

THE TIMES NEWSLETTER

*A publication of the First Congregational Church
of Scarborough, Maine 04074*

JANUARY 2020



MINISTER'S CORNER

Dear Friends:

Happy New Year! 2019 is now over, and 2020 is just beginning. Before our memories of them fade away, perhaps we can take time to reflect on whether there was anything we learned, any wisdom we picked up in the past year, that we can use to help guide us in the year to come. Here are some "life-lessons" other people thought were significant.

LESSONS I'VE LEARNED

I've learned that you can do something in an instant that will give you heartache for life.

I've learned that it's taking me a lifetime to become the person I want to be.

I've learned that you should always leave loved ones with loving words. It may be the last time you see them.

I've learned that you can keep going long after you think you can't.

I've learned that either you control your attitude or it controls you.

I've learned that we are responsible for what we do, no matter how we feel.

I've learned that heroes are people who do what needs to be done when it needs to be done, even when no one is around to give you praise for doing it.

I've learned that money is a lousy way of keeping score.

I've learned that sometimes the people you expect to kick you when you're down will instead be the ones to help you get back up.

I've learned that I have the right to get angry, but that doesn't give me the right to be mean.

I've learned that just because someone doesn't love you the way you want them to doesn't mean they don't love you with all they have.

I've learned that maturity has more to do with the experiences you have had and what you have learned from them and less to do with how many birthdays you have had.

Newsletter Home Delivery - Snail Mail or E-Mail

MINISTER'S CORNER (Cont.)

I've learned that it isn't always enough to be forgiven by others. Sometimes you have to be able to forgive yourself.

I've learned that just because two people argue, it doesn't mean they don't love each other. And just because they don't argue, it doesn't mean they do.

I've learned that you shouldn't be so eager to find out a secret. It could change your life forever, and not necessarily for the better.

I've learned that two people can look at the exact same thing and see something totally different—and that's okay.

I've learned that even when you think you have no more left to give, when a friend cries out to you, you can find the strength to help.

I've learned that families aren't necessarily biological. People who aren't related to you can take care of you and love you and teach you to trust others again.

I've learned that, no matter how good a friend is, they're going to hurt you once in a while and you must forgive them for that.

TIME OUT FOR PRAYER

Grant, O Lord, that as the years change, we may find rest in your eternal changelessness. May we meet this New Year bravely, secure in the faith that, while human beings come and go and life changes around us, you are always the same, guiding us with your wisdom and protecting us with your love; through our Savior Jesus Christ.

William Temple

STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

A new year is upon us—a new year to “spend.”

It is the nature of all created life to expend itself. Every living thing expends itself in some way or another. The sun expends its energy at the rate of billions of tons of spent matter every day; the little flowers poking up through the earth next spring will expend themselves through their blossoms; the fish in the seas will expend themselves through their eggs; all living things, in one way or another, expend themselves. And that includes us.

The most important thing we are meant to expend ourselves for is God. The question is, how will we choose to do that?

A POEM FOR THE NEW YEAR



© Can Stock Photo

MEET OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

During the December 8th worship service, our church was blessed to receive five new members. That's exciting because it has been quite a while since that many people joined our church! I'm pleased to introduce them, in alphabetical order, and share a little bit about them with you. Of course, I will only be scratching the surface as far as information about them goes, so I encourage you to introduce yourselves and personally get to know them better. After all, they're family!

ALLISON CURRY

Some of you have been here long enough to remember Allison by her former name: Allison Flaherty. She belonged to this church a number of years ago, and I'm very pleased to say she has come back to us. But while she was away she made a few minor life-changes: such as becoming an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ! I had the honor of helping her prepare for her Ecclesiastical Council (i.e. an examination to determine if she was qualified for ordained ministry. *Spoiler alert: she was!*). She earned a Master of Divinity degree from Andover Newton, and served as the pastor of the First Congregational Church of Buxton for five years. Allison is retired from the ministry now, but she serves on the Committee on Ministry for the York Association of the Maine Conference, UCC. She is married to Gordon, who also joined our church. She has three sons (and three daughters-in-law), ten grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren. When she isn't exhausted from church and family activities, she enjoys visiting people, gardening, cooking, golf and traveling. Allison joins us by letter of transfer from the First Congregational Church of Buxton.

GORDON CURRY

As I mentioned above, Gordon is married to Allison, so he is a pastor's husband. Pastor's husbands are becoming more and more common these days, by the way! He enjoyed belonging to the First Congregational Church of Buxton and supporting his wife's ministry, but he also had a life outside the church, as pastor's spouses usually do. Gordon earned a Bachelor of Science degree in education from the University of Maine in Orono. He worked as a golf pro in the summer, was a teacher for two years, and then he became a real estate agent at the Curry Agency in Pine Point for 32 years. Gordon retired in 2000 and played lots of golf. He has a daughter, a son, and two grandchildren. In his free time he enjoys gardening, cooking, golf and traveling. He joins us by letter of transfer from the First Congregational Church of Buxton.

SHARON HASKELL

Sharon has been worshipping with us for a while, and I'm very glad she decided to become a member of our church! She grew up in Pine Point, lived in Westbrook for 33 years, and has been a resident of South Portland for the past 16 years. She attended the Pride's Corner Congregational Church before coming here to FCC Scarborough. Sharon is the mother of three sons and grandmother to two grandsons. She works part-time as an associate at Romard's Hallmark in Portland. She is a member of our church's Women's Fellowship, where she has involved herself in things like helping out with the Holiday Fair. For the past 34 years Sharon has belonged to a women's international sorority—Beta Sigma Phi—where she and her sorority sisters raise money and help charitable organizations. Her other interests include crafting and cooking. She comes to us by reaffirmation of faith.

FRANCIS WHITTEN

Francis, or "Fran" as he is informally called, moved to Scarborough with his wife, Susan (also a new member) from Westborough, Massachusetts about a year ago. In their search for a church to attend they discovered us, and for that we are very fortunate! Fran earned a Bachelor's degree in education from Boston College, and a Master's degree in education from Boston University. He taught social studies and physical education (Does that mean Fran was one of those guys who blew a whistle and pointed at you when you got too rowdy playing kick ball?), and then became the athletic director at his school. After 35 years in education he retired, but he continued to coach youth sports and officiate at high school sports. He and Sue have an "amazing" son, also named Fran, who lives in Las Cruces, New Mexico. For recreation Fran loves to hike, ski and travel. He comes to us by letter of transfer from the Congregational Church of Westborough, Massachusetts.

SUSAN WHITTEN

Susan has been married to Fran for 38 years, and like her husband she also had a long career in education. She grew up in Rockville Centre, New York, just outside of New York City. She graduated from Mount Holyoke College with a Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology and earned a Master's degree in education at Boston College. Sue was an elementary school principal until she retired from that career. When I asked her at the information meeting for people interested in becoming new members what attracted her to our church, she said that she was drawn to our here because we remind her of a congregation she used to belong to and has fond memories of. In her retirement, Sue loves to travel, spend time at the beach, ski and hike. She comes to us by letter of transfer from the Congregational Church of Westborough, Massachusetts.

Welcome to our new members! It's wonderful to have you here, and we look forward to getting to know you better and working together to accomplish the work God is calling us to do. God bless you all!

MINISTRY MEETINGS

Ministry of Christian Outreach & Stewardship:
January 12th, Sun., 11:00 meet in the Annex.



Ministry of Members, Friends & Church Life:
January 19, Sun., 11:00 am meet in the Ladies' Parlor.

Min. of Governing & Finance:
January 20th, Mon., 7:00 pm meet in the Annex.

Ministry of Worship & Spiritual Care:
January 26th, Sun., 11:00 am meet in the Sanctuary

SPECIAL INFORMATIONAL MEETINGS WITH THE CONGREGATION

Long Range Planning Committee: Progress Report
January 12th, Sun., 10:45 during neighboring after the Service

Ministry of Governing and Finance: Periodic Financial Update
January 26th, Sun., 10:45 after the Service
(See Finance Report, below)

FINANCE REPORT FOR DECEMBER 2019 & YEAR-TO-DATE 2019-2020

	<u>December</u> <u>2019</u>	<u>Year-to-Date</u> <u>(July 1—December 31)</u>
Total Operating Income	\$ 52,127.90	\$ 142,845.48
Total Expenses	\$-13,446.09	\$-104,400.55
Net Income	\$ 38,681.81	\$ 38,444.93

(This total includes several new pledges paid in full for the 2019-2020 year.)

Notes from the pantry. By Liane Giambalvo

We had a wonderful December at the food pantry. Many food donations filled our shelves, while wreaths and decorations warmed our hearts. Customers so appreciate the opportunity to select items left from the Christmas Fair.



Every family received a bag filled with cleaning supplies. We received toys too, as Santa made an early stop—Project G.R.A.C.E. had extra gifts after meeting the needs of many Scarborough children. We were able to help more than a few families have a fun filled Christmas morning for sure.

Our little pantry is so much more than food. As the Bible says, people do not live by bread alone. All the volunteers take that message to heart and do their best to make people feel welcome and cared for.

I like to create recipes for the pantry, especially when we get government foods that are unfamiliar to many: lentils or canned pumpkin or yellow split peas. Or, just to mix it up a little, putting a new spin on the boring old stuff, like peanut butter or oatmeal. It is fun for me to hear back from our customers that tried a new recipe and encourage them to tell me how they use some items. I'm including one of my creations, based on a Thai recipe, for you to try:

EASY-PEASY NUTTY NOODLES (Serves 2)

(You will need a medium-large size sauce pan or frying pan with lid.)

Ingredients:

- 2 1/4 cups water
- 1/2 cup minced onion or 1 Tablespoon dried minced onion
- 4 oz. uncooked egg noodles or other pasta (about 2 cups)
- 1/4 cup peanut butter, creamy or crunchy
- 1/4 cup ketchup or salsa
- 1/4 teaspoon salt (optional)
- 1 15 oz. can of sliced carrots, drained (optional)

Directions:

Bring water and onion to a boil. Add the egg noodles and cook partially covered for about 10 minutes, or the cook time according to the package directions. Do NOT drain.

Add the remaining ingredients and stir evenly to coat the pasta. Heat through until all is bubbly. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

THE GIVING TREE THANK YOU

A very grateful thank you to all who took tags and little bags from our Giving Tree. The items, plus gifts cards, were delivered to Long Creek Youth Development Center. Stephanie Netto, Volunteer Coordinator, was delighted to receive them all. The Youth Center is undergoing some changes, but there are still young people needing to be kept safe and out of trouble who need to know someone was thinking of them at Christmas! And that's what you have done in this gift giving.

The gift cards are used as the young people transition into the community, but especially at Christmas for those who really don't have support from family. The other items are used while they live either in the Youth Center or in the group homes to which they move as release time draws near. Know that your gifts are received and much appreciated. You make me smile and give my heart a great lift. Thank you so very much for your generosity. Submitted by Gail Dobriko, Ministry of Outreach and Stewardship

BIBLE STUDY BASED ON THE GOSPEL OF JOHN WILL START THIS MONTH

Sheryl Rhodes will be leading a Bible study of the Gospel of John, beginning January 19 and continuing for 8 weeks until March 8, 2020. The study group will meet in the lower level of the Annex every Sunday after the worship service and neighboring, from 11:00 AM til 12:15 pm. Please join her for as many sessions as you can attend. FMI, contact Sheryl Rhodes at 636-399-7239 or sheryl@slrhodes.com

SAVE THE DATE: CROCK POT SUPPER on March 14, 2020 from 5:00 - 6:30 pm. Cost: \$8 for adults; \$4 for children under 10. If you are able to bring a crock pot, please contact Sheryl Rhoades to sign up. See contact info, above.

NEWS FROM THE MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

NEXT MEETING: January 11th, Saturday at 8:30 am in the Ladies Parlor of the Parish Hall. All men of the church are welcome to join for this monthly get-together. Contact Dan Davidson with any questions at danprpro@gwi.net or 767-4682

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP ONGOING ACTIVITIES: We continue to make progress on repairs and maintenance at the Parsonage and are now reviewing the original engineering report. We made a little over \$300 from our participation in the Christmas Fair by selling coffee and coffeecakes and offering a "hot dog lunch" of dogs, chips, sodas and water. We have set the date of Wednesday, **September 23, 2020 for our next Moe's BBQ fundraiser dinner.**

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP MONTHLY MEETING

January 28th, 2020 at 6:00 in the Ladies Parlor

Program: Potluck Dinner and Post-Fair Discussion (postponed from December)

Invitation to all women of the FCC: Come join us this month, bring a friend and a casserole, salad or dessert! This month we are accepting donations of Small Toiletries for the Food Pantry, i.e. toothpaste, soap, deodorant.

Ring Out, Wild Bells

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light:
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind
For those that here we see no more;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a lowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times;
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love o' good.

Ring out the shapes of foul disease;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

Alfred Lord Tennyson - 1850

For several months now, the newsletter for First Congregational Church has not been mailed to your homes. The numbers of newsletters needed for the bulk rate mailing had dropped so we would have to mail those first class. That's expensive. Or is it? The newsletters have been available for pick-up in the narthex and on the church's website.

It is not clear how many people knew that latter fact, that they could get the newsletter that way. The members of the Ministry of Outreach and Stewardship were concerned that the change in the usual way of spreading our information might not be as helpful and productive as might be assumed. How many of you go to the website at least once a month? It can be found on the FCC website at [www, fccscarborough.com](http://www.fccscarborough.com) (click on "Newsletters" under the Outreach tab.).

After some discussion about whether or not folks were actually getting the information about the church as well as receiving information about special offerings (Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter envelopes are included in the newsletter), the Ministry of Outreach and Stewardship voted to fund the mailing of the church's newsletter for the next year.

The Ministry of Finance has let us know that the funds that would have been used for the bulk rate mailing would be used first, then money from the Ministry of Outreach and Stewardship would be accepted and used to mail newsletters first class. We, on the Ministry, felt it would be a good use of money for outreach to you, family and friends.

Some members and friends, away for the winter, were going to receive the newsletter first class. Some people have expressed interest in receiving the newsletter electronically in their e-mail so you are being offered a choice: E-mail or snail mail (by postal service).

Elaine Sederlund has devised a form for you to use if you wish E-mail delivery. If you do nothing, you will receive the newsletter in the mail, as you used to do.

With hope for a successful change in delivery for the newsletter,
Your Ministry of Outreach and Stewardship,

Ruth B, Mary Ellen B., Gail D, Lynn R, Vicki F, Susan H, Bryce R, and Megan W.

Fill out the form below and return to the church in the offering plate or mail to the church office, 161 Black Point Rd, Scarborough, ME 04074 or perhaps send an email to Elaine at fcchurch@fccscarborough.com.

* * * * *

I prefer to receive the monthly newsletter by e-mail. Please print clearly.

Here is my name and e-mail address:

Name _____

E-Mail address _____

**" I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life."
JOHN 5:24**

We hold in our thoughts the members, friends and family who passed away in 2019. Shortly before her death last week, Mary Lello reached out to express her appreciation to all her friends at church and all “the girls” at Women’s Fellowship for their many cards, message, notes and prayers sent to her the last few weeks. They meant so very much to her and she wanted to thank each of you for your love and kindness.



OUR CHURCH’S INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

We all know that Maine winters are unpredictable and can be treacherous. So, if there is a significant storm on Saturday night or it is storming on Sunday morning, make sure you check before venturing out to see if the service has been cancelled. The cancellation notice will be posted on our church’s website, at **fccscarborough.com**. Also, the First Congregational Church of Scarborough is now registered with **WCSH and WGME TV**, and a cancellation notice will run on both of those stations as early in the morning as possible. Finally, you can call the office at **883-2342**. Pastor Gagnon will leave a message on the answering machine by 7:30 a.m. if the service has been cancelled. If the answering machine message hasn’t been changed, it means there will be a service of some kind (although it may be an abbreviated one). Please use discretion in deciding whether to come to church in bad weather. You can contact Pastor Gagnon if you have any questions about this policy.

Return Mailing Address:

First Congregational Church
of Scarborough
161 Black Point Road
Scarborough, ME 04074