
SOUTH CHINA COMMUNITY CHURCH



Rev. Paul Harwath, Pastor

Summer/Autumn 2024

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Have you ever had questions that pertain to your faith, but you were afraid to ask? Sometimes we feel lacking in our faith because of a question we feel we should know, but are afraid to ask. Sometimes someone comes to our door & asks us faith questions. We are embarrassed to say we don't know a certain fact. It is easy to put an end to embarrassment.

First of all, God loves for us to search Him out & study God's works. Don't be embarrassed, but be curious to find the answers to your questions. I spend my day dreaming up questions to ask!

The more you learn, the better you understand how God works. As you learn, the wonder of God's works will overwhelm you. You will never be sorry for spending your time in exploration of the Lord's plan in our lives. - *God's love & mine be with you all, Pastor Paul*



CHURCH COUNCIL NEWS

President's Report:

"The Transfer Station as Metaphor for the Christian"

Well, my brain has been at it again & I've discovered a lot of parallels between trash & the related functions of the transfer station with our journey as Christians. Here goes:

- ❖ The garbage truck collects refuse; the church collects us, good & struggling. (I do meet the best people at the transfer station & church, of course...)
- ❖ Discarded items fall into several categories. When you throw something away, the original use has come & gone. This could be compared to the rejection of past ideas or negative experiences, even sin. When we recycle, we're allowing the item to be used again; we're reshaping ourselves to be something better. This happens with containers that are made of the right materials: those of us who have the Holy Spirit. The process involves a filtering & transformation, to be rid of whatever is bad, useless, perhaps poisonous in some cases. We strive to have redeeming qualities so that we can be continuously used by God!
- ❖ There are some who have truly reached the end of the line: the containers (souls) are black & cannot be reused. There are people who completely reject Christ & any concept of love or caring for others.

They become the unsightly landfill we complain about.

- ❖ Those of you who have compost piles understand how organic waste breaks down, transforms & is used on gardens as fertilizer. New plants & sources of healthy food spring from the ground, all part of the natural cycle of rebirth.

We all must cling to this hope that we can be used repeatedly for a higher purpose. Each day gives us another opportunity to start again & help others & fulfill our mission in this world as Christians. God knows our potential! Let's remember this & go forward with courage, praise & thanksgiving. - *Bless you all, Emily Schroeder, Council President*



Missions & Benevolence:

Another summer has come & gone & what a glorious time it was! I just want to say how grateful I am to be a part of this church family. Now that I am totally retired, I have more free time to help out with all the various projects we have going on. I love every minute I can volunteer to help, whatever that may involve. It is so heartwarming to witness all the other people - new & old members – who are always more than willing to pitch in, whether it be donating money, washing dishes or baking goodies. Thank you everyone!

Due to the generous donations of our parishioners, we have been able to help out a couple of people who needed an extra boost. Also, donations for the China Food Pantry are always welcome. In another month or so, we will be putting

together a list of needs for our Christmas families. It's always amazing how everyone contributes to this mission. Thanks again for everything! - *Kathy Plaisted, Deacon*



Finance & Stewardship:

Summer is winding down. It's time to update you on our church finances. As of the end of August, our monthly summary shows that we have spent \$66,675.81, which is 84% of our budget for 2024. This is mainly because of a large expenditure under "Operations" for the roof in the back of the church, which was \$11,000. However, this expense was paid fully with funding from the Jordan Savings Account. Neither the expenditure nor the revenue was part of our budget for the year, so we expect the percentages to be inflated. If we ignore the \$11,000, we are still slightly over budget (by \$2,200) for expenditures, but we are also slightly over (by \$2,600) our target for revenue.

Another unbudgeted item was the expense & revenue for a new piano for the sanctuary, paid for with your generous \$1,900 in donations & money from the Faith Ames & Jordan Funds. Faith & Glenna would be very pleased!

Our fundraising efforts are great, but fall slightly behind our target. We still have the Craft Fair/Bake Sale, more Blessed Breakfasts & suppers to bring that revenue up.

Debbie Stowe & her crew (Debbie Gillcash, Joan Ferrone, Kathy Plaisted, Darlene Zimmerman, Janet Preston)

continue to crank out those Needhams, adding over \$1,800 to our fundraising income so far this year! It truly is a group effort, especially when you consider everyone who donates food items to the cause. Thank you for your tireless efforts!

Offerings are about \$1,600 short of where we should be at this point. Our weekly offering averages \$1,055, but our weekly goal is \$1,082. Only \$27 more each week & we'd be right on target!

Our CD investments at Maine State Credit Union have yielded \$4,109.16 in interest just in 2024. Between our Bar Harbor Bank & Trust & Maine State Credit Union accounts, our total financial assets at the end of August were \$175,907.38. I'd say we are in pretty good shape! Thank you for your generosity, support, & trust. We are very blessed. - Janet Preston, Finance Chair



Building & Grounds:

Greetings! It has been a beautiful summer & it went by in a flash of sun & heat. Here at SCCC, the concentration has been on the outside of the building. Encroaching vegetation was pushed back & tamed (helped by the Erskine crew of volunteers). The bushes & shrubs around the church have been shorn monthly, which has lent them a new green & kept them looking like washed & well-behaved children. The new growth will serve them well since they have bulked out, instead of tall & gangly. The large bush on the front corner of the building was only thinned & allowed to bloom. A benefit of the work is the large space

around the building that allows airflow & a natural removal of water (free movement & evaporation). The small porch stairs of Memorial Hall were reset & shored up. Before the snow flies, the outside stairs & ramp will be painted, the driveway sealed & the front of the building pressure-washed to complete the summer chores.

An access port in the back of the cement wall in the basement was resealed with foam for weather & rodents. In the future, it will be an excellent way to exchange air with the outside, which will allow for the basement to get the circulation it needs to lose its "musty" nature.

Upstairs in the kitchen, the plumbing under the sinks is reaching end of life, so in the near future it will be replaced & the areas restored to ensure perfect function.

Lastly, we had a new insurance inspection as we looked to find a company with better rates. The last inspection gave us a large "To Do" list & the recent one was just as helpful. The complete list is pages long, so I won't burden you with the complete document. It is an excellent opportunity for us to get a third party look at the building & has some good steps for improving the building, so I am grateful for it. These items will be taken care of, each in turn & by employed technical labor where appropriate.

Thanks again for your support, financially & physically, it means a great deal! - Ron Maxwell, Deacon Building & Grounds



Christian Education:

Hello, all! Fall will soon be upon us. Those of us in the adult Bible Study are making our way through the Book of Luke & pondering many interesting questions as we go. You are welcome to join us at any time.

Paul has shared with you that our classmate Roy is in hospice care & we may not be seeing him again. What a delight he has been! Please continue to pray for him & his family.

We always hope that a child or two will appear with an adult in tow; Lydia & Nancy are prepared & ready to serve the young ones when needed! - *Blessings, Emily Schroeder, Elder*



Communications & Outreach:

Summer has been busy & seems to fly by faster each year for me. We've held our Blessed Breakfast on the 2nd Saturday of most months, had our annual Chicken Barbeque/Rummage Sale/Cookie Walk in August - which was very successful - & set up a booth for China Community Days to share information. We tried our first Potluck Casserole Supper & it was a big hit, so we will have more in the future.

A Craft Fair & Bake Sale is planned for October 26 from 9AM to 2PM. If you know any crafters who would be interested in having a table, have them call me at 207-399-6359. For a small fee, they can rent table space & their proceeds are theirs to keep.

Thank you to all those who help, donate, cook, sell, serve, & shop at our events!

Thank you to my Communications team! Jayne Winters provides posters & great ideas. Russell Poulin maintains our church website southchinacommunitychurch.org & along with Jayne & Beth (Preston) Swahn, our Facebook page. Check it out! Emily Schroeder & Russell also maintain a music website created by Carl Schroeder & it has awesome music (including our own artists) from all over the world. Check it out at my-christian-music.com. - *'Til Next Time, in Christ's Service, Diane Rawson, Elder*



Worship Committee:

I hope that everyone had a fantastic summer! The big item for Worship was the purchase of the new keyboard. Thanks go to Mary & Diane for the research & testing of keyboard options. Many thanks go to everyone who donated towards the cost.

We are blessed to have in our church people who see a need & are willing to help. As my Grandmother used to say, "many hands make the work light." We also seem to have a good time doing it! This is one of the things that drew me to this church. - *God's Blessing for You, Debra Stowe, Worship Chair*



PLEASE NOTE: Any SCCC or individual Needham sales need to be recorded on the calendar in the kitchen - thank you!



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

Jean Guimond (5/30/24)

Roy Feihel (6/16/24)

Randy Biswell (7/22/24)

Positive Quotes



"Always be a little kinder than necessary." – **J.M. Barrie, Novelist/Playwright**

"We build too many walls & not enough bridges." –

Isaac Newton, Physicist/Astronomer

"Grant me courage to serve others, for in service, there is true life." – **Cesar Chavez, Labor Leader/Civil Rights Activist**

"Give without remembering & always receive without forgetting." – **Unknown**

"What you do makes a difference & you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make." – **Jane Goodall, Anthropologist**

(From <https://www.insightoftheday.com>)

***Please e-mail or speak to me or a Council member with any tidbits you have for...**

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 & please call (207) 458-7283 for further information about pruning, chipping or tree removal needs.

♥ 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.

♥ Please keep **Nancy Harwath**, Pastor Paul's mom, in your prayers as she will be having heart surgery next week.



A Pew Research Center study shows that Americans state the quality of the sermon & a warm welcome as the two most important elements in a new church, but there are other things to consider:

- ♦ The church's statement of faith, which should be posted on its website.
- ♦ Church leadership: educational background & experience. Do you hear passion & love for God's word?
- ♦ Music: does it distract you or lead you into God's presence?
- ♦ Size/Style: do you prefer a large church or are you more comfortable in a small one? Do you like formal liturgy or a more informal atmosphere? Or a combination?

- ♦ Are there outreach programs you want to be involved with? How does the church serve the community?

Rick Hamlin, contributing editor to Guideposts Magazine, reminds people there's no such thing as a perfect church. Remember to appreciate their differences, celebrate expressions of praise & worship; let your preconceptions go. "If you've been involved in a church for a while, it's like a family. There will be times when something or someone really bugs you. Staying at the same place and working through problems can be a great opportunity for spiritual growth."



- † ADULT BIBLE STUDY & SUNDAY SCHOOL, 9AM
- † SUNDAY CHURCH SERVICE, 10AM
- † COMMUNION: OCT 6 - NOV 3 - DEC 1
- † COUNCIL MEETINGS, TBA
- † PASTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND (PDF)
DONATION SUNDAY: SEPT 29- DEC 29
- † BLESSED BRUNCH, 8-10AM, SEPT 14 - OCT 12 - NOV 9 - DEC 14
- † CRAFT FAIR & BAKE SALE, 9AM-2PM, OCT 26
- † SOUP FUNDRAISER (DATE & TIME TBD)



On the lighter side:

Q: If slow old men using walking sticks, what do fast old men use?

A: Hurry canes

Q: What do you call strawberries playing the guitar?

A: A jam session

Q: What does bread do after it's done baking?

A: Loaf around

Q: What do baseball & baking a cake have in common?

A: It's all about the batter

Q: What do you call it when someone illegally bakes bread?

A: Baking Bad

Q: What ingredient is essential when baking a Star Wars cake?

A: Bicarbonate of Yoda

Q: Why did the math student take up baking?

A: She heard it's as easy as pi

Q: What should you do when you want to try something different with your baking?

A: Take a whisk





IN PREPARATION FOR THANKSGIVING...

Thanksgiving is understanding that blessings are hiding all around us & we must find & focus on them. It's the attitude of knowing we have a God in charge of all. It's the habit of pausing to whisper, "Thank You, Lord," throughout the day. It's finding good times even in bad times & rejoicing even in sorrow. It's noticing the color of flowers, the shape of clouds, the smell of fresh bread & the comfort of a soft pillow at night.

Thanksgiving is the opposite of grumbling, the antithesis of fault-finding & the antidote for a complaining spirit. The Bible tells us to replace "foolish talking" & "coarse jesting" with "giving of thanks" (Ephesians 5:4).

Gratitude leads to "glad-itude." Counting our blessings is a positive step toward erasing our heartaches. The psychology of thanksgiving comes from the very mind & heart of the God who told us to be vigilant in thanksgiving (Colossians 4:2) & "in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

Learn to give thanks in the good times. And give thanks in the bad times too, for that will make them better! *Don't take even the simplest things for granted—appreciate them and give thanks.*
Jack Canfield, Author/Motivational Speaker



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*“Ask, and it will be given to
you; seek, and you will find;
knock, and it will be opened to
you.”*

- Matthew 7:7

