

# Good Tidings

February 2024



**Arnold Mills United Methodist Church**

Rev. Heather R. Bailes Baker

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## *A note from our pastor...*

Beautiful Beloveds,

I hope you have found our series, "In a New Light," enlightening (sorry, I couldn't help myself). We'll wrap it up on February 4, but that doesn't mean our exploration of our beliefs about human sexuality ends. There will be further conversation, listening sessions, perhaps a film screening, and I hope you'll check out the resources in our church library for considering human sexuality. There are memoirs by two of our United Methodist Bishops, Bishop Johnson and Bishop Oliveto, theological studies, and practical guides for talking about sex. Check it out. Stay tuned for more opportunities as we continue to work towards becoming a Reconciling Congregation.

And...insert witty and intriguing segue...speaking of love, Lent begins February 14, Valentine's Day. What if, this year, as many celebrate a day of idealized love, we also acknowledge our humanity and mortality? Not in a heavy handed guilt inducing way, but rather, in a loving, gentle way. And what if, this year, we didn't give up chocolate for Lent? What if we picked up a new practice that brings us closer to God?

This year's worship series, "what r u up 2?" invites us to let go of giving something up and beating ourselves up, and instead notice what Jesus is "up to," and what he invites us to pick up in his name. Rather than a miserable spiritual overhaul with lofty goals of penitential perfection, we'll focus on micro-practices, real steps we can take toward uplifting our spirits.

February may be short, but it's full of opportunity for expanding our perspective and our love. May our study of human sexuality widen our love for ourselves and all God's children. May our Lenten journey deepen our love for God, ourselves, and others. May Black History month inspire us, setting our passion for justice aflame. And, we get an extra day! May God's love leap, changing hearts and the world.

Love and peace,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Heather R. Bailes Baker".

Pastor Heather

## Coming Soon in Worship

### Conclusion of “In a New Light Series”

February 4 — *A New Teaching*

Mark 1: 21-28

1 Corinthians: 6: 9-20, 1 Timothy 1: 1-11

Communion

### February 11 — Scout Sunday

### February 14 — Lent Begins

New Series, “what r u up 2?”

### February 15—Ash Wednesday— “Store Up”

Drive Through Ashes 7-9am

Worship at 7pm

Matthew 6: 1-6, 16-21

### February 18—Lent 1 “Come Up”

Mark 1: 9-15

### February 25—Lent 2 “Take Up”

Mark 8: 31-38

### March 3—Lent 3— “Raise Up”

Communion

John 2: 13-22

### March 10—Lent 4— “Light Up”

John 3: 14-21

### March 17—Lent 5— “Lift Up”

John 12: 20-33

### March 24—Palm Sunday— “Sit Up”

John 12: 12-16

### March 31—Easter— “Look Up”

Acts 10: 34-43

### 7pm Wednesday Night Study —

Join us on Zoom for study

Stay tuned to learn what we're up to. Our next study begins February 21.

### Pastor's Office Hours: At Phantom Farms

Meet Pastor Heather, Wednesdays at 11am for conversation and connections over coffee. No agenda. Come and chat. Catch up on anything going on in your life or our community.

Phantom Farms, 2920 Diamond Hill Rd, Cumberland

### Bishop Peggy Johnson will be on the District Saturday, February 10, 1-3 pm.

Hazardville UMC (330 Hazard Ave., Enfield, CT) and Livestreamed



We are encouraging those who are attending Bishop Johnson's day on the district to read the book, *Being United Methodist Christians: Living a Life of Grace and Hope* by Andy Langford, Sally Langford, Ann Langford Duncan. Bishop Johnson said, “In this time of change, The UMC needs to move forward with renewed commitment to our core beliefs, values, and practices.” This book includes our United Methodist story and beliefs, our Biblical story, how we share with other Christians, how we nurture our Spiritual lives and serve God and our neighbors.”

In the event there is inclement weather announced for Saturday, February 10th the event will be moved online. Please check your emails on Thursday, February 8 for such an announcement.

Also, on February 10, at 11 am, Bishop Johnson is looking forward to meeting with any one who is discerning a call to lay, licensed and/or ordained ministry.

### Arnold Mills Cemetery

Karl Ikerman

The Arnold Mills Cemetery is pleased to donate \$1056 as a gift for the excellent co-operation we have received from the Reverend Baker and her staff. This check is also an example of the commission the church would receive yearly from the sale of burial rights. So please spread the word and we will all benefit.

As part of our commitment to justice, our church is selling Equal Exchange Fair Trade Coffee and Tea.

**We are currently selling:**



**Organic Ground Coffee — \$10/bag**

French Roast                      Love Buzz  
Breakfast Blend                  Decaf  
Mind, Body, and Soul  
Midnight Sun

**Organic Tea — \$4/box**

Chai  
Irish Breakfast

**Chocolate —\$3/bar**

Organic Dark Chocolate Almond & Sea Salt, 55% cacao

**Make checks payable to AMUMC, Memo: Fair Trade**

Check the coat room to see what we have available today! If you have special requests, questions or suggestions, please contact Pastor Heather or George Jutras, office.amumc@gmail.com . Coffee sales benefit our church and small coffee growers, and help build justice in the world. Buying Equal Exchange Fair Trade products supports:

- Regenerative agriculture, helping farmers combat climate change.
- Gender equity, workshops and youth empowerment programs strengthen farmer co-ops.
- Pre-harvest financing, allows for dependable livelihood.

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## Trustee Report

The Board of Trustees did not meet in January but will be meeting on Thursday, February 8, 2024. First on the agenda will be the annual review of our investments which are managed by Rockland Trust. This meeting will commence at 6:30 PM and all interested members of the congregation are welcome to attend.

During the months of December and January, the trustees were not on vacation.

The following projects and needs have been, or are being, addressed:

- The giant pine tree which crashed in the front yard of the parsonage has been removed, along with a destroyed dogwood. The maple tree along the driveway was trimmed, and recently, all the stumps were ground down. Our thanks go to Fran Carr for handling all this with Stanley Tree Service.
- Due to this tree taking down wires and the electrical control panel becoming wet, a new panel was installed in the parsonage by Eastland Electric.
- After the heavy rainstorms in January, the sump pump in the parsonage basement decided that it had had enough! Thanks to the joint efforts of Sam Baker and George Gettinger, a new pump has been installed. More shelving was purchased by the trustees in order to get stored items off the ground, as well as a dry/wet shop vac to be used at both the church and parsonage.
- Dave Larson and the Sustainability Committee received approval from the trustees to take the RISE proposal for energy improvements to the Church Council to be voted upon. This first step, which was approved, involves adding insulation and updating the lighting in both the sanctuary and the hall. Adding solar panels will be researched and discussed further.
- We are grateful this month for the men who diligently take care of our parking lots and walkways; our friend, Peter Bradley, and from Orchard Acres, Jon Ryone. Also Marques Cleaning Service is to be commended for their hard work. The church and hall are cleaned every other Friday afternoon and always look clean and neat afterwards!

Sincerely,

Lindsay Gettinger, Fran Carr, Scott Murphy, Tom Cabana, Tom Hetherington, Dave Larson, Mark Farnell

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## Finance Committee Update

The Church Council has approved a budget for 2024. Total operating income is expected to be \$200,646 with projected operating expenses of \$227,198.94. The net loss for the year is budgeted at \$26,502.94. If you would like to review the budget, copies are available in the Coat Room, or email [treasurer.amumc@gmail.com](mailto:treasurer.amumc@gmail.com) for a copy. Cindy Mauch Treasurer

## School Supply Donations

The teaching staff in many schools provide various supplies for their classrooms that are not covered in the school budgets. Those out-of-pocket purchases benefit their students. We can assist them by donating the suggested supplies that we will distribute to the various local schools. A basket is in the hallway next to the display case and the other donation baskets.

Suggested items for classroom support:

- small laptop headphones with auxiliary cords (Like the kind used on airplane video devices)
- computer paper
- glue (sticks and bottles)
- poster boards
- pencils, colored pencils, erasable markers
- folders and notebooks (any subject, any type)
- large chart paper

Any questions, contact Chip Thurlow; thurlowcp@aol.com; 401-333-1235 (H)

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### **A note from the Reconciliation Team.....**

As mentioned, the church council at Arnold Mills United Methodist Church voted to start the reconciliation process. What does this mean exactly? The Reconciling Ministries Network (RMN) focuses on the full participation of all LGBTQ+ people throughout the life and leadership of the Church. The vision is a transformed United Methodist Church that ensures justice, equity, and dignity for ALL of God's children in their diverse intersecting identities. A "Reconciling Congregation" publicly proclaims sharing this vision. The reconciliation process allows careful discernment of the church members throughout a process that includes Bible studies, story sharing, open discussion, written information, and more. The process ends with a vote in June by church members to decide IF we will formally be a Reconciling Church. We need 75% of the church body to vote affirmatively to proceed.

FAQ's.....

*Aren't we already a welcoming church?* Yes, we certainly are but one must enter our church to find this out. Our goal is to advertise how welcoming we are to all who drive by or look us up on the internet.

*Why is this so important?* In 1972, the policy-setting General Conference for the first time added a provision on homosexuality to the Book of Discipline, the church's rule book. The provision said, "The United Methodist Church does not condone the practice of homosexuality and considers this practice incompatible with Christian teaching." In 1984, the General Conference banned having any "self-avowed practicing homosexuals" as clergy. In 1996, language was approved that prohibits churches and ministers from conducting "ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions."

During the 2012 General Conference, two prominent pastors made a proposal to add to the Book of Discipline a statement expressing sadness that United Methodists disagree on whether "same-sex sexual intimacy is contrary to the will of God" but vowing "to disagree with respect and love." It was rejected, 54 percent to 46 percent.

While many younger Americans oppose the church's current official position, the average age of United Methodists in this country is 58 and membership is declining. The fast-growing conferences are overseas, particularly in Africa, many of whose pastors strongly have argued at recent General Conference meetings for retention of current policy.

*How will this change our weekly sermons?* No changes are expected. Pastors will continue to decide what to preach about. Most of our liturgy already uses inclusive language.

*Will we be known as the Gay Church?* Unlikely, there are other churches in RI who are reconciling including 2 in Providence

*If we do affiliate, does that mean our congregation's main focus will be on inclusion and gay rights?*  
No. We support all sorts of justice at AMUMC and this just will be another.

*Where can I find more information on the Reconciling Ministries?* [Our Mission - Reconciling Ministries \(rmnetwork.org\)](http://OurMission-ReconcilingMinistries(rmnetwork.org))

*Who is on the committee?* Adama Brown, Lee Ann Cotta, Stacey Johnson, Dave Larson, Alex Kithes

# Missions Committee Newsletter Report

## February 2024

### Meals in the Park

On December 31st we served our guests American Chop Suey and vegetable soup for lunch and homemade desserts. We served over 160 meals. Our next meal is **February 18th**. Also please consider making some homemade desserts for is meal. We are also looking for plastic shopping bags, or paper bags with handles (Target is the best!) also reusable bags that may need some mending. Some of our guests have a long walk back home and can use a sturdy carrier to get the meals safely back home. Thank you. Karen Oswain [kkoswain@netscape.net](mailto:kkoswain@netscape.net); 401-749-3609

### Habitat for Humanity

The new duplex project is to erect **two** residences for military veteran families at **57 & 59 Oakland School Street in Burrillville, RI**. The second duplex foundation is now ready for volunteers to work installing the exterior walls. After the roof trusses and shingles are installed, the additional work can begin inside the duplex. Any questions, contact Chip Thurlow; [thurlowcp@aol.com](mailto:thurlowcp@aol.com); 401-333-1235

### Cintas Clothing Donation and the St. James Episcopal Church Clothing Closet

The twice monthly clothing donations continue from the Cintas Warehouse in Woonsocket to the St. James Church clothing closet. The delivery schedule is posted in the coat room. **They are also requesting the donations of children's clothing for distribution to needy families. Those items can be placed in the hallway at our church** and they will be delivered to St. James Church by our volunteers.

### School Supplies Donations

Due to the need to supplement supplies for local area schools, many of the teaching staff purchase those supplies at their own expense. **A basket is in the hallway for us to donate the needed supplies that we can systematically distribute to local schools.** Requested supplies: **Suggested items for classroom support:** small laptop headphones with auxiliary cords (like the kind used on airplane video devices); computer paper; glue (sticks and bottles); poster boards; pencils, colored pencils, erasable markers; folders and notebooks (any subject, any type); large chart paper. Any questions, contact Chip Thurlow; [thurlowcp@aol.com](mailto:thurlowcp@aol.com); 401-333-1235

### Ongoing Service Activities:

#### The Franklin Farm Community Garden and the Historic Metcalf-Franklin Farm Preservation Association

**The volunteers at Franklin Farm have completed the 2023 harvest season!** The gardening areas are sleeping for the upcoming cold season and the Winter Rye has germinated to prevent erosion and enrich the soil when it is plowed in in the Spring. The trails and fields are still available for visitors to wander around and enjoy the beautiful open space. Any questions, contact Pam and Chip Thurlow: [thurlowcp@gmail.com](mailto:thurlowcp@gmail.com); 401-333-1235.

### Dave's Marketplace Day Old Bakery Donations

Since 2016, volunteers from AMUMC have transported day old baked goods three times each week to the Cumberland Senior Center, the Northern RI Food Pantry or the Woonsocket Shelter. The schedule of the three donations each week and the many volunteers making the deliveries is posted on the bulletin board in the coat room.

### The Woonsocket Shelter

The Woonsocket Shelter has received donations of persons care items and household items (sheets, towels, quilts, curtains, etc.) for families to relocate into independent living when they leave the shelter. In addition, AMUMC volunteers have been donating day old baked goods from area supermarkets – currently Dave's Marketplace – for over 15 years to the shelter. On Fridays, Elton and Rachel Odom make the weekly deliveries to the Shelter.

Chip Thurlow,  
Chairperson, AMUMC Missions and Social Concerns Committee





## Tips for February 2024

Jesus said the first of the Greatest Commandments (Luke 10:25-28) is to **love God**. How? We love the Creator by loving Creation, by caring for what God has blessed us with as stewards. Look at nature, all that surrounds us, as a gift to be cherished. **Give thanks and follow through with actions** that show your love of God.

Jesus said the Second of the Greatest Commandments is to **love our neighbor**. He then told the story of the Good Samaritan, who cared for an injured traveler (Luke 10:25-37). Our neighbors near and far suffer from environmental injustice. Work to fix the “road” – the systems that perpetuate harm to those with few resources. **Join or support organizations that love your neighbor** by working for creation justice.

Jesus said as part of the Greatest Commandment that we are to love our neighbor as we **love ourselves** (Luke 10:25-28). We love ourselves by taking care of ourselves for the long haul. **Live a [sustainable lifestyle](#)**. Living sustainably makes the world better for ourselves and everyone else.

Jesus said we are to **love our enemies** (Matthew 5:43-45). He followed that statement with “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you” (Luke 6:27-37). Recognize the differences in tactics of hate versus strategies of accountability and reconciliation. **Speak up for change. Show a better way.**

Jesus said to his disciples (and us), “I give you a New Commandment: **Love one another** – and in doing so, you will help others see my love” (paraphrase of John 13:31-35). As a church, work together to **provide opportunities to help the environment** and to give the wider community a vision of what love in action can do. Consider hosting a recycling bin or event.

**Love the earth.** Stop using [Styrofoam](#). This single-use “convenience” has its raw materials extracted from the earth, leaches harmful chemicals into hot food or drink, adds to the volume of methane from landfills, and exposes production workers to permanent nervous system damage. **Switch to reusable containers** for food and drink.

**Love the air.** Clean it up. Deadly air pollution contributes to nearly 7 million [deaths each year through noncommunicable diseases](#), including stroke, heart disease, asthma, respiratory infections, and lung cancer. US emissions are among the highest. Women, children, minorities, migrants and displaced persons, older people, and those with underlying conditions bear the brunt. **Reduce your own emissions; pressure your lawmakers** to make changes.

**Love the water.** Oceans are God’s great carbon sinks. With a warming climate our oceans, which work for humanity as well as for an amazing array of marine life, are struggling. [Plastic pollution](#) is a major culprit. Litter finds its way through waterways to the great seas. Raise the alarm and an army of friends to **tackle plastic pollution locally and internationally**. That will help downstream too.

**Love God’s creatures.** Consider the endangered [forest elephants](#). In the rainforests of central and west Africa, the elephants prefer to eat the fast growing, low carbon density trees – the weeds of the forest. Thinning those allows the high carbon density trees to flourish, which sequesters more carbon and is better for all God’s creatures. Because they eat fruit, they are also planters of new trees. [Support elephant conservation](#).

**Love the younger generations.** Eco-anxiety is growing among younger people. An antidote to the threat of that mental illness is connecting with people who are taking action. When working for creation care and justice, include younger ones in the efforts and the conversation. Keep in mind, “**He who plants a tree plants a hope**” (Lucy Larcom).

The United Methodist Creation Justice Movement is providing these Tips as a tool to equip church members, families, and individuals to respond to God's call to care for creation and do justice with our neighbors. For more about the UM Creation Justice Movement, go to [umcreationjustice.org](http://umcreationjustice.org).

# Church School News

# THE GOLDEN RULE

The church school is currently working with the unit titled "Living God's Word: Respect".

**Main Idea:** Jesus teaches us to love God and to love others. One way we show love to God and to others is by being respectful.

**Objectives:** Children will hear what the Bible says about respect and how to treat God, other people, and nature as they explore these concepts:

\* Respect means treating others as you would like to be treated.

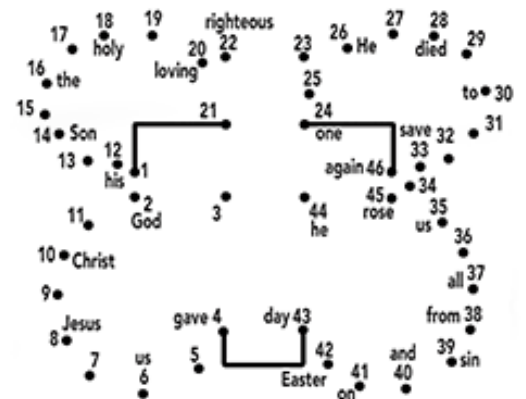
\* Good manners and good sportsmanship are ways of loving other people and being respectful.

\* Showing respect includes accepting others.

**Bible Verse:** In everything do to others as you would have them do to you. (Matthew 7:12)

## Puzzle!

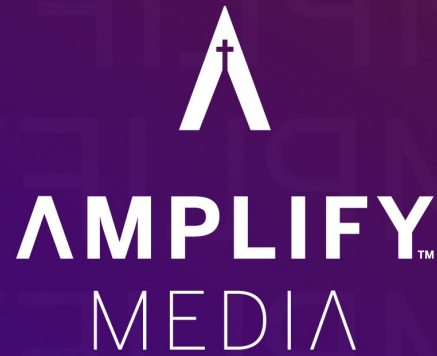
Connect the dots to find two symbols of Easter. Then write the words in the correct blanks to complete an Easter poem.



2	4	6	8	10	12	14
16	18	20	22	24		
26	28	30	33	35	37	39
40	41	42	43	44	45	46

Answer: God gave us Jesus Christ, His Son, the Holy King, righteous one, He died to save us all from sin, and on Easter day he rose again.

NOW  
Available



What if you could stay engaged and encouraged anywhere and anytime with a library of the best media for study and reflection? Through any device you now have 24/7 access to motivating stories, insightful teaching, and powerful resources. To see everything we can do with Amplify, just visit the site below

**Our Amplify Website:**

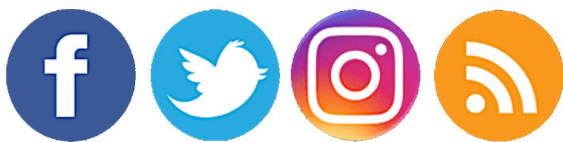
<https://my.amplifymedia.com/arnoldmillsumccumberlandri>

**Access Code: DTLSGY**

### **SPRC News**

Our committee includes Olivia Carney, Sue Therien, Sandy Ferretti and Cindy Mauch. (Updated 1/4/2024)

If you have any questions, comments or concerns having to do with the staff of the parish feel free to see any member of the committee or you can email us at [amumcsprc@gmail.com](mailto:amumcsprc@gmail.com)



### **Arnold Mills UMC's Social Media**

**Find us on social media!**

We are on Facebook and on Instagram.

Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/Arnold-Mills-United-Methodist-Church-115722435105941>

Twitter at [https://twitter.com/ArnoldMills\\_UMC](https://twitter.com/ArnoldMills_UMC)

Instagram at [https://www.instagram.com/arnold\\_mills\\_umc](https://www.instagram.com/arnold_mills_umc)

Listen to sermons on our website at <http://www.amumc.org>

### **Prayer Requests**

Prayer requests are sent out each week to every address on our email list. We understand that not everyone who asks for prayer in worship during "Sharing Our Joys and Concerns" wishes to have that information shared on the email blast. If you would like to have a prayer request included in the weekly email, please use the "Prayer Request" form on the table in the back of the sanctuary, call the office at 401-333-5203, or email [office.amumc@gmail.com](mailto:office.amumc@gmail.com). Prayer requests will remain on the prayer list for one month. If you would like a prayer request to remain longer, just let us know.



# **AMUMC Upcoming Events**

## **February**

Sun Feb 4 - 11:00 AM: Greeters Meeting

Thu Feb 8 - 6:30 PM: Trustees Meeting

Sun Feb 11: Scouting Ministries Sunday

Wed Feb 14 - 7-9 AM: Drive Through Ashes

Wed Feb 14 - 7 PM: Ash Wednesday Service

Wed Feb 14: Valentines Day

Sun Feb 18 - 11:15 AM: All Church Meeting

Mon Feb 19: President's Day

Thu Jul 22 - 7:00 PM: July 4th Committee Meeting

Remember, Sunday Worship Time is now  
10:00 AM!

**The Church Calendar is available at**  
**[amumc.org](http://amumc.org) under Church News.**



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Rev. Heather R. Bailes Baker



You are welcome. Join us for Worship on Sunday!

Worship and Church School begin at 10am in the sanctuary

Livestreaming of our worship service will be available during the service for those who do not attend the service in person. After each service the video will be archived for viewing anytime.

Check out our webpage at [www.amumc.org](http://www.amumc.org)