

THE TIMES NEWSLETTER

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

SEPTEMBER 2023



PASTOR'S MESSAGE:

What a Mess!

As many of you know, over the last several months Dennis and I have been renovating a house in Kennebunk that has not gone too well – it is far beyond schedule and way over budget! Nevertheless, we are finally getting through the initial projects on the inside of the house and have turned our attention to the outside areas that need work. One of those areas is a broken-down shed with a leaky roof. A couple of weeks ago, when we removed the few things we had stored there over the winter, we had a big cleaning project on our hands as mildew and mold had taken hold due to the leaky roof. Some things were just too far gone and needed to be discarded. It was a mess!

Upon further examination, we decided that the shed itself is also too far gone and so we have purchased a new shed to be built and delivered in a few weeks. In the meantime, the old shed will be picked up and hauled away, and we'll have the fun task of clearing debris and preparing the area with crushed stone. I hope our backs hold out!



When the changes to the house and shed are all done, it will be worth it. It will be new life for the property. But we have had to accept the fact that the path has been strewn with many big messes along the way. There's really no other way to get there!

New life by its very nature, is a force of change. And it makes a mess! When you and I find ourselves in the midst of change, it is uncomfortable. We may even become disoriented, for what was previously there may be gone and we don't yet know what new thing will appear. We don't like this discomfort. In fact, our usual response is to try and figure out how to end it as quickly as possible and restore order to our lives.

The Hebrew people encountered numerous experiences of change and disorientation. You know the stories – their Exodus from Egypt out of slavery followed by their wandering in the desert for 40 years. The prophets also tell stories of battles and kingdoms conquered and Israel's exile to Babylon. Have you ever thought about how whole generations actually lived in a state of disorientation? There were a few ways they approached their messy situations. Some turned away from God. Others turned away from their community. And others, as the prophets testify, chose to “*wait for the Lord.*” This was not easy, yet they knew that God was doing a new thing with them.

The call to “*wait for the Lord*” is a helpful encouragement for us today to remain faithful to God’s promises and God’s faithfulness to us. This is true for all of our times and circumstances, and it is especially true for us now, as a church in the midst of transition.

Such waiting can be difficult. Anxieties creep in and can even derail us. Sometimes in our hurry to relieve our present discomfort we deny ourselves important life-renewing experiences. We may deny ourselves time to grieve. Or we may deny ourselves time to let go of things we no longer need for the next stage of our journey. We may even deny ourselves the gifts of growth and new life that transition can bring.

As we return from our summer wanderings and begin planning for the Fall, I encourage us to hold the prophets’ advice in our hearts to “*wait for the Lord.*” Surely God is preparing to unfold a new thing in our church. While we wait, let us not forget that new life doesn’t happen without first making a mess! It’s okay. There’s really no other way to get there.

Yours in Christ’s Service,

Reverend Linda C. Hey

Transitional Steering Team begins work in September!

The Transitional Steering Team has been formed and will soon begin the work of discerning a path for our church during this time of pastoral transition. Be sure to extend your congratulations and thanks to the members of this team for answering the call to serve in this important role.

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

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| OFFICE E-MAIL ADDRESS: | fcchurch@fccscarborough.com |
| Church mailing address | 161 Black Point Rd, Scarborough ME 04074 |
| Office Hours: | 9:00 am - 1:00 pm Monday through Friday |
| Church Website | www.fccscarborough.com |
| Church Telephone # | (207) 883-2342 |
| Pastor: Rev. Linda Hey | lindahey@comcast.net |

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 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.



SAVE THE DATE - SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2023

**WELCOME BACK SUNDAY
HOT DOG LUNCH & GAMES AFTER CHURCH**



Rev. Hey and the Ministries of Members, Friends and Church Life and Worship and Spiritual Care invite you to stay after the Worship Service and enjoy a hot dog luncheon and refreshments outside the Parish Hall. (If it rains we will move inside).

We welcome back to church our active members and invite those members and friends we have not seen in a while to join us for an afternoon of fellowship and fun. There will be lawn games for kids of all ages.

The event will begin around 11:00 AM immediately after the church service. All are welcome. Bring a friend!

SAVE THE DATE—SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2023

FINANCIAL UPDATE FROM MINISTRY OF GOVERNING AND FINANCE

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 to hear current information and be able to ask questions.

NEWS FROM THE MINISTRY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Sunday School resumes on September 17.

Fall Retreat for Adults on Saturday, October 7.

The Ministry of Christian Education is planning a Fall retreat for members and friends of First Congregational church. Reverend Cheryl Anderson has agreed to lead the event, as she did last year at our Women's Retreat. Once again there will be opportunity to get to know each other better, and to focus on our individual faith experiences.

More information will be coming shortly, as I engage a suitable venue, and develop the format and timetable. I hope everyone will save the date, and look forward to attending! I'm pretty excited to be able to offer this inspirational program. Cheryl has so much to offer us! Many blessings to all, Liane Giambalvo, Ministry of Christian Education

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

It's hard to believe, but the annual Yuletide Fair is just a few short months away! For those of you making jams and jellies or pickles and relishes during this time of bountiful produce, please consider saving a few jars of whatever you make for the Food Table at the fair. People love the homemade items and they sell out all the time. If you don't make jams, jellies, pickles or relishes, we will still need your help. Closer to the fair date, we will also be asking for baked goods - cookies, breads, muffins, cupcakes, etc. for the Food Table and Cookie Walk. And a reminder, if there are any "retired" Christmas decorations in good condition and working order you want to get rid of, we will be collecting those items in November for the Christmas Table. It takes a congregation to make our fair a success - and you all come through every year. Thank you!



The Women's Fellowship will be starting our meetings again in September. Our first meeting will be Tuesday, September 26th at 5:00 p.m. Please note the time as we are having a pot luck supper. Make your favorite entree, salad, dessert, etc. to share with all the ladies. We will have a short meeting, but mostly it will be an evening of fellowship and great conversation. We hope to see everyone - both existing members and new!

Roberta Brown

President, Women's Fellowship

NEWS FROM THE MINISTRY OF WORSHIP & SPIRITUAL CARE

CLEANSING THE TEMPLE: We owe Terri Brown and her crew a big Thank You for hiring Magic Carpet to clean the carpets in the Church on August 7. Terri enlisted folk to help move all the tables, chairs and other furniture before and after the cleaning operation.

NEW CANDLESTICKS PURCHASED FOR THE ALTAR: The Ministry purchased a new set of candlesticks for the Altar. They are sturdy, attractive and will not tip over.



CALL FOR USHERS: We need some new faces to help usher. Ushers arrive at 9:00, greet worshippers as they enter the Church and light the candles on the altar and take collection. It is not difficult and a member of the Ministry of Worship and Spiritual Care can "show you the ropes". Being an usher is a great way to get to know our members and visitors better and to associate a name with a face.

Music Notes from our Minister of Music

Happy summer to all. Here's to having figured out summer fun between lots of raindrops! Ah, any season in Maine. We are so blessed whether it is sunny or not.



I hope you have enjoyed the special music each week this summer, from Singers and Stringers – thanks Brenda and crew – to a few Falmouth High School students, Bethany Kirkpatrick, and Brenda and I harmonizing to some favorite hymns. Not to mention your beautiful singing on the hymns throughout the year, and when our hardworking choir members are on a much deserved break. We are certainly blessed at the 1st Congregational Church in Scarborough to have so many participants willing to share God's love through song, whether in the choir loft or in the pews!

Speaking of singing and the choir loft. If you have any interest in helping those of us in the choir with our musical mission, please consider a visit to one or more of our choir rehearsals, Thursday nights, from 7:00pm - 8:15ish, beginning September 7th. You can rehearse and sing with us for one or more Sundays, or one or more seasons, or ongoing each week. Flexibility is our mantra and any participation is absolutely welcome. I sincerely believe the right people will always show up at the right time, and please do not be self-conscious about your ability. It's my job to guide you to your best singing self and that's the most fun part of the job! Would you try out a rehearsal or two, and see if it's a good fit for your contribution to our church's ministry?

If Thursday night rehearsals are not possible for some there is still good news. We will also reinstate the People's Choir during the service, roughly once a month, with favorite hymns, so just pop up with the choir to sing with us once in a while if that's your comfort level.

Lastly, would you please share this note and invitation with anyone you know of who might be interested in singing and sharing worship through participation in the choir? New beginnings are a great opportunity to reinvigorate our interests. Maybe there are those who would like to begin singing again or would like to try something new! I look forward to the upcoming season of music and wish you well with the rest of our Maine summer.

Yours in music,

Wendy

