

## A Note From Jenn

Happy Easter, beloved!



I'm sitting at the Breakaway Cafe in Dover writing this letter to you, a few days after Easter. (And by that I mean, April 3rd, which, for those keeping score at home is way later than the Bellman deadline. Sorry Paula!) My heart is so full after celebrating Easter worship with you all - with ten of us at sunrise service, 140 people at the 10am service, and more than 80 people online.

I shared with you all on Sunday during the Invitation to Generosity, about the beautiful, organic way we spread light during prayer time. On Sunday, everyone was invited forward to pray, to light a candle with their prayers of hope, joy, concern, or anything in between. As people came forward, they would light their candle and then turn around to look behind them for who needed the light next.

And it wasn't just this Sunday that I saw it happen, but I've seen it every time we light candles for prayer. The light was spread in prayer in the same way that North Church makes sure there's supplies at the children's table, or snacks at Fellowship. It's the same way that the Valentine's and Easter and Christmas cards get sent out to folks in the church. It's the same way that North Church ensures that there's room for everyone to come and worship at Webster-at-Rye and Wentworth Senior Living. It's the same way that North Church ensures that gifts are made to the Human Needs Fund, or that the Seafarer's Friend ditty bags get filled, or that the meatballs get collected for Meatball Mondays. This is a church that is looking around asking: who needs the light next?

So this month, beloved, as we begin Eastertide, let's recommit ourselves to looking around. Let's look over our shoulders for the people coming up behind us, so we can pass them the light they need, so they can light their own candles, and pass the light themselves. Who knows how bright we could burn with just a little look around, with just a passing candle.

Love always,  
**Jenn**



## Bible Study

We will be meeting on Tuesdays at 1pm in the Sanctuary. Can't wait to see you then!



## Pivoting During a Difficult Time

North Church just had an amazing month (and then some!). It was so wonderful to see how seamlessly we were able to make adjustments to our worship schedule when we learned we would have to vacate the building during the unexpected furnace repairs.

The Cabinet wanted to be sure to thank everyone who helped—the word got out, greeters were there to open doors, the service got shifted, but we made it through to the other side. A huge thank you to Pastor Jenn for finding us two wonderful options for worship space. I think I speak for everyone who was able to make it to worship during one or more of those five weeks when I say how nice it was to put ourselves out in the community and see how the other half lives, so to speak. Now we have new friends in the Jewish community as well as a whole new congregation across the bridge that we can add to our lists of UCC friends. Let us hope these friendships continue.

I am only sorry I had to miss the first service back in the building (the end of Zachary and Emma's spring break had me busy). I'm sure the new organ was wonderful and the joy of being "home" was palpable. I, for one, hope that we can take this experience and learn from it—maybe it isn't necessary to always get pulpit supply for Jenn's vacation weeks—maybe there are some new friends we haven't met yet!

Elizabeth Cross



## April Senior Living Services

Join us for uplifting services with our friends at Webster-at-Rye and Wentworth Senior Living! Experience spiritual renewal and connection as we bring music, communion and fellowship to our friends at both places. All are welcome to celebrate together!

Webster-at-Rye Service: **April 15, 2024, 3pm**

Wentworth Senior Living Service: **April 18, 2:15pm**



## C A B I N E T   N E W S

### Quick highlights:

- We are hopeful that the City of Portsmouth will accept our code path that alleviates our need to put sprinklers in the building. However, we do not have final approval yet. Please keep the prayers coming! On a related note, current building code requires that we have five restrooms. Though we wonder if this is the best use of our limited space, we can reframe that to believe that we are building for the future with a packed sanctuary! As we await approval from the City, we also await pricing from our engineers. Once we receive these important pieces of information, we'll let you know by way of informational meetings, hopefully in late April, to discuss the construction process, timeline, and address congregational questions. After we have answered questions from the congregation, we will announce a date for a congregational meeting to vote to approve the amended plan and required funds. In the interim, please contact anyone on the renovation/construction team (Christine Groleau, Pete Kinner, Doug Woodward) if you have any questions or concerns. Information as to updated plans, pricing, and timing will be communicated to the congregation as soon as it is available.
- The Cabinet is facilitating a ministerial review. Many thanks to our ministerial review committee (Barb Bolko, Betty Gilman, Liz Good, Christine Groleau, Betsy Kinner, Nancy Layton, Nichole Prince, and Pam Woodward). Keep your eyes peeled for a survey coming your way soon. The surveys will be sent through email, and hardcopies will be available for anyone who prefers to respond on paper. The purpose of this review is to understand better what North Church does well and where we can grow. Please offer your insights by completing the survey when you receive it.
- Select pieces from the North Church silver collection have been lent to the Portsmouth Historical Society (PHS) for display in "The Matter of Memory" exhibit. Swing by the PHS April 1 - November 3 (open seven days a week from 10 - 5) to check out our silver.
- Become a part of the Cabinet team! We have two members cycling off the Cabinet at the end of June and would love to offer anyone with interest the opportunity to discuss the role and/or attend a meeting.

The furnace is working, and we're back "home." We have overcome the many obstacles that have delayed our construction. North Church is on a path forward! Many thanks to all who continuously work hard to make this happen with both grace and grit. And, as always, thanks to you, the congregation for your continuous support.

Christine Groleau, Moderator



### Theology on Tap

Join us for Theology on Tap **Monday, April 22nd** as we talk about what it means to Walk the Talk of our faith!



## A Peek into the Pulpit

**April 7th, 2024**  
**Acts 4:32-35**

*In the days after Easter, we're invited to live a resurrection life. Our text invites us into the community of the earliest believers. They share all things in common, they worship together, they share with each other, and in doing so, they find abundance and wonder and communion. What does that look like for us? How can we center new life in our community today?*

**April 14th, 2024**  
**Luke 24:36b-48**

*In this service, we will hear from the disciples as they bear witness to the Risen Christ, which will cause us to ask: How are we seeking out the Risen Christ in our own lives? Do we see Him in our neighbors and friends? In the people we do not yet know? How can we tune our gazes so that everywhere we look, we see the inflowing of God?*

**April 21st, 2024**  
**1 John 3:16-24**

*Making friends is a difficult, risky business. Allowing people to know us, care for us, see us at our worst and our best, this is vulnerable work. And yet, it is vital to our well-being. Our text today invites us to examine the ways we love one another, ourselves, and God, and how well God loves each of us.*

**April 28th, 2024**

*On this Sunday we welcome Mr Dean Pratt from Durham, NH to our pulpit as our guest preacher. Pastor Jenn will be in Chicago on a congregational vitality trek with her cohort through the Next Generation Leadership Initiative. We give thanks for Dean's presence with us, and for the many voices of our congregation who will help to lead worship!*

## Women's Book Group



The Women's Book Group will resume on **Monday April 22** at 7 pm at Market Square.

We will be discussing "This Other Eden" by Paul Harding.

## Newcomer Gatherings!



**April 14th & 21st  
following worship!**

## Curious About North Church? Come to our Newcomers Gatherings!

Join us for a Newcomers Class this April! On April 14th and 21st after worship we will host gatherings where all who are interested can learn about the history of our congregation, get to know other newcomers, and discern whether you'd like to become a member at North Church!

You may be wondering, why join the church as a member? Isn't it enough to come, to participate, to be part of the church just as you are? And the easy answer to that is: yes. Yes, it absolutely is enough to come and worship, and give, and participate without ever joining the ranks as an official member. The reason we make space for people to become members is because being a member comes with the opportunity to make decisions about the church. Membership includes voting on budgets, incoming pastors, and big decisions (like, let's say, votes about construction and new organs and more). It includes joining committees, planning events, creating programs that might meet the needs of our community.

It's also a chance to stand up with the church and covenant - make a sacred promise - to go on a faith journey together. Much like the other covenants of our lives like marriage or baptism, or even communion, they're made more powerful by doing them together, publicly, with our friends and family surrounding us. When we join a church, we do so in the presence of our faith community, who make promises back to us, to walk with us through whatever life brings. Would the church still do that, even if you never become a member? Yes, absolutely. Does standing up and telling your truth and committing to living a life of faith together still matter? Also yes.

Whatever your journey with North Church, whether you've been a member for decades, just walked through the door, or you're somewhere in between, I'm so glad you're here.

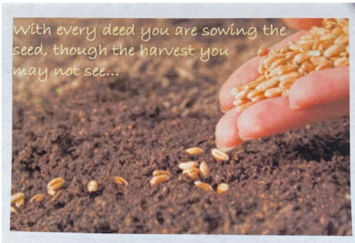
Love,  
Jenn

## Men's Breakfast



The Men's Breakfast group will be meeting on **Wednesday April 17th, 9am at Cafe Espresso**. In addition, there will be a Men's Coffee at **Webster at Rye on April 10th at 10 am**.

For information contact Peter Kinner ( [pckinner@gmail.com](mailto:pckinner@gmail.com)) or Paul Kelley ( [pk-rk@comcast.net](mailto:pk-rk@comcast.net))



## Stewardship

During the past nine months of this fiscal year, we as members and friends of North Church have contributed to the sowing of seeds. As a result of the Fruits of Our Labors, whether it has been in our time, talent and/or treasure, we have been able to support the harvest in so many areas of church life. Take a minute to reflect on the missions and ministries that you have been involved in and the feelings of gratitude you have experienced in return. Thank you for your commitment and contributions that you have made to the important work of this church.

The Stewardship Campaign will be held during this month of April. Beginning on April 14 through April 28, members will share their experiences within North Church and how they have come to love and support all that is important to them. As you read or listen to each story, please reflect on your own personal important areas of church and how you added to the harvest of fruit! Together, we each support the whole.

A letter and pledge card will soon be arriving in the mail. This is your opportunity to fill a need and support the missions of North Church by completing the enclosed pledge card. Please return your completed pledge on Sunday morning or by mail in preparation for making decisions at the annual meeting. We are grateful for your support for the missions of North Church today and in the coming year. We offer our thanks and gratitude to each and every one.

Below is an ongoing account over the recent fiscal years which show the monthly donations made by friends and members of North Church. In looking at the totals, we have set a goal to increase our financial contribution to \$120,000 for the 2024/2025 budget.

Monthly Collections	Fiscal Year 2019-2020	Fiscal Year 2020-2021	Fiscal Year 2021-2022	Fiscal Year 2022-2023	Fiscal Year 2023-2024
July	\$21,049	\$13,499	\$ 16,942	\$ 7,950	\$ 12,923
August	\$ 6,068	\$ 6,131	\$ 5,337	\$ 8,565	\$ 6,951
September	\$ 7,713	\$ 4,835	\$ 6,184	\$ 4,501	\$ 4,749
October	\$ 7,158	\$ 9,493	\$ 6,899	\$ 6,520	\$ 5,735
November	\$ 5,860	\$ 5,678	\$ 4,357	\$ 5,716	\$10,144
December	\$20,395	\$16,325	\$ 6,044	\$11,268	\$ 8,584
January	\$ 6,690	\$11,108	\$ 6,084	\$ 8,380	\$15,325
February	\$ 9,106	\$ 7,108	\$ 4,629	\$ 8,563	\$ 5,069
March	\$ 7,119	\$4,871	\$ 5,747.50	\$ 4,943	
April	\$ 7,044	\$ 7,878	\$ 6,389	\$ 6,073	
May	\$ 9,997	\$ 4,648	\$ 5,977	\$ 8,575	
June	\$ 8,034	\$13,520	\$ 8,970	\$ 6,248	
<b>Annual Total</b>	<b>\$116,233</b>	<b>\$105,094</b>	<b>\$83,559.50</b>	<b>\$ 87,302</b>	<b>First seven months \$69480</b>

We extend heartfelt gratitude for your time, talent and financial donations which you regularly donate to the North Church missions.

Thank you,  
 Stewardship Committee: Betty Gilman, Nancy Layton, Mark & Jenny Shaw

# MISSIONS NEWS



## Gather

The Mission Board supports GATHER by requesting donations of food and personal care items. Items may be placed in the bin on the bench to the right of the church entrance in the narthex at Market Square before or after the Sunday service.



Here are the suggested donation items for this month:

Month	Food Item	Personal Care Item
April	Mac & Cheese	Reusable Ice Packs

*\*As always, please check dates. Out of date items are not accepted.*

As always, thank you for your continued support of Gather. Your support of our community is greatly appreciated.



## The Allan Lurvey Memorial (Seacoast) Crop Hunger Walk 2023 Check Presentation



The check presentation for Gather was delayed. It will be taking place sometime this month. Please keep watch in the weekly news for the date when we will hear a little bit about Gather and to celebrate our success.

## Seafarer's Friend Ditty Bags - Preview

We are collecting items to fill ditty bags for the Seafarer's Friend through the month of April. The goal is to fill 10 ditty bags, 2 for women and 8 for men. Please keep this in mind as you shop for your items. We ask that you keep your items at home until we are back in the church and ready to collect them. Here are the items requested for the ditty bags:



Razors  
Toothpaste  
Playing cards  
Deodorant  
Nail clippers  
Socks (2 pair per bag maximum)  
1-2 pens or pencils

Shave cream/gel  
Toothbrush (1)  
Mending kits  
Shampoo (8 oz. size bottle)  
Soap/body wash (8 oz. size bottle)  
Puzzle Books  
Feminine Hygiene Products

Floss  
Travel sized Kleenex  
Shoelaces  
Travel-size first aid kit  
Small writing pad  
Knit hat  
Chapstick



## Opportunities for Individual Support for the Humanitarian Crisis in Ukraine

For those who may be looking to ways to individually support the crisis in Ukraine, below are a couple of alternatives:

Church World Services: Go to [CWSglobal.org](https://www.CWSglobal.org) and click on “Donate Now.”

Those who knit or crochet may go to <https://www.Ravelry.com> to seek out and purchase patterns by Ukrainian Designers. The funds go directly to the individual designers.



## Prayer Shawls

Throughout the centuries, shawls have been made and worn to provide comfort, warmth and protection from the elements.

Gifts of Prayer shawls are handmade well wishes for the recipient; offering comfort, warmth and fortification from the emotional elements of the world around us.

Shawls can be gifted for those undergoing medical procedures, as a comfort after a loss, in times of stress, during bereavement, for commitment or marriage ceremonies, as a bridal shower or wedding gift. A prayer shawl may be used for prayer or meditation, in leading a ritual, during an illness and recovery, ministering to others, birthing, nursing a baby, ... the possibilities are endless.

Knitting a prayer shawl can be as comforting for the knitter as it is for the intended recipient. Marcia Leach has put together Prayer Shawl kits for members of the congregation who would like to join her in this ministry. Kits include yarn and a pattern for a shawl. Needles are not included, but she has extra needles if anyone needs them.

Please contact Marcia Leach at [mleach991@gmail.com](mailto:mleach991@gmail.com) to learn more about Prayer Shawls and how you can become part of the ministry.

## Salvation Army Soup Kitchen – Meatball Sundays



We had a very successful Meatball Sunday in March. Our Salvation Army Soup Kitchen crew will be able to prepare a lot of Monday meals in the coming months thanks to your tremendous generosity.



# MISSIONS NEWS



## Seacoast Community Lunch Volunteer Opportunity

Middle Street Baptist Church, 18 Court Street, Portsmouth is looking for volunteers for their Seacoast Community Lunch which is held every Wednesday. Volunteers arrive at 11:15. At 11:30 guests can enter the dining room to enjoy coffee and water while visiting with other guests. Lunch is served 12:00-1:00. Between 1:00 and 1:30 volunteers clean off the tables and chairs.

If you would like to volunteer, please contact Vicki Walters via email at [vickiwa@comcast.net](mailto:vickiwa@comcast.net) and specify Seacoast Community Lunch in the subject line. If you have any questions, please contact a member of Missions (Betsy Kinner, Jean Crist, Gail Darrow or Martha Labbe)

## Scarf Bombing



Mission Opportunity: Beginning in October and through the end of March 2025 we would like to provide knitted, crocheted, and fleece scarves to anyone who needs them. They can be homemade or purchased. They will be put into individual plastic bags and attached to the fence outside of the church. A tag will be attached to each one stating:

I am not lost! If you're stuck out in the cold, take this gift to keep warm.

Is anyone interested in teaching others to knit or crochet? Is anyone interested in forming a group to knit or crochet together? Scarves can be made at home as well. Knitting/crocheting/sewing patterns can be provided if desired. We will begin collecting the scarves in September to package for placement on the church fencing beginning in October.

Please contact Betsy, Martha, Gail or Jean with questions and/or comments.





**Birthdays**

- April 5            Arthur Clough III
- April 5            Tracy LaPointe
- April 5            Charlie Lehoux
- April 6            Castle Pizz
- April 7            Russell Knox Jr.
- April 9            Nichole Prince
- April 12           Marcia Leach
- April 13           Madeleine Pettis
- April 16           Luise Palace
- April 20           Jennifer Mazur
- April 20           Vera Ritcey
- April 25           Carly Amsden
- April 26           Jared Leach
- April 27           Judi Layton
- April 30           Emma Cross
- April 30           Zachary Cross

**Anniversaries**

- Pauline & Mark Lampert    April 10
- Russell & Ann Knox            April 11

*Worship*  
**SCHEDULE**

**Worship begins at 10am  
At Market Square and  
On Facebook Live**

**Sunday, April 7  
Second Sunday of Easter**  
*The Sacrament of Communion  
will be Celebrated*

**Sunday, April 14  
Third Sunday of Easter**

**Sunday, April 21  
Fourth Sunday of Easter**

**Sunday, April 28  
Fifth Sunday of Easter**

**IMPORTANT DATES**

The deadline for the May Bellman is  
April 24th.  
and  
The deadline for the Annual Reports  
is April 29th.

# April 2024

April 2024							May 2024						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
7	1	2	3	4	5	6	13	4	5	6	7	8	9
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	27	28	29	30	31		
28	29	30											

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Mar 31	Apr 1 Easter Monday - office closed	2 10:00am Staff meeting (Market Square Sanctuary) 1:00pm Bible Study (Market Square) 6:30pm Mission Board	3	4	5	6
7 9:30am Community Service Sunday 10:00am Worship	8 4:00pm SOUP KITCHEN	9 10:00am Staff meeting (Market Square) 1:00pm Bible Study (Market Square) 6:00pm Cabinet Meeting (Market Square)	10 10:00am Men's Coffee (Webster at Rye)	11	12	13
14 10:00am Worship	15 3:00pm Webster at Rye	16 10:00am Staff meeting (Market Square Sanctuary) 10:00am Deacons Mtg 1:00pm Bible Study (Market Square)	17 9:00am Men's Breakfast (Cafe Espresso)	18 2-15pm Wentworth Senior Living	19	20
21 10:00am Worship	22 7:00pm Women's Book Group (MS Sanctuary)	23 10:00am Staff meeting (Market Square) 1:00pm Bible Study (Market Square) 7:00pm Theology on 7:00pm Parish Life Board	24 Bellman Articles Due	25	26	27
28 10:00am Worship	29 Annual Reports Due	30 10:00am Staff meeting (Market Square Sanctuary) 1:00pm Bible Study (Market Square Sanctuary)	May 1	2	3	4

**NORTH CHURCH OF PORTSMOUTH**

**Church Sanctuary and Office**

2 Congress Street  
Portsmouth, NH 03801  
603.436.9109 phone  
603.436.6744 fax

**Sunday Worship**

**Reverend Jennifer Mazur**  
Worship is at 10am every Sunday at Market Square Sanctuary and via Facebook Live

**Fellowship Time**

Following 10:00 am Service

**Church School**

(Sept - June) Every Sunday following Children's Message

**Office Hours**

Mon., Tues., Thurs., Friday 9am - 2pm

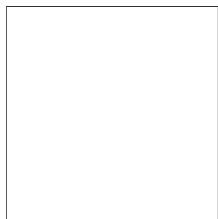
*North Church of Portsmouth is an Open and Affirming Church of the United Church of Christ  
Open and Affirming Covenant*

We, the members of North Church of Portsmouth welcome all people to be faithful followers of God and the teachings of Jesus Christ with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We believe we should reach out and be open to all people. Therefore, this Open and Affirming statement expresses that which is accepted by our congregation.

"The first [commandment] is . . . 'You shall love The Lord your God with all your soul, and with all your mind, with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." (Mark 12:29-31).

Therefore, we work together to support our members, the community and those seeking a place in God's family with the understanding that each is unique. We welcome people of any race, creed, color, age, gender identity and gender expression, sexual orientation, economic status, marital status, physical, emotional, mental capacity and those in relationships recognized under God's law.

[www.northchurchportsmouth.org](http://www.northchurchportsmouth.org)



North Church of Portsmouth, UCC  
2 Congress Street  
Portsmouth, NH 03801  
Return Service Requested