

First United Methodist Church
34 South Main Street
Rochester, NH 03867
603-948-1179
www.firstumcrochester.org

hello
APRIL



The Messenger
Published monthly April 2026

First United Methodist Church, 34 South Main Street, Rochester, NH 03867
office@firstumcrochester.org Donna L. Downes, Editor
603-948-1179 kdld@metrocast.net

Holy Week schedules and worship:

Maundy Thursday, April 2nd

7pm-Worship service at First Church Congregational

Thursday April 2nd- to Friday April 3rd- 24 Hour Prayer Vigil

Vigil is ongoing from 8pm Thursday until Good Friday at 7pm.

(Sign-up sheet in the Welcome Center) You may pray at home or in the church chapel.

Good Friday, April 3rd 7:00 PM

Worship service at FUMC

Saturday, April 4th

9AM- Family Baking Bread for Easter communion service

Easter, April 5th

6am—Easter Sunrise Service

9:30 AM- Worship

10:45am- Easter Egg hunt after worship (please bring your own basket)

He Is Risen Indeed!!!



PASTOR'S CORNER

Dear FUMC Family,

While traveling in England for our Wesleyan Heritage Tour, I walked along the ancient city walls of York. As I made my way along those narrow paths, I found myself reflecting on what it means to walk faithfully through history. Between the sturdy stone walls and the iron rods that now reinforce them, there stands the magnificent cathedral—a witness to centuries of human struggle, conflict, and hope.

Those walls have seen years of wars and violence, moments when fear and uncertainty must have seemed overwhelming. And yet, even there, generation after generation chose to walk the narrow way of faith. They embraced belief not as something accidental, but as an intentional journey—one that required courage, perseverance, and trust in God. Their faith was carried forward, passed down like a sacred torch, even in the most difficult of times.



As I walked, I couldn't help but think about how similar our own journey of faith is today. We, too, live in a world marked by uncertainty and division. We, too, are called to choose the narrow path—not always the easiest or most popular one, but the one that leads to life. This is certainly what we celebrate in Easter.

Easter reminds us that faith is not merely about surviving the brokenness of the world, but about trusting in God's power to bring new life out of it. The resurrection of Jesus is God's ultimate declaration that violence, despair, and even death do not have the final word. Just as those ancient stones in York still stand as testimony to enduring faith, the empty tomb stands as an everlasting sign of hope.

The people who built and preserved that cathedral did so because they believed in something beyond what they could immediately see. In the same way, we are invited to live as Easter people—those who trust in resurrection even when we are surrounded by reminders of Good Friday.

So this month, as we journey toward and through Easter, may we walk that intentional path of faith. May we carry forward the hope that has been entrusted to us. And may our lives, like those ancient walls and that enduring cathedral, bear witness to the truth that Christ is risen—and because He lives, we too are made new.

In peace,
Ho-Soon

APRIL



If you do not see your birthday listed, or date is incorrect, please contact the church office to update your information.

2	Jeff Gustafson	13	Janet Walker
3	Brogan Meehan	13	Emily Singleton
4	Eleanor Henderson	17	Carol Park
4	Danielle Peterson	18	Lawrence (Skip) Brownell
4	Robert Walker	19	Jean Georgious
5	Amy Renaud	19	Charlotte Pyrich
5	Ryan Fowler	20	Benjamin Battis
6	Richard Combs	20	Natalie Hudson
6	Matthew Winders	20	Sharon Muffett
7	Rhonda Semo	23	Bennett Parsell
8	Greg Ward	24	Paul Blackadar
9	Claude Saddler	28	Louis Santucci
10	Carole Casey	28	Ron Menard
13	Katie Mullins	30	Frank Milinski

April 6- Stephanie and John Brown
April 8- Roseann and Scott Bencit
April 16- Matthew and Danielle Peterson
April 18- Sue and Kevin Nolan
April 26- Kaitlin and Peter Ciccarello
April 27- Susan and Donald Raab
April 29- Jennifer and Scott and Mayotte

	<u>Acolytes</u>	<u>Ushers</u>
3 Good Friday	<i>Nora Rice</i>	<i>Sally Dyer</i>
5 Easter	<i>Alejandra Hernandez Parsell Natalia Hernandez Parsell</i>	<i>Donna Walter/ Deb Boynton</i>
12	<i>Charlotte Pyrich</i>	<i>Pat Hewitt</i>
19	<i>Madilyn Gabbard</i>	<i>Susan and Don Raab</i>
26	<i>Declan Meehan</i>	<i>Deb Boynton Marianne Gustafson</i>

APRIL

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
		1	1 9am Project Linus 6pm Cub Scouts 6:30pm Choir 7pm Disciple Study	2 MAUNDY THURSDAY 10am AA Group 5pm Fellowship Kitchen 7pm Maundy Thursday Service @ UCC 7pm FINANCE 7pm District 15AA	3 GOOD FRIDAY 7PM Good Friday Service FUMC	4 10am AA Group 9am Family Baking 
5 EASTER COMMUNION 9:30AM Worship Easter Egg Hunt 5pm- Fellowship kitchen	6 10:30 am AA Group 5pm Fellowship Kitchen 6 pm Project Linus	7 9:30am Sip N Share 5pm Fellowship Kitchen 6pm Witherell Bells 7pm Scouts	8 9am Project Linus 6pm Cub Scouts 7pm Disciple Study	9 10am AA Group 5pm Fellowship Kitchen 6:30pm Choir 6:30pm Seacoast Carvers	10	11 10am- AA Group 10am- UWif Gathering
12 9:30 am Worship NOW- Birthdays and Blessings 10:45am Christian Ed 5pm Fellowship kitchen	13 10:30 am AA Group 5pm Fellowship Kitchen 6 pm Project Linus 6:30PM WORSHIP COMMITTEE	14 9:30am Sip N Share 5pm Fellowship Kitchen 6pm Witherell Bells 7pm Scouts 7:30PM STEEPLE COMMITTEE	15 NEWLETTER DEADLINE 8am Rochester Mental Health Summit 9am Project Linus 6pm Cub Scouts 7pm Disciple Study	16 10AM AA Group 3pm Fellowship kitchen	17	18 SPRING CLEAN-UP 8-12 
19 9:30 am Worship Souped up Sunday 5pm Fellowship kitchen	20 10:30 am AA Group 5pm Fellowship Kitchen 6pm Project Linus 6PM LAY LEADERS 7PM ADMIN. COUNCIL	21 9:30am Sip N Share 5pm Fellowship Kitchen 6pm Witherell Bells 6pm Patrol Leader 7pm Scouts 7PM TRUSTEES	22 9am Project Linus 6pm Cub Scouts 7pm Disciple Study	23 10am AA Group 5pm Fellowship kitchen 6:30 Pack Committee 6:30 pm Choir 6:30pm Seacoast Carvers	24	25 10am AA Group SPRING CLEAN-UP RAIN DATE 4:30 TURKEY DINNER SILENT AUCTION
26 9:30am Worship 1pm- GSCS rehearsal 5pm Fellowship Kitchen	27 10:30 am AA Group 5pm Fellowship Kitchen 6 pm Project Linus 6:30pm SPPRC	28 9:30am Sip N Share 5pm Fellowship Kitchen 6pm Witherell Bells 7pm Scouts	29 9am Project Linus 6pm Cub Scouts 7pm Disciple Study	30 10am AA Group 5pm Fellowship kitchen 6:30 pm Choir		



	<u>Liturgists</u>	<u>Greeters</u>
3 Good Friday	TBD	TBD
5 Easter	John Wilderman	Lorie and Sam Tweedy
12	Michelle Parker	Sue Parsell
19	Jenn Elliott	Pat Hewitt/ Eileen Foss
26	Kent Marzoli	Roseann and Scott Benoit

PREPARE FOR WORSHIP IN APRIL

April 2nd—Maundy Thursday
Service at FCC

April 3rd— Good Friday
Service at FUMC
Luke 23:33-38, 44-46

“The Good News Is...revealed through non-violence”

April 5th-Easter

Sunrise Service 6 a.m.

Mark 16:1-13

“Firsthand Faith: God’s DM to You”

Easter Sunday Service 9:30 a.m.

Romans 8:31-39– Matthew 28:1-10

The Good News Is...Alive in the World”

April 12th- Second Sunday of Easter
Acts 2:14a, 22-32
John 20:19-31

“We All Have Doubts, and That’s Okay”

John Wilderman Preaching

Children’s Message Michelle Pyrich

April 19th- Third Sunday of Easter

Acts 2:14a, 36-41

Luke 24:13-35

“From Blindness to Burning Hearts”

Children’s Message Michele Leahy

April 26th- Fourth Sunday of Easter

Acts 2:42-47

John 10:1-10

“When the Church Lives Like There Is Enough”

Easter Flowers

**Honor Your Loved Ones and
Make Easter Service Festive!**

Leave the flowers in the Library
by Saturday, April 4th, 9-11 a.m.
Notify the office of
“the names in honor/memory of”
by March 31st.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT THE OFFICE.





THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
New Hope Episcopal Area

Thomas J. Bickerton
Resident Bishop

Ho-Soon Han
First UMC Rochester
34 S Main Street
Rochester, NH 03867

Ximena A. Diaz
Assistant to the Bishop
Pamela Bowe-Tabbs
Executive Assistant (NY)
Gwen Junghanss
Executive Assistant (NE)

February 4, 2026

Dear Administrative Council Chair Charles Devito and Pastor Ho-Soon Han,

"Just as you excel in everything ... see also that you excel in the grace of giving."
2 Corinthians 8:7

In our recent cabinet meeting, we have reviewed the giving of each of our local churches for the last year and noted that your church increased the percentage of your giving to our connectional Mission Share apportionments over last year. As your bishop, I'm especially proud of the commitment you have to each other and the way in which you demonstrate your commitment through your payment of Mission Shares.

I am writing today to thank you for that commitment. It has not gone unnoticed and, I know, is a result of some very intentional and hard work on your part.

Our United Methodist Book of Discipline clearly states that paying your Connectional Apportionments is every local church's "first benevolent responsibility." By increasing your giving to our Mission Shares, you are demonstrating that you are intentionally working on a game plan to do that. Because you are intentionally trying to be faithful to the ministry of our church, I'm proud to write and acknowledge your faithfulness not only to the New England Annual Conference, and not only to the broader connection of The United Methodist Church, but also to the "kingdom work" that God has called us to as faithful disciples.

Thank you so very much for your hard work and faithfulness. It is greatly appreciated.

God is faithful! Faithful is also what God is asking us to be. In the book of II Corinthians, Paul recounts the extreme faithfulness of the church in Macedonia even in the midst of what Paul described as a severe ordeal in the midst of extreme poverty. They were faithful and joyful as they gave themselves to God and to one another. When they did, they gave beyond what the Bible says was their ability to give at all.

God changed the world through them. As we are faithful, I believe God will once again change the world, . . . through us!

Thank you once again for your faithfulness in increasing the percentage payout of your Conference Mission Shares. I deeply appreciate it.

The Journey Continues, . . .

Peace & Joy,

Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton, Resident Bishop - New Hope Episcopal Area
The New England and New York Annual Conferences

New England Annual Conference
978-682-7555
nebishop@neumc.org
www.neumc.org

New York Annual Conference
914-615-2221
bishop@nyac.com
www.nyac.com

FUMC HERITAGE HAPPENINGS

He (Rev. Noah Bigelow) was followed in 1816 by Rev. John Lord who commenced his labors under some discouragements, but so overcame difficulties that this was regarded the most prosperous in the year of the society. A great revival occurred in which more than a hundred persons were converted, and sixty added to the membership. He was presiding Elder many years in the Maine Conference where he died. (McDuffee 1988, 262)

During 1817-18 Rev. Philip Munger was stationed here. He was a physician as well as a preacher, and is said to have excelled in both professions. He was born in South Brimfield, Mass., in 1780; joined the New England Conference in 1802; and the Maine Conference at its formation in 1824; and died Oct. 19, 1846. He had labored forty years in the ministry, and was a studious, gifted, and successful preacher, and a writer of very marked ability. (McDuffee 1988, 262-3)

Munger, Philip a minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was born in South Brimfield, Massachusetts, in 1780; was converted in 1796; entered the New England Conference in 1802; preached in the itinerancy thirty-four years; from 1836 to 1846 was either supernumerary or superannuated (retired), and died October 19, 1846. He was a man of energy and method, very studious, and a gifted and successful preacher. He preached more than nine thousand sermons, and wrote considerably for the Church literature. He was for many years an active trustee of the Maine Conference Seminary; and as a man, Christian, and minister was in all respects very exemplary and useful. (*Minutes of Conferences*, 4:150; Stevens, *Memorials of Methodism*, volume 1, chapter 15.)

McDuffee, Franklin. 1988. *History of the Town of Rochester New Hampshire 1722-1890*. Re-print. Somersworth, NH: New England History Press.

To be continued
Kent Marzoli, Records and History



In Our Thoughts and Prayers

Personal Concerns- cont.

Tracy Lang; Shirley Brannock; Carolyn Wilderman; Macee; Maggie; Lily Hess; Tina Weaver; Doug Lindsay; Michael; Chantelle; Carolyn Meehan; Tracy Lange; Amanda and family; Leclair; Dean Miles, Jennifer Livingston; Tracy; Baby Alice; Zayla Rosea; Bishop Mariann Bedde; Russell Scott; Bill; Steve; Sue St.Peter; Camden; Stephanie; Kristen; Dave Lemire; Glen Foss; Janet Berube; David Lindsay; Mike; Francine Dion; Devin Schafer; Mike; Carol; Larry; Elaine Hartford; Francine Dion; Frank Locke; Jan Becker; Peter; John Hebert and wife Tina; Debbie Smith; Mike Buceiri; Lee and Michael Wygant; Betsy Fisher; Linda Rankin, Margaret and Makeyla, Amanda Tweedy; Sarah; David Smith; Glenn Cooper; Patty Ernest; Braden Ross; Trica Oliver; Christina Napolitano; Randy; Steve; Jakob; Pastor John Hutchinson; Bonnie Succi; Samantha Cole; Ara Tamzarian; Martha Fantasia; Elaine Lindsay; Matt Chase; Denise C; Nancy Warren; Barry Ellsworth; Bob E.; Pat Neal; George Livingston; Dale Marino; John Landers; David Lindsay; Mike and Carol Chick; Carole Albert; Rebecca Laurion; Michael Mercier; Nell Sylvain; Carol; Tammy and Charlie Allard; Allison; Paul and Cheryl; Tammy and Charlie Allard; Robin Sandborn; Carol; Denise Wilcox; Steve; Don Raab; Barbra Abrams; Claude Saddler; Nate Phinney; Erin, Emily, Richie and Paul Southard; Aden and Jane; Carole; Mike Torres; Robbie's father Dean; Hailey Raab; Nick Rosic; Deb Storrs; Elaine Leughmyer; Marian Miller; Carol Raab; Pam Ferriera; Bill Wise; Ginny Veno; Sherry; Jen Livingston; Nancy Manning; Bill Hoelscher; Leslie Keller; Marie; Jeff Grote; Amy; Lexi Keyser; Nick; Patrick Combs; Michael Mercier; Ellen Drew; Ron Zielfelder, Carole; Roger Frasier; Ric and Cherly Wachter; Vicki Wachter; Phil; Sarabeth and Peter; Bob H.; Gary; Mr. Cormier; Michelle Pyrich; Martha Fantasia; Carole; Sue Yun; Jessica Milliard; Carol Park; Katrinka Walsh; Bruce Perry and Family; John Boudreau; Geraldine Boudreau; Elizabeth Wood; Sharon; Lee Benoit; Uncle Nick; Donna; Bob H.; Paul Lessard; Betty; Cory; Carol Carr; Carol Park; Pastor Ho-Soon; Jackie and Husband; Donna Blair; Paul Lessard; Doug Coons; Tori; Marianne Gustafson; Ken & Karen Manning; Rosemary Guptill; Karen Clarke; Glenn LaRoche; Taylor Spedding and father; Clio; Jeff Grote; Jack Jones; Steve Dube; Chris Pinckey; Maureen Smith; Jackie Morganti; John Sheehan

Prayers of congratulations and thanksgiving:

to MYF for the wonderful Italian Night Presentation; Birth of Harper Elizabeth LaFond; Baptism of Luke Joel White; Rev. Pat Williams

Prayers of condolences for the Family and Friends of:

John Peterson; Marilyn Jones; Ronald Meehan

Prayers for the Ministry we support:

Dr. Belinda Forbes and Family



Christian Education

FutureGen!



	PreK– 5th grade	Jr. and Sr. High
April 5	<i>Easter Sunday– stay in church and Worship together</i>	
April 12	<i>Jesus Teaches Us to Pray</i> Michelle Pyrich	Echo– <i>Parables</i>
April 19	<i>Jesus fill us to Overflowing</i> Tammy Roberge	Echo– <i>Kingdom Treasures</i>
April 26	<i>Jesus calms the storms in your life</i> Donna Brill	Echo– <i>Jesus' Encounters</i>

MYF- Calendar of Events

Saturday, April 4th– 10am **Stuff Easter Eggs for egg hunt**



April 19th– 6pm-8pm **Meeting**

Vacation Bible School



July 20– 24
5:00-7:30
First United Methodist Church
34 South Main Street, Rochester, NH

ON THE GO WITH GOD!
"THE LORD GOD IS WITH YOU WHERE EVER YOU GO."
JOSHUA, 1:9

Join us for an exciting adventure on the open road, where kids embark on thrilling journeys to fantastic destinations.

Led by Navigator and their adventurous pup Scout, children will discover that go is always with them. They'll explore timeless stories from the Old and New Testaments, learning how to face challenges and find strength in God's presence.

Look for more information soon but we can't wait to see you for another fun exiting year. If you would like to volunteer or help with donations, please contact Dan Saucier dasaucier@gmail.com.

Christian Education

IT'S TIME AGAIN TO THINK ABOUT GOING TO WANAKEE FOR SUMMER CAMP.

Another wonderful summer at Wanakee is just around the corner. We are excited to welcome new and returning campers for a season full of growth, friendship and adventure.



Wanakee is a co-ed sleep-away camp in Meredith, NH, in the foothills of the White Mountains. It is located on 227 acres that include wooded trails, half a mile of lakefront on Lake Pemigewasset and open fields.

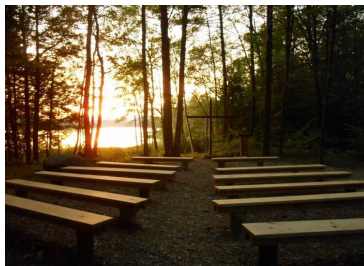
The camps mission is to love, accept, challenge and provide opportunities for growth to all God's people, help individuals interact with one another, build relationships and grow in their Christian faith through experiences with a Christian community .

If you are interested in more information, program details, dates, and rates are available at wanakee.org/dates-and-rates.

Financial hardships should not stop a child from attending camp. Scholarships are available through the camp and also in the church office for youth attending.

Wanakee Outdoor Chapelle

For more information please contact Kelly Hearn, at 603-781-3710 or kmhearn63@gmail.com
Wanakee Representat



In Our Thoughts and Prayers

Please let the office know if there is someone to add or also to remove from the ongoing prayer list. We try to keep this list up to date.

Bold indicates new addition to prayer lists.

Concerns- General

Prayers for those who are homeless, hungry or unemployed; those affected by natural disasters such as floods, fires, hurricanes, floods, earthquakes; those who struggle with chronic pain, mental and medical health illness, addiction, cancer, loss of jobs, healthcare and other services, families in turmoil; deportation; all children; those suffering with financial issues, personal stress and mental health issues; those who are celebrating LOVE; People of Ukraine; City of Minneapolis; victims of violence; airline tragedies; Gaza; Middle East Conflicts; Israel and Jordan for peace; Christians in Nigeria; Victims of Brown University shooting ; end to gun violence; Armed Service members and First Responders

Personal Concerns-

Warren and Edna Carr; Tim Hill; Les and Bertha Huckins; Henry and Janice Wolforth; Larry and Cindy Edgerly; Lynda Ward; Carol Bolduc; Lois Coate; Robin Stevens; Olin Jackson; Jennifer Philips; Christin; Megan; Baby Archie; Nicholas; Jennifer Carter; Monica and Richard; Jacki Emma McQueen; David Goethel; John Leary; Jacolyn Hartford; Makayla Herget; Joseph; Donette Sylvester; Carrie; Amy B; John; Sister Katie Hoelscher; Valerie; Susan Morisette; Nancy; Katie Jean Sharp; Fred Hildebrant; William Bujold; Robert and Dan Devoid; Jenny Farkas' dad; Jeanne; Jennifer Livingston, Jill; Callan Mimmon; Jillian; Kelly; Charles Crone; Priscilla; Jim and Becky McQueen; Melissa White; Mary Jane and Carly; Hayden Kessey; Valerie Hoelscher; Pat Demaris; Lindsay; Kevin Magner; Jeff; Jackie and Bill Smith; Brannon; Lynn Ricker; Bernie; Gabby; Lisa Staple; Rosemary Lucus; Cheryl Flamen; Arlene and Joy; Glenn Gault; Lino Mion; Sherry Cathcart; June Knight; Amber Hall; Kevin; John; Vivian ; David Ericson; Rachel G; Cassidy Brennan; Kevin Menard; Jon Menard; Steve Marison; Paul and Angie; David; David Ericson; Madelyn; Brittany's niece; Kay Sylvain; Michael Bujold; Logan & family; Matt G; Lisa Staples; Angie; Nathan; Irene; Bill; Karen; Mary Heather; Marcy; Melissa; Rosemary; Carol; Pauline Graham; Anthony; Bud Lee; Rosemary Guptill; Bob Mankittick, Warren Cummings; Zach Foss; Kelly Merrihew; Henry McMullen; Nancy-Ann Ferren; Cheyenne Noble; Mikey Spell; Mary; John; Jean Brisco; Timothy Branyen; Rachel and Lorena; Katherine Brody; Beth Gould; Anita Brown; Ida Kneeland; Betsy and Dale Kneeland; Dan Goethel; Timothy Branyen; Peter Rankins; Carol McMullen; Joyce Goodberry; Natalie and Dave; Leo Rankins; Ron Menard; Dean and Lori; Dave Ropel; Mei Hayes; Jay Tanger; Eugene and Ruth Hoelscher; Pat Demaris; Kevin Magner; Joanne Sylvain; Hazel; Marilyn Ives; Dona Sanborn; James; Dave and Natalie Lemier; Faith Williams, Franchesca Panniello; Barb and Ron Rafferty; Kelsie Sargent and parents; Benjamin Horta; Debra Scarponi; Elaine Hartford; Monique Bamford; Carol Chick; Maddie Rankins; Lisa; Julie Tweedy; Kelly; (cont. next page)

Missions and Outreach

NEWS FROM N.O.W

Nurture, Outreach, Witness

Do you have a special occasion to celebrate?
Please let Pat Hewitt of Pastor Ho-Soon know.



April 12th Birthdays and blessings celebrations



*May 3rd- Spring Fair and Comic Book Day
(Sign-up sheet in the Welcome Center)*

Thank you all for the generous donations given through the "Souped Up Sunday" fellowships. It is wonderful to hear the happy chatter in Hurd Hall. We look forward to hosting other fellowships in the future.

NOW Committee meets on the third Sunday of the month, after church. All are always welcome. We would love to have you come join us. Blessings, Pat Hewitt

We gather on Monday nights from 6-8 and Wednesday mornings from 9-11, weather permitting.

Project ♥ Linus



"Providing Security Through Blankets"

All are welcome to come, no experience necessary, come, no experience is necessary. There is always something for everyone to do to help bring comfort to children through a blanket.

Next dedication will be on Mother's Day, May 11th. For further information please contact Cindy Egerly.

FUMC CASSEROLE COMMITTEE

This committee provides meals for people in our church family during difficult times.



Anyone who is in need of meals, please contact one of two chairpersons:
Diane Marzoli 332-1766 or Dottie Bickford-Longo 664-5552, or contact the office for assistance.

Please let us know of any dietary restrictions. We always bring enough for the whole family. If you can help, either by cooking or buying a meal, we need you!. Thank you in advance.

From the Editor

Is Easter Early or Late this Year?

Have you ever been in the middle of conversation where someone says, "Easter is early, or Easter is late this year." Granted, when Easter sunrise service falls in late March, there is snow on the ground and the cold temperatures require warm winter clothing, you may have made the same comment.

Holidays on the calendar, whether Christian or secular fall into two categories; they either stay stationary with the same exact date, or they change from year to year. Christmas is always on the 25th of December, Halloween is October 31st, with All Saints Day November 1st. Why isn't Easter the same month and Sunday (the first Sunday in April) like Mother's and Fathers Days. Why does it fall on a different numerical date each year?

To answer this question, you need to look at the moon's lunar cycle. First find the date of the first day of spring (usually March 20th or 21st.) Then look on the calendar to find the first full moon after that date. Easter always falls on the first Sunday, after that first full moon of the March Equinox. This year that full moon was on April 1st. The date of Easter this year is April 5th.

Easter Morning is the culmination of the 40 days of Lent. To find out when Lent begins, count back 40 days (not including Sundays) from the date of Easter, back to what is traditionally called Mardi Gras, Shrove Tuesday, or Fat Tuesday. The word shrove derives from shrive, meaning to forgive. Shrove Tuesday (aka Mardi Gras, Fat Tuesday) , is a day of celebration and feasting before Lent begins. Ash Wednesday, the day after Shrove Tuesday, is the first day of Lent.

Lent comes from the Latin word *quadragesima*, meaning Fortieth, in observance of Jesus' 40 days in the wilderness. Lent also gets its English name from the days lengthening in the Northern Hemisphere as the spring equinox approaches.

During Lent, Christians fast, pray and reflect. You may have noticed that the sanctuary of the church has less ornamentation in appearance. It is traditional that churches will "strip down" their sanctuaries, removing ornate items. Worship items are returned to the sanctuary for Easter morning services. (cont. next pg.)

From the Editor

Lent culminates after Holy Week, the week leading up to Easter. Holy Week begins on Palm Sunday, with the triumphal procession of Jesus into Jerusalem, celebrates the Passover Meal (Last Supper), takes us through the passion of Good Friday, and ends on Easter morning with the empty tomb and the resurrected Christ. I have always wondered why it was called Good Friday, as what can be seen as good in it with Jesus' death? It is considered good, as it is a Holy Day when *Jesus died for the sins of the world, showing his love for us and purchased for us every blessing.* It has also been called *God's Friday* and *Holy Friday.*

So, as you continue on your faith journey following Jesus, from Palm Sunday to Easter and beyond, when the conversation leans towards where Easter is on the calendar, remember the moon that God made has everything to do with the date. **Easter is right where it supposed to be. God so Loved the World!"**

Donna Downes, Editor

A Word From Finance

We are grateful for the faithful generosity of our congregation, and we are pleased to share that giving to the church is in line with what we had projected for this point in the year. At the same time, we want to keep everyone informed about our overall financial position. Through the end of March, we are currently operating at a deficit of approximately \$14,000, which has required us to transfer funds from savings to meet ongoing expenses. This shortfall is due in part to seasonal costs such as snow plowing, heating fuel, and property insurance, which are highest during the winter months. In addition, we have been paying our full Mission Shares to the New England Conference this year. In previous years, we paid only a portion directed specifically to missions, but updated Conference requirements now call for full payment, resulting in approximately \$5,000 in additional expenses beyond what we have typically spent. We ask for your continued prayers for the financial health of our church, that we may faithfully meet our commitments and continue to serve our congregation and community.

Jon Pyrich, Finance

Missions and Outreach



Tri State Rural Mission Team

Would you like to share your skills and love of God with others? The next mission team date has been set for June 28-July 3. We would love to have a full crew attend and are looking to get youth, chaperones and church members involved. We leave on a Sunday afternoon and return Friday evening. Can't attend for the full week, that's fine. Come when you can.



The cost for the week is \$350. The cost can be prorated on a daily basis (\$70) based on attendance. The cost includes lodging at the facility, food, and help with the cost of materials needed for the ministry to complete the work. Financial scholarships are available through UMEM and also through FUMC for participants.



There are many jobs to be done. Everyone is an asset to the team. You could plant a garden, sort greeting cards or clothes, prepare meals, paint, hang sheet rock, or build a deck with an access ramp are just a few items on the "to do" list. Please prayerfully consider this ministry that helps the needs of the rural communities of Maine.

The United Methodist Economic Ministry is located in Salem, Maine, about a 3 hour drive from Rochester Cannot participate? Monetary donations are gratefully accepted.



Mission flyers in the Welcome Center. If you are interested in learning more or being a part of this mission team, please contact Ken Downes at 603-970-0131 or kdld@metrocast.net.

SAVE THE DATE

If you haven't started taking your photos there is still time!
**9th Annual Rochester Community
 Amateur Photography Show**



Photo intake
Friday, April 24th from 6-8 pm

Saturday, April 25th from 10am -12pm.

Awards Ceremony
Wednesday, May 20th from 7-9pm

Registration forms can be found in the Welcome Center
For more information please see Cindy Edgerly or Donna Downes



Eager Hearts Reunion Group

We are rejuvenating the Eager Hearts Reunion Group, which is a part of Crossroads Emmaus of New England. If you have gone on a walk, you can be part of the group.

Initial meeting date is Friday, April 17th at 6:00 pm.

As there is a Fall Walk on the schedule, reunion group leaders, Kelly Hearn, Donna Downes and Pat Hewitt have met and come up with some ideas to share. Please check your email for additional information . . . If your email has changed, or you wish to be removed from the email list, please contact Pat Hewitt. The reunion gatherings will take place at FUMC.



**CROSSROADS EMMAUS
 OF NEW ENGLAND**

The Walk to Emmaus is a weekend that focuses on God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit, helping the participants to renew their connection with Christ and consider Christ's model of servanthood. While this is not an actual physical walk, there is some physical movement/walking involved. During the weekend you will explore a spiritual journey of fellowship, fun and renewal.

Men's and Women's Walk Dates:
Thursday, October 15th at 7pm to
Sunday, October 18th at 5pm

If you are interested in attending a walk, want more information, or wish to sponsor someone for the upcoming walks, please contact either Pat Hewitt, Kelly Hearn or Donna Downes.

Church Happenings



NH State Home Show
 Double Tree by Hilton
 700 Elm Street
 Manchester, NH
 March 14- 15, 2026



Roseann and Scott Benoit



Susan and Don Raab



John Wilderman, Killian Brown
 Stephanie Brown



John Wilderman, Don Raab, Kelly
 Ayotte, Sue Raab, Roseann Benoit

A booth was set up with information regarding our "Save our Steeple" project and Capital Campaign at the NH Home Show.

Many attendees of the show, stopped by our tables for information. Those manning the tables from FUMC made numerous contacts with the public, contractors and businesses that were very interested in the project. Baked items were available. Total donations received were \$597.

We were visited by Governor Kelly Ayotte, and all the dignitaries who are also very interested and excited about the project.

The capital campaign, as of the end of March has \$188,00 in donations.

Thank you so much!
 Scott Benoit, Steeple Committee
 Jon Pyrich, Finance

Church Happenings



Behind the scenes—
John Brown



Behind the scenes
Stephanie Brown Jon Pyrich



It's a MURDER MYSTERY
Those in attendance—
Who can you pick out?



Behind the scenes—
Youth picking up dessert, did it have
cinnamon in it?



Watching with bated breath—
Writing notes— in deep contemplation!

SAVE THE DATE

Saturday MAY 2, 2026

8am-1pm



Garden Gallery ~ Plant donations of house plants & perennials are accepted! Please label your plants as many buyers want to know what the plant/flower is. Also donations of plant pots, vases, watering cans and gardening essentials!

Used Books ~ No Encyclopedias, National Geographic, textbooks, or magazines of any kind! ANY QUESTIONS ON BOOK DONATION PLEASE TALK TO MARIANNE GUSTAFSON or DEBBIE BOYNTON. Books can be hard cover or paper back in gently used condition. Please, no torn covers or pages ;not musty smelling .

Gifts/ Crafts ~ We will have a gifts & crafts area and Jewelry. Think about Mother's Day, Prom, Weddings, Birthdays, Graduations and Dads.

Toys~ should be clean, not broken or parts missing! Stuffed animals should be clean & not musty/smoke smelling or torn.

Games & Puzzles ~ should be in the box with instructions. No missing pieces.

Movies and Music ~ CDs & DVDs, especially for kids! Any players donated should be in working condition.

Baked Goods, Cookies, Candy & Pies Please mark all baked goods. Please be mindful and indicate if any nuts & types of nuts if any. Gluten Free , Dairy Free & Sugar Free are welcome!

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Pat Hewitt at 603-948-5935 , or email her at pugles4@yahoo.com.



May 16th from 9-1

Sign up at <https://www.redcross.org>



SAVE THE DATE Spring Fair

Saturday MAY 2, 2026
8am-1pm

Spring Cleaning? Consider donating your items in good usable condition!
Please sort & clean donations before them bringing in.
It costs the church to discard junk items. Thank you!

**BRING BOOKS EARLY AS WE QUICKLY GET OVERWHELMED
AND HAVE TO CUT OFF DONATIONS!**

PLEASE NOTE CHANGES TO DROP OFFS!!

SUNDAY, APRIL 26 from 9am-12noon

MON-WEDS, APRIL 27-29 from 9am- 1pm and 5pm-7pm

Items can be brought in the week before the fair with
some help available after church until noon.

NO ITEMS WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER WEDNESDAY. THANK YOU!
THURSDAY & FRIDAY ARE SET-UP WORK DAYS.

*Many hands make light work and help will be needed throughout
the week sorting out, displaying items and pricing.
Come in when you can to help! Thank You !!*

FRIDAY DROP OR EARLY SATURDAY (BY 8AM)

**ONLY ITEMS ARE FOOD FOR BAKE SALE, PLANTS AND SMALL FURNITURE.
THE FURNITURE MAY TAKE UP SPACE TO GET AROUND.**

Clothing Rummage Sale ~ new or Gently worn items.
PLEASE NO stains, rips, missing buttons or broken zippers.
No used undergarments , hats or socks.

Yard Sale ~ We will accept small furniture- table bureaus, desk, etc. All left-
over furniture must be taken home by donor.

Attic Treasures ~ Items should be clean & in good usable condition. No old
computers or old tv's (only flat screen) .

Church Happenings



Baptism of Luke Joel White

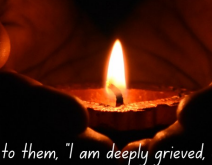


Parting is Such Sweet Sorrow

*Anni and Charlie De Vita, long time church members leave for new ven-
tures as they move from NH to NY. Although it is sad to see them go,
there is a silver lining in for them. They will now be closer to their grand-
child.*

Church Happenings

24-HOUR PRAYER VIGIL
APRIL 2 8PM TO APRIL 3 7PM
 Please sign up in the Welcome Center



Then he said to them, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me." (Matthew 26:38)

FAMILY BAKING DAY
SATURDAY, APRIL 4, 9 A.M.



for Families with Children & Youth
 to make communion bread for Easter
 and learn about resurrection

Easter Egg Hunt



Sunday, April 5, After Service
 Have your children bring their own baskets



ANNUAL SPRING CLEAN-UP DAY
 Hosted by the Trustees



SATURDAY, APRIL 18th- 8 am- NOON
 (rain date April 25th)

Please bring yard tools, wheelbarrows, work gloves, etc.
All are welcome to help. Can't lift? We have a job for you!

There will be raking, mulching, gardening, sprucing up the grounds and things to be done inside and out of the building.

For more information contact Kent Marzoli.

SAVE THE DATE

Turkey Supper & Silent Auction

TO BENEFIT STEEPLE RESTORATION

Saturday, April 25, 4:30-6 p.m.

First United Methodist Church
 34 S. Main St. Rochester, NH

Adult \$12 (Advance) / \$15 (At the door)
 Children ages 5-12 \$6 / under 5 free

For tickets, contact 603-948-1179 or
office@firstumcrochester.org

ROAST TURKEY, STUFFING, MASHED POTATOES, GRAVY,
 VEGETABLES, CRANBERRY SAUCE, ASSORTED PIES & DRINK



We once again will be having a silent auction as part of the April 25th Turkey Supper. We are looking for items to be donated to the auction. Gift baskets, baked goods, crafts, meals for 3 or 4 people, pictures, garden or yard work are only some of the popular items from the past. Please sign up on the list in the welcome center or call Don Raab or Pat Hewitt. Items need to be dropped off at the church by noon time April 25th.



United
 Women
 in Faith

Saturday, April 11th at 10:00 AM
Ladies Tea- "Then and Now"
Missions donation: Project Linus



Tea, cold beverages and light brunch foods provided. Bring your favorite tea cup, a silly hat for ladies tea, favorite photos, mementos or stories of your personal faith journey (childhood, mission trips, helping others).

UWIF

Scholarship applications are now available. Scholarships are awarded to graduating seniors that have been active participants in the church and are members. To obtain an application, please contact Roseann in the church office at 603-948-1633 or email at office@firstumcrochester.org.