



Spring 2020 Emerging from the Storm

We have been experiencing a new way of life these past few months. Coping with being confined to our homes, learning new technology, finding ways to keep busy, and dealing with the anxiety of living through a pandemic. Going out is stress inducing. It's a production to wear masks, maybe gloves, pray for continued health, and then deal with the process of returning home to decontaminate ourselves and the products we acquired.

I thought it would be a good time to reflect on what our members and friends have been doing to keep busy as a way of marking history for our church. Here are some of our stories. — Kim Kennedy

Paul DiMauro is keeping busy helping to supply meals once a week to the Men living at the Middletown YMCA.



Dean and Leslie Coutsouridis

Dean is practicing and writing music, working in his wood shop making various items for people, doing yard work, online teaching one band class at Coginchaug High School, de-cluttering our house, doing the necessary shopping, and last but not least helping my 94 year old dad in Bristol. Leslie is gardening, de-cluttering the home, delivering crafts to her special needs friends, helping her father who lives alone, practicing piano, skyping with our grandson in Tacoma, doing crafts and calling friends. All between migraine attacks, but life is good for the time being.



Betty Shaw writes —“On a personal note, I have been busy here working in my garden on good days. Getting ready for summer. I have a new great grand-daughter, three weeks old and just adorable. Can't visit like I would like but can see her through a window. Lol Also catching up on my garden, reading and doing fill-in puzzles.” Pastor Nancy notes Betty has also been busy working in the church garden, keeping it looking bright and beautiful.

Mike and Kim Hale-Riccio and Chris, Emily and Olivia LaValley



Kim writes — The kids have schoolwork each weekday, but following that, they each have at least one chore to do. Then they have free time until dinner where they play with friends or play on electronics. But the best part has been that we give each child one night per week to pick the dinner and cook it themselves! That has been very fun. Following dinner, we always play family games until bedtime. We love a card game called Cover Your Assets where we are keeping a running score during this pandemic.

Other activities to keep us busy include reading hour, a family walk with the dogs, a trip to the beach in Old Saybrook where the dogs played in the water, watching a movie and baking. I found new Biscotti recipes and they are delicious!



Kim & Paul Kennedy

Paul has been working from home and is putting in many hours and working around the house. Kim has been doing some home improvement projects as you can see and doing many puzzles. We have also enjoyed nights with our boys playing games, enjoying pizza and our pool and hot tub.

Around the Church

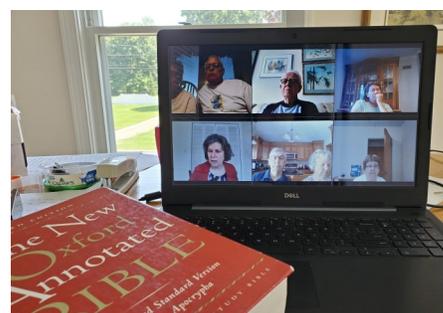


Amazing Grace Donations We held food drives in April and May. Pictured here is Kate Pillion making the May delivery. She has been delivering our donations for the last 6 months. The monthly donations average 70 pounds and so far in 2020 we have donated about 300 pounds. Thank you to everyone who donated food or money to Amazing Grace.



We are so thankful for the wonderful donation of Jeff Yardis' time and talent to film our worship services each week during this pandemic. Jeff is a wonderful asset to the church. He has donated many hours to film, edit and upload the services each week. Jeff gave us all access to his business website, so we could begin viewing services the very first week we were unable to meet in person. Jeff kept us together, when we had to worship apart. Matt Tomer has also spent some time behind the camera, assisting Jeff.

Pastor Nancy has learned how to hold Bible study and church meetings online. She has been holding Bible study every Wednesday morning through GoToMeeting. The Standing Committee, leadership team, the deacons, MM&C, the Board of Music, and other church groups have also met via GoToMeeting.



Our recent survey shows that many of our members want to come back to church while retaining a stay at home option. The Deacons are looking at ways to accomplish this within the guidelines of the state and in a safe manner. Outside services are scheduled to begin July 5. Watch for updates in our News & Notes and emails from the church.



The 136th Annual Strawberry Festival has been cancelled. Given the current restrictions and recommendations set in place by the Governor, we feel that it is in the best interest and safety of our members, volunteers, and customers to cancel this year's festival. Ladies Aid and Third Church would like to thank all of our dedicated volunteers. We hope that we can hold this next year.