

FIRST UMC  PORTSMOUTH
MARCH BEACON
2024



One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." Jesus answered him, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise." Luke 23:39-43

Dear Friends,

It has only been a few weeks since we reflected about the Evil One tempting Jesus by asking him to prove he was really God and as we get closer to Holy Week, we will once more hear the same taunts from those around Jesus as he lay dying on the Cross. Jesus knew even in that dark and excruciating moment that He did not have to prove himself. He was and is the Messiah and knew his act of love on that Cross would save the world. One of the criminals dying with him, recognized Jesus as the Messiah and was immediately forgiven for all of his sins and sent to Heaven that very day. Doesn't that give you a reason to celebrate? Jesus is filled with mercy and grace and is quick to forgive us even after the zillionth time we mess up! That is the story of Easter which we will celebrate at the end of this month.

My prayer for us this month is that we take the time to reflect on who Jesus is in our lives and what kind of disciples we are. Before we can really take in the joy of Easter, we need to experience what Jesus gave up for us and search our hearts for how we have returned that gift. Have we given back enough?

I hope to see you all for our Maundy Thursday soup and communion meal at 6 PM on March 28th. Please let me know if you are planning on attending so we have enough food.

Blessings,

Pastor Jackie



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



SUNDAYS
10am



FIRST UMC LIFE

PALM SUNDAY

Join us in celebrating Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem Sunday March 24th @ 10am. Get ready to make a joyful noise with the kids leading the celebration.



MAUNDY THURSDAY

Join us for a soup, bread and communion supper commemorating Jesus' Last Supper with the disciples - March 28th @ 6pm in Sanborn Hall.



GOOD FRIDAY

Our church sanctuary will be open for quiet meditation and reflection on Good Friday - March 29th from 12-3pm



EASTER SUNDAY

He is RISEN hallelujah! Come join us in celebrating our risen Savior on Sunday March 31st at 10am



You can learn more about us by using your camera on your phone and this QR code



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



SUNDAYS 10am



FIRST UMC LIFE



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



SUNDAYS 10am



FIRST UMC LIFE

Isabella's Birthday Cupcakes

- 1 1/2 cups of flour
- 2 cups of sugar
- 3/4 cup of cocoa powder
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp salt
- Stick of butter (or a half cup)
- 1 cup of milk
- 1 cup (8 oz) of brewed coffee (stronger is BETTER)
- 2 eggs
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- Cupcake liners



Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Sift together flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Set aside.

Melt butter in a big saucepan over medium heat. Once it is melted, stir in the cocoa powder until fragrant then take the pan off of the heat.

Next, mix the coffee and milk into the pan. Then whisk in the sugar first, followed by the eggs and vanilla, mixing together until the sugar has dissolved.

Finally, add the flour mixture to the rest of the batter and stir it all together with a spatula until combined. If your batter is lumpy, you can switch to a whisk once all the flour is incorporated. However, be careful not to overmix; a few small lumps are okay.

To finish, pour the batter evenly into lined muffin tins. Fill them up almost to the top, about three-quarters of the way full. Bake approximately 12-15 minutes.

Frosting

- 3/4 cup of butter
- 1/4 cup of shortening
- 2 cups powdered sugar
- 1/2 cups Nestle Coffee mate Espresso Chocolate liquid coffee creamer (alternatively, make your own by using one tbsp of instant espresso powder and 1/2 cup of milk or cream, whatever you have on hand)

Cream together the butter and shortening, scraping the bowl once with a spatula and mixing again. You can also omit the shortening and replace it with the same amount of butter.

With the mixer on medium speed, add the powdered sugar one cup at a time. Scrape the bowl in between each mix to remove any sugar sticking to the sides. After the last cup, the mixture will be slightly crumbly.

Start by adding just one-quarter cup of the liquid (whether coffee creamer or homemade espresso mixture), mixing to test the consistency. It should come together smoothly, but if the frosting is too runny add more sugar.





FIRST UMC LIFE



MEET PASTOR ROBERT [BOB] STEWART

Pastor Bob will be joining First UMC as our new Pastor on July 1, 2024. Here is Pastor Bob's bio.

I am married to Sharon Stewart, and we celebrated our 51st wedding anniversary on September 30, 2023. We have two children, Jaime and Jeffrey. They are both married, and each have three children. Our oldest grandchild, Quinn, is 17 and a senior and will be graduating this June from Pembroke Academy. Our youngest grandchild, Gabriella, is in third grade in Pembroke, NH.

We moved to New Hampshire from Michigan in 1989 as a result of a promotion as a corporate Training Director with the company I was employed. In my career before becoming a Pastor, I was in the college bookstore business for twenty years employed with Follett Higher Education Group. My last position with Follett before retiring June 30, 2017, was as the Director of the Boston College Bookstores.

Ten years ago while I was still employed with Follett, I began my ministry journey being part of a team with 3 other men from Bow Mills UMC. We served North Charlestown UMC in North Charlestown, NH. I then became a Licensed Local Pastor in 2017 and have served St. Paul's UMC - Manchester with a 3/4 time appointment. I will be retiring June 30, 2024 after 7 wonderful years of ministry with that congregation.

Sharon and I have always been looked upon as a team. We serve God and we serve in ministry together. Sharon has many gifts and while we were at St. Paul's, she would always transform the altar and other areas of the church with her visual arts gift. Together we both do sacred dance which is an act of worshipping God. When we were members of Bow Mills UMC we had a large adult dance choir, and two children dance choirs. All three choirs were directed by Sharon. I also like to make a joyful noise to the Lord by singing in the choir.

I am currently a member of the Manchester Clergy Association. My clergy brothers and sisters serve various denominations in the Greater Manchester area. Together we have a Thanksgiving Ecumenical Service, and this past year St. Paul's was the host church. We, as a group, jointly serve in Mission by having events to support Families in Transition of Manchester. I am very much involved in developing our spiritual life. We accomplish that through our worship services, developing our prayer lives and through Bible Study. I am currently doing two Bible studies at St. Paul's after completing a study ... 52 Weeks With Jesus. Yes ... we spent 52 Weeks With Jesus. I offer the studies in-person and also via zoom for those who work. It is always my desire to insure everyone has an opportunity to study God's Word.

Outreach and Mission is another high priority of mine. We need to be active in our community and help those in need. Jesus often said, I did not come to be served but I came to serve others. That is what we as a church need to do too.

The children of the church is close to our hearts. We love the children, and they love us. I love their hugs and look forward to them every week. We are doing a Children's church now at St. Paul's and the children are dismissed to learn about Jesus after I have children's time with them. God has a mailbox at St. Paul's and sends the children a weekly message which is yet another opportunity to build their spiritual life. We had our first VBS last year and we had 7- 8 children in attendance.

I look forward to being in ministry with First United Methodist Church - Portsmouth. One thing that I have always emphasized in my career over the years, including ministry, is that there is no "I" in the word "TEAM." It will take a team to build and grow the church. We need to do it together as a team. I hope you want to serve alongside of us.

"I can do ALL things through Christ who strengthens me." Philippians 4: 13 NRSV

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



SUNDAYS 10am



FIRST UMC LIFE



March 2024

FIRST UMC WORSHIP SCHEDULE

NOTE - If you are unable to meet the proposed schedule please let the office know immediately and we will reschedule.

DATE	LITURGIST	ACOLYTES	BELL RINGERS	GREETERS & USHERS	FACEBOOK LIVE	WORSHIP TECH	SOUND TECH	COFFEE HOUR
March 3	Cathy VanReenen	Lilly	Arcadipane's	Yvonne Griffin Marilyn Stebbins	PennySue Orr	Sue Richards	Dave Richards	Christine Williams PennySue Orr
March 10	Marilyn Stebbins	Maria	Rosie & Will	Al Cansdale Jan Cansdale	Bella S.	Steve Scott	Dave Richards	Yvonne Griffin Sue Lange
March 17	Brock LaBadie	Bella & Georgia S	Labadie's	Anne Coffey Mike Coffey	Sue Richards	Steve Scott	Sue Sarosiek	Kellie Langs Sue Richards
March 24	Christine Williams	Liam	Sillanpaa's	John VanReenen Cathy VanReenen	PennySue Orr	Steve Scott	Sue Sarosiek	Cathy VanReenen Rosie Buswell
March 31	John VanReenen	Maria & Dominic	Arcadipane's	Marilyn Stebbins Linda Reiber	Sue Richards	Steve Scott	Dave Richards	Sillanpaa Family

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS:

March 19th @ 6pm Leadership meeting in the Randall Room

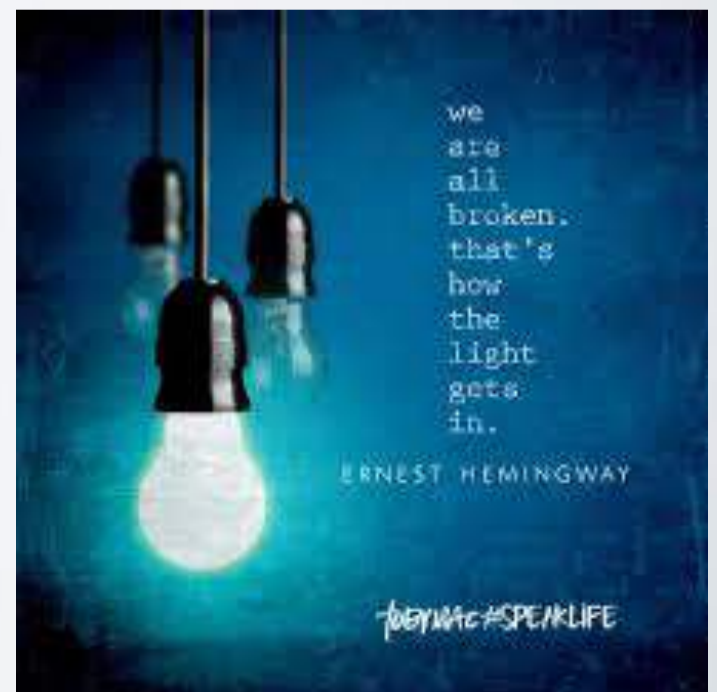
March 24th @ 10am Palm Sunday Service

March 28th @ 6:30pm Maundy Thursday soup & bread dinner

March 29th @ 12-3pm Church sanctuary will be open for meditation

March 31st @ 10am Easter Sunday

Any Wednesday from 10-2 come and visit Sue S. and Sue R. in the church office there is always something to do like filling cold weather packs, emergency packs etc.



International Women's Day

March 8th

CELEBRATING AND HONORING WOMEN

March 8th is a celebration of the past and present women in our lives that have made and continue to make a difference in the world and in our lives. Here are two shared stories from Kaya, and PennySue honoring the women in their lives.

FROM KAYA SAROSIEK - "Super Hero Mom"



I think many people can recognize what a superhero my mom can be but I would like to write a little something about her tremendous, unwavering love for Women's Day if I might! My mother (Susan Sarosiek) is the most selfless, caring person I know. She went through a lot just to be able to adopt me and she has been my biggest supporter ever since. She has been a beacon of light throughout many a hard time (deaths of immediate family members, medical diagnoses, etc.) and I know without a doubt that she was hand-picked by God to be my mother. She's not only amazing for me but she is an amazing friend, volunteer, coordinator and just a good person. Thank you, mum, for everything you do! You are the best woman I know.

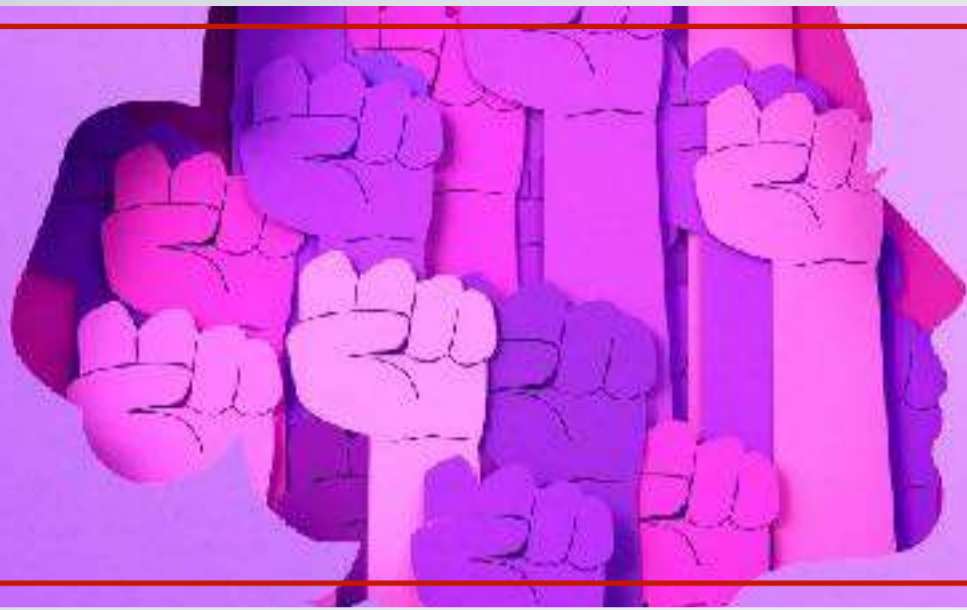
Special mentions also go out to Marilyn Stebbins, Evelyn New, Aerial Sillanpaa, Leanne Castle, Ethel Mundy and many, many more.

FROM PENNYSUE ORR - "Be the things you loved most about the people who are gone"



As you can probably guess my Mom and Grandma had a major impact on my life. There were other female figures, my 4th grade teacher Ms Sullivan and my Sunday school teacher Linda DePriest MacKenzie (whom I'm still friends with today some 40+ years later), my aunts and best friends, however Mom and Grandma influenced me the most. Mom taught me the basics of life like the proper way to load a washing machine (yes I thought you could fill it to the brim with clothes), cooking (I make a mean roast chicken and brownies thanks to Mom), Grandma would teach me how to balance a checkbook, knitting lessons but these life skills are nothing compared to the lesson on family and church. That one lesson - nothing is more important and valuable than the love of family and that includes the church as they are family too.

Even though they are no longer physically present in my everyday life they are forever part of who I am.



International Women's Day

March 8th

CELEBRATING AND HONORING WOMEN

March 8th is a celebration of the past and present women in our lives that have made and continue to make a difference in the world and in our lives. Here is another story written as a poem from Kevin Fickenscher about his Mother-in-law - Dorothy Olbricht after he and Suzanne celebrated her 90th birthday.

TIME, LIFE AND LOVE - THE ILLUSIVE COMMODITIES

Written by Kevin Fickenscher



Time, the illusive commodity
There is so much of it
Yet a limited amount we can seek
And, at the end of the day
Not enough to enjoy
For just one more day

Life, another illusive commodity
There is so much to take in
Yet only a measured amount of time for using it -
Far less than we like to think
And, at the end of the day
Not enough for just one more day

Love, the most illusive commodity
There is so much talk of it
Yet, limited in amounts we actually use
Too often, less than we should share with the world
And, at the end of the day
Not enough to bask in its warmth forever and a day

Time, life and love - the illusive commodities
If we take them as is...
But, if we embrace them,
If we honor them,
If we harness them with compassion
At the end of the day
Their growth will fill us with the joy
Of our presence now and forevermore
So another day is not needed.

*We are all
made of stories*

We would love to hear yours!

FAVORITE QUOTES

Anyone who knows Bevan Bloemendaal he is a believer and lover of quotes...here are two that are an integral part of his personal values in this journey called LIFE.

...people will forget what you
said, people will forget what
you **did**, but people will
never forget how you made
them **feel**.

MAYA ANGELOU

“In a world filled with darkness, light
a candle...better yet...be that candle!



*We are all
made of stories*

We would love to hear yours!

SHARE YOURS

We all have them...moments of awe, random acts of kindness, opportunities to be a witness of God's love, a favorite poem, a recipe or a funny story or joke...we would love to hear them.

Share Your Story!

Send it to Bevan at bbloemendaal@comcast.net and we will put it in next month's Beacon!



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

HELPING THE COMMUNITY STAY WARM

We continue to provide cold weather packs to our community with hat, gloves, socks, and scarf. We are in need of mens gloves if you can donate!



I GOT BRIDGED

Learn more about Freddy Petrone and how I Got Bridged is bridging the gap for people in need.

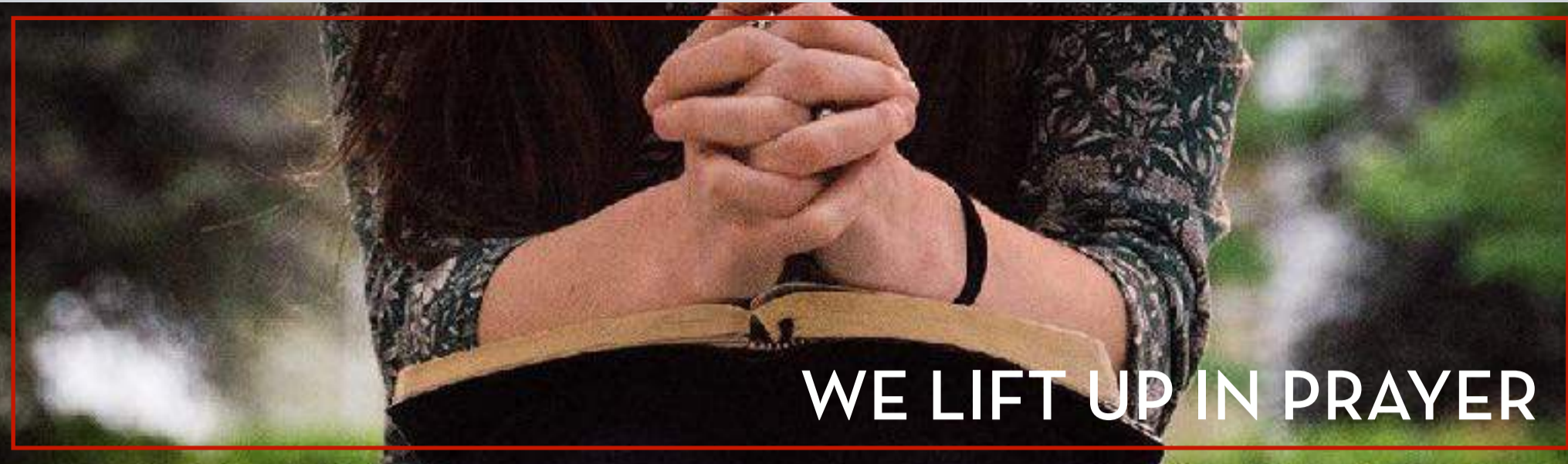


RECOVERY CHURCH - NH'S FIRST AT FIRST UMC

Every Wednesday @ 6pm for food & fellowship and service @7pm creating a bridge between addiction and faith in the community.



Do you want to learn more about how you can help call the church office @ 603.436.6038 or visit:
First United Methodist Church - Portsmouth <https://fumcportsmouth.com/>
I Got Bridged <https://www.igotbridged.com/>



WE LIFT UP IN PRAYER



CARING FOR EACH OTHER

We are a FAMILY first and foremost...and there are some who are not able to make it to church on Sundays or be part of the activities that are happening at First UMC. Prayers, cards, calls or a visit are always welcome!

We also lift up in prayer those names that have been shared with us a community as they go through their own challenges and we ask that God cradles them in His loving arms.

Ukraine, Gaza, peace in the world, for those who face homelessness, food insecurity, mental illness, and addictions, Blake, James, Kaya, Linda, Bregan, Nancy, Erica, Peter, our Church Family, Friends and Community



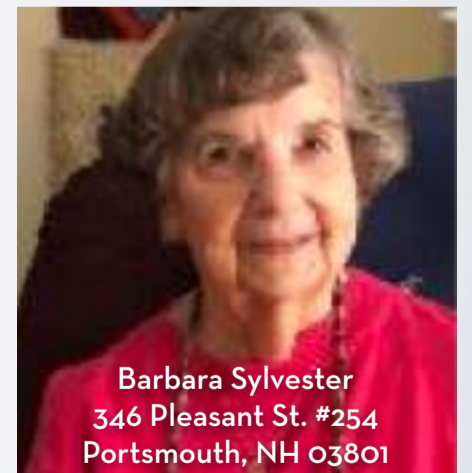
Ruth Griffin
479 Richards Avenue
Portsmouth, NH 03801



Jim Slater
75 State Street
Portland, ME 04101



Barbara Glidden
188 Jones Ave #101
Portsmouth, NH 03801



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



UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Get a card in the mail or send a quick text or instant messenger to wish these church family members a Happy Birthday day filled with love, laughter and lots of cake!



March Birthdays

- 1 Roberta Noble
- 7 Devin (Scott) Barrass
- 7 Daphne Labadie
- 13 Carson Crisp
- 24 Melanie (Berry) Lindgren

ORDER YOUR EASTER PIES BY MARCH 10th!

Homemade by our Pie Angels frozen "take and bake" Apple, Blueberry and Cherry - \$16 and Pecan - \$18. Pick up for the pies will be at the First UMC office on 3/24 - 11:30-1:30, 3/27 - 10-2 and 3/30 - 10-noon. Contact Sue Richards at 603.749.4169...cash, check and Venmo accepted.





DIGITAL DISCIPLES

In our interconnected world, technology plays a crucial role in spreading the gospel message. Social media platforms and smartphones have made digital discipleship an influential method for global discipleship. You can be part of it!



JOIN US FOR
LIVE STREAMING
WORSHIP ON OUR
facebook page



share

you can help us grow please like and share our posts!

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

fumcportsmouth.com

THINGS CHANGE WEEKLY 

Want to learn more about the importance of Digital Discipleship check out this website @ <https://orangeleaders.com/2023/01/12/why-digital-discipleship-matters-for-student-ministry/>



First UMC is a Reconciling Congregation dedicated to worshiping, learning, and serving with ALL people embracing Jesus Christ's message of love and acceptance.

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.

You can learn more about us by using your camera on your phone and this QR code

