

PURPOSE
STATEMENT

*"We are disciples of
Jesus Christ
committed to making a
difference in the
community and in the
world through service
and invitational
outreach."*



The Messenger

First United Methodist Church, Chatham

From the Pastor

September 2022

Volume 26, Issue 9

Dear Friends—

John Wesley, the man we look to as founder of United Methodist churches, wrote in the 1700s that Churches should be built with a rail down the middle to divide the men from the women! Today we would laugh at that idea.

When I was appointed as pastor of my first church in 1962 just outside of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, they still followed that practice of men sitting on one side of the center isle and women on the other. I was shocked! Today in our Church we believe God looks for an inclusive, not divisive spirit. Inclusiveness means all of God's children loving one another no matter their age, gender, race, or nationality. We celebrate the diversity of God's creation.

« « « « » » » »

Our United Methodist Book of Discipline says:

"We recognize that God made all creation and saw that it was good. As a diverse people of God who bring special gifts and evidences of God's grace to the unity of the Church and to society, we are called to be faithful to the example of Jesus' ministry to all persons.

"Inclusiveness means openness, acceptance, and support that enables all persons to participate in the life of the Church, the community, and the world; therefore, inclusiveness denies every semblance of discrimination. The services of worship of every local church of The United Methodist Church shall be open to all persons.

"The mark of an inclusive society is one in which all persons are open, welcoming, fully accepting, and supporting of all other persons, enabling them to participate fully in the life of the church, the community, and the world. A further mark of inclusiveness is the setting of church activities in facilities accessible to persons with disabilities.

"In The United Methodist Church inclusiveness means the freedom for the total involvement of all persons who meet the requirements of The United Methodist *Book of Discipline* in the membership and leadership of the Church at any level and in every place. In the spirit of this declaration, United Methodist seminaries will begin or continue to improve access to facilities, to information and communication, and to appropriate support services and accommodations as delineated by The United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities and applicable World Council of Churches guidelines."

The United Methodist Book of Discipline, 2016. Copyright 2016 by The United Methodist Publishing House. Used by permission

Prayer Concerns

We recently lost a dear friend, Jackie Page, who managed our website. Please keep her husband Mike and their families in your prayers. Rev. John Betlyon, Sandy Ould Betlyon's husband, passed away recently. And please pray for all our military and shut-ins, including our own Phyllis Tileston.

Blessings, Thom

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**First United Methodist
Church Location: 569 Main
Street**

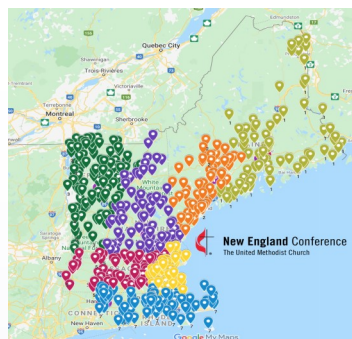
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***The Chatham Ecumenical Council
helping prevent Homelessness (CECH)
will hold its Annual Fundraiser
Thursday, September 1st, at
St. Christopher's Episcopal Church
7:30— 9:00
Tickets are \$20—available at the door***

Holy One,

This morning, we hear your prophets again. They call us out. It's never pleasant. Our failings are painful. Our faithfulness seeks your mercy and loving presence.

We want the laughing Jesus and manifestation of love to calm and soothe as we go about our business. Jesus' words are clear and they convict and sting: this is about life and death – for Jesus ... and us. We cannot delude ourselves about our failures and willful ignorance. Today, we mourn division and pray and work to be on the side of love, mercy, and justice.

God of us all, *The water for which we thirst is your grace... you give us the job of hauling it in our own buckets.*

Fill our hearts with new understanding, generosity, and love, and with overflowing buckets, strengthen us for our journey this day. Amen.

Rev. Ted Crass, President, The United Methodist Foundation of New England. Inspiration: Isaiah 5.1-7, Jeremiah 23.23-29, Luke 12.49-56, Evelyn Underhill.

Kentucky churches care for neighbors hit by floods

PIPPA PASSES, Ky. (UM News) — After record flooding in Eastern Kentucky, United Methodist volunteers are serving as God's "hands and feet." Bishop Leonard Fairley, episcopal leader of the Kentucky Conference, visited portions of the flood-damaged area to offer prayers and thank people for their help.

Lorie Street, a teacher at Hindman Elementary School, said, "Every book in our library was destroyed, pre-school through 12th grade. I am an English teacher, so that breaks my heart," she said. "It is amazing the power of water. There were weird things like I had a bucket in my classroom and there wasn't any water in it — the one thing that was meant to hold water."

Give to the United Methodist Committee on Relief's [U.S. Disaster Response and Recovery through Advance #901670](#). Donations also can be made directly to the Kentucky Conference's [Disaster Response Advance #200902](#).

In the wake of this year's horrific mass shootings, a number of U.S. annual conferences called on elected leaders to adopt firearm regulations.

The Rev. Andrew C. Kjørlaug, an Arkansas Conference elder and U.S. Army chaplain, presented a resolution at the Arkansas Annual Conference that calls on the state's congressional delegation to act on "Responsible Fire-Arm legislation." In a year that has seen multiple mass shootings, Arkansas was among a number of United Methodist conferences urging elected leaders to do more to regulate guns. *"Now, therefore be it resolved, we, the Arkansas Annual Conference, call upon the Congressional Delegation from the State of Arkansas to support and act upon Responsible Fire-Arm legislation." The Arkansas Annual Conference passed the resolution with 75% of the vote.*



***Conference historian
honored with Ministry of
Memory Award***

***Rev. Pat Thompson, retired
elder, with her
Ministry of Memory Award***

Please join us in congratulating New England Conference Historian Rev. Pat Thompson on receiving the 2022 Ministry of Memory Award, presented by the Board of the Historical Society of The United Methodist Church. Rev. Thompson serves the Wolcott, VT, United Methodist Church. "I feel very blessed and honored to have received this national award," Rev. Thompson said.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY AND FRIENDS



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO

- 9-02 Jay Thompson**
9-12 Claire Thompson
9-15 Anthony Pacillo
9-26 Jean Patnode

GREETER & ELEVATOR OPERATOR SCHEDULES **SEPTEMBER**

- Sept. 4: Greeters—Keith Bradley and Toni Wordell**
Elevator Operator—Myron Kellberg
- Sept. 11: Greeters—Pat Cooke and Phyllis Power**
Elevator—Debra Smith
- Sept. 18: Greeters—Mike Firmin and Debra Smith**
Elevator—Jay Thompson
- Sept. 25: Greeters—David & Ginger Murray**
Elevator—Bruce Wynn

SERVING IN THE MILITARY

The following members of the military are associated with our church:

- Lt. Forrest A. Bogue, U.S. Navy, San Diego, CA, son of Amy Bogue and Forrest Bogue, and grand son of Olive Bogue.
- Petty Officer 3rd Class, USN, Noah Firmin, son of Michael and Anita Firmin, who is stationed in Yokosuka, Japan.
- Pvt. Jacob Stewart, grandson of Elaine & Roger Trexler, stationed at Ft. Belvoir, Virginia.



DO YOU REMEMBER . . .

when the old parsonage, which was at the Thrift Shop end of our driveway, was torn down?

"In 1841, the Trustees had put aside money '... for a parsonage when they got around to have one.' Apparently in 1846

they decided to 'have one' as it was voted to purchase land on Cross Street and a committee was appointed to oversee the construction of a house. The structure was approximately 1600 feet from the corner of Cross and Main Street. Total accuracy is not possible as the boundaries of the church property has changed with each new land survey. Further, there are no details on the interior of the house but its length or ridge line ran parallel to Cross Street. The completed house cost \$725."

Excerpt from "A History of Methodism in Chatham, 1799-2012," compiled by The Reverend Dr. William E. Sissell, Jr., United Methodist, Retired.

SUMMER ACTIVITIES

The Strawberry Festival dished up about 300 helpings this year! More volunteers are needed for this well-attended event, held after the July 4th Chatham Parade. Call Toni Wordell, 508.789.7100, or email her at takwordell@comcast.net.

Lobster Roll Lunches continued to be popular and sold out every week (no small thanks to the sides, as people were impressed with their inclusion in the price)!

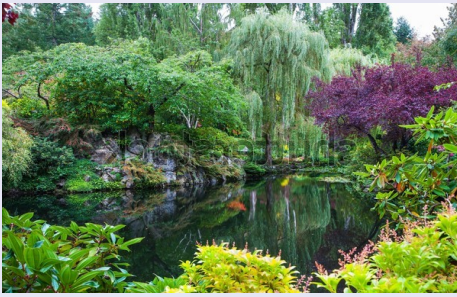
The Chatham Guild of Artists' displays are a great addition to our property, bringing color to our lawn and people to view the paintings. There are two dates left, September 2 & 3, 9:30—5:30.

We are so grateful to all the volunteers who worked tirelessly to pull these events together.

Hurricane Turned Church Into Maternity Ward

After Hurricane Celia in 1970, First UMC of Aransas Pass, Texas, became a temporary hospital for its battered community, seeing more than 80 births over four months. The church recently held a reunion, welcoming back the now middle-age "babies" and others who had a key role in a hard but inspiring time.

"I don't care how bad something is, something good's going to come out of it. Those babies taught me that." — Billy Ellis of Aransas Pass First UMC.



**GARDENS
OF
THE BIBLE**

For this article, Suzanna suggested writing about the church garden (which will be included in the October issue), which led us to consider the gardens of the Bible. The local drought made us think about the Alpha and Omega gardens—Adam’s garden in Eden and John’s vision of the Tree of Life in Heaven—which used watering systems created by God.

Genesis tells us that God had “planted a garden” in Eden with the Tree of Life in the middle. He hadn’t yet created rain because “...there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground...And a river went out of Eden to water the garden...” He put Adam in the garden “...to dress it and keep it.”

It is interesting to note that the food God provided grew on trees, so gardening was easy until Adam and Eve disobeyed God, and then it became a lot of work. Although today we can enjoy the “dressing and keeping,” the weeding and watering can be exhausting.

In John’s Book of Revelation, he describes the new heaven and new earth. Again we encounter the Tree of Life, watered by “a pure river of water of life” flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb.

It is difficult to imagine how the tree is situated because it is in the middle of a street and on both sides of the river, but it bears fruit each month, and its leaves are for “the healing of the nations.”

I heard a story of a man who inherited a fruit orchard from his parents, but couldn’t keep it, so he took branches from all the different kinds of trees and grafted them onto one tree. The tree then blossomed with different flowers every Spring and Summer and bore many types of fruit at various times.

(cont’d. top right column)

We too can be trees of life. By the watering system created by God—God’s Word and the Holy Spirit - we grow and develop in the Spirit, able to offer spiritual food, healing and the water of life to a hungry and thirsty world.

Genesis 2:5-6, 8-10, 15
Revelation 21:1, 22:1-2

Enjoy your gardens, even this year!

Rachel Nickerson Luna and
Suzanna Nickerson



**GODLY PLAY:
THE
GIFT
OF
WONDER**

We all know what the *Seven*

Wonders of the World are:

1. Egypt’s Great Pyramids
2. Taj Mahal
3. Grand Canyon
4. Panama Canal
5. Empire State Building
6. St. Peter’s Basilica
7. China’s Great Wall

Now think of them in a different light
and what you think they might be:

- | | |
|--------------|--------------|
| 1. To See, | 4. To Taste, |
| 2. To Hear, | 5. To Feel, |
| 3. To Touch, | 6. To Laugh, |

And most important—7. To LOVE.

The things we overlook as simple
and ordinary, and take for granted, are
truly wondrous.

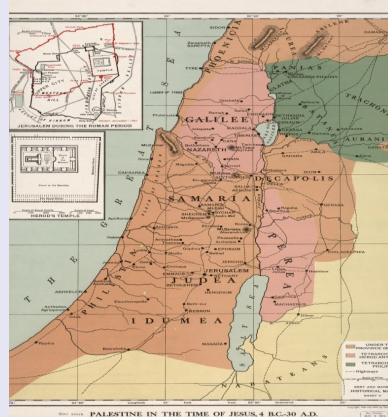
Blessings, Pastor Sonny

THE PALESTINIAN BACKGROUND FOR A LIFE OF JESUS (*The social world of first century Jewish Palestine; the shared meanings and understandings within which that culture lived.*) Excerpts from a book by Marcus Borg.

“...we are talking about a small-scale world [and] how compact the social world of first-century Jewish Palestine was. . .approximately 150 miles long from north to south, with an average width of 50 miles. That’s 7,500 square miles, which is 1/13th the size of the state of Oregon, or. . .5/6th the size of the state of Maryland. The Sea of Galilee, in fact, is really a freshwater lake approximately 12 miles by 7 miles. The Jordan River, one of the most famous rivers in the world, is only 100 miles long. Population centers were also small. Jerusalem, the major city, had about 40,000 people. Sepphoris, the largest city in Galilee, also had about 40,000 people. . .Nazareth has been variously estimated from about 200 people to 1,500 people. This small-scale world...was a deeply Jewish social world, and. . .the central cultural characteristics were also deeply Jewish. . .it is easy to forget the Jewish character of Jesus [also his disciples and, with the possible exception of Luke and Acts, all the New Testament authors] the early Jesus movement and, for that matter, early Christianity throughout much of the first century.

“...grounded in the Scriptures of ancient Israel, basically the Law and the Prophets at the time of Jesus. . .the social world lived [under] a sacred canopy. . .Temple and Torah. . .[were] the foundations of Israel’s world view and ethos. . .its image of reality and its way of life. The Torah contained the stories that shaped its way of seeing as well as its sense of identity. . .[it was the source of laws and of the legal system], contained stories of creation, of God entering into a covenant with Abraham and the promises attached to it, of the liberation of the slaves [from] Egypt, of the giving of the law at Mount Sinai, the wandering in the wilderness, and the gift of the land.

“The importance of the Temple can be described this way. Rather than saying the Temple was in Jerusalem, we should say Jerusalem was a small city built around the Temple. . .it was the symbolic and cosmological center of the Jewish universe. . .God’s dwelling place on earth. . .the point of contact between this world and the other world, the world of spirit. . .the navel of the earth, the umbilical cord connecting this world to the world that gave birth to it. . .the center of both worship and devotion. . .the destination of pilgrimages. . .the central bank. . .and to it flowed the tithes commanded by the Torah. [It was also the] center of the native Jewish aristocracy, the high priestly families who ruled in collaboration with Rome. The central dynamics of Jesus’ social world [were] colonialism,



the peasant class, purity and patriarchy. Jewish Palestine was a colony of the Roman Empire. [It was important to Roman imperial policy.] It was the land bridge to Egypt, the breadbasket of the empire, and a buffer against the Parthian empire to the east.

Rome ruled Palestine sometimes through client kings, such as the Herods, and sometimes directly through Roman governors in cooperation with the native Jewish aristocracy.

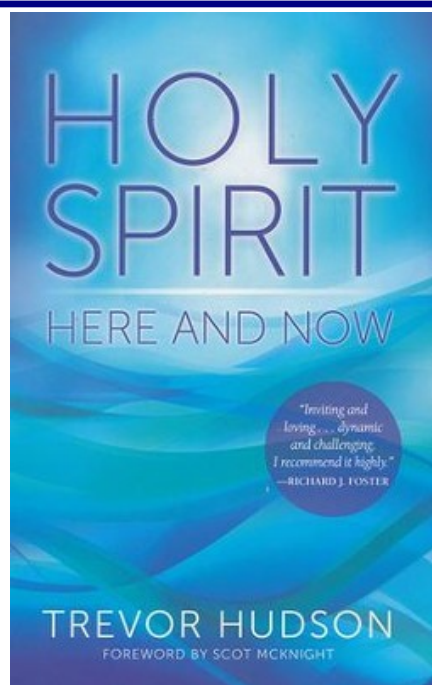
“Jesus lived in a cosmopolitan society, a society that was in contact with other cultures, especially Hellenism, and was affected by them. To some extent, all of Judaism had been Hellenized by the first century with. . .important differences of degree. Galilee was more pluralistic and perhaps more urbanized than most of us have commonly imagined. There was international trade.

“Sepphoris was destroyed by the Romans in 4 B.C.E. when a rebellion at the time of the death of Herod the Great was put down. The city was rebuilt during the childhood and young adulthood of Jesus. . .the social world of Jesus was a peasant, pre-industrial agrarian society’. . .a two-class society, urban ruling elites and rural peasants [90% of the population]. . .there was no middle class. The urban ruling elites [got] their wealth from the peasants [via] rent for land and taxation.

“When Jesus speaks about his message being ‘good news to the poor’ or when he says ‘blessed are the poor’. . .he’s talking about real poor people. . .the oppressed group in a peasant society. Jesus’ primary social conflict was with the elites. . .a combination of Roman authority and a narrow circle of the Jewish ruling elites was responsible for his arrest and execution, [but] rather than Jesus being rejected, arrested and executed by ‘the Jews’. . .the final and fatal conflict was with elites who, rather than representing the Jewish people, were in fact oppressors of most Jewish people. “The “central characteristic of Jesus’ world was patriarchy. . .seeing the world through male eyes. . .hierarchical social parts of the system in which some men rule over other men and over all women and children. Patriarchy was typical. . .in all the world, in fact. Torah was a form of power, and if you let women start playing with those texts, there’s no telling what they might come up with”.

(cont’d bottom of p. 6)

THE READING ROOM (I was looking back at some of Pastor Nancy's newsletters and liked this title she used—thank you Nancy.)



“Trevor Hudson is a Methodist minister, pastoral therapist, and retreat leader in Benoni, South Africa. He shares his personal journey and practical guidance to help you experience the Holy Spirit’s movement in your life. His simple exercises help you invite the Holy Spirit into every area of your life-- here and now.

“Why write another book about the Holy Spirit?” a close friend asked me when I told him I was writing this book. It is a good question. Many books about the Holy Spirit are readily available. I have benefited from reading several of them. Yet for some time now I have wanted to write about how the Holy Spirit works in our lives.’

“Do you long for something more in your relationship with God? Are you struggling to feel the presence of the Holy Spirit? Are you ready to embark on a Spirit-propelled adventure of restoration, renewal and transformation?

“Many Christians feel that something is missing from their relationship with God. Hudson invites readers into a fresh relationship with the Holy Spirit, reassuring them that ‘the Holy Spirit is deeply at work in you, right at this moment, wherever you are.’ Each chapter includes a simple exercise to help them connect with the Holy Spirit in their daily life.

“The Holy Spirit dwells in you, urging you forward in your desire to develop a deeper relationship with God.’ In *Holy Spirit Here and Now*, [you are invited] to move beyond ‘religion as usual’ into an adventure of restoration, renewal and transformation. The Spirit brings about a renovation of our entire lives: emotions, body, soul, relationships, vocation--all become an arena for the Holy Spirit’s work.”

“Max Lucado’s Life Lessons from Revelation is a 12-session study on the book of Revelation, which our Tuesday group has studied.. The apostle John writes about an amazing vision he saw while in exile that gave him a glimpse into heaven.

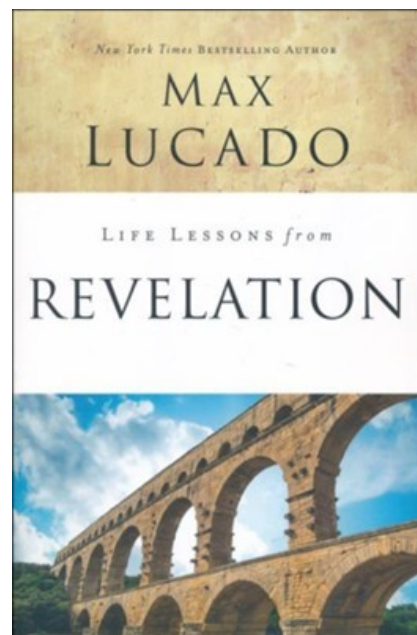
“Key Themes:

- °God has a plan and a future for the world
- °God will be ultimately victorious over evil
- °There will be a final accounting for our faith and our lives
- °There is a better world in store

“Each lesson has a key scripture verse, reflection, situation, observation, exploration, inspiration, reaction, life lessons, devotion, and space for journaling.

“The end of the world... How do you react to that thought? Does it make you afraid or nervous? Excited? At peace? Or do you simply try not to think about it?”

“The apostle John was privileged to preview the end of the world in a dream. While in exile on the island of Patmos, he experienced an amazing vision that gave him a glimpse of heaven. He saw the final battle between good and evil. He saw God’s justice. He witnessed the assured victory for believers in Christ as all hell broke loose and all heaven came forth. He saw Jesus, born in a manger, now triumphant over Satan. His description stretches our imagination, fuels our anticipation, and comforts us as we wait for the final curtain call.”



(cont’d. from p. 5)

“All the stories about Jesus and women in the Gospels constitute a radical challenge to [the social system of] patriarchy. There were many different Jewish voices in the society [described above]. . .many reform and renewal movements, popular prophetic movements, individual Jewish saints, mystics and purveyors of peasant wisdom. Jesus and the Jesus movement were among those alternative voices.”

SEPTEMBER 2022 CHURCH CALENDAR

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 8:30—9:30am Osteo Exercise in Fellowship Hall 11am—2pm Thrift Shop Open	2 11am—2pm Thrift Shop Open 9:30am— 5:30pm Chatham Guild of Artists on our lawn 11:30am— 1:30pm Final Lobster Roll Lunch	3 11am—2pm Thrift Shop Open 9:30am— 5:30pm Chatham Guild of Artists on our lawn
4 10 am Worship: Communion	5 OFFICE CLOSED FOR LABOR DAY Joyce is on vacation this week	6 8:30—9:30am Osteo Exercise in Fellowship Hall 10:30—Noon Faith Study in Peace Room (by the offices)	7 11am—2pm Thrift Shop Open	8 8:30—9:30am Osteo Exercise in Fellowship Hall 11am—2pm Thrift Shop Open	9 11am—2pm Thrift Shop Open 9:30am— 5:30pm Chatham Guild of Artists on	10 11am—2pm Thrift Shop Open
11 10 am Worship	12	13 8:30—9:30am Osteo Exercise in Fellowship Hall 10:30—Noon Faith Study in Peace Room (by the offices)	14 11am—2pm Thrift Shop Open 5:30pm Finance and Board of Trustees	15 11am—2pm Thrift Shop Open	16 11am—2pm Thrift Shop Open 9:30am— 5:30pm Chatham Guild of Artists on our lawn	17 11am—2pm Thrift Shop Open
18 10 am Worship, followed by a Covered Dish Luncheon. All are invited.	19 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	20 8:30—9:30am Osteo Exercise in Fellowship Hall 10:30—Noon Faith Study in Peace Room (by the offices)	21 11am—2pm Thrift Shop Open	22 11am—2pm Thrift Shop Open	23 11am—2pm Thrift Shop Open	24 11am—2pm Thrift Shop Open
25 10 am Worship	26	27 8:30—9:30am Osteo Exercise in Fellowship Hall 10:30am—Noon Faith Study in Peace Room (by the offices)	28 11am—2pm Thrift Shop Open	29 11am—2pm Thrift Shop Open	30 11am—2pm Thrift Shop Open	



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