



The Beacon

May 2026

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BONHOEFFER IN MAY

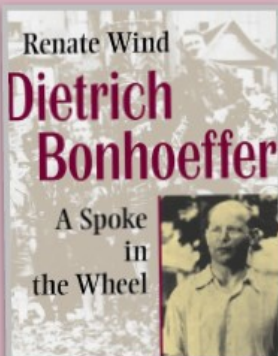
Documentary
Thurs., May 21, 7:00pm

Documentary film on the
Life Story of Dietrich
Bonhoeffer. (90 mins)



Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Memories and Perspectives

Thurs., May 28, 6:00 - 7:15 pm



Book Discussion on
Dietrich Bonhoeffer:
A Spoke in the Wheel,
by Renate Wind

Facilitated by
David J. Wood

Books available for purchase in
the Pilgrim Room during coffee
hour. \$10



*From the Interim
Senior Minister's Desk*

Rev. David J. Wood

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Dear Friends,

This month, as part of our Adult Education here at FCC, we will be learning about the life and thought of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Bonhoeffer was a theologian, a pastor and, eventually, a co-conspirator in plots to assassinate Adolf Hitler. He was executed by the Nazi regime on April 9, 1945 in Flossenburg, Germany at the age of 39, a month before the end of the World War II in Europe. He was a professor of theology by his mid 20's, served as a pastor in the Lutheran Church, and led an underground seminary until it was shut down by the Gestapo.

Around the year 1940, Bonhoeffer wrote a draft of a confession of guilt by the church in Germany—a confession he hoped would be made one day in the future. Sadly, it never was. Here is part what he wrote: “The church was silent when she should have cried out...The church confesses that she witnessed the lawless application of brutal force, the physical and spiritual suffering of countless innocent people, oppression, hatred and murder, and that she has not raised her voice on behalf of the victims and has not found a way to hasten their aid. She is guilty of the deaths of the weakest and most defenseless brothers of Jesus Christ.”

As one German theologian put it, “In 1933 [at the age of 27] Bonhoeffer was almost alone in his opinions; he was the only one who considered solidarity with the Jews, especially with non-Christian Jews, to be a matter of such importance as to obligate the Christian churches to risk massive conflict with the state...a risk which could threaten their very existence.”

During the two years he was imprisoned (1943-45, without trial), he wrote a good deal of the theology that he has become best known for. A central question for Bonhoeffer during those terrible

and tragic years, was simply this, "Who is Jesus Christ for us today?" He wrote of a "religionless world," of a "world come of age," of a world in which God had become limited to what we don't know. He called for a "this-worldly christianity" in which Christians would be actively involved in shaping history according to the gospel of Jesus in a life characterized by courage in social justice, discipline, and a willingness to enter into solidarity with those who suffer and are oppressed.

His life and thought remain immensely relevant to our day and time. In Bonhoeffer's Germany, being a good German and being a good Christian were one and the same. Among other things, his life and thought stand as a timely witness against "Christian Nationalism."

All are invited to engage Bonhoeffer's life and thought by participating in any or all of the three upcoming events in May and June:

o **Thursday, May 21 @ 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. in the Pilgrim Room.**

A showing of the documentary film "Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Memories and Perspectives"

o **Thursday, May 28 @ 6:00 - 7:15 p.m. in the Pilgrim Room.**

(Facilitated by David J. Wood) A conversation on a short biography of Bonhoeffer, *Dietrich Bonhoeffer: A Spoke in the Wheel*, by Renate Wind. Copies available for \$10 during Coffee Hour or through the Church Office.

o **Wednesday, June 3 @ 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. in the Pilgrim Room.**

A presentation by Bonhoeffer Scholar, Andrew Root, "Bearing Witness in a Time of Christian Nationalism: An Introduction to the Life and Thought of Dietrich Bonhoeffer."

I look forward to our timely engagement with Bonhoeffer's life and thought.

In June and July we will be treated to public lectures by two other current scholars: Bill McKibben and Alan Lightman. (see next page)

Peace,
David

Coming in June and July

More events to inspire conversation

Open to the Public

Held in our sanctuary

ALL ARE WELCOME

Public Lecture

by theologian and
acclaimed author

Andrew Root

Wed, June 3

6:00-8:00pm

**Bearing Witness in a Time
of Christian Nationalism:**

An Introduction to the Life and Thought of Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Public Lecture

by acclaimed
environmentalist and author

Bill McKibben

Author of the bestselling book,
*Here Comes the Sun: A Last Chance for the Climate
and a Fresh Chance for Civilization*

**“Back to the Wall,
Face to the Sun”**

Thurs, June 18

7:00pm

Public Lecture

by acclaimed
MIT humanities professor,
physicist and author

Alan Lightman

Author of the bestselling book,
*Einstein's Dreams, Searching for Stars on an Island in
Maine and The Miraculous from the Material.*

**“The Miraculous
from the
Material”**

Wed., July 8

7:00pm

JUSTICE & WITNESS

LGBTQ+ Action Group Update

Calling all FCC Chefs (translation: any and all of the wonderful cooks, female or male, in the congregation)! Our next treat for the youth and staff at The Landing Place (TLP) will be homemade granola bars. **Please consider joining in this fun project! Imagine the excitement of being showered with homemade granola bars! What a treat for the youth!**

How can I participate, you might ask? Please sign up for the project in the Mayflower Room on Sunday morning or email Zella Walker (walkerzd1@gmail.com). All participants are asked to prepare a granola bar recipe of their choice. **Dates to leave your granola bars in the church kitchen will be Friday, May 22 and Sunday, May 24.** Containers designated for the granola bars will be in the grey refrigerator as well as on top of the stoves.

Most granola bar recipes make 10-12 bars. Please package the bars two to a snack-size storage bag (if sticky, wrap the bars separately in plastic wrap). Storage bags will be available in the church kitchen for pick up beginning Sunday, May 10. Additionally, in the kitchen participants can, also, pick up notes intended for one to be placed in each bag. Each note will have written a short, inspirational phrase along with “Best Wishes” and a place for contributing chefs to sign their first name. Jennifer Wood is working on a design for the notes. Any suggestions of inspirational phrases are welcome.

The Landing Place is the youth services arm of Homeworthy, located in downtown Rockland. “TLP youth center provides services for highly resilient young people who are at high-risk of experiencing different types of adversity- shelter and food insecurity, personal conflicts, and other barriers that make it difficult for youth to succeed.” (homeworthy.com) Routinely, TLP has between 40-50 youth who attend the “After School Club Drop In”.

Big thanks to those of you who made contributions to TLP from the FCC Donations Wish List.

* On the **Wish List for April/May** are **prom dresses (all sizes); hygiene supplies (male and female); flashlights and extra batteries; bike locks; Connect Four and Stratego games; guitar amp.**

* **Art and school supplies are an on-going request.** These supplies, new or used, are available for use at the **TLP After School Club** offered five afternoons a week.

DONATIONS MAY BE PLACED IN A BIN IN THE CHURCH OFFICE.

LGBTQ+ Action Group Co-Chairpersons:
Ben Perry and Zella Walker



From Matt Mainster
Minister of Music
matt@camdenucc.org

Join the Sanctuary Choir or the Choral Bells

This year's Easter service was so uplifting for me! Despite the rain and gloom outside our windows, the energy *inside* was palpable from start to finish. In particular, with the aid of the wonderful Midcoast Brass Quintet and our talented section leaders Sierra Lary, Mary Fairfield, Susan Weber, Hayden Sears, and James Cook, our Sanctuary Choir shared a joyous and triumphant performance of Handel's "Alleluia" from *Coronation Anthems*. I couldn't have been more pleased with the whole experience. And if you liked what you heard, we still have one more chance for you to sing with us this season—a wonderful 4-hand-piano accompanied anthem on "My Hope is Built on Nothing Less" which we will rehearse on Monday, May 11th and sing on Sunday, May 17th. Email me at matt@camdenucc.org with any interest, and I'll be sure to send you the music and practice information!

The bells have been knocking it out of the park as well this year, and yes—we *absolutely* have room for more ringers. We've had a few well-earned retirements the past year or so that have lowered our numbers. Still, I couldn't be prouder of both choirs—they may be small, but boy are they *mighty*! It's always a pleasure working with everyone. Just a reminder: Both choirs now rehearse one Monday evening a month (not including summer)—and you can sing/ring as many or as few months as you like. There is no full-time commitment required.

And in other news, please keep an eye on our Friends of Music concert calendar (posted around the church and on our website).



Next Friends of Music Concert:
Sunday, May 31 at 4 pm
PENOBSCOT BAY RINGERS
~ A BENEFIT FOR THE SHIELDS FUND ~

Phishing: Don't Take the Bait

Phishing is when you get emails, texts, or calls that seem to be from companies or people you know. But they're actually from scammers. They want you to click on a link or give personal information (like a password) so that they can steal your money or identity, and maybe get access to your computer.



We are seeing more phishing emails in the office; are you seeing them too? You might be asked for gift cards, or for names & addresses in the directory, or to answer a question.

**This is how to best identify a scam email:
LOOK AT THE SENDER'S EMAIL ADDRESS....**

It will not be someone you know or expect to hear from.



Shields Fund Administrator

Jeanne Denny

A Busy Time for Shields

With the moratorium on payment for Central Maine Power (CMP) ending in April, the applications for CMP are pouring in; many of the applicants are requesting payments to prevent disconnection. In addition, there are fewer financial resources to meet the growing number of financial challenges. In the past, Knox County has had numerous churches willing to contribute to funds to assist families and while there are still churches making contributions, the size of these gifts is smaller. Today, I learned that Lakeview Presbyterian, Homeworthy, and Shields are the ones primarily supporting the families living in Knox County. So far, the Shields Fund has reviewed 25 applications and gifted more than \$11,093 for the month of April!

As we move into the spring, we on the Shields Committee hope you will consider donating to the Shields Fund in May. It has proven to be a tough winter and we ask you to remember all your good fortune and help others in need. Perhaps you will consider donating to honor your mother and other significant women in your life. Perhaps you will consider donating to honor the new hope and renewal in the air with the arrival of spring. Whatever motivates you to open your heart and your wallet, please follow the inspiration!

My mother always said I had an ability to stretch a dollar and get the best value for my money. While this winter was lean, most of my money went to fuel oil and snow plowing, and vet expenses (2 emergency surgeries in one month). I was able to pay those expenses, buy groceries, and purchase medications. I shudder to think how families on fixed incomes of less than \$1000 a month are getting by. In my younger days, my friends in social work practice used to make jokes about eating cat food to get by in our aging years— it isn't funny anymore!

A couple of family situations stand out in my mind this month (all of the names of these families have been changed to maintain confidentiality):

- Sally Jenkins supports a young family of 5. Sally is the sole breadwinner for the family and recently delivered her third child. Sally is on unpaid maternity leave at this time so there is no income. In addition, her husband does not have his green card so the family is currently living in fear of possible deportation. Shields paid rent and CMP expenses for the family.
- George Wentworth has seasonal employment as crew on a lobster boat. Currently he is without income as he waits for the season to begin. He is a single dad raising his daughter; his ex-wife lives in another state and he is traveling there to keep his daughter in touch with her mother. Following the Maine policy which prevents disconnection, he has not paid his CMP bill this winter as he strives to sustain a stable home environment for his daughter.
- John Sweetser and his family work hard to sustain a stable financial environment. The family strives to develop an independent carpentry business but while pioneering this venture, Mary Beth is seeking employment to support the family and John accepts all the work he can, but the family struggles to sustain stability and have applied for rent relief to keep their 4 children housed.
- As you well know, I can supply endless examples of families struggling to sustain housing, stable work, food, medications, etc. Keeping cars in drivable condition is getting harder, making transportation to work more challenging.

Please consider a donation to Shields to help Shields and FCC help the residents of Knox County and Lincolnville.

With warm regards,
Jeanne

Shields Committee: Natalie Ward (chair), Deb Endl, Jean Forest (public relations), David Giansiracusa (fundraising), David Jones, Rich Stuart, Zella Walker (thank you/donations), and Jeanne Denny (administrator).

DO YOU MEMORIZE POEMS ANY MORE?

Our ancestors did, maybe you did as a child. Now, if we want to find a poem, we just look online.....

Our member Mary Sue Bishop tells this story: Her grandmother, at age 95, could easily recite the Ten Commandments in poetry form. The grandmother was a lighthouse keeper's daughter out on Ram Island, and was taught this as a child in 1894; Mary Sue says that her grandmother never saw it in print.

Ten Commandments

- I Thou no God shall have but me
- II Before no Idol, bend thy knee
- III Take not the name of God in vain.
- IV Dare not the Sabbath Day profane.

- V Give both thy parents honor due.
- VI Take heed that ye no murder do.
- VII Refrain from words or deeds unclean
- VIII Steal not, though thou be poor or mean.
- IX. Make not a willful lie or love it
- X. Want not thy neighbor's, do not covet.



Hearing Assist Follow Up Meeting

Dear Friends,

We are pleased to announce a follow up session with Dr. Angela Loavenbruck. The purpose of this session will be to get your input on Auracast as the hearing assist solution for the sanctuary. During this session, we will have a demonstration of Auracast technology and will be able to test several sample hearing aids.

We will also be joined by Geoff Parker, our local audiovisual expert, and John Beaudette from the Henderson Company, who will be providing the sample hearing aids and assisting with the equipment demonstration.

Meeting Details

Date: Thursday, May 7

Time: 11:00 a.m.

Location: Church Sanctuary

Angela Loavenbruck has provided a list of questions for congregants to consider prior to the Hearing Assist meeting on Thursday.

- 1) are they experiencing difficulties during church functions?
- 2) What causes them difficulty - sermons, music, conversations and/or discussion activities in the sanctuary?
- 3) are there other areas of the church where they experience difficulty?
- 4) Are they currently wearing hearing aids?
- 5) Are their hearing aids bluetooth compatible?
- 6) Do their hearing aids have a t-coil ?
- 7) Are their current hearing aids Auracast ready?

Please feel free to reach out with any questions by emailing me at <mailto:robertedmonds945@msn.com> or calling 612 987 3229.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Warm regards,
Rob Edmonds



News
from Heavenly Threads
James Cook, Manager



**Opportunity in a Time of Difficulty:
Summer Non-Profit Internship at Heavenly Threads**

Not an Easy Time to be Young

Many of us remember the promise to young Americans of past generations: stay in school or enter a skilled trade, and a stable job with a living wage will be available, with a career ladder to climb from the entry level on up.

That promise has never been entirely fulfilled in practice, with women, disabled Americans, and racial and religious minorities making advances but facing persistent discrimination in hiring and promotion. Over the last two years, however, this promise has ruptured for all young Americans.

Getting Even an Entry-Level Job is Harder

- According to a recent analysis by the Randstad corporation, the number of entry-level job postings have plummeted by 29 percentage points since January 2024.
- Competition for remaining jobs is brutal. A 2026 ZipRecruiter report finds that 16% of recent college graduates submit more than 20 applications before receiving a single job offer, a much higher rate than in previous years.

Climbing the Career Ladder is Harder Still

- According to a study by Burning Glass Technologies, 48% of young entry-level workers without a college degree failed to move to a better job in their first five years of employment. Instead, this large group moved from one low-paying, entry-level job to another.
- The Federal Reserve's underemployment rate measures the share of young American college graduates doing work that doesn't use their skills. This share rose to 42.5% by the end of 2025.

Helping Young Folks Take Their First Step: Heavenly Threads Summer Non-Profit Internship Program

We can't erase these challenges at the local level, but we can help young people prepare to meet them. Here at Heavenly Threads, we are delighted to offer a new summer non-profit internship. Interns will volunteer for one shift a week at Heavenly Threads for six weeks, rotating through different positions in the shop to gain experience in different facets of our charitable operation. Interns will also cooperate with our manager to identify and execute a creative project in an area of professional interest to them, such as marketing, social media management, design, analysis, reporting, or inventory. Interns will complete the program not only with valuable non-profit experience, but also with a reference and a letter of recommendation detailing their skills and contributions, and a track record of charitable volunteering that is valuable in college and job applications.

No experience is required to join, just an interest and commitment to participate. Those interested in participating in the summer non-profit internship program should call the Heavenly Threads Thrift Shop at 207-236-3203 or send an email to heavenlythreads@camdenucc.org to schedule an appointment.

James Cook, Heavenly Threads Manager

~ a few current selections at Heavenly Threads ~



A flip scooter for toddlers!



SPECIAL EASTER APPEAL CONTINUES

Dear Members and Friends,

Easter is a season for rebirth, renewal, and rejoicing. It is a time when our hearts and souls are enlivened by the hope that resounds from Easter and a fresh realization of God's unimaginable love for us. The Easter message of love, redemption, and new beginnings is universal—and it has the power to transcend cultural, racial, national, and political boundaries.

Please consider a special donation to the Easter appeal. Your contribution will support ongoing outreach to our community and efforts to make our old, historic church more energy efficient.

In light of the extraordinary circumstances our world is experiencing due to war, political unrest, and financial uncertainty, we are reminded of the significance and power of community. **Many of you have expressed over and over again how much you cherish the unity, support, and love found here.** And every week you are reminded that you are not alone, but are connected through faith in Christ to each other in the family of our church.

Your special donation to the Easter appeal is critical. **Not only will you be supporting outreach in your community – vital services and supports for neighbors and friends, but you will also be investing in the future sustainability of our church home.** Among other activities, we will shortly be replacing one of our two boilers with a much more efficient and effective one. The boiler project alone will cost \$22,000, and is a much-needed step toward sustainability and responsible stewardship of our resources. Please make your gift today by cash or check in the offering plate or via the donation page on the church website - <https://camdenucc.org>.

You can also scan this QR code to make your gift immediately. **Choose Offering Plate/General Fund.**



May the promise and celebration of Easter fill your hearts with peace, joy, and love.

Thank you so much for your generosity and care.

camden
area
CHRISTIAN

food
pantry

Requesting donations

FOR MAY

BOXES OF MAC & CHEESE

**Please leave in the box across from the office, and
thank you for helping.**

**Hearty congratulations to Marian White
on her 100th birthday May 1st!**

MAY BIRTHDAYS

5/1	Marian White
5/5	Ann Bresnahan
5/6	Susan Weber
	Ed Weber
	Wendy Wickenden
5/9	Peter Palermo
5/10	Jenna VanRyn
5/11	Marian Rector
5/12	Loie Hanscom
5/13	Pam Brown
	Craig Wells
	Mark Bergelin
5/19	Sally Fernald
	Ben Perry
5/21	Roberta Walker
5/23	Dyane Mohr
5/26	Rick Bresnahan
5/30	Mike Fletcher



If your birthday is not listed please contact the office.

FIRST
CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH
CAMDEN, MAINE
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

First Congregational Church
55 Elm Street
Camden, ME 04843



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF CAMDEN
An Open & Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

Inclusive. Inspired. Involved.

**We are an Open and Affirming Congregation embracing diversity
and affirming the worth and dignity of every person.**

We welcome everyone to share in all aspects of our church life.

To CONTACT US:

Call the Church Office at 207.236.4821, Monday through Friday, 8:30-3:30 pm

E-mail the Church Office at churchoffice@camdenucc.org

Check out our website: www.camdenucc.org