



THE UMC NEWS

**The deadline for the
March 2024 newsletter
is February 20**

Submit via email to
officefumcstafford@gmail.com

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

8 Church Street, Stafford Springs, CT 06076
860-684-2468 officefumcstafford@gmail.com
www.fumcstafford.org

Reverend Dr. Thomas Bentum, pastor

Home# 860-684-2657
pastorfumcstafford@gmail.com

If you'd like something announced during worship – please speak to Kathy Aborn prior to the service so she can add to her announcements.

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS*

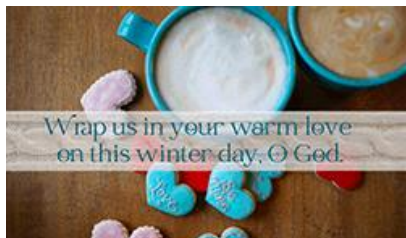
Monday, Tuesday & Friday

9am – Noon

Wednesday & Thursday

9am - 2pm

**Closings and vacations will be posted on office & front doors and printed in bulletins.*



**10 AM Worship* & Sunday school
w/ Coffee Fellowship afterwards**

The following link will bring you to the FUMC* live stream on Sundays. Here is the link to the FUMC YouTube Channel: [FUMC Stafford CT YouTube Channel](#)

We are also on Facebook ☺



Weekly Happenings at FUMC

Sunday 8:30am Moms in Prayer
8:30am Pastor's Sunday school (Jan 28-March 17)
10am Worship & Sunday School
11:15 am Confirmation Class

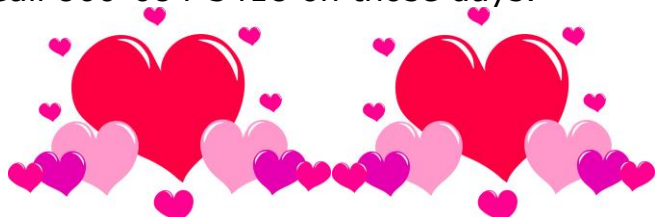
Monday 5pm Fellowship Dinner (offering taken)
6:30pm Disciple Bible Study

Tuesday 6pm online Bible Study
6pm Men of Faith Rehearsal
6:30pm Praise Choir Rehearsal

Wednesday 10am Grief Support Group for Women
6:00 pm Prayer Meeting (2nd Weds.)
6:30 pm Men's Bible Study (every other Wed.)

Thursday 10am Woman to Woman

FLO'S KITCHEN serving dine in & take out
Lunch **Wednesday** at 11:30am
Dinner **Friday** at 4:30pm
Call 860-684-3418 on those days.



Pastor's Corner

Dear Friends,

Now that I have started the sermon series on The Beatitudes (Matthew 5.1-12), I want to say a little more on the curious way Jesus begins each one. He begins with the word "blessed". This word got me hooked on The Beatitudes in college when I discovered that it is often translated as "happy". Perhaps your Bible does that.

In college everyone I knew was trying to find happiness in all sorts of ways. Some tried to find it in drugs and alcohol, some in sex, some in superior knowledge and skills, some in hope of future wealth and power. So, finding the source of what Jesus said brought happiness intrigued me. I wanted to be happy like everyone else.

The first thing I discovered is that what we think of when someone says "happy" is not exactly what Jesus is talking about. It is deeper than that. That is why Bibles generally leave the original Greek word translated as "blessed" to avoid a superficial understanding. The happiness or blessedness that Jesus is talking about is not simply about a feeling that we have. It is more a statement of who we are or what God thinks of us. It is what we are when we are living the way God designed us to live. In other words, how could we not be anything but happy if we live as the designer designed us?

I think it is genius that the author Max Lucado called his book on the Beatitudes *The Applause of Heaven*. It draws on the Old Testament use of blessed. When people blessed God, they were appreciating him. When God blessed the people, he was showing his approval. Living God's way in a very real sense brings the applause of heaven. Any performer

hungers for the happiness the applause of the audience brings. God is our audience and is ready to cheer us on. What a wonderful image that is!

For God to bless us we need to first open our hearts to him. God's blessing is not forced on us. That is why the conditions of blessing are so associated with the heart: poverty of spirit, mourning, meekness, hungering and thirsting for righteousness, mercy, purity of heart, and even peacemaking and persecution. Into our open hearts God pours his kingdom and all that it means. We are designed for his kingdom, not one that we might build for ourselves.

My prayer is that you would open your heart today and each day for what God has for you. May you be blessed!

In Christ, Pastor Tom



1 Deneane Bentum, 3 Keiko Thon, 5 Butch Hajosy, 14 Brian Donor, 21 Kathy Aborn, 22 Paul Maselek
No Anniversaries this month.

If your birthday or anniversary isn't on our list, please contact Connie in the office to be added on.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Trustees – February 8 at 6:30pm

Bishop @ Hazardville UMC – February 10 at 1pm

Worship Team – February 15 at 10am

Stafford Clergy – February 21 at 11am at FUMC

SPRC – March 6 at 6:30pm

Finance – March 20 at 6:30pm



Contact Connie in the church office if you have any changes/updates to

your contact information.

Paul Burch email paul.burch925@yahoo.com



Remain at \$15 per bouquet and there are order forms in the church entryway, on the fellowship hall bulletin board & one Sunday a month in your bulletins. After worship take your flowers home with you, just be sure to return the vase. Thank you! If you have any questions see Jen Malack our Flower Ministry Coordinator.

jennifer.e.malack@gmail.com

Ways to give online:



1. Go to our web

page <https://www.fumcstafford.org/> and then click the green "GIVE NOW" button. This takes you to our Safe and Secure Vanco giving page.

2. Go directly to our Safe and secure Vanco giving page:

<https://secure.myvanco.com/YPVR>

3. Use the QR code found here and on all our communications:

Once at the giving page sign up, log in, or give as a guest by selecting the fund you wish to contribute to and following the prompts. church office.



2023 FUMC Audit –

Rose is working on this. If you are in charge of a group in the church please bring your

materials to the church office NOW! Thank you.

Your AV Team is still in need of a few more volunteers. You may have noticed that not every Sunday service is live streamed. That is because we only have two people trained on the laptop that livestreams the service and sometimes, we are both unavailable. The words used may seem complicated but most of the process is just click and go. Like anything new there will be a learning curve and we will give you step by step instruction and training. Stop by the AV station some Sunday before or after church and check us out. Your AV Team

WORSHIP with us

February 4 –
Communion
February 11 –
Transfiguration Sunday

February 14 – Ash Wednesday in person service at 12:30pm

February 18 – 1st Sunday in Lent

February 25 – 2nd Sunday in Lent/Anointing

March 3 – 3rd Sunday in Lent/Communion

March 10 – 4th Sunday in Lent/UMCOR special offering taken

March 17 – 5th Sunday in Lent

March 24 – Palm Sunday

March 28 – Holy Thursday – evening Communion Service at FUMC – Time TBA

March 29 – Good Friday – Noon Service at Stafford Springs Congregational Church, on Main Street, downtown

March 31 – Easter Sunday 10am Service at FUMC, 6:30am Sunrise Service at Staffordville Public Beach

First United Methodist Church weather closings/delays: The church office follows the Stafford Public school system for closings & delays. Worship/events/classes/meetings – we will post on NBC and be listed as First UMC, Stafford Springs www.nbcsonnecticut.com Also, on WFSB, listed as First United Methodist Ch, Stafford Spgs www.wfsb.com

Women's Grief Support group that runs year-round on Wednesdays at 10am in Room 101 – The Giller Room. All women are encouraged to attend regardless of church affiliation. If you know of someone who's experienced a loss tell her about this group.

Woman to Woman Bible Study in The Giller Room on Thursdays at 10am. All women are welcome.

If you have any questions about either group see Polly Streb 860-684-2838.

Safe Net Donations: We have a collection box under our mail cubbies. You will see specific requests each week in the FUMC bulletin. You can donate any *unexpired* canned/dried foods anytime. They are always in need of tuna, spaghetti/pasta, soups, gravy, peanut butter & brownie mixes. Thanks for your generosity for those who are in need in our community.

PRAYER
list


Riley Pickering & family
Lori Giedraitis
Cheri & Will Jobbins
Sandy Cinfo
Ray Shackway

Judy – pancreatic cancer
Faith – cancer
Frank & MaryBeth (Polly's daughter & son-in-law)
Israel
Jimmy West
Wanda Darling
Jackie Lambert
Alma
Christine
Tracy
Ginger Perrier
The family in Somers, CT for the home fire and passing of 4 children.
Walter Cosman
Cynthia Crawford (Don's daughter)
Uncle George (Kathy Aborn)
Archer
Family of Hazel Malookis for her passing.
Joey Sciarra
Kathy ALS
Jeff & Kathy Aborn
Family of George Pippin for his passing.

Julie Kangas Girdali's family for her passing – to send a card
Chris & Ashley Tierinni, 108 Herbert Drive, East Hartford, CT 06118

Congratulations to Rebecca & Joe Pikul for the birth of baby Brian – to send a card
111 Hurlbut Road, Tolland, CT 06084

Prayers will run for 4 weeks – contact the office if you need someone placed on the list.
860-684-2468 or
officefumcstafford@gmail.com



2024
Co-Creating
Justice & Joy
New England Annual Conference

Isaiah 58:6-14
The Message

NEW ENGLAND ANNUAL CONFERENCE
JUNE 20-22, 2024
Hybrid Session
online via Zoom or in person
Boston North Shore DoubleTree
50 Ferncroft Road, Danvers, MA
Clergy and Laity sessions and Preachers' Aid Society Luncheon
Wednesday, June 19, 2024



FUMC Men's Ministry

February 10, 2024
8:30am At FUMC

Women's
MINISTRY

SATURDAY, February 3, 2024, 9:30 AM

Presentation on 'what you need to know before the death of a loved one.' Nancy Oaks will share her personal experience after her mother's death that may be helpful in your time of need. Refreshments will be served. All women are invited to attend.

Blessings, Kathy Aborn

860-684-9484-h 860-874-6697-c abornk@yahoo.com

LOOKING AHEAD: March 2, 2024,

PROGRAM: Presentation on Self Defense for Women by Robert Green, a Certified Safety Instructor

The February 2024 issue of Connected – The New England Conference of The UMC is available from the table in the church entryway downstairs. Connected is a monthly publication of the New England Conference of The United Methodist Church designed to put Conference news directly into the hands of local church members. Find more: www.neumc.org



Easter Flower Order Form
LAST DAY TO ORDER
March 24, 2024,
NO EXCEPTIONS!

IN HONOR or MEMORY OF
(circle one):

FROM:

You may choose from the following:

Daffodils ____ x \$21.00 = _____

Easter Lily ____ x \$21.00 = _____

Tulips* ____ x \$21.00 = _____

(Please write how many flowers you are ordering) *(no special color requests, please – we do get a mixture.)

Total Enclosed: \$ _____
 _____ *cash or check #* _____

PLEASE ENCLOSE PAYMENT WITH ORDER
& place order form in offering plate for Connie in the office or put in Connie's mail cubby.

AFTER EASTER SERVICE FLOWERS MAY BE TAKEN WITH YOU!



Sunday School News

We continue to have Sunday school each Sunday. Kids of all ages are welcome to join us anytime!

Kathy's Corner



We're all alike snowflakes all different and wonderfully made!

We each have been given different gifts from God, and he gave them to us for a purpose: to be used in His name so others may know of his work through our works on earth.

God always has a plan even when we don't understand what it is. He gave each one of us specific and unique gifts to be used to show others His word. So, when you share God's word and love or witness how he has come into your life and blessed you, you are doing what God has planned for you to do! Take time to discover what these gifts might be through prayer and reflection. What are the passions or talents you have? Do you like to teach, cook, comfort those in need, share God's word with others, work with children, visit the elderly, decorate, organize, reach out to the community? You have been given your talents/passions for a reason. They make you special and unique like the snowflakes. Listen to what God is calling you to do with them, and go forward and do it! You will be blessed as you bless others.

Now, go find your special purpose and share it with others. Remember: "With God all things are possible." Matthew 19:26
 May God's grace, love and JOY be in your day!



Kathy Aborn 860-684-9484 h 860-874-6697 c
abornk@yahoo.com

Worship Participants

February 4: Liturgist: Chris

Greeters: Molly & Marty

Ushers: Polly, Robert

Coffee: Robert & Danielle

Counters: Jen, Jill

Communion Servers: Donna, Nancy

February 11: Liturgist: Erik

Greeters: Al, Leroy

Ushers: Robert & **SUB NEEDED**

Coffee: Polly, Betty & Ginger

Counters: Chris, Robert

February 14 – 12:30pm Ash Wednesday

Sound tech: Butch

Greeter:

February 18: Liturgist: Deneane

Greeters: Betty, Charles

Ushers: Nancy, Jeff

Coffee: Anita, Loretta

Counters: Jeff, Rose

February 25: Liturgist: Anita

Greeters: Al, Leroy

Ushers: Robert & **SUB NEEDED**

Coffee: Aaron & Gabrielle

Counters: Robert & **SUB NEEDED**

March 3 Communion: Liturgist: Nancy

Greeters: Marty & Molly

Ushers: Al, Leroy

Coffee: Robert & Danielle

Counters: Joan, JoAnn

Communion: Kathy, Debbie

March 10: Liturgist: Leroy

Greeters: Charles, Al

Ushers: Robert & **SUB NEEDED**

Coffee: Polly, Betty, Ginger

Counters: Jen, Jill

Let Connie know if you can fill in where we need participants.

March 17: Liturgist: Chris

Greeters: Anita, Leroy

Ushers: Polly, Jeff

Coffee: Aaron & Gabrielle

Counters: Jeff, Rose

March 24: Palm Sunday

Liturgist: Erik

Greeters: Marty & Molly

Ushers: Robert, Nancy

Coffee: Anita, Loretta

Counters: Chris, Robert

March 28 – Holy Thursday PM Service time

TBA

Liturgists:

Greeter:

Usher:

Communion:

Sound Tech: Butch

March 31: Easter – No Coffee today

Liturgist: Deneane

Greeters: Leroy, Charles

Ushers: Al, Polly

Counters: Robert & **SUB NEEDED**

No nursery

April 7: Communion

Liturgist: Nancy

Greeters: Anita, Charles

Ushers: Robert, Leroy

Coffee: Polly, Betty & Ginger

Counters: JoAnn & Joan

Communion: Kathy, Donna

***If you see a week where you aren't available (liturgist, ushers, counters, greeters, coffee hosts) let Connie in the church office know ASAP so she can try to find a substitute.



Men's Bible Study
6:30pm in Fellowship Hall
and will be held on
every other
Wednesday
February 14, 28



The deadline to submit articles for our
March 2024 edition of "The UMC News"
our church newsletter will be
February 20th.

The February newsletter will be emailed to
everyone we have an email address for and
there will be a few on the table downstairs, if
you'd like a printed copy.
If you'd like one emailed be sure Connie in the
office has your email address.

MONTHLY PRAYER MEETING

We will have a 6:30 pm Prayer Meeting
on the 2nd Wednesday of each month.
The next one is February 14



FLO'S FRIENDSHIP KITCHEN

servin^g LUNCH WEDNESDAYS at
11:30am
DINNER FRIDAYS at 4:30PM
IN THE FUMC FELLOWSHIP HALL
ALL are WELCOME!

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO VOLUNTEER see JILL GREGORI

**Flo's Friendship Kitchen raised \$122 in the
Community Bag Program during the month
of December 2023.**



February 14, 2024, at 12:30pm

CAPTIAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Number of households that have pledged to date: 30
Amount pledged to date: \$26,165.00
Amount paid to date: \$25,627.21
Matching gift (complete): \$15,000.00
Total raised: \$41,165.00 (pledged + match)

**Corned Beef Dinner 5pm
& Talent Show 6:30pm**



Saturday, March 16, 2024

Tickets \$20

*Join us at FUMC for yummy food & lots of fun!
Tickets for sale soon, watch your bulletins for
more information.*



Julia C. Gheraldi

APRIL 13, 1948

- JANUARY 2, 2024

Julia C. "Jules" (Springer)

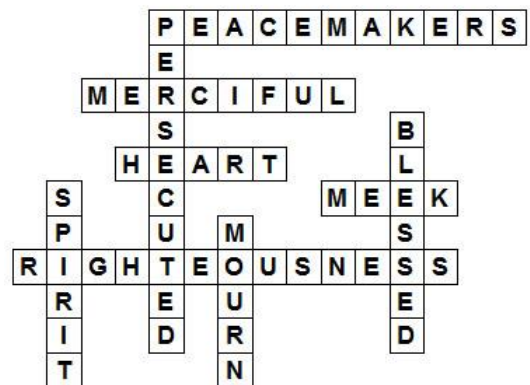
Gheraldi, 75, of East Hartford and formerly of Stafford Springs, entered into eternal rest on Tuesday, January 2, 2024, at Apple Rehab in Colchester. Born in Weston, Maine on April 13, 1948, a daughter of the late Bryan and Cora (Muncey) Springer, she had been a resident of Stafford Springs for over 30 years prior to moving to East Hartford in 2018. Prior to her retirement she was employed for many years by the town of Enfield Housing Authority. She was a longtime member and volunteer at the Stafford Senior Center, and a former member of the First United Methodist Church of Stafford Springs. Family was very important to Julia, and she was a proud mother and grandmother who cherished her time with her entire family, especially her four grandchildren.

Julia is survived by three daughters, Stacey Kangas of Pittsburgh, PA, Carlene VanBuskirk of Cadillac, MI, Ashley Tierinni and her husband Christopher of East Hartford with whom she made her home: four adored grandchildren, Braydon, Dakota, Elliot, and Filomena Tierinni all of East Hartford. She also leaves a brother, Walter Springer of Bowdoinham, ME; a sister, Leona Rollins of Stafford Springs; many nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.

Along with her parents, she was predeceased by her life partner, Mike Gheraldi of Stafford Springs; a brother, Bryan Springer of Maine; and two sisters, Esther Spenser of Maine and Daisy Miller of East Windsor.

Julia's family will receive relatives and friends on Wednesday (January 17, 2024) from 4 - 5:45 pm at the D'Esopo East Hartford Memorial Chapel, 30 Carter Street, East Hartford followed by a Celebration of Life service at 5:45 pm at the funeral home chapel. Burial will be private and at the convenience of the family. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions in Julia's name may be made to New Covenant United Methodist Church Friendship Center, 16 Church Street, East Hartford, CT 06108. For on-line expressions of sympathy to the family, please visit www.desopoeh.com.

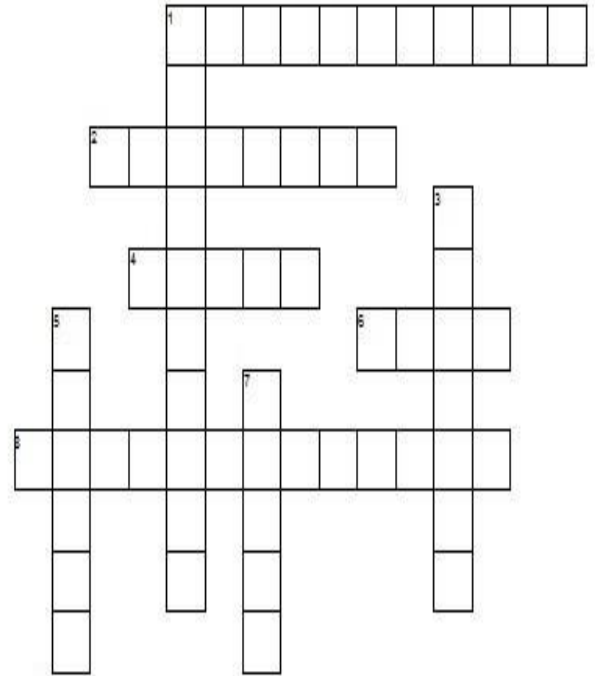
Beatitudes



Answers to crossword on page 9.

PURE OF HEART
 PEACEMAKERS
 INHERIT THE EARTH
 MERCIFUL
 MECK
 CHILDREN OF GOD
 POOR IN SPIRIT
The Beatitudes
 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
 MOURN
 HUNGER AND THIRST
 COMFORTED
 OF RIGHTEOUSNESS
 PERSECUTED
 SATISFIED
 GOD
 MERCY

Beatitudes



www.churchhousepuzzles.com © 2011

ACROSS

- 1 Blessed are the _____: for they shall be called the children of God
- 2 Blessed are the _____: for they shall obtain mercy
- 4 Blessed are the pure in _____, for they shall see God
- 6 Blessed are the _____: for they shall inherit the earth
- 8 Blessed are those that hunger and thirst after _____: for they shall be filled

DOWN

- 1 Blessed are they which are _____ for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven
- 3 _____ are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.
- 5 Blessed are the poor in _____: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven
- 7 Blessed are they that _____: for they shall be comforted





February

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Address Service Requested

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TO:

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and in your bulletins too.