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# SOUTH CHINA COMMUNITY CHURCH

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Rev. Paul Harwath, Pastor

Spring 2024

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## **PASTOR'S MESSAGE**

Spring time is a time of new life. Plants are sprouting, leaves are unfolding, & birds are singing. We are still within the Easter season. I am excited to be able to start fishing again & enjoying the outdoors.

We can get distracted & forget that this season may not be so wonderful for those who are struggling with the loss of good health for themselves or a loved one. Sometimes a person who has lost a loved one has a hard time seeing the beauty around them. We need to always be searching & watching for God's people who need our help, our companionship, & our love that comes from Jesus Christ.

We need do nothing but hold out our hand & embrace those people in need. Remember that if you are one of God's people who are struggling, you have the ability to reach out. Do not be shy, we are all here for each other. We all have times in our lives when we need the help of Jesus Christ. Christ sometimes looks like the person sitting next to you at the doctor or sometimes the checkout girl at the store. Be the hand of God loving all those in your path; you will never stray from the road & will arrive where you want to be when your journey ends: in God's arms! - *God's love & mine be with you, Pastor Paul*



## **CHURCH COUNCIL NEWS**

### **President's Report: "Renewal"**

Greetings all & Happy Spring! This season makes me think of renewal. When Spring comes, we get to start again: lawns & plants come back to life, warmth returns & we can grow flowers & vegetables. We can shed heavy clothes & travel easily. The seasons allow us to repeat. We see old friends who come back as other parts of the country get too hot. God gives us the opportunity with each day & month to live better lives for one another & to fulfill His plans for us.



Along with "renewal", I found many other "re" words in the back of my Bible: "reconcile", "redeemed", "rejoice", "remember", "renounce", "repent", "restore", "resurrection", & "return", to name a few. The prefix "re" means "again, or again & again", or "back or backward", according to dictionary.com. Sometimes we need to do something again & again to improve or gain better understanding; repetition works!

Christ had to repeat His lessons (parables) of love & faith even to His disciples; how often we've said in our Bible study that they just didn't understand. For example, after the Resurrection, Christ revealed Himself to Mary, then to the disciples. At His first visit with them, He said, "Receive the Holy Spirit" (John 20:22). Then He

appeared again a week later & spoke with Thomas, & a third time by the Sea of Tiberius, to test their faith, especially Peter's. He repeated Himself. (See the "re" words here!)

Our dear friend Ron Emery has fulfilled God's plan for him on earth. We are given great hope through the Resurrection. The Book of Revelation describes life in the new Jerusalem; Chapter 21, Vs. 4: "He (God) will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." We will meet this loving, caring man in one of Heaven's many mansions.

Meanwhile, may peace be with all of us as we renew & refresh ourselves together, as members of this wonderful church. - *Blessings, Emily Schroeder, Council President*



### **Missions & Benevolence:**

As I sit here today, I'm looking out the window at this glorious spring day. The sun is shining & the sky is a beautiful blue color. Definitely makes me feel thankful for what God has given us!

There isn't much new to report this quarter. A big thank you to Susie for all her delicious goodies & also to those who contribute to the PDF jar every week. We are very blessed to have such generous parishioners.

We continue to make a monthly financial donation to the China Food Pantry, but it is always in need of items; thank you in advance. - *Kathy Plaisted, Deacon*

### **Finance & Stewardship:**

We are about 1/3 of the way through the year. As of April 14<sup>th</sup>, we have spent \$30,105, or 38% of our expenditure budget, & brought in \$20,397, which is 26% of our proposed revenue.

Expenses are slightly over our target & income is a bit under target, which is expected early in the year. Our biggest expenditure was in the Operations category. We had some repairs to the exterior of our building, including the rear roof. However, we received a very generous donation that paid for the project entirely! The highest percentage of our income is in offerings at 30%. Thank you very much for your generosity.



We have our money invested in two places now - about \$41,000 in Bar Harbor Bank & Trust (checking, Meader, Memorial, & Faith Ames accounts) & about \$95,000 in two CDs at the Maine State Credit Union (MSCU).

We also have a new CD at MSCU in memory of Floyd & Glenna Jordan that was opened with money from a generous contribution of \$60,000 from Patty & Debbie. We are humbled & very grateful to them for choosing to honor their parents in a way that greatly benefits South China Community Church. All in all, our total asset value is about \$186,000. We are in great shape financially, thanks to your loyalty, hard work, & generosity. - *Lovingly submitted, Janet Preston, Finance Chair*



### **Building & Grounds:**

Spring is here and with it came work...

Fascia was replaced on the windows of the south wall. The final part of the roof that was weak was replaced, along with the small roof on the Memorial Hall porch. The front corner of the sanctuary wall was re-sided. The last part of the list is the removal of trees that are threatening to fall on the sanctuary; they will be taken care of by an arborist team in the very near future.

The good news is that there are still things to do! Paint will be applied to many outside ramps & steps. Bushes need a fresh trim to begin the year. The "stairs" that go down to the lower lawn need backfilling & leveling. The parking lot needs to have sealant coating the second half. The sign in front of the building needs to be scraped & restored with some paint & TLC.

As I sit in the sun, here in the parking lot, I am grateful to those who assist in all this work: by replacing light bulbs (you know the ones - at the top of the sanctuary ceiling), resetting chairs/tables, super cleaning rooms, & donating funds to make the work possible. This is the hand of Providence on our ministry that makes all my work possible.

If you would like to be a part of the fun or have a suggestion or question, please let me know at [room21@outlook.com](mailto:room21@outlook.com). -  
*Regards, Ron Maxwell, Chair, Building & Grounds*



### **Christian Education:**

My thanks to Pastor Paul for his work with us adults as we work our way through the Gospels. The Serendipity Bible is challenging & provides intriguing questions as we relate the words written so long ago to the many situations we face today. If you feel so inclined, please join us!

Our intrepid Sunday School teachers, Lydia & Nancy, have joined this group as we have no young ones at this time. I also encourage you, if you know of any children in need of religious instruction, to send them our way. These ladies stand at the ready! - *Thank you all for your continuing support, Emily Schroeder, Elder*



### **Communications & Outreach:**

I should be home from Florida soon! It's been a long, interesting winter. I was in a vehicle accident, but am doing OK. God is good, because if I had been hit two feet further back, I probably wouldn't be alive.

Thank you to Jayne Winters, Russell Poulin, the whole Council & everyone who keep things running at church. What an immense blessing!

I hear the Soup-to-Go meals & monthly breakfasts are going well. Praise God! I would like to set up a table at China Community Days again on August 3. If anyone has ideas or would like to help, please let me know.

Our Annual Rummage Sale, Cookie Walk & Chicken BBQ will be the following Saturday, August 10.

I'm anxious to get home & see everyone & our loving church family at South China Community Church! – *In Christ's Service, Diane Rawson, Elder*

## COMMUNITY

### Worship Committee:

Easter season is with us! Praise God for letting His Son die & rise again for our sins. It boggles my mind that we don't earn our way to Heaven; we just need to accept Jesus into our hearts. How simple it truly is.

This June, the South China Library is holding a fundraiser by having tables for rent at the Boynton-Webber American Legion Post. The church will have a table with various items, including Needhams. I'm sure there will be something for everyone. Look for more information in the near future.

This past Sunday, we were pleasantly surprised to have Rachel Maxwell play the piano before services. So much talent in someone so young! It gives us hope for the future. - *Yours In Christ, Debbie Stowe, Worship Chair*



**REMINDER:** Any SCCC or individual Needham sales need to be recorded on the calendar in the kitchen – thank you!

**DON'T FORGET:** If you drop bottles off at the Redemption Center on Rte 3, you can request that SCCC receive the cash deposit & a check will be sent to us. Thank you!

### MEMBER NEWS:

♥ **Gillian Welch & Galen Lichterfeld** (Certified Arborist) of SymmeTree Tree & Garden Services in Vassalboro are offering discounts to SCCC members. Check out their Facebook page or call (207) 458-7283 for further info about pruning, chipping or tree removal.

♥ For info about Mbingo Mountain Coffee, the Waterville coffee roasting business founded by **Churchill Elangwe-Preston**, call (207) 619-2492 or go to [mbingomountaincoffee.com](http://mbingomountaincoffee.com).

♥ Please continue to keep **Casey Gillcash** in your prayers as he's being closely monitored following his liver transplant several months ago.

♥ Congratulations to 1<sup>st</sup> time grandparents **Ron & Helen Emery**, whose granddaughter Margaret was born in December to their son Mason & Tess Rau. What a special Christmas gift!

♥ Congratulations to **Beth (Preston) Swahn** & husband Erik, who welcomed son Noah Allen Jerome Swahn, born on March 29. Noah is the 2<sup>nd</sup> grandson for David & Janet Preston.

♥ **Nancy Harwath**, Pastor Paul's mom, is home from rehab after a hip fracture.



**SYMPATHY & CONTINUED PRAYERS** for the families & friends of those who have passed into God's hands.

Evelyn Stevenson (Pastor Paul's granddaughter, 11/27/23)

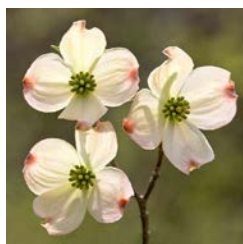
Ron Emery (4/24/24)

## **Popular Bible Verses About Spring**

- † Ask the Lord for rain in the springtime; it is the Lord who sends the thunderstorms. He gives showers of rain to all people, and plants of the field to everyone. —*Zechariah 10:1*
- † Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains. —*James 5:7*
- † And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years." —*Genesis 1:14*
- † Faithfulness springs forth from the earth, and righteousness looks down from heaven. The Lord will indeed give what is good, and our land will yield its harvest. Righteousness goes before him and prepares the way for his steps. —*Psalms 85:11-13*

(From *Guideposts*)

## ***Did You Know....?***



An old & beautiful legend has it that at the time of Jesus's crucifixion, the dogwood was comparable in size to the oak tree & other monarchs of the forest.

Because of its firmness & strength, it was selected as the timber for the cross, but to be put to such a cruel use greatly distressed the tree. Sensing this, the crucified Jesus, in His gentle pity for the sorrow & suffering of all, said to it, "Because of your sorrow & pity for my sufferings, never again will the dogwood tree grow large enough to be used as a

gibbet. Henceforth, it will be slender, bent and twisted. Its blossoms will be in the form of a cross – two long and two short petals. In the center of the outer edge of each petal, there will be nail prints – brown with rust and stained with red. In the center of the flower will be the crown of thorns and all who see this will remember." – (*Story from a handwritten note by one of the editor's aunts, photo from jamesmilson.com*)



The spring peeper is brown, less than an inch long with sticky toe pads, weighs less than an ounce & has a dark cross pattern on its back. Its scientific name is *Pseudacris crucifer*, the latter word meaning "cross-bearing." - (*Photo from roadsendnaturalist.com*)



- † ADULT BIBLE STUDY, SUNDAYS AT 9AM
- † SUNDAY CHURCH SERVICE, 10AM
- † COMMUNION: MAY 5 - JUNE 2 - JULY 7 - AUGUST 4
- † PASTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND (PDF)  
DONATION SUNDAY: JUNE 24
- † BLESSED BREAKFAST, 2<sup>ND</sup> SATURDAY EACH MONTH, 8-10:30 AM: MAY 11 - JUNE 8 - JULY 13 - **AUGUST 10 IS OUR ANNUAL BBQ/COOKIE WALK/RUMMAGE SALE!**

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*“For behold, the winter is past; the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our song.”*  
*– Song of Solomon 2:11-12*

