



# The Crossroads Connection

A Newsletter for United Churches of Durham  
& Middlefield Federated Church

Volume 5, May 2026  
Office: (860) 349-3683

## May at a Glance

### Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>

Men's Breakfast

Time: 8:30am

Loc: Athenian Diner II

### Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>

Accidental Harmony Concert

Time: 6:00pm

Loc: Sanctuary

### Sunday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>

New Member Sunday

Time: 10am

Loc: Sanctuary

### Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup>

Annual Spring Tag Sale

Time: 8:00am – 1:00pm

Loc: Fellowship Hall

### Sunday, May 10<sup>th</sup>

Sunday Worship

Time: 10am

Loc: Sanctuary

### Tuesday, May 12<sup>th</sup>

Ladies Luncheon

Time: 12pm

Loc: Fellowship Hall

### Sunday, May 17<sup>th</sup>

Worship (& Birthday Party)

Time: 10am

Loc: Sanctuary

### Sunday, May 24<sup>th</sup>

Pentecost Sunday

Time: 10am

Loc: Sanctuary

### Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup>

Believer's Baptism

Time: 10am

Loc: Sanctuary

## Dear Friends...

Many years ago and long before I met my now husband, I worked as a peer counselor at a high school in Sweden for two years. (Not employed by the school but with their "blessing".) Part of my job was to interact with and "see" the students without judgment. However, what I found, was, instead of me "seeing" 200+ students a day, several hundred students a week saw "ME". And not only at school. They would see me shopping, hanging out with friends, out on the town when I had no idea there were any students around. And quite rightly, they were quick to point out any inconsistencies between what they observed me doing and what they heard me say as a Christian. Which turned out to be a very good - and sometimes humbling- life lesson in integrity! But one of the recurring questions I got as a Christian, was "How do you know when a faith/religion becomes a cult? When is it healthy and when is it time to leave?"

I would basically tell them the following:

**If what you are looking for is truth, love, peace, harmony, meaning, and validation of human worth, then these are things that cannot come by oppression and dominance or by readymade answers and "one size fits all."**

So,

When you are not allowed to question creeds, tenets, and doctrines outside of pre-defined boundaries - leave.

If doubt is viewed with suspicion and is equated with disbelief - leave.

When anyone who articulates a different understanding (from "theirs") is shamed and/or vilified - leave.

When there are different standards for leaders and followers - leave.

When there are hierarchies based on arbitrary or irregular "rules" - leave.

When being "right" (per their definition) is valued over being merciful - leave.

When love is used as weapon for manipulation – leave.

When loyalty to the group/leader/faith takes precedence over mercy and compassion -leave.

When "because xxxx said so" is used as final argument intended to override and/or silence all objections, – leave.

When "us/we" are all good, and "them" -however defined, are all bad - leave.

And while recognizing that even mostly healthy groups and communities from time to time can have pockets of, or stray in the ways listed, when any of the above things are community norm rather than (unhealthy) occurrence, -LEAVE!

(continued...)

Because, if -as we believe as Christians, God is the same "yesterday, today, and tomorrow" -then God will not be threatened or moved by you asking questions. However difficult ones.

If God is God of love and mercy, then love cannot be pitted against love, withheld, or manipulated to enforce control or subjugation.

God is not so fragile that he requires **your** defense/protection in order to act, or not break.

If God is the one who creates order out of chaos, then asking questions is an invitation to join in a process of divine origin. Through curiosity, science, exploration, and research.

If God has created us all different with ALL the differences that make up this beautiful mosaic of people, then we are in the wrong when we try assert dominance with classifying differences hierarchically.

Today, if I was to give the answers above, I would add, "If God didn't send his Son into the world to condemn it, (John 3:17) he most certainly didn't send anyone else." I must admit that over the years, taking my own advice has at time been very painful. But I still stand by them.

My Friends, Christian Extremism is growing at an alarming rate all around us, demanding preferential treatment and privilege at the expense of all who does not share their "faith" i.e. programming. We need to know what is God's love and what is wolves in sheep's clothing. May you stay vigilant against all powers that seek to harden your hearts to others.

*"And now faith, hope, and love remain, these three, and the greatest of these is love."*  
(1 Corinthians 13:13)

***Pastor Eva***

## MAY WORSHIP

<b>May 3</b> Communion 5 <sup>th</sup> Sun. of Easter	<b>May 10</b> Mother's Day 6 <sup>th</sup> Sun. of Easter	<b>May 17</b> 7 <sup>th</sup> Sun. of Easter	<b>May 24</b> <b>Pentecost Sunday</b>	<b>May 31</b> Believers' Baptism <b>Trinity Sunday</b>
Acts 7:55-60 Ps. 31:1-5, 15-16 1 Peter 2:2-10 <b>John 14:1-14</b>	Acts 17:22-31 Ps. 66:8-20 1 Peter 3:13-22 <b>John 14:15-20</b>	Acts 1:6-14 Ps. 68:1-10, 32-35 1 Peter 5:6-11 <b>John 17:1-11</b>	Acts 2:1-21 Ps. 104:24-34, 35b 1 Cor 12:3b-13 <b>John 20:19-23</b>	Gen 1:1-2:4a Ps. 8 2 Cor 13:11-13 <b>Matt 28:16-20</b>
<b>Liturgist</b> Fred Wintch	<b>Liturgist</b> Vicki Berry	<b>Liturgist</b> Fred Wintch	<b>Liturgist</b> Amy Dills	<b>Liturgist</b> Carol Francis
<b>Ushers/DOD</b> Stacey Prifitera	<b>Ushers/DOD</b> TBD	<b>Ushers/DOD</b> Carol Francis	<b>Ushers/DOD</b> TBD	<b>Ushers/DOD</b> Jen DiPentima Carolyn Cairns
<b>Coffee Hour</b> WSCS	<b>Coffee Hour</b> UCD Trustees	<b>Coffee Hour</b> MFC	<b>Coffee Hour</b> UCD Missions	<b>Coffee Hour</b> UCD Deacons
<b>Notes</b> Welcoming New Members	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Notes</b> Church Birthday Party	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Notes</b> Believers' Baptism

## UCD Missions Presents...

### *The Annual Spring*



**Saturday, May 9, 2026,**  
**from 8am to 1pm**  
*(No early birds, Please)*

Individual spots are available for \$20.

#### **Item Drop-Offs:**

May 6; May 7; May 8  
2:00–6:00 PM

If you have questions or need help,  
call 860-490-7624.

## SAVE THE DATE

#### **Saturday, May 2: Men's Breakfast, 8:30am**

Gather with the men of the church for breakfast and good conversation at the Athenian Diner II in Middletown.

#### **Saturday, May 2: Accidental Harmony Concert, 6:00pm**

Accidental Harmony will be holding their annual spring concert on Saturday, May 2 at 6:00pm. This concert, featuring a collection of your favorite Disney songs, is free to attend.

#### **Tuesday, May 12: Ladies Luncheon, 12:00pm**

All are welcome to join the women of our congregations in the fellowship hall for a relaxed time of food and fellowship.

#### **Sunday, May 17: Church Birthday Party, 11:00am**

Join us after worship for a special birthday celebration! Thanks to the generosity of our members, a variety of cakes will be shared, and together we'll sing "Happy Birthday" to everyone. As part of the celebration, you are invited to make a donation that reflects your age—whether that's 9 pennies, 9 dimes, 9 dollars, or any amount that feels meaningful to you.

# Scholarship

It's spring and that means it's time to look into the future with the support of the church! Consider applying for the **Alan and Craig Chiarappa Scholarship**. The scholarship is open to anyone who is furthering their skills with continued education, and who have contributed to the work and values of UCD and MFC. **Deadline** for the applications is **May 31<sup>st</sup>**. Application forms are available here: (<https://tinyurl.com/MFCscholarship2026>) or by following our Linktr.ee QR code located on the back of this newsletter.

The recipient will be awarded in our worship service in June. The scholarship was established in memory of Alan and Craig Chiarappa, sons of Elmer and Angela Chiarappa. It is sustained through generous donations from church members, family, and friends. **This scholarship is open to members of both congregations! Please spread the word!**



#### **Part-Time Evening PCA Needed (M-T, 5-10pm)**

A member of our Church family, Deb Talbott, is seeking a dependable PCA to assist with evening care, including meal preparation, medication reminders, personal care (showers), and bedtime routines. Occasional errands and transportation to activities may be required. The applicant must be able to drive a large van, lift household items, prepare healthy meals within dietary needs, and work cooperatively with other PCAs.

Deb lives with TBI and TSCI and uses a power wheelchair as needed. The position involves supporting an active schedule of therapies, appointments, and daily care needs. The position is through the PCA Waiver Program (CT DSS & Agency on Aging & Disabilities). A background check and clean driving record will be required. Prior or current substance use is not compatible with this role. Familiarity with TBI/TSCI is helpful but not required; willingness to learn care protocols is essential. Deb's home is smoke-free and alcohol-free.

**To apply or for more information, please contact Deb Talbott:**  
[revdebt@gmail.com](mailto:revdebt@gmail.com) | 618-339-4687



**1. Amazing Grace Special Collection.** The following items are currently in short supply. We will focus on them this month.

- Soups - No creamed soups
- Condiments - Mayonnaise, Ketchup, Mustard
- Tea, Coffee
- Tomato Products - Canned, Sauce, Paste
- BROWN Rice

**2. 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!**

**3. May Focus:** For the month of **May**, the focus will be on **First Aid and Sunscreen**.

**4. SVDM Supportive Housing:** Saint Vincent de Paul in Middletown is seeking our help to support individuals and families as they transition into new housing. You can contribute by purchasing needed household items through their Amazon Wishlist (<https://tinyurl.com/svdmwish>), or by donating comparable items locally and dropping them off at 617 Main St. or 8 Liberty St. in Middletown, CT.

**5. Eddy Shelter.** Our **chili ministry** to the Eddy Shelter will continue on the **3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month** (*subject to change for holidays and weather disruptions*). Please see our sign-up sheet in the Fellowship Hall to donate your time and talents. **Desserts** are also welcome, and can be delivered to UCD on **SUNDAY MORNING, MAY 17**, or to **JO-ANN HALIBOZEK'S HOME** on **SUNDAY AFTERNOON BETWEEN 4 AND 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!

**Thank you!**



### Imagine This...

What if you had to miss school or work simply because you didn't have access to proper menstrual supplies? How many days each year would you lose in education and wages—just because of your period? Now imagine never being taught about menstruation at all—or worse, being made to feel ashamed of your body. This is the reality for more than **500 million women, girls, and menstruators worldwide**. It's called **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.

### Our Rocky Hill Team: 8 Years Strong

For eight years, our incredible Rocky Hill team has been showing up 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.

### 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. 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.

### Get Involved

Our team runs entirely on donations and volunteers. We are always in need of:

- 100% cotton fabric
- Underwear (girls' and women's sizes)
- Washcloths

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.

### 2026 Workshop Dates

We meet every third Saturday, January through October:  
• **May 16** • Jun 20 • Jul 18 • Aug 16 • Sep 20 • Oct 17



Nicholas Hummel	May 1
Ralph Chase	May 1
Hazel Chapman	May 2
Maria Chapman	May 4
Travis Holden	May 4
Pete Carras	May 6
Martha Wheeler	May 9
Sarah Kennedy	May 11
Maddison Burt	May 12
Kyle Perkins	May 12
Elah Pope	May 12
Ted Brainerd	May 15
Joyce Dowling	May 17
Etzie Heyl	May 17
Brian Korzon	May 18
Richard Sorensen	May 21
Jim Fowler	May 22
Claudia Guynn	May 22
Wendy Sorensen	May 22
Eileen Casey	May 27
Judy Shuler	May 28
Tim Burt	May 29
PJ Casey-Leonard	May 29
Daryl Smith	May 30
Barbara Kauffman	May 31
Janice Wenzel	May 31

# FLOWERS

*for Sunday Worship Services!*

You are invited to bring FLOWERS to beautify our Sanctuary!

Flowers may come from your garden or from anywhere you choose to purchase them. They can be given for any occasion—in honor or in memory of a loved one, to celebrate a birthday, or simply to mark a special day.

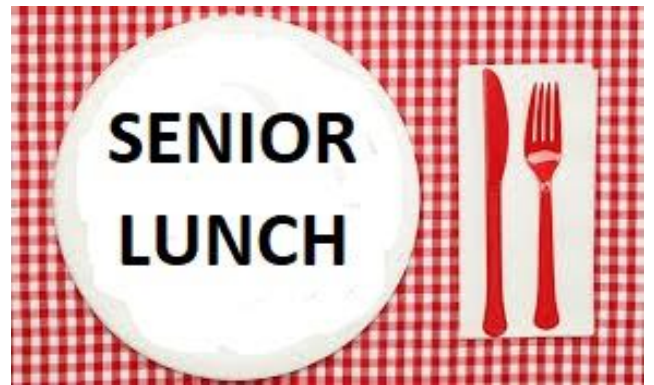
After the service, you are welcome to take your flowers home, share them with a member, leave them in the church office, or donate them to a nursing home.

If you would like to sign up for a specific date, please use the sign-up sheet at church or contact Nancy Hennick at (860-614-8847).

Multiple people are welcome to bring flowers on the same day—the more, the merrier!



Fred & Ruth Wintsch	May 14
Tom & Nancy Hennick	May 29



*Every Monday and Wednesday*

**DURHAM COMMUNITY CENTER**  
144 Pickett Lane, Durham, CT

Lunches for folks aged 60 or older will be held from 11:00am to 1:00pm with lunch served at noon. A voluntary donation of \$3.00 is suggested for eligible participants, however, no one will be denied a meal if unable to pay.

**Please sign up by Wednesday each week for the following week by calling, emailing, or using the sign-up sheets available during lunch. Join us!**

(Morgan Perry 860-349- 3153  
[mperry@townofdurhamct.org](mailto:mperry@townofdurhamct.org))



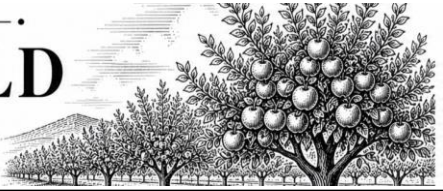
If you have updates, announcements, or events you'd like included in our newsletters, please remember to send them in!

- **Weekly Newsletter Deadline:** Wednesdays @ Noon
- **Monthly Newsletter Deadline:** May 27

Check out <https://www.unitedchurches.net/events.html> for a full calendar of upcoming events, updated weekly!



# THE MIDDLEFIELD MINUTE



*"I am the resurrection and the life... The one who believes in me will live, even though they die." — John 11:25*

There is something tender about the weeks after Easter. The lilies fade, the hymns quiet, and life settles back into its rhythm. But grief does not follow the calendar.

This Easter felt different for me. Many of you knew and loved my mom, and you understand the space she filled—not just in my life, but in so many others. Her absence is real and present, even in a season that proclaims resurrection.

And yet, this is exactly where Easter meets us.

Mary stood weeping in the garden, not yet recognizing that new life stood before her. Grief clouded her vision until Jesus spoke her name. I think of that often—that even in resurrection, there was still sorrow, still waiting, still the slow unfolding of hope.

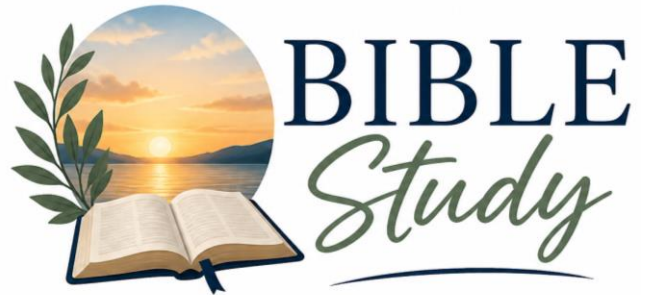
Spring reminds us that life does not rush forward all at once. Beneath the surface, something is always stirring. What looks barren is not without promise.

The resurrection does not erase our grief—but it does hold it. It reminds us that love is not lost, only changed. That those we love are held securely in the One who conquered the grave.


So we live here, in this quiet in-between—  
grieving what was,  
trusting what is to come,  
and listening for the voice that still calls our name.

Lord, in this season of new life, hold our grief with gentleness. Thank You for the gift of those we have loved so deeply. Help us to trust that even now, You are bringing life where we cannot yet see it. **Amen.**

**Lovingly,  
Bridget Melien,  
MFC Deacons**



 **Summer Evening Bible Study**

 **Monday, June 8 through to August 17  
(no class on July 13)**

 **7-8pm mix of Zoom or in person TBD**

A new 10 week Monday evening Bible study on the book of Acts will begin soon, designed especially for those who cannot attend weekday morning or afternoon events due to work schedules. The group will follow a structured workbook and include weekly homework assignments to support deeper study and reflection.

Participation is limited to 10 people to allow for meaningful discussion and shared learning. If you're interested in joining, please sign up in the church office or contact Amy Dills.

**Amy Dills. MFC Deacons**

## **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 ([church.mfc@gmail.com](mailto:church.mfc@gmail.com)) and/or leave a voicemail message (860-349-9881). Our church administrator Aren will be collecting your communications.**

**Thank you!**

# May 2026

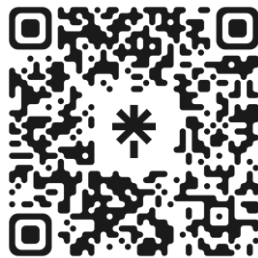
## MONTHLY PLANNER

05 / 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2 Men's Breakfast 8:30 Al-Anon 9-11am Accidental Harmony 6pm
3 <b>Worship 10am</b> New Member Sunday	4	5 MFC Deacons 6:30pm Scouts 6:45-8:45pm	6	7 Scouts 6:45-8:45pm Choir Rehearsal 7pm	8	9 Tag Sale 8am-1pm Al-Anon 9-11am
10 <b>Worship 10am</b>	11	12 Ladies Lunch 12pm All Deacons 6:30pm Scouts 6:45-8:45pm	13	14 Scouts 6:45-8:45pm Choir Rehearsal 7pm	15	16 Al-Anon 9-11am
17 <b>Worship 10am</b> Church Birthday Party	18	19 Scouts 6:45-8:45pm	20	21 MFC All-Board 7pm UCD Deacons 6:30pm	22	23 Al-Anon 9-11am
24 <b>Worship 10am</b> <b>Pentecost Sunday</b>	25	26 Scouts 6:45-8:45pm	27	28 UCD Council 7pm	29	30 Al-Anon 9-11am
31 <b>Worship 10am</b> Believer's Baptism <b>Trinity Sunday</b>						

**The Crossroads Connection**  
A Newsletter for April 2026

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



[www.unitedchurches.net](http://www.unitedchurches.net)

**United Churches of Durham**  
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**Middlefield Federated Church**  
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Aren Alberico

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Mon: Appointment Only

**Pastor**

Rev. Eva Cudmore

**Email:**  
[burgencudmore@gmail.com](mailto:burgencudmore@gmail.com)

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(860) 227-0722

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**Music Director**

Michael Meurs

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