



"For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope." —Jeremiah 29:11 (NRSV)

NOTE: Suicide is referenced in this column.

I begin each year with good intentions. Whether they are formal New Year's resolutions for myself or an optimistic view of progress I will make on continuing goals, I enter most years confident that the new year will mark the beginning of some positive new trends. Yet, it is often the case that after a short time I revert to former patterns. I'm not alone: surveys regularly indicate that a majority of Americans fall away from their New Year's resolutions. The reasons for this are many and can be found elsewhere in the news and online.

I want to suggest a different approach for 2022. For the last several weeks, we have been praying in worship for my nephew. We have prayed for him before. December marked the third time he has tried to take his life over the past two years. My sister and her family have tried everything within reason they could think of and that has been recommended to them. The situation seemingly improves for a time only for them to eventually face a renewed crisis. They are struggling to figure out what they should do next. As a family member half a continent away, I have often felt helpless in the midst of their need. Over time, however, I have learned that my seemingly small gestures have made a bigger difference than I realized. The occasional phone call, text notes, prayer shawls with the assistance of our prayer shawl ministry, many prayers and even a few cards from our congregation(!) have been much appreciated by my sister and her family. The experience has me thinking of ways I can continue to make a difference despite the distance. I want to learn more about suicide, its causes and constructive approaches and treatments. I want to stay connected in ways that will be helpful and supportive. Though I do not always follow through on resolutions for myself, I am going to add a resolution focused on someone else's need: my nephew and his family in this case.

In 2022, would you set a resolution alongside or instead of your usual resolutions that will contribute to someone else's hope and welfare? You might "adopt" a friend going through a tough patch. You might offer time to an organization that provides services to vulnerable, forgotten, hurting or misunderstood people. You could connect with strangers near and far (our new pen pal effort is a good example). Whatever you choose, you will not only be living out the gospel. You will be making the verse above from Jeremiah come true. Indeed, it is often the case that the plans God has in mind are enacted by his people: you and me. A month of preaching about hope has reminded me that my ultimate hope (God in Christ) is most often made real by the actions and ministries of others. In 2022 may we be agents of hope in our world.

Grace and peace,
Tim



The Caribou Clock

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Greetings from the Church Office!

Is it just my imagination or do the years go by faster as you get older? Certainly feels that way! I think I remember hearing that from my older relatives years ago and never thought much about it until now!

The new Church Directory is still a “work in progress” as other priorities and a few vacation days have limited the time I had to update it. I do plan to make it a priority over the next several months.

I truly enjoyed visiting with family and friends just before Christmas. It was also wonderful to spend Christmas Eve and day with my “church family”! I wish each and every one of you a very Happy and Blessed New Year!

We raised \$2,229.73 from the Christmas Tree sales this year! See all the pictures from Rev. Tim on page 12. Thank you to all the volunteers!

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 Tuesday, January 25th!!!**

Until next month (and year!).....

Bobbi Pelletier
Church Secretary



November 28th and December Prayer Joys and Concerns

Prayer Concerns: Debbie & Lu Sharp, Sheila Belyea, Dave DeMerchant, Richard & Susan Clark, Gary & Marilyn Langley, Ralph & Gwen Ferguson, Audrey Bubar (Caribou Rehab Center), Sylvia Akeley, Louis Greenier, Leland Frost, Ivan Shaw, Zelma Merritt, Malcolm Hare, Susan Osgood, Claire Hodgkins, Alex Hilleman & family, Mary Ouellette

On Family Death: Family of Shirley Sutherland

Other: Staff of our local clinics & hospitals that they may not lose hope

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 recently:

Dear Rev. Tim and Gray Memorial congregation....I hope that this will find a place in the church newsletter so that it can convey my gratitude to you all. Thank you for your "prayers of Thanksgiving" during your worship on November 7, 2021. God is so good! My oncologist gave me the wonderful report in that I am now 5 years cancer free, and she is putting me on the "Survivorship" program. Bob and I shared this joyful news via telephone with two congregation members ~ and I am very appreciative that the prayers of Thanksgiving were lifted up. "Yes...Thank you, God! Amen... In Jesus, Debbie Jordan

 Bobbi - take this donation and use it where you all think it will do the most good. Thanks again to a church that took in and welcomed a young airman far from home at a time when people in the military weren't so esteemed as today. My visit last August reminded me that the countryside is still as beautiful and the people just as wonderful as when I first came to this part of the country over 50 years ago (May 1971 - April 1973). Here's wishing everyone a very warm and joyous Christmas and that next year will be your very best one so far. Love, Kenn (Frye)

REMINDERS

<u>DATE</u>	<u>LITURGIST</u>	<u>Organist/Pianist</u>	<u>COUNTER</u>	<u>COFFEE FELLOWSHIP</u>
Jan 2	Deborah Nichols	TBD	Diane Fitzpatrick	No Coffee Fellowship!
Jan 9	Deborah Nichols	TBD	Diane Fitzpatrick	"
Jan 16	Bobbi Pelletier	TBD	Diane Fitzpatrick	"
Jan 23	Deb Pringnitz	TBD	Mary Ouellette	"
Jan 30	Del Ramey	TBD	Mary Ouellette	"

Usher Coordinator for January: Bruce Fitzpatrick

**Please note that the church building is open for visitors and committee meetings.
 Rev. Tim and the Worship Committee will make decisions on whether Worship Services
 will continue to be in-person or on-line.**

* * January Birthdays & Anniversaries * *

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

Remember your birthday & anniversary by making a special offering!



2	Colleen Harmon	18	Phil Brown, Francis Cyr
3	Jennifer Branscom, Aaron Doody	20	Tanner Sterner
4	Jennifer Espling, Betty Fowler, Jennifer Norsworthy	23	Jean Cashman, Carter Irving, Ken Peters
7	Anthony Morrow, Katie Smith	24	Jeffery Cyr
10	Aaron Greenier	26	Sheila Belyea
12	Steve Bailey, Lauren McHattie	27	Paul Pangburn
13	Sheila Pelletier, Bessie Thornton	28	Lauren Craig
14	Michelle Nichols, Alan Pangburn	29	Winnie Brown
16	Julie Ordway, Parker Stallings	30	Louis Greenier, Michael Scott
		31	Mona Johnson



1	Linda & Alan Pangburn	22	Norma & Bob Thompson
8	Elsie & Ken Doody	26	Tammy & Ken Albert

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.


 Finance &
 Stewardship
 Committee

Worship Attendance and General Fund Offerings:

<u>Date</u>	<u>* Attendance</u>	<u>Operating Fund Offering</u>
Nov 28	33	\$ 956.00
Dec 5	39	\$3,578.72
Dec 12	36	\$2,854.72
Dec 19	44	\$11,185.00
Dec 24	64	\$6,042.00
Dec 26	33	\$1,055.72

*In-person attendance only
 Needed weekly to meet 2021 Budget: \$3,986.53

“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 December 26th, the balance in the account is \$100,734.89 (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.)

Photo Directory Changes (January 2022 Newsletter changes):

Lister, Nancy – new address: 34 Oak Street, Casco ME 04015

Sutherland, Shirley – deceased December 3, 2021



The Missions & Evangelism Committee and the Church Council is still seeking a volunteer (or two) to handle local publicity for the church's events. This person would be responsible for advertising through a number of sources - WAGM-TV, newspapers, Rec Center sign, flyers, etc. If you are interested, please contact Melonie Carlson or the Church Office.



A new Church Directory is still in progress! The new directory will be produced by the church office and look similar to the one printed in 2016. The "Membership/Constituent Information" form had been provided for several months within the monthly Newsletter and is still emailed with the weekly email Newsletter. If you have not completed it yet, please contact the church office for the form. It is vital that we have the most update information (names, mailing address, email address, birth dates, anniversaries, etc.) to ensure our database and a new directory is as current as possible! We would appreciate it if we could get a form from every household!

Worship & Ministry Opportunities During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Worship Services will be held in the church sanctuary until next summer and will continue to be streamed live. Masking and social distancing for indoor services and meetings is advised.

Reminder from Rev. Tim -

Rev. Tim's is available for appointments Tuesday - Sunday with Monday being his usual day off. His cell phone number is (207) 551-7924. Depending on the situation, he can arrange for the particular means for the meeting as necessary.



In an effort to improve communication, I want to provide clear guidance on how to reach me in certain situations:

On my day off (usually Monday), on a Saturday, or in an emergency (for example, a death, hospitalization or family crisis) the best way to reach me is by first calling the parsonage, 207-492-0371. Someone is at the parsonage most of the time. For the most part I do not often check phone or email messages on a day off or during family time.

When I am traveling and on most other occasions, the best way to reach me is on the cell phone, 207-551-7924. You can also call the church office at 207-498-2103. Ordinarily, my goal is to respond within 24 hours. It may take additional time to return your call when I am traveling or when a day off is involved.

If you have any questions or need more information about reaching me when needed, please contact me.

--Rev. Tim

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 to 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 **\$497.60** from this "fun-raiser"! Thank you!





The Caribou Ecumenical Food Pantry is in need of the following items: condiments, macaroni and spaghetti. Donations may be brought to the church on Monday mornings from 9am to noon. Thank you!

Is your household or someone you know experiencing food insecurity? The Caribou Ecumenical Food Pantry serves the communities of Caribou, Connor, Woodland, Wade, Washburn and Perham and will provide food to those households that meet income guidelines. The Pantry, located at 31 Herschel Street in Caribou, is open on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 8am to 11am. Please call 493-4860 between those hours and the pantry volunteers will help provide you with food boxes (available every 4 weeks or as needed.)



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 three 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 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 Vanco Mobile, an app provided by VANCO. You can download on an Apple or android phone. This method supports both recurring and one-time gifts. For more information, contact Tamara Wilcox.

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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This year's "Angel Tree" had angel ornaments for us to provide Christmas gifts to 29 school students. All the gifts were given to the schools on Thursday, December 16th, along with \$500 to help families in need. Thank you for your amazing generosity!



Last day to sign-up for this Disciple Class is January 4th!

DISCIPLE

BECOMING DISCIPLES THROUGH BIBLE STUDY

Plans are being made to offer Disciple Short Term studies during the 2021-22 program year. Short term studies are designed for schedules that make longer commitments difficult. They also provide an opportunity to explore the chosen books in greater depth than the original series of Disciple classes. These classes use a teaching and reading pattern similar to other Disciple courses. Two classes were/are planned: Romans in the fall (**will conclude on December 23rd**) and Genesis in the later winter and spring. Because of the unpredictable nature of the unfolding pandemic, the class is currently being planned as a hybrid class. This means that as of now there will be an option to participate in the class in person and an option to participate online. How the class is presented is subject to CDC, church & government directives. Please be flexible as possible. Our need for study and fellowship continues regardless of the conditions on the ground at the time. If you are interested in taking the Genesis class or would like more information, please fill out the form below and return to Rev. Tim by Jan 4.

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- I am interested in the Genesis Disciple short-term study:
Genesis, 11 weeks, later January to mid-March
 - I would participate (circle one): in person online either works for me
 - I would like more information / would like to discuss with Rev. Tim

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Class could be offered anywhere from Tuesday to Sunday. Please note here days and times that do NOT work in your schedule: _____

The Missions & Evangelism Committee's Pen Pal Project is going strong! We currently have 14 congregation members corresponding with 12 students and everyone is totally enjoying the experience. The Prayer Shawl Ministry recently provided shawls & pocket prayers shawls for each of these students and they were very well received!



Tree of Lights 2021

Name	In Memory of	In Honor of
Del Ramey	Sharon Ramey	
Mary Anderson	John & Elsie Price and Lenny & Betty Loveland	
George Ferland	Verna Ferland	Jesse Carasos
Gwen Ellinwood	Bob Ellinwood, Reta Haley, Joanne Smith, Diane McDonough	
Melonie Carlson	My father Melvin Griffin; my mother Wilma Hicks & sis Deanna Griffin	Erika Carlson
Deborah Pringnitz	Doyce & Ruth Pringnitz	
Mary & Ed Ouellette	Lane Ouellette, Evelyn Ouellette, Vicki Jean Madore, Robert Harrison, Marge Harrison, Priscilla Ouellette, Vinnie Ouellette, Pat Dobson	
Jean Cashman	Stephen Cashman	
Bill Thomas		Medical Staff - First Responders
Penny & Ivan Shaw	Ivan Sr. & Freida Shaw; Jay & Marian Krafve; Emmanuel Bouchard	
The family	Emily Stuart	
Shirley Bowman	Diane McDonough, Pat Dobson	
David DeMerchant	Marcia DeMerchant; Elray & Ruth DeMerchant; Charles & Doris Barnes Jr.	David Jr, Denise, Dale, Doug
Michele Theriault	Eugene (Gene) & Flora Philbrick - My grandparents; E. James (Jim) Philbrick - My dad	
Deb Nichols	McGarys, Greens & Nichols families	Friends
Bobbi Pelletier	Robert & Irene McDowell; Marjorie Wright, Linda Haefke, Richard McDowell	
Colleen Harmon	Pat Dobson (friend); Arthur Harmon (husband); Mr & Mrs Harrison Curtis (parents)	Duane Curtis (brother)
Bruce & Diane Fitzpatrick		Vivian and Vincent Bell
Dave & Sheila Belyea	Dorothy Adams, Chester Gage, Philip Adams, Sherie Adams Chickos, Dorothy Allen	
Diana Locke and David Wakana	Elsie Locke, Millie & Toby Wakana	All who serve others
Dale & Lu Sharp		Debbie Sharp
Duska Franklin	Robert and Arline Hemingway	
Judi and Louis Greenier	Marie Sutherland, Hazel Greenier, Hayden Sutherland, Gretchen Gallant, Margaret Turner, Stanley Sutherland, Roland Sutherland, Esther Page, Marjorie Giggie	Aaron Greenier, Adam Greenier, Samantha Maron Greenier
Wendy L. Bossie	Maynard & Valeska Lombard	
Claire Hodgkins	Peter Finkel, Louise & Clarence Chamberlin	



Christmas Plants In Loving Memory Of ~



† All Our Loved Ones

Given by: Mary & Ed Ouellette

† Marcia DeMerchant; Elray & Ruth DeMerchant; Charles & Doris Barnes, Jr.

Given by: David W. DeMerchant

† Emily Stuart

Given by: The Family

† Marjorie Wright, Linda Haefke, Richard McDowell †

Given by: Bobbi Pelletier

† Philip & Vivian Brown; Arey & Mildred Fitzpatrick †

Given by: Bruce & Diane Fitzpatrick

† Paul Soucie, Keith Drew †

Given by: Ralph & Gwen Ferguson

† Elsie Locke †

Given by: Robert Locke and family

† Sharon Ramey †

Given by: Del Ramey

† Hazel Greenier and Marie Sutherland †

Given by: Judi & Louis Greenier

† Doris Jeffery and Robert Cyr †

Given by: Margaret Cyr

† Harold and Katrina Clark †

Given by: Richard and Susan Clark

† Brewer and Clark Families †

Given by: Catherine Brewer

In Honor Of ~

† Patricia Ramsden; Annabella & Leokadia Brennan †

Given by: Bobbi Pelletier

† Carol Soucie-Drew †

Given by: Ralph & Gwen Ferguson

† Deanna Leuenberger †

Given by: Dean & Diana Rauch



KODAK MOMENTS - WORSHIP SERVICES!



Beginning November 28th, our sanctuary was decorated for Advent and we used our new blue paraments donated in memory of Doris Jeffery. The special flowers on the altar are in memory of Doris, provided by her daughter Margaret Cyr. (Photos taken by Melonie Carlson)

Photos from Melonie Carlson on December 19th:



The altar was very special with all the beautiful Christmas plants!

It was so nice to have Margaret Cyr play the organ!



Conrad Walton, representing SPRC, presented Christmas gifts to staff members: Tamara Wilcox, Will Barnum, Rev. Tim and Judson Drake on December 19th (not pictured – Alaina Pethick; not present – Bobbi Pelletier)

Photos taken during our Christmas Tree Sales (provided by Rev. Tim)



LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENING IN JANUARY 2022!!!

MEETINGS ARE AUTHORIZED TO BE IN-PERSON AT THE CHURCH (MASKING & SOCIAL DISTANCING REQUIRED); STILL POSSIBLE TO JOIN BY VIDEO OR PHONE

ALL SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES WILL BE LIVE STREAMED ON YOUTUBE

Sunday	02	10:00am	Worship - Epiphany Sunday; Preaching - Kathleen Forbes
Friday	07	9:30am	Worship Committee Meeting in Fellowship Hall or Library
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Sunday	09	10:00am	Worship - Baptism of the Lord Sunday; Communion Sunday
Thursday	13	6:30pm	SPRC Meeting in Fellowship Hall
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Sunday	16	10:00am	Worship - Second Sunday after the Epiphany; Human Relations Day
		11:30am	Missions & Evangelism Committee Meeting
Monday	17	<u>FEDERAL HOLIDAY - MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY - OFFICE IS CLOSED</u>	
Tuesday	18	6:00pm	Trustee Meeting
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Sunday	23	10:00am	Worship - Third Sunday after the Epiphany; Ecumenical Sunday
Tuesday	25	10:00am	<u>DEADLINE FOR ALL NEWSLETTER INPUT</u>
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Sunday	30	10:00am	Worship - Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany
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HAPPY ☆ NEW YEAR