



# Union Church of Belgrade Lakes

United Methodist Church

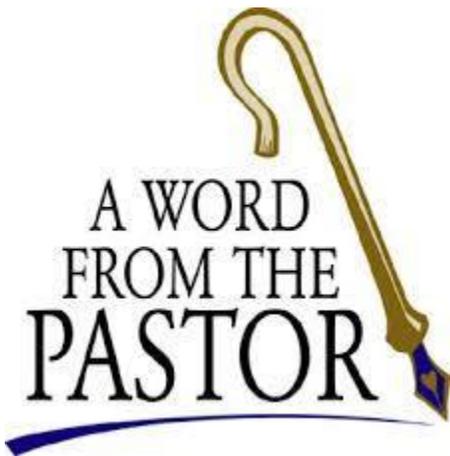
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## Union Rider

## September 2021 Newsletter



Dear Members  
and Friends of  
Union Church,

Greetings in the  
name of the One  
in whose name,  
and by whose  
grace, we truly  
are "Better  
Together!"

Yes, we are "Better Together" – the theme for our 2022 Stewardship Program that is now wrapping up. I hope and pray that you have had an opportunity to explore what that means for you, as we explored the folktale "*Stone Soup*" and the many ways that stones are featured prominently in the Bible. If you have not yet returned to us a Covenant Card, fear not! Cards are welcomed and appreciated whenever we receive them.

August was a very eventful month! In addition to our annual Stewardship Program in August, we were also able to resume our long-awaited implementation of "Vision 2020" which had to be suspended when COVID-19 shut everything down in March 2020. Our efforts took the form

of a series of "Vision Walks" in which small groups of participants visited seven "stations" around the church, with a focused conversation and idea-gathering at each of them. A timeline of Union Church's past has been built, our current ministry partners were listed and discussed, we talked about "Current Realities" and "Current Opportunities," discussed a few "Tough Questions," and then turned our attention to the "God-Sized Dreams" we feel God has for us. Six "Vision Walks" have been held so far, involving about 45 people. What next?? If you haven't yet had a chance to participate in a "Vision Walk," please let us know so that one can be scheduled according to your availability! Once we have accommodated those requests, the process of organizing input and ideas will begin. Once that is completed, everyone will be invited to a "Weighing In" session, where all of the input will be presented and all will be given the opportunity to prioritize our "Moving Forward" efforts. That same information will be shared electronically for those unable to gather in person. Your input is vital to this process! Please make every effort to become involved in the rest of this process, whether or not you choose to participate in a "Vision Walk."

As summer turns to fall, the Lay Leadership Development Committee begins meeting in early September to look at the membership needs of our church committees as we move from one year to the next. This is a wonderful time to consider how you might be called by God to offer your unique gifts in service to and through Union Church. If you have ideas, or maybe just questions at this point, please contact me, or another member of the Lay Leadership Development Committee to chat about your thoughts and/or questions.

(Members: Kathy Gerard, Carol Johnson, Lynn Matson, Linda Petersen, Gail Rizzo, Christine Merckens, Nancy Mastromarino, and Bobbi Mahler)

In these weeks in which we say “Farewell” to our seasonal friends, please know that I pray for each of you, and I pray for all of us together as we continue to strive to stay connected to God and our beloved Union Church community of faith in the midst of on-going uncertainty and turmoil! Let us never forget that we are...

Better Together in Christ’s Love and Service,  
*Pastor Eleanor Collinsworth*



### Rise Again

- [\*\*Psalms 70–71\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Romans 8:22–39\*\*](#)

Though the righteous fall seven times,  
they rise again.

[Proverbs 24:16](#)

**Today's Scripture & Insight:**

### Proverbs 24:15–18

Olympic runner Ryan Hall is the US record-holder for the half marathon. He completed the event distance of 13.1 miles (21 kilometers) in a remarkable time of fifty-nine minutes and forty-three seconds, making him the first US athlete to run the race in under one hour. While Hall has celebrated record-setting victories, he’s also known the disappointment of not being able to finish a race.

Having tasted both success and failure, Hall credits his faith in Jesus for sustaining him. One of his favorite Bible verses is an encouraging reminder from the book of Proverbs that “though the righteous fall seven times, they rise again” (24:16). This proverb reminds us that the righteous, those who trust in and have a right relationship with God, will still experience difficulties and hardships. However, as they continue to seek Him even in the midst of difficulty, God is faithful to give them the strength to rise again.

Have you recently experienced a devastating disappointment or failure and feel like you'll never recover? Scripture encourages us not to rely on our strength but to continue to put our confidence in God and His promises. As we trust Him, God’s Spirit gives us strength for every difficulty we encounter in this life, from the seemingly mundane to significant struggles ([2 Corinthians 12:9](#)).

By: [\*\*Lisa M. Samra\*\*](#)

### Reflect & Pray

**How has God strengthened you after a difficult disappointment? How does that give you encouragement for the struggles you face today?**

*Heavenly Father, thank You that in every trial and disappointment You’re always close, offering comfort and strength to help me rise again.*

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## Bible Study



Wednesdays 10 a.m. – 11 a.m.

At this time; we will be reading and discussing Upper Room Readings

PLEASE JOIN US; EVERYONE WELCOME  
Wednesdays 10 – 11 a.m.



FRIENDS  
AND  
NEIGHBOR  
LUNCHEON

Thursday,  
September 9, 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 8/29/2021: \$2,118

Our yearly goal is \$2,500;



Meetings at a  
Glance:  
September 2021

Worship Committee: 9/14 @ 7 p.m.

Missions & Outreach: 9/8 @ 11:15

Prayer Shawl: 9/13 and 9/27 @ 1 p.m.

**NOTE:** Change in Time and Remain this time

Finance Committee: 8/24 @ 10 a.m.



## 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.***

**Center for All Seasons Summer Camp BBQ** will be held on August 15<sup>th</sup> with this committee providing/grilling hamburgers and hot dogs as well as fruit and ice cream for as many as 75!

### **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 23<sup>rd</sup> 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 June 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 27<sup>th</sup> 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 June 9<sup>th</sup> 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. To date \$1,924.06 has been expended.

**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.

**Pine Tree Camp for Special Needs Adults and Children** – As part of Barbara & John Sheble's general donation a \$5,000 gift was given to this camp so they could build a greenhouse and have a garden this summer

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## Center For All Season Camp on Golden Pond End of Summer BBQ



On August 11<sup>th</sup> the Mission & Outreach Committee hosted an End of Summer BBQ for

the kiddos and staff at the Center For All Seasons.

We had many volunteers including a couple of master grillers on hand. It was such a fun time despite that it was a rainy day. We fed around 70 and there wasn't all that much leftover. What was left over was taken to the Bread of Life Homeless Shelter so they could enjoy it for their dinner.



Lilly Shubert does a great job of running this summer program for these kids; they were all very polite and appreciative of yummy hot dogs, hamburgers, chips, apple



juice, watermelon and of course ice cream! Thank you to all who devoted their time to make this wonderful ministry happen. Fantastic time had by all!



# Bread Of Life Ministries

**Our Next Bread of Life Homeless Shelter Dinner will be September 21st**

Please email us at [unionchurchmaine@gmail.com](mailto:unionchurchmaine@gmail.com) for those of you wanting to designate your participation in this ministry; we are looking for many volunteers. 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, Gwen, Betty, Tony, Sharron, JoAnn and Kathy for sharing in this ministry on May 18<sup>th</sup>.

**We share a hot meal on the 3<sup>rd</sup> 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



### 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.

They are in need of donations to help with their operating expenses and needs volunteers.



### Finance Committee Update

Having just wrapped up our annual stewardship campaign for 2022, I want to take this opportunity to first **thank all of you** for your continued generous commitment to the ongoing ministries of Union Church **this** year. Through the first 7 months of 2021, Union Church has faired very well. Through July 31, 2021, income has exceeded our projections by approximately 5%, totaling \$92,737, and our expenses are approximately 5% lower than projected, totaling \$88,643. The net operating income through July is \$4,095 ---Alleluia! Indeed, we are **“Better Together”**. We pray that the remaining 5 months of 2021 continue on this same trajectory. With your continued support there will be a joyous celebration at year’s end!

COVID-imposed restrictions had an unexpected impact on our revenue in that Union Church was the recipient of a PPP (Payroll Protection Plan) loan/grant in 2020, and will be the recipient of additional federal funds from the Employee Retention Tax Credits (ERTC) sometime later this year. These federal funds provided a life line during a difficult period.

Looking at the current status of our 2022 stewardship campaign, **Better Together**, to date we have received 3 new pledges among a total of 22 pledges, totaling \$62,620. Of this year’s 44 pledges, 19 have been renewed for

2022 or 43%. As the stone soup bowl visual suggests, the total pledged to date represents approximately 49% of our projected goal, i.e., our bowl is only half full.



However, with your cooperation and resolve, we will fill the bowl to overflowing and achieve our goal of \$127,342 in pledges this year. Approximately 75% of our annual budget is derived from pledges. We are off to a good start, but, if you have not yet returned your pledge card, I would like to encourage you to do so as soon as possible so that the finance committee can more accurately project our 2022 budget.

Our individual commitments are a grateful response for the many blessings we have received. Let us be generous in committing our time, talents, and treasures to doing Christ's work here in our community and beyond. As the allegory of the **Stone Soup** clearly noted, we (the church) can accomplish great things to everyone's satisfaction when we each contribute and share our gifts. Very truly, we are **Better Together**.

Thank you for the success to date and let us continue to support the ministries of Union Church.

Tony Mastromarino

### Union Church Technology Upgrade

If you have been watching on our Website; you know we are having some technical difficulties, sadly. I and the Technology

Committee have been in constant

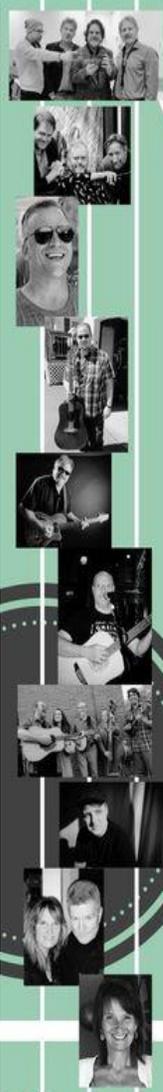
communication with Power Sound in hopes to get all the glitches straightened out. We appreciate your patience in the meantime.

The Technology Committee is asking you to email us as to your experience viewing on our Website as to the clarity of sound and picture.

It will help us in assuring it is a wonderful experience for you our members as well as those from the community who choose to watch.

**Thank you!**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Don Petersen, Chair of Technology Committee



# VILLAGE GREEN MUSIC SERIES

Thursdays 6:30-8:00 PM

July 1st//Mes Amis  
July 8th//Bob Colwell Trio  
July 15th//The Cowboy Angels  
July 22nd//Ryan Michaud  
July 29th//Denny Breau  
Aug. 5th//Rick Ray  
Aug. 12th//Sandy River Ramblers  
Aug. 19th//Joey Charles  
Aug. 26th//The Laura Hudson Project  
Sept. 2nd//Chris Poulson & The Social Club

SPONSORED BY G&L CONTRACTING AND  
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For more info call 207-495-3481 or email  
recreation@townofbelgrade.com



## Craft Shows

The Town of Belgrade

continues to host a series of craft shows at the Village Green. The shows will be on the last Sunday of the month with an additional show on Saturday, Oct. 9. (August 29, September 26 remaining)

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



Food Pantry Donations Needed

## MONTH OF SEPTEMBER



## PACKING UP FOR SCHOOL

**Granola Bars, Cookies, Individual Servings of Fruit**

**FOR THE ROME/BELGRADE FOOD PANTRY**

**PERSONAL CARE ITEMS NEEDED:  
TOOTHBRUSHES (INDIVIDUAL)  
TOOTHPASTE (REG SIZE)  
DEODORANT (GENERIC)  
SHAMPOO (GENERIC)**



HARVEST FESTIVAL 2021

**Wow; another Summer gone??**

**We the church, have decided we would hold our own little (downsized) Harvest Festival again this year.**

Octoberfest will be held on October 9, 2021 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Be thinking about ways you can help out - many hands needed! Lots of volunteers needed to make this a success again this year. Hoping that



each and every one of you will come join us in the fun and fellowship as we share in our preparations. It is a great way to connect with old friends, meet new friends and get incorporated into the life of the church and community.

**Craft Table** – If you have any crafts you would like to share, please feel free to bring them to this event.

Watch for information on whether or not Bobbi will hold a Craft Day at her home.

**Bake Shop** – We are grateful for any and all donations 😊. We have observed that the small breads (pumpkin, apple, spice, etc.) go very well. And smaller cakes and pies. Also, cookies other than chocolate chip (most everyone makes them); Folks are looking for your grandma's favorite recipe cookies.

Please be sure to fully pre-package everything; nothing can be open.

**Harvest Kitchen** – Looking for homemade soups for the freezer (soups of all kinds that we will provide containers for). Canned goods, jams and jellies. If you are having a hard time finding jam jars; Carol has plenty; please contact her. [caroljohnson@allstate.com](mailto:caroljohnson@allstate.com)

**Silent Auction** – Carol will again chair this portion of our HF; however it will be online and we will have to be selective of the items we do place on the auction as we will be incurring fees associated with this way of holding it this year. Please consider a donation; thank you.

**Brats and Hot Dogs** – We are hoping Tom Kelly will volunteer to be a griller; who would like to join him. We will need a few volunteers to cook and serve these during the day.

**We truly hope and pray that folks are looking forward to something to attend and to purchase our special Union Church delicacies, etc. We will be taking all the necessary precautions to make this as safe as possible!**

**Nothing will be inside; we will hold it all outside on the front lawn under tents.**

In the meantime; save the date, start canning, crafting, woodworking, picking out your recipes for baked goods and soup for the freezer. If you know any shopkeepers; see if they would be willing to donate something to our Silent Auction. Or check with family and friends to see if they would donate an item. Look for "really good" things in your attic or basement that you can donate to the auction, or make something using your special talents. Please contact Kathy Gerard (Chair) at [kakoala5@gmail.com](mailto:kakoala5@gmail.com) or Carol Johnson at [caroljohnson@allstate.com](mailto:caroljohnson@allstate.com) (Chair of Silent Auction) if you have any comments/questions/ideas and would like to step up and volunteer.

**Thank you and God Bless!**



**UMCOR International Disaster  
Response and Recovery  
Advance # 982450**

In the past few days we have seen two devastating events unfold in the world: the 7.2-magnitude earthquake that struck Haiti this past Saturday and the chaotic end to two decades of U.S. military involvement in Afghanistan.

We need to remember who we are as Christians and whose we are as people of faith. These events are a call to reflection as individuals and congregations. In the midst of tragedy – whether a natural disaster or a humanmade one – we are called to respond with compassion and relief but also to seek ways to prevent suffering and injustice.

May all of us in the New England Conference

pray earnestly for the millions whose lives are affected by these two devastating events as well as those affected by natural disasters here in the U.S. Let us also consider ways to support Haiti's recovery and offer help for Afghan refugees seeking a new home in the world. Click the link to donate to UMCOR's International Disaster Response and Recovery ([Advance # 982450](#)). Donate to U.S. Disaster Response and Recovery through [Advance # 901670](#)



### UMCOR Helping Dixie Fire Survivors

WEST SACRAMENTO, Calif. — United Methodists are helping survivors of the Dixie Fire, the largest fire in California history. California-Nevada Conference churches in Quincy, Portola, Greenville, and Susanville are assisting evacuees. More than \$10,000 worth of gift cards, emergency hygiene kits, wildfire buckets, cleaning supplies and local church assistance have been distributed. Steve Elliott reports.

*Photo courtesy of the California-Nevada Conference*

[Read the story](#)

[To make a donation to Cal-Nevada](#)

[Donate to UMCOR's North American disaster relief, Advance # 901670](#)

## A BACK-TO-SCHOOL PRAYER

Loving God, thank you for the rest and relaxation we enjoyed over the summer.

Today, we pray for our children as they begin their new school year.

Bless them with joy at seeing friends, excitement at new experiences, and a love of learning. Watch over all who learn, replacing fear with joy, anxiety with peace, and tiredness with energy.

Grant teachers wisdom, patience, and joy in serving their students.

In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

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...