 The Grapevine

13 Green Street,

Augusta, Maine 04330

207-622-0843

greenstreetumc@gmail.com

2 – Rebecca Polzella 12 – Tina Monroe

3 – Charles Atwater. 12 – Tina Noble

5 – Lee Ware 13 – Robin Forbes

6 – Jessica McGuire 24 – Nancy Merrick



 **8 - Donna Alexander**

**16 - Linda Forbes**

**17 - Robert Thurlow**

 **23 - Kristin Tripp**

**24—Kristen Tripp**



January 8 – Future Pathways Mtg 3:30 – 5:00 PM

January 10 – Simplified Board Mtg - zoom – 6:00PM

January 15 – Ministry Team Workshop – 11 – 2

January 22 – River Churches Coordinating Team

 @ DRUM – 2:00 PM

February 22 – Ash Wednesday

February 23 – Future Pathways Work session

 Replaces Simplified Board mtg

February 26 – Pulpit Exchange: Rev Rich Cullen



We have received thank you notes from the following:

Augusta Food Bank $461.10

Bridging the gap

clothes closet customer

Hussey School Angel tree

umcor $150

**A glimpse at our financial picture**

**Our bills are paid!!**

January 2022 beginning balance $27,025.01

2022 year Deposits $160,200.14

2022 Debits $176,385.08

2022 Year end balance $10,840.07

We are up to date on all bills and our Mission Shares have been paid. A detailed report will be available mid-February.

 The Pastor and Staff of Green Street thank all of you

 for your kindness and generosity with this year’s

 Christmas gift. We feel blessed.

 Lynne, George, Sue and Karen



**Grapevine newsletter**

January 2023

Blessings! This issue brings words from leaders and information about the season between New Years and Lent, which will begin with Ash Wednesday on February 22. During this respiratory virus season, we request masking in worship and other large group gatherings. Please help reduce strain on our medical providers and risk to those most vulnerable. N95s are more effective than fabric or surgical masks. Should it be necessary in any given week to require masking, information will be shared through our Facebook page, church email, and voicemail message.

**Reflection from Pastor Karen**

Methodists have long imagined faith’s journey as the passage into a house. The porch is our experience of repentance as we realize God’s all-encompassing goodness, grace, and power. The entry is baptism, the heavens are opened, and we chose to enter God’s home. And finally, we live our lives of faith within God’s household, in the embodiment known as church, seeking to become more like Jesus. These three sacred spaces hold the three main doctrines of Methodism: repentance, faith, holiness.

In mid-December, members of the church gathered for Table Talk during fellowship time. The topic was Green Street UMC’s future pathway (more on that in February). We began by sharing the essential actions and quality of life together that make us the congregation we are. You might think of these as ways of being and ways of doing together.

Here are essential forms of *doing* ministry that were named:

\*Worship to spread the good news, Sunday Morning Service

\*Fellowship, Friendship, Hospitality

\*Good works: Congregational Care, Angel Food Suppers, Clothes Closet, Mission Trips, engagement with Augusta Community Efforts: Bread of Life, Augusta Food Bank, Bridging the Gap, Angel Tree

\*Small groups: to explore spiritual issues, Sunday School, Music, Chancel and Bell Choir, Nurturing and developing mature spirituality

\*Good Office Communication

And here are essential aspects of *being* as Christians in ministry:

**\***Being authentic

\*Seen as believers bringing hope

\*Being a caring community

\*Inclusivity

\*Hospitality

\*Our Methodist identity and connection denominationally and through River Churches

 Quadrilateral,

\* Desire for God

\*Compassion for the world and determination and courage to act on it.

These are powerful insights and observations that will help us form a new mission statement.

What is essential for you in our life together? Do any of these rise to the top? Are there any others you would add? Contribute your insights by dropping a note in the office or emailing pastor.greenstreetumc@gmail.com.

And let us continue to be in conversation and prayer together as our pathway emerges.

As we begin this new year together, I thank you for embodying these essential qualities during the difficult life passages my family has been experiencing. And a HUGE thank you for the generous Christmas gift. I appreciate each and all of you. Your Partner in Ministry, *Pastor Karen*

I am available for drop in visits at Green St United Methodist Church (13 Green St, Augusta) 9:00am-12:00pm each Wednesday. To schedule an appointment please call or email, 207-622-3656 or pastor.greenstreetumc@gmail.com.

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**WORDS FROM OUR BISHOP by Bishop Peggy Johnson**

One of my favorite hymns that the Deaf Choir of Christ UMC of the Deaf signed while I was their pastor was “Standing in the Need of Prayer.”  Simple and repetitive, it stressed the importance of prayer with an emphatic sign “need” with a large sweeping motion. All of us most definitely are “standing in the NEED of prayer.”

I am strongly convinced that prayer is the most important resource we have for life and ministry, and I can testify to its power a hundred times over. It is with that conviction that I will be praying for a different district every week. I will be lifting up the names of churches, pastors and lay leaders and I invite you to email to me your joys and concerns if you wish. This will enable to me to pray even more specifically.

We live in challenging times, and we need to “take it to the Lord in prayer.” The overwhelming good we experience from God’s gracious hand also needs celebrating as well as the many answered prayers. Please join me in prayer for the conference, for our churches, for our witness in the world.

Note: During her tenure in New England, Bishop Peggy A. Johnson will pray for a different district each week. Send your joys and concerns by Friday for the following week to bishopjohnson@neumc.org. In 2023 Bishop Johnson will pray for the Many Waters District: Jan. 15-22, March 5-11, April 23-29, June 11-17

MORE FROM BISHOP JOHNSON

As I begin my ministry here, I would like to encourage all of us to study the Word of God as a priority. The founder of the Methodist movement John Wesley wrote in his Preface to Standard Sermons, “O give me that book! At any price, give me the book of God! I have it: here is knowledge enough for me.” Indeed, the study of Scripture is the fundamental ordinance of God that is “useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction and training in righteousness, that the person of God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.” (II Timothy 3;16-17 NRSV Updated Edition).

Siblings in Christ, may we commit ourselves anew to the study of Scripture in private, at our churches, and wherever we teach it out in the world. I encourage you to consider reading the entire Bible in 2023 so that you can take in the full sweep of the whole of Scripture. Commit to Bible study every day as it is manna for the soul. Often in the rush of our busy lives, we become spiritually malnourished, and our effectiveness suffers. Scripture speaks to our hearts in real-time as it is a living Word.

I want to testify to you that my calling to offer my name for interim episcopal service was a direct result of hearing a sermon preached on a passage from Luke 14 last September. The Holy Spirit speaks through the Word now as it has through the ages. We need to look no further for guidance in facing life’s complexities.

I also encourage you to read and study the Bible this year using a different translation than you are accustomed. Recently the New Revised Standard Version has been updated. According to Zondervan Publishing, “It gives English Bible readers access to the most meticulously researched, rigorously reviewed and faithfully accurate translation on the market.” I have found many Scripture passages in this new addition to be more understandable. This includes a clarification about the Greek word used in I Corinthians 6:9 that had previously been translated as “homosexual.”

But what about voices of cultural diversity among us? [The First Nations Version: An IndigenousTranslation of the New Testament](https://neumc-email.brtapp.com/%21EKm1S6ay5F7k7yk8DXuAAMFXnM0BARafmyE9B-MrwyxUVvHeYpQ3G8oN4yzxXz5FM) (InterVarsity Press) brings a unique linguistic understanding of the life and teachings of Jesus and the early church’s ministry as seen through the eyes and hearts of Native American people. It is now in its second edition. Another way to study Scripture is by watching it — on video in American Sign Language (ASLV Bible at [deafmissions.org](https://neumc-email.brtapp.com/%21w-FVSxcY32disXvtqKLyxzAjwoQ%2BlmzaO1JXcu1S41GxBQBWUhxztB60oExjQC68g)). In these videos, it is rendered in the visual language of the culturally Deaf community without voice. People who don’t know sign language can follow along with a printed Bible and experience Scripture in a new, inspiring way.

How about singing the Scripture? [A Metrical Psalter: The Book of Psalms Set to Meter for Singing](https://neumc-email.brtapp.com/%21Ac2x9aYp0LOau2W-ePAbeurkHIn2%2BgYWICF67YeaA0rBvLnyynuYe9r-ZzjjfqwXg) by Julie and Timothy Tennent is another way of bringing God’s Word to life. Hearing the voices of diversity through the study of Scripture is fundamental to our spiritual growth and the justice ministry that we are called to bring forth from our faith communities.

May 2023 be a blessed year for you and your churches. Let us delve deeply into the streams of Living Water that come from the Word of God and be quick to obey and swift to give testimony to its power.

**April 15, 2023**: In Person 'Meet and Greet' Bishop Johnson on the Many Waters District.  Location will be at the UMC of Auburn from 2:00-4:00.

**Lenten Pulpit Exchange**

Feb 19

East Pittston (9:00am) Rev. Ruth Merriam **DRUM (11:00 am) Rev. Ruth Merriam**

Highland Ave (9:00 am) Rev. Richard Cullen Randolph (11:00 am) Rev. Rich Cullen

Green St (9:30 am) Rev. Karen Munson/ Cox Memorial (10:00 am) *lay led or guest*

 Communion Sunday

Feb 26

East Pittston (9:00am) *lay led or guest* **DRUM (11:00 am) *Anne Carter (TBC)***

Highland Ave (9:00 am) Rev. Karen MunsonRandolph (11:00 am) Rev. Karen Munson

Green St (9:30 am) Rev. Rich Cullen Cox Memorial (10:00 am) Rev. Ruth Merriam

March 5

East Pittston (9:00am) Rev. Rich Cullen **DRUM (11:00 am) Rev. Rich Cullen**

Highland Ave (9:00 am) *lay led or guest* Randolph (11:00 am) Rev. Ruth Merriam

Green St (9:30 am) Rev. Ruth Merriam Cox Memorial (10:00 am) Rev. Karen Munson

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 Please join us for the next **FREE COMMUNITY BREAKFAST**

 hosted by DRUM Church’s menfolk. All are welcome.

 February 4, 8:00-10:00 AM