



Church on the Cape Newsletter



August 2026

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Did I Make God Happy Today?

While in College I spent time worshiping with an Orthodox Presbyterian congregation. There I was introduced to Calvinist theology and the Westminster Shorter Catechism. Ever since I've been fascinated by its opening question and answer: "Q. 1. What is the chief end of man? A. Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever." Having been written in the 1600's it uses the male-dominated language of its time, but I continue to ponder the deep question it asks—why did God create humans?

I often think about ants. There are more ants in the world than almost any other creature. They are also essential to the global ecosystem. Without ants, most of the world's biomes would collapse. The same cannot be said of humans. What we often forget or ignore is that the world does not need us and would go on quite well and happily if we all disappeared. We are late comers to the party and completely unnecessary.

Yet the ant's universe, which seems immense to them, is very tiny. An ant probably never sees the stars. They do not know there are many planets in our solar system. They cannot ponder constellations or galaxies. Their world can often be measured in meters, not light years. In fact, of all the creatures who have lived on this planet thus far, only humans can behold and ponder the universe—and its creator.

God wanted companions. God wanted creatures who could see and wonder at all that God had made. God wanted people who would behold, ponder and be in awe of all that is. While God "needed" ants, God "wanted" humans! What God wants most is companions who walk with God, treasure what God has created, tend the garden of creation with care and respect and glorify and enjoy the God who created it!

I wonder, in the end, if it is not our primary purpose to make God happy? Perhaps that should be the question we ask at the end of each day—did I make God happy today?

Rev. Greg Smith

SCRIPTURE READINGS



AUG 02 | 10th Sunday after Pentecost
(Green)

- Gen 32:22-31
- Ps 17:1-7, 15 (UMH 749)
- Rom 9:1-5
- Matt 14:13-21

AUG 09 | 11th Sunday after Pentecost
(Green)

- Gen 37:1-4, 12-28
- Ps 105:1-6, 16-22, 45b (UMH 828)
- Rom 10:5-15;
- Matt 14:22-33

AUG 16 | 12th Sunday after Pentecost
(Green)

- Gen 45:1-15
- Ps 133 (UMH 850)
- Rom 11:1-2a, 29-32
- Matt 15:(10-20), 21-28

AUG 23 | 13th Sunday after Pentecost
(Green)

- Exod 1:8-2:10
- Ps 124 (UMH 846)
- Rom 12:1-8
- Matt 16:13-20

AUG 30 | 14th Sunday after Pentecost
(Green)

- Exod 3:1-15
- Ps 105:1-6, 23-26, 45b (UMH 828)
- Rom 12:9-21
- Matt 16:21-28

Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for all your prayers and support during Mary's illness and passing. Her Memorial service was wonderful and so was the reception following. It gave me the opportunity to interact with so many of you and to receive more of your love and support. It was a real source of strength and blessing that will support me for all the years to come.

May God bless you all.

Many Thanks, Desmond

THE UPPER ROOM GROUP

This is a new offering at Church on the Cape. The group will meet on Wednesdays at 11 a.m. for one hour. Each participant will be asked to read the daily devotions from the Upper Room. Our conversation will be guided by the questions for each week in the last pages of the Upper Room. This group will combine in person participants at the Church with ZOOM participants. This means people can join the group even if they do not live nearby. We are now in the "interest assessment" phase. If you would like to join this group, please pre-register with the Church office. We expect to begin this group in mid-July if there is enough interest.

CHILDREN'S VIDEO TIME

Veggie Tales videos are available in Parlor of Peace on Sunday mornings during worship for those who would like to attend. No registration is necessary.

TUESDAY BOOK STUDY

In addition to the Upper Room Group, we will be offering a book study group after Picnic Lunch on Tuesdays. This group will read "Wesleyan Vile-tality" by Ashley Boggan. The group will meet from 12:45-1:45 on Tuesdays. Again, we are looking for pre-registrations so we can order books and expect that the books will cost around \$17 each. We expect this group to begin sometime in July.

CAMP MECHUWANA

Registration is open for the Summer 2026! Camps fill quickly so early registration is encouraged. Pick up a registration form in the lobby, or online.

<https://www.churchonthecape.org/campmechuwana2026>

Mechuwana continues its long history of ensuring that no camper is turned away for financial reasons. We will work to ensure that anyone who wants to attend a week of camp can. To request financial assistance, please contact the camp office by phone or email. We also offer a volunteer credit of \$150 for each adult who volunteers as a camp counselor or dean during the 2026 season. That credit can be applied to one camp registration for a child in your family. Volunteers must meet certain criteria to fill this role. Please contact the office for more information about how to receive this credit.

McClelland Music Foundation

The Joan Kennedy Trio

Saturday, August 15, @ 2:00 pm

Free Concert at Church on the Cape

Enjoy an afternoon of country, folk and more!



Rough Road Ahead

It had been a long trip home, and the weary traveler still had miles to go. So, when a sign appeared reading, "Rough Road Ahead —

4 miles," he braced himself.

Rough was an understatement. The lanes narrowed, the shoulder disappeared, and traffic slowed to a crawl. Drivers carefully weaved around potholes and construction equipment, inching forward one stretch at a time. But just as the sign promised, after four difficult miles, the road opened up and smoothed out again.

Jesus offers a similar kind of clarity about life. In John 16:33 (NIV), He says, "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." Notice He doesn't say we might face trouble. It is part of the journey. There will be stretches that feel slow, uncertain and hard.

Notice that Jesus didn't say we "might" have trouble. Sooner or later, problems will come. The road will get rough. But Jesus has already defeated everything the world can throw our way. We just have to keep moving, fueled by hope.

The promise is just as certain as the warning sign. The rough road does not last forever, and it does not have the final say. Christ has already gone before us, and smoother ground is ahead.

Source: Newsletternewsletter

A MESSAGE FROM BISHOP BICKERTON



New England Conference
The United Methodist Church



July 14, 2026

A Response to the Latest ICE Shooting:

Remembering Joan Sebastian Guerrero

"The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit." — Psalm 34:18

On Monday morning, Joan Sebastian Guerrero, a 26-year-old from Colombia, died in a shooting involving federal immigration officers on Pool Street in Biddeford, Maine. According to the Portland Press Herald, Mr. Guerrero was from Colombia, was authorized to work in the United States, and was on his way to work. Reports are coming in that Mr. Guerrero was not the man the agents were looking for. This ICE killing comes less than a week after ICE shot and killed Lorenzo Salgado Araujo of Houston Texas.

While accurate reports are still being gathered, what we do know is that, yet another life has been lost that could have and should have been avoided. Another family is grieving a father, a partner, a son. A community is grappling with news that a frightening, violent, and deadly incident has unfolded on its streets, in the middle of what should have been a routine Monday morning in their coastal city of about 23,000 people. And yet again, a nation is confronted with actions from a government supported agency that run completely contrary to the principles and values upon which our country was formed.

In the hours since, hundreds of Biddeford neighbors have gathered in prayer, in grief, and in peaceful public witness, first at Mechanics Park and later at an evening vigil. Members of our faith community are already gathering to pray, organize, stand in the gap for our immigrant neighbors and more. Protests have been organized and concerned people have begun to mobilize demanding an accurate investigation so that justice can be felt, and truth can be known.

In these moments, the role of the church is critical and undeniably important. We can and should take the lead in helping people find ways to grieve together and to make their voices heard without violence, lest other harm be done.

We join the Governor, Maine's congressional delegation, and local officials in calling for a full, fair, and transparent investigation, one conducted openly and shared plainly with the people of Biddeford, the state of Maine, and concerned citizens anywhere who can no longer tolerate actions that unjustly rob someone of their rights and their lives. Answers, when they come, should come from evidence, not assumption, and the people closest to this loss deserve to receive them first.

Most of all we grieve. Beloved community has been invaded once again by an act of unjust violence. We hold this family, this community, and all who gather this week, in prayer. We also believe, as people of faith, that truth matters, and grief deserves honesty. To that end, we call upon our elected officials to represent us with diligence and determination to bring an end to what is wrong and stand strong for what is right. As citizens of a nation that just a few days ago celebrated its commitment to liberty and justice for all (immigrant and native-born alike), we are once again left asking hard questions that demand truthful answers and searching for clear directions on how these sanctioned acts of violence will end immediately.

To our immigrant neighbors in Biddeford and across our New England and New York Annual Conferences: we see you and know that tragic events like this affect you in ways that many of us cannot comprehend.

Yet, we are called upon to be people of compassion and care. Our congregations remain places of welcome and refuge. If you need someone to pray with, sit with, or simply listen, our United Methodist churches are here. Please do not fear or grieve alone. We stand with you.

This is a day for us to do what the church has always been called upon to do: pray, advocate, and act with the guiding principles of doing good, doing no harm, and always staying so much in love with God that we can do nothing less than love everyone as our neighbor. To that end, we ask everyone in our churches and communities to hold the family of Joan

Sebastian Guerrero, the people of Biddeford, and all who mourn or live in fear close to our hearts as they mourn, and as we together work tirelessly to seek answers and justice.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas J. Bickerton". The script is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'T' and 'B'.

Bishop: Thomas J. Bickerton

Resident: New Hope Episcopal:

New England & New York Annual Conferences

Submitted by: Priscilla Campbell-Wyman

THE POWER OF PRAYER WARRIORS

Prayer warriors are spiritual soldiers—men and women who faithfully lift others in prayer, often behind the scenes. Though their work may go unnoticed by the world, it is deeply valued by God. Their intercession can strengthen the weary, comfort the grieving, and open doors for God's will to be done.

In Scripture, we are urged to "pray one for another" (James 5:16, KJV), reminding us that healing and restoration often come through the prayers of the faithful. A prayer warrior stands in the gap, bringing needs before the Lord with boldness and persistence.

The Apostle Paul recognized the power of prayer, often asking others to pray for him as he shared the gospel. In the same way, prayer warriors today uphold churches, pastors, families, and communities.

Their prayers may be silent, but their impact is mighty. Never underestimate the difference a praying heart can make.

Source: newsletternewsletter

JULY SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

The Sunday School children and their families have been quite busy over the summer visiting with family and friends. Occasionally there is a mini reunion of some of the Sunday School children at the Rhumb Line Resort in Kennebunkport. We miss seeing them in church but are happy they are having good times and making memories with their families.

Isabella and Jacob were happy to be in church on the 26th, and the congregation was delighted to see them. Both Jacob and Isabella take the hymn sing quite seriously and enjoy story time, a lot!

Summer Sunday School focuses on a particular lesson from the Veggie Tales. Isabella and Jake learned about the Wise Builder and the Foolish Builders. First, they built a block structure, being careful to lay a solid foundation, so the rest of the blocks could be added successfully.

The children learned about the importance of having God as the foundation for their lives. In part, this means keeping God's love in our hearts and remembering to be loving to other people. Following the Veggie Tale (which they both loved!), the children learned and sang the song The Wise Man and the Foolish Man. Isabella remarked, "I know this song, Mommy sings it to me." Her mommy had learned it as a young child, as well.

Summer is flying by. In a few short weeks Children will be heading back to school, and 'regular' Sunday School will resume. Please contact Sharon Miesel if you'd like to be a helper, or teacher, and see Pastor Greg to be vetted. Enjoy this beautiful weather.

Article by Carol Nason



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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