




# Grapevine<sup>2</sup> March '25

 *I heard it through the grapevine ...*

 **Welcome to the Grapevine<sup>2</sup>** - the virtual version of the Sunday Grapevine brought to you by the Worship Team. We welcome news, comments, & suggestions. Please tell us what would be helpful to include. **We are always looking for joys and concerns too!** To contribute, call the church office at 774-0487 or [Secretary@thorntonheightsumc.org](mailto:Secretary@thorntonheightsumc.org) or [Email Marie Eschner](mailto:Marie.Eschner@thorntonheightsumc.org).

For each week's events, reminders and opportunities, you can also receive the weekly bulletin by [subscribing to the Pastor's Weekly ENote](#).

## **Pastor's Message** - Rev. Gwyneth Arrison, Pastor, THUMC

Grace and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Many folks are experiencing a lot of anxiety with government firings, world conflict and political chaos in addition to our everyday health, financial and other struggles. The apostle Paul has some wonderful insight for us: *Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, **think about these things**.* (Philippians 4:4-8)

The question is then, what will help us to "think about these things," instead of our anxieties and fears? As Paul advises, turning anxieties into prayers is one key to remaining positive and reminds us to trust in God no matter the circumstances. Another idea is eliminating or reducing our access to those things that create anxiety. I try to keep updated on world events but sometimes I find myself getting overly anxious about current events and have to turn off the news altogether. It's ok to take a break (a "fast") from TV or internet or limit your content each day if you find yourself becoming anxious.

Going for a short walk outside, or just sitting by a window and watching birds can help us refocus. Surrounding ourselves with positive relationships can also help our mental outlook and I would highly recommend joining one of the Wesley Groups this Lent as they provide a forum for spiritual community and connection. You may also consider what helps you let off steam. For some, journaling or drawing can help. The group that gathers on Friday mornings has found woodworking helpful. For others, exercise or competitive sports is most effective. And I highly recommend finding a good therapist.

And focusing on what we can do rather than the overwhelming number of world and community issues is also helpful. Many of you were in worship when Bonnie shared her story of dropping off donations to the food cupboard and how this simple gesture of blessing others also blessed her and reduced her anxiety. What has helped you? How is God calling you to improve your emotional self? Let me know, or share your ideas in worship.

Together in ministry for Christ,

*Pastor Gwyneth* (207) 449-5010 call or text [pastorgwyneth@gmail.com](mailto:pastorgwyneth@gmail.com)

## **Lent and Easter at a Glance - Join Us!**

**Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, March 5** and marks the 40 days (not including Sundays) before Easter.

**Lighthouse Lent Gatherings at Cape Elizabeth UMC on March 5 (Ash Wednesday), March 19 and April 9** - The three Lighthouse Churches are hosting three gatherings on Wednesdays during Lent! These will all begin with **dinner at 5:30 pm** followed by gathering for prayer, worship and discipleship together. Cape Elizabeth UMC will provide hearty soups. Peoples will provide desserts. And **Thornton Heights is asked to provide bread and salads**. We will also have a signup list so that set up and take down are being done by a few people from each church. Mark your calendars!



**Lenten Sermon Series** - Our theme this year is **God's Gardens**. The Biblical narrative can be told in terms of gardens. Creation begins with a garden, eternal paradise is described as a garden, and Jesus redeemed us in gardens. This Lent we will enter these gardens that draw us closer to God and provide a greater understanding of our purpose in God's creation.

- 3/9 Creation of the Garden, Gen 1-2
- 3/16 Banished from Eden, Gen 2-3
- 3/23 The Future Eden, Rev 2:, 22:2
- 3/30 The Promised Land, Deut 11:8-22
- 4/6 Israel Call as Vineyard, Isaiah 5:1-7, John 15:1-11
- 4/13 Garden of Gethsemane, Matt 26:30-45
- 4/20 Meeting the Gardener, John 20:1, 11-18

### **Holy Week Schedule**

- **Palm Sunday** 4/13 worship at 9:30am
- **Maundy Thursday Service** here on Thursday, 4/17
- **Good Friday Service** at Peoples, 4/18
- **Easter Sunrise** at 2 Lights on 4/20 at 6:00am
- **Easter morning worship** on 4/20 at 9:30am

**The Worship Team** will meet throughout March & April on **Tuesdays at 1 pm** in the Fireside Room. Working with the theme of *God's Garden*, in addition to displaying the traditional purple and lenten symbols, we will begin to build our garden in the sanctuary. All are welcome to join us!  
Worship Team: Melissa Bell, Pat Binns, Carol Hall, Kate Hansen, Barbara Lambach, Gini Link, Sally Nason, Jill Silke, Gwyneth Arrison, Marie Eschner - Chair

## **Children & Youth**

### **Building Blocks Learning Center**

Currently, a lot is on hold at BBLC. We are awaiting news on mold remediation and figuring out how to proceed. Thanks to many generous donations we have been able to purchase most if not all of the items needed for our Infant Room. We are so excited to begin taking babies into our care! I have 3-4

babies already on our waiting list and are hoping to get 3-4 more. We have conducted interviews to find a lead teacher and will eventually need a second teacher if we get more than 4 babies.



Teachers have been continuing with the curriculum. January's themes were New Year- New Me, Snowflakes & Snowmen, Winter Animals & Hibernation, and Winter Wonderland. They did a variety of activities that went along with each theme. Teachers combated the weather whenever possible and brought the kids outside to engage in gross motor play.



Miss Ashley went on a much deserved vacation (see Florida photos below) and thanks to staff, things went very smoothly. Thank you to my amazing employees for picking up the slack and continuing to keep things running. A special thank you to Miss Adrianna for managing the day to day operations and ensuring expectations are followed. A thank you to Miss Sue also for answering phone calls and taking messages for me in my absence.  
~ Ashley & the Building Blocks Family



**Haven't been to BBLC in a while?**  
Need your fill of

joy by watching children learn and play? Looking to volunteer? Stop by and check out all the improvements we've made. Introduce or reintroduce yourself with BBLC! Please reach out via phone or email: (207)761-3936 [buildingblockslcdirector@gmail.com](mailto:buildingblockslcdirector@gmail.com)



**March 3-7 will be Dr. Seuss week.** Stop by to see what everyone's wearing on our mismatched sock day, wacky hair day or favorite color day. You never know if you might meet the Cat in the Hat or some other wacky Dr. Seuss character.

**March 17th-21st we'll be celebrating St. Patrick's Day week.** We're looking for some volunteers to help us make and set up leprechaun traps.

- **With Easter coming in April, we'd love to have some volunteers help us decorate eggs and set up an Easter egg hunt.**

**BBLC/THUMC Support Team** - Reading the BBLC news, you can see that we are in a waiting game for some improvements BUT, a lot is still happening!! The stairway hall has been repaired and painted and IT LOOKS FANTASTIC! Check it out. We also had a plumber install hot and cold water pipes to the infant room and install the new changing table. These are two big jobs that make a significant difference to the feel and operation of our space. *If you have an interest in working with church members & BBLC staff to improve our relationship and provide varying kinds of support, we invite you to join our small but mighty group - The BBLC/THUMC Support Team!* Contact Marie Eschner (207-272-2170. Or [mgeschner@gmail.com](mailto:mgeschner@gmail.com)).



### **Camp Mechuwana**

Big news....the 2025 summer camp and Day Camp brochures are in the mail and **online**. And that means, summer can't be too far away, right? We are also offering two family weekends and two crafters' weekends — one each in the spring and fall. The Youth Leader, family, and crafter events have their own registration forms, which can be found and downloaded at [mechuwana.org/events](http://mechuwana.org/events) Visit [mechuwana.org/summer-camps](http://mechuwana.org/summer-camps) to view and download full brochures and registration forms. If you have questions, please call the camp office at 207.377.2924.

## ***Discipleship and Connection***

**Games Day** was great fun last weekend! We played all kinds of games including dominos, pence, bananagrams, cribbage and finished with a group game of apples to apples.

**Monthly Men's Breakfast** Our next meeting is scheduled for **Saturday, March 8th at Peoples UMC 310 Broadway at 7:15am.**

**The Lighthouse Churches** are offering **CPR training** on **Saturday, April 12 at 9:30am in Ellis Hall at Peoples UMC.**

There will be certification training available for a maximum of 6 people at a cost of \$50 each. Registration for the certification is required. The training will also be available to observe the process of CPR but with no certification and at no cost.

**A Men's Weekly Prayer time** is open to men everywhere to gather virtually together. **Every Tuesday at 6:15 pm for approximately 30 minutes** for men to share, pray, and fellowship together. All are invited. **Zoom ID 854 6747 6019 PW: 284223**

**Beavers Woodcarving Class** meets on **Friday at 10 am to 12 noon.** See Margaret Gilson to sign up.

**Sisters in Strength (SIS)** will meet on **Tuesdays throughout March at 2 pm.** We are currently reading a book by Anne Lamott, **Grace (Eventually):** all sisters welcome!



**Lenten Wesley Groups** - Last year during Lent, most of our active congregation met in small groups each week for conversation, prayer, and checking in with one another, and everyone was blessed. We called them Wesley Groups because these small groups were the key to the growth of early Methodism, and are key to our growth as disciples today. If you are interested in joining or facilitating one of these beginning this Lent, or hosting one in your home, please sign up at church OR contact Pastor Gwyneth and she will get you connected.

**Conference Workshops** - [Early Response Team \(ERT\) training](#) (several location options) encompasses the essential components of initial disaster response including roof tarping, clearing out damaged residences, providing spiritual and emotional support, and following team protocols. [Online training for SPRC](#) March 10 7pm. [Online Trustees training](#) March 20 7pm.

**New Library Books** - Some new books are being added to the church library. Among them are:  
Job Descriptions and Leadership Training - from UMC Discipleship Resources  
Soul Care by Debra Fileta  
What Would Jesus Eat? by Don Colbeert, M.D.  
Enough by Adam Hamilton  
Ask, Thank, Tell by Charles R. Lane

**Lyric Music Theater - THE SPONGE BOB MUSICAL** Running weekends March 21 - April 6  
It's been a long winter! To celebrate the arrival of Spring, treat yourself to a fun musical experience. Our own **Emily Akeley** will be playing the part of Sandy Cheeks the Squirrel in Lyric Music Theater's production of the SpongeBob Musical. You don't want to miss it! If there is interest, we can organize a group ticket to the theater. FMI <https://lyricmusictheater.org/>

## **Administrative Updates**

**\$\$ Finance** We have a new safe in the hallway where people can place their donations anytime. Many thanks to the Finance Team for purchasing, Rich Huguen for installing and Kate Hansen for sewing a velcro cover.. There's a slot on the top, and there is also a larger hinged door to drop bank deposit bags or other larger donation items. Finance members include Barbara Lambach, George Merrill, Tom Eschner, Patti Sears, Jen Goff, Rain Daugherty, Rich Huguen and Pastor Gwyneth. **Finance meets next on March 26 at 5:30pm.**



**Joyful Generosity Appreciated!** Please consider all of the ministries of your church family and know your offering makes a real difference. You can donate online using the QR code or at [www.thorntonheightsumc.org/give](http://www.thorntonheightsumc.org/give) . You may also pay by check or set up an auto bill pay or ACH with your own bank (with no fees and does not depend on attendance or memory!) to: Thornton Heights UMC 100 Westbrook Street South Portland, ME 04106. Thank you for your generosity!

**Leadership** - The leadership team will be meeting with the Wesley Development Group (WDG) for a building walk through and consultation regarding our building at 11:00 a..m. on **Sunday, March 16.** The leadership team will then meet at noon following the consultation. This consultation is especially timely because even as we perform maintenance and make improvements to the building, we uncover

additional problems requiring attention! The WDG consultation will assist THUMC in our visioning work by providing information to help us discern our options for the building in light of community needs and the building's condition. It will help us consider not only what might be done to tackle deferred maintenance of the building, but how our building might benefit the community as well as the congregation. All are welcome, so please consider participating in the walk through, or the leadership team meeting, or both! **Leadership will also be meeting on March 11 at 5pm** for our regular business matters. Leadership members include Tom Eschner, Barbar Lambach, Pat Binns, Steve & Jane Sax, Brenda Kane, Gini Link, Patti Sears, Maddie Akeley, George Merrill, Teena Z., & Ashley Lajoie.

🚧 **Trustees** - The Trustees met on February 25 to discuss and review the many issues facing our building. We are pleased to report that we have a new custodian, Michael Welsh (see SPRC below), and he started working on February 24. He will be replacing Mary Link who has done a FANTASTIC job for us the last few years. Mary is leaving the custodial position as she has found (more than) full time employment with her CPA work. **THANK YOU MARY LINK!!!** Members of the Trustees include Hank Foster, Rich Huguen, Patti Sears, Jeremy Link, Tor deVries, Brenda Kane, Rain Daugherty, Clyde Hamlin and Barbara Lambach. Reach out to any of them with any building concerns. **Trustees meets next on March 25 at 4pm.**



👉 **SPRC** - We have hired a Church Custodian! **Mike Welsh** is an Army veteran with multiple years of experience in custodial work. Mike has already begun and we welcome him to the THUMC community.

We have also hired an Administrative Assistant! **Maddie Ellingsworth** is an editor and you can read about her on her webpage: [maddisonellingsworth.com/](http://maddisonellingsworth.com/) Maddie will start the first week of March with office hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays 10am - 1pm. We welcome Maddie to the THUMC community.



**SPRC's next meeting is March 30 following worship.** All are welcome to attend the first 10 minutes of this meeting to discuss any congregational concerns. SPRC Members: Pat Binns (Chair), Teena Zimmerman, Steve Sax, Linda Brown, Sally Nason, Maddie Akeley, Paul Hansen, George Merrill

**Annual Conference** - The New England annual conference of the United Methodist Church will be meeting **June 19-21**. Those attending include Pastor Gwyneth, Maddie Akeley (as Lay Member to AC) and Pat Binns (as Alternate Lay Member to AC). Rich Huguen will also be attending this year as an Equalization Member for our Many Waters District.

## 🍎 **Mission Updates**

**Winter Homeless Care Kits** - Our winter mission has been collecting items for winter care kits for the homeless, assembling them into packets and giving them to people in the congregation to keep in their cars to give out. We have assembled and given out 65 kits so far, and we have another 20 more to assemble!

**South Portland Food Cupboard** - SPFC was thrilled with our participation last year of a donation of the equivalent of 981 cans. So beginning in March, we plan to host another **"40 Cans for Lent"**

**Mission.** We are asked to donate condensed chicken noodle soup (10.5 oz cans please) & canned tuna packed in water (CANS please, no packets or pouches). OR feel free to donate cash in any amount (to THUMC with 40 Cans in the memo line). Dick and Nancy Horton will then purchase cans at Sam's Club.



Congrats to **Micky and her Angels** for participating in the Winter Special Olympics at Lost Valley on February 26-27. Lots of medals to celebrate! The church was honored to sponsor three hotel rooms for Micky's Angels so they were able to participate fully in all of the events. Great job everyone!



**Immigration Book Group** - Peoples UMC is hosting a book reading series as part of their justice focus and welcome us to join them. The first half of the year will focus on immigration, reading **American Dirt** by Jeanine Cummins. **There will be a group discussion on April 2.** FMI, speak with Betsy Morrison.

**This Possible Kingdom Pilgrimage** Come away to remember why worship matters. This July, the liturgical resourcing team of the Iona Community (Wild Goose Resource Group) will lead "Worship in the Wilds," a **weeklong workshop at Iona Abbey in Scotland**. The Iona Community is an ecumenical, inclusive intentional community with laity in leadership and international membership. This workshop theme asks, "How can we respond to the wilds of God and our world through worshipping and singing together?" When: **July 10-19, 2025** Cost: \$3,279 New England pilgrimage leaders: Rev. Lourey Savick and Rev. Dr. Jacquelyn Brannen [Registration and more here](#)



**Leading Worship at Evergreen UMC** - THUMC Certified Lay Servants have been leading worship at Evergreen UMC on Long Island on fourth Sundays. **Rich Hughen and Pat Binns** led the service on Sunday, February 23. It was a beautiful, calm winter day for the ferry ride. **Jeremy Link** will be leading the service on **March 23.**



## Other Updates

**Emergency Contact Info** - The office will be collecting emergency contact information for those who are part of the church family. This information will be kept private and only used if there was a need to get in touch with a family member in an emergency. We will have cards in worship to fill out.

## ♥ **Community Joys & Concerns:**

**THUMC Community ... What joys and concerns do YOU have that you would like to share? Births, weddings, prayers for healing, strength or encouragement?**

- **Merrill Robbins** is having heart surgery on February 28 to replace stents and appreciates our prayers for healing.
- Prayers for **Jen Goff** as she travels to Pennsylvania to support her mom and family during a time of loss..
- Prayers requested for **Melodie Foster** who is having total knee replacement surgery on Tuesday, March 4 (and her birthday is on March 6!). You may have received a card from "THUMC" from Massachusetts. That has been Melodie's ministry! You can return the favor by sending a card to her at 8 Lloyd Street, Hopedale, MA 01747
- **Jeremy Link** had a successful heart procedure performed on Wednesday, February 26. Keep Jeremy in prayer for healing and recovery.
- **Marie Floyd** continues to feel under the weather as sickness is passed around in the center where she lives.
- **Brenda Kane** asks for prayer that her dad, **Frank**, finds peace. Continue to lift Brenda, her mom, and family for prayer, encouragement, and support!
- **Carol Hall** was in a car accident on February 25th and suffered a broken wrist needing surgery as well as broken ribs on both sides of her body. She is hospitalized and can use our prayers and encouragement.
- **Kathy Lyons** took a fall at home and broke some ribs. Prayers for being patient with herself and for the process of healing. She is especially thankful for her son and neighbors!
- **Patti Sears** is going in for hip replacement surgery on March 10. Keep Patti in prayer for healing and recovery as she will be facing a second hip replacement when this one heals.
- Continued prayers for **Kate Hansen** with a pinched nerve in her neck
- Prayers for **Gail MacLean** who has been dealing with a lot of family loss in the past few months. Please keep Gail and her brother Dick in prayer.
- Continued prayer for both **Divino and Nathanael** in their fear and uncertainty of deportation. They are asylum seekers and although here legally are still very worried.
- **Roger Williams** has had several trips to the Emergency Room in the past month. Continue to pray for his ongoing health issues.



## ***Time Change March 8!***

Remember to set your clocks ahead before bed on March 8!



## ***Thought to Ponder***

In this moment

Don't judge  
whether things are better or worse now  
than they used to be or will be in the future.  
(There is always both.)

In this moment,  
with these constraints,  
love.

The tree bent under snow  
keeps living.  
The river accepts the narrow gorge,  
the wide plain, the splattering falls,  
even under the ice,  
flowing,  
flowing.

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Steve Garnaas-Holmes  
Unfolding Light  
[www.unfoldinglight.net](http://www.unfoldinglight.net)



## ***A Little Smile in Your Day***

A man goes out ice fishing one morning. He reaches the ice and is about to cut a hole in it when he hears a voice from above: "There are no fish here." The fisherman is shocked but gets up and moves to another spot. As he's about to cut a hole, he hears a voice from above again, "There are no fish here either." He gets up and moves to a third spot. Before he's even finished walking, the voice says, "I'm telling you, there are no fish here." The fisherman says, "God, how can you be so sure there aren't any fish here?" The voice replies, "This is the ice rink manager."

Two brothers who loved baseball wondered whether they could play the sport when they went to heaven. So, they swore that whoever went to heaven first would find some way to let the living brother know. The oldest brother passed away a week later. And, on the night he was buried, he reappeared at the foot of his brother's bed. "Is there baseball in heaven?" asked the younger brother. "Well, I've got good and bad news," the older brother said. "The good news is that there is baseball in heaven." "That's great!" said the brother. "What's the bad news?" "The bad news is you're pitching Sunday."



## **Birthdays & Anniversaries in March and April !!**



### **March Birthdays**

2 Peter Cotton  
 4 Janet Cheney Yeaton  
 6 Melodie Foster  
 6 Jack Nason  
 7 Joshua Fennelly  
 15 Kevin Gallagher  
 15 Jeremy Link  
 16 Barbara Lambach  
 18 Diane Doak  
 20 Peter Brewster  
 27 Janice Burrell

### **April Birthdays**

5 Sally Kingsbury  
 5 Judy White  
 6 Kathy Lyons  
 7 Sally Nason  
 8 Jen Goff  
 11 Karen Galbraith Williams  
 19 Sue Galbraith  
 20 Olivia Hamlin  
 21 Phyllis Cotton  
 21 Tom Eschner  
 22 Carol Hall  
 22 Maxine Lano  
 27 Rich Hughen  
 28 Sally Gredlics  
 30 Mary Dix-Little

**If we're missing your birthday or anniversary**, please contact the church office at 207.774-0487 or [secretary@thorntonheightsumc.org](mailto:secretary@thorntonheightsumc.org) so this information can be updated!

### **April Anniversaries**

4 Steve & Jane Sax



## **Thornton Heights UMC Communications**

Subscribe to Pastor's Weekly ENote: <https://thumc.breezechms.com/form/2b086873>  
 Church Office: (207) 774-0487 [officethumc@gmail.com](mailto:officethumc@gmail.com)  
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 Contact Pastor Gwyneth: Call or text (207) 449-5010 or [PastorGwyneth@gmail.com](mailto:PastorGwyneth@gmail.com)  
[Church Events Calendar](#) and [Community Facility Use Calendar](#).



## **Thornton Heights UMC Staff**

Pastor: Rev. Gwyneth Arrison  
 Administrative Assistant: Maddie Ellingsworth  
 Music Director: Ida Santos  
 Audio Visual Tech: Divino M'bango  
 Custodian: Mike Welsh  
 BBLC Director: Ashley Lajoie

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