

THE CONGREGATOR

"Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time." -1 Peter 5:6



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A Letter From The Pastor

Dear Falmouth Congregational Church,

Did you know that our Boy Scout Troop, Troop 93, has graduated 72 Eagle Scouts? These young people work diligently to complete a major community service project, along with many other requirements, in order to be awarded the Boy Scout's highest honor. Whether Eagle Scout or no, all the children (our troop is co-ed!) spend a lot of time camping- including winter camping. The next time you are in Beinema Hall check out their log of camping outings- it is impressive.

Camping is a good metaphor for this season of Lent. When we are preparing to camp we have to make some tough choices- what do we really need? Not everything will fit in the car (or, if you are *really* camping, in your backpack). But some things are vitally important- you don't want to forget the matches or your sleeping bag!

The campsite is without many of the things we take for granted in our day to day lives- our phones, computers, televisions, plush furniture, cozy beds, etc. And yet, in that simplicity we are able to enjoy the beauty of nature, hear new family stories, and learn new things about ourselves and our fellow travelers.

The image the Bible gives us for Lent is a journey through the wilderness. A time of deciding what to carry in our backpacks and what to put down. A time of unburdening ourselves from things that might not be serving us, while picking up things that will help us in the next leg of our journey. We come from God's baptismal blessings and we stride towards the Easter miracle. Happy trails, fellow travelers! unasked for pilgrimage. I pray that we will remember that God goes with us in the waters of baptism, in the Easter miracle, and in the desert, too.

~Pastor Amelia
pastoramelia@falmouthcongregationalchurch.org



COUNCIL Corner

A Message from our Moderator



Hi – I hope everyone is doing well, staying warm, and enjoying the winter season!

We had a successful Annual Meeting in January. We had about 35-40 people attend which was great considering we held it virtually. I am quite confident that was a first for our church.

At the Annual Meeting we approved the 2021 budget knowing we had a \$24k deficit. The plan was to cover the gap with a second round PPP loan. Just to remind everyone we received a first round PPP loan of \$33,000 and we were granted forgiveness on the loan at the end of 2020. Unfortunately, we don't qualify for the second round PPP loan. To qualify, applicants must have a decline of at least 25% from 2019 to 2020, either year to year or quarter to quarter. The largest decline we had was in Q3 at 21%. Given this, we are running at a shortfall of approximately \$24k. We are optimistic that we will be able to make up this difference over the course of the year as (hopefully we are able to fully reopen at some point) through higher rental income (hopefully all renters are back by fall), higher plate offerings (we receive more when there are more people in the sanctuary), and hopefully a Holly Days Fair that is more like prior years. We also ended 2020 with a profit of around \$20k (not including the forgiveness of the PPP loan) so that is sitting on our balance sheet. This puts us in a strong cash position to comfortably meet our monthly expenses for the next 5-6 months. The Finance Committee along with the Council will monitor this situation closely over the coming months and provide regular updates.

Continuing our finance theme, January was a challenging month for us. We had a loss of about \$7k. We were expecting a loss of \$2k so this is a bit more than expected. This isn't a big deal for one month but it will be if we continue this trend. Pledge income was very light for January which is not uncommon for the first few months of the year. I will be the first to admit we are already behind on our pledge payments for 2021. It is harder to remember to pledge when we aren't in-person but the church relies on that revenue to pay our hard working staff and to provide important services to our congregation and community. So, I've had to reframe how to pay our pledge and what we've decided to do is pay two months at a time. You could also pay quarterly. There are lots of options. Please remember there are multiple ways to pay your pledge too: on-line (which is secure and super easy), mail it to the church (267 Falmouth Rd), or drop it off at the church (you can put it in the mailbox which is checked regularly). Thanks in advance for your support!

We are still recruiting for one more person to join the Council. If anyone is interested, please give me a call. I would love to talk about a role for you on the Council!! Last but not least (sorry I know this has been a long Council Corner), I want to share the great work that our Pastoral Relations Committee is doing in supporting Pastor Amelia in her role. They are a great sounding board for her especially during this pandemic. The members of the Pastoral Relations Committee are Cathy Bowden, and Stephen Hendry.

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

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207-756-9343



Pastoral Letter

Dear Falmouth Congregational Church,

Lent is a season of leaving. We leave the lush landscape of the Jordan river and follow Jesus into the wilderness.

The desert is a place of wandering, scarcity, shifting sands and isolation. It requires that we put down anything that we don't need for the journey, unburdening ourselves so that we can carry on.

This week marked 500,000 deaths from the COVID 19 pandemic. More American lives lost than in World War I, II, or the Vietnam War combined. This season we have seen so much leaving, and done so much leave taking: saying goodbye not only to those who have died, but also mourning our hopes and expectations for this time, leaving behind things we took for granted. Family traditions, visits to loved ones, the sort of births and deaths we envisioned, the outings and music that brought us joy,

the comfort of our daily routines; We each have our own list.

Lent is a season of returning. We walk towards the Easter miracle, and on the journey, we learn what it truly means to be God's beloved children. Our time in the wilderness reminds us of the blessings of more verdant times. We gather up things to take back with us: more wisdom, more spiritual practices, a better understanding of what gives us joy, and why.

This week 15% of Maine, and almost 13% of the United States, has received at least one COVID 19 vaccination. Many people in our church have gotten their shot. We are slowly, slowly, slowly beginning to glimpse visions of a return to normalcy— as the cases continue to get lower there is hope on the horizon.

Leaving is hard work. So is returning. We are right in the middle of both, and all of us are in different parts of this winding wilderness path. As we travel I pray that we will be able to mourn. I pray that we will be intentional about what we carry with us, going forward. I pray that we will be ever so gentle with ourselves, and each other, as we slog through this unasked for pilgrimage. I pray that we will remember that God goes with us in the waters of baptism, in the Easter miracle, and in desert, too.

~Pastor Amelia
pastoramelia@falmouthcongregationalchurch.org



Easter Flower Order Form

Easter Sunday, April 4, 2021

If you would like to order flowers for Easter, please fill out the form below and return it to the church office or place in the offering plate with payment.

* The deadline for flower orders and inclusion in the bulletin listing is Monday, March 22.

Please call the church office, 781-3413, if you have any questions. Thank you.

Please indicate the type and number of plants on the order form below.

PRICING: Lilies & Tulips are \$12, miniature Daffodils are \$6.* Pricing is from 2020, subject to change

Please make checks payable to: Falmouth Congregational Church and write "Easter Flowers" in the memo section.

I would like to purchase a plant (or plants) for the Easter Service:

Lilies (\$12) _____ Tulips (\$12) _____ Daffodils (\$6) _____ Total due \$ _____

In Loving Memory of: _____

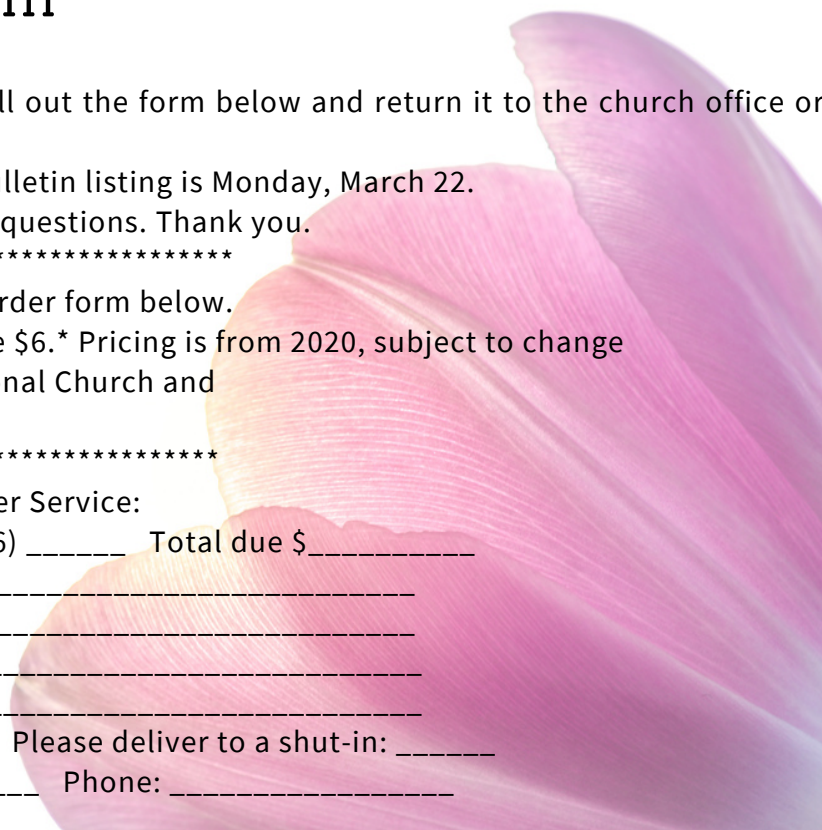
In Loving Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____

In Honor of: _____

After the service: I will pick up my plant(s): _____ OR Please deliver to a shut-in: _____

Given by: _____ Phone: _____



[Hope] is on the way

Pour some tea, and let's get ready!

Spiritual Practices Lenten Small Group Schedule:

- Feb 18: What are spiritual practices (and why do you need them?)
- Feb 23: Sacred Imagination (with Scripture)
- March 4th Ignatian Examen OR Centering Prayer (group decides)
- March 11th: Coloring with Rev. Kelli Whitman
- March 18th: Lectio Divinia with Minister of Visitation Jane Stegemann
- March 25th: Praying with beads

3 PM every Thursday in Lent. Come to one, a few, or all!



Return to In-Person Worship

After three months of worshipping virtually, we will be able to gather together again, starting Sunday, March 7th. Please register on our website.



MINISTRY OF *missions*

Church World Service Mission Kits



March's Special Offering: One Great Hour of Sharing

This important offering from our church 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. Please consider making a contribution to this far-reaching ministry of the UCC by sending 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 14.

We have a wonderful opportunity to create hygiene kits for those in need! Due to the pandemic, we are asking that each contributor create complete kits, which need to include:

- One hand towel measuring approximately 15" x 28" to 16" x 32" (no fingertip, bath, dish towel, or microfiber)
- One washcloth
- One wide-tooth comb removed from the package
- One fingernail or toenail clipper removed from the package (either one is acceptable)
- One bath-size bar of soap in the original package
- One toothbrush in the original package
- Ten standard-size Band-Aids
- All items need to fit inside a one-gallon Ziploc type bag.

Please do NOT add any extra items or toothpaste. A tube of extended-expiration-date-toothpaste will be added to each hygiene kit just prior to its final journey.

The completed kits, in the Ziploc bags, can be dropped off in the bin outside of Fellowship Hall.

Here is the link for more information and to sign up as a contributor:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/_1Dnkr4k8OXG3wdVUe9PFZwyS65_zv31L1s_j7wss3u0C4/edit?usp=sharing

Thank you very much!



Pastor's Discretionary Fund

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



Let love
flow. **One Great
HOUR
OF SHARING**

MINISTRY OF *missions*



Falmouth Food Pantry

Many thanks to those who have already put boxes of pasta inside the collection bin outside Fellowship Hall.

You have been PASTA-TIVELY amazing, so let's continue this exciting opportunity for one more month.

So, PASTA than a speeding bullet, our church will continue to collect different kinds of pasta during the month of March. The PASTABILITIES are endless

!If you would like, please put boxes of pasta into the collection bin outside Fellowship Hall, and the pasta will be given to very grateful Food Pantry families. THANK YOU!

(With cold weather and winter storms, the Falmouth Food Pantry is continuing to use an entirely doorstep delivery distribution system. Boxes of food are being packed at the Pantry and delivered by volunteers 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 continuing strong support.)



Family Promise



Family Promise is working with two homeless families to help them find homes. One is a family of four, and one is a couple expecting their first baby in March. With the pandemic, we haven't been able to provide hospitality like we were used to so we are excited to be able to help here.

Right now, the main need is Hannaford Gift Cards for food. Following are three ways you can help.

Best,

Steve Hendry,
Chair-Ministry of
Missions

1. When shopping at any Hannaford, you can pick up a physical gift card and either mail it to the church (267 Falmouth Road, Falmouth, ME 04105) or put it in the school kit bin just outside the entrance to the church. If you do put it in the bin, please email me at stevrunn@gmail.com or text me at 207-333-8780 and I'll go pick up.
2. You can purchase a card online at: <https://www.hannaford.com/shop/gift-cards>, select a physical card, and have it shipped to the Falmouth Congregational Church at the address above (shipping is free).
3. You can also send a check to the Falmouth Congregational Church (Subject line: FP - Missions), and we'll pool that money to purchase cards. Food insecurity is such a huge issue right now with many families struggling to make ends meet while balancing housing, bus, gas, food, and other bills. Your help here is greatly appreciated.

Here is the link for more information and to sign up as a contributor. (Please scroll down below the Mission Kit information!): <https://bit.ly/2MKBV2E>

You can use your landline or cell phone to call in 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.

This is similar to making a call to New York.



Suffering

I want to tell a story about a recent, sequential sharing of information and how that positively influenced people. We endearingly call my father's brother, Uncle Pauli, and at age 95, he is engaged in life in his retirement community in PA where he enjoys Bible Study. Several weeks ago, during Bible Study, he read about a gentleman named Cornelius Rempel, a Mennonite churchman and hospital chaplain who shares in the suffering of other people. "With some authority on the subject of suffering, he offers the following for our comfort":



1. Suffering is not God's desire for us, but occurs in the process of life.
2. Suffering is not given in order to teach us something, but through it we learn.
3. Suffering is not given to us to teach others something, but through it they may learn.
4. Suffering is not given to punish us, but is sometimes the consequence of sin or poor judgment.
5. Suffering does not occur because our faith is weak, but through it our faith may be strengthened.
6. God does not depend on human suffering to achieve God's purposes, but through it God's purposes are sometimes achieved.
7. Suffering is not always to be avoided at all costs, but is sometimes chosen.
8. Suffering can either destroy us or add meaning to life.
9. The will of God has more to do with how we respond to life, than with how life deals with us.

After sharing these 9 statements, I received a beautiful response which reads as follows:

"This is excellent. Thank you for sharing this wisdom. I once heard a sermon that detailed a story of a bus of schoolchildren that fell off a muddy road and pitched down the side of a mountain.

As people were first in shock at the suffering and loss of innocent lives, they then became angry. They were asking how God could let this suffering happen. They were viewing God as a puppeteer. He explained "God doesn't make things happen, he doesn't cause suffering. We live with free will, and things happen. We respond with our rage, reason or grace. Things will always happen.

The next week, my father died suddenly at age 65, looking and feeling the best he had in years. I remembered this sermon, and knew it was true. I responded to his death with sorrow and pain for what he lost and we lost, but ultimately with gratitude for the life he lived, and what he meant to everyone who knew him."

Another person's response was to add statement #10: "Suffering helps us learn compassion and resilience".

Amidst this difficult time, these responses are demonstrations of "silver linings" which are groundwork to support our faithful work to turn obstacles into opportunities.

~Jane Stegemann, Ph.D.
Commissioned Minister
jhsteg@gmail.com

LENT A TIME FOR REFLECTION AND PREPARATION.
LEANING INTO SUFFERING



MINISTRY OF

community life



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@falmouthcongregationchurch.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

Gratefulness

During the past 11 months, Judy Nilsen and Carol Kauffman have provided the all church email to those without computers or access to email.

How? They are quite a team!

Carol edits the email for duplications in Congregator where necessary, prints out 20 copies, provides address labels then hands them off to Judy Nilsen who folds and stuffs, stamps, addresses and mails the envelopes.

Then our beloved FCC members delight in receiving the FCC all church email information "hot off the press"!

This has been a wonderful help and they are now ready to pass this faithful offering to someone else to do.



At this point, it requires only once a month mailings as the email information dovetails every other week with the Congregator.

If you want to help, let me know. In the meantime, let us join together in praising God and thanking Judy and Carol for their faithful work!

Jane Hessemer Stegemann, Ph.D.

Commissioned Minister

jhsteg@gmail.com and 252-8272

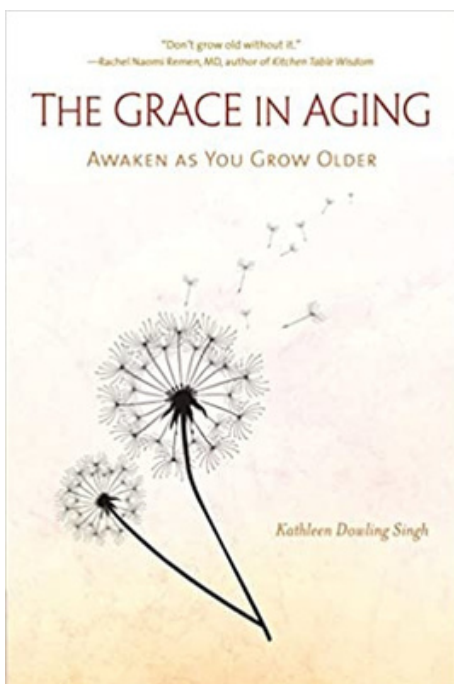


Women's Spiritual Book Group

On Wednesday, March 3rd at noon, the Women's Spiritual Book Group will meet virtually to discuss 'The Grace in Aging: Awakening as You Grow Older' by Kathleen Dowling Singh.

Reviews describe this book as "inviting all those who have ever experienced spiritual longing to awaken in their twilight years" and "suggests and explores causes and conditions that we can create in our lives to allow awakening to unfold -- transforming the predictable sufferings of aging into profound opportunities for growth in clarity, love, compassion, and peace".

Contact Cathy Bowden at cbbmaine@gmail.com or 776-5543 to join in these virtual conversations if you have not participated before. We welcome new faces! A Zoom link will be sent by email as the date of each meeting approaches.



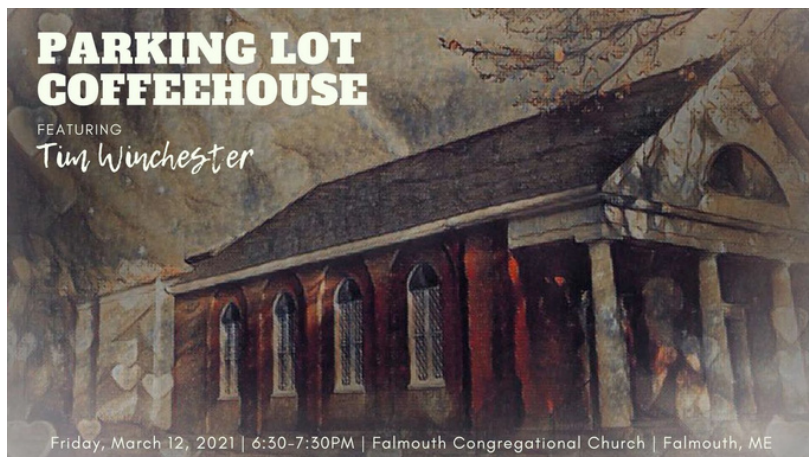
MINISTRY OF

Christian education

BY KRISTEN COLEMAN

Kid's Church will continue to meet 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 Game and clean up

This March we will be diving into the season of Lent. The children had Lent boxes delivered to them on Ash Wednesday. We will be doing lent activities like baking pretzels, creating beautiful art projects, and playing Lent games. Stay tuned for information about the Easter Egg Hunt coming soon.



Tim Winchester: Outdoor and Livestreamed

Friday, March 12th, 6:00 PM

Drive-in music is back by popular demand!

Join Falmouth Congregational Church and Tim Winchester for music in the parking lot.

Tim Winchester will sing over loudspeakers and, via a transponder, car radios can tune in. You can sing along, or not, from the safety of your car. This is a family-friendly, weather permitting event. Coffee drinks will be available.

Be there!

CHURCH family news

March Birthdays

- 
- 4. Jean Jett
 - 4. Trent Macgowan
 - 5. Paul Cousins
 - 8. Kim Hendry
 - 11. Anna Poore
 - 11. Katharine Poore
 - 14. Erlon Varney
 - 15. John Wilcox
 - 16. Helen Tupper-Southard
 - 17. Christine Pfeffer
 - 22. Madeline Bender
 - 23. Karen Jones
 - 24. Monica Aaskov
 - 26. Richard Wheeler
 - 27. Eric Christopher
 - 30. Spring Pillsbury
 - 30. Lydia Farmer
 - 31. Louise Caruso
 - 31. Jack Davis

HAPPY
BIRTHDAY



We Lift in Prayer...

- Alan Matthieu's brother, Wayne, and their mother, Anita, as she prepares to move to Stroudwater Lodge.
- Please pray for Peggy Halleck for comfort from sharp leg pain. Please send cards of comfort to: 32 Blueberry Lane Apt. #222 Falmouth, Maine 04105.
- Terri & Dana Collins as they return to complete health.
- Please pray with Vicki Miele who asks that we continue to pray for Pat who has been brought home in NC but remains on oxygen and is participating in rehab.
- Please pray for Bee O'Brien. Please send cards to: Room 309A 191 Foreside Road Falmouth, ME 04105.
- Please pray for Richard Corey's daughter's wife, Kris, who is having cancer treatment.
- Please pray for Sarah Davis' mother, Sydney, and her father, Joe, as he adapts to his role as caregiver.
- Please pray for Dr. Myron Krueger who is working to regain his usual lifestyle. Please pray for John Graustein's faithful PT work to strengthen himself.
- Please pray for Maureen Grubb's health as she has received her first vaccine!
- Please continue praying for Ginny Hamilton, Norm O'Brien, Bill Graves and Sally Emery.



Prayers of Joy:

- Kathy Whitmore is recuperating well after surgery.
- Lorraine Bergen called Jane Stegemann to share her tearful and heartfelt JOY after speaking with Helen Tupper-Southard on the phone.
- We praise God that more of our parishioners have gotten the COVID 19 vaccine! Please keep advocating for yourselves to get vaccines through your doctors or other resources!



*Prayers of comfort for
Barbara Wood's family,
Barbara went to her eternal
rest on February 23rd.*

*Please hold Gini Medford and
family in God's loving comfort
as her husband, Mark, went
into his eternal rest on
February 12th.*



March 2021 Calendar

**Important
Upcoming Dates:**

**April
Congregator
Deadline:
March 15th**

**Maundy
Thursday:
April 1st, 5:30 PM**

**Good Friday:
April 2nd, 6 PM**

**Easter:
April 4th, 10 AM**

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 12 PM Bible Study 6:30 PM Ministry of Worship & Covenant	2	3 12 PM Women's Spiritual Book Group 3 PM Recording 6:30 PM Handbell Choir Practice	4 8:30 AM Ecu Clergy Mtg 3 PM "Tea Time" 6:30 PM Ministry of Missions	5	6
7 Communion 10 AM Worship In Person or Online 10-12 Church School	8 12 PM Bible Study	9	10 3 PM Recording 6:30 PM Handbell Choir Practice	11 3 PM "Tea Time" 6 PM Ministry of Finance	12 6:00 PM Parking Lot Coffeehouse- Tim Winchester	13
14 10 AM Worship 10-12 Church School 11:30 AM Council of Ministries	15 Congregator Deadline 12 PM Bible Study	16	17 3 PM Recording 6:30 PM Handbell Choir Practice	18 3 PM "Tea Time"	19	20
21 10 AM Worship 10-12 Church School	22 12 PM Bible Study	23	24 3 PM Recording 6:30 PM Handbell Choir Practice	25 3 PM "Tea Time"	26	27
28 10 Worship 10-12 Church School 11:30 Ministry of Christian Education	29 12 PM Bible Study	30	31 3 PM Recording 6:30 PM Handbell Choir Practice			

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Phone: 207-781-3413
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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 and Property Manager
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