Greater Bridgeport Tent of Abraham

invites you to

Finding Meaning in the Journey:

_The Practice of Spiritual Preparation in our Faith Traditions_

Sunday, April 30
7-8:30 p.m.
Congregation B’nai Israel, Bridgeport

The practice of spiritual preparation is a key element of our faith traditions. The period leading up to a holiday or festival can be just as important and meaningful as the festival itself. In the Jewish faith, we are in the period of “counting the Omer,” preparing for the festival of Shavuot. The period of Lent in the Christian faith prepares us for Easter, and soon we will be in the season of Pentecost. And in the Muslim faith, we are preparing for the upcoming observance of Ramadan and the annual Haj journey. Come learn about and discuss the practice of spiritual preparation in each of our faith traditions. How do we each find meaning in the journey? Learn about the festivals of Shavuot, Pentecost, the Jewish festival of the new moon, and spiritual preparation for Ramadan. This will be a wonderful opportunity for interfaith dialogue with Muslim, Christian and Jewish people of faith!

Refreshments and lite fare will be served.

We encourage you to wear red to this event

Please RSVP to bit.ly/meaninginthejourney
COUNCIL OF CHURCHES’ CELEBRATION & FUNDRAISER

Spring Fling 2017 will take place on **May 4th** at the Downtown Cabaret Theatre, 263 Golden Hill Street in Bridgeport. Join us for a presentation of the multi-award winning Broadway Hit, "In The Heights," the presentation of our Faith & Community Award to The United Congregational Church and the Bridgeport Islamic Community Center, and a recap of new programs and initiatives at CCGB.

A Welcome Reception will take place at the City Lights Gallery, which will be up and running in its new home at 265 Golden Hill Street, adjacent to the Cabaret Theatre.

Tickets ($75 each) are available at “ccgb.org/springfling,” or by calling 203-334-1121.

---

**“WHERE THERE’S A WILL, THERE’S A WAY.”**

Why is it important to make a Will?   Do I need a lawyer?
Why a Will, even if I don’t have much money or a family?
What happens if I die without one?   What if I change my mind?
Who should I include in my Will?   How about the church?

For answers to these questions and many more, we are having a 1-hour **Wills Workshop** on Sunday, **May 7th** after the 10:00 a.m. service in the All-Purpose Room. Grab some coffee or tea and come on down! Questions? Call Sonja Devitt: 203-375-7705.
SUNDAY, MAY 7th at 3:30 pm
A SPECIAL CONCERT at SUMC.

COME HEAR PAUL BISACCIA PLAY THE MUSIC OF GEORGE GERSHWIN. A MARVELOUS PIANIST WHO ALSO ENJOYS BEING A SHOWMAN. PAUL HAS PLAYED ACROSS THE NATION AND ON HIS OWN PBS TELEVISION SPECIAL.

Tickets are $10 at the door, and FREE Admission for children under 12.
Stratford United Methodist Church
2600 Main Street, Stratford, CT 06615
(203) 375-5851

Pancake Day
43rd Anniversary
Complete meal: Juice, Pancakes or French Toast,
Bacon or Sausage,
Coffee or Tea, plus second helpings

Saturday, May 13, 2017
7:30 AM to 12:00 noon

Tickets $8.00 each

Real Vermont Maple Syrup $1.50 extra
(children 6 years old and younger - free)

Come browse our:
Thrift Shop
Our Baked Goods Table
Mother's Day Gift Baskets and Jewelry Table
and
Spring Flowers and Plants
Bakers Needed: Pancake Day is quickly approaching and again we are hoping for some bakers to help for the annual bake table. Ruth Bentley, Ruth Semancik, and June Evitts will be running the bake table and are hoping that you will volunteer to bake. Your help in the past has made the bake table a huge success. Please contact Ruth Bentley at 203-736-6876 or gbentley@sbcglobal.net to sign up. It’s going to be a great day!
I have very vivid memories of attending church as a child. I remember entering the Sanctuary and being dazzled by the brilliance of the stained glass windows. I felt dwarfed by the remarkable heights of the ceiling, and I craned my neck to see it in full view, the same feeling I get when I enter NYC’s Grand Central Station. I was mystified by what the adults were saying and how serious they seemed. During the hymns I remember my father resting the hymnal on the pew in front of him as most people do. I could not reach to see the words on the page though it mattered little since I could not read the words either. Yet I wanted so much to join in the singing and I told him so. He stopped singing for a moment. “You can’t read,” he reasoned. “But I want to sing like everyone else,” I persisted. I could tell he was thinking. “So sing something else,” he replied. Hmmm...what to sing? I tugged on his sleeve and interrupted one more time, “What should I sing Dad?” He looked at me exasperated, “I don’t know...sing ‘Old McDonald.’” Had he really thought this through? This seemed perfectly reasonable to me. I proceeded to belt out “Old McDonald Had a Farm” right then and there, and for me this dilemma was resolved. I’m not sure what the people around us were thinking, but I sang with gusto. It seemed incidental that I was not in unison with the rest of the congregation because for me I was. I was joined with them in song even if it was my own song.

“eeh-ay-eeh-ay-oohhhhhhh!”

- - - -

Our Church Anniversary:
On May 19th, 1790, they held the First Methodist Class meeting in Stratford.
Sunday School News

We raised $210 for Heifer International! Thank you to all for your generous support of this important fundraiser.

We have enough money to buy a gift of Trees for $180.00, which received the most “votes.” And we have enough left over to also buy a gift of Honey Bees for $30.00!

TREES FOR EVERY SEASON
This gift includes seedlings and saplings of trees appropriate to the region. Recipients are educated on nurturing young trees and the importance of reforestation. Each gift of a tree:
- Provides firewood and fodder
- Yields nutritious fruits and nuts that improve health
- Enriches the soil and purifies the air.

A family with a small orchard is able to supplement their diet with delicious fruits and vegetables, while becoming self-reliant at the same time. Passing on the seedlings enables communities to continue the cycle of sustainability.

Further Ahead – “Sunday School” Sunday will be held on Sunday, June 11th.
Certificate of Recognition

gratefully presented to

Stratford United Methodist Church

For outstanding contributions to the 2016 Greater Bridgeport CROP Hunger Walk

WALK, GIVE, CHANGE THE WORLD.

Crop Walk, Sunday May 7th, from 1:30 to 4:30 pm at Seaside Park, Bridgeport.

See Tammy Merry after church for a donation envelope or more information.
UMC MISSION UPDATES

GLOBAL MINISTRIES – FROM EVERYWHERE, TO EVERYWHERE.

Christian leaders from around Asia joined in celebrating the opening of a regional United Methodist Global Ministries office in Seoul, Korea, March 23rd, and welcomed the spirit of partnership that the office represents. The office was dedicated with a multicultural worship service and love feast at Kwanglim Methodist Church. Thomas Kemper, top staff executive of Global Ministries, invited those gathered to be in mission together. “There is only one God; there is one mission; and we are participants in God’s mission in this world,” he said. Previously, Global Ministries dedicated a regional office in partnership with Upper Room Ministries in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in April 2016; and a regional Global Ministries office is planned for French-speaking Africa in 2018 or 2019.

The Seoul office is within blocks of where the first Methodist missionaries to Korea began working in the 1880’s, starting schools and health care ministries, and laying the foundation for a flourishing Methodist denomination. The Korean Methodist Church is doing well today because of the work of the early missionaries, said Bishop Myung Gu Jun, presiding Bishop of the denomination. Global Ministries has ten staff people from diverse backgrounds related to the office, including seven people on site and three others in Atlanta, New York, and Nanjing, China. Joy Eva Bohol, who is on staff as a mission advocate for Global Ministries Young Adult Mission Service, said more people in the region are applying to be in mission service because Asians are seeing that they can be missionaries. (From a story by Tim Tanton, Executive Director, Global Voices, News and Information for United Methodist Communications.)
UMC HOLSTON CONFERENCE TO BUILD HOMES FROM WILDFIRE DONATIONS

The UMC Holston Conference is showing gratitude for the nation’s outpouring of donations for Sevier County Wildfire Relief by putting the funds back into the building of 25 new homes for survivors. With a total of $400,141 received in donations to date, the Holston treasurer’s office has advanced the first $125,000 to Appalachia Service Project (ASP) to kick off a new partnership that will help low-income families who lost their homes in the fires.

On Nov. 28, 2016, a fire that started in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park was pushed by strong winds out of the park and into Gatlinburg and Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. This summer, ASP and Holston Conference will work with Sevier County’s Mountain Tough Recovery Team and other agencies to build twenty homes for former homeowners, and five homes for former renters. “Most of these families have been denied Federal Disaster Recovery Loan funding due to a lack of adequate income, and they are unable to secure other resources for rebuilding.” (From Holston Conference website)

A big "thank you" to all who participated in the Church World Service Kit Drive. We were able to pack up 45 Hygiene Kits and 15 School Kits. In 2016, your support enabled CWS to provide help to those recovering from disasters, or facing poverty or displacement around the world. In the U.S. alone, the following were distributed: 39,884 Hygiene Kits; 31,575 School Kits; 15,554 Cleanup Buckets; 3,064 Blankets; and 2,495 Baby Care Kits!
How do we meet the challenges, large or small, that we face in our lives? Those whose biographies can be found in the Church Library have been challenged in a variety ways, including physical, political, and for their faith. For example, Nelson Mandela became involved in politics while a university student. He was asked to leave Hare University for leading protests against school policies. He fled to Johannesburg where he was able to complete a law degree and become a lawyer. He continued fighting apartheid and was jailed for 27 Years. He eventually was elected president of South Africa.

John Wesley was a clergyman in the Anglican Church in England. While at Oxford University, he became involved in visiting prisoners. Also, as time went on, he began preaching outside in fields to large audiences. These preaching sessions were not supported by traditional clergy, and Wesley was often chased out of town by local mobs. This is a much shortened version of John Wesley’s life, but he definitely faced challenges.

Sally Ride was America’s first woman in space. Not only did she get the education and training required for astronauts, but she also needed to persuade the men in charge of the space program that she was capable.

One young woman everyone is familiar with is Malala Yousafzai, the girl who was shot by the Taliban on her way to school one morning in Pakistan. We all know what her challenge was, and it probably continues to be a challenge.

The biographies mentioned in this article have the call numbers B M; B W; B R; B Y. There are also other biographies on the shelves. Biographies of all these people and many more, are in the church library. They can be borrowed by signing your name on the card in the back of the book. The card is left in the box next to the card catalogue. Please return the book in three weeks.
INCIDENTS AND HAPPENINGS  
OUT OF OUR PAST

The Stratford Female Bible Society

During the first meeting of the Fairfield County Bible Society in 1826, a resolution was passed that every family in Fairfield County should be furnished with a bible. To this end it was decided that a Bible Society should be established in Stratford.

The society was composed of members from the Congregational, Methodist, and Episcopal Churches in Stratford. Bibles were to be distributed without note or comment, in English, and be of a version in common use. Persons contributing any amount were made members of the society for one year. Those contributing one dollar or more received a common bible. Persons who contributed fifteen dollars at one time, or twenty dollars in two payments, became members for life. The membership of the society reads like a “who’s who” of women from the most prominent families of Stratford at the time: such as Peck, Lewis, Judson, Booth, Gilford, Curtis, Osborne, Norris, Whiting, Brooks, and Weed, to name a few.

By 1848, the name of the society had been changed to the Stratford Female Bible Society and had become an auxiliary of the American Bible Society of New York. It was noted that the 12th annual meeting of the society in 1868 was held in the Methodist Parsonage and was chaired by the president, Mrs. Lucy Peck. The minutes of this meeting indicated that an average of $80 per year was collected and forwarded to the New York Bible Society to purchase bibles. (Bibles at the time cost between fifty cents and two dollars each.)

The minutes of the society from 1829 to 1863 can be found in the Methodist Church file of the Stratford Historical Society located in the Judson house in Stratford. These documents give us a brief look at what was possibly the first cooperative effort of the Protestant churches of Stratford.
ARTS & CRAFTS – will gather at Vazzi’s Restaurant on Main St, Stratford, on Wednesday, May 17th (note this is a third Wednesday), at 12 noon to celebrate our year. Call Phebe for details.

YOUTH GROUP MEETING (rescheduled from April)

MR WIZARD (science demo and project)

Sunday, May 21st, after service – 12:30 pm,
6th grade to 12th grade. Come for fun and bring a friend.

Mission u – a mission education event for u! – will take place July 14-16 at the Stamford Hilton.

This year’s studies will be:
Living as a Covenant Community.

Mission Conferences of the United Methodist Church in the United States.

Climate Justice:
A Call to Hope and Action Class for Adults, Youth, and Children.

The Youth class will volunteer on Saturday at the New Covenant House of Hospitality food bank and soup kitchen. Details and registration at:
MAY 2017 BIRTHDAYS

1 Kim Pack
2 Jessica Ramanauskas
4 Teresa Kuhn
5 Doris Becker
5 Jean Campbell
6 Matthew Bickley
6 Liliette Diavua
6 Christopher Olah
6 Nyla Petrahai
6 Amy Russell
7 Barbara Blewett
7 Janice Randolph
9 Kimberly Leko
9 Jeanette Winton
10 John Cottrell
10 Sierra Rose Troutman
13 Elijah Law
14 Steve Robertson
14 George Bentley
15 Marianne Card
15 Robert Pierson
15 Rev. Simeon Law
16 Lisa Feudo
16 Brian Green
16 Diane Wall
17 Stephen Petrahai
18 Phyllis Hopkins
18 Sophia Rodriquez
18 Chris Brown
19 Gerald Millbauer
19 Haille DiStefano
19 James DiStefano
20 Matthew Damiano
20 Cheryl Ernst
20 Jessica Giammattei
20 Mila Berrien
20 Layla DeVonish
21 Burdette James
22 Molly Bosma
24 Betty Foote
24 Kevin McCarthy
24 Susan Minkowski
25 Wendy Buchanan
25 Alex Shadman
25 Evan Tubiak
26 Erin Burns
27 Herb Scripture
29 Susan Burns
30 Kelly Tubiak
31 Stefanie Knight

If your May birthday isn’t on this list, please call the church office at 203-375-5851.
May 2017 Wedding Anniversaries

May 2\textsuperscript{nd} Mr. & Mrs. Sprouse
May 6\textsuperscript{th} Mr. & Mrs. Towne
May 16\textsuperscript{th} Mr. & Mrs. Pike
May 16\textsuperscript{th} Mr. & Mrs. Tubiak
May 16\textsuperscript{th} Mr. & Mrs. Pike
May 20\textsuperscript{th} Mr. & Mrs. Green
May 22\textsuperscript{nd} Mr. & Mrs. Baird
May 22\textsuperscript{nd} Mr. & Mrs. Erickson
May 25\textsuperscript{th} Mr. & Mrs. Bobko

THANK YOU

“Thanks to everyone for their cards, words and concerns for me during my hospital stay and my current nursing home stay at Lord Chamberlain. Special thanks to Virginia Ware and Joyce Lewis. Sincerely, Teresa Kuhn.”

Those collating the Good News mailed 3/22/17:
Barbara Hagan, Diane Troutman, June Evitts, Barbara Piper, Marianne Card, Cecilla & Howard Jack.
CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES are available on the Narthex Table. You are welcome to take a copy.

SO MANY VOLUNTEER MINISTRIES What position would interest you? There are many great opportunities available. Please speak to Burdette James about what you would like to try.

SUMC NEIGHBORHOOD BREAKFAST Third Saturday of each month: We are currently serving an average of thirty to forty meals at our Neighborhood Breakfast. We welcome new volunteers, or just stop by and enjoy a meal with us. If you wish to volunteer, in any capacity, please contact Ray & Jo-Ann Burrows: 203-377-5034 or raybur14@aol.com.

USHERS NEEDED! If you would like to become an usher, please see Michael Kranyak.

THE YOUNGEST MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH NEED YOU! The 2-6 year old class needs volunteers to help Miss Stefanie through June. You don't need to write lesson plans...just come ready to have fun and maybe get a little dirty. Please consider signing up to help on a Sunday by contacting Stefanie Lockwood Knight at stefanieknight01@gmail.com.

ALL ARTICLES FOR THE GOOD NEWS SHOULD BE E-MAILED TO SECRETARY@SUMCCT.ORG* OR DROPPED OFF IN THE GOOD NEWS BOX IN THE CHURCH OFFICE. THANK YOU!

GOOD NEWS SCHEDULE FOR 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good News Issue</th>
<th>Articles Due no later than...</th>
<th>Good News Mailed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>April 14th</td>
<td>April 26th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>May 12th</td>
<td>May 24th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July/August</td>
<td>June 16th</td>
<td>June 28th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>August 11th</td>
<td>August 23rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>September 15th</td>
<td>September 27th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>October 13th</td>
<td>October 25th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>November 10th</td>
<td>November 22nd</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to reading The Good News, bulletin supplements, viewing our website (sumcct.org), looking at our Facebook page, or checking out the local newspapers, there is another way to keep up-to-date on upcoming events at S.U.M.C. Call the Church Office (203-375-5851) when it isn't staffed (that would be after 1:30 p.m. weekdays and all weekends). Press 5 to hear a calendar of upcoming events. The recording is updated on a regular basis.