Church on the Cape Newsletter

November 2026

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

HERMENEUTICAL ANCHORS

That's a fancy word-hermeneutical. It gets used a lot in theology and Biblical studies. Hermeneutics refers simply to a method or principle of interpretation. It is a method for understanding something, in this case, scripture. Throughout my journey of faith, I have sought those anchors upon which I can build a coherent method of interpreting scripture to inform my life of faith.

Scripture has a lot of variety! In fact, we can even find things that contradict each other. There are other things that are just puzzling and hard to understand. That's why I think we need anchors. These are the things that we hold as first principles or core values to assist us in making sense of other things.

I consistently suggest three scriptural anchors that I try to use whenever I approach scripture or faith. The first of these is the one Pastor Jeff spoke about when he visited us on October 18. It is found in Matthew, Mark and Luke. A pharisee, a scribe or a lawyer—each Gospel identifies the questioner a bit differently—asks Jesus what is the greatest commandment. Jesus answers "you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." (Actually, in Luke the lawyer answers and Jesus agrees!) The point is that loving God means loving your neighbor. As an anchor this means testing everything else against this rule—does this support and enhance loving God by loving my neighbor? If it is the greatest commandment, then every other aspect of Scripture must be read in relationship to this commandment.

This commandment of Jesus is echoed both in the writings of Paul and in the letter of James revealing that it was held in high regard by the earliest Christian community. It is the only saying of Jesus that Paul ever quotes, and James refers to it as "the royal law." It is a direct quote from Leviticus 19:18 which reads "you shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself."

The Gospel of John takes a slightly different approach. Jesus is not asked what is the greatest commandments, but Jesus chooses to give a "new" commandment. That elevates it to a position of preeminence and implies that it encompasses every other possible directive. This commandment is to love one another as Jesus has loved us. Of course, Jesus' love is exemplified, in John, by his willing offering of himself in love. Once again, as an anchor, we can test our interpretation of scripture and our actions by asking—am I loving as Jesus would love?

The third anchor is found in Matthew 7:12 an Luke 6:31. You might have grown up hearing it called the "golden rule." "In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets." Again, in this teaching, Jesus implies that this saying sums up all the law and the prophets. It is a powerful corollary to loving the neighbor suggesting that this love takes on the shape of empathy—how would you want to be treated and use that as your pattern for treating those around you. This particular directive is echoed in many other faith and spiritual traditions sometimes in the positive as it is framed here, and sometimes in the negative: do not do anything to anyone else that you would not want them to do to you.

When we take all of these together as core principles, they create a framework by which we can evaluate every other aspect of scripture, our Christian ethic and our spiritual lives.

Article by Rev. Greg Smith.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

November 1 | All Saints Sunday
- Josh 3:7-17
- Ps 107:1-7, 33-37 (UMH 830)
- Acts 11:1-18
- Matt 23:1-12

All Saints Lections:
- Revelation 7:9-17
- Psalm 34:1-10, 22 (UMH 769)
- 1 John 3:1-3
- Matthew 5:1-12

NOV 08 | 24th Sunday after Pentecost; Organ & Tissue Donor Sunday
- Josh 24:1-3a14-25
- Psalm 78:1-7 (UMH 799)
- 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
- Matthew 25:1-13

NOV 15 | 25th Sunday after Pentecost
- Judges 4:1-7
- Psalm 123 or Psalm 76 (UMH 797)
- 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11
- Matthew 25:14-30

NOV 22 | Christ the King/Reign of Christ Sunday; Thanksgiving Sunday
- Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24
- Psalm 100 (UMH 821)
- Ephesians 1:15-23
- Matthew 25:31-46

NOV 29 | Beginning Lectionary Year B
1st Sunday of Advent
- Isaiah 64:1-9
- Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19 (UMH 801)
- 1 Corinthians 1:3-9
- Mark 13:24-37

Church News

PLEDGE CARDS

If you've not received a pledge card in the mail, please let the office know. If you need a pledge card, please ask an usher. The Finance Committee requests they be returned by November 1. Thank you!

BON APPETIT
VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED!

Wednesday, Nov. 18 is Church on Cape's night to volunteer at Bon Appetit. Volunteers are asked to arrive at 19 Crescent Street, Biddeford, ME at 4:30 pm. Please email Kathy Johnson to let her know if you plan to help!
kjohnjazz@yahoo.com

PLEDGE CARDS

If you need a pledge card, please ask an usher. The Finance Committee requests they be returned by November 1.
Thank you!

TUESDAY DISCUSSION GROUP Our Tuesday, after lunch, group is now discussing the book "The Story of the Other Wise Man" by Henry Van Dyke. If you wish to join us, see Rev. Smith to get a copy of the story and the study guide.

Our next book will be "Tuesdays with Morrie" by Mitch Albom. If you need help getting a copy of the book, please see Rev. Smith as soon as possible so you can be prepared.

ECUMENICAL THANKSGIVING WORSHIP SERVICE

Save the Date

November 22 at 2:00 pm

Holy Cross Lutheran Church

2 Lord St.

Kennebunk, ME 04043

TO OUR LOYAL BAKERS:

This year's Holiday Fair is Dec.5! We ask you to make five (5) dozens of one of cookie (please no peppermint, mint flavoring). 'Christmas cookies" are always appreciated and make the tins look more festive. Sign-up sheets will be on table outside Bartlett Hall. Kindly indicate variety you are making to avoid duplication.

Delivery to the kitchen for your labeled cookies is between 10 AM and 5 PM on THURSDAY, DEC.3rd (label kind and if nuts are included).

We will be packing the tins on Friday morning Dec 4th.

We welcome used tins, medium holiday trays and plastic containers

Thanks very much,

Debbie and Joan

FRAUD OR NOT

Please join us on November 8 after the church service for a presentation with valuable information about spotting fraud and not getting involved. There's a lot out there on our electronic equipment and in our mailbox. Be knowledgeable!

Scams and fraud are becoming increasingly common but understanding how they work can help keep you and your loved ones safe.

Join local banking professional Kaylee Pawnell of Kennebunk Savings for a presentation focused on recognizing fraud before it happens, protecting your finances and staying one step ahead of today's scammers Learn practical strategies in a welcoming and engaging environment.

Get your treats and beverage and proceed to the Parlor of Peace for a 30-minute discussion.

Judy Tripp

PASTOR appreciation

What a wonderful Pastor Appreciation Sunday! Everyone seemed to enjoy the opportunity to share a delicious (family recipe) potluck meal, wonderful conversation, meet others you may not have known before.

Thank you to SPRC and the many volunteers behind the scenes that made Bartlett Hall sparkle with flowers, decorations, cake and a community welcoming to all.

A SPECIAL SHOUT OUT to Sandy Day and Judy Unsworth for offering their culinary and event planning expertise. They surely contributed to the success of the day.

Many have suggested we gather for another Potluck. With winter settling in and the days getting shorter, sharing a meal together would be wonderful and something special to look forward to. You and your circle of friends or committee might want to consider planning the next Potluck??

Many thanks to all,
Staff Parish Relations Committee
(SPRC)

CONGRATULATIONS REV GREG SMITH
40th Anniversary Ordination
39 Years Ministers
65th Birthday

Table
6

GRACE -STREET MINISTRY

Our Socks and Dunkin Card Campaign is Underway!

As cooler temperatures arrive, we are reminded of our neighbors in Portland who are unhoused and marginalized. This season, we will continue to offer practical support and care through Grace Street Ministries.

Photo by Carol Nason

The sock team labeled over 1,000 pairs of socks; they ready to be delivered to the Grace Street Ministry.

Christmas Surprise Packages

DUE BEFORE NOVEMBER 22

Please do not gift wrap items!

GIFT CARDS NEEDED

: $10.00 - $15.00 in value with gift receipt attached. Suggestions: McDonalds, Wendy's, Michaels, Target, Reny's, Staples, Home Depot, Cosco, movie theater gift cards, etc.

PLEASE NOTE:

THE GIFT CARD RECEIPT MUST BE ATTACHED

NEW GIFT ITEMS NEEDED

$10.00 - $20.00 in value, leave purchase price on item. Suggestions: Coffee mugs, candles, gift sets, gift items for ladies, men, boys, and girls. Note: Items for children's gifts can range from ages 4 to 10 years old.

DUPLICATIONS ARE ACCEPTED

Leave gift cards in the church office for Debora Berry. Gift items are left in a Christmas Surprise box in the lobby under the table.

OCTOBER SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

Sunday School is in full swing. Thanks to the enthusiastic Sunday School teachers, Pastor Greg's love of the children, and your interest in the children, they are happy to come to church.

Photos included within this article: We love to see baby Joey sleeping comfortably in Mommy Elizabeth's arms. Sophie shares a prayer she created with Pastor Greg. Carol and Sophie were delighted to discover they were twins. Jake and Isabella bring their food items to the COS basket. How special to see Winston and Remy participate in Communion with their parents. Pastor Greg and Diana's Oreo snack for coffee hour was a big hit with all, especially with Remy. The children love story time with Pastor Greg. The Sophie, Jake, Isabella and Ben are enthusiastically listening to the story of The Wedding Feast.

One Sunday the children made little boxes filled it with words of things they were grateful for. Hazel is grateful for her church, God and Jesus, and her family. Remy is grateful for his mom and dad, his family, the ocean, God and Jesus, his dog, and Mother Nature. Winston is grateful for his family. Isabella is grateful for Mom, Dad, Jacob, and Winston. Jake is grateful for God, Mom, toys, and food. It is a blessing to have these children in church, and wonderful to learn more about them.

One Sunday the children heard the parable of The Wedding Feast. The children enjoyed sharing their experiences with parties. They talked about going to parties, giving them, and what to do to get ready; pick a place, order food, invite people. It was particularly fun that this lesson fell on Pastor Greg's special party. The children heard about a king who was having a big party for his son. The king had his servants invite all the important people to this party. Sadly, the important people did not want to come to the party, "I'm way too busy" was the response from all. The king was very angry and told the servants to invite all the unimportant people. All the unimportant people came, the baker, the builder, the grape picker, and so on. These people had a great time at the king's party.

The children were then asked, 'what is the message Jesus wants us to understand about this parable?' Ben answered, "when you invite people to a party, some say yes and some say no!" Ben was on the right track.

The discussion went on to explain that this is just like when God invites us to His party – which means to follow him, and be a loving a kind person. Sometimes we say yes and sometimes we say no. We feel God's love in our hearts, but we still might be a little bit mean to a sibling. This is saying no to God's party. Everyone understood that! Examples of going to God's party were shared: being kind to people, helping Mom, and never laughing when someone is hurt…. Parables are tricky and the children are starting to grasp the idea that behind each parable is an important message. God bless our children.

Article by Carol Nason

Cheerios

EXIT

Photos by Carol Nason and Friend

A Reason to Give Thanks

After Eddie Rickenbacker and his companions were rescued after more than three weeks adrift in life rafts in the Pacific, he was asked what lesson he had learned from the ordeal.

He answered that anyone with plenty of fresh water to drink and enough food to eat should never complain.

His words still speak clearly today. Many blessings can become so familiar that we barely notice them. This Thanksgiving, pause to give thanks for clean water, nourishing food, a safe place to rest and the people God has placed in your life. Let gratitude continue long after the holiday table is cleared.

Source: Newsletternewsletter

Church on the Cape
A United Methodist Church

We of The Church on the Cape represent various religious and cultural backgrounds and lifestyles. We are young, old, middle-aged, single, married, widowed, divorced, parents, grandparents, and members of extended families. Above all, we are people who take risks, make mistakes, confess, repent, and try again.

At the center of our community is Jesus Christ, whose life, death, and resurrection are the reasons we are together. The life and hope in this community have more to do with Christ's faithfulness to us than ours to Christ.

Whether you are searching for a faith community or just passing through, we want you to feel at home. Whoever you are, whatever your history, your scars, your gifts; You are among people like yourself.

Join us from wherever you call home. If you like what you see here, we post our virtual Hymn Sing and Sunday Worship Service on our website, www.churchonthecape.org.

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