

Good Tidings

April 2024



Arnold Mills United Methodist Church

Rev. Heather R. Bailes Baker

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A note from our pastor...

Beautiful Beloveds,

April Showers bring May flowers. April fools bring... hilarity or obnoxiousness? Our house is a home divided when it comes to April Fools and pranks in general. Some of us love the gentle ribbing, the sillier the better, and others think it's generally unkind. What say you: all in good fun or bah and humbug? For those who love it, what's your favorite prank? For those who don't, if you could re-purpose or rename the day, what would it be?

Easter may be one of the greatest April Fools of all time. Everyone thought Jesus was dead, and yet, we know, Christ is Risen! The stories of the Easter Season are of Jesus, believed to be dead, showing up time and again to those who knew and loved him. Is it any wonder they didn't recognize him at first? I think there's a reason Jesus stuck around awhile after Easter. People needed time to see him, touch him, and know mind, body, and soul that he was risen. We too need a whole season to hear the amazing stories of Jesus, crucified, buried and risen again. We need resurrection stories.

In April we kick off a new worship series, "Resurrection Stories." As creator Marcia McFee writes, "We can be in need of rising out of the depth of imprisonment, addiction, poverty, illness, and oppression — not just physically and literally, but also spiritually. What keeps us locked up inside? What holds us back from the joy of life? What binds us, keeping us from the fullness of who God created us to be?"

The Sunday after Easter, Rev. Mary Johnson, retired United Methodist pastor and our Bishop's wife will be preaching. She's written a communion liturgy just for the day. Come and hear powerful preaching, good news, and feast at the table. And, April 3, we begin a new book study, on Bishop Peggy Johnson's book, *The Ever-Expansive Spirit of God-For All Who Feel Left Out*. Join us via Zoom Wednesday, April 3, 7-8 pm to process the beginning pages.

We'll wrap up the month with a very special conference. In our straw poll, you voted overwhelmingly to become a Reconciling Congregation and explicitly proclaim our welcome of all God's beloved children, especially our siblings and neighbors who identify as lgbtq+. We'll make this official with a brief, one-item agenda, Church Conference, immediately following worship on April 28. If you have questions about our process, church conference or human sexuality and United Methodist theology, please see me or any member of our Reconciling Team: Adama Brown, LeeAnn Cotta, Stacey Johnson, Alex Kithes, and Dave Larson.

Special Church Conference

Sunday, April 28

immediately following worship

One Item Agenda: Should Arnold Mills United Methodist Church be a Reconciling Congregation?

There's a lot happening at the amazing Arnold Mills United Methodist Church. Join us for worship, study, service and so much more.

Love and peace,

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

Pastor Heather

Coming Soon in Worship

April 7 | Rev. Mary Johnson, preaching

Communion

1 John 1:1-2:2 "Living in the Light"

April 21 | "Released"

Psalms 121, Nehemiah 9: 9-15, John 12: 20-33

April 14 "Freed"

Rom 8: 12-25, Luke 24: 13-32, Acts 16: 16-34

April 28 | "Found"

Psalms 24, Luke 24: 36-43, John 14: 18-28

7pm Wednesday Night Study

April 3, 10, 17, 24

New Book Study begins April 3—*The Ever-Expansive Spirit of God-For All Who Feel Left Out*, by Bishop Peggy A. Johnson

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/839125938>

Meeting ID: 839 125 938

In this book, our Bishop shares her own personal experiences with sexual orientation and gender identity during her lifetime of ministry. These shared moments are painful at times, yet also courageous, embarrassing, sad, happy, inspiring and even humorous.

Our church is up to lots of things: Reconciling Ministries, Solar Panels, Creation Care, etc.

Our denomination is up to lots of things:

General Conference begins April 23.

Need to ask a question or talk about it?

Make an appointment with Pastor Heather to chat in her office, schedule a visit to your home, or meet somewhere off campus for a walk, a cup of coffee, or sit and talk. Email, Call or text, 774.994.3645.

Or stop by Phantom Farms

Wednesdays at 11

Meet Pastor Heather for conversation and connections over coffee. No agenda. Come and chat.

Phantom Farms, 2920 Diamond Hill Rd, Cumberland



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

Organic Tea — \$4/box

Chocolate Bars — \$3/bar

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.

Please pray for our confirmands and their mentors as together they grow in discipleship.

Pedro Cardoso — Chip Thurlow

Michael Emerson — LeeAnn Cotta

Lexi Johnson — Sharon Bizier

Allie Stewart — Stacey Johnson

Our Reconciling Process

-Adama Brown

This year the Arnold Mills Reconciling Team kicked off a process to discern whether or not this church will become a reconciling congregation. This process would involve Arnold Mills actively making a stance to welcome all, particularly and especially our siblings and neighbors who identify as LGBTQ+.

To date this process has included or will include:

- A worship series on the clobber passages.
- Two bible studies: one on the clobber passages and the other about love in the Bible.
- Members of the team have been available during coffee hour to answer questions and Rev. Heather has made herself available to answer questions after church as well as on Wednesdays at Phantom Farms.
- Storytelling and sharing about why this church and this process is important.
- A book study to further our education beginning April 3
- Rev. Mary Johnson, wife of Bishop Johnson, will bring the word on April 7 at Arnold Mills UMC
- A straw poll was conducted to seek congregation input, and was overwhelming affirming to be Reconciling.
- Our official vote at a church conference will be April 28, immediately following worship. If we get a 75% affirmation from the church body, we can add ourselves to the growing list of reconciling congregations identified by the Reconciling Ministries Network.

Our denomination is in flux at the moment. In the past year or so, 25% of the churches that were originally part of the United Methodist denomination disaffiliated and many have aligned themselves with a more conservative and less welcoming brand of Methodism as part of the Global Methodist Church.

Next month, beginning April 23 and ending on May 3rd, our General Conference will convene in Charlotte, North Carolina to set rules and establish the denomination's official policies for the work of the church. One of the things that is up for consideration is the removal of harmful language from the Book of Discipline – our denomination's governing document - that currently restricts the participation of LGBTQ+ persons in the life of the church.

The New England Annual Conference, of which Arnold Mills United Methodist Church is a part of, and which organizes the ministry and business of UMC's in all six New England States, made a stance in 2016 stating that it would not comply with provisions in the Book of Discipline that discriminate against LGBTQ+ persons.

So, you might wonder – if decisions are still yet to be made at the denominational level and our own annual conference has taken a stance to affirm LGBTQ+ persons, what does this have to do with Arnold Mills UMC?

I'll give you **three main reasons why this is all important to Arnold Mills UMC:**

Arnold Mill's current mission statement reads as follows: The purpose of Arnold Mills United Methodist Church is to provide an active, loving and caring Christian community open to all, where people of diverse religious and social backgrounds have the opportunity for worship, learning, spiritual growth, service and fellowship. Becoming a reconciling congregation allows us to live into and live out this mission.

Through recent visioning work, it has been established that we can increase the visibility and awareness of the good work of Arnold Mills by developing new partnerships and relationships with individuals and community organizations in Northern Rhode Island. By becoming a reconciling congregation, this affords us an opportunity to forge and strengthen community partnerships that speak to a wide array of needs and people in this area.

And finally, the Gospel of Matthew calls us to abide by the two greatest commandments of all; that is, love God with all your heart, mind and soul and love your neighbor as yourself. No matter what decisions are made at General Conference, what better way to model what Christ calls us to do by loving and affirming those on the margins and practicing radical welcome in both word and deed.

Trustee Report

The Trustee Committee held its monthly meeting on March 14, 2024. The following projects were in progress, with some having been completed by now.

- Fire alarm panel batteries were changed on March 22nd by Eastland Electric.
- The Sustainability Project was presented to the congregation after services on Sunday, March 17th.
- The church's internet service has been upgraded.
- The Scouts, along with their parents and several church members, did a terrific job of cleaning up the grounds on Saturday, March 16th. We thank them all!
- The playground project is in the works.
- A bike rack will soon be added.
- The parsonage lamp post was taken out during all the recent tree demolition and will be replaced by a solar light fixture.
- Darren Chisnell is planning a memorial party in Cargill Hall to honor his mother, Jane Shaw, on a Saturday in May. The date is still to be determined.
- Approval has been given for Cargill Hall to be used by the Town of Cumberland as a voting venue in the fall.
- The church was inspected a second time by the town Fire Inspector and is close to compliance. A few doors, ceiling holes, and signs still need work, but the list is almost finished!
- A computerized organ is being researched by our music director and trustees as a solution to our organ absence. We have received a generous donation toward this project from a former musical member.

Stay tuned!

- A new microwave was purchased for the kitchen.
- The lawn tractor was serviced and is ready for the cutting season.

Respectfully submitted,

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



Arnold Mills Cemetery Trivia

Karl Ikerman

You would think with the reservoir so close to the well that water would be easy to find! Not true, and no one guessed the correct amount. At 400 feet there still wasn't any water. I told the driller to stop at 500 feet. At 480 feet we hit water, but not enough to run all the sprinklers at once. We had to install a timer to switch sprinkler heads and let the well recover.

Special Sunday Offering for The Hope School

A message from Cindy Mauch



On Sunday, April 21, we will have a special offering opportunity for The Hope School in Bethlehem. The Hope School is a non-profit Christian school founded in 1962 serving disadvantaged children and orphans in the Palestinian West Bank. The school provides high quality education while promoting the Christian values of Love, Peace, Tolerance, Human Dignity and Justice. It serves children from kindergarten through high school.

Six years ago, I had the privilege of traveling to Israel and Palestine with Bishop Suda Devadhar and members of the New England Conference, and one of the places we visited was The Hope School. I was impressed with the quality of the staff and

their dedication to providing high quality education to students amidst ongoing financial challenges, political tensions, and ever-present dangers of armed conflict.

Recently our current Bishop Peggy Johnson shared a press release issued by the US Council of Bishops urging a cease fire in the current Israeli-Palestinian conflict. She asked that churches in our New England Conference consider contributing to The Hope School as a tangible way to make a positive impact in an otherwise heartbreaking situation. While we continue to pray for an end to the current conflict, please consider also making a financial donation to this special school. There will be envelopes in the pews. Please make any check out to AMUMC with Hope School in the memo line. You may also give online through our website. Thank you!



2024 Margaret Stearns Service Award

Since 1978 the Margaret Stearns Service Award has been presented by the Arnold Mills United Methodist Church to graduating high school seniors continuing their education. Two awards - **\$1,500 each** - will be issued each year. Although academic excellence and financial need are considered by the Selection Committee, **the essential characteristic of an ideal candidate is a "demonstrated concern for others at home, school, church or community". Applicants must be able to demonstrate how their own concern for others has benefited someone else.**

The application submission deadline is **April 19, 2024.**

Eligibility

The applicant must be a **graduating senior at Cumberland High School, or a Cumberland resident graduating from another high school and/or a contributing member of the Arnold Mills United Methodist Church graduating from any high school with plans for further education at a junior college, college, university, business school, technical school or vocational school.** A contributing member would be a student who attended the AMUMC church school (student or teacher aide), be a member of any of the youth groups, complete the confirmation process, and/or volunteer at one or more of the AMUMC activities and events such as the July 4th food sale, the Holiday Fair, the variety of Missions Committee activities, etc.

Interested AMUMC high school seniors can apply by requesting the application from the Cumberland High School Guidance office or, if they attend other High Schools, they can email their request to: amumcstearnsserviceaward@gmail.com

Charles Thurlow, Chairperson, Margaret Stearns Service Award Committee
Arnold Mills United Methodist Church

Native American Ministries Sunday April 14, 2024



This Special Sunday is a denomination wide celebration designed to raise awareness and remind United Methodists of the gifts and contributions made by Native Americans to our society. A gap in knowledge exists in The United Methodist Church, in congregations and other United Methodist entities, relative to comprehending concepts of Native American life, cultures, languages, spirit, values, contemporary issues, and such. We affirm the sacredness of indigenous people, their languages, cultures, and gifts to the church and the world. Churches are encouraged to donate through their local churches or [give online](#).

You can support this Special Sunday by giving online at [UMC.org/SSGive](https://www.UMC.org/SSGive), through your local United Methodist Church or mail a check to:
GCFA. P.O. Box 340029, Nashville, TN 37203
Please include Native American Ministries Sunday in the note section of your check.

Missions Committee Newsletter Report

April 2024

Meals in the Park

Our upcoming meals are **April 14th and May 5th**. Please let Karen know if you would like to volunteer for these events or make some homemade desserts. Please save us plastic or paper bags with handles to package the lunch. Thank you for your support for this wonderful program. Karen Oswain 401-749-3609

School Supplies Donations

Thanks to many generous donations, we were able to provide school supplies to five of the 15 different Elementary Schools in our northern RI area. The schools that have received our donations so far are: Community School, Cumberland Hill Elementary School and Garvin Memorial Elementary School in Cumberland; the Northern Lincoln Elementary School and the Citizen's Memorial Elementary School in Woonsocket. We are hopeful that donations will continue to be made in the basket in the hallway so that all of the elementary schools can benefit from our generosity. **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. Check out the wonderful Thank You cards that are posted on the Bulletin Board in the Coat Room. Any questions, contact Chip Thurlow; thurlowcp@aol.com; 401-333-1235.

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 interior work installing the sheet rock and insulation. Any questions, contact Chip Thurlow; thurlowcp@aol.com; 401-333-1235

Exterior Views



January



March

Interior Views



January



March



Sheet Rock Installation



Window Installation

Ongoing Service Activities:

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

The volunteers at Franklin Farm are preparing for the 2024 harvest season! The gardening areas will soon be plowed over as preparations are made for the planting of the seeds and seedlings in the next few months. 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; 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.

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 April 2024

For a few days **keep a tally of all the single-use plastic you encounter**. Become hyper-aware of plastic bags, excess packaging, water bottles, disposable cutlery, straws, cups that litter your life before they stay in landfills or oceans for eons. Share your count with at least one other person. Awareness is the first step to positive change.

Treat your family to alternatives to the usual single-use plastic items in your home. Consider bamboo toothbrushes, shampoo bars, aluminum water bottles, reusable silicone baggies, for example. Or visit a refill store. **Move away from “throw-away.”**

Tell your friends what you are doing to greatly reduce the plastic waste in your life. Talk about why that change is important to you. Recount your changes as steps in a journey and invite them to join you in tackling the problem. Encourage them; avoid creating any embarrassment.

At work, check out the coffee station. Styrofoam cups and plastic stirrers get thrown away but never go away. **Look for non-plastic alternatives** for coffee cups. Buy a package of linguine pasta, break the strands in half and use them to stir the coffee or tea. The pasta-stirrers can be composted or thrown away without the same harm that plastic generates.

Plan an Earth Day (April 22) opportunity to educate and encourage your church family about choosing the planet vs. plastic. Consider a display, “This—Not That,” showing alternatives to single-use plastic. Plan a special Sunday school program. Arrange to clean up a nearby stream or roadway as a service project. Weigh and report the results. In worship include prayers for the planet. Hand out reusable bags imprinted with a reminder to care for creation.

Donate to organizations that are addressing the plastic problem on a larger scale. Your financial support enables them to reach far and wide. Check out these: [EarthDay.org](https://www.earthday.org), [Plastic-Free July](https://www.plastic-free-july.com), The Story of Stuff Project, specifically [The Story of Bottled Water](https://www.storyofstuff.org).

Push your state or city to ban specific single-use plastics. Already, more than 500 cities have ordinances against plastic bags. Twelve states have bans in place. Two more are working in that direction. The number is growing, and [the bans are working](#). Get your local policymakers on the “ban-wagon.”

Money talks. **Boycott companies that use excessive plastic packaging**. Purchase from businesses that are committed to environmentally friendly practices as well as plastic-free products. Look for [B Corp certification](#). Read the “About” tab on websites. Complain if you receive something with plastic packaging. Buy food not wrapped in plastic.

Currently wending its way through Congress is the bill [H.R. 6053](#): “To amend the Solid Waste Disposal Act to reduce the production and use of certain single-use plastic products and packaging, to improve the responsibility of producers in the design, collection, reuse, recycling, and disposal of consumer products and packaging, to prevent pollution from consumer products and packaging from entering into animal and human food chains and waterways, and for other purposes.” **Contact your Representative to advocate for its passage.**

Approach this Earth Day—and every day—with gratitude. Our Creator God has gifted us with an amazing planet—not wrapped in plastic. Our faithful response is to cherish and care for this treasure.

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.

Church School News



Important Dates

April 7: Communion Sunday
Children will begin in the classroom.

Sunday School Registration

To register go to the Children & Youth page under Education on the church website (amumc.org). You will find a form you can print and fill in and an online form if you prefer registering online. Use either one to register.

This month we are continuing our unit titled "Breakfast on the Beach".

Main Idea: After the Resurrection the disciples recognized Jesus in familiar places and in familiar activities. We too can experience the hope and love of Jesus in everyday activities such as walking, talking, and eating.

Objectives: Children will have opportunities to:

- *Meet the resurrected Jesus in their own lives.
- *Recognize the presence of Jesus Christ in their everyday lives.
- *See the love and hope of Jesus in the faces and actions of other people.

Bible Verse: It is the Lord! (John 21:7)

Puzzle!

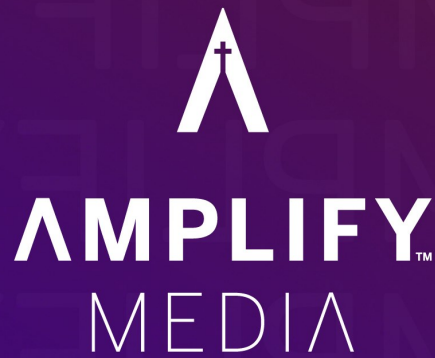
Fill in the horizontal rows using the clues. Then, using the number codes, complete the squares below to read three Beatitudes from Luke 6:20-21, NIV.

Grassy area behind a house	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Blooms that have petals	11 12 13 14 15 16
Spring precipitation	17 18 19 20
Puffy and white in the sky	21 22 23 24 25 26
Soil	27 28 29 30
Lawn	31 32 33 34 35
Must be weeded and tended	36 37 38 39 40
Tiptoe through these	41 42 43 44 45
Baby sheep	46 47 48 49
We need food and this	50 51 52 53 54
God made this from nothing	55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62
A sign of God's promise	63 64 65 66 67 68 69
These, in April, bring May flowers	70 71 72 73 74 75 76

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76
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Answers: backyard, foam, air, clouds, dirt, grass, garden, sign, lamb, water, cream, rickon, flower, flower. *Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who hunger now, for you will be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.

NOW
Available



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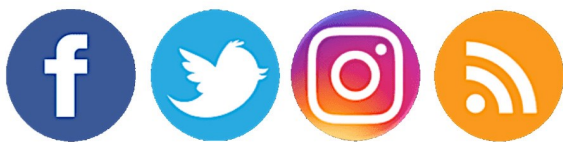
<https://my.amplifymedia.com/arnoldmillsumccumberlandri>

Access Code: DTLSGY

SPRC News

Our committee includes Bolaji Campbell, Olivia Carney, Sandy Ferretti, Cindy Mauch, Karen Roeber, Sue Therien and Margaret Waterman. (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



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

Instagram at 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. 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

April

Thu Apr 11 - 6:30 PM: Trustees Meeting

Thu Apr 11 - 7:00 PM: July 4th Parade Committee

Sun Apr 14: Native American Ministries Sunday

Mon Apr 15 - 7:00 PM:

Church Council Visioning Session

Thu Apr 18 - 7:30 PM:

Arnold Mills Cemetery Committee

Sun Apr 21: Hope School Fund Raiser

Tue Apr 23: General Conference of the UMC

Thu Apr 25 - 7:00 PM: July 4th Parade Committee

Sun Apr 28: Official Church Vote to become

Reconciling Congregation

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

**The Church Calendar is available at
amumc.org under Church News.**



Arnold Mills United Methodist Church
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Cumberland, RI 02864
Phone: 401-333-5203
E-mail: office.amumc@gmail.com
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