

THE TIMES NEWSLETTER

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

MARCH 2024



Spring Cleaning

This year the Vernal Equinox, which marks the first day of Spring, happens on March 19th. This is right around the corner! Maybe you know that when there is a Vernal Equinox, the earth's axis is perpendicular to the Sun's rays, which means that all regions on Earth receive about the same number hours of sunlight. Night and day are essentially the same length all over the world!

There is actually another way I know when Spring is beginning. I know it because I have a sudden, inexplicable desire to "spring clean." The celestial balancing act between the sun and earth in Spring, apparently makes me want to balance areas of my life by cleaning out winter cobwebs, and reclaiming space filled with old, useless clutter. Refreshing my surroundings brings me joy and a new perspective. Spring cleaning feels good!



The season of Lent is upon us, and I always think of this season as another kind of "spring-cleaning" task. What I mean is that during Lent we take on the task of cleaning our inner-spiritual lives. During Lent we are invited into a special time of preparation. Lent calls us into an extended period of prayer and inner-reflection.

Some people wonder about the purpose of such a season. I have discovered through my own spiritual journey that spending focused time reflecting on my faith life has helped me to grow closer to God. It was so, with Jesus too. He often went off alone to pray. And we remember how the "alone time" he spent being tempted by Satan in the wilderness brought him confidence and clarity about the ministry he was to do.

Lent gives us the opportunity once a year to sweep out the winter dust that has collected on our spiritual selves. It gives us the chance to take seriously our need for repentance so that we might be set in right relationship again with God. Though we might like to think we don't ever disappoint God, of course we do. Lent reminds us to set time aside to acknowledge our shortcomings and open ourselves up to the truth that we need God.

Of course, the journey of Lent is ultimately about Jesus' journey to the cross. And we know that journey did not end at his death. Lent ends at the climax of Easter. And when Jesus left the land of the dead and was resurrected to new life on that first Easter, we were assured of a refreshed new life with God's grace and forgiveness.

As we joyfully welcome the days of Spring, I hope you will also treasure the season of Lent that is upon us. Yes, do a little spring-cleaning of your soul. Pray. Ask for God's forgiveness. Embrace the opportunity to remove the dust and cobwebs that keep you from shining brightly as God's beloved ones!

I wish you a fruitful season of Lent and a joyous Easter!

Yours in Christ's Service,
Reverend Linda C. Hey



**WORSHIP SERVICES AND EVENTS FOR HOLY WEEK
AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**

| | | |
|----------|--|--|
| March 24 | Palm Sunday | 9:30 A.M. (Church Sanctuary) |
| March 28 | Maundy Thursday | |
| | Last Supper Service & Service of Tenebrae | 6:30 P.M. (Vestry and Sanctuary) |
| March 29 | Good Friday | 11:30 A.M. Movie (Parish Hall Parlor) |
| March 31 | Easter Sunday | 6:15 A.M. Sunrise Service (The Breakers - Higgins Beach) 9:30 A.M. Easter Sunday Service (Church Sanctuary) |

Maundy Thursday Last Supper Service and Service of Tenebrae

Last year we filled all the seats at our Maundy Thursday Last Supper table. Because it was greatly appreciated by those who attended, we will be hosting it again as part of our Holy Week observations. This year's Last Supper Service and Service of Tenebrae will be on Thursday, March 28th at 6:30 P.M. The evening begins in the Vestry, where we honor Jesus' last Passover meal by reading scripture (Exodus, Psalms of Praise, and Luke's gospel), singing hymns, and eating a simple meal together. The meal culminates in the sharing of Holy Communion elements.

Our group then proceeds upstairs to the Sanctuary where we participate in a Service of Tenebrae. In this service we extinguish candles and Sanctuary lights as we read the story of Jesus' night of betrayal and arrest. It is a solemn service, different from others we share together, as it is not a time for fellowship, but contemplation and silence. Many who have been a part of Maundy Thursday services attest to the fact that it is a very powerful experience.



We hope you will join us in remembering the holy sacrifice Jesus made for our salvation.

FLOWER COMMITTEE NEWS

Our Florist, Fleur de Lis in Cape Elizabeth, has understandably had to raise the cost of our weekly Altar flowers to \$50.00. We know this may be hard for some people, but hope that you will still sign up on the sheet in the Narthex for your special occasions. You are also welcome to provide you own flowers at any time, as long as you sign up on the sheet and write "own flowers" next to your name so we will know not to order them. Any dedication will be submitted for our Sunday Bulletins through Elaine as usual. Thank you for your continued help in decorating our Altar on Sundays.

OFFICE E-MAIL ADDRESS: fcchurch@fccscarborough.com

Church mailing address 161 Black Point Rd, Scarborough ME 04074

Church Website www.fccscarborough.com

Church Telephone # (207) 883-2342

Pastor: Rev. Linda Hey rlindahey2@gmail.com

Office Hours: 9:00 am - 1:00 pm. Monday through Friday

Outreach & Stewardship

Our ministry has been asking for testimonials from our congregation for this year's pledge theme, **Because of YOU our church changes lives.**

One of the testimonials is the following: “My mother moved to Scarborough to be closer to her family. She had lived 50 years in small Maine town. She was a nervous about coming to the “big city”. She was very depressed about changing all that was familiar to her. She had always been active in her previous Methodist church and had hoped she would fit in with our church. She did not have to try very hard. The members of this church were extremely kind and gracious. They asked her to participate in various events. She enjoyed developing new friendships. Slowly as she was aging she had to give up her license. No problem, members of the congregation would pick her up and bring her to church and even church events. There came the day that her dementia got worse and she was admitted to a nursing home. Again, she was nervous and fearful. This church still stayed connected to her through this transition. Lovely cards were sent by the Women's Fellowship. The pastor would visit (which she would remember and talk about for days) and members of our congregation would stop by to say hello. The support, generosity of time, care, outreach and love that this church offered, helped to keep her cheerful and contented with her new situation and life. It made her feel fortunate that she was able to have such a full life well into her 80s.

I hope the members of this church realize that *because of them they helped change my mother's life.*”



PLEDGE CAMPAIGN KICK OFF BECAUSE OF YOU OUR CHURCH CHANGES LIVES

The Stewardship Ministry will be kicking off a celebration of the Pledge Campaign with our annual **BRUNCH** on **March 3!** Please come to pick up your packets, enjoy some delicious brunch and fellowship!

Covenant for Christian Communication
Adopted by the First Congregational Church of Scarborough
Transitional Steering Team and the Church Council

Date: December 5, 2023

As a community of the Christian faith, we believe it is important for us to create and maintain safe space, true sanctuary in our communications with one another. Such sanctuary requires transparency, openness, caring, and compassion. We also believe that conflict is normal and will inevitably occur. Rather than seeing this as a negative, we believe conflict presents opportunities for growth in ministry.

Therefore, for the purpose of creating authentic community life with our church family, we make the following commitments to one another and to God:

We will seek God's Will in all things and listen for God's voice in our discussions.

We will seek to discover what is collectively best for our church, not what may be best for us or for some small group in the church.

We will speak for ourselves and not claim to speak for others, which runs the risk of misrepresenting them. Using "I" statements, not "We" statements is a good way to accomplish this.

We will listen carefully and be respectful of the feelings and experiences of others, and only speak after they have finished.

We will focus on ideas and suggestions instead of questioning people's motives, intelligence, or integrity.

We will actively encourage open and honest conversation.

We will listen with an open, nonjudgmental mind.

We will not dominate the conversation but will allow others to participate equally.

We will seek to stay in community with each other though the discussion may be vigorous or full of tension.

When we are part of a conversation that is confidential, we will not share it with others outside the group.

Viewing the First Congregational Church Services Remotely

Sunday Service livestreaming and previous recordings of most services are viewable on the church's Facebook page.

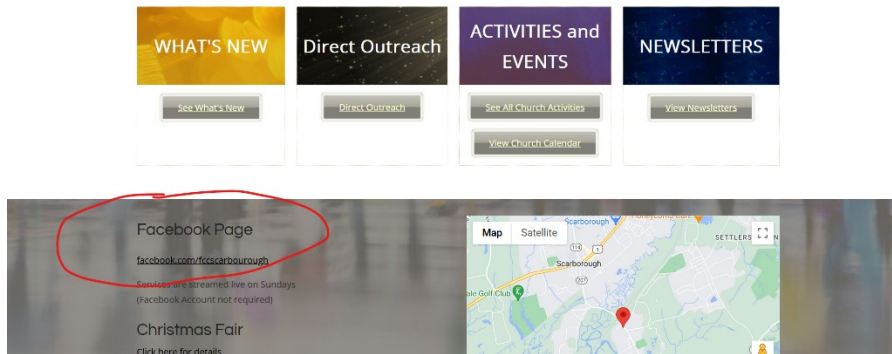
Although more features are available via logging into a Facebook account (such as the ability to comment and link to other congregants), one is NOT necessary to view the livestreams and recordings. Below are the instructions.

From your internet-connected device (PC, Mac, Phone, or Tablet):

Open an Internet browser (Edge, Mozilla/Firefox, Chrome, Safari, etc).

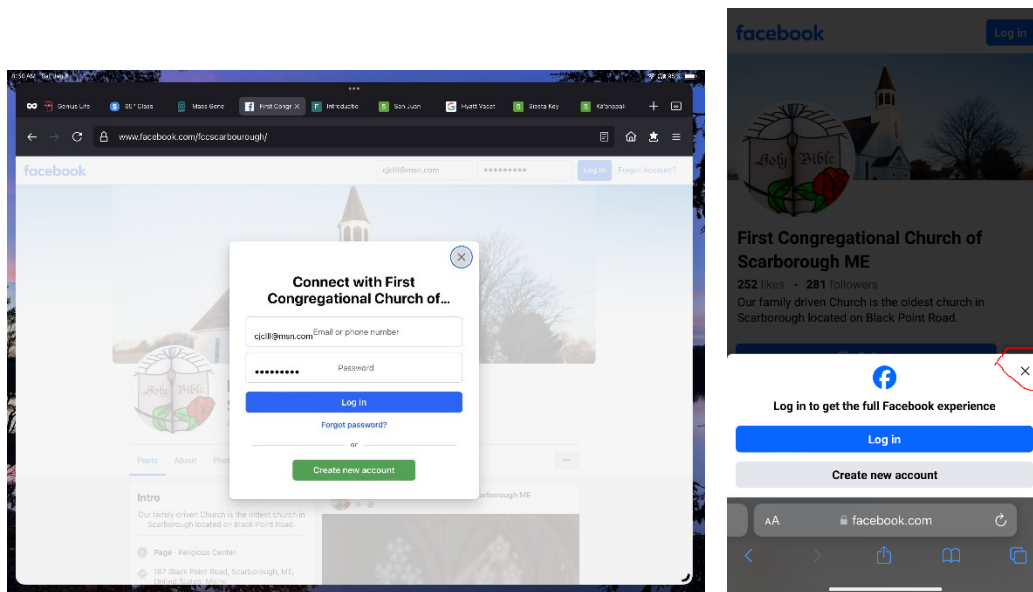
Navigate to the church's website: <http://www.fccscarborough.com>

Click on the church's Facebook link located on the lower left of the web page (see circled below)

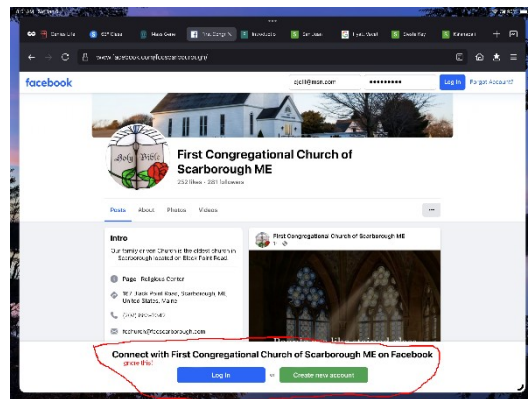
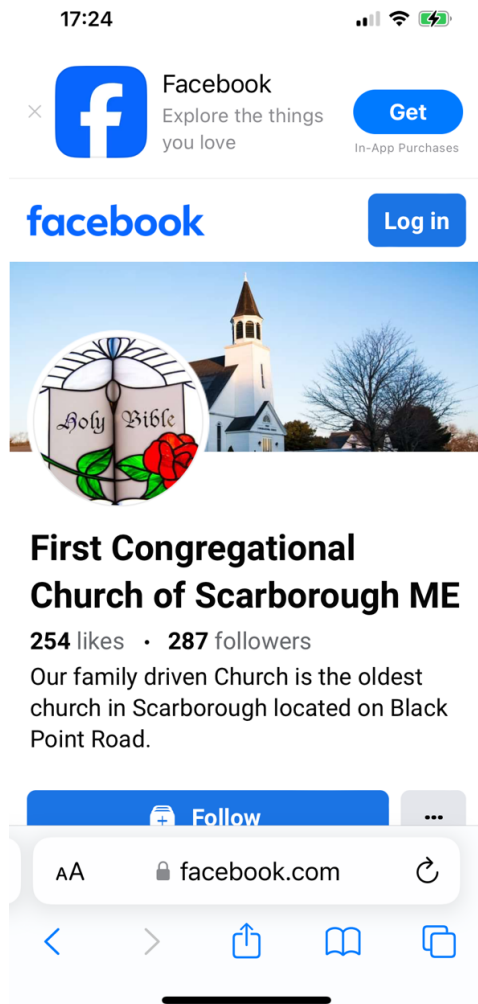


You may want to 'Bookmark' the link in you preferred Internet Browser

If you have Facebook installed on your device, you may see screens like below



If you DO NOT have Facebook installed on your device you may see a screen similar to the one below



If you are NOT a Facebook user or do not wish to 'Log In', you can 'Close' the pop-up window asking for a 'Log In' by tapping or clicking on the 'X' at the upper right OR in the case of the screen that shows a 'Get' button for Facebook you can ignore it or click or tap the 'X' to the left of the blue 'f'

After completing the above you should be able to scroll down the page via touch or mouse depending on your device

Livestreamed Sunday Services will only be available at 9:30AM on Sundays

Previous services can be found either by scrolling down the page (recent services), or selecting the 'Videos' sub-page in the menu bar just below the 'First Congregational Church of Scarborough ME' header under the photo of the church

You might need to 'unmute' the audio by 'hovering' a mouse or finger over the video and then tapping or clicking the little speaker icon in the lower right hand corner

Music Notes



We are so blessed to be embarking on the reflective chapter of Lent in our church year, leading up to our most holy of the holy days, Good Friday and Easter Sunday. Hallelujah!

When I think of reflection, I can think of many impactful ways to engage, but what better journey than through prayer and music? Or both! Whether actively singing or just as actively listening, music can be prayerful, as well as exuberant.

You will hear many anthems with prayer in the title or in the lyrics this season, and for good reason. We can just as easily pray through our musical sharing as in silent prayers or mantras. Please join us in person in the choir loft for a rehearsal or two, and a Sunday or two, to sing with our fabulous choir members, or continue to enjoy our musical offerings to present God's word and his mission through music, from the pews. May we engage personally and together on our own work to reflect on and share God's word and grace.

Choir members will sing during the Maundy Thursday service, which will begin at 6:30pm downstairs in the church and then continue upstairs. I will lead the music for Pastor Hey's sunrise service at the Breakers Higgins Beach Easter morning - at 6:15 a.m. - and, lastly, the choir will be in full force for our 9:30 Easter Service in the church, for another beautiful gathering together in Christ's name.

Bring a friend or two or ten and fill the bench and the pews. You and they might even hear a trumpet that morning to announce and celebrate the good news of the risen Christ!

May God bless you this entire season and every day forever more.

Yours in music,

Wendy

NOTES FROM THE AD HOC MUSIC COMMITTEE

We began meeting as an ad hoc arm of the Ministry of Worship and Spiritual Care after Wendy Northrup was hired to be our Music Minister in June 2023.

Our members are: Susan Fielding (Chair)

Brenda Birkner

Mary Ellen Bossom

Elaine Sederlund

Kate Sawdon



Rev. Linda Hey attends each meeting and Wendy as available or by telephone.

The following issues have or are in process of being reviewed:

1. Condition of the choir robes: Last Summer the choir robes were cataloged and cleaned. A few were discarded because of their condition. We decided no new robes were needed.

We are shopping for new green stoles that would match the color green of our antependia (paraments) and comparing fabric swatches.

2. It was noted that in the past there was no regular evaluation of the Music Director. We will be doing an evaluation and feedback with Wendy this Spring.
3. A new synthesizer was donated to the church. It will need a stand and speakers. This will give us a portable keyboard for special situations that require it.
4. We are aware that our organ will need maintenance and conditioning in the future. A fund may be needed to make this a possibility.
5. Lighting for the organ is not optimal. We are looking into options.

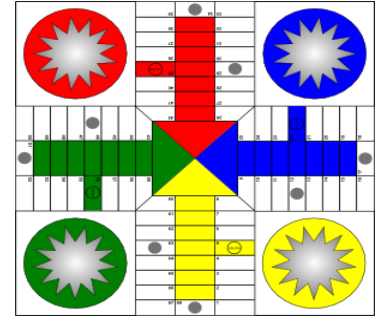
Our next meeting is the afternoon of February 20th. If anyone has suggestions or questions for the ad hoc Music Committee, please let us know.

Submitted by

Susan Fielding, Chair

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP NEWS

February 27, 2024 is our next Women's Fellowship Meeting. We will meet at 2:00 p.m. in the Vestry. It will be our Game Day, so bring your favorite board game or card game to teach the others if they don't already know how to play it. Our hostesses will be Elizabeth Deal and Edie Davidson.



For our March 26, 2024 meeting, we will gather at 2:00 p.m. in the Vestry. Our program will be Seated Exercise, so come in comfortable clothes! Our hostesses will be Nancy Hall and Roberta Brown.

The Crafts and Fellowship Group is looking for some good ideas of things to make for the Yuletide Fair. If you have an idea, gather everything needed to make 5-6 of the same item and come to the Annex on Tuesday afternoons. We start at 1:30 pm. You can show the attendees how to make the craft and we'll have something cute to sell at the fair in December!

We are looking for a nice, local restaurant for our year-end banquet in May. If you know of any place that has a good seating area for between 20-30 ladies and a delicious menu, please let Gail Dobriko know.

Roberta Brown

REMEMBRANCES FROM ALLISON CURRY—OF A CULINARY KIND:

BETTY HART was a long time member of First Congregational Church and known for many talents. Many youngsters attended her Pied Piper Nursery School, including Gordon's grandchildren who are now in their thirties, and her cooking talents were many. She is particularly remembered for her wonderful baked beans which her daughter, Linda Baird, makes for the Christmas Fair each year.

My favorite memory of Betty was when I first moved to Scarborough after marrying Wally Flaherty who was already a member of the church. I suggested making venison mincemeat to sell at the Fair as I had done at my former church in Vermont, but I didn't have a canner at the time. Betty loaned me hers for the first batches and venison mincemeat was a staple at the Fair until I left. I believe it sold for \$12.00/quart.

The funnier part of that however, was when I was serving the church in Buxton I suggested the venison mincemeat once again and one of our ladies said she could obtain plenty of venison. A member of her extended family was a game warden so she asked him if he could provide us with venison for the mincemeat and told him we planned to sell it at our Christmas Fair. His first response was, "do you really want your pastor to go to jail?" It seems it is illegal to sell venison in any form so I guess we were very lucky no one realized we were doing something illegal at Black Point. And we are a church!!!

2024 EASTER FLOWERS ORDER FORM

Please help us prepare our sanctuary for the glorious celebration of Easter on March 31st. Flowers may be dedicated “**in memory of**” or “**in honor of**” loved ones. The dedications will be listed in the bulletin on Easter Sunday.

Please fill out the order form, then mail it or bring it with your check to the church office: 161 Black Point Road. Any questions, please call Elaine at the church office at 883-2342. You may also bring in your own Spring plant of any variety to the church office or Vestry by Friday, March 29th.

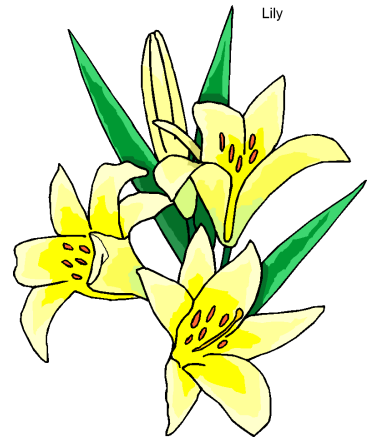
The deadline for ordering plants is Wednesday March 20th..

Please indicate quantity of the item you wish to order.

___ Single Lily (6” pot) \$20.00

___ Tulips (6” pot)\$20.00

___ Hyacinths (6” pot) \$20.00



Dedication - Please circle one (in memory of / in honor of)

Given by

Phone number _____ **E-mail** _____

Bringing my own plant _____



**SHOWN HERE IS OUR
NEIGHBORING
OF FEBRUARY 11TH ,
WHICH WAS HOSTED BY
THE VOLUNTEERS FROM OUR
FOOD PANTRY**

**Len Giambalvo shows
Rob Willey the array of groceries
that are available to the customers
of the Food Pantry**



**Here Ralph Lorfano ,Wendy Northrup
and Barbara Grotton sample the
baked goods which were prepared
using foods that are stocked by our
Food Pantry.**

