

# Good News

Quarterly Newsletter of the  
First United Methodist Church of Blirstown  
Summer 2019

## Children's Bible School & Fellowship

Looking for things to do with your children this summer? Want to interact with other parents while your children are safely engaged in fun faith-based activities? Curious about how we run our Sunday School? Come join us for a Children's Bible School and Fellowship. Kids ages 0-8 will enjoy story time, a themed craft, and a snack while their parents enjoy light refreshments and adult discussion in fellowship hall. Sessions will be August 7 & 21 from 10:00-11:30am. Registration is free. Want to help the children have fun? Volunteers are needed! Contact Allison Lacken, Brittany Celentano or Amy DeTurco to learn how you can get involved. If you are interested in joining us please register by contacting the church office at 908-362-6693 or [info@firstumcblirstown.com](mailto:info@firstumcblirstown.com). *Hope to see you there!!!*

## What's Inside

- New Music Leaders
- Red Bird Update
- Bible School
- Senior Ministry
- Bible Study & Mid-Month Communion
- Food Pantry
- UM Women
- Annual Conference Recap

*And Much More!*

Summer  
CHILDREN'S  
MINISTRY



Faith  
It does not make  
things easy, it makes  
them POSSIBLE

Luke 1:37

## New Music Leaders at First UMC of Blirstown



The First United Methodist Church of Blirstown is pleased to announce two new staff members for their worship music team. In March, Keyboardist and Vocalist Andie Baldwin and Drummer Joe Celentano will begin sharing the helm as they lead the church's worship team and parishioners in a wide variety of contemporary and fresh traditional music.

Baldwin is 17 years old, and lives locally to the UMC in Blirstown. Music has been a part of her life since day one. In addition to her work at the church, she is a full-time student, plays gigs at restaurants, concerts, and local events, and is currently recording her first studio album. Baldwin has been a member of the church for several years now and has been a part of the worship team, playing keyboards and singing backup vocals. She looks forward to bringing her talent to the music program and allowing people to not only hear the music but also feel

the Grace of God through it.

Celentano has lived in Central New Jersey for most of his life, playing in several Rock and Roll bands, while learning much about music discipline concerning music balance. When he first relocated to Blirstown in 2002 with his wife Barbara, son Joey and daughter Nina, he set music aside for a while. After joining the First United Methodist Church in 2004, he fell in love with Contemporary Christian Music. Shortly thereafter, Celentano founded the first Praise Band at FUMC in 2006 with a few musicians and began to bring contemporary music into the church's traditional worship service. Since that time he has continued to build up the worship team and share his love for contemporary Christian music with the congregation.

Baldwin and Celentano look forward to their new collaboration with each other, and pray that it will draw more people to the ministry to encounter the gospel of Christ.



## Red Bird Mission

This July, 13 people will embark on an exciting and fun filled journey to the hills of southeastern Kentucky as we join the Northeast Brigade trip to the Red Bird Mission. Thanks to your generosity, we have met our fundraising goal and raised over \$6,300 for our trip. This allows our missionaries to experience this life changing adventure, which costs about \$650 per person, for \$205 each. Your donations not only help us send people to and from Kentucky, but also pay for all of the materials we will be using to repair people's homes and change their lives.



Please be in prayer for all those who are joining us this year, especially our first time missionaries: Trey Baldwin (2), Aiden Bende (3), Rev. Carla Costantino (1), Larry Costantino (2), Noah Lockie (3), Beau Parker (2), Dot Quick (3), Deb Snyder (1), Rich Snyder (1), Anna Tillisch (3), Rev. Dave Tillisch (3), Jack Tironi (1), & Mike Tironi (1). In addition, we ask that you pray for our trip's leaders, the people we will be serving, and the Red Bird Mission itself, which has been serving the people of SE Kentucky for 98 years! The trip leaves at 7am on July 13 from the Blirstown UMC. Come on out and send us off with prayer. We look forward to sharing new stories of lives that have been changed when we return!



## LISTENING SESSIONS

There is much happening in the United Methodist denomination these days around the issue of human sexuality, especially in light of the Special General Conference that was held in February and all of the news coverage that it generated. With this in mind, we want to take some time to hear from you through informal conversations with our church leaders and congregation members. What have you heard? What gives you hope and what gives you concern?

We'll take some time to share what is happening in our conference and how we are responding in our local church. We'll also spend some time to talk about your hopes for our ministry and explore ways that you'd like to become engaged with your knowledge, experience, and passions for helping others with God's grace.

Gatherings are scheduled on the following dates:

- Saturday, June 15 at 8:30am (continental breakfast will be served)
- Friday, June 21 at 12:00pm (light lunch will be served)
- Thursday, June 27 at 6:30pm (soup & salad dinner)
- Sunday, June 30 at 11:30am (light lunch)

Please RSVP by going to [signupgenius.com/go/8050E49A5AA29A2F85-blairstown](https://signupgenius.com/go/8050E49A5AA29A2F85-blairstown), signing up on the sheet in Fellowship Hall, or by contacting the church office at 908-362-6693 or [info@firstumcblairstown.com](mailto:info@firstumcblairstown.com).

If you would like to host a gathering at your home, please contact Pastor Dave. Additional sessions will be published in the Sunday bulletins, the weekly email, and on our Facebook and Instagram pages.

## Senior Ministry

Our Older Adults Safely at Home program is going well. Home Safety presentations have been given to the Senior groups of Blairstown, Frelinghuysen, Hardwick, and Knowlton. A presentation is planned for Hope in August. The group members appreciated the information and the offer of assistance with minor home modifications and safety equipment. Thus far, we have provided fire extinguishers and CO detectors to several seniors; a reflective house number sign to one and enlisted an electrician to check out the wiring in a home. If you know of any older adults needing help with home safety, or you would like to contribute to this program through donations of time or resources, please email [seniors@firstumcblairstown.com](mailto:seniors@firstumcblairstown.com) or call 908-219-7650.



## Evening Bible Study: Paul's Letters - A Chronological Journey

Let the Word of God come alive in your life! The Blairstown United Methodist Church's "Letters of Paul" Bible Study meets on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 and are currently reading through 1 Corinthians. Come and explore Paul's evolving understanding of Jesus as the Christ as we take a chronological journey through his Epistles.





Our church's Stephen Ministry provides one-to-one Christian care for individuals experiencing a wide range of life's challenges: loss of a loved one, hospitalization, separation or divorce, loneliness or discouragement, spiritual crises, unemployment or job crises, a chronic illness, a terminal illness, incarceration, aging, relocation, recovery after an accident, birth, adoption, miscarriage, and / or infertility, etc. at no cost to the receiver.

*Would you like to have a Stephen Minister?*

Our Stephen Ministers are ready to bring God's love and care into your life! They will listen, care, encourage, pray with and for you, and provide weekly support for you as long as your need persists. Contact Pastor Dave to see how a Stephen Minister might be able to help you.

*Would you like to learn to care for others?*

If you have gifts for caring, encouragement, and listening, please begin to prayerfully consider whether you might want to be part of this exciting ministry. If you think you might be interested, talk with Pastor Dave or one of our other Stephen Ministers.



## Forest Manor Ministry

Our congregation is larger than many people realize! Each third Sunday of the month, members of our church lead worship with communion for the residents of the Forest Manor Healthcare Center in Hope. In addition, Adrienne Bates and Jean Charles lead a weekly Bible Study on Tuesday evenings. These ministries reach an additional 30-40 children of God each month and allow us to expand our ministry beyond the walls of the church. If you would like to play a role in sharing the gospel with our extended family or know a resident of Forest Manor who would benefit from our ministry, please contact Jean, Adrienne, or Pastor Dave.

## Catch Your Breath Mid-Month

Rev. Wen-Ling Lai will lead a mid-month evening communion service from 6:30 - 7pm on the second Wednesday of the month. This is a wonderful opportunity to catch your breath, recharge your soul, and connect with the Divine through the table of grace. The service is open to all regardless of church affiliation.



## Haven of Hope Kitchen Remodel

As part of our community outreach program, the United Methodist Men volunteered to install new kitchen cabinets at the Haven of Hope for Children cottage in Hope. As with many renovations the scope of the project greatly increased. As Blue Ridge Lumber generously donated the cabinets and countertop, the UMM decided to include tiling the kitchen floor in the project. The coordinator from Haven of Hope then asked if the living room floor could also be tiled, so additional help was enlisted to do this. Also, the electrical circuits in the kitchen needed to be upgraded and the plumbing for the sink and dishwasher needed to be completed. By the time you are reading this, the project will be complete. The UMM would like to thank the following people for their generous donations of time, talents, and materials – Blue Ridge lumber, Tom Charles, Terry and RJ Urfer, Brian Peralta, and Bob Bailey.



## Haven of Hope BBQ

The United Methodist Men are sponsoring a barbecue for the Haven of Hope for Kids on Saturday, June 22 beginning at 5pm behind the Episcopal Church of St. Luke and St. Mary in Hope, NJ. All are invited to attend - please bring a dessert or side dish to share. The Haven of Hope for Kids provides no-cost country vacations and a network of support for urban families caring for a child with a life threatening condition.

The weekly barbecues are a way for the families to connect with the community and receive support and encouragement. For more information, contact Bill Willix at [bigbuck16pt@hotmail.com](mailto:bigbuck16pt@hotmail.com).



# 2020 VISION

## 2020 Vision Update

Our 2020 Vision Capital Campaign continues to inch closer to its goal of \$75,000. Through April 30, we have raised \$12,554. In addition, our church's capital fund has \$20,198. Clearly we have a ways to go!

The 2020 Vision Campaign seeks to raise \$75,000 to replace our 30+ year old roof and make our church accessible to everyone by bringing the bathrooms and entrances up to current ADA codes. Your tax-deductible contribution can help us get closer to our goal! Please consider making a contribution to enable us to protect our building and create a space that is welcome to everyone.

# Annual Conference Recap



## Episcopal Address

In his opening address, Bishop John Schol celebrated the ministries of congregations in Greater New Jersey, sharing ways that clergy and congregational leaders have demonstrated their love through mission and outreach. He shared the good works of GNJ's vital mission partners who witness to our communities through mission, financial management, engaging young disciples and serving housing needs. In a personal and emotional witness to the state of the church, he shared his commitment to explore new expressions of Methodism in the wake of current disagreements over homosexuality. "Let me be clear, I am not interested in changing a few paragraphs in The Book of Discipline and then call it a day. The Gospel demands more of us, of me and of you as leaders of the church of Jesus Christ. God is ready to do new things through us and while it will not look the same, it will be Wesleyan, it will be connectional, it will be transformative and it will turn the church outward.

Bishop Schol called for 50 congregations to volunteer to pilot the next Methodism. He called for others to continue to move our mission forward: 75 congregations who are interested in becoming the next Hope Center, 30 congregations who want to partner to start and grow a youth ministry program. 100 congregations who are ready and willing to be the next miracle in the Miracles Everywhere Campaign, 10 congregations ready to invest with the Stewardship Foundation to move us forward into what is next and 10 congregations who are ready to start a new worship experience.

## Clergy General Conference Delegates

GNJ elected new delegates to the General and Jurisdictional Conference of the United Methodist Church for 2020:

### Clergy Delegates to General Conference -

**Drew Dyson, Chair of the Clergy Delegation**

Héctor A. Burgos

Jennifer Cho

Kaleigh Tomich Corbett

### Clergy Jurisdictional Conference Delegates -

Catherine Williams

William Williams, III

Eunice Vega-Perez

Thomas Lank

### Clergy Reserves -

Tanya Linn Bennett

Sang-Won Doh

Robert Costello

### Laity Delegates to General Conference -

**Bethany Amey, Chair of the Delegation**

Judy Colorado

Stephen Quigg

Harriett Olson

### Laity Delegates to the Jurisdictional Conference -

Dale Caldwell

Moselle Jules

Carolyn Pendleton

Cynthia Kent

### Laity Reserves -

Jane Ehlers

Andrea Wren-Hardin

Creed Pogue

## Leadership

GNJ leaders shared the fruits of our ministry and the steps we have taken to fulfill our 2023 Strategic Plan including resources like Leadership 100, the Pathway to Discipleship, the Breakthrough Worship Series, the Clergy Leadership Development Initiative, Clergy Coaching, PaCE groups, Team Vital, the Congregational Leadership Development Initiative and more.

Outside of regular sessions, United Methodists served communion on the beach and boardwalk, meditated in communal prayer at our prayer stations, shared fellowship at one of the group or general meals and packed 30,000 meals for Rise Against Hunger. GNJ received a generous offering of \$31,281.50 from our congregations for the Miracles Everywhere Campaign which is supporting our partnership with Tanzania and Puerto Rico, Next Generation Ministries and A Future With Hope.



## The Way Forward

Holy Conferencing took on new meaning Tuesday as the conference discussed the work of The Way Forward Team. Bishop John Schol invited all members of the Way Forward Team to join him in sharing their work, by focusing on the tools of having an outward mindset. David Wherle, the vice chair of the Wesleyan Covenant Association and Amanda Hemenetz, the chair of Reconciling Ministries, both gave witness to how the team is lifting them up and giving them hope for a way forward. Members of the body stepped to the microphones to share where they saw themselves in the boxes that kept us inward and where in our lives we experienced outward ministries. Our conferencing concluded at the table that Jesus set for us. We held communion as Bishop Schol proclaimed the mystery of our faith and the fragility of all of us in this liminal time.

## Food Pantry Mission

*Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord.  
It is the Lord Christ you are serving. (Colossians 3:23-24)*

Our food pantry has been very blessed with donations from the following:

- ☺ Knowlton Elementary School
- ☺ Ronetco Supermarkets (10 pans of frozen baked ziti)
- ☺ Blair Women's Club
- ☺ Blairstown Elementary School

We also received a \$500.00 grant from Ronetco Supermarkets. This grant is in the form of a credit to be used food orders at NORWESCAP Food Bank.

Remember that during the school break families with children do not have access to school meal programs. Please be generous in your donations as we go through the summer months.

### **Pantry Volunteer Opportunity - PLEASE HELP!**

Each month, our food pantry feeds 30+ families with

needed groceries. As part of our ministry, we help our guests by carrying the bags to their car. We are in need of some able-bodied volunteers to bring the groceries out to the cars. Contact Claire Smith or Eloise Raymond if you can help!



## United Methodist Women

The United Methodist Women celebrated 150 years of the organization on May 19. During our worship service we dedicated a butterfly bush in honor of former members of the group. The women also held a bake sale in conjunction with the Mother's Day plant sale on May 10 & 11. We raised over \$600 and \$500 will be donated to the Red Bird Mission trip. We want to thank Stefanie Fredericks from Sweet Luxe Cakes for donating baked goods and her time for the sale. In April, the women collected items for St. Hubert's animal shelter in Roxbury. We collected 18 bags of items along with 42 lbs of dog and 22 lbs of cat food, 32 cans of dog/cat food, a large pack of paper towels and donated \$50 in memory of Karen San-Filippo.

*This summer we have many activities planned:*

**In June**, the women along with the men's group, will be giving scholarships to Andie Baldwin and Jonathan Stiefel. On Father's day, the group will be celebrating the men of the church, hosting coffee hour, and will have a gift for the men.

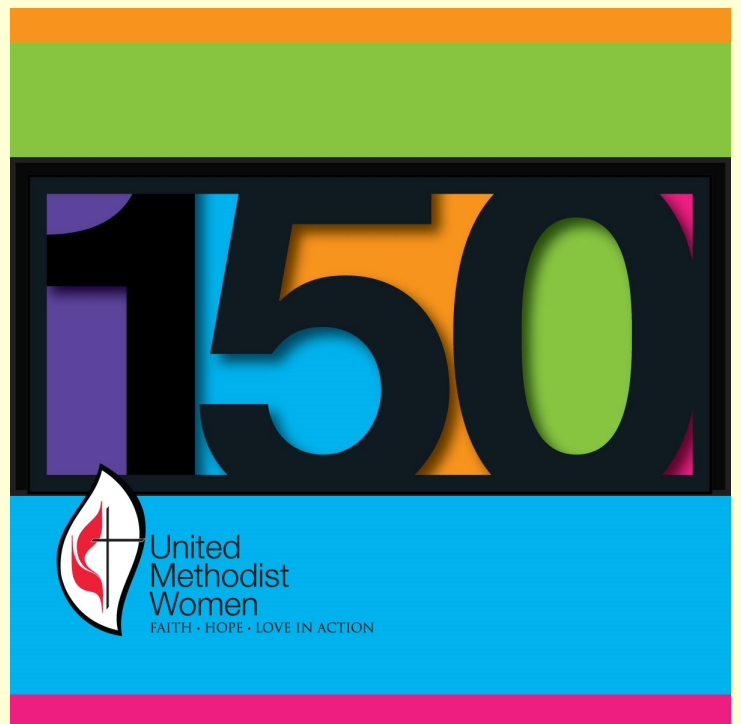
Our summer Pastie sale will take place on June 21 with orders due by June 16. They are \$5.50 each and come with or without onions. There is a signup sheet in the fellowship hall.

**On July 26 & 27** we will be hosting a yard sale at the home of Claire Smith on Mt. Hermon Road. We will take donations of furniture, clothing, bedding, decorations,

sports items, children's items, etc. We will not take electronics. Please see Claire for drop off information.

And **in August**, we will have a luncheon. *Stay tuned for date and location.*

The United Methodist Women meet on the second Sunday after church and is open to all women. Their mission is to nurture each other's faith, and advocate for and address the needs of women, children, and youth. Contact Eloise Raymond to learn more.



# Parkinson's Support Group

Caregivers and family members are welcome!

The Northwest NJ Parkinson's Support group is an informal group of Parkinson Disease sufferers and caregivers that supports one another by sharing stories and experiences dealing with the prospects of progressive symptoms and growing limitations, and offers occasional presentations. They meet the 2nd Thursday of each month at the First United Methodist Church of Blairstown, 10 Stillwater Road (521).

## Parkinson's Treatment Seminar

*For Caregivers and Disease Sufferers*

The Northwest NJ Parkinson's Support Group will present

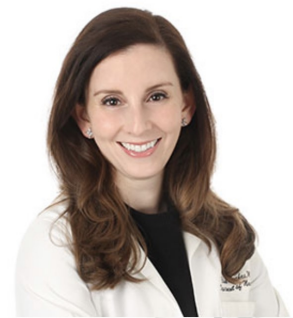
a special seminar on treatments for Parkinson's Disease featuring **Dr. Hooman Azmi** from Hackensack University Medical Center and **Dr. Elena Clar** from the North Jersey Brain and Spine Center. Come and learn about Parkinson's disease, as well as medical and surgical treatment options and new developments in gene therapy. June 13 from 6-7:30pm. Light refreshments will be served.

Space is limited - reserve your spot by contacting Ron Hourning at [ronhourning@gmail.com](mailto:ronhourning@gmail.com) or 973-997-8093.



**Hooman Azmi, MD**

Director and Neurosurgeon  
Division of Movement  
Disorders at Hackensack UMC



**Elena Clar, MD**

Movement Disorders Neurologist  
North Jersey Brain & Spine

## 4-H Garden Group

The Plants vs. Zombies 4-H Garden Club is at it again this year! We are happy to get back into our food pantry garden located outside of the church courtyard and are expanding within the garden fencing. We have enlisted the help of local Rutgers Master Gardener, Jodi Butler, to help us.

We are excited to be getting some hands-on learning together with 'Straw Bale Gardening.' This is where vegetables are grown directly inside of straw bale and there are many benefits to this technique. The straw bales can be placed really anywhere with full sun and access to water—even in places with poor soil, or no soil at all! The plants get nutrients from the composting process taking place inside of the bale. By the end of the season, the bales are broken down and ready to throw into your backyard compost. Straw bales are perfect height for comfortable reach, reduce the amount of weeds and reduce soil-borne diseases and pests.



This year, the club plans to grow tomatoes, cucumbers, strawberries, kale, herbs, green beans, beets and more. Some seeds have already been sown, and the best part is that all of the produce will be donated to our local food pantries. If you or a local group you are part of would like to volunteer in our garden or learn more about gardening, contact [lynnblodnik@yahoo.com](mailto:lynnblodnik@yahoo.com).





## Offering Our Gratitude

*Our church family is grateful to all who help make our church a place of grace and do their part to help us thrive. This season we would like to offer our gratitude for the following:*

- ☺ To Mike Tironi and Michelle Peterson for organizing our ham dinner on April 16, and to all who helped to cook, serve, cleanup, promote, and bake treats! Your efforts helped us connect with our community and raise \$875 for our ministry
- ☺ To Gene Taylor and all who helped with this year's church cleanup. Your donations of time and hard work helped to prepare our grounds to welcome members and visitors alike
- ☺ To Joan McNinch and Michelle Peterson for leading this year's Mother's Day flower sale, Mike Tironi for printing and setting up signs, and all who served our shoppers, purchased plants, or invited people to come. You helped bring smiles to many faces and raised over \$1,400 for our ministry.
- ☺ To the UMW and the Sweet Luxe Cake Shoppe for leading our bake sale, and to all who baked and shopped. You helped to raise money for this year's Red Bird Mission Trip.
- ☺ To Fang Xiao and all who participated in this year's Chinese Dumpling Class. You helped to build bridges between cultures, engage our community, and raise nearly \$300 for our red Bird Trip.
- ☺ To Mick Hall for volunteering his time to trim around our grounds and keep them looking great
- ☺ To Tom and Jean Charles for donating their time and talents to repair our boiler room door, and parsonage and pastor's study chairs.
- ☺ To Lorrie Koonz who helped us all stay a little safer by offering free CPR/AED classes to all of our greeters and ushers.
- ☺ To Carla Jones and Amy DelTurco who did a beautiful job preparing our sanctuary for all of our worship services in Lent and Easter.
- ☺ And to everyone else who quietly make our community of faith a wonderful place to gather and grow in our faith.





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## Online Giving

Our church has a new way to receive electronic donations! You can now donate online using your debit or credit card by going to our Facebook page and clicking the Donate button. One-time donations can be made or you can set up automatic monthly donations so you can continue to support our ministry and not have to worry about forgetting your envelope on Sunday morning. Visit [firstumcblairstown.com/index.php/giving](http://firstumcblairstown.com/index.php/giving) to learn more.



Do you shop online? Did you know you can shop AND support our ministry at the same time all while taking advantage of special savings? Visit UMCMarket.org and shop from 2000+ online retailers and help us continue to share Christ's love.

# Mark Your Calendar

## June

- 1 – Food Pantry & Community  
Breakfast 8:30-11:30a
- 2 -- Jacob Summers' Eagle Scout  
Court of Honor 3p
- 4 -- Hospital Auxiliary  
-- SPPRC 7p
- 5 – Letters of Paul Study 7p
- 9 -- Pentecost Sunday  
– UM Women 11:30a  
– Red Bird Meeting @St. John's 12p
- 12 – Stephen Ministers 1:30p  
--Mid Month Communion 6:30p  
-- Letters of Paul Study 7p
- 13 -- Parkinson's Support 6:30p
- 15 -- Listening Session 8:30a
- 16 – Forest Manor Worship 2:30p
- 18 – Ministry Planning Team 7p
- 19 -- Letters of Paul Study 7p
- 21 – Listening Session 12p
- 22 -- Haven of Hope BBQ 5p
- 26 -- Letters of Paul Study 7p
- 27 -- Listening Session 6:30p
- 30 -- Listening Session 11:30a

## July

- 2– Hospital Auxiliary 10a  
-- Trustees 7p
- 3– Bible Study 7p
- 4 -- Red Bird table @Footbridge Park
- 6 – Food Pantry & Community  
Breakfast 8:30-11:30a
- 10– Stephen Ministers 1:30p  
-- Mid-Month Communion 6:30p  
-- Bible Study 7p
- 11– Parkinson's Support 6:30p
- 13 -- Red Bird Mission departs 7a
- 14 -- UM Women 11:30a
- 16 - Finance Team 7p
- 17 – Bible Study 7p
- 21-- Forest Manor Worship 2:30p
- 24 -- Bible Study 7p
- 31 -- Bible Study 7p

## August

- 3 – Food Pantry & Community  
Breakfast 8:30-11:30a
- 6 – Hospital Auxiliary  
-- Church Council 7p
- 7 – Children's Bible School 10a  
-- Bible Study 7p
- 8 -- Parkinson's Support 6:30p
- 11 --UM Women 11:30a
- 14 – Stephen Ministers 1:30p  
-- Mid-Month Communion 6:30p  
-- Bible Study 7p
- 18 – Forest Manor Worship 2:30p
- 20-- Nominations & Leadership 7p
- 21 --Children's Bible School 10a  
-- Bible Study 7p
- 29 --Bible Study 7p



# Celebrate!

## **JUNE - Birthdays/Anniversaries**

- 8 Joey Celentano
- 18 Lois Bedell
- 22 Elizabeth Shotwell
- 26 Jill Butcher  
Hannah Moyna
- 27 Mary Ann Ropek
  
- 4 *Eloise & Charles Raymond*
- 7 *Jean & Tom Charles*
- 17 *Debra & Richard Stiefel*
- 23 *Carol & Gary Arvary*

## **JULY - Birthdays**

- 7 Lorrie Koonz  
Jeff Geuther
- 14 Kathy Chambarry
- 15 Patti Tironi
- 16 Jerry Moog
- 21 Emily Peterson  
Tina Taylor
- 25 Karen Hinchman
- 26 Paul Arvary
- 29 Judy Butcher

## **AUGUST - Birthdays/Anniversaries**

- 1 Odessa A. Kise
- 3 David Dwiggin
- 4 Yvonne Brodt
- 5 Tom Charles
- 9 Erica Jones
- 14 Elizabeth Moyna  
Shaelyn Moog
- 17 Alexa Tironi
- 23 Patrick Moog
- 24 Mark Ropek
- 26 Lester Shotwell
- 29 Andre Hinchman
- 15 *Carol & Fred Cook*
- 20 *Joann & David Stoner*



## Father's Day Breakfast



### *ALL YOU CAN EAT!!*

The boys of Troop 140 invite everyone to come out and enjoy a delicious all-you-can-eat pancake breakfast from 8 - 10:30am on Father's Day, June 16 at the Givens-Belet American Legion Post, 22 Hope Road. Breakfast includes plain, blueberry, or chocolate chip pancakes, sausage or bacon, and beverage (coffee, tea, apple or orange juice) - all for only \$10 adults, \$5 kids 4-12. Business card sized placemat ads are also available for \$25 and include 2 adult tickets for the breakfast. To purchase tickets or reserve a spot on the placemats, contact Trey or Suzie Baldwin at [andientreismom@aol.com](mailto:andientreismom@aol.com). Thank you for supporting the boys of Troop 140!



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