
SOUTH CHINA COMMUNITY CHURCH

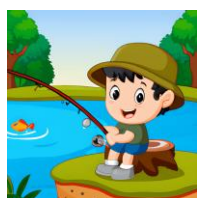


Rev. Paul Harwath, Pastor

Summer/Autumn 2026

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

We waited so long for summer to arrive & already fall is fast approaching! The same thing happens in our lives.



Just yesterday, I was a kid fishing all summer long. Then I grew into an adult. I was taking my little children out to the county fair. I was a journalist filming Midwest news stories. My kids grew. I was in seminary & then working for different Christian churches. My kids finished school & started families of their own. It was just yesterday I came to pastor South China Community Church. I look at records & find I will have been pastor here for 15 years this January 12, 2027! I am not a youngster any more. My life has changed so many times, I've lost count. I have no control over the passing of time.

I do, however, have control over my love for God & for those around me. My faith has matured; my child-like joy & excitement over the realization that God has chosen to bless me with true love & faith has grown as I've come to realize the love & sacrifice Jesus has shown to you & me. I realize that through my faith in Christ, I need not mourn forever the friends & family who have passed this life before me.

My heart is like the heart of a young child who can't wait for Christmas morning. The greatest gift is yet to come! I need not worry about time. The passing of time brings me closer to God & the gift of

eternal life with all whom I love. This world makes me tired & old, but the world to come will be forever young & a world of love! - *God's love & mine be with you,*
Pastor Paul



CHURCH COUNCIL NEWS

President's Report: Reunions

I've been thinking a lot about reunions lately. My 50th high school reunion was two summers ago & it was great. It was wonderful to see old friends & classmates again, especially after so much time had passed. Most of us had not changed that much at all. Since then, a group of us girls has formed & we get together for meals occasionally, strengthening our bond.

We experience a similar fellowship in our church. Every time we walk through our doors, we reunite with each other & with Christ. At our baptism we are united to Christ. Each opportunity we take to welcome Him into our hearts is a reunion, a re-uniting.

We are all members of the body of Christ. This is detailed in 1 Corinthians, "One Body, Many Parts", beginning with vs. 12.

In vs. 13: "...we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body..."; continuing on to vs. 24-26: "...God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it."

We are blessed with different gifts/parts & we share them with all those around us every day in a variety of ways, big & small. This sharing serves to reunite us with the church, the body, & Christ Himself. Let us continue these reunions, for they are a vital part of our ministry as Christians!

"May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all." (2 Corinthians 13:14) - *Emily Schroeder, Council President*



**"FOR IN ONE
BODY WE HAVE
MANY MEMBERS"
ROMANS**

Missions & Benevolence:

As the summer is coming to an end, we start feeling a little sad thinking ahead to the cold, snowy weather that will be arriving before we know it. But truthfully, I feel very fortunate just thinking about being a part of this great church community that we have here in South China. After the very successful summer sale & barbeque we just had, in one way or another, everyone played a part helping, whether you were there on Saturday or making potato salad, cookies, baked beans or donating money. It definitely gives me a big boost of spirit

knowing what a great church we have that thinking ahead to the cold that's coming doesn't bother me half as much.

It has been a slow, few months in regards to people needing a helping hand, which I would say is a good thing. But with the cold weather coming, I'm sure there will be more requests for assistance. Keep in mind that when there is a fifth Sunday in the month, we call that "PDF (**P**astor's **D**iscretionary **F**und) Sunday" so any extra donation you make will go toward people in the community in need. Thanks in advance for any help you can provide! - *Kathy Plaisted, Deacon*

NOTE: A couple months ago, a question about whether SCCC could financially support overseas humanitarian aid programs was presented to the Church Council. In light of last year's increased requests for immediate local assistance, the Council decided to remain focused on our local community & put support for overseas programs on hold for now. As we all know, families in Gaza are in great need of assistance. Please see Janet Preston for details & contact information for agencies she's familiar with.

Finance & Stewardship:

I hope you are all enjoying this wonderful summer! As of July 31, we have held 30 out of 52, or 58%, of our church services. Our expenses are slightly less than budgeted & our revenue is almost at our goal for this time of year. We are in the black by \$2,056.56. Excellent news & excellent job!

YTD	Amount	Percent of Budget
Expenses	\$46,348.39	55%
Revenue	\$48,404.95	57%

Our average weekly offerings at the end of July were \$1,015.60, which was \$44.98 less than our target of \$1,060.58/week.

Our PDF income is above projection by about \$1,000 & to date, we have provided \$2,000 to assist needy community members with their bills.

Bar Harbor Bank & Trust	Balance
Checkbook	\$6,573.93
Faith Ames Savings	\$1,150.98
Memorial Savings	\$4,839.57
Meader Savings	\$3,693.80
Total	\$16,258.28

State Credit Union	Balance	YTD Interest
Memorial CD	\$79,852.39	\$1,950.11
Meader CD	\$29,831.61	\$734.55
Jordan CD	\$34,729.50	\$767.29
Jordan Savings	\$3,259.51	\$21.04
Savings	\$80.79	0.00
Total	\$147,753.80	\$3,472.99

Total Assets	\$164,012.08
---------------------	---------------------

As each of our CDs at Maine State Credit Union matured this year, we withdrew the 2025 interest they earned & reinvested the remaining funds. This interest revenue was included in our budget plan.

The Jordan CD interest of \$1,330 & Memorial CD interest of \$3,763.71 were

deposited into our checking account to help with general operating expenses. The Meader CD yielded \$1,600.58 in interest; this was put into our Meader Savings Account to be used according to the stipulations of the Fund.

Thank you, thank you, thank you for your generosity & enthusiastic dedication to South China Community Church! - Janet Preston, Finance Chair



Building & Grounds:

In mid-May, an Ohio Mutual Insurance representative did a walk-through inspection of the building. All of the previous maintenance requirements outlined by State Farm have been successfully completed! The only recommendations from Ohio Mutual were a new cover plate for the basement electrical box, a new fire extinguisher for the kitchen, & annual inspection/service for our heating system. The first two items have been taken care of & the heating system will be serviced later this month.

Upcoming projects will be power washing the driveway & parking lot, filling the cracks, repairing the asphalt & then sealing the whole area. In addition, the ADA ramp is in disrepair & needs serious work.

I've been keeping an eye on the hallway carpet, which has been shifting. I don't believe it's a structural problem, but we'll probably have to remove the carpet & replace it with flooring.

We had an outside volunteer work day on May 16; although the crew was small, a great deal of work was done to clean up Starrett-Houlton Park behind the church. It's now space-defined & you can actually see the plants, dedication plaque on the large rock & stepping stones! - *Regards, Ron Maxwell, Chair, Building & Grounds*

EDITOR'S NOTE:

The garden group are calling themselves "The Fiddleheads" [thanks to Karen Keller's T-shirt!]. Wednesdays at 9AM has been a convenient time for most of us to get together, but the work is done as weather, schedules & time permit. We continue to weed, rake, trim shrubbery, & look forward to fall plantings, when the weather is cooler. Now that spring & summer flowers have bloomed & photos taken to Longfellow's Greenhouse for recommendations, we have a better sense of what to plant & where.



Fiddleheads is an informal group of volunteers – there is no time commitment or pressure, so if you're ready, willing & able, please talk to me or Kathy Plaisted for more information. ~Jayne (Winters)



Christian Education:

Thanks to the continued guidance of Pastor Paul, we adult students are working our way through the New Testament. Learning the historical background is so important! The questions which are included in our study Bible are sometimes baffling, but always thought-provoking. All

are welcome to join us, 9AM Sunday mornings!

The Council would like to extend a special thank you to Lydia [Biswell] for her beautiful, creative work on the bulletin boards in Memorial Hall. - *Emily Schroeder, Elder*



Communications & Outreach:

It's been a long & glorious summer! We've all been busy & sometimes we just need to focus on the Lord & breathe!

We had a very successful Rummage Sale & Chicken BBQ in August. We raised about \$1,200 on the sale, \$200 on the Cookie Walk (thanks to Kathy Plaisted & others), & \$1,200 on the BBQ. It really was a team effort! Thank you to everyone who donated, cooked, baked, helped set up, served, bought & cleaned up after! And thank you to those with artistic flair (Mary Matteson)!

Watch for upcoming community suppers & soup lunches this fall. Also, Debbie Stowe heads up the wonderful Thanksgiving Dinner which is open to the community, free of charge, on Thanksgiving Day.

Russell Poulin & Emily Schroeder work hard at taping our services on YouTube & maintaining the church's website. Check out southchinacommunitychurch.org

I've been contemplating the word "communication." Sometimes communication is done without any words - it's done through our actions & how we treat people. It's shown through love & generosity. I am very grateful to belong to

a church that demonstrates that God is active in our lives. – *In Christ's Service, Diane Rawson, Elder*



Worship Committee:

Worship on Sundays follows a predictable course, with Pastor Paul leading us in meaningful worship, scripture & prayer. He lets everyone know of the folks who need special prayers.

We are blessed to have Mary Matteson as our Music Director. She leads our hymns in style, regardless of the choir size!

Susie has blessed our church with her baked goods. She has certainly found her calling: that of a fantastic baker, who shares with the church. In turn, the money collected from her baked goods helps others. What a blessing this is! (I don't feel guilty buying the goodies as the money goes to others' needs!)

That is one thing that I have seen in this church - if there is a need, people always work together to find a solution. To me, this is what it's all about: helping each other, even people we do not know. For a small church, we are strong on faith! - *Blessings to you & your families, Debra Stowe, Worship Chair*

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

MEMBER NEWS:

- ♥ We're happy to welcome **Nils & Fawn Garnett** back! They're now retired & spending the summer at Norval's & Norma's former home on Kildeer Point.
- ♥ Owner of Symmetree Arborist Services of Vassalboro, **Galen Lichterfeld** & associate **Andrew Maxwell**, came to the rescue of a local feline. Follow this link to the TOWN LINE's article from June 24, 2026 for the adventure! <https://townline.org/hometown-heroes-rescue-kitten/>
- ♥ The July 2026 issue of Down East magazine features an article called "Common Grounds" which highlights a student-made documentary about Rwandan coffee beans roasted locally, by none other than our **Churchill Elangwe-Preston** at his Mbingo Mountain Coffee! Call (207) 619-2492 or go to mbingomountaincoffee.com for info about his delicious coffee ☺



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

Thurlow "Jack" "Bub" Jackson (3/29/26, Stowe family friend)

Joseph Seeley (8/6/26, Nancy Rogers' son-in-law)

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



Positive quotes

"God does not ask us to do great things, only to do little things with great love."

(Mother Teresa)

"The purpose of life is not to be happy. It is to be useful, to be honorable, to be compassionate, to have it make some difference that you have lived and lived well." (Ralph Waldo Emerson)

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." (1 Peter 4:10 (NIV))

"Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can." (John Wesley)

Did You Know....?



While working in the garden on the east side of church, I was curious about who Gayle Gouin Ritch was & why there is a plaque on this rock in her memory. My deep appreciation to Dana Huber for providing such a wonderful history:

"My father, Art Ritch, worked for Councilman Linwood Salvage at the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration in Washington DC in the '50s. Linwood brought my dad to Maine for Thanksgiving and my dad fell in love with Togus Pond.

Several years later, after my father married my mother, Gayle Gouin, they purchased the store at the corner of Weeks Mills and Rt. 3 from Howard and Mary Pratt, and also the cottage on the point of Barrows Cove on Togus Pond.

Then they found out my mom was pregnant with my brother Voit and decided the timing wasn't right to give up Dad's government job and move to Maine to run a corner store. Howard and Mary let them back out of the purchase of the store, but they weren't able to back out of the cottage. My grandparents, Frank and Chuddy Gouin, from Oklahoma, had loaned them the down payment, so they purchased the cottage and fell in love with Togus. They spent 2 weeks a year at their cottage and attended services at South China.

When my mom died of cancer at age 40, Frank and Chuddy wanted a memorial to represent the place she loved so much. This is the only memorial in her memory and I would like to thank the church for maintaining it.

My parents purchased another cottage on Togus Pond, next to Harvey Amermann [SCCC Pastor 1983-87], shortly before she died and our family has been vacationing there ever since. My father retired and moved to Maine in the '80s; my brother

moved a few years later and owns Autowerkes of Maine in Freeport.

Since then, my grandparents continued to spend their summers in Maine and also attended services at South China. My aunt and uncle, Phyllis and George Kelly, also spent summers at Togus Pond and attended South China Community Church when they retired.

Now my cousin, Tricia and Paul [Allen], as well as Scott and I, spend as much time as we can on Togus and attend your church when we are here.

I recently found out that Sheldon [Goodine] knew my grandparents, so he may be able to add more to the story. Thanks for letting the congregation know the history of my mother's memorial."

THANK YOU, DANA, FOR
SHARING YOUR FAMILY'S
HISTORY & CONNECTION TO
OUR CHURCH!



- † ADULT BIBLE STUDY, SUNDAYS AT 9AM
SUNDAY SCHOOL, TBA
- † SUNDAY CHURCH SERVICE, 10AM
- † COUNCIL MEETING: 2ND SUNDAY EACH
MONTH @4PM: SEPT 13 - OCT 11 - NOV 8
- † COMMUNION, 1ST SUNDAY EACH MONTH:
SEPT 6 - OCT 4 - NOV 1 - DEC 6
- † PASTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND (PDF)
DONATION SUNDAY: AUGUST 30 - NOV 29
- † BLESSED BREAKFAST, 2ND SATURDAY EACH
MONTH, 8-10 AM: SEPT 12 - OCT 10 - NOV
14 - DEC 12
- † COMMUNITY SUPPER, SATURDAY AUGUST
29, 4:30 - 6PM
- † THANKSGIVING EVE SERVICE, WEDNESDAY
NOV 25, 6PM
- † THANKSGIVING COMMUNITY DINNER,
THURS NOV 26, 12 NOON - 2PM

COMING SOON: SCCC PRAYER BOX

In our continued efforts to expand community outreach, a locked prayer request box will be securely placed on the tree stump in front of SCCC, facing the street. We hope church & community members will drop off confidential written prayer requests for themselves or others, personal worries, or gratitude for prayers God has answered. Pastor Paul or Council members will collect these notes regularly so the congregation can include them in our Sunday "Remember in Prayer" list.

South China Community Church
246 Village Street, PO Box 335
South China, ME 04358
southchinacommunitychurch.org

*“And this is the promise that He
made us – eternal life.” – 1 John
2:25*

