

# THE TIMES NEWSLETTER

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

*MAY 2021*



## MINISTER'S CORNER

Dear Friends:

The Ministry of Worship and Spiritual Care and I are moving forward with plans to resume worship services in our church sanctuary beginning on Sunday, May 9th. Everyone is anxious to have in person worship again, but I can't stress enough that we will do it differently for a while. In last month's newsletter I shared the guidelines we will be following so that everyone who attends will be as safe as possible, but I thought I would do so again this month (they have been slightly modified).

Attendance will be limited to 30-35 people. The number will depend on how many families come who are able to sit close together in the same pew.

Attendance will be by reservation only. People will need to call the church office at 883-2342 from Monday through Thursday and leave a message if no one is there, or on Friday morning. Requests to attend worship that come after Elaine, our church secretary, leaves on Friday afternoon will have to be declined to help keep things simple and organized. People who show up on Sunday morning without having first called the office to reserve a seat in the sanctuary will, regretfully, have to be turned away.

We will be taking contact information from those who make a reservation (unless we already have that information on file) so that we can notify attendees if someone who was COVID positive attended the service.

Temperatures will be taken at the door with a forehead thermometer before people are admitted into the church building. Everyone will be encouraged to use hand sanitizer when entering and exiting the church.

Wearing masks will be required. No mask, no entry.

Social distancing practices will need to be followed by everyone as they enter the church, sit in church and exit the church. Pews will be marked to allow for distancing and separation.

People will enter and exit the church building by the front door only, in an orderly and socially distanced way. Entering through the back door (near the organ) will be prohibited to insure our organist's wellbeing.

The rest room will be available, but people will be asked to use it only if it is absolutely necessary because it will need to be cleaned after each use.

There will be no Neighboring for the time being.

There will not be a choir. Bethany and Wendy (and hopefully some special musicians or soloists) will provide music. The congregation may sing hymns but will need to wear masks and sing softly.

There will not be Bibles in the pews, but people are welcome to bring their own Bibles if they wish.

For those aren't able to make a reservation or who have been worshipping on Zoom and want that to continue, we are going to try to live-stream the sanctuary worship service so they can view it at home. They will not be able to interact and chat with one another the way they could during past Zoom worship services, but they will be able to "attend" the worship service virtually.

If you have any questions about these guidelines, feel free to contact the church office.

## JUST FOR LAUGHS- KIDS' LETTERS TO GOD

Dear God,  
Please put another holiday between Christmas and Easter. There is nothing good in there now. –  
Ginny

Dear God,  
I want to be just like my Daddy when I get big, but not with so much hair all over.  
—Sam

Dear God,  
Are you a ninja? Is that why I can't see you? —Jacob

Dear God,  
I think the stapler is one of your greatest inventions. —Ruth M.

Dear God,  
Please change the taste of asparagus. It's gross. Thanks. —Sarah

Dear God,  
You don't have to worry about me. I always look both ways. —Dean

Dear God,  
Would you make me a little brother? I want somebody to boss around! Amen.

Dear God,  
Instead of letting people die and having to make new ones why don't you just keep the ones you got now? —Jane

Dear God,  
I do not think anybody could be a better God. Well I just want you to know but I am not saying that because you are God. —Charles

Dear God,  
I am American. What are you? —Robert

Dear God,  
If you watch in church on Sunday I will show you my new shoes. —Mickey D.

Dear God,  
If you let the dinosaur not go extinct we would not have a country. You did the right thing. —  
Jonathan

Dear God,  
Mommy says all babies cry, but I don't think baby Jesus did. You must know the answer, so please write back. We have a bet. —Angelina

Dear God,  
Did you mean for the giraffe to look like that or was it an accident? —Norma

## STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

This story reveals the reason why Christians should give of themselves and their financial resources to help others.

The man lay in a dark alley, moaning and near death from the savage beating he had just suffered. The thugs who had attacked him for his money were gone. As he felt himself losing consciousness, he saw in the amber glow of a towering streetlight the head of a man gazing down at him. It looked to him like a halo.

He awoke in the hospital. The nurse told him that the man who brought him in wanted to visit and see how he was doing. When the rescuer entered his room, the attack victim said, "I want to thank you for helping me."

"I was glad to do it," came the reply.

"You know, it's funny. When you came to help me, I looked up at you in the dim light and I thought you were Jesus."

"You know," replied the visitor, "when I found you laying there in that alley, I thought you were Jesus."

## TIME OUT FOR PRAYER

My God, I abandon myself to you. Do with me as you will. Whatever you may do with me, I thank you. I am prepared for anything. I accept everything. Doing your will in me, I ask for nothing more. I place my soul in your hands. I give it to you, my God, with all the love of my heart, because I love you. And for me it is a necessity of love, this gift of myself, this placing of myself in your hands without hesitation, in boundless confidence because you are my God.

--Charles de Foucauld, 1858-1916 (adapted)

## SOME LAUGHS TO CELEBRATE MOTHER'S DAY

Quote from a young mother: "The joy of motherhood is what a woman experiences when all the children are finally in bed."

A mother talking to an old college friend said, "Remember, before I was married, I told you that I had three theories about raising children? Well, now I have three children, and no theories."

A drill sergeant was frustrated in his efforts to make a soldier out of a certain recruit. The trainee lagged behind on all the marches. He used any excuse he could think of to go on sick call, grumbled constantly about the food, and never made his bunk properly. But one day, a noticeable change for the better took place in the young man's attitude. When asked what had happened to improve the soldier's attitude, the drill sergeant explained, "Threats and punishment didn't work, so I had to resort to the ultimate weapon: I called his mother."

## **ANNUAL MEETING ON MAY 2**

The Annual Meeting will be conducted by ZOOM starting at 11:00 on May 2nd. Everyone was mailed an Annual Report, along with instructions for participating in the meeting remotely, and a Proxy if you are unable to attend. Please call the church office this week no later than April 30th, should you have any questions about the meeting, the Annual Report or to submit a Proxy.

## **WOMENS FELLOWSHIP WILL MEET ON MAY 7**

The Women's Fellowship will meet at 3:00 on May 7 at the Parish Hall. If the weather permits we will meet outside. In addition to socializing and catching up with each other, we will elect officers, vote on the yearly pledge to the Church, discuss the Yard Sale scheduled for June 19, and share ideas about the Holiday Fair. Hope to see you there.

## **IN-CHURCH SERVICES RESUME MAY 9**

There is a limit of 35 people for our in-church service on May 9. Currently there are 19 people signed up to attend, and another 5 consisting of the minister, music director and 3 ushers. Please contact the office as soon as possible to "reserve your pew" if you wish to attend.

## **APRIL SHOWERS BRING MAY FLOWERS**

With services resuming in the Church, the Flower Committee will arrange for flowers on the altar. If you wish to pay for flowers one Sunday, or if you wish to supply a floral arrangement from your own garden, please contact Kate Sawdon or Elaine in the office to sign up. Thank you.

## **SPRING CLEANUP ON JUNE 5**

The Ministry of Governing and Finance has scheduled a spring cleanup around the Church buildings for the morning of June 5th, from 8:30 AM til Noon. They are a hard working group but could really use some assistance from the rest of the congregation. Please join us if you are able.

## **YARD SALE SCHEDULED FOR SATURDAY, JUNE 19**

We have the green light to hold a Yard Sale inside the Parish Hall, as in years past, on June 19th. Details are being ironed out, but it will probably be conducted between 9:00 AM and 1:00 AM. We will start accepting donations on Friday, June 11th. If you wish to volunteer to sort and arrange in advance of the Sale, or work on the day of the Sale, or to drop off donations, please contact Elaine at the Church Office. As in the past we are accepting household goods, sporting goods, office supplies, craft materials, decorative items, tools and garden items, and small furniture. If you donate clothes, please be "discriminating"...we don't want to end up with a lot of unsold items that then go off to Goodwill. We hope this is not just a Fundraiser but a chance for us to work together and visit with friends and neighbors who drop in.

## **UPDATED BYLAWS AND MEMBER DIRECTORY AVAILABLE**

Copies of the Current By-laws (as revised last year) and the Directory of members and friends with mailing addresses and e-mail addresses are available in the Church office and will be placed in the Narthex starting May 9.

### **A MESSAGE FROM THE COUNTERS:**

We are exceedingly grateful for your continuing support of the Church and Food Pantry during the pandemic. From time to time we receive checks made out to the UCC, when the correct designation is the FCC. Other donors include a donation to the Church and the Food Pantry on the same check, which causes headaches for our counters and treasurer. If you are one of these donors, please send us separate checks made out to the FCC or the Food Pantry. Thank you.

### **NEED A LIFT?**

Our church still has a “ride ministry” to connect drivers to members and friends who are unable to get out to the grocery store or to medical / vaccine appointments, If you need a ride, please contact Elaine Sederlund, our Administrative Assistant, at the Church Office: 883-2342 for more information or scheduling.

### **CHURCH CONTACTS:**

TELEPHONE Office 883-2342

Pastor 510-1328

EMAIL Office [fcchurch@fccscarborough.com](mailto:fcchurch@fccscarborough.com)

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