

Memorial United Methodist Church Avon, CT



Guiding To and Growing Through the Christian Life

Pastor, Rev. Sungmu Lee PhD

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Church Email: avonmumc@gmail.com Website: avonunitedmethodist.com

Church Office Hours: Tue, Wed, Fri 9 am – 2 pm Church Sexton Hours: Mon – Fri 6:30 am – 10:30 am Sunday Worship Schedule:

8:30am Worship Service with Communion

9:30am Sunday School for all ages

10:30am Family Worship Service

On line worship:

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/avon.mumc/ Youtubehttps://www.youtube.com/user/AvonMUMC

Welcome to the year 2023!

As we begin another new year, I would like to share one of my favorite books in the Bible. That is Ecclesiastes. Why do I like it? It is because I believe that Ecclesiastes is full of wisdom useful for human life and helpful for understanding the relationship between God and humans.

I think the author was an elderly person who looked over every aspect of life, trying to know what endures and what lasts. Here is the way he put it: "I considered all that my hands had done, and I realized all was vanity and a chasing after wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun."

In the words of Ecclesiastes, all of our work, despite our best efforts, is mostly vanity. The writer of Ecclesiastes says, "I build, I made great, I acquired, and I gathered." He did everything that we have done. And yet, all of this doing is mere illusion. It all goes down into death. There is nothing new under the sun.

You may think that Ecclesiastes would say that work is pointless, and therefore, should be

avoided. Yet, that is not true. The writer of Ecclesiastes urges enthusiastic, vigorous engagement in work, because work is one of the gracious things God gives us to do in this world. The results of our work may not last forever, but in the meantime, our work is joyous, active creation.

Do you want to live a happy life in 2023? Then, listen carefully to the book of Ecclesiastes. As we begin a new year, I recommend you to read the entire book (only 12 chapters!), remembering the following: When you set human work as the ultimate goal in your life, it will become like chasing the wind. However, if you regard it as God-given gift, then you can enjoy human work itself.

Let us do our best, but not seeking results too much in the year 2023. Then, we can enjoy the process of the toil and eventually, have unexpected good results. I pray that in the coming year, you and I will have the wisdom of Ecclesiastes and live a happy life. Happy New Year!

Sungmu Lee

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PLEASE JOIN US ON FACEBOOK OR YOUTUBE

FOR SUNDAY SERVICES, SEARCH FOR Avon Mumc

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

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



Martin Kibbe
Peter Tremback
Kevin Oommen
Justin Hunter
Colin Holtzman
Dave Chase
Mary Tew
Deb Slevinsky
Kristen Baker
Amanda Holtzman
Brett Holtzman
Jean Pickens

14 Jennifer Lamoureux

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



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

A card would be so appreciated.

Katie Morris's temporary address with her daughter as she recovers from her fall:

c/o Robin K. 101 Indian Hill Road Canton, CT 06019

Judy C.
The Residence at
Brookside
117 Simsbury Rd.
Avon, CT 060001

Lorraine Z. 9 Keystone Circle Avon, CT 06001

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

NEW YEAR, NEW STAFF!

Linda Kime, SPRC co-chair

December 25th 10:30 am worship marked **Elizabeth Knox**'s final time providing song and piano for us as our music director since mid-June. We appreciate her work with our choirs for many weeks. In front of the congregation and by a note with her staff gift, I thanked Elizabeth and her husband **Carl** for their talent and time shared with us.

January 1st 10:30 am worship will be first Sunday for **Tamari Witkin**, our new music director! We look forward to hearing her amazing talent on piano and our organ! Please join to welcome Tamari to our MUMC family with open arms and love. Choir will begin the following week, and we are excited for them to work together.

This week we have a new office manager starting! Martha Hillemeir comes to us with experience from First Christ Church of Christ in Simsbury. Kay Hunter will assist Martha mastering our bulletin prep. Martha will be getting used to email and phone response to our questions/requests. When you have time to meet Martha, please keep visits to office short as she is learning lots about how we do things at MUMC. Kay will be creating our newsletter for now as volunteer.

Our office hours are now Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9 am - 2 pm in response to budget constraints on new salaries.

Please remember that if you have any suggestions, concerns about a staff member or how things are being done, these comments need to be shared immediately with SPR. I know we all want to help, but proper communication channel will allow SPR to guide our staff and not confuse them with many bosses. Thank you for your cooperation.

PAIRS AND SPARES STARTING UP AGAIN

Anne Fitzgerald 860-673-1216 afitzgerald138@gmail.com

We all do it; we see people at church on Sunday, know their names and perhaps the town they live in, but beyond that we truly know nothing about them. Where are they from? Are they employed, work remotely or in an office, and if so, where? Do they have hobbies or come from where we did? Spending an evening with them is a wonderful way to get to know our church family better.

Over the years this group has been called Pairs and Spares, Eats for Eight and Fellowship Dining, and this year we'll repeat Pairs and Spares. Here's how it works:

First, let me know that you would like to participate. You can be solo or in a couple, it makes no difference.

Next, I will put together a group of people who will take turns hosting the others in their homes, initiating meeting at a restaurant, having potluck at the church, or whatever, and we encourage inviting another person or two who is or are not in another group and might not normally be invited to your home.

Once the original group determines a convenient first date and who will be host, the host decides who the spare(s) will be. The host provides the entrée and the others provide side dishes, dessert, and beverage.

At the first dinner, the group may decide who will host next and when, then that host will invite another spare(s). Or the date decision can be made when convenient. Repeat the third time. There is no specific time frame, just whenever it works for the original group during 2023.

If you would like to participate, you can email or call me, or sign up on the landing and I will assign groups to begin dining in 2023.



FROM THE CHURCHERY SCHOOL

On December 12th, the Sanctuary was filled with over 50 people who

came to listen to our **4-year-old class sing**, and then spend time together in Fellowship Hall for a wonderful reception. Thank you Kay Hunter who created a beautiful program for us and Bill who made sure everything was in place for a successful evening.

Our registration for the 2023-2024 school year is going well, we are full in our 3's and 4's class, we have a few openings in the 2's classes.

The state requires that every preschool has a designated **Head Teacher**, I'm happy to announce that Jennifer Lamoureux has been accepted into that position. Congratulations Jenn!!

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



UMARMY CHRISTMAS COOKIE SALES

Laura Gorden

Thank you to all who purchased Christmas Cookies on December 18. We sold out quickly. We made \$429 which will help cover the registration fees for next summer's mission week.

If there is interest in doing a UMARMY "Pop-up weekend", please let me know. We will have to choose a date and coordinate with Gina Grubbs, the NE Region Director.

MEAL FOR WINSTED

Laura Gorden

On **December 3** we delivered 64 meatloaf meals to Winsted. Thank you to Jeff Tremback and Linda Kime for helping me cook the food. Dave Gorden joined us to fill food containers and went with me to deliver the meals to Winsted. Jeff and Linda also washed the dishes and cleaned the kitchen.

The 2023 Schedule for Winsted meals is:

February 4 August 5
April 1 October 7
June 3 December 2

Always looking for people to help me with this mission project. Would love to have the youth help me some time.



"SING A SONG OF CHRISTMAS"



On December 18, church members and guests came together to raise our voices in Christmas celebration. We sang many favorite Christmas hymns and tunes, accompanied by Music Director Elizabeth Knox. Ellla Ross joined in on flute for a few lovely songs as we filled the sanctuary with many joyful voices! Following the carols, we all enjoyed punch, cookies and fellowship. Thank you to all who came and those who helped plan the event.

FROM THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY

Diane Hornaday

A reminder that all donations to be included in the 2022 reports should be in the office no later than **December 28**. Envelopes for the coming year will be in the narthex beginning Jan. 1. Giving reports will be mailed out the last two weeks in January.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Greg Slone

As of the latest Finance Report at the end of November, the church's general fund had a deficit of roughly \$6,000 year to date. Another quarter of the church apportionment was paid in December.

Work is underway on the 2023 annual budget with a target to complete in January as a final picture of 2023 giving intentions becomes clearer. The finance committee would like to thank Vicki Kuziak for recently completing the financial audit. The finance committee will work with church council in the new year to enact any recommendations coming out of the financial audit.

HELLO FROM THE MEMORIAL GARDEN COMMITTEE

Jeff Tremback
Chair of the Memorial Garden Committee

The garden is all buttoned up for the winter. The Garden Committee and the garden will be on vacation until spring of 2023. In April, the Garden Committee will conduct it first meeting to plan for the rebirth of the garden after its long winter's nap. Have a wonderful winter season. We shall see you all in the spring. God bless.

PASTA SUPPER Friday, January 20



Join us for our first supper of 2023 sponsored by

Revitalization Task Force. Prepared by Brian Hunter, Jr. (chief cook for Tunxis Hose Co. #1) with their secret sauce recipe. Pasta, salad, desserts and beverages – free will offering.

Serving continuously from **5 to 6:30 pm**. Come join us for great food, fellowship and conversation. Invite friends and family to join you and to introduce them to Memorial!!!



THE OTHER GOOD BOOK GROUP

Heather Kelsey hrmkels@aol.com (860) 670-1163

We will begin 2023 with a visit to Terry Pratchett's Discworld as we read *Monstrous Regiment*. "Women belong in the kitchen

- everyone knows that. Not in jobs, pubs or indeed trousers, and certainly not on the front line. Nonetheless, Polly Perks has to become a boy in a hurry if she wants to find her missing brother in the army. Cutting off her hair and wearing the trousers is easy. Learning to fart and belch in public and walk like an ape takes more time. There's a war on. There's always a war on. and Polly and her fellow raw recruits are suddenly in the thick of it. All they have on their side is the most artful sergeant in the army, a vampire with a lust for coffee, and a secret. It's time to make a stand". [terrypratchettbooks.com] Our discussion will be held Sunday, January 15th at 7pm. It features a hybrid format as we meet both on Zoom and in the Parlor. If you wish to participate by Zoom, please contact Heather for the link. Remember, all are welcome!

THANKSGIVING BASKETS FOR COVENANT TO CARE FAMILIES

Linda Johansen, Missions Committee

Members of the Congregation responded generously to the request from Covenant to Care to provide assistance for Thanksgiving dinners for **16** families.

On Sunday, November all of the donations were placed on the altar and blessed as our gift in Jesus' name to these families.

Thank you for your generous donations of food.

COVENANT TO CARE CHRISTMAS GIFTS

Linda Johansen, Missions Committee

To those who donated Christmas gifts to Covenant to Care this year, you are a blessing. When I learned, via email, that **45 children** needed gifts, I turned into Thomas, the doubtful one. I wondered how would we get all these gifts? Our congregation is not very large. If we elected to buy less than the 45, which children would we cut from the list? Last year we had 19 children to buy for.....

On and on my worry went. Our mission members told me "We can do it." Michele and Jean diligently organized the list and made an ornament for each name. Ornaments were hung on the angel tree and we were ready. Sunday, December 4th was coming and ornaments would start to disappear from the tree. (Hal and I missed that Sunday at church. Not the best weekend to go camping.) Again, I worried.

The following Monday I came to look at the angel tree. I should have believed all along. Only 3 ornaments were left. If I had only held on to my faith in God.

I thank everyone who worked hard to make this happen. We may not be able to see these children's faces but they are there, don't doubt it.





FELLOWSHIP HOUR

Linda Kime



Fellowship Hour is back in full swing down in Fellowship Hall after Sunday worship. Keeping it very light and simple this year. We appreciate the committee members giving us this service.

January host is **Memorial Garden Committee**.

FROM PASTORAL CARE:

DECEMBER FIRST FRIDAY HOLIDAY POT LUCK LUNCH HONORED FIRST FRIDAY "SAINTS"

December brought us our annual holiday lunch with roasted turkey and all of the fixings with a great variety of side dishes and an abundance of scrumptious desserts, but the "icing on the cake" was having Tony Rauche with us to accompany us as we sang a few carols, but I think most of us just enjoyed hearing Tony play.



KEEP US INFORMED!

Just a reminder that if you should hear of someone from the congregation who is ill or has another need for pastoral care, please notify the church office who will share the info with the Pastor and Pastoral Care Committee.

Too often we all think someone else has passed on this information especially to the Pastor and that is not always the case. Better to get several messages than none. Thanks for your help in keeping us all informed and able to keep all in prayer.





JANUARY FIRST FRIDAY POT LUCK LUNCH

Won't you join us for our January pot luck lunch on **Friday**, **January 6** for some delicious food, good conversation, friendship and fellowship.

Bring your favorite dish to share if you can, but as always it is not compulsory. We always have plenty to go around. Hope to see you there!!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!! RESURRECTION OF GAME NIGHT!

Friday, February 24 6 pm

Covid prevented us from safely holding our annual game night for a couple of years, but we are now looking forward to once again sponsoring our traditional game night. Come for supper and stay for games!!! We'll be providing a variety of homemade soups, etc. Please bring your favorite board games! This has been a wonderful intergenerational activity in the past and we look forward to doing it again. Please join us!

THURSDAY LUNCH BUNCH



When Covid struck and we were no longer able to gather for First Friday "potluck" lunch, we began meeting every Thursday in the Memorial Garden, sitting in our

lawn chairs at safe distance and bringing our own lunch – no sharing.

This has become such an enjoyable custom that we continue to meet **every Thursday (except the week of First Friday Pot Luck)** now with the cold weather meeting in Fellowship Hall.

This allows us to enjoy a hot cup of coffee or tea prepared by our barista – Kathryn! Always lively conversation and fellowship. Won't you join us? Just pack up your own lunch (can heat in microwave if needed). There's always room for more!!!

CHURCH DIRECTORY UPDATE

Linda Kime, Membership Committee

To better capture what we currently look like (especially those families with kids in their photos), I'm asking everyone who would like to, please **send me a recent photo for the directory** to lmk318@aol.com with 'PHOTO' as the subject. Even if you don't want a new picture, please send me any other updates such as cell phone number. We are still collecting birthdays and anniversaries. If you have not yet done so, please send this information to the church office avonmumc@gmail.com with 'UPDATES' as the subject. Thanks everyone!

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.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALTAR FLOWERS

Barbara Chase



The **2023 Calenda**r for altar flowers is up and running. 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, 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 via the church office. She will be glad to reserve a week for you.

If you ordered Altar Flowers for a Sunday Service and are not able to pick up on Sunday, they will be available for pickup in the MUMC office during the office hours of Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9:00am - 2:00pm.

COMMUNICATION

Kay Hunter

BLAST E-MAILS: In an effort to cut down on the number of e-mails that are sent to the congregation, we will be sending one blast e-mail every Wednesday announcing and reminding all of upcoming events and important information. If you have something you would like included in this announcement, please forward to the church office and to me no later than Wednesday morning.

NEWSLETTERS: Please send all newsletter articles to me and to the church office as we will be combining forces to develop and publish the newsletter. In order to publish the newsletter in timely manner, please try to observe the due date. Of course there are exceptions for timely events. Thanks for your help with accomplishing this.

MUMC TRUSTEE NEWS

December 31, 2022

Crompton, Johnny Fillian, Linda Johansen, Hal Johansen, Marsha Booth Kennedy, Bruce Merritt, John Perotti

- Sexton Bill Rebillard monitored McDermott Electric as they installed an outlet under the Parsonage kitchen sink, and he also monitored SafeSide Chimney, which cleaned the parsonage chimneys just before Christmas. Trustee Mark arranged for these jobs to be done after conducting the Annual Parsonage review in early November.
- Trustee Hal contacted Sansone Snow Plowing and set up our winter service after Trustee Dave staked out the parking lots to avoid the plow tearing up the turf. Memorial Garden Chair Jeff Tremback also laid out a barrier in the Garden area to prevent turf damage there also.
- Trustee Marsha has been accepting Building
 Use Request forms online to be processed
 more quickly and efficiently, and recently she
 booked a Girl Scout Dinner held in midDecember and a Paul Howard Music Concert
 in January 2022, both using Fellowship Hall
 facilities.
- Sexton Bill pulled the old ballast out of the lighting over the upstairs elevator entrance and installed a new ballast to create more efficient lighting in that area.
- Churchery School continues to use the lower church entry for student and parent arrival and departure, with the inner door being locked except for two half hour periods early morning and midday for state-required security purposes.
- Sexton Bill worked on the inner lower church entry door overhead opener after it began malfunctioning but eventually had to call the Stanley Company to come and replace worn

parts, worn partly by improper operation of the door over time.

- Trustees Mark and Johnny finished mounting the new speakers in the Sanctuary and removing the old speakers after that, greatly improving the listening experience of both live and online church attendees. Trustee Bruce continues to work with Don Austin and Kevin Sweet to install a rotating camera in the balcony area so the Bell Choir can be filmed live while performing there, as well as being able to sweep the sanctuary from above.
- Trustees will continue to work with Records and History and David Gorden as they design a historical display in Thornburg. Sexton Bill will move the TV monitor to the east wall.
- A large new Pavilion to be located on the east lawn has been offered to the church as a memorial gift from a long-time church member. The idea was presented by Linda Arnold and Kevin Sweet and discussed at the December 5th Trustees meeting and, after its approval by Trustees, was forwarded to Church Council for consideration at their January 2023 meeting.
- Sexton Bill continues to use our new Fisher salt spreader almost weekly, especially for pretreatment of the lots when snow/ice are predicted. This gift from Churchery Board will save the Church thousands in commercial ice mitigation.
- Farmington Continuing Education has once again asked to use our Fellowship Hall during the winter and spring months twice per week in the morning for yoga classes. Their offer of \$10 per session usage fee, however, is not a fair amount, considering their need for us to light and heat that space on those mornings.
- Sexton Bill was able to obtain the codes from PJ for our security camera over the lower foyer entrance and has it operational again 24/7.

- Laura Gorden continues to manage the Food Pantry) now in the lower foyer for the winter) originated by Office Manager Virginia two years ago and more popular than ever. Laura would ask that we members check it regularly and bring in contributions, perhaps on Sunday while attending church service. Trustees approved its placement on a three-month trial basis in 2020 but it now appears to be a permanent part of the church's Mission Committee outreach.
- Rusted pipes burst in the wall of the lower men's bathroom in mid-December and flooded the hallway outside the main storage room.
 Sexton Bill vacuumed up the water, shut off the water to that area, opened a hole in the lav wall behind the urinal, bought a new Sloan Valve at Plimpton and Hills, installed the new device, and solved the problem for us.
- Trustee Linda received word from our insurance carrier, Brotherhood Insurance, that they needed to do a walk-through inspection of the entire church by the end of the Calendar year. Sexton Bill did a full preinspection, then accompanied Linda and Hal as the inspection was conducted to the satisfaction of the carrier.

• The Fall 2022 MUMC Church Improvement Update

West Side Drainage Rebuilding (\$1000)

John Fillian/Glenn Rivard supervising.... not yet funded

Parking Lot Surface Repairs (\$1900)

Hal Johansen supervising... funded by the Parking Lot Fund

Fisher Salt/Sander (\$1500)... funded by Churchery School

Bill Rebillard supervising and operating

3 Honeywell Programmable WiFi-controlled Thermostats (\$390) ... funded by a long-time church member couple

Bill Rebillard supervising

Additional Gifts include:

Commercial Carpet Cleaner (\$575) ... gift of long-time church members

Lifeline AED- (**\$1500**)- gift of Memorials Committee

Tree Removal and landscaping (\$2,800)- gift of Memorials Committee

Sanctuary Soundboard, and Speakers (\$5,000)- anonymous donor

Pavilion (proposed- est \$5000)- gift of long-time church member

HAPPY NEW YEAR 2023 FROM YOUR MUMC TRUSTEES

WON'T YOU BE A WORSHIP LEADER?



Worship Committee

Volunteers are needed to serve as worship leaders for both **8:30** and **10:30** Sunday services. 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.

PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO FIND OUT LATEST HAPPENINGS! www.avonunitedmethodist.com

CHECK OUT OUR FACEBOOK FOR NEWS! Avon Mumc

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP VISION, PURPOSE

Allen Nixon

Everyone grieves differently and in their own way, and your grief will vary from day to day. There is no simple answer or definitive process for your grief, but know that 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 you, and His grace supports 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.

The Bereavement Support Group meets the **third** Wednesday of every month, except July and August, from 10 am to 11:30am. The meeting is held in the parlor and also on Zoom; the Zoom meeting ID and password will be sent to Group members several days prior to the meeting.

KEEPING MUMC "PEANUT FREE"

While we cannot guarantee MUMC will be totally peanut free, we would appreciate your help in making every effort to support a peanut free environment when you



are bringing something for yourself or to share at meetings or events at Memorial -in the interest of safety and wellbeing of all and especially our little ones.

FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS



MUMC food pantry is still available for those in need in our community. Box is now located in atrium at downstairs entrance. Most useful food pantry donations:

Thank you!

Boxed milk or Powdered milk Cereal bar/ protein bars/ granola bars

Pasta sauce and pasta

Cracker packs

Peanut butter

Soups

Tuna

Vegetable Oil

Cake mix

Knorr sides

Cookie mix

Single serve rice cups

Mayo

Beans / black, red navy, baked

Salad dressings

Cereal

Instant Oatmeal

Canned vegetables

Jelly

Canned fruits

Coffee / tea

Single serve applesauce & fruit cups

Hot Chocolate

Beef Stew

Canned meats

Stuffing

Plus:

Personal hygiene products

PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO FIND OUT LATEST HAPPENINGS!
www.avonunitedmethodist.com

CHECK OUT OUR FACEBOOK FOR NEWS! Avon Mumc



MEMORIAL UM CHURCH 867 WEST AVON ROAD AVON, CT 06001