

# THE TIMES NEWSLETTER

*A publication of the First Congregational Church  
of Scarborough, Maine 04074*

*FALL 2020*



## MINISTER'S CORNER

Dear Friends:

My daughter Alisha was heading back to school on opening day (she works in the speech and language department at Deering High School) and she texted Penny and me about something she saw. A young boy and his parents were doing something that many families do: taking pictures of their children on the first day of school. But this photo opportunity was different—call it a sign of the times—because the young boy who was having his picture taken was wearing a mask.

Much of the year 2020 has been a real drag (am I showing my age using that term?). We have experienced six long months of coping with a deadly pandemic, dealing with significant disruptions in our lives, and having to distance ourselves from people we love. Six long months of angry political polarization, including arguing and fighting about whether or not we should have to wear masks. Six long months of worrying about the health and wellbeing of our family and loved ones (and now having to worry about the safety of our children as they return back to school). And six long months of not being able to gather as a faith community on Sunday mornings and worship together in our sanctuary.

I am not okay with any of this. I have seen signs on people's lawns that say, "We're in This Together," but to be honest, it doesn't feel that way to me. I've read that people are feeling more lonely and alienated from one another than they ever have before. Which is very sad, because if we're going to make it through these difficult days, we need to be able to support one another and share our burdens and pain with those who are experiencing the same challenges. In other words, as Jesus once said, "Love one another." It may sound corny, but love really is the answer during this time of COVID 19.

We don't know what the future holds. God only knows where we are headed and what our final destination will be. The unknown can cause anxiety and make us feel pretty powerless. But two things that are in everyone's power and we can do are to pray for our world and one another, and to be kind to each other. After that, we can only place our lives and our future in God's hands. And there are no stronger, more capable and secure hands to be held in than God's.

May the Lord bless us, strengthen our faith and grant us peace as we strive to overcome the challenges we face, one day at a time.

## WORSHIP SERVICE UPDATE

For the last three months our church has been having *Zoom* worship services on Sunday mornings, where people can log in from their computer, tablet or smartphone or call from their telephone and be part of a virtual worship community. About 30 people “attend” these weekly services, and have expressed how wonderful it is to be able to worship with fellow church members they haven’t seen for a long time and interact with them. We invite you to join us. Of course, as wonderful as the Zoom services have been, nothing beats worshipping in person. The Ministry of Worship and Spiritual Care and I are currently planning other means of worshipping as a faith community until we can safely resume worship in our sanctuary. We ask for your continued patience as we do this. We promise to keep you updated on any decisions that are made.

## THE LORD’S PRAYER

These lines of Charles Thompson may help you avoid the tendency to be self-centered in praying.

You cannot pray the Lord’s Prayer, and even once say “I.”  
You cannot pray the Lord’s Prayer, and even once say “My.”  
Nor can you pray the Lord’s Prayer, and not pray for another;  
For when you ask for daily bread you must include your brother.  
Yes, others are included in each and every plea.  
From the beginning to the end of it, it does not once say “Me.”

## STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

George Washington Carver left a significant mark on the scientific community. He was born a slave. After the Emancipation Proclamation he was freed, and he decided to go to college. He received a degree from Tuskegee University.

After he graduated, he was invited to remain at the school and teach. He agreed to do so, and worked for a salary of \$125.00 a month for the rest of his life. Both Henry Ford and Thomas Edison tried to get him to come work with them. Others offered him as much as \$100,000 a year to leave his teaching position and join them, but he always kindly refused. He believed it was God’s will for him to stay in the South and help develop its agricultural commerce.

At his death, this simple epitaph was put on his tombstone: “He could have added fame and fortune, but caring for neither, he found happiness and honor in being helpful to the world.”

## TIME OUT FOR PRAYER

When all within is dark,  
and former friends misprize;  
from them I turn to You, O Lord,  
and find love in Your eyes.

When all within is dark,  
and I my soul despise;  
from me I turn to You, O Lord,  
and find love in Your eyes.

When all Your face is dark,  
and Your just angers rise;  
From You I turn to You, O Lord,  
and find love in Your eyes.



Israel Abrams, based on *Ibi Gabirol*

## ARE YOU READY TO COME BACK INSIDE?



A few of us would like to resume worship services inside our Church with appropriate precautions. The Ministry of Worship and Spiritual Care (MWSC) want to hear from people who might attend a Sunday service in the sanctuary during November and/or December. If there is enough interest, we will schedule a date and arrange for the service to be broadcast live to participants at home.

Please contact Pastor Fred and/or Elaine in the office to express your interest or thoughts.

Phone: 883-2342; E-mail: [fcchurch@fccscarborough.com](mailto:fcchurch@fccscarborough.com).

## NOTES FROM THE FOOD PANTRY

## NEW HOURS:

Monday & Thursday (1:30—4:00 pm)

Happy Fall! The start of school always brings change and the pantry is no exception. We made the switch to afternoon hours with only a few glitches. Just a few of our recipients have concerns due to loss of transportation, or because of work schedules making it hard to come in the afternoon. We are working with those people to ensure that they continue to receive food.

Because of the “drive-thru” set up and social distancing, we have not kept our usual records on how many individuals we served each month, but we served about 100 families a month through the Spring and Summer. We expect those numbers to increase (possibly double) with the colder weather and heating bills coming due.

Many generous donors have been supplying us with eggs, apples, garden produce, and purchased foods, along with other supporters donating financial gifts. One friend of the pantry collects dented canned food from the Hannaford warehouse once a month. We are so fortunate to have such a generous community of support! We receive government food from Wayside in Portland and even some items from the SoPo food pantry. We shop at Hannaford, Shaw’s and Sam’s Club as well.

Recently we had an excess of certain government items. We were able to donate juice, applesauce, dried lentils and other foods to support the efforts of Community Services and SMAA during their project of providing prepared meals to senior citizens.

Currently we are gearing up for the Thanksgiving holiday meal, and even though people may not be able to spend the day with friends and family, we want them to have a nice meal. We will be preparing a special bag of food with items typically found on the Thanksgiving table - stuffing and gravy, green bean casserole, cranberry sauce, and pie. Kiwanis are donating turkeys as they have in the past, and we will be working with other groups and churches in Scarborough to make this project a winner.

We have grown to know and love all of our recipients, and we keep meeting new families in need. Many come to us that have recently been laid off or had hours cut. Some are new to the area and looking for ways to make ends meet while they get settled. All are extremely grateful that we have been able to remain open and serving the surrounding community. It is thanks to the generosity of you, dear reader, that this is possible. Thank you from all of us for all your blessings and support, Liane Giambalvo, on behalf of the Scarborough Food Pantry



## **Financial Support - Consider Automatic Direct Payment**

Financial contributions to our church are down slightly from previous years. This is not unexpected given our in-person Sunday services being suspended temporarily due to the pandemic.

Stewardship pledge and general contributions can be mailed to or dropped off at the Annex, 161 Black Point Rd. An even better option to ensure regular contribution to the church with little ongoing effort is to complete an electronic Direct Payment Authorization form. Using Direct Payment, your donation is automatically paid from your bank account to FCC. We have offered this automated option for several years and one third of FCC's members currently participate. Participants have experienced no security issues, finding it to be safe and convenient.

To participate in Direct Payment, print the one-page form from the FCC website, fill in the requested information and mail or return to the Annex with the sealed envelope marked "Attn: Stewardship". The form is available at <https://fccscarborough.com/donations1>

To have the Direct Payment form mailed to you or for further information on this donation method please call the church office at 883-2342.

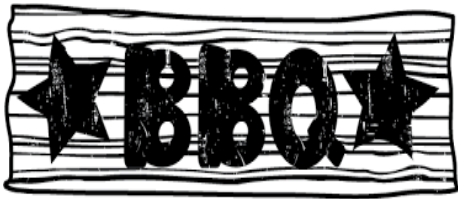
Thank you for your on-going support.

## **We are Looking for an Assistant Treasurer**

As you may know, the bylaw changes approved by the church membership at the Annual Meeting included provision for an individual to be appointed as an assistant to the Treasurer, who would act on behalf of the Treasurer or Ministry of Governing and Finance in certain situations. This role will provide better preparedness to perform some or all of the current Treasurer duties in times where work obligations, personal health, family emergencies or other absences conflict with required activities. This is a volunteer role for the church and will be appointed by the Ministry of Governing and Finance.

If you have any interest in this role and have some background in finance, accounting or a college degree in that field, or know of another member of the church that might be interested, please contact the church office. The Church office can also provided you the Treasurer job description for a better understanding of what duties may be involved.

Ministry of Governing and Finance



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## BBQ FUNDRAISER EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS

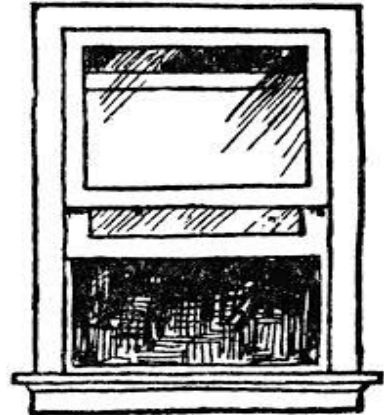
The Men's Fellowship BBQ fundraiser on September 23 went very well in spite of COVID limitations. It was a takeout only, drive through, cash only event this year. WE, the "laborers" were all geared up with masks, face shields. Body wraps, gloves, etc. And the Men's group had some wonderful additional help from Vickie Flynn, Liz Barton, Edie Davidson and Elaine Sederlund. Pastor Fred said, "Wow! What a rush the BBQ fundraiser was! The time went by so fast it seemed like it was over before it started! Oh yeah, it was over before it started (at 5 p.m.)" We sold out early! And Dick Grotton, the coordinator and mastermind of these events, added, "What a support team we had. My profound "Thank You" to the terrific team that participated in the BBQ tonight. You were the very best! About two hours of pure adrenalin rush but fun and easier than the sit down version but without the in person camaraderie around dining tables. With some very generous contributions we made a net profit of roughly \$830.00 after expenses. My thanks."

Submitted by Dan Davidson for Men's Fellowship

### HELP WANTED:

There are 5 windows in the kitchen part of the vestry, which need some outside painting. As you may know we have vinyl siding and trim but there is a wooden piece of trim around each window that is peeling and the caulking is falling out. These windows need to be scraped, caulking removed and replaced, and painted. They are tall enough that some of the work will require working off a stepladder. I need some help.

Please contact me at [kross29@me.com](mailto:kross29@me.com) or call 510-1264 if you would be willing to help. Thank You, Kathy Ross, Ministry of Governing and Finance



### CHURCH CONTACTS:

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