



# The Landmark

Volume 22, Issue 5 | May, 2023

## A Letter From The Pastor

Dear Congregation,

Anyone who enjoys sailing will know the importance of a landmark. Out on the open water, far from land, it can be difficult to find one's bearings. And here along Maine's rocky coastline, sailors are constantly on the lookout. They need to know where they are so they can safely navigate back to harbor.

I am told that our church steeple is a good landmark. Our steeple is easily visible from Penobscot Bay, and sailors coming into Searsport Harbor can find their bearings by sighting our steeple. When they see it, they know that they are heading into Searsport Harbor.

I imagine it was like this for a generation of sailors and ship captains arriving home to Searsport Harbor after a long voyage. As they sailed into Penobscot Bay, they would be scanning the horizon, watching the shore, searching for our church steeple, the landmark that would let them know they were approaching Searsport Harbor and home.

I was reminded of the importance of landmarks. Although I am usually good with navigation, on my recent trip to Salt Lake City, finding myself in a completely new and unfamiliar location, I was surprised by how difficult it was to get oriented. It was my first-time visiting Salt Lake City, and it took me much longer than I expected to find my way around. The streets are laid out on a grid, with names like "800 South" and "300 East." At one point, I found myself standing at the corner of 900<sup>th</sup> and 900<sup>th</sup>. I was completely baffled! But then, walking across the street I turned around and saw snow-covered mountain peaks towering above the city. Suddenly, I had a landmark, and I could find my direction.

Our church newsletter is called The Landmark. I like this name. I think it is fitting. In the same way that our church steeple is a guide for sailors coming into Searsport Harbor, The Landmark newsletter is a guide reporting on the life of our church. Here in The Landmark, you will find out what's going on at our church. And more generally speaking, our church functions as a landmark. First Congregational Church has been a guide and a landmark for generations of people here in Searsport. We are grateful and blessed to continue this tradition.

If you are interested in our church and would like to learn more about us, please keep reading. On the following pages, you will find out what's going on in the life of our church. We are a small church family, but we are dynamic and alive in spirit, and we offer all the elements of a traditional church community.

*May God's peace be with you,*  
Pastor Ed

## MAY BIRTHDAYS

1-May	Carolyn Maunz
1-May	Megan McKeon
4-May	Natasha Adams
4-May	Willow Patterson
4-May	Debbie Bryant
8-May	Bob Snowdale
9-May	Dan Nichols
10-May	Helen Nezda
12-May	James Rose
15-May	Kathy Sacucci
16-May	Cynthia Zito
18-May	Scott Young
21-May	Joyce Harvey
21-May	Norman Otis
22-May	Beckham Middleswart
22-May	Kali Rose
22-May	Kadence Rose (DeWitt)
25-May	Judy Otis

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## WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP NEWS

By Karen Kelley, President

The Fellowship met on April 4th at Phyllis Gaul's home. We continued to finalize our plans for our Saturday April 29th Auction at the Mermaid Plaza on Main Street. There will be a preview from 8 to 10 am, and the auction will begin at 10 am. We would like some more items to be sold so if you have anything you would like to donate please contact Karen Kelley at 548-2947, Phyllis Gaul at 548-0232 to make arrangements to have those items picked up.

The Fellowship is also planning a yard sale on May 13th beginning at 8 am at the Historical Society's headquarters; the Crary/Carlin/Colman House on Sears Island Road. So, as you are doing your spring housecleaning, please consider donating unwanted items to our sale.

Our May meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 2nd at 10 am in the Murphy Room. Please consider joining us as we make plans for the future that focus on supporting the needs of our church and community.

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## FLAGPOLE UPDATE

By Karen Kelley

Thank you to all who have donated to the Flagpole Project. We have raised nearly \$4,000. Not only will this allow us to put up the flagpole, but will also support any future maintenance that may be needed. Now that spring is here, we are finalizing the plans for the site and the installation of the flagpole. It is our hope to hold a dedication and celebration that will take place in May; the date to be announced. I want to extend a heartfelt "Thank You" to all of you who have supported this project.

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## MEMORIAL BOOK UPDATE

By Karen Kelley

The Memorial Book Committee is pleased to announce that the Memorial Books have begun printing information in memory of our members and friends who have passed. The books are on the podium at the back of the Sanctuary. If you would like to have a page commemorating your loved ones, forms are available at the back of the Sanctuary that will explain the process of submitting the information. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Karen Kelley at 548-2947 or Bill Zito at 548-0327.

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Let us acknowledge the Lord; let us press on to acknowledge Him. As surely as the sun rises, He will appear; He will come to us like the winter rains, like the spring rains that water the earth. —Hosea 6:3

## SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

By Sue Nichols, Sunday School Chair

Thank you to Shayla and Katy, who decorated all the hearts that Katy gave out at the service just before Valentine's Day. The hearts were part of the lesson on Kindness that was led by Mary and Sheri.

Sue N and Sue V will introduce the Lenten Journey to the kids on February 19th, using a great visual: a board game which starts with Ash Wednesday and ends 40 days later with Easter. The kids are coloring their own copies in the photo.

We will continue to use a combination of lessons from the new curriculum series and favorite Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Holy Week and Easter lessons from past year's, adapting them as our children grow and mature in their understanding of the highlights of the church year.

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## MUSIC NOTES

By Carolyn Maunz and Dionne Haase

*"When April steps aside for May, like diamonds all the rain-drops glisten; fresh violets open every day; to some new bird each hour we listen." —Lucy Larcom*

The warm days in late April and early May bring us singing birds, flowers pushing up from the earth, and buds bursting on the trees. We are ready to be renewed and refreshed after the darker days, and appreciate nature and sun more than we could during the long winter!

Our music program is already making plans for summer, with special solos, ensembles, instrumentals, choir festivals and concerts. We hope you will free up your summer schedule on second Sunday afternoons to join us for some wonderful music programs. Everything from

string ensembles to Blue Grass and Dixieland, to organ concerts and festivals.

Our Bell Choir will continue to rehearse and perform throughout the summer. In May, we will welcome back Lyle Johnson to our dedicated group. We all really enjoy playing and have made great gains in the past year. We hope you are all enjoying their selections, monthly.

### SAVE THE DATES – Concert Schedule

- *Sunday May 14th – 3:00 PM Sea Strings Orchestra:* Talented local musicians will kick off the concert season!
- *Sunday June 11th – 3:00 PM The Pineland Strings:* Featuring Owen Kennedy, the 2022 National Scottish Fiddling Champion!
- *Sunday July 9th – 3:00 PM The Katahdin Valley Boys:* Maine's most popular Bluegrass band – celebrating their 25th year!
- *Sunday August 13th – 3:00 PM – The Maine Friends of Music:* Maine Friends of music includes the music of piano, harpsichord, bassoon, and flute with Soprano soloist, Mary Sullivan – their 20th year!
- *Sunday September 10th – 3:00 PM – Dixieland Band:* The sounds of Dixie will emanate from talented members of this Maine Band, under the direction of Sean Fleming.
- *Sunday October 8th – 3:00 PM Organ Concert:* Classics and favorites with sought after Maine organist, Sean Fleming
- *Sunday November 20th – 7:00 PM:* Second Annual Festival of Gratitude. Local area choirs under the direction of Nancy Cole, accompanied by Dionne Hasse.

### HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!

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## **Happy Spring, Greetings from the Choir Room!!**

It is hard to believe that the Easter Lenten season has come and gone. It seems like yesterday that the choir began rehearsing for the season, including extra Wednesday practices. The choir participated in the Ash Wednesday, and Maundy Thursday services providing the introit, anthems, and special music. Palm Sunday included the bell choir, a solo introit, youth Shayla and Annie joining the adult choir on their anthem, and a piano/organ duet.

A joyous Easter culminated the season with the bell choir, vocal solos, a piano/organ duet and a wonderful, successful Easter cantata performed by the adult choir. Many thanks to our guest violinist and Stockton Springs baker, Matthew Horwitz-Lee, and the competent narrations read by our own Jim Rose. A special thanks to the choir for all of their hard work and efforts for agreeing to take on a new vocal challenge and rising up to the occasion with conviction and fortitude. A heartfelt thank you to Carolyn Maunz for filling in as the accompanist with less than 12 -hour notice when our guest accompanist had to bow out due to a family health emergency.

The choir's work is not done though!! We sing through Children's Sunday, the first Sunday in June. April and May will be filled with uplifting, beautiful anthems, with several that will feature instrumentation.

We welcome snowbirds Dick and Barbara Burns back to the choir, along with new singers Rick and Kate Fooshee, and new alto Allison Miner. The choir is now up to 17 singers, and always welcomes new members regardless of ability or experience. The faithful few

Children's Choir members continue to amaze me with their perseverance and ability to memorize their monthly songs.

*Make a joyful noise, Dionne Haase*

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## **NEWS FROM THE TRUSTEES**

By Dan Nichols, Co- Chair

Last month we mentioned that a drone inspection of the steeple roof discovered that a section of the flat roofing where the steeple joins the large square section had been peeled back by one of our winter storms. It is almost impossible to see from ground level.



As expected, this had the makings of an expensive repair because it had to be accomplished using a tall lift. We received an estimate of almost \$19K to do the work. Church Mutual Insurance, after bringing out their own inspector with a drone, has agreed to cover all but the \$1000 deductible for the repairs. It remains for us to get the actual work scheduled and coordinated with electrical work the needs be done around the flood light.

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It's hard to believe but March 31 closed out the end of the 2nd quarter of our fiscal year. We are slightly ahead of the pace line for the weekly offerings in our operational budget and have had good response for "other" income/donations (e.g., music fund, missions, flagpole, etc.) so far. These 2nd quarter financial reports are available upon request. Still, recall that we are striving to make up a \$60K operational budget deficit. We certainly appreciate everything everyone has done to support our ministry in these challenging times.

The open shelving is set up now in the storeroom downstairs in Curtis Hall. PLEASE don't use this as a dump for questionable stuff! Please talk to Trustees first! We'll continue to work to establish the smaller room at the end of the hall as a small meeting room and transient office/work room for use by various boards and committees. It needs painting. We have a nice upholstered chair and love seat sized sofa thanks to Becky Mohr and we're looking for a work desk/table that would be most useful there.

Now that our southern travelers and snow birds have returned and it looks like spring may actually be coming this way, many projects can get underway. Let us know what you see needs to be done around campus. We appreciate any help you can provide. (But, please approach us after worship!) Volunteer to help if you can. A hearty thank you to all who gave the campus a good face lift during Levi Sunday last month!

Trustee of the Month, April: Norm Otis  
Trustee of the Month, May: Dick Burns

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## **DIRECT FROM THE DEACONS**

By Dorothy Alling, Deacon of the Month

The maple syrup tastes so good after the running of the sap and boiling down from the maple trees. And last week I saw my first robin visiting our front yard. Today I spied a yellow warbler at the bird feeder. And what a beautiful Easter we all had together starting with that glorious service on Palm Sunday.

Pastor Ed's sermons of God's love, are spreading throughout our community! God does provide for all of us if we wait and look around us and take in the beauty that surrounds us. And as Pastor Deb Arnold, our former minister who was back in the pulpit on April 16th, while Ed was on vacation, said, "I spy with my little eye".... all the things around us that tell us to believe in Jesus is risen and alive. No more doubting if you believe and see.

It is so good to be serving as your Deacon of the Month, indeed, as all of us Deacons try to serve you every Sunday and the days in between when phone calls, cards, food or visits to let you know everyone in our church cares for you. Our church family is one that loves one another and supports each other. And the Deacons support each other and for that I am ever so thankful, more than they will ever know!

Our Deacons continue to regularly meet in Curtis Hall. Please let us know if you need a phone call, or anything else. We are very grateful that we can stay in touch with our church family and help out when needed. All the Deacons and Pastor Ed encourage you to bring any concerns that you have to us whenever you need anything as we try to help you with your spiritual needs or other needs.

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We do assist people in our area with funds from the Deacons Fund. You are always welcome to donate to that fund on the last Sunday of the month in a separate envelope with your regular offering. Remember to say the necessary prayers for those who need it and continue to rely on them. Prayers do work and do wonders. Just ask those people who have been helped!

If you have a suggestion for a need, please call me directly at 548-2425 or talk to one of the other Deacons: Priscilla King – Chair, Mary Alden, Dorothy Alling, Barbara Burns, Karen Kelley, and Jill Perkins. You can call directly to Pastor Ed at: 595-9173.

I am so thankful for all the Trustees who have kept our church running so smoothly, and also in the back of the church parking lot for Drive-in Church Service. Our hearts overflow with special thanks to Carolyn Maunz, who with her extraordinary talents keeps our music and bell choir flowing. And also to Dionne Haase for her leadership in conducting the choir! Bell choir is next in line. People take on multiple tasks so for all you greeters, ushers, acolytes, and coffee hour preparers, many thanks for keeping our church alive and thriving.

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## **METHODIST TO PRESENT PASSION PLAY APRIL 30**

The Searsport United Methodist Church will present “The Way” at 7:00 PM on Sunday, April 30 at the church. The play will present the Passion story in scripture, song, and prose and be performed in shadow. The play was written by Mary Curtis and will be performed by church members.

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For behold, the winter is past; the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land. — *Song of Solomon 2:11-12*

## ***Estate Auction +***

Furniture, glassware, coins,  
jewelry, etc.

**When:** 10 a.m. - April 29<sup>th</sup>

Preview from 8 to 10 a.m.

**Where:** At the Mermaid  
Plaza on Main Street,  
in Searsport

Donuts & coffee available during the preview.  
Sandwiches, chips, baked goods, coffee &  
bottled water will be available for lunch.

To Benefit the Women's Fellowship, First Congregational Church of  
Searsport

## **MISSION NEWS**

By Nancy Hamilton, Committee Chair

At the April 19 Missions Committee meeting, the group decided to provide a “housewarming” gift of a Wal-Mart gift card to a “graduate” of the CourageLIVES home who is now moving out into her own apartment. This woman, a former victim of sex trafficking, is currently in college and on the Dean’s List, and the group is pleased to celebrate her success with her.

The committee also decided that, although illness prevented providing Easter shoes and socks for the children of Waldo County prisoners, that the program will go ahead this year as “Spring Shoes and Socks.” We will be distributing information about the children as soon as we can obtain it from the prison. Watch for more details!

Planning ahead, the committee voted to again hold the Southern Fried Gospel Dinner this summer. Date and time are to be decided, but this year’s event will be inside, now that Covid restrictions have been lifted. Again, watch for more details.

*“Missions is not something the Church does. The Church was formed for THE Mission.”*  
(From an American Baptist mission newsletter.)

## CONTACT INFORMATION

### Church

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/fccsearsport/>

Email: [fccsearsport@gmail.com](mailto:fccsearsport@gmail.com)

Phone: 207-548-0327

### Pastor Ed Gabrielsen

Office hours: Tues., Wed. 8AM-4PM (or by appt.)

Email: [edgabrielsen1114@gmail.com](mailto:edgabrielsen1114@gmail.com)

Cell phone: 207-595-9173

### Bill Zito, Administrative Assistant

Office (and home) hours: Tues., Thurs. 11AM-3PM

Cell phone: 207-323-0230

### Carolyn Maunz, Minister of Music

Office/prep hours: Tues. 8:30-10:30AM, Thurs. 1:00-2:00PM

Email: [clmaunz@icloud.com](mailto:clmaunz@icloud.com)

Home phone: 207-567-8039

### Dionne Haase, Associate Minister of Music

Office/prep hours: Tues. 8:30-10:30AM, Thurs. 1:00-2:00PM

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Cell phone: 303-842-7804

## MAY CALENDAR

**April 29**, 10:00 AM, Women's Fellowship Auction, Mermaid Plaza

**April 30**, 7:00 PM, "The Way" Passion play, Methodist Church

**May 2**, Women's Fellowship, 10:00 AM, Murphy Room

**May 3 and 16**, 8:00 AM, Men's Breakfast, Methodist Church

**May 9**, 7:00 PM, Trustees Meeting

**May 10** 10:00 AM, Missions Committee, Murphy Room

**May 13**, 8:00 AM Women's Fellowship Yard Sale, Historical Society lawn, Sears Island Road

**May 14**, 3:00 PM, Sea Strings Orchestra concert

**May 21**, Deadline for May Landmark articles

**May 21**, 11:30 AM, Church Council Meeting, Murphy Room

**May 24**, 3:30 PM, Deacons' Meeting

"For as the soil makes the sprout come up and a garden causes seeds to grow, so the Sovereign Lord will make righteousness and praise spring up before all nations."

Isaiah 61:11

