Background Reading: Luke 15:11-32, the story of the Prodigal Son



As the time of Althea's birth approached, I applied to the New England Conference for a paternity leave. Then, as now, not many men were able or in a position to be at home for any extended time when his child was born. I continue to be grateful that maternity and paternity leave time is available to United Methodist Church pastors. Because we don't have family anywhere in the New England region, this time was especially helpful for Tamara and me in

myriad ways as we navigated the challenges of a newborn – both expected and unexpected.

What I hadn't anticipated, was how challenging re-entry to pastoral work would be. One aspect was reengaging in full-time pastoral ministry after being a full time at home father for 7 weeks. Another aspect was doing any work with bleary eyes and an often foggy brain. The most unexpected part, however, was in the congregation and myself becoming reacquainted with each other. Now, it wasn't that I had disappeared completely for 7 weeks. We attended worship throughout the leave time, including for Althea's baptism. We would talk with people as they came to the church and parsonage grounds and would occasionally see people around town. What I hadn't recognized at first, was how much had changed (I will note here that our children were not born in the same place so this process was different in each case). I couldn't simply go back to the way life and ministry was before Althea's birth. Her arrival had forever and irrevocably changed our lives. I was not the same person. Although I was not the first pastor in those congregations to take family leave, they had both happened recently at that point in time. Those experiences had an effect on the congregations involved. In essence we had to become reacquainted with each other. You might do this when you see a friend or family member that you haven't spoken with in months or years. Though you might have those relationships with whom you simply "pick up where you left off," that is not always the case. This is particularly so when considering an organization like a church with many interconnected relationships.

Over the coming weeks, our congregation will begin to worship together in the sanctuary again. It will be tempting to expect that worship will be "the way it used to be".....that we will soon be "back to normal." I want to encourage you instead to become reacquainted with each other as if you are newly meeting people and newly entering the organization. Of course, those of you whom have been at Gray Memorial for a while know most of the people and, of course, you have had many experiences as part of this congregation. I would submit, however, that we are not the same as we were. We have been impacted by the experience of the pandemic. Many of us have reconsidered our priorities. Many have discovered interests or abilities previously unknown or undeveloped. We have witnessed both the strengths of our neighbors and the weaknesses in our society's ability to treat equitably its most vulnerable and disadvantaged citizens. We are likely to look back to 2020-2021 as one of those pivot points in history, as we do with the Great Depression, World War II, the shooting of JFK, and 9-11.

When the "prodigal son" returned to his family after squandering his inheritance, his brother was angry by his father's welcome of and throwing a party for the prodigal. I don't think the prodigal's brother recognized the change that had taken place. The prodigal came back in spite of what he had done. He would have to live with the consequences of his actions. Life wouldn't be what it would have been. But, he was willing to risk reconnecting with his family and to rebuild his life despite what had changed. Like God, the prodigal's father welcomed him as he was. Do not be afraid to reconnect with people, meeting them where they are rather than where they were. We may not be entirely the same, but we have interesting stories and experiences to share. And, all the while, God has been with us on this journey. With that same grace we will be able to navigate this latest bend in the river of life.

Grace and peace, Rev. Tim



Caribou Clock

Publisher - Gray Memorial United Methodist Church 2 Prospect Street, P. O. Box 69 Caribou ME 04736

E-mail: graymemorial@outlook.com

Date: June 2021

Church Office: 498-2103
Website: http://www.bgmumc.com

Greetings from the Church Office!

Our church participated in two fundraising events on May 15th during the Caribou City-Wide Yard Sale: First, a yard sale by the Memorial Garden. Second, we hosted a pulled-pork BBQ by the church from 10am until it was sold-out around noon. Both of these events netted over \$3,000! Thank you to Roy Alden and Judson Drake for these events. Proceeds from both of these events will go towards the church's operating budget.

Our church building is reopening for in-person Worship services on Sunday, May 30th. The building is open while staff members are present. Funeral and Memorial services will resume soon and eventually committee meetings can be held in the church. If you do visit the church, please follow a few simple rules: sign-in on the clipboard that hangs just inside the back door or is in the church office, do not turn on any sanctuary lights using the "old" breaker panels, and if you use the new upstairs bathroom in the Narthex, please close the door when you leave.

I am taking some much needed vacation time from June 7 – 11. After not being able to travel since January 2020, I plan to visit my family in Massachusetts. Even though the church office will not be open that week, I will "catch up" with emails and phone calls when I return to the office on Saturday, June 12^{th} .

Please help me meet deadlines by submitting things for the Newsletter when due. For our next Newsletter, all input must be submitted by 10am on <u>Tuesday</u>, <u>June 22nd!!!!!</u>

Until next month....

Bobbi Pelletier Church Secretary



May Prayer Joys and Concerns

Prayer Concerns: Debbie & Lu Sharp, Sheila Belyea, Dave DeMerchant, Dave Corriveau, Phyllis Sykes, Robin Stuart, James Stuart, Bob & Margaret Cyr, George & Joyce Knorr, Richard & Susan Clark, Gary & Marilyn Langley, Martin Gallant, Ralph Ferguson, Audrey Bubar (Caribou Rehab Center), Alex Hilleman, Pat & Warren Dobson, Tom & Tami Flowers, Dick Carde, Sylvia Akeley, Mary Coffin, Sharon Berz

On Family Death: Family of Mary Willey; Family of Leila Robertson; Family of Loma Cole (Ivan Shaw's sister); Family of Herbert Cleaves (Pastor Ellen Cleaves' brother)

Other: Will Barnum - traveling to Minnesota to fight fires; COVID-19 national death toll of over 600,000 - prayers for all suffering pandemic loss

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!

<u>REMINDERS</u>

<u>DATE</u> Jun 6	<u>LITURGIST</u> Samuela Manages	<u>COUNTER</u> Elsie Doody
Jun 13	Mary Ouellette	Elsie Doody
Jun 20	Bobbi Pelletier	Diane Fitzpatrick
Jun 27	Deb Pringnitz	Diane Fitzpatrick

Usher Coordinator for June: Bill Thomas

Please note that the church building is open for Sunday Worship Services and other services (i.e. funerals or weddings), but committee meetings are on-hold temporarily.

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 2020 until March 2021 for emailing or mailing. Please contact the church office if you are interested in receiving any of the earlier transcripts.

In April 2021, the DVD Ministry began and several people are now receiving DVDs weekly to watch services on their home devices. Contact the church office if you wish to receive a DVD!

* * June Birthdays & Anniversaries * *

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

Remember your birthday & anniversary by making a special offering!



1	Wendy Bossie	18	Kathryn Fletcher, Erin McBreairty
2	Craig Staples	19	Michele Blackstone, Dale Dee
3	Melinda Thibodeau	22	Gwen Ferguson
5	Betty Branscom, Glen Warner	24	Ben Wakana
8	Stephen Bailey, Tom Richardson	25	Michelle Branscom
9	Darrell Adams	26	David Belyea, Sherri DeMerchant
10	Ashleigh Craig, Celena Sharp	27	Amanda Mockler
12	Cameron Doody, Scott Witmer	28	Audrey Bubar, Quinn DeMerchant,
16	Patricia Adams, Jillian Jandreau,		Carole Doody, Caleb Espling
	Danielle Lombard, Christy Van Egmond	29	Charlene Gage, Rebecca Rife, Alden Wilcox
17	Brian Doody		



16	Diane & Phil McDonough	25	Debbie & Bob Jordan
20	Diana & Dean Rauch	26	Kim & Travis Barnes
21	Diane & Bruce Fitzpatrick	27	Peggy & Stephen Bailey, Hope & Scott Walton
23	Mary & Mike Ayers	28	Carole & Steve Doody, Duska & Jeff Franklin
24	Sherri & Ray DeMerchant	29	Kristi & Vince Bell

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 <u>ALWAYS</u> 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>	Operating Fund Offering
May 2	On-line Service (YouTube)	\$2,764.72
May 9	"	\$5,448.00
May 16	"	\$1,339.72
May 23	"	\$1,563.00
May 30	This information will be repor	ted in next Newsletter

Needed to meet 2021 Budget: \$3,986.53 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 May 23rd, the balance in the account is \$104,576.35 (of that amount, the "furnace replacement donations" total \$32,153.05. All remaining donations made for the "Furnace Replacement" will be held in this account until needed.). In May, we paid \$169.85 for sound booth expenses (using residual new bathroom funds).

Photo Directory Changes (June 2021 Newsletter changes):

Conrad, Larry & Lynne Josselyn: Phone number (863-471-6314) is "winter number" and (207) 733-4566 is "summer number".





Over the next few months, we will be updating our membership database in order to produce a new Church Directory. The new directory will be produced by the church office and look similar to the one printed in 2016. The "Membership/Constituent Information" form on the next page should be completed and returned to the church in order to update information (names, mailing address, email address, birth dates, anniversaries, etc.) and ensure the directory and our database is as current as possible!

Membership/Constituent Information Date:

	Head of Household	Spouse	
Title: (Circle one)	Mr. Mrs. Miss. Ms. Dr. Rev. Other	Mr. Mrs. Miss. Ms. Dr. Rev. Other	
Name: (First / Middle or			
Maiden / Last)			
Sex: (Check one)	Male □ Female □	Male □ Female □	
Birthday: (mo/day/yr)	Date:	Date:	
Preferred or Nickname			
Mailing & Street Address			
Address:			
City, State, Zip:			
Alternate Address	From: To:	From: To:	
Address:			
City, State / Zip:			
Home Phone:	() - Unlisted? 🗆	() - Unlisted? 🗆	
Cell Phone:	() - Unlisted? 🗆	() - Unlisted? 🗆	
Work Phone	() - Unlisted? 🗆	() - Unlisted? 🗆	
Email			
Pager #:	() - Unlisted? 🗆	() - Unlisted? 🗆	
Fax #:	() - Unlisted? 🗆	() - Unlisted? 🗆	
Extra Phone:	Unlisted? 🗅	Unlisted? □	
Marital Status:			
Anniversary Date:	Date:	Date:	
(mo/day/yr)			
Baptized (if known):	yes 🗆 no 🗅 Date:	yes 🗆 no 🗅 Date:	

CHILDREN

Name (first, middle, last)	Birth Date	Grade	Baptized
	(mo/day/yr)		(mo/day/yr)
	Date:		yes 🗅 Date:
	Date:		yes 🗅 Date:
	Date:		yes 🗅 Date:
	Date:		yes 🗅 Date:
	Date:		yes 🗅 Date:
	Date:		yes 🗅 Date:

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 quest 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.

Worship & Ministry Opportunities During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Sunday Worship – as of May 30th, we will begin having in-person services in the sanctuary. The service will also be available Sunday mornings on YouTube (live) and then on our Facebook page

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 implemented 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.

Bobbi Pelletier is available by phone at the church office, at home and email for church business during her usual hours, Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9-noon, but is more often working from home. Tithes and offerings can be brought with you on Sundays and you can still contribute using one of the methods outlined below. 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.

** In-person Worship services in the church sanctuary will begin on Sunday, May 30th. For the near-term, we urge people to reserve their seat(s) to ease their entry into the sanctuary. Once we determine it is safe to lift requirements for social distancing and wearing masks, we ask everyone to comply with these recommendations.

Reminder from Rev. Tim -

Rev. Tim's "office hours": He is primarily available for phone and online appointments Tuesday - Sunday with Monday being my usual day off. His cell phone number is (207) 551-7924.



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.

The Caribou Ecumenical Food Pantry is in need of the following items: oatmeal and condiments (ketchup & mayonnaise).

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!

So far, we have received donations of \$322.40 from this "fun-raiser"! Thank you!





Tamara Wilcox has several masks available for sale as part of one of our church funraisers. Adult/teen and small children's sizes are available. Themes include holidays, outdoor activities and a variety of colorful designs. Contact Tamara (492-0371) if you are interested!

<u>NEW FUN-RAISERS!</u>

Paint Recycling \$2 per container





In June, the church will accept paint cans for recycling. Just donate \$2 per can and we will take care of their disposal. All proceeds will benefit the church's operating budget. Look for more details in early June on when you may bring in your leftover paint cans for recycling!

Other fun-raiser events that are being considered (we will ask for a small donation for each of these projects): Electronic device donations (recycle used computers, tablets, TVs, cassette players, etc.) in July Home tighten-up project in the fall (September/October); help households prepare for the winter months



STEWARDSHIP ARTICLE:

Here is this month's edition of "Relationships":

The easy path vs the hard trail.....

There are parks and trails both here and abroad that give us this choice. If only life was as simple as choosing Door #1 or Door #2.....

There are those of us who appear to have an easy life and those right from birth that must face a long and arduous path. The majority of us fall somewhere in the middle and are faced with difficulties throughout life. Do we see them as challenges to overcome or obstacles to face, go around or even turn back from without even trying...

In life and in our faith, how do we make the hard easier? Is it simply our outlook, the tools we have, the inner strength we possess or our faith? How do we embrace the hard, the difficult, the unknown. Do we rise to the challenge and pick up the mantle. Do we do it alone or are we supported by friends, family and especially our faith. As we look outward for support, do we also look inward and examine ourselves.

How we identify ourselves and by which way we measure our lives, our purpose, our worth and our faith impacts how we face life and make the hard easy or easier. If I was to ask "Who are you?", how do you answer? Do you answer by your family role, your sex, your occupation? Or is the first word that comes to mind "I'm a Christian".

Jesus did not have a life of roses, wealth or plenty. He was made human and given a human life with choices and obstacles no different than our own. He was a carpenter, a shepherd and a teacher; all worthy occupations, but not at that time. And yet when we think of him, we think of him with reverence and grace, not as a man.

As we embrace our faith and embark ever forward in life as stewards and Christians, maybe it is important to recognize that we too are human and are capable of great things and remember that most great things in life come from work, faith, generosity of self, spirit and purpose. Maybe it is as simple to reflect each day of our life to simply "be good and do good" every day the best way we can.....

Melonie Carlson

Scholarship Opportunity

The Church Office received a letter regarding "The George W. and Beulah Barton Akeley Scholarship Fund" along with an application form. This year, two scholarships are available to "graduating high school seniors or to non-traditional students who will be attending post-secondary schools during the 2021-2022 school year" and are members of the Northern District Cluster's Methodist churches and/or to qualified Akeley descendants. Please let the church office know if you wish to receive an application. Deadline to return the application is "before July 31" in care of Gray Memorial UMC.

CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES 4-29-21

<u>ATTENDEES</u>: Roy Alden (Chair), Will Barnum, Melonie Carlson, Judson Drake, Neal Genz, Diane McDonough, Bobbi Pelletier, Alaina Pethick, Tamara and Rev. Tim Wilcox.

Roy started the meeting on Zoom at 6:35pm. He asked Rev. Tim to do a devotion and Rev. Tim read the daily COVID prayer from the New England Conference.

Roy then said the agenda would include discussing the Finance/Stewardship reports for March, plans for the next couple of weeks, any reports regarding various ministries and/or committees and then the recommendation from the Re-entry Task Group.

Tamara presented the Financial Secretary's March report as follows:

Total Operating Income received - \$10.097.44; Reimbursements - \$86.24; Special Funds for Church Use - \$17,448.98 (includes the \$15,739.57 for PPP Loan); Special Funds Not for Church Use - \$500.00.

Bobbi then presented her Treasurer's Report for March as follows:

\$13,041.04
10,097.44
1.98
(28.88)
(14,222.54)

2021 Mission Shares (2,469.50) (Note: Monthly amount put into Special Funds temporarily)

Fun-Raiser Process 47.85

PPP Loan Money 8,086.38 (Payroll, Church Utilities, Tel/Internet/Cell Phone)

Ending Balance 14,553.77 (Without PPP money, would be \$6,467.39)

Bobbi noted that donations received in March did not cover the month's expenses, which has been a trend. She also added that the remaining PPP loan money of \$7,653.19 will be used in April to cover similar expenses.

Roy mentioned that perhaps once we return to in-person Worship services, our donations will improve. The May fundraisers will hopefully bring in a good amount (anticipate \$500 from Yard Sale; Judson said \$2,500 from BBQ). Rev. Tim suggested we plan more activities in June or July to raise money. Roy agreed and perhaps we can do a fundraiser every 6 weeks or so.

Melonie Carlson presented attendance numbers (Average attendance for March = 53; Average attendance YTD = 63), noting that the YouTube numbers we collect only account for the number of views and not the number of people watching. There was discussion that some of our congregation are going to other churches that are open and hopefully they will return to Gray Memorial when we re-open.

Updates on the May fundraisers:

Roy – Yard Sale (May 15th & 16th, if not sold out on the 15th): he has heard from people offering donations for the yard sale and volunteering to help. He hopes to pick-up big pieces that have been donated on Friday night and can cover them with a tarp of Dave Wakana's large trailer.

Judson – BBQ on May 15th: he has 8 volunteers, everything ordered and picked up firewood, should be all set. Roy said we should spread the work about these two events. BBQ should do well and a lot of people going to yard sales this year. Diane McDonough asked if the BBQ is drive—thru…answer is yes, no seating. Do you need sweets? Judson said he could use some more desserts (brownies). Roy – some people have offered to bring food for the yard

sale and after a little discussion it was decided that would be fine. We can also plan a bake sale or pie sale later on. Rev. Tim didn't think having food at the yard sale would compete with the BBQ.

Roy talked a little about the new DVD Ministry. After a few problems in the beginning, things have smoothed out. Bobbi told Roy that Gwen Ellinwood told her that she had a problem with this past Sunday's DVD. The video part stopped about halfway through the sermon, but she could still hear everything. She listened to the rest of the service. Bobbi will check to see if the master DVD might have the same issue. Roy said that Shirley Bowman is coming into the church to watch the DVDs (Bobbi said she hasn't come in the past two weeks), Jeannette Belyea had a problem at first but then started using a different player and is now okay. Perhaps we can offer these DVDs to others (perhaps Ralph Ferguson and Richard Clark). Rev. Tim thanked everyone involved in this ministry – Will Barnum, Alaina Pethick and Roy Alden – for all the work they've done.

Roy then proceeded to discuss the Re-entry Task Group's meeting that was held on Tuesday, April 27th. The group reviewed the existing approved re-entry plan and told the Church Council members that the group wants to re-open services in the church building effective May 30th. Then also open the building for meetings and funeral/memorial services. The group felt that if we followed the protocols it will be safe. Outside services were discussed, but the group wanted to go directly to in-person services in the building.

Bobbi then read the guidelines people will receive next week in the Monday email from the church office:

In order to prepare for our first Worship service in the church building and ensure safety for everyone who come, please be advised that the following guidelines must be followed:

- Each person or household planning to return to in-person services must come to the church prior to May 30th to reserve their seats (staff personnel will be present Monday, Wednesday & Friday from 9am to noon beginning on Friday, May 14th)
- Those planning to come each Sunday must notify the church office during the prior week; call church office and leave a message if staff are not present (THIS REQUIREMENT HAS CHANGED ONCE YOU HAVE RESERVED YOUR SEAT(S) YOU DO NOT NEED TO CALL EACH WEEK)
- Everyone must wear a mask
- Observe social distancing while entering and exiting the church and while in the building
- Use hand sanitizer on entering the building and immediately go to reserved seats
- Everyone is asked to refrain from going to the basement level
- The new Narthex bathroom is available for use during the Sunday Worship time; it will be sanitized after each use
- No Coffee Fellowship until deemed safe to resume
- Each Sunday service will be streamed on YouTube for those unable to attend in-person

Roy asked Rev. Tim to outline changes to the service. Rev. Tim said the on-line worship will look a little different. There will be no bulletins or hymnals. We will use the screen. We will not offer a "passing of the peace"; no live vocal singing (organist can play, but vocalists will have to do a pre-recorded piece); no food at this time.

Neal asked about offerings and Bobbi said that per the re-entry plan, the plates will be available in the Narthex for people to place their donations into. Plates will not be passed around.

Rev. Tim then said pre-packaged communion elements will be on a table in the Narthex for people to pick up on their way out of the sanctuary. He did add that soloists are okay but they would have to wear a mask, per the District Superintendent.

Roy then asked if anyone had any comments. Neal said he thought all the bases were covered. Roy said he feels comfortable and if Rev. Tim is ready and feels comfortable, we should do this. He asked if there were any opinions or concerns.

Neal asked about the role of the usher coordinators (he won't be there on May 30th, but he can make sure someone is designated). Roy said we'd need help with visitors that come. We must welcome people and if there is an issue with

anyone not following protocols, someone will need to speak to them. Neal said he'd contact the ushers. Bobbi said the Worship Committee will meet next week and we'll talk about needing volunteers to help oversee the services. Someone will need to take attendance like we did during the Outdoor Services (for contact tracing), just in case. Melonie said this is the right step to take. How many can we have? Bobbi read the Governor's rule – "Effective May 24, the limit for indoor gatherings will increase to 75 percent..." (from previous 50 percent). Judson said we can do about 75 people safely. Attendance was averaging between 60 and 80 people before COVID, so we should not have a problem. Some people may not come. Rev. Tim said he had some trepidations because of family health issues. He will function a little different. He won't stand in the Narthex to meet people as they leave, but he will be outside as people leave (but he won't hang out in the rain!). On a personal note, he is still concerned about Althea. He'll be more cautious for now, but he said that the Maine CDC recently announced that the age group that Althea falls into might be able to get their vaccine in late May or early June. Also added that people will have to be 20 feet from that top step for him to deliver the sermon and the Call to Worship.

Issue with air circulation – discussion about opening the hatch in the clock tower so it will draw the air up. Roy said we have fans, we can open the doors when it gets hot. Rev. Tim suggested we put a fan in the hatchway.

Rev. Tim suggested we wait until we get worship services in place before we open the church for committee meetings.

Roy then made a motion to return to in-person Worship Services, following COVID protocols, on Sunday May 30th and allow other activities (funerals and weddings) as long as they follow the protocols. If we can make sure our Sunday services work well on May 30th and June 6th, then we can allow other services after that. We can then talk in a couple months about having meetings in the building. Melonie seconded this motion. Roy asked if there was any other discussion (none). He asked for a vote and all present were in favor. Passed unanimously.

Diane suggested we ask for feedback on concerns or highlights of the in-person worship services, so we will provide a survey form that people can take with them when they leave the sanctuary.

Roy said that tonight we should be calling people up and letting everyone know we feel good about this!

Other Business:

Melonie said she has ordered the offering envelopes for 2022 and received a 10% discount, so they will cost \$173 plus shipping. They should arrive in May or June. She said the image on the envelopes has changed at no cost and people should like them!

Rev. Tim told us about his meeting with Rick McKinley about the Possibilities Study. They talked about some options that involved perhaps a combination of on-line and some in-person workshops or a hybrid version. Could have small groups (3-5 people) in different locations but would need devices to tie-in together. Timing wise, Rick is available in the fall but could do it sooner. Perhaps combine the 3-hr workshop with a Sunday Worship service.

Roy is one who thinks this is a good thing for us to do but recommended we wait until the fall time when things have settled. We should authorize Rev. Tim to go forward and make plans with Rick.

No further business to discuss. Next meeting is Thursday, May 20th. Meeting ended at 8:45pm.

Bobbi Pelletier Fill-in Secretary

Report received prior to Church Council Meeting:

TRUSTEES:

<u>Treasurer's report.</u> Judi noted that Al Akeley, past trustee member, was interested in the permanent fund. She suggested that the trustees donate \$100 to the permanent fund in his memory. Judson indicated in his motion that we donate \$300 from the trustee checking account to the permanent fund, Richard seconded. Passed.

Scholarships: Arie Davenport (Jack & Juanita Lancaster scholarship \$500). She is home taking courses online from the U. of M. The check is made out to her and the school. She would like to have the check made out to her to use on her computer. Rev. Tim suggested that this might be setting a precedent. Judi feels that this is a one-time deal, a result of the COVID-19 school situation. Del made a motion that we issue Arie a new check in her name only, Richard seconded. Passed. A thank you was received from Connor DeMerchant; Judi needs the name of his school.

Judi passed out the treasurer's report. There is \$18,524.32 in the checking account. The \$159.99 bill from S. W. Collins was for a new sump pump. (The church has three sump pumps and Judson will put in a fourth.) Wendy moved that the treasurer's report be accepted, Del seconded. Passed.

<u>Parsonage attic windows</u>. The windows are ordered and will arrive about May 15th. Six replica colonial windows at \$264.88 each = \$1,589.28. This will be paid from the Capital Campaign, part of the safety section.

Parsonage electrical. Waiting for materials to arrive.

Church office ceiling. Needs 2nd coat of dry wall compound and 3rd coat prime, then can paint.

NEW BUSINESS

<u>Front of church.</u> Judson recommends holding off putting siding on the "front" of the church which, in this case, is the side facing Sweden St. Inflation/gouging was increased the price of building materials to an unreasonable amount. This side of the church facing the main street does look bad. Paint (lead) is falling off in sheets. Judson suggested just painting for the time being. Rev. Tim wondered if the paint would stick. Rev. Tim & Tamara suggest that we leave it until prices come down. Beeline (Justin Bouchard) has put in a good bid for the siding and the six red doors that need repainting. Judson will get a price for the door painting job. Repairing the Sweden St. outside wall of the church has been tabled.

<u>Parsonage walkway</u>. This has been a trip hazard for years. The cement is broken, raised up, or missing. The city cement sidewalk along Prospect St. has been moved closer to the walkway as a result of widening Prospect. Snowblown snow hardens on the walkway in the winter making it difficult to keep clean. Judson would like to move the walkway and explained his diagram. He had originally thought of using cement again but has switched his thinking to pavers (blocks) which have a more old-fashioned look. He explained the process. Cost \$900 - \$1000.

<u>Church Mutual Insurance</u>. Since none of us were excited about traveling to Merrill, Wisconsin, for the annual meeting, we signed our vote over to the trustees of the insurance company.

<u>Sound Booth</u>. The booth will be located on the back wall of the balcony to the right going up the stairs and straight ahead looking from the pulpit to the balcony. The camera will be located over the sanctuary entrance. Judson will remove three pews which he will save to be auctioned off later. The booth will be 8' x 10' and will seat four people. All recording and sound equipment will be moved from Rev. Tim's office and the library and put in this safe place, space that is not now being utilized. A motion was made by Richard that the pews be removed and a floor be put in; Tamara seconded. Passed.

<u>Lawn care proposals, 2021</u>. A bid from Bernaiche Professional Property Maintenance, itemizing all work that will be done, \$3,593. A bid from Wilcox Bros., 2 Prospect St., also itemizing work, \$1,200. We are waiting for more bids.

<u>Internet in the church.</u> Rev. Tim asked about bids for technicians to bring the church up to full Internet capacity. These companies are few and far between. Aroostook Technologies has shown interest.

<u>Church usage.</u> Rev. Tim asked Judson for his suggestions for a meeting Tuesday. Judson noted that bathrooms should be cleaned after each use. There is no air movement in the church, especially downstairs. Discussion.

Water in parsonage basement. Rev. Tim mentioned the various wet spots.

CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES 5-20-21

<u>ATTENDEES</u>: Roy Alden (Chair), Claire Hodgkins, Rev. Tim Wilcox, Tamara Wilcox, Debbie Barnes, Bobbi Pelletier, Melonie Carlson, Diane McDonough, Alaina Pethick, and Kathleen Forbes

Roy Alden called the meeting to order at 6:33 PM and requested a brief prayer from Rev. Tim before turning to the business of the Council. The first order of business was the April Financial reports.

Tamara reported that the offerings for April came to \$10,615.44. Other sources brought in \$1,210 for a total offering for April of \$11,825.44. Special Funds for Church Use totaled \$5,625.96. Special Funds NOT for Church Use included \$50 for the Caribou Ecumenical Food Pantry and \$20 for UMCOR which added \$70 to the total April funds of \$17,521.40.

Bobbi Pelletier reported the checkbook figures as follows:

Beginning Balance \$14,553.77
2021 Operating Income 11,825.44
Interest 2.14
Less EFT Fee (29.40)
Less expenses (12,900.98)

2021 Mission Shares (2,469.50) (Note: Monthly amount put into Special Funds temporarily)

Fun-Raiser Proceeds 53.40

PPP Loan Money 7,653.19 (Payroll, Church Utilities, and \$9.02 on Tel/Internet/Cell Phone)

Ending Balance 18,688.06 (Without PPP money, would be \$2,948.49)

The Capital Account Seed Money Previous Balance was \$102,123.10. Deposits amounted to \$2,340.82. Expenditures were \$1,589.28. The Current Balance on April 30th was \$102,874.64.

Bobbi reported that all of the PPP money has been spent as per agreement for loan forgiveness. If we had not had the PPP money, we would only have a little less than \$3,000.00 for a balance instead of the \$18,688.06. Bobbi also transferred \$3,000.00 into the Memorial Garden Account from the investment portfolio to cover expenses in the care and maintenance of the Memorial Garden. The Investment portfolio totaled \$28,028.49 on April 30, 2021. Melonie pointed out that the monthly offerings are not covering expenses so the Council members spent a lot of time discussing various ideas for fund raising. The Pulled Pork fund raiser was a big success as was the yard sale. It was estimated that the Yard Sale brought in around \$1,900.00 and the pulled pork meals brought in about \$1,300.00. The City Wide Yard Sale event was probably a big factor so it might be wise to plan events around such events as "Thursdays on Sweden Street" and "Caribou Cares about Kids". More planning will be discussed in future meetings. Judson Drake has suggested doing ribs for the next event.

Debbie Barnes looked up the dates for Thursdays on Sweden. They are June 3rd/17th, July 1st/15th/29th, and August 12th/26th. It was thought June 3rd was too close so maybe shoot for June 17th.

April Expenses are as follows:

 Programs
 \$216.65

 Trustees
 3,686.31

SPRC:

Pastor's Compensation 5,809.00
Other salaries 2,045.83
Other Expenses 331.73
SPRC Subtotal 8,186.56

New England Conference:

Pastor Pension 811.46 Total Expenses for April \$12,900.98

Weekly Average Needed for 2021: \$3,986.53

MS=\$2,459.50/mo.; As of EOM Apr – 4 months behind (\$9,838.00)

Dead River Budget Plan Figures: C=\$1,033; P=\$235 (decrease of \$93/month) Balances as of Apr 30: C=(\$3,254.12); P=(\$700.75) NO PAYMENT DUE IN MAY

Annual Budget YTD

Target: \$69,099.83; Tithes & Offerings: \$54,831.96; Total Expenses \$64,155.35; Unpaid Bills: \$9,878.00; Average Attendance for April: 62*; Average Attendance YTD: 65* (* an aggregate of in-person and virtual attendance)

Next, the Council discussed re-opening which will take place May 30th. The Council discussed revisiting the plan as some items may now no longer apply and adjustments may be needed. People will be assigned a seat. Hopefully they will come in when Bobbi is there M/W/F so that on Sunday people can just head right to their places. Masks will be required for now at least. We will have Communion on June 6th. People will be able to pick up elements that will be on a table in the back as they leave. In coming months that could change.

The Counters will meet in the church office to count the weekly offering. Bobbi will make appropriate changes to the Re-entry Plan that was approved in July 2020.

The Nominations Committee has been meeting and most people will continue in their committee assignments. However a few have requested to step down. Replacements are in the talking stage and some may be announced later this summer. A Special

Church Conference has been set for possibly the June Council Meeting on June 17th or after church on June 27th which ever seems most appropriate.

Debbie Barnes brought up the issue of childcare. There will be no child care for the foreseeable future unless someone calls in advance. However, children are welcome to come to church. It is hoped that childcare will be resumed when possible when a new childcare person can be hired.

There will be no coffee fellowship for the time being.

While we cannot have a choir or singing at this time it will be permitted to have a live soloist for special music.

The next meeting will be Thursday, June 17th at 6:30 PM.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 7:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted Claire Hodgkins, Secretary

OTHER REPORTS SUBMITTED PRIOR TO THE CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING:

The meeting came to order at 9:06 am on May 6th with the following in attendance via Zoom: Paula Lilley, HyungYong Choi, Victor Han, Tim Wilcox, John DeFelice and Sue Brown.

Devotions were shared by Sue from "Openings" by Rev. Larry Peacock followed by the music "In the Midst of New Dimensions" then led us in prayer.

Treasurer's Report

Paula reported a current checkbook balance of \$523.05. Motion to approve the report by Tim and seconded by Choi. Motion carried.

Current worship in our churches

We discussed current modes of worship in our churches. Houlton and Hodgdon are in-person with live-streaming from Houlton. Mapleton is in-person and uploads the service for those who are uncomfortable attending in person. Presque Isle (Grant) has met in person throughout and is continuing to recommend masks & social distancing. The CDC guidelines may affect this going forward. Gray Memorial (Caribou) will reopen on May 30th for in-person. Mars Hill is meeting in person and livestreaming on Facebook. While not represented, Patten, Limestone and Mars Hill are also meeting in person. We shared our joys at returning and our concerns that are ongoing.

Celebrating Families

No report at this time.

Cluster Lenten (Good Friday) Service

Tim offered thanks to all who worked to prepare this service – both for worship and technical support. There was positive feedback from many in our congregations. It was good to share our connectionalism – especially meaningful during the time of pandemic.

Meeting Time Going Forward

As our meetings have been coming in conflict with DCOM and CODS, it was agreed to try Wednesday mornings beginning with our first meeting in the fall: September 1st at 10:00am. We agreed to continue meeting via Zoom as the drive distance is so great for some.

Pulpit Exchange/Sharing

On hold until "normalcy" for our churches reconnecting with their pastors.

Gathering Together

Those present felt that it would be helpful to gather a few times a year just to be together – no business – perhaps lunch at a local establishment. Please bring your thoughts and ideas on this to our September meeting.

2021 Discipleship Recognition

Pastors and their SPRC members should be prepared to submit their recipients for recognition by our October meeting.

<u>Cluster Mission Project – St. Apollonia Festival of Trees</u>
It is time to begin thinking about a theme for our offering to this event. Please be thinking about this and be prepared to make a decision at our September meeting =>).

<u>Cluster Confirmation Class</u>

Tim mentioned returning to planning a confirmation class that was put on hold because of the pandemic. Discussion around protocols/vaccinations, etc. Choi and Tim will talk together and get back to the Cluster.

Cluster Mission Project

After discussion, it was agreed that the Cluster will prepare a "promo video" to support the work of UMCOR in their efforts to relieve the pandemic worldwide. Victor will write a script and all in Cluster Council who are available are asked to meet via Zoom on June 3rd at 9:00am to participate in recording the video (2 to3 minutes) that we can share in all of our churches. We voted that \$300 of our Cluster funds will be given along with those funds gathered by each church. All gifts should be sent to Paula who will write a single check from our Cluster for this mission project. Victor will provide a Zoom link for June 3rd. We will not have a meeting at that time – just do the recording – so it should not take a long time. Please join us if at all possible as we again demonstrate our connectionalism in mission.

TRUSTEES:

Treasurer's report. Scholarships. Judi reported that Connor DeMerchant has not responded as to the name of his school; the Rev. George Budd scholarship has not been paid. The Alex Turner scholarship will be given again this year. The trustees had stipulated \$200 to a boy and \$200 to a girl but should the guidance office decide to award the \$400 differently, that is acceptable. Judi made a motion to offer this scholarship, Judson seconded. Passed. Judi is updating the Permanent Fund pamphlet and passed around a corrected copy that will go to County Quik Print. There was discussion about the Permanent Fund and its history (starting with Al Akeley, former trustee) and the Memorial Fund. The Permanent Fund interest is reinvested. We do not use it except in an emergency. The Memorial Fund interest is received quarterly and goes into the trustee checking account (1st quarter, 2021=\$930.79). There is \$19,155.92 in the trustee checking account. Louis moved that the treasurer's report be accepted, Richard seconded. Passed.

OLD BUSINESS

<u>Red doors</u>. Judson noted the Work Estimate sheet in our packet from Beeline Painting (Justin Bouchard). Justin will sand and paint 6 exterior doors, hopefully in time for our church reopening on May 30, for \$250. Wendy moved that we accept this estimate, Judi seconded. Passed.

<u>Parsonage walkway.</u> This walk will be moved away from the public sidewalk. It will be made of pavers with a rock foundation, 3" crusher dust compaction and landscaping cloth. It will be 4' wide and can be cleared with the snow blower in the winter. Judson will do the work – a late summer project. Estimated cost \$900 - \$1000 from the trustees' checking account. Judi moved that this job be done, Richard seconded. Passed.

<u>Parsonage electrical.</u> Underwood Electric has begun this work.

<u>Parsonage windows.</u> Six windows totaling \$1,589.28 will be here on May 21st. Judson will install. This bill will be paid from the Capital Campaign – Safety and Structure.

<u>Lawn care.</u> The Wilcox Bros. came in as the lowest bidders at \$1,200 for lawn care around the church and the parsonage. They will be using church equipment. The other bid was from Northend Lawn Care at \$3593. Judi moved that we accept the Wilcox Bros. bid, Richard seconded. Passed.

NEW BUSINESS

<u>Parking lot paving</u>. Judson received two bids. Quality Paving, Woodland, Maine, will do the lower parking lot but will not do extra patching. \$8000. D. J. Paving (Dewey Johndro) will do the lower parking lot and patch the upper lot, plus grading work. \$6000. Louis made a motion that we accept the bid by D. J. Paving, Richard seconded. Passed. This project will be paid from the Capital Campaign.

<u>Sound booth.</u> Judson's definition of a sound booth. "A specialized place for sound recording, mixing and audio production of instrumental, spoken words of God and other sounds and video recordings and duplication." Pews have been removed and the floor framed plus sub floor. Underwood Electric is in the process of moving sound cables.

<u>Parsonage microwave</u>. There have been problems with the General Electric over-the-stove microwaves in the past. After doing research, Tamara suggests that we purchase a Whirlpool. Lowe's has a high end model (\$419) and a lower priced model (\$269). Judson feels that we should go with the high end and that Lowe's may give the church a better price. He will check into this. Judson made a motion that we purchase a microwave for the parsonage from Lowe's, Del seconded. Passed.

<u>Stump removal.</u> There are several stumps left from decorative cedars and he will remove these with his tractor.

<u>Garden parking lot sign.</u> Bob Collins, Mars Hill, will make a permanent sign to replace the deteriorating sign now at the entrance of the upper parking lot at the cost of \$578.06. There was discussion about the new sign for the memorial garden which is a separate project of the Memorial Committee. Judi made a motion that Judson proceed with hiring Collins to do this job, Richard seconded. Passed.

<u>AED (Automated External Defibrillator)</u>, located in the narthex is eight years old. Judson tested it; it needs a new battery pack and pads. The cost is \$234.27 from the trustee checking account.

WORSHIP:

Attendees at May 7th Meeting: Bobbi Pelletier (chair), Rev. Tim Wilcox, Diane Fitzpatrick, Neal Genz, Claire Hodgkins, Diana Locke, Dean Rauch (guest)

Old Business:

- Dean Rauch joined us for this meeting to explain the benefits of purchasing a new license that would allow us to do more in selecting music that can be streamed. It would replace the current CCLC license and Worship Cast license. Dean recommended that we purchase the license and offered to pay half of it in memory of Leila Robertson. Diana moved to allocate the funds necessary to fund the remainder of the license and Claire seconded the motion. All were in favor.
- Discussion was held on the reopening of the church on May 30th. CDC protocols will be enforced. They include wearing face masks, social distancing, no greeting others with handshakes or hugs, no bulletins, no singing (except for the person providing special music), and no going downstairs or coffee fellowship. Neal will ask Bill Thomas to record attendance. Rev. Tim mentioned shifting the focus of the service to recognize Mother's Day, Ascension Sunday, Pentecost, and Heritage Sunday. Fifty- year members to be recognized are Bob and Karen White, Debbie Barnes, and Lori Mazursky.
- Discussion was also held on whether we should publicize the reopening on the 30th. Diana made a suggestion to have a "soft" opening for members only where those attending need to be preregistered to attend. Committee members agreed and suggested a larger "Back to Church Sunday" at a later time when CDC restrictions have been somewhat revised. Bobbi mentioned that she will order seventy pewter visor clips to be given out on opening Sunday. They will be given as one per family and can be placed on a person's car visor. She also mentioned that Jud Drake has suggested that we have a professional picture taken by Duane McCubrey of the people attending on that day.

New Business

• Rev. Tim reported that Debbie Barnes has suggested having an event to recognize and celebrate the lives of church members who have passed away during the pandemic of this past year. The committee decided that we should do this during a regular worship service when more people would be apt to attend. Bobbi suggested a display of their pictures on the library bulletin board. Diana suggested holding the service outside by the church memorial garden. She also suggested asking the families of those being remembered if they would prefer a service by the garden or an inside service. We will finalize plans for this special service at our June meeting.

Rev. Tim mentioned that there are several people we will recognize and include Avis Armstrong, Melvin Griffin, Eloise Penny, Joanne Smith, Darlene Nelder, Doris Jeffery, Dale Fowler, Marcia DeMerchant, Albert Akeley and Leila Robertson.

- Bobbi asked if there is going to be a confirmation class held. Rev. Tim indicated that the Cluster will make a decision on this at a later time.
- Diana reported that the technology director at the high school has not returned her call pertaining to the possibility of training a few student to help Will and Alaina with the Sunday service when they are not available. Rev. Tim mentioned that Will is working on recruiting a group to be trained on our equipment.
- Rev. Tim mentioned Mission Sunday that is traditionally held in the spring. He would like to have Alan Merrill from the Hope Gateway Church in Portland and the BTS speak at our church if possible. He will have more information at a later time.

Next meeting: We will need to change the day and time of our monthly meetings as Bobbi will be working in the church office on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings now. Therefore, our next meeting will be on Thursday, June 3 at 10:30 a.m. We will plan on meeting on the first Thursday of each month at 10:30am from here on in.

LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENING IN JUNE 2021!!!

THIS CALENDAR SHOWS EVENTS THAT ARE STILL OCCURRING WHILE THE BUILDING REMAINS CLOSED FOR MEETINGS!

ALL SUNDAYS WORSHIP SERVICES WILL CONTINUE ON YOUTUBE

Thursday	03	9:00am 10:30am	Aroostook Cluster Meeting to record "promo video" (Zoom) Worship Committee Meeting (Zoom); note date/time change
Sunday	09	10:00am	Worship in the Sanctuary; Second Sunday after Pentecost; YouTube
Thursday	10	6:30pm	SPRC Meeting (Zoom)
Sunday	13	10:00am	Worship in the Sanctuary; Third Sunday after Pentecost; YouTube
Tuesday	15	6:00pm	Trustee Meeting
Thursday	17	6:30pm	Church Council Meeting (Zoom)
Sunday	20	10:00am	Worship in the Sanctuary; Fourth Sunday after Pentecost; Father's Day; YouTube; FIRST DAY OF SUMMER!
Tuesday	22	10:00am	DEADLINE FOR ALL NEWSLETTER INPUT
•		6:00pm	Congregational Care Team Meeting (Zoom) – date may change
Saturday	26	11:00am	Memorial Service for Doris Jeffery
Sunday	27	10:00am	Worship in the Sanctuary; Fifth Sunday after Pentecost; YouTube

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