

October 2025



He has given me a new song to sing, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see what he has done and be amazed. They will put their trust in the LORD.

Psalm 40:3 (NLT)

Grace and Peace, Gray Memorial UMC!

I humbly request your prayers this October, as I am scheduled to go before the Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM) on the third full week of the month. During that week, I will travel to Rolling Ridge

Retreat Center in North Andover, MA, to be examined for ordination as an elder within the United Methodist Church. I am now a provisional elder, having passed the first exam in 2018. A rough equivalent to this experience from other realms of life might be going up for tenure as a professor or defending a thesis. In other words, it's an involved process.

Why do it, you may ask? Well, the short answer is, Jesus' love simply got hold of me and wouldn't let go. The Lord slowly and patiently wore away my defenses over a long-suffering and persistent road, until I found I could no longer resist God's claim of grace on my heart. Ever since I first entrusted my life to Jesus' care, the Holy Spirit has only deepened and widened my sense of awe and gratitude at the gift it is to be alive. And not only to be alive but also awakened, and awakening to Christ's love along the way.

That same love has bidden me climb up to expansive mountain vistas and carried me through lonesome valleys of dread. Along the way, "He has given me a new song to sing," like the psalmist declares in the words above. Consistently, remarkably, that song of love in Christ has shined most brightly through people. (!) That was the big surprise, for me, with Jesus. He restored my faith in God to work in and through people, even hurting and broken ones, like me. "We love because he first loved us," 1 John 4. In John 16 he says: "Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world." Through Christ, we too get to take part in love's overcoming, uplifting ways, by faith. That's a bit more of the short answer for what's bringing me back to Rolling Ridge. You, the folks of Gray Memorial UMC, who like me have your complexities and strengths and graces and foibles in all your glorious humanity, are an expression of God's great faithfulness in my life, and healing. You too are a big part of what's bringing me back to Rolling Ridge. I thank God for you, for how our paths have come together, and for your prayerful support through this time of sacred listening, prayer, and dialogue.

In Christ's Love,

Pastor Ben



The Caribou Clock

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Greetings from the Church Office!

Several members of our church attended the annual Church Conference on Saturday, September 6th at Grant Memorial UMC, along with members from Grant, Lidstone, Limestone and Mapleton Churches. There are a few of our conference booklets available if you wish to see what was discussed. You can also view the conference using this link: <https://www.facebook.com/GrantMemorialUMC/videos/740254492342544>

As part of this year's conference, quite a few members of our church will be removed from our membership rolls due to either no contact information or non-response to two audit letters sent in August 2023 and August 2024. This will take me quite some time to record all these removals in the various records, both hardcopy records and our Servant Keeper database. Once all that is accomplished, I will then publish a new Church Directory! I know everyone will look forward to having a current directory (as will I)!

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, October 23rd!!*

Until next month.....

Bobbi Pelletier
Church Office Administrator



August 31st and September Prayer Requests

Prayer Concerns: Dale, Lu & Debbie Sharp; Leland Frost, Ivan Shaw, Sylvia Akeley, Jeff Franklin, Richard Carde, Shirley Bowman, Nancy Jones, William Autrey, Dasha Creeley, James Stuart, Rodney Nichols, Peter Doody, Sheila Belyea, Ruth Ross, Richard Clark, Dave Belyea (broken vertebrae in back from fall), Don DeMerchant, Phyllis Sykes, Bess Thornton, Kara Thayer

Deaths: Family of Allison Davidson; Family of Mae Soucy; Family of Robert Wunderlich; Family of Charlie Kirk

Other: Will Barnum & Ben Goodwin - fighting wildfires in Washington state/safe travels home; Jillian Jandreau - safe trip home; Happy 96th Birthday to Ruth Ross!

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

REMINDERS

<u>DATE</u>	<u>Greeter</u>	<u>Pianist</u>	<u>Liturgist</u>	<u>Counter</u>	<u>Coffee Fellowship</u>
Oct 05	Roberta Walton	Mary Lou Brown	Aurora Barnum	Mary Ouellette	Trustees
Oct 12	Charlotte Willey	Mari-Jo Hedman	David Belyea	Mary Ouellette	NOW Committee
Oct 19	Dave Belyea	Judi Greenier	Kim Vandenburg	Mary Ouellette	Church Council
Oct 26	Sally Carde	Mari-Jo Hedman	Richard Clark	Ruthann Weeks	Worship Committee

Usher Coordinator for October ~ Debbie Barnes
Communion Stewardess for October ~ Diane Fitzpatrick
Communion Bread for October ~ Diane Fitzpatrick

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

Doody, Carole – new email address: cldoody53@gmail.com

* * October Birthdays & Anniversaries * *

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

Remember your birthday & anniversary by making a special offering!



2	Jordan Franklin	24	Elida Frederick
3	Marjie Edgecomb, Amy Wischmann	26	Joelene Boucher, Denise Levesque
4	Betheny Anderson, Nancy Porter	27	Sandra Pethick, Drenna Veilleux
5	Vivian Bell, Millie Pangburn	28	Barb Brehm
13	Ivan (Patrick) Shaw, Mary Theriault	30	Dean Rauch, Ruthann Weeks
16	Dale Sharp	31	Bill Thomas
21	Jay Bullard, Steven Doody		



12	Karen & Rich Rego	28	Lu & Dale Sharp
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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

<u>Worship Attendance and General Fund Offerings:</u>			
<u>Date</u>	<u>In-Person Attendance</u>	<u>*On-Line Attendance</u>	<u>+ Operating Fund Offering</u>
Aug 24	55	31	\$1,890.00
Aug 31	38	12	\$1,383.00
Sep 07	57	24	\$5,280.00
Sep 14	52	35	\$1,970.00
Sep 21	53	(will report next month)	\$2,546.00
Sep 28		(will report 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 \$32,988.99. Since then, we received interest of \$1.42 and paid \$1,800.00 to AM Construction for installing the new entrance door. Our balance as of September 26th is \$31,190.41 (of that amount, the "furnace replacement donation funds" that remain are \$5,424.27).



The Caribou Ecumenical Food Pantry is in need of the following items: Any type of jam or jelly, marshmallow fluff, adult cereals and canned vegetables. Donations may be brought to the church on Sunday and placed in the marked box in the Narthex OR Monday through Friday from 9am to 12pm. 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).

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The Worship Committee is resuming their Mission Project to provide supplies to the schools. These are the items needed: shampoo, soap, deodorants, toothpaste, notebooks, bookbags, folders, colored pencils. They also have a “snack closet” the kids come to quite often for items like gummies, cheez nips, trail mix; any single serve items, water, juice boxes. Marked boxes are in the library. Please consider donating to this project! 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, you may bring them to the church and we will take them to the Redemption Center.

We received \$7.00 in donations for September, so our proceeds are now \$1,311.95! 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.

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

Oct. 5 - <https://youtube.com/live/sahBsQBK8Vw>

Oct. 12 - <https://youtube.com/live/8oGSYPk7AUo>

Oct. 19 - https://youtube.com/live/zP_bMI_Z-14

Oct. 26 - <https://youtube.com/live/wbteKDNdgpw>

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 you own meal(s) or eat-in. Deliveries are made to Rose Acre residents or those in town (Caribou).

UPCOMING EVENTS:



The NOW Committee is sponsoring their famous “Cookie Booth” at this year’s Caribou 51st Annual Arts & Craft Fair at the

High School on Sat/Sun, October 18 & 19.

Hours are 10am to 4pm each day. They need volunteers to work at the booth (2-hour shifts) and make LOTS of cookies as this has been a very successful fundraiser for many years. We also invite anyone to make dog treats too, which were a big hit last year!

All proceeds will go towards the committee’s various mission projects.

PICTURES FROM OUR WORSHIP SERVICES



Sunday, September 14th - Our Senior Choir, led by Mari-Jo Hedman!

Front row: Beth Alden, Diana Locke, Bobbi Pelletier
Second row: Marjie Edgecomb, Claire Hodgkins, Wendy Bossie
Back row: Del Ramey, Pastor Ben Daggett, Melonie Carlson, Cheryl Martin, Pam Thompson

(photo by Mary Ouellette)

A different view of our Senior Choir and Director on September 14th – Neal Genz took this picture from the balcony!
We welcome Pastor Ben Daggett and Pam Thompson to our choir!





Sunday, September 21st – Pastor Ben shared some toys/gadgets that the children can play with while sitting at the new “Pray Ground” table in the library. Cheryl Martin thanked the congregation for their support as the Education Committee plans to start Sunday School classes in the near future.



Sunday, September 21st – Pastor Ben dedicated prayer shawls, baby blankets & hat sets, pocket prayer shawls and new items (“onesies”) during the Offertory time.

Sunday, September 21st – Mary Lou Brown played the organ while Judi Greenier played the piano during the service!



Announcements from our Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC):

Gray Memorial has an immediate opening for a Financial Secretary. Shirley Bowman has expressed her desire to step down from this position and move on to other plans. Shirley has done a wonderful job over the last three plus years as well as during a previous tenure. She will be greatly missed in this position.

The Financial Secretary position oversees the tracking and reporting of financial gifts to Gray Memorial. It requires weekly deposit reports, a monthly report to the Church Council, two reports annually to donors, and tracking the results of the annual stewardship campaign, all using a computerized software program. Training assistance would be provided. The position also requires a general knowledge of bookkeeping, a detail-oriented work standard as well as an ability to maintain very strict privacy about individual donors and their accounts. The Financial Secretary is expected to attend the monthly Church Council meetings to address any issues brought up relative to the monthly reports.

If you, or anyone you know, might be interested in this position a formal job description and/or a job application can be requested from the church office or from any SPRC member (Melonie Carlson, Cheryl Martin, Kathy Panaro, Dave Belyea, Mary Lou Brown, or Debbie Barnes).

When you have a chance, please express your thanks to Shirley for the great job she has done for our church and wish her many blessings in her future.

Pastor Ben wants to meet with YOU!
Pastor Ben would like to meet in small groups with church members to help him get to know the membership better as well as to help membership get to know him better. He would like to do these meet and greets around the end of September or early October. There will be a sign-up poster available soon with a variety of meeting dates and times to choose from so hopefully everyone will be able to fit a meeting into their schedules. He looks forward to successful meetings and hopes church members and affiliates will sign up for a meet and greet session with him, so please watch for the sign-up poster soon.

Debbie Barnes, SPRC Chair

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Special Church Council Meeting – Sunday ~ August 31, 2025

Members Present: Roy Alden (chair), Diane Fitzpatrick, Debbie Barnes, Dave DeMerchant, Bobbi Pelletier, Melonie Carlson, Cheryl Martin, Pastor Ben Daggett

This special Church Council Meeting was called to receive SPRC’s 2026 Pastoral Compensation recommendation. The meeting occurred after the August 31st service in the memorial garden.

Debbie Barnes outlined the proposed compensation as follows:

Base Salary	\$53,000
<u>Social Security</u>	<u>\$2,000</u>
Total:	\$55,000
Pastor Reimbursements:	\$3,700
Housing Exclusion	\$1,000

Roy asked for a motion. Melonie Carlson made motion to accept the compensation as presented. Cheryl Martin seconded the motion. Members present unanimously approved.

Then the subject of the upgrade to Servant Keeper was introduced. Bobbi had sent an email to the Church Council members that indicated it would be in our best interest to pay a monthly fee for the upgraded version in order to retain the database, receive periodic updates and safeguard the database as the provider will do automatic backups for us and be available to restore the database in case anything happened. Cost for the “Good” plan is \$69.99 per month or \$769.89 for the year (1 month free). Dave DeMerchant made a motion to authorize the upgrade. Melonie Carlson seconded the motion. The members present unanimously approved.

Minutes provided by Bobbi Pelletier

Church Council Minutes September 18, 2025

Members Present: Roy Alden (chair), Pastor Ben Daggett, Diane Fitzpatrick, David DeMerchant, Cheryl Martin, Melonie Carlson, Bobbi Pelletier, Debbie Barnes

The meeting was opened at 1:00pm by Roy Alden. Pastor Ben offered devotions. He read from The Message, Ephesians 3; Paul’s Prayer of Intercession.

Roy’s open discussion question was: How does God’s grace empower and lead us to be a fruitful congregation? Following some discussion, Roy admonished us to look deeper inside ourselves to hear God’s grace and act on it. We are blessed to have Pastor Ben here with us to guide us in using our gifts to make a difference in other peoples’ lives.

Financial Statements:

- Debbie presented the financial secretary’s report. She highlighted offerings and special funds that have been received in the month of August. The total donations received for the month was \$28,211.4.
- Bobbi presented her report, which showed an ending balance for August to be \$2, 908.90 available in the Operating Budget account. She also reported that she paid one month of Mission Shares in August, using the \$500.00 that was being held in the “Special Funds for Church Use” lines. We are still five months behind.
- Bobbi passed out the “2026 Proposed Budget” spreadsheet and asked committee/group leaders to discuss at their next meetings and present their proposed budgets at the November 2026 Church Council meeting for discussion.

Committee Reports:

- SPRC: Debbie reported that the committee is looking for a new financial secretary.
- Bobbi reported on the new Servant Keeper Data Base. She was able to download the new version (Servant Keeper 8) successfully on September 17th.
- Education: Cheryl reported that a Pray Ground program will begin on Sunday, September 21st. A small table, chairs, and quiet toys will be dedicated during the Children’s Time on Sunday. They will be set up in a special place in the church library so that small children can have quiet things to do while still being among the congregation during the services. An adult will need to sit with the children while they are there during the service. Cheryl also reported on a new link to the Red Cross on-line training that must be completed before the class meets on September 25th.
- Trustees: Dave reported on several projects that the Trustees are involved in:
 - *The Trustees met with members of the Worship Committee to discuss items of concern regarding the security team guidelines.
 - *A new computer and printer have been approved for Pastor Ben’s use.
 - *The snowplowing contract needs to be sent out.
 - *A new hammer for the clock needs to be cast by the Amish.
 - *A new security system will be installed.
 - *A new projector is needed for Sunday services.
 - *The ceiling in the sanctuary needs painting.
 - *Pastor Ben has been received as a voting member of the Trustees.

Debbie mentioned that the speaker in the nursery is not working well. Dave will have this checked on.

Other Items:

- Roy asked about the yearly stewardship campaign and when it will begin. We expect that the campaign will begin sometime in October and run through November.
- Cheryl mentioned that David Abbott from the Foundation has announced some Q&A sessions on Stewardship Program – September 24 @ 12:30pm and October 30th @ 7pm, both via Zoom.
- Diane suggested that our church begin supporting Anderson Soares' Street Mission in Brazil. The committee members agreed and suggested that dedicated funds could be included in the Stewardship Campaign (perhaps add a line on the pledge cards for people to designate offerings to Anderson's ministry).
- Pastor Ben mentioned the need for more members on the Nominations Committee. He and Melonie are the only members serving at this time. Members are also needed on the SPRC and Auditing Committee.
- Pastor Ben mentioned that the Education Committee needs to be added to the slate of committees. Melonie said that it has been added.
- Bobbi will email each committee chair asking them to canvas their committee members to see who is willing to continue serving in 2026.
- Pastor Ben told us that he will be traveling to Rolling Ridge October 22 and 23 to interview for full elder.

The next meeting will be held on **Tuesday, October 21st at 3:00pm**, following the meeting of the Trustee.

Diane Fitzpatrick, Secretary

Committee/Group Reports provided to the Church Council during September:

Aroostook Cluster of the United Methodist Churches Meeting Minutes for September 4, 2025

The meeting came to order at 9:00 am with the following present via Zoom. Victor Han, Mary Miller, Paula Lilley, Sue Michaud, Joyce Kang, Melonie Carlson, Ben Daggett, Nicholas Perez, John DeFelice, Carolyn Kimball, James Choi, and Sue Brown.

Victor led us in introducing ourselves and welcoming Pastor Ben Daggett (Gray Memorial UMC) and Nicholas Perez (Grant Memorial UMC). Sue B. led us in a time of devotions about hospitality and welcome. She read from 1 Peter 4:9-11 and shared a devotion on honoring Christ through our interaction with others. Sue closed with prayer.

Secretary's Report

The minutes of the May 8th meeting were presented. Motion to approve the minutes as presented was made by Mary and seconded by Sue M. Motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Paula reported that the Aldersgate Day Service offering of \$443 has been sent to the Good Shepherd Food Bank. In addition, there have been \$80 in donations to the Cluster. Our current checkbook balance is \$538.10. Motion to approve the report was made by Joyce and seconded by John. Motion carried unanimously. Thank you, Paula.

2025 St. Apollonia Festival of Trees

Melonie will make ornaments and will share at our next meeting for our perusal. Sue B. requested permission to register our Cluster for this event and purchase a tree. Moved by Mary and seconded by Sue M. Unanimously approved. Reminder that we discussed each participating church provide gift cards to be wrapped in boxes and placed as gifts beneath the tree. Marie Bagley (Mapleton UMC) is working up fabric purchased by Sue B. for the tree.

Pulpit Exchange

Tabled until January.

Fall Cluster Service

Discussion on a fall service. It was decided to have a Cluster service at Houlton UMC on Sunday, November 2nd at 3:00pm. Victor and Joyce will begin to put together the service and will bring their ideas to our next meeting.

Cluster VBS

Joyce reported that the first cluster VBS was held in August and was very well attended. Next year the hope is to have it earlier in the summer (before school starts in some of our districts).

Aldersgate Day Service

This worship service, held on Saturday, May 24th at Grant Memorial UMC was enriching for all who participated as we shared the story of John and Charles Wesley. It was wonderful to have participation from the children (bell ringing, sacred dance). Mary mentioned how special it would be to have an even larger congregation to participate. The pick-up choir was appreciated by all. Joyce made a suggestion that we invite more musicians and young families to participate.

Service with Bishop Bickerton

The Bishop is available to come to the County on April 12, 2026.

Fall Cluster Gathering

Breakfast on September 16th at 9:00am at Governor’s in Presque Isle for those who can be present. Victor will contact Governor’s to try to reserve the back room.

New Business

Pastor Ben extended his invitation for folks to come hear the testimony of Anderson Soares at the luncheon after the Annual Church Conference on Saturday, Sept. 6th at approx. 12:30. Anderson is also doing a Q & A this evening, Sept. 4th at Gray Memorial at 5:00pm.

Sharing Mission and Outreach Ideas

As time was running short, we will share at our next meeting.

Joys and concerns

After sharing joys and concerns, John led us in prayer.

Next meeting: Thursday, October 2nd via Zoom at 9:00am

Devotions for next meeting: James

Meeting adjourned at 10:27 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Brown
Sue Brown
Secretary
Aroostook Cluster Council of United Methodist Churches

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**Education Committee Minutes
August 13, 2025**

The meeting came to order with the following members present: Cheryl Martin (chair), Diane Fitzpatrick, Roy Alden, Melonie Carlson, Alaina Pethick and Mary Theriault. Colleen Harmon was also in attendance to discuss Safer Sanctuaries/Red Cross training.

Cheryl opened the meeting with a prayer.

Diane made a motion to accept the minutes of the July meeting with Melonie seconding it.

New Business

❖ Sunday School Program

- Some Sunday School materials were shared that we will take a closer look at and discuss in further detail at our next meeting.
- The starting date to the Sunday School program will most likely be in October once we have all the necessary items in place.

❖ Safer Sanctuary/Red Cross Training

- The dates chosen for the Safer Sanctuary training were Wednesday, September 10th or Thursday September 11th, 5:00-8:00, depending on the evening that most people will be able to attend.
- Judd popped in to answer some questions for us concerning the Red Cross training versus the American Heart Association training. The major concern voiced is to make sure that the certifications we receive will be under an insurance umbrella that will cover us. Below is detailed information from Judd:

Red Cross Training - The provider or instructor is responsible for obtaining and maintaining their own insurance coverage, which typically includes: General liability insurance and professional liability insurance. (or medical malpractice insurance) They need to provide a certificate of insurance.

- As a result of this discussion it was agreed that we would go with the Red Cross training unless some other concern arises. Colleen is going to check on Wednesday, September 17th and Thursday September 18th for possible dates.
- These trainings as well as the dates will be discussed with congregation members in hopes of having as many participants as possible.

Other

- ❖ The Aroostook Cluster Vacation Bible School will be held tomorrow in Houlton from 10-4 with three children attending from our church.

Our next meeting will be held on September 10th at 9:30 where we will decide on a Sunday School start date, finalize the teacher's schedule, and make curriculum plans.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Theriault

FINANCE & STEWARDSHIP REPORTS:

From Financial Secretary:

The following is the total church offering for August:

Regular Offering	\$18,901.00
<u>Loose Offering</u>	<u>229.00</u>
Subtotal-Regular Offering	\$19,130.00

Other Sources Operating Fund:	.00
Total Regular Offerings	\$19,130.00

Reimbursements:	
Education-Discovery	22.00

Special Funds for Church Use:	
Coffee Fellowship	9.00
Bottle Redemption	1.65
Community Support	700.00
Pastor's Discretionary Fund	300.00
Memorial Garden	3,000.00
Anna Roberts Memorial	100.00
Ivan Shaw Memorial Gifts	670.98
Tax Refund	535.12
ERC	3,542.66
Subtotal Funds for Church Use	\$8,859.41

Special Funds Not for Church Use:	
Ecumenical Food Pantry	200.00
Sub-Total Funds Not for Church Use	200.00
Grand Total:	\$28,211.41

From Treasurer:

Beginning Balance	(22.12)	
2025 Operating income	19,130.00	
Bottle Redemption	1.65	
Mission Shares	500.00	
Interest	1.22	
Less EFT fee	(32.55)	VANCO fees (EFT deposits)
Less Expenses	(16,669.30)	
Ending Balance	2,908.90	

Total "Special Funds for Church Use", which included many lines for various donations, total \$29,873.31. The "Special Funds NOT for Church Use" total 45.08. 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 & \$3,000 in Aug 2025; as of September 2, 2025, on-line report shows ending value = \$25,319.59.

The Capital Account Money is as follows as of August 31: Previous Balance - \$33,166.56; Deposits - \$1.43; Expenses = \$177.57 (AWM Electric – fan motor in electric sign). Current Balance - \$32,990.41. (Includes funds earmarked for Furnace Fund - \$5,397.33; Emergency Fund Donations = \$21,104.23).

Expenditures for August 2025:

Programs:	
Education	\$ (8.00)
Office	1,485.07
NOW Team	50.00
Programs Sub-Total	\$1,527.07

Trustee Expenses:

Church Utilities	\$395.27
Parsonage Utilities	915.40
Telephone/Internet	215.00
Snow Removal/Mowing	450.00
Maintenance/Cleaning	165.88
Trustee Sub-Total	\$2,141.55

Staff-Parish Relations Expenses:

Pastor's Salary	\$4,420.00
Health Insurance	1,788.83
Pastor's Total Comp	\$6,208.83

Treasurer	166.67
Church Office Administrator	833.33
Custodian	1,625.00
Maine PFML Deductions	(36.48)
Total Other Salaries	\$2,588.52

Other Expenses:

Guest & Substitute Staff	\$150.00
Delegates to Annual Conf.	566.31
FICA	200.81
Workman's Comp	66.64
Total Other Expenses	\$983.76

Sub-Total SPRC Expenses \$9,781.11

New England Conference:

Ministerial Support (3) – MS	\$2,387.33
Pastor Pension Benefit	832.24
NEC Total	\$ 3,219.57
Grand Total Expenses	\$16,669.30

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

Mission Shares = \$2,387.33/mo. As of EOM August, 5 months behind - \$11,936.65. (2 months of Mission Shares paid in March; one month paid in August)

Note: Dead River bills for church also include charges for propane deliveries. Balances as of Aug 30: Church = (\$483.40); Parsonage = (\$1,241.23)

2025 YTD REVIEW – August 2025

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

August:

Target = \$148,464.19; Beginning Operating Fund Balance (Jan only) - \$924.51; Operating Fund Income from F/S YTD - \$121,202.32; Special Funds Used for Operating Fund Expenses YTD = \$17,969.26; Total Expenses YTD - \$136,952.63; Unpaid Mission Shares = \$11,936.65.

An aggregate of in-person and virtual attendance shows monthly average of 82 and 82 YTD.

NOW Team Meeting - September 9, 2025

Nurture - Outreach - Witness

In attendance: Sandy Pethick, Bobbi Pelletier, Kathy Panaro, Melonie Carlson, Pastor Ben, Cheryl Martin, Alaina Pethick

Others Present: Judson Drake

Absent: Aurora Pethick Barnum, Ruthann Weeks

Meeting was called to order at 10:04 am.

Opening Prayer - Kathy

(Alaina will do the opening prayer next month.)

Acceptance of Minutes -

Sandy moved to accept the minutes as received via email. Bobbi seconded. The motion passed.

Treasurer's Report - Cheryl

NOW Treasurer's Report - September 8, 2025

Beginning Balance	\$2248.05
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8-7-25	GMUMC \$300. Pastor's Discretion \$300. Community Support (Check #549)	(\$600.00)
8-26-25	Interfaith Federal Credit Union Anti-Fatigue Mats. (Check #550)	(\$120.23)
9-2-25	Two reimbursement checks For chili-fest Q&A for Anderson. (Checks #551, #552)	(\$65.61)
9-8-25	Two reimbursement checks For pulled pork+meal Following Church Conference (Checks #553, #554)	(\$166.64)
9-8-25	Credit Interest	\$0.40
9-8-25	Deposit	\$300.00

Deposit Details:

9-8-25 \$300.00 donation toward meals during Anderson's visit

Additional money was donated by Grant Memorial UMC, and a reimbursement was offered and declined/donation only.

Balance 9-8-25 \$1596.56

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Martin

Gift Card Update 9-8-25:

1 restaurant card \$50.00

Cheryl reported that the total cost of the Pulled Pork Saturday Event was \$539. \$550 in donations was received and all parties that wished to be reimbursed had been.

Cheryl also gave the restaurant gift card to Judson Drake to be used on the next trip downstate to return items to the Regos.

Bobbi moved to accept the Treasurer's Report. Kathy seconded. The motion passed.

Anderson Soares Mission Follow-Up

Pastor Ben extended his gratitude to all who cooked, volunteered, donated and/or participated at the events for Anderson. Anderson felt very welcomed and was touched by the gifts he received. A donation from Grant UMM was given to Anderson's mission. Anderson also received some donations, which he gave to the NOW Team to support our mission work.

We then discussed some of the positive aspects and areas of improvement for the events. Some of the positives included a greater attendance at the church conference, interest and enjoyment of Anderson's testimony and presentations, a great opportunity for fellowship with other churches in the cluster, and interest in pursuing a similar mission locally. Some of the areas for improvement included the short notice for planning the events and choosing a better circumstance for wider community involvement. Melonie is working on sending thank you notes to all who helped with these events.

Discussion continued regarding ways to implement similar mission work locally. One of the ideas that was brainstormed was a way to offer clean clothes, a meal, and a shower to local homeless people. Many logistical challenges related to this came up. Judson said he would bring this up with the Trustees and discuss potentially installing a shower in the handicapped stall in the women's restroom.

Pastor Ben said he was moved by the ways Anderson's team built relationships through games. We discussed some ways to do that here as well. He also reminded us that it is very important for this work to be surrounded by prayer. The question for us to think about is - what is our next faithful step? Further discussion is needed.

Cookie Booth Sale - Oct. 18/19

We will have our cookie booth at the Caribou Craft Fair again this year. We plan to include dog treats again as well. We will also include the "You're Amazing" cards that were made for the Caribou Cares About Kids parade. More cards will need to be ordered. Bobbi has made many pocket prayer shawls to include in each purchase too. We will start asking for volunteers and creating a schedule in late September or early October.

Committee Membership/Nominations

All members present wish to continue serving on the committee. The officers will continue in their positions as well: Melonie Carlson, Chair; Bobbi Pelletier, Vice-Chair; Alaina Pethick, Recording Secretary; Cheryl Martin, Treasurer. Kim Vandenburg, Rhonda Cyr and Karen Rego have asked to be removed from the committee.

Transportation to Bangor

Cheryl Martin is providing transportation to Bangor for a medical appointment for a church member. Bobbi made a motion to reimburse Cheryl for her gas expenses and a meal. Sandy seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Updates

- Penpals
 - All of the penpals from last year will be continuing this year. Hopefully the first letters will arrive on Friday, Sept. 12. Then there will be 1 complete round of correspondence before harvest break. Melonie has been talking with Denise about potentially including the 8th graders this year.
- Food Pantry
 - No new updates
- Photo Class
 - The class begins on Sept. 22. Returning students need to sign up again, but do not need to pay the class fee a second time.

Coffee Fellowship

The NOW Team has Coffee Fellowship on Sunday, September 14.

Parcel Post Auction

Discussion of this event was tabled to a later meeting.

Additional Business

Some discussion of collaborating with Colleen for her Snowman & Friends Christmas event on Dec. 6. We could potentially do a bake sale or no-cost activities for the children. More discussion is needed.

Pastor Ben is looking to start a book study soon. The book is Redeeming Conflict by Ann Garrido. He will have more details soon.

Agenda Items for October Meeting

Angel Tree - updated tags with church logo

St. Apollonia Tree Festival - cluster theme is "Fruits of the Spirit" with gift cards. Melonie and Sandy will work on making ornaments for the tree.

Closing Prayer - Melonie

Our next regular meeting will be October 1 at 10 am.

(We are going back to our usual first Wednesday of the month meeting date.)

Respectfully submitted,
Alaina Pethick
NOW Team Recording Secretary

Trustee Meeting
August 19, 2025

Present: Pastor Ben, Richard Clark, Judson Drake, Colleen Harmon, Del Ramey, Debbie Nichols, and David DeMerchant.
Guests Bobbi Pelletier, Diane Fitzpatrick, Beth Alden, and Roy Alden.

The meeting was called to order at 12:59 p.m.

Opening prayer was given by Pastor Ben.

Three members of the Worship Committee requested to speak to the Trustees. Roy Alden spoke briefly for the Church Council. The congregation doesn't know what to do in case of emergencies. Three areas of concern were: 1. Policy for opening and closing of the doors during communion; 2. Red Cross training, why it has still not been done, 3. Need to make people immediately aware of emergencies and call 911. Roy Alden considers #1 and #2 close to solutions. Bobbi Pelletier would like to have one door kept open for people who come down from the balcony and children coming up from the Nursery for communion. The date for the Safer Sanctuaries Training has been set for September 11, 2025 and the Red Cross training for September 25, 2025. Diane Fitzpatrick suggested we have a plainly visible written protocol for what to do in case of emergencies. Judson Drake stressed the importance of calling 911 for any accident, injury or emergency. The ambulance driver will make out a report and the church will not be charged for the service. The injured person can refuse to be transported and will have to sign the drivers report. The church has 24 hours to report the incident to the church's insurance company. Judson stated that there is a maroon notebook on top of the filing cabinet in the library where the radios are kept that tells us what to do in emergencies. Bobbi suggested that there be a big simple poster in a prominent place to tell us what to do. Diane said there is a need to broadcast in vivid terms what could happen and what must be done. Roy commented we need to avoid anything that creates suspicion, mistrust and lawsuits. We need to trust the Trustees but they need to know and understand what the people in church are saying. Judson stated the only safety option our church has is its doors but those with bad intentions can easily pop these doors open. Doors don't keep them out, procedures do. There is no place to hide in the church. Because of false alarms, the police no longer show up, though they would on Sunday morning or at night. Jud no longer receives calls on breaches of security, but e-mails instead. The new security system will identify those who create false alarms as well as other problems such as water or heat. If there is trouble during the service, one of the Guest Services staff will press the call button on the safety fob and the police will respond. Del stated that if it takes a minute and a half for the police to respond a lot can happen. Diane raised the question as who pays for the ambulance if the person refuses to be transported. She was advised it was not our concern who pays but that for our insurance purposes we called the ambulance as required. The Worship members had no other questions or comments and left the meeting. Discussion by the Trustees on comments by the Worship Committee and took them into consideration. Dave suggested a Standard Operation Procedures (SOP) for every incident we have. They must know all we are doing and why we do it. Some will disagree with the decisions we make and that's OK. We can agree to disagree. We can put up signs and tell them where they are. Judson reminded us that the protocol is to call 911 first. It was suggested we put laminated copies of protocol in every pew. This may give the impression to new people coming to church for the first time that our church is unsafe and not come back. Our church is most vulnerable during communion when we are all standing in the center aisle. Children will adapt to this more easily than adults.

The Trustee meeting was called to order at 2:20 p.m.

Secretary's report was presented. Motion to accept the report as printed. Report approved.

No Treasurer's report as Judi was on vacation.

It was approved to pay A&M \$1,800 from the Capital Campaign for installing the new doors. Pastor Ben needs a new laptop and printer. It was moved, seconded and approved to purchase one for \$775.

It was moved and approved to repair the ceiling in the sanctuary. Funds for this will come from the Capital Campaign. The work is planned for January 2026.

Assignment of Church maintenance duties

Security and Heating– We will wait until the new security system is in place.

ELEVATOR SYSTEM: Colleen Harmon

SPRINKLER SYSTEM: Colleen Harmon

LIGHT SYSTEM: Dave DeMerchant

Team members to work on Trustee Projects. Colleen, Del, Dave, Richard

Closing prayer given by Richard Clark

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm

Richard Clark

Worship Committee Minutes September 4, 2025

Members Present: Bobbi Pelletier (chair), Pastor Ben Daggett, Diane Fitzpatrick, Richard Clark, Cheryl Martin, Mary Lou Brown, Claire Hodgkins, Gwen Ellinwood, Beth Alden

The meeting was opened by Bobbi at 10:35am.

Devotions were offered by Gwen with a reading called, “It is Perfectly Natural to Pray”. This was a lovely piece that told us that “prayer is the heartbeat of the soul”.

The minutes from the August meeting were reviewed. Mary Lou moved and Richard seconded to accept the minutes as published. All approved.

Old Business:

- The Senior Choir will begin practices with Mari-Jo Hedman on Saturday, September 13th and will sing for the first time at the September 14th worship service. Mari-Jo will play the piano a couple times each month for the choir and for the entire service. It is so nice to have her with us! Mary Lou, Judi, and Rich Daggett will cover other Sundays when Mari-Jo is not with us. Choir practices will be held on certain Saturday mornings. There will not be any “warm-ups” on the Sunday mornings that the choir sings.
- Bobbi reported that Pastor Ellen Cleaves and her assistant, Diane, did a great job on September 17th during the “Blessing of the Backpacks” segment of the service!
- The outdoor service held on Sunday, August 31st, was great! The weather cooperated and several people brought their dogs for the “Blessing of the Animals” segment during the service.
- Several members of our committee met at Beth Alden’s home on Monday, August 18th to discuss three issues concerning safety during services at the church. On Tuesday, August 19th, they met with the Trustees to present the following three concerns:
 1. We asked them to reconsider allowing the ushers to open one of the swinging doors during Communion and Offertory times to allow those upstairs or downstairs to pass through the door.
 2. We asked for more information on when the Safer Sanctuary and Red Cross trainings will be held.
 3. We asked for a simple chart to be posted in a couple places in the church, both upstairs and downstairs, that would help people know what to do in case of an emergency.
- “Back to Church Sunday” will be September 21st. Bobbi located a large banner that had been used several years ago that will be displayed on the parsonage lawn. An announcement for this special Sunday will also be displayed on the outdoor sign. Bobbi encouraged everyone present to “spread the word”!

New Business:

- Based on the draft minutes that Bobbi saw from our meeting with the Trustees, it appears that they will not modify the swinging door policy.

- Judson had Bobbi order two different signs. One sign shows every type of incident scenario and the other indicates where the first aid kits are located (loosely!)
- Bobbi passed the list of people that need the Safer Sanctuary and Red cross training to Colleen Harmon on Wednesday, September 3rd. The Safer Sanctuary will be held either on Sept. 10th or 11th from 5-8pm. The Red Cross training will be offered in two sessions on Thursday, September 25th: 1-4:30pm and 5:15-8:45pm.
- At last month's Church Council meeting, Roy Alden mentioned that he feels the announcements we do at the beginning of the worship services are distracting. Bobbi suggested that we put all the announcements on slides that could be shown on the overhead screen BEFORE the service begins (during the prelude time). Alaina said she could do that for us. All present agreed to give it a try!
- Aurora will play her flute during the service on September 14th! *Note: she asked to change to Sep 21st.*
- Richard suggested that the Pastor spell out the names of the people that are offered in prayer for the first time, as it is not always possible to get the names written down correctly.
- Denise Hamlin has provided a list of items for the mission boxes: shampoo, soap, deodorants, toothpaste, notebooks, bookbags, folders, colored pencils, and the following "snack closet" items: gummies, Cheez Nips, trail mix, any single serve items, water and juice boxes. A notice will be put in the bulletin starting on September 7th that we will begin collecting on September 14th. Bobbi was happy to report that two boxes in the office have already been filled!
- Bobbi asked about each member's plans for continuing on this committee after the end of December. All those present are willing to serve for another year.

Upcoming Sundays:

- October 5th will be World Communion Sunday. A special offering will be taken and Beth and Diane have volunteered to do a special altar display.
- October 19th will be Laity Sunday and Children's Sabbath. Bobbi and Pastor Ben will work together to find a way to include the children more in that service.
- November 2nd will be All Saints Sunday when we remember those we have lost in the past year. We will discuss this further at our next meeting. Pastor Ben noted that there will be a Cluster Event held in Houlton at 3:00pm on that same day. The service will include a harvest theme and a remembrance of those who have passed away.

Other Business:

- The Church Council met after the worship service on August 31st to approve the SPRC's recommendation for the Pastor's 2026 compensation package.
- Pastor Ben expressed joy in the arrival of his friend, Anderson, who is here from Brazil to share about his mission ministry and to get caught up on each other's lives!
- Mary Lou spoke about her concerns over our organ and what the future holds for it. The organ needs repairs, which the Andover Company will address when they come to assess the workings of it. Mary Lou and Judi are playing the organ periodically to keep it in working order. Mary Lou suggested that we should have someone observe the representative from the Andover Company in order to learn more about what we can do to be good stewards of our organ. She also expressed her congratulations to Bobbi and the members of our committee for such an organized and meaningful meeting! She is happy that everyone is welcomed to participate!

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, October 2nd at 10:30am.
Diane volunteered to offer devotions.

Diane Fitzpatrick, Secretary

LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OCTOBER 2025!!!

Wednesday	01	10:00am	NOW Committee Meeting
Thursday	02	9:00am	Aroostook Cluster Meeting via Zoom
		10:30am	Worship Committee Meeting
Saturday	04	11:30am	Senior Choir Practice
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Sunday	05	10:00am	Worship; Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost; World Communion Sunday (special offering)
Monday	06	11:30am	"Gray Gals" Pot-Luck Luncheon
		1:00pm	Prayer Shawl Ministry Meeting
		1:00pm	"Snap and Shoot: Photography Basics" Class led by Sandy Pethick (3 of 7)
Tuesday	07	7:00pm	Caribou Choral Society Practice at Caribou United Baptist Church
Wednesday	08	9:30am	Education Committee Meeting
Thursday	09	1:00pm	SPRC Meeting
Saturday	11	11:30am	Senior Choir Practice
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Sunday	12	10:00am	Worship; Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost (Senior Choir sings)
Monday	13		<u>FEDERAL HOLIDAY - COLUMBUS DAY - CHURCH OFFICE IS CLOSED</u>
		1:00pm	"Snap and Shoot: Photography Basics" Class led by Sandy Pethick (4 of 7)
Tuesday	14	6:00pm	Caribou Ecumenical Food Pantry Board Meeting
		7:00pm	Caribou Choral Society Practice at Caribou United Baptist Church
Saturday	18	10am-4pm	NOW Committee's Cookie Booth at Caribou Arts & Craft Fair
		11:30am	Senior Choir Practice
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Sunday	19	10:00am	Worship; Nineteen Sunday after Pentecost; Laity Sunday; Children's Sabbath
		10am-4pm	NOW Committee's Cookie Booth at Caribou Arts & Craft Fair
Monday	20	1:00pm	"Snap and Shoot: Photography Basics" Class led by Sandy Pethick (5 of 7)
Tuesday	21	1:00pm	Trustees Meeting
		3:00pm	Church Council Meeting (note change in date & time)
		7:00pm	Caribou Choral Society Practice at Caribou United Baptist Church
Thursday	23	10:00am	<u>DEADLINE FOR ALL NEWSLETTER INPUT</u>
Saturday	25	8:00am	UMM Breakfast & Meeting
		11:30am	Senior Choir Practice
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Sunday	26	10:00am	Worship; Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost; Reformation Sunday; <u>Preaching: TBD; (Senior Choir sings)</u>
Monday	27	1:00pm	"Snap and Shoot: Photography Basics" Class led by Sandy Pethick (6 of 7)
Tuesday	28	7:00pm	Caribou Choral Society Practice at Caribou United Baptist Church
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