

FROM YOUR PASTOR: *The Kingdom of God is at Hand*

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

OUTREACH

FINANCE

SPRING FLING

LAY LEADER

AND MUCH MORE!

When we read of the ministry of John the Baptist in the season of Advent, we heard him admonish the people gathered at the Jordan River for their baptism to turn from their sinful ways and create new paths on which to travel for, as he proclaimed, "the Kingdom of God is near."

Likewise, as we listened to Jesus' call to the brothers James and John, Simon and Andrew at the beginning of his ministry with them, we heard Jesus also proclaim, "the Kingdom of God is at hand."

Both of these holy ones remind us of our reality as the people of God: each day we are called to prepare our lives and our world for that time when Christ comes again. Not only are we called to pay attention to our relationship to God but we are also commanded by Christ to love one another. In caring for others – in whatever ways are needed – moves us one step closer to the Kingdom God wishes for us.

This anecdote reminds me of our calling to work for the Kingdom: A woman who is a member of Bryn Mawr Presbyterian church in Pennsylvania was asked why she came to church. She said, "I come to worship to pray and to sing and to listen. But most of all, I come for the benediction. Because that is the moment that I am reminded who I am. That is the moment when, one more time, I am pushed by God out into the world to be the very presence of Christ." This is the benediction which is used every week at the Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church:

"Go out into the world in peace;



have courage;
hold onto what is good;
strengthen the fainthearted;
support the weak, and help the suffering;
honor all people;
love and serve the Lord
rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit."

The anecdote ends with these words: "This, of course, is just an elegant way of echoing John's (and Jesus') very tough, very good news: Repent! for the kingdom of God is at hand."

May these words be on our hearts and in our lives as we go forth as disciples for Jesus, working on behalf of God's Kingdom.

God's blessings, *Pastor Elizabeth*

FINANCE NEWS

The finance committee met on January 22nd to discuss the shortcomings in the church's finances. At the committee's suggestion the Administrative Council held an emergency meeting on January 24th to allow the finance committee to withdraw \$20,000.00 from monies held at the Methodist Foundation.

Unfortunately this is only a temporary solution. If you have any creative ideas on how we can stretch the budget further please get in touch with a member of the finance committee. Also please don't forget the active ongoing fundraisers we have. The church has a Clynk account which is easy to use. Just grab a green Clynk bag from church, fill it with your returnables and bring it to your nearest Clynk station which can be found at Hannaford.

Also, please do not forget about the generosity tree. New tags have been added for office supplies and seasonal expenses.

The finance committee understands that everyone's personal budgets are also tight right now and they truly appreciate everyone's contributions to LUMC.

If you have any questions regarding the financial operations of the church please feel free to ask any one of the finance committee members.

Respectively submitted,

Shane Soiett, Finance Chairperson

*"No act of kindness,
no matter how
small, is ever
wasted."*

~Unknown

INSTALLATION OF OUR NEW BISHOP ONLINE

The New England Conference Committee on Episcopacy invites you to the Service of Installation for Bishop Peggy A. Johnson on Thursday, February 2nd from 7:00 to 8:00 pm. All New England United Methodists are encouraged to join our new bishop for this time of worship and celebration.

Please copy and paste the following link into your computer's browser and you will be sent the webinar link when you register.

<https://www.neumc.org/eventdetail/bishop-johnsons-installation-17227481>

LUMC Mission Statement:

***"The Lisbon United Methodist Church welcomes, nurtures, and serves all
people with the love of Christ."***

NEWS FROM OUR DISTRICT

Many Waters District Annual Meeting

Please register for the Many Waters District Annual Meeting scheduled for February 26 at 3:00 pm. [You must register to get the ZOOM link.](#)

Meeting Agenda is:

Rev. Arlene Tully, DS welcome and share information regarding the district and conference.

Review and vote on the equalization members for the Annual Conference in June.

Review and vote on district committees

NEWS FROM OUR NEIGHBOR UMC

Calvary UMC's City Mission Receives Grant for Warming Shelter

Calvary UMC's City Mission project is partnering with the city of Lewiston to extend their Warming Shelter hours to include overnights. *(See attached or the link below Sun Journal article.)*

[Sun+Journal+Article+on+Calvary.pdf](#)

Beginning Friday, January 27, the shelter will be open from midnight to 8 am, seven days a week, and will accommodate more than 50 people. The program will provide meals, bathroom and shower facilities, and laundry services.

City Mission is seeking volunteers to help staff the Warming Center from 8 am until 4 pm on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday. To volunteer or for more information contact Nancy Craig by phone or text at 207-353-7135 or by mail at nancycraig@yahoo.com

OUTREACH

The Outreach Committee would like to thank everyone who helped make the gift card collection for New Beginnings such a success. A special thank you to Pastor Elizabeth for taking the donations, purchasing the gift cards and delivering them. Also thank you to the Evening Circle for donating their mission monies to this cause.

At our recent meeting we voted to donate \$100 to Warm Thy Neighbors to be used for Lisbon residents.

Our next meeting will be in early April. The time and date are to be determined.

Connie Earle,

Chairperson

GREETINGS FROM YOUR LAY LEADER

Greetings from your Lay Leader. I wish you a happy Groundhog Day, Valentine's Day and President's Day. For those who are traveling this month, stay safe and well and enjoy your trips.

This month I am bringing you some thoughts on sibling rivalry and a book report on a study of Lamentations. Those two things don't seem connected at first glance, but for some of you perhaps they are.

I have been reading my daily scripture from Bible Gateway. There is an app with a daily verse and I use the reading plan that goes through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation in one year. To keep it interesting each year I use a different translation. This year I am using the Common Jewish Bible. There are also commentaries, maps, and many other resources on the app. Since I started in Genesis in January I have been noticing how many siblings there are in the early stories. There is usually some sort of conflict or competition for attention from parents and God. The important thing is to follow the story to the end. God has a way of working things out for the siblings and their descendents. Take the story of Joseph, for example. He drove his brothers crazy with his prophetic dreams and the favor of his father. The brothers were so fed up that they plotted Joseph's death. But...things didn't work out according to their plans. In the end they are reconciled and saved from famine. The story is always good reading, even if you have read it many times. (If you don't like reading and you love music you can always watch Donnie Osmand as Joseph in Joseph and the Many Colored Dreamcoat.)

If you have siblings (I have four) you may have experienced the rivalry and competition in a family. Or if you have cousins, you may have found yourself vying for a grandparent's attention. What we can learn from the Bible is that if you let God help, things can be resolved, or at the very least, siblings can be tolerated and even loved.

As Christians and United Methodists we are siblings in Christ. Conflict, competition, emotion and love are parts of our lives. In our committees we may disagree and have to work things out. This can take much patience, prayer, and time. If we let God lead us, we can resolve those prickly issues. Sometimes God works with us through our church pastor and leaders, and sometimes we just need to be quiet and listen to one another. Big emotions often come from a deep place inside a person and we can try to have empathy for whatever is being triggered. We don't even need to know exactly what is going on, only that something is happening.

You may have noticed that the United Methodist Church is going through some conflicts that feel a bit like sibling rivalry. We sometimes worry so much about who is right, we forget to get right with God. Please understand that what is happening is a process and it will take time and love to work through. Look at how long it took Abraham and Sarah to even give birth to siblings! After that they had their own process to work through which, thousands of years later, produced our church ancestry. Don't forget to pray for all our church siblings. We all need it.

GREETINGS FROM YOUR LAY LEADER, CONT.

Now to the book of Lamentations. The study is written by Kathleen M. O'Connor. It is called Lamentations and The Tears of the World. Perhaps this book can help you work through your own feelings about God and siblings. It's always important to understand the perspective of any book. This book is a bit on the scholarly side, so if you are not interested in language, poetic form, and Bible history, it's ok to skip the first part. The second part brings Lamentations into our lives. It doesn't give magic answers, but it helps with how to approach God. It also brings to life empathy for each other and for the world. It also reminds us that we are not alone in our need of comfort. The book helps us find words for our pain. The writers of Lamentations are survivors of the destruction of their world. Perhaps as we watch war and destruction unfold on the nightly news, we can find a way to have empathy for those going through suffering. From suffering comes grief, and Lamentations can help give voice to grief. It could allow you to move from, "no one can feel as I feel", to "maybe there is someone out there who understands". There is even some God-blaming language. Lots of people have been angry with God. It's ok to voice that hurt. Later, we read how God's love is not finished; God's mercies never end. Ms. O'Connor encourages us to use Lamentations as a model for prayer for our wounded world, a summons to companionship, and a reunion of mother and children. I would take this further to pray for a healthy sibling relationship with all those in our lives.

Wishing you Peace, Serenity, and Love,
Sue White

POTLUCK BRUNCH A SUCCESS

Twenty-five members of our church family gathered on January 15 for our "first" potluck brunch after a pandemic hiatus of a few years. We had a wonderful variety of food from our usually GREAT cooks and a nice time of fellowship with one another. Many thanks to all who participated and to Trudy and Addison who organized and created our snowman centerpieces!

Our next potluck brunch will be held on Sunday, March 5 so please put the date on your calendar. We'll have a St. Patrick's Day emphasis with a centerpiece "door prize" once again. Then, looking way ahead, please mark the date of Easter Sunday, April 9 on your spring calendar when we'll have a potluck breakfast prior to our service of worship for the Day of Resurrection.

Plan to join in on the fun and have a great meal!

BIRTHDAY WISHES



Happy Birthday to the following church members celebrating a birthday in February!

(f you know someone to be added to our list please let Erica Soiett know)

| | | | |
|-----|---------------------|-----|----------------|
| 4- | Kadie Palmer-Foster | 17- | Karli Rogers |
| 7- | Carolyn Belmain | 18- | Pat Cavender |
| 8 - | Mark A. Stambach | | Martha Palmer |
| | Cathy Strople | 20- | Shane Soiett |
| | Lola Carlson | | Rosalie White |
| 12- | Peter Dudar | 21- | Caroline White |
| 15- | Win Smith | 22- | Dot Brooks |
| 16- | Brenda Rogers | 23- | Joan Stambach |
| | | 28- | Elania Rioux |

SAVE THE DATE!

Mark your calendar for May 13th for the Spring Fling, formerly known as the plant sale!

This year the plant sale will have a whole new look! Besides amazing plants and seedlings we will also be featuring a vendor fair and a yard sale. Stay tuned for more information regarding times and ways to volunteer!



February 2023

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|--------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----|-----|-------------------|
| | | | 1-Worship Committee, 6:30 p.m. | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5-Worship w/ Holy Communion in person & virtually, 9:30 a.m. Church Council, 1:00 p.m. | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 12-Worship in person & virtually, 9:30 a.m. | 13 | 14-Happy Valentine's Day! | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19-Worship in person & virtually w/ Sacrament of Baptism, 9:30am | 20-President's Day | 21 | 22-Ash Wednesday | 23 | 24 | 25-Bean Supper |
| 26-1st Sunday in Lent Worship in person & virtually, 9:30 Finance Comm., 1:00 | 27 | 28 | | | | |

NOTE: All meetings are held in the Hunnewell Room, unless otherwise noted

Office Hours: Wednesday: Times Vary, Thursday 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.,

Friday is the Pastor's Sabbath Day

Other times available by appointment

Every Thursday: Girl Scouts, Hunnewell Room, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

**LISBON UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH**

14 School Street

Lisbon Falls, Maine 04252

(207)353-4982

Sunday Worship Service

Sunday Worship

(In Person and Live Stream on Facebook)

9:30 a.m.

*Experienced people are ready to provide nursery
care for infants.*

Please speak with a greeter.

Office Hours: Wednesday: Times Vary

Thursday 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Other times available by appointment

Friday is the Pastor's Sabbath day

Important Contacts:

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