

THE CENTER HARBOR LIGHT

Special Offering this Month: Our Ministry of Space

Ordinary Joy

As I am writing this letter, we are around the middle of what we call “ordinary time,” which begins after Pentecost Sunday in May and wraps up before the First Sunday of Advent in November. A handy visual I often refer to describes Advent through Pentecost as “The Story of Jesus,” and ordinary time as “The Story of the People of God.” We are not immersed in the joy of Jesus’ birth or resurrection, just counting the weeks of our own ordinary lives.

While we are in the middle of ordinary time, we are at the end of summer. I wonder what kind of stories you, people of God, will bring back from your summer. Maybe some exciting stories about vacation, camp, or family visits. But what about you, people of God, who have not had a particularly happy or exciting summer? You, whose summer has been marked largely by exhaustion or even sorrow? Has God shown up for you in small ways regardless of how happy, sorrowful, or banal the last few months have been for you?

What stories could you share about your own ordinary time? The simple things that give meaning to the hours between celebrations? The small things that don’t change your life, but give you hope to take one more step? Did you share a meaningful, silent moment with a loved one? Did you read a poem or hear a song that filled your heart with that deep, mysterious...something? Did you notice a new bird or insect in your yard? Theologian Kate Bowler describes joy as “when your heart is still breaking, but, suddenly, you’re overwhelmed by the beauty of the sky.” The heartache, the happiness, the loss, the laughter, these all make up stories of our lives. And joy is something that can break into any of it in the most surprising yet ordinary ways and hold it all together.

When we return to our sanctuary on September 13th, after we are called to worship, we will center our worship in joy. We will have our usual opportunity to share our stories of concerns later in the service, but we will begin by sharing our stories of joys. Please continue to share the stories of recovery and accomplishments and new life so we can celebrate together. And I also encourage you to share a story of an ordinary joy, the kind you think is too simple or small to matter. Your whole ordinary story matters and is gleaming with God’s love in surprising places. And it may be just the kind of story of ordinary joy that someone needs to hear.

With you on the journey,

Pastor Alison

Center Harbor
Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
An Open and Affirming Congregation
PO Box 229, 52 Main Street
Center Harbor, NH 03226
Tel: (603) 253-7698
Website: www.chccucc.org
Fall Office Hours:
(begin September 1st)
Tuesday, Thursday, & Friday
12:30 - 4 PM



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Pastor Alison Thatcher
CHCCpastor@chccucc.org
Nancy Stamnas, Music Director
Louisa Cartier, Office Secretary
CHCCsecretary@chccucc.org
All Members: Ministers

Summer Worship

Center Harbor held its worship services in our beautiful meadow during July and August. We are so blessed to have this lovely space for praising God. There are many logistics involved in holding these services outside. Many thanks go to Ann and Jeff for purchasing our new and improved sound system. Also, a million thanks to Norman, Ann,

Jess, and Jill who have dedicated themselves each Sunday to arriving early to set up the sound system, place the chairs in our new seating pattern, and greet our members and friends. And a heartfelt thanks to Patty Finn who stepped in to play the keyboard during worship in Nancy's absence. Nice job, everyone.



THANK YOU

A special thank you to Jeff Koniszewski and Dave Brown for finishing the ramp rebuild at the rear of the building.



Holly Fair 2026

Many helpful Holly Fair elves met in August for jewelry making. The results will be a great hit with our customers. Thank you to Patty McQuone for leading this workshop.



This Month's Events



Fellowship Activity

Saturday, September 12th, 7 PM
Gilpatric Hall

Join us for a sing-a long and ice cream buffet.
Bring a friend!



Thursday Bible Study

With Pastor Alison
September 10, 17, and 24
9 AM by Zoom

Check weekly e-mail for Zoom link!



Books & Bites

Come share what you've been reading!
September 15th at 1:30 PM in parlor
Contact: Jill Morton
(ladymort17@gmail.com) or Diane Crawford (onie54@gmail.com)

Sunday School Lessons

The Sunday School season will start on September 13th. Tivvi Pare from Horton Center will join us during worship. Children who attended Horton Center, along with some adult members, will share a memorable moment from camp, or tell how their time at camp helped their faith grow, or express a "wow" moment they felt while being "on the mountain". Tivvi will tell one of her own special moments at camp. She will also teach us a few camp songs. At the end of the service, weather permitting, we will make s'mores outside in the meadow. Hope you can join.

Sunday school classes for the 2026-2027 school year will begin meeting on September 20th.



Join us for Sunday School
September 20th and 27th this month!



Check out this new service organization in our area:



Family Promise
of the Lakes Region



Family Promise of the Lakes Region (FPLR) is dedicated to preventing and ending family homelessness in Belknap county by case management, and support services. Through community partnerships, we help families regain housing and stability. Together, we aim to break the cycle of homelessness—one family at a time.

WHY IT MATTERS

A safe, stable home is the foundation for a child's success. By intervening early and providing consistent support, FPLR helps families avoid homelessness and build brighter futures.

PREVENTION

Preventing eviction is the most cost-effective solution to family homelessness—and the least disruptive for children.

- Community based intervention
- Shelter diversion
- Help with rental and utility assistance referrals
- Mediation and advocacy with landlords
- Housing search support and case guidance
- Training in tenancy skills and financial management

STABILIZATION

A secure home is the starting point for a child's healthy growth and bright future. Family Promise's Stabilization Program supports families on their journey by offering steady guidance and access to important resources.

Through Mobility Mentoring, families work toward goals in housing, work readiness, child support services, learning, and financial planning. With one-on-one support and a strong community, families learn skills that help them move forward with confidence.

FAMILY PROMISE IMPACT

80% of those served find housing



Serving 100 Belknap County Children Annually



Support our work



FIVE WAYS TO HELP





1 JOIN US!

Help expand our resources and magnify the work of Family Promise by joining our Board or a Committee.

2 DONATIONS

Donations are a key source of funding to support families. Examples of how funds are used:

1. Help with utility bills.
2. Provide rental assistance.
3. Hire a qualified project manager to work with our families for lasting independence.

3 PARTICIPATE

Whether virtual or in-person, you can host an event to support and raise awareness for Family Promise, or participate in our upcoming events.

4 SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS!

Share your knowledge of FPLR with other stakeholders, funders and providers. Become a Brand Ambassador and help us to share the work we do with others.



5 LEND A HAND

Help with some behind the scenes administrative work around donation acknowledgement, social media and other tasks.



For more information, contact Hannah Marquis, Program Director
hannah@familypromiselnh.org

September Mission of the Month: Our Ministry of Space

The Board of Missions has designated September as the month to recognize our building and grounds as essential elements of our local mission and all that we do as the loving hands of God in the local community. Please consider an extra contribution to help keep our ministry of space in good working order.

You might ask, "Don't we already support our buildings and grounds through our pledges and giving to the church?" The answer is yes, in part. Giving to the church through pledges and regular giving covers 60% of the budget. The 5% sustainable withdrawal and interest from our invested funds covers 16%, fundraisers and use-of-church donations cover 7%. To balance the operating budget, we're withdrawing an additional amount from our funds to cover the remaining 18%, which means

News from the Board of Missions

we're dipping into the future to pay for the present. The 3 biggest areas in which our budgeted costs have increased in the past years are pastoral expenses and property-related expenses.

You might also ask, "So why are we calling this a mission?" The answer is that our buildings and grounds reach beyond our congregation and are integral to our outreach to the community. Imagine if we didn't have the gift of space to offer. Through our buildings and grounds, we provide a beautiful gathering place of service and support: the Soup Kitchen, the Little Food Pantry,

AA and Humble Grunt Work meeting space, and overflow parking for the town, local businesses, and the youth fishing derby. In many ways our church serves as a community center for the town. We contribute to the spirit of the town through the music of our carillon and the presence of our steeple on the hill. The Craft Fair and Yard Sale in July and the Holly Fair in November are not only fundraisers but friend-raisers that bring the community together. These activities are all part of our mission and outreach.

In summary, our Ministry of Space recognizes the importance of our property and grounds to the mission work of the church and asks that you consider making an extra contribution toward keeping our space and our funds in good working order for all who benefit.

Missions Collections as of September 1, 2026

Mission Name	Total Collected
Backpack Mission	\$748.00
Christmas Fund	\$190.00
Community Caregivers	\$140.00
Habitat for Humanity	\$675.00
Horton Center	\$590.00
Hunger	\$290.00
Ministry of Space	\$20.00
Neighbors in Need	\$60.00
New Beginnings	\$764.00
OCWM	\$1,025.00
OGHS	\$1,025.00
Strengthen the Church	\$170.00
Total:	\$5,697.00



Are you a Hannaford shopper? Purchase \$100 grocery cards with cash or check from the church each Sunday during Fellowship Hour and Hannaford will give us \$5 for each that you buy!

Paying for your groceries with these cards continues to earn your rewards to use and the cards will never expire.

Can't spend it all at once?

Use the balance the next time you shop!

Many thanks to all for supporting our church!

In Memorium



Roy Putnam

Roy Philip Putnam "Putt" of Moultonborough, NH passed away July 23, 2026, at the NH Veterans Home of Tilton NH. He was born in Peabody, MA August 14, 1927, to parents Everett and Alice (Jung) Putnam. Roy married the love of his life, Barbara (Morris) in 1956 and spent 62 years together until her passing in 2018.

Roy graduated from Peabody High School in 1945 and joined the Marine Corps where he proudly served his country during the final year of WWII. He then worked for Eastman Kodak Co. in Peabody, MA for nearly 45 years as well as worked part-time as a professional photographer, one of his many passions.

Roy enjoyed spending summers at Lake Winnepesaukee with family and friends and skiing and snowmobiling in the mountains during the winter. Following retirement, Roy and his wife traveled across the world with some of the highlights being China, Alaska and Germany. He loved all sports and took up golfing in his retirement years, where he was a long-standing member of Waukegan Golf Club in Center Harbor, NH. Often, Roy was found working in his garden sharing his green thumb by generously giving out his vegetables and fruit to neighbors and family. Additionally, in 1985, Roy proudly established a local family run Christmas tree farm named Joal Tree Farm in Moultonborough, NH. For generations his family helped sell handmade wreaths and fresh trees to the community.



John Merrill

John P. Merrill, 93, formerly of Center Harbor and New Hampton, NH, passed away on Sunday, August 9, 2026, at Compass at Forestview, in Meredith, NH.

John was born on February 20, 1933, in Concord, NH, the son of the late Bernard E. Merrill and Pauline (Swain) Merrill.



John attended a one-room schoolhouse, New Hampton Elementary School (Fiske School), just about a mile from his family home. Later, he would bike 3 miles to the Bristol High School where he graduated in 1947. He worked for Clark's Dairy during his high school years. John was accepted into the UNH Thompson School to study agriculture and studied for a year before being called to serve in the Army for the next six years touring through Korea, Alaska and Japan. Once he returned home; John worked back at the farm for nine more years.

John began his long career with the Center Harbor Post Office in 1967, retiring in 1992. He was a volunteer with the Center Harbor Fire Department from December of 1960 until retiring in January of 1989. John served as Assistant Chief for thirteen years.

He was involved with 4-H from 1942-1989. John started as a member, with his mother serving as a leader, and later a leader himself receiving numerous awards over the years. He also held a Federal Bird Banding permit through the U.S. Department of Interior for over 60 years.

John was a faithful steward of the Center Harbor Congregational Church. He had been a deacon, trustee, auditor, church school teacher, member of the Board of Christian Education, leader and mentor for several confirmation classes, and had fostered children through Plan International.

Happy Birthday

9/02 Nancy Stamnas
 9/07 Patty McQuone
 9/10 Su Mansur
 9/12 Palmer Smith
 9/12 Carol Bovill
 9/17 Jill Morton
 9/22 Diane Crawford
 9/25 Patte Morrow

Happy Anniversary

9/01 Laurie and William Burke
 9/04 Dave and Lynne Sias
 9/06 Joe and Marianne McGrail
 9/06 Jane Hilder and Robertson Williams
 9/22 Kevin and Patte Morrow



Opportunities in Our Community



"A THREESTRAND CORD IS NOT QUICKLY BROKEN."
 - Ecclesiastes 4:12

The NHCUCU Local Church Initiative and the Granite State Committee for Connection and Covenant will be holding a series of **LUNCH & LISTEN** events around the state to help build connections between churches and support other ways we might help one another. Our first event will be held on:

Sunday, September 27th
1 - 3pm
at First Congregational Church Wolfeboro UCC
115 S Main St., Wolfeboro, NH

Lunch included
 Please **RSVP** with number of people and any dietary restrictions by **Sept 15th**
 to pastordawn@wolfeboroucc.org.
 Event open to both clergy & laity. Multiple people from each church welcome.



Fall/Winter Kids Consignment Sale

Public Shopping: November 6-8, 2026

Geneva Point · Moultonborough, NH

Buy and sell children's clothing, toys, books, baby gear, winter gear, sports equipment, and more.

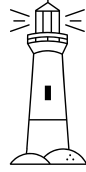
Learn more + register at

littlepinesmarket.com

BUY. SELL. GIVE BACK.

September

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 -4:30 PM Soup Kitchen	2 -5 PM Missions Meeting, by Zoom	3	4 -8 PM AA	5
6 -9 AM Worship	7	8 -4:30 PM Deacons Meeting, by Zoom -4:30 PM Soup Kitchen	9	10 -9 AM Bible Study, by Zoom	11 -8 PM AA	12 -7 PM Sing-Along and Ice Cream Buffett, Gilpatric Hall
13 -10 AM Worship -11:30 AM Bell Choir Rehearsal (Treble Bells)	14	15 -1:30 PM Books & Bites, Parlor -4:30 PM Soup Kitchen	16	17 -9 AM Bible Study, by Zoom	18 -8 PM AA	19
20 -10 AM Worship Sunday School Classes Resume	21	22 -4:30 PM Soup Kitchen	23	24 -9 AM Bible Study, by Zoom	25 -8 PM AA	26
27 -10 AM Worship -11:30 AM Bell Choir Rehearsal (Treble Bells)	28	29 -1:30 PM Cabinet Meeting, Parlor -4:30 PM Soup Kitchen	30			



The Last Rose of Summer
by Thomas Moore (1779-1852)

'Tis the last rose of Summer,
Left blooming alone;
All her lovely companions
Are faded and gone;
No flower of her kindred,
No rose-bud is nigh,
To reflect back her blushes
Or give sigh for sigh!
I'll not leave thee, thou lone one,
To pine on the stem;
Since the lovely are sleeping,
Go sleep thou with them.
Thus kindly I scatter
Thy leaves o'er the bed
Where thy mates of the garden
Lie scentless and dead.
So soon may I follow,
When friendships decay,
And from Love's shining circle
The gems drop away!
When true hearts lie withered,
And fond ones are flown,
Oh! who would inhabit
This bleak world alone?



Anna Maria Cumpston by Charles Polk, 1790,
National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.
This poem is in the public domain.