



Highland Avenue United Methodist Church
River Churches Cooperative Parish

Many Waters District
of the New England Annual Conference
of the United Methodist Church

2
0 Co-Creating
2 Justice & Joy
4 New England Annual Conference



2024 Church Conference
December 19, 2024

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2024 HOLY CONFERENCING IN OUR CHURCHES

CO-CREATING JUSTICE AND JOY

In honor of the sacred call to be co-creators of God's justice and joy, this year's church conference liturgy is inspired and informed by the apology written by the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women. (See links below.) This apology was made at the postponed session of the General Conference in May, and at the New England Annual Conference session in June. Each local church is encouraged to take up the important work of sharing this apology and offering support to those "who have been mistreated, abused, and assaulted by clergy and lay leaders in the Church."

[Watch the apology](#)

[Read the Service of Lament](#)

[Read the text of the apology](#)

The New England Response and Intervention Team responds to cases of sexual misconduct. Contact Rev. Heather Bailes Baker, Team Coordinator, at heather.bailes.baker@gmail.com. The Conference Anti-Sexism Team provides support, training, & resources to address/prevent sexism & gender-based discrimination. This is a first point of contact for clergy and laity seeking support. Contact the team at antisexismteam@gmail.com.

As we endeavor to co-create God's justice and joy now and in the future in our churches and communities, we are also called to update and implement Safer Sanctuaries policies. (See link.)

www.neumc.org/safesanctuaries

CALL TO HOLY CONFERENCING

Inspired by Isaiah 58.6-14, The Message

SONG FOR GOD

**Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;
let every heart prepare him room,
and heaven & nature sing, (x2) and heaven, and heaven, & nature sing.**

Isaac Watts, United Methodist Hymnal, UMH #246

Presider: Blessed co-creators of justice and joy, we have heard it proclaimed that when we loose the chains of injustice, untie the cords of the yoke, set the oppressed free, & break every yoke, then we have taken up the kind of fasting chosen for us by God. And so we pray:

People: Just God, place in us a mission for the world where
justice is not just for us;
but where justice just is, for all.

SONG FOR GOD

**No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow
far as the curse is found, (x2) far as, far as the curse is found.**

Isaac Watts, United Methodist Hymnal, UMH #246

Presider: When we share our food with the hungry, provide shelter for the wanderer, clothe those in need, and tend to the family, then God's righteousness goes before us. And so we pray:

People: **Good and Right God, put in us a dream for the world where your righteousness is right in us.**

SONG FOR GOD

**He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness,
and wonders of his love, (x2) and wonders, wonders of his love.**

Isaac Watts, United Methodist Hymnal, UMH #246

Presider: When we delight in keeping the Sabbath and honor God with our words and actions, then we discover joy in God. And so we pray:

People: **Joyful God, put in us a vision for the world where *joy* is justifiable always, obtainable everywhere, and a yearning created within us all.**

SONG FOR GOD

**Joy to the world, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ;
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy, (x2) repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

Isaac Watts, United Methodist Hymnal, UMH #246

Presider: In the spirit of co-creating justice and joy, I hereby call the Church Conferences of *Cox Memorial UMC, Dresden-Richmond UMC, East Pittston UMC, Green Street UMC, Highland Avenue UMC, and Randolph UMC* into session and ask for your response.

People: **We are here as a United Methodist community of God to account for our ministries, to order our life together, and to resolve that in the year ahead we will answer the call of Jesus Christ to his disciples, leading this church into active ministries of love, truth, and justice.**

Presider: Knowing that we are all, lay and clergy alike, called to the ministry of co-creating justice and joy, let us enter into the business of your Church Conference.

WORK OF CO-CREATING JUSTICE AND JOY

Forms for the church conference must be completed one week prior to the meeting or by December 1, whichever comes first (see neumc.org/church-conference). Also, the District Superintendent must be notified of new candidates for ministry when the church conference schedule is set. If those in attendance do not have access to the Church Dashboard during the meeting, paper copies can be printed for reference.

1. Election of Recording Secretary (Elect by nomination.)

The elected recording secretary is responsible for taking minutes that must be submitted on the
Revised 8/23/2024

Church Dashboard. The required digital Church Conference Minutes report (worksheet available) follows the Church Conference agenda and replaces the narrative minutes. Church Conference Minutes are due one week after the conference.

2. Recording of attendance

The elected recording secretary should take attendance (in person and virtual) and submit the names with the conference minutes on the Church Dashboard within one week of the conference.

3. Approval of Minutes of 2023 Church Conference(s) (Vote to receive minutes from last year's church conference and any special church/charge conferences since then.)

4. Presentation of Trustees Report (2023 data), 2024 Accessibility Audit, 2024 Energy Action Checklist, 2024 Safer Sanctuaries Policy

- a. Has the congregation received any bequests from a will? Bequests from wills that have been received since the last Church Conference must be accepted by vote.
- b. Has the congregation used any capital/principle from investments/endowments for operating expenses this year? If so, for what purposes and how much?
- c. Has the congregation spent any funds realized from the sale of a parsonage? If so, for what purpose and how much? Was this done with permission from the DS?

5. Motion of Pastoral Compensation Report (Vote on pastoral compensation of those appointed by the Bishop. Vote on compensation for laity assigned by the Bishop to lead.)

The pastor's base compensation, housing exclusion (if designated by the pastor), housing allowance (if offered), and reimbursables should be reported in specific dollar amounts by the Staff-Parish Relations Committee.

6. Presentation of Fund Balance Audit Report (2023 data) and 2024 Finance Committee Report (Receive reports and year-to-date finances if prepared and vote on 2025 budget if prepared.)
As needed an update on mission shares will be provided by the District Superintendent.

7. Motion of Lay Leadership / Nominations (Vote on church leaders and trustees.)

The completed Church Leaders Contact Report must be submitted on the Church Dashboard within one week of the church conference.

8. Presentation of Lay Servant / Lay Speaker / Certified Lay Minister Reports (Vote to approve for the first time or reaffirm any in these categories.)

Each lay servant/lay speaker/certified lay minister should have completed, signed, and submitted an annual report on the Church Dashboard prior to the church conference.

9. Presentation of Candidacy Form 104, examination, recommendation, and/or reaffirmation of Candidates for Ministry

a. Examination and ballot vote for any new candidate for ministry

Those attending the conference online will submit their vote privately to the presider via the chat function, the poll feature, or a poll site. Some platforms only allow one vote per log-in. In that case there may need to be a supplementary text, email, or call-in option for multiple users of the same device. Those attending the conference via phone will need to email, mail, or call in their vote to the presider. If virtual voting is not possible, a mail in,

written ballot will be taken. The results of the vote may need to be announced later. A copy of the votes must be saved and submitted to the District Superintendent.

- b. Examination and recommendation of candidates for church related vocations
 - c. Reaffirmation of candidates for ministry
10. Presentation of Clergy Narrative Reports (Receive narratives.)
a. Elder/Licensed Local Pastor Narrative Report(s)
11. Presentation of 2024 Church Membership Report, Remembering Our Saints (Receive report.)
12. Presentation of ministry celebrations, narrative reports, and motions; and discussion of ministry possibilities (Take action as needed.)

JUSTICE AND JOY AT THE TABLE

Based on Word and Table: Service I and the Ecumenical Text of The Lord's Prayer / Jill Colley Robinson ©2017, 2024

Presider: May God, our Just and Joyful Creator, be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Presider: Lift up your hearts.

People: **We lift them up to the One who delivers us.**

Presider: Let us give thanks to God.

People: **It is good to take joy and give thanks.**

Presider: It is good to pray to you, Just and Joyful Creator, keeper of the promise of no more mourning, no more crying, no more pain...

People: **Our Parent and Creator in heaven,...**

Presider: It is good and a joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, God of all that is life-giving. In the beginning, you formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life. You knit us together in our mother's wombs. You numbered every hair on our heads. And yet, cradled in this steadfast knowing and being known by you, we at times became and become lost. We are held captive by things that steal this life from us. Our spirits are broken by the promises that are forgotten. Our world grows dim, and we are afraid. It is in these moments that you come near. You hear us. You go with us. You liberate us and set us free. You tell us everything we have ever done and seen and endured, and love us still. You say the words that we need to hear, spoken through those we can trust. And so with those we can trust, and with the angels of mercy, we pray:

People: **Hallowed be your name,...**

Presider: And we join the forever hymn:

People: **Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

Presider: Holy are you, and blessed is your Child Jesus, our Christ. The Spirit empowered Jesus to be our Gentle Healer. The Spirit abided with Jesus to bring about the kin-dom.

People: **Your kin-dom come,...**

Presider: And so the kin-dom did... In the One who wrote with his finger in the dust so that stones of hate would be dropped harmlessly at her side, and in the One for whom even the stones of the earth would cry out at his approach.

...In the One who let his feet be washed by her tears and anointed by her precious perfume, and in the One who then in turn knelt and washed the feet of those who had followed him.

...In the One who gave the best crumbs of healing from his table of grace to her ailing daughter, honoring a parent's fierce love, and in the One who gave the bread and cup from his table of grace to many for forgiveness, for healing, for a Parent's fierce love.

...In the One who gave his power to her to stop her bleeding and in the One who then bled and died and was raised to a new power that we might all know what it is to live into the one promise that cannot be broken—a promise of water that cleanses and Spirit that gives us courage to rise.

The church is born in this new power and this promise. We are born in this new power and this promise. And so we pray in the words of the Gentle Healer for ourselves and for this world:

People: **Your will be done, on earth as in heaven.**

Presider: On the same night on which this prayer for your will to be done was lifted, Jesus took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to the disciples, and said: "This is no longer just bread. This is my life which is given for you. Take; eat. Do this in remembrance of me."

People: **Give us today our daily bread.**

Presider: Likewise, when the supper was over, Jesus took the common cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to the disciples who would soon deny, desert, or deceive, and said: "Drink from this, all of you. This is no longer just a cup of juice from the vine. This is my life in a new covenant, poured out for you and for many for forgiveness and healing. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

People: **Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.**

Presider: And so, we remember your powerful, healing acts in Jesus, and we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving for the work of justice and joy in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

People: **Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

Presider: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and juice from the vine. Make them be for us the body of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, healed, saved, delivered, and set free.

People: **Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.**

Presider: By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world until that day when Christ will come for the kin-dom and we will feast in the paradise of peace. Through your Child Jesus, our Christ, with your Holy Spirit in your holy Church, all honor is yours, Almighty God.

People: **For the kin-dom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.**

BREAKING BREAD AND SHARING CUP

GOING FORTH IN JUSTICE AND JOY

BLESSING & CHARGE

May be spoken or sung to the following tune or one that is familiar.

People: **For everyone born, a place at the table, for everyone born, clean water & bread, a shelter, a space, a safe place for growing, for everyone born, a star overhead.**

Refrain: **And God will delight when we are creators of justice and joy, yes, God will delight when we are creators of justice, justice and joy!**

For just and unjust, a place at the table, abuser, abused, with need to forgive, in anger, in hurt, a mind-set of mercy, for just and unjust, a new way to live.

(Refrain)

For everyone born, a place at the table, to live without fear, and simply to be, to work, to speak out, to witness & worship, for everyone born, the right to be free.

(Refrain)

Shirley Erena Murray, A Place at the Table, W&S #3149

FORMAL MOTION TO ADJOURN THE CHURCH CONFERENCE

Presider: As our time together comes to an end, I declare these Church Conferences adjourned. Our worshipful work is over. Our service begins.

This document and the accompanying PowerPoint were assembled by Rev. Jill Colley Robinson, Superintendent for the Green Mountain District/Dean of the Cabinet and Pastor Evie Doyon, in consultation with Bishop Peggy Johnson, the New England Clergy Sexual Misconduct Response Team, and conference staff.

Highland Avenue United Methodist Church
River Churches Cooperative Parish
Many Waters District
New England Conference

Church Conference Minutes
November 4, 2023

Members Present: Heather Brown, Kitty Cogley, Phil Garwood, Gail-Ellen Kelley, Patti Martin, Pat McKee, Sandy Nisbet, Vicki Record, Patsy Tessier, Jaye Trimm (Breakout session led by Rev. Eleanor Collinsworth)

Rev. Arlene Tully welcomed the River Churches Cooperative Parish and explained how the session would work. She explained that the church conference liturgy included traditions of people indigenous to the land of the Abenaki and directed the churches to the New England Conference Committee on Native American Ministries online for more information.

She then opened with the Call to Holy Conferencing, Around the Circle and the Song for God - TFWS# 2024; the Church Conference was called into session.

The River Churches then broke into individual church sessions. The Highland Avenue UMC session was led by Rev. Eleanor Collinsworth of Union Church in Belgrade Lakes.

- **Election of Recording Secretary:** Vicki Record was appointed Secretary.
- **Approval of the Minutes of 2022 Church Conference:** The minutes were approved unanimously.
- **Trustee Report:**
 - The church received a gift of \$5000 from the estate of Lois Church. The bequest was voted on and accepted unanimously.
 - The congregation did use capital/principle from investments/endowments for operating expenses this year. \$12,800 was used for maintenance and fuel expenses.
 - The congregation has not spent any funds realized from the sale of the parsonage.
- **Pastoral Compensation Report:** Refer to Memorandum of Understanding
- **Presentation of 2022 Fund Balance Report/Audit and Finance Committee Report:** The Fund Balance Report and the Year-to-Date Finances (January – September) were presented. Kitty noted that Pat McKee (Church Treasurer) had addressed all the concerns noted in the audit. The reports were approved unanimously. The Church Budget was available but will be voted on by the Administrative Council.
- **Lay Leadership/Nominations Report:** The draft report was included in the packet. It was noted that there were two positions that needed to be filled. There were no nominations from the

floor. The Report was adopted as a work in progress and the positions of Co-Lay Leader and Trustee, class of 2026 will need to be filled by the end of the year.

- **Lay Servants/Lay Speakers/Certified Lay Ministers Reports:** None
- **Examination, recommendation and/or reaffirmation of Candidates for Ministry:** None
- **Membership Report:** The Membership report was shared.

It was noted that there were two baptisms: **Addison Blayke Chadbourne (6/11/23)** and **Darlene Fay Ward Young (6/18/23)**. It was also noted that **Alaina Belle Chadbourne (6/11/20)** was missing from the 2020 report.

There were no confirmations or marriages.

Two new members were noted: **Cynthia Marie O'Driscoll Malcolm (4/2/23)** and **Darlene Fay Ward Young (4/2/23)**. It was also noted that **Judy Meserve (4/11/1982)** transferred in 1982 but was not documented in the Membership book; confirmation was received from Milford UMC, N.H.

Three members transferred to other non-United Methodist churches: **Dwight Cooper (9/1/23)**, **Mary Cooper (9/1/23)** and **Diane Willoughby (10/15/23)**

The name of **Lois Olive Bailey Church (01/21/23)** was removed from membership by death.

- **Remembering Our Saints:** Remembrances of Lois Church were shared, and a prayer was offered.
- **Presentation of ministry celebrations, narrative reports, and motions:** The reports of the Cooperative Parish vote, UM Men, Lay Leader, Worship Committee and Caring Team were shared and celebrated.

The churches then came together again. Rev. Tully led some brief discussions of the following questions:

- **What is the most exciting thing that has happened as a Parish?**
Some of the responses included: the gathering of the River Churches with the Bishop in September, meeting new people, combined Bible Study, connecting with "old friends", joint Christmas Fair, sharing lay speakers, hope, the reassurance that we are never alone
- **What are you looking forward to as a Parish going forward?**
Some of the responses were: growth, singing together, Sandy Nisbet offered to join some of the other River Churches in outreach to area senior living facilities.
- **What most surprised/gratified you as a Parish?**
Responses included: cooperation, caring, support, attendance at Parish leadership meetings, joint services

Presentation of Clergy Narratives: Rev. Angela Rotherham and Pastor Mauren Julião shared a joint report. Rev. Angela reflected on the scripture Exodus 18: 13-23 and noted that their job was to equip leaders from the individual churches to serve the congregations. Pastor Mauren spoke on Nehemiah 4: 19-20 and said that the congregations of the Parish are “building a bridge”, and each church has a part to build in it, knowing that there are others to help when is needed, and also there’s help to offer when other churches need.

The Parish then shared Fellowship Around the Table, partaking of Holy Communion.

A motion was made to adjourn the church conference; it was seconded. The Church Conference was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,



Vicki Record
Recording Secretary

Special Church Conference

January 11, 2024

Members of Highland Avenue United Methodist Church present: **Gene Anastasio, Joan Anastasio, Heather Brown, Jim Brown, Kitty Cogley, Rusty Greenleaf, Paula Greenleaf, Kay Gregory, Gail-Ellen Kelley (not present to vote), Audrey Littlefield (abstained from voting), Dwight Littlefield, Cindy Malcolm, Pat McKee, Sandy Nisbet, Cheryl Ramsay, Rhonda Rush, Vicki Record, and Patsy Tessier.**

Rev. Arlene Tully, District Superintendent, opened the meeting, declaring it had a single item agenda which was to vote to approve a combined Staff/Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) for the River Churches Cooperative Parish instead of individual SPRCs at each church. She then led us in prayer.

Secretaries were chosen to take the minutes for each church. Vicki Record was chosen for Highland Avenue UMC.

The motion was made for a vote to authorize the virtual meeting:

We move that those who are authorized to participate in the church conferences of Green Street UMC, Cox Memorial UMC, Highland Avenue UMC, Randolph UMC, East Pittston UMC, and Dresden Richmond UMC on January 11, 2024 hereby agree that we consent to proceed with a virtual meeting using remote technology, and consent that all of our decisions are in accordance with the Constitution of the United Methodist Church (Division Two, Section VI, Article II ¶133) and with the laws of the church and are therefore legal and binding actions of the conference.

The motion was moved by Dave Robbins and seconded by Bob Moody. The vote was taken and approved.

The Church Conference was called to order.

The following motion was made for the Parish Council to vote on the creation of a Parish SPRC, as follows:

The River Churches Cooperative Parish create a Parish SPRC made up of one representative and one Lay Leader from each congregation. Further, that in the creation of this committee, a local church SPRC/PPRC will not be necessary.

The motion was seconded by Pat McKee.

Rev. Angela Rotherham explained that the Parish Board had been working on this for some time, trying to determine methods of streamlining church level committees that could be handled at the Parish level, thereby alleviating the stress of trying to find members for each individual church, given that the churches have less members to draw from in recent years. She shared a list of paid

employees in the River Churches, highlighting that some were shared by more than one church. She explained that the SPRC makes salary recommendations but that the Administrative Council/Board of each church would vote on the salaries of their own staff. She then shared a second document listing the responsibilities of the SPRC at both the parish and local levels. Some of the responsibilities would be handled at the Parish level and some would be handled by the representatives of the church and pastor and, if necessary, an Ad Hoc Committee created for that purpose. She gave examples of hiring an employee or working with a candidate for ministry.

A discussion was then held. Some of the questions and points discussed are listed here as well as responses if included:

- If the church doesn't have a lay leader, can someone else serve in that role? The Book of Discipline requires a lay leader in each church.
- Are there insurance liabilities connected with this change? Has anyone contacted Fred C. Church, the insurance company, for clarification? The D.S. said to her knowledge, it shouldn't affect it; everyone is covered under the umbrella of the 501C. How would local Workers Compensation issues be handled? They would be addressed by the local representatives. The D.S. said that the attorney would need to ultimately determine if there is an issue, however since the SPRC is a recommending body – not a decision-making body – any issues would be handled by the individual Administrative Council/Boards.
- The D.S. clarified that the Church Conference is the executive body and the Ad Council/Board has that function in the interim. The SPRC doesn't have any authority other than that given by the Administrative Council/Board. Decisions would be made at the local church level.
- The SPRC would meet quarterly; the chairperson would be in communication with the D.S. If an item arises that needs to be addressed before the regular meeting, an additional meeting can be called.
- If someone has a behavioral covenant with a church, issues would be handled at the local level. It was mentioned that the experience that one of more of the churches has regarding an issue like that could be helpful to the other churches who might experience it in the future.
- The Parish level SPRC would be subject to the same restrictions as a local SPRC (i.e. confidentiality, etc.) as mentioned in the Book of Discipline.
- Local churches would make decisions to hire or dismiss employees.
- Have other groups used this model? The D.S. said that there was not much precedent since Cooperative Parishes are just beginning to be formed. There have been a couple of times when there have been combined SPRCs that she is aware of.
- If in the future, it is determined that this model is not working, it can be changed back to the present model. The basic reason it is being suggested is to alleviate the anxiety of trying to fill all the positions at the local level.

The individual churches then went to breakout rooms to further discuss how it affects their church and to take a vote. In the Highland Avenue UMC breakout room, some of the questions and comments that arose were:

- We would need to nominate a second person to serve with Patsy (lay leader) if this is approved.
- Who would be responsible for filling out the various forms required by the conference? Probably an Ad Hoc committee would be formed to fill out the necessary forms.
- The representatives and the Pastor would handle local issues if necessary.

A voice vote was taken as requested. The following is the result of the vote.

Total: 8 yea 8 nay 2 did not vote

Vicki reread the votes to be sure that she had recorded them correctly.

The churches were called back from the breakout rooms.

The results of the votes were announced:

| | | | |
|------------------|--------|-------|----------------|
| Randolph | 2 yea | 1 nay | |
| Cox Memorial | 12 yea | 0 nah | |
| East Pittston | 2 yea | 0 nah | |
| Dresden/Richmond | 2 yea | 0 nah | |
| Green Street | 13 yea | 0 nah | |
| Highland Avenue | 8 yea | 8 nay | 2 did not vote |

It was noted that since not all the churches voted to approve, it could not be approved. There was a discussion about this. Some of the points/questions raised were:

- Gail-Ellen Kelly was contacted about why she had not been present in the break out room although she had logged into the zoom meeting; she said she had company come and had not heard the discussion so she didn't feel she should vote.
- Why couldn't the churches that voted yea have their own cooperative level SPRC without Highland Avenue?
- Why did this not pass if a majority of the people present voted yea?
- One member mentioned that she would like to have clear support from all the churches.
- Can Highland Avenue have time to discuss the matter on their own and vote again?

Discussion about the tie vote at Highland Ave. UMC led to a motion by Doreen Swanholm to "allow Highland Ave UMC additional time to have further conversation, discussion with the Administrative Council, have another Charge Conference, and hold another vote. The vote of the other 5 churches

will stand, and only Highland Ave. UMC will attend the next Charge Conference." The motion was seconded by Laurie DeCoursey and approved.

A motion was made by Doreen Swanholm to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Bob Moody. The motion carried, and the meeting adjourned at 7:40pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Vicki L Record
Church Administrator
Highland Avenue United Methodist Church

Special Church Conference
December 1, 2024
River Churches Cooperative Parish

Cox Memorial UMC, Dresden-Richmond UMC, E. Pittston UMC,
Green Street UMC, Highland Avenue UMC, Randolph UMC

Members from Highland Avenue present: **Joan Anastasio, Kitty Cogley, Connie Greenleaf, Rusty Greenleaf, Kay Gregory, Gail-Ellen Kelley, Dwight Littlefield, Patti Martin, Pat McKee, Judy Meserve, Vicki Record, Rhonda Rush, Ilene Russell, Patsy Tessier, Jaye Trimm, and Lisa Wilson**

Members of the River Churches Cooperative Parish met at Dresden-Richmond UMC for a special church conference to decide the future of the Cooperative Parish.

The meeting was opened with prayer.

Pastor Mauren Julião and Rev. Angela Rotherham shared how they envisioned the Parish.

The District Superintendent, Arlene Tully, welcomed the members of the parish and called into session the church conference. Recording secretaries were elected. Vicki Record was elected by Highland Avenue UMC. Rev. Tully explained that the vote would be done by a written ballot. The entire parish would vote on the first question; Highland Avenue would vote on the second question since the other churches had already done so.

The first question to be voted on was:

1) Will your church commit to staying in the River Churches Cooperative Parish? Yes or No

Each church was asked to make a motion to move the question. The motion for Highland Avenue UMC was moved by Pat McKee and seconded by Gail-Ellen Kelley.

A discussion was held. Some of the questions and comments included:

- What is the duration of the commitment? 1 year? More? The District Superintendent (D.S.) explained that it was at the discretion of Bishop Bickerton.
- What is the vision going forward for the cooperative parish? The D.S. note that the Bishop Bickerton's vision is that all United Methodist Churches would be part of a cooperative parish. Not all would be the same and would depend on individual circumstances. She also noted that the Book of Discipline mandates all churches be in a cooperative parish, although that has not been the case to date. The pastors have been working with the Parish PPRC, the Parish Council, and the Parish

Coordinating Team to create an action plan to reflect the vision. A retreat was held to further that effort. Two shared mission projects were established for this year. Pastor Mauren shared her vision to help equip all laity to develop their own ministries. They also mentioned the development of small groups based on geography rather than church.

- Will all churches end up merging? No, each church is an important resource for their community and their membership. The parish will be there to help each other as needed.
- Some members of the church have left because they feel they have lost the pastoral connection and the consistency of worship experiences (worship series, etc.)
- Several people noted the wonderful connections they have made with members of other churches.
- How do we handle a situation where there is no pastor available to fill in on any given date? Call the pastors and they will arrange a fill-in, or they will contact the D.S.
- The pastors would like to have a joint worship team that would plan worship series for all the churches, etc. and help make more of a connection, including possible help with filling open dates.
- Another suggestion was to have more ways for the churches to connect.
- It was suggested that more joint services would be appreciated.
- It was noted that there are still things that need to be worked on to grow the parish. How do we improve the connection? To do that, people from all the churches need to take part in the events offered. Also, members of the church need to share their concerns with the pastors so that they can help facilitate improvements. If people have ideas, they should share them with the pastors.
- Is there an option for more pastors to be appointed to help with the parish? The D.S. noted that we are trying to move towards ministries being led more by the laity with the pastors available to support them in the fashion of the original "circuit riders". The churches would not be able to support more clergy currently.
- It was noted that the Cabinet has provided monetary support to help with the coaching and other needs of the parish.

Rev. Tully called the churches back to the question for a vote. A yes vote indicates approval of moving forward with the parish.

A written vote was taken and tallied. Highland Avenue voted 13-3 to move forward with the parish.

The second motion was addressed for Highland Avenue UMC only:

2.) Will you commit to joining the other churches in creating a united Parish Staff Parish Relations Committee? Yes or No

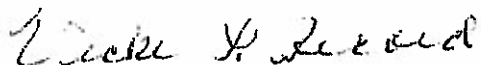
Pastor Angela explained why this vote was being taken. The motion had been approved by the other churches at the last Church Conference, but Highland Avenue's vote ended up in a tie. It was decided to table the vote until the church had time to discuss it further, and a vote would be taken at a later date.

The idea for creating this committee is to relieve some of the burden on the local churches to establish their own Staff/Parish Relations Committee along with sending members to the Parish PPR Committee. The Parish committee would consist of 2 members from each church (the current requirement is at least 3 members on the local church committee). Local church representatives would handle all matters of hiring and firing, salaries, etc. but would be able to get advice from other members of the council if desired. They would be able to ask the Administrative Council to form an ad hoc committee if needed at the local church level. The local committee members would make recommendations to the Administrative Council, and a final vote would be up to the council.

A vote was taken. Highland Avenue voted 13-1 with 1 abstention to approve the creation of the Parish Staff Parish Relations Committee.

The D.S. called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Several people agreed and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,



Vicki L. Record
Church Administrator
Highland Avenue United Methodist Church

Trustee Report

5. Presentation of (2023 data) Trustees Report, 2024 Accessibility Audit, Energy Action Checklist, 2024 Safe Sanctuaries Policy Updates

- a. Has the congregation received any bequests from a will? Bequests from wills that have been received since the last Church Conference must be accepted by vote.**

- b. Has the congregation used any capital/principle from investments/endowments for operating expenses this year? If so, for what purposes and how much?**

- c. Has the congregation spent any funds realized from the sale of a parsonage? If so, for what purpose and how much? Was this done with permission from the DS.**

Reports have been filed with the District Office.

Highland Avenue United Methodist Church
Trustee Narrative
November 8, 2024

Withdrawals:

| | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| March 2024 - \$3,150.00 | Tree Removal |
| July 2024 - \$11,888.20 | Fuel oil and Maintenance Contract |
| October 2024 - \$10,000.00 | General Fund |

Bequests:

Lois Church: \$5,000.00
Marilyn Brown: \$1,000.00 (no restrictions)

Rusty Greenleaf, Trustee Chair

Dwight Littlefield, Trustee Treasurer

2025 Parish Budget

2025 Parish Budget

Lead Pastor (same as 2023 and 2024)

Minimum Cash salary for FE w/11-15 yrs = \$50,300
 Minimum Reimbursables = \$3300
 Pension calculation did not change from 2024

| | |
|------------------|--------|
| Salary | 55000 |
| Reimbursables | 4000 |
| Pension (est) | 10000 |
| *Housing | 13750 |
| Health Insurance | 20000 |
| | 102750 |

This is still adequate to cover expenses related to parsonage

Associate Pastor (same as '23 & '24)

Minimum Cash Salary for LP = \$44,700

| | |
|---------------|-------|
| Salary | 24000 |
| Reimbursables | 2000 |
| Pension (est) | 3750 |
| | 29750 |

Parish Expenses

\$2000 used through 10/24

Total 135000

| | 2025 | 2023 & 2024 | Projected 2026 (if no change to budget) |
|----------------------|---------|-------------|---|
| Cost Distribution | | | |
| Green Street UMC | 31875 | 30000 | 33750 25.00% |
| Cox Memorial UMC | 31875 | 30000 | 33750 25.00% |
| Highland Ave UMC | 31875 | 30000 | 33750 25.00% |
| E. Pittston UMC | 15937.5 | 15000 | 16875 12.50% |
| Dresden Richmond UMC | 15937.5 | 15000 | 16875 12.50% |
| Randolph UMC | 7500 | 15000 | 16875 12.50% |
| | 135000 | 135000 | 135000 |

(This represents proportional distribution of Randolph's contribution.)

*Includes: utilities, internet, TV, phone, property insurance, mowing/plowing, and property taxes

There are approximately \$8000 remaining in Hebrews 11 grant.

These funds were not intended to be used to cover anticipated operating costs.

Angela Rotherham

Forgot something? Make changes (<https://neumc-reg.brtapp.com/edit/A9E07B9D1BB8478096F0E604C8397FE7>)

Date created: 5/21/2024 Last updated: 6/26/2024

2024 CC: Fund Balance Audit Report (2023 data)

Report covers January 1, 2023 - December 31, 2023

The Committee on Finance is required to make provision for an annual audit of the records of all the financial officers (including the financial secretary or church business manager and treasurers) of the church and all its organizations and shall report to the Charge Conference. Guidelines for handling of an accountability of funds can be found in the 2017-2020 United Methodist Church Financial Records Handbook (<https://www.cokesbury.com/The-United-Methodist-Church-Financial-Records-Handbook-2017-2020?refq=the%20united%20methodist%20church%20financial%20records%20handbook%202017-2020>) and in Guidelines for Leading Your Congregation: FINANCE (<https://www.neumc.org/files/districts/nh+district/2018nhd/2018+emails/finance+guidelines.pdf>), and for the GCFA Local Church Audit Guide (https://www.gcfa.org/_files/ugd/5524b1_def4650e277644c6838a218910dccb13.pdf).

Paragraphs and page numbers refer to the 2016 United Methodist Book of Discipline Cokesbury: free online version 2016 UMC Book of Discipline (<https://www.cokesbury.com/book-of-discipline-book-of-resolutions-free-versions>)

Please note that all questions marked with an asterisk (*) are required fields. If a required question does not pertain to you, please input "N/A" in the blank field.

Name and email of person submitting this report.

First Name

Last Name

Email

Angela

Rotherham

revangelarotherham@gmail.com

Church Information

Use the dropdown menu and scroll to find your church by city/town (not the church name).

Gardiner: Highland Avenue UMC-35 Highland Av-Gardiner-ME-04345

District

Many Waters

1. Receipts, Disbursements, and Balances (Round to the nearest dollar)

Local Church Funds (complete fields applicable to your church)

General Fund

a) Balance at Beginning of Period

11479

b) Cash Received and Recorded

92336

c) Total Disbursements for Period (-)

117075

d) Transfers + (-)

24798

e) Balance End of Period

11538

Does your church have a Benevolence Fund?

Yes

c) Cash Received and Recorded

832

c) Total Disbursements for Period (-)

1346

d) Transfers + (-)

1000

c) Balance End Of Period

1138

Does your church have a Building or Improvement Fund?

No

Does your church have a Board of Trustees' Fund?

No

Does your church have a United Women in Faith Fund?

yes

a) Balance at Beginning of Period

3280

b) Cash Received and Recorded

2494

c) Total Disbursements for Period (-)

3406

(d) Transfers + (-)

(e) Balance End Of Period

2368

Does your church have a United Methodist Youth Fellowship Fund?

No

Does your church have a United Methodist Men Fund?

No

Does your church have a Church School Fund?

No

How many other Organizations or Funds does your church have?

If your church has more than four additional funds, upload spreadsheet below.

Name:

Trustee's Money Market Parsonage

a) Balance at Beginning of Period

131381

b) Cash Received and Recorded

132

c) Total Disbursements for Period (-)

131507

d) Transfers + (-)

-5

e) Balance End Of Period

0

Name:

Memorial Fund

a) Balance at Beginning of Period

14586

b) Cash Received and Recorded

7429

c) Total Disbursements for Period (-)

0

d) Transfers + (-)

-9224

e) Balance End Of Period

12791

Name:

Hannaford Cards

a) Balance at Beginning of Period

100

b) Cash Received and Recorded

149017

c) Total Disbursements for Period (-)

139904

d) Transfers + (-)

-9113

e) Balance End Of Period

100

Trustee's Investment

1) Balance at Beginning of Period

518142

2) Cash Received and Recorded

256516

3) Total Disbursements for Period (-)

7432

4) Transfers + (-)

-7455

5) Balance End Of Period

759770

Spreadsheet Upload

If you have more accounts than space provided, attach file here.

Description of above attached Spreadsheet Upload.

2. Name(s) of Auditors/Audit Committee

Lisa J. Wilson
Kim Backus

Auditors or Auditing Committee have examined the accounts listed; reviewed procedures of counting and accounting under the current Book of Discipline; have reconciled receipts and disbursements with bank deposits and bank balances; and have found the balances displayed to be correct, procedures proper, and records properly kept, except as noted below (attach file as needed):

3. Recommendations for changes in financial policies and practices (attach pages above as needed):

1. Was Gene's name removed from all checking accounts?
2. Has an assistant Treasurer been found?
3. Please include check numbers on treasurers reports from financial software.
4. Please include Memorial account activities and balances on Treasurer's monthly reports and in Administrative Council minutes.

Yes Acknowledgment

By checking this box and entering my name below, I acknowledge that I am electronically signing this report.

Full Name and Role

Angela Rotherham, Lead Pastor

Date

2024-05-21

District office use only.

Highland Avenue United Methodist Church
Fund Summary

Jan 1-Dec 7, 2024 | All Funds | All Payment Types

| Fund | Total |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Building Use Donation | 3,711.25 |
| Christmas Envelope | 20.00 |
| Donation | 20.00 |
| Easter Envelope | 455.00 |
| Fund Raiser Income | 4,898.00 |
| General Fund | 64,147.00 |
| Hannaford Income | 7,614.70 |
| Initial Offering | 40.00 |
| Investment Transfer | 3,150.00 |
| Local Missions | 3,783.00 |
| Loose Cash Offering | 1,034.81 |
| Memorial Fund | 2,130.00 |
| Thanksgiving Envelope | 250.00 |
| Verizon payment | 24,120.00 |
| | 115,373.76 |

Highland Avenue United Methodist Church
Statement of Activities

Date Range: Jan 1st 2024 - Dec 7th 2024

| Accounts | Actual | Budget | Budget |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| | Jan 01, 2024 - Dec 07, 2024 | Jan 01, 2024 - Dec 07, 2024 | Remaining Jan 01, 2024 - Dec 07, 2024 |
| Revenues | | | |
| 4000 Pledges | 64,402.00 | 63,612.93 | (789.07) |
| 4001 Transfer from Investments | 36,665.52 | 15,903.25 | (20,762.27) |
| 4003 Loose Offering | 1,039.81 | 3,330.35 | 2,290.54 |
| 4004 Seasonal Envelopes | 805.00 | 935.46 | 130.46 |
| 4005 Hannaford Income | 8,731.95 | 7,951.58 | (780.37) |
| 4006 Fund Raisers | 4,898.00 | 3,741.91 | (1,156.09) |
| 4007 Building Use | 3,711.25 | 2,993.58 | (717.67) |
| 4010 Miscellaneous and Donations | 20.00 | 467.77 | 447.77 |
| 4012 Local Missions | 4,783.00 | 6,548.36 | 1,765.36 |
| 4013 Capital Projects Unbudgeted | 0.00 | 0.91 | 0.91 |
| 4014 Bank Interest | 4.42 | 9.33 | 4.91 |
| 4015 Verizon Tower Rent | 22,590.00 | 0.91 | (22,589.09) |
| Total Revenues | \$ 147,650.95 | \$ 105,496.34 | (\$ 42,154.61) |
| Expenses | | | |
| 5000 Pastor's Salary | 27,650.00 | 28,064.52 | 414.52 |
| 5001 Custodian's Salary | 3,477.86 | 3,648.39 | 170.53 |
| 5002 Music Minister | 7,495.68 | 5,987.07 | (1,508.61) |
| 5003 Financial Secretary | 2,065.56 | 1,683.87 | (381.69) |
| 5004 Treasurer | 2,065.56 | 1,683.87 | (381.69) |
| 5005 Secretary | 7,459.10 | 6,080.67 | (1,378.43) |
| 5006 SS & Med. Taxes | 5,165.69 | 1,403.23 | (3,762.46) |
| 5007 Guest Speaker/Pulpit supplies | 1,230.69 | 1,122.58 | (108.11) |
| 5008 Workers' Comp. Insurance | 180.24 | 327.45 | 147.21 |
| 5010 Fund Raising Expenditures | 102.20 | 93.52 | (8.68) |
| 5011 Capital Improvements | 0.00 | 0.91 | 0.91 |
| 5100 Telephone and Internet | 1,196.78 | 1,029.06 | (167.72) |
| 5101 Electricity | 1,462.19 | 1,496.75 | 34.56 |
| 5102 LP Gas | 0.00 | 93.52 | 93.52 |
| 5103 Water | 342.57 | 327.45 | (15.12) |
| 5104 Sewer | 429.30 | 467.77 | 38.47 |
| 5105 Heating Oil/maintenance cont | 11,888.20 | 12,067.74 | 179.54 |
| 5106 Rubbish Removal | 500.00 | 374.17 | (125.83) |
| 5108 Equipment & Building Repairs | 3,035.00 | 4,677.45 | 1,642.45 |
| 5109 Snow Removal and Shoveling | 1,365.00 | 2,338.68 | 973.68 |
| 5110 Lawn/Landscaping | 3,400.00 | 327.45 | (3,072.55) |
| 5111 Elevator Contract | 1,306.91 | 982.26 | (324.65) |
| 5112 Elevator License | 150.00 | 187.13 | 37.13 |
| 5113 Clock Contract | 800.00 | 795.13 | (4.87) |
| 5114 Piano Tuning | 350.00 | 327.45 | (22.55) |
| 5115 Church Audit | 0.00 | 0.91 | 0.91 |
| 5116 Organ Tuning | 0.00 | 374.17 | 374.17 |
| 5201 Office Supplies | 904.66 | 1,122.58 | 217.92 |
| 5202 Christian Education | 0.00 | 93.52 | 93.52 |
| 5203 Copier Rental | 1,858.16 | 1,627.74 | (230.42) |
| 5204 Custodial Supplies | 296.73 | 420.97 | 124.24 |
| 5205 Music | 165.00 | 187.13 | 22.13 |

| Accounts | Actual | Budget | Budget |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| | Jan 01, 2024 - Dec 07, 2024 | Jan 01, 2024 - Dec 07, 2024 | Remaining Jan 01, 2024 - Dec 07, 2024 |
| 5206 Web Site | 0.00 | 420.97 | 420.97 |
| 5207 Sustaining Member/Mechuwana | 225.00 | 280.65 | 55.65 |
| 5208 Realm | 1,488.50 | 1,075.78 | (412.72) |
| 5209 Floor Maintenance | 0.00 | 935.46 | 935.46 |
| 5301 Advertising | 0.00 | 374.17 | 374.17 |
| 5302 Building Insurance | 10,869.69 | 10,337.07 | (532.62) |
| 5304 Conference Expenses | 0.00 | 841.94 | 841.94 |
| 5306 Camden National Bank | 100.00 | 0.00 | (100.00) |
| 5307 Trustee's investment transfer | 18,171.84 | 0.00 | (18,171.84) |
| 5309 Caring Team | 90.79 | 187.13 | 96.34 |
| 5401 Ministry Support | 7,105.87 | 7,242.54 | 136.67 |
| 5402 New England Missions | 3,142.37 | 3,206.87 | 64.50 |
| 5403 World Missions | 3,206.50 | 3,272.32 | 65.82 |
| 5404 Local Missions | 5,352.97 | 6,548.36 | 1,195.39 |
| 5406 Zoom | 159.90 | 140.32 | (19.58) |
| Total Expenses | \$ 136,256.51 | \$ 114,278.69 | (\$ 21,977.82) |
| Net Total | \$ 11,394.44 | (\$ 8,782.35) | (\$ 20,176.79) |

2025 HAUMC Proposed Budget

| Acct # | Description | 2024 Estimate Budget | 2025 Estimated Budget |
|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 4000 | Pledges | \$68,000 | \$68,000 |
| 4001 | Invest Transfer to General Fund | \$17,000 | \$1 |
| 4003 | Loose Offering | \$3,560 | \$2,000 |
| 4004 | Seasonal Envelope | \$1,000 | \$1,000 |
| 4005 | Hannaford | \$8,500 | \$9,000 |
| 4006 | Fund Raisers | \$4,000 | \$5,500 |
| 4007 | Building Use | \$3,200 | \$4,500 |
| 4010 | Misc./Donations | \$500 | \$500 |
| 4012 | Local Missions | \$7,000 | \$4,500 |
| 4013 | Capital Project | \$1 | \$1 |
| 4014 | Bank Interest | \$10 | \$10 |
| 4015 | Verizon Rent | \$1 | \$18,360 |
| Budget surplus - rollover previous year | | | \$20,000 |
| Total income: | | \$112,772 | \$133,372 |
| Difference between income and expenses: | | \$12 | +802 |
| Acct # | Description | 2024 Estimated Budget | 2025 Estimated Budget |
| 5000 | Co-op Pastors Compensation | \$30,000 | \$31,890 |
| 5001 | Custodian's Salary | \$3,900 | \$9,100 |
| 5002 | Music Minister Salary | \$6,400 | \$6,400 |
| 5003 | Financial Secretary Salary | \$1,800 | \$1,800 |
| 5004 | Treasurer Salary | \$1,800 | \$1,800 |
| 5005 | Secretary Salary | \$6,500 | \$6,500 |
| 5006 | Social Security | \$1,500 | \$1,500 |
| 5007 | Pulpit/Lay Supplies | \$1,200 | \$1,500 |
| 5008 | Workers' Comp. | \$350 | \$200 |
| 5010 | Fund Raising Expenses | \$100 | \$200 |
| 5011 | Capital Improvement | \$1 | \$1 |
| 5100 | Telephone/Internet | \$1,100 | \$1,360 |
| 5101 | Electricity | \$1,600 | \$1,700 |
| 5102 | Propane | \$100 | \$100 |
| 5103 | Water | \$350 | \$350 |
| 5104 | Sewer | \$500 | \$500 |
| 5105 | Heating Oil/Furnace Maint | \$12,900 | \$12,000 |
| 5106 | Rubbish Removal | \$400 | \$400 |
| 5108 | Building Repairs | \$5,000 | \$5,000 |

2025 HAUMC Proposed Budget

| Acct # | Description | 2024 Estimated Budget | | 2025 Estimated Budget |
|--------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|--|-----------------------|
| 5109 | Snow Removal | \$2,500 | | \$3,585 |
| 5110 | Lawn/Landscaping | \$350 | | \$1,800 |
| 5111 | Elevator Contract | \$1,050 | | \$1,250 |
| 5112 | Elevator License | \$200 | | \$200 |
| 5113 | Clock Contract | \$850 | | \$850 |
| 5114 | Piano Tuning | \$350 | | \$350 |
| 5115 | Church Audit | \$1 | | \$1 |
| 5116 | Organ Tuning | \$400 | | \$400 |
| 5201 | Office Supplies | \$1,200 | | \$1,400 |
| 5202 | Christian Ed | \$100 | | \$1 |
| 5203 | Copier Rental | \$1,740 | | \$1,900 |
| 5204 | Cust. Supplies | \$450 | | \$500 |
| 5205 | Music | \$200 | | \$200 |
| 5206 | Web Site | \$450 | | \$450 |
| 5207 | Mechuwana | \$300 | | \$300 |
| 5208 | Realm | \$1,150 | | \$1,700 |
| 5209 | Floor Maintenance | \$1,000 | | \$1,000 |
| 5301 | Advertising | \$400 | | \$400 |
| 5302 | Building Insura | \$11,050 | | \$14,000 |
| 5304 | Conference Expenses | \$900 | | \$900 |
| 5306 | Bank Fees | \$0 | | \$120 |
| 5307 | Investment Transfer (Trombly) | \$0 | | \$1 |
| 5309 | Caring Team | \$200 | | \$200 |
| 5401 | Ministry Support | \$7,742 | | \$7,701 |
| 5402 | New England Mis | \$3,428 | | \$3,520 |
| 5403 | World Missions | \$3,498 | | \$2,890 |
| 5404 | Local Missions | \$7,000 | | \$4,500 |
| 5406 | Zoom | \$150 | | \$150 |
| | | \$122,160 | | \$132,570 |

HAUMC Lay Leadership 2025

*Pastors and Lay Leaders are included as voting members of all committees except Trustees, unless they are elected members of that Committee.
Pastors should be given prior notice about all meetings.*

Administrative Council

Members shall include (but are not limited to): Chairperson, Recording Secretaries, Lay Leader, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, Parish SPRC Rep, Chair or Rep of Trustees, Chair or Rep of Finance, Lay Member to Annual Conference, Pastor. Additional members: Benevolence Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Chair or Rep of United Women of Faith, Chair or Rep of United Methodist Men, Community Supper Coordinator. *Unless a meeting is called as a Charge Conference, all Council meetings are open to the public and all HAUMC members have voice and vote.*

Ad Council Chair: Phil Garwood (*nominated-Ad Council elect at first meeting in 2025*)
Co-Lay Leaders: Patsy Tessier & Pat McKee
Lay Member to AC (June 18-21, 2025): ~~?????~~
Recording Secretaries (*Ad Council & Church Conference*): Vicki Record/Kitty Cogley
Parish SPRC Rep (*Maximum of two consecutive 3-Year Terms before 1 year break is required by Discipline. Must be a member of HAUMC.*): Pam Mitchel (2024)
Parish Council Reps (*need 2*): Pat McKee & Kitty Cogley
Parish Coordinating Team (*need 2*): Vicki Record & Sharon Wogaman
Parish Emergency Coordinating Team: Phil Garwood
Membership Secretary: Cheryl Ramsey
Benevolence Treasurer: Judy Meserve
United Women of Faith: (Elect their own)
United Methodist Men: (Elect their own)
Community Supper Coordinator: Pam Mitchel

Board of Trustees

(Two-thirds of this committee must be made up of HAUMC members and are elected to 3-Year terms. They elect their own chairperson and Treasurer.)

| <u>2025</u> | <u>2026</u> | <u>2027</u> |
|--------------------|-------------|---|
| Rhonda Rush (2023) | | Rusty Greenleaf (2022) Dwight Littlefield (2022) Dennis Wogaman (2025) Sandy Batten (2025) |

Stewardship & Finance

Chair: Jay Trimm
Financial Sec'y: Kitty Cogley
Treasurer: Pat McKee
Committee Members: Paula Greenleaf, Cheryl Ramsay

Finance Members MUST ALSO include: Pastor(s), Ad Council Chair, Lay Member to Annual Conference, Rep of SPRC, Rep of Trustees, and Lay Leader.

Nominations and Leadership Development

(These members are elected to 3-Year terms.)

Chair: Pastor(s)

Vice Chair: Lay Leader(s)

| <u>2025</u> | <u>2026</u> | <u>2027</u> |
|-------------|-------------|-------------------------------|
| Becky Hicks | | Patti Martin Cindy Malcolm |

Caring Team

Members: Sandy Batten (Chair), Kay Gregory, Patti Martin, Sandy Nisbet, Patsy Tessier, Pat O'Connor, Ruth Pallotta

Worship & Music Committee

Chair: Connie Greenleaf

Usher Ministry Coordinator:

Music Minister: Ralph Cheeney

Members: Cheryl Ramsay, Vicki Record, Patsy Tessier

(Other members are still being contacted.)

River Churches Cooperative Parish – 2024 Pastors’ Report

From the beginning, we were clear that we did not believe this project was “doable” without God’s inspiration and wisdom. It has been a daunting and incredible privilege to serve the six churches of the River Churches Cooperative Parish and we continue to look to Scripture to guide us. We started with two images:

Nehemiah 4: 19-20 – When Israel was trying to rebuild the wall in Jerusalem, the tribes divided up various areas to build all at the same time. When one tribe needed more help, they would sound the trumpet and others would come to assist. Our vision is to strengthen the Parish so that each community has its own mission field, its own values, gifts, and ministries, but is part of a larger body of Christ where the main mission – Creating Currents of Connection To Build a More Loving Community – is central. We seek to empower each congregation to build their part of God’s kingdom, connect when we don’t have the resources (people, time, money, etc.), and thereby exponentially increase our impact not only where we live but as part of the United Methodist worldwide connection.

Ecclesiastes 4: 9-12 teaches us that living and working in the company of people enriches our vision of the world, brings encouragement to the soul, and helps us grow in the face of difficulties. “¹² And though one might prevail against another, two will withstand one. A threefold cord is not quickly broken.” We see our Cooperative Parish as a cord with six layers. Just imagine how strong this cord can be, how resistant, and how useful! Such a cord is capable of supporting a great weight and can resist natural wear and tear. Like the ropes used by fishermen to make nets and to secure their boats, our ropes can be used to make us “fishers of people.”

On the local church level this year, we have assisted individual churches with: building sales, navigating merger possibilities, bringing in conference and district resources like grants and consulting, as well as pastoral care, worship leadership, administrative/Disciplinary guidance, nurturing new members, and providing spiritual resources through Bible study, prayer guides, and devotionals.

We also serve at the Conference level, as is expected of clergy in the United Methodist connection. Rev. Angela serves as Co-Chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry and so is also on several other Conference level committees by virtue of that position. Pastor Mauren is the new Co-Chair of Hispanic/Latino Ministries for the Conference and also serves on the Connectional Table with Rev. Angela.

Of the many advances the Parish has made this year, especially in terms of connection and cooperation between the churches, we’d like to highlight 3:

- Many members became more involved in the local church, making their ministries flourish.

- Members of different churches who already knew each other reconnected through joint events such as lunch & sharing, and new relationships were started.

- We had a joint celebration in a public space, marking the United Methodist presence in the Augusta area, with representation from all the churches and welcoming new members.

Certainly more examples can be seen in our Parish Profile. We believe that it is because of God's amazing grace and all these positive experiences that each of the churches voted to continue in the cooperative parish model – and we are grateful!

We know we still have a long way to go, and our special church conference in December confirmed some needs and steps to be taken. This was very important for us, and we will continue to work with commitment and love for the growth and unity of our parish.

Our goals for the coming year include:

- Equip the laity to develop their ministries in the local church, Parish, and outside the church.

- Create spaces to share faith as small groups involving all the churches, starting from geographically based groups.

- Help each church develop its vision, identify its mission field, and develop an action plan (by doing this, it will be easier to identify how they can help each other and what projects we can develop as a Parish).

To achieve these objectives, we intend to:

- Offer training, lectures and conversation circles on: lay ministry, creating action plans for the church, and starting small groups.

- Continue to offer spaces for Bible study and fellowship at parish level.

- Strengthen and expand the actions we have already developed together: joint services, lunch and sharing, joint mission campaigns in specific months, joint activities on special dates. We specifically heard the desire for more opportunities for joint worship and the potential for creating a joint worship team that can work together on: consistency in worship design, filling the preaching calendar, and finding last minute solutions for unexpected preaching vacancies.

We started with the Word of God and, as long as we hope to continue to receive God's blessings and assurance that we are on God's path, we bring one more passage for you to consider: Exodus 18: 13-23. When Israel was in the wilderness, Moses would meet with and hear every single conflict, he would teach them God's instruction and laws, and it was exhausting him. Jethro advised him to continue to teach and to represent the people before God, but that he should appoint other leaders to help make decisions. "They should bring every major dispute to you, but they should decide all the minor cases themselves.... If you do this and God directs you, then

you will be able to endure. And all these people will be able to go back to their homes much happier.”

Our vision also includes equipping the laity with the tools they need to accomplish day-to-day decisions AND so that the local congregation has local leadership prepared to meet their needs. This is also a return to our early Methodist roots going all the way back to Jesse Lee – from whom all of our churches grew out of the Wesley class meetings he started. We truly believe that, by the grace of God, we can accomplish this vision for our Cooperative Parish and make it work well together.

Rev. Angela L. Rotherham

Pastor Mauren G. Julião

Membership Report

2024 changes to the membership rolls:

Baptisms: 0

Confirmations: 0

Marriages: 0

New Members: 0

Transfers from other United Methodist Churches: 2

Dennis Wogaman Transferred from First UMC, Littleton, N.H. 8/25/24

Sharon Wogaman Transferred from First UMC, Littleton, N.H. 8/25/24

Withdrawal: 1

Alexander (Sandy) Nisbet

Removed from membership by death:

Jean Knox 1/10/24

Florence Estelle Simpson Rost 1/25/24

Gregory Batten 4/27/24

James Hynson 5/19/24

Dianne McCollor 7/7/24



Remembrance of Our Saints

They will receive blessing from the Lord

and vindication from the God

of their salvation. Psalm 24.5



Jean Knox 1/10/24

Florence Estelle Simpson Rost 1/25/24

Gregory Batten 4/27/24

James Hynson 5/19/24

Dianne McCollor 7/7/24

Grace M. Moody

Mike Hicks

Report of the Lay Leader 2024
Highland Avenue United Methodist Church
Gardiner, Maine

Although we have been working to adjust to The River Churches Cooperative Parish, there are on-going difficulties and challenges. We have been able to acknowledge some positive aspects all the while being aware of the more negative issues. Six or seven of the congregants have left our church in search of a place of worship which offers greater continuity. Having an aging church family as we do limits availability of folks who are able to support these challenges.

Green St. UMC in Augusta has closed its church doors and now meets for worship in a near-by chapel. Randolph UMC is closing by the end of December. Several of those members have indicated that they will be joining us in Gardiner.

Patsy Tessier

Lay Leader

Highland Ave. UMC

Report of the Worship Committee 2024
Highland Avenue United Methodist Church
Gardiner, Maine

Because of the excellent planning of our Ministerial Staff we only meet on occasion, two or three times a year. As the River Churches come together as a group each church sets their own weekly worship program again under the guidance of Pastor Angela and Pastor Mauren. We are a large group, but we are also a small congregation in each of our special churches.

Connie Greenleaf, Chairperson

Worship Committee

Highland Ave. UMC

Report of the Caring Team 2024
Highland Avenue United Methodist Church
Gardiner, Maine

As the Caring Team of the Highland Avenue United Methodist Church, our purpose is to be aware of the needs of the congregation and the wider community. We serve the homebound, the hospitalized and those in assisted living residences.

The Caring team has been working to provide outreach to both local and global organizations. Each month we collect needed items or money donations for ministries like Chrysalis Place (Gardiner Area Food Bank), Gardiner Area High School and Guidance Office Food Pantries, Food for Thought, UMCOR, Bridging the Gap, Capital Area New Mainers, etc. We also do a Giving Tree at Christmas time to provide gifts for 2-3 families in need.

In addition to that we, with other parishioners, regularly visit senior living facilities to sing and visit with the residents.

The team provides homemade chicken pot pies and sides to church members and friends who are homebound or going through a hard time. We also send cards and make phone calls.

Sandy Batten
Caring Team
Highland Ave. UMC



2024 CC: United Methodist Men Report

Name and email of person submitting this form.

*First Name Philip
 *Last Name Garwood
 *Email crabhatbrew@gmail.com
 *Church Information
 Gardiner: Highland Avenue UMC-35 Highland Av-Gardiner-ME- 04345
 *District Many Waters
 Number of UMMen members at the present time: 5-7
 Number of members a year ago: 6-9
 Number of new members during the past year: 0
 Number of general meetings: 6
 Average attendance: 5-8

The HAUMC UMMen group meets roughly once per month except for the summer months. However, because of conflicts during some of the months, we met 6 times during 2023 through October.

The gatherings are breakfast fellowship meetings. Since the formation of the River Churches Cooperative Parish, there have been mentions of expanding the men’s group to a parish-wide group, but nothing has developed in that direction yet.

At present, the only mission project of the UMMen group is to provide the Gardiner Community Supper for the first Sunday of October. The Gardiner Community Supper is organized by the Gardiner Area Ministers Association. Every Sunday of every month, a free supper is provided at Christ Episcopal Church. Each participating church is responsible for a given Sunday each month, with the Girl Scout Troop doing the 5th Sundays. Within HAUMC, a different committee or group is responsible for the supper in a given month.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Cash on hand at beginning of period \$233.25
 Cash on hand as of October 19, 2024: \$148.75
 List here amount of any savings accounts, etc. N/A

Additional Comments/Information: Our treasury, such as it is, depends completely upon a free will offering at each breakfast meeting. This money is initially used to defray the expenses of the cook for purchasing the provisions for making breakfast. We do not have a summary of the reimbursements to the cook. The decrease in the Treasury is due to the lower average attendance.

President Name and Email Address Philip Garwood
Treasurer Name and Email Address Dwight Littlefield