

Bangor First United Methodist Church  
703 Essex Street , Bangor Maine



# Cross Talk

**FEBRUARY, 2024**

## For Information...

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First

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The United Methodist  
Church



OPEN MINDS

OPEN HEARTS

OPEN DOORS

## *A Note from our pastor Dr. Steve Smith....*

Life is full of surprises. Did you know there is such a thing as “*National Weatherperson Day?*” I wasn’t aware of this until 1999, when a family dropped-off a cake at WLBZ-TV one afternoon to mark the occasion (I was the meteorologist at WLBZ.)

“National Weatherperson Day” falls on February 5<sup>th</sup> each year (also my dad’s birthday) and commemorates the birth of John Jeffries on February 5, 1744. Jeffries is recognized as the first known weather observer, recording fastidious weather records from 1774 to 1816.

Why bring this bit of weather commemoration to your attention today? Because weather forecasting is *biblical*, and Jesus was a weather observer! “No way,” you say? “*There’s nothing in the Bible about predicting weather,*” you say? Well, check out these word from Jesus in Matthew 16:2-3: “*When it is evening, you say, ‘It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.’ And in the morning, ‘It will be stormy today, for the sky is red and threatening.’ You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times.*” Surprising, eh?

Indeed, the Bible is full of surprises and fascinating facts. Did you know the Bible was written in three languages? (Greek, Hebrew, Aramaic) Composed on three different continents? (Asia, Egypt, Europe) Did you know the longest word in the Bible is “Mahershalalhashbaz?” (Isaiah 8:3) Did you know several characters in Hermon Melville’s classic *Moby Dick* are named after biblical characters?

It is easy to let our Bibles collect dust. It is common to think the Bible is outdated, uninteresting, and not terribly relevant to us, or surprising for that matter. Yet the Bible speaks significantly to our human condition and experiences; what we find in the text is highly relatable, meaningful, and yes...even surprising.

Lent is approaching soon, and I have a challenge for you. If you’re planning on “giving something up” for Lent, that’s cool. However, my challenge for you is to add something to your routine during Lent: at least 15 minutes per day reading a segment of scripture. And, while reading the text, it’s really helpful to use a commentary or study Bible in order to understand the context of what you are reading (who wrote it, when, why, for what purpose, etc.) If you need a commentary, a study Bible, or any other helpful resource, please let me know! One of the vital functions of church is equipping you for your faith journey, so please let us help in that way when needed.

Who knows what surprises we may find together as we jump into scripture together during lent!

*Blessings to you,*  
Pastor Steve

## This 'N That...



Our meeting this month will have a Valentine's theme. Date and time for the meeting are still being determined.

## FIBER ARTS FELLOWSHIP

**Tuesdays 9:30-11:30**

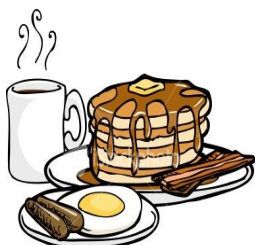


Everyone is welcome to come knit, crochet or just fellowship with us on Tuesdays.

We continue to work on the warm prayer shawls and lap robes that keep our fingers and needles busy.

We are also currently sorting through all the wonderful things folks have gathered for us this summer and hope to be putting "kits" together to work on both here at church and at home.

## Next Men's Breakfast



Saturday, February 3

7 am, Governor's on Broadway

## FOOD CUPBOARD NEEDS



Any non-perishable items are gratefully accepted! But peanut butter & soup are always in high demand!

You are welcome to drop off donated food items at the back door of the church on **Thursdays from 10-1:00 or on Sunday mornings.**

Also checks are gladly accepted and can be sent to:

**Ecumenical Food Cupboard  
PO Box 1106  
28 High Street, Bangor, ME 04401**



BEAN SUPPER Next Bean Supper is March 23, 2024

**Community Meal** continues to serve drive up meals each Thursday from 4-6 pm



**Our next meeting is February 10 at 10 am.** If you are currently not on our email list and would like to be added to the Zoom list please give the office a call at 945-9567 or send an email to: [bangorfirstumc@gmail.com](mailto:bangorfirstumc@gmail.com)



## COMMUNITY MEAL

The Community Meal Take Out  
Thursdays from 4-6

Drive up and pick up a delicious and nutritious meal!

### *GRATITUDE ATTITUDE... Be My Valentine*



When I taught school Valentine's Day was always a much anticipated time of the year. Children sometimes took days sorting and making decisions about which valentine cards to give to each classmate. My third graders selected their cards differently than did my fifth graders. Much more pondering took place from the fifth graders! The school rule was that everyone in the class would receive a valentine from everyone. That way all of the students received an equal number of valentines. When I was in school that was not the rule and often a child might leave school with only three or four valentines. Maybe that's why some students were consistently absent on Valentine's Day! On a couple of occasions I spent several weeks giving the children time to make and address Valentine's cards for each other. This was a lot of good practice for our English skills, rhyming and composition skills, and math skills as we measured and cut paper for our cards making sure that our design covered fractional parts of the cover, and of course we used our best penmanship! The artistic students especially enjoyed this activity as they worked to come up with some clever designs for the front of their cards!

As Christians we know that love is not confined to only one month but is to be given freely all year long. When we think of enduring love we think of the love that came down at Christmas with the birth of Jesus and we remember the love which Jesus demonstrated with his death on the cross...His ultimate sacrifice of love. God asks us to love ourselves, to love others and to demonstrate that love whenever we can in an unconditional way.

So, how will you be out and about sharing love this year? Call someone or send a card to someone who might need a cheerful greeting. Shovel a walkway, run an errand or drop off a special baked treat for a friend or neighbor. Donate to the food cupboard, give a donation to a mission or charity, bake a dessert for the Community meal or a pie for the Bean Supper, be part of a local organization that helps others, drop off a colorful bouquet of flowers, or volunteer your time. There are so many ways to bring joy and love to others on Valentine's Day **and all year long**. This February let's be grateful for all the love that comes our way....be thankful for those who love you and those whom you love. Then celebrate LOVE by giving some of your love away ....not just on Valentine's Day but all year long!



## And **MEMORY JOGGERS**

Greetings,

*My Friend's Place* is a small, non-profit dementia day-care program. We are blessed to serve those who have Alzheimer's or other memory loss issues. We provide a specialized day program where laughter and friendship truly are the "best medicine." It is a safe, interactive experience where participants can enjoy a non-judgmental environment. Our program provides much needed respite for family members and other care partners. *My friend's Place* is a much needed, one-of-a kind program in our region.

Each day starts with tea, coffee and snacks, as we sit around a table together for socializing, much like our participants enjoyed before their diagnosis. It is a sad reality: when a person with dementia loses the ability to carry-on routine conversations, they often become socially isolated. We have wonderful volunteers that work to provide a wonderful experience for those who join us each week. We always welcome new volunteers. If you would like to find out more about our programs please contact me at 945-0122.

Blessings,

Lisa Jordan, Director MFP



## FELLOWSHIP LIBRARY NEWS The New Books Are Here!

Marybeth's order of new books for the UWF reading program are here. These books are selected by members of UWF and include books about social justice, leadership, nurturing communities, spiritual growth and missions. These books are a great way to expand your thinking, learn new skills and just enjoy an inspiring story.

The Library also has a large and varied selection of spiritual music on CD. Enjoy all types from smooth and soothing to upbeat for moving around – and who doesn't need that right now?

There are also new large prints, both with the UWF books and on the Library large print shelf. Do you still want to do some Black History month reading. We have Jon Meacham's "His Truth Is Marching On" about the Selma march and Dr. Harold Dorrell Briscoe's, "There's A Storm Comin'." Dr. Briscoe went to Duke with Pastor Steve, and he spoke at the Faith Linking in Action MLK observance this year.

Come in and browse. You won't be disappointed.

**CHECK IT OUT!**

## Prayer Requests and Joys at FUMC

Jim C.  
Sue W.  
Helen W.  
Charles W.  
Merton K.  
Dottie E. & family  
David H.  
Tim R.  
Family of Juanita R.  
Family of Mary Jane T.  
Suzanne W.  
Andy & Diane M.  
Tuhan K.  
Neighbor of Roz  
John brother of Jill  
Gary C  
Marie's son .  
Amanda H.  
Patsy  
Jessie S.  
Anita  
Donna friend of Roz  
Rose friend of Kathie



### Prayer Requests

Andy P.  
Family of Charlotte W.  
Donna & Beckett  
Linda friend of Phyllis  
Nicole  
Lynn D.  
Bill P.  
Carolyn Mc  
The homeless & hungry  
All those who have lost loved ones due to gun violence  
The people of Ukraine  
Pray for peace in our nation  
The people of Palestine and Israel

### JOYS

#### We are grateful for...

- New beginnings
- God given courage & strength to face whatever life sends our way
- For new beginnings
- Health and recovery from illness
- Family & friends
- God's unconditional love
- For all those who help, even when not being asked
- Our pastors, musicians & Sunday school leaders
- Opportunities to learn and grow our faith
- The support of our congregation
- Our pets who give unconditional love
- Food, clothing and a home... the necessities of life!

Into your hands Heavenly Father we entrust these people who are in need of your healing touch, knowledge of your presence, and your comfort.

Sustain them in good days and bad. Help them to feel your loving presence with them during every difficulty, for you are always there ahead of any circumstance.

Watch over all those who are in need. Help them to feel that you are always near them and know that all they need do is look to YOU for comfort and for strength.

In Your loving name we pray. Amen

*Don't you know? Haven't you heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the creator of the ends of the earth. He doesn't grow tired or weary. His understanding is beyond human reach, giving power to the tired and reviving the exhausted. Youths will become tired and weary, young men will certainly stumble; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength; they will fly up on wings like eagles; they will run and not be tired; they will walk and not be weary.*

*Isaiah 40: 28-30 (Common English Bible)*



# FEBRUARY 2024 BIRTHDAYS

**Sun      Mon      Tue      Wed      Thu      Fri      Sat**

<p><i>Happy Birthday to you!</i>  <b>God Bless you and keep you the whole year through</b></p>				1	2	3
4	5	6 Don Gallupe Donna Frost	7	8	9	10
11 Steve Earl	12	13 Barbara Modery Ken Killian	14	15 Maggie Cowperthwaite	16 George Parke Stephen Ritz-Perkins	17 Cindy Sayles
18	19 Rena Anderson	20	21 Jim Chick	22	23 Kerry Woodbury	24
25	26	27	27 Kara Scheiber Louise Hatch Jan Ashton	28	29	

**If you don't find your name on the birthday calendar it is because the office doesn't have the information. If you would like to be included on the Birthday Calendar just let the office know the month and day. (We don't need the year unless you want to share it!)**



Grow Your Faith at FUMC:

**\*Tuesday Bible Study meets at the church at 1:00 & Thursday at 7 via Zoom**

**\*8:30 Sunday Spirituals (discussion group)**

**\*On-In person and online Sunday morning worship at 10:30 with Sunday school**

**\*On line devotionals Monday, Wednesdays and Fridays via email**

**\*Join one of our women's faith and fellowships groups: United Women of Faith, Piburn Circle**

**\*Join the Fellowship Choir or come and play a handbell**

**\*Get involved in mission by helping with our Community Meal on Thursdays... with our Bean Suppers throughout the year...or volunteer at My Friend's Place**

**\*Visit our library and check out a book for enjoyment, information or to grow your faith.**

**\*Volunteer to serve on a church committee**

**We are a busy church and there are lots of ways to grow! For information about any of our programs contact the office at 945-9567**




The books are here! Looking forward to our next study group-based on **"Wrestling With Doubt, Finding Faith."** Books are in Mary's office-a \$10 donation is suggested but certainly not required. We will dive into this new study the first week of February.

We will meet **Tuesdays at 1pm** at church, and **Thursday evenings at 7:00**

I just want to thank you all for your participation and involvement on January 21 in our celebration of my work alongside you .... The worship service shared together, the personal "thank you's, the multitude of cards, the congregational gift, the special words of gratitude. I and my family were deeply touched and most thankful. I can't help but think of Paul's words to Philemon, his "friend and fellow worker," for the cause of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior: *"Your love has given me great joy and encouragement..."*

Under the leadership of Pastor Steve and Judy, our church family has undertaken great things in the name of Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. You have all been friends and fellow workers for the cause of Jesus Christ. I am just glad and most grateful that Barb and I can participate in some small way...and you have enabled it. To once again borrow Paul's words: *"Your love has given me great joy and encouragement..."* THANK YOU!

May grace and peace continue to be with you. Your servant in Christ... Jeff Fister

	Newsletter Deadline	Worship Schedule
 <p><i>Show God's love on Valentine's Day &amp; all year long!</i></p>	<p><b>Deadline for information for the March newsletter is February 19.</b></p> <p>Information may be submitted in written form, via email, or by phone.</p>	<p><i>Pathways to God 8:30 via Zoom</i></p> <p><i>Traditional Worship Service: 10:30 On-line and in person</i></p>



**2024**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3 AA at 11:00 <b>Men's break- fast 7 am Governor's</b>
4 8:30 Pathways 10:30 Worship	5 Office open 7:30-10:30  DKG at 4:30	6 Office open 7:39-12  Fiber Arts Fellowship 9:30	7 Office open 7:30-12  Bells at 6 pm	8 Office open 7:30-10:30  Community meal 4-6	9 Office closed	10 <b>101 UWF at 10</b>  AA at 11  <b>Happy 100th birthday celebration Don Gallupe!</b>
11 8:30 Pathways 10:30 Worship	12 Office open 7:30-10:30	13 Office open 7:30-12  Fiber Arts Fellowship 9:30	14 Office open 7:30-12  Bells at 6 pm  <b>ASH WEDNESDAY service 7:30</b>	15 Office open 7:30-10:30  Community meal 4-6  <b>Piburn 1 PM EAAA food distribution, 3pm</b>	16 Office closed	17 AA at 11:00
18 8:30 Pathways 10:30 Worship	19 <b>Office closed Presidents' Day</b>	20 Office open 7:30-12  Fiber Arts Fellowship 9:30	21 Office open 7:30-12  Bells at 6 pm	22 Office open 7:30-10:30  Community meal 4-6	23 Office closed	24 AA at 11:00
25 8:30 Pathways 10:30 Worship	26 Office open 7:30-10:30	27 Office open 7:30-12  Ad Council at 7 via Zoom	28 Office open 7:30-12  Bells at 6 pm	29 Office open 7:30-10:30  Community meal 4-6		