An invitation For Inquiring Minds
† What does it mean to be a United Methodist?
† How can I get involved in the church?
† What do United Methodists believe?
† How can I become a member of UMC, Branford?

Several of you have asked these and similar questions lately. Please know that you are invited to the next “Inquirer’s Class” which is designed to teach more about The United Methodist Church and be a place where you can ask questions.

The next session will be held on Thursday evenings from 6:30 to 8:00 pm on February 13 and 20. Please let Pastor Kent know if you are planning to attend.

Note: If there are any youth who are interested in Confirmation Class, Pastor Kent would like to plan a series of classes for you this Spring.

Small Groups

Monday Morning Quarterbacking is an opportunity to dig deeper into the Sunday Sermon. Pastor Kent shares additional insight into the scriptures and the participants are encouraged to ask questions and share reflections on the material which was preached. Please consider attending on a weekly basis or occasionally as the Spirit moves. This group will continue to meet on Mondays at 10am in the Church Office.

Our Tuesday 7pm and Thursday 10am Study Groups continue to meet. Our curriculum is titled When Happiness Happens by Max Lucado. Please stop by the church office to pick up your copy. A donation of $15 is requested.

In the "How Happiness Begins Study Guide with DVD", bestselling author Max Lucado looks at several "one another" statements in the Bible that reveal how the happiest people on earth aren't those who have the most but those who are willing to give the most away.

God wants to bring joy to the people of this generation, and in his Word, he has given us practical and applicable ways to quarry that joy by sharing it with others. Although the world can be a lonely and disappointing place, we can be God's representatives to bring about a cascade of kindness! While we won't be able to solve every problem, we can bring a few smiles to a few faces, and in this way, we might even initiate our own quiet revolution of joy.

Sessions include:
• Accept One Another
• Bear with One Another
• Serve One Another
• Forgive One Another
• Carry One Another’s Burdens
• Love One Another

Men’s Breakfast: All men of the church are invited to join together for a delicious breakfast and engaging conversation as we discuss “Faith Commander: Living Five Values from the Parables of Jesus”.

Join the Robertson men of the hit television show, Duck Dynasty®, as they tell stories and discuss some of the Bible’s most-loved parables. In this five-session video-based small group Bible study, we will learn about faith-based values and how to apply them to our life. We are not meeting in December, but the series will continue in February with a lesson on Rowdy Kindness.

The next gathering is scheduled for February 15 at 8am.

Pastor Kent
February Events

Sun 2/2: Soup-er Bowl (following service)
Wed 2/5 7pm: Church Council
Wed 2/12 5:30pm: Learn & Play Board
Thurs 2/13 6:30pm: Inquirer's Class
Sat 2/15 8am: Men's Breakfast
Mon 2/17, 12:30pm: Ladies Luncheon
Wed 2/19 6:15: Prayer Meeting
Wed 2/19 7pm: Faithful Stewards
Thurs 2/20 6:30pm: Inquirer's Class
Mon 2/24- 6:30pm: Staff Parish Relations
Wed 2/26 7pm: Ash Wednesday Service
Fri 2/28 6pm: Community Dinner

February Birthdays

1  Jennifer Sygiel
3  Sam Appleton, Jim Lee
6  Len Dunican
8  Rick Gregoire
12  Joyce Emslie
13  Sue Beatty, Dick Robinson
15  Joan Dunican
16  Lori Cartwright
17  Raymond Nickou
18  Charlotte Rispoli
19  Madelyn Caruso, Pam Johnson
20  Paige Machnicz
25  Heather Mazzucco

February Anniversaries

13  John & Carolyn Flynn
19  Ro & Dick Robinson
27  Charlie & Pat Steeves

SUNDAY SCHEDULE
Worship & Sunday School - 9:30am
(No Sunday School on 1st Sunday of the month)

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS
Tues thru Thurs 9:00am-2:00pm

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
The 20th of every month - please send articles to
Lori Cartwright at loriahlcart@gmail.com

Missed a Sunday? Unable to attend worship?
You can catch the weekly sermon video at
www.umcbranford.org

“Where the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Power of the Holy Spirit converge to change hearts and lives.”
Sunday, February 2

Souper Bowl of Caring is a youth-inspired, youth-led movement working with other groups across the nation, including schools, churches, local businesses, corporations, passionate individuals, and NFL teams to tackle hunger in their local communities during the weeks leading up to the biggest celebration in football, the Super Bowl. The vision is transforming the Big Game into a nation-wide movement inspiring people to give locally and make a collective impact on hunger.

We will be hosting a soup luncheon after service on Sunday, February 2. We'd love for you to make your favorite soup and bring it in to share with your church family! There is a sign-up sheet on the wall in Connector Hall.

Along with the luncheon, we are asking everyone to bring in cans of soup and a dollar (or more!). Everything that is collected goes to support local women's shelters in the area. There will be a goal post for collecting the cans of soup and two soup pots for the dollars - one pot for the Chiefs and one for the 49ers. Choose your team and donate to a great cause!

To learn more, visit www.souperbowl.org

Additional Principle Mortgage Opportunity

How can you change your $10 donation into $19.13? Give it to the church and indicate that you want the donation to be an extra principle payment against the mortgage.

Currently, our mortgage is about $418,000. The mortgage balloons in 2025. We anticipate that it will be refinanced. If it is refinanced at the current rate and terms, the mortgage will be paid off in 2035.

The additional ten dollars put towards the mortgage principle reduces interest by $9.13. So your $10 becomes $19.13!

Thank you to John Beatty for providing this information.

RMD: An Alternative Giving Method

Those of us age 70½ or older know that the RMD [Required Minimum Distribution] is the amount that must be withdrawn from any IRAs that we have.

The good news is that if you direct the IRA trustee to make the payment directly to UMC Branford, the distribution does not show up on your tax return—no federal tax, no state tax. The donation can be your normal pledge or an extra donation, if you are so inclined. It’s quick and easy, and you pay less taxes than if you received your RMD and then wrote a check to the church.

Thank you to John Beatty for providing this information which may be an opportunity for some members of our congregation.

“Where the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Power of the Holy Spirit converge to change hearts and lives.”

GOD’S WORK OUR HANDS

Ephesians 2:10
For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.
Learn & Play is in full winter mode! We have been concentrating on winter, snow, and ice activities during the month of January. This month we will move on to traditional themes of Dental Health, with a planned visit from our Dental Consultant on February 4 to talk to the children about how to keep their teeth healthy. We will have fun Valentine’s Day activities, and then we will move on to different forms of currency. Our Bible themes will be Daniel and the Lion’s Den, Daniel and the Fiery Furnace, and the story of the Widow’s Mite. We’ll finish the month with the story of Martha and Mary as we begin preparing for the Easter season. Our faith point will be “Jesus loves me,” and our Scripture verse is “Love one another as I have loved you.” John 13:34

We will be conducting our annual Soup Can Collection from January 20 through February 2, with all cans collected going to the UMCB food pantry for distribution. Once again, our goal is to collect 100 cans of soup. You can watch our football travel down the field counting the cans collected. Can we make a touchdown?! Special sports-related games and snacks are also planned to culminate our week.

Our Preschool and Pre-K programs have been enjoying large muscle movement activities with Coach Shane. Twice a month, Coach Shane brings us super-fun and sometimes silly activities to get us moving. Even though our children go outside most days even in the winter, it is such a good program to release some of that extra energy that the children have during the winter months.

Weather permitting, we will be visiting our friends at Artis to bring them some Valentine’s Day cheer.

Robin Costa

Thank you to everyone for your great generosity in giving me the Christmas bonus. I appreciated all the cards, thoughtful gifts, and goodies that were left on my desk as well. Such a wonderful season. I hope 2020 brings you Peace and Joy.

Brenda Prunty

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To the Members and friends of UMC, Branford: Thank you for the very generous Christmas bonus which was handed to me several weeks ago during worship. I am grateful for your warm expressions of thanks during worship and the many kind words you spoke to me individually afterwards. The financial gift is always helpful, but please know that your support of our mutual ministry together is invaluable.

Blessings,

Pastor Kent

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I want to thank all of the folks that sent cards to Amos and Gloria.

Gloria surprised her mom Bev and her dad Scott by coming home for 2 weeks! She was in church and was able to visit with many of us at coffee hour.

Amos was "amazed" and very grateful for the love he felt hearing from us. He is stationed in California, the last I heard from him.

Our church family is just awesome!

Blessings,

Marcia

“Where the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Power of the Holy Spirit converge to change hearts and lives.”
FRIDAY, FEB 28 • 6pm

Come for the delicious dinner and desserts and stay for the awesome and engaging fellowship with members of the church and the community!

Sewing for God
Mondays 4:30 to 7:00 pm (except Feb. 17)

We have been sewing like crazy and have accumulated 13+ tops with backings. Our plan is to layer them on Feb 3 and then begin quilting. We are hoping to deliver 12 quilts (including 2 veteran quilts) by Feb. 17 to our friends at Artis.

After that, we’ll continue to make more tops to build up our stash of quilts.

If you can assist in any way with pinning or pressing, please join us - weather permitting. All supplies are provided, or you can bring your own.

As always, if you have any questions, please contact Rosemary at (203) 589-1620 (leave a message).

Commmunion in the Community

Pastor Kent leads regular Worship Services with Holy Communion at Artis Senior Living and Guilford House. You are invited to join him any Sunday at 11:30am at Artis or on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month at 1:30pm at the Guilford House.

Ride Share to Church

Sometimes members of our church family are unable to come to church because they need a ride. Would you be willing to be on a list of drivers who would be willing to provide a ride for them? If so, please see Mike Cartwright.

Let’s Do Lunch, Ladies!

Come join us for Lunch
Monday, Feb, 17• 12:30pm – 2pm Weather permitting
Café Fiore • 420 E Main Street, Branford

SAVE THE DATE:
Monday, March 16 at Donovan’s Reef

Secret Pal

Somebody is thinking about you…
Hoping you’re having a beautiful day…
Sending caring thoughts your way…
Saying a little prayer for you…
And thanking God you’re in the world!

Thank you to everyone who participated in the 2019 Secret Pal program. The Reveal Brunch had great food and fellowship as Secret Pals were revealed.

2020 Secret Pal assignments have been delivered or mailed. Remember, there are no set rules other than to have fun and remind your Secret Pal that you are thinking of them in some way throughout the year. And don’t reveal who you are until January 2021!

If you forget who your new Secret Pal is, just see Rosemary.

“Where the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Power of the Holy Spirit converge to change hearts and lives.”
Pastor Kent will be in the office or around the church building on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 8am to 1pm (with the exception of being at Artis from 11-11:30 am on Wednesdays).

He welcomes anyone who wants to stop in and visit during those times.

If you would like to be in touch or schedule an appointment outside of those hours, Pastor Kent can be reached on his cell phone or by email: (845) 522-1233 UMCBPastor@gmail.com

We welcome contributions from the list of items in the connector hall or any other appropriate items. Help us help those in need!

Please continue to help support our friend at Ronald McDonald House. It’s an easy way to support the Ronald McDonald House New Haven so they can continue to provide their services at no charge.

It’s easy! All you need to do is remove the tab from each can before you recycle it. It’s fun! You can involve community groups and your family in supporting the cause without a lot of effort. Approximately 1,200 tabs make up a pound. Put a small jar on your counter and you will be surprised how fast it will fill up.

“Where the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Power of the Holy Spirit converge to change hearts and lives.”