

SEPTEMBER UPDATE

Dear Members and Friends of Union Church,

It seems that we ask this every year, but I'm sure you'll agree that once again it is fitting. Where has the summer gone? I hope that it has been a blessed time for each of you as you entertained loved ones and enjoyed the beauty, weather, food and activities of the season. As the days get shorter and the nights cooler, let's take time to remember with gratitude all that we have experienced. We are each precious to God. May we feel the love!

Also, as the members of the search committee for a settled pastor begin their work, let us pray for them and for our church community in this time of transition. May we continue to grow in love and service to one another and to the wider community.

Nancy

Union Church Web Site: The Union Church Web Site <http://www.unionchurchme.com/home/> includes the weekly sermon and Sunday Bulletins and inserts as well as news items and pictures of church and community events. If you have pictures of church related events, please send them to Paul Schlaver. We may not be able to post everything, but it is a great way to share all that is happening in our community. Please visit our web page often!

Blessing of the Animals 2016



Union Church of Biddeford Pool held its annual Blessing of the Animals on Sunday, August 14 on the McPheeters' lawn. It turned out to be a hot, humid afternoon, so a number of two-legged and four-legged creatures chose to stay in a cool place. Nevertheless, Interim Pastor Rev. Dr. Nancy Parent Bancroft was able to bestow a blessing on a number of dogs who braved the trip with their owners. Each dog had a few words said about him or her, received Nancy's blessing and a bandana (which Katie Koles obtained) which said "Union Church" and "I am blessed."

In addition, financial donations were received, \$385.00 for the Animal Welfare Society and \$367.00 for Lucky Pup Rescue, each of which had representatives at our event. I want to thank all the many volunteers who helped make this blessing possible. Ken Murray, Mission Committee Chair

Laity Sunday: Union Church has held a Laity Sunday in past years and the Deacons decided that they would like to hold one again. They would like to hold a Laity Sunday on October 16, 2016. On this Sunday, all the parts of the worship service will be presented by people who are not clergy. We are hoping many of you will step forward and share your gifts by leading a portion of the service. Beyond the music and the ministry in the Children's Corner, the following portions of the service need volunteers:

Call to Order
Welcome to Worship and Concerns and Celebrations
Call to Worship
Invocation and the Lord's Prayer
Prayers of the People: Silent Prayer and Pastoral Prayer
Children's Message
Call to Offering and Prayer of Dedication
Scripture Readings
Sermon
Children's Sharing Time
Benediction

We have a wonderful congregation with many gifts. Share yours, by taking part in Laity Sunday on October 16. To volunteer, please contact Ken Murray at 985-6577 or ktmurray1727@hotmail.com
Ken Murray agreed to help organize that event.

Settled Pastor Search Process Update I would like to report that the Search Team has held its first meeting and is now beginning its work. We are preparing the publicity and information needed to outreach for candidates and to provide them with the information needed to help them decide if they think they might be a good fit for our church. The review of applications received and then interviews of some of them are not expected to begin for a few months. Our team has the challenge to determine if the candidates are a good fit for us and then present the best one to you! The Search Team, as previously announced is: Paul Schlaver, Lamar Robinson, Eve McPheeters, Debbie Lamb, Beth Baskin, Katie Koles, Joe Boyle and Heather Davis.

I will offer periodic updates of the progress on behalf of the Search Team. As I have previously said, anyone is welcome to offer their individual thoughts to me or members of the Search Team as to your ideal pastor and/or what the most important priorities in one would be. The process, though, will primarily be done quietly apart from the daily life of worship activities of Union Church. It may be quite some time before there can be wider church involvement in the final selection of a Settled Pastor so I ask you all to continue to support Nancy's ministry and the good work of our church in the community as this all unfolds.



Paul Schlaver, U C Moderator



Sy Montgomery

Another Amazingly Successful Speaker Series!

Our 15th annual summer speaker series combined an interesting array of speakers, from Hank Phillippi Ryan's thrilling crime novels, to Anita Diamant's smart and literary novels about place and relationships, to Tad Baker's interesting explorations to unravel the clues to our seaside past, to Sy Montgomery's escapades with octopuses and other wildlife.

Our faithful and devoted attendees seemed to enjoy

every night. And the results of our efforts are an expected \$16,650 in total revenues and approximately \$13,500 in proceeds for our local charity partners. (Of course, there are a few outstanding advertiser dollars to collect before we get there.)

Great thanks goes to our faithful and hard-working committee members and associated volunteers who contributed in many ways -- by soliciting ads, by hauling chairs and AV equipment from the community club, in parking patrol, ticket collecting, gift purchases, goody making, and speaker hosting.

Grateful thanks to all of you. We could never do it if each of you hadn't contributed. Bravo

Hank Phillippi Ryan



Calendar of Events:

September 4 – Communion Sunday: When receiving Communion, you may take from the half loaf, which is regular bread, or take a cube of gluten-free bread. The cups contain non-alcoholic grape juice. All are welcome.
– Collection for the Alternative Pathways Center student store.

September 9 – Free Course: FACTS AND MYTHS OF ISLAM, Union Church 2:00p.m.-4:00p.m. – All are welcome.

September 10 – Wedding of Alisha Allen and Craig Lauder 2:00 p.m.

September 11 – Mini -Music Sunday: “The one who sings prays twice” (St. Augustine) Though several of our musicians will be away on this Sunday, before our snow birds begin flying away we want to have a celebratory service using music as our primary way to praise and center on God. Though a full-fledged Music Sunday will be scheduled at a later date, September 11 will be a beautiful and sacred time together .

September 11 – Bible Presentation: After the service, Rev. Jonathan Wright-Gray will give a short presentation about the various bible options based on his years in the ministry and his knowledge of different translations. You'll then have an opportunity to give your opinion about what to purchase for our church to replace the faded and frayed copies that are now in the pews.

September 13 - Reiki - 9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. at the church office. If you are planning to take part, please contact John Forssen at jforssen@gmail.com.

September 13 - Deacons' Meeting at the Church Office, 4:30 p.m.

September 16 – Course, FACTS AND MYTHS OF ISLAM: Union Church 2:00p.m.-4:00p.m.

September 18 - Life Lessons Sunday: *Lessons from my Hobby*. Please consider contributing.

September 18 – Written opinion poll on Bibles

September 19 – Saco Meals

September 20 – Union Church service at St. Andre's Healthcare Center

September 20 - Reiki - 9:00 a.m. -11:30 a.m. at the church office. If you are planning to take part, please contact John Forssen at jforssen@gmail.com.

September 23 – Course, FACTS AND MYTHS OF ISLAM: Union Church 2:00p.m.-4:00p.m.

September 25 – Sunday Theme Facing Giants

September 30 – Course, FACTS AND MYTHS OF ISLAM: Union Church 2:00p.m.-4:00p.m.



Soup's On!

Thanks to our team of terrific soup makers, the Mission Committee is pleased to announce the return of our **Soup Friends Program** during the Fall and winter seasons. Soup makers take turns making and delivering delicious, nourishing soup to those in need of a friendly hello and a warm meal. If you would like to be on the list to receive soup and/or know of others who would benefit from it, please contact Laura Cobb @ lcobb82@gmail.com. The soup makers team is in need of a few new cooks, if you can help, please contact Laura (286-3426). It only requires a commitment about once every two months. Nothing like a hot bowl of soup to warm the cockles of your heart! Thanks to all! Laura

Dempsey Challenge: Jeremy Smith, Charlotte Cyr's significant other, is going to be participating in the Dempsey Challenge this October and will be trying to raise funds for the Dempsey Center which provides free services/support to those afflicted with cancer and their families. He will be challenging himself to a 70 mile bike ride on Sunday October 2nd. He has currently reached 25% of his goal of \$1000. If you want to help, his personal web page, hosted by the

Dempsey Challenge is: <http://cmhc.convio.net/goto/JeremySmithRide2016>. Alternatively, if people want to contact him directly his e-mail is: smith.jeremy1970@gmail.com

**Susan G. Komen 3-Day Breast Cancer
Walk**



Caryn Firebaugh and her team, The Ta-Ta's from KC, will be traveling to Seattle **September 16-18** to walk the Susan G. Komen 3-Day. The 3-Day is a 60 mile walk over the course of three days to raise awareness and money for breast cancer research, education and a variety of community assistance programs. The 3-Day family believes this isn't just a walk...but a journey to the end of breast cancer!

To donate, visit her web page: www.the3Day.org/goto/carynfirebaugh

If you have questions, please contact her at Racquetees@aol.com or [913-707-9038](tel:913-707-9038)

Reiki: Reiki is available to you on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month, 9:00 - 11:30 at the church office in Biddeford. The sessions are free, and you can drop in at any time during the scheduled hours.



Why would you do this? It calms the spirit and soothes the soul. If you need relief from stress, there is great support for you here. The first session is Tuesday, August 9 --and, please, if you are planning to come, send me a quick email <jforssen@gmail.com>. (John Forssen)



Bibles: You may have noticed that the bibles in the pews are very faded and worn. They have served the members of Union Church well, but displayed as they are now is comparable to flying a frayed and tattered American flag. They need to be replaced; but, with what? We are a very diverse congregation and there are many choices available. Though the decision about which bibles to purchase will be made at a later date by the settled pastor in consultation with the deacons, we want your input as well. So as to capture the most opinions, when the congregation is the largest, on September 18th, the members of the congregation will have an opportunity to offer their preferences on a written form. To help inform your decision, Rev. Jonathan Wright-Gray has offered his comments. (Please see below.) Printed copies of his remarks will be available on Sunday, September 5th for people who are unable to receive them by email. On the Sunday, September 11th, following our service Jonathan will give a short presentation and be available to answer any questions that you might have.

Suggestions for Comparing Bible Versions

- Select some very familiar texts, and read them aloud in the different versions. How texts sound can be quite different from how they read silently.
- Choose some narrative passages in the gospels or Paul's letters, or the Old Testament, and read them aloud.
- Be sure to examine the Psalms in each version being considered.

One question to consider is whether a pew Bible would be a good choice for unison or responsive reading by the congregation. This is not a current practice at Union Church, but is common in many Protestant churches, and might be an option the new settled pastor will want to use.

In any case, here below is some information on four of the most widely used translations, in order of publication date, and my evaluation of their strengths and weaknesses. There are literally dozens of different translations, each of which have their own history, purpose and selling points, but I think only a few stand out for consideration for common use as a pew Bible.

NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION (1978)

One of the most widely used Bible translations today, it has become the most common version used in evangelical Protestant churches, but much less so in mainline denominations.

Plusses:

Balanced approach to translation- Uses some of the more literal word for word translation method and some of the more dynamic phrase for phrase approach. For the most part it reads well in public worship.

Negatives:

Theological Bias- Has been criticized by many scholars and theologians for skewing the text in some cases to reflect

evangelical theology.

Not gender-neutral- While all the other translations discussed here have been careful to eliminate masculine language when referring to both men and women, and to minimize masculine language when referring to God where possible while being true to the text, the NIV does not do this.

Lack of ecumenical acceptance- Due to the reasons above. This remains a Bible primarily for one theological group.

NEW REVISED STANDARD BIBLE (1989)

Widely accepted for its accuracy in translating the original languages of the Bible, this is the official revision or updating of the King James Bible.

Plusses:

Accuracy- (the preferred study Bible by many)

Ecumenical acceptance- (including by the Roman Catholic, eastern Orthodox and all mainline Protestant churches)

Familiarity- (passages like the 23 Psalm, the Beatitudes and the Christmas story sound like what people expect them to sound like, for the most part)

Good for reading in worship - familiar cadences, poetical renditions of the psalms

Negative:

Word by word translation philosophy- While this provides faithful accuracy to the original Hebrew and Greek, it leaves the language sounding somewhat stilted and may not convey the meaning as well in English. This often puts more demand on the reader or listener to figure out what the text really means.

CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH VERSION (1995)

Published by the American Bible Society, this is the successor to the popular “Good News Bible”, intended to read like colloquial English with a standard vocabulary and style, somewhat like the Reader’s Digest.

Plusses:

Understandability- There is an ease of listening that can seem like it is bringing the Bible into modern, everyday life.

Bible study- Great for comparative study alongside the very accurate (and often more familiar) NRSV above.

Ecumenical acceptance

Negative:

Dynamic or “phrase by phrase” translation philosophy- While this leads to the understandability and colloquial feel of this translation, there are two reasons why some will feel it is less appropriate for common use in worship. First, it will often sound less familiar than what one expects the Bible to sound like. Second, when it comes to the Psalms, for example, there is very little sense of poetic flow or cadence, often leaving a rather flat feeling.

COMMON ENGLISH BIBLE (2011)

This relatively new version was sponsored by half a dozen major Protestant denominations with very broad ecumenical input. It was made specifically with public worship as well as Bible study and devotional reading in mind.

Plusses:

Accuracy and clarity- Balancing these twin goals is the CEB’s great strength. While leaning more to the “dynamic equivalent” or “phrase by phrase” translation philosophy, it does not go as far as the CEV above in adopting colloquial sounding language. But it does sound more like everyday modern English than the NRSV, while at the same time being a very accurate translation.

Use in public worship- The Psalms in particular retain a poetic cadence, while at the same time reading more like modern English.

Ecumenical acceptance- A very broad and diverse group religiously was used in creating this translation.

Negative:

Perhaps the only downside is if one is looking for a more thoroughly traditional sounding translation for use in worship. Certainly many churches use the NRSV for this reason. And until quite recently the CEB was not available.

A word about paraphrases:

“The Living Bible” by Kenneth Taylor and more recently “The Message” by Eugene Peterson, are examples of another category of Bible versions. These are personal interpretations of the Biblical text by one person, reflecting on their own theology and understanding. While helpful for devotional reading and study, when used in conjunction with genuine translations, they would not be suitable for a common pew Bible.

All of the Bibles discussed above were created by a community of translators, with great attention given to reflecting the original text of the Bible with great accuracy. A paraphrase version would not be a good choice for a pew Bible, because it is inherently one person’s interpretation of the text, and not the text itself.

Jonathan Wright-Gray

Beginning September 9th!



FACTS AND MYTHS OF ISLAM

Learn about the history and practices of Islam and its effects on the world and how it is similar to and how it is different from Judaism and Christianity.

The seven-week course will involve 2-hour sessions with a video or two for every class plus various handouts and a Saturday visit to a mosque.

The instructor Brother Albert Heinrich FIC, a Brother of Christian Instruction for fifty-four years, taught science and mathematics at high school and college levels in Ohio, Alaska, and Tokyo Japan for 31 years, worked at Alaska Radio Mission broadcast station KNOM for 4 years in Nome, Alaska, and in parish ministry in Nome, Alaska for 3 years. Since returning to Alfred, Maine in the summer of 2005, he has taught sixteen Senior College classes for the York County Senior College. The last two courses were about ISLAM.

Classes will begin on Friday, September 9, 2:00-4:00 at Union Church. All are welcome to attend this free course.



Life Lessons

Sunday

– *Lessons From My Hobby*: At one time or another you have all had a hobby, interesting past-time or have been involved in sports. These experiences have enriched your lives and taught you lessons from which we can all benefit. Please consider sharing your thoughts, writing a prayer, poem or short essay, sending a photo, etc. no later than September 12, which can be used in our September 18th service.



Ever After Mustang Rescue : Please consider being a \$10 supporter in the program for **Ever After Mustang Rescue's 10th Annual Benefit Horse Show**. You'll be listed on "Supporters" pages (\$100 per page). **To be a \$10 supporter, please contact Anita before Tuesday (9/6)** (ideally, today) **and you can pay Anita later, with cash or by check made out to EAMR**. If you'd like to purchase an ad (black and white) and supply your own ad copy — which would be especially easy if you were to use ad copy from the speaker series program -- contact Anita, 284-1273 or awcoupe@gmail.com. *Thank you for your consideration!*

The Horse Show is Saturday, October 8 . . . at Hollis Equestrian Park, Route 5, Hollis 04042. . . 9 to "finish". For observers, admission is free; to compete, a registration fee applies. For more information go to <https://www.facebook.com/events/253730601687147/>

Or call 207-284-7721 for details.





Alternative Pathways Center Store (APC): The students at APC earn APC bucks through good attendance, good grades, respectful behavior, and doing positive things around the school. With their APC bucks they can buy such things as snacks and gift cards for movie theaters, Subway, pizza, Dunkin Donuts, etc.



Thank you for the cash contributions that you made last week. The mission committee would also like to deliver some tangible items to the store so we are extending our drive another week. If you have the time, please consider stopping in at Smitty's Cinema, Dunkin Donuts, a local pizza parlor, etc. to buy gift cards, or pick up some snack items when you are doing your regular shopping. By helping to stock the APC Store we can show these kids who are struggling with many challenges that there are people who care about them. **Please bring your donations in this Sunday and place them in the box at the front of the church.**

A Night for Animal Lovers' with Caroline McNerney - Friday, September 9th
Dessert & Coffee are available at 6:30 p. m. Talk at 7:00pm. At the Biddeford Pool Community Club. Free!
Carolyn will share animal stories from her personal experiences. Her stories vividly illustrate the powerful force the natural world employs - a healing force accessible and available to all.
Come listen, learn, and share your own stories.