

I CAN  
*DO*  
ALL THINGS  
THROUGH  
CHRIST  
WHO  
*STRENGTHENS*  
ME  
*PHILIPPIANS*  
*4:13*  
JESUS

FIRST UMC  PORTSMOUTH  
JANUARY BEACON  
2025



## **FROM THE DESK OF PASTOR BOB...**

We celebrated our first Advent and Christmas together at FUMC-Portsmouth. What a joyous first Christmas together! I want to thank all the children that participated in the Christmas pageant presented on Sunday, December 22nd, ***“It Wasn’t The Hilton You Know!”*** Sharon and I are still talking about how remarkable all the children did with their various parts. I was so proud of how well they gave the message to the congregation. In my heart I know that God was smiling on the performance of all the children. I also know God was appreciative of all the support of those that guided this pageant along. As Bishop Suda Devadhar use to always say...Thank you, Thank you and Thank you!

I also want to say Thank you, Thank you and Thank you! On that same Sunday, I was presented with your generous Christmas gift. Since coming in July, I have felt your love and support, and your generous gift just cemented that feeling I have for you all. As I said that day...You are my gift! I would also like to thank Brock Labadie, SPRC Chair, for his kind words when he presented the gift to me.

It is hard to believe that another year is about to close and a new one set to begin. When arriving at FUMC-Portsmouth in July of this year (2024) I brought two scriptures that would serve as our mantra as a congregation. I still hold these two scriptures near and dear to my heart. The first is found in the Old Testament from the Prophet Jeremiah. ***Jeremiah 20:11 “For I know the plans I have for you,” says the Lord. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope”***. I believe this scripture strongly encourages me regardless of what may be going on in my life personally or in the life of the church. I know God has a plan for me and for us as a church. Together we can do great things! This is where the second scripture from the New Testament lends its strength to the Jeremiah 29:11 scripture, The Apostle Paul writes in ***Philippians 4:13 “I [we] can do all things through Christ who strengthens me [us].”*** It is my hope and prayer for us as a church to know that when we focus on Jesus nothing will be impossible for us as a church family. Jesus will strengthen us so that we can continue to spread the good news. Let us spread the love and light of Jesus and know that God goes before us...behind us...and beside us! Sharon and I want to wish all of you a healthy, happy and prosperous New Year [2025].

***Christmas and New Year Blessings from our home to yours!***

***Pastor Bob & Sharon***

# God speaks to you through His personal love letter, the Bible.



## **LECTIONARY READINGS FOR THE MONTH OF JANUARY:**

It is truly remarkable how reading God's word draws people closer to Him as He speaks through the Scriptures. The Holy Spirit reaches out to connect with us even before we fully receive the Spirit in our hearts. Through the conviction of Scripture, we will often discover a need we may not have previously recognized, drawing us closer to God. Enjoy getting closer to Him!

### **January 5 - Epiphany Sunday**

*Isaiah 60:1-6, Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14,  
Ephesians 3:1-12, Matthew 2:1-12*

### **January 12 - Jesus' Baptism**

*Isaiah 43:1-7, Psalm 29,  
Acts 8:14-17, Luke 3:15-17, 21-22*

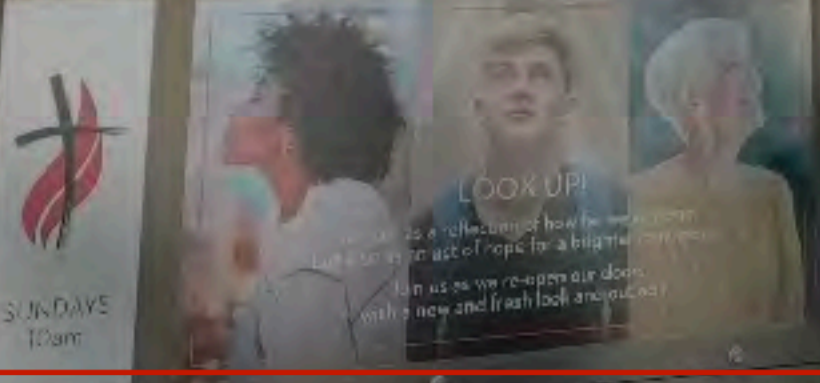
### **January 19**

*Isaiah 62:1-5, Psalm 36:5-10,  
1 Corinthians 12:1-11, John 2:1-11*

### **January 26**

*Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10,  
Psalm 19, 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a,  
Luke 4:14-21*

# FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

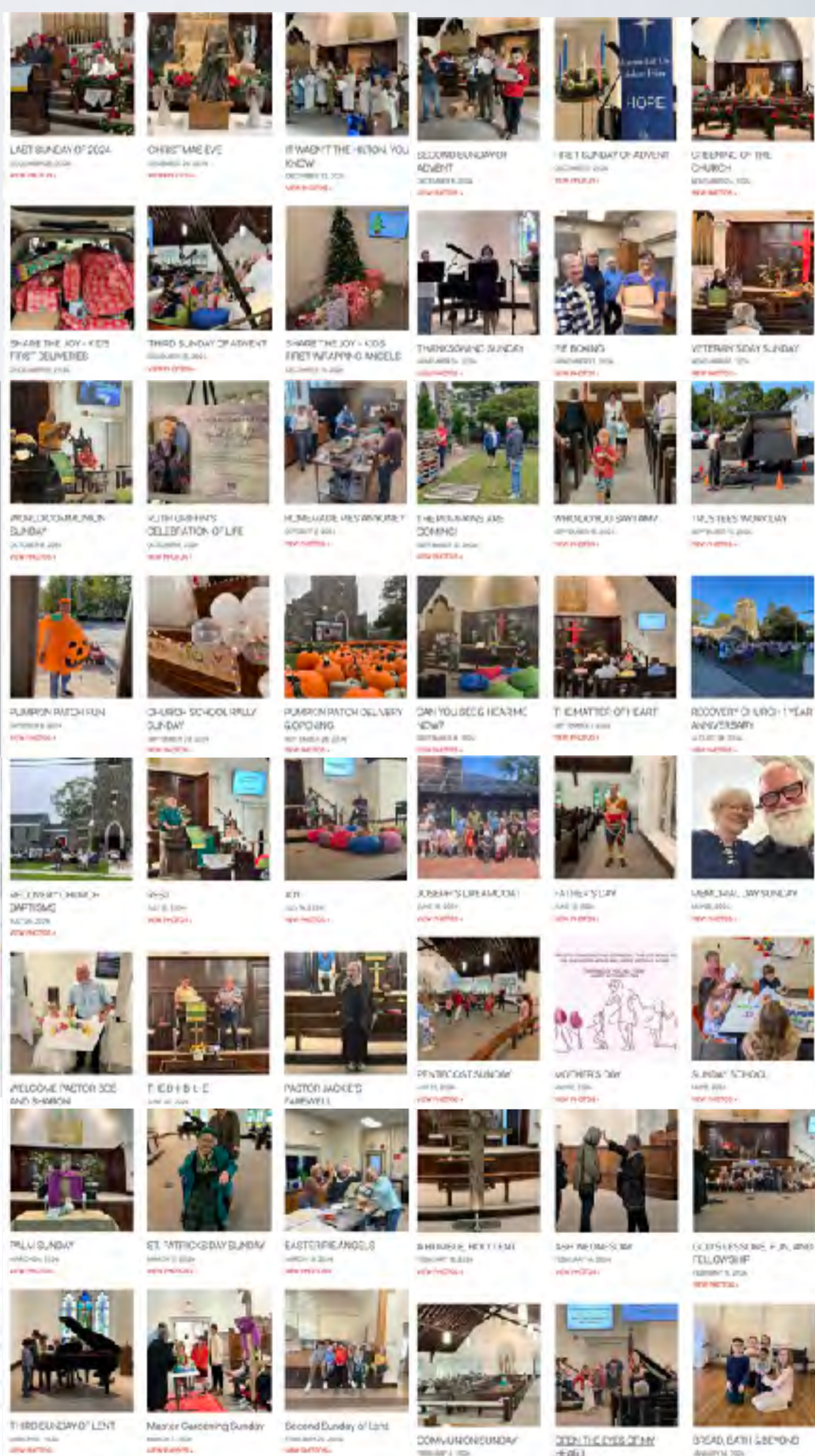


# FIRST UMC LIFE

## A LOOK BACK AT 2024

Our Church website [fumcportsmouth.com](http://fumcportsmouth.com) is a great place to remind ourselves of the amazing work we are doing supporting each other, our community in making a difference by sharing our faith in God. Check out the photo galleries for a look back and thanks for all you did and will do in 2024.

2024





Those we love don't go away they walk beside us every day. Unseen, unheard, but always near. Still loved. Still missed. And very dear.

**WE CELEBRATE THE LIVES OF THOSE WHO HAVE GONE ON BEFORE US**

This past year we have mourned but also celebrated the lives of our brothers and sisters who now rest in the loving arms of our Lord and Savior—Safely Home.



Barbara Sylvester  
December 20, 2024



John W. Richards  
December 17, 2024



Glenn Cyr  
September 10, 2024



Hazel Randi  
August 12, 2024



Ruth Lewin Griffin  
August 10, 2024



Roberta Noble  
July 15, 2024



Alberta Eckert  
April 20, 2024



Mary Shults  
March 23, 2024



Harold Whitehouse  
January 4, 2024



# LIFTING UP IN PRAYER



## WE LIFT UP IN PRAYER

*John Richards Family, Mary Kirkland Family, Joe's Wife & Family, Michael Cormier Family, Wayne, Sandy and Michael, Linda's Family, Derek Zhou Family, Rosie, Sue, Anne, TJ, Jim, Deb, Jianna, Ken & Jenya, Amanda, MaryLou, Louisa, Delores, Barbara, Cheryl, Derek, Bradley, Charles, Russ, Jodi, Denise, Cynthia, Gary, Leo, Anna, Rochelle, AJ, Marsha, Keith's Family, Tim, Steve, Elliott, Dan, Peter, Joanne, Simon, Andy,  
Those seeking employment,  
Those who find the Holidays difficult,  
Our country, and Our Church*

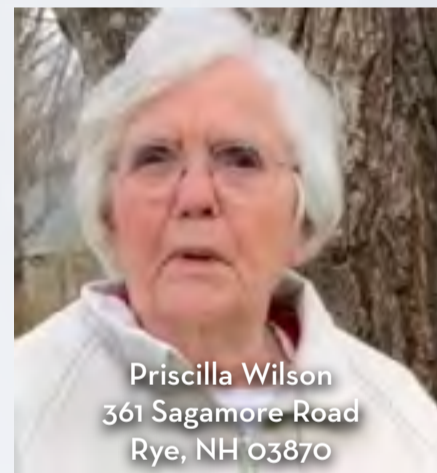
### CARING FOR EACH OTHER

At our core, we are a FAMILY. We recognize that some members may not be able to attend church regularly or participate in activities at First UMC. They are always in our thoughts, and prayers, cards, calls, or visits are always appreciated.

We also lift up in prayer the names that have been shared with us, asking that God wrap them in His loving embrace as they face their own challenges.



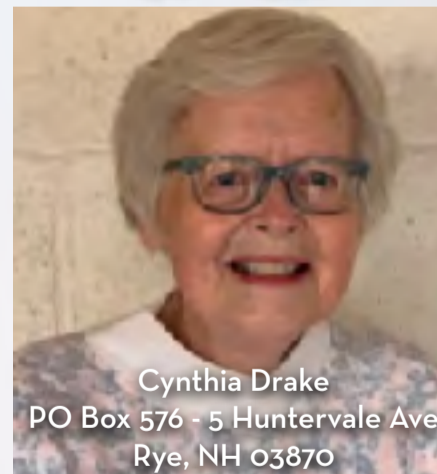
Jim Slater  
75 State Street  
Portland, ME 04101



Priscilla Wilson  
361 Sagamore Road  
Rye, NH 03870



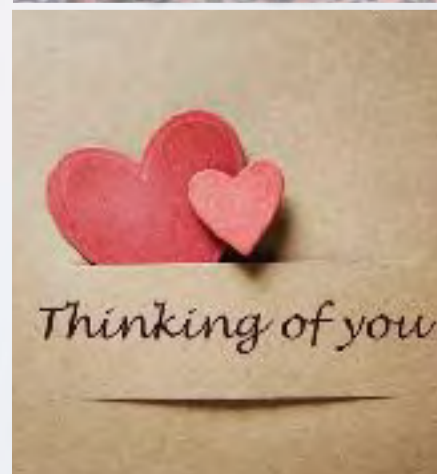
Barbara Glidden  
188 Jones Ave #101  
Portsmouth, NH 03801



Cynthia Drake  
PO Box 576 - 5 Huntervale Ave  
Rye, NH 03870



Ken & Jenya Westbrook  
20 Islington Street #402  
Portsmouth, NH 03801





## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **REMEMBERING FORMER PRESIDENT JIMMY CARTER**


January 9th has been declared a National Day of Mourning for the 39th President, Jimmy Carter, who passed away on December 29, 2024.



REMEMBERING  
**JIMMY  
CARTER**  
1924-2024

### **REMEMBERING DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.**

January 20th we celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.



DR. MARTIN LUTHER  
**KING JR.**  
— DAY —



January 2025

# 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	9:55 BELL RINGERS	GREETERS & USHERS	FACEBOOK LIVE	WORSHIP TECH	SOUND TECH	SUNDAY SCHOOL	COFFEE HOUR
1/5/25	S. Richards	Daphne	Labadie's	K. Langa S. Langa, A. Langa	PS, Orr	S. Scott	S. Sarosiek	S. Stewart M. Verrill	Y. Griffin S. Lange
1/12/25	C. VanReenen	Maria	Norah	L. Reiber M. Stebbins	TBD	S. Scott	S. Sarosiek	S. Richards, PS. Orr	J. Berry S. Stewart
1/19/25	S. Stewart	Georgia	Lilly	J. VanReenen C. VanReenen	S. Richards	S. Scott	S. Sarosiek	S. Labadie, D. Richards	A. Sillanpaa L. Reiber
1/26/25	J. VanReenen	Dominic	Daphne & Jack	PS. Orr S. Lange	S. Richards	S. Scott	S. Sarosiek	Pastor B. Stewart M. Stebbins	R. Groff Y. Griffin

## UPCOMING MEETINGS AND VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

**January 5th** after our worship service we need volunteers to take down and store the Advent decorations.

**January 12th @ 11:30 a.m.** Church Council meeting location TBD

**January 13th @ 6:30 p.m.** Finance Committee meeting at the Church parsonage - Note from Aerial: *Dear Congregation members, you are welcome to audit our Finance meetings via zoom or attend in person and we [Pastor Bob and myself] welcome any ideas or feedback post the meeting.*

**January 19th @ 11:30 a.m.** Worship Committee meeting location TBD

**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.

God *blesses* us  
*to be a blessing*  
to others





# COMMUNITY OUTREACH



## **HELPING THE COMMUNITY STAY WARM**

We continue to provide cold weather packs to our community with hat, gloves, socks, and scarf.



## **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/>

## JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

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!

- 3 Stephanie Labadie
- 6 David Richards
- 6 Gary Sillanpaa
- 9 Maria Arcadipane
- 11 Cathy Martin
- 18 Pastor Jackie Brannen
- 23 David Bovee
- 25 John VanReenen
- 31 Tim Orr
- 31 Karin Scott
- 31 Yvonne Griffin



The New Year brings a new chapter in  
your life — but know that God will  
always be a main character in the book

**HAPPY**  
*New year*



# WITH GRATITUDE

*Dear Church Family,*

*I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for your thoughts, prayers, and the kind cards you sent following the loss of my son, John. Your support means so much to me during this difficult time. My church family holds a special place in my heart, and I truly love and appreciate each one of you.*

*With love and thanks,*

*Jane Richards*

*Dear First UMC Congregation,*

*Thank you very much for the card and Christmas check.*

*Pete Engel*

*Dear Church Family,*

*I wanted to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude for the thoughtful Christmas gift your generosity and kindness have as always touched my heart.*

*The love and support of First UMC means the world to me and your presence in my life is a constant reminder of the true spirit of Christmas - the spirit of giving, love, and togetherness. Your thoughtfulness has filled my heart with joy, and I feel truly blessed to be a part of this community.*

*Wishing everyone a New Year filled with happiness and the love of family and friends.*

*Love and hugs,*

*Bevan*

**BEING A DIGITAL DISCIPLE IS AN IMPORTANT ROLE FOR ALL OF US!**


## WHY BE DIGITAL DISCIPLES?

- Builds relationships and reaches new visitors
- Spreads the message of God's love
- Shares our Church's message
- Builds community and connections
- Grows our church physically and spiritually
- Facilitates prayer and support
- Recruits volunteers and collaborations

**YOU CAN HELP BY: SHARING - VISITING - INVITING - PROMOTING - LIKING OUR POSTS AND WEBSITE**

### LET'S BE FRIENDS ON FACEBOOK!

Facebook is a fantastic way to stay updated on events, prayers, daily inspiration, and to connect with Church family and friends. We appreciate it when you "like" our posts, but we absolutely LOVE it when you share them too!



**UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**  
**FIRST METHODIST CHURCH**

**LOOK UP!**  
Not just a reflection of how far we've come,  
but also an act of hope for a brighter tomorrow.  
Join us as we re-open our doors  
with a new and fresh look and outlook.

**WEDNESDAYS 10am!**

**Fumcportsmouthnh Church**  
331 friends

[+ Add to story](#) [Edit profile](#)



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

