

**Big Moose Community Chapel  
Committee Reports  
(as of 8/20/2025)**

**Balsam Bee:**

The next Bee is scheduled for Saturday, July 25, 2026, with much enthusiasm on the committee for holding the event at the new time of 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. based on a suggestion by Lorraine Schunck. We'll follow the usual set-up of grinding, stuffing, and sewing downstairs and, weather permitting, sewing tables also on the Chapel lawn. We're looking forward to 2 new pillow designs from Loretta Lepkowski and Kristin Schunck and anticipate the pillow price holding steady at \$20 each. We're also exploring the option of restuffing old pillows guests bring for a lesser price--Chapel pillows only. And there's a possibility of coordinating with a Sagamore volunteer group for a limited number of Sagamore pillows. Costs and other details TBD. Given the Bee's new time, we ask that nothing be put on the Chapel calendar for July 24 or 25 to accommodate early grinding and other Bee preparations.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary Moore, Chair

**Bazaar:**

We had a wonderful Bazaar this year! Thank you all so much for your amazing hard work, time and treasures that made it such a success.

This year's Bazaar had a few new features. Penny Bianco supplied musical entertainment, we had the quilt and pack basket raffles, as well as all the usual booths/areas: Adirondack Charms, Holiday, Olga's incredible Cloths, Hungry Moose Cafe, Crafts, Children's Games, Clothing, Silent Auction, Baked Goods, Calendar's and Cookbooks, Chapel Events table and much more.

I want to thank our wonderful greeters, our set-up and tear-down crews and our parking lot czars. They were all terrific. The coordination of the Bazaar would not be possible without these vital roles.

We served 467 members of the public as well as all the hard-working volunteers who participated this year. We are working to get a completed budget prepared but that will take a bit more time. But you all should be incredibly proud of the success of this event.

Please welcome, if you didn't get the chance to be at church on August 3rd, Michael Eastwood, who will be my co-chair for the 2027 Bazaar.

Thank you again for all you do for the chapel and for the Bazaar. See you all again for our next Bazaar on August 7th, 2027!

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary “Kiki” White, Chair

### **Coffee Hour Hosts and Ushers:**

A big thank you everyone who stepped up to either serve as an usher or help host the coffee hour this summer. It was great to see some new faces helping to make the experience of worship at Big Moose Chapel more enjoyable! And we couldn't get by without those dedicated members who do one or the other (or both) every summer! A special thanks also to those who help with table set-up, carrying coffee urns and clean-up to help things go more smoothly.

Respectfully submitted,  
Phyllis Sanzone & Linda Martin, Co-Chairs

### **Discretionary:**

No Spending in the last month

Respectfully submitted,  
Judy Bean

### **Facilities:**

Projects accomplished at the Chapel since September, 2024 include completing the repointing of the main façade of the building; installing 200 amp service including a new power pole, electrical entry and breaker box; refinishing the floors in the side room and front of the sanctuary; installing video and sound for spillover seating in the side room; a replacement dehumidifier in the kitchen; reconfiguring our parking lot to make more efficient use of that space and improve access for people with difficulty walking; power washing and mortar repairs to the stairs behind the chapel; replacing all the incandescent bulbs in the sanctuary; and installing a new water line from the well to the rear of the building. All safety upgrades recommended by the fire marshal's inspection last summer including replacing the water heater have been completed except for installing carbon monoxide detectors, which are on order. Tree trimming on both sides of the Chapel and leveling the walkway near the side entrance are scheduled to take place within the next few weeks.

The Manse has required relatively little work other than routine maintenance this year. However, the quality and reliability of the Manse water supply demands attention. We are in the process of assessing our options and hope to have a plan and cost estimate for a major upgrade to present to the Finance Committee as part of the 2026 budget formulation process. We will also need to address the condition of the Manse windows fairly soon. They are all original, wooden, and showing their age.

Many thanks to the diligent committee members and other volunteers who have stepped forward to help manage our big projects, as well as other necessary equipment purchases and small fixes far too numerous to mention.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dan Conable, Chair

### **Fellowship:**

Teen night was held July 8th at the Manse. Weston and Jenny hosted 14 teens. Fun night of food, games, and fellowship.

2nd annual Bingo night was held August 7th at the BMPOA Rec. Center. 36 in attendance with a special fleece blanket made and donated by Mary Moore. Many families attended and enjoyed playing Bingo as well as popcorn and beverages. Over 40 personal hygiene items were collected at Bingo night. These were dropped off at the Old Forge Library to help with their 24 pantry that they maintain. In discussion with Library Director Linda Weal she had mentioned the high need for these items.

Respectfully submitted,  
Joanne Carey and Betsy Hadden, Co-Chairs

### **Finance:**

The last meeting of the Finance Committee was on July 6th. We dealt with a number of issues including:

- How to deal with undesignated gifts of over \$1000 (they are few in number and go into Chapel operations)
- How to get an independent review of the Chapel's Financial Statements (a work in progress)
- Restricted gifts and special appeals (there are accounting restrictions that limit our ability to freely ask for these, so we developed a number of suggestions to achieve the same level of support)
- Donor Privacy (also a work in progress)
- Development of a donor database enabling the sending of year-end letter to donors giving over \$250 via checks (starting in 2026)
- A very preliminary discussion of revisiting the policy of a 50-50 split between operations and Outreach for Sunday plate donations.

Since then, there have been a number of discussions about Fundraising strategy in general, and we have received some valuable material from Weston. This is a subject we will be pursuing in the coming months.

Financial reports will be submitted by Meridyth Burrows and an update on the Endowments will be sent by Bill Locke.

Respectfully submitted,  
Robin Smith, Chair

### **Flowers:**

Flowers continue to be managed by a team this year: Gayle is the primary contact person, monitors the online requests, payments and ordering of altar flowers. Joan Robinson picks up the arrangements, brings them to the chapel and returns the vases each week. Susie Nettleton created and tends the beautiful outdoor planters. We also have help from other volunteers when needed.

Flowers are provided by Mountain Greenery. Arrangements continue to cost \$60 per vase. This year we added the option to sponsor an outdoor planter. To date all vases and planters have been paid for by donors and only 2 remaining Sundays are open. In the event no flowers are donated we would use the flower budget to purchase a vase.

We continue to work with the webmaster to improve the online request and payment process while maintaining the option to pay by check.

The committee requested a budget of \$1500 to cover Sundays with no donors, delivery charges when flowers can't be picked up, cost of the plants for the outdoor planters and other contingencies. As of July 31, no budgeted funds have been spent.

Respectfully submitted,  
Gayle Stankiewicz and Susie Nettleton, Co-Chairs

### **Gifts and Memorials:**

Due to accounting complexities, the chapel will no longer publish an official "Wish List." Designated gifts are very challenging to account for in the financials, and thus we will discuss with donors the ways in which funds might be used. Know that our facilities committee is interested in replacing the lakeside benches and performing historically appropriate window repairs/replacements at the Manse.

There are two types of pew plaques available: Traditional for \$750 and Double-sized for \$1,500. The size is driven by the wording requested, and the committee will work with you to make best use of the limited pew space. Please contact Katy Beltz with interests. [katybeltz@gmail.com](mailto:katybeltz@gmail.com)

There now a directory notebook in the Narthex for easy location of plaques within the Sanctuary and Memorial Woods.

With our annual Memorial Sunday behind us, throughout the next year we will gather names of those from our BMCC community who pass. Please Contact Sarah Winch at [swinch@comcast.net](mailto:swinch@comcast.net) or Kathryn Orbanek at [kathrynaorbanek@gmail.com](mailto:kathrynaorbanek@gmail.com) with inputs.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kathryn Orbanek, Chair

### **Historian:**

The Chapel's 94th year opened on Fathers' Day in June and will conclude at the end of September. The Bazaar was back as it's now scheduled biannually (as is the Balsam Bee) to everyone's joy on a fine weather day in early August. This was the inaugural year for the Monday Connection held at 5:30 p.m. on six Mondays for informal worship led by the Reverend Weston Williams and other area clergy and church leaders. Reverend Williams came back from his Kentucky home for his third year leading our worship. He and his family lived at the Chapel's Manse (Fern Spring Camp) on Big Moose Lake and joined lake social and church events.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dick Williams, Historian

### **Mathias Music Endowment Fund:**

The Mathias Music Endowment Fund was established in memory of Fred and Cleta Mathias to perpetuate the strong music program of the Big Moose Community Chapel, to encourage talent in the arts, and to subsidize Chapel Musical performances. Since 1999 the fund has supported the studies of 23 students in a wide variety of disciplines in music and the arts and has also subsidized musical performances at Big Moose Community Chapel and other nearby venues.

This summer the chapel was privileged to host a saxophone recital presented by Olivia Phaneuf. The Mathias Endowment committee has been proud to support Olivia's musical journey over the past 10 years – from lessons to undergraduate studies at the Crane School of Music at SUNY Potsdam, to a Master of Music from the University of Texas at Austin, and currently while pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts at the Herb Alpert School of Music at UCLA.

In keeping with the missions of the Fund, this year the committee allocated awards as follows:

- \$1000 to Olivia Phaneuf, of Old Forge and Los Angeles, CA, for Doctor of Musical Arts studies at UCLA in saxophone performance.
- \$1000 to Lily SlatonBarker, of Eagle River, AK, for studies at the University of Oregon toward a Master of Music in Violin Performance.

Respectfully submitted,  
Miyako Schanely, Chair

## **Membership / Database:**

From the outset, this database has been run on Claris FileMaker Pro and is maintained with frequent updates by Richard Widdicombe. Various information is kept including name and home address, home phone, email, lake location if relevant etc. It is possible to tag people in the database to produce a Choir list, Members of Trustees, separate people with only emails or only physical mailing addresses etc. Mailing labels can be produced as well as name tags.

We gather new names usually by people filling out our printed yellow cards. These are either dropped in the collection plate or mailed to the Administrator. There are instructions on the card for people to enroll separately in the electronic email list. These people then may receive weekly informational blasts. This is optional. This system automatically removes any “bounced” emails or emails that are not regularly opened.

The Chapel uses the U.S. Post Office to send several physical mailings each year: two Newsletters, an Annual Appeal letter etc. By doing this, we can regularly detect changes of addresses and update our files. Changes in email addresses are problematic and depend upon people to alert us to their new email.

Although Richard Widdicombe is the keeper of the Master File, a mirror file is kept by Bill Burrows, Jr. Changes and corrections are also contributed by Judy Bean, Mary Moore, Mark Mayer and Susan Taylor.

As of 11 August 2025 there are 380 Family addresses recorded. The database can also be printed as a directory.

Respectfully submitted,  
Richard P. Widdicombe

## **Memorial Services:**

This summer we held a lovely memorial service for Ellen Wilcox on July 12. Weston Williams presided and Jennifer Evans played the organ. The family shared stories, books and mementos of Ellen’s life and brought special items that she had handcrafted. Ellen was so beloved by the community, that the chapel was filled to capacity with an overflow into the side room.

There was a private inurnment for Joyce K Whightman in the Memorial Woods columbarium.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kristina Wikander Love

## **Memorial Woods:**

Projects completed this year:

- Annual Spring clean-up in advance of Memorial Day Weekend
- Capital Project: Leveled and resurfaced walkway from road to entrance gate

Projects currently underway:

- Adding more plaque space (near-term)
- Consideration of where to add additional niches (long-term)
- Increased maintenance of the “Memorial Woods Trail,” and consideration of refurbishing the benches in the woods and adding appropriate trail markers (medium-term)

Statistics for 2025:

- Niches
  - Total Number of Niches: 160
  - # of Available Niches 8/1/2024: 51
  - # of Purchased Niches: 6
  - # of Niches Available 8/1/2025: 45
  - # of Internments: 3
  - Current Price of a Niche: \$1,750
- Plaques
  - Total Number of Plaques: 30
  - # of Available Plaques 8/1/2024: 3
  - # of Plaques Purchased: 3
  - # of Plaques Available 8/1/2025: 0
  - # of Plaques Installed: 3
  - Current Price of a Plaque: \$500

Respectfully submitted,  
Jeff Hadden, Chair

## **Music:**

In keeping with Big Moose tradition, music has played an active role both in our summer worship and in performances for the community. Jennifer Evans and Laura Rankin have provided beautiful organ and piano music for worship, and we are always grateful for our dedicated choir members who have blessed us with their talents throughout the season!

The Summer Music Series consisted of six performances this season, with many perennial favorites. Dan Berggren kicked off our series, followed by Scott Sileo, Fritz Henry, and Peggy Lynn & Dan Duggan. This year’s lineup featured two new headliners: Jay Taylor led an inspiring hymn sing that explored the rich stories and histories behind the tunes and lyrics. Mad Agnes, a trio from Connecticut, closed the music series, thrilling the audience with striking harmonies and stories during their inaugural performance at the chapel. All these concerts drew a broad range of listeners from both within and well beyond our Big Moose Community.

Respectfully submitted,  
Miyako Schanely and Terry McSweeney, Co-Chairs

### **Nominations:**

Members of the Nominating Committee for this year are Sara Burrows (Chair), Bill Locke, Kathryn Orbanek, Joan Robinson, Jerry Rutherford, and Martha Widdicombe. Bill Burrows will join the Committee next year, while Sara Burrows and Kathryn Orbanek will depart.

The Committee corresponded via email and phone calls to discuss potential Trustee candidates for the class of 2028. Criteria for Trustee candidates are: availability, demonstrates hard work and initiative, participation in worship services, and a willingness to help in Chapel and Trustee activities.

Bill Burrows, Betsy Hadden and Larry Schunck are nominated for another term. Terry McSweeney will leave the Board having completed three terms. Also departing the Board are Joanne Carey, Loretta Lepkowski, and Laura Rankin. The Committee nominates the following as new Trustees candidates: Bill Locke, Jerry Rutherford, Elaine Nelson, and Susan Rimato.

The Committee is looking for a Clerk to replace Miyako Schanely who is stepping down from the position. To date, a replacement has not been found.

Nominations for the Board of Trustee Officers are:

- President – Kathryn Orbanek
- Vice President – Judy Bean
- Treasurer – Mark Mayer, with Meridyth Burrows as Bookkeeper
- Assistant Treasurer – Jerry Rutherford

Chapel members have been notified of a proposal to amend the By-Laws to reduce the number of Trustees from 21 to no fewer than 15. The congregation will have the opportunity to vote on the proposal at the Annual Meeting on August 24, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sara Burrows, Chair

### **Outreach:**

The Committee met this summer to review the list of local agencies to be considered for our Outreach allocations. These include:

- Big Moose Fire Department
- Eagle Bay Fire Department
- Old Forge Fire Department
- Inlet Ambulance



- Old Forge Ambulance
- Community Transport Services
- HASCA
- Mercy Flight
- Old Forge Health and Wellness Fund (Health Center & Services )
- Niccolls Memorial Food Pantry
- Old Forge Library Food Pantry
- Fulton Chain Area Food Pantry

Allocations should be finalized before the end of August and disbursements will be distributed immediately.

By keeping our radius locally focused, we are infusing our Outreach into the community that we live in, aiding our neighbors, friends and first responders. The need out there is great, and we are grateful to be able to play a meaningful role in aiding these agencies to service the community.

If you are interested in understanding the ways the money being donated is used, or in joining the committee to have a voice in our Outreach decisions, please contact Bill Keener or Kathryn Orbanek.

Respectfully submitted,  
Bill Keener and Kathryn Orbanek, Co-Chairs

### **Prayer Group:**

The group is privileged to receive requests to share joys and concerns throughout the year. All communication is confidential unless specified to share with the larger Chapel community. The dedicated email is [BigMoosePrayer@gmail.com](mailto:BigMoosePrayer@gmail.com).

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary Moore, Coordinator

### **Public Relations / Publicity:**

The committee has had a full year of print and electronic communication to distribute information about worship and other Chapel events. Deadlines for 2026 are under construction and will be communicated soon, and any questions should be sent to Mary Moore at [BigMooseMittens@gmail.com](mailto:BigMooseMittens@gmail.com). It's been a pleasure to work with Vicky Menand and Susan Taylor to coordinate e-blasts and keep the website supplied with new, attractive, and timely information and likewise with Barb Morgan and Miyako Schanely to supply materials for and to promote Worship, Open Door, and Summer Music events.

The committee appreciates all efforts to meet deadlines as publicity and other schedules need to be planned and met throughout the entire calendar year. All publicity, print, and promotional needs and materials should be submitted to Publicity for proper scheduling, vetting, design,

review, and release to the appropriate outlet. Schedules are key to the work of the committee, and we're grateful for information received in a timely manner. Our media outlets definitely appreciate the Chapel as a good customer in our press release timeliness, thoroughness, and advertising purchases. As always, anything which is unusually newsworthy or serious in nature should be referred directly to Chapel President, as the President is the official Chapel "voice."

The committee appreciates all encouragement we can provide to new visitors to sign up for our mail and/or e-communications. Both are easy to do and let us keep in touch with interested persons throughout the year.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary Moore, Chair

### **Raffles:**

A queen-sized quilt from the Pointed Pine quilters in Old Forge and a handsome adult-sized Adirondack pack basket made by Linda Martin are the two items being raffled in the 2025 season. The raffles started at the Chapel's opening in mid-June and will run until the winners are drawn on the last Sunday in September. Laura and Mike Rankin and Catherine Zuver manned the raffle booth at the Bazaar in early August with their usual enthusiasm, and all help selling raffle tickets when the Chapel is open for other events is greatly appreciated. Thanks also to Linda Keener as our link with the quilters. Judy Bean and Mary Moore will coordinate some thank-you baked goods for the quilters in August.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary Moore, Coordinator

### **Sunday School:**

Sunday School welcomed new and returning Sunday Schoolers and a few parents in 2025. To make the Chapel's "next gen" members an active part of worship, acolytes were selected from Sunday School and trained to light the candelabras at the opening of the worship service as guided by Worship Chair Barb Morgan. On August 10, Linda Martin coordinated Sunday School hosting coffee hour, and all help she received from bakers and servers was greatly appreciated. Continuing Linda's long-standing Sunday School tradition, toddler Bibles are always available as gifts from the Chapel--but given only in consultation with a parent or appropriate adult first.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary Moore, Chair

**Sunshine Committee:**

On behalf of the chapel family, cards were sent to:

7/14/25	Bill and Diane Lux	Thinking of You (grandchild)
7/21/25	Thomas Hartz	Thinking of You
7/26/25	Chuck Michels	Get Well
7/29/25	MaryJo Steinhausen	Thinking of You
7/29/25	Mrs. Jenny Shourds	Get Well (Kentucky)
7/31/25	Mr. and Mrs. Pete Steinhausen	Happy 60th Anniversary
8/6/25	Dan Duggan	Thinking of You
8/6/25	Eve Winter	Get Well (broken ankle)
8/6/25	John and Sara Burrows	Congratulations on birth of grandson
8/6/25	Annette Mahoney	Get Well
8/6/25	Fran Knorr	Thinking of You
8/8/25	Terry McSweeney	Get Well
8/8/25	Alison and Trevor Stameisen	Congratulations on birth of son
8/12/25	Fran Knorr	Happy Birthday
8/12/25	Jeanne Brown	Get Well
8/12/25	Mr. and Mrs. Richard Rosteck	Sympathy for daughter
8/12/25	Caleb Williams	Thinking of you and wishing you well in the Marines

Respectfully submitted,  
Judy Bean

**Volunteer Coordination:**

This year's largest need for volunteers was by far and away the bazaar. There were no known volunteer requests unfilled.

The Event/Volunteer Table was busy. It seems that having chapel events at the table attracts people, and once they are there it seamlessly leads to generating volunteers.

Thanks to all committee members and volunteers making this a successful chapel season.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Steve Schanely, Chair

**Website:**

Working in conjunction with the publicity/communications committee, the Website Committee continued to support Chapel information dissemination. The publicity/communications committee developed an annual eBlast schedule for "Save the Date" eBlasts highlighting the upcoming summer season events. This along with the Monday "Coming this Week" eBlast

provided Chapel members with timely information. The website committee works hard to get pertinent information about Chapel life out once weekly. Occasionally, a committee chair will ask us to send info about their committee separately. These requests are carefully considered in order to respect our subscribers' inboxes.

We continue to ask New Chapel members to sign up for email communications through the Chapel website and we have seen an increase in email recipients (about 50 new since August 2024). Currently an average of 240 eBlasts are delivered to recipients and about 200 are opened on any given eBlast. A new feature that was added to the website this year was a repository of the summer's audio recordings of Rev. Williams' sermons. Thank you to Rev. Williams for providing these weekly recordings which allow current and prospective members to listen. The website would not be as beautiful as it is without the artwork and leadership of Mary Moore. Vicky and Susan will work toward securing the domain over the winter months.

Respectfully submitted,  
Vicky Menand and Susan Taylor, Co-Chairs

### **Weddings:**

The 2025 wedding season has 5 Weddings scheduled and 2 Renewals.

The 2026 wedding season has 1 wedding booked and 4 under discussion.

Thank you to my committee members who graciously host a wedding.

Respectfully submitted,  
Joanne Carey, Chair

### **Worship:**

#### ***Format of Service***

The following changes were made to our service this summer. The committee feels the changes created a better flow and required less standing up and sitting down for the congregation.

- Moved Lord's Prayer to the end of the Children's Sermon
- Moved offertory to after sermon
- Had postlude be exit music

#### ***Increased Attendance***

The committee has noticed a general increase in attendance this year not only for Sunday service but Open Door events as well. We attribute that increase to Weston's engaging sermons, more efficient parking due to the added white lines in the parking lot, additional seating in the side room due to a monitor and speaker, and high-quality public relations. The committee wishes to thank the Building Committee, Jay and Susan Taylor, and Mary Moore for their contributions.

### ***Monday Connections***

This year the Chapel began offering a second service for 6 weeks on Monday evenings at 5:30pm from July 14 to Aug. 18 with a social gathering afterwards. This new worship was a shortened service with an emphasis on group sharing. Several of the services were officiated by Weston Williams and the others were officiated by ministers from other local houses of worship from a variety of denominations. The first 3 weeks saw attendance at about 20 people including the 4 hosts. The 4th and 5th week's attendance was at about 10. The committee found there to be many positive aspects including the fact that we created partnerships with the other local churches, folks were able to participate in an open and meaningful dialogue, and we were able to welcome many newcomers.

The committee feels the program needs another year to explore possibilities for growth.

### ***Recommended Dates for 2026 Services***

- Sunday Services: June 21 to Sept. 27 – One service at 10:00am
- Monday Connections: July 6 to Aug. 10 – One service at 5:30pm
- Christmas Service: Sunday, Dec. 13th at 4:00pm

### ***Minister Performance Review and Recommendation to Trustees***

The Worship Committee recommends calling Rev. Weston Williams as the Summer Minister for the Chapel for 2026.

### ***Open Doors***

A big thanks from **Open Door** to Noel Sherry, Dick Williams, Peter Ostrum, Loretta Lepkowski, Wendy and Brian Sanders, and Susie, Sarah, and Jack Nettleton for sharing their time, enthusiasms, and the impressive C4 racing canoe "Big Mike" with our Chapel audiences. Open Door is very grateful for tech support and equipment management from Susan and Jay Taylor, Dan Conable, Steve Schanely, and Barb Morgan. For next year, Open Door is looking forward to an evening with Bill Burrows, Jr. sharing about his 2025 pilgrimage on the Camino de Santiago, as well as another craft workshop by the Nettleton family. We're always looking for more programs, workshops, and tech help, so please don't hesitate to reach out to Barb Morgan, Judy Bean, or Mary Moore to discuss ideas and opportunities.

Respectfully submitted,  
Barbara Morgan, Chair