



The Hammond Streeter

Hammond Street Congregational Church, UCC, Bangor, ME

An Open and Affirming Community December 17, 2025

Website: www.hammondstreetchurch.org

Phone: 207-942-4381



FROM THE PASTOR'S OFFICE

No Room in the Inn

SCRIPTURE

7 And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Luke 2:7

WORDS OF HOPE

Each year we here the story of Christ Birth and are again told that for Joseph and Mary there was no place for them in the Inn. It is a story that tugs at our heart strings when we think of a couple having to stay in a stable with the animals and not only that, but she gives birth to her child in that setting. To us it is a horrible thought that anyone would have to stay in a stable and especially give birth in one.

In our day and time, it is not uncommon for people who have experienced hardships in life to find themselves living in situations that many of us would deem unfit for anyone. In the news we hear of the encampments here in Bangor and although some would have them removed, we as the followers of Christ should be asking how we can help, you see for some of these individuals just need someone to help them get back on their feet so that they can make it on their own. For some they need much more assistance and someone to show them how they can get the help they need, others just want to be left alone.

A few months ago, I met a couple who were not looking for a handout but asked if they could attend my church, our church. I know they didn't need money or food, because I asked them and they let me know they had a meager income, they just wanted a place where they could belong. Housing was out of the question because, like so many, they cannot afford housing in Bangor. They saved what money they had until they could afford a tent and sleeping bags and that became their home wherever they could find a place to camp. Summer turned to Fall and Fall to Winter and yet they were content in their tent.

With the threat of the first measurable snow fall and temperatures plummeting to the single digits, I inquired as to where they would be during all of this. I knew that they would not be able to stay outside in a tent and survive. With the help of Rev. Jim and Diane Scovil we worked to get them a room where they could stay for a while. Diane shared with me that they were literally told at one motel that there was no room for them. You see it even happens today. However, Jim and Diane found a place for them and by God's grace and the help of others we have been able to keep them safe.

Working as Advocates Diane and Jim have been able to help them work through the system with Penquis and help them get Maine IDs so they can work. They didn't come looking for a handout what they were seeking was a place where they could worship and belong, they found that at HSCC. Since all of this has been going on another person in our congregation gave them work and they earned money that they could have kept for themselves but instead of keeping all they earned they gave me money to help cover the cost of their lodging. Another member has donated and is storing furniture for their new home.

Penquis is working to find them a place but that is not easy in our current housing situation. So, we continue to help them so that they like Mary and Joseph can find a house in which to reside. They need our help and I am asking that if you have or know of a possible place, they could make their home please let me know. You see this is our own Mary and Joseph story and we are the Inn keepers.

PRAYER

Holy one, as your Inn keepers open our hearts and minds so that we can see new ways and possibilities to help the Marys and Josephs in our world. Amen

See you Sunday,

Pastor Gary



****POINSETTIA HOLIDAY ORDERS****

Electronic order forms are attached to this Hammond Streeter for Holiday Poinsettias. **The deadline to place orders is this FRIDAY at noon.** You can return them to the office during the week. They are \$18 each.

****SPECIAL CHRISTMAS OFFERING****

On Sunday, December 21st there will be envelopes for the Christmas Fund on the information tables at the entrance of the Sanctuary for those who will not be able to attend the Christmas Eve Service but would like to support the Christmas Fund. Our Offering on Christmas Eve will be for the Christmas Fund. As I shared last week the Christmas Fund is the fifth of the five special offerings the UCC asks each of its congregations to receive throughout the year. Our Congregation has been a Five for Five Church every year and our hope is to continue long into the future.

The Christmas Fund is a special offering by the United Church of Christ (UCC) that provides financial assistance to active and retired clergy and church workers in need.

It has been supporting UCC ministers, church workers, and their families for over 100 years. It provides emergency grants, supplements small annuities, and covers health premiums. Each December, the fund also distributes Christmas "Thank You" gift checks to lower-income retirees, ensuring they receive support during the holiday season.

I hope that you will join me in supporting the Christmas Fund and help to make this Holy Season and the coming year a little brighter for those who have given their lives in service to Christ through the United Church of Christ.

Pastor Gary



WHAT IS THE CHRISTMAS CARD MAILBOX?

It's a place for you to share holiday greetings with your HSCC family without needing stamps or the internet. Just address your cards with first and last name (if possible) and put them in the cubby in the Narthex.



WINTER WARMTH TREE

The Outreach Committee is hoping to decorate the Winter Warmth Tree with warm socks (**new only please**) and gloves. These items along with hats we already have will provide a warmer winter for our neighbors in need.

HOMELESS SHELTER MEAL VOLUNTEERS

On the 4th Monday of each month, Hammond Streeters prepare and serve a hearty meal for guests at the Bangor Area Homeless Shelter. While this program is coordinated by Your Outreach Committee, it takes the support of our entire congregation to sustain this effort throughout the year. We could use some additional involvement from the good folks at Hammond St. contact Andy Wood (664awood@gmail.com or 745-3428). To get more details about supporting this project with or without digital access, contact Andy.

Thanks for considering involvement in this HSCC Outreach program – Your Outreach Committee



MONTHLY FREE BEAN LUNCHES

On the first Saturday of every month HSCC's Free Bean Lunch provides a free meal and a bag lunch to all who attend. Over the past few months we have been averaging around 65 guests at each meal. We have an email list of those who wish to help by providing needed supplies, casseroles, salads, and help with set-up, serving, and cleanup. If you are interested in being added to that email list please contact me. The sign-up sheet is emailed the weekend before the FB Lunch. My email address is: ryehle2@gmail.com and my phone number is: 207-478-9122. Thank you, Ruey



WINTER CLOTHING

Your Outreach Committee is looking for gently worn winter outerwear. Can you help us out?

During the winter months, HSCC offers gently used winter clothing to guests at our Free Bean Lunch. We offer the clothing from the first week in November through March. Any winter outerwear in good condition and sweaters, sweatshirts and fleece would be appreciated, especially larger adult sizes. Donations can be placed in the basket in the Narthex or brought to the office. Contact Andy Wood (745-3428) with questions. Thanks for helping our neighbors in need in the greater Bangor area – Your Outreach Committee

*****PLEASE REMEMBER*****

Hammond Streeters at Home

Eda & Hugh Morrison, Glen & Ann Rea, Sandy Farver

Sylvia Ross Home

758 Broadway, Apt. 37, Bangor, ME 04401
Ronnie Kittredge

Brewer Rehab

74 Parkway S., Brewer, ME 04412
Ansley Throckmorton-Rm. 109

Westgate Manor

750 Union St.—Room 111, Bangor, ME 04401
Susan Davies

****DEADLINES FOR PUBLICATIONS****

HAMMOND STR. *TUESDAYS* at 11 AM
SUNDAY BULLETIN *WEDS.* at 10 AM

****CHURCH OFFICE HOURS****

Monday—Friday 9 to 3. Please knock or call the office at 207-942-4381 for assistance.

EMAIL ADDRESS

admin@hammondstreetchurch.net

Please sign up to read scripture and dedicate flowers in the notebooks on the table in the back of the Sanctuary.

PRAYER CIRCLE

Do you believe in the power of prayer? Willing to lend your prayer power for others? If so, join the HSCC Circle. The only requirements are that you have an email address and will maintain confidentiality when requested. Interested? Have a prayer request? Contact Fran at frandg31@gmail.com

*****SECURITY REMINDER*****

Please make sure the backdoor is locked. Lock it and give it a tug to make sure it is secure and ALWAYS make sure your vehicle is locked.

SERVICE STREAMING LIVE OR RECORDED

You can find our services live or at your convenience on our YouTube channel.
AVTECHHammondStreetChurch@Youtube.com
or use this QR Code:



ALWAYS NEEDED IN THE FOOD PANTRY

Spaghetti O's, Canned Ravioli, Pasta Sauce, Shelf-Stable Milk, Cereal, Baked Beans, Soup, Mustard, Ketchup, Mayo and Salt-n-Pepper. Thank you, BFP

REMEMBER TO CLYNK

Hammond Street has a CLYNK account for recycling cans and bottles at Hannaford stores. Pick up a bag with our tag on the ushers' tables in the back of the sanctuary or in the office. When the bag is full, put it in the receptacle at a Hannaford location. The proceeds go to the church. It's a very easy way to help. If you have questions, contact Tracy Bigney at 207-356-7223 or bigney@maine.edu.

COVID GUIDELINES

Covid levels have increased. We can help reduce the risk of getting or spreading Covid by wearing a mask. Getting the latest Covid vaccination will also reduce the risk of serious illness. **HSCC has free N-95 masks at the greeter's table in the narthex.**

****HSCC COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2025****

NONE THIS WEEK



2025 Advent Calendar

First Sunday of Advent, November 30

10:00 a.m.

Hanging of the Greens Service

Second Sunday of Advent, December 7

10:00 a.m.

Black Bear Men's Chorus

Third Sunday of Advent, December 14

10:00 a.m.

Choir Cantata and Intergenerational Tableau

Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 21

10:00 a.m.

Lessons and Carols

Christmas Eve, December 24

7:00 p.m.

Communion and Candlelight Service

During the month of December there is no Sunday School so that the children and Youth can be a part of our special service.

There are crayons and coloring books available for the younger children on the Tables as you enter the Sanctuary.

There will be crafts for the children in Fellowship Hall during Coffee Hour.



2025 HOLIDAY FAIR

Santa was a big hit with the kids. The generosity of the time and talent of our Hammond Street Community was evident on Saturday at our Holiday Fair. It looked beautiful, tasted delicious, and was filled with smiles and welcome. Together we raised over \$4,000. Thank you.



CHOIR CANTATA/INTERGENERATIONAL TABLEAU 2025

A living nativity gradually filled the altar and pulpit as "The Promise of the King" unfolded through music and narration. Thank you Judy Fricke for coordinating a beautiful cantata with a memorable tableau.





**Hammond Street
Congregational Church, UCC
P.O. Box 1106
Bangor, ME 04402-1106**

**FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
In Person Sunday Service
Pastor Gary Bagley
December 21, 2025 at 10 AM
ALL ARE WELCOME!!**

**The Hammond Streeter
is a weekly publication of the
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United Church of Christ (EXCEPT IN JULY AND AUGUST)**

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