

Peace on earth, good will to all...



**Waterford
Congregational Church UCC**
Minister: Rev. Doretta Colburn
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We are now gathering inside our church for 9:30 am services on Sundays. Masks and social distancing are optional. These services are also filmed and are available on our website.



Newsletter - December 2022



THOUGHTS FROM THE PULPIT...

Dear Church Family & Friends,

'Tis the season when gratitude rises to the surface of our minds and generosity to our sense of action. In that vein I wish to convey to you how grateful I am to be walking this spiritual path with a church community that is overflowing with goodwill, compassion and sharing. We have held each other in our caring thoughts during difficult times, prayed together through our fears and worries, laughed with one another in times of fellowship, joined our souls together in worship and lifted up in celebration our shared joys. We have been all of these things and more because we are wrapped in the sacred space of community and I know that we will continue along that pathway as we strengthen our bond of love.

Being in community is not something new to us. We know that our faith is stronger, wiser, richer and deeper when we come together. While the idea of community is being talked about increasingly so throughout the world, we have always known the benefits of coming together honoring our diversity at the same time as celebrating the common ground of our faith. How grateful we can be for all that we mean to one another.



In this season when our attention is focused on giving thanks, sharing gifts, and spreading joy, it seems appropriate to celebrate our togetherness and our interconnections that are building a just and loving community with the desire to welcome all...to work together toward a better world, to share our resources in whatever way we are able, to live the love we believe will change the world, will transform us and, indeed, will change our world. It is contagious because love keeps giving of itself again and again and again.

That is the Christmas promise, after all – to recognize that we are loved and to love. There is no brighter hope for our lives, for our world. May that light shine into the darkness on these cold winter nights warming your heart and bringing a deep and assuring joy.

Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift! 2 Corinthians 9:15

Advent blessings,

Doretta

LETTER FROM THE MODERATOR ... November 21, 2022

Good Morning Friends,

It's a cold one, 13 degrees as Ted, Anne and I stepped out to take our walk. Rice Road is a great place to go. There are woods, farmland and interesting houses to observe. We quickly voted on a temperature that would be a "no go"; that was 10 degrees (later amended to 10 degrees wind chill.)



When Ted and I were delivering Thanksgiving baskets yesterday we got caught in a snow squall that obliterated the road and any vision of the outside world...what a real taste of winter! It was worth it, though, as we were greeted with smiles and heartfelt thanks for the food. These folks were living rough and winter is just beginning. My heart went out to them and I was thankful we could provide a bit of respite for them. When we returned to our nice warm homes and the comforts we expect to find there, I experienced a feeling bordering on guilt. How, I asked myself, does such disparity in our small community happen? What can I do to relieve some of the pain.

Our little church has a program for Neighbors in Need and the Fuel Fund. We are expecting both of these resources to be "taxed to the max" this winter. Yes, I am asking for you to donate what you can to keep these funds available. We also have begun a coat donation program that is starting soon after the Thanksgiving holiday. A coat, a basic need here in Maine, will allow a child to go to school instead of staying home because it is too cold to leave the house. These resources will provide a safety net for our neighbors until state programs kick in later in the season. Giving, that's what I can do, that's what you can do.

At our Council meeting yesterday most of the committee reports were aimed at helping the community. It was almost second nature. No one blinked or said we can't. We can, and we will, help. Many contributions come from folks who are *friends* of the church. They aren't *members*

of our church, but they know we will get things donated directly to those who need it. Thank God for these friends!

This season will be a test for us all. Let us hope our state and our national governing bodies can get past the rhetoric and get the help to our citizens who need it. We can set an example, but our motivation shouldn't be that. We should be and are moved to do this because it is the right thing to do.

I wish you and yours a wonderful Thanksgiving and Christmas season. It will be that much more poignant if you know you have done what you can to help spread the comfort.

Blessings to you all during this holiday season,
A∞

TRUSTEE'S REPORT...

It will be two years on December 6th that we had the damage to the rear of the church from the trees that came down in the storm. As I reported in June, the repairs to the chimney were completed in May and we were waiting for the roof repairs to be completed. James Long and Sons are on site and the final repairs should be completed in the next two weeks.

The furnaces in both building have been serviced and have a clean bill of health.

The Meditation Garden has been put to bed for the winter and fall clean has been completed.

If there are any issues that need to be addressed, please contact one of the trustees.

Regards from the Trustees,

John Wait, Kerry Johnson, Larry Griffin

DEACONS' UPDATE...

The deacons were busy these past few months helping organize several special church services. • Our church participated in World Wide Communion on the first Sunday of October, along with churches everywhere. Myra Maltby made her delicious breads from around the world and shared a special peace prayer concerning her love of World Wide Communion. Myra explained how thoughtfully she chooses the breads she makes each year.

- On the second Sunday of October we celebrated Indigenous Peoples' Day. The service focused on honor, respect and support for Native People.
- The third Sunday of October was Laity and Children's Sunday and was led by the deacon's with Pam Williams doing the sermon based on a beautiful children's book she discovered this past summer. Doretta had a well deserved Sunday off.





• On October 19th John Bear Mitchell, a citizen of the Penobscot Tribe from Indian Island and University of Maine Native American Educational

Program Coordinator, gave a very informative and engaging talk at the Wilkins House, with over 40 people attending. Topics included Native language, myths and symbols, tribal citizenship, land trusts and reservations, the location of different tribes and much more! There were several teachers in the audience enhancing their Wabanaki studies for students. We look forward to learning more through the resources at the University of Maine Native Studies programs, John Bear Mitchell, and his colleagues.

A Resolution in Support of Tribal Sovereignty

Our church conducted a book study on the book, **The Gatherings, Reimagining Indigenous-Settlers Relations**, twice this year, via Zoom. The second study was co-sponsored by the Maine Conference of the United Church of Christ's Social Action Committee (SAC), of which I am a member. Out of this committee's discussions and the book study, along with studying current legislative initiatives, the committee created and presented a resolution supporting tribal sovereignty in Maine to the Maine Conference of the United Church of Christ Annual Meeting in October.

Since the 1980 Settlement Act, Native tribes in Maine have not had the same rights as all other tribes in the United States. Because of our part in the education of the SAC, the Waterford Church council was asked to endorse the resolution ahead of the state vote. At the state meeting in October, the resolution was voted in nearly unanimously. This gives UCC churches in Maine the backing of the Maine Conference to take appropriate action, including education, and legislative advocacy in support of the Wabanaki people in Maine.

As you can see, a little church like ours played an important part in a significant state level church initiative. More importantly, this resolution lays the foundation for our churches to be allies to the people who have lived and cared for this land for thousands of years. For more information on the resolution please contact me, Dianne Morse Leonard.

• Advent began with the Hanging of the Greens on November 27th, followed by a special coffee hour and decorating our beautiful Christmas tree. Sunday, December 4th - Communion.

• There is no service on Christmas Day but two on Christmas Eve this year! December 24th at 5:30 PM we will have our traditional family candlelight service and at 11:00 PM we will have candlelight carols, scripture, poetry and meditations. Come help us start a new tradition with this service!

Thank you to everyone who volunteers to sign up for refreshments, flowers, and the peace candle and to those who read the scriptures. Your help is greatly appreciated.

All services are streamed live on FaceBook each week so be sure to check it out.

Please speak to the deacons or Doretta if you know of someone who needs extra care and attention, especially during this busy holiday season.

Dianne Morse-Leonard for the Deacons

Dianne, Myra Maltby and Ted Nixon



Celebrate the Season!

Advent and Christmas at Waterford Congregational Church

The little church with the big heart

Rev. Doretta Colburn

Join together in community as we celebrate the traditions of Christmas

Music ~ Scripture ~ Messages of Hope ~ Prayers for Peace

You're invited...

Sunday, November 27 – 9:30 AM

First Sunday in Advent: Hanging of the Greens

Sunday, December 4 – 9:30 AM

Message: Blessings in the Wilderness

Sunday, December 11 – 9:30 AM

Message: Recognizing Signs of Hope

Sunday, December 18 – 9:30 AM

Message: A Profound Presence of Peace

Saturday, December 24 – 5:30 PM

Christmas Eve Family Candlelight Service

Saturday, December 24 – 11:00 PM

Candlelight Carols, with scripture, poetry, and meditations

WATERFORD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UCC

15 Plummer Hill Rd., Waterford, Maine – www.wccucc.com

and... WATERFORD COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY CELEBRATION

Sunday, December 4th beginning at 4 pm

- Music in the Village Church with young people reading about what Christmas means to them
 - Tree Lighting and Caroling on the Green
- Refreshments and a Visit From Santa at the Library • Raffle Drawings • Other Festivities

MUSIC NOTES...



Our choir has been small, but mighty, over the last few months since summer. We are now preparing for Advent and then Christmas Eve and Epiphany with lots of wonderful music of the season!

George and Al have been rehearsing some piano/clarinet pieces and we hope to add more music to our services in December. There is so much Christmas music and so little time!

With two Christmas Eve services planned this year, we can be more creative and add some different and special music at the 11:00 service. So...don't miss anything...come to both services!

Thank you to all of our dedicated singers in the choir. You are amazing and I cannot thank you enough! You are a joy! Kay Leslie, our wonderful accompanist, is just the best!

Joy to you all for a wonderful Thanksgiving and Christmas!

Yours in song, *Jane Morse*



George playing his harpsichord in our church

CHURCH ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE...

The CAC has sponsored three activities since the last issue of the newsletter.



On September 17th we held an Italian Dinner to benefit the Fuel Fund. Nine of our church family baked delicious lasagnas. The dinner was set up buffet style with the labeled lasagnas, salad, and several loaves of Doretta's bread. For dessert, homemade cannolis were served while we enjoyed the music of Skip Green and Preston Harrison. Fifty two people attended the event and \$1500 was raised for the Fuel Fund through ticket sales and contributions. A big thank you to everyone who helped make this event so successful.

On November 6th, on the Sunday morning of the time change, we hosted a French Toast Breakfast to celebrate that extra hour of time that we gain each autumn. Myra, John, Nancy, and Dodi set up and cooked a delicious breakfast of French toast, bacon, fresh fruit, juice, and coffee before we all went to the church service. Rumor has it that there is consideration of eliminating time change. I guess we'd have to think of another reason to have the breakfast.

On Sunday, November 20th, we delivered Thanksgiving baskets to 12 Waterford families. Each family received a turkey and everything needed for a family Thanksgiving dinner. As usual, the recipients were very grateful. Several remarked, "This really helps." In this time of extreme inflation many people are having a hard time making ends meet...perhaps the givers as well as the receivers. Thank you all!



We wish you a happy holiday season, and look forward to planning activities for you in 2023.

Nancy, Myra, Dodi, Denny, and Doretta

MISSION NEWS...

We held a very successful challenge to fill at least 10 Clean-up Buckets by Sunday the 25th of September and were able to send 15 buckets to the depot site in Meriden, CT. Thank-you to the Doss and her husband for delivering all the buckets. Once again we proved that we are "the Little Church with a Big Heart."



In November we began gathering gently used coats, gloves, hats, and mittens of all sizes to be given to the Harrison Food bank. These will be shared with people in need of warm winter clothing. Please bring your clean and gently items to church where we will collect. When the box is full someone will deliver and bring the box back to be filled again. Helping to keep our neighbors safe and warm this winter.

In December we will be offering envelopes for the "Christmas Fund" which is used to help provide pension and health premiums to low-income retired clergy, and church workers, and will also provide emergency assistance to clergy families in need.

We will continue to strive to be a 5 for 5 church in 2023.

| | |
|-----------|---|
| January | *OCWM |
| February | *One Great Hour of Sharing |
| March | CWS |
| April | |
| May | *Strengthen the Church |
| June | |
| July | CWS |
| August | |
| September | |
| October | *Neighbors in Need |
| November | Thanksgiving Baskets |
| December | *Christmas Fund Heifer International Living gifts Christmas Eve - local needs |

Again, we will follow our Calendar of Giving and review other needs as they arise.

We believe that each person is unique and valuable. It is the will of God that every person belongs to a family of faith where they have a strong sense of being valued and loved.

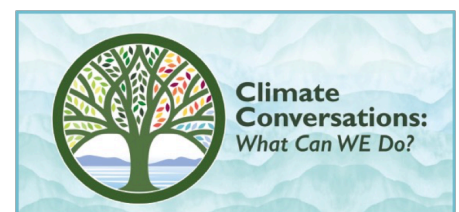
Please let us know if you would like to join the Mission Committee. We are really a fun group.

Shalom, *Pam Williams*

CLIMATE CONVERSATIONS UPDATE ...

Kerry & Doretta

About 20 folks from our church and community joined together for a 6-week book study on Active Hope: How to Face the Mess We're in with Unexpected Resilience and Creative Power from the *work that reconnects* by Joanna Macy. Our gatherings were insightful, rich, and inspiring as we shared our perspectives and hopes for building a climate resilient future. As a matter of fact, we were eager to continue meeting as a way to share with one another, find support, and consider ways we can work collectively toward meaningful



change. We welcome all who would like to join us. Email Doretta at colburndoretta@gmail.com if you are interested.

On Tuesday, **December 13th from 6-7 p.m** we are hosting a program with Efficiency Maine:

ARE YOU LOOKING FOR WAYS TO SAVE ON YOUR ENERGY COSTS?

Come learn how you can...**ALL ARE WELCOME**

Tuesday, December 13th from 6-7 pm

Wilkins House, 19 Plummer Hill Road, Waterford Village

Efficiency Maine will present an introduction to available rebates, financing options, technical resources, and their installer locator. Find out about rebates on heat pumps, hot water heaters, electric vehicles and more.

Learn how you can get thousands of dollars in rebates for energy efficient upgrades that can help you save money and make your home more comfortable.

Andy Meyer, Senior Program Manager at Efficiency Maine will be presenting.
There will be time for Q&A.

This event is hosted by PEERWaterford & Climate Conversations: What Can WE Do?

STEWARDSHIP REPORT...

Pledge cards are coming in at a good rate in response to our 2022 Stewardship letter. However, if you're like me, I'm in need of digging deep into my pile of mail to find mine. I think of it often, but I've been a little slow to take action. This year appeals for support have seemed to come in at an unprecedented rate. While 90% deserve my attention, I've needed to prioritize my support. For me, our *"little church with the big heart"* deserves top billing.

This year in particular we have managed to do so many important things for members and friends as well as for the Waterford community. We have demonstrated our caring nature by reaching out to people through our Thanksgiving baskets; supported both the Sweden and the Harrison food banks; helped neighbors in need through our fuel fund; led spiritual conversations in the community about improving racial justice and addressing the climate crisis. Most importantly, we have actively reached out to our entire faith community in new ways through our use of technology in order to serve those unable to attend church in person. And, we have carefully, thoughtfully, and safely joined again in in-person services for those able to attend.

Throughout the year Doretta, Jane, George, Kay, and the choir, and many other members of the church family have shared their gifts with us. They have uplifted our spirits, given us hope and joy in an otherwise troubled time, and maintained our buildings, and other assets well, and within budget. Their personal and collective resilience is indeed a gift and a blessing to all of us.

Please join me in finding and returning your pledge cards as soon as possible so that we can continue to serve the Waterford community. Your pledges make it possible for us to plan carefully and deliver fully on the promise and mission of our wonderful church.

Blessings for the holiday season, *Kerry Johnson*, Chair – Stewardship Committee

THE CHURCH WEBSITE...

is maintained on almost a daily basis (<https://www.wccucc.com/>) depending on what we are all doing each week. The website is good for those who cannot come to church, but want to hear the sermon; it is also a way for viewers to learn about our active Waterford community.

The website carries Sunday sermons in two versions: 1) by video camera for later viewing and 2) on the phone, live streamed to FaceBook. The website also has information about our programs concerning transitioning Climate, the Church activities calendar, the Newsletters - past and present, Doretta's thought-reflections and other informative church items.

We have folks who tune into the service through Facebook on a regular basis. So I am pleased to be able to share that each week on the website. Along with the recordings, the Sunday page shares the quote of the week, the weekly scriptures, and choral arrangements. Since I am in the choir, Bruce Whichard, Tabitha Day or Ted Colburn often record for me. Thank you guys! The music can stand on its own, so sometimes I just do an audio recording.

Doretta's sermons are available for listening back to 2019. Her words are certainly an uplift to those needing quiet inspiration.

Tuning into our website on occasion is a lovely way to support the WCC and our community. Here's watching!

Ginny — Webmaster



The image shows a screenshot of the Waterford Congregational Church UCC website. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links: HOME, ABOUT US, SUNDAY SERVICE, REFLECTIONS, CLIMATE, EVENTS, and NEWSLETTERS. Below the menu, a central box announces a sermon for November 13, 2022, by Rev. Doretta Colburn, titled "Something New Is In the Air". Below this, a quote is displayed: "When God begins to do a new thing in a new way, the greatest opposition comes from the old thing with its old ways!" attributed to Lisa Bevere. At the bottom, there are two video player thumbnails. The left one shows a woman speaking at a pulpit with an American flag and a red play button overlay. The right one is a smaller thumbnail with a play button and the text "Waterford Congregational Church UCC was li" and "Facebook Watch".

Putting Up the Tree and the Hanging of the Greens 2022...



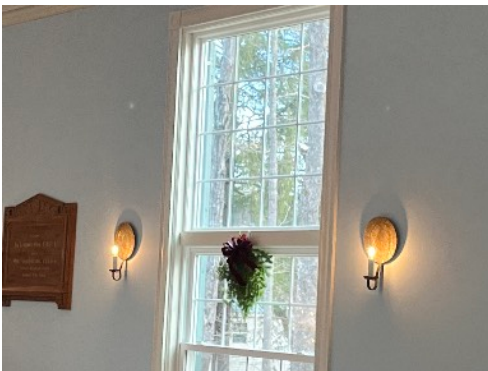
*Bruce, John and Jared
The Three Wise Men???*



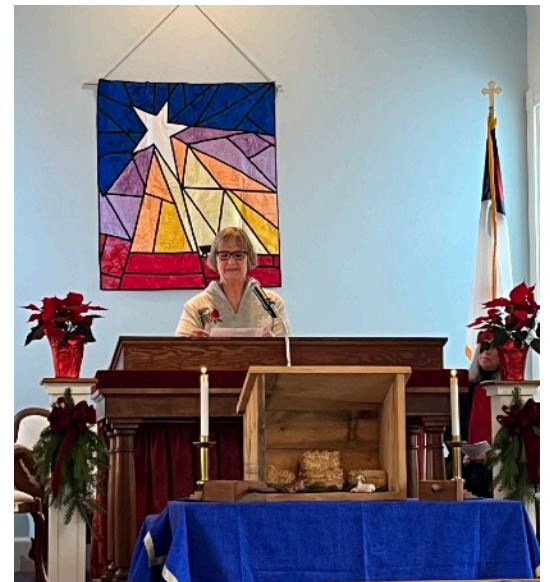
*The congregation decorates the tree as part of
the church service*



The Finished Product



*The windows get their own special
greenery at this church service*



*Dianne reading at the
Hanging of the Greens service*



News from the Pews



We hope you enjoy receiving the Waterford Church Newsletter. If you know someone who would like to be added to our newsletter list; or if you would like your name added to our birthday list; or should you choose to unsubscribe...please email ksleslie@me.com.

The Williams 50th Wedding Anniversary...

Pam and Lloyd will be celebrating their special day on December 23, 2022! Their trip last summer was also part of honoring and enjoying this milestone event.

Congratulations!



News from the Wrights...



Not much change with Dee or Stan. We will be going to my son's home for Thanksgiving dinner but generally staying home...boring. As some of you may have noticed, the junk cars are getting ready for their last trip to the crusher, so our yard will be a little more respectable. Stan turned 86 on the 27th of November...just a little older, but still Irish! May God bless all of you!

Ted Nixon Reports...

I'd like to mention two recent church events: the first where anyone who had worked in one or more variety of ways for the church was invited to a complimentary French Toast and Fruit Breakfast. The event was very well planned and much appreciated.

A second interesting event was the study and discussion of the book "Active Hope: How to Face the Mess We're in with Unexpected Resilience and Creative Power." The people who attended were a diverse group — members of our church and others from Waterford and nearby communities.



Ralph Sylvester Honored on Veteran's Day...

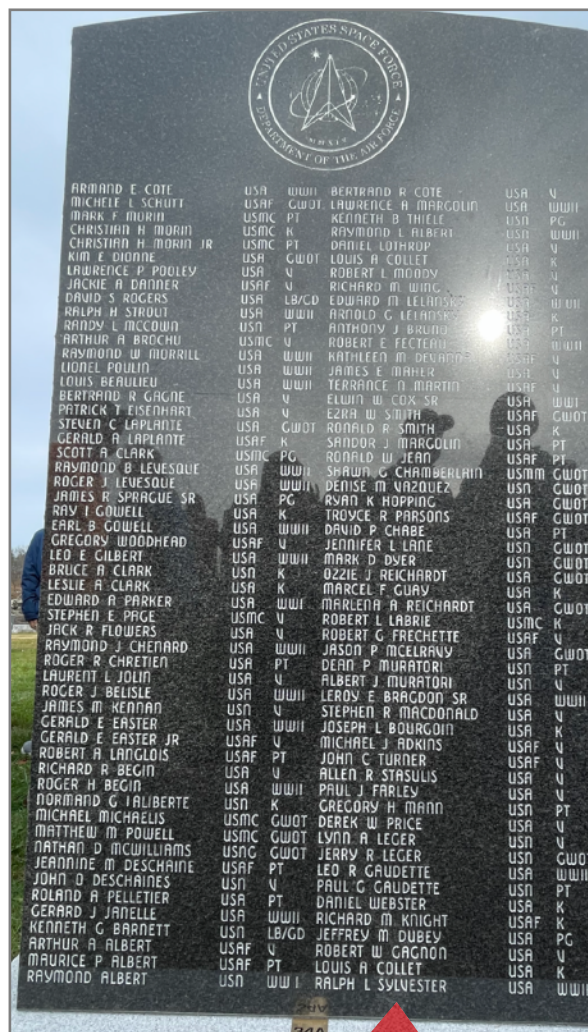
A picture is worth a thousand words! Bruce, Arlene, Jared, Dodi, and John were honored to be in Ralph's company to share in the Veteran's Day gathering in Lewiston, Maine. Ralph's name is now engraved in granite at the Veteran's Memorial Park.



Ralph Sylvester, 98, a World War II veteran from Auburn, and his friend, Arlene Whichard, are greeted Friday by Crystal Guerrette of Honor Flight Maine at a Veterans Day event at Veterans Memorial



Gold Star Mother sharing time with Ralph.



The Raymonds Describe Their Special Hobby...

As many of you know, Denny and I spend quite a bit of time volunteering for various organizations locally, but not all in Waterford. One organization dear to our hearts is Maine Sheltie Rescue (MSR). I run their website...a challenge and always a learning experience! The exciting and more fruitful work we do for them is to foster Sheltie-dogs that are without homes. These Shelties are strays or are owner-surrendered. We have fostered 13 dogs since

2015, two of which were strays with no family history. Since 2009, we have adopted 5 MSR dogs. They often are old souls, so their life time with us tends to be on the short side.

Pictured here are the 3 Shelties we have at this time. They make a lovely pack, each bringing their own sweet personalities to our home.

In front with the big red bow is Miss Kelly Girl (11). Kelly was owner-surrendered and came into rescue two years ago. She was 52 lbs...she now weigh 29 lbs! Kelly was fostered by two other MSR families beside us, and we all fell in love with her. What a happy dog! Sadly, we had to have all her teeth removed (which were rotten) and her sinus passages repaired. She wears the big red bow because she is now a forever-rescue (which means she will never be adopted) and is the MSR Mascot. Denny

absolutely fell in love with her, so she lives with us, MSR pays her food and medical bills, and we have the fun of her presence, but not the expense!



Behind Kelly is Queen Willow Bee (13). We did not foster Willow. The MSR foster family that had Willow loved her, but did not have a spot in their pack for another dog, so they were attempting to find a home for her. Two possible homes were considered, but neither were a match. They were preparing to put Willow on Pet Finder, but I said NO, we would adopt her. She has a lovely sweet nature. Her favorite spot is under the legs as you sit so you can scratch her back. BTW, Willow came into Rescue a little over two years at 10 lbs (She almost died of starvation. Her elderly parent kept forgetting to feed her (Alzheimer's.) Gratefully now she weighs 22 lbs. She has a very young nature, loves her walks and her dinners!

The little dog with the cute crooked ear is Little Manny Boy (5). Manny has been with us just over a year. He was a failed foster (Yes, we fostered him and adopted him.) He came to us from an apartment situation where he could not run and play (no fenced yard). Instead, he was leashed all the time, yanking and pulling and barking at everything he saw. The apartment administration told the family: You go or he goes! And why did we adopt such a handful? Well... he is awfully cute and full of exuberance! AND Kelly loves him. We do not get young dogs often in Rescue. His age appealed to us, and we knew he would need training, which I was pretty sure I could manage. Well, it is a bit of a struggle, but he is learning. By the time he is an old dog, he will be quite well behaved (HA!).

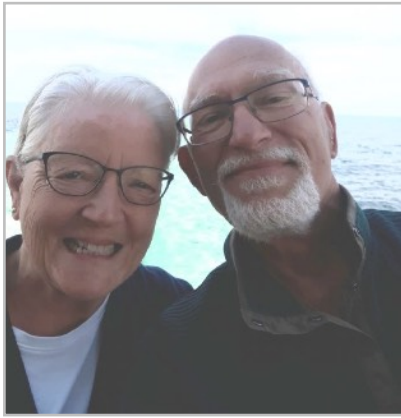
Anyway, this is our at-home family...along with the 3 cats. They keep us happy, entertained, and well exercised as we walk most every day (weather permitting!)

This is the MSR website: <https://www.mainesheltierescue.org>, and they are also on FaceBook.

Blessings to you, *Ginny and Denny*

The Strucks Travel to...

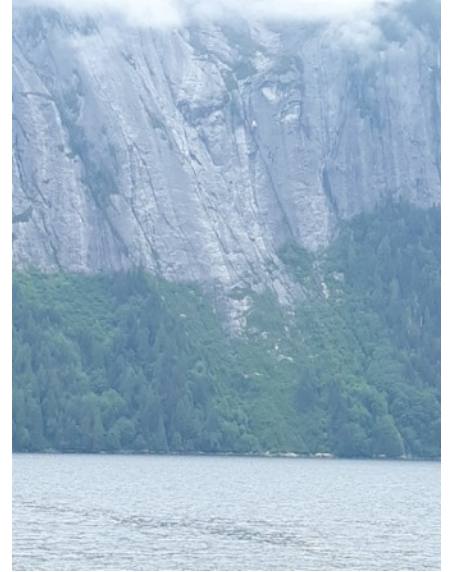
ALASKA



Jean & Al enjoyed their time on the ship Orion



Drinking from a glacier stream



Fjord in Alaska

and to...
MISSISSIPPI



Gator during swamp visit



French Quarter – New Orleans



Tug prop to push barges



Happy Birthday

DECEMBER

- 1 Eva Brannan
- 21 Carol Madsen
- 29 Kerry Johnson

JANUARY

- 5 Joy Plate
- 6 Sue Van Dehey
- 11 Tabitha Day
- 13 Brenda Hambleton
- 17 Sherry Bedard
- 21 Petra Smyth
- 27 Mary Colbath

FEBRUARY

- 1 Bob Ross III
- 13 Gabe Johnson
- 19 George Wiese

Church Leadership

Moderator: *Al Struck*

Clerk: *Larry Griffin*

Trustees: *John Wait, Kerry Johnson, Larry Griffin*

Treasurers: *John & Dodi Wait*

Assistant Treasurer: *Ralph MacKinnon*

Stewardship: *Kerry Johnson*

Deacons: *Dianne Morse Leonard, Myra Maltby,
Ted Nixon*

Church School: *Myra Maltby*

Missions: *Pam Williams (Global),
Nancy Engdahl (Local)*

Church Activities Committee: *Nancy Engdahl*

Communications Coordinator: *Sally Holm*

Webmaster: *Ginny Raymond*

Church Historian: *Dianne Morse Leonard*

Love Came Down at Christmas

Christina G. Rossetti, pub. 1885

Love came down at Christmas,
Love all lovely, Love divine;
Love was born at Christmas,
Star and angels gave the sign.

Love shall be our token,
Love be yours and love be mine,
Love to God and all men,
Love for plea and gift and sign.

We wish you a Merry Christmas, a Happy Holiday Season,
and many blessings as we move into a New Year!

