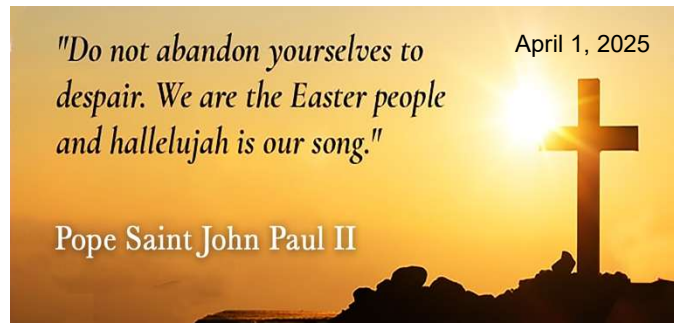


We Need the Easter Miracle Now More Than Ever!

In a world weighed down by much uncertainty, suffering, and fear, the message of the Messiah's Resurrection is more vital than ever. As we witness moral decline, global unrest, and more personal struggles, we must hold fast to the Truth that Christ's victory over death is not just another historical event but a present and living hope. Saints, the Resurrection is the foundation of our faith, and without it, as Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 15:13-14, *"If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation has been in vain, and your faith has been in vain. But we know Christ has been raised, and His Resurrection power is at work in us today.*



The world is longing for renewal. We see brokenness all around—hearts weighed down by grief, relationships shattered, communities divided, and faith tested. Yet, the same Spirit of Almighty God, who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in us, offering the power to raise us up and transform our lives. Romans 8:11 reminds us, *"If the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you."* This isn't just a promise for our future; it is an assurance for today. The Resurrection is God's declaration that death does not have the final word, and His power is still working in the world. **The miracle of the Resurrection is not just something we believe in—it is something we live and breathe.**

Right now, we need the miracle of the Resurrection in our hearts, our homes, and our nations. We need the hope that Christ's victory brings—the hope that no darkness can ever overcome the light, and no sin is beyond God's redemption. May these truths give us the blessed assurance of hope in these challenging times.

During the remainder of Lent into Palm Sunday and Holy Week, let's not simply reflect on events from the past but invite their reality into our present. Deciding to take that perspective will allow us to ponder more deeply, the suffering that Jesus endured - even to the cross. If we strive to internalize the last few days of Jesus' temporal life, we'll better understand Christ's suffering and agonizing death on the cross. We'll come to know personally, the miracle of Easter's Resurrection - remembering that *"God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life."* (John 3:16) Through Christ, we are made new, and through Him, we have the strength to overcome every trial. Now, more than ever, we need to embrace this truth of Christ's Resurrection and share it with a world desperate for the hope only He can provide.

Please attend Palm Sunday, Holy Week, and Easter Sunday events. You're encouraged to bring friends and family with you. Easter 2025 will be bittersweet because it's Margaret Cyr's last Sunday with us. It's also my last Easter Sunday with you as I retire in late June. Let's celebrate Gray's rich tradition of sacred music, awesome choir, and transformational ministry. Join us as we also pray for your new pastor, as of July 1, Ben Daggett.

Palm Sunday, 10AM, April 13 - Aurora Barnum's Confirmation
Holy Week Noon Ecumenical Worship - lunch will follow

Monday, April 14: Father Tony Korir (Holy Rosary)
Tuesday, April 15: Pastor Mark Kalata (Caribou United Baptist)
Wednesday, April 16: Pastor Isaias Lopez (7th Day Adventist)
Thursday, April 17: Pastor Ellen Cleaves (Gray Memorial UMC)
Friday Noon & 6 PM Pastor Richard Rego (Gray Memorial UMC)

Have a blessed Easter. I look forward to seeing you! **Pastor Rich**

In Christ's Service - Pastor Rich

Easter Sunrise:	6:00 AM
Caribou Nursing Home front parking lot at 10 Bernadette St., Caribou	
Easter Breakfast Follows	
Gray Memorial UMC, Prospect St.	
Easter Egg Hunt	8:30 AM
Gray Memorial UMC, Prospect St.	
Easter Worship	10:00 AM
Gray Memorial UMC, Prospect St.	



The Caribou Clock

Publisher - Gray Memorial United Methodist Church
2 Prospect Street, P. O. Box 69
Caribou ME 04736
E-mail: bessiegraymemorial@outlook.com

Date: April 2025

Church Office: (207) 498-2103
Website: <http://www.bgmumc.com>

Greetings from the Church Office!

We had a good turnout for our St. Patrick's Day dinner on Saturday, March 15th. We had a few leftovers on Sunday morning and quite a few people made donations to take them home during coffee fellowship. Our gross proceeds were a little over \$600!

On, Sunday, March 16th, Melonie Carlson announced who our new Pastor would be effective July 1, 2025. Please see the article and picture later in this newsletter. The next few months will be tough on all of us as we have to say goodbye to Pastor Rich and Karen.

In April, we will have our Holy Week Ecumenical Noon Services with several guest preachers (Father Tony Korir, Isaias Lopez, Pastor Mark Kalata and Ellen Cleaves). Our NOW Committee will provide refreshments after each service, so come and enjoy the service and fellowship! We will accept free will offerings each day to provide a stipend to musicians and donations to NOW Committee for the refreshments.

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 Thursday, April 24!!!*

Until next month.....

Bobbi Pelletier
Church Office Administrator



March Prayer Requests

Prayer Concerns: Dale, Lu & Debbie Sharp, Leland Frost, Ivan Shaw, Jeff Franklin, Sylvia Akeley, Dean & Diana Rauch, William Autrey, Paul Pelletier, Debbie Tardy, Gwen Ellinwood, James Stuart, Linda Cyr, Rodney Nichols, Kristine Brantley, Robin Stuart, Richard Carde, Pauline Davis, Marie Ouellette, Bill Watson, Peter Doody (stage 4 cancer), Chris & Paul McEwen, Steve Clark's mother Joanna, Del Ramey (surgery on March 17th), Linda Schall, Bonnie Lavway, John Anderson, Elida Frederick, Hendel Family, Justin Haines, Arlette Green & Family, Jamison Page

Deaths: Family of David Greenier; Family of Rodric Johnson; Family of Marie Ouellette

Other: Del Ramey - prayers for full recovery from hip replacement surgery; thanks from people at the Homeless Shelter for the meals our church has provided

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 PASTOR RICH. WE OFTEN HEAR FROM RECIPIENTS ON HOW TOUCHED THEY ARE THAT WE OFFERED PRAYERS FOR THEM!

REMINDERS

<u>DATE</u>	<u>Greeter</u>	<u>Organist/Pianist</u>	<u>Liturgist</u>	<u>Counter</u>	<u>Coffee Fellowship</u>
Apr 06	Roberta Walton	Mary Lou Brown	Deb Pringnitz	Mary Ouellette	Trustees
Apr 13	Mary Ouellette	Margaret Cyr	Del Ramey	Mary Ouellette	Now Committee
Apr 20	Shirley Bowman	Margaret Cyr	Karen Rego	Ruthann Weeks	*Church Council
Apr 27	Diane Fitzpatrick	Judi Greenier	Melonie Carlson	Ruthann Weeks	No Coffee Fellowship

*April 20th - Easter Sunday: Coffee Fellowship will be held in the library immediately following the service.

Usher Coordinator for April ~ Neal Genz
 Communion Stewardess for April ~ Debbie Barnes
 Communion Bread for April ~ Debbie Barnes

Changes to the May 2022 Church Directory (please update your copy!):

Cyr, Margaret – new address effective April 24, 2025: 33 Rollins Lane, Kennebunk, ME 04043

* * April Birthdays & Anniversaries * *

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

Remember your birthday & anniversary by making a special offering!



4	Greg Anderson	22	Riley Bouchard
6	Teelyne Herbert	24	Richard Carde, Debbie Jordan
11	Diane DuBois	26	Austin Felix
14	Debbie Barnes	27	Shirley Bowman
18	Larry Conrad, Peter Edgecomb	28	Margaret Cyr, Mary Ouellette
19	Laura Hoepstine	30	Walker Doody
21	Sally Carde, Bruce Hagelstein, Malcolm Hare		



7 Diana Locke & Dave Wakana

Note: A number of people with birthdays and/or anniversaries are not listed here due to no response to the August Membership Audit project and church members were reported in the October 15, 2023 annual Church Conference Booklet for ultimate removal from our membership rolls. This also includes some non-members who are no longer active in the life of our church.

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>In-Person Attendance</u>	<u>*On-Line Attendance</u>	<u>+ Operating Fund Offering</u>
Feb 23	52	23	\$2,743.00
Mar 02	41	29	\$1,981.00
Mar 09	50	28	\$8,243.00
Mar 16	60	29	\$1,243.58
Mar 23	48	(will report next month)	\$2,079.00
Mar 30	(will report all data next month)		

+ Needed weekly to meet 2025 Budget: \$4,282.62

* On-line attendance shows the number of unique viewers, but may not capture accurate number of people if more than one person is viewing the service from one location.

"Growing in Faith" Capital Campaign Account: Balance reported in last month's Newsletter was \$34,074.79. Since then, we received interest of \$1.35 and paid \$916.66 to AWM Electric for various electrical upgrades. Our balance as of March 26, 2025 is \$33,159.48 (of that amount, the "furnace replacement donation funds" that remain are \$5,424.27).

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The Caribou Ecumenical Food Pantry is in need of the following items:
 Any type of pasta, peanut butter, jelly, marshmallow fluff and breakfast cereals. Donations may be brought to the church on Sunday and placed in the marked box in the Narthex OR
 Monday/Wednesday/Friday from 9am to 2pm. Thank you!
 Monetary donations are always welcome!

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).



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, you may bring them to the church and we will take them to the Redemption Center.

We did not pick up any donations for March, so our proceeds remain at \$1,157.45! Thank you for your support of this project! Just a reminder that these monies are used to cover operating expenses.

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 our ministries.

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 Shirley Bowman (493-1039), 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 Shirley Bowman.

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 Shirley Bowman for more information on giving options.

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Here are the links for our April Sunday Worship Services at 10:00am:

- April 6 - <https://youtube.com/live/mlHM2ciAA58>
- April 13 - <https://youtube.com/live/BTULeP5EV-8>
- April 20 - <https://youtube.com/live/nUnjvsTfI-8>
- April 27 - <https://youtube.com/live/x93w9XaanSM>

The Caribou Assembly of God Church offers "Friday Nite Meals" and they recently expanded this outreach program to offer hot meals to more households in the area. In order to receive these meals, you must call on Monday of every week if you want a meal for that Friday. Please call Diane at 207-496-0373. You may also pick-up your own meal(s) or eat-in. Deliveries are made to Rose Acre residents or those in town (Caribou).

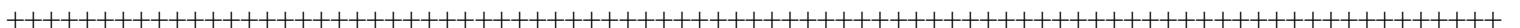
Melonie Carlson, our Lay Leader, made the following announcement during our Worship Service on Sunday, March 16th:

"I have been asked to make the following announcement on behalf of SPRC this morning for Debbie Barnes who is unable to be here today. Bishop Bickerton intends to appoint Pastor Benjamin Daggett to Gray Memorial United Methodist Church beginning July 1st, 2025. This morning this same announcement is being made at both the St. Luke's United Methodist Church in Derry, NH and the Pleasant Street United Methodist Church in Salem, NJ.

Pastor Ben, as he likes to be referred to, has been a co-pastor at both churches since 2020 as a provisional elder.

He comes from a small town in CT, and came to the ministry over time. His journey began as an exchange student in Brazil in high school, then again as an exchange student in college in Argentina. He has worked as a medical interpreter in MA, before being called to do mission work with former street kids in Brazil, Venezuela and Texas. It was then he was called to seminary and full time ministry.

Pastor Ben is aware of many of the dynamics and challenges in our community. He is excited about having a full-time appointment to our church. He is a recent divorcee and has family in the area. After meeting with Pastor Ben, the members of SPRC were very impressed with all he has to offer Gray Memorial and we look forward to welcoming him to our church."



The NOW Committee. Many of you have heard the name. You have seen us at many church events in one capacity or another. For those that may be new to the church or our committee, I'd like to explain who and what we are.

At one time, our committee was known as the Missions and Evangelism Committee. That defined our purpose, but not our focus. We realized with the insight of Pastor Richard Rego, that we were an example of Methodism and that we embrace our faith through love, grace and service to others.

Our committee then evolved to become N.O.W., to Nurture, provide Outreach, and Witness the various aspects of evangelism and purpose in serving our church family and local community. To that end, we help promote and sponsor activities both within the church and the local community.

In the coming months, our committee will assist the church with refreshments during Holy Week. Beginning May 5th, the NOW committee is sponsoring a photography class being led by Sandy Pethick. On the weekend of May 16th-17th, we will have our annual Spring Fling Perennial Sale. We are in hopes that other groups and committees within our church will help make this a truly church-wide event.

If you are interested in knowing more about the NOW Committee, have an idea for Outreach for our church or are interested in any of the upcoming events, please reach out and let us know. Our meetings are also open to all.

Thank you,
Melonie Carlson (Chair)

UPCOMING EVENTS:



The Guest Services Team is hosting a "Spring Has Sprung" Event on Saturday, April 5th from 8am to 3pm. This event will include: selling prefilled Easter Baskets, creating your own baskets and there will also be some baskets to bid on! Also, items to decorate for Easter & Spring!
Breakfast served from 8am - 10am.
A "Car Hop" Lunch of hamburgers, French Fries and a drink from 11am to 1pm.
All proceeds will go towards church facility safety upgrades.



Spaghetti Supper

All proceeds to benefit the
Caribou Ecumenical Food Pantry
In-Person Dining or Take Outs
SATURDAY – April 26, 2025
4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Tickets: \$10 per meal

Caribou Assembly of God Activity Center
Sweden Street, Caribou

Menu includes salad, spaghetti, garlic bread, and dessert



FLOWERS FOR EASTER – April 20, 2025

The Worship Committee invites you to order or purchase your own plants/flowers and bring/deliver them to the church for display on Easter Sunday.
Flowers are to be brought in or delivered on Friday, April 18th from 9am-noon or at 1:00pm on Saturday, April 19th when Worship Committee members are here to arrange them for the Easter Sunday Service the next day.
If the following information is provided by Wednesday, April 16th, it will be listed in the Easter Sunday Bulletin.

IN MEMORY OF: _____

IN HONOR OF: _____



Come Join Our Photography Class!

Presenter: Sandra Pethick **Class Limit:** 12

Snap and Shoot: Photography Basics is a fun and interactive photography class designed to help you master a better understanding of the basics of photography, including composition, lighting, and the camera settings. Perfect for beginners and enthusiasts looking to boost your confidence behind the lens, develop your creative eye, and discover a photographic style. No prior experience is required – just a willingness to learn and explore your artistic side. So, pack up your camera or bring your phone and come join us for some fun!

When: On Monday: May 5,12,19, June 2,9,16,23,30 **Time:** 1:00 -2:30 p.m.

Where: Gray Memorial United Methodist Church

Donation: \$10.00

Needed for Class:

Your Camera or Phone (Which ever your have) and a 3pronged 2pocket Folder

YES! I am interested in taking this class:

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

SPECIAL KODAK MOMENTS!



Sunday, March 16th - Leland R. Frost with a special cake in honor of the dedication of a new Memorial Fund - "The Bertrum & Erma Frost and Leland R. Frost Fund" - established by the Board of Trustees.



Church Council Minutes March 20, 2025

Members Present: Roy Alden (chair), Pastor Rich Rego, Debbie Barnes, Bobbi Pelletier, Diane Fitzpatrick, Shirley Bowman, Cheryl Martin, Melonie Carlson, David DeMerchant, Mary Lou Brown

The meeting was opened at 1:00pm with a prayer by Pastor Rich.

Opening Question: As Pastor Rich transitions into retirement, what were some of the transitions we have made at some times in our lives? Bobbi and Melonie mentioned moving to Caribou for new jobs or a spouse's new job. They shared what it was like to now be in a place and church where they didn't know anyone. They all felt blessed to be welcomed into the family at Gray Memorial. Both Dave and Diane mentioned the transitions they encountered upon marriage and beginning a new life. Diane agreed with Dave that starting out "knowing nothing" and having to learn together with their spouses was an awakening!

Financial Statements:

- Shirley submitted her report which showed the total receipts for February to be \$13, 130.48.
- Bobbi reported the ending checkbook balance for February was \$1, 749.31, which was a negative amount due to our expenses exceeding our income. However, we do have a healthy checkbook balance of \$32,074.64 due to "special fund" line items. She also mentioned that we are two months behind in Mission Shares. Total expenses for February were \$15,683.12. Attendance was down a bit in January and February, which was probably due to weather and illness.

Special Reports:

- Melonie announced that the NOW Committee is planning an event to coincide with the City-Wide Yard Sale on May 16 and 17. A garden theme is being planned with a luncheon also being provided. Donations of plants will be welcomed and the plant sale will be held outside. Roy asked about the possibility of having a yard sale at the same time. Since this would be too much for the NOW Committee to take on, Roy will work on having some other committee sponsor it.
- Melonie also mentioned that she will be writing an article for the newsletter that outlines the purpose of the NOW Committee and how it can be utilized in the church happenings.
- Debbie reported that there will be Transition Workshops held on-line through Zoom on April 26th at 9:00am and again on May 7th at 6:00pm. A Transition Team for both Pastor Rich and Pastor Ben will be developed soon. Pastor Rich offered to send the 2024 transition materials to Debbie.
- A question was raised concerning how the Guest Services Committee should be reporting to the Church Council. Since they are a subcommittee of the Trustees, a report could be submitted through the Trustees.
- Cheryl reported that the Education Committee is in status quo at this time until the Safer Sanctuary training will be held on April 30th. Colleen Harmon will be guiding this training with a series of three videos. This session starts at 5pm and will last 3 hours. Pastor Rich mentioned that Grant Memorial may want to join in with us for this training. A lady named Shannon may present a segment on special needs. The Red Cross, CPR, and First Aid training will be done later.
- Bobbi reported on the issue raised at last month's meeting concerning the billing and receipts for propane and oil deliveries from Dead River. She learned that they were being sent to the church's old email address.

- Bobbi reported that she can call in May to get the church's account set up on a budget plan starting in June, which will avoid the higher bills during the winter months.
- Bobbi mentioned the need for our church use policy forms to be updated and followed. Right now, the policy pertains to external groups wishing to make use of our building for events. Bobbi will devise a policy for internal use which will be given to the Trustees and the Pastor. She stressed the importance of the policy being followed by everyone so that there is no conflict in scheduling events. It was suggested that the request forms should be submitted six to eight weeks in advance of the event planned. Once the form has been submitted, there should be no changes made in dates, times or activities happening during the events.
- Bobbi asked the committee if there were any suggestions concerning a gift to present to Margaret Cyr from the church on her last day with us, which will be Easter Sunday. The committee decided to present her with a framed Holub painting of our church. It will also have a small engraved plaque attached to it to recognize and thank her for her many years of service as our choir director and organist.
- Bobbi reported that after Roy Alden told her he'd spoken with Lukas Lagasse recently about playing for our worship services, she talked with Lukas about our need for an organist/pianist and perhaps a new choir director. He is currently playing for the Gustaf Adolph Lutheran Church in New Sweden (and sometimes other church on special occasions), but may consider coming here if we could match or exceed what he receives there. She gave Debbie Barnes the information and a phone number for Lukas.
- Pastor Rich mentioned his concern for our community in light of the fact that there are currently eight drug houses in town, and the possibility of the Food Pantry having to close if money and food supplies are not forthcoming. He would like us to consider what we can do as a church.

The next meeting will be held on April 17th at **2:00pm**.

Diane Fitzpatrick, Secretary

Committee/Group Reports provided during March:

Aroostook Cluster of the United Methodist Churches Meeting Minutes for March 6, 2025

The meeting came to order at 9:00 am with the following present via Zoom. Victor Han, Mary Miller, Paula Lilley, Rich Rego, Sue Michaud, Joyce Kang, Carolyn Kimball, Melonie Carlson, Tracy Reeves, John DeFelice and Sue Brown.

Victor welcomed everyone and Mary led us in a time of devotions based on Gift Economies beginning with a reading about serviceberries – an abundance of gift from the land, along with air, rain, and all gifts of nature. Gifts we share with others are all part of gift economies. What might gift economies look like on a larger scale. Mary shared her personal experience of how gift economy had meant so much to her recently. In our current climate, she encouraged us all to focus on where we can all be part of sharing to do our part to help others and help to reduce the fear that seems to be all around us. Focus: Intentional kindness, reciprocity, gratitude and whatever we can do to help others.

Secretary's Report

The minutes of the February 6th meeting were presented. Motion to approve the minutes as presented was made by Tracy and seconded by Sue M. Motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Paula reported that there has been no activity on our account this month. Our current checkbook balance is \$453.10. Motion to approve the report was made by Tracy and seconded by Mary. Motion carried unanimously. Thank you, Paula.

2025 St. Apollonia Festival of Trees

Sue B. reported that the committee met and would like to offer up the theme “Fruits of the Spirit.” The committee is recommending that each church provide gift certificates/cards of their choosing and then wrap them in Christmas packaging to be placed under the tree. Victor suggested that we have a listing of the types of certificates for attendees to see. Ideas for ornaments were discussed and Sue B. will send a link to the fabric to see if folks would like to use that for a tree skirt or table runner or decorations or....

Pulpit Exchange

Victor has assigned those willing to participate on March 30th as follows:

- Tracy → Mars Hill - Service time 9:00am
- Mary → Grant Memorial – Service time 10:30am
- Joyce → Gray Memorial – Service time 10:00
- John → Houlton – Service time 11:00am
- Sue → Hodgdon – Service time 9:00am
- Richard → Mapleton – Service time 10:30am
- Victor → Lidstone Memorial - Service time 9:00am

That day is also UMCOR Sunday for those churches wishing to accept a special offering for the United Methodist Committee on Relief.

Aldersgate Day Service

Saturday, May 24th – 6:00pm Aldersgate Day Service at Grant Memorial UMC. Tracy is working on the service. It was discussed how to use the offering from this service and tabled until the next meeting pending Victor’s conversation regarding possibly having Bishop Bickerton at that service. Please let Tracy know of any music/dance that your church would be willing to share at this service. If you have your name for Discipleship Recognition, please let Sue B. know so that the certificates can be printed and given at the at the Aldersgate Day Service.

Spring Gathering

The Cluster members and their families are invited to meet at Grant Memorial UMC at 2:00pm on June 8th We will share a potluck meal as we bid Godspeed to Tracy and Rich on their respective retirements.

Sharing Mission and Outreach Ideas

Joyce shared progress on their pen pal program with seniors/nursing home residents and school children. Others shared ongoing outreach to the Mission Train, Backpacks for Kids, prayer shawls, and handheld prayer quilts.

New Business

Welcoming new pastors

We will discuss a possible breakfast meeting sometime in September to welcome any new clergy.

Joys and concerns

John shared that his ankle surgery has failed and will need it completely redone. His recovery will be about 6 months. John is discouraged and asked for prayer and may need to reach out for help with the church as he takes this journey again. After sharing joys and concerns, Rich led us in prayer.

Next meeting: Thursday, April 3rd via Zoom at 9:00am

Devotions for next meeting: Victor

Meeting adjourned at 10:30 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Brown

Sue Brown Secretary

Aroostook Cluster Council of United Methodist Churches

Education Committee Minutes February 19, 2025

The meeting came to order with the following members present: Cheryl Martin (chair), Diane Fitzpatrick, Melonie Carlson, Roy Alden, Debbie Nichols, Mary Theriault, Alaina Pethick.

Cheryl welcomed everyone and thanked them for being willing to be a part of this much needed committee. She asked if there was someone willing to take attendance and keep minutes of the meetings and Mary offered to do this.

New Business

❖ Meetings

It was decided that the committee would meet on the second Friday of each month at 9:30.

❖ Sunday School Program

- There will be two Sunday School groups ~ Pre-K -3rd grade and 4th grade up.
- We will be reaching out for volunteers to teach each of these groups. We are hoping to have enough teachers so that each person will only have to teach once a month so as not to miss all of the worship services. Diane and Mary offered to teach the younger group and Alaina and Roy the older children. We are hoping to have at least two more volunteers for each group. Cheryl will be presenting this need at our Sunday service.
- Judson informed Cheryl that volunteers will have to undergo background checks as well as the Safe Sanctuary Course prior to teaching. Debbie will provide information on this for us.
- At this point we will not be ordering any programs due to the number of children we have attending. The Worship Committee is ordering children's bulletins for two age groups which will suffice for now.

❖ Order of Events

- Children's Moment ~ Pastor Rich will continue with this. We might need volunteers at some point. (Melonie shared some websites that might come in handy ~ Bible Gateway, Discipleship Ministries)

- Children go downstairs and meet as a whole group where they will participate in music. (Ideas ~ Cheryl has Wee Sing materials, Diane has Dan Shaw cds, Alaina has instruments, Melonie mentioned bells that are available.)
- Children will break into groups for lessons.

❖ Youth Group

- Bob Keller has expressed an interest in forming a youth group. He has mentioned that meeting in a coffee shop in town might be an option. It was voiced that there should be two adults in attendance in order to follow the Safe Sanctuary guidelines.

❖ Easter Egg Hunt

- It was mentioned that it might be nice to have an egg hunt for the children after the Sunrise Service breakfast. This might bring more children to the service. (Further discussion to follow.)

Our next meeting will be held on March 14th at 9:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Theriault

+++++

FINANCE & STEWARDSHIP REPORTS:

From Financial Secretary:

The following is the total church offering for February:

Regular Offering	\$11,481.58
Loose Offering	193.00
<u>Subtotal-Regular Offering</u>	<u>\$11,674.58</u>

Reimbursements:

<u>Education - Discovery</u>	<u>23.00</u>
Subtotal-Reimbursements	\$23.00

Special Funds for Church Use:

Coffee Fellowship	95.00
Bottle Redemption	7.90
Valentine's Dinner	865.00
<u>Community Support</u>	<u>465.00</u>
Subtotal Funds for Church Use	\$1,432.90

Special Funds Not for Church Use: .00

Grand Total: \$13,130.48

From Treasurer:

Beginning Balance	\$1,713.33
2025 Operating income	11,674.58
Bottle Redemption	7.90
Valentine' Day Dinner Proceeds	571.59
Interest	1.46
Less EFT fee	(35.05) VANCO fees (EFT deposits)
<u>Less Expenses</u>	<u>(15,683.12)</u>
Ending Balance	(\$1,749.31)

Total "Special Funds for Church Use", which included many lines for various donations, total \$33,758.87. The "Special Funds NOT for Church Use" total \$65.08. Details are available in complete report packages available at the church.

* \$25,000.00 invested with Thompson/Hamel LLC for Memorial Garden on June 29, 2017. Investment cost of \$1,073.78; withdrew \$3,000 in March 2021 & \$3,000 in May 2023; as of February 28, 2025, on-line report shows ending value = \$27,049.88.

The Capital Account Money is as follows as of February 28th: Previous Balance - \$37,489.79; Deposits - \$1.35; Expenses of \$3,415.00 (Sprinkler System 5-yr inspection & service work); Current Balance - \$34,076.14. (Includes funds earmarked for Furnace Fund - \$5,397.33; Emergency Fund Donations = \$21,104.23).

Expenditures for February 2025:

Programs:

Education	(\$ 9.00)
Office	491.73
NOW Team	78.80
<u>Programs Sub-Total</u>	<u>\$ 561.53</u>

Trustee Expenses:

Church Utilities	\$1,254.58
Parsonage Utilities	800.74
Telephone/Internet	194.96
Property Insurance	1,707.43
Snow Removal	720.00
Maintenance/Cleaning	152.79
Technology	16.95
<u>Trustee Sub-Total</u>	<u>\$4,847.45</u>

Staff-Parish Relations Expenses:

Pastor's Salary	\$4,420.00
Health Insurance	1,788.83
<u>Pastor's Total Comp</u>	<u>\$6,208.83</u>
Choir Director	200.00
Treasurer	166.67
Church Office Administrator	833.33
Custodian	1,625.00
<u>Maine PFML Deductions</u>	<u>(74.96)</u>
<u>Total Other Salaries</u>	<u>\$2,750.04</u>

Other Expenses:

Guest & Substitute Staff	\$200.00
FICA	216.61
<u>Workman's Comp</u>	<u>66.64</u>
<u>Total Other Expenses</u>	<u>\$482.75</u>

Sub-Total SPRC Expenses \$9,441.62

New England Conference:

<u>Pastor Pension Benefit</u>	<u>832.52</u>
NEC Total	\$ 832.52
<u>Grand Total Expenses</u>	<u>\$15,683.12</u>

Weekly Average Needed for 2025: \$4,282.62 (52 Sundays)

Mission Shares = \$2,387.33/mo. As of EOM February, 2 months behind - \$4,774.66.

Note: Dead River bills for church also include charges for propane deliveries

Balances as of February 28: Church = \$2,062.26=7; Parsonage = (\$1,626.48)

2025 YTD REVIEW – February 2025

Annual Budget	\$222,696.29
Required Monthly	\$18,558.02
Required Weekly	\$4,282.62

February:

Target = \$37,116.05; Beginning Operating Fund Balance (Jan only) - \$924.51; Operating Fund Income from F/S YTD - \$28,779.58; Special Funds Used for Operating Fund Expenses YTD = \$3,917.08; Total Expenses YTD - \$35,334.80; Unpaid Mission Shares = \$4,774.66.

An aggregate of in-person and virtual attendance shows monthly average of 78 and 83 YTD.

=====

NOW Team Meeting - March 12, 2025
Nurture - Outreach - Witness

In attendance: Sandy Pethick, Bobbi Pelletier, Kathy Panaro, Melonie Carlson, Cheryl Martin, Alaina Pethick, Ruthann Weeks
Absent: Karen Rego, Rhonda Cyr, Pastor Rich Rego

Meeting was called to order at 10:04 am.

Opening Prayer - Ruthann

(Sandy will do the opening prayer next month.)

Acceptance of Minutes -

Ruthann moved to accept the minutes as updated via email. Sandy seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Treasurer's Report -

Cheryl provided the following report.

Treasurer's Report March 11, 2025

Beginning Balance		\$2596.04
1-31-25	Interest	\$0.50
2-05-25	Deposit	\$63.30
2-12-25	GMUMC Community Support (Check #540)	(\$200.00)
2-28-25	Interest	\$0.40

Deposit Details

2-05-25	from GMUMC 2024 Special Funds	
	\$13.30 - Apollonia Festival of Trees	
	\$50.00 - NOW Team	

Outstanding Debts

Camp Mechuwana	(\$500.00)
Balance 3-11-25	\$2460.24
	(\$1960.24 - operating budget)

Gift Card Update 3-11-25

1 restaurant gift card \$50.00

(2 Hannaford gift cards \$50.00 each and 1 Visa Debit card \$55.59 were donated to the Caribou Ecumenical Food Pantry.)

Kathy made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report as amended. Sandy seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Nurture, Outreach, Witness - Review vision and foundational goals

Melonie read the NOW Team missions statement and asked us to reflect on it and the goal of our work.

While we have seen an improvement, there still seems to be a misconception of the purpose of our committee. After some discussion, it was decided that Melonie would speak with the church council and other committees and also write a segment for the church newsletter to help explain our goals.

Increase church awareness and solicit help

In continuation of our discussion of the previous topic, we next talked about how to increase volunteers from outside our group for the events we host. We decided that for each event, there will be an announcement during service welcoming outside volunteers and expressing the need for their help.

There was also a related discussion of the importance of planning events on the church calendar by checking for conflicts beforehand and to make sure other groups coordinate their own volunteers.

Church Calendar

- Photograph Class - Sandy Pethick
 - Sandy presented her proposal for a spring photography class called Snap and Shoot: Photography Basics. After discussing the details, it was decided that the class will run for 8 weeks beginning May 5 through June 30 (excluding Memorial Day) on Mondays at 1:30-3:00pm. There will be a limit of 10 people attending. The cost of the class is \$10/person.
 - There will be an announcement in the April newsletter. Sandy is working on a sign-up flyer to go in the bulletins. The sign-up deadline will be April 20 (Easter Sunday).
- Holy Week - food/server volunteers
 - Bobbi brought our volunteer schedule from last year as a template. We will be providing refreshments all week this time. A sign-up sheet was passed around for volunteers to bring in food and to serve each day. Bobbi will email a copy to everyone.
- Spring Fling/City Wide Yard Sale and other events
 - This topic was also on our agenda, but was tabled until our next meeting.
 - There will be an announcement regarding donations of plant clippings, garden items, etc. on Sunday, March 23

Updates

- Tablecloths
 - The pattern we originally picked was not available at the time the order was placed, so the ones we got are slightly different. The other pattern is available in another type of tablecloth, though.
- Penpals
 - The letters had not been picked up at the time of the meeting.
- Food Pantry
 - Ruthann shared that they are unsure of what they are going to get each week as of late. There has not been much meat in their deliveries.
- Visitor Bags
 - The visitor bags are put together and in the narthex. One has already been given out to a visitor last Sunday.

Additional Business

None at this time

Closing Prayer - Melonie

Our next regular meeting will be April 2 at 10 am.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:24 am.

Alaina Pethick, Secretary

Gray Memorial United Methodist Church

Board of Trustees Meeting

March 18, 2025

Present: David DeMerchant (chair), Judson Drake, Colleen Harmon, Deborah Nichols, Judi Greenier, Richard Clark, Pastor Rich Rego

Meeting convened at 1:05pm. Pastor Rich offered an opening prayer.

Secretary report: None. No February Meeting.

Treasurer Report – moved and accepted. Judi reminded us that 1) The Board of Trustees is required to vote on any liquidation of funds, and 2) All donations intended for the permanent fund and/or Trustees' funds should be made out to and come to the Trustees.

Judi's report showed the following balances for local accounts as of 3/18/25:

Organ Fund - \$2,484.34

Clock Account - \$536.49

Steeple Maintenance - \$1,023.12

Pastors Moving Account - \$100.75

* Board of Trustees Checking - \$7,865.91

Trustees' CD - \$11,720.72

Hazel Greenier Family Accessibility Fund - \$14,423.20

*Attachment shows there is \$3,929.25 in the checking account earmarked for Guest Services. Available funds in the Checking Account is \$3,766.66.

OLD BUSINESS

Projects for 2025 (change in priorities):

- 1) Because of projected increase in utility rates, we need to revisit the Solar Project. Judson will get new figures.
- 2) Computerized system to automate church heating, lights, doors, etc. Computer purchase was tabled until the price is established.

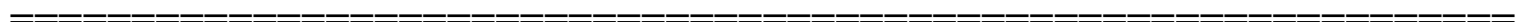
New Minister: Moving expenses will be less than usual, because he is single. Pastor Ben Daggett stated that he will move himself in a U-Haul as he is not bringing many items. Judson will touch base with him again, just to make sure.

ROUND TABLE The counters are doing a better job in securing the office door and making sure that one person is never left alone.

Guest Services - Discussion on safer sanctuaries.

Closing Prayer

Richard Clark provided these notes



Worship Committee Minutes March 14, 2025

Members Present: Bobbi Pelletier (chair), Pastor Rich Rego, Cheryl Martin, Diane Fitzpatrick, Gwen Ellinwood, Claire Hodgkins, Diana Locke, Margaret Cyr

The meeting was opened with prayer by Pastor Rich. Margaret also offered a lovely reading called "Putting Others First", based on Philippians 2: 3-4

Old Business:

- Bobbi reported that Aurora Barnum will play her flute, accompanied by Margaret Cyr, on Palm Sunday when Aurora will be Confirmed into Membership. The committee voted to purchase a Confirmation necklace and personalized pocket token for Aurora.
- Bobbi reported that Denise Hamlin suggested we designate our Mission Project to the Homeless Shelter in Presque Isle, as the schools have enough donations at this time. Judson will provide Bobbi with a list of the shelter's needs.
- As of today, there has been no report on a committee to address the organ. Pastor Rich will check with the Trustees at their meeting on Tuesday, March 18th.
- The Lenten devotionals that Bobbi ordered have arrived and were available on March 2nd.
- Bobbi reported on feedback on the Ash Wednesday Prayer Vigil. It was suggested that we should have provided more reading materials and soft music. There were a few open slots which Jud filled.
- Bobbi has ordered and received the palm crosses and will order the palm fronds and an altar arrangement for Palm Sunday sometime over the next week or so.
- Holy Week Noon-time services will be held on April 14 – 18. Father Tony from Holy Rosary will preach on Monday, Isaiah Lopez from The Seventh Day Advent will preach on Wednesday, and Pastor Rich will preach on Friday. Bobbi will reach out to Ron Rosser and Ellen Cleaves to see if they would be willing to serve on Tuesday and Thursday.
- A Good Friday service will be held at 6:00pm on April 18th. Pastor Rich asked that the altar be stripped during the noon service and during the 6:00pm service. He will replace the altar adornments between the two services.
- The NOW Committee will serve refreshments each day following the noon services.
- An Easter Sunrise Service will be held at 6:00am at the Caribou Nursing home with a breakfast provided by Jud to follow at the church. The Education Committee will be asked to provide an Easter Egg Hunt following the breakfast and before our regular worship service at 10:00am.
- Bobbi reported that we have enough gifts on hand for men that can be given on Father's Day. Bobbi circulated a catalog with gift suggestions for women. We decided on small tote bags that will be given to women on Mother's Day.

New Business:

- Bobbi reported that we have resumed providing children's bulletins for children in two age groups (ages 3+ and 7+). The children will also be provided clipboards, colored pencils, and crayons to use with the bulletins. We will need to designate someone to pass them out on Sunday mornings and have them returned to the pew in front of the cry room at the end of the service. There are several scripture bulletins offered each week, so Bobbi will choose the one we will utilize.
- The NOW Committee assisted the Guest Services team in serving and clean-up at the Shrove Tuesday supper on March 4th.
- Pastor Rich reported that Bob Keller and perhaps a few others will be joining the church on Easter Sunday.
- Communion will be held on Palm Sunday instead of on April 6th as Richard Clark will be preaching.
- Traditional coffee fellowship will not be held in the fellowship hall on Easter. There will, however, be cake, coffee, and punch served in the library following the service.

The next meeting will be held on Friday, April 4th, at 9:30am.

Gwen Ellinwood will offer devotions.

Diane Fitzpatrick, Secretary

LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENING IN APRIL 2025!!!

Wednesday	02	10:00am	NOW Committee Meeting
		12:00pm	Wesley Covenant Group
Friday	04	9:30am	Worship Committee Meeting
Saturday	05	TIME TBD	Guest Services "Spring Has Sprung" Event; Breakfast Luncheon

Sunday	06	10:00am	Worship; Fifth Sunday in Lent; Preaching: <u>Richard Clark</u>
Monday	07	11:30am	"Gray Gals" Pot-Luck Luncheon (Note date change)
		1:00pm	Prayer Shawl Ministry Meeting
Tuesday	08	6:00pm	Caribou Ecumenical Food Pantry Board Meeting at Pantry
Wednesday	09	12:00pm	Wesley Covenant Group
		6:00pm	Senior Choir Practice (note time change)
Thursday	10	1:00pm	SPRC Meeting
Friday	11	9:30am	Education Committee Meeting

Sunday	13	10:00am	Worship; Palm/Passion Sunday
Monday	14	12:00pm	Holy Week Ecumenical Service (Preaching - Father Tony Korir)
Tuesday	15	12:00pm	Holy Week Ecumenical Service (Preaching - Pastor Mark Kalata)
		6:00pm	Caribou Ecumenical Food Pantry Board Meeting at Pantry
Wednesday	16	12:00pm	Holy Week Ecumenical Service (Preaching - Isaias Lopez)
		6:00pm	Senior Choir Practice (note time change)
Thursday	17	12:00pm	Holy Week Ecumenical Service (Preaching - Ellen Cleaves)
		2:00pm	Church Council Meeting (note time change)
Friday	18	12:00pm	Holy Week Ecumenical Service (Preaching - Pastor Rich Rego)
		6:00pm	Good Friday Service (Preaching - Pastor Rich)

Sunday	20	6:00am	Easter Sunrise Service at Caribou Nursing & Rehab Center
		7:00am	Easter Breakfast in Fellowship Hall
		10:00am	Worship; Easter Day
Tuesday	22	1:00pm	Trustees Meeting
Wednesday	23	12:00pm	Wesley Covenant Group
Thursday	24	10:00am	<u>DEADLINE FOR ALL NEWSLETTER INPUT</u>
		1:00pm	Church Council Meeting
Saturday	26	8:00am	UMM Breakfast & Meeting
		9:00am	Transition Training On-line (also offered on May 7 th at 6pm)
		4:30-6pm	Caribou Ecumenical Food Pantry's Annual Spaghetti Supper Fundraiser at the Assembly of God Activity Center

Sunday	27	10:00am	Worship; Second Sunday of Easter; Preaching: <u>Cheryl Martin</u>
Wednesday	30	12:00pm	Wesley Covenant Group
		5:00pm	Safer Sanctuary Training

Note: Pastor Rich & Karen away April 3-6; They are taking vacation time from April 21 - April 27.