February 25, 2026

Church Happenings.

Pastor Nathan's Weekly Message

The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to till and keep it. And the Lord commanded the man, " You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for the day in that you eat of it you shall die." (Genesis 2:15-17)

The biblical view of the history of humankind, and each individual human, is contained in the first three chapters of Genesis. We were, and are, created to serve God by loving God and each other in freedom and joy. However, we invariably chose, and continue to choose, the bondage of sin and woe instead as prices not too high to pay for the independence God offers us in Jesus Christ.

Pastor Nathan's Video of the week.

Click Here to Watch The video

Scan QR Code with your Camera to Watch.

In this course, Dr. Nijay Gupta delves into the often-overlooked stories of women leaders in the early church. As you explore the historical context of women's roles in Scripture and its ancient context, you'll gain fresh perspectives on familiar biblical texts, discover the significant contributions of women like Deborah, Phoebe, Prisca, and Junia, and engage with important discussions about the roles of women in leadership. The course also addresses challenging passages that seem to limit women's participation in leadership, offering a fresh perspective on these texts. Whether you're a student, scholar, or simply someone curious about the Bible, this course will deepen your knowledge and appreciation of the diverse individuals who shaped early Christianity.

Save the Date:

Sunday, March 15th is Missions Sunday.

Plan to stay after church for lunch and conversation. Lent is a great time to add **"Making A Difference**" to your calendar

Sue Gayne

CE Update:

Join us on Sunday, March 1st, after Church, for our next installment of Coffee and Conversation!

Rev. Richards will show a brief video from *Right Now Media* and will then lead us in a discussion of the video's message.

Previous conversations have been interesting and very worthwhile.

2. **Mark your calendars for March 8th, find your sunglasses and Hawaiian shirts, and come join in the fun in the sun after Church on March 8th, BEACH DAY!**

Heat, sand, balloon volleyball, hot dogs and chips, cake - what more can you ask for in March! This is a multi-generational event, aimed at the "kid" in all of us.

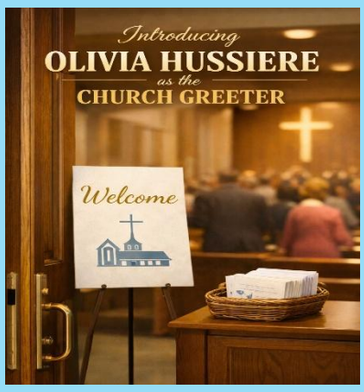
Kathy Petersen, CE Chair

FOOD PANTRY NEWS

🎉👊❤️! You're rock stars, all stars, gold medalists, every kind of champion there is, because the food pantry is overflowing with abundance! Thank you all so much. The loving care you show for your friends and neighbors who might need a little help is so indicative of what this church and its supporters are all about. We are blessed with both the food and the inspiration. 🙏

Greeter report February 7, 2026

Nelson Leavitt



Going to Church on Sunday is always a highlight of our week but today was different. We were sad because we will be leaving on Wednesday to go on vacation for almost 3 months… Happy God has blessed us with another getaway but grieving about leaving our Church Family. It became much easier when Olivia volunteered to take over as greeter! A week or two ago, I was talking with Sheldon and mentioned we needed to find someone to take my place. Olivia overheard and said "I could do that!" I checked with everyone, including Pastor Nathan, to make sure such an idea would be pleasing and it was! With approval of all, I asked Olivia this morning, as she was getting ready to light the candles, if she would mind me making an announcement. She asked, "Does this mean that I do it from now on? " I answered with a smile, "It could mean that, if I don't come back." With that, I made the announcement before the congregation.

Olivia is the perfect person to do the job. She has the qualities needed with her warm, outgoing personality and inviting smile. As several people commented, she can attract younger people, and we need that. (I am old enough to be her great-grandfather, and I think so!) When you see her next, be sure to comment on how you feel. It may be with Sheldon near the main entrance next Sunday.

This week there were five new people and one young man that I didn't tell about from last week.

There was Tami-Anne, who said she came in for coffee. (I got the feeling she was surprised when she found herself in a pew and learned no foods are allowed in the Sanctuary… :) Not sure if she stayed.

Ivan came back the second time. He and our son Chris stayed for a long conversation with me. We talked about God making the difference in our lives between success and failure. It is so much fun to see younger people learn what some of us finally realized when we were their ages. The light comes on when we realize it has always been God, pulling us out of bad situations we have gotten into. He is the One to find strength to pick ourselves back up.

Kati and Bryan from Quimby Street came in at a time when I was absent making the announcement. I only got to say hello in passing.

Matthew and Sam also arrived when I came in to make the announcement. Pastor Nathan noticed and came down from the pulpit to tell me. Matthew had come from Gardiner to find a small Church congregation, "not a mega-church," as he said later.

He said he was surprised when he saw Pastor Nathan in the pulpit. He had attended the Church in Solon where Pastor previously preached. He was delighted!

Sam told of his family "Blaisdells" long history on the Maine coast in Pemaquid.

Bridging the Gap
JANUARY 2026
REPORT

Bridging the Gap JANUARY 2026 report

I am happy to report to you what has happened in January at Bridging the Gap. It's been busy! Our numbers are up in some areas and the same in others. We have not seen a decline in New Mainers utilizing our services despite the ICE threat.
The requests for financial assistance have continued to grow. It is a challenge to make our resources stretch throughout a month. As the chart shows we distributed $4,165.23 to help with recovery housing (rent), rental assistance, utilities, heating assistance and transportation. February is approaching our $3,000/month threshold and we're only half way through the month.

BTG and Emmanuel are committed to keep the CHEF program going and, hopefully, secure the funds to do so. We are hopeful to have the Resource Program Leader position filled soon! Our team has worked diligently to keep up with tabling scheduling, answering phone calls and emails requesting help, and assisting guests.

We thank you for your continued support!

Kind regards,
Bobbi-Jo Burdin
Interim Director

Bridging the Gap Monthly Report JANUARY 2026

TOTAL UNDUPLICATED INDIVIDUALS REACHED IN 2026 TO DATE: 1,209

TOTAL INDIVIDUALS REPORTING "NO PERMANENT RESIDENCE": 47

SERVICE STATISTICS FOR JANUARY

Addie's Attic
- Total Households served: **249** (same month 2025: 248)
- Total unduplicated individuals served: 872 (same month 2025: 898 = 2% decrease)

Basic Essentials Hygiene Pantry:
- Total Households served: **305** (same month 2025: 252)
- Unduplicated individuals served: **1,131** (same month 2025: 1,391= 18.69% decrease)
- Percentage of individuals who are New Mainers: **39.35%**
- Total New Mainers served **445** (same month 2025: 389 = 14.3% increase)

RESOURCES, SUPPORT AND CENTRALIZED HELPING FUND (CHEF):
The Resource Department handles multiple calls a day. The nature and outcome of each call is different. People might be directed to a different or additional resource; asked to call back with more information so BTG can better assess and assist; or BTG might agree to assist financially. BTG often works with other funding sources to fully meet a request that is beyond what BTG can support alone. When other agencies' funds are depleted, BTG must be even more discerning.

Number of calls/emails/walk-ins received: **100+**
Number of individuals directly served: **29**

Note: The number of individuals served represents hands-on cases, sometimes in collaboration with another program/agency, and/or BTG supported the individual financially. It does not represent the number of individuals who simply received a pamphlet or phone number.

JANUARY 2026	AMOUNT	YEAR TO DATE 2026	AMOUNT
Recovery Housing	$1,000.00	Recovery Housing	$1,000.00
Rooming House		Rooming House	
Rental Assistance	$1,497.36	Rental Assistance	$1,497.36
Security Deposit		Security Deposit	
Housing Other		Housing Other	
Utilities	$432.17	Utilities	$432.17
Heating Assistance	$1,195.70	Heating Assistance	$1,195.70
ID/Birth Certificate		ID/Birth Certificate	
Car Repairs		Car Repairs	
Gas	$40.00	Gas	$40.00
Taxi/Concord/Greyhound		Taxi/Concord/Greyhound	
Phone/Phone Service		Phone/Phone Service	
Food Card		Food Card	
Other		Other	
JANUARY TOTAL	**$4,165.23**	**YEAR TO DATE 2026 TOTAL**	**$4,165.23**

Bridging the Gap offered direct/indirect support with matters including:

Moral Support	Gas Card
Recovery Housing	Utilities
Rent	
Connecting/Directing to other resources	

Agency or Person who referred individual to BTG:

Self	Spurwink
Kennebec Behavioral Health	211
Augusta General Assistance	Community Member
Anglez	HFGC
Augusta Police Dept. Community Response Specialist	

Agency or Person BTG referred individuals to:

Augusta General Assistance	Salvation Army
Grace Church	Hope Baptist Church
Christ Church	Catholic Charities
Local General Assistance	

Tabling at Bridging the Gap:

Family Violence	Anglez
LINC	SKCDC
Bangor Savings Bank	Career Center

VOLUNTEERS:

Number of Volunteers in January: **16** Total Volunteer Hours: **206.7**

Bridging the Gap

Together we can!

East Coast Swing Dance Lesson

Come dance, have fun, and learn some swing moves!

Thursday, February 19
6:30 PM
9 Church St., Augusta
$5.00 donation

(Enter by the Glass Door near the flag)

No experience needed—just show up and enjoy!

AUGUSTA FARMERS MARKET AT MILL PARK

Our Winter Market runs from November through April.
Tuesday's 3pm-5pm
Winter Market Location: The Buker Center -22 Armory Street, Augusta, Maine

Come Shop from Neighboring Farms and Businesses at The Augusta Farmers Market! Located right in the heart of Augusta, Maine and year-round.

Join us every Tuesday to shop for local, fresh, quality delicious products from the area's best local vendors. You can find anything from fresh vegetables and meats to fresh-baked breads and other baked goods, fruit, spices, flowers, honey, and maple syrup from our farms and kitchens!

Come visit our tight-knit community of small, local Maine businesses and farms!

Monthly Meetings & Events

- Trustees Meetings – 1st Tuesday of each month – 6pm
- Council Meetings – 3rd Tuesday of each month – 6pm
- Deacon Meetings – 4th Sunday of each month – after Sunday Service
- Pet Pantry – 2nd Saturday of each month – 9am

Weekly Meetings & Events

- Line Dancing Every Monday at 6pm
- Bible Study – Tuesdays – 5pm
- Sunday Service – Every Sunday 10am
- AA Meetings Mon – Fri 10pm Monday Evening 6pm and Saturday 7pm
- ALA-ANON Every Wednesday 5:30pm
- Men's Breakfast Every Thursday at 6:30am
- Swing Dancing Classes Every Thursday at 6:30pm
- Community Meals 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 5th at 5:30pm

Pastor Nathan's Office Hours
Tuesday's 11am to 3pm
Thursday's 9am to 2pm

Church Office Hours
Monday Thru Wednesday 9am to 2pm
Thursday 8am to 12pm

Happenings Newsletter South Parish Congregational Church February 25, 2026

FEBUARY 2025						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 10am - Green St. 10am - SPCC UCC	2 12pm - AA Meeting 1pm - Bridge Club 6pm - AA Meeting 6pm - Line Dancing	3 12pm - AA Meeting 5pm - Bible Study 6pm Trustees Meeting	4 12pm - AA Meeting 4pm - Green St 5pm - AL-ANON	5 6:30am - Men's 12pm - AA Meeting	6 12pm - AA Meeting	7 4:30pm – Community Meals 7pm - AA Meetings
8 10am - Green St. 10am - SPCC UCC 2pm Shakespeare	9 12pm - AA Meeting 1pm - Bridge Club 6pm - AA Meeting 6pm - Line Dancing	10 12pm - AA Meeting 5pm - Bible Study 5pm - Zoom Bible	11 12pm - AA Meeting 4pm - Green St 5pm - AL-ANON	12 6:30am - Men's 12pm - AA Meeting	13 12pm - AA Meeting	14 9am - Pet Pantry 4:30pm – Community Meals 7pm - AA Meetings
15 10am - Green St. 10am - SPCC UCC 2pm Shakespeare	16 12pm - AA Meeting 1pm - Bridge Club 6pm - AA Meeting 6pm - Line Dancing	17 12pm - AA Meeting 5pm - Bible Study 5pm - Zoom Bible 6m Council Meeting	18 12pm - AA Meeting 4pm - Green St 5pm - AL-ANON	19 6:30am - Men's 12pm - AA Meeting	20 12pm - AA Meeting	21 9am - Green St. 4:30pm - 7pm - AA Meetings
22 10am - Green St. 10am - SPCC UCC Shakespeare Group 11:30am Deacon's Mtg	23 12pm - AA Meeting 1pm - Bridge Club 6pm - AA Meeting 6pm - Line Dancing	24 12pm - AA Meeting 5pm - Bible Study 5pm - Zoom Bible	25 12pm - AA Meeting 4pm - Green St 5pm - AL-ANON	26 6:30am - Men's 12pm - AA Meeting	27 12pm - AA Meeting	28 7pm - AA Meetings