



Guiding To and Growing Through the Christian Life

Pastor, Rev. Sungmu Lee PhD

Parsonage Phone: (860) 507-6081

Cell Phone: (631) 456-1713

Email: [sungmulee@icloud.com](mailto:sungmulee@icloud.com)

We often encounter the poor widow in the stewardship season. The story of the widow's mite is the all-time great story of Christian giving to the church. There was no crowd to witness that she put the two small coins into the temple treasury. No one, that is, except Jesus.



He said to his disciples, "This poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. For all of them have contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had" (Mark 12:43-44).

Our Finance Committee has met every month, making plans and discussing how to lead our church into faithful stewardship. You would be surprised if you knew how much time and energy each finance committee member has spent in planning and leading the church. The committee realizes that our church needs more financial resources for current expenses as we have a deficit budget.

When I say, "current expenses," you may think of paying for utility bills, salaries, office products, and so on. Yet, they also include the items like our church apportionments to the annual conference and mission and outreach programs, as well. In other words, they are expenses necessary for our church to do the basic functions.

Jesus tells us something that goes against our value system in pointing out the poor widow to us. However, here is an important point that we should not misunderstand: Jesus praised her because she put in everything she had, giving herself to

God, not because she gave a small donation to the church. I have met people who have a lot but give little to the church, saying, "The amount is not important according to Jesus."

Let us not take advantage of the poor widow in order to justify our giving patterns. I am not saying that we should give

everything we have but saying that we should give as generously as we can, especially when our church needs our financial support. The offering should be one of our priorities.

As you know, I do not talk about generous offering very often, but I have the responsibility to inform you of our financial situation that our income has not met our expenses during the past year, and that we have had to use our reserve resources.

You will soon receive the intention form for 2024 offering. I would like you to consider prayerfully what gifts you can joyfully offer to Christ's work in this place from your resources of time, talent, and money. And the way of giving should be the celebration, rather than the obligation.

Where did the poor widow go? Where can we find her again? Jesus wants us to look at the poor widow in our Christian life and to be like her. When you and I become the poor widow who gave her living to the church, we will see the modern poor widow through each other's faces. Then, we will experience Jesus Christ, who gave himself to us so that we may live eternal life. Amen.

Sungmu Lee

Church Office: (860) 673-2111  
 Office Fax: (860) 673-5777  
 Church Email: [avonmumc@gmail.com](mailto:avonmumc@gmail.com)  
 Website: [avonunitedmethodist.com](http://avonunitedmethodist.com)

Church Office Hours: Tue, Wed, Fri 11 am - 4 pm  
 Church Sexton Hours: Mon-Sat 6-8 am Mon-Sat 1-2 pm (estimate) on call as needed via cell (860) 960-3360

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/>  
 Youtube <https://www.youtube.com/user/AvonMUMC>

**INSIDE THIS ISSUE:**

3	<b>Advent Concert – First UMC Torrington</b>
4	Altar Flowers
8	Bereavement Support Group
2	Birthdays / Anniversaries of the Month
9	Calendar of Upcoming Events
4	Churcery School News
	Deck The Halls
3	Fall Goodie Bags
4	Fellowship Hour – Trustees
7	Finance / Financial Secretary
3	<b>First Friday HOLIDAY Pot Luck Lunch</b>
6	Food Pantry
7	Girl Scouts Bronze Awards
6	God Giving Us Hope
8	Halloween Sites and Sights
3	<b>Lunch Bunch</b>
9	<b>Meals for Winsted</b>
6	Membership Updates
8	Memorial Garden
7	Missions – Thanksgiving Baskets
5	<b>Other Good Book Group</b>
1	Pastor Lee Message
8	Peanut Free Facility
9	Praise God!!!
7	Pumpkin Patch Results
2	Remember Those Who Cannot Get Out
5	Reverse Trick or Treat
4	Staff Parish Relations
3	Veterans’ Recognition
5	<b>Women’s Bible Study Group</b>

**DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS**

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



- |   |                 |    |                  |
|---|-----------------|----|------------------|
| 1 | Sally Parylak   | 14 | Kay Hunter       |
| 2 | Leslie Arnold   | 16 | Xavier Corbett   |
| 2 | Beth Sweet      | 17 | Kathryn Robinett |
| 4 | Michele Matava  | 24 | Carol Merritt    |
| 7 | Abby Brinn      | 24 | Noel Rendell     |
| 7 | Maureen Fillian | 29 | Krista Kennedy   |
| 8 | Sue Yankus      |    |                  |

**DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES**

“Happy Anniversary” to the following people who are celebrating anniversaries this month.

- Harold and Pam Palmer
- Bruce and Ruthellen Corbett
- Scott and Krista Kennedy
- Bruce and Carol Merritt

If you would like your special day(s) added, please notify the church office at; [avonmumc@gmail.com](mailto:avonmumc@gmail.com).

**REMEMBERING THOSE WHO HAVE TROUBLE GETTING OUT**

A card would be so appreciated.

- |                                                                             |                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Judy C.<br>The Residence at Brookside<br>117 Simsbury Rd.<br>Avon, CT 06001 | Katie M.<br>11 Briarwood Road<br>Farmington, CT 06032 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|



**HOLIDAY  
FIRST FRIDAY  
POT LUCK LUNCH**  
Friday, December 1  
12 noon

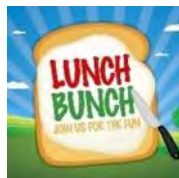
Our first holiday event!!! Come to enjoy roasted turkey and all the fixings!! Bring your favorite holiday dish to share if you can!! Enjoy a great time singing carols and sharing time together as well!!!

**FALL GOODIE BAGS FOR  
SPECIAL PEOPLE**



As has been our tradition, we from Pastoral Care Committee gathered together and prepared goodie bags to be delivered to our special people. Muffins, apples, cuties, candy, tea bags, bookmarks and honey were placed into decorated bags. In addition to those hand delivered, we also mailed to three of our folks who have moved south. We will once again be preparing and delivering to all for Christmas. Keeping all close to our hearts!!!

**THURSDAY  
LUNCH BUNCH**



Lunch Bunch is a casual get together of MUMCers every Thursday at noon (except week of First Friday Potluck Lunch). We meet in Fellowship Hall and bring our own lunches, sometimes share some cookies. It has become such an enjoyable custom.

We share stories, memories and even discuss current affairs a bit. Always lively conversation and fellowship. Won't you join us? Just pack up your own lunch, and grab a lawn chair (limited bench space available.) **There's always room for more!!! Just give us a try!!!!**

**VETERANS' RECOGNITION**

For the first time, we honored MUMC and family veterans with the placement of flags along our property on West Avon Road, each flag containing the name, branch and time of service of a veteran. This was well received and appreciated by many. The flags will be carefully stored to be used again next year and hopefully with the addition of others that you would like to honor for their service.

Thanks to Hyeonjin Kim for providing the video version of the FIVE military songs during worship which provided the opportunity for all to see the lyrics and honor each by singing along .



**SPIRIT OF JOY  
ADVENT SERVICE**

Sunday, December 3 2 pm

First UMC, 21 Fern Drive, Torrington. Musical service with musicians from churches and community. Let's consider carpooling!!! **Choir with participants from all churches.** If you'd like to be part of this choir, there are **2 rehearsals remaining:** Sat. 12/2 - 10:30 am; Sun. 12/3 1:15 pm (choir warmup).

A CT Central Cooperative Parish Event.



## ALTAR FLOWERS

Barbara Chase /  
Linda Arnold

## CHURCHERY SCHOOL NEWS

Jean Baron, Director



The holidays are here, and the Churchery School Children are having fun making decorations and presents for their families. We are getting ready for our annual **Christmas concert on December 11 @ 6:00**, feel free to join us for what promises to be a beautiful evening celebrating the birth of Jesus.

Opening still remains on the 2023 calendar for **December 31**.

The signup genius is all ready for 2024. If you would like to order flowers for Sundays in 2024 go to our 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](#). She will be glad to reserve a week for you.

Registration for the 2024-2025 school year has started, please know that if you have a child of preschool age, you are welcome to register your child (or grandchild) now. We open registration to the public on December 4.

Have a wonderful Christmas!  
Jean, Susan, Jess, Yuki, Jenn, Jaclyn



## FELLOWSHIP HOUR

Linda Kime

Worship

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).

Responsibility for hosting Fellowship Hour rotates among the many committees of MUMC. Keeping it very light and simple this year. We appreciate the committee members giving us this service.

December Fellowship Hour Host is...

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

who holds title to and manages the property belonging to our local church; keeps accurate records of its proceedings and reports to the Church Charge Conference to which it is amenable. Chairperson facilitates the Board of Trustees' work within the church; advises the Church Council concerning actions of the Board of Trustees; reviews annually, with the Chairperson of the SPRC, the church-owned parsonage. And much, much more!!!!



## STAFF PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Linda Kime

Rick Zeiser and Linda Kime are co-chairs for 2024. Liaison for Bill is Matt Ross; liaison for Tamari is Julia Sweet; liaison for our new treasurer Dave Gorden is Peter Perkins; liaison for Pastor Sungmu is Linda Kime. Any concerns with staff should be brought to liaisons and not address yourselves or to any other parties. This way the proper channel is implemented. Thanks for your cooperation.

Liaisons will be conducting year-end evaluations with feedback from staff to SPR and from SPR to staff. New 2024 contracts will be signed.

**PLEASE NOTE-** Office hours are now Tues, Wed, Fri 11am - 4pm. This will work better for Martha's energy due to chemo.

## REVERSE TRICK OR TREAT

For the first time in many years, we were able to actively participate in Reverse Trick or Treat at the Avon Health Center to deliver in costume, cards – that each child had prepared – to the residents of Avon Health Center. There were many smiles and some tears as the children eagerly visited the residents and wished them Happy Halloween.

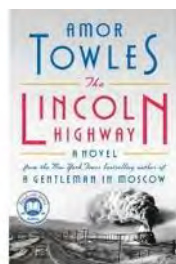
The visit was preceded by the preparation of the cards, and enjoyment of some great goodies prepared and provided by Heather Kelsey. Thanks to Kay Hunter and Joan Robinson for escorting the families to AHC. A fun time was had by all and the children experienced the joy of giving!!!



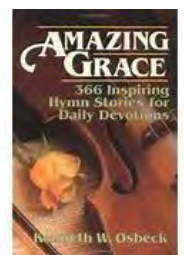
### THE OTHER GOOD BOOK GROUP

[Contact: Heather Kelsey,  
[hmkels@aol.com](mailto:hmkels@aol.com)  
(860) 670-1163]

We will not meet in December but will take the time to get a head start on January's title, *The Lincoln Highway* by Amor Towles. Our discussion will be held Sunday, January 21st at 7pm in the Parlor. Watch for more information in the January newsletter.



### WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY Hymn Stories for Daily Devotions Chris Calandriello



Our study on Saturday mornings based on the devotional book, **Amazing Grace: 366 Inspiring Hymn Stories for Daily Devotions** continues. There are scripture references which correspond to the words that we study and discuss what they mean in our lives. We sing these hymns, but no experience is necessary in reading the Bible or music! We pray as the Holy Spirit leads us and enjoy time together in fellowship.



## MEMBERSHIP UPDATES

Linda Kime

Reminder to report ANY changes of phone numbers (if only use cell then office needs to know to delete home phone and give cell numbers), email address and preferences updates, physical addresses. Therefore this information will be current in our MUMC Family directory and membership computer record.

---



## MEMORIAL'S FOOD PANTRY

**FEED THE  
HUNGRY**

**Please help keep our food pantry stocked by bringing non-perishable food items to**

be dropped off in the blue bin located outside the kitchen. If you would prefer to make a monetary donation to the missions committee, notated for food pantry, I am willing to do the shopping.

### **Most useful food pantry donations for the winter season:**

- Boxed milk or Powdered milk
  - Cereal/Instant Oatmeal
  - Pasta sauce and pasta
  - Mac and cheese
  - Soups/beef stew
  - Canned fruits
  - Tuna/salmon
  - Canned meats/chicken, beef, spam
  - Rice
  - Beans/black, red, navy, baked
  - Peanut butter/Jelly
  - Coffee/Tea/Hot Chocolate
  - Personal hygiene products
- 

*Christmas*  
BEGINS WITH  
*Christ*

## GOD – GIVING US HOPE IN THE FACE OF DESPAIR

From a Facebook post:--

The year my dad - who was a pastor at the time - was caught in his addiction, the Church leadership asked him and my mom to not attend the Christmas Eve service. The investigation was ongoing and they wanted him to step back while it happened. What they didn't count on, I don't think, was for me to show up at the service. I have a deep commitment to tradition so when my parents said we weren't going to the service, I resolved to go by myself. Under the weight of uncertainty and the fear of what I had suspected might just be a true accusation, I showed up to the candlelight service. Families were there to celebrate - it was Christmas after all.

I found my usual spot at the front and as the first carols rang out, my tears began to fall. I felt like an imposter. I was a cloud of grief and darkness amidst a cheerful celebration. I felt guilty for dampening the time of rejoicing. As I sat, I found myself talking to Jesus. "I'm ruining your party," I told him.

It was his response in that moment that changed Christmas for me forever. He told me: "I came to that manger as a baby not for those in celebration, but for those in mourning. I came for you." In this moment. Right here. For the first time in my relatively easy life, I was tasting heartache (and oh if only I knew how much more would come). And it was there that Jesus showed me the heart of Christmas. Jesus stepped down to pursue the broken and the hurting and the lost.

If this year broke you down. Isolated you. Left you grieving or fearful or hurt. I want you to know that you don't have to muster up cheer. You don't have to feel like a downer in the midst of celebration. You can sit at the feet of a savior who came for you - where you are right now. That's how Immanuel works. It's God with us in the dirt giving us hope in the face of despair.

*"Those who walk in darkness have seen a great light, on those living in spaces of deepest darkness a light has dawned." - Isaiah 9:2*



## FINANCIAL SECRETARY

Diane Hornaday

Time to start praying on what you will be able to do to support your church for 2024. Soon you will be receiving, via email, my request for your intentions for next year. There will also be a form for you to indicate ministry areas in which you are interested in participating. In the meantime, enjoy the Thanksgiving holiday with your family and friends.

## FINANCE COMMITTEE

Greg Slone

Adjusting for carryover from last year, the current general fund balance as of the end of October was a year to date deficit of roughly \$17,000.

The pumpkin patch was again a success as the pumpkins raised just over \$6,000 and the bread raised just under \$3,000 for a total of roughly \$9,000.

## MISSIONS

Linda Johansen



Sending a big thank you to all who donated to provide Thanksgiving dinners for eight Covenant to Care families.

Thank you also the Sunday School children and staff who created foam Thanksgiving wreaths for each of the families as well as gifting some to members of Memorial.



### RESULTS!!!

Pumpkin sales = 18606. Bread + tips = 2888.  
2022 pumpkins = 18993  
2021 = 21755  
2020 = 16794



## GIRL SCOUTS ACHIEVE BRONZE AWARD

On Thursday, November 16, MUMC's own Alexa Hunter and Makayla Tardiff were among the members of Girl Scout Troop 66304 who were promoted to Girl Scout Cadettes and earned and received their Bronze Award with a ceremony here at Memorial.

Their joint Bronze project was the creation of reusable and sustainable coloring books and activities for the Churchery School children. They spent a lot of time thinking through the details of what would be appropriate for the students.

Congrats to all of these Girl Scouts!!





## Greetings from the MEMORIAL GARDEN

Jeff Tremback

Hello Everyone,  
*Zzzzzz. Zzzzzz.*  
Shhhhhhhh ! Quiet, please. The garden is sleeping till spring.

The Memorial Garden Committee

---

## HALLOWEEN SIGHTS AND SITES



A band of youth and adults journeyed out on Saturday evening, October 28, to visit some amazing sites with outstanding Halloween decorations. Starting at the home of Chaz Calandriello who spent weeks preparing his yard

with an incredible number of characters, we then drove to several other sites in Plainville to see some other amazing sights, finishing off on Metacomet Road in Farmington where many neighbors join forces to provide festive displays on many houses – an incredible sight!!! It was well worth the time to see all that these people created to make Halloween fun!!!



## 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 judgment, 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 11:30 am.** 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 at Memorial -in the interest of safety and wellbeing of all and especially our little ones.





## PRAISE GOD!

(Upper Room 11/22/2023)

*About midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the*

*other prisoners were listening to them. – Acts 16:25 NIV*

I have usually made a point to arrive early to worship so that I have time to listen for God’s message for me. But then my church began playing praise music ahead of the service – music I am not familiar with and really do not enjoy. So I started arriving just prior to the sermon, thinking this is the only thing I need from God.

One Sunday the sermon was based on Acts 16:16-40 The story of Paul and Silas in prison spoke directly to my heart. Rather than dwell on their pain and suffering into the night, they began to pray and sing praises to God! That message had a powerful impact on me. Praise is a sign of love we can always offer to God, who is faithful, generous, and compassionate. More than that praise is the affirmation of God’s love for us Moving forward, I began to join in every praise

song, whether I was familiar with it or not. Later, I would search the internet for the less familiar songs so I could learn them. Now I don’t want to be late for worship because I don’t want to miss the songs of praise. Being present and fully prepared to participate is something I have come to value – and enjoy!

*Prayer: Heavenly Father, attune our hearts to worship you in spirit and truth. May we all find joy in praising you. Amen.*

- Roberto Alonso Rodriquez (Nuevo Leon, Mexico)



## MEAL FOR WINSTED

Laura Gorden

December 2 will be our final meal this year prepared for the people of Winsted. Thank you all for your support throughout the year.

We look forward to continuing this ministry in 2024. Watch for next year’s schedule in the January newsletter.

## DECEMBER DATES TO REMEMBER!!!

Date	Time	Pg.	Event
Fri. 12/1	12 pm	3	Holiday First Friday Lunch
Sat. 12/2	8 am	9	Meal for Winsted
Sun. 12/3	2 pm	3	Spirit of Joy Advent Service–First UMC, Torrington (Parish Event)
Mon. 12/11	6 pm	4	Churchery School Christmas Concert
Sun. 12/24	5 & 11 pm	10	Christmas Eve Worship

**PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO FIND OUT LATEST HAPPENINGS AND UP TO DATE INFORMATION!**

**[avonunitedmethodist.com](http://avonunitedmethodist.com)**

# DECEMBER 24 WORSHIP SERVICES



**10:30 AM** *4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent*  
*(no 8:30 worship or Sunday School)*

**5 PM** *Christmas Eve Worship with*  
*carols, communion, candles and*  
*children's pageant*

**11 PM** *Christmas Eve Worship with*  
*carols, communion and candles.*



**MEMORIAL UM CHURCH**  
**867 WEST AVON ROAD, AVON, CT 06001**