



May 2026

Dear Gray Memorial UMC Family,

There is so much that I am eager to share with you about my time away last month, on a Wesleyan Heritage Tour with our Bishop. What a fascinating and expansive experience! The above photos are from one of our stops along the way, in Coventry. St. Michael's Cathedral, constructed from the 14th to 15th century, was firebombed by the Germans in November of 1940, during the blitz. The city of Coventry had shifted its automobile industry from making cars to tanks for the war effort, and thus became a strategic target for the Nazis. Though much of the Cathedral burned and the roof caved in, since it was struck by firebombs, the walls and steeple remained standing. The charred cross pictured above was unearthed from the rubble, and is preserved in the sanctuary next door, a modern cathedral finished in the 1960s.

Our visit there was brief but powerful. Bishop Bickerton offered words of encouragement and hope, while school groups and other visitors milled about in the public space and some listened in. He shared the story about the parish priest who, while clearing rubble in the days following the bombings, inscribed the words, "Father Forgive" on the wall. This phrase echoed the words of Jesus on the cross, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." In the case of the priest, however, many among the public did not appreciate the fact that he had left the phrase open, instead of qualifying it with the word "them" at the end (i.e., the Germans). He took a great deal of heat for what he had written, and he stood by his words. To this day, St. Michael's Cathedral holds a daily prayer service, weekdays at noon, based on the words, "Father, forgive," called the Litany of Reconciliation. It was not lost on any of us that while we gathered in Coventry that very day, our own country was dropping its own bombs in our name.

Father, forgive. (see the picture taken with this litany on next page)

In days of violence, fearful rhetoric, and chaotic retribution, that priest acknowledged how we all are implicated in the destructive cycles that permeate our experience on this side of eternity. The way of Jesus, the way of the cross, makes an appeal to all humanity, to us *all*, to know that God's way is *not* a way of condemnation and violence, "For God sent not his son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved," John 3:17. Jesus took all our sin upon himself so we might live. The laughter of the children, their games of duck duck goose in the lawn by the new cathedral, bespoke the promise of brighter days for the days we've been given. Each of us does our part by embracing God's forgiveness for ourselves and bringing that healing grace out in the world. We can, by God's mercy, be a part of the redemptive cycles that lead up to eternal life in Jesus' name. Father, forgive.

With Love in Christ,
Pastor Ben



The Litany of Reconciliation

All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

The hatred which divides nation from nation,
race from race, class from class. ***Father, forgive.***

The covetous desires of people and nations
to possess what is not their own. ***Father, forgive.***

The greed which exploits the work of
human hands and lays waste the earth. ***Father, forgive.***

Our envy of the welfare and happiness
of others. ***Father, forgive.***

Our indifference to the plight of the
imprisoned, the homeless, the refugee. ***Father, forgive.***

The lust which dishonours the bodies of
men, women and children. ***Father, forgive.***

The pride which leads us to trust in
ourselves and not in God. ***Father, forgive.***

**Be kind to one another, tender hearted,
forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.**



The Caribou Clock

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

Date: May 2026

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

Greetings from the Church Office!

I have to tell you that now that tax season is over, I feel a great weight lifted from my shoulders! I truly love providing this free service to a lot of clients who benefit from it, but it's great to be back to a "normal" schedule again! I truly appreciate your support in allowing me to do this each year!!!! This was our 18th year as a Tax-Aide Team and several of us "long-timers" have agreed to stay on for 2 more years (to get our much coveted 20-year pin) and hope we are able to recruit and train new volunteers to carry on this service.

I also had the pleasure to accompany Melonie and Erika Carlson as we volunteered at the Children's Museum of Aroostook County on Sunday, April 19th from noon to 4pm. We had four young children aged two and under, accompanied by parents, who all enjoyed exploring the many inter-active scenarios that the museum offers. We encourage you all to pass the word on to families with children and encourage them to visit the museum. The NOW Committee has offered to volunteer at the museum when needed to help reduce their staffing costs.

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 Friday, May 22nd!!!*

Until next month.....

Bobbi Pelletier
Church Office Administrator



April Prayer Requests

Prayer Concerns: Dale, Lu & Debbie Sharp; Leland Frost, Sylvia Akeley, Jeff Franklin, Richard Carde, James Stuart, Shirley Bowman, Sammy Day, Don Lizotte, Ruby Philbrick, Scott's Mother (accident), Gabriel Ben Tepherrith (eye surgery), Bruce & Diane Fitzpatrick, Kate O'Boyle (surgery), Jayne (losing house/eviction), Erica (lost baby after birth), Kim Keene (uterine cancer), Mary Lou Brown, Beth Alden, Rhonda Cyr, Dean & Diana Rauch, Jeremy & Madison, Ben & Carol Stone, Bill Divot's family, Larry Lavalle

Deaths: Family of Richard (Rick) Hallowell; Family of Kelly England; Family of David Stairs; Family of Peter Doody; Family of Elaine Cote; Family of Dr. Butterfield; Family of Gail Thompson; Family of John Habeeb; Family of Steve & Kim Perreault; Family of Don Lizotte; Family of Frenchie Doody

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/Music</u>	<u>Liturgist</u>	<u>Counter</u>	<u>Coffee Fellowship</u>
May 03 *	Debbie Nichols	Hymnal CDs	David Belyea	Mary Ouellette	SPRC
May 10	Ruthann Weeks	Hymnal CDs	Melonie Carlson	Mary Ouellette	NOW Committee
May 17	Diane Fitzpatrick	Hymnal CDs	Richard Clark	Ruthann Weeks	UMM
May 24	David Belyea	Hymnal CDs	Diane Fitzpatrick	Ruthann Weeks	Worship Committee
May 31	Penny Shaw	Mari-Jo Hedman	Cheryl Martin	Ruthann Weeks	Need Volunteers!

Usher Coordinator for May ~ Roy Alden
 Communion Stewardess for May ~ Diane Fitzpatrick (May 10th)
 Communion Bread for May ~ Ruthann Weeks (May 10th)

* May 3 - Our Senior Choir will sing with the Washburn choir at the 10:30am service at Grant Memorial UMC; congregation is invited to attend this service as Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton will preach and hold a regional meeting after the service. A meal will also be served. Our congregation is asked to bring salads for the meal.

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

NO CHANGES THIS MONTH! The new directory is nearly completed!

* * May Birthdays & Anniversaries * *

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

Remember your birthday & anniversary by making a special offering!



- | | | | |
|----|--|----|---------------------------------|
| 2 | Jeannette Belyea | 17 | Vincent Bell, Lu Sharp |
| 5 | Danna Bouchard, Erika Carlson, Beth Greenier | 19 | Annette Staples |
| 6 | Brenda Curtis | 20 | Ashley Bell |
| 7 | Vicki Clyburn, Rich Rego | 21 | Debbie Nichols, Glen Warner |
| 8 | Judson Drake | 22 | Gary Doody |
| 9 | Peggy Nichols | 23 | Justin Walton, Jacob Walton |
| 14 | Gwen Barnum | 28 | Richard Clark |
| 16 | Linda Pangburn | 29 | Mary Lou Brown, Douglas Lombard |



- | | | | |
|----|---------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 20 | Mary & Ed Ouellette | 24 | Gail & Bruce Hagelstein |
| | 27 | Annette & Craig Staples | |

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>
Mar 29	47	24	\$2,346.63
Apr 05	41	47	\$5,980.00
Apr 12	40	30	\$2,794.63
Apr 19	38	38	\$3,287.00
Apr 26	39	(will report next month)	\$1,800.00

+ Needed weekly to meet 2026 Budget: \$4,429.75

* 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 \$31,198.28. Since then, we received interest of \$1.34 and did not have any payments. Our balance as of April 27th is \$31,199.62 (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).



The Worship Committee has resumed 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 \$32.40 in March, so proceeds increased to \$1,380.80! Please remember that these donations help offset our operating budget expenses each month!



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 the church office (498-2103), 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.

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.

Here are the links for our May services on Sundays at 10:00am:

- May 3 -No Live Stream - Bishop's Service in PI
- May 10 - <https://youtube.com/live/cnVwNk3cuAs>
- May 17 - <https://youtube.com/live/JeWm49+xLIIs>
- May 24 - <https://youtube.com/live/VHNa0H5oaqE>
- May 31 -<https://youtube.com/live/mSqEy8bdKJc>

The Caribou Assembly of God Church offers “Friday Nite Meals” and 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).

AN INVITATION TO CELEBRATE Pastor Ben's Ordination
A note from SPRC

Yes, ordination to full elder status for a pastor in the United Methodist Denomination is a big deal! It is the culmination of years of study while at the same time engaging in the practices of active ministry. The journey to ordination involves conversations and discernment times with God and with other people who willingly provide listening and feedback to a pastor's many comments and questions. The journey is filled with: educational pursuits of undergraduate and a master's degree in theology; the writing of theological reflection papers and explanations of doctrinal statements; interviews with governing committees; meetings with the Bishop in Residence; psychological assessments; medical physicals; actual practices in ministry; more papers; and more interviews. The journey is riddled with deep valley lows, mountaintop highs, and bumpy roads connecting the two. Yet, the way is also a time to sense God's affirming powers of "this is where I [God] want you to be".

The rite of ordination is also a new beginning for a pastor. There will be more educational opportunities, deeper involvement in aspects of ministry and, always, the continuing focus on one's own spiritual growth and development and good self-care practices.

June 6, 2026, (1:30 pm) is the culmination of this part of the journey for Pastor Ben Daggett's road to ordination. He will be ordained as a full elder in the United Methodist Church (denomination) at the New England Annual Conference to be held in Manchester NH from June 4-6.

The ordination service is open to guests if you would like to attend in person. There is no registration required. Information* is found at the conclusion of this article for those attending. If you would like to view from home, there is a live-stream link available for the service and the information to that link is also included at the end.

The Staff/Parish Relations Committee would also like to invite you to celebrate with Pastor Ben and, with us, at Gray Memorial UMC on Sunday, June 14, 2026. A short celebratory program will be held in the Sanctuary immediately following the worship service. All persons will then be invited to refreshments and continued conversations in the dining room downstairs. A basket to receive cards of congratulations will be placed in the narthex in the later part of May until June 14. For those of you who would like to mail a card to Pastor Ben please do so in this way: Gray Memorial UMC, c/o SPRC, PO Box 69, Caribou, ME 04736. Cards coming through the mail will be placed into the basket.

This is the first time that Gray Memorial has had the opportunity of being a part of her Pastor's Service of Ordination. We, the congregation, have had this blessing of walking the final year toward this special time with Pastor Ben. Thank you for being a part of this celebration in whatever way you are able to be involved.

Certainly-- we say together "Well Done, Pastor Ben Daggett".

- The 2026 New England Annual Conference Ordination Service will begin at 1:30 pm on Saturday, June 6. It will last about two hours (maybe longer). It will be conducted at the DoubleTree by Hilton, Manchester Downtown, 700 Elm St, Manchester NH. No registration required. You are encouraged to check out details about parking, area lodging, etc. at the neumc.org/annualconference site online.
- The live-stream link for the Ordination Service is <https://www.youtube.com/@newenglandconferenceumc2273/streams>

And can be found on the neumc.org website (search ordination service 2026)

PHOTOS FROM OUR WORSHIP SERVICES

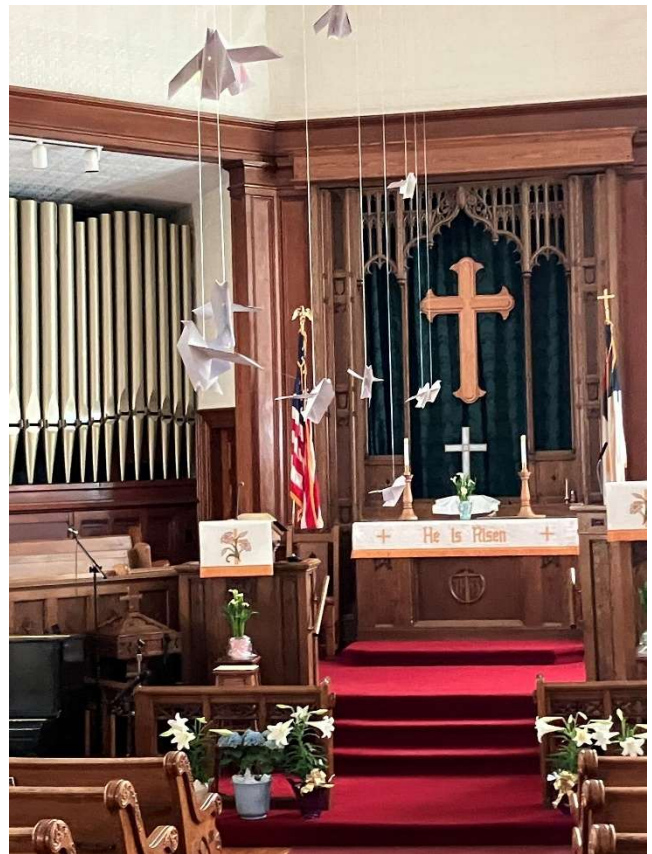


April 2nd - Maundy Thursday Service at 6:30pm.



The Daggett family during and after our Maundy Thursday service. Rich Daggett played the piano for the service, Jeanne and Pastor Ben sang together during the service and John Daggett joined them for the service!

Steve Jones taught members of the Worship Committee to make origami doves and they were strung up on fishing line in the sanctuary on Easter Sunday. We thank Judson Drake, Colleen Harmon and Pastor Ben for putting them up! The prayer papers that people filled out were inserted in these doves!



April 5th – our Easter altar with flowers



April 12th – Pastor Ben with the children as Hazel pointed out where we are on that globe!
He talked about the recent space expedition around the moon and what wonders the astronauts saw!



Rev. Dr. Wesley E. Palmer, Executive Director of
the Preachers' Aid Society of New England.
Rev. Palmer will preach and serve Communion
during our Worship Service on
Sunday, May 10th.
We look forward to his visit!



Spaghetti Supper

All proceeds to benefit the Caribou Ecumenical Food Pantry
Take Outs Only

SATURDAY – May 2, 2026

4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Tickets: FREE!!!

Free-will donations accepted

Caribou Assembly of God Activity Center

Use Back Entrance

Sweden Street, Caribou

Menu includes salad, spaghetti, garlic bread, and dessert



**The Church Council met on April 23rd.
Minutes from that meeting will be published next month.**

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

**Aroostook Cluster Council of United Methodist Churches
Meeting Minutes for April 2, 2026**

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

Victor welcomed everyone. John led us in a time of devotions beginning with the reading from Matthew 13:51-52 and discussed mixing the old with the new. The church, as well, mixes the old (hymns, etc.) with the new (contemporary music, etc.). John led us in prayer.

Secretary's Report

The minutes of the March 5th meeting were presented. Motion to approve the minutes as presented was made by Sue M. and seconded by John. Motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Paula reported (in absentia) that there has been no activity on our account. The current checkbook balance remains at \$477.36. Motion to approve the report was made by Sue and seconded by Ben. Motion carried unanimously. Thank you, Paula.

2026 St. Apollonia Festival of Trees

Discussion of a theme for this year's Festival of Trees was tabled until May.

Service with Bishop Bickerton

The service with the Bishop is May 3rd at Grant Memorial UMC at 10:30am with all cluster churches attending (or livestreaming if that is not an option for folks). Mary will write a liturgy for the service. We are asked to provide an "arrival time" (9:45am) as well as the service time. Nicholas received word from the Bishop's office that we will not have information on the Bishop's sermon ahead of time. The Bishop will remain for his comments and meeting about Cooperative Ministry following the luncheon. Nicholas will check in with the DS on time management for the Bishop. Five churches will bring desserts. Three will bring salads. Rough estimate of number of folks from each church would be helpful the Wednesday prior to the service. Gifts for Hope and Justice will be received and later delivered by Sue Michaud and Dan Robertson. Each church can pass out

envelopes to receive their regular Sunday offering. We discussed a theme – Nicholas will take our ideas and send out a suggestion via email.

Pulpit Exchange

Tabled until September

Sharing Mission and Outreach Ideas

Sarah shared that Stetson Memorial had a luncheon for the victims of the fire as a way to help them maintain their community and provide emotional support for one another.

John shared that Mapleton UMC works hard to keep their local food pantry stocked as the need is so great.

Ben and Nicholas reported the next date for prayer vigil is April 15th at Senator Angus King's office at 11:00am (and will continue every third Wednesday at Nat'l elected officials offices).

New Business

Officers needed for our Cluster for the 2026-2027 year:

John has volunteered to take on the role of Cluster Secretary.

Nicholas will take on the role of Chairperson of the Cluster.

Thank you John and Nicholas for your willingness to serve.

Spring Gathering

Houlton UMC at noon on May 7th. Potluck lunch. Family members are included if they wish to come. Short meeting and sharing of lunch together to celebrate Victor and Joyce's ministries here in the Aroostook Cluster.

Joys and concerns

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

Next meeting: Thursday, May 7th in Houlton at Noon.

Devotions for next meeting: Victor and Joyce

Meeting adjourned at 10:10 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Brown

Sue Brown

Secretary

Aroostook Cluster Council of United Methodist Churches

Education Committee Minutes
April 8, 2026

The meeting came to order with the following members present: Cheryl Martin (chair), Pastor Ben Daggett, Diane Fitzpatrick, Alaina Pethick, Mary Theriault and Melonie Carlson (via Zoom).

The meeting was opened with a prayer from Cheryl.

The March minutes had prior approval from the committee via email and were sent to Bobbi. They were reviewed once again and Diane moved to accept them with Alaina seconding the motion.

❖ **PrayGround/Children’s Moment**

- Cheryl and Mary shared items that have been purchased for the PrayGround and Children’s Welcome Bags. (lacing cards, activity booklets, crayons, bibles, etc.) Committee members will be organizing the materials and filling the bags during our next meeting.
- Alaina offered to create a welcome brochure to be included in the Children’s Welcome Bags. This brochure will include pictures of the children’s involvement in the church such as participating as an acolyte, working at dinners, Children’s Moment, etc.

❖ **Easter Egg Hunt**

- Since the Egg Hunt was not held this year it was agreed that the eggs could be used during the City Wide Yard Sale. Containers will be made to resemble nests and the children will be able to search for “bird’s eggs” to put in their nests.

❖ **Additional Items**

- More discussion was held about the yard sale but since we do not organize this event no decisions were made.
- Discussion was also held on what could be done, above what we’re doing, to make our church more visible/inviting to the community and hopefully in turn grow worship attendance. It was voiced that social media might be something we might want to take a closer look at.
- Pastor Ben shared a program called Fresh Expressions. The main focus is taking the church out of the building and into the communities and reaching new people in new places. (dog parks, coffee shops, etc.)

Pastor Ben closed with prayer.

Next meeting: Wednesday, May 13th at 9:30.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Theriault

FINANCE & STEWARDSHIP REPORTS:

From Financial Secretary:

The following is the total church offering for March:

Regular Offering	\$14,490.89
Loose Offering	125.00
<hr/> Subtotal-Regular Offering	<hr/> \$14,615.89

Other Sources Operating Fund:	.00
Total Regular Offerings	\$14,615.89

Reimbursements:	
Upper Room	11.00
Discovery Guide	21.00
Annual Conference Expenses	<u>268.54</u>
Subtotal-Reimbursements	\$300.54

Special Funds for Church Use:	
Prayer Shawl	\$ 70.00
Coffee Fellowship	86.00
Bottle Redemption	32.40
Pastor Discretionary Funds	500.00
Community Support	<u>135.00</u>
Subtotal Funds for Church Use	\$ 823.40

Special Funds Not for Church Use:	
Ecumenical Food Pantry	\$ 215.00
UMCOR Sunday	<u>10.00</u>
Sub-Total Funds Not for Church Us	\$225.00
Grand Total:	\$15,964.83

From Treasurer:	
Beginning Balance	\$5,263.96
2025 Operating income	14,615.89
Bottle Redemption	32.40
Interest	1.17
Less EFT fee	(35.55) VANCO fees (EFT deposits)
<u>Less Expenses</u>	<u>(16,897.80)</u>
Ending Balance	2,980.07

Total "Special Funds for Church Use", which includes many lines for various donations, total \$18,716.89. The "Special Funds NOT for Church Use" total \$316.08. 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 April 2, 2026, on-line report shows ending value = \$26,383.98.

The Capital Account Money is as follows as of March 31st: Previous Balance - \$31,198.28; Deposits - \$1.34; Expenses = 0.00; Current Balance - \$31,199.62 (Includes funds earmarked for Furnace Fund - \$5,397.33; Emergency Fund Donations = \$21,104.23).

<u>Expenditures for March 2026:</u>	
Programs:	
Education	\$ 49.00
NOW Committee	<u>39.00</u>
Programs Sub-Total	\$ 88.00

<u>Trustee Expenses:</u>	
Church Utilities	\$2,587.00
Parsonage Utilities	969.23
Telephone/Internet	243.34
Property Insurance	1,394.87
Snow Removal (Sanding)	1,000.00
Maintenance/Cleaning	<u>345.95</u>
Trustee Sub-Total	\$6,540.39

<u>Staff-Parish Relations Expenses:</u>	
Pastor's Salary	\$4,416.66
Social Security	500.00
Health Insurance	<u>1,788.85</u>
Pastor's Total Comp	\$6,705.51

Choir Director	\$ 100.00
Treasurer	250.00
Church Office Administrator	833.33
Custodian	1,625.00
Maine PFML Deductions	(38.63)
Total Other Salaries	\$2,769.70

Other Expenses:

Guest & Substitute Staff	\$100.00
Delegates to Annual Conf.	(268.54)
FICA	230.14
Workman's Comp	51.97
Total Other Expenses	\$113.57

Sub-Total SPRC Expenses \$9,588.78

New England Conference:

Pastor Pension Benefit \$ 680.63

Grand Total Expenses \$16,897.80

Note: Dead River bills for church also include charges for propane deliveries. Balances as of Mar 31: Church = \$49.74; Parsonage = (\$1,464.49)

Weekly Average Needed for 2026: \$4,429.75 (52 Sundays)

Mission Shares = \$2,264.25/mo. As of EOM March, owe three months of Mission Shares - \$6,792.75

2026 YTD REVIEW – March 2026

Annual Budget	\$230,347.29
Required Monthly	\$19,195.61
Required Weekly	\$4,429.76

:

Target = \$57,586.82; Beginning Operating Fund Balance (Jan only) - \$1,961.71; Operating Fund Income from F/S YTD - \$49,471.78; Special Funds Used for Operating Fund Expenses YTD = \$244.00; Total Expenses YTD - \$48,600.56; Unpaid Mission Shares = \$6,792.75

An aggregate of in-person and virtual attendance shows monthly average of 70 and 72 YTD. (No services on Jan 11th and 25th)

NOW Team Meeting - April 16, 2026
Nurture - Outreach - Witness

In attendance: Sandy Pethick, Pastor Ben Daggett, Bobbi Pelletier, Melonie Carlson (chair), Ruthann Weeks, Alaina Pethick

Not present: Kathy Panaro, Cheryl Martin, Aurora Pethick Barnum, Charlotte Willey

Opening Prayer - Melonie

Acceptance of Minutes -

Sandy made a motion to accept the minutes from the March meeting. Bobbi seconded. The motion passed.

Treasurer's Report - Cheryl

NOW Treasurer's Report - April 16, 2026

Beginning Balance \$1578.03

2-28-26	Credit Interest	\$0.33
3-30-26	William Barnum Check #561 Camp Mechuwana	(\$550.00)
3-31-26	Credit Interest	\$0.37
4-13-26	Proceeds from Coffee Fellowship	\$75.00
4-13-26	Additional donations Holy Week refreshments	\$25.00
Balance 4-16-26		\$1128.75

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Martin

We missed the deadline for sponsorship to the Caribou Rec CROC program, so we did not have that expense this year. There is an additional \$243.75 in donations from the Holy Week refreshments that has not been deposited yet. The two deposits on 4-13-26 were donations from the 4-12-26 coffee fellowship. The Worship Committee decided to give those funds to the NOW Team in lieu of the Good Friday luncheon that was cancelled due to weather.

**There was a typo on the date of the last deposit in the original report. After clarification from Cheryl, it has been corrected here.*

Yard Sale/Perennial Sale

Although we have not heard word from other committees about the church participating in the City-Wide Yard Sale, we decided to continue moving forward with this event. If the Trustees choose to participate, we are happy to coordinate with them as well. Bobbi will fill out the registration for us. We will have the garden sale on Friday, May 15 and Saturday, May 16 from 8-3. There will also be a lunch on Saturday from 11-1 including homemade soups and desserts. The meal will be \$5/adult per trip through the line and \$3 for children. We will accept donations of items for the sale as well as baked goods from the congregation. Items can be dropped off the week of May 11 and plants can be dropped off that Thursday and kept outside.

Each person volunteered to bring the following items for the lunch as well as a simple dessert:

Sandy - chili	Melonie - soup
Cheryl - beans(?)	Ruthann - soup

There was a side discussion about care of the memorial garden. It has been a challenge to find a reliable contractor to tend it. Bobbi gave some background on the matter. Pastor Ben expressed interest in helping.

Parcel Post Exchange

While this event sounded like a lot of fun, we have other activities coming up in May and July. Bobbi moved to postpone this event to a later date.

Ecumenical Food Pantry Spaghetti Supper

The supper is on May 2. This year they will be doing take out only. At this time, there are enough volunteers. Everyone is encouraged to come pick up a meal to help support the food pantry.

May 3 Bishop Bickerton Service

A reminder to return the registration form to Bobbi if you plan on attending. Our congregation has been asked to bring a salad dish to share. The Aroostook Cluster will also be collecting donations for the Hope and Justice Project at this service. There is a list of items they suggest in the announcements, newsletter, and bulletin.

Welcome new members: (2026) Roy Alden; (2027) Dave Belyea; (2028) Will Barnum, Colleen Harmon, and Neal Genz.

Election of Officers: Chair: Dave DeMerchant; Vice-Chair: Debbie Nichols; Secretary: Richard Clark; Treasurer: Judi Greenier.

Secretary's report for January 2026 was presented. Motion was made and second to approve the report. Approved.

Treasurer's report was given by Judi Greenier. Judi gave a presentation about the financial report and the Scholarship accounts for the benefit of the new members. The United Methodist Foundation of New England assigned our church, parsonage, property, and investments amount higher market value than we had. According to our reckoning, our Memorial Funds amount to \$149,897, according to UMFNE, \$227,540 market value. Treasurers report was moved, second, and approved.

LOCAL ACCOUNTS: Organ/Piano Fund = \$552.02; Church Clock Account =- \$537.48; Steeple Maintenance = \$1,025.06; Pastors Moving Account = \$ 769.38; Trustee CD= \$12,179.30; Balance in Checking = \$6,507.30; Hazel Greenier Family Accessibility Fund (the elevator fund) = \$15,993.14.

OLD BUSINESS

No bill has been received for the paving repair of the parking lot next to the parsonage.

Video replacement presentation by Will Barnum included a long list of suitable projectors was shown us, from least to most expensive. Will recommended the fourth least expensive, as it would not require climbing a ladder to operate. Will was asked to narrow the list down to 4 or 5 and get back with us. Roy suggested that we use money from the Memorial Fund account. Judi thinks this is a good idea.

Solar Project Exploratory Committee: Pastor Ben Daggett, Dave DeMerchant, Dave Belyea, Mary Lou Brown. More people are needed on the committee. Debbie Nichols and Roy Alden volunteered to be on the committee. Dave D thinks we should also ask for volunteers from the congregation

The committee decided to meet on the first Tuesday of each month at 10:00 a.m. at Dave DeMerchant's house, 32 Solar Drive. In the meantime, Dave B and Roy Alden will talk with Spectrum and Aroostook Internet.

FOLDING DOORS AT SUNDAY SCHOOL ROOM/DINING HALL: The folding door locking mechanism needs repair. This item was tabled.

NEW BUSINESS

The bills from Dead River for servicing the furnace at the church and parsonage were received and given to Judi for payment. They were unable to finish the servicing and will return on the 19th. Dave and others think we could get a better deal elsewhere and should look around, especially at local based companies. Daigle Oil supplies both #2 fuel and propane.

A bill was received for adjusting the church clock from Mr. Yoder in the amount of \$150. More work has to be done and he will return on 2/19 to finish.

The door on the refrigerator in the kitchen has to be pushed closed. This was not done and it caused things to thaw and had to be thrown away. Please push the door shut!

Any discussion from the floor.

Dave B said that there is a huge bill to maintain the old boiler and should look at replacing it.

Colleen reports that the elevator inspection will take place on the 23rd. Colleen will be there

Closing prayer given by Pastor Ben

Meeting adjourned at 2:55 PM

Richard Clark, Sec

Gray Memorial United Methodist Church
United Methodist Men's Club Meeting
Mar. 27, 2026

1. Call to order and opening prayer:

- Members gathered at 0830 at kitchen/fellowship hall for breakfast casseroles, muffins, fruit, juice, and coffee.
- Opening Prayer was led by Pastor Ben Daggett.
- Meeting was called to order at 0915 by Pres. Neal Genz. Members present were: Neal Genz, Dave Belyea, Dave DeMerchant, Bruce Fitzpatrick, Pastor Ben Daggett, and Del Ramey; and one guest – Wayne Selfridge representing the Friends of the Aroostook National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR).

2. Program: Today's program was another captivating presentation by Wayne Selfridge from the Friends of ANWR. He and Dave Belyea gave some history of the former Loring AFB and how the refuge came to be. Wayne discussed the general aspects of the refuge system and specifics of ANWR. The presentation generated a lot of interest in doing a field trip to the refuge in May.

3. Prelate's message: Richard was not present.

4. Old Business:

Secretary's Report: copies of our last meeting minutes – January 31, 2026 draft were emailed and passed out. Accepted as presented.

- Discussed the Shrove Tuesday pancake supper held on February 17, 2026. Net proceeds of \$ 423 were donated to the Prayer Shawl Ministry to restock their yarn supply. That should purchase enough yarn to do over 20 shawls and last for several months!

5. New Business:

Treasurer's Report: Checkbook balance as of March 28, 2026: \$ 1,074.52. Accepted as presented.

Voted to sponsor one of the Barnum girls for Camp Mechuwana for \$ 550.

6. Other Business:

- Pastor Ben gave a brief talk about his recent trip to England with our bishop and others and took the Wesleyan Heritage Tour. He also handed out copies of The Litany of Reconciliation from the Coventry Cathedral and the profound impact the Cathedral had on him personally. An expanded presentation of his trip would make an excellent topic for one of our meeting programs.
- President Neal again thanked the members for their continued support of the coffee fellowship and noted this years' schedule: May 17, Aug 16, and Nov 15.

Next meeting: April 25, 2026

David Belyea
Secretary

Worship Committee Minutes
April 8, 2026

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

The meeting was opened with devotions by Richard Clark, who shared his offering on “God is the Artist, We’re just Cartoonists”. Thank you, Richard, for this inspiring message!

The minutes from the March 11th meeting were reviewed as published. Beth moved to accept, Mary seconded, and all approved.

Old Business:

- Bobbi mentioned that she will work with Mari-Jo about potential dates and what we need to do to make a Summer Musicale happen.
- The Holy Week services went well and were well attended, though the Good Friday noon and evening services were cancelled due to inclement weather. We have received commitments from several of the guest speakers for next year! Bobbi thanked the NOW Committee and some of our committee members who helped provide food and worked in the kitchen each day. Bobbi reported that she will make her haddock chowder for coffee fellowship on Sunday, April 12th. Mary will supply the crackers! After the musicians were paid from the daily donations received, the remaining proceeds will go to the NOW Committee.
- The weather appeared to be an issue on Easter Sunday, April 5th. Pastor Ben was the only person at the Sunrise Service. Bobbi wondered if late notice of the service may also have been a factor.
- Bobbi thanked all who gathered at Caribou Gardens to create the origami doves that were displayed with the prayer slips that were submitted during Lent. Special thanks were given to Jud, Colleen, and Pastor Ben who created the dove display. Those who attended church on Sunday enjoyed them! Bobbi will send a thank you note to Steve Jones for instructing us in this project.
- There was a good turn out for the Maundy Thursday service with Communion. We are sorry that we couldn’t control the weather and had to cancel the Good Friday evening service as well as the noon time service.
- Bobbi shared a catalog with a suggested gift for mothers on Mother’s Day. It was decided to purchase magnetic page markers to use in books or Bibles.
- Grant Memorial UMC will be hosting a worship service on May 3rd, when Bishop Bickerton will be the guest preacher at the 10:30am service. Our choir will be singing with the choir from Lidstone UMC in Washburn and Mari-Jo will be playing. Those attending from our congregation need to supply their own offering envelopes, either from our church or in a separate envelope earmarked for Gray Memorial UMC. The offerings will be sorted by church. Our church is also asked to supply salads for the reception following the service. At this service, gifts will be accepted for the Hope and Justice Project (primarily for babies). We will have a list of suggested items and will share it with the congregation during April. The Cluster/Grant Memorial request a headcount of attendees by Wednesday, April 29th. The New

- England Conference has put out a registration form that can be filled out and submitted. Bobbi is willing to do this for people planning to attend, if they contact her to do so.
- Pastor Ben mentioned that Ellen Cleaves has offered to lead a service here at Gray on May 3rd for those who are unable, or do not wish to attend the service with Bishop Bickerton at Grant Memorial on May 3rd. Details of the service are to be determined.
- Pastor Ben will be away from May 9-14. He suggested reaching out to Rev. Wesley Palmer, the director of the Preacher's Aid Society, to preach on Mother's Day, May 10th. Pastor Ben will reach out to him.
- May 31st will be the 5th Sunday of the month. We had in a previous meeting discussed doing "something different" on the 5th Sundays of the month this year. Pastor Ben will reach out to Abbey Clair, director of The House of Comfort, to see if she would be willing to be our guest speaker on May 31st.

New Business:

- April 19th will be Native American Ministries Sunday and there will be a special offering taken.
- April 26th will be our next Prayer Shawl Dedication.
- Bobbi announced that meeting schedules for all committees will revert to the published schedule that we had previous to her volunteering for the tax season. If a committee has to adjust their meeting schedule due to unforeseen situations, they should notify the church office on the date/time changes. Our committee will go back to meeting on the first Thursday of the month at 10:30am.
- The new projector is in place and we will begin using it on April 12th. Announcements need to be submitted by Friday at 10:00am to be included on Sunday. Allowance will also be provided for announcements to be made that are not included in the published list. The announcements will be shown on the screen during the prelude and again after the postlude. Feedback on this will be welcomed by those who wish to express their opinion.

Other Business;

- The church clean-up day has not yet been scheduled by the Trustees. Perhaps they will set a date at their April 19th meeting.
- The City-Wide Yard Sale will be held on May 15-17.
- Diane expressed concern about our long-used Communion cloth getting very thin and the delicate lace beginning to pull apart. She asked if we think we should purchase a new one. She also is concerned about the present cloth being a memorial gift and what will be done with it. Beth suggested keeping a piece it and framing it. The committee agreed to purchase a new one and Bobbi will order it.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, May 7th, at 10:30am. Cheryl will do devotions.

Note: The next meeting was changed to Wednesday, May 6th at 11:30am.

Diane Fitzpatrick, Secretary

LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENING IN MAY 2026!!!

Saturday	02	11:30am 4:30-6pm	Senoir Choir Practice Caribou Ecumenical Food Pantry's Annual Spaghetti Supper; Tickets are free - donations accepted! Take-out meals only; Caribou Assembly of God Activity Center; enter through back door

Sunday	03	10:00am 10:30am	Worship; Fifth Sunday of Easter; Pastor Ellen Cleaves will lead a Service at Gray Memorial UMC Worship at Grant Memorial UMC; Bishop Pinkerton - guest speaker; Refreshments and Meeting to follow the service
Monday	04	10:00am 1:00pm	"Recovering the Sacred Center" Book Study Prayer Shawl Ministry Meeting
Wednesday	06	10:00am 11:30am 3:00pm	NOW Committee Meeting Worship Committee Meeting (changed from Thu, May 7 th at 10:30am) "Recovering the Sacred Center" Book Study
Thursday	07	12:00pm 3:00pm 6:30pm	Aroostook Cluster Meeting at Houlton UMC Church Weekly Prayer Service with Communion (all are welcome!) "Redeeming Conflict" Book Study
Saturday	09	11:30am	Senior Choir Practice

Sunday	10	10:00am	Worship; Sixth Sunday of Easter; Mother's Day; Guest Preacher - Wesley Palmer, Preachers' Aid Society of NE
Tuesday	12	5:30pm	Caribou Ecumenical Food Pantry Board Meeting at Pantry
Wednesday	13	9:30am	Education Committee Meeting
Thursday	14	3:00pm 6:30pm	Weekly Prayer Service with Communion (all are welcome!) "Redeeming Conflict" Book Study
Friday	15	8am-3pm	City-Wide Yard Sale; NOW Committee Plant Sale/Bake Sale
Saturday	16	8am-3pm 11am-1pm 11:30am	City-Wide Yard Sale; NOW Committee Plant Sale/Bake Sale NOW Committee Lunch Open to the Public (Adults-\$5; Children-\$3) Senior Choir Practice

Sunday	17	10:00am	Worship; Ascension Sunday; Heritage Sunday (New 50 year members!)
Monday	18	10:00am 1:30pm	"Recovering the Sacred Center" Book Study SPRC Meeting (note date/time change)
Tuesday	19	1:00pm	Trustees Meeting
Wednesday	20	3:00pm	"Recovering the Sacred Center" Book Study
Thursday	21	1:00pm 3:00pm 6:30pm	Church Council Meeting Weekly Prayer Service with Communion (all are welcome!) "Redeeming Conflict" Book Study
Friday	22	10:00am	<u>DEADLINE FOR ALL NEWSLETTER INPUT!!!</u>
Saturday	23	8:00am 11:30am	UMM Breakfast & Meeting (or is it May 30 th ?) Senior Choir Practice

Sunday	24	10:00am	Worship; Pentecost
Monday	25		<u>FEDERAL HOLIDAY - MEMORIAL DAY - CHURCH OFFICE IS CLOSED</u>
Wednesday	27	10:00am 3:00pm	"Recovering the Sacred Center" Book Study "Recovering the Sacred Center" Book Study
Thursday	28	3:00pm 6:30pm	Weekly Prayer Service with Communion (all are welcome!) "Redeeming Conflict" Book Study
Saturday	30	11:30am	Senior Choir Practice

Sunday	31	10:00am	Worship; Trinity Sunday; Peace with Justice Sunday (special offering)