



Union Church of Belgrade Lakes

United Methodist Church

Location: 67 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes, Maine
Mailing Address: P. O. Box 133, Belgrade Lakes, Maine 04918
Phone: 207-495-3599

Church Email: unionchurchmaine@gmail.com
Pastor's Email: unionchurchumcbelgrade@gmail.com
Website: unionchurchmaine.org

Union Rider

MAY 2021 Newsletter



Dear Members
and Friends of
Union Church,

Happy
Easter! Grace
and peace to you
in the name of
our Risen Lord
and Savior Jesus
Christ, who was,
and is, and will

A WORD FROM THE PASTOR

always be the rock of our faith and the source of our strength! And so Easter is far more than one day, and far more, even, than a season. As Christians, we are Easter people, and together we strive to be "The Resurrected Church."

One year ago this month, we were in the depths of a great time of uncertainty, brought upon the world by the COVID-19 pandemic. In the year since, we have experienced, endured, and survived much. We have lamented, grieved, and at times, shaken our fist at God. Yet through it all, we can repeat the words I offered in the May 2020 newsletter: "God is working among us, through us, and yes, in spite of us in these trying times. We are reaching more people than ever before through our church website and Facebook page, as we are sharing our worship experiences far more

broadly than we could have imagined a mere six weeks ago. We will not return to "the way things were before..." but I am sure that God has been with us, that God has been at work in this through us, and that God will continue to guide us into the future. It's a future that remains mostly hidden from our view just now, for certain, but it is a future into which we walk with the blessed assurance that our Creator God, our Redeemer Christ, and our Sustaining Holy Spirit walk beside us, and guide us."

Indeed, we have not yet returned to "the way things were before..." and in some ways, we will never. But the words I shared still ring true – God has been with us, God has been at work in this through us, and God will continue to guide us into the future. To that end, I am making plans to take up the visioning process we had just begun when COVID-19 shut things down in March 2020. So stay tuned for more to come on that...

Elsewhere in this newsletter, I encourage you to read about our shared financial stewardship that demonstrates your collective faithfulness to God's call upon us as Christ's "Resurrected Church." And I encourage you to read about the wonderful work that our Missions and Outreach Committee is doing on behalf of us all, as they strive to find and meet the needs of our communities – local, regional, and global. I am

beyond grateful for the spirit of abundance that has carried us through challenging times – the God we serve is truly a God of abundance! The church I serve alongside you is truly a church who lives out God's Spirit of abundance.

To God be the glory for the great things God has done; and is doing in the midst of it all!!!

May you be well and be blessed as we move forward together in Christ's Love and Service,

Pastor Eleanor Collingsworth



Quarantined by Fear

Bible in a Year:

- 2 Samuel 6–8
 - Luke 15:1–10
- Seek his kingdom

Luke 12:31

Today's Scripture & Insight: **Luke 12:22–34**

In 2020, an outbreak of the coronavirus left the world in fear. People were quarantined, countries were put under lockdown, flights and large events were canceled. Those living in areas with no known cases still feared they might get the virus. Graham Davey, an expert in anxiety, believes that negative news broadcasts are "likely to make you sadder and more anxious." A meme that circulated on social media showed a man watching the news on TV, and he asked how to stop worrying. In response, another person in the room reached over and flipped off the TV, suggesting that the answer might be a shift in focus!

Luke 12 gives us some advice to help us stop worrying: "Seek his kingdom" (v. 31). We seek God's kingdom when we focus on the promise that His followers have an inheritance in heaven. When we face difficulty, we can shift our focus and remember that God sees us and knows our needs (vv. 24–30).

Jesus encourages His disciples: "Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom" (v. 32). God enjoys blessing us! Let's worship Him, knowing He cares for us more than the birds of the air and the flowers of the field (vv. 22–29).

Even in difficult times, we can read the Scriptures, pray for God's peace, and trust in our good and faithful God.

By: Julie Schwab

Reflect & Prayer
What's causing you to fear today? What's one thing you can do to seek God's kingdom when you begin to worry?

Loving God, instead of living in fear or worry, help me to focus on Your care for me.



NEW BIBLE STUDY SERIES

(Using Materials from Pastor Chuck Swindoll)

We began this new series on Wednesday, April 14th

We will continue for the next several weeks studying Jesus's Sermon on the Mount

PLEASE JOIN US; EVERYONE WELCOME
Wednesdays 10 – 11 a.m.
Via Zoom or In Person

FRIENDS AND NEIGHBOR LUNCHEON



Thursday,
May 13, 2021
from 11:30 to 1pm.

While we are unable to share this time together; while you are eating your lunch, pray for those who usually join us for lunch on this day for fellowship



**Good Shepherd
Food-Bank**
Feeding Maine's Hungry

Our 2021 Global Mission Initiative will continue to be donated to the **Good Shepherd Food Bank** (donations will be sent to them quarterly)

**Joys & Celebrations Total
As of 4/25/2021: \$787**

Our yearly goal is \$2,500;



**Meetings at a Glance:
May 2021**

Staff Parish Relation Committee: 5/11
@ 4 p.m. in person

Worship Committee: 5/11 @ 7 p.m. - via Zoom

Missions & Outreach: 5/12 @ 11:15 Site Visit to Pine Tree Camp

Prayer Shawl: 5/10 and 5/24 @ 1 p.m.



CHURCH
COUNCIL

SUNDAY, May 16th

10:30 A.M. **In Person** right after our Worship Service

**EVERYONE WELCOME AND
ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND**



Our Mission Ministries

Through the year in this Newsletter we highlight our mission projects and

programs where we serve God through Christlike compassion, mercy and transformation; reaching out, lifting up, building up.

We will list some of the ways during 2021 contributions from Missions and Outreach through your support received in our weekly worship offerings, pledges and special giving.

The Good Shepherd Food Bank

We will continue to support this work that provides food to local food banks throughout Maine. "Feeding families living with food insecurity makes an impact that goes beyond a nutritious meal." (At our February 23rd Church Council Meeting it was approved our Joys and Celebrations monies will be sent to this organization through 2021)

The Belgrade Rome Food Pantry with special monthly "Wish List" donations; January through December we will be fillin' our shopping cart. - Many thanks. January we are accepting donations of Toothpaste, Toilet Paper and Shampoo.

Kenneth Workman Youth Sports Program - Ever notice the sign at the Belgrade Ball Park? Our donation each year supports this local youth program and shares our active presence in the community in Christ's service. \$150 was donated on September 9th.

Maine Justice Foundation, Augusta, Maine. We supported this work that serves the LGBT, gay community those of whom are among the poor and vulnerable among us,

facing issues of employment and housing discrimination, domestic violence, homelessness. In this manner we extend our church Welcoming Statement into the community beyond our own worship doors. Our \$500 donation was sent on **February 17, 2021.**

Messalonskee High School – In April we sent \$500 to support the High School's Food Pantry. Each year their empty Bowls project supports our local Food cupboards and the Food Cupboard at the High School we will continue to contribute and will share information of this year's project in March as it becomes available . In June we look to provide leadership and participation in their Baccalaureate program for new graduates.

Bread of Life Ministries. Through the year, each month we provide a Tuesday evening meal for the residents of the temporary Shelter Program. It's been a blessing to meet folks there and see how this ministry gives them both shelter and a boost to what is next as they move forwards in life by God's grace. We will again contribute to this program in 2021. In Late December we sent a donation of \$500. Our Christmas Eve Offering this year again was sent to the Bread of Life Homeless Shelter. As of Sunday, December 27th we have received \$805! Thank you!

Waterville Homeless Shelter – In late December we shared with them a donation of \$500

Vernon Valley Lodge 99 A.F. & A.M. – We sponsored the Bikes for Reading Program for local school children by sharing with them \$200. Jim Webster is a key member of this group

Belgrade Historical Society – We shared \$200 for their Townhouse restoration project in

which they will be opening up to the public in the future. Preserving Belgrade History for Future Generations

Maine Adaptive Sports – We will again support this program in 2021 as an affirmation of their annual Ski-A-Thon that supports programs that empower adaptive athletes towards a healthy, active and rewarding life. A \$100 donation was sent on **February 17, 2021.**

Neighbors Driving Neighbors, this local ministry program serving to help folks who would be otherwise home bound was supported with our **\$500 gift on February 17, 2021** and through the engagement of those offering to serve as drivers, and part of the programs leadership

Winthrop, Maine: United Methodist Camp Mechuwana. Due to Covid they were unable to hold camp weeks; however the Camp put together a Food Program to share meals with those in need. Many folks/students stepped to help with this. On September 9th we sent a \$500 donation towards this much needed program. The year-round camp and youth programs happening there transforms lives of children and youth.

Pastor's Discretionary Fund – With generous donations we are able to assist families with urgent housing needs; **and will continue helping through 2021.** Each specific in their own way are able to be a means of God's Grace in troubling times.

Prayer Shawl Ministry. This group meets twice a month and distributes prayers shawls to both women and men who are dealing with health issues and or hospital stays. Prayer Shawls were sent to both Elisha McKenney and David Stevens in April

Belgrade Central School – The Mission and Outreach Committee at their August meeting found that the school could use donations of snacks and school supplies and will be working closely with the School Administrators as to their **needs in 2021. To date we have dropped off two carloads of snacks during their school year.**

Maine Home for Little Wanderers, Waterville, ME – On February 17, 2021 we sent \$1,000 in memory of Joan & Dick Tripp. All three of their children were adopted from this wonderful organization.

The Committee will continue to schedule monthly mission giving in 2021. We will update the above listing monthly as these occur.



Bread Of Life Ministries

Our Next Bread of Life Homeless Shelter Dinner will be May 18th

Please email us at unionchurchmaine@gmail.com for those of you wanting to designate your participation in this ministry. Signing up is important so that we are aware of what you will bring so that we can complete planning for whatever else needs to be prepared and donated. Thank you!

We would like to encourage as many volunteers as possible to help donate items for this dinner.

At this time they are housing around 30 residents.

Thank you to Meg, Cheryl, Marcy, Julie, Tony, Sharron, JoAnn and Kathy for sharing in this ministry on April 20th.

We share a hot meal on the 3rd Tuesday of each month.

In addition to providing the Bread of Life Homeless Shelter with a hot meal every month; we have learned that they are in need of the following items. If you are interested in donating, please drop off and we will deliver at our next meal delivery.

Pillows



Bath towels



Face Cloths



Twin size bed in bags



Bedding is so important to us because the shelter clients take this with them when they move into their own apartments



Crafts for children from the ages of 2 to 12



"Pathway to Tomorrow" – Union Church Capital Campaign

Last Summer I announced that the church was embarking on a year-long Capital Campaign to raise \$45,000. The funds are to be used to make several improvements to our church facility including the brick walkway, new signage and new lighting in front of the church; new decking on the ramps and stair landings and an enlarged and paved parking lot in the rear of the church. I am pleased to announce that to date we have received gifts and pledges totaling \$38,650

I want to extend a heartfelt THANK YOU to those who have already contributed and invite everyone else to make

If you would like to contribute, please make out a check to Union Church and write "Capital Campaign" on the memo line. Put it in the offering on Sunday morning or send it to the church office.

Union Church of Belgrade Lakes, UMC, P. O. Box 133, Belgrade Lakes, ME 04918.

Thank you,
Lynn Matson
Chair, Staff Parish Relations Committee

The parking lot will be graded on May 10th and paved on May 12th!

Watch for more information to be shared in the near future.

Thank you!



United Methodist Economic Ministry

They have kicked off their own Stronger Together Capital Campaign Program. The purpose of this campaign is to complete long-needed capital improvements that will allow us to continue to serve our communities for years to come. With a successful campaign, UMEM will install a new roof over the Salem Thrift Shop, convert the Salem bunkhouse for four season living, and build designated storage/sorting buildings at our Salem and Howland locations.

In late December we sent them a donation in the amount of \$1,000 from the Missions & Outreach Budget Line Item.



Finance Report

On behalf of the Finance Committee, I want to take this opportunity to THANK each and every member of our congregation for not only keeping the faith, but spreading it throughout our community and beyond! March 31 marked the end of the first quarter of 2021. As I reported previously, Union Church ended 2020 in the black despite the setbacks associated with the virus. That

achievement is commendable and noteworthy. I am pleased to report that through March 31, 2021, Union Church continues to amaze! One might think that having been a part of Union Church for nearly 20 years I shouldn't be surprised by the congregational response. I am, however, very pleased that God continues to work in and through our collective efforts. We need to continue to give thanks to God and to praise Him. Each of us needs to remember that we are part of larger body and that it is our individual responsibility to serve others and to be Christ-like in our community.

The income and expenses for the first quarter of 2021 were nearly identical to those in 2020! Our first quarter income this year totaled \$35,469 and that is 96.2% of what was projected. Kudos to each of you! Pledges represented \$30,654 which represents 86.4% of the total income. Expenses for the first quarter totaled \$38,139 which was 83% of what was projected. Kudos to Kathy and Cheryl for reigning in expenses and depositing contributions. Although the net operating income through March 31, 2021, is a negative **\$2,670**, the figures do not include the PPP funds received. When those monies are taken into account, the net operating income is a positive \$12,030. To date, we are in a better financial position than this time last year.

I realize we have three more quarters ahead of us, but I am confident that we will meet the challenges ahead with optimism and faith. Our community will continue to be blessed by our continued generous and faithful support. Thanks to all for putting us in a favorable position to date and let us together see that we end the year well. Many thanks for your continued commitment to the mission and ministries of Union Church.

Respectfully Submitted,
Tony Mastromarino
Chair, Finance Committee

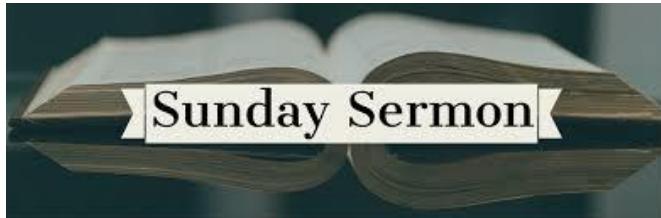


MOTHER'S DAY FLOWERS

Once again this year we will place buckets of flowers on our sidewalk on Saturday May 8th and Sunday May 9th or until they are gone; for anyone to stop

by and pick up a flower for the Mom in their life.

Thank you Carol for picking them up!



Sunday, May 9th

Carol Johnson will be filling in for Pastor Eleanor while she and Mark spend Mother's Day with their Daughter, Katrina.

Thank you, Carol!



Carol is requesting that you send us your Mom's

favorite Hymns. She would love to share during our Worship Service on Mother's Day.

Please email us at
unoinchurchmaine@gmail.com



Food Pantry Donations Needed

MONTH OF MAY

May Day

Mayday Mayhem

Tomato Soup, Chicken Noodle Soup, and Ramen Soup.

FOR THE ROME/BELGRADE FOOD PANTRY

ANY AND ALL PERSONAL CARE ITEMS ARE ALWAYS NEEDED



REMEMBER AND PRAY FOR ALL THOSE WHO SERVED AND THOSE WHO ARE SERVING NOW!



Craft Shows

The Town of Belgrade will host a series of craft shows at the Village Green. The

shows will be on the last Sunday of the month from May to September, with an additional show on Saturday, Oct. 9. (May 30th, June 27, July 25, August 29, September 26)

Each show will be from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. and will feature wares created by local artists and crafters.

A Mother's Day Prayer



In the name of
JESUS CHRIST,
we lift up all
MOTHERS today.

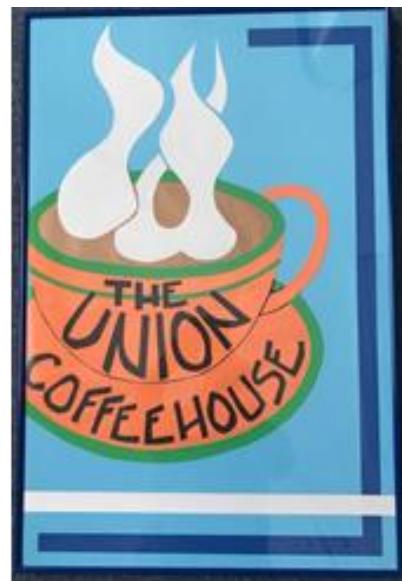
We thank them for their
sacrifices so that we can
have a life of contentment.
Grant them favour, Lord
and may they have a
wonderful place in existence
in Your heart of **GRACE**.

HAPPY AND BLESSED MOTHER'S DAY

While most Moms are unable to be with their families last year, may you be able to this year.

We hold all Mothers and those who are like Moms in our thoughts and prayers on this Mother's Day!

Union Coffeehouse News



Watch for news about some sessions Don is working on to take place in July and August.

They will be held at the Gazebo

Thank you Don!

2021 Sunrise Service

Sunday, April 4 @ 6 a.m.



Thank you Tony for sharing these beautiful pics!

Union Church of Belgrade Lakes
United Methodist Church
67 Main Street
P.O. Box 133
Belgrade Lakes, Maine 04918

Our Mission is to live our experience of God's love
in all that we say and do...

Our Vision is to be a growing spiritual faith community in the
manner of Christ, where all are welcome and cared for...