



Vestry News

AUGUST 2024



Narraguagus Bay near Cherryfield, ME. See pages 4 & 5 for the scoop on the Adult Mission trip.

IN THIS ISSUE

Pastors' Page	2
Important Meeting on Rally Day	3
Adult Mission Trip	4, 5
Generosity Scholarship News	6
Birthdays Zoom Worship info.	7

Faith In Action

This team met recently and discussed our responsibility to make donations on behalf of the congregation. While there are so many varied needs in our world, we did hone in on two for our donations this month. We will send \$500 to the Women's Lunch Place in Boston. This organization provides a healthy breakfast and lunch daily for women who are experiencing homelessness, hunger and poverty. They also provide the essentials of underwear and hygiene products. This daytime shelter has wellness programs for substance abuse recovery, mental health and free medical services. It has an advocacy program for job and housing advice. In short, the Faith in Action team felt it was quite worthy of our support.

We also decided to donate \$1000 to the Acton Food Pantry. Food insecurity remains a troubling issue in our towns and the food pantry is an effective program.

The Faith in Action team welcomes the congregation's suggestions for recipients of donations. Please contact Janet Glidden or Glynis Hamel with your thoughts.

“Turbulence Shelter”

In June of this year, evolutionary biologists at Harvard, Yangfan Zhang and George Lauder, published their findings measuring the energy savings of fish swimming together or in schools. ([PLoS Biol.](#) 2024 Jun; 22(6): e3002677.) It has been assumed that fish swam in schools for protection (safety in numbers), collective navigation, and procreation (availability of mates). Their study of locomotive efficiency has revealed that fish swimming collectively in turbulent waters expend 79% less energy than a solo swimmer. Locomotive efficiency has long been observed in birds flying in flocks and utilized in bicycle or automobile racing as racers cluster to reduce “drag.”

“The most surprising part of the study is the dramatic benefits that moving in a group confers when fish swim in turbulence,” says Zhang. “It’s much, much, better to swim in a school if the environmental flows are turbulent and challenging than it is to swim as a solitary individual.”

This phenomenon has been labelled as “turbulence shelter.”

Families, friends, and, yes, communities of faith become shelters when our lives are in turbulence. Your church, UCC Boxborough, is a “turbulence shelter.”

While we may not be able to measure the locomotive efficiency of faith when moving through life collectively, this article has reframed what it means to rise from the waters of baptism with:

*strength for life’s journey,
courage in time of suffering,
the joy of faith,
the freedom of love, and
the hope of new life.”* [UCC Book of Worship]

See you on Sunday as we grow in the efficiency and joy of swimming together!

Peace,

Richard & Jill

Richard & Jill Edens
Interim Co-Ministers



Transition Update and Notification of Congregational Meeting to Approve Local Church Profile and Pastoral Search Team on September 8

Things are moving along nicely as we continue to prepare for our next settled pastor! Many thanks to those who have provided input to Tineke Vandegrift and the team of volunteers working on our Local Church Profile, the document we will use to attract candidates to our church, as we prepare to call our next settled pastor.

On September 8, in a brief congregational meeting, we will undertake two important steps in the transition process. Both of these steps require approval by a majority of the congregation. The meeting and vote are planned to immediately follow the first Sunday service of our program year, Rally Day.

The Local Church Profile

To maximize our prospects of attracting strong candidates early, it is important for our profile to be circulated as soon as possible after the program year starts in early September. Approval of this profile is required before it can be circulated among the various UCC conference Search and Call websites.

- The process of crafting the Local Church Profile has been extensive and the profile has gone through several steps of review. The drafting process has included the involvement of the Profile Team, the Transition Team, our interim Co-Ministers, and finally our Church Council.
- Once the Church Council has reviewed and approved the Local Church Profile (expected at Council's meeting on 8/15), it will be made available to church members for their review.
- Our hope is that the Profile will be in its final form when distributed following the 8/15 Council meeting. It is possible, however, that even with several steps of review an item might be missed that will need to be addressed. In order to get this document to congregational vote on September 8, it is important that only critical "fixes" be made to the document once the profile has received Council approval.
- With this in mind, should anyone notice an important error or omission, it is critical that this be brought to Tineke's and Peter's attention as soon as possible as changes have to go back to Council for their approval.
- On September 8 we are asked to vote to approve the presented version, ready for circulation, as recommended by Council.
- With an affirmative vote, we will provide the Local Church Profile to our UCC Conference for distribution.

Pastoral Search Team

Larry Wellington has assembled and oriented our Pastoral Search Team. The team needs to be approved by a congregational vote on September 8.

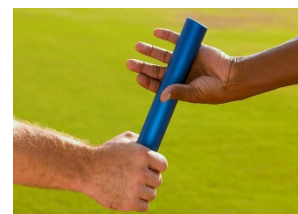
Along with Larry, the team includes Susan Appleton, Brian Davis, Ellen Hickey, Kellie Senghas, and Todd Waddington. This team is responsible for working closely with the Southern New England Conference of the UCC (SNEUCC) to promote and attract candidates to apply for our position, interview qualified applicants, and recommend to the Church Council and ultimately the Congregation a final candidate for the opening of Settled Pastor.

Congregational approval will require a majority vote.

We are excited about the progress we have made over the last several weeks! Please reach out to any member of the Transition Team should you have any questions, comments, or concerns.

The UCCB Transition Team:

Laurel Dickson-Bull, Glynis Hamel, Ellen Hickey, Catherine Michael, Mary Pavlik, Peter Senghas, Todd Waddington, and Larry Wellington



Adult Mission Trip 2024 — Faith in Action!

For a week in July, ten members of the broader UCCB community traveled to Cherryfield, Maine, to partner with Maine Seacoast Mission and through participation in their Housing Improvement Program. By day, we used drills, tape measures, weedwhackers, bug spray, and sunscreen to build a 12' x 12' back deck, replace the front steps, and remove and replace the skirting around a trailer home for a family in Harrison, Maine. By night, we enjoyed communal dinners, reflections on the day and great conversations about life in general. And, throughout, we walked with humor and grace for our varied strengths and weaknesses and made a difference in the lives of others.

We have been asked if we would hold a slide show gathering to share more about the 2024 trip (this was our 8th, our first was in 2015 - a two-year gap for COVID). Yes, we will! Date TBD so stay tuned.

Until then, here are some **mystery** reflections from the ten participants, some one-word reflections and some longer, to whet your appetite!

“My new best friend is a chop saw!”

“CONNECTED. Within our group and to the community in Maine and the homeowners.”

“FUN!!!”

“Friends”

“Awe. I am in awe of the participants of the mission trip. No matter what circumstances, weather and/or tasks they are asked to do, they are always upbeat with a can-do attitude! Just gets better every year!”

“I enjoy being part of a team that helps improve the lives of those in need.”

“A great way to get away for a week and return feeling good about the world.”

“I just love learning more about myself and others as I learn new skills. The week was an ongoing reminder to ‘Do what you can, with what you have, where you are.’ (Squire Bill Widener)”

“It was so great to see everyone I used to attend church with in Boxborough and catch up. It was wonderful hearing about their lives and how kids are doing. It’s just a good experience improving someone’s life in some small way and having fun doing it. Thanks to Greg for organizing our work 😊.”

“Satisfaction. Satisfaction that I was able to use my ‘skills’ to help someone else; satisfaction that we were able to make a positive impact in someone else’s lives; satisfaction that we were able to grow and learn as individuals and as a team; satisfaction that we all came out safe and healthy – ‘Toes, fingers and eyes and ears, eyes and ears 😊.”

And, from Jennifer Kempthorne, the Director of the Housing Improvement Program for Maine Seacoast Mission, “I am moved by the genuine kindness and sensitivity this group brings to their work even in very difficult situations. This group is amazing to work with from beginning to end! They go above and beyond in all aspects of their work.” Maine Seacoast Mission was started in 1905 by two brothers, both pastors, who realized that the spiritual needs of the island residents of Downeast Maine were not being met. Today Maine Seacoast Mission’s focus includes rural education, food security, and healthcare issues. While they provide a wide array of support services, they utilize mission trip volunteers in their Housing Improvement Program. This region of Maine has older housing stock and the need for repairs and weatherization on these homes is constant. With the support of volunteers, Maine Seacoast Mission is able to help their most vulnerable neighbors. www.seacoastmission.org



See photos on the next page

Adult Mission Trip



Jim H. and Dave R.



Even Mary Ellen joined in! Along with Greg and another volunteer.



It takes many hands!



Chris L., Art B. (all the way from Virginia) and Peter S.



From the left Greg T., Dave R., Lee B., family members, Art B., Connie B., Chris L., and Peter S. Peter organizes the trips.

Generosity



Thank you to all who contribute financially and otherwise to keep the lights on and programs strong here at UCCB. Contributions arrive in many forms and all are welcome! Your financial support has made possible:

- Using our indoor and outdoor spaces to support the FreeBee Market – such an important way to tangibly show our love for our local neighbors and for this earth
- Ongoing support for World Central Kitchen and Earthjustice as we broaden our field of vision to global efforts as well as local support for the Acton Food Pantry and through the Community Support Fund
- Providing welcome to new members and worship attendees, in-person and via Zoom
- The ability to access resources that faithfully guide our lay leaders and interim pastors through this period of transition
- Worship resource to support our music programming

Whether participants are church members or not, we open our doors, provide our resources, and welcome all. We know that these actions help us build community and grow God's love in the world. Thank you for making all this possible.

Have you not contributed financially to help us keep our lights on in this corner of the world and would like to? Check out the Giving section on the church's website to provide a one-time gift or to establish a recurring contribution. Or, simply reach to a member of the Generosity Team, Kellie Senghas (ktsenghas@gmail.com) or Jeff Glidden (jeffrey.glidden50@gmail.com) to learn more.

Thank you for your generosity – *on so many levels*. Because of YOU our church changes lives.

Congratulations to Natalie Davis who received the Eleanor Voorhies Scholarship for her pursuit in Elementary Education at Penn State University.



August Birthday Blessings



Martha Ikerd	08/03	Sandy Connor	08/21
Karen Wilber	08/05	Kelsey Bond	08/22
Rylee Maruskin	08/05	David Roberts	08/22
Juan Sierra	08/06	Robert Schoenfeld	08/22
Maggie Loughlin	08/08	Nicolette Wellington	08/22
Kevin Lyons	08/08	Rachel Lane	08/23
Ken Whitcomb	08/09	Gloria Roe	08/23
Joseph Camara	08/11	Walker Royce	08/23
Paul Desrochers	08/11	Emily Deyst	08/26
Riteesh Mudunuri	08/13	Carol Dionne	08/27
Brendan Lyons	08/14	Karen Hamlin	08/30

"If your birthday doesn't appear in the appropriate edition of the Vestry News, please inform the church office of your birth month and day. We'd love to celebrate you!"

OUR SERVICES ARE SUNDAY MORNINGS AT 9:30 IN PERSON OR ON ZOOM

To worship via Zoom:

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88306753408?pwd=VlIgwZUtYl05JeVU2WkIHwGtUWExGdz09>

Meeting ID: 883 0675 3408
 Passcode: 7387

Please note: our worship services are streamed live via Zoom, and recorded for posting on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChIayswOH7Ta7LYVK-BcAyA>). Zoom offers closed captioning subtitles) for those who find that helpful.



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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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Vestry News articles, ideas and submissions are welcome and due the 24th of each month. The Vestry News is published prior to the first Sunday of each month.

Please submit to:

hmatthew25@verizon.net

