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The United Methodist Church

OPEN MINDS

OPEN HEARTS

OPEN DOORS

Bangor First United Methodist Church
703 Essex Street , Bangor Maine

Cross Talk

DECEMBER 2024

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

Advent Greetings,

Slow down!!! During a trip back from the Portland area we encountered some freezing drizzle which caused the roadway to get very slick. It was quite hard to see any ice, but there was just enough fog/drizzle to create a thin coat of ice on the highway. Recognizing the danger, the "Reduced Speed Limit to 45mph" signs were illuminated along the way. Despite the black ice, despite the warning signs, cars were barreling by us doing 70 to 80 miles-per-hour at times (note picture snapped by Judy.) Result? Many of these same cars went off the road, some even flipping over. Eventually the highway was closed to accommodate multiple tow trucks as they fetched cars and trucks from deep ditches. If only they had heeded the signal to slow down….

During the Advent season we will be reminded of the prophet Isaiah, who like many other prophets, shared words of warning to people speeding along, often in the wrong direction. *"Slow down! Stop! You're going the wrong way!"* Yet these words and other signals went unheeded, leading to calamity and ruin for those who wouldn't listen, or were too busy to notice.

And us? How are we doing at listening, of paying attention to words of instruction presented to us to slow down, to change direction? Are we, as Micah 6:8 implores: doing justice? Loving kindness? Walking humbly with our God?

When we are going too fast, heading in the wrong direction, may we heed the signals made available to us through scripture, prayer, and our fellowship together.

Pastor Steve

This 'N That...

Next meeting December 15. We will attend "A Christmas Carol" at the Penobscot Theater!

FIBER ARTS FELLOWSHIP
Tuesdays 9:30-11:00

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

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

We will begin meeting again this September but hope you will join us any Tuesday that you can.

Next Men's Breakfast

Saturday, December 7

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 Box1106
28 High Street, Bangor, ME 04401

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

United Women in Faith

Please join us for our next meeting at 10 am on December 14 at the church and on ZOOM. Call the Church office at 945-9567 or contact Julie Brownie if you want to receive emails or telephone calls about UWF events.

COMMUNITY MEAL

The Community Meal Take Out
Thursdays from 4-6
Drive up and pick up a delicious and nutritious meal!

GRATITUDE ATTITUDE…. Bah Humbug!

The Christmas season is upon us and as usual it has been a year of many ups and downs. We elected a new president, we saw our economy improve, we added many new members to our church rolls, and we lost some special people. Now we begin a new year with hope and optimism….Well, maybe. For some the year will begin with a Bah Humbug! Hopefully this naysayer attitude won't be coming from you!

Although I often do my shopping later in the month of December and find myself hustling and bustling around (I've been spotted in the stores on Christmas Eve), since Covid and with my "bad knee" I haven't done much shopping in stores in recent years. I miss racing through the stores looking for just the right gift for my loved ones but like many folks my comfy chair and computer call to me and I order gift cards and/or deliverable items that are sent directly to folks from distributors. However sometime using the internet is often a *Bah Humbug* moment for me and I have learned to only do online shopping when my computer savvy daughter is near by!

Like many, my family and closest friends won't be gathering in one location for Christmas as we all live miles apart thus we celebrate quietly in our own homes. Cooking the meal for but a few will seem like more of a task but I will still do some cookie baking, and will plan, cook and serve a meal for my daughter and myself, but the usual traditions of a huge Christmas dinner and being far away from family will a *Bah Humbug* moment year!

Although I purchased a beautiful artificial tree a few years ago, I still miss a real tree and the tradition of cutting one down. We've been thinking of going back to a "real" tree this year but the decision has yet to be made. We'll soon decide whether my daughter, the pups and I will trek to the mountain for the annual cutting of our tree. The decorating of the inside and outside of the house will be about the same and I will really enjoy the festive atmosphere they provide. However one of the kittens loves the shiny glass ornaments adorning the tree so once in awhile she feels she must knock an ornament to the floor...usually shattering it into teeny, tiny shards of glass. *Bah Humbug*!

As usual there will be folks hustling and bustling everywhere and being out and about even in a time of love, hope and cheer will take some patience. We will be bumped into, pulled in front of or beeped at when we don't immediately move our car forward when the traffic light turns green. We may wait in line for a much coveted gift for a family member only to find out they sold the last one to the person right ahead of us. We will go into a grocery store to find a necessary ingredient for our turkey stuffing, only to find out they don't carry that brand any longer. We rush into a store to pick up a gift for our spouse only to find out that the size we need is not available. *Bah Humbug* is anything going to go our way?

So what are we to do? Just Bah Humbug around for the whole season? Like Scrooge we could do that. We could just hide away, count our coins and be particularly grumpy. That however is not what Jesus wants us to do in celebration of his birth. He was a gift to us from the Father, and although there were many times in his life when he could have said, "*Bah Humbug*" he didn't! He worked, and loved and cared for all people.

Despite everything that may come your way this Christmas season, no *Bah Humbugging*! Christ was born in a simple stable and lived, worked and ultimately gave his life for us so... let's praise him at this special time and as the famous carol says: *"Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die, born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth. Hark the herald angels sing, Glory to the newborn King!"*

MY FRIEND'S PLACE
An Adult Social Program

And **MEMORY JOGGERS**

Hello Everyone,

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. ***We always welcome new volunteers.*** *If you would like to find out more about our programs please contact me at 945-0122.*

Fall has been a very busy and fun time at *My Friends Place* and *Memory Joggers*. We started off talking about apples and our favorite food made from apples. Lisa brought in her Instapot and everyone helped to peel and cut apples to make applesauce. There was also apple tasting with an assortment of different types of apples and a delicious peanut butter sauce. (Yum)

Then we always have fun games to test our hand and eye coordination and exercise to help strengthen our muscles. Some of the exercises can be challenging, like the ones we do for balance, but we've really improved greatly over the past several months. The next week we celebrated Halloween. The volunteers dressed up and everyone had an assortment of hats to choose from to wear. There were silly chicken hats, Mardi Gras masks, cowboy hats, headbands with bunny an cat ears, sombreros and a "Cat in the Hat" style hat.

Mary Keller, MFP Reporter

FELLOWSHIP LIBRARY NEWS

CHURCH LIBRARY News

Our library is full of all sorts of interesting things….puzzles, study books, periodicals, books for leisurely reading, books for information and of course Bibles. We also have a magnifier you can borrow if you find reading small print challenging. Check the Fellowship Library hall bulleting board for featured books. Books for digging deeper into sermon topics are featured right now. Come in and **CHECK IT OUT!**

Prayer Requests and Joys at FUMC

Charles W.
Keith W.
Bernice S.
Beverly W.
Helen W.
Barbara W.
Charles W.
David H.
Christina W.
Suzanne W.
Tuhan K.
Morgan W.
Patsy H.
Morgan W.
Darlene (Gregg's mom)
Jessie S.
Lisa S.
Roz
Donna & Beckett
Lynn D.
Carolyn Mc
Marion
Margaret S.
Family of Nancy P.

Prayer Requests

Steve P.
Christi S.
Page C's relatives
Suzanne W.
Carol & John F.
Pete L.
The homeless & hungry
Pray for our nation and its leaders
For the people who live in a place of war and hostility
For our pastors and church leaders including our Bishop and District Superintendent
For our children and youth
For those who lead us in worship and for those who provide the video links to those watching from home

JOYS

We are grateful for...

- God given courage & strength to face whatever life sends our way
- For crisp winter days and fresh fallen snow
- For the beauty of winter and the promise of spring
- Health and recovery from illness
- Family & friends
- God's unconditional love
- For all those who help, even when not being asked
- Our pastors, musicians and media techs
- 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)*

BIRTHDAYS

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Nancy Isaacs Diane Moody	**2** Cynthia Commeau	**3**	4	**5**	**6** Jaddah Swett	7 Steven Van Dolman
8	**9** Glenda McNally	**10** Jeff Fister	**11**	**12** Bill Langerstrom	13	**14**
15 David Pelkey Matt Nye	16	**17**	**18** Bob Worcester	**19**	**20**	**21** David Swett Hillson Beal Joe Haskins
22 Jackie Tapley	**23**	**24** Bill Mason Ane Roberts	**25** Jane Weston	**26**	**27**	**28** Glenn Mower Michael Downs
29	**30**	**31** Sue Edwards				***Happy Birthday to you!*** ***Happy Birthday to you!*** **God Bless you and keep you the whole year through**

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 1:00pm & at 7pm via Zoom**

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

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

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

Men's Breakfast devotion and fellowship the first Saturday at 7 am

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

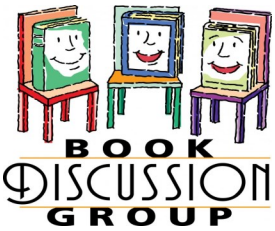
***Join the Fellowship Choir or come and play a handbell**

***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



Groups meet on Tuesdays at 1pm at church and at 7:00 pm via Zoom.
A new study will begin in early 2025!

Poinsettia Memorials

Each Christmas we have a display of poinsettias on the altar. If you would like to *remember or honor* someone as part of the display, you are welcome to make a donation. Donations will go to the Youth group this year. Forms will be available beginning December 8.

I heard the bells on Christmas Day.
Their old, familiar, carols play, and mild
and sweet, the words repeat of
PEACE on earth, good-will to men!

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

	Newsletter Deadline	Worship Schedule
Light up our lives Lord Jesus. Bring the hope, joy, love and peace of Christmas into our hearts…now and all year long.	**Deadline for information for the January *2025* newsletter is December 16.** Information may be submitted in written form, via email, or by phone.	*Sundays….* *Pathways to God 8:30 via Zoom* *Traditional Worship Service: 10:30 On-line and in person*

DECEMBER, 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7** **AA at 11:00** **Men's Breakfast 7 am at Governor's on**
8 8:30 Pathways 10:30 Worship	**9**Office Open 7:30-11:30 **My Friend's Place 10-2** **DKG 4:30**	**10** Office open 7:30-11:30 **Fiber Arts 9 am** **Mahjong 9am**	**11** Office open 7:30 -10:30 **Memory Joggers 10-2** **Choir/ Bells**	**12** Office Open 7:30-10:30 **Community meal 4-6** **Mahjong 12:30**	**13** Office closed **My Friend's Place 10-2**	**14** **AA at 11:00** **UWF 10 am**
15 8:30 Pathways 10:30 Worship **Youth Group**	**16** Office open 7:30-11:30 **My Friend's Place 10-2**	**17** Office open 7:30-11:30 **Fiber Arts 9 am** **Mahjong 9am** **Ad Council at 7 via Zoom**	**18** Office open 7:30-10:30 **Memory Joggers 10-2** **Choir/Bells**	**19** Office open 7:30-10:30 **Community meal 4-6** **Mahjong 12:30** **Piburn 1 pm** **EAAA food distribution**	**20** Office closed **My Friend's Place 10-2**	**21** **AA at 11:00**
22 8:30 Pathways 10:30 Worship	**23** Office open 7:30-11:30	**24** Office open *7:30-10:30* **Christmas Eve service 8 pm** 	**25** Office closed 	**26** Office ***closed*** **Community meal 4-6** **Mahjong 12:30**	**27** Office closed	**28** **AA at 11:00**
29 8:30 Pathways 10:30 Worship	**30** Office open 7:30-11:30	**31** Office open 7:30-11:30				