



<p>Inside This Issue: From the Pastor Council Corner Pastoral Letter: Grieving Ongoing Church Life Resources Ministry of Facilities Community Life Office News Ministry of Missions Family Promise Worship Prayer List</p>	<p>From the Pastor: The last Sunday in May we enter Pentecost, the season of the church year in which we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit. This spirit, which descends on the first followers of Jesus like fire and wind, is the force that started (and maintains) the church.</p> <p>As some in the national news speak about churches being “closed,” celebrating Pentecost feels especially important – for it is not our building that makes us the church, but the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. The church, at least Falmouth Congregational Church, is not closed. We are temporarily out of our building, yes – but the Holy Spirit is all around us, and we are on the move! Like the first disciples and countless generations of Christians before us, we are adapting to the world as we find it, working and worshiping and forming community in new ways. We are doing so while following the directives of the Gospel: to love our neighbors as ourselves and prioritize the “least” (i.e., the most vulnerable) among us.</p> <p>This Church (You!) is making masks for our neighbors. It is getting groceries for those in quarantine. It is collecting diapers for the food pantry. It is educating our children about community and Christ; reading books online and posting YouTube lessons; conscripting our household pets to add pizzazz to the weekly children’s moments. It is calling the members of our congregation and writing cards of support and encouragement. The church is worshiping, every Sunday, our good and loving God. The church is not the building, and the church is not closed!</p> <p>Now, don’t get me wrong, I miss gathering in our sanctuary terribly. I miss seeing all of your faces each week. I miss the coffee, and the singing, and the times of fellowship. I even miss the announcements! Our leadership is thinking hard about when and where we can gather physically and safely, and what it will look like when we do. No matter what, we will continue to Live Stream, so that all can participate even if they cannot physically join in.</p> <p>There is more information about that process in the pages that follow, as well as an update about my Parental Leave during July and August.</p> <p>I give thanks for this church on the move, and for all the ways your ministry shines the light of Christ out into the world.</p> <p>- Pastor Amelia</p>
---	--



Council Corner for June

I hope this finds everyone doing well and staying healthy. I also hope that everyone has been able to get outside recently and enjoy the sunny, "kind of summer" weather.

In May's Council Corner, I shared that the Small Business Association's Payroll Protection Plan approved our church for a loan. We received the funds in late April and those funds allowed us to retain our staff and avoid any furloughs.

At our May Council meeting, we reviewed the plans for coverage during Pastor Amelia's parental leave (approximately 10 Sundays from June 28th through August 30th). During this time, the Foreside Community Church will provide worship coverage for our church via Live Streamed virtual services. Our church will still provide lectionary readers and occamusic throughout the 10 weeks. Jane Stegemann, Minister of Visitation, will provide pastoral care during this time. We will compensate both Jane and the Foreside Community Church for their services.

The Council also agreed to set up a sub-committee to assist in the planning of a safe re-opening of our church. The name of the group is Supporting our On-Going Church Life and the members of the group are Cathy Bowden, Laurie Davis and David Giansiracusa. There is a separate article in this Congregator about the new group so I will refer you to that article for more details.

I also wanted to provide an update on the Solar Project. We received the structural engineer's report, which details what would be required to reinforce the church roof to support the solar array. Given that the roof is quite old, the work required is somewhat extensive. We are working with Goggin to get a quote of what the cost would be. We are also considering the option to install the array on the roof of Beinema Hall. I will continue to share more details as I receive them.

Stay safe and healthy and please contact the church office if you need help during this difficult time.

~ Kim Hendry, Moderator

Pastoral Letter: Grieving

This week (the last week in May) our nation reached a terrible milestone: more than 100,000 Americans have died from COVID-19. In less than three months more people have lost their lives to this virus than died over seven decades in the Korean, Vietnam, Persian Gulf, Afghanistan and Iraq Wars combined. There will be more deaths in the next few months, and there's no way to know exactly what to expect.

As we mourn these deaths, and the many changes, disruptions, and losses that this time has brought upon us, I pray that we will have patience, compassion, and grace for ourselves and those around us. We are all—ourselves, our loved ones, our church family, strangers in the grocery store—experiencing collective grief. As we start to think about moving forward or next steps, we are also struggling with anticipatory grief: we do not know what is coming, who will be impacted, what and who we will mourn. I have written before about Elizabeth Kubler-Ross' Stages of Grief: denial, bargaining, sadness, acceptance. These are not stages that we move through so much as places on a map, a landscape in which we are all walking. At any moment you may find yourself walking through a field of bargaining (mine sounds like, "If I wear a mask, and stay 6 feet away, and don't touch my face, I'll be fine...right?"), or on the mountain of acceptance ("I've always wanted to spend all weekend gardening—this is great!") only to be in the pit of anger ("that person wasn't even keeping a safe distance!!!!") moments later. I encourage you to be gentle with yourselves, and with the people you encounter; grief is exhausting, and we are likely to be grieving collectively for a while to come.

Collective grief cries out for collective comfort and support. I am deeply grateful to be in this community as you continue to provide just that. As I write this I know there are calls, cards, and prayers going out to the people on our prayer list. The first week of June we will bring hundreds of collected diapers and wipes to the Food Pantry. We will gather on June 12th to lift our spirits with a virtual coffee house. Each week we will gather for worship on Sunday at 9:30 AM to sing, pray, and greet one another. We will comfort one another as we mourn, and hold one another as we each do our best to find joy and hope in this time of trial.

The life of this church is full, and there are more details in this Congregator, on the website, and on the calendar. We are grieving, but we are not grieving alone. We are held in love by our church family, drawn into joy through service and community, and wrapped in peace and hope by our ever-present, ever-loving God.

I am grateful to be walking beside you in this time.

Many blessings,
Pastor Amelia

Supporting Our Ongoing Church Life: An Introduction

The Falmouth Congregational Church's Council of Ministries cares about its congregants and the impact on all as the church functions differently during this period of physical distancing and uncertainty caused by Covid-19. In response, the Council has established an "Ongoing Church Life" group. Their mission will be to facilitate a God-centered, inclusive way forward into a future that strives to safely meet the needs of the church community while incorporating the latest from experts in science, the leadership at the Maine Conference UCC, and the directives of the Maine CDC. Current Council members Laurie Davis and Cathy Bowden will lead this effort. The guiding principle to which they will frame all their work will be drawn from the Book of Matthew, Chapter 25, Verse 40: "Truly I tell you, whatever you do for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you do for me."



In the weeks ahead, the "Ongoing Church Life" group will develop recommendations for when and how to safely return to the sanctuary for worship, as well as, guidelines for building use and access, protocols for committee and social gatherings, suggestions for keeping the staff safe, and a response to the changing needs this unprecedented time brings. Members and friends of the congregation are invited to be part of this Covid-19 response by contacting Laurie or Cathy. Your thoughts and suggestions are valued as are your collective prayers during this time of discernment for wisdom and patience in this work and in our response as a community.



FCC & COVID-19: Resources & Staying Connected

FCC Phone Team

The FCC phone team is calling our community in order to check in with each other. **Please make sure the church office has your updated information so that we can check in with you.**

Grocery Ministry

People in the congregation have offered to pick up groceries and drop them off "curbside" (eg on your doorstep) for any in our community who cannot go out. **If this would be helpful to you please call the Church Office (207) 781 3413 and leave a message or let Steve Hendry, Chair of our Missions Ministry, know.**

Soup Ministry

If you or a loved one need a pre-made meal volunteers will make chicken noodle soup and drop it off curbside. Especially in times of stress, or when feeling under the weather, brothy and protein-full hot soup can be just the thing. Note that, for now, this soup does have chicken and gluten in it and that it should be boiled before consumption to maintain our good health directives. **If a quart of chicken noodle soup would brighten your day please contact the Church Office (207) 781 3413.**

Card Ministry

There are people in our congregation who practice a beautiful and tender ministry of card writing. If someone in our community would benefit from receiving a card, please let our Office Manager, Kat Roderick, know.

Mask Ministry

Outside the church there are cloth masks in a basket, sewn by members of our community to keep you safe for essential errands and appointments. This basket is restocked ~once/ week- please take only what you and your family needs, and stay safe. If you need a mask dropped off to you please let the office know.

Prayer

Please hold one another, and yourself, in prayer during this time. We all need the peace and love of Christ, and nurturing our connection to that source is something that we can do from anywhere. If you or someone you know would like to be added to the prayer list, please let the church office know.

Ministry of Facilities

Gardens

Good Garden News: our perennials are reliably springing up, preparing for summer bloom.

Not-So-Good News: All of our flower beds need a fresh layer of mulch.

How can you help beautify our church grounds?

1. Volunteer your weeding, pruning or raking skills
2. Donate to pay for mulch
3. You have a truck to pick up mulch and save us delivery charge
4. Help spread mulch
5. Have some divided perennials to donate

Please call Eunice Wilcox to sign up, 878-8134



Building Usage:

For the safety of building users and staff please **do not enter the building** unless you have been in touch with Pastor Amelia or FCC Sexton, Matthew Strobel.

CLYNK



TAG IT!



WWW.CLYNK.COM

CLYNK

Please support our 'bottle/can recycling' effort. The CLYNK Bags are ready to go with tags. Donating your empties to our group account is a relatively painless way to support church income. Bags are available at the basket near the entry door.

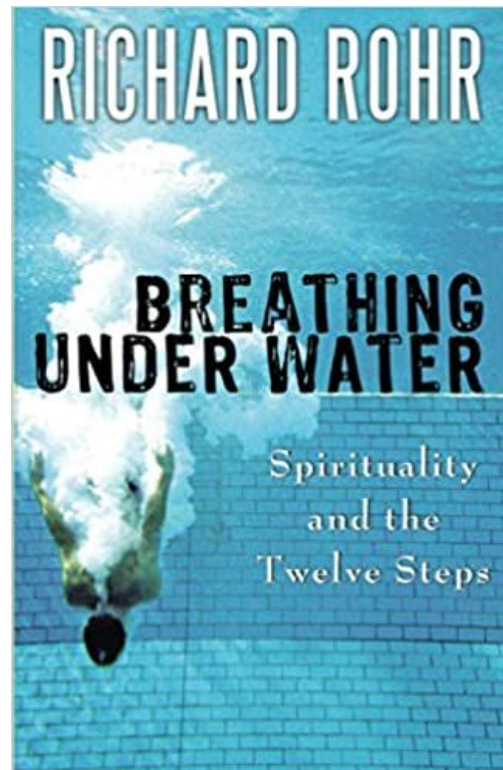
Hydrate and help us this summer

Bottoms up!

Community Life

Women's Spiritual Book Group

The Women's Spiritual book group meets virtually on June 4th at 12:00 to discuss Richard Rohr's book Breathing Under Water. In this book, Richard Rohr makes a case that the Twelve Steps relate well to Christian teaching and can rescue people who are drowning in addiction and may not even realize it. To survive the tidal wave of compulsive behavior and addiction, Christians must learn to breathe under water and discover God's love and compassion. In this exploration of Twelve Step spirituality, Rohr identifies the Christian principles in the Twelve Steps, connecting The Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous with the gospel. To join, contact Cathy Bowden.



June Coffee House: Live on Facebook on June 12th at 6:30 PM

June's Coffee house will be our second virtual coffee house, as Connor Garvey took to the stage in a successful show on Facebook live on Friday, May 8th. Jacob McCurdy is



a Singer/Songwriter from Portland, ME. He is debuting new songs this spring, his first release since an acoustic EP in 2017. McCurdy loops various layers of vocals, whistling, guitar and bass creating a lush backdrop for the lyrical stories of his past, present, and future. You can find him fronting his wedding band, The Dapper Gents, playing bass with the Americana group The Johnny Clay Shanks Band or tracking various artists across New England with his production company, Dapper Productions.

Office News



Thank you to our office assistant, Laura Rosenberg, who has been an asset during these confusing months and has helped us immensely with office technology. She will have the summer off and we hope to see her back in September!

Forever Growing: Back to Class!

Our long-time tenant will be back this month with many new precautions for safety for both the kids and anyone who needs to be in the church.

Beware of Phishing

After these months of living with the coronavirus, we are aware of how to stop the spread of the virus yet even with all the information, it can be hard to change our habits. In the same way, we are aware of the need to create secure passwords, but may not always do so. Phishing is on the rise so be proactive instead of reactive and do some spring cleaning - data security cleaning, that is. Here are a few helpful videos that outline how to create a strong password and stay safe from scammers online. Checking on the security of your online accounts may seem like a hassle, but a little regular focus and attention goes a long way.

<https://www.commoncraft.com/video/phishing-scams>

<https://www.commoncraft.com/video/secure-passwords>

<https://www.commoncraft.com/video/account-security>

If you receive a message from Pastor Amelia or Church Staff asking for donations, Amazon gift cards, etc please double check the email and do not click on anything or respond. We will never ask for donations individually over email-- those sorts of efforts will come from one of the church ministries (think Diaper Drive or Family Promise). These false emails can be very convincing. If in doubt reach out to Kat or Pastor Amelia.

Ministry of Missions

THANK YOU FOR ALL THE DIAPERS!

Hooray for the donators of diapers! The Mother's Day Diaper Drive was a huge success. Donated diapers have already filled a large bin, with more still arriving. The diapers will be quarantined for two weeks to ensure safety and then given to families in need in our community. Thank you very much!



FALMOUTH FOOD PANTRY

It is heartwarming to see how our community has come together to help each other during this terribly sad pandemic. During the current coronavirus crisis, we are not working out of our physical space at the Food Pantry, but we are continuing to serve families with home deliveries and a central distribution location at the schools. Not surprisingly, there has been an increase in the number of families who are being served; in fact, 40% more families are currently benefiting from the Food Pantry than were a year ago.

The Food Pantry is hoping to continue distributing free food several times a month in front of the Falmouth Elementary School for current food pantry clients and those with a food emergency. If you have questions or know someone with an urgent need, please call Nancy Lightbody. Thank you for your help.

PASTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

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

KID'S CHURCH

This June we are finishing up our virtual Kid's Church until we resume in person in September. Through virtual learning we have covered many topics and many activities like: Baking tutorials, Sing alongs, Craft activities, Story time, Service Projects, Green Projects and Even a puppy baptism!

If you are interested in seeing any of my virtual lessons/activities visit our youtube channel or email me for links.

I hope everyone has a great summer and is ready to learn all about the Christian faith this fall!

- Kristen Coleman, Christian Education



FAMILY PROMISE PROGRAM UPDATE



Greater Portland Family Promise continues to shelter families at a reduced capacity. We have two families currently. Emanuel and Dina and their children were with us back when we were still hosting in congregations, and they are still with us now. Emanuel and Dina have 2 children: Eloimi (11-year-old boy) and Beneditte (7-year-old girl). Dina is pregnant and due this summer. Our second family joined us after we put shelter-in-place measures into practice, so most of you have not met them. The parents are Neolinda and Andre, and their children are Andrea (8-year-old girl) and Gabriel (3-year-old boy). Neolinda is also pregnant and due this summer.

Both these families have been moved to two shelter-in-place locations at two different congregations. At a time when families experiencing homelessness are more vulnerable than ever, these shelter-in-place options are such an important piece. A core group of volunteers is checking in with the families regularly and providing food so that they can prepare meals themselves. In addition, Wayside Food Programs is providing a box of food to each of the families on a weekly basis. If our families find housing and we do not take new families for a while, please be aware that Family Promise will continue to operate by providing care for our graduates, which is something that has always been done and will continue to be offered going forward.

Here are a few things you can do to support our families:

- **Hannaford gift cards** are still needed and appreciated. You can order gift cards electronically at the Hannaford website and email to contact@greaterportlandfamilypromise.org or mail a plastic gift card to
Greater Portland Family Promise
PO Box 11048
Portland, ME 04104
- Show some love to our families! If you'd like to offer our families a little hospitality, our current guests would love to receive **cards, notes, or drawings** as a sign of kindness and connection in this isolating time. Please feel free to mail cards to our PO Box, listed above.

We are still not sure whether our church will host families the first week of August as previously scheduled. Stay tuned, and thank you for your continuing support.

Worship Schedule

Each Sunday morning throughout the summer at 9:30 AM we will be livestreaming worship, in partnership with the Foreside Community Church, UCC, from our Facebook Page: You can access that here: <https://www.facebook.com/falmouth.ucc/>.

1. Type www.facebook.com in your browser, you may need to login if prompted.
2. Search for Falmouth Congregational Church UCC in the facebook search bar.
3. Click on Falmouth Congregational Church UCC and Scroll down until you see a "Video Premiere", it should look like this:
4. On Sunday morning it will read: This premiere video will begin soon, Click Watch Now.



Falmouth Congregational Church United Church of Christ 267 Falmouth Road Falmouth, ME 04105

Office phone: 207-781-3413

Office e-mail: FCCOFFC@gmail.com

Web site: www.falmouthcongregationalchurch.org

Ministries

Kim Hendry **Chair, Council of Ministries**

Kristen Coleman **Chair, Ministry of Christian Education**

Rae Pierce & Ann Sanborn **Co-Chairs, Ministry of Community Life**

Eunice Wilcox **Ministry of Facilities**

Steve Hendry **Chair, Ministry of Missions**

Larry Perry, Jim Parr **Co-Chairs, Ministry of Worship & Covenant**

Church Staff

Rev. Amelia Edson, **Settled Pastor**

Doris Krueger, **Minister of Music**

Kristen Coleman, **Christian Education**

Church Staff

Matthew Strobel, **Sexton**

Kat Roderick, **Office Manager, Newsletter Editor**

Laura Rosenberg, **Office Assistant**

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**