

Give Thanks

— IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES —

FIRST UMC  PORTSMOUTH
NOVEMBER BEACON
2025



FROM THE DESK OF PASTOR BOB...

The Apostle Paul in his letter to the Thessalonians wrote, **“Always be joyful. Never stop praying. Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.”**

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

As I look at my calendar I begin to get somewhat overwhelmed with everything that is going on during the month of November. I take a deep breath, and I am reminded of Paul’s letter to the Thessalonians. I begin to smile. I begin to give thanks, and I begin to pray. Then a peace that surpasses all understanding begins to rest on me. Thank you Paul and thank you Jesus!

November 1st is All Saints Day, and we celebrate the life of one of our saints from FUMC, Ken Westbrook. Ken’s service is scheduled to begin at 11am followed by a luncheon in Sanborn Hall. I hope that you are able to join Ken’s family and friends as we celebrate his life.

Before you retire for the night on Saturday, November 1st don’t forget to turn you clock back one hour.

Sunday, November 2nd is All Saints Sunday, and we will celebrate our saints of the church but if there is a saint in your life...bring in a picture so we can light a candle in their honor.

Tuesday, November 11th is our annual Church Conference with our new District Superintendent, Rev. Dr. David Palmer. We will begin with a potluck supper in Sanborn Hall at 5:30pm. Sharon has her famous clipboard and will be seeking you out to sign up. This is our time to live Paul’s words above. Our time to be joyful and our time to be thankful in all circumstances. There is a new twist this year as the DS will be asking us to answer three questions.

- 1. Who are we?**
- 2. Who is our neighbor?**
- 3. To What Is God calling us?**

Three important questions to ponder over the next several days leading up to our Church Conference. The SPRC members will meet with David Palmer at 6:00pm and the Church Conference will begin at 7:00pm. I am thankful and grateful to all of you and your service to God and your church. I hope everyone will try to come to this Church Conference to celebrate FUMC and to meet our new District Superintendent.

Sunday, November 16th is our Commitment Sunday. This year during our Stewardship Campaign we have been exploring the six steps to a Generous Life as we strengthen being **Committed to Christ**. On Commitment Sunday will you consider taking a step up in your financial giving to God through your church. I plan to share in the next couple of weeks how we, Sharon and I always work toward taking that step up. We are always joyful when we are able to move up and forward. Take time now to look at where you are at today in your financial giving to the church and do what Paul also suggests in the scripture I shared and the first step leading to a Generous Life...Pray and as Paul said, never stop praying.

Thursday, November 27th...**HAPPY THANKSGIVING DAY!** I hope you enjoy some time with family and friends and give thanks for all your blessings. Don’t forget to order your Thanksgiving pie from Sue Richards and her pie making team. Friday, November 28th we will celebrate another saint of our church, Jim Slater. Jim’s Celebration of Life service will be held at 1:30pm in the sanctuary.

Sunday, November 30th I will be receiving three new members that have asked to join our faith community. If you are interested in joining our church please speak to me by Sunday, November 23rd.

Also on Sunday, November 30th the season of Advent begins. I have purchased an Advent 2025 Devotional book for you. They will be available on Commitment Sunday.

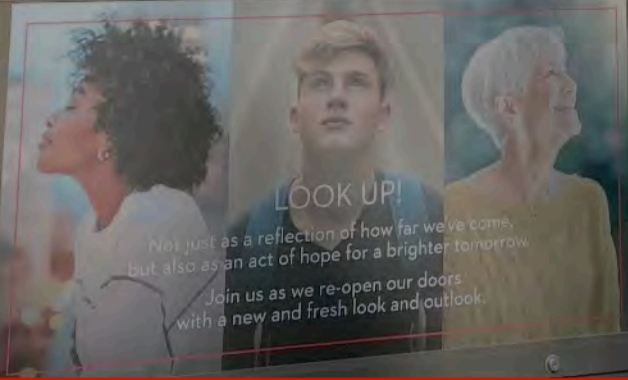
Our theme for this Advent Season is **One Night...One Star...One Child**. Come, Let Us Adore Him.

See You In Church, Pastor Bob

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



SUNDAYS
10am



FIRST UMC LIFE

WORSHIP, FUN, AND FAITH IN ACTION AT FIRST UMC

Our Church website 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 here - <https://fumcportsmouth.com/photo-galleries/>



First United Methodist Church

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THE WORD OF GOD FOR THE PEOPLE OF GOD

OCTOBER 26, 2025

[VIEW PHOTOS »](#)



DON'T STOP PRAYING

OCTOBER 19, 2025

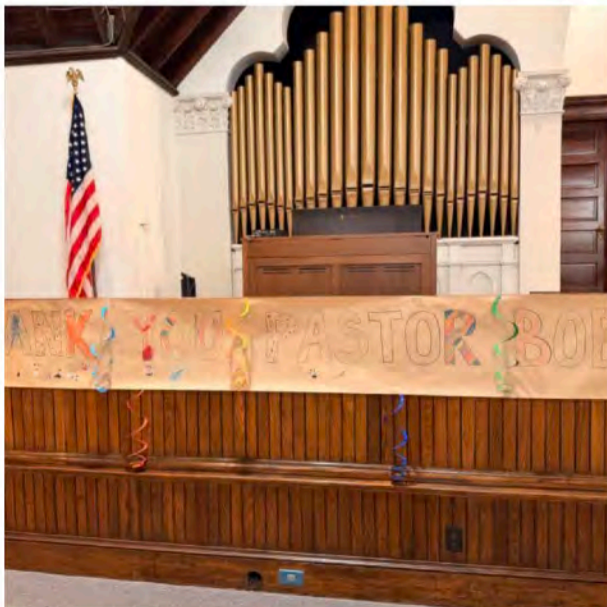
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TIME TO MAKE MORE PIES!

OCTOBER 14, 2025

[VIEW PHOTOS »](#)



PASTOR APPRECIATION

OCTOBER 12, 2025



WHERE ARE THE REST?

OCTOBER 12, 2025



PUMPKIN PATCH DELIVERY #2

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



SUNDAYS
10am



FIRST UMC LIFE

WORSHIP, FUN, AND FAITH IN ACTION AT FIRST UMC

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PORTSMOUTH HIGH SCHOOL SERVICE LEARNING CLASS

OCTOBER 10, 2025

[VIEW PHOTOS »](#)



PIE ANGELS

OCTOBER 7, 2025

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INCREASE OUR FAITH

OCTOBER 5, 2025

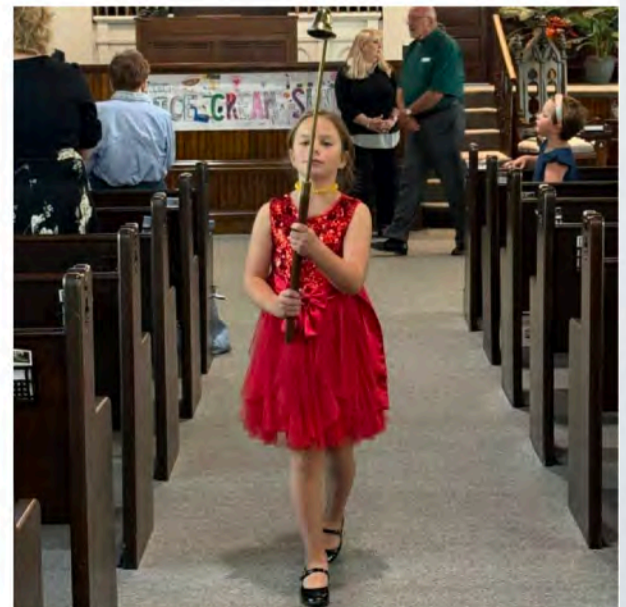
[VIEW PHOTOS »](#)



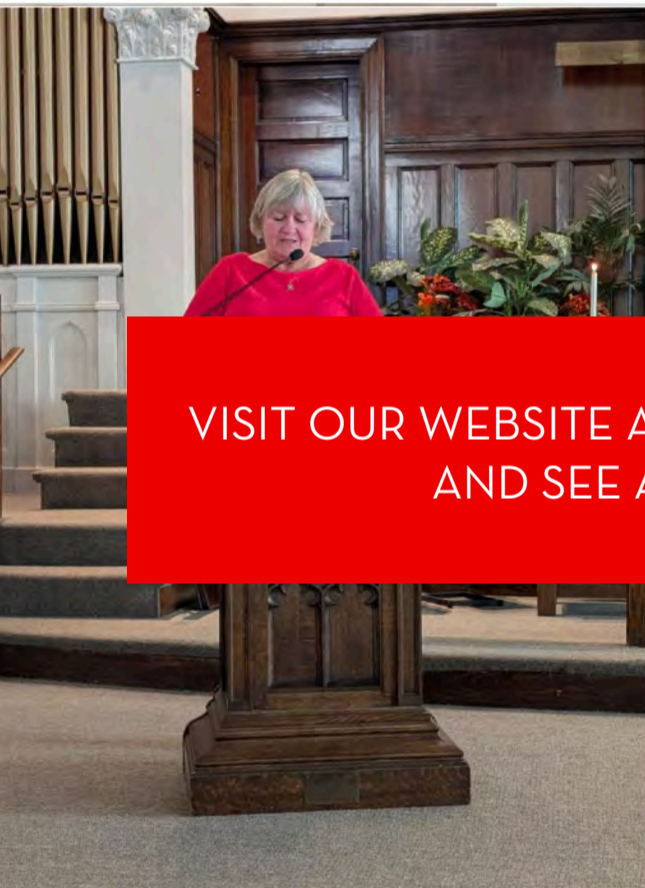
LIVING A GOD-LIKE LIFE



PUMPKIN UNLOADING



YOU GET TO CHOOSE!



VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT FUMCPORTSMOUTH.COM - CLICK PHOTO GALLERIES AND SEE ALL THE SHARED PHOTOS FROM EVERYONE!



God speaks through Scripture



LECTIONARY READINGS FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER:

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!

Sunday, November 2, 2025 (All Saint's Sunday)

Habakkuk 1:1-4, 2:1-4, Psalm 119:137-144
2 Thessalonians 1:1-4, 11-12, Luke 19:1-10

Sunday, November 9, 2025

Haggai 1:15b-2:9, Psalm 145:1-5, 17-21
2 Thessalonians 2:1-5, 13-17, Luke 20:27-38

Sunday, November 16, 2025

Isaiah 65:17-25, Isaiah 12
2 Thessalonians 3:6-13, Luke 21:5-19

Sunday, November 16, 2025

Isaiah 65:17-25, Isaiah 12
2 Thessalonians 3:6-13, Luke 21:5-19

Sunday, November 23, 2025

(Christ the King Sunday)
Jeremiah 23:1-6, Luke 1:68-79
Colossians 1:11-20, Luke 23:33-43

Thursday, November 27, 2025

Deuteronomy 26:1-11, Psalm 100
Philippians 4:4-9, John 6:25-35

Sunday, November 30, 2025

(First Sunday of Advent)
Isaiah 2:1-5, Psalm 122
Romans 13:11-14



FIRST UMC FINANCE FLASH UPDATE

As we approach the end of the year, I want to remind everyone that our **Annual Church Conference** will be held on **Tuesday, November 11, 2025**. This gathering is one of the most important events in our church calendar. It's a time for every member of the congregation to have a voice in shaping the leadership and direction of our church. I encourage you to attend, participate, and be part of this important conversation about our shared future. I don't think we'll be able to Zoom The Conference, but I'm happy to update anyone who cannot attend.

I'm also delighted to share that we have a new stair lift chair! This addition will continue to make our building more accessible for those with mobility challenges, which is a wonderful step toward making our space welcoming to all. If you're able, contributions toward this project are deeply appreciated as an "extra mile" financial gift. Please reach out to me if you would like details of the total cost of the chair or its lifetime warranty. (Pumps fist in the air).

As I write this the final Pumpkin Patch totals aren't yet available. However, I want to extend heartfelt thanks to Sue Richards for her tireless volunteerism and extraordinary leadership. Her attention to detail, organization, and steady dedication keep this major fundraiser running smoothly year after year. Sue's energy, creativity, and commitment inspire everyone around her, and her efforts have a lasting impact on both our church and the wider community. We are deeply grateful for her, and for all who gave their time and talents to make the Pumpkin Patch such a success.

As we continue this season of gratitude and growth, may we remember the words of **Galatians 6:9**:

"Let us not grow weary in doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up."

With gratitude,

Airial Sillanpaa

Chair, Finance Committee



LET US NOT BECOME
WEARY IN DOING GOOD,
FOR AT THE PROPER TIME
WE WILL REAP A HARVEST
IF WE DO NOT GIVE UP

GALATIANS 6:9



FIRST UMC TRUSTEES UPDATE

STAIR LIFT

Many of our church members know that our chair lift recently stopped working, creating hardship for those who depend on it to access the church. A repair company was contacted, but their availability was limited, delaying service for several weeks.

When they finally arrived, it was discovered that the original chair lift manufacturer was no longer in business and that replacement parts were unavailable. By the *Grace of God*, the technician was able to get the lift operating again temporarily.

Recognizing the need for a permanent solution, the Board of Trustees reviewed options and received estimates from three companies. A contract has now been initiated with National Seating and Mobility to install a new chair lift. We hope to have it in place within the next few weeks.

A heartfelt thank-you to the Board of Trustees and Pastor Bob for their quick and thoughtful action in resolving this issue.

If you would like to make a donation in honor of or in memory of please drop off a check at the church office.

Michael Coffey, Chairperson





FIRST UMC WORSHIP COMMITTEE UPDATE



Happy Thanksgiving my church family!

As a church family we will remember the Saints in our lives on Sunday 11/2/25. We will honor those who have joined our Heavenly Family this year and in the years past. Everyone is encouraged to bring in a photo of those who have been an influence so we might have a display during worship. We want to be surrounded by the great cloud of witnesses.

The Worship team is busy making preparations for Advent and Christmas. Advent begins on Sunday November 30th. "One Night, One Star, One Child" is our Advent theme. The Worship Committee will be decorating the sanctuary on Sunday 11/23 immediately after worship. Anyone is invited to attend. Sharon will be coordinating this special event. Pastor Bob will be offering an Advent devotional booklet as he did last year. Be sure to grab your copy once they are available.

The Children's Christmas Pageant "Joy Story" will be held Sunday December 21 during worship. Please mark your calendars. THANK YOU Stephanie Labadie for polishing up the cross, candle sticks and acolyte lighters! This has been long overdue!

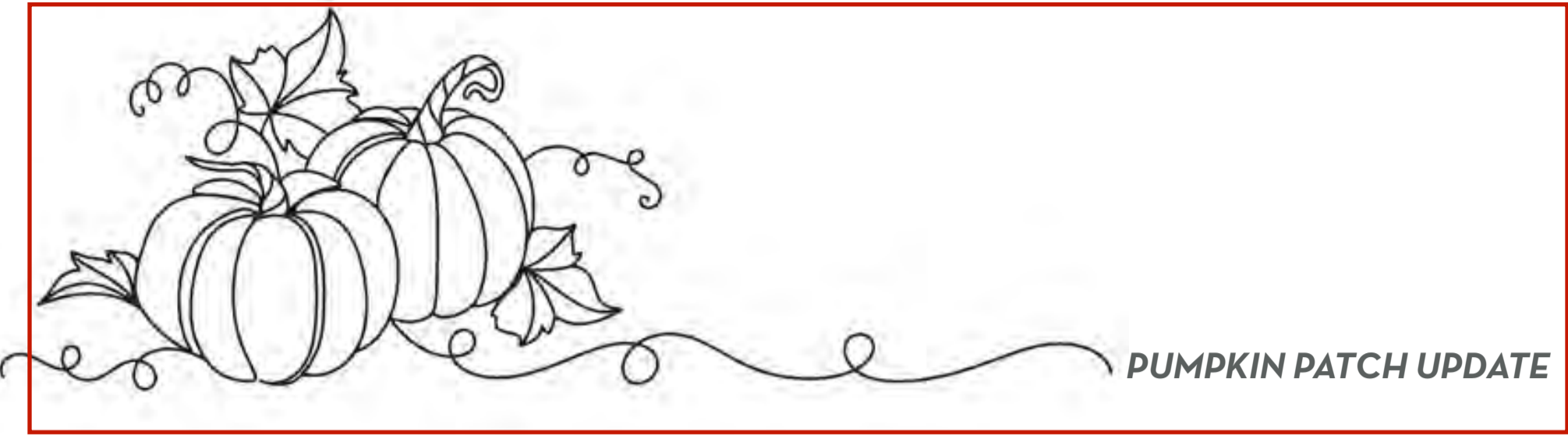
Starting in January 2026 the acolyte/bell ringer schedule will be on a sign up basis. These important duties are not just for the kiddos! Anyone can be an acolyte. Please see myself or Pastor Bob if you are interested. I will be circulating a clipboard soon!

This is a season when everyone turns their thoughts to family, friends and thanksgiving, we need to remember to be thankful everyday for the blessings Christ has given to us. "Thanksgiving isn't a day - it's a way to live"

Peace in your Journey
PennySue Orr
Worship Committee Chair



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



Hello Church Family and Friends!

Our 21st year has been another very successful one with lots of happy volunteers and customers, mostly nice weather, and great sales! Reaching the maximum 40% profit by selling \$30,001 or more in pumpkins has happened for many years now. The final statistics will be in the Annual Church Conference Booklet. It takes a community to continue having this necessary annual FUNdraiser and we have an awesome one. Thank you from the bottom of my heart to everyone who was able to help set up, unload, move rotten pumpkins into the trailer, worked in the Booth, baked goodies/pies, and will help put things away!

Please join us after church on Sun., Nov. 2nd for our annual Thank You Luncheon to celebrate our volunteers! If you can come, RSVP ASAP so we can have enough food at <https://signup.com/go/ZcKdLWb> or text/call me at 603-749-4169.

Sue Richards,
Grateful Pumpkin Patch Coordinator





THANK YOU!





CHILDREN'S CHURCH UPDATE

I must take every available opportunity to thank our amazing group of volunteer instructors for sharing your time and talent with the kids this fall! We couldn't make it happen without all of you!

During this first week in November, Children's Church will finish Unit 2 from the Fall Year 2 installment of Cokesbury's Celebrate Wonder curriculum with a lesson on Solomon's temple. A set of lessons about Elijah, Elisha, and Isaiah will bring us to Advent!

And speaking of Advent - we are also ready to kick off rehearsals for "Joy Story", this year's Christmas pageant. A box full of toys - an astronaut, Barbie, an army sergeant, a ninja warrior, a teddy bear, a cowgirl, and Raggedy Ann - will discuss and discover the true meaning of Christmas...but only while the kids and parents are out of the room! Mark your calendars for Sunday, December 21st!

Stephanie Labadie

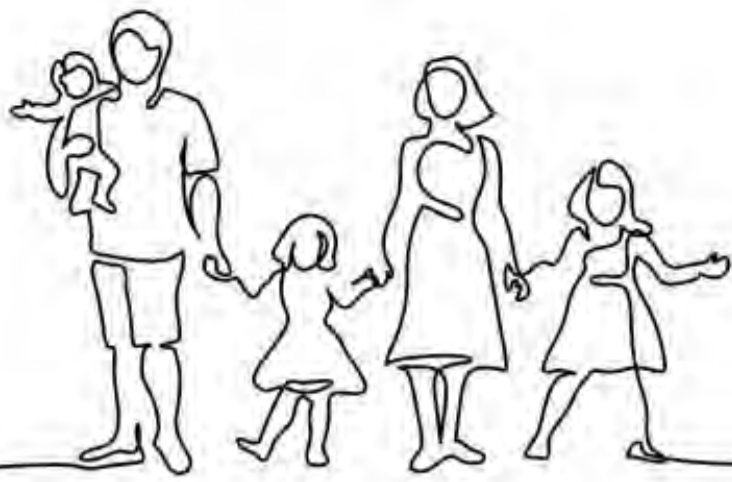
Seeking

To look

and discover

our faith in God





SEACOAST FAMILY PROMISE UPDATE

Seacoast Family Promise - Volunteers needed

As one of the founding churches for Seacoast Family Promise, First UMC has been assisting families experiencing homelessness for 20+ years now. The families used to come to our church to stay, but since COVID hit in 2020, they have been staying at the Joshua House in Greenland. However, the network of churches involved in this ministry still provide dinners for the families every day. First UMC, along with our partner in this work, Temple Israel, are responsible for providing dinner 5 - 6 weeks per year. Below are the remaining dates for 2025 that FUMC is responsible for providing dinner:

November 13, 14, 15

December 21, 26, 27 (21st is a Sunday - Temple traded days with us so they will provide dinner on Christmas Day.)

Volunteers cook the meal and deliver it to the Joshua House in Greenland ready-to-serve.

Updates to previous articles:

Joshua House - the new addition to the building is complete except for the kitchen stove and we have 4 families currently staying there (13 people). Renovations on the original house are in progress, and we hope to have them completed by the end of the year. I did a tour of the building a month ago and it is really impressive. This program has come a long way since its beginning.

Donations for Joshua House in honor of Pati Frew-Waters - donations so far to honor Pati total \$15,982.50!

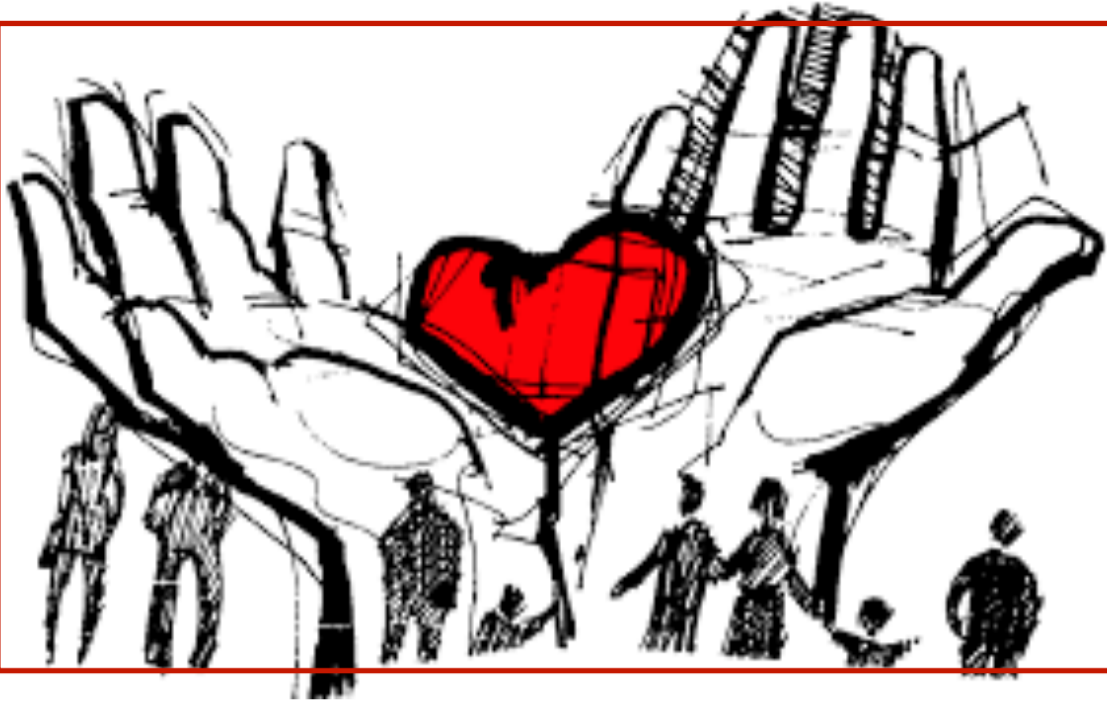
This ministry has been an important one for this church since 2003 and I hope people will volunteer so we can continue to be a part of such important outreach. This program changes lives forever. See <https://www.seacoastfamilypromise.org/> for more information.

Jen Berry

Jen.berry76@gmail.com

603-801-3886





CHURCH FAMILY

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
Are
Family

Jenya Westbrook
20 Islington Street #402
Portsmouth, NH 03801

Priscilla Wilson
361 Sagamore Road
Rye, NH 03870

Barbara Glidden
188 Jones Ave #101
Portsmouth, NH 03801

Cynthia Drake
5 Huntervale Avenue
Rye, NH 03870

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





Never underestimate the power of a single prayer.

Mark Batterson

quote fancy

THERE IS POWER IN PRAYER!

Through prayer, we can connect with God, seek His guidance, and intercede on behalf of others.



ALWAYS

PRAY

AND

never give up.

LUKE 18:1



WE LIFT UP IN PRAYER:

Our brothers and sisters impacted by hurricane Melissa, PennySue, Jody, Scott, Our Country, Steve McMullen, and for Rosie's family who will be visiting. Sharon Rhodes, Patricia Ross and her son, and those we silently lift up right now.

NOVEMBER 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 or Happy Anniversary and a day filled with love, laughter and lots of cake!

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

2 Dominic Arcadipane

2 Dianne Thompson

12 Mike Coffey

12 Michelle Verrill

16 Evelyn Laux

11 Stephanie & Brock Labadie



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

11/1 - Ken Westbrook's Celebration of Life @ 11 a.m.

11/11 - Church Conference - potluck @ 5:30, SPRC meets with DS @ 6 pm and Conference @ 7pm

11/13, 14, & 15 - Seacoast Family Promise dinners

11/16 - Commitment Sunday

11/28- Jim Slater's Celebration of Life @ 1:30

11/30 - Receiving New Members

12/21 - Children's Christmas Pageant

12/21, 26, & 27 - Seacoast Family Promise dinners



November 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
11/2/25	PS. Orr	Norah	Daphne & Jack	M. Coffey A.Coffey	S. Richards	S. Scott	S. Sarosiek	D. Richards S. Labadie	S. Stewart A. Sillanpaa
11/9/25	K. Langs	Rosie & Will	Maria	M. Stebbins S. Beckert	B. Labadie	S. Scott	S. Sarosiek	S. Richards PS. Orr	S. Labadie
11/16/25	R. Groff	Liam	Dominic	K. Langs, S. Langs A. Langs	S. Richards	S. Scott	D. Richards	J. VanReenen C. VanReenen	S.Lange Y. Griffin
11/23/25	M. Arcadipane	Daphne & Jack	Norah	C. VanReenen J. VanReenen	S. Richards	S. Scott	S. Sarosiek	PB Stewart, M. Stebbins, M. Verrill	J. Berry M. Lindgren
11/30/25	D. Richards	Lilly	Grayson	D. Pierce E. Pierce	S Richards	S. Scott	TBD	K. Langs A. Langs	R. Groff



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.

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

DON'T FORGET TO

FALL

BACK

November 2, 2025



FIRST
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



Assorted
Gourds