benefit the patrons at the Island Heart Food Pantry. We gave away 120 bags filled with a turkey or ham, fixings and desserts. It was a thrilling and busy day!



Book Drive

Missions organized a book drive to benefit children of the Unkechaug Nation in Mastic. Recent heavy rains caused flooding in their library and many books were destroyed.

Throughout the month of November, we collected **400 books** for children in grades 1 through 8. Thanks to all for your generosity and giving the gift of reading!



Advent and Christmas

Join with us as we anticipate and celebrate the Birth of Jesus Christ

It's Advent!

How did that happen so soon? And what does it mean for our church?

Advent is a time of preparation and waiting. And, if you're anything like me, you've always thought of it as a waiting time for Christmas. "Why, then," you might ask, "are the Scripture lessons so dark and apocalyptic?" Here is some insight from Tish Harrison Warren. Ms. Warren is a priest in the Anglican Church in North America:

In the church calendar, every period of celebration is preceded by a time of preparation. Historically, Advent, the liturgical season that begins four Sundays before Christmas Day, is a way to prepare our hearts (and minds and souls) for Christmas. For Christians, Christmas is a celebration of Jesus' birth — that light has come into darkness and, as the Gospel of John says, "the darkness could not overcome it." But Advent bids us first to pause and to look, with complete honesty, at that darkness.

To practice Advent is to lean into an almost cosmic ache: our deep, wordless desire for things to be made right and the incompleteness we find in the meantime. We dwell in a world still racked with conflict, violence, suffering, darkness. Advent holds space for our grief, and it reminds us that all of us, in one way or another, are not only wounded by the evil in the world but are also wielders of it, contributing our own moments of unkindness or impatience or selfishness.

(<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/30/opinion/sunday/christmas-season-advent-celebration.html>)

To think about Advent in these terms is to consider the promise that in the darkest of our times, Jesus will return to set things right. Thus, Advent becomes a time of waiting not only for the baby Jesus to be born into our world, but also for Jesus the Messiah to return to it in glory. Before his death, Jesus warns us to "keep watch," so in the meantime, we must practice the love he demands of us so we can manifest it in our Advent waiting and all the days that follow.

Sue Hoff, Worship and Sacraments Lead

LOOK TO THE NEXT FEW PAGES TO SEE ALL THAT IS GOING ON AT MT. SINAI CONGREGATIONAL UCC
DURING THIS TIME OF ADVENT AND THE CELEBRATION OF THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.

JOIN WITH US. PREPARE WITH US. KEEP WATCH.

Advent Sundays at Mt. Sinai Church



Our Advent theme this year is "Waiting for the Gift." At each worship service we will light candles, the first for Hope, the second for Peace, the third for Joy, and the fourth for Love. Because the fourth Sunday in Advent is Christmas Eve, we'll also light the Christ candle during that service.

On Christmas Eve we will celebrate with two worship services, one at 10:00 a.m. that will be designed for families and children, and one at 9:00 p.m. Both services will feature candles and carols. The choir will sing at the 9:00 p.m. service, which will feature readings of the Christmas story and passing the candlelight throughout the sanctuary while singing "Silent Night." Watch for more details about both of these services in each Advent Sunday's bulletin.

On December 3rd, 10th, and 17th, we invite you to bring a gift of an unwrapped toy or a store gift card to place under the Christmas tree in the sanctuary during the first hymn. This honors our commitment to giving gifts as we await the greatest gift of all, the birth of Jesus.



Preaching Schedule

December 3rd	Rev. Candace Whitman Communion and the candle of Hope
December 10th	Jamie Dunlop The candle of Peace
December 17th	Patrice Perreca The candle of Joy
December 24th	Various readers for the Christmas story The candle of Love The Christ candle

Calling all Singers! Join us for the Holidays!

There are so many beautiful songs to sing during Advent and Christmas! What could possibly make them even better? Why, hearing them sung by a large choir in the sanctuary! Come help us create that wonderful holiday sound.

Don't read music? That's okay, we are patient and helpful. Can't come out in the evening? Don't worry, we rehearse at 9:00 a.m. each Sunday in the choir room (down the hall past the conference room.) Please speak with any choir member about joining in on the holiday fun.

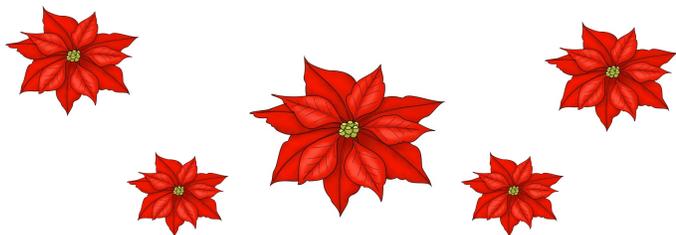




Christmas Flowers and Giving

Purchase beautiful poinsettias in memory or honor of a family member, friend or group of people. Christmas Poinsettias are \$15 each. To have names listed in the Christmas bulletin, please submit your form and payment by Friday, December 17th. You can place an envelope in the offering tray or give/send it to Jayne in the church office.

Donations are also being accepted for the **Island Heart Food Pantry** and the **General Fund**.



Sunday School

Keep an eye out for information about our Sunday School activities during Advent and Christmas.



Sunday Worship At Mt. Sinai Church



In-Person Worship - Join us at our 10 a.m. service in the sanctuary. Communion, as always, takes place on the first Sunday of the month.

Digital Worship - Digital worship is now available as a live stream. at 10 a.m. on the LIVE tab of our YouTube channel: [Mt. Sinai Congregational Church, UCC - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...). After that time you can find the service in the regular recordings section.

Offering - There are many ways to donate to the church: via check or cash (offering plate, drop-off or mail), electronic payment via the church website <https://www.msucc.org/giving/>, by setting up bill pay through your bank or roll-over from a 401(k)/403(b). We appreciate your support.

Moderator's Message

Psalm 1:3 *They are like trees planted by the streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season, and their leaves do not wither. In all that they do, they prosper.*

One of my practices, as the year winds down, is to take stock and review goals I may have established at the onset of the New Year. I dare say that many of you likely do the same. Well, I am happy to report that I lost a few pounds and have managed to keep them off during the year! As Kate often tells me, however, it's not always about me. To support that premise and to look outside of myself this year, I also envisioned what I hoped would be achievable goals for our church family that would strengthen our community presence, and build a solid foundation for our future. As fate would have it, we were presented with our first obstacle; the resignation of Rev. Phil Hobson. This could have easily immobilized us from the start. As it turned out, however, while this was a significant blow, it proved to be a unifying event. It initiated several activities that set us on the path to wholeness as a congregation, and to answer the call to bring the Good News to all. God certainly works in mysterious ways.

Immediate action was taken by Council. The Minister Search Committee was formed and without delay, meetings began even before Rev. Phil's departure. The committee moved along quite well creating the Local Church Profile until the second obstacle was encountered; funding the salary and benefits for our next minister. We could no longer support a full-time minister and after many discussions, it came to a congregational vote that resulted in the decision to pursue a part-time minister. This completed the Local Church Profile which will be sent to the NY UCC conference this week for review/approval to post the position.



Additionally, the Game Changer team was formed to improve how we communicate with the communities we serve. The results? Great turnouts for the Steeple Showcase season performances, increased Red Barn visitors, a successful grief support group series, a special "Blessings" retreat day, great support for partnership activities with the Suffolk County 6th Precinct, and who will ever forget the fabulous Holiday Bazaar that brought the community to our wonderful church home. As a side benefit to these successful activities, income to the church's general fund was achieved.

An additional two teams were created. The Strategic Planning Action Team will begin looking at opportunities to generate income with the intention of moving towards a full-time minister and to support church mission activities. And the newly formed Church Communication & Technology Team is making significant progress with our media presence, critical in this day and age.

How did all this happen!? I can unequivocally say that the Spirit is alive and well at Mt. Sinai Congregational Church. The Spirit within each of us prompted action, and that action has brought new life and the prospect of a bright future with untold success stories. I am so proud to be a part of this thriving community. May God bless and guide us through the power of the Holy Spirit as we begin the next year of our journey.

Peace,
Dennis Laderwager
Moderator
Bigreader54@yahoo.com
(631) 682-9276

Upcoming Event

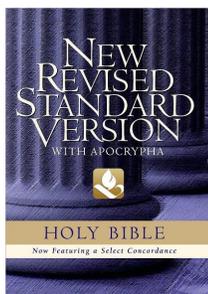
BIBLICAL LITERACY **A Bible Study Program**

Do you want to know:

Who wrote the Bible?
What's in it?
What am I reading?
Why four Gospels?

If so, you are in luck as we have a long-awaited Bible study lined up to discuss these and other issues. Join us as we watch or listen to recorded lectures by biblical scholars and then discuss what they have said. The first lecture will be "The Early Christians and Their Literature" and will take place after the service starting on January 7th from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Bring a lunch or a snack.

Planned sessions will take us through January and even into February if there is enough interest. Topics will include "Do we have the original New Testament?" and investigations of the different perspectives on the books of Mark, Matthew, Luke and John. We may even get to the Dead Sea Scrolls!



For more information contact the church office or Terry Burke at terryburke@optonline.net

The Red Barn: Then and Now

By Patrice Perreca and Barbara DeBree

We had a terrific season at the Red Barn, reaching out to the community, making new friends, and of course earning \$13,658 to support our beautiful church! Thank you to all

who volunteered many, many hours to clean, organize, move things and schlep merchandise. Hats off to Pat Hewlett, Betty Fanning, Leesie Schultz, Joan Cogan, Nancy West, Dal Kittredge, Audrey Boulukos, Diane Corson, Mike Dionisio, Glen and Anne Hulsberg, Sandy



Russo and Debby Michienzi for their dedication to the Red Barn! Thank you also to all those who donated items for inventory to sell. "Somebody's trash is another one's treasure" is one of the truest statements ever said!

We must be reminded, however, that if it were not for the sweat and toil of some other folks, there would not be a story to tell! Florrie Randall and Helen Samuels sold secondhand items at the old Post office (Miller House) on North Country Road for the Mt. Sinai/Miller place Historical Society. It is unclear when the move was made to bring the "White Elephant Sale" to the Red Barn but when they did they decided that the money raised should go to the church. Several repairs to the barn were necessary because the Madsen



Family, who had owned the barn, raised horses at one time. Tom Lyon and other folks helped to repair the floor and build shelves.

Soon, anyone passing by would notice lots of "stuff" sitting outside the red barn doors with Florrie, Helen, Corny Wakefield and Nona Carrette happy to take their money! Cathy Keane was also there organizing the many clothing articles

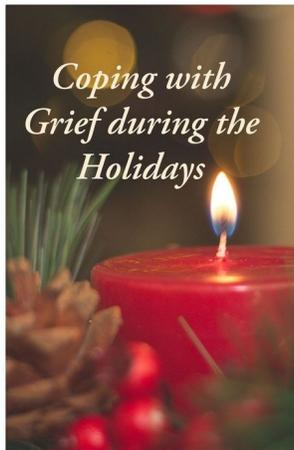
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Upcoming Event

Caring Ministry - Grief and the Holidays

The Caring Ministry is offering a Grief and the Holidays Discussion and Support Group on Saturday, December 2, 2023, from 10:00 a.m. at Mt. Sinai Congregational Church, 233 North Country Rd., Mt. Sinai, NY. We will use information from various grief counseling sources to discuss and share ideas on how we can not only make it through the holidays after losing a loved one but perhaps give the holidays new meaning.

The Grief and the Holidays Discussion and Support Group is open to adults who have experienced the loss of a loved one and are looking for a safe place to process and be supported by others who have also experienced loss, in a warm and caring environment during the upcoming holiday season.



To register or if you have questions, please call the church office at 631-473-1582. There is no fee, but we need to know how many to expect and the contact information of those planning on attending so we can confirm with you.

Wishing you peace and comfort,
Diane Corson

The Red Barn continued from page 7

and stacking shelves. Helen would let us know at Sunday service, how much money was brought in on Saturday and Florrie recorded it each week. Records show that \$10,000 was made in both 2014 and 2015!

Unfortunately, Covid shuttered the Red Barn's doors. When things started looking up again, a new group of volunteers decided to revamp, reorganize and revitalize this wonderful fundraiser. The Red Barn continues to be not only a money-maker for the church but also a wonderful community meeting place!

****NEW**** Church Office Hours

9 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Monday, Wednesday, Friday

1 to 4 p.m. Tuesday, Thursday

Jayne Garrido Hardy
Office Administrator

(631) 473-1582
mssc1@optonline.net

Old Man's News

Published by the Mt. Sinai Congregational United Church of Christ, formerly known as The Congregational Church in the Community of Old Man's, Miller's Place & Rocky Point, established 1789.

If you would like something in the church's monthly newsletter, the deadline to let the editor know is the **20th of every month**. Please, keep in mind that your submission may be edited for content and for space. Email the OMN Editor at cdwiebel@optonline.net with all submissions and questions.

Mt. Sinai Congregational Church

We are a congregation committed to justice. All are welcome into our full life and ministry regardless of age, race, abilities, economic or marital status, gender, sexual orientation, or gender identification. We are a church that is open and affirming of all people, as we are each made in the image of God.

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

Congregational Nurture



Welcome Back *Friendly Circle!*

The knitting, quilting and crafting group looked to the past for its new, official name: **The Friendly Circle**. The group will continue to meet on Tuesdays in the Conference Room from 2 to 4 p.m. Participants work on personal projects while sharing conversation and good feelings. If you are interested in joining the

Friendly Circle, feel free to drop by on Tuesdays or give the office a call at 631-473-1582. On Tuesdays, if the door is locked call the office and Jayne will open the door for you.

Caring Ministry

The Caring Ministry provides many emotional support services for the church. We are active in providing meals to those who are temporarily in need of assistance. Our card ministry sends out cards (frequently made by our Sunday school children), for those who are ill, post-surgery, grieving, or for birthday and holiday celebrations. And, you might see a Caring ministry member ushering at a memorial service or running a Grief Support Group.

In addition, the church's **Prayer List** is coordinated by the Caring Ministry. It is updated weekly as a way to provide prayers for members and family in need. Any church members that would like to receive the prayer list email please let Jayne Hardy know at mssc1@optonline.net.

Caring Ministry is always looking for new members. If you would like to join us, please leave a message with Jayne.

Goodness Abounds!

Thank you to Mt. Sinai Church member, Vicki Francis, for presenting the Island Heart Food Pantry as a donation opportunity to residents of Leisure Village. The Pantry received a very generous donation of \$900 for much needed food supplies.

Thank you Vicki and your fellow Leisure Villagers.

Men's Breakfast Group and Women's Breakfast and Lunch Groups

Men of the church are invited to meet each Thursday morning at 8 a.m. for coffee, food and conversation at Zona Out East diner in Rocky Point. Want to be reminded via email? Please send your email address to Dennis Murphy at murphyde@optonline.net.



Please call the office if you are interested in knowing more about the women's Lunch Bunch and breakfast groups.



A FUTURE WITH HOPE

The Giving/ Stewardship Team. would like to thank everyone who has pledged so far this

year for our 2024 budget. If you have not pledged yet, we ask that you consider doing so. There are three ways you can get it done:

1. Fill out a pledge card and bring it in with you on Sunday (or mail it in.)
2. Pledge through the Donation button on the church's website msucc.org
3. Use this QR Code.



All pledges are kept confidential.

Thank you for always answering and supporting our call,
The Stewardship Committee

Church Food Cupboard

Thanks to all for the generous food donations. There is still a need for canned tomatoes, tomato sauce, canned vegetables and fruits, soups and jelly/jams. We also need personal care items like toilet paper, toothpaste, deodorant and shampoo. Your help is greatly appreciated.



We are open on Tuesdays from 9:15 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.

June Kelly and Diane Murphy

Contact Us

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United Church of Christ**



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Please visit our website if you would like to be added to our email list.



Office Hours

9 - Noon, MWF & 1-4 p.m. on TTh

Church Food Cupboard,
Tuesdays, 9:15 to 11:45 a.m.

Mission Ministry



During Advent, the Missions Board and the Worship and Sacraments Board invite you to join us in this year's Christmas Toy Collection. We will be inviting members of the congregation to participate during our worship services. During the first hymn on December 3rd, 10th and 17th, you may come forward with a new, unwrapped toy or gift card and place them under the Christmas tree. We also welcome children to do the same when they come up for the children's message.

The toys and gift cards will be donated to the Family Service League of Suffolk County. They are a Social Services agency that provides a variety of services to individuals and families. These could include services for mental health issues, addiction, homelessness or helping families stay together. We have participated in a toy drive for this agency for the last several years, and your generosity is very much appreciated.

Island Heart Food Pantry

As we come to the close of another year at the pantry, we are amazed at the support we have received in order to meet the rising demands we face. As if 2022 wasn't challenging enough, we saw our guest numbers continue to climb, along with a national increase of thirty percent. Our only hope in meeting the challenge was the reliable support of the following people:

- Long Island Cares
- Island Harvest
- Trader Joe's
- The Rocky Point Rotary
- Unitarian Universalist Fellowship at Stony Brook
- Temple Beth Emeth of Mt. Sinai
- Serve All NY
- Jane Guido Foundation
- And several other donors who help make it happen.



And a special debt of gratitude goes to every volunteer who commits to the IHFP throughout the month!

Thank you all!

Halloween inspired Mike D'Andrea to hold his Annual Spooktacular Food Drive, with chilling photo ops and a reverse trick-or-treat. Thank You Mike!

Our Annual 2023 Thanksgiving Meal distribution culminated in over 120 Meals for those in need, at the Island Heart and church pantries, as well as the Laddie A. Decker Sound Beach School. Much gratitude for all who donated and assisted in making it a warm and blessed holiday!

Kat Lahey and Janice Flaiz

Upcoming Events @Mt.SinaiChurch

December & January

(See individual articles for more information)

December Preview

- 12/2 Grief and the Holidays Discussion, 10 a.m.
Decorating the Church for Christmas
- 12/3 First Sunday of Advent - Hope, 10 a.m.
Toy Drive Gifting
- 12/10 Second Sunday of Advent - Peace, 10 a.m.
Toy Drive Gifting
- 12/17 Third Sunday of Advent - Joy, 10 a.m.
Toy Drive Gifting
- 12/24 Fourth Sunday of Advent - Love & Christ Candles
10 a.m. Early Christmas Eve for Families
9 p.m. Christmas Eve Service of Candles & Carols
- 12/31 Regular Sunday Service at 10 a.m.

January Preview

- 1/7 Bible Study with Terry Burke, 11:30 to 12:30
- 1/13 Food Pantry Fundraiser - Music Night, 7 to 11 p.m.
- 1/14 Bible Study with Terry Burke, 11:30 to 12:30

IHFP Benefit Concert

Sing and dance the night away at the Island Heart Food Pantry (IHFP) benefit concert with the crowd favorite:

Del and The Courageous Cats!

January 13th
7 to 11 p.m.

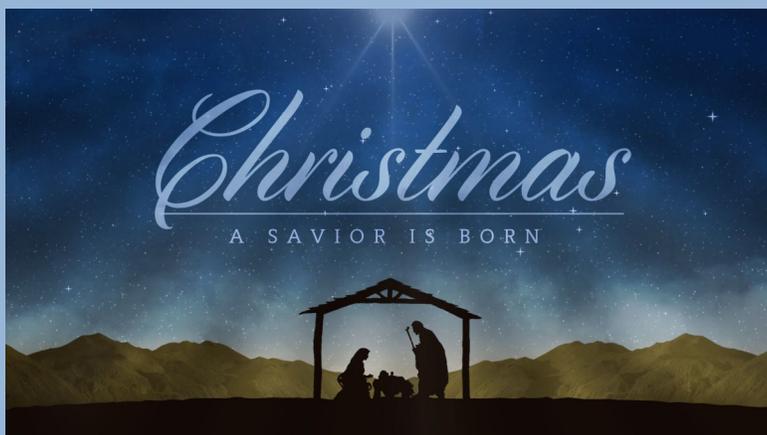
Mt. Sinai Congregational Church

With a suggested \$20 donation and a non-perishable item, be prepared to enjoy a night of eclectic music which will definitely get you up on your feet.

There will be raffles and refreshments.

Be there or be square!

If you'd like to bring an appetizer or dessert, please do!



MAY YOU SHINE
THE LIGHT OF
CHRIST IN THE
NEW YEAR!

ChrsCards.com