

Simsbury United Methodist Church

The Messenger

May 2018

Open hearts, open minds, open doors

Farewell to Pastor Woody

On June 10, 2018, there will be a combined church service followed by our annual Strawberry Festival. And combined with the festival this year will also be SUMC's Farewell to Woody! Immediately following the service we will gather to enjoy fellowship and say goodbye to a pastor who means so much to all of us. Plans are in the works to make this a special time and there will be more details coming, but for now, please mark your calendars so you don't miss this special Sunday.

Traditionally, donations are gathered and consolidated into one cash gift when a pastor leaves a church to help the pastor and his family with the transition. If you would care to contribute to this special parting gift, please make checks payable to SUMC and track me down on a Sunday morning, or mail them to me at my home address below by June 3. Please write "Farewell to Woody" in the memo line.

~Jennifer Acheson, 117 Hollow Brook Road, Windsor, CT 06095

SUMC Cleaned Up

A team of hard workers from SUMC donned matching T-shirts (see photo) and helped clean up Simsbury during the annual Earth Day Collection Event on April 21. Thank you to Debbie Dunn for organizing this event. The team worked along Hopmeadow Street clearing debris.



The SUMC Church cleanup day was also held on April 21! Thank you to all who swept up the sand in the parking lot from the winter, rake out the lawns, and spread down fresh mulch on our Church properties.

The last-but-not-least SUMC clean up on April 21? The youth, led by Pastor Peter, cleared Howard Stewart's yard of leaves and branches – and about a million pinecones!

Walk Against Hunger

Foodshare's Walk Against Hunger is on May 5 this year, at the Yard Goats Stadium in Hartford. The walk begins at 9:00 a.m.

Gifts of Love is a Foodshare partner, and last year a team of walkers from SUMC walked in support of Gifts of Love. Individuals can walk, donate, or both. Contact Susan Pribyson for more information/to join the SUMC walkers.

Important Dates

May 1: South Park Inn

May 5: Days for Girls, 9:00 a.m.; Walk Against Hunger (Foodshare/Gifts of Love)

May 6: Greeting card sale; CT District conference event (p. 5)

May 8: Church Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m., in the Barn

May 11-13: Confirmation class retreat

May 12: Youth HARC at the Park (p. 6)

May 13: Mother's Day

May 15: Newsletter deadline for June issue

May 20: Pentecost

May 24-29: LLI Art Show

May 27: Confirmation; Peace with Justice Sunday

May 28: Carillon concert, 12:30 p.m.; last day to register for VBS

June 2: Days for Girls

June 10: Strawberry Festival/Farewell to Woody

June 20-22: Vacation Bible School (held at First Church)

June 30 – July 7: ASP mission trip

Pastor's Page

I find hymn #707 to be one of the most meaningful hymns we sing: Hymn of Promise. It was written by Natalie Sleeth for her husband who had a terminal illness. It is a song about endings but it is a song of hope that in every ending there is a new beginning.

Verse 3: "In our end is our beginning; in our time, infinity; in our doubt there is believing; in our life eternity. In our death a resurrection; at the last a victory, unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see." The words have always given me hope when I felt that I had reached one of life's dead ends and there seemed no place to go.

As I reach another ending in my life I realize how difficult it is to say goodbye to so many wonderful people and relationships. The time that I have been given here to share with you, these ten years, have been an amazing part of my life's journey. I will never forget the lives I have been privileged to encounter in so many different circumstances.

We have recently purchased a house outside of Baltimore. We will be leaving Simsbury at the end of May in order that the Trustees can paint and do the needed repairs to the parsonage. (May 27 will be confirmation Sunday). We will return to Simsbury for the Strawberry Festival and to say goodbye to everyone on June 10.

Thanks to all who have been so supportive as we make this transition.

~ Grace and Peace, Pastor Woody

From Stephen Ministry

Men are sometimes reluctant to reach out for help or to accept help. Can you tell me more about how men could benefit from having a Stephen Minister?

I would encourage any man going through something difficult – divorce, loss of a job, death of a loved one, financial difficulties, a serious illness – to be open to having a Stephen Minister. Men are conditioned to be strong and self-reliant, so we put a wall around ourselves and don't talk about what's going on inside. But talking with a Stephen Minister really will help. I've seen the difference it can make.

Your Stephen Minister is going to respect you. He's not going to tell you what to do; he's not going to judge you. He's here to listen – to walk alongside, to help you talk things out and work things through. And it's totally confidential. No one will even know you have a Stephen Minister, and your Stephen Minister won't share anything you say.

And remember, it's not just the two of you in that caring relationship – the Lord's there too, and that's where the healing comes in. It's God who will help you take hold of what's buried deep inside and bring it out and kick it out the door.

I would recommend Stephen Ministry to any man – or woman – during a difficult time.

~ written by Steve Feith; submitted by Judy Sturgis

Uganda 2018 Mission Trip

Are you interested in doing mission work? Would you like to travel? Come join the mission team traveling to Uganda from September 26 to October 9. We have a great team coming together and will continue to accept interested travelers until space fills up, on a first-come, first-served basis up until June 15. We will be working with Guiding Light Orphans (GLO) on the medical clinic progress we started in 2016! Please contact Michelle Ebert in the church office at 860.651.3356 with any questions.



Growing Pains

“Don’t be amazed that I say you, you must be born anew.” -John 3:7

Jesus said this at the end of his conversation with Nicodemus, a religious leader of the Jew people. Traditionally this has been interpreted to point to a personal spiritual awakening. Methodist founder John Wesley once had such a moment in his life on Aldersgate Street in London when he declared that his heart had been ‘strangely warmed.’ The Rev. Alfred T. Day III, General Commission on Archives and History for the UMC, summarizes John’s experience by saying, “It was the sense that ‘God loved him, even him,’ that was life changing.” Each year in May, United Methodists observe Aldersgate Sunday to commemorate this historic moment and to use it as an opportunity to reflect on their own spiritual journey. This month, I’d like to ask us to consider what this means to us as a church as well as individuals.

Any birth requires growing pains. (I am not speaking from first-hand experience, but as a close observer of this phenomenon!) What a wonderful metaphor for the inescapable changes that life brings. Our congregation has plenty of changes in store for us in the days ahead: A new pastor, other staffing changes, and the Reimagine Church initiative to name just a few. And, make no mistake, there will be growing pains. Like the womb stretching to contain the new life it holds, we will be stretched as a church in the days ahead. During this time will we focus on the discomfort that this period brings, or will we fix our vision beyond it? Later in the Gospel of John we read about the birth metaphor again: “When a woman is in labor she has pain, because her time has come. Yet when she has given birth to her child, she doesn’t remember the agony anymore because of the joy of having brought a human being into the world.” [16:21] Our labor pains as a church can yield wonderful results as well, but only if we earnestly work for them and concentrate on a positive outcome.

You’ve probably heard the expression: “Change is inevitable, growth is optional.” My prayer for Simsbury United Methodist Church this year will be that God brings something marvelous with our changes, and that we will move forward with unity of purpose as we trust in God’s bright future for us all.

Blessings!

Pastor Peter

Baptisms!

Reese Charlotte Redman was baptized on Sunday, April 8! Her parents are Nicole and Scott Redman, his big brother is Benjamin, and grandparents are Donna and Mike Motyl.

Eugene Aloysius Sheehan was also baptized on Sunday, April 8! His parents are Hale Yalincak and Eugene Sheehan and his grandparent is Omer Yalincak.



Altar Flowers

If you would like to donate altar flowers in honor, in celebration, or in memory of someone, the following Sundays in May are available: **May 6 (NEXT Sunday!), May 13 (Mother’s Day). May 27 (Confirmation Sunday)**

The flowers cost \$40 and you may take the arrangement following the 10:30 service. Please contact Jean Staley at 860.658.2885 if you are interested.

Prayers and Condolences

Our condolences are extended to the family and friends of **Debbie and Bob Beckius**, following the death of Debbie's niece, **Tanya**, on April 9, following a long battle with addiction. She was only 29 and leaves behind her parents Michael and Laurie.

Our condolences are extended to the family and friends of **Rudy and Joanne Maurer**, following the death of Rudy's father, **Rudolph E. Maurer, Sr.**, on April 14, in Greenville, NC where he resided. His ashes will be interred at Arlington National Cemetery at a time convenient for the family.

Our condolences are extended to the family and friends of **Shirley Crane**, following the death of her husband, **Lawrence Paul Crane**, on April 17. A Memorial Service will be held at SUMC on May 29 (Paul's birthdate) beginning at 11:00 a.m. A reception in Wesley Hall will follow the service.

Circles

The Susanna Circle will meet on May 8, at 6:30 p.m. in the Ellsworth visitor's Center of the Simsbury Historical Society for a private tour. We are a friendly group and would welcome anyone who would like to join us. For information contact Rolene Johnson at halandrolene@gmail.com or 860.658.0634.

The **Rachel Circle** will meet on May 9 at 9:30 a.m. in the Annex.

The **Rebekah Circle** is scheduled to meet on May 17 at noon in the Annex living room. All are welcome! Questions? Call Jane Whelchel.

Prayers and Squares Quilters meet on May 1, 11, and 18, at 1:00 p.m. in the Annex Upper Room.

Prayer Shawls

Happy Spring to all our crafts people! Thank you for the shawls you've turned in this month. The pastors are so happy to have these gifts for the people of our congregation.

A Prayer Shawl is knitted or crocheted covering for the legs or shoulders. Its generous size is intended to allow a recipient to feel surrounded by comfort and warmth. The shawl is usually worked up in a pattern of three stitches meant to signify the Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Ghost. The finished shawls are given to the church for the pastors to bless and deliver to people who are undergoing personal struggles. The Prayer Shawl reminds us of the gift of grace that God has wrapped around each of us during good times and bad.

If you are interested in creating a shawl, we can provide yarn to get you going. For more information, contact Carol Bressor 860.653.3555 or Carrie Houghton 860.651.1645.

~ *Carrie Houghton*

June Newsletter Deadline

Please email items for the June 2018 issue of the newsletter to bryan@snet.net by May 15, 2018.

CT District Conference Event

On Sunday, May 6, from 2:00–4:30 p.m. at the West Hartford UMC, there will be a discussion on the topic the “Way Forward,” with Bishop Bickerton as the keynote speaker. If you would like to know the decision of the Council of Bishops on the church’s new position on “Human Sexuality and The Way Forward,” please plan to attend. To attend, please RSVP to Deb Clifford at 860.944.5479 or deb@inspiredpeople.com.

Next Church Council Meeting

After some flexibility, the next church council meeting will be held on **Tuesday, May 8 at 6:30 pm** in the Barn. There are many reasons to attend this meeting: it will be Woody’s last Church Council meeting, we will prepare to receive our new pastor, Rev. Gene Ott, we have other SPR news and decisions to discuss, Stewardship/Trustees/Finance will give us a snapshot of the well-being of our pledges, property, endowment, and finances, the Reimagine Church team will share some of the growth they’ve experienced and plans to involve Pastor Gene in our next steps, plans for the Strawberry Festival will be shared, plans for the Confirmation Retreat will be shared, and more. Please join in the fellowship, leadership and discussion. Contact Deb Clifford with any questions at 860.944.5479 or deb@inspiredpeople.com.

Carillon Concert

On Monday, May 28, from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m., Dan Kehoe will be playing patriotic music selections on the Foreman Carillon in honor of American Servicemen and Servicewomen who gave their lives for their country. It is both a solemn and a happy occasion as we reflect on the special memories of loved ones who made the ultimate sacrifice for this great nation of ours.

Dan is a nationally known carillonneur with a career spanning over 40 years, including 25 years as the carillonneur at Trinity College. More recently, until moving to North Carolina, he was our SUMC carillonneur. From the first season of our Foreman Carillon Summer Concerts in 1987, he has made significant contributions to our musical life at SUMC through his numerous concerts and his teaching of the carillon.

Bring chairs and a picnic basket to the SUMC lawn and enjoy the sound of our world-class, 55-bell Forman Carillon. The Simsbury Memorial Day Parade begins shortly after the concert.

~ Carl Coppersmith



ERT Training Note from Mel Kawakami

I just returned from the Northeast Jurisdiction Volunteers in Mission Academy in Maryland where I served as Chaplain and Keynote speaker on Ministry after Acts of Violence. Since I was there, I was certified as a Trainer for Early Response Teams (ERTs), including re-certifications and the new, 3-hour ERT 200 courses, which takes a deeper dive into some of the Team Member responsibilities. So SUMC has a Trainer on board!

Junior and Senior High School Youth Activities at SUMC

Please contact Pastor Peter at the church office or at 860.970.5695 with any questions about the junior/senior high programming.

Ongoing and Upcoming

HARC at the Park Join us for this family-friendly walk on Saturday, **May 12**, beginning at 10:00 a.m. at Dunkin Donuts Stadium. We will be participating in this walkathon-type event to bring awareness and funding to help individuals with intellectual disabilities and their families enjoy lives of quality, inclusion, and dignity. Our youth will walk, and also help run some fun game booths that will be set up around the stadium. Let me know if you can come!

ASP Mission Trip (Appalachian Service Project) It's exciting to be thinking about another trip to Appalachia this summer for an incredible week of helping others by working to improve their homes with much-needed repairs. The mission trip is for youth in high school (and those graduating from 8th grade this June). Adult chaperones are needed as well. Dates for this year's project are June 30 - July 7. The sign-up deadline has passed, so please let me know ASAP if you are interested!

Our new senior high study group continues to gather each Sunday morning from 10:30-11:30 in the Barn. Come join lively discussions about current topics in our culture and in your life!

Sunday evening fellowship for junior/senior high youth continues to meet with Pastor Peter, immediately following Confirmation Class. Youth in grades 6 – 12 are encouraged to attend (friends welcome!). The group meets from 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. in the Barn on the Sundays that Confirmation Class is held. If Confirmation Class is not held on a particular Sunday, youth group will not meet either. Come join us!

Recent Events

Rake & Roll On Saturday, April 21, a youth spring clean-up team helped get SUMC member Howard Stewart's yard looking nice after a hard winter. We were grateful that the sun was finally shining! See picture of the team hard at work at Mr. Stewart's property, at right.

~ Blessings! Pastor Peter



Church School Updates

Please join us for Vacation Bible School at First Church Simsbury! VBS dates are June 20 and June 21, from 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m., and June 22 from 9:00 a.m. - noon.

Children ages 4 (by May 31) through 5th grade (in spring 2018) will come together to celebrate *Rolling River Rampage 2018*: Experience the Ride of a Lifetime with God! Registration closes May 28. Register online at fccsimsbury.org.

Adults from SUMC are needed to make this year's VBS fabulous! Please see me or email me at jody@simsbury.org with questions.

~ Jody Swan

Adult Spiritual Growth Opportunities

SUNDAY, 10:30 a.m. in the Annex: The Book of Luke (study guide TBD)

Begun on Sunday, April 8, this group has embarked on a Bible study focusing on Luke. Amy Kulig will serve as facilitator. All are welcome! Please contact Amy if you have questions.

MONDAY, 4:30 - 6:00 p.m. in the Annex: *The Story* by Zondervan Publishers

Facilitated by Pastor Peter. This study has begun but newcomers are always welcome. The study runs through June 17. Weekly meetings consist of Video segments followed by group discussion.

“The greatest story ever told” is more than just a cliché. God goes to great lengths to rescue lost and hurting people. That is what *The Story* is about: the story of the Bible, God’s great love affair with humanity. Condensed into 31 accessible chapters, *The Story* reveals the God of grace – the God who speaks, the God who acts, the God who listens, and the God whose loves. *The Story* is an abridged, chronological Bible that reads like a novel, seamlessly woven together with transition text into a single grand narrative. If you have always wanted to read through the Bible, but found the prospect a bit daunting, this study is for you!

TUESDAY, 10:30 a.m. - noon in the Annex

This group is taking a break in April to encourage participation in the Conversation Cafes. We will resume in May with a book to be decided.

THURSDAY, 9:00 a.m. in the Annex: Women’s Bible Study

Facilitated by Donna Motyl and Rolene Johnson, this group is currently studying the Gospel of Matthew. The women are reading it together and looking at what the verses meant to believers then and how they are still meaningful today, using study notes and commentaries on Matthew.

Welcome New Members

Lynn and Stan Snyder were both born and raised in New Jersey, and it’s where they both attended college, got married, and started a family. Both Lynn and Stan were elementary school teachers for many years. Later in his career Stan began working as a special education teacher in high school. They were blessed with four children (Jeffrey, Lindsay, Meg and Sara) and six grandchildren. Their oldest daughter Lindsay attended UCONN and after college settled down in West Hartford. It seemed pretty clear that she was happy here and didn’t plan to return to NJ. When Lindsay gave birth to her twin sons, Lynn came up to help out very frequently and started to give serious consideration to moving to this area. At that time, their son Jeffrey was already living in Norwalk, and younger daughter Meg expressed interest in relocating to CT in the future. In the fall of 2014, Lynn and Stan moved to Simsbury and they have found a sense of community and a great quality of life. Stan loves to play golf and has become a member at Simsbury Farms.



When Lynn and Stan relocated to Simsbury, Mary and Dave Gridley (who are their next door neighbors) reached out to them, invited them to events and welcomed them into the community. The Gridleys invited them to our church and to participate in the Dinner for Eight program. Their welcoming and loving outreach has meant so much to the Snyders as they settled into their new home in Simsbury.

Lynn and Stan attended worship service at several local churches but ultimately kept coming back to SUMC. They speak very highly of Pastor Woody and he has been a significant factor in their decision to join SUMC. Lynn and Stan have become very involved in church activities and Bible studies.

Lynn and Stan, we are so glad to welcome you as official members of our wonderful church family!

Confirmation Sunday

Twenty-one youth (one from West Granby UMC) have completed the journey through confirmation class this year. They have read scripture and discussed their application to social issues. They have presented topics from the Methodist Social Principles and attended worship at a synagogue and at a Korean Church. They have volunteered for service projects and assisted with communion. May 11-13 they will attend the Confirmation Retreat and make their decision about confirmation in the faith. On May 27th at the 9:00 and 10:30 services class members will be confirmed and become full members of SUMC. Please plan to be there that day to support them.

**This newsletter is published 10 times a year by
The Simsbury United Methodist Church
799 Hopmeadow Street
Simsbury, CT 06070
860.651.3356
www.simsburyumc.org**

**Rev. Woodrow Eddins, Senior Pastor
Rev. Peter Preiser, Assistant Pastor
and Youth Ministries Director**

**Office Manager and Church Secretary
Webmaster and E-Blast Coordinator:
Michelle Ebert**

**Adult Music Director: Yves Venne
Children/Youth/CAYA Music Director: Dorothy Cowles
Director, Little Lambs & Ivy: Joanne Maurer
Church School Coordinator: Jody Swan
Newsletter Editor: Heather Ryan**



Simsbury United Methodist Church
799 Hopmeadow Street
Simsbury, CT 06070

[Recipient]

Address Line 1
Address Line 2
Address Line 3
Address Line 4