



THE CONGREGATOR

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Dear Falmouth UCC,

This Lent we are focusing on stories, and the power they have on our lives.

We are being told stories all day long-- from the newspaper, social media, the car radio, our families, even our own minds. These stories shape how we experience the world. It is important to occasionally take stock of which stories we are listening to.

One of the most impactful stories of all time are the stories of the Bible. As we continue to read and preach through the book(s) we see that the stories our ancestors of faith inherited, experienced, and embraced impacted them and their world in both life giving and destructive ways. Over and above the story of human action in the Bible there is the story of God, who works, again and again, to turn the world towards goodness.

We are sharing our own stories, too, over Dine Around Dinners at each others homes. An attendee from the first dinner said "it was wonderful to learn the stories of people who I had previously just traded smiles with at church. It was a warm and comfortable evening and we talked about everything from grandchildren to our faith journeys. Socializing around a table is the best way to get to know people." Hearing about how God has been at work in our lives reminds us that we, and those around us, are God's people-- our lives are what God's story looks like now. It also reminds us to look for God, eg the good, in our lives and turn ourselves in that direction.

As we keep taking stock of, and responsibility for, our stories; here are some resources for the journey:



This Is Our Story
Devotional



This is our Story
Spotify Playlist

In Christ.

Pastor Amelia

Lent 2024

This is our story



Dine Around Dinners: Getting to know each others stories

Reading Through the Bible

<http://tinyurl.com/4fw54vuj>



Easter Flowers Order Forms: Click Here or pick up a form in Fellowship Hall

Easter Card Writing: Friday, March 8 | 1 PM - 3 PM
in the parlor, snacks provided!

Holy Week 2024

Maundy Thursday | March 28 | 5:30 PM

Good Friday Reflection | March 29

Easter Egg Hunt | March 30 | 11 AM - 1 PM

Easter Sunday | March 31

Sunrise Service 6 AM @ Town Landing with Foreside UCC

Easter Service 10 AM

MINISTRY OF

Community Life

Women's Spiritual Book Group

The Women's Spiritual Book Group's next meeting is on Wednesday, March 6 at noon. March's discussion will be on "Mad Honey", by Jennifer Finney Boylan and Jodi Picoult.

Participants may meet in the Grant Room or attend by Zoom. Let the office know if you need a Zoom link. "Mad Honey" is a riveting novel of suspense, an unforgettable love story, and a moving and powerful exploration of the secrets we keep and the risks we take. This book is available in paperback and 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.



Making Connections and Building Relationships Through a Ministry of Visitation

Jane Stegemann and Rev. Dr. Leslie Foley will host a time of fellowship and discussion about the ministry of visitation.

Thursday, March 7 at 10 AM in Fellowship Hall.

RSVP to Jhsteg@gmail.com or 207-252-8272

Zoom Link Available Upon Request

Tech Update

Office Manager, Kat Roderick, sat in the loft with the tech team on February 18 to get a better understanding of the process.



COUNCIL Corner

Spring is just around the corner.....



For some, winter is an uncomfortable and miserable time of the year. They look forward to the blessing of warmth and energy that comes with Spring, Summer and Fall. Perhaps it is the anticipation of Summer that gets you through Winter. And certainly, the change from darkness to light, cold to warm, and inside to outside is a blessing. And it was this thought that got me thinking about Lent.

I recently read a passage about Lent by Sarah Phillips in Crosswalk.com. She says it makes sense to set aside time to prepare for the two most important days of the Christian year, Good Friday and Easter. Lent is a time to open the doors of our hearts a little wider and understand our Lord a little deeper so that when Good Friday and Easter come, it is not just another day at church but an opportunity to receive the overflowing graces God has to offer. Lent gives us time to prepare our minds and hearts for remembering the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. During these 40 days of Lent, we are encouraged to remember Jesus' suffering and sacrifice. We do this even as we seek God's forgiveness, accept his love and mercy and repent or turn from our sins. What a blessing it is to have Christ in our lives and I pray we use these 40 days of Lent to focus on the precious gift Jesus has given to us.

What is the Council of Ministries doing now?



At our February Council meeting we discussed these items:

- We approved a new sound system for the Sanctuary. Funded by the generous memorial gift honoring Linda Gouws, this system replaces our 25 year old one. We will have some additional microphones, better sound control, functional speakers in fellowship hall, hearing assist equipment, new amplifiers and remote power control from the chancel to allow easier powering on and off of the system. This system will be installed next month and we anticipate a smooth transition from the old system to this new one without interrupting our Sunday service.
- We reviewed our Church's comprehensive insurance policy and were able to increase our building insurance to reflect the higher costs of construction. Thankfully, we were able to do this without any increase in premiums because we have submitted written and approved formal Safe Church policy, a formal evacuation plan for the nursery and church school, and amended Pastor Amelia's Call Agreement to reflect her participation as Falmouth's Police Chaplain. These written policies provide a premium discount offsetting any increase in the building coverage.

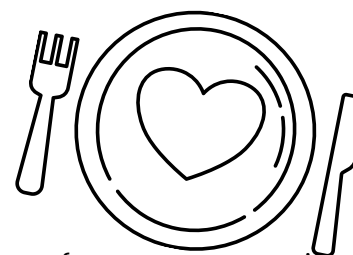
- There was discussion regarding the “Dine Around Dinner” event. This will be a fun social time with church friends, and an opportunity to meet new ones. And while we enjoy each other’s company, we will discuss a few questions on your thoughts about our church’s vision ahead. We look forward to hearing your thoughts and sharing the results with you.
- We have formed a new lower level church school renovation project committee. We are grateful for Peggy McGehee, Jud Cleveland, Lydia Hoffman, Rodney Coleman, Mark Howison, Jim Smith, Kristin Tripp, Chris Davis, Chan Sinnett, Joan Kaijala, and Pastor Amelia who have graciously stepped up to join this committee. We have preliminary plans and several estimates by one builder all of which are significantly higher than we expected. Therefore, with the acumen of this talented committee, we will reevaluate the plans and choice of builder to hopefully arrive at a satisfactory balance of wishlist and the cost for the project. This is a much needed renovation particularly with a growing church school population and to be able to rent this space to community daycares. I will be giving you updates as we work through the decision making process.
- Lastly we discussed the need for additional members for our various ministries. It is the ministries that do the work of the church. The ministries are fun, meaningful and they do vital work that keeps our church spiritually and financially healthy, and functioning well. The ministries teach our children, giving them a lifelong gift of faith. They reach out to our community and those in need as well as care for those in our congregation. They improve our worship experience and give its members the opportunity to serve. Falmouth Congregational church is like a loving family that is bound by faith in God and each other. And we have our staff and ministries to thank for this. Consider joining one of the ministries and see what the fun is all about.

Stay tuned, our next Council meeting is Sunday, March 10.

Thanks for all you do, Tom Stegemann



Dine Around Dinners



This year’s Dine Around Dinners are a fun way to get to know fellow members of our congregation and enjoy a good meal together. Dinners are held in the homes of our congregation members – or in the Parlor at church. Thanks to everyone who has participated so far!



ARRE WINTER BALL RECAP

Hosted by FCC

Our ARRE Winter Ball co-partnership continues to be such a ministry to our community. This year, the Winter Ball raised over \$6,000 for the foundation! Our church home served as host for this super fun family event, raising awareness and research funds for children with the ASXL gene, and their families.

Thank you to all who provided their support! Special thanks to Kristen, Jessica, Anna, Charles, Alyssa, Jeaneen, Beth, Mark, Maha, and all other FCC volunteers who made this year's ball possible!

Go Church!



MINISTRY OF
missions



What does Arnold
Schwarzenegger say before
eating pasta?
PASTA LA VISTA, BABY

Where did the spaghetti go
to dance?

THE MEAT BALL



Many many thanks to all who have donated granola bars over the past few months. We don't know who you are and therefore can't thank you personally, but please know that many families have already appreciated your help!

PASTA than a speeding bullet, our church will be collecting different kinds of pasta during the months of March, April, May, and June. The PASTABILITIES are endless! Please put boxes of pasta into the collection bin in Fellowship Hall. The pasta will be given to grateful Food Pantry families. We are not IMPASTAS, and we all know that 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 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!

Urgent Need: State Street Shelter Volunteers

Our Church will staff the shelter March 17th- 23rd



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

This year church is responsible for staffing the shelter March 17-23. Please click here to sign up - we will need one greeter and two overnight volunteers each day in order to keep the shelter open.

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 everyone who donates to current 5-for-5 UCC missions, which in March 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 on Saturday, March 2, baking RAISIN BRIOCHE! After that we will need bakers on April 6 and May 4. Please contact Alyce Graves if you would like to join in the fun!



MINISTRY OF

missions

One Great Hour of Sharing Offering on March 10

This offering 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.

Make a contribution 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. Dedication Day is on Sunday, March 10, 2024.


Socks for the Homeless

Please consider contributing some white cotton socks to the Missions Bin in Fellowship Hall. The socks will be given to people who benefit from the Preble Street Resource Center and who would like to have warm dry feet without infections. Thank you!



Maine Needs

This winter, Falmouth UCC has donated many coats and snow pants to Maine Needs. They have all been very much appreciated and needed! You do make a difference!

Cleaning Kits are in big demand! During March and April we will be collecting cleaning kits. 

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

CLEANING & TOILETRY KIT

- All Purpose Spray
- Toilet Bowl Cleaner & Brush
- Dish Soap & Sponges
- Trash Bags
- Body Soap & Lotion
- Shampoo & Conditioner
- Toothbrush & Toothpaste

**Assemble in a bag with handle, cleaning bucket or waste bin. We will add wipes and laundry strips.*

Our Minister of Music, Jan Stover, will be back from vacation on March 3. Here's what else is going on this month:

Kids Chorus Resumes: Sunday, March 3, 11:10 AM

Bell Choir Resumes: Wednesday, March 6, 6:00 PM

Palm Sunday Pop-Up Choir with Kids Chorus and Bells: Rehearsal Wednesday, March 20, 7:00 PM

MINISTRY OF

Music



PALM SUNDAY



FALMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

EASTER EGG HUNT

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

REGISTER TODAY!



MINISTRY OF *Christian Education*

We are continuing to read through the Bible in Kids' Church! We have worked our way through Genesis and we will finish up Exodus this month, with a pit stop to learn about Lent! Our Youth Group celebrated Mardi Gras this month, and discussed what they might give up or take on as a spiritual practice this Lenten season. We had so much fun making pancakes and singing songs in the church kitchen!

Coming up soon! Our annual Falmouth UCC Egg Hunt, the Youth Group will have a sleepover at the church, also called a "Lock In", and Kids' Chorus will resume with their first practice on March 3 after worship! Make sure you are signed up for weekly Kids' Church emails for all the details. To do so, just send me an email! Thanks for all you do to support our Kids' Church programming.

YOUTH GROUP

LOCK-IN

A FUN OVERNIGHT CHURCH SLEEPOVER

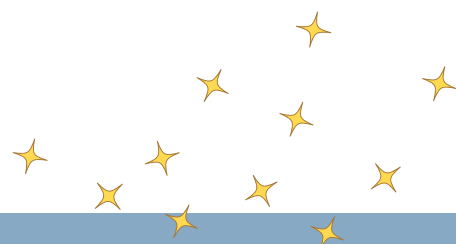
MARCH 15TH | 5PM - 10AM | FALMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH



Lydia Hoffman

Minister of Children and Families

lydia@falmouthcongregationalchurch.org



CHURCH

family news

- The Howison family as Mark's father battles Parkinson's disease.
- Ted and Dolores Vail who celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary this past Sunday!



- The Genese family as they grieve a family member who died last week.
- Cathy Bowden and family: Cathy's parents went into their eternal rest February 15 and February 18. Cathy and Ken thank you for your prayers that have buoyed and sustained them during this time. Cards of comfort: 9 Ashwood Lane Falmouth, ME 04105.
- Families in our church and community who are grieving the death of Nex Benedict. Prayers that all our children will be safe in their schools and communities.
- 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, who is in the hospital with high blood pressure and dizziness. She awaits an ablation in England. Her husband, who has advanced Parkinson's and dementia, relies 100% on her and refuses to receive help from anyone else. Please pray that this changes.

We Lift in Prayer...



- Stephen, Andrew and all those serving our country in the Middle East.
- Junior Bridges who is recovering from a broken wrist.
- Joan Jensen as she settles into Ocean View's Blueberry Commons: 3 Marion Way Apt. 3202 Falmouth, ME. Please send cards of welcome and encouragement.
- Joan's son, Michael, continues to be in care at Maine Medical after a stroke.
- Daric Collins Sr, Dana Collins' brother as he recovers from a stroke and continues to get tests done to find the cause.
- For James Smith as he settles back into his home after a recent brief hospitalization.
- 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
- 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! P.O. Box 102, Gray, ME 04039.

Ushers

- 3 - Alyce Graves & Susan Perry
- 10 - Kathie & Chan Sinnett
- 17 - Sarah Davis & Kim Hendry
- 24 - Nancy Lightbody
- 31 - Alyce Graves

Liturgists

- 3 - Charlotte Towns
- 10 - Nancy Lightbody
- 17 - Marilee Beinema
- 24 - Virginia Eddy
- 31 - Mark Horton

March Birthdays

- Paul Cousins
- Chris Davis
- Jack Davis
- William Edson
- Kim Hendry
- Devin McNeill
- Finn McNeill
- Christine Pfeffer
- John Wilcox



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United Church of Christ
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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