

# Union Church April 2017 Update



Mandy Groce '12

ministry-to-children.com

You are invited to fill me in (with the many events listed below) and color!

Dear Members and friends of Union Church,

Despite the crazy-making weather, the days are visibly longer and the buds on the trees continue to plump up. Spring is really here and now we begin Passiontide, the last two weeks of Lent.

During the first four weeks of Lent we were invited to take time to deepen our spirituality, feed our souls, and enjoy some intimacy with our God. Now, the scripture readings, prayers and services during these last two weeks dramatically portray the depth of Jesus' love and our call to imitate him. It is to the degree that we love and allow ourselves to be loved that we live fully. Easter is the celebration of that expanded life; new life! If the business of daily activities or other events have prevented you from taking time to feed your spirit, you still have many opportunities to do so.

This week our Sunday Communion Service will be enhanced with the talent of Jim Rice our guest musician. Even if you haven't attended so far, you are invited to take part in the Lenten scripture discussion group at the office on Tuesday, April 4<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m. April 5-6 is the annual women's retreat at Marie Joseph Spiritual Center. This is a time of shared prayer, song, discussion and laughter. Last year we all left a little lighter. April 9<sup>th</sup> we celebrate Palm Sunday with a triumphal procession. Please bring your bells, drums, or other instruments as together we make a joyful noise to the Lord. Tuesday, April 11, Jan Hryniewicz and Deirdre Drennen will lead a prayer circle at 9:00 a.m. at The First Congregational Church, 141 North Street in Kennebunkport. On Thursday, April 13<sup>th</sup> you are invited to join the deacons at Seeds of Hope, 35 South Street, Biddeford, as we celebrate Maundy Thursday there by sharing hot cross buns. Thursday evening at 7:00 p.m. is our Candles and Communion Service, when we reenact the last actions of Jesus with a foot washing ritual, communion and Tenebrae. It is a moving experience and a beautiful way to enter the sacredness of the season. We begin celebrating the Resurrection on

*Sunday, April 16 at 5:45 with a sunrise service at Anita and Brad Coupe's home 20 Ocean Avenue, Biddeford Pool. We continue our celebration with a lovely pot-luck breakfast, 7:00 – 8:30, at the community club, 2 Yates Street, Biddeford Pool. Finally we have our traditional Easter Sunday Service at the church at 10:00. So if you haven't given yourself the opportunity to experience the blessings of Lent, you still have many opportunities to do so. Come feel the embrace of our warm, loving and joy-filled community as we celebrate this sacred season.*

*Love, as always,*

*Nancy*

#### **Lenten Psalm of Longing**



I thank you, O God,  
for the warming of the winds  
that brings a melting of the snow,

for daylight hours that daily grow longer  
and richer in the aroma of hope.  
Spring lingers beneath the horizon  
as approaching echoes of Easter  
ring in my ears.  
I lift up my heart to you, Beloved,  
in this season of Lent  
that gently sweeps across  
my sluggish and sleeping heart,  
awakening me  
to a deeper love for you.  
May the wind of the Spirit  
that drove Jesus into the desert,  
into the furnace of prayer,  
also drive me with a passion  
during this Lenten season  
to enkindle the fire of my devotion  
in the desert of Lenten love.  
May I earnestly use this Holy Season to answer the call to return to You.  
Amen  
Edward Hays, *Prayers for a Planetary Pilgrim*

## 2017 SUMMER SPEAKER SERIES

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS ... SAVE THE DATE ... BUY TICKETS EARLY!**

Sunday July 16 Christina Baker Kline – *A Piece of the World (2017)*, novel inspired by Andrew Wyeth’s iconic painting, “Christina’s World”

Thursday July 27 Anita Shreve – *Stars are On Fire (2017)*, novel based on Maine’s 1946 fire, the largest in its history

Thursday August 10 Howard Mansfield – *Sheds (2016)*. A “cultural historian” of “emotionally and intellectually nourishing books” re architecture and preservation.

Thursday August 24 The Telling Room - *The Story I Want to Tell (2014)*. Young writers reading their stories, having been mentored by The Telling Room, a Portland nonprofit, and Maine masters of writing such as Gilbert, Blanco, Russo and more.

Watch for e-announcement for online ticket sales (while they last),

beginning with Series Tickets only starting ~ April 1, single event tickets ~ May 1 .



### **Mission Committee**

Thanks to the great success of the 2016 Summer Speaker Series, whose proceeds fund the mission outreach of our church, the Mission Committee was able to reach out and help fund several projects above and beyond our regular 2016 annual budget. In last month's Monthly Update, we told you about how we were able to help two refugee families in Biddeford. Now, I am pleased to report on three additional gifts:

1. Through Education for All Children-Kenya we are sponsoring a secondary or post-secondary student's education fees in that country. We will have more information about our particular student in the future.
2. We made a donation to the Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project, which assists immigrants and refugees in Maine with all the legal and regulatory issues that they face.
3. We made an extra donation to Seeds of Hope Neighborhood Center, one of our regular mission partners, to help replace clothing and other goods that were stolen in a break-in at their facility.

The next meeting of the Mission Committee is in the church office at 11:00 a.m. on Monday, May 1, 2017. You are cordially invited to attend, without obligation, to learn about the work we do on behalf of Union Church.

Ken Murray, Chair

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April 2 – Communion Sunday – Fifth Sunday in Lent

April 4 – Lenten Group Discussion, 1:00 p.m., Church Office

April 5-6 – Women’s Overnight Retreat (Women of Grace) April 5, 4:00p.m. – April 6, 1:00 p.m.

April 9 – Palm Sunday

April 11 – Holy Week Prayer Circle - The First Congregational Church, 141 North Street, Kennebunkport

April 12 – Knit Wits 11:00 a.m. -1:00 p.m. Church Office

April 13 – Visit to Seeds of Hope (Share Hot Cross Buns)

- Maundy Thursday service 7:00 p.m.

April 16 – Easter Sunrise Service 5:55 a.m. Anita and Brad Coupe’s home,20 Ocean Avenue, Biddeford Pool

- Free Community Pot-Luck Breakfast 7:00-8:30, 2 Yates Street, Biddeford Pool
- Easter Service, Union Church 10:00 a.m.

April 18 – Prayer Service St. Andre’s Health Center

April 23 – Life Lessons Sunday: Lessons from Spring

April 26 - Knit Wits 11:00 a.m. -1:00 p.m. Church Office

**Treats Wanted:** The teachers who work with the immigrant students at the Biddeford Primary school say that the kids are often hungry, so they have been spending their own money buying snacks for them and handing them out throughout the day. By donating snacks we can help the teachers and communicate that Union Church welcomes immigrants. The teachers suggest Cheerios or other healthy cereals put in snack bags, granola bars, fruit cups, snack cracker packages, etc.

Alternative Pathways, the high school for challenged kids at risk of not graduating opens a store every Friday where students can use the credit that they’ve earned through attendance, completing their homework, acts of kindness, etc. to buy snacks and other small things that they otherwise could not afford. They appreciate power bars, and other snack items, Snapple, bottled flavored tea and gift cards to fast food restaurants.

There is a box in the second side pew to collect donations for each school. They will certainly appreciate your generosity.



**Holy Week Prayer Circle:** You are invited to join the women of The First Congregational Church at 141 North Street in Kennebunkport for a Holy Week Prayer Circle:

***Let Go of the Shore, Circle of Prayer and Song*** with Rev. Jan Hryniewicz and Deirdre Drennen on Tuesday morning, April 11th at 9:00 am.

Enjoy your morning coffee following the 45 minute gathering.



## Knit Wits at work

Contact Carol Sherman  
[cksherman@me.com](mailto:cksherman@me.com) or  
207.967.9967 if you'd like to join.



### *Message from the Finance Committee:*

The Finance Committee and Executive Committees recently discussed potential ways that Union Church members and friends might consider planning for bequests to benefit our Church, as they do their estate planning. Non-profit organizations often promote such planning among their supporters. As with the recent generous bequest received from Karen Barbie's estate, these gifts can go a long way to ensure our long term financial stability.

In the case of Karen's estate, the bequest was unrestricted, meaning that she left it up to Union Church leadership as to how best to allocate and utilize the money realized from the bequest. You can also make a restricted bequest if there is some specific direction in which you would want the Church leadership to focus the use of funds realized from your bequest. For instance, you might direct that the proceeds go toward Union Church Missions, or toward the Preservation Fund, or toward an endowment for continuing education for the pastor, or for some combination of uses. Or, as mentioned above, you can simply leave the allocation of funds up to Church leadership. These are just a few among a myriad of options.

If you have questions about any of this, any one of us would be more than happy to have a confidential discussion with you. The following are examples of language that could be added to your will as you plan or revise your estate with your attorney:

#### ***Unrestricted bequest***

*'I give \_\_\_\_\_ [\$ amount, description of property, or % of estate] to the Union Church of Biddeford Pool, Maine, located at [address], for its unrestricted use'.*

#### ***Restricted bequest***

*'I give \_\_\_\_\_ [\$ amount, description of property, or % of estate] to the Union Church of Biddeford Pool, Maine, located at [address], for the purpose of \_\_\_\_\_'."*

We thank you for your kind consideration of this wonderful way to leave a legacy of support for our Church, and for the generations that will come after us to worship in our special place.