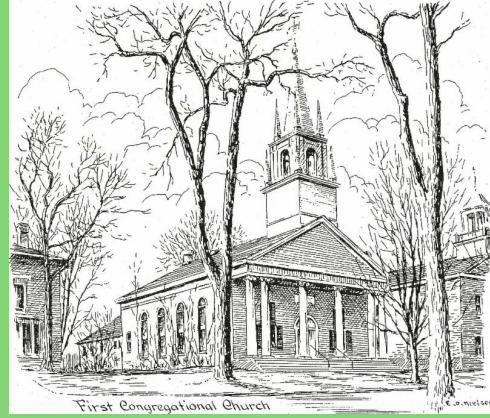


September 2022



The MEETING HOUSE CHIMES



**First Congregational Church of Wiscasset, UCC
28 High Street, Wiscasset, ME 04578
(207) 882-7544**

Welcome to the September edition of the monthly Chimes

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." Matthew 5:9

Get ready for Homecoming!

Please read article below.

Also in this issue:

- ~ An update from the Pastoral Search Committee
- ~ Organ Society resumes in-person
- ~ Updates about office staff & Feed Our Scholars
- ~ Maine gets a new Conference Minister
- ~ and much more!



From the Pastor's Pen

Late summer greetings,

In my back yard, the tomatoes and the maple leaves are in a race to see who can turn from green to red first. So far, the leaves are winning!

I am excited for Homecoming Sunday on Sept. 11. The choir will return, Sunday school will resume, and I'll be back in my robe. More than any of that, I appreciate the sense of in-gathering that always comes with the beginning of the school year, palpable even for those of us who do not have school-age children in our lives.

For the most part, our summer adventures are drawing to a close. If we opened our homes to visiting family and friends, they have likely made their way back to their own domiciles. The long, sunny days that seemed to add hours of unstructured time are giving way to shorter days, with all those routines that sustain us. We start thinking about protecting outside plants and making plans for lawn furniture.

Of course we will miss our friends with whom we worship only during the summer months. So many in our church family live elsewhere much of the year; what a blessing to see them when we can. If their spots in the pews seem sadly vacant, we can rejoice imagining them back in their routines, and look forward in hope to seeing them again next summer.

For me, the turning of summer into autumn is a poignant reminder that we are in God's care. Whatever the season, God cares for us and about us. We are part of an ever-changing world created by God, whose love never changes. The steadfast nature of God's love helps me adapt to changes that life inevitably brings -- whether seasonal or once-in-a-lifetime, whether predictable or unimaginable.

Yes, I lament the stubbornness of those green tomatoes, and all those outdoor projects that remain unfinished. At the same time, I reflect on what I learned this first summer as a Maine gardener and imagine what I can do differently next year. This is all part of the in-gathering this in-between season brings us.

I'd like to encourage us to reflect on what Homecoming means and why it is a special and important Sunday in the life of the church. If there is someone you haven't seen in a while in church, please give that person a call to say, "we've missed you!" A call from an old friend is a very powerful way to re-open doors and strengthen our connections in our communities.

I look forward to seeing you on Homecoming Sunday, and on the Sundays that follow!

Amy

Rev. Dr. Amy Lignitz Harken
Interim Minister



**Homecoming Sunday Sept. 11
Features Choir, Potluck
& Update from Pastoral Search Committee**

**Mark your calendar for our traditional Homecoming Sunday,
held on September 11, 2022.**

We'll celebrate the return of the choir and the Sunday School class.

Of course, we'll also pause for a moment of silence to commemorate 9/11 of 2001.

Following the service will be a potluck luncheon in Fellowship

Hall. Please bring a dish to share if you are able. Everybody is welcome, whether or not they bring a dish!

Lunch will be followed by a presentation by the members of the Pastoral Search Committee, who will share the church profile they created based on feedback from the congregation. They will also discuss the steps in our search for our next settled pastor. (See related article later in this edition of the Chimes.)

It's an exciting time in our church. Please invite someone to join you as we all "come home" on this special Sunday!



News from the Church Office...

The Trustees are happy to announce that our former office administrator, Janet Leonard, has agreed to come back to that position until spring. She will be working on Wednesday and Thursday mornings. We'll continue to rely on our volunteers for office coverage on Tuesday mornings. If you'd like to volunteer, please contact Steve Whitfield.



The Maine Conference of the United Church of Christ has called the Rev. Dr. Marisa Laviola as the new conference minister. She comes to Maine from Pennsylvania. Oscar Wallace, Linda Wallace, Libby Mooney and Rev. Amy represented FCCW at a special meeting to approve Dr. Laviola's call, held Aug. 6 at First Parish Church in Brunswick. For more information ...

<https://www.maineucc.org/blog-post/words-of-blessing-new-cm-marisa/>



SCHOOL IS BACK IN SESSION!

Wiscasset Elementary School begins classes on Tuesday, September 6.

For years, we have been packing bags of weekend food for nearly a quarter of the students on Wednesdays at 11 a.m. This year, Wednesdays have been set as early release days so I am not sure how this affects our schedule.

In years past, several volunteers and three helpful Wiscasset Middle High School students got packing down to a science. We've been able to pack up to 48 bags of food in about 30 minutes, with setup prep being done prior to bagging.

We also receive delivery of a pallet full of shelf-stable food items from Good Shepherd on the third Tuesday of each month at 7 a.m. (way earlier than I usually am awake!). The food needs to be taken upstairs, labeled with date received, and stored on the shelves of our Feed Our Scholars food closet.

I will have an update on times for packing as the school begins and we find out what works as a delivery time. I have been loading my truck each Wednesday and delivering the bags to the school; school staff helps unload the bags. Volunteers with trucks or SUVs to do the delivery would be more than welcome.

Please stay tuned for further information about the schedule. Many thanks to everyone who helped last year to support this very important hands-on ministry – mission outreach of our church family. Questions or volunteer information can come to me at 882-6180 or emaxwell@myfairpoint.net.

~ Beth Maxwell



News from Church World Service



Bottle/Cans Returns to Support Feed Our Scholars

For many years, Nancy and Wally Roby have been taking bottles and cans placed in the bin below the church mail boxes to redemption centers, with the proceeds going to the Feed Our Scholars program. While this might be a fun outing in times past, redemption centers seem to be disappearing. So, we're going to try something different!

The Hannaford supermarket chain has a program called "Clynk," which makes it easy to redeem bottles, cans, etc. This is how it works: The church signs up for an account and is issued a barcode unique to us. The barcode is

attached to special Clynk bags, in to which church members put their redeemables. Church members drop off the bags at Hannaford's whenever it is convenient for them. The bags hold a lot of bottles and cans (I personally saw one being returned the other day). Clynk recycles what's in the bags, and credits the proceeds to the church's account.

The first ten Clynk bags are free; after that, the cost is \$2.49 for ten bags (25 cents per bag). We'll determine how to cover the cost (donations, committee funds, etc.) as we go forward and see how popular the Clynk program is at the church.

We hope this will give more financial support to the Feed Our Scholars program. There may be those of you who did not know that we collected cans and bottles, while others may prefer not to bring their redeemables to the church.

As always, every penny or nickel or \$.15 counts in our efforts to provide food to those in our community who really need us to help them!

~ Beth Maxwell



Organ Society Marks 200 Years and YOU Are Invited to Help Celebrate!

*The Organ Society Welcomes You!
Meeting in-person on Sept. 7*

The Ladies Auxiliary, known as the Organ Society, is in its 200th year, the longest continuously serving ladies group in the United States.

After purchasing a furnace for the sanctuary, the ladies raised money for the first of three organs to be installed in this church. Over the years, the ladies have raised money for many useful items for the church. In more recent times, the Organ Society assisted in replacing the cushions for the pews, purchased a new microwave oven for the kitchen which was one of many acquisitions for the kitchen, purchased

card tables for Fellowship Hall, donated a baptismal font for their 190th anniversary celebration, donated funds toward the granite steps at the front of the church, and made donations to many local charities in our community.

Yes, we are more than a group of ladies meeting once a week to socialize and knit. Monthly programs of local and social issues have been offered, along with fun programs including the popular cooking demonstrations, and tours of local historical locations such as Castle Tucker and the former Musical Wonder House. The ladies spearheaded the card program which sends notes of congratulations and concern to our members. And lest it is forgotten, the ladies started the summer fair which became Summerfest, the fair which glues us together as a church community working toward the idea of improving lives of others through charitable donations.

On September 7th, we will once again meet in Fellowship Hall to begin our Fall Session. Throughout the pandemic, Zoom has kept us in contact with our neighbors, near and far. If we remain in a healthy environment, we will hold our weekly meetings every Wednesday from 9:30 to 11:00. Our first meeting will be a business meeting where we will set our goals for the Fall. We hope that you will come to this first meeting and be a part of your church community. Although we are called a Ladies group, men and children are welcome.

Worship moments...



A beautiful day to worship.



Martha Speed, Jane Junkert, and Margot Stiassni sing in a multi-church choir as part of "Musical Treats and Sweets" at St. Philip's Episcopal Church on Aug. 28.

Important News from the Pastoral Search Committee

Your search committee has reached an important milestone!

After 18 meetings of the whole group and numerous sub-group gatherings, we completed the Profile's writing. As we have said and written since we began at the end of last year, the Profile seeks to tell a story of who we (the First Congregational Church of Wiscasset) are, who our neighbors (Wiscasset and surrounding community) are, and who God is calling us to become.

Through your participation in the survey and focus groups, you helped us create an engaging story that will be a big part of what brings our next settled minister to Wiscasset. We have had our Profile reviewed by the Maine Conference staff (the people who brought us Josh and Amy) as we prepare to post it. After they reviewed the Profile, they responded with "excellent! Don't change a thing." We will be posting on the UCC ministry opportunities in early September.

We now ask that you include the church in your prayers, praying that the Spirit will lead the search committee and the right candidate to a fruitful conversation leading us to call our new minister.

Please join us at the pot-luck luncheon after worship on September 11. We will present the completed Profile and have time for your thought and questions.

Thank You!

...From a grateful congregation,
thank you to all who have
volunteered in the church office.
You are appreciated!

Office volunteers: Brad Adler, Emily Adler, Susan Atwood, Janet Cappers, Cindy Clement, Ann Dunleavy, Pam Frenier, Ruth Gilbert, Chris Grosser, Lisa Hargreaves, Anne Harris, Jane Junkert, Becky Lenz, Ann Light, Beth Maxwell, Libby Mooney, Joan Shea, Martha Speed, and Margo Stiassni.



Thank you to all those who have been providing hospitality during Coffee Hour! Thank you to the Choir, which hosted in August. Upcoming hosts are:

September ~ Christian Education

October ~ Men of the Church

Also, if you would like reimbursement for the half and half, please submit the receipt to Jan Whitfield.



Gratitude is Good!



Let's Say "Thanks!"

Many local businesses contributed items and gift certificates to the Silent Auction at this year's Summerfest. Perhaps you were lucky enough to have the winning bid on one or more! Even if you didn't win, we hope you will thank any of the businesses listed below when you happen to frequent their premises. That will help them know that their contribution had an impact, and just maybe that will make them think well of the First Congregational Church of Wiscasset.

Red's Eats
Sprague's Lobster
Sarah's
Ames True Value
Moulinette
Birches Home and Gifts
Rock Paper Scissors
In the Clover
Treats
Woodsong Market and Cafe
Edgecomb Pottery
Cooks Landing
Henhouse Sugaring Co.
Margot Stiassni
Barn House Grill and Pub
Water Street Kitchen and Bar
Now You're Cooking
Morris Farm
Jan Kilburn Art Studio
Monkey C Monkey Do
Birches Coffee Cafe and Market
North of the Border
Market Place Cafe
Jodie's Cafe and Bakery
Maine Tasting Center

The "The Good Life" Book Study Finishes

The summer study of *The Good Life* wrapped up Sept. 1. In all, nine people took part in the Thursday afternoon discussion. Even after adding another half hour to the class, we more than filled our time talking about subjects such as justice, self-esteem, how Jesus impacts our lives, and how we can and do make positive differences in the world ... and in our church! Thanks to all who participated!



A Covid reminder ...

We continue to keep an eye on Covid levels in Lincoln County. Every Sunday before worship, a piece of red, yellow, or green colored paper will be attached to the poster based on our Covid status. You'll quickly see when a mask is required, and when it is optional.

*Thank you for reading the September issue of The Chimes!
If you have news you'd like to share for the October issue, please send your article to Rev. Amy at revlignitzharken@gmail.com by Sept. 20.*

First Congregational Church of Wiscasset, UCC
Mailing address: P.O. Box 350
www.uccwiscasset.org ~ fccw@myfairpoint.net

Office Hours: Tuesday through Thursday, 9am–12pm
Worship: Sunday 10 a.m.

Interim Minister: Rev. Dr. Amy Lignitz Harken
Organist: Joel Pierce
Sexton: Mary McKinney

Shining the Light of Christ
**FIRST
CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH**
in the Heart of Wiscasset

First Congregational Church, Wiscasset | 28 High Street, P.O. Box 350, Wiscasset, ME 04578

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