

Waterford Congregational Church UCC

Minister: Rev. Doretta Colburn

15 Plummer Hill Road, P.O. Box 59, Waterford,
Maine 04088

Email: waterfordcongregationalchurch@gmail.com

Facebook: Waterford Congregational church UCC

Website: wccucc.com



Newsletter - February 2026



Services are at 9:30 am on Sundays. All are welcome. The services are also filmed and are available on our website.

THOUGHTS FROM THE PULPIT...

Dear Friends and Family,

Several years ago it was decided that our church would create a float for the Waterford 4th of July Parade and we have been doing so ever since. Each year the appearance has changed with alterations and additions. Last year we towed the Griffin's pontoon boat behind the Wait's truck. It was decked out with banners and flags that read "Unity in Community" and along the route we tossed out red, white, and blue beach balls with an image of our church outlined with those three words. We wanted to make the statement that we believe we are *better together than separate* and that our diversity is what makes us stronger. The parade was a blast! Before long we will be thinking about what our float will look like this year.



The original banners were made first for our float a few years ago and rather than put them away for the rest of the year, we decided to hang one between the columns throughout the

rest of the year. While that worked out relatively well, its tendency to sag and flap in the wind hadn't given it the crisp and clean appearance hoped for. Thanks to Stephane, who made the suggestion we get it framed, and Tom Fanning, who created it, our "FINDING **UNITY IN COMMUNITY**" sign stands out more prominently and states boldly who we are at Waterford Congregational Church.

Sometimes we use words to paint an image of what we hope to be, yet I believe these words convey who we truly are and my heart could not be more full. To be a part of this truly amazing body of friends and family held together in loving kindness is a gift that brings strength near and far.

I thank each of you for your part in helping us be the community of faith that we are and I invite you to thank one another. It takes care and compassion, kindness and acceptance, joy and welcome, to name only a few of the qualities that define what "FINDING **UNITY IN COMMUNITY**" is all about. Let us celebrate who we are and continue to be invitational to all.

Gratitude and Blessings,

Doretta

LETTER FROM THE MODERATOR...

Good Morning Everyone,

It's a nice, balmy 21 degrees out there. A new layer of snow fell Wednesday to freshen things up. It looks wonderful as the guessing game of *what is under that lump of snow in the yard?* is played from the living room window.

I'm pretty sure I put the lawnmower away.

We held our first **Veteran's Appreciation Dinner** in November, which was a wonderful success. Many thanks to the VFW of Harrison for joining with our church to make this event a reality. Then the Advent season was upon us with the **Waterford Winter Celebration** in conjunction with the Library and the lighting of the tree in the Common. This time of year allows

George to really shine as he prepared the Church Choir to anticipate the birthday of our Lord. **Mainely Clarinets** took a turn on one of those Sundays to fill the sanctuary with joyful sounds.





The two services on **Christmas Eve** were very well attended . Doretta's special message for the season was enhanced with special music from George and his friends on trombones.

While all these festivities were occurring the Church Council was preparing for the **Annual Celebration**.

Each Committee Chair prepared an Annual Report for the final document. John, Dodi, and Ralph need to be recognized for keeping us fiscally solvent and on budget. They spent many hours getting the proposed budget shaped up and ready to present at the Celebration, which was the next chance for us to all eat together, enjoy each others company and recognize the work accomplished this past year by members of our Church. There was a good-sized group present. We welcomed 13 new members this past year in no small part due to Doretta's pastoral style and George's musical acumen.

Winter signals the start of **Play Night** for the 5-8th grades in our area. We also have started a **Game Night** for adults which was a big success. Both events were the brainchild of Larry Griffin. Following up on those events was our popular **Trivia Night** and **SouperBowl Sunday**. There were nine delicious soups to sample and I did!

As you can see the thermometer doesn't dictate our energy level...we thrive in the cold! We celebrate, eat, play, eat and laugh a lot. Our souls are fed by top spiritual chef, Doretta, and musical sous chef, George. As we enter the Lenten season it is a good time to sit and ponder where we are and where we want to go. A renewal is coming. It is just under the snow waiting quietly to spring forth with new life and challenges. I look forward to it.

In Peace,

Al Struck, Moderator

DEACONS' REPORT...

The Deacons thank Dodi Wait for her wonderful leadership as Head Deacon this past year! Currently, we welcome Rachel Pitman as our newest Deacon. Rachel is a member of the choir and lives in South Chatham, NH. Rachel joins Kerri Sooter, Doss Hasson and me as deacons. We help Doretta with services and also do outreach to those needing TLC. If you know someone in that situation please speak to one of us.

Dianne Morse-Leonard

2026 Head Deacon

THE CHURCH ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE (CAC)...

The Church Activities Committee's 2026 activities started on January 31. Doretta and Doss hosted **Trivia Night**. The crowd was small but the 3 teams had lots of fun. Rumor has it that the questions were really good and were answerable. We'll be planning more Trivia Nights during the year and will keep you posted. If any of you want to host, let us know.



On Super Bowl Sunday, we had our annual pregame celebration which we call Souperbowl Sunday. After the church service, everyone was treated to nine delicious soups made by nine of our congregants. The challenge was to enjoy all 9 soups and the winner... Ted Nixon! Myra's Ethiopian, Mexican, and Irish breads rounded out the meal.

On Sunday, March 15, we'll celebrate (one day late) Pi Day. Pie and coffee will be served after church. Needed...bakers. Get out your recipe book and treat us to one of your pies.



Suggestions for activities and field trips are always welcome....as are new committee members. —

Nancy Engdahl for the Committee: Nancy Engdahl, Myra Maltby, Doss Hasson

MUSIC NOTES...

The holiday season was greatly enriched by numerous guest musicians at WCC. The Mainely Clarinets, a Christmas trombone quartet, and George Wiese, Jr (my dad) visiting with his trumpet made the season extra festive. It is a delight to have the choir singing each week, too. Their Christmas Eve rendition of Randall Thompson's "Nowell" was beautiful, and the following week they premiered a new choral arrangement of the praise song, "Ring the Bells." On Epiphany Sunday, the choir sang J.S. Bach's "O Morning Star." Bruce Whichard captured a recording, which was later posted online where it has been watched over 1500 times (and counting!) Through the month of February we celebrated the rich tradition of gospel music, including many spirituals and songs associated with the civil rights movement. Our "Gospel Sunday" Anthem, "Precious Lord", was a particular highlight of the month - especially Kay's inspired piano playing!

A reminder that all are welcome to join the choir at any time - there's no audition. We meet at 8:30 am on Sundays.

---*George Wiese*, Music Director

●●Mark Your Calendars: Carol Madsen reports that Sharps on the Flat will sponsor, for the third summer, a candle-lit concert by the Sebago-Long Lake Music Festival. Our lovely grand piano will be featured at this concert in our church at 7 pm on Wed., July 29. Details to follow.



News from the Pews



We hope you enjoy receiving these newsletters. If you know someone who would like to be added to our newsletter list; or if you would like your name added to our birthday list; or should you choose to unsubscribe...please email ksleslie@me.com.

Wreaths Across America...

December 5 through December 16, 2025, **Jared and Bruce Whichard** drove escort vehicles in the Wreaths Across America Convoy from Columbia Falls Maine to Washington DC, to deliver and help lay over 265,000 Veterans wreaths on every grave in Arlington National Cemetery. Wreaths Across America started over 20 years ago when Morrell Worcester donated 5,000 wreaths to lay on graves in Arlington. A Pentagon photographer took a picture 20 years ago of these bright green wreaths lying against the white grave stones, sitting on a blanket of freshly fallen snow. This picture went out over the air waves and thousands of people responded positively, but asked, "Why only 5,000 Veterans Wreaths, when there are so many more graves to cover in Arlington?" So Mr. Worcester declared that from now on, EVERY grave would have a wreath placed upon it.



Fast forward to December 6, 2025.... 64 tractor trailers left Columbia Falls, Maine carrying a precious cargo of 265,000 wreaths destined to arrive in Arlington one week later. Fifteen of these tractor trailers had an Escort of special vehicles and police and first responder vehicles. As this convoy made its way to Arlington, they stopped 4 to 5 times each day at schools, churches, ball fields, YMCA's, Vietnam Memorials and other locations. There

would be a wreath-laying ceremony, and we would honor Gold Star Families. Many Gold Star families from across the country rode with us in our escort vehicles.

As our convoy proceeded to Arlington, another 835 tractor trailers left Columbia Falls carrying their precious cargo south and west to deliver wreaths to over 5,600 Veteran Cemeteries throughout the USA. This year, Wreaths Across

America, a non profit organization that relies solely on donations for these Veterans Wreaths, and donations from over 600 trucking companies to transport the wreaths, delivered over three million, one hundred thousand wreaths to be placed on the graves of Veterans world wide!



Jared, Matt Mank, Chair of Honor Flight Maine, and Bruce preparing wreaths for a ceremony at the Vietnam Wall in Washington DC

For Jared and me, it was an honor to take part in such a meaningful experience. We both have been Board Members with Honor Flight Maine, and have flown with WWII Veterans, Korea and Vietnam Veterans to Washington DC so that those Veterans could experience their memorials. Now, to take part and drive escort vehicles in the Wreaths Across America Convoy, to meet, spend time with, and become friends with Gold Star Families is extra special, an emotional memory that will live inside us forever.

The Wreaths Across America motto is "REMEMBER, HONOR, and TEACH.

...Always REMEMBER those Veterans that are no longer with us, say their name!

...Always HONOR those Veterans that are here with us now. Shake their hand, thank them for their service.

...Always TEACH our younger generations about the freedom that the United States offers, and teach them about the greatest generation that fought for OUR freedom.

KEEP MOVING FORWARD!, (the theme of the 2025 convoy) is the last three words spoken by Joshua Byers. We met and got to know Joshua's parents, Lloyd and Mary Byers. Their son, Joshua, was killed in action. The Byers never want their beloved son to be forgotten. But they, and all the other Gold Star Families, do not want their child remembered only as dying on a battlefield. Their children were people like

you and me...they grew up, had sisters and brothers, had buddies in school, played football in the street, rode bicycles, went to the high school prom, some got married and had families of their own. Remember these brave men and women who lost their lives fighting for our freedom as PEOPLE, not just as casualties of war. KEEP MOVING FORWARD!



The Paws of Hope Pet Pantry...

The Paws of Hope Pet Pantry was started in November 2025 by **Daryl-Ann Leonard**. She saw a need for this service while volunteering at the Harrison Food Bank as a delivery driver to community members who are housebound. Darylann has been working to collaborate with community businesses and individuals to raise money and collect pet food. The program, which is housed inside the Harrison Food Bank, has grown quickly and now serves over 1,100 pets each week from 90 different towns. Each week she works at the foodbank breaking down large bags of food into gallon size Ziploc bags to hand out each Tuesday. During these difficult economic times, many families have faced the difficult decision of feeding themselves or feeding their pets. The mission of Paws of Hope Pantry is to provide supplemental pet food to families experiencing financial hardship, helping ensure beloved pets can remain safely at home.



Become a Donor Today!
www.harrisonfoodbank.com/pets

	\$25 Kitten	
	\$50 Chihuahua	
	\$100 Maine Coon	
	\$250 Husky	
	\$500 Golden Retriever	
	\$1,000 Great Dane	
	Paws of Hope Pantry	



experiencing financial hardship, helping ensure beloved pets can remain safely at home.

Joy's Birthday Week...from Karen Shelnut

Early in January, **Joy Plate** spent her birthday week (we all love extended birthdays!) in Alabama! On the way, we stopped to visit Austin and his family and then headed on to our house. We enjoyed celebrating Christmas early on and birthday gifts/cake/dinner out later in the week. Other highlights - daily face-time calls with her grandchildren and great grandchildren, "buggy rides" around parts of the lake, shopping in the quaint stores of Wedowee, and just a lot of quality time between 'mom and daughter' !!



Nancy's Engdahl's Super Secret Soup Story...

About 20 years ago Fred and I stopped into Mr. Bagel in Windham for lunch. We loved their mulligatawny soup. We also enjoyed the friendliness of the proprietors. It was a sunny spring day following a night of a few inches of snow. I was carrying a cup of coffee as we left, and as I stepped off the curb, my foot got caught in the slush and the coffee splashed up and burned my forehead. I rushed back inside to put cold water on the burn which was sore but not serious. "Mr Bagel" was very upset and asked if I planned to sue him. I told him, "Of course not. It was my carelessness for not watching where I was stepping." He then said, "If you promise you will never share it, I'll give you my mulligatawny soup recipe which I never share." For all those years, I have never given out his recipe...even to my family. When I volunteered at the hospital coffee shop years ago, I made the soup once a month. I had ardent followers who constantly asked me for the recipe. Many said they would look it up and try it themselves, but for some reason no one could match that recipe. I am happy that you folks can enjoy his recipe on Souperbowl Sunday. But....it is still a secret soup!!



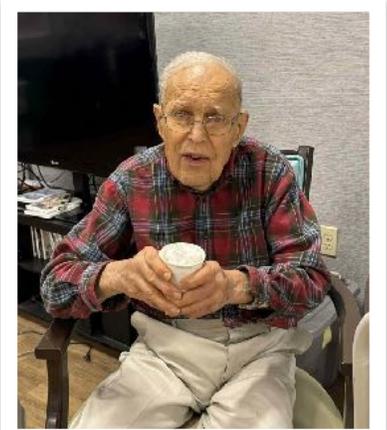
Al & Jean's Winter Photos...



Left: *First ice of the season in the fountain across the street.*



Left: *The Harrison school decorated for Al's "Polar Express" reading.*



Right: *Our friend Ted Nixon in his new digs at Market Square Health Care Center.*



Left: *This will keep the squirrels out!*



Right: *What do you do when 18 inches of snow falls? You repaint your kitchen cabinets!*

Ginny and the Sheltie's...

Dear friends,

Thank you all so much for the love and support you have given me over these eight months. Denny loved that we moved to Waterford...you all being one of the BIG reasons. This is a very caring community. We both have been very happy we made this our full-time home.

In our last News, we reported on our little foster Sheltie-dog, Halle, who almost immediately gave us two puppies. All three of these pups settled nicely into their new names and new homes.

Often people ask how we could foster dogs only to give them up. I do admit sometimes it's really hard. Often the dogs are not a good fit for my home, they don't get along with my dogs or they have a bothersome behavior. Primarily I embrace the thought that this is someone else's dog. I occasionally care for friends' dogs as they go on vacation. I would never consider keeping them, so why would I consider keeping a foster dog who ultimately will give another family pleasure! I cannot keep them all. I would never be able to foster again!



Denny and I fostered Ocho mid-winter. He was a stud Sheltie from a backyard breeder. Ocho was a nice dog, affectionate, except when unsupervised, he would attack our-own-fixed-male dog, Manny. Ocho was fixed almost immediately, but his hormones needed settling. Ultimately, we found a sweet home for Ocho with a former-Sheltie family. He became king of that household as an only dog.

Barkley James is a Sheltie that came to me in the spring.

He was a very happy, affectionate, well-adjusted dog. He had a quirky, but endearing, behavior of clapping his teeth. I think he clapped his teeth in place of barking! Shelties can be big barkers. Amazingly enough, we placed him with a family that was not a good fit.



Mitzi, Manny, (Foster) Barkley, and Kelly

They were excited to get Barkley, but their own Sheltie was not! You never know! Well...along came a former Sheltie owner who was looking for a doggy companion. Ocho was a perfect fit!.....I love happy endings! *Ginny Raymond*

Speaking of Dogs...from George Wiese

Tabitha and I have recently welcomed Max, the dog, into our household. Max is a 10-month-old Brittany spaniel who came to us from a family of Brittans owned by WCC choir member Rachel Pitman and husband Matt. Max is keeping us VERY active! We're delighted that he is friendly, outgoing, and polite (usually.) He likes coming to church with us on Sunday mornings, and especially enjoys the closing circle at the end of the service.



A Pet Memorial Christmas Tree in Waterford...

from Bruce, Arlene, and Jared Whichard

The original Pet Memorial Christmas Tree was "hidden" in a part of Central Park in NYC where many dog owners walked their dogs. Years ago, people started to hang pictures of their pets, that had crossed the rainbow bridge, on that Memorial Tree. This grew to over 3,000 photographs of beloved pets on the tree. Our friend, Brad, would visit the memorial tree almost daily with his 6 standard poodles to watch the number of photographs grow.....Sadly, Brad informed us that the tree in Central Park got a disease and had to be cut down. He had placed a

picture of our dog, Joy, on the memorial tree last year. Joy had lived in NYC and spent 6 years of her life walking Central Park with Brad and his 6 poodles before coming to live with us on McWain Pond....We talked to Brad and agreed to start our own Pet Memorial Tree in Waterford.

What a response! As word got out about this Tree, we received many pictures from people wanting to share their pet photos with us. Hopefully this Memorial Pet Tree will become a tradition here in Waterford, as it did in Central Park in New York City.



Right: This is a "painting" of our grandchildren Isabella and Joseph, sitting under our Christmas tree, very excited to open Christmas presents with our poodles Hope and Chance.

Memories of a Childhood in the Waterford Church(es)...

Chapter One...to be continued...Kathleen Leslie

I joined the Waterford Congregational Church with several other young people on April 13, 1952 when Dr. Wilbur Bull was the minister. I was born in Old Town, Maine in 1939 to Norris and Dorothy Scribner. When I was ages 1 - 4 we lived in Stratton, Maine; from ages 4 - 8 we lived in Saugus, Massachusetts; in 1947 we moved to South Waterford. Here are some memories (mostly accurate, I hope) of the Waterford and South Waterford Churches from a child's point of view.



REV. WILBUR I. BULL, DD
and ANNA C. BULL
Founder and Minister 1925 - 1983
OXFORD COUNTY UNITED PARISH

Dr. Bull served both the Waterford Congregational Church and the South Waterford Methodist Church. Services were held in Waterford in the winter (the church had central heating!) and in South Waterford in the summer. Elaine Morse (Dianne's mother) was in charge of the Sunday School, which in those days had 20+ children. My favorite Sunday School teacher was Irene Bean (Joanne Fillebrown's mother). I was probably in 5th grade when she taught us to compare the

different ways New Testament Bible stories were told by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. We also memorized Bible verses. We'd gather in the Wilkins House as a group to learn songs, listen to Bible stories followed by a short discussion and prayers, and then break into small groups for age-appropriate activities such as discussion groups, crafts, games, etc. We joined the adult services in the church sanctuary only on special occasions. There was always a 2-week Summer Vacation Bible School for all community kids with lots of activities filling both the Wilkins House and the Masonic Hall.

Because Dr. Bull was a graduate of Dartmouth College where he had been an enthusiastic member of their Outing Club, he encouraged us in outdoor activities. When a big snow storm would occur, he would load his 6- to 8-person-bobsled atop his car, and pick up interested kids - as many as would fit in his car (no seat belts in those days.) We'd drive on the unsanded roads to the vicinity of Mutiny Brook, leave the car, pull the bobsled to the top of the hill heading toward Sweden, pile onto the bobsled, and attempt to get to the bottom without tipping over. I don't know how our parents ever let us do it, but we had great fun! No injuries!



I couldn't find a photo of us, but this is exactly the way we looked! I'd be the one with mouth wide open! It's a STEEP hill!



FEBRUARY

1 Bob Ross III
 9 Dell Foss
 13 Gabe Johnson
 13 Cathy Griffin
 25 Rachel Pitman

MARCH

2 Jared Whichard
 15 Patty Tingley

APRIL

10 Ed Range
 10 Darylann Leonard
 11 Al Struck
 11 Dwight Smith
 14 Dodi Wait
 16 Valerie Saurer
 19 Del Leonard
 25 Myra Maltby

Church Council 2026



Moderator: *Al Struck*

Clerk: *Larry Griffin*

Trustees: *John Wait, Ted Colburn,
 Larry Griffin*

Treasurers: *John & Dodi Wait*

Assistant Treasurer: *Ralph MacKinnon*

Stewardship: *Al Struck*

Deacons: *Doss Hasson, Rachel Pitman,
 Dianne Morse-Leonard, Kerri Sooter*

Music Director: *George Wiese*

Church Activities: *Nancy Engdahl*

Communications: *Al Struck & George Wiese*

Webmaster: *Ginny Raymond*

Church Historian: *Dianne Morse-Leonard*

*** Save the Dates: ***

- Wednesday, February 18 - Ash Wednesday, first day of Lent
- Thursdays: Community PotLuck Suppers February 19, March 19, April 16 at the Wilkins Community House..6 pm
- Sunday, March 1 - Lenten Book Study Wilkins House...10:45 - noon March 1, 8, 22, 29
- Sunday, March 8 - Daylight Saving Time begins
- Sunday, March 15 - Pi Day-Wilkins House 10:45 am...Lots of pies / coffee too!!
- Sunday, March 29 - Palm Sunday
- Sunday, April 5 - Easter ...Sunrise Service, Breakfast, Easter Church Service



To make a gift using our secure online donation portal, visit wccucc.com/donate, or follow the QR code link with your smartphone. Thank you!



God Be With You 'til We Meet Again



