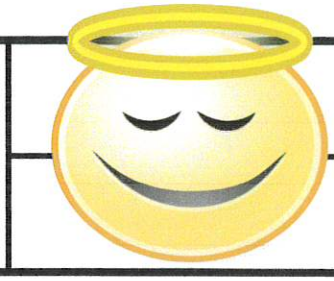


Dixfield Congregational Church Newsletter

OCTOBER 2026



FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

How is it that the same trees we look at all year seem to be an entirely different forest when Fall arrives? First, we made it through the muck and dust of mud season, and we were just grateful to see the buds at all once they returned! After that, the fiddleheads unrolled themselves and became clusters of ferns. The trees surprised us with the thickness of their foliage, where there previously were only bare branches. But still, we knew the best display was yet to come with the Fall colors.

Our faith lives surely follow a similar trajectory. Sometimes we find ourselves in a state of bare branches, so to speak. We just don't have anything to "show" that day, that week, or that month. Maybe life's just been hard. And yet: when we follow the wisdom passed down to us by our Christian forebears, we stay in God's Word and in fellowship with the church. Somehow (often inexplicably) the green leaves of our spiritual life fill out again, thicker than we ever expected. But the best is yet to come, when we again find ourselves able to rise above circumstances, and we can finally raise our hearts in praise and thankfulness a bit like those beautiful Fall colors. And we only make it to those colors by surviving the winter...and then eventually it happens all over again.

Thankfully, our "seasons" of faith are not prescribed like the seasons of nature. I'm supremely grateful when a few years go by without any great tragedy or difficulty. But maturity is understanding that winter will return in some form or another, and faith is deciding to walk through that winter on a return journey to praise. The community of faith at a church like ours means not having to walk alone on that journey.

It's probably important now to point out a significant difference between us and the trees, though: *the trees can't help what they're doing.*

In addition to walking out of dark seasons, and walking away from the bitter cold of spiritual winters, we also have to get out of our own way on the journey at times. This usually means battling the tendency to withdraw from our church community, and it often means actively resisting the temptation to dwell on dark circumstances, or to feel sorry for ourselves.

My friend Murray tells a story of finding his pre-teen daughter crying in the bathroom in front of the mirror after he'd told her she wouldn't be able to participate in a particular activity with her friends. "What are you doing?" he asked her.

"Watching myself cry," she replied.

He first had to resist the temptation to laugh at how silly it was, but he says that he then had an epiphany: *How many times do I "cry in the mirror" because something didn't go the way I wanted it to, when God is standing right there with me, offering to draw me close and comfort me through any situation?*

May those of us in seasons of colorful praise soak it up to its very maximum. May those of us who are in slow seasons of growth take joy in the knowledge that we still haven't reached full potential yet. May those of us in winter find strength in God, and our faith community, to believe that the season will indeed change.

For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven. -Ecc3:1

Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning. -Psalm 30:5

- Pastor Matt Andrews

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Women's Retreat 2026 - Unlocking Your Spiritual Gifts

Unlocking Your Spiritual Gifts women's retreat was held on 9/11-9/12/26 in Newry where for 24 powerful hours eight women celebrated the light within them planted by God, discovered and "Unlocked" their spiritual gifts and reflected on how they might use them.

We welcomed new and old faces and quickly became friends. Free time on Friday night brought lots of laughter and some ladies ventured out to see the 9/11 memorial beams of light from Mt. Washington honoring victims, first responders, and veterans.

The warmth of the sun on Saturday was like the spirit warming you from the inside out. It was such a blessing to be able to reflect upon our gifts and to share them. Each of us has many gifts which is our bouquet. And in our bouquet, as it is with the church (Members of the Body), we are one body but made up of many different parts (our gifts). When combined with other people's gifts they complete each other. It's okay to not have connection with certain gifts because that one is not yours. Celebrate the gifts that you DO have! And the food was amazing as always!!!

We look forward to presenting other women's retreats.

Pictured are some tangible reminders of our spiritual gifts and the lights from Mt. Washington.

- Deb Morang







Anniversary Celebration—One Year and Counting!

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." John 15:5

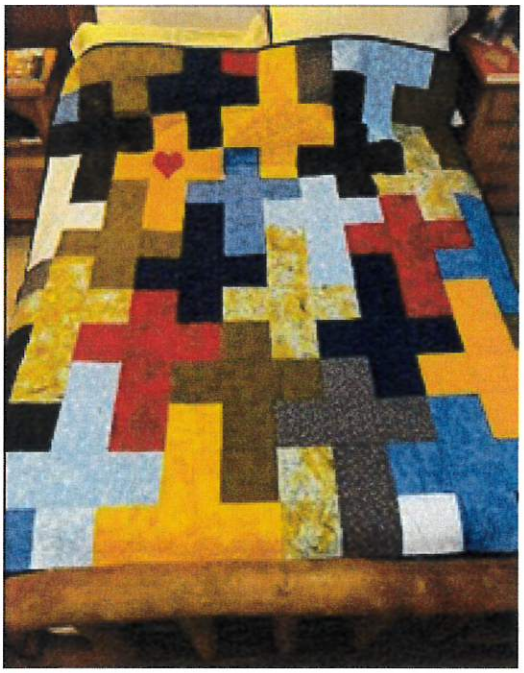
On September 20, 2026 we celebrated one year of having Pastor Matt & Kristi as the leaders of our congregation – and what a heart-felt celebration it was! This has been a year of many infusions of the Holy Spirit – live music for Worship, thoughtful Sermons, Bible Study, doubled attendance, Youth Group, Baptisms, Prayer Warriors and New Members! By drawing us, as a congregation, into a closer walk with God, we are, together, indeed bearing much fruit!

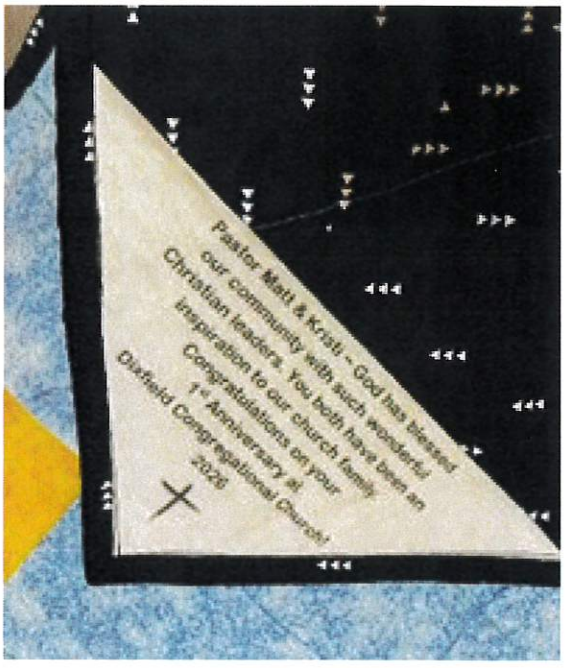
And this is all being accomplished with much laughter and love!

The walk is not easy, each of us has trials, heart-break, suffering and loss yet at the same time we can support each other and rejoice that God is a constant in our lives lending support, encouragement, love, peace and answered prayer. Thank you, Matt & Kristi for having the courage to follow God's leading and come be a blessing to us!

Food, fun, a custom card and a gifted quilt are some of the ways the congregation showed appreciation and love!

- Diane Ray





Dixfield Congregational Church Booth at Dixfield Days

Dixfield Days returned this summer on Saturday, August 15. It was a beautiful sunny day and booths lined Main Street with people selling all sorts of things. The church had a pop-up tent set up on Nancy Carpenter's lawn. There were baked goods and freshly made cotton candy for sale. Pastor Matt discovered that he has quite a knack for making cotton candy after getting a lesson from Layla! Several people from the church took turns manning the booth during the day. It was a great way to get information about our church out to the community.







Missions Pasta Night Fundraiser

The missions committee hosted a spaghetti supper on August 22 which was very well attended. The meal was by donation and $569 was raised that evening.









Coffee House Fun

Mary Murphy filled the annex with beautiful music on September 18. Everyone enjoyed listening to Mary play and hopes that she will come back in 2027 for another coffee house.

The last coffee house for 2026 is coming right up. Jim Hamalainen, the Dirigo Middle School and Dirigo High School music teacher, will be performing in the annex on Saturday, November 7 at 7:00 p.m. He is planning to bring some special, surprise guests to perform with him.

Dixfield Congregational Church Choir News

After a hiatus of several years, the DCC Choir has re-formed. Although we have no director/ organist at this time, we are able to sing music from a selection of previously-recorded hymns on our organ and from the CD collection of church music purchased during Pastor Dave Lambertson's tenure as our interim minister. Our current goal is to sing an anthem every month or six weeks. We began on October 4th with "The Prayer of Saint Francis." Please see Pru Schofield with questions or suggestions.

Mini-Golf Fun at Roy's

The church folks who played mini-golf at Taber's in July had so much fun, they requested another mini-golf outing. This took place at Roy's in Auburn on September 25. Sixteen people enjoyed beautiful weather, friendly competition, and food. Kristi Andrews and Marge Murphy both got holes-in-one! (Kristi actually got two!)



Pictured above: Pastor Matt, Kristi, John , Reggie, Val, Amy, Priscilla, Dexter, Darlene, Kathy, Ruthie, Deb, John, Pru, Marge, and Albert



Ladies' Tea

Some of the ladies of the church organized an afternoon tea which took place on September 10. As part of the afternoon festivities, Kristi Andrews was gifted with some presents for Pastor Matt and Kristi's grandson Silas who had been born five days earlier. Refreshments and fellowship were enjoyed by all.



