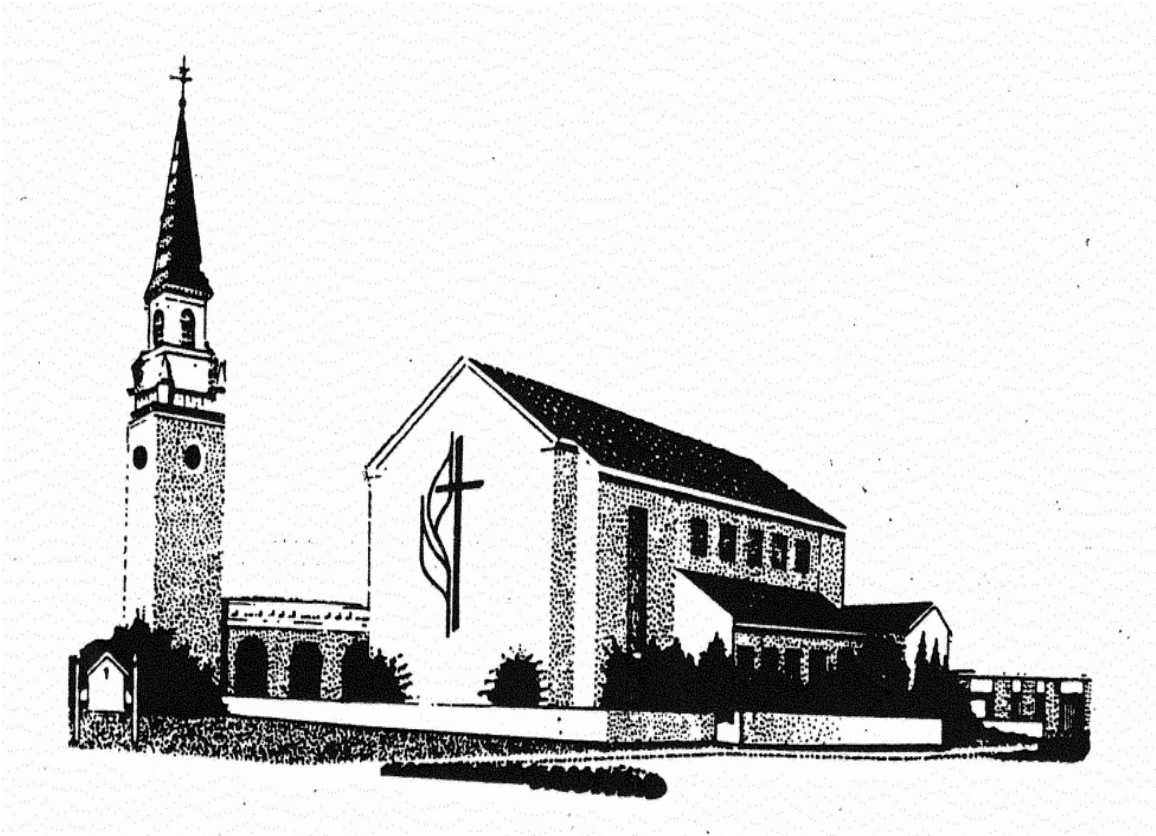


THE GOOD NEWS
From The
Stratford United Methodist Church

2600 MAIN STREET • STRATFORD, CT 06615-5893
SUMC phone: 203-375-5851 ~ fax: 203-375-6890

SUMC & Good News email: secretary@sumcct.org
SUMC website: www.sumcct.org

MARCH 2025



The Rev. Suhee Kim, Pastor
Affiliated Pastors: Rev. Carol Gibson,
Rev. George Hilton, Rev. James Stinson
Chris Muller, Director of Music
Beth Buckmir, Preschool Director
Church Office: Beth Sullivan, Secretary
Worship Technology: Jayden Zeleznik

MARCH 2025 WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday, Mar 2 - 10:00 am Communion

Sunday, Mar 9 - 8:15 & 10:00 am - Adult and Teen Challenge Choir, Confirmation Class #3

Sunday, Mar 16 - 8:15 & 10:00 am - Confirmation Class #5

Sunday, Mar 23 - 8:15 & 10:00 am

Sunday, Mar 30 - 8:15 & 10:00 am - Confirmation Class #6

To listen by phone: 1) call (646) 558-8656, 2) Enter Meeting ID: 203 375 5851

3) Password is **123**

Here is the Sunday School News!

Souper Bowl of Caring

The Sunday School is hosting its Annual Souper Bowl of Caring event which was rescheduled to March 9th. Please bring a canned good donation for Sterling House and join us for a hot bowl of soup and fellowship during coffee hour before you head home!

Heifer is Coming!

Join us March 2nd to kick off another year of Heifer!

Confirmation Class News

Pastor Abby is leading a Confirmation Class this Winter for students ages 10 - 17! Please pray for our confirmands and join us April 6th during the 10am service to support them as they become members of the church. This year's class includes:

Kaylani Alicea

Christopher Knight

Isaiah Leon

Zavier Leon

Kyra McLean

Theo Robertson

Sunday School Schedule

March 2nd - Sunday School Heifer Kick Off Event

March 9th - Sunday School/Confirmation Class #3

March 15th - Confirmation Class #4 8:30 - 12

March 16th - Sunday School/Confirmation Class #5

March 23rd - Sunday School

March 30th - Sunday School/Confirmation Class



Ash Wednesday service is on 3/5 at 12:15 pm.
The choir will be singing.



Intergenerational Pen Pal Program

The Sunday school team will begin an intergenerational pen pal program!

If you are interested in being paired with a youth or child in the church and sharing a note or letter with them each week, please email Stefanie Knight (stefanieknight01@gmail.com) or call/text her at (203) 824-2903.



Pastor Abby will lead the sessions. All Confirmation classes will take place during Sunday School. The Confirmation service will be held on Sunday, April 6th. We look forward to seeing you this Sunday!

Class Schedule

Feb 23rd, 10 a.m.

Class #2: John Wesley and the Growth of Methodism

March 9th, 10 a.m.

Class #3: Methodism: the Quadrilateral, Grace, and Perfection

March 15th, 8:30 a.m.

Class #4: Discipleship

Serve alongside mentors at Neighborhood Breakfast and fellowship together

March 16th, 10 a.m.

Class #5: United Methodist Church

March 30th, 10:00 a.m.

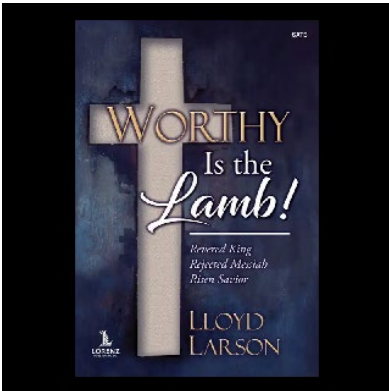
Class #6: Now What?

April 6th, 10:00 a.m.

Confirmation Sunday

Music Program News

The choir will be singing for Maundy Thursday, April 17



We are doing a unique two-part Lenten cantata this year, “Worthy is the Lamb” composed by Lloyd Larson. Part one will be presented during 10:00 am Worship on **Palm Sunday, 4/13** and **part two on Easter Sunday, 4/20**.

We will have guest singers and the Grace Notes handbells for both services, and the choir will sing Handel’s “Hallelujah Chorus” as the benediction on Easter.

Choir News

We are always looking for members for the Choir and Grace Notes Handbell Choir.

If you or someone you know loves to sing or can read music, or would like to learn to play the handbells, please join us!

You can commit to the entire year, or join us for the Lenten Season.

Lenten Season rehearsals begin on February 27th and continue through Easter Sunday.

On Palm Sunday and Easter, we will present the cantata "Worthy is the Lamb" by Lloyd Larson. This is a very special cantata that spans from the Hosannas of Palm Sunday to the sorrow of Holy Week and the joy of Easter.

If you play an instrument, please share your talents with us in worship! An audition is required.

If you have questions, please speak to Chris after worship or email music.director@sumcct.org.

Required rehearsal times are flexible. Rehearsals are on Thursday evenings, and pieces are rehearsed several weeks in advance of performances.

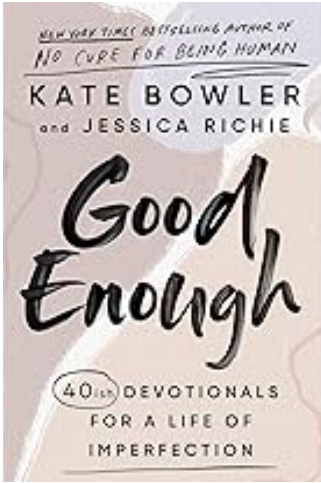
Support our Music Program

If you would like to support the music program, donations can be made to the Church with a note/notation intending their direct support of this important ministry.

Your support allows us to hire extra musicians and singers for special events such as our seasonal Cantatas (Palm Sunday and Christmas) and Easter services.

Thank you!

Chris Muller, Director of Music



Good Enough - Lenten Devotional Series

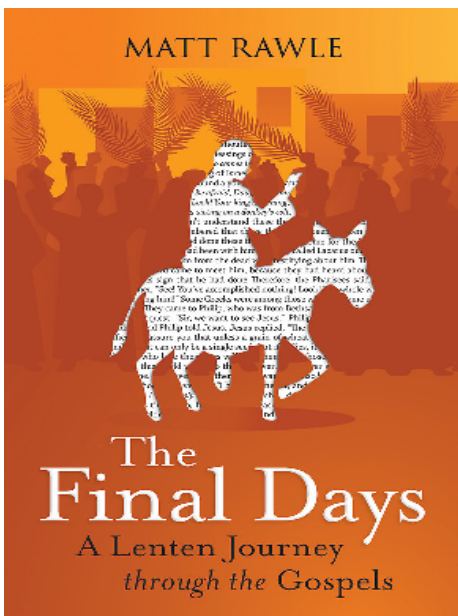
Join us during Lent in reading a devotional every day (or any day you can!) from Kate Bowler's book *Good Enough*.

We'd love for you to join, and any participation will be good enough and very welcome. Every day during Lent, we'll email you a prayer and scripture verse to accompany the daily *Good Enough* reading. We'll also meet every Monday night during Lent from 7 - 8 pm over Zoom to check in, reflect on our lives and this book, and support one another in this season of asking God to show us the world as it is.

Contact Pastor Abby for more information or any questions (abby.langford@yale.edu).



Bible Study meets every Tuesday at 2:00 p.m. on Zoom.



We will take March 4 off as a break before we begin our new Lenten study, "The Final Day" by Matt Rawler, on March 11.

Please pick up your copy of *The Final Day* at the church office in the meantime. The cost is \$14 per book.

Join Zoom Meeting:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2160664239?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2160664239?pwd=K3U5b21WS0duQ2VlOXRQM0gvRUtPdZ09&omn=86183795830)

pwd=K3U5b21WS0duQ2VlOXRQM0gvRUtPdZ09&omn=86183795830

Meeting ID: 216 066 4239 / Passcode: 06614



SOMETIMES GOD DOES NOT REMOVE OUR PROBLEMS HE MAKES A WAY THROUGH THEM

INCIDENTS AND HAPPENINGS

OUT OF OUR PAST

John Wesley on Lent

Early Methodists in the United States did not celebrate Lent as we do now. They did not acknowledge the period at all. Why? According to Taylor Burton-Edwards, writing on the UMC website, there is a rather reasonable explanation.

John Wesley left out all references to Lent in “John Wesley’s Prayer Book: The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America” which he wrote and sent to the Americans in 1784. For example the “First Sunday in Lent” according to the British Anglican tradition was simply labeled “The Eleventh Sunday after Christmas.” In Wesley’s time the membership in the Methodist society was based on several core practices. Fasting and abstinence were a regular practice. Members were part of a band, or class, where members confessed their sins every week, week after week. Love Feasts were held regularly as were watched night services, and covenant renewal services. As these were regular practices, what need was there for special emphasis during the 40 days of Lent?

Wesley said that celebrating Lent and other holy days “at [the] present “time answered “no valuable end.” Alas, times have changed. We no longer meet weekly in classes or bands to share our thoughts, lives, and confessions. Actually, we rarely confess our sins in church these days except as part of the communion service. The practice of fasting and abstinence is usually practiced today for health reasons, not religious. While we do use part of Wesley’s Covenant Service in January, and have remembered our baptism, we have never had a Love Feast, or similar service.

We need Lent now, again. The 40 days of Lent are a time to renew ourselves and reconnect with our God and our faith. It is a time to fast, pray, read and study the Bible, confess, and serve others. Please join us for Ash Wednesday, March 5, and Maundy Thursday April 17.



Arts and Crafts will meet at 1 pm in the All Purpose Room on Wednesday March 12. We will be doing a craft for Wesley Heights.



Neighborhood Breakfast

The Neighborhood Breakfast is **every third Saturday at SUMC**. Eat-in breakfast will be served from 8:30am to 10am. Guests will be greeted at the back parking lot entrance. We would greatly appreciate your help serving breakfast, donating items, or your time, if you can. If you are interested in helping, send a message to missions@sumcct.org.

Next month's breakfast will be Saturday, March 15th.

**Please donate breakfast items such as fruit, granola bars, muffins, yogurt, etc.
Thank you for your donations!**

Toiletry Items are Being Accepted!

Our team has been sharing donated toiletry items with guests who attend our monthly Neighborhood Breakfast. These items are greatly appreciated, and we could use more donations to offer at breakfasts in the months ahead.

There is a donation bin located in the narthex, and both men's and women's items are being accepted. We will gladly accept any size item (full size, samples, etc.). Donations suggestions include (but are not limited to): soap, shampoo/conditioner, toothpaste/toothbrush, deodorant, razors/shaving cream, lotion, tissues, and feminine products.

Golden Hill UMC Community Supper - Volunteers Needed

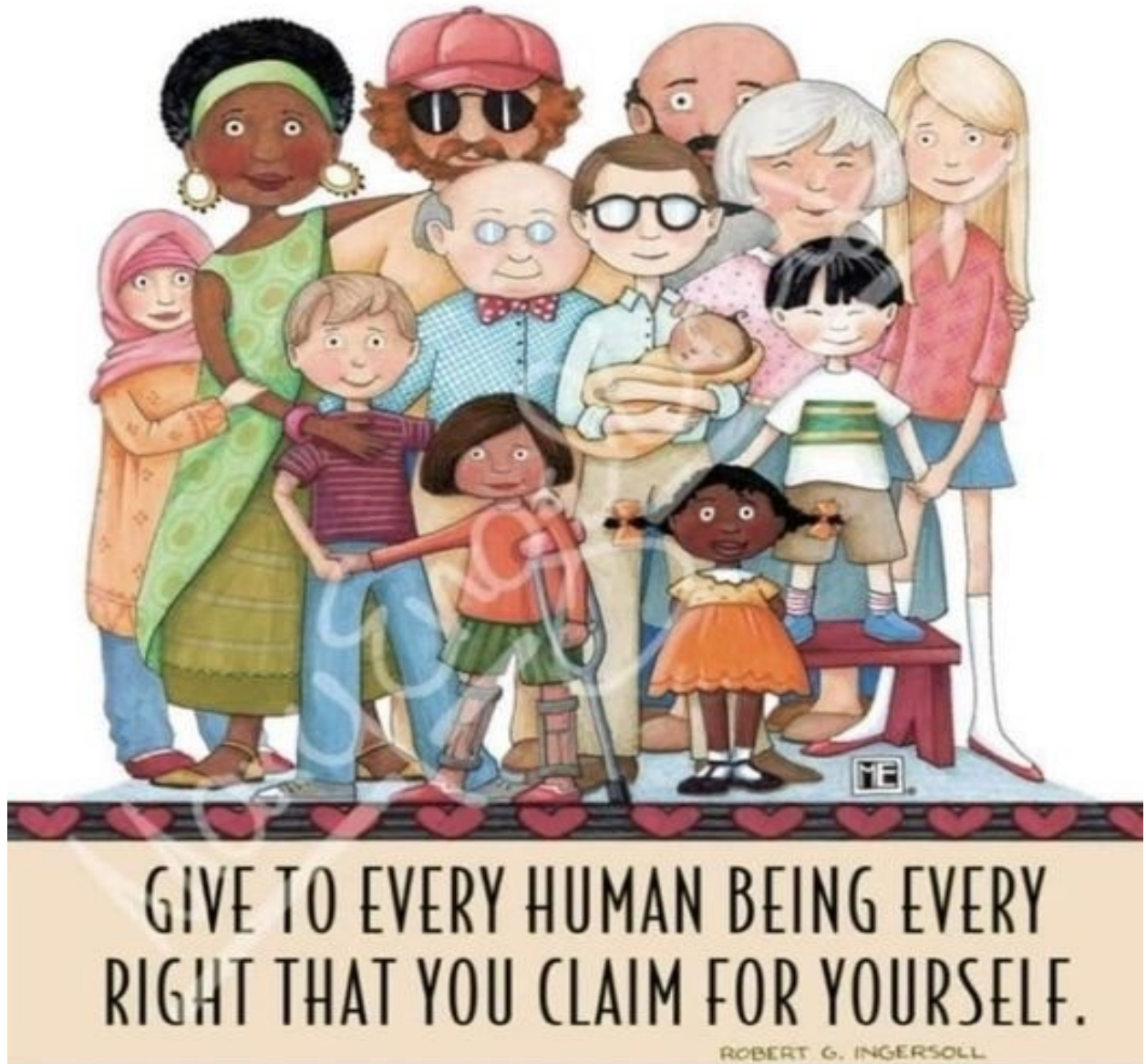
The Golden Hill United Methodist Church in downtown Bridgeport is one of several Bridgeport churches that provide evening meals for those in need on different evenings of the week. Golden Hill hosts a meal every Wednesday. They provide the food, the location, and the planning. Others volunteer to provide the labor.

Our upcoming turn at Golden Hill UMC Community Supper is April 16th.

A cook and about 3 additional volunteers will be needed to start around 2:30 - 3:00 to prepare the meals. One to two volunteers will be needed to stay and help pack the meals from 5:30 on. Please contact Pat Knebel (pknebel@yahoo.com) if you are interested in volunteering.

The Lord's Kitchen

The next Lord's Kitchen will be on Monday, March 17th.



Staying in The Loop

The kitchen is back in business! Thank you to the hard-working group that coordinated the purchase of a new stove, installation of a new fire suppression system, hood cleaning, removal of old equipment, and coordination with the Fire Marshal. The total cost right now is \$7344, and these expenses were paid from Memorial Funds.

The Trustees are still researching the cost of getting the dishwasher repaired or replaced.



Dag Hammarskjöld served as Secretary-General of the UN with the utmost courage and integrity from 1953 till his death in 1961, creating standards against which his successors continue to be measured.

Dag Hammarskjöld's most celebrated legacy may well be his journal of personal and spiritual reflections which was published posthumously as *Markings* in 1963.

FROM THE BOOK MARKINGS

Thou who art over us,
Thou who art one of us,
Thou who *art*----
Also within us,
May all see thee----in me also,
May I prepare the way for Thee,
May I thank Thee for all that shall fall to my lot,
May I also not forget the needs of others,
Keep me in Thy love
As Thou wouldest that all should be kept in mine.
May everything in this my being be directed to Thy glory
And may I never despair,
For I am under Thy hand,
And in Thee is all power and goodness.

Give me a pure heart----that I may see Thee,
A humble heart----That I may hear Thee,
A heart of love----that I may serve Thee,
A heart of faith----that I may abide in Thee.



We come to church to be filled. We are also invited to empty, to release our burdens and all the things that hold us back. Is there "spring cleaning" for the soul?



Over the past few years, severe flooding in Vermont has upended lives and livelihoods. The state has been repeatedly hit by storms, that have caused extensive damage to homes, businesses, property, roads, and bridges.

Our partners in the New England Annual Conference and the United Methodist Committee on Relief are already at work in Vermont, filling significant gaps in assistance and providing critical resources.

But more help is needed.

Resident Bishop **Thomas J. Bickerton** is calling on United Methodists in the New Hope Episcopal Area (the New England and New York Annual Conferences) to “blitz” Vermont with UMC mission teams for a week this spring and summer to assist with ongoing flood recovery and rebuilding efforts.

This is a long-term effort—and there are many opportunities for NYAC mission teams to join in and help.

Volunteers in Mission (VIM) Team Leader Training

There's no prerequisite for volunteers looking to go on a VIM trip or serve as a team leader. But for insurance purposes, training is required to lead a deployed VIM team to Vermont or other mission journeys across the country and around the world. Each mission team is required to have at least one member who has taken Leader Training.

The NYAC Leader Training will take place on Saturday, March 22, 2025 (9am - 5pm) in the NYAC Conference Center (Perkins Learning Center) at 20 Soundview Avenue., White Plains, New York 10606.

Northeast Jurisdictional UMVIM Coordinator, Ray Yarnall, will be our instructor for the day. During the session you will receive guidance on best practices, practical resources for nurturing the spiritual life of the team, checklists, timelines, team forms, and other guidance. Teams of all sizes and skill levels are welcome.

HEAVEN SENT THRIFT SHOP

Thrift Shop Hours:

Thursdays and Fridays, 9:30 am - 1 pm;
Saturdays, 9 am - 12 noon.



If you would like to make an altar flower dedication, or place an order for Easter flowers please contact JoAnn Schif at (203) 513-0514.

Bible Word Search



Love Thy Neighbor



Word list:

BUILD	HUMBLE
CARE	KIND
COMPASSIONATE	LOVE
ENCOURAGE	MIND
FORGIVE	NEIGHBOR
GOD	PRAY
HEART	SHARE
HELP	TREAT

