

I AM THE *bread* OF LIFE.
WHOEVER COMES TO ME
WILL NEVER GO *hungry*.

JOHN 6:35



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
129 MILLER AVENUE
PORTSMOUTH, NH 03801
603.436.6038
fumcportsmouth.com

REV. DR. DEBRA J. HANSON

Welcome

Hymn “Come, Share the Lord” (FWS#2269)

Scripture John 6:35 (CEB)

Jesus replied, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

Message “Eat This Bread, Drink This Cup”

“The Bread of Life” - 9/1/19 (written by Deb Hanson)

(**Deb** is intently studying a book as Dave walks past her and stops.)

Dave: What’cha doing, Deb?

Deb: (startled) Oh! Hi, Dave. I’m just reading.

Dave: A new book?

Deb: (putting the book down by her side with her finger in the place where she had stopped)

Dave: What’s it about?

Deb: Oh, just another book.

Dave: Uh huh - what’s the topic.

Deb: (sighs and holds up the book) Well, if you must know, it’s called “The Bread of Life Diet.”

Dave: Ohhhhh. A diet book. How many does that make this month? Six?

Deb: No, of course not. It’s (mumbles a little) only the second one.

Dave. How many do you plan to read?

Deb: What do you mean?

Dave: Well, you keep reading and reading diet books, but none of them seem to be quite right.

Deb: (sighs) I suppose I’m looking for the one that will fit me perfectly.

Dave: You DO know that you have done really well with the plan you are on AND that there are no perfect diet plans out there.

Deb: Yes, . . . I do know that.

Dave: (puts his arm around her shoulder) You also know that I’m proud of your weightloss already, and that I love you just the way you are.

Deb: (smiles up at him) Yes, I do. Thanks!

Dave: (removes arm and looks more closely at the book) "The Bread of Life Diet," huh.

Deb: Yes, well, you know how many diets restrict bread, and today we have all these wonderful breads right here in front of us, and we will be enjoying them after church at fellowship, so I thought it would be really good to start my bread of life diet today!

Dave: Hmmm, so what is the premise of this diet.

Deb: You can eat all the bread you want.

Dave: ALL the bread you want?

Deb: Yes. Well, within reason.

Dave: Okay. What else can you eat?

Deb: Grape juice.

Dave: Grape juice?

Deb: Right.

Dave: Is that all?

Deb: No, of course there are many more healthy choices that I can make, but I do this one once a month.

Dave: Once a month? Hey! Are you talking about communion?

Deb: You got it! The bread of life is about Jesus!

Dave: So we aren't just talking about actually eating, but about a spiritual diet, a spiritual connection with Jesus and each other.

Deb: Right - being fed in the fullness of life in Christ. In the scripture passage from John, Jesus talked about being the bread of life. He calls himself the bread of life.

Dave: The crowds had just seen him feed five thousand people with bread and fish, and they saw that as a sign about Jesus. Jesus said that they were just thinking about actual food, not spiritual food.

Deb: They often missed his metaphors. Jesus came to bring God's love to the world, and they didn't understand that he was trying to tell them that he provided more than just actual bread.

Dave: The crowds had just seen him feed five thousand people with bread and fish, and they saw that as a sign about Jesus. Jesus said that they were just thinking about actual food, not spiritual food.

Deb: They often missed his metaphors. Jesus came to bring God's love to the world, and they didn't understand that he was trying to tell them that he provided more than just actual bread.

Dave: And they didn't understand that he provided the food for eternal life.

Deb: We are reminded of that every time we celebrate the sacraments.

Dave: Baptism and communion.

Deb: They connect us to Jesus. The water of baptism and the bread and cup in communion are the physical ways we experience Jesus' presence.

Dave: And through those symbols, we are reminded of Jesus' presence with us.

Deb: When we come to the table of communion, we remember that Jesus' life, death and resurrection offer us forgiveness, healing, and God's unconditional love for us.

Dave: Communion is one of the ways Jesus' helps us work toward wholeness in God's love, of being spiritually healthy, too.

Deb: On the nose again! You see, being healthy isn't only about eating and drinking the "right" things, it's also about living our lives by finding ways to be balanced in body, mind, and spirit.

Dave: So all those books I read are part of building up my mind.

Deb: Right! And the way you are taking care of your health is part of it, as well as getting exercise and building a relationship with Jesus - who is the Bread of Life.

Dave: I get that. They are all mixed together - like the bread dough.

Deb: Right! And they make us whole and healthy as we continue to make a difference in the world wherever we are.

Dave: So The Bread of Life Diet is a focus on Jesus, and when we receive communion we are blessed with God's grace, forgiveness, and love.

Deb: Yes. We break the bread to remind ourselves of Jesus' broken body, and we drink the juice as a reminder of the blood he shed on the cross for the forgiveness of our sins.

Dave: A reminder of salvation in Jesus Christ.

Deb: Right. Rev. David Sellery wrote: “We are not Christians because we call ourselves Christians. We are Christians because we are baptized into grace, nourished and strengthened, body and soul, fully committed, fully absorbed in the love of Christ. In that context, we start each day. We end each day. We live each day.” (Text This Week under the commentary section for today’s scripture passage)

Dave: There’s another thing about today’s bread offerings.

Deb: What’s that?

Dave: Do you see the large variety of bread that’s there? Different textures, different colors, different tastes?

Deb: Yes.

Dave: It’s a reminder that Jesus died for everyone – the whole world. All those varieties remind us about the diversity of the family of God all over the world.

Deb: Good point! We are one in the Spirit, we are one in Jesus Christ.

Dave: It’s kind of cool, actually.

Deb: What’s that?

Dave: That we can celebrate the love of God through communion and know that Christians everywhere do the same thing in their own culture with their own resources. And we are all connected in Jesus.

Deb: That IS pretty cool! Hey! Maybe I don’t need this book after all. After all, the Bible tells me a lot more about Jesus, and being with these folks, sharing communion with them is part of the life-giving work of Christ in the world.

Dave: Right. We can be whole in body, mind, and spirit without a diet book as long as we try to live the way Jesus teaches us to live.

Deb: Right! (puts the book down) I think it’s time for communion!

Dave: Right! (High Five!)

Prayer

O God, you sent Jesus into our world to teach us about life, faith, and caring for others. Whenever we receive Holy Communion, we remember that he gave his own life so that we will have eternal life. Sometimes we think we can manage things on our own, and we forget to turn to you for

nourishment and renewal. We ask now, that you would forgive our self-centeredness and continue to lead us always as we walk the path of faith with you and our earthly companions. We give you thanks for your abundant love and grace offered freely every moment of every day. Amen.

Lord's Prayer (ecumenical version)

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Sharing the Bread and Cup

Hymn "Take Our Bread" (UMH #640)

Sending Forth





WE LIFT UP IN PRAYER

Juliann
Joan Allen
Naomi
Erin Frane
Madeline
Charles Gilman
Josh Jones
Jenn
Gary
Joyce

Harry Junkins
Marilyn & Gil
Donna Smith
Sophia
Bobbie Noble
Dan Strange
Danny Westbrook
Marion Collishaw
Mark & Sarah
Delores

Christine & her parents
Those in nursing and assisted living care
Our Church family






FUMC PORTSMOUTH A RECONCILING CONGREGATION

We, the congregation of the First United Methodist Church of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, are dedicated in worshipping, learning, and serving with all people as we embrace Jesus Christ's message of love and acceptance. As a United Methodist Church we stand fully behind the statement "Open Hearts, Open Minds, and Open Doors". We celebrate our diversity and invite all persons regardless of age, gender, racial or ethnic background, sexual orientation, marital or socioeconomic status, nationality, physical or mental ability into full membership and participation in the life of this community of faith.



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
129 Miller Avenue - Portsmouth, NH 03801
Office Phone 603-436-6038
Email - office@fumcportsmouth.net
Website - fumcportsmouth.com

Pastor - Rev. Dr. Debra J. Hanson

Like and Follow Us On:   

4 WAYS TO GIVE, DONATE & TITHE



BY MAIL
First UMC
129 Miller Ave
Portsmouth, NH
03801



ONLINE
fumcportsmouth.com
"GIVE" button



IN PERSON
First UMC
129 Miller Ave
Portsmouth, NH
03801
Wednesday's 10-2pm



QR code
Point your phone camera
on the QR code to the
left to view the online
PayPal donation page



LAST CALL!

The First UMC Church - Portsmouth is clearing out the Craft Room and is looking for schools, non profits who can use any of the supplies. Everything must go and it's FREE or donations accepted...if interested come to the church at 129 Miller Avenue on Wednesday from 10am - 2pm or set up an appointment with Sue R. at 603.749.4169 or email mksrichards@comcast.net

Here's a short list of what may be available:

3 sewing machines, picture/poster frames, shells, pine cones, yarn, counted cross-stitch/embroidery kits and supplies, floor containers, beads, fabric, fleece, foam molds, wooden shapes, trays, baskets, small Christmas trees, felt, muslin, misc. crafts supplies, partially finished projects, sewing supplies etc.