



Dear Friends,

This summer I have come across what seems an inordinate number of dead frogs on the road. Have you ever seen a frog right after it dies? If it is belly up, its back legs splay in the familiar froggy pose, but it's front legs stretch up, perpendicular to its body, as though reaching---to whom? To you? To the frog God? To heaven? It's a gesture at once so hopeful and sad that I melt a little when I see it.

Coming back to our "real" lives after summer vacation or summer's altered schedule can be disconcerting to say the least. Not all vacations are restful; some are so jam packed with activities and intentional "fun" that a return to work or some semblance of normalcy seems a welcome respite. Other holidays are blissfully relaxing and the jolt back to reality can prove a harsh hit.

If we have taken any time away, there has been no hiding from everyday reports of shootings, raging fires, famine in Africa, fleeing refugees, melting ice caps and fickle financial markets.

I look around and see the purple mountains' majesty, the unmatched beauty of Vermont in the summer, the abundance of tomatoes and basil and corn that overflows from our gardens, the Queen Ann's Lace, Black Eyed Susans and Chicory that line the road sides—weeds some would say--and I don't know how to reconcile gratitude and fear, how to give thanks with a full and glad spirit while at the same time feeling my heart race in panic.

One of the things the Christian faith does best, I think, is to hold contradictions, to teach us that to be strong we must be vulnerable, to be first we must be last, that to live to a certain kind of life we must die to another. So holding our faith, considering at once the lilies of



the field and starving children in Niger, those of us who have had some time away this summer come back to our church to pray, to rejoice, to petition God, to share with each other our struggles, our faith, our doubts and our blessings.

Still the frog on the road is half sad and half glad, one half gone to death, the other half proclaiming hope and faith in some presence I can't see but on which I stake all my tomorrows. It reminds me that God is always reaching out to lift small spirits to high places, to catch those who fall, to welcome those who return home, lame, sorrowing or reaching out for grace, for communion, for love.

May we too come home with outstretched arms to the One who waits for us and may we also come home also to one another, hopping with joy.

May God's Grace be with you all,

Susan

September CALENDAR

tuesday 1

- CENTERING PRAYER, 6:30 PM

thursday 3

- MUSIC COMM. MTG., 4 PM
- CHOIR PRACTICE, 7 PM

sunday 6

- WORSHIP, 10 AM
- COMMUNION
- BRUNCH BUNCH, 11:45 AM

tuesday 8

- BIBLE STUDY COURSE, 9:30 AM
- CENTERING PRAYER, 6:30 PM
- BIBLE STUDY COURSE, 7:00 PM

wednesday 9

- CABINET MEETING, 6:30 PM

thursday 10

- CHOIR PRACTICE, 7 PM

sunday 13

- WORSHIP, 10 AM
- GATHERING SUNDAY

tuesday 15

- BIBLE STUDY COURSE, 9:30 AM
- CHRISTIAN ED. MTG., 6:15 PM
- CENTERING PRAYER, 6:30 PM
- BIBLE STUDY COURSE, 7:00 PM

wednesday 16

- BREAKFAST BUNCH, 9:00 AM

thursday 17

- CHOIR PRACTICE, 7 PM

sunday 20

- WORSHIP, 10 AM
- KID'S COOK!, 3 PM

tuesday 22

- BIBLE STUDY COURSE, 9:30 AM
- CENTERING PRAYER, 6:30 PM
- BIBLE STUDY COURSE, 7:00 PM

thursday 24

- CHOIR PRACTICE, 7 PM

sunday 27

- WORSHIP, 10 AM
- HARVEST FESTIVAL, 11 AM

monday 28

- DEACON'S MEETING, 5:30 PM

tuesday 29

- BIBLE STUDY COURSE, 9:30 AM
- CENTERING PRAYER, 6:30 PM
- BIBLE STUDY COURSE, 7:00 PM



Charlotte Congregational Church

United Church of Christ

P.O. Box 12 • Charlotte, VT 05445

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www.charlotteucc.org

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Embraced by the healing love of Jesus Christ and inspired by his teachings, we commit ourselves to prayerful, compassionate, and courageous action in the world.

Rev. Susan Cooke Kittredge, BRIDGE PASTOR

Julia Blocksma, MUSIC DIRECTOR

Kim Findlay, COMMUNICATIONS/ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

Karen Speidel, BOOKKEEPER

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To subscribe by either email or snail mail, please contact us by email at charlotteucc@gmavt.net or by phone at 802-425-3176.

BLESSING *of the* ANIMALS 2015



HARVEST FESTIVAL!



**September 27, 2015
11:00 am-12:15 pm**

The Harvest Festival is one of the church's most fun fundraisers and celebrates the beautiful bounty of Vermont as well as our church community! What makes it special is that it taps the talents of our congregation in some unexpected ways.

The three principal organizers this year are Meg Smith, Ebeth Scatchard and Lindsay Smith.

Here's how the Festival is being organized:

- **Baked Goods Table**

Featuring some delicious, special confections most of us don't make at home. Barb Blackman is staffing that table and would love some donations! Please contact her: oblackman@lynnlawvt.com or 324-1688.

- **Crafts Table**

Beautiful handmade crafts, like expertly tailored children's costumes. Donations are welcome! Please contact Jeanie MacDonough: bruceandjeanie@aol.com or 355-9331.

- **Harvest Table**

A veritable cornucopia of fresh produce from various gardens. Including vegetables, fruits, jams, jellies, pickles, pesto and flowers. Lindsay Smith is heading up this effort and welcomes any donations from your gardens and pantries: woodlh5696@gmail.com or 922-0913.

- **Silent Auction**

This auction is unique because we ask people to donate something of their

time and talent. Whether it's a sailing trip on Lake Champlain, a few hours of dog-walking, babysitting, or a catered dinner, the opportunities are as vast as one's imagination. Teach a craft, or maybe a lawyer wants to donate an hour of legal consultation, or weeding someone's garden; we all have something to offer to do that will be of interest to someone else. Please contact Meg Smith: megsmithvt@gmavt.net or 425-4141.

New this year will be the chance to bid online! We are going to put the silent auction items on the church website a few days before the 27th so there will be a chance to peruse the choices and bid ahead of the event!

- **Pot-luck Lunch** - Ebeth Scatchard is in charge of the pot-luck lunch and she needs a core of volunteers to help with set-up, organization and clean-up. And we need others to donate delicious dishes! Ebeth can be reached at ebethandtom@gmail.com or 233-2383.

- **For the children**

Face painting will be the featured kid's activity!

All this requires some help and we hope that we have more than enough volunteers!

The event starts at 11:00 right after church. Lunch will be served by 11:30. The silent auction will close at noon.

Mark your calendar for Sunday, September 27 and in the meantime, please join in by participating in whatever way you would like!



Dear Church,

After almost a week of moving and unpacking boxes and trying to get this smaller place to absorb all the stuff we had accumulated over 15 years in that big parsonage, we are feeling pretty settled here in Winchester. I just wanted to take this opportunity to thank you. Thank you for the wonderful gift of money that you all collected for our family. Wow! We are talking about taking a trip out West to visit Tracy's sister and return to our old Berkeley haunts this coming summer thanks to that gift! Also, thank you of the beautiful framed piece of art that Linda Reynolds did. It will hang in my new church office as a lovely reminder of you all and the beauty of the Champlain Valley. And finally thank you for all the touching notes and dinners and goodbyes that made our last couple of months in Charlotte so meaningful and rich. You all are a generous hearted congregation. I look forward to hearing how God will have you serving this world in the years to come. I am grateful for my 15 years with you and will continue (as I have been) holding you, Susan, Julia, and Kim in prayer and I know that in God's perfect timing the right person will be called to join you on the journey as your next pastor.

Grace, Peace, and Love, Will



Choir Rehearsals
begin Thursday, September 3, at 7 p.m.
All singers are welcome!
We should be meeting every Thursday
for the foreseeable future.

-Julia Blocksma, Music Director



Kids Cook!

Sunday September 20th at 3 pm
Come help pickle and can the fruits of the season for sale at next week's Harvest Festival.

All kids 6 and older are welcome. We meet at Charlie and Susan's house in Shelburne: 331 Beach Road.



Bible Study

Beginning on Tuesday September 8th we will continue our Dickinson Series Bible study with Part II "Introducing the Old Testament." We will meet at 9:30am and at 7pm. Books will be available on August 9th. Everyone is welcome and you need not have participated in the first session to come to this one. Sign-up sheets and books will be in the sanctuary on August 9th.



The Old Testament study is described this way: "A look at the best-known stories, most influential passages, and unforgettable characters that comprise the Old Testament. What are the primary themes and narrative? What are the characteristics of ancient Hebrew literature and the mindset of people in the ancient Near East? Explore both the writing themselves and the historical contexts that gave them birth."

GATHERING SUNDAY

COME JOIN US AS WE GATHER TOGETHER FROM THE SUMMER AS A PEOPLE OF GOD UNITED IN WORSHIP, PRAYER, AND SERVICE. SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES BEGIN WITH TWO GROUPS. ON THIS SUNDAY, WE WILL ALSO FORMALLY COVENANT WITH SUSAN AS OUR BRIDGE PASTOR. AS WE LOOK TO THE YEAR AHEAD, MAY WE ALWAYS HOLD BEFORE US OUR MISSION STATEMENT: EMBRACED BY THE HEALING LOVE OF JESUS CHRIST AND INSPIRED BY HIS TEACHINGS, WE COMMIT OURSELVES TO PRAYERFUL, COMPASSIONATE, AND COURAGEOUS ACTION IN THE WORLD.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

“Thanks, You Made My Day!”

The following are comments taken from some of the thank you notes we received from LUND:

“My sincerest thanks for the thoughtful gift basket I received for Mother’s Day. It **warmed my heart** during a difficult time to know there is support in the community.”

“Thank you very much for the basket of goodies! It has all come to good use and come in very handy. It’s **very much appreciated**. Thank you tons!”

“Thanks so much for the thoughtful and wonderful gift basket filled with all the goodies. It **truly made my day** to think someone cared. Thanks again from someone you made very happy!”

“Thank you for the Mother’s day basket. I **love all the stuff** I got.”

“Thank you so much for the Mother’s Day gift basket. **It was so sweet**. I hope you all had a great Mother’s Day too!”

“Thank you for everything you did for us. **It was great**.”

“**Thank you so much** for the gift basket.”

“Thank you so much for giving me a gift on Mother’s day. **I’m very grateful**. God bless.”

“Thank you all so very much for the wonderful gift basket you gave us for Mother’s day. Not only do I absolutely love everything that I got in my basket, but my favorite soap was in it too! When I woke up to see the basket, my jaw just dropped. It was my only Mother’s Day gift I received this year and **it filled my day with such joy**. This Mother’s day was also the one year death anniversary of my mother so I had anticipated waking up being sad, angry, hurt etc. but your selfless gifts made my day.”

“**Thank you so much** for the gift basket.”

“**You made my day!** Thank you soo so much for the gifts on Mother’s day! It’s a great gester and really appreciated. Again, thank you!!! Thank you so much. The basket you put together for Mother’s Day was absolutely fabulous and extremely generous. I absolutely loved your gift. Thank you.”

“Thank you so much for the beautiful basket. I came home and saw your basket waiting for me in my room. What a beautiful surprise! **It meant a lot**. It’s amazing that come to others to show love for others. I know the moms here really appreciate it. Especially the ones who don’t have family around. Thanks.”



More WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

LUND 7th Annual Ride for Children

Over \$84,000 was raised!!! Money directly impacts LUND's services and our work with women, children, and families through adoption, treatment, education, and family support services. *"We could not host this event without your generous support, so thank you for continuing to be a part of it. p.s. It was a cold and rainy day and I think your prayer helped keep everyone safe – thank you!" – Amy Cronin at LUND*

Too Hot to Knit!!

Warm days don't lend themselves to knitting and crocheting. However, we are still making prayer shawls so if you need a pattern call Jeannie at 355-9331. If you need yarn, the Women's Fellowship can supply it. Contact Jeannie or Ann at 985-9884.

Brunch Bunch will meet On Sunday, September 6th at 11:45 am at the Dutch Mill in Shelburne. Breakfast Bunch will meet on Wed. September 16th at Trader Duke's. 9 am.

Back to School Totes

It's time to shop for back to school items. Since the bank supplies the actual backpacks, we only need to fill them. So fill up shopping bags to bring in on **September 6th**.

Suggested items:

dictionary
folders
lined paper
spiral notebooks
construction paper
sketchbook
erasers
pencils
colored pencils
pencil cap erasers

pens
highlighters
markers
pencil case
crayons
ruler
scissors
glue sticks
water colors



COMMITTEES

UPDATE ON INTERIM MINISTER SEARCH

Your search committee met on August 11th to discuss the interim minister search. Pam Lucas of the Vermont Conference UCC met with us to give us Conference guidance in this process. She was most helpful, giving us the benefit of her own experience and leaving us with a printed Guide for “interim” Search Committees. We anticipate that we will begin receiving profiles of applicants in mid-October.

One of our first duties will be to create a list of our church’s priorities so that we can read incoming interim profiles ‘through the church’s eyes’. So you are invited to contact this committee with your thoughts—we really need them! What do you want in an interim minister? Once again, here is where you can reach us:

Beth Sytsma	gooddog@gmavt.net
Marie Luhr	mariel@gmavt.net
Margaret Woodruff	margaret.woodruff@gmail.com
Scott LaMothe	scottlamothe@yahoo.com
Chris Berger	christopher.berger@med.uvm.edu

FROM THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE TO THE CHARLOTTE CONGREGATION:

We Can Do This!

Will challenged us to be involved the same way that God is involved in our lives. **Please share yourself with the children in this congregation!** We, the Education Committee for the church, are working diligently to try and fill the Sunday School calendar dates with teachers. We are looking for members, parents, past teachers, and those individuals that find joy in being with these young folks, giving them time and energy for **just one hour each Sunday**. There is a very nice curriculum that is accessible on our website or can be passed on to you via email or hard copy. **We will also have a simple 20-minute orientation after the service (October 4th—mark your calendars) to answer questions, give a tour of the space, etc.** Please Contact Hadley at (hadley_abernathy@yahoo.com) or call (802)598-1994.



Aloha, **The Charlotte Congregational Educational Committee** (Hadley Abernathy, Terri Severance, Karen Waters, Emily Kittredge and Susan Cooke-Kittredge).

COMMITTEES

Some events that might interest you (from CASA, our social justice ministry) ...

THE PALESTINIAN VIOLIN PROJECT

Thursday, September 3rd, 7:30 p.m. • College Street Congregational Church
265 College St, Burlington, VT 05401 Venue Phone: 802-864-7704 Phone: (802)878-3695
Ticket Pricing: Free-will offering

Benefit concert by violinist Michael Dabroski and pianist Michael Arnowitz featuring the world premiere of an exquisite violin made by a young Palestinian luthier. The concert will also premiere Mr. Dabroski's Suite for Palestine; included in the program: Bach's Partita no. 2 in c minor, Erik Satie Gnossienne's no. 1, and Beethoven's Sonata in G for violin and piano. Proceeds will benefit Al Kamandjati, a school that provides musical education to impoverished Palestinian children.



SAVING OUR COMMON HOME: A SYMPOSIUM ON INTEGRAL ECOLOGY

September 8, 2015, 6:00-9:00 p.m. • St. Michael's College Recital Hall.

Pope Francis's encyclical, *Laudato Si*, is an urgent call for politicians, policy makers, and all citizens of planet earth to make care for the environment central in our decision making. He appeals for recognition of the "seamless garment of life" which connects the smallest micro-organism in the biosphere to the life of humans and demands that we extend the notion of rights to all living creatures. Linking environmental degradation to war and poverty, he maintains that only a radical shift in our relationship with the earth will allow future generations to survive and flourish. John Allen, Associate Editor of the Boston Globe and foremost commentator on the Catholic Church, will keynote the symposium. He will be followed by a panel of environmental professors and activists including Jon Erickson of the UVM Gund Institute for Ecological Economics, Sister Bernadette Bostwick of Green Mountain Monastery, and Clive Gray, retired Third World Development economist, formerly of the Harvard Institute for International Development. The full encyclical is available at: http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html



BURLINGTON PRIDE PARADE

Sunday, September 13, 12:45 p.m. • 22 Church Street, Burlington

Also, the PRIDE Vermont Interfaith Service is now in its fourth year, is continuing its tradition of being hosted by a different faith community in the Burlington area. This year's service will be held on Thursday, September 10, at 5:30 PM, at the First Congregational Church of Essex Junction. Leaders from various religious traditions will lead an open and affirming service. The service will include readings, music and reflections from different faith traditions, and also a time to remember those who have come before us. While the focus of this service is on LGBT

people, allies are most warmly invited and urged to attend. For more information, please contact The Rev. Stannard Baker by email at: sbaker@stpaulscathedralvt.org or visit <http://pridecentervt.org/calendar/pcvt-events>



OTHER NEWS & EVENTS

In this time together as we await an interim pastor and look ahead to calling a settled pastor, we have a great opportunity to minister to one another and examine what it means to serve in Christ's name. Sharing our gifts of art, music, compassion and leadership help us to know one another better and strengthen our church.

On September 19th the Warren Church is hosting Anne Robertson, the author of our Bible Study. Anne will be leading a workshop for clergy and lay persons that helps us all learn how to lead small groups effectively. See more details below. **If you would like to join Susan at this event, please contact her at: scookekitt@mac.com or 985-5617.**

LEARN TO LEAD

*A day of training—for both clergy and congregants—to lead small groups in general,
and small group Bible study in particular*

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2015

8:30 am-4:00 pm

**Warren United Church UCC
339 Main Street
Warren, VT 05674**

SPONSORED BY WARREN UNITED CHURCH WITH THE MASSACHUSETTS BIBLE SOCIETY



We live in a culture that has become Biblically illiterate, yet there are many people who want to know what the Bible is all about. Churches are floundering for lack of small group leadership in faith formation—the Bible being a cornerstone. Learning to lead a small group will bring new vitality to your church.

The Massachusetts Bible Society has a proven Bible study system that even those who know little about the Bible can learn to lead. In this six-hour workshop, you will:

- Learn the basics of leading a small group.
- Build confidence in leading a Bible study.
- Learn how to use as well as receive a free copy of course #1 in *The Dickinson Series: Exploring the Bible*.
- Practice the skills you've learned.
- Receive tips on recruiting your first group.
- Network with others who are learning to lead.
- Discuss ways to overcome the challenges of group formation in small, rural churches.

Leading a small group Bible study is easier than you think! The Dickinson Series material is succeeding where prior attempts at Bible study have failed. Come and see how you can get started in your church.

For more information on the series, go to www.massbible.org/learn-to-lead-small-groups-workshops-anne-robertson

Church in the Inventive Age

Vermont Conference, United Church of Christ



We live in the midst of inescapable change, and cultural change has always impacted the church. The role of the church is to live as a participant in our culture.

Faith looks different in each cultural moment; this workshop will help us to tell the story of Good News in our Inventive Age.

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!
OCTOBER 24, 2015 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
At the United Church of Thetford

Visit: tinyurl.com/vtcucc for more info and to register

Cost: \$25 per person

Our Keynote Speaker is Doug Pagitt, Director of Inventive Initiatives for the Center for Progressive Renewal (CPR). Doug is a 'possibility enthusiast' who seeks to find creative, entrepreneurial, and generative ways to enlist people to join in the hopes, dreams and desires God has for the world. He is the founder of Solomon's Porch, a holistic missional Christian community in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

This workshop is presented as part of our three year investment with CPR to equip our churches for mission and ministry today and tomorrow.



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