

## ~Staying Connected~

\*A letter from the desk of Pastor Steve-Orono United Methodist Church\*

### -Week of November 23, 2009-

Recently I happened to be in front of our local school when the kids were being released, and noticed how many of them were actually bent over from the weight of the backpacks they were carrying. It seems to me they must arrive home with sore backs from their heavy loads. While witnessing this, I was reminded of an experience from a couple of years ago when I was at our grandchildren's house. As Bailey (then a fourth grader) arrived home from school that day she handed-off her backpack to me, and I was amazed at how heavy it was! I wondered at the time what could possibly make her backpack so heavy....rocks, maybe? At the urging of her mother, Bailey started to empty her backpack and discovered there were many things that didn't need to be in it, such as old books, some computer games, a bunch of pencils that hadn't even been sharpened yet, some play dough, and yes...even a few rocks! Once she sorted through what she did and did not need to carry and placed the necessary items back in her pack, her load was much lighter and easier to bear.

I wonder, do you ever feel as though the load you are carrying is too heavy? Perhaps we should take a cue from Bailey and do some sorting-out. Are there items in our emotional and spiritual "backpacks" which are no longer necessary, perhaps something we have been carrying along which is simply taking-up space and while draining our valuable energy? What do we need to carry, and what can we eliminate? For some, taking an inventory of the load being carried will easily point toward things which can be taken out. For others, this process might not be as easily accomplished. Whether the task is easy or not, it is important to examine our loads often and pray for the wisdom, discipline and strength to release those things which keep us from carrying a load that enable us to walk along our journeys of faith without getting "sore souls."

## ~Sharing Scripture~

"Come to me all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

(Matthew 11:28)

~Looking Ahead~

\*Many thanks to all of you who have completed and passed-in your "investment sheets." To those of you who have not yet completed and passed in your form, please do so sometime soon so we will be able to compile a list of folks who are willing to help with ministry "chores" around the church during the year ahead, and so that we will be able to complete our budget picture for 2010.

\*The adult study group is continuing with its Revelation study, which is being well-received. The study is easy to follow, and has been great in helping us understand what can be a rather intimidating book. Feel free to join us when you can (Sunday mornings at 9:30am.)

\*If you would like to try participating in the bell choir, please let Barb know. And by the way, playing a bell does not mean you are a "ding-a-ling" (sorry, couldn't resist.)

\*The next "Cluster Group" meeting will take place on Saturday, December 5<sup>th</sup> (7:30am) at the Grace United Methodist Church in Bangor.

\*Mark Sunday, December 20, 4pm on your calendar! The combined choirs of the United Methodist churches of Orono and Old Town, along with the choir of the Federated Church of Stillwater will perform a Christmas musical program featuring piano, organ, other instruments, soloists, congregational singing, and music from the choir. An offering will be taken for Crossroads Ministry, refreshments will follow.

\*Our Christmas Eve service will take place at 7:30pm December 24<sup>th</sup>.

*\*For more about the life of our church, including the latest edition of "The Spire" newsletter, visit our website at [www.oronoumc.com](http://www.oronoumc.com).*

**-Blessings and peace to you and yours-**  
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