

Welcome to the Holiday Season and the start of a New Year...



# Waterford Congregational Church UCC

Minister: Rev. Doretta Colburn



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🎄 Worship & Church School at 9:30 am 🎄

## Newsletter - December 2019

### THOUGHTS FROM THE PULPIT...

When my daughters were young I had a book that every Christmas season I would read to them, entitled The Sweet Smell of Christmas. It tells of the delicious smells of the approaching holiday – from the smell of gingerbread and candy canes, hot cocoa and a fresh cut pine tree and more – that tantalize Little Bear’s nostrils assuring that Christmas was right around the corner. There were little scratch-and-sniff spots on each page so those enjoying the book might catch a whiff and imagine, too. I came across the book a few years ago stored in a box to save for the my daughters. The scratch-and-sniff smells had faded away over the years, but the warm memories are still there waiting to be noticed on every page.



How true that is about Christmas! It is steeped in memories – the Biblical narrative of Jesus’ birth, the pageants, the carols and choirs, the trees and lights, the candles and darkness – all pointing to something new and wonderful. Memories and promises. New wrapping around an age-old story of hope and peace, love and joy. We light those respective candles as we walk through Advent until we light the Christ Candle on Christmas Eve. A joyous, symbolic light in the darkness of life.

This year as we loosen the bows, gently pull off the scotch tape and eagerly pull back the wrapping paper to reveal the wonder of this season, may we see not only the gift of God's love as it comes to us in the birth of Jesus, but may we recognize that we, too, are gifts of God's love empowered to share with one another and the world in Jesus' name.

In that way, may your Christmas be filled with the wonder and delight of giving, not so much material gifts, but the immeasurable gifts of gratitude, compassion, love, care, joy and whatever goodness you can imagine for whomever you have the opportunity to share with and give to.

The story of Christmas is retold year after year – first, so that we will remember and second, so that we will recognize our part in the story. We are, you are the living, breathing, reality of God's love. Share the gift of who you are and rediscover the blessings of this Christmas season.

Blessings, *Doretta*



## **MODERATOR'S NOTES...**

It is kind of dreary out, but that's November for ya! First, I would like to share a HUGE thank you for your kind thoughts and prayers concerning my hip operation. All went well and I am walking 12 minutes each hour now, with a walker (thanks Joy and Henry). I'm keeping up with my exercises and will have a PT eval soon which I hope will tell me I no longer need the walker. We'll see...



I've heard wonderful things about the latest of the Climate Change talks. The topic sounded perfect for the time of year – looking at what we each could do to positively impact the environment. I've now seen the beautiful slides that Darylann Leonard provided to open the session. What better way to prepare the mind and attitude than by looking at God's creation in all its colorful glory.

The CAC (Community Activities Committee) has distributed our Thanksgiving turkey "bags." This is a very important community-sharing activity with a long history. How better to show our willingness to share our personal bounty than to prepare the ingredients for a traditional meal of Thanksgiving with those less fortunate. I know as an educator that there are many food-challenged children in our community who need our help and understanding as their parents welcome opportunities to find food for the holidays.

Then begins the Christmas season... We start off with the Waterford Community Celebration in cooperation with the Waterford Library. The festivities include a short concert; caroling around the community tree; more music and refreshments at the Library; a Christmas

reading; and the appearance of Santa with free books for all! (See more details below.) We know how to bring the spirit of Christmas to our town!

The Deacons and Doretta are preparing for the Advent Sundays and the Christmas Eve service. This ramping up of activities reminds me that our motto, "The little Church with the big heart", is never more visible than at this time of year. Along with this burst of spirit, is an underlying building up of energy — energy that will sustain our actions to bring more music to our town, to reach out spiritually through Doretta's recorded sermons, and to assist in the community with our Good Neighbor funds. I can hardly wait for our January Annual Meeting/ Celebration to hear about what we, the Waterford Congregational Church, have been doing to move our church vision forward during this past year. Have a wonderful Thanksgiving and a blessed Christmas.

*Al Struck*, Moderator



## TRUSTEES REPORT...

The trustees were busy during September taking advantage of Richard Maurer's time and skills before he and Tammi left to head south for the winter. We will miss them.

- A new toilet has been installed in the Wilkins House. The Wilkins House has been prepared for the winter season. If you are using the Wilkins House during the winter months, be sure to close all inside doors to ensure that we are not wasting heating oil and that we keep the pipes from freezing.
- Furnaces in both buildings have been serviced and are in good shape.
- Three new outlets have been installed in the choir area to add lighting in this area. A new outlet was added in the organ area for the Christmas Tree, and one has been added to the minister's office.
- We are now preparing for the winter weather! A sand bucket has been placed in the entry way for use on the front stairs and ramp. Kerry & I are ready to shovel snow. Again, we will miss Rich's help...



If you have any concerns relating to the two buildings, please let one of us know and we will address the issue.

**Wonder what's so attractive about the South?**

For the Trustees, *John*



## NEWS FROM THE DEACONS...

The first snowflakes of winter are flying around, a quiet, gentle warning of what is to come. Not just more snow, of course... but Christmas! That holy, jolly, magical season we are so blessed to be able to celebrate.

On Nov. 30 the beautiful tree given to the Church by the Whichard Family will be set up and decorated for the Hanging of the Greens service on Dec. 1. Our thanks to Pam Williams for the wonderful greens that will grace our sanctuary. The four Sundays of Advent will follow, capped with our annual Christmas Eve Candlelight Service.

On Dec. 7 the season arrives for the village of Waterford with a brief concert by local musicians at the church beginning at 4 pm, followed by the singing of Christmas carols around the tree in the town Common. Then off to the Library for refreshments and music of Back Room Brass, the annual reading of a Christmas story and the arrival of Ol' Saint Nick Himself, with a book for every child.



Other Deacons notes... We have purchased a video camera and have begun to record Doretta's sermons for posting on line. They will be available on YouTube (UCC Waterford Congregational Church), our church website ([wccucc.com](http://wccucc.com)), and Facebook (Waterford Congregational Church UCC). As for that new website, we are putting finishing touches on our new site, which has been developed by our webmaster extraordinaire Ginny Raymond. The address is [wccucc.com](http://wccucc.com). Check it out! But remember—it is a work in progress, so there are still glitches to resolve.

After the first of the year, Communion will be offered the first Sunday of EVERY month, as practiced by most Protestant churches. We will look at the first six months as a trial and discuss whether we should continue Communion monthly or continue as before with Communion every other month.



**Left: Mary Huhn, accompanied by her son Lloyd, sings a solo for a fall Communion service.**

And, in an effort to revive the Peace Candle offerings, we encourage members of the congregation to sign up to offer a short story, poem, or essay for the Peace Candle. Please visit the signup sheet on the choir rail in the back of the church and add your name!

May your advent be full of the joy, peace, love and light of the Holy birth.

For the Deacons, *Sally Holm*



## MISSION MEMO...

We will hold a "Living Gift Market" for Heifer International on Sunday, December 1 following church at coffee hour in the Wilkins House. "God loves a cheerful giver" 2 Corinthians 9:7. Through our gifts we help Heifer International work directly in poor communities – providing critical education, training and leadership. Give families the gifts of chickens, cows, pigs, even alpacas, so they can create their own farms and businesses with a steady incomes. Please join us on December 1 as we begin our Advent Celebrations with the Hanging of the Greens church service.



Happy Holidays, Pam



## STEWARDSHIP NEWS...

We are currently in the middle of our 2020 Stewardship pledge drive. You should have received your pledge letter and return pledge card in the mail. Several of you have sent back pledges and we are very grateful.

As you know, your pledges are used to pay our operating expenses, and by sending in your pledge cards you allow the Council to plan and manage our money carefully. We always operate very close to even in our budget process. The more we plan ahead, the better we can be in terms of making that budget.



Jane Morse gave our Stewardship Moment in church recently and reminded us that there was a time not too long ago when the congregation was smaller and not on as firm a financial footing. She told us how, at the time, they had to meet operating expenses with funds from our endowments knowing that doing so would have potentially terrible consequences for future congregations.

Her comments reminded me of the importance of this year's theme, which is so eloquently expressed by Maya Angelou:

*When we cast our bread upon the waters, we can presume that someone downstream whose face we will never know will benefit from our action, as we who are downstream from another will profit from the grantor's gift.*

We owe it to those who will follow us to leave the church in even better financial shape than we found. Your pledges help ensure that those who come "downstream" from us will benefit from our actions and those pledges will be a model to future generations to do the same. Thank you all for your thoughtfulness and generosity.

*Kerry Johnson*, Stewardship Committee

## MUSIC NOTES...

The choir has been ramping up through November singing songs of Thanksgiving. Now on to begin the Advent season, culminating with Christmas, of course!

We have presented a few new choral pieces recently and have had great responses to our music. Thank you so much for your positive feedback! We welcomed **Ginny Halligan** again on her flute. It is always nice to have her accompany us with her beautiful playing. Thanks to Kay and Mary for accompanying the choir and providing lovely music for our worship services. And of course, thank you to every choir member! You are a dedicated group and we are all thankful for your beautiful music!



"Sharps on the Flat Concerts" will begin again in late winter. Stay tuned to hear who will be performing!

Please let me know if you have

any particular favorites you would like to hear the choir sing. And...everyone is welcome to join the choir!

Yours in music, *Jane Morse*



## CLIMATE CONVERSATIONS...



Doretta Colburn and Kerry Johnson

In October we began our year-long series of monthly conversations about the climate crisis and what we, as citizens and stewards of Earth, can do about it. Our church is sponsoring this series of conversations because we believe that we have a responsibility to explore the threat of climate change both in spiritual and scientific ways that enable people to make informed decisions and take action.

Clearly, there is a serious need for these conversations because the attendance at the first two sessions was amazing. Each session has had more than 50 vocal, energetic and informed participants. When you consider that the second one was held on a snowy, icy and cold evening, and that people came from miles around to attend, we think we have responded to a real need. We were also pleased that so many people came from outside our church community.

Our first session featured **Dr. Tom Hammett**, a life-long summer resident in Waterford and a professor of environmental science at Virginia Tech University. He shared stories and images from his years of research and service in Nepal with the goal of making us more aware of the global impact of the climate crisis. We connected the environmental and social science he shared about the impact of the crisis in Nepal with very specific things here in Maine. People shared examples of the impact of climate change they have experienced, and, even more importantly, shared their real feelings, fears, and concerns about not only what's happening to our environment, but how they are struggling to cope with those changes. The most telling comments came from people who expressed gratitude for being able to share their thoughts and feelings with like-minded people, and, particularly for being encouraged to identify specific actions they could take to mitigate the crisis at least in some small way.



In our second session our Pastor, **Doretta Colburn**, shared her personal spiritual experiences and motives for engaging in this work. She told us how important the natural world is to the very essence of her beliefs about our responsibility to care for our planet. Earlier we had reflected on our own beliefs by experiencing a slide show of wonderful nature images provided by local photographer **Darylann Leonard**, which led to an exploration of our individual reasons for concern and need to act.



During the final group discussion, we talked about the distinction between man's dominion over nature versus our role as stewards of God's creation. We gave voice to other faith traditions, especially those of Indigenous peoples, in their gratitude for the gifts of Earth and our responsibility to care for those gifts. We also talked about the need for communities to mobilize in their support of actions that will help to address the climate crisis. And, we spoke about our concern for the

poor who will face the most severe impact of climate change. We discussed issues like climate justice, climate migration, and the inequality that will be experienced in dealing with these issues. Finally, each of us again chose a specific and immediate action we would commit to take to lower our personal impact on the environment.



Our next conversation, to be held Tuesday, **December 3<sup>rd</sup>** at the Wilkins House from 6:30-8:00 pm, features a panel of professionals working on the frontlines of protecting our environment: **Colin Holme**, Director of the Lakes Environmental Association; **Scott Vlaun**, Director of the Ecology Based Economy Organization; and **Deborah Perkins**, Founder of First Light Wildlife Habitats.



## CHURCH ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE REPORT...

Wind and rain did not cancel the Halloween 🎃 **Trunk or Treat** 👻 celebration put on jointly

by the church and the library. It was simply moved inside to a transformed Wilkins House. And...a good time was had by all!



Left: Church members carved pumpkins in preparation for the community event



Right: Library members and church members handed out treats to the many little goblins, ghosts, and skeletons...



Owyn Brockett



Erin & Eddie Girzone



Preston Harrison



And the light of jack-o-lanterns reflected the spirit and warmth of our Waterford community...



A **French Toast Breakfast** held before the church service on the Sunday of the Daylight Savings Time change. Not only was it delicious, it helped all of us adjust to the "fall back" agenda!



Dick & Kay Lyman

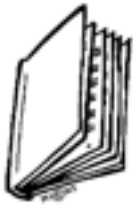


Henry Plate



Gail Nixon





## 2020 Lenten Book Theme and Deadlines Announced

The chilling consequences of the Climate Crisis are already upon us and the threat to our beautiful planet grows more intense with each passing season. All around the world, folks are responding to the need to recognize the changes that are occurring, and that are likely to get worse. Our recent efforts through the year-long Climate Conversations: What Can WE Do? are aimed at giving us information and tools to fight for sustainability and preserve the beauty and the magic of the world we call home.

In keeping with these efforts, our theme for the 2020 Lenten Book will be: **Loving God's Earth.** What do you love most about the home God has created for us? What gifts has the natural world given you personally? What does it mean to you to live on this marvelous "blue marble" in space? What is your favorite spot on Earth? Why is it so important that we protect and preserve our world? What are you willing to do for Love of God's Earth? So many other questions could be posed.



We invite you to submit a story, a poem, an essay, or an artwork describing your response to the theme. The deadline of all material to be sent to [sallyvholm@gmail.com](mailto:sallyvholm@gmail.com) is no later than **Thursday, January 23.** You may include a scripture that is relevant. (Or we can supply one, if you prefer.) Please limit yourself to 350 words or less. If you have a photo or artwork to illustrate your piece, please write tight so we can fit it all in.

Kerry and I will again offer a writing workshop on **Tuesday, Jan. 7 at 7 pm** in the Wilkins House for anyone who wants a little support for his/her writing. So, put on your creativity hat, bring a pen and a notebook, and together we'll try to help bring your ideas to life! Thank you!

*Sally Holm* and the CAC



## NEWS FROM THE PEWS



Celebrating at the 100th Anniversary at the American Veterans Post 67 Gala are Carol Madsen and Doretta Colburn with our handsome husbands. Theodore (Ted) Gerber, former Captain, U.S. Army and Warren Edward (Ted) Colburn, Captain, U.S. Coast Guard (ret.). Ted Colburn was a career officer with 27 years of service. Ted Gerber served 2 years of active duty 1966 & 1967, with one year in Vietnam. A huge thank you to all our Veterans!



While Peter and Kay Leslie were visiting their daughter, Martha Long, and family in Wayzata, MN they attended a church service at St. Edward's Episcopal Church which included the Blessing of the Animals. Pictured at right is son-in-law, Bill Long, with granddog, Skeeter, who was one of the many dogs and cats blessed that day by Rev. Jason Lucas. Sadly, no rabbits or goldfish this year!



So here is our BIG news! We've had a Baby! Angel Baby (center) came into Maine Sheltie Rescue and into our home in early September. She fit perfectly into our pack. Little Miss (L.) and Skipper (R.) say she's a pawesome pooch! We are so happy to include this girl in our family. We felt an instant bond with Angel and knew on the way home with her in September that we were in trouble, AND she is no trouble at all! 🐾

AND...to continue the "doggie theme", here we are in Texas visiting son, Will, and family. With us is granddaughter Olivia (5) and three more dogs! The two blacks are theirs, Beau and Zoey. The speckled dog, Pebbles, is their foster dog.





Last August Gabe Johnson, grandson of Sally and Kerry, was baptized in our church. It was a joyful occasion for all, especially Gabe himself as you can see from the photo at left!



## December Events



### **Sun. Dec. 1 at 9:30 am - Hanging of the Greens Service**

Followed by "Living Gift Market" at coffee hour in the Wilkins House

### **Tues. Dec. 3 at 6:30 pm - Climate Change Panel Discussion**

Location: Wilkins House Topic: Stories from the Frontlines

### **Sat. Dec. 7 at 4 pm - Community Christmas Event**

4 pm concert at the church, and then... • Christmas Carols on the town common  
• Refreshments/Music at the Library • Reading of a Christmas Story • Visit from Santa Claus!

### **Sun. Dec. 8 at 10 am - Mainely Clarinets**

As part of the Harrison Congregational Church morning worship service

### **Sun. Dec. 8 at 4 pm - Mahoosuc Community Band**

West Paris Congregational Church • Free admission and refreshments.

### **Fri. Dec. 6 at 7 pm & Sun. Dec. 8 at 3 pm - Lake Region Community Chorus**

Location: Twitchell Chapel, Bridgton Academy, North Bridgton

### **Fri. Dec. 6 at 7 pm & Sun. Dec. 8 at 3 pm - Mt Washington Valley Choral Society**

Location: First Church of Christ Congregational, North Conway, N.H.

### **Sat. Dec. 14 & Sun. Dec. 15 - Maine Music Society Chorale**

3 pm both days. Location: Gendron Franco Center, Cedar St., Lewiston  
Tickets online at <http://mainemusicsociety.org/season-events/> or at the door.



### **Mon. Dec. 23 - CHRISTMAS with Kennerley**

Location: Merrill Auditorium 7-9 pm Tickets: [PortTIX.com](http://PortTIX.com)

### **Tues. Dec. 24 at 5:00 pm - Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**



### December

1 Eva Brannon  
21 Carol Madsen  
29 Kerry Johnson  
21 Petra Smyth  
27 Mary Colbath

### January

5 Joy Plate  
6 Sue Ven Dehey  
17 Sherry Bedard

### February

1 Bob Ross III  
13 Gabe Johnson  
27 Jayme Lane



## CHURCH COUNCIL 2019



- Moderator: Al Struck
- Organist: Mary Huhn
- Assistant Treasurer: Ralph MacKinnon
- Deacons: Sally Holm, Gail Nixon, Pam Williams, Dianne Morse Leonard
- Trustees: John Wait, Kerry Johnson, Rich Maurer
- Missions: Pam Williams (Global), Nancy Engdahl (Local)
- Communications Coordinator: Sally Holm
- Clerk: Stephenie Michaud
- Accompanist: Kay Leslie
- Music Director: Jane Morse
- Treasurers: John & Dodi Wait
- Stewardship: Kerry Johnson
- Church School: Myra Maltby
- Church Activities Committee: Nancy Engdahl



Wishing you many blessings during the holiday season and in the year to come...



*“The Lord bless you and keep you...”*

