



THE CONGREGATOR

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Over the generations people have envisioned the coming of the Christ's child in a variety of settings, cultures, and time periods. Seeing these depictions inspired Judy Crosby to paint a Portland nativity scene. The current encampments and housing crisis reminded her of Mary and Joseph being turned away from the inn, so she painted a vision of the Holy Family as seen looking up Congress Street. She modeled the people from folks she saw in our community-- refugees in Portland as the Magi, a homeless veteran as a Shepherd, a middle Eastern woman in her pottery class as Mary. The baby Jesus is modeled from baby pictures of her own grandson, Brendan.

Looking at this photo reminds us that, just as in the Bible story, we have much work to do to get ready for Jesus. We will spend Advent making room; in our hearts, minds, homes, and world. From buying gifts for people in need through the Angel Tree, bringing Christmas cheer to our elderly neighbors on the caroling bus, preparing for the Christmas pageant to working through this years Make Room devotional, we will spend these 22 days preparing to greet the miracle of Christmas: Jesus, adventing in our world once again!

In Christ, Pastor Amelia

Christmas at Falmouth UCC

CHRISTMAS CAROLING

Sunday, December 10 ~ 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

MAGIC OF CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Saturday, December 16 ~ 2:00 PM

Please Sign Up in Advance

LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE

Thursday, December 21 ~ 6:00 PM

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT SERVICE

Sunday, December 24 ~ 4:30 PM

LESSONS & CAROLS

Sunday, December 24 ~ 7:00 PM

ADVENT PLAYLIST

On Spotify- Search Advent Falmouth UCC 2023

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL

Pick up a Make Room devotional in Fellowship Hall!

ANGEL TREE GIFTS DUE

Sunday, December 10



Stewardship Update



Last Sunday we finished exploring “Our Money Story” for the church’s 2024 Stewardship Campaign. We would like to thank the following people who participated, either by writing about their story in the weekly newsletter, or in front of the congregation on the four Sundays in November: Kaye and Jim Smith, John and Eunice Wilcox, and Craig Page for telling their story in the weekly newsletter; and Mark Howison, Ann Sanborn, Larry Perry, Paul Davis, Alicia Johnson, and Jim Scherer who told their stories during worship on Sunday mornings.

The money story was also explored in the sermons by Pastor Amelia and in Kids’ Church by our Minister of Children and Families, Lydia Hoffman.

Pledges are important to our church and the ministries we support. This year we have a goal of \$250,000 which is an 8% increase over the 2023 total. As of last Sunday, the church has received 45 pledges for a total of \$174,292 or 70% of our goal.

We know that some of you have not sent in your pledge yet. If you have misplaced your pledge card that came in the mail, please call the office and Kat will send out another one. There also are cards just outside the sanctuary doors on the table to the left as you enter.

Another option is to send an email pledge to Gini Medford, the church’s financial secretary, who keeps the records of all the pledges:

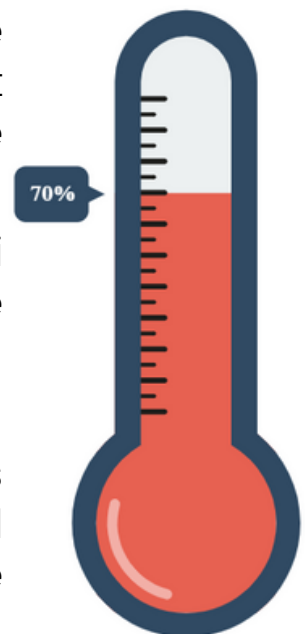
financial.secretary@falmouthcongregationalchurch.org.

As we prepare for the Advent season, let us give thanks for all the blessings we share with our church family and for all the ministries supported by the church with the help of your pledge.

Blessings,

Stewardship Committee

GOAL: \$250,000



Hi – I hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving and enjoyed some time with family and friends.

I am happy to share that we had a very successful Holly Days Fair. We grossed almost \$17,000 which is \$1,000 over what we budgeted. For the first time that I can remember in recent years, we sold out of Lobster Stew on the day of the fair. We usually have some extra to sell the next day but not this year and that is even after Paul made more than last year. A special thank you to Steve Hendry and Jess Collins for co-chairing the event. And thank you to everyone who helped make it a success! I am already looking forward to next year's fair!

The Council will have two more meetings before our Annual Meeting in January. We'll be focused on the 2024 budget as well as considering different options to backfill the sexton position. I will be stepping down as Moderator in January after serving two consecutive two-year terms. I will also be stepping off Council as I am termed out. Several other Council members are stepping off too. This creates a great opportunity for some new people to join the Council. Please contact me or Tom Stegemann if you are interested. You do need to be a member of the Church to serve on the Council.

Thank you to everyone who has already submitted your stewardship pledge. If you haven't turned in your pledge card yet, please do so as soon as possible. It is so helpful for our budgeting purposes to have those pledge cards.

One last thing. Tom and I will collect for the end of year staff bonus over the next couple of weeks. Our staff works behind the scenes in so many different capacities. It is nice to be able to award them a special gift at the end of the year. If you'd like to contribute, please see Tom or me.

Many blessings,
Kim Hendry, Moderator



Falmouth Congregational Church is going...

CHRISTMAS CAROLING!

Sunday
December
10



Meet at FCC
at 12:45pm
to 3:15pm

All ages and abilities welcome!

Transport provided. Festive costumes encouraged!

MINISTRY OF

Music



Learn more about one our our music team members, John Wilcox

Music has been a big part of my life. Piano lessons age 7-10, youth choirs age 10-16, school chorus grades 8-12, organ lessons age 16-17, Handel & Haydn Society in Boston for 10 years, church tenor soloist for 30 years. I am one of founders of Portland Choral Art Society and member from 1971 - 2023, and Falmouth UCC Choir director from 1972-1977 and I still sing in choir and play in handbell choir. Presently, I'm singing in four choral groups in Portland. I was an electrical engineer for all of my working life and have volunteered my electrical talents in various organizations, but music has been my great joy.



MINISTRY OF

Community Life



Christmas Cards



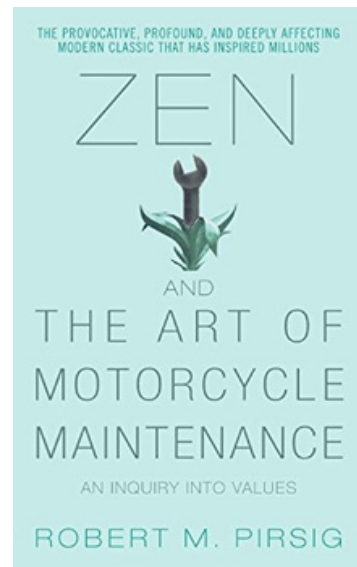
The Ministry of Community Life is grateful to provide a time of gathering together to write Christmas cards to those of our beloved who work as our wonderful staff, are more homebound, and/or experienced grief this past year. Come one, come all on Sunday, December 10 right after church to create Christmas joy by sharing God's love through sending cards. All supplies will be provided. Please RSVP to Jane Stegemann.



Women's Spiritual Book Group

The Women's Spiritual Book Group's next meeting is on December 6 at noon. December's discussion will be on Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance by Robert M. Pirsig. Participants can meet in the Grant Room or attend via Zoom. A narration of a summer motorcycle trip undertaken by a father and his son, Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance becomes a personal and philosophical odyssey into fundamental questions on how to live. The narrator's relationship with his son leads to a powerful self-reckoning; the craft of motorcycle maintenance leads to an austere beautiful process for reconciling science, religion, and humanism.

All are welcome to join this lively group. Bring your lunch and get ready for great conversation and a few laughs! Questions? Contact Kathie Sinnett.



MINISTRY OF

missions



Why did the GRANOLA BAR bring a map to the party?
IT WANTED TO FIND ITS WAY TO EVERYONE'S HEARTS

Why is my life like a Nature Valley GRANOLA BAR?
IT KEEPS CRUMBLING APART

Why is a GRANOLA BAR known to be the smartest kid in class?
BECAUSE IT IS ALWAYS RAISIN ITS HAND

Our church will be collecting GRANOLA BARS for the Food Pantry during November, December, January, and February. If you would like, please put boxes of GRANOLA BARS into the collection bin in Fellowship Hall, and they will be given to grateful Food Pantry families.

The Falmouth Food Pantry would not be able to do what it currently does without the support of so many members of our community throughout the year. The Food Pantry has been extremely grateful for donations of Falmouth-grown fresh produce and eggs, volunteers who pack boxes of food, volunteers who deliver the boxes to families who are not able to get out of their homes, and monetary gifts that help purchase supplies. In addition, the Food Pantry has been able to get food free or at drastically reduced prices from Good Shepherd Food Bank, Wayside Food Rescue, and Cultivating Community on the Gray Road in West Falmouth.

If you have questions or know someone with an urgent need, please contact Nancy Lightbody. Thank you VERY MUCH for your continuing support!

Maine Needs

DONATIONS TO MAINE NEEDS WILL BE GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED FOR:

Winter Coats * Winter Boots * Snow Pants



Please be sure that the items are clean. Items may be left in the Mission Bin that is inside Fellowship Hall and will be delivered to Maine Needs.

Love the Loaves?

On December 2 we will be baking a holiday brioche with dried cherries for communion and for all who wish to take a loaf home.

Two volunteers are needed and welcomed. No experience necessary!

The next Saturday we will be baking is January 6, 2024. Please contact Alyce Graves if you would like to join in the fun!



MINISTRY OF

missions (cont'd)

Special Offering

The Christmas Fund for Veterans of the Cross is a United Church of Christ annual offering that supports ministries to lower-income retired clergy and lay employees as well as to active clergy facing unforeseen financial crises. Retired pastors, church office assistants, or ministers of music continue to touch the lives of all of us.

Please consider contributing to this ministry of the UCC by sending a check to "Falmouth Congregational Church" with "Christmas Fund" mentioned in the memo line. This appeal runs during Advent, beginning on Sunday, December 3, through Sunday, December 24.

**Angel Tree Gifts
Due December 10**



Once again generous church members have said they wanted to bring smiles to many young faces on Christmas Day. This year our Angel Tree gifts will meet the needs of 19 children in families identified by the Falmouth Food Pantry.

We encourage all gifts to be returned to the church no later than Sunday, December 10. Please wrap and label each gift.

The recipients are deeply grateful, and each year the families are very appreciative of our congregation for the thoughtful and generous response to the children's needs and wishes at the holiday season. If you have any questions, please contact Nancy Lightbody. Thank you very much!

MINISTRY OF

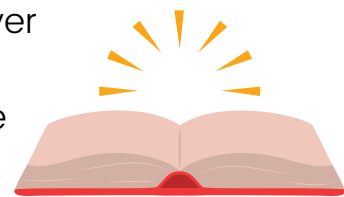
Worship & Covenant

Reading the WHOLE Bible in 2024

For 2024 we will be reading and preaching through the whole Bible-- cover to cover. Pick up a reading plan and/or download the Bible Project app. We will do our Guiding Star Words project in January while exploring the book of Genesis!

Making Room: Housing help

We will have a guest staying in the basement for December- say hi to Maha, an Asylum Seeker from Egypt who faced persecution in her home country. Maha will be helping us with coffee making and snow removal while she is here.



The Men's Beer Fellowship group will meet at Austin Street on Industrial Way at 3:30 PM on Sunday, December 3.

All are invited to join the Cumberland UCC Church at a card/ letter writing event for Gun Safety on December 6th at noon. For details please speak to Peggy Mcgehee Horton.

The Community Corner is a space where members of Falmouth UCC can invite their neighbors to events or let us know about their needs. These things are not officially endorsed by the church but are things that fellow parishioners want to share with their church community.



HOLLY DAYS FAIR

I remember when I was 5 years old, I would help my grandfather set up for the fair week and on the day of the fair we would go around and clean up the tables and put out new place settings so people could sit and enjoy their Lobster stew or Hot Dogs. It was always my favorite event of the year, and it still is!



The Holly Days Fair is our church's biggest fundraiser of the year and allows us to financially support the church so that we can continue to do God's work. This year we raised over \$17,000 which was even better than we did last year!! Nice job everyone!

Thank you to all who were involved, whether you ran a table, baked yummy goods, made handcrafts, donated items, helped make wreaths, volunteered to float, and help on the day of the fair, or came and joined in the festivities. As we all know, it takes a lot of work to pull this fair off and it was possible because of the special community we have here at FCC.

It was an honor to be able to co-chair the fair this year with Steve and watch our community come together to spread some holiday cheer. I look forward to continuing my role as co-chair next year with the wonderful Kim Hendry. Please feel free to reach out to us and provide any feedback on what we can do to make next year's fair even better.

Happy Holidays!

Jess (and Steve)



This old picture is of members of our church (Dana Collins, Charlie Grubb, and David Horne) gathering white elephant items after a Holly Days Fair and loading them on to a trailer to bring to the Lions Club over 20 years ago.



Lights, Camera, CHRISTMAS PAGEANT!

MINISTRY OF
*Christian
Education*



Our kiddos are hard at work preparing for our upcoming Christmas pageant! We hope you will attend our Christmas Eve Family service on the 24 at 4:30 PM.

All are welcome to be in the pageant! Come and rehearse with us in the next few weeks, or show up on the 24! Costumes are abundant, and there is always room for more in the stable.



YOUTH GROUP

This month, our YG friends jumped for JOY at Urban Air trampoline park.

Join us next month for Christmas Caroling on December 10 from 1-3 PM!



CLASSROOM VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

If you are interested in being a classroom volunteer during Kids' Church, please sign-up ASAP. We love our volunteers, and love having new faces!

email Lydia with questions or to sign-up!



Lydia Hoffman

Minister of Children and Families

lydia@falmouthcongregationalchurch.org



CHURCH

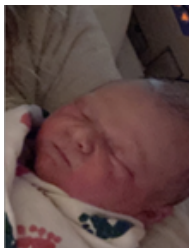
family news

- Forrest Stephens is at Maine medical re- gaining weight after an illness. Forrest will have a feeding tube until his surgery in Boston on December 20th to for VSD (a hole between the two heart ventricles). Prayers of support for Jenni, James, and big brother William: 24 Wildwood Drive Brunswick, ME 04011. If you can help the family financially here is Forrest's support page:

www.givesendgo.com/Forrestspreciousheart



- Ollie McNeil is doing well in his recovery- He's back to school a few hours a day! Please send card to Ollie & his parents, Devin and Erin: 158 Deepwood Drive Portland, ME 04103.
- Julia Poppell as we prepare to commemorate Jim Poppell's life on December 9th here at the church. Cards of support to Julia and family: 20 Blueberry Ln. L112 Falmouth, ME 04105
- LauriAnn Moran who has an aneurysm in her brain and will have a procedure this week: 81 Deepwood Dr Portland Maine 04103.
- Kathy Whitmore's sister, Corinne, who has received a cancer diagnosis.
- Barbara Eddy as she recovers from a health scare. Cards of support to Phoebe Horne, who is worried about her 179 Smith Rd. Windham, ME 04062
- Barbara Graustein and her family; grandson Weston Graustein was born November 13th in Seattle.



We Lift in Prayer...



- Joan Russel whose grandson (4 years) and adult son both had heart surgery last week. Cards of support: 207 Bluff Road Yarmouth, ME 04096
- Joan Jensen's son Michael who had a seizure after a series of strokes and is in hospice care at Maine Medical. Cards to Joan: Ashton Gardens 830 Ocean Ave. Apt. 217 Portland , ME 04103
- Cathy and Ken Bowden as Cathy continues to care for both of her parents in hospice care. Cards of love and perseverance: 9 Ashwood Lane Falmouth, ME 04105
- Jim Scherer and his sister as they support their dad in hospice. Cards to Jim: 77 Babbidge Road Falmouth, ME 04105
- Janie Anderson, who is receiving so much love and care from her husband, Larry, as she lives within hospice care. Cards: 44714 Audubon Square Apt. 105, Ashburn, VA 20147
- Randy Boardway's father, Paul, who is fighting liver cancer.
- Sally Emery who is cared for in her home. Prayers and cards of encouragement: P.O. Box 102, Gray, ME 04039.
- The people of Israel, the people of Palestine, and peace in our world.
- For the people of Lewiston, the families who lost their loved ones, for the people still recovering in critical care, and for us all.

Ushers

- 3 - Kim Hendry
- 10 - Karin Kurry
- 17 - Mark & Peggy Horton
- 24 -
- 31 -

Liturgists

- 3 - Grace Howison
- 10 - Nancy Lightbody
- 17 - Mark Horton
- 24 -
- 31 - Laurie Davis

December Birthdays

- Alan Doughty
- Diana Wescott
- Josephine Gibbons
- Caroline Riley
- Eunice Wilcox



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

Falmouth Congregational Church United Church of Christ

Ministries

Kim Hendry
Chair, Council of Ministries

Kristen Tripp
Chair, Ministry of Christian
Education

Jane Stegemann &
Kathleen Henderson
Ministry of Community Life

Steve Hendry
Chair, Ministry of Missions

Virginia Eddy & Laurie Davis
Ministry of Worship & Covenant

Church Staff

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

Officers

Kim Hendry, Moderator
Tom Stegemann, Vice Moderator
TBD, Clerk
Paul Davis, Treasurer
Gini Medford, Financial Secretary
Carol Kauffman MSN, RN, Faith Community Nurse