

There is a

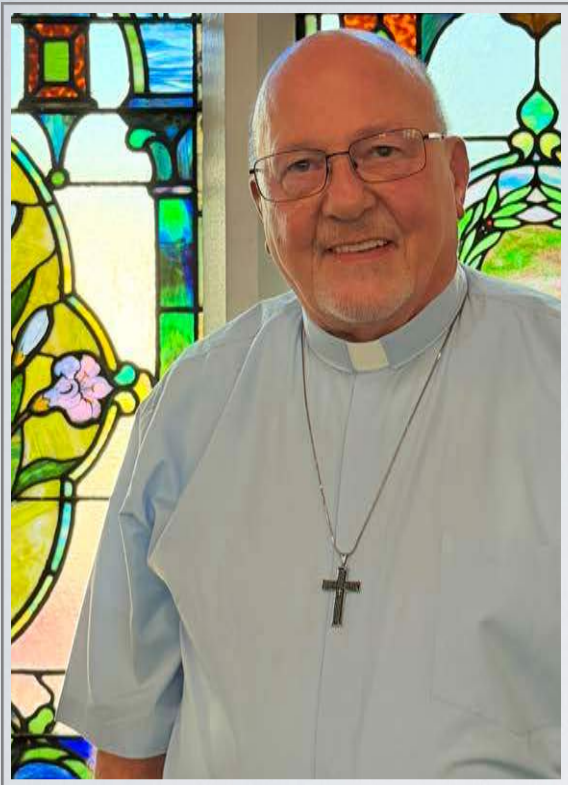
time

for everything, and a

season

for every activity under the heavens.

Ecclesiastes 3:1



From the Pastor's desk.

Pastor Robert Stewart
pastorbobstewart@gmail.com

Dear Church Family,

In Ecclesiastes 3 we read that there is “**A Time for Everything.**”...For everything there is a season, a time for every activity under heaven. A time to be born and a time to die. A time to plant and a time to harvest. A time to kill and a time to heal. A time to tear down and a time to build up. A time to cry and a time to laugh. A time to grieve and a time to dance. A time to scatter stones and a time to gather stones. A time to embrace and a time to turn away. A time to search and a time to quit searching. A time to keep and a time to throw away. A time to tear and a time to mend. A time to be quiet and a time to speak. A time to love and a time to hate. A time for war and a time for peace.

On Sunday, January 25, 2026, in a special children's time toward the end of worshipping together another letter was in God's mailbox asking the children if they knew what the word **RETIRE** meant. I was very impressed with their many answers. Some were even comical in nature. I then informed them and everyone within hearing distance that I was planning to go into full retirement at the end of June 2026. I love how the children are so engaged with me when we have our time together. It was also difficult for us to see them crying after worship. Some hugged me and Sharon so tight. I see God's LOVE in all those children and I was reminded of the scripture from Ecclesiastes 3 where there is “**A Time for Everything.**”

I know that members of the SPRC had asked when they had their time with our District Superintendent...what was wrong with them and the church that they couldn't keep a Pastor. At our January 18th meeting I brought that statement up and said there is absolutely nothing wrong with you and to know that I love each of you with my heart. This was not an easy decision for me to make. For months I have felt like a Yo-Yo wrestling with this decision. It was not a last-minute decision. I was back and forth, up and down. One day I would say...I can do this...I can continue with the commute from Manchester to Portsmouth. The next day or two I return back to reality and saying, “No, I cannot continue with this commute.”

From the Pastor's desk - continued

We have done some pretty good things together in building our Beloved Community at FUMC. We still have a great deal of ministry to accomplish in the next 5 months and what we don't complete you will finish the race with your new Pastor.

One year when Sharon and I were finishing a vacation on the lake we saw a sign board that had a very appropriate message for us. I think it could have been a message from God for us. The sign read:

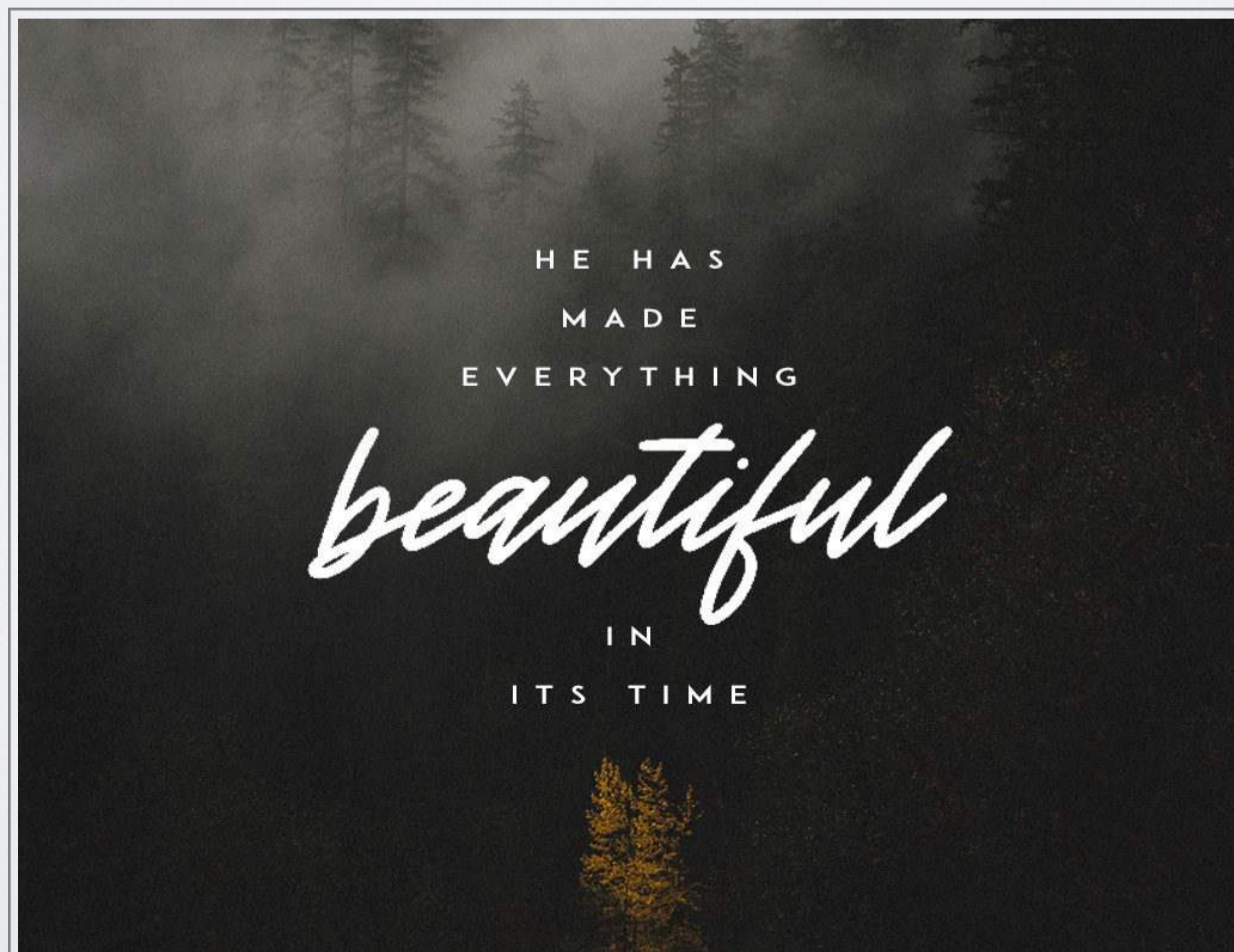
“Don't be SAD that it is over...Be GLAD that it happened.”

That is how I am feeling today...I am glad that we had an opportunity to be in ministry together! Please continue to be the **LIGHT** of Christ! We still have five months left together and we can accomplish so much in that timeframe if we dig in together.

Although life is fleeting, and time seems short, Ecclesiastes reminds us that God has made everything beautiful in its time (**Ecclesiastes 3:11**). Beauty isn't just a pleasant feeling—it's a window into eternity. It awakens in us a longing for something more... someone more. Whether it's the splendor of creation, a child's laughter, or a quiet moment of peace, these glimpses remind us that we were made for a greater purpose: **to know and glorify God**.

So today, embrace your season. Trust God's timing. Enjoy the gifts He's given. And remember, no matter how confusing life gets under the sun, everything becomes clearer when we live under His grace.

Grace and Peace my Friends
Pastor Bob (Sharon too)





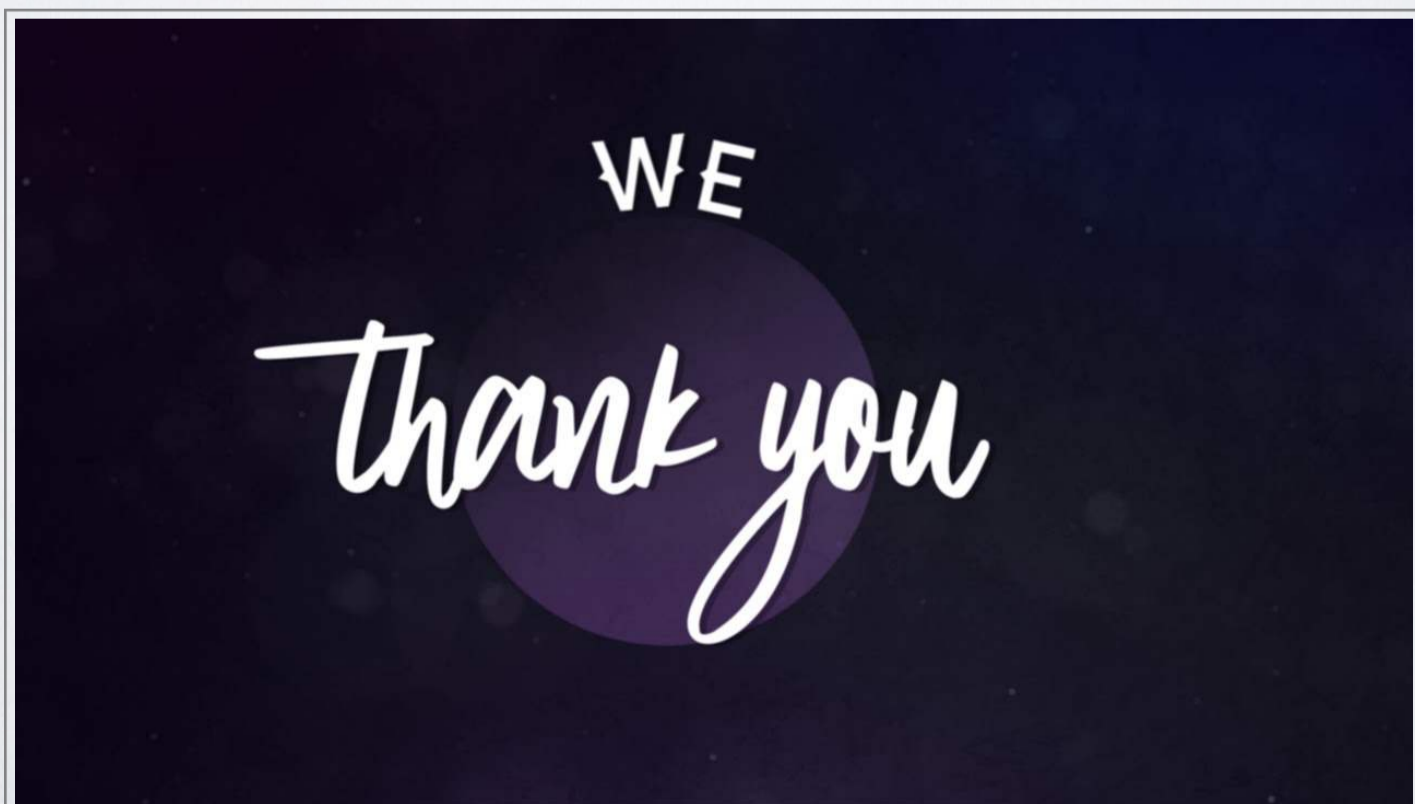
As Bishop Devadhar used to always say when he was grateful and thankful: **THANK YOU... THANK YOU... THANK YOU!**

He never said it once. It was always in threes. Perhaps once for each part of the Trinity (Father-Son-Holy Spirit). So I want to do so in the same vein. **THANK YOU... THANK YOU... THANK YOU!**

What am I thankful for. Well, you ALL for sure! I am so thankful for the generous gifts that each of you gave to me at Christmas. It was so appreciated and I want you to know that I do appreciate your love and generosity toward me and Sharon.

I am also thankful for the love extended with all the calls, texts, cards, etc. while I was experiencing some recent health issues. The last two days have been a real turning point for me and I feel I am getting back to normal. I know...Pastor Bob you are far from normal. 😊! Anyways I am feeling like my old self...so watch out...here I come.

LOVE and BLESSINGS my siblings in Christ!





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/>



ANYONE UP FOR SOME FISHING?

JANUARY 25, 2026

[VIEW PHOTOS »](#)



COME AND SEE

JANUARY 18, 2026

[VIEW PHOTOS »](#)



JESUS, JOHN AND THE JORDAN

JANUARY 11, 2026

[VIEW PHOTOS »](#)

LECTIONARY READINGS



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!

Sunday, February 1

Micah 6:1-8, Psalm 15, 1 Corinthians 1:18-31, Matthew 5:1-12

Sunday, February 8

Isaiah 58:1-9a [9b-12], Psalm 112:1-9 [10], 1 Corinthians 2:1-12 [13-16], Matthew 5:13-20

February 15: Transfiguration of the Lord

Exodus 24:12-18, Psalm 2 or Psalm 99, 2 Peter 1:16-21, Matthew 17:1-9

February 18: Ash Wednesday

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 or Isaiah 58:1-12, Psalm 51:1-17, 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10, Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

February 22: First Sunday in Lent

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7, Psalm 32, Romans 5:12-19, Matthew 4:1-11

FAITHFUL RESISTANCE

A Public Witness for Immigrant Justice



People called United Methodists are called for a Day of Public Witness in Washington D.C. and in your own region on Wednesday, February 25, 2026. New England Conference of the United Methodist Church is organizing to participate in both the national gathering at D.C. and regional gatherings in New England to join and connect together for faithful resistance to uphold our baptismal vow and to stand in solidarity with our immigrant neighbors. All annual conferences in Northeastern Jurisdiction are encouraging United Methodists in our jurisdiction to organize and participate in similar ways.

1. A Day of Public Witness in Washington D.C.

Please find the information about this interfaith national gathering organized by multiple United Methodist agencies @.

<https://www.umcjustice.org/latest/faithful-resistance-a-public-witness-for-immigrant-justice-8557>

- How to participate
- Please use the link above to register for the event. There is an online option to join the national gathering. Please choose the online option when you register.
- You can also organize your local church to gather and join the worship service through the online option.
- There will be \$300 per person travel stipend up to 5 persons per district. Please contact your DS if you like to receive this stipend
- Please also use the following conference link to register your attendance. This is for the conference to provide necessary support in case there is any emergency <https://neumc-reg.brtapp.com/>
- [FaithfulResistance](#)
- If you are organizing a group of leaders to travel together, please inform your district superintendent.
- On the day of the event, there will be an opportunity for United Methodists for Northeastern Jurisdiction to gather for further connection and collaboration at a local site.



FAITHFUL RESISTANCE

A Public Witness for Immigrant Justice



2. Regional Gatherings for a Day of Public Witness

Regional and Local events are being organized on the same day of the national gathering on Wednesday, February 25, 2026. More information will follow after the details of these regional gatherings are shaped.

- How to participate
- These gatherings will happen at the same time of the national gathering.
- When technology is available, please participate the national gathering through live streaming
- Following the worship service, there may be opportunities for various public witnesses. These opportunities will be determined contextually.
- If you plan to organize your own local church or community gathering on the same day, please inform your district superintendent about your plan.

3. Non-Violence Resistance Training:

Active bystander and Non-Violence Resistance Training is offered by *Faith and Action*. This will be offered both as in-person and a webinar.

Saturday, February 7, 2026, from 10am to noon
Aldersgate UMC, 242 Boston Rd. Chelmsford, MA

- Please register using the link below.

<https://neumc-reg.brtapp.com/ResistanceTraining>

- New England Conference is strongly encouraging all who plan to participate in the day of Public Witness to attend this training.
- You can organize your own local church and/or community gathering to join this training through a webinar.



FIRST UMC LEADERSHIP

COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT LAY LEADERSHIP 2026

Church Council (Leadership Board)

Leadership Board Chair: Kellie Langs (3-year term ending 2027)

Pastor: Bob Stewart

Lay Leader: Sue Sarosiek

Lay Member to Annual Conference: Dave Richards

Staff Parish Relations Chair: Brock Labadie

Trustee Chair: Mike Coffey

Finance Chair: Aerial Sillanpaa

Financial Secretary : Jen Berry

Church Treasurer: Steve Scott

Recording Secretary: Sue Richards

Church School Superintendent(s) Dave Richards and Stephanie Labadie

Sunshine Chair: Marilyn Stebbins

Church Historian: Evelyn Laux

Worship Chair: PennySue Orr

Members at Large: Yvonne Griffin, Bella Sillanpaa, Melanie Lindgren

Staff Parish Relations Committee

Brock Labadie (Three-year term as chair ending 2026)

Kellie Langs, Christine Williams (Three-year term ending 2026)

Sue Lange, Sue Richards, Kevin Fickenscher, Anne Coffey (Three-year term ending 2027)

Cathy VanReenen, Rosie Buswell (Three-year term ending 2028)

Lay Leader: Sue Sarosiek

Pastor: Bob Stewart



FIRST UMC LEADERSHIP

COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT LAY LEADERSHIP 2026

Committee on Nominations and Leadership Development

Stephanie Labadie, Melanie Lindgren (3 year term ending 2026)

Sue Richards, Sharon Stewart (3 year term ending 2027)

Marilyn Stebbins (3 year term ending 2028)

Lay Leader: Sue Sarosiek

Pastor: Bob Stewart

Finance Committee

Airial Sillanpaa - Chair (3 year term ending 2026)

Steve Scott - Treasurer (3 year term ending 2028)

Jen Berry - Financial Secretary (3 year term ending 2028)

Linda Reiber (1 year term ending 2026)

Jane Richards (1 year ending 2026)

Dave Richards (3 year term ending 2028)

Roseanne Groff (3 year term ending 2028)

John VanReenen (3 year term ending 2028)

Lay Leader: Sue Sarosiek

Pastor: Bob Stewart

Board of Trustees

Mike Coffey - Chair (3-year term ending 2027)

Gary Sillanpaa (3-year term ending 2026)

Steve Langs (3-year term ending 2026)

Steve Scott (Trustee Treasurer) (3-year term ending 2028)

Mark Giandomenico (3-year term ending 2027)

Wayne Rasch (3-year term ending 2027)

Steve Beckert (3-year term ending 2028)

Karl Duval (3-year term ending 2028)

Lay Leader: Sue Sarosiek

Pastor: Bob Stewart

Worship Committee

PennySue Orr - Chair (3 year term ending 2027)

Marilyn Stebbins (3 year term ending 2027)

Michelle Verrill (3 year term ending 2027)

Bevan Bloemendaal (Consultant)

Yvonne Griffin (3 year term ending 2027)

Stephanie Labadie (3 year term ending 2027)

Dave Richards (3 year term ending 2027)

Sharon Stewart (3 year term ending 2027)

Hollen Groff (3 year term ending 2028)

Debbie Astbury (3 year term ending 2028)

Toby & Diane Thompson (3 year term ending 2028)

Lay Leader: Sue Sarosiek

Pastor: Bob Stewart

Staff (paid)

Pastor: Bob Stewart

Music Director: Bevan Bloemendaal

Custodian: Pete Engel

Digital Outreach Coordinator: Bevan Bloemendaal



Finance Update

Aerial Sillanpaa
Chair, Finance Committee

Hello Church Family,

If you're reading this with a sore back, damp boots, or a newfound respect for your snow shovel, you're not alone. Our community has received *a lot* of snow lately.

But, as I've watched the walkways at 129 Miller Ave. cleared again and again, I've been struck by something far more meaningful than the snowfall itself: the quiet, steady generosity of the people who show up. In particular, members of the recovery community who give their time, strength, and energy to serve others, often without recognition, and certainly without complaint.

There is something deeply holy about this kind of giving. It's not flashy or loud. It's simply people giving back because they themselves have been given much. As Galatians reminds us, "*Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ*" (Galatians 6:2). Even when those burdens happen to be measured in inches of snow.

The Portsmouth First United Methodist Church knows a great deal about giving. We were the recipient of the generosity of Mary Trembley, who conducted our most recent church audit. Mary found "no irregularity in your procedures", and praised our efforts to generate income in an environment where operating costs often exceed revenue for faith-based organizations. Mary offered a few constructive observations that our applicable committees will assimilate into practice. For her time and expertise, Mary asked only that a donation be made in her name to a retreat Center in Massachusetts. Should anyone wish to discuss our audit in further detail, I'm happy to make myself available.

I'm pleased to share that 2025 was what I call a margin correction year. In 2025 we closed the gap between what the church brought in and what it needed to spend on operating expenses. This wasn't done through panic or one-time cost-cutting tricks, but through restoring healthy operations and increasing revenue from a variety of sources. I am also deeply grateful to the anonymous donor who paid our open equity note (secured by the parsonage) down to zero.

In 2025, I learned two core principles about our church and our congregation:

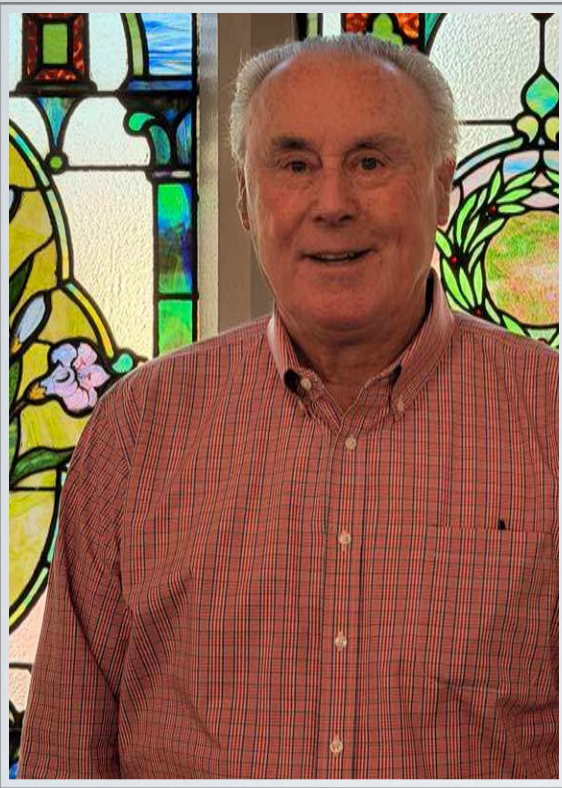
- Donors are most motivated by tangible, visible projects.
- People are willing to give above and beyond a pledge when there is clarity and trust.

That giving comes in many forms, such as financial gifts, volunteerism, offering ideas, and showing up to support a community effort like Spring Patch or Pumpkin Patch.

As Finance Chair, I often think about stewardship in terms of numbers and budgets. But moments like these remind me that stewardship is also about people and community. Everyday acts of service that keep our church safe, welcoming, and alive. I invite you to embrace that notion with me as we slide into 2026 on freshly drifted snow.

If you see someone out there shoveling FUMC this winter, know that you're witnessing generosity in motion. And if you're one of those people: thank you. Your work matters more than you know.

Now, if anyone finds a Bible verse about spring arriving early, please let me know.



Trustee Update

Mike Coffey
Chair, Trustee Committee

Church Family and Friends,

As we say farewell to January, it's time to begin focusing on our project list for the upcoming spring season – it will be here before we know it. As I walk around the church, I've noticed a few general housekeeping items that could use attention, nothing major. Please let me know if you are aware of anything that needs to be addressed. I will begin updating our existing list and circulate it in hopes that volunteers will be willing to step forward to take on a small project. We are very fortunate to have so many people using the church who are also willing to help.

During the first week of January, we experienced a gas leak in the boiler room. It was discovered by members of the Recovery Church, who promptly contacted the Fire Department and the Gas Company, and the church was evacuated. The issue was determined to be a loose coupling in the gas service pipe. It was tightened, tested, and everything was deemed safe. Thank you to the Recovery Church members for their diligence and quick response. Had this gone unnoticed, it could have been catastrophic.

As we pray for spring, please continue to be safe and mindful of slippery or unsafe conditions. Thank you all for your continued support.

Blessings





Worship Committee Update

PennySue Orr
Chair, Worship Committee

Hello church family!

Another big season is coming up in the church year! I'm not talking about Spring, although after the recent snow storm I am ready however I am talking about LENT.

Lent is the Christian season leading up to Easter. Traditionally individuals would give something up for the 40 days leading up to Easter, however as in the past the Worship committee has voted to do a Lenten project to support a charity. This year we will be launching a food drive to help Jesus "Feed the 5,000" in two of our local charities - End 68 Hours of Hunger and the Salvation Army food pantry. We are busy putting the finishing touches on this project but I can tell you there will be an opportunity for everyone to either purchase specific items or give a monetary donation.

End 68 Hours of hunger is a program our congregation has participated in for several years. Each week "angels" pack small bags of food items that local school children can take home for the weekend when they are less likely to receive proper meals. These items are things the child can heat up in a microwave or prepackaged snacks. Stephanie Labadie is working with Jen Berry our church contact to get a list of the most needed items. More info to come! Be watching the big screens in church and a committee announcement during the service. Let us help Jesus feed the 5,000 so no one is without.

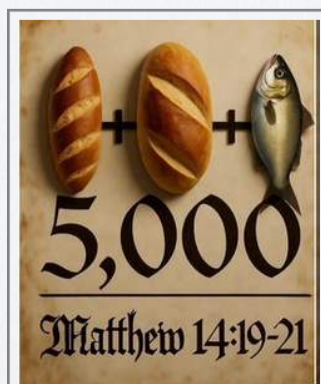
Pastor Bob is once again offering a Lenten study on Wednesday mornings in person and the same session on Saturday mornings via Zoom for those who are unable to attend in person. "He Chose the Nails" by Max Lucado is the text for this study. Please see Sharon or Pastor Bob. The cost is \$11 for the book. Having participated before I can assure you it is so worth the time.

Ash Wednesday service will be held on Wednesday February 18th after the Lenten study at 11:30am

Maundy Thursday - April 2, 2026 at 5:30pm we will celebrate a Seder Meal and pot luck. This is a traditional Passover meal hosted by Jewish families. Our host family will be the Labadies.

Good Friday- April 3, 2026 from 2-3pm. This year a drama "Good Friday Grace" will be performed. This powerful drama is taken from the view of the craftsmen who created the items that were used in the Crucifixion. Robe, crown of thorns, whip, nails, cross and stone mason. If you are able please plan to attend this meaningful hour.

See you all during Lent
Peace in your Journey





Children's Church Update

Stephanie Labadie & David Richards
Co-Superintendents

Church Family and Friends,

Last month, our dedicated volunteers shared four stories of those who believe in Jesus, the Son of God: the magi, whose curiosity to see a new king led them to travel so far, and who worshiped Jesus with their offerings after learning of the prophecy that foretold the birth of the Messiah; John the Baptist, who witnessed the Holy Spirit descend from heaven and heard the heavenly declaration of God's love for His Son; Levi the tax collector, who abandoned a trade rife with greed and dishonesty to follow Jesus at the simple invitation to do so; and a young boy who gave his meager meal of bread and fish to be transformed into nourishment for thousands of Jesus' followers on the shore of the Sea of Galilee.

We will examine our own belief as we learn of Jesus miraculously approaching His disciples' boat across the surface of the water, guiding them safely to shore through a stormy sea.

As we approach Lent, we will hear stories about God's kingdom, where all people are loved and included: Jesus welcomes and blesses the children brought to see Him; He shares joy-filled tales of the shepherd who rejoices over rescuing a lost sheep and the woman who celebrates with friends upon the recovery of her lost silver coin; and He tells the story of forgiveness granted by a loving father to his wayward son.

An important reminder to all FUMC families -

Pastor Bob and Sharon have shared their hearts with all of us over the past 19 months, and they would love to take a little piece of us with them when they depart at the end of June. At the end of service on January 25th, all of the kids received a blank piece of paper and an assignment: draw a self-portrait on one side of the paper, and on the other write down 3 things you love about church. Be sure to return your portrait pages to Pastor Bob and Sharon to be a meaningful memento of their time with us!

"For the kingdom of God belongs to those who are like these children."
Mark 10:14





SPRC

Brock Labadie
Chair

Church family and friends,

The SPRC met on January 18th and were joined by DS David Palmer. We welcomed new members for 2026, Cathy & Rosie, who both have served on SPRC in the past.

Pastor Bob announced to the committee his intention to retire at the end of June, and discussions focused on how this announcement would be made to the church and the new pastor assignment process.

To prepare for this transition, we will need to create a “Transition Team” to prepare to receive our new Pastor. If you are interested and willing to volunteer to be part of this transition team, please let me know by the end of February. More information will follow in future announcements.

We will certainly miss Pastor Bob and Sharon and while the change can and will be challenging, we **NEED** to do our very best to welcome our new Pastor to our church family.

Thank you,



 **TRANSITION TEAM**

VOLUNTEER

OPPORTUNITY



Kids First Update

Sue Sarosiek & Sue Richards
Co-Chairs

Church Family,

Kids First has received significant support this year, allowing us to continue our Winter Cold Packs program. We were blessed to receive a generous donation of 250 handmade hats and scarves from a friend of PennySue Orr, and we are deeply grateful for her continued support and generosity. To date, 39 cold packs have been assembled and distributed during this particularly cold winter season.

These efforts are a meaningful reminder of how small acts of care, when shared, can make a real difference in our community. As we continue to serve, we are thankful for everyone who gives their time, talents, and resources to ensure that children and families feel supported and seen.





Seacoast Family Promise Update

Jen Berry
Chair

Hello!

Seacoast Family Promise provides temporary housing, food, and shelter to families through a structured journey utilizing trauma informed care, employment education and housing search, financial education, parenting and other effective tools leading families back to stability and the return to a place they can call home.

We continue to provide dinners for the families currently staying at the Joshua House. A big thank you to the folks who have helped in the last couple of months with this outreach! Seacoast Family Promise is expecting 2026 to be a big growth year, allowing us to help more families that are in need. Sadly, the number of families experiencing homelessness is only growing due to the lack of affordable housing in the seacoast area so the more families we can help, the better.

Starting in January, families will be eating leftovers on Wednesday nights and making their own dinner on Saturday nights, so we will just be responsible for providing meals on Thursday and Friday of each week we are assigned, as Temple Israel volunteers will cover Sunday, Monday, Tuesday.

Our 2026 schedule is as follows:

February 12 & 13

August 13 & 14

April 30 & May 1

November 12 & 13

June 25 & 26

December 31 & January 1

If you are interested in helping with this outreach, please contact me - Jen Berry - 603-801-3886 or jen_b76@yahoo.com





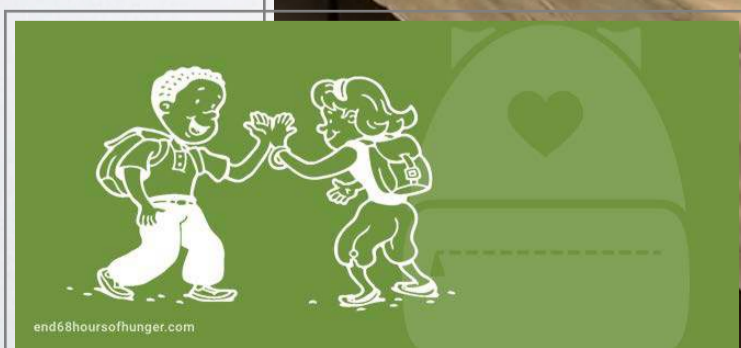
End 68 Hours of Hunger Update

Jen Berry
Chair

Church Family and Friends,

End 68 Hours of Hunger - Portsmouth is still going strong. I can't believe half the school year is already complete. We continue to send bags home each week and stock small pantries at the schools in case the children need food during the week as well. We also provide healthy snack foods to the nurses at the elementary schools so they can provide food to children who need it during the school day. We continue to try to help any way we can.

We could not do this work without the people and companies who generously donate their money and our dedicated volunteers who donate their time and I am so grateful for all of them!





Sunshine Outreach Update

Marilyn Stebbins
Chair

Hello Church Family and Friends,

Thank you all for the taking the time to write a quick note to our church family members who are not able to be with us in church each Sunday. We know they appreciate it very much.

On the second Sunday of each month, you'll find notecards at the entrance to Sanborn Hall. We invite you to take a few moments to write a note of care and encouragement for those who are unable to join us in person. When you're finished, simply leave your card on the table, and I'll be sure it's mailed. Here are some church family that would love hearing from you.

Jenya Westbrook
20 Islington Street #402
Portsmouth, NH 03801

Priscilla Wilson
361 Sagamore Road
Rye, NH 03870

Cynthia Drake
5 Hunterville Avenue
Rye, NH 03870

Barbara Glidden
188 Jones Ave #101
Portsmouth, NH 03801





Coffee Hour Update

Yvonne Griffin
Coordinator

Hello Church Family and Friends,

Coffee Hour is more than a cup of coffee after worship—it's where fellowship continues and community takes shape. Gathered around tables filled with family-favorite recipes and new treats lovingly shared by our volunteers, we take time to visit, catch up, and welcome visitors. These simple moments of conversation and connection help turn a congregation into a church family.

We are deeply grateful to our Coffee Hour volunteers whose generosity, time, and care make this tradition possible each week. Donations are always welcome to help cover the basics like coffee, water, juice, crackers, and chips. If you're interested in joining this joyful and welcoming ministry, please see Yvonne Griffin for more details—we'd love to have you be part of the team.





“Heavenly Favorites”

First UMC Cookbook Fundraiser

PennySue Orr
Project Lead

Hello everyone!

As mentioned a few weeks ago, our cookbook fundraiser, “Heavenly Favorites”, is officially underway – and **we could use your help** to get things cooking! Food has a special way of bringing people together. It sparks conversation, creates joy, and carries stories and traditions that are often passed down from one person to another. This cookbook is a chance to share those favorites, preserve meaningful traditions, and pass them along to others while supporting First UMC.

We’re putting together a small “kitchen” team to help gather recipes, organize categories, and spread the word. Whether you enjoy organizing, encouraging others, or simply love being part of a fun project, we’d love to have you involved. And even if you don’t have time to join the team, we would still love for you to share a favorite recipe or two for the cookbook. **COME AND JOIN THE FUN!**

If you’re interested in helping or would like to submit a recipe, please feel free to reach out to me by email or text anytime @ psorr@comcast.net or 603-781-3004 (cell/text)



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

HELP CELEBRATE!

Take a moment and get a card in the mail or send a quick text or email to wish these church family members a day filled with love, laughter and lots of cake!

4 Toby Thompson
9 Dianne Pierce
10 Wayne Rasch
10 Steve Scott
11 Isabella Sillanpaa
12 Rosanne Groff

13 Connie Parsons
13 Jenya Westbrook
15 Jay Lima
23 Kevin Fickenscher
25 Mark Giandomenico

10 John & Judy Griffin
24 George & Jessie Bennett
25 Art & Nancy [Chesser] Munson

WANT TO HEAR A FUNNY STORY?

A little girl was talking to her teacher about whales. The teacher said it was physically impossible for a whale to swallow a human because even though it was a very large mammal its throat was very small.

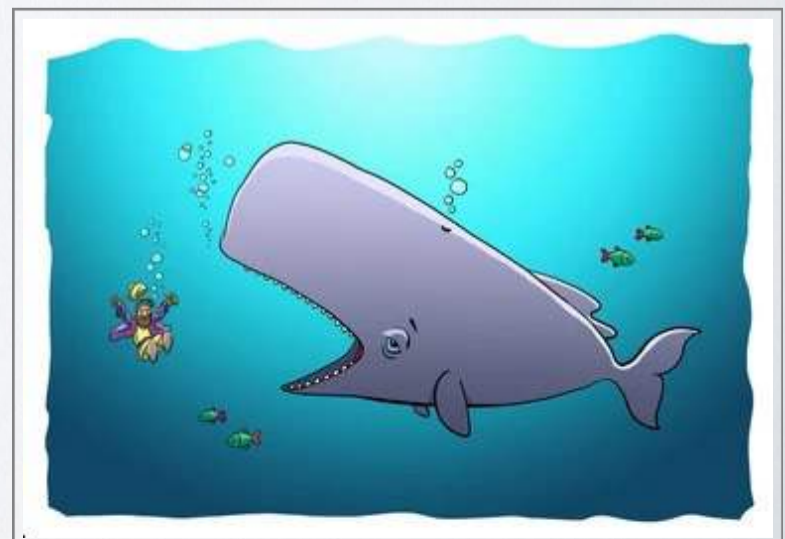
The little girl stated that Jonah was swallowed by a whale.

Irritated, the teacher reiterated that a whale could not swallow a human; it was physically impossible.

The little girl said, "When I get to heaven I will ask Jonah".

The teacher asked, "What if Jonah went to hell?"

The little girl replied, "Then you ask him".





PRAYER

THE MOST POWERFUL
WEAPON
OF A BELIEVER

THERE IS POWER IN PRAYER!

Through prayer, we connect with God, seek wisdom, and hold others in love and faith. We lift up in prayer:

*Tim Orr, the Family of Alex Pretti who was killed in Minnesota,
Sue Lange, Sharon Rhodes, Kellie Langs, Pastor Bob & Sharon, Sue Richards on the loss of Argo, Katie for
the loss of her brother, Terrance our Pumpkin Patch Driver, travel mercies for Bevan, Our country, Those
we lift up silently in our hearts and Prayers of celebration for Sue Richard's father's 95th birthday.*

AN INVITATION

At both church entrances, you'll find red hearts where you can write the names of those you wish to lift up in prayer, as well as any joys you'd like to share. Please give those hearts to one of the ushers or Pastor Bob.



**PRAYER
IS POWERFUL**

MURDER MYSTERY

A CHILLING NIGHT AT DRAFTY CASTLE
MURDER MYSTERY DINNER & PLAY

Performed by the BOW MILLS PLAYERS



Murder, Mystery & Dinner at Bow Mills UMC

Bow Mills United Methodist Church invites you to step into a night of mystery, laughter, and delicious food with their Murder Mystery Play and Dinner, “A Chilling Night at Drafty Castle.”

Join in the fun at 505 South Street, Bow, NH, for one of three performances:

- Friday, February 13, 2026 at 6:00 pm
- Saturday, February 14, 2026 at 12:00 noon or 5:00 pm

Set in an old, drafty castle in the English countryside, the story begins with a shocking crime: Pumpnickel (the butler – not the bread) has been stabbed in the kitchen. The Lady of the Castle, now forced to host paying guests, welcomes an unusual mix of American tourists and family members. But all is not what it seems... one guest has a secret identity, and one is a murderer.

Audience members will be invited to put their detective skills to the test and help solve the mystery while enjoying a hearty dinner and plenty of surprises along the way.

Tickets are \$25 for adults and \$15 for children ages 5-10. Children 5 and under are free. Tickets include dinner, the show, and all the clues you’ll need to crack the case.

Reservations are required. To purchase tickets, please call Darlene Hill at 603-496-4534.

Bring your curiosity, your appetite, and your best sleuthing instincts – it’s sure to be a chillingly good time.



UPCOMING EVENTS

LOOKING AHEAD!

Here are the upcoming meetings, January's worship schedule and ways to get involved.

- 2/8 - Trustee's meeting following worship @ 11:30
- 2/15 - Church Council meeting following worship @ 11:30

FIRST UMC WORSHIP SCHEDULE February 2026

DATE	LITURGIST	ACOLYTES	9:55 BELL RINGERS	GREETERS & USHERS	FACEBOOK LIVE	WORSHIP TECH	SOUND TECH	SUNDAY SCHOOL	COFFEE HOUR
2/1/26	S. Langs	Daphne	Labadies	Sillanpaa Family	S. Richards	S. Scott	S. Sarosiek	D. Richards S. Labadie	C. VanReenen R. Buswell
2/8/26	S. Beckert	Jack	S. Scott	Langs Family	S. Richards	S. Scott	S. Sarosiek	S. Stewart M. Lindgren	Y. Griffin S. Olbricht
2/15/26	M. Stebbins	Norah	D. Richards	VanReenen Family	B. Labadie	S. Scott	D. Richards	S. Richards PS. Orr	M. Lindgren J. Berry
2/18/26 Ash Weds	S. Stewart			M. Giandomenico J. Lima	S. Richards	S. Scott	S. Sarosiek	---	---
2/22/26	M. Giandomenico	Will & Rosie	Dominic	S. Beckert M. Verrill	S. Richards	S. Scott	S. Sarosiek	J. VanReenen C. VanReenen	N. Chesser A. Sillanpaa



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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!

Sharing is part of our outreach too...did you know that when you "Like" our Facebook post, you show support. But when you "SHARE" it, you help spread the message to even more people!

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



Join us Sundays @ 10am
129 Miller Avenue - Portsmouth

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

SUNDAYS
10am

LOOK UP!
Not just as a reflection of how far we've come
but also as an act of hope for a brighter future.
Join us at

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.



ALL ARE WELCOME HERE.
ALL MEANS ALL!