



# Vestry News

DECEMBER 2025

## A Joyful and Successful Merrie Christmas Fair!

Thank you to everyone who helped make the 2025 Merrie Christmas Fair (Rev. Fran's first with us) a resounding success! Crowds filled every building— people of all ages shopping, greeting neighbors, enjoying lunch, and toasting marshmallows by the firepit tended by **Rob Warwick** and **Jim Howie**. Joy and laughter were everywhere.

Not only did the community come to shop, they also stepped up to help make the fair happen. Our heartfelt thanks to the **Boxborough Minutemen** for assisting with tables from Steele Farm, **Wayne Richardson** and the **Boy Scouts** for hauling Attic Treasures, and our **Friday night girls group** with **Natalia Castillo** who helped sort items for both Attic Treasures and the Sugar Plum Café.

**Attic Treasures**, led fearlessly by **Kellie and Peter Senghas**, started the morning with a line around the building—umbrellas up—and quickly filled with excited shoppers. **Anne Chandler's Greens** were a hot spot as arrangements were swept up to decorate homes.

At **Sugar Plum**, **Debbie and Paul Brookes** created a lively café with delicious food and festive music, including Santa dancing to jazz performed by talented Berklee students recruited by the **Brookes family**.

**Baked Goods**, led by **Suzanne Boyden** and **Teresa Howie**, sold out so fast that their empty tables became seating for the lunch crowd. In the **Children's Area**, set up by **Heidi K**, kids crafted happily and found beloved stuffed animals donated by **Fred Batstone** and **Linda Spears**.

Creativity shone throughout—from handcrafted ornaments by **Gloria Roe**, **Linda Morse**, and **Connie Brown**, to woodworking by **Ron Vogel** and **Guy Marchmont**, to beautiful sewn items by **Marlee Roberts** at **Knits and Gifts**. The **Jewelry Table**, led by **Mary Rohwer**, welcomed its loyal followers. And the **Online Silent Auction**, singlehandedly led by **Mary Anne Vogel** saw a strong increase over last year with well over 200 items.

Thank you to everyone who spread the word (**thank you, Heidi Mathew**), supported volunteers behind the scenes (**thank you, Darcy Sidwell, Scott Spaulding**), and kept track of our earnings (**thank you, Dave Pavlik**).

We are truly a small but mighty crew, bringing our faith to life by creating connection, joy, and support for both our church and the Acton Food Pantry building fund.  
—**Laurel Bull & Mary Pavlik**

*Initial totals: \$18K from tables and \$13K from the Silent Auction, for a wonderful total of over \$31K!*



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Well, all I can say is, “Wow!!” The Merrie Christmas Fair was a day of joy and love. Our community welcomed all and served abundantly to our guests. Thank you to everyone who made this incredible tradition come true.

And it is just the beginning of our Advent and Christmas season. We look forward to welcoming many guests during this precious time. Be sure to invite your friends to our December events listed later in the Vestry News. There is something for everyone during this joyous season!

As 2025 comes to an end, I want to send all of my best wishes and blessings to you. I am grateful for my first eight months at UCC Boxborough. It has been a rich and abundant time. I feel privileged to serve this community, both the church and our neighbors and partners. I have learned so much from all of you this year. And we have served together in so many ways. Thank you!!

It is with a humble heart that I look forward to 2026. There is still so much to do; so much to explore; and so much to celebrate! So let us take the next few weeks to be in awe of the possibilities represented by a newborn in a stable. Let us feel the hope, peace, joy, and love that is available to all of us.

No matter where each one of us walks during this season, God’s love is with us. One can review the decades of Christmas seasons we have walked and recall that some were easy and light; some were complicated and busy; and some were dark and lonely. We hold each other in whatever season we walk this year. We hold each other because we have faith that God is With Us. We hold each other because God is in each one of us. We hold each other because grace is a gift to be shared and treasured. It is the hope of this season and the love of neighbor that we celebrate.

Merry Christmas!!  
Pastor Fran



Fran and the Wellingtons enjoying the fair.



## December Schedule

**Mark your calendars for our Advent and Christmas Events**

**Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup> – 7:30 pm Bluegrass Christmas Concert**

**Sunday, December 7<sup>th</sup> – Communion – Sounds of Peace singing  
(second Sunday of Advent)**

**Sunday, December 14<sup>th</sup> – Joint Service with First Parish of Berlin  
“Sing Christmas” Cantata ((third Sunday of Advent)**

**Sunday, December 14<sup>th</sup> - 3 pm ; Living Nativity on Church Lawn**

**Wednesday, December 17<sup>th</sup> - 7 pm Longest Night Service in Sanctuary**

**Sunday, December 21<sup>st</sup> – Fourth Sunday of Advent**

**Wednesday, December 24<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Eve Service**



## UCCB's Annual Bluegrass Christmas Concert

**Saturday, December 6 at 7:30PM in the Sanctuary  
(Doors open at 6:45)**

Many people consider the annual Christmas In New England (CINE) concert in the UCCB Sanctuary to be an important part of their holiday season. We're thrilled to have the CINE performers back! Join us in the Sanctuary for a fabulous Christmas tradition at the UCCB! General admission – come early for best seating! To learn more, visit [www.christmasinnewengland.net](http://www.christmasinnewengland.net).

Here's our chance to offer an extravagant welcome to music lovers in our community!

We'd love your help with baked goods or other snacks to offer during intermission. All food items should be *individually wrapped and ready to easily distribute*. Please contact Peter Senghas at [psenghas@yahoo.com](mailto:psenghas@yahoo.com) or 978-505-5398 with any questions or to offer assistance.



## Christmas Cantata!

**A Most Special Musical event!  
Sunday, December 14**



During the service on December 14th, there will be a most special musical event at UCCB!

We will be presenting "Sing Christmas", a Christmas Cantata! 17 instrumentalists, the choirs of Berlin UU/UCC, our own wonderful choir, the children of the church and narration of the Christmas story by Berlin's pastor and our wonderful Pastor Fran, will make this a joy filled experience for all.

I hope this music will warm your hearts and bring joy to you during the Christmas season this year!

## Advent Christmas Cookie—Swap & Sale

**Sunday, December 14**



The Fellowship Ministry Team's annual Christmas cookie swap and sale will be held on December 14th. Please join us and bring home an assortment of delicious home-made cookies for the holidays!

Participate as a "swapper" by donating a minimum of four dozen home-made cookies and receive one dozen free cookies in return. The remaining cookies will be available for purchase by the congregation. If you're interested in being a swapper, please see the sign-up in the Gathering Room or contact Deb Simmons (508-439-2891 or [dirmcgrath@comcast.net](mailto:dirmcgrath@comcast.net)) for more information.

The sale will be held in the Gathering Room immediately following worship. Proceeds from the sale will be used to fund future Fellowship events.

## Order your Poinsettias

The Christmas Eve service at our church is a beautiful experience, filled with light and hope. We decorate the alter with poinsettia plants for the service. Please use sign up sheet in the Gathering Room. Plants are \$15 each and can choose red, white, or pink/multi. Orders must be in by Dec. 14th. If you aren't able to sign up on the sheet, please contact Cheryl DiPaolo at [cheryl.dipaolo@gmail.com](mailto:cheryl.dipaolo@gmail.com) or (508) 873-2243.



# Merrie Christmas Fair 2025!



As you enter the lobby, you'll have seen the beautiful greens and the gals who made them; Anne and Darcy.



Mary Anne, to the left, explains the Silent Auction to a fair attendee. Pictured above are some items for Auction.



Three generations of the Fournier family.



Maricel and Gloria at the beautiful ornaments table.



Diane at the popular jewelry table.



Marlee and her daughter at the lovely gifts and knits.



Sugar Plum Café: Laura, on the left, came with her husband Andy from Maine to help. Tineke, center, pouring coffee and cocoa. Paul, who helped organize the Café this year with his wife Debbie, pictured below with Marcia) is getting a pot of warm cider.



Above- Ron and Guy created awesome gifts from wood for the Men's table.

Center—Linda with all the cute stuffed koala bears and penguins at the children's Table.

Bottom— Hilary chats with Connie at the Attic Treasures table in the town hall.



# Habitat for Humanity’s Groundbreaking Ceremony - Includes local community leaders

On November 21, 2025, Habitat for Humanity North Central Massachusetts celebrated the groundbreaking of their newest project. The former location of Acton restaurant Le Lyonnaise will soon become three single-family units. Interested in helping with this project during the summer of 2026? Stay tuned for additional information in early 2026 from UCCB Mission Trip Coordinators Jim Howie and Peter Senghas as plans come together.



Left to Right: Rev. Karen Hodges - Acton Congregational Church; Curt Logee – President of the Board of Directors, Habitat for Humanity North Central Massachusetts; Carolyn Read – Executive Director, Habitat for Humanity North Central Massachusetts, Rev. Fran Graveson - UCC Boxborough, and Jamie Eldridge – Massachusetts State Senator



Pastor Fran offers the Blessing of the Land during the Groundbreaking Ceremony.

## Generosity



In November, through the Generosity season, we paused to reflect on the countless ways we **plant seeds of hope – together**. That journey culminated in Celebration Sunday, the worship service in which we came forward our pledges of financial support, looking ahead with faith, courage and hope toward 2026.

We witnessed how a church and community filled with faithful hearts can work together to make God's love real in the world, here at home and in places far, far away.

- ◆ We remembered the saints who walked before us, honoring their legacy as we carry our faith into the world — marching, serving, and, **Growing in the Spirit**.
- ◆ We listened to Maribel Mendoza, a member of the Boxborough community, who reminded us of the power of opening our doors, caring for others, and, **Caring for the World**.
- ◆ And, Debbie and Paul Brookes, joyfully and with thanks, helped us celebrate how we joined hands in preparing for the Merrie Christmas Fair, transforming our campus into a place of welcome, joy, and festive love, **Welcoming All**.

Each of these actions is a seed planted - in us, in our neighbors, and in the wider world.

Your gifts of financial support are the soil in which these seeds take root. They form the foundation that allows UCCB's mission to flourish. Generosity is more than giving; it is a spiritual practice, a way of nurturing all that God calls us to do as one community.

Would you like to join us in planting seeds of hope? You can submit your pledge securely via this [link](#) or share it by email, mail or in person at the church. Through our annual commitments to our congregation, we **plant seeds of hope - together**. Thank you for being part of this journey.

Questions? Please reach out to Pastor Fran, Griet Dehandschutter, or Kellie Senghas

## Caps for the Cold

After the Merrie Christmas Fair, the collection basket for Caps for the Cold (formerly Hats for the Homeless), will be in the lobby. Every year we collect hats, socks, gloves, mittens and scarves, either bought or handmade, and donate them to the Worcester Fellowship. The basket will be available until mid-December. Any questions contact Ann at [marchmont922@gmail.com](mailto:marchmont922@gmail.com)."



## Here's a great way to thank Pastor Fran for her amazing ministry with us!

During Advent each year, the Deacons take a collection for the **Pastor's Discretionary Fund**. This is a fund that the pastor can use for any purpose to advance her ministry. In past year, the fund has been used to purchase books and worship materials, even a computer.

There are a few ways to donate:

- There will be an envelope in the bulletin each of the next 3 Sundays. You can place your offering in the envelope and place the envelope in the collection plate. If paying by check, please write "Pastor's Discretionary Fund" in the memo line.
- You can mail a check (again with "Pastor's Discretionary Fund" in the memo line) to:

Collector  
 UCCB  
 723 Massachusetts Ave.  
 Boxborough, MA 01719

Thank you!



## OUR SERVICES ARE SUNDAY MORNINGS AT 9:30 IN PERSON OR ON ZOOM

### To worship via Zoom:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88306753408?pwd=VlgwZUtrYl05JeVU2WkiHWGtUWExGdz09>

Meeting ID: 883 0675 3408

Passcode: 7387

Please note: our worship services are streamed live via Zoom, and recorded for posting on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChlayswOH7Ta7LYVK-BcAyA>).

Zoom offers closed captioning subtitles for those who find that helpful.

## Parting Shots of the Merrie Christmas Fair



Nicolette and Flo in the kitchen preparing trays for the Sugar Plum Café.



Debbie and Suzanne posing at the delicious Baked Goods Table.



Dave and Rob tend the fire. People were toasting marshmallows to make yummy s'mores.

# December 2025

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**Vestry News articles are due starting the 24th of each month. Please submit your article or pictures to [hmatthew25@verizon.net](mailto:hmatthew25@verizon.net) and [boxborochurch@verizon.net](mailto:boxborochurch@verizon.net)**

