



# Grapevine<sup>2</sup> April '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



Dear Church Family,

**What is going on in the world, and where is Jesus in all of this?** That's a sentiment that has come up not only in pastoral care conversations but in Bible studies, church meetings and other gatherings. Many are so distracted with the anxiety that they are having trouble sleeping, and I have found it difficult to keep people focused on Scripture during studies because we keep getting pulled back into political discussions.

**We actually find ourselves in a very similar position as the first disciples** which we see as Jesus was trying to explain to them the turmoil and grief they would soon be facing:

### **Luke 18:31-34**

*"Jesus took the Twelve aside and told them, 'We are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled. He will be delivered over to the Gentiles. They will mock him, insult him and spit on him; they will flog him and kill him. On the third day he will rise again.' The disciples did not understand any of this. Its meaning was hidden from them, and they did not know what he was talking about."*

**The words of Jesus made no sense to the twelve disciples.** Wasn't the Messiah supposed to come and make things right in the world, bringing peace and prosperity to God's people? Yet Rome dominated their land, injustice and poverty abounded, and now they hear that their only hope ... Jesus the Messiah ... would be mocked and murdered, humiliated and hung on a cross to die.

With our 20-20 hindsight, we know that on the third day Jesus did rise again. But what difference has that made? Well, all the difference in the world. The cross was God's message of sacrificial love and

forgiveness. And the resurrection was God's message of victory over sin and death. As Jesus is saying farewell to his disciples before his death he said: *"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."* (John 16:33, NIV)

Jesus didn't promise that we'll experience peace in the world, but he offered true peace for those who trust him in life and death. **What does this mean for us today as followers of Jesus?** It means before we follow Jesus into resurrection, we are following him to be crucified. **That means suffering because of the love we show.** We can expect resistance as we proclaim God's love to those who feel abandoned, and seek justice for the marginalized, and protect the asylum seeker, and work to end hunger in our community and world, and eliminate slavery and human trafficking, and call out government policies that do harm and give voice to the oppressed ... and the list goes on.

**And we do all of these things, not out of fear and anxiety, but with the "peace that surpasses understanding"** (Philippians 4:7) because our only king is Jesus, not any human political leader whether hated or beloved. So we can "take heart" as Jesus said, because he has already overcome the world with love.

Together in ministry for Christ,

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

**Pizza With the Pastor** - Are you a newcomer at Thornton Heights UMC? [Sign up here](#) for Pizza with the Pastor this **Sunday, April 6 at noon**. Meet others who are new and bring your questions!

## **Lent Continues - Join Us!**

**Last Lighthouse Lent Gathering** - The Lighthouse Churches are hosting the final Wednesday gathering at Cape Elizabeth UMC on **April 9**. The evening will begin with a **PASTA dinner at 5:30 pm** followed by gathering for prayer, worship and discipleship together. Cape Elizabeth UMC will provide the pasta. **Thornton Heights has been asked to provide sauces for the pasta.** Mark your calendars and **sign up at church to bring meatballs and more!**



**Lenten Sermon Series** - Our theme this year is **God's Gardens**. Creation begins with a garden, eternal paradise is described as a garden, and Jesus redeemed us in gardens. This Lent we have entered these gardens to draw us closer to God and provide a greater understanding of our purpose in God's creation. Join us for the last three messages, and [listen online to any you missed.](#)

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

**Lent Wesley Groups Continue** - Several groups have been meeting after worship Sundays as well as during the week to intentionally grow as disciples of Jesus this Lent. Many thanks to those who have facilitated and hosted these groups. And it's not too late to join in one these last few weeks of Lent. Newcomers are welcome.

**Lent Reading Through Mark Continues** - There are still a few purple bookmarks at church that contain the readings for the Gospel of Mark this Lent. No worries if you're behind or haven't even started yet. Most people can read through the whole Gospel of Mark in 2 hours.

**Lent 40 Cans for Lent Continues** - With your generosity we have donated over 500 cans so far this Lent which are going to the South Portland Food Cupboard. **How about another 500?!**

## **Holy Week (Easter Week) Schedule - Join Us!**

**Palm Sunday** - **Worship with us on April 13 at 9:30am** to receive palm branches as we remember the story of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Then we will switch gears as we remember where this parade will eventually lead ... to the cross. Please join us for this powerful time of worship.

**Holy Thursday** - All are invited to a joint United Methodist **Tenebrae service on Thursday, April 17 at 7:00 pm** with the Lighthouse Churches of Cape Elizabeth and South Portland, **hosted this year by our Thornton Heights United Methodist Church**. As the Scriptures are read, candles are extinguished until the last reading done in complete darkness. We hope you can attend this powerful service of worship.

**Good Friday** - The Lighthouse Churches are designing a **"self guided" prayer** experience for **Friday, April 18** that you can use at home, or while walking in the beautiful woods behind Cape Elizabeth UMC or here at Thornton Heights UMC where we will have **stations of the cross set up for any who want to stop by between 9am and 3pm**. Why is Good Friday "good?" Because God demonstrated his love for us on the cross: "For God so loved the world (insert your name) that he gave his only Son, Jesus Christ, that whoever believes in him would not perish but have eternal life." - John 3:16.

**Easter Flowers** - **Please help fill our sanctuary with flowers this Easter!** If you would like to make these in honor or memory of a loved one, you can fill out a form at church and place in the offering, or email the info to [secretary@thorntonheightsumc.org](mailto:secretary@thorntonheightsumc.org) or you can also [fill out a form online](#) this year thanks to our fearless administrative assistant, Maddie Ellingsworth. These memorial donations will be listed in the Easter Sunday bulletin. **Please deliver your flowers** to the church **during office hours the week before Easter** or on **Saturday morning, April 19**. Please, NO Easter lilies due to people with allergies.

**Easter Garden Set-up** - Many hands make light work! Come join the Worship Team on **Saturday, April 19 at 9 am** as we transform the sanctuary into an Easter Garden.



**Easter Sunrise Service, April 20 at 5:30 am** on the ocean in Cape Elizabeth where we will celebrate the resurrection of our Lord as the sun comes up. There is easy access and ample parking at the end of Two Lights Road (just past the Lobster Shack) and will be led together with the Cape Elizabeth United Methodist Church and Church of the Nazarene. All are welcome.

**Easter Worship Celebration** on **April 20 at 9:30 am**. Come experience the annual Easter Garden set up in the church sanctuary, beautiful music and family-friendly time of worship. Invite your friends and family!

## ***Discipleship and Community Connections***

**Monthly Men's Breakfast** on **Saturday, April 12th at Peoples UMC 310 Broadway at 7:15am.**

**The Lighthouse Churches** are offering **CPR training** on **Saturday, April 12 at 9:30am at Peoples UMC** 310 Broadway in Sout Portland. 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 April at 2 pm.** We are currently reading a book by Anne Lamott, ***Grace (Eventually)***. We will be choosing a new book to study after Easter. Aall sisters welcome!

**Lay Servant Ministry Training - Leading Public Prayer** Praying in public can be daunting, but can be learned and used to bless others. This course on praying in public will help the participant grow in confidence and skill in public prayer and enrich their personal prayer life. Led by Rich Hughen, the course will be **5 Thursday evenings** from **6:15-8:30pm** beginning on **May 8 through June 5.** Registration required.

NOTE: This course is required by The Book of Discipline to become a Certified Lay Speaker  
[Register Here: Leading Public Prayer](#)

**New Library Books** - Some new books are being added to the church library. Among them are:

- [Resident Aliens](#) by Stanley Hauerwas and Bishop William Willimon
- [An Effective Approach to Cooperative Parishes](#) by Kay Kotan and Jason Stanley

## ***Upcoming Administrative Events***

**Lighthouse Cooperative Parish Possibilities** - The three Lighthouse Churches are discussing the possibility of forming a cooperative parish. The other churches, Peoples UMC and Cape Elizabeth UMC are both losing their pastors this June. Each of our churches is providing worship for about 30-60 people each Sunday so are served by "half time" pastors. What would it look like for these three churches to share one full time pastor (in this case it would be Pastor Gwyneth)? Could we start children's ministries or youth groups together? Could we share administrative resources? Could we use our facilities more effectively in cooperative ministry? Could we host a more diverse set of worship experiences across three facilities? Each church will be hosting a town hall style meeting led by District Superintendent, Arlene Tully to answer questions about the possibility of making this move as of July 1. If all goes well, then each church will host a church conference where members only vote. Join us for a **town hall meeting at Thornton Heights UMC** on **Sunday, April 13 at 6:30pm** in the Fireside Room. Please be in prayer as we prepare to talk about the possibilities, and bring your questions and ideas. All are welcome. Cape Elizabeth will be hosting their town hall on Wednesday evening, April 2 and Peoples will be hosting their town hall on Thursday, April 3.

**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 the church address. Thank you for your generosity!



Finance members are happy to answer any questions: Barbara Lambach (Treasurer), George Merrill (Financial Secretary), Tom Eschner, Patti Sears, Jen Goff, Rain Daugherty, Rich Hughen and Pastor Gwyneth. **Finance meets next on Wednesday, April 16 at 5:00pm.**

**Leadership - Leadership will be meeting on April 8 at 5pm** for regular business matters. Leadership members include Tom Eschner, Barbara Lambach, Pat Binns, Steve & Jane Sax, Brenda Kane, Gini Link, Patti Sears, Maddie Akeley, George Merrill, Teena Z., & Ashley Lajoie.

**Trustees Updates** - The mold remediation has been addressed in the kitchen and restoration of the ceiling is currently underway. Painting of the kitchen should happen during the month of April. We continue to solicit pricing on the drop ceiling in the entire downstairs as well as the cyclone fencing around the back of the church area used by the daycare. We continue to oversee maintenance and repair issues in both the church building and the parsonage. Members of the Trustees include Hank Foster, Rich Hughen, 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 meet next on April 22 at 4pm.**

**SPRC** - SPRC met on March 30 and will meet next in May. 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

**Worship Team** will meet throughout April on **Tuesdays at 1 pm** in the Fireside Room. Working with the theme of *God's Garden*, we will be planning lenten services and symbols. 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

**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 Hughen will also be attending this year as an Equalization Member for our Many Waters District.

**Emergency Contact Info** - The office is collecting emergency contact information for those who are part of the church family. This information is kept private and only used if there is a need to get in touch with a family member in an emergency. There are forms at church to fill out, or the Breeze form is available online: <https://thumc.breezechms.com/form/898858>.

**Mission Updates** **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 at Peoples UMC 310 Broadway in South Portland.** FMI, contact Betsy Morrison.

**Leading Worship at Evergreen UMC** - THUMC Certified Lay Servants have been leading worship at Evergreen UMC on Long Island on fourth Sundays. **Jeremy Link** led the service on Sunday, March 23. The next service will be on **Sunday, April 27th**, led by **Rich Hughen**.

**Mission Volunteer Opportunities in the South Portland Community -**



**#HandsOff** - A group from our church will be participating in community protests on **Saturday, April 5, from 11am to 1pm** to stand against the new administration's many actions that bypass due process. These actions are negatively impacting people God has called us to care for, including immigrants, the poor and LGBTQ+ folks. Some of us will be gathering in Portland at Monument Square, and others on the Casco Bay Bridge in South Portland. A group will be at church to make **posters**

on **Thursday, April 3 from 2-4pm**. with any who are interested. These are non-partisan issues and our church affirms free speech in our country, and everyone's right to protest peacefully.



**April Stools Day** Stop by anytime **Saturday, April 19 between 9am and noon, Willard Beach!** Spring is coming and the snow is melting, leaving behind.... trash and dog poo! Well we can't have that! You can do your part to clean up your community by joining us on Saturday April 19 from 9a-noon, for an "April Stools" cleanup day. We will be set up at Willard Beach with all the equipment you need for the cleanup, plus TONS of free dog goodies for your furry friends!



**Earth Day Resource Fair** Join together on **Saturday, April 26 from 10 AM to 2 PM at Mill Creek Park** for our very first **Earth Day Fair!** Celebrate all things nature, get resources from sustainable organizations, meet like-minded people in your community, and help clean up our city! Fee: FREE  
Rain Location: South Portland Community Center

 **A Little Smile in Your Day**

Why did the Christian chicken go to the other side of the road? To get a Cross!



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



### **April Birthdays**

5 Sally Kingsbury  
 5 Judy White  
 6 Kathy Lyons  
 7 Sally Nason  
 8 Jen Goff  
 11 Karen Galbraith Williams  
 19 Sue Galbraith  
 19 Peter Peterson  
 20 Jeff Cole  
 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

### **April Anniversaries**

4 Steve & Jane Sax

### **May Birthdays**

1 Andrew Byrd  
 6 Linda England  
 6 Clyde Hamlin  
 6 Amanda Hughen  
 6 Rowen Hughen  
 7 Lucas Fennelly  
 9 Ashley Lajoie  
 11 Will Kane  
 12 Becky Gallagher  
 16 Michael Welsh  
 19 Andrew Hughen  
 21 Adam Eschner  
 22 Madison Cole  
 22 Matthew Cole  
 26 Deborah Moffitt  
 29 Sarah Matzke  
 30 Nora De Vries  
 30 Emily Eschner  
 30 Brenda Kane

### **May Anniversaries**

27 Dick and Nancy Horton

**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!



## **Children & Youth**

*To honor Dr. Seuss & many children's book authors, here's some news in rhyme...*

March was full of fun  
 and for the kids learning had begun.  
 Themes galore this is true,  
 something for everyone to do.

In honor of the author Dr. Seuss  
 kids heard about the crazy adventures of Thing 1 & Thing 2,  
 and many more  
 of the characters the Doctor had in store.

They next ventured forth to a time long ago,  
 to study the Dinosaurs and wouldn't you know  
 From T-rex to Pterodactyl, something for everyone  
 When learning about dinosaurs, it's hard not to have fun

Next they took a chance on Leprechauns and clovers.  
 Creating pots of gold and rainbows to go over.  
 The engagement was there, the fun was big  
 Some of the kids might have even done an Irish jig

Finally to end the learning galore  
 To the jungle they went to learn and explore  
 Lions, and Tigers, and Monkeys oh my  
 Music, and crafts, and fun the kids and staff couldn't deny

## Building Blocks Learning Center

- ★ Due to the mold remediation (see Trustees paragraph) the infant room on hold. When the kitchen is complete and the ceiling tiles are replaced we are hoping to get the room assembled as quickly as possible and begin taking in some babies. We are anticipating being able to open by May if not sooner.
- ★ In the realm of staffing, I have bad news. I've unfortunately lost my preschool teacher due to professional differences. This means the hunt for a replacement is on. I am also looking for a School Age Teacher for when Mr. Jamie leaves, a part time floater, a full time floater, and an Assistant Preschool Teacher. I have posted all job openings and am trying to complete as many interviews as I can to find suitable candidates



is

### Some projects we have coming up....

1. The playground will be getting set up and put together
2. The garage will be cleaned out and reorganized
3. The van needs tires replaced in order to be inspected/registered
4. The cabinets in the kitchen need to be repainted

**If you or anyone you know is handy or wanting to volunteer for helping in these projects, please send them our way!**

## ~ Ashley & the Building Blocks Family



**BBLC/THUMC Support Team** - 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** - 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](https://mechuwana.org/events). Visit [mechuwana.org/summer-camps](https://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.

## ♥ **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?**

- Congratulations to our own **Emily Akeley** on her outstanding performance as Sandy Cheeks the Squirrel in **THE SPONGE BOB MUSICAL** at the Lyric theater. Several THUMC members attended on 3/30 – it is a fun and entertaining show with a lot of talent! 🥳 If you haven't seen it yet, it runs through **April 6th**. FMI <https://lyricmusictheater.org/>



- Prayers for a solution! **Jane & Steve Sax** no longer have a car and would still like to attend church. They live at 77 Pine Street in the west end of Portland. Could YOU and/or a small rotating group be the answer to their prayer?
- Thank you from **Melodie Foster**: “My deepest appreciation to my THUMC family for the prayers, love, cards, and calls I have received since my surgery. My post-op recovery has been challenging and the support I have received from my THUMC family has lifted my spirits. I feel wrapped in your love and prayers and both Hank and I are so grateful! We miss you all and hope to see you in a few months when I am able to travel. God Bless!” ❤️
- Prayers for **Brenda Kane and her family**. Her dad, **Frank**, passed away on March 5. A memorial service will be held April 5 in his honor. Please continue to lift Brenda in prayers for encouragement and support as she helps her mom deal with her continued declining health.
- **Carol Hall** is recovering from her accident at her son’s house, *he has a great little attached apartment*. She has less pain than before but her energy is low, and she is improving slower than she would like. She is anxious to be back in her own home. Thankfully Carol is receiving both PT and OT a few times/week. Cards of support and encouragement may be sent to Carol Hall, % Eric Hall, 13 Conant St., Westbrook, ME 04092.
- Prayers and encouragement requested for **Patti Sears** who is recovering from hip replacement surgery. Recently she was struggling with sciatic nerve pain; thankfully that has resolved itself. She is transitioning from a walker to a cane and her home PT will soon end. She is hoping to be able to drive next week so that she can get out and about. You know Patti, she hates to stand still! Cards can be sent to: Patti Sears, 121 Meadow R., Raymond, ME 04071
- **Kate Hansen** is very appreciative of everyone’s prayers and concerns for the healing of her pinched nerve. She is recovering from surgery which thankfully has brought her much relief. Weekly PT has been helpful in restoring strength to her hand.
- 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 procedures lately to help with his ongoing health issues. Continue to pray for his healing and recovery

### ***Photos From This Month!***

Below: Our second Lighthouse Lent Gathering at Cape Elizabeth UMC this Lent. We met in small groups, sang, prayed and shared a homemade baked potato bar!



Top right : Cleaning up the Administrative Office!

Bottom right: Lent Wesley Group facilitated by Maddie Akeley.

Bottom Left: Mold remediation in the BBLC kitchen.



### **Thornton Heights UMC Communications**

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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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