



**Simsbury United Methodist Church**  
**2016 - 2017 Charge Conference Report**  
Monday, December 5, 2016, 7:30 pm

## **Dinner for Eight**

*By JoAnna Hamilton*  
*Chairperson*

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**Dinner for Eight has kicked off to a good start this year. We changed a few procedures this year in order to accomplish two goals:**

**(1) Ensure that the dinners do happen each round**

We received a lot of comments to the effect of, “No one ever called me for one of the rounds.” “I never knew who was hosting,” “I didn't know when I was supposed to host.” So, though the schedule is posted every year, there were new guidelines included, with a reminder that it is everyone's responsibility to make the meals happen, and that we all forget sometimes. Everyone appreciates a gentle reminder. All hosts have been given a “deadline” to contact their guests and schedule the evening. All guests have been given a subsequent “deadline” to reach out to the host if they have not yet heard from them.

**(2) Include new members in the rounds**

We built 4 “guest” spots into the calendar with the intent to have available “spots” for new members as needed. So far it has worked as we have two new member families who have been able to join the group. We also had 2 substitutes (Deb Clifford and Mark Brady) volunteer to host so that we could have these open spots for new members. There are guest spots in each of the 4 rounds, and members are encouraged to ask new members if they have guests on their lists, otherwise they are encouraged to invite from the substitute list, or even invite a neighbor if they are not able to find someone within the SUMC community.

Attached is the schedule for this year. Numbers have steadily decreased in the last few years. Our sign-ups for full time members is roughly half of what it was the first year Joyce and I did this together. We hope that closer attention to the schedule and the excitement of including new members will breathe new life into this program of fellowship.

Having said that, please note that Joyce Tullock and JoAnna Hamilton have chaired this committee for the past 5 years or more, and we are stepping down at the end of this year. A new chair(s) will be needed for future years. It has been fun, but after this length of time we are both ready for other ventures. We will help in recruiting a new chair early in 2017.

Thank you,  
JoAnna Hamilton

*Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors*