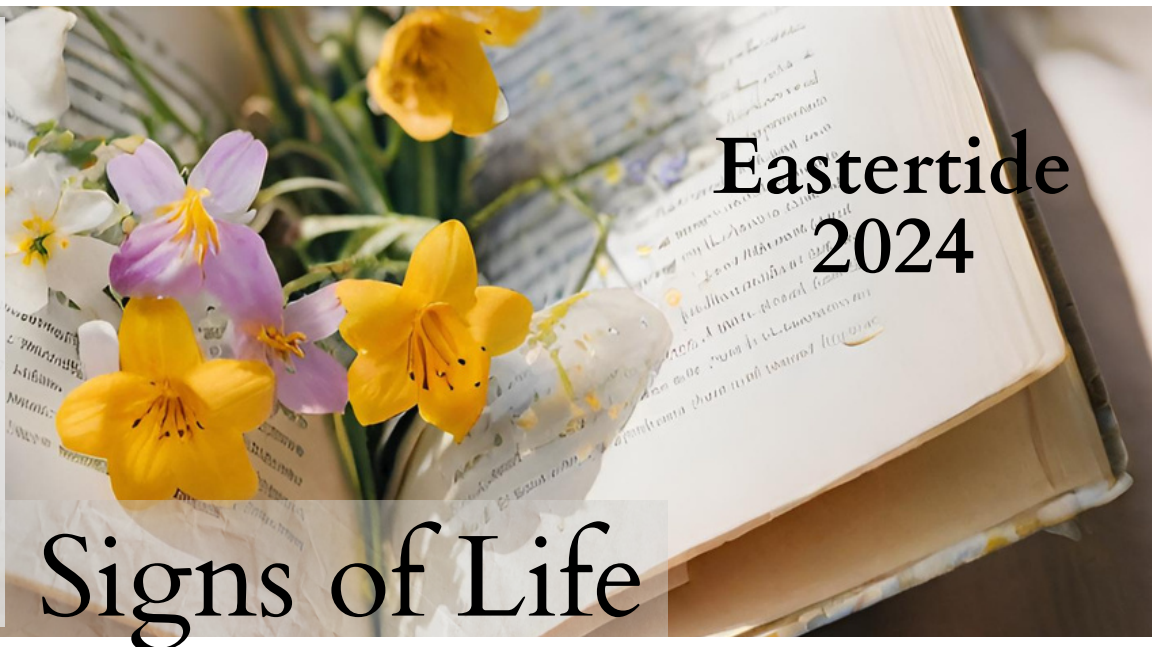




THE CONGREGATOR

IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 - Pastor Amelia
- 2 - Eastertide
- 3 - Council Corner
- 5 - Community Life
- 6 - Ministry of Music
- 7 - Ministry of Missions
- 9- Christian Education
- 10 - Church Family News
- 11 - Calendar



Eastertide 2024

Signs of Life

Dear Falmouth UCC,

The ground is covered in snow, and most of the town is out of power-- it is hard to believe that summer is right around the corner. And yet, the signs are all around us: the birds are setting up nests, the squirrels are spending less time in their dens and more in the trees, Under the ice, the stream behind our house is burbling-- somewhere, snow is melting.

Our Scripture journey this month takes us into Isaiah and begins our time with the prophets (we circle back to Chronicles and the wisdom literature later). The Prophets saw and predicted terrible things and yet, they never stopped lifting up signs of life. Streams in the desert, shoots of new growth from old stumps, new breath and life for tired bones.

It is easy to see the the doom and gloom, mistakes and frustrations. Our work is to look for the places where hope is breaking in, and new things are happening-- that is the work we are called to be part of. This Eastertide we will lift up signs of life, from the Bible and from our own stories. The are all around us, if we can just remember to look!

*In Christ,
Pastor Amelia*

Eastertide 2024

Signs of life

Small Group: Telling our story

Our lives are part of the story of God, and we each have a story to tell about how God has impacted us.

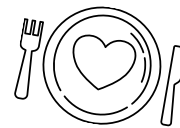
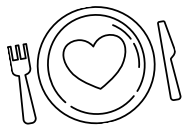
You are invited to a four session small group in April/ May to tell, draft, and eventually preach a story about how your life has been impacted by God.

Classes will be held mid April to early May and will be determined by interest.

The first three preaching dates will be June 30, July 28, & August 25.

COUNCIL

Corner



Dine Around Dinners Earn Four Stars!

Folks had great fun, fabulous food, and good conversations at the recent Dine Around Dinners. Sitting around a dinner table, they laughed over each other's stories and got to know each other in new ways. Guests and hosts also discussed two questions posed by the Council of Ministries. These responses will inform the Council as it looks at the life of our church in the coming years.

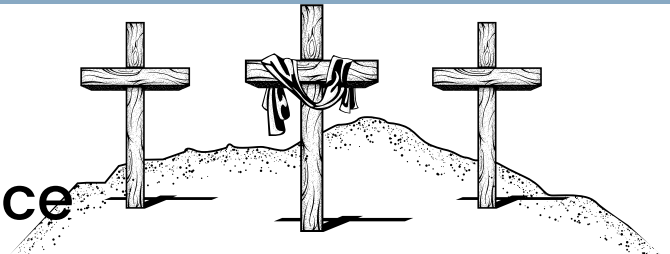
In summary:

13 people hosted 7 dinners for 55 people over 5 weeks in March. Special thanks to all the hosts who contributed their hospitality to these memorable events.



COUNCIL
Corner

Sacrifice



Sacrifice occurs when an individual acts without self interest for the sake of higher values and commitments. We have been reading in the book of Leviticus about different types of sacrifices the Israelites performed. Burnt offerings, grain offerings, peace offerings, and sin offerings all used to atone for various transgressions against God. Yet most of us don't think about sacrifice in these terms. We are more likely to think of sacrifice in terms of our time, labor and treasure. We link sacrifice with love. We sacrifice for people and values that we love. Jesus loves us so deeply that Jesus sacrificed life for us. Yes, Jesus sacrificed life for us because of the deep love Jesus felt for us. As you let that sink in, you can see how this deep love, this unconditional love, provides us with unremitting forgiveness. We are so blessed. Most of you sacrifice your time, labor and treasury on behalf of our church because you love God and the people that worship at Falmouth Congregational Church. Your sacrifice brings our church community closer to each other and deepens our relationship with God. And speaking for the church as a whole, we are forever thankful for the sacrifices and the love that you give to the Falmouth Congregational Church.

We have faith, we have community and most of all we have the gift of enduring love Christ gives us. What joy we experience with Jesus and all of you in our lives!

What is the Council Doing Now?

At our March Council meeting we discussed these items:

1) We discussed different ways of providing transportation for those who need a ride to Sunday services and for the transportation needs of our growing youth group. In the past the church owned a small bus that volunteer church members drove each Sunday to transport a few congregants to Sunday service. The bus was also used for the occasional church outing. During Covid the bus sat idle and the decision was made to sell the bus and put the proceeds back into the bus fund which was generously donated to the church years ago. Moving forward, the council has decided to set up a formal church driving program that matches congregants who need a ride to church with those willing to drive a congregant to church. Thankfully, we currently have several congregants already giving rides to church. Formalizing the ride program will provide additional insurance coverage for the drivers. Stay tuned for announcements about this program. The council approved the use of the interest generated by the bus fund to cover the cost of rental vans for youth group and church outings. In summary, the ride share program utilizes personal vehicles that ergonomically work better for older congregants. And rental vans will be used for youth group outings eliminating the cost of purchasing a bus, maintenance and insurance. The rental fees will be paid for by the interest generated by the bus fund.

2) The lower level renovation project was discussed and we specifically looked at ways to reduce the current projected cost submitted by Wright Ryan builders. Committee members Rodney Coleman and Jud Cleveland suggested the church get estimates from individual contractors for the various aspects of the project. Jud Cleveland has gratefully offered to reach out to builders and contractors he has worked with to get estimates. Within a few weeks we should have these figures and be able to determine the scope of what is achievable with the generously donated funds we have for this renovation.

3) We discussed and approved the purchase of a new computer to replace one of the aging church office computers.

4) The new sound system for the sanctuary that was announced last month will be installed in April. The new system replaces our aging 25 year old system. It will significantly improve functionality, adds additional microphones, reduces the amount of wires on the floor, repairs the monitor speaker for the choir (so they can hear their singing and the sermon), and repairs the speakers in Fellowship Hall . We are assured there will be no disruption of our Sunday services as the new system is installed.

5) The council was informed of necessary repair work on our fire sprinkler system. This work will take place this spring. It is an expensive repair that should last about one to two weeks. This repair is necessary to keep our system functional and to achieve code approval necessary for our child care renters.

Stay tuned, our next council meeting is Sunday, April 14.

Thanks for all you do. Tom Stegemann, moderator

MINISTRY OF *Community Life*

Men's retreat to Flagstaff Hut March 16- 17th



Talk to Jeff Davis about getting in on the fun next year!



MINISTRY OF
Community Life

Women's Spiritual Book Group

The Women's Spiritual Book Group's next meeting is on Wednesday, April 3 at noon. April's discussion will be on "Don't Just Do Something, Sit There: A Mindfulness Retreat with Sylvia Boorstein."

Participants may meet in the Grant Room or attend by Zoom. Let the office know if you need a zoom link. Don't Just Do Something, Sit There was recommended by Eunice Wilcox as a short read on a topic we have been discussing. This book is available in paperback, on Kindle and at the library. All are welcome to join this lively group. Bring your lunch and get ready for great conversation and a few laughs! Questions? Contact Judy Crosby.



Easter Cards



On March 17, children ages 7-13 enjoyed making Easter cards for our homebound folks. Also, Judy Nilsen's beautiful prayer squares were donated and chosen by each child to place with each of their cards to be placed in Easter bags including mini-daffodils, and other cards! These are delivered before Easter with the hope of bringing joy and love!

YOUR POCKET PRAYER SHAWL

*As you hold your Pocket Prayer Shawl
You hold the Hand of God
May you feel His loving and comforting touch.
The cross in the middle connects you
To Jesus and His blessings.
Know that He is always with you.*



MINISTRY OF
Music

Do you know this long-time
Choir member?
Meet Marilee Beinema:



I was born in Island Falls, Maine and moved to Falmouth when I was 5 years old as my father had taken a job as the minister at the Falmouth Congregational Church. My family lived in the parsonage and I had two younger sisters. We grew up playing in the woods surrounding the church, and knew every nook and cranny of the parsonage, church and parish house.

I have had a career as an insurance agent and raised two beautiful daughters who also attended FCC with me from infancy. They attended hundreds of Sunday morning choir rehearsals, as I have been singing in the choir for 44 years and always brought them along with me.

For the last fifteen years or so I have also been singing with ChoralArt and performing with the PSO in the Merrill Auditorium. I jumped at the opportunity in 2019 and 2021 to go on two European Tours with ChoralArt. We performed in Estonia, Finland, St Petersburg, Belgium, and The Netherlands. Those tours were just life changing for me, to be able to perform in massive 17th century cathedrals in Europe, and see cities I had only read about before.

I love to spend time in South Freeport in my camper on the ocean in the summer, go forest bathing in the woods, feed and watch birds, cuddle goats, and be outside as much as I can. Maine is where my heart is!



Cuddling the Stephens' baby, Forrest, at Choir potluck

Easter Sunday
Guest Musicians:

Wendy & Ted Hagarty
on Trumpet & Clarinet
Music Starts at 9:50 AM



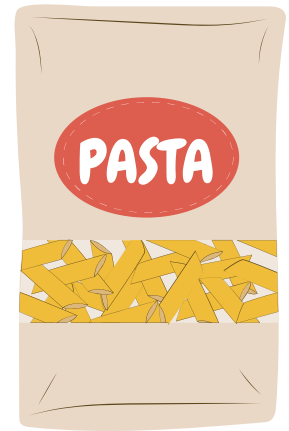
MINISTRY OF
missions



Why did the pasta call up
her friend?
**SHE WAS FEELING
CANNELONI.**

Why did the man get fired
from the pasta factory?
**HE MADE A FUSILLI
MISTAKES.**

What do you think about pasta jokes?
**(I'LL GIVE YOU A PENNE FOR
YOUR THOUGHTS.)**



PASTA than a speeding bullet, our church is continuing to collect different kinds of pasta during the months of April, May, and June. The PASTABILITIES are endless!

If you would like, please put boxes of pasta into the collection bin in Fellowship Hall, and the pasta will be given to very grateful Food Pantry families. Our congregation is PASTA-TIVELY amazing, so let's try it!

The Falmouth Food Pantry continues to do an entirely doorstep delivery distribution system. Volunteers still deliver boxes of non-perishable food, fresh vegetables, eggs, and meat to families who need food assistance. If you have questions or know someone with an urgent need, please contact Nancy Lightbody. Thank you for your continuing support!

Pastor's Discretionary Fund

The church keeps a confidential community fund for people experiencing financial emergencies. Over the past year we have used it to do things like:

- Put new tires on the car of a mom escaping domestic violence
- Pay the cell phone bill for a family that had a medical emergency & was facing shut off
- Pay multiple heating and electric bills for families facing shut off
- Put families or singles up in a hotel room for a few nights until they could be placed in a shelter
- Put gas in a families RV so they could make it out of state to get help
- Buy food cards and bus passes for people in acute need

If someone you know has an emergency financial need please contact the church office. To donate please speak with Paul Davis.

Loaves of Love



Church volunteers continue to bake loaves of bread once a month to serve at Communion and also as a thank-you to anyone who donates to current 5-for-5 UCC missions, which in April 2024 is One Great Hour of Sharing.

Loaves of Love is a community effort. Even if you have no baking experience, please consider donating four hours of your time baking HONEY OATMEAL BREAD on Saturday, April 6!

The next Saturday after that when we will need bakers is May 4. Please contact Alyce Graves if you would like to join in the fun!

MINISTRY OF

missions

One Great Hour of Sharing Offering

This important offering from our church is one of the “5 for 5” missions of the National United Church of Christ. OGHS supports international programs of health, education, agricultural development, relief, and refugee assistance in more than 80 countries (including Ukraine).

There is still time to make a contribution to this far-reaching ministry of the UCC by donating a check to “Falmouth Congregational Church” (267 Falmouth Road, Falmouth, ME 04105) with “One Great Hour of Sharing” mentioned in the memo line.

Maine Needs

THANK YOU from MAINE NEEDS!

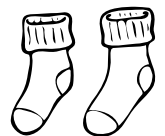
This winter, FCC has donated many coats and snow pants to Maine Needs. They have all been very much appreciated and needed! Thank you very much!

Cleaning Kits are in big demand! During April we will continue to collect cleaning kits. These can be put together by youth groups, neighborhoods, families, or individuals.

These may be put into the Missions Bin and will be delivered to Maine Needs.



Please donate white cotton socks to the Missions Bin in Fellowship Hall.



Women in Harmony is a vibrant feminist chorus of approximately 60 members working together for unity among women. The group is dedicated both to musical excellence and social justice. They will be performing two concerts in our sanctuary on Friday, May 30 and Saturday, June 1. Tickets will be available on their website next month: wihmaine.org.

FALMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

EASTER EGG HUNT

SATURDAY MARCH 30
11AM-1PM
Bring your own basket!

REGISTER TODAY!



MINISTRY OF *Christian Education*

This March, there has been so much happening in the life of Kids' Church! Our Kids' Chorus is back in action, learning so many great songs to sing in worship, our families gathered in one another's homes for a round of dine-around meals, we made Easter cards to send to our beloved church friends, and we are getting ready for the annual egg hunt! Easter is just around the corner, and we are bursting with excitement for the incoming season of spring.

This April, we will transition into a two-classroom model in Kids' Church, with loving volunteers to guide our programming. There is so much in store for Falmouth UCC Kids' Church!

Coming up this weekend,

the annual Falmouth UCC Egg Hunt is ON!

Join us from 11AM-1PM for all the egg-citing fun!



Our youth group slept overnight at the church this month for our Lock-In event! Mario Kart games were played, rounds of Sardines were won, and giggles were heard all through the night!



Lydia Hoffman



Minister of Children and Families

lydia@falmouthcongregationalchurch.org

CHURCH

family news

- Joan Jensen who is mourning her son Michael, who died after a long hospital stay after suffering a stroke. Please send cards of love and encouragement to her new address at Ocean View Falmouth House: 3 Marion Way Apt. #233 Falmouth, ME
- Tom Stegemann as he supports his friend, Tim who has multiple cancers and his friend, Bruce, who is struggling with parkinsons.
- Chaz Roth as he supports his cousin Dena.
- The Howison family as Mark's father battles Parkinson's disease.
- The Genese family as they grieve the loss of a family member.
- Bill Nugent as he goes into radiation this week.
- Anne Gribbon and her husband as he recovers from COVID in a rehab facility and prepares to move home soon. Anne prays especially that he might have both recovery and compliance with his care taking team.
- Joan Russell as she prays for her son, Brian, who is experiencing long COVID and is in need of diagnostic clarity and a treatment plan for medical concerns.

We Lift in Prayer...



- Tomas, Elba Parr's brother in law, who has advanced lung cancer.
- Ken, Anne Gribbon's friend, who is battling brain cancer.
- Jane Stegemann's sister, Marcia, for her health and well being.
- Stephen, Andrew and all those serving our country in the Middle East.
- Junior Bridges as she continues to recover from a broken wrist.
- Daric Collins Sr, Dana Collins' brother as he recovers from a stroke and continues to get tests done to find the cause.
- Kathy Whitmore's sister, Corinne, who is in cancer treatment
- Janie Anderson, who continues to receive love and care from her husband, Larry; Cards: 44714 Audubon Square Apt. 105 Ashburn, VA 20147
- Randy Boardway's father, Paul, who is fighting liver cancer.
- Sally Emery who is joyful about her new rescue dog, Kojo! Prayers and cards of encouragement: P.O. Box 102, Gray, ME 04039

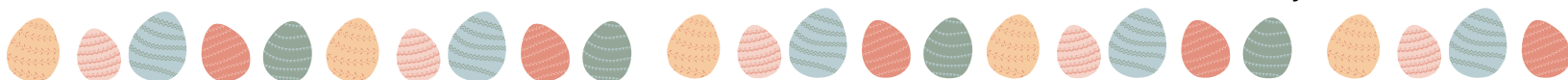
Ushers

- 7 - Karin Kurry & Jim Parr
- 14 - Joel Pond, Kathie & Chan Sinnett
- 21 -
- 28 -

Liturgists

- 7 - Kids' Church
- 14 - Alyce Graves
- 21 - Virginia Eddy
- 28 - Mark Horton

Dear Church Family,
 Ken and I are so deeply grateful for the way you lifted us up in prayer these last few months. As we navigated my parents end-of-life journeys, those prayers and your thoughtful emails and cards seemed to come at just the right time. Each reminded us what a gift it is to be part of such a caring community and that, through you, God was close at hand and always at work. We look forward to joining you back in the pews and thank you from the bottom of our hearts. Cathy Bowden



April 2024 Calendar

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
9-9:30 AM Choir Warmup 9:30 AM Prayer & Tech Check 10 AM Intergen. Worship In-person or Online 11:15 AM Kids Chorus 7 PM Troop 93 Com. Mtg.	Office Closed 12 PM Bible Study 2:45 PM Music Lessons	11 AM Staff Mtg. 6 PM Family Restored	12 PM Women's Spiritual Book Group 2:30 PM Forever Growing Club 6:00 PM Bell Choir 6:45 PM Private Group 7 PM Choir Rehearsal	6 PM Troop 93 Mtg. 6:30 PM Ministry of Missions	9 AM Hiking Club - Two Lights State Park, Cape Elizabeth	Loaves of Love Baking
7 9-9:30 AM Choir Warmup 9:30 AM Prayer & Tech Check 10 AM Intergen. Worship In-person or Online 11:15 AM Kids Chorus 7 PM Troop 93 Com. Mtg.	12 PM Bible Study 2:45 PM Music Lessons 5:30 PM Worship & Covenant 7 PM Fiddle-icious 7 PM Cub Scout Com.	10 AM Bible Study @ Oceanview 11 AM Staff Mtg. 6 PM Family Restored	11:30 AM Forever Growing Club 6 PM Bell Choir 6:45 PM Private Group 7 PM Choir Rehearsal	6 PM Troop 93 7 PM Finance Committee meeting	9 AM Hiking Club - Higgins Beach, Scarborough	13
14 9-9:30 AM Choir Warmup 9:30 AM Prayer & Tech Check 10 AM Worship 11:15 AM Kids Chorus 11:30 AM Council of Ministries	Congregator Deadline 12 PM Bible Study 2:45 PM Music Lessons 7 PM Fiddle-icious Spain	11 AM Staff Mtg. 6 PM Family Restored	6 PM Bell Choir 6:45 PM Private Group 7 PM Choir Rehearsal	6 PM Troop 93 6:30 PM Falmouth Writer's Group	9 AM Hiking Club - Eastern Trail, Scarborough	20
21 9-9:30 AM Choir Warmup 9:30 AM Prayer & Tech Check 10 AM Worship 11:15 AM Toddler Song Circle 11:15 AM Kids Chorus 11:15 AM Men's Group 3:30 PM Youth Group	12 PM Bible Study 2:45 PM Music Lessons 7 PM Fiddle-icious	11 AM Staff Mtg. 6 PM Family Restored 6:30 PM Cub Scout Mtg.	2:30 PM Forever Growing Club 6 PM Bell Choir 6:45 PM Private Group 7 PM Choir Rehearsal	6 PM Troop 93	9 AM Hiking Club - Crescent Beach State Park	27
28 9-9:30 AM Choir Warmup 9:30 AM Prayer & Tech Check 10 AM Worship In-person or Online 11:15 AM Kids Chorus	12 PM Bible Study 2:45 PM Music Lessons	11 AM Staff Mtg. 6 PM Family Restored	12 PM Women's Spiritual Book Group 6 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal 6:45 PM Private Group 7 PM Choir Rehearsal	6 PM Troop 93 Mtg. 6:30 PM Ministry of Missions	9 AM Hiking Club - Cascade Falls Trail, Saco	MAY 4 Loaves of Love Baking

April Birthdays

Dave Althaus
 Randy Boardway
 Lynne Downing
 David Horne
 Eva Howison
 Katie Howison
 Jeff Howland
 Ivy Lotfey
 Alan Mathieu
 Kristen Tripp
 Jude Wiley



Falmouth Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
267 Falmouth Road
Falmouth, ME 04105
Phone: 207-781-3413
Email: officemanager@falmouthcongregationalchurch.org
Website: www.falmouthcongregationalchurch.org

Falmouth Congregational Church United Church of Christ

Ministries

Tom Stegemann
Chair, Council of Ministries

Kristen Tripp
Chair, Ministry of Christian
Education

Jane Stegemann &
Kathleen Henderson
Ministry of Community Life

Laurie Davis, Virginia Eddy
& Karin Kurry
Ministry of Worship &
Covenant

Church Staff

Rev. Amelia Edson, Settled Pastor
Jan Stover, Minister of Music
Lydia Hoffman, Minister of Children and Families
Katharina Roderick, Office Manager &
Newsletter Editor
Laurie Logan, Office Assistant
Jane Stegemann, Minister of Visitation
Tonne Writer, Nursery Caregiver
Jack Gervais, Tech Assistant

Officers

Tom Stegemann, Moderator
Steve Hendry, Vice Moderator
TBD, Clerk
Paul Davis, Treasurer
Gini Medford, Financial Secretary