

But now more than ever the word about Jesus spread abroad; many crowds would gather to hear him and to be cured of their diseases. But he would withdraw to deserted places and pray. -- Luke 5:15-16, NRSV

COVID-19 has impacted us in a variety of ways. We travel and shop differently. Some of us find ourselves in either small circles of people or no longer see friends and family like we once did. Many businesses have lost sales. Some have closed. A few—if they happen to deal in products like hand sanitizer or protective equipment—have more business than ever before. People have lost jobs. Others struggle to do their work given restrictions on travel and personal contact. Some people have rarely had more to do. Teachers are one example. Pastors are another. Nearly every pastor I have been able to talk with over recent months have commented how the last 6 months has been one of the busiest times in ministry if not the busiest. As I have written before much of this comes from the need to learn new skills and in many cases relearn how to do ministry. Stress and expectations have risen to high levels for many of us.

When I took some vacation time in mid-August, I was faced with the impact that these recent months have had on me. It might surprise you that pastors are not immune to human needs—including for rest, exercise, nutrition, quality human interaction and spiritual engagement. In my own busyness I was too often giving these priorities short shrift. During COVID-19, I have not been able to consistently maintain even one day off—never mind additional time for family or self-care. A person can do this for a week or a month. However, over time a person will tend to become empty. Like making withdrawals from your bank account without corresponding deposits, eventually there will be a 0 balance. Flora Slosson Wuellner, when referring to the fact that pastors frequently work closely and intensely with people, says that as pastors take on the cares of other people they need to find a way to “detox” to lessen unhealthy effects. Many of my colleagues and I struggle with making the time to do this. For those 2 weeks of vacation, I was able to rest. I did a fair amount of hiking. I had more time for prayer. I could focus on some other activities for awhile. And, I could see the imbalance that had developed during admittedly extraordinary times. Perhaps I will never have an example this severe in the rest of my life. Still, I could see challenges that are present even in “normal” times. I was reminded and reconnected with many of the practices that have best served me over the years.

Even Jesus, with crowds of people coming to hear him speak and to be healed, took time to retreat from the crowds to pray. Though the human need was continuously present, he still took care of himself. Jesus still spent time with God. There were times for refreshment and rest so that he could best serve others. How do you take care of yourself? How do you lower your levels of stress? How do you renew yourself? When and how do you spend time with God and being part of God's unfolding witness in the world? If even the Son of God needed time apart from his usual ministry activities, then surely we are wise to do likewise. Good self-care increases the effectiveness of your ministry.

Grace and peace,  
Rev. Tim



## **Disciple Short-term Studies**

During this time of pandemic, Rev. Tim plans to continue offering bible study. For the coming year, two Disciple Short-term studies will be offered, one this fall and one beginning this winter. These courses are ideal for people unable to commit to longer studies. They will also give more flexibility in scheduling given the constantly changing nature of the coronavirus pandemic. They focus on smaller Bible sections, or single books of the Bible, and appeal to more participants with more frequent offerings. These studies embody the same scholarship as the *Disciple* foundational studies and include the same core activities: independent reading, weekly small groups and video presentations by scholars.

### **Invitation to the New Testament**

The first offering in this series will be “Invitation to the New Testament.” Over 8 weeks, explore the writings of the New Testament using the story of Jesus as the starting point. This survey of the testament looks at how the early church took ownership of and was shaped by the story of Jesus and how the church learned how to develop as disciples and create communities of faith. Participants find a deeper conversation with the writers of the New Testament and a renewal of our commitment to be shaped — personally and communally — by the story of Jesus. If you haven't previously been part of a Disciple study, the study is accessible for people with little prior Bible experience.

**Invitation to the New Testament is being planned for Wednesdays, 1:30-3:30 p.m. from mid-October to mid-December.** In light of the ongoing pandemic and in keeping with the re-entry plan approved by the Gray Memorial Church Council, the class videos and discussion will be primarily offered online. Although a computer or device with a microphone or camera are recommended to participate online, you can also participate by phone or audio-only connection. An introductory session will be offered during September in an in-person, outdoor setting (with an online option) to be determined. If you would like to be part of this class or have questions, please contact Rev. Tim at [thirdtimothy98@gmail.com](mailto:thirdtimothy98@gmail.com) or 551-7924. You may also contact the church office at 498-2103. If you are interested but the day and time of the course does not fit your schedule, indicate that as well. If there is sufficient interest, a second section will be considered.

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### **Congregational Care Team Initiative**

The Congregational Care Team is organizing an effort to better connect with members and friends of the congregation during the COVID pandemic. One goal of this ministry is to establish consistent connections with the people and families of the congregation with a priority for those with spiritual or physical needs, experiencing times of loss or who are socially more isolated due to life circumstances. It will take at least a few months to build up this ministry. In the meantime if you would like to be part of our “visiting team” or would like to have someone from the team reach out to you, please contact Rev. Tim, [thirdtimothy98@gmail.com](mailto:thirdtimothy98@gmail.com) or 551-7924. You can also leave a message for the team at the church office, 498-2103.



# Caribou Clock

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Date: September 2020  
Church Office: 498-2103  
**Website:** <http://www.bgmumc.com>

Greetings from the Church Office!

The left side of sanctuary's hardwood floors are now refinished. Repair and movement of the pews back into that section has started and will be completed within the next couple of weeks (see pictures on pages 10 & 11).

We enjoyed several very pleasant Sundays in August and were able to have our Outdoor Worship Services by the Memorial Garden! Please pray this good weather continues! We thank Mary Lou Brown and James Smith who provided messages on the Sundays Rev. Tim was taking vacation time.

Are you receiving the emails that announce the Sunday Worship Services on Zoom or call-in if weather prevents an Outdoor Service? If not, please notify Rev. Tim or Bobbi Pelletier your email address will be added. Sunday services and Thursday Devotions are on Facebook - just access "Bessie Gray Memorial United Methodist Church" to watch & listen to them. If you don't have a computer, printed transcripts are available (see page 12 for a list). Just contact the Church Office to be added to that mailing list.

Please help me meet deadlines by submitting things for the Newsletter when due. It is very difficult to "pull it all together" at the last minute and create a quality product. **For our next Newsletter, all input must be submitted by 10:00am on Wednesday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>!**

Until next month.....

Bobbi Pelletier  
Church Secretary



## August Prayer Joys and Concerns

Prayer Concerns: Debbie & Lu Sharp, Sheila Belyea, Dave & Marcia DeMerchant, Darlene Nelder, Dave Corriveau, Phyllis Sykes, Emily Stuart, Robin Stuart, James Stuart, Bob Cyr, George & Joyce Knorr, Meaghan (Lombard) Cousins, Richard & Susan Clark, Herman Wright (Ruthann Weeks' father), Jerry Dare (Chris Dare's father), Gary & Marilyn Langley, Ralph Ferguson, Gregory Dean Moors, Richard Carde, Danny & Janie Milton, Craig Davis, Sonia Calloway, Mary Green, Dawn Westman, Carmen & Alberto Valderrama (parents of Joyce Knorr's daughter; rushed to hospital in Peru with likely COVID), Ron Albert, Martin Gallant, Joanne Smith, Herman Wright, Barbara Foster

On Family Death: Family of Eloise Penny; Family of Dolly Jandreau; family of Anne Lewis

Other: Prayers of joy for Elsie Doody's son Kevin and his son Wyatt who were in a car accident (live in Las Vegas), but sustained only minor scrapes and bruises; Joys for Warren Dobson's birthday (August 23) and Doris Jeffery's 99<sup>th</sup> birthday on August 29<sup>th</sup>!

PLEASE REMEMBER TO PROVIDE A MAILING ADDRESS FOR PEOPLE OR FAMILIES YOU PUT ON THE PRAYER LIST SO WE CAN SEND THEM A NOTE FROM REV. TIM. WE OFTEN HEAR FROM RECIPIENTS ON HOW TOUCHED THEY ARE THAT WE OFFERED PRAYERS FOR THEM!

## REMINDERS

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<u>DATE</u>	<u>LITURGIST</u>
Sep 6	Del Ramey
Sep 13	Dean Rauch
Sep 20	Sue White
Sep 27	Alden Wilcox

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**Please note that the church building remains officially closed.**

**While we are going through this situation, remember to take care of yourself and stay in contact with your friends and family!**

**If you would like to have someone placed on the prayer list and/or you would like an alternate (non-internet based) way of receiving notes from the sermon, please call the church office. Bobbi has transcribed all the Sunday Worship services and Thursday Devotions since the middle of March and they are available for emailing or mailing. Please see the list of available transcripts on **page 12** of this Newsletter.**

# \* \* September Birthdays & Anniversaries \* \*

Birthdays and Anniversaries are celebrated on the first Sunday during Coffee Fellowship.

Remember your birthday & anniversary by making a special offering!



1	Kristi Bell	17	Anna Jandreau
4	Angie Harbert, Nicole Rainey, David Silsbee	19	Romeo Bouchard, Connor DeMerchant, Del Ramey
5	Gail Hagelstein	21	Christopher Silsbee, Daryla Simon
8	Sonny St. Peter	22	Justin McLauchlan
9	Cherie Goranites, Ben Sharp	23	Joyce Knorr, Robert Mockler, Lisa Wilcox
10	Robert Locke	25	Garrick Alley, Dave Wakana, Dawn Westman
11	Marie Beckum	26	Ian McLauchlan, Kyle Staples
12	Lydia Kieffer-Till	27	Emmett Ross
14	Kim Barnes	29	Bob Norsworthy
16	Peter Campbell, Ruth Ross		



1	Lynne Josselyn & Larry Conrad	8	Carol & Francis Cyr
3	Jennifer & Scott Branscom, Nicole & Ryan Cousins	10	Casey & Corey Felix
5	Sheila & David Belyea	20	Joelene & Mark Boucher

If your name or the name of someone in the Gray Memorial Family does not appear on this list and you would like to add it, please contact the church office, 498-2103.

Corrections are ALWAYS appreciated!!! If you know someone whose last name has changed, please let Bobbi know so she can update the database.

Worship Attendance and General Fund Offerings:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Operating Fund Offering</u>
Aug 2	36	\$2,722.00
Aug 9	35	\$5,012.00
Aug 16	49	\$1,562.00
Aug 23	40	\$1,752.22
Aug 30 (will be reported in next Newsletter)		

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Needed to meet 2020 Budget: \$4,427.15 weekly

**Note: We began our Outdoor Worship Services by the Memorial Garden on Sunday, August 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

“Growing in Faith” Capital Campaign Account (previously known as “Capital Account Seed Money”):

As we continue to receive the Growing in Faith (GIF) donations, we will report the balance in the account each month. As of August 23<sup>rd</sup>, the balance in the account is \$88,852.46 (of that amount, the “furnace replacement donations” total \$32,828.00. All donations made for the “Furnace Replacement” will be held in this account until needed.) .

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Photo Directory Changes (September 2020 Newsletter changes):

No changes reported this month.

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*Would you like to receive the weekly email newsletter summarizing events at worship and upcoming events? Also, special bulletins, notices of changes of events, etc.? Send an email to the church office or call 498-2103 so we can add you to the email list!*

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**You can make a contribution to our church through a mobile app!**

To get started, download GivePlus Church for free from the App Store or Google Play. Simply search for “GivePlus Church” to quickly find and download the app today. Then, you can easily make donations directly from your smartphone using your debit/credit card or checking/savings account.

You can also choose to donate as a guest or set up an account that allows you to securely and conveniently schedule recurring donations and manage and review your giving history.

We hope you enjoy this new way to contribute to our ministry! Thanks for your support!

Please note that you can make arrangements to have your tithes and offerings withdrawn from your account on a regular basis, thus ensuring your donations are received even when/if you are unable to attend church. Please contact Tamara Wilcox for additional information.

# Mission Project

**SCHOOL SUPPLIES, CLOTHING (SOCKS, UNDERWEAR, ETC.) AND HYGIENE ITEMS FOR LOCAL SCHOOL CHILDREN.**

**DUE TO THE COVID-19 SITUATION, THE WORSHIP COMMITTEE WILL SUSPEND THIS PROJECT UNTIL IT BECOMES SAFER TO ACCEPT DONATIONS.**



**The Worship Committee will continue to sponsor Outdoor Worship Services by our church's Memorial Garden until the weather turns too cold. So far, we have had between 35 and 50 people each Sunday! Rev. Tim and lay speakers will conduct these services from the Garden and the congregation is invited to bring their own chair and sit around the garden! If it's sunny, bring an umbrella and sunscreen as there will not be a canopy! We also suggest you hydrate well before you come! For Communion Sundays, we have purchased pre-packaged single-serve communion elements to use. We ask that you bring a facemask or face covering, but if you do not have one, we will have disposable masks for you to use. Ushers and volunteers will guide you to ensure recommended social distancing is observed as you place your chair. The parking lot north of the parsonage (by the garden) is not available for parking. Please park in the lot by the church, on the street or at the Dollar Store. We hope to see many of you on these upcoming Sundays! A decision to cancel based on projected inclement weather will be made early each Friday morning, so please read your email or check the church's Facebook page. In these cases, we will revert to our Zoom/Facebook Live format.**

**Rev. Tim provided the following list of Scripture and Worship Themes for the month of September:**

<u>Date/Special Sunday</u>	<u>Story/Scripture(s)</u>	<u>Theme</u>
September 6	Matthew 20	God's Sense of Fairness & Justice
September 13	<i>(couple of healing stories)</i>	When Jesus Heals
September 20	Acts 2:37-47 & Epistle	Building Healthy Christian Community
September 27	Romans 8:31-39; Song of Solomon	Nothing Can Separate Us from God

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### **Worship & Ministry Opportunities During the COVID-19 Pandemic**

Weekly Devotion – posted Thursdays on GMUMC's Facebook page and on YouTube

Sunday Worship – posted Sunday mornings on Facebook page and on YouTube; some upcoming Worship may utilize Facebook live or Zoom; more details to be announced

Bible Study – if you are interested in an online Bible Study, contact Rev. Tim

Phone Tree – please reach out to people in the congregation, family, friends and community members; if you are comfortable, there are persons confined to their homes for health reasons that may need deliveries of food, medicine and other necessities

Caribou Ecumenical Food Pantry – The CEFP is implementing a plan we hope will allow the pantry to keep open on a no or limited contact basis for the duration of this crisis as food insecurity appears to be growing in our area. If you can offer yourself for packing boxes or assisting at the pantry in some fashion, contact Ruthann Weeks.

Bobbi Pelletier is available by phone at home and email for church business during her usual hours, M-F from 9-noon, but is more often working from home. The Gray Memorial building remains closed until further notice. We are asking that people **NOT** come to the church in-person unless you have an essential item to be picked up or dropped off that can't be handled in any other way. Tithes and offerings should be contributed using one of the methods outlined on below. This procedure is meant to protect the health of our remaining staff who use the building and the people with whom they live or with whom they have contact. Thank you for your understanding. Rev. Tim is available for appointments by phone and video conference. Mondays continue to be his usual day off. Contact him by phone or email to arrange a time.

**\*\* Worship services in the church building and in-person events remain suspended until further notice. As of this writing, these suspensions will at a minimum continue through early September (or later if we are able to continue having Sunday Worship Services by our Memorial Garden).** We urge people to heed the recommendations and directives of local, state and CDC officials due to the large numbers of people at elevated and high risk during this COVID-19 outbreak. The church, that is the people of God, is not closed. Even though we will be conducting ministries in ways that are different than what is familiar, it is no less ministry.

Our District Office notified us that our Annual Church Conference is coming up, date TBD. In the meantime, Committee/group chairs and personnel were notified that all reports are due to the Church Office by August 31<sup>st</sup>!





## Give Us a Hand

Giving continues to be important for our ministries that are continuing and adapting. Your ongoing tithes and offerings will make it both possible to maintain ministries during this time of international pandemic and to position us for ministry needs when the crisis is over.

There are currently four ways to make your contributions to GMUMC:

- Send checks by mail to Gray Memorial United Methodist Church, PO Box 69, Caribou, ME 04736. Include your offering envelope if you have one.
- By Phone through VANCO, a third party company providing financial and donation services. Call 800-675-7430 to make a gift to Gray Memorial United Methodist Church in Caribou, Maine.
- By EFT (Electronic Funds Transfer) via VANCO--several people have already chosen this method for recurring gifts. If you are interested in this method, please contact Tamara Wilcox, 492-0371, to set up an EFT.
- By GivePlus, a mobile application, also offered by VANCO. You can download GivePlus from the Apple App Store or from Google Play. This method supports both recurring and one-time gifts.

All VANCO methods include a nominal service fee for the church. Many people choose the options provided by VANCO for convenience and, for the electronic options, to ensure their gifts are always regularly given. Because of regular giving, research shows churches receive more funds overall using these methods. Contact Tamara Wilcox for more information on giving options.

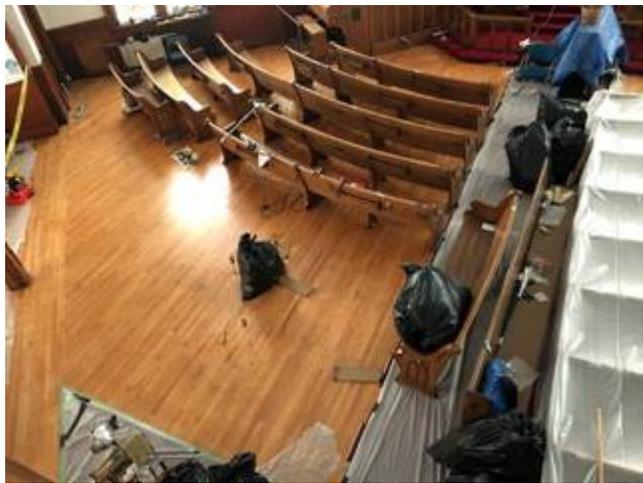
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Here are some pictures that Rev. Tim took during our Outdoor Worship Service on Sunday, August 16<sup>th</sup> –





Here are some pictures that Rev. Tim took that show the sanctuary work progress -





## TRANSCRIPTS AVAILABLE!!!

If you missed a Worship Service or a Thursday Devotion, you can view them on Facebook. If you would prefer a hardcopy of the transcription through email or mail, just let Bobbi know by calling the church office (498-2103) and leave a message. The following transcriptions are available:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Title</u>
March 21, 2020	Our Path Forward with COVID-19
March 22, 2020	Biblical Wisdom – Lessons from Proverbs
March 26, 2020	Thursday Devotion
March 29, 2020	Biblical Wisdom – Lessons from Psalms
April 2, 2020	Thursday Devotion
April 5, 2020	Palm Sunday
April 9, 2020	Maundy Thursday
April 10, 2020	Good Friday Service
April 12, 2020	Easter Sunrise Service
April 12, 2020	Easter Service
April 16, 2020	Thursday Devotion
April 19, 2020	Biblical Wisdom – Lessons from the 10 Plagues
April 23, 2020	Thursday Devotion
April 26, 2020	The Exodus: God’s Initiative to Move Forward
April 30, 2020	Thursday Devotion
May 3, 2020	Lessons from a Wandering People
May 7, 2020	Thursday Devotion
May 10, 2020	Turning from God
May 14, 2020	Thursday Devotion
May 17, 2020	The Appeal of and Challenge in Following God
May 21, 2020	Thursday Devotion
May 24, 2020	Taking Seriously the Law in the Covenant
May 28, 2020	Thursday Devotion
May 31, 2020	Pentecost Sunday
June 4, 2020	Thursday Devotion
June 7, 2020	Jesus: Bread of Life
June 11, 2020	Thursday Devotion
June 14, 2020	The Source of Our Strength
June 18, 2020	Thursday Devotion
June 21, 2020	Ruth: Model of Loyalty, Faithfulness and Loving Kindness
June 25, 2020	Thursday Devotion
June 28, 2020	The Stories of Samuel and David & Goliath: Paying Attention to God
July 2, 2020	Thursday Devotion
July 5, 2020	Truth to Power with Courage and Integrity
July 9, 2020	Thursday Devotion
July 12, 2020	Trials and Tribulations
July 16, 2020	Thursday Devotions
July 19, 2020	You Are Called by Name
July 23, 2020	Thursday Devotions
July 26, 2020	Church in Exile
July 30, 2020	Thursday Devotions
August 2, 2020	Hope in the Valley of Dry Bones
August 6, 2020	Thursday Devotions
August 9, 2020	NO TRANSCRIPT – UNABLE TO RECORD SERVICE
August 13, 2020	Thursday Devotions
August 16, 2020	Worship in the Garden

## LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENING IN SEPTEMBER 2020!!!

THE CHURCH BUILDING IS CLOSED UNTIL AT LEAST THE EARLY PART OF SEPTEMBER, BUT THIS CALENDAR SHOWS EVENTS THAT ARE STILL OCCURRING WHILE THE BUILDING IS CLOSED!

Tuesday	01	6pm-9pm	Companions in Christ Closing Retreat
Wednesday	02	8am-4pm	Companions in Christ Closing Retreat at Debbie Nichol's Camp
		6:30pm	Congregational Care Team Meeting (Zoom)
Thursday	03	9:00am	Aroostook Cluster Meeting (Zoom)
Friday	04	9:30am	Worship Committee Meeting (Zoom)
Sunday	06	10:00am	Sunday Worship Service in the Memorial Garden; if it rains, the service will be held on Zoom and then posted to FB/YouTube
Monday	07	<u>FEDERAL HOLIDAY - LABOR DAY - CHURCH OFFICE IS CLOSED</u>	
Thursday	10	6:30pm	SPRC Meeting (Zoom)
Sunday	13	10:00am	Sunday Worship Service in the Memorial Garden; if it rains, the service will be held on Zoom and then posted to FB/YouTube
Tuesday	15	6:00pm	Trustees Meeting (Zoom)
Thursday	17	10:00am	Thursday Devotion On-line (Facebook & YouTube)
		6:00pm	Church Council Meeting (Zoom)
Sunday	20	10:00am	Sunday Worship Service in the Memorial Garden; if it rains, the service will be held on Zoom and then posted to FB/YouTube
Thursday	24	10:00am	Thursday Devotion On-line (Facebook & YouTube)
Sunday	27	10:00am	Sunday Worship Service in the Memorial Garden; if it rains, the service will be held on Zoom and then posted to FB/YouTube

Note: Instructions to join in through Zoom for all Services and meetings will be sent out in advance.