

# Looking Forward to January ACE

January 2024— Congregational Church in Cumberland, UCC



## Happy New Year!

We will begin this year with a wonderful opportunity to deepen the ties that bind and strengthen our community. As soon as you read this, please take 3-5 minutes to sign up for an Agape meal this month or in February.

These simple meals are based on the Christian tradition of gathering in people's homes to break bread together and in so doing "build up the community in love." Gather for soup and the gift of meeting with some new and old church friends. We have a space saved at the table for you!

Blessings and hope as you begin this New Year!

Allison

PS Mark your calendar for MLK Sunday and our intergenerational community service activity on Jan. 14th.

We are so honored to welcome Vice Chief Richard Silliboy of the Mi'kmaq Nation.

*"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching."*

--Hebrews 10: 24-25

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## Worship and Spiritual Life:



### MLK Sunday

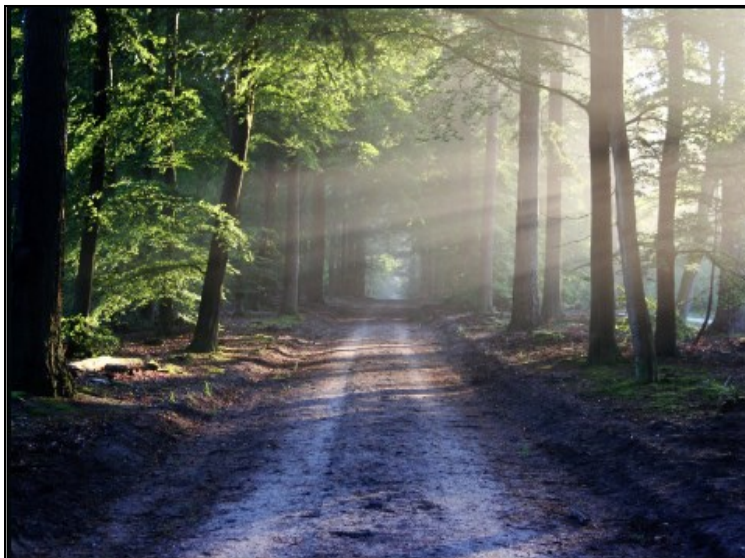
**Join us on Sunday, Jan. 14th at 9:30 am** (in person and online) as we are honored to welcome guest speaker **Vice-Chief Richard Silliboy of the Mi'kmaq Nation.**

**9:30 am Worship** lifting up the life of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Mi'kmaq Nation and Wabanaki struggle for justice

**10:45 am Community Service Opportunity:** all ages join together to pack care packages for those facing homelessness and write letters to our leaders advocating change

**10:45 am Multilingual Worship:** Joy-filled singing and prayer in French, Portuguese, and English. Everyone is welcome!

*Vice Chief Richard Silliboy of the Mi'kmaq Nation is Vice President of the Wabanaki Alliance and serves on the Permanent Commission on the Status of Racial, Indigenous, and Tribal Populations. He is on the board of Pine Tree Legal, Co-chair of the Executive Committee of the Abbe Museum, and a Master Basket Maker. He has 5 adult children, 8 grandchildren, and 10 great grandchildren.*



### Who is Jesus and what does it mean to follow his path of Love?

This group is for those at the beginning of a new faith journey. 4 one hour meetings. Day/time zoom meetings will be based on participants' schedules. We will read through the gospel of Luke as a place to begin. How do we read the Bible with mind and heart--metaphorically and historically. No question is off limits. Time for centering prayer for one another and the world will also be included. Please contact Allison at [allisoncgsmith@gmail.com](mailto:allisoncgsmith@gmail.com) if you are interested.

Love is our Language:

### Multi Lingual Worship

Adoração multilíngue

Culte multilingue

Adoración multilingüe

Jan. 14, 28, Feb. 4, 11

10:30-10:50 am

Congregational Church, UCC

Cumberland

[www.cumberlanducc.org](http://www.cumberlanducc.org)

**Multilingual Service starting again on Sunday, January 14th!** Join us for joy-filled singing and prayer in French, Portuguese, and English at 10:45 after the 9:30 am service.



### Agape Meal Sign Up

Dear friends,

As we celebrate the new year, we also have the opportunity to gather with fellow parishioners in homes over simple meals of bread and soup and deepen our connections with each other. For many who have experienced Agape meals, they have said we should do this more often. So, beginning the first weekend in January, there will be opportunities for you to sign up for a meal which fits your calendars by using this **SignUpGenius** link: Click [HERE](#).

Signing up is easy! If you are a first time user, please note: you do NOT NEED TO CLICK ON ANYTHING OTHER THAN:

1. The meal you want to attend (click soup maker, bread provider or attendee, whichever applies to you)
2. Next hit "SAVE AND CONTINUE" which will take you to providing your name or Jane and Joe Doe if two of you are coming.
3. Next, indicate how many of you are coming and then you should be finished. ALL THE OTHER DISTRACTIONS ARE JUST ADS TRYING TO GET YOUR ATTENTION.

If you are unable to use this method, you can email me with the meal you would like to attend, whether you are making soup, bringing bread or just attending, and how many of you there will be...

If you have any questions, contact me at [sjbancroft@gmail.com](mailto:sjbancroft@gmail.com) or email [office@cumberlanducc.org](mailto:office@cumberlanducc.org).

Thanks, Sally Bancroft





## Annual Finance Meeting

Save the Date! Sunday, Jan. 21st at 10:45 am

Join us for this important meeting in the life of the Church as the congregation reviews the proposed budget for 2024.

If you need childcare for this meeting, please contact the Church Office by Jan. 14.

## Families and Youth:

Happy New Year! I can't believe that by the time we resume Church School, Family Dinners, and other youth activities, the Twelve Days of Christmas will have come and gone. I hope that each and everyone of you had a wonderful Christmas and that your New Year is off to a healthy, happy start.

As we start this New Year I would like to invite you to become involved with our Church School or Junior High/High School kids by sharing any special skill or hobby that you have— from archery to zoology or a capella singing to ziplining, please contact Danielle by email, [danielle@cumberlanducc.org](mailto:danielle@cumberlanducc.org), with your ideas and questions.

### Church School

After a wonderful pageant that took over all church school activities for a few weeks, then a break for Christmas and New Year's, we are ready to get back to our curriculum from the Fruits of the Spirit! Starting January 7 we will be learning about forbearance, an old fashioned word for patience, tolerance, or endurance. During our time together every Sunday we share about our week, laugh, play, ask questions, all while learning about our faith, and we always end with snacks. Everyone from Kindergarten through fifth grade is welcome.

### LINKS

Mark your calendar for January 14 from 6-8PM. We will plan our winter activities. As always, please bring your friends!

### Nursery

We are seeking folks, from teens and up, to staff our nursery on Sunday mornings. Please contact Danielle by email for more information, [danielle@cumberlanducc.org](mailto:danielle@cumberlanducc.org).

## Family Dinner

Sunday, January 7, 5:30-7:00 pm

(1st Sundays of every month at 5:30 pm)

Our next Family Dinner is on January 7 from 5:30-7:00 PM. These wonderful, free meals are for all families with school age children as well as other members of our church family, so don't be shy to bring friends. Our activity this time will be handbells! A member of our Bell Choir will join us to show us how to play the bells. Please RSVP by January 4 by emailing the church office or Danielle Keller at [danielle@cumberlanducc.org](mailto:danielle@cumberlanducc.org).



New FREE Community Group

## Playgroup at CCCUCC

Thursdays, 10:00-11:00am

Jan. 11, 18, 25, Feb. 1, 8, and 15

Fun playgroup for parents/caregivers with babies, toddlers, and preschool kids!  
Story time, play time (inside/outside) and possibly yoga

For more info contact Allison [allisoncgsmith@gmail.com](mailto:allisoncgsmith@gmail.com)

Congregational Church in Cumberland, UCC  
282 Main Street, Cumberland, ME  
FB @cumberlanducc www.cumberlanducc.org



## Love in Action

**It is such a joy to let you know that as of Dec. 28th, the Christmas Eve offering shared is \$3115!**

What a beautiful gift for the Baby Jesus which will truly be a sign of God's presence through these winter months. The offering will be shared with: the Cumberland Food Pantry, Grace Street Ministry--serving those facing homelessness, and our Welcoming Neighbors Fund--helping our new neighbors in many ways.

Another sign of the 12 Days of Christmas is in the 285+ pairs of socks and gloves that have decked the halls and which will truly bring the "presence" and warmth of love.

Thank you for all of these Christmas gifts and so much love and generosity

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## Gun Violence Prevention

The Maine Conference UCC Social Action Committee is hosting sacred conversations in February at three different churches, covering a wide geography of our conference. You are invited to engage in spirit-led and compassionate conversation, look to one another for healing, and to contemplate a faithful response to gun control. These gatherings are in person except if weather forces hybrid or zoom gatherings. If you wish to participate and cannot travel to one of these churches, we will provide a zoom option.

**Wednesday Feb. 7, 6:30-8pm at Waterville UCC**

**Saturday Feb.10, 10-11:30am at Hammond St. UCC in Bangor**

**Sunday Feb.11, 2-3:30pm at High St. Congregational in Auburn**

**We will have a carpool going from CCCUCC to Auburn on Feb. 11th.** Please contact Ann Sawchuck from the Social Justice Team to car pool or for ways to help.  
[annsawchuck8@gmail.com](mailto:annsawchuck8@gmail.com)

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## CCC Solar LLC

In 2016 many church members were looking for a way to support actions that benefited the environment and, at the same time, help the church continue its missions. A friend of mine with whom I had worked at Maine Medical Center, Robert Ackroyd, had started a solar company called Green Sun Alternative Energy Solutions, and enthusiastically suggested he could help church members install a solar array. He had previously donated and installed an array at Pilgrim Lodge. Because non-profit organizations could not apply tax-credit savings we formed a limited liability company and named it

(Congregational Church in Cumberland), CCC Solar LLC.

We needed about \$35000 for the materials and, fortunately, seven generous individuals were willing to provide \$5000 each with a guarantee of no, as in zero, appreciation on their loan. The agreement stated that once each partner of the LLC had recovered their initial \$5000, the LLC would sell the array to the church for \$1. The individuals that came forward, with support of their families, were Al Alschuler, Debbie Auclair, Ron Bancroft, Steve Barr, Peter Bingham, Dave Carlson, and Ira Hartman. As Managing Agent, I periodically billed the church for electricity that was generated by the array and distributed the funds to each partner. Each year Ron Smith and his firm RHR Smith & Company, CPA's, very generously complete our relatively complicated tax filings, and we are all extremely grateful for that.

Based on the agreement we are now ending the LLC and the array will be owned by our church. Since the time of installation, the array has generated about 149 MWh (149,00 KWh) of electrical power which is equivalent to over 117,000 pounds of coal burned and to carbon sequestered by nearly 1800 tree seedlings grown for 10 years. May the sun stay bright!

Paul Auclair

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*Dear Friends,*

*Not only were we able to help our neighbors in Freeport stay warm but we had extra coats that we could share with families at the shelter at the YMCA in Portland.*

*The warmth of God's love and presence has been so evident in you this Christmas! Thank you, Allison*  
Dear Martha and the UCC Cumberland Congregation,

We wanted to extend our deep gratitude and appreciation for the donation of winter gear for adults and children seeking asylum at our shelter. From you all, we received an abundance of winter coats, boots, and snow pants. We have begun sorting through the items and are distributing to families according to need over the next few weeks.

We are moved by your extension of love and care for these families. Thank you for all that you have done this year to contribute to the warm welcoming of immigrant communities in the state of Maine.

Gratefully,

Lilly, Dacoda, and Madeleine

Madeleine R. Saucier

*Program and Community Engagement Manager*  
Maine Immigrants' Rights Coalition (MIRC)





## Love in Action



Guy Alain, Toto, Carol, a friend and Arlene

### ROOT CELLAR

To volunteer to pack meals for residents at Motel 6, please sign up here or contact Carol Riley for more info. (207-329-7111)

Sign-up [HERE](#)

## The Work of Christmas

By Howard Thurman

When the song of the angels is stilled,  
When the star in the sky is gone,  
When the kings and princes are home,  
When the shepherds are back with their flocks,  
The work of Christmas begins:

To find the lost,  
To heal the broken,  
To feed the hungry,  
To release the prisoner,  
To rebuild the nations,  
To bring peace among the people,  
To make music in the heart.

## Church News

## Our Church Community

We know that, together, we make a wonderful Church community. We have so much in common but each one of us has a unique story. We worship and work alongside each other but we all have a life history that started long before today. We would love to hear all the stories so, once a month, we will fea-

ture the story of one family. It could be a family of one or more - everyone of us has a story to tell!

If you would like to be featured for one month, please email me and I will put you on the list. We have a list of 10 questions below to answer. Feel free to make the answers short or long however, in the interest of space, we may abbreviate if necessary!

### Personal Background Information

1. Where were you born?
2. Where did you grow up?
3. Where do you live now?
4. How did your childhood shape who you are today? Do you have siblings?
5. How would you describe yourself?
6. What is your educational background?
7. Do you have any children/grandchildren/great grandchildren?
8. What is/was your profession?
9. What are some of the things you enjoy doing in your free time?
10. Do you have a personal motto or is there a phrase/quote that is meaningful to you?

Please email [karengallati@gmail.com](mailto:karengallati@gmail.com) if you would like to be included in this 'Tell us your Story' project. Looking forward to hearing the stories from all of our wonderful community!

## Church Council Minutes

### Summary of the December Council Minutes

- Clerk's Report: There were several requests made for membership removal, mostly due to folks moving out of state. Louise Clark has been reinstated. Katie Dana and Joseph Collura joined on 11/26. Total membership is now 287.
- Treasurer's Report: The past month was a good one for income, part of which was due to income being drawn from the cell tower investments. The Christmas Fair earned \$12,500, an increase from last year.
- Solar Panel Buyout: Paul Auclair wrote an account that was published in the ACE at the beginning of December. The church owns the solar panels and many thanks to those individuals who made the initial investments.
- Church Budget for 2024: The proposed budget includes 3% for salary increases. There is some concern about pledges reaching the Pledge Committee's goal. A number of pledges are still coming in and a decision was made to continue with the final number we actually arrive at. Council is still looking for a group to lead another fund raiser in the spring. The Budget as presented for 2024 was approved by Council.
- Danielle: Allison is checking on "Call" requirements for Danielle before the Annual Meeting on January 21st. The Council



## Church News



### Deacons Corner

Ron and I attended this year's Choral Art Christmas at the Cathedral held annually the first weekend of December. For us, it is the one event that sets the tone for Advent: majestic space in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception; exceptional acoustics; a full house of concert devotees of all ages; and a selection of sacred Christmas music magnificently presented.

The traditional works we never tire of hearing are "Personent Hodie Voces Puerulae" from Piae Cantiones and "Silent Night". The Hodi sung as the singers emerge from both sides of the altar, surrounding us with their mellifluous voices, begins the concert.

The second, Silent Night, concludes the performance. Once again, the singers come from behind the altar in a now darkened space, surrounding us while singing all verses of "Silent Night", beginning with *Stille Nacht*. This time, however, every fifth singer is holding a lighted candle. As they encircle us and find their places, those with candles light the taper of the person to their left until the entire interior is graced with light. The soft candlelight casting a warm glow on each singer's face, the resonant beauty of their blended voices, the angelic descant soaring and transfixing the audience is, for me, peace within.

I always come away believing if there were candlelight for each person in the world, how could there be hatred. My prayer is that, when we light a candle, we light it also for those who live in darkness and so desperately need light.

Peace,  
Sally Bancroft

### The Congregational Church in Cumberland United Church of Christ

#### "Love in Action"

In-person Sunday Worship at 9:30 and available on-line

Rev. Allison Smith, Senior Minister [allisoncgsmith@gmail.com](mailto:allisoncgsmith@gmail.com)

Street Address: 282 Main Street

Mailing Address: PO Box 247 Cumberland Center, ME 04021

Phone: (207) 829-3419

#### Church Office Hours:

Monday - Thursdays 9:30-2:30pm, Friday 9:30 - 1:30pm



### MSCC Thank You

The Main Street Children's Center families gathered for their first holiday potluck since the pandemic. It was a very special time to recognize **Susan Novak, the founder and Director of MSCC** who will be retiring from that position but continuing her work as Office Manager. In Jan. 2008 with the Church, Susan founded MSCC and has worked tirelessly in support of children and families in our community for fifteen years plus.

Thank you, Susan, for all of the ways you have nurtured the growth of children and supported families with an affordable, caring, wonderful preschool.



### Faithful Readers

We will be meeting in the New Year on **Monday, January 22 at 6:30 PM** to discuss the book **The Last Lifeboat by Hazel Gaynor**. The book is available in hardcover, paperback Kindle and Audible.

We warmly welcome new folks to join our gatherings. Let me know if you have interest so I can be sure you receive any emails about our next meeting on **January 22, 2024**. Suggestions for our next reading will be discussed at that time.

Karen Day 780-8091 or by email [kday0718@gmail.com](mailto:kday0718@gmail.com)



### Men's Retreat

Men's Retreat January 26 (FRI) thru January 28 (SUN)  
at AMC Medawisla Lodge.

We have 18 bunks reserved for that weekend event where the cost is between \$244 per person for the whole weekend. This includes 3 meals/day. Car pooling will be available and plenty of parking at the lodge. Come join us and enjoy the lord's north county. Inquires - David Carlson at 207-408-1563 or [dcarlson@maine.rr.com](mailto:dcarlson@maine.rr.com).

Questions? Happy to dialog when you have a moment.

Enjoy your day!  
Dave Carlson, 408-1563



## Community Notes

### Sympathy

To **Larry Morse and the Morse family** in the loss of Marilyn. A memorial service will be held on **Jan. 13th at 10 am.**  
To **Judy McAfee** in the loss of both her brothers-in-law Bob McAfee and Bruce McAfee.

**Congratulations!**

To **Samuel Mavanga and Teresa Matondo** on their wedding on December 31, 2023!

### Thanks

Reverend Smith,

My sincere thanks to you and your knitting group for my prayer shawl. It's weight, color and history are indeed comforts. It means a lot.

Best regards, Ingrid Flynn, Newburyport, MA

*If you have Joys or Sympathies you would like to share, please contact the church office.*



01/01 Carol Hulst	01/19 Ken Blanchard
01/03 Samuel Mavanga	01/22 Frances Palmer
01/05 Amy Haile	01/23 Gage Gallati
01/05 Colleen Higgins	01/23 Kathleen Barnhart
01/08 Brian Sites	01/25 Andrew Bertocci
01/10 Thomas Leggat-Barr	01/26 Kay Blanchard
01/14 Tom Snyder	01/28 Alan Pierce
01/17 Deborah Auclair	01/28 Pat Rosengren
01/17 Madelyn Snyder	01/29 Pete Scheib
01/18 Sandra Thomas	

If you have special birthdays or celebrations you would like included in the monthly newsletter, please contact the Church Office  
[office@cumberlanducc.org](mailto:office@cumberlanducc.org)

## Wider Church News

### “Ways to Love the Earth” Series Begins Wednesday, January. 17

#### at Foreside Community Church, Falmouth

Foreside Community Church member and naturalist the Rev. Susan Gilpin will present and facilitate a conversation about a theological framework for being in right relationship with the natural world on Wednesday, January 17, beginning at 6:30 p.m., immediately following the Evening Prayer service.

“Christianity and Nature 101: Where Did We Go Wrong?” will explore how Christianity adopted the problematic notion of human dominion over all other life on earth and how we might reframe our approach.

The hour-long program will lead off a four-week series building on last year’s “Four Ways to Love the Earth” programs. On Wednesday, January 24, we welcome the Rev. Allen Ewing-Merrill, Executive Director of the Portland-based BTS Center to present on strategies for cultivating active hope and resiliency and how we care for ourselves and for others in an age of eco-anxiety. The problem of plastics, plastics and more plastics will be addressed on Wednesday, January 31.

These and a program on Wednesday, February 7 about green and healthy homes with Fred Horch of the new non-profit Sustainable Practice will be hosted by FCC Green Team members.

In the event of a snow cancellation requiring rescheduling any of these programs, we have reserved Wednesday, February 21.

For more information, contact Green Team member Janette Gustafson, [rg787878@hotmail.com](mailto:rg787878@hotmail.com)





We are Selling **Hannaford** and **Shaw's** Grocery Gift Cards during our coffee and fellowship hour after Service. Or, you can always purchase them at the Church Office.

The Church gets a Quantity Card Purchase Discount and Since the 2010 Start has generated over \$30,000. This has been used for unbudgeted and unexpected expenses such as a rug shampoo machine, a snowblower, tables, chairs & repairs. You can use these for your own Grocery Purchases or as a Gift to those in need. The Cards are available in \$50 & \$100 amounts.

We hope you will support this worthwhile project which enables us to accomplish our mission.

# January 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b> Office CLOSED Parish Hall rented 8-2pm	<b>2</b> Office Open 8:30-10:30 12:30-2:30	<b>3</b> Building & Grounds 5:30pm Deacon's Meeting 6:30pm	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> Agape Dinner 6:00pm	<b>6</b> Epiphany
	<b>7</b> Church service & Church School 9:30am Multilingual Service 10:30am Family Dinner, 5:30pm OWL 6:30pm	<b>8</b> Social Justice 6:30pm Welcome Neighbors 7:15pm	<b>9</b> Women in Harmony 5:30pm	<b>10</b> Council Meeting 6:30pm	<b>11</b> Playgroup 10am Agape Dinner 6:00pm	<b>12</b> Morse service 10am
	<b>14</b> MLK Sunday Church service & Church School 9:30am Community Service 10:30am LINKS, 6-8pm OWL 6:30pm	<b>15</b> MLK day  OFFICE CLOSED Lion's Club 6:15pm	<b>16</b> Women in Harmony 5:30pm	<b>17</b> Education Meeting 7:00pm	<b>18</b> Playgroup 10am Woodbank, 5:30pm	<b>19</b> Agape Dinner 6:00pm
	<b>21</b> Church service & Church School 9:30am  Annual Meeting, 10:30am OWL 6:30pm	<b>22</b> Faithful Readers 6:30pm	<b>23</b> Women in Harmony 5:30pm	<b>24</b> Condo Meeting 6:30pm	<b>25</b> Playgroup 10am	<b>26</b> Agape Dinner 6:00pm Men's Retreat
<b>28</b> Church service & Church School 9:30am Multilingual Service 10:30am LINKS, 6-8pm Men's Retreat OWL 6:30pm	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> Women in Harmony 5:30pm	<b>31</b>			<b>27</b> Men's Retreat
<b>Church Office Hours</b> Monday-Thursdays 8:30-2:30pm Fridays 9:30-1:30pm						



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