



# The Cross & Flame



The United Methodist Church, Branford • 811 East Main Street, Branford, CT 06405  
(203) 488-0549 • [umcbranford1966@gmail.com](mailto:umcbranford1966@gmail.com) • [www.umcbranford.org](http://www.umcbranford.org) • Facebook: [umcbranford](https://www.facebook.com/umcbranford)

**APRIL 2024**

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Dear Beloved Members, Learn & Play Families, and Friends,

As we enter the Easter season and have sprung ahead, we are filled with hope. The trees are budding, the birds are singing, and our sanctuary is filled with the fragrance and colors of flowers in full blooms. The chill of winter makes way to the gentle warmth of spring, and we are reminded of the parallels between nature's renewal and the Easter message of transformation at the cross. Jesus is Risen Indeed!

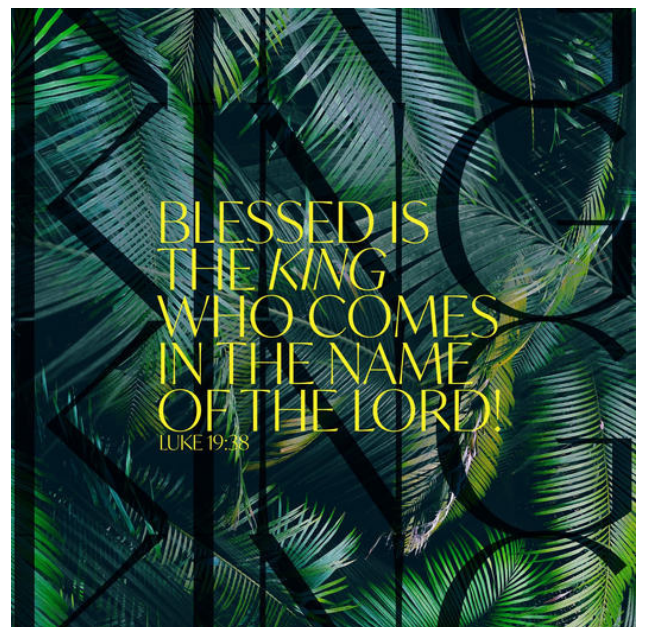
The celebration of Easter marks the pinnacle of our Christian faith—the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Just as nature is awakening from its slumber, the Easter story invites us into a journey of transformation and renewal. Our journey to the cross with Jesus taught us that through Christ's sacrificial love we are offered the promise of redemption and the opportunity for spiritual renewal. Let us embrace the changes that the Holy Spirit is springing up in us, in our church, and at Learn and Play, with courage and conviction, to trust that God's guiding hand is leading us forward. May we be open to the opportunities for new growth, and like a child, share that excitement with others.

Together, as we gather in worship, fellowship, and service, may our hearts overflow with gratitude for the gift of salvation and the promise of eternal life. With our mouths, let us proclaim with joy and conviction: He is risen! He is risen indeed!

May this Easter season be a time of profound transformation, renewal, and rejoicing as we bear witness to the transformative power of Christ's resurrection.

Wishing you and your loved ones a blessed and joyous Easter Season!

*Pastor Barbara*



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



## April Events

*Tues 4/2 7pm:* Prayers for Hope & Understanding  
First & Wesley UMCB  
*Wed 4/3 7pm:* Church Council  
*Mon 4/8 6pm:* Men's Pizza Night  
*Mon 4/8 6pm:* Cooperative Parish Meeting  
*Wed 4/10 1pm:* Prayers for Hope & Understanding  
UMC, Branford  
*Thurs 4/11 6:30pm:* Learn & Play Advisory Council  
*Mon 4/15 12:30pm:* Ladies Luncheon  
*Wed 4/17 7pm:* Faithful Stewards  
*Wed 4/24 1pm:* Prayers for Hope & Understanding  
Hamden Plains UMC

## RECURRING WEEKLY EVENTS

### SUNDAYS

9:30am **Worship Service** (in-person and  
livestreamed)

### MONDAYS

11AM **Monday Zoom Prayer Meeting**  
1PM **Sewing for God** (except 3/18)

### TUESDAYS

7:30pm **AA meeting**

### WEDNESDAYS

10:30am **Prayer Shawl Ministry**  
11am **Lenten Devotional Study**

### THURSDAYS

7:30pm **Al-Anon meeting**

### SATURDAYS

7pm **AA meeting**

## April Birthdays

3 Stephen Solomon  
4 Emily Mazzucco, Gus VanDerMaelen  
10 William Gagné  
12 William Schickler  
16 Daniel Gagné  
21 Robin Wolek  
23 Janet Viets  
25 Mary Choronyz, Nicole Sevigny  
26 John Beatty  
27 Alexandra Loukides

**OFFICE HOURS** Monday through  
Thursday  
9am to 1pm

*Missed a Sunday? Unable to attend worship?*  
Watch past services at [www.umcbranford.org](http://www.umcbranford.org)

## KEEP UP-TO-DATE WITH WHAT'S HAPPENING AT UMCB:

[www.facebook.com/umcbranford](http://www.facebook.com/umcbranford)

<https://twitter.com/UMCBranford>

### Also check out:

[www.facebook.com/unitedmethodistchurch](http://www.facebook.com/unitedmethodistchurch)

[www.facebook.com/umcgeneralconference](http://www.facebook.com/umcgeneralconference)

[www.facebook.com/NYACUMC](http://www.facebook.com/NYACUMC)

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100082683255594>

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



**~An Invitation for You~**

Please prayerfully consider joining us on Monday mornings at 11 am on Zoom as we pray together, seeking God’s guidance and help, in accordance with His holy word:

1 Thessalonians 5:16,17,18

Romans 12:12.

Nothing can be established or affirmed without God’s blessing on it, and the kingdom of God is advancing in our midst...we need His leadership and protection —

Please join us in prayer via Zoom:

<https://bit.ly/3Te4BQT>

Meeting ID: 853 4550 1703

Passcode: Prayer



**ONGOING MINISTRIES**

**CAN TABS**

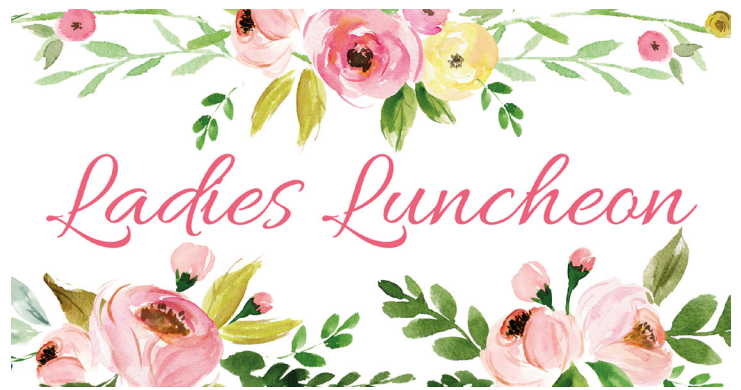
To benefit Ronald McDonald House Charities

Next delivery: end of April

**FOOD PANTRY**

Non-perishable items: tuna fish, cereal, powdered milk, rice, peanut butter, jelly, soup, macaroni, sauce and canned meals.

Personal care items: bar soap, toothpaste and tooth brushes.



*Ladies Luncheon*

**Ladies Luncheon**

Monday, April 15 · 12:30pm

Long Horn in North Haven

Sign up sheet in Connector Hall or  
call Rosemary 203-589-1620



**SEWING FOR GOD**

Every Monday 10:00 am to 2:00 pm

(except April 15)

Don’t know how to sew? We will teach you! We have the machines, fabrics, patterns and great fellowship. Can you iron? Pin? Join us.

Donations of backing fabrics (4-5 yard lengths) and elastic will be needed for both projects. *Gift cards to Hobby Lobby or Joann Fabrics would be welcomed!*



# LEARN & PLAY



Christian Early Learning Center [WWW.LEARNANDPLAYCHRISTIAN.ORG](http://WWW.LEARNANDPLAYCHRISTIAN.ORG)

## ***Meet Our Learn & Play Early Childcare Director!***

Below is a brief bio for Erika Malloy, our new Learn & Play Director. We're sharing it on our Learn & Play website so that current and prospective parents get to know our Director. It's also important that we know and support our new Director as part of our Learn & Play ministry. Please make sure you stop by to say 'hi' and welcome into the UMCB family!

Hello everyone! My name is Erika Malloy. I reside in North Haven with my husband Jimmie and our three beautiful children, ages 26, 17, and 10. Besides my bachelor degree in child studies, I received most of my early childhood experience at the Phyllis Bodel Childcare Center at Yale Medical School. I worked there as an infant/ toddler teacher for 12 years before being promoted to Assistant Program Coordinator. Upon leaving Phyllis Bodel, I moved on to be the Director at a childcare center in New Haven for 3 years and then became the Director for a childcare center in Hamden, where I was for the last 3 years.



One of my favorite things about my career in early childhood is that I get to meet your children and spend time getting to know them! I love getting messy – painting, outdoor time, exploring the world as your child learns and shares their experiences. I've spent time in each of the classrooms since I started at Learn & Play a month ago and am amazed by the sweetness, the talent, the intelligence, and the wonder of your children. It's a pleasure to come here each day—and I love talking to each of you (parents and grandparents) as well!

One the main reasons I chose to come to Learn & Play is that it is a Christian childhood center, based on the principles of Christ, sharing His love while we explore His world together. My favorite verse is 'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me' (Philippians 4:13).

I am also excited that we are on-site at UMC Branford so that we have chapel each week with Pastor Barbara Marks and have the support of the church members in improving our space, helping our staff, and working together for events. There is much to do and much to learn each day, but the important thing to me is that we are learning together from each other and from Jesus. I look forward to getting to know each of you better as we continue forward – and as always, please reach out to me on anything, anytime!