

THE TIMES NEWSLETTER

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

MAY 2024



PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Into God's Hands

Life can sometimes give us tunnel vision. Daily routines fill our thoughts, telling us what we need to do to take care of our responsibilities. Yes, we work hard at fulfilling our commitments and finishing our projects. And when all is said and done, there is usually more to do! This can leave us feeling exhausted. And try as we might to control the events of our lives and do everything well, we inevitably experience setbacks. It could be illness or disappointments that change our plans and leave us having to adapt to the new plan. Isn't it good to know that perfection is God's job, not ours?

Tunnel vision is like going through life with blinders on. When all we can see is our own perspective and priorities, we shut ourselves off from greater possibilities. One of those greater possibilities is trusting in what God can do. Because we often prefer to count on just ourselves for our accomplishments, we inadvertently close our hearts off from God. Unfortunately, when this happens, we are only seeing a small part of reality. When people talk about God's blessings, it falls upon deaf ears.

I have a suggestion for those of us who find ourselves in this circumstance (and we all do at one time or another!) Rather than feeling too busy in life to pay attention to what God can do, we can surrender ourselves into God's hands – yes, right into God's hands. We can give up our sense of control and turn it over to God, even saying: "Okay God, I know you've got this!"



And then watch what happens. I think you will begin to have awareness of a larger reality. Yes, God offers us a newer life than what we had known previously. God makes regeneration and renewal possible. God creates in us a new perspective. It may happen quickly, or it may take some time. But stick with it - for when we surrender ourselves into God's hands, we are opening ourselves up to a deep connection that is already built into us by our Creator. And because it is already in our nature, reconnecting with God will help us discover deep joy in our very soul. Like the joy we might feel at a family reunion! With eyes of faith we can begin to see God's unexpected blessings, and this will refresh us for yet another day.

As we step into the warm summer months, let us do so resting in God's hands - so that our eyes and ears will be opened to God's possibilities!

I wish you the blessing of faith...

Yours in Christ's Service,

Reverend Linda C. Hey



Transitional Steering Team Update – 2nd Congregational Conversation May 19th

We had a great 1st Congregational Conversation after church on Sunday April 28th, with over 45 members and friends in attendance. Our time together was fruitful as we listened to one another share their ideas, concerns, and joys about the church. Our thanks to everyone who participated!

Our next Congregational Conversation will be **Sunday May 19th** after church (1 hr.). This is planned to be a deeper dive into our “church identity” work. At this meeting, we’ll work in small breakout groups who will brainstorm important facts about our various ministries. This is part of our larger goal to develop a clearer understanding of “Who we are now...as First Cong. Church in Scarborough.” Whether you have been a member/friend of the church for many years, or for only a short time, please join us! We need you.

Looking ahead, mark your calendars for a meeting on **Sunday July 14th** after church for a question and answer time about the United Church of Christ, with Maine UCC Conference Minister, Rev. Marisa Laviola. We are also very excited to let you know that Rev. Laviola will be guest preacher that day.

We are Your Servants in Christ,

The Transitional Steering Team Members

Herb Hughes

Sue Whitten

Sue Hilton

Elaine Sederlund

Terri Brown

Rev. Linda Hey

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NOTES FROM THE AD HOC MUSIC COMMITTEE:

The ad hoc Music Committee continues to meet to address the Music Needs of the church. We have just completed an evaluation of our Minister of Music, Wendy Northrup. She has served in the new role about one year and has been doing a wonderful job!

The choir has grown by 3 new members: Dennis Bailey, Jean and Don Showalter. We hope all have benefited from a full sound and improved diction. The choir will take a break beginning June 16. Wendy plans special music for the summer.

The church has been given a donation of a synthesizer. It is a mobile keyboard on a stand. There have been parts donated as well. Thank you to Mary Ellen Bossom and Brenda Birkner for this addition to our music ministry. This instrument will add to our ability to provide music outside the sanctuary. Thanks again to Mary Ellen and to Brenda for some of the parts.



The lighting near the organ and the choir loft is being addressed by the Ministry of Governing and Finance. We hope to improve the dimness in those areas.

We hope you have both enjoyed the music and received a blessing from the message, We welcome new ideas and members. Have a great summer!

Submitted by Susan Fielding, Chair, for the Ad Hoc Music Committee:

Kate Sawdon

Brenda Birkner

Mary Ellen Bossom

Wendy Northrup

Rev. Linda Hey (attends)

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP NEWS

The **Women's Fellowship Luncheon** is coming up. All women of the church are invited to attend. The information is as follows:

DATE: Tuesday, May 21, 2024

TIME: 12:00 p.m. (noon)

CARPOOLING: Meet at the church at 11:30 AM.

PLACE: Stacks Pancake Co.

139 Riverside Street

Portland, Maine



We will have our own room for conversation and fellowship. Their menu is quite extensive with breakfast and lunch items available - we will be ordering off the menu so you may want to check it out before we go! They will be doing separate checks for us. If you are interested in carpooling, meet at the church parking lot at 11:30 a.m. or make arrangements prior to that day. Please let Gail know if you're needing to carpool

If you plan on attending, please contact Gail Dobriko, 883-3039 or dobriko2@maine.rr.com so she has a headcount to give the restaurant. We look forward to seeing you there!!!

Our **Ladies Breakfast** will meet next on June 19 at IHOP near the Maine Mall. Come for a time of fellowship and food.



MOTHER'S DAY

May 12, 2024

On this day the Men's Fellowship took charge of ushers and neighboring to honor the women of our Church. Don Barker, an accomplished florist, made this beautiful flower arrangement for the altar.

NOTES FROM THE ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

First, I want to thank the very thoughtful people who left a card and beautiful flower arrangement on my desk on the occasion of Administrative Professionals Day (April 24th). To me it is a joy to serve this church, in any capacity, and your warm wishes were greatly appreciated.

Second, earlier this month I met with Rev. Hey and Kathy Ross (representing Governing & Finance), for my annual review. They offered insights and guidance as to how I could perform better in this position. Likewise I had the opportunity to share with them what I thought was working (for me and the church administration) and where there was room for improvement.

Lastly, I want to remind everyone of the resources in the office: Frequently requested documents include:

Annual Reports

Church By-laws

Directories of Members and Friends, including contact information for All our Members, and another for Active Members and Friends. These Directories are updated as people change their mailing addresses, phone numbers or e-mail addresses, and as people sign the Friendship Registers. I rely in part on all of you to let me know if someone has moved into or out of the area, or passed away.

Church Calendar: On my desk in the office, for all to see, is a Desk Calendar and Plan book published by the UCC. This displays the Liturgical Calendar. In it I note all meetings and events that I know of, ranging from Ministry meetings, Women's and Men's Fellowship events, choir rehearsals and community uses to scheduled maintenance of our buildings

The Upper Room: This small booklet is a daily devotional guide. The church receives 10 copies bimonthly. I place some in the Narthex outside the Sanctuary and keep a few in the office.

Lock box codes. The Ministry of Governing & Finance had lock boxes installed outside each of our 3 buildings, with a key to enter inside. This eliminated our concern over how many keys were "floating around town". It also helps our community groups access the buildings for meetings after hours. Please call the office for the code(s) as needed.

Since my job is to provide administrative support to the Pastor and general church body, I encourage you to contact me at the office whenever the need arises. If I cannot help you I will refer you to the proper person or Ministry.

Respectfully submitted, Elaine Sederlund

SUMMARY REPORT OF THE ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the First Congregational Church of Scarborough was held on Sunday, May 5th following the worship service. There were 62 people in attendance, including Proxies submitted by members prior to the meeting.

Fran Whitten acted as Moderator with Elaine Sederlund, Clerk, taking notes. Kathy Ross and Dick Grotton circulated through the Sanctuary with microphones so all speakers could be heard.

This was a “typical” Annual Meeting with regular items of business:

Article 1: The Slate of Officers and Ministry Members as prepared by Members, Friends and Church Life and amended at the meeting was approved by unanimous vote. (A list of the Officers and Ministries for 2024-2025 appears on the following pages).

Article 2: The Report of the Church Clerk and Minutes of the 2023 Annual Meeting were approved by unanimous vote.

Article 3: Treasurer Lynne Hermann summarized the Financial Reports which were approved by unanimous vote.

Article 4: Treasurer Lynne Hermann updated the Budget Summary included in the Annual Reports and described the highlights of the 2024-2025 Budget. The Budget for the new year was adopted by a near unanimous vote with one abstention.

Article 5: The reports of the Minister, Co-Moderators and Recording Treasurer were accepted by unanimous vote.

Article 6: The reports of the Church Council and the five Ministries were accepted by unanimous vote.

Article 7: The reports of the Minister of Music, Women’s Fellowship and Men’s Fellowship were accepted by unanimous vote.

Article 8: Rob Willey delivered a verbal report of the activities of the Building Advisory Committee, describing its progress to date. That report was accepted by unanimous vote.

The Annual Meeting concluded just before Noon on May 5, 2024.

First Congregational Church of Scarborough

2024 Officers and Ministry Members

All Terms are for 1 year (7/1/2024-6/30/2025)

<u>Office</u>	<u>Name</u>
CO-MODERATORS	Fran Whitten Richard Grotton
CLERK	Elaine Sederlund
TREASURER	Lynne Hermann
RECORDING TREASURER	Carl Ross
COUNCIL-AT-LARGE (3)	Brenda Harrison

MINISTRY OF GOVERNING AND FINANCE

Cliff Colville
Richard Grotton
Lynne Hermann
Kathy Meserve
Kathy Ross
Fran Whitten

MINISTRY OF WORSHIP & SPIRITUAL CARE

Roberta Brown
Terri Brown
Allison Curry
Elizabeth Deal
Susan Fielding
Vickie Flynn
Kate Sawdon

MINISTRY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Liane Giambalvo

MINISTRY OF MEMBERS, FRIENDS AND CHURCH LIFE

Joanne Brown

Ruth Bruns

Brenda Harrison

Susan Whitten

Elaine Sederlund

MINISTRY OF OUTREACH AND STEWARDSHIP

Gail Dobriko

Sandra Elder

Liane Giambalvo

Pam Joy

Lynn Roberge

DELEGATE TO CUMBERLAND ASSOCIATION – UCC

Terri Brown

