

# Simsbury United Methodist Church

## The Messenger

October 2017

Open hearts, open minds, open doors

## Shhhhh! All-Church Book Club Meetings In Progress!

No need to “Shhhhh!” – make your voice heard!

You probably know that our church congregation is reading the book *The Great Spiritual Migration* by Brian McLaren. The book challenges Christians to grow in their faith by taking a new look at what it means to be a follower of Jesus Christ in the world today. The book is theological, **not** political; inviting Christians to look again at what we believe and why. While no one is asked to agree with everything McLaren writes, this is an opportunity for us to find a basis for discussion of our faith and in doing so to strengthen our faith and our church.

Weekly gatherings led by various SUMC leaders are underway. Haven't joined one yet? Contact the facilitator (below) of the meeting time that works best for you, and join any time! Can't make the times listed below, or just can't stand meetings? You can share your thoughts on the book group's private Facebook page (contact Deb Clifford to be added to that FB group).

Everyone is encouraged to share their thoughts and opinions about the book either in person or online.

October's worship services will continue to pick up on the book club's theme for the week – not only in the sermon but in the music and readings as well. The church school program and youth groups will be oriented toward the theme as well, giving the whole family a topic for discussion.

Day/time	Facilitator
Saturday 9:30 a.m.	Woody Eddins
Sunday 10:15 a.m.	Amy Kulig/Deb Clifford
Monday 4:30 p.m.	Peter Preiser
Tuesday 10:30 a.m.	Dennis Winkelblack
Thursday 9:00 a.m.	Donna Motyl/Leslie Kirkwood
Thursday 7:00 p.m.	Mel Kawakami/Deb Clifford

## Donate to UMCOR Hurricane Relief Efforts

UMCOR, a nonprofit ministry of the United Methodist Church, is a leading worldwide relief aid organization. UMCOR spends 100 percent of designated donations on the projects that donors specify.

To donate to UMCOR, visit <http://www.umcor.org> or make your check to SUMC and “for disaster relief.”

## Important Dates

**October 1:** World Communion Sunday; Greeting Card Sale Wesley Hall

**October 3:** South Park Inn

**October 9:** Columbus Day; SPR meeting in Verdin Parlor, 7:00 p.m.

**October 13 & 20:** Prayers & Squares, 1:00 p.m., Annex Upper Room

**October 14:** Days for Girls workshop, 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

**October 15:** Laity Sunday

**October 16:** Office closed for staff meeting, 10:00 a.m. to noon

**October 21:** Safe Sanctuaries training, 9:00 a.m.; Sour Note Café, 7:00 p.m.

**October 27:** LLI Halloween party, 6:00 p.m.

**October 28:** KISS Day

**October 31:** Happy Halloween!

**November 4:** Disaster readiness training class

**November 5:** All Saints Day (celebrated); Day Light Savings ends; Greeting card sale

## Pastor's Page

The writer of a recent movie review commented, *"The movie was quite sterile and dry, lacking any character development."* Though I did not bother to see the movie the criticism rang true. Interesting movies have character development—the characters at first seem limited, then grow into the hero that is needed to meet the challenge that is before them. Think Luke Skywalker in Star Wars, or Scarlett O'Hara in Gone With the Wind, or King George in the King's Speech: each grew in response to the challenges they faced. We like to see that movement, it feels right when the hero finds that inner strength to overcome.

How are we—as Christians and as the Church—developing our character in response to the needs and challenges that we face? Do we sense in ourselves, a renewal of strength and courage needed to address the issues that need to be addressed? There are many matters that the church should be engaged with today, from the political divide in this nation to the threat of nuclear war, to climate change, to the plight of the poor—especially those most impacted by natural disasters.

In the movies the hero does not know that they have the ability when they set out to confront the evil, but they do so anyway. And it is in the conflict that they discover their strengths and abilities needed to triumph. We too, both as individual Christians and as a community together need to rise to the challenges before us and boldly speak truth to power, to proclaim the Good News of God's love for creation, and to affirm our love for all.

May we all become the people we were cast to be in God's Kingdom every day.

~ Pastor Woody

### **One More Hike!**

This summer Pastor Woody led several hikes on various trails around Simsbury. Sometimes there was one person who joined, other times there were a dozen. There will be one last hike this fall, on Columbus Day **Sunday, October 8** in the afternoon. We will gather at the home of Mark Mitchell (14 Highwood Road in Bloomfield) and walk the back way up Talcott Mountain to the Heubline Tower. We will return to Mark's for refreshments. Start time is 2:00 PM. Hope you can make it. Kids and dogs are welcome.

## Confirmation Classes Underway

Classes have begun for 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders who plan to become confirmed at the Simsbury United Methodist Church on Pentecost Sunday 2018. Twenty-one youth from SUMC have made the commitment to attend these classes in preparation for confirmation.



Each week throughout the school year, these youth will meet with Pastor Woody, who is leading the class. Nancy Hadd is assisting Pastor Woody with the class. The class meets most Sundays in the Barn from 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

In addition to studying the teachings of Methodism, students in the class will visit other houses of worship and attend a mandatory weekend retreat later in the year.

Please keep these youth in your prayers as they set out on this faith journey.

## Youth Group Meetings Held Sunday Evenings



Pastor Peter is leading weekly youth group gatherings each Sunday evening, immediately following Confirmation Class. Youth in grades 6 – 12 are encouraged to attend (friends welcome!). The group will meet 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!

Please contact Pastor Peter if you have any questions about youth group meetings or upcoming youth events at SUMC.

## Days for Girls

The Good News is that our closets are EMPTY of Days for Girls kits and their components used by girls who otherwise miss as much as a week of school every month because they have no way to manage their periods. In September, Jan Baker, Don Baker, and Barbara Vasquenza packed and shipped two barrels to the new sewing enterprise in Winneba, Ghana, a village outside of Accra. The pieces of kits and kits were sewn by hundreds of DFG volunteers who work with the Simsbury Team of Days for Girls. Also in the barrels were more supplies for the enterprise to continue to sew them themselves. They aim to get 500 kits to waiting girls in schools in their area. When girls and women want kits or pieces of kits they will be able to get them from the



Winneba DFG Enterprise at a cost they can afford. The capable people in charge, through the Winneba Methodist Church, will make sure that those who need them will get them. NYAC's job is to partner with them in ways that help them do that. Presently, that includes paying the salaries of those who will work in the enterprise. Supporting this enterprise is done by SUMC and many other churches are working on DFG, following Simsbury's example or contributing money directly to DFG.



The Sewing Center is staffed by Maame Nyaneba, the director, and Maame Esi, sewing supervisor. There will be five students and five seamstresses who are skilled in sewing. The students will be tutored by the director and the sewing supervisor, who will oversee the work of the seamstresses and the quality of their production.

The Winneba Enterprise will produce quality DFG kits, teach sewing to teenage girls and empower them to gain career skills. So far since beginning, in 2015 SUMC/NYAC distributed 750 kits to girls in Uganda, Ghana, Haiti, and Zimbabwe.

**JOIN US TO REACH MORE GIRLS! Sewing workshops held monthly. The next workshop is October 14 in Wesley Hall, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.** For more info, contact Jan Baker: 860.242.8620 or bakerijan@aol.com.

~ Jan Baker

## Prayers and Condolences

Our condolences are extended to the family and friends of **Bob and Valerie Ives** (parents) and **Marilyn Ives** (grandparent), following the death of their son/grandson, **Gordon Ives**, on September 19 in California where he resided. A funeral service will be held at SUMC on Tuesday, October 3, at 11:00 a.m., followed by a reception in Wesley Hall.

Our condolences are extended to the family and friends of former longtime SUMC member **Kay Essick**, following her death on August 3 from pancreatic cancer. A memorial service was held on August 15 at the Pinehurst Methodist Church in North Carolina, where she resided.



# A Disaster Preparedness Plan

*There will be signs and distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world.... So be on guard; be alert at all times.*

LUKE, CHAPTER 21

Apocalypse... The End of the World. Songs have been written about it. Movies have been filmed about it. More than anything, endless prophecies and predictions have been made concerning it. Remember the Y2K excitement? The start of the new millennium was supposed to begin with a worldwide computer crash that would result in chaos and, some thought, the Second Coming of Christ. And yet we're still here... The doomsayers haven't stopped, either. Future predictions of the end include extinction level events in the form of meteor strikes, supernovas, nuclear war, geomagnetic reversals, ice ages, and atmospheric collapse.

Probably more predictions of the end of the world have been made by Christians than by any other group. Why? Because the Bible has a fair amount to say about it. But why does the Bible speak of it at all? One of the "signs" spoken of in the Bible is an increase of natural disasters. Recent events like hurricanes hitting our own shores, earthquakes in our neighbor's lands, and floods and landslides in other parts of the world have been construed by some as signs of the end of all things. Regardless how you see the end, whether as a great dramatic cosmic ball of prophetic fire, or as a personal apocalypse that unveils the end of your own life, an end will come. The end of all things comes eventually. I think the prophecies are given as an exhortation to readiness. In other words, are we ready for whatever comes our way, whenever it comes?

Luke's exhortation is to be on watch, to be vigilant, to stay alert, and to stay awake.

When I was on active duty in the Navy, we would stand watch – long, boring, uneventful hours trying to stay awake, punctuated by sudden periods of activity and excitement. The purpose of the watch was to keep safe everyone around you, to guard against danger. The endless drills and exercises were given to make you ready to instantly respond to emerging challenges and needs.

**Watch for opportunities.** Hurricanes relief work is underway, and VIM (Volunteers In Missions) teams already deployed to the troubled areas. What can we do as we see needs and opportunities emerge around us?

**Be ready to respond.** Sometimes things come up that aren't carefully planned our calendars, in our Dayrunners and Smartphones. Are we willing to set aside our plans, which seem so important to us, when we become aware of an urgent need that we hadn't planned on? How will we respond to these situations? How we can spend the time given us doing the greatest good? What work, what service does God have for me here on earth that He has uniquely equipped me to accomplish?

Early Christians thought that Jesus would return in their lifetime; since then Christians of practically every age have thought the same thing. They set a good example: The signs of the times were not given so we should **know**, but that we should **do**. That we should live with a sense of urgent, pressing purpose that can overcome imminent needs, and overshadow any hint of impending doom. We can plan like the Second Coming will never happen; but let's live like we'll see Jesus by the end of the day.

You don't need a cataclysm, a crisis, or a disaster in order to watch and be ready for whatever happens next. We can live lives of preparedness by spending our time and energies on things that matter most, and by striving to remain alert to the opportunities around us and responding to needs as we see them.

*Blessings!*

*Pastor Peter*

## The Year of Firsts

Stephen Ministry has a series of four *Journeying through Grief* books to help those who have lost a loved one. A Stephen Minister was sending these books to a colleague whose father had died earlier that year. One day, he heard from his colleague, who thanked him and shared that every August, he and his father would go on a fishing trip together. That week, he had suddenly realized that this year would be the first time he and his dad wouldn't be making that fishing trip together, and it hit him hard. He had just received the second *Journeying through Grief* book—which goes out three months after the loss—and he opened it to find a chapter called “The Year of the Firsts.” The chapter describes how, during the year after a loss, people are often blindsided by many “firsts”—the first time experiencing an event, occasion, or special day without their loved one—and that those firsts often lead to painful feelings.

The colleague told the Stephen Minister that he found the chapter very helpful and that these words were especially affirming:

“It’s normal to feel the pain of your loss whenever a first occurs. Although each first brings back the intense hurt we initially felt, we typically grow a little stronger afterward. The seconds then hurt a little less, and the thirds hurt even less still. These occasions may always hurt some, but in time they’ll also begin to jog warm memories of your loved one that will bring comfort to soothe the pain.”

As you relate to people you know who have lost a loved one, be aware that they too will most likely experience their own “year of the firsts.” You can be a help to them by listening and being a caring presence during those times.

**To find out more about how a Stephen Minister can help you, call Pastor Woody or Pastor Peter, 860.651.3356, or Barbara Vasquez, Referrals Coordinator, 860.677.4750.**

~ Charlotte Ray, Stephen Leader

## Welcome New Member

**Sally Sevetz** joined SUMC because she felt a “warm feeling” of caring among our congregation. That’s the same feeling she must exude when she performs her daily duties at the Hopmeadow Animal Hospital in Simsbury. Sally, a native of Connecticut and mother of two grown children, came into her present career by the back door. Initially, she worked as a construction bookkeeper at the Griffin Office Buildings complex in Windsor. Nestled among the buildings are ponds, which are the homes of assorted woodland animals, including Griffin’s swans. When the swans became endangered, Sally took them under *her* wing. From that point on, she developed a desire to nurse animals back to health. Renowned at her office complex for this gift, her moniker at work became the “Swan Lady.” The sometimes tedious bookkeeping job behind her, Sally’s “calling” led to her full-time job at the animal hospital. As Sally says, “I never dreamed I could make a living this way.” In her spare time, Sally also enjoys kayaking and hiking; in addition, she’s a knitter and sewer.



We are thrilled that this “Swan Lady,” Sally Sevetz, has made the commitment to join our church family. Welcome, Sally!

# Outreach Updates

## ***Connecting Neighbors: Organizing the Local Church for Disaster Ministries***



“Connecting Neighbors / Ready Church” is an UMCOR and NYAC-based curriculum designed to assist churches in preparing their parishioners more effectively for local disasters, focusing on preparedness – particularly, developing a district-based structure and plan that would allow us to respond more quickly and effectively in our local communities. We have had trainings in ERT Basic and Recertification, Disaster Emotional and Spiritual Care, and Connecting Neighbors. The long-term goal is to have every church establish its own disaster response plan – for both its own preparedness and for community response.

Simsbury UMC will host a session of Connecting Neighbors on Saturday, November 4 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Following this training, there will be a short ERT recertification class starting at 1:00 p.m. If you are interested in attending either of these two classes, please contact Debbie Dunn.

### ***Early Response Teams***

UMCOR is a ministry of The United Methodist Church to assist the most vulnerable persons affected by crisis or chronic need without regard to their race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation. We believe all people have God-given worth and dignity.

UMCOR spends 100 percent of designated donations on the projects our donors specify. When UMCOR donors give their time, money, and supplies, they join UMCOR as the hands and feet of Christ

The mission of an Early Response Team (ERT) is to provide a caring Christian presence in the aftermath of a disaster. These teams are neither a first response group of emergency workers nor a recovery rebuild or repair team; rather they fill a specific need in the early days after a disaster to establish the presence of the church.

Early Response Teams are intended to be small (7 to 12 people), self-sufficient and self-sustaining, with specialized skills for early response. While there are specific tasks assigned to early response teams, no task is more important than the people they serve.

### **What do early response teams do?**

1. Provide a Christian presence. This does not sound like a task... and is NOT; however, it can be the MOST important thing a team can do.
2. Take steps to prevent further damage to a family’s personal property (stabilize):
  - Cleaning out flooded or storm-affected homes
  - Debris removal
  - Tarping of roofs

A key phrase to describe the efforts of an ERT teams is to make a situation “safe, sanitary, and secure.”

3. Teams may be asked to manage donated materials, gather information, or perform other tasks as deemed necessary by the community.
4. Observe survivor’s needs and report these to the local operations.
5. Be a part of the caring ministry of “listeners” who will help the survivor being to heal.

***The article continues on the next page.***



## Outreach Update, *continued from previous page*

Early Response Teams must be invited into an area – they should not self-deploy. As of the end of September, two conferences in Texas have requested teams. Areas affected by Hurricanes Irma and Maria are not yet out of the rescue phase and are not ready to accept volunteers.

The current schedule for training sessions in our area is as follows. Classes held at Simsbury UMC are noted in bold. More classes may become available soon.

October 14: Early Response Team basic training class at the NY Conference Center, 9:00 a.m.

October 21: Connecting Neighbors / Ready Church training, 9:00 a.m., and ERT recertification training, 1:00 p.m., both at the Seymour UMC

October 28: Early Response Team basic training class, 9:00 a.m., at Grace UMC in Southington

**November 4: Connecting Neighbors / Ready Church Training, 9:00 a.m., and ERT recertification training, 1:00 p.m., both at SUMC**

November 11: Connecting Neighbors / Ready Church training, 9:00 a.m., and ERT recertification Training, 1:00 p.m., both at Hillsdale UMC

~ Debbie Dunn, Outreach Chair [dunnds@comcast.net](mailto:dunnds@comcast.net), 860.539.7970

## Circles

The **Susanna Circle** will meet on Tuesday, October 10, at 7:00 p.m. at the Simsbury Public Library. We will gather in front of the fireplace for a “behind the scenes” tour of the library. For information, contact Rolene Johnson at [halandrolene@gmail.com](mailto:halandrolene@gmail.com) or 860.658.0634.

The **Rachel Circle** is scheduled to meet on October 11 at 9:30 a.m. in the Annex.

The **Rebekah Circle** is scheduled to meet on October 19 at noon in the Annex living room.

**Prayers and Squares Quilters** meet October 13 and October 20 at 1:00 p.m. in the Annex Upper Room.



## Prayer Shawl Ministry

Thanks to all who stopped by our table at Rally Day. If you would like to get some yarn to make a prayer shawl, contact Carol Bressor at 860.653.3555 ([cbressor@gmail.com](mailto:cbressor@gmail.com)) or Carrie Houghton at 860.651.1645 ([choughton123@yahoo.com](mailto:choughton123@yahoo.com)). Can't knit or crochet but would like to be a part of our ministry? A donation of \$15 will help us to purchase the yarn to make a shawl.

## November Newsletter Deadline

Please email items for the November issue of the newsletter to [hryan@snet.net](mailto:hryan@snet.net) by October 15, 2017.

## KISSS Dates

Mark your calendar for the KISSS (Knit, Inspire, Sew, Stamp, and Scrap) dates: October 28, January 20, and March 17.

All dates are Saturdays. The event goes from 9:00 a.m. till 9:00 p.m. in Wesley Hall. All crafters are welcome – as is anyone who wants to join in the fun and fellowship!

Sign-up now for Saturday, October 28! Please bring a potluck dish to share and a suggested donation of \$25 to benefit a church mission project. Past years beneficiaries included the Prayer Shawl Ministry, the Prayers & Squares Quilt Ministry, Covenant to Care for Children, and the youth summer Appalachian Service Project (ASP) mission trip. There'll be lots of space for crafting, breakfast munchies, lunch, dinner, and snacks through the day along with great fellowship!

Contact Linda Stroud at [linda.stroud3@gmail.com](mailto:linda.stroud3@gmail.com) or 860.212.9616 (call or text) with any questions or to sign-up.

## Calling All Crafters

We need your help! In December, we will be hosting a Christmas workshop for children to buy Christmas presents for their loved ones.

We would appreciate any homemade crafts like, jewelry, Christmas ornaments, stationery, aprons, totes, etc. Plenty of time to craft during the waning days of summer weather (and when the kids go back to school)!

Please contact Heather Kaliden, [rockwood7777@yahoo.com](mailto:rockwood7777@yahoo.com), for more information.

## Sour Note Café on October 21

Sour Note Cafe is back after a long hiatus! Join your church family in Wesley Hall on Saturday, October 21, at 7:00 p.m. for an evening filled with entertainment, refreshments, and fellowship! Talented church members will delight the audience with music, comedy, dance – you name it, we've probably got it.

Any would-be performers (jugglers? poets? gymnasts?) can contact Steve O'Brien at to be added to the line-up. There will be a free-will offering, and all donations will go to Disaster Relief.

## Interfaith Invitation

The Farmington Valley Islamic Society would like to invite you to these two upcoming interfaith events during the month of October:

(1) Wednesday October 11<sup>th</sup> 7:00 - 9:00 pm at Our Lady of Calvary Retreat Center (31 Colton St, Farmington, CT 06032). **Discover the Intersectionality of Two Abrahamic Faiths: Islam and Christianity.** For information and registration, visit: <https://www.ourladyofcalvary.net/blog/tag/islam/>

(2) Friday Night October 27<sup>th</sup> 7:00-9:00 pm and Saturday October 28<sup>th</sup>, 10/27 8:00 am - 3:30 pm. Interfaith Spirit One Conference: **How Christians and Muslims Flourish Together in These Times.** For information and registration, visit <http://www.fvamc.org/spiritone/>



# Church School News

The children of SUMC will transition soon from examining the book of Genesis to the book of Joshua. We will learn about the life of Joshua, whom God chose to follow Moses as the leader of the Israelite people. We will learn about the story of Joshua and how he led the people across the Jordan River into the Promise Land. We will also explore the history and the culture of the time and wonder how we might be called to serve and obey God.

Our new Godly Play room is off to great start! The children are exploring the stories of the Bible in a way that seeks to nurture the deepest parts of their hearts and help them become aware of the mystery of God and his presence in their life.

A reminder that Michelle Ebert will offer another Safe Sanctuary training on October 21 at 9:00 a.m. All teachers and shepherds scheduled to volunteer in the church school will need to attend a training session. Please contact Michelle to reserve your spot. Thank you all for your continued support and care for our children.

The church school is always looking for new people to help in the ministry. Please contact me at [jody@simsburyumc.org](mailto:jody@simsburyumc.org) or 860.408.1478. We'd love to have you join us!

~ Blessings, Jody

## Safe Sanctuaries

Our Safe Sanctuaries covenant is our pledge to protect children and vulnerable adults in our care as well as those who work with them by understanding and following the covenant guideline with respect to both paid staff and volunteers. *All SUMC staff and lay persons involved with children and youth ministries are required to participate in a three-hour educational session to be certified to volunteer and work with SUMC youth.* The next sessions is scheduled for **October 21 (not 10/7) from 9:00 am – Noon** in Wesley Hall. We also invite all who have an interest in deepening their understanding of Safe Sanctuary implementation.

**Please Note:** we are looking to add a new class in early November for anyone who may be interested in volunteering for Hurricane Harvey or Irma ERT Teams in the near future. Most areas requesting ERT teams would like to ensure that members are trained in Safe Sanctuaries guidelines for working with vulnerable people.

**Anyone interested in attending are asked to SIGNUP with Michelle in the office so that enough materials are available.**

## Methodist Missions

With the recent news being dominated by Hurricanes Harvey and Irma, perhaps we should explore some of the Methodist history in regard to missions and how that is now being transformed in support of such natural disasters. From a 1833 Methodist *Book of Discipline*, it has a specific section in regard to Support of Missions. “It shall be the duty of each annual conference, where missions have been or are to be established, to appoint a standing committee whose duty it shall be to make an estimate for the support of each mission and mission school.” At this time, the effort was directed primarily to setting up missions and providing missionaries along with their needed support. That basic principle is continued today but expanded much more. From the current 2016 Methodist *Book of Discipline*, there is a specific role identified under the General Board of Global Ministries that continues to support the original concept of missions and missionaries, but also more specific directed outreach. Some excerpts from their listing of responsibilities include: “To advocate the unity of Christ’s church through witness and service with other Christian churches and through ecumenical councils....To assist local congregations and annual conferences in mission both in their own communities and across the globe by raising awareness of the claims of global mission and by providing channels for participation...To affirm Volunteers in Mission as an authentic form of personal missionary involvement and devise appropriate structure to interpret and implement opportunities for mission volunteers in the global community.”

In review of SUMC history, there are many instances of support for missions, missionary and overall outreach efforts in support of needs locally, within the U.S. and internationally. Some early examples include the following: In 1919, we have a record of the church surpassing its goal in support of the conference missionary; in 1925 the church gave \$1,000 to support a mission in Tokyo, Japan; in 1932 the church provided support for the Methodist Episcopal Hospital and the St. Christopher's School in Dobbs Ferry, NY; and both during and after WWII, there were many efforts sending items to the troops and those impacted by the war. In recent years, the many mission trips and Volunteer in Mission efforts have been a constant along with the many local outreach programs. Each one of these efforts now become part of SUMC's continuing history of its mission support.

In addition to the above efforts, SUMC has and continues to provide even more mission support through the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR). As stated in the 2016 Book of Discipline: “UMCOR exists to assist United Methodists and churches to become involved globally in direct ministry to persons in need through programs of relief, rehabilitation, and service, including issues of displaced persons, hunger and poverty, disaster response, and disaster risk reduction; and to assist organizations, institutions, and programs related to annual conferences and other units of The United Methodist Church in their involvement in direct service to such persons in need.” Since the UMCOR staff is paid by the General Conference, all donations to UMCOR go directly to those in need. Within the New York Annual Conference, it still has a direct on-going coordination effort in regard to Hurricane Sandy. In particular, this recovery project employs staff for coordinating construction, training and volunteers, and relating to agencies and funding sources with reporting, family support and pastoral care.

UMCOR was mentioned in September article in *USA Today* about the impact of faith-based disaster support entitled “Faith Groups Provide the Bulk of Disaster Recovery, in Coordination With FEMA”:

*Likewise, the United Methodist Committee on Relief is known for its expertise in “case management.” After the initial cleanup — where the Methodists have work crews helping pull mud out of houses — the church sends trained volunteers into the wreckage to help families navigate the maze of FEMA assistance, state aid programs and private insurance to help them rebuild their lives. UMCOR also trains other non-profits to send their own case managers into the disaster zone. One of the most critical resources the faith groups can provide is manpower. The United Methodists have 20,000 trained volunteers around the country who can be called up for “early response teams,” basically small crews that can help with debris removal and home cleanup, said Cathy Earl, UMCOR's director of disaster programs. “They are trained they are badged they are background checked and they are part of the team that can be called up on short notice to respond,” she said.*

**The article continues on the next page.**

## Methodist Missions, *continued from previous page*

With Hurricane Irma leaving damage across the Caribbean (see photo) and southern US, UMCOR will be there just like it will for Hurricane Harvey support in and around Houston. In a recent update on September 12th, UMCOR provided the following: "Hurricane Irma has become one of the most powerful hurricanes ever recorded in the Atlantic, a category 5 hurricane with sustained winds of 295 km/hour. To date, it has passed over Barbuda, Saint Barthelemy, Anguilla, Saint Marten, British and US Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Turks and Caicos, Cuba, the Bahamas and currently passing through Florida with Georgia in line. Extensive damage has been reported in Barbuda and Anguilla where 70-90% of the buildings were destroyed. 27 people reported dead across affected territories, 34,000 people displaced in the Dominican Republic and Haiti. Over 1 million people were evacuated along the coastline in central and eastern Cuba. 17,000 people are in need of immediate shelter across the affected eastern Caribbean islands. Assessments will take place over the coming days to determine the number of people in need of food assistance. More than 10,000 people are in temporary shelters in the North. The damage to the Dominican Republic was less than expected, with no fatalities reported. There is damage to water infrastructure that affects 1.2 million people, according to the national water authorities. Livelihoods in affected communities are anticipated to be an area of need when recovery efforts begin. Widespread flooding has been recorded in northern Cuba as well including Havana, there has also been significant damage to farms including swine and poultry. Concerns



have also been raised about possible waterborne disease outbreaks as flooding is likely to persist for 36 hours at least. Most of the coastal municipalities in affected countries are without electricity. Given the level of damage so far, Haiti and Cuba are likely to be our first areas of response outside of the US and US territories, this is because of the significant level of damage and our Methodist connections in these countries. We are awaiting response from MCCA about support to Barbuda and Anguilla."

However, UMCOR is global so while these hurricanes are making the biggest news currently, there are other ongoing efforts. UMCOR's work reaches people in more than 80 countries, including the United States. It provides humanitarian relief when war, conflict, or natural disaster disrupts life to such an extent that communities are unable to recover on their own. One effort is in South Asia, which has experienced unprecedented flooding from monsoon rains. At least 1,200 people have died because of the floods and millions more have been forced to leave their homes. Another effort is related to the widespread fires currently impacting nine states in the northwest US where UMCOR is preparing to support.

SUMC currently is planning to help with relief efforts for Hurricane Harvey through UMCOR by preparing flood buckets that the Conference will deliver to the UMCOR supply depot for distribution to flood victims. UMCOR maintains the supply depot for distribution of needed supplies where needed. Of course, another method for support of UMCOR's efforts is through donations. These can be made through the church or directly to UMCOR via their website <http://www.umcor.org/>. More information can be found out about UMCOR either through their website or their Facebook page [https://www.facebook.com/pg/UMCOR/posts/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/UMCOR/posts/?ref=page_internal).

SUMC has many other on-going efforts for support that are identified in Wesley Hall, in its announcements and through its website <http://www.simsburyumc.org/MissionandOutreach>. As a member of SUMC, you can be a part of our mission history by participating directly or through donations to the many causes that SUMC supports.

~ Jim Ray, SUMC Historian

## Day Light Saving Time Ends on 11/5

Fall has just begun and the days are getting shorter! Don't forget to plan ahead and reset your clocks for the first Sunday in November!



**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