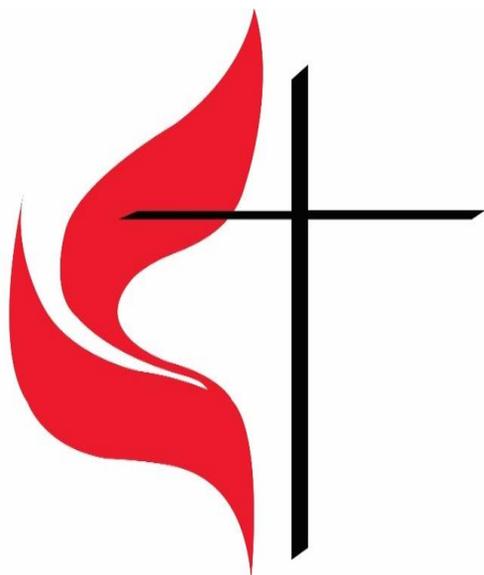


Betay Kneeland



United Methodist Church
of Danielson

The Cross & Flame
Journal

Mission Statement:
**Learning the Three O's - Open
Hearts, Open Minds, Open
Doors**

Vision Statement:
Repentance, Renewal, Reform

February 2026

February message from Pastor
Zach:

February is often referred to as the month of love, for the obvious reasons. Even before the ball dropped, the trappings of Santas and Christmas trees were giving way to Valentines and candy hearts.

Last year, without thinking to look ahead at the 2026 calendar, I decided that every February, I would teach on the theme of "Love." So last year, we looked at the four Greek words most often found in scripture to describe love. These different words describe the different loves we have for our family and friends, our significant others, and of course, God.

When we think of the subject of love as found in the Bible there are two places we tend to look first - 1 Corinthians 13 and the whole of 1 John. Both letters were written to churches needing to learn a new way of living together. Paul calls it "A more excellent way" (1 Cor 12:31b, NSRVue). The writer of 1 John identifies God with love itself, insisting that unless we love, we

won't know God, regardless of how hard we protest to the contrary (4:8). It is of first importance, the writer insists, that love is at the center of everything we do. This is not a request, but vital instruction. Unless we work from a place of love learned from God, nothing we do will be worthy of being called done "in his name."

The hardest part about this is that we can't just say we love in God's name, because as soon as we do, we are claiming to love in a certain way. "Love is a verb" sings DC Talk. "Love is patient," writes Paul. It is also "kind. It isn't jealous, it doesn't brag, it isn't arrogant, it isn't rude, it doesn't seek its own advantage, it isn't irritable, it doesn't keep a record of complaints, it isn't happy with injustice, but it is happy with the truth" and so on (1 Cor 13:4-6, CEB).

Love is not something we can claim without reflecting on what our love often looks like compared to the God's standards. The way God calls us to love doesn't come naturally, it a fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22). "We love, because God first loved us" (1 John 4:19). If we love, it is because God is giving the increase as we grow in that big

theological idea called "Sanctification;" a word John Wesley described more plainly, albeit no less daunting, as "being made perfect in love."

This year, Lent comes early. Ash Wednesday is February 18th, effectively messing up my initial plans. But call it fate, good fortune, or divine providence (I'll let your personal theology decide), we will still be talking about love in February. This year, our Lenten theme for both study, and service will be "Multiplying Love," taken from the Paul Chilcote book of the same name. If that book already sounds familiar to you, that's because it's the book I used as the basis for our visioning retreat in January.

In the book, Chilcote notes how John Wesley wrote in his notes on John 4:19, that the love with which God enables us to love is "the sum of all religion" (31). For it is the essential nature of our faith, "the sum of all things" (31).

If you would like to participate or just read the book on your own if you're unable to attend Saturday morning discussions, please let Cyndi or myself know. We will get you a copy. It will be a constant companion throughout the

season for both the study and sermon series. It's also a great read!

See you in church,
Pastor Zach



Welcome
to the
United Methodist Church
of Danielson

We're glad you found us.

Contact Us at ...

Church Office: 860-779-2018

Church Email:

betsy.kneeland@umcdanielson.org

Pastor's Cell: 217-840-1623

Pastor's Email:

pastor.zach@umcdanielson.org

Media Email:

media@umcdanielson.org

~ Church Office Hours~

Tuesday: 8:30 a.m.- Noon

~Pastor's Office Hours~

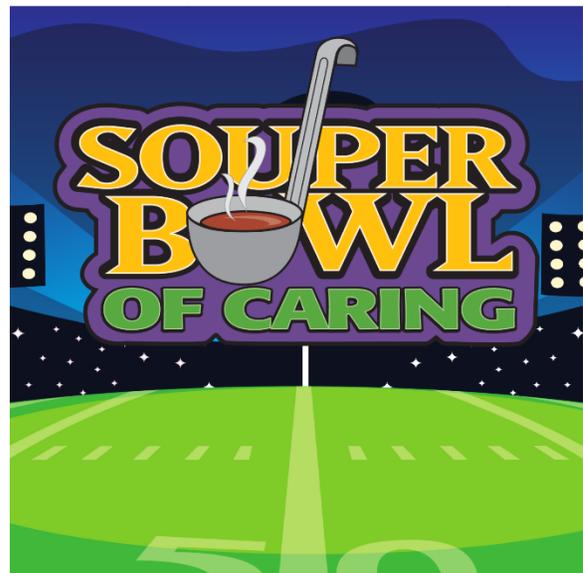
Tuesday: 9:30 a.m. - Noon

Wednesday: 10 a.m. - Noon

Thursday: @ Killingly Public Library:
10-12 p.m., or any other time by
appointment.

Pastor Zach's Sabbath are Fridays.

Things to put on your calendar:



2/8 - give your loose change and dollar
bills

The **Annual Souper Bowl of Caring**, organized by International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC). This event encourages parishes and church youth to collect donations for local food banks, aiming to ensure that no one goes without a bowl of soup. The Souper Bowl of Caring has generated over \$220 million for local food charities across all fifty states, making it a significant effort to combat hunger in the community.

2/8 Missions and Ad Council meetings after church

2/13 Chicken dinner 4 p.m.

Church Happenings:

Sunday:

9:30 a.m. Sunday School

10:15 a.m. Worship - In Person and Zoom (See link below)

2 p.m. Davis Place - every 1st Sunday

2 - 3 p.m. Al Anon in fellowship hall

Tuesday:

1 p.m. K.B.I.C. every 3rd Tuesday

Wednesday:

12p.m. Community Kitchens

Friday:

10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Diaper Bank, last Friday of the month

6:30 - 8pm: NA in fellowship hall

Saturday:

9 - 10 am: Bible Study in Christian Ed Room and ZOOM (See link below)

10:15: Grief Group (2nd and 4th Saturdays) in Christian Ed Room and ZOOM (See link below)

ZOOM Info: Sunday Service:

Meeting ID: 899 8668 2568

Adult Sunday School: **Meeting**

ID: 862 3566 5633

Bible study and Grief Group:

Meeting ID: 707 166 7519

Liturgist schedule:

February 1 - Earl McWilliams

February 8 - Scott Richards

February 15 - Betsy Kneeland

February 22 - Arianna Miles

Children's Moments:

February 1 - Pastor Zach

February 8 - Cyndi Perkins

February 15 - Chrissy Pagano

February 22 - Sue Martin



Please sign up for Coffee Time and greeters. Please see Sandy Andrews with questions or to sign the sign-up sheets.

There is also a sign-up sheet for flowers on the back table. If you want to give flowers in honor or in memory of a loved one, friend, pet, special occasion, etc. please sign up!



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2/2 Kendra Collins
2/5 Mary Ellen Goettel
2/14 Cassandra Sleboda
2/15 Emilie LeCrone
2/20 Sheila Richardson

Project Haven: Warming Kits

For the last few months, I and a few others from our church have been involved in what came out of the Town Hall meeting about homelessness in our community at Westfield back in October. From that conversation came more intentional planning that has grown into a multi-faceted grassroots organization calling ourselves "Project Haven." Among the many resources we are currently putting together for our unhoused or car bound neighbors are warming kits. Below you will find items you can purchase off the list we have put together to put in backpacks and provide to those who need them.

Some of the items include hats, gloves, and thermal socks.

Space in the warming shelters are often limited and more of our neighbors are finding themselves losing access to a stable roof over their heads and the need for basic items continues to grow. If you have a little extra to share in this way, check out the list. Our church is a collection site for items and will also be a place people can get a kit once they are assembled.

We know this won't fix the bigger issues behind homelessness that are brought on by both socio-economic realities that are systemic in nature and individual choice. What we do know is that we are responsibly following the way of Jesus who said, "Give to those who ask, and don't refuse those who wish to borrow from you" (Matthew 5:42).

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1NWUCQS2H967L?ref=wl_share

Getting to Know...Barbara Schreier

How and why did you come to this church?

Barbara started coming to the church in 2000 when she was ordained as a

Deacon. She came to us from Living Faith UMC in Putnam. She felt we were a better fit.

How long have you been coming to UMCD?

Twenty-six years.

What is/was or was your profession?

Barbara started her career as an elementary teacher. After 3 years, she transitioned to work with special needs children for DDS and then moved up from direct care to case management.

What are your hobbies/interests?

Barbara enjoys yardwork, gardening, being outdoors and watching the Patriots and UCONN teams.

A few words to describe yourself...

Barbara describes herself as adventurous. She will try most things once. Loves working with people. Barbara works at the Fuel Bank, likes to give back since she was a single mom and had to take advantage of resources, is on many conference committees, and is chair of the Missions, Ad Council and Interfaith committees. She enjoys being retired since she can pick and choose what she wants to serve on and make her own hours.



Leadership group:

Lay Leader: Cyndi Perkins

Office Manager: Betsy Kneeland

Reverend: Zach LeCrone

IT/Media Director: Cori Sharrow

Please feel free to share any of your special events: joys & celebrations, anniversaries, birthdays, special awards/honors, trips, etc. The deadline for news items is the 10th of each month. Send info to betsy.kneeland@umcdanielson.org

The deadline for news items is the 10th of each month. Send info to betsy.kneeland@umcdanielson.org

The church's email has changed.

Please use

betsy.kneeland@umcdanielson.org

going forward.



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