

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

July 2026—Vol. 30—Issue 7

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***When we see God, it will not be a
new discovery. It will be a profound
recognition of that heart and soul of
yourself that is already in union with
God. All contemplation, all true
prayer, is an attempt to go back to
that place.***

Richard Rohr



PASTOR'S MESSAGE

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When Andrew and his friend asked Jesus where he was staying, Jesus replied with three simple words. "Come and see." This is a timely invitation when transitioning into a new relationship. As I become your pastor, I'm excited to 'come and see' who you are as individuals and a congregation, and what's going on among you and through you in the larger community. In turn, you will 'come and see' who I am and what I'm about.

I grew up in Methodist parsonages in Idaho, Hingham, MA and Winthrop, ME. After graduating high school I

attended Union College and Moravian College, getting a BA in English and Philosophy. While at Union I had a transforming encounter

with Jesus Christ, and began what is now a fifty-seven year journey as his disciple. Cindy and I met around the time I was experiencing a call to be a pastor. Though I had great respect for my father's ministry, I never intended to follow in his footsteps. God had a different idea, and I reluctantly said Yes.

In 1973, Cindy and I packed our VW bug and swung west to Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, CA where I earned a M Div. I'd connected with the Cal-Nevada Conference of the UMC, and was ordained and appointed to a two-point charge in Boonville and Philo,

Mendocino County. While there we developed a fruitful clergy cluster of UM pastors which transformed my understanding of shared ministry.

Two more appointments followed, to Jackson and Grass Valley UMC's. Somewhere along the way of serving those three wonderful congregations, I let go of my reluctance to be a pastor. *This is your calling, Ed---deal with it.*

In 1994 we moved east to Cape Cod, where Cindy's family owns an old house and cottage in North Eastham. One Sunday that August I worshipped here at First UMC where, with Thom Gallen's help, I connected with the New England Conference, becoming the interim pastor of Osterville UMC. Appointments to Barrington UMC (RI), Trinity UMC (Springfield, MA) and Shepherd of the Valley UMC (Hope, RI) followed, all wonderful congregations with whom to serve and grow.

I retired in 2013 after 35 years. But wait, God called me the next appointment year to be the half-time pastor of the Harwich UMC, then in 2023 to Christ UMC in Kingston, RI (near URI), and now to First Church Chatham. In between I ministered as a part-time hospital chaplain.

Cindy and I have two adult children, Caitlin and Josh, who've blessed us with four grandchildren: Chloe, Remy, Lion, and Penn (who turns one this month). As a family we cherish the natural world and have camped extensively, in the West and New England.

Both Cindy and I are avid readers, and enjoy exploring back roads. I spend free moments kayaking and fly fishing—Chatham being a favorite venue. As to my faith journey and theology, you'll hear plenty in sermons and small groups.

Finally, I guarantee newsletter articles will never again be this lengthy. I look with great anticipation to the 'coming and seeing' we will all share in the weeks and months ahead. If you prefer, you're welcome to call me Pastor Ed.

Blessings, Ed





## Did You Know?

You no doubt remember the following scene: An enormous crowd had been following Jesus. It was near the end of the day, and the disciples urged Jesus to send the crowd away. It was after all impossible to feed such a throng. Instead, Our Lord had these hungry souls sit on the grass of that hillside, and with two loaves and five fish he fed five thousand needy souls.

Sometimes we are not aware, or do not connect what we put in the offering plate each Sunday, or commit through our tithes, as part of real ministry. Yet these gifts are the loaves and fish of our church. While we are a small church, our congregation each year touches lives, offers ministry, in so many ways. Through our apportionment giving, we help UMCOR (the United Methodist Committee on Relief) which is on the site of unfolding tragedies across the globe. Just in the past year we have committed funds to these organizations and groups: the Yale Cancer Walk, Mountains of Hope for Haiti. Asheville Relief, Homeless Prevention Council, Latham School, Rolling Ridge/Aldersgate Camps, and St. Paul's Church Food Program.

In addition to these Mission commitments for the past six years our church has awarded scholarships to a graduating senior from Monomoy and Cape Tech High Schools. Each scholarship is for \$1,000. The money for these scholarships come from the bequests of Dennis and June Marquis, and Dick and Sally Woolbert, and our Church Mission funds. The Thrift Shop, Lobster Lunches, and Craft Fairs all provide a portion of their income to these Missions. We are delighted to announce that the recipient of our 2026 scholarship from Monomoy High School is Riley Hesse. She will be attending Keene State College in the fall. Teaghan Moore is the Cape Cod Tech winner. She

will be attending Salem State College in New Hampshire in the fall. Our church is so fortunate to play a part, though it be a small one, in the educational journey of these two students. Our thoughts, prayers, and best wishes go with them.

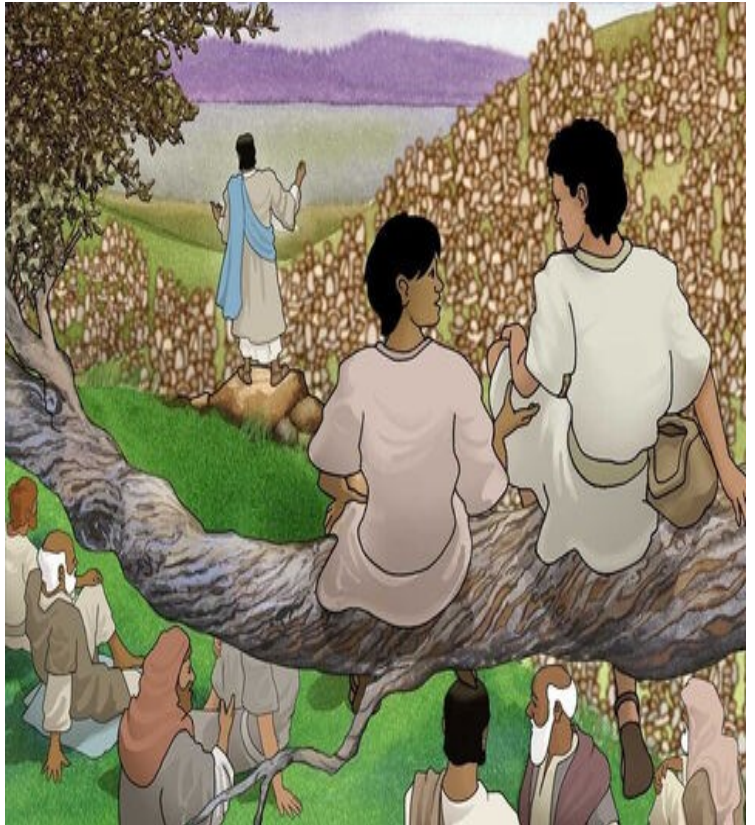


Image courtesy of John Paul Stanley / [YoPlace.com](https://www.yoplac.com)  
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## **NOTICED SOME NEW FACES?**

We are happy to be hosting the Meals on Wheels program at FUMC while Chatham's Center for Active Living undergoes renovation.

## **Letter from Bishop Bickerton**

### **Covenant Hills camp property restored to Abenaki Nation**

On June 26<sup>th</sup> in his Daily Meditations Father Richard Rohr describes the constant movement of God toward us throughout human history. He writes,

*“The Bible shows a relentless movement toward intimacy and divine union between Creator and creatures. For this to happen, there needs to be some degree of compatibility, likeness, or even ‘sameness’ between the two parties. In other words, there has to be a little bit of God in us that wants to find itself.”*

I find these words deeply meaningful and highly relevant for our journey together as people. When Rohr writes “*a little bit of God in us*” wants to “*find itself*,” that not only involves that little bit of God in us that’s searching for the fullness of God within us but also our search for the bit of God that resides in those around us.

I believe several of us experienced that moment of discovery recently as we took part in [the ceremony to transfer the Covenant Hills camp property in Vermont over to the Nulhegan Band of the Coosuk Abenaki Nation on June 27](#).

We gathered as United Methodists, members of the United Church of Christ, and Abenaki people to officially deconsecrate Covenant Hills and transfer this property into hands and stewardship of the Abenaki.

The emotions were undeniable. On one hand, there was loss; this camp is a storehouse of memories – children, youth, and adults who came to a deeper understanding

of life and faith because of the programs offered. On the other, there was a deep sense of gratitude as an indigenous people were experiencing the opportunity to reconnect their past with the present and a future filled with possibility.

We are different people with different histories, different rituals, different pains, different hopes and aspirations. But as we sat together at the lakeside chapel, we began to experience the part of the Creator/God that resides in all of us and that longs for us to recognize that the fullness of life can only be found when we unite our lives, even if only for a few moments during a liturgy of deconsecration and transfer of property.

We sang hymns together. We were taught Abenaki songs. We said, “*thank you*,” and we said “*wliwni*.” We prayed a prayer of blessing, and we blessed the land with the traditional ritual of spreading tobacco. We talked of God’s grace and we talked of the Creator’s goodness. We invoked the presence of the “*Holy Spirit*” and we acknowledged the presence of “*many spirits*” that unite us and bind us to the land.

And during the course of that 90-minute service, we discovered that we had more in common, much more in common, than some had realized. Different languages but a common moment of “*Pentecost*” when those languages were heard and understood by all. Different rituals but a common core of belief: We are in the hands of the One who created us and gives us life.

In one deeply meaningful moment, Abenaki Chief Don Stevens spoke of not only his people’s gratitude in receiving this gift but also of their pledge to pick up the mantle and care for this land moving forward. He connected the history of Covenant Hills with the future hopes of the Abenaki people by

pledging that they will always honor the stories of lives changed and impacted on this land.

Their plan is to use this site as a place to teach Abenaki language and culture to an emerging generation. His words were genuine, sincere, and connecting.

This was and is the source of healing – the ability to realize that although things change, there are covenants and commonalities that remain. We are one family, in need of forgiveness and reconciliation but also in need of the Spirit's help to bind us together in deeper appreciation and love.

As I left Covenant Hills, I found myself deeply grateful for being in the presence of the Holy, a presence that reminded me that sanctification, *“complete love,”* is not possible unless it is altogether inclusive.

And it is why my heart constantly breaks when this completeness is shattered by the feeble and misguided actions of those who judge, dictate, and legislate separation.

While we were finding ways to unite cultures at Covenant Hills, the U.S. Supreme Court ended humanitarian protections that have permitted persons to flee dangerous conditions in their homelands to live and work legally in the United States. Suddenly, a wedge has been created that specifically impacts people from Haiti and Syria. This act is dehumanizing and has immediately caused anxiety, fear and anger that disconnects rather than unites.

What does this mean? It means that for every success there is a subsequent setback. It means that the work of justice never ends. It means that the search for that little bit of God and the goodness of our Creator is sometimes easy, but oftentimes so very

hard. It means that our work never ends.

Father Rohr writes,

*“God does not love you because you are good; God loves you because God is good, and then you CAN be good because you draw upon such an Infinite Source of Goodness. The older I get, the more I am sure that God does all the giving and we do all the receiving. God is always and forever the initiator in my life, and I am, on occasion, the half-hearted respondent. My mustard seed of a response seems to be more than enough for a humble God, even though the mustard seed is ‘the tiniest of all the seeds.’” (Matthew 13:32)*

I give God thanks for *“mustard seed moments,”* like the service at Covenant Hills, where we showed up to discover that our Creator God was already there. And I pray that we might continue to show up in all the places where injustice dominates to demonstrate that even the tiniest of all of the seeds might bear much fruit for that which is good, and right, and holy.

It is time for that little bit of God in us to find itself.



Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton  
Resident Bishop  
New Hope Episcopal Area

**HAPPENINGS AT FUMC**  
**LOBSTER ROLL LUNCHESES**

The Lobster Roll Luncheon Season got off to a record-breaking start on July 3rd and will be held each Friday from 11:30—1:30 through September 4th.

Volunteers are welcome.  
 Brownie bakers are needed.

**OTHER SUMMER ACTIVITIES AT FUMC**

**38th ANNUAL ARTS & CRAFTS FAIR**

Wednesday, July 8, 9:00—4:00

Wednesday, August 12, 9:00—4:00

To pick up an application for a vendor space, stop in the church office Monday—Thursday, between 10:00—2:00, or email [office@chathammethodist.org](mailto:office@chathammethodist.org)

**FUMC THRIFT SHOP**

is open Thursday—Saturday  
 from 11:00—2:00.

We are in need of volunteers so that we can open on Wednesdays

**THE CHATHAM GUILD OF PAINTERS**

will exhibit on the Cross Street lawn, 9:00—5:00

Thurs, Fri and Sat through Sept 5th

**PLEASE PARDON OUR APPEARANCE**

(The newsletter, that is...)

With many transitions happening at once, and Summer activities heating up, the newsletter did not get the attention that it normally requires.

If you have any submissions for the August newsletter, which will be distributed in a more timely matter, **please send them by Monday July 20th** to

[office@chathammethodist.org](mailto:office@chathammethodist.org) or call 508-945-0474.

Thank you for your patience & understanding.

Mary Byrne

Director of Finance & Operations and  
*The Messenger* Editor



## CHURCH CALENDAR

| Sun                                                       | Mon                                            | Tue                                                         | Wed                                      | Thu                                                                                                                                                       | Fri                                                                                                                               | Sat                                                                                               |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                           |                                                |                                                             | <b>1</b>                                 | <b>2</b><br>8:30-9:30am<br>Osteo Exercise in Fellowship Hall<br><br>9-5 Chatham Guild of Painters on church lawn<br><br>11-2 Thrift Shop and Food Pantry  | <b>3</b><br>9-5 Chatham Guild of Painters on church lawn<br><br>11-2 Thrift Shop and Food Pantry<br><br>11:30-1:30 Lobster rolls  | <b>4</b><br>9-5 Chatham Guild of Painters on church lawn<br><br>11-2 Thrift Shop and Food Pantry  |
| <b>5</b><br>10am Worship and Communion                    | <b>6</b>                                       | <b>7</b><br>8:30-9:30<br>Osteo Exercise in Fellowship Hall  | <b>8</b><br>9-4 Craft Fair               | <b>9</b><br>8:30-9:30am<br>Osteo Exercise in Fellowship Hall<br><br>9-5 Chatham Guild of Painters on church lawn<br><br>11-2 Thrift Shop and Food Pantry  | <b>10</b><br>9-5 Chatham Guild of Painters on church lawn<br><br>11-2 Thrift Shop and Food Pantry<br><br>11:30-1:30 Lobster rolls | <b>11</b><br>9-5 Chatham Guild of Painters on church lawn<br><br>11-2 Thrift Shop and Food Pantry |
| <b>12</b><br>10am—Worship<br><br><b>POT LUCK LUNCHEON</b> | <b>13</b>                                      | <b>14</b><br>8:30-9:30<br>Osteo Exercise in Fellowship Hall | <b>15</b><br>3:00 Finance & Trustees Mtg | <b>16</b><br>8:30-9:30am<br>Osteo Exercise in Fellowship Hall<br><br>9-5 Chatham Guild of Painters on church lawn<br><br>11-2 Thrift Shop and Food Pantry | <b>17</b><br>9-5 Chatham Guild of Painters on church lawn<br><br>11-2 Thrift Shop and Food Pantry<br><br>11:30-1:30 Lobster rolls | <b>18</b><br>9-5 Chatham Guild of Painters on church lawn<br><br>11-2 Thrift Shop and Food Pantry |
| <b>19</b><br>10am—Worship                                 | <b>20</b><br><b>AUGUST NEWSLETTER DEADLINE</b> | <b>21</b><br>8:30-9:30<br>Osteo Exercise in Fellowship Hall | <b>22</b>                                | <b>23</b><br>8:30-9:30am<br>Osteo Exercise in Fellowship Hall<br><br>9-5 Chatham Guild of Painters on church lawn<br><br>11-2 Thrift Shop and Food Pantry | <b>24</b><br>9-5 Chatham Guild of Painters on church lawn<br><br>11-2 Thrift Shop and Food Pantry<br><br>11:30-1:30 Lobster rolls | <b>25</b><br>9-5 Chatham Guild of Painters on church lawn<br><br>11-2 Thrift Shop and Food Pantry |
| <b>26</b><br>10am—Worship                                 | <b>27</b>                                      | <b>28</b><br>8:30-9:30<br>Osteo Exercise in Fellowship Hall | <b>29</b>                                | <b>30</b><br>8:30-9:30<br>Osteo Exercise in Fellowship Hall<br><br>9-5 Chatham Guild of Painters on church lawn                                           | <b>31</b><br>9-5 Chatham Guild of Painters on church lawn<br><br>11:30-1:30 Lobster rolls                                         |                                                                                                   |



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