



Church on the Cape Newsletter



September 2025



Graphic source: Newsletternewsletter

PRAISE FOR OUR MUSIC MINISTRY BEGINS ON PAGE 8.

From the Pastor's Desk

Reflections from the pastor

Slavery is always wrong. Slavery was never good. That was the reality I was raised to believe and which I still believe. I also believe that my ancestors and those from the churches I have served, who fought in the Union Army during the Civil War, fought to abolish slavery.

I never imagined that I would, one day, encounter those who would question those statements. It began when I met people who called the Civil War the "War of Northern Aggression." They argue that the cause of the war was not slavery, but states' rights. It was a war that pitted those who favored a powerful central government against greater state autonomy. What that conveniently overlooks is that the states that wanted autonomy wanted it precisely so that they could preserve the system of slavery.

Recently, we have heard those who argue that slavery was good for those who were enslaved and that, therefore, slavery should not be remembered as an evil system. Most recently, we have heard our president criticizing the Smithsonian for reminding us of the evils of slavery and making our country look bad.

As I frequently remind people, the sad truth is that our scriptures at best allow for slavery and at worst condone it. Christians who came to oppose the institution of slavery struggled to refute the scriptural arguments that supported its continued existence. The beloved hymn "Amazing Grace" is in part the story of how its author, John Newton, repented of his participation in slave trading. As a

Christian guided by John and Charles Wesley and William Wilberforce, he became an ardent abolitionist.

The hymn reminds us of the importance of acknowledging our past sins in order to be sure we do not repeat them. The purpose of telling the harsh story of slavery in our country and recording it in institutions like the Smithsonian is to be sure we never forget the harm and horror of our past. If we ignore or deny the terrible things we have done as a society, we are in danger of excusing and repeating those very wrongs.

As a Christian, I must repeat, slavery is never good, never acceptable, always wrong, and always evil. We need to remember the sins of our collective past, to see the damage they caused, and repent lest we excuse and repeat the sins of our past.

A Spiritual Presence

This morning, I arrived at church and began to attend to the tasks and chores that need to be done on a Tuesday morning before people begin to arrive for the day. It was quiet and peaceful as I went about my tasks. I went out the front door to make sure the trash bins were in order for the weekly pickup and was greeted by one of the resident-dog-walkers of Langsford Road, who stopped to comment on how much she enjoyed the beauty of the garden and the freshness of the cool mornings we've had this week.

I went back in to look things over in Bartlett Hall and, as I looked out the glass doors, I noticed a middle-aged man

sitting quietly on a bench in the meditation garden in quiet contemplation. Neither of those people attends Sunday services at Church on the Cape, and I did not know either one. Both, however, joined us for worship in their own way.

It reminds me that our ministry often extends far beyond what any of us see or know. There are toddlers in the community who wait excitedly to hear our bell chime out the hours of the day, and the little girl who brings her parents to the church each afternoon so she can walk up and down the ramp.

There are many who have appreciated the art we have chosen to host for the summer. There are those who walk across our lawn on the way to other places who simply enjoy safe passage. Then there are those who see the beauty of God's creation here and those who use our space to quietly meditate and seek a connection with their own spirituality. We are a spiritual presence touching lives in countless untold and unseen ways. That is God's gift to us, and our gift to the place in which we live.

Rev. Greg Smith

Office Schedule Reminder

Except for identified holidays, the church office is open Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Rev. Smith follows this same schedule and is in the office when he is not away visiting or at meetings. Except when there are funerals or weddings, Rev. Smith takes Friday and Saturday off.



The Bible affirms both the value and dignity of work. From the beginning, God placed Adam in

the garden "to work it and keep it" (Genesis 2:15, ESV). In the fourth commandment, we are reminded not only to observe the Sabbath, but also to labor diligently throughout the week: "Six days you shall labor and do all your work" (Exodus 20:9, ESV).

Work is more than a routine obligation; it is an opportunity to engage our God-given abilities in meaningful ways. Whether using our hands, minds, or hearts, we reflect the image of our Creator—bringing order, care, and creativity into the world.

Our labor allows us to contribute to the common good, find personal fulfillment, and practice faithful stewardship of the talents and strengths God has entrusted to us. As Paul writes, "We are God's fellow workers" (1 Corinthians 3:9, ESV).

On this Labor Day, may we take time to recognize the blessing of work and celebrate those who serve, build, teach, lead, and labor with purpose and care.

Source: Newsletternewsletter



Lectionary Readings

SEPT 07 | 13th Sunday after
Pentecost (Green)

- Jer 18:1-11
- Ps 139:1-6, 13-18 (UMH 854)
- Philem 1:17-27
- Luke 14:25-33

SEPT 14 | 14th Sunday after
Pentecost; Grandparent's Day (Green)

- Jer 4:11-12, 22-28
- Ps 14 (UMH 746)
- 1 Tim 1:12-17
- Luke 15:1-10

SEPT 21 | 15th Sunday after
Pentecost

- Jer 8:8-9:1
- Ps 79:1-9 or Ps 4 (UMH 741)
- 1 Tim 2:1-7
- Luke 16:1-13

Sept 28 | 16th Sunday after
Pentecost

- Jer 32:1-3a, 6-15
- Ps 91:1-6, 14-16 (UMH 810)
- 1 Tim 6:6-19



Robert Lee Olson
August 18, 2025

Welcome!



Parsonage Open House,
September 28, 1-4 p.m.
All are invited!

UMCOR

Thank you for helping the flood victims
of the Kerrville, Texas area.
Contributions totaled \$12,480 and
have been forwarded to UMCOR.

SENIOR MOMENTS IS BACK

Rehearsals begin **September 3, at 3:00
p.m.** in Bartlett Hall.

SUNDAY SCHOOL PICNIC

On Sunday, **September 7th, at 4:00 p.m.** There will be a picnic at Church on the Cape for the Sunday School Teachers and Families of Sunday School Students.

FROM THE EVANGELISM COMMITTEE

On **September 7**, the Evangelism Committee will host a special program of sharing and information about the "Cookie Davis Mural" that we have enjoyed hosting on our building. The sharing time will begin at **11:30 a.m.** after a shortened fellowship time. The program will feature storytelling about the artwork on the mural and stories about Cookie's life and art. This event is open to church members and the public.

A NEW SEASON OF SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School will begin on **September 14**. Children will join us for the beginning of the worship service until Story Time. After the story, the volunteers will take them upstairs for Sunday School. Their parents will go upstairs to pick them up after the worship service. We thank all those volunteers who have agreed to help. Anyone who wants to have the chance to help with Sunday School needs to see Rev. Smith to have a criminal background check and to review and sign our covenant for working with children.

BLUEGRASS DUO FREE CONCERT SATURDAY, **SEPTEMBER 27TH AT 2 PM.**

The McLelland Music Foundation presents bluegrass duo Harvey Reid and Joyce Andersen for a free concert at COTC..



NEW BIBLE STUDY BEGINS **SEPTEMBER 30TH**

Our Tuesday Study group will begin a new topic on September 30. We will read and discuss Harold Kushner's book "How Good Do We Have to Be?" The group meets every Tuesday right after Picnic Lunch at **12:30-1:30 p.m.** Everyone is welcome to join the study group, and you may choose whether to come to lunch or just join us for the conversation. Please plan to obtain your own copy of the book and begin reading as soon as you like! If you need help finding a copy of the book, please contact the church office, and we will be glad to assist.

Please email Judy Tripp if you plan to attend. jbtripp@maine.rr.com

2025 New England Annual Conference

The Conference was held in Danvers, MA, the third week of June, and was attended by several hundred clergy and laity. During the conference, a lot of church business was tended to along with inspirational talks and worship services. What particularly interested me were Bishop Bickerton's remarks about the state of the church organization.

Bishop Bickerton played on the theme, Hope with Joy, as taken from Romans 15:13. It was hard to see where he was going with this since he reported that church attendance continues to decline, mission shares are being vastly reduced, and conference must cut its budget drastically if it's to survive.

He noted that the church, like so many other institutions, can not be taken for granted. It's not business as usual anymore, and the old system is no longer working. We cannot expect people to show up for Sunday services like they used to and keep the doors open, nor can we expect the church, as we've known it, to lead the way.

But instead of taking a gloom and doom attitude, Bickerton stressed the positive. He posed some thought-provoking questions ... "What is church?" "Who is church?" "Where is church?" is for us all to think about. He encouraged us to get out of the proverbial box and, instead of focusing on people coming to church, find ways to go to them. Meet them where their needs are.

What I took this to mean is that we are it! Time's up. We cannot afford to wait for Jesus to arrive and uncover heaven on earth for us. Jesus is waiting for us to show up for/with/as Christ in our daily lives. Do we or do we not belong to God? Are we not the body of Christ? Does the Creator endow us with His power and gifts to light the way, or are the words, "Ye are Gods" in John 10:34 and "I have said Ye are gods" in Psalm 82:6 lies?

We have to wrap our brains around the belief that we belong to God, that God is LIFE, and God can do all things to, through, and with us so long as we ask, trust, and believe. We each have to uncover and deepen our experience of what it means to belong to God and practice being authentic and faithful. As we develop a genuine relationship with God, we will see through God's eyes and share love with one another and our wonderful planet in new ways.

As the institution of the church changes, perhaps our mantra will be, "If it's to be, it's up to you and me." And as we come to embrace our partnership with Christ and experience His joys and tribulations, we will discover heaven on earth. After all, isn't this why we are chosen?

Carl Sandburg said, "Nothing happens unless first a dream." My dream for the new world involves us all believing, "We are enough. We do create enough. We have enough". No more worries. No more doubts. When we start and live there, our home is paradise. And if that deceptive serpent comes slithering around wanting to cause trouble again, we won't even listen to him.

Nonie Freeman

June 23, 2025

ANNUAL CONFERENCE RELIEF

A portion of our Church budget, and of every United Methodist Church budget, goes to fund the work of the Annual Conference. Among other things, this pays for staff positions like the District Superintendents, the Bishop, and other necessary staff members. It also pays for shared programs and ministries. At the meeting of the New England Annual Conference in June, we agreed to significantly reduce the Conference budget.

That means that the total amount of money we ask churches to pay will decrease for 2026. That is the good news. That does not mean that our Mission Shares will be reduced because we know, all too well, that we continue to close United Methodist Churches and others are struggling financially. That means that healthy churches, like Church on the Cape, often don't see a big reduction even though the Conference reduces spending. We will know soon and hold out hope that our Mission Shares will be lower for 2026.

Rev. Greg Smith

ONE OF THE GREAT STRENGTHS OF A CHURCH IS ITS MUSIC MINISTRY, AND OURS IS EXCEPTIONAL

HYMN SING, SUSIE GOODWIN

Our Sunday Worship Service begins with a "Hymn Sing" led by Susie Goodwin. Her knowledge of music seems to have no end, including playing the autoharp, which she recently did in a Song Sisters performance.

Faithfully, she is there early for the 9:45 am hymn sing, Sunday after Sunday, year after year. And she is also a choir and Song Sisters member and leads the Church on the Cape Chimers. Susie starts the hymn sing with a pleasant greeting to those in attendance and online.



A preselected hymn starts the hymn sing, followed by hymn requests from those in attendance. We are blessed by singing members whose beautiful music, full of spiritual content, spills into the sanctuary. Singing together leads to sharing praises to God, strengthening our faith through the hymn's subject matter, and having a sense of togetherness as children of God.

MUSIC DIRECTOR, ORGAN, AND PIANO

Our Music Director is Paul Stephan, who prepares the Sunday music program, leads practice sessions with the choir, and conducts the polished performance while playing the organ or piano. Paul's choir management, organ, and piano skills are superb! And Paul's dedication to our church's musical ministry is outstanding



and appreciated by all of us. Under his leadership, our choir has grown in number and musical ability.

Sunday worship hymns are chosen by Pastor Greg. Choir members then study the music selections for rehearsals.

Rehearsals occur each Thursday at 5 pm, which means the choir gets together for practice many times during the year, especially near dinner time. That's a lot of dedication, especially by some members who have been choir members for many years.

MEET THE CHOIR

All the choir members shown in the photo below are talented and dedicated women and men who take time from their busy schedules for rehearsals and Sunday performances and help make our Sunday Worship Service so very pleasing. They are fantastic! As shown, they are all dressed in red for Pentecost Sunday.



Front row: Liz Phillips, Judy Unsworth, Joan Cole, Nonie Freeman, Elisabeth Boberg, Sharon Miesel, Ginny Hammar, Amy Hall, Debbie Parsons, Elaine Triplett. Back row: Pastor Greg Smith, David Smith, Marshall Chamberlin, Rich Parsons, Nancy Chamberlin, Susie Goodwin, Helen Farnsworth, Marilyn Crocker, and Ann Hand.

Photo by Mike Kelly

We are most grateful for the joy of the beautiful music that our choir provides and are appreciative of the many hours of study and practice they incur. They are fabulous! We also love them for being there for us, giving us spiritual inspiration, and furthering our Christian virtue of loving God and others.

THE SONG SISTERS

Occasionally, we are blessed by the Song Sisters singing a hymn. Together, they provide a special blend of singing voices that are especially pleasing to hear.

Liz Phillips, Helen Farnsworth, and Susie Goodwin (L to R) are also in the choir. They are terrific and are another treasure of our music ministry.



NANCY CHAMBERLIN CHOIR, PIANO, AND ORGAN

Nancy is another special person who supports the choir and serves us faithfully in so many ways. Not only is she a choir member, but Nancy frequently plays the piano or organ – both beautifully – and has served as the Interim Music Director for our church. Her love of and commitment to the church's music ministry are marvelous.



CHURCH ON THE CAPE CHIMERS

The Church on the Cape Chimers add diversity to the church's music ministry and show the depth of its music program. They are capably led by Susie Goodwin and, through their hand chimes, provide us with crisp and distinctive musical sounds that are a pleasure to hear.



Marilyn Crocker, Janet Wade, Sharon Miesel, Pastor Greg Smith, Any Hall, Barbara Fuller, Mary Parker, Reverend Desmond Parker, and Director Susie Goodwin

Article by Charlie Benore, photos except for the choir, are screenshots from the church website.

Church on the Cape Unveils Mural Honoring Beloved Local Artist “Cookie” Davis

CAPE PORPOISE, ME — The Church on the Cape is now home to a striking temporary mural celebrating the life and legacy of “Cookie” Davis, a cherished local artist and laborer recently highlighted in the Brick Store Museum’s 2024 exhibition *Bold Visions*. The mural originally hung on the outside of the Museum during the exhibition, but now the mural lives on as a traveling artwork that can appear in various familiar locations in the coming years. The mural will be on display at this current location until mid-October.

Born Colman Davis and later known as Dominique London, Davis was affectionately nicknamed “Cookie” by friends and neighbors. She was a well-known figure throughout the Kennebunks, especially in Cape Porpoise, where her creativity, warmth, and hard work left a lasting impact on the community.



To honor her memory, the Church on the Cape, in partnership with the Brick Store Museum, will host a **Community Story Sharing Event** on Sunday, September 7, from 11:30am to 12:30pm (following Sunday service) at the Church, located at 3 Langsford Road in Cape Porpoise. This free gathering invites friends, neighbors, and community members to share personal stories and memories of Cookie in an informal, welcoming group setting. This event is rain or shine. There will be artwork on display and “Bold Visions: The Art of Cookie Davis” books for sale at the event.

The oral histories shared will be recorded and preserved in the Brick Store Museum’s archives, ensuring that Cookie’s legacy and the voices of her community live on for future generations. All are welcome to participate.

Article by Cynthia Walker (Brick Store Museum) and Kathy Berger

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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