



Highland Avenue United Methodist Church

Highlander News

Gardiner, Me. 582-2303
Reverend Angela Rotherham
Lay Leader: Patsy Tessier

Worship: 9:30 am
Pastor Mauren Julião

May—August 2024

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Highland Avenue UMC
35 Highland Avenue
Gardiner, ME 04345

Website: <http://highlandaveumc.net>
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Facing Changes With Faith

(Josuah 1.1-9; John 14.1, 16-18)

Pastor Mauren Juliao

Joshua 1 is used in general to talk with leaders of the church. But this passage brings precious lessons for everyone who has faith in God and follows Jesus. I'd like to share one of them, about things we cannot change. God was talking about that to Joshua in verse 2. Everyone knew that Moses was dead, it wasn't exactly a revelation. But by repeating it, God was saying to Joshua: - this reality is not going to change. He's not coming back. Things will be different, and you need to find your way to keep following me.



The death of someone is certainly one of the most radical changes in our lives because it is irreversible. But other changes can also shake us up: a terrifying diagnosis, the loss of a job, a broken relationship... even the changes at the church. Each one of us can think of difficult and painful experiences for which there is no return, at least at first. Some of these changes are sudden, others not so much, but the fact is that they tend to frighten or discourage us.

In the face of these situations, God's words to Joshua apply to us: You cannot change the circumstances but remember that I am still with you! Be willing to keep going and you will prove my power. Don't let present circumstances discourage you or the uncertainties of the future frighten you. Life changes but my power doesn't. And I will use my power on your behalf.

Jesus said the same to his disciples in a different way when he promised the Holy Spirit. He said: "Don't let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in me. I will ask the Father, and the Father will send the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, to be with you always, teaching you all things. Jesus also said: "Those who love me, will keep my word; and my Father will love them, and we will come to

Please see TRUST, page 5

Birthdays and Anniversaries



Happy Birthday to:

May

- 3 Beverley Hayward
- 5 Abby Dunn
- 10 Kay Gregory
- 11 Dick Merriam
- 11 Joseph Szakas
- 12 Judy Lumbert
- 13 Joan Cummings
- 14 Kim Batten Jamison
- 14 Sawyer Pracher
- 18 Dana Rush
- 18 Philip Garwood
- 22 Julie Merriam
- 25 Sandra Hickey
- 29 Daralyn Hicks
- 30 Connie Greenleaf
- 31 Holly Sherburne



June

- 2 Heidi Sherburne
- 3 Heidi Aiken Hicks
- 4 Jeremy Lufkin
- 4 Lincoln James Austin
(Judy Lumbert's great-grandson)
- 7 Austin Moore
- 13 Kayla Marks
- 13 Elson Robbins
- 16 Nancy Sparrow
- 17 Elizabeth Sparrow
Chaisson
- 20 Gene Anastasio
- 20 Megan Nickless
- 25 Kerry Ramsay
- 25 Phoebe Littlefield

July

- 2 Carole LaPlante Britt
- 4 Naomi Shardlow
- 5 Kristen Record
- 7 Ken Lufkin
- 8 Tammy Batten Hatt
- 13 Harold Gerard

- 14 Cody Moore
- 16 Brianna Hope DeSoto
- 17 Pam Danforth Dixon
- 18 Audrey Littlefield
- 20 Ashley McCollor
- 21 Don Chimera
- 27 Phyllis Buck
- 31 Carol Christopoulos
- 31 Kayla Dennis

August

- 1 Jessica Greenleaf
- 2 Sue Frost
- 4 Gregory Garwood
- 6 Nora Tessier
- 7 Kristopher Ramsay
- 8 Robert Hicks
- 13 Lew Gipson
- 17 Chloe Littlefield
- 17 Patti Martin
- 19 Tami Gipson
- 20 Vicki Record
- 23 Ross Littlefield
- 24 Kelly Gipson
- 24 Pat McKee
- 28 Joe Szakas
- 31 Josh Hayward
- 31 Beverly LaPlante



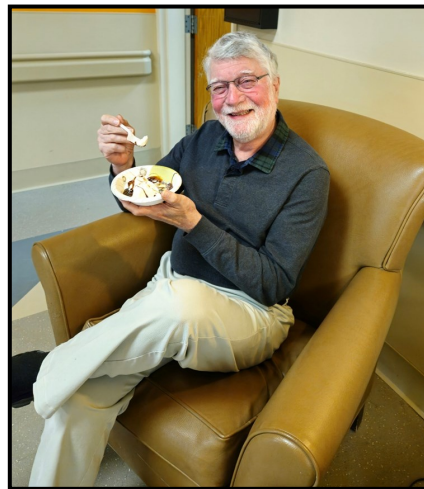
Wishing a Happy Anniversary to:

- Rusty and Paula Greenleaf - May 20
- James and Judy Meserve - May 29
- Russell and Sandra Hickey - June 8
- Dwight and Mary Cooper - June 22
- Ken and Donna Lufkin - June 23
- Jim and Jackie Toman - June 24
- Tom and Vicki Record - June 28
- Pastor Ruth and Dick Merriam - July 2
- Pam Mitchel and Phil Garwood-Aug 7
- Dwight and Audrey Littlefield - Aug. 24
- Sonny and Norine Leathers - Aug. 28

People in the News



The Greenleaf/Chadbourne families celebrate Easter Sunday.



Caring Team Ministry

Sandy Nisbet and the Caring Team continue their ministry visiting senior living facilities. The two pictures on the left were taken on a recent visit to Gray Birch. The picture on the right was a visit to the Woodlands in Hallowell to sing for the residents and visit Vicki's mom. Thank you so much, Sandy, and all those who accompany him, for this outreach ministry.

(See more pictures on the next page.)

Birthday Celebration



Happy Birthday, Joan!



On Monday, May 13, a group of Caring Team and church members visited Joan Cummings to celebrate her 90th birthday at Pierce House in Farmington. Sandy Nisbet sang and Heather Brown and Judy Meserve even danced the Charleston. Then everyone shared cake and ice cream.



Congratulations!



Mission Pin Recipient



On April 7, Kay Gregory presented the 2020 United Methodist Women Mission Pin to Wendy Vigue. The following is what she shared on that day:

Wendy I want to present this 2020 UMW Mission Pin to you on behalf of your UMW friends, who nominated you. Due to Covid and health issues I was unable to present Wendy with this UMW mission pin in 2020.

I would now like to share with all of you some info about our friend Wendy.

She became a part of our church family attending Sunday school and youth group. After graduating from Gardiner Area High school, she soon went to work for the Social Security office in Augusta. In 1982 she moved to New York for 8 years working in a government office. While in New York, she also worked as a Hospice Volunteer for 4 years.

Then returning to Maine in 1990 she began working at Togus VA center until her retirement. Upon her return she joined our Highlander's Circle of the United Methodist Women and became an active member of our church family serving on the following committees/activities:

- Staff Parish Relations – 3 years,
- Communion Steward – 5 years,
- Worship Committee – 7 years,
- Shift Team in 2018,
- UMW Funeral Luncheon Team – 6 years,
- Christmas Fair and Easter Party.

In addition to that, Wendy, along with Pat McKee, worked to get the TV in our Fellowship Hall. Plus, she was a caregiver for her cousin, George and her Mom.

Wendy, on behalf of your UMW friends and your church family, I want to thank you for all that you have done and are doing for our church. We want you to have these flowers as a small thank you and may they brighten your day.



Congratulations, Patrick!

Congratulations to Patrick Rush who graduated on May 11 from Plymouth State University in Plymouth, New Hampshire with a B.S. degree in Business Administration. Patrick is the son of Rhonda and Eric Rush. He is employed by BSN Sports. Best wishes!

Trust

Continued from Page 1

them and make our home with them"
(John 14.1; 16-23).

And today the Lord is saying again: "Life is what it is. There are circumstances you can't change, there are facts in life you cannot do anything about. But you don't have to surrender to the facts, you don't have to give up. Know that I am with you in each and every situation. Am I not the one who allows all things? Trust me, follow my teachings, and you will succeed because I am with you!"

Whatever the challenging change we face as a person or as a church, in the present or the future, we have an all-powerful and all-reliable God who is limitless in resources and who loves us and cares for us. So, let's go forward in faith!

With my prayers,
Pastor Mauren

Committee/Group News



Bible Study

Using the Psalms to shape our prayers

May 22 to June 12

Wednesdays, 6:30 pm
at Cox Memorial UMC
29 Middle St - Hallowell-ME

Livestream:

[Facebook.com/maurenjuliao](https://www.facebook.com/maurenjuliao)



Graduate Sunday



Graduate Sunday will be held on Sunday, June 9 during worship. If you have a loved one whom you would like to recognize during worship, please let Vicki know the details (name, names of parents and grandparents if appropriate, school they graduated from, future plans, and siblings if you want them listed) by June 2. Also, please let us know if they will be there in the sanctuary on that day.

On another note, plans are in the works for a Baccalaureate service led by the Gardiner Area Minister's Association (GAMA) on June 2 at 2 pm. The place is yet to be determined.



Baccalaureate Service

May Basket Fundraiser



On behalf of the Stewardship and Finance Committee, please accept our sincere gratitude to ALL who participated in making the May Basket Mission

an overwhelming success.

We sold a total of 143 baskets. Thirty of those were delivered to the Alzheimer's Center.

A heartfelt thanks also goes out to all who purchased the baskets, we hope they brought smiles to the recipients' faces.

United Women in Faith

On May 15, the United Women in Faith gathered in our Fellowship Hall to share a potluck supper and install new officers.

Many thanks to Heather Brown (president) and Connie Greenleaf (vice-president) for volunteering to lead the group. And thanks to Lynda Moreshead (secretary) and Judy Meserve (treasurer) for continuing in their present positions. Special thanks to Kay Gregory and Sandy Batten for their service over the past several years. Blessings to you all!

Caring Team Mission Projects

The Caring Team has the following mission projects planned for the coming months:

- ✝ **May:** Community Supper donations
- ✝ **June:** Food For Thought
- ✝ **July:** Bridging the Gap
- ✝ **August:** Backpack Program

If you would like to contribute, you can make a check out to HAUMC and put the mission in the memo line.

General Conference



Middle Ground

Reflection on the General Conference

Rev. Angela Rotherham

Decisions in the church should never be about winning or losing – us against them. Bishop Devadhar was always very clear that when we were in the midst of Holy Conferencing, there would be no clapping if a vote went the way we wanted it to go, because that meant that someone else was hurting or disappointed and it made them feel less included in the family. There were many decisions made at the postponed 2020 General Conference - some were lauded, some lamented. Yet what seems to have been celebrated by all was the feeling of community. For the first time in more than 50 years, General Conference did not seem adversarial – we were a family doing our best to treat each other with respect and dignity and TOGETHER discern the will of God for the United Methodist Church.

It made me think of a song by Maroon 5 called “Middle Ground.” Here are some of the lyrics:

*I need peace, I need hope, I need guidance/I need more than myself
I need light, I need life, I need what I never felt
Sisters and brothers are picking sides/And both of our mothers are terrified
And I'm crying out to an empty sky/Tell me
If I hit the ground / And I fall down to my knees / Would you hear the sound?
Am I crazy to think that we / Could make it out?
Am I crazier to believe / There's a middle ground?*

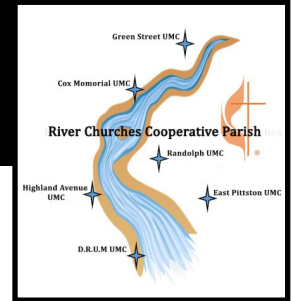
Friends, the decisions at General Conference around human sexuality, same-sex marriage, and the ordination of LGBTQ+ persons did not swing the pendulum from one side to the other. They didn’t add any language that would only exclude a different group of people. What they did was remove language and return the Book of Discipline back to what it was in 1972. Together they found a middle ground. At the May Lunch and Sharing at Randolph UMC, this came up in one of our table conversations and I explained it like this:

God gave Moses 10 Commandments. 10 rules that were all about how we love God and how we love one another. Over the centuries, the Hebrew priests added specifics – God’s rules were too general, we wanted more details. So, they added rules and consequences if those rules were not obeyed - a very human thing to do. God did not give us more laws. In our countries, we do the same. It’s not enough that we use common courtesy and not park our car so that it blocks someone’s walkway or driveway, we need rules that make it illegal, and we give people tickets as a deterrent to stop them from breaking those rules. United Methodists did the same with our Book of Discipline.

In 1972, a group of people were not happy with the fact that we had LGBTQ+ clergy (it wasn’t legal to perform same sex weddings at that time anyway), so they ADDED SPECIFICS making it illegal and, as the years went on, adding consequences for those who broke the rules. The actions of this most recent General Conference, in a sense, brought us back to the 10 commandments. In other words, clergy can still decide who they will or will not marry, but there are no punishments for those who decide to conduct a same-sex wedding and there are no punishments for those who decide not to! It also means that we will only discern whether someone is fit to serve the church in a leadership role based on their calling and their gifts for the ministry – we don’t need to ask questions that are really none of our business and pose no threat to anyone.

No longer are there specifics because we don’t agree on the specifics! What we do agree on is that we are a family, and we need to learn to live with and love one another. What we do agree on is that we are not to be

The Cooperative Parish



Coordinating Team News



The River Churches Coordinating Team (consisting of two members from each of the churches) met on May 5th on Zoom to discuss parish events that have happened since the last meeting and to start planning for events going forward. Sharon Wogaman and Vicki Record attended from Highland Avenue. Some of the items discussed included:

Soup/Lunch and Sharing: We have met five times at different churches on the second Saturday of the month, and those who have participated have enjoyed the time of fellowship (not to mention the food). The next one will take place at Dresden/Richmond UMC on **June 8**. We are going to take a break during the summer and will pair up in the fall. On **September 14**, Highland Avenue will join Cox Memorial to provide lunch at Cox Memorial. Other dates are **October 19** at Randolph (Green Street and Randolph to host) and **November 9** at East Pittston (DRUM and East Pittston will host).

Ash Wednesday and Holy Week Services were well received. It was suggested that an Ash Wednesday service be offered next year in the morning as well as the evening to provide more flexibility for people. The Easter Party at Highland Avenue had a small but enthusiastic group of children that attended. (*See page 10*). It was suggested that it might be held the previous Saturday so that it didn't interfere with set-up for Easter Breakfast (or to have it at one of the churches that doesn't host breakfast).

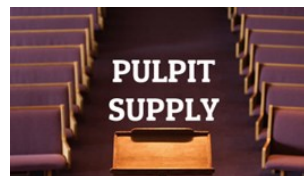
Vacation Bible School was discussed but it was decided that the Parish would focus on providing help for students attending **Camp Mechuwana**. East Pittston UMC is offering a Vacation Bible School and would

welcome children from around the parish if they would like to attend.

A joint worship service for all the churches is being planned for August 25, with a possible outside service (weather permitting) at a local riverfront venue with a picnic to follow. More details will be posted as we get closer to the date.

This group will meet again on May 28th. If you have anything that you think should be discussed, let Vicki or Sharon know.

Pulpit Supply Committee

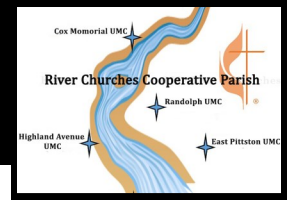


The Pulpit Supply Committee (Diann Bailey and Kathy Patrick from Randolph and Vicki Record and Patsy Tessier from HAUMC) met May 10th to discuss finding worship leaders for the months of July through December. Pastor Angela will be on leave during the months of September and October so Pastor Mauren will be serving full time during that time period.

We have been very fortunate to have some familiar favorites agree to join us again and some new faces as well: Anne Carter, Patsy Tessier, Rev. John Cheney, Rev. Ruth Merriam, Rob Olson (who is traveling all the way up from Kennebunk), Wes Palmer and Rich Hughen have agreed to lead services for us. And Ralph Cheney will organize another Music Sunday on September 29 in Randolph (we will join them on that date). Stay tuned to the bulletins for the dates.

If you would like to become a worship leader, we would love to hear from you. We are very fortunate to have Sandy Nisbet decide to do just that, and he did an awesome job on Mother's Day! Many thanks for your ministry, Sandy!

The Cooperative Parish



Conference

Continued from pg. 7

judge or jury, passing out punishment for those who are acting according to their conscience. We do not decide who will be saved and who won't. As Methodists, we believe that God gave us experience, reason, tradition, and scripture with the intention that we use ALL of them to make our decisions in life. We also know that only God is worthy to judge, and we leave that judgment to God alone. Salvation is a gift from God, not from us. Our mission and our joy are in obeying Jesus's words: that we share the Good News to the ends of the earth and bring people into the family through Baptism.

Like a loving mother, who wants nothing more than all her family at the table together, God longs for us to be at the table together. God doesn't need us to agree on everything, nor do we need to avoid talking about religion or politics! What God desires most is that we show love to one another; that we learn to learn to speak to each other with compassion and respect. Instead of only listening to respond, or acting reactively when someone says something we disagree with, we hear them out and choose our words carefully.

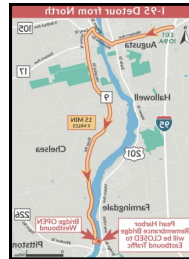
What we need is to have an open mind that maybe, just maybe, none of us has the answer to every question. What we need is some humility and a sense of the greater good, rather than a focus on "me and mine" or what does or doesn't make sense to me. In truth, the actions of the General Conference are only words in a book. The true test will be how we live them out – will we actually be inclusive and welcoming of all? Will we choose another group of people to discriminate against, like we did with African Americans and women in the not-so-distant past? We can ask the same of the Bible. Jesus distilled those 10 commandments to two: Love God and Love your neighbor as yourself. Those could just be words in a book OR we could try living them out to their fullest capacity.

Now, THAT would be transformational!

See Bishop Johnson's message at the link below:

[A message from Bishop Johnson \(brtapp.com\)](http://brtapp.com)

We'll Cross that Bridge...Or Not!



The Gardiner/ Randolph Bridge will be open one-way this summer during the months of July and August. The exact time period is uncertain. The Maine DOT website describes it as follows: "The maintenance of traffic for the project will utilize a directional detour, which will

remove eastbound traffic to Randolph from the bridge during construction. Access to the east side of the Kennebec River will require traveling north to Augusta or south to Richmond-Dresden. The duration of the directional detour is anticipated to be 30 days in July-August of 2024."

Since Highland Avenue and Randolph UMCs share worship leaders and a music minister, we have worked to plan worship this summer so that we share the challenges of the bridge construction. During the month of July, Randolph will join us at Highland Avenue for worship at 9:30 am. During the month of August, Highland Avenue will join Randolph for their service at 11 am. (except for the Parish joint worship service on August 25).

We appreciate your patience while this is happening. We thank Pastor Mauren for agreeing to lead an extra service beyond her usual schedule to help out with this. Sandy Nisbet and Kathy Patrick have also agreed to do services. We will continue to try to provide zoom at the services in Randolph to the best of our abilities.

Visioning Team



As was noted in the last newsletter, the Visioning Team meets once a month and is the "conduit through which information reaches the local congregation and local church leadership." Information is shared through the newsletters, bulletins, and email. You might also have noticed a new bulletin board in the back of the sanctuary. We will put items of interest on the bulletin board as we receive them. Check it out next time you are in church.

Easter Party/Egg Hunt



Many Thanks!

Many thanks to all who helped plan, set up, and work at the Easter Egg Hunt/Party. Thanks especially to Wendy Vigue for all she did to organize it. It was a wonderful day and the kids said it was “the best Easter Egg Hunt EVER!!!!”



In Our Prayers



Please pray for:

Harold Aziz
 Kari Linton Barrett
 David Boucher
 Michael Breed
 Jim Brown and family
 Diane Bryant
 Cyndi and Dave Chase
 Ted and Bonnie Collins
 Dwight Cooper
 Cheri Daniels
 Nora Dennis

Peter Dennis
 Lynn Gerard
 Terry Greenleaf
 Karen Grover (Pastor
 Angela's mom)
 Vee Hanna and her dog
 Ruby
 Sarah Hart
 Jim Hynson
 Darin Larrabee
 Tom Leet and family
 Lue Luare
 Jerry Lucas
 Judy Lumbert's
 daughter and family
 Cindy and
 Curt Malcolm

Darlene Manzo
 Amanda Mason
 Doug Mason
 Philip Mason
 Sandra McCurdy
 Rick McKenna
 Ellen Minotty
 Rob and Beth Munzing
 Dennis O'DRISCOLL
 Carla Parsons
 Penelope
 Cheryl Ramsay
 Michael Scott Taylor
 Ric Thombs
 Sharon Wogaman
 Robert Wood

**People of Lewiston and
 those affected by
 the shooting
 People of the Middle
 East
 Border Concerns
 People of Ukraine
 People of Afghanistan
 Coronavirus Victims
 Victims of Violence
 Victims of Natural
 Disasters (including
 the tornado victims
 in Missouri)
 The United Methodist
 General Conference**

Our Heartfelt Sympathies

Our community of faith is once again saddened by the loss of two of our dear saints in the last month.

† Greg Batten passed away on April 27 at home with his loved ones by his side. Greg was a long time member of the church along with his wife Sandy. He often worked behind the scenes, helping on suppers and fairs, ushering and serving on committees. Our hearts go out to Sandy and his two daughters, Tammy Hatt (and her husband Eric) and Kim Jamison (and her husband Don) and his five grandchildren. A memorial service is planned in our sanctuary on Friday, May 31 at 1 pm with a reception to follow.



† Sam O'Connor passed away on May 4 with his wife Pat at his side. He was loved by his students at Erskine Academy and Gardiner Regional Junior High where he taught and then upon retiring served as a bus driver. He also coached and

refereed basketball and soccer. We were blessed to have him as part of our church family. Our sympathies are with his wife, Pat and daughter, Penny Inman (and husband Erik) and son, Todd and his grandchildren, Morgan, Madison, and Nikolas and his extended family. There will be a memorial service in our sanctuary on Friday, May 17 at 1 pm followed by a reception.



We will miss these wonderful people. We hope that knowing they are in the loving arms of our Lord will bring peace and that their memories will be a comfort.



Highland Avenue United Methodist Church
35 Highland Avenue
Gardiner, ME 04345

TIME DATED MATERIAL

HIGHLANDER NEWS

We welcome your suggestions and contributions to our newsletter. Contact the pastor or church secretary with your news.
Tel: (207) 582-2303

Pastors.....	Rev. Angela Rotherham
.....	Pastor Mauren Julião
Lay Leader.....	Patsy Tessier
Music Minister.....	Ralph Cheney
Treasurer.....	Pat McKee
Financial Secretary.....	Kitty Cogley
Church Administrator....	Vicki Record

Worship 9:30 AM
All are welcome !!



**COME
Join
US**

**Second Saturday
Lunch & Sharing
Noon – 1:00 PM**

June 8
at
DRUM

(Dresden/Richmond UMC)

121 Pleasant Street
Richmond, ME

**Scripture
Prayer &
Good Conversation**