The Crossroads Connection

A Newsletter for United Churches of Durham & Middlefield Federated Church

Volume 9, Oct. 2026
Office: (860) 349-3683

October at a Glance

Saturday, Oct. 3
Men's Breakfast
Time: 8:30am
Loc: Athenian Diner II

Sunday, Oct. 4
Communion Sunday
Time: 10:00am
Loc: Sanctuary

Sunday, Oct. 11
Bluegrass Cantata/Worship
Time: 10:00am
Loc: Sanctuary

Tuesday, Oct. 13
Ladies Luncheon
Time: 12:00pm
Loc: Fellowship Hall

Sunday, Oct. 18
Sunday Worship
Time: 10:00am
Loc: Sanctuary

Thursday, Oct. 22
Red Cross Blood Drive
Time: 1:00pm
Loc: Fellowship Hall

Sunday, Oct. 25
Sunday Worship
Time: 10:00am
Loc: Sanctuary

Visit our website for more upcoming events and services!

Dear Friends…

It's October and, unless you live under a rock, you can't possibly miss it! Not just because of the changing of seasons, but particularly in North America, (and spreading across the globe) anything that can be capitalized on in any way is a great asset to most businesses. **It's not just October – it's "Spooktober!"** A month long celebration of all things ghoulish culminating in joyous "trick or treat-ing" on October 31st.

The origins of the popular celebration of Halloween are somewhat muddy. Claims have been made for both pagan and Christian roots and quite likely the truth is somewhere in the middle. As the Christian faith spread across the European continent, it is a known fact that Christians frequently tapped in to popular local and sometimes pagan customs, gave them a good scrub off and doused them in faith observance. Thus allowing old customs to live on in a new dress.

Be that as it may, Halloween and All Saints Day converge and present an interesting turning point in the year. Halloween, with its costumes, laughter, and reminders of things that frighten us, invites us to acknowledge the mystery of life and even our fears. All Saints Day, celebrated on November 1, invites us to remember those who have gone before us in faith and to give thanks for the lives they shared with us. And perhaps we can also apply another connection between the two: Halloween reminds us that we do not have to be controlled by our fears, and All Saints Day reminds us that we do not face life -or death -alone.

Someone once defined a (protestant) saint as follows: "A person who makes it easier for others to believe in the goodness of God." So on All Saints Day, we get to remember ordinary people who became extraordinary witnesses through the way they lived: parents and grandparents, friends and neighbors, teachers and mentors, people whose names will never appear in history books but whose love shaped our lives. They reflected to us something of God's grace through their kindness, courage, faithfulness, and compassion. These every-day-saints remind us that holiness is often found in ordinary places. It is found in meals shared, hands extended, forgiveness offered, children raised, burdens carried, and love given without expectation of recognition.

And so, as we move through "spooktober" and Halloween and into All Saints Day, we are reminded not to let fear have the final word. As people of faith we believe that God's love is stronger than death, and that in Christ, life and love ultimately has the last word.

(*continued…*)

Today we can give thanks for the saints who have gone before us—and remember that we, too, are called to be saints in the making. Our lives, however ordinary they may seem, are a testimony to God's love. Share it freely with every little "trick -or -treat-er" that cross your path.

Peace,

Pastor Eva

OCTOBER WORSHIP

October 4 Communion 19th Sun. a. Pentecost	**October 11** Bluegrass Cantata 20th Sun. a. Pentecost	**October 18** 21st Sun. a. Pentecost	**October 25** Reformation Sunday 22nd Sun. a. Pentecost
Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9,12-20 Psalm 19 Philippians 3:4b-14 **Matthew 21:33-46**	Exodus 32:1-14 Psalm 106:1-6,19-23 Philippians 4:1-9 **Matthew 22:1-14**	Exodus 33:12-23 Psalm 99 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 **Matthew 22:15-22**	Deuteronomy 34:1-12 Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17 1 Thessalonians 2:1-8 **Matthew 22:34-46**
Liturgist Linda Shulz	**Liturgist** Ed Holden	**Liturgist** Tracy Olson	**Liturgist** Vicki Berry
Ushers/DOD Linda Shulz, Rick Robin, Robin Ryan	**Ushers/DOD** Scott Cairns	**Ushers/DOD** Jennifer DiPentima	**Ushers/DOD** Flint McLellan
Coffee Hour UCD Trustees	**Coffee Hour** MFC	**Coffee Hour** UCD Missions	**Coffee Hour** UCD Deacons

Office Closed: October 9

The Office will be closed on Friday, October 9, as our office administrator and Pastor will be away. The Office will remain open on Wednesday of that week during our normal office hours from 9am to 2pm, as well as for limited office hours on Monday, October 5 between 12pm and 5pm.

Pastor Eva Away: October 5-12

Pastor Eva will be away from Monday, October 5th until Monday, October 12th. During her absence, worship will consist of our Annual Bluegrass Gospel Cantata. Reach out to a member of Church leadership if you need pastoral support and we will put you in touch with someone.

Bluegrass Gospel Cantata

Join us on **Sunday**, **October 11** at **10am** for our annual Bluegrass Gospel Cantata, featuring a special morning of bluegrass music centered around worship and faith.

Hosted by Bill and Sydney Mintz, this special service will take the place of our usual worship service and will offer a unique blend of bluegrass music, gospel favorites, and a message of faith. Come enjoy some great music and celebrate the joy of worship with us!

Confirmation

Beginning in October, we will offer a confirmation program for all high school students starting 8th grade this year. We will meet **every other Sunday** from **4PM-6PM** and will conclude the Sunday after Easter, April 4th.

An information meeting for both students and parents will be held **October 4th** at **4pm**. Just let us know.

Please contact Pastor Eva or the church office if you would like more information or plan to bring a student. We are also looking for volunteers to assist with the program!

NEWS and UPDATES

While the nor'easter may have kept some folks away and meant we did not have quite the success we had hoped for, we are still happy to report that the Durham Fair remained profitable for United Churches of Durham. From a booming first night at the Lime Rickey Booth to our participation in the parade, United Churches made an impact! Thank you to everyone who helped make the weekend possible, to all who volunteered their time, and to all who stopped by for one of our limited-edition cups!

We will share the final numbers and more details in next month's newsletter. In the meantime, check out our Facebook page for some pictures from the weekend!

SAVE THE DATE

October 3: Men's Breakfast, 8:30am
The men of our two congregations will be meeting at the Athenian Diner II in Middletown for breakfast.

October 13: Ladies Luncheon, 12:00pm
The ladies of our two congregations will be joining together in the Fellowship Hall for a relaxed time of food and friendship!

Red Cross Blood Drive

With the success of our May and June events, we are excited to announce that we will once again be hosting a Red Cross Blood Drive at the Fellowship Hall on **Thursday**, **October 22**, from **1:00 PM to 6:00 PM**! Every donation can help save lives, and the need for blood donations remains constant.

The Red Cross encourages donors to schedule an appointment in advance through their website, which we have linked here: (https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/find-drive). Simply visit the link, enter our code **(Durham CT**) or our ZIP (**06422**), and scroll down to our event for a list of available time blocks.

Donors may give:

- **Whole Blood Donation** – The most common type of donation, during which approximately one pint of blood is collected. This process usually takes about an hour.
- **Power Red Donation** – A specialized donation that collects red blood cells while returning most of the plasma and platelets to the donor. Power Red donors must meet specific eligibility requirements and have blood type A Negative, B Negative, or O.

Whether you are a first-time donor or a regular supporter, your generosity makes a real difference. We hope you will consider signing up and helping meet this critical need. If you have any questions about our blood drive, please contact the office.

As you may know, our AED has been installed in its well-marked cabinet on the wall in Fellowship Hall and the Trustees are in process of arranging an in-service training session in the immediate future on AED operations presented by Rob Chadd or one of his Durham First Responder colleagues at Fellowship Hall.

Anyone interested in attending that training session, please reach out to Bob Guynn directly, phone/text at **860-982-2831**, or by email at rguynn8@comcast.net, as soon as possible.

1. Amazing Grace (SOS). Our commitment to **SOS** (**Support Our Shelves**) at Amazing Grace is **75 pounds per month**. Beans should be **15-16 OUNCE ONLY**! Items for Amazing Grace may be left in the designated baked bean totes in either of 2 areas at UCD---Fellowship Hall or the church narthex OR contact Sydney Mintz or Pam Hogarth for other options. **NO DENTED OR OUTDATED CANS PLEASE**!

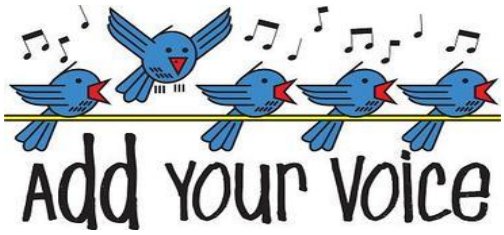
2. Durham Food Pantry: The Durham Food Pantry is currently seeking donations of unopened, unexpired items, including: ***dinner side packets, tomato sauce, peanut butter, baked beans, canned chili, black beans, lentil soup, low-sodium protein-based soups, canned chicken, diced tomatoes, mac & cheese, crackers, healthy snacks, rice, instant potatoes, jelly or jam, pancake mix and syrup, ketchup, mayonnaise, shelf-stable milk, canned fruit, coffee, tinfoil, zip-top storage bags, deodorant, hand soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, all-purpose cleaning spray, Lysol wipes, and laundry detergent***. Durham Pantry Items can be left in our Pantry Collection Tubs.

3. Middlefield Food Bank: The Middlefield Food Bank needs our help. They need the following: ***Shampoo, deodorant, body soap, laundry care, cleaning supplies, sponges, dish detergents, dishwasher detergent, pastas & sauce, rice, coffee, & tea, condiments, toilet paper, paper towels, snacks and baking items, & gluten free items***. For more information, contact Susan D'Orvilliers at sdorvilliers@middlefieldct.org.

4. Eddy Shelter. Our **chili ministry** to the Eddy Shelter continues on the **3rd Sunday of each month** (*schedule may adjust for holidays or weather*)! Volunteers are needed to assist with purchasing fresh meats and veggies (***$40/month***). The sign-up sheet is located by the **coffee station** in **Fellowship Hall**. Desserts are always welcome and can be dropped off at **church** on **Sunday Morning OR Jo-Ann Halibozek's home** on Sunday afternoon, **Sept. 20** (**4-5 PM**).

6. Recycling Bin (Save the Earth). The recycle bin is located between the office and Fellowship Hall at UCD. **SAVE** your bottles, cans and plastics and place them in the appropriate "hole" in the recycle bin. A member from MFC will recycle them. **RINSE CONTAINERS BEFORE PUTTING THEM IN THE BIN AND** be sure to save the can tabs for Shriners.

7. Care Cards. We continually send cards to members and get great enjoyment in doing so!



Come Sing with Our Choir!

Have you ever thought about joining the church choir? We'd love to have you! Whether you're an experienced singer or simply enjoy making music, our choir is a wonderful way to worship, build friendships, and enrich our church services through song.

We rehearse most **Thursday evenings from 7:00–8:00 PM**, from **September through June**. We understand that work, family, and life's unexpected events can sometimes get in the way, so we don't expect everyone to be at every rehearsal or service. We simply ask that members make a sincere effort to attend consistently so we can prepare meaningful music together.

If you've been thinking about singing with us, this is the perfect time to give it a try. Come as you are; we would love to welcome you into our choir family! For more info, please contact Mike at mevis0130@gmail.com or simply join us at a rehearsal starting in September! We look forward to singing with you!

Open and Affirming: A Conversation

Exploring Open and Affirming (ONA)

There is interest among members of our congregation in beginning a conversation about the possibility of pursuing an official **Open and Affirming (ONA)** designation within the *United Church of Christ*. At this time, this is **not an official church initiative**, but rather a member-led effort to learn more about the ONA process and to determine whether there is interest in bringing the conversation before the wider congregation.

The Open and Affirming (ONA) designation is the UCC's public covenant of welcome, affirming the full participation of people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions in the life and ministry of the church.

The ONA discernment process is often thoughtful and takes time, involving education, conversation, and prayer. Since this is a lengthy process, we hope to begin the exploratory work soon. If you are interested in being part of this important conversation from the beginning, please reach out to **Bronwyn Commins** by email at bcwriter16@gmail.com.

Dorothy Galgowski	October 1
Karen Bergenholtz	October 2
Danny Smith	October 2
Caitie Casey-Leonard	October 6
Cassie Cade	October 7
Joel Nick	October 9
Fred Wintsch	October 10
Elaine Lyman	October 10
Paul Miarecki	October 11
Laura Webster	October 12
Claudia White	October 12
Debbie Decker	October 13
William Wimler	October 14
Jenny Perkins	October 15
Sarina McCoy	October 16
Jonathan Keuralian	October 20
Karen Koch	October 22
Jacob Toth	October 22
Dave Webster	October 23
Kelly Kalber	October 24
Liz McCoy	October 25
Lorrie Martin	October 25
Chad Spooner	October 25
Linda Shulz	October 26
Macy Gerry	October 27
Jerry Norton	October 27
Christine Montgomery	October 29
Caden Schlicker	October 30
Lori Michaud	October 31

Paul & Karen Bergenholtz	October 1
Richard & Wendy Sorensen	October 5
Curt & Aleta Cromack	October 11
Bernard & Betty Inkel	October 12
Bob & Christy Dlugoleski	October 28

- **Weekly Newsletter Deadline:** Wednesdays @ Noon
- **Monthly Newsletter Deadline:** October 28

DAYS FOR GIRLS

The year for Days for Girls is quickly coming to a close, with their final meeting of the year taking place in October. If you have been thinking about joining or would simply like to learn more about what they do, now is the perfect time to visit for a meeting!

For those who were unable to attend June's presentation, here is a brief introduction to the mission of Days for Girls:

■ **Empowering Women. Restoring Dignity. Changing Lives.**
Days for Girls is dedicated to eliminating the stigma and limitations surrounding menstruation so that women and girls can experience improved health, education, and economic opportunity. To date, Days for Girls has reached more than 3.5 million women and girls around the world with life-changing menstrual health solutions.

Period Poverty—the lack of access to safe, affordable menstrual supplies and education. Period poverty leads to missed school days, lost income, poor mental and physical health, and deep-rooted stigma.

■ **Global Impact**
Recently, we've partnered with Jean Scialabba from the Orange, CT Chapter, expanding our reach through missions that serve communities most in need in Tanzania, Liberia, Cameroon, Chad and Bangladesh.

■ **Get Involved**
For eight years, our incredible Rocky Hill team has been showing up—every third Saturday from January through October—to sew, pack, and prepare menstrual health kits for distribution across the globe. Though small in size, our group is mighty in impact—creating an average of 2,800 feminine hygiene kits for women and girls around the world. You don't need to sew to help! There's plenty to do… washing and cutting fabric, ironing, stringing ribbons, pinning pieces, or tracing liner patterns. Every task makes a difference.

■ ***2026 Remaining Workshop Date: Oct 17***

Together, we're creating a world where periods don't pause potential. Thank you for being part of this powerful mission.

THE MIDDLEFIELD MINUTE

MIDDLEFIELD DEACON'S CORNER

A Little Sugar

By the time you read this, the Durham Fair will be over. Hopefully there were plenty of good memories, good food, and even a Lime Rickey or two. (or ten!)

True to history, there was one thing none of us could control: the weather. We made plans for the fair, just as we make plans for our lives. And then it rains.. and rains.

Sometimes the rain is just inconvenient. Other times, it changes our plans completely. Life is like that too. We can do our best to prepare, make thoughtful decisions, and still find ourselves dealing with circumstances we never expected.

Mary Poppins may have put it more playfully, but there is something to the idea that a little sugar can make something difficult easier to take. The lime brings the sharpness; the sugar balances it. Neither one has to disappear for the drink to work.

Our faith doesn't promise that life will always be sweet. There will be disappointment. There will be uncertainty. There will be days when things simply don't go the way we hoped.
But God's grace is there to balance the sourness. Not necessarily to change the circumstance, but to give us what we need within it—patience, strength, perspective, and hope.

We don't get to choose every ingredient life gives us, but we can trust God to be present in the recipe.

As Paul writes in Romans, "…suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit…"
—Romans 5:3–5

Sometimes we get the rain. Sometimes we get the lime.
And sometimes what we need is to seek out a little more sugar.

Amy Dills
MFC Deacons

Our Condolences

Our hearts and prayers go out to Rev. Deb Talbott on the occasion of the death of her father, Rev. Floyd Blackard. Rev. Deb has on several occasions filled in for me when I've been away, and her parents have frequently joined us in worship when visiting.

Cards of sympathy can be sent to:
Rev. Deborah Talbott,
58 Miller Road,
Middlefield CT, 06455

And to her mother:
Rev. Roberta Blackard
2800 Via Rosso Unit 199
Springfield Il, 62703

Services will take place on Nov. 7 in Illinois.

MFC Bylaw Review

Most churches have some type of internal document that sets the rules and expectations for its members in relation to the ministry. Usually, this document is referred to as the bylaws. Basically, this document acts as a type of contract between the church and its members. It details topics like the ministry's purpose, organizational structure and leadership roles.

It is often the foundation of any church's internal rules and self- governance. Keeping bylaws current and up-to-date to remain compliant is necessary for any church and particularly now for us as MFC moves forward in our planning process for the future. MFC's by-laws have not been reviewed, updated or amended for many years and it is time this work gets done.

If you want to be part of a small committee that will be carrying out this work, please email the church at (church.mfc@gmail.com) and/or leave a voicemail message (860-349-9881). Our church administrator Aren will be collecting your communications.

Thank you!

October 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1 Choir Rehearsal 7pm	2	3 Men's Breakfast 8:30am Al-Anon 9-11am
4 Worship 10am Communion Confirmation Meeting 4pm	5	6	7	8 Choir Rehearsal 7pm	9 Office Closed	10 Al-Anon 9-11am
11 Worship 10am Bluegrass Cantata	12	13 Ladies Luncheon 12pm Deacons Meeting 6:30pm	14	15 Choir Rehearsal 7pm	16	17 Al-Anon 9-11am
18 Worship 10am Confirmation Meeting 4pm	19	20	21 MFC All Boards 6:30pm	22 Blood Drive 1-6pm Choir Rehearsal 7pm	23	24 Al-Anon 9-11am
25 Worship 10am	26	27	28 UCD Council 7pm	29 Choir Rehearsal 7pm	30	31 Al-Anon 9-11am

The Crossroads Connection
A Newsletter for Oct. 2026

Sunday Worship: 10am
Communion is celebrated on the 1st Sunday of every month. Can't make it in person? We stream services live on our Facebook: https://linktr.ee/unitedchurches

www.unitedchurches.net

United Churches of Durham
228 Main Street,
Durham, CT 06422

Middlefield Federated Church
PO Box 200,
Middlefield, CT, 06455

Administrator
Aren Alberico

Office Email:
office@unitedchurches.net

Office Phone:
(860) 349-3683

Office Hours:
Weds/Fri
9am-2pm
Mon: Appointment Only

Pastor
Rev. Eva Cudmore

Email:
burgencudmore@gmail.com

Cell:
(860) 227-0722

Office Hours:
Tues/Weds/Fri
9am-2pm
Thurs: Flexible

Music Director
Michael Meurs

Email:
Mevis0130@gmail.com

Assistant Music Director
Jenny-Joy Moore

Email:
jennbuckwalter@gmail.com