

# THE TIMES NEWSLETTER

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

**MAY 2024**



## PASTOR'S MESSAGE

### Sacramental

Every first Sunday of the month we celebrate the sacrament of Holy Communion in our worship service. Maybe you have noticed how, at the end of the invitation to the sacrament, I say these words: *“Come not because you must, but because you may.”* These words are not original to me. They are part of a Communion liturgy that was programmed into my soul as a congregant of my home church a long time ago.

When I first heard these words, *“Come not because you must, but because you may,”* I was grateful for what they said to me. They told me that receiving Christ in the sacrament of Holy Communion was a gift of pure grace. It was an offering being made to me. I was not being told what to do. I was being given an opportunity and I had the freedom to choose to participate or not, which is a deeply held value of mine. I was welcome, as all are welcome into the hospitality of Christ's table. This means a lot!



When the church body gathers to celebrate a sacrament, it is a time like no other gathering - for in it we believe that Christ is mysteriously present in our midst. The theological definition of *sacrament* is that it is an *outward visible sign of an inward invisible grace*. The movement of the Spirit among us is a mystery that defies explanation. But every so often, we know that God has touched us, and when this happens, it is amazing.

The church is like nothing else that exists on earth. We believe our church building is God's house and that God comes to dwell here with us. Yet sometimes we forget to trust that God is a partner in our present work and in our planning for the future.

It is true that we are a part of the church which Jesus started over two millennia ago. It was Jesus who taught the first teachers and ministers, and he gave his very life for it so we would know the love of God to its full extent. Jesus told those who believed in him that they could “*come to him when they were weary and heavy burdened, and he would give them rest.*” How wonderful! He gave the church the sacraments to keep its members vitally connected with him and his Spirit.

No doubt these are gifts to us in our own time and place. And you and I are always welcome to come and find Christ here – *not because we must but because we may*. I am always amazed at how many people walk away from this generous invitation. And I am always grateful for those who accept it.

Over the next few months we, as a congregation, are beginning to do the hard work of transition and transformation for our church. We are in this together. And I believe we’ll be in our best form if we begin with Jesus’ invitation to live as sacramental people. As we embrace this work, which is an opportunity to grow in our self-understanding, we will have greater success when we invite God into the process and trust God and each other as sacred partners.

I have no doubt that the gifts of Jesus’ church always remain, regardless of the outcome of our future work. Yet as we begin, we must not forget the sacramental power we have in the mystery of Spirit that is just waiting to touch us and transform us into something we haven’t even yet imagined. Will we be a part of this work of God and God’s people? Will we be open to join in “*because we may?*”

God bless you all.

Yours in Christ’s Service,

Reverend Linda C. Hey

## STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

It is with tremendous gratitude that we share the wonderful news that our church has exceeded this year's Stewardship Campaign goal! To date, we have received pledges totaling more than our goal of \$140,000.

Additionally, we surpassed our number of new pledges goal of 8 with 9 new pledges from those who have not pledged in the past. With just a few outstanding follow-ups remaining, our campaign is not yet finished. Soon we will be able to communicate the final numbers. The Ministry of Outreach and Stewardship wishes to thank you all for such admirable support. Because of YOU our church will continue to change lives. Thank you!



### Viewing the First Congregational Church Services Remotely

If you are unable to join us in the church sanctuary on Sunday mornings to worship, you can live stream the service from the comfort of your own home. The easiest way is to go to the church Face book site. If you do not use Face book, you can visit the church website and access the services that way: [www.fccscarborough.com](http://www.fccscarborough.com)

**OFFICE E-MAIL ADDRESS:** [fcchurch@fccscarborough.com](mailto:fcchurch@fccscarborough.com)

Church mailing address 161 Black Point Rd, Scarborough ME 04074

Church Website [www.fccscarborough.com](http://www.fccscarborough.com)

Church Telephone # (207) 883-2342

Pastor: Rev. Linda Hey [rlindahey2@gmail.com](mailto:rlindahey2@gmail.com)

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

## MUSIC NOTES:

Music in May: how exciting, with the Earth waking up and trees and flowers budding and blossoming and birds serenading us with their songs of joy. We are blossoming in the choir loft, too. Jean and Don are continuing with us for the spring season, and Kate is back! How blessed we are. Choir members are singing for God with confidence, beautiful tone, and expressivity.

Might you join the fun and try a Sunday or two, with a small commitment to experience the fulfillment of “making unto the Lord a joyful noise?” We always love to hear you signing from the pews, but you might find a seat in the choir fits you very well!

Also, the need for Special Music for the summer months will be here before we know it, when our choir members will take a well deserved break for much of June, and July and August. If you have suggestions for folks that might like to join us to sing on a Sunday in the summer, for a modest honorarium, please give them my information, or vice versa, so that I can get them scheduled. We would love your input! They or you, can email me at [wendynorthrup9@gmail.com](mailto:wendynorthrup9@gmail.com) , or call or text me at 207-671-0488.

Thanks!

Wendy Northrup

Minister of Music



## THANKS FOR THE THOUGHTFULNESS

Kate Sawdon wishes to extend her sincere thanks to everyone for their kind prayers, calls, cards, flowers, food and gifts following her accident and surgery. It is a Blessing to have such a wonderful Church Family!

## WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP NEWS

Our last regular meeting will be held on April 23, 2024 at 2:00 in the Ladies Parlor. Our program will be about Beekeeping. Hostesses for the meeting are Susan Fielding and Deb Gerry. If you are able, the Food Pantry donation for the month is condiments.



Our May 21, 2024 meeting will be our Annual Banquet. It will be held at STACKS PANCAKE COMPANY, 139 Riverside Dr., Portland, beginning at 12:00 Noon. WE will order from the Menu. If you wish to carpool, please meet in the Church parking lot no later than 11:30 a.m.

Our Ladies Breakfast resumes on April 17, 2024, then again on May 15 and June 19.. We meet at 9:30 a.m. at IHOP. Come for a time of fellowship and food.

## MEN'S FELLOWSHIP MEETING

**THURSDAY, APRIL 25 at 3:30 p.m.**

in the Ladies Lounge in the Parish Hall.  
We have not met for some time and your attendance is requested; please put this meeting on your calendars. 😊



## SAVE THE DATE: MAY 5th ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the First Congregational Church will take place following the worship service on Sunday, May 5th . Annual reports will be mailed out or hand delivered to you at least 7 days prior to the meeting.

Please join us for this important gathering or send in a Proxy if unable to attend in person.

## Congregational Meeting



We still have some open positions on the various Ministries, mostly on the Ministry of Christian Outreach and Stewardship.

Should you have any questions about a particular

Ministry, please contact Joanne Brown  
([joannebrown7175@gmail.com](mailto:joannebrown7175@gmail.com)).

## 1st Congregational Conversation Meeting—April 28th

The Transitional Steering Team invites everyone to our **1st Congregational Conversation** to be held on Sunday **April 28th** after church. Our purpose for this gathering is to share in conversations with you about the church and learn from each other as we begin to prepare for a new chapter in the church's life. We invite all our members and active "friends" of the church to attend. We need you! Our April 28<sup>th</sup> gathering will be held in the Vestry beginning at 10:45 AM, lasting approximately one hour. There will be coffee, water, and special snack bags for all participants.

Looking ahead, mark your calendars for our **2nd Congregational Conversation** to be held on Sunday **May 19<sup>th</sup>** after church. At this meeting we will focus on our church's ministries. It will also be held in the Vestry beginning at 10:45 AM. We need everyone's participation, so please come!

We are Yours in Christ,

**The Transitional Steering Team Members**

Herb Hughes

Sue Whitten

Sue Hilton

Elaine Sederlund

Terri Brown

Rev. Linda Hey





**PASTOR LINDA HEY AND  
MINISTER OF MUSIC WENDY  
NORTHRUP GREETED  
WORSHIPERS TO THE  
EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE  
HELD AT THE BREAKERS ON  
HIGGINS BEACH**







**EASTER SERVICES IN THE SANCTUARY  
WERE ATTENDED BY 80 PEOPLE**

**SHIRLEY BROWN CELEBRATED  
HER 97th BIRTHDAY  
(here with Joanne Brown)**

**PALM SUNDAY SERVICES WERE  
CANCELLED ON ACCOUNT OF  
“LIMB SATURDAY”**





































