SERVICE OF WONDER & AMAZEAMMENT
August 25 at MERRYSPRING

It was a truly lovely morning for everyone to enjoy outdoor worship! Thanks to Scouts and our own teams for setting things up so comfortably.

Mark and Ute spoke with joy and humor to guide us even closer to an experience of God’s

spirit and the beauty of nature.
Special poems were read.
Alex Wilder and Matt Mainster gave us beautiful music.
Ed Weber advised us that “Leave No Trace” is the best way to live. Many wondrous and special things were brought to share and appreciate on our Altar of Amazement.
Our One Year Anniversary!

We began our shared ministry in September of 2018 and it has been a joy and privilege to serve with you. I continue to be impressed with your level of dedication to serving in our church as we, together, also serve the wider community. Thank you for your on-going warm welcome, patience and flexibility as we have gotten to know each other, worshipped, learned and served together. This congregation is blessed with capable, open, creative and faithful leaders who exemplify a spirit of servant leadership. I also feel blessed by working with dedicated, professional, creative and collaborative staff members. It has been a joy for me to get to know other clergy colleagues and the many energetic community service organizations and non-profits in our area as well. I trust that we will discern where our gifts will most effectively and faithfully meet the needs of our community as we move forward.

You recently received a letter along with your pledge statements for the first half of the year which highlighted some of the positive developments in the past year. I would like to take a little time now to spell out one area of growth that I am excited about as we move forward into our next year of living into the vision and teachings of the good news of Jesus Christ: faith formation. I am not suggesting that we do all this at once or that we even embrace all these ideas but simply offer these for conversation. How we move forward together will be a shared discernment and endeavor. I look forward to hearing more about what moves you in terms of growing in faith and responding both to the beauty and suffering in our world.

As you know, faith formation is one of my passions. I hope that we can grow an adult education team that will take on developing and implementing a more comprehensive program. I envision a program that involves opportunities for learning about our tradition (perhaps including travel), developing contemplative and active ministry practices. Hopefully, the latter will also involve additional hands-on ministry that include meeting people in their suffering and learning to see the world from their perspective. Possible teaching programs could focus on the Bible, Jesus’ message and
model of living, theology and daily life, the mystics, poetry and spirituality, arts and spirituality, creative aging, parenting, etc. For some of these programs, we may have to ask outside presenters. Some of the programs could be led by church members, including additional book studies or topics based on the expertise of our members. I am also thrilled to say that my spouse will have many gifts to share in this area. It matters very much to me that we find ways to connect the dots for each other on how we can share our passions, knowledge and experience with each other and the wider community.

I also hope that we can develop on-line opportunities to participate in some of these programs for parents who may not be able to come to church during the day or early evening. Such programs could also be accessed by snowbirds and the homebound (if they can access a computer), and others who cannot attend. Imagine doing a bible study via your computer while you can actually see and interact with other participants. Depending on the format, these sessions could also be recorded for later viewing. We would offer a parallel program “in person” at church.

We are truly blessed by Elizabeth’s ministry with our children and families. She will tell you about emerging initiatives. It has been a joy to see the growing interest in intergenerational activities as well. How we strengthen our outreach to families and children/youth may also play a role in our discussion about whether and how to fill the extra staff position which has been included in our budget but has not been filled. This and other considerations will be included in any strategic planning for the future. These are blessed and exciting times. Thanks be to God.

I would also like to bring your attention to the emerging Community Emergency Shelter Pilot Project. Jeanne Denny, who also oversees our Shields Mission Project, has been the visionary and driving force behind getting a Community Emergency Shelter during the winter for homeless people started. After the hope for a Camden location did not materialize, the efforts were shifted to Rockland. Our support and involvement will still be much needed to help get this important project under way. Please read Jeanne's column about the project and the public information sessions coming up in September. Thank God for Jeanne's caring heart, tenacity and vision!

With great hope,

Ute
Outdoor Service Celebration – Thank You (from Ute)
I would like to thank our new Outdoor Worship Ad Hoc Team for creating our beautiful service on August 25th: Joey Dowd, Roy Hitchings, John Hufnagel, David Jones, Ed Weber (and Boy scout Troop 200)! We were blessed with fantastic weather and the beautiful surroundings of Merryspring Park. Thank you to Mark Burrows for co-leading the sermon, to our staff, the communications team, the deacons and fellowship team members for their flexibility and help in making this a memorable experience! It was lovely to have Alex Wilder as our guest musician and sound expert. Finally, thank you all for making the extra effort to come to Merryspring! I trust that this will not be our last outdoor service and have hope that we can find additional occasional ways to experiment in some of our services (Sunday or at another time) using a variety of themes, text sources and music.

Weekly Lectio Divina and Meditation
Tuesdays @ 1:30 in the Sanctuary
We engage a biblical text using an ancient practice that focuses not on a scholarly interpretation but a personal encounter with the text. The process concludes with 20 minutes of silent meditation. No experience is necessary. We meet for about 60 minutes. All are welcome!

Blessing the Animals–Mark Your Calendars for October 6th
We hope to collaborate with St. Thomas Episcopal on offering a Blessing of the Animals ceremony on October 6th at 4:00 pm., mostly likely on the Camden Village Green. This tradition of blessing the animals is usually held close to October 4th which is the Feast Day of St. Francis of Assisi who was revered for his love and connection to creation. You can bring your actual pets or a photo displaying your pet if an actual appearance is not practical. Please look for further details in future messages.

Ute is Away September 9-20 and News on Mark’s Plans
I will be joining Mark in Malaga, Spain, where he is teaching a seminar. We will also have a few days alone to travel in Spain before Mark returns to Germany to teach and I return to Camden. It has been a joy to have much of the summer together in Camden.
We have also decided that Mark will leave his teaching post in Germany by the end of this coming semester (which runs from late September to early February 2020). He will still return to Europe for shorter stretches to teach a block seminar and lead some workshops but he will be Maine based!

Rev. Abby Pettee will be providing pastoral support while I am away (301-8546). Our careteam will also be available to offer support to you. Please call Becky at the office (236-4821) who will contact our careteam leaders. I will be leading the services on September 8 and 22.

Our guest minister on September 15th will be renowned preacher and teacher Rev. Peter Panagore. Panagore, who earned his divinity degree from Yale, was broadcast daily for 15 years on two Maine NBC television stations as storyteller and minister of "Daily Devotions," two-minute spots simulcast on a variety of AM and FM radio stations, as the First Radio Parish Church of America. A two-time near-death experiencer, Panagore first died of hypothermia while ice climbing in Banff Provincial Park in 1980, and again in 2015 from a heart attack. Two books are best sellers: "Heaven Is Beautiful: How Dying Taught Me That Death Is Just The Beginning" and "Two Minutes for God: Quick Fixes for the Spirit."

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PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE
The Pastoral Relations Committee met as required by our bylaws. The purpose of the Pastoral Relations Committee is to be a confidential sounding board for the Pastor and to act as a bridge for congregants who are struggling with something that they don’t feel comfortable talking with Pastor Ute directly. Those on the Pastoral Relations Committee are Debbi Hitchings, Sally Fernald, John Hufnagel and Joey Dowd.

Calling All Goddesses!
Note change of dates from what was printed in July/August Beacon.

The 2019 Women’s Retreat will be held November 1-3
The next planning meeting is Monday, September 16 from 5-7:30 at Donna Crane’s home. Light refreshments provided. All are welcome to participate in planning the schedule-that-isn’t-a-schedule! Even if you’ve never been to the retreat before, half the fun is in the preparations! Newcomers are welcome to the planning session—just be sure to let Donna know you’re coming. Everyone, please R.S.V.P. donna@tillmancrane.com so we’ll have a chair for you.
SUNDAY SCHOOL KICKOFF SEPT. 8th

The regular Sunday School classes will begin on September 8th at 8:45. Older youth (6th grade-12th grade) will meet in the conference room across from the office, using the new GROOVE curriculum, described in the July/August Beacon. The teachers for September will be Alisa and Joey Dowd and the theme for the month will be Character. The way that this class will work for this year is that we will have an outing on the second Sunday of each month led by Alisa and Joey. The kids will meet at 8:45 and then will go off on an outing (hiking, apple picking, ice fishing etc.) and we will hold regular classes the rest of the month. This “outing” Sunday will serve like our youth group. In today’s times it is hard for families to get back to church for an extra event so we decided that we would give this way a shot.

The younger class (3 years old through 5th grade) meets in the Godly Play classroom downstairs for music, stories, and crafts. This is our second year using the Godly Play curriculum. Godly play is a Montessori based curriculum that uses lovely wooden items to help support the stories. The stories are memorized and they cover all manner of things. The church calendar, the prophets, the parables, Advent, the Easter Season, an explanation of the books of the bible, Pauls’ teachings, the Old Testament, and more. It has been a smooth transition for us and we feel confident that it will provide a solid foundation for our youngest kids. The music portion of our program is lovely and is led by Ursula Crosslin. Ursula brings a wealth of knowledge and enthusiasm to the class and provides the children practice in intentional breathing, warm up exercises, contemporary songs, traditional songs and singing with movement. We are blessed to have her.
Emily Bennett is in charge of the nursery and also helps with kids who go down during the sermon. She is caring and funny and has a great rapport with our youth, providing exceptional care for kids during Sunday School and the service.

We will have a meeting after fellowship on September 15th for all those people who have signed up to teach this coming year:  
**Alisa Dowd, Joey Dowd, Joseph Cote, Greg Worden, Terri Mackenzie, Zella Walker, Mimi Benedict, Amy Rollins, Deb Endl, Mary Wells, Essie Sexton, Ursula Crosslin, Judy Cucinotta, Jane Babbitt, Donna Crane, Sharon Walker-Spencer, and Tom Yoder**  
(Look at that list!!!! Amazing)

This meeting will be between 30-45 minutes, no longer. It will be a chance for us to give you information about the kids who will be in your class. Alisa and Joey Dowd will be there to help me answer any questions that you might have. They worked closely with this group last year and will have a lot of insight on the best way to shepherd them through the year. If you are unable to make this meeting, we can set up a time to go over the information another time.

Peace, Elizabeth

"**AUTHENTIC INTENTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS**"

Get A I R !

It’s happening! Our congregation is beginning to change the way we do things. Houses are “opening up.” Activities are being planned. Relationships are being built. We have had Game Night in the Pilgrim Room, and an Outdoor Game Night during the summer. These events were quite fun for all ages!

Are you willing to host an event at your house? Do you have a boat and are willing to take a family or two out on the water? Would you like to take along a family on a hike or a cross-country ski? Are you willing to invite a family over for a cookout and game night? Any reaching out is good reaching out. Any time we all spend together is relationship building. We will have another “Get AIR” meeting at the end of September. If you have not previously let me know that you want to be involved, send me an email and I will add you to the list.
Heavenly Threads Thrift Shop
Heavenly Threads Thrift Shop has had an outstanding summer! This is thanks to our awesome staff, loyal volunteers, enthusiastic customers and our most generous donors! So a hearty THANK YOU to you all! It truly does take a village to keep this mission going.

After a big sale over Labor Day weekend (hope you didn't miss it!) we closed the shop for a couple of days to reorganize, restock and recuperate. Now we have embraced the fall season offering some warmer clothing, back to school supplies & autumn decorations. Volunteers and staff have created beautiful displays and the shop has many new treasures to see. We hope you make time to stop by and see us! We are open Monday-Friday 10-4.

SOS
SOS has been open Thursdays this summer from 4-6 pm in addition to the regular Tuesday morning hours from 9-11. We hope to continue the Thursday afternoon opening through September but we will need your help to do this. We need volunteers to greet customers and maybe hang some clothing on Thursdays from 4-6. Not stressful at all and someone will be at Heavenly Threads so you would not be there alone. Please call us at 236-3203 or email us at threadsucc@gmail.com if you can help.

Our Little Free Pantry
Outside of the SOS door is a small food pantry housed in a little brown wooden "birdhouse" structure. The food items are free for anyone to take but unfortunately the pantry is often empty. Please take the time to drop off non-perishable items to help keep this stocked. The pantry is unlocked and you can put items in anytime at your convenience. Thanks!

P.S. We are always in need of handled paper bags.
Hoping everyone enjoyed the beautiful weather at our outdoor service this past Sunday as much as I did—I of course missed our pipe organ and Steinway, but loved being surrounded by the music of nature. Merryspring is a very special place. And now I’m very much looking forward to the routine of fall! I’m not a big fan of haphazard schedules and greater than 70-degree temps, so autumn is my season …

Sanctuary Choir rehearsals will begin next Wednesday, September 4th, at 7 p.m., and our first official Sunday singing will be September 15th. Choral Bells will also begin rehearsing on Sept 4th (6 p.m.), and will likely play for the first time some Sunday in October (but perhaps earlier—stay tuned!) As always, anyone interested in singing or ringing is most encouraged to pop by and give us a try!

Please mark your calendars for the last two Friends of Music concerts of 2019: The first will take place on Sunday, October 20th at 4 p.m. in the sanctuary, featuring pianist Shelly Moorman-Stahlman, a Pennsylvania-based concert musician and professor of music at Lebanon Valley College (where I studied with her!) Shelly has performed all over the world, including right here in Rockport two years ago for the "Rachmaninoff in Rockport" concert with the Maine ProMusica Orchestra. Most recently she has been in Brazil performing with various different orchestras. She continues to coach with Rachmaninoff’s last living student, Ruth Slenczynska, who, at 94 years of age, still teaches and performs! Following Shelly’s not-to-be-missed concert, we will have our annual Christmas By the Sea noontime recital on Friday, December 6th, featuring a variety of wonderful local musicians. We hope you can make it to both these free concerts, and please tell your friends!

Happy fall!
Matt
Homelessness

As many of you know, I have a passion for addressing the needs of the homeless and near homeless, especially those residing in Knox County. Many area residents do not think we have a problem, wondering why there is a movement to start an emergency shelter in Rockland for the worst of the winter weather for 2019-2020. Often interested parties ask, “Don’t we already have a shelter? Isn’t that what Hospitality House is all about?”

Hospitality House started, in 1988, as a cold weather shelter offered in the basement of Our Lady of Good Hope, the Catholic Parish in Camden. Since that early beginning, Hospitality House has morphed a couple of times, but it currently serves as a residential shelter, primarily serving women and children. This facility serves 23 individuals and family members with a goal of creating stability for families transitioning to affordable housing. A worthy goal; however, there are approximately an additional 300 on their waiting list. Many of these individuals and family members receive case management services from a group of dedicated case managers employed by the Knox County Homeless Coalition. In addition to shelter needs, the Catholic Parish of St. Bernard’s provides a daily soup kitchen for anyone in need of a hot meal at 11:30AM. This service is augmented by St. Peter’s Episcopal Church in Rockland where individuals and families receive a hot meal on Saturday and Sunday. All of these meal services are staffed by volunteers. In Camden, the Chestnut Street Baptist Church provides a hot breakfast for anyone seeking food and socialization every Monday morning. In addition, the SOS Room of our church, the First Congregational Church of Camden, is open on Tuesday AM and Thursday PM to assist local families in acquiring clothing and small household items for free; the hours of the SOS room coincide with the hours of the Camden Food Pantry where families can acquire food supplies to expand their food budget.
Now we are considering another needed service in the community. A small group of area church pastors and leaders have been meeting for the last 18 months at Our Lady of Good Hope, to design a proposal for an emergency shelter for Knox County. In conjunction with the Knox County Homeless Coalition, this committee hopes to launch a pilot program during the winter of 2019-2020. This pilot proposal is supported by the Director of the Recreational Center of Rockland, the YMCA Director, the Rockland Chief of Police and the Rockland City Manager. A preliminary meeting of the Rockland City Council took place in early August with a council vote scheduled for 9/9/19 at 5:30PM at the City Council meeting room in Rockland, located at 270 Pleasant St. (For all of you Rockland residents reading this article I hope you will attend and support this proposal.)

In addition, the Committee planning the emergency shelter project is hosting 3 information sessions:

- **September 12**, at Nativity Lutheran Church, 179 Old County Road, Rockport at 7:00PM.
- **September 19, at the First Congregational Church of Camden, 55 Elm St., Camden at 1:00PM**
- **September 26, at the Recreational Center, 61 Limerock St., Rockland at 5:30PM.**

Please try to attend one of these sessions so that you can learn more about volunteering to assist the shelter and/or donating to support this winter’s pilot project.

For additional information, please call: Jeanne Denny at Emergency Shelter Pilot at 230-8227 or email: emergencyshelterpilot@gmail.com.

Should you wish to donate funds, make **checks payable to Knox County Homeless Coalition** and give them to me, Jeanne Denny, or mail funds to:

- Emergency Shelter Pilot
- P.O. Box 1255
- Rockland, ME 04841

*Shields Committee: Deb Endl (Chair), Betty Bates, Julianne Edmondson, Jean Forest, Rich Stuart, Debbi Hitchings, Claudia Griffiths, Jeanne Denny (Administrator)*
September Highlights

1. **SUNDAY 9:30am, Communion, Worship & Sunday School**
2. Monday LABOR DAY, CHURCH CLOSED
3. Tuesday 1:30pm, Meditation
4. Wednesday 9:30am Staff Meeting; 5-6:30pm, Brooks’ Book Study Group, last one; rehearsals begin for Bells and Choir, 6:00 pm Bell Ringers, 7:00pm Choir
5. Thursday 4:30pm, Deacons meet

8. **SUNDAY 8:45am SUNDAY SCHOOL BEGINS; 9:30am, Worship**
9. Monday RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE Pilgrim Room, 12:30-5:30pm
10. Tuesday 1:30pm, Meditation; 3:00pm Care Team meets, 5pm Communication Committee meets offsite
11. Wednesday 9:30am Staff meeting; 5:30pm Trustees meet; 6pm Bell Ringers, 7pm Choir
12. Friday 9:00am Outreach meets; 2 pm Shields meets

15. **SUNDAY, 8:45am Sunday School; 9:30am, Worship**
   GUEST MINISTER Rev. Peter Panagore
16. Monday 5:30-7pm, Women’s Retreat Planning meeting at Donna Crane’s house (RSVP please)
17. Tuesday 1:30pm, Meditation
18. Wednesday No Staff Meeting; 2:00pm, Personnel Committee meets; 6pm Bell Ringers, 7pm Choir
19. Thursday **1:00 pm, Public Meeting, Pilgrim Room, Emergency Shelter Pilot;** Cabinet Reports due to office

22. **SUNDAY 8:45am Sunday School; 9:30am, Worship; 1:30pm Ecumenical Service at Quarry Hill, Ute Molitor leading**
23. Monday 5:30pm, Women’s Retreat Planning
24. Tuesday 1:30pm, Meditation; 5:30pm Cabinet meets; BUDGETS DUE TO TRUSTEES
25. Wednesday 9:30am Staff meeting; 6pm Bell Ringers, 7pm Choir
   OCTOBER BEACON DEADLINE
26. Thursday 10:30am, Membership committee meets
29. **SUNDAY, 8:45am Sunday School; 9:30am, Worship**

UTE WILL BE AWAY 9/9-9/20. Rev. Abby Pettee will be covering Pastoral duties. See details in Ute Molitor’s article.
September Birthdays

9/3 Olivia Hamalainen
   Dan Brady
9/4 Ann Bex
9/10 Rebecca Simms
   Grayson Orne
9/12 Bob Grant
9/13 Bette McFarland
   Sadie Mills
9/14 Wyatt Laliberte
9/15 Peg (Way) Flippo
   Sarah Shepherd
9/18 Renee Hutcheon
9/22 Eliza Edmunds
9/23 Mary Rabaioli
   Emily Orne
9/24 Pixie Lauer
9/26 Phil Roberts
   Ruth Lowry
9/28 Chip Laite
   Peter Orne
9/30 Louie Regnier

Our next BLOOD DRIVE is Monday, September 9, 12:30-5:30 Pilgrim Room. To schedule an appointment, call 1-800-RED CROSS.

Dearest Church Family,

I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for the best retirement party ever! Oh, the food, and that cake!! The gorgeous flowers, the heartfelt words, the very generous gift, the tears! I can't thank you enough. My daughter Anna said through her tears, "They really love you, Mom."

It's a wonderful feeling and I love you right back!
With all my heart, Nan
OUR VOLUNTEERS

For every month, in every *Beacon*, we will be printing the names of our very wonderful volunteers who have signed up for the tasks below. Check your calendars. If Ushers & Coffee Hour Team Members are unable to assume the duties on that day, please find a substitute and alert the office so the Sunday Bulletin can be accurate. Many thanks!

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 1</td>
<td>Noel Cox</td>
<td>Owen &amp; Meg Thomas, Rich Stuart, Susie Luce</td>
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<td>#3: Nancy Laite, Gail Palmer, Elizabeth &amp; Mike Lally, Greg &amp; Vicki</td>
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<td>Wickenden</td>
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<td>Sept 8</td>
<td>Dorothea Graham</td>
<td>Ellen Claussen, Mimi Edmunds, MaryEllen Ostherr, Joseph Coté</td>
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<td>#4: Jeni Mason, Carol &amp; Gary Spinney, Barbara Lamb, Ellen Claussen,</td>
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<td>Charlene &amp; Peter Orne</td>
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<td>Sept 15</td>
<td>Joseph Coté</td>
<td>Zella &amp; David Walker, Dorothea &amp; Charles Graham</td>
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<td>#5: Chris &amp; Shelley Mills, Tony &amp; Betty Bates, Julie Clement, Annie</td>
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<td>Woodruff, Bob &amp; Judy Laurence</td>
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<td>Sept 22</td>
<td>Andi Hamalainen</td>
<td>Alisa &amp; Joey Dowd, Mimi Benedict, Skip Hoblin</td>
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<td>#6: Sarah Shepherd, Gloria Guiduli, Bonnie White, Marcia Dietrich,</td>
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<td>Debbi &amp; Roy Hitchings</td>
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<td>Sept 29</td>
<td>Tracy Wheeler</td>
<td>Marty Martens, Deb Endl, Terri Mackenzie tbd</td>
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<td>#7: Judy Cucinotta, Andi Hamalainen, Julianne Edmondson, Rita Elliott,</td>
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MINDSTRY MOMENTS DURING WORSHIP

As a way of demonstrating the impact of our work as a congregation, once a month going forward to November, a member will share a story or testimony describing how our church and our ministries can lead to deep and transforming connections, making a difference in people’s lives.

**During August 18 Worship Service, from Ruben Brown**

My name is Ruben Brown. I am a widower having lost my Wife of 51 years in 2017. At the suggestion of my neighbor, Richard Anderson, and my appraiser, Terri Mackenzie, I started attending this church in July 2018. By the time of the Christmas concert, I sat in the back row and said to myself this is where I want to be.

Early in 2019 Pastor Ute recruited and trained a cadre of Lay caregivers to refresh and extend the ministry of the historically small Care Team. I volunteered.

When bringing food to a Care Team member, Barbara Lamb, who was recovering from surgery, she told me that this church is a “family”. I believe her. It is also a living ministry, especially among the expanded membership of the Care Team.

On a Sunday in March, I was sitting with another care team member, Marjorie Wester, listening to the sermon. About 10 AM, I became aware that I was sick. I got up and retreated to the back of the sanctuary to exit by the front door and go home.

As I left, I told the Deacon on Call what was happening and I asked her to tell Tom Yoder to cover for me and assist with counting the offering. I headed home to attend to my virus. By 11:30 Tom and Susan Yoder were at my door checking in to see that I was OK. By 12:00 Pastor Ute called to check on me and by 12:30 Joseph Cote, who had been asked by Marge Wester, arrived at my house in Rockport bringing soup from the Camden Deli. Marge herself called later. We have since become engaged to be married and did obtain our marriage license this past week.

As it happened back then, I was recovering most of a week during which a number of people checked in on me.

The description of the church as “family” seems very real. This is Ministry in Action.
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF CAMDEN
An Open & Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

Growing in Faith, Centered in Christ, Committed to Community
OUR MISSION & VISION

Our vision is that all people here find a spiritual home, grow in faith, and experience and share God's unconditional love and grace through Christ. As disciples of Christ, our mission is to build a community of faith by learning and living the word of God.

TO CONTACT US:
Call the Church Office at 207.236.4821, Monday through Thursday, 8:30-3:30pm
E-mail the Church Office at churchoffice@camdenucc.org
Check out our website: www.camdenucc.org