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# SOUTH CHINA COMMUNITY CHURCH

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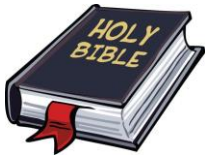


Rev. Paul Harwath, Pastor

Autumn/Winter 2025

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## **PASTOR'S MESSAGE**



The new church year is about to begin. Advent begins our new year with scripture lessons we have not heard for three years.

We use *The Three-Year Lectionary*, which is used by most of the major Christian Churches. It is put together so that the Pastor will have to preach on the entire Bible & not just each preacher's favorite scripture.

This is very important; studying the entire Bible gives a balance to how & why God has spoken & continues to speak to us. If we just read our favorite passages, we push aside part of God's voice meant for each of us to hear. I sure wish I could skip preaching on some of the lessons God has given us, but I know these lessons are very important & may be the most important to ourselves, as well as others. This is important not just for preaching, but also in our daily devotional studies. Do not skip those hard lessons - they may mean more to you than you realize! – *God's love & mine be with you all, Pastor Paul*



## **CHURCH COUNCIL NEWS**

### **President's Report:**

#### *Turbulence in Every Time*

Thomas Paine, Founding Father & statesman, is famously credited with the phrase: "These are the times that try men's souls." He was attempting to rally troops for the Revolution, but this sentiment certainly holds in today's world. We are surrounded by turmoil: wars, disasters, hunger, homelessness, differences in philosophy & politics, & just plain violence.

We're never promised a carefree life as Christians. Our friend Job is a prime example of this. He lost his oxen, donkeys, sheep & camels; a house fell on his children; he was afflicted with sores. In Chapter 3, Vs. 26 of Job, he says: "I have no peace, no quietness; I have no rest, but only turmoil." His friends wrongly assume God is punishing him for his sins. Job felt God was not answering his prayers, but he remained faithful & hopeful through it all. God addresses him directly, showing His supremacy & love. Everything happens when it should, for reasons beyond our comprehension.



The tides rise & fall; there are floods & hurricanes, but the waters recede & the winds calm. We gain our footing again on the solid dry ground of faith. We have that hope, that promise of salvation.

Jesus told His disciples, and still tells us: "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)

At this special time of year, let us remain hopeful & thankful. Blessings to you all! -  
*Emily Schroeder, Elder/Council President*



### **Missions & Benevolence:**

As we prepare ourselves for the season of giving, we invite everyone to help with our annual drive for families who need extra help at Christmas time.

I have received a request list from the China Primary school for 12 children from four different families. In the past, we have put out a list of what was needed & people chose things to buy. Since I know



not everyone likes to shop, I would like to make it easier this year for people & suggest giving a donation & we can do the shopping for you. Of course, if you want to shop, please pick something from the list to

purchase. In past years, people have always been more than generous & the families certainly appreciate everything donated. Thank you, everyone, in advance!

The China Food Pantry is another thing to keep in mind for donations this season. We keep hearing every day how more people are coming up short with feeding their families, so please consider just picking up an extra box of pasta or cereal when you're shopping as it would certainly

be a big help. One thing the Food Pantry does ask: if you donate something, please make sure it is not outdated!

We are also doing our free Thanksgiving Dinner again this year for anyone who doesn't want to be alone or can't afford to prepare a meal. This is an invitation to everyone in the community, so please put the word out there. Give Deb Stowe a call at (207) 462-2175 to reserve a place. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20:35) - *Kathy Plaisted, Deacon*



**Thank You, LORD!**

### **Finance & Stewardship:**

What a wonderful fall we have had! It has been great weather to enjoy the beautiful leaves. I know we need rain, but I have to say I have loved all the sunny warm days & cool nights.

I will be stepping down as Finance Chair at the end of my term this year. I am happy to report that Jackie Healy will be assuming this role on the Council in my place. As a member of our Kitchen Crew, Jackie has been actively helping with our Blessed Breakfasts every month. She is a great addition to our church & is eager to get more involved! Thank you, Jackie.

As of October 31, (75% through the year):

YTD	Amount	Percent of Budget
Expenses	79,834.66	95%
Revenue	\$75,072.79	89%

Average weekly offerings are \$1,076.52, which is \$6.17 less than our target of \$1,088.22/week.

<b>Bar Harbor Bank &amp; Trust</b>	<b>Balance</b>
Checkbook	3,657.34
Faith Ames Fund	1,271.01
Memorial Fund	7,528.13
Meador Fund	2,093.06
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$14,549.54</b>

<b>Maine State Credit Union</b>	<b>Balance</b>	<b>YTD Interest Earned</b>
Memorial CD	\$81,081.10	3184.62
Meador CD	\$30,479.95	1382.89
Jordan CD	\$35,050.40	1088.15

Jordan Savings	\$4,304.10	78.84
Savings	\$55.79	0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$150,971.34</b>	<b>\$5,734.50</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$165,520.88</b>	

Thank you, as always, for your continuous generosity & support! - *With appreciation, Janet Preston, Finance Chair*



### **Building & Grounds:**

The end of summer, the beginning of winter, is my favorite season. Time to put things right & sort out our summer work, laying aside a store for the coming quiet. As such, so was the work at our building.

The grounds were cleaned, the bushes trimmed & the rubbish from summer's work removed (4 loads of detritus from the windows' installation & various building endeavors). Downstairs, the ladders were stowed & the entry cleaned of its partially used supplies. Upstairs, tools, equipment & extra materials were deprived of their status in Memorial Hall & consigned to the basement to await their need in '26.



The list for winter is being formulated: inside chores include prep of the Hall for Thanksgiving (more tables, new table cloths & deep cleaning of the stains that reappeared on the carpet), random jobs (new bulbs in Sanctuary, storage home for extra chairs that is not the hallway or choir room, etc.) & of course, suggestions (send to [room21@outlook.com](mailto:room21@outlook.com) because a written record means a better response than my promise of remembering!) will fill the odd hours 'til birdsong returns.

A season of renewal will go nicely after the chaos of insurance work that has plagued the last year. I'll make a list which will allow me to share the joy... offers of help are always appreciated, but the list will mean I can accept them! - *Regards, Ron Maxwell, Chair, Building & Grounds*

### **Christian Education:**

Our adult group has made it through Acts & Romans is next! We are so thankful for Pastor Paul's guidance & wisdom! All are welcome to join in, at any point, 9AM before Sunday service.

Lydia is continuing with her one young student, who is very enthusiastic. Many thanks to Lydia & her co-pilot Nancy, for their steadfastness! We are all very blessed! - *Thank you all for your continuing support, Emily Schroeder, Elder*



### **Communications & Outreach:**

It has been a busy fall & winter is just around the corner. The Craft Fair & Bake Sale went well - thank you to everyone who helped! I'm not sure if we will plan one for next year since the vendors didn't bring in much for themselves, but we'll see.



The Blessed Breakfasts have been well-attended & attendance continues to grow. Thanks to the folks who regularly work at this fundraiser every month.

There are some exciting events coming up. Thanks to Debbie Stowe, we will have our 2<sup>nd</sup> Thanksgiving Community Dinner on Thanksgiving Day from 12 – 2PM. This is free to the community & a wonderful outreach. If people want to make a donation at the dinner, there will be a free will collection which will be used to help people in the area with Christmas needs.

We will have our 3<sup>rd</sup> Christmas Music Sing-a-Long with our wonderful choir director, Mary Matteson, on December 9 from 1:30 to 2:45. This is open to the public & a great opportunity to connect. I'm sure food will be involved!

Outreach is everyone's job as we spread God's love to those around us. Please consider inviting your friends & family to our active & welcoming church.

I've headed south, but am just an email or phone call away (207) 399-6359. See you in the spring! - *In Christ's Service, Diane Rawson, Elder*



### **Worship Committee:**

We are gearing up for the 2nd annual free Thanksgiving Community Dinner! We have approached a variety of vendors this year & they have been very generous.

I have to admit that I love the planning, getting items needed & how everyone pitches in to make the dinner a success! We are a small church blessed with people with big hearts & willing hands. I hope we are blessed with many people joining us for dinner.

**\*November 30th** is the start of Advent. Mary has opened the choir for anyone who loves the Christmas hymns. Rehearsals will be on Thursdays from 6:30-7:30 on December 4th, 11th, & 18th. I am planning to make a joyful noise! Hope others will join.

**\*December 9th** is our now annual Christmas Sing-a-Long. It starts at 1:30 & light refreshments will be served.



**\*December 13th** is our breakfast with Santa. Hope to have many come & enjoy the bountiful feast!



**\*December 24th** is our Christmas Eve service starting at 6PM - *Debra Stowe, Worship Chair*



Our choir is changing this year & we need your help! While Diane is away (mid-November to mid-May), there will only be three voices in our choir. We're wondering if any of the congregation would be interested & willing to sign up to sing with us for a month (or more, no pressure!)?

Special music for Advent (Nov. 30, Dec. 7, 14, 21, & 24) is being planned, as well as for Lent 2026 (Feb. 22, March 1, 8, 15, 22, & 29). Palm Sunday is March 29, followed by Easter on April 5.

#### **Suggestions:**

- \*Sign up for one month at a time to sing in the choir
- \*Sign up with a "buddy" for one month to sing in the choir
- \*Sign up to sing with the choir during Advent (5 services, see above dates)
- \*Sign up to sing with the choir during Lent (7 services + Easter, see above dates)

Rehearsals are on Thursdays from 6:30-7:30 PM & Sunday mornings 9-9:45 AM, before the service.

Recordings of weekly music can be made ahead of time to help you practice at home. I can meet with new participants to work on music at times that will work for everyone.

Choir is fun & an important part of our worship services! Come join us & praise the Lord through song.

**\*REMINDERS:** Any SCCC or individual Needham sales need to be recorded on the calendar on the refrigerator in the kitchen - thank you!

**\*Church phone: (207) 313-7591**

**\*We're no longer recycling bottles at the Redemption Center on Rte 3. Please see Kathy Plaisted about our new Clynck Can & Bottle Redemption account at Hannaford. Pre-coded tags for your bags will be available in our kitchen. Thank you!**



#### **MEMBER NEWS**

- ♥ Congratulations to **Jeff & Darlene Zimmerman**, whose granddaughter Karli Nadine decided to make her appearance on Sept. 23, a couple of weeks before her expected arrival. She is the 2<sup>nd</sup> daughter of **Rachael & Kenneth (Newman) Cummings**, who live in GA.
- ♥ Congratulations & deep appreciation to **Sheldon Goodine** on his 67yrs of volunteer service with the Fire Dept, 62 of which have been in South China. He's technically on Inactive status, but we all know he will always be available if needed!
- ♥ Go to [mbingomountaincoffee.com](http://mbingomountaincoffee.com) for info about Mbingo Mountain Coffee, the Waterville coffee roasting business founded by **Churchill Elangwe-Preston**.



## Positive quotes



*"You can't have a better tomorrow if you're thinking about yesterday."*

- Charles Kettering

*"Peace is not the absence of trouble, but the presence of Christ."*

- Sheila Walsh

*"You can never do a kindness too soon, for you never know how soon it will be too late."* - Ralph Waldo Emerson

*"When you feel that quiet tug to reach out, speak up or show kindness – don't hesitate. Follow through on that nudge from God today. You may be part of the blessing He wants to give someone."*

- Guideposts

*"Be kind and merciful. Let no one ever come to you without leaving better and happier."* - Mother Teresa

*"Example is not the main thing in influencing others; it is the only thing."*

- Albert Schweitzer

*"Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow, it empties today of its strength."*

- Corrie ten Boom



## 5 Days to a Joyful Connection to Christ

- ✚ **Day #1 – Love Every Day.** Build a daily faith practice. Set aside a few quiet moments to deepen your relationship with Him. Taking time from your busy schedule to sit with God - even for just a few minutes a day - can be a powerful way to grow stronger in your faith & create a more sustainable spiritual practice.
- ✚ **Day #2 – Joy Everywhere.** It's easy to get swept up in the rush of a packed morning schedule, feeling like you're just slogging through. **But joy doesn't have to wait for a perfect moment.** Spending even a few quiet moments with Jesus in the morning can make a significant difference & set the tone for the rest of the day.
- ✚ **Day #3 – Faith Thru Challenges.** Life is full of challenges, whether it's a frustrating traffic jam or a life-altering medical diagnosis. These moments test us, but they also offer an opportunity to grow closer to God. Rather than turning to Him only in times of crisis, building a daily habit of walking with Jesus equips us to face obstacles with faith & resilience. **When trials arise, you have a choice: let them make you bitter or let them make you better.** Trust in God's goodness & believe He will redeem every hardship for your good & His glory.
- ✚ **Day #4 – Peace in the Evening.** We've explored how beginning our day with God sets a firm foundation & how staying connected to Him keeps us grounded throughout the day. Yet, as evening approaches, it's easy to feel the weight of the day's challenges - tired, burdened, or even burnt out. **But evenings also offer an opportunity to pause, reflect, & embrace the peace Jesus gives so freely.** Just a few quiet moments

with Jesus can transform our nights, ease the burdens we carry & prepare us for the following day.

✠ **Day #5 – Kindness in All Seasons.**

On this final day, we're reflecting on the gift of kindness. When you're navigating a period of change, practicing kindness can bring comfort, connection & peace. As followers of Christ, we're called to embody His love in every moment. Extending compassion not only transforms those around us, but also deepens our relationship with Jesus, allowing His light to shine through us in all seasons of life. – *From Guideposts*

Kindness has a ripple effect. When we extend compassion to others, it not only touches their hearts, but also inspires those around us to do the same. Simple acts of kindness - listening, encouraging, or helping someone in need - can refresh & strengthen both the giver & receiver.



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

Ronald Austin Colwell (10/12/25)

*Those we love don't go away;  
they walk beside us every day*



- ✠ ADULT BIBLE STUDY & SUNDAY SCHOOL SUNDAYS AT 9AM
- ✠ SUNDAY CHURCH SERVICE, 10AM
- ✠ COMMUNION: DEC 7 - JAN 4 - FEB 1 - MARCH 1
- ✠ PASTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND (PDF) DONATION SUNDAY: MARCH 29
- ✠ BLESSED BREAKFAST, 2<sup>ND</sup> SATURDAY EACH MONTH, 8-10 AM: DEC 13 - JAN 10 - FEB 14 - MARCH 14
- ✠ THANKSGIVING EVE SERVICE, NOV 26, 6PM
- ✠ COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING DINNER, NOV 27, 12 NOON - 2PM
- ✠ HOLIDAY SING-A-LONG, DEC 9, 1:30PM
- ✠ CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE, 6PM
- ✠ CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE, 10AM
- ✠ ANNUAL MEETING, JAN 25, 11AM

## **A Thanksgiving Prayer**

**Thank you, God, for all your blessings to me and my family, for the strength you give me each day, and for all the people who make life more meaningful. Amen.**

*South China Community Church*  
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*“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”*

- Isaiah 9:6

