



Walton First Congregational Church  
United Church of Christ

Updates December 15, 2025

**Celebrations**

<b>December</b>		<b>January</b>	
<u>Birthdays</u>		<u>Birthdays</u>	
1 <sup>st</sup> : Rosemarie Tiesler	1 <sup>st</sup> : Warren Kelly	7 <sup>th</sup> : Nancy Grotevant	12 <sup>th</sup> : Bruce Ellis
2 <sup>nd</sup> : Glen LePinnet	3 <sup>rd</sup> : Edie Morales	15 <sup>th</sup> : Lynn Allen	20 <sup>th</sup> : Josie Kelly
6 <sup>th</sup> : Loraine Davila	9 <sup>th</sup> : Haley Clark	22 <sup>nd</sup> : Nadene Kopetz	27 <sup>th</sup> : Donna Thomson
10 <sup>th</sup> : Chris Clark	20 <sup>th</sup> : Todd Ogden		
25 <sup>th</sup> : Beth Ogden	28 <sup>th</sup> : Moira Walter		

**Remembrances**

<b>December</b>	
<u>Heavenly Birthdays</u>	<u>Day of Resurrection</u>
12 <sup>th</sup> : Leonard Parkinson	9 <sup>th</sup> : Bill Thomson

**On the Calendar**

- Sunday, December 21:** No Worship Service; Christmas play & lunch 11:30 am
- Tuesday, December 23:** Christmas Caroling 4:00 pm
- Wednesday, December 24:** Christmas Eve Candle Light Service. Our music service begins at 3:00 pm with our service of Celebration beginning at 3:30 pm
- Sunday, December 28:** No Worship Service or Sunday School. Happy New Year!
- Sunday, January 4:** Sanctuary Worship and Communion 10:15 am; No Sunday School; Coffee Hour, hosted by Bruce Ellis
- Thursday, January 8:** Ministry Committee Meeting 2:00 pm
- Friday, January 9:** Operations Committee Meeting 4:30 pm
- Saturday, January 10:** Gathering Table 11:30 am-1:00 pm
- Sunday, January 11:** Sanctuary Worship 10:15 am; Sunday School; Prudential Board Meeting
- Thursday, January 15:** Annual Reports are due

**Elijah's Closet**

Fridays and Saturdays 10:00 am-2:00 pm

**\*\*50% Off Christmas Items Sale Coming Soon\*\***



Patly Look@ The Walton Reporter

### Fashionable Recyclables...

Women of the First Congregational Church in Walton have been busy making designer-statement tote bags from plastic grocery bags and selling them to help fund church projects. Spearheading the project is Dorothy Welch, who said it takes 65 plastic bags, which must be cut, crocheted and tied to create each bag. The church will host a holiday bazaar and cookie sale this Saturday, Dec. 1, beginning at 9 a.m. Totes will be for sale at that time. Church ladies pictured are, seated from left to right, Rev. Jennifer Matison Juliani with her daughter, Chloe, and Charlene Gregory. Back row Jan Kilpatrick, Betty Johnston, Jeri Ogden, Fran Robinson, Betty Moore and Dorothy Welch.

## Member Updates

Please place your non-perishable food and toiletry donations in the wagon located at the back of the sanctuary. Loraine Davila will drive donations to the food bank the last Tuesday of each month.

If you have anything that you would like included in our bi-monthly Updates, please contact April at 607-865-4066 or

[secretary@uccwalton.com](mailto:secretary@uccwalton.com)

Nov 2007 Reporter Article, provided by Mary Carroll

## Board Updates

# WORSHIP & EVENT CHANGES



**DUE TO A RECENT BOUT WITH PNEUMONIA, PASTOR JANET WILL BE ON A RECOVERY LEAVE THROUGH THE MONTH OF DECEMBER. WE HAVE MADE THE FOLLOWING CHANGES TO THE DECEMBER WORSHIP AND EVENTS SCHEDULED.**

- SUNDAY 12/14** Ron Galley will lead worship at 10:15 am.
- SUNDAY 12/21** To celebrate our Sunday School program, we will not hold regular Sanctuary Worship. The Christmas Play will take place at 11:30 am in the Fellowship Hall, followed by lunch. There will not be an evening performance or dinner. Please RSVP to April at (607)865-4066 or [secretary@uccwalton.com](mailto:secretary@uccwalton.com) by 12/14.
- TUESDAY 12/23** Caroling at 4:00 pm, please meet in the parking lot.
- WEDNESDAY 12/24** Our Christmas Eve service will begin at 3:00 pm with Carillon music in the parking lot. The candlelight service will be held at 3:30 pm in the Sanctuary.
- THURSDAY 12/25-SUNDAY 12/28** Merry Christmas! The office will be closed. Elijah's Closet will maintain normal business hours.
- SUNDAY 12/28** No Worship Service; No Sunday School. Enjoy a peaceful Sunday morning!

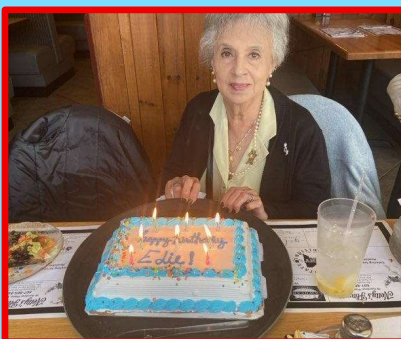
This year, we will be collecting a special offering in memory of your loved ones to purchase poinsettias for our Christmas Eve Service. Envelopes were included in the November 23<sup>rd</sup> bulletin. Please contact April if you need one.

To honor loved ones that are no longer with us, we would like to add birthdate/memorial dates to our newsletter. If you would like to have a loved one included, please submit their names and dates to April.

We will be designing and printing our own offering envelopes this year. If you would like to use these, please request them from April. Be sure to include the frequency you would prefer, i.e. monthly or weekly.

## Highlights

### Edie's Birthday Luncheon



## Advent



Sarah & Nora Kellogg



Guest speaker,  
Ron Galley



Nolan & Cooper Evans



Gifts for our Christmas Family

## Previous Sermons and Liturgy

### ❖ December 7, 2025

- ▶ Scripture Reading: *Isaiah 11:1-10*
- ▶ Gospel Reading: *Matthew 24:36-44*
- ▶ Sermon: Waiting

### ❖ December 14, 2025

- ▶ Scripture Reading: *Isaiah 35:1-10*
- ▶ Gospel Reading: *John 1:6-8, 19-28*
- ▶ Sermon: The Joyful Anticipation of Our Lord

## Pastor's Pen

### **Saint Lucia** by Pastor Janet Schwengber

December 13th is recognized and celebrated as Saint Lucia Day throughout the Nordic countries. St. Lucia, a Christian who would not give in to the Roman ruler, was martyred by the Romans in about 304 AD. Today Saint Lucia Day is celebrated for her central role in Christianity in Scandinavia.

The day is celebrated with Candle Crowns on children who also wear the white order of Lucia. Lucia wore candles in her hair to permit her to hold food in her hands for persecuted Christians. Likewise, in the modern celebration, the oldest daughter of Nordic families serves her parents "Lucia buns" (sweet S-shaped rolls) with coffee or mulled wine.

During church the children sing the traditional hymns that describe how the martyr overcame the Darkness and found Light. The night of St. Lucia is known as the longest night of the year (winter

solstice) which was changed when the Gregorian calendar was reformed. The Norse people were originally pagan and would set huge bonfires to ward off evil spirits on this day. But by 1,000 AD Christianity had spread among the Nordic peoples, and the festival of lights was placed in the virgin daughter's hair in honor of St. Lucia who gave light to a world that came to accept the Christian faith.

Today in America we do not usually celebrate St. Lucia, but many churches hold a Christmas Eve Candlelight service that, in a way, is the same idea of St. Lucia overcoming darkness and bringing light into a troubled world. As Jesus says in John 8, "I am the light of the world." Why not consider following the light this Christmas by attending the worship of the birth of Christ!

## **A Devotional from Pastor Janet**

### **Saving Flesh** by Mary Luti

*God will save God's people on that day... They will sparkle in God's land like jewels in a crown. How attractive and beautiful they will be! - Zechariah 9:16-17a (NIV adapted)*

A good friend of mine was in therapy for a debilitating situational depression. After a few months, her appetite improved, there was less pressure in her chest. But she still couldn't listen to music. It overwhelmed her. Her depression was deep, and progress was slow.

It was spring. Each week she walked to her appointment along the tree-lush banks of the Charles River in Cambridge, MA, where on warm days Harvard undergrads lolled in various states of undress, sunning themselves, tossing Frisbees, preening, laughing, and seducing each other with unapologetic sensuality.

She saw them through a lusterless haze. Everything gray, everyone blurred, voices muffled and distorted, underwater. And she couldn't bear them, those children, their youth and their joy. The pleasure they took in their bodies repulsed her.

But then one day she looked at them, and they were gleaming. Their light didn't hurt her eyes. Their laughter made her own heart sing. Their flesh was so resplendent it made her cry.

And right then and there she loved them, loved their bodies in all their graceful, awkward, odd, and lovely permutations, their varied colors, shapes, and sizes. She loved their joy, their life, their immodest abandon. She almost fell to her knees, adoring.

On the day she loved them, she knew she was well. She knew she was whole again when their bodies became for her a parted sea, a burning bush, a transfiguration. She knew she was saved the day that human flesh made manifest the Glory.

It was Christmas, that spring.

### **Prayer**

Save us in the body, through the body, by the body, O God who, in Bethlehem's Child, took one for yourself. Praise to you, who loves all flesh.

## **Lifted in Prayer**

Lorraine Miller

The family of Gary Hood

The family of Margaret Haywood

The family of Tony Contello

Pastor Janet

The family of Raymond Cole

The family of John Higgins