

THE TIMES NEWSLETTER

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

OCTOBER 2023



PASTOR'S MESSAGE:

Once in a Blue Moon

This year, on August 30th there was a Super Blue Moon. Did you see it? Astronomers tell us that this is one of the rarest moons we'll ever see. It happens when a second full moon appears in a month, at the same time the moon is closest to Earth on its' elliptical orbit. Because the moon travels around the earth every 29.5 days, the gap in days eventually results in a full moon happening at the beginning and ending of one month. A 13th full moon occurs every 2 to 3 years. A Super Blue Moon occurs about every 10 years or so, on average.

The notion of the phrase "Blue Moon" has been around since the 16th century. According to folklore, it was said that to call the moon blue was to state an absurdity, for the moon was not actually blue. The phrase evolved through the centuries to take on the meaning of "a long time." Haven't we all, at one time or another, used this expression, "once in a blue moon" to refer to something that rarely happens?

Did you know that this phrase eventually became connected to rare lunar events right here in the state of Maine in the 19th and 20th century? "Blue Moon" appeared in the Maine Farmer's Almanac as the designation for the 3rd full moon in a season with 4 full moons. How about that!



I have always experienced looking up at the night sky as awe inspiring. If it's a clear night and you're in a place without much ambient light, you can see millions of stars in the sky. It is overwhelming to contemplate the vastness of this reality. Of course our moon is always the brightest light in the sky, and it is beautiful. I remember when I was just a little girl, I used to squint my eyes to try and see the American flag the astronauts left on the moon in 1969. Did you do that too? The possibility of this was just as real to me as seeing Santa and his reindeer flying in the sky on Christmas Eve!

Now that I am grown-up, I know that the moon is not quite close enough for me to see that tiny American flag. Too bad. And I also know that the movement of the earth and moon causes the changes we experience as the turning of the seasons. These heavenly "bodies in motion" are in charge - controlling our shifting temperatures, our changing tides, our changing seasons, and the length of daylight hours.

Life as we know it cycles through seasons each and every year, bringing forth harvest, death, rest, renewal, and new life. It is never boring! It is the way God made it to be. It is also

The way God made us to be. I am reminded of Ecclesiastes chapter 3, which speaks of the seasons of life, and how there is a time for everything in God's purpose. *"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die; A time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted..."*

God's mystery is present in all things, and our proper place is to stand in awe of its complexity; of its power; and of God's continual impetus to always renew, refresh, and bring forth life. Awe is a proper sentiment as we consider our smallness in relation to the planets and stars. I believe that with God, awe is what we can feel all the time in the presence of this glorious creation, not just "once in a blue moon."

For everything there is indeed a season. And as people of faith, the words from the teacher of Ecclesiastes resonate with us - that God's purposes under heaven will have their time. God, the Creator of the planets, the sun, the Super Blue Moon, and all of life as we know it, is the only One who can see the big picture. We will never fully know God, but we can give thanks and praise for the light of the sun and moon, and for the gift of life we receive, by God's mercy and grace.

Yours in Christ's Service,

Reverend. Linda C. Hey

Transitional Steering Team Off and Running!

The Transitional Steering Team has been meeting twice a month since the end of August. Utilizing the book, Temporary Shepherds (by Roger S. Nicholson) as a guide, we are looking at our church through the lens of the Interim Development Tasks. Our study continues, with an eye towards developing a plan for bringing the wider congregation into the conversation. Stay tuned for more updates. And do keep us in your prayers!

Team Members: Herb Hughes, Sue Whitten, Sue Hilton, Brenda Harrison, Elaine Sederlund, Terri Brown, and Rev. Linda Hey.

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Office Hours:

9:00 am - 1:00 pm Monday through Friday

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(207) 883-2342

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PUBLIC SPAGHETTI DINNER SEPT. 23

The First Congregational Church

167 Black Point Road, Scarborough

Men's Fellowship is sponsoring its 7th annual public fundraiser

Saturday, September 23, from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m.

This year's meal will be sit-down, dine-in in the Vestry with a take-out option.

**ALL CASH, FIRST-COME FIRST-SERVED BASIS...UNTIL FOOD RUNS OUT.
Rain or shine. No tickets, no reservations.**

**Dinner is spaghetti (with meat sauce or a non-meat sauce), salad, garlic bread,
beverages (for dine-in), homemade cookies.**

**Enjoy a fun and easy meal with great food ... and support the Men's Fellowship
efforts at the church. Take-out: pick-up inside the church vestry. Food prep and
packaging will adhere to all food handling and sanitary precautions.**

**Tell FRIENDS, COLLEAGUES, and NEIGHBORS and introduce them to our
church! Also, a night you don't have to cook!**

Cost: \$12 (\$8 for under age 10). CASH ONLY. It's a bargain!!

Dine in with us, or enjoy a delicious take-out dinner at home.

THE JOHN LIBBY FAMILY ASSOCIATION REUNION

RETURNS ON SEPT. 23 TO THE PARISH HALL

If you notice lots of cars in the church parking lot Saturday, Sept. 23, between the hours of 9:00 am and 5:00 pm, take notice that the John Libby Family Association is holding its Annual Reunion in the Parish Hall that day.

John Libby was one of the original colonists in Scarborough arriving to North America in 1637. By 1664 he owned nearly 300 acres of land on the Libby River (west of the intersection of Black Point and Spurwink Roads.) In 1892, Simon Libby gifted the land facing Fogg Road for the present church site. (The church had met in 3 locations prior to this permanent location).

Some of our members may be descended from John Libby or married a descendant. Please welcome the Libby family back to our Church (and invite them to the Spaghetti Dinner!)

FINDING PEACE RETREAT ON OCTOBER 7

The FCC Christian Education Ministry has been busy developing a women's retreat for this fall. Stepping aside from our daily responsibilities gives us time to connect with other women and build fulfilling relationships. We will take time to reflect on our faith journeys, and perhaps find new pathways to come closer to God.

Rev. Cheryl Anderson is an experienced retreat leader, who has preached and led a retreat for us last year. This year's event will be held Saturday October 7, from 10 AM until 2:30 PM. Come a little early for social time if you like! We will have coffee and muffins for you. This program is open to all women worshipping at First Congregational Church and any friends you may wish to invite.

We will meet at St. Nicholas Episcopal church on Route 1 in Scarborough. St. Nick's has great parking, easy access and can easily accommodate 20-30 women without feeling cramped. (So far nine women have signed up to participate).

A \$20 donation would help cover the cost of the event, if you are able to contribute. Lunch will be a super-simple "pot-luck" salad or sandwich to share (bring enough for two people). Beverages, cookies and fruit will be provided.

If you are interested in joining us, please let Elaine at the church office know soon (Phone 883-2342). For more information, please contact Liane Giambalvo: liane.giam@icloud.com. I'm looking forward to seeing you at this event.



2nd ANNUAL TRUNK OR TREAT

Please join us for FCC's 2nd Annual Trunk or Treat. It is going to take place on Saturday, October 28th from 3:30-5:00 pm. I hope to have a minimum of 15 individuals and their car trunks participate.

The event is very easy to take part in and the children (as well as the Trunkers) had a great time last year. All you need is a trunk and some candy. You can decorate your trunk with as little as a pumpkin or you can get really extravagant, your choice.

In addition, we will be having hot dogs and a fire pit (for s'mores) for both the children, their family and the Trunkers.

I hope you will be able to join us. Please contact Terri Brown (terribrown1959@yahoo.com or 883-6093) if you have any questions or can join us on the 28th.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

The Women's Fellowship has started their meetings again for the year. Please set aside the following dates and times to join us for fellowship and some wonderful programs:

September 26 @ 5:00 in the Vestry for a Pot Luck

October 24 @ 2:00 in the Ladies Parlor

November 28 @ 2:00 in the Ladies Parlor

December 19 @ 2:00 in the Ladies Parlor (date change because of the holiday)

January 23 @ 2:00 in the Ladies Parlor

February 27 @ 2:00 in the Ladies Parlor

March 26 @ 2:00 in the Ladies Parlor

April 23 @ 2:00 in the Ladies Parlor

May 21 - TBD for our banquet (date change because of the holiday)



The Yuletide Fair is fast approaching! For those that make jams, jellies, pickles, etc, please consider setting aside 1 or 2 jars to be sold at the Baked Goods table. If canning is not your thing, but you are a great baker please consider helping out too. The Cookie Walk can always use lots of cookies as they sell out every year. The Baked Goods and Candy tables are always looking for delicious items to be sold - breads, pies, squares, muffins, cupcakes, fudge, needhams and other candies. You are all so generous with your time and efforts to make our fair a success each year!

The Women's Coffee Time has started again. It is held the second Wednesday of each month at 9:30 a.m. at the IHOP in South Portland. Hope you can join us!

The Craft & Fellowship group meets every Tuesday at 1:30 p.m. in the Annex. Bring your craft to work on, or maybe a card/board game to play with everyone. This is not for ladies only - you men are perfectly welcome too! (This group will not meet on the days there are Women's Fellowship meetings.)

Roberta Brown

President, Women's Fellowship

ON A PERSONAL NOTE:

I would like to thank everyone who sent me cards, well wishes and prayers during my surgery and subsequent recovery. It meant so much to me. Thank you!

Roberta Brown

Music Notes

Happy late summer. What beautiful weather. Choir members are back in action, as you have seen and heard in Sunday services, and we want you all to know we still have plenty of seats in the choir loft. If you want to try out a rehearsal or two, and perform with us one or more Sundays, just come out with us on a Thursday rehearsal night at 7:00pm, in the sanctuary, or come up and join us during the service for a People's Choir selection; the first People's Choir opportunity will be September 24th.

Another great singing and service opportunity would be to join us for the Cantata that will be sung this Advent Season, in combination with members of the church choir from the United Methodist Church in Brunswick, directed by John Sustersic. You might remember his daughter Charlotte performed in church this summer, playing her violin and also singing. We will perform the Cantata for our church members, Saturday, December 9th, at 5:00pm, and then we will travel the next day to the Brunswick United Methodist Church for a performance for their members at 4pm. We are excited to collaborate with another choir!

I hope you enjoyed the music of members of mainebblend during our September 17th service. Speaking of collaboration, it's nice to have another music ensemble rehearsing in our church, filling the parking lot with more cars on Tuesday evenings. Let's keep finding reasons to throw those front doors open for the community to see lights on and hear activity in our sanctuary.

Music is alive and well here at the Scarborough 1st Congregational Church. Thank you for all of your support and your active participation singing your hearts out in our services. I'm always inspired as I hear you from the organ bench!

Yours in music,

Wendy



NEWS FROM MEMBERS, FRIENDS & CHURCH LIFE

We have not met but we have started our neighboring after church services!! We had a combined Welcome Back gathering on the 10th of September and all that came had a great time and the rain held off so we could be outside!!! (see photos on the last page) We are always in need of volunteers for neighboring and sign up sheet is on vestry bulletin board ! Each month a member of the committee is in charge of that month and to get volunteers! You can call those people that are in charge for any info needed! Call Joanne Brown 883-2057

NEWS FROM THE MINISTRY OF GOVERNING & FINANCE

FINANCIAL UPDATE ON SEPT 17

The Ministry of Governing and Finance invites all to a regularly scheduled Financial Update after Church on Sunday, September 17. We will give you the Year-end results for fiscal year 2022-2023; the Year-to-date financial status for fiscal year 2023-2024; and an update on the possible addition connecting the church and Parish Hall. Please join us immediately after the service to hear current information and be able to ask questions. If you miss the Meeting, you can get copies of any information that is distributed by calling the church office.

AVAILABILITY OF LIFE SAVING NALOXONE (NARCAN)

The Ministry of Governing and Finances has placed a box of Nasal Spray Naloxone (Narcan), and instructions for its use, in the Automated External Defibrillator (AED) cabinet located in the Vestry.

This action was prompted by an experience the congregation had last year when a young couple attended our Sunday service, and the young man was clearly under the influence of drugs. The young man was looking for help, and Dick Grotton was able to connect the young man with Project HOPE through his contacts at Scarborough Police. This led to a conversation within Governing and Finances that in the event of an overdose on FCC grounds, we aren't fully prepared to assist the person overdosing.

A member of Governing and Finances attended an educational session on opioid overdose and Naloxone, hosted by Sweetser's OPTIONS Initiative (Overdose Prevention Through Intensive Outreach, Naloxone, and Safety). The session provided education on overdose symptoms, administering Naloxone (Narcan), and Maine's Good Samaritan Law that protects individuals and organizations from liability when aiding someone experiencing a medical emergency. Each attendee also received two boxes of Nasal Spray Naloxone.

Naloxone is a medication designed to rapidly reverse opioid overdose. It can very quickly restore normal respiration to a person whose breathing has slowed or stopped because of overdosing from heroin, fentanyl, or prescription opioid pain medications. Nasal Spray Naloxone, commonly referred to by its brand name Narcan, is developed to be used by first responders, family members, friends, and community members who are responding to an overdose emergency.

Please contact a member of Governing and Finances if you have any questions.

**PHOTOS FROM OUR
WELCOME BACK SUNDAY
HELD ON SEPTEMBER 10
A good time was had by all!**



