



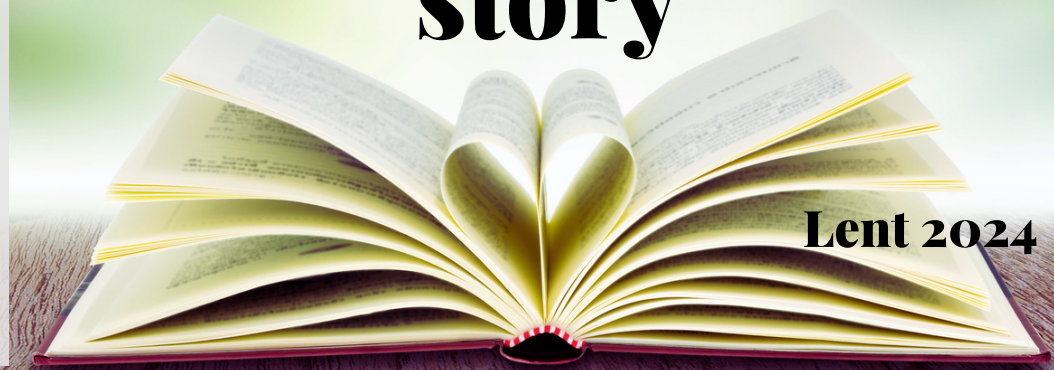
# THE CONGREGATOR

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## This is our story

**Lent 2024**



Dear Falmouth UCC,

Lent starts on February 14th this year—Happy VaLENTines! It is fitting because Lent is about God's love: real love, that hopes for us and challenges us to be more fully ourselves—creatures made in the image and likeness of God.

Lent is a season of 40 days (plus Sundays) that takes us through Holy Week and into Easter. It commemorates Christ's wandering in the desert, and the ways that each of our lives brings us into wilderness and liminal space—it is in that journey that we are prepared to see the miracle of God.

As we continue to read through the Bible we will be covering Deuteronomy, Numbers, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel, and 1 & 2 Kings. These are stories full of wandering—not to mention strange happenings, terrible decisions, hilarity, disturbing violence, unexpected love, and the humdrum chronicling of how our ancestors tried (often unsuccessfully) to organize themselves and their common life.

The central message of Lent is that the journey of our lives is sometimes, even often, hard—and that doesn't mean there is anything wrong with us. The world is imperfect, and so are we. There are places in our lives and ourselves that we want to turn away from. This is true in our Bible, too. But in Lent we don't turn away, or numb, or deny or avoid—instead we walk into the wilderness and take stock of the rocky, troublesome places. We do this honest traveling because we know it is our responsibility—for these forlorn places are our story, too. They are places where we can meet God, and there is nothing there that is bigger than the love and grace that God has for us. We venture out and in, knowing that even in the tomb the light of Easter breaks in.

*In Christ,  
Pastor Amelia*

LENT



**Ash Wednesday  
Service  
February 14th  
5:30 PM**

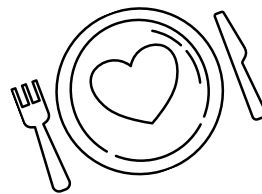
**We will also mark Lent  
this year with...**

**Pre-Lent  
Princess Party!**

**This Is Our  
Story Devotional  
& Spotify  
Playlist**



**Mardi Gras  
Youth Group  
Pancake Supper  
Sunday, Feb. 11  
3:30 - 6 PM**



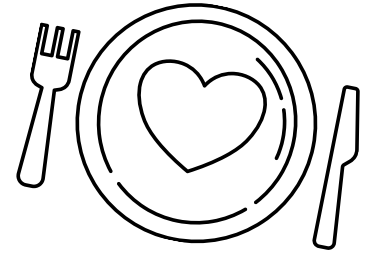
**Getting to know  
each others  
stories at Dine  
Arounds!**



Throughout 2024 we will be reading through the Bible — cover to cover!

[Click here for the Interactive Bible Reading Plan](#)  
or pickup a paper copy in the office.

MINISTRY OF  
*Worship &*  
*Covenant*



## Dine Around Dinners

This year's Dine Around Dinners will be a fun way to get to know fellow members of our congregation and enjoy a good meal together. Dinners will be held in the homes of our congregation members – or in the Parlor at church – on the following dates:

	<u>March</u>
<u>February</u>	<b>Saturday, 2</b>
<b>Thursday, 15</b>	<b>Friday, 8</b>
<b>Tuesday, 20</b>	<b>Monday, 11</b>
<b>Wednesday, 28</b>	<b>Saturday, 16</b>
	<b>Sunday, 17</b>

Sign up on the poster in Fellowship Hall or call the church office (781-3413) before Sunday, February 11. Check off all the dates you are available to attend a dinner. If you're willing to host a dinner, put an "H" in all the dates when you can host a dinner. Guests (and hosts) will be notified which date and where they will attend.

Also, as you gather around the dinner table, you will be asked a few questions to capture your ideas for the future of Falmouth Congregational Church. Your answers will be compiled by the Council of Ministries as it embarks on future planning.

What could be better?! Contribute to the evolution of our church and get to know folks, all over a good meal! Questions? Contact Laurie Davis at 233-1705 or [davislaurie84@gmail.com](mailto:davislaurie84@gmail.com).



## COUNCIL

## Corner



As I write this message the sun is out, the sky is a beautiful blue, and there are two red cardinals at the bird feeder. There is a freshness in the air and I feel more energized. Yet as much as I love this clear day, I believe the good energy I feel emanates from my new role as Moderator. I am so honored and excited to serve our faithful and joyous church. For those who do not know me, my wife Jane and two adult children Lydia (husband Jake and 3mos old daughter Annie) and Peter have been members of our church for over twenty five years. Jane is our Licensed Minister of Visitation and a retired psychologist. I am a retired orthodontist, I love playing sports, gardening, and being part of our church. As I look forward to the next two years, I pray our collective faith in God continues to grow our connection and value with our wider community and that we find unified glory in the service of Christ.

The annual meeting was held last Sunday in Beinema Hall. Lunch provided by Jeff Howland was much appreciated. Pastor Amelia opened with a prayer, Kim Hendry gave her final remarks as outgoing moderator, we reviewed last year's financial report and elected new officers. We gave thanks to Kim Hendry for her productive and faithful two terms as moderator. Paul Davis presented the 2024 budget and it was approved. Lydia Hoffman gave us an update about the vision for our lower level kid's church school space renovation. I followed this with a discussion about the current state of this project. We have an architect, blueprints, and have engaged a builder. The estimates for this project are considerably higher than expected. Consequently, we are reviewing the plans, adapting the wish list and have sought out a second builder for an estimate.

Pastor Amelia discussed her upcoming Sabbatical this summer. You can read more about this valuable time in the annual report. Pastor Amelia informed the congregation that Lydia Hoffman, our Minister of Children and Families, will be leading worship while she is away. I followed this with an appreciation for the work and efforts the congregation does on behalf of the church. We filled out time and talent forms that will be collated and entered into a breeze database. Laurie Davis followed this with discussion about exciting upcoming "Dine Around" events where the congregation will have the opportunity to eat dinner in small groups while discussing their ideas about the future of our church. Pastor Amelia closed the meeting with a prayer.

Our new council meets on February 11 with three new members, Steve Hendry as Vice Moderator, Alicia Johnson, and Chaz Roth joining. Kim Hendry, Jim Parr and Carol Kauffman are stepping down and we appreciate them for their faithful work over the past years. As we move into 2024, I look forward to reporting the work of the council to the congregation.



But for now, let's focus on our blessed work of reading through the Bible, caring for each other and community, and living our lives centered on Christ's teachings. Thank you for all you do, Tom Stegemann, Moderator

# ARRE WINTER BALL

Hosted by FCC

This is our second year partnering with the ARRE foundation to host the Winter Ball! Complete with princesses, dancing, a silent auction, a special reading room, baked goods, and so much fun! All the proceeds will go towards the ARRE foundation, working for research and care for those with the ASXL gene.

We hope you'll join us to support the foundation, and enjoy the festivities! You might even recognize the princesses! Come out and dance the day away! This is a family friendly event. Tickets can be found right on the FCC website.



**Saturday, February 10**

**3-5pm**

**Falmouth Congregational Church**

# ARRE

ASXL RARE RESEARCH ENDOWMENT



## Welcome to our New Members!



Jud & Patience  
Cleveland



Hannah & Corey  
Van Woert



Anne Gribbon



Rachel Rier

Judson and Patience live in Falmouth with their three kids-- close enough to walk to service!

Hannah and Corey just moved to Falmouth. Their toddler, Killian, is an enthusiastic nursery participant.

Anne just moved to Falmouth with her husband. She is happy to be worshipping with a multi-generational community.

Rachel lives in Falmouth with her kids, Beatrix and Elliot. She is excited to have found her new spiritual home at FCC and looks forward to getting to know you all better.

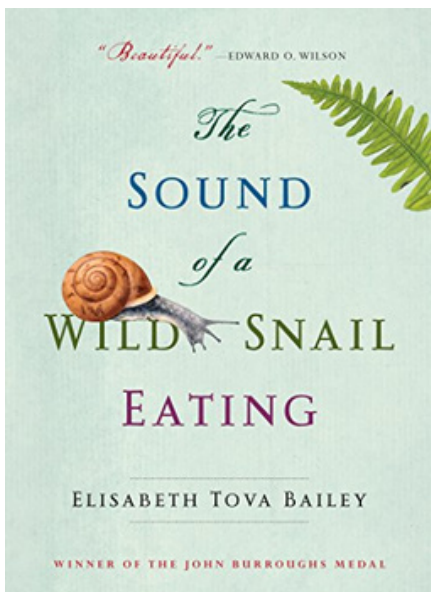
### MINISTRY OF *Community Life*

## Women's Spiritual Book Group

The Women's Spiritual Book Group's next meeting is on Wednesday Feb. 7 at noon. February's discussion will be on The Sound of a Wild Snail Eating by Elisabeth Tova Bailey. Participants may meet in the Grant Room or attend by Zoom. Let the office know if you need a zoom link.

Bailey's story is an extraordinary meditation on the restorative connection between nature and humans. This slim book is available in paperback 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 Kathie Sinnett



MINISTRY OF  
*missions*



What does a granola bar call  
its workout?  
**RAISIN' THE WEIGHTS**

What did the granola bar say  
to its friend when it felt  
lonely?  
**“I NEED YOU TO BE MY  
OATS-STANDING  
COMPANION!”**

We will be collecting GRANOLA BARS for the Food Pantry through February. If you would like, please put boxes of GRANOLA BARS into the collection bin in Fellowship Hall. If you have questions or know someone with an urgent food need, please contact Nancy Lightbody. Thank you for your support: You are all the best, BAR none!



## State Street Shelter – Volunteers Needed



Last winter we partnered with State Street Church to open an overnight family shelter to keep children and parents warm and safe in the coldest months of the year.

Our church is responsible for staffing the shelter February 18-24 and March 17-23. Please put this on your calendar- we will need one greeter and two overnight volunteers each day in order to keep the shelter open.

## 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. **Snow Pants** of all sizes are desperately needed! These may be left in the Missions Bin in Fellowship Hall. Thank you!



## Bakers Needed!

Please plan ahead for the Saturdays before Communion Sundays! Over the past year Loaves of Love has generated close to \$2,000 to support the five special mission offerings of the United Church of Christ. We need to keep the good work going! The next Saturday we will be baking is February 3, 2024. After that we will need bakers on March 2, April 6, and May 4. Please contact Alyce Graves if you would like to join in the fun!



MINISTRY OF



*missions*

**We Continue to be a "5 for 5" Church**

The Ministry of Missions has set a goal of our being a "5 for 5 Church." This means that our congregation stands with many other Maine churches as a true advocate of selected national and worldwide United Church of Christ missions. Because our church has been able to contribute to all four special mission offerings in the UCC (One Great Hour of Sharing, Strengthen the Church, Neighbors in Need, and The Christmas Fund) and also gives to Our Church's Wider Mission Basic Support, we are a 5 for 5 church.

Many thanks to the generous contributors who continue to make this possible

**Pastor's Discretionary Fund**

If you or someone you know has a financial need in a difficult time, please contact the church office. There is limited funding in this account for just such a purpose.

**Priority Fund**

From the money that was in the Church's Priority Fund at the end of 2023, \$1,000 will be given to each of the following organizations: the Preble Street Resource Center, the Falmouth Food Pantry, and Maine Needs.



**Donations of Used Eyeglasses**

Please leave donations of no-longer-used eyeglasses and eyeglass cases in the designated container in Fellowship Hall. These are picked up and taken to Falmouth Vision Center, where they are collected by the Lions Club and sent out of state to be refurbished for use by other people

Our Minister of Music, Jan Stover, will be on vacation for the month of February. Please welcome Ray Cornils as our substitute organist!

Ray Cornils served as Portland's tenth Municipal Organist from 1990 to 2017. For thirty years he was Minister of Music at First Parish Church, UCC, Brunswick, Maine.

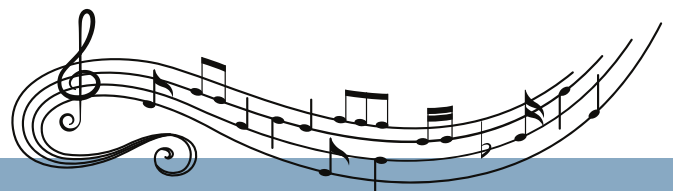
Ray has concertized throughout the United States, Europe, South America and New Zealand. He has taught at Bowdoin College and the University of Southern Maine, among others. As an active member of the American Guild of Organists, he has held many leadership roles, including Convention Coordinator for the 2014 National Convention in Boston.

Since his retirement in 2017 Ray has served several churches as interim organist/choir director and continues to concertize from time to time. He, his husband David, and their two miniature dachshunds divide their time between the Maine coast and Ecuador's Andes mountains.

Ray invites newcomers and short-termers to start rehearsing with him on January 31 at 7:00 PM.

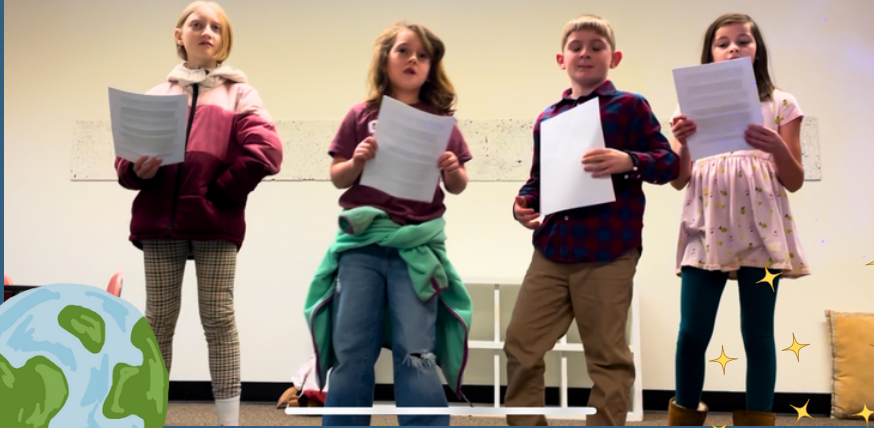
MINISTRY OF

*Music*





**Acting out the story of creation!**



**MINISTRY OF**  
*Christian Education*

This year, we are journeying through the Bible in Kids' Church! We have begun with the story of creation and we will continue hearing about each of the key stories that teach us about God's love. Our Kids' Church programming is in full swing, and welcomes new friends each week. What a gift it is to learn the big stories with our littlest friends.



**COME BE A KIDS' CHURCH VOLUNTEER!**

We are seeking volunteers in the Kids Church classroom as our program grows! Our kiddos would LOVE to learn from YOU!

**We are seeking:**

- Volunteers to teach for one month
- Volunteers to teach on a rotational basis
- Back-Up volunteers

**MEET TONNE!**

Tonne will take over for Gabby Colby-George as our lead nursery provider!

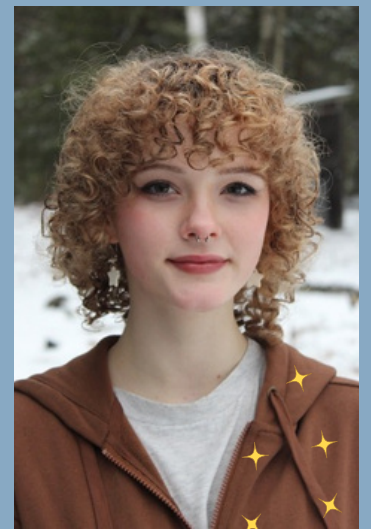
Miss Gabby will remain on the team and will offer her gifts when available.



**Our classroom set up for "The Beginning"!**



*Lydia Hoffman*  
Minister of Children and Families  
[lydia@falmouthcongregationalchurch.org](mailto:lydia@falmouthcongregationalchurch.org)



# CHURCH

## family news

- Betty Shively’s family and friends as we prepare to celebrate her life on Sunday, February 4th, at Falmouth House at 1:30 PM. <https://www.pressherald.com/2024/01/28/obituaryelizabeth-betty-shively-2/>
- Joan Jensen as she moves to Ocean View’s Blueberry Commons: 3 Marion Way Apt. 3202 Falmouth, ME. Please send cards of welcome and encouragement.
- Joan’s son, Michael, who continues to be in care at Maine Medical after a stroke.
- Prayers for the Stephens family as they recover from Forrest’s surgery and William’s illness. Here is a caring bridge with updates: <https://www.caringbridge.org/visit/forreststephens> If you want to give Jennie the night off from cooking the family will gladly accept food- no pork please.



- Daric Collins Sr, Dana Collins’s brother as he recovers from a stroke this past week. Prayers for him and his family as he continues to get tests done to find the cause.

## We Lift in Prayer...



- LauriAnn Moran as she continues to recover from the procedure to treat an aneurysm in her brain. She sends gratitude to you all for the cards, visits, and support. 81 Deepwood Dr Portland Maine 04103.
- Kathy Whitmore’s sister, Corinne, who is in cancer treatment
- 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
- Janie Anderson, who continues to receive so much 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!
- Sally’s caregiver, Nana, needs prayers of comfort since her brother was recently killed. Prayers and cards of encouragement: P.O. Box 102, Gray, ME 04039.

## Ushers

- 4 - Paul Davis & Karin Kurry
- 11 - Alyce Graves & Lauren Jordy
- 18 - Alyce Graves & Julia Poppell
- 25 - Peggy & Mark Horton

## Liturgists

- 4 - TBD
- 11 - Steve Hendry
- 18 - Jim Scherer
- 25 - Jim Parr

## February Birthdays

- Chris Allen
- Joan Ashley
- Mary Hart
- Aiden Hendry
- Kathy Whitmore





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