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**Guiding To and Growing Through the Christian Life**

Church Office: (860) 673-2111 Office Fax: (860) 673-5777 Email: [avonmumc@gmail.com](mailto:avonmumc@gmail.com)  
Website: [avonunitedmethodist.com](http://avonunitedmethodist.com) Current Worship Schedule: Sunday, 10:30am Family Worship  
Church Office Hours: Monday - Friday 9:00am - 2:00pm Church Sexton Hours: Monday – Friday 8:30am – 12:30pm  
YOUTUBE Link to Sunday Worship Service: <https://www.youtube.com/user/AvonMUMC>  
FACEBOOK Link to Sunday Worship Service: <https://www.facebook.com/avon.mumc/>  
Rev. Joseph Piccirillo, Pastor (203) 545-3277 (Mobile Phone)  
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**A New Adventure**

“Hey, anybody up for a new adventure?” Back in college, a college classmate had invited me to a sky diving trip. He got a few others to join him. They were going to a northern Massachusetts local airport to jump. It sounded exciting. The only thing getting in the way of saying yes was my fear of “What ifs”. As exhilarating as it sounded, I couldn’t get past the fear of what would happen if... The chute didn’t open or only half the chute opened, or the wind was too strong, or I landed wrong.

I regret passing up that opportunity. I regret letting fear control my decision. After all, life is a risk. Living is a risk. Getting up every morning is a risk. Falling in love is a risk. Having a child is a risk. But without forging ahead and facing each day as a new opportunity, a new adventure, we miss out. We miss out on “Life” if we are afraid to take some risks.

So, are you ready for a new adventure? The New Year brings with it new adventures. For most of us our new adventures may not include skydiving. But to live means to trust. We must trust every day. We wake up, drive our cars, go to work and school trusting all will be well.

But there is good news. God invites us to trust Him with the risk of living every day...

*“Commit your way to the LORD; trust in Him, and He will act”.* Psalm 37:5

*“When I am afraid, I put my trust in Thee”.* Psalm 56:3

*“Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid; for the LORD GOD is my strength and my song, and He has become my salvation.* Isaiah 12:2

*“Blessed is the one who trusts in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD.* Jeremiah 17:7

*“So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus; but when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, “Lord, save me.” Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him. “O man of little faith, why did you doubt?”* Matthew 14:29-31.

From the Psalms to the prophets to Christ Jesus, we are reminded to TRUST in the LORD. The New Year is a bold new adventure waiting for us. Let us lay aside our fear and TRUST IN THE LORD.

God bless us as we embark on a New Adventure in a New Year.

Pastor Joseph

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**JANUARY BIRTHDAYS**

“Happy Birthday!” to the following people who are celebrating birthdays this month.



<b>BIRTHDAYS</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Martin Kibbe</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Peter Tremback</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Kevin Oommen</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Justin Hunter</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Colin Holtzman</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>Dave Chase</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>Jennifer Lamoureux</b>
<b>17</b>	<b>Mary Tew</b>
<b>22</b>	<b>Deb Slevinsky</b>
<b>26</b>	<b>Kristen Baker</b>
<b>29</b>	<b>Amanda Holtzman</b>
<b>29</b>	<b>Brett Holtzman</b>
<b>30</b>	<b>Jean Pickens</b>

A card, note, e-mail, phone call or spoken “Happy Birthday!” is another way of showing we care.

If YOU would like to be put on the birthday and/or anniversary list, please contact the church office.



**PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO FIND OUT LATEST HAPPENINGS!** [www.avonunitedmethodist.com](http://www.avonunitedmethodist.com)

**CHECK OUT OUR FACEBOOK FOR NEWS!** *Avon Mumc*

**PLEASE JOIN US ON FACEBOOK OR YOUTUBE FOR SUNDAY SERVICE AT 10:30am, SEARCH FOR Avon Mumc**

**THANK YOU!**

On behalf of the staff at MUMC, Pastor Joseph, Virginia Capalbo (office mgr.), Tony Rauche (organist/choir director), Bill Rebillard (sexton), and Walt Sargant (treasurer), we would like to thank you wholeheartedly for your very generous Christmas gift. It is very much appreciated, and we are all very grateful.



**EMERGENCY CONTACTS**

[Ruthellen Corbett] Pastoral Care Chair

A few months ago a committee member could not reach an elderly person and became concerned. Eventually she did but spoke about possible problems in the future.



Pastoral Care also talked about what might happen if someone had a medical problem or accident on site and we didn't know whom to contact. We needed a list of older members (and others too) and their emergency contacts. We started with our own members and have gradually added others. This record is kept in the church office and also in Pastor Joseph's office. Inside the Pastor's Office, hanging to the left of the door there is a bright red folder with the list. If you would like to be added to the list or get more information, contact Anne Fitzgerald [afitzgerald138@gmail.com](mailto:afitzgerald138@gmail.com) We are a family and want to care for each other. Stay safe.

**2021 GIVING AND 2022 CONSECRATION SUNDAY**

[John Baily]

The finance committee reviewed a draft of the 2022 MUMC budget at its December meeting. It has been reported that church attendance and giving are down significantly in 2021 compared to pre COVID years. MUMC giving is down by roughly \$100,000 in 2021 compared to 2019. As previously reported, our financial position has been significantly helped by the monies we received under the CARES Act. As I write this there are two weeks left for giving in 2021. There is still time for you to give in 2021.

Our budget for 2022 will be under significant pressure. We have all read of significant increases in the cost of heating oil and electricity in the New Year. It was reported this week that inflation in the USA is running at a rate of almost 8% in the month of November. Like all of us, MUMC is facing those increased costs as well. In order to get a better picture of our finances in 2022 we are now planning to have Consecration Sunday on January 23. You will hear more about Consecration Sunday in the weeks before January 23. We ask you to pray about what the Lord would have you give. After we have a better estimate of our expected giving, the Finance committee will look to finalize the budget based on our available resources.

**ONE MORE STEP "BACK TO NORMAL"**

[Chalise Ross] Liturgical Arts

As our services adjust back to normal, we will begin having ushers during the service. We are looking for volunteers to welcome members and visitors one Sunday a month. We also need an usher coordinator to help create the schedule. Please contact Chalise Ross or Pastor Joseph and consider either ministry in our church.

**PASTORAL CARE**

[Ruthellen Corbett]

The December meeting was our "Pack the Bags". Ten of us gathered together at noon to pack our Holiday goodie bags to be delivered to our partners and other members of our church family. We baked the cookies and placed 2-3 in a snack bag, to insure only the baker's fingers handle the cookies. There still is a COVID virus out there. In addition to the cookies, we added clementine's, chocolate candies, candy canes, chocolate kisses. The bags, decorated by Heather Kelsey, were bulging! Heather does this every year for Pastoral Care, and we are very grateful. We filled 16 bags! We will make our "appointed rounds" within the next few days.



After all our "work" we played. George's supplied delicious grinders, and Linda Kime bought a yummy chocolate cake to celebrate Kay's birthday and Kathryn's 3 days later. A wonderful party!

### PASTOR'S DAILY DEVOTIONS ON MUMC WEBSITE

Just a reminder that Pastor Joseph's daily devotions appear on the home page of our website. Also, if you would like to be able to revisit a favorite, the devotions from the past year can be accessed on the main menu – PASTOR JOSEPH'S DEVOTIONS. Enjoy!

### SUNDAY FLOWERS

[Barbara Chase]

### OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUNDAY FLOWERS

Choose a week for your arrangement by using our online Sign-Up-Genius form with its easy-to-follow directions.

Just go to the church website, [avonunitedmethodist.com](http://avonunitedmethodist.com), and choose **ALTAR FLOWERS** in the left-hand column. This will connect you to the Sign-Up-Genius **Church Flowers** order form with its easy-to-follow directions.

If you would rather not use the Sign-Up-Genius, contact Linda Arnold via [the church office](#).

Dates still available: 01/09/2022 and 01/30/2022



### SHARE GOD'S GOOD NEWS

Worship Committee



Volunteers are needed to serve as liturgists at the 10:30am Sunday service. This is a great chance to serve MUMC with a minimal time commitment. No experience or expertise is needed. You will receive the reading a couple days before the service. On the day of the service, arrive about 15 minutes prior to the service. At the end of the service your commitment is complete. Commit for one Sunday or to serve 3 to 4 times over a one-year period - whatever works for your schedule.

To volunteer contact [the church office](#).

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### MAKING MUMC "PEANUT FREE"



As we begin to offer Fellowship Hour and hopefully other social activities, we would like to remind everyone that in the interest of safety and well-being of our little ones, we are attempting to make MUMC a "peanut free" building. Please keep this in mind when you are bringing something for yourself or to share at future meetings or events at Memorial. While we cannot guarantee MUMC will be totally peanut free, every effort that can be made to support this effort will be much appreciated.

### MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

[Linda Kime] Membership Directory



As Membership chair, I want us to take advantage of simply logging in to our church directory at your convenience. Please try to follow the steps below to gain access to our FRIENDS & FAMILY DIRECTORY.

Go to: [www.instantchurchdirectory.com](http://www.instantchurchdirectory.com)

Select "Church Member Sign-in". Click on '1st time register' and create an 8-digit password per instructions. Next time all you'll have to do is type in your email and password to access directory anytime. You can also download the App for instant access by following instructions to the right or click on the App Access from the opening page of Instant Church Directory Website.



**FINANCE COMMITTEE:**

**NOVEMBER 2021**

	Actual YTD	Budget YTD	Difference
Total Budget Income:	\$ 351,285.88	\$ 319,198.00	\$ 32,087.88
Total Budget Expense:	\$ 295,356.86	\$ 319,231.00	- \$ 23,874.14

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Net to Date                    \$ 55,929.02  
 Income – Expense

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**NEW BATCH OF “HOLY” BEARS AND CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL IS HERE**



**MUMC TRUSTEES NEWS**

[Mark Borenstein, Dave Crompton, John Fillian, Laura Gorden, Linda Johansen, Hal Johansen, Marsha Kennedy, Bruce Merritt, John Perotti]



- **Sexton Bill Rebillard** has been busy doing special projects, such as re-staining the legs of the Sanctuary chairs, along with his weekly cleaning of the main church proper mornings, setups for weekly meetings and activities, and afternoon cleaning of the Churchery School.
- **The main church parking lots have their winter plowing stakes** in place, and Memorial Garden leadership is using barrels and stakes in the Garden area to prevent damage to the plantings and shrubbery there.
- **Trustees’ 2022 Trustee Budget Proposal** reflects a decrease in capital improvements to accommodate an expected increase in natural gas and electric prices, based on projections by the companies that service the Church.
- The **Memorials and Special Gifts subcommittee** has allocated funds for new technology to be used to facilitate committee communications going forward.
- **Klaus Larsen Roofing was chosen to complete the Education Wing roof replacement**, along with two additional sections in the back of the church, slated to have begun on December 28<sup>th</sup> during Churchery School Christmas vacation, weather permitting. As you read this, the work may have already been completed.
- Brotherhood Insurance will require that our new church **roofing be inspected by a licensed contractor and** a report forwarded to them. In addition, they require that all our other roofs be inspected and certified as sound.
- Because of recent evidence of nighttime visitors parking behind our church building, **Trustees have asked for and received extra patrols** behind the church by the third shift of the Avon Police Department.
- The lower entry doors of the church have been found unlocked many mornings in the past month upon our sexton’s 7:30 AM arrival. It appears that when more than one group is on the property, *each expects the other to do the lockup* and it isn’t getting done all the time. AA, Girls Scouts, etc. have been asked to secure the lower doors regardless of any meeting still in progress upstairs, and **all church committees should walk the entire building before leaving to ensure that outside doors’ panic bars are in the locked position.**

**REMEMBERING THOSE WHO HAVE TROUBLE GETTING OUT & THOSE NEEDING A PRAYER**



A card would be so appreciated.

**Katie M.**  
11 Briarwood Road  
Farmington, CT 06032

**Cheryl M.**  
209 West Side Blvd.  
Unionville, CT 06085

**Muriel K.**  
22 C Rita Drive  
Bristol, CT 06010

**Jill R.**  
7 Wyndham Lane  
Burlington, CT 06013

**Lorraine Z.**  
9 Keystone Circle  
Avon, CT 06001

**MEMORIAL GARDEN**

[Jeff Tremback] Memorial Garden Chairperson



We still need some new garden members. We will accept all people who wish to join the Garden Committee, but we especially invite those who are not yet senior citizens. We now have a very mature membership and would like to add some new, youthful energy to our group. Thank you. And God Bless.

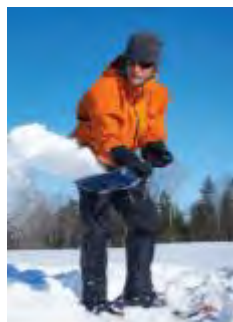
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**COLD STRESS**

[Brian Baldwin]



Anyone who is exposed to extreme cold or work in cold environments may be at risk of cold stress. Extremely cold or wet weather is a dangerous situation that can cause illness and injuries such as hypothermia, frostbite, trench foot, and chilblains.

**Hypothermia:** A condition in which the body uses up its stored energy and can no longer produce heat. Often occurs after prolonged exposure to cold temperature.

**Early symptoms:** Shivering, Fatigue, Loss of coordination, Confusion and disorientation

**Late symptoms:** No shivering, Blue skin, Dilated pupils, Slowed pulse and breathing, Loss of consciousness

**First Aid:** Request immediate medical assistance, Move the victim into a warm room or shelter, Remove wet clothing, Warm the center of their body first—chest, neck, head, and groin. Use dry layers of blankets, clothing, or towels. If conscious, warm beverages may help increase the body temperature. Do not give alcohol. Keep them dry and wrapped in a warm blanket, including the head and neck.

**Frostbite:** An injury to the body that is caused by freezing, which most often affects the nose, ears, cheeks, chin, fingers, or toes. **Symptoms:** Reduced blood flow to hands and feet, Numbness, Aching, Tingling or stinging, Bluish or pale, waxy skin. **First Aid:** Get into a warm room as soon as possible. Unless necessary, do not walk on frostbitten feet or toes. Do not massage the frostbitten area; doing so may cause more damage. Seek medical care.

**Protect Yourself:** Monitor your physical condition and that of your family, coworkers and other people around you. Wear appropriate clothing. Wear several layers of loose clothing for insulation. Tight clothing reduces blood circulation to the extremities. Be aware that some clothing may restrict movement resulting in a hazardous situation. Protect the ears, face, hands and feet in extremely cold or wet weather. Boots should be waterproof and insulated. Wear a hat to reduce the loss of body heat from your head. Move into warm locations during breaks; limit the amount of time outside. Carry extra socks, gloves, hats, jacket, blankets, a change of clothes and a thermos of hot liquid. Avoid touching cold metal surfaces with bare skin.

**MAILING LIST FOR NEWSLETTER**



If you would like to be added to the mailing list, for the newsletter to be mailed to your home monthly, please email the church office at [avonmumc@gmail.com](mailto:avonmumc@gmail.com) with "NEWSLETTER" in the subject line.

**HOUSEHOLD INFO UPDATE**

[Linda Kime] Membership Committee

In order to update our Church membership files we'd like to ask everyone to send to the church office all birthdays for their household, including birth year (which needs to be included for the program to accept the date). We can include these special dates in the monthly newsletter and directory, without birth year. Also, we'd like you to include wedding anniversaries for the monthly newsletter! We are a church family and want to celebrate these special dates with one another!

Please send updated information to [avonmumc@gmail.com](mailto:avonmumc@gmail.com) with "household info update" in the subject line.

**MUMC MONTHLY CALENDAR**

The MUMC monthly calendar is available on the MUMC Church website. Please be sure to look on the MUMC church website for calendar updates or changes.

DECEMBER 2021						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	



**FROM KEVIN SWEET AND FAMILY**

Several years ago, the church was getting rid of an extra Wurlitzer piano, and we took it home. We are now looking to pass it along. It comes with free delivery. Please contact Kevin for more details.



**INSTANT CHURCH DIRECTORY AND NEWSLETTERS ON WEBSITE**

[Kay Hunter] Website Admin.

While our monthly newsletters have been accessible on our MUMC website, we can now also access the **Instant Church Directory** which consists of members and friends of MUMC. In order to maintain privacy of this information, it is accessible only to those who have registered on the site and been approved by the website administrator. This will prevent those from outside of our church family being able to access any of your personal information.

On the website, go to the main menu on the left, guide your cursor to **Members Only** which will make **MEMBERS ONLY** appear to the right, slide further to the right which will make **Members & Friends Directory** and **Newsletter** appear. Click on your choice. If you have not yet registered, you will be requested to do so and once approved, you will be able to continually sign in by clicking on either of those titles and providing your password. For Directory access, click on the link to Instant Church Directory which takes you to their site. To log-in you will use your email address that's in our directory and a password you create with this site.

Hope you find these features of our website helpful.

**COVENANT TO CARE GIFTS**

[Linda Johansen]

I took a photo of all the presents before they were picked up. Thank you all. All sixteen children received at least one gift. Special thanks to Michelle Matava for assisting.



January 2022

**FROM BILL REBILLARD**

Good Day to All,

I would like to thank everyone for their generosity this season. As my first year comes to a close, I wanted everyone to know it's been a pleasure working for and with all of you. I have enjoyed the last year at MUMC and am looking forward to the years to come.

Thank you again,  
Bill Rebillard

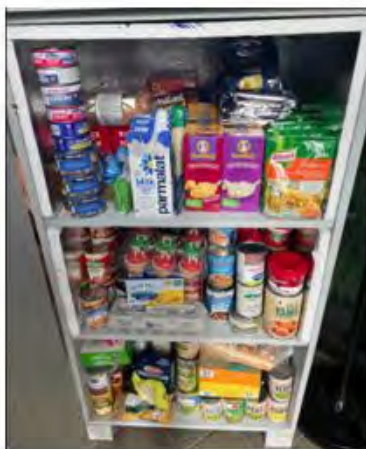


**FOOD PANTRY BOX AT MUMC**

Thank you to those that have already donated to the food pantry box in the glass foyer at MUMC. Please continue donating if you can and help spread the word. There is an on-going need for food in our community.

Once a month food is also brought to the Winsted UMC Community and when the MUMC 1<sup>st</sup> floor bin for Winsted UMC is low, food is taken from the glass foyer box to share with the Winsted UMC Community.

Thank you!                      Thank you!                      Thank you!



**CHURCHERY SCHOOL**

[Jean Baron] Churchery Director

On December 16<sup>th</sup> the sanctuary was filled with children and families coming together to celebrate Christmas. Our angels sang, played bells and ended the night recognizing our retiring teacher, Mrs Maysa. Lenore will be retiring at the end of the school year; she's been teaching at the Churchery School for 35 years. A big thank you to Virginia for helping us recognize her. Thank you to Pastor Joseph for accompanying the children on his guitar. We had three elves helping us, thank you Madison, Elianna and Sienna!



I hope you had a lovely Christmas, Happy New Year!

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**THE OTHER GOOD BOOK GROUP**

[Heather Kelsey] [hmkels@aol.com](mailto:hmkels@aol.com), (860) 678-1314



We will begin 2022 with a discussion of *Life and Death in Shanghai* by Nien Cheng. "In August 1966 a group of Red Guards ransacked the home of Nien Cheng. Her background made her an obvious target for the fanatics of the Cultural Revolution: educated in London, the widow of an official of Chiang Kai-Shek's regime, and an employee of Shell Oil, Nien Cheng enjoyed comforts that few of her compatriots could afford. When she refused to confess that any of this made her an enemy of the state, she was placed in solitary confinement, where she would remain for more than six years. *Life and Death in Shanghai* is the powerful story of Nien Cheng's imprisonment, of the deprivation she endured, of her heroic resistance, and of her quest for justice when she was released. It is the story, too, of a country torn apart by the savage fight for power Mao Tse-tung launched in his campaign to topple party moderates. An incisive, rare personal account of a terrifying chapter in twentieth-century history, *Life and Death in Shanghai* is also an astounding portrait of one woman's courage." [\[goodreads.com\]](https://www.goodreads.com) Our discussion will be held at 7pm on Sunday, January 16th. We will meet in the Parlor and on Zoom and all are welcome!

**AA / A Longstanding Outreach Program of MUMC**



Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) was founded in America in 1935 by Bill Wilson (Bill W.) and Robert Smith (Dr. Bob). Two centuries earlier, John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, established Methodist penitent bands in England, which organized on Saturday nights, the evening on which members of these small groups were most tempted to frequent alehouses. The hymns and teaching provided during these meetings addressed the issues the members faced, thus the connection between these bands and the current practices of AA.

Memorial United Methodist Church has always supported AA, and currently two groups meet weekly in our Fellowship Hall, Wednesday and Saturday nights at 8:00 PM. In addition, other Avon locations for AA meetings are available, one at the Avon Center Congregational Church each morning at 7:00 AM, and also Tuesday evenings at 8:00 PM at the West Avon Congregational Church on Country Club Road. If you know of anyone who would benefit from participating in any of these meetings, please have them contact any of the three churches mentioned. AA is truly a lifesaving program that has stood the test of time.

**BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP VISION, PURPOSE**



Everyone grieves differently and in their own way, and your grief will vary from day to day. There is no simple answer nor definitive process for your grief, but know you are not alone. This is the fundamental benefit of MUMC's Bereavement Support Group, knowing you are not alone and to remember Christ is always with us.

This Support Group provides a safe place to share each other's experiences, concerns and emotions that may be causing pain. Talking with the group about one's experiences with grief and listening to what others have experienced affords a great benefit to understand and process our personal grief.

Your time with the Bereavement Support Group is a time specifically set aside for you to process your grief, away from distractions and the day-to-day frustrations and interruptions we all experience. Here you may cry, remain silent, and express your emotions without fear of judgement, as the members of this group understand what you are going through.

At the end of each session, Pastor Joseph will lead us in prayer, to remind us Christ is always with us, and His grace supports us.

The Bereavement Support Group meets the third Wednesday of every month from 9:30am to 11:00am in the parlor and also on Zoom, Pastor Joseph provides the ZOOM meeting ID several days prior to the meeting. Masks are required for those not vaccinated, but not mandatory for those persons vaccinated.

**PEDALS FOR PROGRESS**

Small but Large  
[Anne Fitzgerald]

In anticipation of me driving to Maryland for Thanksgiving (and not too far from P4P's NJ headquarters) you may recall I put out a call for bikes and sewing machines so I could deliver them on the way. I was able to gather four sewing machines, three bikes and \$285! There were six donors plus four who donated money only. Vice President Gary Michel told me they would be going to Ghana. I am so grateful to all my friends and church family for how they have contributed to this wonderful cause over the years. Since May 2008 we have collected 721 bikes, 339 sewing machines and \$12,428! Thank you. Pedals for Progress is blessed.

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We have had Coffee Hour back in swing down in Fellowship Hall after 10:30am worship. Keeping it very light and simple this year. We appreciate the committee members giving us this service. See schedule below and on the kitchen main fridge.

COFFEE HOUR SCHEDULE SEPTEMBER 2021 – AUG 2022	
SEPTEMBER - FINANCE	
OCTOBER – STAFF PARISH RELATIONS	
NOVEMBER – HISTORICAL RECORDS/LIT. ARTS	
DECEMBER – TRUSTEES	
JANUARY – MEMORIAL GARDEN	
FEBRUARY – NOMINATIONS	
MARCH – PASTORAL CARE	
APRIL – MISSIONS	
MAY – MEMBERSHIP/MEMORIALS	
JUNE – EDUCATION	
JULY – CONTINUES TO BE VOLUNTEER ONLY	
AUGUST - CONTINUES TO BE VOLUNTEER ONLY	

**MUMC CHRISTMAS  
FAMILY FUN NIGHT**

Thanks to all who came out for our first Christmas Family Fun Night on Friday, December 17<sup>th</sup>. As we had hoped, we had multigenerations participating and enjoying time together. As promised, we had the opportunity to participate in crafts as well as frosting, decorating (and eating) Christmas cookies along with some delicious hot chocolate.

The kids loved the large variety of games and became quite skilled. As a bonus we had the opportunity to participate in Christmas Karaoke led by Pastor Joseph on guitar. We closed out the evening with singing of some favorite carols.

A special holiday evening of fun and fellowship!!!

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**MEMORIAL GARDEN**  
[Jeff Tremback]

Below are the interment instructions for the Memorial Garden.



*Memorial Garden Remembrance*

**Requested by:**

_____		_____
Name	Street Address	
_____	_____	_____
City, State	Zip-code	Telephone

**Remembrance Type Desired:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Place loved one's cremains (ashes) in the Memorial Garden.  
*Provides for bronze nameplate*
- \_\_\_\_\_ Memorialize loved one whose remains are elsewhere.  
*Provides for bronze nameplate*
- \_\_\_\_\_ I wish to pre-arrange for my own remembrance in the Memorial Garden.  
*Provides for bronze nameplate*
- \_\_\_\_\_ I wish to offer a gift to the Memorial Garden:  
In memory of \_\_\_\_\_  
In the amount of \_\_\_\_\_

**Bronze Nameplate Information:** Use additional forms for multiple requests. Please print information in CAPITAL LETTERS, maximum 20, including spaces.

_____	(First)	(Middle Name or Initial)	(Last)
_____		_____	
Date of Birth		Date of Death	

*The remembrance donation of \$500 provides for the bronze nameplate as well as the perpetual care of the Memorial Garden.*

Please follow these instructions if you wish to have cremains interred in the Memorial United Methodist Church (MUMC) Memorial Garden.

1. Contact the Memorial Garden chairperson to begin the process. Call the church office to get the chairperson's phone number. The MUMC office phone is: 860-673-2111.
2. The chairperson will:
  - a) explain the interment process;
  - b) provide the Memorial Garden Remembrance form;
  - c) coordinate and schedule the interment and service with the pastor and the family;
  - d) order and facilitate delivery of a bronze nameplate.
3. A completed Memorial Garden Remembrance form is required for all interments.
4. Please request at the crematory that the cremains be pulverized to a fine consistency. This process is common and produces cremains which are easier to inter or spread on top of the ground.
5. The Pastor of MUMC or clergy member of your choice may say some prayers and/or speak briefly. Then the cremains will be respectfully interred by the family and/or friends and/or Memorial Garden chairperson. Some people keep a small amount of the cremains to place in a small urn as a keepsake. It is also an option to spread the cremains on top of the ground in the garden area rather than inter them in the ground.
6. No indication or marker will be placed at the site of the cremains to identify where the cremains are located. A bronze nameplate (to be mounted on a plaque in the garden) with an asterisk after the name signifies that cremains are located somewhere in the garden.
7. Cremains alone, without any type of container, may be interred in our Memorial Garden. Cremains cannot be interred in our garden if they are placed in any type of container before being placed in the ground.

**Messenger Article**  
**Stephen Ministry Awareness**  
**The Importance of Empathy**

Empathy is choosing to see ourselves in another despite our differences.

It's recognizing that the same humanity - the same desire for meaning, fulfillment, and security - exists in each of us, even if it's expressed uniquely. - Vivek Murthy

Empathy is a word that is used often by many people. It's commonly known that empathy is a good thing to have, but it isn't always a priority in people's lives.

Did you know that 98% of people have the ability to empathize with others?

While a large majority of the population is capable of empathy, sometimes its practice is limited.

- What is empathy, and why is it important?
- Can empathy be developed, or are we born with a certain amount?
- Are some people just naturally better at empathizing?
- Is it as important as some people say to practice empathy?

In simple terms, empathy is the ability to understand things from another person's perspective. It's the ability to share someone else's feelings and emotions and understand why they have those feelings. Empathy is essential in almost every aspect of daily life. It allows us to have compassion for others, to relate to friends, loved ones, co-workers, and strangers, and it has a significant beneficial impact on the world.

Healthy relationships require nurture, care, and understanding. Any relationship that lacks empathy and compassion will soon flounder. When people only think of their own interests, the other people in the relationships will suffer.

If one person in a relationship forgoes seeing things from the other's perspective, they will likely have interpersonal issues. No two people are ever going to think exactly alike, and no two people will have the same experiences. Both people in a relationship bring their own ideas, life experiences, and struggles. Without trying to relate to one another's feelings and perspectives, people in relationships will likely feel unloved and uncared for.

Empathy from a world perspective is infinitely important, especially when it leads to compassion. This type of empathy pushes people to dive in and help when there are major disasters. People are willing to help out others that they have never met because they know that they, too, would need help if things were reversed.

Continued .....

Without compassionate empathy, the world would be a much darker and less functional place to live.

While there is some evidence that the ability to empathize is traced to genetic predisposition, it's also true that empathy is a skill that can be increased or decreased.

Feel free to watch a brief video on building skills that increase empathy. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UzPMMSKfKZQ>

Stephen Ministers use empathy to support others in a time of need. If you like to use empathy and enjoy caring for others, God might call you to serve as a Stephen Minister. Your first step is to learn more about getting involved.

To explore the role of Stephen Minister, or if you know someone who needs a Stephen Minister, reach out to Pastor Gene, Deacon Deb, and/or call one of our Stephen Ministry Referral Coordinator's: Barbara Vasquenza (women) 860-712-2710 or Mike Motyl (men) (860) 559-3724 for more information.



**PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO FIND OUT LATEST HAPPENINGS! [www.avonunitedmethodist.com](http://www.avonunitedmethodist.com)**

**CHECK OUT OUR FACEBOOK FOR NEWS! [Avon Mumc](#)**

**PLEASE JOIN US ON FACEBOOK OR YOUTUBE FOR SUNDAY SERVICE AT 10:30am, SEARCH FOR [Avon Mumc](#)**

What a pleasant surprise I had when Pastor Joseph came with Kay Hunter last week! I always enjoy their visits so much. MUMC is so fortunate to have Pastor Joseph as their minister.

Many thanks, much love, +  
God bless.

Love,  
Muriel Kelly



The gift of Christ's self-giving  
Is to redeem the people and make  
Them holy to fulfill God's purposes.  
Titus 2: 11-14

Christmas, 2021

Dear Family and Friends

Truly these have been dark days, but Christmas brings the assurance that light cannot be overcome by darkness. For the second year, our annual Christmas letter begins with gratitude to God for our family's health and safety during this pandemic.

**Aaron and Jaime's** family continue to flourish. Grace (almost 13), Jake (10), Sawyer (almost 8), and Augustus (almost 2) continue with home schooling. The pandemic has limited their extracurricular activities.

**Dawood and Suzanne** are watching Rayyan (age 5) grow in all aspects. They are seeking to adopt another child, but the pandemic has impacted their adoption process. Sadly Dawood's father Ashraf died unexpectedly in November.

**Jim and Judy** continue to learn new ways of both ministry and mission. Jim is part of two classes via Zoom and Judy has tried to keep the church members connected in these trying times. We continue to push back at the effects of aging through regular exercise, healthy eating and too many doctor visits.

Our church opened for in-person worship in October with about 1/2 the congregation attending and the other half worshipping remotely via Zoom.


We pray that God's light will shine in your lives now and always.

Jim and Judy Hoffman

With fond best  
wishes to our friends  
at Memorial  
from Jim & Judy



## "The Oak Tree"



**A** mighty wind blew night and day.  
It stole the oak tree's leaves away.  
Then snapped its boughs and pulled its bark  
Until the oak was tired and stark.  
But still the oak tree held its ground  
While other trees fell all around.  
The weary wind gave up and spoke,  
"How can you still be standing, Oak?"  
The oak tree said, "I know that you  
Can break each branch of mine in two,  
Carry every leaf away,  
Shake my limbs, and make me sway.  
But I have roots stretched in the earth,  
Growing stronger since my birth.  
You'll never touch them, for you see,  
They are the deepest part of me.  
Until today, I wasn't sure  
Of just how much I could endure.  
But now I've found, with thanks to you,  
I'm stronger than I ever knew."  
-Johnny Ray Ryder, Jr.