



July 2021
FUMC BEACON

Dear Friends,

This month I am sharing a devotional written by Rev. Talitha Arnold from June 14, 2021 and posted on Still Speaking Daily Devotions. She writes:

My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast. - Psalm 108:1a (NRSV)

Saguaro cactus are steadfast. On less than 10 inches of rain a year, with temperatures that range from 120 degrees down to freezing, the iconic “giants of the desert” live on average for 150 to 200 years.

Saguaros grow in only one part of the world: the Sonoran Desert that stretches from southern Arizona to northern Sonora (Mexico) and west to a small corner of California. They’ve been a part of that landscape of rock and hard sand for 10,000 years. They are steadfast.

It’s doubtful the author of Psalm 108 ever saw a saguaro. Yet I think they would have appreciated these long-lasting denizens of the desert, especially the lessons they offer in staying steadfast when life is rocky and hard.

Unlike tumbleweeds that spring up quickly after a rain but blow away when life gets hard, saguaros grow slowly, putting out roots that are as broad underground as the plant is tall above ground. They have the foundation they need to remain steadfast through thunderstorms and blistering sun.

The saguaro’s adaptability is also key to its tenacity. Most trees have a central trunk, but a saguaro has ribs. When the rains come, the cactus expands to store water for the dry times. When a bird pecks into its skin, the cactus forms a “shoe” around the injury for protection—just as the psalmist looks too God to be a “fortified city” in their time of trouble.

The psalmist strengthens their faith in God through thanks and praise, proclaiming “I will awake the dawn.” Every morning, the upraised arms of God’s steadfast saguaros do the same. Prayer: Thank you, Creator God, for your steadfast saguaros and all the other lessons of your Creation. Amen.

We, too, can praise God and trust that we are resilient and hope-filled as we move toward the light at the end of this pandemic tunnel. May this reflection be a blessing to you!

Grace and peace, Rev. Deb



CELEBRATING TOGETHER

First UMC, Eliot UMC and St. Mark's UMC

You are all invited to join with our sister churches in Maine for an old fashioned outdoor worship service, communion and a barbecue lunch all provided by the Eliot church.

Here are the details...mark your calendars:

DATE - July 4th

TIME - 10 am

WHERE - 238 Dow Highway, Eliot, ME

We will be following local CDC & denomination guidelines of social distancing and wearing masks.



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

REV. DR. DEBRA J. HANSON

If you can't make the service in person, join the live stream by going to eliotumc.org and clicking on the link to the service, or you can join on Facebook by going to the Eliot UMC's Facebook page. The service will be recorded for anyone who would like to view it later. There will **not** be a FUMC Zoom gathering that day.

A photograph of a church interior undergoing renovation. The scene is dominated by a high, vaulted wooden ceiling with exposed beams. A worker in a white shirt and shorts is on a tall ladder, painting the upper part of a wall. Several other ladders are leaning against the walls and pews. The floor is covered with red carpeting, and a wooden bench is in the foreground. A large, ornate chandelier hangs from the ceiling. The text "THE CHURCH AT WORK" is overlaid in the center.

THE CHURCH AT WORK



FIRST UMC

SPECIAL CHURCH CONFERENCE

Held on June 22, 2021

On Tuesday, June 22, a special church conference was held to approve funding for the Visioning Task Force projects. The total approved from the Parkhurst bequest was as follows*:

- \$110,703 for completing the masonry work
- \$126,550 for improvements, upgrades, and building repairs, painting the sanctuary and hallways, new carpeting and floor tile, pew cushions, and fixing the three pulpit chairs.
- \$85,945 to build an Outreach and Communication Ministry, including hiring a director, new digital and sound equipment, new FUMC website and increased outreach digitally to the community.
- \$80,000 pay off the parsonage mortgage.

The remainder of the bequest has been invested at the United Methodist Foundation of New England.

We are blessed and grateful for the insight and generosity of Gertrude Parkhurst and for her love of this church that led her to set up a bequest in order to help the church continue and grow in ministry!

In tandem, the General Fund supports salaries, utilities, and programming, and has managed to keep the bills and staff paid. We do ask that you prayerfully consider your continue stewardship and your creative way of investing your FUMC \$50.

How are things at the church?

Well if you are around the area stop in on Wednesday mornings and see the progress in person...it looks amazing.

*to note you can refer to the emailed or mailed copy of the Special Church Conference packet sent to everyone on June 16th.





WE REMEMBER AND ARE GRATEFUL



Gertrude Hatfield Parkhurst, 93, of Portsmouth, passed away peacefully on Friday, February 22, 2019 at Wentworth Senior Living in Portsmouth. She was born on September 15, 1925 in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, to John Rodney and Marion Vera (Hatfield) Parkhurst.

Trudy was a graduate of Portsmouth High School, Class of 1943; University of New Hampshire, Class of 1946; Yale University School of Nursing, Class of 1949; and Boston University School of Nursing, Class of 1960, receiving her master's degree in Nursing Administration.

She proudly served her country for over 10 years in the United States Army Nurse Corps, serving during the Korean War. She served for a time at an Army Hospital in Germany, at Togus Veterans Hospital in Maine, at Letterman Hospital in San Francisco, and at hospitals in Battle Creek MI, and in Texas. At the time of her retirement, Trudy had lived in Rhode Island for many years and was employed at Rhode Island Hospital in Providence. She had also worked at other hospitals including Mass General Hospital in Boston, Brockton Hospital in MA, and The Miriam Hospital in Providence, serving as a nurse and/or nursing administrator.

Trudy was a lifelong member of the First United Methodist Church in Portsmouth, NH. She was an avid reader, loved animals, and enjoyed traveling. She visited many places in Europe, traveled to China, and enjoyed a wonderful trip through the Panama Canal with her sister, Jane. Another memorable journey was to Antarctica, which she enjoyed with her niece, Nancy. She was predeceased by her longtime friend and companion, Doris Berry, and a number of other close nursing friends.

Survivors include her sister, Jane Richards of Rye; nieces, Nancy Richards (Susan) of Brevard, NC, and Carol Bovee (David) of Dover; nephews, John Richards (Carol) of Peterborough and David Richards (Susan) of Dover; and also many great nieces and nephews.

WE'RE CLOSING BACK! BACK! BACK! CHURCH IS REOPENING.

SEPTEMBER 12TH

FUMC RE-OPENING

September 12th is the target date to re-open FUMC for worship and we can't wait! Things will be different as to how we will be able to hold worship, and we will be updating everyone over the summer with information that will continue to help us all feel safe following the CDC and Conference guidelines.

The Finance/Trustees have been busy this past year approving and implementing recommendations of the Visioning Facilities Task Force in doing some much needed repairs and upkeep of our beautiful building. Here are a few of the exciting improvements you will see when returning:

OUTSIDE:

- Repair and repointing of the stone facade
- Repainting of iconic red doors and handrails
- Planters adorn entrances
- Removal and replanting of dead trees
- Reseeding of front lawn
- Church sign update

INSIDE:

- Deep clean of sanctuary
- Painting of sanctuary, sanctuary entrance and narthex
- Painting of downstairs hallway and bathrooms
- New flooring

SANCTUARY WORK IN PROGRESS



WAS GOOD TO SEE EVERYONE WHO COULD MAKE IT
TO THE FIRST UMC "VISION FOR THE FUTURE"
IN-PERSON PRESENTATION JUNE 26th.

[everyone either took, or was emailed/mailed a copy of the presentation]

Thank you to the Visioning Team for making this happen -
Rev. Deb, Nancy, Sue S, Sue R, Dave R, Kevin, John, Linda, Steve & Bevan

BE
Salt BE
Light

Matthew 5:13-16

FUMC PURPOSE 2020
VISIONING COMMITTEE

OUR PURPOSE:



"TO TRANSFORM LIVES THROUGH
UNCONDITIONAL INCLUSION,
EMPOWERING ACTIONS
TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE"

1 Revitalize our
physical presence

2 Educate and inspire
through outreach
and worship

3 Create a culture
of transformation

BE THE
COMMUNITY CHURCH

REPAIR AND IMPROVE
BE ACCESSIBLE
MODERNIZE
PRESERVE OUR HERITAGE
CELEBRATE DIGITAL

REACHING
"IN & OUT"

CREATE CONNECTIONS
ENCOURAGE VOLUNTEERISM
MAKE A TANGIBLE DIFFERENCE
BE THE FACE OF THE CHURCH
SHAPE NEW COLLABORATIONS

BECOME
DIGITAL DISCIPLES

ACT DIGITAL FIRST
NEW WEBSITE
CONSTANT CONVERSATION
ENGAGING CONTENT
SHAREABLE SOCIAL
COLLABORATE & ACTIVATE
STAYING CONNECTED

DENOMINATION MISSION

We are a community of faith with open hearts, open minds, and
open doors that through God's grace embraces Jesus Christ's
message of love and acceptance.

FUMC PURPOSE

To transform lives through unconditional inclusion,
empowering actions to make a difference.

FUMC CORE PILLARS

1 Revitalize our
physical presence

2 Educate and inspire
through outreach
and worship

3 Create a culture
of transformation






VISION FOR THE FUTURE BROWN BAG LUNCH.

Was so nice to to see everyone in person, and learn what is being planned for our church's future and then have lunch together. Sandwich, chips, homemade cookies [thank you Sue Richards] and a bottle of water...OK some of us had 2 sandwiches!

Thank you Sue Lange, Sue Richards, Sue Sarosiek, John VanReenen, Rev. Deb and Bevan for organizing, setting up and making the lunches!



STEWARDSHIP ^{vs} OWNERSHIP UPDATE!

FROM YOUR CHURCH LEADERSHIP
TEAM - OUTREACH & SPRC

Hello Church Family!

How are you doing on coming up with ideas for investing your \$50 from First UMC? As promised in the launch brochure Church Leadership was also participating. Well, the OUTREACH & SPRC teams have kicked it off with a BURRITO LUNCH deal this past Wednesday. Their \$50 investment turned into a profit of \$284 a 568% increase in their investment.

Thank You to the folks who came to have lunch with us...it was so much fun planning, organizing and catching up with over 25 of our FUMC community. Also a SHOUT OUT to Ken and the LasOlas team who helped make this so successful!

We hope you are having fun planning your idea[s] and if you are looking for some help let us know...we would love to help you.

If you've already accomplished your idea let us know all about it with pics and/or video...it just might inspire others too!

WE BELIEVE IN YOU!

HAVE FUN!



FROM YOUR CHURCH LEADERSHIP
TEAM - OUTREACH & SPRC

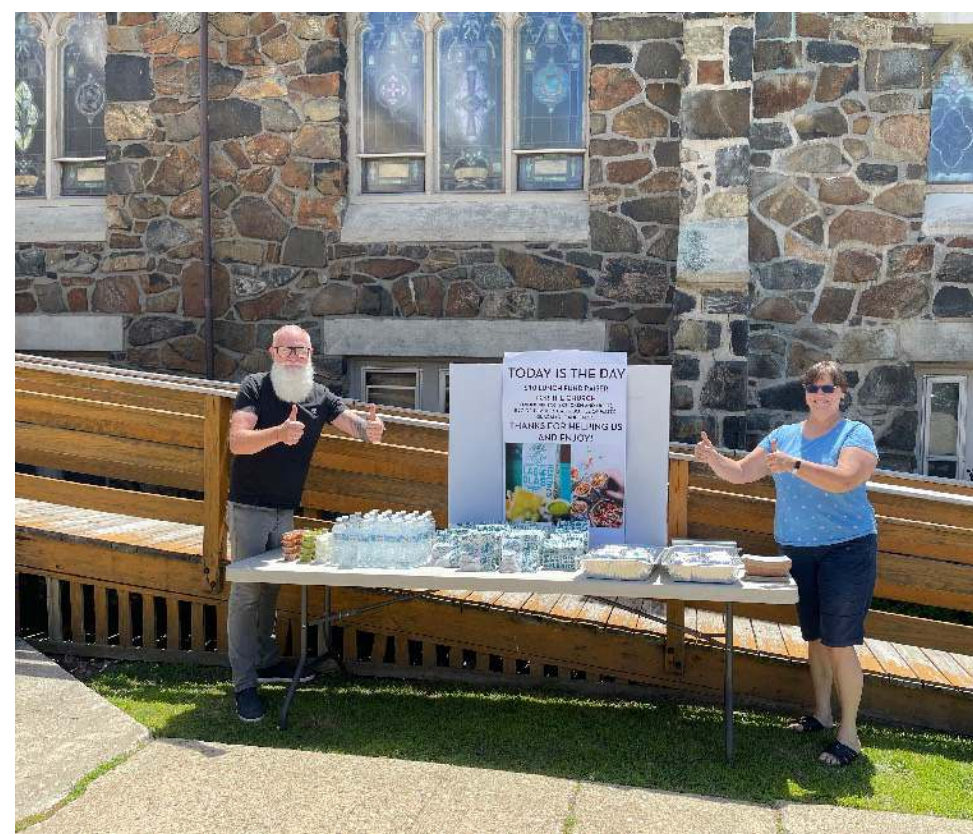


TODAY IS THE DAY

**\$10 LUNCH FUND RAISER
FOR THE CHURCH**

2 MINI BURRITOS [1 CHICKEN AND 1 BEEF],
BAG OF TORTILLA CHIPS, BOTTLE OF WATER,
GUACAMOLE AND SALSA.

**THANKS FOR HELPING US
AND ENJOY!**



A photograph of a stone church building with a tall steeple. The church has a red door and a sign above it that says "Share the joy". The text "UPCOMING MEETINGS" is overlaid on the image in large white letters, with horizontal lines above and below the text.

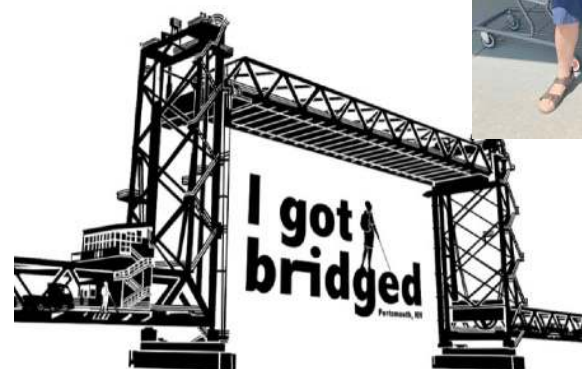
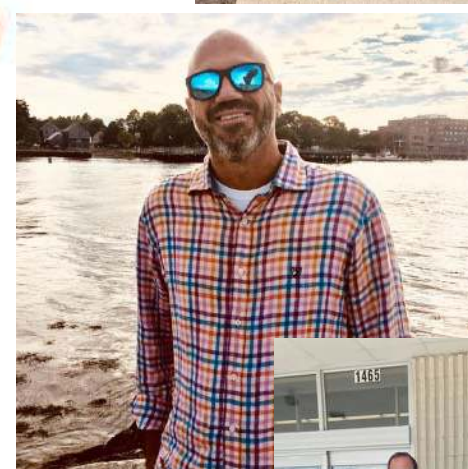
UPCOMING MEETINGS

July 13th @ 6 pm in the Randall Room - Finance/Trustees and Church Council with a Zoom option - All are welcome!

July 21st @ 6:30 pm SPRC in person meeting in the Randall Room. Zoom is also available.

Sunday School

We are beginning to think about Sunday school for September. As we work on the curriculum over the next month or two, we will be reformatting how we do our lessons and adding some on-line projects. If anyone is interested in being part of the planning, please contact Rev. Deb. We can meet via Zoom to begin, and we will look at some of the resources we have to use.



RECOGNITION OF VOLUNTEERS

This month we recognize Freddy Petrone. While Freddy isn't a FUMC member he is part of our church family and an amazing light within the community. He was just highlighted in a Seacoast online article titled "If I didn't lose it I'd be dead" - How a Portsmouth man's loss of sight opened his eyes. Freddy is part of the AA group and the loss of his sight at 45 years old actually saved his life. You will see him walking through Kittery, Portsmouth and New Castle with his cane for 14 to 17 miles a day. And while walking along the Memorial Bridge last summer he got caught with the bridge up and told his friend that he "got bridged"...and that started his nonprofit doing various charitable deeds in the Seacoast from buying Christmas presents for kids, shoveling snow for those who couldn't, installed air conditioners for local elderly and brought doughnuts and coffee to Gather food pantry volunteers. Freddy is an incredibly positive and great guy who has helped FUMC in many ways despite fighting his own pressing battles. We love you Freddy!

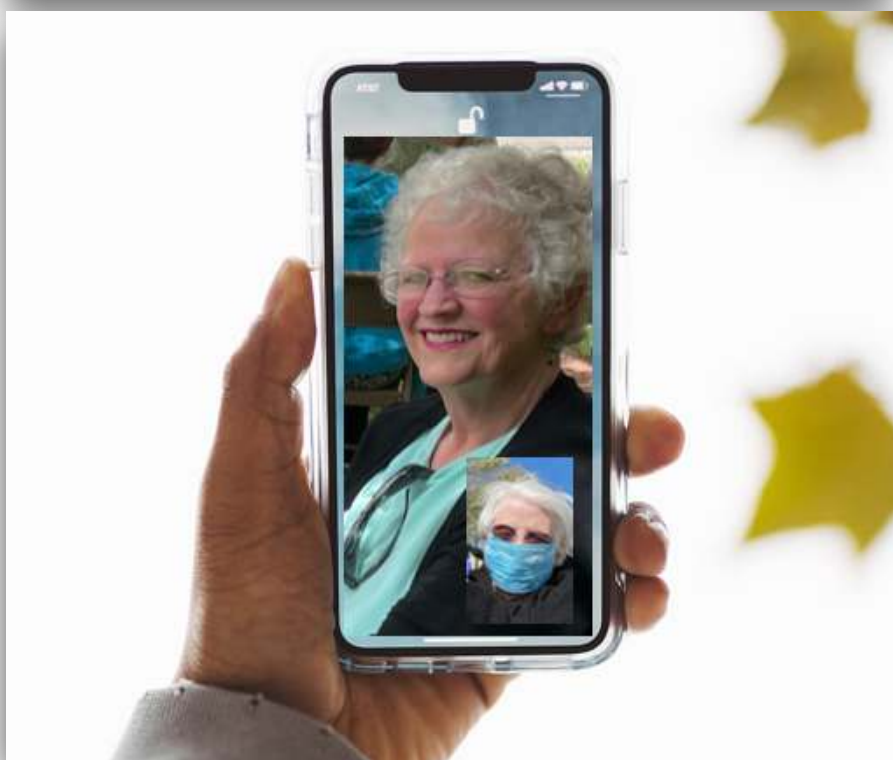
THE CHURCH ON ZOOM



SUNDAY MORNING ZOOM CALL

Zoom in on Sundays at 10 am! Please join us. Watch for the link in your email!

On the second Sunday of the month, we have children's time at the beginning of the Zoom gathering. They stay for about ten minutes to check in and say "hi." We hope to see those of you who can join us on Zoom!



FACE TIME

While Face Time isn't new we are trying to use it more often making it possible for Rev. Deb to have time with more folks digitally vs the time spent in driving. We have piloted the program with Barbara Clement while Bevan visits. We have scheduled 5-10 minutes each week for a quick catch up and a prayer and it has been something Barbara really appreciates.

If you are going to visit someone that could use a quick hello and prayer please arrange with Rev. Deb and use your smartphone to FaceTime...it will make someone's day much brighter!



HELP

If you need help in better understanding, setting up or learning about some of the digital tools available please do not hesitate asking...let the church office know and we will arrange it.

A close-up photograph of a cupcake in a red paper liner. The cupcake is topped with a swirl of white frosting, which is decorated with colorful sprinkles. A lit sparkler is stuck into the frosting, creating a bright burst of light and sparks. The background is a solid light blue color. In the foreground, some colorful sprinkles are scattered on a light blue surface.

July

1 Harold Whitehouse

9 Ruth Griffin

18 Susan Sarosiek



WE LIFT UP IN PRAYER

Juliann Smith
Joan Allen
Naomi
Erin Frane
Madeline
Charles Gilman
Josh Jones
Aerial Sillanpaa

Harry Junkins
Marilyn & Gil
Donna Smith
Sophia
Bobbie Noble
Dan Strange
Danny Westbrook
Delores [Marilyn's sister]

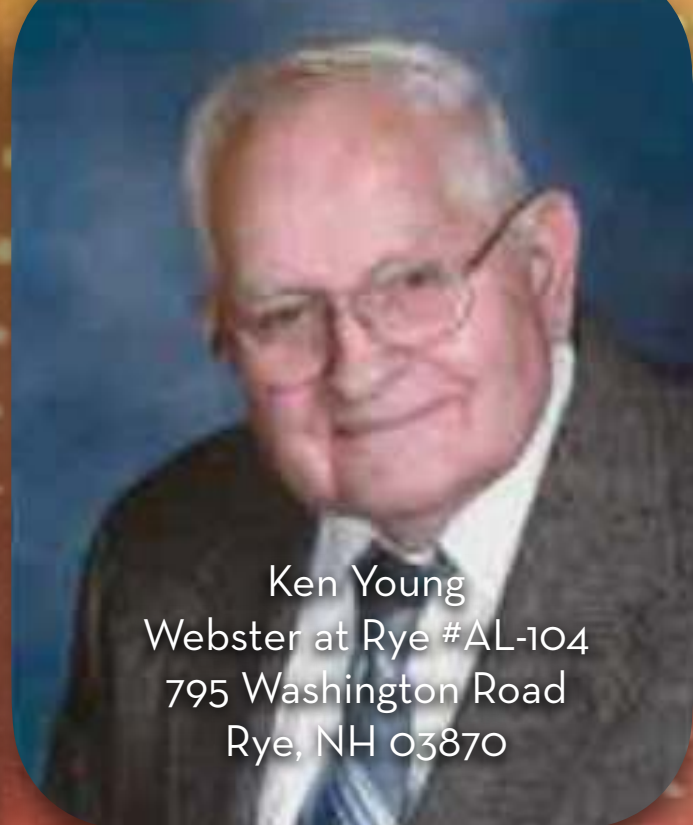
Christine & her parents
Jenn - Stebbins daughter-in-law
Those in nursing and assisted living care
Our Church family



Barbara Clement
Riverside Rest Home
276 County Farm Rd #304
Dover, NH 03820



Marion Collishaw
50 Old Colony Way
Scituate MA 02066



Ken Young
Webster at Rye #AL-104
795 Washington Road
Rye, NH 03870

OUR FAMILY

WHO CAN'T MAKE IT TO CHURCH

A card can make a big difference in someone's day!



Barbara Glidden
188 Jones Ave #101
Portsmouth, NH 03801



Gil Stebbins
9 Lewis Road, #104-2
Kittery, ME. 03904



Barbara Sylvester
346 Pleasant St. #254
Portsmouth, NH 03801

Thank You letter from NicaLove



June 1, 2021

First United Methodist Church

129 Miller Avenue
Portsmouth NH, 03879

Dear Rev. Deb Hansom, Bevan Bloemendall and FUMC Church Family,

I want to give you my sincerest thanks for your thoughtful donation of \$500.00 and for choosing NicaLove to be a recipient of FUMC's generous Easter offerings this year. It is such a blessing to be able to share this gift with the animals and humans we support in Nicaragua and appreciate your trust in our efforts. Your gift will help support the organization's ongoing animal welfare, and school projects in the vulnerable communities we work alongside in Nicaragua.

Being on the ground for 10 weeks this winter I witnessed the surge in suffering caused by the pandemic and the growing need for our supports. The effects of the pandemic has left animals and humans already facing severe poverty and food insecurity in a more critical state. Abandonment, and neglect of animals are at an all-time high and we are feeling the effects in our partners shelters.

We have been incredibly blessed to continue to receive support during this challenging time, allowing NicaLove the fortune to continue in our mission and projects continuing to move forward. The past few months have been a tremendous challenge for grassroots organizations like ours. I am extremely grateful to receive your gift for this purpose.

Once again, my sincerest gratitude for your generous contribution and for sharing NicaLove's work with the First United Methodist Church Family. It is an honor to receive this gift from my childhood church family, thank you to each and every one of you.

With gratitude,

Julie
Founder

NicaLove

Our fiscal sponsor is FNE International, EIN 27-1792140
PO Box 703 Rye, NH 03870 /Phone 6032056116 E-mail: julie@nicalove.org
www.nicalove.org



UPDATE

Thank you for your donations!!!! Lets keep it going as we still need more!

HERES HOW YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

We can use any of the following gently used or new items:

Leashes, Muzzles, Collars
 Slip leads. Harnesses
 Nail clippers
 Grooming gloves, Brushes
 Indestructible toys (like Kong)
 Sweaters, Costumes
 Gently expired chewable flea, tick and heart worm pills
 Wee wee pads [new]
 Doggie diapers [new]
 Travel/Collapsible bowls
 Cat toys

You can drop them off at:
 First United Methodist Church
 129 Miller Ave
 Portsmouth, NH

Or

Send directly to:
 NicaLove
 306 West Road
 Rye, NH 03870

THANK YOU FOR CARING!

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



WHO WE ARE

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.



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