

CENTRE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Celebrating 200 years in the heart of Brattleboro!

193 Main Street, Brattleboro, VT 05301

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

Sexton

Church Administrator

Rev. Bert Marshall: revbert@centrechurchvt.org

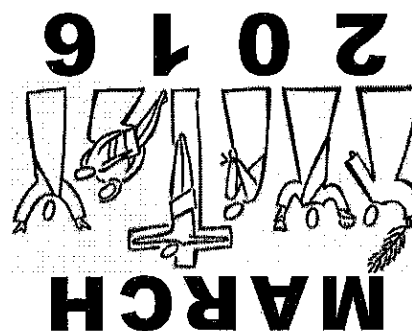
Christine Yost: finance@centrechurchvt.org

Mary Milkey-May: music@centrechurchvt.org

Ernest May

Gary and Paul Smith

Bruce Landenberger: bruce@centrechurchvt.org



BRATTLEBORO, VT 05301

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193 Main Street Brattleboro, Vermont 05301

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

CENTRE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

INTERIM MINISTER'S COLUMN, Rev. Bert Marshall

There's Lint on My Lent

This is how you begin when you don't know how to begin. You think of some pithy little phrase and you try to make something out of it. You think of Lent's past and you read about other peoples' Lent's and you contemplate other peoples' Lenten resources and conclude that everyone else's ideas are far better than yours. You become sullen and distant. You attempt to read some literature that might offer related insights or inspiration, but you end up falling asleep on the couch trying to read Dostoevsky or Flannery O'Connor – among your favorites but they cannot rescue you from the void. Your favorite poets have also abandoned you. How could they leave you at a time like this, you ask? Where have they gone, where have they gone?

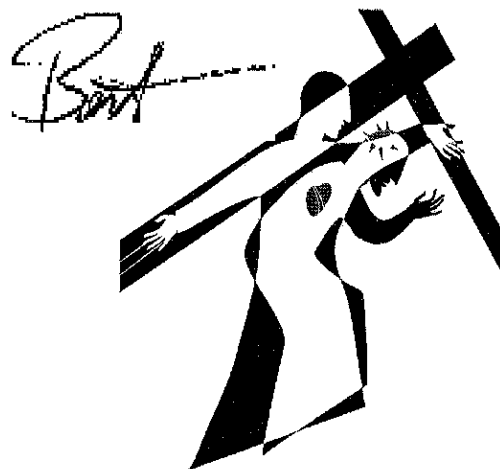
The road ahead is dark and winding and steep, the mountains and valleys shrouded in fog. The trees in the forest are shadowy giants towering above you as your reluctant feet carry you onward toward a rendezvous with yourself in a clearing of light and dreams. You've forgotten what you were like long ago, and you're afraid to see what you've become. You would turn and run the other way if you could but someone is pushing you from behind. Or calling you from up ahead, just beyond the edge of the fog. You stumble forward, the fog closes in, the light seems distant, the forest is silent.

This is how I walk through Lent every year, it seems. I dust the lint off of last year's Lent and discover that it leads nowhere. So I have to begin again. Only this year's Lent is Lent, because if you've been there before it isn't Lent. If you know where you're going, it isn't Lent. If you're thinking palm branches and resurrection already, that's not Lent.

You make whatever preparations you can. Forty days is a long journey, but maybe it will go by quickly. There are distractions. You're busy. It isn't easy to lay aside your most cherished interests, your most comforting entertainments, in order to walk through the valley of Lent. With Jesus, no less. It's too hard to pick up a cross and follow him. Who was he kidding, anyway?

Lent. Even the word doesn't seem right. It sounds like something borrowed, something temporary, something you have to give back when you're finished with it. And that's the problem with Lent: it corners you with one of the basic truths about your life – it *is* borrowed, and you *do* have to give it back. Our whole existence as people of God, as followers of Christ, converges around how we use what is Lent to us, and the manner in which we return it.

That's the only way I know how to move through Lent. Every year you have to start where you are. The road ahead is dark and winding and steep. But someone is waiting for you in that clearing of light. There are no regrets when you get there.



◆ WORSHIP SCHEDULE ◆ HOLY WEEK & EASTER

March 20 - Palm / Passion Sunday

A liturgy of transition from palms to passion
Distribution of palms

March 24 – Maundy Thursday

7:00 pm, Centre Church
A service of Tenebrae and Sacrament

March 25 – Good Friday

1:00pm till 3:00pm
Location TBA

Reflections on the Seven Last Words of Christ
By Members of the Brattleboro Area
Interfaith Clergy Association

March 27 – Easter Sunday

Christ Is Risen! Alleluia!

CENTRE BELLS

The Newsletter of
Centre Congregational Church
United Church of Christ

March 2016

From Council Chair, BILL McCARTY

Welcome to Centre Church! This is a greeting we all should repeat whenever we see new a new face at Centre Church. A warm welcome and a smile has been the hallmark of our community for years.

We are have an anniversary to celebrate ! On February 22, the Rev. Bert Marshall will be celebrating his first year with Centre Church. It doesn't seem possible that it has been an entire year. But, it has been a happy and exciting year. We have accomplished many things and are now moving forward in a positive direction.

The Council and Rev. Bert have jointly decided that he should remain as Interim Minister for an additional year and he will continue to assist us with our search for a settled pastor. An extension of his Covenant has been discussed and will be signed for another year.

Where will you be on May 22nd 2016? That is the date for Centre Church's Annual Program meeting; a day when we will install new Council, Boards, and committee members. There will be many changes, and your participation and assistance is needed to make this a successful 2016 and 2017 for Centre Church. On behalf of the Council, I hope that you will please consider volunteering to support Centre Church and participate by volunteering to fill in many different positions that are needed for our church to fulfill it's many roles in the community. It is important to have diverse perspectives and ideas on the Council and on many Boards. Centre Church is your church and needs your ideas, energy and participation to succeed.

The **Settled Pastor Search Committee** is being formed. If you are interested in participating in the search committee, please contact a Council member. We are looking for diverse viewpoints and you might be the right fit.

As I have said previously, an exciting and interesting time has arrived at Centre Church. All should be actively participating in becoming part of our Christian community.

Ellen Pond, a longtime member who recently passed away, has bequeathed to Centre Church a generous and ongoing sustaining gift. The details are still being reviewed and more information will be available in the future.

Spring is coming (it seems earlier than usual) and your Council and the Boards are working to prepare for the warmer weather.

Lent is here and Easter will be arriving in a few weeks. Join us in this holy season of Lent at Centre Church.

From Music Director, MARY MILKEY-MAY

Calling all interested folks to get on board for a musical celebration !!!

On **Sunday, April 24, 2016**, following the service, the Music Committee is planning a fun event as part of the Bicentennial Celebration occurring at Centre Church this year. The plan is to have a light lunch while enjoying a light Cabaret! Of course, to make this happen we will need some help in many different areas.....food servers, performers, emcee(s), set up, take down etc. This Bicentennial Cabaret will be organized around a theme: EGOTs!! (Emmy, Grammy, Oscar, Tony, ie, music from TV, Radio, Broadway and movies.) If you are interested in being a part of this event, please see someone on the Music Committee: Jenifer Ambler, Joanne Clark, Matt Kennedy, Virginia Kneubel and Michael Mario; or speak to Mary.

There will be opportunities for some small group numbers, solos, instrumentals, dancing....you name it, we'll take it! Even if you think you're not a soloist, you might have fun participating in a group number or perhaps you could help organize props. This event is meant to be fun! As April is just around the corner, please let us know soon if you are interested in being part of the performance and we'll help you rehearse and prepare.

Whether or not you plan on being in the program, please save the date!! We will need an audience too!



CHURCH LIFE

BOARD FOR CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION @ CENTRE CHURCH

Sunday School: every Sunday from 9:00 - 9:45 for ages 4+

Faith in Action: during the worship service for ages 5+; every Sunday except Communion Sunday, the 1st Sunday of the month.

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

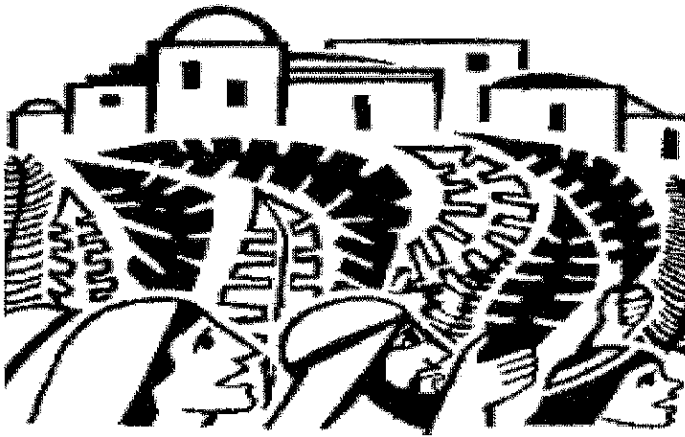
ADULT EDUCATION OFFERINGS

BOOK STUDY: an adult group book study currently reading *Rumi: The Life and Work of the Great Sufi Poet* by Annemarie Schimmel.

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.

Fourth Monday of each Month, 7:00-8:30PM



BICENTENNIAL COMMITTEE



Dot VanderMeulen and Judy Palmer receiving the Bicentennial Recognition Award from Vickie Case, president of the Board of Directors of the Brattleboro Chamber of Commerce at the Chamber Breakfast on January 28, 2016.

Shrove Tuesday, Fat Tuesday, Mardi Gras, 200th Anniversary Pancake Fest was a wonderful success, attended by a diverse group of well over a hundred including many from the larger community — exactly what we hoped would happen.

There were pancakes, of course, sausages, fruit and a variety of drinks. The West River Wildcats provided fabulous festive music. Bill & Carlene McCarty, Peter & Marion Abell, Judy Palmer, Dennis Newman, Jim Bedard (a miraculous flap jack flipper!), Don & Beverly Webster, Mike Ball, Connie Bresnahan, Jack & Mary Ellen Bixby, and Matt & Holly Kennedy made it happen....plus a bevy of other helpers impossible to list. It was a fun evening full of conversation, laughter, activity and good vibrations.

Maybe we'll do it again.....

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 they are packed and mailed to you

The Gospel of Mark

Told from memory by Rev. Bert Marshall

The whole gospel, beginning to end, as it might have been told in the early years of the Jesus Movement.

Hear it come to life in a live storytelling performance!

www.gospelofmarkalive.com

"...a sacramental experience, an incredible event!"
 "We were enthralled!", "Wonderful", "Unforgettable", "Brilliant",
 "You blew the doors off the place!"

Bert Marshall is interim minister at Centre Congregational Church, Brattleboro, VT, and graduate of Yale Divinity School



Bert at Church of the Village UMC, New York City

To Be Performed at Centre Church Sunday, March 13, 3:00PM

BOARD FOR MISSION & SERVICE

Centre Church Special Offerings serve local and national (UCC) causes and include the following for 2016: *Luz del Mundo Scholarship Fund*, *Bread for the World*, *Groundworks Collaborative*, *Carry Me Home* (clothes/postage for Syrian refugees), *One Great Hour of Sharing* (national), *Star Island Scholarships*, *the Nell Sather Scholarship Fund*, *the Boys and Girls Club of Brattleboro*, *the Brattleboro Summer Lunch Program*, *Strengthen Our Church* (national), *Brattleboro Area Walk-In Clinic*, *the Women's Freedom Center*, *the AIDS Project*, *Brattleboro Senior Meals*, *the Brattleboro Area Affordable Housing*, *Neighbors in Need* (national and international), *Loaves & Fishes*, *the Help Fund*, *the Samaritan Fund*, and *the Christmas Fund*. If you have suggestions for new or thoughts on current Special Offerings, please speak to a member of Mission & Service.



Our next Monday night Overflow Shelter meal is **Monday, March 21**, with Dennis Newman and Amy Balin coordinating. Please consider signing up on the hallway sheet to prepare a food item or serve on that evening (5-7 pm at the Baptist Church).



Centre Church folks who were helping to serve dinner at the Overflow Shelter across the street at the Baptist Church on the evening of February 15 got an extra surprise when water started dripping from the Baptist Church kitchen ceiling. Within minutes the dripping had increased and had spread across a third of the ceiling. Mild panic ensued. Steve Fecto helped to find and shut off the building's water. Groundworks Collaborative workers on duty their called their supervisor who then contacted a Baptist church deacon, who then contacted a plumber. But without access to water that night, homeless sleepers needed temporary quarters. Dinner worker Jenifer Ambler checked with Church Council Head Bill McCarty, who gave permission for use of Centre Church's Memorial Hall for the night. Priscilla & Ron Svec, with their pick-up truck, helped overnight guests to move cots and belongings across the street, and Jenifer kept Rev. Bert informed. The next morning, guests had left before Centre for Children kids arrived and Loaves & Fishes, serving lunch that day, found the Centre Church kitchen in good shape.

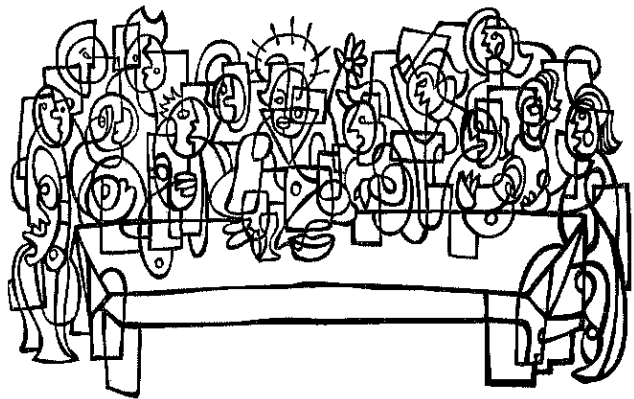
Who said that God doesn't work in mysterious ways?

The Special Offering for March is One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS). This is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that addresses disaster, refugee/immigration, and development ministries throughout the world. UCC administrators note "Through OGHS you [can] engage in holistic development programs including health care, education, agriculture, food sustainability, micro-financing, and women's empowerment. You meet immediate needs and you address the underlying causes that create those needs in the first place."

PEACE & JUSTICE COMMITTEE

Everyone is invited to the
MOMENT for PEACE,
Friday, March 4, 5:30-6:00PM,
Centre Church Parlor

This month Michael Pittman will lead our meditation on Gurdjieff's notion of contemplation as a means for understanding the "higher truths" of religious teachings. Gurdjieff, a unique, even esoteric, mystic, was a Greco-Armenian teacher who has been considered a "context-setter" for current spiritual and religious movements. Michael Pittman is Associate Professor of Religion at Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences. His research focuses on G. I. Gurdjieff and Sufism in Armenia, Turkey, and the U.S.A.



Women's Spirit continues meeting each Thursday afternoon at 4:30 in the library. Marcus Borg's book *Convictions* is being read. We learn of his life, how he developed his most bedrock convictions, and why they matter. The group is often amazed at how their own experiences are similar to the author's. Sharing both similarities and dis-similarities leads to rich discussions. Join us at any time for a fulfilling hour together.



BRATTLEBORO CENTRE FOR CHILDREN

While we may think that winter is nearly over, in February we started our annual winter trips to Kids-Playce, a wonderful opportunity for our Toddler and Preschool classes. Each year, we purchase an organization admission, which gives us 8 weeks of indoor play when our playground is not so inviting. The children love it; check out some photos on our facebook page and see for yourself! In February we also had a wonderful time with an all-school pajama day! All four classes, teachers included, came to school in our pjs. We brought stuffed animals, blankets, and had a special "lullaby" version of All school Sing. We ate popcorn and snuggled and giggled a lot. It is a popular and fun day. We have welcomed some new children this winter also, so community building is front and center in our curriculum in nearly every room. We want to thank the Centre Church congregation for your generosity when we have needs. We sometimes post a "wish list" on our facebook page. We haven't listed anything there lately, but we still need bibs (especially the kind that are terry cloth with a stretch hole to go over the child's head, also size 3 to 6 girls and boys underwear, and child sized spoons and forks. If you would like to visit our facebook page, it's Brattleboro Centre for Children, Inc. or take a look at our website, www.centreforchildren.org

Thanks! Nan Mann, Director

If you would like to give one or more flowers for Easter, please fill out a form for each plant ordered and return the form(s) to the church office with your check to:

Centre Congregational Church
193 Main Street
Brattleboro, VT 05301



DEADLINE: Sunday, March 13, 2016

EASTER FLOWER ORDER

NAME _____

PHONE _____

Circle one: in Honor / Memory / Celebration of
in Thanksgiving for

____ 8" pot, 9 bulb tulips@ \$14.00 each

____ 7.5" pot, 1 bulb Easter lily@ \$12.00 each

____ 6" pot, 3 bulb hyacinth@ \$ 9.00 each

CHECK TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

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____ 6" pot, 3 bulb hyacinth@ \$ 9.00 each

CHECK TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

PEOPLE



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

JEANNE RUETER

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

NANCY CLARKE / BABS DUNN

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 05350 (802) 221-4213

MARJORIE SPRAGUE

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

DON STOCKWELL

Vernon Green, 61 Greenway Dr.,
Vernon, VT 05354 254-6041

Please let Bruce know if we've missed someone



New Friends of Centre Church



Harvey Nystrom & David Shallenberger
66 Lexington Ave.
Brattleboro, VT 05301
nystromharvey@gmail.com
david.shallenberger@gmail.com

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! Loaves & Fishes needs folks willing to make a morning pick up at the Brattleboro Co-op and Amy's Bakery and drop off at Centre Church several Tuesday or Friday mornings per month.

Please contact Bruce Landenberger:
bruce@centrechurchvt.org / 802.254.4730. **Thank You!**

YOU CAN STILL ORDER PAVERS

Don't forget, you can still order pavers for the front walkway. These benefit the Capital Campaign, and are a fine way to recognize a loved one, mark an anniversary, or quote a Bible verse. The cost is \$100. Order forms are on the desk in the foyer outside the Church Office.

To My Church Family

Thank-you for your prayers, cards, hospital visits and the beautiful flowers, during my stay at Grace Cottage Hospital.

When I returned home, delicious meals were delivered by Carlene, Roger & Judi Miller, Anne Doesburg, Pam Reardon, Marion Daley and Gisela.

I received a beautiful Prayer Shawl knitted by Dottie Vander Meulen.

I truly appreciate your hospitality.

God Bless.

Mary Bristol

21 January 2016

Dear Congregation,

Reflecting upon the 2015 decycles bicycle trek from Indiana to Nova Scotia - an odyssey covering over 1500 miles, in 17 cycling days - I am awestruck by the fact that I actually completed it, and, at the same time, humbled by the realization that averaging 90 miles a day on a bicycle was only possible with the help of an array of people and organizations that tended to all of your needs. Essentially all we had to do was pedal the bike. I am deeply grateful to the good people of Centre Church - United Congregation, who provided us with overnight accommodations when we cycled through Brattleboro on July 2nd. To be the recipient of such kindness from total strangers is profoundly touching and truly a blessing for which I extend a hearty thank you.

Please accept the enclosed donation as a small token of my gratitude, and invest it into a worthy cause at your church, as you see fit. It be the seed that becomes a tree in the forest of good works at Centre Church-United Congregation! **I WISH YOU ALL GOOD HEALTH, PEACE, AND PROSPERITY IN 2016.** In closing, I encourage anyone in your church community seeking a physical, as well as a spiritual challenge, to consider a journey with decycles. See website for pertinent information: www.decyclesindiana.org

Sincerely, Marian Tichy

MARCH 2016

*Holy Communion celebrated

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes 7 ³⁰ AA Meeting	2	3 9 ⁰⁰ BWC 9 ³⁰ Quilting Ministry 4 ³⁰ Women's Spirit 7 ⁰⁰ Choir Rehearsal	4 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes 5 ³⁰ Moment for Peace 6 ¹⁵ Bratt Solidarity 7 ³⁰ AA Meeting	5 9 ³⁰ SEVIA
6 9 ⁰⁰ Book Study/ Sunday School 10 ⁰⁰ Worship* 10 ⁰⁰ AA Meeting 4 ⁰⁰ BMC concert 6 ⁰⁰ AA Meeting	7 4 ³⁰ Prayer Shawl	8 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes 6 ³⁰ Meeting Night 7 ³⁰ AA Meeting	9 6 ¹⁵ Race Dialogue	10 9 ⁰⁰ BWC 9 ³⁰ Quilting Ministry 4 ³⁰ Women's Spirit 7 ⁰⁰ Choir Rehearsal	11 <i>CENTRE BELLS DEADLINE</i> 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes 7 ³⁰ AA Meeting	12
13 <i>EASTER FLOWERS DEADLINE</i> 9 ⁰⁰ Book Study/ Sunday School 10 ⁰⁰ Worship/FIA 10 ⁰⁰ AA Meeting 11 ³⁰ Music Committee 3 ⁰⁰ Gospel of Mark 6 ⁰⁰ AA Meeting	14 4 ³⁰ Prayer Shawl 7 ³⁰ AA District 8	15 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes 7 ³⁰ AA Meeting	16 12 ⁰⁰ BALL 6 ³⁰ Church Council	17 9 ⁰⁰ BWC 9 ³⁰ Quilting Ministry 4 ³⁰ Women's Spirit 7 ⁰⁰ Choir Rehearsal	18 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes 7 ³⁰ BMC Concert 7 ³⁰ AA Meeting	19 9 ⁰⁰ BWC
20 9 ⁰⁰ Book Study/ Sunday School 10 ⁰⁰ Worship/FIA 10 ⁰⁰ AA Meeting 6 ⁰⁰ AA Meeting	21 4 ³⁰ Prayer Shawl 5 ⁰⁰ Overflow Shelter	22 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes 7 ³⁰ AA Meeting	23 <i>MAIL CENTRE BELLS</i> 9 ⁰⁰ Clean Chandellers	24 <i>MAUNDY THURSDAY</i> 9 ⁰⁰ BWC 9 ³⁰ Quilting Ministry 4 ³⁰ Women's Spirit 7 ⁰⁰ Worship	25 <i>GOOD FRIDAY</i> 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes 7 ³⁰ AA Meeting	26
27 <i>EASTER</i> 9 ⁰⁰ Book Study/ Sunday School 10 ⁰⁰ Worship/FIA 10 ⁰⁰ AA Meeting 6 ⁰⁰ AA Meeting	28 4 ³⁰ Prayer Shawl 7 ⁰⁰ Spiritual Conversations	29 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes 7 ³⁰ AA Meeting	30	31 9 ⁰⁰ BWC 9 ³⁰ Quilting Ministry 4 ³⁰ Women's Spirit 7 ⁰⁰ Choir Rehearsal		

BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Priscilla Svec
- 3 Patricia Brown
Milton Eaton
- 5 Emma Rueter
- 6 Emmett Healey
- 7 Dianne Bassett
Sylvia Eaton
- 8 Richard Dunn
- 13 Jon Potter
- 18 Haley Marcil
- 20 Cynthia Terzariol
Kathryn Fecto
- 21 Mike Ball
- 22 Matthew Kennedy
- 26 Addison Minott
- 27 Marilyn Young
Aidan Kindopp
Henry Grobe

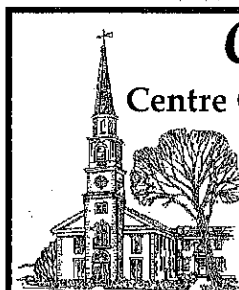
ANNIVERSARIES

- 12 Deborah & Robert Cope
- 31 Mary & Verne Bristol



NATIONAL UCC NEWS

The national United Church of Christ has a home web site: <http://www.ucc.org> which covers many topics and directories. It also has web sites for several different publications such as *UCC Congregational Vitality* newsletter. There's a weekly *Keeping You Posted* e-zine to which anyone with a computer may subscribe free, full of UCC news. *God is Still Speaking* is an 88-page, oversize, full-color magazine to be published twice annually in spring and fall. Order on-line: UCC.org/magazine.



Centre Bells is published monthly by
Centre Congregational Church, United Church of Christ

News items and articles should be submitted to the church administrator. Please contact the church administrator with address changes or requests to be added or removed from the *Centre Bells* mailing list at: 802-254-4730 / centrechurch@centrechurchvt.org