

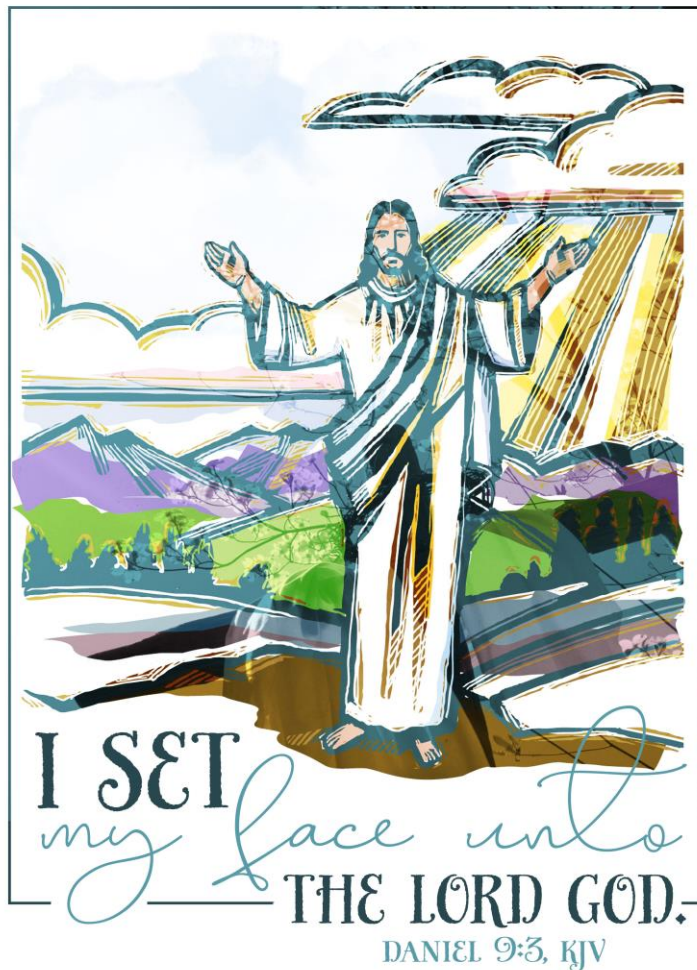
Opus Christi Works of Christ

St. James United Methodist Church
646 Daniel Webster Highway
Merrimack, NH 03054
Rev. Annie Baker-Streevy, Pastor
Robin House, Office Administrator

Contact Us:

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Building Christian Community Within and Beyond the Church



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Pastor's Message

*Draw the circle wide, draw it wider still
Let this be our song, no one stands alone
Standing side by side
Draw the circle, draw the circle wide!*



Also submitted as:

ALL BELONG: Honoring the calling and gifting of the Holy Spirit

¶ 304.3. While persons set apart by the Church for ordained ministry are subject to all the frailties of the human condition, they are required to maintain the highest standards of holy living in the world. The practice of homosexuality is incompatible with the Christian faith. Practicing homosexuals are not to be certified as candidates, ordained as ministers, or appointed to serve in the Church.

Amend footnote 1 to ¶ 304.3 as follows:

1. "Self-avowed practicing homosexual" is understood to mean that a person openly acknowledges to a bishop, district superintendent, district committee of ordained ministry, Board of Ordained Ministry, or clergy session that the person is a practicing homosexual; or is living in a same-sex marriage, domestic partnership or civil union, or is a person who publicly states she or he is a practicing homosexual. See Judicial Council Decisions 702, 708, 722, 725, 764, 844, 984, 1020, 1341.

After about 50 years, the General Conference of the UMC removed the ban on LGBTQIA+ persons seeking ordination! The above petition passed on a consent calendar (a group of legislative materials that passed their committees with 10 or fewer NO votes) this morning with 93% in favor of removing the ban. This is a historic move after years of pain and active harm toward our queer* siblings. As my spouse, who is non-binary and uses they/them pronouns, commented, "may [this harmful language] be dismantled in hearts and minds as well."

Friends, there is still work to do for our General Conference delegates this week and for God's kingdom to be ultimately realized, but for now I invite you to celebrate a big move toward justice and inclusion in our denomination!

Don't forget you can follow along with General Conference at home via the livestream (most morning worship happens at 8am) here: <https://www.resourceumc.org/en/churchwide/general-conference-2020/live-stream>

With Joy,
Pastor Annie

*"Queer" can be used as an umbrella term for the LGBTQIA+ community. It used to be only known as a derogatory term, but has been recently reclaimed by the LGBTQIA+ community.

WORSHIP



Katherine Mithoefer

We extend our deepest sympathy to Randy Mithoefer for the passing of his wife Kathy who lost her battle against ovarian cancer and leukemia on March 12. Randy and Kathy were members of St. James from 1989 until 2015. We send prayers of comfort to Randy and son Scott and his partner Angie, son Kurt and his wife Nichole, and their three children Zac, Claire, and Ella, and son Trent.

Paul Goodridge

We send our condolences to Liz Langley-Goodridge for the passing of her husband Paul who passed away on March 16. From Paul's obituary – "As a quiet lonely widower, Paul often ate dinner at the Village Eatery. The waitstaff were persistent in their efforts to introduce him to a lovely lady who also dined alone. A beautiful love story began the filled his final chapter with laughter and joy. It's a reminder that its nerve too late to find true love if you keep your heart open."

NEWS FROM COMMITTEES AND TEAMS



Church Work Day: Saturday, May 4 from 9:30 am to noon

Submitted by Dick Wallace

Church work days are a great way to give a helping hand and enjoy spending time with your friends from church. This month we will work on indoor and outdoor projects weather permitting.

Office Hours

Robin will be out of the office on Tuesday, May 7 for a medical procedure.

St. James Website Has a New Look

Thanks to Kyle Sanborn and the Digital Outreach Team for updating the content and appearance of our website.

By visiting www.stjames-umchurch.org, you can find information about our local church worship services, spiritual life, events, and outreach plus get connected to resources in the New England Conference.

The calendar on the website will be reformatted soon. Thank you for your patience as we continue to make improvements.



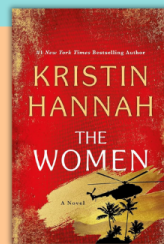
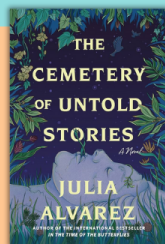
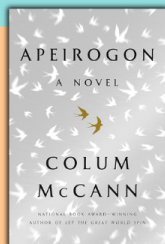
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Summer Reading Virtual Book Club



Read along with us and then join us for a virtual book discussion at the end of the month at 7pm on zoom.

- June 26th: Apeirogon by Colum McCann
- July 24th: The Cemetery of Untold Stories by Julia Alvarez
- August 21st: The Women by Kristin Hannah





VBS 2024
July 19 and 20, 2024

This year's VBS theme is Camp Firelight: A Summer Camp Adventure with God.


Camp Firelight invites children on an exciting summer adventure where they learn to trust God no matter what situation life brings, know God is always with them, and feel confident in sharing the good news of God's love through Jesus Christ. As campers experience Bible stories through music, storytelling, games, arts & crafts, science and snacks, they learn ways to connect with and trust God as well as connect with others at VBS, church, home and every area of their lives.

Volunteers needed. Help kids put their trust in God. See Robin House if you can help.

?? ? Bible Quiz ? ?

What two rivers that we still know today are named in the Creation account in Genesis 2?

- A. Nile
- B. Yangtze
- C. Jordan
- D. Tigris
- E. Ganges
- F. Euphrates



Answer: D & F (See Genesis 2:10-14.)

OUTREACH



Sewing Group Taking a Break for the Summer

The sewing group that has been meeting here at St. James on the third Thursday of every month to sew dresses for Dress a Girl Around the World will take a break during the months of May through August.



Change of Leadership in the Food Pantry

Mother-Daughter team Julie and Olivia Gage will hang up their Food Pantry Co-Director hats effective May 16. We are very grateful for their strong leadership these last two years and for their 6 years of volunteer service before becoming co-directors.

A subcommittee from the St. James Church Council has been working with Julie and Olivia and other Food Pantry volunteers to make sure that we can continue to reach out to the community with this much needed program.

FELLOWSHIP



Monthly Breakfast

The St. James United Methodist Men (UMM) would love to have you join them for breakfast on the first Saturday of every month. RSVP to George Fisher at fishergf@comcast.net so he knows how many people to expect.

Date: Saturday, May 4

Time: 8:00 am

Place: Mary Ann's Diner, 1 Craftsman Lane, Amherst



Coffee Hour Volunteers Needed

We need volunteers to make coffee and provide refreshments for coffee hour after church during the months of May, June, July and August. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board outside the church office.

Feel free to use baked goods in kitchen freezer that are marked for coffee fellowship

Card Tables Needed for Spring Tea

St. James will host a lovely afternoon tea on Saturday, May 11 at 2 pm. We need to borrow 6 card tables. Please let Brenda DuLong know if you have a card table that we can borrow or if you would like to help with preparations. See p. 8 of the newsletter for information about reserving tickets.

Bow Mills UMW Mother, Daughter & Friend Dinner

Date: Wednesday, May 8, 2024

Time: 6:00 pm

Place: Bow Mills UMC, 505 South St. Bow, NH.

Program: Rebecca Mercier will present "The Strength of Women Through Song."

Menu: spaghetti & meatballs, salad, garlic bread, dessert, coffee and tea.

Cost: \$15 pp (under 12 free)

RSVP: Call Linda Dewar at Bow Mills UMC
603-224-0884 for reservations.



Not Your Usual Mother's Day Brunch

Date: Saturday, May 11, 2024

Time: 10:00 am

Place: St. Paul's UMC 335 Smyth Rd, Manchester,

Cost: Adults \$13; children 5-8 \$9; under 5 free

RSVP: St. Paul's church office 603-647-7322



PLEASE JOIN US

Springtime Tea

ST JAMES UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
646 DANIEL WEBSTER HWY • MERRIMACK, NH

SATURDAY MAY 11TH 2 PM

\$12.00 PER PERSON

RESERVE TICKETS 603-424-7459 OR BSDULONG@GMAIL.COM



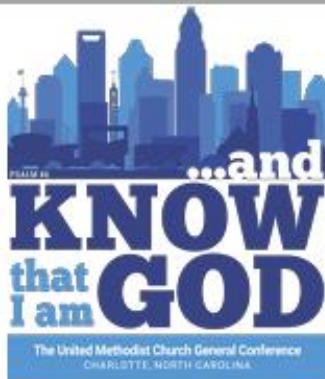
May 2024



New England Conference
The United Methodist Church

Connected is a publication of the New England Conference of The United Methodist Church. This monthly insert is designed put Conference news directly into the hands of our local church members.

Find more at www.neumc.org.



General Conference continues through May 3

The postponed 2020 General Conference is taking place April 23 to May 3 in Charlotte, NC.

Use the QR code to visit the denomination's page that includes all the news and information about this important event in the life of The United Methodist Church. The page also includes a link to the live stream. Find #umcgc on social media.

Our website www.neumc.org also has links and info.



NEAC Scholarships



Apply now for undergrad support

Each year the New England Conference Scholarship Committee seeks applications from adults or recent high school graduates who are pursuing undergraduate education at any accredited two- or four-year college, university or technical school.

Applicants must be United Methodist Church members

and are eligible to apply every year until they complete their undergraduate degree.

In 2023, \$29,101 in scholarships was awarded to 23 students.

Online application form and instructions can be found on our website at the address below.

Application period for 2024-25 support continues through May 24, 2024.



GET THE APPLICATION FORMS AND INSTRUCTIONS:
www.neumc.org/scholarships

Online training opportunity

Safer Sanctuaries

Safety is a fundamental requirement if people are going to be at their best. Without a safe environment in our churches we cannot worship, learn, grow, or serve. Please join your fellow United Methodists in New England — clergy and laity — learn more about how to provide not just safe, but safer sanctuaries for all who come to your church: members, children, and vulnerable adults.

While your church may have a safe sanctuary policy in place, this new information will help you to expand your understanding of how to keep everyone safe in a new era— both digital and in person.

Who should attend?

All clergy currently serving or taking an appointment in July are mandated to attend. Laity are highly encouraged to attend — even if there are no children currently in your congregation.

Participants should plan to share this training with the leaders in their church/es who work with children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults. The PowerPoint used in this training will be provided.

Materials

Each church will be asked to upload an updated Safe Sanctuaries policy in Church Dashboard in preparation for the 2024 Church Conference.

The book "Safer Sanctuaries: Nurturing Trust within Faith Communities" is available via [Amazon, Cokesbury, Upper Room](#)

It is recommended that each church have a copy of this valuable reference guide. If your church cannot afford a copy, contact Brenda Cayer at bishopsoffice@neumc.org



Training sessions

May 4 Granite District 9 am to noon
 May 6 Many Waters District 5-9 pm (includes breaks)
 May 7 Seacoast District 6-9 pm
 May 8 Green Mountain District 6-9 pm
 May 18 Commonwealth East 1-4 pm
 May 20 Commonwealth West 6-9 pm
 TBD Katahdin District

There are multiple opportunities to attend this online training; you are welcome to join any session that's convenient.



LEARN MORE & REGISTER:
www.neumc.org



Celebrate Heritage Sunday

Heritage Sunday is a time for United Methodists to reflect on their legacy and consider their own place in the story of The United Methodist Church.

It is traditionally recognized on the third Sunday in May (May 19, 2024), but congregations may choose to commemorate the special Sunday at any time. This year's theme is "Rooted and Grounded in Love."

The underlying message of all Heritage Sunday observances is that history is an essential part of the church's ministry, and that all members of the church family can celebrate our shared heritage.



Learn more and get resources at resourceumc.org and search Archives and History.

Let's Connect

Do you have a story to share? A feature idea? A question to ask? Contact Beth DiCocco, Conference Director of Communications, at communicate@neumc.org or (978) 682-8055 ext. 150

a fun Flower Frog

A flower frog sits atop a vase to help arrange flowers and hold stems in place. This personalized frog will become a favorite!

What you need:

- Air-dry clay
- Roller
- Vase (or jar)
- Plastic knife
- Straw
- Acrylic paint and brushes



What you do:

1. Roll out a portion of clay to about 1/2-inch thickness.
2. Cut out a circle that's slightly larger than the vase opening. (This will allow the finished frog to sit securely on top.)
3. To make holes for stems, use a straw to punch out circle shapes. If you make more than one frog, try arranging the holes in different patterns.
4. Let dry completely. Then personalize your work with acrylic paint.
5. When dry, place the frog atop the vase. Arrange flowers and greenery to make a Mother's Day bouquet.



PUZZLE

UNFADING BEAUTY

Peter says beauty shouldn't come from outward adornment.
How does a godly woman adorn herself on the inside?

*Directions: From each list, write the word that doesn't belong.
Then insert the circled letters in order below to complete 1 Peter 3:4, NIV.*

flower, stem, bee, leaf

pink, red, yellow, blue

mother, sister, brother, aunt

purple, dress, skirt, blouse

necklace, ring, bracelet, braid

diamond, emerald, heart, ruby

orange, cherry, potato, kiwi

my, our, she, your

faith, family, love, hope

sunny, rainy, snowy, temperature

cookie, cake, pie, sandwich

silver, white, gold, bronze

"Rather, it should be that of your inner self,
the unfading beauty of a g _____
and qu _____ p _____, which is
of great worth in God's sight." 1 Peter 3:4, NIV

Answers: bee, pink, brother, purple, braid, heart, potato, kiwi, heart, braid, bracelet, necklace, dress, skirt, blouse, mother, sister, brother, aunt, pink, red, yellow, blue, flower, stem, bee, leaf, my, our, she, your, faith, family, love, hope, sunny, rainy, snowy, temperature, cookie, cake, pie, sandwich, silver, white, gold, bronze



M • A • Y

2024

Thank you to the volunteers who signed up to provide refreshments following worship during the month of May.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28 9:30am Worship 5:30pm NH Table Tennis Club	29	30 Office Administrator vacation 8:00am Fit & Strong 9:00am Clothes Closet 9:30am Food Pantry	1 7:00pm On Purpose Book Study	2 National Day of Prayer 8:00am Fit & Strong	3 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal	4 8:00am Monthly Breakfast 9:30am Church Work Day
5 9:30am Worship 5:30pm NH Table Tennis Club	6	7 Church office closed 8:00am Fit & Strong 9:00am Clothes Closet 9:30am Food Pantry 7:00pm Finance Committee Meeting	8 6:00pm Bow Mills UMW Mother, Daughter, Friend Dinner 7:00pm On Purpose Book Study	9 8:00am Fit & Strong	10 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal	11 10:00am St. Paul's Mother's Day Brunch 2:00pm Spring Tea
12 9:30am Worship 5:30pm NH Table Tennis Club	13	14 8:00am Fit & Strong 9:00am Clothes Closet 9:30am Food Pantry 6:30pm Church Council Meeting	15	16 8:00am Fit & Strong	17 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal	18
19 Pentecost 9:30am Worship 5:30pm NH Table Tennis Club	20	21 8:00am Fit & Strong 9:00am Clothes Closet 9:30am Food Pantry 6:30pm SPRC Meeting	22	23 8:00am Fit & Strong	24 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal	25
26 9:30am Worship 5:30pm NH Table Tennis Club	27 Memorial Day	28 8:00am Fit & Strong 9:00am Clothes Closet 9:30am Food Pantry 6:30pm Trustees Meeting	29	30 8:00am Fit & Strong	31 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal	1 8:00am Monthly Breakfast