

# DAY'S FERRY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

## *Our Local Community*

Day's Ferry is a picturesque village beside the Kennebec River. It is part of the town of Woolwich (pop. 3,000), located in the Midcoast region of Maine. The village, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, was settled in 1740 and served as a center of shipbuilding and farming for many years.

Woolwich is located 35 miles north of Portland (pop. 67,000) with easy access to the Portland International Jetport and daily train/bus service to Boston. *Bon Appétit* magazine named Portland its 2018 Restaurant City of the Year (following in the footsteps of Washington, D.C., and Chicago). Midcoast Maine is a four-season destination for recreation, including popular beaches at Reid State Park and Popham Beach State Park, summer activities (boating/hiking/camping), spectacular fall foliage and winter sports.

Directly across the Kennebec River from Woolwich is Bath (pop. 8,500). Woolwich is part of the state's first unified school district (Regional School Unit 1 or RSU 1) serving Bath and four surrounding towns. The Woolwich Central School (K-8) was rebuilt in 2012 and serves about 300 students. Morse High School in Bath is being replaced with a brand-new facility expected to open in 2021. The Bath Area YMCA provides state-of-the-art fitness facilities at two sites.

Ten miles south of Woolwich is Brunswick (pop. 20,000), home of the newly expanded Mid Coast Hospital, which recently formed a clinical affiliation with Maine Medical Center in Portland. Brunswick is also the home of highly respected Bowdoin College, which offers many cultural opportunities to the local population (museums, concerts, lectures). There are numerous museums, libraries, theaters and centers of learning located within an easy drive.

Like the rest of Maine, the average age of the population in our Midcoast region is projected to increase over the next decade with the "over 65" portion growing to 25%. Our region has a higher level of educational attainment and higher household income than Maine as a whole. Our congregation reflects these demographic trends.



*Day's Ferry Congregational Church & Johnson Hall*



## Who We Are

The Day's Ferry Congregational Church has served the local community since 1833. Today, we have a faithful membership of about 70 adults, with average attendance of 35-40 at Sunday worship. Our members live in Woolwich and surrounding towns including Bath, Brunswick and Wiscasset.

Our multi-talented congregation includes professionals, educators, artisans, executives and active retirees, who are all willing to share their skills and time for the greater good of our community. We quietly relish independent thinking, higher learning and putting our ideas into cooperative, effective action.

We are a caring and involved congregation, seeking to respond to new members, as well as our established congregation, in our missions of service and outreach. We seek a minister to help us continue to grow spiritually and encourage new members who will add energy, fresh ideas and strength to our congregation.

Our community is characterized by its wide variety of faith experiences and sense of kinship with others. We welcome anyone walking through our church doors. The congregation adopted an Open and Affirming Statement in 2017.

Members of the congregation carry out virtually all aspects of the day-to-day operation of the church. Although we are not a large group, we are willing to contribute our time and talents to the life of the church, including maintaining our physical facilities, caring for each other's needs, and supporting a generous outreach program that serves our local neighbors and the larger world.



*From top: Children's moment during worship, annual concert by students from the Bowdoin International Music Festival, July 2019*





## History

In colonial New England, a town could not be established until it built a church and engaged a pastor. In 1757, the Nequasset Church was built and a minister employed enabling Woolwich to be established in 1759. The church in Day's Ferry was built in 1833 at the instigation of Rev. Jacob Goss as the "West Woolwich" branch of the Nequasset Church.

For more than 100 years, the two churches shared a minister. In 1951 services at the two churches were limited to summers only. In 1958, with the support of a trust fund, the Day's Ferry church was re-opened year-round. From 1967 to 1987, our church

was operated jointly and shared a minister with the North Woolwich Methodist Church.

In 1987, a group of parishioners voted to establish an independent church in Day's Ferry and engaged its first settled pastor, Rev. Stanley Johnson. One of the first congregational decisions (recommended by Rev. Johnson) was to build a parish hall, which was designed, built and decorated largely by the hands of the



congregation. On April 15, 1990, the ribbon was cut for Easter breakfast in the new parish hall. The hall was named for Rev. Johnson upon his retirement in 2004.

The wood-framed clapboard church features large windows and a prominent bell tower. The interior has a single level sanctuary and choir with a central aisle and wooden pews. Johnson Hall contains a large meeting room, kitchen, study and restroom on the main level. The lower level of Johnson Hall includes classroom space, mechanical facilities and a second restroom. A parking lot and updated septic system were added in 2000. The entire facility is maintained in excellent condition, aided by regular volunteer work days.



*From top: The church circa 1925, entering Day's Ferry, the crew for spring 2019 work day*

## Our Mission in the Community

Our purpose, stated in our bylaws, is to: “establish opportunities for followers of Jesus, the Christ, to gather for worship, fellowship, study, outreach and service.”

Our outreach program maintains long-term relationships in the local community. We have supported the Bath Area Food Bank for many years—providing regular staffing and fundraising. A church member was honored by Maine’s governor in 2018 as “Volunteer of the Year” for his over 20 years of service to the food banks in our Midcoast Region.



The congregation is also a long-time supporter of Habitat for Humanity, participating both in home-building and fundraising efforts. Our small church has often been one of the largest contributors of funds to the annual walk. Recently, our local HFH chapter awarded its “2018 Executive Director’s Award” to a church member, recognizing her many years of fundraising efforts for the organization.

Last year the church began hosting Red Cross blood drives. In 2019, we raised our commitment from twice a year to three times a year. Our drives have been filled to capacity and cover an area of our region previously unserved by a blood drive.

The congregation also participates in a special program to support three local families during the Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons. Working with the Salvation Army to identify families in need, parishioners provide food baskets for both holidays, in addition to fulfilling gift requests for all children in the families. This is a popular initiative in our congregation with the sign-up sheets often filled immediately. Last year the estimated value of the Christmas and Thanksgiving food and gift baskets was \$2,000.



*From top: Staffing the food bank (March 2019), our walkers in the Habitat Walk (May 2019), knitting a prayer shawl*



Our prayer shawl group meets twice a month and knits about 15 shawls a year, which are blessed and donated to the local hospice and to friends needing comfort.

We also make cash donations to local organizations providing help with housing, medical treatment and other social services. These organizations include Tedford Shelter, Bath Back Pack Program, New Hope for Women, Oasis Free Clinics, American Refugee Committee and Children's Hunger Relief Fund. In 2018, the total value of our outreach efforts approached 15% of our budget (or approximately \$12,500).

## ***Caring for Each Other***

Midcoast Maine is a highly attractive retirement area. Many in our congregation have chosen to move here in recent years. Area attractions include the scenic beauty, neighborly population, non-urban atmosphere, and, importantly, the myriad of opportunities for civic involvement and educational and cultural enrichment.

To address the needs of our congregation we sponsor a lively, intellectually stimulating, weekly adult Bible study program, a bi-monthly prayer shawl knitting group, a Lenten meditation series, and regular book discussions (recent books include Atul Gawande's *Being Mortal*, Willa Cather's *My Antonia*, and, most recently, *The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*).

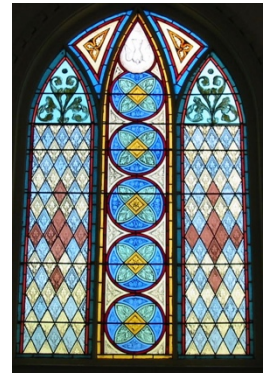
With an older congregation, we pay special attention to the access and transportation needs of our members. We have recently modified our facilities to improve access in all weather. The congregation works to ensure that all those needing transportation to services, other church activities, or to medical appointments will have a ride.



*Clockwise from top left: Coffee hour, book discussion, weeding our garden, Easter morning breakfast*

## Worship

Our worship style is traditional with scripture-based sermons by the pastor and sacred music supplied by our talented music director, Dr. Paul Althouse. Dr. Althouse, a professor of music for 40 years at Connecticut College, has recruited and developed an enthusiastic choir of approximately a dozen, with added participants at holidays. We have three superior instruments (a newly restored 1890 Wilcox & White reed organ, a Rodgers electronic organ, and a Yamaha baby grand piano) which are all used regularly to enhance worship. Congregants identify music as an important reason they attend services.



*Clockwise from top right: Stained glass window, the tenors, Sunday flowers, Dr. Althouse at the piano*

Our typical service includes greeters at the door, flowers in the sanctuary, and a well-attended coffee hour following the service—all provided by church members. During each service, the congregation recognizes its “concerns and celebrations” on a personal, community and world-at-large basis.

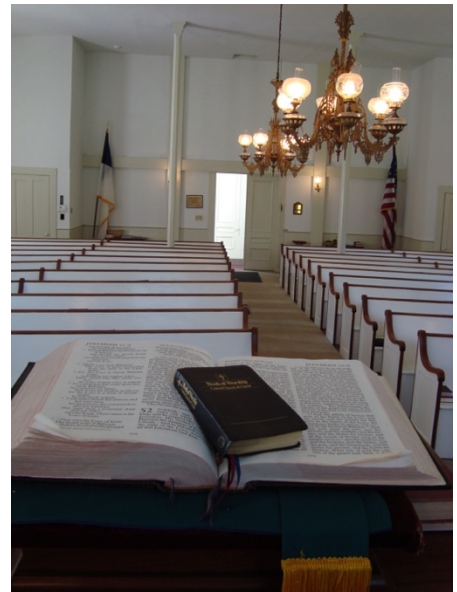
Special services during the year include the popular Christmas Eve candlelight service and the Tenebrae Service on Maundy Thursday. Church traditions include a Christmas tree expedition, Advent luncheon and carol sing, Easter breakfast, and annual fundraising auction. We also participate in the Town of Woolwich’s Memorial Day and Veterans Day services.



*Left to right: Christmas tree expedition, Christmas Eve service*







*Left to right: Christmas Eve 2017, view from the pulpit*

## ***Invitation to Our Next Minister***

If you join us, you will find yourself embraced by our friendly, self-reliant, active, service-oriented membership. We offer “extravagant hospitality” and an intellectually curious congregation committed to making a difference in our community.

We do not expect our minister to do the work for us, but to help find our path to grow in spirit and service to each other and the community at large. Important qualities for our next minister include:

- Listening to and understanding what the congregation seeks, and suggesting ideas to help us accomplish the work we want to do
- Being approachable with the ability to counsel, educate, and inspire
- Providing intellectually stimulating sermons focused on practical living for followers of Christ that challenge us to grow spiritually
- Offering compassion with the ability to recognize and address the pastoral needs of the congregation, including regular visitation to the ill or absent among us

## ***Compensation***

The Day’s Ferry Congregational Church offers a total compensation package that meets UCC guidelines for a half-time ministerial position. No parsonage is available. The compensation package can be tailored to minimize tax consequences and coordinate with the benefits of a spouse or partner.



*Left to right: Preparing for a laity service, the communion table, recent baptism*

## ***Key Websites***

### Art/Culture

Bowdoin International Music Festival  
Maine Maritime Museum  
Maine State Music Theatre

[www.bowdoinfestival.org](http://www.bowdoinfestival.org)  
[www.mainemaritimemuseum.org](http://www.mainemaritimemuseum.org)  
[www.msmt.org](http://www.msmt.org)

### Community Services

Mid Coast Hospital  
Bath Area YMCA

[www.midcoasthealth.com](http://www.midcoasthealth.com)  
[www.bathymca.org](http://www.bathymca.org)

### Education

Bowdoin College  
Midcoast Senior College  
Regional School Unit 1

[www.bowdoin.edu](http://www.bowdoin.edu)  
[www.midcoastseniorcollege.org](http://www.midcoastseniorcollege.org)  
[www.rsu1.org](http://www.rsu1.org)

### Libraries

Curtis Memorial Library  
Patten Free Library

[www.curtislibrary.com](http://www.curtislibrary.com)  
[www.patten.lib.me.us](http://www.patten.lib.me.us)

### Charitable Organizations

Bath Area Food Bank  
Bath Back Pack Program  
Habitat for Humanity—7 Rivers Maine  
New Hope for Women  
Oasis Free Clinics  
Tedford Housing

[www.bathfoodbank.org](http://www.bathfoodbank.org)  
[www.bathareabackpack.org](http://www.bathareabackpack.org)  
[www.habitat7rivers.org](http://www.habitat7rivers.org)  
[www.newhopeforwomen.org](http://www.newhopeforwomen.org)  
[www.oasisfreeclinics.org](http://www.oasisfreeclinics.org)  
[www.tedfordhousing.org](http://www.tedfordhousing.org)



***More scenes of life at  
Day's Ferry Congregational Church***





