

The Parish Herald

Newsletter of the
First United Methodist Church
Meriden, Connecticut

Ric Hanse
Pastor

February 2018

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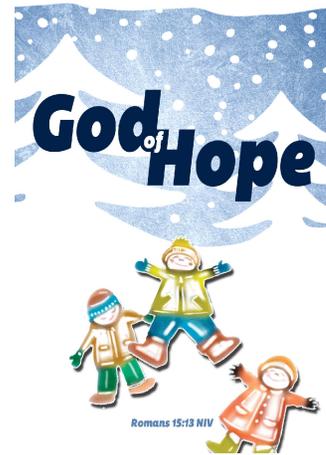
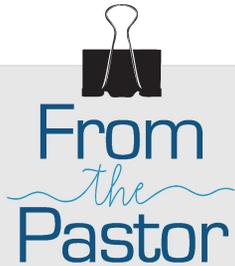
Do you like winter? Or are you ready for winter to melt into spring? Whatever we think of winter, some wonderful events take place from December through March: We celebrate Jesus' birthday. We remember the birthdays of some key leaders in the history of our nation – Martin Luther King Junior, George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. And in wintertime we begin the adventure of a new year and start down the road that leads to Jesus' Resurrection.

Jesus invites us to travel with Him through our winter days with grateful hearts.

On the coldest of winter days Jesus makes us very aware that our friendship with Him warms our hearts in ways that the coldest of temperatures cannot conquer. During the short days of winter, Jesus, our Sun of Righteousness fills our hearts and minds with His light, and brightens our journey through life. Through snow falls that blankets our world with white God reminds us that our faith in Jesus Christ washes away our sins and makes our spirits are white as snow.

Jesus also works through winter to fill us with gratitude for the many wonderful gifts He gives

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us to enjoy: A warm home, cozy blankets, a hot cup of cocoa, tea or coffee to wrap our hands around, a fire in the fireplace, a hot shower and warm winter comfort food. What great gifts from God!

But winter is not a time for hibernation. Through the cold and snow of winter God calls us to bring the warmth of Jesus into the lives of people whose hearts have experienced the bright, warm love of Jesus. We bring the warmth of Jesus to people through prayers for them, acts of kindness, and by inviting them to experience Christ's love through our wonderful Church Family. Through winter's chill God gives us opportunities to make sure that those without homes are given warm

food and warm shelters (through our support of The Meriden Soup Kitchen, Unity House, Fostering Love, UMArmy, the H.O.M.E. shelter in Orland, Maine, Caring Hands and so many other ministries).

Whether or not we like winter, Jesus is with all winter to warm us with His love and fill us with the radiance of His joy which is our warmth and strength forever.

Affectionately,

Pastor Ric

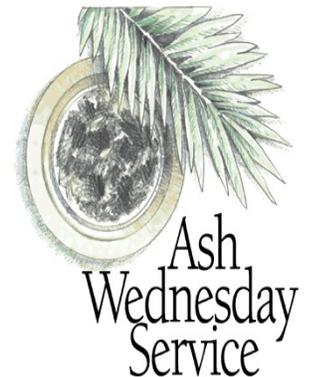
Ash Wednesday

Dear First Church Family Member,

Please be with me on Wednesday 14 February at 7:00 pm for our Ash Wednesday service. I can't think of a better way to celebrate Valentine's Day than by being with our Church Family to celebrate that Jesus loves us so much that He comes into the world for us to burn away all the wrongs we've ever done and bring us the gift of a brand-new beginning. "Ashes of Love" is the theme of our **Ash Wednesday / Valentines Day celebration.**

Affectionately,

Pastor Ric



YOUTH NEWS

The youth group is open for **all youth** from grades 4 through High School. We typically meet at 11:30 am – 3:00 pm. Lunch is 12:45 pm. All Junior & Senior High youth of the Church and their friends are welcome. If you have any questions please contact Jim Hazlett at 860.324.2588 or email at

jhazlett1222@gmail.com.

Upcoming meeting plans:

- 2/4 **Kareoke**
- 2/11 TBD
- 2/13 **Fat Tuesday Pancake Dinner**
- 2/25 **Drama/Easter/ Make your own pizza**
- 3/4 **Clothing Drive Begins**
- 3/11 **Sundae Sunday**
- 3/18 **Kite Flying/Hike**
- 3/24- 25 **Lock-in Palm Sunday Breakfast**

February 13th Fat Tuesday (Mardi Gras) celebration hosted by the youth. This historically is a special day in the life of church. The Day before Ash Wednesday. ALL ARE INVITED to a pancake dinner that will be fun for all ages. **Mask making, Mardi Gras parade, music, food, and a gift** for everyone who attends. This is also free will offering and all profits will be donated to Mission Trip 2018.



SCHOLARSHIPS

First United Methodist Church Scholarships are available for **graduating Seniors**. All High School Seniors who have been active in the life of the Church for five years or longer who intend to continue their education are invited to apply for FUMC scholarships. Greatest emphasis for consideration of awards will be placed upon active service to the Church, especially during high

school years. Additional criteria for consideration include community service, academic standing, extracurricular activities, and employment. Applications will be available March 1st, must be returned to the "Scholarship" receptacle on the Bulletin Board in the cloister no later than the first Sunday in May (May 6, 2018). Awards are made in June. **Please Note** - there are also hundreds of scholarships available to college students of all ages through the General Board of Higher Education. Call 615-340-7344 or go to the web-site www.gbhem.org. Click onto Scholarship information and requests. A form is available to request information.

FOCUS ON WOMEN

The UMW Book Club will meet Tuesday, January 30, at the home of Myrna Spencer 126 Ann St. We will be discussing "A Gentleman in Moscow by Amor Towles. All women are welcome.

Unit 4 will host a craft meeting Monday, February 5, 12:30 pm. Come and give us a hand! We are making crafts for the UMW Craft Fair this fall.

Are you crafty? Do you enjoy spending time with Church Family members? Then the new First UMC Craft Group is for you! We'll meet on **Sundays from 11:30-1:30pm in the corner Sunday School Room** - behind the Wesley Room. If you have any questions please see Dawn Szacik.

Unit 4 of the UMW is again collecting items for **Health Kits** that will be taken to NY Annual Conference for UMCOR to distribute to those affected by floods, tornados, and other natural disasters. Donations of the items or cash to buy & send them are appreciated! Please mark any donations "Health Kits". Please leave items in the Health Kits box in the hallway. Any questions members of Unit 4. Thank you!!!

Items needed: *Soap – bath size (no Ivory)* *Wash cloths – terry cloth*
Nail clippers or metal nail files *Hand towels – 15-17"X25-27" terry cloth*

Band-aids – ¾-1" wide only *Combs – 8" Toothbrush – individually packaged.*

Relief-supply kits help provide care for the most vulnerable people during times of crisis. Health kits, sewing kits, school kits, bedding kits, birthing kits,

and cleaning buckets are collected by generous donors across the United States.

These items are then sent to one of two supply depots, where volunteers assemble, verify, and pack the kits so that they can be sent to where they are needed most. Kits also help sustain everyday life for people who lack ready access to essential supplies. They provide vital support for UMCOR's global development work and make a tangible difference in people's lives.

MEN'S NOTES

Brothers in Christ: Bible study, support & encouragement. The goal is to grow in our responsiveness to Jesus Christ in all aspects of our lives. We meet on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of each month, 8:00 am in the Parish House. If you have any questions or need additional information please see Hal Quigley. All men warmly welcomed.

Prayer Chain continues active and strong, and would love to be praying for your needs and desires. If you have a special need for prayer, please let our prayer chain coordinator (Holly Wishart) know so she can share your burdens and needs with those who are on the chain. Please make certain you have permission from the person(s) you are praying for, and then call Holly, 203-907-5725, or the Church office, 235-9620. You can also e-mail the office, fumc@snet.net, if you prefer.

The **Prayer Chain Ministry** may be for you. If you would like to be a part of this important and supportive ministry, just provide me with your name and email address. You will be added to the list and will be one of our prayer warriors. As requests come in you will be sent an email and then pray. I look forward to growing our prayer ministry. Thank you. Holly Wishart 203-793-7043

MISSION

Ongoing Mission projects: Fostering Love Children placed in Foster Care receive from 1st UMC Church a backpack with an outfit, a toy, and toiletries. We are in need of: Boys coloring books, cards and other games for older kids...especially for boys. Thank you for your generous help!

Caring Hands group makes blankets for the patients at MidState Medical Oncology and the veterans at West Haven VA Hospital. Each blanket costs \$15.00 and we include a copy of The Upper Room. Since 2014 we have given 245 blankets to these people who have given so much and are in need of a warm "hug." Please help us to keep this mission going with a small (or large) donation. Questions? Please contact Jan Richardson or Nancy Tracy. Thank you.

Unity House is a refugee house run by the South Meriden UMC. Your missions committee is providing three ways for you to participate. **Change in the Collection Plate.** Loose change placed in the collection plate will be set aside for Unity House. This includes Coins only. **UNITY JAR.** A collection jar will be available in Rogers Memorial for those that want to give a little more. **CHECK.** Checks made out to FUMC with "Unity House" in the Memo line will be given to Unity House. Our goal and pledge commitment to Unity House as a congregation is \$100.00 per month.

Red Cross Bloodmobiles: Wednesdays, February 21, and March 21, 1:00 –



6:00 pm in Rogers Memorial. Giving blood only takes about one hour and can save up to three lives. Call 1-800-GIVE LIFE or make an appointment on the Internet at <http://www.redcrossblood.org/>. The American Red Cross has an **urgent need** for blood donations to help prevent a shortage of blood products. Donors of all blood

types are urgently needed now, especially those with type O, AB, B negative and A negative. If you make an appointment don't forget to use RapidPass to complete your pre-reading and donation questions online from the comfort and privacy of your home or office; reducing the time spent at the blood drive by up to 15 minutes!

DISTRICT RESOURCE DAY WORKSHOPS 2018

Saturday, February 3rd 9 to 12:00 p.m. @ Simsbury UMC

Sunday, February 11th 2 to 5:00 p.m. @ Stratford UMC

SPR IOI A basic overview of the role of the Staff-Parish Relations Committee, along with an update on the Bishop's procedures on appointment-making. CT DS, Rev. Dr. Alpher Sylvester

The Changing Face of Youth and Student Ministries Our Teens seem to be busier than ever, and with their demanding schedules it seems increasingly difficult to find the best ways (and times) to engage them. Many of us are finding that a one-size-fits-all approach to ministry is yielding diminishing returns. We'll share ideas about what we can do and what programming changes we can make to accommodate these changing times. Peter Preiser, Asst. Pastor & Director of Youth & Student Ministries, Simsbury, and Herron Gaston, Pastor, Summerfield.

Parish Development All you need to know about Parish Development (DIMCHEX) Loans and Grants for your church. Rev. David Mantz, CT District Chairperson and past Chair of the Conference Committee!

Re-Purposing Church Property A conversation concerning the possibilities and challenges of re-purposing church property for the sake of ministry. Led by Dr. Stephen Bauman and Holly Fogle, Leadership Council Chair, Christ Church, New York City. **(Stratford only)**

The Six Thinking Hats A process that can be used for exploring different perspectives towards a complex situation or challenge. Deb Clifford will introduce us to this simple, effective process that helps people be more productive, focused, and mindfully involved. It is a powerful tool set which, once learned, can be applied immediately. Led by Deb Clifford, Simsbury UMC.

Life Changing Mission Trips - What are they? How do you do them? What are the secrets of success? How do you pay for them? Help from a 30-year veteran, first as laity and now a Pastor. Rev. David Mantz, Watertown UMC.

Sanctuary Church Is your church considering offering sanctuary to undocumented immigrants facing deportation? Would you like to learn other ways to support immigrants? This workshop is organized by Rev. Paul Fleck,

Pastor of Hamden Plains and a member of the Conference Immigration Task Force. The February 11 workshop will also feature Rev. Juhye Hahn sharing her experience as a pastor who has hosted two guests in sanctuary at 1st & Summerfield in New Haven. Rev. Paul Fleck, Hamden Plains UMC.

Church Finances A discussion on Church Finances including the most frequently asked questions of the Conference Center office. Topics will include taxes, budgeting, auditing, apportionments and clergy benefits, along with others. Led by Ross Williams, Chief Financial Officer for the New York Annual Conference (Simsbury only) and Diana Moore, NYAC Conference Controller. (Stratford only)

What's New and What's Next at the Intersection of Faith and Culture The first part of our time together will present a summary of some cultural, religious, and political trends in our society that are impacting the way churches do ministry. The second half will be an open discussion about what we are doing, and might be able to do, in terms of strategies and methodologies, to maintain our relevance and "re-imagine" our ministries in a rapidly changing culture. Peter Preiser, Assistant Pastor & Director of Youth & Student Ministries, Simsbury, Pastor, West Granby

Stewardship – What It Is and What It Is Not This innovative, actions-based session begins with a clear definition of "stewardship" and then explores both its relational aspect and biblical foundation. Participants will gain ideas and tools to expand stewardship programs and help churches move toward a stronger position of financial sustainability. Joe Andreana, Deputy Executive Director, Frontier Foundation



FUMC Facebook Page: Take a minute to "like" it and "share" items our Facebook page. If you would like something posted (advertisement of sort, meeting time, photos etc.,) please contact the church office at fumc@snet.net.

FINANCIAL NEWS

Donations Received **January 1 – December 31: \$304,913.88**

Needed January 1 – December 31: \$303,890.38

Dear First Church Family Member,

Praise be to God! Jesus is pouring His blessings upon us. Your trust in Jesus and commitment to our First UMC Family has led us to finish 2017 with a \$1,023.50 surplus! This is the first time since the 2008 Great Recession that we are ahead of expenses. The Lord Jesus is doing great things for us and through us. With all my heart I thank Jesus and I thank YOU for your faithful giving.

Affectionately,
Pastor Ric

To print out your giving statement log in to www.onrealm.org. On the left click on "giving." You may have to "filter" the dates. After changing the date don't forget to re-hit the filter button! You will then download a pdf you can print and/or save. It's that easy!

If you can't remember your login password e-mail the church office and we'll send you a password reset.

If you don't have e-mail please contact the church office at 203-235-9620.

Offering envelopes are available in Rogers Memorial. Please pick up your's and a friend's and save the Church some postage. If you have not used numbered offering envelopes and wish to receive them, please call the Church office, 203-235-9620. Using the offering envelopes makes it easier for the counters and for the office to track your donations in order that we may prepare a year-end statement for you. Thank you for your support to the continuing ministry of our Lord.



Don't forget you can access our **Church Calendar** on our website at <http://www.firstumcmeriden.com/events/> This calendar has the most current schedules.

FELLOWSHIP HOUR

Attention Fellowship Captains and Membership Committee. There will be a meeting **January 28, 11:30 am**, after worship in the Wesley Room to assess the Fellowship Hour.

Help! Coffee Hour: please consider joining a coffee hour team so that we can continue our worship in fellowship with a treat. No baking required, but certainly welcome. Cheese and crackers/vegetables/fruits make a delightful snack. See Stan Kapustinski, (203) 317-0144 or sign-up in Rogers Memorial.

Feb 4 – Team 6: Deane Poirier, Alison Green, Maurice Poirier, MaryEllen Brechlin, Trudi Schott, Mark Fancher, Carol Porsch, Lauren Rhines, Ellen Fisk.

Feb 11 – Team 7: Myrna Spencer, Karen Caproizzo, Earl Yeomans, Linda Mizell, Jim Pearsall, Renee Pearsall, Betty Thomson, Mary Andersen

Feb 18 – Team 8: Ed & Nancy Peterson, Donna Oddie, Gerry West, Jim Hazlett, Beverly Teixeira, Ruth Petrucelli

Feb 25 – Team 1: Sue Winchell, Barbara Quigley, Evelyn Mills, Stacy Morgan, Sarah Uylaky, Cathy Bacon

March 4 – Team 2: Stanley & Sharon Kapustinski, Brenda Daly, Nancy Tracy, Jan Richardson, Stacy Harris, Karen Harrison

March 11 – Team 3: Debbie Molloy, Novelyn Cosmiano, Susan Farquharson, JoAnn Myers, Steve Rittenhouse, Jennifer Janus

Briefs: Join us on the web! www.firstUMCmeriden.com Better still it is smart phone friendly. This is a wonderful new way for us to grow closer to Jesus and each other as a Church Family. Be sure to check it out! We have openings for **Altar Flowers** for February 4, 11, & 25 and March 4, 11, & 25. If you wish to donate flowers in honor of or in memory of someone please fill out the poster in the cloister or call the Church office, 235-9620. Thank you.

A **Food Pantry** is available at New Opportunities, 74 Cambridge St, Meriden. Mon, Wed, Fri 9:00 am – 12:00 pm. Thurs, 4:00 pm – 6:30 pm.

Upper Room Devotional Books are available on the table by the kitchen in Rogers Memorial. A small donation in the offering plate will help cover the cost. Large print copies are also available.

Cold & flu season is upon us: We are giving full permission to anyone who has cold or flu-like symptoms to stay home from all Church activities during these coming months. While we will miss you, we certainly understand your desire not to “spread yourself around.”

Church closing due to inclement weather... On the rare occasion that we must cancel Sunday morning worship and other activities due to the weather you will be notified on Channel 3 WFSB. Otherwise “where two or more are gathered” – someone will be here.

The Church wants to support you while **you are in the hospital** or care facility. Due to privacy laws patient information is no longer given our Pastors and the Church is not contacted when you are admitted. Please make arrangements to notify the Church in the event you are hospitalized.

WITHIN OUR FAMILY

To the First United Methodist Church Family. How can we begin to say thank you for all of your kindness to us on December 31st. We were so overwhelmed by everyone’s love shown to us in worship and during the reception. The retirement poster board was put together beautifully and was so memorable to reflect on. Such beautiful cards, which we reflected on later at home, and an abundant display of food was so heartwarming knowing that many hands put in many hours! The gift presented during worship made us feel so unworthy. And we love the cozy, warm throws made so lovingly by special people. They are already on display in our living room!

There is just no way to let you all know how much we appreciate your love and you. You all hold a special place in our hearts, not to be forgotten. We promise to keep in touch and stop by “here & there”. Much love to each one, *Alden & Helen Barnes*

Dear Pastor Ric & Friends a FUMC. On behalf of the United Way of Meriden & Wallingford, I’d like to extend our sincere thanks for donating six bags of beautiful hand knitted hats and mittens to benefit families in need, as part of our 2017 Adopt a Family program. Donations from businesses, groups, and individual families helped make this holiday season brighter for numerous struggling families in our community. Together, we assisted 101 families, consisting of 361 people. This would not have been possible without your generous support!

Please accept our deepest appreciation of your assistance and for helping make a positive impact in the community. We thank you for thinking of us here at Untied Way and we would be delighted to work with you again.

Wishing you and your families a healthy, happy, and prosperous year!

Sincerely, Lizandra Mejías-Salinas, Volunteer Coordinator



Weddings: Pastor Ric officiated at the wedding 12/30 of Katharine Timlin & Andrew Johnston.

Hospitalized since the last Parish Herald: Lisa Fancher, Darlene Fancher, Rose Walsh

+ **In Memoriam** + Since our last issue of the Parish Herald, the following have passed into eternal life: 12 January – *Gerald Heselton*.

February Birthdays:

Mary Andersen	22	Tyler Kohlun	24
Alexander Antaya	12	Leo Lavado	11
Jackson Aresco	11	Cindy LoPiano	5
Melissa Aresco	6	Alexa Marquardt	19
Zachary Aresco	16	Rachel Matsil	13
Scott Backus	19	Marvin McNeill	19
Penny Cabata	4	Nicholas Mroczka	26
Jennie-Marie Cross	16	JoAnn Myers	21
Stephen Cross	1	Blaine Poirier	22
Peter Doerfler	2	Maurice Poirier	15
Amy Farquharson	25	Elizabeth Reiners	16
Janice Gawlik	29	Desi Simon	16
Jonathan Hanse	25	Jim Spencer	21
Jim Hazlett	26	Eleanor Underwood	6
		Jeffrey Wodatch	16

Adult Bible Studys, Seasonally. Pastoral & Lay Leadership

Boy Scout Troop 52 Tuesday, 7:00 pm.

Brothers in Christ 1st & 3rd Saturday, 8:00 am, Parish House

Chancel Choir Rehearsal, Thursday, 7:30 pm, Sunday, 9:00 am

Church School Children's Choir – 1st Sunday and Seasonal: 10:15 am

Confirmation Class, Alternate Sundays after worship

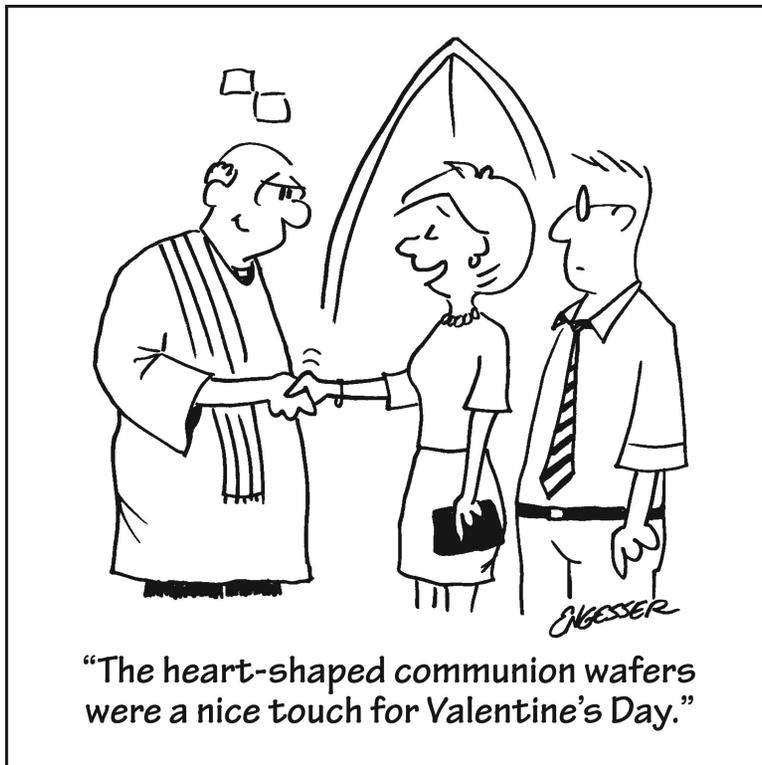
Handbell Choir Rehearsal, Sunday, 11:30 am.

Youth Groups, Grades 6- 12 , Sunday after worship.

United Methodist Women , 2nd Monday of each month & Special Programs

Worship Service & Church School at 10:00 am Sunday - Nursery provided.

Web Site: www.firstumcmeriden.com.





Conversation hearts

The world encourages people to look out for themselves and seek success, but in Micah 6:8, God tells us to live differently.

Directions: Put the conversation hearts in the correct order by writing the words on the lines below. Hint: Capitalization and quotation marks are included.



“

 _____ ?

 _____ ”
 _____ 6:8 , _____

Answer: "And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." Micah 6:8, NIV

Kindly tear off and return to Church office. Thank you.

- () Please add/drop person below to mailing list
- () Would like offering envelopes
- () Would like to join Church
- () Changes in Address, phone, e-mail...
- () The person below is in the hospital
- () Please pray for:

NEWS FOR THE PARISH HERALD, COMMENTS, INFORMATION.

Signed.....

Mail should be sent to our 15 Pleasant St. Church office address. Please do not use the East Main Street address.

Our E-Mail address is fumc@snet.net Phone: 203-235-9620

First United Methodist Church
 15 Pleasant Street
 Meriden, CT 06450-5702

