



We are called to be a welcoming community of loving servants of Jesus Christ.

The Evangel September 2023

PASTOR'S CORNER

"O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his steadfast love endures forever!" Psalms 118:1



Yes, give thanks to the Lord! Let us do just that. It does us good. I have a great deal to be thankful for. I have a wonderful family, a beautiful wife and two very different, very brotherly sons, and an incredibly funny, sweet and intelligent daughter, who's become quite the young lady. We are fortunate to live in this beautiful town and parsonage in Sandy Hook where I am fortunate to serve a wonderfully energetic, outgoing, and outstanding church! Most of my assorted weird plants are still alive, some even thriving! Most importantly I give my God thanks for what Jesus Christ, God's Son, has made possible for me and all of us – reconciliation to the Lord our God through his sacrifice upon the cross. Yes, there have been some times and occurrences in life that sought to squelch any voice of thanksgiving. And it's a struggle at times not to let those things silence the thanksgiving I feel in my heart towards God.

There are moments, hours, days even when we get so caught up in a particular moment that the forest gets lost to the seeming importance of a certain tree before us, and our perspective becomes skewed. There is a way, I believe, that we can manage our perspective and always give thanks. The answer comes in the way the Psalmist tells us he looks. He doesn't mention the forest or the trees, but rather in Psalm 121 he talks about hills. We don't know what the Psalmist was going through at the time he wrote those words, but it must have been one of those days – a day where things happen that can rob the heart of thankfulness. But rather than get stuck in that muck and mire, he pens these words, "I lift my eyes to the hills – from where will my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth." Ps. 121:1

He lifts his eyes beyond the situation to God and regardless of the reality he will have to endure; it is not the end. God, the God who made those very hills, will lend him comfort and strength to get through it. "He will not let your foot be moved; ... The Lord is your keeper, ... he will keep your life." The Psalmist is still able to see that through it all, God is with him and will keep him whole and in God's care. Even through all the "stuff" he was going through he can still find a tongue to praise and thank the God who loves him.

School is starting up again, and all the anxiety, studying and work that goes along with that. Outside of school, in our own lives we hear about what is going on in the world: natural disasters, nuclear threats, divisiveness, economic issues, etc. And then bringing it home, we can add to that our own personal griefs, sorrow and pain, past and present; certainly, there are any number of things that can stop us from fully offering thanks. But, thanks be to God that we can say, "Thank you", even through all we endure that might keep us down, that might silence our voice of thanksgiving. We may not be delivered out of all that stuff, but the God who loves us and cares for us will give us the strength, peace and comfort to get through whatever threatens to overshadow us. Trust that God will give you these things as we, by faith, lift our eyes to the hills and see the mighty gentle hand of God at work in our lives. Remembering, as the Psalmist did, "He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep... The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore."

The Peace and Joy of Christ be Yours,

Pastor Steve

We are called to be a welcoming community of loving servants of Jesus Christ.

Saint of the Month

For the month of September our Saint of the Month is Stephanie Burns who volunteered to clean the offices and empty the trash cans since the beginning of the Covid epidemic, and continued it until just recently as she and her family are moving to South Carolina. On behalf of the church I say – “Thank you, Stephanie, and God be with and bless your family.”

For the month of September, give Stephanie a share of your gratitude.

In Loving Memory

Robert Kalbaugh passed on to his reward, watching the birds on Thursday, September 13, 2023. He was just 59 years of age. Rob was a man of deep faith, who with his wife, Susan, helped start and became leaders of the Stephen's Ministry at NUMC. A Celebration of Life service was held at NUMC on July 22.



A NOTE FROM YOUR MINISTER OF MUSIC

Choir rehearsals will resume on Thursday, September 7 from 7-8:30pm in the choir room.



All are welcome! No auditions required!

Come and find great joy in singing your faith. As one of our favorite anthems declares "Blessed Are You". Join us and share your talent! You will indeed be blessed!

Sue

NEWTOWN LABOR DAY PARADE

Calling all marchers! We need your help to carry the banner and craft fair signs as we promote NUMC in the Annual Newtown Labor Day Parade! **We are positioned in Division 1 (#10 - right in front of F. U. N.) on Johnny Cake Lane.**

It gets very busy with traffic so arrive early! We suggest parking at Caraluzzi's around 8:30/9:00 and taking the shuttle bus to Johnny Cake Lane. We will be lined up and ready to march shortly after 10am. Hopefully it will be a beautiful day!

If you have any questions, call Linda Jones at 203-512-6284.

Church Family... we need lots of candy to toss to the parade goers (no chocolate, please)! Donations can be left in the narthex this Sunday, September 3.

WELCOME HOME

Come home to NUMC!

Mark your calendar for September 17, beginning at 9:30am.

Friends and families past and present are invited to meet the new pastor and share in our wonderful bond of christian love.



We are called to be a welcoming community of loving servants of Jesus Christ.

Office News

Please note...

The pastor will have the following office hours:

Monday - Thursday
9am to 12pm
The church will be open and appointments aren't necessary. Simply knock on the office door if closed.

Fridays
Off

Pastor Steve can also be reached at revsev62@sbcglabal.net and at 203.232.2752.

Rae will continue to be in the office on Tuesdays and Fridays, 9:30am to 12:30pm, unless otherwise noted.

For the month of September, she will be out of the office September 29.

Mark your calendar for **Sunday, September 24, for our Annual Parish Charge Conference.** *The location and time is still tbd, but committee reports are due to [Rae](#) in the church office no later than September 12.*

FALL HAPPENINGS

Fall Worship Schedule

The Worship Committee has taken the survey results, both those formal and informal, under prayerful consideration and has decided that ***as of September 10, we will be worshipping at 9:30am.***

This new time will carry through the summer months as well, maintaining continuity throughout the year.

Thank you everyone for your feedback.



Prayer Group Resumes

Please note that our Prayer Group will restart on Monday, September 11 at a new time!

If you want to gather to pray for others, or if you are in need of prayer, you are welcome to meet on Mondays at 11:30am in the Betts conference room. All are invited and encouraged to join.



Fall Small Group/Bible Study

Those interested in being part of a Bible study led by Pastor Steve are invited to meet in the Betts Room *following worship on Sunday, Sept. 17* to discuss the “who, what, where and when” of our adult programming. This should not be a long meeting, but your input and participation is greatly appreciated!



Spaghetti Supper Returns Saturday, September 30

Mark you calendar and spread the word about the return of our in person Spaghetti Supper on Saturday, September 30, followed by live music! Times are still tbd, but plans are underway to honor the late Roger Sprung who was the feature of our coffee house jam sessions for years. The full menu and times will be shared as soon as available, but please note we will also continue to offer curbside pick-up as well!

Additional details will be posted to numc.us as soon as they become available.

We are called to be a welcoming community of loving servants of Jesus Christ.

Thank You!

Congratulations congregation! You did it again. Your donations to *OFF THE STREETS* filled the narthex with lamps, bed linens and towels. A huge thank you to all who donated.

Beth Davis, who is their contact person in Newtown, was impressed by the amount and quality of all the items. She sends her gratitude. I too, am grateful for all you do. Your Christian love for others in need is heartwarming.

Well done church!

Lynette



Just a note to say thank you to all those who helped with our arrival at NUMC. The warm welcome and gift cards were greatly appreciated.

Pastor Steve & family

2023 ANNUAL NUMC CRAFT FAIR

Calling All Members!



Please support this year's **NUMC Craft Fair on Sat., Oct. 14th from 10am - 4pm at Reed School!** There's a job for **EVERYONE**. We're at full capacity with craft vendors, and the wait list is growing! So, this year's fair promises to be a great one.

If you're a baker, start baking, wrapping & freezing items for individual sale (especially those cookies)!

If you're a quilter, get your handiwork ready for display & purchase!

And if you can create a gift basket or solicit an item from a local business for our silent auction, please do!

Everyone's help is needed & greatly appreciated. Here's what you can do over the next few weeks to be part of NUMC's largest annual community event:

- Visit NUMC's [Volunteer Sign-Up](#) page to sign up for a shift whenever is convenient for you. Or...
- Got your phone handy? Easily access the volunteer sign-up page by scanning the QR code to the right.
- Share the 2023 NUMC Fall Craft Fair [Facebook](#) event page with your friends.



Questions? Text or call **Barb Sibley at 203-300-1171** or email barbsib@gmail.com. **Thanks, everyone!**

Something to Think About from the Reverend John Wesley...

“Though we cannot think alike, may we not love alike? May we not be of one heart, though we are not of one opinion? Without all doubt, we may. Herein all the children of God may unite, notwithstanding these smaller differences.”

We are called to be a welcoming community of loving servants of Jesus Christ.

**October Evangel
Deadline
September 22**

*It's never too early to
submit your
information!*

*Birthdays &
Anniversaries!*

September

- 9/1 Keith Dahlstrom - 🎂
it's the big five oh!
Susan Miles
- 9/2 Hunter Kilson
Scott Wolf
- 9/3 Greg Tani
- 9/5 Wende Wenis
- 9/7 Ryan &
Dominique Clancy 🍷
- 9/8 Betsy Hoyt
- 9/10 Jack Agnew
- 9/12 Judy Hammel
- 9/14 Nicholas Benkovich
Parker Chung
Jim Maurer - *wowza!* 🎂
Paul McManus
- 9/20 Richard Carlson
Rachele Cox
Don & Judith Singer 🍷
Colton Sposta
- 9/21 Robin Rambone - 🎂
it's a milestone!
- 9/23 Ron Nemece
- 9/24 Raul & Dora Oliveira 🍷
William & Rahna Peck 🍷
- 9/27 Christian & Wende Wenis 🍷
- 9/29 Chad & Karan Goodhue 🍷

WESLEY LEARNING CENTER NEWS

It's a busy time at WLC as soon we will be welcoming our kids for the 2023/24 school year! Currently, we have 98 students enrolled which means that there is room for only 1 more student in the 3 year-old classroom!



This last week of August has been filled with activity in preparation for the first day of class.

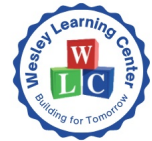
- Aug 28 - Parent Orientation
- Aug 31 - All Teachers will be CPR Certified
- Sept 1 - Student Orientation
- Sept 5 - School Begins!

For their tireless efforts, we would like to thank Chad Goodhue and New England Restoration for all the work they did to improve our school this summer. We have a newly installed dehumidifier which has greatly improved the quality of air in our school; new cabinets, shelving, and blinds along with a renovated bathroom that includes an additional sink.

Happy fall and thank you to everyone for all of your hard work this summer.

Diane Fuchs

Director, Wesley Learning Center,
a NAEYC accredited program for children ages 2 to 6.
wesleyfuchs@gmail.com
203.426.6149



Church Staff

Rev. Stephen Volpe, Pastor

Rev. E. Sue Klein, Deacon & Minister of Music

Diane Fuchs, Director, Wesley Learning Center

Rae Steare, Office Assistant

Newtown United Methodist Church

92 Church Hill Rd,

Sandy Hook, CT 06482

203.426.9998

churchoffice@newtown-umc.org

numc.us

B E K I N D