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**Return Service Requested
Dated Material**

June & July 2024



The Sandpiper is a publication of the North Falmouth Congregational Church, UCC.
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The Sandpiper



North Falmouth Congregational Church,
United Church of Christ

June & July 2024

Jesus said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." – Matthew 18:3

Dear Friends,

Children have a simple approach to the world—they are curious, full of wonder, and they are masters at having fun. They don't worry about dirtying their clothes when they splash around in a mud puddle. They revel in the sheer joy and sensation of smearing all that squishy stuff on their little bodies. They crack up at bad dad jokes. They feed the dog under the table because they can't resist those puppy-dog eyes. They ask so many questions it can make your head spin. And they have this innate superpower of being intimately connected to the present moment.

Obviously, Jesus loved children too. He venerated their heavenly qualities so much that he said we should change and become like them. When Jesus tells us to be like children it is an invitation to lighten up and not get so bogged down in the mire of our fears, worries, sorrows, and concerns. While those all might be legitimate—we don't do ourselves any

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favors by getting stuck there. But you already know that—don't you? It is one thing to know and another thing to put it into practice.

One thing dragging us down these days is the current news cycle and how things are changing so rapidly. As engaged citizens of this good country, it is important to keep up with the local and national news and to do our part to make this country better for all. Yet, at times it can pull us into the vortex of despair and that can terribly exhausting.

So, would if in such situations we become more like children and honor the sacrament of the present moment? Even if it means playing in the garden dirt, plopping on the couch to watch a funny show, dancing to our favorite song, singing at the top of our lungs with the car windows rolled up, or doing silly things with the people we love.

It is always in the present moment we meet God who is always seeking and waiting for us to come play in the Kingdom. Somehow children know this better than we do. So, in the coming days and months as the news cycle ramps up, we are invited to be good citizens and to take time to enter the holiness of the present moment to find rest, delight, laughter, renewed hope, and rejuvenation.

In hope and faith,
Pastor Christina

From Claire Bamberg's Newsletter

North Falmouth – Little Church, Big Heart



Some “success stories” are more exciting to tell than others. When that is the case, it is usually because there is an element of the (pleasantly) unexpected in unfolding of the

story. It is exciting to be able to tell this genre of story about my work with the North Falmouth Congregational Church. Even as I write this, I hear “the little engine that could” Church.

The story that formed the basis of the beginning of our work together was all too familiar and is told congregation after congregation in our nation right now: dwindling numbers (both human and financial), a post-pandemic “lostness” about mission and purpose. Reluctance on the part of some to let go of “what has worked so well in the past” and to, instead, “try something completely different” is a frequent undercurrent of conflict. Still others think they need to “deal with the handwriting on the wall” and close, preemptively. In short, most approaches are binary.

When I go in to work with a church, I inevitably need to point out early in our work, the incongruity and “dead end” represented in the back to back statements I hear, that: 1) “all we need are more, young families to come in and support the church in time, talent and treasure,” and 2) “we do not want to change.” To understate the obvious, visitors will not become engaged in the life of the church if what they hear is any version of “this is the way we do things here,” signaling that their innovative ideas are not likely to be welcome or tolerated.

There are clearly options for how traditional main-line Protestant churches can move into the future as healthy, vibrant, strong, and mission-driven communities of faith.



Typically, I present six or seven PowerPoint slides, articulating options that congregations in the nation (with whom I am working or have worked) have engaged in. Taking the extremes first, I

notice that the church can close (examining what it means to become a legacy entity), or try to remain open, doing as they have always done and expecting different results (does anyone know the definition of insanity?). Then, I begin to articulate other options: sell (to like-minded others), and rent back the use of necessary space for viable programming; sell, and rent space for worship in another location (neighboring faith community site or local municipality); retain ownership and become a “benevolent landlord”, welcoming in other like-minded non-profits, as much space as possible, to as many as possible; consolidate with another community of faith in some way; and, stand as is, and collaborate with another community of faith, sharing staff, etc.

When I went down to begin my work with N. Falmouth, I was prepared to think in these terms and to work alongside them as they discerned which path or avenue was the one to which they were being called. *However*, within a brief period of time, our whole approach and strategy shifted and when I went down to present my traditional

Congratulations to Recent Falmouth Academy High School Graduates!

PowerPoint slides, I found I needed to create an eighth slide to accurately reflect the exciting novel approach that *was working* in their midst!



This one? Double-down and reach out!! Through a combination of attractive signage along town access roads, bookmarks, welcome mugs, word clouds, oversized post-cards, banners,

a new look in front of the church, marketing, media coverage, a new website and focused, mission-driven outreach, informed by a careful assessment of the unmet needs in the area, and of viable community partners, this congregation had begun to make a publicly-recognized difference in their neighborhood and town. Yes, people are finding their way to the doors of this small, tucked away building and the community of faith that worships there, for a variety of reasons.

Faith communities in the US (United States) will continue to have challenges in “becoming church” in the world for years to come. This “little church with a big heart” is paving the way for a new way of stepping up to post-pandemic revitalization and charting a new, successful course! This has been an unexpected and successful path into a revitalized expression of being church in the world!



Claire Bamberg,
D.Min, LMFT, PCC
Founder & CEO, Faculty,
Mentor Coach, Sr. Consultant,
Executive & Leadership Coach



June 8, Nathalie Packard & Marcus Greco



June 30th Presentation of Scholarship Awards



Alexzander Oshman reads his essay prior to the awards presentation by Chair of Finance Peter Allenby.



Awards Recipients Alexander Oshman,
Bianca Greco & Thomas Heino
(not pictured)



Greetings!

June proved to be a busy month, full of music and fun.



Candida Rose shared her musical gifts with us on June 9th.

Our choir and bells performed beautifully as well, throughout the month of June, along with soloist Alan King who sang *What A Wonderful World* on Father's day!

June 23rd, was Music Appreciation Sunday. During the service, delightful music was presented by the Bell Choir, Chancel Choir, and by guest flutist Evelyn Shertzer.



For July, bells and choir will continue to share beautiful musical works for our services. You can also expect a few soloists to join on Sundays. (violin, flute, or guest soprano)

I hope you are enjoying the preludes and postludes I have chosen for each service.

The choir will continue throughout the month of July. We welcome new members to join us.

The choir and bells will take a break for the month of August and are to resume practices on Wednesday, August 28th. Our bell members would also love to have you join them!

We are looking forward to seeing you during the summer, in the sanctuary or outside in the church garden.

Peace and blessings.
Stephanie

June 16th New Member Sunday



Welcome to our newest members Bob Nelson, Stephanie Miles & Scott Burk

New Landscaping for the Front!



Thank you Carolee & Rin for your hard work and knowledge of gardening!



Jan & Carolee checking it out!

NFCC Clippers Tackle the Church Jungle

The NFCC Clippers (Carolee Packard, Linda Thomas, Bob Swartz, Rev. Christina, Paul Smith and Bella Smith) were out in force on a June Monday morning in an effort to spruce up the church grounds. Team organizer Carolee Packard got the gardening festivities going by directing the team members to clip, weed, prune, and rake away to their hearts' content. The result was multiple piles of branches, weeds, and debris. What to do with all those piles? Two SUVs and one pickup came to the rescue. Paul, Bob, and Carolee

made quick work of making those piles disappear. Linda focused on beautifying the Thrift Shop grounds and the parking-lot side of the church.

The crowning member of the team was Bella Smith, because who else could sport a tiara the entire time raking, making piles of debris, crawling under bushes to make sure all the branches were cleaned up, and rescuing a few errant toys that escaped from the Y Daycare playground.

Well done, Bella! Well done team!



From the Altar Committee

Calling all gardeners to consider supplying bouquets of their garden flowers to grace the altar this summer.



Please contact Marsha Martin (willmart41@comcast.net) to sign up for a date when God's beauty in your garden is ready to share.

Back by Demand!

LOBSTER ROLL TO GO

TO BENEFIT NFCC COMMUNITY
OUTREACH ASSISTANCE

FRIDAY, JULY 12th
PRE-ORDERS
TAKE OUT ONLY
\$22.00

****LOBSTER ROLL****
CHIPS & COLD DRINK

❖ **PICK UP ONLY 4-6 pm**
❖ **PRE-ORDERED BY WED!**
❖ **NO INSIDE DINING**

**RESERVE AT: 508-564-5628, LEAVE NAME,
PHONE NUMBER, & NUMBER OF ROLLS**

NORTH FALMOUTH CONG. CHURCH,
155 OLD MAIN RD. NORTH FALMOUTH



The Community Gardens in Bourne thanks us for supporting them.

We firmly believe that food security should never be a concern in our community. One of the most intimidating challenges that many local residents face is not knowing where their next meal will come from. By funding and overseeing the Friends Food Pantry, we can relieve some stress and provide much-needed stability and security to our neighbors.



Community Outreach

As members the Board of Directors of the Upper Cape Chaplaincy representing NFCC, we would like to thank those of you who dined in or did take out from Stir Crazy Restaurant during our May fundraiser for the Chaplaincy. It was a great success as it raised over \$800.00. But more importantly it brought together people from many faith and spiritual backgrounds to enjoy each other in a common cause. We would also like to thank those of you who responded to our spring Letter Campaign. The Chaplaincy team, which includes our own Rev. Saramaria Allenby, provides spiritual care in an ecumenical and interfaith manner to patients, families and staff at Falmouth Hospital and JML Health Care during times of stress and uncertainty.

Kristin Fraser, Joyce Kenneally, & Masha Martin

At Friends Food Pantry, we believe that everyone should feel confident about where their next meal will come from. It breaks out hearts to imagine anyone going hungry that cannot afford the proper nutrition they need to stay healthy and strong, so we decided to do something about it. That’s when the Friends Food Pantry was born. The community knows us by many names, Bourne Food Pantry, Friends of the Bourne Food Pantry, Bourne Friends Food Pantry, and of course, Friends Food Pantry, but we are one organization dedicated to seniors and those in need.

The Friends Food Pantry was [founded in 1992](#) and is still going strong. The group of volunteers who started the food pantry had a goal to combat the food insecurity and financial burden that many Bourne residents face daily. We currently run this food pantry to provide those in need with nutritious, tasty, free food supplies to supplement their grocery budget.

UPCOMING SUMMER WORSHIP

Summer Worship Series

For four Sundays this summer we delve into a themed-sermon series on INTEGRITY. In a time of complicated political debate, fierce animosity, and hard ironies, this is an opportunity to examine the qualities of integrity and the ways we fall short so that we might find hope for understanding each other across boundaries in our community life. Inspiration for this sermon series comes from 2 Samuel chapters 7, 11, 12 & 18.

July 14 | The Foundation of Integrity: Humility

The foundation of living with integrity as a Christian (or anyone else for that matter) starts with humility. David transitions from roaming the countryside and fighting his enemies to being a settled king. It turns out David is a complex person, and we learn what keeps him humble in a position of complete power. 2 Samuel 7:1-14a & Psalm 89:20-37.

July 21 | Guest Preacher Rev. Eric Shoshine

July 28 | Bible Stories for Grown Ups: It's Not About the Fish

We continue the last Sunday-of-the-month series on exploring popular Bible stories for children from an adult perspective. We will examine the whale of tale—Jonah and the Fish. Jonah is the kind of prophet who knows the voice of God but doesn't want anything to do with the Almighty. When have you been reluctant to listen to God's voice? Excerpts from Jonah, chapters 1-4.

August 4 | The Challenge to Integrity: Hubris

As stated before, David is a complex person, and he doesn't always act with integrity in every situation. (Do any of us?) His temptations get in the way, and he thinks he can keep it a secret. People who have power are sometimes tempted to abuse it. When has your hubris gotten the better of you? 2 Samuel 11:1-15 & Psalm 14.

August 11 | Integrity Depends on Honesty

David is confronted by the prophet Nathan for the damage his transgressions have caused others. Nathan tells David a tale about a man who was greedy and took something valuable away from someone and then tried to fool people by lying about it. The story was told in the hope David would realize his mistakes and the pain it caused. Admitting our mistakes doesn't always come easy. 2 Samuel 11:26-12:13a & Psalm 51:1-12.

August 18 | A Key Component of Integrity: Honor

This messy story is about David's sons who take advantage of their power to abuse and ruin other's lives. In some ways it seems the apple didn't fall far from the tree. But his one son Absalom—David's favorite—tries so hard to prove himself to his father. Instead, his impatience and pride get in the way of gaining his inheritance. What does honor require of us that Absalom missed? 2 Samuel 18:5-9, 15, 31-33 & Psalm 130.

continued

August 25 | Bible Stories for Grown Ups: The Parable of the Talents

In this confounding parable, the master gives each of his slaves some talents before going away on a long trip. When he returns, he praises all the slaves who invested their coins and made more money, but the one who dug a hole and saved it for when the master came back was rebuked. Why? We will explore that question together. Matthew 25:14-30.



Southern New England Conference

United Church of Christ

Living the Love & Justice of Jesus

Daily Lectionary Scripture References – July 2024 (Year B)

Mon., July 1

Psalm 18:1-6, 43-50
1 Samuel 23:14-18
2 Corinthians 8:16-24

Tues., July 2

Psalm 18:1-6, 43-50
1 Samuel 31:1-13
2 Corinthians 9:1-5

Wed., July 3

Psalm 18:1-6, 43-50
1 Chronicles 10:1-14
Mark 9:14-29

Thurs., July 4

Psalm 48
2 Samuel 2:1-11
1 Corinthians 4:8-13

Fri., July 5

Psalm 48
2 Samuel 3:1-12
2 Corinthians 10:7-11

Sat., July 6

Psalm 48
2 Samuel 3:31-38
Matthew 8:18-22

Sun., July 7

Seventh Sunday after Pentecost
2 Samuel 5:1-5, 9-10
Psalm 48
2 Corinthians 12:2-10
Mark 6:1-13

Mon., July 8

Psalm 21
2 Samuel 5:1-10
2 Corinthians 11:16-33

Tues., July 9

Psalm 21
2 Samuel 5:11-16
James 5:7-12

Wed., July 10

Psalm 21
2 Samuel 5:17-25
John 7:1-9

Thurs., July 11

Psalm 24
Exodus 25:10-22
Colossians 2:1-5

Fri., July 12

Psalm 24
Exodus 37:1-16
Colossians 4:2-18

Sat., July 13

Psalm 24
Numbers 10:11-36
Luke 1:57-80

Sun., July 14

Eighth Sunday after Pentecost
2 Samuel 6:1-5, 12b-19
Psalm 24
Ephesians 1:3-14
Mark 6:14-29

Mon., July 15

Psalm 68:24-35
2 Samuel 6:6-12a
Acts 21:27-39

Tues., July 16

Psalm 68:24-35
2 Samuel 3:12-16
Acts 23:12-35

Wed., July 17

Psalm 68:24-35
2 Samuel 6:16-23
Luke 7:31-35

Thurs., July 18

Psalm 89:20-37
1 Chronicles 11:15-19
Colossians 1:15-23

Fri., July 19

Psalm 89:20-37
1 Chronicles 14:1-2
Acts 17:16-31

Sat., July 20

Psalm 89:20-37
1 Chronicles 15:1-2, 16:4-13
Luke 18:35-43

Sun., July 21

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost
2 Samuel 7:1-14a
Psalm 89:20-37
Ephesians 2:11-22
Mark 6:30-34, 53-56

Mon., July 22

Psalm 61
2 Samuel 7:18-29
Hebrews 13:17-25

Tues., July 23

Psalm 61
2 Samuel 8:1-18
Acts 20:17-38

Wed., July 24

Psalm 61
2 Samuel 9:1-13
Luke 15:1-7

Thurs., July 25

Psalm 14
2 Samuel 10:1-5
Colossians 1:9-14

Fri., July 26

Psalm 14
2 Samuel 10:6-12
Colossians 3:12-17

Sat., July 27

Psalm 14
2 Samuel 10:13-19
John 4:31-38

Sun., July 28

Tenth Sunday after Pentecost
2 Samuel 11:1-15
Psalm 14
Ephesians 3:14-21
John 6:1-21

Mon., July 29

Psalm 37:12-22
2 Samuel 11:14-21
Philippians 4:10-20

Tues., July 30

Psalm 37:12-22
2 Samuel 11:22-27
Romans 15:22-33

Wed., July 31

Psalm 37:12-22
2 Chronicles 9:29-31
Mark 6:35-44

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