

THE GOOD NEWS
From The
Stratford United Methodist Church

2600 MAIN STREET • STRATFORD, CT 06615-5893
SUMC phone: 203-375-5851 ~ fax: 203-375-6890

SUMC & Good News email: secretary@sumcct.org
SUMC website: www.sumcct.org

JANUARY 2025



The Rev. Suhee Kim, Pastor
Affiliated Pastors: Rev. Caroly Gibson,
Rev. George Hilton, Rev. James Stinson
Chris Muller, Director of Music
Beth Buckmir, Preschool Director
Church Office: Beth Sullivan, Secretary
Worship Technology: Jayden Zeleznik

Building Relationships, Working Together



"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28

JANUARY 2025 WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday, Jan 5 - 10:00 am Communion

Sunday, Jan 12 - 8:15 & 10:00 am

*Sunday, Jan 19 - 8:15 & 10:00 am -
Martin Luther King Remembrance*

Sunday, Jan 26 - 8:15 & 10:00 am

Sunday School Schedule

January 5, 2025 - No Sunday School

January 12, 2025 - Sunday School

January 19, 2025 - Sunday School

January 26, 2025 - Sunday School

February 2, 2025 - No Sunday School

February 9, 2025 - Super Bowl of Caring

February 16, 2025 - Sunday School

February 23, 2025 - Sunday School

**Sunday,
December 1,
2024
Joint service
with the
First Baptist
Church**



Sunday School Year in Review

Sunday School had a very busy year in 2024 and completed several mission projects. Take a look at what we accomplished:

We started the year with our annual Super Bowl of Caring Food Drive which included collecting canned goods for the Sterling House Food Paney and serving chicken soup to the congregation and Neighborhood Breakfast visitors during coffee hour on Super Bowl Sunday.

During the Lenten Season, the Sunday School continued their mission outreach which resulted in raising \$720 for the Heifer Project, \$225 for Our Woven Community in Bridgeport, and \$200 to Campfed. To celebrate a job well done, the kids threw water balloons at Miss Stefanie on Rally Sunday, the same day we welcomed Pastor Abby!

In November, we headed out on the train to NYC to visit John Street Church, the oldest Methodist Church in the New York Conference. Then we ended the year with our annual Advent Party and Christmas Pageant.

Thank you to our church families for sharing your children with us and entrusting us with their Christian Education. It means the world to us. We can't wait to see what 2025 brings!



In November, we headed out on the train to NYC to visit John Street Church, the oldest Methodist Church in the New York Conference. Then we ended the year with our annual Advent Party and Christmas Pageant. See pictures on the following pages.



Thank you to the Fords, Scofields and Fullers for helping with Gingerbread Decorating at this year's Advent Party



Thank you to Steve James, Steve Robertson and Cal Robertson (aka The SUMC building crew) for helping assemble the manger for the Christmas Pageant



Christmas Cantata and Sunday School Christmas Pageant





CHRISTMAS BLESSING



A Blessing for Love to Come at Christmas

God we are waiting for love,
not the simple kind or the sweep-you- off- your feet kind,
but the absurd kind.

The kind wrapped in rags,
resting in a bucket of animal feed.
Love enough to save us all.

Blessed are we who look for love
Deeper, fuller, truer---than we have ever known,
than we could have ever hoped for.

Blessed are we who seek you,
The light that dawned so long ago
In that dark stable.
Love given. Love received.
Receive this gift, dear one.
Love has come for you.

*From The Lives We Actually Have:
200 Blessings for Imperfect Days
by Kate Bowler and Jessica Ritchie*

INCIDENTS AND HAPPENINGS

OUT OF OUR PAST

1940: the 150th Anniversary of First Methodist Church, Stratford

Just last month we received in the mail a copy of the Anniversary program listing the events to celebrate our church's 150th birthday in 1940. Can you imagine, someone actually kept this program in their personal papers all these years, passed down from one generation to the next! Barbara Moore, widow of the late Raymond Moore, Jr., found this program among her husband's papers. He had inherited it at his mother's death in 1987. Audrey Moore had been a long standing member of the church. Barbara thought to send it back to us. How grateful we are to people who help us preserve our history.

The program lists all the events held from October 6 to the 13th to celebrate. The Rev. Melville S. Bulmer was our Minister. In 1940 there was a world war raging in Europe and Asia, with the US maintaining neutrality and trying to stay out of the war.

The program has a short history of the church, and a list of all the Ministers appointed to Stratford, which was first a circuit, then a charge. As a circuit we shared ministers with local parishes. As a charge, beginning in 1834, we had our own full time pastor.

On Sunday October 6 there was a 7 am Communion Service, the 9:45 am Church School, and the 11 am Morning Worship with a sermon by Bishop Herbert Welch of New York City. The anthem was the "Hallelujah Chorus." At 5 pm the Wesley Fellowship met for a talk by Mrs. Alice Euerle telling the story of the Methodist Circuit Rider. At 6:30 pm Miss Ann Wistrup told the story of Jesse Lee. And then at 7:45 there was a dramatic presentation on "the Coming of Jesse Lee to Stratford." Rev. Bulmer played Jesse Lee, and other actors included Herbert Gledhill, Paul Shutterworth, Walter Curtis, Mrs. Robert Elliott, Maurice Curtis, Irene Doe, Cornelia Bishop, Jeanette Turney, Ruth Blamey, and R.T. Yale.

On Tuesday evening there was a Home Coming dinner, talks by former Ministers, and a Musical program. Wednesday evening featured a Spiritual Fellowship Night with scripture, hymn singing, a talk by the Rev James T. Jones of Bethany Church, and testimonials from members of the congregation. Thursday evening was Community Night: "The Church in Action" with quest speakers including Connecticut Governor Raymond E. Baldwin, Mr. W.H. Wilcoxson, Mr. E.W. Peck, and the Rev. Stanley Selleck.

Then the following Sunday, October 13, the Church School met at 9:45 am, and at the 11 am Morning Worship the Rev. Bulmer preached on "Our Church Through the Years." At 5 pm the Wesley Fellowship met. At 6:30 pm Mr. E. W. Peck addressed the Epworth League on "Our Church, 1790-1940." Meanwhile the Jr. Epworth League also met at 6:30 pm for information on "Old Hymns and Stories behind them" by Miss Irene Doe. And finally at 7:45 pm there was a Youth Rally led by the District Superintendent of the N.Y. District, Dr. Norman Twiddy.

Wow, what a celebration!

2025 will be our 235th Anniversary. What stories we can add to those of 1940 as our church has served the community.



Neighborhood Breakfast

The Neighborhood Breakfast is **every third Saturday at SUMC**. Eat-in breakfast will be served from 8:30am to 10am. Guests will be greeted at the back parking lot entrance. We would greatly appreciate your help serving breakfast, donating items, or your time, if you can. If you are interested in helping, send a message to missions@sumcct.org.

Next month's breakfast will be Saturday, January 18th.

**Please donate breakfast items such as fruit, granola bars, muffins, yogurt, etc.
Thank you for your donations!**

Toiletry Items are Being Accepted!

Our team has been sharing donated toiletry items with guests who attend our monthly Neighborhood Breakfast. These items are greatly appreciated, and we could use more donations to offer at breakfasts in the months ahead.

There is a donation bin located in the narthex, and both men's and women's items are being accepted. We will gladly accept any size item (full size, samples, etc.). Donations suggestions include (but are not limited to): soap, shampoo/conditioner, toothpaste/toothbrush, deodorant, razors/shaving cream, lotion, tissues, and feminine products.

Golden Hill UMC Community Supper - Volunteers Needed

The Golden Hill United Methodist Church in downtown Bridgeport is one of several Bridgeport churches that provide evening meals for those in need on different evenings of the week. Golden Hill hosts a meal every Wednesday. They provide the food, the location, and the planning. Others volunteer to provide the labor.

Our upcoming turn at Golden Hill UMC Community Supper is February 19th.

A cook and about 3 additional volunteers will be needed to start around 2:30 - 3:00 to prepare the meals. One to two volunteers will be needed to stay and help pack the meals from 5:30 on. Please contact Pat Knebel (pknebel@yahoo.com) if you are interested in volunteering.

The Lord's Kitchen

The next Lord's Kitchen will be on Monday, March 17th.

Thank You From Sterling House Community Center!



The SUMC Mission fund donated the Food Drive donations and \$2,000 to Sterling House Community Center to help kids in our community!



Staying In The Loop

The stove and ovens in the SUMC kitchen are currently not in use because the Stratford Fire Marshall has deemed the required fire suppression in the hood does not comply with town regulations. In addition, there may be a small gas leak associated with the stove so the gas has been turned off. The Trustees and Church Council are investigating options to repair/replace the fire suppression system and the stove with hopes of having this resolved quickly. If you have any questions, please speak to me, Steve James, or Pastor Suhee.

Peace,
Burdette James, Church Council Chair



Arts and crafts will be meeting on Wednesday January 15 at 1 pm in the All Purpose Room. We will be making Valentines for the shut-ins and church folk. Everyone is welcome to join us. We will be using a lot of stickers and some glue.



Choir News

**We always seeking new Choir members and
Grace Notes Handbell Choir members for this season.
If you know someone who loves to sing or reads music,
or would like to try playing the handbells, please let them know!**

If you play an instrument, we would love it if you
shared your talents with us in worship.

If you're interested in joining or have questions, please
speak to Chris after worship or send an email to music.director@sumcct.org.

Required rehearsal times are flexible.

There is also an option to sign up to participate in the seasonal
Advent/Christmas and/or Palm Sunday/Easter choir.

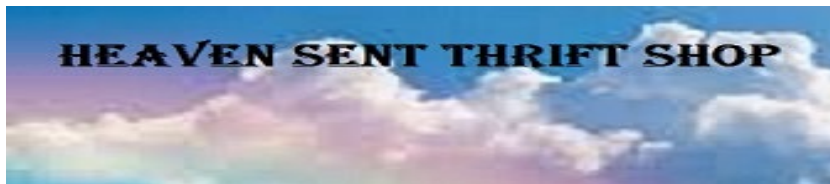
Support our Music Program

If you would like to support the music program, donations can be made to the Church with a note/notation
intending their direct support of this important ministry.

Your support allows us to hire extra musicians and singers for special events such as our seasonal Cantatas
(Palm Sunday and Christmas) and Easter services.

Thank you!

Chris Muller, Director of Music



All of us at the thrift shop would like to thank all of our
customers and donors for helping us raise 15,842.24 dollars
for 2024

After Christmas Prayer

Creator God, hear our grateful praise. Jesus Christ is born! Remind us of the miracle of His humble birth; those who heard the angel and followed a star, those who placed their trust in you and obeyed. Give us strength and Your guidance that we may now begin the real work of Christmas. Send us forth with the Christmas message in our minds and hearts. In Jesus name we pray. Amen



Bible Word Search:
CHOOSE TO SERVE GOD
 (Joshua 24)

W	S	S	E	N	T	I	W	T	A	E	K	U	C	O
L	H	P	I	O	T	X	C	B	K	V	W	O	C	T
L	I	O	W	K	H	R	R	H	Z	O	I	G	R	X
A	E	X	L	J	Y	A	V	W	Q	X	Y	B	B	C
A	W	A	O	E	H	Z	U	W	Z	X	S	E	B	U
Z	S	N	R	A	H	M	Y	E	N	P	J	P	F	E
M	B	Q	M	S	T	E	Q	W	G	O	G	Q	S	G
H	Q	Q	V	Z	I	C	A	B	S	K	H	O	M	Y
I	W	L	R	U	E	G	I	R	S	E	O	A	W	P
G	C	P	H	A	A	O	A	G	T	H	R	E	E	T
N	I	N	L	U	U	D	K	Q	C	B	F	V	T	I
P	L	R	V	H	M	O	S	E	S	J	F	I	E	A
H	X	D	C	S	O	S	I	A	N	V	C	M	D	N
G	F	N	H	O	G	G	P	S	G	L	I	N	Y	S
P	V	P	G	J	D	W	P	E	V	R	X	J	F	U

ABRAHAM
 GOD
 MOSES
 WITNESS

CHOOSE
 ISRAEL
 SERVE

EGYPTIANS
 JOSHUA
 WHOLE HEART