



Union Church of Belgrade Lakes
United Methodist Church

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Union Rider

October 2024



Dear Members and Friends of Union Church,

Grace and peace to you in the name of the One who sustains us and renews us in all things and seasons, but also renews us! In our newly begun study of the Book of Revelation in our Wednesday Bible Study Group, I have been reminded that this greeting of “grace and peace” is the one the apostle Paul used in the salutation at the beginning of all his letters, and it soon became a traditional greeting among Christians. It invokes the grace and peace that come from God, and reminds us of the favor and acceptance that God has extended to all believers. Truly, it is because of God’s grace that we – and all God’s people – can enjoy peace. That is, peace with God as well as the peace of God, resulting in inner tranquility, even amid the hardest experiences of life on this side of heaven.

The fall season here at Union Church is a very full one! Our annual Harvest Festival is happening on Saturday, October 5. Plans are well underway, and many hands are needed. If you haven’t already signed up to help, please consider pitching in. Elsewhere in this newsletter, please take time to read about our outdoor (weather permitting) “Blessings of the Animals” Service on Sunday, October 13, and our fourth-annual multi-generational pumpkin-carving event on Sunday, October 27!

Our fall worship services offer meaningful opportunities to participate in World Communion Sunday on October 6, and on November 3, we will remember those saints of

the church and our lives who have gone before us, on All Saints’ Sunday.

This fall, we are also experiencing an extremely heated election season. In light of that, I offer to you part of a meditation, written by Professor David Dark of Belmont University, that I find particularly meaningful in this season. He says, “When we look at one another’s faces, we are beholding infinitely valuable bearers of the divine image. God’s image is there, not sometimes but always. When we talk to others, however, recognizing the divine image we are looking at can sometimes prove difficult. It is easy – too easy – to mistake a person for an idea we associate with their appearance, their opinions, their position [on an issue or a candidate]. It is easy to mistake a struggle over ideas for a bodily attack...But we must be exceedingly wary of reducing others to one issue or identity...as we hunger and thirst for righteousness in the land of the living, we must look into the eyes of those we’re prone to oppose and see the image of God. It’s always there.”

I have been and will continue to pray for each of you, and I pray for all of us as we continue to strive to stay connected to God and to our beloved Union Church community of faith in these times of uncertainty and turmoil! Let us be supported by our faith, strengthened by the joy of the Lord, and upheld by God’s abundant grace. Let us never forget that we are...

Together In Christ’s Love and Service,

Pastor Eleanor Collinsworth

Finance Committee Update

Although the Stewardship Campaign for 2024, "Bread for the Journey," has formally ended, responses continue to come in. If you have already returned your pledge card for 2025, THANK YOU! If you have not yet returned your pledge card, it's not too late to do so, as the Finance Committee continues to prepare the 2025 Budget.

For the first eight months of 2024 (through August 31), the unrestricted checkbook balance is robust, and our various escrow accounts are healthy. As far as the church's year-to-date operating budget is concerned, however, through the end of August, expenses totaling \$112,778 exceeded income totaling \$93,829 by \$18,949. Pledged contributions, as of August 31, were running \$10,000 below the budgeted amount. For pledging givers, when you receive your third quarter statement of giving, if it shows a deficit from what you had pledged, please do what you can to make up for any deficit. Your efforts to do that are greatly appreciated.

Thank you, one and all, for your continued faithful and generous contributions to the mission and ministries of Union Church. May God continue abundantly to bless us throughout 2024, into 2025, and beyond! May each of you receive the "Bread for the Journey" you need as we work together to provide "Bread for the Journey" for others in our community, region and world.



Coffee Hour will be hosted by Missions & Outreach Committee on October 20, 2024.



Our 2024 "Joys and Celebrations Love Offering" Recipients are Belgrade-Rome Food Pantry & Good Shepherd Food Bank.

Joys and Celebrations total (as of 9/22/24) is \$1952.85. Our yearly goal is \$3,500.



Blessing of the Animals will occur on Sunday, October 13th, after our Worship Service, at 11 a.m. (to give those of you in attendance time to run home and get your fur babies) we will have a special time to bless your beloved pets.

Feel free to bring your furry friends over to the front lawn of the church to receive their blessings.

Boxed Mac & Cheese
Boxed/Canned Pasta
Peanut Butter
Canned Beef Stew
Chicken Noodle & Tomato Soup



Food Pantry Donations Needed



Bread Of Life Ministries

Our Next Bread of Life Homeless Shelter Dinner will be Tues., October 15, 2024.

Please email us at 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. At this time they are housing around 50 residents.

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 warm clothing such as: Wool Hats, Gloves, Hand and Feet Warmers. Please drop off items at the church and we will deliver at our next meal delivery.

They are also always in need of pillows, bath towels and face cloths, and bed-in-a-bags (twin size). Bedding is important because the shelter clients take it with them when they move to apartments.

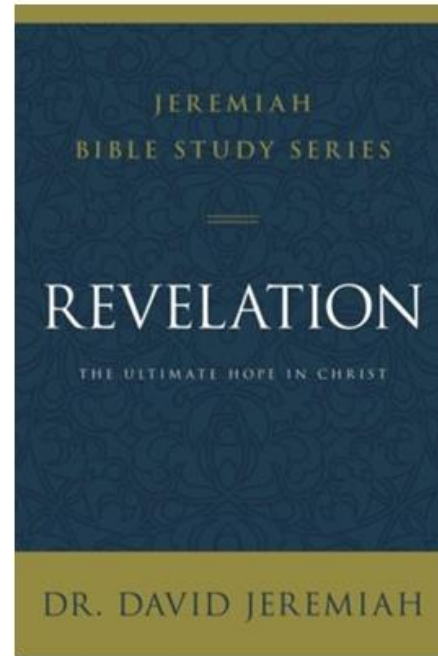
Bread of Life Soup Kitchen Wish List:

Bottled Water, Sandwich-size Zipper Bags, Coffee Creamers.



BIBLE STUDY

On Wednesday, September 18, 2024, a new Bible Study started. The study will last 12 weeks. We'll meet for a time of prayer at 9:45 a.m.



A Call To Remain Faithful
By the time John, the "beloved disciple," wrote the book of Revelation, he was an old man living in exile on the isle of Patmos in the Aegean Sea. He had been imprisoned there by the

Romans for the "crime" of preaching the gospel. But if the authorities thought exile would silence him...they were sadly mistaken. For it was on Patmos that John received a vision of startling events to come when Jesus returned for His church and God executed His final judgment on earth for sin. Today, John's words provide hope to all followers of Christ. While in this world we will face pain and persecution, our trials will only be temporary. For this reason, we must stand firm and never compromise. We must remain ever faithful to our Lord so we can experience eternal life with Him and witness His ultimate triumph over evil.



MEETINGS AT A GLANCE:

Missions & Outreach 10/9@1130AM

Knitting Group 10/14 & 28@100PM



HARVEST FESTIVAL 2024
UNION CHURCH OF
BELGRADE LAKES, ROUTE 27
October 5, 2024
10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

AUTUMN CAFÉ features:

- BRATS/HOT DOGS
- HANDMADE CRAFTS
- HOME BAKED GOODIES
- HARVEST KITCHEN including **CANNED GOODS, FROZEN SOUPS**

PLUS OUR FAMOUS
HELD ONLINE!



Pumpkin-Carving Party



Our “fourth-annual” Pumpkin-Carving Party will take place after the worship service, at 10:45 a.m.,

on Sunday, October 27th. We would like to have a few jack-o-lanterns as decorations here at the church for Village Trick-or-Treating on Halloween, so we need your help!

Those attending are asked to bring their own carving tools and a pumpkin if they have one. There will be a limited number of pumpkins provided for those who don’t already have one. And here’s the great thing about a Pumpkin-

Carving Party—you just might be able to partner with someone who’s willing to do the parts of the job that aren’t your favorite, be it digging the “guts” out of the pumpkin, drawing the face or design, or carving! Teamwork!

For planning purposes, please sign up for this fun event either on the sign-up sheet in worship services or by contacting the church office (by phone or e-mail).

TRICK OR TREAT

We will be filling the trick or treat goodie bags on Wednesday, October 23rd @ 11:30am; right after Bible Study. Come join us for some fun!





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 are led in our efforts by the **Missions and Outreach Committee.**

Organizations Supported So Far in 2024:

- **Maine Justice Foundation, Augusta, ME**
Serves the LGBTQ community and the poor and vulnerable, facing employment & housing
- **Adaptive Outdoor Education Center**
Supports programs that empower adaptive athletes towards a healthy, active and rewarding life.

- **Neighbors Driving Neighbors** – Serves folks who are homebound and unable to get to doctors' appointments, shopping, errands, etc.
- **Belgrade Central School** – Monthly donations of snacks and school supplies.
- **Kenneth Workman Youth Sports Program**

Organizations Supported in 2023:

- **Bread of Life Ministries**
 - **Vernon Valley Lodge 99 A.F. & A.M.** – the Bikes for Reading Program for local school children
 - **United Methodist Camp Mechuwana in Winthrop, ME**
 - **Center for All Seasons After-School Programs and Summer Camp**
 - **Belgrade/Rome Food Pantry**
 - **Pastor's Discretionary Fund**
 - **Prayer Shawl Ministry**
 - **Belgrade Public Library**
 - **Belgrade Fire & Rescue**
 - **UNEM (United Methodist Economic Ministry, located in Salem & Howland, ME)**
 - **Belgrade Fire & Rescue**
 - **UMEM (United Methodist Economic Ministry, located in Salem & Howland, ME)**
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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 in all that we say and do...