



*For everything there is a season, and a
time for every purpose under heaven.
Ecclesiastes 3:1*



From the Pastor's desk

Pastor Larry Holman

PastorLarryHolman@gmail.com

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ.

Another change in the seasons is upon us. Fall is now officially here and God's creation is, as it always is, changing. The days and nights are gradually getting colder. The air is getting dryer. The hours of daylight are getting shorter and the hours of darkness are getting longer. The time for harvesting summer's bounty is here. We take time to enjoy fresh fruits and vegetables and store what we will use during the winter months ahead. The leaves that sprouted from buds in the spring are starting to change into a multi-colored blaze of glory and will soon thereafter be falling to the ground. We have constant reminders of the scripture from Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 - "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven."

Fall starts a busy season at the church as activities like Sunday School, pie baking, the Pumpkin Patch fundraiser, committee meetings, seeking leaders and committee members to nominate for the year to come, church conference and the season of advent kick off into high gear. Everything has a season and a purpose.

Both the church, and each of us, are entering a season of introspection - a time to look at ourselves. For the church, we look at: what we've accomplished over the past year, what are our resources, gifts, skills and passions and our financial state. For ourselves, we ask: have I grown in my faith and discipleship over the past year, how am I living my faith and how am I sharing my faith to help introduce others to Jesus? This is also a time of looking ahead. Who do we feel will lead us in the work of the church in the community? What is our vision for the church in serving our community. What can I do to grow as a disciple of Christ? How can I use my gifts to be fruitful and help enable the vision of the church to become a reality. What is my purpose under heaven?

Some of these questions we answer together at church conference. Some we answer together as a member of a leadership committee. Some we answer as small groups working together and still others we seek to answer in prayer. All these questions are important to ask and have answered. Your responses to these questions determine the impact First United, the Seacoast Cooperative Parish (of which we are a part of), the Granite District, the New Hope Episcopal Conference and the global United Methodist Church will have in our community and in the world.

Hope came to us over 2000 years ago in the form of a baby. Today, that hope comes in the form of each and every one of you. This is our season. Let us work together and, as the Apostle Paul writes, "Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus"

Peace and blessings my friends. Pastor Larry



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/>



ONE MIND

SEPTEMBER 27, 2026

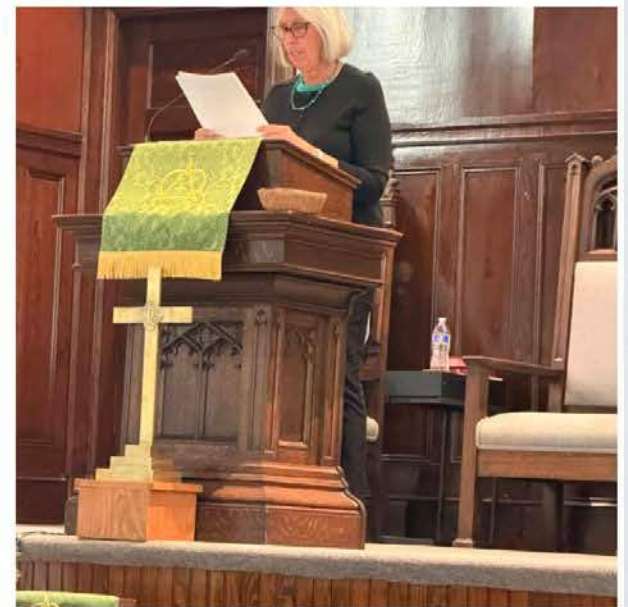
[VIEW PHOTOS »](#)



THE PUMPKINS ARE HERE!

SEPTEMBER 26, 2026

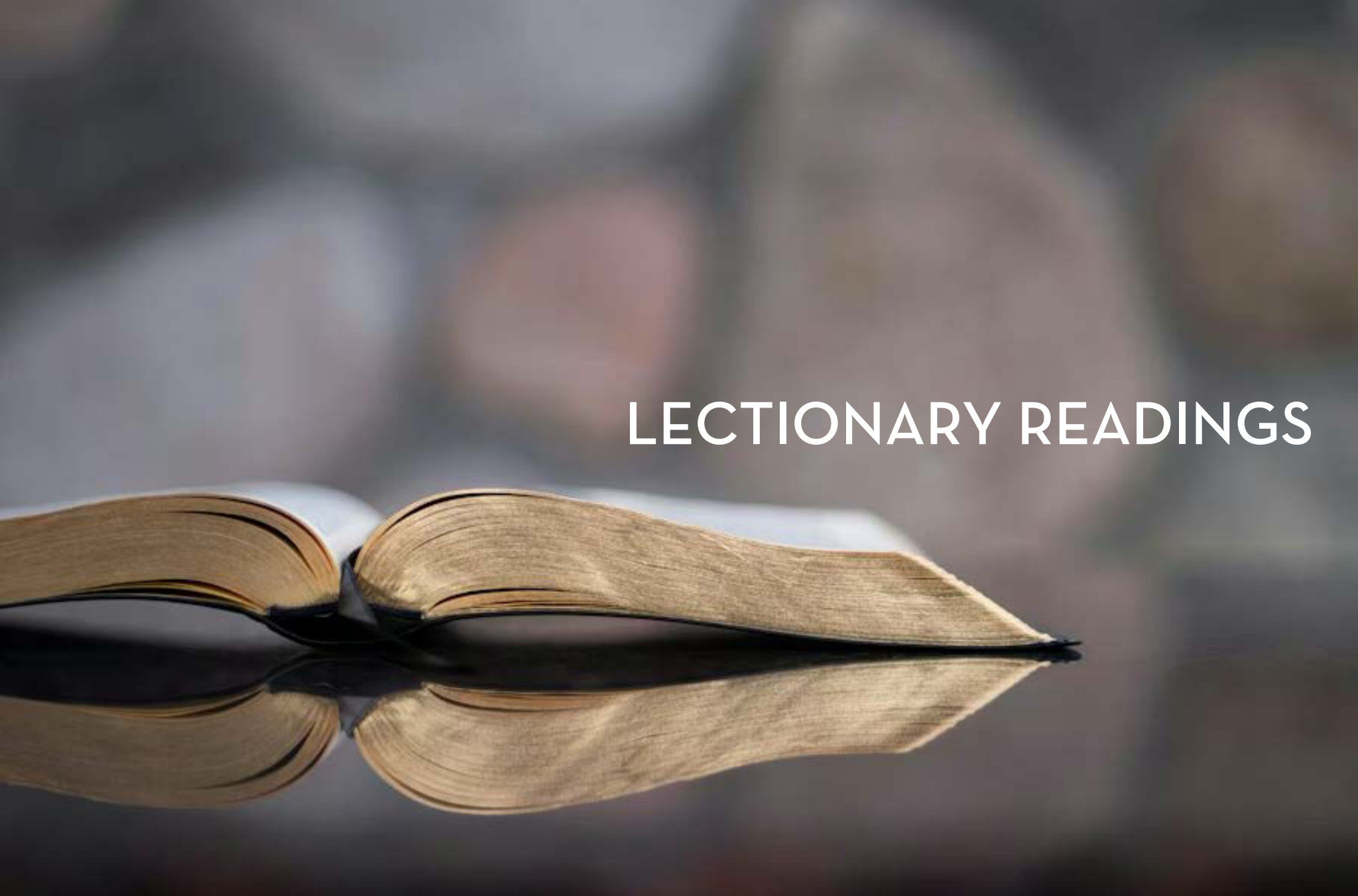
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MANAGING EXPECTATIONS

SEPTEMBER 20, 2026

[VIEW PHOTOS »](#)



LECTIONARY READINGS

LECTIONARY READINGS FOR THE MONTH OF OCTOBER:

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, October 4, 2026

Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20, Psalm 19, Isaiah 5:1-7, Psalm 80:7-15, Philippians 3:4b-14, Matthew 21:33-46

Sunday, October 11, 2026

Exodus 21:1-14, Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23, Isaiah 25:1-9, Psalm 23, Philippians 4:1-9, Matthew 22:1-14

Sunday, October 18, 2026

Exodus 33:12-23, Psalm 99, Isaiah 45:1-7, Psalm 96:1-9, 1, Thessalonians 1:1-10, Matthew 22:15-22

Sunday, October 25, 2026

Deuteronomy 34:1-12, Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17, Leviticus 10:12, 15-18, Psalm 1, 1 Thessalonians 2:1-8, Matthew 22:34-46



FIRST UMC LEADERSHIP

FIRST UMC COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP 2026

Church Council (Leadership Board)

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

Pastor: Larry Holman

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: Linda Reiber

Recording Secretary: Sue Richards

Church School Superintendent(s) (Sunday School): 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 (3 year term as chair ending 2026)

Kellie Langs, Christine Williams (3 year term ending 2026)

Sue Richards, Kevin Fickenscher (3 year term ending 2027)

Rosie Buswell (3 year term ending 2028)

Rhonda Royal, Steve Beckert (3 year term ending 2029)

Lay Leader: Sue Sarosiek

Pastor: Larry Holman



FIRST UMC LEADERSHIP

FIRST UMC COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP 2026

Committee on Nominations and Leadership Development

Stephanie Labadie, Melanie Lindgren (3 year term ending 2026)
Sue Richards (3 year term ending 2027)
Marilyn Stebbins (3 year term ending 2028)
Lay Leader: Sue Sarosiek
Pastor: Larry Holman

Finance Committee

Airial Sillanpaa - Chair (3 year term ending 2026)
Linda Reiber Treasurer (1 year term ending 2026)
Jen Berry - Financial Secretary (3 year term ending 2028)
Jane Richards (1 year ending 2026)
Dave Richards (3 year term ending 2028)
Rosanne Groff (3 year term ending 2028)
John VanReenen (3 year term ending 2028)
Steve Scott - (3 year term ending 2028)
Lay Leader: Sue Sarosiek
Pastor: Larry Holman

Staff (paid)

Pastor: Larry Holman
Music Director: Bevan Bloemendaal
Custodian: Pete Engel
Digital Outreach Coordinator: Bevan Bloemendaal

Worship Committee

PennySue Orr - Chair (3 year term ending 2027)
Marilyn Stebbins (3 year term ending 2027)
Michelle Verrill (3 year term ending 2027)
Yvonne Griffin (3 year term ending 2027)
Stephanie Labadie (3 year term ending 2027)
Dave Richards (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)
Bevan Bloemendaal (Consultant)
Lay Leader: Sue Sarosiek
Pastor: Larry Holman

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 (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)
Jayson Lima (3 year term ending 2029)
Lay Leader: Sue Sarosiek
Pastor: Larry Holman



Finance Update

Aerial Sillanpaa
Chair, Finance Committee

Hello Church!

As we head into the fourth quarter of 2026, I find myself thinking about the incredible dedication I see within our church.

There are people at FUMC who quietly show up, week after week, to cook, clean, count, organize, repair, plan, serve, attend meetings, solve problems, and do countless things most people never see. They give freely of their time because they believe this church and its ministries matter. I am deeply grateful for them, and they truly inspire me. "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others." – 1 Peter 4:10

So, for these last few months of 2026, I have a challenge for all of us: find a way to give a little more of yourself to your church and help us finish the year strong. Volunteer time may be unpaid, but it is incredibly valuable. Our church and its ministries depend on all of us sharing in the work. When we make a commitment to serve, following through matters, not only to the church, but to the people who are counting on us. That doesn't have to mean taking on a huge responsibility. There are big jobs, little jobs, and plenty of times when we simply need another pair of hands.

Pumpkin Patch, our largest annual fundraiser, offers plenty of opportunities to jump in. See Sue Richards if you can help. She will be delighted to have you.

Our Annual Church Conference will be held Tuesday, November 10, along with six other churches from our district. Conference begins at 6:30 p.m., with a friendly reception at 5:30 p.m.

I hope you'll join us. It's a chance to meet members and leaders from neighboring churches, exchange ideas, and find some solidarity in the reality that keeping a church healthy, active, financially sustainable, and moving forward takes a lot of work everywhere.

If you can provide a dish for the reception, please see Yvonne Griffin. We also need help with setup and cleanup. If you'd like to attend but need transportation, please let us know and we'll help arrange a ride.

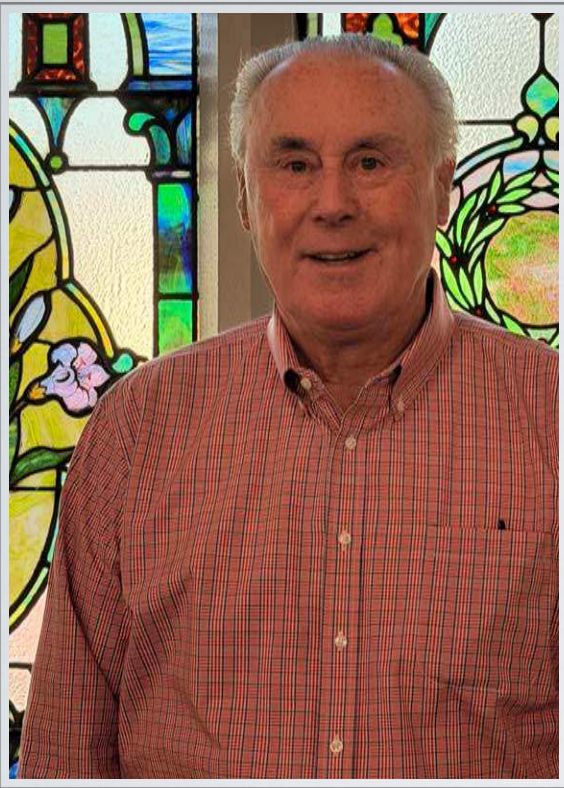
Meanwhile, the Finance Committee is working on our 2027 budget. This magical annual exercise in which we predict twelve months of income and expenses while pretending we possess powers of clairvoyance!

But our budget is more than numbers. It represents our ministries, our staff, our building, our commitments beyond our walls, and what we hope to accomplish together. Church Conference gives everyone an opportunity to see that work, participate in the annual business of FUMC, and help us look toward 2027.

Finally, we have so enjoyed welcoming Pastor Larry and his wife to FUMC. They have been a wonderful addition to our church family, and I am excited about what lies ahead.

We have three months left in 2026. There is much to celebrate, plenty still to accomplish, and room for every one of us to be part of it.

Let's finish strong. Together.



Trustee Update

Mike Coffey
Chair, Trustee Committee

Hello Church Family and Friends,

Now that fall is upon us we need to think about getting our Church property ready for what's to come, not to be negative but yes winter.

As I have walked around the interior of the building I have noticed a bit of clutter here and there. I would ask our members and friends that use the building please be mindful of organizing and discard item no longer used. As far as the outside of the building after the Pumpkin Patch has ended we need to make sure everything is stored in its proper place and the grounds are cleaned up. And, I know they will, thank you in advance Sue and her team.

The kitchen dishwasher is having problems. I believe it is 10 years old and we should consider a replacement, it gets a lot of use. The Trustee's voted to replace it. If anyone would like to consider donating to they project please contact the Church office.





Worship Committee Update

PennySue Orr
Chair, Worship Committee

Happy fall my church family!

The Worship Committee recently met for the first time after a short summer break.

Here are some of the very important dates to mark on your calendars.

Sunday November 1st All Saints' Sunday. This is the day we remember those who have gone before us. As in the past we will take time in our service to light candles for those who have passed since last All Saints' Sunday. - Catherine VanReenen, Donald Twombly, Barbara Glidden, and David Brown.

November 1-22 Thanksgiving season. Keeping with tradition we are asking the congregation to bring in non-perishable foods for the Salvation Army food pantry.

Advent! Yup the season where we patiently await the birth of our Savior will quickly be here. The **greening of the church will be Sunday November 22** directly after church. More details on the season of Advent to come!

As always remember to take time everyday to worship the Holy One.

Peace in our Journey





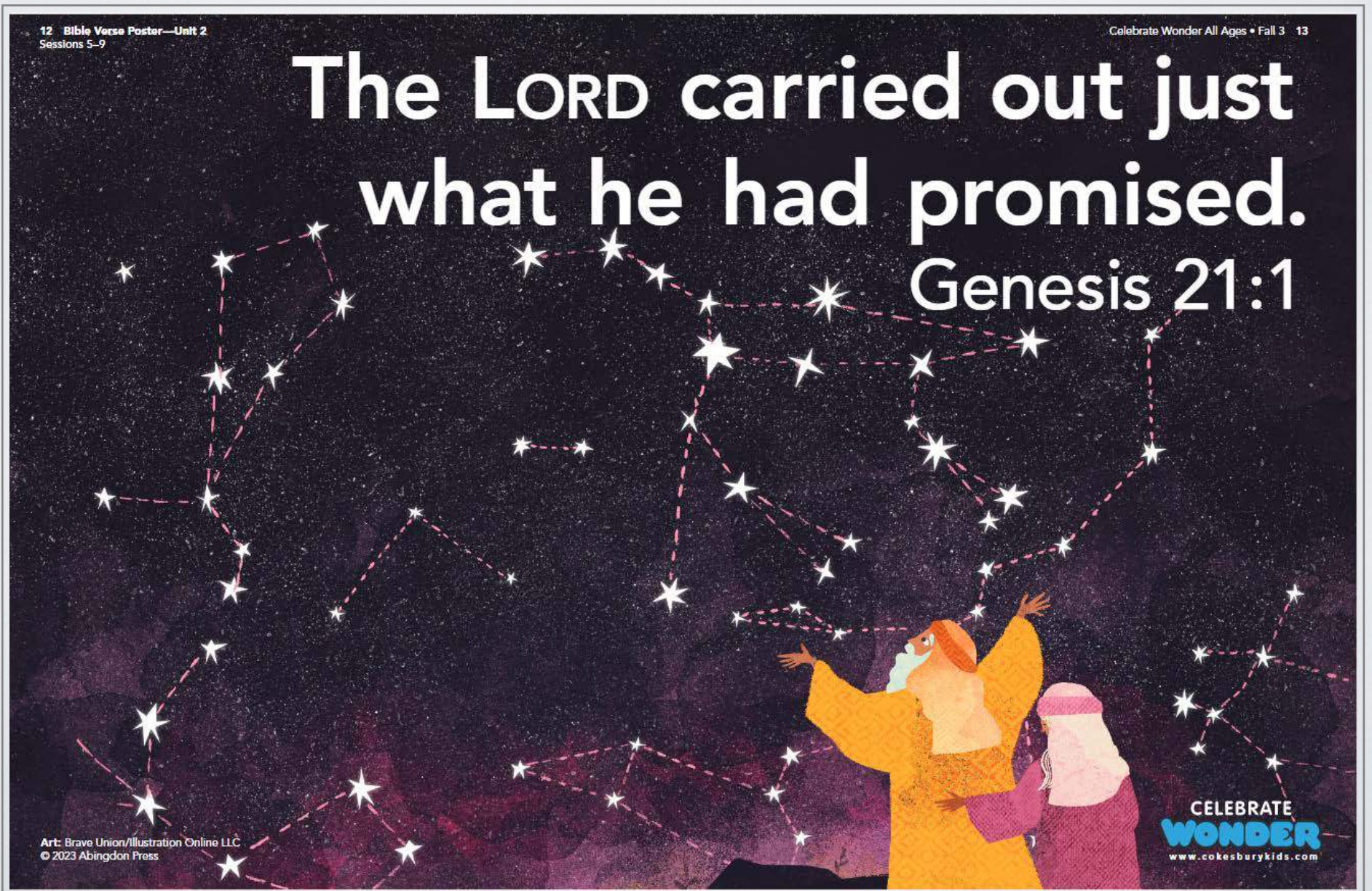
Sunday School Update

Stephanie Labadie & David Richards
Co-Superintendents

Hello everyone!

On Rally Day last month, Pastor Larry bestowed a meaningful blessing on this year's volunteer Sunday School instructors and many of our youth members. Thank you to our 10 returning volunteers who were recognized that day, as well as Pastor Larry himself who will try his hand at teaching occasional Sunday School lessons as his schedule allows, and youth members Maria and Alexa who will also assist as instructors this year!

Having reviewed the wonder of the creation story presented in Genesis last month, our October lessons proceed to the miraculous birth of Isaac to Abraham and Sarah, establishing the foundation of God's covenant.





SPRC

Brock Labadie
Chair

Church family and friends,

SPRC continues to prepare for our upcoming Church Conference. SPRC has attended to several areas of ministry, including:

- Preparing the necessary materials and reports for our fall Church Conference.
- Reviewed staff roles and responsibilities to ensure they continue to serve the needs of our congregation.
- Having conversations about personnel priorities and needs for the coming year.

As we prepare for the Church Conference and the year ahead, we are grateful for the many people who faithfully give of their time, gifts, and energy to make our church's ministry possible. We look forward to the opportunities God will place before us in the coming year.

ANNUAL CHURCH CONFERENCE



Seacoast Family Promise Update

Jen Berry
Chair

Hello!

Seacoast Family Promise provides temporary housing, meals, and shelter to families through a structured, trauma-informed program that includes employment support, housing search assistance, financial education, parenting resources, and other proven tools. These services help families regain stability and move toward a place they can once again call home.

August was a busy month at SFP. We currently have 5 families in the program totaling 6 adults, 4 teenagers and 3 younger children. One family transitioned out of the program to live with family members and is doing well and another family in the program was notified they were approved for housing. They have now completed their paperwork and are waiting for available housing. We're all hoping something becomes available soon as they have done a great job in the program.

SFP also had their annual "Back to School Bash" on August 22, providing school supplies, backpacks, and gift cards for clothing to the children both currently in the program and our past families. It gets bigger every year!

Our team continues to provide dinners for families currently staying at the Joshua House. Families now prepare their own meals on Wednesday and Saturday evenings, using leftovers on Wednesdays. Our responsibility is to provide meals on Thursdays and Fridays during our assigned weeks, while our partner, Temple Israel, will cover Sundays through Tuesdays. We provided meals on August 14 and 15 and our remaining dates for 2026 are:

November 12 & 13
December 31 & January 1

Thank you to everyone who has supported this outreach this year!

If you are interested in supporting this meaningful outreach, please contact me @ 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 preparing to begin its seventeenth school year, continuing a legacy of serving local children and families. Where has the time gone? The program remains strong thanks to the unwavering dedication of its volunteers and the generosity of the community, who consistently contribute both cash and food donations.

Sadly, food insecurity persists as a critical issue in the United States. An estimated one out of every six children in New Hampshire faces food insecurity, with many experiencing hunger daily. I find that statistic both shocking and heartbreaking. No child should have to go to bed hungry, especially in a country blessed with such abundant wealth and resources. We will continue to help as many children as possible through this program, feeding them so they can thrive and learn the way they should.

Reflecting on the impact of the program, a note received from a grateful parent in the early years continues to inspire me. The parent wrote, "It's not just the food you provide, but the knowledge that someone cares enough about us to keep providing it week after week that gives me hope." This message serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of our mission. Together, let us continue to bring the light and hope of Jesus to the Portsmouth community.





Sunshine Outreach Update

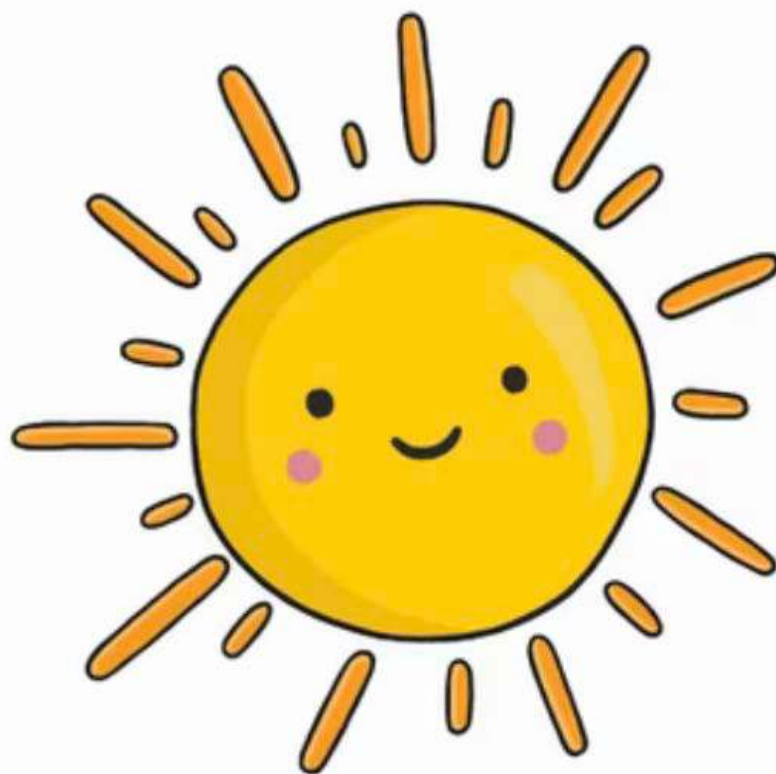
Marilyn Stebbins
Chair

Hello Church Family and Friends,

We're continuing our effort to stay connected with members of our church family who are no longer able to join us in person each Sunday, and your support truly makes a difference.

Thank you to everyone who takes a few moments to write a note. These simple gestures of care and encouragement are deeply appreciated and help remind each person that they are remembered and still very much a part of our community.

As a reminder...on the second Sunday of each month, notecards will be available at the entrance to Sanborn Hall. A short message can go a long way in brightening someone's day and helping them feel connected.



SENDING WARM HUGS
& SUNSHINE

Jane Richards
1131 Washington Road
Rye, NH 03870

Jenya Westbrook
20 Islington Street #402
Portsmouth, NH 03801

Cynthia Drake
5 Huntervale Avenue
Rye, NH 03870

Priscilla Wilson
361 Sagamore Road
Rye, NH 03870

Sue Lange
100 Hahnemann Trail
Apt 150
Pittsford, NY 14534



Coffee Hour Update

Yvonne Griffin
Coordinator

Hello Family and Friends,

If you haven't stayed for Coffee Hour after worship, you're missing an important part of the continued energy and spirit of our Sunday morning together. The love, hugs, smiles, laughter and conversations continue long after the final hymn, creating a wonderful sense of community and reminding us that we all have different gifts and talents to share in glorifying God.

A special thank-you goes out to all of our Coffee Hour Angels who make this time together possible each Sunday. Their generosity, time and willingness to serve give all of us a chance to gather, connect and enjoy a little fellowship after worship.

The next time you're at Coffee Hour, take a moment to thank one of our Coffee Hour Angels and consider making a donation to help keep it going. And, of course, we are always looking for more volunteers! If you would like to join the Coffee Hour team, please reach out to me at yvonnegriffin217@comcast.net or 603.531.4514.

Come for worship. Stay for Coffee Hour. You just might leave with a fuller heart and a few more hugs than you came with!





PUMPKIN PATCH UPDATE

Sue Richards
Chair

Hello Church Family & Friends,

Isn't the front of the church amazing with all the fall colors of pumpkins, gourds and mums!

We have **lots of volunteer opportunities for almost all ages and physical abilities** and it "takes a village" to make it happen. Please spread the word to family and friends and especially on social media. You can sign up online at <https://signup.com/go/ZcKdLWb>, after church on Sundays, by texting/calling me at 603-749-4169 or emailing me at mksrichards@comcast.net.

Saturday, Oct. 17 from 10:30 until early afternoon: Help move pumpkins and gourds from large cardboard bins and small boxes onto pallets, finalize customer purchases in the Booth, and/or bring in homemade goodies to sell like cookies, bars, whoopie pies, fudge, and flavored breads.

Daily through Friday, Oct. 31:

-Sign up to help finalize customer purchases in the Booth. New volunteers will work with an experienced person who will show you how easy and fun it is...and how happy our customers are! We have heard many times that people wait until we open and only buy from us because they love how much we help our community!

-Bring in homemade goodies ready to sell in plastic wrap or baggies like cookies, bars, whoopie pies, fudge, and flavored breads. (Cookies and bars sell for \$1.00.)

On Tuesdays and Fridays (ending Oct. 30) from 9 a.m. - Noonish: Come be part of our Pie Team to make and bake yummy pies to sell. No experience needed!

Sun., Nov. 1 around 11:30 a.m.: Come help move pallets off the lawn and/or take signs down.

Any amount of help is greatly appreciated! Thanks for your continued support.

Love and Hugs, 😊 Sue Richards, Grateful Pumpkin Patch Coordinator





THANK YOU EVERYONE!...THE PATCH IS OPEN!



OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

3 Rosie Buswell
6 Rhonda Royal
8 Kaya Sarosiek ~ Adoption Day
9 Grayson Sillanpaa
12 Cynthia Drake
16 Sue Lange
18 Carol Bovee
22 Pastor Larry Holman
28 Chelsea Leigh

7 Al & Jan Cansdale
8 Steve & Karin Scott

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!



Edit cover photo

Fumcportsmouthnh Church

331 friends



+ Add to story

Edit profile

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!



UPCOMING EVENTS

LOOKING AHEAD!

Here are the upcoming events, and the month’s worship schedule.

- 10/4 - Nominations and Leadership meeting after worship
- 10/9 - Church Conference Committee Reports due to church office
- 10/17 - Pumpkin Patch second delivery @ 10:30 am
- 10/27 - Finance Meeting @ 6:30 pm at parsonage
- 11/10 - Church Conference - 5:30 reception - Conference @ 6:30 in Sanborn Hall
- 11/17 - Church Council @ 6:30 pm at parsonage

 FIRST UMC WORSHIP SCHEDULE
October 2026

DATE	LITURGIST	ACOLYTES	9:55 BELL RINGERS	GREETERS & USHERS	FACEBOOK LIVE	WORSHIP TECH	SOUND TECH	SUNDAY SCHOOL	COFFEE HOUR
10/4/26	D. Richards	Will	TBD	M. Giandomenico S. Beckert	S. Richards	S. Scott	S. Sarosiek	John, Maria, Brock	R. Groff H. Groff
10/11/26	D. Pierce	PS. Orr	TBD	H. Groff R. Groff	S. Richards	S. Scott	D. Richards	Rosie, Kellie, PennySue	N. Chesser M. Giandomenico
10/18/26 Pastor Sue Preaching	S. Beckert	Daphne/Jack	TBD	Labadie Family	S. Richards	S. Scott	S. Sarosiek	David, Michelle Stephanie	Sillanpaa Family
10/25/26 PennySue Preaching	M. Stebbins	B. Labadie	TBD	M. Medeiros C. Leigh	S. Richards	S. Scott	S. Sarosiek	Jen, Hollen	S. Labadie



ABOUT US

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.

AUDITIONS/SIGN UPS

TTSPLAYERS
PORTSMOUTH



AUDITIONS

Saturday, October 24, 3:30–5 p.m.
Thursday, October 29, 5–6:30 p.m.

WHERE

First United Methodist Church
129 Miller Avenue, Portsmouth, NH

REHEARSALS

Saturdays, 3:30–5 p.m.

PRODUCTION FEE

\$195 (Siblings discount of \$25 off)

SHOWS

Friday, February 12, 6:30 p.m.
Saturday, February 13, 4 p.m.
Sunday, February 14, 4 p.m.

Scan this QR code to sign up
for an audition:



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact Mike at (978) 476-6053 or email coachmikefay@gmail.com.



Like us on Facebook: TTS Players Portsmouth



FIRST 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 tomorrow.
Join us as we re-open our doors
with a new and fresh look and outlook.