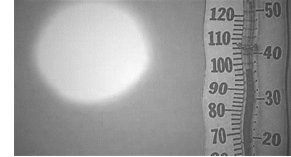


Dear Friends,

The summer heat is upon us! As I sit at my writing desk at 4 a.m. this morning, the air is already thick with humidity as fog surrounds the house. I really love living here on mid-coast Maine, but mostly because these days are few and far between. It is going to be a scorcher, as they say. So, admittedly, I'm starting the day in a rather bad mood. A voice inside is telling me I need an attitude adjustment.



In the winter, when everyone else is complaining about the next forecasted snow storm, I am delighted. Because a snow-filled day has become an opportunity for me to slow down, to stay inside, to read, to pray, to tend to my inner self. Well, why not think similarly about these 90 degree days? They automatically slow down my body, I move at a snail's pace. And I think my mind slows down as well. Nothing moves too fast! Perhaps these hot days are also invitations to go inside, see what is simmering (literally) in there. We need hydration for the body and we also sometimes need a watering of the soul.



There is a robin singing right outside my window. Her song pierces the fog and is almost too loud for my ears. Okay...attitude adjustment accomplished. What a magnificent world we live in...even at 90 degrees!

Speaking of magnificent, I hope you all heard about our visitors at the campfire this past Saturday evening. From another realm, the past, they taught us a lot about the life of the church in the early to mid 19th century when the sanctuary was fashioned. We met the Rev. Ebenezer Price, our first pastor, who, though buried in New Hampshire, made the trip for the event. Then Robert Miller and Abel Baker burst onto the scene, still were fighting about the money Abel stole that caused Robert to lose the land that the church now stands on. We even got to experience a reconciliation!

Then out of the church came the Rev. William Frothingham, of whom it was said he preached so well that the people thought he deserved a proper building in which to do his ministry. Thus the sanctuary was built. We met Ann Sarah Johnson, granddaughter of the second pastor, and an early feminist and civil rights activist, who not only attended the front lines of the Civil War assisting her physician husband, but was also active in the Underground Railroad here in Belfast. We had the pleasure to meet the famous Phineas Parkhurst Quimby who built the town clock in the steeple and was credited with founding of the New Thought Movement. Amazing, Ghost Quimby was carrying his true original cane! Finally we were joined by the lovely poetess Rebecca Palfrey Utter who was instrumental in the founding of a large charitable organization that still exists today "The King's Daughters (and Sons) Society." She graced us with one of her poems.

The evening was ended by singing "This Little Light of Mine" and "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," as more s'mores and hotdogs were made over the fire. The next day, Sunday, Pastor Joel asked the children if 200 years from now they would be the subject of a campfire gathering at the church, what might be said about them? I think it is a good question for all of us to ask ourselves.

The next event of our 200th Anniversary celebration is this upcoming weekend. On Saturday, the 7th, we will hold a **strawberry shortcake** extravaganza, including lunch beginning at noon. On Sunday the Rev. Marc Stewart, a former pastor and current Conference Minister of the Montana-Northern Wyoming Conference will preach! The weather is supposed to cool down. But cooler or not, it will be a great weekend to celebrate at The First Church!

With love and blessings,

Kate