

BRANCHES

A Newsletter of the Phippsburg Congregational Church (UCC), Phippsburg, ME
Rev. Holly Morrison, Pastor

John 15:5 "I am the vine, you are the branches."

FROM THE PASTOR:

Awash in the Gladness of Summer

"There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God..." and, for five steamy-hot days in Baltimore, at the national gathering of the United Church of Christ, we let ourselves be guided by this river image. The words from Psalm 46 sluiced and tumbled, trickled and roared through our proceedings. In fact, you could say, we were awash!

The Kennebec and Maine's other rivers have blessed us with much bounty: water of life, to support our ecosystem and all its creatures, as well as power for our mills, food for our families and passageways for every kind of boat and ship. These rivers were here long before us. They have borne witness to countless generations and changes. Seekers and people of faith can learn much from these wise elders.

The first lesson of rivers: everything needs a source. What is the source of your own strength, and your own renewal? How do you make time and space to reconnect with that source? This is a special challenge for summertime, as many of us get overwhelmed and exhausted by the otherwise joyful task of hosting family and other visitors. Have you scheduled your own quiet time at the water's edge? When and where might you make more space to speak with—and, especially, to listen to—God?



The Kennebec River as viewed from the belfry at Phippsburg Congregational Church



The second lesson of rivers: everything needs an outlet. Logjams put everyone at risk, and dams deprive countless creatures of life and liberty. In the book, *Mister God, This is Anna*, a little girl declares that it isn't so much the badness of people that makes them miserable, "it's the good that can't get out and find its proper place." What good passions are stirring within you that long for expression? Do you love to teach, to build, to share the work of creating a more just and compassionate community, a better world? Find a way to give voice and shape to your creative gifts. Let your love pour out!

(continued on page 2)



Rivers need movement, from source to outlet, from raindrop to ocean and back again. The church needs movement, too—and we who seek to follow Jesus must MOVE to follow him. Like the rivers, we depend on a complex ecosystem and it holds us accountable. When the movement stops flowing, the river—and the church—run the risk of stagnation. When there is a healthy flow, we all flourish.

How does the river make glad the city of God? By connecting outlet and source and sharing the joy of each and every connection. Here are some of the joys WE celebrate, here along the Kennebec:

- Helping neighbors through our support of the Bath Area Food Bank, Bath Housing, and other local mission partners,
- Acquiring the lot adjoining the church—for continued stewardship and expanded ministry opportunities,
- Helping resettle Asylum-Seekers and sharing the joy as they settle, learn, and live in safety,
- Building networks of local faith communities for shared ministry and mission,
- Hosting concerts, including our own concert series, rising young musicians from the Bowdoin International Music Festival, and our new partnership with the Kennebec Early Music Festival,
- Raising, and celebrating, a new high school graduate (congratulations, Chipper!) and honoring over 70 years of Morse Alumni/Alumnae connections,
- Giving glory to God through the work of our hands—care of buildings and grounds, beautiful flowers, delicious fellowship refreshments, thoughtful cards and letters, our newly-built hospitality cart & communication kiosk, prayer shawls, and more!

There is a river that makes glad the city of God. We are all touched and taught by this beautiful river. May you be blessed with some of that river-borne gladness, this summer and in every season!

BLESSINGS, --Pastor Holly

A NOTE FROM THE PASTORAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Thank you to all in the church who returned questionnaires! Your comments and suggestions have been tremendously helpful. Our task of gathering and compiling the results of this spring's Evaluation of Ministry has been completed and shared with Holly. A report will be made to Council, and we will also share findings at the congregational meeting on July 9th.

Because of anonymity, we are unable to reach out to those expressing individual or personal concerns. In the spirit of maintaining open, free-flowing lines of communication, we again encourage anyone who has questions or areas of concern to contact Holly directly, and have a confidential conversation with her.

If you prefer, please feel free to contact members of the Pastoral Advisory Committee not only in response to the evaluation process, but anytime.

Sincerely,

John Morse (443-3948, morse.johng@gmail.com),

Bettina Tucker (882-5450, tinasmithtucker@gmail.com),

Ellen Parker (443-9393, EllenParkerherself@comcast.net)

'MELT-IN-YOUR-MOUTH' BLUEBERRY CAKE

2 eggs, separated
1 cup sugar
¼ tsp salt
½ cup shortening
1 tsp vanilla
1 ½ cups sifted flour
1 tsp baking powder
1/3cup milk
1 ½ cups fresh blueberries

Beat egg whites until stiff. Add about ¼ cup of sugar to keep them stiff.

Cream shortening, add salt and vanilla to this. Add remaining sugar gradually. Add unbeaten egg yolks and beat until light and creamy. Add sifted dry ingredients alternately with milk. Fold in beaten whites. Fold in fresh blueberries. (Take a bit of the flour called for in the recipe and gently shake berries in it so they won't settle to the bottom of the cake.)

Turn into a greased 8"x8" pan. Sprinkle top of batter lightly with granulated sugar. Bake at 350°F for 50-60 minutes. Serves 8-9.



Recipe by Marjorie Standish

SUMMER CONCERTS & CELEBRATIONS

CONTRADANCE, YARD SALE, & LOBSTER MEAL TO
CELEBRATE PHIPPSBURG CHURCH
ANNIVERSARY Saturday, July 15th

Lobster Meal: \$22; Chicken Salad or Hummus: \$8

Contradance admission: \$10 for adults/ \$7
students. Children under 10 free.

In celebration of the 10th anniversary of its Linden Tree Meeting House, the Phippsburg Congregational Church will hold a contradance, a yard sale, and a lobster roll meal on Saturday, July 15. The historic main building of the 1802 church will also be open for visitors.

The day will begin with a yard sale from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Offerings include two original framed watercolor paintings from local artist Sharon Bond, fishing lures, ice fishing items, lamps, kitchen items, and much more.

From 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. lobster roll meals will be available to purchase. Meals, which can be eaten on premise or taken out, include a lobster roll, chips, a soda, and a piece of homemade "melt in your mouth" blueberry cake for \$22. Chicken Salad or Hummus Roll available for \$8.

The day will conclude with a 7 p.m. contradance led by musician Jim Joseph and veteran dance caller Elna Joseph. They will be supported by other established area musicians. Jim is a member of the Acadian folk music trio T-Acadie, and has played concerts and contradances at venues including Bowdoin College, the University of Maine, the New England Folk Festival, the Downeast Country Dance Festival, and the Crossroads Celtic Festival. The Josephs also perform in the Cajun music ensemble, JimmyJo & The Jumbol'Ayuhs.

New and experienced dancers of all ages are invited. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m.

BOWDOIN INTERNATIONAL MUSIC FESTIVAL COMMUNITY
CONCERT Tuesday, August 1, 2:00-3:00 pm

No Charge but donations are appreciated.

Each summer, talented student musicians from around the world come to Bowdoin College to study with accomplished masters. For the last several years, we have been pleased to host a community concert featuring performances by these amazing students. Come and hear the stars of tomorrow!

KENNEBEC EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL August 15-20, Evenings at 7:30 pm, Sunday at 3 pm

\$25 General Admission/ \$20 seniors/ \$10 students (ages 16-25). Children under 15 free.

Solo and chamber music concerts will be performed at the Linden Tree Meeting House of the Phippsburg Congregational Church and the Grace Episcopal Church in Bath.

Revel in the dynamic artistry of six of national and international renown from San Francisco, Seattle, Boston, Portland, and Bath. Experience the Music of Bach, Dowland, Beethoven, Mozart, and other masters as it should be – performed on the historic instruments they knew, played, and loved. View the full concert schedule at www.kennebecearlymusicfestival.org.

OUR LOCAL NEWS

HENS FOR HEIFER!

In March 2017, Pastor Holly's hens heard about PCC's great history with Heifer Project International: the successful "ark" fundraiser in 2008, regular mission projects spearheaded by our Sunday School children and youth, and our ongoing commitment to the financial support of their worldwide mission to combat hunger and poverty. (More about HPI at www.heifer.org.) You know how hens are: one gets her feathers ruffled, and pretty soon the whole flock is riled up. Those chickens wanted to join in and make a difference. During the seasons of Lent and Easter, all their eggs were donated to the church for sale to church members and friends—not to benefit the farm owners, but as a mission fund-raiser. All proceeds were earmarked for HPI. When the egg sale concluded in mid-May, PCC members and friends had not only enjoyed some fresh, local eggs from free-range chickens; they also succeeded in raising a total of \$315 for Heifer Project International...a mission project worth crowing about!



Pastor Holly's hens greet the day.



FULL SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE FOR LGBTQ+ HIGH SCHOOL CAMP!

Pilgrim Lodge has just received a major grant for scholarships to CAMP PRIDE, August 6-12, 2017

We have a limited amount of scholarship funds, including the opportunity for full scholarships. This is a chance for youth who identify as LGBTQ+ to spend a week at camp together, sharing and learning. For more information visit <http://www.pilgrimlodge.org/camps/pride>. To apply for scholarship funds visit: <http://www.pilgrimlodge.org/summer-camp/scholarships/camp-pride/>. Allies welcome! Campers should be entering 10th grade through 2017 HS graduates.

ITEMS TO DONATE

NON-PERISHABLE FOOD ITEMS:

Canned tuna
Canned meat
Canned vegetables
Canned fruits
Peanut butter
Canned baked beans
Boxes of Mac & Cheese
Pasta
Boxed cereal
100% juice in bottles
Canned soup

OFTEN REQUESTED:

Diapers
Coffee
Dehydrated Milk

OTHER ITEMS:

Toothbrushes
Toothpaste
Floss
Shampoo & Conditioner

(Please, no canned salmon or egg cartons.)

Thank you!



benefit from the Summer Feed Program. You can give them a ride, and enjoy a great meal yourself. Every Mon-Wed-Fri the Bath Area Kitchen Table will serve a meal to all ages! Children will receive a 'bag lunch' on M/W/F to take home and eat on T/Th/Sat. The Kitchen Table WILL NOT be open Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun. Children do NOT need to be accompanied by an adult thru August 31st.

Also, keep your eyes peeled as you drive by the Phippsburg Fire Station. They will announce on their sign when the Mobile Food Truck is arriving in Phippsburg in August, October, and December.

BATH KITCHEN TABLE & FOOD BANK

The Bath Kitchen Table [former soup kitchen] is now in the same building as the Food Pantry, at 150 Congress Avenue in Bath.

Local farms and gardeners who have donated produce to the Food Pantry in the past, have been joined by a couple of new farms. The fresh vegetables and fruit are always greatly appreciated by the clients.

Short-falls in volunteers often occur around major holidays. Should you wish to volunteer; there is an on-call list kept by the Executive Director of people willing to volunteer and fill in at the last minute, to replace scheduled volunteers who become ill or have an emergency. Volunteers may be asked to stand for up to 4 hours in an evening, until all of the clients have had a chance to shop at the Food Pantry. Volunteers are also sometimes needed at fill-a-bus collection events. If you are interested, please send an email to Kimberly Gates, kfgates@gwi.net, with your full name, contact information, and what type of work you would be willing to be on-call for.

Other ways to help: Please keep on the lookout at this summer's yard sales; for gently used children's books for the Pantry Book Cart and give them to Sally Gray, or leave them in the narthex at Church.

Each dollar you are able to donate will buy about \$7.00 worth of groceries from Good Shepard Food Bank. Please write check to Phippsburg Congregational Church, and put BAFB on the memo line. This helps the church meet its' annual donation goal to missions.

Items for donation can be brought to the box in the Narthex at the church, or left in the wooden box inside the front entry at 150 Congress Avenue, in Bath.

Have a wonderful peaceful summer, Ann Schroeder

BATH AREA KITCHEN TABLE SUMMER FEED PROGRAM

Maybe you know of some children in Phippsburg who would benefit from the Summer Feed Program. You can give them a ride, and enjoy a great meal yourself. Every

When: Mon-Wed-Fri

Dates: July 1st – August 31st

Time: 10:50-12:00 (please do not arrive early)

Place: 150 Congress Street, Bath

BE THE CHURCH

Protect the environment.

Care for the poor.

Forgive often.

Reject racism.

Fight for the powerless.

Share earthly and spiritual resources.

Embrace diversity.

Love God.

Enjoy this life.

God is still speaking,
**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



FURNITURE DRIVE SUCCESS!

The rain stopped, the furniture poured in, the goodwill of everybody involved remained strong, and in the end we had enough furniture to resettle a number of asylum seekers or families requesting support. Many thanks to all who participated, and a special shout out to Steve Howe of Cumberland Storage, who donated enough space to accommodate the output of 5 large rental trucks and multiple pickups, with room to spare. Thank you Steve!

Our furniture drive exceeded all expectations and we have a solid foundation on which to build for future relocations of people seeking peace and security in Maine.

Peace and blessings to all, Fred

AUGUST WORSHIP: TWO WAYS TO GREET THE DAY

E.B. White must have been talking about summer days in Maine when he wrote these words: "I awake in the morning torn between a desire to enjoy the world, and a desire to improve the world. This makes it hard to plan the day."

It's OK to
dress casual for church.
Jesus did.



This August, you won't have to choose: we'll have two worship services each Sunday of the month. On August 6, 13, 20, and 27, there will be one service at 9:00 for the early risers, and another service at 10:30 for the leisurely lingerers. (On August 6th, the sacrament of Communion will be served at both the early and late services.)

9:00 services will be standard-format one-hour worship services with traditional hymns, scriptures, and a sermon. Fellowship time with refreshments will follow, allowing a social overlap between the two services.

10:30 services will last about 30 minutes and will be drawn from the Iona Abbey Worship Book, a collection developed by an ecumenical Christian community "committed to new ways of living the Gospel in today's world." The Iona Community is based on the ancient pilgrimage site of the Isle of Iona in Scotland. Their worship resources, influenced by the Celtic tradition and Biblical calls to justice, peace, and healing, are used by Christians around the world.

August worship: come to one, or both: (all ages welcome!)

9:00-10:00 Standard worship service with hymns and sermon

10:00-10:30 Fellowship time with refreshments (Linden Tree Meeting House)

10:30-11:00 Morning praise and prayer from Iona Abbey

PRAYER SHAWLS & KNITTERS CIRCLE

Thursdays at 2:00 pm

Prayer Shawls can go to anyone in need of a hug & prayer from the congregation. Please let the Deacons or the Pastor know, if you feel someone could benefit from a prayer shawl. You are very welcome to join this caring ministry and make a prayer shawl that will be blessed for someone in need.

If you would like to join the Thursday Knitters Circle, please contact Laurie Simpson at chip.simpson57@gmail.com so we know to expect you!

COOKS CORNER

Inspiration and Love from our Administrative Assistant, Amanda, who is also a local farmer

It's not far off now, that most beloved of all seasons where each day's harvest brings buckets and buckets of vine-ripened juicy fruit... Tomato season, of course! Last year my husband Levi and I processed hundreds of pounds of tomatoes into sauce, salsa, jam, and frozen tomatoes, and this year, with 3 times the tomato plants in the ground, we're set to do the same. One of my favorite ways to savor our fresh (or frozen) heirloom tomatoes is in this out-of-this-world Creamy Curried Tomato Soup. Enjoy!

Creamy Curried Tomato Soup

Makes at least 4 quarts. Great for when you have picky eaters, extra houseguests, or when you need to use up those tomatoes pronto! This recipe is also easily adaptable for food allergies or sensitivities.

A few lbs of tomatoes (anywhere from 5-10lbs is good)
1 head Garlic
1 can Coconut Milk
2 c Cow's Milk or other Milk of your choice
1/4 c Nutritional Yeast (NY)
1-2 T Tomato Paste
1 T Turmeric
1 T Curry Powder
1 T Garam Masala (a spice mix that's easy to make)
1 Hot Pepper or Hot Sauce to taste
Salt & Pepper to taste
2 T Coconut Manna or Shredded Coconut (optional)
Basil, Cilantro, or Mint as garnish

Roast quartered tomatoes & garlic w/ Olive oil @ 450F 20-25 minutes till soft. (If using frozen tomatoes, skip roasting & put in a pot of warm water for 1 minute, remove skin, and return to water. Simmer till soft.)

In a big pot, whisk coconut milk, almond milk, NY, paste, hot pepper & spices. Simmer, do not boil.

Add tomatoes & garlic to spices/milk mixture & blend w/ immersion blender

Add in coconut manna or coconut (optional)

Add S + P to taste

Serve warm w/ fresh herbs



****Shameless plug: if you would like to get your hands on large quantities of local, not-sprayed-with-anything heirloom tomatoes, please email Amanda at centerpondfarm@gmail.com. ****

Thank you and Happy Gardening, Amanda Kibbe-Wark

NEWS FROM THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

DECLARING THE EARTH IS THE LORD'S, UCC CALLS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPERATIVES FOR A NEW MORAL ERA

July 4, 2017 Written by Tim Kershner

The United Church of Christ, noting both the urgency of climate change and the continued debate over its existence, is "raising its prophetic voice" to urge the "healing of the Earth."

On Monday, July 3, the delegates of the General Synod passed a resolution that calls on clergy across the life of the church to preach about the moral obligation to protect God's creation, and appeals to its members to lead efforts to educate and advocate for legislation to reduce the human impact on the environment.

"The climate crisis is an opportunity for which the church was born," said Rev. Jim Antal, president and conference minister for the Massachusetts Conference United Church of Christ, and the author of the resolution. "This sets the stage for engagement and hope. This is a proclamation of truth and the love of God's gift."

The resolution, "The Earth is the Lord's-Not Ours to Wreck," which passed with more than 97% of delegates in favor, was first adopted by the denomination's Southern California Nevada Conference at its June meeting in response to the United States withdrawal from the Paris Climate Accord. Since then, more than 16 additional regional conferences endorsed the resolution at their annual meetings.

"No resolution has arrived to General Synod with this much momentum," Antal said.

While addressing climate change, the action primarily calls attention to efforts, often politically motivated, to belittle the science behind climate change and deny what climate supporters say are obvious impacts on the environment. "The truth is under attack," says Marilyn Kendrix, chair of the Synod committee that considered the resolution. "It is up to us to reclaim truth."



The resolution relates the Bible's description of the encounter between Jesus and Pilate. When asked, "So you are a king?" Jesus responds by declaring to Pilate, "I came into this world to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice."

Science, Kendrix adds, has no political opinion or bias. "Science is the basis of our understanding of climate change, and science is under attack. [This resolution] is about the truth."

The Rev. Denise Mason Bullitt, interim conference minister of the Central Atlantic Conference, agreed. During the Synod committee process, she said, "Science has everything to do with our responsibility and accountability to address climate change. Scripture tells us we have a firm foundation in the truth."

The resolution calls on UCC clergy, churches and members to speak from the pulpit and in the "public square," and to set an example "through words and actions."

"Let's work together now to save the world."

NEW LOGO FOR THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

A Just World For All

The words "A Just World for All" summarize Purpose, Mission, and Vision statements adopted by the national setting of the UCC in 2017. Here are the texts of those statements:

- Purpose: To love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength and our neighbor as ourselves.
- Mission: United in Spirit and inspired by God's grace, we welcome all, love all, and seek justice for all.
- Vision: United in Christ's love, a just world for all.



The logo is an update of the popular red and black "God is still Speaking," comma logo. The new logo reflects the themes of "A Just World for All" and consists of a hand/dove shape along with an image of the world encompassing the comma, accompanied by the words "a just world for all."

In the coming months, watch for more news on opportunities for local action as part of this national campaign.



'447 Mothers Hands' by Cheryl Hrudka

THE WORK OF OUR HANDS

"To make bread or love, to dig in the earth, to feed an animal or cook for a stranger—these activities require no extensive commentary, no lucid theology.

All they require is someone willing to bend, reach, chop, stir.

Most of these tasks are so full of pleasure that there is no need to complicate things by calling them holy. And yet these are the same activities that change lives, sometimes all at once and sometimes more slowly, the way dripping water changes stone.

In a world where faith is often construed as a way of thinking, bodily practices remind the willing that faith is a way of life."

—from *An Altar in the World: A Geography of Faith* by Barbara Brown Taylor

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