

SECONCH

Second Congregational Church UCC, P.O. Box 164, 205 Main Street, Norway, ME 04268
(207) 743-2290 ~ e-mail: seconch@megalink.net ~ website: seconch.com
JANUARY 2022 ~ WORSHIP ~ SUNDAY SCHOOL ~ CHILDCARE **SUNDAYS AT 10 AM**

MESSAGE FROM PASTOR SARA



I don't know about you all, but for me, January can seem like such a "bleh," long month. The cold can seep into our bones, and the darkness arrives in the late afternoons. It can be challenging to find God, and the meaning of our relationships during this month. COVID of course is not helping, As I write this, COVID numbers are increasing. In addition, this church works hard in keeping the community going.

With all this, I wonder if you, my church peeps, are tired and a bit worn out?

How do we replenish ourselves when there is so much to do, and so much to give?

I offer that we open up ourselves just a little bit, be vulnerable, and let ourselves be loved. This can be harder than it seems. To be open to love means that we are vulnerable to hurt, grief, and pain. In community where all sorts of personalities come together, to open ourselves can mean that we are trusting another person to hold us in tenderness and care.

So, I offer that during 2022, we lean into the small ways we are able to be vulnerable with each other, to be tender with each other, and to care for each other. To know that everyone deserves to be loved, including ourselves. God loves you and wants you to feel that love.

Your Sibling in Christ,
Sara

MESSAGE FROM THE MODERATOR

Happy New Year!

This month we will be back on our regular schedule for our annual meeting,

which will be held on Sunday, January 23 after our service. Those unable to attend in-person can access the meeting via Zoom. (Snow date will be the following Sunday, January 30.) I hope you all will attend and participate in making decisions for our church for 2022. Everyone is welcome, however only members are allowed to vote. If you would like to become a member before the meeting, please reach out to Rev. Sara or myself. We began 2021 with our designated term minister, Rev. Sharon Rankin and expanded our technology to provide the best service possible online. Sharon was only with us until July 1st but she did a great job in helping us to look to the future as we decided what we would need moving into the future. We began a search for a new part time minister and called Rev. Sara Bartlett to be our designated 3- year term minister and Sara started with us on September 1st. A few of our members served as worship leaders between July 1 and September 1st and they provided us with some thoughtful messages throughout the summer. We are blessed to have those willing to step in when needed!

Sara has been with us four months and they have been some very busy four months! We are blessed to have her jump in and learn all the things that are important to our church. She has supported all our missions by attending our drive thru free suppers, helping with our yard sales, our Thanksgiving baskets, wreath sales and more. When our basement flooded from the loss of our hot water tank, she was there working with us to clean up the mess! During this time, she has met with people, provided support

to those dealing with illness and loss and learning our way of doing things! She has joined our bible study and provides those attending with thoughtful questions and participated in some great discussions. We have been blessed by her ministry to us and our community.

So as we head into the new year, what do you hope for in the future? Do you just want to maintain what we have now? “Or” Do you look forward to moving forward, trying new ideas and seeking ways for the church to grow? It would be easy to say, “let’s just keep things the way they are”, especially when we have worked hard to maintain our budget and the things that are important to us. It would be easy to say, “Let’s just coast for now – we are tired and what we are doing is enough.” I can relate to that as the last two years have been tough!

However, instead I want to suggest that we focus on moving forward! May we all be open to trying new things, even those that may push us out of our comfort zone! I expect that Sara will encourage us to look at things in a new way, and I hope that we will all say, “Yes, let’s give it a try!” May we take what this pandemic has taught us: that using technology we can stay connected and reach others that have not come through our doors. It taught us to “think outside the box”, which led to identifying the things that matter to us and finding different ways of doing them. We continued to “be the church” even when we couldn’t be together. Perhaps that is the “silver lining” in this pandemic time – being open to new ways of doing things! Change is difficult and is hardly ever easy, but the one thing I have found

through the years is that the best way to deal with change is to be a part of it! I hope you will join me in welcoming new ideas and being part of the change that will help our church to grow and spread God's love throughout our community! Blessing to you all!
Pam Davison, Moderator

The Flood and What it means for us!

In November, the day of the Oxford Hills parade, we arrived at church to find the basement flooded due to the loss of the water heater. As a result of this incident, we have reached out to our insurance company and found that the damage to the floor tiles will be covered by insurance for the back hall, the ell, the blue pew room, thrift shop and the back processing room, and numerous closets. The flooring is asbestos which requires a special process to remove it. We are fortunate that the insurance will cover those sections of flooring removal and replacement.

The Trustees will be talking about replacing the kitchen and dining room floors at the same time. Those floors are also covered with asbestos tiles and the church will have to cover those costs. The hope is to find a good quality tile that will hold up as well as the last ones have! So what does that mean for us? Well, everything in those rooms will have to be removed and stored somewhere in the church or on the church property. So discussions will be taking place on how to utilize the space we have. We will have to share space and move a bunch of stuff. Perhaps we will look at things and determine that we no longer use or need

an item and clean some things out. So there will be some discussions at the Church Council and Trustees meetings as we plan on how to get ready for this project to get completed. Based on the estimates we received it will be March before we can start this project and will take most of the month of March to get it completed. More to come as we create a plan.

Free Supper:

Our December Drive-thru free supper of Lasagna was a big success and we want to thank all those who contributed one or more lasagnas for the meal. We had 170 meals and found a home for everyone one of them! We had two small lasagnas and large pan of lasagna left over and we have frozen them. We donated one of the small lasagnas to a family in need that the church helped over Christmas.

Our next drive-thru free supper will be Friday, January 21st starting at 5:00 p.m. until the food is gone. Our menu for January will be Chili. We will offer a vegetarian chili as well. We will be using up some of the left over pork from the BBQ ribs we offered – which Smokin Dave's says will make a great chili! Share the news and come and let us cook for you that night!

Church Council & Covid Protocols:

Our next Church Council meeting will be on Tuesday, January 4th via Zoom at 6:30 p.m. We know that some churches have gone back to remote services for the next few weeks due to the increasing numbers in our area. We are also concerned about the continued rise in the Covid rates in

our area. Our Church Council continues to review the protocols we have in place and make adjustments to our protocols as needed at each meeting.

When you come into the sanctuary for worship, you will notice that we have blocked off some seating to ensure that people can sit safely while social distancing. We ask that you be observant of the signs and blocked off pews. Your continued support of the protocols we have put in place are helping to keep ourselves and others safe and well. If you are not feeling well, we encourage you to stay home and access our service online. Thank you for your support during these continuing challenging times!

Are you a knitter?

If you are a knitter and would like to participate in a project, we have just the project for you! A group of knitters are creating prayer squares with hearts that will be sent to Stephens Memorial Hospital and staff to show how we appreciate all the care they are continuing to provide to our community. If you would like to contribute there is yarn, directions and positive poems available at the church. Please feel free to reach out to Susan Prindall at syprindall@gmail.com if you have any questions.

Annual Reports:

Please submit your annual reports to Susan Prindall by January 4th (syprindall@gmail.com) so that she can complete the annual report for you all to review before our annual meeting.

Annual Meeting:

Our annual meeting will be Sunday, January 23, 2022, following our church

service. We will also offer access to the meeting for those unable to attend in-person via Zoom. It is important to have as many members as possible to attend this important meeting as we make plans for 2022.

TRUSTEE NEWS

Board of Trustees News

As we end the year, we have been presented with a big challenge. On November 27, we had a water heater leak in the janitor closet outside the kitchen. Michelle, our housekeeper, found it early, and because it was the day of the wreath sale, there were people on hand who could work on the cleanup. Two shop vacs and several mops were used to clean up the water. Dehumidifiers and fans were put in place. So, damage seemed to be at a minimum with the Thrift Shop end of the basement most affected.

First, the water heater had to be replaced, and that was accomplished within a week. But we found that we had tiles coming loose from the floor, and water leaking out between them. We had been told by several people that there was probably asbestos in the tile, given its age and size.

I opened a claim with our insurer, Church Mutual Insurance Company, knowing that we could possibly have a larger catastrophe on our hands. They contacted Atlantic Environmental Co. of Lewiston, who responded within hours, and came to do an assessment. They took samples of the tile for testing, and found that all the tile in

the basement and the mastic (glue) is made from asbestos.

We are working with Church Mutual to get estimates for the removal and replacement of the tile in that area. All the green and brown tile will be covered by our insurance claim. This includes what we call the ell, the Thrift Shop rooms, several closets and hallways to the outside door and the boiler room. Atlantic uses a heat method for removal which does not require all the protective equipment you may have seen on HGTV shows. The job will take two or three weeks, and will be done possibly in March.

As Pam has reported to you, this will require removal of EVERYTHING in the affected areas, and that is going to be a huge job. Plans will be developed for this project.

As I said, all the tile in the basement is asbestos, including the kitchen and dining room. These areas will not be covered by the insurance claim. It is the opinion of many that while we have the contractor on site, we should have the tile removed from those areas as well. We have received a separate estimate for that work.

Next, we have to select a replacement flooring. We have had one local contractor measure the area, and he will give us an estimate based on the type of flooring we choose.

This is not how any of us wanted to spend "the holidays!" But I am grateful for the response we have received from Church Mutual and Atlantic Environmental, and from our own church leaders. 2022 will be the

year that the old tile gets replaced. It's about time.

And a last minute thing. I have been informed that Rice Tree Service will be removing the big overgrown cedar tree beside the parsonage in coming weeks. The Trustees voted to have this done several months ago. There are seven trunks on that tree. Foster Shibles is suggesting that the large cedar logs be kept to donate to the forestry program at OHCHS, or sold to a sawmill. Would you like to build a cedar table or a sauna? Make us an offer.

John Ellis

MISSION NEWS

THE CHRISTMAS FUND: The Mission Committee wishes to thank our church family for their generous support of The Christmas Fund this year. Adding \$200 from our Mission Budget to what was donated we have sent \$400 to the United Church of Christ this year.

HEIFER PROJECT

INTERNATIONAL: This year we chose "sheep" as our featured animal in honor of Karen Ellis and her devotion to the Heifer Project for many years. In addition to donations for a goat and honeybees we were overwhelmed to be able to send donations for seven sheep plus six shares toward another one. A total of \$1,061 was donated which is a wonderful tribute to our dear friend and former committee member. Thank you all so much!

UP NEXT: Once again, the Mission Committee will be collecting donations for "**SOUPER**" **SUNDAY**. During the month of January we will happily accept cans, bags, and boxes of soups for the

Church Council

Moderator, Pam Davison
 Collector, Carolyn Baker
 Treasurer – Jane Munn
 Clerk – Susan Prindall
 Shirli Allen Heald, Deb Ladner,
 Mary-Jane Robichaud, John
 Ellis, Deb Fickett, Linda Porter
 (member at large)

Trustees

Deb Ladner, Keith Ladner,
 Foster Shibles, Buck Gouin,
 Melssa Wood, John Ellis, Randy
 Butters

Spiritual Life & Leadership

Shirli-Allen Heald, Christina
 Bigelow, Mary-Jane Robichaud,
 Mickie Shibles, Melissa Wood

Deacons

Robert & Debbie Fickett, Laura
 Gouin, Chad Pendexter, Mary-
 Jane Robichaud, Mary Gatchell,
 Christina Bigelow, Michele
 Johnson, Jon Ladd.

Mission Committee

Mickie Shibles, Linda Porter,
 Jane Munn, Bruce Davison,
 Trudy Brown.

Youth and Family Team

Melissa Wood, Annie Tilsley

Stewardship

Deb Ladner, John Ellis, Jean
 Saunders, Dave Porter

Church Staff

Designated Minister – Sara
 Bartlett

Director of Music: Shirli Allen
 Heald

Organist/Pianist: Elaine Emery,
 Ed Baldrige

Office Hours

Thursday - 9 a.m. to noon
 or by appointment.

Norway Food Pantry and the Harrison Food Bank. We also encourage our church family to send checks with "Souper Sunday" in the memo line to the church so we can purchase some gift cards to be given to high school students who are food insecure since we can not give the schools any food during the pandemic. We will dedicate whatever we receive on Super Bowl Sunday, February 6th, and thank you in advance for your support of this annual appeal.

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS



3rd Veronica Knight
 8th Norman Emery
 19th Breta Howe
 22nd Stephanie Emery
 28th Benjamin Wood

PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS



Zachary (Judy and Tere Porter's grandson), Martha Farrington, Helen Heath, Larry Moody, Jane Munn's brother, David Porter, John Higgins and P.J. Allen.

A big thanks to the kids for their hard work on the Christmas play this year--despite only 2 weeks to write, stage, practice and perform--it always comes together! Bravo! A thank you to Kelsey and all our bake sale customers, our donors, and the youth group shopping team--we were able to provide gifts to a family with 5 kids this year. Their Mom was very grateful for our assistance. We were sad not to have a New Year's Eve party this year, but with the upsurge in COVID it did not seem prudent. We are planning to join with other UCC churches in the area for a day of dogsledding, as well as youth group outings for skating and sledding in the great outdoors over the next couple of months, stay tuned for more details. May this new year bring us all Peace, Health, Joy and Comfort! ~Melissa

Knitters Wanted

We are in need of HEART knitted squares that will be given to the staff of our neighbor Stephens Memorial Hospital as a “thank you” for all that they are doing for our community. With each knitted HEART square, we will include a card with a poem or writing about healing, gratitude, kindness, etc. If you are inspired, please pick up your needles and knit HEARTS!

Completed HEART squares can be left at the prayer square table at the top of the indoor church ramp. Cards will be attached before they are delivered to Stephens. Feel free to invite friends to join in the effort. Our first delivery will be at the beginning of February to coincide with Valentine’s Day.

Directions for HEART Prayer Square with border are below. Copies of directions are also on the top shelf of the prayer square table.

Use size 4, 5, or 6 needles. Finished square will be between 3 – 4 ½ inches

Cast on 19 stitches

Rows

1	K	17	K2, P2, K11, P2, K2
2	K	18	K
3	K2, P 15, K2	19	K2, P2, K11, P2, K2
4	K	20	K
5	K2, P 15, K2	21	K2, P2, K11, P2, K2
6	K	22	K
7	K2, P7, K1, P7, K2,	23	K2, P2, K5, P1, K5, P2, K2
8	K	24	K
9	K2, P6, K3, P6, K2	25	K2, P3, K3, P3, K3, P3, K2
10	K	26	K
11	K2, P5, K5, P5, K2	27	K2, P 15, K2
12	K	28	K
13	K2, P4, K7, P4, K2	29	K2, P 15, K2
14	K	30	K
15	K2, P3, K9, P3, K2	31	K
16	K		CAST OFF

Optional: Attach tassel to bottom of square

Thank you for being a part of the knitting ministry at Second Congregational Church, Norway, ME.