

CENTRE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
193 Main Street, Brattleboro, VT 05301

Celebrating 200 years in the heart of Brattleboro!

Office Hours: M - F: 8:30am—12:30pm

Church Office: (802) 254-4730 / centrechurch@centrechurchvt.org

Website: www.centrechurchvt.org

Facebook: [Centre Congregational Church-Brattleboro](https://www.facebook.com/Centre-Congregational-Church-Brattleboro)

Current news and information in the larger UCC Community:

VT Conference: www.vtcucc.org / National: www.ucc.org

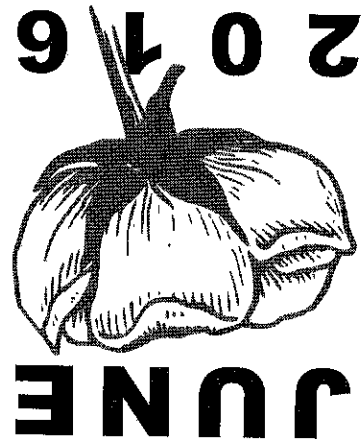
CHURCH STAFF AND LEADERSHIP

Interim Minister
Financial Secretary
Music Director
Assisting the Music Director
Sextons
Church Administrator

Rev. Bert Marshall: revbert@centrechurchvt.org
Christine Yost: finance@centrechurchvt.org
Mary Milkey-May: music@centrechurchvt.org
Ernest May
Gary and Paul Smith
Bruce Landenberger: bruce@centrechurchvt.org

Council Chair
Treasurer / Clerk

Matt Kennedy
Holly Kennedy / Constance Bresnahan



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UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

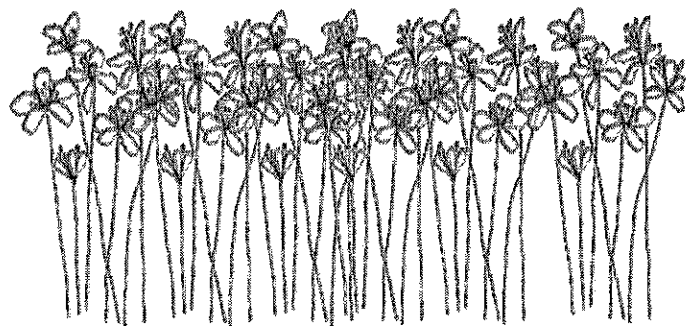
INTERIM MINISTER'S COLUMN, Rev. Bert Marshall

Just wondering. Let's say that Jesus is really alive somewhere and tuned in to what's happening in our world and in our lives – as opposed to, well, like sitting on a far away heavenly throne, judging the quick and the dead and the deadheads and the not-so-quick, one after the other in deadening endless procession: you know, 'you're saved, you're not, you're saved, you're not', until (one would think) even the most divine of beings, impervious to human drudgery and folly though they may be, would become restless and desire some of the freedoms and advantages thought to be inherent in divinity, such as the ability to traverse the Universe at will, or sneak into the realm of human experience and wreck havoc inside the minds of logical positivists and religious fundamentalists – anything, anything at all, other than sitting in judgment, 24/7, over a pathetic multitude of ordinary Earth mortals, plodding before you like terrified insects, who just for starters were cast unawares into the murky mists of human existence, and were then expected not only to get into a good school, land a job, and buy a house and a car, but to also somehow comprehend the total incomprehensible meaning of all-there-is-to-know during the course of a fleeting lifespan, or else, or else be tossed unceremoniously (and with much wailing and gnashing of teeth) into the outer lake of fire reeking darkness smoldering trash heap, or some such place. I mean, is this an activity befitting the Christ the Son of God the Son of Man the Messiah Prince of Peace?

I don't think so. But let's say that Jesus is alive and listening in, which is what we say we believe (if you don't believe this, please report to the dungeon immediately). So I'm just wondering. If we say that Jesus is alive and paying attention to what's going on, then what might he have to say about the present state of affairs? What if he suddenly showed up somewhere in our world today? Shall we suppose he would appear in the mightiest wealthiest greatest most powerful high-tech nation with the most bombs in the whole world ever? Well, probably not, because unless he changed his whole message quite a bit, an awful lot of our folks wouldn't care to hear from him right now anyway. Better if he landed in, say, Gaza, or maybe Syria, or Haiti, or Afghanistan. This means, of course, that most of us wouldn't get to see him at all, which is exactly what happened the last time he appeared nearly two thousand years ago when he showed up as (gasp!) a tiny helpless infant in a small town in a small country ruled at the time by the mightiest wealthiest greatest most powerful high-tech empire with the most chariots and spears in the whole world ever.

But let's say that Jesus is alive and concerned about what's going on and is able to be everywhere all at once, like Santa Claus, so we could hear what he would say to us. Would he say that "love your enemies" was maybe a little too extreme and that he's changed his mind now and thinks that a little hate, a little bigotry, and some violent retaliation might work in some cases? Would he say that "pray for those who persecute you" is a seriously misguided teaching because (he realizes now) it gives aid and comfort to the enemies of the powerful? Perhaps he would say that "turn the other cheek" wasn't such a good idea after all because it only leads to rejection and suffering, while the benefits of Roman citizenship would have been so much nicer and ever so much safer, and might even have included a nice retirement package. Forgiveness? Well, he might say, it's certainly easier to forgive after you've soundly defeated your adversary, or at least captured and deported him. It must be tough to be Jesus these days, recognizing that most of your greatest teachings are apparently deemed irrelevant by a large majority of the people who use your name to name their faith.

Anyway, I was just wondering. Personally, I believe in Jesus' teachings - even the most difficult ones, even if I repeatedly fall flat trying to follow them – and I often do. I believe that his Way of compassion, nonviolence, and love is the way to the Realm of God. Friends, let us not grow weary of living the Gospel each day, as best we can!



CENTRE BELLS The Newsletter of
Centre Congregational Church, UCC
June 2016

From Council Chair, BILL McCARTY

By the time this is printed and viewed, the Annual Program Meeting will be finished and my term as Council Chair will be complete. My deepest thanks and appreciation to all who have assisted Council and me over the past years. We have endured and accomplished many things. I am proud of what has been accomplished and look forward to the continued progress and growth of Centre Congregational Church in the next millennium.

Thank you all and see you at Church!

Bill McCarty, *Former Council Chair*

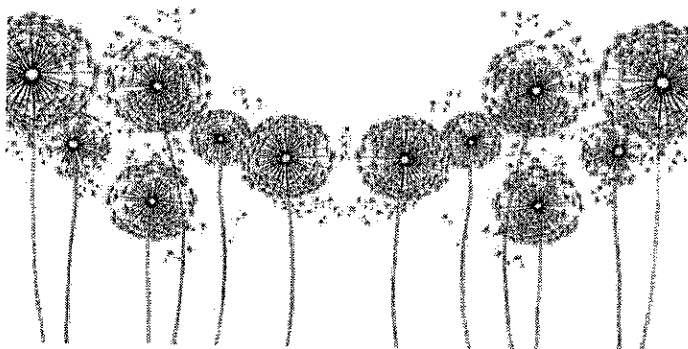
From Music Director, MARY MILKEY-MAY

By the time you read this, the choir will have finished its season and I will be taking some vacation time! Summer will soon be upon us!

During the months of June, July, and August we are looking for some folks who might want to volunteer their musical talents during a Sunday service. Perhaps you would enjoy singing with a small group or doing a solo.....maybe you play an instrument and you'd like to provide special music during one of the services. Now is the time to let us know! Please see Matt Kennedy while I'm on vacation to make sure we know of your interest. We will be putting the summer music schedule together by early June, so please volunteer soon!

On Sunday, August 28th, we plan to have a "pick-up" choir for the combined service and we hope folks from Guilford and W. Brattleboro will join us as well. It would be wonderful to have a large group from Centre Church for this occasion so please consider joining us if you're in town.

And finally.....one more request for new members as we begin the choir season again in September. With the busy schedules that we all have, adding one more thing might seem crazy, but entertain the possibility that singing might feed your soul! We would love to have you be a part of the group!



CHURCH LIFE

PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE

Our Pastoral Search Committee had its second meeting and is off to a strong start. We are a new group of 8 with energy and passion. We are walking with God on our journey in this life and our church.

Lynn Bujnak our Vermont UCC Conference Minister led our meeting; Bert was also there supporting and sharing with us. Judy brought pizza as we started our meeting at 5. Thanks Judy! Lynn opened the meeting with Exodus 26 Bible verse, thoughtfully leading our group in faith. She brought hand-outs (a lot of reading) and shared her words of wisdom and guidance. She started us getting to really know each other with sharing our Church story. This was a truly wonderful first step in our path to calling a permanent Minister. She answered all our questions and steered us on our path.

We will have a Chair, a member who took the "Book" home and is praying on this next step in life, we hope will accept this need. We have split the Secretary position to a member who takes and writes up the minutes, thank you Jennifer and I who will be communicating with our candidates and if Bert has his way, with you all. I believe a member has accepted being our Chaplain, leading us in pray, sharing bible verses and keeping our faith in our work and actions.

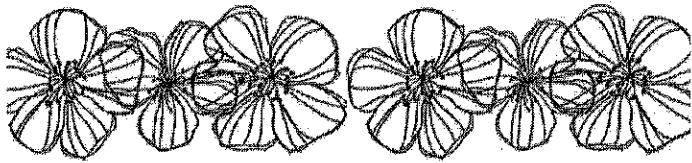
We, the committee and our Church, have a lot of work and soul searching ahead of us. This committee will be asking you for your input creating our church profile. We hope to update the web site, keep using Facebook and more! We are excited to work together, to grow in faith together and to call our next Minister together!

One of Lynn last thoughts to share...We are not just looking for a CEO but a partner in faith.

Please talk to the member our Pastoral Search Committee about our search. We seek your questions, thoughts and prayers. Together we grow our faith.

-Anne Fecto, Jenifer Ambler, Roger Brown,
Judy Palmer, Priscilla Svec, Tony Grobe,
Kate Maisner, Jim Bedard

The newly formed **BROWN BAG LUNCH** group will meet at noon in the church parlor on the first Wednesday in June, which this month is **June 1st**. This group enjoys an hour of sharing and conversation and will be facilitated this month by Peter & Marion Abell. Everyone is welcome!



BOARD FOR CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

As the church school year winds down, CE is looking forward to **Youth Sunday, June 12**. This is the day the Board will thank and recognize the many people who have contributed to a variety of CE programs this past year. The children will sing a song for the congregation and help us express our gratitude. This will be the last Sunday of Church School and Faith In Action. Programming will begin again in the fall, with the Ice Cream Social in September.

The children's message will continue to be provided throughout the summer whenever children are in the congregation. Nursery will also continue each Sunday following the children's message. It has been a full and fruitful year and the CE Board looks forward to the future. Nan Mann will be stepping down and the other board members, Abi Healey, Logan Lefebvre, and James Cera would appreciate your time and support for the future of Centre Congregational Church's Christian Education programs.

SUMMER CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AT CENTRE CHURCH

Nursery Care: every Sunday during Worship for ages 0-5.

ADULT EDUCATION OFFERINGS

BOOK STUDY: an adult group book study currently reading *The Meaning of Human Existence* by Edward O. Wilson
Sunday mornings, 9:00-10:00AM

SPIRITUAL CONVERSATIONS: Led by the Rev. Sandy Daly, a group of adults gather in Chesterfield, NH at Hallelujah Farm to discuss how and where God is moving in our lives and what we are being called to be and do. Directions to Hallelujah Farm are in the church office.



WOMEN'S SPIRIT...

This group of 8 women is nearing the end of reading and sharing Marcus Borg's last book, *Convictions*, and will be planning the next adventure in their own and other's experiences in life. The group meets weekly at 4:30 in the library and is open to anyone who would like to drop in and join the experience.

BICENTENNIAL BONNET PARTY

Come celebrate 200 years of Centre Congregational Church, our jewel in the heart of Brattleboro. Everyone is invited to the second annual luncheon which will be held in the church parlor on **Wednesday, June 15**, from 12:00 - 1:30 p.m. A delicious meal will be provided by Aroma Catering. Please plan to attend and invite a friend.

At some of our Bicentennial events, some ladies will be wearing bonnets in the styles of the 1800s. If you have a favorite hat or bonnet, celebrate this occasion by wearing it to lunch. Hats on, or off - all folks will be welcome. The fee is \$15.00 per person or by donation. Please R.S.V.P. to Mary Bristol at 254-6713 by June 7. This will be a fun, celebratory time together.

BOARD of DEACONS

Union Services will begin on **June 26** at First Congregational Church in West Brattleboro. Then on **August 28** at Centre Church. The Guilford Church will not share in the Union Services as Lisa Sparrow will be on sabbatical.

During the summer months, we will have 2 Deacons in attendance instead of 4. This worked out well last summer, so we are trying it again. During communion we will still have 4 Deacons.

The members of the Deacons for the next two years are as follows: Deborah Brown, Patty Neubauer, Wendy Randall, Joy Everett, Carlene McCarty, and Bill McCarty, liaison to the Council. We are still looking for one more Deacon. There must be someone in the congregation who would like to work with this great group of people.

-Carlene McCarty, *Acting Chair*

PEACE & JUSTICE COMMITTEE

Everyone is invited to the
MOMENT for PEACE

Friday, June 3, 5:30-6:00PM, Centre Church Parlor
Our meditation, led by Nancy Middleton, will be reflections on the poem *Traveler* by David Whyte and consideration of the possibility that one's life is the ultimate pilgrimage.

Nancy is a retired business administrator, former General Secretary of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends (Quaker) and a traveling minister for Friends General Conference. She has resided in Grafton, VT for twenty years and is a member of Putney Friends Meeting.

BOARD FOR MEMBER CARE



This is my favorite entry for Centre Bells to submit - the announcement of the All Church Picnic.

I'm not sure how long these have been going on. Ever since I joined the church in 1989 this has been an annual event, although not always held at the park. I remember is being at the Vernon recreation site. Once it was held on the back of the church. This year, as always, it will be held the 2nd Sunday of June - June 12th. The Kiwanis Shelter at Living Memorial Park has been reserved for Centre Church. This has always been a well attended and fun event.

Member Care Board provides the hamburgers, veggie burgers, hot dogs, buns, drinks, chips, tableware, and condiments. All you are asked to bring is a salad or dessert, and a serving spoon. In the past we have divided this by last names. This year it's A-L, bring a dessert; M-Z, bring a salad. (But nobody is checking on you. If your last name starts with an "S" and you really want to bring a dessert, please do!)

Feel free to wear casual clothes to church that morning as this outdoor event starts **right after church service**. There will be active games for the young and young-at-heart, paper and pencil games for those who like brain games, and for those who prefer just to sit and talk, there will be that too!

Come one, come all on June 12th - Rain or Shine

Marion Daley, for Member Care

PEOPLE



Dorothy Vander Meulen, right, was honored by the Brattleboro AAUW as its Woman of Distinction of 2016. Presenting the award are, from left, former recipients Norma Shakun, Mary Hawkes and Patricia Neer.



A word of good cheer would be warmly received by church members and friends who are in nursing homes, assisted living centers, or housebound as of April 25th.

JEANNE RUETER

Thompson House, 80 Maple St.,
Brattleboro, VT 05301 254-4977

NANCY CLARKE

Holton Home, 158 Western Ave.,
Brattleboro, VT 05301 254-5005

WANDA GODFREY

Vernon Hall, 13 Greenway Dr.,
Vernon, VT 05354 254-2444

PHYLLIS HICKOK

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Ames, IA 50014 (515) 292-9196

ROBERT & JANE REED

461 Grafton Rd., #201
Townshend, VT 05350 (802) 221-4213

MARJORIE SPRAGUE

Nason Center, Room 221
Breckenridge Village, 36859 Ridge Road
Willoughby Ohio 44094 (440) 497-5208

Please let Bruce know if we've missed someone

DOT VANDER MEULEN HONORED BY AAUW

Dorothy Vander Meulen was recognized for her significant contributions to her community and to the Brattleboro branch of the American Association of University Women at its recent 90th birthday celebration.

Dot was cited for her volunteer work with the branch as a member of the scholarship committee and with the book sale that raises money for the scholarship fund.

An active community member, Dot volunteers with the overnight shelter and the food pantry. She is also a member and historian of Centre Congregational Church and is author of a history of the church entitled "This Jewel on Main Street: Centre Congregational Church at 200 Years, 1816-2016." She was honored by the Brattleboro Chamber of Commerce with its Bicentennial Recognition Award for her authorship of the book.

A native of Waterbury, Ct., Dot graduated from the University of Connecticut School of Nursing. She and Allen, her husband of almost 57 years, have three children and four grandchildren.

AAUW is devoted to advancing equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research. Further information is available by contacting President Vivian Prunier at (802) 387-5875, online at aauwvt.org, or on the branch Facebook page.

JUNE 2016

*Holy Communion celebrated

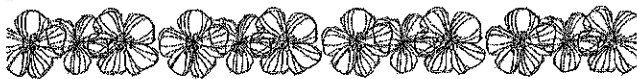
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 Bruce out 12 ⁰⁰ Brown Bag Lunch 5 ⁰⁰ Bicentennial	2 Bruce out 1 ³⁰ Quilting Ministry 4 ³⁰ Women's Spirit	3 Bruce out 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes 5 ³⁰ Moment for Peace 7 ³⁰ AA Meeting	4
5 9 ⁰⁰ Book Study/ Sunday School 10 ⁰⁰ Worship* 10 ⁰⁰ AA Meeting 4 ⁰⁰ BMC Concert 6 ⁰⁰ AA Meeting	6 Bruce out 4 ³⁰ Prayer Shawl	7 Bruce out 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes 3 ³⁰ Fundraising 7 ³⁰ AA Meeting	8 6 ¹⁵ Race Dialogue	9 1 ³⁰ Quilting Ministry 4 ³⁰ Women's Spirit	10 <u>CENTRE BELLS DEADLINE</u> 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes 7 ³⁰ AA Meeting	11
12 9 ⁰⁰ Book Study/ Sunday School 10 ⁰⁰ Worship/FIA Youth Sunday 10 ⁰⁰ AA Meeting 11 ³⁰ Music Committee 6 ⁰⁰ AA Meeting	13 4 ⁰⁰ SEVIA 4 ³⁰ Prayer Shawl 7 ³⁰ AA District 8	14 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes 6 ⁰⁰ Meeting Night 7 ³⁰ AA Meeting	15 12 ⁰⁰ BAll 12 ⁰⁰ Bonnet Party 6 ³⁰ Church Council	16 1 ³⁰ Quilting Ministry 4 ³⁰ Women's Spirit	17 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes 7 ³⁰ AA Meeting	18
19 9 ⁰⁰ Book Study 10 ⁰⁰ Worship 10 ⁰⁰ AA Meeting 6 ⁰⁰ AA Meeting	20 4 ³⁰ Prayer Shawl	21 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes 7 ³⁰ AA Meeting	22 <u>MAIL CENTRE BELLS</u>	23 1 ³⁰ Quilting Ministry 4 ³⁰ Women's Spirit	24 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes 7 ³⁰ AA Meeting	25 9 ³⁰ SEVIA
26 9 ⁰⁰ Book Study/ 10 ⁰⁰ Worship—Union Svce @ W. Bratt 10 ⁰⁰ AA Meeting 6 ⁰⁰ AA Meeting	27 4 ³⁰ Prayer Shawl 7 ⁰⁰ Spiritual Conversations	28 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes 7 ³⁰ AA Meeting	29	30 1 ³⁰ Quilting Ministry 4 ³⁰ Women's Spirit		

CONNECTIONS

Adam Miller, Youth Director at a church in Harrisonburg, VA and his wife who is pursuing a Graduate Degree from SIT will be in the area for a year beginning in August., contacted us about assistance -

- Finding an apartment. near SIT or along the bus route
- Leads for full time employment, church or otherwise for Adam.

They would be most appreciative of any help we can give. If you have any information, please contact Bruce at the church office: 254-4730 / bruce@centrechurchvt.org



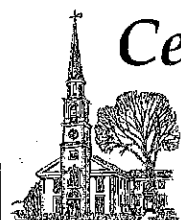
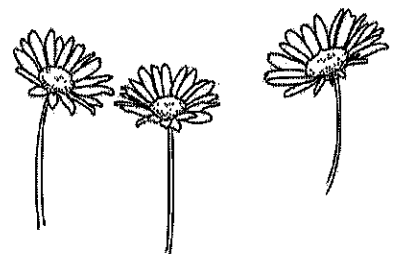
BIRTHDAYS

- 3 Alina Secrest
- 4 Hannah Svec
- 7 Roger Ketcham
- 9 Jack Bixby
Don Webster
- 10 Roger Miller
- 12 Carolyn Smith
- 13 Jenifer Ambler
- 16 Pat Verboom
- 18 Bob Keller
- 19 Marion Abell
Patti Neubauer
- 23 Allen Vander Meulen
- 24 Alta Barber
- 26 Morgan Randrup, Jr.
- 27 Mary Hawkes

ANNIVERSARIES

- 8 Darlene & Rene LaPlante
- 12 Arnold & Marilyn Young
- 14 Myrna & Ralph Melroy
- 17 Allen & Judy Myrick
- 19 Alice & Gary Carrier
- 25 Mike & Julie Ball
- 26 Bob & Jane Reed
Marion & Peter Abell
- 28 David & Rennie Washburn

Congratulations!
Gary Smith
On the birth of a grandson
May 16, 2016



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