

*Holy Communion celebrated

DECEMBER 2016

SATURDAY

FRIDAY

THURSDAY

WEDNESDAY

TUESDAY

MONDAY

SUNDAY

	3	2	1	8	7	6
	900 Holiday Craft Fair 1130 Loaves & Fishes 500 Holiday Craft Fair 730 AA Meeting 900 Messiah Sing	1130 Loaves & Fishes 430 Women's Spirit 700 Choir Rehearsal	1130 Loaves & Fishes 430 Women's Spirit 700 Choir Rehearsal	1130 Loaves & Fishes 430 Women's Spirit 700 Choir Rehearsal	1200 Brown Bag Lunch 630 Standing Rock Film	1130 Loaves & Fishes 530 Search Committee 730 AA Meeting
	10	9	8	7	6	5
	1130 Loaves & Fishes 730 AA Meeting	1130 Loaves & Fishes 730 AA Meeting	1130 Loaves & Fishes 430 Women's Spirit 700 Choir Rehearsal	1200 Brown Bag Lunch 630 Standing Rock Film	1130 Loaves & Fishes 530 Search Committee 730 AA Meeting	430 Prayer Shawl
	17	16	15	14	13	12
	Centre Bells Deadline 1130 Loaves & Fishes 730 AA Meeting 730 BMVC Concert	1130 Loaves & Fishes 430 Women's Spirit 700 Choir Rehearsal	1130 Loaves & Fishes 430 Women's Spirit 700 Choir Rehearsal	630 Standing Rock Film	1130 Loaves & Fishes 600 Meeting Night 730 AA Meeting	430 Prayer Shawl 730 AA District 8
	24	23	22	21	20	19
	600 All-day Alcañon 700 Christmas Eve Service	1130 Loaves & Fishes 730 AA Meeting	1130 Loaves & Fishes 430 Women's Spirit 700 Choir Rehearsal	1200 Ball	1130 Loaves & Fishes 730 AA Meeting	430 Prayer Shawl
	31	30	29	28	27	26
	600 All-day Alcañon	1130 Loaves & Fishes 730 AA Meeting	1130 Loaves & Fishes 430 Women's Spirit 700 Choir Rehearsal	Mail Centre Bells	1130 Loaves & Fishes 630 Church Council 730 AA Meeting	Office Closed 430 Prayer Shawl
						25
						900 Worship 1000 AA Meeting 600 AA Meeting

ÖEL... may the season bring you comfort and joy!

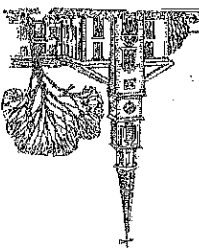


Centre Bells is published monthly by Centre Congregational Church, UCC

News items and articles, address changes, or requests to be added or removed from the *Centre Bells* mailing list should be submitted to the administrative assistant at:

802-254-4730/

centrechurch@centrechurchvt.org



ANNIVERSARIES
27 Darrel & Marion Daley

BIRTHDAYS

3 Damon Kindopp
7 Deborah Cope
10 Robert Reed

13 Alice Stockwell

Isabelle Mann

17 Phyllis Hickok

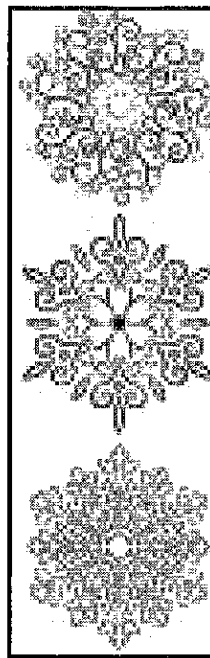
19 Pat Austin

24 Mary Ellen Bixby

Sen Pu

25 Jesus of Nazareth

31 Roger Brown



CENTRE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

193 Main Street Brattleboro, Vermont 05301
centrechurch@centrechurchvt.org

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID

PERMIT # 8

BRATTLEBORO, VT 05301

DECEMBER



2 0 1 6

Matt Kennedy
Holly Kennedy / Constance Bresnahan

Council Chair
Treasurer / Clerk

Hilary Farquhar: hilary@centrechurchvt.org
Gary and Paul Smith

Administrative Assistant

Mary Milkey-May: music@centrechurchvt.org
Christine Yost: finance@centrechurchvt.org

Sextons
Music Director

Rev. Bert Marshall: revbert@centrechurchvt.org

Financial Secretary
Interim Minister

CHURCH STAFF AND LEADERSHIP

VT Conference: www.vtcucc.org / National: www.ucc.org
Current news and information in the larger UCC Community:

Facebook: Centre Congregational Church-Brattleboro

Website: www.centrechurchvt.org

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

Office Hours: M - F: 8:30am - 12:30pm

Celebrating 200 years in the heart of Brattleboro!

193 Main Street, Brattleboro, VT 05301

CENTRE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

PEOPLE



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 October 26.

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

1520 Little Blue Stem Ct.
Ames, IA 50014 (515)292-9196

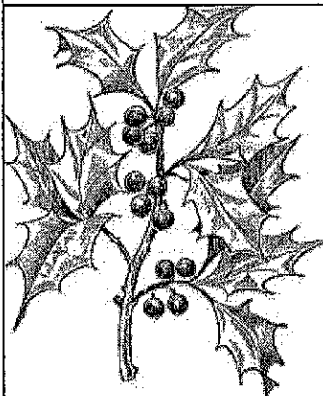
ROBERT & JANE REED

461 Grafton Rd., #201
Townshend, VT 05353 (802)221-4213

KAREN PETER

Langdon Place, 136 Arch Street, Room 152
Keene, NH 03431 (603)357-3902

Please let Hilary know if we've missed someone.



BROWN BAG LUNCH GROUP

This group's next hour of conversation and sharing is Wednesday noon, December 7th. Everyone is welcome to bring a lunch and enjoy warm fellowship with old and new friends and maybe

singing a round or two together. Great, relaxing fun.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION @ CENTRE CHURCH

Sunday School every Sunday from 9:00 to 9:45 for ages 4+; nursery care is provided during this time for ages 0-4. Faith in Action during the worship service for ages 5+; nursery care provided during the service for ages 0-5. Every Sunday except Communion Sunday, the first Sunday of the month.

Standing with Standing Rock Free Film Series

Sponsored by Brattleboro Solidarity

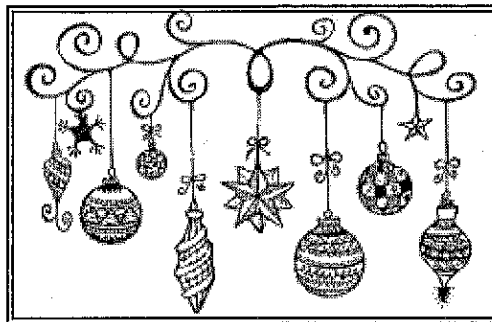
Location: Centre Congregational Church

All films begin at 6:30p.m., Discussion follows, SNACKS

Nov. 30: The Wisdom to Survive

Dec. 7: - Flow, for the Love of Water

Dec. 14: - The Corporation



FOR THOSE WHO MISSED IT, or would like to hear it again, an **audio file** of Rev. Bert's 11/13/16 meditation on Stewardship is available thanks to Roger Brown. Please email the office at hilary@centrechurchvt.org and we can email you a copy. Just a reminder: You can turn in or mail your stewardship pledge to the office; if you need a card and envelope, they are here, too!

ORDER *This Jewel on Main Street*

The history of Centre Congregational Church, published for our bicentennial year, is available for sale every Sunday during coffee hour. For those who do not intend to be in the area and wish to buy a copy of this remarkable book, you may purchase it by sending a check for \$20.00 to cover the book and shipping, made out to Centre Church. Please send your orders to:

Marion Daley
PO Box 445
Putney, VT 05346

Dot Vander Meulen will be happy to autograph the book before it is packed and mailed to you.



***CHURCH CANCELLED,
DUE TO A RELIGIOUS HOLIDAY***

Church may be cancelled this year, due to a religious holiday. It may seem a little strange—no one planned it that way.

The choir's voices all were shot—they sang on Christmas Eve. The children would see their presents and wouldn't want to leave.

The organist was just worn out—it was a hectic season. The counters of the offerings upheld a similar reason.

The Deacons said no one would come—the custodian concurred. Buildings and Grounds just listened and then never said a word.

Council said the final word should come just from the preacher. No Sunday School because no one would ever find a teacher.

So what's a modern church to do? Isn't Christmas just a fun day? And remember, come next Easter, we still can have it on Sunday.

~ Joanne MacLean, 2011

WOMEN'S SPIRIT



... is nearing the end of Sebastian Junger's **TRIBE** and is investigating their next adventure in reading and sharing thoughts and insights. This group meets each Thursday at 4:30 p.m. in the library. Everyone is welcome.



THE DEACONS are involved with updating the Membership List for the 2017 Directory.

CHRISTMAS EVE AND CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICES

Services for Christmas Eve will be Dec. 24 at 7:00. This will be a candlelight service with traditional Christmas Carols. Christmas Day Services will start at 9:00 (this will be a music-filled service of about 45 min. *Carlene McCarty, Deacon*

December Lectionary Texts:

- 4 Isa 11:1-10•Ps 72:1-7, 18-19•Rom 15:4-13•
Matt 3:1-12
- 11 Isa 35:1-10•Ps 146:5-10 or Luke 1:47-55•
James 5:7-10•Matt 11:2-11
- 18 Isa 7:10-16•Ps 80:1-7, 17-19•Rom 1:1-7•
Matt 1:18-25
- 25 Isa 9:2-7•Ps 96•Titus 2:11-14•Luke 2:1-14
(15-20)

Advent Calendar



Nov 27 - First Sunday of Advent, Reception of New Members

Dec 1 - World Aids Day

Dec 2 & 3 - Holiday Fair/Messiah Sing (Dec 3)

Dec 4 - Second Sunday of Advent, New England Brass, Communion Sunday

Dec 11 - Third Sunday of Advent, Church Retreat @ Hallelujah Farm after worship (12:00 - 4:00)

Dec 18 - Fourth Sunday of Advent, Children's Program

Dec 21 & 22 - Brattleboro Drop-In Center Food Distribution @ Centre Church

Dec 24 - Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, 7:00 pm / First Night of Hanukkah

Dec 25 - Christmas Morning Service: Lessons & Carols @ 9:00 am

Advent Retreat @ Hallelujah Farm

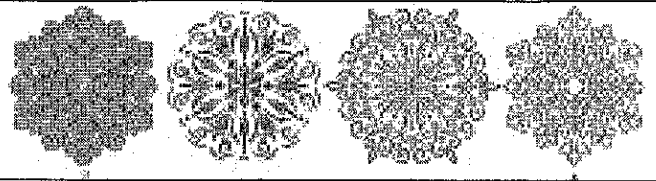
Chesterfield, New Hampshire
Sunday, Dec. 11, noon-4pm

Light lunch and afternoon beverage will be provided. Any amount up to \$20 donation; additional donations can help those who can't give as much.

Get away from the noise of commercial Christmas; come together to experience the light of the season through singing, scripture, and stories with interactive fellowship.

Hosted by the Pastoral Relations Committee.

Please sign up with Hilary (call 802-254-4730 or email hilary@centrechurchvt.org) or sign up at the church.

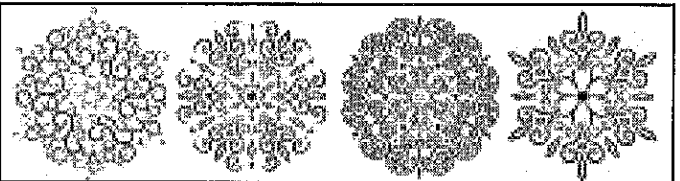
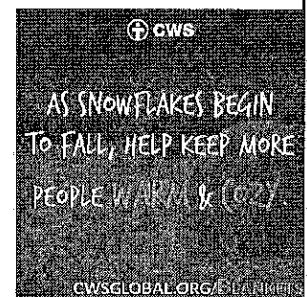


SERRV and El Salvador Crafts Sales!

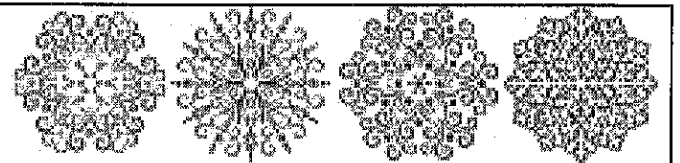
Mission & Service will once again be selling hand-crafts from El Salvador (personally selected and purchased by Centre Church member travelers in the Salvadoran markets) and from SERRV (a non-profit organization that acts as a middleman for artisans in many countries throughout the world). Proceeds go to the Luz del Mundo Scholarship Fund, thus enabling the children in our Sister Parish in El Salvador to attend school. Do your Christmas shopping during coffee hours December 4, 11, 18 and help the kids at the same time!

Church World Service Blanket Sales

Mission & Service will be selling CWS blankets during December coffee hours. \$5 "buys" a blanket to be sent to disaster areas throughout the world for warmth and shelter. Cards are available if you wish to give in honor of someone dear to you.



The Special Offerings for December are **The Samaritan Fund**, which is our pastor's discretionary fund for use helping those in need (bus ticket, heating oil, medicine, etc), and **The Christmas Fund**, which the UCC administers to aid retired pastors living on limited incomes.



CENTRE CHURCH'S ANNUAL CHRISTMAS FAIR

Friday, December 2, 5-8 pm
Saturday, December 3, 9am-1 pm



New! This year's fair begins Friday, Dec. 2nd, from 5 - 8pm. There will be interactive carol singing and soups available for supper. The fun continues . . .

- Our famous waffles to start your day of shopping Saturday and a great luncheon menu to keep you going.
- New vendors will be on hand, as well as those we look forward to each year.
- Cookie Walk filled with delicious goodies for you to take home.
- Santa's Attic again, and wreaths by Heidi Mario
- The always wonderful Children's Creative Activities table.
- The church's Quilt Raffle drawing will take place at noon on **Saturday at noon.**

Tickets for the 2016 **RAFFLE QUILT** are still available. Tickets are \$2.00 each / 6 tickets for \$10.00. Contact: Anne Doesburg: 254-5495/adoesburg@comcast.net or the church office: 254-4730 hilary@centrechurchvt.org. You do not have to be present to win.

Come see your friends and bring new friends to buy presents and celebrate the season!

The Fundraising Committee wishes to thank everyone at Centre Church for their time and participation!

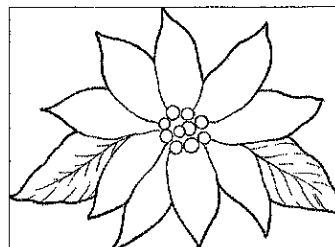
46th Annual Community
MESSIAH SING
A Benefit for the Homeless
Saturday, December 3, 1:00 p.m.
Centre Church

Join in singing the Christmas Choruses from Handel's *Messiah*. Bring a score; borrow or buy one at the door. Admission by donation to benefit the Groundworks Shelter and its food programs.

ORDER 2016 CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

If you would like to give one or more poinsettias for Christmas, please fill out the form below for each plant ordered and return to the church office with your check made payable to: *Centre Church* by **Sunday, December 4**, addressed to:
193 Main Street
Brattleboro, VT 05301

The plants will decorate the sanctuary from December 18th to the 24th. You are invited to take yours after Christmas Eve Service.



CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA ORDER

NAME _____

PHONE _____

Circle one:
IN HONOR / MEMORY / CELEBRATION OF /
THANKSGIVING FOR

\$14.00 _____

Donation toward other decorations _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED _____

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA ORDER

NAME _____

PHONE _____

Circle one:
IN HONOR / MEMORY / CELEBRATION OF /
THANKSGIVING FOR

\$14.00 _____

Donation toward other decorations _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED _____

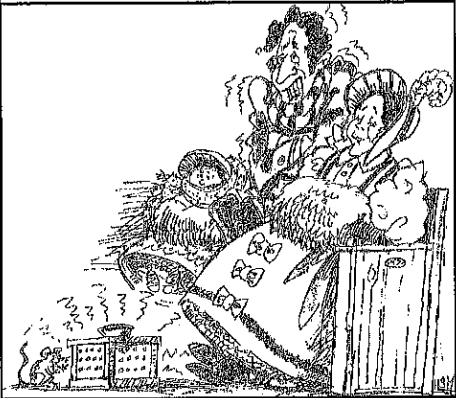
BICENTENNIAL COMMITTEE

Grand Finale

When I first learned of the plans for Sunday, October 23 this year my initial reaction was "Oh no!—how are we going to get that all crammed into one day? an historical worship service 1816 style, the celebration of Silver Bells Society, a luncheon using 18th century recipes, — costumes,—picture taking and then a lecture on historical church meeting house architecture.

It happened—and it was a wonderful wrap up, the grand finale of our year of bicentennial celebrations.

Most of the choir and many in the congregation got in the spirit and wore period costumes. The choir sang old-fashioned songs. Pastor Bert preached from the pulpit a sermon that Dot VanderMeulen had found in the church archives. It was written by one of the first ministers. Even though Bert cut the length of the sermon in half it was long! I wondered how those early Congregationalists sat through an hour-long sermon. In the book "This Jewel on Main Street," Heidi Mario's cartoon on page 27 shows



a family sitting through a sermon in the cold of winter. I wondered if they sang all the verses of all the hymns in those days, or did they speed things up by singing just the first and last?

The Silver Bells celebration hap-

pened with the children handing out the carnations to all the members as their years were called. The newest inductees are Jenifer Ambler and Dawn Everett Grobe.

As we exited Darrel Daley snapped pictures of all the carnation-carrying members. These are currently on display on a couple of bulletin boards. Later they will be added to our growing collection of Silver Bells albums, going back to 1995.

Then it was down to Memorial Hall for the delicious pot-luck luncheon with dishes cooked from recipes of bygone years.

Many stayed for the illustrated lecture in the parlor. Jack Bixby introduced Dr Glenn Andres, who spoke on the architecture of New England meeting houses, with a special emphasis on this Centre Church. I left with a new appreciation of this beautiful historic building.



In the February issue of Centre Bells I wrote:

"This year of celebrating the church's 200th anniversary gives us a chance to take stock—to appreciate all the church has meant in the past, to celebrate its place on Main Street today and to think about who we are, what we need and what our goals are as we look ahead."

This Bicentennial Year 2016 has been a success because of all the creative ideas offered and carried out by so many members of the committee, co-chaired by Judy Palmer and Dart Everett. The congregation enthusiastically joined in the special events and invited others to join us.

A final note that the book "This Jewel on Main Street" would make a fine gift to give to people, especially those who used to have some connection with Brattleboro and this church.

Marion Daley

History books, pancake supper, musical cabaret, Gospel of Mark, spaghetti supper, lawn picnic and games, bonnets, Kurn Hattin singers, t-shirts, Bread and Puppet performance, Contra Dance, New England Meeting Houses talk...Whew! What a Bicentennial Year it's been. I loved the variety of events planned by the Committee and the variety of ages and of people—many not church members—who participated. The laughter and good food and fellowship linger. Thanks to all of you who planned, publicized, carried out, and/or came to these activities. The "clouds of witnesses" to these 200 years might be proud of what we did this year. I have great hopes for our next 200.

As Rev. Bert might say, "Let's go out and be a church now."
Judy Palmer, Co-chair

PEACE CANDLE COMMITTEE

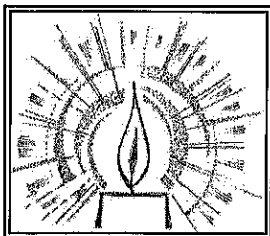
In preparing for this Peace Candle moment, I reflected on *where* we have been and *where* we are going. *Who* we have been and *who* will we be in the future?

In 1837 we are the church who participated in antislavery discussions in our chapel.

And wider, we were formed as a church from leaders like Karl Berth and Ditrek VonHoffeur. Ditrek left Germany as WWII intensified, only to return to be of service to his country's people. He was executed there.

And in more recent history, we have struggled to find ways to connect and serve, as in 1988 when we declared Centre Church to be a *Just Peace Church*, connecting Justice and Peace in "all that we do." We joined with others world wide in the "Bridges for Peace" program and supported citizen exchanges. Don Webster, Judy Kinley and Mary Ellen Bixby traveled as citizens and CCC church members to Russia during the Cold War times. Ideas and understanding were opened up for us in these exchanges between Russia and the US, between Moscow and Brattleboro, between a Greek Orthodox church and Centre Congregational Church, and as one person to another.

And in 1992, our church began its support and understanding of El Salvador and Cabanitas, our sister parish. From their initial visits, church members Jack Bixby, Peter Abell, Jim Lobenstein, Dart Everett, Jenifer Ambler, and Marion



Abell have inspired us to be connected with this small country and its people. Rotary trips, medical trips and the creation of Pure Water for the World all stem from the support and hard work of these church and community members.

Our church continues its strong commitment of justice and peace through its support of education and our trips to El Salvador. The Luz del Mundo school scholarship program supports children from Cabanitas to further their education from elementary school through college. Our support of this program insures that children can attend school and progress to the next level of their education. Our last youth group trips in 2013 and 2014 connected our youth with many of these students from Cabanitas. They travelled, played, worked, shared meals and worshiped in their homes and their church, connecting teens to teens and adults to adults.

And today we continue our work for justice and peace by supporting the work of: Carry Me Home, the distribution of clothing from Centre Church basement to refugees of war in Syria; Loaves and Fishes, feeding not only the homeless but the changing faces of those in need in Brattleboro; and One Great Hour of Sharing, supporting needs around the world. Today we will send funds to Haiti to help the people of this small, poor country move forward after the devastating hurricane.

This is an incomplete list of all that Centre Church does in unity and as individuals. When our daughter Tori was preparing to go with the church to El Salvador, she received a note card that said, "Our lives may be the only Gospel some people ever read." We carry the Gospel with us through our lives and our actions.

As we celebrate our history and look forward today in contemplating and filling in our Search Committees surveys, let us reflect on Dot Vander Muelen's words in *This Jewel on Main Street*, "We honor those who have come before and made possible the church to which we belong. That said, we move on to grow and change as the world around us moves on. Conditions, needs, new knowledge and insights cause us to reevaluate our old ideas and traditions and we do change and grow as a result."

Mother Teresa said, "We may wonder whom can I love and serve? Where is the face of God to whom I can pray? The answer is simple. That naked one. That lonely one. That unwanted one is my brother and my sister. If we have no peace it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other."

Lord, help us to work to connect to one another through you, through an *active* Peace. Amen

Priscilla Svoc

Search Committee and Mission & Service
Peace Candle offering October 2016

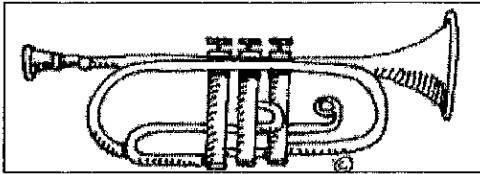
Everyone is invited to the
MOMENT for PEACE

Friday, December 2, 5:30-6:00PM
Centre Church Chapel

"Marking the darkest time of the year, the Moment for Peace on December 2 offers those attending a chance to light candles for places in their hearts, communities, and the world where justice, conflict transformation, and peace are needed. Rev. Lise Sparrow, pastor of the Guilford Community Church, an Open and Affirming Church of the United Church of Christ, will lead our meditation. Everyone is welcome."

From Music Director, MARY MILKEY-MAY:

By the time you receive this December issue of Centre Bells, it will likely be the season of Advent. This year we are fortunate to be able to use the remaining funds from our guest instrumentalist budget to bring The New England Brass Quartet to Centre Church. I have worked with these wonderful folks in previous church settings and I can attest to their amazing talent and spirit! PLEASE PLAN ON COMING EARLY ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4! The NEBRASS will begin the Prelude at 9:45. They will also be participating in various ways throughout the service including joining the choir during the anthem. Please do not miss this service. The music promises to be uplifting and inspiring.



Lately, due to the generosity of several folks, we have two new (to us) pianos at Centre Church. The beautiful Baldwin Grand was gifted to Centre Church by Karen Getty Peter and it is already in the parlor. Thanks to Marion and Peter Abell and Patty Reardon for facilitating the move. We are very grateful to have an instrument in such good condition and I'm sure it will be used for many years to come.

The second piano is a traditional Spinnet and was given by Judy Palmer to be used by the choir during rehearsals. Because this piano is low, it is easy to see the choir while I'm at the keyboard! We will continue to use the electric piano as well but we now have a bit more flexibility to use that one in several locations as it is more portable. A special shout out goes to Matt Kennedy, Tony Grobe and Mike Ball who accompanied me to Judy's house to load the piano in my little blue truck!! Matt's driving skills were deeply appreciated as he had to go through a field, up a hill, through a narrow passageway missing a propane tank and tree. Great job, Matt!

As we enter this season of Advent, we hope to provide you with inspiring music. This year, however,

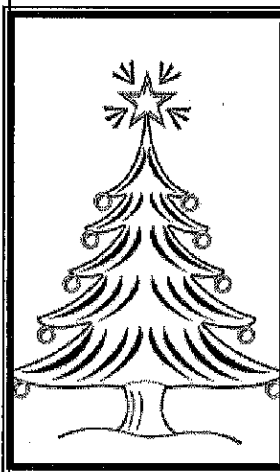
we have 6 choir members who will be away for Christmas Eve. That means we will have a very small choir! I'm still hoping there might be folks who could join us but so far no one has stepped up! Please see me if you would be willing to help out the choir on Christmas Eve.

We're a friendly bunch!

BRATTLEBORO CENTRE FOR CHILDREN

In December, Brattleboro Centre for Children is having its annual appeal. This year, the letter writing campaign is trying to raise funds for a new structure for the playground out back. We are looking into the construction of a wonderful wooden boat—"The BCC Friend Ship" (or Noah's Ark on Sundays!!). You can visit the hall by our office to see the 2-dimensional version with our children's and staff's happy and hopeful faces.

Even if you don't receive a letter from our board of directors, please consider making a gift to the "Friend Ship Fund." Contributions can be placed in an envelope and put into Nan's mailbox marked "Centre for Children Director." Your donation is tax-deductible so please include your name and address. Thank you so much!



We have been told that the Church will once again sponsor a Giving Tree during Advent. I hope you will take an ornament and find one of the BCC children to support with a small demonstration of the Christmas Spirit. Look for a child's description on one of the ornaments on the tree or ask Nan for more information. Thank you.

Nan Mann, Director

CENTRE BELLS

The Newsletter of
Centre Congregational Church, UCC
December 2016

