Prayers, Presence, Gifts & Service

The building is CLOSED, but the church remains OPEN!!!

I celebrate that vital ministry is taking place through small groups, weekly worship, Community Dinner, food pantry support, and so much more! Our Learn & Play Christian Early Learning Center is also preparing to welcome children back into the building very soon!

With so going on, I want to encourage you to fully live out your membership vows of supporting the church through your:

• PRAYERS: Please pray for one another as we seek to remain physically, emotionally, and spiritually healthy. I encourage you to pray through the prayer list at the back of this newsletter. Please also consider joining the Prayer Blast email list. You may sign up on the church website.
• PRESENCE: You are encouraged to be "present" in ministry not by attending worship (yet) but by tending to your relationships with other church members. Please consider sending a card, making a phone call, or writing a letter.
• GIFTS: Your financial contributions are still needed, and you are encouraged to contribute online through our church website or by mailing your check to the church. Additionally, please be creative in finding ways to contribute your time and talents. Let me know if you need some ideas...
• and SERVICE: I’m thankful for those who have provided transportation, delivered groceries, and helped others in many ways. We can always find opportunity to serve Christ while ministering to others!

I join you in eager anticipation of resuming in-person worship. But until that time, may we all continue to live as faithful members of Christ’s holy church as we support local ministry by being faithful stewards of all that the Lord has entrusted to our care.

Ministry While Practicing Social Distancing

WORSHIP: We will be worshiping online until the restrictions for “social-distancing” are lifted. We will be pre-recording our worship services, which will be posted on the website early Sunday morning. Please visit the church website to view the most recent worship service. Look under the Sermons tab to view previous weeks’ services. If you don’t have access to a computer, you can use DialMyCalls to listen to an audio version of the scripture and sermon each Sunday. Dial 959-202-4UMC (4862) to hear the most recent Sunday Service.

PASTORAL CARE: Please know that Pastor Kent is available for Pastoral Care “visits” either by telephone or individual Zoom meetings. If you would like to be in conversation to help process an issue you are dealing with or just to “catch up,” please text or email Pastor Kent to arrange a meeting.

MEETINGS: Our committee meetings will be meeting via Zoom. Please go to www.zoom.us and click “Sign Up. It’s Free” to create your account. All committee members will automatically be sent an invitation to their meetings. If you would like to receive an invitation to join a meeting, please contact Pastor Kent ahead of time so you can receive the log-in information.

FINANCES: Because we’re not meeting in the church building, we are not receiving the offering during weekly worship. As you are able, please mail a check for your tithes and offerings to the church. This will enable us to stay current on all our financial commitments. We are also minimizing expenses where possible.

COMMUNICATION: Brenda has resumed her regular working hours in the church office from 9am-2pm. In the interest of social distancing, we are asking that you DO NOT visit the church office during those hours. If you must be in the office while she is working, please be sure to be wearing a mask.

Pastor Kent will not be holding scheduled office hours at this time. Please feel free to contact Pastor Kent for any Pastoral or ministry needs by texting or calling his cell phone at 845-522-1233 or by sending an email to umcbpastor@gmail.com.

Blessings, Pastor Kent
July Birthdays
1 Rosemary Luzzi
6 Philip Gregoire
10 Andrew Wolek
12 Jocelyn Neary
18 James Torello
19 Michael Mazzucco
20 Marcia Donnelly, Molly Mazzucco
22 Ellie Bowman
26 Erica Klein
27 Anne Jackson
28 Edward Perchaluk
29 Carole Viel

July Anniversaries
13 M.E. & Stephen Solomon
24 Heather & Michael Mazzucco

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

KEEP UP-TO-DATE WITH WHAT'S HAPPENING AT UMCB:
www.facebook.com/umcbranford

Also check out:
www.facebook.com/unitedmethodistchurch
www.facebook.com/umcgeneralconference
www.facebook.com/NYACUMC

Please note: While social gathering restrictions are in place, no events (including Sunday morning services) are taking place at the church. Committee meetings and some activities are happening online. Please contact your committee chair for more information.

July Events
Wed 7/1 7pm: Trustees
Wed 7/8 6:30pm: L&P Advisory Council
7/8 - 7/12: Aldersgate Conference (see article in newsletter)
Wed 7/15 7pm: Faithful Stewards
Wed 7/29 7pm: Finance Committee
Fri 7/31 6pm: Community Dinner

WEEKLY CALENDAR

MONDAYS:
10:10am  Monday Morning Quarterbacking:
During the quarantine we will be meeting by conference call. Please dial in at (425) 436-6385 using access code 841200#

TUESDAYS:
7-8:30pm  Pastor’s Bible Study Group:
Meeting online during the quarantine period. Please email Pastor Kent for a Zoom link or telephone number if you would like to join.

THURSDAYS:
10am  Pastor’s Bible Study Group:
Meeting online during the quarantine period via conference call. Please call (425) 436-6385 and use access code 841200#.

AA Online Meetings
For those in need, links to online and voice meetings can be found at:
https://www.aa-intergroup.org/directory.php

"Where the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Power of the Holy Spirit converge to change hearts and lives."
Do you have a joy you want to celebrate?
Do you have a need that only God can meet?

We want to celebrate your joys and join in prayer with you!

Your joys and concerns are important to your church family and we very much want to pray and rejoice with you in what God has provided and for his answers to your prayers.

Please text your joys and concerns to Pastor Kent at 845-522-1233 or to his email at umcbpastor@gmail.com.

Friday, July 31, 6pm

We will be making food and serving to any and all via "curbside" pickup.

Please pull into the church parking lot and into one of the spaces. One of the volunteers will bring out dinner(s) to you wrapped up and ready for travel.

"Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."

-- John 6:35 --

So dinner will be ready. Come be fed.

Meet Bishop Thomas Bickerton

He was raised in West Virginia where his family worked in the glass industry and raised him in the church from day one. At West Virginia Wesleyan College, he developed an appreciation for the stories each person has to tell, which later deepened as he had opportunity to travel the world. When asked about the best part of being a bishop, he responded, "Being a bishop." Bickerton is clearly enthusiastic about his ministry. Although a self-described driven personality, he talks about the importance of stillness, encouraging us to "just breathe" as an act of spiritual discipline.

Watch the interview online:
https://youtu.be/k8UhzUZFHs
As you are aware, the current pandemic has presented L&P with significant challenges. Hopefully, by the time you read this, the Center will have reopened.

How Can You Help?

Learn and Play is a vital ministry of UMC, Branford. As with any ministry, the funds available often limit how long things can be sustained in the event of an emergency that lasts as long as the current one has. This is where your help is needed. If you can make a special donation to this ministry, it would be...well...a Godsend!

Checks can be made out to Learn & Play and mailed to the church – please write “L&P Ministry” and your envelope number in the note. Or visit www.umcbranford.org and click on the “Give Online” button (lower right side of page) to make an online donation – please be sure to select "Learn and Play Ministry" from the drop down list and enter your envelope number.

If you have any concerns or questions, please contact Laurie Gagné, facilitator for the L&P Advisory Council, at gagnes@snet.net or 203-676-4287.

Small Study Groups Continue

Our Tuesday 7pm and Thursday 10:10am Study Groups continue to meet online during the quarantine period. Please email Pastor Kent for a Zoom link or telephone number if you would like to join the Tuesday evening study. The Thursday morning group is meeting via conference call. Please call 425-436-6385 and use access code 841200#.

PRAYER THAT MOVES HEAVEN AND CHANGES NATIONS

“The Daniel Prayer is born deep within your soul, erupts through your heart, and pours out on your lips — words created by and infused with the Spirit of God quivering with spiritual electricity.”

Many people today find that their prayers don’t “work.” And like a broken cell phone, prayer gets thrown out as unnecessary “clutter” in most people’s lives. Anne has found that while prayer does work, sometimes the “pray-ers” don’t. So she turned to the prophet Daniel for help.

This book, based on Daniel’s prayer in Daniel 9, will help you pray effectively for your nation, for your family, and for yourself. Anne answers questions such as:

How do I know the God to whom I pray will listen?
How do I know God cares about my prayer?
How do I know God will answer my prayer?
Why should I pray?
Does it matter where I am when I pray?
Are words in prayer all that matter, or does my attitude affect prayer?
What difference does my prayer make?

Monday Morning Quarterbacking

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. During the quarantine, we will be meeting by Conference Call at 10am. Please dial in at 425-436-6385 using access code 841200#.

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.
**Passing of the Peace - Video Edition**

We are hoping to be able to share the Peace of Christ with each other, even though we cannot be in the same room. Please consider recording a short video of you and your family saying your name, a special message and end with "Peace be with you."

When recording the video: press start and count to 5 (in your head) before speaking. Then count to 5 (again, in your head) before hitting stop. This will give some buffer before and after so that the video can be stitched cleanly together with others.

If you will be contributing a video, please send it to umcbpastor@gmail.com by Friday. This will give Roger time to add them to the service video during editing.

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**SEWING FOR GOD**

**July & August: Still No Meeting at Church**

Wow, has it been a hot one already! We will continue to work on making tops for our friends across the street at Artis. Since it's likely we may not get together until September, we should have lots of tops to assemble into layers.

We wish all of our friends a wonderful and safe summer until we can meet again.

*Your donations to SFG have been greatly appreciated!* These funds made it possible to purchase batting and muslin to be used when we finally can get together for a "layering" party.

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**To All the Secret Pals**

May you continue to keep each other in thought and prayer until we meet again.

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**Ladies Luncheon - Summer Schedule**

Ladies, mark your calendars! These restaurants are now open for business. Join us for some fellowship this summer.

- **July 20, 12:30:** Lenny and Joes, Long Wharf New Haven
- **Aug 17, 12:30:** Dockside Seafood & Grille, Branford

Masks will need to be worn until we are seated. There will be no more than 10 at a table, so 15 of us will be split into two tables, 6 feet apart.

**RSVP REQUIRED!** Contact Rosemary: 203-589-1620 or rosemary.llam@gmail.com
HOW TO ATTEND CHURCH ONLINE

GET OUT OF BED AND GET DRESSED
it will put you in the right mindset for worship

GO THROUGH YOUR NORMAL SUNDAY ROUTINE
minus the “hurry up, we’re late” part

GATHER TOGETHER AS A FAMILY
no multitasking; worship is a family activity

STREAM TO YOUR LARGEST SCREEN IF POSSIBLE
it will feel like you are really “there”

SING ALONG LOUD AND PROUD
it may feel weird, but it also feels weird to the people leading worship in an empty room

PREACH WITH THE PREACHER
say amen, clap, shout and take notes; have a time of prayer at the end; make your home a sanctuary
#IGiveUMC to support your church!

Make a donation to your church in honor of an everyday hero who has made a difference to you. Then, post it on social media.

Your #IGiveUMC social media post can be either a photo or a video post. Get inspired by searching “#IGiveUMC” on Facebook or Instagram!

**Photo posts** are quick and easy. Simply post a photo of your honoree and include a written message.

**Video posts** can be created with your cell phone. Consider a “paper messages” video. Write a message on cards or poster board. During your video, show one page at a time so that viewers can read it.

Here is an example of a written post that could accompany either a photo or a video post. Be sure to include #IGiveUMC!

Today, I made a donation to my church in honor of my neighbor who sewed masks and gave them to neighbors and health care workers. I honor their service and dedication to the community. Join me, by sharing about an everyday hero you are proud to know and honor them by supporting your local church. Contact the church to find out how. Even $5 will make a big difference!

#IGiveUMC

Thank you for your participation!