

The Spirit at First July/August 2018



Pastor's Ponderings.....

The Mendes family heads west in a week. If the plans come off without a hitch, then we will spend most of our time in Yellowstone and Grand Tetons National Parks with minor excursions at Rocky Mountain, Black Hills and Wind Cave National Parks as well. Nestled in the midst of those magnificent destinations will be a Nepali cultural camp with many of the 65 "Pipeline" families we journeyed with through the rough and tumble State and Immigration Departments as we brought our daughter home six years ago. We will hike, whitewater raft, eat at a Dude Ranch, roast s'mores, play games, swim and drive 5-10,000 miles! With the many responsibilities of this last year, it will be a welcome relief like many of your vacations as well.

In my previous churches, it seemed that after similar such travels, I would return to the fold and have a month or so of fires to put out: negative interpersonal conflicts between members to bring to a peaceful solution, initiatives that went dormant in my absence, pastoral visitation to catch up on, etc. However, First Congregational Church of Essex runs smoothly in my absence. Many clergy get nervous over such a feat since it seems to diminish their necessity. NOT ME! I love the fact that our staff, officers and volunteers continue to operate the church with aplomb. Josh is planning an incredible sermon series that will connect Broadway Shows, scripture and music in a thematic way. He will visit folks and stay on top of all the tasks required of First Church's clergy. Laurie will be knee deep in completing all the plans for another incredible VB Camp. Jen will amazingly continue to keep all the various balls of church life in the air and going. Carol will play inspiring music for you all's enjoyment. And Kul will keep the place clean and the yard looking good.

Plus, Kevin and the Trustees in conjunction with the Capital Campaign folks will begin to spend the money raised on projects around the church. The Deacons will continue to assist and lead worship throughout the summer. Hospitality will continue to keep folks happy with coffee, food and fellowship after worship. The Food Pantry will continue to offer food for the hungry; Essex Eats Out will continue to provide great meals to community members; the Thrift Store will continue to help clothe community members at an extreme discount and a host of our volunteers will begin planning programs and initiatives for next year.

All of you are amazing and I am grateful to be able to go on vacation and not worry about the health and welfare of the church for I know it is in good hands! I hope all of you will enjoy your vacations and the Vermont Summer. Looking forward to being refreshed and ready to venture into the unknown future with you in the fall, I am

Yours in Christ,
Rev. Mark

SPECIAL SERVICES & EVENTS IN JULY/AUGUST

July 1st & August 5th, ONE SERVICE, 9am ~ Communion

Communion for July & August will have everyone able come forward to receive the elements.
There will be ONE SERVICE @ 9am, until September 2nd.



Thursday, June 28th, 7pm ~ Celebrate LGBT+ Pride Month!

June 28th marks a pivotal moment in the movement for LGBT+ rights, the Stonewall Inn Riots. Without the Stonewall Inn Riots, there would be no modern LGBT+ rights movement. In the morning of June 28th, 1969, LGBT+ folks had had enough harassment.

They decided to stand up for themselves and assert their right to be who they are, wherever they are. Come to First Congregational for an interfaith service honoring and celebrating LGBT+ rights movement. All are welcome.

Summer Preaching Schedule

July 1: Rev. Simon [communion - intinction]

July 8: Rev. Simon

July 15: Rev. Simon

July 22: Rev. Simon

July 29: Rev. Simon

August 5: Rev. Mendes [communion - intinction]

August 12: Deacons Sharing their Spiritual Journeys

August 19: Rev. Mendes

August 26: Rev. Mendes

Sept. 2: Rev. Mendes [communion - intinction]

Clergy Vacation Schedules & Emergency Coverage

Rev. Josh's Vacation

June 17th – 22nd Mission Trip

August 11th - 27th Vacation

Rev. Mark's Vacation

June 26th – August 1st

August 12th - 17th

Emergency Coverage

Rev. Karen Mendes will cover for any pastoral emergencies from August 12-17th
Her cell phone number is 802 922-3374.

ASSOCIATE PASTOR NEWS

Thank you to everyone who participated or attended my installation service on June 10th. From the music to the sermon to the charges and to the prayers, joy abounded. I am glad to be here.

Mark is on vacation in July. For the five Sundays in July, I'm preaching a sermon series on Broadway musicals. I have selected Godspell, Urinetown, Wicked, Hamilton, and Les Misérables. At each service, we will sing or hear someone sing a song from these musicals. I'm glad we have so many talented vocalist and musicians. A word about Urinetown: this is a socio-political satire. I will pair this musical with the book of Jonah, also considered to be a satire. For the rest of the musicals, you'll have to show up to see.

The church programmatic year is over. Since I started, I have connected with our youth, been to many committee meetings, had great conversations with folks at Sermon Talk Back and Friday morning coffee at Martone's, and many more. I'm glad that in March several youth and adults went to rally in Montpelier for March for Our Lives. For the youth who attended it was a meaningful time to demonstrate our support for their generation's leadership. I'm glad all our

Confirmands decided to join the church. I'm glad I attended the Association and Vermont Conference annual meetings. I'm glad to have been part of the Jamaica Committee and the Calcutta. I'm glad to have been part of the Capital Campaign. I'm glad for many, many activities and events. I look forward to the next programmatic year.

In July, Laurie and I will send out a survey/doodle poll to families to help guides us decided when the junior youth and high school youth groups should meet. Families, please look for that in July.

Check out our blog from the NYC Mission Trip and I will report back to you in our September newsletter on the trip. <https://nycmissionfccej2018.blogspot.com/>





Laurie's Lens

Our summer worship services are intergenerational and welcoming for all ages. A reminder that we have worship items in the Narthex on the bench to help children keep their hands busy during worship. We are hopeful to have a staff person in our Nursery every Sunday, or a volunteer back up, for those under 3 years of age. Outside our Nursery room door you can find our summer self-led Kids Activity Bin that can be moved over to the low kid friendly table in Fellowship Hall. Children are encouraged to take an older youth or adult with them from worship.

Being an acolyte and bringing in the light of Christ and carrying the light out is a great way to be engaged and be a part of the service. I am happy to help train or give a refresher lesson to a third grader or older child on how to light the worship candles and extinguish them at the end of worship. Our church is not just a building that we come to and gather as a community to practice who God wants us to be. This faith community gathers to help keep our faith strong and alive. Can we listen, pray and talk to God by ourselves? Of course, we can. The question should be do we want our faith to continue to grow and be enriched as much as it can by being a part of this church and its worshiping community? Let us all remember to carry the Light of Christ with us when we leave and know that Christ and God continue to be with us every day, so when we return to worship and witness that Christ light burning bright, it will continue to keep our faith ever growing stronger. In September I will offer an acolyte orientation after worship for those who would like to practice more or have a refresher. Children and youth may also feel a part of our worshiping community by being an usher or a greeter. All three of these are great ways that individuals or families can give of their time to support our faith community, as well as ringing the church bell 15 minutes before worship starts.

I am so excited for our Vacation Bible Camp week and the families that are signing up and the kids who will be here with us when we transform this church and experience the *Ride of a Lifetime with God!* Help us spread the word that all are welcome at VBC and we have room for neighbors and friends to join us. Please stop by and pick up a flyer to post in your area of the community, take a few registration forms or send me an email. Campers can attend for just a day or every day. Volunteer helpers are at every station and with every group, so if you would like to join us every day or just for a day we would love to have you.

As I continue to tackle all the items on my to do list and piles on my desk this summer, the one that sits at the top of my list is looking for volunteers for our Sunday morning Faith Formation programs that will resume in September. Feel free to reach out to me by phone or by email if you know you would like to help or have questions. Summers are busy, but I pray you all will take the time to consider where and how you can see yourself being involved. As you all know it takes a village to help raise a child or youth in the faith. Maybe you were a part of a program at a different church or remember what things were like for you growing up or maybe you volunteered more than 2 years ago here. Parents, please remember that we welcome all of you into our programs and encourage you to come experience them first hand. Sunday morning programs have changed a lot over the years and continue to change. We encourage our high school youth to find the place they feel most comfortable here at First Church. You can volunteer too.

Let us continue to learn and ask questions as we travel along on our faith journeys.

Blessed to be in ministry with you, Laurie

DEACON'S CORNER

It's memorized and said weekly by over two billion Christians around the world. Appearing in two Gospels (Matthew and Luke) in different forms, most churches use a translation of Matthew's longer Lord's Prayer. But even with consensus about which version to use, there are countless translations (our church uses the 1928 Episcopal). Those different English translations have additions to the original text—Reformers tacked on the “For Thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the Glory forever”—and there has been debate for centuries about how correctly the Prayer has been translated from the original Greek (are you on team “trespasser” or team “debtor?”).

When Pope Francis was asked a few months ago how God can “lead us into temptation,” he said the line was confusing, the result of a translation that was “not very good.” Many Christians around the world took to social media to tell the Pope to leave the Lord's Prayer alone. It seems for them, whatever version you grew up saying is the one you want to keep, even if you acknowledge the prayer's history with many changes over time. It makes sense. Saying those familiar words is a comforting part of church ritual; when so much around us is changing at record speed, continuity feels good. As Fuller Seminary professor Clayton Schmit said, “there is a sense of solidarity in knowing that Christians around the globe are praying together...and these words always unite us.”

But Pope Francis has a point too. If a small change can remedy a confusing translation, why not make it? In fact the Catholic Church in France recently switched from “Ne nous soumet pas à la tentation” (roughly “Don't expose us to temptation”) to an updated version, “Ne nous laisse pas entrer en tentation” (“Don't let us enter into temptation”).

Protestants are debating even more changes, with calls for more inclusive, gender-neutral wording. As Congregationalists who love good debates, they're happening in our congregation too. The Deacons haven't taken a survey, but it feels like we're pretty evenly divided between the “keep your hands off my Lord's Prayer” crowd and the “let's update this relic” one. Like every potential change that's been debated over our 250 years, the future of the Lord's Prayer will be discussed, argued about, and thoughtfully considered. Every voice will be heard and respected, no matter how much we may disagree. In that spirit, let us listen and learn from one another as we consider the Lord's Prayer.

MUSIC

Abigail Evans & Sondra Goldsmith-Proctor Midsummer Music Medley

July 15th @ 6:30pm



Abigail Evans and her music mentor from St. Lawrence University, Sondra Goldsmith-Proctor will be performing a variety of pieces from the repertoire they've built throughout this past year.

Sondra Goldsmith-Proctor is the current Musician-in-Residence at St. Lawrence University and as an organist, she has had the opportunity to study and perform throughout the East Coast, Europe, and the Caribbean. Abigail is now a junior at St. Lawrence University and has been playing violin for ten years with experience in the Vermont Youth Orchestra, St. Lawrence U Orchestra, and various other ensembles.

STEWARDSHIP



When You Put Money in the Mail or Offering Plate, Please Put on the Memo Line/Envelope Where It Goes, ie) Pledge, Capital Campaign, Per Capita, Children's Offering

Greetings from the Stewardship Committee! As we enjoy the long days of summer, it gives us time to reflect on how our church supports us as members. I am writing to you as a new member of the Stewardship Committee, to let you know that come fall, we will begin our annual Stewardship Campaign. It will be our time to support the church, as we enter the 151st year of service to the community.

The Stewardship Committee oversees the Annual Giving Drive allowing members to financially support our church. The foundation for many of our initiatives comes from the generosity of our members during this important time. It is the role of the Stewardship Committee to inform the congregation about the many ways members can be a valuable resource. One might ask, "What is stewardship?" Stewardship is about making a conscious effort to be actively involved in one's church community. This involvement can be through a financial offering, donating one's time to help, or providing one's talent toward a church need.

One on-going way that members can contribute is through the **Hannaford Gift Cards Program**. By purchasing or reloading a gift card, on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month, 5% of the value of the card comes back to the Church. Since many of us shop at Hannaford grocery store, this is an easy opportunity to support one of our missions.

I am pleased to be a part of this endeavor and look forward to supporting the Stewardship Committee as it meets the needs of the greater church community.

Bill Keithcart

Special Offerings: September-Seminary Sunday, October-Neighbors in Need, November-Food Pantry, December-Christmas Fund

SAVE THE DATES

July 29th –August 3rd ~ UCC Camp week 'HC goes to VT' at Rock Point (more info in Camp section)
August 6-10th ~ Vacation Bible Camp ~ Join the Volunteer team ~ Youth & Adults ~ Come join the Fun!
September 9th ~ Welcome Back Sunday ~ two services resume

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN NEWS

Our Home, Our Future, Our Time...



On June 3rd, FCCEJ celebrated the success of the *Our Home, Our Future, Our Time Capital Campaign* to date, and the many volunteers who helped make it possible. We were thrilled to announce that we had exceeded our goal of \$822,000, and are well on our way to reaching our “stretch goal” of \$1.09 million! Rev. Mark did the honors by filling in the silhouette of the church (representing our initial goal), and then continuing to paint about a third of the stretch goal heart.

Can we raise enough funds to fill it the rest of the way?

Officially, as this newsletter goes to print the Campaign has received gifts and pledges totaling \$913,601. We want to thank everyone who has made a financial contribution to the Campaign so far. And gifts continue to come in! Every gift we receive now will help make our stretch goal projects possible. Projects such as the Sawyer House/Thrift Store renovation, new floors in Fellowship Hall, Gym and 2nd floor classrooms, a wider (and more attractive) Church Street entrance, and more. For a complete list of projects that will be possible if we reach our stretch goal, please visit our Capital Campaign page on the church website at www.fccej.org.

Last but not least, we want to recognize and thank everyone who has given their time and energy to the Campaign, whether serving on the Campaign Steering Committee, serving as a visitor, helping with our special events, writing thank-you notes, helping with mailings, helping with our printed materials, making buttons, developing our campaign website, singing special songs, listening to all our Campaign spiels, receiving a visitor in your home, or praying for our Church and this Campaign... *Our Home*, this community of faith, is stronger and even more vibrant because we have done this work together. Our hearts are fuller too.

With many thanks and heartfelt gratitude,

Dave Johnson & Kaki McGear, Co-Chairs

Capital Campaign Project Update

The Church Trustees are turning their attention to the long list of projects that will now be made possible through the generosity of so many donors. Trustee Chair Kevin Meilleur reports that the Trustees are working hard to gather bids and secure contractors for several projects that they hope to begin as early as this summer. The roof work is expected to begin this summer and the organ maintenance and repair work is scheduled for this October. The parking lot project work will depend on contractor availability once the appropriate bids have been evaluated. Church members should monitor the weekly bulletins, this newsletter, and our social media sites to stay informed about the various projects that will soon begin. We can expect that there will be changes in the location of Church services and programs throughout the construction process but the Trustees and staff will work to minimize any disruptions.



Reminder – Campaign Pledge Payments Due July 1st!

(Write “Campaign” on memo line please!)

Please remember to send your first Campaign pledge payments on July 1, 2018. If you have questions about your payment schedule, you can look at your pledge form copy, Pledge Acknowledgement Letter, or contact Campaign Treasurer Dan Petherbridge at dpetherbridge@comcast.net

We have received payments of \$326,312 to date. This will help us get started on some of the campaign projects this summer. For those who wish to do so, early pledge payments are welcome and can help reduce our bridge loan finance costs.

CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES



Music Time During Faith Formation

Cherubs & Joyful Noise will resume having music time on September 18th

Faith Formation Sunday School Calendar

Preschool – 8th Grade

Now – September 2nd ~ Summer Faith Formation

Self- led Activity Bin in Fellowship Hall available most weeks

Kids bring a parent to FH and watch the service while you spend time being creative.

September 9th ~ Welcome Back Sunday & Fall Faith Formation Program Begins



Acolytes



Acolytes are those who carry the taper and bring the light of Christ into the Sanctuary at the beginning of worship to remind us that God is with us. Acolytes also will carry the light out at the end of worship to remind us that God continues to be with us wherever we go. This is a great way for all those who are in 3rd grade or above to participate in worship. You can acolyte solo or with another friend or parent. Please sign up on the calendar on the bulletin board as you walk up to worship! We are looking for someone every Sunday. See Laurie for questions.

Ring the Bell

All children and their families are welcome to sign up and ring the church bell 15 minutes before worship begins. Please sign-up on the calendar on the bulletin board by the Acolyte sheet. Instructions are at the top of the sheet as to which rope to pull and how many times to ring the bell. We love to have our church bell ring every Sunday morning before worship!



2018 Faith Formation Offering ~ Jamaica Children ~ Uniforms & Books

Current Giving Total is \$524.06

Keep remembering to bring your Offering!

\$1 a week can go a long way! If every child and youth contributed a \$1 a week we could raise over \$2000 to help Jamaica kids have uniforms & books so they can go to school and learn to read and write. Bring your offering each week & don't forget to use the children's envelopes in the pews so our counters know your money goes to the Jamaica Children.



All our First Church Youth Programs are Parent Supported!

1 to 3 parents/volunteers are needed at each youth group gathering!

Youth Group bulletin boards can be found in the staff hallway.

Junior Youth by Laurie's office / High School Youth by Josh's office

Reminder to stay active and be engaged! *Help a neighbor or a friend *Bring your offering ~ put it in the plate as general offering or use the 'color me' envelopes and support the Jamaica Children-Uniforms & Books!

*Find ways & places to connect with your God & have Spirit time.

Junior Youth @ FCCEJ

5th - 8th graders meet TWICE a month from 11:30-1:30pm

Faith & Mission Focus ~ Meal ~ Fellowship/Games

Parents sign up for meals and to volunteer on the JY board.

Enjoy your summer and September 16th is Call Out for Junior Youth!

High School Youth Group @ FCCEJ

Watch for September Date Coming Soon!

Our Nursery

Our Nursery is one of the first places that our little ones and their parents feel the love of God and learn that the church is a safe place to be. Parents ~ please be mindful of our Safe Conduct Guidelines and help us keep to our child ratio (2 children to 1 adult). Volunteer to stay in the Nursery with your child if you see that extra hands will be needed. Thank you for your help.



We are currently looking for another staff person. If you know of someone, please contact Laurie.

Starting on September 9th we are looking for a volunteer to be in the Nursery along with our staff person.

If you are interested in being taking a Sunday a month or a Sunday a quarter, please be in touch.

CAMP



Vermont Outdoor Ministry Camps

There is still time to sign up and go to camp!

Go to www.hortoncenter.org or www.silverlakeect.org

Stop by our Outdoor Ministry bulletin board on your way up to the Sanctuary and see the fun t-shirt and paints you could win and take to camp with you this summer! All you need to do is register for a week of camp. Let Laurie know you did and you'll be in the drawing. Need scholarship money to help get there? Let FCCEJ staff know, we can help! Going into 5th - 8th grade in the fall? There is still room to come to Horton Center Goes to VT! **As of printing, there are two more girl openings and three more boy openings.** Laurie will be visiting the camp every day at Rock Point. See the description below. Register for this camp on the Horton Center website above.



Our Vermont OM Week at Rock Point Camp

July 29-August 3 ~ Horton Center Goes to Vermont ~ Middler

\$420, Entering Grades 5-8 in the Fall

Come be a part of a great community of friends at Rock Point, Horton Center style, while we explore along the shores of Lake Champlain. God's beauty will be all around us as we swim, paddle board, hike through the many nature trails, have evening campfires and s'mores, sing, worship, play games and enjoy the amazing sunsets. Rock Point is in Burlington on the site of the Episcopal Conference Center.



Vacation Bible Camp 2018

August 6th -10th, M-F 9-11:45am

Rolling River Rampage: Experience the Ride of a Lifetime with God!

VB Camp is a week of energy and excitement of seeing God's Love in Action! All are encouraged to join up and be a part of this fun week!

Calling all KIDS ~~ Registration is now OPEN!

Groups: You & Me (toddler & parent/grandparent)

Preschool (threes & fours - potty trained) up through those entering 5th grade in the fall.



FELLOWSHIP & LEARNING



Essex Eats Out Community Dinners Continue...

1st Friday of Every Month ~ July 6th & August 3rd

Come - Help - Eat www.essexeatsoout.org

JOY (Just Older Youth)

A group for the over 55 crowd (both men & women) meets the first Thursday of each month at 12 noon in the Marvin Lounge. If you have any questions about the group or need a ride please call the office. **We will be taking a summer break July and August.** Our next meeting will be September 6th. Have a fun, safe and happy summer!



Third Thursday Potluck Series

Third Thursday, September 20th from 5:45 to 7pm

On hold until September. Watch for the new schedule coming in August. Fellowship dinners are open to all! Come get to know others at First Church



The Community of Bridge

On the third Friday of every month from 1:30-4pm, a group of FCCEJ members & friends gather to have a little fun playing bridge. This month the date is **July 20th & August 17th**. It is an open group and competition takes the back seat of enjoying each other's company and having fun. We usually also get some home baked cookies and coffee to boot. And on top of all of that, the winner gets a jar of Rev. Mark's famous jam and bragging rights for a month. Come and bring a friend.

Off For The Summer ~ Faith on Tap

Meeting People in Meeting Places outside the Church

Come join us for food and drinks at McGillicuddy's Five Corners, 4 Pearl St, Essex Jct

Friday nights will resume in September, from 6:00-8:00 pm

Stay Tuned to the Bulletin for this Fall's dates & topics



NEW DAY Wednesdays, July 18th & August 15th, Noontime Book Group

Please note that our new meeting time is at noon on the third Wednesday of each month in the Marvin Lounge. This summer we will gather on July 18th & August 15th for a brown bag lunch, fellowship and a good discussion. Please join us! For information on the two books that are being read this summer, please contact Joanne Irwin at jirwin1000@aol.com.



Yoga @ First Offers TWO WEEKLY CLASSES Through The Summer!

Jonah is offering two classes, on Mondays and Thursdays through August 23rd. Both classes will meet in the gym from 5:30-6:45. All levels from beginner to experienced are absolutely welcome. You can bring your own mat or borrow one of Jonah's. Classes are free but donations are gratefully accepted for FCCEJ. This fall, beginning with August 28th, there will be **ONE** class offered on **Tuesdays** at 5:30-6:45pm in the Fellowship Hall.

Women's Spirituality Group

The Women's Spirituality Group will meet in Marvin Lounge at 9:30 am on the third Saturday of each month unless otherwise advertised. All women of the church are invited to join us for interesting programs and wonderful fellowship. We will not meet in July. We have been invited to Joanne Irwin's camp for our August 18 meeting. We can share our special "happy places" with each other, while everyone enjoys Joanne's! We can walk the beach, sit on the patio or on the beach, which is usually shady in the morning. There's room inside if it's rainy.

August 18 - Brunch at Joanne Irwin's camp in Colchester. Meet at church at 10am and we'll carpool to Joanne's camp. Bring a brunch item to share while we enjoy each other and our beautiful Lake!

'Take Out Church' Boxes

Have a box and running out of items? Contact Laurie for refills. These 'pizza' size boxes can travel around with you wherever you go and will slide under the seat of your car. Items inside can help the whole family stay connected to God and help everyone continue to grow in their faith. 'Flat Jesus' is inside! Color and cut it him out. Take him with you everywhere you go. Post pictures of you with 'Flat Jesus' on our Facebook page and help us all be reminded that Jesus and God are with us wherever we go. Enjoy the fun items that are inside... VB Camp music CD, Graces to read or sing before you have a meal, beachball of thanksgivings and much more! See Laurie to collect your box.



Coffee Clatter @ Martone's

Every Friday at 8:05 a.m., Revs Mark and Josh welcome everyone to come and talk about any subject you would like. We talk politics, camping, travel, church life, community issues....any and everything that comes up. We meet for one hour ~ join us!



Coffee Fellowship

NEW DAY & TIME ~ Ladies Crafting Night Out

Do you knit, crochet or do any other crafty projects that you would like to do in fellowship with others? Join us in the Marvin Lounge the 4th Wednesday of each month at **2-4pm, July 25th and August 22nd** for a time of common crafting. All are welcome!



Tuesday Morning Sermon Talkback, 8:30 – 10am



Each Tuesday morning 15-20+ people meet over coffee and goodies to discuss what went on that week in worship. We expand upon the sermon and explore the things that preaching just cannot get at in twenty minutes. We explore any and every subject that might properly come forward -although we try to leave politics out of it! We laugh, challenge, eat, share our stories and support one another in our life journeys. It is a good group that you would be very welcome to attend.

MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

Jamaica Mission Program Update



We're very excited to announce that we have put together a team of 17 people (9 youth and 8 adults) for our third intergenerational mission trip to Jamaica in July 2019! This is our largest team yet, and we are excited about the work we'll be able to accomplish. Although the trip seems a long way off, we will begin the process of getting documents in order, making plans, getting to know each other, and organizing our fundraising efforts. We will be having some team building events over the summer and we look forward to sharing more information with you in the fall.

Missions Moment

Summer is upon us and the Missions Committee continues to do amazing work here at FCCEJ and in the local community. For those who are unfamiliar with the Missions Committee's work, we help facilitate community outreach and give financial assistance to several different groups locally, nationally and internationally each year. The outreach and financial

assistance recipients can and often do, vary from year to year. The Missions Committee members would like to remind everyone that our community outreach continues through the summer months and the needs are always great. Please continue to bring in feminine hygiene products for JUMP (Joint Urban Ministry Project) through the summer. The Red Tent is always ready to accept donations. Remember to sign up to provide and serve a meal once a month at Dismas House. To do

this, please see below or contact Ed Steele at edwardmsteele@msn.com. If you'd like to volunteer at the Thrift Shop this summer, please contact Elaine Raymond at ebraimond@gmail.com. If you'd like to help at Essex Eats Out, please contact Judy Allen at judy@invalidate.net.



Thank you all for continuing to remember those less fortunate among us while we are enjoying what is sure to be a glorious summer.

Dismas House

Across the state of Vermont there are four Dismas Houses that provide shelter and support to men and women making the difficult transition from incarceration to new lives. For several years now, we have once a month been serving a dinner on the 4th Wednesday of the month to the residents of the Winooski Dismas. Living there is a professional manager along with 10-15 people who have been released after serving their prison terms. Our service to Dismas House comes from our belief that all of us are imperfect human beings, but that we all have the potential to be better people, and that that potential



can be best realized with the support of others. Our participation in this program helps to lessen the feelings of estrangement that people released from prison are often burdened with. The residents and staff are extremely friendly and appreciative of our help. **We are currently looking for volunteers for September 26th.** Please contact Ed Steele at 871-5897 or edwardmsteele@msn.com if interested or with any questions. A sign-up sheet is in the hallway exiting Fellowship Hall. We need four people to volunteer for each date (space is limited so that the residents and guests have a meaningful dinner experience. Our FCCEJ group will decide the menu to feed 12-16 people (which includes the FCCEJ cooks), and then purchase and prepare the food (typically includes the main course as well as vegetables or salad – dessert is optional). The Dismas House provides beverages, condiments, set-up and clean-up. There is no age on who can volunteer, great for retired folks on down and you can donate part of the meal even if you are not able to attend.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Craft Fest News ~ Help Needed!

The Craft Fest in 2017 made almost \$7,000 for the Church which is wonderful news. A large portion of this profit comes from the Silent Auction. This has become a favorite with all our customers. Both Diana Higgins and Phyllis Willey have decided to resign from being the key organizers of the Silent Auction. We are now looking for 2 people who are willing to organize the auction. Both Diana and Phyllis are willing to help their successors and will be available the day of the event to assist. Please contact Linda at lbogardus@myfairpoint.net if you are interested or have any questions. It would be very sad if the auction wasn't a part of this special event.



Heavenly Food Pantry

Next Heavenly Food Pantry days are Mondays, July 9th & August 13th, 5:30-7:30pm and Thursdays, July 26th & August 23rd, 2-6pm
We are all set right now for donations! Thank you SO much to our

FCCEJ family and also the community at large. The Postal Workers Food Drive brought in more than we could have expected as seen by the photo! What an abundance of donations!



Nurse and Lifeguard needed for Camp-PAID Positions

The VT Outdoor Ministry Team is looking ASAP for a NURSE (RN) & a certified LIFEGUARD for our week at Rock Point! Yes, you will be paid! Know someone? Contact Laurie for more information. Think of it... no cooking or laundry for a week, just great fun in God's outdoors!

2018-19 Faith Formation Volunteers

Starting in the Fall

If these statements hold true for YOU, please connect with Laurie for more information...we need YOU!

- I have been a part of the family here at FCCEJ for the least 6 months.
- I would like to help our children and youth continue to grow in their faith.
- I know I don't have all the answers-that's OK, but I am willing to learn and help grow my faith.
- I believe the FCCEJ Faith Formation programs are vital to this church and I am willing to give of my time and talents to keep them healthy.

Many ways to support First Church kids and youth:

Nursery ~ join our staff person and be a friendly face to the parents and the littlest ones among us during first service or second. We strive for a two to one ratio in the Nursery.

1st Sunday Spiritual Friends ~ join Laurie on the first Sunday of the month on the 2nd floor and we'll have great conversations with the kids. We'll read a story, have snack, Godly Play time with playdough mats and/or Faith Talk circle conversations. Then all return to worship for communion.

Peer Class Leaders & Helpers ~ be a leader or helper in one of our classes from preschool up through eighth grade. Weekly emails of news and curriculum lesson are sent out keeping you connected and what's coming up on Sunday mornings. Peer classes meet 2 or 3 times a month.

Hands-On Mission Sundays ~ once a month all ages are together for a time of hands on mission project and learning about an organization and talking about God's love for all people and things.

Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop News

Regular Hours: 10am-3pm Tues & Wed, 4-8pm Thurs

Mark your Calendar – Saturday Open Hours

Saturdays, July 7th & August 4th, 9 am to 1 pm

Saturday, July 21th 9 am to 2 pm Porch Sale



We are looking for a tarp or tent covering to use for the Porch Sale. Please contact Linda Bogardus at lbogardus@myfairpoint.net if you have something that can be borrowed. We will be collecting Nearly New items for the Porch Sale starting now until July. Please use our drop off container. Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop is also looking for more ***volunteers***. Customers keep asking for the shop to be open more Saturdays. Right now we don't have anyone who can assist on a regular basis for another Saturday. If anyone is interested in helping on the 3rd Saturday of Each month to open the shop, please let Elaine know at ebaymond@gmail.com We are also looking for accessories such as jewelry, scarfs, hats, and purses. Please see if your closet has some items which can be donated.

August 6-10 ~ Vacation Bible Camp

Rolling River Rampage: *Experience the Ride of a Lifetime with God!*

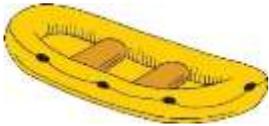
Monday – Friday from 9am to 11:45am

Continuing to Recruit for ...

Helpers: Youth (entering sixth grade & up), ***College Students/ Adults of all ages!*** ***Be a group leader, help in Bible Drama and much more!*** Contact Laurie for more info and to sign up!

This is a great way to get community service time.





VB Camp Wish List

Looking to borrow: 4 Artificial Christmas Trees (different sizes), Folding camping chair, Small Inflatable Raft

Discovery Station Needs: 1 large box of Wide Popsicle/Craft Sticks

Snack Station Needs: 1 small bag of Large Pretzel Rods Gluten Free, 1 - 14oz pkg of pull apart Twizzlers (Red) 2 bags or boxes of Fish Shaped Pretzel Crackers, 2 large bags Garden Veggie Straws, 3 boxes of Graham crackers, 1 box gluten free Graham crackers, 1 bag of Mini Marshmallows, 5 / 8oz containers of Spreadable Cream Cheese, 10 packages of String Cheese, 4 / 8oz pkg (slices) of Provolone cheese, 5 bags of Clementine, 5 lbs of Grapes, 3 bags of Apples, 4 pints of Blueberries, 4 cans of Pineapple wedges, 3 packages of Celery, 2 packages of 8" Tortilla wraps, 1 pk of 8" Tortilla wraps (gluten free), 2 medium Watermelons, Strawberries (4 pints), Bananas (12 medium or 2 bunches)

OUR CHURCH FAMILY



Jen's Summer Office Hours
Monday, Tuesday & Thursday 9am – 1pm

July Birthdays

1st Emma Polly, Marion Wrightington; **3rd** Lauren Starkey; **4th** Rachel Johnson, Margaret Mendes; **5th** Emo Aboukhalil, Mark Holden; **7th** Sawyer Gabert, Vincent Hoffman; **8th** Tamsin Laflam; **9th** Luann Donley, Martha Houghton, Ira Isham, Betsy Weischedel; **10th** Christine Gilliam, Grace Jones; **11th** Doris Metzelaar; **12th** Norma Edwards; **14th** Langston Deal; **15th** Grace Buchspics, Tucker Martin, Tessa Nowell, Sam Phillipppo; **16th** George Jackson, Jackie Knapp, Sarah Krauss, Amani Whitfield; **18th** Isabelle Bourn, Brian Chipman, Alessandra Hoffman, Zoe Moos ; **19th** Emily Cunningham-Firkey; **20th** Lily Marthaler; **21st** Judy Blackman, Dax Knight; **22nd** Courtney Frank, Dan Petherbridge, Walker Stapleton; **23rd** Marilyn Vincent; **25th** Clay Messier, Eric Robinson, Stephen Savage; **26th** Jan Frivoll; **27th** Diane Bottamini, Kelley Didio, Sylvia Nyhagen, Christine Sinkewicz; **28th** Harriet Chates; **29th** Tessa Lynch; **30th** Trista Acebo, Kiley Boerger, Dan Crocket, Sheila Hathaway, Diana Higgins, Barbara Isham; **31st** Lanie Benton, Brad Jackson, Robert Sinkewicz

August Birthdays

1st Luisa Chernyshov, Mark Mendes; **2nd** Laurie Chipman, Susan Kremer; **3rd** Sue Conti, Henry King, Minga Turner; **4th** Dick Allen, Mallory Charland, Matt Clark, Melissa Culver, Francis Raymond, Barb Smith, Carolyn Toof, Hope Whitfield; **6th** Marissa Szymanski; **7th** Matt Birmingham, Carol Daigle, Pat Williams; **8th** Peter Bero, Val Smith; **9th** Lois Frivoll, Bruce Giannuzzi, Gary Smith; **10th** Benjamin Krauss; **12th** TJ Didio, Russ Schneider; **13th** Terri Livak, Barbara Williams;

14th Liam Gorniak; 16th Bill Coddington, Judy Moreau; 17th Todd Kelley, Shannon McCullen;
18th Elizabeth Crocket, Amanda Wark; 19th Kimberly Calhoun, Rob Evans; 21st Marie Johnson;
22nd Fred Babinger, Bobby Evans; 23rd Carolyn Antone; 24th Ryan Baker, Abby Culver; 25th Rachel
Ahokas, Stefan Deutsch, Stephen Gorniak; 26th Celia McClintock; 27th John Alden, Gene Cheek, Judy
McCullen, Devon Thomas, Keenan Weischedel; 29th Charlotte Frivoll, Sara Kellogg;
30th Carolyn Brooks, Adam Hoy, Kevin Meilleur, Jan Mittl



Dear FCCEJ, We wanted to extend our heartfelt appreciation to Rev. Mark, Rev. Josh and Laurie for all of their efforts on behalf of this year's Confirmation class. It was a great experience for our son, Zach, and made extra meaningful by the other kids, many of whom that he has grown up with here at FCCEJ. They all seemed to have a terrific experience. We know it is a big undertaking -- thanks very much to you all and congratulations on another successful Confirmation class year! From Peter Schmalz & Chris Catterton

Dear First Church, Thank you so very much for the beautiful yellow rose. It certainly added to my birthday celebration. The years are adding up! Best Wishes to all, Louise Kolvoord



Many thanks for all your donations to support kids and youth going to Outdoor Ministry camps!!



They are SO appreciated! You are helping kids from FCCEJ and from across VT attend a UCC site in New England or for our VT UCC week at Rock Point Camp. You are helping kids dive deeper than one can at VB Camp or even on Sunday mornings at church. Kids and youth can live and breathe it for a full week, sleeping in cabins, spending time in God's outdoors and getting more in touch with who they

are and truly seeing that they are not alone. OM gives everyone a chance to grow in their faith, making friends and spreading their wings in a fun, safe and Spirit filled atmosphere...whether on the shores of Lake Champlain at Rock Point or to on the top of Pine Mountain at Horton Center in NH or beside Silver Lake in CT. There are many camps for all ages!

You can always give to our FCCEJ Camper Scholarship fund or give a donation to the VT UCC OM Scholarship & Program that will be sent on VT Conference and help us continue to keep OM alive and well in Vermont. Checks can be made out to First Church with either 'VTUCC OM Program' or 'FCCEJ Camp Scholarship' on the memo line. For questions, please connect with Laurie.

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- Phone us at 802-878-5745, OR
- Mail this page back to us at the address above

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