

First Congregational Church

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

An Open and Affirming Church

PO Box 350, 28 High Street, Wiscasset, Maine 04578

207-882-7544, www.uccwiscasset.org



We welcome you to the First Congregational Church of Wiscasset.

VISION: We are on a journey to reflect God's love, embracing diversity and affirming the dignity and worth of all.

MISSION: Together we strive to praise God, grow in faith, cultivate love, spread joy, care for all people and God's creation, promote peace, and do justice.



August 3, 2025

August 3, 2025
Eighth Sunday of Pentecost
10:00am

* Indicates to please stand with your heart or your posture.

We welcome **all** to our worship service whether present or on streaming video!
The First Congregational Church of Wiscasset is an Open and Affirming Church
affiliated with the United Church of Christ denomination.
All are invited to gather in Fellowship Hall immediately following worship for
Coffee, Refreshments and Conversation.

For Your Contemplation: “One reason why we come to church, listen to sermons,
read scripture, is to “wise up.” The church loves to tell us the truth, to set before us
the difference between the Way of God and the ways of the world.”
... William Willimon

PRELUDE *Kinderszenen, op. 15* Robert Schumann
XIII. Der Dichter spricht
VIII. Am Kamin

RINGING OF THE BELL

CHORAL INTROIT *He Is Exalted* Twila Paris

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

* INVITATION TO WORSHIP

May those who love Your salvation, O Lord, say continually, “Great is the Lord!”
Yes, our heart is glad in God, because we trust in God’s holy name.
Let us make a joyful noise to God with songs of praise!
We praise You, O God: we acknowledge You to be the Lord.

* HYMN *Great Is Thy Faithfulness* see insert

UNISON PRAYER

**O God, our guide and guardian, You have set us apart from the busy
world into the quiet of Your house. Grant us grace to worship You in Spirit
and in Truth to the comfort of our souls and the up building of every good
purpose and holy desire. Enable us to understand Your Will, that we may
not fear the coming of the night, when we shall resign into Your hands all**

our cares. So we may worship You not with our lips at this hour, but in word and deed all the days of our lives. Amen.

CHORAL ANTHEM

Blessed Quietness

Mark Blankenship

JOYS AND CONCERNS:

After each Joy or Concern please respond:

Pastor: “Lord,” **Congregation: “Hear our prayer.”**

MORNING PRAYER

SILENT PRAYER

THE LORD’S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

CHORAL RESPONSE

Calm to the Waves

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Colossians 3:1 – 11

Luke 12:13 – 21

Liturgist: This is the Word of God for the people of God.

People: Thanks be to God.

* HYMN

God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending

No. 454

SERMON:

“More?!?!?! (hint: it’s never enough)”

Rev. David C. Myers

Text: “Put to death, therefore, whatever in you is earthly: . . . evil desire, and greed (which is idolatry).”

. . . Luke 12:20b

OFFERTORY PRAYER

OFFERTORY

VII. Träumerei

Robert Schumann

* PRESENTATION WITH DOXOLOGY

No.46

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen.**

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

We practice Open Communion. All are invited to receive the means of grace the bread and wine provide. Our church swerves gluten free bread, and grape juice. Please wait until all are served, then we will consume together.

Invitation to the Table of Grace: As we gather at this table remembering Jesus last meal with His disciples, we come knowing the Christ welcomed all. Come. Join the body of Christ that forgives and has compassion to all.

For we are the Body of Christ, and around this table we enact our faith. The Body broken that we share restores us to wholeness; and lifeblood is poured out to bring healing to our world. God has told us that the heavenly realm is at hand. Even though we get too wrapped up in our busyness, we experience bits and pieces of it when we extend love and care to those in need, whether we know them or not. And God now invites us to gather as One Body, in One world, loved and redeemed by God.

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

Rev. Myers

Holy God, in the fullness of time, you sent your son Jesus Christ, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, all that we may be reconciled to you O God, the source of life and love.

Jesus healed the sick, ate and drank with outcasts and sinners, Jesus opened the eyes of the blind and proclaimed the Good News of your Kin-dom to the poor and these in need. In all things Jesus fulfilled your gracious will.

On the night Jesus freely gave himself to death, our Lord took the BREAD . . . and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

(Bread is served in in the pews)

After supper Jesus took the **cup of wine**, . . . and when he had given thanks, He gave it to them, and said, "Drink from this all of you; this is My blood of the New Covenant which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sin, "Whenever you drink of it, do this in remembrance of Me."

(Wine is served in the pews)

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (unison): **Our Creator, our Savior, our Sustainer:**

In this Holy Mystery you have given yourself to us. We are eternally grateful. Empower us, that we may go into the world in the strength of your spirit to give ourselves to each other in the name of Jesus Christ who gave his life for us.

* HYMN

Now Thank We All Our God

No. 27

BENEDICTION

BENEDICTORY RESPONSE

**Go now in peace. Never be afraid. God will go with you each hour of every day.
Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true. Know God will guide you in all you do.
Go now in love, and show you believe. Reach out to others so all the world can see.
God will be there watching from above. Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.**

POSTLUDE

*I. Von fremden Ländern und Menschen
XI. Fürchtenmachen*

You are invited to sit for the postlude.

* * * * *

“Our worship ends, let our service begin”

Great Is Thy Faithfulness

1. Great is thy faith-ful-ness, O God my Fa-ther; there is no
 2. Sum-mer and win-ter and spring-time and har-vest, sun, moon, and
 3. Par-don for sin and a peace that en-dur-eth, thine own dear

shad-ow of turn-ing with thee; thou chang-est not, thy com-
 stars in their cours-es a-bove join with all na-ture in
 pres-ence to cheer and to guide; strength for to-day and bright

pas-sions, they fail not; as thou hast been, thou for-ev-er wilt be.
 man-i-fold wit-ness to thy great faith-ful-ness, mer-cy, and love.
 hope for to-mor-row, bless-ings all mine, with ten thou-sand be-side!

Refrain

Great is thy faith-ful-ness! Great is thy faith-ful-ness! Morn-ing by

morn-ing new mer-cies I see; all I have need-ed thy

hand hath pro-vid-ed; great is thy faith-ful-ness, Lord, un-to me!

Colossians 3:1-11

So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

Put to death, therefore, whatever in you is earthly: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed (which is idolatry). On account of these the wrath of God is coming on those who are disobedient. These are the ways you also once followed, when you were living that life. But now you must get rid of all such things—anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive language from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have stripped off the old self with its practices and have clothed yourselves with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator. In that renewal there is no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free; but Christ is all and in all!

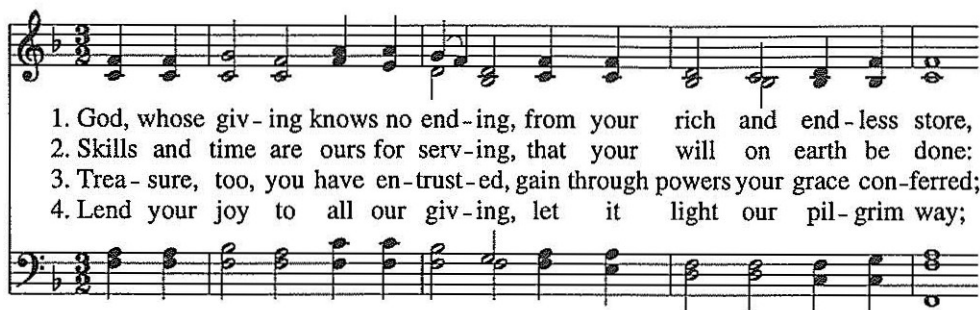
Luke 12:13-21

Someone in the crowd said to him, ‘Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me.’ But he said to him, ‘Friend, who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?’ And he said to them, ‘Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of possessions.’ Then he told them a parable: ‘The land of a rich man produced abundantly. And he thought to himself, “What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?” Then he said, “I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.” But God said to him, “You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?” So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich towards God.’

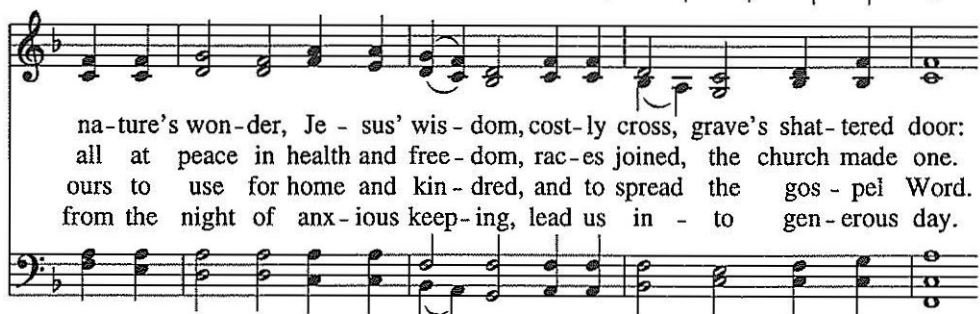
Liturgist: This is the Word of God for the people of God.

People: Thanks be to God!

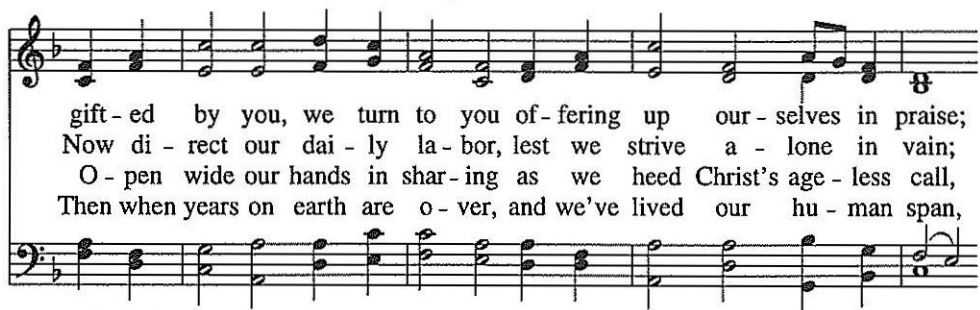
God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending 454



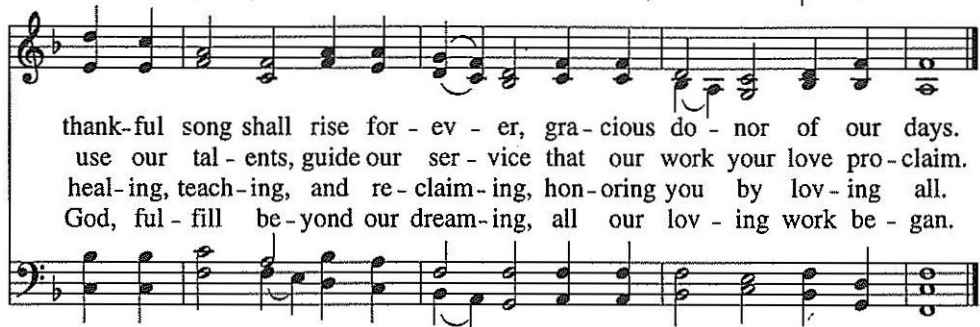
1. God, whose giv-ing knows no end-ing, from your rich and end-less store,
 2. Skills and time are ours for serv-ing, that your will on earth be done;
 3. Trea-sure, too, you have en-trust-ed, gain through powers your grace con-ferred;
 4. Lend your joy to all our giv-ing, let it light our pil-grim way;



na-ture's won-der, Je-sus' wis-dom, cost-ly cross, grave's shat-tered door:
 all at peace in health and free-dom, rac-es joined, the church made one.
 ours to use for home and kin-dred, and to spread the gos-pel Word.
 from the night of anx-ious keep-ing, lead us in-to gen-erous day.



gift-ed by you, we turn to you of-fering up our-selves in praise;
 Now di-rect our dai-ly la-bor, lest we strive a-lone in vain;
 O-pen wide our hands in shar-ing as we heed Christ's age-less call,
 Then when years on earth are o-ver, and we've lived our hu-man span,



thank-ful song shall rise for-ev-er, gra-cious do-nor of our days.
 use our tal-ents, guide our ser-vice that our work your love pro-claim.
 heal-ing, teach-ing, and re-claim-ing, hon-oring you by lov-ing all.
 God, ful-fill be-yond our dream-ing, all our lov-ing work be-gan.

WORDS: Robert L. Edwards, 1961, alt.
 MUSIC: *The Sacred Harp*, 1844; harm. FCC, 1997

BEACH SPRING
 87.87D

“More?!?!?”

Colossians 3:1 – 11

Luke 12:13 – 21

Texts: “Put to death, therefore, whatever in you is earthly: . . . , evil
desire, and greed (which is idolatry).” . . . I Colossians 3:3

“And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?”
. . . Luke 12:20b

When my children were in their pre-teen years, they were always in shock when I would throw away the all too familiar brown envelope with the red print on the front, “Congratulations! You may already have won one million dollars!” You may remember the one – from Ed McMahon and the Publisher’s Clearing House. My kids would beg me to open it. Dreams of Disney World, fancy cars, a bigger house, perhaps a swimming pool were dancing in their heads. “Dad, *we* (I never figured out where they got the “we” – the envelope was clearly addressed to me) – dad, we could be rich and not even know it! Don’t you think you better open it up and find out?”

And I thought about it: we could be rich and not even know it. What a thought! And as I reflected, how true that is – we are all rich, and few of us really know it.

In a materialistic culture such as ours we tend to think that money is the solution to most difficulties. If you want more security, get more money. If you want to put yourself in a good mood, go shopping and spend more money. It is the cultural cure-all. More. More. More.

Several years ago, an article in **Money** magazine dealt with how much income it would take to make people satisfied. A wide variety of professions and levels of income were represented among those questioned. Teachers, custodians, engineers, secretaries, executives, from those making \$30,000 a year to those whose salaries topped a quarter million, virtually no one was entirely happy. Discontent prevailed.

But most didn't claim it would take a great deal more to make them happy; just a little more. In fact, there was a considerable degree of agreement about how much more it would take. From the lowest wage earner to those with top salaries, the consensus was that they needed about 20% more.

That's not all that much, is it? Twenty percent is reasonable. Our material expectations and aspirations are just a little beyond our reach, not wildly beyond the realm of possibility.

This brings us today's Gospel reading from Luke. It has one parallel to the story of the story of the Prodigal Son. In this case a rich man comes to Jesus and asks Jesus to tell his brother to divide the inheritance with him. That it itself indicates this man was a younger brother (already rich), who was greedy – he wanted more - his share of the family inheritance – now!!! So, Jesus tells him a parable about the rich farmer who has apparently acquired his goods through just means – nowhere is he accused of criminality or even greed. He is successful through his wise management and through God's providence. However, like so many successful, wealthy people, the rich man seems to have forgotten the basics. He is rich only toward himself, not toward God. He talks only to himself. While never clearly stated in Scripture, it would have been plain to Jesus' audience that this man was not giving as his faith demanded: the man left no grain for the gleaners, the widows and orphans.

He lives for himself thinking that he is securing his life through his hard work and his possessions. In today's times this man that we might call a prudent, productive businessperson.

Jesus calls him a "fool."

Surely this parable has nothing to do with us. It is so easy to assume that Jesus is speaking of someone else. Jesus would never call us a "fool." Surely not us.

But Jesus is speaking to us; perhaps to all of us. Even if we do not see ourselves as wealthy; we still live in the United States. We have food and shelter, cars, TVs, computers, and smart phones. Our modest and not so modest homes contain thousands of stewardship lessons.

So we, like the man in the parable, say to ourselves, “I will pull down my barns and build bigger ones,” or some early 21st century equivalent. But the problem is that our income never manages to catch up with our expectations.

Now, ***you*** may be the exception. But I’m not, and I suspect that most of you, like me, want more. Just ask my wife, Deb! You see one of the difficulties of preaching on this parable is that if I am honest with you I have to be honest with me. And then that requires me to be confessional – at least to myself.

It’s been like this for a long time. We aren’t facing a new problem. And Jesus saw how misleading wealth can be. It is not worthy of our devotion because it doesn’t provide the satisfaction that lasts, or the security that endures.

This is not a comfortable lesson for us. Jesus likes to take us out of our comfort zone. William Willimon reminds us, “One reason why we come to church, listen to sermons, read scripture, is to ‘wise up.’ The church loves us enough to tell us the truth, to set before us the difference between the ways of God and the ways of the world.”

A man came to Jesus wanting more. He must have been a younger son, because he couldn’t wait for his brother to split up the family inheritance. So he sought to enlist Jesus’ aid: “Tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me.” But Jesus knew that getting more wouldn’t get the man what he really needed. Instead of helping him get what he wanted, Jesus cautioned him to consider what matters in life. “Take heed,” said Jesus, “and beware of all greed, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of possessions.” The aim of Jesus was to help people be more, not to have more.

It is also most interesting that we get doubled up a bit this morning. It’s not enough that Jesus confronts us with our greed, the lectionary reading from Colossians written by Paul, tells us that greed is idolatry. It is interesting that Paul lists several sins we all have some degree of familiarity with –

fornication, impurity, evil desire and greed; but it is only greed that he called idolatry.

I once read a story about a philosopher that taught a course entitled, “Money and the Meaning of Life.” Many who signed up for it were already well established in their careers – accountants, bankers, and attorneys. But they came to realize that while money can be a solution to some problems; it also presents us with a new set of problems. As the course neared a conclusion, he asked the class members to submit the questions they found most pressing in their own relationship to wealth. Some of the responses were like cries in the dark. For examples:

- “How can I let go of my fears about money? It totally absorbs my consciousness. I fear I will get old and become a street person.”
- “How can I prevent my sense of self-worth from being so dependent on how much money I make? Why do I want more when I have enough?”
- “How much of myself will I have to sell for money in order to be able to live more fully later, and can I regain what I’ve sold?”

Jesus points toward the answer to these questions. We need to store up riches – but not primarily in bank accounts or stock portfolios or in real estate holdings. These can distract us if God is not the center of our aims and intentions. Wealth as a means of lasting security is an illusion. Possessions as a reliable path to a rich life is an illusion. Having more does not get us what we most deeply want.

Now before I leave this entirely – it is important we see the implications as we move beyond ourselves to our collective society. You see, this story is not just about what we do personally; it has implications for what we do together.

Our country is like this very rich man. The more our country focuses on ourselves, the less we become what we want – we lose our respect in the world, and become less liked in the eyes of others. Consider this, if we

could shrink the Earth's population to a village of precisely 100 people, with all existing human ratios remaining the same, it would look like this:

- 70 would be non-white, 30 would be white
- 70 would be non-Christian, 30 would be Christian
- 50% of the entire world's wealth and resources would be in the hands of only 6 people and all 6 would be citizen's of the United States
- 80 would live in sub-standard housing
- 70 would be unable to read
- 50 would suffer from malnutrition
- Only 1 would have a college education¹

Well, Jesus never leaves us without pointing us in the right direction. Jesus turns our attention elsewhere, to the Kingdom of God. He wants the divine reign of peace and plenty to be ours. In this reign there is wealth that never needs protecting, a treasure that can't be lost, stolen or devalued by the wear and tear of time. This wealth is communion with God. ***Earthly*** treasure, even when we have it sufficiently protected, can never truly protect us. We are forced to hover over it.

Jesus ended his story by saying, "You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?"

Jesus knew what we so often refuse to admit. Our possessions can get a stranglehold on our hearts. In His parable of the sower, Jesus spoke of the Word of God being spread about like scattered seed. In some places, it grows healthy and strong, but He taught that sometimes the seed is choked by "the cares of the world and the delight in riches." (Matthew 13:22)

The true treasure is not the material wealth we accumulate on earth, but the spiritual riches that are linked to God. This treasure does not come

¹ The above numbers are simplified from an original article that is much longer, written by Donella H. Meadows, former professor at Dartmouth College, New Hampshire.

to us as we focus ourselves on having and holding. It is ours as we give and serve.

Materially speaking *more* is never enough because the purpose of our lives' transcends the confines of this world. As we pour out our financial resources, creative energy, and precious time to care for those in need we pile up treasure in heaven. And the same is true collectively as we interact in the world.

Bishop William Willimon reminds us, "One reason why we come to church, listen to sermons, read scripture, is to 'wise up.' The church loves us enough to tell us the truth, to set before us the difference between the ways of God and the ways of the world."

Jesus was just reminding us that there is a necessary friction between the ways of the church and the ways of the world. Many of the world's standards for good and the beautiful, the right and the noble, are, in the eyes of the faith, foolish. Therefore, it would seem to me that a faithful church will always be a church that is at pains to make some distinctions between itself and the world.

And how hard that can be.

Riches that are not wealth and possessions?

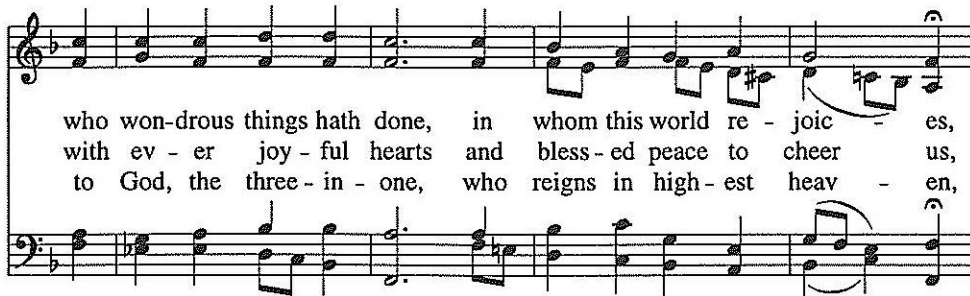
Our faith is filled with paradoxes – it stands in sharp contrast with the values of the world.

A satisfying meal that only has a small piece of bread barely moistened with grape juice?

You are invited, this morning; to gather at the Table of our Lord to experience true wealth – to receive a meal that truly satisfies. You are invited to receive God's grace at God's Table. It truly is an extravagant meal!



1. Now thank we all our God with heart and hands and voices,
 2. O may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,
 3. All praise and thanks to God almighty now be given;



who wondrous things hath done, in whom this world rejoices,
 with ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us,
 to God, the three-in-one, who reigns in highest heaven,



who, from our mothers' arms, hath blessed us on our way
 and keep us in all grace, and guide us when perplexed,
 the one eternal God, whom earth and heaven adore,



with countless gifts of love, and still is ours to-day.
 and free us from all ills in this world and the next.
 for thus it was, is now, and shall be evermore.

WORDS: Martin Rinkart, 1636; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1858, alt.
 MUSIC: Melody, Johann Crüger, 1647

NUN DANKET
 67.67.66.66

Those serving you today:
Interim Minister: Rev. David Myers
Music Director/Organist: Joel Pierce
Ushers: Gail Burke & Cindy Clement
Reader: Janet Cappers
Flowers: Jan Whitfield

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

LISTENING FOR THE WORD OF GOD

A Bible Study, started in June Continues. . .

Held Wednesday mornings at 9:00am in the church parlor, led by Rev. Dave Myers. Bring your favorite translation and we will discuss the scripture reading for the upcoming Sunday. You might even hear a thought you express in Sunday's sermon!

The next Study is for the Sunday, August 10, scriptures: John 7:53 – 8:11.

If you are interested but not able to attend in the morning, please let Cindy Clement know - she would be happy to lead a second discussion in the evening either in person or via Zoom.

Outreach Team Quarterly Meeting, August 3, after Church.

Church Council Meeting, Wednesday, August 6, 6:30pm in the Parlor. If interested in attending via Zoom, please contact Cindy Clement for a link.

Happy Birthday to all church members with August Birthdays.

*Beth Whitney, Bill Sutter, Judith Sutter, Janet Cappers,
Scott Murray, Jim Spurlin. Happy Birthday!*

Sunday, August 3:	Choir Practice, 8:10am Sunday Worship – 10:00am Coffee Hour following church in Fellowship Hall. Outreach Team Meeting , August 3, after Church.
Monday, August 4:	Mah Jongg, 6:00pm – 8:30pm
Tuesday, August 5:	Office Hours 9:00am – 12:00pm
Wednesday, August 6:	Bible Study , A discussion of upcoming scripture readings, 9:00am in the church parlor. Office Hours 9:00am – 12:00pm Church Council Meeting , Wednesday, August 6, 6:30pm in the Parlor. If interested in attending via Zoom, please contact Cindy Clement for a Zoom link.
Thursday, August 7:	Office Hours 9:00am – 12:00pm
Sunday, August 10:	Choir Practice, 8:10am Sunday Worship – 10:00am Coffee Hour following church in Fellowship Hall.
<p align="center">Need a ride or Can you provide a ride?</p> <p>If you need or would be willing to provide a ride to and from church on Sundays for those unable to drive, please call Lisa Hargreaves at 207.315.0802.</p>	
<p align="center">Volunteer Opportunity at St. Philip's Church</p> <p>St. Philip's is looking for volunteers to in the Bargain Basement thrift shop. Contact Sharman Ballantine at sharman1738@gmail.com or 207 481 1043 for more info.</p>	
<p>Please take note of the colored paper prayer slips in the pew rack. These are for you to write a word or phrase of prayer or concerns and place it on the plate of offering. It will only be shared with the pastor.</p>	