



I have fond memories of Christmases during my childhood. On Christmas Eve we would attend Christmas Eve worship with candlelight. Christmas morning was with my mom, dad, sister and brother. We would discover what Santa, mom and dad had brought us. The rest of the morning was spent using / assembling / reading / trying on / playing with the gifts we had been given. Approximately every other year we would go to grandma's house (my dad's mom) for dinner – at least that is what we called the meal in Iowa. There would be a time of receiving grandma's gifts and often playing games outside or sledding with cousins. The other years were at one of my aunt and uncle's houses. Due to work schedules, this was often on the Sunday nearest Christmas. Christmas evening was at grandma and grandpa's house (mom's parents). Following supper and a round of homemade Christmas delights, grandpa would lead us in a retelling of the Christmas story with a few carols. After opening grandma and grandpa's presents, including an ornament for each of us, we would play games with our cousins – one group of whom this was often the only time in the year we saw them – until mom and dad would have to pry us away because it was well past bed time.

After Tamara and I married, our families lived too far apart to be with both on Christmas, so we alternated between them for a few years. When we moved to Maine, we had to change out of necessity. A pastor couldn't miss being with a congregation on Christmas Eve. Travel, then, to either of our families for Christmas Day wasn't a particularly good option. And, the cost of air travel during a busy travel season has usually been beyond our reach. Plus, there wasn't much time before school was back in session. So, we made our own traditions. We exchange gifts in the morning and enjoy using them for the remaining hours of the day. We have phone calls with family throughout the day. Christmas dinner featuring chicken curry and sparkling apple cider caps off the day. Though I still miss seeing other family during the holidays, our current traditions are also meaningful and special.

When you read this it will be between Thanksgiving and Christmas. Many of you are lamenting the changes that COVID-19 has brought to favorite traditions during the holiday season. Some of you are wondering about the safety of the traditions you or other people are still planning. Others of you aren't seeing much different in your traditions but can see a lot of changes in plans among friends, family and society overall. Many of us are experiencing “COVID fatigue” while wishing that we didn't have to live under restrictions during a pandemic that continues to worsen.....if only we could awaken from our dream and return to a “normal” life.

I understand a feeling of missing an aspect of life that has meaning that you would like to experience again. I understand that it is frequently easier to miss what we have known in the past more than it is to embrace the relative unknown of living a day or season differently, whether by choice or by circumstance. I know from my experience about the power of traditions whether in a family, in our community or church or across our country. Yet, our Christian faith reminds us of figures like Moses who in leading the people out of Egypt changed virtually everything that the people had known about living. Jesus regularly broke with understood tradition in the service of people. Jesus' death and resurrection inaugurated the development of a new set of traditions that have actually continued to evolve to the present day. We are the baptized people of God. As such, we have taken off the old and put on the new. The scriptures remind us that, “Behold, I make all things new.” (Revelation 21:5) We tend to focus on ministry as bringing comfort and support in a time of need to the people of the church. Ministry does include these qualities. However, it is more than this. Making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world by definition involves transformation. Interacting with Jesus and the Holy Spirit will leave its mark on us and the world. If we are open to their work in our lives, we cannot help but be changed. As an angel of God might say, we have no reason to fear God being active in us or our world. Nor do we have to be afraid of varying from our usual traditions or even beginning some new traditions. We are being asked to sacrifice some of our usual activity for the health and safety of our society and the ability of our health care and other front line workers to function. Given how much Jesus sacrificed for us, we know we can sacrifice our usual traditions for the benefit of others and, ultimately, for our own benefit. If our traditions do not ultimately point to God, then they are more likely to be blocking a faithful response to God.

I long ago had to change my approach to Thanksgiving and Christmas. For all the changes that 2020 has brought to my life, it feels surprising that for me my family's holiday celebrations in Caribou over the next 6 weeks will be mostly what they have been for years. Many of you ARE looking at significant changes to your family traditions this year. Don't be afraid to make changes for the benefit of others, yourself, your country and the entire world. I am confident God won't love you less nor will Jesus think less of you. And, there will be holy—perhaps even unexpected—treasures in your new experiences.

May the grace of the Prince of Peace be with you during Advent, Christmas and all year long!  
Rev. Tim



# Caribou Clock

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**E-mail:** [graymemorial@outlook.com](mailto:graymemorial@outlook.com)

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

Greetings from the Church Office!

We continue to provide on-line Worship Services through Facebook Live and are ordering new equipment to enhance our capabilities. Until the various leadership groups (Worship Committee, Church Council and Re-entry Task Group) feel it is safe to offer in-person services, continuing with on-line services remains the safest option.

If you don't have internet access, printed transcripts of each Sunday Worship, Thursday Devotions and the weekly email Newsletter are available. Just contact the Church Office to be added to that mailing list.

Even though the church building remains closed for services and meetings, you may visit the church any Monday morning from 9am to noon just to take a tour to see all the updates that have occurred recently.

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, December 23rd!**

Until next month.....

Bobbi Pelletier  
Church Secretary



## November 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, Gary & Marilyn Langley, Martin Gallant, Doris Jeffery, Ralph Ferguson, Ken Doody, Pat Dobson, Cathy Easterly, Ron Albert, Maddie Swanberg

On Family Death: Family of Jerry Pelletier; family of Darlene Nelder; family of Ruth Casteel (Rev. Tim's grandmother)

Other: Casey & Corey Felix - safe travels as they move to Florida; prayers for Tracey & Peggy Nichols as they also travel to Florida with Casey & Corey)

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!

### *Correspondence Received:*

*Dear Friends - Thank you so very, very much for all the prayers, phone calls, and cards you have sent to us at this most difficult time of loss for our family. The loss of my sister's son, Jason, and husband, Jerry in just four weeks has been devastating for all of us. Please know that your expressions of sympathy and concern are deeply appreciated and have meant so much to us. Please keep my sister Kathy and her son Scott in your prayers. They have a difficult journey of acceptance and healing ahead of them. We are so very thankful for our wonderful church family and pray God's blessings to be upon you all. Love, Bruce & Diane Fitzpatrick*

## REMINDERS

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<u>DATE</u>	<u>LITURGIST</u>
Dec 6	Bobbi Pelletier
Dec 13	Del Ramey
Dec 20	Dean Rauch
Dec 24	Sue White (Christmas Eve)
Dec 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 contact the church office if you are interested in receiving any of the earlier transcripts and get placed on the mailing list!**

# \* \* December Birthdays & Anniversaries \* \*

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

Remember your birthday & anniversary by making a special offering!



1	Mike Ayers, Carson Doody	16	Leland Frost
5	Victoria Wakana	18	Donald Cole
7	Bonnie Ward, Jeffrey Alden, Janet Chandler, Dave Doody, Daniel Swain	20	Hazel Barnum
10	Pamela Danforth, Paula Richards	23	Diane Fitzpatrick, Alison Kieffer, Meghan Scott, Katherine Scott
11	Elsie Doody, George Knorr	24	Dylan LaForge, Carol Norsworthy
12	Leslie Anderson, Steven Scott	27	Dan DaCosta
14	Libby Collier, Connie Ennis, Claire Hodgkins	28	Nick Pelletier
15	Ryan Fitzpatrick, Dawn Frost, Zelma Merritt	29	Ken Albert, Jody Smith
		30	Kathleen Forbes



1	Pat & Warren Dobson	7	Sally & Richard Carde
3	Penny & Ivan Shaw	24	Jeanette & Ken Peters
	26		Ruthann & John Weeks

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>
Nov 1	On-line Service (FB Live)	\$2,079.72
Nov 8	On-line Service (FB Live)	\$6,615.00
Nov 15	On-line Service (FB Live)	\$ 914.72
Nov 22	On-line Service (FB Live)	\$1,525.00
Nov 29	On-line Service (FB Live)	will report in next Newsletter

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

“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 November 22nd, the balance in the account is \$93,235.62 (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.) . In November, a payment to SW Collins for \$106.55 and a payment to P&E Distributors for \$11.20 was processed for charges related to the new bathroom, which was covered by a special donation.

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Photo Directory Changes (December 2020 Newsletter changes):

Felix, Corey & Casey: new address - 2102 Portofino Way Champions Gate, FL 33896

Nelder, Darlene: deceased (November 2, 2020)

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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.



**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 IS SAFE TO ACCEPT DONATIONS.**

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

<u>Date/Special Sunday</u>	<u>Story/Scripture(s)</u>	<u>Theme</u>
December 6, Advent 2	Revelation	Ready for Christ's Coming Again
December 13, Advent 3	Elizabeth & Mary	Do Not Fear
December 20, Advent 4	John the Baptist	Repentance
December 24, Christmas Eve	Luke 2:1-10	
December 27	John 1:1-14	The Word Made Flesh/Walking with the Poor

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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 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 sanctuary with Rev. Tim along with a liturgist, soloist and tech personnel began on Sunday, October 18<sup>th</sup>. 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.**





## 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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The Caribou Ecumenical Food Pantry is in need of the following items: baked beans or dry beans, any canned meat, spaghetti, stuffing and cranberry sauce (would be great with the holidays coming). Donations may be brought to the church on Monday mornings from 9am to noon. Thank you!



Gray Memorial UMC has an account at the Bennett Drive Redemption Center. When you bring your bottles/cans to the center, you may designate the proceeds to go the church's account! If you are not comfortable bringing them yourselves, contact the Church Office and we'll make arrangements to pick them up!





The Missions & Evangelism Committee will sponsor the “Angel Tree” again this year! We will get a list of students with gender & age and place angel ornaments on the tree. If you wish to sponsor a child, please call the church office and speak with Bobbi about selecting an ornament. We will also have ornaments for cash donations as well. All presents must be brought to the church by Wednesday, December 16<sup>th</sup>!

The Church will sell Christmas Trees this year!  
Schedule is as follows:

Saturdays (Nov 28, Dec 5, 12, 19): 9:00am – 4:00pm  
Sundays (Nov 29, Dec 6, 13, 20): 9:00am - 4:00pm  
Wednesdays (Dec 2, 9, 16) 3:00pm – 6:00pm  
Thursdays (Dec 3, 10, 17) 3:00pm – 6:00pm  
Fridays (Dec 4, 11, 18) 3:00pm - 6:00pm

We are offering weekday hours for the first time this year!  
Plan to come and support our church!



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## TREE OF LIGHTS ORDER FORM

The Church is sponsoring a “Tree of Lights” that will have approximately 200 white lights and be on display outside the church.

You may “purchase” a light for \$5 and as the lights are “sold”, the lights will be changed to red! Our hope is that all the lights will be “sold” by Sunday, Dec 20th.

Please complete the form below and proceeds will go towards our operating budget. Payment to the church is due by Sunday, Dec 20th.

Please make checks payable to Gray Memorial UMC and indicate “Tree of Lights” in the memo line.

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Number of lights: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$5.00 each Total \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_



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## **FLOWERS FOR CHRISTMAS SEASON**

Again this year, the Worship Committee is offering people the opportunity to purchase their own plants/flowers and bring them to the church for display during the Christmas Season.

Flowers are to be brought in or delivered from 9am – 12pm on **Friday, December 18<sup>th</sup>** or at **1:00pm on Saturday, December 19<sup>th</sup>**, when Worship Committee members are here to arrange them for the December 20<sup>th</sup> Service the next day. If the following information is provided by **Wednesday, December 16<sup>th</sup>**, it will be announced during the December 20<sup>th</sup> and December 24<sup>th</sup> services:

IN MEMORY OF: \_\_\_\_\_

IN HONOR OF: \_\_\_\_\_

BY: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM AND RETURN TO THE CHURCH OFFICE BY WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16<sup>th</sup>!**

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### CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES 11-19-20

**ATTENDEES:** Roy Alden (Chair), Claire Hodgkins, Rev. Tim Wilcox, Tamara Wilcox, Mary Lou Brown, Alaina Pethick, Neal Genz, Bobbi Pelletier, Debbie Barnes, Melonie Carlson, Kathleen Forbes, and Judson Drake

Roy Alden brought the meeting to order at 6:33 PM on Zoom from his home and Rev. Tim said a brief Thanksgiving prayer. The members of the Finance Committee went over the October reports.

Tamara Reported on EOM: The total offering for the Operating Budget for October was \$10,102.44. Reimbursements totaled \$37.00. Special funds for church use amounted to \$1,568.39 for grand total of \$11,707.83. Tamara Wilcox reported that there was a substantially less loose change offerings YTD and October donations were the least received in any 2020 month. In fact, all Tithes and Offerings were down although the pledges are constant and up to date.

Bobbi Pelletier reported the checkbook figures for October as follows:

Beginning Balance	\$7,667.40	
2020 Operating Income	10,102.44	
Interest	2.56	
Less EFT fee	(29.46)	
Less Expenses	(13,123.46)	
Ending Balance	4,619.48	Note: Ending balance without PPP monies – (\$12,980.52)

The Beginning Balance of special funds was \$20,086.20. The Ending balance is \$19,854.57.

The current balance for the \$25,000.00 Memorial Garden investment was \$29,080.67 on October 30.

The Capital Account Seed Money had a previous balance of \$87,642.61. There were deposits amounting to \$1,467.23 and \$43.03 in expenditures. The Ending Balance on Oct. 30 was \$89,066.81 of which \$32,828.00 is ear-marked for the Furnace Fund.

The Finance Committee realistically stated that they doubted there would be a yearend bump in donations. Bobbi reported there was still \$4,600.00 in PPP money, but it will most likely be gone by the end of the year. If it were not for the PPP money we would be nearly \$13,000.00 in arrears for operating expenses. At the end of October, we are now \$22,826.25 behind in Mission Shares. Bobbi reported all proceeds from fund raisers are being held in reserve but will be used by the end of the year to offset operating expenses.

Expenditures for October:

The various Program expenses were \$184.50. Trustee expenses were \$3,830.63 to cover utilities, maintenance and technology. SPRC expenses were \$8,294.60. NEC expenses paid was \$823.73, bringing the total expenses to \$13,123.44.

The Current October Budget numbers are as follows:

Target was \$191,843.13: Tithes & Offerings YTD were \$132,489.98: Total Expenses YTD were \$168,121.76: Unpaid Bills amounted to \$22,826.25, all Mission Shares.

The average attendance for October was 67, YTD = 73. (March - October: Attendance is aggregate of in-person and virtual view counts.)

Rev. Tim stated that he had been working with the Foundation on our situation and would be meeting with a representative soon. The District Superintendent is aware that many of the churches are struggling to pay 100% of their Mission Shares. The Mission Share fund that must be paid is that which concerns the Ministerial Support – we will need to pay \$15,136.75 as soon as we can do so.

Status of the 2021 Stewardship Letter, brochure and pledge card – the material was mailed out on Wednesday, November 18<sup>th</sup> and we are asked to return the pledge cards by November 30<sup>th</sup>.

We will be selling Christmas trees this year – a letter from Roy Alden was emailed to local church members and others providing the sale dates and times and asking for volunteers. Roy will create the master volunteer list as people contact him. We will post this announcement on our Facebook page. All proceeds will go towards the church's operating budget. Roy Alden has ordered 200 trees from the Bouchard farm in Van Buran and Del will also donate about 40 or 50 trees. We need volunteers to help sell Christmas trees. The trees will sell from \$30 and up. We need everyone to help by buying a tree or volunteering time as possible.

Rev. Tim informed everyone that new equipment (camera, controller, etc.) will be purchased soon so we can improve the quality of service presentation and recording. The Trustees will pay up front but are hoping the Memorials Committee will okay payment when a new Chairman has been installed.

The next order of business was a presentation of the 2021 proposed budget for approval. The Budget for 2021 was presented by Melonie Carlson. It is down from this year as almost all Committees cut wherever possible. Programs Budget proposal for 2021 have come in at \$8,750 compared with 2020 at \$9,200. Trustee 2021 Budget proposal for 2021 is \$54,770.00 which is down from the 2020 Budget of \$57,460. SPRC proposed 2021 budget is \$104,408.00 compared to \$123,232.00 in 2020. The 2021 Mission Shares Budget is \$29,634.00, which is \$801.00 less than 2020. In 2020, we have only paid \$2,536.25, so we are behind by \$22,826.25 at the end of October. The 2021 Pastor Pension Benefit is \$9,737.50, which is \$147.25 less than in 2020 (Note - this Pastor Pension Benefit budget line will get moved under SPRC in future expense reports). The proposed 2021 Budget is \$207,299.50, a 10 % decrease from 2020 budget of \$230,211.75. After some discussion the members brought the Budget for 2021 to a vote. Mary Lou Brown made a motion and Kathleen Forbes seconded. The proposed budget was passed unanimously.

It was mentioned that we should do the "Tree of Lights" again this year, so Bobbi will get that in motion and provide the sign-up slips to everyone in the upcoming Newsletter.

Rev. Tim announced that we currently have a vacancy on the Memorial Committee. We have someone in mind to fill that position, but not definite yet. He asked that the Church Council approve an additional interim member to this committee in order to take care of some much needed actions. This proposal was approved.

Rev. Tim announced that the Aroostook Cluster churches nominated individuals for their Discipleship Award and our nomination is Margaret Cyr. These awards will be announced during the Cluster Thanksgiving Service.

Next Church Council Meeting is Thursday, December 17<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm.

There being no other business the meeting adjourned at 7:31 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Claire Hodgkins, Secretary.

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Reports received prior to the Church Council Meeting:

CLUSTER:

Attendees at November 5<sup>th</sup> meeting: Tim Wilcox, Victor Han, Paula Lilley, Cheryl Stratton and Sue Brown.

**Secretary's Report**

The minutes of the October 1<sup>st</sup> meeting were accepted as presented. Motion to approve by Cheryl and seconded by Paula. Motion carried.

**Treasurer's Report**

Paula reported no activity on the checkbook and the current balance is unchanged at \$523.05. Motion to approve by Tim and seconded by Victor. Motion carried.

**Celebrating Families**

No report.

**Cluster Thanksgiving Service**

Tim and Victor will meet again to continue planning for this service. They have asked for discipleship names, organizing around the theme of Thankfulness, and photos from each church. Discussion was held around an offering and recipient of this year's Cluster offering. St. Apollonia Dental Health Clinic was agreed upon by all. It was decided

that the service will be pre-recorded in order to make it accessible to as many persons as possible. Cluster members may be tapped to help with specific portions of the service. Discipleship Recognition will be a part of this service.

### **Pulpit Exchange**

We discussed possible virtual/in-person exchange on Christian Unity Sunday – January 24, 2020.

### **2020 Discipleship Recognition**

If you have not turned in a name for this year, please do so as soon as possible.

### **Cluster Mission Project – St. Apollonia Festival of Trees**

The festival has been canceled. Our Thanksgiving offering will be given to St. Apollonia.

### **Confirmation Class**

On Hold.

### **Coronavirus**

We discussed again how each of our churches is handling in-person and virtual worship. Those of us doing both in-person and live streaming have questions around when to suspend in-person worship. When school is “red”...or when someone in our congregation tests positive? More questions than answers....

### **New Business** – None at this time

### **Joys and Concerns**

We shared our joys and concerns together. Sue led us in prayer.

### **Church Activities:**

November 7<sup>th</sup> - Houlton UMC Bazaar 10am – 2pm, Take-out lunch 11am to 1pm.

### **Joys and Concerns**

We shared our joys and concerns together. Sue led us in prayer.

### **Church Activities:**

November 7<sup>th</sup> - Houlton UMC Bazaar 10am – 2pm, Take-out lunch 11am to 1pm.

### **SPRC:**

Currently there are 5 vacancies and 4 people on staff. There were 9 positions. We have lost our organist, our choir director, child care person, and Michele Sterner. We decided not to fund the organist and choir director’s positions in the 2021 Budget, as in the time of COVID-19 they are not needed.

### **TRUSTEES:**

**Secretary's reports:** The reports (October 20 and 27) were read silently. Judson asked that the figure on the trustee section of the budget - “snow removal/mowing” - of the October 27 special meeting secretary's report be amended to \$4,000 instead of \$5,000. Judson will plow the upper parking lot if needed. With church not in session, there is no need to plow the whole lot regularly. Louis voted to change the figure and accept the reports, Richard seconded. Passed.

**Treasurer's report:** Judi is still waiting for information on the scholarship recipients. Rev. Tim explained circumstances. As of November 3<sup>rd</sup> there are now two signatures on all of our accounts at Aroostook Savings & Loan. The balance in

the trustee checking account as of November 14, 2020, is \$20,817.23. Louis made a motion to accept the report, Del seconded. Passed.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Budget. The trustees' budget suggestions have been passed in to the Finance Committee.

Furnaces. The cleanings to both the church and parsonage furnaces have been done. There is a problem with the hybrid hot water heater in the parsonage. A plumber is needed and Dead River does not have a plumber on staff. There was some discussion on the future of the heating system in the church. The furnace is 25 – 30 years old with some good updates in the last 10 years. Judson's plan, in case of an emergency during the winter months, and to avoid burst pipes, is to put four 2<sup>nd</sup> generation (newer models) heat pumps in the church. This could be done within twelve hours.

Posts. The Bollard posts are in, outside the columns of the church overhang. They are 7' in the ground. These are to protect the columns from being damaged by snowplows or other errant vehicles. They can also be used as a hitching post for visiting Amish. Suggestion by Rev. Tim that they be painted red to match the doors. This project cost \$488.19.

The Cares Act Loan. This loan sponsored by the federal government and backed by Aroostook Savings and Loan has been forgiven.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

CM Sensor. These sensors have been put in areas in the church of potential low temperatures. They are connected to our insurance company. Judson is connected on his smart phone. This project is free to the church and should result in a \$100 rebate on the insurance.

Church Office Repairs. A ceiling will be installed in the church business office with rock wool insulation and fire-rated sheet rock. A portable electric heater is now being used during the winter. There is a heater already in the room, and it should be able to keep the room warm after the renovation.

Video Equipment. The Memorial Committee has offered to pay for new equipment for our services to be sent out via Facebook or YouTube to the congregation. There is a transition in memorial chairmanship right now. The trustees will pay up to \$2,000 front money for new equipment to be purchased as soon as possible. This money will be paid back by the Memorial Committee. Motion made by Louis, seconded by Richard. Passed.

Miscellaneous. There was more discussion and concern about the future of the church. Weekly offerings are not paying all the bills. The Conference holds the title to the church. One of the bills that the church does not have to pay is the professional labor on the projects already completed which amounts to over \$87,000 and projects yet to be undertaken.

## **WORSHIP COMMITTEE:**

Bobbi went through some of the items covered in previous meeting:

Options for continuing worship services are (as reported in Church Council Minutes in November Newsletter) ...

[Note-we have received mixed reviews of moving to the 2<sup>nd</sup> option; some would prefer to continue as we are doing, others do want to come back to Worship in the building]:

1. Rev. Tim presently in the sanctuary with liturgist and tech personnel only; service is available on Facebook Live (We discussed the problems with Zoom call-in, as it was determined to not be good quality). Rev. Tim said they need to do a diagnostic on the church router to see if that might help. Note – this option to provide audio Zoom was suspended

2. Rev. Tim streamed from remote location; up to 50 people could attend in the church; this version is dependent on purchasing appropriate A/V equipment

3. Rev. Tim and congregation together in the church; Rev. Tim would either: use a mask (if that is a safe option for him) and all Re-entry protocols would be followed; OR construction of special “box” for Rev. Tim. As of this meeting, the Trustees are not willing to fund the construction of the special “box”.

The October 31<sup>st</sup> wedding did not happen at Gray Memorial. Couple decided on different date and venue.

November 1<sup>st</sup> - We recognized all the saints we’ve lost in the past year. Rev. Tim and Kathie Forbes did a nice job!

Putting the organ to “sleep” – Andover Organ Company could not come, so Judson will safeguard the organ. Roy Alden had contacted Bobbi just prior to our meeting and asked if we’d discuss whether we should go ahead and do Christmas Tree sales this year. Vendor can provide 200 trees at \$19 each and we believe Del will provide 50 trees. The committee agreed we should proceed as the “Fun-raising Committee” did want to do it and all proceeds would go towards the Operating Budget, not the Youth Account as agreed to by the Education Committee. There was some discussion about volunteers – will we have enough? Should we offer hours during the week (mid to late afternoon) when volunteers will be there? Bobbi will call Roy back after the meeting and ask him to proceed and pose the questions about concern for sufficient volunteers and additional during-the-week hours.

Advent begins on Sunday, November 29<sup>th</sup>. Bobbi would like to decorate the sanctuary on Saturday, November 28<sup>th</sup> at 1pm. Volunteers are needed! We will also put up the “Angel Tree” in the library and Bobbi will contact the school POC to see if they wish us to solicit for gifts.

Thanksgiving Cluster Service – Sunday, November 22<sup>nd</sup> at 4pm. This will be a virtual service. Rev. Tim and Rev. Victor Han will coordinate on the service; Rev. Tim said they are looking for pictures of the church buildings and various ministries to include in the service (2-3 minute piece in gratitude), music, readings, etc. Most of the various service pieces will be pre-recorded. Beth suggested that our handbell choir do a piece. Rev. Tim will check!

Note from a later discussion between Bobbi & Rev. Tim: Christmas Eve Service – Rev. Tim would like to have an organist/pianist present to play hymns.

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

THIS CALENDAR SHOWS EVENTS THAT ARE STILL OCCURRING WHILE THE BUILDING REMAINS CLOSED TO THE CONGREGATION!

Thursday	03	9:00am	Aroostook Cluster Meeting (Zoom)
		10:00am	Thursday Devotion On-line (Facebook & YouTube)
Friday	04	9:30am	Worship Committee Meeting (Zoom)
Sunday	06	10:00am	Worship from the Sanctuary; Second Sunday of Advent; FB Live
Thursday	10	10:00am	Thursday Devotion On-line (Facebook & YouTube)
		6:30pm	SPRC Meeting (Zoom)
Sunday	13	10:00am	Worship from the Sanctuary; Third Sunday of Advent; FB Live
Tuesday	15	4:00pm	Education Committee Meeting (Zoom)
		7:00pm	Trustee Meeting
Wednesday	16	TBD	Special Evening Devotional Time/Worship (Blue Christmas style)
Thursday	17	6:30pm	Church Council Meeting (Zoom)
Sunday	20	10:00am	Worship from the Sanctuary; Fourth Sunday of Advent; FB Live
Tuesday	22		<u>FIRST DAY OF WINTER</u>
Wednesday	23	10:00am	<u>DEADLINE FOR ALL NEWSLETTER INPUT!!!!</u>
Thursday	24	4:00pm	Christmas Eve Service; FB Live
Friday	25		<u>FEDERAL HOLIDAY - CHRISTMAS DAY - CHURCH OFFICE IS CLOSED</u>
Sunday	27	10:00am	Worship from the Sanctuary; First Sunday after Christmas Day; FB Live

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

