

Union Church

Monthly Update-November 2017



From the Pastor...

How quickly time passes as we move from the warmer days of September and October into the month of November, a time for giving thanks and a time to remember those we have loved and lost. Many of us remember celebrating All Saint's and All Soul's Day on November 1st and 2nd, a time to remember the holy people who have come before us and to think back with affection about beloved family and friends we have lost. In Mexico, they celebrate the Day of the Dead where they visit the gravesites and bring a picnic to commune with the spirits of

precious loved ones. It seems a fitting time of year to recall those we have lost as we move into the season of Thanksgiving when we gather with dear friends and family to share a meal and to take stock of all the blessings in our lives.

Among the many blessings of this past year, I certainly count my call to serve as Pastor at Union Church among them. It has been a wonderful time of introduction for me in recent months, to the traditions and rituals, the committees and outreach, and most especially to all of the wonderful members and friends whom I have had the privilege and pleasure of coming to know over this time. It has been a joy for me to share visits with many in the church, and I will continue to welcome that opportunity in the days ahead. We all have stories of our lives and I know that this is just the beginning. The conversations I have shared with so many of you have been inspiring, interesting, and truly fun as we have spoken about the joys and sorrows that many have shared. Thank you to all of you for making time to visit with me and for your warm welcome, your support, and your encouragement.

My hope and prayer is that in the coming days, you may take time to be still, to rest, to remember those you have lost and to give thanks for all the simple gifts of your life.

In Peace, Pastor Paula

Updates from Various Committees

From Mission...

Bakers Needed for In-A-Pinch: On *Tuesday, November 14* we will be hosting the meal at the In-A-Pinch non-food essentials pantry. If you are able to bake a batch of cookies or brownies or bars of some sort, please sign up on the sheet in the vestibule. If you'd like Debbie Lamb to deliver the baked goods to In-A-Pinch, please contact her at 282-2644 or dlamb4711@gmail.com. Thank you for your help!



Don't Forget the Seeds of Hope Brunch: This event will take place at the Nonantum Resort in Kennebunkport on Sunday, November 19. It is a wonderful thing to do after church that morning. It is the biggest fundraiser for Seeds of Hope Neighborhood Center in Biddeford, which is a program supported by the Union Church mission program. Tickets are \$30 per person and may be ordered through the Seeds of Hope website.

EFAC News: Jo Deupree, summer resident of Biddeford Pool and volunteer with the Education for All Children-Kenya program, recently traveled to that country and met with Diana Jepchirchir, the student we sponsor through our mission program. Jo carried with her the letter and cards from our church. Diana was very grateful to receive them and is grateful for our support. Diana is a first-year secondary school student and is near the top of her class. Jo sent back this picture of the two of them.



Jo Deupree and Diana Jepchirchir (l to r)

Social Justice & Peace Planning Group: Recently, a group of people interested in exploring the connection between Christian faith and social justice and peace issues met after church. From that meeting, they delegated a small group to come up with a plan to carry the discussion further. That group, Rev. Paula Norbert, Stephen Fox, Anne Murray and Ken Murray, met and proposed the following plan:

- Shortly, we will propose two dates and times for initial meetings of two groups, one a daytime meeting and one an evening meeting.
- Each group will have the freedom to set its own schedule of six monthly meetings to begin in the new year.

- Each group will have the freedom to choose a topic to explore over the course of those six monthly meetings beginning in the new year.
- Participation in these groups is entirely voluntary, depending on people's interest and availability.

Watch for more information about the initial meetings, coming soon

Trustees Update...

We are scheduled to have our church sanctuary painted starting on Monday, November 6th. During this time, our Services will be held at the Biddeford Pool Community Center which is located nearby. If you need directions to the Center, please ask one of our Deacons. Parking is a little more challenging, so we ask that you arrive a little earlier to allow time. The Service will be held on the second floor of the Center. The Trustees have set up a schedule to prepare for the move from the church to our temporary site at the Center. Given that the Center hosts other activities during the week, we will need to put the chairs and table away each week following the Service and then set up the room each week on the Saturday prior to the Sunday Service. Our hope is that we will only need to be there for two Sundays, but we will keep you posted as it unfolds.

Here is the schedule for the move...



Nov 5 After worship service and gathering time, Trustees and volunteers to move items to prepare worship center for painting

Nov 11 10:00 AM Trustees to set up BPCC for worship service (to be

taken down immediately after Nov 12 Sunday service)

Nov 18 10:00 AM Trustees to set up BPC for worship service (to be taken down immediately after Nov 19 Sunday service)

Nov 20 4:00 PM Trustees to move stored items back into Union Church.

Volunteers are welcome to join in any of the above activities

Benefit Bake Sale



The Saco Meals Program will sell Jackie Fontaine's famous homemade PORK PIES as a fund raiser for the Saco Meals Program again this year before Thanksgiving. The pies are \$15.00 for a nine-inch pie. They will be available for purchase and pickup on the afternoon of Friday November 17th at the meal site in the Most Holy Trinity Church Hall at in Saco. They do not have to be pre-ordered. If these logistics are not workable for you, Paul Schlaver is willing to pick up some pies that have been pre-ordered with him and then will be available for pickup at the Union Church worship service on Sunday, November 19th. That service will be held at the Biddeford Pool Community Club, due to the painting

of the interior of the church building. The pies will be in the Club refrigerator and payment arrangements can be made with Paul. His email address is: Schlaver@maine.rr.com and phone number is 207-571-4285.

ALSO

The Saco Meals Program is pleased to announce that **Saco Meals Program** has been selected to be a part of the exciting Hannaford Cause Bag program designed to create revenue streams for nonprofits like us.

For every reusable Fight Hunger bag with the “This bag has helped feed someone in need” message purchased during the month of **November** at the Hannaford store located in Saco \$.25 will be donated to this organization! The bag retails for just \$1.50 and is located on the reusable bag rack. As you may know, the City of Saco now does not allow stores to provide plastic bags with purchases, thus creating an even stronger need for grocery shoppers to use reusable shopping bags like the Fight Hunger Bags offered in the store for purchase.



Donate some healthy snack items for November please!

The Union Church Mission Committee has decided to expand the collection of healthy snacks for the ELL kids promoted during Lent last

spring. This effort started on October 1st, and will last through the entire school year, we ask that our Union Church family bring in healthy snack items on Sundays and place them in a plastic bin in the front side pew. The focus will be on the first Sunday of each month, Communion Sunday. Whatever is collected will be taken to the Biddeford Primary School on the following Monday. You are welcome to bring in items on other Sundays if you cannot attend on the first Sunday.

From Our Deacons...

Scripture Readers-We invite those interested in serving as a reader for our Sunday Services to please sign up in the vestibule of the church for dates that work for you. Both new and returning readers are welcome.

The Deacons will be wearing name tags at the Sunday Service so that those who are attending may easily connect with one of the Deacons should anyone have questions or concerns. We also want to let guests know whom they might connect with should they have questions or are seeking information.

Recent Events at Union Church:

A gathering of women...

On a lovely fall evening, October 25th, many of the women of Union Church gathered at the Biddeford Pool Community Center for a time of fellowship and good food. The women were generous in their food offerings to be sure, and delicious appetizers, soups, main dishes and desserts were shared.

The real purpose of the gathering was to share stories and get to know one another in a relaxed way. After some time to enjoy our meals and

chat with others at the tables, we were treated to a viewing of the beautiful video on the sacredness of nature which had been assembled and edited by our own Jen Comeau. Everyone enjoyed seeing the beautiful photos of nature, set among other photos of endangered species, which had been set to music. We will look forward to another evening of fellowship in a few months.

Men's Breakfast:

A group of men from the church gathered on Thursday morning, October 19th at Three Sisters in Arundel to enjoy breakfast and conversation together. A dozen men from the church attended and shared a nice meal and the opportunity to get to know one another better. Other activities are planned for the coming months.

A reflection from Peter McPheeters as he concluded treatment for cancer, composed on Monday, October 23rd...

As I write, I am on the train down to Boston for my 20th and last radiation treatment at Mass General, and I think it is a good time for me to reflect upon, and to try to articulate some of the very many things for which I am and have been grateful throughout this journey.

The caregivers that I have had the privilege of seeing, from the wonderful Portland medical community to the amazing work that happens every day at Mass General, have been universally amazing. I am so thankful that I have had the great good fortune to live near enough to such a world class facility, where they are striving every day, if not to cure, then at least to make these illnesses so much more

manageable. As an example, very recent treatment innovations have so enhanced the precision with which they are able to deliver my radiation, that it has allowed them to safely increase the intensity of the treatments, and thus to decrease the duration from five weeks to four. This is why today is my last day.

At least equally important has been the amazing support of family, friends, church community, etc. Eve has been a loving rock from the first hint of a problem, through the worst days of bad biopsy results, and all of the hard decisions that had to be made as a result, to the more mundane, such as cheerfully packing me a delicious lunch to take on the train every day. Our kids have been equally wonderful and thoughtful. I staunchly maintain that the caregivers often have at least as difficult a journey as the afflicted, and get a mere fraction of the sympathy and support.

Of course, the Union Church community has been awesome, with heartfelt words of support, cards that seemingly arrive at just the right moments, and of course the prayers. One of our parishioners has already claimed credit for my shortened treatment because of her prayers, I will happily give her partial credit, but I know and she knows that she must share my thanks with many, many others. I knew that the power of prayer is very strong, but this has been a great reminder to me of just how strong it can be, and believe me, it has been powerfully felt.

As I have waited my turn every day in the reception area at the hospital, it is so apparent that I am one of the very lucky ones. There are so many folks there who are in real trouble, but the fellowship in that space is very powerful, and the great attitudes and mutual support that I have seen and experienced every day in there have been nothing short of inspirational.

Finally, I thank you (Pastor Paula), and Nancy, and Jan for all of the

inspiration that I have felt from you most recently, and from them over the years. Our community is so blessed!

I hope you will pass my heartfelt thanks along to everyone. I am one lucky guy!

November Calendar Events

- **Nov 5th Communion Sunday & healthy snacks collection**
- **Nov. 6th Mission Committee meeting 11am church office**
- **Nov 8th Knit Wits 10am church office**
- **Nov 12th Worship Service at BPCC**
- **Nov 14th In a Pinch meal at Seeds of Hope**
- **Nov 19th Worship Service at BPCC**
- **Nov 19th Seeds of Hope Nonantum Brunch fundraiser 11am-2pm**
- **Nov 19th Interfaith Thanksgiving Service 7pm N. Saco Cong. Church**
- **Nov 20th Finance Committee 10am at Ocean View office**
- **Nov 22nd Knit Wits 10am church office**

Here is another local event that might be of interest to some!



Thrive Inspiring Positive Change

Welcome to THRIVE! We are a group of health care providers in the Biddeford/Saco area with a common goal to inspire lives full of joy and well-being. We will be offering monthly learning labs where we will have yummy local food along with a speaker on different aspects of health...and of course plenty of lovely conversation! Community is our love...our driving force so let us know what you want to learn about!!

THE FIRST EVENT:

Saturday, November 4

First Aid for Stress

9:30am, 10:30am & 11:30am, Pepperell Mill Campus, Biddeford
(at Think Tank during the Farmer's Market held in the event space next to Portland Pie Company)

Join **Dr. Aline Potvin** for *Stress Management First Aid*, a short 20-minute talk on the ways you can quickly evaluate and diffuse stress responses. Leave knowing your body better, with simple strategies to calm yourself and share with your friends. We will also have some delicious prepared foods to sample from The Farm in Saco. Come share with us and join the conversation!