

Simsbury United Methodist Church

The Messenger

November 2018

Open hearts, open minds, open doors

Fall Clean Up Is November 10

Calling ALL men, women, and youth! It's time to spruce up the church grounds before winter weather blows in! Please mark your calendars and come on out for the Annual Fall Clean Up on **Saturday, November 10!** Help trim plants, trees, and bushes, and rake leaves at both the church and the parsonage.

We kick off the day with coffee, donuts, and prayer in the kitchen at 7:30 a.m. and then hit the grounds. Bring your rakes, leaf blowers, hedge trimmers, tarps, and brooms. With a great turn out, we can be done by noon!

Simsbury Celebrates!

SUMC traditionally hosts a "warming hut" during the Simsbury Celebrates! activities – offering music, and warm fellowship to the many visitors to this annual Simsbury tradition. Simsbury Celebrates! will be held on the Saturday after Thanksgiving, **November 24**, from 4:30-6:30 p.m.

We will host the Messiah Sing with the Farmington Valley Chorale in the sanctuary beginning at 6:00 p.m. The Bell Tower will be open for tours beginning at 4:30 and a bell concert will be performed midway through the evening festivities. All kinds of fun will be happening here at SUMC, so be sure to stop in!

Cooks and coordinators needed

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED TO ENSURE THAT THIS TRADITION AT SUMC CONTINUES! If you can help in any way, or if you have helped before and can offer tips, please contact the church office as soon as possible.

Simsbury Celebrates! is always a wonderful time for everyone, but we really need a "point person" to coordinate the various teams (coordinating the setup/cleanup, activities for the evening, and offering tours/playing the carillon).

Simsbury's Annual Thanksgiving Interfaith Service

This year's Interfaith Thanksgiving Service will be held on **Sunday, November 18**, at 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary at First Church in Simsbury. Reception to follow in Palmer Hall; please bring a dessert to share. This annual service is jointly sponsored by the churches, synagogues, and houses of worship in Simsbury.

Important Dates

November 3: Kits for Kids, 9:00 a.m., Wesley Hall

November 4: All Saints Day; greeting card sale; end of daylight savings

November 6: Election Day; South Park Inn

November 10: All-church clean-up day, 7:30 a.m.

November 11: Deadline for Tom Turkey items; first Christmas pageant rehearsal

November 17: Days for Girls, 9:00 a.m., Wesley Hall

November 18: Thanksgiving interfaith service, 7:00 p.m. at First Church

November 19 & 26: Reimagine Church meeting, 7:00 p.m. in the Barn

November 22 and 23: Office closed for Thanksgiving

November 24: Simsbury Celebrates! begins at 4:30 p.m.

November 25: Christ the King Sunday; Giving Tree goes up in Wesley Hall

November 29: Deadline for Dec/Jan newsletter

Pastor's Page

All Saints Day Traditions – Old and New

Summer is changing to fall in Simsbury. The smell of wood smoke is in the air, pumpkins are out on doorsteps, and the leaves are slowly going through their costume changes of red to yellow to brown from brilliant green. Days by the pool have been replaced with flannel, warm drinks, and thoughts of Halloween costumes. For nearly a decade Erin and I have taken that opportunity to dress up pretty seriously, and for the last number of years we've hosted a party for our friends to bring their kids, get dressed up, eat some good food and have some fun. I won't spoil it for this year, but the last couple of years have included an old school Ventriloquist and Dummy, the Dude and Maude, and Bob Ross and a Happy Tree. All of this is in good fun, and while I hope you have your own fall traditions I also hope that we don't lose sight of the day that follows: All Saints Day.

Celebrated in nearly all corners of Christianity, All Saints is intended to remind us of the deep links between the Church Militant (those who are alive) and the Church Triumphant (those who are deceased). Customs vary across traditions and cultures, but many involve the lighting of candles and the remembering of the Saints who've gone before us. Often those customs involve a simple service and the recitation of names from those who have passed in the last year but not always. Sometimes they're more elaborate and can encompass many more people.

The tradition at Simsbury United Methodist has been to light candles, ring a bell, and read the names of folks who have passed into the Church Triumphant over the past year. It is a beautiful and moving tribute to those people who we've loved and lost, those who have been inspirations to us, and sometime those that we truthfully didn't know that well. I'm so excited that you've been doing this already, and I look forward to continuing that tradition this year while also expanding our worship experience.

At my previous church we celebrated the lives of those who passed in the last year, and we also encouraged the congregation to remember people who were significant in their lives by allowing each person to light a candle on the altar. This year at Simsbury we will do the same thing for each three services. While the bulletin or PowerPoint will list the names of the recently deceased, during the service and after receiving Communion, each person will have the chance to approach the altar and light a candle in memory of whomever they choose. At the service's conclusion we should have an altar ablaze (not really) with candlelight representing those dear to us who are no longer with us. It is a truly moving sight, and I hope that it will have as powerful impact on you as it has on me over the years.

Additionally, I want to encourage you to bring in an item that represents the person you will be recognizing this year to display on a table in Wesley Hall during Coffee Hour. Having an artifact or memento to show provides another opportunity to remember that Saint who is important to you. It shouldn't be a large item, nor should it be valuable, but it should represent who that person was whether it's a picture or something else entirely.

One of my favorite parts of my job is hearing your stories about loved ones, adventures, and how you came to be you. All Saints Sunday is a wonderful way for us both to learn more about each other, and I hope and pray that you will participate fully.

On the journey,
PG

All Saints Sunday Is November 4

This year, All Saints Day will be observed on **Sunday, November 4**. This is the time when all three of our services include the lighting of candles for members and friends of SUMC who have died since the last All Saints Sunday (November 2017). If you are unable to attend the services, but would like a copy of the bulletin, please contact the church office.

Calling All Crafters

We need your help! **December 15 and 16**, we will again host a Christmas Workshop for children to buy Christmas presents for their loved ones. We would appreciate donations of homemade crafts like jewelry, Christmas ornaments, stationery, aprons, totes, etc. There's still time to craft before the holiday season is upon us!

Please contact Heather Kaliden, rockwood7777@yahoo.com, for more information.

The Cookie Caper Is Coming!

The annual Christmas cookie sale returns to SUMC on **Saturday, December 15**. Bakers (and buyers) are needed! Please plan to bake dozens of your most festive cookies – all money raised goes toward the summer youth mission trip. Each year, we sell out quickly and typically raise over \$1,500!

Watch for more information to be posted in the church building and published in the bulletin and e-blast. Please contact Heather Ryan or Missy Iler with any questions.

Don't Forget to Fall Back!

Daylight Savings Time officially ends on **Sunday, November 4**. Don't forget to change your clocks so that you can join us for worship on time! Please note that November 4 is also All Saints Day.

SUMC Outreach Projects

Tom Turkey

Tom Turkey returned to Wesley Hall on Sunday, October 28. The SUMC Outreach Committee and Stephen Ministers are working together to bring Thanksgiving cheer to those in our community who are in need of a boost. Please help us make Thanksgiving extra special for them by taking a post it note "feather" and purchasing the item listed. Please return items to Wesley Hall by **November 11** (Thanksgiving is early this year!).

Questions can be directed to Debbie Dunn, dunnds@comcast.net or 860.651.4408.

The Giving Tree

Joanne Maurer, Linda Stroud, and Melissa Fearington are coordinating the Covenant to Care "giving tree" at SUMC, which will be up in Wesley Hall on **Sunday, November 25**. Please take an ornament or two and return them with your gifts for local families who need a helping hand this holiday season. Our giving tree will only be up for a short time this year, because the gifts need to be delivered to the social workers on **Sunday, December 9**.

"Sock-tober"

In October SUMC sponsored a town-wide sock collection for the homeless. Socks are one of the least-often donated items and are vitally important to those who cannot afford them. Collection boxes were set up throughout Simsbury and Avon, and area residents dropped off new socks for women, men, and children. The socks were distributed to South Park Inn in Hartford, Streetfire in New Haven, and Gifts of Love in Avon, among others. At press time, we were still collecting socks, so a more detailed update will appear in the next issue.

SEW Happy to Announce a Quilting Night!

Prayers & Squares, SUMC's quilting group, is happy to announce that the second Wednesday night of each month has been chosen as our evening quilting time. If you are interested in quilting yet busy during our usual afternoon schedule, please join us in the evenings! We hope to see you **November 14 and December 12** this year. Whether you are a quilting pro or a quilting newbie, you are cordially invited to join us in our quilting studio (second floor of the Annex) from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. for quilting hints and fellowship as we participate in this important outreach. Please contact Jan Bennett (860.985.3503, janbennett@cox.net) for more information.

Circles

The **Susanna Circle** will meet on **Tuesday, November 13**, at 7:00 p.m. in the parlor. We will meet the new director of Interval House and make jewelry to be donated to the SUMC Christmas workshop for children. We are a friendly and welcoming group and are happy to have any women of the church to join us. For information, contact Rolene Johnson at halandrolene@gmail.com or 860.658.0634.

The **Rebekah Circle** will meet on **November 15** in the Annex at noon. All are welcome! Call Jane Whelchel with any questions at 860.658.7356.

The **Rachel Circle** will meet on **November 14** in the Annex at 9:30 a.m.

Prayers and Squares Quilters will meet on November 2, 7, 9, 16, 21, 23, 28, and 30, at 12:30 p.m. in the Annex Upper Room. The Quilters will meet in the evening (7:00 p.m.) on November 14.

Happy Fall and Happy Thanksgiving from the Knitters!

We are truly blessed to have wonderful people who make our prayer shawls. Carol and I are very thankful for your talents. That being said, with the slight chill in the air it is a great time to pick up your needles, watch the new TV shows (or baseball or football games), and create something warm for a friend in need! We can supply you with yarn to get you going. If you'd like to help but don't have time to knit or crochet, please consider a donation of \$20 to help us purchase yarn to have one made in your honor.



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 pastor 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.

For more information please contact Carol Bressor at 860.653.3555 or Carrie Houghton at 860.508.6304.

~ Carrie Houghton

Kits for Kids

A Kits for Kids Service Project will be held here at SUMC on **Saturday, November 3**, beginning at 9:00 a.m. in Wesley Hall. We plan to make 800 Christmas stockings to be distributed to children who have been removed from difficult home situations. Please call Jan Johnston at 860.658.6692 for more information.

Children and Youth at SUMC

Church School (nursery school – 5th grade)

As we turn the calendar to November, I would like to extend thanks to all the shepherds and teachers who dedicated their time and shared their hearts in the first rotation of Church School. As we move into our second rotation, we will be discussing Exodus 2-14, where God worked through Moses to free the people of Israel from slavery. God continues to use ordinary people to do God's work.

Junior Youth (grades 6-8)

The Junior Youth class has been very busy the past few months. Along with attending their weekly Sunday Scholl class in Verdin Parlor, the middle schoolers organized a successful bake sale in Wesley Hall earlier in the fall. They raised \$435.00 for South Park Inn in Hartford (the charity that they voted to donate to). Thanks, SUMC, for being generous at the bake sale, and congratulations to the Junior Youth! The Junior Youth class is rescheduling a visit to the Gifts of Love at Community Farm to help the farmers with chores (this activity was rained out in October!). The kids also went on a trip in October to Foster Family Farms to explore corn mazes and enjoy an autumn evening with SUMC friends.

Senior Youth Group (high school)

The group has gotten off to a nice start! Pastor Gene took the high school kids to enjoy an evening at Sonny's Place in Somers – go carts, batting cages, and a monkey swing were the highlights of the trip. In late October, the Senior Youth and Junior Youth joined forces with a visit to Foster Family Farm. Kids enjoyed navigating the dark trails lined with cornstalks. On November 11 the senior high girls will be taking a short trip next door to the Hello Lovely makeup artist. Girls will have lessons on inner beauty and being made in the image of God. After the lesson, the girls will have a fun session on makeup application. The Senior Youth will also gather in November to create care packages for SUMC college freshman.

And Another Thing...

Christmas Pageant rehearsals begin on **November 4**. Rehearsals are held weekly after the 10:30 service until the pageant on **December 16**. Children and youth interested in being a part of our Christmas Pageant should see Bridget Scarlato, music director, or me for more information.

Parents: please fill a registration form for Church School. Forms can be obtained on the kiosk in Wesley Hall, from a teacher, or on our SUMC website. And please don't forget – our Sunday School and youth groups are always looking for volunteers to help out on a short- or long-term basis. Please reach out to me or to Pastor Gene if you are interested or have questions!

~ Jody Swan



*Pastor Gene and others line up to purchase treats from the Junior Youth bake sale.
SUMC kids enjoy the corn maze at Foster Family Farm.*

Adult Spiritual Growth Opportunities

Cooler weather has set in so get a cup of coffee or tea, pick up your Bible and study book, and head off to one of our Adult Spiritual Growth classes. Let me know if you'd like to see other offerings – or if you want to lead a particular class! I hope to share with you at one of the small groups!



Ongoing Studies

SUNDAYS, 10:30 a.m. in the Annex: *First Light: Jesus and the Kingdom of God (DVD study)*

This study, begun in September, continues. Filmed on location in Galilee and Jerusalem, this DVD series is by John Dominic Crossan and Marcus Borg. Crossan is a former Roman Catholic monk and priest, and both he and Borg have written many books and are former college professors. Hearing from these historians should provoke valuable discussion and stretch us a bit. There will be about 15 minutes of reading to prepare for each class – a much lighter requirement than usual! The study is led by Amy Kulig.

MONDAYS, 4:30 - 6:00 p.m. in the Annex: *C.S. Lewis's Greatest Book and Isaiah*

Our study of C.S. Lewis' *Mere Christianity*, which began September 17, will conclude this month. Our group begins a new study of Isaiah. All are welcome. This study group is co-led by Jan Bennett and Susan Samuel.

THURSDAYS, 9:15 – 11:00 a.m. in the Annex: *Women's Bible Study*

Women's Bible Study is led by Donna Motyl and Rolene Johnson. The group is studying the gospel of Matthew. There is no homework. The group members read a chapter and then discuss it using study Bibles and Internet resources. All women are welcome!

2nd Annual Women's Retreat ~ Inspiration by the Sea

In early October, 14 ladies gathered in Madison, Connecticut, for 24 hours of rest, worship, fellowship, and meals in a beautiful setting on Long Island Sound. We laughed and cried, shared and prayed, wrote in journals, and made prayer boxes. Some of us knew each other very well and others met for the first time, but we all left with a special bond that only a retreat away from our busy lives can provide.

Ask people that have been on a retreat before (confirmands, women, couples, anyone), and they will tell you it is a time of bonding or soul searching or renewal. You leave wanting to go on a retreat every weekend, but then again that would take away from the specialness of



being away from it all. Even so, maybe we need retreats more than once a year, even if only for one day, just to remember: *We are blessed, we are children of God, we are his beloved.*

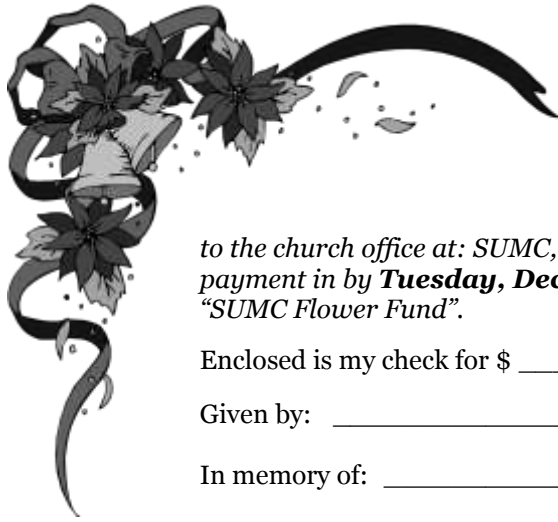
~ Blessings,
Susan Samuel, singnring@gmail.com



Order Your Poinsettias!

It may seem early to be thinking about holiday flowers, but orders will be due before you know it! You can get your order in early using the order form below, and order forms will also be available at all entrances to the sanctuary beginning Thanksgiving weekend. Reminders will appear in the Sunday bulletin announcements. The floral display of poinsettias will decorate our sanctuary for services on the 4th Sunday of Advent and Christmas Eve. The sanctuary always looks so beautiful with this red floral display as we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

~ Please have your order and payment in by Tuesday, December 18 ~



Christmas Poinsettia Order Form

Poinsettias are a beautiful way to make our sanctuary festive for services on the 4th Sunday of Advent and Christmas Eve. To order, simply complete the form below and place it in the offering plate with your payment or send the form and check

*to the church office at: SUMC, 799 Hopmeadow St. Simsbury, CT 06070. Please have your order and payment in by **Tuesday, December 18**. The cost is \$13 per plant. Please make checks payable to "SUMC Flower Fund".*

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____ for _____ poinsettia plant(s).

Given by: _____

In memory of: _____

In celebration or in honor of: _____

- I will pick up my plant(s) after the 11 pm service on Christmas Eve
- I will pick up my plants on Tuesday, December 26
- Please deliver my plant to a homebound member

Notes from the Music Director

By this time in the fall all SUMC Music Ensembles are in full swing and, I am happy to report, are sounding good! We will hear from the Wesley Ringers and the Children's Choir in Sunday services. Our musicians will also be participating in the town-wide Thanksgiving Interfaith Service on November 18.

In November we will hear some truly beautiful music in our church by renowned composers such as John Rutter, Stephen Paulus, and Mack Wilberg. The following month, December, is a very busy month for the Music Ministry so please mark your calendars now for these special events:

On the evening of **December 6**, the Chancel Ringers will perform a special **Christmas Bell Concert** at the Simsbury Library. Please come and support the group and listen to some great holiday bell music!

On Sunday, **December 9**, at 4:00 p.m., SUMC will host a "**Messiah Sing**" to celebrate the Christmas season. George Frederic Handel's "Messiah" was first performed in 1742 in Dublin and has since become one of the best known and most frequently performed choral works in classical western music. The SUMC Chancel Choir will be joined with other area church choirs for this performance, and will also feature Kari Miller on the organ and professional vocal soloists. If anyone is interested in joining the Chancel Choir for this special event, please contact me.

The **Children's Christmas Pageant** will be on **December 16** at 4:00 p.m. Rehearsals will be held throughout November and December after the 10:30 service on Sundays. If you have a child who would like to participate but has not signed up yet, please speak to me soon. There is room for all to be involved – even our smallest children are welcome to join as "roaming animals"! I very much encourage all youth and children in the church to come participate in this fun and meaningful Christmas celebration.

I thank everyone in the church, especially the musicians and Pastor Gene, as you have continued welcoming me into the church. If anyone has an interest in joining one of our many ensembles or performing in church as a soloist, please let me know!

~ Blessings, Bridget Scarlato, SUMC Music Director

Christ the King Sunday is November 25

The United Methodist Church celebrates the special days of the Christmas season (Advent, Christmas, Epiphany) and the Easter season (Lent, Easter, Pentecost) as well as special Christian days that fall during what is known as Ordinary Time. These include All Saints Day and Christ the King Sunday.

What is Christ the King Sunday, and why do we celebrate it?

The Festival of Christ the King is both the Last Sunday After Pentecost and the last Sunday of the Christian Year. It is not so much a climax in itself, however, as it is a transitional Sunday leading directly to Advent, the Christmas cycle, and the new Christian Year. People are already thinking about Christmas, and the observance of Christ the King can help them prepare by stressing the continuity between the celebration of kingship, or sovereignty, of Christ and the expectation of Christ's coming again in sovereign glory which opens the Advent Season. We have more than a baby Jesus at Christmas; we have a sovereign Christ. "Joy to the world! The Lord is come: Let earth receive her King."

~ From the umc.org website

December/January Newsletter Deadline

Please email items you'd like to see in the combined December 2018/January 2019 issue of the newsletter to hryan@snet.net by **November 29**.

Church Office Closures

The church office will be closed for a staff meeting on November 5, 10 – 11:30 am.

The church office will be closed on November 22 in observance of Thanksgiving.

If you have a pastoral emergency during this time, please contact Pastor Gene by cell phone.



**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. Gene Ott, Senior Pastor

**Office Manager & Church Secretary: Maureen Griffin
Director of Music Ministries: Bridget Scarlato
Director of Contemporary Music Ministries and CAYA
Worship Team: Dorothy Cowles
Organist: Kari Miller
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