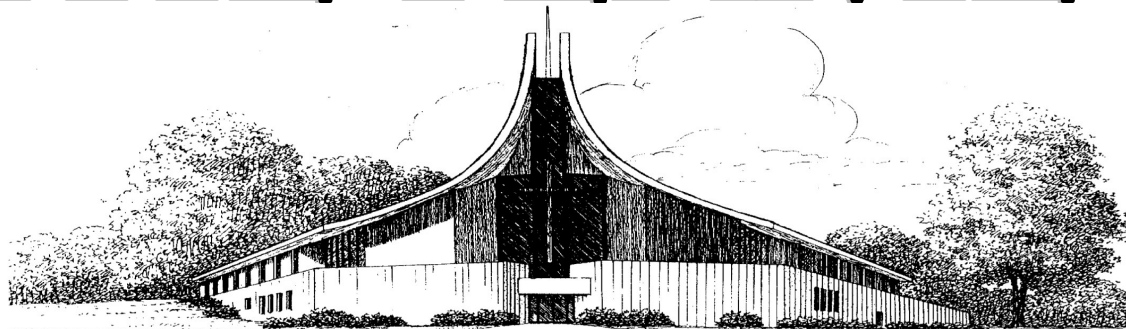




UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF DANBURY

THE FLAME



VOLUME 21
ISSUE 8
OCTOBER
2019

OCTOBER **EVENTS**

EVERY THURSDAY 6PM
Thursday Night Life

Wednesday, October 2
6:00pm Chapel Bells
7:00pm Trustees Meeting

Thursday, October 3
6:30pm Craft Group
7:00pm Advent Auction
Meeting

Saturday, October 5
PUMPKIN FESTIVAL
10:00am - 4:00pm

Monday, October 7
7:00pm UMM Dinner
7:00pm Baby Clothing
Bank Committee Meeting

Wednesday, October 9
6:00pm Chapel Bells
6:30pm SPR Committee
7:30pm Church Council

Saturday, October 12
12:00pm Dorothy Day
Ministry

Sunday, October 13
No Sunday School
11:00am Education
Committee Meeting

Monday, October 14
COLUMBUS DAY
UMCD Office closed

Tuesday, October 15
7:30pm UMCD Book Club

Wednesday, October 16
6:00pm Chapel Bells
7:00pm ASP Meeting

Wednesday, October 23
6:00pm Chapel Bells

Wednesday, October 30
6:00pm Chapel Bells
7:00pm Finance
Committee Meeting

WORDS OF WISDOM FROM PASTOR KIM

For this month's newsletter cover piece, I am sharing with you the contents of a sermon I preached on Sunday, September 8. I wanted to share it with all of you as it contains important info from Bishop Bickerton re: some of the challenges facing our denomination.

"Standing on the Promises"

At a recent training session with our Bishop, he shared some sobering statistics.

39% of churches within the New York Annual Conference now have less than 25 persons in worship.

46% of churches within the Conference have between 26 and 99 worshipping. That would of course be us.

Only 15% have more than 100 in worship.

Of the 46% who worship between 26 and 99, 85% of those are looking at serious sustainability problems within the next 5 years.

On paper that should be us. Except we have faced serious financial challenges within the last five years and here we are. And I believe if we continue to be faithful, God will keep us here for the next five years and even beyond. Indeed, Betsy Ott had shared with me last spring that Danbury is one of only 12 or 14 churches within our district that is holding its own in terms of a full time ministry. That is something to celebrate: Out of some 70 churches, we are one of handful that is holding our own. In the years I've been here, I have witnessed nearly 20 churches in our district go to coop parishes or half time ministries. And they are not thriving or doing better as a result of those arrangements. No church that I am aware of that has gone to a coop parish or half time status has ever gone back up to full time.

So the statistics are sobering. The Bishop called this struggle around sustainability in our Conference a drastic scenario. Of course this scenario is playing out in many denominations all around the country. We are hardly alone in the New York Conference, but this is our context so I share with you the reality from here.

(continued on page 2)

WORDS OF WISDOM FROM PASTOR KIM

(continued from page 1)

Why do we need to know? Because when we consider the ways we have declined and the financial challenges we continue to face, it is easy to imagine it is just us and that there is a magic bullet somewhere that could turn it all around. But there isn't. The reality is that we are called on to be in ministry within a culture of decline, and the challenge will be how do we continue to do that?

How did the church become irrelevant to so many in our culture, especially young people? There are many reasons.

The Bishop stated that from his perspective on church growth, we need to stop focusing on trying to fill up our pews and start focusing on making disciples. To what extent are we focusing on making disciples here at UMCD? I'm going to ask our Ad Council to give some thought to that very question.

There's more complicated news. Bishop Bickerton told us that it is looking more and more likely that the UMC will divide over the inclusion of LGBT persons and go in two different directions as early as next summer. We don't know what the church will look like when that happens within the next year or two or what the changes will mean for each church, pastor, and our Conference. More sobering news.

So what can we do about it and what is the good news? One of the things the Bishop is doing about it is that he has assigned each church to cluster groupings called cooperative parishes. This not the kind of cooperative parishes I referred to earlier where 3 or more churches share 2 or more pastors for financial purposes. This is a cooperative parish that is organized for the purpose of strategic planning and resource sharing. We are now officially a coop parish with the following churches: Jesse Lee in Ridgefield, Cornerstone in Norwalk, Rowayton UMC, Darien UMC in Darien, Stevens Memorial in So. Salem, Zion's Hill in Wilton, and Danbury. I have been named coordinator of our parish. Meetings will start later in the fall with the bishop planning to meet with each cooperative parish at its first meeting. The Bishops plan is that the clergy will meet at least monthly for the purpose of study, planning, and conversation. The laity and clergy will be invited to find ways to share resources and consider: how can we work together in mission in the face of obstacles? As the Bishop said, our future life is not going to be found out of an individual local church off by itself much longer. So: we are looking at new directions and new possibilities for ministry. And it will be exciting to see where that goes.

Still, it's a lot to take in and to process the question: how can we best be God's servants in this challenging environment. I can't think of a better place to turn than St. Paul. In the midst of his own contextual grief and fear, he had the amazing gift of being able to proclaim in the midst of adversity and uncertainty the joyful belief that God had claimed him and was using him to be a difference maker in the world. No matter what he was facing, he simply never lost sight of what God had done for him. Listen to what he said from his prison cell: I will continue to rejoice for I know that through your prayers and God's provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance. Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy for the gospel of JC.

Really? From a 1st century prison cell? And in those days prison was not 3 meals a day and clean uniforms. The conditions were dark with no light, no allowance for hygiene, a place of humiliation and pain. Fear was a constant drain on one's mental status. Most of us would more likely be proclaiming: Nobody knows the trouble I've seen. The setting - a grim prison cell - give Paul's words an even more powerful edge. How can someone conjure up that kind of faith, that degree of courage, when the circumstances seem so grim and discouraging. It's amazing. That person would have to know on what and whom he is standing.

(continued on page 3)

(continued from page 2)

Bishop Bickerton preached a very powerful sermon at Annual Conference on just this issue of on what can we now stand. It is in large part in response to the pain and division at the Special Session of Annual Conference. I've been wanting to share a part of it with you. The remainder of this sermon is excerpted from his sermon. **These are now his words:**

"Like many of you, I grew up in this church. My parents took their son to church for the first time when he was 4 days old and I've been there every day since. Life for many years—as a boy, a youth, young adult, and pastor—was filled with joyful anticipation of what to expect when you went to church. Memories of lots of children, churches focused on vision statements and building programs and all kinds of amazing programs flood my mind. Even though I didn't always want to be there, church was a refuge from the storm. But now, in many places, it IS the storm. Issues dominate the landscape and there is plenty of conversation about what will happen next, will we survive, how will we make it through. I used to stand on that solid ground that my church would be there. But I can't stand there anymore..."

I didn't need a seminary education to learn Wesleyan theology. I was raised on it and my parents were simple blue collar workers. We learned from an early age what it meant to be filled with God's grace. We were taught about the value of personal holiness through worship, Bible study, prayer groups. We were expected to convert that personal holiness into ministries where you shared God's love, invited people on the journey, and weren't afraid to use words like evangelism. Church was a place of joy because of what Jesus had done for us and what we could do to make our lives a reflection of Christ in all that we said and did. But have you been on Facebook or Twitter lately? Have you googled The United Methodist church? Something happened to our theology. Grace has been replaced with judgement, respect has been replaced with my way or the highway, honoring divergent opinions has been replaced with finger pointing and accusations, and this wonderful Wesleyan theology of grace, hope, joy, kindness, doing no harm and doing good seems to be harder to embrace. I used to stand on that ground with lots of assurance that I would see it at work within people who used the name Christian. But I just can't stand there anymore with that same assurance..."

I beamed with joy when I was elected to General Conference for the first time in 1976. I've been to every one since. I was elected as a youth, a young adult, a pastor, a DS. I am a product of the General Conference. I saw and participated in wonderful initiatives and couldn't wait to get home and tell everyone about it. I loved General Conference. But I can't stand there anymore. It has become mean, divisive, and backbiting..."

I think of St. Paul when he said: Strive together as one for the faith of the gospel without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. How do you do that when the things you have relied on seem to be disappearing right in front of you? We can't stand on our history as a denomination? We can't stand on the assurance that Christian people are going to act Christian? We can't stand on the organization of the church that we have participated in and relied on? And when it all piles up as we race from one place to another trying to find some security and assurance, you just want to cry out: "Where Do I Stand, O God? Where Do I Stand?"

*"Standing on the promises of Christ, my King. Through eternal ages let his praises ring.
Glory in the highest I will shout and sing. Standing on the promises of God.
Standing on the Promises I cannot fail, when the howling storms of doubt and fear assail.
By the Living Word of God, I shall prevail. Standing on the promises of God.
Standing, standing, standing on the Promises of God my Savior. Standing. Standing.
I'm Standing on the promises of God.*

That sounds like a great place to stand to me. By God's grace, may it be so. Amen.

Blessings in Christ,

Pastor Kin



JOIN US FOR OCTOBER



SUNDAY, OCTOBER 6 - 17TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY

9:30AM SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR ALL AGES
10:30AM WORSHIP - COMMUNION
FIRST SUNDAY OF OUR STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN:
DEFYING GRAVITY
PASTOR KIM BOSLEY PREACHING

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13 - 18TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

NO SUNDAY SCHOOL
10:30AM WORSHIP
STEWARDSHIP WITNESS
PASTOR KIM BOSLEY PREACHING

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 20 - 19TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

9:30AM SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR ALL AGES
10:30AM WORSHIP
STEWARDSHIP WITNESS
PASTOR KIM BOSLEY PREACHING

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27 - 20TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST CONSECRATION SUNDAY

9:30AM SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR ALL AGES
10:30AM WORSHIP - CONCLUSION OF OUR STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN
CONSECRATION SUNDAY GUEST SPEAKER: SERGE KARPOW
CELEBRATION OF OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS
CELEBRATION LUNCH FOLLOWING WORSHIP

CHILD CARE IS PROVIDED DURING OUR SERVICES

**JOIN US FOR COFFEE AND FELLOWSHIP
IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING WORSHIP**





PUMPKIN FESTIVAL NEWS

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5

10:00am - 4:00pm

This is a great opportunity for ALL UMCD Members and friends to help make our **PUMPKIN FESTIVAL a tremendous success!**

Our 15th annual Pumpkin Festival is a great place for families to have fun. Admission is free. Have a ball in the bouncy house, play games, dress up with face painting, choose a pumpkin (or 2) in the pumpkin patch, look for a special book, be mesmerized by two Magic Shows, choose specialty baked goods, and enjoy great food.

VOLUNTEER AND DONATION OPPORTUNITIES

CALLING ALL BAKERS, CANNERS, CANDY MAKERS!



It's that time of year when thoughts of the beach turn to thoughts of the Pumpkin Festival. Our Pumpkin Festival is Saturday, October 5. Please donate to the baked goods/ canned goods table. Last year our jams and jellies sold very well and we would like to sell those again. Any pickle makers out there? Or relish? We'll sell whatever you make! Smaller size containers sell better than larger ones – think half pint and pint. Please bag cookies 4 per bag. Please label your goodies and note if nuts are included, gluten free, sugar free etc. For more information, please contact Barbara Kunicki.

DONATIONS NEEDED FOR THE PUMPKIN FESTIVAL CAFÉ

Please consider donating the following items:

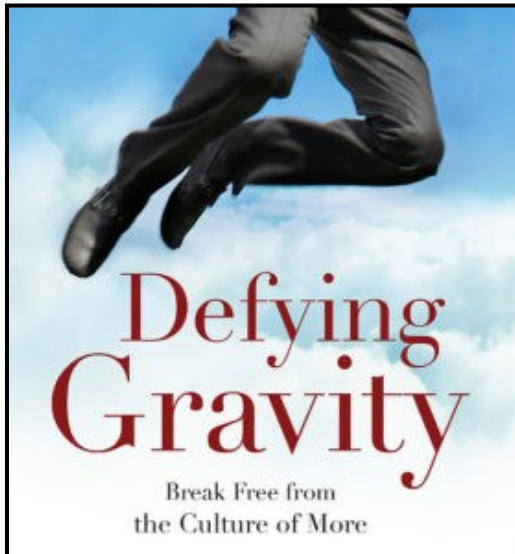
Cans of Pepsi and Diet Pepsi

Juice boxes

Small (6") paper plates and napkins

Cans of chopped clams

Turkey Burgers



STEWARDSHIP

2019-2020

We will be celebrating a church wide stewardship program called “Defying Gravity.” Over a four-week period we’ll examine the generous life - what it is and why it can be hard to experience.

We’ll be studying the topic of generosity

We all want to be generous, but most of us find this difficult to achieve. Demands on our time and money make scarcity a real problem. Marketing creates a compulsion to buy things that are new or the latest version of the old. Instead of enjoying the freedom to bless others with the best of our lives, we feel trapped. We are held down and held back by forces that seem beyond our control.

But there is good news! Jesus offers us a way to defy gravity and break free from the culture of more. Defying Gravity is a four-week stewardship program exploring what the Bible says about how to experience a generous life.

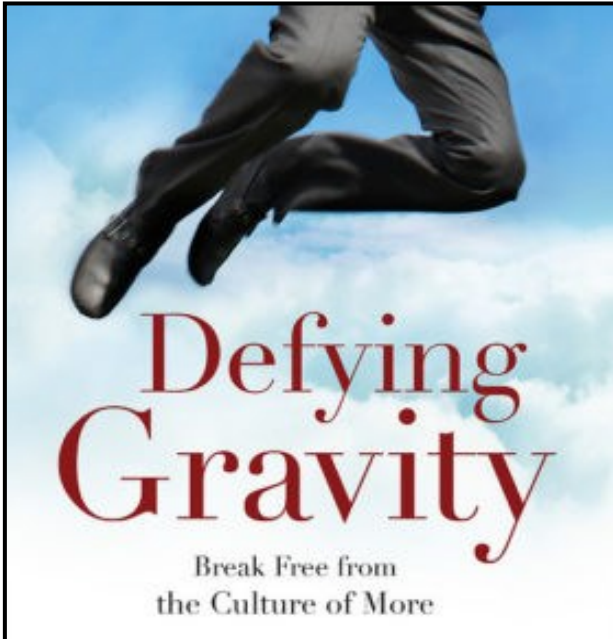
Our stewardship campaign will start Sunday, October 6, 2019 and run the following three Sundays, ending with consecration Sunday, October 27, 2019. At the conclusion of the emphasis, we will have the opportunity to make personal commitments of our offerings (our pledge) to God through our church in the coming year. We will consecrate these commitments in the worship service on Sunday, October 27, 2019 in which Serge Karpow will be our guest speaker and we will have a celebration lunch in fellowship hall.

I hope you will join us in the coming weeks as we look at how we can manage our financial resources and truly experience simplicity, generosity, and joy.

Carla Pierce

Stewardship Chair





BREAK FREE FROM THE CULTURE OF MORE

Plan now to join us for our next adult study opportunity, beginning Thursday, October 10, at 7:00pm. We will be reading and studying the book: **Defying Gravity: Break Free from the Culture of More**, by Rev. Tom Berlin. The book is intended to go along with our theme of faithful stewardship for the month of October.

Each session will feature a video tape, Bible study, and group discussion. Using Bible resources, these are some of the questions we will be considering at each session:

October 10: Session 1: Discovering Gravity:

- ◆ Discern the difference between the kingdom of self and the kingdom of God.
- ◆ What is it about money?
- ◆ What is at the basis for our reluctance to give financially?

October 17: Session 2: Breaking Free

- ◆ Reflect on how we can adopt Christ's attitude toward generosity.
- ◆ Explore what it means to be both a beneficiary and a participant in the kingdom of God.
- ◆ Consider the connection between a joyful, purposeful life and generosity.

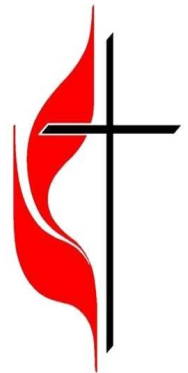
October 24: Session 3: Tethered to God

- ◆ Consider the spiritual benefits of budgeting for generosity.
- ◆ Consider the principles of simplicity and complexity as they relate to our way of life.

October 31: Session 4: When We Get it Right

- ◆ Discover how Joseph answered the call to stewardship in the midst of difficult circumstances.
- ◆ What does it mean to be a faithful steward?
- ◆ How can we teach generosity?
- ◆ Examine our feelings about sacrificial giving.

***The study is open to all adults and teens.
No prior knowledge of the Bible is required.
Pastor Kim will lead all sessions.
Sessions will generally run from 7:00pm to 8:15pm.
Please see Pastor Kim to sign up.***





ANNUAL CHURCH CONFERENCE

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 3

12:30pm

This year's Annual Church Conference is scheduled for Sunday, November 3, at 12:30pm. Our District Superintendent, Rev. Tim Riss, will preside. The Conference is held annually in every church in order to allow every member of the congregation to have a voice and vote in matters pertaining to the church. **Everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend.**



The next United Methodist Women's meeting will be Tuesday, October 22, 2019. The meeting will be held in the Fellowship Hall of the church and it will begin at 7:00pm. The program will be: "Radical Discipleship", and it will be based on the Gospel of Mark. In Mark's era and even now Christians are caught in a world of crisis and confusion and it can be a time of uncertainty and fear. Beverly Anderson will highlight her recent experience with the Mission U study of the Gospel of Mark. She will lead us in an exploration of ways that we can energize our discipleship for Jesus. The Charter for Racial Justice will also be observed. There will be a dessert social following this meeting. Please bring any **Labels for Education**. Any questions or concerns please contact Karlene Lombardo at (203) 743-1260 or lombardodk@gmail.com

MARY'S CRADLE

The UMW mission spotlight will again be on Mary's Cradle, located at the Trinity United Methodist Church, in Bluefield, West Virginia. This is an infant and toddler outreach program. We will specifically be supporting the resource library at the center. I will get these books at the Friends of the Danbury Library sale. What I need from members of the Danbury United Methodist Church is a donation to cover the cost of mailing two or three boxes. Last year the Director, Jennifer Tobias, thanked the UMW for the donation and pointed out that their bookshelves were nearly bare. What a great way to reach out to others in another part of our nation. You may give any money for this project to me or to Valerie Stagen. Any checks should be made out to the Danbury United Methodist Women. **Thank you!**



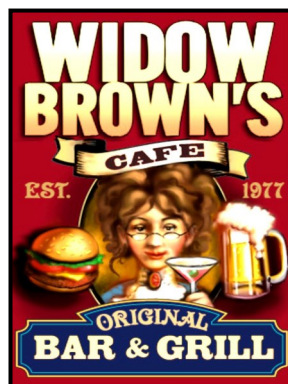
The United Methodist Men meet for dinner on the 1st Monday of each month at 7:00pm

Please join them for comradery, good food, and interesting discussions on

Monday, October 7 at 7:00pm

Widow Brown's Cafe

128 Federal Rd,
Danbury



TEAM MEMBERS NEEDED FOR OUR WONDERFUL ADVENT AUCTION



Join us for the 1st meeting of the Advent Auction Team on **Thursday, October 3 at 7:00pm.**

This annual "fun" draising event is a highlight of the advent season. New ideas are always welcome!



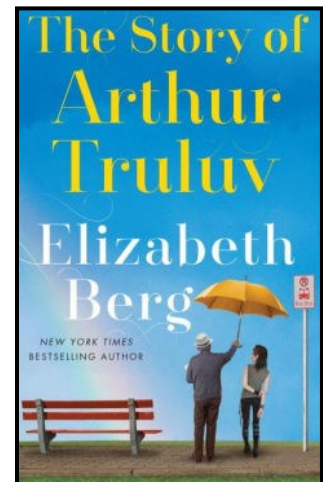
BOOK CLUB



The United Methodist Church Book Club meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month.

The October meeting will take place on **Tuesday, October 15 - 7:30pm** at the United Methodist Church of Danbury. Mary Lou Heyel will serve as the hostess. **Everyone is welcome to attend.**

Book Selection:
The Story of Arthur Truluv
By Elizabeth Berg



Save the Date

Saturday, December 7 - 5:00pm

3rd Annual Advent Auction

Sponsored by
The United Methodist Church
of Danbury

*A Holiday event open
to the public for
Food
Fellowship
Fund Raising*

*Please plan to join us in Fellowship
Hall for an evening of Fun!*





Thanks to the generosity of our church family twenty students began their school year better prepared. I was able to deliver 20 filled backpacks to DCF (department of children & family). Our social worker was so excited to see me arrive. She was visiting a family that afternoon with school age children and could now bring them school supplies.

Thank you to all those who participated. Your participation not only helped children and families but also helped us work toward our mission of serving our community. I am so grateful for my loving church family.

Our next project is helping provide food toward the Thanksgiving holiday celebration. Look for more details in early November.

Again my heartfelt appreciation for your help in making this project a success.

Blessings,

Phyllis Tranzillo



**THANK YOU
TO
PHYLLIS TRANZILLO
FOR CHAIRING THIS
IMPORTANT PROJECT.**



ANNOUNCING OUR NEWEST COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROJECT



The United Methodist Church of Danbury is currently working with a team of volunteers to develop a Baby and Toddler Clothing Bank here at UMCD. We will be seeking donations of new and gently used Baby and Toddler Clothing, in addition to financial contributions to stock our new endeavor.

Prior to accepting donations we will need:



- ◆ To accept donations once a month (time to be determined)
- ◆ Wash and fold the clothing

If you are interested in helping with this vital project, please contact our Church Administrator, Patti Cohen-Hecht at 203-743-1503 or danburyumc@sbcglobal.net

The Baby/Toddler Clothing Bank will benefit at-risk families in our community.

THANK YOU!

Friday, September 20, we hosted volunteers from Western Connecticut State University for their annual Day of Service.

What a Blessing!



UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF DANBURY



SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5

10am ~ 4pm

ADMISSION IS FREE

5 Clapboard Ridge Road, Danbury, CT

I-84, EXIT 5

- | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---------------|---|----------------|
| CRAFT VENDORS | 🍁 | FACE PAINTING | 🍁 | BOUNCY HOUSE |
| BOOKS | 🍁 | TAG SALE | 🍁 | PUMPKIN PATCH |
| MAGIC SHOWS | 🍁 | COUNTRY STORE | 🍁 | JEWELRY |
| CHILDREN'S GAMES | 🍁 | BAKED GOODS | 🍁 | JAMS & JELLIES |

CHILD CAR SEAT CHECK BY THE DANBURY POLICE DEPARTMENT

GREAT FOOD - INCLUDING BURGERS, HOT DOGS, PIES AND MORE.....

www.DanburyMethodist.org

203-743-1503

danburyumc@sbcglobal.net



OCTOBER 6

Greeters	Sandra Esposito Frank Esposito
Scripture Reader	Minnie Rouse
People's Prayers	Carla Pierce
Counters	Carla Pierce Don DeMouth

OCTOBER 13

Greeter	Carla Pierce
Scripture Reader	Carla Pierce
People's Prayers	Pastor Kim
Counters	Phyllis Tranzillo Bev Anderson

OCTOBER 20

Greeter	Kim Goodwin
Scripture Reader	David Johnson V
People's Prayers	Carol Spaulding
Counters	Myra Tesbir Norma Bucko

OCTOBER 27

Greeter	Barbara Fulton
Scripture Reader	Bishop Rouse
People's Prayers	Phyllis Tranzillo
Counters	Star Auer Sue Teer

**BEST WISHES AND GOD'S BLESSINGS
TO THOSE
CELEBRATING BIRTHDAYS IN**



Marti Foster	October 1
Danielle Sutor	October 1
Audrey Kunicki	October 5
Rufus Sanders	October 5
Sherry Tyrrell	October 6
Joanne Hornik	October 7
Zachary Kunicki	October 8
Pam Clark	October 10
William McWilliams	October 11
Virginia Altberg	October 12
Dan Lourenco	October 13
Stephen Bucko	October 18
Donald Lombardo	October 18
Donald Woodin	October 18
Cora Mitchell	October 30



THURSDAY NIGHT LIFE
DINNER IN FELLOWSHIP HALL
6:00PM - 6:30PM

Thursday Night Life is an informal, affordable dinner served buffet style. The cost is \$3.00 per person with a family maximum of \$15.00

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF DANBURY

OUR MISSION

**WE ARE A WELCOMING FAMILY OF DISCIPLES
WHO SEEK TO STRENGTHEN OUR FAITH AND
ALLOW THE LIGHT OF CHRIST TO GUIDE US
AS WE SERVE OUR COMMUNITY.**



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CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR: PATTI COHEN-HECHT

LAY LEADER: CHRIS RUSSOCK

OCTOBER 2019 FLAME

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DEADLINE FOR NOVEMBER 2019 FLAME IS MONDAY, OCTOBER 14