

THE CONGREGATOR

Celebrating the hope & joy of the Advent Season



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A Letter From The Pastor

BY THE REVEREND AMELIA EDSON

Dear Falmouth Congregational Church,

We have an unprecedented opportunity this year to practice the Advent virtues: to be hopeful, loving, peace seeking, and joyful while we wait for the world that we long for, and for the arrival of the Christ child and His reign.

We know much about this story. We know about waiting, and yearning, and maintaining our faith despite feelings of sadness and despair.

We can empathize with the Holy Family, as they navigate welcoming the baby Jesus in circumstances that were not of their own choosing, that were uncomfortable, that were different than they may have hoped. Mary had the baby Jesus in a barn. This year we may greet him on zoom, or with a mask on our face, or without all of our friends and family.

Regardless, Christ arrives. Regardless, hope appears.

Join us as we remember, and celebrate, and greet Him.

Please see our Advent and Christmas programming to see the many ways to gather, to learn, and to celebrate this season.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Amelia

COUNCIL

corner



BY KIM HENDRY

Hi Everyone – I want to provide a few updates from the Council. We had our November meeting on Sunday the 8th. At that meeting, we made the difficult decision to suspend Sunday in-person worship through at least the end of the year and maybe longer depending on the direction this pandemic takes. The decision was based on the Governor's updated mask mandate and the challenges that presents for the service participants, the difficulty of keeping windows open for increased ventilation with cold weather upon us, and the overall uptick in cases here in Maine. However, Pastor Amelia has come up with some great alternatives for modified in-person worship during Advent and there is a lot of information on those options in the weekly email and this Congregator.

We also discussed the financial challenges that are in front of us for 2021. With lower plate offerings and rental income expected for at least the first half of 2021, we are likely to see a significant drop in our total income. We hope to have a first pass of our budget by early December so we can see where we stand so please send in your stewardship pledge cards as soon as possible. This will help us get a better overall financial picture. We will share more details of this with you over the coming weeks.

The Fall Clean Up Day held on November 7th was a huge success. The group was able to do it safely and get the church grounds cleaned up and ready for winter. A huge thanks to the Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts for helping us with this effort! We couldn't do it without them!

We have three vacancies on the Council going in to 2021. Both Mark Horton and Carol Kaufman have termed out and we already had one vacancy so we now need three new Council members. If anyone is interested, please give me a call. I would love to talk about a role for you on the Council!! Our next meeting is on December 13th. You could join us and give it a trial run! We really are the coolest group in town!

I wish you all peace, happiness, and most of all, patience as we all continue to find our way through this challenging time. Stay healthy!

~ Kim Hendry, Moderator
shendry001@maine.rr.com
207-756-9343



Fall Clean Up 2020

Small Group Bible Study

MONDAYS AT 1 PM

Join other seekers for the lunch time zoom gathering. Each week we dive into the weekly Scripture readings using a variety of practices.

Please email Jane Stegemann to sign up: Jhsteg@gmail.com.





Angel Tree Gifts Due December 6th

Even during this terrible virus, generous church members have said that they still wanted to bring smiles to many young faces on Christmas Day.

Our Angel Tree gifts this year will meet the needs of 22 children identified by the Falmouth Food Pantry. Please choose your gift on the following website:

<https://bit.ly/2GRdKwr>

We encourage all gifts to be returned to the bins outside Fellowship Hall no later than Sunday, December 6. Please wrap and label each gift.

The families are very appreciative of our thoughtful and generous response to the children's needs and wishes at the holiday season. If you have any questions, please contact Nancy Lightbody at 781-4670. Thank you very much!

MINISTRY OF

Missions

Falmouth Food Pantry:

Thank you for your continuing strong support of the Falmouth Food Pantry! For the past several months, the Food Pantry distributed food to almost 90 families twice a month via a drive through pick-up service in front of the Food Pantry. Food Pantry volunteers also delivered boxed food to the doorsteps of dozens of families. With cold weather and winter storms approaching, the Food Pantry will move to an entirely doorstep delivery distribution system beginning in December. Boxes will be packed at the Pantry and delivered by volunteers to 145 families. The Pantry will continue to do its best to provide food to all area families. If you have questions or know someone with an urgent need, please call Nancy Lightbody at 781-4670. Thank you for your help.

KIDS' CHURCH FOOD DRIVE CONTINUES:

Please bring any of the following to the large labeled bin just outside the door to Fellowship Hall:

- Diced tomatoes (in cans)
- Tomato paste (in cans)
- Cold cereal
- Oatmeal (either Quick or Instant, with no sugar or other items added)
- Canned beans
- Pasta (any kind, in boxes)

Because there is very limited space inside the Food Pantry right now, please refrain from bringing any other items at this time. Thank you for your ongoing support of so many families in our community.

December Special Offering:



The Christmas Fund 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 making a contribution 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, November 29, through Sunday, December 20.



Family Promise

Greater Portland

BY NANCY LIGHTBODY

Since about mid-summer, all families that were guests of Family Promise have moved into apartments. Fifteen families are now getting graduate support, which could involve practicing English, receiving clothes and diapers, finding a ride to an appointment, or getting help filling out an application. There are more families that could benefit from this. In addition, now that the Clark Church is no longer holding services in a house in Portland, occupancy of the church building by Family Promise families is expected to occur in late November.

One of the largest families that were in our program a year ago was a family of 7 (now 8, as the mom was pregnant at the time). They are no longer able to stay in their apartment and will be the first family to utilize the Clark Church. While Family Promise works really hard on housing stabilization, this happens occasionally. The challenge is finding a 3-bedroom apartment in the area. The dad now has his work permit and is working. Stay tuned, as we will all be able to address the family's needs with "contact-free" support.

While the program may not be serving families in the same way we remember, homelessness is still in our community. The Family Shelter is full, so there are 25 families staying at the Maine Motel. If you have ever been a volunteer of Family Promise, you will be shortly receiving an email. Family Promise is working on providing Thanksgiving meals for some of the families staying in the motel. There will be a Google sheet to sign up for different parts of the meals, and the meals will be brought to Woodfords Church and delivered by Family Promise. This is a great way to chip in and help. When it comes out, we'll send the link in the wider church email. What can you do to help? We are looking at ways we can help support a family (with the help of our community churches) especially with winter coming to make sure they have the warm clothes they need. In addition, there are continual financial needs such as Hannaford gift cards, bus passes, etc. that are always helpful. If you would like to help out here, you can always write a check to our church and put Family Promise in the subject line.



HOW YOU CAN HELP:

If you have volunteered in the past, you will receive an email with an opportunity to sign up to provide a dish for families staying at the Maine Motel for Thanksgiving.

Write a check to our church and put Family Promise in the subject line. This money will go towards things like Hannaford gift cards and bus passes.

if you'd like to participate more, feel free to call Steve Hendry, our Family Promise Liaison, at 207-333-8780 or email: stevrunn@gmail.com



MINISTRY OF *community life*

Holly Days Sale Update

BY KATHIE SINNETT



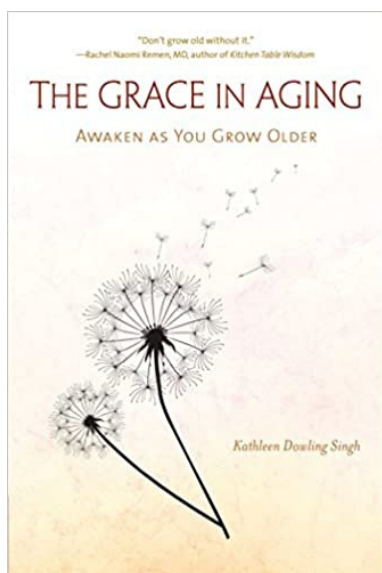
CONGRATULATIONS for helping to make this year's Holly Day Curbside Event a SUCCESS! TOGETHER WE DID IT! Each person's role (including our church staff) was a key piece of the puzzle to putting this together: visualizing the possibilities, planning, creating a website, introducing PayPal, soliciting and picking up donations, communicating, making merchandise and food (which isn't always easy when you need to find supplies and purchase during Covid), coordinating and fulfilling orders, marketing your items and individual tables,

decorating the church parking lot area, providing music, setting up and taking down tables, ensuring traffic safety, donating your time and talents, purchasing items and making monetary donations, spreading good cheer and hope, and even visiting from the North Pole!

This year, particularly, it is great to think about how all the positiveness above may have spread exponentially, even with everyone wearing a mask!

Thank you, again!

Sarah, Cathy, and Kathie



Women's Spiritual Book Group

This month the book club is reading: [The Grace in Aging: Awaken as You Grow Older](#) by Kathleen Singh.

Learn to use your later years for awakening and spiritual growth. Encouraging, inspiring, and practical, [The Grace in Aging](#) invites all those who have ever experienced spiritual longing to awaken in their twilight years.

Since aging, in and of itself, does not lead to spiritual maturity, [The Grace in Aging](#) suggests and explores causes and conditions that we can create in our lives, just as we are living them, to allow awakening to unfold—transforming the predictable sufferings of aging into profound opportunities for growth in clarity, love, compassion, and peace.

Join us on Zoom at Noon on Wednesday, December 2nd.

MINISTRY OF

Christian education Canned Goods

Extended Kids' Church

BY KRISTEN COLEMAN

Kid's Church has taken on a new form! We will now be meeting for 2 hours on Sundays from 10:00-12:00.

Our general Kid's Church outline is as follows:

10:00-10:30 Lesson

10:30-11:00 Craft

11:00-11:30 Outdoor time (weather permitting) and snack time

11:30-12:00 We will finish up with a game and clean up



We are having our annual canned good drive this year and will be taking donations until December 20th. An updated list of needed items will be sent out to all members of the congregation. We appreciate any donation no matter how big or small.

Christmas Pageant

We will be having an online pageant this year. The children will be assigned their parts and they will practice on Sundays leading up to the Christmas Eve service, and get into costume. However, this year we will film the pageant ahead of time, to be broadcast on Christmas Eve. Please let me know if your child may be interested.

Car Caroling



There will be caroling this year, though it will take on a new form. You can sign up to sing outside in the church parking lot on Sunday December 13th between 1:00-3:00. We will sing outside in shifts, as cars come through to enjoy the Christmas music, and get a little holiday spirit pick-me-up. Please call or email me with any questions or interest:

kristen.coleman@maine.edu
207-615-3849



January Coffee House

Chris Kemp White

Friday, January

11th, 6:30 PM

Maine-born and raised singer-songwriter Chris Kemp White has been making music in and around Portland for more than twenty years. After performing almost exclusively with bands, he is currently writing, arranging and recording solo material. Drawing from classic and modern influences like David Bowie, Crowded House, Wilco and Death Cab for Cutie, the songs explore both spiritual and everyday themes of love, loss and longing.

STEWARDSHIP & finance



FCC PHOTO CONNECTION

Do you miss seeing your FCC community? We Do!!! Please help us stay connected by sending a photo of yourself which will be shared during the virtual church service. We are asking all that are comfortable to send our church a casual photo of yourself individually and or your family. These photos will be displayed with your first name as part of our virtual church broadcast. Seeing each other's familiar faces once again will bring us all joy.

Please send your photo(s) with your name via email to Laura Rosenberg at fcc.ucc.desk@falmouthcongregationalchurch.org. Or if you are unable to take a photo or send it please contact Tom Stegemann at 207-838-5357 who will gladly come take your photo from a Covid-safe distance. I look forward to seeing your smiling faces, Tom Stegemann

Stewardship Update

BY PAUL DAVIS

The Finance ministry is pleased to announce as of Nov 22nd we have reached 84% of our goal \$175,000 for 2021. Number of pledges sent in (44) is 58% of last year's total of 75. The good news is we are ahead of last year at this time, and with 30 more pledge units still outstanding, we have a good opportunity to reach our goal.

Next month the Finance ministry will present a budget to the Council of Ministries for review and approval to present at the annual meeting in January. We know we are going to have challenges to present a balance budget in 2021, but the ministry will look at all ways possible to keep expenses down, the ministries and staff supported, so we can continue to spread the good news among our church family, and the wider church in our community and around the world.

Blessings, Finance Ministry



The Rules of QCDs

BY LARRY PERRY

For those of you who listened to my presentation regarding donating to a charity using a qualified charitable deduction (QCD) on October 25, here are the stated rules. I would be happy to talk 1 on 1 to anyone who has questions.

A QCD must adhere to the following requirements:

- For a QCD to count toward your current year's RMD, the funds must come out of your IRA by your RMD deadline, which is generally December 31 each year.
- Funds must be transferred directly from your IRA custodian to the qualified charity. This is accomplished by requesting your IRA custodian issue a check from your IRA payable to the charity. You can then request that the check be mailed to the charity, or forward the check to the charity yourself.
- You must be at least 70 1/2 years old at the time you request a QCD. If you process a distribution prior to reaching age 70.5, the distribution will be treated as taxable income.



ADVENT & christmas

Sunday Virtual Worship: Live from the Sanctuary, featuring musicians and readers who you know and love.

Advent Mini Worship:

We will host short candle lit services in our sanctuary on Thursday Nights at 5:30 PM: December 3rd, 10th, and 17th.

Advent Small Group:

Join Pastor Amelia on zoom at 3 PM Wednesdays, December 2nd, 9th, and 16th to learn to use Christian practices like Centering Prayer, the Ignatian Daily Examen, and Counting our Blessings. Please email Pastor Amelia to sign up.

Extended Church School: Are you a parent who needs a break? We have extended in person church school from 10 AM - 12 PM on Sunday mornings. Drop your children off for a COVID compliant time of outdoor games, crafts, and connection. Take some time for yourself as your children are nurtured in their faith.

Car Caroling:

We are organizing a car carol for December 13th from 1 - 3 PM, where we can sing along with old time favorites in the church parking lot. Want to help? Please email Kristen Coleman.

Longest Night Service:

On the Winter Solstice we will gather to recognize the sadness and mixed emotions that come with the holiday season. This short, candle lit service will be held either outside or in our sanctuary, depending on factors such as weather, state recommendations, and the needs of our community: Monday, December 21st at 5:30 PM.



WEEKLY ADVENT SCHEDULE

Sundays
Worship Online
10:00 - 11:00 AM
Extended Sunday School
(Church)
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Mondays
Bible Group (Zoom)
12:00 - 1:00 PM

Wednesdays
Advent Small Group
(Zoom)
3:00 - 4:00 PM

Thursdays
Advent Mini Worship
(Sanctuary)
5:30 - 6:00 PM



Christmas at Falmouth Congregational

Christmas Eve 6:30 Pageant Service : We will be showcasing a prerecorded pageant type service this year, created by our church school children. We will broadcast this service at 6:30 PM and (barring regulatory changes) we will also welcome people who wish to sit in our Sanctuary and watch the pre-recorded service.

Christmas Eve 8 PM Service (Virtual & In-person): Our Christmas Eve service will be entirely prerecorded this year, which means that you will be able to experience the music, sermon, and traditions that we treasure without increased risk. This service will be Livestreamed on our Youtube Channel, and (barring regulatory changes) we will also welcome people who wish to sit in our Sanctuary and watch the pre-recorded service.

To watch either service in person **please sign up in advance** (the sign up sheet will go live on our website by December 15th). If we cannot accommodate all sign ups we will add another service time.

How to Watch Live Worship on your TV



There are three easy ways to watch the service on your TV

If you own a SMART TV, then you can use the Youtube app already embedded into your television! You may already have a SMART TV, and you don't even realize it!



If you don't own a SMART TV, that's fine! You can use a small ROKU device (Pictured below) to access the Youtube app as well! If you don't already own a ROKU device, they are extremely cheap, starting at \$25, (Roku remote is included).



If You Own (or Purchase) a Roku:

The setup for a ROKU is also very simple. Two cords will be provided with the package. One of these cords is an AC Adapter cord (Power cord) which you plug directly into a wall outlet. The other of these two cords is an HDMI cord, which you plug directly in the back of your television screen. Modern televisions all have HDMI ports, but if you have an older TV screen, make sure to check to make sure you have one.



After hooking up your Roku:

Make sure your TV input is set to whatever HDMI port you are plugged in to, (your television should automatically open the Roku menu once your device is set up.) The only step left in setting yourself up is connecting to your WIFI using the included Roku remote. Once you are connected, Youtube is automatically installed on all Roku devices. Navigate towards Youtube in the Roku menu using the Roku remote, open Youtube, search, "Falmouth Congregational Church" and you will be able to watch and videos and broadcasts published by the church on the FCC Youtube channel.

*YOU CAN
ALSO CALL
AND LISTEN
TO WORSHIP*

For people who do not have smart phones or can't connect to the internet, you can dial (925)-205-6099 at 10 AM on Sunday and listen to the entirety of worship.

CHURCH

family news

We Lift in Prayer...

- Abraham, Elba Parr's Brother
- John Tarbell, Dolores Vail's brother
- Deborah Plummer
- Joan Bammel
- Maureen Grubb
- Ginny Hamilton
- Myron Krueger
- Bill Graves
- Lynn & Randy Boardway
- The Henderson Family
- Louise Caruso
- Sally Emery
- Norm O'Brien
- Barbara & John Graustein
- Kathleen & Bill Henderson
- Val Gray
- Nancy Wulbrecht



Congratulations to the Kaluba family who welcomed their new baby girl, Amelia Marcia Bankuna, the morning of Nov 1st, 7lb 10 oz.

Important Upcoming Dates

January Congregator Deadline: December 14

Annual Reports Deadline: December 14

Save the Date: Annual Meeting: Tuesday, January 26



We hold in prayer the family of Mary Louise Endicott, whose spirit joined God on November 4th.
 Obituary here:
<https://www.pressherald.com/2020/11/08/obituarymary-louise-blake-merrill-endicott/>



1. Meredith M.
2. Gini M.
7. Doug M.
9. Alice K.
11. Alexis B.
12. Chris K.
17. Nancy K.
18. Allen M.
19. Diana W.
20. Natalie M.
21. Pam C.
21. Gini H.
25. Ben R.
27. Carrie R
29. Doug E.
29. Jim M.
31. Eunice W.



December 2020 Calendar

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2 12 PM Women's Spiritual Book Group 1PM Called to Care Christmas Cards 3PM Advent Small Group (Zoom)	3 8:30 Ecu Clergy Mtg 5:30 Livestream wkgrp 5:30 Advent Mini Worship 6:30 Ministry of Missions	4	5
6 Communion 10 Worship 10-12 Church School	7 12 PM Bible Study 6:30 Ministry of Worship & Covenant	8	9 3PM Advent Small Group (Zoom)	10 9:30 Livestream 5:30 Advent Mini Worship 6:30 Ministry of Finance	11	12
13 10 Worship 10-12 Church School 11:30 Council of Ministries 1 Car Caroling	14 Annual Reports Due Congregator Due 12 PM Bible Study	15	16 3PM Advent Small Group (Zoom)	17 9:30 Livestream wkgrp 5:30 Advent Mini Worship	18	19
20 Christmas Fund 10 Worship 10-12 Church School	21 12 PM Bible Study 5:30 Longest Night Service	22	23	24 CHRISTMAS EVE 9:30 Livestream wkgrp 6:30 Worship with Pageant, 8 Worship	25 CHRISTMAS DAY	26
27 10 Worship 10-12 Church School 11:30 Ministry of Christian Education	28 12 PM Bible Study	29	30	31 NEW YEAR'S EVE		

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Falmouth Congregational Church United Church of Christ

Ministries

Kim Hendry
Chair, Council of Ministries

Kristen Coleman
Chair, Ministry of Christian Education

Rae Pierce & Jane Stegemann
Ministry of Community Life

Eunice Wilcox
Ministry of Facilities

Steve Hendry
Chair, Ministry of Missions

Larry Perry & Jim Parr
Ministry of Worship & Covenant

Church Staff

Rev. Amelia Edson, Settled Pastor
Katharina Roderick, Office Manager, Newsletter Editor
Laura Rosenberg, Office Assistant
Matthew Strobel, Sexton
Doris Krueger, Minister of Music
Jane Stegemann, Minister of Visitation
Kristen Coleman, Christian Education

Officers

Kim Hendry, Moderator
Anne Coleman, Vice Moderator
Laurie Davis, Clerk
Pam Carroll, Treasurer
Gini Medford, Financial Secretary
Carol Kauffman MSN, RN, Faith Community Nurse